The Baraza and the Role of the Public Administration in Informal Settlements: Lived Experiences in the Mukuru Kayaba Informal Settlement, Nairobi, Kenya.

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ABSTRACT
This article examines the interactions of informal settlement communities with created spaces for citizen participation. The Baraza is a semi-formal public gathering held in communities at the behest of local administrators. The aims of the baraza are to pass critical information, to deal with rising information in a locality and to collect the views of the local community on certain issues. Although it has been touted as a tool for creating access, voice, empowerment, representation and participation in communities, it has also has a chequered history. Its colonial origins and design continue to plague its legitimacy and effectiveness. This is especially true in informal settlements in Kenya; which are home to some of the most marginalised individuals. This article is based on research carried out in Mukuru Kayaba, an informal settlement on the city of Nairobi. The findings of the research depict mixed results of the use of the baraza as a tool for citizen participation. They perceive that the baraza may be used as a rubber stamping tool and not as an avenue to include their views in policy making. Also, elements of power contestation, corruption and intimidation come on to play in the space of the baraza. This locks out the most vulnerable and needy members who are unable to fully express their frustrations in the language and manner of the baraza.
Key Words: Citizen Participation; Informal Settlements; Policymaking; Subalternity

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I.   INTRODUCTION

The first part of this paper is an introduction of the background of the Public Administration. The second part is a review of related literature and the third part describes the research methodology employed in the research process. The fourth and fifth portions of this article encompass the findings, discussion and the conclusion of the article's contribution to knowledge. This article is the product of a transcendental phenomenological research carried in Mukuru Kayaba; one of the slums making up the 'Mukuru Belt' of informal settlements in the city of Nairobi. Through an analysis of the lived experiences of the local community, we attempt to highlight their perceptions of the *baraza* and the public administration officers. Public administration officers constitute *baraza*s as a means through which the local community participates in debates concerning the planning, initiation and implementation of policies that affect them. We address their understandings of citizen participation; the place and the effectiveness of the public administration in driving sustainable development in informal settlements.

1.1 Historical Overview of Public Administration in Kenya

The Provincial or Public Administration (PA) is a creature of the colonial era (Omanga, 2015). It was established as an instrument of the state whose activities included general representation of the authority of the executive at the local level, co-ordination of government activities in the field and chairing several committees at the local level (Bagaka, 2011). Under the old constitution, the co-ordination of central government policies and development programmes at the local level was done by this department. The Provincial Administration was a department in the Office of the President. The system divided Kenya into eight provinces; and then into districts, division, locations and sub-locations. They supervised central government ministries at the provincial and district levels but also co-ordinated their programmes and policies (Hassan, 2015; Cheeseman et al.2016;

Oyugi et al. 2020). They served as the representatives of the President in local areas and exercised upward accountability because they served at the pleasure of the president (Haugerud, 1995). One of the reasons activists and architects of the new constitution sought for the scrapping of this outfit are that they followed the orders of the executive without question (Odhiambo and Opiyo, 2017). This meant that even when people were disenfranchised as a result, they could not change their actions. They, therefore, came to symbolise repression, dictatorship, impunity and authoritarianism.

The new constitution phased out provinces and introduced forty-seven counties which are further sub-divided into sub-counties, wards, locations and sub-locations (The Standard, 2014). Some of the powers that the PA had have been taken away and given to the County Executive Committee (CEC). The CEC is headed by a governor and has a cabinet of county executive committee bureaucrats. The transfer of powers from a central government bureaucrat to a locally elected governor is meant to establish a culture of accountability (KSG, 2015). The fear of arbitrary uses of power in Kenya is still eminent with the retention of the PA. Even the restructuring of the outfit has not led to better sentiments. Some reasons give observers pause; such as the fact that under the Constitution of Kenya (2010), the functions of the CEC (Member of the County Executive Committee) and the PA bear a resemblance. The 2007 Scheme of Service for field administrative officers within the PA lays out their roles in the field. Some of the roles conflict with those of the CEC as mentioned above. Scholars such as Bagaka (2011) have argued that they now form the basis of the intergovernmental relationship between the central government and the county governments.

Intergovernmental relations are the complex network of overlapping and interlocking roles with different levels of government (IGRTC, 2015). They go deeper and are more involved than the formal understanding of devolution. They also refer to the set of policies and mechanisms by which the interplay between different levels of government serve a common geographical areas (Peters, 2004). Inter-governmental relations are oriented towards governmental issues rather than political ones. In Articles 176, 186 and 189 of the Constitution of Kenya (2010) provision for a political structure is made. Underneath this constitutional structure, there is an administrative structure which is created to carry out specific functions of governance. The reality is that both the political and administrative structure is important in governing the country. Although the Constitution of Kenya (2010) enumerates the functions of both the national and county governments, implementing a constitution is more than ceding and sharing authority. There are issues such as education, health, terrorism, security, disaster management and peacebuilding that have both national and local implications. They are then in the purview of different levels of government. This system in Kenya then acts as a nexus between national and county governments. In 2012, following the signing of an Executive Order by the then President, officers from the former arrangement were formally designated as national government administrative officers (NGAO) (The Standard, 2014). They included 47 County Commissioners, deputy county commissioners, assistant county commissioners, chiefs and assistant chiefs.

Section 17 of the COK (2010) stipulates that within five years the 'new' formations should have undergone a restructuring. This, however, has not happened and the administrative operatives function as they did before. Therefore, to an extent, they maintain the same aloofness in their operational history. Also, the vestiges of the past in the form of consolidation of power by Kenya's post-colonial rulers has affected their ethical standards. This has exacerbated the marginalisation of local administration and led to weak accountability and capacity to respond efficiently to all residents. The inability to devise effective strategies to deal with informal settlement communities has affected the lives of the residents.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.
2.1 Arnstein's Ladder and the Promise of Devolution
Following the repeal of section 2(a) of the constitution which turned Kenya from a one party state to a multi-party state, various actors began to agitate for a change in the constitutional order. As a result of Kenya's second liberation, the country went through a period of consultative democracy to seek meaningful change. This was a long, gruelling process that lasted over twenty with a failed attempt at changing the constitution through a referendum in 2005. Post-election violence after the 2007 election also precipitated this change because it was one of the major sources of conflict. Through a process of compromise and consultations, the draft was presented to the public through a referendum early August 2010 and the new constitution was promulgated on 27 August 2010. The document laid the ground for a two-tier system of government, the entrenchment of citizen participation and devolution in the country's constitutional order; these are the central promises of the new constitution. Borrowing heavily from Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation, the country started the process of making governance more inclusive and participatory. Through this new system, at the national and county levels, participation in the matters of governance was localized. Using the county government as the main driver of devolution at the grassroots level and entrenching participation as a central tenet of the formulation of all laws has been a key process. In fact, so important has the process of citizen participation become such that cases challenging the lack of citizen participation in the formulation of laws has

been challenged and won by ordinary citizens in courts of law. By giving citizens the space to participate it was hoped that it would aid in moving them to the higher rungs of the typology.
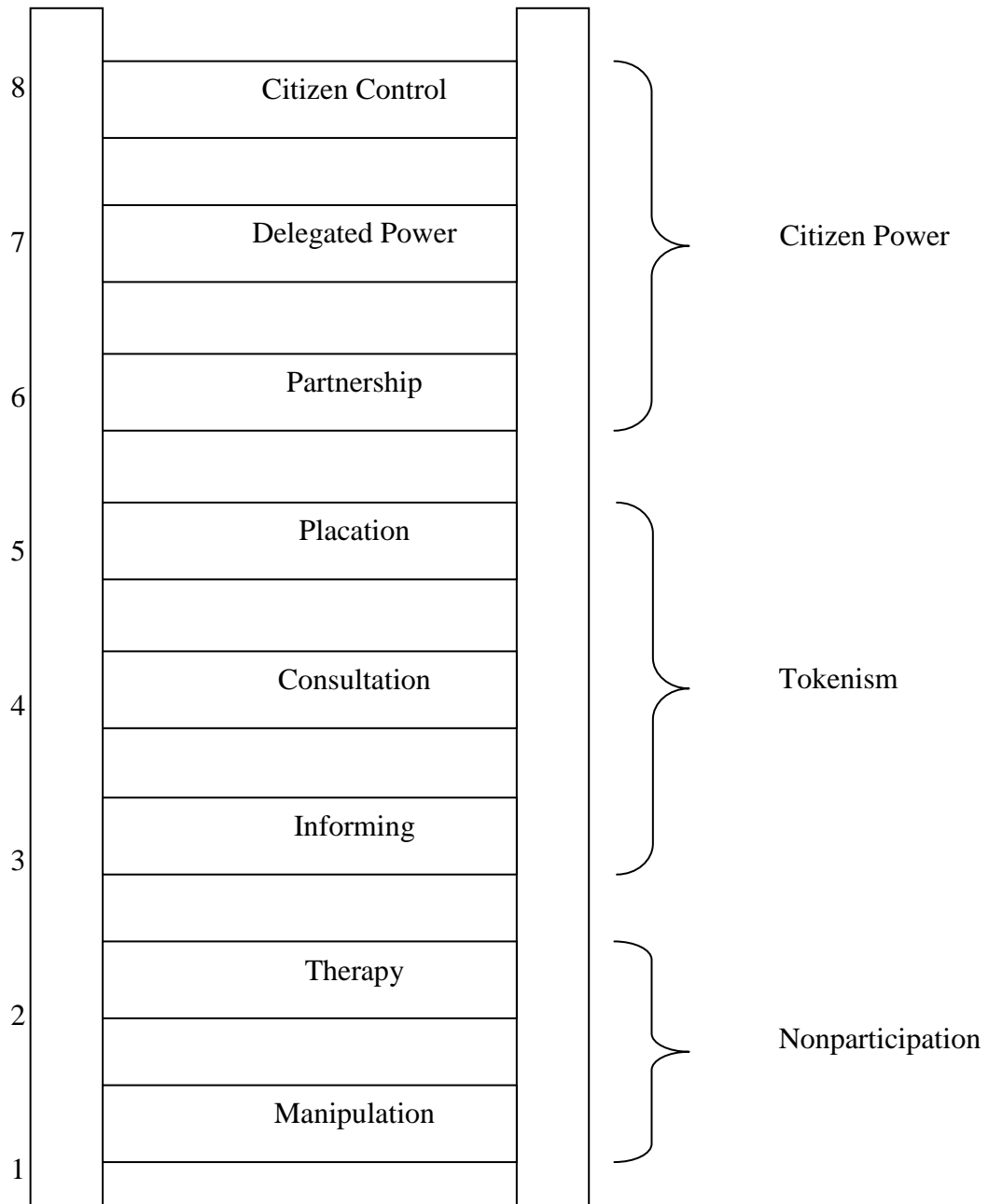
8	Citizen Control	Citizen Power
7	Delegated Power	
6	Partnership	
5	Placation	Tokenism
4	Consultation	
3	Informing	
2	Therapy	Nonparticipation
1	Manipulation	

Fig. 1. Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation

The utilization of this seminal work has had a transformative effect on Kenya's devolution promise. It has opened the space for local problems to receive local solutions (Makueni, n.d.). The local people become partners and gain immensely by having more control in their own development agenda. Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation is regarded as one of the most prominent typology in designing Kenya's devolution promise (IGRTC, 2015). In fact, as a typology, its definition of citizen participation fits quite well into the Kenyan understanding of exclusion and the need for voice and influence for all citizens on issues that affect their way of life   Cornwall (2008) argues that typologies are a useful starting point for differentiating degrees and kinds of participation. They also focus on the intentionality and the associated approach of those who initiate participation. This typology looks at participation through the lens of those who are recipients. She also opines that certain terms used in the typology have been used by certain organizations that have embraced participation fairly late and all in response to the failure of certain tenets; such as tokenism is associated with

how international development organizations define and carry out their activities that are related participation. For example, the term consultation is used both in the global north and south to legitimize decisions that have already been take to lend the process a kind of moral authority (Cornwall, 2008).

Using Arnstein's Ladder as a super structure, participation as envisaged in the typology was effected. The significant prominence given by this typology is visible in various documents especially at national level. It is used to explain participation and its gradations and their effect on governance. It has been used to explain the refinement in governance. The main idea of this decentralization to the county levels and beyond is to shift government to embrace a bottom –up approach (KSG, 2015). County governments are required to put in place structures, mechanisms, and guidelines for public participation, promote access for minority and marginalized groups , establish mechanisms for wider public communication and access to information and submit an annual report on public participation   to the county assembly. These county governments have an important responsibility over a significant portion of public finances and service delivery.

2.1.1 The Place of Public/Citizen Participation

The Constitution of Kenya (2010) recognizes, institutionalizes, and strengthens the position of public participation or citizen participation in Kenya (KSG, 2015). This enables citizens to take part in the processes that affect them and their communities (Odhiambo and Opiyo, 2017). All the legal frameworks of the constitution are part of the strategy to accelerate growth and to address long standing inequalities in economic opportunities, investment and service delivery in different parts of the country (KSG, 2015). It also establishes the framework for public participation and makes it mandatory for policy and law making processes, it establishes the key institutions for public participation and directs the establishment of statutory bodies and the enactment of legislation for effective participation. The expected performance and accountability gains of decentralization are often diminished by factors such as elite capture, clientlism, capacity constraints, and competition over power between levels of government and weaknesses in performance monitoring (KSG, 2015). The World Bank (2012) opines that effective decentralization depends on balancing increased discretion of local governments with increased accountability at all levels. Kenya's devolution project is one of the most ambitious that involves large scale political, fiscal and administrative decentralization.

These reforms in the system of governance seek to tackle long-term, deeply entrenched disparities between regions, increase the responsiveness and accountability of government to citizens, and allow greater autonomy to different regions and groups and to rebalance power away from a historically strong central government. The overarching principles and values in the constitution and subsequent legal framework consistently commit the national government to transparency, accountability, and civic engagement in devolved governance (IGRTC, 2015). The space for citizen-state interaction has been widened despite occasional setbacks. The national government and civil society have gained a lot of experience in deploying participatory tools and approaches, especially connected with local service delivery funds. Kenya has an independent media, a rich network of civic organizations (Odhiambo and Opiyo, 2017). . For the purposes of operationalizing the constitution, several pieces of legislation have been crafted at the national level to serve as a template for further action from the counties. These include the County Government Act (2012), the Public Finance Management Act (2011) and the Urban Areas and Cities (Amendment) Act (2019). All these Acts of the national legislature include measures for public participation for county governments to implement (Odhiambo and Opiyo, 2017).They require public participation in many aspects of the operations of both levels including the developing of new legislation setting national and county priorities, reviewing public sector performance and expenditure and submitting grievances.

2.1.2 Mechanisms for Public Participation in Kenya
1.	Community Forums
Community members have standing meetings or associations that are used for interaction with the government. These include religious gatherings, school meetings, co-operatives and professional associations.
2.	Town Hall Meetings
These meetings are convened to facilitate consultation, discussion and dissemination of important information. Members are invited individually or through the public media.
3.	Media
Mainstream print and electronic media play a large part in driving the agenda for discussing issues and disseminating important information. They also open up new avenues for citizen-state engagement.
4.	'Bunge Mashinani'
These are Kiswahili words that literally parliament at the grassroots level. It is an initiative where members of the public interact with the Members of the County Assembly (MCAs). They deliberate on issue that affect their county.

5.   Petitions

The national parliament and the county assembly legislation make provision for petitions from members of the public on issues under their jurisdiction. They are usually filed by citizen who require action to be taken on certain issue that they are concerned about.

6.   Public Barazas

Baraza is a Kiswahili word that denotes a kind of open air seating held in public. In this kind of meeting, citizens can air their views as well receive important information from local administrators. The most common baraza is usually the Chief's baraza at the village or ward level.

7.   Parliamentary Committee/County Assembly Committee

These committees are usually constituted by the legislatures to deal with arising issues which are deemed to be of certain importance. For example, matters dealing with poor educational outcome, sugar shortages and non-payment of dues owed to farmers. They give access to citizens to participate in matters before them give citizens access to follow proceedings.

8.   Written and Oral Submissions

When the national parliament and the County Assemblies decide to consider any Bill or budget estimates, notices are placed in the media for citizens to present submissions orally or in writing.

Other mechanisms used include holding public referendums where matters of great public interest are voted on. Performance surveys, impeachment or recall proceedings, constitutional and statutory bodies, and sector working groups are also used to improve and open up spaces for public participation.

2.2 The Baraza and Citizen/Public Participation in Informal Settlements

The *baraza* is a semi-formal and irregularly held open air meeting that is convened by a local chief for the purposes of addressing local issues and to ensure that the government agenda and policy reaches the grassroots (Omanga, 2015). It is a product of the colonial era. It can be described as a formal gathering used for the purpose of interaction between the rulers and the ruled. It emerged from the Swahili culture but in the independence period it was viewed as a forum arranged by the Public Administration aimed at consensus rather than debate. All Kenyan chiefs are required by law to convene at least two *barazas* every month (Omanga,2015). Most people are known to consider barazas a nuisance and a waste of time. They are only attended by those who are not gainfully engaged at the tie the meetings are being held. Unlike other African countries, chiefs are considered an extension of the repressive state (Oyugi and Ochieng', 2020; Omanga, 2015). They were also known to misuse their authority. The idea of chiefs was a colonial idea that was designed to entrench the influence of the colonial government at the grassroots. Haugerud (1995: 1195) explains that in the early twentieth century, subjugation in Kenya started with the imposition of chiefs in the communities that had never known such political authority. Throup (1988) adds that many of these chiefs were less communally-minded and interested in acquiring land and establishing economic dominance. Ochieng' (1972) adds that during the colonial era they were used for collection purposes, adjudicating disputes, conducting infrastructure projects and they also had the final word on land ownership. Their power was legitimised by their collaboration with the colonial government. They became agents of the colonial government and found themselves becoming targets of the resistance movement. After independence they were retained as part of the Public Administration (The Standard, 2014). In the post-independence period, with the opening up of democratic spaces, the still retain their baggage. This is in the sense that they may be convened for and by politicians and civil servants to address people in a locale.

They have lost much of their power and power as people have become more educated and with the opening up of democratic spaces; a process that started in the 1990s. The changing political landscape has greatly undermined the role and power of the Chief which has diminished over time (Omanga, 2015). They have become less visible and far less intrusive but people still hold residual negative perceptions of Chiefs. The old baraza is largely routine, more of a strategic ritual. Before 2015, the Public Administration was the core local institution in Kenya. Its main task was to co-ordinate central government policies and development programmes at the local level. Its officers arbitrated local conflicted and were in charge of local security (Bagaka, 2011). The main function of the PA was political; it constituted the 'prolonged' arm of the central government and guaranteed all-embracing presidential powers even in the remotest parts of Kenya (Haugerud, 1995). The PA was granted almost unlimited power as long as they administered their sphere of influence to the satisfaction of the president in power. Nothing much has changed and decentralisation of the government remain a stronghold of national political influence at the local level (Oyugi and Ochieng', 2020). At the local level, Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs and elders have a key role to play in the core implementation processes of various programmes. Traditional authorities are instrumental in mobilising communities and disseminating information thereby complementing formal programmes structures even where they are functioning well and are routinely enforced(Hassan,2015; Carey et al.2018; Rohregger et al.2021).

Chiefs play a key role in communities because it is only the Chief who can call or hold a baraza. They are also viewed as highly efficient and effective data collectors complementing the limited operational capacities of other civil servants. They have intimate knowledge of communities and their poor and vulnerable people (Carey et al. 2018). This puts them in powerful positions that allow them to reconcile their formal roles with their interests. Informal authorities may complement and substitute formal grievance and redress mechanisms (Rohregger et al.2021). However, some people may also skew the rules and allocation of resources in their favour, enlist family members, kinsmen, or non-eligible persons in return for personal or material favours. The Chiefs would abuse their power with regards to the issuance of Identity Cards (IDs) which is a document one must have a precondition for accessing certain services. The Chief is an important gate keeper of the community who in many cases lack human and operational resources which gives informal authorities a key role.

Relating to the findings of Rohregger et al.(2021), the Public Administration create competing systems of obligations that diverge from intended formal institutional outcomes that renders certain social programmes e.g. *'Kazi Mtaani'* (Youth employment programme) and their rules of access and redistribution obsolete which leads to distorted policy outcomes. This goes to show that informal institutions can or may have largely negative impact on access to public social services and resource distribution usually in favour of the rich. Carey et al., (2018) argue that traditional authorities have a key role in facilitating social policy outcomes at the local level complementing effective but inadequate formal delivery structures and partly substituting them where they are weak by supporting civil servants in the provision of basic operational functions.

2.3 Opportunities and Challenges in the Practice of Citizen/Public Participation

Although most counties have enacted laws on public participation, the implementation has been dismal. However, Makueni County stands out for effective and innovative public participation. It has developed and rolled out an elaborate framework involving the establishment of citizen – centred and focused structures from the county level to the village level. The county forums at the county. sub – county, ward and village level are empowered to facilitate effective public participation through resource provision, clear structures of management and political support at the highest levels (IGRTC, 2015). According to the Society for International Development (2015b) in their Citizen Report Card, several constraints or challenges to public participation are identified. They conclude that the problem of absentee leaders, time constraints , inaccessibility of venues, a lack of feedback and follow up , miscommunication, lack of interest , fear of intimidation and the presence of power brokers all contribute to hindering effective public participation. They posit that public participation is still regarded as an expensive constitutional imposition with many complaints about its inconveniences and little utility for public participation for good governance, democracy, transparency and accountability does not appear to have gained momentum (SID, 2015a).

Public participation continues to be hindered by issues such as the lack of enabling policy, legal and institutional framework, deficient civic education, lack of capacity, inadequate resources and deeply entrenched cultural attitudes and practices (Oyugi & Ochieng',2020; IGRTC, 2015). Also, a national framework setting out the norms and standards of public participation at both levels of government has not been developed. What exists are guidelines that provide for public participation and the Ministry of Devolution and Planning has developed guidelines for public participation for the counties. Another hindrance to effective public participation is the lack of an assessment framework of the nature and extent of public participation at the two levels of government (Bagaka, 2011; KSG 2015b).

Weaknesses in governance negatively impacts service delivery and investment, the business environment and job creation. Entrenched deficiencies around land distribution, public contracts and other activities affect the investment climate, job creation and contribute to persistent inequalities and conflict. Building sub – national government responsiveness and performance require focused effort to link county governments with the public. For example, Brazil, India and South Africa have laid emphasis on building accountability of local government to citizens as part of decentralization (KSG, 2015).Available comparative research highlights the fact that effective implementation of decentralization reforms requires a strategy to give discretionary power to local governments and to strengthen accountability towards members of the public. Strengthening public participation requires a significant focus on building government systems and capacity as well as that of citizens and civil society organizations (CSOs).

III.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative approach because the nature of the question under study is a social problem. The use of qualitative approach was appropriate because the study was conducted in a natural setting and sought to understand the perceptions of human beings about their social world. Mack *et al.* (2005) postulate that a qualitative study has the following strengths: first, it provides an understanding of the problem from the perspective of the local population. It is also a good way of acquiring culturally specific information about the

values, opinions, behaviours and the social context of particular populations. This approach also depicts in a textual manner how people experience a given research issue. Finally, in utilising a small number of in depth cases, it is especially relevant in investigating issues of social complexity

3.1 Research Approach
This study is situated in the qualitative research approach under the phenomenological method. There are two main approaches to phenomenological study: hermeneutic phenomenology and transcendental phenomenology. Transcendental phenomenology as a qualitative research design method draws heavily on the writings of the German philosopher, Husserl (1859 – 1938). It is defined as the study of phenomena as they present themselves in an individual's direct awareness and experience (O'Leary, 2010).

3.2 Study Site
The study looked at the informal settlement of Mukuru Kayaba which is one of the villages that make up the Mukuru slums, that is, the 'Mukuru Belt' of Mukuru Kayaba, Mukuru kwa Njenga, Mukuru kwa Reuben and Viwandani . The area is located in the County of Nairobi and is part of Starehe sub – county. The entire Mukuru slum has an estimated population of 527,526 people living in 193,539 households and occupying 52.5 sq., km of land (KNBS, 2010). Sixty percent of the inhabitants earn less than ten thousand shillings per month and live on less than half a dollar per person per day. The poorest fifteen percent of the population earn less than five thousand shillings per month and live on less than half a dollar per person per day (Save the Children 2003). This area was selected for the study because unlike the other informal settlements of the 'Mukuru Belt', it receives less attention. Also, it is situated close to the Industrial Area which acts as a job – seeking hub for the casual labourer residing in this area. This study site witnesses higher interaction between the subaltern communities and the local administrators in form of assistant county commissioners, chiefs and assistant chiefs. There is also a clear indication that due to the existing poverty and lack of basic amenities, the locals rely on the government as well as non - governmental organisations for subsistence.

The slums arose from land previously owned by white settlers. Some of the land was acquired by their former workers and in collaboration with other individuals; they began to put up shacks made of cartons and polythene papers. The local government in the 1970s declared that the land was condemned and unsuitable for human habitation. However, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, people began streaming into the city from the rural areas in search of employment. Many of them ended up in these areas because they were unable to find cheap housing. There was steady growth of the slums as the number of people and their dependants increased. These areas were especially beneficial to the job seekers due to their proximity to the industrial centres of the city. It made it easier for job seekers to access these potential sources of employment at minimal cost in terms of transportation.

As the size of these settlements grew, they were organised into villages. The villages served the purpose of easing the provision of security, services and administration as well as accessibility. There was also the designation of leaders for the villages. These leaders were the overall headmen, women's' leaders and youth leaders to address the needs of the local population. There has also been the proliferation of local organisation especially for social and economic empowerment. These covered local needs such as the unity of traders, women and local saving and credit societies (SACCOs). The government through local administration maintains its presence in the area in form of Assistant Commissioners, Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs. There are also security installations in the form of Administration Police Posts in the area to boost the security of the areas.

The area is characterised by high levels of congestion, has an unplanned urban layout, a lack of proper sanitation, drainage as well as areas for trade and recreation. Access is made difficult because the internal roads are unmotorable and most people use these secondary tracks for daily movement. The horrific dangers of the problem of access are depicted by the frequent occurrences of fires that consume dwellings, property and cause death. Due to this problem, rescue services such as the Red Cross and the Fire Brigade cannot carry out their functions effectively. In some instances, pregnant women, the disabled and the dead are transported by wheel barrows when there is a need to access essential health and social services. It is common for the residents to face sanitary and respiratory diseases such as typhoid, diarrhoea, tuberculosis and pneumonia. The lack of proper ventilation and sanitation exacerbates occurrences of these diseases.

Despite the numerous challenges faced in the informal settlement, there is vibrant daily life. Many economic activities take place such as the sale of water, food, health clinics, day care centres, salons, kiosks, green grocers, tailoring, shoe repair and barbershops. Research has shown that although the returns for many of the traders may be minimal, they are always hopeful for improvements and face challenges in satisfying their daily needs from the businesses (CUIR, 2013).

It is important to note that the social context is the setting in which the actors are situated. These actors – the subaltern communities, local administration and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) – all have a stake in the wellbeing and governance of the communities. In this setting -pervaded by economic, social, political,

cultural and technological aspects- that is where the problem under study is situated. The new constitutional dispensation serves as a manifesto, a socioeconomic and political contract between the rulers and the ruled. Through its provisions, these citizens are afforded, social, economic and political rights. The access and utilisation of these rights is crucial for the well-being and governance of subaltern communities. It is also important for addressing issues around the concepts of economic and social exclusion that disenfranchise millions of individuals and communities in slums. This study then addresses inclusion and participation as fundamental rights that contribute to the dignity of the human being. It espouses principles articulated by Sen (1999) who viewed development basically as the freedom to choose and chart the destiny that improves the well-being of individuals and their communities; especially the poorest in society.

3.2.2 Target Population and Unit of Analysis

According to O'Leary (2010: 161), the target population is *"...the total membership of a defined class of people, objects or events".* The target population of this study was the population of the Mukuru Kayaba slum. Therefore, the unit of analysis were the individuals who inhabit this locale. In this case, these are adults both male and female who are eighteen years and above.

3.2.3 Sampling: Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

A sample is a subset of the population. The objectives of the researcher and the characteristics of the study population will determine which and how many people to select (Mack *et al,* (2005). This study utilised purposive sampling to investigate the phenomenon under study. According to Polkingthorne (1989), for a phenomenological study, the researcher can use a sample size of between five to twenty five individuals. Englander (2012) also agrees with this view by positing that five to twenty participants would be sufficient for better appreciation of the variation of the phenomenon. Other scholars such as Boyd (2001) argue that in the case of transcendental phenomenology which seeks to describe lived experiences, research saturation can be typically attained with two to ten participants. Creswell (1998) recommends that a phenomenological study should involve long interviews with up to ten people. Strauss and Corbin (1998) opine differently. They argue that in a phenomenological study the sample size will be determined by informational saturation. This view is further buttressed by Mack et al. (2005) who argue that sample sizes are also determined by the point of theoretical saturation which is the point at which new data no longer provides additional insights to the research questions.

These individuals were selected using two types of purposive sampling. Maxwell (2005) argues that purposive sampling is common in qualitative research and that it is a strategy for selecting specific elements or units of analysis due to the unique information only they can provide. Rubin and Rubin (2005) suggest three guidelines that can be applied when designing a purposive sampling strategy: first, the units of analysis must be knowledgeable about the experience being studied. Next, they must be willing to talk and they must represent a range of points of view. This sampling procedure was used to achieve representativeness and authenticity of the settings, the individuals and the phenomenon to be studied. Also, it adequately captured the heterogeneity of the population in order to ensure that the conclusions arrived at adequately represent the entire range of variations than only a subset of the population.

Sampling from the population of Mukuru Kayaba to gain a sample of thirty individuals was based on two forms of purposive sampling: criterion sampling and snowball sampling. The use of a small number of units will be helpful on maximising the diversity relevant to the phenomenon under study. It is important that sampling strategies use the weakness of a small sample's variations in the common patterns that emerge into strength (Patton, 1990). Criterion sampling is where the participants closely match the criteria of the study (Rudestam and Newton, 2007). Palys (2008) also points out that it is a search for units of analysis that meet certain requirements of the study. This selection of cases is done to ensure that they meet predetermined criterion of importance (Patton, 2001).It also aids in gaining an understanding of cases that are likely to reveal weaknesses requiring system or programme improvement (Patton, 1990). In this case, those participants who live in the area in the area whether from birth or having migrated to the area recently. They are those individuals that are expected to have the possibility of accessing and utilising the institutionalised spaces for participation. Criterion sampling was applied in this case to enable the generation of data from information – rich sources who live and work in the slum.

Snowball sampling was used to identify participants who would be good interview participants especially those who are local leaders from local Community – based organisations (CBOs) and community leaders. An initial question according to Nastasi (2017) postulates would be put to the relevant key informants asking: 'Who knows a lot about…' These are well – situated participants who can provide rich and in depth knowledge. Many referrals may be received as Patton (1990), notes but in the end key figures will arise.

The researcher employed this method because the study sought an appropriate number of respondents not a strict quota as in the case of other types of sampling such as quota sampling (Mack *et. al.* 2005).The case for sampling using the two sampling techniques provides the diversity and information – rich sources required

to generate data on the research problem. . Teddlie and Yu (2007) support this assertion by providing an example from Poorman (2002) who studied the abuse and oppression of women. Using four different types of purposive sampling in combination with one another, he selected participants for four focus groups.

The table below is a descriptive representation of their demographics. It captures participant information in terms of their gender, age, occupation and the number of years they have lived in the settlement. In terms of their gender, the researcher found that it was easier to access female participants as compared to male participants. This could be due to the fact that most of the female participants run small business concerns close to the area where they live. The researcher also attributed this to most of them being mothers who had young children or grandchildren. Also, the attendant costs of starting businesses in areas where renting and transportations costs were higher made it an easier choice to start their businesses in their locality. There is also a significant number of the participants who are community health volunteers. The researcher found that community health volunteers play a key role in this informal settlement. They act as gate keepers and mobilisers of various initiatives such as health, sanitation and immunisation. Their ability access the interior of the settlement that many people are unable to gives them an inner understanding of the needs of this area.

Description	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1. Gender	Male	11	37
	Female	19	63
Total		*30*	*100*
2. Age	18-29	06	20
	29-39	09	30
	40-50	09	30
	51-60	06	20
Total		*30*	*100*
Economic Activity	Small business owners	06	20
	Teachers	02	6.7
	Students/youth	06	20
	Community health volunteers	10	33
	Employed	02	6.7
	Pastors	01	3.3
	Chairmen/ladies	02	6.7
	Housewives	01	3.3
Total		*30*	*100*
Number of Years Lived in Mukuru	1-5 years	02	6.6
	6-10 years	09	30
	11-15 years	10	33.4
	More than 15 years	09	30
Total		*30*	*100*

Table 1: Background Information of the Study Participants

3.3 Data Analysis

Qualitative data can take various forms such as field notes, transcripts and audio and video recordings. This study generated data in the form of documents, interview transcripts and focus group discussion transcripts. This were generated during the processes of interviewing the informal settlement community members and interrogating pre–existing texts. The nature of qualitative data, in that it is based on meaning conveyed through words and its collection results in non – standardised data, determined its analysis (Dey, 1993). Although qualitative analysis falls into three categories: categorising strategies, connecting strategies, memos and displays (Maxwell, 2005), this study adopted the categorising strategies method. Categorising strategies involved coding and thematic analysis. Coding is defined as the fracturing and rearranging of data into categories that will facilitate comparison between things in the same category and between categories (Maxwell, 2005). The categories were derived from existing theory, inductively generated during research or drawn from the categories of the people being studied (ibid,2005). Creswell (1998) also posits that the process of data analysis proceeds through a methodology of reduction, the analysis of specific statements and themes and a search of all possible meanings.

All interviews and focus group discussions were first coded manually through open coding. Document analysis was also carried out for the thirty-five documents collected for this study in the same way. Through reading and review of the documents, the researcher formed categories and codes emerged from those categories. These categories then led to the emergence of themes (Bowen, 2009; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane,

2006). Saldaña (2009) defines a code as a word or a short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing and evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data. Coding is a transitional process between data generation and more extensive data analysis (Owen, 2013).From verbatim transcripts, seventy-three significant codes were derived. The first cycle coding used narrative coding to look at the verbatim transcripts. After first cycle coding, the codes were categorised to generate categories based on the underlying meanings across the codes generated from all the interviews (Saldaña, 2016). These codes were analysed and their meanings were formulated. Using the formulated meanings, clusters of meaning were formed by grouping together leading to the emergent themes.

IV.FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As an aspect borrowed from the past, the *baraza* plays a crucial role in the current practice of citizen/public participation in informal settlements. It therefore plays a key role in the provision of spaces for people to express their opinions and be heard. However this space, the public sphere, has been captured and become a space for passing information and for consultation. The participants expressed their opinion that they would have preferred that the baraza is utilised as a space for discussion and prioritisation of community needs. The animation of the *baraza* as a space that creates lasting impact for the society is important in improving communal engagement of the community in the practice of public participation. Joseph reiterates the importance of the baraza to their community by saying that:

"Yes, it is easy to access and speak but most of the time, there must be a pressing issue to be dealt with in that meeting, for example insecurity so that when people meet they will only address insecurity and not speak about any project. People will raise their hands and use the opportunity they gain to complain until the Chief gives the final word."

Hannah says that:

"...because the person from Mariguini (one of the 11 villages of Mukuru Kayaba informal settlement) *will not know the problems we have here (in Kisii village, one of the 11 villages of Mukuru Kayaba informal settlement)...so it is beneficial for the baraza.... to meet so that every area presents their own issues that exist in their area"*

The perception by the participants that the baraza is held less frequently is an expression of their frustration with the relevance of the baraza in their lives as they seek to eke a living. For example, Rose says:

"......being oppressed is also there ...sometimes you might think you are not good enough...If I say something, how will people take me?"

Christopher explains that:

"...because when you attend the chief's baraza, you find the chairman, the chief, his/her assistant and the D.O. (District Officer/Assistant County Commissioner-ACC) so when you attend as two or three citizens, there is no way that your opinions will be considered ...because they will have already made a decision... they are just waiting for you to speak and make your noise ..."

The timings of the meetings also remain a contentious issue because of the precarious nature of the employment of many members of the community. Many of them are casual labourers seeking daily employment and others are small business owners. The perception that the losses of attending a baraza outweigh the benefits of going to seeking daily bread or earning a small amount from the businesses; means that turn out at such events is usually low and is subject to the level of interest the locals place in the agenda of the *baraza* of the day; Wycliffe opines that:

"...even that baraza, they hold it for the sake of the cameras but not because they want to listen or that people can give their opinions...views were given a long time and it is a done deal..."

The Public Administration (PA) is a key actor role in Kenya's administrative infrastructure. Questions of the legality of the its operation even after the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya(2010) may arise from time to time but it remains the main way of reaching the grassroots of this country. This is especially true of the informal settlements where public administrators have major contact with the local community. Their presence in these communities is a sign of governmental presence that has both positive and negative connotations; Joseph explains that:

"...we need a good platform that is not dominated by the public administration ...there are those who see the marks of the authority of the chief (on the Chief's official uniform) and they are unable to express themselves ...they are unable to speak..."

In certain instances and circumstances, it may serve as a protector, arbiter and mobiliser of development. The government through the public administration sets the development agenda. Utilising the chairpersons as well as the community health volunteers (CHVs) who are mobilisers in their communities. They are also political and social actors who have significant clout in their communities. The local hierarchy provides as expressed by the interview participants, an important framework for social sustainability in the community. However, many of

the participants expressed their dissatisfaction with the lack of political good will by the local public administrators to open up the baraza for greater citizen/public participation.

The *baraza*, which has its origins in the traditional history of Africa, was used in the colonial periods and post-colonial periods (Omanga, 2015). As a space for the transmission of information from the rulers to the ruled in the colonial era, it found new life in the post-colonial era in the government of Kenya's second president (Brunotti, 2018). The PA used this space as a semi-coercive space to compel residents to adhere to the directions of the central government (Haugerud, 1995). Programmes such as the District Focus for Rural Development and its 'Blue Book' of prescriptions mad this space one of passing information and tokenism. Persisting in this form into the government of the third president; the change began to take place after the promulgation of the new constitution in 2010. The *baraza* then acquired new life through the provisions of the new dispensation that created opportunities to animate the space. The baraza plays an important role in informal settlements. It serves both as opportunity and a barrier to effective citizen participation. The opportunity arises in the chances that as a space infused with new 'power to' and 'power with' (Gaventa, 2006), it has the ability to move subaltern communities up the ladder of participation to experience the highest form of expressing their citizenship. However, the vestiges pf the past continue to plague and conflate any efforts to positively utilise the *baraza*. The study participants noted that power contestations and interests affect the utilisation of these spaces in favour of the poor. Those who are able to leverage associations can bring their items on the agenda; locking out those addressing the most urgent and relevant needs of the majority.

4.1 Discussion

The role of the Public Administration (PA) is highlighted by citizenship studies (Cornwall, 2003). The PA is a key enabler of the understandings of citizenship. However, the PA lacks the incentives and the capacity to assist citizens to fully understand their lived experiences. Their proximity to citizens is used as a tool of control and facilitation of government ideas (Bagaka, 2011). This means that the main role of the public administration is one of control rather than dialogue. The historical context as administrators and enablers of government agenda means that all their actions and initiatives are met with greatest suspicion especially in informal settlements. The role of the public administration (PA) is a key theme linked to participation because the PA is an important part of the process of governance. It is a reflection of influence of the government and control in the country. The rights-based approach that advocates for participation as a basic right enables communities to grasp their own agency and make decision concerning their communities. However, for the vulnerable communities to use these spaces, they will require an effective and responsive state (Kabeer, 2002). It is therefore important that the central government through the PA must deliberately enable citizen participation especially in informal settlement communities.

Animating and activating the role of the government is key for the government agencies in terms of setting the agenda and taking the initiative is ensuring that the baraza which is a site for addressing the issues of local communities is free of the vestiges of the past. This is important in setting standards so that local people are free to present their views. The implications for these main stakeholders in terms of depicting the project as the site for citizen participation, is that projects provide locals critical spaces to actualise the developmental changes they prioritise. It is important for the local community to develop and build the capacity of local NGOs and CBOs to drive local development.

As key actors, the local community voiced their perceptions that they had been sidelined even though they were the main beneficiaries of citizen participation. They noted that there is disconnect between the local community and other actors such as the public administration. They expressed the view that what is required is inclusion and visible and tangible implementation of citizen participation. This implies that for the local community, the creation of agency is critical in dealing with exclusion for social sustainability of their community. Another theme is that of devolution as an enabler of citizen participation highlights that the community has to hold accountable the public administration and other actors such as the MP (Member of Parliament) and the MCA(Member of the County Assembly) to ensure deeper, relevant implementation of citizen participation. Devolution is seeking to empower and place the individual and their communities as citizens as the main beneficiaries of development is important in optimising sustainable development of informal settlement communities. This implies that the local community requires capacity development and sensitisation on the importance and the implementation of citizen participation.

The Public Administration, in its current iteration as the National Government Administrative Officers (NGAO) is a creature of Kenya's colonial past. As such, its functions and public perceptions to existence, relevance and utility are viewed from that lens. In their working, as expressed by the views of the study participants, there are patron-client linkages. They perceive the assistance of these officers is usually accorded when there is a transactional relationship sustained by corruption and nepotism. Such claims and the reality on the ground leads to the views of the PA as a source of the suppression of positive expressions of citizenship and

citizen participation on in informal settlements. The study participants all expressed their frustration as they ended up acting as 'rubber stamps' for decisions already made by receiving information.

The *baraza*, which has its origins in the traditional history of Africa, was used in the colonial periods and post-colonial periods (Omanga, 2015). As a space for the transmission of information from the rulers to the ruled in the colonial era, it found new life in the post-colonial era in the government of Kenya's second president. The PA used this space as a semi-coercive space to compel residents to adhere to the directions of the central government (Haugerud, 1995). Programmes such as the District Focus for Rural Development and its 'Blue Book' of prescriptions mad this space one of passing information and tokenism. Persisting in this form into the government of the third president; the change began to take place after the promulgation of the new constitution in 2010. The *baraza* then acquired new life through the provisions of the new dispensation that created opportunities to animate the space. The *baraza* plays an important role in informal settlements. It serves both as opportunity and a barrier to effective citizen participation. The opportunity arises in the chances that as a space infused with new 'power to' and 'power with' (Gaventa, 2006), it has the ability to move subaltern communities up the ladder of participation to experience the highest form of expressing their citizenship. However, the vestiges pf the past continue to plague and conflate any efforts to positively utilise the baraza. The study participants noted that power contestations and interests affect the utilisation of these spaces in favour of the poor. Those who are able to leverage associations can bring their items on the agenda; locking out those addressing the most urgent and relevant needs of the majority.

V. CONCLUSION

"While opening spaces for dialogue through invitation is necessary, it is by no means sufficient to ensure effective participation" (Cornwall, 2008:275)

Although the opening up spaces for participation by invitation through the *baraza*, as has been done through the constitution is necessary, but it is not sufficient. Arnstein's ladder has a continued role in empowering and awakening citizens on their right to participate; but more needs to be done to secure the legacy and activate the promise of devolved governance. It will all depend on how citizens take up and utilize what has been availed to them. There must also be supportive processes that can help build the capacity to nurture voice and enable people to empower themselves (Cornwall, 2008). Therefore, the best way to practice participation is to ensure that it is functioning at optimum levels rather than trying to judge its depth and breadth (Farrington and Bebbington, 1993). Optimum participation requires there should be a balance between depth and inclusion that is fit for the purpose for which public participation is taking place. Citizens must also find the space that enables them to be more than participants but have sufficient influence over the processes. Indeed the target of every participatory activity is to create agency and strengthen the bargaining positions of citizens and communities (Cornwall and Gaventa, 2001).

There is need to develop a national overarching policy that would set the norms and standards of effective participation through a participatory process (IGRTC, 2015). The policy should clearly define what public participation means in the Kenyan context, its values and principles, the key elements of effective public participation, the infrastructure for public participation and the resources for public participation. Civil Society organizations such The Institute for Social Accountability (TISA) and statutory bodies such as the Kenya Law Reform Commission have developed model participation law. This is meant to facilitate the development of county legislation on public participation. In the case of the Kenya Law Reform Commission (KLRC), their model law is known as the County Public Participation Bill. It has been adopted by several counties where it has served as a template for their laws. The Institute for Social Accountability (TISA), has also proposed a Bill on public participation. The main provisions of these Bills are that: first, there needs to be a dedicated institution for public participation, Secondly, there must be established in the counties a public participation forum through which citizens can participate in county affairs. The KLRC provides for forums devolved right down to the village level. The TISA model on the other hand provides a window for a fourteen day notice before the citizen forum is held. It also provides for a clear reporting framework on the proceedings and outcomes of such forums.

It is also important to note that what people are participating in conditions how their participation might be evaluated (Cornwall, 2008). This could lead to a transformation in power relations. Therefore, it is a key issue in refining public participation that people participate in issues that they perceive to be meaningful to them. In this way, then, public participation is strengthened. Participatory interventions may result in effects never envisaged at the outset. For example, gaining knowledge on how participation improves social outcomes may cause citizens to demand greater accountability from their leaders. Therefore, the most instrumental variants of participation can provide the impetus for popular engagement around particular issues. As in the case of counties such as Makueni where the devolved systems of participation to the village level have opened up spaces for improved healthcare and value addition to agricultural produce. This serves as a way of embedding citizen participation in local cultures and presents opportunities to effectively engage with past vestiges of

exclusion. Ordinary people are provided with platforms they can relate to and which they can fashion to suit their local needs.

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