

NATURE OF POLITICAL MESSAGES AND YOUTH BEHAVIOR DURING 2022 ELECTIONS IN KISUMU COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract: The study sought to establish influence of nature of political messages on youth behavior during 2022 elections in Kisumu County, Kenya. The existing gap in knowledge was the understanding of how political communication can influence youth behavior during election campaigns. Even though youth play a critical role in various stages in future leadership, they can be used as a source of unity as well as source of division. If youth are not used productively during electioneering periods, they may have negative impact on themselves, families and society at large affecting voter turnout, voting trends and inter-ethnic relationships. The study informed by Speech Act Theory and Theory of Political Propaganda. The study was conducted using the descriptive design, with the mixed methods approach. Quantitative data was collected from 400 respondents of Kisumu County, Kenya, while qualitative data obtained through 10 in-depth interviews and 30 respondents for Focus Group Discussions. The study findings revealed that nature of political messages influence youth behavior. The study recommends the need for political class to follow laid down legislations for proper youth engagement in political matters without causing mayhem among in the society.

Keywords: Political Communication, Youth & Youth Behavior.

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1.0 Introduction

There is a growing debate on the political communication literature about the effects of campaign messages and media on citizens' political attitudes and participation in contemporary audience democracies, (Francisco & Jimenez, 2017). Political communication involves interactive processes in which information is exchanged between political actors, especially politicians; the media; and the public who are voters, (Mihaliki, Garaj, & Bardovic, 2022). The flow of information itself is realized in several directions and various talking points, (Norris, 2015). Its importance for society is indirectly visible through the great interest of the authors in this area. In addition, it merges and is directly linked to other areas of political life, such as the political campaign, which opens up other topics and sub-themes of study, (Bardovic, 2018). A study by Mihaliki et al 2022 is framed in the field of political communication, and specific attention is paid to the form of communication of youth political organizations within Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and the European level on the social network Facebook. Recent years have brought fundamental

technological innovations that have also affected political communication and opened a new paradigm in its research especially among the youth political engagements, (Allcott & Matthew, 2017). As a result, an important part of the exchange of information between politicians and voters has gradually moved to the online environment.

Francisco and Jimenez, (2017) assert that political communication campaigns serve several important functions in the contemporary democratic elections. They may increase the levels of political awareness and information of people on relevant policy issues. Political communication campaigns can also mobilize citizens to get involved in the electoral processes in different ways including seeking news about candidates' campaign events, discusses politics with family members and friends as well as attending organized political events, (Diaz & Francisco, 2015). The degree to which citizens are informed and interested in campaign events, determines their likelihood to vote on Election Day, (Jackson, 2011 & Alejandro, 2015). Many old and new democracies around the world, media play increasingly important role as electoral

intermediaries between parties and voters as in the case of Mexican elections of 2012. During democratization process, Mexico political class have significantly professionalized campaign efforts by adopting a hybrid model that combines traditional practices based on direct contact with voters including electoral mobilization practices based on clientelistic exchanges with modern media and intensive campaign tactics and strategies based on the heavy use of media appeals, (Juarez & Brambila, 2013).

Kitanova (2019), on “Youth Political Participation in the EU: Evidence from a Cross-National Analysis,” argues that Youth behavior in politics continues to be a major issue facing contemporary democracies that needs to be understood better. Social and demographic factors determine youth participation in politics, (Fox, 2015). While these factors are crucial for youth participation in politics, context matters in shaping levels of participation in politics among the youth in society. Gallup International (2017) states that in the European Union democracies, demographic maturity influences patterns of political participation on youth. Youth engagement in political participation may vary significantly across distinctive democracies which determine whether young people become politically active or not. In advanced and new democracies there are higher levels of youth engagement in politics, (Allen & Birth, 2015 & Sloam, 2016). This is a vital challenge that re-shapes electoral politics and the relationship between citizens and political parties. Young people are often seen engaged when it comes to political engagements and this determines youth behavior during campaigns.

The youth can be a creative force, a dynamic source of innovations, and they have undoubtedly throughout history participated, contributed, and even catalyzed important changes in political systems, power-sharing dynamics and economic opportunities, (UNDP, 2012 & UNDP, 2023). However, youth also face other challenges such as poverty, barriers to education, multiple forms of discrimination and limited employment prospects and various opportunities. Since the Arab Awakening, many youth in the region have remained politically active through “political arrangements” instead of engaging with and in political parties. Young men and women are traditionally active politically in their universities especially when allowed but very often disillusioned with political leadership and political institutions and excluded from policy development, (UNDP & IPU, 2012).

In a survey conducted by the UN IANYD in August 2012, a majority of 13,000 respondents expressing their voices from 186 countries highlighted that the main challenges for youth were limited opportunities for effective participation in decision-making processes such as electoral among other democratic processes, (UNDP & IPU, 2012; UNDP, 2012 & UNDP, 2023). With limited opportunities and exposure to meaningfully participate in inclusive decision-making processes, young men and women feel excluded and marginalized in their societies and communities. Efforts should also be made to focus on the most vulnerable of young people, including via specific actions targeting young women.

Abegbola et al., (2022), tests how different types of political communication relate to three forms of political engagement which are non-conventional, conventional and voting in Nigeria. The study found out that reliance on different types of political information can enhance as well as undermine citizen engagement in political communication. It shows that political talks and texting

are the most impactful across engagement types, while traditional news use discourages disruptive non-conventional engagement. The study further found out that Nigeria is an emerging democracy with a political communication environment that supports citizen engagement especially the youth in political and decision making matters among other democratic processes. The study further indicates that vast political, technological and social changes have occurred that have potentially altered the landscape for youth political engagement.

In Kenya, every five years after elections, there is a period of peaceful co-existence; businesses usually operate and the economy grows, (Fortuna, 2019). Ndavula, (2015) states that political parties and political candidates seek to compete in elections to win and hold public offices. The harmonious co-existence among youth groups of different ideologies and ethnic groups is often distorted as political class seeks to win and hold offices. Arther (2017), “The Political Effects of Immigrant Naturalization,” politics is based mainly on socialized communication and on the capacity to influence people’s minds. Politicians employ the use of different messages enjoyed and easily understood by their affiliate supporters, (Snow, 2015).

1.1 Statement of Problem

Political communication involves interactive processes in which information is exchanged between political actors, especially politicians; the media; and the public who are voters, (Mihaliki, Garaj, & Bardovic, 2022). The flow of information itself is realized in several directions and various talking points, (Norris, 2015). There is a growing debate on the political communication literature about the effects of campaign messages and media on citizens’ political attitudes and participation in contemporary audience democracies, (Francisco & Jimenez, 2017). Recent years have brought fundamental technological innovations that have also affected political communication and opened a new paradigm in its research especially among the youth political engagements, (Allcott & Matthew, 2017). As a result, an important part of the exchange of information between politicians and voters has gradually moved to the online environment.

Youth behavior in politics continues to be a major issue facing contemporary democracies that needs to be understood better, (Kitanova, 2019). Social and demographic factors determine youth participation in politics, (Fox, 2015). While these factors are crucial for youth participation in politics, context matters in shaping levels of participation in politics among the youth in society. Demographic maturity influences patterns of political participation on youth, (Allen & Birth, 2015; Sloam, 2016 & Gallup International, 2017).

According to UN Youth, youth folks are summing up to one-fifth of the world’s population, hence, younger generation engagement is needful for the purpose of governance in democracy, (Phillips, 2022). The youth are the most productive minds during election campaigns, (Youth Organization, 2019 & GSOD, 2023). They play a critical role in various stages hence, future leadership. The youth can be used as a source of unity as well as source of division, (UNDP, 2012). In every economy, if youth are not used productively during electioneering periods, they may have negative impact on themselves, families and society at large, (Ochieng, 2017). Therefore, if not handled with care, their behavior can turn out to be negative and this might affect their voter turnout, voting

trends and their relationship with others from different ethnic groups.

The post-election violence of January 2008, left over 1,000 dead and some 350,000 displaced and it was a stark illustration of the enduring tensions and challenges the country must overcome and the fragility of its democratic trajectory, (Cooke, 2024). The 2008 post-election violence played out largely on ethnic lines, and ethnicity continues to play an inordinate role in Kenyan political life among people led by Kenyan youth, (Cheeseman, Kanyinga, & Lynch, 2024). This was witnessed during campaigns and after ballot day led by the Kenyan youth. Ethnic-based violence has a long history in the country, fueled by grievances over inequality, privilege, and land. Ethnicity continues to be the principal axis on which political elites mobilize constituencies, and elections are more often won on the basis of shrewd ethnic calculus and alliances than on the basis of performance or national vision, (Telegraph, 2022). The violence following the December 2007 election was not the first of its kind—the 1992 and 1997 elections saw a similar level of death and displacement.

The behavior of the youth in any electoral system can be source of unity, ethnic intolerance i.e in-group, out-group, intergroup and intragroup, disunity and lack of peace. Studies by Matara 2020 and Abdulhameed et al 2018 show that intolerance behavior among youth in the society has been witnessed before especially during election periods, (Matara, 2020 & Abdulhameed et al., 2018). This may affect voter turnout and voting trends among people. During the 2017 general elections, vices among them ethnic rivalry were witnessed in the society from different communities, (Magara, 2020).

The youth are increasingly exposed to political communication aspects from a broad range of media messages, (Magara, 2020). The study further found out that before the election dates, youth are usually peaceful. When the political campaigns begin, they stand divided and kill each other. If the youth are exposed to political communication that has disunity, they are likely to look at their peers negatively. This can extend to ethnic intolerance, suspicion of others not being of the same in-groups, voter turnout and voting trends. Therefore, political communication if not checked well may cause a lot of vice that may affect youth negatively and this can have a negative social economic impact in the country. This study therefore sought to establish political communication and the influence it might have on the youth behavior.

1.2 Objective of the Study

To establish influence of nature of political messages on youth behavior during 2022 elections in Kisumu County, Kenya.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

H₀1 Nature of political messages have no influence on youth behavior during 2022 elections in Kisumu County, Kenya.

2.0 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was informed by the following theories; Theory of Political Propaganda and Speech Act Theory which were discussed below;

2.1.1 The Theory of Political Propaganda

This theory was propounded and developed by Herold Dwillight Lasswell in 1927 (Lasswell, 1927; Naveed, 2016 & American Psychological Association, 2023). The theory states that propaganda is the management of collective attitudes by manipulation of various significant symbols. Rice 2012 defines the term attitude symbol as a tendency to act according to certain valuation patterns, (Rice S. A., 2012). The theory states that the existence of an attitude may not be a direct determinant of experience but also inference from signs which have a conventionalized significance. The valuational patterns upon which this inference is founded may be primitive gestures of the face, body, or more sophisticated gestures of the voice.

The theory further argues that the purpose of the propagandist is to intensify the attitudes favorable to his own desired purpose, to reverse the hostile attitudes to it and also to convince the rebels, (Rice S. , 2013). Every cultural group has its unique values which include the possession of claims to ceremonial defense, (Rice, 2012). The statement or object that is aimed at promoting hate, incite and divide the group against another is presented by the propagandist in a way that is against the values provided, (Pavlov, 2015). The propagandists choose wisely statements that are meant to manipulate one from another, (Cody, 2018). This theory informed the study in that, it elaborates more on various aspects of propaganda as a form of political communication message which is one of the key indicators of independent variables. In this regard, this theory was used to explain how propagandists use words to influence youth electorates and their behavior.

2.1.2 Speech Act Theory (SAT)

The Speech Act Theory developed by a British Philosopher J.L Austin in 1975, (Musa & Willis, 2014 & Barrero, 2023). The theory was further developed by the American Philosopher J.R Searle. Speech Act Theory seeks to explain language in reality as well as how it is used to perform acts. It considers language as a sort of action rather than a medium to convey and express, (Nordquist, 2020). The theory emphasizes that utterance or speeches have a different and specific meaning depending with the contextual language employed. Speech is defined as human vocal communication using language communication, or the expression of thoughts in spoken words, (Constantino & Simon, 2018).

According to the theory there are two kinds of utterances; constative and performative, (Musa & Willis, 2014 & Barrero, 2023). Constative utterance describes the situation in relation to truth or falsehood, whereas, performative utterance, is considered to have a meaning of its own, (Brisset, 2018). Language defines the ethnic groupings and also a means to organize people and direct their own behaviors, (Ayeomoni & Akinkuolere, 2012). Austin further elaborates his theory pointing that there are three basic components of a speech act; Locutionary act, Illocutionary act and Perlocutionary act, (Nakai, et al., 2017), (Nakai, Brown, Rothermel, Kojima, Kamabar, & Al, 2017). The Locutionary act is the act of saying something with a certain sense and reference, whereas, Illocutionary act is the act performed in saying something, for example, the act named and identified by explicit performative verb and the Perlocutionary act is the act performed by as a consequence of saying something, (Kimotho, 2016).

Language does not only define an ethnic group but also, to a large extent, it is a means of organizing people and directing their

behavior, (Ayeomoni & Akinkuolere, 2012). People especially political figures, use language to persuade or to dissuade and even to criticize the electorates to support them, (Austin, 2020). This theory was relevant to inform the study since the type of political communication message; hate speech in one of the indicators independent variables under study. Understanding what people say, and how they say it might impact on the lives and actions of those being addressed, (Cohen-Almagor, 2013 & Kimotho, 2013).

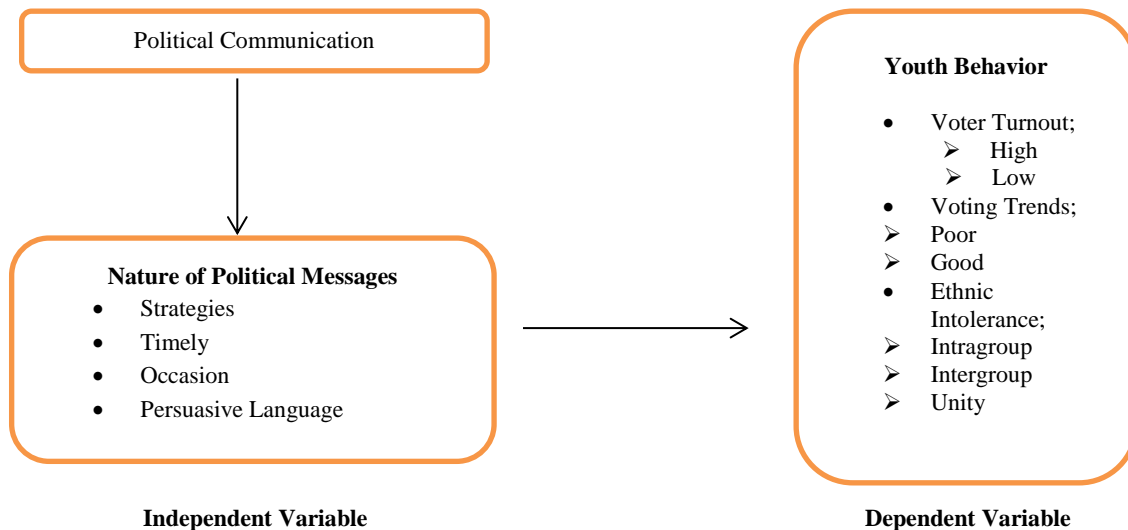
This Speech Act theory, is fundamental to enable one understand ethnic hate speech, (Cohen-Almagor, 2013; Brisset, 2018). This study utilizes Austin’s Speech Act Theory (SAT). Speech Act Theory in summary argues that to say something is to do something, (Searle, 1979; Constantiono & Simon, 2018; Karin, 2020). SAT determines that a person does not only say things with words but also do these things. With political communication; political parties, political class and other opinion leaders, pronounce some sentiments that maybe considered provocative, (Austin, 2020). The negative sentiments might possess the capability to promote division and conflict among various

communities, especially with various political affiliations, (Deutscher, 2006). This might result into change of behavior of the people including vices such as ethnic intolerance and other virtues. For example, politician may say, “kill someone when they joke with you” in the presence of supporters. In the mental state of this politician, his speech can be perceived by the listeners as an act of killing. This theory was used in the study to explain how political communication can be provocative and prompt listeners to believe in a predicative way.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework is a representation of the relationship between variables of the study, (Swaen & George, 2023). It illustrated the expected relationship between variables in a study. It defines diagrammatically the relevant objectives for research process in a study and maps out how variables came and drew coherent conclusions. The diagram below depicted the conceptual framework that guided the study;

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



The figure above illustrated the relationship between independent variable; The Nature of Political Messages; strategies, time, occasion, persuasive and language applied by political actors while the dependent variable is youth behavior which involved three categories; voter turnout (high or low voter turnout), voting trends (poor or good trends and ethnic intolerance (intragroup, intergroup and unity).

3.1 Methodology

The study was done using a mixed method research design where both quantitative and qualitative data was collected and analyzed. Quantitative data helps to infer statistical results that are meaningful from samples to population, whereas, qualitative data aids in gathering extensive information on the subject of study, (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The combination of both quantitative and qualitative research helps draw on the strengths of each, (Creswell, Klases, Clark, & Smith, 2011).

The population of the study was residents sampled from four sub counties; Kisumu East, Kisumu West, Kisumu Central and Nyando constituencies in Kisumu County, Kenya. The sample size was 400

residents aged 18 years and above. They were sampled through convenient sampling, simple random sampling and stratified sampling techniques. The target population also consisted of ordinary residents who are voters, media station reporters and political candidates’ agents. Political candidates’ agents, local administrators and opinion leaders were also purposively sampled and interviewed in 10 interview sessions. The other section of target respondents (30) were also sampled and engaged through focus group discussions.

The researcher collected 320 questionnaires which were sufficiently filled, representing 80% response rate which was sufficient and acceptable, and thus used for data analysis. The in-depth interviews done with 10 key informants as well as 30 respondents for focus group discussions that comprised of between 6-8 respondents per group.

4.0 Results and Discussions

The study objective sought to establish the influence of nature of political messages on youth behavior in Kenya during 2022

elections in Kisumu County, Kenya. To achieve this objective, the following research hypothesis guided the study:

H₀₁ Nature of political messages have no influence on youth behavior during 2022 elections in Kisumu County, Kenya.

It was imperative to establish if nature of political messages influenced behavior of the youth in Kisumu County, Kenya. The

following attributes of nature of political messages were used as a guide to achieve the specific objective; strategies, time, occasion, language and persuasion in a Likert scale of 1-5 1. SD=strongly disagree 2. D=disagree 3. N=neutral 4. A=agree 5. SA=strongly agree, was used and the mean, standard deviation and response rate from respondents calculated. The descriptive statistics for the nature of political messages are presented in table 1.0 below;

4.1 Nature of political messages and youth behavior

Table 1.0: Nature of political messages and youth behavior during elections

Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation(σ)
Political actors use campaign strategies such as knowing times when there are crowds e.g funerals, weddings, women meetings, Bodaboda group Saccos etc. as well as what audience wants to hear e.g. water, electricity matters etc. to pass messages	0.9	0	1.9	15.6	81.6	4.77	0.573
Use of persuasive language by political class during campaigns can easily influence the youth	0	0.9	2.5	38.8	57.8	4.53	0.597
Elections times political actors organize youth events to lure voters hence, change youth voting trends	0.9	0	1.3	57.2	40.6	4.37	0.609
Political messages influence youth behavior positively	2.8	0.9	21.3	58.8	16.3	3.85	0.803
Political messages influence youth behavior negatively	0	0.9	0	52.8	46.3	4.44	0.551
Hate messages act a barrier to effective political communication	0.9	0	0	20.9	78.1	4.75	0.547
Propaganda messages act a barrier to effective political communication	0	0.9	1.3	21.3	76.6	4.73	0.526

Weighted Average: 4.55

4.1.1 Campaign Strategies and Persuasive Language

Based on the results in table 1.0, political actors use campaign strategies such as knowing times when crowd is available such as funerals, weddings, women meetings, bodaboda groups Sacco as well as designing what the audience wants to hear at the moment such as water need and electricity matters among other needs. The study sought to find out whether these campaign strategies can have influence on youth behavior, strongly disagreed (0.9%), disagreed (0%), neutral (1.9%), agreed (15.6%) and strongly agreed (81.6%). The results had a mean of 4.77 and standard deviation of 0.573. The respondents agreed that such campaign strategies have influence to change youth behavior among communities. On whether use of persuasive language by politicians can influence youth behavior, 0% of respondents strongly disagreed, 0.9% disagreed, 2.5% were neutral, 38.8% agreed and 57.8% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement.

The results had a mean of 4.53 and standard deviation of 0.597. The results show that majority of the respondents agreed that use of persuasive language by political class during campaign period, easily influences youth behavior among communities. This implies that the respondents agreed with the statement but the responses were varied. These findings show that various political strategies and the use of persuasive language easily influence youth to change behavior. For example, if politicians take advantage of the crowd available to spread hate messages and to convince them

whoever does not vote for the major party is a betrayer, youth changes mind against those with opposed views.

Among respondents interviewed, 7 out of 10 (70%) confirmed that the nature of political messages influence youth behavior. This is elucidated by some of the excerpts below;

Interviewee 1 “...political strategies politicians are using including dishing out money to electorates are key to defining the youth behavior during electioneering periods...”

Interview 2 “...Most of the political leaders around here in Kisumu will reach out to the people when elections are at the door so that they are not forgotten, hence, the young electorates tend to identify themselves with candidates who will appear severally during election campaigns...”

These findings were in agreement with findings of Smith, (2017), Werder et al., (2018) & Bokemper et al., (2021), who argue that people, political parties, political actors and organizations decide to use strategic communication to accomplish their goals, They must decide how to allocate limited resources design effective messages as well as to anticipate barriers and diagnose problems that may arise.

4.1.2 Campaign Times and Youth Events

On whether youth events are organized by political actors during election time, strongly disagreed (0%), disagreed (0.9%), neutral (2.5%), agreed (38.8%) and strongly agreed (57.8%). The results results had a mean of 4.37 and standard deviation of 0.609. The study sought to find out whether these organized events by political

class are used to lure voters to ensure they change their voting trends. The respondents agreed that political class organize various youth events, to find a platform to engage them and to ensure that they change their behavior interms of voting trends. This suggests that these messages are usually timely in that they are most of times only organized toward and during election times for purposes of persuading the youth. The findings are inline with findings by Lane, (2020), who argues that, there is relationship between perceived the time opinion is expressed and the willingness of the people to receive the communications idea; characteristics of communication situation and the time in which the information is presented by political actors can affect political outspokenness.

On whether political messages influence youth behavior positively, the results, 2.8% strongly disagreed with the statement, 0.9% disagreed, 21.3 were neutral whereas, 58.8% agreed and 16.3% strongly agreed with the statement. The results had a mean of 3.85 and standard deviation of 0.803. The results show that most of the respondents held a neatral view and perceptions on whether political messages can influence youth behavior in positively. In other words, they were not sure on the positive aspect of the influence of these political messages. On whether political messages influence youth behavior negatively, the results showed 0% of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, 0.9% disagreed, 0% neutral whereas, 52.8% agreed and 46.3 strongly agreed with the statement. The results had a mean of 4.44 and standard deviation Of 0.551. Majority of the respondents agreed that political messages have negative influence on youth behavior though others had varied responses.

Some of the respondents interviewed 8 out of 10 (80%) confirmed election time’s political engagement to youth events to influence youth behavior especially during 2022 elections as elucidated by some of the excerpts below;

Interviewee 10 “...political leaders and other aspirants love attending events or occasions such as funerals where there is gathering. As youth they like attending events organized by even

without invitation, just to get a crowd and address u. Through this they find and capture our attention so that we buy their ideas...”

Interviewee 9 “...you know persuasion is a language that every political actor uses to change our perception as youths during election processes. They pretend to be good to us, they use us for their own political gains and sometimes we die but we do not care...”

The findings are inline with Kawashima-Ginsberg & Levine, (2014) study that is deepening our understanding of the factors that influence how young people come to vote is crucial for ensuring the stability and equity of a democratic society over the long term.

The descriptive statistics for the nature of political messages results had a weighted mean of 4.55. This implies that respondents agreed with most of the statements concerning influence of nature of political messages on youth behavior during 2022 elections in Kisumu County, Kenya as indicated in table 1.0 above. This implies that most of the respondents agreed with most of the statements concerning the nature of political messages and their influence on youth behavior during 2022 elections in Kisumu County, Kenya as indicated in table 1.0. However, responses were varied and spread about the mean. The findings were found to concur with reports by Bennet, (2017) & Cochoy, (2021), who state that political communication involves creation of messages that resonate with the audience, making sure the language being used is appropriate for every group. It also involves focusing on one idea at a time, knowing the audience and how they will react to specific political messages of different nature and contexts. In different contexts, political actors also use short and simple words, use humor sparingly and use of simple familiar language to voters.

5.1 Correlation Analysis

In this subsection a summary of the correlation analysis is presented. It seeks to first determine the degree of interdependence of the independent variables and also show the degree and strength of their association with the dependent variables separately. These results are summarized in Table 2.1 and Table 2.2 below;

Table 2.1 Summary of Correlation Matrix

		Nature of political messages	Verbal political messages	Visual political messages	News media coverage	Barriers to effective political communication
Correlation	Nature of political messages	1.000	.757	.686	.600	.728
	Verbal political messages	.757	1.000	.612	.497	.700
	Visual political messages	.686	.612	1.000	.499	.684
	News media coverage	.600	.497	.499	1.000	.575
	Barriers to effective political communication	.728	.700	.684	.575	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Nature of political messages		.000	.000	.000	.000
	Verbal political messages	.000		.000	.000	.000
	Visual political messages	.000	.000		.000	.000
	News media coverage	.000	.000	.000		.000
	Barriers to effective political communication	.000	.000	.000	.000	

a. Determinant = .048

The correlation matrix in Table 2.1 revealed significant relationships among various aspects of political communication and their potential influence on youth behavior during the 2022 elections in Kisumu County, Kenya. Notably, all variables show strong positive correlations, with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.497 to 0.757, indicating that these aspects are interrelated. For instance, the nature of political messages has an exceptionally high correlation with nature of political messages (1.000), verbal political messages (0.757) and barriers to effective political communication (0.728). This suggests that how political messages are constructed and delivered is closely linked to verbal messaging strategies and the challenges in communication effectiveness. The significant p-values (all .000) confirm that these correlations are statistically significant, meaning the observed relationships are unlikely due to chance. With several attributes of political discussions networks, political discussions form the center of youth political engagements enhancing political participation, (Correa,

2010; Correa & Jeong, 2010;Valenzuela et al., 2012).

5.2 Regression Analysis

Multivariate regression analysis was used to determine the multiple regression model hypothesized in chapter three held. It was also used to determine how the independent variables influenced the dependent variable collectively. The analysis was also meant to establish the extent to which each independent variable affected the dependent variable in such a collective set up and which were the more significant factors. The results are presented focusing on two models, that is, Model 1 before moderation and Model 2 after Moderation.

5.2.1 Regression Analysis Model Summary (Before Moderation)

The study first performed the regression analysis of the variables and the results are summarized in Table 2.2 below;

Table 2.2: Model Summary (Regression Model Summary)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.840 ^a	.705	.701	.1972907	1.437

a. Predictors: (Constant), Nature of political messages
 b. Dependent Variable: Youth behavior

The regression analysis in Table 2.2 shows that the relationship between the dependent variable and all the independent variables pooled together had a model correlation coefficient = 0.840^a. The adjusted r-square ($R^2_{Adj} = 0.701$), further, indicates that the model could explain upto 70.5% variations in the influence on youth behavior during 2022 elections in Kisumu County, Kenya. It also suggests that the model could improve when more predictive variables were incorporated into the model.

5.2.2 Summary of ANOVA

Hair et al., (2020) and Hair, Hult, Ringle and Sarstedt, (2020), state that the appropriateness of the multiple regression model as a whole can be tested using F-test. Therefore, the study also performed an ANOVA on the independent and dependent variable and the results are summarized in Table 2.3 below;

Table 2.3: Summary of ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	29.268	5	5.854	150.386	.000 ^b
	Residual	12.222	314	.039		
	Total	41.490	319			

a. Dependent Variable: Youth behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), Nature of political messages

The results in Table 2.3 indicate that there is a significant difference between means of variables predicting youth behavior during 2022 elections in Kisumu County, Kenya. The regression model was significant, $F(5, 314) = 150.386$, $p < .000$ ^b, explaining a substantial portion of the variance in youth behavior during 2022 elections in Kisumu County, Kenya.

The model's detailed analysis indicated that the sum of squares due to regression (SSR) was 29.268, with degrees of freedom (*df*) of 5, resulting in a mean square (MSR) of 5.854. The sum of squares

due to error (SSE) was 41.490, with a *df* of 314, leading to a mean square error (MSE) of .039. The total sum of squares (SST) was 41.490 with a total *df* of 319. These results underscore the significant predictive power of nature of political messages on the youth behavior during 2022 elections in Kisumu County, Kenya.

5.3 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.3.1 Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the analysis concluded that nature

of political messages characterized with various political strategies, political language used, time and occasion of the events, and used of persuasion techniques to engage young voters, significantly influences youth behavior during elections. However, there exists a notable gap between the expected standards of nature of political messages and change on youth behavior. This gap underscores the necessity for interventions aimed at controlling and censoring nature of political messages used by political actors to align more closely with youth behavior during elections, thereby potentially increasing youth engagement in political matters.

5.3.2 Recommendations

The study recommends the need for political class to follow laid down legislations for proper youth engagement in political matters without causing mayhem among in the society. As they engage in debates and other political discussions, they should avoid sentiments that are likely to make youth change their behavior negatively since it affects the society as has been witnessed in the previous elections.

5.3.3 Implications and Suggestions for Further Studies

The study finding contributes to the existing knowledge in a number of ways. The finding of this study maybe of great assistance to the various government agencies and policy makers regarding nature of political messages and youth behavior during elections. It may aid identify mechanisms during political campaigns that may help curb various vices among the youth such as ethnic intolerance. It also helps the political class to know extent of youth engagement for higher voter turnout and productive voting trends in the country. The finding of this study may also be of great assistance to the future researchers and other academicians who may use this finding as reference source. The study established nature of political messages and youth behavior during 2022 elections in Kisumu County, Kenya. A similar study can be conducted in other counties and regions, nationally and even in other African countries where youth behavior is wanting and a point of concern during election times. This will improve the systems for youth political engagements for the stability of democracies in African countries and other nations of the world.

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