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CHALLENGES FACING INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY IN KENYA: AN EXAMINATION OF SIX MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE PERIOD 2002-2012.

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CHALLENGES FACING INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY IN KENYA: AN EXAMINATION OF SIX MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE PERIOD 2002-2012.

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the study was to establish the factors affecting intra-party democracy.

Methodology: The study used descriptive survey design. The sample consisted 60 respondents. Random sampling technique was used to select the 60 members from the population. The instrument that was used for the research was a questionnaire. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used for data analysis. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics which involved the use of means, standard deviation, correlation co-efficient and regression analysis. Subsequently, coding was done using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science). Data was presented in tables and graphs with accompanying descriptive details.

Results: The findings found out that majority of parties do not discourage election violence. The finding also indicated that majority of parties do not ensures absolute transparency in the use of public funds and managerial practices. The findings further indicated that there is a low degree of accountability in the financial management of the parties. Further, the results implied that parties in Kenya have a low rate of retention of party members.

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: The study recommended Political parties in Kenya to hold intraparty elections frequently as they are supposed to since doing so will boost the intraparty democracy. Political parties in Kenya were also recommended to come up with promotion drives that will enhance members' participation in the management of party affairs as doing so will boost the intraparty democracy. Political parties in Kenya need to put in place internal controls and structures that enhance the accountability in the financial management of the parties as doing so will boost the intraparty democracy. Political parties in Kenya need to put in place loyalty programs for their members so as to boost the retention rate of members. This will boost the intraparty democracy.

Keywords: Frequency of elections, members' participation, accountability, financial management and retention of party members.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

According to Gitelson, Dudley, and Dubnick (*American Government,* Houghton Mifflin, political parties are coalitions of people organized formally to recruit, nominate, and elect candidates for public office. They are also instrumental in running the government, creating and implementing shared political goals through the election of officials to the executive and legislative branches of government, and bringing stability to the political system.

Political parties are central to representative democracy and to the process of democratization. They connect society and the state. They aggregate and represent interests. They recruit political leaders. They disseminate political information. They socialize citizens into democratic politics.

They manage conflicts of interest and, very importantly in societies that have recently experienced violent conflict, they can offer a forum for social and political integration, a tool for nation-building. Democracy in the modern world is inconceivable without healthy parties and an effective party system. Such a system exists where the number of genuine parties is neither too small (a highly polarized system) nor too large (highly fragmented). It offers meaningful choices to the electorate. The relations among the parties display a responsible attitude towards the practice of political competition. And the parties connect with society (Matlosa, 2005).

Political parties can serve multiple functions. They are necessary to build and aggregate support among broad coalitions of citizens' organizations and interest groups; to integrate multiple conflicting demands into coherent policy programs; to select and train legislative candidates and political leaders; to provide voters with choices among governing teams and

policies; and, if elected to office, to organize the process of government and stand collectively accountable for their actions in subsequent contests. Representative democracy is impossible without multiparty competition. Political parties accordingly function uniquely and constitute a cornerstone of democratic society. The long list of their potential functions can be summarized under five key headings: the integration and mobilization of citizens; the articulation and aggregation of interests; the formulation of public policy; the recruitment of political leaders; and the organization of parliament and government (Chege, 2007).

1.2 Problem Statement

Political parties in Kenya have witnessed growth in number since independence. The problem is that political parties have failed in their objective of promoting democracy since they themselves are not democratic. Historically, political parties have witnessed increased party hopping, while party nominations have always caused discontent among aspirants.

Several studies have addressed the issues surrounding the lack of governance in political parties in Kenya. Such studies include Oloo (2007), Wanjohi (2003); Wanjohi (2005); Chege,(2007). However, the studies were only descriptive and used secondary data to make their conclusions. This study will use a more rigorous research methodology which will involve interviewing party leaders and members in an attempt to reveal the state of interparty democracy in Kenya. The lack of rigor in methodology forms the study gap. It is for this reason that this study will use a rigorous methodology to establish the challenges facing intra party democracy in Kenya.

1.3 Research Objective

The main objective of this study was to establish the factors affecting intra-party democracy.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Empirical Review

Many political parties, both in established democracies and in nascent multi-party systems, are in a state of near crisis. Globally, citizens have grown increasingly frustrated with their political parties and leaders. Polls, focus groups and voting behavior indicate that society largely views political parties as ineffective, corrupt, and out of touch with their needs. Established political parties have experienced a dwindling membership that is aging. Young people are hesitating to

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join or become associated with political parties. At the same time, support has risen for independent candidates, special interest parties, and anti-party movements (Wollack, 2002).

Political parties perform certain crucial democratic functions in the wider society which include augmenting citizen participation in the political processes, widening aggregation of diverse political interests, facilitating orderly and democratic transfer of political power, promoting government accountability, and imparting legitimacy to the political system (Matlosa, 2005). In Africa, political parties also serve as channels of resource distribution, patronage, upward mobility and expressions of indigenous and ethnic aspirations.

Political parties form the cornerstone of political, social and economic growth of countries and societies with a vision to institutionalize political parties so that they can take their rightful role in society. Having recognized this, several training programmes related to corporate governance, financial management and adherence to the constitution and the rule of law have been introduced over time through CMD-Kenya to member political parties. During these training sessions it is common to consistently observe resistance to structured and disciplined acceptance of the various principles that would otherwise make political parties shape up faster than is currently the situation (Oloo, 2007).

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used descriptive survey design. The sample will consist of 6 political parties and in each party will select 10 members hence the study will have 60 respondents. Random sampling technique will used to select the 60 members from the population. The instrument that was used for the research was a questionnaire. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used for data analysis. Like type questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics which involved the use of means, standard deviation, correlation co-efficient and regression analysis. Quantitative analytical methods was used for analyzing the data obtained like profit, market share and published materials as well as data obtained through the questionnaires, while those data obtained through interview and open ended questions was analyzed qualitatively. Subsequently, coding was done using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science). The classification and grouping of data was done according to the research questions. Data was presented in tables and graphs with accompanying descriptive details.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

4.1.1 Party membership distribution

The respondents were requested to indicate their party membership.

Table 1: Party membership distribution

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	ODM	10	16.7	16.7
	TNA	10	16.7	33.3
	KANU	10	16.7	50.0
	DP	10	16.7	66.7
	NARC KENYA	10	16.7	83.3
	FORD KENYA	10	16.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	

10(16.7%) of members were from ODM, 10(16.7%) of members were TNA party, 10(16.7%) were from KANU party, 10(16.7%) were from DP party, 10(16.7%) were from NARC KENYA party, 10(16.7%) were from FORD KENYA party. The findings revealed that respondents were equally distributed across the 6 parties as indicated in table 1.

4.1.2 Gender of respondents

The respondents were requested to indicate their gender.
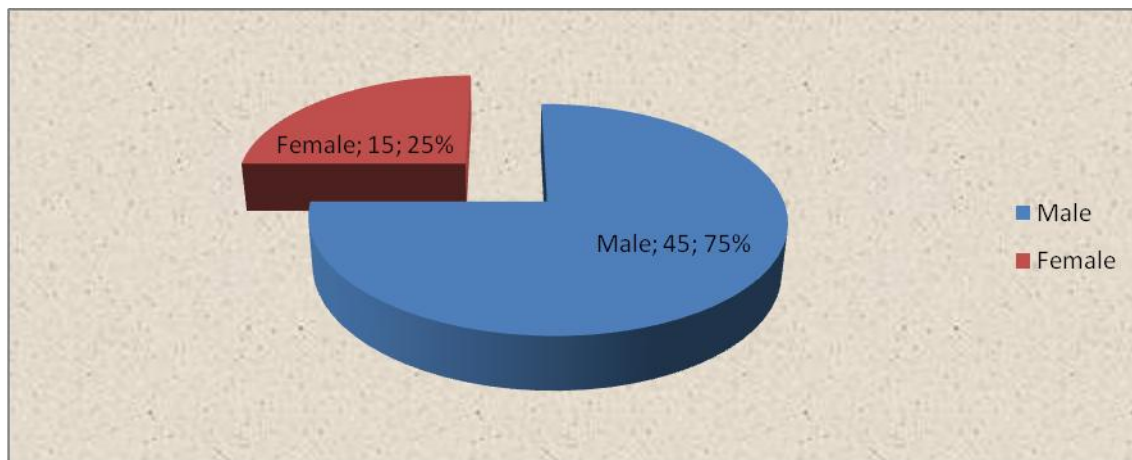
Figure 1: Gender of respondents

Majority (75%) were male while the remainders (25%) were female. This implies that party membership is highly dominated by males. The gender distribution may have an implication on the intraparty democracy. Perhaps, the low female membership has led to poor intra party democracy.

4.1.3 Age of respondents

The respondents were requested to indicate their age.
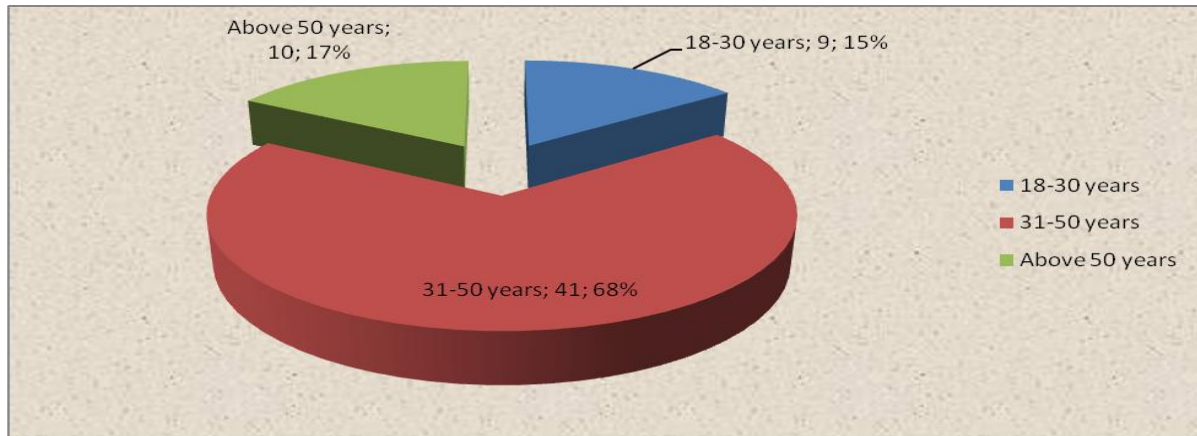
Figure 2: Age of respondents

Figure 2 reveals that a majority (68%) were aged between 31 to 50 years. The respondents who were above 50 years were 17% of the total respondents. The youth membership-those with 18 to 30 years were 15%. This implies that party membership is highly dominated by mature middle aged members. The age distribution may have an implication on the intraparty democracy. Perhaps, the low youth membership has led to poor intra party democracy.

4.1.4 Level of education of respondents

The respondents were requested to indicate their level of education.
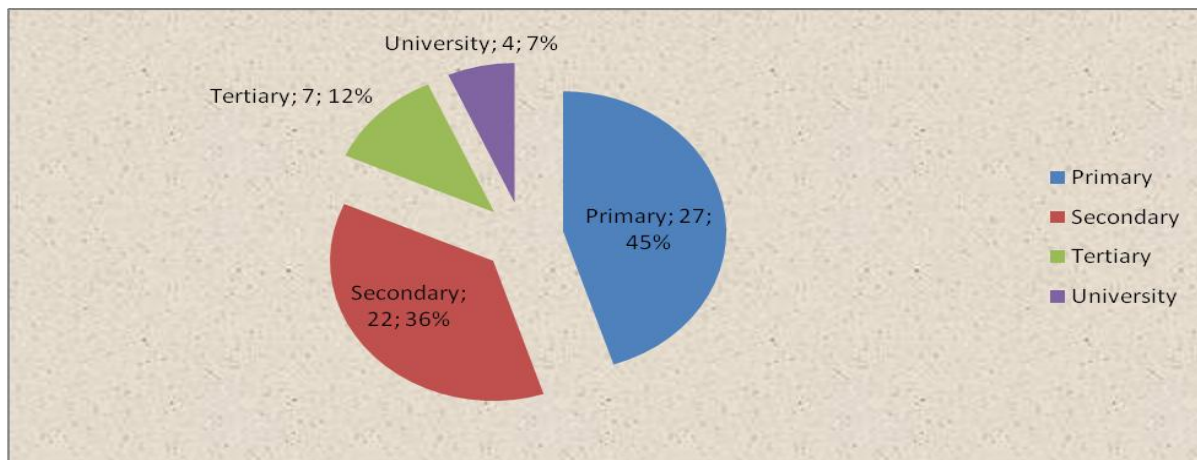
Figure 3: Level of education of respondents

Figure 3 reveals that a 45% had a high school level of education, 36% had a secondary school level of education, 12% had tertiary level school education and 7% had university level of education. This implies that party membership is highly dominated by members with low education. The level of education may have an implication on the intraparty democracy. Perhaps, the low level of education has led to poor intra party democracy.

4.1.5 Employment status of respondents

The respondents were requested to indicate their employment status.
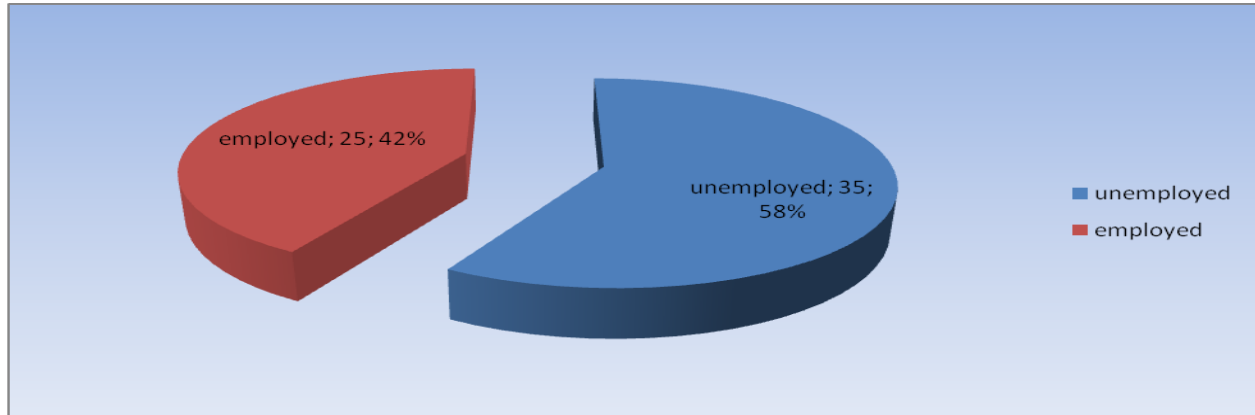

Figure 4: Employment status of respondents

Figure 4 reveals that a 58% of respondents were unemployed. Results also indicate that 42% were employed. This implies that party membership is highly dominated by members with no employment. The employment status may have an implication on the intraparty democracy. Perhaps, the low level of employment of party members has led to poor intra party democracy.

4.2 Frequency of intra party elections

One of the study objectives was to determine the frequency of intraparty elections. To achieve this objective, the respondents were requested to express their opinion on a set of statements related to intraparty elections.

4.2.1 My party holds intraparty elections for selecting party office bearers

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party holds intraparty elections for selecting party office bearers.
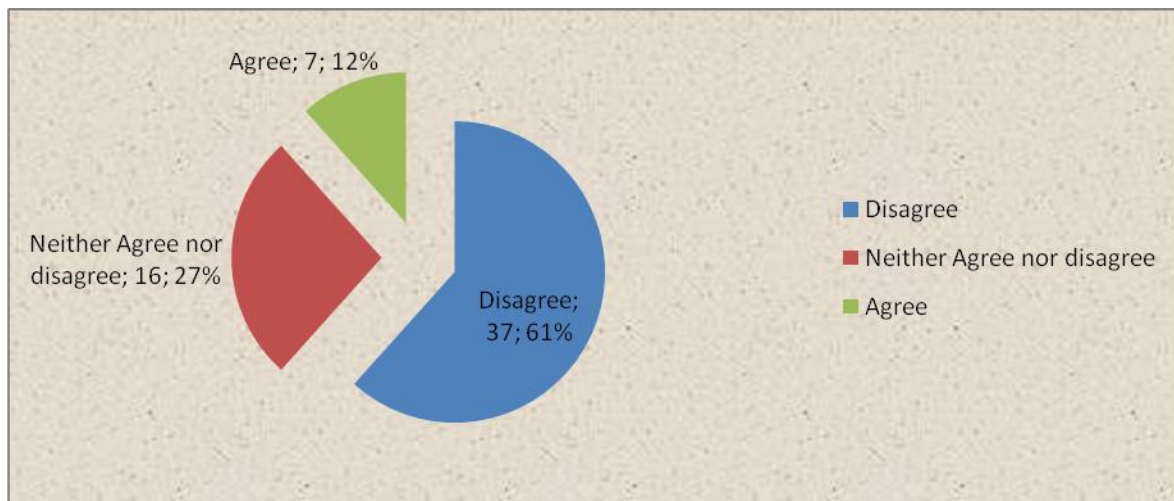
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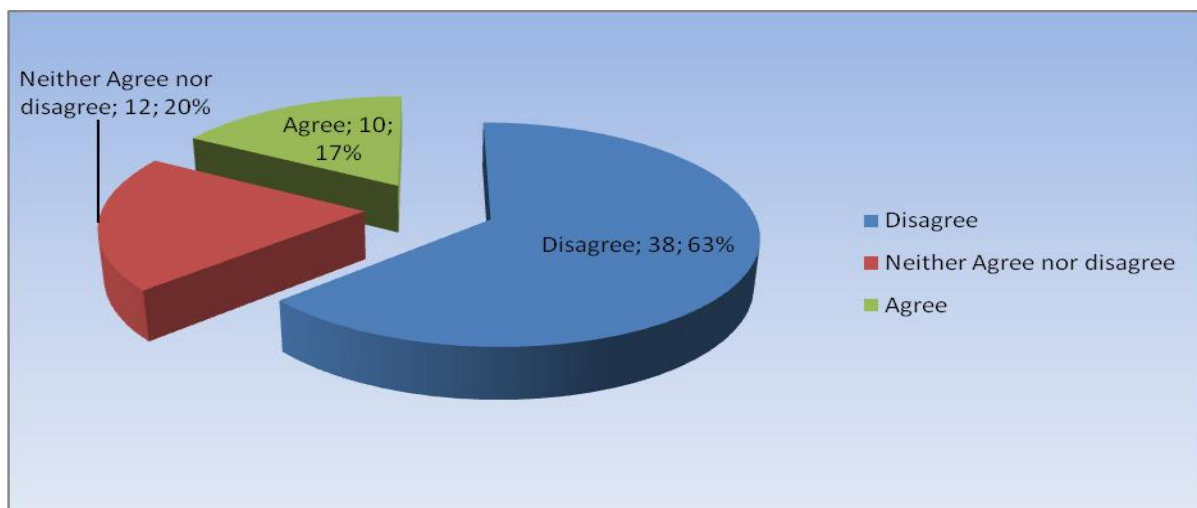
Figure 5: party holds intraparty elections for selecting party office bearers

Results in figure 5 reveals that 63% of party members disagreed, 17% agreed while 20% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of parties do not hold intraparty elections for selecting party office bearers. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.2.2 My party holds intraparty elections for selecting the nominees to field for political posts

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party holds intraparty elections for selecting the nominees to field for political posts.

Figure 5: party holds intraparty elections for selecting the nominees for political posts

Results in figure 6 reveals that 61% of party members disagreed, 12% agreed while 27% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of parties do not hold intraparty elections for selecting the nominees for political posts. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.2.3 My party holds intraparty elections for selecting the nominees to field for by elections

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party holds intraparty elections for selecting the nominees to field for by elections.
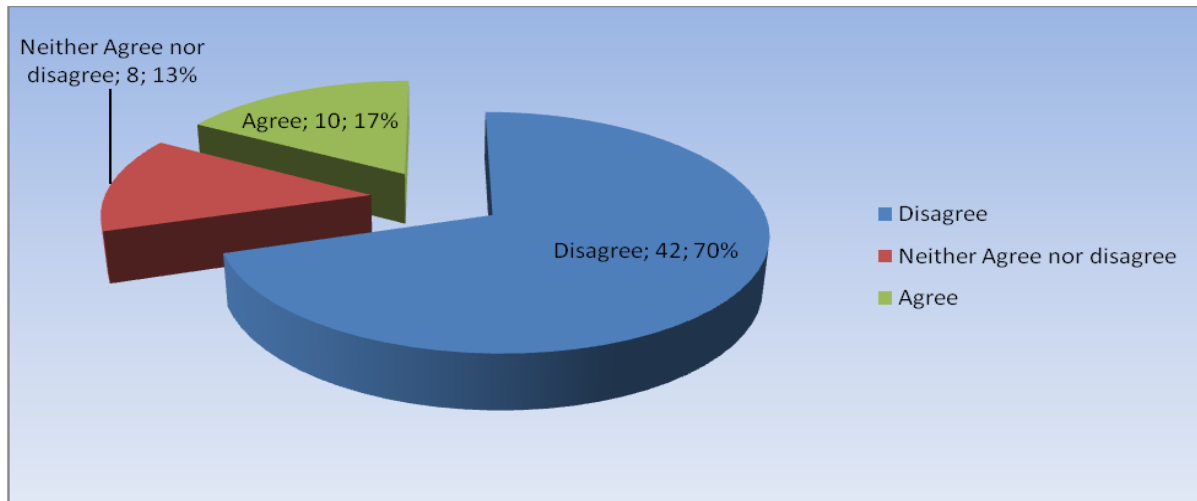
Figure 6: party holds intraparty elections for selecting the nominees to field for by elections

Results in figure 7 reveals that 70% of party members disagreed, 17% agreed while 13% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of parties do not hold intraparty elections for selecting the nominees for by elections. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.2.4 My party believes that intraparty elections are the hall mark of democratic politics

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party believes that intraparty elections are the hall mark of democratic politics.
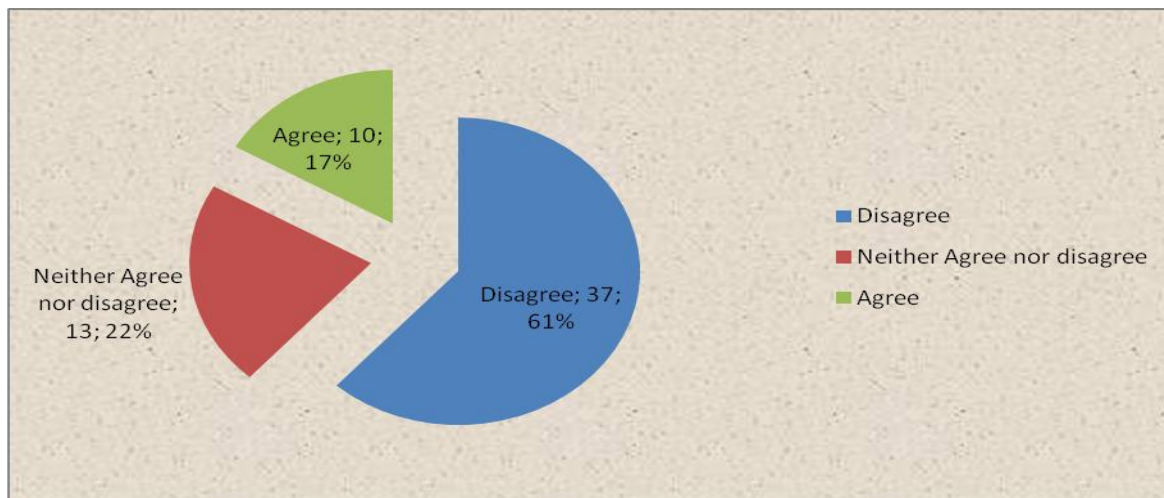
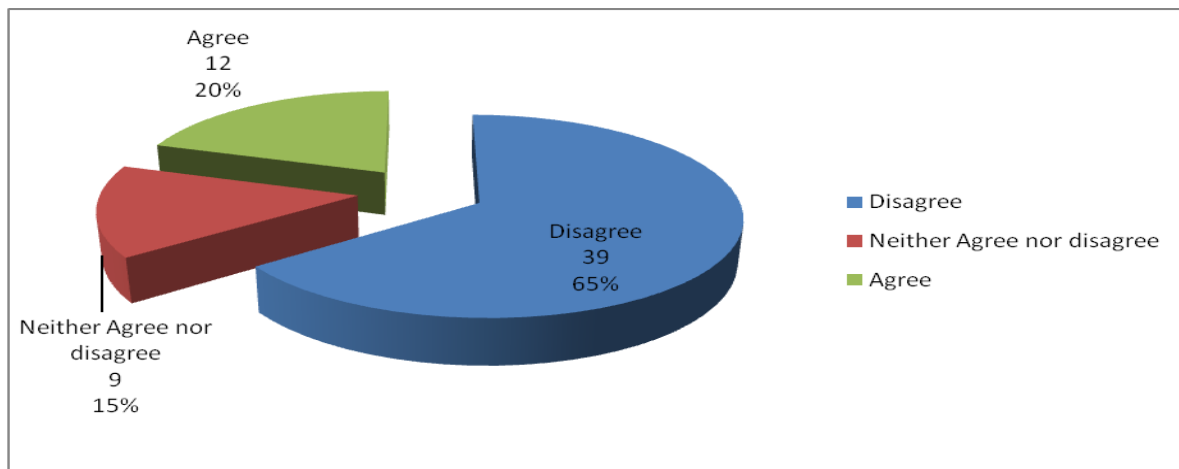**Figure 7: My party believes that intraparty elections are the hall mark of democratic politics**

Results in figure 8 reveals that 61% of party members disagreed, 17% agreed while 22% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of parties do not believe in intraparty elections as being a hall mark of democratic politics. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.2.5 My party believes that intraparty elections provide a unique opportunity for the electorate to indicate their priorities, interests and concerns by exercising the right to vote

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party believes that intraparty elections provide a unique opportunity for the electorate to indicate their priorities, interests and concerns by exercising the right to vote.

Figure 8: party believes that intraparty elections provide a unique opportunity for the electorate to indicate their priorities, interests and concerns by exercising the right to vote

Results in figure 9 reveals that 65% of party members disagreed, 20% agreed while 15% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of parties do not believe that intraparty elections provide a unique opportunity for the electorate to indicate their priorities, interests and concerns by exercising the right to vote. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.
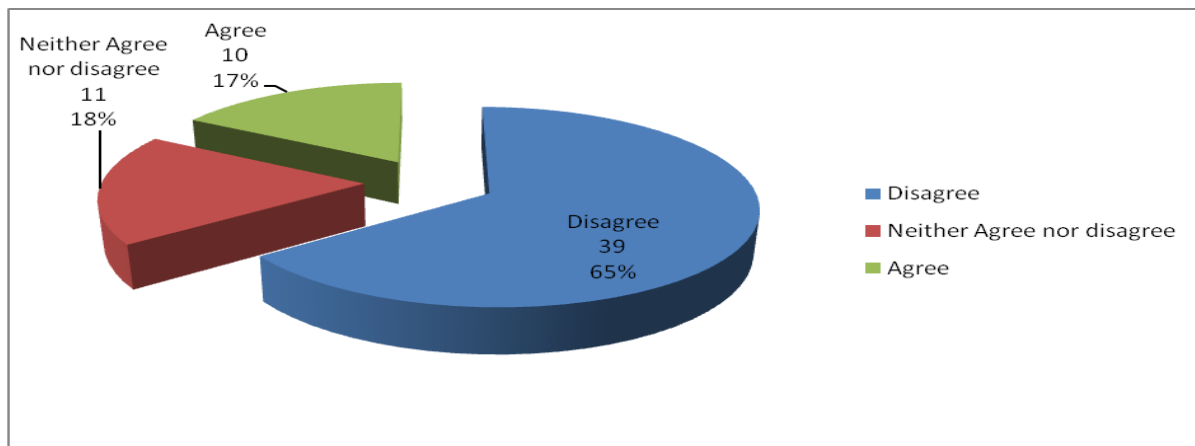
4.2.6 My party elections are free and fair

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party elections are free and fair.

Figure 9: party elections are free and fair

Results in figure 10 reveals that 65% of party members disagreed, 17% agreed while 18% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of parties elections are not free and fair. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.3.7 My party does not coerce people when voting

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party does not coerce people when voting
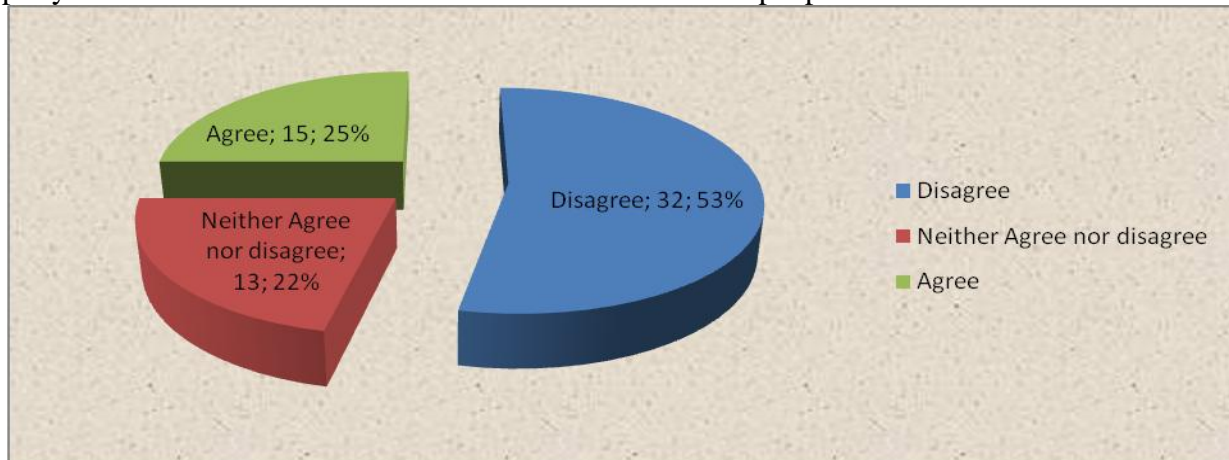
Figure 10: party does not coerce people when voting

Results in figure 11 reveals that 65% of party members disagreed, 17% agreed while 18% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of parties coerce people when voting. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.2.8 My party provides access to information and polling sites to all taking part in the intraparty elections

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party provides access to information and polling sites to all taking part in the intraparties elections.
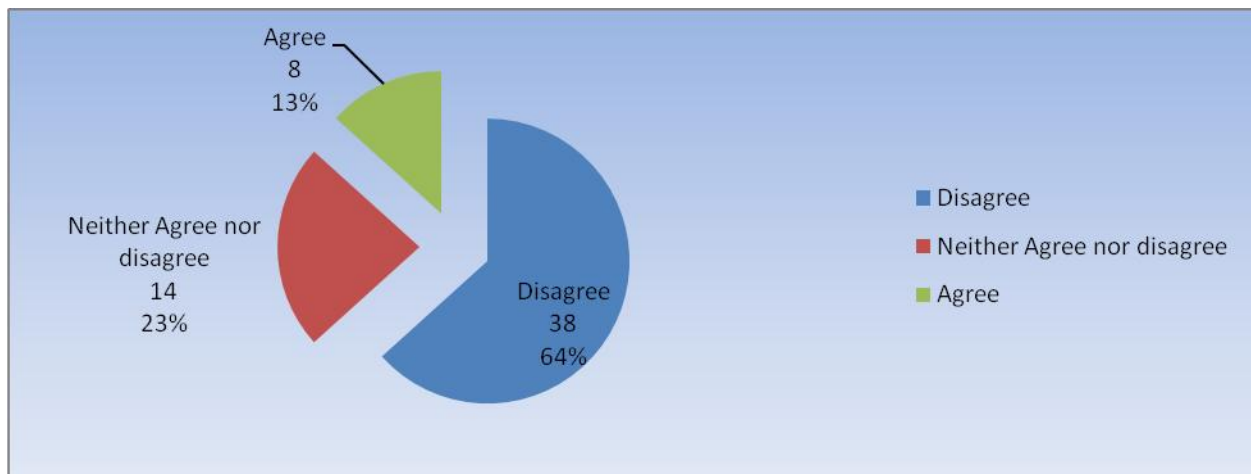
Figure 11: party provides access to information and polling sites to all taking part in the intraparty elections

Results in figure 12 reveals that 64% of party members disagreed, 13% agreed while 23% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of parties do not provide access to information and polling sites to all taking part in the intraparty elections. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.2. 9 My party discourages election violence

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party discourages election violence.
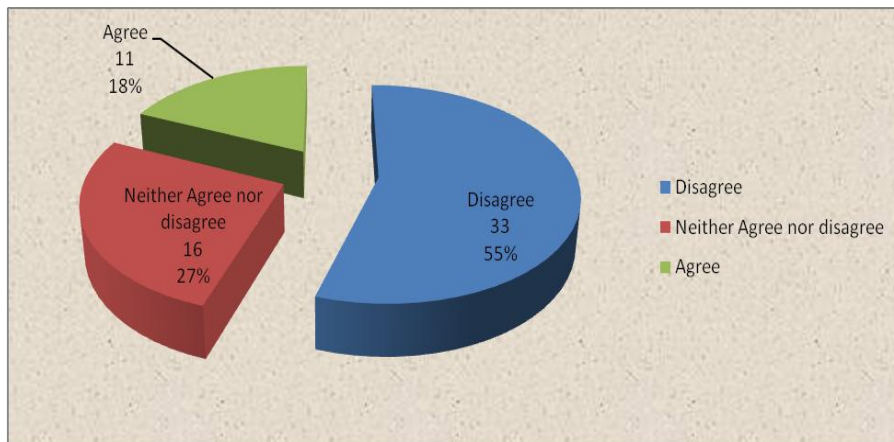
Figure 12: party discourages election violence

Results in figure 13 reveals that 55% of party members disagreed, 18% agreed while 27% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of parties do not discourages election violence. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.3 Degree of members participation in the management of party affairs

One of the study objectives was to determine the degree of members participation in the management of party affairs. To achieve this objective, the respondents were requested to express their opinion on a set of statements related to intraparty elections.

4.3.1 My party maintains an open door policy

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party maintains an open door policy**.**

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Table 2: party maintains an open door policy

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	40	66.7	66.7
	Neither Agree nor disagree	7	11.7	78.3
	Agree	13	21.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	

Results in table 2 reveals that 66.7% of party members disagreed, 21.7% agreed while 11.7% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of parties do not maintain an open door policy. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.3.2 My party invites proposals from its members

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party invites proposals from its members.

Table 3: My party invites proposals from its members

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	43	71.7	71.7
	Neither Agree nor disagree	4	6.7	78.3
	Agree	13	21.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	

Results in table 3 reveals that 71.7 % of party members disagreed, 6.7% agreed while 21.7% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of party do not invites proposals from its members. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.3.3 My party has a well laid organization structure

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party has a well laid organization structure.

Table 4: My party has a well laid organization structure

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	38	63.3	63.3
	Neither Agree nor disagree	4	6.7	70.0
	Agree	18	30.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	

Results in table 4 reveals that 63.3% of party members disagreed, 30% agreed while 6.7% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of parties do not have a well laid organization structure. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.3.4 My party organization structure ensures that party members have a role to play in the management of the party

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party organization structure ensures that party members have a role to play in the management of the part.

Table 5: My party organization structure ensures that party members have a role to play in the management of the party

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	36	60.0	60.0
	Neither Agree nor disagree	4	6.7	66.7
	Agree	20	33.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	

Results in table 5 reveals that 60.0% of party members disagreed, 33.3% agreed while 6.7% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of party organization structures do not ensure that party members have a role to play in the management of the part. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.3.5 My party first consults with its party members before making decisions

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party first consults with its party members before making decisions.

Table 6: My party first consults with its party members before making decisions

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	38	63.3	63.3
	Neither Agree nor disagree	4	6.7	70.0
	Agree	18	30.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	

Results in table 6 reveals that 63.3% of party members disagreed, 30.0% agreed while 6.7% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of parties do not first consult with its party members before making decisions. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.3.6 My party ensures absolute transparency in the use of public funds and managerial practices.

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party ensures absolute transparency in the use of public funds and managerial practices.

Table 7: party ensures absolute transparency in the use of public funds and managerial practices

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	40	66.7	66.7
	Neither Agree nor disagree	6	10.0	76.7
	Agree	14	23.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	

Results in table 7 reveals that 66.77% of party members disagreed, 23.3% agreed while 10% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of parties do not ensures absolute transparency in the use of public funds and managerial practices. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.3.7 My party has effectively transferred its power to the grassroots

The respondents were requested to express their agreement or otherwise to the statement that the party has effectively transferred its power to the grassroots.

Table 8: party has effectively transferred its power to the grassroots

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	37	61.7	61.7
	Neither Agree nor disagree	7	11.7	73.3
	Agree	16	26.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	

Results in table 8 reveals that 61.7% of party members disagreed, 26.7% agreed while 11.7% neither agreed nor disagreed. The finding implies that majority of parties do not effectively transferred its power to the grassroots. This may have a further negative effect on intraparty democracy.

4.4 Degree of accountability in the financial management of the parties

One of the objectives of the study was to establish the degree of accountability in the financial management of the parties.

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Table 9: of accountability in the financial management of the parties

	Disagree		Neither Agree nor disagree		Agree		Total
My party maintains financial records of all party affairs	42	70 %	7	12%	11	18%	60
My party has established internal controls for financial management	30	50 %	14	23%	16	27%	60
My party has well laid out procedures for the authorization of party expenditure	38	63 %	13	22%	9	15%	60
My party has an independent internal auditor	36	60 %	12	20%	12	20%	60
My party subjects its books of accounts to be audited by external auditors	40	67 %	7	12%	13	22%	60
My party ensures that its regularly produces financial statements	40	67 %	6	10%	14	23%	60
My party has put in place procedures to detect fraud	38	63 %	5	8%	17	28%	60
My party has put in place procedures to prevent fraud	36	60 %	3	5%	21	35%	60
My party seriously investigates allegations of fraud and corruption	41	68 %	7	12%	12	20%	60
My party has an effective fund raising department	34	57 %	9	15%	17	28%	60
My party is able to pay its short term expenses such as staff salaries and advertising costs comfortably	35	58 %	8	13%	17	28%	60
My party is not highly dependent on costly overdrafts to finance its activities	42	70 %	7	12%	11	18%	60

Results in table 9 indicates that 70%, 50%, 63%, 60%,67%, 67%, 63%, 60%,68%, 57%, 58%, 70% disagreed with the statement that My party maintains financial records of all party affairs ,My party has established internal controls for financial management, My party has well laid out procedures for the authorization of party expenditure, My party has an independent internal auditor , My party subjects its books of accounts to be audited by external auditors, My party ensures that its regularly produces financial statements, My party has put in place procedures to

detect fraud, My party has put in place procedures to prevent fraud, My party seriously investigates allegations of fraud and corruption, My party has an effective fund raising department, My party is able to pay its short term expenses such as staff salaries and advertising costs comfortably, My party is not highly dependent on costly overdrafts to finance its activities respectively. The findings indicate that there is a low degree of accountability in the financial management of the parties. The low level of accountability may have led to poor intraparty democracy.

4.5 To evaluate the extent of retention of party members

One of the objectives of the study was to establish the extent of retention of party members.

Table 10: extent of retention of party members

	Disagree		Neither Agree nor disagree		Agree		Total
My party has experienced a high rate of party members leaving the party for other parties	30	50%	14	23%	16	27%	60
My party has witnessed a lot of party hopping by senior party officials	38	63%	13	22%	9	15%	60
I will continue being a party member	36	60%	12	20%	12	20%	60
I will continue participating in party affairs	40	67%	7	12%	13	22%	60
I will continue talking well about my party to other people	40	67%	6	10%	14	23%	60
I would recommend my party to other people	38	63%	5	8%	17	28%	60

Results in table 10 indicates that 50%, 63%, 60%, 67%, 67%, 63% disagreed with the statements that My party has experienced a high rate of party members leaving the party for other parties, My party has witnessed a lot of party hopping by senior party officials, I will continue being a party member, I will continue participating in party affairs, I will continue talking well about my party to other people, I would recommend my party to other people respectively. The findings imply that parties in Kenya have a low rate of retention of party members. The low level of retention may have led to poor intraparty democracy

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Based on the study findings, the study concluded that, Political parties in Kenya do not hold intraparty elections frequently as they are supposed to. The study also concluded that Political parties in Kenya have a low degree of members participation in the management of party affairs. The study further concluded that Political parties in Kenya have a low degree of accountability in the financial management of the parties. Further, the study concluded that Political parties in Kenya have a low retention rate of members. The low frequency of elections, low degree of members participation, low degree of accountability in the financial management of party affairs and low retention of party members could have contributed to the poor intraparty democracy being witnessed in Kenyan political parties.

5.2 Recommendations

The study recommended Political parties in Kenya to hold intraparty elections frequently as they are supposed to since doing so will boost the intraparty democracy. Political parties in Kenya were also recommended to come up with promotion drives that will enhance members' participation in the management of party affairs as doing so will boost the intraparty democracy. Political parties in Kenya need to put in place internal controls and structures that enhance the accountability in the financial management of the parties as doing so will boost the intraparty democracy. Political parties in Kenya need to put in place loyalty programs for their members so as to boost the retention rate of members. This will boost the intraparty democracy.

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