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Symbolic politics in Kenya: An analysis of the major political parties' symbols since independence and their contribution to the general elections

The purpose of this study is to analyse political parties' symbols in Kenya and assess their contribution to the general elections. Political symbolism is used to represent a political standpoint or party. The symbolism can occur in various media including banners, pictures and flags. Political parties often associate themselves officially or unofficially with symbols. The questions answered in this article are: What are party symbols? How did party symbols start? What do party symbols stand for? What are the significance of party symbols to elections? Since no studies have been done with respect to the study area, seemingly there is need to interrogate this phenomenon. The study relied on descriptive research design and was premised on Ferdinand de Saussure Semiotics theory. The theory helps to understand how meaning is created and communicated. Purposive sampling was used to select the data in this case selected political parties symbols under study. Textual analysis was the main form of data analysis in the study. The study findings are useful to political parties and political communication during election campaigns.

Key Terms: Symbols, Symbolic politics, Political parties, general elections

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