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#DigitalActivism: A Study of Socio-Political Movements in Kenya

By

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A Dissertation submitted to the Department of Media Studies, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

2020

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my original unaided work, and it has not been previously submitted for a degree or diploma at any other university. Where other people's works have been used, this has been fully acknowledged. This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa.

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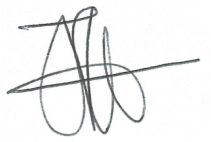

25 January 2021

..... ……

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Johannesburg, 2021.

Acknowledgement

I thank God for his grace and the wisdom he has bestowed on me, which has enabled me to complete this PhD research. I am gratefully indebted to my supervisor Prof. Iginio Gagliardone for his friendship, unwavering support, guidance, and a critical input into this PhD research. I have grown academically because of working with you. I am also grateful to the intellectual conversations and support accorded by the staff in the Department of Media Studies. Special thanks to Prof. Ligaga and Dr Ufuoma for their unwavering support to ensure I started my PhD journey with ease. To all my colleagues and comrades at the Humanities Graduate Centre, thanks too for the many intellectual conversations we had. I would also like to thank Prof. Grace Musila (Wits University) and Dr. Last Alfandika (Great Zimbabwe University) for providing comments to some chapters of this research study and Prof. Erika Polson and Prof. Lynn Schofield Clark, both of University of Denver for accepting to publish sections of this research study in their edited collection on Media and Class. Thank you all for your valuable contribution to my research.

I also awe my gratitude for financial support provided by the Postgraduate Merit Award for four years, the numerous conference funding by Wits School of Literature, Language and Media, Austrian Academy of Science, University of Bergen, Association of Internet Researchers, The University of Michigan Ann Arbor, Yale University, Centre for Multilingualism at the University of Oslo through the INPART partnership and other grants and scholarships from SSRC's Next-Generation of Social Science Researchers in Africa, WISER (Wits Institute of Social and Education Research), and IFRA (French Institute) Nairobi.

My heartfelt thanks to my family for believing in me. To my parents, Mrs Alice Wairimu Muiruri and Mr Ernest Tuiga – Thank you for bringing me up in a family that values education. Thank you too for your financial support and your prayers. I hope I will make you proud. To my sister Carol and my brother Tito, thank you so much for always believing in me, especially during my PhD journey. Special mention to Alvin Mwaura, Patience Wairimu and Samara Wairimu for making me work harder so that you can get someone to emulate. To all my friends at the great Long Street and the numerous friends scattered around the world, thank you for the love, life, and laughter we have continued to share.

Publication

Part of this dissertation was published in *The Routledge Companion to Media and Class*

Citation:

Mwaura, J. (2019). Class Interplay in Social Activism in Kenya. In E. Polson, L. S. Clark, & R. Gajjala (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Media and Class* (1st Edition, pp. 280–292). Routledge. https://www.routledge.com/The-Routledge-Companion-to-Media-and-Class-1st-Edition/Polson-Schofield-Clark-Gajjala/p/book/9781138493612

Dedication

This work is dedicated to grassroots social justice movements in Kenya. These social justice movements have continuously worked in an environment devoid of ethical-political leaders, and an environment characterised by police brutality and extrajudicial killings. May all your efforts to give your communities a voice and to elevate them from social, economic, and political marginalisation bear fruits.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACECA: ---------- Anti Corruption and Economic Crimes Act
BVR: ---------- Biometric Voter Registration
CAJ: ---------- Commission for Administrative Justice
CBD: ---------- Central Business District
CCRK: ---------- Commission for Constitutional Review of Kenya
CMP: ---------- Contemporary Metropolitan Protests
CORD: ---------- Coalition for Reforms and Democracy
CRC: ---------- Constitutional Review Commission
EACC: ---------- Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission
EZLN: ---------- The Zapatista Army of National Liberation
GEMA: ----------Gikuyu, Embu, Meru, Akamba
IASB: ----------International African Service Bureau
ICT: ---------- Information Communication Technology
IEBC: ---------- Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
IMF: ---------- International Monetary Fund
INPART:----------International Partnerships for Excellent Education and Research
IPOA: ---------- Independent Police Oversight Authority
KAA: ----------Kenya Anti Corruption Authority
KACC: ---------- Kenya Anti Corruption Commission
KADU: ---------- Kenya African Democratic Union
KAHT: ---------- Kenya Association of Head Teachers
KANU: ----------Kenya African National Union
KAU: ---------- Kenya African Union
KBC: ---------- Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
KCA: ---------- Kikuyu Central Association
KCAA: ----------Kenya Civil Aviation Authority
KIEMS: ---------- Kenya Integrated Electronic Management System
KNCHR: ---------- Kenya National Commission on Human Rights
KNEC: ----------Kenya National Examination Council
KOT: ---------- Kenyans on Twitter

KPTJ: ---------- Kenyans for Peace Truth and Justice

KPU: ---------- Kenya Peoples Union

LSK: ---------- Law Society of Kenya

MCA: ---------- Member of County Assembly

MOA: ---------- Matatu Owners Association

NARC: ---------- National Rainbow Coalition

NCC: ---------- Nairobi City County

NCCK: ---------- National Council of Churches of Kenya

NLC: ---------- National Lands Commission

NYS: ---------- National Youth Service

OCPD: ---------- Officer Commanding Police Station

ODM: ---------- Orange Democratic Movement

PNU: ---------- Party of National Unity

PSC: ---------- Parliamentary Service Commission

QDAS: ---------- Qualitative Data Analysis Software

SDP: ---------- Social Democratic Party

SFO: ---------- Serious Fraud Office

SID: ---------- Society for International Development

SOMA: ---------- Social Media Awards

SONU: ---------- Student Organization of Nairobi University

SRC: ---------- Salaries and Remuneration Commission

SSRC: ---------- Social Science Research Council

TNA: ---------- The National Alliance

US: ---------- United States

YKA: ---------- Young Kikuyu Association

#DigitalActivism: A Study of Socio-Political Movements in Kenya

Abstract

Kenya is regarded as one of the technological hubs in Africa, and the increased use of internet technologies have become part of the everyday life of most citizens, especially in urban areas. Internet technologies have become essential in political participation in Kenya, particularly among the marginalised communities such as the youth and women. This research explores the place of social media in socio-political movements, the dynamics of protests and the socio-political issues that shape socio-political movements. Empirical research on digital activism in Kenyan context is scarce and the few studies that exist which explore social media as a tool for political change are not based on empirical evidence and they offer less understanding on the dynamics of political led and grassroots-led protests in Kenya and the role different media play in the outcome of the protests. This research study aims to fill this gap. This research draws inspiration from the theories of social movements such as Castell's network theory, resource mobilisation theory, and the theory of collective identity and collective action. This research adopts a qualitative research design and a multiple case study research approach. Three socio-political movements (also referred to as forms of digital activisms in this study) that happened in Kenya between 2013 and 2016 were selected to study the phenomenon. These included two grassroots movements - #OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayground and one political led movement #IEBCMustGo. This research analysed both the actors and the contents of the protest. Firstly, interviews were conducted with individuals who shaped or took part in those movements, as well as with individuals who were touched by them, as targets or active observers from the civil society organisations, the media, religious leaders, and politicians. Secondly, this research analysed the content of the three movements from social media sites, blogs, and newspaper articles. The use of these sources of data made it possible to understand the dynamics of protests in digital activism in grassroots-led and political led protests. The findings of this research indicated that, firstly, there had been a trajectory of using the media for activism since the pre-independence period in Kenya. Using the media for activism in the pre-independence and post-independence eras have continuously been shaped by various political environments and leadership – from a more restricted media environment in the colonial period to a free media in the current post-independence era. Although the current political environment has allowed grassroots and political led activism to thrive, government restrictions still exist during socio-political movements. Secondly, the findings indicated that grassroots-led protests and politically led protests use various media differently for activism, mostly due to the existing socio-political factors. Thirdly, the findings of this research indicated that offline activities during protest such as street protests, meetings, and court processes and which are complemented by online protests are all critical in realising socio-political change. This applies to both grassroots and political led protests.

Key Words: #Activism; #Socio-Political Movements; Social Media; Grassroots Activism; Political Activism

CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Background of the Study

I decided to be part of Kenya's struggle for democracy when I was still in the United States at Cornell University in the early 1970s, where I was on a scholarship. This decision came after I compared what I had seen there in the United States, in terms of the levels of democracy, I was then convinced that despite our independence, we had not earned any democracy or freedom and that stage of the struggle needed to be completed. And it would only be done by us. Therefore, in a wild sort of way, I abandoned my school and my scholarship, and I decided to come back home to fight for democracy in the second liberation movement.

[Koigi wa Wamwere, interview, 7th January 2019]

1.1 Introduction

The struggle for democratic rights in Kenya since the pre-independence period has taken various paths that have been shaped by numerous socio-political, economic, and cultural issues. In many cases, it has involved great sacrifices from leaders and ordinary citizens – who put their lives at the front line of democratic struggles. In the above quote from an interview with Koigi wa Wamwere - a Kenyan political prisoner, human rights defender, and politician - he mentioned why it was necessary to put his studies on hold and go back home to fight for democratic rights of the people in Kenya. It is important to understand that the democratization process in Kenya, just like in many other countries around the world, has been a slow and gradual process. The struggle for democracy by various individuals, movements and activists has and continues to take various approaches.

This study explores the use of social media in activism in Kenya and the issues that emerge due to its use and because of the existing socio-political dynamics. The definition of social media has been an ongoing debate amongst media scholars but in recent times the term has been used to refer to silicon valley internet apps such as Facebook and Twitter. While some scholars such as Baym (2015) and Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) define social media based on their technological aspect

others such as (Russo, Watkins, Kelly, and Chan (2008) define them according to their loose interactive nature. There is not one formal, concise, and mutually agreed-upon definition of social media but in this study, however, social media is conceptualised as "…internet-based channels that allow users to interact opportunistically and selectively self-present, either in real-time or asynchronously, with both broad and narrow audiences who derive value from user-generated content and the perception of interaction with others" (Carr & Hayes , 2015, p. 50). The use of digital tools in activism, including social media, mobile phones, emails, digital sit-ins, and other applications of the internet for communication and mobilisation will be referred to as digital activism in this study. Activism in this study is framed as taking action to effect change, push for change, by criticising socio-economic, cultural, and political structures with a purpose of replacing them with others that are more democratic. The term socio-political aspects will be used in this study to refer to aspects composed of both social elements and political elements (Elwell, 2013), and how the intersection between them plays out in digital activism.

New media technologies have changed many spheres of life, including activism. Specifically, two aspects of traditional mobilisation and advocacy have changed: participation cost and the need for co-presence (Theocharis et al., 2015). Digital activism is a recent term, and the popularity of it peaked during the Arab Spring in 2010/2011 where social media was credited with helping in bringing down authoritarian regimes in North Africa and the Middle East. The events of the Arab spring inspired socio-political movements around the world with the #Occupy movements in, the Spanish Idignados[1] and Greek Aganaktismenoi[2] receiving world attention, primarily due to the use of social media (Penney & Dadas, 2013; Welty et al., 2013, p. 91). Scholars and researchers have since been debating and researching digital activism in Arab and Western nations, but the term has only started to gain prominence recently in sub-Saharan Africa due to the greater proliferation of internet technologies and mobile phone.

[1]The Spanish people started this movement in May of 2011. The country was undergoing economic crisis and there was a general sense of frustrations towards the elections where Spaniards felt there was no better alternative government that would offer economic and social relief from the crisis. Indignation swept across Spain and people took to the streets and camped in urban areas.(Anduiza et al., 2014)

[2] The Greek Aganaktismenoi movement also known as the anti-austerity movement happened early May 2010 and involved several protests started by Greek people to refute government measures to cut public spending and raise taxes as part of austerity measures aimed at solving government debt crisis.

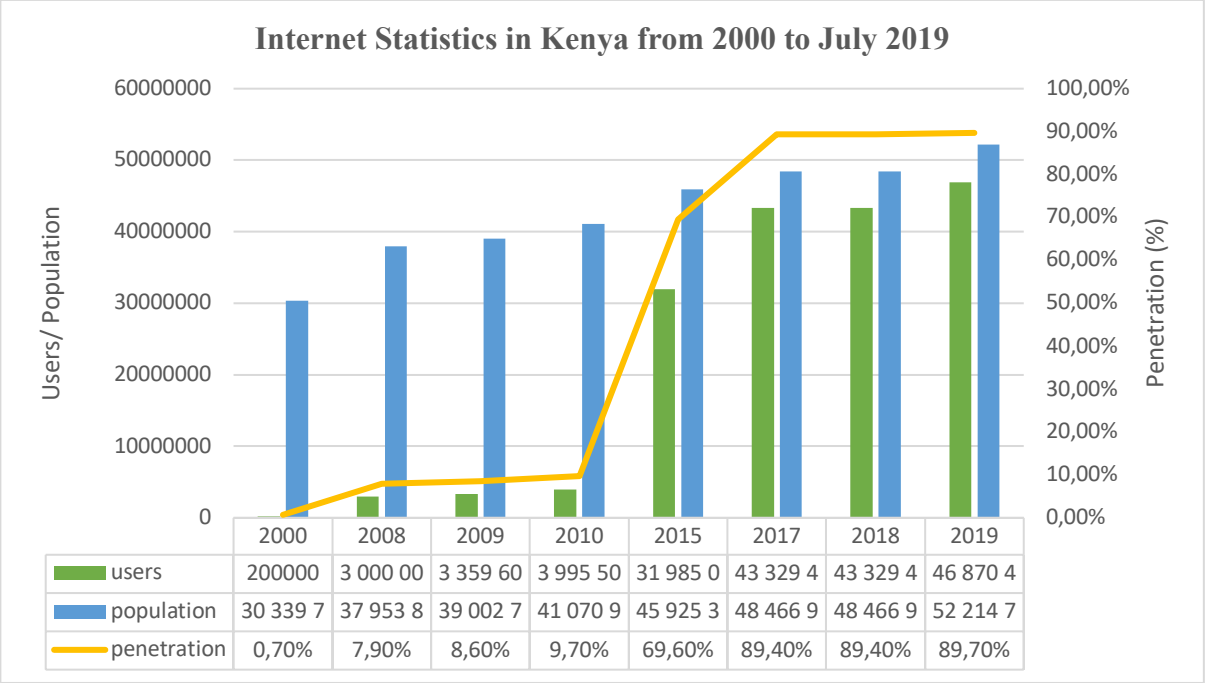
To explore the use of social media in activism in Kenya and the dynamics that have characterized it, I used three socio-political movements: #OccupyParliament, #OccupyPlayground and #IEBCMustGo, which took place between 2013 and 2016. During these movements, opinion was divided on the role of social media in activism. Some Kenyan scholars argued that social media is an essential tool to achieve socio-political change (Madowo, 2015; Sambuli, 2016). Other researchers also argued that the use of social media as a tool during activism combined with other socio-political and cultural factors can be used to achieve success in activism (Mason, 2013). However, some socio-political factors that play out in activism are inadequately researched. Mutsvairo (2016) has noted that the experiences with digital media usage in Africa seems different from the experiences of the Western nations due to differences in norms, beliefs, and cultural and economic circumstances. Elsewhere, Branch & Mampilly (2015: 7) argue that the study of protests in Africa should be "…contextualized within African political history and not be taken merely as representatives of universal economic or political identities.The politics of protest in Africa cannot be read from models imported from other historical experiences". This, therefore, marks my departure point and it will be important to explore the place of social media in activism in Kenya and at the same time study the dynamics of protest, and the socio-political issues that comes to play in digital activism.

1.2 Background of the study

1.2.1 The Media industry in Kenya

The media (print, radio, and television) in Kenya begun during the colonial period and was used by the colonial masters to propagate their dominance. In the late 1990s, the government introduced the Kenya Government Telecommunications and Postal Sector Policy, which had a significant impact on media reforms in Kenya. These policies allowed for the enactment of Kenya Communication Act of 1998, which saw the establishment of the Communication Commission of Kenya (The current Communication Authority of Kenya) (Mitullah et al., 2015). Further, the Kenya Communication Act, which was enacted in 1998, provided a pathway for the development of the 2006 ICT Policy, which contained the guidelines for the establishment of e-governance. This ICT policy also provided guidelines on setting up information and communication infrastructure, as well as putting to use other information systems.

The use of the internet in Kenya has increased over the last few years. The 2019 Statistics show Kenya has 46 Million, internet users. The figure below shows internet statistics from the first four years after the year 2000, when there was increased internet usage, and the current figures in the last four years.



	2000	2008	2009	2010	2015	2017	2018	2019
users	200000	3 000 00	3 359 60	3 995 50	31 985 0	43 329 4	43 329 4	46 870 4
population	30 339 7	37 953 8	39 002 7	41 070 9	45 925 3	48 466 9	48 466 9	52 214 7
penetration	0,70%	7,90%	8,60%	9,70%	69,60%	89,40%	89,40%	89,70%

Fig 1.1: Internet Statistics in Kenya

Source: Internet world stats website and Communication Authority of Kenya

Further, Kenya's internet speed is ranked as one of the highest in Africa with an average of 13.7mbps (see Akamai Q1 2017)[3]. The installation of fibre optics cables[4] in Kenya has contributed to faster Internet speed, wider access to digital technology and cheaper cost of connection in Kenya (Gagliardone & Stremlau, 2011). Globally, the cost of connection has gone down after a move from satellite connection, which was significantly more expensive than fibre optic. Over the years,

[3] Akamai is a cloud delivery platform that collects data across 130 countries in the world and releases state of the Internet statistics quarterly. https://www.akamai.com

[4] Kenya has five undersea fibre optic cables, namely: SEACOMS, EASSy, TEAMS, KDN reliance, and FLAG Falcon. The Kenyan government owns SEACOM while various multinational companies in partnership with local companies own the rest.

this has increased opportunities in various sectors of the economy, especially in digital communication.

With these technological advancements, social, political, and economic sectors of the economy have been finding ways to use digital technology to foster growth. Kenya has been applauded for innovative use of mobile technologies. The mobile money transfer *M-Pesa* has received accolades throughout the world for changing the economic lives of people in Kenya. Other innovative technologies from Kenya include *Ushahidi*[5], *BitPesa*[6] and *BRCK*[7]. *Ushahidi* has been adopted globally as a crisis-mapping platform. Tech laboratories in Kenya, such as the *iHub* have hosted numerous young entrepreneurs who have continued to innovatively use technology to create mobile phone applications that have been used to solve local problems. These innovative ideas have made Kenya be recognised globally as a technological hub in Africa.

1.2.2 The advent of free media and Internet experience in Kenya

Before the multiparty democracy in the 1990s, access to information was significantly constrained by the policies of the late President Moi's government. The government owned the media sector which included the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), controlled both Radio and TV. Some of the early known activists including the late Prof. Wangari Maathai, Alexander Muge, Bishop Timothy Njoya, and others who led the second liberation in Kenya did not have access to sophisticated communication tools, which they could use during activism. Those available (such as printed periodicals), were significantly monitored by the government. Kenyans found criticising the government at that time were arrested, tortured, or sent to exiles - notable cases being Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and Makau Mutua. The introduction of privately-owned radio stations and later television stations was a step towards liberalising the media. The government monitored the operation of these stations closely and the owners such as S.K Macharia (Media mogul who owns Royal Media Services) was in a constant fight with the government.

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[5] *Ushahidi* is a crisis-mapping platform that was invented by a group of bloggers in Kenya during the Kenya's Post-Election crisis in 2007/2008. The platform has been used in several other countries to map and report on crisis.

[6] BitPesa is a digital currency converter, which converts from currencies such as bitcoin to local African currencies. It is used currently in Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda.

[7] BRCK is a portable Wi-Fi gadget targeted at remote areas without stable Internet connection and recently got into the education space with BRCK education.

When the Internet was introduced in 1995 in Kenya, the media environment begun to change. By then, only a small crop of individuals in civil society organizations had access to it. Activists being early adopters of technology seems to have been the trend globally. Tufekci (2017) acknowledges this fact by saying that "activists generally are among the earliest adopters of digital technologies. When they are asked about their technology use, many activists recite a long history, describing how they seized on the first tools available" (p. 96). She further mentions that in her research that she found activists in many countries were among the first to use internet tools to mobilize, organize, and seek ways to avoid censorship. Towards the end of the 1990s, the internet was becoming popular, and David Kobia – the man behind the establishment of *Mashada* blog - set the first internet community up around 1998. The blog (*Mashada*) was dominated by Kenyans including those in the diaspora and had about 40,000 registered members. The blog acted as a platform for members to debate and discuss socio-political issues in Kenya. Later, the Kenyan blogging community increased and access to the internet was mainly in the cyber/internet cafes. Other notable blogs that came up around this time was the *Mentalacrobatics* founded by Daudi Were – who went on to become the CEO of *Ushahidi.* At that time, in 2004, a blogging community was also established under the name *The Kenya Bloggers Webring* (KBW) commonly known as *Kenya Unlimited.* Mbure (2013) mentions that KBW allowed Kenyan bloggers to form an online collective, which consolidated the readers and the contributors of the blog.

The Kenyan blogging community has increased exponentially since then. The blogs have provided forums for discussion of various socio-political issues. KBW in 2011 transformed to Bloggers Association of Kenya (BAKE). According to BAKE website description, the association aims to promote online content creation and free expression in Kenya. Further, the coming of social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook further expanded this community. Virtual communities such as *Kenyans on Twitter* (KOT) and *Mukuru Kwa Zuckerberg*[8] (MKZ) cropped up (Zaid, 2016). These communities bring together individuals on Twitter and Facebook, respectively, from Kenya. Keck & Sikkink (1998) state that networks are more effective where they are strong and dense while Castells (2015) refers to this kind of networks as networks of brains. Further, he says that

[8] *Mukuru Kwa Zuckerberg,* is a term commonly used by Kenyans On Twitter (KOT) in reference to Facebook users. The term originates from a nomenclature used to give names to many slums in Kenya, for example, "Mukuru Kwa Jenga" slum located in Nairobi. The term uses the name of Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and is a derogatory way of referring to Facebook as a slum full of backdated and out-of-style people who on most occasions don't have the slightest idea of what's going on in the urban socio-political discussions.

the ability of these networks to generate and share information within and without their networks is their most valuable asset.

Since the inception of the blogging communities in Kenya, there have been various blogging awards, meant to incentivise the members. KBW had its blogging award named Kaybees, which was given to members of the community and publishers who excelled in many ways. In 2012, Bloggers Association of Kenya (BAKE) also came up with annual awards, which seeks to recognize bloggers who post regular great, creative, innovative, and useful content. According to its website (www.bakeawards.co.ke), the 2019 award had over 15,000 blogs entered into the competition and over one million people voted. Since Social Media was becoming a huge part of Kenya's socio-political and cultural life, the Social Media Awards (SOMA) were established in 2011 to recognize and award influential individuals, organizations and companies that have made a significant contribution to the growth of social media in Kenya. Other related awards include Digital Media Awards (DMA) – an award scheme that celebrates individual who are involved in digital marketing in Kenya.

These online communities have been active on socio-political discussions and activists have been born in these communities. During the 2007-2008 post-election violence, social media and blogging communities were accused of fuelling hate and violence (Goldstein & Rotich, 2008), something that led to the closure of blogs such as *Mashada.* The government of Kenya in 2011 and 2012 begun to put restrictions on the usage of social media by requesting all telecom companies to register customers who owned SIM cards – with the hope of tracking social media users through IP (Internet Protocol) addresses. Government critics from the blogging community have often landed in trouble. Bloggers such as Dennis Itumbi, Cyprian Nyakundi, Alan Wadi (jailed for two years for insulting the president online) and Abraham Mutai were arrested after posting controversial content on social media, mostly content that is unpopular with the government. Another blogger, Dickson Bongoko Bosire, a former journalist and author of *Jakal News*[9], mysteriously disappeared (Some, 2015). Dickson Bongoko Bosire was linked to the list of witnesses he published on Twitter in a case involving President Uhuru and his Deputy William Ruto at the International Criminal Court (ICC), which has since ended. Mr Jacob Juma, another

[9] Jackal news was an online tabloid on politics, fashion, celebrity and gossips. The site (http://ww1.thejackalnews.com/) closed after its owner went missing in 2014.

political blogger who was murdered mysteriously for what is believed to be his original posts on social media, which criticised the government. Abraham Mutai was arrested for exposing corruption cases in Isiolo County but was released without any charge after an online outrage (#ReleaseMutai) (Tomchak, 2015). Therefore, even with increased digital media use, and increased freedom of expression, government restrictions are still common in Kenya.

In recent years, we have witnessed the emergence and increase of social media activists or digital activists in Kenya. With very vibrant civil rights groups several successes have been registered over the last few years, key among them the move from a one-party system to a multiparty system in 1992 and the adoption of a new constitution in 2010. Digital technologies have indeed added fresh blood to these civil rights groups. Together with continued reforms on laws of Kenya, we have seen an increase in the number of activists and new ways and tactics of doing activism. Castells (2015) states that when activism is mentioned in contemporary society, the quickest tool for use that comes to mind is social networking sites. That ideally shows how social media networks have become essential in today's activism.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is first to explore the place of social media in socio-political movements in Kenya; second, to examine the dynamics of protest in such movements; and third, to explore how specific socio-political issues shape different movements. Social media in Kenya has been regarded as an essential platform for political communication. Social media platforms have been used to organise and mobilise socio-political movements and citizens have used these movements to push for change. Although techno-optimists have regarded social media as revolutionary, the dynamics of protests and the role of social media in socio-political movements in the Kenyan context has not been well explored.

1.4 Significance of the study

Research on digital activism in sub-Saharan Africa has only recently gained momentum among media and political science scholars. Some of the cases that have drawn interest from scholars and researchers in the recent past include the #FeesMustFall student movement in South Africa (Bosch, 2017; Konik & Konik, 2017; Luescher, 2016; Luescher et al., 2017; Naicker, 2016; Oxlund, 2016) and the #BringBackOurGirls movement (Carter Olson, 2016; Chiluwa & Ifukor, 2015; Khoja-

Moolji, 2015; Loken, 2014; Njoroge, 2016). Even with this positivity by scholars and activists, empirical studies on digital activism are still thin. It is therefore important to contribute to this conversation in a bid to expand knowledge and add to the growing body of literature on digital activism in Kenya and sub-Saharan Africa as a region.

The use of social media during activism has generated different view and conversations from scholars and activists. Scholars who researched the Arab Spring such as Eltantawy & Wiest, (2011) and Gerbaudo (2012) gave accolades to social media for its use at that time. Another crop of researchers such as Alterman (2011) and Christensen (2011) found out that social media was useful for mobilisation into street protest but did not create a revolution alone. In addition, during the Egyptian revolution, the protests still went on after internet connectivity was shut. However, most of the researchers agree that social media alone could not have been sufficient to bring a revolution. A mix of other factors such a street protests, coverage by mainstream media, pre-existing grievances, and other socio-political issues, were key factors in these revolutions. My research will explore the place of social media in activism as well as identify other socio-political factors that informed the #OccupyPlayground, #OccupyParliament and #IEBCMustGo movements.

Given the uneven access to internet technologies, especially in rural areas, social media use in Kenya has yet to be fully exploited. Researchers such as Mäkinen & Kuira (2008) have documented its use during 2007/2008 post-election violence, crisis reporting during the Westgate Mall terrorist attack (Simon et al., 2014) while others have documented the uneven access to digital media in rural Kenya (Wyche et al., 2013). Zuckerberg (2010) states that social media has the potential to bring change through citizen participation in unmoderated media spaces. It is therefore vital to explore how social media can be used effectively during activism for socio-political change in Kenya.

This study is also significant because it will provide an avenue for documentation of the three cases #OccupyPlayground, #OccupyParliament and #IEBCMustGo movements and unveil dynamics of protest and how social media was used in them. Although the media widely documented the cases, there has not been any empirical research on the cases.

In addition, this study will draw inspiration from literature and theories used to study other socio-political movements around the world. Network theories, theory of collective identity and collective action and resource mobilisation theories are some of the theories that have found their

way into the studies of social media in activism (Carroll & Hackett, 2006; Castells, 2015; Chan, 2016; DeMarrais & Earle, 2017; Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011; Golhasani & Hosseinirad, 2017; Jenkins, 1983). Locating this study within this literature and theories will help in locating this study within the global studies on social movements and add to the existing literature, at the same time advancing the existing theories.

1.5 Research questions

To explore the place of social media in activism in Kenya, I will seek answers to the following questions using three cases - #OccupyPlayground, #OccupyParliament and #IEBCMustGo movements.

RQ:

To what extent are social media used in activism in Kenya and with which consequences?

a. What are the dynamics of protest that emerge and play out in political movements?
b. What socio-political factors come into play in digital activism in Kenya?
c. How do the dynamics of protest and socio-political factors characterizing political movements affect political change?

1.6 Structural overview of the thesis

This dissertation is structured into three broad sections, composed by: three contextual chapters (2-3-4), three empirical chapters (5-6-7), and an analytical chapter (8).

Chapter two of this study is the Literature and theoretical review. Here, I begin by discussing the main concepts of the study and reviewing the literature around them. In this section, I examine the concepts of the network society, social movements, citizenship, participation, and activism. The concepts are defined in detail and adapted for use in the rest of the chapters. By reviewing literature around these main terms, the gap of the study was also identified. The second section of this chapter highlights the theoretical framework. This study was inspired by three theories of social movements that included – Castell's network theory, resource mobilisation theory and the theory

of collective action and collective identity. These theories helped in explaining why individuals form movements in relation to the Kenyan context.

In chapter three, I highlight the methods that were used in data generation and analysis in this study. I begin by highlighting the research design adopted for this study, and then offering a snapshot of the cases included in my research. Importantly, this chapter discusses how the cases were selected and how they were analysed using process-tracing. Moreover, the chapter discusses ethical issues that were experienced in this research study and how I worked towards solving ethical issues. In the last bit of the chapter, I discuss various aspects of trustworthiness of this research study.

In chapter four, I offer a historical overview of media activism in Kenya. Within this chapter, I locate when the media was first used as a tool for social change and how its usage has evolved over time, through different regimes. In this chapter, I argue that the current use of media for activism is not new in Kenya, but something that has existed over the years. I also argue that the media and activism/social movements are closely intertwined.

In chapter five, six and seven, I present and describe a preliminary analysis of the three cases in this study. I also present some of the emerging issues in each of the cases. The main issue in the three cases is to locate the place of social media in the three social movements. The other crucial element in the three cases is to contribute to documenting them by tracing their histories and how they unfolded up to the end. By doing this, it helped in drawing valid conclusions for the next chapter.

Chapter eight of this study discusses the emerging issues, gives the main arguments of the study, as well as pointers for future research and the concluding remarks for this study. This chapter consolidates all the issues discussed in the three case studies. In the first section, the chapter is structured according to the research questions of this study. Firstly, I discuss the use of social media in social movements in Kenya as an emerging issue, secondly, I discuss the dynamics and nature of social movements in Kenyan context, and thirdly, I discuss some of the main socio-political issues that emerge and shape social movements in Kenya. Fourthly, I discuss the aspect of change, which is a critical component in the study of social movements. This discussion is done in relation to the three social movements in this study. The major contributions of this research, the gaps and pointers for future research concludes the chapter and the whole research study.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Understanding digital activism in Africa requires a firm commitment to contextualizing the concept within a broad and diverse framework that underpins the continent's cultural, economic, geopolitical, and historical backgrounds.

[Mutsvairo, 2016, p. 7]

2.0 Introduction

This chapter locates digital activism within the studies on network society, social movements, and activism. I begin by introducing these concepts (network society, social movements, and activism) as they have been framed by key scholars in the fields of media studies, sociology, anthropology, and political science, and then defining them in the context of this study. In addition, I locate social activism in Kenya in the broader context of global academic debates that have emerged over the years in these areas of study. By doing this, the chapter locates this study on digital activism within the global context because digital activism in the Kenyan context cannot be understood in isolation from the global debates on political movements and activism. This discussion will be important in identifying the gaps in the literature which this study aims to fill. Since political movements involve citizens, their participation, and contributes to the strengthening of democratic rights and social justice, a reflection on these concepts and in relation to the study of political movements will be given.

The second part of this chapter discusses some of the theoretical inspirations that this study drew from. These theories are the network theory, the theory of resource mobilization, and the theory of collective identity and collective action. Firstly, I discuss how the network theory, initially developed by Manuel Castells guides this study in understanding how networks are formed and their importance in political action. This theory also helps in shedding light on aspects of digital and offline networks, which are necessary for the formation and strengthening of political movements. Secondly, I discuss and locate this study within the resource mobilisation theory – this theory helps in providing an understanding of why people form social movements. Thirdly, I

locate the study within the theory of collective identity and collective action. This theory helps to create an understanding of 'why' and 'how' individuals form social movements.

2.1 The rise of the Network Society

Discussions on online social networks reached global significance in the 1990s when the Internet became a global phenomenon, after its early diffusion in the United States. Manuel Castells can be considered the most prominent scholar on social networks in this early phase of researching emerging online phenomena, especially for his efforts to understand how the Internet could transform social networks on a global scale (Castells, 2008). He acknowledged how networks have become a "key feature" in social morphology (Castells, 2000) particularly in discussions on new forms of social organisation. Castells also studied the shift of power resulting from increased mediatisation. He argued that power rested in networks created by people power. One of the best examples of the power of networks can be demonstrated in the 2013 massive protest in Brazil's capital Sao Paulo due to the hike in bus fares (Purdy, 2019). The government had to reverse the decision to increase the bus and subway fares which had ignited anti-government protests. In addition, Castells argues that in as much as local networks could be powerful in realizing change, the use of media technologies had been shifting these local networks to global networks, thus creating possibilities for global change. Besides, he mentioned that digital networks had transformed the public sphere, as a space for debate on public affairs, from national to global and were increasingly being constructed around global communication (2008).

From the perspective of political science and international relations, Keck & Sikkink (1998) have offered a complementary understanding of how networks operate. They refer to them as transnational networks rather than coalitions, movements, or civil society. The authors argue that these networks, which include local and international groupings are brought together by the centrality of principled ideas or values and their works often go beyond policy change to advocate and instigate changes in the institutional and principled bases of international interactions. The authors also argue that for networks to be effective, information between them is essential. Just like Castells, Keck & Sikkink (1998) acknowledge that for networks to be effective, they must use the power of information by creating it, altering it, and strategically using it for the purpose of socio-political change.

While initial studies of networked movements focussed on networked movements emerging in the global north, over time, more localized attempts to understand the unique combination between local dynamics and global tools have been emerging in the past few years. For instance, social movements - such as the #MeToo movement, that was started by Tarana Burke in 2006, moved from a local campaign that promoted "empowerment through empathy" to a global campaign that fought (and continues to fight) against sexual abuse within underprivileged communities (Rodino-Colocino, 2018).

In non-western contexts, studies on networks in social movements have also been taking shape. For instance, in China, Zhao et al., (2018) studied the complex nature of participation in the network society in Shanghai. They revealed that the communication process within the subjects of the study was influenced by Chinese social capital – guanxi. They discovered uneven patterns of participation in the network society, shaped by socio-political and cultural issues within the society. Other scholars in this area have also studied the formation of social movements and activism in online spaces, because of increased mediatisation and transformation and rise of the network society (Anduiza et al., 2014; Njoroge, 2016; Theocharis et al., 2015; Tufekci, 2017; K. C. Yang & Kang, 2017; Zaid, 2016).

Much of the focus of debates on network society has been on how social media, particularly Facebook and Twitter, have enabled and increased political participation. Theocharis et al., (2015) in a research on Occupy Wall Street, Indignados, and Aganaktismenoi movements argued that Twitter was used significantly for political discussion and to communicate protest information. Specifically, the activists in the movement used Twitter to facilitate the discourses amongst themselves, organizations, and the public on one hand, and to also sustain the movement mobilization in online and offline channels. Daniels (2016) on the other hand interrogated the role of journalists and traditional media in #MustFall movement in South Africa. She found out that there was greater diversity of voices on social media and the role of traditional media as a number one place in public discourse and debate was overturned, to become a follower of news on digital media rather than a leader. Kang (2017) in a research on the Korean madcow movement argued that the protesters were able to speak back to the authorities with irrelevant humour and carnivalesque defiance. He argues that 'slacktivism' is not an antithesis of meaningful protest but an important practice that young people are growing up accustomed to as a protest tool. Zaid

(2016) on a research on internet and democracy in the Moroccan protest found out that the internet had created a dynamic and networked public space where debates could take place on issues that mainstream media could not report or discuss.

Research in sub-Saharan Africa on online political participation, and social movements is still thin regardless of the increased research in social networks around the world. Bosch (2017) and Mutsvairo (2016) have acknowledged that socio-political, cultural, and economic issues shape experiences on digital media in sub-Saharan Africa. Mukhongo (2015), on the other hand, discusses how young people in sub-Saharan Africa use digital media platforms to foster political activism and the challenges posed by using these technologies. She further argues that socio-political issues such as "…poor governance, drought, poverty, poor infrastructure, high illiteracy levels, ethnic conflicts and civil wars coupled with human rights abuses," have affected how young people use digital media for political engagement in sub-Saharan Africa. Despite these growing interest in digital media for political participation in sub-Saharan Africa, there remain thin empirical studies on how social media is used in political and grassroots protests. This research hopes to fill some of the gaps in the literature.

2.2 Social Movements and their Formation

The concept of "social movement" has been used by different disciplines to study the modes, causes, and consequences of grassroot political mobilization. Tindall & Piggot (in Harvey, 2014) define it as a grouping whose goals involve trying either to foster or to resist social change. Sociologists McCarthy & Zald, the proponents of resource mobilisation theory, define social movements as 'a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements and reward distribution of a society' (1977, p. 1218). Zald & Ash define social movements as an attempt by a "purposive and collective" number of people to change individuals or societal institutions and structures (1977, p. 329). Tarrow (2011) adds that not all mobilization around events qualifies as movements. Instead, he views social movements as - "sequences of contentious politics that are based on underlying social networks and resonant collective action frames which challenges powerful opponents." Diani (1992) elaborates this further and says social movements are "networks of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals or groups, engaged in political or cultural conflicts, based on shared collective identities". Press (2015) in his research on non-violent movements in Liberia, Kenya and Sierra

Leone defined social movements not as an event but as a process where the public challenges a regime's inadequacies of power – which may involve individuals and groups with an aim of regime reform or regime change. Therefore, essential components that make up a social movement are that there must be "individuals" or a "collection of people" who "challenge" institutions or influential individuals in society with a "common purpose to change an issue." In this study, I will refer to the "collection of people" to mean both in online spaces such as social media sites, as well as offline spaces such as those who demonstrate in the streets and other physical locations.

Kahn & Kellner (2004, p. 87) studied how new media culture has reconfigured politics in everyday life. In their study, they argue that social movements, begun using the internet to foster affiliations and stage events against the excesses of neoliberalism and transnational corporate capitalism. The earliest adoption and successful use of the internet can be traced in the early 1990s by two movements. The indigenous EZLN[10] Zapatista movement in the Chiapas region of Mexico and a protest which broke out in San Francisco to oppose the United Kingdom's (UK) Criminal Justice and Public Order Act of 1994. In the EZLN Zapatista movement, the internet provided a means for rapid dissemination of information. News reports on radio and television were complemented by first-hand reports from the activists on the internet who also voiced their opinions easily and quickly (Cleaver, 1998). In the San Francisco protest, activists sent out volumes of protest emails that overwhelmed UK government servers (York, 2014 as cited in Harvey, 2014). In both cases, the internet dramatized how new media and grassroots progressivism could synergise, excite the world, and challenge status quo culture and politics (Cleaver, 1997; Kahn & Kellner, 2004; Laer & Aelst, 2010).

[10] *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (EZLN) is liberation and socialist political and militant group that controls the Chiapas region in Southern Mexico. This group aligns itself with the global anti-neoliberalism movements, seeking indigenous control over their local resources, especially land (Nash, 1997)

Studies on social movements have continued to evolve and transform particularly because of the newer ways of formation of networks facilitated by increased media technologies. Although media technologies have played an important part in the information of social movements, this has not been without a share of criticism from other scholars. For instance, during and after the Arab Spring in 2010, social media was credited for the success of the movements in Tunisia and Egypt (Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011; Freelon et al., 2016; Lim, 2012). However, other scholars were opposed to the idea of crediting social media such as Facebook and Twitter in the movements. These scholars argued that the role of social media in social movements such as mobilisation, fundraising, raising awareness, blogging, and sharing of pictures could not be seen as producing any real change in the social movement. They down-played digital activists' efforts, nicknaming them as "clicktivism," "Keyboard warriors," "slacktivism" "cyber-militants" or "Keyboard activism" (Cornelissen et al., 2014; Drumbl, 2012; Glenn, 2015; Halupka, 2014; Lee & Hsieh, 2013). Instead, these critics considered street protests, town hall meetings, writing petitions to legislatures, and even court actions as necessary in producing the required change in social movements and activism.

In later years, however, scholars such as Vie (2014), argued that the success of social movements should not be viewed in unidirectional but multidirectional manner – in that, success should be seen as incremental and composed of various actions. Therefore, the use of digital media should be seen as complementing street protests, and its role should then be acknowledged as necessary (Twyman et al., 2017). In recent years, research on the place of social media in social movements has grown rapidly, much of which has been enriched by empirical studies using a variety of research methods. Studies on online social movements have dominated this field of study, inquiring into various aspects of the movements. Scholars such as (Carney, 2016; Cowart, Saunders, & Blackstone, 2016; Freelon et al., 2016; Rickford, 2016; Twyman et al., 2017) have examined several aspects of the global #BlackLivesMatter movement – such as race, ideologies, and identities.

Also, scholars of the global movement #MeToo, have been examining issues such as the shifting terrain of sex and power (Gill & Orgad, 2018)); promises and pitfalls of feminist digital activism (Mendes et al., 2018); and the global collective nature of #MeToo movement and the lessons that can be deduced from it (Regulska, 2018). Another global movement that scholars have been

researching include the Occupy movements that started in 2011 and spread around the globe – which were progressive socio-political movements aimed at fighting for social and economic inequality. Debates on this movement have been looking at media practices in Occupy movements (Costanza-Chock, 2012); the process through which Occupy activists come to constitute themselves as collective actors, and the role of social media in this process (Kavada, 2015); examination of the interrelation between religion and the occupy movement (Cloke et al., 2016); and even discourses and linguistic markers on social media (Facebook and Twitter) during the Occupy movements (Smith et al., 2015). Importantly, scholars have been trying to advance theories of social movements from the classical era to the current digital era (Buechler, 2016; Escobar & Alvarez, 1992; John et al., 2017).

Even with these growths on research in social movements, a notable geographical location that has been missing out from these global debates is the sub-Saharan region in Africa. Global debates on social media and activism in Africa, have tended to focus more on the Arab Spring – a location that seems to be discussed in isolation from sub-Saharan Africa. Although other social and political movements existed, as discussed in Chapter 4 of this research, the current debates on social movements that interlink them to the role of the internet and social media are thin. Current debates that seem to have grabbed the global attention and focussed on the role of social media in activism and movements include the feminist movements such as #JusticeForLizz[11] (Higgs, 2015), and #MyDressMyChoice[12] both in Kenya (Nyabola, 2015). The Kony 2012 video on YouTube also made it to the global debate but mainly because 60% of the 100 million viewers by the 7th day of being posted came from the youth in the United States (Meikle, as cited in (Ratto & Boler, 2014,

[11] The story of a sixteen-year-old schoolgirl known by the pseudonym "Liz," was reported for the first time in Kenyan national newspaper the *Daily Nation* on October 7, 2013. In June that year, Liz had been gang-raped by six men, who then threw her into a pit latrine and left her to die. Thankfully, Liz survived and despite suffering serious injuries, she was able to make a formal report at the local police station, naming three of her attackers. In a series of grievous failures on the part of the police, the "punishment" handed to these three men was to work in the garden of the police station, cutting the grass. The police made no attempts to identify or apprehend the other three rapists (Higgs, 2015).

[12] The #MyDressMyChoice campaign began after a woman was brutally assaulted outside a Nairobi bus stop for wearing a miniskirt. Thousands of protesters gathered in Nairobi to rally in support of the victim who was assaulted and stripped by a group of men. The attackers accused the victim, who wore a miniskirt, of "tempting" them because she was wearing "indecent" clothing. The incident was captured on a video that was published on YouTube. The video has since been removed from YouTube, but it has caused an uproar in Kenya where thousands have taken to social media using #MyDressMyChoice in support of the victim (Deutsche Welle, 2014)

p. 374). Other debates that seemed to have grabbed world attention include the Oromo uprising in Ethiopia. In it, Gagliardone & Pohjonen, (2016) researched the blogging collective called Zone9 and examined the "opportunities and contradictions of digital activism in closed regimes" (p. 25). Other scholars such as Ogola (2019) have explored emerging expressive cultures in Kenya in online spaces and how they disrupt power. This research study sought to locate three social-political movements - #OccupyPlayGround, #OccupyParliament, and #IEBCMustGo within the global debates on social movements and digital media, in ways that do not simply "localize" their understanding, their concepts and tools, but also in ways that contribute to enriching the global debates and challenge mainstream understanding and frameworks in the study of social movements.

2.3 Activism

Activism in this research relates to advocacy or campaigns enacted for the purpose of pressing for a socio-political change. Specifically, this research adopts Keck & Sikkink (1998) definition of activism, framing it as a set of strategically linked activities in which members of a dispersed principled network develop explicit, visible, and mutually recognized roles in pursuit of a common goal – and against a common target. Activists, on the other hand, are defined as individuals of a diffuse network who come together to press for socio-political change. Usually, activists identify a problem, specify a cause (strategic activity), and propose a solution – with a purpose of what Keck & Sikkink call 'an eye toward producing a procedural, substantive, and normative change in their area of concern." Change is an essential part of activism, and so is strategy.

Activism is not a new term. The use of media tools for activism has also a long history (Karpf, 2016). When print media and radio began to be used as a means of mass communication, individuals also began using them to push for socio-political change. As noted by Keck & Sikkink (1998), media tools were used to defeat slavery, which came to an end in 1838. It was also used to fight colonialism, especially in African countries such as Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa, among others.

Kaun & Uldam (2018) consider activism as an ambiguous term whose meaning, and usage has been changing over time. A peek at Google Ngram Viewer can help in tracing how the word has been used over the years. Ngram viewer contains 30 million books and other collections published

between 1950 and 2008, with billions of words. From it, the usage of the words *Activism, Networks, Civil Society and Activism* has been increasing since the 1960s as shown in the figure below.

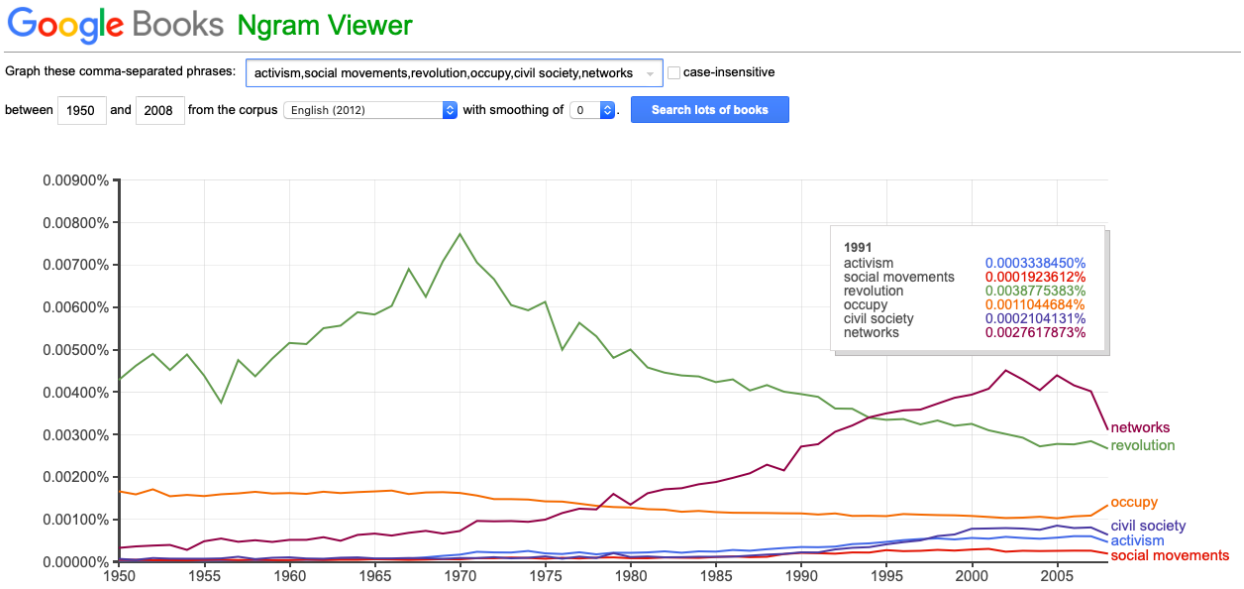

Fig. 2.1: Use of Revolution, Occupy, Civil Society, Activism, Social movements, and Networks in Google Ngram Viewer, 1950–2008.

Yang (2016) points out that the definition of activism could mean radical, revolutionary as well as nonrevolutionary and community action. However, Kaun & Uldam (2018) noted that over the past 35 years, activism as a term has become less likely to mean a radical and revolutionary action in service or opposition to a nation. The coming of the internet has also contributed to the broadening of the term activism. Related terms have been coined, which include online activism, cyberactivism, hacktivism, Twitter activism, Facebook activism and digital activism. Of interest in this study is digital activism, which Joyce (2010) defines as activism that engages both fixed and mobile devices with access to the internet and can include other forms such as hacktivism, denial of service attacks, hashtag activism, and open-source advocacy. On the other hand, Gerbaudo (2017) defines the term activism broadly to include all digital media (mobile phones, video-handheld cameras, and personal computers) used for political purposes. Other scholars such as Castells (2015), Earl & Kimport (2009) and Mutsvairo (2016) use the term digital activism to refer to the formation of social networks in the media for political purposes. Digital activism is

central to this study and will be used interchangeably with online activism to mean any strategic activity that utilizes digital media in pushing for socio-political change.

2.4 Current Debates on Activism

Activism has become sophisticated over the last few years, and most of its changes are attributed to the idea of globalisation as well as the use of digital media platforms. Hardt, (2017) notes that the emergence of digital activism could be seen as speeding up of the protest's cycles where media aspects of protests and movements give an impression of accelerated rhythm of political change. Yang (2016) argues that in more authoritarian states like China, the rise of the use of digital or online activism could have been because of the weakening of civil societies, the fact that street protests were becoming increasingly risky for activists, and the state-owned and controlled the mass media. This can be seen as true in the Kenyan case where digital activism has been on the rise in the last few years. A possible explanation for this is that the Kenyan government has over the years repressed the civil society organizations, street protests have always turned out chaotic as it shall be noted later in the study, and the government has often interfered with the operations of mainstream and sometimes alternative media.

In modern societies, digital activism has been used as a means of fighting socio-political, economic, and cultural injustices. This is what characterised Occupy movements that sprung up around the world about 10 years ago. A new wave of environmental activism such as protests against climate change in China (DeLuca et al., 2016) and the coal protests in Kenya (DeSouza & Ikawah, 2019) are just an example of environmental activism created out of media networks. Some of these political actions have been revolutionary, such as the events of the Arab Spring in 2010 where dictatorial regimes were removed from power.

However, digital activism has had its fair of criticism. Scholars have questioned if there is anything new in it (Karpf, 2010). Before the arrival of new media, activists used letters and faxes to communicate with networks which have now been replaced by email listservs. Further, there existed a public space for the exchange of ideas which in early eighteenth century comprised of coffeehouses and salons (Habermas, 1991) but in present-day society, digital spaces such as Facebook and Twitter have become new public spheres where socio-political transformations are taking place (Castells, 2008; Joyce, 2010; Shirky, 2011). According to these authors, activism has

not changed, and it is only the form that has changed. The old tactics of activism have only been digitised.

These are essential points to note here for this research in that it helps in understanding digital activism. Activists are using digital tools all around, but that does not mean the field of digital activism is a new field of study. When faxes and cassettes were used in activism as new technologies, a new kind of activism was not created. Automating old tactics of activism is what has transformed activism into digital activism. However, this automation does not create a new kind of activism.

Even with this criticism, it is essential to engage in research on how social media is being used in activism in networked societies such as Kenya. Traditionally, activism was reserved for activists who came from the civil rights movements. Their causes defined them, but present-day activists are defined by their tools as noted by Gladwell (2010). Further, in present-day society, digital media is providing avenues through which everyone can take part in activism. Hara (2008) points out that ordinary citizens are making use of mobile media and technological platforms and consider themselves activists too.

Mason (2013) also provides other reasons why digital activism is on the rise in several countries. First, he says neoliberalism seems not to be working in present-day society, and there is a persistent effort by the people to make it work. Second, he says the revolution in technology has made horizontal networks the default mode of activism and protests, thus becoming favourable for most people. Third, he points out the change in human consciousness, which has resulted in what Castells (2008) calls networked individuals. These networked individuals have realised their power and that has changed the way they think. Ideas have exploded through the expansion of knowledge; therefore, a rise in revolutionary culture. On the other hand, Branch & Mampilly (2015) further adds that "the protests are cast at the ultimate challenge of capitalism, a rejection of liberal democracy, an uprising by the multitude, the work of social-media-savvy youth, or an outburst by frustrated middle class" (p.2).

In addition, there are emerging global issues that are likely to result in an increase in digital activism. In the wake of New Coronavirus discovered in 2019 (COVID-19), later declared a pandemic by the WHO, there are unprecedented challenges to human rights works around the world. The pandemic has meant that there are increased limitations on physical assemblies (due to

increased call for social distancing) in many countries and this can impair individuals' ability to campaign and participate in rallies, to conduct voter outreach and to monitor election processes. In a recent communication by a UN Special Rapporteur on the right to peaceful assembly and association, sent on behalf of Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Voule (2020) notes that the rights to freedom of peaceful association apply/ online just as they do offline. He added that in this time when physical assemblies are restricted, it is all the more necessary that access to and use of the internet be ensured. Elsewhere, Pinckney & Rivers, (2020) notes the following in relation to the recent development brought by the COVID-19 pandemic:

> As the coronavirus has grown into a global pandemic, many movements that have relied on street protests have struggled to know how to respond. The evidence of a global slowdown in public protests is striking. As news of the virus spread and public health authorities began recommending a stop to public gatherings with large numbers of people in early March, the number of public protests around the world dropped precipitously. The most recent month of protest activity recorded by the ACLED data project (February 21 through March 21) saw a 28 per cent decline in public protests relative to the monthly average last year, and this number is likely to continue to fall.

Although these reasons cut across globally and explain why digital activism is on the rise, researchers have not yet paid attention to sustained reasons why digital activism is on the rise in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly Kenya. Branch & Mampilly (2015) note that in the global debates on activism, none of the reasons given clarifies the recent waves of protests in Africa which are driven by distinct socio-political and economic developments.

Researchers in activism has recently been debating if digital activism is slacktivism. McCafferty, (2011) defines slacktivism as an action where people are happy to click a "like" button on social media networks or where supporters of a specific cause are encouraged to copy and paste a letter to show support. Typically, this is done without putting much thought on it or giving supporters a chance to put in their own words. With this action, researchers say it cannot change people's minds and hearts and effect real change. Gladwell, (2010), in her research, challenges the potential of social media in making or contributing to the real change in society. She mentions that social networks are effective in increasing participation but also lessening motivation. A good example

is the Kony 2012 video by Invisible Children in United States, Gregory (2012) and the #BringBackOurGirls campaign in Nigeria Chiluwa & Ifukor, P. (2015). She adds that activism on the Internet is horizontal with no leadership and made of loose or weak networks, something that is different from the conventional activism. She sums up by stating that for real change to happen, social movements must be hierarchical and use other traditional tactics of activism. Gladwell's ideas are important but also likely to be challenged due to the recent health challenges brought about by COVID-19.

Even with these thoughts, it is essential to recognise the power of incremental success in realising change in activism. Every effort or resource that goes into activism helps in contributing to the needed change. Therefore, digital activism is not slacktivism, and it has been broadly defined as the strategic use of digital tools in activism. It is crucial, therefore, to continue engaging in this debate and researching on the place of social media in activism in Kenya.

2.5 A Reflection on Citizenship, Participation and Democracy in Political Movements

Participation of citizens in governance ideally involves the actions of taking part in activities of social, economic, or political significance. Citizen participation has been defined by Arnstein (1969) as the 'redistribution of power that enables the have-nots, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future' (p. 216). Citizen participation could also be seen as the aspect of the governed participating in their government which then becomes the starting point of democracy. Through democracy, citizens can achieve critical social reforms which enable them to share the privileges of the affluent in society.

Arnstein (1969) highlights three significant categories of citizen participation: *Nonparticipation*, *Degree of tokenism* and *Degree of Citizen Participation*. Nonparticipation, as described by Arnstein, allows powerholders to educate people but not to allow them to participate in the planning or conducting programs. This is the lowest level of participation. At the second level of participation which Arnstein calls tokenism, the citizens are capable of speaking and being heard, but they lack the power to ensure that the powerholders will hear their views. Here, there is a lot of informing and consultation. At the peak of tokenism is placation where the have-not's advice but the powerholders make the decision. At the last level of citizen participation, the degree of citizen power, elements of the partnership, delegation and citizen control are clear. The citizens

and the power holders negotiate and engage in trade-offs, while at citizen control, citizens obtain full power of decision making (Arnstein, 1969). Although I will discuss how citizen participation relates to democracy later in this section, it is important to mention here that Arnstein's stages of participation can also be related to the level of democracy in different countries. Countries that foster higher democratic ideals would fall in Anstein's 'degree of tokenism' and vice versa. The level of citizen participation in Kenya is located at Arnstein's level of tokenism. Arnstein definition and breakdown of the level of participation is important in this study not only in defining what participation entails, but also in offering a larger comparative base to locate the forms of participation encountered in Kenya.

Participating in debates on social media increases shared awareness where messages are transmitted to a variety of networks. Shirky (2011) mentions that mass media alone – such as social media – does not change people. Instead, there must be a discussion around an issue for minds to be influenced/changed and for political opinions to be formed. Therefore, social media as a tool must be effectively used as a public space of discussion and articulation. According to Shirky (2011), the mere "liking" and "following" or "retweeting" a cause without actively engaging with the issue at hand, which he calls "slacktivism", cannot be expected to produce change. Morozov (2009), however, mentions that slacktivism could be useful in some specific movements that would benefit from increased public attention and more research on this would, therefore, be necessary. This study will explore how social media was used in three political movements in Kenya and how different actors engaged in different forms of participation.

Social networking sites have become instrumental in enabling citizen participation in the media. The flexibility of communication on such sites easily enables coordination. Although the movements formed on those sites have horizontal leadership, specific individuals become influential in matters under discussion. The old methods of handling large groups have become easy. Shirky (2008) points out that the social media tools have radically altered the old limits on the size, sophistication, and the scope of unsupervised efforts. He adds that the difficulties of that are shrinking in such a way that it is now possible to gather a group through online resources without financial motivation or managerial oversight. The barriers to group actions have collapsed, and without those barriers, we are free to explore new ways of gathering and getting things done.

Participating in political discussions and debates online is not enough if there is no broader impact on society. Koc-Michalska, Lilleker, & Vedel (2016) noted that in societies where power rests with the state and global corporate institutions, citizen participation in politics could be only limited to voting in electing political elites. Other traditional political participation methods include campaigning, contacting their representatives, and activism. Even though this traditional model has changed because of the increased use of digital media, the objective of participation must be aimed at having an impact on governance. Digital media ideally promote political participation which can include discussions, debating, agreeing, promotion, investigation, and collating political-related data. Although this form of participation would still happen in the traditional form, digital technologies allow all of them to happen in the same space. The idea of exploring the impact of citizen participation in digital technologies is of utmost importance in this study. This study recognises that traditional forms of participation have either converged in digital spaces or used together with online tools. Gagliardone (2016), in his study on the use of mobile phones during radio call-in sessions in Kenya, elaborates on the hybridity of ICT and radio. He also discusses on the hybridity of political order and governance. This study will also unveil the hybridity of participation, governance and use of ICT for development.

Participation of citizens in socio-political issues in a state is viewed as a positive direction towards the attainment of people's democratic rights. The theory of democracy advanced by various scholars can help in understanding why the thirst for democracy is increasing citizen participation in socio-political issues at the same time causing socio-political unrest. Claude Ake in his discussion on the unique case of African Democracy, for instance, argues that western nations have been supporting democracy in Africa, with the pretence this model will be valuable in modernising Africa (1993). The support for democracy in Africa by western nations fails to consider the unique socio-political and cultural factors that exist in African nations, which then shape the understanding of democracy. Ake (1991), Nyamjoh (2005), Obi (2008) and others argue that liberal democracy is least suited for African realities in that firstly, liberal democracy alienates and gives power to a few to rule the majority. Secondly, they argue that liberal democracy is not relevant to Africa's historical and socioeconomic circumstances as its history (that of liberal democracy) is far from representing the African problem. In his words, Ake (2000) observes that:

> ... the political arrangement of liberal democracy makes little sense in Africa. Liberal democracy assures individualism but there is little individualism in Africa...it assumes abstract universalism, but in Africa that would apply only to the urban environment, and finally political parties of liberal democracy do not make sense in societies where associational life is rudimentary and interest groups are essentially primary groups

Dalacoura (2005) mentioned that after the September 11 terrorism attack in the United States, President Bush's administration made it a point to promote democracy as a critical foreign policy in the Arab world. Part of this reason was to fight terrorism. Dalacoura further argued that President Bush's administration perceived democracy as a cure for terrorism and overlooked how that would be implemented and without considering the role played by the Islamic culture of leadership in the Arab world. Dalacoura (2005) cites Ottaway (2004) and El-Din (2004) who argued that:

> The debate on democracy has encompassed the Islamist movements in the Arab world and, in particular, has encouraged an examination of their attitude towards reform. In response to the debate initiated by US policies and suggestions, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood unveiled its own reform initiative in March 2004, which demanded democratic freedoms and the suspension of emergency law (p. 967).

Further on this, Claude Ake mentions that international monetary institutions such as the World Bank and IMF (International Monetary Fund) and international NGOs require certain "levels of democracy" to receive support. As a result of the spread of these "democratic" ideologies, "ordinary people are calling for second independence having concluded that the politics of the present leadership far from offering any prospect of relief from underdevelopment, has deepened it immensely" (Ake, 1993, p. 239). For these reasons, and many others, various uprisings have been witnessed in various nations, and Sudan, Chile, Hong Kong, and Algeria are just but a recent example of these uprisings. In these movements, the internet has been instrumental in the formation of networks, and for mobilisation purposes.

Shirky recognises that the media (social media) provides a space for discussion among politically engaged citizens. His significant contribution here is that access to the conversation – spaces of

discussion – is much more important (politically) than access to information. It is no doubt that social media enhances democracy by providing public spaces of deliberations and agreement. This study recognises the potential of social media as a space for enhancing democracy – where individuals converge to discuss and agree on political matters. While networks have become essential in the mobilisation of people and passing information, the spaces of gathering to show dissent and building solidarity have often been undermined. In the next section, I examine the role and transformation of offline spaces and how it merges with online spaces as an important element of social movements.

2.6 Spaces of Revolution in Social Movements

There is thin literature on political spatiality, and yet, civic spaces have become essential in social movements. While networks become essential in the mobilisation of people and passing information, the spaces of gathering to show dissent and building solidarity have often been undermined. Gunning & Baron (2014) has however, examined the role and transformation of Tahrir Square in Egypt from a traffic hub to a revolutionary space for new Egypt.

During the Arab Spring, several spaces in various Arab cities acted as points of dissent against the governments. In Egypt, Tahrir square turned out to be a space for revolution (Gunning & Baron, 2014). In Bahrain, during the March of Loyalty to Martyrs, protesters gathered in Pearl Roundabout in Panama (Lilli, 2015). In Iran, Enqelab Square and the City Theatre of Tehran, and other places in Tehran became the central meeting point for the protester. In Syria, the Central Square of Homs and the Clock Square became spaces of defiance by the protesters (Heydemann & Leenders, 2011). In Tunisia, Avenue Habib Bourguiba, downtown Tunis in Tunisia, became a political space of protest (Bellin, 2012). In Yemen, Taghyir Square in Sana'a became a popular symbol of defiance and a podium of dialogue during the Arab Spring (Hall, 2017). Elsewhere, Franklin Square in Washington DC and the areas around it became a meeting space for protesters during the Women's March in November 2017. In Spain, during the anti-austerity movement, the Puerta del Sol square became a focal point and a symbol during the protest (Prentoulis & Thomassen, 2013).

Martin and Miller (2013) as cited in (Gunning & Baron, 2014) argue that such spaces are not merely spaces of containing "activism" but a space that constitutes structures and networks

"including the processes that produce gender, race and class identities" (2014, p. 242). For instance, in Kenya, Freedom Square at Uhuru Park in Nairobi and Parliament building have become important political spaces and a constitutive component of many protests. In these spaces, social relations are shaped and re-shaped. As Gunning & Baron (2014) posit that:

> Socio-political contradictions are realised spatially. The contradictions of space thus make the contradictions of social relations operative. In other words, spatial contradictions 'express' conflicts between socio-political interests and forces; it is only in space that such conflicts come effectively into play, and in doing so, they become contradictions of space (p. 248).

Still, on this debate on spatiality and social movements, Lim, (2014) in her research on people and networks in urban spaces argued that urban spaces, like those mentioned earlier, have become interdependent dimensions of the current day's social movements.

As it will be discussed in subsequent chapters, Freedom Corner and Parliament gates in the #OccupyParliament; Anniversary Towers in #IEBCMustGo and the school playground in #OccupyPlayGround, became spaces where socio-political and cultural issues such as class, ethnicity, political affiliation, gender, and religion were realised. Therefore, during these protest events, physical space and social practices gained a relationship as well.

Castells (2015), in his study on network society, credits political spaces, either online or offline, as necessary in the formation of movements. This is because these spaces enable individuals in society to relate by by-passing the restrictions of the power holders. Castells (2015) further posits that these spaces can involve the interaction between physical spaces and online spaces. The spaces become essential places for people to meet and make deliberations, debates, and a space to show unity and solidarity for collective actions. Contemporary movements have been characterised by occupying public spaces for protests. During the Arab Spring in Egypt, Tahrir Square[13] became a

[13] Midan Tahrir, or 'Liberation Square', is a large traffic rotary in the centre of Cairo. (Gunning & Baron (2014)

"In the heart of Cairo, in the shadows of some of the city's iconic buildings, five different roads pour into one hub. At the center of that intersection lies a simple, nondescript roundabout. Patchy grass and a few bushes are all that mark its center. Thousands of people and vehicles pass around it daily in a dizzying and often frustrating frenzy. There are no monuments, no memorials or plaques in sight. There are no benches for ordinary passers-by to stop catch a breath from the chaos of Cairo colliding around them" (Ayman Mohyeldin (2011) as cited in Gunning & Baron (2014).

space of convergence for the members of the movements previously formed or mobilised online. Gunning & Baron (2014) argues that Tahrir became the symbolic epicentre of the revolution, both nationally and internationally.

Similarly, online platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are now regarded as new spaces of occupation for political movements commonly called digital sit-ins. Habermas theory of the public sphere gains another perspective in that the Internet becomes a new space of contestations rather than the olden days coffee shops. Mason (2012) states that Habermas idea of the public sphere has been redefined as a network for communicating information and points of view. Mutsvairo's (2016) also recognises that online spaces are crucial spaces for pushing for socio-political changes in activism. During the Arab Spring in Tunisia and Egypt as well as the Occupy movements, social movements primarily used social media platforms for mobilisation to the streets (Castells, 2015; Juris, 2012). In the 2019-20 Revolution of Smiles protest in Algeria, social media became the first point of converging for the protesters.

Scholars such as Lim (2014) and Castells (2015) researched the relationship between digital spaces and physical urban spaces. Castells (2015) argues that when individuals come together in particular spaces, they form networks and it is "the mass movement, the people movement, (which) becomes a symbolic power when bodies come together, make a claim and be visible in the eyes of the public". Lim (2014) adds that digital and urban spaces can provide a space for people to interact for the establishment of human agency and the expansion of social networks of the movements. Moreover, these contemporary movements, Lim (2014) argues, move from the digital spaces to urban spaces. Both the urban spaces and digital spaces work hand in hand to form and develop a movement.

Although this study does not fully exploit aspects of space in digital activism, I recognise the importance of urban and online spaces and how they contribute to the formation of movements, and how they act as spaces of dissent for activism. As it shall be noted in chapter 4 of this research, early forms of media, such as books, magazines and newspapers, became important spaces where nationalists in the pre-independence era and members of the second liberation movement in the 90s in Kenya expressed themselves and became spaces of dissent. In the next section, I discuss some of the theories that have inspired this study.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

2.6.1 The Network Theory

The idea of network theory has a long history dating back many decades ago. In a publication by Jan Van Dijik titled *Netwerkmaatschappi* (1991) which was translated to English nine years later as *The Network Society,* Hassan (2009) begun to make clear the ambiguity that existed in the increased use of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the humanities such as – economy, culture and society. Van Dijk (1995) went ahead to define a network society as an organisation with a social information infrastructure such as the current day social and media networks which enables the prime mode of the organization at all levels - Individual, group/organisational and societal. He went further to state that these networks linked all parts of information and individuals which became the basic unit of the network society (Van Dijk, 1995). Van Dijk (1995) compared this type of society to a mass society that was shaped by masses organised in physical spaces. Since the introduction of digital media, visibility and participation of ordinary people have increased. The concept of mass society has been falling rapidly and networked society is fast gaining ground.

However, the theorist – Manuel Castells developed this theory to the current conceptualisation of network society in his trilogy – The Rise of Network Society, The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture (1996), The Power of Identity, The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture (1997) and End of Millennium, The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture (1998). In this trilogy, Castells central argument is that digital information has become the primary driver of economic, cultural, and social change. In his first publication in the trilogy, Manuel Castells discusses the changes in the global economy that took place between the 1970s – 1990s, which he described as the "new economy". He credits the development of information to networks, and this led to the transformation of work and employment. Further, he mentioned that there was higher unemployment in nations where technology was scarce – since technology provided networking opportunities and lowered competitiveness. In the second publication of the trilogy, he argued that networks constituted the new social morphology of the society and that the diffusion of networking logic modified the operation and outcomes in processes of production, experience, power, and culture (Castells, 2010, p. 500). In relation to social movements, he mentions that while

networking form of social organisation has existed in other forms, the new information technologies have provided the material basis for its pervasive expansion in social structures, therefore providing s social change in the network society. In the last publication in the trilogy, he discusses issues on information capitalism, poverty, and social exclusion, globalisation, identity, and network state, among other issues.

Castells (2010) describes networks as open structures and expandable beyond limits and able to join other nodes of networks which allows for more communication within those networks. Due to their ability to expand, he sees these network-based social structures as highly dynamic and very inclined to innovation. He also mentions the following as the merits of having a network society:

> Networks are appropriate instruments for a capitalist economy based on innovation, globalisation, and decentralised concentration; for work, workers, and firms based on flexibility and adaptability; for a culture of endless deconstruction and reconstruction; for a policy geared towards the instant processing of new values and public moods; and for a social organisation aiming at the supersession of space and the annihilation of time (p. 502)

Hassan (2009) notes that Manuel Castells recognises five key features of the information technology model. Firstly, he mentions that information is the raw material of the new forms of production and consumption. By this, he recognises the value of information in the current era. Secondly, he mentions that digital information is all-pervasive – in that we cannot escape from it and its effect. Thirdly, he mentions that the logic of digital information affects society in diverse ways. Fourthly, he says flexibility is an essential part of what information enables - meaning that information can be created in different forms to suit the author and the audience of the information. Lastly, he says networked information tends to converge into highly integrated systems in such a way that it can be from different media sources such as mainstream media sources, offline sources as well as in digital forms but they all converge in the information network (Hassan, 2009). In sum, Manuel Castells says that these processes form a network society.

Castells has continued to make a valuable contribution to the network theory. In one of his most recent books, Castells (2015) discusses how social movements benefit from networks created in online spaces. In this discussion, he mentions that social movements are triggered by emotions

derived from events, which help protesters in social movements overcome fear and challenge the powerful in society. Specifically, Castells (2015) highlights some of the reasons why social movements are formed from hopelessness, anger, fear, economic strains, political distress, and even cultural emptiness. For these reasons, various communities form networks in an attempt to overcome them. The aspect of emotions, coupled with multiple networks created in offline and online spaces, have become essential characteristics of current day networked social movements. These networks begin locally and grow to a global magnitude if the issues on focus resonate with communities and networks elsewhere. For instance, the #MeToo movements begun in the Bronx, in the American city of New York, founded by Tarana Burke in 2006 to protest the pervasiveness of sexual abuse and assault in the society. Global communities, especially in 2017, took it up and used it to fight against sexual harassment and assault - an issue that resonated with many communities around the world. An offshoot of such a global movement includes #JusticeForLizz mentioned earlier that occurred in Kenya in 2013.

This research study used a multiple case study approach to analyse protests dynamics in three hashtag movements. These movements also referred here as political movements or forms of digital activisms, fitted the description of social movements as per Castell's definition. Castells describes social movements as:

> …being political in fundamental sense…are spontaneous in their origin…are most often triggered by emotions derived from some meaningful event that helps the protesters to overcome fear and challenge the powers that be despite the danger inherent to their action (Castells, 2015, p. 247)

The movements in this research fitted this definition in that; first, they were formed out of emotions, after certain socio-political events – grabbing of school land (#OccupyPlayGround), intention to increase salaries by members of parliament (#OccupyParliament), and refusal to leave office by IEBC officials after being implicated in corruption (#IEBCMustGo). This will be discussed in detail in chapter five, six and seven. Secondly, the movements occupied both online and offline spaces. There was a spirited online protest in the three cases under the hashtags mentioned above. There were also street protests that involved occupying physical locations – the playground in (#OccupyPlayGround), the parliament gates in (#OccupyParliament) and Anniversary towers in (#IEBCMustGo). Further, Castells says that there is an interaction between

the two spaces – the physical and the online spaces. The online space (digital platforms) was used in mobilising protesters to the streets, and the events on the streets were reported in online spaces and used as discussion points.

This research draws the following inspirations from Manuel Castells' network theory. His theory helps this study in understanding how and why individuals or groups of individuals form social movements. He explains that, among other things, social movements are triggered by emotions derived from events, which helps protesters overcome fear and challenge the powerful in the society. He also helps this study in understanding how and why technologies have become important for social movements. He mentions that technologies provide networking opportunities, and it is these networks that constitute new social morphology. He helps this study in understanding how technologies have provided the material basis for its pervasive expansion in social structures and this is an important aspect of social change in the network society

Although Castell's theory of the network society has been very progressive and hailed as one of the critical theories of the information society, it has not gone without a share of criticism from other scholars. In a publication titled *The Problem with Networks Theory* Joseph (2010) criticises the main ideas in the network theory. He begins by saying that although Castells succeeds in claiming that the new model of development is an 'information model' which intersects with the restructuring of capitalism of the 1970s and 1980s, Castells increasingly focusses on the 'information mode' and forgets to acknowledge that historical and social context plays a part in development. Joseph (2010) also exposes some gaps in Castells' arguments. On Castell's ideas that networks are providers of organisational transformation, he questions if networks are the cause of change of the consequence of change. Further, on Castells' idea that "information technologies are not in themselves the source of the organisational logic that is transforming the social meaning of space: they are, however, the fundamental instrument that allows this logic to embody itself in historical actuality" Joseph contests that Castells does not mention the source of this organisational logic.

Even with these criticisms, network theory has provided great inspiration for the study of digital activism and the study of the current era of socio-political movements. Indeed, power rests in the networks, and the information technologies have become part of movements and activism.

Other theorists of network society whose work I draw inspiration from, include Michael Dillon who described the network society during warfare and state of emergency. In a publication titled *Network Society, Network-centric Warfare, and the State of Emergency*, which he wrote after the events of 2001 terrorist attack in the United States, he floated the following ideas. Dillon (2002) describes the speed of the spread of information, self-synchronisation, and flexibility to be fast passed in an information society. In addition, Dillon (2002) describes the four issues that characterise the current state of war in an information society. First, he mentions that there is a shift of focus in war from weapons such as aircraft carrier, tanks, and bombers to information networks. This is in recognition of the compelling nature of the information. Secondly, he mentions that there is a shift from individual military actors to radical and continuously adopting military networks operating in continually changing battlescapes. Here, Michael Dillon emphasises the power of battlefield networks instead of seeing wars as just an individual effort. Thirdly, he mentions that there is a tendency towards interpreting the operations of military systems in biological terms such as "natural" organisms but adds that now, military systems are said to co-evolve and adapt ecologically through interactions with others in the battlespace. Lastly, he says that there is a belief that information is the leading agent in the military just like in every other aspect of the human affair. The aspects he highlights above can be applied in the analysis of political movements in this context. Political movements, just like the military, are increasingly using information networks to mobilise and fight the elite and their oppressive policies. In social movements, networks, in online and offline places are expected to continue winning battles (fight for a socio-political change) rather than just individuals. Also, socio-movement scholars can draw lessons from the Dillion's last point in that – information enables individuals to be radical in social movements, without which they cannot.

Shirky (2011) is another theorist who has advanced the theory of network society. For him, social networks that converge in public spheres are motivated by people's frustrations with economic and political matters. Indeed, when individuals pile up anger and frustrations on excesses of ruling regimes for a long time, they begin to share and identify with others with the same issues, and social movements begin to form. Harvey (2014) explains that individuals choose to form networks with people who share political views, embedding themselves within networks that reinforce their political attitudes. The formation of these networks can either be offline or online. Castells recognises that the Internet is a critical feature in modern society. When online networks are

formed, individuals begin to engage in activism to fight their frustrations. Persuasion theory explains that when people interact, they influence each other's attitudes and actions (Harvey, 2014).

In the field of comparative politics, Keck & Sikkink, (1998) have contributed immensely to the study of network theory. They referred to networks formed for political purpose as transnational advocacy networks particularly because they can go beyond local boundaries to international levels. Keck & Sikkink (1998) mention that the formation of transnational advocacy networks is made by individuals with shared values and common discourse, who utilize a dense exchange of information. Importantly, Keck & Sikkink (1998) mentioned that networks created for the purpose of socio-political change must go beyond members of the movement, to include the state and international organizations to multiply the opportunities for dialogue and exchange which is important in bringing the needed change.

Keck & Sikkink (1998) further mentioned that when enquiring about the formation of networks, we are enquiring about the patterns of interaction within certain organized groups and individuals. Interactions, in this case, means the ways these organizations or individuals communicate with each other using various tools. The main argument in Keck and Sikkink's network theory is that networks are created for information dissemination and it is this information that influences and binds individuals within a network. Since networks can create and generate information quickly and accurately, they use it as a valuable currency not only for mobilization but also for the purpose of ensuring social change. For effectiveness, the information created by network members is framed in an innovative way, must be dramatic and timely, and brought to the public agenda through hospitable avenues - such as social media platforms. As it shall be shown later in the discussion of movements in this study, Boniface Mwangi[14] and his team creatively framed the tagline (as a piece of information) for #OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayGround for the

[14] Boniface Mwangi is a Kenyan rights activist, journalist and politician who has been involved in social-political activism. He is also known for his stunning images of the post-election violence that hit Kenya in 2007–2008. Boniface was awarded the 2008 and 2010 CNN Africa Photojournalist of the Year Award among other awards. It was after his *Picha Mtaani* (Swahili for street exhibition) initiative that he developed a stronger human rights stance in his work on fighting (political and corporate) impunity, speaking out against bad and corrupt political leadership and promoting a message of peace with initiatives called *MaVulture* and *Team Courage*. He later founded *Pawa 254*, a hub he (largely) funded himself, and space for artists and activist to work together towards social change and advancing human rights in Kenya.

purpose of mobilizing individuals into the street protest and to also influence change the opponents to make a change.

The network theory helps this study to answer why things were the way they were in the three political movements - #OccupyParliament, #OccupyPlayGround and #IEBCMustGo. First, it helps explain why the movements were created by individuals who were bounded by similar interest. For instance, #IEBCMustGo was started by politicians and other individuals who belonged to the CORD (Coalition for Reforms and Democracy) political party and that was the core network of the movement. In the other two movements #OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayGround, members of civil societies led by Boniface Mwangi formed the core network of the movement. The role of the core network according to network theory is to identify the problem, specify a cause, and propose a solution – with an aim of producing procedural, substantive, and normative change (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).

The networks in the three movements expanded beyond the core network to include other members of civil societies, individuals in government such as members of parliament, religious leaders, members of the fourth estate, members of diplomatic corps and other individuals within and outside Kenya. This is what Keck & Sikkink (1998) refer to as transnational advocacy network. The expansion of this core network, as explained by the network theory, is to strength it and make it more dense and powerful. According to Castell's network theory, power lies in the networks. He says that "the logic of the network is more powerful than the powers of the network" (Castells, 2015).

This theory also offers an explanation, as to why information or messages in media sources were important and part and parcel of the movements. The three movements came to be known by how messages about them were creatively posted and framed on social media platforms. The network theory considers information as a key component that binds the members of a network together and as an essential component of network effectiveness. Information within and outside the core network members of the three movements was exchanged using various communication tools such as physical meetings, email listservs, mainstream media and most importantly, social media platforms. The use of electronic communication by the core members of the movements made it much easier for others to join the networks/cause. In the three movements, social media platforms were used to help distribute the messages from the core network to the entire network. The power

of the networks to generate and distribute the messages can be explained by this theory where Keck & Sikkink (1998) says that the power to control information no longer resides exclusively within the state institutions but resided within media networks which are made up of social relations and communication technologies. Castell further argues that in contemporary network society the power residing in media networks is stronger than that residing in states.

In addition, the framing of the messages accompanied by a unique tag - #OccupyParliament, #OccupyPlayGround and #IEBCMustGo was meant to be an innovative way of introducing the issues to the public agenda. Networks generate attention to contemporary issues and help set agendas on matters that had been in the public debate. The network theory states that to be effective, the framing of the messages must show that a given state of affair is neither natural nor accidental, identify the responsible party or parties and must propose a credible solution. In addition, the theory also says that information used by networks must be reliable and well documented. As it shall be noted in subsequent chapters, the information posted prior to the protests was credible/factual information to persuade/mobilize more people to join the cause and to also convince the government and other actors to change the position/issue the movements were fighting for.

2.6.2 Resource mobilisation theory

This theory emphasises the significance of organisational structures and the accrual of resources for mobilising collective action in that social movements have to acquire resources in the form of finances, people, organisation, and external support in order to sustain a push necessary for the change they desire. The proponents of this theory were John D. McCarthy and Mayer Zald (1977) and later on, Charles Tilly (1978) and Doug McDam (1982) developed the political version of it. The theory emerged in the 1960s when sociologists began to question why individuals participated in social movements, at a time when social movements around the world had escalated. The existing theories at that time, which included mass society theory, relative deprivation theory and collective behaviour theory, did not satisfactorily answer this question (Jenkins, 1983). The three theories relied on the assumption that discontent, ideological justifications and generalised beliefs made individuals participate in social movements, something that McCarthy and Zald were discontented about. It is at this time that MacCarthy and Zald developed the resource mobilisation theory to the gaps that the other theories could not fill.

To begin with, McCarthy and Zald developed a conceptualisation of what social movements meant or entailed. Earlier studies by Wilkinson (1971) and Turner & Killian (1972) had conceptualised social movements as a set of noninstitutionalised collective action-oriented towards social change with the very minimum organisation. McCarthy & Zald (1977) conceptualised the term "social movement" as an extension of institutionalised actions with a restricted focus to a change that alters elements of social structure and the reward distribution of a society (p. 1218). The next contentious issue about social movements was to look at the conditions under which social movements form. Earlier scholars such as Gusfield (1968) mentioned that a sudden increase in short-term grievances and structural strains during the rapid social change as some of the reasons why social movements were on the rise. However, McCarthy & Zald (1977) took a different direction and argued that grievances were just secondary, but the leading cause of the rise of social movements was "the availability of resources especially cadres and organising facilities" (p. 1227). He further conceptualised and categorised cadres as follows:

> First, there is the cadre, the individuals who are involved in the decision-making processes of the organisation. Cadre members may devote most of their time to matters of the organisation or only part of their time. Those who receive compensation, however meagre, and devote full time to the organisation, we term professional cadre; those who devote full time to the organisation, but are not involved in central decision-making processes, we term professional staff; those who intermittently give time to organisational tasks, not at the cadre level, we term workers (McCarthy & Zald, 1977, p. 1227).

The resource mobilisation theory has popularly been referred to as "entrepreneurial model" since it adopts an economic approach where supply and demand of resources are crucial in forming and sustaining social movements. Jenkins, (1983, p. 531) adds that "long term changes in the organisation, resources and opportunities of groups give rise to movement formation".

In the process of mobilisation, the theorists of resource mobilisation posit that groups come together and secure resources necessary for collective action. Crossley (2003), one of the theorists of resource mobilisation adds that the flow of resources during mobilisation of social movements can have a significant effect upon levels and types of movement. A group with a massive flow of resources, be it financial or cultural capital would generally be in a better position to sustain the

social movements until a social change is realised. McCarthy & Zald (1977) also argue that the rise of social movements increases at a period where the middle class have surplus resources to donate to the cadres of social movements. Crossley (2003), however, acknowledges that to keep a sustained social movement, protest groups always face problems while resourcing for these much-needed resources. The theory of resource mobilisation in social movements also argues that all social movements require resources, be it financial, material, or cultural to sustain them. Crossley (2003) says that even those social movements that seem spontaneous or disorganised, they are all shaped by resources flow. The participants of social movements or are only able to sustain them or are only able to continue rebelling if they have the time and energy – and such resources presuppose other resources such as food.

Engels & Müller (2019) analysed the applicability of the resource mobilisation theory in social movements in the sub-Sahara African context. They noted that social movements in the sub-Saharan context have fewer resources at their disposal and depend to a larger extent on donors and private foundations. Indeed, most civil societies in Kenya depend on external donor funding, and although they try to raise funds locally, the funds raised may not be sufficient to run a successful campaign. This can be problematic because the donor can have influence on how the donation should be used, however, as Engels & Müller (2019) note, such funding "…does not necessarily shape the agenda of social movements or impact the goals of political actors. Strong political actors with clear decisions can be able to use external funding in an independent way (p. 87)".

In relating these ideas on resource mobilisation theory to this research study, it is evident that the three social movements - #OccupyPlayGround, #OccupyParliament and #IEBCMustGo -took advantage of various resources at their disposal to sustain their activities. In the initial stages of planning for #OccupyPlayGround, the mobilisers asked people to donate toys and kits to pupils at Langata Road Primary School, that they would use after having reclaimed the grabbed playground. During the #OccupyParliament, the announcement for the day of the protest mentioned that individuals should donate money that would be used in printing t-shirts and placards to be used during the protest. Mobilisation of such resources was crucial towards building a collective action and as a path towards realising social change. The three movements also took advantage of the unemployed youth who could afford the time and collective identity to participate in the movements. With an unemployment rate of 7.4% in Kenya (Ng'ethe, 2018), and a highly

mediatised youthful population, the movements found this as a valuable resource. A high unemployment rate among the youth in South Africa was also noted as an essential resource by (Alexander, 2010) – in his study on why there was a rise of rebellion and protests in South Africa.

Drawing other inspirations from LeFebvre & Armstrong (2018), in their study of #Ferguson [15]as a form of digital activism, resources such as depth of interpersonal networks are essential sources. This is because, networks help in the dissemination of information about the social movements, e.g., location, and date of the protest, aims of the protest and other information that can help in creating more visibility for the social movements. In this case, digital platforms such as Twitter and Facebook, were critical resources in the building of the movements under this study, along with a handful of other influential mobilisers. The hashtags #OccupyParliament, #OccupyParliament and #IEBCMustGo were used to create networks of protesters, both online and offline, and to also pull financial, material, and cultural resources necessary for the day of the protest. In #OccupyParliament, for instance, while some protesters were pulling financial resources to print placards and T-shirts, others provided skills to bring in a sow and piglets to the first protests, and others provided skills in moulding an effigy of a pig in the second protest.

2.6.3 Theory of collective identity and collective action

The theory of collective identity and collective action has been one of the critical theories in the studies of social movements around the globe. This theory emerged in the 1980s in an attempt to fill in gaps left by resource mobilisation theorists – gaps that could not explain the emergence of "new social movements" in Europe and North America, which included feminist movements, gay and lesbian movements and environmental movements (Edelman, 2001; Engels & Müller, 2019). The theorists tried to find answers to how and why people decided to collaborate as a group given that individual self-interests in most times failed to go hand in hand with group interests (Ostrom & Ahn, 2009). The proponents of this theory argue that individuals take part in collective action or protests not just to support the cause of the movement but because they identify with the movement. For instance, being an activist, undergoing similar socio-political experiences and these issues allow individuals to develop collective identities which in turn help them form a

[15] #Furgurson. On August 9th, 2014, an 18-year-old Ferguson resident Mike Brown was shot to death by police officer Darren Wilson That movement finally took the name Black Lives Matter

collective action (Chan, 2016; DeMarrais & Earle, 2017; Engels & Müller, 2019; Fominaya, 2010). Milan (2013) citing Snow (2001) puts collective identity as collapsing of the "I" into "we" – where individuals in a group recognise themselves in the "we-ness", whether in a real or imaginative way.

Collective identity as a theory has become relevant not only in the "new social movements" but also in the study of political and grassroots-led movements. Collective identities play an immense role in mobilisation in many social movements around the globe (Milan, 2013). Fominaya (2010) also noted that collective identity plays an essential role in sustaining movements over time, until the needed change is realised. Movements that are formed by a group with stronger collective identities are stronger and able to sustain the movement for a more extended period until a change is realised, unlike movements formed by individuals with weak collective identities.

A fundamental question in this theory is to explore how collective identities are formed. In answering this question, Fominaya (2010) says that collective identities can be formed in meetings, assemblies, or discussion forums (online or offline). DeMarrais & Earle (2017) on the other hand mention that the shared concerns and experiences of ordinary people – such as concerns for "defence, security, risk management, infrastructural development, conflict resolution" can enable individuals to form collective identities. Fominaya (2010) adds that individuals with a shared history can also form collective identities. For instance, a shared history of having had a frustrating experience of organising movements can create a strong bond amongst individuals in a group. Other ways through which collective identities can be formed is doing collective activities. For instance, before and after these socio-political movements under this study happened, some artists had engaged in painting murals on walls in the streets as a form of protests (see chapter 6).

Another fundamental question that the current era of social movement scholars ought to explore even more is whether collective identities can be formed online (On social media platforms). Scholars such as Carroll & Hackett (2006) have observed that activism formed or emerging in media and technology lack strong collective identities since most individuals perceive such issues to be distant from their daily experiences. In this case, I argue here that collective identities can be formed and even strengthened on social media platforms for collective action. Tufekci (2017) mentions that individuals are creating networked communities based on interests rather than geographical coincidences. In Kenya and South Africa, social media users, especially those on

Twitter have formed virtual groups – Kenyans on Twitter (KOT), Bloggers Association of Kenya (BAKE) and Black Twitter in South Africa. These groups attempt to bring individuals together with the same collective identities and to also form collective actions. KOT, in a mix of development, leisure and entertainment, members participate in civic actions meant to call out corrupt leaders in government, at the same time make posts full of political satire. The members of KOT and Black Twitter become rational social actors who more often than not, assess the actions of those in government to inform their decision.

Members of KOT not only participate in online activities but also offline activities like protests, the annual KOT games and sports and the annual Social Media Awards (SOMA). As Fominaya (2010) noted, "…the process of collective identity is an intra-movement phenomenon even though it is conditioned and constructed in interaction with the broader political field." The bonds created in these activities by social actors helps in creating a stronger collective identity, which is necessary for collective action.

In the local context, Omanga (2019) has also contributed to the theory of collective action in the Kenyan context in research which he examined the transformation of mobile technologies, as a tool for collective action. He studies how some communities in Kenya have transformed their WhatsApp groups into a space of deliberation where members also take action and hold their local leaders to account. In this research, discusses how WhatsApp groups, formed by members of a specific community, is used to convene meetings, discuss politics, and form collective actions around County Government Affairs. In another research, Omanga (2015) discusses how mobile technologies have enabled community leaders, such as chiefs, to communicate to the community members and to also hold digital meetings without the need for physical chief's meetings (also known as *barazas* in Swahili). In this research, Chief Kariuki uses Twitter to send out messages to the community, and members with a mobile phone can follow or subscribe to the Tweets to receive regular updates. In this sense, Twitter is used to prompt community members to social action and administration.

In addition to the political movements in this study, participants in the online and offline protests of the three political movements developed and built collective identities which were a necessary tool for the collective action. The protesters shared similar socio-political environment. They shared the same corrupt leaders that would grab pupil's playground, at the same time increase their

salaries unlawfully. Their grievances were expressed through a common language and other cultural artefacts. The protesters were also caught up in a similar emotional outburst when children were tear-gassed in #OccupyPlyaground and when protesters were killed and injured in #IEBCMustGo. Milan (2013) posits that collective identities in contemporary socio-political movements emerge because potential participants experience injustices – and these injustices produce inequalities in society, which is then a justification for forming collective action for the benefit of the whole society. Further, the protesters on social media also assembled and made discussions under the hashtags of the movement. All these online and offline activities show that they had a collective identity before the protests and continued to make more identities during the movement. These actions were necessary for forming collective action.

2.7 Conclusion

Manuel Castell's works are an important referent to this research study. His conceptualization of networks is important in this research, particularly how he regards information as a core element of networks and how it plays a part in strengthening them for the purpose of political action. The current era of social movements like the ones going to discussed in this study are not only seen in a local sense but as a global phenomenon necessitated by internet networks. Keck & Sikkink (1998) refers to them as transnational advocacy networks not just because of their use of technologies, but because these networks are created by individuals with the same principles of actualizing a political action. I argue here that when the internet is used by local networks for political action, they transform to global political actions – because they go beyond social, political or policy changes at the local level to a global level.

The freedom to form and being involved in social movements is seen as a healthy element of any nation's democracy. This is because, participation of citizens in such activities is seen as a means of power redistribution which enables 'powerless' individuals in the society who are often excluded from political and economic processes, to be deliberately included and be empowered. Social networking sites have become important in enabling citizen participation in state affairs. These digital media tools have enabled citizens to increasingly mobilize and coordinate political causes in different parts of the world. These ideas of citizen participation in democratic process are important in understanding the social movements that were studied in this research.

The theories highlighted in this study were useful in informing the analysis of social movements presented in the next three chapters of this study. These theories helped in understanding how and why #OccupyPlayground, #OccupyParliament and #IEBCMustGo emerged. Networks formed in these movements were done in online and offline spaces and the spaces provided a fertile ground for political action. The resources at their disposal, that is, financial resources, social and political resources are necessary for building and sustaining social movements. The networks formed, also necessitated the formation of collective identity which becomes a necessary ingredient for collective action. The next three chapters discusses in detail the three movements that formed the core part of this study.

Chapter 3

Research Methods

3.0 Introduction

This chapter highlights the study's research strategy. I begin by illustrating the research design and explaining my philosophical orientation, then offering a snapshot of the three cases under scrutiny, explaining how data was sampled and generated through interviews and selection of relevant documents. Further, I highlight how I went about analysing data, as well as how I navigated through the various ethical issues encountered in this research.

3.1 Research Design and its conceptualisation

This study adopted a qualitative research design[16] to generate and analyse data. To make an informed decision about the research design I adopted for this study, I examined three aspects: the worldview assumptions I brought to the study; the procedures I followed to collect, analyse, and interpret the data; and the nature of my research problem.

To conceptualise qualitative research, Denzin & Lincoln, (2005) state that scholars must look at the complex historical field of the term as well as look at the worldviews individuals hold. Denzin & Lincoln (2005) go further to state that conceptualising this term goes beyond merely stating that words are used in place of numerical figures. Qualitative research as a field of study and as a research activity helps to locating the researcher and his materials in a worldview shared by the respondents. The materials used by the researcher turn the world into a representation. Such materials could include informal conversations, interviews, photographs, memos, field notes. The researcher's work becomes interpretive, which then entails finding patterns to the subject under study.

To interpret materials collected in this study, qualitative research requires that research must occur in its natural setting by interpreting phenomena according to how people conceptualise them. Therefore, in qualitative research, researchers engage in constructing meaning either with others

[16] Creswell & Creswell (2017) the authors distinguish he distinguishes three types of research designs – Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed method (see this link for more details https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/research-design/book255675

in various forms of conversations or with materials others have produced or the researcher him/herself has produced with the help of the respondents.

Qualitative research design is well suited to study socio-political, economic, and cultural factors that emerge in social activism in Kenya. This is because the research studies the lived experiences of the individuals closely related to the phenomena under study as well as the materials produced by others on the phenomenon to interpret and make meaning out of them.

3.2 Research Paradigm

A paradigm, according to Donmoyer (1999) is a philosophical worldview formed by a set of assumptions and perceptions that determine how individuals view a phenomenon under study and choose research methods. For a research phenomenon to be understood, a researcher's worldview needs to be considered. The study of the nature of the existence of a phenomenon is referred to as *ontology*. This study entails examining the place of social movements in the Kenyan context, the dynamics of digital activism and offline protests and how different socio-political issues emerge and shape digital activism.

As it is often the case in qualitative research, this study combines a relativist ontology and an interpretive-constructive epistemology. Relativist ontology and interpretive-constructive epistemology as a philosophical orientation guided how data was generated from people closely associated with the phenomenon under examination, to get knowledge about how people perceive, interpret, and understand issues in their own context. Given (2008) posits in this paradigm that researchers have the moral obligation, in their attempt to persuade others to accept the knowledge claims and define the quality of research the way they do, to be open to having themselves persuaded by others.

By using relativist ontology and an interpretive-constructionist epistemology, I needed to be aware that my assumptions influenced what I asked and how I construed the participants' responses. Klenke (2008) contends that it is not possible to conduct rigorous research without understanding its philosophical underpinnings. Thus, in this research inquiry, I had to identify a philosophical underpinning within which it was situated to understand aspects that influenced the conduct of the inquiry. With the foregoing in mind, I adopted a qualitative method in this inquiry.

Further, to understand the dynamics of protests in social movements, this study relied on the perspectives and meanings attached by respondents through the interviews I held with them. Their interpretation (human meaning) of these aspects under examination was of utmost importance since I had the first-hand experience. Most qualitative researchers adopt interpretive constructivism while quantitative researchers tend to rely on statistical modelling. I adopt the view that it is by interacting and talking to the research respondents, listening to their views, and interpreting them that I can gather an in-depth understanding of the variations in their perspectives of the social-political and cultural factors in the study of social movements and digital activism.

Further, regarding the philosophical orientation of this study, it was essential to question the validity and reliability of knowledge generated during the interaction with respondents. It was also important to question if the data generated was factually correct. Lastly, it was vital for me as a researcher to question how I would get factual information. The study of the ability to distinguish between knowledge that can be considered truthful and information that is not valid and reliable is referred to as *epistemology*. This research examined protests dynamics in social movements and the role of social media. The research process carried some epistemological assumptions, which influenced how I understood and interpreted data (Klenke, 2008). This philosophical inclination also includes examining the sources and their limits, as well as rationality and justification of knowledge created. Therefore, the philosophical orientation that I adopted for this study is relativist ontology and interpretive-constructive epistemology.

3.3 Research Approach

To examine protest dynamics in social movements in Kenya, this research adopted a case study as a methodological approach[17]. The cases were examined per se, as key historical events in contemporary Kenya, as well as used to study secondary aspects (i.e., the dynamics of protest), following an instrumental case study approach. Instrumental case studies are examined to provide insights into an issue or to draw a generalisation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Grandy (2010) agrees

[17] Creswell and Poth (2017) distinguish five approaches of qualitative research - Narrative research, Phenomenology research, Grounded theory research, Ethnographic research, and Case study research

that instrumental case studies can be used to provide insight into an issue, redraw generalisation or build a theory.

To provide an extensive and valid explanation of the issue under study, this research utilised three cases (socio-political movements). The cases were selected using the selection criteria described in 3.5. Adopting this kind of approach allowed the examination of outcomes across the cases which have the potential of forming more broad categories of how socio-political and cultural factors comes into play during digital activism. In addition, scholars of digital activism and social movements mostly rely on qualitative case studies in their research. For instance, Keck & Sikkink (1998) used qualitative case study method to study advocacy networks around the world while Kahn & Kellmer (2004) used those same methods to study Zapatista movements in Spain. Other social movement and digital activism scholars have also explored a mix of qualitative case study research and quantitative social network analysis and examples of such scholars include Gagliardone & Pohjonen (2016) in their study on social media and political discourse in Ethiopia and Yang (2016) who studied the complexities of participation in network society of the bus routes in Shanghai, China. Therefore, my choice of these methodologies is guided not only by the research questions of the study but also by methodologies adopted by scholars in this field of study.

3.5 Case selection

To select appropriate cases, I designed a system that would maximize the opportunity of each case to comparatively illustrate how political movements in Kenya make use of social media. This system guided me to ultimately select three cases out of a list of nine movements that were particularly popular in Kenya between 2013 and 2017, and namely:

a) #MyDressMyChoice
b) #OccupyPlayground
c) #OccupyParliament
d) #OccupyHarambeeAve
e) #IEBCMustGo
f) #SomeoneTellCNN
g) #ReleaseMutai
h) #Waiguru

i) #147NotJustANumber

I used the following four criteria to select my cases for this research study:

a) The government was the defendant in the case;
b) There was wide media coverage of the case over several days.
c) The case generated national interest.
d) There was the presence of street protests in the case.

Table 3.1: Criteria for Selection of cases

Movement	**The government was the defendant**	**Wide media coverage over several days**	**National Interest**	**Presence of Street Protests**
#MyDressMyChoice	X	✓	X	✓
#OccupyPlayground	✓	✓	✓	✓
#SomeoneTellCNN	X	X	✓	X
#OccupyParliament	✓	✓	✓	✓
#ReleaseMutai	✓	X	X	X
#IEBCMustGo	✓	✓	✓	✓
#OccupyHarambeeAvenue	✓	X	✓	✓
#Waiguru	X	✓	✓	X
#147NotJustANumber	X	✓	✓	X

The first criterion was to get a case in which the government, government officials or politicians had been incriminated or were defending themselves against what seemed like the will of the people. Most socio-political movements are against decisions made by those in positions of authority or those who hold certain privileges in society. These criteria allowed me also to study the power dynamics of socio-political movements. In this criterion, four cases fitted the description: #OccupyPlayground, #OccupyParliament, #ReleaseMutai and #IEBCMustGo. In the #OccupyPlayground, the government was pressured to release the name of the land grabber who was a senior government official and was also pressured to stop the grabbing of school land as well as give title deeds to all schools.

The second criterion was aimed at finding cases that attracted extensive media coverage over several days. Four cases were able to satisfy this requirement: #MyDressMyChoice, #OccupyPlayground, #OccupyParliament and #IEBCMustGo. These four cases were widely reported over several weeks to several months. #OccupyParliament and #IEBCMustGo had more than one street protests. To determine the level of coverage of these movements, I examined the archives of two major newspapers in Kenya – *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* through a process-tracing approach (a chronological account of the cases based on media reports). A movement would be widely covered if several articles were written about it for more than a week and there was a broad discussion on it on social media sites – Facebook and Twitter. Using this criterion allowed me to incorporate secondary data in my research, uncovering patterns and trends characterizing each movement.

The third criterion was based on public interest. Public interest in this study was taken to mean an issue that has a common interest among a vast population. With this definition, four cases met this requirement: #OccupyPlayground, #SomeoneTellCNN, #OccupyParliament and #IEBCMustGo. #OccupyPlayground was of national interest because many schools in the country had lost their land through land grabbing, creating widespread concerns among teachers and parents at a national level. #OccupyParliament movement was meant to stop Members of Parliament from increasing their salaries, which would have been an extra burden on taxpayers. #IEBCMustGo met this criterion because having a credible team that conducts elections is paramount to national peace. The 2007 /2008, Post Elections Violence (PEV) in Kenya was also in part motivated by the inefficiency of the electoral team, coupled with other socio-political and cultural factors that had

been harboured for a long time. #SomeoneTellCNN was seen as having an intention to spoil the celebratory mood of the country following President Obama's visit and tarnish the country's image as being a hotbed of terror. Having this criterion for the selection of my cases was crucial as it allowed me to study the dynamics of the protests in socio-political movements on a wide scale. If the cases selected were only of interest within a single region or community in Kenya, it would have been to draw comparative lessons.

My fourth criterion was to select cases that included both online and off-line protests (i.e., street protests). Having an element of street protest would be key in unveiling how social media was used during those protests and the socio-political and cultural issues that came into play - essential elements of the aims of this study. Four of the cases satisfied this criterion: #OccupyPlayground, #OccupyParliament, #MyDressMyChoice and #IEBCMustGo. The other cases #ReleaseMutai and #SomeoneTellCNN protests took place exclusively online rather than through street protests.

From this, three cases – #OccupyPlayground, #OccupyParliament, and #IEBCMustGo – satisfied all four criteria and were thus included in the research.

3.6 Description of the cases

In this section, I offer a snapshot of the three cases under scrutiny. A more detailed analysis can be found in chapter 5, 6 and 7.

3.6.1 #OccupyPlayground

This movement erupted in January 2015. After the schools were reopened following the 2014 December holidays, pupils at Lang'ata Primary School in Nairobi found out that their school playground had been grabbed by a neighbouring hotel that wanted to use it as a parking space. The story had been reported initially by *Daily Nation* newspaper in December 2014, but it did not elicit any action from the authorities. On 19th January 2015, activists led by Boniface Mwangi organised a protest to reclaim the playground and bring down the wall that had fenced it off. The mobilisation for this event was done on social media (Twitter and Facebook). During the 10 a.m break time on that day, the pupils were mobilised and headed to their grabbed playground to reclaim it. The police had been deployed early that morning to guard the property. However, the police threw teargas canisters at the children to disperse them as they were bringing down the wall. In the event,

a confrontation ensued between the activists, pupils, and the police. Ten pupils were injured as a result and were rushed to the hospital. Hundreds of others choked from the teargas fumes.

The case elicited strong emotions from citizens, especially when the first photos of the event were posted on social media. There was an outburst of anger directed at the police and the government from citizens, civil society organisations, and religious leaders. The hashtag (#OccupyPlayground) trended for the next few days as the public pushed for the naming and arrest of the land grabbers. The then Cabinet Secretary of Lands, Charity Ngilu, released names of those who owned the hotel, but citizens were not convinced. A feature story, which had been recorded by Citizen Television several months before this incident, revealed that the actual owner of the hotel was the Vice President William Ruto.

Political leaders joined in the conversation, and the opposition leaders blamed the president and the government for failing to name the real land grabbers. A day after the incident President Uhuru Kenyatta gave a tongue-lashing to his Lands Cabinet Secretary, Charity Ngilu, and National Lands Commission boss, Mohammed Swazuri, over the issue. President Kenyatta also asked the head teacher at the school to answer questions on the matter and especially why pupils could participate in the protest.

Due to mounting pressure from the public, President Kenyatta issued executive orders that all schools countrywide should receive title deeds (certificates of land ownership) for their land. Taking cues from the bold action of the students from Lang'ata primary schools, 24 other schools countrywide organized protests, and reclaimed back their grabbed land, although there were no confrontations with police as witnessed at Lang'ata Primary School. To save face, the then Interior Cabinet Secretary (Cabinet secretary in charge of internal security), the late Mr Joseph Nkaiserry issued a public apology for the use of force by the police on children. He visited the school to offer an apology to the pupils. The police boss who led the police in using excessive force against the pupils was also interdicted.

3.6.2 #OccupyParliament

The Occupy Parliament movement took place between the 14th May and 11th June 2013. following the announcement that the newly elected Members of Parliament had proposed to increase their salaries, against the constitution and the wishes of many Kenyans. The Salaries and Remuneration

Commission (Sarah Serem Commission), an independent government office, was expected to streamline salaries of all government officials and civil servants. However, the members of parliament endeavoured to dictate their own salary packages.

The civil society organisations led by Boniface Mwangi called for protests. On 14th May 2013, protesters gathered at Freedom Corner in Uhuru Park and begun their protests there. They conveyed various messages in placards and t-shirts, blew whistles, and sung as they went through the Central Business District to the Parliament building. On reaching there, all the gates were heavily guarded by police officers in riot gears. During the walk from Freedom Corner to Parliament, a truck followed the protesters, but few knew what was in it. Outside the gate, a heard of swine, and drift of piglets was offloaded from the lorry and induced to eat a red substance that resembled blood poured at the parliament gate. This was meant to symbolise that members of parliament are as greedy as pigs. Thus, the pun M-Pigs became widely used in social media to describe the protest. Although many applauded this tactic, others claimed the use of pigs amounted to animal cruelty. On 11th June, the activists twisted their tactic, only using a sculpture of a pig. Although this movement ensured that members of parliament did not increase their basic salaries, the MPs later found a loophole and increased their allowances in a deal that was closed between them and the Salaries and Remuneration Commission. This movement attracted huge media coverage and discussion on social media.

3.6.3 #IEBCMustGo

In 2014 and 2015, the Kenyan opposition party Coalition for Reform and Democracy (CORD) started to push for the change of the Kenyan constitution by gathering signatures to petition the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) to conduct a referendum. This referendum campaign was dubbed *Okoa Kenya* (a Swahili word that translates as 'Save Kenya'). In October of 2015, it presented 1.4 million signatures from citizens to IEBC for approval. The opposition party was needed to present not more than 1 Million signatures. On 22nd of March, IEBC announced that CORD had failed to present one million valid signatures and ran short by 200,000 signatures. The party protested the move and accused IEBC of colluding with the government to block the *Okoa Kenya* campaign. CORD announced that it was going to demand the removal of IEBC commissioners for they had failed Kenyans. Accusations levelled against them included being involved in vote rigging in the 2013 elections as well as blocking the *Okoa*

Kenya campaign. On 25th April 2016, the first protest was held in Nairobi dubbed #IEBCMustGo. The protesters aimed at occupying the IEBC offices (at Anniversary Towers located in Nairobi's Central Business District (CBD) and present their petition. However, police dispersed the protesters using tear gas and water cannons as soon as they arrived at the IEBC offices. Similar protests took place on 9th May 16th May 23rd May, and 6th June of 2016. Protests were held in nine other counties. Violence was witnessed as police battled with protesters. Later, a negotiation team was formed with representatives from both the ruling party, government, and the opposition leaders. They were to come up with a plan of replacing the IEBC officials. After several months of negotiations, the IEBC officials left office in August 4th, 2016 and a new team was put in place.

3.7 Data Generation

A case study involves extensive data collection with multiple forms of data. My choice of data generation tools aimed at providing rich, detailed, and in-depth information about each movement. I generated data using semi-structured in-depth interviews, documents analysis and analysis of social media and online content such as blog posts.

3.7.1 Sampling

I used a purposive sampling technique to select key respondents. This technique implied that I sampled individuals depending on my research questions. The choice of the individuals who were interviewed was dependent on their role in the three cases. I began by subjecting the documents from the three case studies: #OccupyPlayground, #OccupyParliament and #IEBCMustGo to a process-tracing method. In this study, I adapted Collier (2011)'s definition of process tracing where he describes it as a focus on the unfolding of events or situations over time. He goes further to state that during process tracing, researchers begin with taking good snapshots at a series of specific moments. To tailor process-tracing to my specific research questions and cases, I also adopted Bennett (2015)'s definition, which describes process tracing as an attempt by a researcher to make use of generalizing and particularizing explanations – and locating cases under study as events, while also giving their historical explanation. I used the documents in the three cases under study to identify the key moments – going from the emergence, to the peak, up to the end of each movement. Appendix 1 and 2 indicate how the process tracing was carried out. Further, in the empirical chapters of this study (5, 6, and 7), I have offered to trace the history and the pathways

that led to the emergence of the three socio-political movements in considerable details, following these guidelines.

This process-tracing method allowed me to identify the key players or actors who were closely involved, associated, linked, or affected by the cases. The choice of these actors also recognised how different actors coexist in socio-political spaces in the African context. The five key players or actors identified were:

a) Activists (local and international)
b) Politicians
c) Journalists
d) Bloggers
e) Religious leaders.

Fieldwork was conducted in two phases. The first phase was done between October 2017 and Mid-February 2018 in Kenya, days after Kenya had come out of a period of long electioneering. The second phase took place between December of 2018 and January 2019. This allowed me to fill gaps that I had noted in previous fieldwork and seek out more clarity from the previous respondents. I acknowledge that this research study took place between three to four years after the events of #OccupyPlayground, #OccupyParliament and #IEBCMustGo took place in Kenya. To ensure trustworthiness in the research study, I used a thick description of the case studies with data from different sources such as social media posts, newspapers, blog posts and interviews from those who were closely associated with the cases (triangulation). In addition, aspects of this research study were presented in conferences and other forums (credibility) where scholars agreed that the methodologies used were the right ones for this kind of study.

Having had a good experience with conducting research in Kenya in the past, I was able to understand the dynamics of the research environment. I was aware of the previous challenges and what I needed to do to avoid them. Accessing politicians and key individuals in civil society organizations was a challenge, but alternative respondents were sought if those contacted initially were not available. For those respondents that I could not reach, I used secondary data to fill the data gaps.

Interviews

Individuals who were directly involved in or affected by the movements were interviewed. My intention was to get to hear their experiences and their roles in the movements.

Before I embarked on fieldwork, I already had a list of names of those who were closely linked with the three cases under investigation. While I had contact details of most of them, I also used other networks to get contact details.

In the end, I contacted 36 potential participants. From this list, 22 responded positively. 21 face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted, and one respondent preferred answering questions via email. The following were the categorization of the respondents:

a) Activists (local and international) – 9 respondents
b) Politicians – 3 respondents
c) Journalists – 3 respondents
d) Bloggers – 5 respondents
e) Religious leaders – 2 respondents

A voice recorder was used to record their responses. One respondent requested to have the questions sent to her via email. Face-to-face interviews took between one and one-and-a-half hours and were conducted in restaurants and public places in Nairobi. In one of the interviews with a retired activist, I was given access to his library and his archival store, which contained materials he authored when he was as an activist in the 1990s.

There were several reasons why it was not possible to get all the 36 potential respondents. First, some respondents cited lack of time to have the interviews. Secondly, Kenya had just come out of a very gruelling year with elections, and the political class was still settling in new positions. It was, therefore, difficult to get hold of them. Thirdly, bloggers had had a rough time with the government before and during the elections period and were afraid of meeting new people for fear of being arrested.

Documents and analysis of social media/online texts

I used documents and analysis of social media and online texts in this study as additional sources of data. While conducting process-tracing, posts from online sources such as tweets, Facebook

posts, blogs, and documents in form of newspapers were identified, which allowed me to develop a thick description of each cases. In the early phase of the fieldwork, I broadly focused on all available documents and online content without pre-screening, judging, or limiting alternatives. As the study took shape, I began to be more selective and focus on the most relevant documents for each case.

Historical social media texts from Twitter on the three cases were scrapped for the purpose of this research study. To scrape this data, TAGS[18] and NCapture[19] Sofware that uses Twitter API to capture historical data was used. This involved searching Tweets that bore the three hashtags in this study and they were downloaded into a CSV[20] (Comma Separated Values) format. The analysis of this data is described in the next section (3.8) of this study.

Using these two sources of evidence sustained the study of the cases to the end. The two sources of evidence gave multiple perspectives, which allowed me to address contradictions or errors that could result from using a single data source. Using the two sources of evidence was beneficial since there was a potential to give a strong conclusion of the study.

3.8 Data analysis

Data analysis of the documents begun with collating all the writings on the movements and arranging them chronologically in an excel sheet. This helped me to know the kind of materials that were written or generated at a particular time as the movement unfolded. I was able to note the time offline activities related to the movements took place and the angle and kind of discussions that took place. In addition, I used this first level analysis to identify the main actors of the movement as well as the potential respondents of this study.

Analysis of data generated from interviews began by first transcribing the voice recorded data. Secondly, data that was not in English was translated. Thirdly, the data was anonymized as a way of adhering to ethical aspects of this research. The data generated from both sources was loaded in

[18] TAGS is a free Google Sheet template which lets you setup and run automated collection of search results from Twitter.

[19] NCapture is a web-browser extension for Chrome and Internet Explorer that enables you to gather web content to import into NVivo.

[20] CSV is a simple file format used to store tabular data, such as a spreadsheet or database.

NVivo, a Qualitative Data Analysis Software that is used to organize and code data. I began by reading and conceptualizing the data in the transcripts and in the documents. I then categorized the data into codes, which later became themes.

Thematic data analysis was adopted in this study. In conceptualizing a "theme" in thematic analysis, Vaismoradi et al. (2016) defines it as a way of organizing a group of repeated ideas which enables the researcher to answer the questions in a research study. This study adopted Vaismoradi et al. (2016) stages in developing themes

The first step towards developing a theme was the 'initializing phase' which involved reading through the research materials which included interview transcripts, literature, social media posts, videos, photos, emails and so on, that were relevant to this research study. Through reading, I was able to understand the data and to set out the out important constructs in the data. This phase also involved coding the data using NVivo and noting down reflective notes from the data in the memo of the NVivo software.

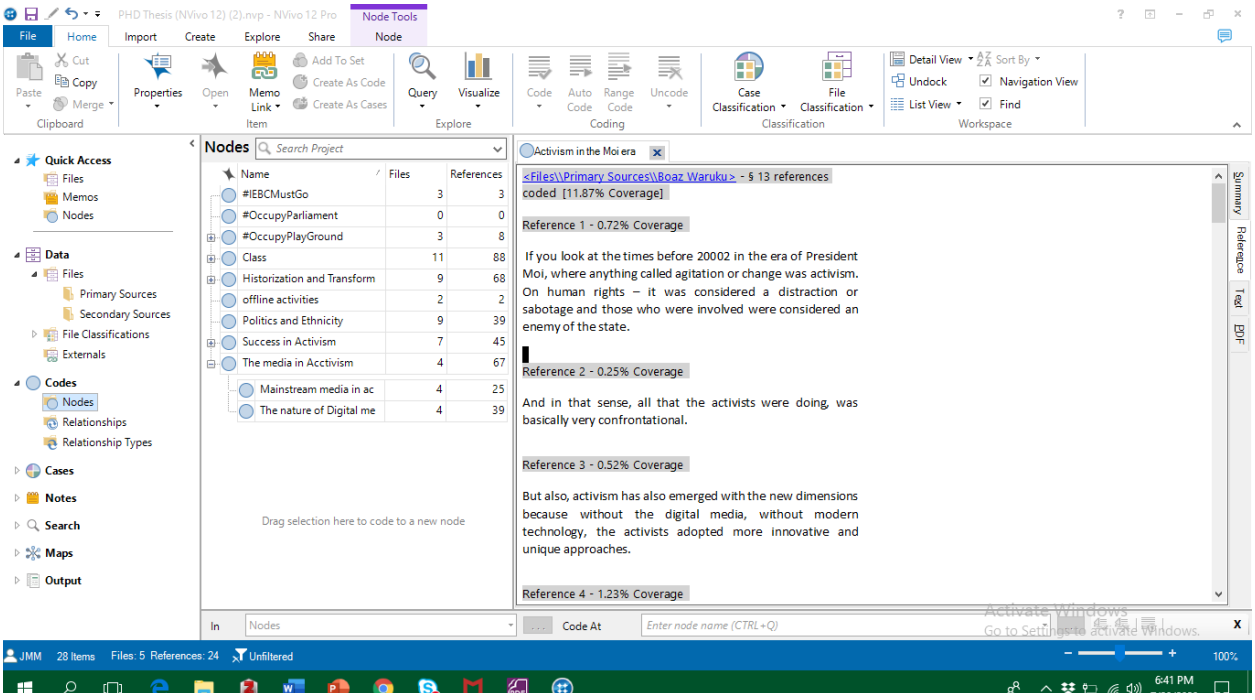

Fig.3.2. A screenshot of the NVivo project used in data analysis for this study

The second step was the 'construction phase' where I began to organize codes and comparing them in terms of similarities and differences. Codes that were similar were merged. The third phase was the 'rectification phase.' Here, I begun a process of checking and confirming to ensure a relative

certainty about developed themes while at the same time relating themes to established knowledge. The last step was the 'finalizing Phase' where I developed a narration – a story line – that gave a holistic view on the studied phenomenon. Creating a story line provided an opportunity to review the entire process of data analysis, promote further ideas and collect more data that improved the saturation of themes. While developing the story line, I linked it to existing literature and theories to facilitate further understanding.

In order to show the trends of the use of social media in the three cases, tweets that were scrapped for this study were analysed to show how participants of the movement used social media. Since this was a vast amount of data scrapped for this study, Tableau[21] software was used to visualize the tweets and show their amount against time during the movements.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

This study generated data from online sources, documented information in the form of texts, media as well as from individuals through interviews. There has been an ongoing debate on the best way to adhere to research ethics in studies involving the use of social media. The massiveness of data from online sources provides researchers with many opportunities to conduct a variety of research, but this also comes with a requirement for ethical responsibility. While dealing with this data, it is not always clear whether the data accessed, analyzed or reused can be traced back to its original context or whether the person was of sound mind while posting on social media. Other debates among scholars on ethical issues in online data revolve around whether researchers should seek informed consent from the producers of such data. Researchers such as Sandvig & Hargittai (2015) argues that digital researchers should use the 1979 Belmont Report as a primary statement of principles of ethical research on human subjects today. I used this report as my ethical guide in this research. The report lays out three main principles:

a) Respect for persons – researchers should treat people as ends in themselves and not means to an end.
b) Beneficence – Researchers should never harm research subjects but should instead maximize benefits and minimize harm.

[21] Tableau Software is an interactive data visualization software. It helps in simplifying raw data into the very easily understandable format.

c) Justice – Researchers should distribute the burden of benefits of research equally across society.

Further, in striving to adhere to ethical concerns in this research, I sought ethical clearance from the Research and Ethics Committee at the University of the Witwatersrand. All the data collection tools for this research were reviewed and certified as having met the ethical requirements (See Appendix 4-9). The ethics certificate can be found in Appendix 3 of this research report.

Adherence to ethical requirements was, however, an ongoing endeavour at every instance of fieldwork. Each of the respondents was given the research information sheet (See 3.5 to 3.8) days before a scheduled interview. Before any interview begun, I read out the consent form with the respondents and any concerns were addressed before the interview begun. The respondents were required to sign the consent form found in Appendix 8 of this research report. As I conducted the interviews, I ensured that I stuck to the main research questions and no personal or uncomfortable questions were asked. In the middle of the interview sessions, I reminded the respondents that they had the liberty to withdraw without any consequences as well as not to answer any uncomfortable questions. All respondents whose names have been used in this report gave permission to do so. Others opted to remain anonymous.

To ensure that the data generated was safe, I entered it in password-protected computer and the computer were put under lock and key cupboard. As mentioned earlier, during transcription and cleaning of the data, anonymization of sources that did not want to be mentioned in the research report was done.

3.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I begun by presenting my philosophical orientation. This orientation stated my worldview and especially how I view the creation of knowledge. This further justified the research design and the approach I adopted for this research. Further, I presented the case study approach, how I went about selecting my case studies and I also gave a snapshot of the cases. The philosophical orientation, research design as well as research approaches were best suited to conduct a valid, scientific, and systematic research study on digital activism in Kenya.

Moreover, I presented how I went about generating data for this research, how I sampled my sources of data and how I analysed the data. These details account for the fieldwork I did for this study. In the generation of data, I described the category of people that I interviewed as well as the

documents I analysed. I went further to mention how the data was analysed to produce a research report through thematic analysis. In addition, I presented how I ensured the research was ethical as well as the trustworthiness of the research. In the next chapter, I will delve into the history of media activism in Kenya from the period after independence to current digital era. This will further help in understanding the context of this study.

Chapter 4

The history of media activism in Kenya

Media remains a critical player in a democracy. You cannot talk about being a free or democratic society without a free and vibrant media. We need a vibrant media that also reminds people of the values enshrined in the Constitution, particularly the national values of leadership. This is critical if we are going to enjoy the benefits of a democratic country.

[Interview with Gitobu Imanyara – 15th January 2019]

4.0 Introduction

The media has been instrumental in various struggles world over. Over the years, it has been an essential tool for expressing dissent as well as amplifying the voices of those involved in various socio-political and cultural struggles. The use of the radio and the newspaper were important in the anti-colonial struggle in various parts of Africa. In some African nations, radio became a revolutionary tool during the freedom struggle. In South Africa, *Radio Freedom,* which broadcasted from Lusaka in Zambia and other African countries (Lekgoathi 2010), played a key role during the *Apartheid* era as a revolutionary tool. It also mobilised South Africans to rise against the oppressive apartheid government (Simpson, 2009). Berg (2008) notes that in the Horn of Africa, Radio Mogadishu broadcasted voices of liberation front of Western Somalia, Abo region (within Somalia) as well those of Eritreans. He further noted that Radio Halgan which operated until 1988 in Ethiopia, carried anti-Somali broadcast of Radio Kulmis (Radio Unity). Those are just a few examples of how the media was instrumental in activism and revolutionary movements.

This chapter delves into the history of the media as a revolutionary tool in Kenya, from the pre-colonial period. The chapter gives a snapshot of the contribution of various authors in the liberation struggles in pre- and post-independence regimes in Kenya. The focus in this chapter will be on alternative press/media which in this study broadly includes newspaper articles, magazines, songs, theatre shows, pamphlets, journals, books, and other protests literature such as placards/posters. Using the media for activism is not a new thing but something that has existed for several decades

in Kenya. The history of media in Kenya is synonymous with the history of activism in Kenya. Indian immigrants in Kenya and the African nationalists established some of these publications to work as their mouthpiece and push for change from the oppressive colonial government.

The first section of this chapter highlights, in brief, some of the contemporary aspects of using the media for activism. In the second section, a discussion on the pre-independence media owners such as the missionary publications, the Indian publications, the colonial administration publications, and finally the nationalists' publications are made. In each of the sub-section, I examine the kind of publications that existed in that era, the issues that the newspapers published and how the British colonial government responded to them. Further, I argue that increased repression from the colonial administration led to an influx of publications by the Asians and African nationalists. Some of the works of prolific writers during the colonial era, the kind of publication they authored and the issues they highlighted are also discussed. Two of the most important authors mentioned in this section include Gakaara Wanjau and Jomo Kenyatta. Gakaara Wanjau was a critical author and one of the most prolific writers in pre-independence whose writings were in vernacular language. Jomo Kenyatta's works, especially during his stay in the UK, is an example of how powerful the media can be in pushing for change. His kind of activism can be compared to the present-day role of diaspora communities in various nations – a good example being Zimbabwe – who use the media in pushing for socio-political change (Chari, 2014; Kuhlmann, 2012). These publications acted as platforms for dissent against colonial rule.

In the third section, I examine the media between the post-independence era (1964) to the return of multi-party democracy (1992). In this section, I discuss how the media was used as a revolutionary tool and how the shift from colonial rule to the newly independent state affected its use. Further, I look at how, after independence, the Kenyan nationalists led by Jomo Kenyatta gagged the media that became critical of the government. This was an ironical move considering how the nationalists had used the media among other strategies, to push for change. Famous authors such as Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Koigi wa Wamwere, and Gitobu Imanyara's works have been discussed.

4.1 Contemporary aspects of the media in activism

While the use of the media for activism has been a common trait of many liberation movements and political formations advocating for change, the development of media technology has also meant a change in how activism is done. For instance, before the advent of digital media in the radio and other publications were the main tools of change. Currently, digital media has redefined and transformed activism. Murthy (2018)discusses how social media has fundamentally changed the landscape of organisational communication, from mobilising resources and even making grassroots activism more feasible.

Media forms have over the years continued to change human interaction both positively and negatively, and more especially, moving communication from personal to interpersonal. In the last few decades, various forms of the media have continued to transform both technologically and transformed how we think of media and define it. Different forms of the media act not only as informative and educative tools but also a tool for that provide citizens with avenues to express themselves – to critique various ideologies on socio-political and economic issues, and to express dissent to various ideologies. The media, for several decades now, has been used to speak truth to power, for power to manipulate people, to radicalise people and to make people think about their current situations and their destiny. The media has evolved and revolutionised the way people communicate. It is important to note that when early forms of technology were invented, such as the radio and the newspapers, the media was taken away from ordinary individuals. Those who had the technological knowledge operated the media, and those who held both political and economic capital controlled it. However, the current development in media technology has taken back the media to ordinary individuals, thus advancing aspects of media and democracy (Akpojivi, 2018; Salawu & Chibita, 2016). Social media platforms have become spaces where ordinary citizens can create and share their own media. The downside of this is that the algorithmic power of tech companies such as Facebook and Twitter have been used to profit from users' interactions in online spaces (Digital Capitalism). In addition, Moyo (2009) observed that various digital divides in the global south epitomize a serious information poverty that affects billions of people in this age of information society.

In the last few years, digital media have become spaces of public debate. In a paper on how the Youth use the media, Vromen, Xenos, & Loader, (2015) argue that young people from a broad

range of existing political and civic groups use digital media for sharing information, and mobilising which becomes a way of redefining political action and political spaces. However, this is not a new thing – but the size at which is happening is what makes it unique. Letters to the editors, commentaries in mainstream media, radio talk shows, call-in sessions, etc. have become spaces of political debate for ordinary citizens as well as spaces of expressing defiance on oppressive government decisions. Although for several years, the Kenyan government repressed on individuals and media organisations who were critical of them, citizens still found a way to publish their concerns in alternative media such as gutter presses, pamphlets, magazines, novels, and even music and dance.

Further, looking at the concerns of ordinary citizens in post-colonial Kenya, and the concerns of the same citizens during the colonial period from late 1880s to 1960s, the similarity is very much striking. The primary concern of the nationalists during the colonial period was fighting for social justices. Specifically, they were enraged by the decision of the colonial administration who had displaced them on their land. These concerns were expressed in many ways – but one of them was through the media. In contemporary Kenya, citizens are still expressing similar concerns but in a unique way. Although we have a wide range of concerns expressed by citizens in contemporary media platforms, the cases under study in this research are all about social justice. #OccupyPlayground was a protest about social injustice. The school children at Langata Primary School protested the grabbing of their school playground which was to be converted to a parking lot for a hotel owned by the current Deputy President – William Ruto. #OccupyParliament was a civil society-led protest that contented the intended salary increments by members of parliament for themselves. #IEBCMustGo was another protest led by opposition leader and his party ODM, to pressure members of the electoral body IEBC to step down after being implicated in corruption. All these issues point to social injustices.

In the next section, I discuss how the media was first used in Kenya as a revolutionary tool in the pre-independence Kenya, and how it set pace for the current era of digital activism.

4.2 Pre-Independence Media Activism

4.2.1 Church Sponsored Publications

Kenya was under the colonial rule from 1888 to 1963 when it gained independence. The years under colonial rule were made up of various forms of resistance. These forms of resistance included armed struggles (like the Mau Mau rebellion), covert and overt defiance of colonial rule, trade union movements, strikes and demonstrations as well as using the media in pushing for socio-political change. Of importance in this section is to discuss how various forms of religious sponsored media were used in pushing for change.

Before 1928, in Kenya, the only modernised form of media that was available was the newspaper. As expected, there was no form of electronic media. In 1928, the first English radio, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), begun to broadcast, but it only targeted colonial settlers in Kenya. In the early 1940s, KBC began broadcasting radio programs which acted as a point of information for parents, whose sons had gone to fight in the World War II. The colonial government also intended to get information from the local communities through the broadcast. However, it was until 1953 that KBC began the first broadcasting programs in the following languages: Swahili, Luo, Kikuyu, Kalenjin, Luhya, Kamba, and Arabic. The station was owned by the colonial administration and acted as its mouthpiece.

Wa'Njogu, (2004) documents the history of the first newspaper in Kenya and mentions that *Taveta Chronicles* was the first to be published in 1895 by Reverend Albert Stega of Church Missionary Society – (CMS) and it targeted the British settlers in Kenya. It published until 1901 and closed to financial difficulties. Other publications by CMS included – *The Weakly East African* and the *Ugandan mail* both in the year 1899. *Taveta Chronicles* published articles on a range of stories from education, health, agriculture, and made updates when a new administrator from the British or German Protectorate arrived in the area. In later years, the paper published articles that were advocating for fair treatment of everyone by the colonial masters. The church used such media publications to spread the gospel as well as to inform people of the current events. In later years, missionaries from other groups also owned publications such as *Catholic Times of East Africa (*1937) and *Kenya Church News* (1929). These publications tended to be neutral in their content and sometimes leaning towards the ideologies of the local population with a purpose of appealing

to them. The church was, however, cautious of conflicting with the government. Mukhongo, (2015) however notes that a church-sponsored publication named *Target,* which was sponsored by Rev. John Schoffield had managed to publish articles which included social and political commentaries. In later years (1968 - 1971), Rev. Henry Okullu became the assistant editor, and together, they continued to publish articles about the oppressive ideologies of Kenyatta's government. Although he was highly targeted by government forces, in the brief period he headed the *Target*; he managed to speak harshly against President Kenyatta's ideologies in his publications. In 1976, under the leadership of veteran journalist Phillip Ochieng, *Target* collapsed due to increased government censorship (Kimani & Middleton, 2009).

Between 1956 and 1963, Reverend Stanley Eric Francis Booth-Clibborn founded the *Rock* while he was heading the Christian Council of Kenya, which later came to be known as National Council of Churches of Kenya (CCK). In his publication, he championed for the release of Jomo Kenyatta. Okullu (1997) mentions that:

> The *Rock* waged a tough battle against the colonial government, which jailed Jomo Kenyatta and later detained him for being the leader of Mau Mau, a liberation movement which led to Kenya's independence. *Rock* fought for Kenyatta's release and joined the campaign for Kenya's independence. After independence, the churches in the council continued to perceive their role as that of speaking against evil in society, even in black-ruled Kenya, and these publications were to be one of the tools for fulfilling that call (p. 49).

These publications may have been the first tools of activism in Kenya, and this happened from 1894 when Kenya was declared one of the East African protectorates of the British government. The invasion of the British colonialists brought about socio-political, cultural, and economic changes in Kenya – which was the beginning of an oppressive regime against the African natives.

4.2.2 Indian publications

Indians first came to Kenya in the 1890s to work as security forces for the British Administration, who had established the East African Protectorate (Murunga & Nasong'o, 2007). In the same period, the British Administration through an Indian contractor Alibhai Mulla Jeevanjee, who begun constructing the Kenya Uganda Railway from 1896 to 1901 (Brennan, 2001). Sowell (1997)

further adds that it is at this time that the Indians migrated to East Africa in large numbers to construct the railway. The Indians were politically ambitious not only in Kenya but the whole of East Africa until 1950s. The Indian nationalism preceded African nationalism in East Africa.

Since the missionary publications targeted the European settlers in Kenya and abroad, the Indians and Africans found a need to have space where their voices could be articulated (Wa'Njogu, 2004). Soon after the completion of the Kenya Uganda railway in November 1901, an Indian Merchant Alibhai Mulla Jeevanjee founded three newspapers named – *The African Standard, Mombasa Times, and Uganda Argus* (Durrani, 2016). These publications became the second batch in the country after the earlier ones published by missionaries. Jeevanjee had begun to take an interest in politics, and this newspaper served as a platform where individuals could express their views against the oppression of the colonial administration. Hawley (2008) states that

> …leading Indian professionals and merchants began formulating collective opposition to discriminatory policies. …the European had reserved the agriculturally and climatically desirable Kenya highlands solely for European occupation.

Such protests by the Indians re-ignited African nationalists to put more questions on the activities of the white settlers who displaced them from their land. The Indian activists also questioned why white settlers had allocated themselves land in the highlands of Kenya while the Indians had been allocated land in lowlands of Kenya. The Africans had their land stolen. Durrani (2016) describes Indian dissent and political activity as follows:

> … the Asian African community had long been involved in dissent and political activity against oppression in Kenya. … A.M. Jeevanjee and M.A.Desai continuously and successfully challenged and controlled settler ambitions for their self-rule in Kenya on the apartheid model of South Africa.

In later years, most of the newspapers that were started by the Indians were radical against the British colonial rule. The *Daily Chronicle*, which was published between 1947-62, was started by a small group of young Indian militant (Durrani, 2016). These young militant Indians were led by the Pio Gama Pinto and Pranlal Shethi who were the editors of the *Daily Chronicle*. Durrani, (2016) adds that other notable publications by the Indian community included the *East African*

Chronicles (1919-1922) whose editor was Manilal A. Dasai. This paper supported the nationalists such as Harry Thuku to publish their articles which were meant to express dissent against the colonial rule. Newspapers became such a valuable tool for activism. Durrani (2016) mentions that:

> Desai also made available his office to Thuku and gave him clerical and financial support. An outspoken critic of colonial rule, Desai turned the offices of *East African Chronicle* into a meeting place of South Asian and African political activists. His defence of humanity encouraged many young men like Jomo Kenyatta of the Kikuyu Central Association (KAU) to do likewise. Desai inspired and helped other Africans to publish their papers, including Harry Thuku, who published *Tangazo* with Desai's support (p. 37).

Newspapers like the *East African Chronicles* was used by the contributors to express dissent and fight for equal rights of all. Durrani (2016) further mentions that in the first issue of the newspaper, the following statement was carried out at the top of the first page, which showed their dissatisfaction with the colonial administration "we do not ask for concessions, and we scorn concessions; we do not ask for generosity; generosity is for the weak; we ask for no rewards, rewards are for slaves. We ask only for justice" p. 34.

Some publications by the Indian community such as *Hindi Prakash* (1911-1914) and *Indian Voice* (1911-1914) were purposely established as a platform for pushing for socio-political change. They used the paper to express their grievances towards the colonial government. However, such radical moves made by the Indian community made the British government begin repression against the newspaper owners and editors. Haron Ahmed and Pranlal Purshotam, the editors of the *Daily Chronicle*, were jailed for six months by the British government for expressing sympathy with Mombasa Dock Workers who were on strike in 1947 (Durrani, 2016). In the same year, their printing press *The Express Printing and Publishing Company* was dissolved (Government of Kenya, 1947).

The Asian community from 1900 – 1967 in East Africa became highly active and concerned about the socio-economic, political, and religious issues of the people in East Africa (Gregory, 1993). The struggle of the Kenyans became their struggle as well. Since the colonial publications excluded African and Asian voices, the Asian community found newspapers as a platform where

they could express their dissent with the oppression the British administration was unleashing on Africans and Asians.

A critical point to note is the role of Asian communities in helping the Kenyan nationalists publish their own presses. Pugliese (1994) noted that since Africans could not afford to buy printing equipment, and European printers would not print African newspapers, they had to rely on the presses owned and supported Indian radicals who were trying to form a united non-European front against the colonial government. However, the British Colonial administrators were not pleased with the way Asian communities helped the Kenyan nationalists establish their presses. Pugliese (1994) adds that:

> "…in early 1950s, the authorities became aware of it, and it took a series of measures against the printers. The government tried to discourage them from printing African newspapers by giving them heavier sentences than the editor in the sedition cases. V. G. Patel (Who later sold his printing equipment to Muoria) went to jail for producing *mumenyereri (Caregiver)* as did G. L. Vidyarthi for printing *Sauti ya Mwafrika*" (p. 57).

The Indian publications were thus crucial to the Kenyan nationalists who saw them as a foothold to publishing their media. Their support for the African nationalists in publishing their voices was essential in forging a united front against the European settlers in Kenya. As the resource mobilization theory explains, the Indian publishers provided resources for the Kenyan nationalists – financial, material, and cultural resources, which were important to pushing for the change they desired. Most of these publications openly criticised the government, which was led by the European settlers, and African nationalists picked up these skills and courage to openly criticise the colonial government. The role of the Indians in activism in Kenya was critical in setting the pace for the nationalist publications that followed.

4.3 Nationalist publications

The quest for self-rule by indigenous Africans from the mid-1920s led to the establishment of publications across the continent. In Kenya, the nationalists published articles, songs, poems, and even pamphlets to communicate various messages such as health issues, news around them, marriage but particularly to resist injustices that were being unleashed by the colonial

administration. The African nationalists published their work in already established Asian owned publications since, first, they were not allowed to access in publications established by the colonial government and secondly, they did not own or have the skills to operate printing machine. Later, they established their press by acquiring printing machine as well as acquiring skills to operate them – after working in missionary and Indian printing presses. The existing networks between the Kenyan nationalists and the Indian immigrants became important at this point as explained by the network theory in chapter two of this study.

The kind of media established by Kenyan nationalists was in African languages – particularly Agikuyu language. Publishing in vernacular languages was a form of resistance against the colonial administration. The nationalists used their own languages so that the colonial administration could not easily understand it (Pugliese, 1994; Wa Wanjau, 1988).

The most successful use of vernacular "media" for resistance was through the songs written and sung by nationalists – such as Gikuyu militants while serving sentences in various detention camps in Kenya. The songs were political and regularly sung by members of political parties such as KAU to spread anti-government propaganda. Pugliese (1994) noted the following with regards to political songs and hymns during the colonial period "… the political messages in the songs were set to well-known church tunes… and they could be sung freely in the presence of all but a very few Europeans since the vast majority could not understand a word of Gikuyu."

Using songs as a strategy for resistance was significant because they were learned both by illiterate individuals through word of mouth and literate individuals who read the written songs and taught others. Songs such as *Nyimbo cia kwarahura ruriri* (Songs to awaken ethnic communities) by Kinuthia Mugia, *Nyimbo cia matuko maya* (Songs of these days) by Muthee Chege, *Nyimbo cia Gikuyu na Mumbi* (Songs of Gikuyu and Mumbi) and *Nyimbo cia ciana cia Gikuyu na mumbi* were the most popular songs in 1951 and 1952 (Wa Wanjau, 1988). The songs urged the Agikuyu community to revolt against colonial injustices.

Apart from songs, the nationalists published vernacular newspapers, books and pamphlets that spoke about topical issues at that time. The overriding theme in these publications was to protest injustices committed by the colonial government – particularly forceful eviction of the black communities from their own land by white settlers. *Muigwithania wa andu a bururi wa Gikuyu* (Unifier of the Gikuyu people) was the first recorded African led newspaper which was established

in 1927 by a political outfit – Kikuyu Central Association (KCA). Before Jomo Kenyatta left for London in 1929, he acted as the editor of the newspaper. KCA was formed after the Young Kikuyu Association (YKA) was banned in 1924 by radical young men from the Agikuyu community. The two political outfits were formed to act as on behalf of the Kikuyu Community to present their grievances to the British Colonial Government (Delf, 1961). The establishment of the *Muigwithania* newspaper by KCA served as a platform where it could amplify the voices of the nationalists. The British reaction to *Muigwithania* was at first cautious and then turned out to be a hostile one. The colonial government later repressed it in 1940. Although *Mwigwithania* was the first local newspaper in Kenya, *Sekanyola*[22], a newspaper published for Ugandans and printed in Nairobi was already in circulation (Durrani, 2016; Thuku, 1970). *Sekanyola* published articles that were in support of anti-colonial struggle and Mwigwithania drew its inspiration from this paper.

However, the enormous influx of these African led publications begun in the 1940s and 1950s. Several reasons could have resulted to this influx of vernacular publications during this time. First, this was in the middle of World War II and Kenyan soldiers, the majority of whom were volunteers, participated in the war in distinct parts of Africa, led by the few British Army. When the soldiers returned home and having interacted with other African Nationalists during the war, they began to push for the end of colonialism and spoke broadly about social, political, and economic injustices. Secondly, by this time, Africans had already gained literacy skills after attending missionary schools. Therefore, they were able to read and write both in their vernacular and some in the English language. Thirdly, Africans had gained skills to operate printing machine. These skills had been gained through the works force they provided in both British, Asian, and missionary presses. Lastly, Africans had gained enough capital to afford to buy a printing machine. Gakaara Wanjau, in his prison diary, states that he first operated a publishing company without owning any printing machine. He would edit and take manuscripts to an Indian owned printer for printing and distribution.

As mentioned earlier, African nationalists published their articles with the help of the South Asians who had settled at the coast. As earlier mentioned, African nationalists were not allowed to publish in European publications. In later years, the nationalists established their own publications. Some

[22] Sekanyolya newspaper was owned by a Ugandan named Ssentongo

of the editors and publishers of books and newspapers/periodicals according to Wa Wanjau, (1988) included:

a) Victor Murage Wakobi – *Muthamaki* (The good leader), *Gikuyu na Mumbi*
b) Nyamurua – *Mumenyereri (Caregiver)*
c) Gakaara wa Wanjau – *Waigwa atia (What is the news) Roho ya kiume na Bidii kwa Mwafrika* (The spirit of adulthood and the spirit of resilience for an African, *Ngwenda Ujurage* (I want you to kill me), *Mageria no mo mahota* (Success comes with persistence)
d) John Cege Kabogoro – Wiyathi (freedom) and *Hindi ya Agikuyu* (The Times of the Agikuyu)
e) Griggory Mbiti – *Mugambo wa Embu* (The voice of Embu)
f) Isaac Gathanju – *Wihuge* (Stay Alert) and *Muramati* (Caretaker)
g) Morris Mwai Koigi – Mwaraniria (The conversation maker)
h) Mwaniki mugweru – *Wiyathi wa andu airu na kamuingi koyaga ndiri* (Freedom of the Africans through united action)
i) Bildad Kaggia, *Sauti ya Mwafrika*
j) Henry Mworia Mwaniki,

Most of these writers were political and radical. The titles of these publications had radical titles that talked about the quest and fight for freedom. The titles also implied their urgency for their voices to be heard. Griggory Mbiti's publication *Mugambo wa Embu* (The Voice of Embu) aimed at highlighting the voices and issues that people from the Aembu community were facing. John Cege's publication *Hindi ya Agikuyu* and Victor Murage's *Gikuyu na mumbi* published the voices of the Agikuyu community.

The nationalist publications acted as platforms for resisting the colonial rule. Puglise (1994) states that an influx of vernacular publications in the 1940s helped build a political awareness that had not existed before. These publications had one over-riding theme - The fight for self-rule. They provided a platform where the nationalists could voice their concerns.

In the next section, I discuss the works of two nationalists: Gakaara wa Wanjau as well as Jomo Kenyatta. The two authors, apart from being proficient writers in their vernacular languages, used their publications to fight for colonial injustices. It is also important to note that most of Jomo Kenyatta's works were authored while he was abroad, while Gakaara Wa Wanjau's works were

authored locally in Kenya. Therefore, it will be important to draw their similarities and differences as well. The importance of this historical review on media for activism is to achieve two purposes. First, that the use of media for social change has had a long history in Kenya since the pre-independence period, and two, that the culture of resistance in Kenya is also not new but something that has existed throughout Kenya's history.

4.3.1 Gakaara wa Wanjau

Gakaara was born in the 1920s in Central Kenya a year after Kenya was declared part of the British East African Protectorate and two years before Major-General Sir Edward Northey took over as the first governor of British Colonial administration in Kenya. Pugliese (1994) describes Gakaara as one of the most prolific vernacular writers, in the whole of East Africa during his time.

Gakaara Wanjau begun writing in the late 1940s at the time when African politics had become increasingly militant (Pugliese, 1994). His writings and those of other nationalists challenged the European invasion and colonial control. Some of his known works included:

a) Uhoro wa Ugurani (Marriage procedures)
b) Riũa Rĩtaanathũa (Before the sun sets)
c) Kĩrĩma Ngaagũa (Wherever I will fall)
d) Mageria Nomo Mahota (You only win after trying)
e) Ngwenda Ũũũnjurage (I want you to kill me)
f) Marebeta Ikũmi ma wendo (The 10 commands of love)
g) Mwandiki wa Mau Mau Ithaamirio-ini (A Mau Mau writer in asylum)
h) Nyĩmbo cia Mau Mau: iria ciarehithirie wiyathi (The songs of Mau Mau that brought freedom)
i) Gũkũngũĩra mĩaka 25 haraambee! (25th Anniversary of harambee)
j) Nyayo!
k) Mũrutani wa thiomi ithatũ hamwe (A teacher of three languages together)
l) Mĩhĩrĩga ya aagĩkũyũ (Clans of the Agikuyu People)
m) *Waigwa atia* (What is the news)
n) *kiume na Bidii kwa Mwafrika* (The spirit of adulthood for an African)

Gakaara's first writing was a non-fiction book titled *Uhoro wa Ugurani* (marriage procedures). Although this was a fictional book, it highlighted some of the Agikuyu marriage customs and procedures that individuals from the Agikuyu community needed to follow. In this publication, Gakaara sold ten thousand copies. It was this publication that popularised his later writings and established an audience.

What made him a unique author was his use of vernacular language in his publications. This may have served several purposes. First, he may have wanted to reach out to his readers in a much familiar language. During his active authorship in the 1940s, Kenya's literacy levels must have been extremely low, and those who could read and write in their mother tongue or any other language were very few. Secondly, he must have used vernacular language as a way of resisting colonial ideologies that regarded African languages as uncivilised. Gakaara's writings could only be understood by Agikuyu speakers.

Just like Jomo Kenyatta's writings, as it shall be discussed in the next section, most of Gakaara's writings were political and protested the invasion of the British colonial rule in Kenya. Although Jomo Kenyatta's works were very formal and mostly authored in the English language, the two authors had one clarion call – to end colonial rule and injustices. In contrast, however, Gakaara's works spoke directly to the Agikuyu speakers, and especially those who were fighting colonial injustices. Gakaara's works, such as *Mwandiki wa Mau Mau Ithaamirio-ini* (A Mau Mau writer in the asylum) and *Nyĩmbo cia Mau Mau: iria ciarehithirie wiyathi* (Mau Mau songs that brought freedom) talked about the radicalised freedom fighters from the Mau Mau outfit. On the other hand, Jomo Kenyatta's works spoke directly to the colonial masters. In his book *Facing Mount Kenya*, Kenyatta reflected on the use of anthropology as a weapon against colonialism and challenged colonial mentality that Africa was uncivilised and represented the virtues and self-sufficiency of the Kikuyu society (Murray-Brown, 1973).

His publications such as *Roho ya kiume na bidi kwa mwafrika* (The spirit of adulthood and Perseverance for the African) became the main reason Gakaara was thrown in detention in the

1950s for nine years. Some of his other publications featured prominently as evidence during the *trial*[23] In 1952, the same year the colonial government declared a state of emergency in Kenya.

4.3.2 Jomo Kenyatta

Jomo Kenyatta moved to Britain in the early 1930s to further his education and stayed on until 1946. Among the institutions, he attended while in Britain, included the London School of Economics where he graduated with a Diploma in Anthropology and published his thesis – *Facing Mount Kenya*. Jomo Kenyatta also undertook studies in Moscow at the Comintern-run Communist University of the Toiers of the East. Although there are no clear records about his studies in this university, most of his classmates in the college from all over the world returned to their home countries and established communist parties with communist ideologies. Some of these classmates included South African Communist Edwin Mofutsanyana. (Andrew & Mitrokhin, 2005). The question of how he adopted capitalism as an ideology and his disregard of communism remains a paradox.

During his stay, he participated in various activities that were geared towards ending colonial rule by Britain not only in Africa but also in other parts of the world such as India and the Caribbean. At that time, the British government conducted surveillance on his activities to establish his ideological orientation, monitor his political activities as well as identify his social and political contacts in Britain and in Kenya (Maloba, 2017). Maloba (2017) further mentioned that:

> Beyond the book, Kenyatta also published articles in newspapers and periodicals throughout his stay in Britain. The intelligence services noted each contribution. In the case of publications in newspapers, clippings of the article were attached to reports in the many files maintained on his activities. In March 1930, on his first

[23] Kapenguria trial: On 9th October 1952, Senior Chief Waruhiu of Nyeri was shot and killed by Mau Mau gunmen. He had been tried by Mau Mau leaders in absentia and found guilty of collaborating with colonialists. At his funeral, Evelyn Baring, the then British Colonial Governor and the late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta locked eyes over Waruhiu's casket in a knowing mental challenge over who between them was in charge of the country's affairs. A few days later, Baring signed arrest warrants for the famous Kapenguria Six – Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, Kung'u Karumba, Fred Kubai, Paul Ngei, Bildad Kaggia and Ramogi Achieng' Oneko. (Ithuli, 2010)

> trip, Kenyatta wrote a letter to *The Times*, in which he reiterated many of the major points contained in the petition he had brought to the Colonial Office (p. 61)

Although he was highly monitored during his stay in Britain, he was not arrested or charged for it, and neither did that stop him from writing and pushing for the change he desired.

This section aims to look at how he used various media was used to push for socio-political change during the colonial period. A year after he landed in Britain, Kenyatta became a spokesperson of pan-Africanists and nationalism movements in Britain who was agitating for the end of colonial rule in Africa, India, and the Caribbean. Kenyatta became affiliated to International African Service Bureau (IASB). He participated in regular activities of this organisation which included rallies at Trafalgar Square and attending various workshops, forums, and conferences where he gave speeches as well as writing in various forms of media. George Padmore, a Pan-Africanist, author, and journalist from Trinidad, who was also in London from 1934 with Jomo Kenyatta mentioned the following in one of his memoirs:

> … in the 1930s [George Padmore] spent his days researching Africa in the chilling recesses of the British Museum, his evenings deliberating with C.L.R. James and Jomo Kenyatta, and his weekends organising protest rallies, hounding Marcus Garvey at Hyde Park Corner, or heckling the well-meaning condescension of liberals assembled for the latest Fabian Colonial Bureau conference… (Ballantyne, 2002).

Maloba (2017) further notes that apart from pamphlets that IASB published for mass distribution, it owned *The African Sentinel Journal* which was in the distribution in 1938 and 1939 and Kenyatta was a regular contributor.

By the time Kenyatta moved to London in 1930s, he was the editor of *Mwigwithania,* the KCA publication. Throughout his stay in Britain, he published articles in newspapers and various periodicals. Kenyatta and other Pan-Africanists attached significant importance to the mass media as a revolutionary tool in the African liberation struggle, envisioning the media as an excellent tool for political change and social, political, and economic growth (Faringer, 1991). In March 1930, Kenyatta wrote a letter to the editor of *The Times* where he reiterated on the petition he had made to the British colonial government - that British Colonial government should treat African workers with dignity and condemned the displacement of Africans from their farms. In 1934, he wrote

another letter to the editor in *Manchester Guardian* where he protested the appointment of two unofficial members to represent native interests in the Legislature in Kenya – of which none was African. He lamented that no one could represent the interests of Africans other than Africans themselves. He concluded by saying that until the issue of African representation was rightly settled, there would be no peace or prosperity in Africa.

Kenyatta's most radical publication was an article he wrote for Nancy Cunard's *The Negro Anthology* titled *Kenya*. Maloba (2017) reports that in the article, he lamented how Africans had been robbed of their land, and they were reduced to slaves. He went further to state that British imperialism in Kenya had become parasitic - that the wealth which Kenyans had produced went to the coffers and stomachs of the British imperialists and the white settlers, instead of being used for the development of the people. Between 1931 – 1937, Jomo Kenyatta also published in George Padmore's collection titled *The Negro Worker*. *The Negro Worker* became one of the most controversial and radical publications that dealt with black issues during that era (Ballantyne, 2002; Maloba, 2017). Just like *Muigwithania* – an official publication of KCA, *The Negro Worker* was an official publication of the *International Trade Union Committee of the Negro workers*. George Padmore, the editor of the publication, was a citizen of Trinidad and a radical pan-Africanist, who published many articles on anti-imperialism while living in Europe. Maloba (2017) states that *The Negro Worker* aimed at discussing issues of the Negro workers and connected them up with the struggles of workers all over the world. In August 1933, Kenyatta acted as a member of the editorial board of this publication, and his focus on the activities of British colonial rule in East Africa (Ballantyne, 2002).

In one of the articles by Kenyatta titled *The Situation in Kenya* that appeared in *The Negro Worker*, he outlined some of the details of the British oppression in Kenya. In another article in the same publication titled *An African Looks at British Imperialism* Kenyatta dismissed the appointment of several commissions by British Colonial office to deal with land issues in Kenya saying that they had not born any fruits since Africans continued to be exploited (Maloba, 2017). In addition to his writings in various publications, some of his speeches were also published in *The Negro Worker*. For instance, the 1934 conference in Britain titled *Negro*, Kenyatta gave a speech titled – *British Slave Rule in Kenya,* which was later published in *The Negro worker* (Maloba, 2017). In the

speech, he focussed on Kenya's *Kipande*[24] *A system* which was a dehumanising identity card that Africans were forced to carry on their necks.

In his writings and speeches, Kenyatta's messages included those of calling for justice for workers in Africa and the rest of the world, agitating for the return of the land belonging to Kenyans that the white settlers had taken, and fighting for freedom by ending the British Colonial rule in various colonies around the world. Having had experience with the media while working at KCA's *Mwigwithania*, Kenyatta found the tool to be crucial in pushing for social, political change.

On his (Kenyatta) return to Kenya, the colonial government was aware of his radical abilities and influence gained from his education in Britain and Russia, his writings, speeches as well as his interaction with scholars, and nationalists from various African nations, India, and the Caribbean. His return to Kenya in generated a lot of political unrest and the Mau Mau revolt heightened. The colonial government saw him as a threat and blamed him for the unrest that existed in Kenya at that time. His victory as the president of KAU (Kenya African Union) intensified arrest in Kenya which went on until 1952 when the colonial government declared a state of emergency in Kenya. Kenyatta and other five other nationalists and KAU leaders who included Bildad Kaggia, Kung'u Karumba, Fred Kubai, Paul Ngei, and Achieng' Oneko, were arrested, tried and imprisoned in Kapenguria. As mentioned earlier, Gakaara Wanjau's writings and other vernacular publications formed the core evidence of the Kapenguria six trial.

During the colonial era, the Mau Mau revolt became the most documented civil resistance movement in Kenya. However, in 1938, the Akamba[25] Destocking Revolt became another widely documented resistance movement (Gadsden, 1974). The case involved a protest by the Akamba people against the colonial government policy to destock their livestock which was over-grazing the Kamba Machakos reserve. This case was widely reported both in local publications as well as in the British media such as – *The Times*, *The Telegraph*, and *The Yorkshire Post* (Gadsden, 1974). Equally important, the Akamba community used their learned leaders such as Muindi Mbingu (Samuel Muindi), Elijah Kavulu, Isaac Mwalonzi, and Simon Kioko, who wrote petitions to the

[24] *Kipande* was a piece of tin about three inches long and two inches wide. The names and particulars were taken together with the fingerprints of the African, and the African had to carry this tied with a string around his neck.

[25] The Akamba ethnic group is one of the 42 recognized communities in Kenya that belongs to the Bantu speaking people. They are mainly found in three counties in Kenya – Machakos County, Kitui County, and Makueni county.

government. The leaders also led the Akamba community in a peaceful demonstration in Nairobi to make the colonial government reverse its decision. Gadsden further states that *The Manchester Guardian* covered the story again, when Kenyatta, who was by then living in the UK, commented about it.

> "… Kenyatta assured members of the KCA, that he was still working for his country, and that he had recently forwarded complaints (*To the colonial office*) from Wakamba (Akamba) tribesmen in Kenya regarding compulsory seizure and sale of their cattle, and the matter was "receiving attention." (Maloba, 2017, p. 60)

In the next section, I discuss the role of the media as a tool for activism in the post-independence era. In that period, I discuss the works of three Kenyan writers – Ngugi wa Thiongo, Koigi wa Wamwere and Gitobu Imanyara and how they used the media as a tool for pushing for social change. This historical account is important to show that the use of media for social change has a long history and helps in understanding why there is increased use of digital in Kenya in the current era.

4.4 Media Activism in Post-Independence Kenya

Kenya gained independence in 1963, and Jomo Kenyatta became the first President of Kenya. In the years that followed, there was the structuring of the government. The British colonial rule helped set up a nation based on the British government system. Kenyatta's government entered into various agreements with the British government and white settlers, especially when it came to land matters. Jomo Kenyatta amerced much wealth for himself and his friends. Hornsby (2012) noted that in the period after independence…

> Kenyatta was… developing his fortune. As prime minister and president, he was the recipient of many gifts and the subject of many requests for favours, and the enormous wealth of the Kenyatta family – which remained 30 years after his death – began in this period (p. 108)

On matters of land, there was an effort from the government to resettle squatters who had been displaced from their farms. The land was distributed in two ways – willing buyer, willing seller. The British colonial government helped Kenyatta's government to secure loans to pay off white

settlers. Although this was opposed by some politicians and some communities who wanted their ancestral land back, it sailed through smoothly.

In the same period after independence, there was a restructuring of power. The Kenya African National Union (KANU) that Kenyatta belonged to took power and formed government while the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) that Ronald Ngala and Oginga Odinga belonged formed the opposition. However, in 1964, KADU dissolved and joined Jomo Kenyatta's party, KANU to form government. The merger of the two parties was orchestrated by Tom Mboya – The then Justice minister, Secretary-General and founding member of KANU. Hornsby (2012) observed that Kenyatta's attitude to parliamentary opposition was aggressive. He argued that negative and destructive opposition was dangerous to democracy, and it could quickly lead to the destruction of the privileges and rights of the opposition itself. Further, Kenyatta's government did not accept open debate on political matters, including from the media, and it did not want unfettered access by politicians to the people. After the state of emergency was declared in 1952, the colonial government allowed only licensed political meetings and rallies to take place. Contrary to the expectation of many, Kenyatta's government did not relax this rule and licenses to hold political rallies could be refused for "political reasons" or even cancelled at the last minute.

Kenyatta's attitude towards the opposition leaders and parties affected the way the media operated in that era. Kenyatta's government inherited a single radio and a Tv broadcaster. Print journalism during this era was open, and several individuals owned their publications. However, after the state of emergency was declared, there was increased censorship by the colonial government, and many private publishers like Gakaara wa Wanjau closed their businesses. Hornsby (2012) observed the following with regards to the way the independent leaders viewed the media:

> The freedom of the press was far from guaranteed at independence. Legislation from 1960 gave the government significant powers over the media. The new elite warned the press that it must respect the government and cease to expose its internal divisions (p.76).

Repression of the media was therefore carried forward to the independent government from the colonial government. The media was a vital tool for development but also a potential threat to the new government (Mukhongo, 2015). Mbeke (2010) observed that Jomo Kenyatta and his nationalist colleagues were keenly aware of the might of the press, and they set out to manipulate

and control the media for propaganda purposes. In June of 1963, Tom Mboya, the Minister of Labour, orchestrated the burning of newspaper copies that were deemed critical of KANU and in July of that year, Achieng Oneko, the Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Tourism, announced that any attempt by the press to promote disunity, or slight Jomo Kenyatta and his government would not be tolerated (Hornsby, 2012). A Central Intelligence Unit (CIA) publication dated 6th December 1963, reported the following:

> Any criticism of the government by the press or the independent radio and television networks is certain to bring increased government control. Achieng Oneko, the minister of information and broadcasting, and tourism said in October (1963) that all media of information must uphold the activities, the plans, and the needs of the state to create the true African image (p. 6).

This must-have generated a deep fear not only within the press but also within the public and the fear of publicly challenging the independent leadership cropped in.

By 1970, several key issues had happened which shaped the political landscape of Kenya. Kenyatta had changed his style of leadership from a radical nationalist to conservative, capitalist, and bourgeois politics. This could have been because of his fear of plunging the country into further political unrest. This further led to repression of political parties such as Kenya People's Union (KPU) which collapsed. As earlier mentioned, the government, and especially those who held power did not entertain any form of criticism – the direction through which KPU was taking.

In the 1970s, there seemed to have been a general feeling of frustration from the Kenyan citizens since their expectation after *uhuru* (freedom) had not been met. There was a feeling that Jomo Kenyatta's government was returning the citizens to the darker days of colonialism rather than to a progressive and equal country. It is this piled up frustration that ignited another era of writing amongst a new crop of writers who were drawn from the University of Nairobi. This crop of writers begun to look for ways through which they could express themselves and give a political opinion even in a political environment that had become repressive.

In the next section, I discuss the works of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, a prominent post-colonial writer. I discuss how he used literary works to push for change in Kenya and contrast it with the works of nationalists before Kenya's independence.

4.4.1 Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o

One of the most prominent political and fictional authors of the post-independence era was Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. Ngũgĩ was a literature graduate from Makerere University in Uganda. He later taught at the University of Nairobi and is currently based at the United States of America. He grew up during the era of Mau Mau. In 1963, he authored his first play *The Black Hermit*, whose version was staged at Makerere University. In the same year, he began writing a column in the *Nation* newspaper titled "As I see it." Initially, he commended President Kenyatta for his stance on nationalism. Munene (2012) states that by September 1963, Ngũgĩ was no longer praising Kenyatta but instead, begun asking tough questions on the policies Jomo Kenyatta's independence government was adopting. From then, he never turned back.

In 1964 Ngũgĩ authored his first fictional novel *Weep Not Child*[26]. This novel explored the negative effects of British imperialism in Kenya. In the novel, Ngũgĩ was extremely critical of the colonial rule in Kenya. This novel served as a memory of the Mau Mau struggle to regain freedom from the colonialists. He also criticised Africans who were oppressing other Africans just the same way the colonialists did. In this fictional novel, Kamau, the brother to the main character in the novel – Njoroge, takes a hard stance against black people who try to emulate the ways of the white man. He says "That's why you at times hear Father say that he would rather work for a white man. A white man is a white man. However, a black man trying to be a white man is bad and harsh" (p. 22).

His second novel *The River Between* was set during the colonial period, and it tells a story of a young leader – *Waiyaki*, who was struggling to unite two villages – *Kameno* and *Mukuyu*, which had been separated by differences in faith. The adults of the two villages hated each other, and this led to further separation. Through fictional writing, Ngũgĩ narrates a story of the colonial days when Africans were displaced from their land to give space to the white settlers. This story is also a premonition of what was to happen in post-colonial Kenya – deep-rooted ethnic and political divisions.

[26] Weep Not, Child integrates Gikuyu mythology and the ideology of nationalism that serves as a catalyst for much of the novel's action. The novel explores the negative aspects of colonialism and imperialism.

Ngũgĩ adopted several ways of resistance. First, he changed his name from James Ngũgĩ to Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and denounced all colonial ways. He also began writing in his native language. Some of the books he authored in Agikuyu language included *Caitaani mutharaba-Ini* (Devil on the Cross, 1980), *Ngaahika Ndeenda: Ithaako ria ngerekano* (I Will Marry When I Want, co-authored with Ngugi wa Mirii 1982), *Matigari ma Njiruungi* (The remains of Njiruungi) 1986 and *Mũrogi wa Kagogo (*Wizard of the crow, 2004*)*. Ngũgĩ's writings in the post-independence era focussed or had an overriding theme of challenging colonial attitude and ways of thinking as well as a representation of Africans at a crossroad in the aftermath of colonial rule. To date, Ngũgĩ remains active as a writer in decolonisation. His writings include novels, plays, memoirs, essays, non-fiction work, and short stories. Equally important, in 1976, he played a key role in setting up *Kamiriithu Community Education and Cultural Centre,* a community centre that also had a travelling theatre club which was inclined to celebrating African languages in theatrical performances. The group also performed plays with themes on pressing issues of that era. One year after the establishment of the community centre, Ngũgĩ was detained for a year without trial. His play *Ngaahika Ndeenda* had provoked the then vice-President Daniel Moi and his novel *Petals of Blood* (1977) talked about the post-independence issues in Kenya. The group was consequently banned in early 1982, and the structures of the centre were torched down by government forces.

Ngũgĩ's writings drive several ideologies which are still relevant in today's post-colonial studies. In this context, Ngũgĩ uses the media (literary works) to push for change within African societies. He regards literature as a valuable tool for activism. Some of the ideologies in his writings are as follows. In his non-fictional essay - *Decolonising the mind*, Ngũgĩ advocated for a change from the colonial mentality and returned to our African way of doing things including the use of African Languages. He is against cultural imperialism and regards it as enslavement (Amoko, 2010; Wa Thiong'o, 1981). In his novel *Petals of Blood*, he criticises how free Kenyans (especially the nationalists) carried forth oppression styles gotten from colonial masters and perpetuated it on fellow Africans in the post-independence era. Amoko (2010) mentions that in *The River Between* and *Weep Not Child*, Ngũgĩ pushes for the restoration of African Culture, instead of seeing it as being inferior.

> The early novels, especially - *The River Between* and *Weep Not, Child*, examine the use of traditional Gikuyu elites made of European education, which brought both

> liberal concepts of human rights and the technologies of progress and modernisation but at the same time was invested with a racist ideology that insisted on Africans' innate primitiveness and inferiority to Europeans and European Enlightenment culture (p. 29).

Ngũgĩ's way of writing was different from Jomo Kenyatta's style of writing. The similarity was just that they used their writing to push for change. Kenyatta's style was more radical and directly critical of the colonial government and the injustices that they continued to commit. Ngũgĩ, on the other hand, used fictional writings, metaphors, and a coded language to pass his message. His motivation for using metaphors and coded language was to conceal criticism and avoid being bluntly critical of a government that had grown so sensitive. So, the style changed from being direct (With Kenyatta) to that of being indirect (With Ngugi). Ngugi's writings are, however, like Gakaara wa Wanjau. While Gakaara wa Wanjau criticised the injustices of the colonial government while concealing his criticism using vernacular language (Agikuyu), Ngũgĩ used the same vernacular language to recall life in the colonial period as well as condemning injustices by the new liberation government.

4.4.2 Koigi wa Wamwere

Another prominent writer was Koigi wa Wamwere[27], a politician, and the member of parliament in the 1970s. In an interview with him for this research, he mentions the following as his motivation for joining politics.

> **Koigi**: My quest for being part of the liberation struggle was born while I was still in the United States. After comparing what I had seen there and what was happening in Kenya, I was convinced that despite Kenya's independence, we had not earned any democracy or freedom. Moreover, that stage needed to be completed and could only be done by us. In a weird turn of events, I abandoned my school and decided to come back.

[27] He was an MP for Nakuru North (Now Subukia Constituency). In the informed consent for this research, Mr. Koigi gave permission for his name to be used in the final research report.

I was at Cornel University doing business administration specialising in hotel management and tourism. So, I asked myself, how those courses were going to be important for the struggle for democracy and I concluded that they were not going to be helpful and therefore I decided to do what I had to do. I was convinced that some people had to consciously join the struggle to make Mau Mau struggle a success. The people in power could not salvage this freedom.

So, when I arrived here, I asked myself what platform I was going to use to realise my goals. And I remembered I had taken a course in journalism as one of my humanities. So, I decided that I was going to look for a position in one of the newspapers as a columnist. I was lucky that I was given this position by *Sunday Post* whose editor by then was Salim Lone. The paper had a very progressive outlook. Every weekend, I would have an article in the *Sunday Post,* and it would cause many controversies. Many people thought that it was too much for human rights, some government officers also thought that I was too much for workers' rights, and of course, the police thought that I was using the platform to make trouble. So, every time the article would appear, the police would visit me. And it reached a point where I knew for sure that the police would come for me. So, I would go to the police station before they even came to me. And I would tell them that they needed not to come for me, and I would explain to them what I meant to say in the article.

[Koigi wa Wamwere, interview, 7th January 2019]

He belonged to a group christened *The Seven Bearded Sisters*[28] that included, Abuya Abuya[29], Onyango Midika[30], Mwashengu wa Mwachofi[31], James Orengo[32], Lawrence Sifuna[33], Chibule wa Tsuma[34]. Others included George Anyona[35], Chelagat Mutai[36] , and Wasike Ndobi[37]. Most of these individuals were graduates of the University of Nairobi, and some were leaders of the infamous - SONU[38] at the University of Nairobi. This group formed the backbenchers in parliament and opposed retrogressive government policies. Chelagat Mutai was an editor of *The Platform*[39]. However, she was suspended from after running articles that were critical of President Moi's government.

Koigi wa Wamwere was a writer, a journalist, and an activist. He was arrested on several occasions to what was false allegations of owning weapons, subversive publications, illegally entering a security zone, and attempted robbery with violence (wa Wamwere, 1988).

Unlike Ngugi, his writings were non-fictional but political, and they revolved around pushing for socio-political change in Kenya. Some of his titles included: *A Woman Reborn* (1980), *Conscience on Trial: Why I Was Detained*: *Notes of a Political Prisoner in Kenya* (1988), *People's Representative and the Tyrants* (1992), *Dream of freedom* (1997), *Tears of The Heart: A Portrait of Racism in Norway and Europe* (2000), *I Refuse to Die: My Journey for Freedom* (2003),

[28] The name was coined by the then Kenyan attorney general Charles Njonjo in 1981. He picked it from the 1975 book *The Seven Sisters: The Great Oil Companies and the World they Shaped* by Anthony Sampson (1974). The book is about how seven of the biggest oil companies in the world conspired to overthrow governments. Njonjo used the word 'bearded' to draw a comparison with Karl Marx, as he saw these MPs to uphold Marxist ideologies.

[29] He was an MP for Kitutu East Constituency in the current Nyamira County

[30] He was the MP for Nyando now Muhoroni Constituency in the current Kisumu County

[31] He was MP for Wundanyi Constituency in the current Taita Taveta County

[32] He was the MP for Ugenya Constituency in the current Siaya County

[33] He was the MP for Bumula Constituency in the current Bungoma County

[34] He was the MP for Kaloleni Constituency in the current Kilifi County

[35] George Anyona the MP for Kitutu East in Nyamira County

[36] Chelagat Mutai the MP for Eldoret North in Uasin Gishu County

[37] Wasike Ndobi the MP for Lurambi Constituency in Kakamega County

[38] SONU – Student Organization of University of Nairobi

[39] The Platform was a student's magazine at the University of Nairobi

Negative Ethnicity: From Bias to Genocide (2003), and *Towards Genocide in Kenya: The Curse of Negative Ethnicity* (2008).

Just like Gakaara wa Wanjau's detention diary - *Mwandiki wa Mau Mau Ithaamirio-ini (Mau Mau Author in Detention* and Ngugi's book *Detained: A writer's prison Diary*, which he wrote while in Kamiti Maximum Prison[40], Koigi documents brutal treatment and other experiences while in prison in *Conscience on Trial: Why I Was Detained*: *Notes of a Political Prisoner in Kenya* (1988). Billington (2009), a novelist, and author of *Inside Poetry: voices from prison,* offers the following reason prison literature does exist

> Prisoners have time - as never before in their lives - to think and reflect on who they are, where they are and why they have ended up there. Locked up in their cell with their thoughts, they often find themselves in emotional freefall. Moreover, part of that is searching for a way to express their feelings. All it takes is a nudge in the right direction... and they start writing (2009)

Besides, researchers such as Gready, (1993) who has done extensive studies on prison writing in South Africa during the Apartheid era, argues that being a political prisoner means people writing about you through various ways and all through the stages of prosecution. During this time, the sense of self of the prisoner is destabilised, and pain is visible and realised in writing and converted into state power. Gready (1993) goes further to say that "Prisoners write to restore a sense of self and world, to reclaim the truth from the apartheid lie, to seek empowerment in an oppositional power of writing by writing against the official text of imprisonment" (p. 489). Gready (1993) further argues that Robben Island became a symbol of political resistance for political activists. Similarly, Kamiti Maximum Prison, where most of the political prisoners were detained – including Ngugi and Koigi wa Wamwere also became a symbol of resistance. These spaces (prisons) are meant to become correctional facilities. However, for the political prisoners, they became spaces to mobilise and inspire struggles for change. Therefore, using such detention texts becomes a form of resistance for political prisoners such as Koigi wa Wamwere, Ngugi and Gakaara.

[40] Kamiti maximum prison is a Maximum-security prison located near Nairobi in Kenya for hardcore criminals.

4.4.3 Gitobu Imanyara

Just like in the period before independence (the 1940s), the rise of alternative press was witnessed in the early 1980s through 1990s. Njogu & Middleton (2009) state that with some external support, the elites founded alternative press to counter docile local mainstream media and to also fight the injustices that were being perpetrated by the government. Gitobu Imanyara was one of the prominent writers, editor, and publisher of this era, who, up to now, is still an active writer in the current liberation struggles. He is a human rights lawyer, journalist, and politician. He founded the *Nairobi Law monthly* in 1987, a publication that crusaded for the restoration of democracy (Imanyara, 1992). Initially, this publication catered for a small group of Kenya's legal fraternity. Imanyara (1992) stated that the idea of starting Nairobi Law Monthly sprang when he was serving a prison sentence at Kamiti Maximum Prison in 1983. In an interview for this research study, he said.

> I did not train as a journalist. I trained as a lawyer and as a practising lawyer, I experienced how the law was being used very negatively to settle scores to achieve a political purpose and as to a tool of control. I became such a victim and found myself in solitary confinement at Kamiti Maximum prison, where I had been sent to prevent or punish me for representing Kenya Airforce rebels. That was the time the government wanted to destroy my legal career. I was imprisoned for two years. During that time lots and lots of the officers that had been jailed wrongfully by the courts-martial. In prison, I also met many prisoners who were in prison for no offence at all. They had disagreed with somebody or some political person had engineered their arrest and had them imprisoned with fixed charges. The legal process and the law were being abused. That is how *Nairobi law monthly* was born. I promised myself that if I do get out of prison, I would start a publication that championed against human rights abuses through enlightenment of others. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the coming of new world order, the pro-democracy movements sprung up all over the world, including China. So, this publication could show how young people, with the opening of political spaces, could exercise their democratic rights. This publication continued to champion for that cause. Many times, I was arrested, I was detained, the publication was banned – Actually, it was the only publication whose prescription order read that all 'past, present, and future publications had been banned.'

[Interview with Gitobu Imanyara, 15th January 2019]

In early 1990, he was arrested again after authoring an article titled *The Historical Debate: Law, Democracy and Multi-party Politics in Kenya.* The government gave the following reasons for his arrest:

> You have been involved in subversive activities aimed at undermining and overthrowing the government of Kenya as by law established. 'You are the editor or proprietor, or publisher of a Nairobi magazine known as The Nairobi Law Monthly in which you have repeatedly written and published articles which denounce, ridicule and discredit the government of Kenya, its activities and its established constitutional leadership. You have given lectures or speeches at Limuru Theological College on diverse occasions and on subjects which constitute or amount to downright subversion against the government of Kenya as by law established. You have aligned yourself to and associated with known anti-government characters and personalities such as Kenneth Matiba, Charles Rubia and others and have worked in concert with them to lay the groundwork for the formation or creation of another political party contrary to the provision of the Constitution of the country. You have participated with the same said characters, in a series of illegal meetings in Nairobi and at these meetings, you together with those characters, have discussed, promoted, and mapped out plans and strategies to overthrow the government of Kenya by unlawful means including the use of violence. You have conducted yourselves in total disregard and disrespect of the Head of State and have participated in activities calculated to create disaffection, discontent, ill-will, hatred and hostility amongst the people of Kenya. Now, therefore, because of these anti-government activities and in the interest of preservation of public security, your detention has become necessary.' (Imanyara, 1992, p. 22).

Although Nairobi Law monthly has since changed ownership and is currently owned by lawyer Ahmednasir Abdullahi, it has stood the test of time as a place for socio-political debates. It

continues to challenge oppressive ideologies and laws of the government, critiquing the government, fighting for justice and democratic rights of citizens, and discussing other societal matters. Apart from the monthly publication, there is an active website for it.

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Fig. 4.1 Cover images of The Nairobi Law Monthly Magazine (Downloaded from *http://www.nairobilawmonthly.com* on 26th November 2018)

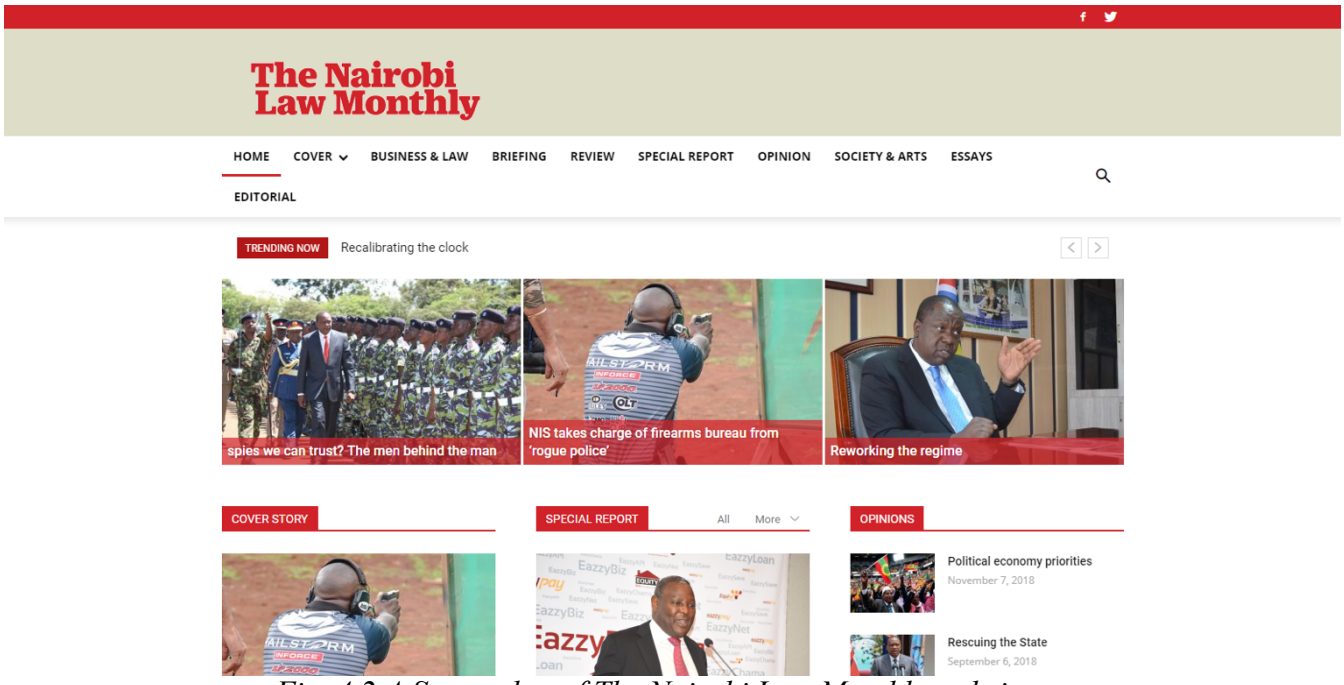


Fig. 4.2 A Screenshot of The Nairobi Law Monthly website

Gitobu Imanyara used the media to push for socio-political change. He fought for the return of multi-party democracy in Kenya in the 1990s. Together with other members of the Law Society of Kenya (LSK), Gitobu remained steadfast in the fight for democracy in Kenya. *Nairobi Law Monthly* which he later renamed *African Law Review* became an important platform for expressing resistance and dissent on Daniel Moi's government. In Press (2015), David Makali a Kenyan journalist described Gitobu as follows:

> Imanyara became one of the key sources of energy in the nonviolent resistance. He recruited an impressive array of contributors to his *Nairobi Law Monthly*, whose articles defiantly challenged the legitimacy of the Moi regime and its pretence at a just legal system. *Nairobi Law Monthly* was the primary forum and weapon and tool for the movement for human rights in this country for ... about five years: 1987 to about 1992. The more they punished Gitobu Imanyara, the more the resistance grew ... Gitobu, for me, was very, very, very courageous a glaring example of somebody who was acting as an individual. He suffered a lot for it (p. 228)

In later years, Gitobu founded another magazine *The platform* which acts as a platform for alternative voices and focuses on contemporary issues of law, justice, and society.

Other alternative press that joined *Nairobi law Monthly* and 1980s and 1990s and championed for pro-democracy included *Finance*, which was owned and edited by Njehu Gatabaki. Initially, the magazine had aimed at targeting businesspeople for advertisement, but later he changed his editorial policy and assumed a stance of crusading against the oppressive President Moi's regime. *Society* was another alternative press which was owned by Pius Nyamora. Although Pius Nyamora initially aimed at publishing light societal issues, he changed his editorial policy in 1990 and begun championing for pro-democracy rights (Kimani & Middleton, 2009). In 1985, NCCK founded another publication called *Beyond* which was edited by Bidan Mbugua. Bidan Mbugua's publication called for the promotion of religious life and he also condemned ungodly behaviour such as tribalism, injustices, and social immorality. He was particularly critical of the March 1988 election where there was massive vote rigging. Press (2015) noted the following with regards, to Bidan Mbugua's magazine.

> The magazine sold out quickly as Kenyans not used to seeing government fraud so boldly exposed rushed to grab even the additional copies printed before the

> government banned the sale later the day of publication. Many were being arrested for carrying the Beyond magazine. So, it was a big, big – the magazine created a very big crisis in the country. And with that reaction, it is like the tide [of resistance to the regime] that you could not stop was born. (p. 214)

Mbugua was jailed for this and the publication was banned. Kimani & Middleton, (2009) note that the banning of *Beyond* made the *Financial Review* which had been founded in 1987 and edited by Peter Kareithi emerge from the shadows. Initially, it had been an occasional supplement of Hillary Ng'weno's Weekly review.

Amid government censorship, these alternative presses became important in the repeal of the section 2 (a) of the constitution that allowed for the reintroduction of multi-party politics in Kenya. The repeal of the section 2(a) also set pace for the fight for a new constitution which was realized in the year 2010. Gitobu Imanyara credits the alternative press and the resilience of the second liberation nationalists in the freedom of expression that Kenyans enjoy today. He mentions that.

> The media as a medium of expression and communication is crucial, it is critical not only at that time, but even now because it is a communication that enables people to enjoy that inherent values as human beings and without ability to communicate. And not just print media but electronic and other forms of media. If you limit the human person to communicate and express themselves, you limit the inherent value of a human being. There are major challenges that the internet has brought, particularly regarding fake media, criminal activities, terrorism, so these are challenges that we must face. We do not fix them by banning them because you cannot suppress an idea whose time has come.
>
> [Interview with Gitobu Imanyara, 15th January 2019]

In later years, Gitobu Imanyara became the Central Imenti (Meru County) Member of Parliament for 10 years between 1997-2002 and 2007 – 2013. For the last 30 years, he has continued to fight for social justice in Kenya through the courts and through publishing. On several occasions in the recent past, he has faced government censorship. In 2011, his The Nairobi Law Monthly offices were vandalized by what Gitobu Imanyara termed as government forces (Shiundu, 2011). He is

described by many as a fearless activist who on several occasions has afflicted the government openly, including being in a lawsuit with individuals such as Deputy President William Ruto and former First Lady the late Lucy Kibaki (Nyaundi, 2017).

It is also important to note here that there were a host of other publications that were considered seditious for exposing the injustices of the Kenyatta and Moi government in the 70s, 80, and 90s. For instance, a publication named *Pambana* (Swahili for struggle) owned by the December 12th[41] Movement was banned and its editor journalist Wangondu Kariuki was arrested and charged for four and a half years. According to Index on Censorship 6/82, it noted that "Weeks before the hearing of Kariuki's case, the President of Kenya (President Moi) and other members of the government had made public statements calling for the conviction of those found in possession of underground papers like Pambana" (p. 34). Wa Kinyatti (2008) also noted that other revolutionary documents that were printed and distributed secretly in Kenya and abroad, included *Moi's reign of Terror* (1983), *University Destroyed, Moi Crowns Ten Years of Government Terror in Kenya* (1983), *Kenya: Register of Resistance* (1986), *Struggle for Democracy in Kenya* (1987) among others.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter aimed at highlighting the importance of the media in activism in Kenya. Even though mainstream media also contributed to socio-political change in post-independence Kenya, the discussion in this chapter revolved around alternative press and its role in socio-political change in pre- and post-independence Kenya. As noted in this chapter, the missionary and the Indian owned publications established the media as tools for driving change (activism) in Kenya. Apart from offering education to nationalists, which helped them read and write their issues in a better way, the missionaries offered a space for articulation of their issues in their publications. They (missionaries) also mentored the nationalists and passed editorial positions to them. For instance, Bishop Henry Okullu took over as the editor of the *Target* from Rev. John Schoffield. On the other hand, Indian publishers not only offered technical skills of operating publishing machine, but they

[41] *December 12 was the date in 1963 when Kenya achieved formal independence from Britain*

also provided a space to the nationalists in their publications that ensured socio-political change. Their support for the African nationalists in publishing their voices was essential in forging a united front against the colonial administration in Kenya. As noted in this chapter, the Indians had a long history of being in East Africa especially after they were contracted to build the East African Railway. The Indians and the other Kenyans faced the same wrath of colonialism both at home in India and in their new location in East Africa when they came to provide labour for the imperial government. Therefore, their collective experience made them begin to form collective political actions. The theory of collective identity and collective action discussed in chapter two of this research helps in understanding why individuals or groups of people with similar experiences come together to form a movement or a political action.

In the nationalist's publications section, I discussed the two prominent authors – Jomo Kenyatta and Gakaara wa Wanjau. While there were many other writers at that time who contributed immensely to pushing for change, their choice in this discussion was made because of their writing proficiency and an attempt to show how geographical location of the authors did not hinder them from fighting colonial regimes. These two authors, together with the missionary and Indian owned publications formed what Keck & Sikkink (1998) called transnational advocacy network, discussed in chapter two, to fight common enemy. A transnational advocacy network includes those actors working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and dense exchanges of information and services (Keck & Sikkink 1998). These two authors wrote many publications and Jomo Kenyatta himself participated in many anti-colonial forums while he was living in the UK. Although these authors had an uncoordinated network, they helped in multiplying the opportunity for dialogue and exchange between the nationalists and the oppressive colonial regime that led to independence.

In the last section of this chapter, I highlighted issues on media activism in the post-independence era. Just like elsewhere in the world, post-independence period presented a new set of grievances, this time perpetrated by the independence government. There were elevated expectations at independence from Kenyans since they had regained power from the oppressive colonial government. Authors such as Ngugi wa Thiongo had begun to speak positively in his writings about the independence government but within a short stint, he changed and begun criticizing the government. Koigi wa Wamwere and Gitobu Imanyara considered their writings as important tools

for exposing social and political injustices that were being peddled by the post-independence government. It was ironical that Jomo Kenyatta, who had attached significant importance to the mass media as a revolutionary tool in the African liberation struggle, silenced those who used the same tool to criticize him and his government. The same oppressive trend was followed by his predecessor Daniel Moi, whose *Nyayo* philosophy initially entailed following the footsteps of Jomo Kenyatta.

This historical review is important in understanding the current wave of digital activism in Kenya. First, it highlights the importance of the media as a tool for socio-political change. Secondly, digital activism is pegged on the ideologies of alternative media – where alternative media represents the interests of the oppressed. Jeppesen (2015) stated that alternative media share an anti-authoritarian ideology and emphasize collective autonomy which also supports the idea that liberation of one person is the liberation for all. Therefore, alternative media are organized and rooted within "decentred liberatory social movements" emphasizing values such as collective decision making and "horizontalism." Lastly, this chapter was important in laying an understanding that a culture of resistance in Kenya started in pre-independence period and has continued to the current era. While the current era of resistance uses sophisticated media tools for social change, some of the grievances by citizens such as poor governance, government repression, corruption, etc. have remained the same for a long time. In the next chapters, I begin to discuss the three case studies in this research, beginning with #OccupyPlayground, then #OccupyParliament and lastly #IEBCMustGo.

CHAPTER 5

#OccupyPlayGround

- *This Land Belongs to Lang'ata Road Primary School –*[42]

5.1 Introduction

Lang'ata Road Primary School is located in Lang'ata sub-county of the Nairobi County, Kenya's capital, and the largest metropolitan centre in Kenya. The school is located in the southern side of Nairobi's central business district, approximately 4 kilometres away. The school is closer to Lang'ata estate, Kibera, South C, and Nairobi west estate. Although there are no details of when the school was established, the school sits on a land of prime value next to Weston hotel and opposite Wilson Airport. According to various documents examined for this research, the school obtained a title deed for two pieces of land in the 1970s and was amalgamated in 1974 (LSK, 2015).

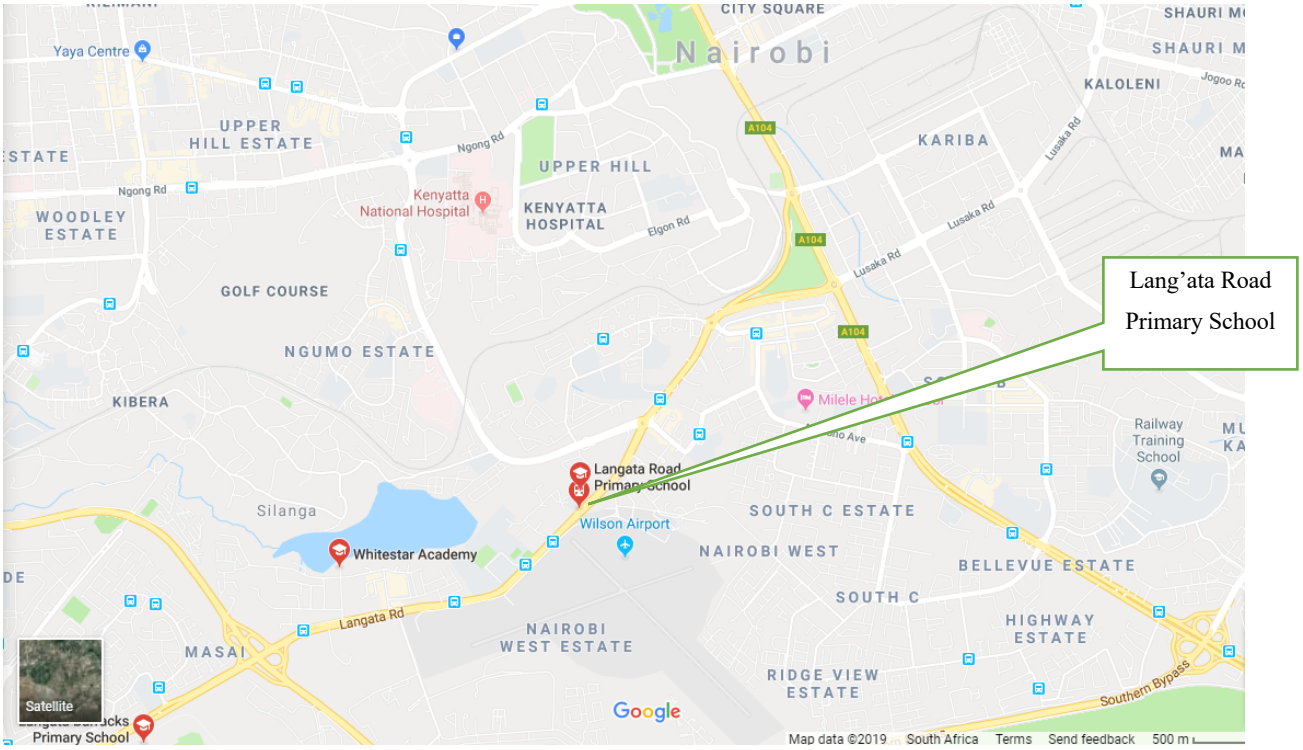


Fig 5.1 A google map showing the location of Lang'ata Road Primary School and the surrounding areas

[42] Writings on a signpost on the school playground of Langata Primary School

Between 1984 and 1989, however, some individuals started the process of claiming the land where the hotel is located and the land where the school playground was located. In a small documentary aired on Citizen tv in 2010 showing the everyday life of William Ruto, he (William Ruto) took the interviewer to a construction site where Weston hotel was being built and mentioned the hotel as one of his investment (Alai, 2015). Citizen TV originally produced the video and posted it on YouTube. The station pulled it down during the #OccupyPlayground movement, but it was later reposted by a YouTube blogger – Robert Alai.

The construction of the hotel was completed some months later and begun its operations. In 2014, the hotel management, operating under the name of Airport View Estate took over the adjacent school playground. It fenced it off using a concrete wall to use it as a parking lot for its guests. Earlier, the company had sought approval from Nairobi City County to contract a shopping mall on the site, and this was granted.



Fig 5.2 A closer view of Lang'ata Road Primary School, the playground and adjacent hotel (Source Google maps satellite version)

It is this land between the school and the hotel, which was used as a playground for the school that brought this controversy that grabbed international attention. Further reports showed that the land where the 5-star hotel is located had been grabbed from Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA). The attempt to grab the school playground was the beginning of #OccupyPlayground. Before I delve into the details of #OccupyPlayGround, it is essential to mention that at that time (2015), William Ruto denied publicly, in several public forums, that he owned the hotel. It was until June of that year (2015) in a tv interview that he admitted to having an interest in the hotel and owned shares in it together with others whom he did not mention (Citizen TV, 2015). In February 2019, however, William Ruto admitted again that he owned the hotel in a televised BBC tv talk show – *The Hardtalk*, hosted by Dernières Nouvelles. In the same month, the National Land Commission directed William Ruto to pay KCAA for the Weston Hotel land at the 2019 market value (Nouvelles, 2019).

Since 2015, the land ownership where the hotel is located has continued to elicit debate and has become a point of reference of land grabbing by government officials. In late 2018, there was a rallying call by members of the public on social media to demolish sub-standard buildings and buildings which had been built on public land in Nairobi. This was after several sub-standard buildings collapsed in Eastland's part of Nairobi killing several people. Among those demolished were two malls – Taj Mall and Nakumatt Ukay Mall which were built on a road reserve and a wetland[43] respectively. This prompted a massive debate on social media to demolish Weston hotel, which was built on government land belonging to KCAA.

As the debate on the land where Weston hotel is located ranges on to date, the attempted grabbing of the school playground died off but formed the focus of this study. In the next section, I begin by introducing the emergence of #OccupyPlayGround, morphing from an event to a movement. After that, I will discuss the socio-political issues that shaped that movement.

[43] According to The Kenya Environmental Management and Co-ordination (wetlands, River banks, lake shores and sea shore management) Regulations, of 2009 "wetlands" are areas permanently or seasonally flooded by water where plants and animals have become adapted; and include swamps, areas of marsh, peat land, mountain bogs, bank of rivers, vegetation, areas of impeded drainage or brackish, salt or alkaline; including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed 6 maters. It also incorporates riparian and coastal zones adjacent to the wetlands. These areas are protected areas owned by the government of Kenya.

5.2 The emergence of #OccupyPlayGround

Six months before this event happened, a task force on the improvement of the performance of public primary schools and transition rate from primary to secondary education in Nairobi City County published a report of their findings. In the report, they observed that "...out of every ten visited schools, one had a complaint on encroachment either by private developers, religious organisations, and/or illegal settlements" (Nairobi City County, 2014). The report further showed that encroachment had been done by private developers, religious organisations, and illegal settlements. Houghton Irũngũ [44], in an interview for this research, narrated that a team of activists had bumped into this report and decided to follow up on the matter. As they were doing this, they overheard that part of Lang'ata Road Primary School land was being fenced off. They decided to reach out to the National Lands Commission[45] and reported the matter to the police. He further narrated the following in detail:

> I was in a team of activists who would just come across a report of a task force indicating that various interests had grabbed many schools in Nairobi. This issue was contained in a report that had been commissioned by Evans Kidero, the then Governor of Nairobi, where he set up a litigation task force to look at the quality of education, and sports in the county of Nairobi. When we received the report, it was shocking to learn is that over 200 primary schools in Nairobi – about one in 10 schools were in legal contestation over their land. One in four did not know the boundaries anymore, because the level of encroachment had been so high.
> It is at this point that we began to think about doing something about this that we saw the issue of Lang'ata Road Primary school come up. The first thing I did was to send a team to the ground. We met with teachers and the local Member of County Assembly (MCA[46]). We also met with the police and confirmed that, the land which had been fenced off by big stone wall was fenced off over Christmas period, under very suspicious circumstances. We then reached out to other organizations that

[44] Irũngũ Houghton currently serves as Executive Director for Amnesty International Kenya. Between 2013-2017, he was an Executive Director for Chapter One Kenya and the Society for International Development (SID). While working at SID, him and his colleagues established an influential public interest campaigning program and several alliances. The program expanded the right to association and protected public school land and public resources from corruption. In the informed consent form, he mentioned that it was ok for his name to be used in this research study.

[45] The National Land Commission is an independent government commission which was set up to, amongst other things, manage public land on behalf of the national and county governments, initiate investigations into present or historical land injustices and recommend appropriate redress, in addition to monitoring and playing oversight role over land use planning throughout the country.

[46] MCA – Member of County Assembly is the ward representative and is a member of County Assembly

> were concerned about this issue and decided to do a tweet chat [47]on a Friday about it. We had a tweet chat for about an hour on this issue, and it generated a huge conversation.
> From that, it looked quite clear that the issue had touched a nerve among Kenyans. We decided that we would reach out to the National Lands Commission, and to the Ministry of Lands. We also decided to pursue the matter at the level of the cabinet secretary. The chairperson of National Lands Commission received the information and decided to go to the school and do an investigation on the matter.
> They went to the school, and we made sure the media supported them, and the media captured them talking to the headteacher and walking past the playground. So, they declared that the land belonged to the school and gave the instructions to the land grabbers to remove the wall. What we found very strange is that if they were clear that the land is allocated to the school, then, the first the thing they should have done is taken action by stopping the encroachment.
>
> *(Interview with Irũngũ , 17th January 2018)*

After the schools were reopened following the 2014 December holidays, the pupils found out that their school playground had been grabbed by the proprietor of the hotel to be repurposed as a parking space. Although the story had initially been reported by *Daily Nation* newspaper in December 2014, it did not elicit any action. Initial reports in the media also indicated that Nairobi City County officials had approved construction of a shopping mall on the land where the playground was located. Before this approval, the applicants, Airport View Housing Company, had requested the City-County of Nairobi officials to state whether there was any existing ownership wrangle on the piece of land. The Council officials stated that there was no existing ownership dispute and went ahead to request KCAA to advise on the height restriction of structures near airports. Attempts by the headteacher of the school, Mr Peter Mugo, to stop the grabbing of the land was met with resistance from the gang hired to protect the construction of the wall and the owners of the hotel. *Daily Nation* reported him saying, "It has been extremely stressful for me. I have been intimidated and told to keep off this matter. The school has all the documents, but City Hall carried out approvals" (Guguyu, 2015).

It was for these reasons that activists started organising a protest on January 19th, 2015. The initial plan by the activist was a call for donation of playing items for the school children, reclaim the grabbed playground and play on it. The activists planned to bring down the wall that had fenced

[47] A tweet chat allows users to chat with each other on a topic using a specified hashtag on a fixed day and time, enabling users to come together on Twitter to engage in a conversation (Singh & John, 2015)

off the playground. The mobilisation for this event was done on social media (Twitter and Facebook) and the hashtag #OccupyPlayground had been highly publicised on social media from early January. An event created by Boniface Mwangi on Facebook read as follows:

> *Lang'ata Road Primary School playground has been grabbed by a group of known professional land grabbers acting on behalf of a very senior politician in the Jubilee government (The ruling party). The grabbing took place over the Christmas holiday when around 50 young men were hired from Kibera slums to guard construction workers who worked day and night to fence off the school playground. A frontman in the grabbing was also involved in the 2010 Lang'ata Cemetery scandal where taxpayers lost 260 million shillings.*
>
> *A school playground is a necessity, not a privilege. This is a blatant infringement upon the rights of the pupils and the community. It is illegal to build a school without a playground according to city by-laws and if this school property is successfully grabbed, the school runs the risk of closure by the same county government that has allowed the grabbing to take place. The school board, which is made up of civil servants, has been threatened by senior people in government and its members warned that they will lose their jobs if they keep insisting the land has been grabbed.*
>
> *The future of the pupils is at risk and their innocence has been violated by the insatiable greed of the owners of Weston Hotel which itself is built on grabbed land. We call on Kenyans to boycott Weston Hotel and all those who are linked to the land grab.*
>
> *On Monday 19th January we shall go to Lang'ata Primary School to donate sports equipment at Lang'ata Primary School and play on the grabbed playground. The playthings we will carry with us shall be donated to the school. Spread the word and join us on the material day and bring something to donate.*
>
> *Scheduled games:*
>
> *· Football, Rounders, Kati, Bladder, Bano, Hopscotch, Chobo, Shake, 3 sticks, Bendings, Kamare, Mufara*

The Facebook event invitation had attracted over 900 confirmations of attendance. On the day of the event, the mobilisation had not worked well, and one distraught participant of this study had this to say:

> ***Respondent A***: … when I got back from dropping my kids to another school, I came back, and I was hoping to get many people given that there was a massive online campaign saying we must take action, we must do this and that. The teachers themselves had been told that [the] security situation is not good because a big person had been involved in the land case. Even the principal was being threatened. So, I arrived there, and I found few people – Irũngũ , Bonnie, - a countable number and I was wondering what went wrong? So, the issue (agenda) was there, the media picked it up coz of the big man involved, but [those]

> who were supposed to be there were not there. Maybe they were cheering and checking online when the teargas and the rest would be thrown.
>
> *(Interview with Respondent A, 5th January 2018).*

The low turnout of the event could have been the result of several factors. While many had expressed interest in attending, most preferred sitting back and join the conversation online instead of taking part in the street protest. However, dozens of armed police officers with riot gear and dogs had been deployed early that morning to guard the property against destruction. According to an LSK (2015) report, part of the reasons why the police were in large numbers was that they were expecting aggression from the nearby Kibera slums. The few activists who turned up mobilised the pupils during the 10am break, together with their teachers, some parents, two politicians (Area MP and MCA), whose playground had been grabbed, to reclaim it. They began to push down the wall with their hands in full presence of the police. Part of the wall fell, but before they could access the playground, the police lobbed tear gas at the pupils to disperse them. In the event, a confrontation ensued between the protesters and the police. Ten pupils were injured as a result and were rushed to the hospital. A police officer also injured and two of the activists were arrested. Hundreds of others choked from the teargas fumes. Two activists – Boaz Waruku and Houghton were arrested and detained by police.

As this was going on, images of the protesting kids started circulating online and reports showed that five pupils had been hospitalised (Feeney, 2015). This event elicited a huge debate online and other media sources. There was an outburst of anger directed to the police and the government by citizens, civil society organisations, and other organisations. In an interview for this research, Njoki Chege described the event as follows:

> During #Occupyplayground, I remember Kenyans put a very spirited social media campaign about it and mostly it was leaning on the ethical side of the whole issue – the morality of denying children the right to play. This was not just another corruption scandal; it was just something personal for so many Kenyans, and then it got worse when the children were teargassed. A politician had grabbed land and no humanity and no morality and then they teargassed the children. It was an exceptional case. It was beyond politics and corruption. It now moved to a higher level of morality.
>
> *(Interview with Njoki Chege, 6th January 2018)*

Later that day, debates online quickly shifted from land grabbing to blaming the activists led by Boniface Mwangi for involving children in the protest and putting them at risk. Facebook commenters also blamed the police for use of excessive force on children (Guguyu, 2015). Below were some of the comments from Facebook:

> ***Facebook User 1****: Boniface this is the worst I have seen of you. Fight everyone but please spare the kids for they do not deserve the kind of brutality you exposed them to today. You were prepared to do this ... and watching you on NTV this evening I did not see any expression of sorry for the ailing children. You have put our country in shame!!!*
>
> ***Facebook User 2****: The children's lives are more important than land & it is our duty as adults to protect them and not to put them in situations that would harm them!*
>
> ***Facebook User 3:*** *I Am a parent and what you did today was wrong. Was any of your kids in the protest? You used other people's kids to get fame! Shame on you!*
>
> ***Facebook User 4:*** *Land grabbers should be condemned equally as much as people who use kids to push agendas. Boniface, you could have called grown folks to protest. You have done it before. I do not know why this time you endangered the lives of children. Thank God there was no serious accident. This was a bad move bro. Bad move*.

However, other social media (Facebook) users expressed support for Boniface Mwangi and his colleagues for using children in the protest. Some compared the events of #OccupyPlayGround with the 1976 Movement in Soweto which was led by school children and protested the use of Afrikaans as a language of instruction (Glaser, 1998; Hirson, 1979). Some of the comments read as follows:

> ***Facebook User 5:*** *Let us be practical, how do you expect a busy parent to as for leave from work to go bring down a wall. I support Boniface Mwangi for that*
>
> ***Facebook User 6:*** *Those saying Children should have not been involved are missing the point, the kids would not have been involved if the land had not been taken away from them. At least they see what is wrong and want to change it. For the longest time, we have complained about impunity and corruption, but we have never challenged the wrongdoers Maybe these kids are teaching us something.*
>
> ***Facebook User 7:*** *Keep the fight up Boniface .... all the haters shouting 'child abuse' are out for lunch and have missed the bigger picture entirely! It is our duty as parents to teach our children to stand up for their rights and demonstrate! The real criminals here are the wanainchi (citizens) digging their heads in the sand on this issue and the politicians sending armed police and dogs to intimidate and exercise violence against school kids!!!*

> ***Facebook User 8:*** *Emma, people like you are the reason these things will continue to happen unaddressed. Children have the right to fight for their rights, and more importantly to be shown how to do so in a non-violent manner.*

This narrative was meant to shame Boniface for the means he was using in the campaign, although the backlash also contributed to derailing the campaign of repossessing the playground by undermining support for the activities. The involvement of the children in the protest was meant to spark interest and scandalize the police forces to hasten the repossession of the land. The playground belonged to the children and they needed it back. But Boniface and other organizers felt that using the children was well justified. The use of social media and children was a tactical innovation for the activists. As discussed in chapter 4 of this research study, pre-independence nationalists and second liberation nationalists adopted various tactics to fight for liberation. The mau mau movement used armed struggle to fight colonialists while individuals such as Gakaara wa Wanjau and Jomo Kenyatta wrote book, essays, and other articles to fight colonialism. Second liberation nationalists used church pulpits to give revolutionary sermons while others published alternative press meant to fight injustices. In the civil rights movements between 1955-1964 used in United States where they devised multiple and major tactical innovations from bus boycott to sit-ins to freedom-rides to community-wide protest campaigns and more – all very distinct in what they target and how (Doherty, 1999).

A day after the ugly incident President Kenyatta issued executive orders that all schools countrywide should receive title deeds (certificates of land ownership) for their land. President Uhuru Kenyatta also gave a tongue lashing to his Lands Cabinet Secretary Charity Ngilu and National Lands Commission boss Mohammed Swazuri over the issue. President Kenyatta also asked the headteacher of the school to answer questions on the matter and especially why pupils were allowed to take part in the protest. *The Standard* reported President Uhuru Kenyatta saying

> I am disappointed at what happened at the Lang'ata Road Primary School. Where were the officials from the Ministry of Lands and the National Land Commission? The issue has been there since December, why did not they act then. How could he (the headteacher) allow young children under his care to behave the way they did. Even when we want to protest, we must do it in a civilized manner and not involve children (PSU, 2019)

Political leaders joined in the conversation, and the opposition leaders (led by Raila Odinga) blamed the president and the government for not naming the real land grabbers of the school

playground. Also, the Cabinet for Interior – the late Joseph Nkaissery personally went to the school and apologised to the children on behalf of the government and promised the children that the government would protect the school land. Also, psychologists were deployed at the school to help the children deal with the trauma associated with police brutality. The Law Society of Kenya report showed that:

> …a team of counsellors was sent to offer therapy to the affected pupils at the school. The team of counsellors included of representatives from the Ministry of Education, IPOA, Childline, LSK, KNCHR. The counsellors were assigned respective classes, and group therapy was undertaken on Thursday 22nd and Friday, 23rd January 2015 (LSK, 2015).

The hashtag (#OccupyPlayground) trended for the next few days as the public pushed for the naming and arrest of the land grabbers. Later that week, the then Cabinet Secretary of Lands Charity Ngilu released the names of the directors of Airport View Limited. The owners included 1). Madip Singh Amrit-1000 shares, 2). Masjid Singh-nil shares, 3.) Haban Singh- 3000 shares and 4.) Kamal Prakash -4000 shares (Okwembah & Mbaka, 2015). They were all from a Sikh family in Kenya. This was considered as a joke by the public and in social media discussions, the hashtag #NgiluSinghJokes trended for the better part of that day (January 23rd, 2015).

Further, two investigations were conducted by independent organisations – LSK and the Office of the Ombudsman. The Law Society of Kenya (LSK) investigated the conduct of the police at the school and published a report titled which gave the following recommendations:

a) LSK to consider and commence proceedings by way of public interest litigation case in the form of a Constitutional Petition on behalf of Lang'ata Primary school children. This action to be against the office of the Inspector General of Police, the Ministry of Education, and others for violation of children's fundamental rights to care and protection under both national and international laws, by action and inaction on their part or their servants and agents. Furthermore, LSK to seek compensation on behalf of the Lang'ata Road Primary School Children from the violating authorities.
b) LSK to carefully consider and commence criminal proceedings against the violating authorities by way of private prosecution, upon obtaining consent from the Director of Public Prosecution. The LSK, in the alternative, continue to seek by way of judicial review, an order compelling the Inspector General of Police to supply names of specific police officers who were involved in the violation of the rights of the children.
c) LSK to undertake an audit of all land belonging to all public schools in Nairobi County and to demand a similar audit to be undertaken by the Nairobi County Government and published within a specific timeframe.

d) LSK to seek to be enjoined in the ongoing suit filed by the Lang'ata Road Primary School Advocate.
e) The LSK to continue providing psycho-social care for "Child A" until the child is restored to reasonably good health.
f) The LSK to send a clear message to the responsible department of the Kenya Government, asking for the provision of continuing psycho-social support to the children of Lang'ata Road Primary School to ensure that the paramount welfare of the children is secured.
g) LSK to send a recommendation to the Kenya government through the relevant departments about the need to undertake nationwide civic education and training to the police, law enforcement agencies and all caregivers to ensure that they are well equipped to understand fundamental rights regarding the "best interest of the child" whenever they get in contact with children. (LSK, 2015).

The Office of the Ombudsman also known as The Commission on Administrative Justice (CAJ) also carried out an investigation and into the conduct of police officers involved in quelling the 19th January 2015 demonstration at Lang'ata Road Primary School and in particular, the alleged use of excessive force by the police against the school children. It published a report and recommended the following among others:

a) The Teachers Service Commission to issue a warning letter to the Headteacher Lang'ata Road Primary School in line with section 34 (3) (a) of the Teachers Commission Act.
b) The National Police Service Commission to take disciplinary action against the offending police officers by suspending them officers for six months and also suspending their salary increments for six months.
c) The Inspector-General of Police should review and revise the Riot Manual according to current international standards contained in the United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law
d) The Principal Secretary, Education, to ensure that a policy for a Safety Standards Manual for Schools in Kenya is implemented.

Apart from these reports, various organisations gave a press briefing and condemned the land grabbing and the police brutality on children. Among them included Save the Children, Society for International Development (SID), and Church leaders. The event also grabbed international news headlines, and news outlets such as Aljazeera, CNN, the Guardian, among others reported the event. The main focus of the stories in these newspapers was the teargassing of children and little focus on the land grabber.



Fig 5.3 A tweet by Boniface Mwangi crediting the pupils at Lang'ata Road Primary for bringing change during the #OccupyPlayground

5.3 Changes and Actions After the Protest

As the next cause of action, Houghton Irũngũ and his team founded the *Shule Yangu* (Swahili for My School) Alliance Campaign project which was hosted by SID (Society for International Development). The main aim of this campaign was to push for policy change and fight land grabbing of public-school land as well as ensure schools received title deeds. The Shule Yangu Alliance Campaign website further describes the organisation as:

> A campaign that brings together stakeholders from the Ministry of Lands, Children Rights Organizations and Education Sector in Kenya – in a bid to accelerate the protection of public school's land in the country. The Campaign seeks to inspire active citizenship and build broad-based alliances with policymakers, leaders, and citizens in securing public school land. The successful public interest action birthed the Campaign, #OccupyPlayground, that sought to protect the playground of Lang'ata Road Primary School in January 2015. It is also pegged within the fundamental human rights principles provided within the Constitution of Kenya including the right of children to free and compulsory education – article 53 (b) and Article 62 (4) that stipulates the protection of public land. It is further anchored on the Presidential and National Lands Commission (NLC) directives that all public schools should have title deeds. The ShuleYangu campaign, therefore, seeks to put pressure on duty bearers including government mechanisms to take responsibility, while inspiring a new spirit of active citizen participation that empowers communities to participate in the protection of public-school land in their

> communities. The Campaign goal is to have 10,000 public schools issued with title deeds and 5,000 schools fenced.
>
> *(Source: https://shuleyangu.co.ke. Accessed on 29th August 2019)*

In the first anniversary of the #OccupyPlayGround, the Shule Yangu Organization noted that despite the directive by NLC and the President that all schools should be issued with a title deed, there were barely any applications by thousands of public schools in the country. Houghton Irũngũ mentioned that:

> We could not understand why the headteachers were not applying for title deeds, and we went back to the Ministry of Land, and we discovered that the headteachers did not know how to apply for title deeds. Of course, the headteachers had maps for their schools, but they did not know how to apply for the title deeds. So, we developed materials to help them. A flow chart kind of, with a three-stage map on how to register for land. We then went back to the National Lands Commission, and we requested them to launch the guideline for the application of title deeds by headteachers. So, they launched the guidelines for and within a fleeting time, some applications started coming. That was a big breakthrough for us.
>
> *(Interview with Irũngũ , 17th January 2018)*

Also, Irũngũ mentioned that they attended several Kenya Association of Head Teachers (KAHT) conferences and also held several sensitisation forums to encourage headteachers to apply for title deeds. On the first anniversary of #OccupyPlayGround, Shule Yangu campaign reported that 70% of public schools in Kenya were facing land ownership wrangles and were at danger of losing their land. In an interview for this research study in 2019, an official at shule yangu campaign had this to say:

> Currently, 9,998 schools have been titled out of 33,652 public primary and secondary schools. Other than dispute issues including those in court, survey issues, land adjudication, discharging from charges (for schools in settlement schemes) and those that require transfers from private individuals/entities (succession issues) and county governments (former county/municipal councils). Also, there are some areas where community land act ought to guide titling which has not been commenced.
>
> *(Moris Maina, 26th June 2019)*

Over the years, Shule Yangu Alliance Campaign has continued to campaign against land grabbing across the country and published a handbook for public school land defenders in the country.

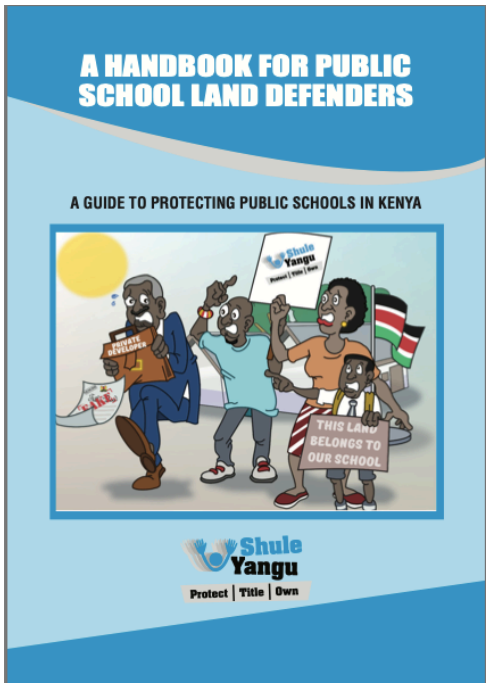


Fig 5.4 A cover page of handbook developed by Shule Yangu initiative for land defenders

In subsequent months after this event, a popular cartoonist in Kenya, Godfrey Mwapembwa (Also known as Gado) depicted William Ruto in a Sikh dastaar[48], and it is one some of these cartoons that made him rub shoulders with the William Ruto and led to an end of his career at Nation Media Group after 23years as a cartoonist.

[48] A Dastaar - A Dastaar, Punjabi Pagri, or Pagg is an item of headwear associated with Sikhism and is an important part of the Sikh culture. Wearing a Sikh dastaar, or turban, is mandatory for all Sikh men and women. Among the Sikhs, the dastaar is an article of faith that represents honor, self-respect, courage, spirituality, and piety.



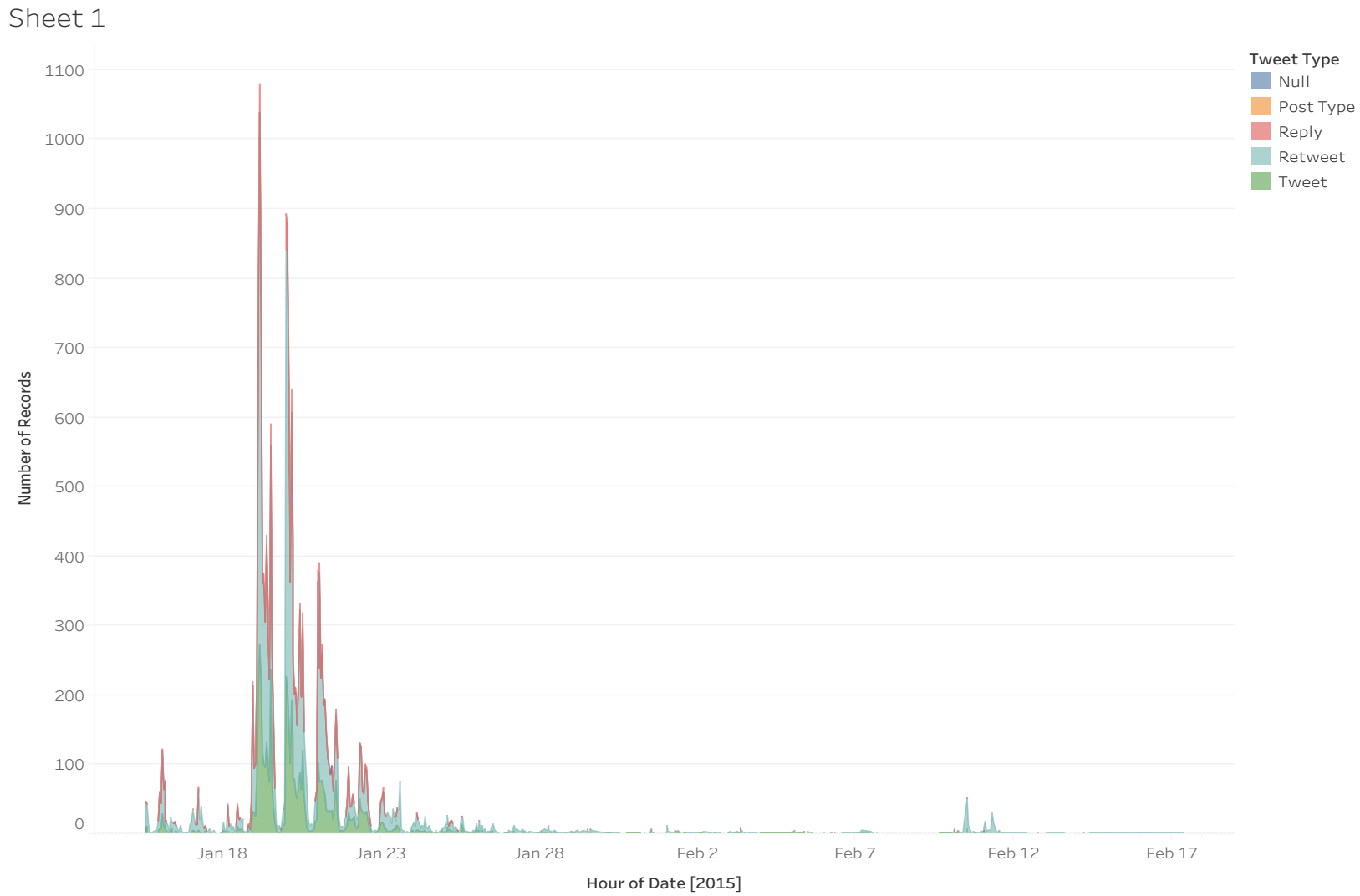
Fig 5.5 Cartoons published in Daily Nation depicting William Ruto as a Sikh. Source (Namu, 2016).

5.4 Social Media in #OccupyPlayGround

Digital media and especially social media platforms are so integral in today's socio-political movements that many protesters and activists refer to them by their hashtags – the Twitter convention for making a topic, and that is how #OccupyPlayGround came to be. The name was coined from the #OccupyMovement that sprung up in several parts of the world from around 2009 that was preceded by the Arab Spring in Egypt and Tunisia, and #OccupyWallStreet in New York. The over-riding reason for the movements was to protest against social and economic inequality in addition to what citizens in those countries perceived as "lack of democracy."

The protesters' language offline and online in #OccupyPlayground was almost similar to the language used in other Occupy movements around the world which included not just the use of hashtags but also discussions on the theme of authoritarianism, corruption, distrust in authority and a desire for participation and self-expression. The use of social media acted as a platform not only for expressing defiance but also a platform for discussing the key issues in the movement and pushing for change. Social media also created a network of protesters who were brought together by the hashtag #OccupyPlayground. Just like twitter and teargas in Tufekci (2017), the playground

and social media in this movement became a reconfiguration of public physically, and digitally. Most of the discussion in this movement happened on social media. According to Tweets collected and analysed for this research study (See section 3.7 and 3.8 on how data was downloaded and analysed), and as visualized in *fig. 5.6 a* huge discussion took place between mid-January (when the hashtag was first used) to the end of that month, with occasional spikes in February and subsequent months. The bigger spike in the diagram shows the indicates the actual day of the protest. The other spikes came about when something related to the #occupyplayground happened, such as the release of the individuals arrested after the protest, declaration of the president that all schools should receive title deeds and when the owners of the hotel were named.



The plot of sum of Number of Records for Date Hour. Color shows details about Tweet Type. The view is filtered on Exclusions (HOUR(Date),Tweet Type), which keeps 857 members.

Fig. 5.6 A Tableau Visualization of tweets during the #OccupyPlayGround Protest

This event that later grew to be a movement was organised by activists who belonged to institutionalised civil society groups and others who did not belong in any civil society group or institutions. They were brought together by the power of networks, as discussed in chapter 2. The internet was instrumental in allowing the network of activists to expand its collective capacity and push for social change. As Tufekci (2017) points out, "the ability to organise without organisations, indeed, speeds things up and allows for greater scale in rapid time frames (pg. 19)."

It is in these platforms that socio-political and cultural issues emerged and shaped the direction of the movement. These issues help in understanding the movements and why things are the way they are. Tufekci (2017) in her study of social movements acknowledged that she came to understand how social movements operated and how they were opposed to those in power by looking at "…the long-standing trends in culture, politics, and civics in many protest movements and how they converged with technology (pg. 15)" In #OccupyPlayground, these long-standing socio-political issues in Kenya came to the fore and played out in both social media and mainstream media. Just like all stories of revolution, from the times of Martin Luther King Jnr to Mahatma Gandhi, and many others were shaped by deep socio-political, cultural, and historical issues.

In the next section, I discuss two socio-political issues that emerged from the movements and how social media, in particular, was used as a platform for their unfolding. The first will be corruption as a social ill in Kenya and how it served as the primary catalyst of the formation of movements such as #OccupyPlayGround and in addition to how the class as a socio-political issue also played out in the movement.

5.5 Corruption as a social ill

For several years, Kenya has scored poorly in corruption index globally. Corruption in this context will mean embezzlement of public utilities for private benefit. It bears different meanings depending on the context, but Apata (2018) acknowledges that it is an issue that permeates every sector of the economy, particularly in the African context. Some scholars trace the origin of corruption in Africa as a postcolonial issue and as part of neo-liberalism. Apata (2018) explains that

> …corruption emerged out of Western neo-liberal capitalist tradition and its exploitative tendencies, a system that was exported to Africa and which in turn

> became Africanised. In other words, it is … a practice that did not previously exist in pre-colonial Africa but which, upon its importation, somehow became an indigenous African (pg. 6)

Corruption has become a common trend in African states also due to a conglomeration of issues, among them the collapse of morals, greed, and poor governance. Joe Khamisi's documents four eras of corruption in post-independence Kenya, beginning with the rein of Kenya's first President Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, the second President Daniel Moi, the third president Mwai Kibaki, and the fourth President Uhuru Kenyatta. In his book, he describes corruption as the biggest obstacle to Kenya's economic development and the leading cause of wretched poverty that continue to affect many Kenyans. Hope (2014) describes corruption in Kenya as an issue that '…has grown roots in Kenyan society at large and become endemic.' Khamisi (2018) says that corruption is deeply rooted and begins at the smallest unit, such as families and grassroots leadership. He further says that:

> Corruption and bribery are encountered everywhere: in the village from low-level officials; on the streets in the cities and towns; in government offices; in Parliament, in the Judiciary and even in religious institutions. A villager who goes to a chief in a domestic dispute matter must pay to be heard. The officer who processes your job application demands "*kits kidogo'(Swahili for Something small)*; procurement officers inflate prices of projects; legislators extort to pass or reject a bill, and Judges make rulings based on kickbacks. Also, this is not happening only in public offices (pg. 9).

The huge appetite for land predates the pre-colonial era when the colonial administration allocated 20% of Kenya's land consisting of the best agricultural land to a small group of white settlers and displaced local communities from their fertile native land for farming purposes. Apart from fighting for freedom and end of colonial rule, as mentioned in chapter 4 of this research study, the pre-independent nationalists and freedom fighters fought the return of the stolen land by colonial settlers. Soon after independence, however, those who took overpower appropriated land from the white settlers and allocated themselves vast chunks of land to themselves and left little to ordinary people who had been displaced and living as squatters. Fanon (1961) describes the greed and corruption of the bourgeoisie in the post-independence era and which can be used to describe the new class of power and wealthy in the post-independent Kenya as follows.

> There exists inside the new regime; however, an inequality in the acquisition of wealth and monopolisation. Some have a double source of income and demonstrate that they are specialised in opportunism. Privileges multiply and corruption

> triumphs, while morality declines. Today the vultures are too numerous and too voracious in proportion to the lean spoils of the national wealth. The party, a true instrument of power in the hands of the bourgeoisie, reinforces the machine and ensures that the people are hemmed in and immobilised (Fanon, 1961).

Land grabbing by those who held power was frequent and continued several decades after, and this has been a source of corruption.

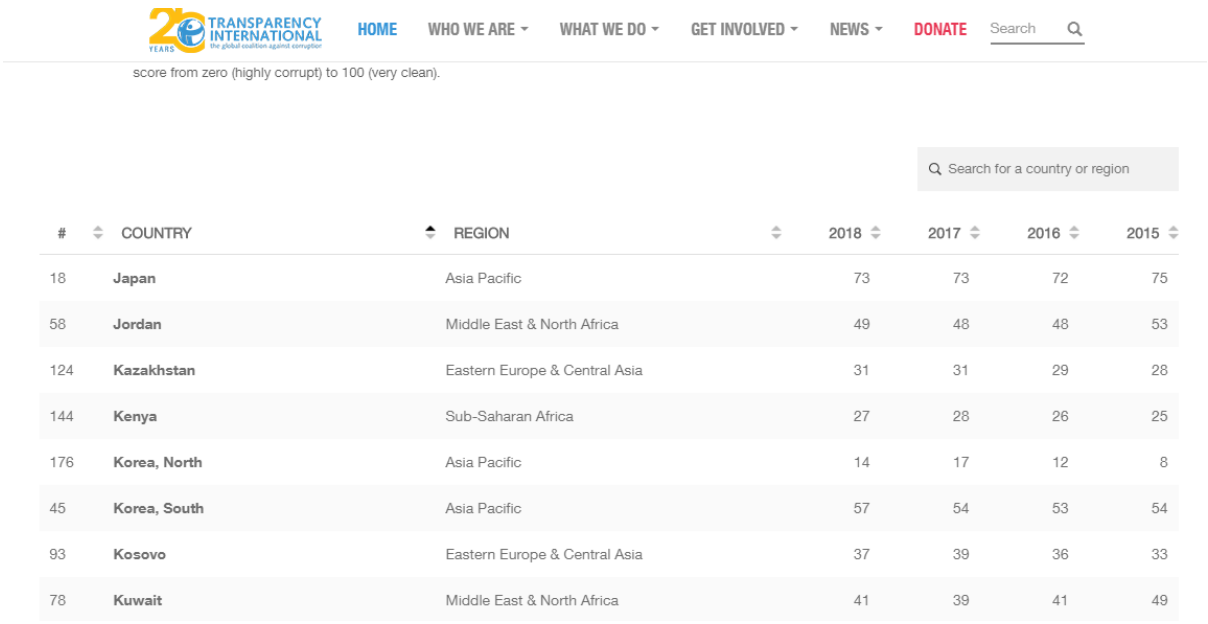
Corruption has been documented variously in Kenyan context by numerous organisations in government itself, commissions, civil society organisations, the media, and whistle-blowers. However, the most comprehensive documentation of land grabbing was done by a commission formed to inquire into the illegal/irregular allocation of public land in 2003 which was popularly known as the Ndugu Land Commission (Paul Ndungu was the Chairman of the Commission). The report acknowledged that in the pre-independence era land was held under a complex system of customary tenure in which rights of access to and use of land was regulated by intricate rules, usages, and practices. Among recommendations made by the commission included inventory and titling of public land and repossession of illegally and irregularly allocated public land. The Ndugu report concluded by saying that:

> The process and findings of this Inquiry have disclosed the fact that the illegal allocation of public land is one of the most pronounced manifestations of corruption and moral decadence in our society. It has demonstrated the loss of public responsibility for the present and future generations by those entrusted with power. The memoranda received from the people by this Commission leave no doubt that they expect nothing short of the restoration of their land: Political statements made against this Commission during the Inquiry, on the other hand, demonstrate the lack of shame on the part of those who may have benefited from the plunder of public resources. Such people would go to any lengths to protect their fraudulent property. At the end of the day, the challenge lies with the Government - to summon all its political will and might to implement the recommendations made in this Report. Only that way, will impunity be stamped out of our society (Pg. 192).

At the time #OccupyPlayground was taking place, Transparency International had indexed Kenya at a score of 25 (twenty-five) [49] - an index that rates countries on a scale from zero to one hundred

[49] The index, which ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and businesspeople, uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean. More than two-thirds of countries score below 50 on this year's CPI, with an average score of just 43.

(0-100), with zero being the most corrupt and 100 being the least corrupt. This was due to the increased cases of corruption



#	COUNTRY	REGION	2018	2017	2016	2015
18	**Japan**	Asia Pacific	73	73	72	75
58	**Jordan**	Middle East & North Africa	49	48	48	53
124	**Kazakhstan**	Eastern Europe & Central Asia	31	31	29	28
144	**Kenya**	Sub-Saharan Africa	27	28	26	25
176	**Korea, North**	Asia Pacific	14	17	12	8
45	**Korea, South**	Asia Pacific	57	54	53	54
93	**Kosovo**	Eastern Europe & Central Asia	37	39	36	33
78	**Kuwait**	Middle East & North Africa	41	39	41	49

Fig 5.7 A snapshot of Corruption index from Transparency International (2015, 2016 and 2017)

#OccupyPlayground was not the only corruption-related movements in Kenya at the time. In 2016, young people in Nairobi organised a movement dubbed #TakeBackKenya. The movement began online on Twitter and Facebook, where there was a heated debate about increased corruption cases in the government. On 12th December 2016, during Jamuhuri[50] Day celebration, young people organised a street protest, first, to protest increased corruption cases and secondly, to show defiance on a national day celebration. The organisers of the movement, who were drawn from Kenyans on Twitter (KOT) described the movement as meant to reclaim Kenya from the firm grasp of corruption and the individuals that felt they owned the country.

[50] Jamuhuri is Swahili word for Republic. It is a national holiday in Kenya, celebrated on 12 December each year. The holiday is meant to officially mark the date when Kenya became an independent republic which happened on 12th December 1964.

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Figure 5.8: Emblem of the #TakeBackKenya

In the event, however, the protesters were dispersed by police with teargas, and they did not get to reach parliament building. When asked if the online discussions would bear any fruits since street protests were always met with aggression from the police, one of the participants of this study remarked that:

> …#TakeBackKenya campaign was about fighting back corruption. So, we went to the streets and talked about corruption even though police dispersed us. However, someone would say, people are still getting involved in corruption. Which is correct, there is still corruption. However, just by getting people to talk about it in online and offline spaces is a success because the government listens to such sentiments. Government officials are more aware now that we as citizens are watching their steps. As an activist, one thing I have learned to do is to celebrate the little successes that we make.
>
> *(Sheaffer Okore[51], Interview, December 2017)*

In the past few years, debates on corruption have mainly been happening in the media and more so on social media platforms. During heated corruption debates on social media, we have had scandals christened with hashtags such as #ChikenGateScandal, #NYSscandal, #EuroBondScandal, among many others. The government of Kenya established the Kenya Anti-Corruption Authority (KAA) in 1997 as an authority to fight and prevent corruption in Kenya. The name of the authority later changed to Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission (KACC) and is currently known and as Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC). This government organisation was established under two legislations - The Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes

[51] In the informed consent form, politician and activist Sheaffer Okore mentioned that it was ok for his name to be used in this research study.

Act (ACECA) No. 3 of 2003, and The Public Officer Ethics Act, No 4 of 2003. For several years, the commission has been considered incapable of dealing with corruption cases. Despite allegations facing various public officers, the commission has been accused of being toothless and unable to arrest and charge the "big fish" – a term used to refer to prominent and untouchable individuals in the country. Their "tooth lessness" could be attributed to their incapability to arrest and charge prominent individuals, legislative gaps and even lack of political will from the ruling class.



Fig 5.9 Newspaper headlines showing the corrupt nature of the anti-corruption Authority

The above screenshots from newspaper cuttings give a glimpse of how the anti-corruption authority has been viewed over the years. In an interview for this research study, Koigi wa Wamwere laments about the failure of the government to curb corruption. He says

> …other than ethnicity; corruption is this country's second-biggest enemy. If we had a culture of government resignation, this government should long have resigned on account of corruption. However, of course, they are stubborn and have accepted

corruption as a way of life. Life goes on, but many people are angry because they are also victims, but there is nothing much one can do.

(Koigi wa Wamwere, interview, 7th January 2019)

His views reflect the sentiment of many citizens in Kenya who have been frustrated by the fight against corruption, including among activists. Interestingly, however, the anger and frustration caused by increased corruption cases have led to an increase in the number of activists, some of whom have not given up on the fight against impunity. Some of the corruption cases have received support from unlikely quarters, such as children, a good case in point being #OccupyPlyaground. Every year for the last 10years, we have had activists organise



Fig 5.10 Anti-Corruption demonstrators in Nairobi in November 2016. Source: https://www.voanews.com/africa/nairobi-anti-corruption-protest-turns-violent#&gid=1&pid=1

street protests and complimented by online debates labelled with such names as #BeyondZeroCorruption, #ActOnCorruptionOrResign, #REDTHURSDAY, #RedVestMovement among many other names. The activists have more than often faced police brutality and government repressions, such as arrest, detention, forced disappearance, and even killings. Most of these corruption movements have been a protest on rogue government policies. The most exciting and important thing, despite the aggression from government forces, is that social media

platforms have provided a platform for conversation. Social Media users, and especially on Twitter and Facebook, can speak truth to power and online activities such as protests, meetings and forums complement these online discussions.



Fig 5.11 Anti-Corruption demonstrators during the Red Vest Movement on April 30, 2019. Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/05/13/why-are-kenyans-protesting-their-government/?utm_term=.7bf284c98cb5

#OccupyPlayground movement was a fight against corruption. Through social media discussion and media reports, several levels of corruption came to the fore, and this shaped the direction of the whole movement. When the story first appeared in media sources, there was an indication that city council officials had approved construction of a mall on the playground. This was despite the school having been allocated the piece of land in the 1970s according to government records and as earlier indicated in this chapter. Double allocation of the land not only indicated how corruption in government but also how corruption had become a social ill. Besides, the land where the hotel

was located had also been acquired illegally (grabbed) from the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA), another government organisation.

The grabbing of public land as an issue and a form of corruption dominated in discussions both in mainstream media and social media. Some of the posts protested on why the government was afraid to name the land grabber. The most apparent reason was that the owner of the hotel was an influential politician, and government officials, beginning with the cabinet secretaries, land officials, county officials and even the headteacher of the school, were afraid of naming him for fear of victimisation. They were afraid of blaming the owner of the hotel. Not because they were not sure about him but because they wanted to protect their jobs.

In a bid to continue protecting the name of the corrupt politician, the narrative of the whole #OccupyPlayground movement shifted from the grabbing of the land to the police brutality on children. The blame was directed to the activists who organised the protest, the headteacher for allowing the children to protest and the police officer who threw teargas at the children. In a speech by President Kenyatta on the day after the protest, he further pushed away from the central issue of land grabbing and said:

> I am disappointed at what happened at Lang'ata Road Primary School. Action will be taken against the Ministry of Lands and the National Land Commission officials for failing to address the Lang'ata Road Primary School land issue until it got out of hand resulting in the protest yesterday. Government officials must take their duties seriously. While the action will be taken against the police who tear-gassed protesting pupils, the headteacher of the school should also answer questions about the incident. How could he allow young children under his care to behave the way they did? Even when we want to protest, we must do it in a civilized manner and not involve children (Koech, 2015).

These narratives were meant to be a deviation from the main issue – the issue of land grabbing. In his speech, he did not mention the main culprit - the land grabber, to the utter shock of some of social media users who also see it as a diversionary tactic from the real issue and the real culprit. He failed to even promise an investigation into the issue. His use of diversionary tactics is interpreted as an effort to conceal corrupt individuals and their corrupt actions. This does not escape the ears of the online protesters of users in the #OccupyPlayground on social media as seen in the screenshots below.



Fig 5.12 Some tweets reacting to the president's speech

On the day after the protest, the owner of the hotel was given 24 hours to demolish the wall that had fenced off the school playground. However, the owner, who by this time was only known as "private developer" did not do anything. Instead, the National Youth Service (NYS) under the Ministry of Devolution was contracted to demolish the wall and fence off the whole school. Using state resources to demolish walls of corruption is corruption.

In conclusion, social media platforms, particularly twitter, allowed for extensive political expression against corruption perpetrated by government officials in #OccupyPlayground movement. These calls were echoed around the country and led to a change of government policy to register and give titles to all public schools in the country. Although this is still an ongoing exercise, due to the massive number of public schools, it was a step in the right direction.

5.6 Class

Several class issues emerged from the onset of this event. First, the elites had the privilege not only to own property but also to have access to the power to acquire property legally or through dubious means. In Melber's (2016) analysis of social stratification, Kenya's social positions are defined by produced surplus, for which the means of production in Kenya are capital, labour, and land. The hotel owner, a politician, used his influence to grab the school playground and influenced the Nairobi City County (NCC) officials to approve the construction of a shopping mall. Th. *Daily Nation* reported that "Nairobi County officials played a key role in rushing the approval of a multi-story shopping mall adjacent to Lang'ata Primary School…" (Guguyo, 2015).

Second, because of the power held by this politician and his financial capability, he was able to hire some youths who first provided labour to build the wall around the school playground. The youth also provided "illegal" security for the construction workers of the wall and were later paid to violently confront the school community, which included teachers and parents who had gathered to complain about the encroachment on the school playground (Guguyo, 2015). As the case unfolded, it was discovered that City Hall officials illegally had given permission to a company to set up a perimeter wall around the playground in the dead of night with no regard for safety and without caring about the children, whose playground they were grabbing. The fenced-off area thus turned into a battleground between the hired youth and the school community as reported in the *Daily Nation*. The young people who were hired were poor and lived in informal settlements of

the city – in this case, the Kibera Slums that bordered the Lang'ata residential estate. The politician could easily afford to hire a group of youth to cause chaos, as the youths, who belonged to the working class, were familiar with provisioning their labour for the payment of the bourgeoises, consistent with Marxist approaches that suggest that the working class do not own their own means of production but instead, they sell their labour to the bourgeoisie to survive.

In the event description posted on Facebook by Boniface Mwangi (See section 5.3), several class issues also emerged. Boniface Mwangi mentioned that the school playground had been grabbed by professional land grabbers on behalf of a powerful politician. He also mentioned that the grabbing had taken place over the 2014 December holidays and that a group of about 50 youths had been hired from Kibera slums to guard construction workers who were fencing off the playground. This confirms that the elite, who are powerful individuals in government, employed the middle and the lower-class individuals who do not have financial means to commit gross atrocities. The description of the event also indicated that the school board, which was made up of civil servants (middle-class individuals) had been threatened by senior people in government and their member warned that they would lose their jobs if they kept insisting that the land had been grabbed. Some respondents of this research study described middle class individuals as individuals who earned a decent living and feared slipping back into poverty and that they work hard to maintain their status or rise to the elite class. They further described this class as follows:

> **Respondent A**: The middle class in Kenya is always the most contented lot. They are contented because they know they have already climbed above that poverty level. It is very unlikely that they will fall back to poverty. Some of them aspire to be at the top (rich). In fact, as we are talking here, [the] majority of the middle class are now dealing with tender issues from the government and county governments since elections are over and there is new leadership. If they are not chasing tenders, they are dealing with buying large parcels of land, sub-dividing and getting rich extremely fast. They aspire to get richer and richer as quickly as possible.
>
> *(Interview with Respondent A, 5th January 2018).*

> **Respondent B***:* The Kenyan middle-class likes to enjoy the benefits which they have not fought for. The people who fight for change are the most affected by the need for change. The victims of economic injustices. The victims of land grabbing. You find some slums next to palatial homes in some parts of Kiambu county for instance. These are the people the political class exploit during elections. The most vulnerable people you find in informal settlements are the people who bring change in this country
>
> *(Interview with Respondent B, 9th January 2019).*

When a narrative emerged on social media emerged to blame Boniface Mwangi for involving children in the protest, class issues also emerged. The comments read as follows.

> ***Facebook User 9:*** *… Kenyans, you are full of hypocrisy. Half of us are middle-class people who can afford some luxurious play toys to offer our children. They are comfortable playing their PS (Play Station games) as they rest from the comforts of their beds and living rooms. I went to a school like Lang'ata Primary School to be precise - Kayole Primary School. It hurts me. One thing that keeps these kids from not thinking of their daily troubles is the games they play on those playgrounds. That is their comfort zone. Halafu (and then) some idiotic minds are blaming it on Boniface Mwangi. Common sense ni bure (is free) and clearly not everybody has it…*
>
> ***Facebook User 10:*** *At least the children made an impact. How many middle class educated people would volunteer to demonstrate on their behalf. In Kenya, we believe that the end justifies the means…*

These social media comments also revealed several class issues. The school is in what I would refer here as lower-middle-class area in Nairobi and the community around the school, judging by the kind of houses they dwell in, earn a decent income. Given that the government is the biggest employer in Kenya, we can assume that most of the school community members are government workers or businesspeople who earn a decent living. Therefore, the parents who got distraught that their children were involved in protest saw it as an activity that is distant from them or not meant for them and their children (see the Facebook comments above and in section 5.3 of this chapter).

Further, the comments described the carefree attitude of the middle-class who are comfortable even when issues that affect them are happening. In one of the in-depth interviews of this study, a respondent described the middle-class individuals as people who do not participate in agitating for change and only those from informal settlements – who are often poor, oppressed, and unrepresented attend demonstrations and street protests.

> ***Respondent C****:* Kenyans have always been divided along with class issues on social media. Those who live in leafy suburbs do not always agitate for change with much vigour like those who live in slum areas such as Korogocho areas and from upcountry and those who are poor. Most of the time, middle-class individuals are not concerned about social change because for them, they get a paycheque at the end of the month and are comfortable. They do not want to lose their salaries; they do not want to lose the good living they have created for themselves and they do not want to get out there and get their hands dirty. These people who are poor, suffering, and unemployed have always got their hands dirty and they have been fighting for social change with much vigour. When demonstrations are called, middle-class people do not go for protests in the streets. They stay indoors and lock themselves up in upmarket areas such as Karen and Kileleshwa (upmarket area of Nairobi). If you look at

> political rallies at Uhuru Park, people normally walk from Korogocho, people walk from Kibera, Mathare but you will not see people walking or being ferried from Runda or Karen. These middle-class people do not even attend these kinds of meetings. This is a significant difference that is very noticeable. You cannot convince such kind of people and you cannot tell them anything. They think they have reached the apex of Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. For instance, there is a very flamboyant lawyer who once said that he does not even know the price of unga (maize flour) during the unga revolution demonstrations. Those are the kind of ignorance portrayed by the middle class.
>
> *(Interview with respondent C, 3rd April 2018)*

These views could offer more insights as to why individuals on social media were agitated by the involvement of pupils in the #OccupyPlayground protests.

Kenya has a very vibrant civil society in the region. It is one of the bravest and the most vocal and a model for other civil societies in the region (Allison, 2016). However, in the last few years, they have faced intense crackdowns from the government. In 2016, about 900 civil societies were deregistered by the Kenyan government (AFP, 2016). This has, of course, affected how they operate. During the #OccupyPlayground movement, only a handful of civil societies were involved – notably PAWA254, and Society for International Development (SID). From an observation made on the main listserv of the civil societies in Kenya (kptj[52]-communications), the Civil Societies came to life when Irũngũ Houghton and Boaz Waruku were arrested after the protests. One grassroots activist had this to say about the current crop of activists in Kenya:

> **Respondent**: Civil societies have changed and become commercialized. They are full of middle-class individuals whose only interest is to earn a living. Their work is to sit in the office, chase big money and do nothing on agitating for social change. Smaller grassroots organizations such as Mathare Social Justice are the ones doing the actual work of pushing for social change. You will not see some of these individuals in the streets for demonstration but only hear of them in boardroom meetings inexpensive hotels.
>
> *(Interview, 6th January 2018)*

The sentiments of the respondent offer some insights as to why some stayed home from the #OccupyPlayground protest. Whereas the middle-class individuals were glad to support the movement from a distance and in online ventures, they were not the ones who would have been

[52] Kenyans for Peace Truth and Justice (KPTJ) is an active civil society in Kenya and owns the KPTJ list serve where members of the civil society organizations exchange ideas

taking part in the first place on the ground. In contrast, it could be that those who were the parents of the school children were either occupied with work or not on social media sites or both.

5.7 Conclusion

#OccupyPlayground morphed from an event to a movement which has continued to date led by the *Shule Yangu* initiative. It brings to the fore several issues which can be connected to the discussions in the previous chapters. Since the pre-independence period, Kenyan have cultivated a culture of resistance as discussed in detail in chapter 4 of this research study. In this movement, the activists were able to push for the repossession of the school playground and get an executive order from the government that all schools should have a title deed.

The grabbing of land in Kenya continues to date. However, for many years before this case, conversations on land grabbing were done in hashed tones and in great fear since most times, it involved power individuals in government. This conversation was changed in this movement where Kenyans realized that they could challenge even the Vice President for grabbing of land. In addition, the reclaiming of land in various schools across the country has continued to date and the government itself has even led such initiatives. This was a change.

This case also demonstrates the power of social media networks. Social media platforms were used as a resource by the activists to mobilize individuals to join the protest. Although they did not get large numbers as expected, they used the same platforms to perform a huge online campaign which pushed the agenda of the campaign beyond the streets. In addition, the organizers of this event, which turned out to be a movement, used the power of the networks, online and offline, to mobilize support. They were able to bring in the voices of the politicians, religious leaders, the media, and other individuals. Tufekci (2017) says “People in movements still try to find and connect with people like themselves, get attention for their cause, convince people of their ideas, seek legitimacy and strength, and hope to bring about change (pg. 355).” All individuals who took part in the movement felt aggrieved by Kenyan politicians who used their influence to commit crimes. This collective feeling led to a collective action that yielded the desired results.

Lastly, Tufekci (2017) in her study on social movements, found out that some movements were caught up in a “tactical freeze” - the inability of movements to adjust tactics and negotiate demands and push for tangible policy changes. This was common in leaderless movements. However, this

movement revealed the importance of having a mix of horizontal and vertical leadership in a social movement. In #OccupyPlayground, digital technologies allowed the formation and strengthening of the movement without much early planning (horizontal leadership) while those at the forefront in the movement (vertical leadership) were able to make a tactical shift using their cultural and network resources which resulted to a countrywide campaign to protect school lands.

Chapter 6

#OccupyParliament

Mbunge sio biashara. Mbunge ni Utumishi[53]

An uprising against collective greed of Kenyan MPs

6.1 Introduction to #OccupyParliament

#OccupyParliament, just like #OccupyPlayground was an offshoot of the occupy movements that sprung up throughout the world to challenge governments on various socio-political issues citizens were facing. Occupy movement was meant to initiate global change against capitalism, austerity measures, and to condemn greed and corruption in society. The movement sparked many activities both in online and offline spaces globally. In Kenya, occupy movement took various forms and several occupy events took place, including #OccupyHarambeeAvenue, #OccupyParliament, and #OccupyPlayGround. These movements encouraged people to link the problems they were facing to a larger social movement frame organised by civil society organisations in Kenya.

Participants of the Occupy movements in Kenya expressed defiance and dissent towards the government in several ways. The street protests in this movement took place in the city of Nairobi between May and June of 2013. Before this event took place, Kenya had just emerged from a general election, won by President Uhuru Kenyatta. During the electioneering period, the government had banned any form of political protests and gathering, to maintain peace. A considerable peace campaign attempted to avert ethnic animosity that had happened in the 2007 general elections in Kenya. At that time, Kenya was in the blink of sinking into civil war after ethnic violence left hundreds of people dead and thousands of others displaced from their homes (Bennett et al., 2015; Kihato, 2016; Schuberth, 2018). #OccupyParliament was the first movement in Uhuru Kenyatta's reign.

[53] Swahili for: Parliamentary work is not a business adventure but a devotion to public service. (Campaign slogan during #OccupyParliament protests)

In this chapter, I begin by tracing the reasons that led to the emergence of the movement, how it formed, developed, and ended, also highlighting some of the key issues that emerged.

6.2 The genesis of the #OccupyParliament

Before the promulgation of the constitution of Kenya in 2013, members of parliament were at liberty to determine their salaries. The 2010 Kenya's constitution created a Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC), which was tasked with setting and regularly reviewing the remuneration and benefits of all state officers, and to advise the national and county governments on the remuneration and benefits of all other public officers. The full implementation of the new constitution was to take effect from the year 2013 when President Uhuru Kenyatta's presidency began.

With a new parliament (11th Parliament) the salaries of the members of parliament were meant to be discussed and determined by the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC), commonly known as The Serem Commission (The name of the Chairperson of the Commission was Sarah Serem). On 1st March 2013, the SRC gazetted the new salary scale for Members of parliament (See Appendix 12) which reduced their basic salary from Kshs 851,000 (About USD 8,510) to Kshs 532,500 (About USD 5,325) per month. This gazettement of new salaries was done before the general elections that were held on 4th March 2013. So, candidates for the elective posts knew, well in advance, the salaries they were going to receive.

A few weeks after the election, the 11th Parliament was constituted, sworn in, and begun its operations. However, a parliamentary committee on Delegated County Legislation[54] considered that the gazette notice by SRC as unconstitutional, unlawful, and recommended that the gazette notice be declared invalid. The recommendations were adopted by parliament unanimously.

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[54] The Select Committee on Delegated County Legislation is established under Standing Order 202 to among other functions, consider in respect of any statutory instrument whether it -

a) is in accord with the provisions of the Constitution, the Act pursuant to which it is made or other relevant written law.
b) infringes on fundamental rights and freedoms of the public.
c) contains a matter which in the opinion of the Committee should more properly be dealt with in an Act of Parliament; etc.

In previous years, Kenyan Parliamentarians were regarded as among the most paid in the world, and there was an expression of hope by the citizens that this would change since the SRC was meant to set the salary scales for all public officers. It is this decision by parliament to side-line the SRC that led to public anger and disappointment and thus the emergence of #OccupyParliament, to challenge this decision by the 11th Parliament of Kenya.

Forming a movement around this decision by the Parliament of Kenya to raise their salaries came much later. Although there had been an existing conversation around this issue in the mainstream media, it was until one twitter subscriber - @v***mus - tweeted that #OccupyParliament was long overdue, and implied that Kenyans On Twitter (KOT) should do something.



Fig 6.1 First tweet of #OccupyParliament

Ten days later, Boniface Mwangi[55], photojournalist and a popular activist, posted that if "vultures could unite, Kenyans could unite as well and have a million people's march." In this tweet, he was implying that if members of parliament (vultures) forgot their political differences, and united to increase their salaries, it was possible for Kenyans also to unite and protest this decision. Due to his level of influence, the tweet generated a relatively high interest, gauged by the number of likes and retweets the tweet had.

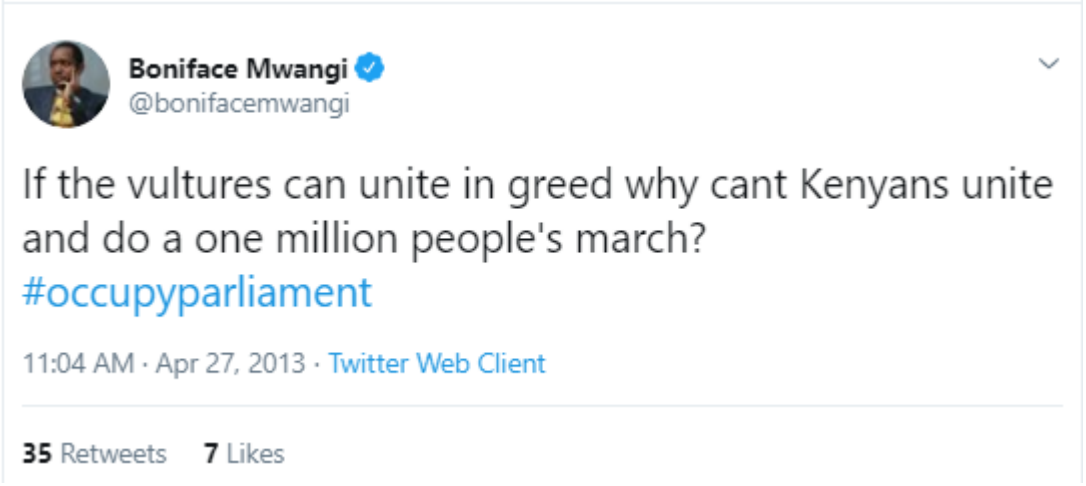


Fig 6.2 First tweet of #OccupyParliament by Boniface Mwangi

To put the word "vulture" into context, in early 2012, Boniface Mwangi had been involved in a graffiti campaign where he worked with visual artists in a campaign called *MaVulture*. In the campaign, where he described Members of Parliament as vultures through words and images, the team spray-painted graffiti on walls of buildings in Nairobi business district and stencilled various other messages on the streets' surface. The messages in those writings and drawings highlighted the corruption of the members of parliament. Just like vultures, and their scavenging habit of eating dead animals, Boniface disapproved Members of Parliament in Kenya, for their continued abuse of power through corruption, land grabbing, poor leadership, and many other atrocities. These series of illegal murals (See figure 6.4) captured the imagination of the nation and sent Kenyans into thinking about their leaders and their selfish behaviours.

In the graffiti (See figure 6.4), the artists portrayed a greedy politician seated outside the Kenyan parliament building and depicted as a vulture. The politician was seen arrogantly staring at a group of protesters – with one of the protesters wearing a *Unga Revolution*[56] movement T-shirt. On the

[56] Unga revolution – *Unga* (Swahili for maize flour) is used to make a maize meal called *Ugali*, which is a staple food in Kenya, and consumed widely. In 2006, the cost of *Unga* and other basic commodities rose from about USD 0.3 to about USD 1.20 – USD 2. A group from *Bunge la Mwananchi* (People's parliament), a grassroots civic group, organized a protest to pressure the government to reduce the price of maize flour and other basic commodities. The group later formed a movement around this.

feet of the politician, a woman commonly referred to us *Wanjiku*[57] in the Kenyan context, denotating an ordinary citizen. The vulture reminisced: "I am a tribal leader, they loot, rape, burn and kill in my defence, while I steal their taxes, and grab their land, but the idiots will still vote for me."



Fig 6.3 One of the graffiti on a wall in a building in Nairobi Business District. Source - https://edition.cnn.com/2012/06/14/world/africa/kenya-graffiti/index.html)

In addition to using these street images, the team also used a website[58], social media platforms – Twitter[59] and Facebook[60], to send out various "vulture" messages that were condemning corruption by members of parliament. On these digital platforms, they made portraits of several members of

[57] Wanjiku – In Kenyan context, Wanjiku is a name used to symbolize a common citizen in national socio-political context. It was largely popularized by the former President Daniel Moi who insinuated that "Wanjiku" could not understand the constitution. From then on, the name Wanjiku came to symbolize the common citizen.

[58] www.mavulture.com (The website is no longer functional)

[59] Twitter handle @mavulture

[60] Mavulture - https://www.facebook.com/Mavulture-407170952669920/

parliament with their photos, names, and a list of some of the fraudulent activities they had engaged themselves in (see figure 6.4).



Fig 6.4 Images of politicians christened as Mavultures (a word meaning – corrupt) as portrayed in Social Media platforms. The first image is that of the current Governor of Kitui County Charity Ngilu, and a former Lands Minister while the second image is that of the current Deputy President, William Ruto. Source:https://www.facebook.com/pg/Mavulture-407170952669920/photos/?tab=album&album_id=428834743836874&ref=page_internal

Graffiti has been used in several nations as a tool for the struggle for socio-political change which compliments other forms of traditional advocacy such as street protests and using other props such as T-shirts and posters. In the use of graffiti for social activism, ordinary citizens can express themselves freely, and it is also a way of giving a public opinion about socio-political issues in society. In the graffiti made by the "mavulture" artists, the artists attacked the elite and their corrupt lifestyles, their poor governance, and leadership skills – which are necessarily a threat to prosperity. Also, ordinary citizens were able to resonate more with the graffiti, due to their use of the familiar and everyday environment (The streets and walls). Meikle (2018) noted that the use

of graffiti for activism is because of an emergence of subcultural identity which tends to break away from the usual conventions and develop variously as a tool for resistance. In most instances, the youth or artists, are censored from expressing themselves on the mainstream media and therefore resort to using graffiti.

Unlike street protests such as #OccupyParliament and #IEBCMustGo (as we shall see later), graffiti are in ordinary spaces rather than in protesting in spaces of power. These graffiti had an intention to invite ordinary citizens to imagine their leaders as vultures, as well as inviting them to a public protest and condemn the culture of corruption amongst the political class – that had been corrupted by greed, infested by poor leadership and governance, and failed to address major socio-economic and political issues.

In #OccupyParliament, therefore, Boniface Mwangi's first call for action referred to the political class, united by greed, like vultures. Hence his use of the word "vulture" in his tweet. Nine days later, on 6th May 2013, an announcement was posted by a blogger on a blog post named *Kenya Today*, stating that there were planned demonstrations scheduled for Tuesday the 14th of May 2013. The purpose of the demonstration according to the post was to fight against the greed of the Kenyan Members of Parliament who were trying to arm-twist the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) into yielding to the MPs' demands for indefinitely higher pay. The announcement further said the aims of the #OccupyParliament were as follows:

a) Using the power of numbers, to give Kenyans the courage to defend their Constitution, which Parliament had endeavoured to overthrow by threatening to disband a constitutionally established body [SSRC]
b) To make Members of Parliament aware that the days of parliamentary dictatorship were over. MPs could not—be self-regulating; they had to be answerable to the people
c) To send home the message that no one was above the law and to instil a sense of accountability to persons who hold public office. They made it clear that public officers who make the law were subject to that law too.

The actual announcement of this protest is as annexed in Appendix 10

The announcement was circulated on social media platforms and email in a civil society's listservs (KPTJ). On jukwaa blog, individuals debated the description and importance of the #OccupyParliament movement. Importantly, the post showed the groups and organisations that had declared interest in the movement and would be part of it, and included:

a) Students
b) Workers
c) The urban poor
d) Middle-class representatives
e) Artists
f) Cultural workers
g) Socialists
h) Bloggers and journalists.

The post also mentioned that the core organising team of the movement included:

a) Pawa 254 led by Boniface Mwangi
b) Bunge la Mwananchi (The grassroots people's parliament)
c) Safina (A political party)
d) SDP (Social Democratic Party)
e) CORD (political party)
f) Kenyans for Peace through Truth and Justice (KPTJ) – a civil society organisation
g) Jukwaa la Katiba

These organisations/groups formed the nucleus of the movement. While #OccupyPlayground discussed in the previous chapter seemed to be more spontaneous, #OccupyParliament was more organized, planned by more "professional" activists. Scholars of non-violent movements such as Musarurwa, Akande, Rukuni, & Musingafi (2016) consider planning/strategies as an essential part of building a movement. In a post by Oloo Onyango on Jukwaa blog, he mentioned that the individuals and groups mentioned above had met several times before the day of the protest. During the planning meetings, almost all details of the protest were discussed, which included the attire to be worn, the meeting point, the songs, and chants to be used and most importantly, how to handle police brutality in the streets.

Over the years, successful movements have required meticulous planning and members of the civil societies have been at the forefront in planning for these movements. Bogad, (2006) portrays demonstrations in social movements as a dialogical performance and posits that planning is essential in sustaining any protest beyond the streets. He argues that rehearsing before protests in the nonviolent movement teaches activists essential skills such as how to stay calm, centred, committed when faced with adversity in the streets. In 1960 at First Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee, black college students rehearsed how they were going to execute their dissent against racial segregation in Nashville. Foster (2003), in her discussion of this movement, states that:

> To adhere to these general guidelines, protestors put themselves through an informal training program. Sometimes benefiting from contact with members of CORE (Committee on Racial Equality) who had been conducting workshops in nonviolent direct action since the 1940s, they encouraged all those who wished to participate in the sit-ins to learn what to do. In such workshops, participants practised role-playing both as protestors and as those who might easily aggress against them (p. 399)

The Nashville students protest eventually became one of the most successful protests of the 1960s against racial segregation of the black people in the United States (Foster, 2003; Polletta, 1998; Wynn, 1991). Therefore, to ensure success in #OccupyParliament, there was a need to plan for it and the regular meetings with the core organisers was essential.

Further, the individuals at the core of this movement provided various resources to ensure the success of the movement. Proponents of resource mobilisation theory (Charles Tilly and Doug McAdam) stated that, in social movements and other political processes, mobilisation of resources is essential in propelling the movements to the desired level. In the #OccupyParliament movement, the individuals and groups mentioned above were necessary for mobilising resources for the movement. Resource mobilisation theory expounded that such individuals and groups, who have the social and economic infrastructure, bring in finances, supporters, attention of the media, and even collaborations with those in power to move a success. Indeed, individuals and organisations at the core of #OccupyParliament were critical factors in movement mobilisation.

The theory (resource mobilisation) further posits that individuals in such movements are highly integrated. The mobilizers use such groups and individuals because they provide an advantage of targeting existing dense networks from these individuals and groups. Recruitment in these dense networks would take place in face to face situation rather than through expensive mass media

channels, on social media platforms which they have control of, and in informal networks such as among family and friends who can mobilise resources. These networks get to strengthen the movements to function successfully. In a conceptual paper on resource mobilisation theory, Golhasani & Hosseinirad (2017) argue that

> … social movement organisations are encouraged to target existing dense networks since doing so offers significant advantages: they can capture existing material and solidary incentives provided to individuals from their collective identification and they can use face-to-face recruitment strategies rather than complicated and costly mass communication techniques (p. 2)

6.3 Props and Performance at the #OccupyParliament

During the #OccupyParliament, the whole street protest was characterized by a meticulously planned street performance. The rehearsal for this performance had taken place in the meetings held before the event itself. The protests began at Freedom Corner, located at Uhuru Park, a place that has become synonymous with social movements. The protesters moved from Freedom Corner, through Kenyatta Avenue, Moi Avenue, Harambee Avenue, and the destination was outside parliament gates on Parliament Road.

As the protesters snaked through the streets of Nairobi Central Business District; a small truck drove at a snail pace behind the protesters. Unknown to many, what was in the truck was to characterize the peak of this protest. Boniface Mwangi and other organisers had fetched a sow and thirteen piglets from the outskirts of Nairobi and transported them in a small truck to the protest. Also, the organisers had fetched a few jerricans of blood from a slaughterhouse in Dagoretti (a centre in the outskirts of Nairobi). At the gates of parliament, the pigs were released from the truck and directed to feed on the blood that was poured on the ground. Also, the piglets had some names of the members of parliament inscribed on their bodies using blood.



Fig 6.5 An Image of the sow and the piglets being fed on blood outside the gates of parliament during the #OccupyParliament protest (Source - Eng, 2015)

The use of pigs in this protest provoked considerable debate, and local and international media reported on it extensively. Although this publicity was to be an advantage to the individuals and civil rights groups taking part in the protest, religious leaders, politicians and even people from the public flaunted the use of animals in the protest. Most of the arguments in those discussions argued that the protesters were cruel to the animals and, the mere sight of pigs feeding on blood violated the religious beliefs of Muslims since pigs were considered as *haram*.

Several days after the protest, individuals engaged in heated debates on social media and other online platforms on the use of pigs in this protest. These debates almost blurred the aim of the whole protest, and it could also be considered as a counter-narrative of the pro-government (those in support of the increase of MP's salaries) function at that time. In an email listserv belonging to civil society groups in Kenya, participants expressed the following views:

> I did not take part in this demo, but I supported it wholeheartedly –however I am extremely disappointed by how it was conducted…. On Tuesday, the pigs + blood not only outraged the Muslims and the KSPCA [Kenya Society for Protection and Care of Animals], it totally subverted the message and purpose of the demonstration. National and international news has focussed on the pigs; there has been no discussion of the merits of our demands. Is this what was intended? The sad truth is that the (M) 'pigs' had the day, we lost out. And to top it all, there was neither decorum nor dignity nor a sense of responsibility. The pigs and their handling were gross … My conclusion: Mass action is the way ahead and the sooner we learn and master the science of non-violent protest the better (Z. Patel, KPTJ listserv, May 15, 2013).

> I was viscerally revolted by the use of pigs and blood. I think those who chose this tactic owe Kenyans an explanation. It was wrong to do this even if it had resulted in support for the cause - the end cannot justify such means (S. Lone, KPTJ listserv, May 15, 2013).

> I was equally incensed at the use of pigs during the demonstration as it did dilute the essence and the just cause the event was intended for. Instructive to see that, the constitution is the embodiment of flora and fauna hence the need to internalise reverence for animals as well express sensitivity to their plight/situation (Ochieng M. K, KPTJ listserv, May 15, 2013).

> So really were the pigs necessary? Did it not offend anyone with all the blood poured out of jerricans on the streets? What was the blood symbolising? Moving on to cruelty to the pigs, I hold the view that feeding them with blood, painting names of MPs including those who profess the Islamic faith was not only careless but insensitive to the religious beliefs of the said MPs...! (K. May, *Jukwaa blog*, May 15, 2013)

This counter-narrative was quickly picked up by politicians and used it to defend themselves and to shame the protesters for being ruthless and inconsiderate. Other politicians whose names had been inscribed on the pigs threatened to sue the protesters for defamation. In another article that appeared on *The Standard* newspaper, a member of Parliament (Hon. Billow Kerrow) lamented that Kenyans had lost respect on their leaders and added that there was a continued the use of pigs in the demonstration was irresponsible.

> The 'M-Pigs' demonstration by civil society that likened the MPs to pigs was equally in unbelievably bad taste. However much as we disagree over the matter, it would be utterly irresponsible and callous to equate the leaders to pigs and dogs because of their persistent calls for higher salaries. Such ridicule and indignity are undeserved despite the disagreement with their action. It demeans the leadership and portrays lack of respect for

> the institution of Parliament. Clearly, the citizens have a right to express their disapproval through protests but with decorum, such as through a petition to Parliament and public rallies. [Billow Kerrow Saturday, May 18th, 2013 at 22:22 GMT +3]

Amid these discussions, however, other members of civil rights groups defended the use of pigs as a symbol of greed in the #OccupyParliament protest. Veteran activist Maina Kiai and Prof. Yash Pal Ghai wrote the following in the KPTJ email listservs:

> We are making mountains out of molehills with these pigs' issue! We are diverting from the issues, and I am not sure why. The pigs--whatever we may think about them--served to drive the point home. They were effective. We do not have to like or accept every detail in protests, but as long as is peaceful, this navel-gazing will not help. There are enough people who have never stood up for any rights--human, animal, or insect-- criticising anything. One of them made me laugh when he said he cannot stand the sight of blood (as a victim of the 1998 bomb-blast) yet he owns a butchery (M. Kiai, KPTJ listserv, May 19, 2013).

> I agree entirely with Kiai. There was no cruelty to the pigs. In fact, I thought they were having a good time until the police began to beat them. My understanding is that pigs are not haram under Islamic doctrines, merely the eating of pork. …. What has struck me is that [there] are few comments on the behaviour of the police, both in harassing the pigs and in their failure to protect citizens' rights---and on the contrary violating them MASSIVELY! (Y. Ghai, KPTJ listserv, May 19, 2013)

The use of opposing discourses or counter-narratives could be interpreted as a tactic by the ruling class to divert from the real issue the #OccupyParliament protest was pushing for. The members of parliament in various media events framed the whole protest as a disrespect to the country's leaders. They gave statements in press conferences and gave opinions in broadcast media (Radio and Television) shows as well as print media and continued to justify why they needed a pay rise against the wishes of many Kenyans. They also trashed the #OccupyParliament protest and focussed more on the performance of it (The use of pigs and blood) and failed to focus on the main issue of the protest. Because of their economic and social capital, the leaders were able to sway many individuals into their narrative. Religious leaders also focussed on the pigs and not on the main issue of the movement. Although Onyango Oloo, on Jukwaa platform had showed how the core organising team of this movement had sufficiently prepared (See Appendix 12), the counter-narratives seemed not to have been factored in during the preparation stage.

Further, one of the issues that brought about the controversy when pigs were released is that one of the protesters had come with a head of a dead pig to the protest, collected from a slaughterhouse.

One blogger narrated the following in a blog titled *The Struggle Within, The Struggle Without [Part II]*:

> "When the pigs were finally let out, the first thing I saw was the pig head held high, bloody [pig] where the neck had been cut. I have since come to learn that the pig head was not part of the protest. Not by the protest organisation is doing anyway. A madman in this market had thought it striking imagery to bring the head with him…. Yet a sideshow was in fact created, in the way of the pig head. The pigs and blood alone would have been no major issue to me, turned off as I am by blood. The head, though, was overkill. And not the organisers' fault. [Diary of a Serial Schizo – May 16th, 2013]

The use of another pig head – another prop for the street protest performance was another distraction and sent confusing messages to the "audience" of the protesters. This was one of the reasons that brought anger in the public discourse since some thought it was one of the piglets that had been slaughtered by the protesters at parliament gate. It was this that also created a new narrative by animal rights defenders that there was animal brutality during the protest. The police also took advantage of this confusion to unleash violence on the protesters. A blogger interviewed for this research had this to say:

> The police mentioned that they were forced to act with violence because the rights of Muslims were impinged upon by the use of pigs to symbolise MPs in the struggle. First off, I am sure it would have made no difference if the pigs were vultures shot down and weighed down with stones, to not fly off.
>
> (Interview, 7th January 2018)

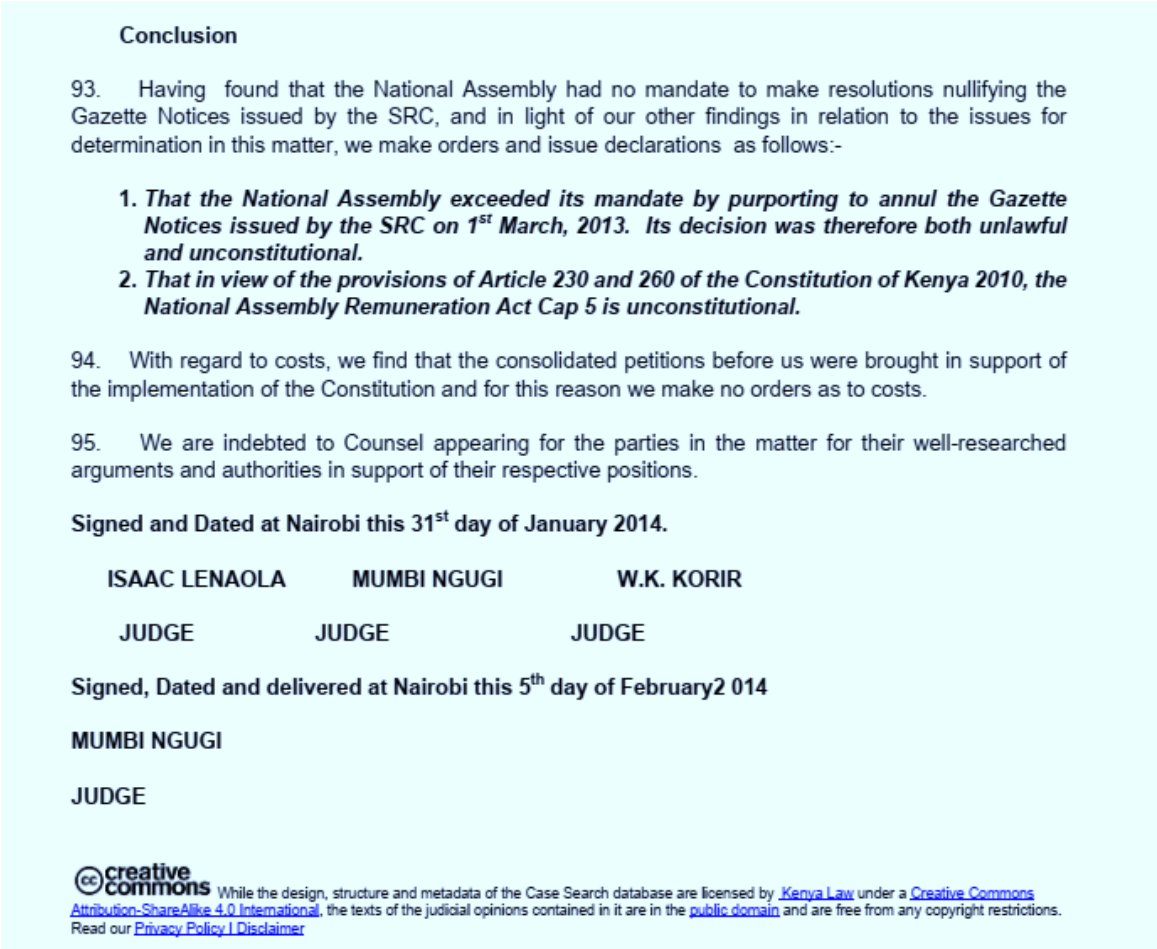
All these counter-narratives were becoming a distraction and counterproductive. The contending narratives were made even stronger and quickly spread since 17 members of the organising team of #OccupyParliament were arrested and charged with a breach of peace. Their arrest was condemned by civil societies, among others. Freedom House also condemned the violence in a report that read in part:

> The state (Kenya) failed to recognise the constitutional right to freedom of association and assembly. Though many protests took place during the review period, such as the "pig protest" over MPs' pay in May 2013, the "my dress, my choice"70 protest against harassment of women in January 2015, and the "occupy playground" protest against land grabbing, police often used force to disperse demonstrators. Police also used excessive force against CORD-led anti-IEBC protesters in June 2016, resulting in 4 deaths. The consistent pattern of recourse to excessive force has raised concerns that security agencies may try to intimidate opposition supporters around the 2017 elections. (Freedom House, 2016, p. 7).

6.4 The Role of the Judiciary in #OccupyParliament

On May 29th, 2013, activist Okiya Omtatah[61] went to court and made an urgent application to the High court and sought orders restraining the Parliamentary Service commission (PSC) from increasing the salaries of the members of parliament above Ksh. 532,500 set by the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) and to stop Parliament from disbanding the SRC. Okiyah Omtatah got interim orders that Members of Parliament should restrain from increasing their salaries and from disbanding the SRC pending full determination of the court. Okiya Omatah's case was enjoined with other similar cases filed by The Law Society of Kenya (LSK), Cosmas Ngeno Koech and Daniel Kamau Chege of Uzalendo Institute for Leadership and Democracy. The respondents to this consolidated case were The Attorney General, Parliamentary Service Commission, Salaries and Remuneration Commission, National assembly, Republic of Kenya, The Speaker of the National Assembly, the Controller of Budget, Clerk of the National Assembly and Clerk to the Senate. The determination of the case was made on 31st January 2014, a year later, and the court found the decision to annul the Gazette Notice issued by SRC on 1st March 2013 as unlawful. It also determined that the intention to disband SRC was unlawful.

[61] Okiya Omtatah is a Kenyan activist. His kind of activism is anchored on the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 where he uses the Judiciary and the rule of law in the conduct of public affairs and litigation. He has filed many court cases to challenge the decision of the government on behalf of ordinary citizens.



Conclusion

93. Having found that the National Assembly had no mandate to make resolutions nullifying the Gazette Notices issued by the SRC, and in light of our other findings in relation to the issues for determination in this matter, we make orders and issue declarations as follows:-

1. ***That the National Assembly exceeded its mandate by purporting to annul the Gazette Notices issued by the SRC on 1st March, 2013. Its decision was therefore both unlawful and unconstitutional.***
2. ***That in view of the provisions of Article 230 and 260 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, the National Assembly Remuneration Act Cap 5 is unconstitutional.***

94. With regard to costs, we find that the consolidated petitions before us were brought in support of the implementation of the Constitution and for this reason we make no orders as to costs.

95. We are indebted to Counsel appearing for the parties in the matter for their well-researched arguments and authorities in support of their respective positions.

Signed and Dated at Nairobi this 31st day of January 2014.

ISAAC LENAOLA MUMBI NGUGI W.K. KORIR

JUDGE JUDGE JUDGE

Signed, Dated and delivered at Nairobi this 5th day of February2 014

MUMBI NGUGI

JUDGE

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Fig 6.6 An extract of the conclusion of the determination of the case filed by Okiya Omtatah and others. (Source – Kenya Law Report website)

Okiyah Omtatah was interviewed for this study to provide a perspective on his push for social justice through public interest litigations. It is important to mention here that Mr Okiyah Omtatah's kind of activism has been different over the years, compared to the kind of activism Boniface Mwangi and other civil society organisations practice. Although Mr Omtatah is not an advocate, but a former mechanical engineer and playwright, he is a public litigator who fights for injustices through the court system. Before he started his public interest litigation advocacy, he survived several arrests, detentions, and police brutality when he took part in street protests, in most instances as a lone person. In one of the instances, he chained himself on gates of government offices, and went on hunger strike – just as a way of gaining visibility and fighting for social

justice. In an interview for this research study, he mentioned the following about his kind of activism:

> I do a lot of public interest litigation, like the other day I won a case where someone had refused to pay duty on sugar importation. I moved from street activism because I realised that there is little achievement on the streets rather than publicity. You can go there and make headlines, but what do you take home? I saw an opportunity in Kenya's 2010 constitution that gives a chance for public litigation as a means of checking the executive. Street activism still has a place in current era, but it requires a huge mobilisation. So far, I have achieved more in the courts than being on the streets. I have won countless cases against the government. During the pigs, protest, while others went to the street, I went to court. So, the real change in #OccupyParliament was achieved in court and not in the streets.
>
> [Okiyah Omtatah, Thursday, 10th January 2019]

His views on where a change in social movements happens are correct but also remains contentious at the same time – particularly on the process of realising change. In a discussion on Jukwaa platform blog, a user by the name @kamlet supported Okiya Omtatah's route to public litigation instead of street protest. He mentioned that:

> "…. the other thing to look at is the agenda of the activists (no human right issue here!) which in my mind is misplaced as the decision to go to the streets should be a sign of failed systems, and I do not think the systems are failed. For this reason, I was all full of support of the decision by Okiyah to go to court to contest exactly what the Boniface Mwangi was fighting for. My point is that the courts have not failed Kenyans yet to prompt the chaos I saw yesterday." (Kamlet, May 15, 2013).

For change to happen in social activism, a variety of actors and factors are involved – and they all come together to contribute to the change. I argue that in the #OccupyParliament, the role of the truck driver who ferried the pigs to the demonstration contributed significantly to the end goal of the movement. Equally, the person who sat on their computer and created content meant to condemn the intended increase in salaries of the members of parliament also played a role in sustaining the movement until change was achieved. Therefore, both the activists on the streets, online and those pursuing legal justice in the courts are important in every social activism in bringing about change.

Okiya Omtatah was not enthusiastic about street activism and even social media protest. However, in tweets collected for this research, Okiyah was one of the people who tweeted the most during #OccupyParliament, coming second after @Maskani254[62]. See the infographic below.

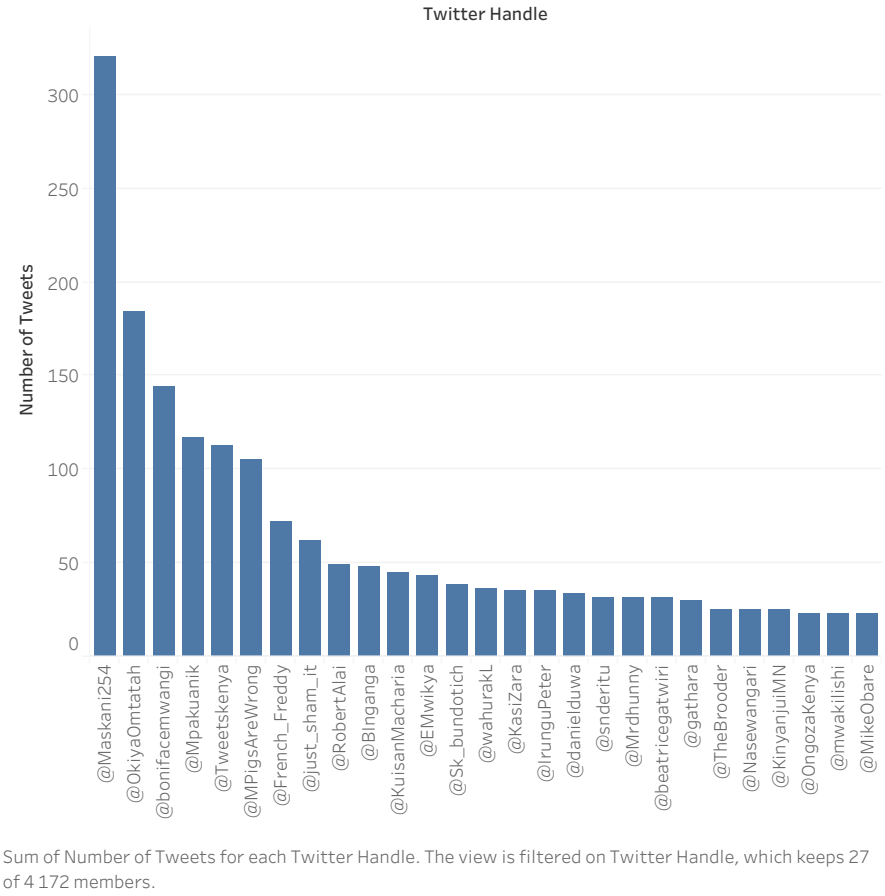


Fig. 6.7 Number of tweets by twitter users during #OccupyParliament

The point I am trying to make here is that despite the fact that Okiya Omtatah uses the courts for public interest litigation and fighting for social justice, social media platforms have become an integral part of his kind of activism to not only publicize the cases he takes to court but to also pass information about the outcome of his litigations. In September of 2018, he used twitter to raise funds so that he could challenge the Finance Act 2018, which had been passed in parliament.

[62] @Maskani254 Twitter Profile has the following description: "An online-offline collaborative space. Voicing civic issues. Engaging you! An informed + An activated citizenry = Transformed Kenya. #Maskaniconversations



Fig 6.8 A tweet from @ntvkenya detailing the online crowdfunding for Okiyah Omtatah

6.5 The #OccupyParliamentReloaded

On 1st June 2013, civil society organisations – led by a group by the name *Kenya ni Kwetu* (Kenya is ours) announced on social media platforms that they were going to hold another protest dubbed "Occupy Parliament Reloaded'. Event details are as below as posted on Facebook.

The description of the #OccupyParliamentReloaded protest read like the previous #OccupyParliament which condemned the greed of the members of parliament. One thing noted here is that the organisers mentioned that "no animals" were going to be used as props in the demo. This was due to the previous controversy that emerged when live pigs were used in the #OccupyPArliament demos.

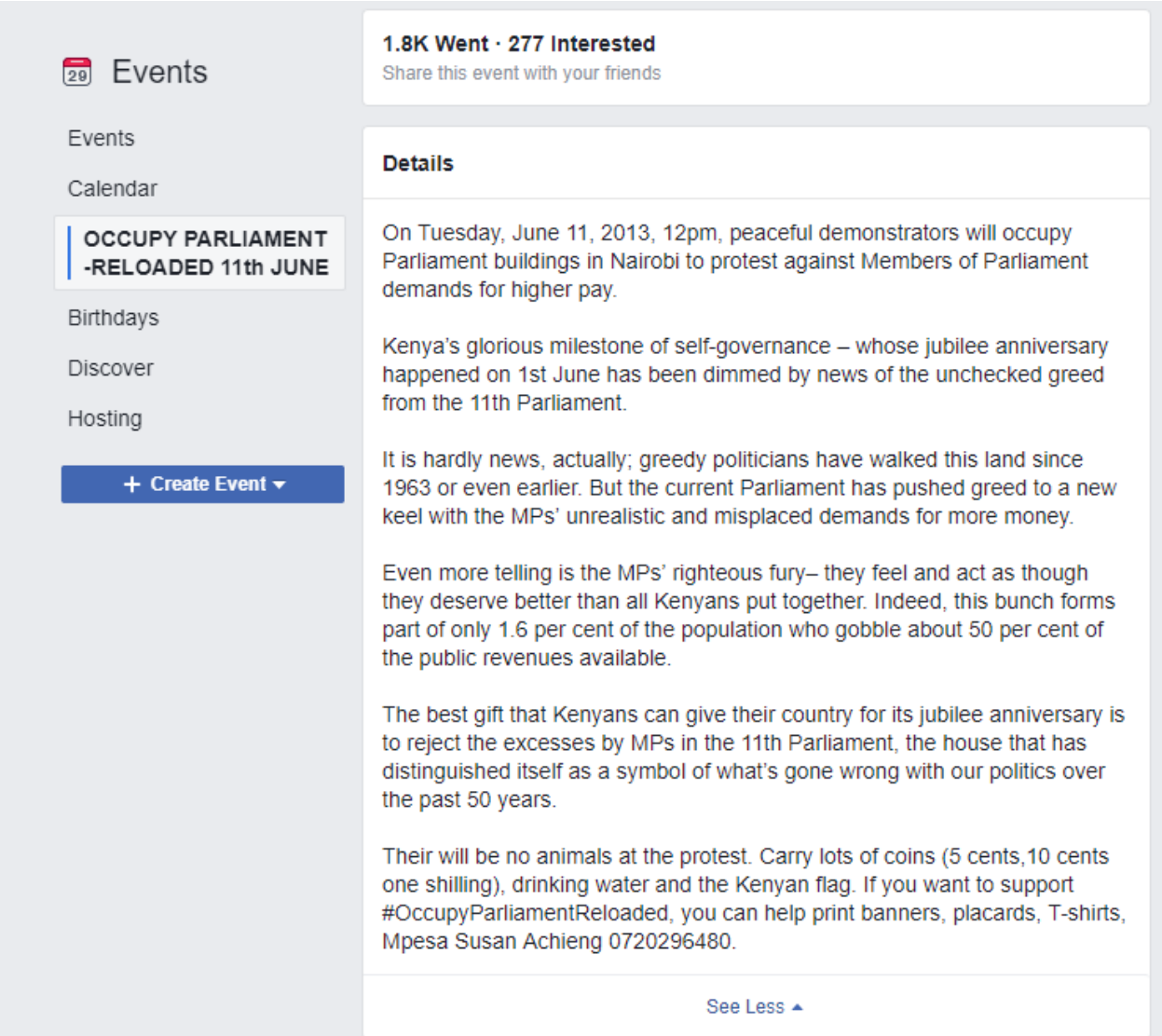
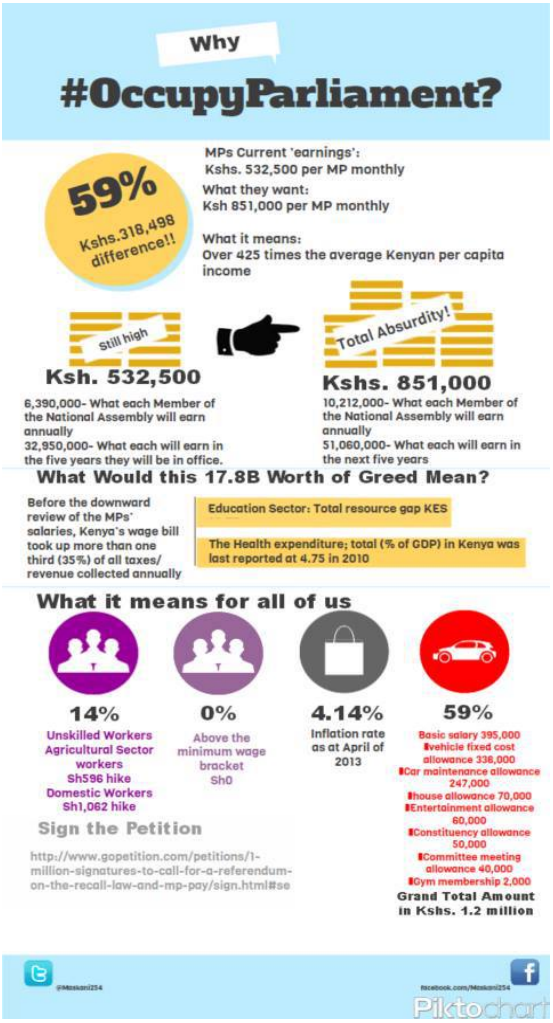


Fig 6.9 A screenshot of the details of the #OccupyParliamentReloaded

Boniface Mwangi wrote a letter to the OCPD (Officer Commanding Police Station) of Central Police Station in Nairobi and Parliament Police Station – informing them of the intended protest. (See details on Appendix 10). The organisers used Social media platforms to mobilise people to join the protest.

The description of the event denounced the intended actions of the Members of Parliament to disband the SRC and to increase their wages. The post castigated the members of parliament and condemned their greed. The post also announced the protest props and acted as a fundraising moment for the organisers. Also, online protesters began to create social media content in preparation for the protest and to mobilise people to join the protest. One of the posts highlighted what it meant to have the Member of Parliament increase their salaries while another one posted how a payslip for an MP would look like.



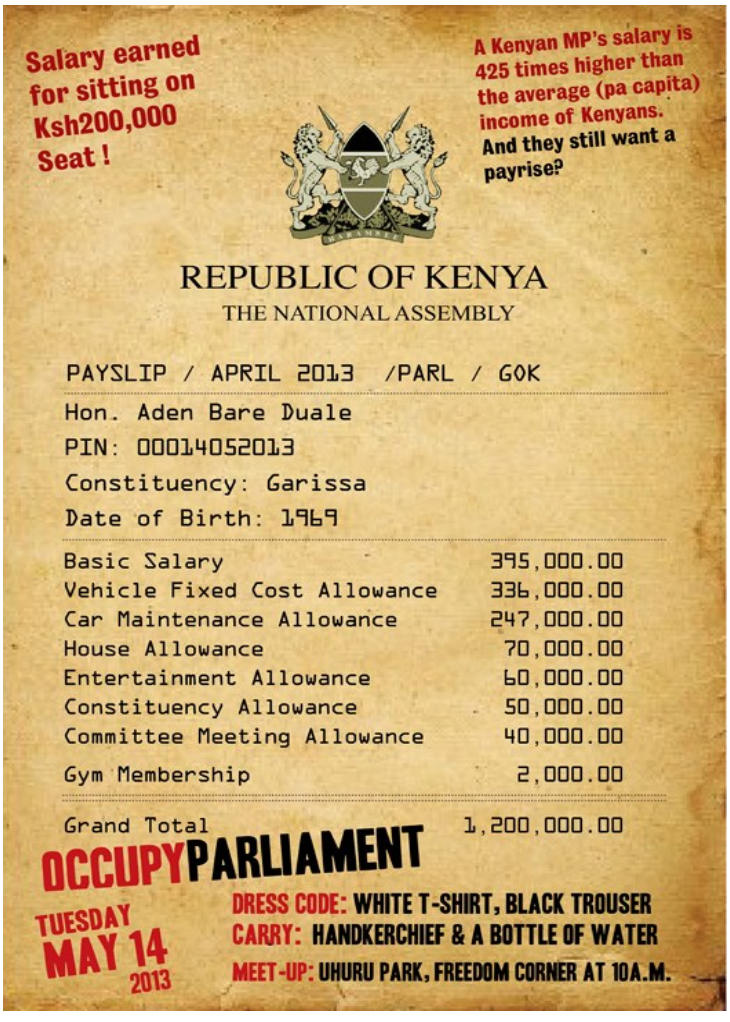


Fig 6.10 Online posters circulated on social media platforms for the #OccupyParliament protest

Although there was also a wave of looming anger in public on the intended increase of MPs salaries, by themselves, these posts were meant to aggravate that anger and make individuals join the protest.

On 11th June, protesters converged at Freedom Corner at Uhuru Park to begin the #OccupyParliamentReloaded protest. On the day before the protest, the organisers had an eight-point code of conduct for the protesters, which was circulated on social media platforms and read out to the protesters (See the code of conduct at attached in Appendix 15). This code of conduct was meant to ensure that the protest remained peaceful and avoid police brutality – unlike in the previous #OccupyParliament that turned out chaotic.

The protesters were dressed in white t-shirts with several inscriptions. At the front, there was a sketch of the parliament building drawn in black and below it there were the words "Occupy Parliament" in white colour with a red background. Then there were words "reloaded" written in black ink and then the tag line "*an uprising against collective greed of Kenyan MPs.*" At the back of the t-shirt, there were words that read *Niko Tuko (*Swahili for - I am there, we are there). The protesters also had headbands with the words *Occupy Parliament* and *Niko Tuko* (I am there, we are there) and *Kenya Yetu* (Our Kenya). The protesters also carried printed placards with various messages such as: *If courts fail, Kenyans will not*, *Kenyan MPs paid first world salaries while Kenyans earn 3rd world salaries*, *you are Fired! Public enemy No. 1 MPigs and several other messages*. All these messages were meant to express displeasure and anger on the members of parliament who had intended to increase their salaries. The messages were also meant to increase visibility of the protest at the same time aggravating public anger.

However, the prop that formed the spectacle of the whole #OccupyParliamentReloaded was a mould of a pig. In the first #OccupyParliament protest, the use of a live pig generated huge debate in the public that diverted the conversation of the leading cause of the movement. In #OccupyParliamentReloaded, the organisers of the protests wanted everything right and therefore avoided the use of live pigs. Instead, and with an effort of keeping the same representation, they moulded a pig and used it as a main prop in the movement. The organisers had hired the services of a Kenyan tv show – *The XYZ*, show that uses satire to scrutinise controversies that surround contemporary leaders (Peck, 2019). The huge mould of the pig, just like the sow and piglets in the #OccupyParliament, were meant to represent the greed of the members of parliament. Something

else that was noted here is that - while the live pig in #OccupyParliament bore the names of the Members of Parliament, this particular "pig" bore insults in Swahili and sheng, directed to the members of parliament. The image below shows a picture of the moulded pig posted by a Facebook user.



Fig 6.11 Photos showing the mould of a pig during the #OccupyParliamentReloaded. Source https://tinyurl.com/rf5w6yw

In the call for the #OccuppyParliamentReloaded, protesters had been asked to carry Kenyan money in coins. The organisers of the protest, on the other hand, brought a replica of a piggy bank. The intention was to show the MPs at the parliament gate how to save money. This was meant to mock them and to remind them that they needed to make better financial decisions instead of stealing from the public coffers.

The protesters snaked through the streets of Nairobi to the parliament building. On the way, they chanted, sung songs whistled, and mocked the MPs. At the Parliament gates, the police force stood there armed and seemed ready for any eventualities. After reading a petition which was handed to one of the parliamentary staff, they dropped the moulded pig outside the gate and poured a red substance on it, in what seemed to be blood packed in plastic bags by some protesters. The whole protest went on peacefully, and the police did not interfere. The protesters had made their point and later dispersed peacefully.

As the protest was going on, the members of Parliament were locked in a salary negotiation with SRC. According to a newspaper article that appeared on 12th June 2013 by Alex Ndegwa, Deputy President William Ruto brokered the negotiations together with SRC and Members of Parliament from the Parliamentary Service Commission. The negotiating team agreed not to increase the MPs salaries but increased their committee allowances and luxury car allowances. The next day, The Standard run the following headline:



Fig 6.12 A newspaper article that covered the salary brokering of MP's, SRC and Deputy President

In March 2015, two years after #OccupyParliament, a group of unknown protesters brought five donkeys and released them in the streets of Nairobi. The donkeys had red paintings on their skin and inscriptions speaking against corruption by members of parliament in Kenya (Ombati, 2015).

6.6 Social Media in #OccupyParliament

Social Media platforms were an integral part of this movement. Facebook, Twitter, email listservs' and even blogs provided an opportunity to mobilise many protesters and build a network of resistance. Social media platforms also enhanced the scale of operation and allowed protesters to communicate with ease without the need for vertical hierarchies. All the information about these protests was posted on social media, which included date and time, dress code, venue, and even the code of conduct for protesters – as noted during the second protest.

The protest was organized by civil society organisations, and grassroots social justice groups such as PAWA254, Mathare Social Justice and Muslim for Huma Rights (Muhuri). Boniface Mwangi was the face of the two protests and one of the main organisers who worked behind the scenes to ensure the protest was successful. He used social media platforms – Facebook and Twitter, to provide information about the protest and to mobilise protesters. Other Facebook pages like

Mavultures and *Kenya ni Kwetu* posted information about the protest and built a community of protesters who discussed the issue at hand.

In the following infographic, tweets from the #OccupyParliament were visualised to reveal how individuals on social media – Twitter, used the platform during the #OccupyParliament protest (See section 3.7 and 3.8 on how data was downloaded and analysed). The two large spikes represent the day of the protest where there was an increase in number of tweets. In September of 2013, during Kenya's Social Media Awards (SOMA), #OccupyParliament was awarded the Social Media Advocacy campaign of the year. This is represented by the small spike of tweets in September of that year in the infographic below. The most important thing to note here is that social media was an integral part of this campaign.

Visualization of *#OccupyParliament*

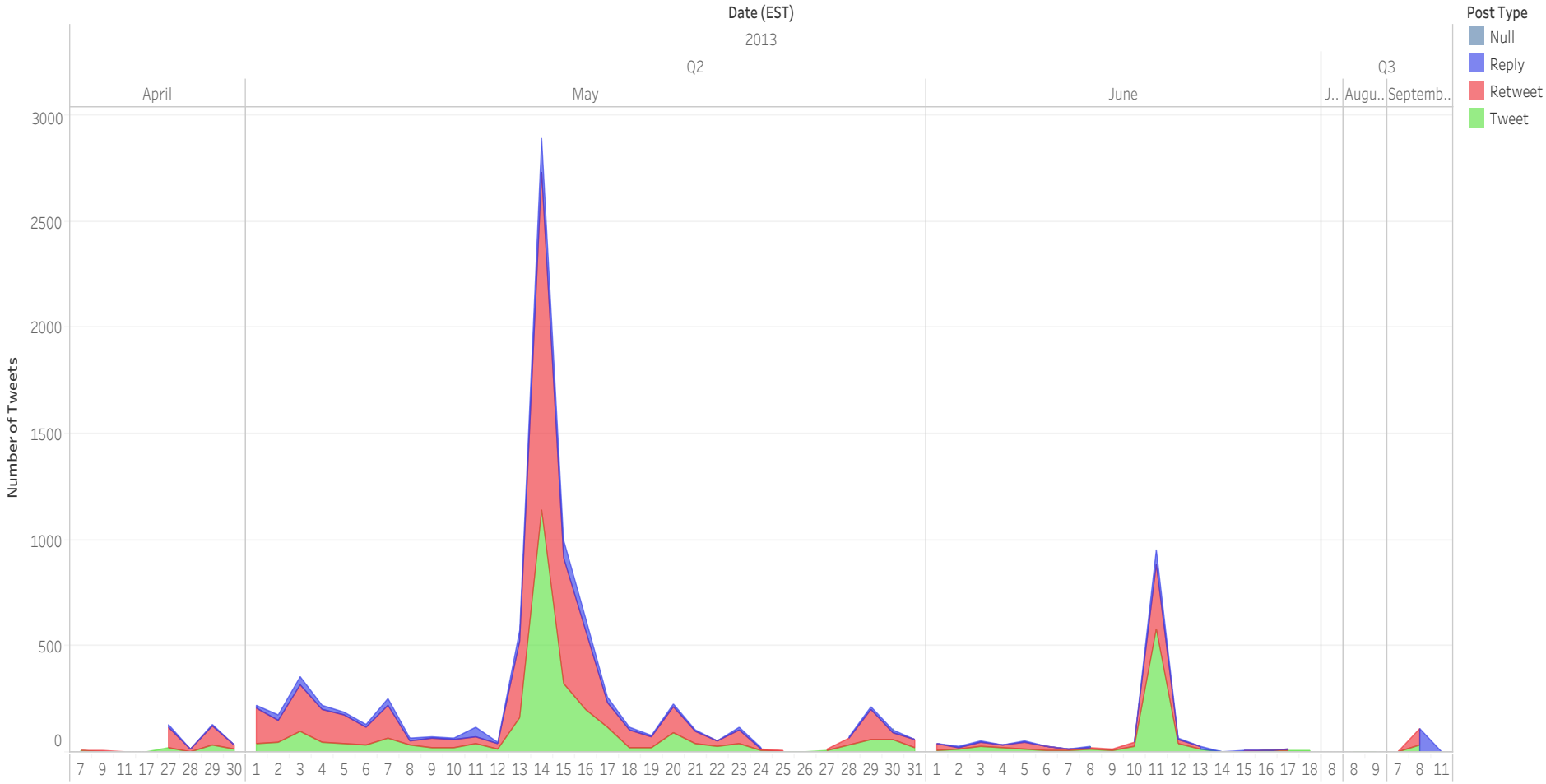


Fig. 12: Sum of Number of Tweets for each Date from April 2013 to Septermber 2013 that bore the hashtag #OccupyParliament.

*Fig 6.13 Sum of number of tweets for each date from April 2013 to September 2013 that bore the hashtag #OccupyP*arliament

The composition of the protesters was mostly youthful, with a few veteran activists such as Reverend Timothy Njoya and Prof. Yash Pal Ghai joining in. There was no clear distinction between protesters online and those on the streets in both #OccupyParliament protests. Judging by the kind of planning that went into this protest, this kind of group could be said to be from Kenya's middle class. The protesters led by their organisers afforded the technology to mobilise and publicise the protest. Social media sites – Facebook and Twitter, also acted as a platform for debates in the build-up to the day of the protests, during the protests and after the protests. The protesters on the streets supplied content for social media protesters. Hundreds of texts, photos and videos were posted on social media platforms. This also helped in creating a network of protesters that was able to push for the needed change.

When the Facebook event page for the protest was created, a mobile phone number was shared for individuals to financially support the cause through the mobile money transfer, *Mpesa*. As indicated in the Facebook event details, the financial support went towards preparing and printing the placards, the t-shirts, buying the sow and piglets, paying for the mould of the pig and various other mobilisation purposes.

The visibility of the #OccupyParliament on mainstream media, before the protest, was minimal. The organisers did not use the mainstream media to announce or popularise the protest. On the day before the protest social media users made the #OccupyParliament trend on Twitter. That was when the hashtag captured the attention of the mainstream media. On the day of the protest, the spectacle of the pigs outside parliamentary gates increased the media coverage both locally and internationally.

6.7 Amalgamation of Social Media Protest and Street Protest

The epicentre of both #OccupyParliament and #OccupyParliamentReloaded was the gate of Parliament of Kenya located on Parliament Road in the Central Business District of Nairobi. The protest began at Freedom Corner in Uhuru Park, snaked through Kenyatta Avenues and Harambee Avenue. Harambee Avenue is associated with power, since it is an avenue where many government offices are located, which include the office of the President, The Office of the Deputy President, Police Head Quarters, The Treasury, among others. That was the reason the street was principal for #OccupyHarambeeAvenue[63] movement. In #OccupyParliament, the

[63] The protest dubbed #OccupyHarambeeAvenue protest happened in November 2014 to push for the removal of Interior Cabinet Secretary (In charge of Internal Security), Joseph Ole Lenku, due to what was seen as laxity in security docket. In 2014 alone, there were 13 terrorist attacks that happened in Nairobi, Mombasa and Mandera.

physical space for defiance was outside the Parliament of Kenya – a stone throw away from Harambee Avenue. The occupation of these spaces of power by citizens, just like in other occupy movements, was meant to arouse a sense of militant briefness on a space or a physical location that did not belong to them. In actual sense, the term "occupy" does not mean ownership of the physical space but acts as a symbol which casts the participants as "occupiers" or short-term guests.

When social movements occupy these spaces of power, they get to engage with power and create their kind of power – a counter power-driven by the people. According to the description of the invitation of this event (#OccupyParliament) that was posted on Facebook, the author stated that the occupation of Parliament by citizens was meant to "symbolize the power and pre-eminence of the public over persons who hold elective office." The emphasis placed on taking and holding physical spaces by protesters of occupy movements all over the world was tactical and not only meant to show defiance at the front of spaces of 'power' but also to ignite and increase media coverage, an essential aspect for the movement.

Lim (2014) describes the amalgamation of cyberspaces and urban spaces/physical world. She views these two spaces (Online and offline) as one and not separate and social media platforms have contributed to the blurring of these boundaries. She also adds that there is a continued blurring of our lives that we live virtually and physically. In the case of #OccupyParliament, the protests on the streets and the online protests were intricately networked using social media. Uhuru Park, all through to Harambee Avenue formed a network with virtual occupation on social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter, and as Lim (2015) notes, the amalgamation of these spaces represented spatial turn for protests from the streets to virtual form. Lim (2015) further notes that "With our perpetual connectedness to the internet, especially through social media, the division of online and offline is rendered meaningless".

In #OccupyParliament, the streets and the online discussion supplied a site for contestation of power between the people and the government. Staging the movement outside Kenya's parliament building was the most effective way to express resistance, show the power of the people in the movement and challenge the oppressive power of the parliamentarians. Besides, the hashtag #OccupyParliament gathered social media users in one location virtually, to discuss, express defiance, and challenge the members of parliament for the continued greed and selfishness. Lim (2015) posits that these spatial connections of physical spaces, old and

new media form an essential element of contemporary social movements. Lim (2015) sums up the discussion by noting that

> …this hybrid space [urban and online space] has appeared as integral to the initiating and development of contemporary social movements. Its fluidity and resilience suggest that cyber urban space will continue to be part of any future social movement, presenting new possibilities as well as new complexities and challenges for protests' imaginaries, practices, and trajectories.

Since the up rise of #OccupyMovement in many parts of the world, social media sites have become an integral part of the street protests. The creation of content on the streets and in online spaces during such movements strengthens and sustains the movements beyond the streets. In many cases, the street protests are disrupted by government forces/police and to ensure the protests are sustained, social media platforms come in handy.

6.8 Conclusion

This chapter dwelt on the second case study of this research study, #OccupyParliament. It highlighted the issues that led to its formation, how the movement developed, how it was done and how it ended. As noted in this chapter, this was one of the most famous grassroots movement of 2013 that was planned and executed well. Compared to #OccupyPlayGround in the earlier chapter, activists in the #OccupyParliament movement meticulously planned the protest to ensure they had their message was heard by the relevant persons. Importantly, I argue here that while it is important to plan for protests, flash mobs such as those witnessed during the 2019 protests in Hong Kong have been known to be effective especially among protesters who would want to avoid repression by government forces. However, what is more important is the plan to carry on with the conversation beyond the street protest to ensure real change. While the #OccupyParliament street protest was successful, the judicial route of seeking social justice adopted by Okiya Omtatah was a key component of the whole movement. In #OccupyPlayground, a similar plan to carry the conversation beyond the protest at the school playground ensured that justice was served.

In this chapter, it was important to note how protesters used various tactics to pass their message. The use of pigs in both protests served to portray the greedy nature of Members of Parliament at that time. The earlier use of street murals and graffiti served to rebuke the members of parliament and their greedy nature. However, as much as these protest props can be important, we realize how they can be used against the protesters and diverge their energies from the main cause. The members of parliament used the "pigs" narrative to discredit the

movement rather than focussing on the main issue of the protest, a narrative that was even adopted by some members of the civil societies.

Lastly, social media became an integral part of the movement to mobilise protesters and to also act as a platform for discussions. While the street protests ended, social media protest went on for a couple of days to put pressure on the members of parliament to reverse their decision to disband the SRC. The extension of the street spaces was made possible by the availability of digital media platforms. This moved the protest from the gates of parliament to Twitter and Facebook. This is supported by Lim (2014)'s discussion that describes the blurring of the borderlines between physical spaces and cyberspaces in most aspects of life.

Chapter 7

#IEBCMustGo

This is a story not only about technology but also about long-standing trends in culture, politics, and civics in many protest movements that converged with more recent technological affordances.

Zeynep Tufekci (2007)

7.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the events of the #IEBCMustGo that took place in the year 2015 and 2016 and led by the politicians in the then opposition political party CORD. the chapter begins by tracing how the movement emerged and how it developed until its final stage. Two of the key issues that led its emergence were the quest for constitutional reforms as well as the fight against systemic corruption that was affecting many sectors of the economy, including elections. But before the protests, a host of other events had happened and shaped how the protests were carried out, including individuals who were involved and took part in it.

The chapter discusses the five #IEBCMustGo protests and the broader issues that shaped the dynamics of the protests. Since this was a movement led by political class, the dynamics of the protests and emerging issues took a slightly different angle, compared to the grassroots led protests discussed in chapter 5 and 6. Even with these differences, particularly on how individuals were mobilized, the broader issues of corruption and police brutality still continued to shape also this protest. Importantly, this chapter highlights how social media protesters and street protesters complemented each other to keep the movement alive throughout its lifetime.

7.2 The Kenyan Constitution

The current Kenyan Constitution was inaugurated in 2010 and it replaced the 1963 independence constitution. The demand to change the independence constitution begun in the early 1980s led by the second liberation nationalists. They included prominent religious and political figures such as Timothy Njoya, Gitobu Imanyara, Raila Odinga, his father Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, Martin Shikuku, Mwai Kibaki, Kenneth Matiba, and several others. At that time, the government of Kenya was under the leadership of Daniel Torotich Arap Moi – who ruled between 1978 and 2002.

In the year 2002, the opposition party NARC (National Rainbow Coalition) ousted KANU (Kenya African National Union) out of power, and President Moi retired. At that time, The NARC government was being led by former president Emilio Mwai Kibaki, and one of the campaign promises was to deliver a new constitution within 90 days after swearing-in. NARC was a coalition of opposition parties that had come together to outer President Daniel Moi. A few months after Mwai Kibaki's government came to power, rifts within the coalition begun to appear – mainly because a "memorandum of understanding" between the coalition partners seemed not to have been honoured by Mwai Kibaki's government. These rifts and differences, in opinion, made the delivery of a new constitution difficult.

The constitution review process that culminated in the 2010 Kenya's constitution had begun in the year 1997 when the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission Act was passed in Kenyan Parliament during President Moi's reign. In 1998, another legislation – Constitution of Kenya Review Commission (Amendment) Act was established, and this led to the creation of the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC), which later became the Commission for Constitutional Review of Kenya (CCRK) - led by Prof. Yash Pal Ghai. At that time, also, there was a debate on who had the mandate to change the constitution between the parliament and the people. This led to the birth of the *Ufungamano initiative* – a citizen constitutional lobby group that was led by religious leaders. The two parties (Ufungamano initiative and CCRK) merged to form the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission (CKRC). The commission began its work to review the constitution. In the year 2002, following the dissolution of Parliament, the commission stopped its review process until President Kibaki's government took power.

In the year 2003, CRCK held a National Constitutional Conference at Bomas of Kenya and adopted a draft constitution which was christened – The Ghai Draft (Named after the chair of CKRC – Prof. Yash Pal Ghai). However, the Bomas process collapsed due to differences in opinion on various issues. This prompted the then-Attorney General – Amos Wako to develop a draft which was then christened as the Wako Draft. The government pushed to have the draft subjected to a National Referendum in 2005. The referendum became a contest between Mwai Kibaki's government and those who had defected from the government following the collapse of NARC party's initial memorandum of understanding, as mentioned earlier. The Wako Draft was rejected by voters, and this contributed to the deterioration of the political environment in the country, which went on to the year 2007 during the disputed general elections. It was this

foul political environment that led to a rogue general election, that resulted in ethnic strife, killings, and displacement in some parts of the country.

In the year 2008, the Parliament of Kenya enacted the Constitution of Kenya Review Act and the Constitution of Kenya (Amendment) Act, which provided another legal framework for the second review of the constitution. To spearhead the review process, four groups were recognised as important and included: The committee of experts, the Kenyan Parliament Select Committee (PSC), the National Assembly and the People of Kenya, through a referendum.

The Committee of Experts (CoE) was the technical group that was mandated to develop a draft constitution. The drafts were taken through the scrutiny of the PSC, the National Assembly, and the public. On August 4th, 2010, the harmonised draft constitution underwent a referendum, and majority of Kenyans voted for it. It is important to note here that Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga were in government together, through a power-sharing deal struck in a reconciliation commission chaired by the late Kofi Annan. Although the draft was harmonised, various issues were left pending, and there was a promise by political leaders that these issues would be revisited at a later stage. The new constitution was promulgated on 27th August 2010.

The 2013 general elections were peaceful although there were incidences on the Coast – in Kilifi, where 23 individuals were killed on the eve of the voting day, and the number included ten police officers. The individuals were killed by a secessionist group called Mombasa Republican Council (MRC), which was protesting against voting, citing that they did not want to be part of Kenya. In other geographical areas in the country, political leaders exercised caution to avoid a repeat of the 2007/2008 ethnic violence that had erupted due to the disputed elections. President Uhuru Kenyatta was declared the winner and Raila Odinga, the party leader of CORD[64] (Coalition for Reforms and Democracy) party lost.

On the day of the elections, and the months that followed, details began to emerge that IEBC had been involved in a series of election-related irregularities. To begin with, it is important to note that the 2013 elections were the first to be held under Kenya's 2010 constitution. Therefore, the Independent Electoral and boundaries Commission (IEBC) had a new set of expanded, and well-defined roles and responsibilities enshrined in the constitution. In that

[64] CORD (Coalition for Reforms and Democracy) is a coalition of multiple political parties, built around three politicians: Raila Odinga, Kalonzo Musyoka, and Moses Wetangula. It was purposely built to contest the 2013 general elections in Kenya. The members of the coalition are Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), Wiper Democratic Movement, Amani National Congress, FORD-Kenya, Kenya Social Congress, KADU–Asili, Peoples Democratic Party, Kenia Solidarity Movement, Chama Cha Uzalendo, Muungano Development Movement Party of Kenya, United Democratic Movement, Chama Cha Mwananchi, Federal Party of Kenya

election, IEBC opted to use Biometric Voters Register (BVR) and KIEMS – Kenya Integrated Electronic Management System (KIEMS). KIEMS was meant to tally and transmit election results from the polling stations, all the way to the National Tallying Centre in Nairobi. The tenders to supply these technologies were awarded to Morpho Technology Canada, a subsidiary of French Safran Morpho. These technologies were meant to quicken the voting process, relay the election results, and this would help in increasing the credibility of elections. The faulty BVR kits were acquired from a French Company OT Morpho[65]. According to Khamisi (2018), delay in procurement of the BVR kits delayed their delivery, which also caused a delay in training the election officials who were to use them. When they were tested, IEBC officials discovered that some of the BVR kits were not reliable and broke down. On the election's day, most of the BVR kits failed to operate as expected, and IEBC reverted to manual register. In addition to procurement of BVR kits and KIEMS, IEBC had given a tender for printing of election materials, including ballot papers to a British company, Smith & Ouzman Limited.

In 2014, a year after the Kenyan elections, British SFO (Serious Fraud Office) carried out an investigation on the activities of Smith & Ouzman for four years in Kenya and Mauritania. They found out that S&O and the Interim Independent Electoral Commission (IIEC – which is now known as IEBC), and the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) had been involved in a series of bribery cases. According to an article that appeared on *Print Week* on November 14th, 2014, authored by Simon Nias, the British SFO found incriminating email correspondence between S&O Kenyan government officials. Simon Nias reported that the offense took place between November 2006 and December 2010, where S&O made bribes to public officials in Kenya – which they referred to as "Chicken" to influence the award of tenders for printing electoral materials and examination papers. Simon Nias further reported that according to a verbatim provided by SFO of an email between Oyombra and Chris Smith, the email read as follows "*He is a nice guy, Smith, he is in my pockets now, let's use them to get the contract, and as I promised them we get the order he gets chicken.....Smith these people's problem is chicken after award, and I told them as long as we get the tender and after*

[65] OT Morpho was also contracted by IEBC in 2017 to supply BVR and KIEMS kits. The system was again compromised, and the kits failed to work on elections day. The same company was also contracted by the government of Kenya to supply kits for new digitized ID called Huduma Namba (Service Number) in 2019.

looking at our margins then will definitely give them the chicken…" From then on, the scandal acquired a name – The Chicken gate Scandal[66].

7.3 Push for Constitutional Reforms

Two years after the 2013 general elections, CORD initiated a process to amend various sections of the constitution – as a follow up to the promise made after the 2010 promulgation of the constitution. Their initiative was also motivated by the fact that Uhuru Kenyatta's government was not keen to initiate a review of the constitution at that time.

The party, CORD, sought to initiate a constitutional review on the following issues, among others:

a) To improve the electoral management and adjudication process in Kenya by requiring greater transparency in voter registration, identification, and in the counting of votes.
b) To grant the judiciary greater independence, with a view of boosting its neutrality when adjudicating electoral disputes.
c) Empower the National Land Commission in the management of the country's land registries.
d) Entrench the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) in the Constitution.
e) Increase the total revenue allocated to the country's 47 counties.
f) Mandate ethnic quotas in public sector jobs

To achieve these changes, there was a need to amendment/review the constitution. Chapter 16, section 257 (1 and 4) of the constitution gave the following guidelines for anyone wishing to change the constitution:

> 257. AMENDMENT BY POPULAR INITIATIVE
>
> 1. An amendment to this Constitution may be proposed by a popular initiative signed by at least one million registered voters.
> 4. The promoters of a popular initiative shall deliver the draft Bill and the supporting signatures to the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, which shall verify that the initiative is supported by at least one million registered voters.

[66] It was not until February 2017 that Kenyan government took people to court. James Oswago, the then CEO of IIEC (now Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, IEBC) was arrested and charged with corruption in connection to the "chickengate" scandal. Also charged was a procurement officer, Hamida Ali Kibwana, and a broker Trevy Oyombra, an agent of S&O. They denied various charges of soliciting and receiving millions of shillings from S&O. They denied the charges and were granted bail. Part of the money recovered from S&O was returned to Kenya and used to purchase seven ambulances which President Uhuru presented to County governments on 4 July 2017 (Khamisi, 2018)

With the above requirements, CORD aimed to collect five million signatures from registered voters in August 2015 in a campaign dubbed *Okoa Kenya* (Swahili for Save Kenya) but only managed to collect 1.4 million signatures. The signatures were collected in geographical areas where CORD had staunch support, that is parts of Rift Valley, Western Kenya, Nairobi, and Nyanza region. On November 9, 2015, CORD presented *Okoa Kenya* campaign signatures to IEBC for verification. The screenshot shows the presentation of signatures by CORD to IEBC, as reported by *NTV Kenya*.



Fig 7.1: A tweet by @NTV Kenya (A Kenyan television Station) showing the presentation of Okoa Kenya signatures at IEBC offices by CORD

IEBC promised to conclude the verification of signatures in three months. However, the process went on until March of 2016 (nearly five months later). In mid-March of 2016, leaders in the CORD party begun to put pressure on IEBC to release verification results of the signatures submitted for the Okoa Kenya campaign. On March 16th, the political leaders stormed IEBC offices to press for the release of the results, but there was no IEBC commissioner present in the office on that day to speak to the leaders. At that same time, several political leaders, who included Johnston Sakaja and Aden Duale, affiliated to the ruling party TNA, spoke in a press conference and mentioned that the signatures CORD had submitted to IEBC were invalid and requested IEBC to release all the names and signatures of individuals who had signed them for Kenyans to verify them as well. It was at this point that CORD

accused the ruling party TNA of colluding with IEBC officials to bring down *Okoa Kenya* campaign.

On the 28th of March 2016, IEBC announced that out of the 1.6[67] million signatures submitted by CORD, only 891,598 signatures were authentic. The extract showing the results of the analysis of the signatures submitted to IEBC by CORD is attached in Appendix 16. It is at this point that a major confrontation between CORD and IEBC begun. The narrative quickly changed from a focus on constitutional reforms to ousting Independent Electoral and boundaries commission officials. In a press conference, CORD leaders – led by politicians Kalonzo Musyoka and Moses Wetangula questioned the IEBC verification process citing that no one had been hired to do the job. They also mentioned that IEBC had been compromised by the ruling party instead of acting independently. In addition, CORD mentioned that IEBC had been involved in corruption scandals and was therefore not fit to conduct the 2017 elections. They vowed that they would push for the removal of IEBC officials, and this was the beginning of a wave of protests. The protests generated a massive debate in Kenya, and even internationally. Social media platforms for the weeks that followed (April through to the first days of June) became a platform for discussion of the demonstrations under the hashtags #IEBCMustGo, #CORDDemos, #TeargasMonday, among others. The demonstrations were widely covered in mainstream media as well.

7.4 #IEBCMustGoDemos /#CORDDemos

In the weeks that followed, CORD held several demonstrations with a clarion call for the disbandment of IEBC. The first demonstration was held on 25th April 2016. Five other demonstrations followed on 9th May 16th May 23rd May, and the last demonstration took place on 6th June 2016. These demonstrations mainly took place in the city of Nairobi, where IEBC headquarters are found (Anniversary Towers). The demonstrations also took place in 11 counties, namely: Siaya, Kisumu, Bungoma, Kwale, Nakuru, Kakamega, Nairobi, Mombasa, Migori, Homa Bay and Meru.

There were five demonstrations in total that happened between the end of April 2016 and June 2016. CORD had indicated that demonstrations would happen every Monday from April 25th, 2016. However, on 3rd May, when the demonstrations were meant to take place, the party,

[67] Note that the numbers of signatures reported by the CORD party were 1.4 million, but the numbers reported by IEBC after verification were 1.6 million

CORD, called off the demonstrations to honour the passing of the former first lady and wife to retired President Mwai Kibaki, Mrs Lucy Kibaki. The demonstrations resumed on 9th May 2016.

All this time, IEBC officials refused to leave office, and President Kenyatta mentioned several times that the law had to be followed for any constitutional amendments to be done. Raila Odinga, however, mentioned that the law was for the people, and it was possible to change it. On the days after 9th May 2016, CORD, and other national leaders, including religious leaders, begun to push for dialogue between the government and the opposition party CORD. CORD maintained that the IEBC was too tainted to conduct the 2017 elections. They called for reforms in not only changing the commissioners at IEBC but also changing the electoral laws.

In a survey conducted by Consumer Insight and commissioned by *Nation Media* group, 44% of the 1,035 individuals who took part showed that IEBC was, at that time, not fit to conduct the next elections. Also, the survey showed that most Kenyans did not support the CORD demos but supported dialogue between CORD and the government to find a solution to the ensuing stalemate. The findings of this survey were contained in an article by Benard Mwinzi, on Daily Nation on 16th May 2016. The support of the #IEBCMustGo or lack of it by citizens was expected. As it shall later be seen, only 11 of the 47 counties took part in the demonstrations.

Madaraka day (Independence Day) is celebrated every year on 1st June to commemorate the day in 1963 when Kenya attained independence after decades of colonial rule. In 2016 the national celebrations took place in Nakuru County, and President Kenyatta and his Deputy Wiliam Ruto attended the celebrations. In their speeches, they gave a public backlash against #IEBCMustGo demos and the organisers - CORD leaders. According to an article on Daily Nation by Caroline Wafula and Francis Mureithi, the President and his deputy mentioned that the law had to be followed in making any constitutional amendments. They also spoke against the weekly #IEBCMustGo demos citing they were causing unrest in the country. As the national celebrations were happening in Nakuru, CORD party held a rally in Nairobi's Uhuru Park. However, later that week, details emerged that CORD leaders and the President and his deputy had held a meeting in State House. The meeting that was hurriedly organized was attended by four individuals – The President (Uhuru Kenyatta), Deputy President (William Ruto), Raila Odinga, and Moses Wetangula. In a newspaper article by Justus Wanga on Daily Nation (June 4th, 2016), the Daily nation team reported that "…*Mr Kenyatta acted on advice*

from the National Intelligence Service (NIS) to meet Mr Odinga and pose for photographs together to contain the soaring political temperatures…"

On Thursday of that week (2nd June 2016), CORD held a rally in the city of Kisumu, and this was also a prayer session to condole with those who had lost their lives in the #IEBCMustGo clashes with the police. By then, the political atmosphere in the country had grown very tense. CORD continued to push for their agenda for electoral reforms.

The last #IEBCMustGo demonstration was held on 6th June 2016 in several counties. In Nairobi, the demonstrations followed the usual choreography – From Capitol Hill (CORD Headquarters) through Kenyatta Avenue, Moi Avenue, and finally at Anniversary Towers (IEBC Headquarters). The politicians maintained the same tact – moving with their vehicles while their supporters walked beside them. On that day, many demonstrators were injured in a scuffle between them and the police. In Kisumu county, two people were shot dead, and several others were taken to hospital with bullet wounds. Police officers were also injured during the demonstrations and airlifted to Nairobi for treatment. In addition, some individuals took advantage of the tense situation and looted shops and destroyed other property during the demonstrations. In Nairobi, a public service vehicle – a matatu - was set on fire.

On 13th June 2016, several ambassadors and diplomats and religious leaders organised a meeting between CORD leaders and political leaders from the ruling party TNA to broker a truce. In a meeting that lasted hours, the two parties agreed to form a 14-member steering committee that would investigate the electoral reform issues. The committee was composed of senators and members of parliament. At this time, #IEBCMustGo was called off by the CORD leaders to allow for negotiations to begin. On the week of 20th June 2016, the two parties began negotiations on how they would effect reforms in electoral laws. The talks went on until the beginning of August. On August 4th, the negotiating team announced that IEBC officials had agreed to leave office voluntarily. On 5th September, IEBC commissioners officially vacated office. A new electoral body was going to be set up by 30th September of that year. Modalities of exit for the IEBC commissioners were laid down, and recruitment procedures also set up. The committee concluded its mandate on August 12th, 2016, and a recruitment exercise began. However, it was not until January 18th, 2017 that Wafula Chebukati was appointed by President Kenyatta as the new chair of IEBC, including other commissioners. The new team only had seven months to prepare for the 2017 general elections.

The action taken by citizens to oust leaders out of office is was not new, but something that has been happening worldwide in that decade. #IEBCMustGo resonated with events that were taking place in Europe and the Arab league. #IEBCMustGo followed the same trajectory as the demonstrations that happened in Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Portugal, Spain, Greece, and several other countries. The main reason for all these uprisings was to protest poor leadership. In the first stages of the protests, there was a concern about the number of people who turned up for the demonstrations. However, some online participants (such as @Mu****nya) in the below screenshot mentioned that the Arab revolution in Egypt and Tunisia begun with just a few people and later became a massive movement that was successful. This was a case of drawing aspiration from past successful movements.



*Fig. 7.2: A Tweet by @Mu****nya mentioning the comparison of Arab Spring to #IEBCMustGo protest*

In a study by Rabinowitz (2014) where they examine resistance in cities, they mentioned that mass demonstrations, rallies and sit-ins that took place in 2011 in Egypt, Tunisia, Spain – which they call Contemporary Metropolitan Protests (CMP) and the successes that were achieved, not only inspired activists locally but also internationally. It is also important to stress again that since 2013, when President Uhuru Kenyatta's government came to power, there was a wave of protests such as #OccupyParliament, #OccupyPlyaground, #MyDressMyChoice, #OccupyHarambeeAvenue, and several others. Historically, as discussed in chapter 4, Kenyans have had a culture of resistance since pre-independence era. #IEBCMustGo should be thus understood in the context of both these long-term and more recent trajectories of political activism.

In social movement studies, social movements appear when there is a dysfunction in societal systems brought about by poor leadership, greed, corruption, and other social ills. In most cases, social movements are usually tied to a common goal. The first goal for this campaign was constitutional reforms through a referendum. However, the politicians might have realised that their goals would not easily be achieved since they had failed to submit enough signatures that would support a referendum. Their focus changed to removing IEBC out of office, not only because the opposition party CORD had thought that IEBC had undermined them in a drive towards constitutional reforms, but also because they had been implicated in gross misconduct while in office. The organisers chose not to stick to all aspects they had wanted initially but only the issue that was simpler to push for – ousting the #IEBC commissioners. The goal was clear and to the point.

The most significant characteristic for the #IEBCMustGo organisers was their persistence and their refusal to bow out despite the many challenges they faced. Their greatest resource was the people – the supporters of the opposition party, CORD. They also knew where they had a support base and where they did not. Going by the 2013 general elections voting patterns, CORD had garnered a substantial number of votes in the counties where the #IEBCMustGo demos took place. It is important to note here that Raila Odinga had unsuccessfully contested as a presidential candidate in the 1992, 2007, 2013, and 2017 elections. There was a belief amongst his supporters that he had never lost an election, and he had always been rigged out by the sitting government in collaboration with the electoral commission. Since 2017 elections were approaching, Raila Odinga and his party ODM/CORD had to make proper strategies to ensure they were not rigged out again. As such, CORD supporters saw it that a win for Raila to oust the IEBC officials was like a foothold towards winning the elections. This was the primary motivation of the supporters of the #IEBCMustGo.

Social movement scholar Klandermans and Oegema (1987) came up with four steps that individuals undergo to become participants of social movements. 1) demonstrating potential for mobilisation; 2) becoming the target of mobilisation attempts; 3) becoming motivated to take part, and 4) overcoming barriers to participation. As mentioned earlier, the CORD demos took place in areas where Raila Odinga had won most votes during the 2013 elections. As such, the population in those counties demonstrated potential to be recruited into the demonstration, and they also became the target of mobilisation attempts. For reasons mentioned above, that Raila Odinga had a focus on 2017 elections, the demonstrators became motivated to take part. Lastly, the demonstrators were able to counter the barriers to their cause, both the streets and

in boardrooms. In addition, social movement theorists consider sympathy as an essential element in sustaining a movement. Participants' social movements must show sympathy towards the cause that is being acted upon and have hope that it was going to be achievable. There was a general sympathy towards Raila Odinga for his failure to cling the country's top position during the general elections in three elections. For these reasons, they saw the benefits of taking part in the demonstrations as outweighing the risk, cost, and sacrifices.

In addition, CORD, as a party waned its members against not taking part in the demonstrations. In an article that appeared on Daily Nation by Maurice Kaluoch, the ODM chairperson (John Mbadi) had this to say:

As the party chairperson, I have the authority and powers to instil discipline against errant members and forge unity between the officials and members hence will not hesitate to invoke some of the powers bestowed upon me … We cannot build the party through constant fights. I am telling those who were defeated in the party grassroots elections to swallow their pride and support the duly elected officials … We cannot forge ahead in pushing for the IEBC disbandment if some of our members are pulling in different directions. Let our supporters deal with those considered disloyal to the party come next nominations.

The check on the CORD members was meant to ensure that there were no divisions and that the members remained focused on the goal of the movement.

7.5 Media Coverage and Mobilization in #IEBCMustGo

According to an article that appeared on Daily Nation by Millicent Mwololo on 1st January 2017, #IEBCMustGo was among the top events of 2016 in Kenya. The demonstrations grabbed major headlines, as shown in the screenshots of Kenyan dailies below, between April and June 2016.



Fig. 7.3 Headlines in the dailies during the IEBC Must Go protests

Unlike #OccupyPlyaground and #OccupyParliament – which were organised by civil society organizations and ordinary citizens, the #IEBCMustGo was organised and led by political leaders in the opposition party, CORD. These political leaders did not use social media platforms to organise but used the platforms to stir up discussion and push for their agenda. The social media platforms were used to sustain the movement and to widen the scope of participation beyond the streets.

On the day before the demonstrations or some days before the planned demonstration, the political leaders would hold a press conference to announce the planned demonstrations. Because of the influence of the political leaders, the information from the press conference would make it to the top news stories in tv, radio, and newspaper headlines and this would popularise the demonstrations even more. For several weeks, newspapers covered the stories of the demonstrations, and this popularised the movement even more. The widespread drama and police brutality in the demonstrations also generated top stories for the dailies.

On the day of the protest, protesters gathered at Capito Hill, the CORD headquarters, located in Upper Hill area of the city of Nairobi. The protesters marched through Kenyatta Avenue (one the major streets in the city) and went all the way to IEBC headquarters found at Moi Avenue and directly opposite the University of Nairobi. Unlike the #OccupyPlyaground and #OccupyParliament, the caravan of the demonstrators would have the political leaders riding in vehicles while their supporters would walk alongside them chanting, singing, and displaying placards. On arrival at the IEBC headquarters, the protesters would either stage a sit-in or try to force their way to the IEBC offices. In addition, the political leaders would give some speeches at the Anniversary towers and reiterate their cause.

The organisation of this protest revealed several interesting issues. The role of the media as a tool that serves the interests of the privileged groups in society was clear in this movement. The media in Kenya is highly privatised. The government owns Kenya Broadcasting Cooperation (KBC) that has several radio stations and a television station. Other leading media houses are privately owned by individuals who often have political inclinations of pro or anti-government. For instance, Mediamax is a private media house that owns a television, radio, and newspaper – and it is owned by President Kenyatta's family. Royal Media, the biggest media house in Kenya, owns a dozen radio stations and a television station. It is owned by media mogul S.K. Macharia. Several other media houses are owned by politicians and other powerful individuals in Kenya. As such, the media in Kenya is very politically inclined either

as pro or anti-government. In 2013 general elections, S.K Macharia campaigned for Raila Odinga using his media stations, and he was also appointed as a member of ODM summit (advisory organ of the party). The case of media owners furthering their political interest in their media is not something new and has been happening globally. Studies by Curren & Seaton (1997) and Doyle (2002) found out that in the United Kingdom, media owners used their newspapers to further their political and commercial interests.

In an interview conducted for this research, Koigi wa Wamwere, responding to a question on if the media in Kenya can help bring a revolution, he mentions the following:

> *Koigi: ...*because the media is too pro-establishment. No. The media owners are part of the establishment. They do not want you to rock the boat, and they do not even believe we need a revolution because they are doing well. The top media houses are doing very well. They make much money. So why would they want a revolution they have absolutely no intention. Although they might have the means, but I do not think they do not intend if anything, they are great enemies of revolution.

During Jomo Kenyatta's and Daniel Moi's presidency, the media was highly censored (as discussed in chapter 4 of this research), but the media environment changed when Mwaki Kibaki became the president. Ogola (2011) states that during President Kibaki's reign, however, the media in Kenya found themselves serving two dominant political forces – Kibaki's Party of National Unity (PNU) and Raila Odinga's Orange Democratic Movement (ODM). The two parties found surrogate voices in the country's media, and this carried on in President Uhuru Kenyatta's reign. These reasons partly describe why #IEBCMustGo received such huge coverage.

In addition, the media has, over the past years, grown fond of stories on political party contestations in the country. #IEBCMustGo was a political contestation between Uhuru Kenyatta's ruling party and Raila Odinga's opposition party. Although the IEBC is a constitutionally independent body, there is a general belief that the government of the day manipulates it to fit the government agenda. That is why it was a contest between the government and the opposition. In fact, politicians allied to the ruling party at that time, TNA, condemned the demonstrations and sided with IEBC. Besides, this movement was also seen as a contestation between citizens who supported CORD as a political party (anti-government) and Uhuru's TNA party at that time. A closer look at the nine counties which took part in the #IEBCMustGo protest (Table 7.1) reveals that they all overwhelmingly voted for CORD during the 2013 elections apart from Nakuru and Meru (as highlighted in Table 7.1).

Table 7.1: An extract of Carter Observer Group Report on votes Garnered by Uhuru and Raila during the 2013 General Elections

	County	**Uhuru Kenyatta**	**Raila Odinga**
1.	Nairobi	659,490 (46.75%)	691,156 (49.00%)
2.	Siaya	884 (0.31%)	284,031 (98.47%)
3.	Kisumu	4,630 (1.33%)	337,232 (96.64%)
4.	Meru	384,290 (89.41%)	32,447 (7.55%)
5.	Migori	26,055 (9.97%)	225,645 (86.38%)
6.	Homa Bay	725 (0.24%)	303,447 (98.93%)
7.	Bungoma	42,988 (12.25%)	185,419 (52.83%)
8.	Kwale	17,633 (14.04%)	101,407 (80.74%)
9.	Mombasa	64,793 (23.79%)	189,985 (69.77%)
10	Kakamega	12,469 (2.63%)	303,120 (63.84%)
11	Nakuru	494,239 (80.19%)	105,660 (17.14%)

The intensity of the demonstrations in those two counties – Nakuru and Meru were minimal compared to other locations such as Siaya, and Homa Bay counties where CORD as a party had most supporters. Social media users considered #IEBCMustGo demonstrations in Meru as a joke (see the tweet and responses in fig. 7.4). Days before this, the governor of Meru, Hon. Kiraitu Murungi defended IEBC, saying that calls by the opposition party CORD to disband IEBC could only be affected through the constitutionally laid down procedure (Citizen Digital, 16th May 2016). However, in later weeks, when the steering for electoral reforms was formed, he became the chairperson and spokesperson of the committee. The screenshots of tweets below show how the demonstrations in Meru were not taken seriously.



Fig. 7.4 Screenshots of tweets from #IEBCMustGo demonstrations in Meru County

Although much of the drama in the #IEBCMustGo protest took place in Nairobi and Kisumu Counties, no bias was noted in terms of reporting in the media. Besides, some of the media stations covered the #IEBCMustGo protest live from the streets. Some of the protesters themselves also posted pictures and videos from the streets to social media, which helped to drive the conversation.

7.6 Social Media in #IEBCMustGo

The #IEBCMustGo can be considered to have occurred at two levels. On the streets and online. These two locations complemented each other and were used to sustain the whole movement. Social Media platforms, particularly Twitter, played a crucial role, not only as a place for protest but also as a platform for discussion on the #IEBCMustGo protest. When CORD announced plans to fight for the removal of IEBC, #IEBCMustGo hashtag came up. This became the main hashtag for the demonstrations. The hashtag was popularised by members and supporters of the opposition party, CORD, including Raila Odinga, who used it to report on what had taken place during the demos, and to push for the main agenda of the demonstrations.



Fig. 7.5 Screenshots of tweets showing the use of #IEBCmustGo hashtag by political leaders

The hashtag also gained popularity amongst top bloggers in Kenya who included Robert Alai (@RobertAlai), Boniface Mwangi (@Boniface Mwangi), the late Jacob Juma (@kabete, among others. While mainstream media did a more refined reporting, Twitter, on the other hand, provided the ability to instantaneously spread messages from the street protests, boardroom meetings, and other essential sources during the #IEBCMustGo. The protesters on the streets, the online protesters and the audience of the mainstream media converged to form a robust network that sustained the movement from the moment it started to the end of it. It was such a spirited campaign that took place for the better part of 2016.

About 24,000 tweets bearing the primary hashtag #IEBCMustGo were analysed for this study. (See section 3.7 and 3.8 on how data was downloaded and analysed) In Fig.7.7, the tweets were put together to see how the #IEBCMustGo hashtag was used throughout the protest period. The hashtag begun trending on 25th April 2016 as shown in the spike labelled 1, and that was when the first protest happened. On the spikes labelled 2, 3, 4, and 5 represent the day of the protest. The demonstrations on 9th May (spike 2) was the most tweeted – with about 7,000

tweets. The vast number of tweets and retweets on 9th May 2016 we garnered from the fact that Boniface Mwangi, Raila Odinga, Kalonzo Musyoka[68] and Ali Hassan Joho[69] tweeted about the #IEBCMustGo as shown in the screenshots below. Although Boniface Mwangi was not taking part the protests, unlike the earlier cases - #OccupyPlayGround and #OccupyParliament, his influence on the matter could not go unnoticed gauged by the number of likes and retweets his tweets got.

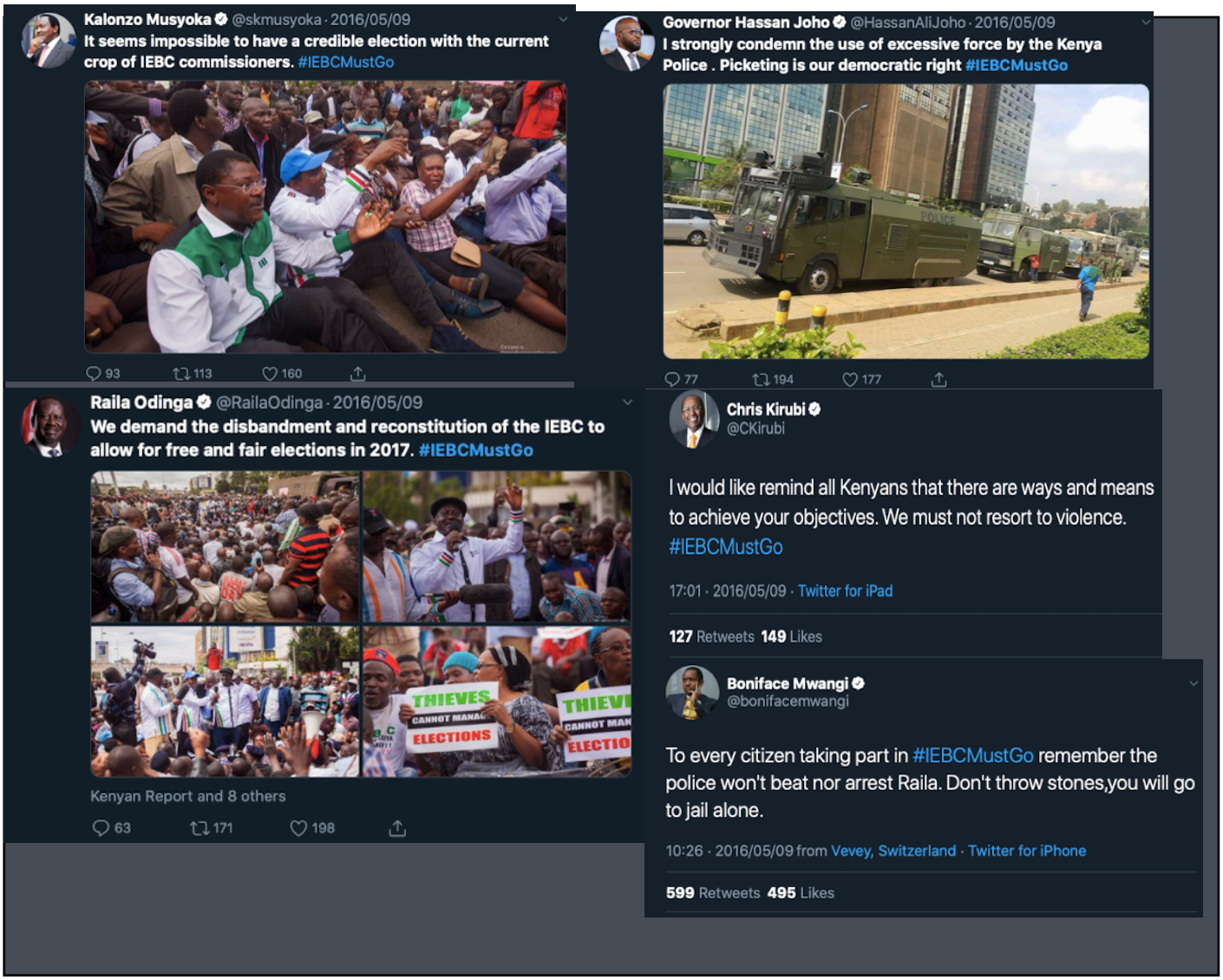


Fig. 7.6 Screenshots of tweets from prominent individuals during the #IEBCMustGo protest

With all the drama in the streets – violence, police brutality, running battles and looting of property, social media provided a haven for protest. Although this was limited to only those

[68] Kalonzo Musyoka is the former Vice President of Kenya during Mwai Kibaki's era. He went on to become CORD principal and deputized Raila Odinga in the 2013 and 2017 elections.

[69] Ali Hassan Joho is the Governor of Mombasa city

who had technological affordance, it allowed participation from a range of people. According to a journalist who was interviewed for this research and who extensively covered the #IEBCMustGo noted that the protesters on the streets were different from those protesting online. He said:

> Those who were on the streets came from informal settlements of Kibera, Mathare, and mukuru. They could not afford to be online due to their technological challenges of affording smartphones and internet. They walked all the way from those informal settlements and went back home after the protests. Those tweeting and writing Facebook posts are individuals from the middle class. They have nice jobs and can afford the internet and smartphones. However, they would not go to the streets because they were working or were too afraid to be on the front line.
>
> (Journalist A, Interview, 9th January 2018)

In one of the #IEBCMustGo protests, police camped on the road leading out of Kibera to Nairobi city to prevent youths from leaving the area and joining the demonstrations. This was after a realisation that the majority of those who went from the demonstrations were from Kibera. Apart from challenges in technological affordance, it is also important to note that Kibera forms part of Kibra Constituency which was led by Raila Odinga as a member of parliament for many years. Kibera is still considered an ODM stronghold. In 2013 elections, Kibra constituency had the highest voter turnout at 93 percent. Raila Odinga garnered 57,055 votes while Uhuru Kenyatta garnered 15,739 out of the 96,670 votes cast.

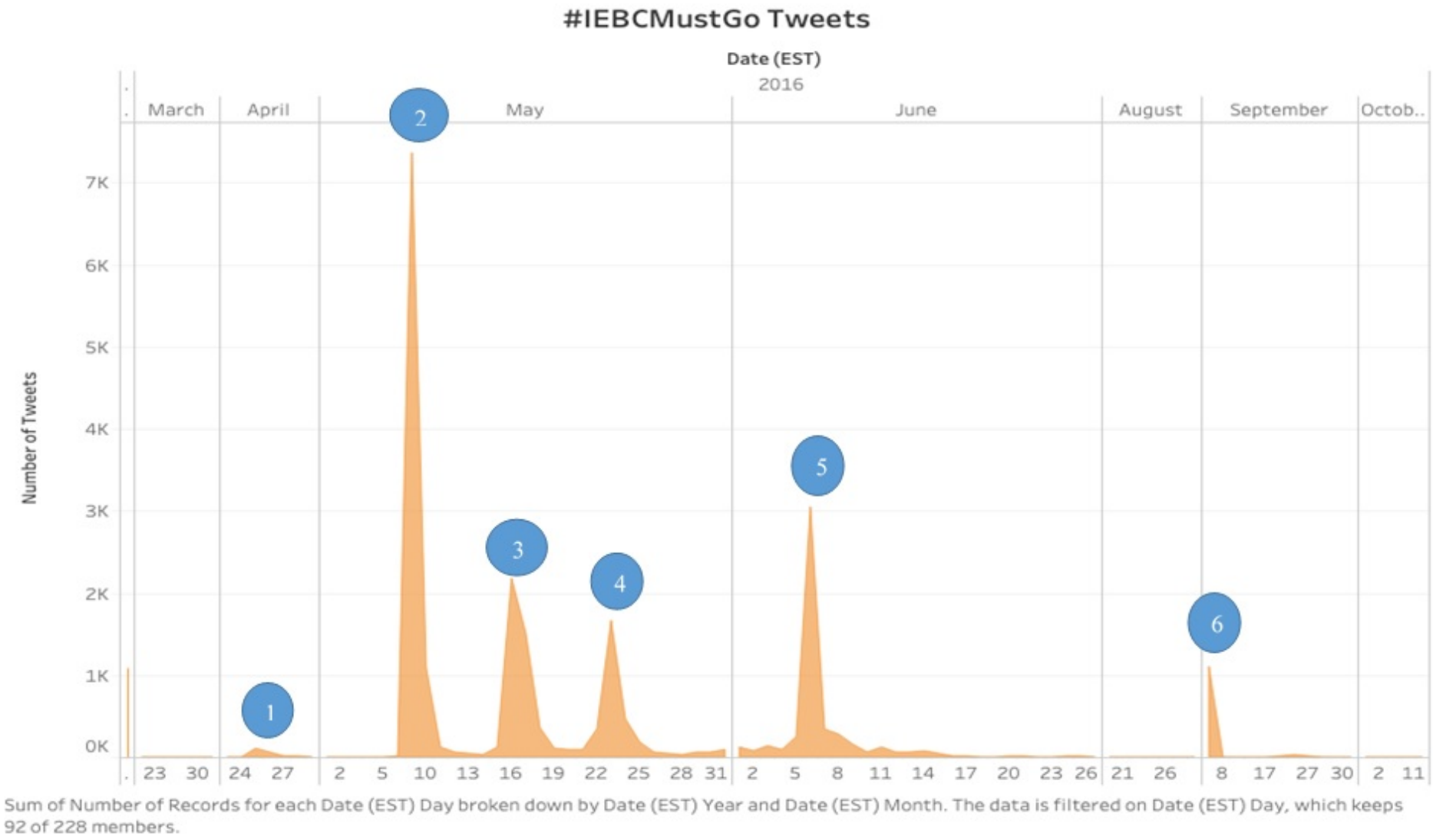


Fig. 7.7 A visualization of #IEBCMustGoTweets

7.7 Police Brutality in the #IEBCMustGo Protests

Just like the #OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayGround, #IEBCMustGo was characterised by a widespread confrontation between the police and the demonstrators. Right from the first to the last day of protests, the demonstrations were characterised by violence, injuries, destruction of property, running battles, killings, and police brutality. On the first day of demonstrations on 25th April 2019, the demonstrators faced police brutality outside the IEBC offices. The next day, on 26th April, CORD leaders Raila Odinga, Kalonzo Musyoka and Moses Wetangula gave a press briefing and read a statement which read in part:

> *Yesterday a lawful attempt by CORD to have a peaceful engagement with IEBC based on Articles 37 and 38 of the Constitution was violently brought down through police brutality. Many of our people were hurt. Jubilee has brought back the imperial presidency and state terror as a means of control and running an autocratic administration. We are not impressed. We condemn the state for going back to the dark days of one-party state, social injustice, and political oppression. We shall not allow it*. (The statement was posted on Kalonzo Musyoka's Facebook page (See Appendix 17).

Chapter 4 of Kenya's constitution highlights the bill of rights of every citizen. Article 37 of the same chapter reads as follows:

> ***Assembly, demonstration, picketing, and petition.***
>
> *37. Every person has the right, peaceably and unarmed, to assemble, to demonstrate, to picket, and to present petitions to public authorities. (Constitution of Kenya, 2010)*

The demonstrators were well within their rights to take part in the demonstrations, but they were met by the full force of the police. The police cited that the demonstrators were rowdy and threatened public order instead of peacefully demonstrating. The police are tasked with maintaining order and providing security to the citizens. The Police Act (Chapter 84) in Part III reads as follows:

> **Part III—Duties, Powers and Privileges**
> 14. (1) The Force shall be employed in Kenya for the maintenance of law and order, the preservation of peace, the protection of life and property, the prevention and detection of crime, the apprehension of offenders, and the enforcement of all laws and regulations with which it is charged.

The police used live bullets, water cannons, buttons and, tear gas to disperse the demonstrators. Since the demonstrations were happening mostly on Mondays, social media users coined the hashtag #TearGasMonday as one of the hashtags for the demonstrations. In the second screenshot of fig.7.8, CORD leader is pictured being assisted in escaping the teargas fumes thrown by the police during the demonstrations. The tweets below by @Vi***vor and @F***i shows how citizens on Twitter complained about the use of excessive force by the police.

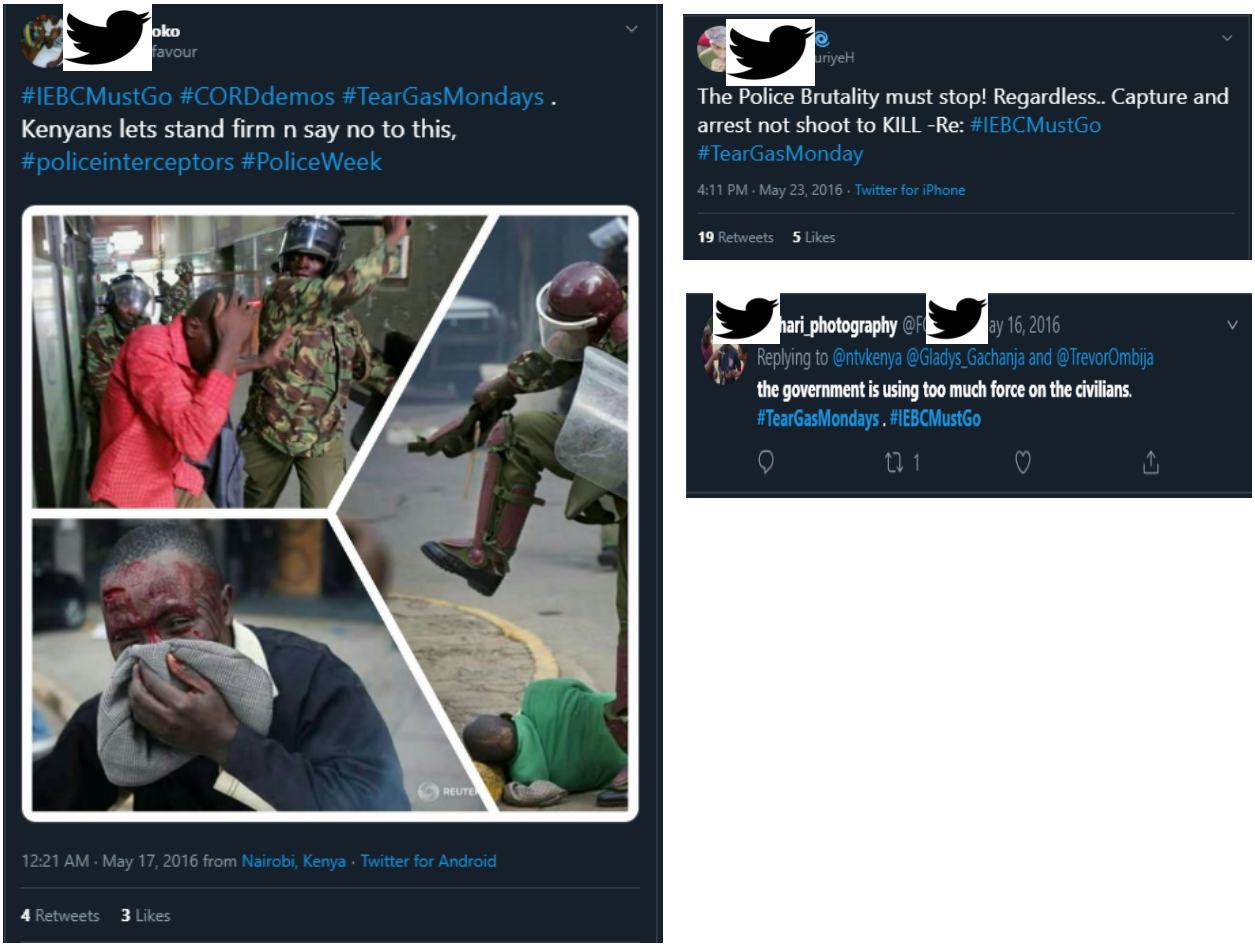


Fig 7.8 Screenshots of tweets showing police brutality during the #IEBCMustGo

On social media platforms, at that time, the hashtag #PoliceBrutalityKE was used in addition to #IEBCmustGo and #TeargasMonday during the protests. In several parts where the demonstrations took place, several people were killed, others escaped with severe and minor injuries, while some business premises were attacked and looted by demonstrators. In the first and

third images above (fig 7.8), police were photographed brutalising protesters while the second photo showed a man injured on his head by the police.

There were efforts made by several political leaders to condemn the police brutality, but the police bosses said they would continue using force on the demonstrators. In addition, five members allied to the TNA (ruling party) went to court to seek orders that CORD should stop the demonstrations because it was polarising the country and hurting the business environment (see Appendix 18). However, the High Court of Kenya ordered that CORD and its members had every right to demonstrate and they were not breaking the law. However, the CORD members were ordered not to storm IEBC offices. The demonstrators also made efforts to befriend the police during demonstrations. In a tweet, Boniface Mwangi, asked the protesters to buy flowers on their way to demonstrations and give them to police officers.



Fig 7.9 A screenshot of a tweet by Boniface Mwangi urging protesters to give followers to police officers as a sign of friendship

Surprisingly, this did not work out, and a few minutes later, the police dispersed protesters using teargas and water cannons. The below tweet by @Ma***go shows his surprise that the flowers seem to have gone on fire.



Fig. 7.10 A screenshot of a tweet showing the outcome of the attempt to give flowers to the police officer

In a report on Governance Assessment in Kenya by Freedom house – conducted between January 2013 and July 2016, Ebole & Odhiambo (2016) reported that the Kenyan government had failed to uphold the rights and freedoms of its citizens, especially during demonstrations. The report read in part:

> The state also largely failed to recognize the constitutional right to freedom of association and assembly. Though many protests took place during the review period, such as the "pig protest" over MPs' pay in May 2013, the "my dress, my choice" protest against harassment of women in January 2015, and the "occupy playground" protest against land grabbing, police often used force to disperse demonstrators. Police also used excessive force against CORD-led anti-IEBC protesters in June 2016, resulting in 4 deaths. The consistent pattern of recourse to excessive force has raised concerns that security agencies may attempt to intimidate opposition supporters around the 2017 elections (p. 7).

In a turn of the narrative that protesters in the CORD/IEBC demos were violent and looted business premises, the CORD party mentioned that the Jubilee party had hired gangs to join the peaceful protest. They claimed that the hired goons were meant to shed a bad light on the demonstrations that they considered peaceful. These claims were too difficult to authenticate for this research. Jubilee party leaders however maintained that CORD was causing chaos in the city, and it was affecting businesses. Indeed, on the day of the demonstrations, several shops were forced to close for several hours to avoid being caught up in the violence.

On 6th June 2016, protest, two public service vehicles – *matatus*, we set on fire in the Eastland's area of Nairobi (Juja Road) by youths returning from the CORD demonstrations. The *Matatus* owners were accused of being Jubilee sympathisers. The next day, on 7th June, Maina Kamanda, the Member of Parliament for Starehe Constituency in Nairobi, led a demonstration accompanied

by about 1000 youths who were against the #IEBCMustGo protests. The demonstrators were composed of members of the Matatu industry. The demonstrations snaked through the Kenyan Parliament and ended at Capitol Hill. During the protest, they towed the remains of the burnt *matatus* in a trailer and dumped them outside CORD offices. They then gave a petition at parliament that the owners of the matatu needed to be compensated.



Fig. 7.11 A tweet by The Star Kenya, a Kenyan newspaper, showing a shell of the burnt matatu

On June 10th, 2016, CORD was sued by the owner of the *Matatu* Agnes Macharia and Prime City Transporters and sought compensation. On 14th of June, in one of the vernacular stations (Kameme FM), the radio host led a fundraiser with his listeners and contributed money to buy a new vehicle for Agnes Macharia. Also, MPs from the Jubilee Party contributed 1 million Kenya shillings (about 10,000 dollars) to aid in buying another matatu for the lady.

The torching of the *matatu* brought out another aspect of the demonstrations. Some rumors were spreading on social media platforms that members of an outlawed vigilante group called *Mungiki* – which was active in the early 2000s and was mainly drawn from the Kikuyu community, had been hired by the government to manage the #IEBCMustGo demonstrations. The claims had it that the vigilante group had been given police uniforms to unleash terror on demonstrators, especially the Luo community in Nyanza region. However, these claims could not be verified.



Fig 7.12 Screenshots of tweets showing the emergence of a new narrative -- #MungikiDemos during the #IEBCMustGo

Importantly, the emergence of the hashtag #MungikiDemos was an interesting aspect of the #IEBCDemos. It served to show how ethnic dynamics can blur socio-political protests and even shape how participants view them. The issue of #MungikiDemos was exacerbated when a group calling itself *Nairobi Business Community* emerged, alongside the Matatus Owners Association (MOA) and held a demonstration in the city of Nairobi condemning the CORD Demos, citing that it was hurting their businesses. These counterdemonstrations blurred the focus of the #IEBCMustGo protesters and were believed to be sponsored by pro-government politicians and businessmen.

#IEBCMustGo revealed the high price of socio-political movements not only on the organizers and participants of the social movement but also on the people who were not participants of the socio-political movement. While the benefits of ousting corrupt IEBC, officials were on the whole nation, some citizens paid for the cost of movement painfully than others. On the day of the protests, some business premises were burned, lost revenue, looted, and others destroyed especially in Nairobi and Kisumu city. In addition, other individuals were caught amid the protest chaos and had their valuables mugged.

In Kisumu, especially, political bias was also evident during the protests. Nyanza region, which has counties such as Kisumu, Siaya, and Migori, and these areas are considered to have huge support for Raila Odinga and his party. This has been a trend since the post-independence period when Raila's father, Jaramogo Oginga Odinga fell out with Kenya's first president – Jomo Kenyatta. In these counties, police were reported to have used brutal force on protesters, where

some individuals died, and others were left with severe injuries, including bullet wounds. Many socio-political movements around the world have been characterized by chaotic scenes especially a confrontation between the citizens and the government through its forces. Tufekci (2017) discusses the challenges of the current era of protests driven by the people and the street protests and also supplemented by social media platforms.

7.8 Political biases and other socio-political issues

The #IEBC protests revealed some dynamics that come with socio-political movements – some, very unique depending on societal culture and norms. Socio-political movements around the world strive to have participants act the same and focus on the same goal, IEBC revealed that some protesters were more important than others. The CORD leaders moved from Capitol Hill - ODM Headquarters in convoy. Usually, influential politicians and members of parliament are given escorts from the police. It was ironical that the same government the CORD leaders were fighting and the same police force that was brutalizing them was the same one protecting them. Their supporters walked on foot beside the convoy for a distance of over 30minutes (See the fig 7.13). When the politicians arrived outside IEBC offices, Times Towers, the politicians would leave their vehicles or even remain there and address their supporters. When chaos broke out and teargas was thrown at the protesters, the politicians would hurriedly be escorted back in their vehicles and driven away from the scene. Raila Odinga and Kalonzo Musyoka had their police guards withdrawn by the government at some point during the protest.

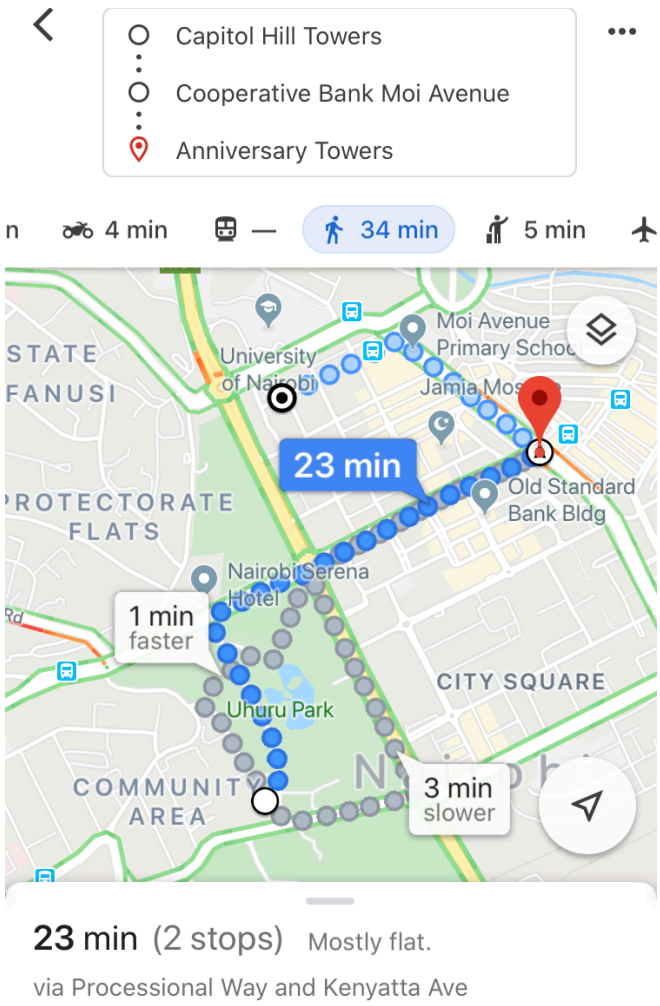


Figure 7.13 The #IEBCMustGo protest route from CORD headquarters to IEBC Head quarters

These scenarios revealed how social stratifications can lay out during activism. The "elite" activists from the political leaders were not willing to be on the same level as the ordinary citizen activists. They could afford vehicles, and police guards to drive them away when chaos erupted during the protests. The ordinary protesters would face the police wrath on their own, get shot, or even killed – while the politicians were already gone. The politicians would appear in hospitals and funerals to mourn those who had been injured and killed while on the front line. It was clear that there were two kinds of demonstrators – online and on the streets, both of them complementing each other. Both of them played an essential role in pushing for the much-needed change. Those online had the affordance of the internet and the affordance of a computer or a smartphone that could access social media platforms.

Ethnic stereotyping and ethnic hate also emerged in the protest as well. Since the post-independence period, a contest between the Odinga's and the Kenyatta's has always been seen as a contest between the Kikuyu and the Luo Communities. The two communities have held strong political inclinations towards whichever side is supported by either of the political leaders. It was not unusual to see an individual trying to find out if there was a person from the Kikuyu community supporting the #IEBCMustGo since it was an anti-government campaign. @myerci in the tweet below says:



Fig 7.14 A screen shot of a tweet mentioning ethnic issues in #IEBCMustGo

It is important to note here that counties in Central Province, an area dominated by the Kikuyu community, did not participate in the demonstrations. Therefore, it was not surprising not to find someone from the Kikuyu community supporting the #IEBCMustGo demos. Other tweets that showed ethnic dynamics during protests are shown below



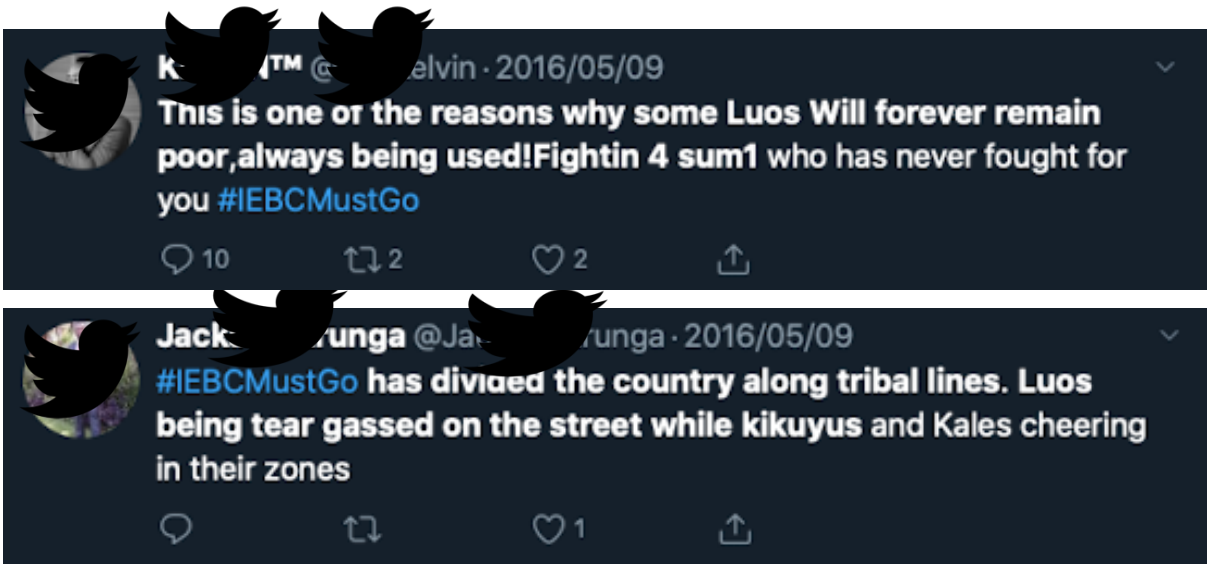


Fig. 7.15 Screenshots of tweets from the #IEBCMustGo movement that had an ethnic dimension

7.9 Conclusion

Just like the other movements discussed in Chapter 5 and 6, #IEBCMust movement was formed as a result of a continuity with the past and antecedent, and other dynamics that predated it. The unwillingness and the procrastination of national leaders to settle socio-political disputes shaped the emergence of #IEBCMsutGo. The long-standing issues in this movement were the failure to complete constitutional reforms in the year 2010 and the continuing culture of impunity in the public offices. Although these issues were the main causes of the emergence of this movement, the politicians also used the protest to further their own political interests.

As noted in the events of this movement, #IEBCMustGo was organized and led by political leaders while the other two - #OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayground were organized and led by civil societies. The protests were not leaderless and relied on the political leadership for direction. #IEBCMustGo protests were not meticulously organized like the #OccupyPlayGround and #OccupyParliament, and instead, the organizers used their influence and the media to mobilize their supporters to turn out in large numbers. As noted from the events of this protest, #IEBCMustGo was organized by CORD party leaders and their supporters joined especially in counties where they had a large number of supporters based on the 2013 general elections voting patterns.

The mainstream media and social media played an important role in this movement in the mobilization of supporters to the streets and online. The presence of the politicians on social media and their political influence on mainstream media made the movement to flourish both in online space and offline on the streets. It was interesting to note that CORD supporters from all the levels of social classes felt as part of this movement. The politicians were joined by their supporters mainly from informal settlements areas of Nairobi and Mathare, while majority of supporters from the middle class were protesting online on Twitter and Facebook. Their media tactics worked well to popularize the movement and push for their agenda.

Police brutality dominated again in this protest just like the other protests discussed in Chapter 5 and 6 of this study. Police brutality generated greater media coverage and gave more energy to the protesters. The protesters raged on despite the continued attacks and killings by police officers. In several of the cases studied by Tufekci (2017) in *Twitter and Tear Gas,* it was revealed that continued police brutality on protesters did not scare them, but it energized them even more. But even when the police managed to disperse protesters from the streets, technologies of connectivity allowed them to converge online and continue with the protests.

Chapter 8

Emerging Issues, Conclusion and Pointers for Future Research

"Our revolution is not a public-speaking tournament. Our revolution is not a battle of fine phrases. Our revolution is not simply for spouting slogans that are no more than signals used by manipulators trying to use them as catchwords, as codewords, as a foil for their own display. Our revolution is, and should continue to be, the collective effort of revolutionaries to transform reality, to improve the concrete situation of the masses of our country."

— Thomas Sankara —

8.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the emerging issues from the three cases discussed in chapters 5, 6 and 7. I begin by discussing the place of social media in the three socio-political movements discussed in this study, explaining how social media was used in the three cases (#IEBCMustGo, #OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayground) and how it blended with offline activities (street protests). In the second section, I discuss the dynamics and nature of protest in the three movements, looking at the contextual issues that shaped them. In the third section, I highlight two of the main socio-political issues that emerged and shaped these movements – ethnicity and class. In the last section of the chapter, I discuss some of the contextual issues that necessitated change in the movement.

8.2 Social media in Socio-Political movements in Kenya

Digital media technologies play an active role in creating civic space for civic participation of individuals and groups world over. This has been proven across the three cases in this research that civic engagement is inseparable from the digital media landscape. Digital media platforms for civic engagement are particularly popular among youthful populations because the platforms enable them to bypass adult and government led structures to speak to the masses. Digital media platforms allow for various political expressions which are a pathway to strengthening democracy but more specifically to improve the well-being of communities or societies in general. Digital media platforms as an important site of civic engagement helps to connect people from various socio-political backgrounds and strengthen their collective action and creative potential. In this

section, I discuss in details how digital media platforms/Social media played a role in the three social movements discussed in chapter 5, 6, and 7.

The rapid growth of ICT in Kenya that begun in the early 2000s and the political goodwill in the sector made Kenyans embrace technology in many sectors of their socio-economic, cultural, and political lives. In this context, the use of the internet/digital platforms for political communication has become part of the everyday life of many Kenyans. Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp have not only become sites of play and social conversations but relevant platforms for pushing for socio-political change. Although the data on internet access in Kenya is contentious, in a society such as Kenya where a large population has access to internet, digital media can serve as a platform that facilitates debates and shapes opinion, which is an essential element for promoting democratic ideals and socio-political change (Bruns et al., 2015; Kahne & Middaugh, 2012).

In Chapter 4 of this study, I argued that the use of media for socio-political change predates pre-independence Kenya. I also argued that the current uses of social media for activism are an offshoot of the alternative press – as was used by Kenyan nationalist movement before independence and in the 1990 second liberation movement. I also argued that the use of social media is rooted on the ideals of alternative media. That is, it is mostly independent from government control, it also advocates the interests of those excluded from the mainstream media and it challenges hegemonic beliefs and values. These ideals made social media platforms in the three movements a crucial part of them, especially because the movements fought against the ills of those in power.

Social media in the three cases was used as a site for shaping issues into protest events and contribute to the emergence of socio-political movements. As noted in chapter 5 and 6, when the first hashtags of #OccupyPlayground and #OccupyParliament appeared on social media, they immediately suggested a call for action. There was little knowledge about whether these calls were going to be actionable or be successful at that initial stage. However, with a sustained discussion over time - which provided more information and a better perspective - issues escalated to both an online and offline protest. Social media platforms played a role in moving the issue from a small online complaint to social movements in the two cases.

As demonstrated in the three cases, digital media played an essential role in the mobilization of protesters, acting as a platform for debate as well as sustaining the movement beyond street

protests. Looking at #OccupyPlayGround and #OccupyParliament, social media platforms were used as a place for deliberation and discussion, expressing dissatisfaction with political leaders. The discussion in these platforms prompted further offline meetings with members of the civil society. Also, social media was used to announce a call for action and to mobilize protesters to the streets. Therefore, social media platforms played a significant role in mobilization and as an information hub for protesters and other interest groups, before, during and after the protest.

In the three cases covered by this study, social media was used by civil society organizations to increase the visibility of both the issue under contestation and the protest itself. Visibility in any advocacy activities is essential. Since #OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayground were grassroots-led movements that did not attract media attention in the first instance, the organizers used social media platforms for visibility purpose - to catch the eye of the individuals who hold power to effect change, including the government. This was in a bid to make the movement known. Although visibility is vital in any social movement, it is a double-edged sword. Visibility can empower or disempower social movement actors. As mentioned in the #OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayground, the movements empowered Boniface Mwangi, who was primarily seen as the face of the movements. The visibility also disempowered him and other actors – in that they were put at a risk of government surveillance and harassment. In later years, Boniface Mwangi sought asylum outside Kenya several times together with his family, after he received threats from unknown individuals. Indeed, in all the three social movements discussed in this study, front line activists were either arrested, detained, charged in court, or met police brutality during the movements.

What can also be deduced from the three cases is that social media become an essential platform for online protest. Social movement scholars have remained sceptical about the effectiveness of online protests without offline activities. In instances where social media has been expected to bring change without much offline action, it has been referred to as slacktivism (Cornelissen et al., 2014; Glenn, 2015; Vie, 2014). However, in the three cases, the protest on social media, coupled with offline activities such as meetings, street protests and court processes – contributed to change. Online activities are inseparable from the activities happening in the real world. Meikle (2018) quotes Cherif Ramallah as saying the following:

> I believe that what is going on online now is an extension to the real world, it is not detached from it. A lot of these battles then also happen on Facebook, on Twitter,

> on Tumblr, on blogs. It is a manifestation of what happens in real life; we need to acknowledge that. Also, because it is not only that, what happens online is just the tip of the iceberg of what is happening in real life.
>
> Cherif, Ramallah, July 2015

As noted earlier, this study examined two grassroots-led social movements (#OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayground) and a political-led movement (#IEBCMustGo). The use of social media in these two kinds of movement was distinctive. Social media platforms were heavily used in the organization and mobilization of grassroots-led social movements. On the other hand, organizers of #IEBCMustGo were less reliant on social media platforms to organize and mobilize the social movement. This was due to the influence of the political elites who led the movement. They were able to attract the attention of the mainstream media in #IEBCMustGo – which helped mobilize people for the protest. The coverage of #IEBCMustGo on mainstream media (newspapers, radio, and television) played a part in this mobilization – more than social media mobilization played in the other two grassroots-led social movements. Mainstream media in Kenya, particularly radio, is exceedingly popular and a significant population in Kenya has access to it. This could have explained why there was a vast number of people from informal settlements in #IEBCMustGo than in the other two grassroots-led social movements (#OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayGround) – that were majorly led by techno-savvy urban youth and members of the civil society.

The events in the three socio-political movements evoked extreme emotions amongst protesters both online and offline. As the events were unfolding on the streets, protesters and the journalists helped pushing content into social media platforms. For instance, it was only when the first photos of children who had been teargassed at #OccupyPlayground were shared on social media that the local journalists made their way to Langata Road Primary School to cover the event. Also, during the #IEBCMustGo, when photos of injured protesters were shared on social media, it evoked emotions and anger, which was necessary for the social movement. Social media platforms become a site of expression of emotions and anger through text and images which also mobilized citizens to take part in the protest, online and offline, and push for the needed change.

Social media platforms also became sites of creativity. Increased accessibility to internet technologies allowed the activists in the movements to creatively use social media platforms for various purposes in the movements. As noted, the names of the three social movements were

derived from hashtags (#). The usage of hashtags was a creative way of popularizing the movements and creating an online community of activists. In addition, social media provided protesters with an opportunity to document the movement. Thousands of Facebook and Twitter posts in the form of images, texts and videos were made – and they documented both the activities offline and online. The protesters did not have to wait for the mainstream media to document the movement. Social media tools allowed protesters to use mass communication tools more quickly and cheaply. Downing (2008) argues that media-making in social movements can be a powerful force for social movement identity creation and personal, group and community transformation.

Further, social media provided a way of crowdfunding for the movements. In #OccupyPlayground, when the first call for action was posted on Facebook by Boniface Mwangi, individuals interested in joining the reclaiming of the playground were asked to donate playing kits for the children of Lang'ata Road Primary school. Also, in #OccupyParliament, when the call to action was made, the organizers of the protest asked those interested to support the cause by sending money through an M-pesa number provided. Social media was, therefore, important in crowdfunding financial and material resources. This is an important aspect that is supported by resource mobilization theory discussed in chapter 2 of this research.

From the discussion above and from the findings of the study, it can be argued that social media can influence the decisions of social actors. Mobilization of protesters in #OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayground was on social media, and this made individuals turn up for the protest. The information posted online about the three movements influenced people to decide to join the social, political movement and push for the needed change or not. Also, social media can shape and control the political and media agenda. From the study of the three cases, social media protest and uproar when the events of the three cases were unfolding made headlines on mainstream media and dominated political discussion in public at that time. Since the ability to control the flows of information is a significant source of power, and since social media platforms give users individual power to create and control information, activists in the three movements were provided with this ability to control information flow. Foucault (1980) argued that power is the ability to shape the mind and to construct the meaning of a phenomenon. Protesters were able to create their narratives about the movements without waiting for the mainstream media to do so. Meikle (2018) observes that enthusiastic adoption of online tools and spaces as a tactic in the current era's wave of protests makes sense, since oppositional voices, such as those from civil society organizations and other

individuals are increasingly banned from mainstream media. Therefore, social media platforms allow oppressed people in society to make themselves heard.

8.3 Dynamics and the nature of participation in the digital era

This section discusses the dynamics of protests and social-political movements in the Kenyan context in recent years as deduced from this study. Hiller (1975) argues that social movements are in themselves dynamic, and it is their nature to be dynamic – in that they change through time. An important question to answer in this section is how social movements emerge in a highly mediated context like Kenya, examining the participants of the movement, as well as the dynamics of participation.

In the three cases examined for this study, the emergence of social movements is shaped by the socio-political and cultural history of the country. As a former colonial state, Kenya has had a history of social, economic, and political injustices spanning from colonial times to the current post-colonial era. As discussed in Chapter 4, Kenyans faced social and political injustices from the colonial government just like in any other colonial state in Africa and in the Global South. While it was expected that socio-political and cultural injustices would end at independence, this was just but a pipe dream. Jomo Kenyatta's independence government alienated Kenyans and silenced individuals who dared to criticize his government. This trend continued and hardened during Daniel Moi's government. Although less repression was seen in Mwai Kibaki's reign and the current Uhuru Kenyatta's reign, forms of socio-political and economic injustices, marginalisation and inequalities have continued to occur. Over the years, since independence, various individuals and groups have formed movements to challenge the oppressive nature of governments. These histories have shaped the current emergence of socio-political movements. Participants in the movements discussed in this research have continued to draw inspirations from pre- and post-independence nationalists and activists who fought against socio-political, cultural, and economic injustices perpetrated by various regimes of government in Kenya.

Apart from these histories, this study has demonstrated that social movements emerge from perceived unacceptability of some decisions made by those who hold power. These decisions are perceived to be oppressive to the ordinary citizens and capable of having adverse effects on the lives of the citizens. In the three cases discussed above, corruption by political leaders is at the

core of emergence of these movements. In #OccupyPlayGround, the grabbing and encroachment of pupils playing ground for the private purpose was corruption. In #OccupyParliament, the intention of members of parliament to bypass the law and increase their salary – at the same time intend to send home a constitutional office (SRC) was an act of corruption. In #IEBCMustGo protest, the main issue was to oust IEBC officials who had been implicated in electoral fraud. These issues agitated the activists and the public and therefore protested them.

To further understand the emergence of these movements, also in a historical perspective, I argue that the three movements were linked to prolonged exposure to injustices. Since independence, as noted in chapter 4, Kenyans have been exposed to poor leadership, injustices, corruption, ethnic animosity, and other social ills. In #IEBCMustGo, those who took part in the protests were from the counties that overwhelmingly supported opposition leader Raila Odinga. Some years after independence, the first vice president Oginga Odinga, Raila Odinga's father, was side-lined by Jomo Kenyatta, fired as the vice president, and he was at some point detained. He was also a Luo Chieftain. Since then, the Luo community, and many others who were aligned to the leadership of the Odinga's have faced a vicious circle of marginalization from successive governments which has continued to traumatize them. Cassegård (2014) argues that collective trauma is simply not a trauma that is shared among people, but it also holds collectives together and provides it with orientation and a framework for the collective identity of its members. He further says that

> When we speak of collective trauma, the collectives affected by the trauma are not limited to the primary collective, which consists of those who strongly identify with the identities that the trauma discredits. Effects extend also to people who may not have experienced the traumatic events first-hand, but who have grown up in or been socialised into a culture marked by the trauma (Pg. 18).

As a result of these traumatic experiences, protesters in the #IEBCMustGo and even those who participated in the second protest of #OccupyParliament did not mind repression by government forces but soldered on with their agenda. The aspect of collective trauma is also supported by the theory of collective identity and collective action discussed in chapter 2 of this research.

Another aspect that forces social movements to emerge is emotions which stir up anger and resentment. This can be caused by unresolved historical issues and injustices in society. Anger, in most cases, is rooted in societal injustices and the society rises to fight these injustices and unfairness. Social movement scholars argue that anger is a powerful tool for exercising power. Polletta (1998) argues that in the 1960s racial uprisings in the United States, emotions were

considered vital to many political actions that occurred outside traditional institutions. Recently, the killing of a black man George Floyd in United States sparked a global online and offline anger that led to #BlackLivesMatter campaign amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Expression of anger is also seen as an outburst of restlessness, and to build this emotional aspect in social movements, serious conversations precede discontent (Hiller, 1975). In the three cases considered by this study, an outburst of emotions (anger) caused by continued vices of the leaders contributed to the emergence of the social movements. Land grabbing, bypassing the set laws, and corruption by public officials were issues that had escalated at that time and caused anger within the public. Conversations in mass media about these issues preceded this outburst of collective anger and movements were perceived to be appropriate and necessary at that time.

Anger, as an outburst of emotions, can also be used to drive the momentum of movements. The organizers and participants of the movements used tactics that were meant to cause more public anger. In #OccupyParliament, protesters creatively used pigs and fed them on bloody substance outside Kenya's parliament gates – to symbolize the greedy nature of members of parliament. This symbolism, however, evoked anger amongst the Muslim community whose culture views pigs as haram. One of the Member of Parliament, whose name had been inscribed in one of the pigs, felt angered and threatened to sue the organizers of the protest. The events at the #OccupyPlayground also evoked public anger when police teargassed school children. As discussed in Chapter 5, this made President Kenyatta to give a tongue lashing to his Cabinet Secretary (minister) of Lands and issued a directive that all schools be issued with a title deed. This was a win for the protesters.

Apart from looking at the dynamics that allow social movements to emerge in the Kenyan context, it is also essential to look at the dynamics that allow individuals to come together and form a movement. In the theoretical review of this research, theories such as resource mobilization, collective identity, and collective action and network theories introduced some of the reasons why individuals may take part in social movements. The examination of the three movements and drawing from the discussions in the empirical chapters of this study, it can be concluded that similar ideas, interest, experiences, and strong feelings towards the goals of the movement drew people together. Participants felt it was justified to come together and reclaim the playground from politicians. They also felt it was necessary to stop members of parliament from increasing their salaries and felt IEBC officials needed to leave the office for being implicated in corruption.

Still, on the dynamics of the protest as an emerging issue in this study, it is essential to look at the leaders of the movement or those at the frontline and their contribution in shaping the movements. It is essential to acknowledge that social movement scholars such as (Earl, 2007; Joosse, 2007) have termed network social movements as having horizontal and informal or distributed leadership. While this is true especially in flash activism[70] (Mehta, 2011), what can be deduced from this study is that there were individuals who acted as the face or leaders of the movements. In #OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayground, activist Boniface Mwangi was regarded as the face of the movements while in #IEBCMustGo, politician Raila Odinga was the clear leader. Although Boniface Mwangi was the face of the movement, it can be deduced from this study that his role as a leader was different compared to Raila Odinga's in #IEBCMustGo. Boniface's leadership was not traditional, hierarchical, or authoritative. On the other hand, Raila Odinga's role in the movement took a traditional approach where he spearheaded and gave instructions for the demonstrations while being assisted by his other ODM assistant party leaders Kalonzo Musyoka and Moses Wetangula. Protests in other counties were led by ODM leaders, as mentioned in chapter 7. In other counties, such as Mombasa, at one point the protests could not go on since the then Governor of Mombasa County, Hassan Joho, who was meant to lead the demonstrations was not available. The two kinds of movements – grassroots-led social movements and political-led movement presented a different kind of leadership, which was all-important to realize change.

This study also acknowledges the role of urban spaces in socio-political movements. All the three socio-political movements were staged in urban centres – and therefore, it is important to look at the urban dynamics in the Kenyan context, that allow social movements to thrive. Nairobi is the capital and the largest city in Kenya. It is also the seat of government and headquarters of many businesses and organizations. Nairobi's infrastructural development is higher than any other city or town in Kenya. In addition, most of the people in Kenya migrate to Nairobi in search of opportunities. The city's population, according to 2019 census, was 4.3 million. With all these dynamics, the city residents have better access to information, communication and technology infrastructure and resources compared to those in rural areas. With a growing youthful and educated population in urban centres such as Nairobi, they are using technology to redefine

[70] Flash activism - is a temporary social mobilization around a particular civic issue; it may or may not have clear-cut goals and may or may not achieve these goals.

political participation. As such, Nairobi as a city is the right place for residents to form collective identities, and networks, which are necessary for collective action, as discussed in chapter 2 of this research. Miller & Nicholls (2013) in their study on urban societies in social movements stated that social-spatial context of urban life might create conditions necessary for the formation of bonds, trust, and resource-sharing which are necessary to social movement mobilization.

Social movement scholars have explored urban spatiality in social movements and defined urban social movements – as struggles to create more just, democratic, and liveable cities for inhabitants (Castells, 1983; Schwanen & van Kempen, 2019). Social movements in urban societies, however, do not necessarily just deal with city issues but socio-political issues propagated by the elite, which affect a wider society beyond the cities. The three social movements under this study can be considered as social movements in urban societies. The three movements took place in an urban centre – by occupying specific spaces in the city of Nairobi. Occupying such urban spaces made it possible for activists to challenge the dominant order, mobilize and concentrate their own symbolic, social, and material power, and make a case for possible alternative worlds (Miller & Nicholls, 2013). The city, therefore, became the main arena through which these struggles were fought. These issues explained why it was much easier to mobilize the movements in urban spaces.

8.4 Police Brutality

To begin with, it is important to highlight police training in Kenya which can help in understanding how police brutality occurs. The requirements to join a police force requires a minimum of high school qualification. Other requirements include physical fitness, presence of all the 32 teeth and not having any visible body marks. Therefore, from the onset, the recruitment itself is discriminatory – since, for instance, no persons with disability can join the police force in Kenya. The recruited individuals are then taken to Kenya Police Training College for a period of six months and then posted to a police station all over Kenya. The police in Kenya are trained to be more antagonistic towards the public than to be more friendly to the public. In addition, the police are poorly paid, are exposed to elevated levels of stress and live in deplorable housing conditions in police camps (Njuguna, Ndung'u, & Achilles, 2015). Despite the many police reforms that have been suggested in the past, little has changed. Moreover, the police are meant to guard the interests of the government and the affluent in the society, even when they do not agree with them. As a result of the conditions they live with, their relationship with the public is seen as antagonistic on

most times (Osse, 2016). A conglomeration of all these factors helps understanding why the three movements discussed in chapter 5, 6 and 7 were characterized by police brutality.

The confrontation between protesters and the police was not a new thing as seen in the three protests in this study. It had been a common occurrence since the pre-independence period in Kenya, as discussed in chapter 4 of this research. Since the colonial era, critics of the government, in actions such as picketing, verbally or in writing, faced the wrath of the government forces. The trend was carried on by Jomo Kenyatta's independence government, as well as Daniel Moi's government. In the early 1990s, during the second liberation movements in Kenya, politicians who held protests and rallies against the Moi's government – such as politician Martin Shikuku, politician Paul Muite, Prof. Wangari Maathai, and others faced police brutality, violence, arrests, and detentions.

During the events of the social movements in this study, resonance with the above periods is striking. The police violence is reminiscent of the pre-independence and post-independence era, particularly in the early 1990s during the second liberation struggle in Kenya. Excuses such as keeping public order and security have always been used to support the police's use of force without any respect for demonstrators' rights to protest. As noted in #OccupyPlayground and #IEBCMustGo, the style of policing in these movements was antagonistic. In most instances, the police receive orders from their leaders or political authorities. This was done to repress government critics, scare protesters or even to protect the interest of the elite in the society. At the time of these protests, the protesters required a police permit to hold a demonstration as showed in Chapter 6. However, even in instances where permission (permit) to picket and protest had been sought, the police would still be antagonistic.

Although police's use of antagonistic force was successful in dispersing the protesters in all the three social movements in this study, it did not prevent the protesters from pushing their agenda. Also, in the case of #IEBCMustGo and #OccupyParliament, police violence did not prevent the protesters from returning to the streets another time. Some instances of police violence seem to have been unsuccessful in the social movements. In #OccupyPlayground, the teargassing of children was not only an unsuccessful tactic, it actually emboldened the movement. It led to emotional outburst in public – and led to the government apologising to the school children and hastening the reclaiming of the grabbed land. In #IEBCMustGo, police brutality and the killing of

protesters caused more unrest, instead of quelling them. The protesters found more reasons to be on the streets and to push their agenda online.

The three protests in this study were about contesting the ills of those in power. The police in the streets during the protests were a direct representation of the government that the protesters were fighting. Therefore, the participants of the protests saw it not just as a physical confrontation but also an ideological one that was meant to defeat the government and its ills. For them (protestors) to engage with armed police officers was considered as a brave thing to do. Finally, I argue that police violence against protesters strengthens the protesters more than it disrupts them.

8.5 Socio-political factors that shape movements in Kenya

This research sought to explore the socio-political issues that emerged and shaped social movements in Kenya. Understanding the socio-cultural patterns in any social movement is essential to understand how people conceptualize politics and how these socio-political contexts shape political participation. It is important to note that political participation is encouraged through socio-political and cultural contexts where habits of political participation are normalized and promoted. In this section, I discuss two of the primary socio-political contexts that emerged and shaped the three social movements in this study.

8.5.1 Class

Class as a social construct shaped discussion in digital spaces in these three socio-political movements. Just like in many other places around the world, Kenyan elites are in constant conflict with the middle class and the lower class. Using their political influence, they commit social and political injustices to the people they serve. Their high economic status means they can afford resources to acquire not only property but also hire labourers. Since the middle-class work for the elite class or the government, and strive to be like these elites, they often take a back seat when a call to challenge injustices committed by the elite are made, although sometimes they support such calls through social media platforms.

Bourdieu (1986) suggests that injustices occur as people enact assumptions of how life might be outside their field of knowledge and experience. In the case of #OccupyPlayground, the elites were ignorant of how life would be for children without a playground. In the #OccupyParliament case,

the members of parliament did not realize how the working and middle-class individuals would be affected by awarding themselves hefty salaries. During the #IEBCMustGo demos, the party leaders came to the demonstrations with their vehicles and bodyguards – who would protect them when the police harassed them. They did not care about the safety of the other demonstrators who did not have such affordances.

It is also possible to conclude that well-meaning middle-class individuals who seek to work with civil societies and the working class to push for socio-political change are unaware of how their own biases undermine their ability to plan protest tactics effectively. In the three protests, participants used tactics that were considered painful, like using children and using pigs. This enabled those in power to align the dominant narrative with their own position, thereby discrediting activism in ways that would make sense and find sympathy among the very people who might have benefitted the most from that activism. While such factors can emerge unconsciously, they may shape the outcome of a protest; civil society organizations need to be aware of this to build sustainable movements.

In this context, class can be considered as one of the dynamics that comes up in social movements and has the possibility to drive or shape movements in certain directions. The study of the interlink between class and social movements has been in existence for a long time. Karl Marx in his study of class struggle and social movements points out why certain social groups are not capable of developing a collective consciousness of itself and therefore being unable to act collectively (Eidlin & Kerrissey (2018). Other scholars such as Klaus (2018) argue that inequality and being situated on the negative side of the social relation can be an important source of motivation for collective action. This explains why in the three movements discussed in this study, the working class and the middle class rise up to the evils perpetrated by the political class. Social media also becomes an important conduit where these class struggles play out.

8.5.2 Political Party Affiliation

This research also revealed that political party affiliation, can shape the participation of individuals in socio-political movements. This emerged more strongly in the case of the political led social movement analysed as part of this study - #IEBCMustGo, than in the other grassroots-led political movement - #OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayground. The reason is that party politics in Kenya since independence has been ethnically inclined. Individuals who were not affiliated to

CORD political party did not participate in the #IEBCMustGo demonstrations. The political party had supporters in certain geographical regions in Kenya and this can be revealed from the counties that took part in the demonstrations and those that did not (as noted in chapter 7 of this study). In addition, political leaders are also perceived as ethnic leaders of the communities they come from. Therefore, it was easy to tell which ethnic communities dominated the #IEBCMustGo protests. From the empirical data of this research, I argue here that since politics and political parties are so ethnically inclined, social movements formed and led by leaders of these political parties are susceptible to taking an ethnic angle. The implication of this is that it affects mobilization in social movements – in that mobilization is likely to be done only in areas where political leaders have support and from specific ethnic communities. Other ethnic communities whose leaders do not take part in such movements are also unlikely to take part. In grassroots-led social movements, the research revealed that ethnic undertones rarely emerge and there is a more focus on the issue under contestation.

8.5.3 Nature of mobilization

The findings of this study indicate that the nature of mobilization shapes the direction the movements are bound to make. As noted, social movements that have a national resonance such as #OccupyPlayground and #OccupyParliament were able to pull a huge support from various quarters which included religious leaders, diplomats in Kenya, professional organizations like Law Society of Kenya e.t.c . The movement was of national importance at that time particularly because public discources on corruption and poor leadership had preceeded these movements. There were calls to redeem Kenya from the jaws of corruption even from influential people in the society. The timing of #OccupyPlayground was apt, and its success in not only reclaiming the school playground but also in ensuring schools received title deeds around the country remains a celebrated achievement to date.

8.5.4 Key actors/players

The findings of this study also indicate that the key actors/players in the social movements can shape the outome of the movements. Mobilizers of social movements generally come out as influential persons who pocess capital – social, cultural or financial capital. The #OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayground were organized by Boniface Mwangi and other members of the civil societies. On the other hand, #IEBCMustGo was spearheaded by political leaders with a huge influence in Kenya. As noted in the three movements, the leaders play a crucial

role in bringing in the resources needed for social movements to thrive. This aspect is supported by the scholars of resource mobilization theory such as Crossley (2003) and McCarthy & Zald (1977) who posit that groups come together and secure resources necessary for collective action. One aspect that is important to note on #IEBCMustGo protest is that because the key actors had sufficient resources, they were able to hold several protests not only in Nairobi but also in several other counties in Kenya. This shows how important key actors in social movements in shapping the movements and their outcomes.

8.6 Change

The ultimate aim of social movements is to produce change. In #OccupyPlayground, the activists wanted the playground to be returned to the school children. In #OccupyParliament, the activists wanted the members of parliament stopped from increasing their salaries and stopped from disbanding the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC). In the #IEBCMustGo, the politicians wanted the IEBC commissioners ousted for their involvement in electoral fraud and corruption. Although some aspects of change were realized, this change did not come easily, and some conditions had to be met to produce these changes.

In #OccupyPlayground, the activists were able to get a directive from the government that the playground should be returned to the school and all schools issued with a title deed. Social media protest and uproar and the reports from mainstream media played a massive part in creating visibility and publicity for the movement – which caught the eye of the government and the President in particular. There was already existing public conversation on corruption and existing political goodwill to fight it. It was this condition that made the President issue a directive that all schools should be issued with a title deed and some months later sack his Lands Cabinet Secretary (Minister).

Another condition that necessitated a change of policy in #OccupyPlayground was the existing public conversation on children's rights. In 2012, the Kenyan government passed the Children Act, which consolidated and enhanced children rights in Kenya. The primary school curriculum at that time included the study of Children's rights from standard one (grade one) to standard eight (grade 8). In a study on the rights of Children in Kenyan Primary School Curriculum, Karuga (2013) notes the following:

> Regarding standard two, I have examined books published by four different publishers...The standard two books published by the Jomo Kenyatta Foundation discusses the topic of child rights in unit seven. The book starts the discussion by revising the rights as they were presented in book one. These are rights to a name, primary education, play and rest, worship and parental care, food, and health (p. 2).

With this knowledge imparted to children (especially to the right to play and rest), they were able to resonate with the call to reclaim their playground from the politician who had grabbed it. As they marched from their school compound to the location of the grabbed playground – they sang and chanted *Haki yetu! Haki yetu!* Swahili for *Our rights* – a popular chant during demonstrations in Kenya. This was also seen as a practical session of claiming their rights from what they had been taught in the class.

In #OccupyParliament, social media and mainstream media also played a crucial role in the publicity and visibility of the movement. The props and art in the demonstrations – especially the use of pigs as a symbol of the corrupt members of parliament also sparked public conversation, which pressured the Parliament to halt their plans to increase their salaries. Two significant issues necessitated a change in this movement. As mentioned in Chapter 6 of this research study, this was the first protest during President Uhuru Kenyatta's presidency. One of his key campaign promises was to eradicate corruption in government. Also, there was increased public conversation in the previous years and the free will at which Members of Parliament determined and regularly increased their salaries. The setting up of Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) as a constitutional office to regulate and harmonize salaries of public officers was one of the strengths of Kenya's 2010 constitution. Due to this, the President was not for the idea that MPs should increase their salaries and he, therefore, sent his Deputy – William Ruto – to negotiate with the MPs and SRC to strike a deal about their salaries. In the end, the Members of Parliament did not increase their basic salaries but increased their allowances.

Besides, Kenya's 2010 constitution allowed for public litigation and gave strength to the civil society organizations in Kenya. At that time, there was also a call from the public for the transformation of the judiciary in Kenya. Activist Okiya Omtatah took advantage of these law reforms and got orders that stopped the Members of Parliament from increasing their salaries and stopped them from disbanding the SRC. Therefore, the law reforms that had been championed since some years after independence were beginning to bear fruits. These conditions and context at that time contributed to the needed change.

The #IEBCMustGo movement was the most gruelling in all the three movements studied in this research. It took several protests, and many boardroom meetings to have the IEBC officials out of office. In the end, however, the much-needed change was realized. Apart from the social media and mainstream media playing a crucial role in pushing for the needed change, other conditions necessitated a change. It is important to note that the initial aim of #IEBCMsutGo was not to oust the IEBC commissioners but to spearhead the change of constitution through the – *Okoa Kenya Referendum Campaign*. Since the promulgation of the 2010 constitution, politicians had vowed to make constitutional amendments. As noted in Chapter 7 of this study, when CORD party did not reach the required number of signatures necessary for a referendum, the call for the removal of office of IEBC commissioners was made.

Just like in the #OccupyParliament and #OccupyPlayground, the call to eradicate corruption of public officers was one of the reasons that necessitated a change in this movement. It is also important to note that in 2013, the then opposition leader Raila Odinga had claimed that he had been rigged out from the Presidential election by Uhuru Kenyatta. The massive rigging, he claimed, perpetuated by IEBC officials tainted the whole commission and were therefore not able to conduct the 2017 elections. The push to have better IEBC commissioners was, therefore, a strategy by CORD party leaders to ensure there would be no rigging in the 2017 elections. With this existing public debate, not only of corrupt public officers but also of the fact that the team to oversee 2017 elections could not guarantee a free and fair election, CORD's #IEBCMustGo movement gained some traction.

Moreover, #IEBCMustGo attracted the attention of the international community, and especially the diplomatic community living in Kenya and religious leaders. This was after it became apparent that the weekly demonstrations were likely to polarize the country. There was also fear of a repeat of the civil unrest witnessed in 2007/2008. Therefore, religious leaders and diplomatic leaders worked hard to ensure that Raila Odinga's CORD party leaders and Uhuru Kenyatta's government met and resolved the issue. Within a few months after the demonstrations were called off, IEBC commissioners left office. It was such conditions that necessitated the much-needed change.

Finally, the way the narratives of change were formed in the three movements was an important in realizing change. In all the movements discussed in this research, the dominant narrative was that of corruption in government. This narrative was used well by the participants to mobilize

others to join the cause, to connect and build powerful communities and to divide and isolate those who had contrary opinions – such as those who believed that the status quo was inevitable, change was not possible and participation in protests was pointless. The organizers of the three protests realized early enough that narratives had the power to disrupt dominant power dynamics that existed. In the three movements, narratives were made up of the many stories that were written about the movements, the thousands of tweets that were posted, the visuals circulated online and those that were used to make posters and other protest props, the memes, the offline conversations and many other forms which helped in shaping the change that was desired. Even though there was an attempt to disrupt the narrative in #OccupyParliament, when the participants of the protest used live pigs, they did not drop the narrative but creatively used an effigy of a pig so as to maintain the same narrative that Members of Parliament were as greedy as pigs. In essence, owning and maintaining the required narrative was important in articulation of the changes the activists wanted.

8.7 Summary of the emerging issues and main arguments

This chapter aimed to discuss the emerging issues and main arguments in this study. In the first section, I discussed the place of social media in the three movements under study. This was in order to answer the broader research question this research asked, "To what extent are social media used in activism in Kenya and with which consequences?" To answer the first sub question, "What are the dynamics of protest that emerge and play out in political movements?" I explored the dynamics of protest in social movements in the second section of this chapter. This also included a discussion on police brutality that was an essential element in all the three movements. In the third section, I discussed some of the dominant socio-political and cultural issues that emerged in the cases under scrutiny. This was also in order to add greater nuance to the answer to the second sub question ("What socio-political factors come into play in digital activism in Kenya?"). In the fourth section of this chapter, I discussed the aspect of change in social movements and guided by the outcome of the three movements that were used in this research. This discussion was important in answering the last research question that asked, "How do the dynamics of protest and socio-political factors characterizing political movements affect political change?"

It can be concluded that in the current wave of social movements, the media and technology are inseparable components. Scholars such as Bossetta (2018) have argued that the architecture of

social media platforms can influence the norms of interaction between people, thus increasing the chances of enactment of democratic ideals such as protests and social movements. This would explain why the three social movements bore their names from a hashtag. Therefore, as long as governments do not repress social media platforms – as it has been the case in some parts of the world - the emergence of social movements and their existence will continue to rely on communication infrastructure, which includes social media platforms.

Further, it can be concluded that social movements, despite their existence through the intersection of human behaviour and technology, cannot exist outside historical and socio-political and cultural frameworks of specific societies. This idea is well supported by theories used in this research, particularly the theory of collective identity and collective action as well as network theory. Therefore, as much as social media was an essential part of the social movements, its amalgamation with socio-political and cultural frameworks helped in the build-up of the movements and contributed to the direction and outcome of the movements. These socio-political issues included class and ethnicity issues, the power relationship between the protesters and the police, aspects of law and law enforcement and even diplomatic and religious issues. Each of these issues can affect social movements in diverse ways, that either build or strengthen social movements or even hinder and kill their emergence.

It can also be concluded that change or victories in social movements can be achieved in many ways. The tactics used by those at the frontline in social movements are essential, but also, many other factors contribute to the needed change. The active use of internet and media technologies in social movements is an essential part. It contributes to change, same as the different socio-political and cultural frameworks existing in a society. For instance, it has been noted in this study that although civil societies and opposition party CORD used protests and social media mobilization, the existence of a judicial system and negotiation/mediation of different parties was able to bring the needed change. Political negotiation between the top tier political leaders was finally able to bring change in #IEBCMustGo. In #OccupyParliament, negotiations between civil societies, the judiciary and the politicians were able to bring the much-needed change. In #OccupyPlayground, negotiations between the civil societies and the government ensured that a directive had been issued that all schools should receive title deeds for their lands. It is important to note that this would not mean that negotiations were the only needed aspect of change in all the

social movements. Each of the tactics, the media and socio-political and cultural issues were important components that contributed to change.

8.6 Major contribution of this research

This study has contributed in this area of study in the Kenyan context. It has traced how the media has been used since the pre-independence era to the current era, to push for socio-political change. By tracing this trajectory of media use in activism, the study has provided a link between the old and the new ways of using media for activism. As noted in chapter four of this research, the media has been an integral part of social movements and has continued to thrive, despite the many challenges that have existed, primarily government surveillance and gagging of the media.

This study has also made a methodological contribution to the study of social movements. This study adopted the process-tracing method to trace the emergence and the unfolding of events in the three socio-political movements. Using this method allowed having a thick description of the social movements and a much better understanding of the socio-political and cultural issues that emerged and shaped these movements.

This study has also contributed to literature in digital activism and social movements in Kenya. As noted in chapter two of this study, while studies on socio-political movements do exist in the Northern part of Africa, there is a thin body of literature in sub-Saharan Africa. In Kenya, there is a thin layer of empirical research studies on digital activism. This study, therefore, contributed to this area. Also, this study helped in expounding the theories of social movements – resource mobilization, network theories and collective identity and collective action theory. In this research, I showed the applicability of these theories in the Kenyan context.

This study has the potential to lay a foundation for the development of the African theory of digital activism. This is where, technology and media, with a potent mix of African socio-political and cultural aspects, allows for participation in political processes, and how these socio-political and cultural aspects shape digital activism and social movements. There exists a uniquely African context – where the rich socio-political and cultural issues shape every aspect of life. These socio-political and cultural issues shape the emergence of social movements, the direction they take and their outcome.

This study has also contributed to the documentation of the three cases through an empirical research study. Documenting a case can help researchers and other interested groups to draw more lessons and build more knowledge for the future. This study did a thick description of the three cases, including their background. Documenting #IEBCMustGo, #OccupyPlayground and #OccupyParliament means that the cases will not be forgotten.

8.7 Gaps and limitations of the study

The limitations of this study included time constraint and financial constraints also tied to researching away from the study site. Refining of this research study happened during a global pandemic – COVID-19 and there were challenges in keeping sober throughout. In addition, Due to the limited period of PhD research, this study would have benefited immensely from a more in-depth archival study of how the media was used for activism from the pre-colonial period in 1888 in Kenya. Chapter 4 of this research study only gives a snapshot of the main ways through which individuals used the media for social change in pre- and post-colonial Kenya. If time allowed, analysing the cultural artefacts such as songs, dances, poems, and other writings that were used as forms of resistance would have provided an added dimension to this study.

Another limitation of this study revolved around data and data sources for this study — first, the study aimed at having primary and secondary sources of data. Interviews and document analysis were the primary sources of data. The interviews sample included individuals who were linked closely with the three cases under this study – from the media, civil societies, religious leaders, and politicians. While individuals from civil societies, the media, and religious leaders were easily accessible, I spent a lot of time and resources trying to approach politicians for interviews with little success. In the end, only two politicians were interviewed. This study would have benefited immensely from views of the politicians, especially in the #IEBCMustGo.

8.9 Pointers for future research

There were significant issues that were beyond the scope of this study, and future research can focus on them. The first issue is that personal degree of commitment in the social movements should be studied. This is important because it would unravels the issues that may make individuals to be committed to movements and issues that may hinder individual commitments and how to build these commitments. As noted earlier in this research, resources, and especially human

resources are essential in building and sustaining a movement. Therefore, the nature of individual commitments, the degree of personal involvement and even social movements membership turn over should be studied in Kenya and even other contexts.

It was beyond the scope of this research to study the relationship between police and protesters in the Kenyan context. Empirical research on this area, especially in Kenyan context is almost non-existent. For a long time, research in this area has been hampered by law enforcers who are not keen on opening their doors to external researchers. The current era of policing, where there is increased digitization of law enforcement, is an encouraging endeavour for researchers to study the relationship between police and protesters in online and offline spaces.

This research also fell beyond the scope of studying how women and rural communities take part in digital activism. As Mutsvairo & Ragnedda (2017) note, women and poor communities living in the rural areas are traditionally marginalized and unlikely to benefit from growth in ICT. They are less likely to take part in digital activism. It is essential, therefore, for future research to focus on how such marginalized communities take part in digital activism.

Lastly, it was beyond the scope of this research to study how art as an essential part of social movements. As noted in #OccupyParliament, the use of sculptured pigs, placards, memes, digital images, GIFs (Graphics Interchange Formats) cartoons, and other art on T-shirts during the street protest helped in not only passing a message but also increasing the visibility of the social movement. In other instances, before #OccupyParliament took place, street art and graffiti had appeared on the streets of Nairobi, as a place where artists and young people can hide from the surveillance of the society and say what they cannot express in public. Although such empirical studies exist elsewhere, such as those conducted by (Duncombe & Lambert, 2018; Miladi, 2015, 2018), there is still a thin body of empirical research in Kenya that examines the use of these forms of art in relation to political participation, activism, and social movements.

8.10 Conclusion

The dynamics of #IEBCMustGo were many and somehow interesting. From the movement, the differences between social movements organised by politicians and those organised by civil society organisations and ordinary citizens emerged. When politicians lead demonstrations, in a context such as Kenya the bias on media coverage is clear. Looking at the #IEBCMustGo, the

media covered the issue extensively as compared to #OccupyPlaygroud that had only slight coverage, despite the issue being a national concern. This research has also revealed how socio-political issues are an integral part of social movements in Kenya. Party affiliation, nature of mobilization, the key actors in the movements and class dynamics could not be ignored. These socio-political issues can serve two issues – strengthen the movements or hinder the progress of the movements. Besides, and just like other movements around the world, brutality on protesters by government forces was extensive, but this did not stop the demonstrators from pushing for the change they wanted. Lastly, this chapter has also showed how social media platforms are an integral part of current-day social movements. Social media, especially Twitter, complemented what was on the streets and served to keep the movement to thrive throughout.

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Appendix 1: Process Tracing in #OccupyPArliament

#OccupyParliament			
Date		**Events**	**Type of Media**
Jan-13			
Feb-13			
Mar-13			
02-Mar-13		Occupy Parliament Song	YouTube
Apr-13			
May-13			
03-May-13		Article by Civil society (HRD)	Mainstream Media use by HRDs
06-May-13		Civil Society Organizations meet to plan and later sends updates on email. Social Media Campaigns: These need to be hyped so as create and sustain the requisite public support and long term momentum for the campaign.	Social Media
		A blog Post Goes up :The Greed Of Kenya MPs: Operation Occupy Parliament Starts Tuesday	Social Media
07-May-13		Kenyans should decide on Salaries team: lobby	Mainstream Media
09-May-13		Posts on Google +	Social Media
12-May-13		Our MPs, Kenyans & Thrift	Blog
13-May-13			
		Details of the meet up point of the demo sent on email and social media which included dress code, weather reports, what to carry (water, snack, handkerchief)	Email
14-May-13	Day of Protests	Facebook Event created for May 14 Demos (3.8k people click	Social Media
		Activists arrested and name circulated on email	Email
		Greedy pig' protest held at Kenya parliament	International Media
		BBC Report	International Media
		Guardian: How social media has increased the pace of change	International Media
		WashingtonPost: pigs in front of the parliament to protest	International Media
			International Media
		Nairobi hit by pig protest over MPs pay: News Day	International Media
		Occupy Parliament	

15-May-13		A debate comes up on the use of pigs during demos some argue it was not just and showed animal cruelty	Social Media and mainstream media debates
		Blog by Oloo Onyango revised to reflect criticism (11pm)	Blog
		Poem by Muthoni Njogu on brutality of #Occupyparliament goes up and is circulated on email	Email
		A blog by Onyango oloo documents the success of #Occupy Parliament including the use of social media (success number 1)	Social Media
16-May-13		Speaking truth to Kenya's 'MPigs'	Blog
		MPs face of greed in Kenya	Mainstream Media
		Author credits youth for role in demos	Mainstream Media
17-May-13		protesters charged over live pig protest	Blog
		Pig Meets MPig and the World	Blog
18-May-13		Church Leaders condemn #Occupy Parliament	YouTube
20-May-13		Activists to be charged for protests	
22-May-13		Speaker of National Assembly writes to SRC with new salary scales. Letter Circulated on email	Email
24-May-13		Freedom House Condemns the Arrest of Peaceful Protestors in Kenya	A website post circulated on email as well
		Occupy Parliament Reloaded and Scheduled: Call done on email and social media	Email &Social Media
June			
01-Jun-13		Facebook Event created for june 11 Demos (1800 people click "Going")	Social Media
11-Jun-13	Day of Protests	OccupyParliament Reloaded	
		#OccupyParliamentReloaded Photos	Social Media

Appendix 2: Process-Tracing in #IEBCMustGo

#IEBCMUSTGO				
Date		**Details / Articles/ Reportage**	**Pattern 1**	**Pattern 2(voices)**
Sep-15				
Oct-15		Cord receives 1.4 million Okoa	Mainstream	
28th October 2015		kenya referendum signatures	media	Opposition
4th November 2015		CORD to take referendum signatures to IEBC	Mainstream media	Opposition
Dec-15		No reportage		
Jan-16				
Mar-16		IEBC promises to send draft referendum bill to counties by 1st March	Mainstream media	Government
March 21st 2016		CORD storms IEBC offices to follow up on Okoa Kenya but meets no commissioner	Mainstream media	Opposition
		IEBC accused of colluding with govt against Okoa Kenya initiative	Mainstream media	Opposition
march 22nd 2016		Okoa Kenya referendum push has collapsed, Cord submitted 891,598 signatures-IEBC	Mainstream media	Government
		State pressures IEBC to reject Okoa signatures, says Cord	Mainstream media	Government
March 24th 2016	The idea of protest begins here	Cord threatens to kick out IEBC officials over signatures	Mainstream media	Opposition
March 28th 2016		IEBC rejects Okoa Kenya signatures which angers CORD	Mainstream media	Government
April 10th 2016		Gideon Moi of KANU asks govt to overhaul IEBC and Judiciary	Mainstream media	Polititians
23rd April 2016		Kenyans react to IEBC demos	Mainstream media	Citizens
		Cord plans Mother of all demos	Mainstream media	Opposition

		Parents keep their children safe during IEBC demos	Mainstream media	Citizens
24th April 2016		Cord should follow the law to disband IEBC	Mainstream media	Government
25th April 2016	Day of Protest	Police guard IEBC offices ahead of Cord march	Mainstream media	Government
		Is IEBC must go a Luo Thing?	Blog	Citizens
		CORD leaders teargassed	Mainstream media	Media
		MCA chains himself on IEBC gates in Kisumu	Mainstream media	Polititians
		Cord plot to storm IEBC is a constitutional coup -Duale	Mainstream media	Pro-Government
		Stop intimidating us, IEBC tells Cord	Mainstream media	Government
27th April 2016		Ranguma tear-gassed in IEBC demo, vows to fi ght	Mainstream media	Polititians
26th April 2016		CORD calls for demos and asks all kenyans to join	Mainstream media	Opposition
		Uhuru scolds raila over IEBC protests	Mainstream media	Government
29th April 2016		Raila to lose security during 'illegal' demos	Mainstream media	Government
		Jubilee MPs ask court to block IEBC protests	Mainstream media	Polititians
		CORD defys court orders to end demo	Mainstream media	Opposition
30th April 2016		Cord demos off in Lucy's honour	Mainstream media	Opposition
		Court bars Cord from storming IEBC offices	Mainstream media	Government
3rd May 2016		Demos called off	Mainstream media	Opposition
		Voices from humans of Kibera on IEBC demos	Blog	Citizens
8th May 2016		CORD warn police ahead of planned demos to oust IEBC	Social Media	Opposition

9th May 2016	Day of Protest	Blog on #IEBCMustGo in Kisumu City	Blog	Citizens
		CORD leaders teargassed	Social Media	
		Report by Donald Kipkorir on IEBC Demos	Social Media	Citizens
		Demos in Nairobi	Social Media	
		Governor Joho condemns police brutality during demos	Social media	Opposition
		#IEBCMustGo demos blogged	blog	Citizens
10th May 2016		Anti-IEBC demos fail to take off in Coast	Mainstream media	Media
		Police disperse rioters with tear gas	Mainstream media	Media
		Peter Kenneth asks CORD to embrace dialogue	Mainstream media	Polititians
12th May 2016		Raila calls for dialogue with Uhuru	Mainstream media	Opposition
13th may 2016		Staff changes to strengthen IEBC	Mainstream media	Media
14th May 2016		XYZ political satire show on facebook	Social Media	
		Video showing police harassing demonstrators which sparks uproar on social media	Social Media	
15th May 2016		Police used banned teargas on protesters	Mainstream media	
16th May 2016	Day of Protest	Police rough up CORD supporters as they march to	Social Media	Media
		Chaos and injuries in Demos	Mainstream media	Media
		Jubilee MPs support IEBC Railas armoured car allegedly	Mainstream	
		fired with live bulletsJury is still out on whether or	Social MediaMainstream	
		not poll chiefs have failedRaila says no giving up until	mediaMainstream	
		poll laws are reformed What laws says on how to	mediaMainstream	Opposition
		eject IEBC officers	media	Media
		Demos in MachakosOpinion polls show low	Social MediaMainstream	Media
		support for IEBC demos by	media	Opinions
		Man beaten by police during demos	Blog	Media
		Beaten and robbed during demos	Mainstream media	Citizens

17th May 2017		Police commissioner orders proble on beating of a manMan battered by police during	Mainstream mediaMainstream	Government
		demosPolice fire live shots to	mediaMainstream	Media
		disperse rioting youth in Kibera	media	Media
		Business shut in Nairobi during demos	Mainstream media	
		Raila car windscreen hit during	Mainstream	Opposition
		Man reportedly killed resufaces	Social Media	Citizens
		No IEBC demos in mombasa since governor Joho was away	Mainstream media	
		Cartoon on police brutality	Social Media	
		Don't blame the police for	Mainstream	Citizens
18th May		Twitter debate on a man	Blog	Citizens
		Man brutaly beaten by police	Mainstream	
		Bishops ask Cord to stop	Mainstream	Religious
		We'd rather go to prison than	Mainstream	Government
		#IEBCMustGo on Instagram	Social Media	Citizens
19th May 2016		Police have a duty to protect demonstrators	Social Media	
		Jubilee says CORD should pay for property destroyed during demos	Mainstream media	Polititians
20th May 2016		Our demos will not stop, Cord declares	Mainstream media	Opposition
21st June 2016		Resolve IEBC impasse or risk more violence	Mainstream media	Opposition
		Experience of a city girl in protest	Mainstream media	Citizens
		End protests business leaders urge Uhuru and Raila	Mainstream media	Business leaders
22nd May 2016		Things to learn from IEBC demos	Mainstream media	Media
		Press tatement on IEBC demos by CORDPictaram report on	Blog	Opposition
		#IEBCMustGo	Social Media	Citizens
		CORD says it has right to demonstrate	Mainstream media	Opposition
		Rails and Public Agenda	Social Media	Opposition
		#IEBCMustGo demos in Kisii	Social Media	
		Demos in Mombasa County	Mainstream media	

23rd May 2016	Day of Protest	Speaker says they wont be forced to remove IEBC officials	Mainstream media	Parliament
		Senator Khalwale vows to lead cord demos in Kakamega	Mainstream media	Opposition
		Business shut in Migori due to IEBC Demos	Mainstream media	
		ANTI-IEBC PROTESTS ADD TO NAIROBI'S MONDAY BLUES	Mainstream media	Media
24th May 2016		Police injured during IEBC demo and airlifted to Nairobi	Mainstream media	Government
		Why ODM wants IEBC team disbanded	Mainstream media	Opposition
		CORD protesters stopped from reaching IEBC offices	Mainstream media	
		19 arrested 3 killed in IEBC demos	Mainstream media	
		Envoys condemn violence in IEBC demos, calls for talks	Mainstream media	International community
		MCA arrested in Mombasa over IEBC protests	Mainstream media	
		Senator Khalwale arrested as he leads IEBC demos	Mainstream media	
		Cord condemns fatal shooting of protestors	Mainstream media	Opposition
		IEBC Demos in Meru	Mainstream media	
		9 charged with unlawful assembly over IEBC demosKFCB says airing Anti IEBC	Mainstream media	Courts
		demos is against the board's		
		PUBLIC OUTRAGE AS THREE KILLED IN CORD ANTI-IEBC DEMOS	Mainstream media	
25th May 2016		Police unapologetic over use of force in IEBC demos	Mainstream media	Government
		Two shot men remain defiant over Cord demos	Mainstream media	
		ODM halts demos, Jubilee digs in on talks	Mainstream media	Polititians
		Doubts over extent of injuries suffered by police in anti-IEBC demos	blog	

26th May 2016		cord says police targeted Luo Nyanza	Mainstream media	Opposition
27th May 2016		Government has no business protecting IEBC	Mainstream media	Opposition
29th May 2016		Riots victims are real God's bits of wood	Mainstream media	Opinions
		African Union calls for electoral reforms in Kenya	Mainstream media	International community
		Police airlift to Nairobi from Kisumu was fakery	Mainstream media	Government
		Opinion: Dialogue on IEBC issue	Mainstream media	Opinions
		Opinion: How can IEBC protests be resolved?	Mainstream media	Opinions
31st May 2017		Beyond IEBC demos	Mainstream media	
Jun-16			Mainstream	
1st June 2016		Prayers for CORD demos victims in Kisumu	Mainstream media	Religious organization
		President and DP criticize CORD's demos in a National celebration	Mainstream media	Government
		Cord leaders take IEBC war to Kisumu	Mainstream media	Opposition
2nd June 2016		CORD names team for IEBC negotiations	Mainstream media	Opposition
		Rift valley leaders call for dialogue on IEBC matters	Mainstream media	
3rd June 2016		President says he will stick to the law over IEBC	Mainstream media	Government
		CORD governor differs on IEBC demos	Mainstream media	Opposition
		Police ban protest to happen the next week on Monday (reuters	International media	
4th June 2016		Demos in Kitui County	social media	
		Uhuru and Raila statehouse meeting	Mainstream media	Government and opposition
		Raila on statehouse deal to reconstitute IEBC	Mainstream media	
		Clergy tells Uhuru and Raila to dialogue	Mainstream media	Religious organization
		IEBC debate in a burial ceremony	Mainstream	Burial ceremonies
		Documents on IEBC corruption scandal	social media	

		CORD to resume protests on Monday	blog	
		Uhuru says God answered our prayers on IEBC issue in 2010	Mainstream media	Burial ceremonies
5th June 2016		Raila says he has no grudge with IEBC chair as a person	Mainstream media	Opposition
6th June 2016	Day of Protest	YouTube Video on #IEBCMustGo	Social Media	
		Police commissioner says demos are illegal	Mainstream media	
		Police say they will use force to deal with protesters	Mainstream media	
		ODM warns MPS against snubbing IEBC demos	Mainstream media	Opposition
		Raila and demonstrators	social media	Opposition
		Aljazeera reports on Demo	International media	International community
		Raila Arrives at Uhurupark	social media	
		CORD Demos	social media	
		Cartoon on political satire of CORD and Jubilee	social media	Media
		CORD Demos in Migori County	social media	
		Court allows demos to go on	Mainstream media	
		Protesters in Kisumu block roads	Mainstream media	
		Photo od a dead demostrator posted on facebook	social media	
7th June 2016		National assembly speaker asks MPs to probe police brutality	Mainstream media	
		Protests in Kisumu	Mainstream media	
		Editorial: Resolve IEBC crisis	Mainstream media	
		2 dead, widespread violence and looting in Kenya protests	blog	
		Matatu owners to dump shells of vehicles burnt in demos at Cord's doorstep	Mainstream media	
		Matatu crew drops off a shell of a burnt down matatu	Mainstream	

8th June 2016		Government bans opposition protests	Mainstream media	
		Raila refuses to call off demos	Mainstream	
		IDPs in nakuru demand IEBC demos stopped	Mainstream media	
		Matatu owners hold counterdemonstrations	Mainstream media	
		KANU chiefs differ over street protest	Mainstream media	
		Voices from humans of Kibera on IEBC demos	blog	
9th June 2016		Party rift over IEBC Demos	Mainstream	
		Mason's pain as vehicle burnt in chaos	Mainstream media	
10th June 2016		Dispute on election tems must be resolved	Mainstream media	
		CORD sued over destruction of property during demos	Mainstream media	
		CORD announces Monday and Thursday IEBC demos	Other media	
11th June 2016		Ruto says IEBC demos hurting economy	Mainstream media	
		CORD to step up IEBC Demos	Mainstream media	
12th June 2016		Nairobi governor supports IEBC demos	Mainstream media	
		Diplomats' efforts to resolve IEBC crisis	Mainstream media	
		CORD, Jubilee teams for IEBC talks	Mainstream media	
13th June 2016		Raila calls off demos	Mainstream media	
		IEBC Demos called off	Mainstream media	
14th June 2016		Economic cost of political unrest	Mainstream media	
		Jubilee MPs contribute Sh1 million for matatu burnt in Cord protest	Mainstream media	
16th June 2016		Planned demos did not take place	Other media	
20th June 2016		IEBC Reform talks to begin	Mainstream media	

21 st June 2016		Opinion: Demos and driven by greed for power	Mainstream media	
26 th June 2016		Woman who lost matatu in anti-IEBC demos to get new one	Mainstream media	
29 th June 2016		IEBC Dialogue team formed	social media	
Jul-16				
		Man shot during IEBC Demos seeks justice	Mainstream media	
29 th July 2016		IEBC official admits riggin in 2013 elections	social media	
Aug-16				
2nd August 2016		Businessman lost 120M in IEBC Demos	mainstream media	
		IEBC bosses to exit by Sept 30	mainstream media	
4th August 2016		IEBC bosses to leave office	mainstream media	
Sep-16				
26 th September 20 16		State on exit of election bosses	mainstream media	
Oct-16				
1st October 2016		ODM pays hospital bill for woman shot during IEBC demos	mainstream media	
5th October 2016		IEBC commissioners leave office	mainstream media	
13 th October 2016		Woman shot during IEBC Demos	mainstream media	
Nov-16				
Dec-16				
3rd Dec 2016		Jubilee wants CORD to apologise over anti-IEBC demos	blog	
Jan-17			Mainstream media	
1st January 2017		IEBC Demos is among top events of 2016		

Appendix 3: Ethics Clearance Certificate

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Mwaura

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: H17/09/24**
PROJECT TITLE	#DigitalActivism: The use of social media in socio-political movements in Kenya
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Mr J Mwaura
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	School of Literature, Language and Media Studies/
DATE CONSIDERED	15 September 2017
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved
EXPIRY DATE	13 November 2020

DATE 14 November 2017 **CHAIRPERSON** J Knight
(Professor J Knight)

cc: Supervisor : Dr I Gagliardone

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10004, 10th Floor, Senate House, University. Unreported changes to the application may invalidate the clearance given by the HREC (Non-Medical)

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

Signature

15 September 2017
Date

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

Appendix 4: Participant Information Sheet for Members of Civil Societies (local and international)

Dear sir/madam,

My name is Job Mwaura and I am a PhD student at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa undertaking a degree in Media Studies. I am carrying out a research study titled: **#DigitalActivism: The Use of Social Media in Socio-Political Movements in Kenya.** The research explores how social media was used in three socio-political movements' #OccupyPlayground, #OccupyParliament, and #IEBCMustGo that happened in Kenya in the recent past.

I am inviting you to be a participant in this research study. Your selection to participate in this research is because you were closely linked with these socio-political movements mentioned above as a member of civil society organizations.

As a participant in this research study, I would request an interview session with you, which would be conducted outside your office at a place you are most comfortable with. With your permission, I request that this interview be audio recorded. This will allow me to easily and accurately transcribe and process the data. This interview will last between 60-90 minutes

Your participation in this research is voluntary and I guarantee that your personal details will remain anonymous and confidential throughout this research study as well as in the final research thesis. However, if you so wish, your name may be used in a final research report.

In addition, as a participant, you have the liberty to refuse to answer any questions that you are not comfortable with and may feel free to withdraw from this study at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. By being a participant in this research, you will not receive payment of any form and the information you disclose will be used **ONLY** in the research report. There are no known risks of participating in this research, but your contribution will help in creating knowledge on this area of study.

This research will be written into a Doctorate thesis that will be available online through the University's website. Should you require a summary of the research, I can make this available to you.

If you need further clarifications, please, feel free to contact my supervisor, Dr Iginio Gagliardone through our contact details below or me.

Researcher Supervisor

…… ……..

Job Mwaura (Researcher) Dr. Iginio Gagliardone (Supervisor)

jobmm2007@gmail.com iginio.gagliardone@wits.ac.za

Appendix 5: Participant Information Sheet for Religious Leaders

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Job Mwaura and I am a PhD student at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa undertaking a degree in Media Studies. I am carrying out a research study that explores how social media was used in three socio-political movement's #OccupyPlayground, #OccupyParliament, and #IEBCMustGo which happened in Kenya in the recent past.

I am inviting you to be a participant in this research study as a religious leader. Your selection to participate in this research is because you voiced your concern as a religious leader during the events of the above-mentioned cases.

As a participant in this research study, I would request an interview session with you, which would be conducted outside your office at a place you are most comfortable with. With your permission, I request that this interview be audio recorded. This will allow me to easily and accurately transcribe and process the data. This interview will last between 60-90 minutes.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and I guarantee that your personal details will remain anonymous and confidential throughout this research study as well as in the final research thesis. However, if you so wish, your name may be used in a final research report.

In addition, as a participant, you have the liberty to refuse to answer any questions that you are not comfortable with and may feel free to withdraw from this study at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. By being a participant in this research, you will not receive payment of any form and the information you disclose will be used **ONLY** in the research report. There are no known risks of participating in this research, but your contribution will help in creating knowledge on this area of study.

This research will be written into a Doctorate thesis that will be available online through the University's website. Should you require a summary of the research, I can make this available to you.

In the event that you need further clarifications, please, feel free to contact my supervisor, Dr Iginio Gagliardone through our contact details below or me.

Researcher Supervisor

…… ……..

Job Mwaura (Researcher) Dr. Iginio Gagliardone (Supervisor)

jobmm2007@gmail.com iginio.gagliardone@wits.ac.za

Appendix 6: Participant Information Sheet for journalists, media professionals and bloggers.

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Job Mwaura and I am a PhD student at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa undertaking a degree in Media Studies. I am carrying out a research study titled: **#DigitalActivism: The Use of Social Media in Socio-Political Movements in Kenya.** The research explores how social media was used in three socio-political movements' #OccupyPlayground, #OccupyParliament, and #IEBCMustGo.

I am inviting you to be a participant in this research study. Your selection to participate in this research is because you were linked or involved in coverage of these socio-political movements mentioned above as a journalist/Media professional/blogger.

As a participant in this research study, I would request an interview session with you, which would be conducted outside your office at a place you are most comfortable with. With your permission, I request that this interview be audio recorded. This will allow me to easily and accurately transcribe and process the data. This interview will last between 60-90 minutes.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and I guarantee that your personal details will remain anonymous and confidential throughout this research study as well as in the final research thesis. However, if you so wish, your name may be used in a final research report.

In addition, as a participant, you have the liberty to refuse to answer any questions that you are not comfortable with and may feel free to withdraw from this study at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. By being a participant in this research, you will not receive payment of any form and the information you disclose will be used **ONLY** in the research report. There are no known risks of participating in this research, but your contribution will help in creating knowledge on this area of study.

This research will be written into a Doctorate thesis that will be available online through the University's website. Should you require a summary of the research, I can make this available to you.

In the event that you need further clarifications, please, feel free to contact my supervisor, Dr Iginio Gagliardone through our contact details below or me.

Researcher Supervisor

…… ……..

Job Mwaura (Researcher) Dr. Iginio Gagliardone (Supervisor)

jobmm2007@gmail.com iginio.gagliardone@wits.ac.za

Appendix 7: Participant Information Sheet for Politicians

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Job Mwaura and I am a PhD student at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa undertaking a degree in Media Studies. I am carrying out a research study that explores how social media was used in three socio-political movements #OccupyPlayground, #OccupyParliament, and #IEBCMustGo which happened in Kenya in the recent past.

I am inviting you to be a participant in this research study. Your selection to participate in this research is because you are aware of how the government works as a politician and you were actively involved in one of the cases mentioned above.

As a participant in this research study, I would request an interview session with you, which would be conducted outside your office at a place you are most comfortable with. With your permission, I request that this interview be audio recorded. This will allow me to easily and accurately transcribe and process the data. This interview will last between 60-90 minutes.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and I guarantee that your personal details will remain anonymous and confidential throughout this research study as well as in the final research thesis. However, if you so wish, your name may be used in a final research report.

In addition, as a participant, you have the liberty to refuse to answer any questions that you are not comfortable with and may feel free to withdraw from this study at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. By being a participant in this research, you will not receive payment of any form and the information you disclose will be used **ONLY** in the research report. There are no known risks of participating in this research, but your contribution will help in creating knowledge on this area of study.

This research will be written into a Doctorate thesis that will be available online through the University's website. Should you require a summary of the research, I can make this available to you.

In the event that you need further clarifications, please, feel free to contact my supervisor, Dr Iginio Gagliardone through our contact details below or me.

Researcher Supervisor

…… ……..

Job Mwaura (Researcher) Dr. Iginio Gagliardone (Supervisor)

jobmm2007@gmail.com iginio.gagliardone@wits.ac.za

Appendix 8: Consent Form for Research Participants

I, _____, acknowledge that I understand this research and it has been fully explained to me. I also understand that the information, which I give for this research, will be used in a research report by the researcher.

I also acknowledge that the researcher has promised me the following:

☐ That my participation in this research is voluntary

☐ That my personal details will remain anonymous and confidential throughout the research study as well as in the research thesis

☐ That I will not be obliged to answer any questions, which I feel uncomfortable with

☐ That I have the liberty to withdraw from the interview at any point without any penalty

I hereby consent to be interviewed for this research study titled #DigitalActivism: The Use of Social Media in Socio-Political Movements in Kenya
I agree ☐ **I do not agree** ☐ to the interview being audio- recorded

_____

Participant

_____

Date Signed

Appendix 9: Interview guides

Questions to individuals from the civil society organizations (local and international)

Section I: Activism

1. Do you think activism has changed over the years in Kenya? (Follow up) If, so how?
2. Do you think the advent of multiparty system in Kenya affected activism in any way?
3. What are the key issues that activists are fighting currently?
    a) Are these issues different from what activists fought for in previous years?
4. What tools/tactics are common in activism today?
    a) How does these tactics/tools differ from tactics used in previous years by activists such as Timothy Njoya, Wangari Maathai, and the second liberation politicians such as Martin Shikuku?
5. In your opinion, what determines the success of activism?
6. Are there certain groups of people who seems to be the most significant in determining the success of activism?

Section II: Digital Activism

1. How is the internet in general and social media in specific important in activism in contemporary mediated society?
    a) Can the use of activism in present day be considered a form of Clicktivism/slacktivism?
    b) Social media seems to have given rise to ordinary citizens to activism. How important is this in activism?
2. What provoked #IEBCMustGo/#OccupyPlayground/#OccupyParliament movements?
    a) What tactics were used in #IEBCMustGo /#OccupyPlayground/ #OccupyParliament
    b) How was social media important in #IEBCMustGo/ #OccupyPlayground/ #OccupyParliament
3. What factors made the movement(s) a success/failure?
    a) To what extent did social media contribute to success/failure
    b) Were certain voices important in determining the success/failure of these movements?

4. How important did the civil societies find the addition of digital media into their other traditional media strategies for activism?
    a) Probe: Addition of blogs such as *Mashada*, *jukwaa*, to, listservs and social media

Questions to journalists/media professionals/bloggers

1. What was the role of your media outlet in shaping the events of #OccupyPlayground?
    a. Probe on #IEBCMustGo and #OccupyParliament?
2. How was the coverage of #OccupyPlayground different from #IEBCMustGo and #OccupyParliament?
    a. Probe on their perception of how the media reported each of the above cases?
    b. To what extent did the media outlet you work for propagate or diminish each of the cases though the way it reported them?
3. To what extent was information from (e.g. bloggers, individual tweeting, public figures tweeting useful in coverage of the #OccupyPlayground?
    a. Probe on #IEBCMustGo and #OccupyParliament?
    b. Did your outlet use the information from these social media sources to report on the movements?
4. To what extent do you think the voices from religious leaders, politicians, other media outlets and transnationals were important in coverage/reporting of #OccupyPlayground movement?
    a. Probe on #IEBCMustGo and #OccupyParliament?
5. Are there other factors that affected the way #OccupyPlayground was covered/reported?
    a. Probe on #IEBCMustGo and #OccupyParliament?
6. To what extent do you think the way a movement is reported can help in producing a change?

Questions to religious leaders

1. Did religious organizations/leaders play any role in /#OccupyPlayground?
    a. Probe for #IEBCMustGo and #OccupyPlayground
    b. If so, what was the role? (probe for each of the cases)
    c. If so, why was it important to get involved? (probe for each of the cases)
    d. If so, what motivated this involvement? (probe for each of the cases)
        i. Media coverage?
        ii. Social media coverage?
        iii. Voices from politicians?
2. Are there campaigns that religious leaders been involved in, in the last few 5 years?
    a. Which ones?
    b. Did social media play a particular role in any of the cases you have mentioned?
        i. Probe: What was the role?
3. How different are these campaigns from the campaigns led by individuals like?
        i. Rev. Timothy Njoya (Constitutional change campaign),
        ii. Bishop Ndingi mwana Anzeki (ethnic violence in Rift Valley campaigns) and
        iii. Rev. Alexander Munge in the 90's?
4. To what extent do you think the voices of religious leaders are important in determining the success of a campaign in Kenya?
    a. What other voices do you think are important in in determining success of a campaign?
        i. Probe on (Mainstream media, social media, civil societies)

Questions to the politicians

1. In what ways does politicians influence activism?
2. What is the general feeling among politicians when citizens and civil rights groups form movements against them?
3. In what ways does politicians use social media in activism?

    a. To what extent do politicians to propagate or stop campaigns use it? (Probe on change or advance narratives during activism?)
4. What was the importance of social media to politicians during #IEBCMustGo?
    a. Probe on #OccupyPlayground/ #OccupyParliament movements
5. In reference to the #IEBCMustGo, #OccupyPlayground/ and #OccupyParliament which voices exert more pressure on politicians to make changes or to respond to campaign demands?
    a. Mainstream media?
    b. Social media?
    c. Civil Society organizations?
    d. Religious leaders?

Appendix 10: Invitation for #OccupyParliament



Civil Society members shall, on Tuesday, May 14, 2013, lead a procession of peaceful demonstrators to occupy Parliament buildings in Nairobi to protest an attempt by Members of Parliament to arm-twist the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) into yielding to the MPs' demands for indefinitely higher pay. The act of occupying Parliament by members of the public shall symbolize the power and pre-eminence of the public over persons who hold elective office.

In the recent past, local MPs have made concerted attempts to usurp SRC's mandate of regulating salaries and apportioning the national wage budget across the public sector. Indeed, caving into MPs' pressure to disband SRC, the Sarah Serem-led commission surprisingly decided to award MPs a tax-free grant of Sh5 million each for the purchase of vehicles. Negotiations to have MPs salaries increased are ongoing.

Upon reaching Parliament, Civil Society members will pitch tent at the precincts and read a statement detailing its demands. Members of the civil society and participants from the public will remain at the site for as long as it will take to have their cry of a responsible National Assembly heeded by the House's officers. Importantly, peace will always be upheld.

Objectives of Operation Occupy Parliament

1. Using the power of numbers, we seek to give Kenyans the courage to defend their Constitution, which Parliament has endeavoured to overthrow by threatening to disband a constitutionally established body.
2. We want to make Members of Parliament aware that the days of parliamentary dictatorship are over. MPs cannot—and must not! —be self-regulating; they must be answerable to the people.
3. We want to send home the message that no one is above the law and to instill a sense of accountability to persons who hold public office. It must be borne in mind that even public officers who make the law are subject to that law.

Appendix 11: Discussion on the Successes of #OccupyParliament

Source: http://jukwaa.proboards.com/thread/8435/occupy-parliament-huge-success

Onyango Oloo
Nairobi, Kenya
Thursday, May 16, 2013
18:08 East African Time

In *my personal opinion*, I think that the **May 14, 2013 Occupy Parliament event** is one of the most successful civil society events organized in Kenya over the last five years, swine presence notwithstanding.

Why do I say so?

1. There was a lot of consultation and preparation BEFORE the event, contrary to other opinions. I remember hearing about this action almost two and a half weeks ago during a Jukwaa la Katiba/National Civil Society Congress media briefing. Then I was invited to a series of meetings featuring Kenyans from many diverse organizations- Pawa 254, National Civil Society Congress, Unga Revolution, SDP, Bunge la Mwananchi, Kenyans for Peace, Truth and Justice, to name just a few. The event was well publicized all over mainstream radio, television and the newspapers. It was also widely circulated on mailing lists, discussion forums, Facebook, Twitter and SMS. We shared all the slogans of the Occupy Parliament protest at least 48 hours before the event via various social media outlets like Jukwaa, KPTJ, Kenya Ni Kwetu, Facebook and Twitter.

2. Occupy Parliament was BROAD BASED and NON-PARTISAN. There was a consensus very early on, that NONE of the constituent groups planning the event would "own" it or brand it in anyway. It was agreed that the event would NOT be hijacked by either of the mainstream political coalitions CORD or Jubilee. Equally, it was NOT going to be another "fundable project" from any of the NGO formations, nor would it provide a soap box for the smaller political parties like SDP or Safina.

3. Occupy Parliament was YOUTH led from the very onset. The leading lights were people like Boniface Mwangi of PAWA 254 and Gacheke Gachihi from Unga Revolution/Bunge la Mwananchi.

4. Occupy Parliament had tremendous buy in from the broad civil sector with KPTJ, KHRC, AfriCOG, Awaaz, Sankara Centre, Mazingira, National Civil Society Congress, Muhuri, Transparency International Kenya Chapter, Uraia, InformAction, Kenya Asian Forum etc.

5. There was a lot of public goodwill in relation to the main goals, objectives and demands of the Occupy Parliament protest which revolved around the illegal, unconstitutional and obscene demands of selfish legislators around a pay hike and attempts to dismantle the Salaries and Remuneration Commission.

6. The organizers and protestors of Occupy Parliament fully embraced a non-violent ethos. I was at the planning meeting where organizers drilled the participants on the tactics of civil, legal and non-violent protest where there was a lot of emphasis placed on NOT provoking the cops or engaging in reckless acts of vandalism and hooliganism.

7. Occupy Parliament stayed true to its broad programme: assemble at Freedom Corner, rev up the spirits of the participants with freedom Songs, practice the slogans of the march; walk in a disciplined procession through Kenyatta and Moi Avenue before branching out to Harambee Avenue and convening outside the County Hall entrance to Parliament with their placards with their clear demands and slogans.

8. Even when provoked by the robocops with their batons, whips, kicks, tear gas and water cannons, the organizers and protestors of Occupy Parliament kept their eyes on the non-violent prize. It was inevitable that the neo-colonial state which knows no other way to deal with public protests and demonstrations would at some point barge in on the protestors and haul them to the police cells.

9. There was massive media coverage of Occupy Parliament locally, regionally and internationally. For almost three days, Occupy Parliament dominated the news. As an added bonus, a poll by IPSOS Synovate released on the day after the protest showed that almost 90 % of Kenyans supported the demands of Occupy Parliament (the poll had been carried out earlier, before the protest).

10. Say what you will about the pigs, but they really BRANDED the MPs as greedy, slovenly selfish gluttons.

From *Kenya Today*:

www.kenya-today.com/news/kenya-members-of-parliament

The Greed Of Kenya MPs: Operation Occupy Parliament Starts Tuesday

May 6, 2013

http://www.kenya-today.com/wp-content/themes/striking/cache/images/24279_116-200x150.jpg

On Tuesday, May 14, 2013, peaceful demonstrators will occupy Parliament buildings in Nairobi to protest against an attempt by Members of Parliament to arm-twist the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) into yielding to the MPs' demands for indefinitely higher pay.

The act of occupying Parliament by members of the general public shall symbolize the power and pre-eminence of the public over persons who hold elective office.

In the recent past, local MPs have made concerted attempts to usurp SRC's mandate of regulating salaries and apportioning the national wage budget across the public sector. Indeed, caving in to MPs' pressure to disband SRC, the Sarah Serem-led commission surprisingly decided to award MPs a tax-free grant of Sh5 million each for the purchase of vehicles. Negotiations to have MPs salaries increased are ongoing.

Objectives of Operation Occupy Parliament

1. Using the power of numbers, we seek to give Kenyans the courage to defend their Constitution, which Parliament has endeavoured to overthrow by threatening to disband a constitutionally established body;

2. We want to make Members of Parliament aware that the days of parliamentary dictatorship are over. MPs cannot—and must not!—be self-regulating; they must be answerable to the people;

3. We want to send home the message that no one is above the law, and to instill a sense of accountability to persons who hold public office. At the end of the day, it must be borne in mind that even public officers who make the law are subject to that law.

Appendix 12: Gazette Notice with Details of MPs. Salaries (2013)

SPECIAL ISSUE

THE KENYA GAZETTE

Published by Authority of the Republic of Kenya

(Registered as a Newspaper at the G.P.O.)

Vol. CXV—No. 33 NAIROBI, 1st March, 2013 Price Sh. 60

GAZETTE NOTICE NO. 2885

THE CONSTITUTION OF KENYA

REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS OF STATE OFFICERS IN THE EXECUTIVE

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred by Article 230 (4) (*a*), the Salaries and Remuneration Commission has set the remuneration and benefits of State Officers in the Executive as follows:

REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS OF STATE OFFICERS IN THE EXECUTIVE

State Officer	*Gross Monthly Remuneration Package (KSh.)*
President of the Republic of Kenya	1,237,500 x 103,125 p.a. – 1,340,625 x 103,125 p.a.– 1,443,750 x 103,125 p.a. – 1,546,875 x 103,125 p.a. – 1,650,000
Deputy President	1,051,875 x 87,656 p.a. – 1,139,531 x 87,656 p.a.– 1,227,188 x 87,656 p.a. – 1,314,844 x 87,656 p.a. – 1,402,500
Cabinet Secretary Attorney-General Secretary to the Cabinet Chief of Defence Forces	792,000 x 66,000 p.a. – 858,000 x 66,000 p.a. – 924,000 x 66,000 p.a. – 990,000 x 66,000 p.a. – 1,056,000
Principal Secretary Vice-Chief of the Defence Forces Commander, Kenya Army Director-General (NIS) Inspector-General, National Police Service	655,875 x 54,656 p.a. – 701,531 x 54,656 p.a. – 765,188 x 54,656 p.a. – 819,844 x 54,656 p.a. – 874,500
Director of Public Prosecutions Commander, Kenya Air force Commander, Kenya Navy	640,681 x 30,509 p.a. – 671,190 x 30,509 p.a. – 701,698 x 30,509 p.a. – 732,207 x 30,509 p.a. – 762,715 x 30,509 p.a. – 793,224 x 30,509 p.a. – 823,732 x 30,509 p.a. – 854,241
Deputy Inspector-General, Kenya Police Service Deputy Inspector-General, Administration Police Service	532,500 x 25,357 p.a. – 557,857 x 25,357 p.a. – 583,214 x 25,357 p.a. – 608,571 x 25,357 p.a. – 633,929 x 25,357 p.a. – 659,286 x 25,357 p.a. – 684,643 x 25,357 p.a. – 710,000
Registrar of Political Parties	532,500 x 35,500 p.a. – 568,000 x 35,500 p.a. – 603,500 x 35,500 p.a. – 639,000 x 35,500 p.a. – 674,500 x 35,500 p.a. – 710,000

Notes:

(i) A serving State Officer whose remuneration and benefits were set for the position they are holding before the establishment of the Salaries and Remuneration Commission by the relevant authority as provided by law, where such remuneration is above the set remuneration herein shall retain such remuneration.

[1653

(ii) A serving State Officer whose remuneration and benefits were set for the position they are holding by the Salaries and Remuneration Commission on interim basis before this Gazette Notice, where the remuneration is above the set remuneration herein, shall retain such remuneration at fixed levels unless reviewed by the Salaries and Remuneration Commission.

(iii) New State Officers shall join at the minimum and those currently earning below the total gross minimum remuneration set herein, shall join the scale at the appropriate level.

(iv) State Officers whose current remuneration levels fall within the structure shall join the structure at the next immediate progression point.

(v) Unless otherwise specifically stated in this Gazette Notice, all allowances are herein consolidated and capped at forty per centum (40 per cent) of the set total gross remuneration.

(vi) All other allowances and benefits not specified in this Gazette Notice cease to be payable.

(vii) Additional benefits accruing to the President and the Deputy President shall be reviewed by the Salaries and Remuneration Commission from time to time.

(viii) The salary structure existing before this Gazette notice ceases to apply forthwith.

(a) Benefits

The following benefits shall apply to the State Officers serving in the Executive:

(i) Accommodation and Subsistence Allowance: Retain the existing rates pending review by the Salaries and Remuneration Commission.

(ii) Airtime: Retain the existing rates pending review by the Salaries and Remuneration Commission.

(iii) Security: To be provided as advised by the Inspector-General, National Police Service.

(iv) Official car: Chauffer driven official car; or as reviewed by the Salaries and Remuneration Commission.

(v) Medical Scheme: The medical cover shall be provided per family for self, spouse and up to four children below twenty five years fully dependent on the State Officer as follows:

Inpatient	KSh. 10 million
Outpatient	KSh. 300,000
Maternity	KSh. 150,000
Dental	KSh. 75,000
Optical	KSh. 75,000

The State Officers in the Defence Forces shall retain the existing medical scheme arrangement.

(vi) Retirement Benefits.—A State Officer serving on Permanent and Pensionable terms shall join a contributory pension scheme and contribute at the rate of 7.5% of basic salary with the employer's contribution at the rate of 15% of basic salary.

A State Officer serving on fixed term shall serve on contract and be paid a service gratuity at the end of the term at the rate of 31% of annual basic pay for every year served.

(vii) *Group Life Assurance.*—Officers shall be covered for a value equivalent to three times annual basic salary.

(viii) *Work Injury Benefit (WIBA).*—Work Injury Benefits Act shall apply where applicable.

(ix) *Group Personal Accident.*—State Officers serving in the Executive shall be covered for a value equivalent to up to three times annual basic salary where applicable.

(x) Home, Utilities and Attendants.—The President and Deputy President shall be housed by the State and provided with all commensurate home utilities and attendants, subject to review by the Salaries and Remuneration Commission from time to time.

Effective date: 1st March, 2013.

Dated the 28th February, 2013

SARAH SEREM,
Chairperson, Salaries and Remuneration Commission.

GAZETTE NOTICE NO. 2886

THE CONSTITUTION OF KENYA

REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS FOR STATE OFFICERS IN PARLIAMENT

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred by Article 230 (4) (*a*), the Salaries and Remuneration Commission has set the remuneration and benefits of State Officers in Parliament as follows:

REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS OF ALL STATE OFFICERS IN PARLIAMENT

State Officer	*Gross Monthly Remuneration Package (KSh.)*
Speaker of the National Assembly Speaker of the Senate	990,000 x 82,500 p.a.– 1,072,500 x 82,500 p.a. – 1,155,00 x 82,500 p.a. – 1,237,500 x 82,500 p.a. – 1,320,000
Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Deputy Speaker of the Senate	792,000 x 66,000 p.a. – 858,000 x 66,000 p.a. – 924,000 x 66,000 p.a. – 990,000 x 66,000 p.a. – 1,056,000

State Officer	*Gross Monthly Remuneration Package (KSh.)*
Leader of Majority Party Leader of the Minority Party Chairpersons of Committees Members of Speakers Panel Chief Whips Minority Whips Member of the National Assembly Member of the Senate	532,500 x 44,375 p.a. – 576,875 x 44,375 p.a.– 621,250 x 44,375 p.a. – 665,625 x 44,375 p.a. – 710,000

Notes:

1. Members of Parliament and all other Parliamentary State Officers shall join the remuneration structure at the minimum point and progress to the maximum over the term period.
2. Unless otherwise specifically stated in this Gazette Notice, all allowances have been consolidated and capped at forty per centum (40 per cent) of the set total gross remuneration package.
3. All other allowances and benefits not specified in this Gazette Notice cease to be payable.

(a) Special Parliamentary Duty Allowance:

Members of Parliament who have additional responsibilities as listed below shall be paid an additional allowance as may be apportioned by the Parliamentary Service Commission up to a maximum of KSh.150,000 per month.

(i) Leader of Majority Party;
(ii) Leader of the Minority Party;
(iii) Chairperson of Committees;
(iv) Members of Speakers Panel;
(v) Chief Whips; and
(vi) Minority Whips.

(b) Committee Sitting Allowances:

Members of Parliament and Senate who serve in Committees shall be paid Committee Sitting Allowance as follows:

(i) Chairperson, KSh.10,000 per day of meeting (s) subject to a maximum of 4 days per week and a maximum of KSh. 160,000 per month.

(ii) Vice-Chairperson, KSh. 8,000 per day of meeting (s) subject to a maximum of 4 days in a week and a maximum of KSh. 128,000 per month.

(iii) Member, KSh. 5,000 per day of meeting (s) subject to a maximum of 4 days in a week and a maximum of KSh. 80,000 per month.

(c) Other Allowances and Benefits:

The following benefits shall apply to Parliamentary State Officers:

(i) *Accommodation and Subsistence Allowances.*—to be paid at existing rates pending review by the Salaries and Remuneration Commission.

(ii) *Security.*—To be provided as advised by the Inspector-General, National Police Service.

(iii) *Mileage Allowance.*—shall be paid to Members of Parliament per week of travel(s) up to a maximum of 52 weeks in one calendar year for the journeys between Nairobi and their Constituencies at AA rates or as reviewed by the Salaries and Remuneration Commission from time to time.

(iv) *Medical Scheme.*—Annual Medical cover shall be provided per family for self, spouse and up to four children below twenty five years, who are fully dependent on the Members of Parliament and all other Parliamentary State officers as follows:

Inpatient	KSh. 10 million
Outpatient	KSh. 300,000
Maternity	KSh. 150,000
Dental	KSh. 75,000
Optical	KSh. 75,000

(v) *Retirement Benefits.*—Gratuity scheme at the rate of 31% of annual basic pay, shall be paid at the end of the term and shall not be pensionable.

(vi) *Group Life Assurance.*—State Officers shall be covered for a value equivalent to three times their annual basic salary.

(vii) Work Injury Benefit (WIBA).—Work Injury Benefits Act shall apply.

(viii) Group Personal Accident.—Members of Parliament and other Parliamentary State officers shall be covered for a value equivalent to up to three times their annual basic salary.

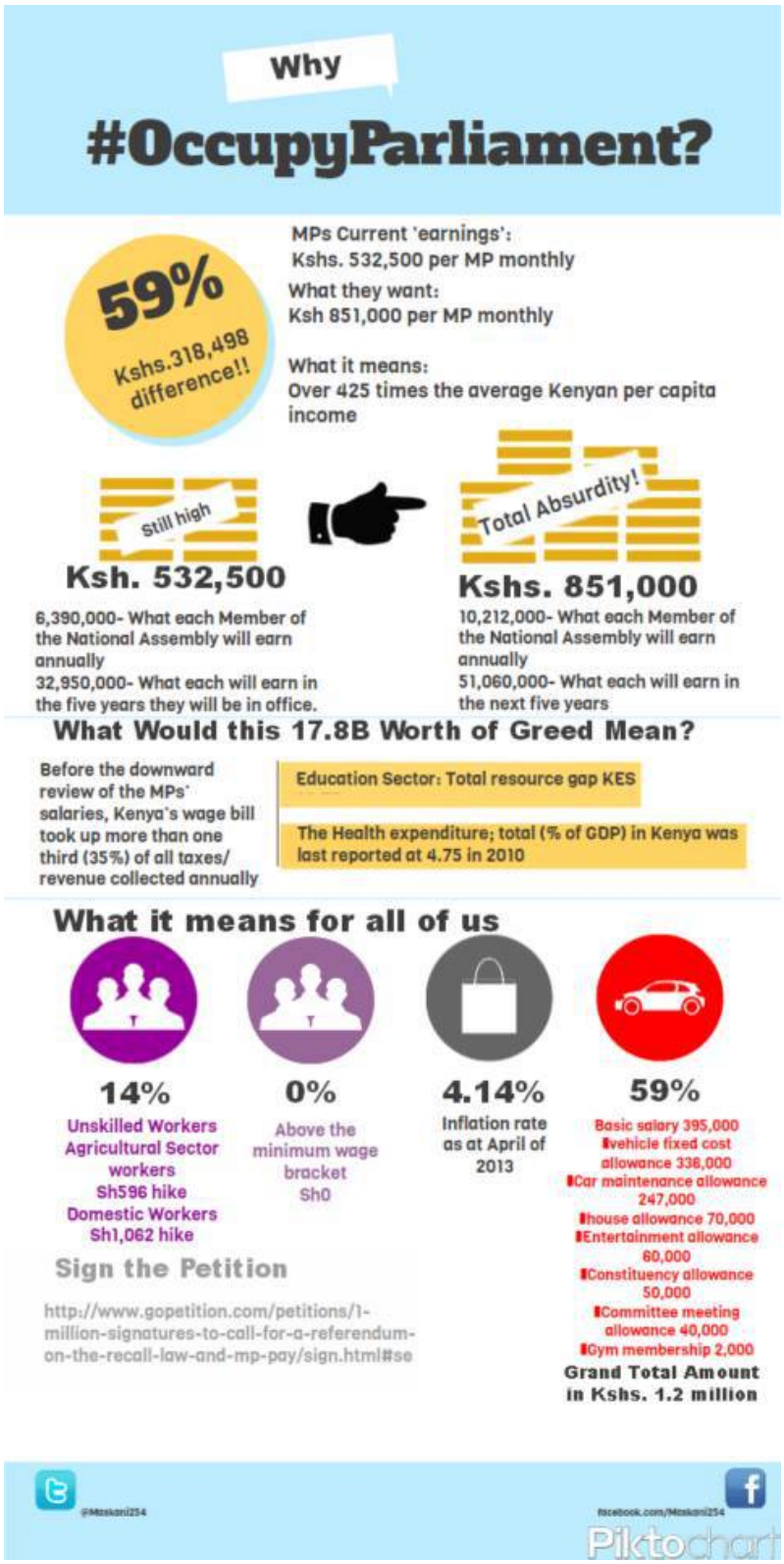
(ix) *Home, Utilities and Attendants.*—Speakers of the Senate and National Assembly shall be housed by the State and provided with all commensurate home utilities and attendants subject to review by the Salaries and Remuneration Commission from time to time.

Effective date: 1st March, 2013.

Dated the 28th February, 2013.

SARAH SEREM,
Chairperson, Salaries and Remuneration Commission.

Appendix 13: An online Poster Showing Why #OccupyParliament was Necessary



Appendix 14: Police Permission for #OccupyParliamentReloaded



04 JUNE 2013

The Officer Commanding Police Station (OCS)

Central Police Station, Nairobi.

O.C.P.D. - CENTRAL
Date 04/06/13
P.O. Box 45796, NAIROBI.

The Officer Commanding Police Station (OCS)

Parliament Police Station Nairobi

Dear Sir,

RE: PEACEFUL PROCESSION TO PARLIAMENT

This is to inform you that we will be staging a peaceful procession to Parliament to picket in protest against the proposed increase to salaries for Members of Parliament on On Tuesday, June 11, 2013.

It is hardly news, actually; greedy politicians have walked this land since 1963 or even earlier. But the current Parliament has pushed greed to a new keel with the MPs' unrealistic and misplaced demands for more money.

The best gift that Kenyans can give their country for its jubilee anniversary is to reject the excesses by MPs in the 11th Parliament, the house that has distinguished itself as a symbol of what's gone wrong with our politics over the past 50 years.

Your cooperation in keeping with Article 37 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 will be greatly appreciated.

OFFICER IN-CHARGE
PARLIAMENT POLICE STATION
04 MAY 2013
Signature

Kind Regards,

Boniface Mwangi

CC: Officer Commanding Police Division-Nairobi.

Rec. OFFICER INCHARGE
Date 4/6/13
P. O. Box 45796 NAIROBI

Appendix 15: Code of Conduct for the #OccupyParliament Reloaded

OCCUPY PARLIAMENT CODE OF CONDUCT



1. Stay cool, especially when harassed. You are an ambassador for peace and Occupy Parliament organisers.
2. Comply with the instructions of Occupy Parliament organisers. No one has been paid to attend the demonstration.
3. No alcohol or pre-drinking. No violence. No weapons. No destruction or vandalism. The demonstration is a peaceful event.
4. Do NOT use threatening or abusive words or behave in a threatening manner towards others passing close to the picket line
5. Do NOT damage property, either deliberately or recklessly
6. Beware of *agent provocateurs* - The agent provocateur may be a paid, or unpaid agent enlisted by MPs or their surrogates to incite people, or do things that may cause a breach of the peace-alert the police if you notice suspicious behavior. There will be police present at the demonstration.
7. If police throw teargas or threaten us, don't run. We shall stick together at all times and we shall leave parliament together after we deliver our message. If you are requested by the Occupy Parliament team to sit down, please do.
8. Do NOT prevent, or attempt to prevent, a police officer from carrying out their duties as long as the officer doesn't infringe on your right according to Article 37 of the Constitution of Kenya on the Bill of Rights- **"Every person has the right, peaceably and unarmed, to assemble, to demonstrate, to picket, and to present petitions to public authorities.**

Appendix 16: Extract of the Analysis of Signatures for Okoa Kenya Initiative

EXTRACT OF THE REPORT ON THE ANAYSIS OF THE OKOA KENYA INITIATIVE RECORDS OF SIGNATURES SUBMITTED TO IEBC

	PARTICULARS	RECORDS
A	Total number of Records Captured	1,633,577
A1	Remove records with ID/Passport numbers but no signatures only	85,647
A2	Remove records with signatures but no ID/Passport numbers only	84,542
A3	Remove records with signatures/marks but no names, no IDs/Passport numbers	15
A4	Remove records missing both ID/PP Number and Signatures (Not included in 1 and 2)	243,110
A5	Remove blank records (serialized but with no information)	9,556
A6	Records with names, ID/PP numbers and signatures	1,210,707
B	Data Subjected to Further Analysis for Quality	1,210,707
B1	Remove invalid records e.g. misspelled ID/Passport Numbers that could not be corrected on the face of it.	1,205
B2	Total Records for matching purposes	1,209,502
C	Records Matched Against IEBC Register of Voters	1,209,502
C1	Remove unmatched records/Records not in the IEBC Register	124,601
C2	Total Records Matching the IEBC Register of Voters using ID/PP Number	1,084,901
D	Records Matching the IEBC Register of Voters	1,084,901
D1	Repeated records for further analysis	356,350
D2	Retain distinct records appearing once	728,551
E	Repeated Records for Further Analysis	356,350
E1	Remove duplicates (same name & same ID/PP number) but retain one	110,529
E2	Duplicated ID/PP numbers with different names	245,821
F	Further Analysis of duplicated ID/PP numbers with different names	245,821
F1	Non-unique names records wit same ID/PP Number for further Analysis	163,033
F2	Retain records found to be unique	82,788
G	Match non–unique names with same ID/PP numbers on the IEBC Register of Voters (potential one-on-one duplicates)	163,033
G1	Remove identified duplicates in the 163,033	82,774
G2	Retain one version of the records identified in the 163,033	80,259
H	Total records treated as invalid against the register of voters (A1+A2+A3+A4+A5+B1+C1+E1+G1)	741,979
G	Total records treated as valid registered voters (D2+F2+G2)	891,598

Appendix 17: Press Statement by CORD Leaders of #IEBCMustGo



Kalonzo Musyoka is with John Muasya and 4 others.
April 26, 2016 ·

CORD PRESS STATEMENT

Free, fair and regular elections are the enduring foundations of every democratic state, not just as episodic events, but as an integral part and societal infrastructure of civilized nations. Africa is now replete with nation states that hold regular elections but many are yet to achieve the distinction of being democratic states where human rights, the rule of law and good governance are respected. Where liberty reigns not in doses but as a way of life.

Everything must be done in every nation, including Kenya, to ensure that citizens have the freedom to exercise their political rights based on universal suffrage and in an election that makes every citizen and every vote count.

The jury is not out anymore. It is now an uncontroverted fact that Jubilee did not win the presidential elections in 2013 but were declared victorious through a conspiracy hatched by IEBC, elements in the Supreme Court and the security agencies. The misuse and abuse of technologies, the illegal recognition of a multiplicity registers of voters and the bias of the IEBC (sanctioned by the Supreme Court) was the path followed to handover power to the current administration. The police and NIS played the role of a rogue cop and a robot soldier controlled by the security barons and operatives in the office of the President and the military.

IEBC is now irredeemably tainted with scandals (chickengate and all). The Supreme Court is collapsing under the weight of corruption allegations. And the police with its infamy of lack of independence has no place in the present constitutional arrangement. CORD therefore declares that there is no proper electoral infrastructure for holding a free and fair elections in 2017.

The referendum and OKOA Kenya Bill proposed amendments to the Constitution to address the legal and institutional reforms that would be necessary to resolve controversy in the electoral law, the independence and impartiality of the police, the judiciary and IEBC. Those who are howling at us for not using legal and constitutional means to remove the IEBC forget that CORD was using the mechanism provided by Article 257 of the Constitution of Kenya.

By a stroke of the pen IEBC frustrated a valid constitutional process by falsely claiming that CORD did not attain the threshold of one million signatures of registered voters. We know that Jubilee has been living in mortal fear of a referendum. The administration has used the threat of prosecution of the Chairman of IEBC and his colleagues to secure decisions to be made in their favour by IEBC.

In Iceland a Prime Minister has resigned recently from office not through a vote of no confidence but by hearing the voice of the people when his name appeared in the Panama Papers. Public outrage was enough to trigger his removal from office. And Jubilee cannot lecture us on legality and validity of process. Mumo Matemu and other Commissioners of EACC were simply hounded out of office through intimidation, harassment and arm-twisting.

The whole of last year we urged the Government to embrace dialogue as an appropriate and peaceful way of dealing with all issues of national concern that included insecurity; more revenue to counties; questions around ethnicity and nepotism; land; and elections. All was turned down with arrogance and chest thumping.

Yesterday a lawful attempt by CORD to have a peaceful engagement with IEBC on the basis of Articles 37 and 38 of the Constitution was violently brought down through police brutality. Many of our people were hurt. Jubilee has brought back the imperial presidency and state terror as a means of control and running an autocratic administration. We are not impressed. We condemn the state for going back to the dark days of one party state, social injustice and political oppression. We shall not allow it.

All sovereign power belongs to the people of Kenya. We, the People, are sovereign. If the state makes an attempt to establish or run the government otherwise than in compliance with the Constitution, we, the people, shall resist. If the administration chooses not to listen to us and run government by unconstitutional means, we, the people, shall exercise our sovereign power directly in accordance with the Constitution of Kenya.

On Tuesday 2nd May 2016 at 10.00 am we call upon all Kenyans to assemble at the Anniversary Towers for a date with IEBC. Subsequntly, we shall assemble at the Anniversary Towers every Monday.

The meeting will be replicated in all major towns and centres in the country to tell the IEBC, time is up, time to go. All meetings outside Nairobi will be held at the IEBC offices with emphasis on Nairobi, Mombasa, Garissa, Machakos, Nakuru, Eldoret, Kakamega, Kisii, Busia, Bungoma, Narok, Lodwar, Meru, Isiolo, Nyeri and Kitale. Kenya cannot and will not conduct any other general election under the IEBC as presently constituted.

DATED at NAIROBI

Tuesday, 26th April 2016

Appendix 18: Court Petition opposing the #IEBCMustGo

Ferdinand Ndung'u Waititu & 4 others v Attorney General & 12 others [2016] eKLR

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KENYA AT NAIROBI

CONSTITUTIONAL & HUMAN RIGHTS DIVISION

PETITION NO. 169 OF 2016

BETWEEN

HON. FERDINAND NDUNG'U WAITITU……1ST PETITIONER

HON. MOSES KURIA……2ND PETITIONER

HON. DENNIS WAWERU……3RD PETITIONER

HON. KIMANI ICHUNG'WA……4TH PETITIONER

HON. ALICE NG'ANG'A……5TH PETITIONER

AND

THE HON. ATTORNEY GENERAL……1ST RESPONDENT

ODINGA RAILA AMOLO……2ND RESPONDENT

MUSYOKA KALONZO STEPHEN……3RD RESPONDENT

MASIKA MOSES WETANGULA……4TH RESPONDENT

COALITION FOR REFORMS AND DEMOCRACY……5TH RESPONDENT

ORANGE DEMOCRATIC PARTY……6TH RESPONDENT

WIPER DEMOCRATIC PARTY……7TH RESPONDENT

FORD KENYA PARTY……8TH RESPONDENT

INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE……9TH RESPONDENT

ORENGO JAMES AGGREY BOB……10TH RESPONDENT

AND

THE INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL & BOUNDARIES COMMISSION.....1ST INTERESTED PARTY

THE COMMISSION FOR INTERGRATION & NATIONAL COHESION...2ND INTERESTED PARTY

THE REGISTRAR OF POLITICAL PARTIES…….....….3RD INTERESTED PARTY

RULING

Introduction

1. The Petitioners are all members of the National Assembly. They filed the Petition herein on 28 April 2016 and roped in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Respondents who are party leaders of the 6th, 7th and 8th Respondents respectively. The 5th Respondent is a coalition of opposition parties in parliament mainly consisting of the 6th, 7th and 8th Respondents.

2. Alongside the Petition, the Petitioners also filed a notice of motion seeking various conservatory orders largely injunctive in nature as against the Respondents. As against the 2nd through 8th Respondents, the Petitioners seek orders to restrain the 2nd through 8th Respondents as well as their members, servants and agents from breaking, storming, possibly opening the doors or blocking access to the 1st Interested Party's premises or offices within Kenya. As against the 9th Respondent, the Petitioners seek a positive injunction to compel the 9th Respondent to ensure security, public safety and observance of the law and order by the other Respondents. The conservatory orders as sought are to last until the determination of the petition.

Background facts

3. The Petition was prompted mainly by a press release issued by the 5th Respondent on 26 April 2016 urging the members of the public 'to assemble at the Anniversary Towers with a date with the IEBC' on Tuesday May 2 2016 at 10:00a.m. and thereafter every Monday. The Anniversary Towers, situate at the heart of the Central Business District of Nairobi, happens to house the head offices of the 1st Interested Party.

4. Similar assemblies were also called for by the 5th Respondent to be held at other IEBC offices all over the country. Part of the statement read as follows:

'…yesterday, a lawful attempt by CORD to have a peaceful engagement with IEBC on the basis of Articles 37 and 38 of the Constitution was violently brought down through police brutality. Many of our people were hurt. Jubilee has brought back the imperial presidency and state terror as a means of control and running an autocratic administration. We are not impressed. We condemn the state for going back to the dark days of one party state, social injustice and political oppression. We shall not allow it.

All sovereign power belongs to the people of Kenya. We, the people, are sovereign. If the state makes an attempt to establish or run the government otherwise than in compliance with the Constitution, we, the People, shall resist. If the administration chooses not to listen to us and run the government by unconstitutional means, we, the People, shall exercise our sovereign power directly in accordance with the Constitution of Kenya.

On Tuesday, 2nd May 2016 at 10:00 a.m. we call upon all Kenyans to assemble at the Anniversary Towers for a date with IEBC. Subsequently, we shall assemble at the Anniversary Towers every

***Monday*.**

The meeting will be replicated in all major towns and centres in the country to tell the IEBC, time is up, time to go. All meetings outside Nairobi will be held at the IEBC offices with emphasis on [sic] Nairobi, Mombasa, Garissa, Machakos, Nakuru, Eldoret, Kakamega, Kisii, Busia, Bungoma, Narok, Lowder, Meru, Isiolo, Nyeri and Kitale. Kenya cannot and will not conduct any other general election under the IEBC as presently constituted….'. [Emphasis in the original]

5. Subsequent to the statement, the 2nd 3rd and 4th Respondents have consistently every Monday organized and led members of the public in demonstrations to the Anniversary Towers. Similar demonstrations have also been witnessed in other parts of the country. It is not in controversy that the demonstrations in certain cases have turned extremely violent, indeed leading to loss of not just property but also of lives.

6. Apart from a sole appearance by Counsel in court on 29 April 2016, the 2nd through 8th Respondents have not reacted to or contested the application by the Petitioners. The 1st Interested Party on the hand, appeared through counsel and filed a replying affidavit.

The Petitioners' case

7. The Petitioners' case can be gathered from the Petition as well the various affidavits filed in support of the application. Additionally, the arguments by Mr. Harrison Kinyanjui expounded the Petitioner case.

8. It is the Petitioners' case that the right to demonstrate and picket as enshrined under Article 37 of the Constitution is not absolute.

9. The Petitioners contended that the 2nd through the 8th Respondents together with their supporters and servants are seeking the removal of commissioners of a constitutionally constituted commission, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission which is the 1st Interested Party herein. The removal, it was stated, is to be effected through demonstrations, threats, slurs and epithets all in total violation of the Constitution. The Petitioners contended that the Respondents' acts of intimidation directed at the 1st Interested Party is contrary to both the provisions of Article 91(2)(b) of the Constitution as well as various provisions of the Elections Act (Cap 7) and the Electoral Code of Conduct to which the Respondents have subscribed. According to the Petitioners, in seeking to remove the commissioners of the 1st Interested Party through demonstrations picketing and intimidation, the Respondents are pursuing an unconstitutional cause and such extra legal means ought not to be allowed.

10. The Petitioners also contended that the 2nd through the 8th Respondents and their supporters or members ought not to be allowed to go to the premises of the 1st Interested Party at all in pursuit of their illegal and unconstitutional acts which are also undertaken whilst the said persons are armed with crude weapons.

11. The Petitioners reiterated that the rights guaranteed by Article 37 of the Constitution are not absolute and are limited when there is a threat of breach of peace or where the demonstrators and picketers are armed. Additionally, submitted counsel, the rights under Article 37 are limited where the demonstrators violate the rights of others and when the object of the demonstration and picketing is unconstitutional. The Petitioners submitted that in the instant case there is a constant and clear breach of the peace.

12. Additionally, the Petitioners also contended that the demonstrations as organized are not in compliance with the law and were thus illegal. Further, the Petitioners also contended that the issuance

of threats to the 1st Interested Party's commissioners and staff was also contrary to Sections 92 and 107 of the Penal Code.

13. Finally, the Petitioners relied on the case of **Harold Hodge *vs.* Pamela Talkin**, a decision of the United States Court of Appeal (District of Columbia Circuit, 28 August 2015) to advance the argument that even demonstrations have boundary lines which must not be crossed.

The 1st and 9th Respondents' case

14. Ms. Anne Mwangi urged the 1st and 9th Respondents' case.

15. Counsel stated that the 1st and 9th Respondents were not opposed to the application being allowed. Counsel added that the demonstrators and picketers as well as their organizers had not notified the 9th Respondent of the intended demonstrations or picketing.

The 1st Interested Party's case

16. Mr. Malonza appeared for the 1st Interested Party and simply stated that the 1st Interested Party was neither opposing nor supporting the application by the Petitioners but was simply relying on the Replying Affidavit filed in court by the 1st Interested Party.

17. I pause and hasten to state that I have read the Replying Affidavit sworn by Mr. Mahamud Jabane on behalf of the 1st Interested Party and filed herein on 5 May 2016. The Replying Affidavit does not focus on the application save for its paragraph 24 which acknowledges the right to picket and to demonstrate and then also adds the rider that the same is not absolute. I must however acknowledge that the Replying Affidavit could have been filed with the Petition, rather than the application, in mind.

Discussion and determination

18. It is important to point out that I am currently considering only one issue: Are the Petitioners entitled to the conservatory orders sought in the Notice of Motion dated 28 April 2016"

19. It is also important to point out that even though the Respondents, save the 1st and 9th Respondents, did not participate in the proceedings herein; it is still incumbent upon the applicant to meet the criteria for the grant of any conservatory orders sought. It is for the applicant, even where the application appears unopposed, to establish that he has a prima facie case with a likelihood of success and that if the order is not granted then there is a real danger that the applicant will suffer real prejudice and the petition rendered nugatory.

20. Besides, the court is also to consider, even in the absence of the respondent, whether granting the conservatory orders would promote constitutional values as well as principles and that, additionally, the public interest would be better served with either the issuance or denial of the conservatory orders. These principles were well summarized in the case of **Kenya Small Scale Farmers Forum *vs* Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education & 5 Others HCCP No 399 of 2015 [2015]eKLR** where the Supreme Court case of **Gatirau Peter Munya *vs* Dickson Mwenda Githinji and 2 Others SCK Pet. No 2 of 2013** was cited with approval amongst other decided cases.

21. As well, at this stage of the proceedings, I need not make any definitive or substantive findings of fact or law unless for the very obvious. I must nonetheless consider the totality of the evidence and circumstances of the case.

22. The Petitioners' thematic argument is that the Respondents are engaging in an unconstitutional and illegal demonstration much to the chagrin of the Petitioners and also to the infuriation of the public generally. The Petitioners contend that the right to assemble, demonstrate and picket as guaranteed under Article 37 is not absolute and where it is shown that it has been justifiably limited or ought to be limited, the court has to intervene and stop the enjoyment of such rights. In this regard, it was contended that the 2nd through the 8th Respondents seek to interfere with the workings and operations of an independent commission in the 1st Interested Party. Additionally, the said Respondents seek to remove holders of constitutional offices; to wit, the Commissioners of the 1st Interested Party, through unconstitutional means.

23. For all these, the Petitioners urged the court to stop what they call 'the unruly' demonstrations organized by the 2nd 3rd and 4th Respondents.

24. The evidence thus far availed by the Petitioners appear to support the position that the 2nd through the 8th Respondents have organized demonstrations with the neutral target being the 1st Interested Party. There is also evidence that members of the public have been involved in the demonstrations first called by the 5th Respondent. That position cannot be disputed.

Article 37

25. The constitutional index referred to by the Petitioners to lay a foundational basis for their case is Article 37. Article 37 of the Constitution guarantees the right to assemble, demonstrate, picket and petition in the following terms:

"37. Every person has the right peaceably and unarmed to assemble, to demonstrate, to picket, and to present petitions to public authorities"

26. There is no doubt that the right to assemble, demonstrate, picket and petition as enshrined under Article 37 is not absolute. It is not one of the Article 25 rights. It may be limited by law. In the paragraphs that follow, I will shortly outline the acceptable and known limitations after a brief review of the extent of the right under Article 37.

27. Article 37, besides guaranteeing the right to assemble, demonstrate, picket and petition is itself an imperative rights' article. Its import is in the fact that it brings together other rights critical in any free democratic society. Article 37 inherently invites the freedom of expression and opinion as well as the freedom of association. In the course of their demonstrations, persons are bound to assemble and associate and likewise, in the course of picketing the picketers are simply bound to express themselves, their common views and opinions.

28. It may very well be that the opinion or view is an unpopular one with others but yet again, freedom of assembly merely provides an alternative form of participating in democracy to those who may be disenchanted and uninspired in one way or another. A minority may, for example, feel disappointed by their own failure to convince the majority. The alternative avenue for expressing their view would simply then be through demonstrations and picketing, even though the minority may still not have their way.

29. Demonstrations and picketing, in short, provide an avenue for those who have strong feelings about particular issues to express those feelings. Such expressions may take the form of motionless protests, public meetings, protest marches, press-conferences, sit-ins and even counter-demonstrations.

30. The actions currently complained of by the Petitioners have largely taken the forms noted above. The

Petitioners however, whilst acknowledging that the Constitution protects persons who seek to express their views as provided under Article 37, insist that Article 37 is not absolute.

31. I would agree. The rights under Article 37 are not absolute.

32. Foremost, the Constitution itself has provided claw-backs. Demonstrators, picketers and petition-presenters must do so "*peaceably and unarmed*". Assemblies, picketing and demonstrations which are not peaceful are excluded from the protection of the Article. If they consist of violence to or intimidation of the public then the assembly or the demonstration ought to be stopped. Likewise participants in assemblies, picketers and demonstrators must not be armed. Weapons as well as defensive or protective contraptions which breed or stimulate aggression ought not to be possessed by the demonstrators or picketers.

33. The spirit of the constitutional claw-back is to ensure that the rights of others within the vicinity of the place of assembly or of the demonstrators or picketers are also not interfered with. Thus in the South African case of **Fourways Mall(Pty) Ltd *vs* South African Commercial Catering [1999] 3 SA 752** , it was held that the Constitution as well as statute law does not protect picketers who proceed in a manner that interferes with the rights of the public or assault others. The court, in interpreting Section 17 of the South Africa's Constitution which is *pari materia* with our Constitution at Article 37, was clear that the Constitution does not encourage a volatile environment in a protest march.

34. It certainly would be an antithesis of constitutional values and principles if picketers and demonstrators are allowed to participate in non-peaceful demonstrations or pickets whilst armed with implements set to stimulate aggression. It is therefore no surprise when the Constitution itself limits the right to assemble, to demonstrate, to picket and to present petitions.

35. My preliminary view is also that the Public Order Act (Cap 56) contrary to popular views does not limit the right to demonstrate or to assemble. It instead seeks to preserve and protect the precious right to public assembly and public protest marches or processions by regulating the same with a view to ensuring order. Part III of the Public Order Act seeks to regulate public meetings and processions by providing for the need to notify the police service and also the power of the police service to stop or prevent a public meeting where appropriate and where it is obvious it will not meet the constitutional objectives. Under the same Part III, the Public Order Act also prohibits the possession of "offensive weapons" at public meetings and processions. In my view, it is a small price to pay to ensure that the assembly or demonstration is peaceful by involving a body enjoined to ensure security, safety and order. Both the participants as well as the non-participants are assured of protection through involvement of security officials.

36. It is for this reason, that I have no doubt that since the promulgation of the Constitution 2010 which in certain aspects saw a break from the past, even with the existence of the Public Order Act as amended in 2014, the people of Kenya have not been deterred from public assembly and protest. Rather in the true and now more constitutional democracy, the regularity of protest marches and public assemblies has increased. From school children to working professionals, as distinct from labourers, the protest marches continue to march on.

37. It is however not atypical for the protest processions or marches to turn unruly violent and riotous. However, that does not implicate the right to assemble, demonstrate and picket for the basic reason that the Constitution is supreme. The right to picket and to demonstrate which is an essential feature of any democratic society ought to be protected especially where it is shown that the marches often start as peaceful ones. The focus should not be on the fact that they turn violent but rather on how to ensure that

they do not turn violent.

38. As I have already pointed out, public demonstrations and assemblies are regulated in a way by the Public Order Act. The organizers also ought to seek to achieve peaceful demonstrations. The police service has an obligation to assure the public of peace and order. The public in these respects include both the participants in the demonstrations and picketing as well as the non-participants. There is a positive obligation on the State to facilitate and protect a peaceful exercise of the Article 37 rights.

39. Certain basic rules ought to be observed to help achieve order and peace.

40. My preliminary view is that, public assemblies and demonstrations ought not to take place in private property. The place to express the opinion through marches, sit-ins or picketing must be appropriately chosen by the organizers. The time chosen for the picketing, assembly or demonstration ought to be reasonable as well. There is no doubt that statute may occasionally draw picket-lines and designate no go zones for demonstrators and picketers but generally, public streets and areas ought to be open to the public for such demonstrations or picketing and assemblies.

41. In the context of the foregoing, what would be the position in the instant case"

42. The Petitioners' chief complaint is the intended end result of the demonstrations as organized by the 5th Respondent. The result sought to be achieved it is stated the removal of the commissioners of the 1st Interested Party.

43. I have no doubt even at this very interlocutory stage of the proceedings, that Article 251 of the Constitution is clear on the mode and medium of removing any commissioner with any of the independent commissions. The 1st Interested party is an independent commission. Removal of any of its commissioners ought to strictly be done within the confines of the Constitution and the law. That is what constitutionalism is all about.

44. A question will then naturally arise whether the constitutional provisions for the removal of the 1st Interested Party's commissioners prevents the 2nd through the 8th Respondents either individually or collectively with others from expressing their opinions even if they appear not to put up with constitutional provisions" That is a question to be answered at the hearing of the substantive petition herein. At the moment, it will suffice to be noted that the 2nd through the 8th Respondents are within their rights to picket for the removal of the commissioners of the 1st Interested Party as Article 37 does not limit the picket content.

45. The Constitution allows every person to picket, demonstrate, assemble and present petitions. Picketing and demonstrations themselves invite the right to express opinions. The opinions may be controversial. The opinions may appear contrary to the law. The opinions may not find favour with others. Yet the Constitution anticipates and expects that such unpopular opinions howsoever expressed be respected. Even if they invite disagreements and counter-demonstrations. The Constitution thus far declines to stifle even the most unpopular view unless it is intended to incite persons to violence, propagates hate speech, is propaganda for war or advocates hatred through ethnic incitement: See **Article 33(2)** of the Constitution.

46. In the instant case, the 5th Respondent called upon the public to demonstrate and express their dissatisfaction with the 1st Interested Party. I did not hear the Petitioners accuse the Respondents of incitement to violence or hate speech or war propaganda. If such accusations were made then there was not clear enough evidence to help establish a prima facie case. I am not convinced with the argument by

the Petitioners that in the Respondents expressing a view that elections cannot be held under the auspices of the 1st Interested Party, such expression constitutes an illegality with the result that the demonstrations are also criminalized. Such a view may be wrong but at this stage of the proceedings, I would state that it ought to be tolerated as wrong views and misguided opinions do not necessarily make protest marches and picketing illegal and unprotected.

47. It brings me to the contention by the Petitioners that the 2nd through the 8th Respondents are causing inconvenience to the general public and to the 1st Interested Party in particular.

48. With regard to the 1st Interested Party, the Replying Affidavit filed on its behalf by one of its managers does not in any way claim or allege any inconveniences and I would leave it at that. With regard to the general public the Petitioners lamented over the blockade occasioned to public roads around and near the 1st Interested Party's offices.

49. I must first point out that protest marches and picketing ordinarily ought to take place on public streets and not private roads or offices.

50. Secondly, the rule of the thumb is that the court ought not to engage in drawing picket lines for picketers and demonstrators except only in extreme and exceptional circumstances and where it is absolutely necessary. Thus in **Brown *vs.* Louisiana 383 US 131(1966)** the court held, that a peaceful protest in a library was protected under the right to demonstrate and picket. Likewise in **Boos *vs.* Barry 485 US 312 (1988),** the court found a statute forbidding demonstrations and picketing within 500 feet of a foreign governments' embassy unconstitutional.

51. At the moment, I am not convinced that the Petitioners have shown exceptional circumstances to warrant an intervention by the court. Even though I tend to agree with the Petitioners that there may be inconvenience occasioned, the matter would require a deeper interrogation than that expected to be done at this interlocutory stage. In any event, the evidence is currently scanty and much reliance has been placed on newspaper cuttings and which cuttings the court is always reticent in approving of: See Section 35 of the Evidence Act (Cap 80) and also the case of **Wamwere *vs* Attorney General [2004] 1 KLR 166.**

52. The Petitioners however stand in better stead when they urge that the 9th Respondent be ordered to ensure the security, public safety and observance of the law. There is evidence before me that the protest marches and demonstrations organized by the 5th Respondent always commence peacefully but later become violent and riotous: see the affidavits sworn in support of the motion by the Petitioners.

53. I hold the view that the 9th Respondent pursuant to Article 245 of the Constitution and section 24 of the National Police Service Act (Cap 84), is obligated to ensure that law and order is maintained and additionally that there is a preservation of peace. Besides, I also hold the view that a cursory reading of Article 244(c) of the Constitution, reveals that the 9th Respondent is duty bound to observe comply with and promote constitutional standards of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

54. When therefore it is alleged that the 9th Respondent has abdicated its duty and evidence points to lack of observance of law and order, then it is plausible to conclude that a party has made out a case prima facie with a likelihood of success. It is not the stopping or breaking up of the protest marches and demonstrations which should help in maintaining law and order but rather the involvement of the 9th Respondent from the get go that may assist in the maintenance of law and order. It is then that the picket or demonstration lines may be drawn.

55. In these respects consequently, it would be appropriate for the court to intervene, not to draw any picket lines but to ensure that the 9th Respondent is not derelict in the performance of his duties. It came therefore as no surprise when the said Respondent decided not to contest the application.

56. In the result, I conclude that the Petitioners have not made out a prima facie case with a likelihood of success as far as the 1st to 8th Respondents are concerned. However, with regard to the 9th Respondent a prima facie case has been made out especially when the Petitioners complain that crime has been committed. I find that constitutional values, Kenya being a constitutional democracy, would not favour a grant of the conservatory orders which prohibit the right to picket, to demonstrate and to assemble without a deeper and thorough interrogation of the allegations made in the Petition. Let the 9th Respondent exercise his constitutional compulsion and maintain law and order.

Disposition

57. While I decline to draw any picket or demonstration lines for the Petitioners as well as the Respondents, in the form of prohibiting demonstrations protest marches and assemblies in particular places, I allow the application in terms only of prayer number 7 and specifically in the following terms only:

a. That pending the hearing and determination of the Petition herein, a conservatory order do issue by way of a mandatory order compelling the 9th Respondent to ensure security, public safety and observance of the law and order by the 2nd 3rd and 4th Respondents and such of the members of the 5th 6th 7th and 8th Respondents affiliated with them, whenever and wherever the said Respondents and their members picket or demonstrate pursuant to any notification given to the 9th Respondent under the Public Order Act.

58. The other prayers in the application filed on 26 April 2016 are hereby dismissed but with no order as to costs.

Dated, signed and delivered at Nairobi this 6th day June, 2016

J.L.ONGUTO

JUDGE

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Appendix 19: Turn-It-In Similarity Index

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