

Abstract

This paper examines the contributions of Asian led-civil societies domiciled in Nairobi city in the struggle for political and constitutional reforms in Kenya in the post-independence period. This paper is anchored on a liberal democratic theoretical perspective. Liberal democracy as advanced by John Locke, argues that the natural law guarantees every individual right to life, liberty and protection of private property. Thus this paper uses this approach to demonstrate that Asians used civil societies in Nairobi city to champion for the protection of their natural rights and that of the other Kenyans. The key objectives of the paper are to: conceptualize and trace the historiography of civil societies in the context of Kenya, secondly, to interrogate the contributions of the Asian-led civil societies domiciled in Nairobi city in the agitation for political and constitutional reforms in post-independent Kenya and finally, to examine the role of Nairobi Asian luminaries in agitation for electoral reforms between 1997 and 2017. This paper adopts a descriptive survey design and utilizes both primary and secondary data. Similarly, the paper utilizes both stratified and purposive sampling techniques to identify research informants. This paper reveals that the Asian luminaries used civil societies to champion for political reforms and constitutional review process in Kenya, especially in the 1990s. Further, these Asian-led civil societies acted as the vehicles for litigation of public interest cases with the major aim of promoting the rule of law, democracy and good governance.