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The impact of Africanization policy on Asian participation in elective politics in Nairobi city county, Kenya, 1963-1978

Edwin Omari Nyagaka

M.A Graduate in Political Science from Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya

* Corresponding Author: **Edwin Omari Nyagaka**

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Abstract

This paper examines how Africanization policy re-engineered the political engagements of the Asian minority community in Nairobi City, Kenya, between the period 1963 and 1978. The paper is anchored on rational choice and liberal democratic theories. Rational choice theory as advanced by Adam Smith, argues that human desires are self-seeking and always lean towards self-interest. On the other hand, liberal democracy theory as advanced by John Locke argues that natural law guarantees every individual right to life, liberty and protection of private property. This paper therefore uses these two approaches to show that Asians have been engaging in political participation in Nairobi City as a matter of self-preservation and/or as a way of championing for protection of their natural rights in case of an imminent violation. The key objectives of the paper are to: examine how politicization of citizenship and Asian identity question impacted on Asian participation in elective politics immediately after independence in Nairobi City; to establish the political implication of Africanization programmes on the Asian community; and thirdly to discuss the ramifications of Africanization policy on Asian participation in elective politics of Nairobi City. The study adopts a descriptive survey design and utilizes both primary and secondary data. Similarly, the study utilizes both stratified and purposive sampling techniques to identify research informants. The study reveals that Africanization policy was such an emotive issue among the Asians not only in Nairobi City, but also across the country where they lived as a minority community. No wonder, the policy impacted negatively on their participation in elective politics between 1963 and 1978.

Keywords: Political participation, Politicization, Asian question and Africanization policy

Introduction

The immediate period after independence in 1963, was a turbulent time for the Asians not only in Nairobi City but also in the rural towns in Kenya where they lived as a minority community. For the Asians, independence was perceived as a looming threat for their future survival in Kenya, while the Africans considered Asians as economic mercenaries from South Asia who had come to Kenya to grab whatever they could and leave (Seidenberg, 1983) ^[58].

To make Africans the masters of their destiny, the independent government in Kenya established the Ominde Commission to investigate how colonial education will be restructured in order to be responsive to the needs of Kenyans in the post-independent era. After a thorough review, the Commission established that, it is only with educated workforce, that the challenges of distributing economic opportunities equitably to all citizens would be addressed. Moreover, the commission identified education as the only citizen equalizer in the wake of educational inequalities emanating from the colonial period (Education Commission Report, 1964). These observations by the Ominde Commission would later lay the foundation for Africanization of all the sectors of the economy by the post-colonial African state in Kenya.

Africanization as both an economic and political ideology was first used by KADU chairman and the first African Minister for Labour, Ronald Ngala in 1961 to imply that aspect of affirmative action of recruiting Africans into the public and private sectors of the economy with a view of enhancing greater African participation in the political and socio-economic spheres (Maganda, 2012:109 and Patel, 2006:406) ^[36, 53]. In order to achieve this, the government through Tom Mboya, the Minister for Economic Planning and Development, formulated Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965; entitled as: *African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya* (Republic of Kenya, 1965). Thus, the introduction of Africanization as an economic and political ideology looked forward to a situation where Africans controlled the local political economy.

To achieve this end, first and foremost, the colonial government's policy of separate political representation for the three races in Kenya namely: the Europeans, Asians and Africans in the various sectors of the economy of the colonial state had to be dismantled and africanized forthwith. Consequently, the post-colonial African government in Kenya interpreted these recommendations to mean alienation, sidelining or expulsion of non-Africans from Kenya.

Thus, this deliberate development of nationalization policies not only in Kenya, but also in Uganda and Tanzania was aimed at minimizing the Asian participation in the political economy of the three sister countries. No wonder, this became the main reason why Asian minority community became detached from political activities not only in Nairobi City but also in the East African region (Moywaywa, 2013:72) ^[38].

Therefore, it is right to argue that these anti-foreigners policies, camouflaged with racist connotations were meant to serve the interests of African political cum business elite in Kenya to the exclusion of non-Africans like the Asian minority. It is against this backdrop that the advent of independence and the implementation of Africanization policies were characterized with the feeling of insecurity and anxiety on the Asian minority not only in Nairobi City, but also across the country where Asians lived as a minority community. Africanization policy would thus later define the role of Asians in the political processes of Nairobi City.

Politicization of Citizenship and Asian Identity Question

One of the emotive issues among the Asian minority in post independent Kenya was that of citizenship. As attested by Maganda (2012: 127) ^[36], citizenship remained the most crucial factor that influenced access to rights, identity and obligations towards political participation and representation in the Kenyan state. This is because citizenship conferred the right and obligation to vote in elections, the right to be elected, nominated and or appointed to a political office.

The Independence Constitutions of East African nations gave Asians who were not automatically citizens by birth or parentage an option to apply for registration as citizens within two years after attaining independence. However, the Asians preferred to keep their options open as a matter of rational choice until the last few months before the grace period expired. However, for the African elite this inaction was interpreted to mean lack of faith in the African leadership and their people. As a result, Asians found themselves being subjected to periodic administrative embargoes (Onk, 2014:17) ^[50].

Accepting Kenyan citizenship was accompanied with certain rights and duties. For example, the Asians would have access to trading licenses and voting rights (ibid). This access to voting in the new political dispensation laid the foundation for Asian participation in the political processes in Kenya and later on, in Nairobi elective politics. The refusal to legalize dual citizenship implied that the Asians had to either accept to be Kenyan citizens or reject it all together. On the contrary, rejection of Kenyan citizenship signaled disloyalty of non-Africans to their countries of adoption. The apathy by Asians in acquiring citizenship was later politicized by African leadership in Kenya to mean Asians' distrust of African leaders (Omenya, 2010: 227) ^[48]. Even the Asians who took up citizenship were also condemned that their taking up of Kenyan citizenship was merely motivated by convenience and self-interest, rather than identifying themselves with the African aspirations.

Despite the efforts of the Indian High Commissioner to Kenya, Shri Prem Bhatia, of mobilizing Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) to accept and apply for Kenyan citizenship in 1965, only a few heeded to his call and applied for Kenyan citizenship (Gupta, 2010 and Maganda, 2012) ^[36]. Unfortunately, even the small number of Asians who applied for Kenyan citizenship faced deep silence from the government over their applications for citizenship. The government also gave the impression that Asians were unwilling to accept Kenyan citizenship. This ambivalent position of Asians created hostilities between the Kenyan government and the Asians in Nairobi. This anti-Asian discourse, would later dissuade Asians from engaging in Nairobi elective politics.

As captured by Onk (2014:18) ^[50], in 1960s and 1970s it became apparently clear for the Asians in East Africa that taking up local citizenship did not guarantee protection by the state. It must be emphasized that property and physical rights of Asians were attacked to varying degrees in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania regardless of whether they were citizens or non-citizens (ibid). Whereas the non-Africans were eligible to vote as long as they had British/Commonwealth passports, the period after independence witnessed franchise being restricted to Kenyan citizens and the number of non-Africans became non-substantial, since many of them had become reluctant to register as citizens (Singh, 1965:903). Lack of acquisition of Kenyan citizenship in one way or the other undermined the participation of Asian minority not only in Nairobi elective politics but also in other towns of Kenya where they settled as a minority group.

In run up to 1969 general elections, Fitz De Souza decried on disenfranchisement of his voters in Nairobi North West constituency as a result of Immigration Policy of 1967 (The National Assembly Official Report Vol. XII (Part II) of 29th June – 28th July, 1967). This ambivalent situation is captured well by Kanyinga (2014: 15-16) ^[25], who argues that politics of belonging or being 'insiders' or 'outsiders' of a particular group in power had been a recurrent theme in defining exclusion and inclusion in Kenyan politics. Consequently, identity became the basis for accessing opportunities in the public and private sector as early as in the 1960s, thus undermining the principle of equality for all citizens.

Equally, Hornsby (2011) ^[21] opines that politics of betrayal and rejection on account of identity was a recurrent theme as early as 1965, characterized by intimidation of few outstanding Africans and Asian nationalists like Pio Gama Pinto, Makhan Singh, Fitz De Souza, Joseph Murumbi,

Oginga Odinga, Bildad Kaggia, Achieng Oneko and Paul Ngei among others. While addressing Kenya Indian Congress (KIC), during one of his lengthy Presidential addresses at the 26th session in 1966, Satish Gautama was dissatisfied with the way the Kenyatta state was discriminating the Asians in Nairobi and elsewhere in Kenya with regard to their applications for naturalization as Kenyan Citizens.

Similarly, Pio Gama Pinto had argued in defense of freedom fighters—including Asians' ideological leaning and sacrifices for the cause of African nationalism, during the celebration of the Independence Day on 12 December, 1963 noting that: "The sacrifices of the hundreds of Kenya's freedom fighters must be honoured; and *Uhuru* (independence) must be *Uhuru* for the masses—*Uhuru* from exploitation, ignorance, disease and poverty" (Nowrojee, 2007:65) ^[42].

The assassination of Pio Gama Pinto in 1965 and the subsequent isolation of Oginga Odinga following the Limuru Conference of 1966 brought into fore the politicization of citizenship as a tool of silencing government critics. One of Odinga's long term Asian friends, mentor and close ally, Pranal Sheth was victimized, deprived off his citizenship and subsequently deported to India on the account of being on the communist's payroll by the Kenyatta state (Patel, 2016) ^[54]. Alongside Sheth, there were also other five Asians who were charged for having engaged in 'subversive activities', leading to deprivation of their Kenyan citizenship and subsequent deportation to India (ibid). These Asians were; Dr. Khrishna Dass Nagaratna, a Nairobi Business Man, Mr. Bharmal Meghji Lakhtia Shah, director of Haria Cash Stores, Mr. Velji Motichand Sajpar Chandaria of Nairobi; Jamnandes Manji Bhadressa, a Nyeri tailor and Babu Premchand Shah of Karatina (*Awaaz* Voices, vol 7, issue 3, 2010) ^[5].

Even though no accusations were leveled against their deportation, the Kenya News Agency, a government publication, carried a sneak view of what the state accused the six deportees of. The Agency stated in part that; '...the deported Asians had shown themselves by act and speech to be disloyal and disaffected towards Kenya.' (Rattansi 2004: 24). A warning was given to the Asian Community that those who chose to take up Kenyan citizenship must identify themselves with Kenya in all 'aspects' or any other activities. The paper also printed a summary of a broadcast in the Voice of Kenya (V.O.K) that declared that the entire Asian community in Kenya stood indicted by the subversive activities of its members.

On 13th August 1966, a strong protest was organized in Nairobi by prominent Asians in support of their counterparts from Mombasa who had protested early in what they had referred to as an 'unadulterated piece of racial diatribe.' Among these protesters were, Fitz De Souza—Deputy Speaker of Kenyan parliament, Lakhamshi R. Shah, Mulchand Khamasia, K.P. Shah, Satish Gautama, Mahendra M. Patel, R.M. Shah, M.R. Desai, S.G. Amin, J.M. Nazareth, B.R. Kapila, Sardara Singh Vohra and S.M. Bhatt (*Awaaz* Voices Vol. 7, Issue 3, 2010) ^[5]. They appealed to the government of Kenya to institute an inquiry into how the V.O.K and Kenya News Agency came to issue its racist diatribe against the Asians and asked the government to take strong action against those responsible. This collective condemnation of the Asian community left Asians in Nairobi paranoid. Consequently, they retreated to private enclaves where they detached themselves from elective politics. Even, some of their members who attempted to offer their candidature in Nairobi elective politics were threatened with reprisals from

the entire Asian community (Devji, S., O.I, 31/10/2017) ^[15]. Thus, Africanization policy, apart from being racist, also dichotomized the Asians in Kenya and made the post independent African state and government as ambivalent as the colonial government. In this context, Asians waging a strong protest against violation of their natural rights was one way of living up to the ideals of liberal democracy as espoused by John Locke in his treatise of social contract.

As attested by Nassali (2011:50) ^[40], Asians in Nairobi discovered that citizenship was indeed a very important factor that influenced access to rights, identity and obligations towards political participation and representation in Kenya. This is because citizenship conferred the right and obligation to vote in elections, the right to be elected, nominated and or appointed to a political office. Without this crucial aspect of identity thus it became very difficult for Asians in Nairobi to register as voters, leave alone accessing state mediated economic opportunities (Sheikh Abdi, O.I, 3/06/2017) ^[60].

The Political Implication of Africanization Programmes on the Asian Community

As argued by Maganda (2012:107) ^[36], the attainment of independence led to apprehension, uncertainty and attacks on Asians not only from the Kenyan state but also from African leaders. This forced Asian minority to seek constitutional safeguards or assurances from African leaders or as a last resort, the Indian government. Whereas a few African leaders empathized with the Asian minority on their predicament, the majority of the African leaders in Nairobi called for sidelining of Asian elite and the entire Asian community. Indeed, these were some of the negative impacts of Africanization policy.

Njoroge Mungai, for instance, while addressing a political rally in Dagoretti in 1964 stated that it was the responsibility of the Asians to win the confidence of the Africans if at all they wanted to be part and parcel of the Nairobi populace (Nixon Makanga, O.I, 10/06/2017) ^[41]. These kinds of sentiments did not only antagonize the Asians in Nairobi but also made politics a dangerous political activity to engage in. Secondly, the Asians with businesses at Nairobi CBD would occasionally be forced to close their shops whenever there was a political rally at Uhuru Park or near the City, lest they fell into politically instigated burglary (Pandya Devji, O.I, 17/06/2018) ^[51].

As put by Seidenberg (1983:162) ^[58] the apprehension that the Asians faced on the eve of independence was exacerbated by a new spate of African attacks on Asians, particularly traders in the rural areas such as Nyeri, Karatina, Murang'a, Naivasha, Nakuru and Kisumu among others, whose spillover effects were felt in Nairobi thus reviving the deep-rooted tensions between Africans and Asians. For instance, Asians shunned political rallies organized by African politicians in any suburb within the City for fear of politically instigated attacks (Malik, Z., O.I, 28/06/2018). This fear demonstrated the colonial racial legacy which the Asian minorities were not able to overcome within the shortest time possible to allow them to politically integrate with Africans in Nairobi.

Africanization policy also targeted Asian minority working in the media industry and the civil service as captured by a circular from the Head of the Civil Service, Duncan Ndegwa in 1964. The first onslaught was on the Voice of Kenya (V.O.K) and the process targeted the Asian broadcasts. This

political wind of change introduced a policy which required that Asian employees in the Voice of Kenya (VOK) be replaced by Africans. As attested by Karam Bharij an avid photographer born in Nairobi, Kenya but later moved to the United Kingdom at the height of Africanization policies in 1968; '.....it was a time of great upheaval. Imagine the stress of training someone to replace you because the colour of your skin did not fit in, with the new regime.' (*Awaaz* Voices, Vol. 7, Issue 3, 2010) ^[5]. As a result, all Indian civil servants, traders and manpower expatriates were forced to leave the civil service (*Daily Nation* July 18, 1968) ^[13]. Other sectors of the civil service that saw Asians retrenched include the military, the police and the teaching service (Ibid). Discrimination in the civil service and retrenchment, following the Africanization policy, complicated Asians' desire to participate in elective politics in Nairobi.

During the first 10 years of independence, motivated by the spirit of Africanization of the economy, the government established statutory bodies to encourage African participation in the economy. Among them were the Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation (ICDC), Kenya National Trading Company (KNTC), Industrial Development Bank (IDB), Kenya Industrial Estate (KIE), Development Finance Company of Kenya (DFCK) and a chain of Commercial Banks with a deliberate bias of financing African businesses and individual entrepreneurs. This move of eliminating Asian middlemen from the chain of commerce was meant to replace non-Africans with Africans in Kenya as the new capitalists (Omenya, 2010: 209-210) ^[48]. In 1967, Kenyanization of Personnel in the Private Sector was published and it indicated that encouragement of Indian industrial owners to radically alter the employment structure in Nairobi's industrial areas had failed and therefore more radical approaches were needed to change this situation (Omenya, 2015: 253) ^[49]. On 3rd March, 1967, Okelo Odongo, MP for Kisumu Rural moved a motion in parliament on nationalization of the industrial sector in Nairobi and other major urban areas in the country (The National Assembly Hansard Official Report of 15th February 1967–7th April, 1967)

This motion would later prompt the government to enact Trade and Licensing Act of 1967 and Immigration Act of 1967. Trade and Licensing Act of 1967 did put certain trading areas and specific products in the hands of Africans while work permits were to be restricted for certain occupations, where such skills were not available in the market (King, 1977). By the beginning of 1970s, Trade and Licensing Act had restricted trade in certain commodities to its citizens only, irrespective of their location. Thus, with Trade and Licensing Act of 1967 in place, Amsden (1971) ^[3] notes that the number of Asians who had declined to become Kenyan citizens by December 1965, discovered that they had put their livelihoods in jeopardy.

When President Jomo Kenyatta discovered that implementation of Africanization policies was happening at a slow rate, he took up the Africanization theme by himself and while addressing KANU branch at Nyali Beach Hotel in Mombasa in 1967, declared that Asians had either to identify with African aspirations or ship out (Omenya, 2010: 227) ^[48]. The enactment of 1967 Immigration Act seemed to have made livelihoods of Asians even complicated as it required all non-Africans to apply for special entry permits if they were willing to begin or continue to work in Kenya. Similarly, Daniel Arap Moi, the Vice-President while

addressing a political rally in Ngong, warned African business persons against entering into business partnerships with Asians, not unless they were quite clear that they were equal partners in the business (*Daily Nation* October 23, 1967) ^[14]. These anti-Asian sentiments served to alienate the Asian minority from the political economy of Nairobi City. Nevertheless, some Asians in Nairobi read good intentions of Africanization policy and sought business partnerships with Africans. Interestingly, these business partnerships and alliances were designed for the Asians' convenience (Moywaywa, 2013:70-71) ^[38]. Here again Asian businessmen in Nairobi are depicted as rational actors who optimized Africanization policy to their advantage.

In order to safeguard the interests of the indigenous petite bourgeoisie from Asian competition in the key sectors of the economy, President Jomo Kenyatta decided to extend credit facilities to the Africans and particularly the Kikuyu elite (Zarina Patel O.I, 20/05/2017) ^[67]. On 9th February 1967, G.K. Kariithi, the Secretary to the Cabinet issued a circular stating that commercial institutions had agreed to extend overdraft facilities to more Africans in a bid to hasten Africanization policy. In the same circular, the local manufacturers were ordered to that effect, to extend the same facilities in terms of manufactured goods to Africans (KNA/MCI/1/21). Moreover, KNTC was ordered to enlarge the list of items that would be distributed through them to the African traders (KNA/TP/1/24). This actions pushed Asian minority in Nairobi out of petty commerce either into manufacturing for those who had capital or out of Kenya altogether.

At the wake of Africanization policies, Fitz De Souza and K.P. Shah tried to plead on behalf of the Asians in Nairobi from being short-changed in commerce by the government with little success (Shah, Z., O.I, 3/11/2017). In one of his epic speeches in parliament, in defense of the Asian community, De Souza sought to set the record straight over Asians' domination in the commercial sector in Nairobi. He remarked that although he sympathized that Africans had no businesses in downtown Nairobi, there was need to appreciate that the Patels and Shahs who owned businesses in Nairobi, were initially farmers from India. It is fate that pushed them to business and that is how they ended being successful businessmen (National Assembly Hansard Report of 14th September 1965 – 22nd October 1965).

The Asian legal practitioners in Nairobi were also frustrated by the Kenyatta state. For example, Jomo Kenyatta's regime charged Achroo R. Kapila, the most proficient criminal defense lawyer in Kenya and East Africa on politically instigated crimes. His knowledge, experience, professional commitment and brilliance in defense of his clients frustrated too many powerful elements in Jomo Kenyatta's government. Although the Kenyatta state charged Achroo R. Kapila with criminal offences, the true intention was to rid him off for being an impediment to Kenyatta's desire to control the Judiciary (Nowrojee, 2014:36) ^[43].

These Africanization policies adopted by the Kenyan government in the first 15 years of independence were designed to drive the Asians out of the key positions in the Nairobi political economy. Against this backdrop, the Asians found themselves without work permits and restricted to certain sectors of the economy. With the trade and employment opportunities cut off, Asians who were holding British passports began leaving Kenya for Britain, North America and Australia (Hansen, 1999) ^[20].

In response to these discriminations by the Kenyan state, the Asians in Nairobi looked up to Asian professionals like lawyers, business persons and African political elite to win their required rapport with the African government (Odhiambo, 1974) ^[46]. A good example of these Asian lawyers included Fitz De Souza, Achroo Kapila and K.P. Shah among other Asian luminaries. Similarly, Ghai and McAuslan (1970) ^[17] attest that in a situation involving racial and ethnic differences, prospects of independence in 1963 had become an obvious source of conflict as the groups competed for political power. Consequently Asians as a minority community and other indigenous African communities realized that they were very far from power especially in the wake of a centralized system as proposed by KANU, and therefore they began to agitate for safeguards which ranged from outright secession to bill of rights and insulation of some aspects of administration from political control.

Suffice it to note that removing of Asians from the mainstream commerce was not an easy task, because the Africanization process encountered lots of resistance from not only Asians but also from some wealthy Africans who worked as directors in some of the Asian owned companies (*Daily Nation* August 5, 2013) ^[10].

The Ramifications of Africanization Policy on the Asian Participation in Elective Politics in Nairobi City

The split between Kenya Indian Congress (KIC) and Kenya Muslim League (KML) greatly weakened the political influence of the Asian Community in Kenya and the subsequent winding up of the KIC in 1964, left the Asians without an official voice (Seidenberg, 1983: 174) ^[58]. On 1st June, 1963 Jomo Kenyatta brought KANU to an electoral victory and became Kenya's Prime Minister (Nyangena, 2003: 4). In November 1963, the Kenya Freedom Party (KFP) members led by Pio Gama Pinto, a renowned Asian leader from Nairobi, K.P. Shah, a highly respected Nairobi merchant, Chanan Singh, LegCo member from Nairobi, I.T Inamdar President of Mombasa Indian Association and S.K. Anjarwalla, Mombasa Tudor LegCo member resolved to align themselves with the African nationalist leadership (Seidenberg, 1983: 174) ^[58], as a matter of rational choice. In this context, therefore the Asian political elite were seizing the opportunity to remain relevant with the Kenyan post-colony and the African prospectus (Omenya, 2010: 225) ^[48]. Other members of KFP from Nairobi included Yusuf Ali Eraj, Andrew Hake and Sewa Singh Mandla all of whom served as members of the Nairobi City Council. In the spirit of shared political space, the leadership of KFP officially decided to dissolve the party with the express intention of its members to join KANU. K.P. Shah was thereafter appointed as KANU Treasurer (Patel, 2016) ^[54] and had a short stint as the Treasurer of KANU at its headquarters in Nairobi. Shortly after, Joseph Murumbi was appointed as the Acting Executive Officer and Treasurer of KANU (KNA/MAC/KEN/77/1). It appears here therefore that the Asian minority were seizing the opportunity as rational actors to remain relevant with the post-colonial African government in Kenya.

Similarly, at the peak of African consciousness in Kenya, J.M. Nazareth a renowned lawyer and champion of Asian natural rights in Nairobi mobilized Asians to contribute to KANU financially and materially through Jomo Kenyatta and Tom Mboya, as a matter of rational choice, in anticipation of

getting nomination slot in the post-independent legislature. The two African leaders unfortunately reneged on their promise, when Jomo Kenyatta took over power as the Prime Minister. Instead of nominating Nazareth to parliament, the Kenyatta state deported Pranlal Sheth, a prominent member of East African Indian Congress (EAIC) of which Nazareth was its President, something that scathed Asian's support for the Kenyatta government not only in Nairobi but elsewhere across the country (Khamisi, 2018: 109-110).

In 1963, just like the other former British colonies, Kenya adopted a parliamentary system of government. Under the independence constitution, the Executive authority was vested in the monarchy – Queen (Odhiambo-Mbai, 2003: 58-60). However, these powers were supposed to be exercised on her behalf by the Resident Governor-General based in Kenya and the Prime Minister who was the Head of Government (Maganda, 2012: 100) ^[36]. Therefore this system guaranteed parliamentary supremacy in Kenya as one of the basic tenets of a liberal democracy (Odhiambo-Mbai, 2003: 58). Asian politicians in Nairobi were therefore to fit into this parliamentary system by participating and contesting for elective positions as a way of gaining access to representative politics within a new political dispensation dominated by the Africans. This was basically the very essence of a liberal democracy within an africanized political space in Nairobi City immediately after Kenya's independence.

The Independence constitution also created a bi-cameral legislature consisting of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Further, the Independence constitution devolved state power to local levels by making Kenya a quasi-federal state. This led to the creation of seven regional governments based in the seven provinces of the country while Nairobi was retained as a Special District. Moreover, the Independence constitution provided for a multi-party democracy in Kenya. In addition, the constitution delineated Kenya into 117 constituencies (CKRC, 2005) while providing for creation of 12 'specially elected seats.' It is clear from the above foregoing that Kenya's independence constitution had laid a foundation for the establishment of a liberal democratic state and the practice of liberal democracy as captured by Kariuki (2015: 247). It is against this backdrop that Africanization both as an economic and political ideology gave Asians the liberties to either choose Kenya's citizenship or leave. Those who chose Kenyan citizenship were at liberty to participate in the political processes such as elections in Nairobi City.

The attainment of independence empowered African petite bourgeoisie to make critical economic and political decisions aimed at enabling Africans in Kenya to be masters of their political and economic destiny. As a consequence of Africanization policy, Asian elite in Nairobi were the first ones to be sidelined and or disempowered altogether (Seidenberg, 1983) ^[58]. In reviewing KFP's activities between 1961 and 1963, one of KFP's original members, concerned about the ambivalent position and increased volatile political environment for the Asians in Kenya, wondered whether the leadership of KFP was aware that it had destroyed the future of Asians by dissolving the party. In a letter to Chanan Singh, a few months after KFP's dissolution, Jagdish Sondhi a renowned Asian political activist and member of KFP decried that fear had gripped the hearts of the Asian community as to what their future holds in independent Kenya (Seidenberg, 1983:164) ^[58]. This statement served as a premonition to the Asians' plight in the

post independent African state, under the reign of Mzee Jomo Kenyatta.

In Nairobi, Makhan Singh a leading Kenyan Trade Unionist of Asian origin found himself isolated and sidelined by the government of Jomo Kenyatta despite his critical role in championing for Kenya's independence. First, his bid to re-enter trade union movement turned out to be unsuccessful. Secondly, he was rejected by the capitalist Kenyan leaders for being a member of the dreaded Indian Communist Party (Chandan, 2007:18-19). Third, in spite of him writing a lobbying letter to President Jomo Kenyatta to be allowed to contest on a KANU ticket, in one of the 'specially elected seats' to the House of Representatives in Nairobi, he did not receive any feedback from the Head of the State (Patel, 2006:437-438) ^[53]. In another letter dated 7th December 1963, inviting Makhan Singh to the independence celebrations, Fred Kubai confirmed this intentional political isolation of freedom fighters by the Jomo Kenyatta state—in reference to Makhan Singh (Patel, 2006:437) ^[53].

In 1964, Pio Gama Pinto was elected as a specially elected MP for KANU to represent Nairobi and served up to the time of his assassination in 1965 (*Awaaz* Vol. 10, Issue 1, 2013). Pinto's assassination on 24th February, 1965 happened a few days after President Jomo Kenyatta had sought legal counsel about how to deal with 'this bloody Goan' (Patel, 2016:89) ^[54]. Pinto's war against the ravages of early days of land grabbing immediately after independence in the Kenyan post-colony might have eventually cost him his life (Khamisi, 2018: 118-119).

According to *Awaaz* Voices (Vol. 12, Issue 1, 2015) ^[6], there were threats from Pio Gama Pinto to Jomo Kenyatta about amending the constitution to challenge Kenyatta's parliamentary leadership. These threats whether real or imagined are said to have made Jomo Kenyatta paranoid. It was also reported (ibid) that Odinga had planned to move a vote of 'No Confidence' against Jomo Kenyatta supported by Pinto over his failure to implement the freedom dream of making Kenya a socialist state.

Moreover, the desire to centralize power by the Jomo Kenyatta state did not even spare Pio Gama Pinto's lifelong friends like Oginga Odinga, Joseph Murumbi, Kung'u Karumba, Bildad Kaggia and Fred Kubai. They were isolated because of their shared vision of a socialist Kenya (Ibid). Nowrojee (2007) ^[42] opines that the Oginga Odinga faction was neutralized during the Limuru Conference of 1966 where KANU convened to elect its new leaders with the major aim of isolating Oginga Odinga. Consequently, Oginga Odinga resigned from KANU and formed a new political entity called the Kenya Peoples Union (KPU).

Keen to consolidate power without rivalry, Jomo Kenyatta's government banned the opposition (KPU) in 1969. This gave KANU as a ruling party unchecked dominance (Leys, 1975). Furthermore, the change of electoral laws and the tough KANU eligibility rules which were aimed at intimidating Oginga Odinga and Kenya Peoples Union (KPU) also caught the attention of the Asians in Nairobi as a community under siege for their alleged close links to Oginga Odinga (Maganda, 2012: 118) ^[36]. For instance, Pranal Sheth was deported for his close association with Oginga Odinga alongside other 5 Asians who were accused for subversive activities. This sent Asians in Nairobi into political oblivion (Jane Wairimu, O.I, 6/08/2018).

Having resigned as the Vice-President of Kenya following the Limuru conference fiasco, Oginga Odinga paved way for

the appointment of Joseph Murumbi, an Asian of mixed parentage, as the second Vice-President of Kenya in 1966. He served up to the close of 1966 when he resigned due to fear for his life from powerful elements in President Jomo Kenyatta's government over his socialist ideals (Zahid Rajan, O.I, 20/05/2017). Even though he alleged to have resigned due to his deteriorating health, the assassination of his political mentor and ally, Pio Gama Pinto played a critical role for his resignation as the Vice-President (Zarina Patel, O.I, 20/05/2017) ^[67].

In an acceptance letter to Murumbi's resignation dated 15/08/1966, President Jomo Kenyatta poured praises on Murumbi's contribution to nation building and the struggle for Kenya's independence (KNA/MAC/KEN/77/1). Joseph Murumbi was subsequently succeeded by Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi as the third Vice-President in 1967 (Rothmyer, 2018: 10).

To completely silence Oginga Odinga and his leftist comrades, in May 1965, Justus Ole Tipis, MP for Narok East, at the behest of the government, moved a motion in parliament for the Africanization of the Lumumba Institute, an Institute that had been founded by Pio Gama Pinto as a training centre for the KANU officials on matters and techniques of party organization (National Assembly Hansard Report of 14th December 1964–12th May, 1965).

The subsequent closure of the institute in mid-1960s marked the end of Oginga Odinga's successful political career. The take-over of the Institute compounded with the assassination of Pio Gama Pinto pushed the Asian community in Nairobi into political oblivion (Lucy Muthui, O.I, 21/07/2018). Secondly, it demoralized Asian young leaders who looked up to Pio Gama Pinto as their political mentor (Zahid Rajan, O.I 20/05/2017). It is this kind of politically instigated motions that would define the role of Asians in the post-independent elective politics in Nairobi.

The assassination of Pio Gama Pinto brought a lot of apathy not only to the Asian fraternity in Nairobi but also to his family. His brother Rosalio Da Gama Pinto, after unsuccessful attempts to plead with the government of Jomo Kenyatta to establish an impartial Commission of Enquiry, alongside the Judicial process to establish the motive and the assassin of his brother Pio Gama Pinto, withdrew his candidature in one of the elective seats in Nairobi. In his letter to President Jomo Kenyatta, Rosalio appealed for more security for himself and the family (KNA/MAC/KEN/71/3/f). With this increased isolation of Asian political leaders in Nairobi, Rosalio bowed out of Nairobi elective politics and confirmed this by writing an official letter to Joseph Murumbi dated 19th March, 1966 (KNA/MAC/KEN/ 71/3/g).

In his speech to the Nation on Madaraka Day in 1967, President Jomo Kenyatta gave a stern warning to the Asians on their abuse of African workers and the government because of their wealth (*Daily Nation* February 13, 1967) ^[14]. This statement sent Asian industrialists in Nairobi's Industrial area and businessmen in the CBD on a panic mode (Jayant, R., O.I, 2/06/2018). This anti-Asian sentiment by President Jomo Kenyatta made the Asian community in Nairobi shun elective politics. They desisted from registering as voters and attending political rallies as a protest. During election period those who had money flew to their kinsmen and women in Europe and North America while those who did not have money stayed indoors during the polling day (ibid).

Based on Kenyatta's anti-Asian sentiments, by 1968 Kenya had run into a diplomatic spat with the government of India, something which strained the diplomatic ties between the two nations. For instance, the Indian Minister for External Affairs B.R. Bhagat was denied audience with President Jomo Kenyatta over the contention that the Republic of India was interfering with Kenyan affairs (Nyakundi, 2015: 159).

Having proscribed KPU as an illegal political outfit, KANU single handedly carried out its primaries on 6th December 1969 in preparation for the January 1970 general elections. Fitz De Souza, the only remaining political voice for the Asians in Nairobi, lost the Parklands parliamentary seat to Samuel Kivuitu in the December 1969 general elections (IED, 1997). It is important to note that winning KANU primaries in a de-facto Kenyan state was unto itself an election into parliament (Grace Bidali, O.I, 27/10/2018). Even though, later President Jomo Kenyatta offered a nomination slot to De Souza into parliament, it is an offer he declined. Owing to increased antagonism from the Kenyan state, from 1969 to 1978, Asian community in Nairobi had no official voice in parliament. Thus, throughout the late 1960s and 1970s the members of the Asian community kept off politics in Nairobi as a matter of rational choice.

Compounded with the above situation of belonging and not belonging, the Asian question and identity dilemma reached its climax in the late 1970s when political parties and individual African politicians began to use it to rally support and attract public sympathy. During national celebrations and political rallies in Nairobi, influential African politicians in Kenya like Koigi Wamwere, Martin Shikuku and G.G. Kariuki would often target the Asian capitalism and blame Asian domination in economic merchandise and exploitation of African workers in Industrial area in Nairobi and elsewhere in the country as the biggest challenge to Kenya's economic development (Albanus Wambua, O.I, 18/06/2017 and Eric Mutiso, O.I, 30/06/2017).

Kenya's ambivalent position in relation to its citizens was manifested after the expulsion of Asians from Uganda by President Idi Amin Dada. Whereas President Nyerere of Tanzania condemned the incident as backward, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta remained silent signaling that he either agreed entirely with the expulsion or perhaps it was a non-issue for him (*Daily Nation* February 12, 1977) ^[11]. This created a hostile political environment for Asians in Nairobi and made them politically vulnerable in the hands of Kenyan politicians. For example, former MP for Butere and Assistant Minister for Environment and Natural Resources, Martin Shikuku declared that Kenya ought to follow Uganda's way in expelling all Asians. He accused them of abusing and taking Kenya's citizenship for granted. He also stated that the Asian community seemed not to have Kenya's interests at heart especially over their tendencies of siphoning capital out of Kenya. He gave examples of Jan Mohamed, the former Assistant Minister for Tourism, Safari Rally driver Joginder Singh and former Kenyan Ambassador to Egypt Feisal Hinesway, all of whom were residents of Nairobi but left Kenya having siphoned huge amounts of money and settled in other countries (Maganda, 2012: 141-142) ^[36].

Throughout the 1970s, Africans dominated KANU party politics even in the suburbs where the Asians' presence was highly felt. It was also observed that in the election for KANU chairmanship position in Parklands constituency in 1974, Krishan Gautama was rigged out because the Africans (Kikuyu) candidates had imported voters from the

neighbouring Karura and Dagoretti areas (Abdul, Y., O.I. 23/06/2018). This cruel nature of the post-colonial state in Kenya portrayed African racism at its best. In essence these were western forms of knowledge and legacies acquired by the Africans and the African state altogether.

The 1970s also witnessed the intense struggles between businessmen from Murang'a, Kiambu and Nyeri in control of Nairobi politics at the expense of Asians. Whereas Charles Rubia campaigned for the interests of Murang'a tycoons, Njoroge Mungai advocated for the interests of Kiambu businessmen while Mwangi Mathai, championed for the interests of the Nyeri business people (Murathi, 2018: 187). Eventually, the Murang'a and Kiambu businessmen triumphed in the control of Nairobi politics via their business interests. At the centre of this intense political cum economic struggles were the Asians (Abdul, Y., O.I. 23/06/2018). The Murang'a, Nyeri and Kiambu tycoons had always wanted all the Asians out of retail business in Nairobi. Therefore, the struggle to control business in Nairobi by these Mt. Kenya political elite cum tycoons from Nyeri, Kiambu and Murang'a was for self preservation and a way of personally or communally advancing the policies of Africanization that had already been set by the post-colonial Kenyan government.

With these anti-Asian sentiments, economic and political obstacles, Asians in Nairobi found themselves even isolated further (Anon, 1968: 5-7). Compounded with strict KANU eligibility rules, for instance, for Asians in Nairobi to join KANU they had to obtain citizenship and afterwards embrace KANU's ideology (Maganda, 2012: 118) ^[36]. These rules which depicted African racism at its best, pushed Asians in Nairobi City into political oblivion (Singh, V., O.I, 26/05/2018). The number of Asian politicians started to dwindle after the resignation of the senior most Asian politician in Nairobi, Joseph Murumbi who had been the second Vice-President of the Republic of Kenya in 1966. Even those who had put a brave face in the wake of political isolation for example Fitz De Souza had it rough in the National Assembly. The murder of Pio Gama Pinto in 1965 and the enactment of indigenization policies completely alienated Asians in Nairobi from the government of Mzee Jomo Kenyatta (Khamisi, 2018: 109-110) ^[28].

By the time President Jomo Kenyatta died in 1978, it was the lowest moment for the Asians in Kenya both economically and politically (Zarina Patel, O.I, 20/05/2017) ^[67]. What was thought to be Africanization of the political economy to empower the common man economically, turned out to be Kikuyunization of the Kenyan state and the means of production thereby sidelining the Asians in participating fully in the political processes of Nairobi City completely.

Conclusion

This paper sought to examine how Africanization policy impacted on Asian participation in the elective politics in Nairobi City between 1963 and 1978. The chapter started by tracing Africanization programmes to the Ominde Commission of 1964 that had recommended Africanization of colonial education system and the economy in order to make it responsive to the needs of the independent Kenyan State. Thus in 1965, the government deemed it necessary to anchor the recommendations of the Ominde Commission of 1964 in the Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965.

The paper also established that acquisition of citizenship for non-Africans was one of the emotive issues among the Asian

community at the eve of independence. This climaxed in 1967 with the Asian exodus from Kenya to Britain, Canada, USA and Australia. The expulsion of Asians from Uganda in 1972 during the reign of President Idi Amin Dada became a game changer altogether to the Asian identity question in Nairobi. In addition, the Kenyan government introduced nationalization of the means of production. Asians were therefore required to exit public and private service for the Africans. Non-Africans in the private sector were also not spared, as they were issued with quit-notices from the government. Furthermore, even the goods that could be sold by Asian minorities in Nairobi were regulated with the enactment of Trade and Licensing Act of 1967.

Regrettably, these policies of Africanization would lead to extermination of Asian elite such as Pio Gama Pinto, sidelining of Makhan Singh by President Jomo Kenyatta's government, resignation of Joseph Murumbi as the Vice-President in 1967, closure of Lumumba Institute, deportation of Pranlal Sheth and 5 other Asians and the subsequent decline by Fitz De Souza to be nominated as member of parliament in 1969 by President Jomo Kenyatta. African leaders who were also associated with these Asians of Kenyan origin like Oginga Odinga, Kung'u Karumba and Bildad Kaggia among others were also sent to political oblivion.

The change of electoral laws and the tough KANU eligibility rules for the perceived disloyal people, which were aimed at intimidating Oginga Odinga and Kenya Peoples Union (KPU), also caught the attention of the Asians in Nairobi as a community under siege for their alleged close links to Oginga Odinga (Maganda, 2012: 118) ^[36]. By the late 1960s, the euphoria of independence began to morph into betrayal of dreams as Asians in Nairobi became an easy scapegoat for the growing economic inequalities and creeping dictatorship (Patel, 2016) ^[54]. This made the Asian community to avoid politics and served to drive them out of Nairobi, or into a tightly guarded isolation.

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