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Why Not Ask The Children? Understanding Young People's
Perspectives on Ethnicity and Politics in Kenya

by

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<u>ABSTRACT</u>

There is an extensive literature on the relationship between ethnicity and politics in Africa. Indeed some have stated that ethnicity is to African states as nationalism was to Europe. It is (or should be) the foundation of the modern African nation state. Despite this large body of work, not a large amount draws on the attitudes and opinions of young people, especially those under the age of 18, to make their arguments. The PhD therefore proposes that it is essential to consider the views of young people with regard to their ethnic identity and its relationship to politics in Kenya in order to better understand the role that ethnicity plays in Kenyan politics; more so how negative ethnic politics is reproduced. Throughout the thesis I take the approach that young people are **not 'citizens in training' or 'future citizens' but active current citizens.**

The PhD employs the **work of Pierre Bourdieu and his "trilogy" of habitus,** field and capital as its theoretical frame. His work provides us with a way to not only reconcile debates on ethnicity, but also to better understand political attitudes in young people. Looking at this process through the lens of young people between the ages of 14 and 17 enables us to examine the earliest stages of political identity formation. The second key influence is the works of a number of Africanist scholars who emphasize the importance of ethnicity in African society and politics as well as the importance of looking at citizens day to day realities rather than a focus on elites in order to better understand the dynamics of African politics.

The anticipated contribution of the PhD is three fold. First, in utilizing an under-researched population in the study of ethnic politics in order to provide an examination of their demotic discourses. Second the thesis utilizes **Bourdieu's conceptual framework of habitus, field and capital in order to** further our theoretical understanding of the reproduction of ethnic politics in Kenya. The third contribution is methodological by adopting the peer-led research framework to the study of ethnic politics in order to investigate how the peer research model can contribute to the quality of data and the development of participatory models of political engagement for young people.

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Fiona Wairimu Ngarachu

declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

Why not ask the children? Understanding their perspectives on ethnicity and politics in Kenya

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;

5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

7. Parts of this work have been published as:

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Signed: ....

Date: ....

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I dedicate this thesis to all the young people in Kenya that I had the pleasure and the privilege of interviewing. You continue to by my inspiration as I embark on my academic career.

Definitions and Abbreviations

Mwalimu – Teacher

Sheng – Urban slang a mixture of English, Swahili and local languages

ICC – International Criminal Court

Majimbo – Federalism

Matatu – Minibus commonly used for transport in Kenya

IDP – Internally Displaced Person

Ksh – Kenya Shillings

CORD – Coalition for the Restoration of Democracy political party

FGD – Focus group discussion

AFGD – Adult focus group discussion

PFGD – Peer focus group discussion

Nyayo – Footsteps

MP – Member of Parliament

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter will briefly introduce the topic of the thesis and set out the research design which will focus on the research objectives, and the research questions. The chapter will highlight the key arguments and approaches to be taken. In addition, there will be a clarification of the key terms that will be used throughout the thesis. Ethnicity and young people are two key terms that will be looked at. For the former, the term tribalism will be used as it more accurately reflects how citizens in Kenya actually understand the term. For the latter, the thesis will take the approach of youth as a socially constructed category and will use the term children and young people interchangeably throughout the thesis to refer to the participants and their age group of 14-17 years. The chapter will conclude by setting out the plan for the thesis which will include the chapter outlines.

1.1   Thesis summary

There is an extensive literature on the relationship between ethnicity and politics in Africa. Indeed some have stated that ethnicity is to African states as nationalism was to Europe. It is (or should be) the foundation of the modern African nation state. Despite this large body of work, not a large amount draws on the attitudes and opinions of young people, especially those under the age of 18, to make their arguments. The PhD therefore proposes that it is essential to consider the views of young people with regard to in order to understand how negative ethnic politics, more so in the form of political tribalism (whose features include discrimination among communities) is reproduced. One of the questions that will guide the discussion is; are young people reproducing the dominant political and ethnic discourses or are they challenging them in their own unique ways? Throughout the thesis I take the approach that young **people are not 'citizens in training' or 'future citizens' but active current** citizens. In this way I situate myself in the literature that explores youth narratives in the dynamic political contexts of Africa.

The project is influenced by the **work of Pierre Bourdieu and his "trilogy"** of habitus, field and capital and how these have been interpreted in various ways within the academic literature. The interpretation of his seminal works

provides us with a way to not only reconcile debates on ethnicity, but also to better understand political attitudes in young people by introducing ideas of political habitus to explain how attitudes and behavior in the political system can be structured from the top by elites but reproduced and reinforced and restructured at the bottom by citizens. Looking at this process through the lens of young people between the ages of 14 and 17 enables us to examine the earliest stages of political identity formation. The second key influence is the works a number of Africanist scholars who emphasize the importance of ethnicity to African society and politics plus the importance of looking at citizens day to day realities rather than a focus on elites in order to better understand the dynamics of African politics. The research objectives that will guide the study are;

1. **To provide a rich understanding of young people's attitudes towards** ethnicity and politics in Kenya.
   a. Analyse how their attitudes are differentiated by their gender and their location within the different regions in Kenya
   b. Analyse the relationship between their ethnicity and their political attitudes
2. Compare their attitudes to prevailing political and ethnic discourses in order to investigate in what ways they are challenging and/or reproducing them.

1.2   Key arguments

The purpose of the PhD is to explain, through the lens of young people and habitus the nature of Kenyan ethnic politics. The key argument that will be **highlighted is that ethnicity is an enduring "issue" in Kenyan politics because** young people acquire enduring negative attitudes towards ethnic diversity at early ages which are self-reinforcing. This limits the exploration of how ethnic diversity can be harnessed for political and social development by encouraging a larger sense of political community.

The thesis will employ **Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field and capital as** mentioned above to illustrate this enduring nature and note how ethnic habitus **interacts with the field of politics to reinforce young people's attitudes and** socialization in the political and ethnic system. In addition it will show how

their attitudes are differentiated by gender and different regional locations within the country. The anticipated contribution of the PhD therefore is three fold. First in investigating an under-researched population in the study of ethnic politics – that is young people under the age of 18 and looking at their construction of ethnicity **and politics. Second the thesis utilizes Bourdieu's** conceptual framework of habitus, field and capital in order to further our understanding of the reproduction of ethnic politics in Kenya. Finally, the **thesis provides a detailed examination of the 'demotic' political and ethnic** discourse of young people. In addition to these key contributions, a reflexive approach that will be adopted throughout the thesis will enable reflection on the research approach, specifically how a peer research model can contribute to the quality of data and the development of participatory models of political engagement for young people. The arguments that will be presented in the thesis are a result of a triangulation of three data sources focus groups, interviews and a narrative exercise. While they were analysed distinctly, they shared common themes and served to reinforce the findings that emerged overall.

1.3   Research problem and background

Ethnicity and especially negative aspects of ethnicity are an enduring aspect of Kenyan politics. The cycle of negative ethnic politics includes the participation of both elites at the top level of politics and the citizens who are influenced by them and in their turn influence the process. In trying to understand the phenomenon of ethnic politics, a large amount of research has focused on the elite level involvement. A growing body of work is focusing on the role of citizens in the reproduction of ethnic politics. However, not a large amount of this has focused on the role of young people under the age of 18, who are not yet formally engaged in politics through voting but are actively involved through debates with their families and peers. The study adopts a qualitative approach that is predicated on the participation of the respondents in the research process by acting as peer researchers. This is in order to explore two issues: how do they conceptualize their ethnic identity and; what do young people think of Kenyan politics, particularly in relation to their ethnic identities and the continuation of tribalism within the political system? The PhD will therefore seek to inform the study of ethnic politics by connecting it with youth

research in order to incorporate the thoughts, feelings and aspirations of young people under the age of 18. As the literature suggests, **"an analysis of politicized ethnicity faces two questions: how and why are ethnic identities formed and sustained? And how and why does a particular line of ethnic cleavage acquire and retain political significance."**(Lynch, 2011a: 24) My thesis focuses on how the first question directly involves the second. I seek to understand how young people conceptualize their ethnic identities, and how these come to acquire a political significance. This will contribute to an understanding of how **young people construct their "political logic" within their** differing tribes (Chabal and Daloz, 2006: 136) and in addition reproduce the negative aspects of ethnic politics. **While in some aspects this 'logic' is** rational, it is also comprised of affective dimensions. Indeed, one cannot strip ethnicity of affect, even though the affective dimension is one political scientists are uncomfortable with. For example, as Posner notes, **[...] "depth of feeling is not an adequate explanation for why one ethnic identity becomes salient rather than another."**(Posner, 2005: 13-14) As will be discussed in the following chapters, ethnicity becomes more relevant and indeed instrumental, the closer it is to elections in Africa.(Eifert et al., 2010) What are sometimes left out of this explanation however, are the emotions that surround this instrumentality. Indeed it is these emotions are manipulated by elites and play a role in the reaction of individuals. As Lynch has indic**ated; "Rational** calculations of loss and gain may be intertwined, reinforced, and come into conflict with more economically irrational feelings of affection, resentment, **anger and hatred."**(2011a: 26)

1.3.1 Research questions

1. How do young people perceive their ethnic identity in relation to politics?
   a. **What are the narratives of young people's ethnic identities?**
   b. **What are the narratives of young people's political identities?**
   c. What is the relationship between their ethnic identity and politics in Kenya?
2. **How are young people's political and ethnic attitudes differentiated by** gender and/or their regional location?

3. Are young people challenging the dominant political and ethnic discourses in Kenya or reproducing them?

1.3.2   Methodology

The project uses urban and rural schools in Kenya as access points to young people. It engages young people as researchers through a peer-led research model which has been a growing trend towards young people's participation in the research process.(Fleming, 2010, Alderson and Morrow, 2004, Alderson, 2001, McLaughlin, 2005, Christensen and James, 2000, Macpherson, 2008). As part of this project, school children (between the ages of 14 and 17) were trained as co-researchers to conduct focus group discussions and interviews with their peers who will be between the ages of 14 and 17. In addition to this, they provided important feedback on the preliminary research design through their ideas on the questions to be asked and the language used in interviews. This gave the young people a level of involvement in the research process as well as enabling a level of insider knowledge that assisted in the data collection. Two focus groups were conducted in each research site), one with the adult researcher and the other with the peer researcher in addition to two in-depth interviews, one from each focus group. This was to enable a comparison to be done between the two which would provide an insight into the method through reflection and systematic data comparison between the two sets of data. This approach was seen as the best way to answer the research question in order to truly understand young people's attitudes from their perspective. A research diary was kept during the research and these field notes have been highlighted as an important tool(Lukalo, 2010) that will be used throughout the thesis to provide additional context, and an extract from the field diary is provided in the appendix H on ethical concerns.

1.4   Definitions

1.4.1   Who are the children?

The study of youth and the transition from childhood to adulthood is a much investigated subject in anthropology, sociology, biology, politics and psychology (James and Prout, 1997, Kagwanja, 2006, Bucholtz, 2002, Abbink

and Kessel, 2005, Alderson, 2001) In previous studies the concern with studying children and young people was on understanding transitions to adulthood, child protection and educational development including their rights **as well as looking at "deviance" and "problem" children. These studies took a** static view to children and youth, analysing them as a fixed, unchanging category that was defined primarily through biological age.

With growing empirical work in this field, this has changed with the **body of literature that is referred to as the "new social studies of childhood."** (James et al., 1998, Holloway and Valentine, 2000, Corsaro, 1997, de Bois-Reymond et al., 2001, Bucholtz, 2002) This looked at children and young people as a socially constructed category whose boundaries are defined by the various societies and cultures that they inhabit in the same way as other categories such as class and ethnicity.(Honwana and Boeck, 2005, Durham, 2007, Alderson, 1995, Morrow and Richards, 1996) Over and above this was the turn towards youth agency. Previously, young people had been viewed as **"not yet finished human beings" and in the political context, as "citizens in waiting."** (Bucholtz, 2002: 528, James et al., 1998, Holloway and Valentine, 2000, Ansell, 2005) The new social studies literature is not without its critics with some such as Ansell,(2005) questioning its universal applicability and bias towards childhood in the western hemisphere as well as Ryan(2008) stating that it was time to move on from it. However, it still provides us with the essential factor which underlies the PhD project; that young people, even those under the age of 18 are active social and political agents whose opinions should be taken into consideration. Over and above having their views taken into consideration, young people have the capacity and ability to be engaged as co-researchers, which was the research strategy that was adopted for the research project. There are a number of ethical and logistical challenges that will be discussed below.

As will be explained in chapter three of the thesis, youth is an ambiguous and often contested category. **"The relationship between social age and biological age is very complex […] youth and age** are not self-evident data but are socially constructed, in the struggle between the young and the **old."**(Bourdieu, 1993: 95) Trying to understand the categories of children and youth by defining them is a complicated exercise. According to the UN, those under the age of 18 are classified as children, but those on the upper limits of that scale may not like to be referred to as children. Indeed they may be quite

offended. To add ambiguity there are overlapping categories such as teenager, adolescent and young adult as indicated in the table below. Ansell(2005: 5) **argues for a more fluid interpretation that "serves to disrupt** the adult-**child conceptual binary."**

Table 1[1]

Child (0-17)								
			Adolescent (10-19)					
				Teenager (13-19)		Young Adult (20-24)		
						Youth (15-24)		

In the Kenyan context, children are defined as those under the age of 18, and youth as those between the ages of 18 and 35. According to the United Nations, youth are those aged between 14 and 25 with children also being defined as those under the age of 18, which is a common age of majority in most countries around the world where one is legally considered an adult. In the context of this particular project, 14-17 year olds were interviewed. I refer to them as young people throughout the project though title of the thesis refers to them as both children and young people. This was deliberate in order to highlight the ambiguity that teenagers in this particular category face. They are not quite children, and not yet adults. This is more obvious in the African context. Many of those in this age group, especially boys have gone through traditional rites of passage such as circumcision. They are traditionally considered adults and are supposed to act in such a way, but in other legal and social arenas such as education, they are still children.

1.4.2 Ethnicity

Ethnicity is a multi-faceted concept and is used in different ways depending on the space, time and con**text. It is an "ambiguous category which is at once** descriptive, analytical and evaluative-**normative."**(Lentz and Nugent, 2000: 2) To make matters even more complicated**, it has also been defined as a "social construct" which needs to be understood within specific "historical contexts."**(Alubo, 2004: 137) If we are to look at the temporal dimension in

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[1] Adapted from Nicola Ansell (2005), Children, Youth and Development (Routledge: New York) p4

defining ethnicity, an example can be given of the use of the term in America. In that geographical context, it is associated with racial considerations. For instance, Phinney (1992), who came up with the MEIM (Multigroup Ethnic Indicator measure) included Asian, Black and African American in her questions on identity. On the other side of the ocean, ethnicity has the connotation of shared cultural and tribal identities. It is less about race and more about what can be described as clan relationships for example if we are looking at ethnicity in Africa. Nevertheless it is perhaps important to differentiate **between race and ethnic identity as "they draw upon different discourses and historical narratives and conceive of "the other" in divergent ways." Ethnicity is different from race as race emphasizes "physical or socio**-political similarity over cultural or historical connection."(Crawford, 2002: 536, Lynch, 2011a: 12)

The usage of the term ethnicity itself is relatively new and in some cases distinctly academic, having appeared in the Oxford English dictionary in the **early 50's but whose origins can be traced back to the Greek term 'ethnos' which according to Antony Smith, "w**as used in reference to band, tribe, race, a **people or a swarm."**(1996-5) In social research the term has increased in usage over the last few decades and with this has come increasing contestation with no clear singular definition or theory of what ethnic groups are and how they form. (Baumann, September 2004, Jones, 1997:56, Isajiw, 1974:111, Berman et al., 2010: 2, Wamwere, 2003) Common elements that have been used in **defining ethnicity have been "a myth of a common ancestry" and "one or more elements of a common culture."** (Hutchinson and Smith, 1996-7) **"social and psych**ological phenomenon."(Jones, 1997)

As has been evidenced, defining the term ethnicity with its attendant variations of ethnic group, ethnocentrism and ethnic identity among others can at times be an exercise in futility. A question that can also be raised if we take the above categories is, are these qualities also shared by the entity that we call a nation. So then, what is the difference between an ethnic group and other groupings that may share some common elements? Depending on which particular approach you take, one can be left with any number of definitions. One of the solutions to this dilemma is to define ethnicity depending on whichever theoretical or empirical stance you are taking. Sian, (1997:56) in her study of ethnicity in Archaelogy, delineated four factors that influence the definition of ethnicity within a study:

1. The impact of different theoretical and disciplinary traditions
2. The particular aspects of ethnicity being researched
3. The region in the world where research is being conducted
4. The particular group that is the subject of research

If I am to apply these factors to my research, then the theoretical tradition would be constructivism and habitus, which would define ethnicity as a social construct and social reality (Munene 2009) as well as understanding ethnicity from below, to take into account peoples understanding of it. The particular aspect of ethnicity being studied is its construction and use as a political resource. The region in the world is Africa where ethnicity is distinguished **from religion, class and race thought all these make up a part of a person's "aspectival" identity (Tully 1994: 45, Parekh 2008, 8) and conceptualized as a** negative force of tribalism.[2] (Wamwere, 2003, Ekeh, 1990, Udogu, 2001) In addi**tion, discourses of "us versus them" serve to define it from a position of "the other". The final** factor is the group under study which is young people under the age of 18. Their understanding of ethnicity and its construction and negotiation is one of the purposes of the research. Berman (2010, 2) summarizes the complexity in defining the term and the way this can be taken forward below;

> Studying ethnicity in Africa involves the analysis of complex causality in which no single set of factors is determinant or can be analysed in isolation from others. The role of theory in this context cannot be to define universal relationships at so high a level of abstraction that they are devoid of empirical content, but rather to provide a conceptual toolkit that can identify common factors and the relationships between them to explain not only the similarities of cases, but also their contingent and idiosyncratic differences. (Berman, 2010: 2)

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[2] Ekeh analyses ethnicity from the view of an "African sociologist" and has noted how tribalism was used in everyday speech and the negative associations with attachments to particular groups and including patronage, corruption and conflict. What is interesting is that from the pilot study conducted, I termed ethnicity as politics, which the young people immediately associated negatively with one noting that they had moved beyond tribalism into a national identity.

For the purposes of this research, the term tribe will be used interchangeably with community and ethnicity in order to reflect its usage in the academic field as well as in local discourse.

1.5   Research context

The research took place during an election year. Before the pilot study, which took place in 2012, the national elections under the new 2010 constitution were supposed to take place in December of that year. This was changed to March of 2013. So from 2012 the country had been in a heightened state of election fever. The main study was conducted from April to August 2013, just after the March 2013 elections. In addition to the research taking place during an election period, it also took place during two teachers strikes (Kahiga, 2013) both during the pilot study and the main study. The main reason behind the strikes was unfulfilled promises by the government to increase salaries. In 2013, there had also been cases of insecurity, especially in the western region but also in the North of Kenya following the March 2013 elections. Some of these were purported to be revenge killings for voters who had not supported particular candidates. Also, while the March elections had been free and fair they had been issues with the electronic tallying system which failed to operate as was intended. Indeed, in the middle of the voter tallying it failed completely and the tallying still had to be done manually. This is what occasioned a dispute from the opposition coalition party, led by Raila Odinga who claimed that they had won. The issue went to the Supreme Court which decided in **Uhuru Kenyatta's favour, a decision which Raila accepted.**

1.5.1   Fieldwork sites

The fieldwork was conducted in nine secondary schools in Kenya, both public and private. The schools were selected through the advice of a key informant with a number of contacts with schools in the four regions. The schools served as sites where it would be easy to access young people between the ages of 14 and 17 but were not themselves the subject of the research study. Four of the schools were in the Nairobi region, two of the schools were in the central, one of the schools was in Mombasa and two of the schools were in the western region. Two focus group discussions and two in depth interviews were

conducted in each school. As much as possible, the discussions were held over lunch hour and after school in order to avoid academic disruption. In one of the Nairobi schools, however, a history teacher allowed his class to be taken up by the focus group discussions. The time factor as well noise factor was observed as a significant challenge during the pilot study.

1.5.2   Levels of analysis

There are two specific categories of gender and location (the four different regions that were the research sites namely Nairobi, Western, Coast and Central) that are of interest in the analysis of the data that will be collected. **The approach that will be taken in analysing these is a "synchronic analysis" as** Giddens (1979) put it where the data that will be presented will be a snapshot **of young people's attitudes towards their e**thnicity and politics as opposed to **"diachronic analysis" which would look at processes or rather the how that** their attitudes come to be and change over time. While it may be argued that this approach would be static, the purpose of the project is in the first instance to understand what their attitudes are and synchronic analysis be the most appropriate for a qualitative methodology.   In future research, there is the possibility of analysing these over a period of time, especially using a survey methodology that would be able to show changes in attitudes and perceptions over time.

1.6   Chapter outlines

Chapter 2: Conceptual framework: habitus-field-capital
This chapter sets out the theoretical framework that will guide the thesis. It first examines the evolution of the main theories in the study of ethnicity: primordialism; instrumentalism; and constructivism. In so doing, the chapter provides an understanding of the historical evolution of the theories in addition to looking at the various criticisms that have been levelled at them. By doing this I investigate one potential alternative that has emerged in **conceptualizing ethnicity which is an adaptation of Pierre Bourdieu's   concepts** of habitus, field and capital. Habitus will be understood as internalized dispositions which when combined with various forms of capital (economic,

cultural, social) interact with a variety of fields in order to produce particular behaviours or practice. As Bourdieu offers in his model, (habitus*capital) + field= practice. In the context of this project, practice will be understood as **young people's political attitudes. The Bourdieusian framework was adopted** because it provides us with a way to conceptualize the construction of ethnicity specifically in young people in order to understand how it can be viewed as both a social construct and an inherent part of their being. It does this by reconciling the theoretical gaps in primordialism, instrumentalism and constructivism by accounting for ethnicity as both a socially constructed category that can be rationally accounted for as constructivism and instrumentalism would advocate at the same time as an inherent part of a **person's social identity that is transferable across various contexts as** primordialism would have us believe. It also provides us with a framework to analyse the link between ethnic identity and politics by understanding the reproduction of norms, values and ideals within individuals which are then activated when they come into contact with the political field.

Chapter 3: Mapping the field: Understanding politics in Kenya.

This chapter will be descriptive and seeks to explore the dominant discourses surrounding the field of Kenyan politics. This is in order to map the field of Kenyan politics. Though it is not possible to cover the length and breadth of Kenyan politics in this chapter, I will aim to set out the relevant context for the thesis. This will be done through a focus on the election period(s) as **"watershed moments" that** contribute to our understanding of key features of Kenyan politics; for instance the politicisation of ethnicity. This will also include an analysis of the involvement of youth in politics which will show that while young people of voting age have been the focus of numerous debates, this is not the case with the youth who cannot vote. Additionally, the youth in Africa have been conceptualized as a dichotomy that is either a positive or negative force, with issues such as generational tension coming to the fore. The argument that will be presented is that this dichotomy pre-judges our assumptions about the youth and the stance that should be adopted is one that recognizes their diversity and seeks to understand their dynamism. Moreover, brief case studies of the 4 regions of interest to the thesis, Nairobi, Coast, Central and Western will be presented in order to have an understanding of the micro political discourses in those areas. The purpose of

this is to identify the key issues and arenas of power in the field of Kenyan politics. This will be in order to help us understand how their ethnic habitus interacts with the field of politics to produce their attitudes towards the political system.

Chapter 4: Involving young people in research; theories, challenges and opportunities

The chapter will introduce the methodology that was utilised to collect and analyse the data. This is a qualitative and participatory research strategy utilizing focus groups, interviews and narratives as data collection tools. The chapter will explore why these were the most appropriate tools to be used for the data collection and will also highlight how the questions that were asked were developed. The participatory element involves the use of the peer-led research methodology. In addition, the chapter will present a critical reflection of the peer-led research method. The chapter will begin by analysing the **literature on children's involvement as** co-researchers in academic and social research projects. This will lead on to a discussion on how they were involved in this particular research project as co-researchers through a reflection of the research process from the initial pilot study through to the main study. This will also involve a discussion on how they influenced the research process especially through their style of questioning, the challenges encountered and the benefits that resulted from this for the researcher and the overall research project.

Chapter 5: **Ethnicity as habitus: understanding young people's** dispositions towards their communities.

The first part of **this chapter will focus on the content of young people's ethnic habitus as discussed in the theoretical chapter and focusing on Reay's** (2004) **understanding of Bourdieu's elements of habitus namely;** habitus as embodiment (stereotypes, body hexis), habitus and agency (resistance and acceptance of dispositions), habitus as individual and collective trajectories (community attachments, individual identities, national and ethnic identity) and habitus as interplay between current reality and past experiences (experiences that are reinforcing attitudes and habitus). This ethnic habitus will be analysed

in regards to the differing contexts or fields that the young people find themselves, in particular their different regional locations. Moreover, it will look at whether young people are reproducing or challenging dominant attitudes towards ethnicity. The second section will focus on analysing ethnicity as a source of social capital and trust. The chapter will correspond to **research question 1 (a): what are the narratives of young people's ethnic** identities? This chapter will subsequently connect directly to the discussion in the subsequent chapters which will focus on their political attitudes in order to analyse if and how their ethnic dispositions affect their political attitudes and serve to reproduce ethnic politics.

Chapter 6: Und**erstanding young people's political attitudes through narrative. An analysis of student's letters to the president**

As human beings our lives are "storied". The stories we tell help us to make sense of the world around us. Indeed there has been a turn to narrative in social science as a way of understanding how citizens understand and relate to the social world. (Somers, 1994, Fraser, 2004, Plummer, 1995, Riessman, 2003a) In the focus groups that were conducted as part of the research, the young people were asked to write letters to the current Kenyan president on any topic of interest to them. This provided a snapshot of their attitudes towards political actors, especially the President of the country as well as the political system. The chapter will therefore present a first cut of the young **people's political attitudes. The chapter will begin by looking at how I went about analysing the narrative letters. This will give an initial "character" of the** narratives in terms of their length and tone. The chapter will then proceed to look at the findings from the narrative letters which includes what young people understood the role of the President to be. This will lead on to a discussion on how they construct politics and their role within it. This will be done through an analysis of the emerging themes from the narrative letters. The aim of this chapter is to provide a first answer to the research question: What are the narratives of young **people's political identities?**

Chapter 7**: "Am I eating the Kenyan spirit?"** Investigating how young people construct Kenyan politics in relation to their ethnic identity.

This chapter will focus how young people understand and interpret politics. It will build on the snapshot of the political system presented in the previous chapter and will focus on the data obtained from the focus group discussions as well as their political comments from the individual interviews. This is in an **effort to highlight the young people's political habitus and the relationship this** has to their ethnic identity. The focus of analysis in the chapter will be on how the character of the four regions has influenced their political opinion. This will be done with reference to the research question: are they reproducing or contesting the current political discourses? Indeed, it will be shown using Patrick Chabal and Jean-**Pascal Dalozs'** (1999) four dimensions of African identity politics that through their discourse they are indeed reproducing dominant ideas of how African politics is conceptualized but this reproduction is never the less differentiated by gender and the different locations they find themselves within the country. In order to do this, the similarities and differences will be highlighted using the framework analysis method.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

The chapter will serve as a summary of the arguments presented in the thesis as well as a reflection on the challenges encountered, future research agendas and the overall contribution of the thesis. The chapter will look at the wider implications of the data and findings presented in the previous chapters. It will start by **looking at what emerged as the narratives of young people's ethnic** identities followed by the narratives of their political identities. It will then look at how young people viewed the relationship between their ethnic and political identities and how this leads to their reproduction of the negative aspects of their ethnic identities. The chapter will then highlight the contribution of the thesis to the literature on ethnic politics. It will also reflect on the contribution of the peer-led research method. It will then briefly highlight some avenues for future research and recommendations fo**r young people's political** engagement. As was discussed in the introduction, ethnicity and especially negative aspects of ethnicity are an enduring aspect of Kenyan politics. The cycle of negative ethnic politics includes the participation of both elites at the top level of politics and the citizens who are influenced by them and in their turn influence the process.

1.7   Conclusion

The chapter has served as an introduction to the thesis. Firstly, it has provided a summary of the thesis including the key arguments and the research problem and background. It has also introduced the research questions that will guide the thesis as well as looked at the definitions of the key terms. These terms are children and ethnicity. For the former, the stance that has been taken is that the participants will be referred to as young people in order to acknowledge that they are not quite children though not yet adults. With ethnicity, the term will be used interchangeably with community and tribe in order to reflect its usage in the academic field as well as in local discourse. The chapter also briefly highlighted the context under which the research took place which was during an election period and included a brief introduction into the field sites which were nine schools in four regions of Kenya namely, Nairobi, Coast, Western and Central. The chapter also provided an outline for each of the chapters to be presented in the thesis. In concluding this **introduction, the thesis seeks to contribute to the study of ethnic politics "from below" by adopting as our lens the perceptions of young people under the age of 18 an**d **utilising as a framework, Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field and** capital in order to examine their demotic ethnic and political discourses and their contribution to the reproduction of ethnic politics in Kenya.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework: Using habitus, field and capital to understand ethnicity in Kenya

2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the theoretical framework that will guide the thesis. It first examines the evolution of the main theories in the study of ethnicity: primordialism; instrumentalism; and constructivism. In so doing, the chapter provides an understanding of the historical evolution of the theories in addition to looking at the various criticisms that have been levelled at them. By doing this I investigate one potential alternative that has emerged in **conceptualizing ethnicity which is an adaptation of Pierre Bourdieu's** concepts of habitus, field and capital. Habitus will be understood as internalized dispositions which when combined with various forms of capital (economic, cultural, and social) interact with a variety of fields in order to produce particular behaviours or practice. As Bourdieu offers in his model, (habitus*capital) + field= practice. In the context of this project, practice will be understood **as young people's political attitudes. Th**e Bourdieusian framework was adopted because it provides us with a way to conceptualize the construction of ethnicity specifically in young people in order to understand how it can be viewed as both a social construct and an inherent part of their being. It does this by reconciling the theoretical gaps in primordialism, instrumentalism and constructivism by accounting for ethnicity as both a socially constructed category that can be rationally accounted for as constructivism and instrumentalism would advocate at the same time as an **inherent part of a person's social identity that is transferable across various** contexts as primordialism would have us believe. It also provides us with a framework to analyse the link between ethnic identity and politics by understanding the reproduction of norms, values and ideals within individuals which are then activated when they come into contact with the political field.

The chapter will proceed by first giving a brief overview of the theoretical conceptualization of ethnicity by tracing the development of

primordialism, instrumentalism and constructivism as the key dimensions that have been used in the study of ethnicity. It will do this by presenting the main ideas behind each as well as analysing the criticisms of each. It will show how the last thirty years of empirical research have resolved the classic debate between primordialism and instrumentalism by the application of constructivism. The chapter will show that there are still gaps to be addressed with constructivism. It will attempt to address these gaps by sketching out **Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital and field with a focus on how they can** be operationalized for empirical research by adapting the work of Reay (2004). This interest in Bourdieu was facilitated by a reading of earlier work by Bentley (1987) and Jones (1997) who at the time sought to move the study of ethnicity forward by applying a theory of practice which they felt would resolve the debates around primordialism and **instrumentalism. Though Bourdieu's** concepts have often been used in the fields of sociology especially the sociology of education, it will be shown that he can be useful in the field of politics as has been highlighted by Swartz (2013, 1997). The chapter will conclude by setting out a conceptual framework that will tie all the concepts together and serve as a theoretical framework for the thesis.

2.2   The study of ethnicity in Africa

Ethnicity in Africa is a feature of many countries' politics. It is also a complex and often contradictory phenomenon that interacts through space and time with a variety of other features of African society including the state, economy, **global industry, "class and generation."** (Berman et al., 2004: 2-3) Kenyans in particular have been known t**o exhibit what can be called a "contradictory political culture." On the one hand they can be demanding of democratic** change and equality while on the other they can and do vote along ethnic lines.(Lonsdale, 2004, Bratton and Kimenyi, 2008) This thesis seeks to further investigate this contradiction by looking at ethnicity and politics through the lens of Bou**rdieu's concepts of habitus and field. This will show how the** conditions of early socialization reinforce attitudes that are expressed in multiple ways depending on the fields that citizens interact in in their daily lives.

The early study of ethnicity in Africa took a primordialist approach. The key ideas of classical primordialism were considered static highlighting that

ethnic attachments were inherent and unchanging. (Geertz, 1963, Grosby, 1994, Levine and Campbell, 1972, Lemarchand, 1986, Van den Berghe, 1995)Indeed for Van de Berghe ethnicity was a biological phenomenon. He states that "all social organisms are biologically programmed to be nepotistic, that is to behave favourably to others in proportion to their real or perceived degree of common ancestry." (1995:359-368) But, even the primordialists admitted that ethnic groups are to a certain extent socially defined. However, their insistence was that ethnic groups were initially formed in a primordial way. Primordialism was essentially a question of emotion or affect (Eller and Coughlan, 1993: 187-201). To give an example, Shils (1957) and Geertz (1963), some of the earliest primordialist writers, developed their ideas through the study of the immediate post-independence process in a number of countries. Geertz equated primordial ethnic attachments to the structures of these emerging states. Indeed, Geertz explored the human need to be "somebody in the world" as an essential social assertion and used this as the basis for his ideas. He noted that ethnic attachments became salient in the struggle for political power, but once they were activated, manifested themselves as primordial and in addition, the conflict that was being observed in these new states was as a result of "serious disaffection based on primordial sentiments." (Geertz, 1963: 108-113) He saw these sentiments as a product of pre-colonial societies and which could be eliminated with modernization, transforming into more civil sentiments which would take predominance over any cultural or traditional ties, following the path of more established democracies. These were some of the ideas that were taken up by post-independence nationalists around Africa including Tom Mboya in Kenya and Sekou Toure in Guinea. For Tom Mboya, it led him to advocate a nationalist agenda that stressed a Kenyan identity over other ethnic identities. (Kagwanja, 2009) One of the appeals of primordialism [for academics] was the fact that ordinary people expressed their identities in such terms and indeed it is how the media even today portrays ethnic issues on the continent. For example, reporting of tensions in the Tana delta area of Kenya in 2012 focused on long standing ethnic grievances over resources and ethnic sentiments between the two communities that were involved and were presented as essential and inherent.(Mawathe, 2012)

With greater empirical research on the continent, a paradigm shift occurred that discredited the primordialist view as "archaic", and led to its

subsequent decline and unpopularity in the academic literature, with some stating that primordialism was dead.(Eller and Coughlan, 1993) There are those, however who still advocate for a primordialist stance such as Bayar (2009: 1647), **who notes that "Individuals and ethnic groups have a fixed set of** options in their primordial toolbox and identify themselves with the one(s) that provides them with maximum security." Further research showed that it was not primordial ethnic attachments that were manifested in the structures of the state. It was instead rational interests that led to the manipulation of ethnic sentiments by elites. Instrumentalists argued that primordial sentiments were not inherent, but rather a tool that was used by elites to manipulate the masses. Within the framework of the modern nation state, **"primordial** identities have pursued claim**s to power in the modern nation state"** (Hagg and Kagwanja, 2007, Horowitz, 1985), or rather it is the appeal to primordial identities which drive the claims to power, not their intrinsic nature. So for example, **claims to "ancestral" land have been used to displace communities that are considered "foreign" from certain areas.** The major critique of the primordialist**'s** origins of ethnicity, that instrumentalism sought to respond to was that it represented a very static and naturalistic viewpoint. It did not take into account cultural processes and other social factors lead to the creation of ethnic communities.(Baumann, September 2004, Brubaker, 2004) Instrumentalists sought to correct this by providing their view which would situate ethnic construction both historically and culturally.

The beginnings of instrumentalism have been linked to the work of Fredrik Barth (1969) and Abner Cohen (1974). For Barth, ethnicity was an **"individualistic strategy." People could choose to move within identities for** their own personal and material interest. In addition, ethnicity was not formed in isolation but through social interactions with others. Barth accepts the multiplicity of ethnic identity as he notes that depending on the social situation **that a person finds themselves in, their "ethnic identity can be perceived or presented" in different ways. Moreover, "cultural traits and even individuals can** cross over ethnic boundaries, which in turn can transform an ethnic group over **time."**(Barth, 1969: 299) Cohen emphasized the group aspect of ethnicity rather than the individual. **He defined an ethnic group as "a *collectively*** organized strategy for the protection of economic and political interests." Further, **ethnicity was made up of "the shared beliefs and practices that** provide a group with the boundary maintenance and organizational

dimensions necessary to maintain, and compete for, socioeconomic resources."(Jones, 1997: 74) Identities that had before been considered primordial, were actually as a result of "recent developments", more so the colonial and post-colonial project that involved "the division and recombination of existing identity groups into new, diverse and highly artificial political communities" (Banegas, 2006, Bayart, 2005, Hagg and Kagwanja, 2007, Lentz and Nugent, 2000, Kellas, 1991, Mattes, June 2004, Mamdani, 2001a, Horowitz, 1985) Instrumentalism was not without its critics. One of the key issues with instrumentalism was highlighted by Lentz (1995) who asked, if ethnicity was such a rational and instrumental creation, then why are people willing to die for their ethnicity? Instrumentalism did not adequately account for the affective dimension of ethnicity. In addition, instrumentalism did not allow us to take into consideration people's perceptions of ethnicity which are sometimes presented in a primordial way but we cannot completely discard as "naive" as they may have a direct influence on their social behaviour.

The key arguments of primordialism and instrumentalism are presented in the table below that has been adapted from Kauffman's' typology of theories of religion (Kauffman, 2012).

Table 1 Theories of ethnicity

Category	Theory	
	Primordialism	*Instrumentalism*
View of human nature	Emotive, cognitive, irrational	Rational, self-interested, contingent
View of history	Pre-modern root to ethnicity	Ethnicity a phenomenon of modernity, a colonial invention
Structure/agency	Focus on individual agency in the formation of ethnicity	Focus on institutions, structures and collective formation of ethnicity
View of ethnicity	Primordial origin and deeply rooted in human evolutionary psychology	Ethnic groups constructed for political and economic reasons

As indicated in the table above, for primordialists human agency is important but for instrumentalists, what are important are the structures of society that produce ethnicity. This may seem intractable, but many emphasize one view over the other depending on their particular research context. Many more draw a line in the middle and take the approach that it is a complex interaction between elements of the two; what is now called constructivism. As noted again by Lentz, "such political connotations and the peculiar mixture of instrumentalist and primordialist arguments can also be located in many of the **studies of ethnicity in Africa [...]."**(Lentz, 1995: 308) As Chandra further explains, ethnicity is seen as constructed when we view it in the longer term but, when taken as a snapshot, then its primordial elements are what come into view.(2006) In addition, in their edited work on ethnicity in Ghana, Lentz and Nugent showed that ethnicity in Ghana was much more complex than pure **instrumentalism would have us believe. A lot is placed on "colonial agency" but recent research in the region suggests that the "ethnicities**[...]were not simply hangovers from the pre-colonial past, nor were they simply plucked from the **air."**(2000: 6)

With all the challenges presented by primordialism and instrumentalism, constructivism came to be adopted as the dominant theoretical paradigm in the study of ethnicity in Africa. Some authors conflate instrumentalism with constructivism, but at least in the African context, they have some distinct differences. While constructivism emphasizes the constructed nature of ethnicity, it also recogni**ses the "primordial appeal" that ethnicity has towards** the population.(Lynch, 2011a) The manipulation of ethnicity by elites, using affective elements, is further recognized in constructivism. Constructivism also emphasizes the socio-historical nature of ethnicity and as is paralleled in the nationalism literature through **the notion of "imagined communities".** (Bayart, 2005, Mamdani, 1996, Lentz and Nugent, 2000, Lynch, 2011a, Young, 2004, Lentz, 1995, Brubaker, 2004, Berman, 1998b, Chabal and Daloz, 1999). It is therefore less rational and calculated than instrumentalism. Constructivists believe that their approach will avoid the ethnicities as unchanging assumption **of primordialists and the sometimes basic assumption of instrumentalist's pure rationality. Indeed constructivists seek to show that "by shedding light on** the ways in which ethnicities relate to older idioms of collective identity, we can investigate the scope as well as the limits of cultural and political **creativity."**(Lentz and Nugent, 2000: 6). One danger of taking a historical

analysis approach, is the categorisation or periodization that may occur which may lead to a loss of the abstraction that is needed in order to be able to see the bigger picture. As Bayart notes, **"historical analyses of conflict enchant the** pre-colonial period as the golden era of identity relations, pointing to the low politicisation of ethnic **or other identities in society"**(2005: 92-96) while the colonial and post-colonial period are seen as a downward turn in ethnic identity relations. Constructivism is therefore a more appropriate theory to adopt when looking at the elements of ethnicity in the longer term or **"diachronic" analysis rather than a snapshot "synchronic"**(Giddens, 1979).

Similar to instrumentalism however, constructionists hold onto their **objectivity and do not "naively adopt the actors' own discourses on ethnic identity."**(Lentz and Nugent, 2000: 3) **These "naive actors' discourses" are a** key part of my thesis. Constructivism was therefore not an approach that I could comfortably adopt. Indeed, Young (2002) is of the school of thought that these theories in isolation cannot fully explain the phenomenon of ethnicity. In my quest to reconcile these different theoretical strands while trying to take into account both objective conditions as an academic and subjective perceptions of the participants, I came across the theory of practice, as set forth by Bourdieu (1977, 1990b) and adapted by a number of authors (Bentley, 1987, Jones, 1997, Connoly, 1997, Scott, 1990a). **Pierre Bourdieu's** concepts of habitus field and capital have been adapted as a way to move away from the theoretical debates presented above and look at practice as the guide to theorising on ethnicity. Indeed, the appeal in using these concepts comes from trying to find a conceptual framework that unifies thinking on ethnic attitudes that both takes into account agency and individual action (including affect and emotion) in reproducing practices as well as the role of structures in keeping these practices active as well and reinforcing them. This is in order to avoid a **"theoretical theory" that** focuses on theory in the absence of the perceptions of the subjects of investigation (Swartz, 1997).

I will discuss below the key highlights of this theory of practice and will then move on to underscore how they can be used to form a conceptual framework that enables us to better understand the reproduction of ethnic identity and ethnic politics among young people. The argument that will be presented in the paper will show that we can move away from the ambiguity of the concept of ethnicity without the need to have a singular overarching theory of it or sacrifice the contextual richness that is provided by differing empirical

situations. The next section will lay this out by first briefly introducing the concepts of habitus, field and capital as the foundations of a theory of practice before moving on to argue how they benefit the study of ethnicity and ethnic politics in Kenya

2.3 Towards a theory of practice

2.3.1 Habitus

Habitus is not a new concept as it has been built from the philosophical contributions of Weber, Hegel and Durkheim and was derived from Latin to mean **"habitual or typical appearance, particularly of the body.** (Jenkins, 1992: 74, Webb et al., 2002) Its recent use has been attributed to its extrapolation by Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1990b) and has been most widely used in the fields of sociology and education. Habitus was one attempt to resolve the structure and agency debate similar to the work of Giddens(1984) in his structuration **theory. Habitus also sought to resolve the "objectivist and subjectivist** explanations of human pract**ice." Subjectivism "asserts that social reality is a** contingent on-**going accomplishment" while objectivism is encompassed in theories of structuralism that "people more or less reproduce the objective structures of the society[...]they live in."** (Webb et al., 2002:31-34) For Bourdieu, subjectivism and objectivism interact in a cyclical manner as will be seen through his definition of the term below.

Habitus can sometimes be viewed as an abstract concept that is difficult to operationalize for empirical research. One of the difficulties is that there are multiple ways that habitus can be conceptualized but, like Reay (2004) and Rapoport (2002), I agree that that is not necessarily the weakness of habitus but its strength. If habitus were not this versatile, then it would not have been possible to apply it in the context of my research. Bourdieu came up with the concept through empirical observation. Its common usage is in the field of education and sociology and it has not been widely used with reference to ethnicity. Bourdieu himself did not highlight ethnicity in his work, though he did study the Kabyle in great detail through his work as an anthropologist. He briefly mentioned tribe as one of the social categories that one can be a member of that contributes to **one's** social capital in his work on the forms of capital (Bourdieu, 1986), but he did not go into it in detail. Others such as

Vann(2013), Rapoport and Lomsky-Feder(2002) have adapted his work to their studies of various ethnic communities.

Habitus can be viewed as an "analytical tool" that one can use to "understand human behaviour" more so by understanding how "various discourses impact upon the individual." (Connoly, 1997: 71) Habitus relates to what tools, be it myths, archetypes and rituals that operate at a subconscious level and that we are imbued with that help us define how we should act in our social world, and indeed define it. From when we are born we "learn from our experiences" and these teachings are incorporated into our everyday lives and "help to guide our future actions and behaviour and dispose us to thinking in a certain way."(Connoly, 1997: 70) In Bourdieu's words, the habitus can be defined as:

> Structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures that is as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. (Bourdieu, 1990b: 53)

We can attempt an example here of these "structuring structures." It is sometimes claimed that the colonial and post-colonial experience in its various forms has had an impact on how Africans view themselves and interact. Africans have developed an inferiority complex with a singular narrative of underachievement. We can hypothesize that the habitus of subsequent generations has been structured by this experience and that it is the reality of "how they come to view themselves." (Connolly: 71) As Nigerian literary author Chimamanda Adichie Ngozi would say, "show a people as one thing, as only one thing, and that is what they become."(October 2009)

I prefer to reference one of Bourdieu's earlier definitions of habitus, which I find is clearer at highlighting exactly what habitus constitutes.

> a system of transposable dispositions, which integrating past experiences functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks, thanks to analogical transfers of schemes

permitting the colution of similarly shaped problems. (Bourdieu 1971, 83 as quoted in Swartz (1997: 100)

It is this "matrix of perceptions" that is of particular interest to this thesis. These are the "ways of feeling and reacting that are the product of inculcation and lived experience."(Vann, 2013: 166) What is of particular interest in this thesis is the "matrix of their ethnic perceptions" or ethnic habitus and how these are affected by their interaction in the political field. Bourdieu noted in his outline of a theory of practice that "the structures constitutive of a particular type of environment for instance the material conditions of existence characteristic of a class condition, produce habitus […]"(Bourdieu, 1977: 72). In this quote, I believe he opens up the opportunity for habitus to not only be class based but also based on ethnicity. Indeed we can look at any "type of environment" hence the opportunity to look at ethnicity, especially when linked with the political field as one of the "structuring structures." Indeed, in his work on the forms of capital, Bourdieu mentions tribe as one of the membership categories that can constitute the formation of capital.(Bourdieu, 1986)

The idea of an ethnic habitus is not a new one and has indeed been explored through the work of Connolly (2009) who looks at its application in ethnic attitudes in children in northern Ireland, and Rapoport and Lomsky-Feder (2002) who use it to investigate the ethnic attitudes of Jews returning to Israel and also with Bentley (1987) who was one of the first to conceptualize it by trying to understand ambivalent ethnicity among minority Indonesian populations struggling to integrate tradition with modernity. I seek to apply this concept of ethnic habitus to the Kenyan context.

The concept of field, which will be discussed later in the chapter, is central to our understanding because habitus does not exist in isolation. Habitus is a "relational" concept which has to be looked at in combination with the various fields in which it interacts. According to Bourdieu,

The relation between habitus and field operates in two ways. On one side, it is a relation of *conditioning*; the field structures the habitus […] on the other side, it is a relation of knowledge or *cognitive construction*. Habitus contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world, a world endowed with sense and value… Social reality exists, so to speak, twice,

in things and in minds, in fields and in habitus, outside and inside of agents. (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 127, original emphasis)

Jones (1997) suggests an approach that utilises "practice theory" that is based on Bourdieu's (1977) concept of *habitus.* This is an attempt to understand "the relationship between objective conditions and subjective perceptions" (Jones, 1997: 88-90) which is an attempt to understand the subjective perceptions of our participants through the objective structures that constrain an academic. For Jones:

The *habitus* is made up of durable dispositions towards certain perceptions and practices (such as those relating to sexual division of labour, morality, tastes, and so on), which become part of an individual's sense of self at an early age, and which can be transposed from one context to another. Shared *habitus* engenders feelings of identification among people similarly endowed.

What we can take from Jones' interpretation of habitus is the notion of dispositions and perceptions towards certain practices. We can include the perceptions towards politics here. In addition, the fact that the habitus becomes a part of a person's sense of self at an early age and is shared by people from a similar upbringing/group shows that it has the possibility to be an important conceptual tool in the study of young people's perceptions towards ethnicity in Kenya. In addition, looking at ethnicity through habitus allows us to more effectively take into account the "naïve perceptions" of our subjects of study. Further borrowing from Bentley(1987), who developed his own ideas of using a theory of practice to study ethnicity, Jones explains that "ethnicity is not a passive reflection" of the biological and inherent nature of ethnic identity that primordialists would have us believe. It is also not entirely "produced in the process of social interaction where […] cultural symbols are consciously manipulated in the pursuit of economic and political interests." If we seek to draw a middle point between these two then we can claim that "the intersubjective construction of ethnic identity is grounded in the shared subliminal dispositions of the habitus which shape and are shaped by objective commonalities of practice."(Jones, 1997: 90) However, for habitus to be a concept that can be applied empirically, we need to operationalize it. As is

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mentioned in the discussion above, it operates unconsciously and this is one of the challenges of trying to apply it empirically. The following section will seek to do this, using Reay's (2004) interpretation of the concept.

2.3.2   Operationalizing habitus

Reay (2004: 432-435) has provided us with a way to pick up key elements of habitus that we can use directly to design a research study and analyse data. She focuses on four key aspects of the term; habitus as embodiment, habitus and agency, habitus as individual and collective trajectories and habitus as past and present. These interrelated concepts will be further explained below, using where appropriate, illustrations from the pilot study:

2.3.2.1   Habitus as embodiment

In this view, habitus consists of dispositions and stereotypes towards certain social phenomenon. Not only does "the body" or the person inhabit the "social world" but the "social world is also in the body." This means that through people's physical actions they reproduce the elements of their socialization as well as contest and challenge them. This is what Bourdieu would call "bodily hexis." Indeed, habitus is not only a collection of "mental attitudes and perceptions" but is also manifested in practice through ways in which people stand, eat, sleep and drink. For instance, Rapoport and Lomsky-Feder in their study of Russian immigrant Jews in Israel noted that the students took it for granted that Jews had a typical appearance and body language.(2002) This can be applied to ethnic stereotyping in the Kenyan context where certain physical characteristics in addition to cultural stereotyping are attributed to certain groups and taken as 'fact'. If I take an example of Kenya, "Luos are dark skinned", "Kikuyu women tend to have an inverted pyramid shape" and "Maasais are tall and beautiful" are some of the statements I have heard and they are sometimes accompanied by the logic that; you don't *look* like X group because you do not display Y characteristics. This can move beyond the physical to include other social characteristics for instance, "Kikuyus are business oriented." [1NYEB1 Pilot AFGD]

Embodiment can also be taken to mean that habitus is an internalized concept where the habitus takes an almost unconscious form and can be

related to a "common sense" notion. This embodiment will be investigated throughout the project by looking at what common sense or taken for granted knowledge young people have regarding their ethnicities and politics as well as what are the different stereotypes, both physical and behavioural, about various communities.

2.3.2.2   Habitus and agency

Habitus can allow for individual agency but within certain predispositions. Habitus allows for individual as well as collective agency within the constraints that are placed upon the subject by existing structures. People therefore see themselves as acting without constraints but this is an illusion where they are acting out their habitus within different fields. In Bourdieu's own words,

> Habitus is a kind of transforming machine that leads us to 'reproduce' the social conditions of our own production but in a relatively unpredictable way. In such a way that one cannot move simply or mechanically from knowledge of the conditions of production to knowledge of the products.(Bourdieu, 1990b: 77)

The dispositions that were mentioned above are therefore "products of opportunities and constraints framing the individual's earlier life experiences."(Reay 2004: 433) It is in childhood that we form our "matrix of perceptions" that guides our day to day interactions. The illusion of agency comes about when, depending on the different contexts that we find ourselves in, we choose a different set of dispositions. However, when we encounter a context that is so outside our experience, our habitus can be transformed and Bourdieu himself conceded that in times of crisis, the habitus can indeed transform (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). To give an example, a person can be religious but through a traumatic life event, such as a death in the family, can have their religious dispositions questioned and abandoned. In the context of this research project, we can investigate the agency of habitus as they move through a variety of fields, for example from rural to urban areas, in order to understand how young people are either constrained by their habitus or rebel against it.

2.3.2.3 Habitus as individual and collective trajectories

Although the habitus is embodied in the individual, the groups in which the individual finds themselves (be it the family or the community) are essential to the formation of the habitus as has been noted by Vann (2013) in his study of Catalan identity. The "collective history" of their community which they are imbued with throughout their upbringing is what forms the foundation of their habitus. This is the case when we seek to look at ethnic habitus in the Kenyan context, where various ethnic communities' histories serve as a frame of reference that influences their attitudes. In my research project, through asking questions on what their communities mean to the participants, I will be able to tease out these histories and investigate how they inform their perceptions and dispositions. For Bourdieu, the individual and collective history are presented as one within the individual and both form an iterative circle that informs an individual's "social position".

We can also add here, that habitus is not singular. An individual does not possess just one habitus, but many habitii. Some are more important than others and of course depend on what context the person finds themselves in. Some in the literature have argued that there are "meta habitii" and "minor habitii" with the latter being integrated with the former (Pickel, 2005). He gives an example of meta-habitii as national habitus which he claims pervades all other social systems and thus all other habitii. Pickel is coming from the perspective of mature democracies and does recognize that this "*homo nationis*" as he refers to it may not be prevalent in all contemporary societies, especially those where the legitimacy of the state is contested. It would be, however interesting to note what the content of this national habitus (in terms of a national identity) is and how it interacts with ethnic habitus. Cillia et al (1999), also noted that national identity can be regarded as a "form of habitus" These are a collection of emotions, attitudes and behavioural dispositions that are internalized by citizens through socialization and include definitions of the nation through contrasts with other societies. Most importantly, there is not one national identity, but many depending on the different fields within which the person finds herself. In essence, it manifests itself in various ways in various people. This is important for us in the context of young people's

identities as we can look at how they conceptualize their national identity depending on the different fields they interact with and their ethnic habitus. This notion of habitus as individual and collective trajectories is directly related to the notion presented below as habitus as past and present.

2.3.2.4   Habitus as past and present

Habitus as past and present helps us to understand the interplay between current realities and past experiences. This shares similarities to habitus as individual and collective trajectories. While habitus operates in the present, it is informed by the experiences of the past, be it individual or collective experiences that are part of the collective memory or history of a social group. For instance Lynch (2011a) would argue that the constructed nature of ethnic **identities is the source of ethnicity's attraction and danger, as selective and** interpreted histories are used to unite some and differentiate others in ways **that are meaningful, contested and unstable."**(2011a: 2) Shared pasts do not have to be historically accurate, but they cannot be invented out of thin air. **They must include "real cultural experience" and "ethnicity by consent"** whereby ethnic cultures are created by people not related to one another by descent but who claim primordialist sentiments which they pass on to their children.(Lynch, 2011a: 123)

A collective understanding of habitus is necessary, according to Bourdieu, in order to recognize that individuals contain within themselves their past and **present position in the social structure "at all times and in all places, in the forms of dispositions which are so many marks of social position"**(Bourdieu, 1990a: 82) It is this past and present that forms the matrix that guides their future actions. We can therefore use this concept to help us understand the influence of current and past action on potential future political behaviour by **analysing young people's political an**d ethnic attitudes.

Connolly shows how ethnicity becomes something that is **"grounded in** experience and moreover, something that comes to engrain itself within a **person's very being and their own sense of self."**(1997: 72) This is especially so at a younger age when all these learned experiences, both from family, peers and the education system come into play. Moreover, people's

experiences make them act and feel as they do and reproduce those actions and conditions.

Socialization through habitus is not universal. Some groups are socialized differently to others because of the social structures that they grow up in. For Bourdieu, the difference in socialization comes about because of **class. Societal structures will ensure that certain 'common' habitus' will** emerge that is the social group will share certain common values. These differences can also be seen in the socialization of different groups such as different ethnic groups. These differences will be highlighted in the thesis by looking at how perceptions of ethnicity and politics differ between different communities and regions. The importance of looking at habitus as being made up of different elements of cultural knowledge can be seen through the work of Rapoport and Lomsky- Feder (2002) as noted previously who seek to analyse the concept of intelligentsia as a form of internalised cultural knowledge that is one form of habitus. As Sian Jones (1997) also notes in her work on ethnicity in archaeology, she looks at habitus as a way to analyse how ethnicity is created by both individuals and groups, in different times and places, influenced by pre-existing notions but never-the-less coming up with a variety of concepts depending on their own contexts. What habitus provides that is not provided by other social theories in the context of ethnicity in Africa is that it enables us to link cultural, individual, group and even physical (when looking at bodily hexis and stereotypes) dimensions (Pickel, 2005). Bentley puts it quite succinctly on the applicability of using habitus in the study of ethnicity, and I will use his quote in its entirety below:

> Such a practice theory of ethnicity facilitates the analysis of the relationship between ethnic consciousness and social structures, and more generally ethnicity and culture; as such it has the potential to **transcend the 'objective/ subjective' dichotomy. Ethnicity is not a** passive reflection of similarities and differences in the cultural practices and structural conditions in which people are socialized, as traditional normative and primordial approaches assume. Nor is ethnicity, as some instrumental approaches imply, produced entirely in the process of social interaction, whereby epiphenomenal cultural symbols are consciously manipulated in the pursuit of economic and political **interests. Rather, drawing on Bourdieu's theory of practice, it can be**

argued that the intersubjective construction of ethnic identity is grounded in the shared subliminal dispositions of the habitus which **shape, and are shaped by, objective commonalities of practice: '[a]** shared habitus engenders feelings of identification among people similarly endowed. Those feelings are consciously appropriated and given form through existing symbolic resources (1987: 173)

Habitus can also further be operationalized through the use of **Bourdieu**'s concept of capital. Social capital can be defined as,

> The sum of resources, actual or virtual that accrue to an individual or group by virtue of possessing a durable network or more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition.(Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 192)

There are many forms of capital and a person can possess a great deal of capital in one area but be lacking capital in others.(Modood, 2004: 97) Indeed, there are a number of authors in the literature such as James Coleman(1988) and Putnam(2000) who have investigated the concept of capital, over and above Bourdieu(1986).(Baron et al., 2000) Capital can further be defined as the resources that are available to an actor because of their position within the social structure/hierarchy and their membership in a particular group. Depending on the capital that a person possess, they may be better placed than others within the social hierarchy. Members in these groups are able to negotiate both material and symbolic resources because they are part of that community. (Bourdieu, 1986) For Bourdieu there are three different types of capital: economic capital, cultural capital and social capital, as he explains:

> capital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as *economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the forms of property rights; as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of educational qualifications; and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations ('connections'), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be

institutionalized in the forms of membership in particular organizations.(Bourdieu, 1986)

Bourdieu went on to explain that social capital is not independent of economic or cultural capital but serves as a multiplier for them and indeed includes how the "judgement of the dominant group is presented as universal and selectively endowed."(Baron et al., 2000: 3) Coleman on the other hand focused on the role of social capital in the educational context and defined social capital as "the set of resources that inhere in family relations and in community organization and that are useful for cognitive or social development of a child."(Baron et al., 2000: 4) For Coleman social capital goes beyond resources to provide for certain norms that must be followed and "sanctions" for breaking these obligations(Baron et al., 2000: 6) For Putnam, social capital was more about membership in organizations that reinforced social trust and "enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives."(Putnam, 1996: 56) There are a number of critiques of these perspectives of social capital, such as Putnam's lack of analysis with regards to the power relationships inherent in the creation of social capital; for example, how a lack of social capital in a given area can leave you at a disadvantage in negotiating your position in a particular field. For my particular context, I take the approach of social capital as trust, as well as access to resources and less about membership in organizations or access to networks, though I do note that membership of particular ethnic groups is what may give them access to certain social and material resources that would enable young people to negotiate their positions in the political field. Indeed according to Baron, "two key terms definitive of social capital, trust and networks."(Baron et al., 2000: 14)

To give an illustration, ethnicity in the Kenyan context can be seen as a form of capital where in business relations, a person from a shared community is accorded a higher level of trust than another. Indeed, the role of social networks in informal economies in Africa is gaining academic attention. (Meagher, 2005) Over and above this, we can understand capital in the context of Kenyan society as illustrated above as ethnic capital. For this, we will take an example of ethnicity as social capital from a study done on the potential of mobilizing ethnic capital to explain educational achievement among minority communities.

Thus ethnicity as social capital collapses the Bourdieusian distinction between cultural capital acquired through family and social capital as benefits mediated through social networks and group membership and highlights the broad roles that ethnicity can play through ethnic capital. (Shah et al., 2010: 1112)

Bourdieu's interest in capital was to show how its transmission was involved in the reproduct**ion of inequalities and "socio**-economic advantages **and disadvantages."**(Shah et al., 2010: 1111) We can use this concept therefore to understand how certain elements of capital produce certain advantages or disadvantages for communities in the Kenyan political context. In the context of this project we can define ethnic capital as those resources that members of particular communities possess to negotiate their access and power in the political system as a result of being members of that particular community. There is an element of trust in the individual relationships that they have with particular members of the political community. This is because there is a greater likelihood to trust a member of their community as a politician as a result of the resources that this capital provides rather than another from another tribe. One element of the ethnic capital can be the reciprocal relationship where politicians are u**nder certain obligations to "provide" for** members of their ethnic group and behave in particular ways while representing them. What this discussion of habitus and social capital brings us to is the arena where habitus comes into play and this is the field. The section below will discuss the key concepts of the field.

2.3.3   Field

Fields are the contexts within which the habitus operates. Swartz (1997) would refer to the**se fields as "power arenas". Indeed fields are areas of constant** competition and examples of different fields are the field of politics, education and various other social institutions. To give a definition:

A field consists of a set of objective, historical relations between positions anchored in certain forms of power (or capital), while habitus **consists of a set of historical relations 'deposited' within individual**

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bodies in the form of mental and corporeal schemata of perception, appreciation, and action.(Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 16)

The field can therefore be understood as the structures in society that serve to define social conduct and practice. The cultural field for instance can be defined as the set of "institutions, rules and regulations"(Webb et al., 2002: 22) and the interactions between them that influence the behaviour of people. They are   seen as authorities within which certain actions are either permissible or not. Power relations, are therefore inherent to both the habitus and the field. The difference comes about in the field operating within institutions and the habitus within the individual. "If a field is the game, the habitus is the 'sense of the game.'"(Bourdieu, 1990b, Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) In this particular research project, the ethnic habitus in relation to the fields of politics is what will be investigated. What 'sense of the game' in terms of rules, conditions and practices of politics are young people being socialized to?

Fields are reproduced through "four main modes of operation" (Webb et al., 2002:24-28) that will be discussed below.

2.3.3.1   Misrecognition and symbolic violence

Symbolic violence can be defined as "every power which manages to impose meanings and to impose them as legitimate by concealing the power relations which are the basis of its force adds its own specifically symbolic force to those power relations."(Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977: 4) Agents may be mistreated but they do not revolt against this because they see it as "the natural order of things." What needs to emphasized here is this complicity is unwitting. The subjects are unaware of its operation and "misrecognize" it as purely symbolic and not an action which affects their lives. Misrecognition can also help us understand "double dealing strategies."(Webb et al., 2002: 24-28) An example of these strategies is acting on behalf of a so-called field or group but rather acting in their own interests or values. From the data gathered from the pilot study, the young people recognize these double dealing strategies as a feature of Kenyan politicians in contrast to their portrayal in the popular

media and in the populist discourse as first and foremost acting on behalf of their communities.

Symbolic domination/violence however, occurs differently in multi-ethnic societies. These are not societies that are multi-ethnic as a result of migration but those for which it is an inherent part of their character. This is of course if we look at it through an ethnic lens and not a class lens. Minority ethnic groups are in constant conflict with the majority even though there may be instances where they are implicitly accepted. For instance, *Wanjiku*, which is a common Kikuyu name, is used by the media and in local discourse to indicate the common citizen. This may be a reflection of Kikuyu dominance in the political and social discourse but this is by no means accepted as a matter of course.

2.3.3.2   Illusio and universalisation

Illusio refers to the fact that there are aspects of a society that will not be understood by those outside that particular society. I would give an example of the interaction and misunderstanding that happens within different ethnic communities in Kenya. For instance, to an outsider, the cultural practice of bride price among a number of communities in Kenya may be seen as an outdated concept and one that is gendered against the women. But for those who possess the habitus of this kind of society, the process is much more complex involving the building of relationships of trust between the two families and as a sense of protection for the woman in terms of what kind of family she will be associating with. The point here is that those that are outside the habitus may find the practices of those within it "ridiculous". The illusio may be the reason why some may view politics in Africa as an exotic aberrant as they have not been socialised to that context. In addition, illusio may also explain why communities may view others with a level of mistrust due to their lack of understanding of other communities.

Universalisation comes as a result of trying to universalise certain values or a certain habitus. For instance, one can give an example of the universal character of western values as a result of globalisation. There is anecdotal evidence that the African middle and upper class aspire to these western values and are socialised to believe in them. What is important here is that these values are not just adopted. They are   contested and transformed and

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localised in certain instances. (Webb et al., 2002) An example here can be given of the "hip hop" culture among urban African youth that has been studied by Honwana (2005) among others. This has its basis in the American hip hop genre but has been localised where hip hop is used as an outlet for political frustrations.

Additionally, within each field, operates the doxa, which are the unspoken rules of the game that are taken for granted. If habitus is a sense of the game, then the doxa are the rules of the game. Doxa determines the "limits of the thinkable and the doable." (Grenfell, 2008: 59) As Bourdieu would state, it is the "naturalization of ideas,"(Eagleton and Bourdieu, 1991) the sense of one's place in the scheme of things, and further:

> Doxa refers to the misrecognition of forms of social arbitrariness that engenders the unformulated, non-discursive, but internalized and practical recognition of that same social arbitrariness. It contributes to its reproduction in social institutions, structures and relations as well as in minds and bodies, expectations and behaviour. (Grenfell, 2008: 119)

The power of doxa is in its hidden nature which claims that there is one "truth" about the nature of existence. Doxa can and does come under challenges. For example, one can move from an orthodox position to a heterodox position. While in an orthodox position, you may be well aware of your own values and dispositions but it may not mean that you yourself challenge them whereas heterodoxy implies the same awareness but crucially it also means that one accepts the relative nature of your values – for example when one is confronted by another culture, group or tribe.

2.3.4   Criticisms of habitus

While a number of critiques have been levelled at Bourdieu's work over the years, perhaps the most serious are directed at his attempt to transcend the deep-seated conflict in social science between structure and agency through the notion of habitus. There are those who have challenged the concept as being "deterministic", and being structural and objectivist (Jenkins, 1992, Nash, 1990, Alexander, 1995, King, 2000) as well as not being one that can be effectively utilized empirically. To give an example, Archer (2003) criticises

Bourdieu on the grounds that he conflates structure and agency, and does not give importance to reflexivity among agents. It seems that for Bourdieu, the habitus is durable and immune to major upset but he did not claim that it does not change. In addition it is unconscious and not a product of conscious thought. A greater reading of Bourdieu will find that he does not completely discard the power of agency, but emphasizes that change of habitus is gradual and difficult but can and does occur (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, Elder-Vass, 2007). Some aspects of habitus can remain stable over a long period of time, but the different fields that habitus comes into contact with are what leads to it being challenges or transformed.(Davey, 2009b, Grenfell, 2008) **Indeed Bourdieu in his later work noted that habitus has the 'permanent capacity for invention', more so if we look at individuals interacting with** different fields. (Bourdieu, 2004: 63) Moreover, when we analyse habitus with its related concepts of field and capital then we can begin to see its transformational capability. Field is essential to seeing the potential of habitus to change. As the habitus interacts with various fields it can either be **reproduced through "resignation" or challenged through "revolt."** (Swartz, 2013)

Also, as Bentley (1987: 27) also argued, habitus is not deterministic in that all those who are socialized under a particular habitus will act in a certain **predictable way. On the contrary, as he formulates from Bourdieu, "objective** conditions of existence mediated by systems of symbolic representations, generate in different persons dispositions **to act in different ways….and it is not in a simple or mechanical way"** Moreover, if we link habitus with the concepts of field and capital instead of looking at it in isolation is where we see the dynamism as it moves through different fields and is mediated by the possession of various capital(s). (Reay, 2004) Elder-Vass attempts to provide a resolution between Bourdieu and his critics on the issue of reflexivity by showing that he himself acknowledged reflexivity in his own work. In a conversation with Wacquant he states,

[Wacquant:] Does the theory of habitus rule out strategic choice and conscious deliberation as one possible modality of action?

[Bourdieu:] **Not at all […] times of crises, in which the routine** adjustment of subjective and objective structures is brutally disrupted,

constitute a class of circumstances when indeed "rational choice" may take over, at least among those agents who are in a position to be rational. (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:131) as quoted in (Elder-Vass, 2007: 329)

These "times of crisis" are what are crucial to the formation, reflexivity and change of habitus. Unlike the critical reflection that academics engage in, Bourdieu compared his concept of reflectivity to a tennis player who looks back on a mistake he has made and contemplates what went wrong rather than engaging in any kind of deeper philosophical reflection. (Elder-Vass, 2007: 329) This will be discussed in more detail in the subsequent chapter as "watershed moments" which are events in a country's history that influence the formation of people's attitudes. One such example of a watershed moment can be a contested election. In addition, agents conceive of the world in more practical terms. The "practical logic of the habitus." (Elder-Vass, 2007: 331) How they interact in their day to day lives is what influences their practice and not necessarily rational decision-making that takes into account a wide variety of choices and makes judgments between them.

In addition, as was noted in the section on operationalizing habitus, Reay (2004) speaks of individuals going through life as both individuals and members of a collective sharing a part of the social history of their group. She interprets this as the possibility of transformation of habitus. On the one hand, individuals go through experiences that serve to affirm and reinforce the habitus while at the other they can encounter those that may transform the habitus. This process is however gradual, as choices are constrained by the habitus itself. Bentley (1987) provides a good example of the difficulty of escaping habitus with his study of a Maranao woman whose habitus of a traditional Maranao woman's role in society is challenged by her need to be a successful modern woman and it takes most of her life to transform this habitus.

The other key critique of Bourdieu was a feminist critique.(Adkins and Skeggs, 2004, McCall, 1992) Gender is subsumed throughout much of Bourdieu's writing, his main concern being social class. Feminists have critically engaged with his work where they do not simply seek to locate feminism within a framework of Bourdieu, but adapt him for their particular needs. For instance they look at the gendered nature of habitus, though of course

Bourdieu still has his limitations (Adkins and Skeggs, 2004). In addition, Cicourel (1993) advocates the need to look at how gender and race can be linked to habitus and indeed play a role in structuring the habitus. I seek to follow the example of the above mentioned authors, who have seen the potential of habitus and seek to adapt it to their research contexts. As Beverly Skeggs (2004: 30) puts it:

> There are many things he [Bourdieu] cannot account for, particularly gender and sexuality. But there are also many things for which he is very useful, such as understanding the middle-class, their authorization, exchange and use of distinction.

Indeed, the possible gendered nature of young people's ethnic and political attitudes is of interest to thesis. For example, within the pilot study, the roles of women in the home and as political leaders were discussed. In a number of schools, the focus groups were conducted with the young women and the young men separately which will enable us to compare and contrast their attitudes towards ethnicity and politics.

Another criticism is the universal applicability of his theories. His theories were informed by empirical observations in particular contexts. Can we now apply them to the Kenyan/African context? In addition, the empirical applicability of his concepts is sometimes in question because of the unconscious nature of habitus that has been highlighted previously in the chapter. Besides, Bourdieu seems to be basing his ideas on the mature democracy context, especially in his educational contexts with part of his work being based on observations in France. How would this be different in a developing country context? For instance, symbolic violence may not be so effective or overt in democratising contexts where the norm is oppression but this is recognized as a fallacy. What is important in localising his ideas is on the situational context as has been mentioned above. Bourdieu did note however that some of his concepts are not universal. For instance, he acknowledged that doxa would differ in highly heterogeneous societies where **as I have noted previously, doxa would be "far less encompassing" a**s people **from different groups would "contest doxic assumptions."**(Swartz, 2013)

My own criticism of Bourdieu is that ethnic relations and tribe are not significant in his work, though he does mention tribe in his forms of capital as

highlighted previously.(Bourdieu, 1986) Though his initial work was an in depth study of the Kabyle tribe in Algeria, his interest was anthropological and not on further developing the concept as he did with social class in the French context. Similar to what feminist scholars, as highlighted above, have done by **critiquing Bourdieu's lack of consideration of gender, I do the** same with tribe. Like them, I do not wholly dismiss his work, but attempt to provide a way in which his toolkit can be adapted to include tribe. In this way I have taken the **"conceptual looseness"**(Reay, 1995) of habitus as an advantage to use it as a tool of analysis of political ethnicity in the Kenyan context.

Another difficulty while using habitus is that while it can be considered a useful conceptual tool that can be adapted in a wide array of areas, from **sociology to politics, macro to micro analysis, this "conceptual versatility" is what leads it to be ambiguous to both define and utilise "empirically".** As was stated earlier, we cannot directly observe habitus. So how then can we tell that **it has "changed, varied or remained the same?"**(Swartz, 1997: 109, Grenfell, 2008: 62) There are those who do not see the indeterminacy about the concept as a problem because it fits in well with the complex messiness of the real world.(Reay, 2004) There is however a real danger in habitus becoming whatever the data reveals.(Davey, 2009b, Davey, 2009a). What all this shows is that there is a need to explicitly set out what exactly constitutes habitus for a researcher. It is also important to anchor habitus in its interaction with the various fields. This is where underlying attitudes and behaviour become clear. Especially when the field challenges deeply held notions. What I will be looking for is a reflection of their habitus through their attitudes towards ethnicity and politics. Habitus is seen through their discussions of their understanding of politics as well as the negotiation of their ethnic identities. It will show us how they conceive the rules of the political field. As Grenfell notes, w**e do not "see** habitus but rather the effects of a habitus in the practices and beliefs to which **it gives rise."**(2008: 62)
In general I define habitus as including the following elements which are specific to my context:

- Stereotypes which are accepted, contested or ambiguous.
- Knowledge about their ethnic groups and their roles within them.
- Influence of the past and their perceptions of the present and future

2.4   Theorising ethnicity using habitus

2.4.1   Reconciling theoretical debates

Habitus provides us with a number of resources to better theorise ethnicity. The instrumental – primordialist debate still rages in a certain sense and even within the constructivist school, there are a number of theoretical strands. There are those who feel that this debate does not generate any new or useful resources for the study of ethnicity.(Chandra, 2012) Habitus serves to bridge the divide between the primordialist and instrumentalist schools of thought in the study of ethnicity. It moves away from the irrationality of belief that seems to be at the heart of the debate to understand how as Lynch (2011a) would put it, ethnicity has a "primordial appeal" among people. Ethnicity becomes something that is "grounded in experience and moreover, something that comes to engrain itself within a person's very being and their own sense of self."(Connoly, 1997: 72) This is especially so at a younger age when all these learned experiences, both from family, peers and the education system come into play. It is these learned experiences that compel people to act and feel as they do and reproduce those actions and conditions.

Indeed as Bader notes, though social scientists recognize demotic discourses, these are still analysed from a constructivist perspective. (2001) In the constructivist school of ethnicity, though primordial understandings of ethnicity that citizens may have are recognized they are seen as a limitation to our understanding of the social construction of the phenomenon. As is stated by Lynch:

> [...] While processes of ethnic construction and negotiation are limited by the need for ethnicity to be rooted in "primordial" discourses of cultural similarity and shared pasts the main motivation for the construction and politicization of a Kalenjin alliance was (and continues to be) a nexus of fear of loss and potential for gain.(Lynch, 2011a: 6)

Indeed, these "primordial discourses" are considered naïve (Kellas, 1991) and sometimes above the remit of the serious social researcher. Primordialism would acknowledge these demotic discourses but would fail to see any

underlying structural influences. The trilogy and habitus, capital and field provide a happy medium.

The role that habitus can play is by highlighting **"the way we have** developed and internalized ways of approaching, thinking about and acting **upon our social world."**(Connoly, 1997: 71) To contextualise this to the Kenyan situation would be the way people have internalized ways of approaching, thinking about and acting upon ethnicity in various contexts. This is where **Bourdieu's related concept of field comes into play, which is the context** through which the habitus manifests itself and operates.

If we **take our definition of ethnicity as a 'discursive construct' which as** Bourdieu would state is **"constitutive of reality, willing into existence that which they name,"**(Fox and Idriss-Miller, 2008: 538) then we can move its study into **the realm of 'everyday ethnicity' as Fox and Idriss**-Miller advocate in their **paper looking at nationalism 'from below'. They look at how "nationhood is** negotiated an**d reproduced and sometimes undermined and subverted."** And the same process can be investigated in ethnicity. This would bring ethnicity **from "analytical models which social scientists construct"** (even from the use of **the word "ethnicity" which is considere**d a neutral academic term) to locate ethnicity within the peoples experience of their day to day lives (where we can **refer to ethnicity in people's terms by using the word tribe**, which has values and meaning attached to it). (Jenkins 1992: 72) This is in line with a growing body of literature (Hosbawm and Ranger, 1997, Lynch, 2011a, Klopp, 2002) that finds that ethnicity is constructed through a dialectical relationship between elites and institutions at one end of the spectrum and the people on the other. In addition, Bourdieu states that one of his intentions was to show **that peoples "practical knowledge" is relevant and cannot be subverted by** academics and theorists who would claim to know more or rather know better than the subjects that they study.(Eagleton and Bourdieu, 1991: 252)

A **'good constructivist' view of ethnicity therefore should cater for the affective dimension of identity as an emotional product of people's** interactions. This is often seen as constant and unchanging on the one hand, if we take a primordialist view or interests based and constructed, shifting over time, if we take an instrumentalist view. We can see how people were attracted to the classical theories of primordialism and instrumentalism and how these came to change into the constructivists' view. Primordialism was able to account for the human agency aspect and was often the answer if ethnicity was

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investigated from the perspectives of the citizens. Instrumentalism emerged to challenge this and take into account the political and economic manipulation of identities as well as the rational and self-interested motivations for identity construction in addition to understanding the historical nature of identity construction. A starting point for this **'good constructivists' view can be taken** from Young (2002: 3) who, in his work on ethnicity and politics in Africa, took the constructivist view but still noted the primordialists as well as the instrumentalists had made contributions to the literature, with the primordialists explaining the emotional aspect of identity and the instrumentalists highlighting material considerations of ethnic mobilization.

This is similar to what habitus enables us to do. Habitus can account for not only identity formation but why such formation can come to be theorised in those particular ways. Let us take a look at instrumentalism for example; we can say that it is the movement of habitus through changing fields that make it seem that different interests are shaping our identities. If we turn to primordialism, habitus helps us to show how while human agency is part of ethnicity formation, citizens are not simply cultural dupes and they reproduce the culture and identity within changing contexts. Indeed, the concept of **embodiment and "bodily hexis" gives a way of understanding how identity can** come to be essentialized and reproduced as such through the socialization and inculcation of practices of being. The table below summarizes this:

Table 2 Reconciling theoretical debates

Primordialist-instrumentalist	Constructivism	Habitus
Primordialism taken seriously as a result of its grip on 1st person experience. Rooted in bodily reactions	Constructivism reconciles the primordial-instrumental debate but has a number of strands relating to different contexts and areas of research. As well as not naively adopting actors discourses	Habitus reconciles all of these and shows how both may be plausible from the standpoint of habitus. Habitus as a root is able to account for the features of ethnicity that are visible.
Instrumentalism taken seriously as seen from the 3rd person (and some first person accounts) and focuses at the interests of the group		

2.4.2 Children's experience of ethnicity

Children are socialized into society in a variety of ways. In the first instance, it is their parents who teach them what the proper code of conduct is in their particular society. Then it is through the education system (for those fortunate enough to attend school) that they are inculcated with societal values and civic duty. All these are topped off by the peer relationships and the influences these exert. In the field of education research, the concept of habitus has been widely utilized to understand the challenges that young people from various class and social backgrounds face to their social mobility and educational achievement. (Lehman, 2012, Reay, 1995, Harker, 1984, Shah et al., 2010)

The reason for this use of habitus in this field is that it provides a way to view the connection between socialization and educational achievement. **Lehman for example uses Bourdieu's habitus and game analogy to understand** how working class students play the education game though they may not fully **understand its rules. He notes that Bourdieu states that "we are most likely to[...] seek out experiences that confirm our habitus."**(Lehman, 2012: 542) The habitus provides a frame of reference for children and young people to process

their experiences. As Lehman found in his paper, it is not a forgone conclusion that these experiences will conform to the habitus, but they can serve to interrupt [or reinforce] those frames of reference. As he further **notes: "Both habitus transformation and resistance require individual agency to either embrace new experiences, or resist them."**(Lehman, 2012: 542)

From the research example presented above, we can see that it is our **early experiences that form our habitus and these "retain a particular weight."** (Connolly 1997: 88) The question that can be asked in relation to ethnicity in Africa is: what is the ethnic habitus of children in Kenya? What are its features and how are they negotiating, transforming, accepting and resisting it? To parallel Lehman, we need to be aware of the role that ethnic habitus plays in the development and interaction of Kenyan children for a greater understanding of the interaction of ethnicity and various aspects of society such as politics. As Jones states:

> The habitus involves a process of socialization whereby new experiences are structured in accordance with the structures produced by past experiences, and early experiences retain a particular weight. In this way, structures of power become embodied, resulting in certain dispositions (cognitive and motivating structures) (Jones, 1997: 88)

An example of the operation of habitus among children is given by Connolly in his work with African and Caribbean children in the UK. He talks about peer group relations among African/Caribbean children and certain aspects of their culture which come to be valued symbolically and being able to be successful in this bestows a certain amount of cultural capital (respect/status) on the individual. And the reverse of this is a deviant student: one who diverges from the accepted forms of cultural capital are identified and disciplined. Children over time, through these competing forms come to **"develop an unconscious, practical sense of what actions and behaviour are** valued and can be cap**italized on." (Connolly 1997: 75)**

This can tie in to ethnic experiences of children in Kenya. For instance I can relate a personal experience similar to the one of the African-Caribbean children. I went to a primary school located in a predominantly Kikuyu area and so the school was drawn majorly from this community. I spoke only Kikuyu up

till the age of four when I went to kindergarten. The language of instruction in school was English, and in order to ensure that we picked it up quickly, we were not allowed to speak our mother tongues while in school. As a result of this, and not speaking it at home either, my spoken Kikuyu deteriorated. By the time I was in the 7th year (13 years old) I remember being teased for not being able to speak it properly and hence being excluded from certain conversations and activities. I had lost this particular "cultural capital", and this was seen as not acceptable by my peers.

An illustrative example can provide an instance of the dynamic of the interaction between habitus and field in the context of ethnic identity. This example takes a leaf from Bentley (1987) who looked at what he called the "ambivalent ethnicity" of a Maranao (Indonesian minority) woman. Ambivalent ethnicity here means that a person feels they do not belong to any one particular group, either the one they were born into or the one they currently reside in which may be different from the former. I will use the experience of a young Kenyan woman whom we shall call Yvonne. Yvonne was born in Kenya, a Luhya, but went to kindergarten in another country as her mother worked in the export business, trading in African curios. Her first language is therefore not Luhya or Kiswahili or even as a matter of fact, English. She then moved back to Kenya and in a short time moved to another country for about a year before returning to Kenya more permanently. Luhya was not regularly spoken in the household, so she never learned her mother tongue and she went to a GCSE school where the national language of Kenya – Kiswahili was never taught. With her mother, she spent summers working in a number of countries around the world.

She grew up with friends from many ethnic groups and countries but was still teased for her lack of language skills. Having graduated from university, she now works in Denmark after having spent the last two years working in Europe. She once said to me: "I do not consider myself a Kenyan, let alone even a Luhya." When I questioned her further on this, she said something along the lines of, "I consider myself a global citizen." But, she still feels torn as she confessed she does not feel quite Kenyan but still refers to Kenyan culture that she is part of when speaking to her colleagues, nor does she feel European although she resides in Europe. She still asserts her 'Luhyaness' when speaking of her love for *ingoho* [chicken] as a Luhya stereotype and her

'Luhya hips.' But, all the push and pull have led her to feel in limbo with regards to her ethnic identity; part of both but not quite accepted by either.

What we can see from the above example is the case of a habitus that was inculcated by her parents and perhaps extended family of what it means to be a "Luhya" interacting with the various fields that she found herself interacting with such as a GCSE school and a job in Europe. And it is through this interaction that we glimpse the habitus emerging in statements that reflect her Luhya identity but also being contested when she refutes her 'Kenyaness' in favour of a more neutral and global identity. The durability of habitus is shown by the fact that even with a diverse background she still feels a "call" to identify as a Luhya. If we had taken a primordialist stance when analysing this story, we would not have been able to account for her shifting identities in her movements around the world. If we had taken an instrumentalist/constructivist stance, we would not have been able to effectively account for the affective dimension that keeps her routed to her Luhya identity. While constructivism acknowledges the 'primordial appeal' of ethnic identity among populations, it does not take it seriously as a unit of analysis. Rather, it looks at it as a result of the process of ethnic creation. As Lynch (2011a) argues, ethnic identities must include "real cultural experience" and "ethnicity by consent" whereby ethnic cultures are created by people not related to one another by descent but who claim primordialist sentiments which they pass on to their children. Primordialism is considered an interesting phenomenon in terms of how people express their ethnic identities but one that is a result of peoples lack of understanding of the bigger picture. In addition, constructivism is good at explaining ethnic identity construction at the macro level but does not do it so well when investigating identity formation at the individual level.

This story may not be unique, and indeed is an entire subject of study in diaspora research, but it may also highlight the conflict between tradition and modernity, more so among urban youth. From this example, we can see the relationship between habitus and agency, as noted by Lehman in the earlier sections of this chapter. So while Yvonne would state she is not a Luhya or a Kenyan, her implicit upbringing as such still influenced certain choices she made or would make. It is the lens through which her world operates and indeed how she presents her identity shifts depending on the context in which she finds herself.

Bourdieu's purpose in developing his concepts was for them to be applied empirically which is the purpose of the wider research project within which this paper situates itself. Habitus can be viewed as both a theory and a method as Bourdieu himself termed it a thinking tool that should inform empirical research. It provides a way to look at "the experience of social agents and…the objective structures which make this experience possible."(Bourdieu, 1988: 782) Moreover, it is not so much used for data collection, as for the reflective interpretation of the data by using it as a method of analysis. (Reay, 2004: 440) As has been seen above, there are a number of studies that employ his concepts as an 'analytical tool' that to guide their research. According to Rapport and Lomsky-Feder (2002), there are different ways of interpreting habitus when researchers look to apply it within their research, either by using habitus to look at a process or using it to understand a category. He notes that there are those like Reay (2004) whose research looks at "how habitus produces differences in daily interactions….by gender, race and class," however, they look at "how habitus is inculcated and transformed within the context of one group."(234) The latter are particularly interested in how it is acquired in childhood and how it is transformed and reproduced through a variety of "social changes" and indeed through time and space. For the purposes of research on ethnic identity among young people, both these strands can be incorporated. This is because the thesis will look at how their different regional locations differentiate their habitus as well as how it is instilled within their particular groups. In terms of the actual methods of data collection, a number can be used but there is a movement towards more qualitative methods such as life histories and narratives (Rapoport and Lomsky-Feder, 2002), as well as interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation.(Fox and Idriss-Miller, 2008)

In summary, habitus can be used to link the various strands of the social construction of ethnicity under an umbrella of practice. We can investigate how ethnicity is internalized and affects peoples "actions and attitudes."(Reay, 2004: 437) Like Bentley and Connolly, the aim here is to look at the micro level processes that reproduce ethnicity, rather than the macro level ones in order to provide an insight into how children "learn" ethnicity. We have seen from the discussion above that habitus can be used to explain various aspects of ethnicity through reconciling theoretical debates to better understanding children's experience of ethnicity. But, how then can we use habitus to link

ethnic experience to politics? The section below will show how habitus can also be used as a tool for political analysis.

2.4.3   Habitus in political analysis

Habitus can also be used as a concept to help us understand political attitudes and behaviour and indeed as an agenda for political change. Swartz (2013) has **highlighted the usefulness of using Bourdieu's concepts of field, capital and** symbolic power in analysing various political contexts. For instance he views politics as a field in which there is a constant struggle for power and capital is **viewed as "a reputational [...] resource that mobilizes support among citizens."** **The political field is therefore "[...]** an arena of struggle to impose a vision of the world as legitimate, the state is the end result of struggle in the political field for it is the state that represents whose ideas, classifications, values that **become official."**(Bourdieu, 2000: 63-64)

Swartz also gives some agency to the process of adaptation and contestation of the habitus. For him, there is always a process of adaptation **because habitus does not possess "complete knowledge of all field conditions".** **So as the habitus comes into contact with different fields, "the**re may be discrepancies between new situations and those in which the habitus was **formed." If these are great enough then "reproduction gives way to either** **resignation or revolt." Therefore, habitus emerges as a product of "primary** **socialization".** (Swartz, 2013: 2-10) The primary socialization of young people is what is of interest here. What is the content of their ethnic and political habitus and how do these two reinforce each other?

In addition, habitus allows us to analyse demotic political discourses by approaching them as real experiences that citizens go through and therefore the starting point of any kind of analysis to be taken. Chabal and Daloz, in their book on cultural troubles, indicate that for example, the quickest way to undermine cultural stereotypes is to take them seriously. In this way, the **researcher can better "understand the logics underlying them."**(2006: 53).

Political attitudes can be viewed as a form of political habitus in the way that attitudes towards ethnicity could constitute an ethnic habitus. In the context of national politics and political habitus, this can be used to analyse **young people's opinions. Are they resigning themselves to the current field of**

politics or are they contesting it? A young person's aspirations and expectations will be related to their respective habitus.(Swartz, 1997: 103) Habitus gives us a way to ground the ethnic experience with the political side of the equation. As was done earlier with ethnic habitus, the elements of young people's political habitus will include;

- Whether they are contesting or reproducing the dominant political discourses
- Their aspirations and demands of the political system
- Their construction of politics and political actors (demotic discourses)

2.5   Conclusion

The chapter above has traced the three dominant traditions in the theoretical conceptualization of ethnicity – primordialism and instrumentalism as well as constructivism. It has shown that while each of the perspectives has their strengths, they also have their weaknesses. In order to move beyond these theories, I have looked at an interpretation of Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* which focuses on the internalization of dispositions that young people are socialized into. The chapter has therefore analysed the concepts of habitus, field, capital and doxa. It has operationalized the terms to ensure that they are not simply abstract but are empirically applicable. This was done through the use of Reay's (2004) four themes of habitus namely: habitus as embodiment, habitus and agency, habitus as individual and collective trajectories and habitus as past and present. By doing this it has shown that these concepts can help us reconcile theoretical debates around ethnicity, better understand children's conceptions of ethnicity and also link this to their perceptions of politics.

Through the adaptation of this notion of habitus we can encompass a growing body of literature that acknowledges the constructed nature of ethnicity but takes into account its primordial appeal within a given populace. In this way it attempts to reject a reifying constructionist view of the study of ethnicity as well as the simplified ethnicity as primordial version. Additionally, habitus helps us better understand the reproduction of ethnic politics by looking at both agential influence and the constraints of the structures.

For the purposes of this research, I will set out a conceptual framework. Firstly, the overarching elements of habitus that will be useful to the thesis are;

1. It is a relational concept. This means that habitus cannot be viewed in isolation but must be viewed in relation to the various contexts or fields in which it operates.
2. Past conditions or socialization are what produce (and reproduce) habitus.
3. Habitus is durable across space and time but it can change when a person is confronted with contexts that challenge the pre-conceived notions.
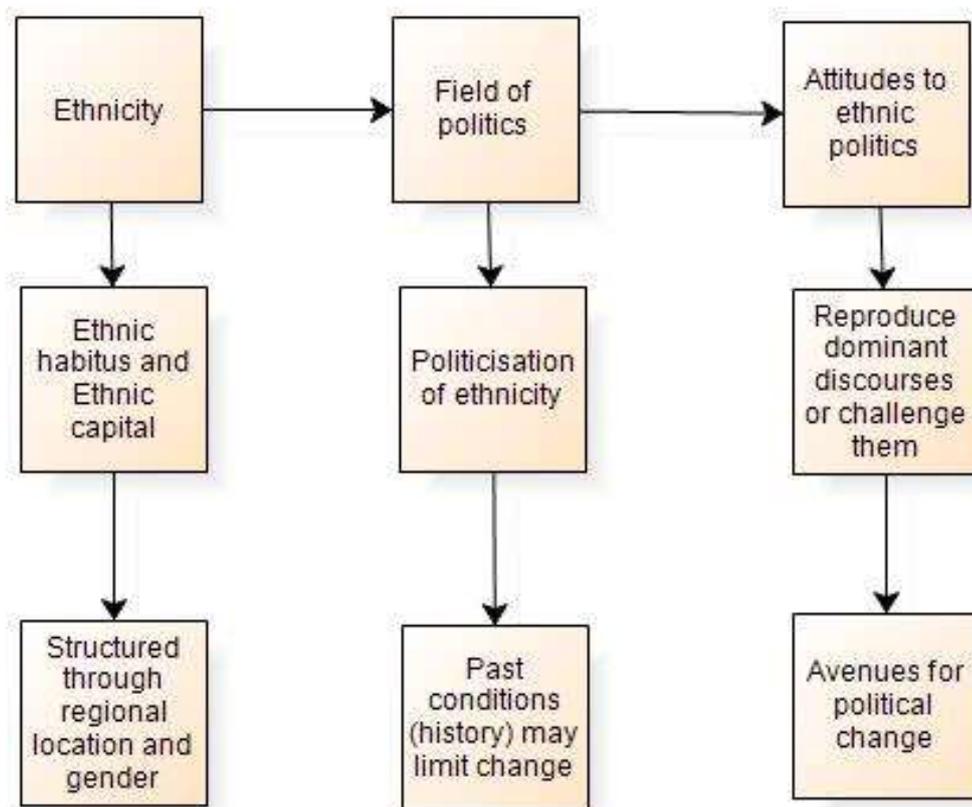
Figure 1 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework presented above contains a number of elements. To explain it a bit further, the thesis is interested in investigating the interaction of ethnicity with the field of politics. We can look at their ethnic identities through the notion of the ethnic habitus which they are socialized into. This includes the capital that they may possess in the form of networks

and a sense of trust in members of their community that may provide them with advantages in the political field. Their habitus is structured through their different regional locations and their gender. It is this ethnic habitus that interacts with the field of politics. The key features of this field will be discussed in detail in the next chapter but chief among this is the politicisation of ethnicity. In addition, past conditions that operate through various historical **"watershed moments" are influential to this particular field.** As was noted in the chapter, the political field is reproduced through knowledge of the doxa understood here as the rules of the game and through symbolic domination, understood as the adherence to the established political order. It is also reproduced through illusio which is the unchanging acceptance of the status quo. The combination of their ethnic habitus and the field of politics is what yields their attitudes towards ethnic politics. This will include their construction of politics and political actors as well as their demands of the political system. This will further enable us to understand their perceptions of ethnic politics and whether they are reproducing the dominant discourses or challenging them. Finally, we will be able to look at the impact of their ethnic and political attitudes in order to understand (in the conclusion) the potential avenues for change.

To summarise, as has been previously indicated, an understanding of history is essential in understanding habitus, as it is history that inclines both groups and individuals to certain actions. As Bourdieu himself mentioned, **"past conditions are what produce the habitus."** (Bourdieu, 1977: 72) This is particularly a shared sense of history, though when analysing political attitudes, as I am in this thesis, national history plays a key roles. As Vann (2013) **highlight in their study of Catalan political identities, "watershed moments" in Kenyan politics will be discussed in the following chapter with a** focus on elections and ethnic politics. In addition, the political histories of the four regions of interest in this thesis will be investigated.

Chapter 3:   Mapping the field: Understanding politics in Kenya

3.1   Introduction

This chapter will be descriptive and seeks to explore the dominant discourses surrounding the field of Kenyan politics. This is in order to map the field of Kenyan politics. Though it is not possible to cover the length and breadth of Kenyan politics in this chapter, I will aim to set out the relevant context for the thesis. This will be done through a focus on the election period(s) as one of the **"watershed moments" that** contribute to our understanding of key features of Kenyan politics, especially the politicisation of ethnicity. It will also include an analysis of the involvement of youth in politics which will show that while young people of voting age have been the focus of numerous debates, this is not the case with the young people under the age of 18. Additionally, the youth in Africa have been conceptualized as a dichotomy that is either a positive or negative force with issues such as generational tension coming to the fore. The argument that will be presented is that this dichotomy pre-judges our assumptions about the youth and the stance that should be adopted is one that recognizes their diversity and seeks to understand their dynamism. Moreover, brief case studies of the 4 regions of interest to the thesis, Nairobi, Coast, Central and Western will be presented in order to have an understanding of the micro political discourses in those areas. The purpose of this is to identify the key issues in the field of Kenyan politics. This will be in order to help us understand, in the subsequent chapters, how their ethnic habitus interacts with the field of politics to influence their attitudes towards the political system.

3.2   The politicisation of ethnicity and elections in Kenya

Political ethnicity has been defined by some in the literature as a condition where political elites use ethnicity as a political tool to manipulate citizens for their personal political gain, for instance to gain votes in an election. The phenomenon of ethnic politics has its roots in pre-independence Kenya. Different policies were applied to different tribes in order to manage the diverse country. For instance, in the fertile highlands of the Rift Valley, which **came to be known as the "white highlands" the Kalenjin community who** had lived there for generations and were pastoralists were forced to move out to make room for white settlers interested in farming. Because the Kalenjin were not traditionally famers, the Kikuyu community, who were farmers, were moved in to work on the farms. At independence, some of the Kikuyu remained and took over part of the farms where they had worked. In later years, this has proved to be a source of tension between these two communities and this fact has been exploited by the political elite, more so during election time. In the literature, the politicisation of ethnicity occurred when ethnicity became a legal identity rather than a purely socio-cultural one.(Mamdani, 2001a, Ekeh, 1990, Berman, 1998a, Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, 2000, Hagg and Kagwanja, 2007)

Countries in Africa were just as diverse in the pre-colonial era as they are now. They interacted through trade, war and intermarriage but were not united as a single political entity.(Bayart, 2005: 92-96) These later became codified into particular ethnic groups, with some which were previously distinct such as the Luhya who are made up of various clans being put under one umbrella. This process did not only involve the colonial authorities, who did it to make it easier for the colonial administration to govern the country, but included the **collusion of "African agents"** (Lynch, 2010) whose reasons were to gain a greater political ground in the colonial and post-colonial administration by presenting a united front. Indeed, this codification was central to the colonial **policies and was "used for the purpose of political control, enforcement of taxes and extraction of wealth."**(Broch-Due, 2005, Rubin, 2006) This was done through policies where access to the state was seen as a resource and different tribes had different levels of access to this and indeed, were treated quite differently. An example is in the Rwandan context where the Belgian colonial

authorities classified the Tutsi's as "Hamitic" and closer to the white ideal type than the Hutu and this has been touted as a factor in the subsequent ethnic conflict in Rwanda and Burundi.(Mamdani, 2001b, Prunier, 1995) The effects of these policies have carried over to the post-colonial state with issues such as generational tensions and ethnic group demands for land rights and recognition (Mcebisi, 2007, Berman, 2010, Chandra, 2006, Mamdani, 2001a, Hagg and Kagwanja, 2007, Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, 2000, Mutua, 2008) In addition, with the introduction of capitalism and "the institutions of modernity in the state and market"(Berman et al., 2010), it has led to the "uneven development of capitalist penetration in Kenya and its tendency to engender regional inequalities." (Ajulu, 2002: 251)

With modernisation there was the centralisation of the state institutions and apparatus in determining how resources will be accessed and distributed as well as classifying a number of indigenous practices as backward (for instance traditional medicine) and in effect "modernizing" the population through education, political institutions and religion. The assumption was that "modernization" with its attendant increase in "education, industrialization and urbanization" (Robinson, 2009) would bring about a greater national identity. This focus on elites and institutions (Ligaga, 2009, Ajulu, 2002, Ajulu, 1998, Branch, 2011, Omolo, 2002) has been emphasized in the literature. There has been some discussion on resistance to this ethnic manipulation or political tribalism which presents the angle that citizens do not simply passively accept conditions of political tribalism (Klopp, 2002). But this agency has also been highlighted in how citizens themselves are involved in reproducing the contexts and process of ethnic politics.(Lynch, 2011a, Lonsdale, 1994)

This ethnic character of politics is exacerbated by "access to material resources" (Mcebisi, 2007: 138) where this determines "whether or not ethnic mobilisation finds popular resonance. Where there is no discrimination or seeming favouritism [...] the possibility of a grievance arising is highly minimized."(Mcebisi, 2007: 140) The linking of ethnicity and politics in Kenya has led to a system where different community interests and not national interests dominate in politics. Similar to what Chabal and Daloz (1999) note, the political system is seen as legitimate as long as it fulfils the needs of a particular community. The modernization school as mentioned above would have us believe that with greater education and urbanization, ethnic identities will transform to a national identity. We can see that this is not the case. Bates

(1983) for instance showed that a greater ethnic identification has arisen as opposed to a national identification in the post-colonial context. As a result of this, ethnicity has been defined, with reference to the political context as a "problem"(Berman, 2010) that needs to be solved. Indeed, studies have shown that the more diverse a country in terms of ethnic groups or sub-nations, the more the likelihood of political conflict.(Habyarimana et al., 2007, Osaghae, 2004) The next section will illustrate this importance of ethnicity in the context of elections. The reason for this focus on elections is it has been shown that ethnic politics is often activated or at its peak during election periods.(Eifert et al., 2010, Posner, 2005) In addition, the research took place during an election period, with the pilot study occurring some six months before the elections and the main study occurring about two months after the 2013 general election.

3.3   Elections in Kenya

As in any democratic political system, elections are important but this is particularly so in the Kenyan context. Elections are one of the only ways that citizens feel they have some measure of power and control over their political leaders and futures. As is often said by the common citizen of members of parliament in various constituencies in Kenya, "I see them once every five years, when they come asking for my vote so my only chance to show my approval or disapproval is at the ballot." While there are irregularities that may affect electoral outcomes, most of these occur at the national level with the presidential elections. In addition, elections in Kenya are still perceived as "winner take all" as Ogot (1999: 287) so aptly stated,

> Winning and losing elections in Africa is not a simple matter. It means the exclusion of the losing ethnic groups from power and the distribution of resources and development. In Kenya, the competition for power has been fought between ethnic coalitions built around powerful individuals.

These links between elections and ethnicity in the Kenyan context date back to the pre independence period. During the negotiations that preceded

the country's independence from Britain in 1963, the type of government that would shape the future of the country was a contested issue. Two distinct camps emerged. One that would later form the political party KANU was composed of the majority tribes in Kenya (those with the highest populations) and sought to have a government that would feature a strong executive with centralised powers in a parliamentary system. The second camp which would later form the opposition party KADU wanted to have a more devolved and federal political system and was comprised of minority tribes who believed this was the best system to ensure their protection from the dominant majority. The redistribution of land by new government was a key issue. KANU, under the leadership of Jomo Kenyatta won this debate to form the independence government with a heavily centralised executive. The opposition was **suppressed and KANU's power** became absolute within the one party state framework.

Apart from some brief periods in the 1960s, other political parties were excluded from competitive politics. From 1982 to December1991 Kenya was a *de jure* one-party state. Indeed, from 1963, when the United Kingdom granted Kenya self-rule, until 2002 the KANU political party, which was founded in 1960, has been continuously in power. The ideals of unity and freedom that were evident in the anti-colonial struggle did not quite manifest themselves in a democratic state at independence. As Banks states**, "traditions and habits** acquired in a difficult struggle do not always coincide with the democratic virtues expected of normal politics. A liberation movement differs from a **political party and the transition is yet to be completed."**(Banks, 2004: 161) Therefore, Kenyans have had limited experience with multi-party politics.

We can therefore describe the party system in Kenya as embryonic. While in the older western democracies parties evolved over several centuries as mass parties, the experience in Kenya has been that parties are either owned or ultimately controlled by individuals. This has led to what can be termed **'cult of the individual' where communities will field particular** candidates who are seen to have their interests at heart, even to the detriment of others' political aspirations. As Ajulu (2002: 251) notes in his analysis of political parties,

> Throughout the period of its political independence, Kenya has had a fairly limited experience with competitive multi-party politics. The first

was the short-lived experiment with political pluralism from **independence in 1963 to the "Little General Election" in 1966. The** second began in the early 1990s and included the multiparty elections of 1992 and 1997. In both periods, ethnicity has emerged as the single most important factor in political competition. Political activity since the renewal of competitive politics in 1992 has seen the reconstruction of ethnicity, ethnic mobilisation and ethnic conflict as the main instruments of political contestation. Political parties have been organised along ethnic identities and state-power aggressively contested on the basis of mobilised ethnicity.

The historical nature of ethnic politics in Kenya has been exacerbated by subsequent government policies such as a controversial constitutional amendment that was passed just before the 1992 multi-party elections which required any presidential candidate to win not only a majority of the total vote, (more than 50**%) but also at least 25% in no fewer than five of Kenya's eight** provinces. This amendment was considered controversial because it was meant to prevent popular opposition candidates, who relied on their ethnic stronghold for support, from gaining a foothold, but on the other side of the coin it was seen as a way to ensure that presidential candidates needed support from a broad base of the electorate. This provision has been changed with the enactment of a new constitution that was voted in 2010 to usher in a new devolved system of government. The ethnic nature of political competition, however, has not changed with the adoption of a new system of government. With the new constitution, in order for a Presidential candidate to be declared the winner, not only do they have to accrue more than half of the votes in the entire country but also at least twenty-five percent of the votes cast in each of more than half of the [47] counties.(GOK, 2010: clause 139, b) This has fed on to the current trend that was witnessed in the build up to the 2013 national elections which featured ethnic coalition building by the two major political parties. This coalition building featured each political coalition engaging with political leaders of key communities in order to accrue their **"votes" from their communities and to seem to be taking the interests of those** particular tribes to heart.

This kind of ethnic coalition building has led to a number of conflicts surrounding elections, starting with the fight for multi-partysim. This struggle **was seen as a crucial point in Kenya's political history. External pressure from** the international community and internal pressure from the opposition and the Kenyan population (which included violent unrest) (Ajulu, 1998) all coalesced to force the KANU elites to gradually concede political power in an effort at greater democratization. The international pressure included the suspension of aid by the World Bank and other donors pending political reforms and took **place during a time of greater "market liberalisation and democratization which** were substantially weakening the post-colonial state and ushering in new **forms of violence and disorder."**(Hagg and Kagwanja, 2007: 10) This forced the one party government to repeal the 1982 amendment to the constitution that had locked the country in a one party system. Various strategies had to be adopted by both sides to ensure that they would not lose out in competitive **elections. One of these was "incitement of ethnic rivalrie**s for partisan political **gain."** (Hagg and Kagwanja, 2007, Watch, 1993: 1-4)

Perhaps the one important exception to this manipulation of ethnicity for political gain came in the 2002 general elections where the opposition united to remove President Moi who had been in power for twenty four years. Indeed the opposition campaign song of *yote yawezekana bila Moi* (everything is possible without Moi) crossed ethnic lines and led to the significant opposition coalition dubbed the Rainbow coalition, which included all the previous myriad opposition political parties under one banner. The success of this coalition also lay in the fact that Moi had put forward Uhuru Kenyatta, the son Jomo Kenyatta as the preferred KANU candidate without consulting his political allies. They viewed it as a ploy by him to remain in power behind the scenes and promptly defected to the opposition leaving the KANU party politically diminished. This election was a relatively peaceful one and showed the level of political maturity that Kenyans had the determination to do things right.(Munene, 2002: 72) For example, instances where various party officials tried to engage in irregularities in various constituencies were immediately quelled with citizens intervening and in some cases bodily throwing them out of polling centres. Moreover, it demonstrated that elections are more than 'bribe and tribe' (Hornsby and Throup, 1992) as indicated in the earlier literature that has also been supported by statistical empirical evidence which shows the tendency of voters to make decisions along ethnic lines (Posner,

2005, Bratton and Kimenyi, 2008). There is, however, a deeper issue at play here as Willis and Chome (2014) indicate in their work on politics in the coast. Voting decisions, even ethnic ones, are also about social capital as was indicated in the previous chapter.

The euphoria that succeeded the peaceful election was not to last. As Kenyan political analysts (Ajulu, 2002, Ndegwa, 2003) have noted,

> The influence of the old classes of capital whose socialisation in **Kenya's politics is intense and extensive. Ndegwa cautioned "against too much optimism" arguing correctly that "African** countries that had ushered long-reigning dictators out of power have tended to fall short of achieving truly transformative (or in some cases, even **significant) change"**(Murunga and Nasong'o, 2006: 10)

This "socialisation in Kenya's politics" does not only happen at the elite level but with the citizens as well. Moreover, political favours had been promised by the principal, Mwai Kibaki to his elite supporters and the general public and when some of these promises were allegedly not fulfilled, they began to move away from the coalition government. One of the main campaign agendas of the Rainbow coalition had been to overhaul and review the Kenyan constitution within 100 days. A battle emerged between those who remained in the coalition government, and those who moved away to form what was called the Orange Democratic Movement, involving disgruntled former Rainbow members and the former dominant KANU party and this played out in the politics surrounding constitutional reform.

The importance of having multiple political parties has been emphasised in the democratization literature but the question remains on the nature of these political parties and their will in actually advancing a democratic agenda. (Randall and Svasand, 2002) If political parties are no more than ethnic coalitions, formed at elections in an effort to gain votes, then their effectiveness in running a government in the post-election period becomes problematic. This has led to a question to be asked in the literature which is why it seems in Kenya that it is a case of one step forward two steps back and things never seem to change.(Ajulu, 1998, Branch et al., 2010, Branch, 2011) The focus of these authors is on the elite and political party level, but there is

another side in the literature that seeks to focus on the role of the citizen in the political system (Lynch, 2011a, Chabal, 2009, Burbridge, 2014) and how their experiences influence political outcomes. This may provide the answer as to why the Kenyan political system never seems to move forward. Indeed, as was presented in the previous theoretical chapter, part of the reason may be that citizens are socialized into the political system in a way that precludes significant change of the values within the system. Certainly, as those in the nationalism literature state, the nation or in our case ethnic politics is not simply as a result of high level forces. **According to Eric Hosbawm, "**It is simultaneously the practical accomplishment of ordinary people engaging in routine activi**ties."**(1992: 10) In addition, he acknowledges that while nationalism is " '[...] constructed essentially from above, [it] cannot be understood unless also analysed from below, that is in terms of the assumptions, hopes, needs, longings and interests of ordinary people, which are not necessarily national and **still less nationalist'."** (Fox and Idriss-Miller, 2008: 537) And what better way to understand this than through the lens of young people, which is the purpose of this thesis. It is important to ask what politics and what their tribes mean to them, similar to what Fox and Idriss-Miller note the literature on nationalism turned, to asking citizens to articulate what the nation means to them. Indeed, this formed one of the first questions that were asked in the focus group discussions; what do you think about politics in Kenya?

This struggle at the elite level is replicated and perhaps even enhanced by citizens expectation for politicians to provide resources for their community. A relationship thus develops where ethnic capital, as described in the theoretical chapter, is built up as a political resource that is used by both elites and citizens. We can take as an example **the "Kikuyu capital" that Ajulu** refers to in his work that Moi had to dismantle when he came to power. This has a direct link to the concept of capital discussed in the theoretical chapter **that will be used as a frame to analyse young people's political attitudes.** Political ethnicity can be **referred to as the "tendency for elites to mobilise ethnicity for political ends."**(Ajulu, 1998: 252) But this definition runs both ways. The citizens themselves have the ability to mobilise politicians for their ends. An example of this two way ethnic mobilization can be seen in the events of the 2007 general elections which will be discussed in the next section.

3.3.1   The 2007 Elections: Violence as never seen before

On 27 December 2007 some ten million Kenyans went to the polls in what was generally anticipated to be the most hotly contested and close-run **presidential, parliamentary and civic elections in the country's 45 years since** emerging from British colonial rule. (Kriegler, 17 September 2008: 1) The two opposing sides in the vote were headed up by incumbent president Mwai Kibaki and his Party of National Unity (PNU) with Raila Odinga on the opposite end with his Orange Democratic Movement (ODM). There was a third candidate, Kalonzo Musyoka of the Orange Democratic Movement –Kenya (ODM-K) but his role has been likened to that of an independent in American presidential races and was not considered significant.[3] The demarcation of the parties seemed to be PNU for the Kikuyu and other tribes of the central and Northern provinces with the western Luo, Luhya and coastal ethnic groups in ODM. This demarcation was not clear however as for example the Kamba were split between Kalonzo Musyoka and the other two dominant camps.

In the run up to the 2007 elections, campaigning at all levels of the contest featured ethnic hate speech and violence. Since the failed constitutional referendum in 2005, political discourse in Kenya had been sustained at a high pitch and tended to focus on the presidential contest. The two main presidential candidates had led opposing sides in the referendum, which was won by the Odinga side. It was therefore hardly surprising that a prominent feature of the ODM parliamentary and presidential campaigns was the claim that only rigging could prevent their taking power at the elections.(Kriegler, 17 September 2008: 1)

The 2007 general elections in Kenya were **considered a "resounding failure" and were characterised by subsequent ethnic violence in the country** which left 1150 people dead, 300,000 internally displaced and damage to property ran to billions of shillings.(Kriegler, 17 September 2008: 1) Some **degree of violence has been a part of Kenya's electoral processes since the** restoration of multi-party politics. However, the violence that shook Kenya after the 2007 general elections was unprecedented. It was by far the most

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[3] It was, however later to emerge in the discourses surrounding the elections, that he was seen as a 'traitor' having split the vote by refusing to back either candidates. Indeed he had initially been allied to the ODM party but had fallen out with them

deadly and the most destructive violence ever experienced in Kenya. Also, unlike previous cycles of election related violence, much of it followed rather than preceded the elections. The 2007-8 post-election violence was also more widespread than in the past. It affected all but two provinces and was felt in both urban and rural parts of the country.(CIPEV, 2008: vii)

As is further explained by Ruteere (2008: 1) in his report on the Mungiki **militia groups' involvement in the violence**:

> The first wave of violence swept over the Western, Nyanza, Rift valley coast, and Nairobi provinces, principally targeting communities viewed as having voted for President Mwai Kibaki and his Party of National Unity. The second wave of violence in parts of Rift Valley and Central provinces was retaliatory and saw attacks and displacement of communities viewed as supporters of the Orange Democratic Movement and its leader Raila Odinga.[4]

In some ways the post-election violence resembled the ethnic clashes of the 1990s and was but an episode in a trend of institutionalization of violence in Kenya over the years. The fact that armed militias, most of whom developed as a result of the 1990s ethnic clashes, were never de-mobilized led to the ease with which political and business leaders reactivated them for the 2007 post-election violence. Secondly, the increasing personalization of power around the presidency continues to be a factor in facilitating election related violence. The widespread belief that the presidency brings advantages for the **President's ethnic group makes communities willing to e**xert violence to attain and keep power.(CIPEV, 2008: vii) Indeed, this was the motivation behind the push for a new constitution with a devolved system of governance which would move power away from the centre and the presidency to local counties which would better reflect the needs of the people. In addition, the issue of land and access to such resources was one of the factors in the post-election violence.

There has been a move in the academic literature to analyse the claims **to "sons of the soil" and** autochthonous belonging especially with the 2007

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[4] Though it should be noted that in Kisumu and areas of the capital Nairobi, the violence was not targeted principally at any group put took the form of riots where people expressed their displeasure at the apparent "theft" of the election.

post-election violence.(Jenkins, 1997, Geschiere and Gugler, 1998, Geschiere and Jackson, 2006, Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, 2000, Dorman et al., 2007) **These studies have traced the evolution of** "autochthonous discourses of **belonging and exclusion"**(Jenkins, 1997: 15) from varied perspectives such as **burial customs and the "immigrant guest metaphor"**(Jenkins, 2012) The land question is not new, with land-based ethnic violence being a feature of every election since the beginning of multi-party democracy, and even for some years before that. The factors behind this are multiple and contradictory, with on the one hand, Kenya **being held up as "a successful model of agrarian reforms" while on the other, the "post-colonial land reform polarized Kenya's ethnic interests"**(Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, 2000: 423, Haugerud, 1989)

There are a number of reasons that have been given for this ethnicisation of land. Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers present the following analysis:

> The reasons for the ethnicisation of land have been three fold. Access to land already formed one of the main currencies of power during colonial times, and in the post-colonial error it became one of the tenets of the political economy. Control over land represents a multi-dimensional resource: it is used as a community territory, as an economic resource, as a source of administrative revenue and as a social asset. It is therefore significant in terms of ethnic identity formation. Ethnicity has evolved into a crucial resource in the hands of local elites and armed actors for the mobilization of political and economic resources(Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers, 2005: 9).

This link between ethnicity and land is not just in social terms but has linkages to economic systems that are entrenched within the patronage system of the state. One of the ways that the government has sought to resolve this is with the enactment of the new constitution in 2010 which stipulated the formation of a land commission to resolve land grievances. While the land question is important in discourses surrounding ethnic politics, it was thought that with reference to the age group of concern (those between 14-17 and in education) it was thought that a focus on their adaptation to varying contexts would be of greater benefit than a focus on land, which may not be of concern

to them at this time. For example in the discussions in the pilot study, some young men in Nyeri noted that they had to adapt learn the language of the majority community that lives in that area when they moved into the area in order to study. [1NYEB1 Pilot AFGD] Moreover, when the young people were asked about issues within Kenyan politics and within their communities, the discussions focus on the equal distribution of resources rather than specifically on land.

Politics in Kenya since 2007 has focused on adopting a new constitution, which was touted as the solution to the previous issues in the political system, including the centralization of power which led to discrimination in the distribution of resources and manipulation of government instruments in elections. This led to the adoption of a new constitution in 2010 with the provisions for a devolved system of government, with a bicameral parliament. Instead of the previous eight provinces, there are now forty-seven counties which better reflect the identities of the communities within them. Each of these counties is headed by a governor and has its own county assembly. Each county also elects a senator to represent their interests in the senate. There are also 290 constituencies that elect members of parliament to the second assembly. These two houses are supposed to act as checks and balances in the law making process. It is still too early to comment on the effect of the devolved system as the first elections under this new system were in March 2013, and the research took place immediately after this. The young people did, however, comment on the potential of the new system in their discussions. Indeed, there have been articles published which note that these elections still reflected the patronage networks that were prevalent under the **old system. 'Insiders' in terms of those with social networks and contacts** within their constituencies still won positions **over 'outsiders' who may have** had more effective policies. Cornell states that the electorate voted for **"patronage over policy."**(2014: 178)

As has been highlighted previously, ethnic coalition building (Ferree et al., 2014) was still present, as each coalition had to garner at least twenty five percent of the vote in half the counties. However there were some new dimensions that emerged. Firstly the Jubilee coalition (whose principals had been indicted by the ICC for crimes against humanity) framed the ballot **process as a 'referendum' against the ICC.** In addition, because they had been on opposing sides during the 2007 election crisis they also framed their

campaign as a peaceful reconciliation. Secondly, the northern region of Kenya **found themselves as a key "swing" area in the 2013 elections which had** previously not been the case.(Carrier and Kochore, 2014) Indeed, this election was to the surprise of some(Cheesman et al., 2014) quite peaceful, due perhaps to the democratic reforms and strong civil society peace agenda that had been in force since the contested 2007 elections. What is surprising is the post-election period remained peaceful despite the controversy over the result due to a new system of electronic tallying which failed in its mandate to provide a clear and fair way of tallying the results. This was one of the major issues in the 2007 general election. This led to one of the contestants, Raila Odinga, challenging the results in court, though he accepted their decision against him in favour of Uhuru Kenyatta. The narratives surrounding this are still relevant in the political space as will be noted in the empirical chapters where the young people in particular reflect this uncertainty in the election results, and to a certain degree the contested legitimacy in the incumbent president.

The issues raised in this descriptive account above all focus on the **effect of people's identities on the political system. The next section will** seek to ground them by taking account of how these issues have been dealt with in the literature with a focus on the dichotomy of moral ethnicity versus political tribalism and the dimensions of citizenship; **for instance Mamdani's**(2001a) **settler versus native, Ekeh's** (1975) **two publics and Ndegwa's** (1997) two civic versus republican citizen. It will illustrate the failure of the nation building process and lead us on to a discussion on how young people have been involved in these political processes and the four themes that will be used to analyse their political narratives.

3.4 The nature of identity in Kenya

The bifurcated nature of citizenship in the African state has been elaborated upon by Mahmood Mamdani (Mamdani, 1996, Mamdani, 2001a, Mamdani, 2001b). In his works, he discusses the difficulties faced by the newly independent states in the formation of a coherent political unit. The trend at the time was to, "homogenize and flatten cultural diversity" **in favour of a** singular narrative. This is where a national identity was favoured over and

above a tribal one in addition to completing the process started by the colonial authorities(Munene, 2002) with the agency of local citizens in some cases (Lynch, 2006, Willis, 1992, Bayart, 2005, Lentz and Nugent, 2000) of essentalizing these once fluid communities.

This redefinition of identities led, for example to the settler versus native dichotomy, which has been touched on in the descriptive narrative above. This is where polarities, especially with regards to land rights between those who considered themselves "natives" and those who were considered "guests". **"Ethnic heterogeneity, was thus transformed into a source of tension."**(Mamdani, 1996) Though some may claim that Africa has not **witnessed the kind of "parade ground" nation building that was characteristic** of states in Europe as they forged their civic identities, there was a push towards nationalism and the formation of national identities. This was not by any means a democratic process and in Kenya focused on the one party state under president Moi. Certainly in the immediate post-colonial period, the successors to the colonial government were concerned with forging a nation but **"unity was defined as the lack of opposition."**(Nasong'o, 2010)

The character of the post-colonial state therefore focused on the externally constructed nature of identities with the emphasis on the differences between various groups which was inherited and expanded upon at independence.(Brass, 1991, Kagwanja, 2009, Mattes, June 2004, Kellas, 1991, Greenburg, 1980, Jonyo and Owuoche, 2004, Ekeh, 1975) The nationalist and homogenization model was adopted. Moreover, there was the Africanist school of thought which is still prevalent in some more recent literature of the need to return to the values, practices and norms of the pre-colonial period (Mazrui, 1995) But whether the exclusionary discourses were started or led by the colonisers, or African agents had a hand in perpetuating them, the key point is that such ethnic political cleavages have pre-empted the evolution of **"nationally-based political organizations."**(Maropeng and Odhiambo, 2009)

The peaceful coexistence of the 42 or so ethnic groups had to be ensured post-independence. This was attempted in various ways with national identity being extolled in the curriculum in direct opposition to a tribal identity (Maropeng and Odhiambo, 2009, Arnot et al., 2012) In addition there were socio-cultural elements of nation building such as national songs and initiatives like the *Maziwa ya Nyayo* (school feeding) program which was centralized through the state and included unifying principles. This ideal was

commendable but there were a number of problems that emerged as a result of it. For example, the nation building project served as one of the justifications of the one party state which was envisioned as a centralized unifying mechanism and the motto of the first president of "*Harambee*" meaning let us all come together. Multi partysm was seen as divisive. Strong ethnic attachments were seen as a detriment to the functioning of effective democracy[5] and indeed the African elites and nationalists saw ethnicity as a "problem". That is why even now there is an emphasis on a national identification as evidenced from the pomp and circumstance that recently followed an announcement that over 50% of Kenyans identify with a national identity.(Afrobarometer, 2013) The nation state is the reality of the international system and thus strategies were put in place to make it effective both internally and externally. The term "pathological homogenisation"[6] (Rae, 2002: 5) can be adopted here to emphasize what has also been called a "parochial and hegemonizing process" which has seen as the result ethnic conflicts over land and other resources (Fanon, 1967: 183) Attendant to this state building project was greater economic liberalization. The problem with this was greater liberalism within the context of an ethnically diverse population, without the mechanisms to deal with competition and the resulting conflict. Though it seems here that strong ethnic attachments have been at the heart of all these problems, the view that can be adopted is one that is similar to multiculturalism (Kymlicka and Wayne, 2000) where if ethnic diversity is recognized and channelled in appropriate ways then it can be a resource rather than a hindrance.

The architect of the hegemonizing process was the founding President, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta who some say cemented the Kikuyu hegemony and later President Moi. Kenyatta maintained the illusion of ethnic diversity, by for example having Daniel Arap Moi, a Kalenjin as his vice president but behind this façade, the power lay in the central province Gikuyu, Embu and Meru association (GEMA). With 42 distinct ethnic groups, each with their own language/dialect, it is easy to see why this centralization and control by only

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[5] For a more detailed explanation of these factors, see Nueberger (2000)
[6] Pathological homogenization is a term used by Heather Rae to describe the strategies that various states used to unify their populations and more importantly attempt to create a "homogenous population within the boundaries of their sovereign states."

particular communities has led to tensions. Indeed part of the rhetoric during the 2007 elections was of "41 against 1" which was the other 41 communities against the Kikuyu. Currently, the majority are the Kikuyu at 22% then the Luhya and Luo at 14% and 13% of the population respectively. The Kalenjin are 12% while the Kamba are 11%. (Agency, 2012) These are sometimes referred to as the big 5 ethnic groups as the others follow this trend in ever decreasing numbers. The term big 5 also refers to the dominance of these groups in the political arena. These groups are distributed among eight provinces that divide up Kenya's geographic space. These are Central, Coast, Eastern, Nairobi, North Eastern, Nyanza, Rift valley and Western provinces. The central province is predominantly Kikuyu, Eastern Kamba, Western Luo and Nyanza Luhya. Nairobi is the capital and therefore quite cosmopolitan and the coast province is a mix of the Swahili, Mijikenda and other tribes. This has currently changed with the reorganization of boundaries from 8 provinces to 47 counties as a result of the provisions for the devolution of power in the 2010 constitution. These will have their own government headed by a governor with control of resources for projects such as healthcare and infrastructure. The provincial boundaries are still relevant to our historical understanding of politics. Since the 1920s, political and economic factors have encouraged the movement of populations within Kenya's national borders, often to zones where they constitute ethnic minorities. For instance, numerous Kikuyu and members of other ethnic groups migrated from the central highlands after being dispossessed by the British. Others moved to Rift Valley province as farm labourers, farmers, traders, or civil servants.

The key assumption during the early nation building process was that greater modernization would bring about a national identity. Modernity would erase strong ethnic attachments and lead to a greater national identification along the lines of the historical development of the western world. This would happen through universal education, greater interaction between different groups and cultures as well as greater economic integration. (Robinson, 2009, Neuberger, 2000, Bannon, 2004) In terms of national and ethnic identification, this seems to be the case as with data from the Afrobarometer survey as well as other surveys showing that respondents identify more with a Kenyan identity than with their ethnic identities.(Bratton and Kimenyi, 2008) This is an interesting finding given the literature on voting according to ethnic lines and the violence experienced in the country in 2007, but perhaps it is a case of

both strong ethnic attachments and strong national identities are true. This contradiction is solved when we look at the **concept of "aspectival identity"** (Tully, 2008) where different identities come to the fore depending on the context that is presented. This contradiction can also be seen in the **phenomenon where "Kenyans hold stern views on public accountability and its** moral tests. But their thought and practice are contradictory. They can be **ethically honourable and tribally factional." They therefore display a "contradictory political culture."** (Lonsdale, 2010: 75) As was highlighted in the theoretical chapter, the different identities can be considered as a part of their ethnic habitus and depending on the fields that they find themselves in, different elements are activated. So as it turns out, modernity was not the harbinger of national unity as was envisioned. What did happen was a period of democratic transition that is still continuing today.(Steeves, 2006, Nasong'o and Murunga, 2007, Carothers, 2002) The traditional democratic transition **literature focused on the assumption of a "linear" form of progression from a** non-democratic state to a fully democratic one with any reversion being seen as a backwards step.(Ajulu, 1998) This has been criticised in the more recent work as it does not take into account the complexities of identities as well as focusing too heavily on free and fair elections as an indicator of democratic achievement rather than a holistic view of the transformation of society. One such complexity that has been noted in Kenya by Ndegwa (1997) as indicated previously, is the duality of citizenship identities expressed in the country. Though I do not agree with his analysis of the civic and republican dimensions of citizenship in Kenya, I do concur with his sentiments on identities. He emphasizes that, in the transition period from one party dictatorship to multi-party democracy:

> The stalled transition reflects the effects of republican citizenship in ethnic political communities and liberal citizenship in the national political community. This duality in citizenship engenders conflict over democracy- conceived as liberal majoritarian democracy-and results in ethnic coalitions disagreeing over which institutions are appropriate for a multi-ethnic state.(1997: 599)

Moreover he argues that:

> Individuals in a post-colonial state like Kenya operate with dual citizenship, one in an ethnic community and the other in the nation state. Within the ethnic community on the one hand, citizenship takes a republican form that subordinates individual rights and demands certain actions in the public arena to preserve and advance the community. The post-colonial state on the other hand grants all its members a liberal citizenship that emphasizes individual rights and does not or is unable to extract obligations(1997: 613)

This leads us to a discussion on the other duality of identity that manifests itself in Kenyan society, which is that of moral ethnicity versus political tribalism.

3.4.1   Moral ethnicity versus political tribalism

The duality of African citizenship is also replicated in the notion of moral ethnicity versus political tribalism. This duality has been reflected in other areas **of the literature, such as Ekeh'**s (1975) tw**o publics, and Ndegwa's (1997)** liberal versus republican citizenship **as mentioned above and Eyoh's** (1999) ethnicity from above versus ethnicity from below. According to Lonsdale:

> Moral ethnicity is a process of ourselves-ing, rather neglected in **Africanist literature. Political tribalism is one of 'othering' often the political analyst's staple fare."** The second is the distinction between high, low and deep politics. High politics is the realm of the elite and the **politicians. Where low politics concerns itself with the "politics of survival"** and is where the citizens come into play. Deep politics is what connects **the two. "[...] connections between patronage on high and clientage** below. These are bound by contracts of obligation, differently interpreted **on either side and daily renegotiated [...]** (Lonsdale, 2004: 74-77)

This process has also been explained as moral ethnicity being an **"internal" process of ethnic construction with political tribalism being its "external dimension". This internal dimensi**on concerns itself with the process

of ethnic identity construction and was seen as a cultural resource where members of a group found themselves obligated to follow its precepts and was used to hold their leaders accountable while the external dimension:

> [...] Emerged out of the diverse consequences of colonialism for different African communities, especially with regard to access to the resources of modernity and economic accumulation. Political tribalism did not involve a search for a moral community of rights and obligations, but rather collective political organization and action across the boundaries of communities defined by moral ethnicity, first against the alien power of the colonial state and then, increasingly, against the competing interests of other emerging rival ethnicities for access to the state and control of its patronage resources(Berman, 1998b: 324)

Though these two processes are presented as distinct in the literature, I believe that they are interrelated. I would present this perception of ourselves-ing (Lonsdale, 2004) as ethnicity as social capital. This will be how young people view the networks and values of their ethnic identity enable them to have advantages in both politics and social life. I seek to understand how these two processes co-exist hand in hand. On the one side, the formation of ethnic identities is predicated on rites, such as rites of passage, marriage and death in addition to values that are important to the community. But on the other hand these can also form the basis of othering, which leads to the negative ethnic politics. As was highlighted in the theoretical framework, a person can possess not only one habitus but many habitii and these are durable and transposable across a number of fields. Practices learned in one arena are transferable across fields. If we look at through this lens we can see how these moral ethnicity and political tribalism are less of a dichotomy and more circular in their relationship to each other. Indeed, Richard Werbner in his epilogue to the edited volume on the politics of recognition noted that, that while the two processes of ourselvsing and othering had been presented as distinct, he did not believe them to be so. He further stated that:

> My own approach to super tribalism, [...] considers how the expression of belonging opposes 'us' and 'them' and yet simultaneously mirror 'them'

and us in ongoing actually enacted interrelations which are at once moral, existential and political.(Werbner, 2004: 267)

These "community of rights" and moral obligations that are imposed on members of the community are what may serve to produce pressures in politicians to act in a favourable way to their community while discriminating against others. So these rights and obligations feed into their expectations under political tribalism. These positions of moral ethnicity and political tribalism may be presented in a circular manner rather than a dichotomy. Not enough has been said, I believe, about how these two forms of ethnicity play off each other. Moral ethnicity is often presented as a potential solution to political tribalism. (Klopp, 2002) However, others have indicated, moral **ethnicity in not necessarily a positive or emancipatory force** "nor will it forge a **strong identity or have liberating effects."** (Jenkins, 2012: 57)

We can see how they are interrelated if we look at them through the trilogy of habitus, capital and field. For example, the contradiction or fluidity between the two concepts comes when young people advocate for democracy and equality, at the same time wanting politicians to take care of their own communities. My understanding of it is that this contradiction comes about because of the different interactions of **individual's** ethnic habitus with the variety of fields that they come into contact with. Different elements of their habitus come into play dependent upon the context. For example, a few years ago the CEO of a major mobile company in Kenya described Kenyan consumer **behaviour as "peculiar" noting that they can bitterly complain about the service** they receive while still remaining loyal to the service provider.

Some of the features of moral ethnicity and political tribalism that are interrelated are:

1. **"MP's are personally responsible for funding local development."**(Cheeseman, 2009: 9) This responsibility is present even though they may do this at the detriment of other areas that they represent. If benefits do not accrue for their particular tribe or community from where they originate then they may seem to have failed in their purpose. This may arise from the values linked to moral ethnicity or taking care of others in your community when you yourself

are more well to do. For instance it is still common for urban dwellers to send money to their rural homes to support development in those areas.

2. Another example of how moral ethnicity and political tribalism are interrelated is in terms of representation. Burbridge (2014: 206) notes that one key mechanism at work in moral ethnicity is the prioritisation of reputation as interpreted through local mores and customs. This is one of the ways in which the conduct of community members as well as their leaders is interpreted. Part of this reputational demand could be **the ability of a politician to represent the people "well" at the national** level. Not only the constituency to which they are elected, indeed the tribe from which they come from.

3.4.2 Towards an understanding African identity politics

The previous sections of this chapter have focused on a description of the Kenyan political context emphasising the election period. It has also introduced the concepts of moral ethnicity and political tribalism and noted that the thesis seeks to show how they are interrelated. The next section will summarise these issues of African identity politics in the four themes that Chabal and Daloz raised in their work on African identity politics. These themes will serve as a framework through which young **people's perceptions of** the political system will be presented. Patrick Chabal and Jean Pascal Daloz, (1999: 51-55) highlight a number of factors that are necessary to our **understanding of the "politics of African identity"** which have been recurrent in the literature on ethnic politics in Africa. They can serve as a useful tool in analysing political discourses. They are; the boundaries of politics, the notion of the individual, the issue of political legitimacy and the question of representation.

3.4.2.1 The boundaries of politics

When considering the boundaries of politics, we can say that the divisions between politics and other aspects of society such as culture, tribe and religion are less clear in the African context. **As Young would term it, ethnicity is "an enduring attribute of African political dynamics."** (Young, 2002: 2-3) It is

indeed a "**political resource**" (Lentz, 1995: 310 , Bratton and Kimenyi, 2008: 1, Ajulu, 2002) needed to win elections, gain power and operate a government as was indicated earlier in this chapter on the politicisation of ethnicity. This is because of particular communities benefiting and others being marginalized depending on who is in power. For instance, in one constituency in the western region of Kenya, the party primaries for the CORD[7] alliance highlighted the fact that it is the majority ethnic group that has dominated politics to the perceived detriment of the minority community present. The elders of the latter have that in the forthcoming elections, it should be one of their members who run for political office in order to secure their interests which have not been taken into account. Additionally, there is also a need **to distinguish between "group versus individual ethnic consciousness.**"(Young, 2002: 13) A large part of the literature looks at how ethnicity operates at the group level, but where we can most clearly see the rationale behind the ethnic decision making process is at **the "individual level."** (Young, 2002: 13) For example if we look at studies (Bratton and Kimenyi, 2008, Norris and Mattes, 2003) of support for political parties across Africa, ethnicity and linguistic cleavages are important in **explaining an individual's** support for parties in power though evaluations of government performance in service delivery also influence voters. There is also an element of trust that comes into play, as highlighted in the conceptual framework on ethnicity as capital including elements of social trust. According to Bratton and Kimenyi (2008) Kenyans downplay the influence of ethnicity on their own decisions but think it has a large impact on the decisions of people from other ethnic groups. The individual is therefore of great importance to our analysis of ethnic politics.

3.4.2.2   The notion of the individual

In the section above, it has been highlighted that there is a need to look at the individual level in terms of ethnic consciousness. But it should also be noted that "**individuals are not seen as being […] meaningfully separated from** the **communities to which they belong.**"(Chabal and Daloz, 1999: 52) To **understand politics on the continent, we must understand how Africans can"** be both modern and non-**individualist." This is not to imply an inherent**

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[7] CORD stands for Coalition for the Restoration of Democracy and is one of the umbrella under which a number of political parties have come together in order to field a single presidential candidate.

socialism to African politics but to situate ethnicity and the implicit allegiance to one's ethnic group as a core part of an individual, especially as they interact with politics and society. This allegiance to one's community has implications for the political system, as will be seen below in the context of political legitimacy.

3.4.2.3   The issue of political legitimacy

What may be understood as legitimacy in other contexts may not be the same for the Kenyan/African context. Weber (1964: 124) would define it at the basic level as "faith in a particular social order." Legitimacy in the state and government is not universal, mainly because of unequal distribution of resources. In addition, legitimacy in the African context can also be about "performance" and therefore authoritarian governments can be seen as legitimate as long as there is positive economic performance. Moreover the legitimacy of a particular politician and indeed the government comes into question depending on the community that they are from. To give an example, the phrase "our turn to eat" (Wrong, 2009, Branch et al., 2010) has the connotation of marginalization of different communities in the country, where if the President or a particular politician is from the "wrong community" then their legitimacy to act can be contested. This was a recent situation on the northern region of Kenya where citizens questioned the distribution of political positions where some clans felt that they should each have a representative. (Field notes 2013)

Shadrack Nasong'o in his work on constitutional reform in Kenya has highlighted that legitimacy as "broad based participation, fairness and responsiveness of government" with the connotation of a free and fair election. (2010: 220) From the initial data in the pilot study, legitimacy is implicitly touched upon and confirms Chabal's view of performance, with statements such as "To improve and take care of common *Mwananchi's* [citizen's] life standards as 1st priority" emerging from the data. (Letter to political candidates, Rural Adult-led FGD) but also highlighted Nasong'o's view of fairness, with call for equal distribution of resources confirmed by statements such as "To all aspiring candidates: Please let us use our energy for positive gain of this country as a whole." (Letter to political candidates, Rural Peer-led FGD)

3.4.2.4   The question of representation

For Chabal and Daloz, **"in mature democracies the function of the representative is to a**ct **on behalf of [...] a given constituency, in Africa the situation is more complex."**(1999: 55) For instance, the current coalition building in anticipation of the March 2013 elections featured power sharing agreements that were geared towards not only representing constituencies but **also the ability of the politicians to 'pull' voters from their various** communities. Therefore, the Jubilee[8] alliance consisted of two key principals, Uhuru Kenyatta, a Kikuyu to bring in his community as well as William Ruto, a Kalenjin who is supposed to focus his campaign in his particular ethnic stronghold.(Nationteam, 29 November 2012) **"representation, therefore is necessarily communal"** (1999: 55) and takes on an ethnic dimension. The representative is not only expected to act on behalf of a particular constituency but also on behalf of his or her tribe.

3.5   A tale of four regions

As was discussed in the theoretical framework, past conditions are what produce habitus and enable us to act in a certain way in future events. (Bourdieu, 1977: 72) The following section will give a brief overview of the four regions that were of interest in the fieldwork. This will seek to highlight some of the political narratives that are characteristic of the areas. For instance we **will see that in certain areas there are "invocations of a history of group repression."**(Vann, 2013) This will give us a reference to be able to analyse whether young people are reproducing these discourses or challenging them. Some of the cross cutting narratives that are present in Kenyan politics, **particularly during the election period include the "40 against one"** (Chege, 2008) narrative, the one being the Kikuyu community that are seen to have dominated in politics and the 40 being the other communities. In addition there is the Kikuyu versus Luo binary (Odhiambo, 2002) that has stretched from independence to the present day.

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[8] The Jubilee alliance is one other umbrella coalition that has brought together a number of political parties in order to directly oppose the CORD alliance mentioned previously.

3.5.1 Coast region

Mombasa is located in the coastal region of the country. It has a rich history being a site of Arab trade for hundreds of years. The Arabs traded with communities in the interior, through the Kamba tribe who would access ivory and slaves and transport them to the coast for subsequent transport to the Middle East. By the "fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Islamic towns were established, having grown from those of local farming and trading communities from as early as the ninth century"(Spear, 2000: 258). There are a number of ethnic communities in the coast including the Swahili, Arabs and Shirazi, as well as the Mijikenda.

There is a strong perception of the coastal history of marginalization from the centre, where power is held at the capital by particular communities who take advantage of others. This includes taking away their ancestral land and using it for the benefit of a few and not the local coastal communities. This has been expressed through various discourses in the popular media. For instance in the run up to the 2007 elections and as far back as 2005 during the referendum debate, there was a small secessionist movement (called the Mombasa Republican Council) that sprung up which demanded that the coastal region secede from the rest of Kenya, as in the pre-colonial history they had been independent.(Willis and Gona, 2013, Gona, 2008) Indeed, one of the slogans that emerged was "*Pwani si Kenya*" which translates as "The coast does not belong to Kenya." This shared sense of marginalization is not however universal. When seen by other communities, the coast seems like a homogenous region, with a large number of the inhabitants sharing values and a religion (Islam) and common goals. Indeed, they are often universally referred to as "Coasterians" by citizens from the rest of the country. However, as Willis and Chome highlight,

> A striking feature of 2012 and 2013 was the way in which the MRC became the way in which 'up-country' debated with and about the 'the Coast', in a language which was often accusatory or recriminatory. Participants on both sides of that debate repeatedly evoked two contrasting images of Kenya: as the inclusive nation which embraces the

coast, and as a distinctive up-country world which is culturally and politically remote. (2014: 117)

According to Mghanga, Ali Mazrui noted that the coastal region defined itself through a number of "paradoxes". Throughout history it had been one of the most cosmopolitan areas of the country, portraying ethnic and religious diversity with Arabs as well as local tribes intermingling. It was a key trade area with slaves, ivory and other goods being traded across the Indian Ocean with the Middle East. Despite this the coast has continued to be underdeveloped "in terms of modern education" and "is under represented in the political system. There is a persistent perception of being politically marginalized with people of Coastal origin holding relatively few executive positions in central administration. Also, members of parliament are often viewed to "forget" their constituencies once they have been elected and gone to Nairobi"(Mghanga, 2010: vii) This marginalization is backed up, to a certain extent by statistical evidence with the Kenya integrated household budget survey showing that the coast has the highest rural poverty levels after the North Eastern region.(Statistics, 2007) These instances of marginalization are what have been used to explain the coasts support for the **Majimbo**[9] system of government. What is of interest in looking at this narrative of marginalization is whether young people are reproducing it and are coherent in its expression.

3.5.2   Central region

The central region is home to the coalition known as GEMA which comprises the Gikuyu, Embu and Meru. The research took place in the Nyeri area of the region, which is predominantly Gikuyu. The Gikuyu or Kikuyu as it is also spelt, are known as the dominant tribe in Kenyan politics as well as in the economy and business industry. This is also the community that rose up against the British during colonial rule and formed the famous Mau Mau fighters who fought for independence. There is a residual narrative within the Kikuyu that their power within the country is a deserved reward, as they are the ones who sacrificed the most for independence. However, the founding father, Mzee

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[9] Majimbo/Majomboism can be translated as regionalism or federalism. It was an ideology that was first advocated for at independence by the KADU political party as the preferred system of government as it was decentralized and would thus protect minority communities.

Jomo Kenyatta sought a more unifying narrative by stating that 'We all fought for Uhuru (Independence)' As Odhiambo and Lonsdale state, "argument about **rights creates political culture. Nothing else can"** (Odhiambo and Lonsdale, 2003: 4)

Nyeri is a district located in central Kenya and is the administrative headquarters of the central province. This means that government services such as the high court and other authorities for the province are located here. It is approximately 2 hour**s' drive from Nairobi in the eastern highlands and is** the home of Mt. Kenya. It has a population of approximately 667,216 people, who predominantly hail from the Kikuyu ethnic group but a variety of other ethnicities are also present. The district has a young population with those between the ages of 10-14 representing 13.9% of the total population. (NCAPD 2005, 6)

Nyeri is also the rural home of Kenya's third president, Mwai Kibaki. It has therefore been loyal to his coalition party, the Party of National Unity and indeed, generally to Kikuyu interests. Nyeri is also one of the birthplaces of the Mungiki movement, which started as a quasi-religious Kikuyu movement and devolved into a violent Kikuyu nationalist tool used by politicians of the region for their own ends.(Kagwanja, 2003)

3.5.3   Western region

Residents in the western region express the sentiment that the Luo community made contributions to the anti-colonial struggle that were unrecognised in the face of the dominance of the Kikuyu dominated Mau Mau anti-colonial struggle**. They consider that they are in a way "marginalized" and reference the** assassination of Tom Mboya and in more recent times the way that Raila **Odinga has been "eclipsed" in Kenyan politics.** As Cohen and Atieno Odhiambo noted, Siaya was infused **with feelings of "subjection to political domination"** (Cohen and Atieno Odhiambo, 1989: 82) in both the Kenyatta and Moi eras. According to Kanyinga, (1994) a number of people who were interviewed in Siaya, who were from a higher social economic background spoke of the role of Oginga Odinga, the current opposition leader Raila **Odinga's father role in the protes**t movements against **"forced terracing by the** white man " **and Oginga Odinga's many sacrifices**. As he further illustrates,

They tended to then proceed to argue that he had been consistently identified with the advocacy of "just causes"—and not only or even mainly Luo ones, up to and including becoming Kenya's "father of political liberalisation". As a result, he deserved to be rewarded with the presidency. But ordinary people tended to put the matter in more basic terms. While also complaining about Luo land's history of external domination, there was little or no talk of national issues or Odinga's national role. Odinga and FORD-Kenya were seen as instruments for creating a "Presidency at home", i.e. one in and for Luo land.(Kanyinga, 1994: 67-68)

This shows the historical relationship that the western region of Kenya has had with the central region. This ethnic binary has informed Kenyan politics, with a number of other communities being drawn into it on either side of the divide. According to observational evidence collected by the researcher this divide became concrete with the assassination of Tom Mboya. (Field notes 2013) This is one of those "watershed moments" that has informed the discourses to date.

This binary is also reflected when we look at Presidential voting statistics in the two regions. If we take Kisumu and Nyeri counties as representative of the regions, and indeed it is to these two regions that the researcher went, then we can see the clear favourites. Kisumu overwhelmingly voted for Raila with 96.64 percent of the vote while Kenyatta garnered 1.33%. On the other side Nyeri voted for President Kenyatta with 96.33% of the vote with Raila receiving 1.70%. This was also reflected in the Mombasa region, which has supported Raila in the past because of his push for Majimbo and self-government which has been an issues close to those in the coast. Nairobi, as to be expected reflected its cosmopolitan nature. 49% of the vote went to Raila with 46.75 to Kenyatta. (Hassan, 2013)

Lesa Morrison (2007) investigates the "myth of decline" presented by the Luo community, where there is a narrative of marginalization within the political system that is evident in the local political discourse. A similar narrative emerged in the focus groups with young people from the region, and these will be discussed in more detail in the subsequent empirical chapters. The sources of these narratives are sometimes historical, and sometimes

influenced by the media, politicians and current events. What is key to highlight is the fact that these narratives that are reproduced by citizens have a great influence on policy decisions and outcomes and are worthy of investigation. This in turn would highlight any disconnect between what they think politics and the government are supposed to do for them versus what a political system actually does. For instance, politics in a number of African **contexts is about the control of resources. Hence "the control of the state and** proximity to those who have access to the state becomes the main preoccupatio**n of politics,"** (Ajulu, 1998: 279)

3.5.4   Nairobi Region

Nairobi is the capital of Kenya, the largest and most populous city; a cosmopolitan and multicultural city with a mix of ethnic groups living together though in some areas, certain communities would constitute the majority for example in the Kibera slums, one of the research sites, it is predominantly the Luo and Nubian ethnic groups. Kibera is the largest slum in Africa and the second largest in the world. It is home to over one million people who put strain on infrastructure provisions such as access to safe drinking water, roads and electricity supply. A large number of the students were from Kibera, although a number were from further afield. This does not mean that the ones from Kibera were homogenous in nature, rather quite the opposite. There are distinctive areas of Kibera that have their own sub cultures and are quite distinctive. **According to Ken Omolo, "Eth**nicity in Kenya and other African **countries seems more intense among the supposedly more "class conscious" urban populations than their rural counterparts."**(Omolo, 2002: 211) Indeed, both Ajulu (2002) and Lonsdale (2003) note that ethnicity is often more important than class in the analysis of politics in Kenya. Additionally, it would be difficult with participants under the age of 18 to identify their class. In these cases, young people are usually assigned the class categories of their parents. This would, however, preclude the youth agency perspective that is at the heart **of this thesis where I seek to understand young people's attitudes** independently. It could have been possible to ask them to self-identify their class but it was felt that it would be better to not have a discussion on socio-

economic classes but rather focus on their ethnicity and the political attitudes which is the key purpose of the thesis. This brings us to a discussion of how young people have been discussed in the literature, with particular reference to their participation on politics.

3.6   Young people, politics and citizenship

Citizenship in Africa has been influenced greatly by ethnic diversity on the continent as indicated in the earlier sections of this chapter. Despite this plethora of work, not a large amount of it considers the views and perspectives of those under the age of 18. The reasons for this may be that ethnicity and its association with politics comes with the assumption of voting and the voting age in most if not all the countries in Sub Saharan Africa remains 18. In addition, even some literature on youth and youth empowerment in Africa focuses on those above the age of 18.(Honwana, 2012) When those under the age of 18 are considered in terms of politics, it is to highlight their involvement as child soldiers and victims of conflict.(Honwana, 2006) The reasons behind this may be the logistical and ethical challenges of conducting academic research with those under that age group rather than a conscious effort to exclude them.

There has, however been a move towards greater participation of young people in politics in mature democracies, even to looking at the possibility of lowering the voting age to 16. (Macpherson, 2008, Weller, 2007, Cohen, 2005) **. This literature seeks to position them not as "citizens in waiting", but** as active and engaged, present citizens. But, this is not the case in all contexts, more so the Kenyan context where the focus is on the enfranchisement of other marginalized groups and young people under the age of 18 are seen as not possessing a political opinion. As Cohen notes,

> Children in democratic polities inhabit an uncertain space between
> alienage and full citizenship. Children are simultaneously assumed to be
> citizens – they hold passports and except in the rarest of cases receive at
> least one nationality at birth – and judged to be incapable of citizenship
> in that they cannot make the rational and informed decisions that
> characterize self-governance In place of democratic citizenship, children
> hold an ill-defined partial membership. Their interests, while distinct

from those of their parents and other adults, do not receive formal representation. (2005: 221)

Context is therefore important to understanding the different experiences of young people as they may face unique situations in different geographical areas. For instance, in a number of African cultures the transition from childhood to adulthood is marked by a variety of initiation practices such as circumcision with no particular category of adolescent or other transitory category between childhood and adulthood. But, with greater urbanization and the expansion of education, this has led to an interesting mix within those **societies, with for instance boys being considered 'men' when they undergo** initiation at the age of 13, but still being in education and not being able to vote or undertake adult decisions until the age of 18. The literature on youth in Africa has raised a number of these complexities and come up with ways of understanding and dealing with them.

Youth is itself an ambiguous and often contested category in Kenya. For example the Kenya national Youth Policy defines youth as those between the ages of 15 and 30 (GOK, 2002) while children are defined as those under 18, leaving teenagers or those in high school aged between 14 and 17 in a loophole. They are old enough to be actively engaged in the political space but they are still considered as children. Indeed, if we look at the youth studies literature that is geared towards analysing their engagement in politics, this focuses on those who are above the age 18 and on the generational tensions **between these "young turks" and the incumbent "old guards"**. Youth are manipulated by political elders and elites more so into engaging in violence but are excluded from the political processes.(Kagwanja, 2004) This literature focuses on their exclusion and frustration with formal political processes.(Honwana, 2012) Aside from this frustration not a lot is noted about their attitudes towards the political system and more so, the attitudes of those under the age of 18 who have not yet formally engaged in politics.(Muna et al., 2014, Kagwanja, 2006)

Honwana (2012) does an extensive review of the literature on youth in Africa. This starts from a historical perspective that considers the anthropological roots of youth studies in the pre-colonial period that looked at transitions to adulthood through various initiation practices but did not focus **on generational conflicts and power relations. This was investigated in the 80's**

and 90's up till today with studies of resistance to "traditional hierarchies" as well as involvement in the transformational politics of the various coups and conflicts on the continent. This led them to be categorized as "in crisis" (Everatt and Sisulu, 1992, Abbink, 2005, Iwilade, 2013) perhaps due to the effects from globalization and the HIV/AIDS pandemic where they have been involved in cultural production and reproduction.(Honwana and Boeck, 2005, Durham, 2004) They are also "marginalized"(Honwana and Boeck, 2005: 1) as well as "lost"(O'Brien, 1996) and a "problem"(Abbink and Kessel, 2005, Diouf, 2003) especially those who have been involved in the conflicts on the continent. The issue with looking at young people as a problem is it that it focuses any investigation into their lives in trying to solve the problem. This may preclude a more nuanced understanding of the struggles within their day to day lives and it is for this reason that this approach was not taken for the project.

There are a number of schools of thought that emerged in response to the view of youth in crisis. One was the youth agency and empowerment school (Sharp, 2002, Kagwanja, 2004, Durham, 2007, Durham, 2004) that seeks to show the youth as active agents in society as highlighted in the previous sections of this chapter and through this seeks to have them integrated into society as members who are not disenfranchised but have the power to act. Another was the interventionist school which focuses on children's rights and is a feature of a number of international development policies (Alderson, 2001, Archard, 1993, Bellamy, 2002) that highlighted their rights such as the right to participation in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and also sought to promote projects and programs that give them the skills to be able to negotiate various challenges in society. This is particularly visible in the peer education model used for HIV prevention across sub- Saharan Africa. The last of these is the descriptive school (Honwana, 2006) which seeks to locate children's experiences in historically and socially grounded accounts in order to better understand how their lived realities influence their reactions, attitudes and opinions. What these studies share is a framework that "recognizes the diversity of experience as well as the agency and creativity of young people as they try to overcome serious everyday challenges."(Honwana, 2012: 16)

My project situates itself within all these approaches by recognizing youth agency as I analyse their opinions and attitudes towards ethnicity and politics;

design an intervention through a methodology that trains young people as peer researchers as well as take into account the descriptive school by taking into account how their experiences relate to their political attitudes which is a growing field of research.(Joubert et al., 2010, Helve and Wallace, 2001, Wawire et al., 2009) For instance Joubert et al in their work in democratic identity in South Africa have stated that, **"Theorizing about the future citizen,** especially the young child, is a largely unexplored aspect of citizenship. Apart from pure theory and practice, children themselves have a voice concerning **their citizenship and democratic identity, a voice people need to note […] as they are seldom heard in social research or in public policy."** (Joubert et al., 2010: 396, 398) This is particularly relevant coming from political socialization theory where the primacy model (Searing et al., 1976, Keller, 1980, Deth Van et al., 2011) stress that opinions formed at an early age are salient for the political attitudes that will be manifested later in life.

In earlier work, Honwana and De Boeck (2005) described children and **youth in Africa as 'makers and breakers.' They described this as a situation in which young people were being "pushed , pulled and coerced […] by** encompassing **structures […] over** which they have little control"(2005: 3) though they are not powerless in the face of this. They have also been **described as "vanguards or vandals"**(Abbink and Kessel, 2005)**, and "predators or victims"**(O'Brien, 1996). In trying to come up with typologies of youth responses to both internal and external challenges in society, this dichotomisation puts them into rigid categories that may lose some descriptive fluidity**. Seekings, for example sought to better understand young people's** transformations throughout adolescence and move beyond seeing them as **"heroes or villains."**(1993, 2006) and Joschka who has also noted the lack of theoretical productivity in this continuing dichotomisation.(Philipps, 2014)

What all these typologies have in common is that they are associated with the economic, political and social space in society. There is a growing body of literature that examines how youth narratives interact with these contexts with in the global south.(Honwana, 2006, Honwana, 2012, Singerman, 2007, Dhillon and Yousef, 2007, Nayak, 2003, Ntarangwi, 2009) The starting point that will be taken is one that has been explained by Joubert:

As interpretivists we claim an approach to enquiry that was qualitative and subjective in nature. We assumed that children's subjective experiences and understandings were real and should be taken seriously; that one can 'make sense of them by interacting with them and listening to their voices' (2010:401)

Moreover, Joubert **uses a conceptual platform of "cultural identity" which** looks at the interconnectedness of political and cultural socialization. This is taken from the premise that **children are able to "identify with his or her race, ethnic and community cultures as a child citizen."**(Banks, 2004-9). This is more so in a multi-cultural and diverse nation state where citizenship is about **the complex interactions between "cultural, natio**nal and global identification **of the individual."** (2004: 8–9)

Perhaps more importantly, are what meanings and manifestations of citizenship can be drawn out. Traditional forms and meanings of citizenship are giving way to more active forms that are involving young people. In their **edited volume, Helve and Wallace stress that "new meanings of citizenship** have emerged which stress more the active elements and this is the connection **also to empowerment." In addition, there has been greater "mobilization of** young people as a *citizenry* **as well as a democracy."** (Helve and Wallace, 2001 :3) This is taking the form of new ways of thinking and being as well as **"new lifestyles." They are in some instances challenging the status quo. To give** an example in Kenya one of these among the youth in Kenya is the *sheng* culture which is more than a language but a way of being that defines those in the in group from those in the out group. The political salience of this has not been seen until most recently in two notable incidences. The first was the election of a young Member of Parliament who was nicknamed Sonko (rich man) and was seen to embody the urban youth culture. He has since run into some trouble on some governance issues though he still remains an embodiment of this new citizenry engaged in politics. The second is one presidential aspirant, Raphael Tuju making a campaign video entirely in Sheng in an attempt to appeal to the younger voting bloc.(K24TV, 2011) There were mixed reactions to this but the point he raised is the need to engage with a somewhat ignored section of society. If we look specifically at the Kenyan context, however, youth are seen as a group that is easily manipulated by the political elite rather than an actively engaged citizenry. They are used to

engage in violence but excluded from other political processes. They thus end up frustrated with politics.(Kagwanja, 2004, Ruteere, 2008)

To recap from the theoretical chapter, peoples orientation towards the **state can be seen as an "ideology" which people live with in order "**to make **their lives meaningful";** Those who govern the nation at the top are able to **influence the "myths beliefs values and visions" which the population hold dear** in order to ensure the approval of the people. (Dorman et al., 2007: 198) On the other side of the coin is the push from the population who reproduce their own narratives, values and norms and form their own identities and ideologies even so far as to influence elite discourses as evidenced by the work of Gabrielle Lynch on the construction of the Kalenjin identity where discourses from below were extremely influential to the acceptance of politicians strategies.(Lynch, 2010) What will be of interest are the myths, beliefs, values and visions that the young people are producing and reproducing.

3.7   Conclusion

The chapter above has served to map the field of politics in Kenya. It has done this by exploring the dominant discourses surrounding the field of Kenyan politics. This was done by focusing on the phenomenon of the politicisation of ethnicity. It has also used elections as one of the watershed moments that help us to understand the various themes of Kenyan politics. The chapter has also explored the nature of identity in Kenya through a discussion of the concepts of moral ethnicity and political tribalism. This has led to a discussion focused on understanding of African identity politics by utilizing Patrick Chabal and Jean Pascal Dalozs**' four themes of identity politics** namely the boundaries of politics, the notion of the individual, the question of representation and the issue of political legitimacy. The chapter has also provided brief case studies of the four regions that were visited during the research namely Nairobi, Western, Coast and Central regions. In conclusion, the chapter has touched on a discussion on how young people have been conceptualized in relation to their involvement in politics in Africa. The purpose of the chapter was to identify the key issue areas surrounding Kenyan politics.

What has emerged from this review is that firstly ethnicity is activated by elections. During the election periods, as a result of the type of campaigning

engaged in by political parties, ethnic identities come to the fore. Ethnic identity has been used as a tool for political manipulation and is indeed considered a resource in the political field. This is important to note as the research took place during the 2012/2013 election period in Kenya. We can perhaps expect discussions around ethnic identities within the focus groups and interviews to be focused on the elections. Secondly, it emerged from the discussions in the chapter that political identity in multifaceted. We can say that the nature of identity is bifurcated with citizens having to negotiate their civic and ethnic identities within the political space. The earlier assumptions of the modernization school that strong ethnic attachments would diminish with modernity have not come to pass. This bifurcation has also been discussed with the concept of moral ethnicity versus political tribalism as important to our understanding of the nature of identity in Kenya. How people construct their ethnic identities in terms of forming communities sharing moral obligations is related to how they externalize this construction and come to protect their **communities'** interests against others and advocate for certain forms of political discrimination and it is through the lens of habitus, capital and field that we can see this emerging. This was also discussed through the brief regional case studies which showed some of the narratives. Finally in **understanding young people's involvement in politics, what h**as emerged is that young people have been viewed as either a positive or a negative force on **the continent. They are either "makers or breakers" and "vanguards or vandals." Indeed the literature has often conceptualized them as a people "in crisis". The re**sponse to this from the literature that was adopted for the study is to take the youth agency view that engages them as active social and political agents. In addition the youth agency school engages them as co-researchers which will be discussed in the methodology chapter.

This leads us to a contextual framework as shown in the figure 2 below. This framework highlights the multifaceted nature of political identity in Kenya with competing national versus tribal identities as well as different regional experiences interacting to form political attitudes. All these interact to produce what can be called a contradictory political culture where democratic principles are upheld at the same time certain forms of political discrimination are deemed acceptable. This **will be analysed in the context of young people's** political narratives in order to help us answer the research question(s) what are the narratives of young people political identities? And what is the relationship

between their ethnic identity and politics? This will also be important in understanding **young people's reproduction of political and ethnic discourses**.
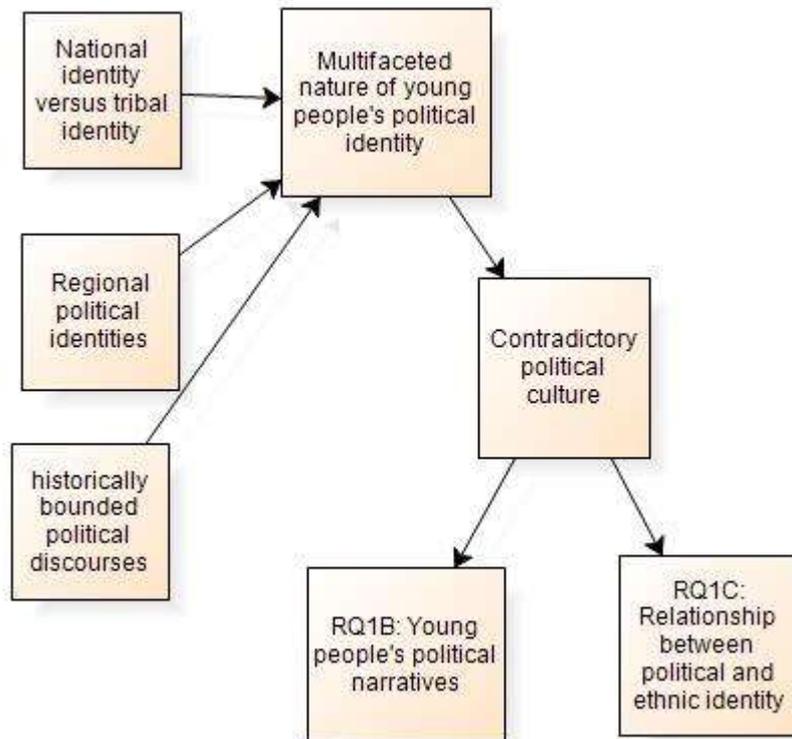
Figure 2 contextual framework

Chapter 4:   Methodology: Engaging young people as co-researchers

4.1   Introduction

The chapter will introduce the methodology that was utilised to collect and analyse the data. This is a qualitative and participatory research strategy utilizing focus groups, interviews and narratives as data collection tools. The chapter will explore why these were the most appropriate tools to be used for the data collection and will also highlight how the questions that were asked were developed. The participatory element involves the use of the peer-led research methodology. In addition, the chapter will present acritical reflection of the peer-led research method. The chapter will begin by analysing the **literature on children's involvement as** co-researchers in academic and social research projects. This will lead on to a discussion on how they were involved in this particular research project as co-researchers through a reflection of the research process from the initial pilot study through to the main study. This will also involve a discussion on how the influenced the research process especially through their style of questioning, the challenges encountered and the benefits that resulted from this for the researcher and the overall research project.

4.2   Young people as co-researchers

As was highlighted in the introduction chapter, children are viewed as a socially constructed category. Over and above this, they are viewed as active social and political agents as has also been highlighted in chapter 3, that sets out the contextual framework. Part of their involvement as active social agents comes with their participation as co-researchers in a variety of projects including academic research (Barber, 2009), HIV/AIDS research and programs(Francis and Hemson, 2010) as well as service evaluations (McLaughlin, 2005). Engaging young people as co-researchers is a fast growing trend in youth studies and has been adapted as a research model in various studies. (Barber, 2009, Fleming, 2010, Harris, 2010, McLaughlin, 2005,

Smith, 2002, Murray, 2006, Barker and Weller, 2003, Macpherson, 2008) among other innovative methodologies with young people. (Heath and Walker, 2012) There are a number of reasons for this interest in involving young people in the research process. First, there is the notion that involving the subjects of research in the research study will produce data of a higher quality and greater authenticity (Kirby, 1999, Fielding and Bragg, 2003) because the young people are insiders who have access to knowledge the researcher does not have. (Thomson and Gunter, 2011, Young and Barrett, 2001, Warren, 2000, Fleming, 2010, Fielding and Bragg, 2003) This assumption of producing higher quality data is not without its critics. They question whether the data collected is truly authentic because the power imbalances are still present in child-child interactions and the politics associated with institutions which may **constrain children's voice** (Kellet, 2010) **as well as 'over privileging' young people's knowledge and point of view** (Thomson and Gunter, 2007). Ramcharan et al (2004) also note that often the decision has to be made between academic rigour that implies high quality on the one side and greater inclusion that implies authentic knowledge though lower quality on the other. Indeed, the entire insider vs outsider dichotomy is more complex than can be seen at first glance. An adult researcher can move from being seen as an outsider to being viewed as a confidant, while depending on the position of the student researcher (for example if they are a student leader) they may be viewed as an outsider by the participants. I take the position advocated by Fleming (2010), where she moves away from the quality debate by stating that young co-researchers produce a different kind of data. It may be of a lower quality as for example, **"young researchers do not seem to probe as much"**(Fleming, 2010: 7) but these should not be the only considerations when it comes to evaluating the kind of data collected. She comes to this conclusion by showing that in a service evaluation project,

> Even though the young people and adults used the same guided conversation schedules to interview councillors and local authority officers, the y**oung people's re**cordings were much shorter. The participants seemed to make efforts to be clearer and more concise with their answers when speaking with the young researchers. The tremendous volume of information the adult researchers had from

interviews was not necessarily more relevant nor provided more insights. (Fleming, 2010: 7)

The benefits and incentive of using this method also include empowerment and rights by giving young people a voice (Leitch et al., 2007, Christensen and James, 2000, Smit) and skills development for the young people (Murray, 2006). In my argument in the thesis of the need to consider the attitudes of young people towards ethnicity and politics, this emerged as the most appropriate research strategy to utilise. In addition, while it has been widely used in the fields of social work, sociology of childhood and education, it has not been widely applied in political science.

The different forms of young people's participation were first codified by UNICEF in their ladder of participation. This was adapted from similar typologies in the participation of adults in the research and policy process first undertaken by Arnstein (1969). It was a way to ensure that children's involvement was not merely a case of "tokenism" or "ambiguous and manipulative."(Hart, 1992: 9)
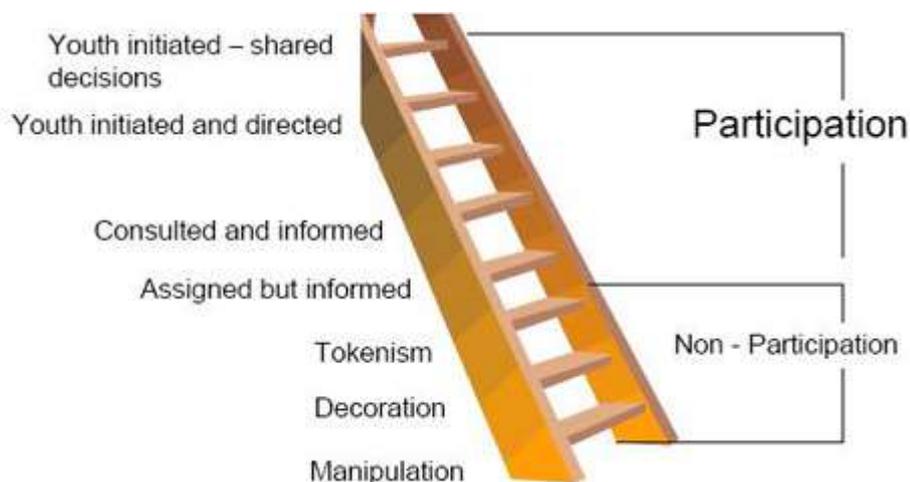
Figure 3: Ladder of participation adapted from (USAID, 2008)

The first three steps in the ladder denote instances of non-participation while the next are the varying degrees in which children can participate. The ladder was not designed as a manual or template for which to tick box or evaluate the "quality" of programs involving children. It is the process of participation that should be looked at in a reflexive manner and the principle of "choice" that should be applied (Hart, 1992: 9-11) in order to move children's participation from form to substance. This typology has been

adapted by Fielding and Bragg (2003) who present their four-fold typology of student involvement. Their typology highlights the intensity of their involvement in a research project from low to high, namely: students as data sources, students as active respondents, students as co-researchers and finally as student researchers. In the PhD project, the consultation of young people fell under student as co-researchers. Their involvement included commenting on the appropriateness of the questions to be asked in the focus group guide, as well as conducting the focus groups; but the research topic and design were decided on beforehand by the researcher. The claim cannot therefore be strictly made that they were involved in the co-production of knowledge but their involvement was influential to the research process. This is evidenced by the insights they were able to provide. For example instead of asking participants "where are you from?" which was in the original focus group guide, the peer researcher suggested that we ask "where is your upcountry?" in order to better understand the participants rural homes of origin. Other examples of the student researchers interpretation of the questions are provided in the notes to the paper. (Field notes, 2012)

Young people's participation in the research process is not without its criticisms. For instance, participation can be just that participation for participation's sake. Participation is taken as a "good thing" and lends gravitas to particular research projects, and even be considered a research "fad" but it needs to be something that is wanted and needed by those engaged in it. (Arnstein, 1969, Hart, 1992) In addition, others have stated that power relationships are still inherent between the peer researchers and the research participants with one of the studies noting that in a focus group discussion, the researchers still arranged the participants in a way where she was seen as the leader of the group. The counter argument to this is that it is not necessarily negative or a failure when this occurs but is an important insight into those particular relationships and the context behind them.

Another criticism is that it can be a challenge to try to match the researchers with the researched such as "attempting to match black researchers with black subjects." This may "marginalize" and "devalue" both the researchers and those being researched (Alderson, 2001: 139) In addition, another point that has been raised is that the "moderators' personal skills and attributes have a considerable influence on the nature and quality of the data gathered."(Sim, 1998: 345) How then can young people have the sufficient skill

to effectively moderate a focus group? The response to this is that a perfect focus group is not the desired outcome and indeed is a challenge to the school of thought that professionalizes this research method. I would go so far as to **claim that an 'unskilled' moderator would be able to get quality data** dependent on the context and research question as will be shown in later sections of this chapter in the reflections of the peer research model as well as in the analysis chapter where the data collected by the peer researchers will be presented. One last concern that is presented is by Alderson who notes, "There is a danger that researchers will over identify with interviewees and assume they understand too much, they may take replies for granted and lose **their 'enquiring outsider' stance.**" (Alderson, 2001: 140) But this is balanced out by their knowledgeable insider stance. The influence of the peer researchers addressing these criticisms will be discussed in the section on the peer researchers style of moderation.

Additionally, there is always the potential for exploitation with proponents of participation using children so as to gain the participative agenda, but doing it for their own means and ends. Also, does it really add anything of value? Within social work it is also noted that it has become **something of a "fad"** (Fleming, 2010: 3) to involve children as researchers and general scepticism of the utility and quality of the general participatory model. There is a need to ensure that it is more than a fad and does not become a case of simply building in their participation but also challenging epistemological standpoints as well as values and norms (Shaw and Tschiwula, 2002, Fleming, 2010) As Fleming (2010: 7) points out,

> We have learnt that young people can be both excellent peers and co-researchers. We have found that young people and adults may tell young people different things than they do adults – young researchers collect different data to adults.

We certainly temper our language and actions, depending on who the subject of our conversation is. The information that we receive as an adult researcher will be tempered by the lens of adult-child relationships. This may not necessarily be a negative occurrence but since it is the relations between the particular age group that are of interest, then removing adults from the equation may be beneficial. This is especially so when the research subjects

are children themselves and would be more comfortable and open with one of their own. It is also an opportunity for skills set development. This will be shown through a reflection of the peer research process presented below. This will be a discussion of how the peer researchers were recruited and trained, and the different positions the researcher adopted throughout the process. **Finally, a discussion on the peer's style of moderation will be conducted with a** view to understanding how they affected the process.

4.2.1   Pilot study

The original **research question/design focused more on the young people's** identities rather than their opinions on the political system. As part of the initial design, it was deemed important to conduct a pilot study in advance of the main study. The objectives of this pilot study were first and foremost to test the peer-led research method in order to investigate whether it was feasible to utilise this for the main study. Secondly, there was the opportunity to compare the peer-led research model with the adult-led research model, as half of the focus groups were conducted by the peer and half of the focus groups and interviews were conducted by the adult researcher. The last objective was to train the young people as co-researchers in order to gain their input on their research questions and the overall research design. The research questions that guided the pilot study were;

1. How do children perceive and exercise their ethnicity?
    a. Are there any differences in perceptions and practice in urban areas as compared to rural areas?
    b. Are there any differences between how girls and boys perceive and exercise their ethnicity?

The research design involved semi-structured focus groups and in-depth interviews as well as a narrative exercise in nine schools in four regions in Kenya as was highlighted in the introduction. Focus groups were chosen because of their wide usage in community, participatory and feminist research as well as research looking at everyday **people's** construction of nationalism and democratic identity. (Wilkinson, 1998, Howarth, 2002 , Fox and Idriss-Miller, 2008, Joubert et al., 2010) What is key, as Morgan stated in 1988 is,

"*the explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group.*" (Morgan, 1988: 12, author emphasis) In addition, the combination of using focus groups as well as interviews allowing for different kinds of data to be collected has been highlighted as a useful research strategy in the literature of research with young people.(Punch, 2002) It is also one that I came across while conducting research on the sensitive topic of HIV prevention products[10] where I found that the interviews allowed participants who may have been hesitant in the focus group discussion to fully express themselves. The questions in the focus group discussions were focused on their attitudes towards politics and tribalism though they also touched on ethnic stereotypes. The interviews on **the other hand focused on the individual's ethnic identity and the** narratives/stories surrounding their tribes and other tribes. Over and above the research questions, a number of sources were consulted in developing the questions to be asked during the focus groups and interviews. For instance, one of the questions asked in the Afrobarometer round 4 survey series questionnaire question number 56 (Afrobarometer, 2011), which is "what are the key issues facing the country?" was adapted and asked in the focus group. Open questions, such as: "What do you think about politics in Kenya?" were asked as well to elicit discussion. Also, because of the narrative element, questions such as "what stories have you heard about your community and about other communities?" were asked. When considering the questions to use in the interview, in order to elicit responses on their tribes, the common **question in identity research of "who are you?"** (Lukalo, 2010) **or "who are the** Luhya?" (Kweya, 2011) for example were adapted to "tell me about your tribe?"

In the pilot study, two focus groups were held in a girls school in Nairobi (Kibera), one with an adult facilitator and one with a peer facilitator. Two focus groups were then held in a boys school in Nyeri in the same format. Each of these consisted of 6-10 participants which kept the group manageable and enabled full participation and is recommended from my own reflective

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[10] The Microbicide market assessment study was a three month qualitative research project where I was a researcher that sought to assess knowledge, attitudes and perceptions towards HIV prevention products in urban, peri – urban and rural areas of Kenya, South Africa and Lesotho. It was conducted through the auspices of the International Partnership for Microbicides http://www.ipmglobal.org/ an international consortium that seeks to develop innovative drugs and methods for HIV prevention and management. A Microbicide is a new HIV prevention tool that is currently at the clinical trials stage.

experiences of previous focus group discussions as well as from the extensive focus group literature which highlights that the smaller the group the more effective the focus group is (Kitzinger, 1994, Krueger, 1995, Morgan, 1993). It has been noted that smaller groups have less chance of dominant personalities or factions emerging in addition to giving the opportunity for all the members of the group to interact with each other and keep the discussion within a reasonable time frame. One volunteer from each focus group was then selected to participate in the interviews which happened immediately after the group discussions. The narrative exercise was adapted from the work of Joubert et al (2010) who investigated democratic identity among primary school pupils in South Africa. In their study, they asked their participants to write an essay in to the president, highlighting issues important to them. These were to be written in advance of the interviews. Adapting this exact format proved a logistical challenge. In the first instance, it was felt that it would be too academic an exercise to ask them to perform, as it is quite similar to essays they may be asked to write in their English classes. More importantly, however, it was discovered at the pilot study stage that it was sometimes difficult to recruit participants for the focus groups in advance and have them write the letter. Some participants were recruited moments before the focus groups started, and this was especially so in the girls school in the Nairobi area, where the group discussions were held at lunchtime and the participants recruited while they sat outside having their lunch. This recruitment was done by the peer researchers who spoke to the students and explained what the research was about and what would be expected of them.

In adapting the format, it was decided that students would be given flash cards (pictured in appendix G) during the focus group discussions where they were asked to write a letter to the Presidential candidates in the forthcoming election (March 2013) on any topic/issue that they felt was important to them. In the main study, which took place immediately after the elections, this was changed and they were asked to write a letter to the recently elected president.

The key finding that emerged from the pilot study was that the young people were interested in talking about their ethnicities in relation to politics. The pilot study was conducted six months before the general election so this was understandable. The focus group discussion guide included questions on politics such as a letter to the President exercise and a question on what they thought about politics in Kenya, as is indicated in the pilot study FGD guide in

appendix A. The research questions and research design were therefore amended to reflect this.

4.2.2   Main study

4.2.2.1   Peer researchers recruitment

The selection of the peer researchers differed depending on the particular school. Two of the schools where the main study was conducted were the same schools where the pilot study had been conducted. In these cases, the same peer researchers were used. In the girls school, initial access had been granted by the programs director who also selected the peer researcher as he indicated that he knew one who would be suitable as she was President of the journalism club. In the boys school, this was done through a pre-existing research club in the school. In this school, after hearing the research explained to them, the club members picked one of their own to conduct the research. In the rest of the schools, a combination of these methods of recruitment was used. The peer researchers were tasked with recruiting participants to both the adult-led and peer-led focus groups. This was seen as a way to give them some recognition from the participants of them as co-researchers as well as their knowledge of which students would be available which the adult researcher would not know. As the research progressed from the pilot study to the main study, there were changes in how the focus groups were conducted. For example, during the main study as a result of the teachers strike, there were only final year students present in one of the schools in the Kisumu region. Initially, twenty had been recruited to participate in two separate focus groups. But the head teacher at the school indicated that there would be no time to conduct two separate focus groups, and they were therefore combined and had a larger number than initially intended. (Field notes 2013)

The peer researchers were introduced to the research topic and process through a one to one conversation with the researcher with the aid of a brief that touched on the social research process, methods of data collection, necessary skills and ethical issues. Initially I had thought that it would be possible to recruit all the peer researchers in advance and host a training workshop for them in Nairobi. But this was logistically difficult, especially due to a teachers' strike and the level of organization that would have been

necessary to accomplish it. The peer researchers were therefore trained individually within the schools. The development of this brief, which can be found in appendix D borrowed from the literature on peer education which while different from that of peer-led research, emphasizes the provision of training and reference materials as well as the adaptation and localisation of the research materials. (Morris et al., 2011, Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, Kellet, 2005, HDA, 2010) This was key in order to ensure that the project was not **merely engaging in 'tokenism' but was seeking to have them 'consulted and informed' as was highlighted in the earlier sections of this chapter**.

On the ethical side of the training, the focus was on informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation and setting ground rules. For example, it was suggested that the peer highlight ground rules such as respect for each other and confidentiality but also invite the participants to make up some other rules for the session. The focus was also on the practicality of actually conducting the research and less on the theories that underpin the methods with the semi structured nature of the focus groups being emphasized. The peer researcher was therefore told that it was all right if the discussion veered off the topic but to bring it back if it went too far off topic. For instance, the extract from the brief highlighted below borrowed from Tuckman (1965) on the stages of team development sought to explain how a focus group can progress and the role of each member during different stages.

Table 3 Focus group stages

Stage	Participants Role	Researcher Role
Stage 1: Forming	Looking around Sitting down Getting to know each other	Welcoming Setting rules/regulations
Stage 2: Storming	Responding to questions Assessing each other	Asking questions Building trust
Stage 3: Norming	Getting into the group discussion Opening up	Guiding discussion
Stage 4: Performing	Becoming a group Responding and challenging each other	Taking a step back Guiding discussion
Stage 5: Mourning	Departing the group	Thanking Any questions?

In order for the peer researchers to better understand the research process, they were allowed to sit in on the initial adult focus group as an observer so that they could have an idea of how it is done. They also had some flexibility to pursue discussions that were outside the focus group guide. The peer **researcher's consultation** involved commenting on the appropriateness of the questions to be asked in the focus group guide as well as conducting the focus groups. The claim cannot therefore be strictly made that they were involved in the co-production of knowledge but their involvement was influential to the research process. This is evidenced by the insights they were **able to provide. For example instead of asking participants "where are you from?" which was in the original focus group guide, the peer researcher suggested that we ask "where is your upcountry?"** in order to better

understand the participants rural homes of origin. The changes that the peer researchers made are illustrated in the table below:

Table 4 Peer researcher FGD changes

Purpose	Topic/questions	Student researcher changes/ adaptation of the question
Warm up discussion	Participants introduce themselves Where are you from?	Where is your upcountry? The student researcher indicated that this would be less confusing than **saying, "where are you from?"**
Perceptions of national and ethnic identity	What is the first thing that comes to mind when I say the word tribe? What does it mean to be a member of your tribe?	
Roles and relationships within the communities	What kinds of things do you do when you are in your community? Probes: Relationships with friends and elders? What do girls do? What do boys do? What is your community like?	What are your relationships there, ***when you go likizo, kitu kama hio*** (when you go on holiday) The student researcher used Kiswahili to try and get the point across.

Ethnic narratives	Growing up, were their particular things you were told about the community you come from? Probes: Are there stories you were told about other communities? What do you think of those stories now? What languages do you speak in school?	Let us say you are somewhere standing alone and you are the only person who is a Kikuyu and not a Luo. And everyone is speaking in Luo because they are not speaking to you. How would you feel? In this example the student researcher set out a story for the participants to relate to
Perceptions of ethnicity and politics and its effect in society	What do you think about politics in Kenya? Probes: What do you think of tribalism? What would you do if you were a politician? How would they run the country? What are the most important problems facing Kenya?	

4.2.2.2   The issue of power

The training and selection of the peer researchers gave them an element of power and control over the participants as they ran the group as they were able to gain some authority by having been trained and asked to conduct it. It was noted that the personality of the peer researchers and their position within

the school was influential in how the focus groups were conducted. To give an example, in the urban focus group the peer had a slightly domineering personality and was a student leader and this was reflected in the way the group was run with her more as a leader than a guide. The opposite was the case in the rural focus group, where the dominant personality was in one of the focus group participants and the facilitator(s) in some instances relinquished a measure of control of the group to them and was more of an observer. (Rural Peer-led FGD, 2012) In terms of the data collected, this had the effect that in the urban focus groups, the peer researcher was able in some instances to probe deeper to get the participants talking while in others, she limited their conversation. While in the rural focus group, the dominant **participant's** opinions took centre stage in some instances. This situation on focus groups with participants and facilitators is not necessarily unique to peer researchers. Adult researchers can have the same challenges when conducting their research and as has been noted by Murray (2008) the assumption that peer research will leads to more equitable relationships between the researchers and researched is false. The exercise of power is inherent in the research process but how it is exercised depends on the particular context.

To explore further the idea of power within research raised in the section above, as the researcher I had to undergo a process of being powerless in terms of not being able to control the entire research process. This helped the me as a social researcher to re-evaluate notions of **what 'proper' research should look like and understand how social research is a 'messy'** (Law, 2004) business, especially for those who adopt participatory methods and the need **for "an act of faith" and trust**. (Leitch et al., 2007: 469)

4.2.2.3   Insider-outsider dichotomy

Also, the research process helped me to understand how the dynamic of insider and outsider between a researcher on the one hand and a participant on the other is a lot more fluid and dynamic. (Thomson and Gunter, 2011) For example, at a first glance I was viewed as an outsider and a member of the **"out-group"** (Tajfel, 1978, Schwartz, 2005, Brown and Capozza, 2006). This was first observed during the pilot study, when I arrived on the first day at the girls school in Nairobi. The student who was sent to guide me to the school from the bus stop spoke to me in English, the language of educational

instruction even when I responded in Kiswahili (and some *Sheng,* a youth dialect) This may be a result of the educational context, where such a response is expected with a visitor to the school. Indeed, in the boys school during the pilot study, I was asked my nationality during the peer researchers training. Because I had indicated that I was studying in the UK, they assumed that I may not have been a Kenyan!

Also, there was a participant in the boys school in Nairobi stating that I came from **"*majuu"*** (slang term for from the upper class) because I did not speak the urban slang known as **Sheng.** I was viewed as a member of the elite due to my fluent spoken English. This was also evidenced by the fact that I was addressed in English by the participants in the focus groups, even when I spoke to them in Kiswahili and **Sheng** (urban slang). This was also clear in the adult-led focus groups where the participants made a conscious effort to speak in English even though it may have been difficult for some of them. I became a confidant however, when they later expressed fears about their career choices and asked me for advice in a large number of the schools I went to, both during the pilot study and the main study. Indeed, in one boys school in Nyeri during the pilot study, they were quite interested in the PhD process and even asked me questions on plagiarism. This took me aback at first, but the students were quite open with their fears, hopes and dreams. I can speculate that this is perhaps because career guidance is perhaps lacking in schools and also, as someone pursuing a PhD, I could have been taken to be an expert on the matter. I indulged their questions, as far as I could, in order to build a rapport with them. So for example in one girls school in Nyeri, I moved from being a school visitor, to a provider of a break in classroom routine, to a student similar to them, a researcher and then to a career confidant. Just as a person inhabits multiple identities such as gender, race, occupation, so does a researcher inhabit different positions throughout the research process. I therefore later came to be viewed as something similar to a teacher, as someone in authority who was a resource to be utilized. This led to the realisation that this delineation of insider and outsider was not clear cut and indeed could be seen as culturally specific. There was therefore a need to reflect more deeply on how this affected my relationship with the co-researchers and participants. The importance of the peer-led research method emerged here as perhaps I would be viewed too much as a teacher in the focus group discussions.

The peer researchers were for the most part considered insiders as they were known to the participants as a fellow student. While this was a positive aspect in terms of the participants being comfortable with them, it did have some effects such as in one boys' school, their having difficulty in controlling one dominant member of the focus group.

This also included understanding my own position as a Kenyan and a member of the Kikuyu community. I was aware of this from the very beginning **of the research process. While on the one hand, being a Kenyan "insider" has** provided me with an awareness of the issues, there was also a potential source of bias. This was mitigated by the fact that I have lived abroad in a number of multicultural settings together with my research training which has tempered **my "Kikuyu habitus"** and allowed me to step back and analyse some of my own potential biases with a critical eye . I also used it to build a rapport among the participants in terms of the fact that I am a Kenyan like them, but I did not volunteer information about my tribe unless asked. What aided me in this is the fact that my last name is not a common Kikuyu name and indeed shares similarities with other tribal names. It was therefore ambiguous and not easy to identify. I took this approach as I did not want them to have any notion of my **taking any "side" during discussions that focus**ed on particular tribes.

The peer research process had its own inherent challenges. From **different researcher's experiences and from my own experience of the pilot** study that was conducted, there are a number of practical challenges and ethical issues raised when working with children as co-researchers. In his **work, Fleming noted that "young researchers do not always seem to probe and get the level of depth that an adult researcher might seek."**(Fleming, 2010: 7) This was not necessarily a criticism as he went on to note that this is a finding in itself, for instance if a focus group discussion does not go quite as expected that can be a research discovery. What is important is to be prepared for it. **This requires a rethinking of what a "perfect" focus group or interview is and a** re-evaluation of the process and power involved in such. Another example from the literature is research that was done with Alderson using teenagers to work with children in hospitals. As is noted from one of the **researcher's** reflective accounts,

> The boy I was talking to was brain damaged and he kept jumping around and on and off the bench. But he still kept talking and I think it

was a good interview. it didn't matter as I am only 16 , whereas if I had been an adult I think I would have had to make him behave more quietly and I don't think he would have told me so much then.(Alderson, 1995: 108)

In the context of this project, the peer researcher's styles of moderation can be inferred from the data collected and is presented below.

4.2.2.4   Peer researchers style of moderation

In general, the student researchers were adaptable in their style of moderation moving from a leader to a listener and/or observer throughout the focus groups. As indicated previously, it had been emphasized to them that they should aim for a midpoint between directing the group too strongly and letting the discussion flow more naturally. Three examples from the focus groups will be used to discuss their style of questioning.

In the first example, the student researchers acted as onlookers when the discussion in the rural focus group centred on gender roles and allowed other respondents to question the participant who was expressing strong views and for the discussion to go on by itself for a period of time.

Respondent 1: [...] I come home; I come from home to bring money. You see that is a big responsibility. You see, if you are given ten thousand shillings and you take it, it arrives safely [...] that is being a man. Any objections?

Respondent 2: 10%

Respondent 3: Girls can't carry money?

Respondent 1: They just put it in their purse.

Respondent 3: Whichever way, it does not make sense; whether you are carrying 1000 or 10,000 (Kenya shillings) it is the same whether you are a man or a woman.

Respondent 1: [for the woman] there is no responsibility

Respondent 2: in my case, when my parents leave, the house is mine. I am responsible for what people will eat. That is what in me I believe a man is.

Respondent 1: so do you cook for the workers?

Respondent 2: yes, [...] because that is what they expect from their contracts [...]

Respondent 1: look, it's a different case but where I live [...] so what I believe a man would do is if he is sent for medicine (by his sick grandmother) I have to make sure that I ask questions of the pharmacy and get the right dose, now that is extra responsibility, that is being a man.

Respondent 3: but, even your sister can do that.

Respondent 2: But there is an extra thing that makes you a man. That responsibility, is taking initiative like he said. To make sure that the medicine is correct. That is an extra initiative that he has taken, an extra step he has taken. That is a man.

This allowed for the participants to express themselves more freely as has been seen in the gender theme discussed above in the rural focus groups. On the other hand, they realized that the discussion could not go on for ever and therefore brought it back to the focus group by saying 'let's do something interesting for a change' as is illustrated at the end of the extract below. It is important to discuss this choice of words. While it could be read as an implication that the student thought that the discussion preceding this was not interesting, it could also be taken at its face value as a way that the student researcher used to move the discussion forward which was focusing too much on male gender roles. This is illustrated in the extract below:

Respondent 3: I understand. OK. Now, I have a question. If you are two brothers, and one of you is assigned more duties that you. If I take that as unfair, is that being a man. Because he is being given responsibility and you aren't. Is that really being a man?

Respondent 1: yes that is being a man

Respondent 3: And does it make him more that a man than you when he is assigned more duties?

Several: No!

Respondent 3: Being a man, does it start with the head or with the body? Because what you are saying you mean that a man would do [...]

Respondent 1: he does what needs to be done [...]

Respondent 1: For me, being a man is taking that extra step to do what others can't do. To stand out among the rest.

Peer facilitator: So, let's do something interesting for a change. [...] I say this. I say a word, and you say what you think at random [...] we want to start with the word tribe

Keeping the discussion focused and on track was not as easy or as straightforward as it seemed. In other instances, within this same focus group, the dominant personality identified as respondent 1 above did not give others a chance to speak and provided a challenge to the other students within the focus group as well as the student researcher. He did, however take the focus group in some interesting directions. To give an example, **he asked "do you cook?" to other participants in a challenging tone to questions on gender roles** which elicited a variety of responses from the other participants and therefore an interesting set of data. This perhaps would not have happened if the student researchers took more of a leader role and were strict with the focus group guide. (Rural student led FGD) There is always the risk, however, that the

student researcher may become emotionally engaged in the discussion. This is shown in the rural focus group where he seemed frustrated with the discussion on whether men were more intelligent than women as shown by the following quote; "Listen here. You know you are saying that story of Madam Curie and Albert Einstein. You know that lady had a brain like you?" The student researcher went on to change the discussion to focus it on tribalism. The effect of student facilitators providing their opinions will be discussed later in this section.

In the second example, it was noted that the peers did not probe or follow up as deeply as they could have. This has been highlighted as a concern that is often raised in peer research. (Fleming, 2010: 7, Murray, 2006: 282) The extract below shows the different ways the peer and adult went about questioning. The question as it was in the semi structured focus group guide was "what is your community like?" and/or "what kinds of things do you do when you are in your community e.g. relationships with other people?"

> *Peer facilitator: In your community. If there are different tribes [that is in the same area] how do you relate with them?*
>
> *Adult facilitator: what is your community like? Where you are from/? How is it like? What do you guys do, what activity do you guys do with your friends [guys around there]*
>
> *Adult Facilitator: So they are not using the property?*
>
> *Adult Facilitator: So you talked about like a lot of the activities. What about the people in your community how are they like? […]*
>
> *Adult Facilitator: So you talked about politicians. What, what [are] other leaders like in those communities apart from the politicians who have like power [do]. Is it just the politicians?*

From the extract above, we can see that the student researcher asked the question and did not follow up on the responses but in the adult-led focus group, when they talked about issues concerning property there was more detailed probing. The effect on the data collected can be seen in perhaps

lesser detail in the student led focus group on that particular issue of communities than in the adult focus group. However, I take the view of Fleming (2010) that this is not necessarily a criticism or a negative outcome. In his research, he noted that the young researcher's recordings were much shorter than the adults when interviewing local councillors, but in the interviews the councillors responded to the young people by making an effort to be more concise and use less technical terms. So even though there was 'less' data so to speak, it was different and brought out some interesting analysis. For instance, in another example, the student researcher in the urban focus group was knowledgeable about pop culture personalities, for instance Eric Omondi (who the adult researcher was unaware of), and used this as a reference when speaking about the appropriateness of urban slang.

In addition, while this lack of probing was a challenge, it is not necessarily unique to the peer research method. For those who have worked with other external facilitators and translators, who may be professionals, there is always a sense of 'I could have asked that differently' when data collection is being done by anyone other than the principal researcher. The point that is being made then is it is not the students who have a lesser competence, but the situation and the context of the research which leads to this loss of depth. Moreover, we should be wary of "over privileging" the method. Whilst there are differences between peer-led research and other research methods, focusing on its similarities rather than its differences can aid us in a wider acceptability of the method.

In the third student researcher style of moderation, they gave their own opinions in response to questions that they were asking and blurred the lines between facilitator and participant, as illustrated in the extract below where the discussion centred on what needs to be done in terms of getting politics to work:

Student facilitator: Do you want to hear my opinion?

[Several respondents speak at once] Yes.

Student facilitator: If am president I would just deal with the recent situation that is really disturbing us, the strike of the teachers.[In] my

list of payment the teachers will be paid first then politicians come last. [...]

When the student researchers were being briefed, they asked whether it was appropriate to give their own opinions in the discussions or if they needed to be objective. They were informed that it was all right to give personal opinions albeit in a limited way such that they did not run the risk of their opinions being dominant within the group. When I initially came across these instances of facilitator involvement, I thought they were a mistake. Thinking upon it reflexively, this can be traced to my grounding in the objective researcher tradition which the student led research process has helped me to move away from. This is more so when reading Nind and Vinha (2014) who speak of impartiality of the facilitators not necessarily being a benefit.

Moreover, when looking at the peer style of moderation and the influence it had on the data, we can raise the issue of power. The training and selection of the student researchers gave them an element of power and control over the participants as they led the group. It was noted that the personality of the student researchers and their position within the school was influential in how the focus groups were conducted. In the urban focus group the student researcher was a student leader and this reflected in the way the group was run with her acting more as a leader than a guide. This can also be attributed, to a small extent to the nature of the education system in Kenya which can be described as hierarchical. Students are not usually encouraged to question their teachers and this may have unconsciously influenced the student researcher as they conducted the group discussion.

Again, in terms of the data collected, this had the effect that in the urban focus groups, the student researcher was able in some instances to probe deeper to get the participants talking, while in others they may have limited their conversation as has been illustrated in the previous section. **Additionally, in the rural focus group, the dominant participant's opinions took** centre stage in some instances. This situation in focus groups with participants and facilitators is not necessarily unique to student led research method. Adult researchers can have the same challenges when conducting their research and as has been noted by Murray (2006), the assumption that participatory research leads to more equitable relationships between the researchers and researched is false. The exercise of power is inherent in the research process

but how it is exercised depends on the particular context.

4.3   Ethical concerns

Ethical clearance was sought and obtained from the University of Southampton with the pilot study ethics clearance number being 2387 and the main study ethical clearance number 5386. Ethical clearance was also sought and obtained in Kenya from the National Council of Science and technology for both the pilot study and the main study and the research was conducted under ethics number NCST/RCD/14/012/1143. The ethical approval letters/permits are attached in appendix H and I as well as a discussion on the ethical issues encountered in the study.

4.4   Analysing the data

Firstly, the data collected was in different languages. A large number of the focus groups and interviews were conducted in English, because it is the language of instruction in schools in Kenya and the students were comfortable conversing in it. In Nairobi, however, this was interspersed with **Sheng** which is the youth slang that is used throughout the country. In the coastal region as well, most of the focus groups were in Kiswahili as it is very commonly spoken in that region. The data was not translated into English during transcription, but the extracts that will be used to illustrate the arguments have been translated. The data was analysed using a variety of approaches. This is because there were three different sources of data. This is the focus groups, interviews and the narrative letters. In the first instance, the focus groups were analysed using thematic analysis in order to understand the emerging themes from the data. The data was then further analysed using the framework method (Furber, 2010, Srivastava and Thomson, 2009). The framework method was first proposed by Nat Cen in the **1980's as a way to systematically** analyse qualitative data collected through interviews and focus groups. The method produces a summary matrix of the data which allows the researcher to look at both different cases and different themes from the data. In the case of this particular research project, focus groups are the cases and the different themes emerging from the analysis of the focus groups serve as the themes. The summaries presented in the framework matrix are derived directly from

the data. The focus group is read through, line by line, with the researcher summarizing the portions of the data relevant to a particular theme.

The second approach was used to analyse the letters to the President and this was the narrative method. The narrative method has been resurgent in **identity research in the last few decades which focus on the "narrative understanding of experience."** (Somers, 1994, Rapoport and Lomsky-Feder, 2002, De Fina, 2003, Riessman, 2003b) **In addition, "narratives reflect values",** (Davis, 2008: 68) This method is also a move to accepting that human beings **exist in a "storied"** (Shotter, 1993, Weedon, 2004) world and attempting to understand any person's lived experience without reference to this leaves out a great deal in the greater analysis. The form of narrative analysis that was taken was a line by line analysis where the letters were read through and categorised into emerging themes. Finally, the interviews were also analysed using thematic analysis, focusing primarily on the four aspects of understanding habitus as highlighted by Reay (2004) in the theoretical chapter. All the analysis was conducted using NVIVO qualitative analysis software. This was used from the very beginning of the research process and included all the transcripts of the data in the programme.

In presenting direct quotations from the data, '[…]' is taken to mean that there was a silence in the transcripts, or that information has been removed for the sake of clarity, and in addition that what was said was not clear either due to background noise in the recordings. Square brackets with wording in them for instance '[I have heard]' were used to add information into the transcript extracts that were not directly stated by the young people but were used to clarify their statements. In addition at the end of each transcript extract, the source of the transcript is indicated, for example [1NYEB1 AFGD] which is a focus group from the Nyeri boy school. The school codes are explained in the appendix E. Data that was gathered in the pilot study is indicated by the word pilot for example [1NYEB1 Pilot AFGD]. The reason for assigning these codes is to ensure the anonymity of the schools and research participants.

4.5   Conclusion

The chapter above introduced the research strategy and methodology that informed the data collection and analysis that was used in the thesis. This was a qualitative and participatory research strategy utilizing focus groups, interviews and narratives as data collection tools. Moreover, the study employed the peer-led research methodology that seeks to engage young people as co-researchers and not only as respondents in the research process. The chapter begun with a reflection on the literature of young people as co-researchers. It noted that within this particular research project the young people were not consulted in the initial stages of research design but their involvement included commenting on the appropriateness of the questions to be asked in the focus group guide as well as conducting the focus groups but the research topic and design were decided on beforehand by the researcher. The claim cannot therefore be strictly made that they were involved in the co-production of knowledge but their involvement was influential to the research process.

Subsequently the chapter went into detail on how the peer research method was adapted both during the pilot study and the main study. This included their recruitment and training and later on their style of moderation. It also included the issues that arose within this method such as the issue of power and the insider and outsider dichotomy. The chapter then dealt with the ethical concerns arising from the conduct of the research and how these were dealt with including informed consent, the mix of ethnic groups, and the location of the interviews. A number of challenges that occurred in the fieldwork were also discussed including a teachers strike that occurred during both the pilot study and the main study which affected access to schools which were the research sites. There were also issues negotiating access in particular schools which were resolved through discussions with other teachers within the schools. The chapter concluded by detailing how the data collected would be analysed and presented. For the focus group discussions, the framework method was utilized which produces a summary matrix of the data which allows the researcher to look at both different cases and different themes from the data. In the case of this particular research project, focus groups are the cases and the different themes emerging from the analysis of the focus groups serve as the themes. The interviews were analysed using thematic analysis

focusing primarily on the four aspects of understanding habitus as highlighted by Reay (2004) in the theoretical chapter. The narrative letters using narrative analysis. All the analysis was conducted using the NVIVO qualitative analysis software. The next chapter will be the first empirical chapter which will present **the data from the interviews on the young people's ethnic habitus.**

Chapter 5:   Ethnicity as habitus:

Understanding young people's

dispositions towards their tribes

5.1   Introduction

The first part of this chapter will focus on the content of young people's ethnic habitus as discussed in the theoretical chapter and focusing on Reay's (2004) understanding of Bourdieu's elements of habitus namely; habitus as embodiment (stereotypes, body hexis), habitus and agency (resistance and acceptance of dispositions), habitus as individual and collective trajectories (community attachments, individual identities, national and ethnic identity) and habitus as interplay between current reality and past experiences (experiences that are reinforcing attitudes and habitus). This ethnic habitus will be analysed in regards to the differing contexts or fields that the young people find themselves, in particular their different regional locations. Moreover, it will look at whether young people are reproducing or challenging dominant attitudes towards ethnicity. The second section will focus on analysing ethnicity as a source of social capital and trust. The chapter will correspond to **research question 1 (a): what are the narratives of young people's ethnic** identities? This chapter will subsequently connect directly to the discussion in the subsequent chapters which will focus on their political attitudes in order to analyse if and how their ethnic dispositions affect their political attitudes and serve to reproduce ethnic politics.

In order to understand young people's ethnic habitus, interviews were conducted with a volunteer participant from each of the focus groups. The exception to this was in one of the schools in Kisumu where only interviews were conducted and no focus groups due to issues surrounding the teachers' strike highlighted in methodology chapter. These interviews focused on narratives surrounding their ethnic group. They were asked about the cultures and traditions of their ethnic group as well as stories they had heard about their own and other communities as indicated in the interview guide in appendix B. **In general, the interviews focused on the young people's**

experiences of their tribe and other tribes in Kenya. In order to tie in their attitudes towards politics, they were asked about their experience of the political campaigns with the Election Day being used as a focus for the discussion. While the data from the interviews will be the focus of this chapter, relevant data collected from the focus groups and the narrative letters will be included.

As has been highlighted in the theoretical framework, this chapter will **focus on the young people's habitus and will focus on using habitus as an "analytical tool" to understand "human behaviour" by** understanding how **"various discourses impact upon the individual."**(Connoly, 1997: 71) Indeed, as has been discussed, habitus enables us to do two things in the study of ethnic identity and its relation to politics. One of these is that we can better explain **young people's experience of ethnicity, especially the et**hnic specific conditions of their socialization. This is because the strongest elements of habitus occur during early childhood where the logic of practice tends to be structured through the differences between social fields that the young people find themselves, be it an educational context or moving from a rural to an urban area. Studying this as it is in the dynamic process of formation can give us an insight into how dispositions come to be reproduced later in life, even among the so called educated elite.

Habitus will be linked with field, in this case the political field as well as the various locations in which the young people find themselves, be it urban or rural will be considered as fields. Through the interaction with the field we see whether the habitus is reinforced or transformed. In my case, this visibility is seen through their attitudes towards the political system and their own ethnic identities in the various regions that the research took place in, and also in their attitudes towards inter-ethnic interaction as evidenced by different tribal stereotypes. Bourdieu, illustrated this in a formula of (habitus*capital) +field=Practice. What this means is that habitus as attitudes towards their ethnic group including capital as shared norms, values and resources (Shah et al., 2010) interact with various contexts and fields to produce and reproduce practices and behaviour which will be attitudes towards the political system and their role within it.

To recap from the theoretical chapter, below are the elements of ethnic habitus that are of interest to the thesis are:

- Stereotypes which are accepted, contested or ambiguous.
- Knowledge about their ethnic groups and their roles within them.
- Influence of the past and their perceptions of the present and future

Table 5 Key regional ethnic attitudes

Theme	Western	Coast	Central	Nairobi
Ethnic narratives and stereotypes	Kikuyus love money and are selfish Luos like to "praise themselves" Lack of knowledge about their communities	Kenya belongs to the Kikuyu. Kikuyu have no right to "wealth" because it is stolen	Kikuyus dominate in politics because they are go getters Kikuyus are hardworking and business oriented and feel compelled to fulfil this stereotype	Movement from a rural area to Nairobi disrupts traditional ethnic attitudes Lack of knowledge about their communities
Gender			Necessity of living in a modern world has young men taking up roles such as cooking that were reserved for women	Women still fulfil traditional gender roles like cooking

5.2 Elements of habitus

5.2.1 Habitus as embodiment

In this view, habitus consists of dispositions and stereotypes towards certain social phenomenon, for instance other social groupings and institutions be it women, tribes or government institutions. This displays the orthodox positions that they may hold towards these phenomenon. This form of habitus was mainly investigated in the interviews through their attitudes towards different ethnic stereotypes. As some have noted, stereotypes are used by people who are presented with a number of ideas about various social identities as a way to **"simplify the process of perception" in order to better understa**nd people who are different from them. (NCIC, 2012: 18, unpublished report)

When analysing the stereotypes, I included not only what they thought of other communities but the narratives surrounding their own communities. As will be seen below, a stereotype such as the Kikuyu are business oriented and like money is one that equates to an expectation of behaviour among certain members of the Kikuyu tribe interviewed. Ethnic stereotyping is common in the Kenyan context with both negative and positive ones manifesting. Indeed it is so common that there are a number of comedy episodes in local comedy shows about them. For instance, Kikuyus **are seen to be "***money hungry misers***"** Luos to have ***"class"*** and Kisiis to be in possession of high sexual libidos (both men and women) and Luhyas to be ***"strong bodied".*** Within the interviews a few that were mentioned included: "***Kikuyus love money***" and *Luos are possessive"* This stereotyping has been raised as a key issue by the national cohesion and integration commission who cite is as one of the factors in **addition to what they term "coded language" that fuels ethnic hatred and** conflict by politicians using them as a political tool of incitement of one community against another.(NCIC, 2012) But, the evaluation of the veracity of these by the young people varied from those who did not believe in them like this respondent in the Nyeri girls school who stated ***"I just think they are something people came up with"*** [2NYEG1 AI2] to those who believe they are natural such as one respondent in the Nairobi boys school noting that they are true because it is what they observe their peers doing. [2NAIB1 AFGD] These identities were, however not fixed but could change depending on the various contexts that the young people found themselves. They had an element of

dynamism and could be considered aspectival (Tully, 2008) This is illustrated by the statement below from one of the participants in the Nyeri boys school saying he is seventy-five percent from one community.

Ok, me I am 75% kikuyu. We are people who like money most of the time. As in from like primary school, we used to hear that for example the Kamba […] are hyper all the time. [1NYEB1 Pilot AFGD]

While he did not elaborate on this particular statement, this is an interesting phrase that illustrates that ethnic identities are not static, neither are they fixed to one particular community, but can shift between them depending on the situation and context. In addition, as will be shown in later sections in this chapter, the fact that Kikuyus like money is not only an aspect of their othering but forms a part of their ourselvsing. With increases in inter-marriages between communities and rural-urban migration, this is perhaps fast becoming a salient feature of this particular generation. They are not as tied to the past as their predecessors and are free to mould and merge their identities as it suits them in their different contexts.

A number of the narratives presented regarding stereotypes revolved around the two dominant ethnic groups in the country, these being the Kikuyu and the Luo. The Kikuyu were presented as enterprising to the point of denying themselves luxuries in order to acquire wealth. This was in interviews in both the Kikuyu dominated regions and those elsewhere. For the Luo community it was all about wealth and showing off. This Kikuyu enterprising nature was seen in both a positive and a negative light. It was seen as positive in the sense that they were hardworking but negative in the sense that they would accumulate wealth at any cost, especially to the detriment of others. Even though these attitudes were expressed in all areas, they were stronger in the Western and Coast regions. This ties in to a narrative of marginalization and exclusion from communities in the Coast and Western regions that will be explored in greater detail in the subsequent chapters. The extract below illustrates the narrative and is taken from an interview in the western region.

Moderator: Now we have talked about corruption versus tribalism, maybe I can ask you more about tribalism. Sometimes you hear stories about different tribes, especially when they are fighting. For example, some

people say that the kikuyu like money, but I don't know the ones about the Luo. Where do these stories come from and do you think they are true or false?

Respondent: Which stories?

Moderator: The ones that people say about different tribes, about their characteristics.

Respondent: I have heard people say that, about the Luhya I have heard of many (Laughter) ummm. [I have heard] a Kikuyu would rather die with money in their pockets instead of buying medicine. [A] Kikuyu can build a big house and rent it out but he will stay in a grass house, so that he can get money. Luos like to praise themselves and be seen with expensive things but the kikuyu love money, you know the Luo like to praise themselves.

Moderator: That's how they are?

Respondent: yes

Moderator: Is that how they are like even in the city?

Respondent: Yes, that is how they are. (2KSMM2 AI1)

In another interview in the same area, the negative Kikuyu narrative was repeated. "*Kikuyu are selfish*" was one of the sentiments expressed. [1KSMM 1 AFGD] In the Mombasa area, there was a narrative that emphasises a stereotype of Kikuyu wickedness. In one focus group in the area, this was repeated, as is evidenced by the extract below.

Respondent 1: To me I have heard that the Kikuyus are the ones who own the country because of, when you look back the people who vote mostly they are the Kikuyus and the Luos, the ones who started having [political] parties they are the Mau Mau [freedom fighters] who fought to

bring Kenya independence, I have heard that there are some other communities that contributed.

Respondent 2: [personally] I have heard stories about it being unfair in Kenya, […] Kenya belongs to the Kikuyu […] these people they grab all the opportunities like in work, let's say employment [at] Kenya Ports Authority, the manager there right now is a Kikuyu [laughter]. That thing is not pleasing to many people from the Coast [sic] And even the one who will take over after him [will be] a Kikuyu [Laughter] yeah we all know that because that chain has been for Kikuyus […] Kikuyus are the go getters [1MSAM1 AFGD]

In the extract by this second respondent, they lament Kikuyu dominance in government appointments, but at the end, they still note that Kikuyu are "go getters". This is similar to sentiments expressed during the post-election violence in 2007, where it is said that people from western parts of Kenya were worried that if all the Kikuyu were chased away from "ancestral land" then business in the area would collapse because they owned all the enterprises. We can see that while the community is reviled, in the same breath, they are praised for their industriousness. Indeed this same narrative was repeated in one of the focus groups in the predominantly Kikuyu area as a counter to the negative stereotype that they are selfish and money hungry to show that instead they are hardworking and entrepreneurial.

Respondent 1: I will tell you the Kikuyu. About the Kikuyu it is not about liking money, it is only that actually if you look at our country right now it is Kikuyus who have-most of the businesses are we. Like there in Bungoma during 2007 election violence, the Luhyas were chasing us out of the-okay, the Luos from Kisumu came to chase the Kikuyus from Bungoma, but the Luhyas in Bungoma told them "If you chase the Kikuyu away, who will run our businesses." [saa mukitufukuzia Wakikyu wetu kazi zitaenda wapi?]

Several respondents: [Laughter]

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Respondent 1: Like when we go we go with the businesses. [sic] Like the town will be finished. So like we Kikuyus it is all about-we are hardworking and we have this urge of doing different businesses entrepreneurship not all about white collar jobs. [2NYEG1 AFGD]

Indeed, in one Nairobi girls school with a majority of students from the Kikuyu community, though there were a few Luos, the Kikuyus were in politics because they were successful, though this was contested by others within the group as also indicated in the illustration,

Respondent 1: but most people in politics are Kikuyus

Respondent 2: yeah because they are successful and they work to get what they want

Respondent 1: it is actually people who voted for them it is not like they put themselves there

Respondent 2: [...] the people who are working hard to get to the top are those Kikuyus, but you are saying that they are tribal. It is not about being tribal. Because if I am a Kikuyu and I know Kikuyus like money and I am poor, why wouldn't I want to be like that rich person? I will work hard. No matter the circumstance I am in. So those people who work and end up getting to the top are Kikuyus and then you people start saying they are tribal. It is not logic, it is just jealousy.

Respondent 1: I think it is tribalistic [sic] because like Uhuru Kenyatta side has basically many Kikuyus and Raila's side has many Luos. So I may think political parties are actually siding with tribes because Raila wouldn't consider [...] I think political parties are just tribalistic. [1NAIG1 PFGD]

To continue on with an extract from the Mombasa focus group, the same sentiment expressed in the extract from focus groups in the Nyeri area in which there were predominantly participants from the central region was also

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expressed in the Mombasa area that had a mix of tribes:

> *Respondent 3: These people, [Kikuyus] I see them grabbing opportunities, they are also very smart [...] because this [Kenya] Ports Authority, has always been led by the Kikuyus [...] so even if they are grabbing opportunities, they also know how to use those opportunities they also know how to make those things to be [...]*

> *Respondent 2: Opportunities they are there for the Kikuyus only, I would say that was my point, you know why in Kenya Ports Authority if you have ever known that there is corruption there is a lot of corruption and what I will see is that the Kikuyus are the people doing the corruption.*

> *Moderator: Should we say it's just fair, if we call them, whatever they do they are just fair as it's in their right?*

> *Respondent 2: Not their right, there are some that are promoting in the development of Kenya although in their funny ways of getting to those opportunities than the positions, though they are developing Kenya, so its somehow right, somehow right, yeah to some extent its right. [1MSAM1 PFGD]*

The respondent here, while adamant that the Kikuyu have no "right" to wealth because of their opportunities gained through corruption, find it still acceptable for them to have this wealth because they are developing Kenya. This is a sentiment that will be repeated in the subsequent chapters, where we will see corruption and other aspects of negative aspects of politics may be deemed acceptable as long as **the young people's** basic needs are provided for. While there are some decidedly negative stereotypes out there, what is interesting is the belief among the young people that they can play a role in determining your life prospects. For instance, Luhyas are apparently known to make good watchmen and ***"Kikuyus are business oriented."*** [1NYEB1 Pilot AFGD] This quote was followed by an explanation, indicated below, where one of the participants highlighted that they felt that they were under an obligation to fulfil this scenario which is an instance where stereotypes are becoming part

and parcel of the identities of the community. This goes some way to explaining how these stereotypes are reproduced which is through a sense of obligation that accompanies the narrative.

> *Respondent: I feel like all these things that we hear, they compel you towards a certain path in life. For example, like myself, the way I have been raised, I have been hearing that the Kikuyu love money, until it becomes a part of my soul until one feels that I was born to make money, therefore you go and make it because you have to prove it to others. Also the Luos you see them on the street, talking very good English, and the way they act, it is something that is expected of them*. [1NYEB1 Pilot AFGD]

When this participant came to high school he felt that he should open a small business to make some money, because that is what is expected of members of his community. So in this case, this aspect of his identity as a Kikuyu can be viewed as inherent and unchanging. We can therefore view identities as not only fixed or fluid as a whole, but manifest themselves in this way depending on the context. So, for this particular individual, in the context of future career choices, he has been socialized that as a member of his community, he has to engage in a business. Within the context of making a livelihood, his ethnic habitus presented itself as fixed an unchanging. But, even as their ethnic habitus displays this embodied quality which seems inherent and unchanging in terms of stereotypes, even to the extent that young people feeling a need to fulfil some of its precepts, there is a transitional quality to it. This is so when we look at certain norms and practices within communities that previously would have been acceptable to the participants but because of life changes such as moving to an urban area as well as a change in religious affiliations, such practices are challenged and transformed. We will take as our example here a story that one of the female respondents from an urban Nairobi school gave of the practice of witchcraft in her community, how she has been affected by it and how it has affected her attitudes towards her community. This shows how embodied ethnic attitudes interact with changing fields and may transform depending on whether elements of the habitus or rather the social capital gained allow them to be successful in that field or not.

The young woman spoke about an incident where her grandmother was sick and she had gone home to see her. It is unclear from the interview why this was the case but she states that people in the community were talking about her and called her a witch. It seemed that the practice of witchcraft was normalized in her community as she described her family using it in order for her sister to pass her examinations. The family participated in a ceremony that involved a snake and as the respondent stated, *"I saw something I have never seen, and that's why I don't like going there."* By "there" she means back to her rural Kisii home. Though she was emphatic that she herself was not involved, she did not protest when the event was happening. This view of her as a witch was reinforced when her grandmother apparently suddenly recovered from her illness the moment that she got home. She went on to explain that;

> *I am a Catholic ,I quit the Adventist church, So as a Catholic ,I just worship but sometimes I see things like witchcraft even though I don't associate with them, I can't. Associate with them. I just associate with people that I go to church with. [sic]*

The incident with the snake happened in their home, which she and her aunt did not approve of and so together, they managed to get rid of it and report the incident to the police [as witchcraft is considered illegal, in Kenya]. It should be noted, that in quite a number of areas in Kenya, even urban areas, certain aspects of witchcraft practice are still practiced. An example is during the 2007 post-election violence. In the Mombasa area, there was looting taking place and a carpenter's shop was broken into and tools as well as lumber stolen. The owner placed a curse on the thieves and his property was returned.(Achieng, 2008) As illustrated by the interview extract below, the participant noted that she is trying to move away from these traditions. She does not want to live in the rural area, and currently goes to school and lives mostly in urban Nairobi. In addition her mother separated from her father and these life changes into different fields such as an urban context and a single parent household served to disrupt the acceptance of the practices.

> *Respondent: I can never go back to Kisii land* [...]

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Moderator: So you are trying to get away from those traditions

Respondent: Yeah, I don't want it because they make you go crazy even [to such an extent that] you cannot understand yourself [1NAIG1 AI1]

What this illustrates is that practices that can be seen as normal, something that you have grown up with through what can perhaps be described as life changing experiences have the potential to transform attitudes and thus the habitus and in this case instil a desire to move away from behaviour that was seen as non-**beneficial and indeed no longer "normal". I would explain this as** not the habitus changing but indeed a glimpse of the formation of the habitus in the first place. Indeed, as had been stated previously, dispositions that are acquired in childhood and adolescence are necessary to the formation of the habitus.

Gender roles and the perceptions of the differences between what boys and girls are expected to do also contribute to the perspective of embodied habitus. Women and girls have particular tasks to perform that are part of the expectations of their community as illustrated by the same Kisii young woman from the discussion above when discussing gender roles in a rural context.

Respondent: As for the work they are doing, as girls we like helping our mothers, we like go look for because taking them to go graze and milking them [...]

Facilitator: okay what do boys do?

Respondent: the boys they are only there for sending for far places. And also they even take care of the cows and they do farming [1NAIG1 AI1]

One thing that is telling is her statement *"they are only there*" to show that she feels that young women are more burdened than their male counterparts. When asked to reflect whether things had changed for her, on moving to the urban area Nairobi, she indicated that for her, it had not changed

Respondent: it doesn't change for me. Am still [...] I know what I was taught with my grandmother. As for the boys, actually they don't go to the kitchen they just [...] they were warned by grandmother not to go and cook for others [1NAIG1 AI]

Attitudes on gender roles are being challenged, and not only by the young women but by young men as well. This change in habitus concerning gender is occasioned by changes in the various fields in which the young people live their lives. This includes moving away from rural areas where perhaps there are a number of sisters and a mother to do what is considered 'women's' work to urban areas where this is not the case because they may need to live alone. [1NYEB1 Pilot AFGD] But this shift is perhaps less of a transformation of the habitus and more of an adaptation to particular circumstances. Because from conversations with other adults, it seems that when a man is single and needs to eat and live, he is willing to let go of pre-conceived notion of cooking being **women's work**, but once he is married, then this circumstance changes and the wife is expected to look after him. These attitudes on gender roles were not as prevalent in the interviews and were present in the Nairobi girls focus group and the Nyeri boys focus group. These changes in context will lead us on to the next section on habitus as past and present in order to look at how these **two interact to produce young people's dispositions.**

The habitus is inculcated in a number of ways. As relates to marriage and traditions around the rights of passage for example, it is from their parents that they receive this information. This was especially the case among the young women interviewed regarding who they were to marry or not marry. For example, one young woman in Nairobi was told that she should not marry a member of the Kamba community because they are known for their witchcraft. It is an example of not only lack of knowledge about other ethnic groups, but also a lack of trust.

Respondent: Like my sister was married to a Kamba. My mum did not agree to it at first, and my big brother who is like my father said that he can't allow my sister to be married to that man because life is going to be difficult for her.

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Moderator: Because of the traditions

Respondent: Yeah, Because of the tradition. They say that our grandfather told us that we see that they have bad behaviour. You can't follow them. Like I think they are the same with witchcraft (Kamutii) that one yeah as in they don't want it now my sister has stayed with that man ,my mum refuse my sister to come home because she is still with that man ,she says that [...] stay there do not come to my home [1NAIG1 AI1]

Additionally, what habitus as embodiment shows us is that stereotypes or attitudes about ethnic groups are not reproduced solely through myths and narratives that young people pick up from kinship relations or mass media as shown above, but, in other cases, ethnic stereotypes are reinforced by their lived experience and day to day observations which may go a long way to explaining their durability even in heterogeneous and urban contexts. In fact, **one of the students was aware of the "normality" of stereotypes.** Normality in the sense that stereotypes are used everywhere in the world and that depending on its usage, it can be a positive or a negative force as illustrated by the focus group extract below :

Respondent: You were asking about the stories, that the Kikuyu like money [..] what I can say is that it is true, but we can also use it to undermine people, the way people use it is what brings about conflict. In other countries, people have/use stereotypes, but they don't use them in a negative way. They are just words/names. But in Kenya we use it in a negative way. [1MSAM1 AFGD]

As was indicated previously, a respondent in Kisumu stated that *"that is how I see them"* when speaking about how he thought that Kikuyus like money. [2KSMM2AI1] The veracity behind stereotypes was therefore two fold. There are those who thought that they are just that, stories, with sentiments such as **"I just think they are something people came up with"** while there were others who believed them to be true, from their observations and day to day experiences. Indeed, believing they were true made them true in some cases,

as is illustrated in this focus group from one of the girls focus groups in Nairobi.

> *Moderator: [...] now that we live in the modern world, in the twenty first century, do you think these stories are true*
>
> *Respondent 1: No*
>
> *Respondent 2: In our place, the traditions of circumcision still happen, even the Luo are doing them.*
>
> *Moderator: So you think they are true*
>
> *Respondent 1: Some but not all, if you only believe in them [3NAIG2 PFGD]*

And there are also true because the respondents "see them happening" as illustrated by the extract from a focus group that was conducted in a school in the Kisumu region

> *Moderator: So what do you think about these stories? Are they true? Are they false?*
>
> *Respondent: They are true*
>
> *Moderator: they are true? [...] Why are they true? You have seen them being true or?*
>
> *Respondent: We've seen them happening*
>
> *Moderator: You've seen them happening ...*
>
> *Respondent: Yes [1KSMM1 AFGD]*

Their observations and beliefs of stereotypes also influence their day to

day behaviour. In the school in the Mombasa region, they say a club treasurer cannot be a Kikuyu because they **will "steal the money"** as is highlighted in the extract below. Stereotypes manifest themselves in their day to day interactions even in school and as has been seen in the discussion above, are not limited to the realm of politics.

Moderator: You have talked about tribalism quite a lot. Let me ask you a question. When I was growing up, there are stories I heard about different tribes, like the Kikuyu like money. Have you heard these stories? Are they any different today?

Several respondents: They are the same

Moderator: They are the same?

Several respondents: Yes

Moderator: So tell me about the Luhya?

Respondent 1: The Luhya? They are the ones with no stories [Laughter]

Moderator: What about other tribes? What have you heard?

Respondent 1: What I have heard, here in the classroom [...]

Moderator: In the classroom? Oh! Do tell!

Respondent 1: in our classroom, there is a mix of tribe, Kikuyu, Luo, [...]

Respondent 2: We even have Kambas

Respondent 1: [...] So in the classroom, some may say that you should not give the [class] treasurer position to a Kikuyu, because they will steal the money, they like money. And then if we are considering the Luo, if

they are given that money, they will spend it on things like a flat screen TV, [laughter] even if they are sleeping under a tin roof. [1MSAM1 AFGD]

There is an underlying assumption that greater interaction between communities will lead to less conflict, indeed this is the key assumption of social contact theory. For example, Hagg and Kagwanja (2007) in their work on reconfiguring conflict resolution indicate that it is crucial that citizens interact with different communities in a way that indicates that they are secure with their own identities and are not threatened by the reality of existing in an area of multiple identities. Essentially, that they have moved from a position of orthodox doxa to a heterodox one. The problem with this is that interaction does not only serve to dispel myths and lead to greater integration, it also serves to reinforce stereotypes. Indeed, stereotypes seem to them to be historical and become so ingrained, that they are seen everywhere, as indicated in the focus group extract below, from the Mombasa region. The young people are, however capable of insights which if utilized can lead to the creation of a better politics which will be discussed in the subsequent chapters.

Respondent: What I can say is that these stories started a long time ago. Now, it has become instilled in people's brains, but even today you will find a Luo business. But the one owned by the Luo, no matter how well it does, you automatically expect the one owned by the Kikuyu to do better. You will say "that one's business is doing well, so the kikuyu like money." But a Kikuyu can also be proud [Like the Luo] Even the Luhya can be proud like them. But when you see a Luo behaving in the same way, you will say, "That is typical of a Luo." […] You will find a Digo being lazy, and the response will be "They are lazy naturally", these stereotypes are instilled in people's brains, that when we observe people doing them, they are reinforced. [1MSAM1 AFGD]

This is in contrast to a recent government study done of adult Kenyans on ethnic stereotypes that states,

In almost all Kenyan communities, there are entrenched beliefs amongst the people about the behaviour, attributes, attitudes, abilities and

weaknesses of members of other ethnic communities. Such beliefs are widely based on limited interactions, hearsay, rumours, sheer contempt and misinformation and/or isolated experiences (NCIC, 2012: 8, unpublished report).

Young people in secondary schools get to interact with members from different communities, especially those who were once in what are referred to as provincial and national schools. Certainly the purpose of national schools which draw their students from around the country was to provide an opportunity for greater ethnic interaction. What the data has shown from the evidence presented above is that this interaction does not automatically lead to greater ethnic tolerance and understanding. Indeed, in some cases it serves to reinforce the entrenched ideas with any observation of a behaviour reinforcing the stereotype. The reason for this is that their ethnic habitus, in this case manifesting as stereotypes is transferable to different contexts and these contexts serve to reinforce and replicate it as is illustrated from the extract below from a focus group in Mombasa.

> *Moderator: So with all those stories you have heard, do you think they are true stories or are they just myths, or are they just lies, do you believe those stories*
>
> *Respondent 1: Because of the examples you have given so they are true*
>
> *Respondent 2: To me because of a, the history talks about it, it is written and you can see and also learn about it so I think it comes to a point where it is true. [1MSAM1 PFGD]*

However, in other circumstances, the new environment or what we can refer to as changing fields, with its challenges, new rules and strange faces, can also serve to disrupt this habitus with some believing that these stereotypes are not true. As illustrated by the extract below, as a result of growing up in an inter-tribal household, this respondent knows them not to be necessarily true, though they admit their influence on behaviour and judgement. This goes back to what was highlighted in chapter 2 that presented

the conceptual framework, in terms of the importance of the affective dimension on ethnic identity.

> *Respondent 1: as in for us [sic] we are only basing our facts on the tribes we come from. From our family we have intermarried from different whatever's [tribes] and I have interacted with many of them. It is not true that Luos love instant things. That is a lie. That is one thing. Not all Luos love instant things.*

> *Several respondents: (Laughter)*

> *Respondent 1: Not all Luos love instant things and not all Kikuyus are hardworking. That is true. It is quite true.*
> *Several respondents: (laughter).*

> *Respondent 1: I know one (laughter) so you see we grow up knowing that all Luos are lazy*

> *Several respondents: (laughter)*

> *Respondent 1: All Kikuyus are hardworking*

> *Several respondents: (laughter)*

> *Respondent 1: The next time I am voting, am going for a hardworking first which is not quite true. The Kikuyu might be the lazy one and the Luo might be the hardworking one.*

> *Moderator: so these influence our judgements but they are not necessarily true?*

> *Respondent 1: yes. [2NYEG1 AFGD]*

When looking at ways in which to solve tribalism, the characteristics of the tribes were presented as inherent by respondents in the Mombasa area.

Members of each community had **certain "talents"** and this should be the basis of job roles. This was, however, contested within the focus group, as it was seen to be one of the reasons behind tribalism. The second respondent thought it was through education that equality could be achieved.

Respondent 1: Let us take advantage of the fact that we have 47 tribes. Let us manage the talents of these 47 tribes because these differences are genetic, aren't they? So Kikuyus are good with money, so put them in finance, and the Luo with power, so let's try it this way and see whether it will function.

Respondent 1: please understand me. People in the coast are good swimmers right? Why not give them the resources to become swimmers? Just the same way that the Nandi are good in athletics. If I put a Wafula [a common Luhya name] in athletics he may not manage against a Kiprotich [a common Nandi/Kalenjin name] because there is something natural inside them. When he runs he feels like it is a part of him. It is the same thing with someone from the coast, when they are in the ocean, they feel like that is their world. So what I am saying is, if someone is good at finance, give them financial things or financial assets, so that they can exploit their talents. Don't have people doing jobs just because they have to. There is another person, if you give them a teaching job, they will be satisfied but another person will do it just for the money, am I right?

Respondent 2: I don't agree with what he is saying. Because this will only bring tribalism because he is saying if a Kikuyu is good in finance then put him in that finance position. What should happen is to educate everyone in those aspects so that anyone can fill that position. For example they say that people from the coast don't like to study and they don't know how to study, but they can learn so they can do that job that the Kikuyu can do or the Luo can do. So that everyone becomes equal. This idea that only a certain tribe can do certain things is what brings tribalism. [1MSAM1 AFGD]

What habitus as embodiment has shown is that there is a narrative of Kikuyu dominance in the political system where those in predominantly Kikuyu regions noted that the Kikuyu were smart and took advantage of the opportunities presented to them while those in the non-Kikuyu regions such as the Western region looked at the Kikuyu as being selfish, money hungry and corrupt. These narratives will be further discussed in subsequent chapters on how they influence political attitudes. In addition, stereotypes were viewed as determinants of future career prospects and behaviour. These stereotypes were not only replicated through myths and kinship relations but through **observations and interactions in the young people's day to day lives. Gender** roles also briefly in terms of certain expectations that young women still have today to perform house work though these were challenged by young men because of the necessity of modern day living resulting in men having to take on roles traditionally reserved for women. This brings us to the section on how the understanding of the past that is the knowledge of their communities influences their perceptions of their ethnic identities.

5.2.2   Habitus as past and present

While habitus operates in the present, it is informed by the experiences of the past. These past experiences are either individual or collective. One way that we can look at how the past interacts with the present in the habitus of the young people is the perceived lack of knowledge about their past in terms of their communities. To briefly illustrate this, when one respondent in Nairobi was asked about her community, this was her response;

I don't know anything about the Kisiis [1NAIG1 A1]

This was also replicated in an interview in the Kisumu region. From the extract you can see the difficulty the moderator had in getting the respondent to speak about the Luo tribe. There was some silence between the time the questions asked and the time they gave their responses which is where the moderator tried to give some more detailed explanations. The respondent had a lot more to say when they were asked about the differences between the Luo and other communities. So in this case, it would seem that it was easier to **define their community through "othering"**

Moderator: I would like to know more about the Luo.

Respondent: The Luo?

Moderator: Yes

Moderator: Imagine that I am a foreigner coming here for the first time, what would you tell me? [about the Luo]

Respondent: I don't understand what you want me to tell you about them?

Moderator: Where do they come from? What do they do? Who are they these Luo people?

Respondent: Luo?

Moderator; Do they only live in Kisumu or are they found in other areas?

Respondent: Oh. The Luo? Let me tell you, you can find Luos all around the world. Wherever you go you can find the Luo.

Moderator: So what kind of traditions and values do they have?

Respondent: The Luo?

Moderator: Yes

Respondent: I don't know about the traditions

Moderator: Ok that's fine.

[…]

Moderator: Let me ask you, are there any differences between the Luo tribe and the Luhya tribe

Respondent: The Luo and the Luhya?

Moderator: because you live so close to each other, I was wondering if there are any differences or you are both the same

Respondent: We are not the same

[silence]

Moderator: Or the Luo and the Kisii, or the Luo and the Kikuyu. What's unique about the Luos if I may ask?

Respondent: The Luo depend on the lake we are fishermen and like doing small things. But the Kikuyu like business, they have a lot of businesses

Moderator: Like shops

Respondent: [yes] shops

Small businesses like those. [2KSMM2 AI1]

Also, in contrast to the previous Kisii respondent used above who stated that not much has changed in gender roles in urban areas, traditional practices and behaviours that form the habitus are perceived to be dying out more so in the urban areas because of the interaction of different communities. This is according to a female participant in a rural school, but who has grown up in a rural town with people from different communities as illustrated from the interview extract below.

Respondent: […] in Nyahururu ,we are like ,Kikuyus ,Luos ,Kambas like many tribes and you will find like actually people live very well ,but when you go back to the rural areas[…]Now you see that's where the tribalism is and the ,that's where they follow their traditions to the root but you see urban areas in Nairobi you will see ,it's hard to know whether this is a Luo ,you won't start to know whether these is a Kamba ,just living together ,when you take the example of the Universities, they take people from everywhere ,so I think it's dying ,as people move you forget where you came from ,you just want to be there ,work [2NYEG1 AI2]

Even though she had grown up in the area around Nyahururu which would be classified as a small town within a rural area, she perceived it as urban and spoke of other more rural areas. From here we can begin to see that

the classification of what is urban and what is rural may be context dependent. While urban areas may be classified as the bigger towns and cities rural areas may have multiple meanings. These may include areas where communities still engage in traditional practices such as some of the Maasai and their nomadic cattle herding way of life and do not have access to modern conveniences and communication such as electricity versus areas which are rural in a sense of say agricultural but have a more modern outlook.

The traditions of the past still live in them according to one female respondent in a rural school. This is more so in terms of traditions surrounding rites of passage. These include transitions from childhood to adulthood, marriage and death. As has been indicated in the earlier section on habitus as embodiment, it is in the rites of passage that knowledge about their **communities remains. Respect must also be given to the "elders" who are the** holders of these traditions. [2KSMM2AI1] This attitude towards the traditions was expressed by respondents from the regions outside Nairobi and will be highlighted in the extract below:

> *Respondent: I have also heard stories about the Kikuyu. They say you are not supposed to marry a man who is not circumcised. [...] Those cultures and traditions of the past, they live in us still [...] It's like my brother, after he is circumcised, He is not supposed to live, under the same roof with my mum as, they are supposed to build a separate room for him. [2NYEGIA1]*

There was, however, an aspect of the fact that living in urban areas **meant that knowledge of one's community was** no longer relevant.

> *Moderator: What values are important in your community? Are there certain things you are told as a Kikuyu that you should not do?*

> *Respondent: Okay me am not so much into coz me, as in I don't know much about Kikuyus [sic]*

> *Moderator: have your [parents] never told you anything? Where do you live?*

Respondent: We live in Nairobi [2NYEGIA1]

In another focus group in the Kisumu region, there was silence the interviewee was asked about their tribe. The respondent did not at first understand the question.

Respondent: what is it that you want me to explain, please explain it to me.

Moderator: Where are they from? [The Luo] What do they do? Who are these Luo people?

Respondent: The Luo? [2KSMM2 AI1]

And even when asked what values were important to the community, their first response was that they did not know.

Facilitator: which values and traditions are important?

Respondent: To the Luo?

Respondent: I don't know their traditions very well. [2KSMM2AI1]

Perhaps they were looking to provide the "right" answer. But the silence can also be interpreted as a matter of not knowing what to say about their community rather than a complete lack of knowledge as they did have an awareness of some of their traditions. For instance, as illustrated below where they talk about the practice of wife inheritance among the Luo, where they highlight the enduring traditions surrounding marriage and death.

Respondent: Someone else comes to take the bride on your behalf, [when you die] I don't know how other tribes do it, some of them do it the same way, they take your wife once you die [wife inheritance]

Moderator: so these traditions are still there to a certain extent?

Respondent: Yes they are still there. [2KSMM2 AI1]

One explanation for this "lack of knowledge" observed can be the "criminalisation of ethnicity" (Mhlanga, 2013: 47) where speaking about your tribe is seen as a backward endeavour as all Kenyans are supposed to be aspiring to a common culture. Indeed, in informal conversations with students in the Nyeri boys school during the pilot study phase of the research, they wondered why I wanted to do research on such a topic because they thought **we should be moving "past" ethnicity** or tribes and on to a national identity. This is further illustrated from the following extract from the data from a Nairobi girls school

Respondent :   To me am not scared of anything whether they strike or not because I think the government is paying them money not that they are not given but even not a little, they are given enough because they are some that even don't have five bob. But them they are getting -- me am not scared of anything whether the citizens themselves they should stop the issue that I am a Luo, am a Kikuyu, they should just say that am a Kenyan. [3NAIG2 Pilot AFGD]

This is also reflective of their reproduction of the nationalist discourse illustrated by the national cohesion and integration commission who recently conducted a study on ethnic stereotyping as was indicated in the contextual chapter. During the launch of the report, one of the commissioners noted that stereotypes are backward practices that should not continue because we are **moving towards a 'national culture' with the implication that there is no room** for the diversity of different tribes and the apparent conflict that it engenders.(Otieno, 2013) Another explanation for the lack of knowledge of their communities is illustrated from the response given by a female from the Nairobi area, but who had grown up in her rural community.

Moderator: So were you not been told like where the Kisiis came from? [or] How long they have lived there?

Respondent: […] my mother never told me [and] I never asked that question even when I was coming to this community. They have never told me anything

Moderator: So you actually asked them [about your community]?

Respondent: I think that my mum doesn't want to tell me [1NAIG1 AI1]

She indicated that she did not have a large amount of knowledge about her community, and the reason she gave was that she was not told anything by her mother even when she asked. With rapid urbanization and greater access to education, there has been a perception that ethnic traditions are being 'lost' especially among the youth. This is not necessarily a unique process as there is always an interruption of this social capital with the next generation in many parts of the world. What is interesting is the effect of this on their attitudes towards politics which will be discussed in more detail in the subsequent chapters. This knowledge about their past and present is also tied in to the next section which looks at their dispositions both as individuals and as members of their ethnic group.

In addition, knowledge of other communities was facilitated by both the education system and movement to different regions and areas. This is perhaps more so when respondents would relocate from a rural area to an urban area for education and vice versa. It may not have been their first realization of other communities but it was possibly their first direct contact or awareness of the differences. This is indicated by the respondents below who was currently studying in one of the girls' schools in Nairobi.

Respondent: oh yeah, like I asked my parents about it and about my name and stuff so...yeah.

Moderator: about what age were you?

Respondent: I was six

Respondent: I think when -coz I used to live with a lot of Kikuyu speaking people so I grew knowing that I was a Kikuyu so that is how I discovered it.

Moderator: So you have always known you are a Kikuyu from the time you were young?

Respondent: coz people asking about- talking Kikuyu so I was like always people how this community is Kikuyu, the people who live here are Kikuyus so I heard that. [sic]

Moderator: when did you first know that different tribes existed in the world-in Kenya?

Respondent: I think I was five when I first learnt that coz when we moved to a new place there was like a lot of different peoples.

Moderator: who else has a[…]?

Respondent: when I went to class four and I met these different people and I was -yeah. When I met them they were talking in Kamba language and others in the Luo language. [1NAIG1 PFGD)

This knowledge, or lack thereof of their community is not only perceived through the individual but also has an element of the collective as will be highlighted in the next section.

5.2.3   Habitus as individual and collective trajectories

Although the habitus is embodied in the individual, the groups in which the individual finds themselves (be it the family or the community) is essential to the habitus as has been noted by Vann (2013) **among others. The "collective history"** of their community which they are imbued with throughout their upbringing is what forms the foundation of their habitus. This collective history includes language, common values and shared history including their perceptions of a national identity. What is interesting about language in rapidly

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modernizing multi-ethnic societies is the struggle between national languages and local languages. In the Kenyan context, there are two official languages, those being English and Kiswahili. The language of instruction in schools and indeed in parliament is English while Kiswahili is spoken in day to day communications between communities. It is also what I will call the "unofficial language" of politics. For instance, when the President is delivering a speech at a national day, he will read the official speech in English while off the cuff remarks will be made in Kiswahili.

In the context of the research project, language emerged as one of the issues concerning identities. There was a conflict between being able to speak your ethnic language with someone who speaks the same language versus only speaking Kiswahili. It seems in the school setting, speaking ethnic languages is discouraged and there was debate about this policy. As one participant highlighted, the need to speak the national language as *"we are cosmopolitan here"* and do not want to "*marginalise anyone*". [1NYEB1 Pilot AFGD] On the other side of the argument was the need for freedom of expression. As highlighted in the quote below.

> *"Feel free when you are speaking Kikuyu in school [...] when it is the language that you understand."* [1NYEB1 Pilot AFGD]

There was a feeling that this freedom of expression was clashing with the need for a more "national" outlook. In conversations with one participant outside the focus groups he noted that he had to learn the language of the community when he moved to that area to study, because, outside of the classroom, in the dormitory and around the area that was what was spoken and he had to adapt. His tone was one of lament for this situation and he would have liked wider use of the national language – Kiswahili.

This concern with national identity as expressed through language leads us to my next element within young people's collective and individual trajectories, this being their perceptions of national identity. Popular feelings of national identity can be encapsulated by a campaign that was spearheaded by the office of the government spokesperson some years back called *"Najivunia kuwa mkenya"* which translates to I am proud to be Kenyan. There are a number of comical variations that arose from this such as *"Najihurumia kuwa mkenya"* which is "I am sorry that I am Kenyan" and *"Navumilia kuwa*

mkenya" which is "I am struggling to be a Kenyan." These reflect what the young people think when one respondent in the boys focus group held in Nyeri [1NYEB1 Pilot AFGD] during the pilot study asked, *"what is the spirit of being Kenyan?"*

This parallels Jean **Daloz' s** (1997) **finding in West Africa of** "*Can I eat democracy?"* In the face of visible inequalities and discrimination, forging a national identity can be difficult. For the respondent above, it seems that when their basic needs are taken care of, when they have an income and a livelihood, is when they can consider themselves a Kenyan. This also links to the findings of Arnot et al (2012) who in their study looked at the relationship between gender, education and poverty in the context of citizenship rights. They highlight that in areas of poverty or conflict, identity is linked to material needs. It is not only material needs that perceptions of national identity are linked to. Areas that have experienced conflict are also affected. What we note here is that lived experiences, as noted in the literature on ethnicity or nationalism from below (Fox and Idriss-Miller, 2008, Lynch, 2011a, Biling, 1995), form the crux of identities and serve to influence discourses at the elite and national level.

For instance, one participant in one of the focus groups conducted in the Nyeri area contested the view of Kenya as peaceful when he stated;

> *No! Let me as you. Let me ask you. Eh there were clashes in Eldoret? So let me ask you, these children that are born in that place and that time, during the post-election violence, does it mean that they will view Kenya as peaceful? [1NYEB1 Pilot PFGD]*

This was further highlighted in a ranking that participants were asked to take part in the pilot study. They were asked to rank family, tribe and country in order. The majority ranked it as family – country – tribe though there were dissenting opinions such as **"without that tribe there would be no Kenya**" and **"propaganda of the government is one tribe, one Kenya."** There were references that were made to how national identity, ethnic identity and more personal identities are linked. It emerged that there is some understanding of the reality of living within a state. Some of the participants highlighted that they live within a country, with common laws, rules, language and regulations and that is what

makes them feel Kenyan. A national identity is seen as acquired by birth. You are born a Kenyan. Different aspects of the country made them proud to be a Kenyan such as the Olympic prowess of athletes and the dominance of the Kenyan economy in the East African market. The context of where they lived and the conditions of their upbringing affected their concept of a national identity or meta habitus.

The dynamism of their ethnic identities is also highlighted with a reference to modernity by one of the participants who stated that modern life is disassociating people and the fact that people were still helping each other out was a key indicator of what one's tribe means to someone. (1NYE B1 Pilot AFGD) From this, it seems it is the point of contact and trust and a form of social capital that is drawn upon both in times of joy, through the celebration of traditional rituals of marriage and circumcision but also in times of crisis. What these identities mean for us is in their interaction with the field of politics, and what emerges from this interaction that will be analysed in subsequent sections.

Habitus can also be considered as collective because it is not learned in isolation. It is through interaction in the community and indeed with communities that are external to a person that perceptions are formed (a **process we can equate to "othering)** This learning can be explicit, as highlighted in the extract below from a Nairobi girls focus group, or implicit and unconscious. Though the explicit nature can have a role in how it comes to **be taken as "common sense"** or doxic if, for instance in this example, all that you hear when growing up is Kikuyu love money and are good with money and that the Digo have spirits inside them as indicated in the previous section that explored their stereotypes.

> *Moderator: […] anyone else who has anything to add? So let's continue. When you were growing up are there things you were told about your community? Everyone says (she) is a Kikuyu so what were you told?*
>
> *Respondent: I was told that I should always love money and I should…yeah, was actually told that money is good and it doesn't have any disadvantages. I was just taught how to spend money and that is something that is in our tribe ah that's all.*

Moderator: interesting. So who else what were you taught about your tribes?

Respondent: like when I was small dad used to tell us a lot of things like-you see Digo' s they have these beliefs like most of them they have like spirits so like I grew I grew up knowing that everyone in Digo has some weird spirits within them that makes them to do things and yeah. [1NAIG1 PFGD]

What this leads us to is a discussion of the agency element of habitus. With certain knowledge about how their communities are and how other communities behave being taken as common sense knowledge then it may be difficult to visualise the agency within the habitus.

5.2.4   Habitus and agency

As was indicated in the theoretical chapter, Reay (2004) in addition to other interpretations (Davey, 2009b) **of Bourdieu's notion of habitus**, provides for the possibility of transformation in habitus. On the one hand, individuals go through experiences that serve to affirm and reinforce the habitus and on the other hand they can encounter those that may transform the habitus. During an interview in the school located in Kibera area, one of the female participants noted in her life history that her mother had separated from her father. This was a painful event, as he had left them abruptly and without warning. What was interesting from this story is when she mentioned that immediately her mother told her that she was no longer a member **of her father's community. I should** mention here that her parents were from two separate ethnic groups. It seemed that she had initially taken on the identity of the father, but when this was no **longer possible, she was asked to revert back to her mother's** ethnic identity. She did not see this as unusual, as her mother had brought her up with an appreciation of the traditions of both communities. This is illustrated by her statement below;

I'm, my real tribe I am Kamba but my mum does not appreciate that she always told me that I am no longer a Kamba but I am a Luhya. As she is

my mum, I had to respect but from my Luhya tribe, it does not have hard rules to follow and it's a good tribe that does not rely mostly on tribalism. [3NAIG2 Pilot PI]

This is an interesting statement that illustrates that ethnic identities are not static, neither are they fixed to one particular community, but can shift between them depending on the situation and context. This was also highlighted in the section on habitus as embodiment with the respondent who stated that **he is "75% Kikuyu."** At the surface, it may seem to show that young **people's ethnic identities are dynamic and indeed aspectival. But it seems this** is more as a result of changes in family dynamics. In the first case, a parental divorce led to the young girl identifying on one side of the spectrum rather than the other. What we see here is that the habitus can change when individuals go through certain key life events or encounter new fields that may challenge their dispositions and where there is not a seamless fit between that field and their habitus (Davey, 2009b, Bourdieu, 2004). In this case a divorce that necessitated a formal change by her mother of the ethnic community that **they belonged to. But, from her statement "my real tribe" we can see that she** did not necessarily fully conform to this change but went along with it because of her respect for her mother. She had also been brought up with an appreciation of both communities and so it was more of different aspects of her identity being foregrounded than others than a change in ethnic habitus. In the second example, it seems was a case of a person whose parents were from different communities which is not unusual as it is slowly becoming more acceptable to marry outside your tribe.

Another point about mixed ethnic group individuals that were encountered in the research was the choice that it presented in terms of which **communities'** traditions they would chose to follow as illustrated by the extract below.

Respondent: I like the Kisii, I am proud of it and am to learn many thing the traditions they were doing. I go to the Maasai; I don't like it at all. [1NAIG1 A1]

One of the female respondents in the Nairobi area stated that she **preferred being her mother's ethnic group, because she preferred their**

traditions to the one of her father, though she claimed to have been raised in the traditions of both. She perhaps felt more Kisii because this is the area which she lived in and therefore she would have to be a Kisii in terms of speaking the language and such in order to be able to interact with other members of the community in the area. I would say that this is reflective of the fluidity of her ethnic attachments as a young woman as is also highlighted by the previous example. Indeed, "women's ethnic affiliations have always been more flexible than those of men. There is a long history of inter-ethnic marriage"(Lonsdale, 2008: 307)

I would suggest that the agency of habitus can perhaps be evidenced in more heterogeneous societies where such instances of inter-community relations such as inter-marriage and this movement between different communities allows for their ethnic habitus to be challenged. The practices that they choose to follow are important because they have an effect not only on their ethnic identities but on their political identities as well. For example in one of the Nairobi female focus groups, Luhyas as a community were identified as being a "passive" people and this reflected on their perceived lack of power and active participation in national politics. The link between how their ethnic identities influence their attitudes towards politics will be explored in more detail in the next chapter.

5.3   Ethnicity as capital

In Kenya, ethnicity and its interaction in the realm of politics has often been viewed in a negative light, but ethnicity can also be viewed in a more positive light as a site of social trust that citizens use to negotiate the complexities of the their daily lives. And also, as a source of social capital where members of the community are trusted, for instance to protect you in business relations and in times of crisis. There is a sense of familiarity when engaging with a person who is known to you through a particular characteristic. This can be through having gone through a particular school system such or in our case, coming from a particular ethnic group. This was highlighted in a focus group with young women in a Nyeri girls school,

Moderator: Ok, and what do others have to say?

Respondent: I was told that I should not marry the Luo. I can marry from any other community but not Kambas or Luos. The Kamba engage in witchcraft.

Moderator: So, you should be with someone [from a community] you know?

Several respondents: Mmm

Respondent 1: Someone familiar

Respondent 2: Someone you can communicate with.

Moderator: Does it also have something to do with circumcision?

Respondent 3: I was told about that. According to what I have heard, the Luo [Wajaka] they do not circumcise [their men] and therefore a Kikuyu should not be with someone who is not circumcised so that is another reason [...] [2NYEG1 AFGD]

In an interview in the same region, the social trust aspect of ethnic relations was highlighted.

Moderator: So, if you could have voted, who would you have voted for?

Respondent: If I could have voted?

Moderator: Yes, if you could have voted. It's ok to tell me.

Respondent: I guess I would have voted how my family voted. They voted for Jubilee [political party] [2NYEG1AI]

I can give another anecdotal incident that I observed while collecting my data that highlights the influence of various social institutions, including one's ethnic community on decision making. One lady was asking another who

she should vote for in the upcoming elections, that were to be held in March 2013. She was shocked when the response that she received was that she **should make up her own mind. She went on to comment, "Were you not told who to vote for in church?"** She went on to insist that her friend tell her who she was voting for and finally, in exasperation, her friend told her. In another example, a young woman of my acquaintance was told by her father not to **"betray" her tribe by voting against her communities' favoured candidate.** There was a moral obligation that was being placed on her; similar to the one in the extract above (Fieldwork notes, 2013) The respondent here expressed a similar view when she indicated that if she could have voted, she would have **gone with how her family voted. This parallels John Lonsdale's notion of "moral ethnicity" that was discussed in the contextual chapter. This is the positive** space in ethnic politics where belonging to a particular community brings with it a responsibility and accountability in the political sphere.(Lonsdale, 1994)

There is, however, an underlying assumption that greater interaction between communities will lead to less conflict, indeed this is the key assumption of social contact theory. For example, Hagg and Kagwanja (2007) in their work on reconfiguring conflict resolution indicate that it is crucial that citizens interact with different communities in a way that indicates that they are secure with their own identities and are not threatened by the reality of existing in an area of multiple identities. Essentially, that they have moved from a position of orthodox doxa to a heterodox one. The problem with this is that interaction does not only serve to dispel myths and lead to greater integration, it also serves to reinforce stereotypes. Indeed, stereotypes seem to them to be historical and become so ingrained, that they are seen everywhere, as indicated in the focus group extract below, from the Mombasa region. The young people are however capable of insights which if utilized can lead to the creation of a better politics which will be discussed in the subsequent chapters.

Respondent: What I can say is that these stories started a long time ago. Now, it has become instilled in people's brains, but even today you will find a Luo business. But the one owned by the Luo, no matter how well it does, you automatically expect the one owned by the Kikuyu to do better. You will say "that one's business is doing well, so the kikuyu like money." But a Kikuyu can also be proud [Like the Luo] Even the Luhya can be proud like them. But when you see a Luo behaving in the same

way, you will say, "That is typical of a Luo." […] You will find a Digo being lazy, and the response will be "They are lazy naturally", these stereotypes are instilled in people's brains, that when we observe people doing them, they are reinforced. [1MSAM1 AFGD]

5.4   Conclusion

The chapter above has focused on understanding young people's ethnic habitus through the lens of **Reay's** (2004) **understanding of Bourdieu's** elements of habitus namely; habitus as embodiment (stereotypes, body hexis), habitus and agency (resistance and acceptance of dispositions), habitus as individual and collective trajectories (community attachments, individual identities, national and ethnic identity) and habitus as interplay between current reality and past experiences (experiences that are reinforcing attitudes and habitus). It has also touched on how ethnicity can be understood as capital. Through this it has focused on their understanding of stereotypes, their knowledge of their ethnic groups and their roles within them as well as the influence of the past on the perceptions of the present and the future. The purpose of this chapter was to answer the research question; what are the **narratives of young people's ethnic identities?**

What habitus as embodiment has shown is that there is a narrative of Kikuyu dominance in the political system where those in predominantly Kikuyu regions noted that the Kikuyu were smart and took advantage of the opportunities presented to them while those in the non-Kikuyu regions such as the Western region looked at the Kikuyu as being selfish, money hungry and corrupt. In addition, stereotypes were viewed as determinants of future career prospects and behaviour. These stereotypes were not only replicated through myths and kinship relations but through observations and interactions in the young people's day to day lives. Gender roles were also briefly touched on in terms of certain expectations that young women still have today to perform house work though these were challenged by young men because of the necessity of modern day living resulting in men having to take on roles traditionally reserved for women.

In addition, the young people also relate the various characteristics of these communities to how they will behave in the political arena. These

narratives will be further discussed in subsequent chapters on how they influence political attitudes. There is a sense of trust in members of their own communities to the detriment of other communities which they do not trust as Willis and Chome (2014) indicate on their work on politics in the coast of Kenya. But even with this sense of trust, they do not seem to know much about their **communities'** values and traditions, except with regards to marriage and the rites of passage. Their rich discussions of stereotypes belied the fact that when they were directly questioned about their communities, they claimed to know very little about them. Indeed, some they claimed that they were cosmopolitan and there was no need to go back to their tribes. What we have also seen is that while in some cases their identities may be presented as fixed and unchanging, their ethnic habitus can and does change, more so when they move from their rural communities into urban areas. The regional differences emerged for example in one of the narratives that emerged exploring the Kikuyu versus the Luo binary. This narrative was predominantly in the Western and Coast regions and reflects the dominant narratives in those areas as highlighted in chapter 3 of the PhD.

Moreover, it has been shown that greater social integration will not necessarily lead to greater cohesion. It may actually lead to certain stereotypes being reinforced through **people's observations of the** practices of those communities. Indeed, we define ourselves through interactions with others. Stereotypes are not just about othering but also ourselvsing. They serve to define the behaviour and expectations of members of the community. What the ethnic narratives show is how they relate directly to their attitudes towards the Kenyan political system. This discussion leads us on to the next chapter, where I will focus on the narratives of their political identities and subsequently in chapter 7, link these ethnic and political narratives.

Chapter 6: **Understanding young people's** political attitudes through narrative: An analysis of student letters to the President

6.1   Introduction

As human beings our lives are "storied". The stories we tell help us to make sense of the world around us. Indeed there has been a turn to narrative in social science as a way of understanding how citizens understand and relate to the social world. (Somers, 1994, Fraser, 2004, Plummer, 1995, Riessman, 2003a) In the focus groups that were conducted as part of the research, the young people were asked to write letters to the current Kenyan president on any topic of interest to them. This provided a snapshot of their attitudes towards political actors, especially the President of the country as well as the political system. It will also provide an indication of their expectations of the political system. As was highlighted in the conceptual chapter the political habitus includes their construction of politics and political actors as well as their aspirations and demands of the political system. The chapter will begin by looking at the approach that was taken in analysing the letters. This will **give an initial "character" of the narratives in terms of their length and tone.** The chapter will then proceed to look at the findings from the narrative letters which includes what young people understood the role of the President to be. This will lead on to a discussion on how they construct politics and their role within it. This will be done through an analysis of the emerging themes from the narrative letters. The aim of this chapter is to provide a first answer to the research question: What are the narratives of young **people's political** identities?

6.2   Analysing narratives

Narratives can take different forms from spoken oral narratives, diaries and letters to narratives collected through interviews and life histories. In this case, the source of narrative data is letters to the President of Kenya. In order to analyse these, a thematic narrative framework was chosen. Most important to this framework is stories must be located in space and time. Narratives are not only about the present. They can give insights about the past and hopes for the future.(Squire, 2012, Andrews et al., 2008) There are varied approaches in the conduct of narrative from those who would focus on the structure and linguistic elements(Labov and Waletzky, 1997) **to arguments over "big stores and small stories"**(Bamberg, 2006). Big stories are the meta narratives that can take on a national or even international character while small stories can be concerned with the minutiae of day to day life. What drives the approach to narrative to be taken is first what kind of narrative it is and secondly what the research question is or rather the purpose of analysing the narrative. In this case the narratives are letters and the purpose is to understand what young people think about politics and the key issues that concern them in the social and political space. It was felt that the best way was to adopt a thematic narrative analysis approach. This is especially helpful when looking at personal narratives which are those that are concerned with events and experiences that happen to the people of interest. However, these kinds of narratives can be about other people or events that did not necessarily directly affect the narrator. (Squire, 2012)

The analysis of the students letters was an attempt to "map local forms of knowledge **or theory."**(Andrews et al., 2008: 11) What narratives can tell us is how people view politics and what micro theories they come up with to understand the world around them, more so the political world. Analysing the letter narratives was a multiple stage process. Most important are the themes that the narratives bring out and this will be borrowed from thematic narrative analysis approaches. (Andrews et al., 2008, Riessman, 2003a) These themes will enable us to examine whether they are reproducing popular political notions or contesting the status quo. In the first instance, the narratives were read line by line and the data categorised according to the emerging themes. This is an approach adopted by Fraser when analysing personal narratives.(2004) These themes included: their hopes for the future, their

demands on the political system and their ideas about how the political system works/ is supposed to work. The point was not to look at grand meta narratives but the small micro narratives that give hints into everyday lives. As stated by Anna Phoenix,

> In response to[...]questions participants may construct themselves as having particular philosophies and habitual ways of dealing with the world **that constitute a projection of identity.[...]Small stories go beyond** narrative as events, in order to focus on accounts that construct emotions, worldviews, characters or events in ways that illuminate why particular accounts are produced in particular ways. (Phoenix, 2008: 67)

To go into a little more detail about the analysis process, the letters were analysed using NVIVO qualitative analysis software. First, each letter was read and the content categorised according to the following themes: their construction of politics which was interpreted as what they said about politics. Second was their evaluation of the president. This was whether they overtly mentioned the president in a positive light, a negative light or were neutral and did not mention him at all. There was also an additional theme that emerged **from this which was labelled "president as all powerful" and will be discussed** in detail in the following sections. The other theme that emerged from the narrative letters was labelled hopes for the future. This is where they indicated what they needed and wanted from the President and other political figures. Other themes that emerged include mentions of current events happening in politics and included corruption, the teachers' strike as well as insecurity and will be highlighted within the discussion below.

6.3   Findings

6.3.1   Character of the narratives

The narratives varied in their length and structure. Some were as short as a few sentences or bullet points while others were more than a paragraph in length. There were even some that were only one line long. There were a total of 110 narrative letters written most in English but others in Kiswahili and *Sheng* and well as combinations of the three. This may be as a result of the participants

being students in an educational context where English as the language of instruction is emphasised. The participants were given open ended instructions on how they were to go about the exercise. For example in one focus group, they were asked to imagine they were writing to the president and write down what they would like to tell him. The respondents sometimes asked for further clarification on what they should write, but this was left to them as they were told to write anything, whether they considered it trivial or not. What was emphasized was that the letters were confidential and would not be sent to the President or the politicians but only used for the purposes of the research.

It is also important to state that the narratives were written a few months after the 2013 Kenyan general election. This election, while not as contested as the one in 2007, was still a high stakes one. With coalitions being formed that depended upon ethnic loyalties as was noted in chapter 3. Additionally one of the key candidates (Uhuru Kenyatta who is now the President of Kenya) had been indicted by the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity pertaining to the last general election. He famously stated that voting for him was a referendum against the ICC. It is essential to highlight this context because as Posner (2005) shows, political attitudes become more salient just **before and after elections, particularly ethnic cleavages and the young people's** attitudes need to be understood in this light.

6.3.2   Evaluation of the President

Four evaluations of the president were analysed; positive, negative, neutral and mixed evaluation. Positive and negative evaluations were coded on explicit negative and positive comments along the lines of for example: **"congratulations Mr. President on your work." Neutral evaluations were simply** letters who made no direct mention of the President in either a positive or a negative light. For example, there were narratives that indicated what should be priorities for the president but did not go into detail on evaluating his performance. There were a total of 110 narrative letters from the 9 schools that were visited. In terms of presidential evaluation, a large number of them were neutral in their content that is 71 of them. It had been expected, as has been shown in the chapter on the contextual framework that the narratives from Western Kenya would display more negative attitudes towards the president then those from the Central Kenya. This would be similar to the

narratives from the Coastal region, whereas in Nairobi there would be a mix, as a result of the cosmopolitan nature of the city. This was not necessarily the case with 5 out of 25 letters in the western region being positive and 3 out of 24 being negative with 2 of the letters being mixed meaning both positive and negative elements were present. In contrast, in the central area, 4 out of 17 letters were positive with no negative narratives, which is perhaps to be expected as the area almost overwhelmingly supported the President during the elections.

The letters that were on the positive side mainly dealt with the notion that they thought that he (the President) was doing a good job or they thought that he could do a good job. For instance, "[...] We trust him, love him and democratically gave him a chance. So let him prove himself a good leader." [2NYEG1 (14)] from a young woman in the central region. Those on the negative end of the spectrum varied. In the western region, they focused on the perception that President Kenyatta had not been democratically elected in the elections and had indeed "stolen" the election. For example, "I think Raila should have a place in the government because the seat is legally his but there's nothing we can do about it." [1KSMM1 (6)] and another who asked in their letter "Mr. President, did you WIN the elections?" [1KSMM1 (18)] 2 of the letters also focused on the pending case at the International Criminal Court in The Hague. This idea of "our turn to eat" or "our turn to rule" will be further discussed in the subsequent chapter. It emerges in the narratives from the western region and is reflective of the politics of the region, which was discussed in the chapter on mapping the field. In certain regions, citizens feel that they have not been given the opportunities to participate in the highest realm of politics, which is the Presidency.

The coastal region did not have a negative evaluation of the President. In Nairobi, the negative evaluations were focused in one particular school [1KAJM1] which had 6 of the 9 negative narratives. As has been explained in the methodology, this school was not in Nairobi proper but was classified as such, because of its format as an international British System school with a large number of its students from the general Nairobi area and that would be most closely associated with Nairobi. The result of this large negative or critical evaluation could stem from the fact that the history teacher of the school, who was the key contact mentioned that he engages in critical discussions with his students, and encourages them to challenge conventional thinking. [Field

notes, 2013] **The students' negative evaluations focused on a number of things** including the fact that the President had a criminal case at The Hague and therefore could not lead the country to the fact that the cabinet was not balanced and thus did not adhere to the principle of ethnic equality in political appointments according to the new constitution.

Fig 1: Key issue areas, letter to the President

     The word cloud above illustrates a word count of the letter narratives that shows which words were most commonly used. It provides us with a snapshot of the issues/themes that were emerging in the narratives. Obviously words like President, Kenya and country were most common as they were used as introductions in the letters but the other words used give us an idea of the developing trends. Teachers, education, school and students show that one of their concerns was with the immediate concern with their education and the nationwide teachers' strike that was on-going at the time of the interviews. Other words seen here such as corruption and tribalism illustrate the issue areas that were of concern to them. More subtly is words such as make and hope which give a hint of their expectations. The themes of corruption and **tribalism will be discussed later in the chapter as part of young people's** construction of politics in addition to their priorities which will relate to their political habitus in terms of the demands that they make of the political system. In the next section I will discuss one of the key themes that emerged

from the narratives which was the role of the President. First the President should be a "benevolent dictator". Second, it is the President's responsibility is to forge a national identity and third is to reign in politicians in order to stop corruption and tribalism.

6.3.3 Role of the President

6.3.3.1 Benevolent dictator

In all the regions, the President was viewed as a powerful entity. They therefore feel frustrated that he does not simply rein in the politicians and solve all the country's problems. I found this interesting as most would not have remembered the heyday of President Moi's rule when he and the state were synonymous. He was made famous by his 'road side declarations' where he would do everything from fire government officials from the back seat of his limousine to make bills into laws. There was a perception that the President had the power to so as he pleases, therefore the problems the country was facing were as a result of the President not doing his job professionally. This could also be interpreted as the view that the buck stops with the President. He is the example of leadership and the failures of others below him reflect on his governance. This is illustrated below by one of the participants' letters from the girls school in the Nairobi (Kibera) area.

> *Mr President I would like you to make the country to stop tribalism in order to build a lovely country where every individual is respected. I would even urge you to make people of the country and even the member of the parliament to stop corruption because with corruption our country will be poor and a lot of misunderstandings will occur. No one should disobey your rules as President and you should be able to make sure that your country has everything and also food to fight hunger. [sic] [3NAIG2 (6)]*

And this other extract below, also from a school in the Nairobi area which illustrates that they thought that he could be one in order to "make Kenya better"

Respondent: Honestly, I would tell Uhuru, what is wrong, you're being a pushover, stand up and make decisions to help Kenya, don't be a sissy, stand up and do what you want, or what you need to make Kenya. Stop being a sissy you sissy. Don't be such a pushover. Stop it! Take control. Don't be a sissy. Make Kenya better [1KAJM1 (14)]

This attitude can be linked to the concept of a "benevolent dictator". This is one who exhibits power and control of the state and society, much like any other dictator would, but instead of looking to his/her own interests, does this in the interests of the citizens in terms of promoting development by controlling dissent and party politics that would otherwise interfere with development aims. The case of Rwandan President Paul Kagame is often referenced here and was indeed mentioned by one of the respondents in the Nairobi focus groups. [1KAJM1 AFDG] Kagame is a "strong man" in African politics in many ways but one crucial one. He is perceived as not accumulating power and resources for his benefit and the benefit of a few of his cronies but for the country's development. He is democratically elected, but does not brook political opposition or dissent within his own ranks. Rwanda does display high levels of development, with, for instance, the highest number of female members of parliament in Africa. This stems from a desire that young citizens have for a politics that works and provides the needs of the citizens, whether it is perceived to be democratic or not. This finding is also present in the South African context through a first look at a survey conducted in secondary schools in Cape Town South Africa that sought to understand the political knowledge and attitudes among teenagers. 21% of respondents from that survey (Mattes, 2012b) stated that they preferred non democratic alternatives of government. It was also shown that they have lower levels of demand for democracy than previous generations. (Mattes, 2012a) This finding is also reflected in Patrick Chabal and Jean Pascal **Daloz's** book, Africa Works. Chabal and Daloz argue that if we look at Africa from the external, then we see the exotic quality of its politics and expect it to conform to western standards, more so for those who ascribe to the modernization thesis. But what they argue is that African identities **should be analysed "as they change over time and are instrumentalised politically."**(Chabal and Daloz, 1999: 51) If we are to do this with this concept of a benevolent dictator then it is not so surprising that young people would hold such a view. Young people have grown up in a

system that is in theory a democracy but they have seen the flawed nature of the Kenyan political system. There have been multiparty elections but before 2002 none of these were considered free and fair. While they may live in a democracy, their political habitus is formed with reference to the past dictatorial regime and the current flawed democracy. Indeed, this was also what Joubert et al (2010) found in their study of primary school students in Johannesburg who noted that while the students were taught the ideals of democracy, they questioned the insecurity and other non-democratic practices that were a part of their day to day lives.

In addition, the day to day functioning of the government is seen as ineffective in providing their basic needs; food, shelter and jobs. As one respondent noted they wanted the president to **"create more job opportunities for the youth." [1NAIG1 (9)]** They are able to see the trappings of greater democratisation, for instance greater freedom of speech with citizens able to openly criticise the president on social media and on other platforms. While protests can still be violently broken up by the police, there is a greater freedom of association. But it seems that these are not the only things that young people want from a democracy. They want to have a sense of hope and security in their future which they interpret as the fulfilment of political promises as illustrated by one respondent in Kisumu, "Mr President, I would like to ask you more about the fulfilment of your promises. Please even us young youths we need your attention so much as citizens of Kenya." [1KSMM1 (3)] This concept of benevolent dictator is not a new one. This has been used to describe rulers from the time of the enlightenment whose absolute rule was not predicated on divine right but on a social contract (Scott, 1990b) until those in former communist countries. (Shapiro and Shapiro, 2004). When recalling the dictatorship under Tito in Yugoslavia, some respondents referred to him as being d**ifferent from others, "To me, unlike the communist dictators of other countries, he put our welfare ahead of the 'line'"**(Shapiro and Shapiro, 2004: 190) Indeed, this can also be applied to the current situation in Cuba. They are not by any definition of the word a democracy, but they have one of the highest literacy rates in the world (100%) as well as universal healthcare. (UNICEF, 2012) It seems that the young people feel these are the more tangible results of democracy that they are still waiting for, and yet are available to citizens in other non-democratic contexts.

Secondly, young people feel that distribution of resources should be prioritised. This sentiment was expressed around the provision of laptops for first year primary school students. This was one of the campaign pledges of the President during the elections. It was felt that there were other pressing needs such as payment of teachers' salaries, resettlement of internally displaced people (IDP's) and ensuring access to education before this should be done as illustrated in the extract below. This was a sentiment that was also expressed across all four regions.

If Uhuru the president were here right now i would have a number of things to say to him. first i would ask him to listen to the cries of Kenyans and take care of their needs before thinking of laptops, they should care for IDP's and improve infrastructure & other facilities like health etc. then other priorities can come in later after much about Kenyans has been solved and made better from before.[...] [2NYEG1 [11]]

Some of their dissatisfaction with politics stems from this. Basic needs, such as provision for school feeding programs are at the top of the priority list as well as provision of health needs. This raises the question of the link between development and democracy. Countries with high levels of development tend to show high levels of democracy but the causality, however, is not that clear. Does democracy lead to development? Or is it rather a more complicated relationship? What is clear here is that citizens perceptions and reality of a lack of basic needs affect their perceptions of the political system, especially when these are not adequately addressed.

The third way in which politics is constructed by young people that will be discussed is their view of politics as demand politics. This is where the role of the president is to solve citizens problems. This could go a long way in explaining the popularity of the politician known as Sonko. He has made a habit of clearing hospital bills of women in his constituency, giving food and hand-outs to the poor and other such activities. These have endeared him to quite a large section of his political base and ensured his election as senator in the recently concluded general elections. This demand politics is illustrated by the narrative letter of one respondent from the Nairobi boys school below which reads like a laundry list.

- *to increase number of high schools throughout the country*
- *to look into the IDP issue which is still a problem to many Kenyans*
- *Jobs jobs jobs please if possible create more job opportunities*
- *To try and reduce cost of some basic needs such as food, fuel etc.*
- *To reduce dependence on aids and grants from other countries and make Kenya's economy stable [2NAIB1(1)]*

This view of demand politics can also include one view that emerged among the Nairobi and Central participants which was that the role of the President is to create a conducive environment for the young people to live their lives. These extracts below from a Nairobi boys and Nairobi girls school respectively highlight these sentiments

[…] on behalf of the youth and other Kenyans I am kindly asking you to allow innovative business capitalist in our country who would help our youths out, people with financial assistance to create job and economic development. [2NAIB1 (5)]

I would request for more jobs to be created because the moment students are done with school they get engaged into evil activities such as theft, drug abuse and immorality. This is caused by lack of enough jobs and people are continuing to be more intelligent as the days go by. Once we see the form four leavers doing such things they also influence us making us to drop out of schools. [2NAIG1 (6)]

This conducive environment also includes equal opportunities. This is reflected the issues that the students had been having with the provision for free secondary education. In informal discussions with students in the Nairobi boys school one of them indicated that to them there was a hierarchy when it came to provisions for various schools. For him the schools that performed better received more funding than those that really needed it but did not perform as well. (Field notes 2013) During the data collection there was a teachers' strike that was in progress and this was one of the costs of education that was implied. The teachers were concerned with their salaries, more

specifically salary increments that they had been promised but that had never materialised. Education for all was seen as vital for any progress in the country to be made. This was more so in the areas outside Nairobi. They also noted that the free primary and secondary education had not been fully realised as intended. "Promote the level of education" and "offer free secondary education" were some of the sentiments that were expressed. The assertion that better performing schools and its connotation of "richer" schools being given more money than poorer schools may or may not be true. What it has led to, however, is a sense of frustration at the perceived lack of opportunities.

For the young people, benefits should not only accrue to the rich or members of a particular community, but also to the poor and oppressed in society. This is in terms of equal distribution of resources and opportunities as well as equality for all before the law as is illustrated by the letter below from a Nairobi girls school:

> *[I would tell the President] to stop corruption in our society. All we need is justice! A rich man for example should be judged equally as a poor man. Now that would be a better place to live in. [1NAIG1 (5)]*

There is also a perception that certain areas benefit more than others in national development. This was a sentiment that was expressed with greater strength from those in the regions outside Nairobi as is illustrated by the following extract from the Nyeri boys and Nyeri girls school. It will be interesting to follow this thought in the coming years with the devolution of power from the centre to the newly formed county governments whether this complaint will be trickled down or was solely a feature of the previous centralization of government.

> *[I would tell the President] to work hard on the rural development by establishing new projects that can support the less privileged. I would also urge him to take concentration in ensuring that corruption goes down to save the resources and manpower the government is wasting by benefiting few individuals.* [1NYEB1 (10)]

> *Develop the rural areas...example construct roads, pay farmers on time.* [1NYEG1 (4)]

The section above has focused on the perception that young people have of the President as a benevolent dictator. They feel that he has the power to solve the countries problems and therefore any outstanding issues are his fault. Under this they felt that the President should prioritise the distribution of resources and ensure equality throughout all the regions. This last sentiment was particularly expressed in the regions outside of Nairobi. This leads us to the next section where the role of the President was to forge a national identity.

6.3.3.2   Forge a national identity

Young people, especially those in the areas outside Nairobi question their national identity. This was also expressed in Nairobi, in the girls school located in Kibera and is illustrated by the extract below:

> *Dear President*
> *What I could want you to do for our country if is just that you help the orphans and the poor so please just build some schools and some homes because it is very bad to see girls sleeping on the roads and mostly girls because they are getting raped and that is more than pain in the mind and some feel so bad and think they are not in Kenya so please make everyone feel like a Kenyan [1NAIG1(13)]*

This is similar to what is observed through anecdotal evidence in certain marginalised areas, for example in Northern Kenya. It was said that when people from other areas visited, member of the Turkana community who live there would ask *"habari ya Kenya?"* [how is Kenya?] This can be taken to mean that they are so far removed from the centre of power that they do not consider themselves to be part of the country, though it is unclear where they do see themselves as belonging. This was in part one of the motivations behind the drive for a new constitution that sought to decentralise power through the formation of local country governments that would localise resources and foster development. As for instance as Arnot(2012) notes, poverty needs to be considered if citizens are to fully realize their rights,

duties and obligations within the nation state, as was highlighted in the chapter on ethnic habitus.

> "The obligation to act as citizens in the labour market and the capability to be productive citizens may not be possible on contexts of acute poverty." (2012)

There is therefore a feeling of a lack of inclusiveness and diversity in the political space. This is especially so for the narratives emerging from respondents in the rural areas outside the capital, Nairobi for example this letter from the girls school in the Nyeri region.

> *Many people are suffering e.g. those in slums, Bungoma crises and more. Crime rates are also very high and also immorality has also come up e.g. bestiality in the history of Kenya it's the first time we've heard of that. Please make it cease its so hurting knowing that the girls are like our sisters. [2NYEG1(6)]*

The word suffering was often repeated in the narratives. More so the suffering that they see in their day to day lives. They refer to the suffering of the children, girls, school dropouts, home runaways, those in the slums and orphans. As illustrated by the second letter above, the young women were especially concerned about their security. As students, however the more direct **suffering that they mention is the teacher's strike that was happening at the** time of the interviews. They were frustrated when they saw the inequalities in society, especially when their politicians are asking for greater allowances[11] when others do not have enough to feed their families. This perception that things are bad and getting worse is reflected in the Afrobarometer survey series data on Kenya. Kenyans are pessimistic about their future with an alarming 71% describing their personal living conditions as very bad and fairly

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[11] At the time of the interviews, the members of parliament were asking for a raise in their salaries and allowances. These had been slashed by the newly formed salary commission from the previous parliament. Previously parliamentarians could set their own salaries and it was common for them to be raised after an election. With the new constitution, this was no longer possible though there was quite a tussle between parliament and the commission with the former threatening to pass a bill to have it disbanded.

bad. (Kivuva, January 2015: 5-6) This is presented as a possible cause of their dissatisfaction with democracy. What this narrative shows is that for them, one component of national identity is not just a feeling of togetherness, with a shared past and future, but one with more practical lines. How can they demonstrate a Kenyan identity when they do not have food in their belly and are insecure at every turn as is shown by the letter below? Their hope is that the President will "*listen to their cry*". [3NAIG2 (2)]

6.3.3.3 Rein in politicians

Managing politicians was another role that the young people assigned to the President. They felt that he should do this by ending corruption and tribalism which were viewed as the key areas in which the elites were involved that **affected citizen's day to day lives. I will discuss these separately in the** following section.

Ending corruption was an often repeated demand expressed by the students in their letters to the President. It is seen as all-encompassing as expressed by one student in the Nyeri area who says "*corruption is big here in Kenya*" [2NYEG1 (1)] What is different about how they view corruption is that instead of viewing corruption as a result of particular structures, it is perceived to be led by individuals, albeit elites and pushed by selfishness and greed rather than institutionalized.

> *Corruption is really affecting country your Excellency. You find that our leaders today are so corrupt that the money invested for us citizens to use is improving our national infrastructures are used by the leaders to satisfy their needs.* [2KSMM2 (4)]

Forms of corruption include MPs asking for salary increments as well as theft of money from the public coffers. Bribery, both in parliament and of police officers and tribalism are also noted as forms of corruption. They feel betrayed by their leaders and their concern is that they and other citizens are the ones who are adversely affected by this. So, corruption to them seems to be less of the institutionalised variety and more of the personal variety. This is **where it is an individual's interests and selfishness that lead to corruption and** not as a result of the structures that allow it to happen and make it so. While

corruption was mostly seen as led from the top, micro level corruption, for example bribing university officials for a student to get into school was also mentioned.

The word tribalism is often use in popular political discourse in Africa to mean when politicians use peoples' feeling about the groups/tribes they belong to for political gain. Ethnicity on the other hand, is, at least in the African context an academic phrase. As was highlighted in the contextual chapter, Bruce Berman elaborates on the dichotomy of "moral ethnicity" versus "political tribalism." He defines the former as the internal struggles that characterised particular ethnic groups negotiation of "political and moral economy" while the latter was characterised by struggles for "resources of modernity and economic accumulation."(1998a: 305)

According to the young people, tribalism is seen as the cause of political problems and violence. This is not because the different communities do not like each other but that politicians use it as a tool of politics to manipulate the citizenry, amass power and fulfil their own interests including rewarding political favours as shown below. It is interesting that they do not, at least in their letters attribute to the people, the citizens themselves, some responsibility for tribalism in the political sphere:

> *Tribalism is also there and it is affecting our lives as Kenyans. Politicians mostly are the ones who make us fight against each other and I would like you to do something on it. [2NYEG1 (1)]*

The young people insist that we are all equal "*before God*" [2KSMM2 (1)] No identity or group is superior to the other. There is a feeling of lack of diversity and inclusiveness in the political space. In Africa, a person's tribe carries with it a myriad of parallel identifications, most of which are benign and positive, symbols of a rich history and diversity, but others, like ethnic politics which have negative connotations. That politics carries with it an ethnic dimension is taken as a basic fact of Kenyan politics. The perception is that those communities in power have more benefits than those who are not in power whether this is factually true or not. This is illustrated by their hope that the President will eliminate tribalism in politics. Bruce Berman (2004) raised the question of why ethnicity is a political problem. The answer to this through the young people's eyes is because of the inequalities it leads to whether real or

perceived. They also reinforce the idea that there is a "key role played by elites in the politicisation of ethnicity." (Berman et al., 2004: 3) It is therefore the Presidents responsibility to solve this problem, as highlighted by the letter below, from the Mombasa region.

> *As our Kenyan president, I would like you to be a better leader than all the others including Daniel Arap Moi, Mwai Kibaki and your beloved father [Jomo Kenyatta]. I would like also to urge you to have a fair heart to every tribe in Kenya, let not any tribe suffer due to tribalism. [1MSAM1 (6)]*

The issue of tribalism in politics and how it links to it is reproduced will be discussed in more detail in chapter 7. What the sections above have highlighted is their view of the role of the President in the political system and hence a part of their construction of political habitus and hence their political habitus. The next section will provide a summary and a discussion of how the young people understood politics with reference to their hopes and aspirations which is another element of their political habitus as indicated in the conceptual framework.

6.4   Young people's understanding of politics

Young people are frustrated with the political process and specifically with Kenyan politics. Tribalism is still a legitimate tool of politics and what the narratives above seem to show is that they feel that the fault of this lies squarely at the feet of the politicians. This leads them to a susceptibility to be involved in non-formal political and often not non democratic processes. This is evidenced, for example by the recent incident in which the President, Uhuru Kenyatta was heckled by youth at a political rally in Migori, the west of Kenya.(Kagwanja, 2014, Kegoro, 2014, Nationteam, 2014) Incidents such as these have the potential to inflame pre-existing tensions. Luckily in this case, as a result of the reaction of the President, which was calm and forgiving, this incident has "backfired" if its intention was to stir up trouble.

There is in addition a sense of frustration running through the themes presented above. With corruption and lack of basic needs in the country they are frustrated with a politics that does not seem to function effectively. A

responsive government would be seen as more a legitimate government. Alcinda Honwana (2012) with her concept of waithood analyses this frustration. Honwana discusses the concept of waithood as being part of youth identity in Africa and indeed the world beyond. Waithood is what she terms the frustration that young people are going through, always having to wait for the future and a better life. This is what is reflected here, though more in a sense of expectation. This expectation is expressed through hope for a better future, thought one it seems they are constantly waiting for. The word hope was itself was mentioned sixteen times in the narrative letters. Hope that they will be listened to and action will be taken. This is more so in light of the recently concluded elections where candidates, as they usually do, made a number of promises. But this sense and expectation goes beyond the election period. It is expressing an expectation for the future which is an element of the habitus as discussed in the theoretical framework. The present may not be what we want it to be, but the future, despite all that has come before holds promise for better; though they are acutely aware of the challenges facing this promise.

One of the implications of this frustration with "the formal political and economic institutions of social organization in Kenya" has been is the growing trend of youth involvement in crime and violence. (Ruteere, 2008: 13) Indeed, in a recent study conducted by Elizabeth Cooper,(2014) she analyses student arson protests in schools in Kenya as a form of political action. While I feel there may be some issues in generalizing the micro politics of student life to larger national politics, she does raise the point that students see this as the only avenue to gain the attention of the political elites and that this is a strategy that has been learned from their observance of local politics for instance the 2008 violence. This "learned" behaviour is also what forms a part of their political habitus as will be discussed in the next chapter.

Their frustration is also echoed in their views on ethnicity as tribalism. The manipulation of ethnicity as a political resource is understood as a tool of politics but not accepted. The challenge presented is how to end this situation, with only recognition that it is harmful to society but with the only solution presented being an appeal to the President and the politicians. Tribalism or the manipulation of ethnic identities for politics is seen more as a feature of the politicians or leaders as individuals and less as a product of or permeating institutional structures. Tribalism to them is also inextricably linked to inequality, and that is the crux of the matter. When tribalism contributes to the

inequalities they see between the rich and the poor as well as different regions of the country, that is when it becomes a significant problem.

Moreover, as has been noted in the previous section, their view of demand politics shows that while they demand much of the government they do not demand the same of themselves. Their contribution to making any change happen did not emerge in the narratives. This is perhaps reflective of how young people in Kenya are viewed by the society at large. There was a proposal by a government official to bring back the national youth service. This was a one year program of compulsory Para-military training and community service that high school leavers had to undertake before they could get jobs or join university. It was suspended in the 80's because the then President Moi felt that it was creating a militarised population that would be a challenge to his authority. The reasoning behind reviving the program is it is felt that young people lack a sense of direction and service to the community. They demand without giving back to society. This is also reflected by some of the teachers in informal conversations who thought that not only are students not being prepared by the education system for their role in the wider society but also do not apply themselves to it. I would think that this also shows that as with all generations there is a tension between the older and the younger one, with the former looking at the past as a golden age and the younger living the realities of the present day and looking to the future with an equal mixture of hope and dread. It also shows the continuing view of youth as a "problem" that needs to be fixed.(Honwana and Boeck, 2005, Macpherson, 2008, Abbink and Kessel, 2005) The issue with this one way narrative is that it does not leave room for the greater complexities that young people exhibit. For instance, young people are expecting change and holding their leaders to a higher standard.

In addition, they are not only expecting change, they are demanding it. This is shown by the use of another term, "make" when addressing what they would wish the President to do. "Make sure there is no corruption"; "Make the education system equal." To them a legitimate government is one that provides for and responds to the needs of its citizens as will be discussed further in the next chapter. Their view of the president is as a person with the authority and who can change anything, and help the people but only if he wants to. He is the centre of power and some of the issues that the young people were raising

sounded like laundry lists of items that they were demanding. These ranged from giving secondary students laptops as well[12] to an end to all corruption. Politicians are held to a higher standard of behaviour and responsibility; perhaps too high a standard. If we are to look at the narrative letters, responsibility for the state of affairs in the country does not lie with the citizens, but with the political leaders.

As can be seen from the discussion throughout this chapter, the young people's view of politics is inherently negative. This is because for them, politics is more about the individual politicians rather than the institutions or the process of politics. These individuals are seen as self-serving and egotistical. As a result, politics is understood to be about acquiring wealth and power with governing the country and serving the people taking a back seat. This is illustrated by the politicians struggle in the last two months to increase the salaries and allowances allocated to them. They young people are also a reflection of what is happening around them. They understand and describe politics as a "dirty game." They would, however, like to see a stronger leadership in the executive. This is ironic as democratic reform in Kenya has been focused on reducing the power held by the president. Their version of a strong president is one who gets rid of tribalism and controls the excesses of the members of parliament and other politicians. They see the current, recently elected president as letting the opposition run over him, similar to sentiments that were reflected when it was perceived that President Obama was giving too much ground to the republicans over issues such as the healthcare reform. There are a number of influences on the attitudes that they hold.

One of these influences is the socio-economic realities of their day to day lives. Nasong'o and Murunga (2007) emphasise that it is important to consider the social and economic realities and challenges that are facing the youth not as impediments to participation but factors motivating and influencing their engagement (and indeed the type of engagement) in the political arena. One of these is a lack of opportunities for young people as a result of the economic situation as seen in the letters presented above. This lack of opportunities leads young people to engage in crime and other

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[12] One of the current President's campaign promises was to provide laptops to all Class one primary school students. There have been mixed reactions to this proposed initiative with some seeing it as wasteful and unnecessary with the priority being lack of schools and teachers. Others, however view it as an important step towards educating a digital generation

destructive activities just to survive. If this is the case, then how can citizens move beyond this day to day struggle and meaningfully engage in politics? Chabal in his book on the politics of suffering and smiling (Chabal, 2009) speaks of suffering in Africa three key ways: violence, conflict and illness. Perhaps, what the young people are emphasising is that it is more about the micro narratives of suffering. The country is not engaged in large scale conflict and indeed serious illnesses such as HIV/AIDS and Malaria though far from resolved are being tackled. But it is the day to day frustrations that seem infinitesimal at first, but which build up to affect or threaten their sense of security.

One other issue raised that could be linked to political engagement is a national identity, or rather the lack of a national identity. One respondents request to the President was "*please make everyone feel like a Kenyan*" [Respondent 13, 1NAIG1]. This sentiment has been repeated in the interviews and focus group discussions that were conducted and will be discussed in more detail in the subsequent chapter. There are no suggestions or hints on how the President should do this, but it is nevertheless seen as a priority. This national identity is not only linked to greater integration among the different communities, but also to economic empowerment. When there are areas that live in great poverty while other, such as the capital is prosperous then it is difficult to forge a coherent national identity. Fairness and equality as has been highlighted above, are what will take the country forward. It is not so much that different groups have prejudices towards each other, which is still an issue, but that they have access to different economic opportunities.

Angelique Haugerud (1993) did a study on **Kenya's political culture in the 1990's. Though her book was not particularly specific on the content of this culture, she did note that** "Kenya's political culture during the early 1990's drew upon foreign and domestic symbols so evoking the changes in Eastern Europe and the rhetoric of multi-**partysim.**"(Haugerud, 1993: 27) This was in opposition to the state mantra of *Nyayo* (follow the footsteps) that emphasised absolute commitment to the one party state. What we can see from the young **people's letters is an almost resignation to the current state of** politics and thought they are quite vocal in their calls to change, there is a passivity in that they do not quite see themselves as actors in this process.

Despite all this negativity there is still a sense of hope and expectation for the future. There is a hope that promises will be fulfilled, but also a

concern for what the future might hold. Will the young people be able to have a better life, or is the status quo to be maintained? This is illustrated by the narrative from one of the respondents below:

My request is that our country Kenya not so well developed and so I what I requesting you to develop it. So that we can be a better nation/country. Us as young people we face some challenges that affect us in life & I hope that if we tell you, you will help us. [2KSMM2 (2)]

6.5   **Young people's priorities** for the President

The three main themes that emerged from the narrative letters from the young people, in terms of their wants and needs, across the board were for jobs, for Kenyans to be taken care of and for political promises to be kept. This is reflected in attitudes of other Kenyans as evidenced from the Afrobarometer survey series where "*Kenyans expected democracy to bring "concrete benefits" such as "safety and security". (Logan et al., April 2007: v)* This is illustrated by the extract below from the Nairobi girls focus group,

I would request for more jobs to be created because the moment students are done with school they get engaged into evil activities such as theft, drug abuse and immorality. This is caused by lack of enough jobs and people are continuing to be more intelligent as the days go by. Once we see the form four leavers doing such things they also influence us making us to drop out of schools. [1NAIG1(6)]

The "take care of Kenyans theme" is directly related to equality and from one Nairobi narrative that was highlighted previously noted, "Make all Kenyans feel they are one." [1NAIG1 (2)] While the narratives of ethnic marginalization are still present in their discourses in some areas, they are also concerned with the equal distribution of wealth to all in the nation. Also, as has been seen from the data presented above, young people have a negative view towards politics calling it a "dirty game". This is a reflection of findings from the Afrobarometer survey series where one analysis found that Young people are particularly disillusioned relative to their elders." *(Logan et al., April 2007: iv)*

Young people's solutions to issues raised such as tribalism, which students in Mombasa identified as the main cause of underdevelopment focused around the education system.

We can't scrap tribalism overnight but we can do it like dealing on the education system, coz the education system when you turn it to history like we are talking about the social organization ,we scrap that topic out coz its bringing tribalism like the Iteso tribe, Maasai tribe what ,social factors you see ,but we can make it ,make it cherish by when like where we put on more efforts like on technical motherhood ,teaching mothers how to shun tribalism out of a kids mid because a kid would grow up following a mothers footstep her father's footstep you see (…) [1MSAM1 PFGD]

As was discussed in the chapter on understanding young people's attitudes through narratives, equality was one of the issues that were most important to them. This was equality between the rich and the poor as well as equality among the various diverse tribes within the country. This is also a sentiment that is expressed by adults as the key product of democracy that they would wish for. As is noted by Logan (April 2007: v)

The democratic output that is most on Kenyans' minds is equality, both political and economic. More than anything else, Kenyans hope that democracy will bring about a more equitable distribution of opportunity and resources in their society. Moreover, there is evidence that Kenyans are concerned about equality not only for themselves and their own ethnic group, but rather, that they see it as an important goal for the benefit of all groups in society.

6.6   Conclusion

As was stated in the introduction to this chapter, as human beings our lives are **"storied".** The young people were asked to write a letter to the newly elected President in order to provide a snapshot to their attitudes towards politics in Kenya. As was highlighted i**n the conceptual chapter the young people's** political habitus includes their construction of politics and political actors as well as their aspirations and demands of the political system. The chapter began by looking at the approach that was taken in analysing the letters. This was in order to give **an initial "character" of the narratives in terms of their** length and tone. The chapter then proceeded to look at the findings from the narrative letters which **first included young people's evaluation of the** President. Their attitudes towards the current Kenyan president were largely neutral, and did not necessarily reflect the expectation that the western and coastal region would portray a more negative attitude than the central and Nairobi regions. This was because of the narrative of marginalization present in the Western and Coast regions presented in chapter 3 on mapping the field.

Secondly, the findings from the letters included what the young people thought about the role of the President. This is directly related to one of the elements of political habitus discussed in the conceptual chapter i.e. their construction of political actors. They viewed him in in three ways: As a benevolent dictator; as responsible for forging a national identity and as responsible for reining in politicians. What is also implicit in the chapter is that young people are up to date and aware of the current political issues and engage in critical political thought. Thirdly, the young people express a deep frustration with the current political status quo. Across all the regions and both genders, politics is viewed as inherently negative. They are also more concerned with the individual politicians who are seen as self-serving and egotistical rather than institutions or the process of politics. But the young people also display a great hope for change, despite the challenges that are presented. They do not necessarily present solutions but look to the leaders, both political and non-political to present solutions.

Lastly, as indicated in the conceptual chapter, one of the elements of their political habitus was their aspirations and demands of the political system. The chapter therefore **looked at young people's priorities in politics. Across the** board in all the regions and with both genders, their demands of the political

system were threefold: for jobs, for Kenyans to be taken care of and for political promises to be kept. This snapshot provides us with a framework to further analyse the political narratives that are presented by the young people, as will be done in the next chapter, which will highlight in greater detail their understanding of politics as briefly touched upon in this chapter. It will also illustrate the links between their ethnic habitus touched upon in chapter five with their political attitudes.

Chapter 7:   "What is the spirit of being Kenyan?" Investigating how young people construct Kenyan politics in relation to their ethnic identities

7.1   Introduction

This chapter will focus how young people understand and interpret politics. It will build on the snapshot of the political system presented in the previous chapter and will focus on the data obtained from the focus group discussions as well as their political comments from the individual interviews. This is in an effort to highlight the young people's political habitus and the relationship this has to their ethnic identity. This will be done with reference to the research question: are they reproducing or contesting the discourses surrounding ethnic politics? Indeed, it will be shown using Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Dalozs' (1999) four dimensions of African identity politics that through their discourse they are indeed reproducing dominant ideas of how African politics is conceptualized but this reproduction is never the less differentiated by gender and the different locations they find themselves within the country. In order to do this, the similarities and differences will be highlighted using the framework analysis method.

To recap from chapter 3, ethnicity and politics are intertwined in the Kenyan political space. The common thread that runs throughout this literature is the fact that ethnicity has been transformed from a purely local cultural and social resource to a "political resource" that has often hindered the democratisation process. (Lentz, 1995: 310 , Bratton and Kimenyi, 2008: 1, Ajulu, 2002) This chapter seeks to better understand this phenomenon through the lens of young people's perspectives of the political system. It will do this by adopting as a theoretical frame, Chabal and Daloz's four dimensions of African identity politics namely: the boundaries of politics, the notion of the individual, the issue of political legitimacy and the question of representation. The aim of this chapter is to use these to reflect on young people's political habitus and illustrate their reproduction of political attitudes. The chapter will begin with a discussion on young people's description of what politics entails which will include a brief discussion on their experiences of the

March 2013 election day. It will then move on to discuss their experiences according to the four themes. It will conclude by highlighting young people's priorities and aspirations for politics as has been highlighted as an element of habitus.

In the previous chapter on their ethnic habitus, there was discussion of ethnic stereotypes and their influence on identity and behaviour as well as other elements of habitus that are a reflection and help us understand young people's ethnic identity. This chapter seeks to further understand their political attitudes with specific reference to their ethnic identities. For example, ethnic stereotypes also reflect how ethnicity is a source of trust when interacting in the political field. The table presented below provides a summary of the key regional differences in the young people's attitudes towards politics which will be elaborated upon within the chapter.

Table 6: Key regional political attitudes

Theme	Western	Coast	Central	Nairobi
View of politics	Tribalism a part of politics Need money to be a successful politician. **'cult of personality'** politicians need to be recognized.	Tribalism part of the political game 'cult of personality.' :Lack of ideologies in political parties Marginalized by the centre/Nairobi	Tribalism part of politics Politicians control the political game	Tribalism part of politics Dirty game which is politician led
Gender			Women cannot play the political game (boy school) Politics is about power and they are powerless to change it (girls school) Voting for a woman is a wasted vote (Girls school)	Women have been empowered enough and should take charge (boys school)
Elections	Not completely free and fair	Not completely free and fair		Not completely free and fair
Tribes and politics	Marginalized by the Kikuyu because they are selfish and crave power		Kikuyu dominate in politics because they are proficient. They also have to	**Luo like "free things" and** would not govern the country

			protect their interests	effectively
			Luo like "free things" and would not govern the country effectively	

7.2 Experience of politics

This section will highlight some of the similarities and differences between young **people's pers**pectives with reference to the framework matrix an extract of which is provided in appendix K. **The young people's perspective towards politics was** largely negative in all the regions. Tribalism was mentioned as an inherent feature of Kenyan politics by all the young people interviewed in the focus groups. Politics **was also commonly described as a "dirty game"** which is reflective of their common **sense or "doxic" understanding of politics**. From the focus group in a Nairobi girls school, it was argued that it is not politics that was an inherently dirty game, but it became so depending on how it was played and who was playing it [3NAIG2 PFGD1] which was a similar finding that was expressed in another Nairobi school where **they stated, "Politicians are the ones w**ho make it dirty, politics is a nice game but **politicians are the ones who make it a dirty game." [1KAJM1 PFGD]** Some of the differences that emerge are how they conceptualize tribalism. In the Mombasa **focus group tribalism was linked to the "cult of personality". This was in terms of a** lack of ideology within the political parties that left citizens to go for the **charismatic or "tribal" personalities when making their decisions. Indeed, in this** focus group politics was seen as instrumental in terms of there was a need to know **"how to play the game" and tribalism was part of the game.** [1MSAM1 PFGD] This was also reflected in the focus group in one of the Nairobi girls schools where they **indicated they noted "if you play with the ball correct then you will eme**rge the **winner." [3NAIG2 PFGD] and from the Nyeri girls focus group "if you are not ready**

to play dirty, then you **can't get into it. So everyone is just dirty.**" [2NYEG1 AFGD2] One of the differences that emerged was in one Nyeri boys school which highlighted the sometimes gendered nature of politics when they noted that because politics was such a dirty game then women could not participate in it**, stating** "Why is it that **a man is in the State House? [...]Because politics is a dirty game, let me tell you,** Keny**a needs a leader who is driven by ideals not gender. [...]**". [1NYEB1 Pilot PFGD] Indeed, in the Nyeri and Nairobi boys schools, the sentiment was also expressed that **women had been "empowered enough"** and should therefore be able to take care of themselves as **illustrated from the following extract "acknowledgement of the boy child since the girl child has already been taken care of".** [2NAIB1 (2)]

Also in reference to the cult of personality they noted that citizens will elect leaders based on who they are not what they will do [in terms of ideology]. Political ideologies, in terms of those presented by the political parties were observed as all the same in terms of things never getting done. [1KSMM1 AFGD] In all of the regions as well, politicians were described as personally selfish, greedy and corrupt. For example in the Kisumu region, they noted that in order to be a successful **politician, then one needs to have money and give money to be "recognized"** [1KSMM1 AFGD] This focus on the politicians extend to a feeling of powerlessness that was highlighted in the girls focus group in Nyeri. There was one particular **quote from this group; "*hao ni wenye nchi na sisi ni wananchi*"** (They own the country, but we are just the citizens). [2NYEG1 AFGD2] and in the second focus group in the Nyeri girls school they also noted that politics is about power and **"getting the high seat" in order to rule [2NYEG1 AFGD1]** At first glance, therefore, the political habitus of young people is framed in a way as to have a negative association with politics and an expectation or resignation that it is corrupt. Young women feel powerless to effect change. It is, however not the political system that is the problem but the individual politicians acting within it.

We can also quickly understand their orientation towards politics by looking at their narratives of the Election Day. As this research was conducted immediately after the elections (1-3months after) their experiences of the Election Day, as people who were not actively involved in voting were of interest.

7.2.1   Election Day

One of the other ways that was used to look at their experience of politics within the interviews was to ask them about the Election Day on 4th March 2013. The narratives surrounding this particular day focused on the fact that they were home

and watching the news for information. The day for them was experienced through this lens and not personally as they were not going to vote and none of them accompanied their parents or older siblings when they went to vote. One of the reasons for this was that they needed to take care of the house or their younger siblings while their parents did their civic duty. Also the experience of the previous elections in 2007 had forewarned them and they were keenly watching what was happening in case of any violence, the media were their tool to know what was going on and how they could escape in case there were problems.

The elections were seen as not free and fair predominantly by the non-Kikuyu communities or those outside central Kenya. (President Kenyatta who won the election is a Kikuyu). The reason that was cited was the technical glitch in the counting and transmission of the votes **which they felt was facilitated by Kenyatta's** party. Kisii and Maasai, Luo, and one Luo respondent from the Kisumu region noted that according to them, there was no difference in the different political candidates and parties. It is the same people who have been in government for the last few decades, so meaningful change is not possible. This reflects their cynicism in politics as a cyclical process as illustrated in the extract from one respondent below.

Facilitator: Were you at home?

Respondent: mmmmm

Facilitator: So what did you think of Election Day? Did it go well or did it not go so well?

Respondent: I didn't see a difference in any of the [political] parties

Facilitator: […] none of them were very good?

Respondent: mmmm

Moderator: why?

Respondent: […] I did not see the difference between them.

Moderator: [you mean] they are the same ones that have been in government for the last 30 years

Respondent: [nodded in acknowledgement] [2KMM2 AI3]

Another interesting finding regarding the election day that the young people observed was that is a common enough feature of Kenyan politics is that voters register not necessarily in the areas that they live but in their rural communities. This is in order to support a particular candidate from their community as illustrated by the interview extract below with a young woman from the Nyeri region.

Respondent: I was just at home. My mother was not there, she was going to vote on Monday so she left on Sunday to stay with a family friend. She wanted to be close to where she was going to vote.

Facilitator: So she registered in a different place from where you live?

Respondent: Yes. [2NYEG1 AI]

This was highlighted as possible cause of the tribalism that is seen during the elections. Even with those that live in urban areas, there is an interest in their rural areas, perhaps because a number of urban residents invest in one way or another in their rural homes for example by farming land or developing property. Young people view it as a cause of tribalism because as is highlighted in the extract below, from the Nyeri girls focus group.

Moderator: Are the elections an exception? Do the elections encourage tribalism?

Respondent: Yes, the elections make it come back, because you know most people will have to go back where you are registered (to vote)

Moderator: Mmm So most people they register like at their rural homes

Respondent: yeah at their rural homes, so when you go back there to vote, you hear stories and you are pressured to vote for a particular person. [2NYE G1 AFGD]

We can see this as one of the negative aspects of social capital. As discussed in the conceptual framework section of operationalising habitus, social capital includes obligations that are places upon members of the community and there are sanctions for breaking these obligations. As is indicated from the extract above, one of these obligations is voting in the rural areas for particular candidates. Their ethnic habitus in the form of obligations to their communities therefore interacts with the field of politics to produce the practice of voting in their rural areas. We also see a reflection of this capital in the form of trust in their communities through the attitudes of a young woman from the Kisii community.

We encountered this young lady in chapter 5, where she noted that her brother had told her that Kikuyus are not a community to be trusted (she was from the Kisii community, having relocated to Nairobi for her studies). Subsequently, when asked about the elections in the same interview, she noted that she was keen to watch the news because she was eager to know who would win. Her eagerness for this was **that she thought the "Uhuru people would steal [the election]" [1NAIG1**A1]. This is an example of how the ethnic narratives that young people are socialized into, in this case through kinship relations, colour their political perceptions. This young **woman's** ethnic habitus in the form of the trust relationship of her social capital interacted with the political field, to produce the attitude that Uhuru, being a Kikuyu would have stolen the election. Similar to this was one other young person who when asked who, they might have voted for in the election, stated they would have voted for whoever their family was voting for [2NYEG1AI].

This also serves to highlight the associational nature of voting decisions. They are not always individual decisions but group decisions. This is further illustrated by observations during my fieldwork where in conversations with one lady, she indicated that she had asked he church leader who she should vote for and thought it was the responsibility of such community leaders to advise them. (Field notes 2013) This leads us to a discussion on the four themes noted in the introduction, starting with the boundaries of politics, where, as has been highlighted in the paragraph above, the divisions between ethnicity and politics are blurred.

7.3 Boundaries of politics

In this section, I will first discuss the issue of tribalism in politics, which will lead on to a discussion of the Kikuyu versus the Luo narrative which was first highlighted in chapter 5 on their ethnic dispositions and will conclude by looking at the issues surrounding national versus ethnic identity. As was noted in the contextual chapter, in Kenya, the divisions are less clear between ethnicity and politics. It can be viewed as a political resource (Lentz, 1995: 310 , Bratton and Kimenyi, 2008: 1, Ajulu, 2002) needed to win elections, gain power and sometimes even successfully operate a government. For example, in the CORD[13] party primaries prior to the March 2013 elections; it was observed that in one constituency in the western region the majority ethnic group in that area had dominated politics to the perceived detriment of the minority community. The elders of the latter have stated that in the forthcoming elections, it should be one of their members who will succeeds to political office in order to secure their interests which they claim have not been taken into account. The boundaries of politics are therefore about how different identities come into play in the political space.

As was also highlighted in the contextual chapter, Mamdani (1996) among **others have spoken of the "politicisation of ethnicity."**(Jonyo and Owuoche, 2004, Ajulu, 2002) This is a two way street where negative ethnic elements are activated by politics as well as ethnicity in itself directly influencing political options. An example of the former can be seen during election periods in various African countries where citizens are more likely to ascribe to their ethnic communities than at other times or in other situations. (Eifert et al., 2010) On the other side of the coin, community interests are often times paramount and there is a strong pressure for politicians from below to conform to the needs and interests of their communities. (Lynch, 2011b) Indeed, tribalism was often the first word that was mentioned when the respondents from all the regions were asked about their opinion on Kenyan politics and it was mentioned 178 times within the focus groups, interviews and narrative letters.

For the young people, tribalism is accepted as an inherent tool of politics that has been utilised since independence. This is illustrated by the following focus group discussion extracts from both the Nairobi and Coast regions

---

[13] CORD stands for Coalition for the Restoration of Democracy and is one of the umbrella under which a number of political parties had come together in order to field a single presidential candidate in the March 2013 general election. This coalition has continued on as the main opposition in the current government.

Extract one

Tribalism to Kenya has been a very major effect to Kenya, exactly ,mostly the leaders we have until today since the 90s until today is the tribalism is the major thing that keeps bringing us back, because like the leaders that we have they keep on fighting for their tribes to be in the government most of them say that if there leaders who are not from their tribes they keep on fighting so it means that [people are not choosing leaders to lead us to the better future people are choosing people because they want their tribes to be represented. [sic] [1MSAM1 PFGD]

Extract two

You can't really ignore the fact, Kenya is out rightly and centre tribal ,Kenya is tribal coz honestly a Kikuyu unless they are very sober (...)Most of the Kikuyu voting now were brought up in the upcountry of course they have these mentality that they should always vote for their own tribe so I don't think these tribalism thing will go away just yet because you see Kenya is still not very developed and until like until like yeah much latter when people are move out from that mentality You see like we have people who live in Nairobi as in they live like any nationality as in its what it's like that So I think till when that happens that's when they vote they think (...) [1KAJM1 PFGD]

Moreover, the young people are aware that tribalism is activated by elections, as illustrated in the extract from the western region below and as Posner (2005) has found in quantitative studies.

Moderator: So what is the solution to tribalism? Because you just said it is a bad thing so what is your opinion [on the solution]?

Respondent: From what I can see is before the elections people are fine but during the elections is when tribalism [and conflict] start, so things are not usually so bad between the elections. [2KSMM2 AI1]

They also indicate that tribalism comes about because of a struggle for resources and the perception of inequality with some ethnic groups being favoured over others as illustrated below and as is also indicated in the literature. It **influences voting in terms of electing "my person" that is someone from my** community who will make sure that I can also benefit. The fact that these narratives were both from outside Nairobi may be indicative of the influence of the marginalization or exclusion narrative which will be discussed in the section on political legitimacy.

Respondent: It is when we are electing new leaders when this [ethnic] hatred comes about. The different tribes start hating each other and it stays like that. And you know money is a big temptation

Moderator: So people like money?

Respondent: You when it is the month of elections, there is a lot of competition between the tribes, the Kamba, the Kalenjin. [sic]
Moderator: [Is it] because they are competing for resources?

Respondent: mmmh

Moderator: So I want my own person in power so I can benefit?

Respondent: Yes, so I can benefit [2KSMM2 AI1]

At first glance, when looking at the data as indicated above, it is easy to understand **the young people's opinion that tribalism is inherent in politics and** leave it at that. In a discussion on one of the Nairobi girls schools, however, there was a debate of whether tribalism was simply a matter of **"bribe and tribe"**(Hornsby and Throup, 1992) as discussed earlier in the thesis or whether it was more about interests based politics as is highlighted in the discussion below.

Moderator: Do you think there is a lot of tribalism in Kenyan politics?

Several respondents: yeah

Respondent 1: oh my God! I don't think so.

(several respondents speak at once)

Respondent 1: people focus on the fact [which is commonly known] that the Kikuyu love money. And now that Kenyatta is President, they say that he is going to favour the Kikuyu and that he wants money. It is about who gets the Prize [the Presidency]. If the person at the top was a Luhya no one would be saying anything or if someone on Raila's side people would not be saying things like [they will steal money]. It's all about the person on the top. That's why people think it's tribal. It is not tribal.

Respondent 2: but most of the people in politics are Kikuyus [...]

Respondent 1: yeah because they are successful and they work to [achieve] what they want. You understand?

Respondent 3: it is actually people who voted for them it is not like they put themselves there [...]

Respondent 1: The people actually working hard to get to the top are the Kikuyu that you are saying are tribal. It's not about being tribal. Because if I am a Kikuyu and people say that Kikuyus like money [...] I will work hard. No matter the circumstance that i am in. So those people who work and get to the top end up being Kikuyus and then you people start saying they are tribal. There is no logic to that, it's just jealousy.

[...]

Respondent 2: i think it is tribal, it is tribal because like Uhuru Kenyatta side has basically many Kikuyus and Raila's side has many Luos. So I may think political parties are actually siding with their tribes because Raila wouldn't consider [Kikuyus]

Respondent 3: okay, he might so that he can get that title that he is not tribalic and stuff but it doesn't really mean like he is not tribalic. I think he is. I think political parties are just tribalic. [sic]

Respondent 4: I actually don't think they are because when people were voting and stuff you would actually see there is this side of Western I guess that were actually on Kenyatta's side[...]

Respondent 1: yeah they were actually on his side, it is not about being tribalistic, it is about getting what you want and if the person who has what you want is a Kikuyu and you are not a Kikuyu, you would say he is tribalistic. [1NAIG1 PFGD]

From the discussion above, for some it is more than a case of bribe and tribe **but about being instrumental and "getting what you want" while others thought that** it is the political parties that are tribal and not the individual politicians. What this shows is their awareness that interests such as the fight for resources and community and individual interests. In addition, the characteristics of stereotypes of tribes, in this case the fact that the Kikuyu love money are taken as expectations of how they will behave in the political arena. This embodied ethnic habitus about the Kikuyu interacts with the political field to produce the attitude that Kikuyus in politics will steal money and this forms a part of their political habitus. Moreover, as one of the respondents presented, it is not about the Kikuyu loving money, it is about them working hard as was first indicated in chapter 5 on ethnic dispositions. This is one of the ways they define themselves that is also linked to their behaviour in the political field. Another example of this is given in the next paragraph where in the same Nairobi girls school, within an interview, the Luhya tribe are said to adopt a somewhat passive demeanour which is also reflected in their behaviour in politics as seen in the discussion below.

Moderator: What are you told about the Luhya?

Respondent 1: I just think Luhyas [...] isolate themselves very much, they don't have any stand in the Kenyan [politics] Luhyas are just lie low people they just "nyamaza chini ya maji" [Keep quiet under the water"]

Moderator: So they are just like all other communities?

Respondent 1: No, not all other communities are like that. Kikuyus and Luos are the leading communities in Kenya because they think they are the ones who fought for independence. […] Everyone is proud of Kikuyus because [of] Jomo Kenyatta's like success .Yeah (1NAIG1 P1)

This notion of Kikuyu dominance in the political system was also expressed in the central region. This is illustrated from two different interviews from young women who were themselves Kikuyus. According to them, the Kikuyu are proficient in politics and have the financial means to do so. They like to be in control and to rule the country.

Interview one:

Moderator: What about the Kikuyu?

Respondent: I see the Kikuyu as people who like [having] a lot of wealth and they are very much into politics. Like you can find a group of old men, and their work is politics. (2NYEG1 A1)

Interview two:

Respondent: Oooh Kikuyus, basically have heard that they love money (sic) and also they love ruling (laughter). And also they have ego they believe that no other community is better than them. Yeah …such stuff (2NYEG1 AI2)

And in the Coast region, it was indicated that the Digo were lazy and that is why they were not involved in politics.

Respondent: I am a Digo from Likoni ,let say am a pure Digo ,my whole DNA has been Digo, everywhere (Laughter)I say that these people currently there is no Digo in the government ,so many people term as these people being lazy

and I just hope by 2030 there will be a maybe a change. [sic](laughter) [1MSAM1 PFGD]

This reflects the prevailing attitudes towards the Kikuyu in a number of regions in Kenya. In a study of ethnic stereotypes, conducted by the National Cohesion and Integration Commission, participants from the Bukusu (Luhya) community stated that, "the Kikuyu though hard workers are thieves, love money and can go to whatever extent to get what they want from any community they target." (NCIC, 2012: 158, unpublished) Similarly, narratives about the Kikuyu from the Kisumu region focused on how the Kikuyu are selfish people and therefore will bribe to acquire political power:

And again the Okuyus [Kikuyu community] with their selfishness when they grab something they know the benefit of for example the power they don't want to leave it to anybody because they tasted these things they know they know what it means so they like grabbing whichever way even if its bribing the IEBC even what they will do it so long as they get it. [1KSMM1 AFGD]

The perception of the Luo community on the other hand, is that they like to receive things for free but also "treat people equally" which is reflective of their political behaviour. They were of the opinion that if they voted for a person from such a community, then they are going to take everything away from them as highlighted in the two interview extracts from Nairobi and Nyeri below as well as an extract from one of the girls focus groups in Nairobi. The first extract was from a Kikuyu while the second was from a Kisii and the third was from a focus group with a number of Luo participants.

Extract one

Respondent: The first thing, like the Luo, What I have heard is that for example if you have a plot of land that you would like to rent out, , they would not pay rent because they like things to be given to them for free. (2NYEG1 A1)

Extract two

Moderator: Very interesting, look, your community [the Kisii] are they really involved in politics?

Respondent: I just see them being involved when they vote in the elections for Uhuru and Ruto and Raila Odinga, but they vote for more for Raila Odinga [...] I was asking them why they wouldn't vote for Uhuru Kenyatta? They told me that they can't because he is going to take everything and according to the Luo who I asked why Uhuru is different from them, they told me that the Luo treat people equally according to them but I don't think this is the case nowadays.

Moderator: Who told you this?

Respondent: My brother. He told us that the Luos they really cooperate with each other, they are not going to leave someone, they are not going to say that I want these for my community [only] to vote for me they are just going to treat each tribe equally(1NAIG1 A1)

Extract 3:

RESPONDENT: As for me I relate with some people very well but when it comes to the Kikuyu, there is a problem because they say I don't know if Raila takes over the country it's like there will be tribalism for the Luos. Luos will be having what they have but the others will be despised. [3NAIG2 Pilot PFGD]

It is perhaps not so surprising a finding and indeed reflects anecdotal/observational evidence from speaking and interacting with Kikuyus. I remember my Kikuyu friends joking that they may have to change our names to more Luo sounding names starting with O (a large number of Luo names begin with this vowel) as some of the opinion polls prior to the election indicated that Raila Odinga, would win the 2013 election. I recall informal discussions focusing around how Kikuyus did not necessarily have a problem with Raila as an individual, but were concerned with what the people around him and his supporters would do if he won (that is they would want "things for free"). Even from the 2007 elections, there were 'stories' circulating of Luos, to give an example, apparently walking into shops and stating that "now all this will be ours". It is these kind of narratives that reflect

the "politics of the belly"(Bayart, 2009) and the sentiment that it is "their turn to eat" that are perhaps influencing the young people to highlight the same.

The response to this from the Nyeri area, with predominantly Kikuyu respondents was that Kikuyu are dominant in politics because they have to protect their interests and their communities. They look after each other and their relations with reference to politics are about social capital and social trust. There is also a narrative of fear if the Luo get into power, then they will take over what the Kikuyu have worked hard to achieve.

Respondent 1: to add to her point, I think after the 2007 elections you see issues like Raila was about to win and Raila wanted this majimbo [Federalism] thing so when it was like when Raila was almost getting into power the Luos who live in...I think Makadara- I don't know. Somewhere in Nairobi you see these-the flats that are owned by the Kikuyu they entered those flats and they didn't pay. Then you as a Kikuyu if you heard such a story and it was only because Raila got into-won that part of Lang'ata. If this is the reaction when Raila wins a county what will be the reactions of those Luos once he becomes the president? You obviously expect that they will dominate you. So you as a Kikuyu to like take your part so that they don't dominate you so that-personally, okay, I might be biased because I am a Kikuyu but I think that Kikuyu we rule and we rule properly. We are hardworking (laughter) the Luos need something. They need to do something [more].

Moderator: any reactions to her comments?

Respondent 2: I bet the reason she might say that Kikuyus are better is because maybe she doesn't understand the culture of the Luos. You know most of us and -maybe that's what led to the post-election violence- we don't understand each other as Kenyans. We may (pose) that we live in harmony but we don't understand each other. Like in these elections I also overheard that when Raila comes into power [...] it was a men's group somewhere the men will not be circumcised. They believe that Luos-the men don't get circumcised. Maybe their circumcision is not the way the Kikuyus do it. So it will be like now you see these boys will not be circumcised. So they are not like Kikuyus coz maybe they will use the Luo way.

Moderator: so it is about different traditions and?

Respondent: and cultures.

Moderator: and values. Okay.

Respondent 3: to add on her point, I come from Western. I heard there is a man a Luo man was walking in the streets during campaign time. He passed a vehicle then he said "Raila akikuwa President hiyo gari itakuwa yangu." [If Raila becomes President, that car will be mine] (Laughter) so like they will take everything that we have. Same case I was coming to school in the matatu [Minibus]. I happened to be in a minibus which was mixed was with other people-grown-ups [...] we were almost getting an accident then the all the Kikuyus who were in the matatu [Minibus] still said '"This one [the mini bus driver] is from CORD" so like he wanted to kill us so the two sides are not getting together. There is rivalry between us. [2NYE G1 AFGD]

Firstly, this narrative goes back to what was noted in Chapter 5 of the reproduction attitudes through their day to day lived experiences and observations. In the mini-bus she experienced the rivalry between the Kikuyus who were perceived to support the Jubilee party and the Luos who were perceived to support the CORD party. Secondly the fact that Luo men are not circumcised which is mentioned in the extract above is an issue in how they come to be viewed in the political arena. I have been told before by Kikuyus that because **they are "not men"** and therefore how can they be trusted to rule? While this is more in the line of political rhetoric, these narratives can have an impact on perceptions and voting. It is not only their tribal identity that has an influence on their attitudes towards politics but also the perceptions of their national identity which will be discussed below.

7.3.1   National vs Ethnic identity

There were references that were made to how national identity, ethnic identity and more personal identities are linked. On the one hand they understood that they

live within a country with common laws, rules, language and regulations and that is what makes them feel Kenyan. A national identity is seen as acquired by birth. You are born a Kenyan. On the other hand different aspects of life in Kenya either make them proud of this fact or not. The participants used what was a national unity campaign slogan to highlight their thoughts, with *Najivunia kuwa mkenya* (I am proud to be Kenyan) emerging as good climate, dominance in the East African economic market and Olympic prowess. They noted that when Kenya won at the Olympics then they felt a greater sense of national identity. However, they felt that those who were from conflict hotspots such as Eldoret and more recently the Tana River region would not display a strong national identification. Their orientation towards a national identity was therefore context dependent. For instance, one participant in Nyeri contested the view of Kenya as peaceful when he stated;

> *Respondent: There were clashes in Eldoret. So let me ask you, these children that are born in that place and that time, during the post-election violence, does it mean that they will view Kenyan as peaceful? [1NYEB1Pilot PFGD]*

This was further highlighted in a ranking that participants were asked to take part in the pilot study focus groups. They were asked to rank family, tribe and country in order. The majority ranked it as family – country – tribe though there were dissenting opinions such as "*without that tribe there would be no Kenya*." and "*propaganda of the government is one tribe one Kenya*." One of these dissenting views reflected quite clearly how their day to day existence affects their identity by asking, "*What is the spirit of being Kenyan?*" as illustrated in the focus group extract below from the Nyeri boys school,

> *Moderator: Let me ask you a question, Are you a Kenyan citizen?*

> *Respondent 1: Yes.*

> *Moderator: According to your feelings, if you were asked.*

> *Respondent 2: No.*

> *Moderator: You feel like you are not a Kenyan?*

Respondent 2: No. You only feel like you are part of Kenya.

Respondent 3: Am not.

Respondent 1: I would say am a Kenyan because of certain elements I am proud to be a Kenyan. [...] And then, if I'm proud to be a Kenyan does it mean I'm a winner because Rudisha [Kenyan Olympic gold medal winner] is a winner?

Several Respondents: No.

Respondent 1: Let me ask you. When you go to those Olympics and Rudisha wins. Does he say I am a Kalenjin? He says I am a Kenyan. The glory comes to Kenya.

Respondent 4: The pride.

Respondent 5: Like Kenya Airways, the Pride of Africa.

Respondent 2: No! I have to ask. I was asked am I a Kenyan citizen? Well, I would say no, because first of all, what is being a Kenyan? The spirit of being a Kenyan?

Respondent: I would say you are a Kenyan if you have as much money as Rudisha does.

Respondent 2: Let me tell you something else, I am a Kikuyu [and proud of it] because the Kikuyu stand together. There is no Kikuyu who will stand by and watch another Kikuyu suffering. [1NYEB1Pilot PFGD]

What this extract highlights is that their identities, especially when it concerns their national identities, are tied to their material concerns as is noted by Patrick Chabal (2009) in his book on the politics of suffering and smiling and Lonsdale (2008: 312) in his work on soil, work, civilization and citizenship in Kenya

who noted,

> It is not to guard against some existential global threat that Africans expel stranger neighbours from their local community. They rebel, rather against the daily inequalities, the unpredictable inclusions and exclusions by which their states decide who is to gain from global linkages, and who is to bear their local costs.

It is easy to have a strong identification with a national identity when all your basic needs have been taken care of but it is quite the opposite when you are suffering. It also parallels Jean **Daloz' s** (1997) **finding in West Africa of "***Can I eat democracy?***"** In the face of visible inequalities and discrimination, forging a national identity can be difficult. For the respondent above, it seems that when their basic needs are taken care of, when they have an income and a livelihood is when they can consider themselves a Kenyan. It also links to the findings of Arnot et al (2012) as mentioned in the previous chapter, who in their study looking at the relationship between gender, education and poverty in the context of citizenship rights highlight that in areas of poverty or conflict, identity is linked to material needs. It is not only material needs that perceptions of national identity are linked to. Areas that have experienced conflict are also affected. What we note here is that lived experiences, as noted in the literature on ethnicity or nationalism from below (Fox and Idriss-Miller, 2008, Lynch, 2011a) form the crux of identities and serve to influence discourses at the elite and national level. Indeed, it is the taken for granted ideologies and discourses are what form the sites for political conflict. (Biling, 1995)

What this section has highlighted is that young people's political narratives are linked to their notions of embodied habitus. The characteristics of certain communities are linked to their behaviour in the political arena and affect the perceptions that the young people how these communities will behave in the political arena. The next section will highlight their attitudes in terms of their attitudes towards the politicians in terms of the notion of the individual.

7.4   Notion of the individual

This theme will be concerned with analysing how politicians do not only represent the constituencies to which they are elected; they are also expected to represent **their tribe's** interests. Over and above this, the notion of the individual was

interpreted to cover the issues surrounding corruption and who bore the responsibility for the negative state of politics in the country, whether it is the politicians or the citizens. One feature that emerged from the analysis of their political attitudes was the fact that the focus of their understanding of politics was individual politicians rather than institutions. This may be as a result of the fact that they do not have experience with the institutions of government for instance they had not yet applied for a national ID. We can also interpret it as the fact that for them political responsibility lies with the individual politicians. Indeed, in one of the **Mombasa focus groups, politics was described as a "job" that politicians engaged** in, rather than a calling or a public service as illustrated below.

Moderator: What is it that happens when the politician get into power? Do they go crazy? They are asking for higher salaries, what do you think?

Respondent: It is just greed and competition. They want to take what they can get because they are not sure if they will be in power in the next elections.

Respondent: It is because politicians use their own resources/money in their campaigns to get into parliament. They therefore see it [politics] as a business; he has to make a profit. Sometimes you hear them say, "We left our jobs to become politicians". This means they did not go into politics to serve the needs of the citizens. They went to parliament to make a profit.

Moderator: So it's a job?

Respondent: yes it's a job. You can find politicians with no other source of income, their only work is politics. They only help the citizens to protect their interests. For example, during an election year, you will find they have fixed some roads, put up some street lights but afterwards, it is back to the old system.[where nothing is done] .[1MSAM1 AFGD]

Right from the initial pilot study, the young people that I spoke to conceptualized Kenyan politics as inherently corrupt, as was indicated in the previous chapter with the narrative letters with the individual self-serving politicians engaging in the practice. Corruption was mentioned as an issue of

concern in the narrative exercise as was highlighted in the previous chapter. While this is not a surprising finding in and of itself, the different ways that they understand corruption is. It was noted that certain cases of corruption such as voter buying were acceptable. For example one respondent stated that politicians often come to the constituency and give money to the people, especially during election time. They said that their vote, or rather voting cannot help them, but the money that the politician would give them would at least enable them to get some food to eat. This reinforces the idea of sustained economic development leading to poverty reduction as one of the factors in ending corruption as poverty is what leads this to be an acceptable and indeed expected practice as illustrated by the focus group extracts below. Though they take the money from the politicians, they are often smart about it and vote for whoever they will want to vote for. It is a survival strategy as is illustrated by the extract below from the Nairobi and Mombasa regions.

Extract one

Respondent 1: When this minister come even if it is me I will take the money but what I can say to the people is this; even if you take the money but during the election just […] vote for the one who can change things [sic] [3NAIG1 pilot PFGD]

Extract two

Moderator: You have raised the point of young people being given money by the politicians. Do you think it's a case of being manipulated [by the politicians] or do these young people know what they are doing when they accept the money? […]

Respondent 1: there are two groups. The first take the money but make up their own minds at the elections. The others take it and vote for the person who gave them the money.

Respondent 2: what I would say is if the government cannot provide jobs to the young people, [what do you expect?] A lot of young people in the towns are hustlers [struggling to make a living] So when they go to a political rally and the politician says I will give everyone one hundred Kenya shillings, and that

person is thinking I do not have flour to cook today, I will take the money and do whatever the politician tells me.

Respondent 3: And sometimes you take that money under oath [ulikula kama kiapo]. So they have to do what the politicians tell them to do. Even if they get someone else to do it for them, they have to do it.

Moderator: Does this happen a lot here

Several respondents: [Yes] a lot.

Respondent 4: I agree with what my friend said, when that young person gets that one hundred Kenya shillings that is what they have to eat for that day. But even so, they still vote for who they want. They do not necessarily vote for the politician who gave them the money. [1MSAM1 AFGD]

What this illustrates is a sense of expectation of this practice. Indeed, in one of the Nairobi focus groups, there is one participant who had attended a political rally where they were given money. When they were further asked what they thought of the political rallies that they had seen on TV, the response was that it is a place to "to watch and listen, the politicians they give you things. They want you to feel they are a good person they give you all those things and then when they get into power" and this is an example of the expectation of the practice. [1KAJM1 PFGD]

It is often said that corruption, like tribalism is perpetuated by the elites and it is at the elite level that we should concentrate prevention mechanisms. It is legitimated as an instrumental reality. For the young people, it is a case of, "I may never see the politician again (as is common, politicians are only ever present during election time) so I might as well get something out of this encounter". The implication for politicians is that those who do not engage in this practice will be at a disadvantage. Indeed, according to Willis and Chome (2014), 18% of Coasterians [people from the coastal region] seem to have engaged in the practice. Politicians have actually asked for security from this as they claim they have been harassed by citizens asking for money and this seems to be the most basic form of patronage in practice. (Willis and Chome, 2014) In addition, there was the perception in urban

Nairobi that one of the reasons that is given for this state of affairs is a lack of education, it being seen as a practice that is predominant in rural areas. In addition, the respondent noted that young people are "struggling to make a living." This is a reflection of Honwana's (2012) concept of waithood, which is the frustration that accompanies the wait for a better life. Young people are constantly told that they are the future but this future does not seem to materialise.

The recent literature on ethnicity as discussed in the conceptual framework has shown that pressures from below can contribute to politician's rhetoric on tribalism and it seems this can be said to be the same on certain practices associated with corruption. Indeed, one student in Nairobi indicated that they had attended a political rally and his first thought when questioned about it is that they had been given money. [1KAJM1 PFGD] Though, as has been shown by the second respondent, citizens should be "smart" about it and still vote for the person who will cater to their needs and bring about change. The key thing to note here is that personal and material needs have to be taken care of, thus the need to accept politicians' money. This theme also has a generational element to it, with the elders (read parents, and generally anyone older than them) being perceived as being more gullible to this political machination that younger people.

What emerged from the analysis was the view that corruption is politician-driven with citizens not having the power to change things. As one respondent in the western region noted, even if they vote the leaders out, the elections happen only every five years, and there is a lack of opportunity to do much else. Indeed most of the politicians come with "fake promises" so it doesn't really matter what their policy agendas are.[2KMM2AI4] This participant noted that it seemed common place that part of the money that politicians received towards development of their constituencies (such as the Constituency Development Fund) would be taken by the politicians. Corruption was also highlighted in the form of rigging elections and giving money to leaders to have a desired outcome. Another respondent, also in the Kisumu region believed that the chief justice had been bribed to decide in favour of Uhuru Kenyatta during the election dispute that occurred right after the 2013 elections. [2KSMM2 AI4]

This same respondent noted that according to them, it is an expectation that "I have to be taken care of" by the politicians. In this way, certain forms of corruption are considered acceptable, more so if they are the direct beneficiary of this largesse. In addition, this narrative expressed a discourse that the President was responsible for bribing his way into power. The respondent went so far as to name individuals the

President had allegedly "put money into the account". This demonstrates the influence of certain rhetoric on citizens more so young citizens. Without the means to critically evaluate such narratives, they have the potential to be influenced by them, and form their political opinions accordingly, regardless of their veracity.

> *Respondent 1: Because they [leaders/politicians] they take care of their people, so people have come to realize that I have to have my own person in power, so that even they can be taken care of.*

> *Moderator: Do you see this changing now that we have a county government, with a governor and a senator.*

> *Respondent: I don't think so because all these people are still under the President (Uhuru Kenyatta). It is the President who brings about corruption, because even before he was President he bribed Isaac Hassan (Electoral commission chairman) He even put money in Willy Mutunga (Chief Justice) account.[…]* [2KSMM2 AI4]

In an interview with a young woman in the Nyeri, central area it was highlighted how it is because of poverty, as indicated above that corruption, in the form of voter bribery is acceptable. The difference here is the sense of rational acceptability of the practice. This is a case of, if the politicians are not fulfilling their obligations in terms of development, then an individual must take what they can get from them.

> *Moderator: What do you think about politics?*

> *Respondent: Okay politics in Kenya is just basically about the money you have, you have to have money to give money in order to "cover people's eyes" [Kuwafunga macho] or you won't succeed*

> *Moderator: So like the money they give during the election and that's what rules and that's what really determine whether like maybe you will get there?[…]*

Respondent: If you are just a person who is here talking about the roads I will make for you, the hospitals [I will build] and you're not giving them anything you are [not going to make it]

Moderator: What do you think about that? Why do you think it's like that?

Respondent: It's because we are blinded and we are ignorant. We just want to see, we just want to hear we don't want to act we just want to be in the comfort zone as in we want to see that person there can provide for us maybe one hundred Kenya Shillings per day during the campaigns But we don't remember that after that he is gone to the parliament they will forget us. So you just want to be there during the campaigns you're getting rich but after that you don't see that you're the one who will suffer […] so it's just ignorance

Moderator: So is poverty also something also to do with it?

Respondent: Yeah also poverty. Because many people also right now are like you have promised us these, but what will we eat Yeah

Moderator: So it's like if I earn one hundred shillings a day and the politician is offering me one thousand, then I will take it?

Respondent: Yeah […] people want easy money

Moderator: So it goes back to the citizen you know and pushing the leaders

Respondent: Yeah

Moderator: Interesting [2NYEAI2]

Additionally, the narrative of the Kikuyu versus the Luo emerges again in terms of corruption in other aspects of life, not only in politics. For this respondent, from the Kisumu region corruption is not only in politics but is still present in daily life, when trying to get a job or go to university. He discusses this especially in the **context of Nairobi and Kikuyu dominance. Indeed he states, "Kikuyu and Luo people don't get along."** He has a negative association with politics in terms of politics

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being the source of hatred in the country, with the politicians being most to blame, though he does briefly acknowledge the role of the citizens in perpetuating it.

Moderator: So even when you go to apply for a job?

Respondent: Yes even when you go to apply for a job. For example let us say that I am a Luo and you are a Kikuyu. You are aware that in Nairobi it is the Kikuyu who have all the top jobs. So if you go to Nairobi to look for a job, they will say, but this candidate is from this particular tribe, [so they will not hire them] the Kikuyu and the Luo do not get along.

Moderator: Where do you think this "not getting along" comes from?

[...]
Respondent: This is all about politics. It is in politics that deep hatred comes from and it is really hurting us, and now they have even brought this politics into employment.

Moderator: So it's about the politician's needs? And whatever he tells you, you believe it?

Respondent: I don't know when the Luo will ever be in power. You know politicians say things without thinking and this is what brings about conflict.

Moderator: So what is the solution to all this negative things that you have talked about?

Respondent: What I see is the cause of all this is the elections. When there are no elections people get along fine, but during elections is when all these things start. [2KSMM2 AI1]

To summarise there were a number of regional differences that emerged within this theme. Firstly, young people across all the regions conceptualized politics as a realm of politicians and focused on these individual politicians rather

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than the political institutions. One form of corruption that was discussed was voter buying and the acceptability of this practice was highlighted by participants in the coastal region. Also, in urban Nairobi there was the perception that such forms of corruption continued as a result of people from the rural areas who were uneducated. In the Western region, the narrative that emerged was t**hat "I have to be taken care of" by the politicians and it was therefore implied that** corruption that favoured them was acceptable. In addition, in the Western region, there was the notion that the Kikuyu were to blame for the corruption witnessed in the political system.

What also emerged from the discussion on corruption was who was to blame for the practice. The narratives surrounding the responsibility for the phenomenon and indeed the responsibility for the state of politics in the country varied along two lines. There was a debate on whether the responsibility was on the elites in the form of political leaders or whether the citizens themselves shared some responsibility. This will be discussed in the next section.

7.4.1   Politicians to blame vs people to blame

As has been highlighted previously, a majority, if not all the respondents agreed that there was something inherently wrong with politics in Kenya. Two definitive schools of thought emerged from the focus groups. One was what I term the **"politicians are to blame camp" while the other was the "people are to blame".** The former opinion can be illustrated by this argument presented by one of the participants:

> *It is our own opinion for us to elect the members but you see us Kenyans we don't have any option. These politicians they can grab somebody's votes and say that they were voted for. So what I can say is that the problem is not the Kenyans, the problem is the government because they are promising things and they are not doing it. Those money which the government is using peoples' taxes and taking them to the ministers, when they give an member of parliament money to give the people in the slums he is taking the money so I think the government is the problem not the people*.[3NAIG2 Pilot AFGD]

Indeed, politicians were blamed for inciting tribalism among citizens. This sentiment was present in the focus groups in all the four regions. In one of the focus groups in the coast, they indicated that tribalism is not inherent; it is the

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politicians who invent it. Those in Mombasa were also disappointed with the type of political rhetoric that focused on insulting ones opponents rather than ideological principles [1MSAM1 PFGD] as the illustration below shows,

Peter Kenneth, he had a good vision of this country, he had good things that he could bring in but others were just, they are good for rallies instead of telling us what they want to do they say [things] like, telling us things in riddles, instead of telling us what they are going to do for the country. They just go [to these rallies] to insult their opponents, what is that? so that's why I will not go for those people where are they in the seat right now? [sic] [1MSAM1 PFGD]

This also highlights what was said earlier regarding Peter Kenneth being an example of a 'good' politician, indeed one who we should be electing to the Presidency, but one without the clout or the knowledge of the dirty game to succeed. On the other side of the coin, the 'blame the people' camp can be illustrated by the following extract from the same focus group conversation

With me I want to say us citizens we are the ones who are stupid because let's take for example –this election I have been wondering let's take for example […] in Nyanza and you will never hear like […] a Luhya winning the seat you will just find like it is the Luos who are the ones who are supposed to win these seats. Now me I see the citizens are the ones who are stupid because they have that mentality that we are staying in Luo Nyanza now our person is the one who is supposed to win the seat, nobody (else) can come because they are just like encouraging tribalism. [3NAIG2 Pilot AFGD]

Also, it was expected that politicians should give out money at rallies at the same time that they abhor the practice. We can say that this contradiction emerges through the interaction of their ethnic habitus with the political field. There is an expectation that politicians are representatives of those communities and should be able to protect their interests. However, there is also the national habitus that they are members of the Kenyan community with equal rights. It is the interaction of these different habitii within the political field that leads to the contradiction of corruption or discrimination against other communities being abhorred at the same

time it may be expected and approved of.

The blame the people camp also included the argument that their parents and other elders were to blame for being gullible and allowing themselves to be lied to by the politicians as well as those who were uneducated not being able to make informed decisions. This links back to the notion of habitus where a person comes **to develop a "sense of what actions and behaviour are valued." (Connolly 1997: 75)** Accepting corruption or bribery therefore comes to be a learned behaviour that is accepted as was indicated in the section on boundaries of politics. In one Nairobi area school, there was the opinion that politicians are simply responding to the **people's needs. [1KAJM1 PFGD]. For instance in term**s of political appointments, there would be no easy solution, as there are only a certain number of political appointments that can be made, therefore it would be difficult to satisfy the over 40 communities in the country. Indeed in the girls school in the Kibera area of Nairobi, they indicated that citizens need to take responsibility and elect leaders on the basis of skill and not just popularity. This was also reflected in both focus groups in the girls school in the Nyeri area. Indeed it was indicated that it is the citizens who mould the leaders, however that there is a lack of civic education so that citizens could vote on policies and not along ethnic lines. [2NYEG AFGD 1and 2] In the coastal region, this narrative took the form of the fact that citizens themselves are not engaged in constructive politics as illustrated from the extract below.

[…] You can even see citizens themselves when they talk about politics during an election year, they talk about who is the "big man", who is more known, who is from our tribe? That is the problem in Kenya because no one is concerned about development. Even those [politicians] who engage in development are not appreciated.] [1MSAM1 AFGD]

Though politicians were seen in some aspects as responding to the citizens needs, in others they are out of touch with the day to day struggles that their people go to. The narrative below, from the western region highlights this. It is perhaps a part of the narrative of marginalization that is present in the western and coastal regions that will be discussed in the next section on political legitimacy.

Respondent: You see, if you are living in a grass thatch house and another lives in an iron sheet roof house, the one who is staying in an iron sheet house, if it rains he will not be concerned, but the one who is sleeping in a

grass thatch house, will be worried that they will be rained on, the one in an iron sheet house does not have any problems, they are sleeping comfortably.[this narrative was in reference to certain politicians who may be taken to be those living in iron sheet houses not being aware of local people's problems who are taken to be those living in grass thatch houses.

Moderator: mmmhh

Respondent: you know the President does not know the problems that certain people are facing.

Moderator: those who live in grass thatch houses?

Respondent: [yes] because since he [the president] was born, he has had everything, like his father [founding father Jomo Kenyatta] did. He does not know that there are others here below that are suffering.

Moderator: So you would like him to come here and see how you are suffering.

Respondent: yes he should come here so he can understand our problems. [2KSMM2 AI1]

Similar to the analysis presented from the letters to the President in Chapter 6, this respondent in Kisumu views the president as all powerful thus the buck stops with him. Even with the county governments, this respondent still views development as being controlled from the executive. They do contradict themselves though because they claim that this is not what they want, they want to be able to control their own destinies, but when there are problems, the President should resolve them. As this was a narrative from the Western region, it feeds into the marginalization narrative that will be presented later in this chapter. This is in terms of the perception of the centre as still being the controlling force in the country, as the devolved system of government had not yet been implemented at the time that the research was conducted. This can be seen in the current political discourse in

the country, as evidenced in the media, where there is a constant blame game between the senators, the governors and the executive whenever something goes wrong as to whose problem it is and where the solution should come from. For instance in the recent protests in Narok (Reporter, 2014) where it was unclear who exactly is in charge of resolving the problem.

What this discussion on politicians and their responsibilities brings us to is the question of whether it is the ethnic group of the politician that is important or whether it is a cult of the individual in Kenyan politics. Is it just the influence of ethnicity that is important as has been shown by the literature or is there something to be said about a cult of personality?

7.4.2   Cult of personality

In one of the schools in the Nairobi area, in informal discussions with one of the history teachers who was my contact at the school, he brought up the issue of whether ethnicity was really as strong a factor when citizens evaluated a politician or was it more to do with their charisma and personality. In addition to being in the **"right" ethnic group a leader needs to have not only the resource base in terms of** finances and social capital but also the personality to pull it off. This is one of the **reasons that were given for the failure of Peter Kenneth's presidential campaign.** Right from the beginning few would have given him any chance to succeed, even though he is known as one of the best politicians in terms of constituency development and indeed engaging in deliberative democracy principles to do this in his Gatundu constituency. But with Uhuru Kenyatta [the son of founding father Jomo Kenyatta] running, he did not have the charisma or the personality to capture the Kikuyu vote. One can say that Peter Kenneth did not possess the ethnic capital in terms of system of networks required to gain the vote. Indeed many before the elections accused him of trying to divide the Kikuyu vote and some conspiracies emerged that he was in the pay of the opposing CORD coalition. This was an emotive issue among the Kikuyu that I spoke to, with one telling me of how her own father sat her down with a group of her friends in order to explain the importance of voting for Kenyatta and not Peter Kenneth, when she indicated that she preferred Kenneth on the principle of his record of good governance. According to her father, that would be the same as a wasted or spoilt vote as every vote was needed to defeat Raila Odinga, the CORD principle. (Field notes 2013)

It was also noted in the coast focus group [1MSAM1 AFGD], that it is not only **about tribalism, but it's also about "Kujulikana" which translates as "being known"**

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as is illustrated by the extract below and indeed according to the participants in this focus groups, tribalism has decreased since the last election in 2007. Even so, there were those that disputed this and noted that it was the politicians who brought about tribalism and for another respondent it was because of Kikuyu dominance in politics;

Respondent 1: I want to talk about tribalism. I think it has gone down a little, it's not the way it was in 2007. For example places like in Eastern [region] like in Wajir, where you would have expected Dida [a presidential candidate] to get votes, he did note get votes. We can say that Kenyans have learnt [a lesson] about tribalism.

Moderator: Sometimes, is it really about tribalism or is it about being known? Like the Dida example, was it simply because he was not known?

Respondent 1: I can say that it is the politicians that bring about tribalism. Because the citizens depend on them, because the leaders will say, [for example] that the Kikuyu should not rule again because they have ruled for many years, so they poison the minds of the citizens.

Moderator: so it's what they say that makes people start fighting?

Respondent 1: yeah.

Respondent 2: How I see it on the streets people say that Kenya belongs to the Kikuyu. This is because the first president of Kenya was a Kikuyu. And the second President Moi, wasn't elected. He was the vice president so he just took on the role when President Kenyatta died. Soon the streets I just hear that Kenya is for the Kikuyu. [1MSAM1 AFGD]

In addition, there seemed to be a cult of the individual, with political personalities being seen as representing their parties. In addition, it was highlighted, though not quite as strongly, that the politicians were representatives not only of their constituencies, but of their communities. Any embarrassment does

not only reflect on the individual or the area they represent but on their entire ethnic group. This illustrates, to a certain extent the notion that moral ethnicity can feed into the political field in terms of the obligations that it places on political leaders from certain communities to represent their tribe appropriately. This is **highlighted by the following statement from one of the respondent's letters to** political candidates.

> *Am not being tribalistic [sic] but even if we are in the same tribe but you aren't representing us well [1NYEB1 Pilot narrative]*

On the other hand, another respondent from one of the focus groups in the coast area indicated that winning in politics in Kenya is not only about tribalism but is a **"popularity contest."**

> *Respondent: about Kenyan politics what I think, Kenyan politics is what I call it dynamic one, because Kenyan politics is all about popularity, it is all about tribalistic.[sic] If you are someone that is popular then automatically you win politics in Kenya ,if you are someone that is well known in every part of Kenya for example Uhuru ,is widely known ,is very famous, even without going to Uhuru our president, if you look at Sonko [Senator for Makadara constituency], Sonko he was popular everywhere […]even people from Kisumu know Sonko so that gave him a higher chance of getting that seat, not because he is good in politics, not because he has good leadership skills or anything like that it's because he is well known. It can also be tribal, if your tribe is well spread [sic] in Kenya for example Uhuru, you've known that the percentage of Kikuyu in Kenya is so many, so he had a chance of getting into that presidential seat. [1MSAM1 PFGD]*

Additionally, in one of the focus groups which was held in urban Nairobi the students discussed whether the March 2013 elections, were tribal or not. The conclusion was they were less tribal than the last elections since the two key communities that were involved in the violence last time were united, though there was one respondent who insisted this was more of a family issue between the Odingas and the Kenyattas then an issue of the different tribes.

> *Moderator: Talking about corruption in our country how is it in our country?*

Respondent 1: It's not as tribalised [sic] as people think it is I think in the parliament the politicians tend [to take] take sides according to how their tribes are if the Luo and the Luhya politicians agree on something so the Luo and the Luhya politicians will be together.

Moderator: So that's how tribalised [sic] it can be. Do people vote as blocks? Do you think that the last year's election was more tribalistic? [sic]

Several Respondents: No

Respondent 2: Not comparing to the other one because last year Kalenjin and the Kikuyus had a disagreement but this year they were together and it was less it was less tribalistic [sic] than the other one.

[…]

Respondent 3: I think Raila was trying to use the elections to somehow to avenge to His father for being beaten by the Kenyatta or something I don't know but that's what I think happened so [1KAJM1 PFGD]

7.5   Political legitimacy

Legitimacy in the state and government is not uniform, mainly because of unequal distribution of resources and perceived election malpractice. For instance, those in the northern arid parts of Kenya may have issues with the legitimacy of the government as they consider themselves marginalized by it. In addition, legitimacy **in the African context is about "performance" and therefore authoritarian** governments can be seen as legitimate as long as there is positive economic performance or positive performance to a particular support group. The key thing is the responsiveness of government can be seen as the ability of the government to **"perform" and pro**vide the basic necessities to the people.

From the initial data in the pilot study, legitimacy is implicitly touched upon **and confirms Chabal and Dalozs'**(1999) view of legitimacy as performance, with statements such as *"**To improve and take care of common citizens life standards as**

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first priority" for politicians [1NYEB1 Pilot narrative] **but also highlighted Nasong'o's** (2007) view of legitimacy in Kenyan politics as fairness, with call for equal distribution of resources confirmed by statements such as *"To all aspiring candidates: Please let us use our energy for positive gain of this country as a whole."* [1NYEB1 Pilot narrative] In addition, legitimacy is gained not only from performance but also from a sense of visibility. Participants reference a politics that you can taste, touch and feel. One of the ways that they judge politicians is on what they have done for the community. This is more so with regards to material resources. This is illustrated from the data extract below where participants were questioning what work that their political representatives have done:

> *Respondent one: Let me ask you. Peter Kenneth is an M.P for Gatanga. The most developed constituency. But he is rarely seen in his constituency. Most developed. What have you seen the politician here doing?*

> *Respondent two: the majority thing [...] am telling you that is simply walking the talk. Talk less but you act most.*

> *Respondent three: She has only built a big house for herself [...]*

> *But there are also people who have received a bursary?*

> *Respondent one: I want something I can see. At least a general hospital, a good one. [2NYEG1 Pilot PFGD]*

It is therefore easy to see why a politician, who takes care of these needs, would have the support of the people, regardless of his/her other vices including corruption. Therefore, corruption in certain cases can become an acceptable practice though in the cases that we have seen previously in the thesis, it is an indicator of a lack of legitimacy and more often than not threatens the politician who engages in it. This is reflected in data collected from adults on what Kenyans really want from democracy. From an analysis of Afrobarometer data, they found **that not only do the "right institutions" matter to Kenyans, but that "outputs even more, both political ones as well as more instrumental or material ones."**(Logan et al., April 2007: iii)

The idea of legitimacy in politics was also touched upon in one of the focus groups in the coast area. It is an expectation when a political leader gets into power for his to distribute favors and positions to his supporters, otherwise he will not be considered legitimate as is highlighted in the extract below;

Respondent: I see tribalism when it is around election time. But when it's not [an election year] it isn't there.

Moderator: so tribalism is only there during the elections?

Respondent: yeah.

Moderator: So it's not there like in business relationships?

Respondent: The thing is the problem of tribalism in Kenya comes from the leaders not the people. You will find that once a politician is in power, like the President, he wants to give [key positions] like the head of the army to people from his tribe. [...] So the members of that tribe have an expectation that if a member of their community is in power then they will be favoured. They will be given work. [1MSAM1 AFGD]

In addition, the narratives of young people in the western region were that the **elections were "not fair" because "the person who won was not the person who should have won" ("***Mwenye alishinda si mwenye angeshinda***")** [2KMM2AI2] Another in the same region indicated that it was more of a case of the more things change, the more they stay the same. They felt those who were campaigning were the same people who are always campaigning. Overall, young people in a number of schools were happy that there was no violence in these elections as opposed to what happened in 2007. In fact, one girl in the Nyeri region expressed boredom with the election day as illustrated below,

It was OK. It was peaceful. Yeah that was one thing I liked about it. I was happy that no one was hurt or only very few were hurt. But to me it was a boring day, because there was nothing else to watch on TV [laughter] [2NYEG1AI]

The extract above illustrates one other element of the notion of legitimacy. Part of the legitimacy of the elections also stems from their having been peaceful. This was acknowledged by the young people in all the four regions with a large sense of relief as there had been uncertainty during the campaign periods. This reflects recent work done on citizens assessments of the 2013 general elections, (Shah, 2015) where they found that over and above legitimacy as a free and fair election, a peaceful election also contributed to the idea of a legitimate government. The idea of legitimacy is not universal however, and as will be highlighted below, some regions that were visited feel that they are marginalized compared to other regions of the country.

7.5.1   Narrative of marginalization

The Coastal and Western regions displayed a narrative of marginalization that was not present in those from the central and Nairobi regions. This was initially highlighted in the chapter 5 on ethnicity as habitus and is directly related to the character of politics in this region that is indicated in the contextual chapter. This narrative took different forms and I will focus on the one in the Western region. In one of the focus groups in the Coast region, they decried the discrimination they felt they were experiencing in the region in terms of inequality evidenced, for example through the distribution of political positions, where a large number of positions were from the political strongholds of the incumbent President and Vice President from the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities respectively. Indeed, in Kisumu this marginalization is linked to inequality evidenced by the fact that the senior political leaders favour the development of their own areas to the detriment of other areas as highlighted in the extract below;

Respondent 1: about the politicians, they should provide equal development projects across the regions in terms of [...]

Respondent 2: I don't think that's true, how can you develop like you give the same amount of money to Kisumu and North Eastern you see that these places are different [sic]

Respondent 1: They should not favour their areas [...] if they give money to Kisumu and North Eastern , give Kisumu more

Several respondents (laughter)

Respondent 3: Yes he is very right

Respondent 4: I think what[she] means is like the [politicians try to favour maybe their counties or where they come from Like is Moi ,President Moi the former president is the one who caused the slow development of Kisumu because when He was the President he was given some money to develop Kisumu but instead he took it to Eldoret and again I hear that president Kibaki was given money to develop the fish industry in Kisumu and then that money he used it in Kikuyu ,he told people I don't know to construct ponds instead they produce even a large amount of fish than what we produce in Kisumu here even though we have a lake [1KSMM1 AFGD]

They also do not see this situation changing with the devolved system of government as it is the same politicians, who are usually involved in corruption, who are now the senators and governors. What this illustrates is what was indicated in the section on the notion of the individual. Their concerns in politics focus on the individual politicians rather than other political institutions. This brings us to our final theme, the question of representation.

7.6   Question of representation

Building on the previous section on legitimacy, and as Chabal and Daloz indicate, **"In mature democracies the function of the representative is to act on behalf of […] a given constituency, in Africa the situation is more complex."** (1999: 54) In addition this section will highlight the influence of the embodied habitus in emphasizing how perception of politicians may be gendered, especially when it comes to perceptions of female politicians. While a politician may be viewed as legitimate by his community, this may not be representative of the rest of the country. For instance, the coalition building in anticipation of the March 2013 elections featured power sharing agreements that were geared towards not only

representing diverse communities but also the ability of the politicians to 'pull' voters from their various communities. Therefore, the Jubilee[14] alliance consists of two key principals, Uhuru Kenyatta, a Kikuyu to bring in his community as well as William Ruto, a Kalenjin who is supposed to focus his campaign in his particular ethnic stronghold. (Nationteam, 29 November 2012) **"Representation, therefore is necessarily communal"** (Chabal and Daloz, 1999: 55) and takes can take on ethnic dimension.

This serves to reinforce the ethnic nature of representation in Kenyan politics. In addition, there is a resource mobilization value attached to ethnicity. It is a response to interest based politics and not purely ideological politics. Because of the obligations that are placed on me as a member of my community and hence the obligations of the ethnic capital, I may vote for a candidate solely because he is a member of my community. My reasoning in this instance may be that this person is better placed to protect my interests. It is about interests being fulfilled and the perception is that, as has been highlighted in the previous section of this paper, there is an element of trust that a member of your ethnic group will fulfil your interests rather than one from another community of which you may have no knowledge in terms of their values and interests. As Chabal emphasizes,

> Indeed, formal democratic theory would stress the need for individual representation. However, for reasons having to do with the importance of communal, racial, regional, ethnic and religious forms of identity, any system of representation operates within a collective rather than individual context— by which I mean that either representatives are chosen for reasons having to do with their communal affiliations or that elections are interpreted on particularistic grounds. (Chabal, 1998:297)

While the young people seem to understand that the MPs represent both **their constituencies and their "people" for instance,** as highlighted in chapter 6, with one of the participants saying in the letter to the President that one of the political candidates, Raila Odinga should not embarrass members of their community, but should represent them well, they are aware, that in the background, this is all a political game and the enmity that the politicians engage in by pitting

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[14] The Jubilee alliance is one other umbrella coalition that was participating in the March 2013 general election that has brought together a number of political parties in order to directly oppose the CORD alliance mentioned previously.

one community against the other is driven by political pressures, not personal or ethnic dislikes:

Respondent: These politicians are so funny. You find that on televisions or around the public they don't speak to one another but when you find them inside hotels, you will find them speaking to each other [...] on TV you will find them trying to create enmity on the air but in their personal life you will find that they are very close, they do care for one another. What I mean is, they will try to portray a bad picture saying that me and him we are [sworn] enemies we don't talk to one another or abuse one another but when you find them in other way like in their home, you will find them laughing, eating even you can't imagine [at all]. [3NAIG2 PFGD]

Also in terms of representation, the influence of embodied habitus is seen with reference to women in politics. In the Nyeri girls school, they highlighted how as it stands in the country, there was still a perception that voting for a woman was **"wasting my vote".** This is illustrated from the respondent below.

Respondent 1: [...] It is a state of mind. It is the attitude that everyone has grown up knowing. In families the father is the head of the family but in families without a father, [the mothers] do the same duties and everything is run the same way. So women can do the same type of jobs. But now as women, the way this one said if a woman runs for a parliamentary [seat]...the women will not vote for that woman because [for example] when Martha Karua [a female Presidential candidate in 2013] was running for office I heard women saying "voting for Martha Karua is wasting my vote."

Several respondents: (Laughter)

Respondent 1: What is that? You see? [sic] There is no need for me to vote for a woman when other women will not vote for a woman. [...] Voting for a woman is wasting my vote. *[2NYEG1 AFGD*]

This was also reflected among young men in the same Nyeri region, where there was the perception that women could not handle politics as it was such a dirty game. This is illustrated by the extract below,

Respondent 1: Let me ask you a question. How many women have their right to vote in Kenya?

Several respondents: All.

Respondent 2: A bigger percentage than men?

Respondent 1: Why is it that a man is in the State House? […]Because politics is a dirty game, let me tell you, Kenya needs a leader who is driven by ideals not gender. […]

Respondent 1: Let me tell you one thing, the reason I'm so against women is this; they have been given equal opportunities. Answer this question first. The male and female have equal brain power? […] [1NYEB1Pilot PFGD]

We can see from the first extract that while on the one hand she felt that women can perform any duties that men can, she was also pragmatic in terms of not wanting to fight against the tide of opinion that it was a waste to vote for women. On the other side of the coin for the young men in the same Nyeri region, it was about the structure of politics i.e. it was a dirty game that prevented women from getting into politics.

7.7   Conclusion

The chapter has focused on how young people understand and interpret politics. It has built on the snapshot of the political system presented in the chapter 6 by focusing on the data collected from the focus groups. This is in an effort to **highlight the young people's political habitus and the relationship this has to their** ethnic identity. The chapter above has provided an understanding of how young people in Kenya conceptualize politics in Kenya by using four themes in **understanding African identity politics from Chabal and Daloz's** (1999) Africa works, disorder as a political instrument . In the first instance, their conception of **politics is negative with it being described as a "dirty game" that** a politician needs to navigate in order to succeed. This is taken as self-evident and the way that politics works in Kenya. This reflection has shown that elements of their political habitus include the expectation and sometimes acceptance of voter bribery in addition to stereotypes and characteristics of particular tribes being expectations of their behaviour in the political arena. Living in different regions affects their attitudes, as was presented in the table at the beginning of the chapter. Across all the regions, politics was viewed as an inherent part of politics. This forms a part of **the young people's political habitus.**   As was discussed in chapter 2 in the **conceptual framework, young people's political habitus would include;**

- Whether they are contesting or reproducing the dominant political discourses
- Their construction of politics and political actors (demotic discourses)

In the first instance, young people construct politics as an inherently negative activity with tribalism and corruption being prominent. The political actors in the form of the politicians were viewed as selfish and greedy. From the discussion in this chapter, we can see that in some cases they are reproducing the dominant political discourses. This can be see, for instance in the narrative of marginalization that was discussed in chapter 3 as being present in the Coast and Western regions. The young people in these areas reproduced this. In addition, we can also see that with regards to women in politics, we can see that in both the boys and girls

schools in the Nyeri region, the young people felt that women cannot handle the 'dirty' political game.

What is clear is that young people's identities are a key influence on their political attitudes and these identities are as a result of their daily lived realities especially those of poverty, marginalisation and economic disenfranchisement. They also reflect some of the dominant discourses/political rhetoric within their regions such as the narratives of marginalization in the Kisumu and coastal areas as well as the prioritisation of economic benefits and security and a politics that works in delivering these. Indeed, individual politicians have affected economic outcomes in a number of constituencies. Report that governors who have previous experience in running institutions are running their counties successfully in such a fashion.(Mathiu, 2012) . The young people's focus is less on government structures and more on the individual politicians. The elements of political culture that they display may be seen as contradictory in that on the one hand they advocate for equality while on the other hand taking bribes from politicians and seeing it as a necessary practice in Kenyan politics.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

The chapter will serve as a summary of the arguments presented in the thesis as well as a reflection on the challenges encountered, future research agendas and the overall contribution of the thesis. The chapter will look at the wider implications of the data and findings presented in the previous chapters. It will start by looking at what emerged as the narratives of young people's ethnic identities followed by the narratives of their political identities. It will then look at how young people viewed the relationship between their ethnic and political identities and how this leads to their reproduction of the negative aspects of their ethnic identities. The chapter will then highlight the contribution of the thesis to the literature on ethnic politics. It will also reflect on the contribution of the peer-led research method. It will then briefly highlight some avenues for future research and recommendations for young people's political engagement. As was discussed in the introduction, ethnicity and especially negative aspects of ethnicity are an enduring aspect of Kenyan politics. The cycle of negative ethnic politics includes the participation of both elites at the top level of politics and the citizens who are influenced by them and in their turn influence the process.

The first chapters of the thesis dealt with focused on the conceptual and contextual framework. The conceptual framework traced the evolution of the three key theories in the study of ethnicity namely primordialism, instrumentalism and constructivism. It then set out the theoretical framework which is an adaptation of Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of habitus field and capital. This enables us to reconcile theoretical debates, understand children's experience of ethnicity and analyse their political attitudes. The contextual chapter mapped the field of politics by focusing on the politicisation of ethnicity, elections and the nature of identity in Kenya. It also focused on brief case studies of the four regions that were visited in this study namely the Coast, Central, Western and Nairobi. The key findings that emerged from the analysis will be presented below.

8.2   Key findings

8.2.1   Narratives of ethnic identity

The young people's ethnic habitus has a number of elements. Firstly, they display a lack of knowledge when questioned about their communities. They do not seem to know much about the values and histories of their tribes. They do, however possess knowledge of their communities with regards to rites of passage including marriage and transitions from childhood to adulthood such as circumcision. What habitus as embodiment has shown is that there is a narrative of Kikuyu dominance in the political system where those in predominantly Kikuyu regions noted that the Kikuyu were smart and took advantage of the opportunities presented to them while those in the non-Kikuyu regions such as the Western region looked at the Kikuyu as being selfish, money hungry and corrupt. In addition, stereotypes were viewed as determinants of future career prospects and behaviour. These stereotypes were not only replicated through myths and kinship relations but through observations and **interactions in the young people's day to day** lives. Gender roles were also briefly touched on in terms of certain expectations that young women still have today to perform house work though these were challenged by young men because of the necessity of modern day living resulting in men having to take on roles traditionally reserved for women.

In addition, the young people also related the various characteristics of these communities to how they will behave in the political arena. These narratives were shown to influence their political attitudes. There was a sense of trust in members of their own communities to the detriment of other communities which they do not trust as Willis and Chome (2014) indicate on their work on politics in the coast of Kenya. But even with this sense of trust, they did not seem to know much about **their communities' values and traditions, except with regards to** marriage and the rites of passage. Their rich discussions of stereotypes belied the fact that when they were directly questioned about their communities, they claimed to know very little about them. Indeed, some they claimed that they were cosmopolitan and there was no need to go back to their tribes. What we have also seen is that while in some cases their identities may be presented as fixed and unchanging, their ethnic habitus can and does change, more so when they move from their rural communities into urban areas. The regional differences emerged for example in one of the narratives that emerged exploring the Kikuyu versus the Luo binary.

Moreover, it has been shown that greater social integration will not necessarily lead to greater cohesion. It may actually lead to certain stereotypes being **reinforced through people's observations of the practices of those communities**. Indeed, we define ourselves through interactions with others. Stereotypes are not just about othering but also ourselvsing. They serve to define the behaviour and expectations of members of the community. What the ethnic narratives show is how they relate directly to their attitudes towards the Kenyan political system.

In addition, they presented a number of stereotypes about their own and different communities which they viewed as an inherent part of the nature of these **communities with one respondent commenting they "compelled him in life".** They not only defined other communities through these stereotypes but also defined themselves for example with Kikuyu respondents highlighting that while it was true that the community loved money, they were hardworking and deserved the benefits that accrued to them. Moreover, while some thought these stereotypes were simply stories and were not true, others believed them to be accurate as they observed them reproduced through their day to day interactions. Though their identities were presented as static they were also subject to disruption, more so when the young people move from one region to another and/or encounter challenging situations such as family upheavals. The young women also highlighted some of the gender roles that they were expected to fulfil such as cooking and cleaning though **these were contested in the context of "modern times". The** contestation was not only from the young women, however, with some of the young men stating that in this day and age it was normal for them to take up traditional gender roles such as cooking and cleaning.

8.2.2   Narratives of political identity

Their attitudes towards the current Kenyan president were largely neutral, and did not necessarily reflect the expectation that the Western and Coastal region would portray a more negative attitude than the Central and Nairobi regions. This was because of the narrative of marginalization present in the Western and Coast regions presented in chapter 3 on mapping the field. Secondly, the findings from the letters included what the young people thought about the role of the President. They viewed him in in three ways: a benevolent dictator; as responsible for forging a national identity and as responsible for reining in politicians. What is also implicit

in the chapter is that young people are up to date and aware of the current political issues and engage in critical political thought. Thirdly, the young people express a deep frustration with the current political status quo. Across all the regions and both genders, politics is viewed as inherently negative. They are also more concerned with the individual politicians who are seen as self-serving and egotistical rather than institutions or the process of politics. They do not necessarily present solutions but look to the leaders, both political and non-political to present solutions.

Their ethnic identities were related to their political identities. The stereotypes or characteristics of communities that they presented in their ethnic identities were related to expectations of how those communities would behave in the political arena. For example, a community such as the Kikuyu **who were thought to "love money" were considered to display this characteristic in the political arena in terms** of being corrupt and wanting to rule the country and amass benefits for their own community. Politics was universally and intrinsically viewed **as a "dirty game"** that one needed to know how to play in order to be able to succeed as a politician in the political system. **Politics was also inherently "tribal"** and corrupt. In addition, politics was conceptualized through individual politicians and not the structures of the political system. It was through individual **politician's** selfishness and greed that corruption was perpetuated and negative ethnic politics reproduced. The politicians did not bear all the blame however, with a debate emerging that noted the responsibility that citizens themselves bore for the current state of Kenyan politics. In discussing corruption (in terms of voter bribery), the young people displayed a contradiction where they abhorred the practice at the same time accepted it as a part of Kenyan politics. When we look at this through the lens of habitus this contradiction becomes clearer. Young people possess both an ethnic habitus where receiving gifts or bribes from a politician was deemed acceptable but also possess a national habitus where they were all Kenyan citizens equal before the law. When these different habitii interact in the political field, they produce different attitudes/behaviour.

They also make demands of the political system with their key priorities being jobs and education. The young women in particular expressed concerns with issues that they faced in their day to day lives such as rape and insecurity that they felt were not being adequately addressed. Indeed it was these day to day experiences, especially those related to situations of poverty that reinforced both their ethnic

and political attitudes. This leads us to a discussion on how their perceptions of inequality lead to the reproduction of ethnic and political discourses.

8.2.3   Reproduction of discourses

The young people reproduced two key discourses which were the narrative of marginalization in the coast and western regions and the Kikuyu versus the Luo binary in the central and western areas. **In the young people's reproduction of** discourses we can see the durability of the habitus in the field of politics. The differences in the regions came about in the context of the reproduction of discourses. From the data we can see that the young people reproduced a number of discourses that were presented. Firstly was the Kikuyu versus the Luo narrative. Respondents in the Western **region highlighted the "myth of decline"**(Morrisson, 2007) where they felt that their region and communities have not been fully involved by the government and by association the Kikuyu. On the other hand, **those in the central region felt that the Luo were "lazy" and only wanted hand outs** instead of working hard for what they had. In addition, those from the Nairobi and Coast regions expressed the idea that politics was not so much about tribalism as a **"cult of personality" where a politician needed to "be known" and possess a certain** amount of charisma in order to be successful. Those in the coast and western **regions are also reproducing the "narrative of marginalization" where they feel that** they have been disregarded by the governments and communities in power with wealth and political positions not benefiting members of their community and region. **We can speculate on the impact of this on young people's** negative association with politics. Firstly, political legitimacy was not viewed as uniform. Political legitimacy was also viewed as performance legitimacy. **Governments/politicians who provide for people's needs, especially their basic** needs may come to be viewed as legitimate regardless of whether they may engage in corruption or other negative political practices. This goes some way to explaining **the popularity of both "hand out politicians" such as Sonko, but also other** politicians such as Peter Kenneth who focus on development in their constituencies. **There is also the danger that young people's frustration with the political system** and economic disenfranchisement that they highlight will lead them to engaging in violent and criminal activities, with as evidenced by recent Al-Shabaab recruitment

trends where young non-Muslim Kenyans are being recruited into the organization, some lured by promises of financial gain.(Ngulia, 2014)

In addition, **a gender element emerged from the young people's narratives** surrounding politics. Those in the Nyeri region, both in the boys and girls schools felt that women were not suited for politics, for the boys because they could not **handle the "dirty game" and for the girls because they thought it would be a** "wasted vote" because of the prevailing attitudes towards women. In addition, young women in Nairobi as highlighted in chapter 6 that analysed the narrative letters felt that the President should be concerned with issues such as rape and insecurity that specifically affected women.

8.3   Contribution to the study of ethnic politics

This thesis makes two contributions to the study of ethnic politics. Firstly, it shows that negative ethnic politics continues to be a problem by highlighting the reproduction of ethnic politics among young people aged between 14 and 17. The political socialization of young people under the age of 18 has not widely been considered in studies of ethnic politics. Ethnicity remains a problem in Kenyan politics because young people are reproducing the negative ethnic discourses. In addition, the thesis makes a theoretical contribution by utilizing the framework adapted from Pierre Bourdi**eu's concepts of habitus**, field and capital in the study of ethnic politics in Kenya. Through this we can account for the contradictions that we may view in Kenyan political culture such as the fact that while on one hand tribalism may be viewed as unacceptable, on the other, it is expected that a political leader would represent their community and advocate for their interest even to the detriment of others. While this may seem contradictory, it is the result of the interaction of the internalized ethnic habitus within the field of politics. This is because of the different habitii that have been inculcated interacting with the political field to produce different and as has been seen contradictory results.

8.4   Methodological contribution

Another contribution to the literature is a methodological one. We have shown that the peer-led research framework is an effective method that lends itself to research on sensitive topics and with minority or marginalized groups or those of particular age groups such as those under the age of 18. It is a research strategy that could be adopted for studies on ethnicity and politics, especially those that focus on

"ethnicity from below". The participatory framework is advantageous as it has an agenda of empowerment of the research participants as not only subjects in the research process from whom data is extracted but as actively engaged on the co-production of data and knowledge. Through the peer-led framework we can also challenge power relations in the research process especially with regards to research in developing country contexts. Finally, the peer-led research framework can lead to a different kind of data produced as a result of insider knowledge than that produced using other means. As was indicated in the methodological chapter, the co- researchers contributed to how the research questions were asked. In addition, they contributed to the data collection process by the way that they conducted the research process, through their style of moderation which in the Nyeri boys focus group allowed for a greater discussion on their attitudes towards women.

8.5   Avenues for further research

- A representative survey on attitudes towards ethnic politics to be conducted with young people under the age of 18 in Kenya in order to produce generalizable results. There is also room for comparative studies to be done with similar surveys that have already been conducted with young people in South Africa.
- A similar qualitative study to be conducted with young people before the next general elections in 2017 that will focus on how their attitudes have changed after 5 years of the devolved system of government. For instance, will the narratives of marginalization and exclusion have changed?
- A qualitative inter-generational study that would trace changed in attitudes towards ethnic identity and ethnic politics across different age groups.

8.6   Recommendations

As Swartz (2013) notes, the purpose of studying politics is with an agenda for change. I will therefore briefly present some recommendations below from the research.

8.6.1   Ethnic diversity as a resource

We cannot escape from ethnicity in the Kenyan context. According to Lonsdale, **"Ethnicity is a universal cradle of civility."**(Lonsdale, 2004: 77) and Berman also **notes that "ethnic pluralism is and will remain a fundamental characteristic of African modernity."**(Berman et al., 2004: 3) As was highlighted in the chapter on ethnicity as habitus, ethnic stereotypes, whose manipulation by both elites and citizens has led to ethnic conflict in Kenya is difficult to resolve. We have shown that while on one hand, young people can discard stereotypes that they have been previously socialized to, on the other, these stereotypes as part of their ethnic habitus can be self-reinforcing and transferable across different contexts. If we are to take habitus in its context, it seems to take a disrupting force to change this habitus. The recommendation is to adopt a participatory framework, similar to the one used in this research to engage with young people as co-researchers with a view to interrupting their ideas of negative ethnic politics. Indeed, as has been seen from the focus group data, some sentiments that were expressed, for example that **ethnicity was "genetic" [1MSAM1 AFGD] were challenged by others who held** differing opinions within the focus group. While this debate did not necessarily change the minds of those who held differing opinions, it can be used as a thinking tool to stimulate debate. As Odhiambo and Lonsdale state, "to construct a new national political culture, the people of Kenya have to broaden their historical experiences to embrace the multi-ethnic and multicultural nature of the Kenyan state"(Odhiambo and Lonsdale, 2003: 5). However, this can only happen if poverty **and inequality are addressed as the "root causes" of ethnic divisions.**(Alkire, 2003: 15, Thomas, 2001)   One of the issues that has been noted as a failure of **democratisation in Africa is the failure to "bring identities to the centre of democratisation and institution building processes."**(Hagg and Kagwanja, 2007) It is not that identities are not considered, but diversity is not recognized as a national resource, it is rather a source of conflict and the policy is still that of emphasizing a national identity to the detriment of tribal identities.

8.6.2   Implications for civic education

Kenya does not currently have a formal citizenship education curriculum in primary or secondary schools. Educational reform has been ongoing but is as yet to be completed. From the research presented, we can see that ethnicity is a topic that needs to be dealt with and cannot be glossed over in basic terms such as simply

stating the number of ethnic groups that are in the country and their traditional history. Its impact on politics and society at large needs to be discussed critically and openly especially how citizens contribute to its manipulation in the political sphere. As Joubert (2010) **indicate in their work on children's democratic citizenship** in the South African context, it is all well and good to teach values and ideal types of citizenship and democracy, but young people do not live in a vacuum. They experience and absorb the everyday realities of politics and find it hard to reconcile these to what they are taught. One teacher I spoke to who happens to teach history stated that he goes beyond the curriculum to engage his students in current political debates. What is needed is for this to be a regular part of the curriculum and not dependent on particular teachers efforts. The effectiveness of teaching citizenship and democracy in formal education have been questioned by some in the literature.(Mattes and Mughogho, 2009)

There has been some resistance to educational reform in general this as it would require more work from both the teachers and the students. Indeed, as was highlighted in an interview with one of the young women in the Nyeri interview, there are under intense academic pressure and during the holidays all they want to do is sleep [2NYEG1 AI]. However, another young man in the Nairobi area indicated that if citizenship education were not included in the curriculum and made **compulsory then it would be "a joke subject" [1NAIB1 AI] that would not be taken** seriously. The medium between these two views then is to perhaps include more participatory frameworks and engage with civil society in the delivery of a citizenship education curriculum that similar to peer-led research would be student led.

Appendices

Appendix A :Focus group guide pilot study

Purpose	Topic	Time
Warm up	Icebreaker Purpose of project Consent to participate Ground rules Ask participants to introduce themselves. Where do you live? Where are you from?	10 minutes
Roles and relationships within the communities	What kinds of things do you do when you are in your community (place where you live)? Relationship with friends. Where do they spend their free time? What do they do? Relationships with elders What is your community like? Leadership issues (who makes decisions? Who influences these decisions) What values/beliefs are important? Interactions between people from different groups? What do girls/women do?	10 minutes

	What do boys/men do? What do young people do? What do Elders do?	
Life histories	*Timeline exercise: Facilitator to draw up a timeline on a flipchart or black board. From 0-18 years and ask the participants if they would like to share the key events in their lives. Facilitator can give an example to get the discussion moving. For instance, being carried to school when I was 4 years old, being told at 17, when I was going to campus not to bring a boy from X community home.* Growing up, were their particular things you were told about the community you come from? Are there stories you were told about other communities? What do you think of these stories now?	10 mins
Intersection of identities	*Circles exercise: Facilitator to draw on the board/flipchart 4 circles representing family, clan, tribe and country. Then ask the participants about the relationship between the four.* How would they draw the relationships between the four (using arrows) Which ones are important?	10 minutes

	How do these four relate to each other?	
	What activities do you participate in as a Kenyan/member of X community?	
	What does it mean to be a member of your community?	
	What makes a person Kenyan?	
	What does it mean to be Kenyan?	
Language and identity	What languages do you speak in school?	5 minutes
	What languages do you speak at home?	
	What languages do you speak with your friends?	
	Where do you speak your mother tongue?	
	What is *sheng?* What do you think about it?	
Perceptions of ethnicity and politics	*Use the letter to the president as a guide to ask:*	10 minutes
	What do they think about politics in Kenya?	
	Do they think they are involved in politics?	
	What do they think about the behaviour of political leaders?	
	Are you a citizen right now?	

	What does it mean to be a citizen? What kinds of things do citizens do? Where do you learn about citizenship?	
Perceptions of influence of ethnicity in societal issues	Ask participants how they would run the country? What would you do to make people feel Kenyan? What are the most important problems facing Kenya? Conflict? Corruption? People not having land? HIV/AIDS If in the circles exercise they saw problems with the relationship between tribe and nation, then ask them here how they would resolve these How do these problems come about? What do you think we can do to solve them? *Facilitators note: if getting a discussion flowing is difficult can refer back to the letter to the President.*	15 minutes
Conclude	Thank participants Any questions?	5 minutes

	Total time	65 minutes

Appendix A : Focus group guide, Main study

Purpose	Topic	Time
Warm up	Icebreaker: *Have a song or a game if necessary and if there is time.* Purpose of project Interested in your opinions on politics and tribalism in Kenya There is no right or wrong answer. You are the experts! Consent to participate Explain that session will be tape recorded and confidential Ground rules *Facilitator note: write down the ground rules on the black board or a flipchart, and as an icebreaker can ask the participants to sign that they will abide by them* Respect Feel free Everybody has an opinion Any others? Give out survey.	10 minutes
	Facilitator note: Tell participants that we	

Perceptions of ethnicity and politics and its effect in society.	*are going to start by looking at politics in Kenya. Give out the flash cards and ask them to write what they would like to tell the Kenyan President about any topic that concerns them. Make it clear that none of this information will not be given to anyone else, especially the politicians and will only be used for the purposes of the research. Collect the cards then ask:* What is politics/what do you understand by politics? What do you think about politics in Kenya? What do you think about tribalism What would you do if you were a politician? How would they run the country? Have you ever attended a political rally or demonstration What did you do? What did you think about it? If you could have voted in the last election who would you have voted for and why? Or who did you support? In the questionnaire, we asked you to put down how much of a democracy you think Kenya is? What is your view on democracy in Kenya?	

	What are the most important problems facing Kenya? Facilitator note: **Ask them to come up with a number of them and then rank them in order of importance.** **Probes:** Conflict? Corruption? People not having land? HIV/AIDS Tribalism? How do these problems come about? What can be done to solve them?	
Ethnic narratives	**Facilitator note: Tribalism should have been mentioned in the discussion above. Tell the participants that we are now going to move on and talk more in detail in the various tribes. Ask them:** What things/stories did your parents tell you about your community/tribe? Growing up, were their particular things you were told about the community you come from (**kabila yako**)? What are some of those stories **Facilitator note: Can give an example of a story that you know. For example that Kikuyus like money etc to get them talking.**	10 minutes

	Are there stories/things you were told about other communities/tribes? What do you think of these stories now? **What do you think of each other's** stories? Are they true or false?	
Perceptions of national and ethnic identity	*Facilitator note: Ask participants which one they feel comes first. The community (tribe) or the nation (country/Kenya). Why do they think that?* *Probes to ask after the exercise:* What is the first thing that comes to mind when I say the word tribe/*Kabila*? What if the first thing that comes to mind when is say the word Kenya? What does it mean to be a member of your *Kabila*? (kikuyu, kamba etc) What does it mean to be a Kenyan? What makes a person a Kenyan? *Facilitators note: Facilitator to note down on the board the things that participants say and ask what each thinks of what the others say.*	10 minutes
Roles and relationships within the communities	*Facilitator note: Tell participants that now we are going to move on to discuss the different issues in your tribes and the places where you live.*	10 minutes

	Relationship with friends. Where do they spend their free time? What do they do?	
	Relationships with elders? Are there any issues with parents, community leaders etc.	
	What is your community like?	
	Leadership issues (who makes decisions? Who influences these decisions)	
	What values/beliefs are important?	
	Interactions between people from different groups?	
	What do girls/women do?	
	What do boys/men do?	
	What do young people do? What do elders do?	
Conclude	Thank participants	5 minutes
	Tell participants that the data collected will be analysed	
	Any questions/anything else that they would like to say?	
	Total time	65 minutes

Appendix B Interview guide pilot study

Purpose	Topic	Time
Representations of self	**Picture exercise:** Ask the participant to draw a picture that represents who they are and describe it to the interviewer. It can be as simple or as complex as they like. Even a stick figure. Ask the participant to explain the picture. *Interviewer note: The interviewer can do this exercise as well to get the discussion flowing. Alternatively, the interviewer can ask about their life. Tell me about yourself.* How do they view their ethnic/tribal identity?	15 minutes
Life narratives	Tell me about your life. From when you were younger till now. What stories were you told about your tribe? What stories were you told about other tribes? What stories were you told about how you should act and behave as a boy/girl What do you think about your tribe? What do you think about other tribes?	10 minutes
Daily narratives	Describe a typical day when you are in school What do you do from when you wake up till you	15 minutes

	go to sleep? Describe a typical day when you are not in school. (e.g. during school holidays/trips) What do you do from when you wake up till you go to sleep? Where do you go with your friends? What activities do you do with your friends and family?	
	Total time	40 minutes

Appendix C : Interview Guide Main Study

Purpose	Topic	Time
Ethnic narratives	*Facilitator to ask the respondent what ethnic community they hail from* Tell me about your community/tribe ? Who are they and where did they come from Where do they mainly stay? What is their culture? Their traditions? What makes you different from other communities?	10 minutes
Political narratives	What stories were you told about your tribe? What stories were you told about other tribes? Is your community involved in politics? Have you personally been involved in politics? What did you think of the elections? Where were you and what were you doing?	10 minutes
Daily narratives	Describe a typical day when you are in school What do you do from when you wake up till you go to sleep? What subjects do you like? Clubs? Activities? What do you do when you are not in class? Describe a typical day when you are not in	10 minutes

	school. (e.g. during school holidays/trips) What do you do from when you wake up till you go to sleep? Where do you go with your friends? What activities do you do with your friends and family?	
	Total time	30 minutes

Appendix D :Peer researchers training manual

Training Brief

How to be a social researcher

A. Introduction

- What is social research?

Research is what people do when they want to find out more about a particular topic, problem or issue. In the sciences this is done through experiments to test reactions and the like. In the social sciences however, we ask questions and observe events in order to gain information. The difference between social research and other kinds of information gathering such as journalism is that it is conducted in a systematic and rigorous way.

The social research process

- Why is it important

a) It can bring about change in society (cures for diseases)

b) Can lead to practices being questioned (e.g FGM,)

c) Extends knowledge and promotes problem solving.

- Types of social research

  o Quantitative vs Qualitative

Quantitative research is about numbers. An example is the census where the questions are asked about numbers of people in the household, what do you own and the government can use this information to say 20% of households own a TV. Opinion polls, like the ones Steadman does where they ask people over the phone for their opinions on political parties and they are able to say 40% of Kenyans support ODM. It is very general. For example it cannot tell you more about what this 40% think of ODM because in the questionnaire, they were only asked who they support. If you want that kind of detailed information, then you do qualitative research.

Qualitative research is about what people think and feel. It is not about numbers or being able to say this number of people think like this. It is about attitudes, beliefs, motivations and behaviors. It is about the depth of understanding rather than the breadth like quantitative research. It is about gaining insights. This is the kind of research that we will be conducting.

B. **Methods of collecting data/information**

In quantitative research questionnaires are the main tool that researchers use to gather information. In qualitative, there are a number of tools

a. Interviews

b. Focus group discussions

c. Observation

- Interviews

These are discussions that are held with the researcher and one other person on a particular topic. It is a meeting between the researcher and another person where ideas and information are exchanged through the researcher asking questions. It is similar to a job interview or the interviews that journalists do to get their news stories.

- Focus group discussions

These are like interviews but the difference is that there is more than one person with the researcher. Usually it is 6-8 people. They are small group discussions where a facilitator guides the discussion on a particular topic through asking questions and encouraging conversation. It is like a club meeting where the club president directs the meeting with the other members giving their input

- *Key issues in Focus Groups*

    o Keep it as natural as possible

    o More about the group discussion and interaction

    o Structure of the focus group

Completely structured - - - - ---Semi Structured - - - - - -Completely unstructured

    o Role of the moderator

Middle approach: Directing the group but not leading it. It is not a classroom session or lecture. Questions are to guide the discussion but should let it flow as they may give answers to the questions later in the topic guide.

Onlooker - - - - - - - - - - -- - - -- - - - - - - - - - - -- - - - - Leader/Director

Stages of a Focus Group Discussion

Stage	Participants Role	Researcher Role
Stage 1: Forming	Looking around Sitting down Getting to know each other	Welcoming Setting rules/regulations
Stage 2: Storming	Responding to questions Assessing each other	Asking questions Building trust
Stage 3: Norming	Getting into the group discussion Opening up	Guiding discussion
Stage 4: Performing	Becoming a group Responding and challenging each other	Taking a step back Guiding discussion
Stage 5: Mourning	Departing the group	Thanking Any questions?

- Who collects the data?

Sometimes it is a trained professional, a student (like me!) or in some cases, the people who are participating in the research can be trained as data collectors. These are called peer researchers, which is like the peer educators that are used in HIV prevention campaigns.

Why peer researchers

- o Get rid of what we call moderator bias

- o Have control over the research process.

- o Not merely a participant. Don't want to just extract information.

C. **How to be a social researcher**

- Necessary skills

  - o The art of asking why

People never answer what you say they answer what they think you mean and what they think you want to hear. Your difficult job is to get them to give an honest and natural an answer as possible. You are like a policeman trying to find out what has happened at a crime scene

  - o The art of listening

This takes time and practice. But it's like being in a debate club. You have to listen to your opponent's points, analyse and respond to them very quickly. In the same way you have to listen and quickly respond to and follow up on what the group is saying. Picking up on both what is said and non-verbal communication. (e.g the group giggling after a statement is made may be an indicator that there is embarrassment over that issue)

  - o Ability to put people at ease

Build a relationship and trust with the people that you are working with. It's just like a conversation.

- Asking questions

    o Ask people to elaborate.

    o Give people a chance to talk. Don't be afraid to ask for clarification e.g. what do you mean by that?

    o There may be some who do not want to contribute. Encourage them gently to do so e.g. by asking "would someone else like to say something?" while maintaining eye contact with them.

D. **The research topic**

- Understanding young people's perspectives on identity and politics

    o Who they are?

    o What they think of politics, tribalism and their role in Kenya?

    o What do you think of the topic?

- The topic guide (attached)

- Translation of the topic guide

    o How would you ask the questions in different languages/sheng?

E. **Ethical Issues and ground rules**

- Informed consent

This is the ability of a person to make their own decisions about whether or not to participate in a research activity. That they understand what it's about and make

the decision of their own free will and with the full knowledge of what the participation will involve. So for example, 5 year old children cannot give informed consent as they would not be able to understand everything that is explained to them. Usually, those in high school or above the age of 14 are seen to have to capacity to make decisions though all under the age of 18 are considered children, and therefore parental consent is needed. However, since the research is being conducted in a school setting, the permission of the teacher/head teacher has been obtained.

- Sensitive topics

Any topic that asks questions about people's tribe or opinion of politics is usually considered sensitive. This is because they can make people get emotionally worked up as a result of the strong views that they hold. People should not come out of a research activity feeling worse than when they went in. If the discussion is getting too negative or people are feeling like they are not comfortable, then you can either try to guide the discussion away from those topic or stop the session entirely.

- Voluntary participation

People should be free to participate in any research activity and not feel like they have been forced to be there. They can stop and leave at any time without any consequences even after they have agreed to participate in the first place. Before anybody participates, the purpose of the research should be explained to them and what they will have to do to participate in it. Then, they should be asked to sign a consent form to show that they have agreed to take part.

- Confidentiality

Everything that is said in the interviews and focus group discussions is confidential. This means that first, we will not be identifying the participants by their names. This is so that I cannot say that, Ruth from Nairobi is the one who said this. Also, the information that is gathered will not be shared with other people,

but will only be used for the purposes of the research. Finally, the participants themselves should be confidential as well and should not discuss the research with other people or for example say that this person said this to other people who are not involved.

- Ground rules

Like in any group setting, there must be rules to ensure that everything goes well. At the beginning of the focus group discussion, these should be discussed. You can suggest some but also ask the participants to suggest their own. For instance:

  o Respect. Give other people a chance to talk

  o Safe place: Feel free. Nothing goes outside this room

  o Which other ones?

Appendix E : School codes

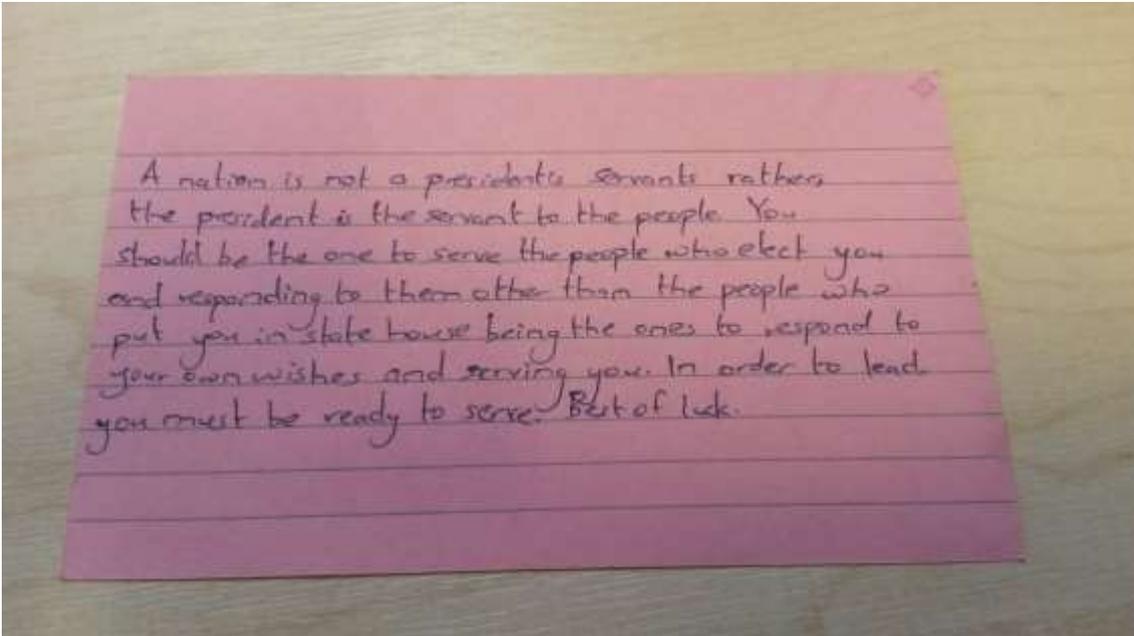| Code	School description	School name
1NAIG1	Girls private day school located in one of the suburbs of the capital Nairobi near the suburb known as Kikuyu.	Forest view academy
2NAIB1	Boys public day school located in one of the suburbs of the capital Nairobi near one of the areas known as South B	Highway academy
3NAIG2	Girls private day school located in the Kibera slums of the capital, Nairobi	Kibera soccer girls
1KAJM1	Mixed gender private boarding school, located in Kajiado but drawing students from Nairobi. It was therefore classified as a Nairobi school.	Naisula School
1NYEB1	Boys private boarding school located in Nyeri, central region	**St. Mary's boys**
2NYEG1	Girls public boarding school located in Nyeri, central region	Tumu Tumu girls
1MSAM1	Mixed gender public boarding school, located in	Moi forces academy

	Likoni in coast region	
1KSMM1	Mixed gender public day school located in Kisumu in the western region	Lions High school
2KSMM2	Mixed gender private day school located in a suburb of Kisumu in the western region	Kisumu south Adventist school

Appendix F : Map of Kenya

Figure 4 Map of Kenya (CIA world factbook)

Appendix G : Letter to the President

A nation is not a president's servant; rather, the president is the servant to the people. You should be the one to serve the people who elect you and responding to them other than the people who put you in state house being the ones to respond to your own wishes and serving you. In order to lead you must be ready to serve. Best of luck.

Appendix H : Ethical concerns

Informed consent and capacity

Consent will be obtained from the head teachers of the schools who were extremely receptive once the study and its purpose was explained to them. They were asked to sign a consent form to indicate that they had agreed to the participation of their school in the research. The responsibility was then handed to the peer researcher (who themselves had volunteered and signed a peer researcher agreement) to recruit the participants, explaining what participation would **entail. Alderson's** (1995) idea that school going children have the capacity to consent to research was effectively adopted in addition to the precedent set, by the Gillick competence (Wheeler, 2006) principle for children under the age of 16 to make decisions about their reproductive health **and which is "based on the assumption that a child who has 'sufficient'** understanding can provide consent and that under such circumstances, a parent has not right to override their wishes.(Wiles et al., 2004) In addition, (Levin 1995 and Petersen and Leffet 1995) have shown that children above the age of 14 are capable of making decisions about participation in research and **thus the children's consent to participate was individually sought through** verbal explanation of the project as well as written consent forms which they were asked to sign. In the case of the peer researcher, that those who are aged 16-17 have the capacity and competence to be trained as peer researchers similar to being trained as peer educators in HIV/AIDS prevention as is quite common practice in Kenya and with the growing literature that involves them as co-researchers in successful projects;(McLaughlin, 2005, Barber, 2009, Smith, 2002) For their time and effort, the peer researchers were given a Ksh 1000 book voucher and their involvement explained as voluntary and part of their educational skills building by being trained in the social research process; participants were not paid for their time but refreshments including juice, biscuits and cakes were provided. The peer researchers were consulted as to the most appropriate snacks to provide. This is from previous experience where inappropriate refreshments were provided in focus groups with elderly

participants some of whom were HIV positive. While sometimes not seen as important, this can be an essential part of breaking the ice and was appreciated by the participants, more so those in boarding school who stated simply, "Thanks for the juice." (FGD participant, October 2012)

Mix of ethnic groups

Initially, there had been a concern that since the FGD's would consist of a mix of ethnic groups that when discussing topics like tribalism and politics in Kenya, that there was the possibility of conflict arising or uncomfortable situations where participants might insult others of a different ethnic group to their own. This was not observed to occur in any of the focus groups, even those where differences of opinion were quite marked. This may be as a result of ground rules having been laid out at the beginning of the discussion that all participants agreed to, chief of which was respect for others opinions, though you may challenge them.

Location of the interviews

The data was collected in schools, as the most convenient location to access adolescents. The first problem with this that was encountered was the fact that during the fieldwork period, public schools, which account for a large percentage of Kenyan schools, were closed due to a teachers strike. The research design had to be adapted to cater for this with two private schools being chosen. Private school here does not mean those at the higher end of the spectrum. In Kenya, there are two different type of private school. Because of the historical lack of adequate schooling, the private school system has flourished to cater for this need, and as such there are a number non-government schools that cater to every socio-economic class and indeed the only difference in students and facilities between these and government school is the lack of government involvement. In addition, one interesting factor that was noted in the rural school was the fact that the students come from all over the country. This is a reflection of the trend of top performing schools in national exams attracting diverse students. The implication of this is that it may not be possible to measure the urban –rural effects with clear cut accuracy as some of the students have not grown up in rural areas and vice versa. But still, as most of these schools are boarding schools, then a large amount of

their time (9 months out of the year) is spent there and it would be interesting to note the effects on their attitudes.

The noise factor was another issue to consider. By having them in the school setting, the research project was at the mercy of the school schedule. The focus group in the boys school was delayed because the classes had to be cleaned first which was to be the location of our discussions. Also, because the FGD's were held at the end of the academic day, there was a lot of movement and distraction outside as well as a constantly ringing school bell!

Linked to the research location, is one other issue of research fatigue among the participants. This was noted in the low income urban area that was one of the field sites. Social research tends to be an extractive process and this particular area has seen a large number of social and scientific researchers, being the second largest slum in Africa. I was asked what the purpose of my research was and whether I would collect the data and go away never to be seen again. I reassured them that this was not the case, as my research design indicated that I would feed back the results to them. Interestingly, they did insist that they did not want a "project" to come out of it, referencing the numerous development projects present in the area but what they wanted was "to know". To be informed so that they could improve themselves. (Field notes, 2012)

Fieldwork challenges

There were a number of challenges that were encountered in the course of the research. Key among these was a teacher's strike that coincidentally occurred during both the pilot study stage and the main study stage of the data collection. The reasons behind the strike were due to unfulfilled promises by the government to increase the teachers' salaries. The issues around the teachers strike were discussed by the students in the focus groups and highlighted their frustration with the political system in terms of the fact that the government could not solve what had become an annual occurrence with teacher's demands for higher salaries. An extract from my field notes highlights the situation around the teachers strike.

18/06/2013, Karinde

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Teachers are also threatening to strike again. In today's newspaper apparently secondary school teachers are supposed to have started today. Dang...contingency plans are to go through private/charity schools and churches (since the kids will be at home) real challenge of doing focus groups in school is the time factor. Need to really summarise them. Eating into classes is an issue and even especially for boarding schools is eating into their free time. Went to Kibera today and met the previous peer researcher.

<u>25/06/2013, Karinde</u>

So teachers have decided to go on strike. Again. They are not happy about the laptop project, which they claim is being done when the allowances they were promised after the last strike are not being taken into consideration. So started today but a bit confused. Some schools are still learning so it's not clear if it is as widespread as last time. Have already booked ticket to Kisumu so if cannot access public schools, do private.

The second key challenge was in negotiating access with teachers/head teachers. Some of teachers had certain pre-conceived expectations of the research process. For instance in one of the boys schools in Nairobi, the head teacher mentioned that I should feedback the results that I obtained to the administration of the school so that they could identify any potential "radical" students. Of course I emphasised to him the need for confidentiality of my students throughout the research process. What is interesting here as a researcher is that various gatekeepers may have a different agenda from what you envision for your research, and the challenge is to manage this agenda. In addition, because of the teachers strike as discussed above, access to students in schools proved difficult. In the Kisumu region, a few public schools remained open and when I was able to go to one of these.

Appendix I Kenya research permit

Appendix J Southampton research approval

Ms Fiona Ngarachu   RGO Ref: 8663
School of Social Sciences
University of Southampton
University Road
Highfield
Southampton
SO17 1BJ

11 July 2012

Dear Ms Ngarachu

**Project Title Why not ask the children? Understanding their perspectives on ethnic identity
in Kenya**

This is to confirm the University of Southampton is prepared to act as Research Sponsor for this
study, and the work detailed in the protocol/study outline will be covered by the University of
Southampton insurance programme.

As the sponsor's representative for the University this office is tasked with:

1. Ensuring the researcher has obtained the necessary approvals for the study
2. Monitoring the conduct of the study
3. Registering and resolving any complaints arising from the study

As the researcher you are responsible for the conduct of the study and you are expected to:

1. Ensure the study is conducted as described in the protocol/study outline approved by this
   office
2. Advise this office of any change to the protocol, methodology, study documents, research
   team, participant numbers or start/end date of the study
3. Report to this office as soon as possible any concern, complaint or adverse event arising
   from the study

Failure to do any of the above may invalidate the insurance agreement and/or affect
sponsorship of your study i.e. suspension or even withdrawal.

On receipt of this letter you may commence your research but please be aware other
approvals may be required by the host organisation if your research takes place outside
the University. It is your responsibility to check with the host organisation and obtain
the appropriate approvals before recruitment is underway in that location.

May I take this opportunity to wish you every success for your research.

Yours sincerely

Dr Martina Prude
Head of Research Governance

Tel: 023 8059 5058
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Appendix K :Framework matrix extract pilot study

	1 : 3NAIG1 Facilitator = Student	2 : 3NAIG1 Facilitator = Adult	3 :1NYEB1 Facilitator = Student	4 : 1NYEB1 Facilitator = Adult
A: Ethnic narratives	Lack of understanding leads to ethnic conflict. Power and access to resources and politicians drive tribalism and inequalities focus on the different roles for boys and girls within their communities	Leaders are responsible for tensions between certain tribes	Where you live/context of your upbringing determines ethnic identification and feeling, those who have grown up in conflict situations have negative associations	Individualism vs socialism in different areas and upbringing. Word Kabila [tribe] evokes: tradition, rural areas, roots, not a big area of life, backwardness greater integration in urban areas so people **don't talk about their trib**es as discrimination of minority tribes in majority areas. Tribalism a form of social capital. You are born what you are stereotypes common and media

	Girls are at a disadvantage			plays a role in influencing but more personal experience. Identities dynamic not static

"There are specific qualities of tribes [...]" for example names starting with "kip" are known for running

tribalism inherent in politics (and society), even from history. "***Hivyo ndio watu walilelewa***."[this is how people were raised] ***hata mimi nikiona mkikuyu hapo naona hata*** [even for me, if I see a kikuyu I will not think] our tribe is safe." about security both physical and social.

Examples focused on the Kikuyu and perceptions of them as a threat. (Students predominantly from this community, 90% according to one student)

have to adapt as a minority living in a major |

				tribe area but one disagreed saying others try and speak common language.
B : National vs ethnic identity	Kenya would be much more developed were it not for tribalism and corruption Nation (Kenya) comes first as can do without the tribe but not without the country Strong sense of national identity, but this overshadowed by the struggles of day to day life. How then to	Institutions (law, parliament) bind people together But **it's the people,** most especially politicians who bring about the divisions. Structure vs agency citizens should	Citizens need to take responsibility for peaceful coexistence and development. Being a Kenyan means being born here. And a racial element of being black Kenya seen as a better country than others in Africa due to better	Greater integration brings about feelings of national identity. Feel Kenyan because of security and more development - material needs (by the half Tanzanian in the FGD) compared to other countries "Born a Kenyan" feel proud to be Kenyan during national events e.g. Olympics and even disputes e.g. Migingo teachers influence Kenyan feeling in lessons, (talk about developing your country not going abroad) in this case Kiswahili teacher

	reconcile the ideal to the reality?	stop identifying by their community and identify by the nation. Criminalisation of ethnic identity (Brilliant Mhlanga)	opportunities. But, day to day realities of where a person lives determines their attitudes. Especially around conflict Group split between a national identity being more important than ethnic identity. Tribes as the foundation of the nation Key cynical attitude "am I eating the Kenyan spirit?"	family comes first, then the country then the individual. But for others starts from the individual to the tribe/family to the country/Kenya was the majority. Another mentioned the surroundings/environment in between family and country. but one said, even with say Olympic athletes, you are more proud is s/he is from your community

Appendix L :Tribes in focus groups

School code	Tribe															Total
	Kikuyu	Luo	Digo	Luhya	Kamba	Kisii	Taita	Arab	Mixed	Mijikenda	All	Kenyan	None	Meru	Maasai	
1MSAM1	3	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	11
2KSMM2	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
1KSMM1	1	13	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	20
3NAIG2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
1NAIG1	8	2	0	4	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	20
1KAJM1	1	1	0	1	2	0	1	1	6	0	0	1	0	0	1	15
2NYEG1	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	17
2NAIB1	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Total	28	24	1	13	3	1	2	2	15	1	1	1	1	2	1	96

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