

CREATION OF KENYA'S IDENTITY THROUGH BUILDING BRIDGES INITIATIVE DISCOURSE BY POLITICAL ACTORS

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ABSTRACT

The identity of a nation is derived from the understanding of how that nation wants to look, behave and value itself. Language is one of the ways people communicate their identities both positive and negative. The current study aims at assessing the use of language in the to construct Kenya's identity through the Building Bridges Initiative by political actors in Kenya. It was anchored on Critical Discourse Analysis theoretically, as observed by Roger Fowler 1970s and this study provided spotlight on how important language is in the community helping to bring out identity. The study concentrated on a few selected politicians; those who were for BBI and those against. This study used qualitative design to carry out a CDA on the use of language in politicians' Building Bridges Initiative discourse. The researcher collected audiovisual recorded talks from YouTube used by politicians and applied a purposive sampling method. The study found out that Kenya's identity was to a large extent shaped negatively in the BBI discourse with only two out of the six having a positive orientation. The researcher suggests that research could also be conducted on a study on creation of identity using other theories for example politeness theory, speech acts theory, or conceptual metaphor theory.

Keywords: Language, Identity, Conversation, Struggling Nation, Tribalism, Corrupt, Fairness and Inclusivity

Date of Submission: 01-09-2022

Date of Acceptance: 12-09-2022

I. Introduction

This paper discusses how politician use language to create a Kenyan identity through on BBI in Kenya in their discourse. This section is divided into Language, Identity

1.1 Language

Linguistic elements derived from speech can be understood as far from accidental, but rather precisely designed and useful in the administration of social and hence possibly political interactions. Language therefore plays a role in the spread of these social constructions, the formation of connections, and the acquisition of power. According to Van Dijk (1985), language is both a facilitator and a vehicle for social creation. Language is a means via which humans exchange information, beliefs, attitudes, opinions, wishes, demands, compliments, duties, vows, and feelings, according to Atieno et al. (2016). According to Mulhern et al. (1989), language is undoubtedly important in politics since it may mislead as well as represent reality and, in some cases, improve well-being; yet, it can also linguistically befog facts and intellectually interpret them to support unjust power systems. Politics, according to Chilton (2004), is preoccupied with the capacity to make decisions, allocate funds and the behavior of others, and, at times, influence their ideals. Language is the key in this procedure since all political actions, whether lawful or not, are organized, supported, impacted, and acted upon by words that would in no time create and identity.

1.2 Identity and Political Identity

Linguistics is interested in the idea of identity for a variety of reasons. It connects the individual and societal levels, allowing us to capture the processes by which individuals attach or remove themselves from specific communities, what sort of information they want to express about themselves, and how this information corresponds with the thoughts others have about them. Bamberg (2006) observed that identity is a yardstick of

showing the type of people we are, the place we belong, as values we value as far as our morals and ethics are of concerned.

According to Smith, (1983) identity is a complicated term that is culturally and discursively constituted. Identity politics, in turn, was initially aligned with the repercussions of identification and categorization about race, race, and sexual identity; however, we see more expansively as an idea that enables us to concentrate on the aspects in which national identity building are associated with desires and philosophies, as well as the consequences of this. Van Dijk (1998) says that while we use language to convey images of ourselves, we also use it to identify others, to classify and judge people, to align ourselves with them, signaling our similarities, or to distance ourselves from them, underlining our differences.

Several contend because what the right - wing conservative movement seems to be doing today is a form of identity politics; that identity politics can thus take the form of ideas of white supremacy, discrimination, xenophobia, sexism, and homophobia, as well as racism and misogyny; and that it can be interconnected with religion and religious identities. As a result, the consequences of identity politics can be severe: 'Identity has taken on the role of a precious treasure, worth battling and even dying for,' says Gillis (1994).

Since independence, Kenya has found herself in a quandary as a result of unending conflicts that mostly ensue from ethnicity, failure to concede defeat in elections by candidates or incitement of citizens by political leaders. Munene (2010) says for as long as we can remember, Kenyan leaders seek votes along tribal lines. If they win, it is considered a community win and the same goes for losing.

Thus according to Munene (2010), in the 1940s and 1950s, a small group of academic and political elites such as Daniel arap Moi and Taita Towett used the term Kalenjin, that is now largely associated with the Nandi-speaking people and was partly created by the colonial administration, as a form of ethnic identity. The word acquired prominence in the mid-1950s, when politicians advocated its use in order to broaden their core vote.

According to Yieke (2010), one is born with an ethnic identity. As a result, identity is determined not only by one's inherent and unchangeable characteristics, but also by one's culture, biological history, and geographical roots. Empiricist scholars describe an individual's or group's racial identity in terms of its link to the identities of other individuals or groups. Fairclough (2015) claims that "language is simultaneously constitutive of social identities (sets) social relations and shapes systems of knowledge and beliefs by forming ideologies that inform the texture and the contexts of discourses".

1.3 Theoretical Framework

This study used Critical discourse analysis which was proposed by Roger Fowler in the 1970s. The tenets of this theory are based on the fact that it is a multidisciplinary method of examining discourse that considers language to be a kind of social exercise. According to Widdowson (2007) it is the uncovering of implicit ideologies in texts. Critical discourse analysis deals with analyzing the content and social relations in a text and this way, it reveals ideologies and power relations in a context. Rahimi and Sahragard, (2007) agrees that CDA tries to reveal the sources of dominance and inequalities observed in the society by analyzing texts. The use of the (de)legitimization strategies: Authorization, Rationalization, Moral Evaluation, And Mythopoeic by politicians in discourse of the BBI campaign revealed how this theory helpful in understanding use of language to dominate, manipulate, consolidate, building relationships, power, and controlling society.

II. METHODOLOGY

A total of 8 talks from different proponents were used, where four were pro-BBI and the other four were from proponents who were against the same. The YouTube video talks were purposively sampled. These videos were then transcribed into text and used to capture the (de) legitimization strategies as used by the politicians. No pseudo name was used for these politicians since the videos were uploaded by reputable media houses and thus were in the public domain.

III. The Political Identity language as used by politician in the on the Building Bridges Initiative in Kenya

3.1 Identity and Political Identity

The identity Strategies included: National Conversation, Struggling Nation, Tribalism, Corrupt, Fairness and Inclusivity, Peaceful Nation

3.1.1 Kenya in Need of National Conversation

Significant events occurred in the time after what was known as the "Handshake" in the year 2018 between two protagonists (President Uhuru Kenyatta and Hon.Raila Odinga) following a delayed election conducted in the year 2017. Rivals became friends, and friends became foes (President Uhuru Kenyatta and his deputy William Ruto), leading one to believe in Trapenberg (2021), who remarked that there are no permanent

friends and enemies in politics; priorities and interests come first. Several speeches were chosen to highlight the necessity for national dialogue and identity, and this was accomplished as a result of them.

For instance,

Pres. Uhuru Kenyatta;

...These are the conversations that we must have because at the end of the day all we want to do is see ourselves improve what has been done.

President Uhuru Kenyatta uses diction that is very easy to understand. He makes use of expressives, “must”, to bring the meaning as an obligation, an essential, a requirement in having national conversation. The president categorically told the audience that if there was something that could be fixed; then it was collective national conversation.

He believed that since the nation was in need of national conversation, it was moral practice that would lead to improvement on what had been done. It is his belief that since BBI was work in progress and needed the participation of all individuals, no one should be stopped from talking about it or from contributing to it in any way possible. According to him, if Kenyans would air their views on the BBI, which would then be incorporated in the already existing document, Kenya would be one step ahead in solving its problems.

The fact that people had been allowed by the president to have a conversation to improve the BBI document, means that it was moral practice. It was a call for national conversation which portrays the need to identify Kenyans as lacking a collective identity of dialoging with one another. He thus ends by saying;

But let us not be bogged down by those and fail to achieve this one because without this hizozinginezoteni za bure (all the others are useless)

The use of the verb “bogged” means to get stuck in mud or something sticky. It is a metaphor of some sort in which he includes himself; “*Lets us not be bogged down*” - he was giving a warning “bogged down by those” in references to earlier events or those who were opposing the BBI and making noise that was uncalled for. He was emphasizing the need for all to get focused on dealing with what was present (BBI) and not what was coming (general election) or fights that would only pull the country backwards. The President’s emphasis on dialogue, makes the audience feel that it is a lack of it that had resulted to the many political conflicts in the country. He further added that if other politicians and all Kenyans would listen to the other party’s point of view objectively like he and Hon.Raila Odinga did, then Kenya would begin its healing process

Pres. Uhuru Kenyatta: -

My friends (rafikizangu), tumekosakuongekamajamiimoyaya baba na mama yawazalendowa Kenya.

“My friends, we have failed to speak as one community of same parents, of Kenyan patriots.”

This speech brings out his diversity in delivering speeches in different languages that resonates well with the majority of the audience and removes the difficulties in being interpreted by a third person. Before this point, the president had lamented to the audience on the many Kenyans that had taken to the podium to spew words meant to have them cheered by the audience without concrete discussion of where they wanted Kenya to be. He said that it was such talks that hindered the national agenda from moving forward since everyone’s aim was to be applauded and please his political allies whenever he got a chance to speak.

In this example, President Uhuru Kenyatta was emphasizing togetherness when he says, “*my friends, we have failed to speak as one community of fathers and mothers of Kenyan patriots.*” He believes that the Kenyan identity had been eroded since Kenyans did not speak as one. They had failed to identify themselves as one nation and instead, had divided themselves into groupings that could no longer be termed as nationalistic. From this view one gets a picture of a nation without unity. The president believed time had come for Kenyans to unite and have a common voice on issues that were affecting the country.

According to him, it was that kind of negativity spewed by politicians that led to the birth of BBI since, had Kenyans been united, they would have come together to solve those problems without the needing it.

Pres. Uhuru Kenyatta

*Wachaturudinyumanikwaninibaadayakilamiakamitano wananchi wakenyalazimawapigane,
lazimatumwagedamu, lazimamaliiharibiwe, lazimabiasharazisimame,
lazimahofuiingiekwawakenyanatukasematurudinyumanatujuiulize. Huondioulukuwamwanzowa BBI.*

(Let's go back and ponder why it is that after five years Kenyans must fight, we must shed blood, we must destroy property, businesses must stop, fear must enter Kenyans and we said let us go back and ask ourselves. That was the beginning of the BBI.)

The president had earlier narrated how he met with Hon. Raila Odinga for the first time after the 2017 general elections, and that they could not have a breakthrough in their conversation. This first meeting with Hon. Raila Odinga was tension-filled and awkward since no one wanted to speak as a result of the previous insults they had traded against each other on the campaign trail. He told the audience that they later realized that their differences were not as big as they had imagined because their ideologies for Kenya were the same.

In this example he uses “we” and “must” as a matter of obligation to the Kenyan nation. He pointed out that Kenyans needed to take time to examine what preceded and came after all elections in the country. To him it was tension, looting, bloodshed and fear. This, John (Ed.). (1994) defines as a settled or regular tendency or practice, especially one that is hard to give up. Lynch (2006) refers to such tendencies as a culture, while Leak, (1994) opines this as an identity - the fact of being who or what a person or thing is. President Uhuru Kenyatta noted that Kenyans had to change that identity, culture and one of the ways to achieve it was through national dialogue.

In this example, the President is showing that in their dialogue with his nemesis, Hon. Raila Odinga, they realized that Kenya's identity had been changed from what had been previously thought out by the founding fathers to one that involved fighting among themselves after every five years, destroying assets, stopping of businesses and living in a state of fear.

In contemporary conflict transformation processes, state and non-state actors at the national, regional, and global levels identify a broad range of factors that cause conflicts. A clear understanding of this range of factors is critical in instituting a proper foundation for their resolution in the pursuit of positive peace amongst people within societies and states. Kenya, like several other states in Africa, has experienced a series of conflicts, and in particular, electoral ones. The state of internal conflict in Kenya has prevented the maintenance of peace in the country. Since independence in 1963, the country has experienced electoral reversals and tensions (Kanyinga, Okello, & Akech, 2010). This has led to a situation in which peace is mostly absent, or, if present, it is just negative peace. In this case, it is periodically interrupted manifest conflict, especially during general elections.

President Uhuru Kenyatta was alive to the fact that elections were seasonal, therefore, inclusivity should also be given an upper hand. This is why he adds:

“Let us talk about it, let us find out what is that, which we can do to make sure the resultant product of an election is inclusive and nobody is left behind.”

The language used here is projected by the use of an adjective, “*Inclusive*” meaning; comprehensive, wide-ranging and general among others. He also repeats the use of the expression “*Let us*” - used as a polite way of making or responding to a suggestion, giving an instruction, or introducing a remark in which he does not exclude himself from what he wants.

It is also important to note that earlier on, the president had talked at length on issues pertaining election outcomes. He pointed out that whenever an election ended, some of the contestants who lost as well as their supporters felt robbed of victory. He emphasized that at the time of the election, there were people who, whether they voted for one or not, were always afraid of loss of property and death, or loss of jobs. The president highlighted that the time had come when elections should be based on policies and whoever wins, should be accepted as the rightful leader for all. President Uhuru Kenyatta says, “*...We want a situation where the one who will win, becomes the leader of both those who voted for him and those who did not.*”

In this example the president meant that every election in Kenya had been marked by an identity of dissatisfaction, dissolution, dejections, and demoralization, for the losing parties. He is thus saying that a solution should be sought where such kinds of scenarios can be avoided and a new identity put in place; where satisfaction and inclusiveness would prevail over atrocity and dejection as a result of an election. The image of this projection is that the President wanted a new national identity devoid of disunity and based on inclusion.

It is important to note that after the August 8, 2017 general elections, there were also repeated calls for secession with a view to isolate the Central and Rift Valley regions of Kenya due to their perceived ethnic domination in the country's political leadership. This secession debate had previously been raised in March 2016 by David Ndii, a prominent economist, who in an article entitled ‘*Kenya is a cruel marriage, it's time we talk divorce*’ elicited national conversations on issues of economic and political marginalization in the country (Madowo 2017; Ndii 2016).

This type of literature by renown T.V personality, Larry Madowo, - CNN and Economist, David Ndii, may have perhaps called upon the consciousness of President Uhuru Kenyatta several years back and prompted him to say in his speech;

Pres. Uhuru Kenyatta: -

Tuna taka kujiuliza, nikwaninibaadayakilamiakamitano; tunaendamiakamitatuyakazi, miakambilitunapotezakwasababusiasaimchacha.

(We want to ask ourselves, why is it that after every five years; we are going to three years of work, then spend the other two years politicking.)

The question posed by the president did not by any means point to anyone but to the audience who perhaps by sheer coincidence might have been part and parcel of the several elections in the past and are aware of the incidences. The emphasis being on the line “*We want to ask ourselves...*” Before this line of speech, the president had spoken at length about the need to understand that Kenya is a country that needed all her citizens to come together. He retaliated the thinking that when a president is elected, he is not supposed to be viewed as a president of a certain region only, but for the forty million Kenyans. There were duties and responsibilities that needed to be understood as those belonging to the local government and the national government. He also said that the responsibility of the Kenyans in the rural areas should be to identify which development is most appropriate in their areas and which one is not.

In this example, therefore, the president meant that Kenya had a culture of politicians working for the first three years of office, and spending the other two politicking. To him, the time spent on politics was a wasted resource that should have been used in developing the country. The president believed that some development issues needed time and planning for them to be realized. Unfortunately, this rarely happened, with politicians doing shoddy work since they spend a lot of time on issues that do not matter to the lives of Kenyans, and this had become a national identity. He wanted a new identity for the nation, one whereby when elections are done, there should be a period for the government in place to play its role and mandate as stipulated in its manifesto to fulfill its promises. The president’s sentiments were pointed to a country which for years failed to have a common goal, emanating from a lack of dialogue.

Hon. Raila Odinga

The founding fathers of our nation wanted a united nation, that is why they said that God bless this our land and nation, justice be our shield and defender, may we dwell in unity Peace and liberty, plenty be found within our borders.

In this example, Hon. Raila Odinga quotes part of the national anthem which the founding fathers used to unite Kenyans and properly get national unity as an identity. He was of the view that as the anthem says, Kenyans would be able to realize that justice is founded in making of the law that would act as their shield and defender, which they need to be identified with. Peace and liberty are only found if there is a unity of purpose that would breed a new identity. The plenty to be found within our borders is a realization that Kenya was a country with a lot of resources, which if properly harnessed would be of benefit to the neighboring countries which can be used as trading; hence acting as an income-earning venture. These ventures would in turn become job creation activities to the dwellers of these counties.

Hon. Raila Odinga: -

So, what is it that is missing that needs to be fixed so that Kenyans can march on as people who are proud and happy?

Hon. Raila Odinga had earlier told the audience that he and President Uhuru Kenyatta had sat together and agreed that the time to make changes to the current constitution was then. He said that they agreed that there was still something still not right though many saw it as the best the country had had.

In this example wondered what was missing that would enable Kenyans to live as proud and happy people. The marching on as one nation/people is what he believed should be the new identity of being together “*who are proud and happy.*” He uses the adjective “proud” to show people who are pleased, delighted, satisfied, and “happy” to mean contented, glad, and in high spirit as an emotion devoid of sadness. Politicians are in the business of promising people a brighter future with hope, and one that looks better than what they had lived until that point. In this case, the speaker uses words that would bring hope in days to come and in doing so, appear to be putting others before him. According to Fukuyama, (2018), this is based on altruism that the speaker’s needs are put aside and the happiness of the other is paramount.

Hon. Raila Odinga thus portrays a new identity for Kenya which was of satisfaction and contentment as a result of fixing the things that had been bedeviling them. In so doing this speaker was inviting a need for national

conversation as a new identity, where the people of Kenya could be encouraged to talk freely and identify that which is of importance to them.

Hon. Raila Odinga quickly adds:

That was the essence of that conversation that we had and after we talked, we put this team (Task Force Committee) together and tasked them to go around the country and collect views of our people.

This example reveals a man on a mission of making sure that the BBI document is portrayed as a holistic. By pointing out that the task force went around the country collecting views from Kenyans, shows that it was a true representative of the people, unlike the earlier 2010 Constitution which was based on delegates. He uses a linguistics mechanism of narration to bring to the attention of his audience Kenya needed a new identity.

He warned Kenyans and leaders not to identify with a new identity which had been observed as coming from some quarters or leaders when he says: -

We don't want a proletarian revolution. A proletarian revolution has never been led by the bourgeoisie.

He had earlier told the audience that Kenya was a country where no one would go hungry and that if one was sick there was available treatment whether one had money or not. He also talked about a Kenya where everyone had an opportunity and not a society where those who had means of survival outweighed those who did not.

The chosen example from Hon. Raila's speech is loaded with caution about a new identity of the proletarian revolution. According to Brovkin, (2015) this is a social revolution in which the working class attempts to overthrow the bourgeoisie. They are sometimes called the middle-class or conservatives, who want to maintain the status quo. The Proletarian revolutions are generally advocated by socialists, communists, and most anarchists. World War I was seen by Marxist–Leninists as proof of Lenin's *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. It was argued that the War would lead to the destruction of capitalism through the international proletarian revolution. Marx's last explanation of the proletarian revolution traces to fundamental economic principles, specifically the labor theory of value and its derivatives. The highly elaborated theory's essence is that the amount of labor imparted to a commodity determines its value as the contradictions of the capitalist system worsen, a revolutionary party is formed, consisting of the proletariat and that part of the bourgeoisie that has been driven into the ranks of the workers. That party ultimately overthrows the capitalist system.

Under capitalism, the bourgeoisie owning the means of production exploits the proletariat that only owns its labor through the surplus value generated by the latter. Thus, the way to a new classless society is a proletarian revolution. According to the tenets of classical Marxism (the Marxism of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels), the dictatorship of the proletariat was to be a transitional form of minority rule that marked the distance between 'bourgeois democracy' – what Marxists considered to be, in reality, a 'dictatorship of the bourgeoisie' – and communist democracy. Lenin assumed full power over the emerging political system that followed the 'proletarian' revolution by legitimizing it through an appeal to an ideological rationale (Furet, 1999).

It is with this in mind that Hon. Raila Odinga cautions the audience, about what has been known as "Hustler nation" led by deputy president William Ruto. He believed that talking of hustler is bound to create a revolution based on class and kin to proletarianism. Lenin's proletarian dictatorship and Mussolini's Fascism provide a syndrome of traits that specifically characterize modern dictatorship (Johnson, 1991).

In both cases, a charismatic leader exercises almost total control over followers as well as the national community out of which they emerge. Leadership in both cases is epistemic. That is to say, leadership, in the absence of popular elections, is legitimized by the leader's putative possession of an ideology that is an inerrant guide to policy, satisfying the needs of the collectivity (the proletariat, or the nation). The inerrant ideology informs the belief system of an organization of believers, usually identified as a "vanguard" of the revolutionary truth. Over time, that vanguard becomes the "unitary party" of the political system, to the exclusion of alternatives. The inerrancy of the ideology and its attendant policy, in turn, is used to prove control over any political dissidents (which, under the circumstances, could only be in error) and any initiatives independent of the vanguard leadership.

In that connection, Hon. Raila Odinga believed the deputy president is bourgeoisie based on the way he had been conducting himself in his "generosity" with his wealth which he had been donating to churches every Sunday thus he says; "*A proletarian revolution has never been led by the bourgeoisie.*" To him, this is a fallacy and a lie. For Deputy President William Ruto to pretend to fight for a class he is not in is a big lie that could not materialize at any given time. Proletariats are low-class, laborers, (can be said in the modern world as hustlers) on the other hand *bourgeoisie* are middle-class which Hon. Raila Odinga believed the deputy president belongs to. How they can fight for or lead the proletariats to him was questionable unless there was something hidden.

He would end up being a dictator since proletarian revolution leaders end up being one and exercise absolute power while the proletariats become the servants (slaves) of the master. This creates the impression that Kenya, though a democratic country, had dictatorial leadership.

The same kind of sentiments are seen to be held by Prof. Patrick Lumumba when he pointed out that the BBI was being shoved down the throats of Kenyans whether they agreed with it or not.

"I think the people who are proposing these amendments have the wherewithal to put it down our throats they have the capacity. But let them remember this let them remember this, they've been leaders in the world who thought that they were larger than life almost as large as death but they too have their comings and goings so when we are amending our constitution let us think of the next generation and not the next elections but even if they force it down our throats we will have our say, so that history may record that when our constitution was being mutilated for no reason we raised our voices even if they could not be heard at their most eloquent. That will be our contribution to history."

This brings to the attention of the audience, that there could be a likelihood of Kenya being a dictatorial country where political leaders impose their ideas on citizens.

Deputy President William Ruto:

We do not have the luxury to walk away in any case, it is said the punishment given to good people, who don't participate in the politics of governance of their country; the punishment given to them is to be ruled by fools

According to him if serious issues especially those related to the leadership were left unchallenged, then the country would be left in the hands of people who did not have a clear picture of the direction it should take. According to him, BBI was proposing governance issues, which would affect the well-being of the citizen and so refusal or neglect to participate in it would at the end of the day have repercussions. He was challenging the nation to a new identity, one based on participation in matters affecting their livelihood. He cautioned them that failure to do so, would leave the nation with leaders who unable to articulate their frustrations, problems, and desires.

3.1.2 Kenya as a Struggling Nation

Kenya as a struggling nation has been demonstrated by the language expressed by many politicians in establishing Kenya's identity. Majority of scholars and researchers agree that language is so important a tool in the construction of individual and social identities, the text configuration in terms of the voice depends on the lexicon-semantic choices made by the speaker, not on the content of the text but, the form is taken by the text-dependent on the context.

Clark, Gioia, Ketchen, & Thomas, (2010) argue that the question of identity, whether on an individual, societal, or institutional is something that is constantly built and negotiated, that is, people switch into various roles at different times and situations and each of those contexts may require a shift into different, sometimes conflicting, identities for the people involved.

This statement is in agreement with Karuri, (2016) who notes that in Kenyan context, every great achievement was once considered impossible. This is true of the country since everything enjoyed was a product of bitter and painful struggles. Multi party politics, the constitution of 2010, devolution; all these are products of painful struggles. The establishment of the 2010 constitution, according to Kiguru (2010) on the one hand, institutionally has strengthened democracy in Kenya. It has increased separation of powers by adding a new layer of governance at the county level and a set of powerful new actors in the governors. But it has had adverse effects on the politics of identity by strengthening ethnic identification and tying it to homelands. This has marginalized minorities within counties and increased new possibilities for conflict at both the county and national level. Hence, the resultant factors have been Kenya being portrayed as a struggling nation on three fronts; tribalism, corruption and violence.

On the national level, there are those who have formed conceptions of Kinship in order to rule a certain region, hence people witnessing the constant struggle to establish supremacy. These battles are more catapulted by violence as observed by Hon. Martha Karua when she said that the state had started a narrative of regional representation which helps the state to manage its affairs. That the violence which was witnessed in Matungu and Kabuchai by-election was sponsored by the state and it was aimed at installing certain people to be heads of certain regions in the country.

3.1.3 Kenya as a Nation of Tribalism

The ethnic incitements in the build up to the general elections in 2007 and the post-election violence that followed in early 2008 however exposed the ethnic rivalry that exists, as the country nearly went into a full-scale civil war along ethnic lines. (Roberts, 2009)

Prof. Lumumba thus says,

"... and one of the things that have exacerbated immorality in this country is negative ethnicity."

This means that more than anything, ethnicity has been the bedrock of Kenya's identity. He uses the verb "exacerbated" meaning aggravated, worsened, or impaired morality to a level that many Kenyans were thus divided into tribal lines, which had been accepted as the norm. He wanted Kenyans to dissociate themselves from vices that deter the development and view of the citizens through the glass of tribal affiliations.

Hon. Kalonzo Musyoka

You know I once said, stood in Jamhuri Park and I was very angry and I wanted to be biblical. Natuachekutukanana! Matusihaiwezikujengataifa. (We stop insulting one another. Insults don't build a nation).

Previously, he had narrated how angry he was at one given time in Jamhuri park in 2013 and 2017 because they had just lost an election in which he was the running mate to Hon. Raila Odinga. He admitted to having said things as a result of anger that were not in the best interest of the unity of the country. Therefore, with BBI being driven to the rural areas, it was just another good occasion for people to forgive one another and move forward since these were some of the tenets of the BBI and the handshake.

From this background Hon. Kalonzo felt that Kenya has been an angry nation. He cautioned the people on the identity Kenya had acquired of politicians insulting their opponents during the campaign period as well as after losing elections. He reminded them of a bible verse he had quoted in Jamuhuri Park then, which according to him was misinterpreted, and for which he felt the people of Mt. Kenya region had not forgiven him.

"Luke 3:5 Every ravine will be filled, and every mountain and hill will be brought low; The crooked will become straight, And the rough roads smooth"

According to him, at that time he meant there would come a time when the people of Mt. Kenya region would not have a say in matters of politics in Kenya. This, according to him, became a talking point and made many people at that time especially people from Mt. Kenya to be angry. Through this example our eyes are opened to the fact that politicians operate along tribal lines, organizing their campaigns in terms of regions rather than treating Kenya as a unit. This then results to tension building in the specific regions. This is why the picture being shown is that Hon. Kalonzo wanted people to identify with the new Kenya where losing an election would not result to anger and vengeance.

President Uhuru Kenyatta

... But must be very careful in managing it. We cannot manage it through inciting them. ... It's very exciting and sweet but we must stop this culture of use and dispose of our young people.

In this example, the president acknowledges the presence of leaders who had for a long time used the youth to fuel violence and later left them without a solution. The president was showing the identity which had been there and that needed to be stopped, was use of the young people to kill and cause mayhem for the benefit of leaders seeking elective posts. The killings were meant to intimidate the opponents and cause fear which in turn resulted to people not being able to exercise their democratic rights for fear of repercussions. He acknowledges that it was "exciting and sweet" but says that such a culture of use and dumping is an identity that needed to end. The president thus adds; *"So many countries, some that we share borders with, have trodden a similar path to destruction and ruin."* Here he means that many countries had fallen as a result of not managing the youth problem properly or misusing them to their detriment.

He wanted the youth to be identified as individuals with the strength and purpose that could be used in more constructive issues. He was also cautioning that if that tradition of using them for violence did not stop, then the country was headed to destruction, just like some of those with whom Kenya shared borders.

Hon. Martha Karua;

The regional kingpins are being confined to the 5 major tribes in Kenya. The Big 5 who form 65% of the population. We have another 38 tribes forming about 35% what does this mean? That the 5 will perpetuate themselves at the expense of the 38? No.

In this example, Hon. Martha Karua is using a communication speech substantiated on plea and rationalization of reason (mental ability to think through) using numbers which are commonly called logos. By way of population density, the five major tribes in Kenya are the Kikuyu, Luo, Luhya, Kalenjin, and Kamba. Her rationalization is that it is not in order to have five tribes control issues

that are of concern a nation consisting of forty-two tribes. Leaving this to only five tribes was a disaster in waiting. Her use of the rhetorical question, "*We have another thirty-eight tribes forming about 35% what does this mean?*" indicates that the audience should trust her ability to question the rationality of the narrative, and its relationship with the violence witnessed.

Munene (2010) notes that the apparent fallacious "Kikuyunisation" and "Kalenjinisation" of political debates on power distribution in the country propagate ethnic hatred and repudiate any well-intended argument for national unity. "Kikuyunisation" and "Kalenjinisation" subtleties are used to promote the continued domination of the Kikuyu and Kalenjin ethnic identities in national leadership. Three of Kenya's presidents; Jomo Kenyatta, Mwai Kibaki, and Uhuru Kenyatta, were from the Kikuyu ethnic group while Daniel Moi was from the Kalenjin ethnic group. Since these two ethnic identities had dominated political leadership, there was a growing agitation against them. Further, ethnic-based appointments into positions of authority intensify the ethnic identity-based political discourses (Munene, 2010).

Hon. Martha Karua notes that there are thirty-eight other tribes that had been marginalized because of their small populace. This painted Kenya in its present form as a country struggling with tribalism. She continued to wonder if those communities who did not feature in the Kingship narrative would have their equal share of developments. It was on those same lines, she pointed out, that violence was sponsored.

Yieke (2010) opined that while the triggers of these conflicts in the country are multi-dimensional and include historical, structural, institutional, legal, and cultural factors, they have always reflected an underlying ethnic-identity problem. This is because the foundation of pluralist democratic politics in the country was anchored on political party structures and strategies that originally segmented the country along ethnic alignments. Political leaders blatantly camouflage ethnic alignments as issues of nationalism as they attempt to secure ethnic backing and patronage that can propel them to power.

3.1.4 Kenya as a Corrupt Nation

Githongo (2006) posits that corruption is traditionalized and reframed as gift giving or as a form of socially recognizable reciprocity.

Prof. Patrick Lumumba created an identity of "struggle" to mean contextually that many Kenyans struggled to achieve what they purpose to. He was indicating that life contained struggles and it was not a bed of roses. He emphasized it by saying, "*My journey has been a journey of struggle because life is a struggle.*" Hypothetically he was saying it was morally correct to struggle since that was what life brought to the table hence alluding to the fact that Kenya as a nation had been identified by the constant struggles of change in the lives of her citizens, the constitution and the political playing grounds.

Prof. Patrick Lumumba adds that;

"..... the pursuit of public office without regard to anything else, honesty, integrity, conviction and of course humility is at the very heart of it.

He had earlier pointed out that Kenyans were victims of corruption, that they paid bribes for them to get quick services in government offices, and had no choice but to do so, since even the politicians holding offices, bribed their way in.

Ideally, from this example, Prof. Lumumba is a man who believed in honesty (uprightness), integrity (truthfulness), conviction (belief), and humility (humbleness). This is taken to mean that anyone who goes for a public office without these basic principles was bound to be corrupt. These tenets were the foundation which he identified himself with. It is this kind of identity he wished Kenya to assume. He thus quickly adds that; - "*.... the truth is that the political culture of this country is defined by corruption.*"

He was of the view that Kenyans had an immoral identity that had been practiced for so long and was ingrained in their culture. According to Yieke, (2010) culture is an umbrella term that encompasses the social behavior and norms found in human societies, as well as the knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, customs, capabilities, and habits of the individuals in these groups. This connection for Prof. Lumumba to use corruption as culture shows how this has been practiced for a long time and turned out to be some normal occurrences or identity by the masses. He says, "*What it tells you, is that when people steal, we celebrate them, by saying he is a thief but he is our thief.*" To indicate that as much as corruption is a vice, some people would defend such acts or people as belonging to this ethnic group or from this political lineage. He reproached the defenders of corruption by saying "*stopcelebrating these thieves am arguing you to liberate yourselves.*"

Prof. Patrick Lumumba remembers with disappointment the time he served at the EACC, an office whose sole duty was to fight corruption. The office which no longer existed according to him because the law was amended to abolish it. He pointed out that there was never a shortage of men and women who were out to curtail what was being done. "*...remember that the law was amended to abolish the office that I held so that is*

the context, that tells you when you are fighting integrity, there will be no shortage of men and women want to curtail what you are doing” Prof.Lumumba admitted that fighting corruption was never an easy thing, since the same people masquerading as fighting it were the very ones engaging in it.

He challenged Kenyans who had been accusing the EACC of not doing its job, to act right. He pointed out that the duty of the EACC is to educate citizens, create an environment where corruption is reduced, to investigate and recover stolen assets. According to him, all that had been done, but it was Kenyans who had continued to propagate corruption by accepting bribes from politicians and offering the same to traffic police officers, to mention but a few.

Hon.Martha Karua highlighted corruption by pointing out even the leaders themselves were bribed by other leaders in higher offices to do their bidding. *“We have seen MCAs getting bribed with car grants”*. According to her, the members of the county assembly were being wooed to supporting the BBI by having car grants awarded to those who were in support. Those who did not ended up being investigated and probed with a heap of accusations on their account. *“Being intimidated and the most obvious intimidation we have seen in Baringo, MCAs, the ones who voted No specifically. We have seen them under investigation, writing statements with NIC and one accused of terrorism”* She wonders whether not choosing to support the BBI is an act of terrorism.

Prof Lumumba echoes the sentiments held by Hon.Martha Karua when he questions how governors and members of county assembly, whose salary was not very lucrative, were able to acquire so much wealth, build luxurious hotels, purchase helicopters and build mansions within a short period. *“Look at your MCA, you know their salary how have they built mansions within eight years. Look at your governors how have they build the hotels that they are building across the country? How have they acquired their helicopters?”* He believed they had done something that was not in agreement with the holy books, yet Kenyans worship them, to the extent that if they went to a church in whose denomination they did not belong, the modern clergy offered them the body of Christ. This is a clear indication that corruption in Kenya had infiltrated even in the holy places of worship. Since it is the same politicians who were invited to help in church developmental projects, then it is deemed okay to bend the law for them.

Prof.Lumumba sheds light on what goes on in public offices in terms of corruption and misuse of public funds when he talks about the salary a Prime minister would earn if the BBI passed. He noted that though many would argue that the amount is little, it takes a lot of money to run an office, and the salary is only a minute fraction of the same. *“And then I hear somebody telling me the Prime Minister will not earn a higher salary. What is a salary in the life of any public office? It is the other hidden costs. Tea of eleven million in your office per diems, the vehicle. Salary is 0.00001% of what it takes to take care of an office.”* He makes it hilarious yet sad, that an office would spend eleven million Kenya shillings on tea alone.

He noted that political leaders in Kenya had an appetite for amending the constitution as a means to an end. He pointed out that the BBI stipulates that for the purposes of inclusivity, there was need to have a prime minister and a deputy prime minister. He gave a brief recap of the Kenyan history, where the country had the late former President Jomo Kenyatta as a prime minister after independence. Through the amendment of the constitution, he was made the president. In 2008, the country again had a prime minister, Hon.Raila Odinga and a deputy Hon.Musalia Mudavadi. This saw to friction with the office of the deputy president, who at the time was Hon. Kalonzo Musyoka. In the 2010 constitution, the office of the prime minister was abolished. Prof. Lumumba thus wonders why the same office wanted to be brought back through the BBI only after ten years.

He pointed out that while the BBI, which he deems unnecessary, was costing billions of monies, the more pressing needs in the country were ignored. For example, he noted, doctors were dying because there were no personal protective equipment (PPE), those who supplied desks to schools were not paid, the police lacked uniforms, because there were no resources. He added that Kenya was continually borrowing from the International Monetary Fund, while the Kenya power and lighting company was increasing tariffs and paying off development loans at very high taxes. *“At the same time doctors are dying because there is no PPIs. At the same time our children are dying because there are no masks! At the same time people who supplied desks have not been paid. At the same time my good friend Dr. Fred Matiangi says that 40, 000 police officers don't have police uniforms because we have no resources. At the same time, we are borrowing money from the IMF. At the same time, we are having the Kenya power increasing the tariffs. At the same time, we are paying for SGR through taxes! At the same time those who did work for counties cannot be paid! At the same time counties have not received money for the last three months then you tell me that the priority is BBI.”* He repeated the phrase “at the same time” severally to emphasize on other dire needs that the country needed to take care of, rather than wasting resources on BBI.

Hon.Charity Ngilu;

“Small handouts coming from leaders have no place in this country. Let us get every Kenyans working for what they believe in.”

In this example, Hon. Ngilu was categorical that the resources promised in the BBI would make people self-sufficient and the need for “small handouts” would not be there. She alluded to the fact that many leaders had been giving electorates handouts in terms of small money or basic needs that did not last. According to her, rather than leaders using resources on projects they were allocated for, they diverted them for personal gains and resulted to giving Kenyans small amounts of money to appease them. This then left developments incomplete or had them done in a substandard manner, which led to their collapse as seen in the past in cases of dams and bridges. This, according to her, was an identity of corruption that had been assumed by many politicians, and which should be stopped. To her, leaders had been using this small handout to woo electorates in supporting or electing them. She challenged leaders to let Kenyans be productive, instead of relying on handouts.

3.1.5 Kenya as a Nation of Fairness and Inclusivity

Kenya has been presented as having inclusivity for all its citizens. For instance, Deputy President William Ruto:

...All these your excellency as you and the former prime minister have said here, in this process we can bring all our ideas together and listen to one another. No idea is more or less superior than the other.

He had just pointed out that different Kenyans held diverse views on whether that was the right time to table the BBI. He noted that there were those who believed the ravages of Covid 19, the youth unemployment as well as the economic status of the country should be given a higher priority. He went on to say that it is the civic duty of every Kenyan to engage in the BBI process. This portrays Kenya as a country where the views of every citizen matter.

He later adds that:

...finally, on this inclusivity question it is my humble submission that as we discuss inclusivity around us as the leaders, we must have a candid open discussion on inclusivity about the millions of Kenyans locked out by poverty and unemployment.

He opens our eyes to the fact that although Kenya may not have had total inclusivity in the past, plans to remedy that and have a nation where nobody is locked out of opportunities whether by poverty or unemployment, were underway.

Hon. Kipchumba Murkomen.

...Your excellency, it starts by what governor Joho said; being able to listen to every view being able to give opportunity even to that Rendille, your excellency, who may never be the president of Kenya or may never be the prime minister should have an opportunity to have a message to speak to the nation.

Rendille is one of the smallest ethnic groups in Kenya. By alluding to that fact Hon. Murkomen implies that even the “smallest” of the people should have fair representation in matters of the nation. He goes on to add:

...I come from one of the smallest communities in the Kalenjin community. But your excellency because of your leadership, I am proud to say I am the majority leader in The Senate.

By stating so, Kenya is presented as a country where its citizens are not limited to positions in governance and other areas depending on where they come from, which makes it inclusive.

Hon. Charity Ngilu:

...We do not want anybody to be left behind, therefore, your excellency and the former prime minister thank you so much for coming together in a timely way, shaking hands and agreeing that every Kenyan should be a part of this.

She pointed out that every Kenyan would be equally represented in the BBI, meaning that their needs would be looked into and solutions sought to fix the different challenges that Kenyans were experiencing.

President Uhuru Kenyatta:

...Both the BBI taskforce and the BBI steering committee listened to thousands of Kenyans from all walks of life in every one of the forty-seven counties; individuals Kenyans, women groups, youth groups, PWDs, religious leaders, pastoralists, trade unions, professional associations, county assemblies, members of parliament and various experts.

By listing the various groups and individuals, he shows the extent to which the committees went to ensure that they captured the views and needs of all Kenyans. This therefore presents Kenya as being inclusive and fair enough to listen to the views of every citizen. He later added that:

...we are again taking these proposals to you, Kenyans, requesting you to confirm and endorse your own proposals...

Kenyans were to be given an opportunity to confirm as well as endorse their own proposals, hence painting the country as fair and inclusive.

Hon. Raila Odinga:

...So, this document is as a result of very extensive consultation with the people of Kenya...

He affirms that the BBI document had been arrived at after all Kenyans were consulted, and their views and opinions incorporated in it. This portrays the country as being fair and inclusive by not leaving anyone out.

3.1.6 Kenya as a Peaceful Country

Through President Uhuru Kenyatta, Kenya is presented as a peaceful country.

...Many Kenyans have forgotten what was happening at that time. We were on the verge of a divisiveness that would have deeply undermined our continued unity and peace.

He was referring to the tension that was there before the handshake with Hon. Raila Odinga. After the general election of 2017, Hon. Raila Odinga, one of the presidential candidates did not agree with the result where president Uhuru Kenyatta was declared the winner. This was followed by a court ruling that ordered a repeat of the presidential election. Hon. Raila Odinga's supporters boycotted the election which was followed by a period of tension in the country that led to disruption of the economy. With the intention of not witnessing the country suffer similar tribulations in future, President Uhuru Kenyatta and Hon. Raila Odinga agreed to launch the initiative whose aim was to create a unified nation. President Uhuru Kenyatta noted that prior to this, Kenya had enjoyed peace for a long time, and that it was the same peace he had aspired to uphold with the handshake and later the BBI.

IV. CONCLUSION

Political actors use (de) legitimization strategies in their discourse to support or oppose ideologies. The political actors used all the (de) legitimization strategies proposed by van Leeuwen (2008) to legitimize their points of view. Rationalization and moral evaluation were used to a large extent in their discourse. Kenya's identity was to a large extent shaped negatively in the BBI discourse with only two out of the six having a positive orientation.

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Gitonga Euridise Nkatha, et. al. "Creation of Kenya's Identity Through Building Bridges Initiative Discourse By Political Actors." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 27(09), 2022, pp. 54-66.