Affective Democratic Discourse and Lisa Hanna:

The Representation and Treatment

of a Jamaican Woman Politician on Social Media

Esrick Atkinson

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Mount Saint Vincent University

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Abstract

This graduate project was conducted to get a better understanding of how women, specifically women politicians in the Global South, are treated on social media. The unique case of Lisa Hanna was chosen and 167 posts were extracted from her Facebook page during the period of March and October 2022. A Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was undertaken, in order to get a better understanding of how Hanna self- presented personally and politically on Facebook. The CDA was also instrumental in helping the researcher to highlight the manner in which the discourse from the comments section on Hanna's posts represented her as well as the role played by affect in determining how Hanna was treated on Facebook. Eight major themes were extracted from the discourse and interpreted based on the theories of intersectionality and affect. The findings were also discussed within the Jamaican context from which they emerged, and my experiences and personal observations as a Black Jamaican man, who studied political science, were incorporated into the interpretation of these findings.

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Introduction and Literature Review

On March 24, 2022, *Daily Mail* in the UK published an article titled “Miss World turned political power player who 'snubbed' Kate: Twice married farmer's daughter Lisa Hanna says she had a 'pleasant' chat with the Duchess despite wanting to remove the Queen as Jamaica's head of state” (MailOnline, 2022). The headline was in bold capital letters, which meant that I could not scroll through their website without seeing the article, nor could anyone else for that matter. I remember the feelings of disgust, and at times even anger, that swept over me while reading the article. Not anger or disgust at the writer, or even the *Daily Mail* for that matter, but for a system that still perpetuated certain stereotypes of women, a system that alleges equal opportunity for all, but at any given moment that equal opportunity can be revoked and you are left to face the wrath of the collective. I say collective here because I did spend some time scanning through the comments (there were over a thousand on their website and at least three times that amount under the viral twitter video, which has since been deleted), and the message was the same. The crown loyalists inside and outside of the UK were having a frenzy. They attacked MP Hanna’s looks, even criticizing her wearing of ‘fake’ jewelry, her skin color, her achievements in comparison to Duchess Kate, and her morality. How could they not? Throughout the article, there were pictures of Lisa pitted against Kate, not just from the visit but from other events over time. There were pictures of her ex-husband, her current husband and her son, her dog, her car, her house and even her work in her constituency. Her political failures were also highlighted. Since then, MP Hanna has utilized all her social media platforms to address the incident and clarified what had happened and how out of context the entire video was. She also shared photos of herself and Kate sharing in happier moments, deep discussions and so on. The reactions to her posts were mixed and the fact that her social media following was nowhere near that of the *Daily*

Mail's, it's not likely her messages got very far outside of her circles. In contrast, the article published by the *Daily Mail* made waves across Europe, the US and even the Caribbean, with other news entities such as *The Guardian*, *Hello Magazine* and other smaller blogs and news sites sharing the story. Lisa Hanna has since indicated that she will be stepping away from representational politics to pursue other interests. While there is no indication that either of the two situations influenced or impacted each other, I think it is noteworthy to mention. This entire situation had me thinking about the role of media in democracy, the extent to which media enhances or diminishes democracy and how exactly women as political figures are treated on social media. Therefore, this study seeks to unearth just that. I will be exploring how democratic discourse on social media platforms works to shape the identities of women and more specifically women in politics.

This arises in the context of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) and specifically goal number five that is geared towards achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls around the world. As we draw closer to the year 2030, it is imperative that nations, especially those classified as "developing", take stock of how close they are to realizing the UNSDGs. More specifically, goal target 5.b which states, "Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women" has come to fore. Furthermore, taking into consideration the twenty-first century political climate, scholars as early as Habermas (1984), observed a shifting in the dynamics of how politics unfolded, from a physical to virtual landscape, and a number of subsequent studies have focused on understanding the evolving relationship between social media and democracy (Aral, 2020; Blumler, 2014; Habermas, 1984; Kellner, 2014; Khiabany and Williamson, 2015; Levy, 2021; Siebert, et al. 1956; Smith, 2009).

These authors have also deduced that the experiences of women and men on social media are different. Women are disproportionately targeted, villainized and ostracized within the social media sphere (Ahmed and Madrid-Morales, 2020; Cardo, 2021; Southern and Harmer, 2019). With the growing number of studies available on the phenomenon, those that look at the specific experiences of women politicians are grossly lacking, specifically within the Jamaican and wider Caribbean contexts.

There is evidence of Jamaican women politicians being targeted by international news media, which in turn has influenced the circulation of certain narratives about them on social media. For example, as mentioned above, on March 24, 2022, the *Daily Mail* online version released an article that at first read seemed to be pitting Jamaican Politician, Lisa Hanna against Duchess Kate Middleton.

The article was in response to a video circulating on social media at the time, where Lisa Hanna seemingly snubbed Duchess Kate. The polarizing effects of such an article was immediately apparent from a first glance at the comment sections wherever the article was shared and re-shared on social media. My research aims to capture this experience by exploring and detailing the online experience for the female politician, utilizing qualitative methods of inquiry. Additionally, with Jamaica being classified as ‘developing’, the adoption and implementation of the UNSDG five is particularly imperative if Jamaica and the Caribbean are to achieve ‘developed’ status by the year 2030. Therefore, research of this nature is important to capturing the experiences of Jamaican women political leaders for the purposes of knowledge generation and potentially policy direction. The exploratory Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methodology used for this research unearths and describes the experience of a select woman political leader in Jamaica. The choice of a single case for this research is because the purpose is

not to generalize the experiences of women politicians at this time, but rather to develop a deeper understanding within a single case. The case of Lisa Hanna can be described as unique because before representative politics, she was world renowned as Miss World 1993. She has also managed to enact a number of policies and legislations that provide free education to citizens of Jamaica, free healthcare and affordable housing options during the span of her career.

In order to get a deeper understanding of how Hanna presented her self through the discourse she shared on her Facebook page, the discourse was separated into personal representation and political representation, and the discourse, inclusive of images, were coded from her posts within those broad categories. The discourse was then broken down into smaller code categories to reflect the emerging themes from the discourse. Hanna self-identifies on facebook, personally, as a mother, a dog lover and someone who takes health and fitness seriously. Then I looked at how Hanna presented herself politically on Facebook. From the posts, the main themes that emerged presented Hanna as a hard working, solutions-oriented Member of Parliament who also is a Leader in her own right. Based on the discourse gathered from the interactions, Hanna was also represented as a leader, someone greatly admired by her constituents and follwers as well as someone who represented the issues of her constiteunts well. There were criticisms of Hanna personally and her leadership, however, none of this discourse resulted in her being treated negatively on her Facebook page, as conceptualized in the body of this research.

Understanding how the intersection of her personal and political life influence the discourse found on her Facebook page, and how she is represented and treated as a result, will serve as a starting point to facilitate long needed research at the national and regional levels. Since this research will be exploratory in nature, it is not concerned with a large sample, but

rather a single case is sufficient to provide the in-depth analysis needed to understand a phenomenon, and lay the foundation for future research (Yin, 2018).

The present study was guided by the intersectional theory of representation and the theory of affect. Intersectionality was adopted from Black Feminist scholarship and used as was originally esposed by Crenshaw (1989). Affect was adopted from two somewhat varying conceptions. The first was Boler and Davis (2020a) that looked at affect as emtions driving virality and influencing political behaviours through a series of interconnected systems and frameworks of power. The second was from Ahmed (2014), that spoke about the ways in which emotions exist in side and outside of the human body, which allows them to be easily transferred to other people based on certain types of interactions that they have with the objects that incite these emotions. These theories are incorporated into the body of the extant literature that was reviewed, amalyzed and expressed in the section below.

Literature Review

According to the United States Agency for International Development (1999), the media is an important pillar in democracy because it helps to keep politicians in check and keep them accountable to their campaign promises. Lisa Hanna has utilized her social media pages for just that. Her social media content often shows her within her constituency at speaking engagements, overseeing the fixing of major roadways, or overseeing the process of wells and other water sources being erected for her constituents. Her political contributions also include participation in UN delegations and advocating for the designation of select protected areas and world heritage sites within the country, which are also displayed on her social media pages. Despite all these efforts and other major accomplishments during her political career, she has never been the topic

of discussion on the international scene, save for when she was crowned Miss World in 1993, and now the controversy over her alleged snubbing of Duchess Kate. Representation for MP Hanna in the media is thus a reflection of how the media has and continues to frame her and her political achievements. This was evident in this instant where a political event (the royal visit) resulted in her entire life (personal and political) being paraded across several international news outlets to bring attention to the situation. Within a democracy, the media serves a critical function of providing information for decision making purposes, however, those in control of these institutions also get to determine what role they want it to play (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2019; Satariano and Frenkel, 2022). In analyzing the aforementioned, within the context of Lisa Hanna's story, the question of representation came to fore. Representation has been a core tenet of modern democracies. Dahl (1991) argued in his philosophies that democracy was in fact the most ideal form of governance, however, he believed that no country has ever been able to achieve democratic status. The missing element for Dahl was that modern democracies were not responsive to the needs of all their citizens. In other words, some citizens' or interest groups' interests were not being represented. Achieve this and similarly the country could automatically be classified as democratic. Women represent one such group that has been historically oppressed (Butler, 1996; Crenshaw, 1991; Disch and Hawkesworth, 2018). Therefore, Feminist theory literature helps to determine the ways in which women have been represented and treated historically, which will greatly inform the present research.

The theory of intersectionality was useful to understanding the findings within the literature and the findings of this research, as it explained the ways in which Black womens' experiences are different in the physical world and virtual spaces. Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) defined intersectionality as "...a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of

inequality or disadvantage sometimes compound themselves and create obstacles that often are not understood among conventional ways of thinking" (p. 149). Crenshaw (1989) further suggested that intersectionality is important to understanding the lived experiences of Black women and other marginalized groups. Intersectionality helps to highlight the different systems of oppression that affect black women around the world. An intersectional approach for Crenshaw is one that recognizes and acknowledges that Black women are oppressed by a multiplicity of social factors. For example, she made the argument that oftentimes in the US, a Black woman who was racially or sexually abused was often made to choose between which claim to bring, i.e. one of racism or sexism but no provision was made for both. A woman oppressed on the basis of being Black, then for being a Black woman, and then sexually abused suffers three harms but can only make a claim for one issue at a time. These systems perpetuate 'violence against black bodies'.

The violence is evident in the history of oppression and invisibility endured by Black women for centuries. Arguments made by bell hooks (1981) demonstrate that Black women have endured a history of invisibility. Male dominated society has actively erased the contributions of Black women in history, and their existence was even erased as no discourse of activism, before Black Feminism captured the issues affecting them directly. According to Hull, Bell-Scott and Smith (1982), the sentiments of Black Feminists during the late 1980s, was that "[a]ll the women are white, and all the Blacks are men" (p. 403). This invisibility was and is still perpetuated by the undifferentiation of Black women and Black men, and the deliberate erasure of the contributions of Black women to academic scholarship, for example (Coles and Pasek, 2020). Coles and Pasek argued that Feminist scholarship within the US focused on the middle-class white women who felt oppressed and were advocating for equal employment opportunities. The

issues of Black women were not addressed up to the 1980s when Crenshaw began her writings. Then there was the anti-racist and decolonization discourse that also did not focus on the specific issues affecting Black women, although there was a concentration on the Black man. Even though Black women were a crucial part of these movements, their contributions were not recorded and the other groups, white women and Black men, did not include them in the discourse. The prototypical woman was white and the prototypical Black person was the Black man. Hills-Collins (2002) also argued that the invisibility was deliberate, as "making the ideas and bodies of Black women invisible within the US and other areas of the world where Black women lived, was critical to maintaining the social inequalities meted out to them" (p. 3). During the time of invisibility, Black women had no control of the narratives spun against them in academic, political and social discourses. They also did not have an opportunity to address and supplant these negative representations with reality as their voices and bodies were ostracized from society.

As a result of the invisibility, Black women have had to develop a theory, though challenged by many on methodological and theoretical grounds, to capture their experiences and advocate for equal opportunities of visibility. Disch (2018) argued that as early as 1989, visibility for Black women meant representation. Therefore, many Black feminist scholars opted to trace the contributions of Black women over the years and document these contributions. Thus recording the lives and contributions of Black women became important as well, and as early as the 1970s, they began to compile memoirs (Scott, 1998). Bay, et al. (2015) highlighted Phyllis Wheatley as an example of a Black woman who contributed intellectually to various disciplines from as early as the 1700s in the US. Interestingly, the works of these early Black feminist

writers also included arguments for the incorporation of race, gender and class to everyday discussions of politics, religion and other social interactions.

Incorporating intersectionality theory into the present research provided a framework for analyzing the ways in which the voices of Black women are recognized or still stifled in contemporary discourse, the degree to which they have autonomy over their bodies and the ways that they chose to define themselves, as extracted from the social media discourses studied. The theory was also used to assess the intellectual contributions and the recognition of such, for the woman politician studied.

Feminist Theory Literature and Representation

Feminist theory also explores the concept of representation. The intersectional theory, for example, supposes that it is impossible to understand and thus adequately advocate for issues affecting Black women and other women of color, without taking an intersectional approach. An intersectional approach means that several social factors ought to be considered when analyzing and addressing these issues. For Kimberle Crenshaw (1989; 1991), the issue of representation is one where the oppressive forces against Black women are eliminated on class and racial lines. As it pertains to women and political representation, feminist theorists such as Lisa Disch (2018) contend that "Feminist theorists of political representation have taken three different approaches to exploring its relationship with aesthetic representation" (p. 792). The approaches are: representation in the political sense (speaking for), representation in the aesthetic (as picturing) and refusing to represent. The works of Gayatri Spivak (1999) was cited as exploring and distinguishing political representation (speaking for) and aesthetic representation (picturing), as well as refusing to represent in feminist political theory. The main form of representation that will be explored for its usefulness to the present research is representation in the political sense

(speaking for). As Lisa Hanna is an elected woman politician, I conclude that it will be instrumental to review this aspect of the Feminist theory literature to help inform how representation ought to be analyzed and determine the common trends or gaps in both works.

According to Disch (2018), feminist theorists such as Judith Squires (2008) illustrate "constitutive representation of gender" (CRG) by building on theorists such as Michael Saward's notion of a representative claim. This looks at the ways in which elected and non-elected political representatives construct verbal and visual images of their constituencies" (p. 797) for identification/visibility purposes. Thus, Disch (2018) contends that Squires' conception of CRG functions in a similar manner to allow female politicians and "femocrats" to construct the identities of the groups that they represent. For Disch (2018), this is both enabling and constraining as in certain contexts, the intricacies of who is defined within the categories they are representing become exclusionary. The example of Sweden's gender equality policy was cited as demonstrating this phenomenon. Disch (2018) argued that whilst the policy achieved substantive representation for women, it was also constrictive from a Constitutive Representation of Gender lens as immigrant women were excluded from among those classified as Swedish women who benefited from the gender equality policy.

Mary Hawkesworth (2003, as cited in Disch, 2018) highlighted another way in which constitutive representation is used to undermine female politicians. She argued that in the 1990's US, the white men of Congress sought to undermine African American congresswomen by deploying certain stereotypes to sway public opinion in their favor. That is, they utilized an image of a Black urban woman as a welfare recipient around the time of congressional debates to enable a narrative that Black women were lazy, uneducated, and refused to work. This in turn

affected the campaigns of these congresswomen of color who, Haweskworth (2003) opined, futilely argued against these representations and the policy themselves.

Against this backdrop, it is also important to glean from the literature the ways in which the media itself has impacted democracy. In the subsequent sections, I will look at the different ways in which the media impacts democracy. To sufficiently address these questions, I reviewed the extant literature to extrapolate themes surrounding old and new media and the ways in which they impact key democratic processes, the political economy or bioeconomy as Nick Couldry and James Hay (2011) and Couldry (2021) term it, and the role of affect in the proliferation of propaganda in social media spaces.

Social Media and Democracy

There have been two distinct sets of arguments within the body of literature that focuses on the relationship between social media and democracy. On one hand, you have scholars such as Richard Kahn and Douglas Kellner (2012), who found among the negative impacts, that social media to an extent, also advances democracy. In that, it has the potential in some cases to promote equal participation of all members of society, facilitate two-way communication between political representatives and their constituents as well as enhancing the process of organizing political rallies and protests (Kahn and Kellner, 2012). On the other hand, you have scholars, such as Rasmus Nielsen and Richard Fletcher (2020), arguing that social media hinders or corrupts democracy as it perpetuates “fake news”, election rigging, and an increased polarization and mistrust of fundamental democratic institutions. The definition I curated and will use for social media democracy therefore takes into context all the political processes that have been translated to online social media platforms. A number of research studies, qualitative

and quantitative in nature, have been done on the growing phenomenon from a multiplicity of contexts. The subsequent sections will briefly review some of those findings.

Old vs New Media/ Convergence

There are several sources that have argued that the type of media, being old or new, has specific impacts on democracy. Couldry and Hay (2011) have argued that to determine whether media enhances or diminishes democracy, one has to first distinguish old and new media. Lesage and Natale (2019) concurred that 'oldness' and 'newness' of media is in fact a major determinant on the effect media has on democracy. They also made the argument that traditionally, the old media resulted in passive audiences that had little to no opportunity to contribute democratic discourse, however, new media has opened 'pathways' for active participation among audiences. Democratic discourse, for the purposes of this paper, is conceptualized by Mendis (2022) as "the ability of members of the public to engage in autonomous self-expression (free of suppression and manipulation by corporate or state power), leading to a proliferation of diverse viewpoints that can be the subject of open, inclusive, and deliberative discussion" (p. 42). This in turn influences the democratic processes of voting, political protests, rule of law, information dissemination and so on.

Even though Lesage and Natale had no statistics to supplement the argument and thereby demonstrate whether passive or active participation enhances or diminishes democracy, their argument remains relevant because it highlights a critical difference in the ways old and new media affect the way citizens receive and respond to political information.

Couldry and Hay (2011) provided an alternative explanation for the relationship between media and democracy. They argued that there is no distinct effect that old or new media has on democracy, but rather there is convergence culture that has direct implications for democracy.

Convergence culture is where old and new media meet (Jenkins, 2006). Couldry and Hay (2011) posited that there was no true defining boundary between old and new media, within the present century, convergence influenced by culture exists. That is, historically audiences had to access news/political information from printed newspapers, for example, that were usually distributed on infrequent cycles. Nowadays, audiences can access information from their 'trusted' news sources online, using what Lesage and Natale (2019) described as Web 2.0. Web 2.0, according to the authors, is the perfect example of convergence culture impacting democracy. Users can interact directly with the suppliers of news or political information, contribute to discourse, and they are also afforded anonymity by creating fake accounts or bots that are used to participate online. They have argued that this is evidence of increased democratic participation. This convergence or carrying over of traditional/old media to new media platforms further blurs the boundaries that distinguish old and new media, which also complicates the ability to study whether old or new media respectively enhances or diminishes democracy within given contexts. What the evidence shows, according to Couldry and Hay (2011) and Lesage and Natale (2019), is that there are powers at play who manipulate these media forms to control the narratives and ensure that their agendas are carried out. Here I contend that the authors are arguing about hegemony. It is the powerful western entities like Google, Meta and Twitter that control the narratives and influence the democratic discourses in other arenas (Satariano and Frenkel, 2022). If we look at the US for example, Hindman, Lubin and Davis (2022) found in their study that on Facebook, "The pages with the most engagement included examples from the far right and the far left, but right-wing pages were dominant among the top-ranked overtly political pages" (para. 7). These Facebook pages were found to generate tens of millions of online content interactions per month. It is interesting to think about whether these interactions also play out offline. We can

assume based on what Hindman, Lubin and Davis (2022) argued that these powerful sources also translate offline as evidenced by the upsurge in right wing narratives coming out of the US for the latter part of this decade, such as the famous "Make America Great Again" tagline. A number of these ideologies gain prominence on social media and are then 'picked up' by mainstream news sources. This method of media convergence is looked at by authors such as O'Boyle and Pardun (2021).

In expanding the discourse around media convergence, O'Boyle and Pardun (2021) made the argument that during the 2016 US Presidential elections, a vast majority of the content that was displayed by traditional news sources was taken directly from, or influenced by, the social networking site Twitter. The authors' analysis incorporated over six thousand tweets across six different countries during the election period. What they found was that a great number of journalists have come to rely on Twitter sources for their information and that Twitter in many ways facilitates agenda-setting similarly to traditional media. The examples drawn upon by the authors included the 'email issue' with Hilary Clinton, a presidential candidate in the US 2016 elections. Most of the Twitter content analyzed by O'Boyle and Pardun signaled that the discourse on the candidate surrounded talks about FBI investigations, the email issue and collusion. The issue of convergence came to the fore when a popular US based newspaper, *The New York Times*, also ran with the story. The paper was also criticized for having *reverberated*- an issue I write about below- by over focusing on it over an extended period. This was seen as a bid to skew the narrative surrounding the candidate and had bearings on her ultimate defeat.

For media scholars interested in determining the type of media, whether old or new, that contributed significantly to Hilary Clinton's defeat, there would be significant challenges trying to distinguish between old and new in this instance. As Lesage and Natale (2019) highlighted,

the distinctions are not easily identifiable, and especially in an era characterized by widespread reliance on technology. Another component that intensifies this complexity is the use of mobile phones/smartphones in accessing news or political information. Gergen (2008) analyzed the ways in which mobile technologies, that is the use of smartphones, have impacted democracy. While a smartphone such as an Apple iPhone would be considered new media, the point the Lesage and Natale (2019) argued, is that the smartphones are used to access traditional news sources, such as newspapers. In the event an individual uses their smartphone to access news information or political communication from the online version of a traditional newspaper, which in turn affects their political decision making, how does one go about determining the type of media that impacted the individual's decision? Do we attribute this to old or new media? Lesage and Natale (2019) attempt to address the nuances that exist by employing a biographical role to media types. That is, they argued that media types should be distinguished by their historic definitions. In light of this, they concluded that based on historicity and cultural factors, new media, within this specific context, would have the greatest impact on key democratic processes. The ease of access to social media that mobile phones afford their users means that content shared can be accessed almost immediately and achieve the desired impact almost instantaneously. The use of algorithms in social media technology also influences a user's proclivity to access social media using mobile technology. The subsequent section will focus more on the use of algorithms to influence political behaviour and the overall impacts of new media on democracy.

Algorithms, Political Economy, and Democracy

Dipankar Sinha (2018) and Peter Csigo (2016), as cited in Couldry (2021), analyzed how democracy has changed and the forces that have contributed to this change from economic

perspectives. There seems to be consensus among the authors that the shifting dynamics is driven by a desire to give the people what they want. They opined: “politics really is being transformed by an increasing pressure to conform political practice to what political consumers (and the media that represent them) want” (p. 141).

This, however, they argued is problematic as different political actors are taking a guess as to what the people truly want. Wahl-Jorgensen (2019) argued along similar lines, stating that governments use the media to amplify and circulate the messages that they want to be adopted, by coining them in ways that elicit affective responses. (Affect is explored further below). The author further argued that “Leaders utilize the media to create a shared community and an emotional bond between themselves and the people” (p. 6). The practice of mobilizing citizens around a unitary ‘popular issue’ gives rise to a new form of governance: populism. This can be a dangerous unintended or intended consequence of/on democracy, depending on the leader and their agenda. To gain and maintain power within democracies, there seems to be a race between political candidates as to whom will be the first to best represent the issues popular to the voting majority, and by doing so gain popularity among said voters, which eventually secures the leader’s power. The issues generally represented in the populist leaders’ manifestos are those that are also popular in the media, to gain public favor. Wahl-Jorgensen (2019) argued that this phenomenon borders on a populist regime. Mazzoni and Mincigrucci (2022) also contended that the manner in which political leaders present themselves on social media, can be used to determine whether or not they are embracing a populist regime. The authors looked at the use of images on Facebook to convey messages about the leaders and the impact that it has on their audiences. They looked at images used for information, engagement, personalization, mobilization and humor purposes. Their study found that the politicians who shared images

depicting themselves in social situations with their constituents and regularly shared images of their personal lives, evoked greater levels of empathy from their followers. The study also showed that these leaders developed relationships similar to celebrities and their followers; the authors referred to this phenomenon as ‘celebrity politics’. They also argued that this was characteristic of populist leaders and that the stories they told by images shared to their posts, was in a bid to foster populism. The authors also argued that :

> In the era of the so-called ‘audience democracy’ (Manin, 1997), citizens are more likely to vote for the person, with his/her personal story and his/her personal characteristics, rather than for parties or programmes: in sum, politicians’ personalities are increasingly important in gaining electoral consensus. (Van Santen & Van Zoonen, 2010) as cited in (Mazzoni and Mincigrucci, 2022, p. 224).

The authors specifically highlighted the story of Matteo Salvini, an Italian politician, whom they believe embodied the celebrity politics phenomenon. Mazzoni and Mincigrucci (2022) found that Salvini personalized his Facebook by sharing a great deal of images that depicted his personal life more than that of his political life. The authors argued that these personalized images being shared by Salvini serve the purpose of portraying him as a ‘common man’ who relates with the ‘ordinary people’, (p. 231). Another important finding made by Mazzoni ad Mincigrucci (2022), is that Salvini emphasized an emotional reaction or connection in the personalized photos shared to his Facebook profile. For example, the pictures depicted Salvini hugging his constituents and others showed enthusiasm on the faces of the crowds that he interacted with or pictures of him hugging the constituents as well as posing for selfies. Salvini was found to be the epitome of a populist leader that utilized social media platforms like Facebook to form strong emotional bonds with the communities that he represented. Paulo Gerbado as cited in Boler and Davis

(2020b), argues that Salvini is a ‘potent’ example of a populist leader utilizing social media platforms like Facebook, to weaponize emotions and ‘micro-target’ those that oppose him (p. 340). The authors quoted examples of Salvini mobilizing his followers online to target and spread hate towards women, migrants and political rivals, which has often resulted in Salvini’s followers going to the pages of these forces of opposition and posting hateful comments and other forms of negative interactions. Paolo further argued that, having such power (the ability to mobilize masses) and using it to control narratives, in the sense that Salvini determines what people can or cannot say about him and his politics, by dispatching his loyal supporters to attack those who criticize him, is extremely dangerous to democracy, but at the same time is characteristic of populist leaders.

A number of politicians across contexts have adopted similar styles of presenting on social media in order to maintain political power. The most remarkable story of such within the past decade, in the Western world, is that of Donald Trump in the US 2016 Presidential elections, as explored later in this chapter (Aral, 2021; O’Boyle & Pardun, 2021; Williamson & Gelfand, 2019). The framework for analyzing how populist leaders maintain power through social media sites like Facebook was also extracted from the literature (Boler and Davis, 2020; Csigo, 2016; Mazzoni and Mincigrucci, 2022; Sinha, 2018). The literature shows that:

1. Populist leaders rely on personalization in order to identify with ordinary citizens.
2. Populist leaders rely heavily on digital media platforms like Facebook as messages aren't as filtered.
3. Populist leaders rely on affect to amplify their messages and resonate with their audiences.

Herein lies the quandary, as Sinha (2018) and Csigo (2016) highlighted: politicians and those in power have now adopted the Market Speculation theory by John Maynard Keynes' in order to 'market' themselves on social media to constituents and customers. That is, the speculative bubbles spoken about by Keynes sees different actors in a constant loop speculating about what is important to citizens, based on what is presented in the media. Therefore, Sinha (2018) and Csigo (2016) further argued that what became popular on the politicians' agendas was not necessarily what citizens thought was important, but rather what was popular in the media at that time as well as the results of unending speculation by the politician. The authors also highlighted the fact that these populist leaders rely on the neuromarketing capabilities of social media to help them carry out this agenda. Neuromarketing, a concept also explored by Aral (2021), is a strategy that incorporates neuropsychology and market research into social media advertising. It stimulates neural responses to certain keywords and content presented to them on social media. Therefore, the populist leader curates their ads with the aid of neuromarketing tools to prompt a neurological response in the consumer (citizen). This response occurs through a process of "extracting marketing-relevant information from the consumer's subconscious" (Couldry, 2021, p. 142). I therefore argue that this application of economic or market principles to politics and the role of social media in the process can be very dangerous for democracy generally, but more so troubling within certain jurisdictions with a history of corruption and dictator-like leaders. These neuromarketing tactics rely on media affect to be effective as Wahl-Jorgensen (2019) pointed out above. The dictator-like leaders therefore sensationalize their messages by adding emotive language to ensure that it resonates with their audiences (Boler and Davis, 2020; Wahl-Jorgensen , 2019).

Couldry and Van Dijck (2015) had earlier argued against the incorporation of neuromarketing into politics because, like Nemorin (2018), they viewed it as biosurveillance, which basically is the use of technology to scope the internet for terrorists and terrorist activity. The resulting bioeconomy, in their opinion, was also dangerous for democracy. Couldry and Van Dijck aimed to dispel the notion of 'Social' as being the primary role of social media by highlighting the political economy that underpinned certain social media practices. They showed that an activity as mundane as sharing your fitness statistics to an app is secretly recorded by the tools that operate social media (algorithms) and is used later to determine health policies that are then redirected to the consumer. This benefits a wide selection of health practitioners. They also argued that social media operates on 'hidden' forces that control what is mainstreamed and challenged the supposition that social media was created to facilitate social interactions and connect individuals globally. Additionally, Couldry and Van Dijck argued that the data captured by some social media platforms is also shared with governments to aid in certain democratic processes. One such example they argued, was that in the UK, the government was willing to discontinue their 10-year census as a method of gathering citizen data, and opt for a more comprehensive and cost-efficient method- social media surveys. This was possible because user data was widely available to them via social media with very few limitations on privacy, collection and storage of the data and re-use. Where there were restrictions, the government and owners of the social media platforms collaborated to bypass them. The irony of this example goes without saying, as the government employs undemocratic means to acquire citizen data, breaching the right to privacy as afforded them within a democratic constitution. Aral (2021) also makes mention of this privacy breach in his example of how Donald Trump was able to utilize his economic prowess to gain valuable data and insights from the social networking

platform Facebook during the 2016 presidential elections period. The argument was further extended to capture Russian intervention in the election as well by deploying bots that aided in spreading propaganda online that saturated the discourse with the ills of candidate Hilary Clinton and the populist narratives of Donald Trump.

In addition, Couldry and Van Dijck (2015) and Aral (2021) highlight that within the complex network of social media spaces, it is not presumed that power is shared equally among the consumers, regulators, and owners of tech companies. It is instead a reality where some players hold hegemonic positions, and their ideals are shared across lateral networks. Those without the power are those who consume the content and reside in the aspirational bubbles. There is also no presumption that every member of a democracy has equal access to these social media networks, nor an equal voice in the political discourses that take place online. As Aral (2021) highlighted in his work, the political economy of social media works in tandem with those who have the financial means to make the data and algorithmic tools work for them. In his analysis of the 2016 US Presidential elections, Aral demonstrated how Donald Trump was able to manipulate Facebook algorithms to get his messages out or control the narrative during campaigning and voting periods. The other candidates were practically ostracized from the discourse as the high levels of engagement with Trump content, facilitated by the manipulation of algorithms and incorporation of Facebook bots, meant that his content would get priority viewing. Hindman, Lubin and Davis (2022) also highlighted the fact that Facebook algorithms ‘reward’ engagement, in that, whichever content is most viewed, shared, liked, or disliked, will result in that user’s subsequent content postings to get priority viewership over other people’s content. The manipulation of the media in such a way has negative consequences for democracy. As O’Boyle and Pardun (2021) demonstrated, to maintain relevance or receive priority

engagement, candidates release a series of ‘fake news’ within their networks to undermine other candidates and maintain their relevance. The following section focuses on the components that enable fake news to impact democracy in the way that it has over the past few years. On its own, fake news does not achieve its desired effect, for it to resonate with audiences, there need to be emotions involved.

Affect, Social Media and Democracy

The impact of social media on democracy does not only rest with the ability of a person or institution to manipulate algorithms or apply market/economics-based principles of neuromarketing or biosurveillance to influence behaviour. Below I introduce several scholars who argue that there is also a socio-cultural element to social media represented by the human element that is behind the smartphone, computer or other electronic device participating in discourses online. These scholars (Aral, 2020; Kunstman, 2020) argued that the human element, or human responsibility behind the algorithms, is a critical contributing/intervening factor that helps to determine the impact social media has on democracy.

Another critical element to the discourse on how social media affects democracy focuses on how individuals perceive certain content that are posted on social media. To best explore this phenomenon, the concept of *affect* is drawn upon. According to Boler and Davis (2020), content sharing online is mostly based on the emotional reaction that consumers have to the content, rather than the intellectual or political correctness of the content. This, they argued, is dangerous to democracy because a key pillar of democracy is the flow of factual information across channels. The authors contend that emotion is the fire that fuels virality, which is a sentiment that resounds in the academic literature around propaganda and democracy (Aral, 2020; Boler and Davis, 2020; Hong, 2020; Kunstman, 2020). Aral (2020) contends that the concept of ‘fake

news' has its etymology in the 2016 US Presidential election campaigning period. That is to highlight the fact that some politicians, particularly those hinging on authoritarian regimes, use 'fake news' as a means of achieving media affect among their consumers.

Kunstman (2020), in expanding the discourse on the impact of affect on politics, noted that politicians have come to understand that to resonate with their audiences (citizens), it is important to either mobilize or perform emotions based on the situation. That is, when the situation demands it, they are required to master the skills of invoking certain emotional responses from their audiences. In other situations, they have to be the ones expressing those emotions that best fit their agenda. Based on what Boler and Davis (2020) argued about the critical role of affect in content virality on social media, we can also understand the key role that affect plays for politicians during election campaign periods. For their messages to trend or go viral on social media, they too have to incorporate high levels of media affect. An identifiable gap with Boler and Davis' research is that they primarily focused on election periods, therefore I plan to expand on that to focus on a period outside of elections, but one that is also defined by a major political event. That is, the Royal visit by Prince William and Duchess Kate of Wales to Jamaica, as outlined in the introduction of this project, was seen as a major political event, with resulting implications for a number of political leaders, including woman politician, Lisa Hanna, whose case will be looked at in depth for this project.

Ahmed (2014) also concurs that affect is the fundamental driver of online democratic discourse. She laid a solid foundation in explaining how political discourse comes to be shaped and intertwined with affect. According to Ahmed, affect takes root and evokes the right emotions in the intended audience through the concept of "othering". That is, the messages shared by some political leaders are constructed in a manner that distinguishes the intended audience, "Us", (the

group that they identify with and want the emotions to resonate with) from the “others”, who the messages are about and the emotions should be targeted towards. In order for the emotionality to be effective, Ahmed (2014) also argues that a certain power structure needs to exist. Therefore, political figures who are entrusted with “power” are at an advantage and possess the ability to “endow ‘others’ with meaning and value” (p. 4).

Ahmed (2014) classified texts, comments or sentiments as affective when there is a clear distinction between the person in the position of power who shares messages that are constructed in a manner that distinguishes the intended audience, “Us” group or the subjects from the “others” group or the objects. These emotions can be targeted at an individual, group, or subject matter. As it pertains to text, Ahmed looks at the ways in which naming certain emotions within messages can also have an affective impact. Beyond that, Ahmed argues that emotions occur outside the person and are public, therefore there are certain telling signs that allow others to recognize them even without the emotions being named by the person experiencing them. For example, intonation and gestures can be telling signs of certain emotions. Ahmed also made the point that words used in certain contexts can communicate certain emotions. In that, if the narrative of the text rejects the presence of a certain group or a subject and describes the presence of the group or subject as causing injury, this can result in the generation of strong negative emotions. As Ahmed also argued, it is the potential benefit or harm of an object that accounts for the feelings that others will have towards it. For the present research, affect was used as a theory to extract the ways in which emotions were named, or inferred based on the utilization of symbols or the tonality expressed in the discourse.

Kuntsman (2020) also argued based on her findings that affect has a positive relationship with democracy when incorporated in online speeches that speak about patriotism and in a like

manner has a negative impact when hate speech is spewed passionately. The author looks at the concept of reverberation to measure the impact of affect on politics. Reverberation as a socio-political concept measured the multiplicity of ways that online content allowed consumers to experience a range of emotions and the possible actions that can result. Kuntsman (2020) opined:

> Reverberation allowed me to think about the movements of feelings around various affective regimes and conventions, and in and out of digital domains, as well as about the multiplicity of effects such movements might entail; sometimes intensifying certain emotions, sometimes muffling them, and sometimes transforming a feeling into its opposite. (p. 70)

Drawing on the example of Hilary Clinton as cited earlier, there was a great feeling of mistrust and indifference towards her, expressed by the voters, based on the repetitiveness of a particular story published and republished in *The New York Times* newspaper about her alleged crimes. Based on Kunstman's explanation of reverberation, we can understand how the constant republishing accounted for reverberation among the voters, which also resulted in the feelings of mistrust and indifference towards the candidate. Kuntsman also highlighted the strategic ways in which certain imagery would be used across varying media platforms to send a particular message or evoke certain feelings about a phenomenon. Of particular interest was social media, as Kuntsman (2020) found that the audio-visual capabilities of these media forms afforded the content creators flexibility in ensuring that the message is well crafted to have maximum impact. Reflecting on what Boler and Davis (2020) shared about virality, as well as agenda setting (O'Boyle and Pardun, 2019), it becomes apparent why certain political candidates fare better than others, and especially when they have the tools necessary to effectively maneuver and manipulate social media spaces to their advantage.

Another noteworthy finding in Kuntsman's work was the argument made about the potential for those in power and having media control to weaponize emotions to stick to certain racialized bodies. For example, Donald Trump while President of the United States would always refer to Muslims as terrorists and POC from Developing Countries as coming from 'shithole' countries. This phenomenon resulted in increased racism, sexism, and xenophobia across the US during his presidency (Williamson and Gelfand, 2019). I therefore contend that Kunstman is highlighting the linkage between affect and political action and the negative consequences that can arise from weaponizing emotions (using affective language that stirs up strong emotions in audiences, which can also result in physical or emotional hurt to a group or individual). Kunstman (2020) also encourages safe use of these platforms. Safe use in this context refers to express and implied responsibility users have when engaging with the content online. From my experience with social media, some regulations exist for sharing and resharing content. Kunstman (2020) emphasized the importance of evaluating the potential impacts certain content might have on certain groups before engaging with and amplifying them on social media. Employing this method of utilizing social media 'safely' would inevitably help to enhance certain presumptions of democracy such as equity and equality, corporate citizenship, and morality. This finding highlights an important issue of representation that this project seeks to address. That is, the direct link between messages amplified on social media and the role they play in shaping certain discourses around historically marginalized groups such as women. I will be looking more closely at politician Lisa Hanna, who has had several messages circulate of and by her on various media platforms in Jamaica and around the world. Within a different socio-political and historical context, there is no guarantee that the arguments for safe use as expressed

by Kuntsman (2020), will gain merit, however it remains a fundamental finding that influences the findings in this study.

Hong (2020) echoes the sentiments of Kunstman (2020) as they pertain to the ability of those in power to weaponize and manipulate the emotions of those who consume their content. A negative impact of this weaponization, according to Hong (2020), is that it perpetuates a system of polarization and inhibits the democratic process. For Hong, in the US, there is a divide between those who "rely on factual news sources" to formulate their political opinions and influence their political behaviors and those who engage with certain news sources because of how it makes them feel (pp. 90-91). The divide intensifies as it perpetuates a system of "us versus them", according to Hong (2020, p. 91). The fact chasers, as she classifies them, have no tolerance for those who are perceived to have no rational, factual basis for their political decisions. Hong (2020) also pointed out that the fact chasers are often those who subscribe to right wing ideologies and the news sources that reflect those ideals. This is certainly interesting to think about within the context of this present study because it provides a further basis of understanding the relationship between online propaganda and political representation. For example, the emphasis on 'facts' over 'emotions' helps us to understand the hidden agendas of those leaders who amplify such narratives in order to discredit the 'other'. This arguably is the main way in which power is maintained, and especially in a system that relies heavily on trust.

Another critical finding that contributes well to the discourse on how media affect influences democracy was found in the work of Lim (2020), who argued that algorithms and affect work in tandem to manipulate and change the landscape of what we view as democracy. Algorithms on their own, she argues, are unable to band and keep a group of like-minded individuals or persons who face a similar socio-political struggle together for an extended period.

The real actions that affect democracy also unfold offline, she argues, and there is no algorithm offline that will influence these behaviors. Therefore, her argument is that algorithms by nature are designed to form enclaves that are further banded together by affect. The impacts of these algorithms are twofold based on what I understand from Lim (2020). In one instant, the algorithms have been proven to impact users' interactions and the nature of political conversations that they have in various "echo chambers" or "enclaves" (p. 189). The impact of whether they will retain the information and be prompted to action is solely dependent on the types of emotions these enclaves elicit. Lim (2020) focuses a great deal on the human element within the social media landscape and their sum total of attitudes, feelings and beliefs that are reinforced through algorithmic enclaves. A number of social movements of this decade come to mind when thinking of Lim's work, such as the Black Lives Matter movement (BLM). The masses were mobilized around the issue of police brutality and oppression or killing of Black people across the USA, in particular. While the movement gained its prominence online, there were also a series of protests offline, by persons demanding change not because an algorithm banded them together, but because of the emotions they experienced witnessing the death of these people. On the other hand, the algorithms also have negative effects on democracy as was evidenced in the Lisa Hanna story. The creators of the content evidently sensationalized the headline by using affective language as explored by Boler and Davis (2020), in order to boost the number of clicks the article got, which is a phenomenon known as clickbait (Bakir and McStay, 2020). Clickbait has negative consequences for democracy, as it motivates journalists to publish content not necessarily newsworthy and beneficial to consumers, but content that will bring 'traffic' to their websites and boost content engagement. As mentioned earlier, the *Daily Mail* online was able to gather large traffic to their website by publishing the emotive article about

Lisa Hanna. Whilst it would be hard to measure the 'harm' that Lisa or democracy suffered from this single action, sources such as Couldry and Van Dijck (2015), Kuntsman (2020), and Hong (2020) have highlighted the negative impact that fake news and propaganda have had on democracy. A number of popular sites also benefit tremendously from ad sales. Lim's (2020) postulations therefore directly challenges a few assumptions made by Aral (2020). Aral's work argued that it was the composition of the algorithms that accounted for the levels of engagement on social media. That is to say that the algorithms were created using technologies that studied and predicted human behaviour, and as such they were able to prompt user engagement without human interference. In so doing, he argued and attributed human-like characteristics to the bots and algorithms that comprised social networks, therefore minimizing the role of human actions in also manipulating those algorithms, as well as the initial intent of those who created the algorithms to begin with. On the other hand, Lim (2020) demonstrated above that the algorithms and human actions are not independent of each other, but rather work in tandem to impact democracy. Based on my current research, I think that the insights provided by Lim (2020) provide a more logical explanation of the intersection of politics and social media algorithms, in terms of how they influence political conversations online, the groups/enclaves that they form and the overall impact on democracy.

In light of all that has been explored above, particularly within the context of Lisa Hanna's story, there still remains a gap in the literature as it pertains to the treatment of women political leaders on social media. More specifically, those women living and working within the Global South. The following section therefore looks briefly at the treatment of women from a global perspective, with an aim to highlight the gaps found and areas of interest for this present study that will specifically look at the experiences of Lisa Hanna, a political leader in Jamaica.

Treatment of Women

The arguments that look at the ways in which social media democracy has affected the lives of historically marginalized groups vary, including those of women. One assumption by some scholars that studied the phenomenon is that social media democracy would afford greater levels of equality for women and other marginalized groups (Cardo, 2021). The extant literature has not provided sufficient evidence at this time to conclude whether or not this is the reality of the majority of women, particularly those within the Global South.

Within the more developed countries like the US and Canada, the literature surrounding the online treatment of women politicians is a bit more extensive. In one study Rheault, Rayment and Musulan (2019) found that women in politics were targeted disproportionately by uncivil comments online than their male counterparts. The ‘high level politicians’ were studied because of their higher visibility rate in the media, based on their utilization of popular social media platforms like Twitter, much like Lisa Hanna in Jamaica. The researchers analyzed over two million tweets to extract messages about these female politicians that were deemed uncivil. They found that “close to 11% of messages addressed to female Canadian politicians on social media can be categorized as uncivil, either because they rely upon explicit profanities or because they represent more fundamental and personal attacks" (Rheault, Rayment and Musulan, 2019, p. 6).

Much of the discourse on social media and democracy has been unidimensional in their approach and analyses. The issue is vastly complex and there are a number of nuances that have contributed to the complexity, which are explored in my research. Thinking back to the story of Member of Parliament, Lisa Hanna and how she was treated online for a situation taken completely out of context and immediately became viral within old and new media spaces, it becomes apparent that attention needs to be given to the lived experiences of these women

within the Global South. The impetus thus remains for there to be current academic research that captures these lived experiences of women and ground them in relevant Feminist theories. Globally, the discourse as evaluated within the body of this literature review, demonstrated that inequality exists based on power relations, hegemony and the political economies that underpin social media spaces and gender. It is therefore not too far-fetched to think that the inequality affects women politicians within the Global South who also utilize these social media spaces. The story of Lisa Hanna is not unique, however, in this instant it is useful in demonstrating how media convergence accounted for the virality of the story published in the *Daily Mail*, as well as the concepts of media affect and neuromarketing have also contributed to the spread of disinformation, that had negative implications on how Hanna as a female politician is perceived and treated online.

Research Objectives and Questions

The main objective of this thesis project is explore the representation and treatment of a woman politician on Facebook in Jamaica between March and October 2022.

RQ1: What is the democratic discourse surrounding Lisa Hanna on Facebook?

1. How has politician Lisa Hanna represented herself personally and politically on Facebook?
2. How has the public discourse represented Lisa Hanna through interactions on her Facebook page?
3. How does *affect* influenced the way that Lisa Hanna is treated on Facebook?

The findings from the extant Literature were instrumental in determining the methods and methodology that would guide this thesis. The literature also painted the picture that, specifically in the Western world, where there is an abundance of information, social media has been a powerful tool in sustaining the existing systems of patriarchal oppression, inequality and poor treatment of women online and offline. Therefore, to sufficiently interrogate discourse and extract themes for a comprehensive overview of representation and treatment on social media, and determine if these findings from the literature will be the corroborated within the Jamaican context, a qualitative approach needed to be employed. Additionally, as the purpose of this research is to contribute to the body of knowledge on a crucial area of development, which is grossly under-researched witin the Jamaican context at the time of this study, this approach is also fitting. An information rich method of inquiry provides sufficient data to influence future research, while exposing the systems of inequalities that exist within the Jamican context. The subsequent chapter focuses in detail on the specific approaches taken to carry out this research and the ways in which the specific methods and methodology chosen as instrumental to the overall findings of this study.

Methodology and Method

Methodology: the Theory Behind the Method

According to Creswell (2008), qualitative research is used to explore and understand the meanings that humans ascribe to the social world or social problems. This is a systematic process that involves: data collection; data analysis, which is done inductively; and, at the final stage, the researcher interprets the meaning of the data and publishes it. In essence, qualitative research emphasizes inductive reasoning, individual meanings and deconstructing complex situations for analysis. Despite qualitative research often being inductive, I also employed a deductive approach in carrying out this research, as the initial codes were arrived at from the data gathered within the literature review. This was in an attempt to narrow the scope of the study and contextualize it, to an extent, based on findings from prior studies of a similar nature.

Kuhn (1962) identifies the research paradigm (as cited in Patel, 2015), as "a set of common beliefs and agreements shared between scientists on how problems should be understood and addressed" (p. 15). The research paradigm incorporates epistemology, ontology, and methodology. For this specific research, I was guided by the interpretivist paradigm, which argues that there is no single truth or reality and therefore to acquire truth or knowledge, reality must be interpreted (Patel, 2015). The interpretivist approach is also deeply concerned with the underlying meanings within contexts— a core element to this present research—as it aimed to analyze online discourse and determine meanings translated by certain narratives or use of language within specific contexts.

Qualitative methodologies are geared towards collecting and analyzing data in depth. There are a series of strategies that can be employed to gather accurate, credible, and valid data, that helps the researcher to develop and explain a phenomenon. The research methodology thus becomes a critical component to the research, as it outlines the specific procedures the researcher aims to use to gather the knowledge. To best inform this qualitative research, I utilized the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methodology to analyze the discourse present on politician Lisa Hanna's Facebook page.

According to Fairclough (2012), CDA is the combination of social analysis and language studies, which allows for the study of discourse and social elements, such as power relations and institutions (p. 9). Henry and Tator (2016) concur with the postulations of Fairclough (2012) and further elaborated that Critical Discourse Analysis focuses on how social power, inequality and dominance are produced, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political arenas of society" (p. 72). Owing to the fact that CDA analyzes power distribution and inequality within society, I also relied on Intersectionality and Affect to shape the theoretical foundations of this research.

Henry and Tator (2016) also draw on the work of Van Dijk (1998) to further argue that CDA demonstrates how the cognitive, social, historical, cultural, and political contexts of language use and communication affect the content, meanings, and structures of text or discourse, which proved useful in extracting the themes from the written data presented in this study. Fairclough's CDA was also useful in helping me to make certain key inferences, based on the use of language in shaping Hanna's identity as it emerged from the discourse. According to Waller (2006), the systematic use of Fairclough's CDA takes into account three important steps. At the first step/level of analysis, the *text* is looked at, in that, its discursive content and how it is

linked to other discourses, genres and styles are analyzed. The second level, discourse as a discursive practice, is where the researcher analyzes the factors that influence how social actors make sense of certain events and how this process in turn affects the production, distribution, transformation, and consumption of text. The final stage looks at the socio-cultural practice, which involves analyzing the "wider socio-cultural, political, ideological, institutional and historical context and structures surrounding the text and their associated discourses" (Waller, 2006, p. 13). Gee (2010) classified online interactions as forming discourse and looked at the ways in which images (static/motion) qualify as text and thus also qualify as discourse (Gee, 2010, pp. 194-199). Therefore, this combination allowed for ease of access when working with the multimodal nature of text as present on Lisa Hanna's Facebook page. The precise ways are further elaborated on within the *methods* section of this proposal.

This methodology was particularly fitting for this research as the research questions sought to explore the representation and treatment of a woman politician on Facebook in Jamaica. Facebook, being classified as a social networking tool amalgamates audio-visual elements to facilitate social interaction among its users. The ability to share posts, statuses and comments, allows for the users to contribute to and formulate online discourse (Triana et al., 2020). Additionally, Facebook was selected as the most appropriate platform for this research as data from Bianchi (2022) revealed that Facebook was the most popular/widely used social media website in Jamaica during the period of March to October 2022. Bianchi (2022) purported that based on site visit percentages, Facebook accounted for 60.64 percent of the user population, while Instagram and Twitter were 16.59 percent and 9.32 percent respectively. Also noteworthy among Bianchi's findings, is that the majority of the users were women.

Fairclough's CDA, therefore, was appropriate for this study as it allowed me to focus on the structure or relationship of language and how it is used to shape identities and to focus on how certain discourse emerges as a result of certain existing systems of power and hegemonic ideologies. The existing literature had revealed that the composition of certain social media sites, like Facebook, enable them to manipulate user behavior and thus directly (in some cases) or inadvertently affecting the way certain discourse are shaped on the platform (Aral, 2021; Boler and Davis, 2020; Wahl-Jorgensen , 2019; Santariano and Frenkel, 2022).

Therefore, to better understand and describe the ways in which women politicians in the Global South (specifically Jamaica), are represented and treated on social media, the experiences of a single politician from Jamaica, Lisa Hanna, was explored. Images and other forms of texts, forming discourse on her Facebook page were extrapolated and analyzed to see the ways in which the subjective experiences of her followers helped shape her identity.

As the research questions sought to determine from the discourse how Lisa Hanna is represented on social media, representation was a major theme of democracy that the study addressed. The dichotomy of representation via language/discourse in Lisa's case was looked at from:

1. The manner in which Hanna chose to present herself (representation by portrayal, via the various posts she makes to her Facebook), and;
2. The representation by interaction- the way she is represented based on the interactions with her followers (the discourse that happens in her comments sections, etc).

This was grounded in Gee's notion of discourse shaping identity, wherein he argued:

> think of how someone gets recognized as a 'good student,' a 'good cook,' a 'gang member', a 'competent lawyer', a 'real basketball fan', or a 'real Catholic'. These all

> involve acting-interacting-thinking-valuing-talking- (sometimes writing-reading) in the 'appropriate way' with the 'appropriate' props at the 'appropriate' times in the 'appropriate' places. (Gee, 2010, p. 54).

Therefore, representation through interaction was critical to this study, as it helped determine the ways in which Hanna was treated online.

Owing to the fact that Critical Discourse Analysis is concerned with understanding the role of language/communication in exposing underlying power structures and systems of oppression (Fairclough, 2012; Henry and Tator, 2016), these sources of data were instrumental to this study, as they helped me to uncover the underlying messages within the comments and posts that signal not only sentiments towards the political leader but also towards democracy on a whole and the role of women in social media democracy. As Dellinger (1995, cited in Henry and Tator, 2016) observed, a focus on both the structure and the social context of media text can offer a strategic approach that allows researchers to expose the "take-for-granted" nature of ideological messages.

Methods

For this study, the posts ranging from March 24, 2022 until October 31, 2022 were extracted using a digital media data collection tool for Facebook, CrowdTangle. The data was exported into an Excel sheet and saved as a single case. The specific time period was chosen as it encompassed the period of the Royal visit as detailed by *Mail Online* (2022) and Hanna's public declaration of her decision to step away from representational politics. For the case, the language, image, texts, as well as the medium-Facebook were examined to determine how Hanna situated her identity as a Jamaican woman and politician within the social media space.

Additionally, the images, texts, language style that her followers used to interact with Hanna's posts, which comprise another part of the discourse, were extracted using the data scraper software CrowdTangle, and compiled into a database. The 167 posts made to her Facebook timeline were analyzed in their entirety and preliminary coding categories developed. The codes were broadly categorized as 'Lisa's Discourse'.

In addition, the comments and other forms of interactions made by the audiences that engaged and interacted with Hanna's posts were crucial to answering the research question: How has the public discourse represented Lisa Hanna through interactions on her Facebook page?

Facebook data scraper *Apify* was used to gather all the comments from the posts made between the periods of March 24, 2022 and October 31, 2022. There were a total of 11,312 comments across all of the posts. The comments were then exported using Microsoft Excel. The comments were separated and saved as a unique Excel file for each post, in order to best manage the data and keep track of specific posts that generated specific types of discourse. Each of the 167 Excel files containing comments were explored a number of times to get a general sense of the discourse that unfolded within each post. Preliminary coding categories informed by the literature review were also generated. There were a total of 45 preliminary codes that captured the essence of the discourse. The data exported within the excel sheets were then imported to the MaxQDA software for coding and analysis. The coding process followed the code scheme that I developed prior to commencing the process, owing to the fact that the data was vast, I had to rely on the themes from the literature review to keep the codes focused to the nature of the research. Creswell (2018) stated, data analysis is an iterative process and therefore it is recommended that data analysis takes place concurrently to data collection. Therefore, as I went back and forth through the data and the literature review, I realized that coding categories overlapped and

alluded to the same themes. Therefore, I condensed and collapsed these codes to fit into the major themes that they alluded to. At the end of the condensing and collapsing process, there were eight coding categories that remained and showed the essence of the data. These were: Advocacy, Affect, Affirmation, Attributes, Crime and Violence, Disagreement/Disapproval, Representation and Other. Each category had subcodes that also helped to bring out the main themes. Thus, the coding scheme was developed to reflect these final codes (see Appendices).

Once the codes were finalized, each of the 167 documents containing the comments were coded separately and the Excel files containing posts made by Hanna were also coded separately, then the findings were further analyzed. The posts made by Hanna and coded were explored first to extract the major themes based on language, contexts and nature of contexts as advanced by Fairclough's CDA. The preliminary codes from Hanna's discourse amounted to 28 codes that were determined by the literature and initial perusing of the documents. These categories were collapsed into major themes as the coding process ensued. This is because the categories were found to overlap and referred to the same themes. The twelve posts that represented Hanna's personal presentation and coded within the 'Personal' category also included images that were imported to MaxQDA and coded as part of the themes as well. The remaining 155 posts that represented Hanna's political self-presentation followed the same coding and analysis process. At the end, there were a total of six major codes that represented the main themes from Hanna's discourse that represented her personaly and politically. The major findings are discussed in the subsequent 'Findings' chapter. From there, I completed additional analyses using the MaxQDA software. Firstly a word cloud analysis was done to extract the most frequently occurring words within the data set. The corresponding coding categories were verified in order to validate the coding technique used. For example, the desire to see Hanna as the next Prime Minister of

Jamaica was expressed a total of 151 times in the dataset. This was coded as Representation>Leadership. After the word cloud analysis, it was revealed that the word 'Prime Minister' was found in the coding category for the total number of times it appeared within the document. The word cloud analyses were completed for a number of the coding categories and the findings recorded in the subsequent chapter.

The data from the page was coded into the secondary categories of personal and political presentation. These categories were further subdivided into the themes that emerged from the discourse. The themes provided a general idea of what the democratic discourse entailed and were further analyzed to extract the type of presentation/representation of Hanna that emerged, whether it was positive or negative. Positive representation as adopted from Paxton and Kunovitch (2003) captured texts that speak of or demonstrate the subject in a positive light. Some examples from Mechkova, Dahlum and Petrarca (2022) include: qualified, disciplined, resourceful, agentic, aggressive (work ethic), powerful, kind, compassionate, inclusive, transparent. The coded category 'attributes' was drawn upon to make this determination. On the other hand, negative representation is the opposite and was represented by text that portrayed the subject in a stereotypical or negative manner. For example: stereotypes surrounding her biology, gender stereotypes, and words like maternal, corrupt, clientelist, unproductive, absent, inefficient, ineffective. As it pertains to treatment, the coding strategy was adopted from Rheault, Rayment and Musulan (2019). They grouped treatment into the categories of Civil and Uncivil with the criteria for determining the categories as "[a]n uncivil text was defined as a tweet containing at least one of the following elements: (1) swear words; (2) vulgarities; (3) insults; (4) threats; (5) personal attacks on someone's private life; or (6) attacks targeted at groups (hate speech)" (p.3). Being that the context of their study was social media platform Twitter, I

modified their model to reflect the Facebook context. Thus, comments, posts or other interactions that contained the elements purported by Rheault, Rayment and Mususlan (2016) were classified as uncivil when discussing the findings, while comments, posts and interactions absent of these elements were classified as civil. After the coding stage and the extraction of linked themes from the text, I further analyzed the codes along with the texts from which they emerged to better understand and describe the use of language. Here I paid close attention to vocabulary and grammar in order to identify particularly, representations and constructions of participant identity (Fairclough, 1995, p. 58).

Finally, *affect* was coded using two separate strategies. The first strategy employed was according to the theory of affect as purported by Sarah Ahmed (2014). Ahmed stated that 'emotions are shaped by contact with objects.' (p. 142). Therefore comments that featured a reaction to the subject matter (explicitly naming the emotion or implied by intonation and semantics or symbolism) were coded as affect. Additionally, some authors argued that affect forms part of a neuromarketing tool used within social media spaces to ensure certain messages resonate with the audiences in order to facilitate populism (Couldry, 2021; Csigo, 2016; Mazzoni and Mincigrucci, 2022; Sinha, 2018; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2019). Therefore, I also coded these sections of the discourse put forward by Hanna or those interacting with her content as affect. Those interactions that also sought to either fuel negative emotions towards Hanna or sway public and/or political opinion of her along partisan lines, or to generate clickbait (multiple interactions to generate profit), were also coded within this category. For example, a post made to Hanna's public Facebook page on August 17, 2022, showed a video of her within her constituency overseeing road work that was being done. She captioned the post with a message about it not being the responsibility of a Member of Parliament to fix the main roads, but rather

that of the Minister of Local Government. However, a government agency she had lobbied to get grants to fix the road for the benefit of her constituents and non-constituents that traverse the roads frequently aided her request. One comment extracted from the discourse read, “Lisa preparing the constituency for her son he will be representing the JLP in the next election that’s why she is stepping down”. Based on Ahmed’s conception of affect, we can surmise that, even though there’s no emotions named in the text, it carries emotional undertones based on the structure and content of the message. The use of the word ‘son’ and insinuating that Hanna has an hidden agenda, which involves supporting the opposition party, can in fact incite strong negative emotions towards the politician. As with CDA, taking into consideration the cultural context, there has been a long standing political culture of hereditary politics in Jamaica, a phenomenon where parents resign and put forward their children as political candidates (Helps, 2007). Some voters are not too keen on this process and have openly advocated against it. This could also result in polarization and elicit negative emotions towards the politician. Texts that Hanna shared and re-shared (reverberation) in order to amplify them and proliferate certain discourses about herself or her constituency were also coded as affect. In a similar manner, texts/interactions with her posts that also featured this amplification were coded as affect.

The major themes from the discourse were then analyzed to unearth the discursive practice surrounding the text. Concepts such as power, intersectionality, leadership and representation were explored between Hanna and those that interacted with her posts. Fairclough (1995) posited that at this level actions, interactions, social relations, the material world, material practices, rituals, beliefs, attitudes, values, desires, power and discourse are taken into consideration in relation to text production, distribution, transformation and consumption, to ascertain possible social injustice in and over discourse (Waller, 2006, p.13).

In the final step of the CDA methodology, sociocultural practice, the analysis is said to take an explanatory approach and focus on how underlying power relations might be reproduced through certain texts. As mentioned at the second level of analysis, the themes were explored to ascertain how discourses of representation and consequent treatment, about/of Hanna, reflect the general culture towards women in politics globally (Crenshaw, 1991; Henry and Tator, 2016; Rheault, Rayment and Musulan, 2016) and more specifically the Jamaican culture towards women in politics. The results are captured in the discussion chapter of this study. The theories of affect and intersectionality were also instrumental in developing a robust analytical framework that saw the research questions being answered in earnest.

Findings

This chapter features data gathered and analyzed using the data analysis software tool MaxQDA. The emergent themes and their coding categories are explored in a bid to answer the research questions as listed in chapter two. The data gathered was in fact conclusive and the findings are explored to demonstrate how Hanna self-presents personally and politically on Facebook (representation by portrayal) as well as the ways in which she is represented through discourse, by those who interact and engage with her posts (representation through interactions). Image 1 is a pictorial representation of the coding categories, derived from the 'code cloud' feature in MaxQDA, which demonstrates the major themes from the discourse on how Lisa Hannaself presents on Facebook.

Image 1: Coding categories for personal and political representation

Personal Representation of Lisa Hanna on Facebook

The present study set out to answer the following question: What is the democratic discourse surrounding Lisa Hanna on Facebook? To answer this question, the first step was to unearth from the data how Lisa Hanna presented herself personally and politically on Facebook. The data extracted from her Facebook posts from the period of March 24, 2022, to October 31, 2022, provided an array of subject matter, sentiments, contentions and other content to be analyzed. As it pertains to her personal life and how she chooses to represent this, Lisa Hanna made several posts documenting, commenting on or highlighting aspects of her social life. These posts were extracted from the dataset and coded into the category 'personal'. From the 167 posts made within the period, twelve of the posts comprising 'text' material, fit the coding criteria and were classified as generating discourse around her personal life. Additionally, there were a series of static images posted to Lisa Hanna's page that displayed Hanna's self-presentation. From the posts, twenty-five photos were extracted to be coded within the personal category as well. These posts were then analyzed to extract the main themes surrounding Lisa's self-presentation on Facebook. These themes are further explored in this section.

Firstly, the theme of health and fitness was extracted from the coded data. Lisa has demonstrated on her Facebook page in the period studied that she takes absolute pride in health and fitness and often advocates that a healthy lifestyle be adopted by her followers (constituents and delegates alike). A total of two posts from the twelve personal posts were exclusively coded as health and fitness. However, a number of other posts also advanced an adoption of healthy lifestyles inferentially. For example, on May 02, 2022, Lisa made a post about her healthy eating

habits and exercise regimen that has helped her remain in good health and maintain her physical appearance. She wrote:

> "Exercise and eating healthy have been a part of my daily routine for most of my life. Now that I'm older I've seen the benefits of maintaining that self discipline. It's important that we teach our children daily habits of exercise, eating healthier foods with less sugar and drinking more water. This is why when @moey_jamaica asked me to participate in the "National School Moves Day" in our schools I never hesitated. I was also very pleased it was held in SESA at our very our Ferncourt High School", (Lisa Hanna, 2022).

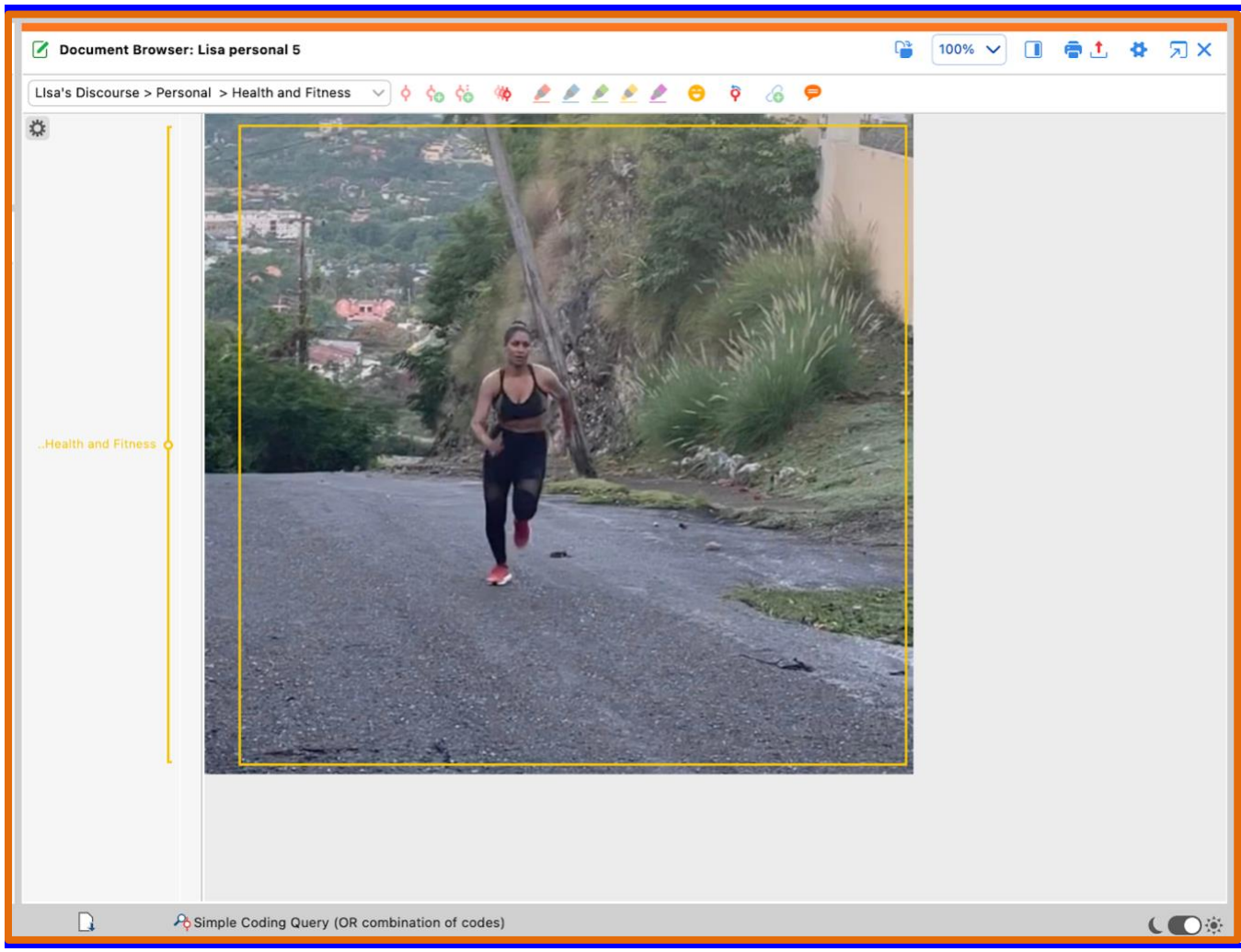

Image 2: Coded category Health and Fitness. Images from Lisa Hanna's Facebook and used with permission.

From this post we see that Lisa is presenting herself as healthy, or someone who takes health and fitness very seriously. In another post made to Hanna's public page on August 20, 2022, depicted Hanna jogging up a very steep hill in her community (Image 2). Even though this image was a part of a wider post about some of her most notable achievements, the picture was coded under 'Health and Fitness', as it spoke to the general theme of health and fitness advocated by Hanna.

Lisa Hanna also presents herself as a mother. From her public posts, there were three texts that spoke about her relationship with her son, Alexander. There were also three images on her page during the period of March 24, 2022 and October 30, 2022 that pictured Hanna with Alexander in various settings. Comparatively, this was not a major find, as six posts out of the 167 that were made during that period is a relatively small amount. However, this finding is still important to the overall discourse found on Hanna's page during the period of study. It is significant.

The use of affective language in her posts also indicate that Hanna feels strongly about her son and his accomplishments. For example, in the post made about her proudest accomplishments that she would celebrate that year, 2022, she listed her son Alexander at number four. On August 20, 2022, she wrote:

> "...4. I'm so proud of Alex and the man he's grown to be. This year he concluded his internship at one of the largest investment firms in New York and now heading into his final year at University. The world is yours, my son." (Lisa Hanna, 2022).

The use of the word "proud" and phrase "my son" in the post indicated sentimental attachment and feelings/affect that she wanted to share about her son, which also inferentially helped me to make this determination about how she self-presents as a mother.

Lisa Hanna also self-presents as someone who makes time for recreation, to have fun and engage socially with friends and family. Various posts captured Hanna in an informal setting celebrating her husband's birthday and the birthday of her close personal friend, Dancehall Artiste Spice, also known as Grace Hamilton.These texts were coded in the category 'Celebrations'. Hanna was depicted in these pictures dancing and engaging with guests in conversation, she was also wearing a huge smile on her face in the majority of the pictures taken. Socially, Hanna also demonstrated on her Facebook page that she is a fan of horseracing. She attended the derby in the UK. These are some of the activities that ordinary citizens engage in. Therefore this finding shows that Hanna personalizes her page to show some aspects of her personality beyond her political position.

From the images and text on Hanna's Facebook page, she personally self-presents as a dog lover. She had a total of four pictures with dogs in the period being studied. She also wrote in the post from August 20, 2022, that being gifted her youngest German Shepherd pup was one of her greatest accomplishments for the year.

Another important post from Hanna, that spoke to how she self-represented, was made on March 25, 2022, in response to the *Mail Online* article. Hanna employed media convergence to carry over a tweet she made on Twitter, to Facebook. In this tweet, she boldly expressed that she was proud to be a farmer's daughter and her disdain for anyone who would try to paint being a farmer's daughter as something that ought to bring shame. The affective tone of the words used such as "proud", "disheartening" and "less than" also convey a message about how Hanna represents herself online when faced with adversity and criticisms. Even though the narrative that she was responding to would evoke negative emotions, she did not respond using strong negative emotions such as anger or rage and she did not respond offensively. Rather, in a post from

August 20, 2022, she described this as “standing up” for herself against propaganda being published by the British tabloid press. Among the list of things that she was proud of and celebrating in 2022, she wrote: “9. Standing up to the false narrative of the British Tabloid Press”. As previously mentioned, the use of affect helps convey underlying messages in the discourse. As explicitly stated, Hanna was standing up for herself against false narratives and attacks on her character, which also demonstrates that Hanna self represents as someone who defends herself against false narratives and is not afraid of fighting for herself in a graceful manner.

The discourse put forward by Hanna herself on her Facebook page did not capture a vast array of her personal life during the period of March and October 2022. However, based on the discourse studied from Hanna’s perspective, the research yielded that Hanna represents herself as a mother, a friend and confidant, someone who loves dogs, someone who is not shy of dancing and celebrating with friends and family, and who defends herself in a graceful manner when faced with adversity.

Political Representation of Lisa Hanna on Facebook

On the other hand, a vast portion of the discourse on Lisa’s public Facebook page were about her political career, incorporating her work locally and internationally.The findings from Lisa’s political life were also extracted from the dataset and the following codes derived to capture the discourse surrounding the essence of her political representation: General Advocacy; Children’s Advocacy; Women’s Rights Advocacy; Constituency Development; Diasporic Relations; Information Sharing; Development Opportunities/Solutions; UK Criticisms; Diplomatic Relations; and, General Affect. Additionally, a number of the posts from Lisa Hanna’s page were coded as Intersectional. Even though the posts made by MP Hanna did not

specifically or explicitly name 'Intersectionality,' it was evident from some of the posts that she often inferred an intersectional approach in her political advocacy and the programmes/projects implemented within her constituency. For example, on July 14, 2022, in a post about poverty reduction in Jamaica and more specifically the South Eastern St. Ann (SESA) constituency that she represents politically, there was an inference made to intersectionality. That is, in the post Hanna advocated/appealed to the wider government, for an intersectional approach to be taken, with the needs of women and children at the forefront of the strategies geared towards poverty reduction within the country. Hanna also mentioned in the post that there was an established Women's movement within her constituency. The only mention of this movement within the discourse was to highlight that they attended the '@pnpwomen conference', and had dialogue with British MP Dianne Abbott about issues surrounding women's reproductive rights. Here we also see that Hanna self represents as a champion or advocate for women's reproductive rights. A total of two posts were found on Hanna's page that addressed the subject matter of women's rights/empowerment. In a similar post on May 08, 2022, Hanna shared her thoughts on the reversal of the Roe v Wade decision to criminalize abortions within some parts of the United States. Hanna effectively shared her thoughts using words like "...criminalize women's reproductive rights…", "...poor working class women…", which gives a sense that she might be slightly outraged at the reversal of the ruling. She also expressed that she is a personal and political advocate for abortion rights in the post.

Lisa Hanna self presents as a hardworking and solutions oriented Member of Parliament, who undertakes and completes a series of projects within her constituency, the country at large and internationally. Firstly, within the code Constituency Development, the discourse put forward by Hanna was analyzed and key messages extracted and compiled within this coding

category. Here Hanna expressed how relentlessly she was advocating for and utilizing various funds available to her in order to resurface, construct new or "fix" existing road networks within the constituency. From the discourse Hanna also represented herself as a leader who was taking a hands-on approach to getting the work done. During the national holiday of Labour Day Hanna is pictured with a bucket pouring Marl (mineral used in construction) onto the roadway that they were resurfacing within her constituency. In addition, the discourse revealed that Hanna also undertook projects seeking to bring modern utilities to the remote areas of her constituency, such as electricity and piped water supply systems. These in a bid to improve the standards of living for those whom she represents. In advancing the narrative of improved livelihood for her constituents, Hanna also advocated for the protection of a number of rights of her constituents. Data gathered from her Facebook page and coded as 'Local Advocacy' reveals that Hanna was often advocating for the poor and disenfranchised within her constituency and the country at large. She argued directly against the ills of capitalism and the adverse impact of such a system that "... [traps them] in a chokehold of institutionalized inequality, a broken system designed to keep them invisible and powerless…". There were a total of 32 codes from the discourse found on Lisa Hanna's public page, from her perspective, that satisfied the predetermined rules to be classified as advocacy. Found in the discourse were also instances of advocacy for the rights of and opportunities for women and children specifically. This intersectional approach to advocacy and policy development led me to analyze the data presented once more. As qualitative research is an iterative process, I went back through the data and observed that a vast portion of the discourse presented by Hanna using static images displayed herself with women or working alongside women, or solely women working within her constituency. This data was coded as 'Empowerment of Women'. The advocacy for the rights of and opportunities for women

interrelates with the Empowerment of Women code that will be explored in more detail subsequently.

As previously mentioned, the discourse from Hanna also revealed that she self-represents as someone who empowers women. Active empowerment is illustrated through educational opportunities, labor equality, home ownership, and advocacy for reproductive autonomy. There were more photos of Hanna posing with women than men on Hanna's Facebook page during the period of study. Hanna self declares as a women's rights advocate, therefore this finding was significant.

In a post from September 1, 2022, Hanna shared that she was undertaking a few home-building projects in her constituency. These houses were specifically being built for households headed by single mothers. She expressed in the post shared that "...Owning your own home continues to be the dream of most Jamaicans especially female headed households with single incomes. This project helps to improve their quality of life and by extension allows them to be far more independent…". There was also another post from April 28, 2022, wherein Hanna was congratulating 18 trainees for successfully completing a skills-based training programme within her constituency. The pictures shared and the narrative of the post was mostly geared towards empowering women through education. Men participated in the program as well, however, the finding revealed that the majority were women. The findings do show that there is substantial data from the posts to corroborate the argument of Hanna being an advocate for the empowerment of women. Based on what is presented, we can assume that Hanna self-presents as someone who emphasizes women's visibility, whether by picturing, as shown in the screenshot from her Facebook page below, or by advocating their needs specifically.

Image 3: Trainees pictured in Hanna's constituency. Images from Lisa Hanna's Facebook and used with permission.

As it pertains to both her personal and political representation, Lisa expressed a lot of sentiments in her posts as well as general attitudes and feelings towards her constituents, her

career, her opposition and herself. The sentiment driven discourse was coded as 'Affect'. This was the largest coding category within the Lisa Hanna discourse, as there were a total of 41 coded segments comprising data from the discourse that reflected this. One example is a post from May 15, 2022, in which Hanna expressed her frustration and how disgruntled she was with the situation concerning access to water within some rural communities. Hanna wrote,

> "...but what truly is our reality. Water remains a scarce commodity especially for some living rural communities; again in these areas the poor is considered 'invisible'". Earlier this week the National Water Commission went on strike and many Jamaica[ns] felt for the first time what it was like to have no water flowing through their pipes. It was a jolting wake up call for them. But can you imagine a world where this lockoff was indefinite? Yes, it exists and the government does not make solving the problem a priority."

Here Hanna affectively uses words and key phrases that evoke empathy for those within the communities that do not have access to water and creates a sense of urgency in those who have the responsibility for providing it.

In essence, the posts containing discourse that represented Hanna politically vastly out proportioned those that represented her personally. This is a crucial finding that helps us to understand how Hanna wants to be perceived in the public realm. The data explored in this section is further elaborated on below and explained within the subsequent chapter of this study.

Representation by Interactions

In order to adequately answer the main research question, the supplemental research question 'how has the public discourse represented Lisa Hanna, through interactions on her Facebook page?' was answered based on the findings presented within this section. The findings

were based on the data extracted from Hanna's Facebook page. More specifically, the discourse captured by comments and other forms of interactions from users on her Facebook posts. The discourse was then imported via excel sheets to MaxQDA, coded, and analyzed for the common themes. Based on the findings, the parent code 'Affect' comprised 2,746 comments and interactions, which constituted the largest coded category within the dataset. More specifically, a vast portion of the discourse found among the interactions on Hanna's page featured words and phrases that signalled strong admiration or affection for Hanna. These comments from the discourse were extracted and coded into the code category 'Adoration/Admiration'. This consisted of 846 comments, which was also the largest frequency among the codes. This sub-code accounted for the comments or symbols used to express admiration of Hanna's work or for Hanna's physical appearance.

It was gleaned from the discourse that Lisa Hanna is perceived to be beautiful and loved, a queen and well-dressed individual by the users who interacted and engaged with her posts. From the texts coded into the category 'Adoration/Admiration', I created a word cloud analysis to determine the most frequently occurring sentiment. The word 'beautiful' was captured 356 times within the discourse. The word was mostly used in phrases such as '...so beautiful..' (24) and '...beautiful Lisa…' (16). I was also able to identify the post that had the sentiment occurring most frequently. Interestingly, it was a post that Hanna made about her attendance at the State Dinner in honor of the Rwandan President's visit to Jamaica. The post highlighted that Hanna engaged in key discussions about collaborative development throughout the night. However, the discourse on Facebook did not center on that information provided by Hanna, rather it was centered on what she looked like and how the individuals interacting with the post felt about her. As shown in Image 4, Hanna is also seen engaging in discussions with the other guests. Also

noteworthy of this post and captured in the screenshot is the number of interactions recorded on the post. There are a total of 6,400 ‘likes’ and ‘loves’ on the post and over 500 comments, with 324 users re-sharing the post.

As previously mentioned, the number of reactions to the post also indicated that the users had feelings of ‘love’ for Lisa Hanna. According to the Word Cloud Analysis, the word ‘Love’ was the second most frequent word used to express affinity or admiration for or adoration of Lisa Hanna. The word was coded 136 times within the Adoration/Admiration category and a total of 313 times across coding categories.

Image 4: Lisa Hanna at State Dinner, King’s House, Jamaica. Images from Lisa Hanna's Facebook and used with permission.

The coded category relates to the theme of affect, which is a major theme within this paper. Affect is explored in more detail in a subsequent section of this research.

In answering the RQ, ‘how has the public discourse represented Lisa Hanna, through interactions on her Facebook page?’, another major theme that was extracted from the discourse was that of Leadership. According to the discourse, Lisa Hanna was seen by some to be a ‘great’ leader who often drives national discourse and successfully represents the interests of her constituency and country, while some criticized her leadership style. A few users also expressed that they believed opportunities for leadership were withheld from Hanna on the basis of her sex. A total of 490 segments of the Facebook comments (text), were coded as ‘Representation>Leadership’. From the findings, the discourse reflected that a number of users deemed Hanna fit to become the next Prime Minister of the country. The words Prime Minister used consecutively, in reference to Hanna, were coded 77 times and the abbreviation ‘PM’ (with varying case combinations), was recorded 74 times. I found that this discourse on leadership appeared in the comment section of posts that were captioned by or pictured Hanna in an official capacity representing her constituency, her political party or the country. For example, a great deal of the discourse unfolded within the comment section of a post made on May 15, 2022. In the post Hanna was filling the capacity as Opposition Leader for Mr. Mark Golding, MP, to welcome the Indian President and his wife, who were visiting in an official capacity. Noteworthy among the discourse were the following sentiments: “Mark Golding needs to hand over the leadership to you”, “Look at our Opposition Leader.. Lisa you represents this country well.”, “Why isn't Lisa Hanna the opposition leader. She always the person standing in the gap for mark.”, “This Prime Minister is very smart, always lead with the hot girl you can never lose,”, “Our future prime Minister...., Standing tall Lisa. I'm seeing you as prime minister more and

more.”, “Looking great, Stand proud Ms. Hanna and much respect to you.”, “A true leader indeed. My Prime Minister ❤️”, “No disrespect but this lady looks like she is the PM...”.

Image 5: Hanna welcomes the President of India and his Wife to Jamaica. Images from Lisa Hanna's Facebook and used with permission.

Among those who were lauding Hanna for her great leadership skills and the manner in which she represents, were also the critics. There were a few users (153 according to the coded segments) commenting that they thought Lisa Hanna and her political party were ineffective in their duties. One user commented "yeah cos you are not doing anything for the people all mouth no action what has been done for the people. Then the Chinese come in and do what the government is supposed have done long time ago". The comment is in response to a post made by Hanna made on October 23, 2022. The post was about elections and the abysmal voter turnout that has characterized the national elections in recent years. Hanna listed potential reasons that explain the voter turnout levels, which the user criticized as missing a key reason: the non-performance of the leaders within Hanna's political party, who the user deems were ineffective. The discourse also revealed that Hanna's leadership and by extension her political party's leadership was also criticized along the following lines: 'not being objective', '...all talk, no action…', 'Sit ur pretty ass down, u not in politics no more, when u were in, u did nothing to help the masses, now u want people to think u care. Pleaseeee'. Despite the criticisms, where 153 sections of the discourse were coded as criticism or cynicism, there were still 495 segments independent of the criticisms that represented more positive sentiments towards Hanna's leadership, and were coded broadly under the category 'Leadership'. The category featured users lauding Hanna for the way in which she represented, and some users were expressing their desires to see her as the next Prime Minister of Jamaica.

Another major theme within the discourse found on Lisa Hanna's Facebook page was that of representation. Representation as expressed in chapters two and three, is expressed as 'speaking for' in the political sense. Discourse from the comments that fit the theme of and were

coded as representation totaled 1,289. The major theme comprised the following coding categories: Information sharing, International Partnerships; Lisa's Work Ethic; Non-recognition of Women; Opposition Political Party; Solutions for Development; Road Maintenance; Contentions with the UK; Constituency Issues; Access to Resources; and, International Representation. Within these codes I determined that the majority of those who interacted with the content posted by Lisa Hanna believe that she represents their issues well and were satisfied with her representation. For example, if we look at the discourse surrounding issues within the constituency, the majority of comments allude to the fact that Hanna has been working hard and resolving their issues. One commenter said:

> "I must take this opportunity, to commend Lisa Hanna for the great work that she is doing in her constituency…Not to take away anything from the other members of parliament, but honestly, Lisa is the hardest working member of parliament in Jamaica . I stand corrected if someone can show me another hard-working member of Parliament in Jamaica keep up the good work Lisa."

Another user said "Great work MP LISA staying in touch with the people, asking and listening.. what a great display of local action and diplomacy". Here the user expresses that Hanna facilitated two-way communicated with her constituents and by virtue of this, becomes sensitized to their local needs. There was also an affective undertone in the way that the user expressed 'what a great display of local action and diplomacy'. I get a sense that the user is praising Hanna for the evident work that she is doing within her constituency and how well she does said work. As mentioned, these sentiments reverberated through the discourse. There was only one comment that stood out to be an anomaly, and it said:

> "How about water passing the Jeffreyville Primary school. Ms Hanna! I cannot believe that you worked so hard to get water in Gibraltar District, and imagine the folks who live pass the school did not get water. Faithful comrades and no water reaches their house. I beg you to look into this. I lived overseas but I was a advocate for my area. May my mentor SIP The Right Honorable Seymour Mullings."

These sentiments expressed by a supposed long-standing supporter of Hanna's political party, demonstrated the level of dissatisfaction the user had with the way Hanna carried out a particular project within the constituency. The user felt that their community was not benefitting from Hanna's advocacy and were looked over when crucial projects such as providing access to piped water systems were being implemented in the constituency. This finding emerges in a political culture where citizens believe that they should benefit the most from projects, policies or even job opportunities when their political party comes into power. Therefore, we have this user affectively expressing her dissatisfaction, disbelief and discontentment with MP Hanna and the manner in which the project was carried out. I make these claims on the basis that the user expressed "Ms Hanna!" in a tone that shows anger, rage or excitement, based on the context, I eleiminated excitement and concluded on the two negative emotions. The user also said "Faithful comrades", to express shared interest or common goal/identifying with Hanna and her party- an element of affective personalization, that is looked at within the subsequent chapter.

The finding that illustrated the reverberation within the discourse, as it pertains to Hanna's representation, thus gives us a sense that the constituents affirm Hanna's leadership and recognize and appreciate the work that she is doing for them. Within the category coded as 'Lisa's work ethic', there are similar praises being sung for the Member of Parliament for the work that she does and how the users perceive the work that she does. One user wrote: "Continue

your good work my SESA MP, I know the people in McNie truly appreciated your good work. We believe in you always❤❤❤❤". From the 299 segments of the discourse coded, there was not a single anomaly found. All of the comments were praising and encouraging MP Hanna for her results-driven work within the constituency and the country.

The discourse found within the comments section of Lisa Hanna's Facebook posts represents her as an advocate. That is, 273 segments of the discourse were coded as 'Advocacy', with sub-codes including: 'Women's rights advocacy'; 'Children's rights advocacy'; 'Healthcare advocacy'; 'Climate change advocacy'; 'Reparations advocacy'; 'Advocacy for the poor'; and, 'Political Advocacy'. The general theme of advocacy was supported by arguments such as 'Thank you Lisa, for advocating for a woman's right to decide what happens to her body'. This particular comment was extracted from a wider discourse/debate among users under a post that was made on May 8, 2022. The post was about the then decision in the United States to reverse the Roe v Wade ruling and thenceforth criminalize certain types of abortions. Lisa Hanna's stance, based on the post, was that of 'shock' at the ruling and listed ways in which she has advanced agendas locally in support of abortion rights for women. The discourse unsurprisingly reflected the polarizing nature of the topic. There were the 'pro-lifers' within the discourse arguing against the 'pro-choicers' on the basis of moral and statute. A number of the arguments were further coded under religion as there were Biblical scriptures being cited to support their arguments against abortion. The other half of the discourse reflected those appreciating Hanna for her efforts in recognizing and advocating for women's reproductive rights.

In addition to the aforementioned, the discourse also revealed that Hanna was an advocate for the rights of children. The posts made by Hanna on July 03, 2022 and September 18, 2022 were the main ones to have generated discourse around the rights of children. In one

post, Hanna talks about the link between child abuse and mental health issues later on in life as well as child abuse and crime and violence. Here she advocated, based on findings from research by a Jamaican anthropologist, for Jamaicans to re-evaluate the measures with which they push or discipline their children. In the other post, Hanna was criticizing a rationale by the Minister of Education that suggested cladding school girls in longer uniforms would deter sexual predators. Instead Hanna argued for systemic changes in society at the legislative and judicial levels that would deter sexual predators. There were a total of 19 comments within the discourse that reflected children advocacy. These were in support of or arguing against what Hanna had put forward in the main post. Some users argued that what Hanna referred to as child abuse was in fact discipline and shared their personal stories. In general, from the posts, there was a sense that the users were appreciative of Hanna using her social media and political platforms to advocate for the rights of children. For example, in a post made by Hanna on July 03, 2022, that spoke about the linkages between child abuse and child deviance as well as adult crime and violence, Hanna advocated against all forms of abuse against children. The post contained findings from various studies conducted by Jamaican Anthropologist Herbert Gayle, on child torture and crime and violence. Hanna urged her followers to read and adopt the strategies in order to eliminate child abuse. In agreeing with what Lisa put forward, one commenter wrote: “Couldn't have said it better Lisa. A lot of people/parents do not realize that abuse comes in many ways? and its not just physical”. Hanna had made a few posts about the issue of child abuse and child devicance, strategies for eliminating poverty affecting children, post-covid learning and how this would affect children, as well as several photos observed on her Facebook page, featured pictures of Hanna hugging children or interacting with them in other ways. This can be construed as Hanna having the rights of children and issues affecting children as an integral part of her political

advocacy, however, the discourse by interaction does not seem to reflect this subject as much. Comparatively, more than 5000 comments were analyzed and coded. With children's rights advocacy accounting for a mere 19 of those comments, therefore, it cannot be classified a major theme within this study. However, since it forms part of the larger theme of advocacy, it is a noteworthy finding to be highlighted.

In addition to the other types of advocacy mentioned above, there was also health advocacy discourse present within the comments section. Some users were urging Hanna to advocate for more regulations surrounding the types of foods imported into Jamaica, as well as the foods allowed into schools.

Lastly, in answering "How has *affect* influenced the way that Lisa Hanna is treated on Facebook?", we look at the coded segments from the data that were coded as 'Affect'. The code categories: 'Lisa's work ethic', 'Admiration/Adoration', 'Personal stories', 'Attributes', and Criticisms/Cynicisms, were collapsed into the larger category of Affect as mentioned in Chapter Three of this study. This was specifically due to the nature of the comments that made up these code categories. They too included elements of affect, whether it be an emotion named, emotive undertones or symbols used to express an attitude or feeling towards the subject of the post, Hanna herself or the differentiated 'other' that evoked certain attitudes or feelings within the commenters.

I can assert that affect has had a positive effect on the way that Hanna is treated on Facebook. The theme of Affect was brought to the fore by the coded categories of 'Admiration/Adoration', 'Personal stories', 'Attributes', 'General affect', and 'Lisa's work ethic'. From the data analyzed and coded into these categories, I found that a vast portion of the sentiments expressed towards Hanna were positive. The code category Adoration/Admiration

had a total of 846 coded segments where users were admiring Hanna for her physical appearance or the manner in which she represented the issues affecting her constituents and the citizens of her country. The general emotion, mood or tone of the messages shared by Hanna were translated to the discourse that unfolded in the comment section of her posts and often influenced the way she was represented and treated in the discourse. For example, in a post made to Hanna's Facebook on August 29, 2022, she expressed her feelings as well as her executive committee's feelings towards the fact that she was resigning from representational politics. The users to a great extent seemed to identify with and share the same emotions that were expressed. One user commented:

> "I am a bit sad,however,We must respect your well thought out decision. This would have been my second oppertunity to be on the campaign band wagon in Jamaica. I had made up my mind to volunteer on your campaign trail. I am living in the diaspora,and seeing the great work that your'e doing on behalf of the Jamaican people home,and abroad it gave me great hope. You will be missed by so many people,but your decision is being respected. Lisa, walk good my daughter."

Here we see the user express that they are respectful of Hanna's decision even though it made them sad. The user also expressed admiration for Hanna's work and even used affective language to express their feelings about the overall work. Therefore, we find in this instance that affect had an impact on the nature of the discourse and accounted for the user treating Hanna with respect on Facebook or rather responding to Hanna in a respectful manner.

A vast portion of the affective comments emerged from the discourse surrounding Hanna's announcement to walk away from representational politics. In the resignation letter posted to her Facebook page on August 10, 2022, Hanna affectively expressed her reasons for

not seeking another political term. That post and subsequent posts depicting Hanna and her political supporters or constituents, accounted for a great deal of affective discourse relating to her resignation. For example, one user wrote, “I am surprised and very sad was hoping to vote you in as PM. I understand your decision however. I hope someone else will head the party soon and you return”. In another post from September 19, 2022, Hanna shared a message about her appreciation for two women, also members of parliament and her political party. She also attached a photo of all three of them to the post. One comment from the ensuing discourse revealed that the affective nature of the post, resulted in the commenters experiencing similar emotions when engaged with said post. One commenter wrote: “Lisa Hanna broke my heart when she decided not to run again. Jamaican politics needs your ideas, your authenticity and your zeal. Nevertheless all the best on your future endeavors.” An analysis of the comments did not reveal any profanities, foul language or expression of strong negative emotions towards Hanna or her political party. I therefore conclude that from the discourse on her Facebook page that Hanna was treated respectfully, was adored by those who interacted with her posts, and that the discourse surrounding her was mainly positive.

Another finding from the data that stood out to me, was captured by a comment that was extracted from the discourse on a post made by Hanna on March 29, 2022. The comment, further discussed below, highlighted the way in which a commenter expressed surprise at the manner in which Hanna was interacting with her constiteunts. The comment was found on the post pictured below (Image 6), which talks about Hanna’s visit to her constituency in order to support the ‘ground-breaking’ for a new recreation center. The post included images of Hanna interacting with some of her constituents as well. Noteworthy from the post is that Hanna mentioned feeling ‘pleased’ as a reaction to the work done by her constituents. To this end, the users participating

in the discourse within the comment section also shared their feelings about the post. One user wrote: “It's so refreshing to see you mingling with your constituents. I've always enjoyed your motivational tidbits which i share with my daughter”. The words ‘refreshing’ and ‘mingling’ stood out from this comment. While refreshing used in this context has an affective connotation, the use of mingling also denotes Lisa Hanna, or politicians to be far removed from their constituents or ranked higher socially.

The aforementioned is also significant when looked at from an intersectional perspective. What about the picture or the post made the user have the perception that Hanna’s mingling is noteworthy and to be admired? Or what cultural precursors could help make sense of this finding? This will be looked at in greater depth within the discussion chapter of this paper.

Image 6: Hanna pictured with constituents at ground-breaking event. Images from Lisa Hanna's Facebook and used with permission.

Another outstanding finding from this research, which helps to answer the question of how affect influences discourse, was found among the comments of a post from April 15, 2022. This post featured Hanna meeting with the Prime Minister of The Bahamas; in it she wrote that they discussed bilateral agreements and matters of economic development. Of the 60 comments on the post, 20 of them were coded as affect. This was the largest coding category

represented on that post. The affective comment that stood out stated: “I like the way how Lisa is marketing herself to be the next Leader of the Opposition”. This comment was coded as Affect as it fit the criteria of neuro-marketing, a strategy looked at within Chapter Three of this study. The use of the term ‘marketing’ suggests that a deeper power structure is at play that influences the users to respond to the messages in a certain way. These strategies are effective when they use emotion as a tool, unbeknown to the users who are engaging with the content. In this context, it is also noteworthy to highlight that the series of posts from April 14, 2022, to April 19, 2022, featured Hanna meeting with political figures from different countries and partaking in a number of political discussions. The discourse surrounding that comment had some users defending Hanna’s representation as a fulfillment of her job functions. One user wrote “she is the opposition spokesperson on foreign affairs so she has to represent the party”, while others concurred that it was a marketing ploy, as illustrated in this comment: “It is obvious but admirable..she is too pretty not to be admired and so intelligent..good to know we are not short of intelligent leaders in my party.”

Another noteworthy finding within this study was the interaction surrounding the alleged “snubbing’ of Duchess Kate. This was extremely important as this occurrence was one of the main reasosn why I became interested in a project of this nature. The way I observed the discourse unfolding in the media and on the social media platforms that I was a part of at the time, masde me think about the linkages between affect, political representation and treatment of women on social media.

The majority of the comments from the discourse that related to this issue were coded as ‘contentions with UK’ and the remaining comments coded into affect based on their nature. The study showed that the incident incited discussions around reparations, support for Hanna’s

alleged snubbing, abolitionists conversations and reprimand for ‘making an enemy of the crown’. From the discourse, in support of Hanna, one user said “Lisa Hanna you know who you are,don't dignify those rumour mills with a response,those sleazy Tabloids are only relevant when they print trash for the garbage collectors to read and believe.” The majority of comments were in support of Hanna and criticized the article and its postulations as divisive and false.

The interactions unearthed a great number of themes that were in some instances similar to what Hanna put out there as her form of self-identity or self-presnetaion and in other instances totally different or contrary to how Hanna presents herself on Facebook. While it shows that in some cases, the discourse promulgated by certain political leaders is what becomes absorbed and then directly influences the nature of discourses that follow on social media. In other cases, it was found that, despite what the leader puts out, the nature and composition of social media spaces affords the users the power to shape and redirect the discourse in the manner that they see fit. Hanna shared posts on a varying degree of subjects, in some cases the discourse followed the nature and subject of her posts, in other cases the discourse ignored the nature and subject and focused on what she looked like physically. In all instances, affect was a major contributor to how the discourse unfolded. These themes and findings are explored in more depth in the subsequent *Discussion of Findings* chapter of this study.

Discussion of Findings

This study intended to answer the question "What is the democratic discourse surrounding Lisa Hanna on Facebook?". The definition for democratic discourse was adopted from Mendis (2022), who classified such discourse as "the ability of members of the public to engage in autonomous self-expression (free of suppression and manipulation by corporate or state power), leading to a proliferation of diverse viewpoints that can be the subject of open, inclusive, and deliberative discussion" (p. ?). The data as explored in the preceding chapter of this thesis highlighted that democratic discourse was indeed present on Hanna's Facebook page, meaning at face value, the discourse did not prove to be influenced nor manipulated nor suppressed by corporate or state powers. But what did the democratic discourse surrounding a Jamaican woman politician look like from an intersectional perspective?

The first thing to be discussed is what does this democratic discourse look like that is present on Hanna's page? More importantly, what does democratic discourse on Hanna's page look like through an intersectional lens? And how is the discourse influenced by affect? Initially, before combing through the findings of this research, I had to take a step back and recognize my own reflexivity and how it might affect the way the findings are treated. Being a Black man who has a background in Political Science and Development Management, and being from Jamaica, are some of the things that I had to be mindful of before and during the analysis of the findings. With that at the forefront, the data was approached as objectively as possible.

The findings painted a picture that the democratic discourse on Hanna's page also reflected the elements expressed by Mendis (2022), in that there were diverse viewpoints captured within the data, commenting on various social and political issues. The findings showed that Hanna presented herself personally and politically in a positive way and the discourse by

interaction concurs with this representation. On the other hand, affect greatly influenced the discourse surrounding Lisa Hanna on Facebook.

First, let us look deeper at Hanna's use of images alongside text to make better sense of her self-presentation. Hanna has shared a variety of images on her Facebook posts that can be classified into four of Bene's (2017) five types of/or uses of Facebook messages. There were images that fit into the information, engagement, personalization and mobilization categories, but not so much the humor category. Therefore I will exclude the humor category from this discussion. As the findings suggested, Hanna does a great deal of self-presenting on her Facebook page, so I will first discuss the category of personalization.

If the average Jamaican is asked 'Who is Lisa Hanna?", the answers would vary from "Miss World 1993" to "Member of Parliament for the South Eastern St. Ann constituency". These achievements have afforded Hanna popularity and celebrity status in Jamaica and some other areas of the world. The celebrity status is evidenced by her large social media following; on Facebook she has over 200,000 followers, on Instagram, she has almost 500,000 followers, and on Twitter she has over 47,000 followers. This study focused on Facebook because of the large percentage of Jamaicans who use the platform. Hanna has shared a post per day on average, between the periods of March and October 2022. In the realm of social media, these features qualify as celebrity or social influencer. When done by a political figure, however, it can have serious implications for the political process and the style of leadership. Some scholars have argued that leaders who utilize social media in certain ways that result in them having a strong influence over the consumers of their content, border on populism (Couldry, 2021; Csigo, 2016; Mazzoni and Mincigrucci, 2022; Sinha, 2018; Wahl-Jorgensen , 2019). Based on the findings of this research, can I then argue that Hanna is a populist leader? Or does she rely on populist

tendencies to advance her political career? To make such determination, I utilize a model adopted from Ernst et al. (2019) and Schmuck and Hameleers (2020) (as cited in Mazzoni and Mincigrucci, 2022), and incorporate elements from Couldry (2021), Csigo (2016), Sinha (2018), and Wahl-Jorgensen (2019).They contend that:

1. Populist leaders rely on personalization in order to identify with ordinary citizens.
2. Populist leaders rely heavily on digital media platforms like Facebook as messages aren't as filtered as traditional media spaces.
3. Populist leaders rely on affect to amplify their messages and resonate with their audiences (Couldry, 2021; Csigo, 2016; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2019; Sinha, 2018).

Populist Leaders Rely on Personalization in Order to Identify with Ordinary Citizens

Mazzoni and Mincigrucci (2022) have argued that within contemporary democracies, a politician's image is of utmost importance, as it greatly determines their electoral appeal.Thus, politicians will use social media sites to construct personalized identities that work in tandem with their political identities. This the scholars refer to as a stimulated personalization of politics (p .222). The findings do in fact provide evidence of Hanna "stimulating a personalization of politics" (Bennett, 2012, as cited in Mazzoni and Mincigrucci, 2022, p. 222). The degree to which Hanna presents herself on her Facebook page does in fact capture and reflect images and posts about her personal life. There were a series of codes that depicted her as a mother, dog lover, fan of horse-racing, someone who parties and celebrates friends and intimate images with her husband. Scholars believe that politicians represent themselves in this way in order to create consensus among themselves and their communities, and in order to appear more empathetic (Bennett, 2012; Street, 2019; Ventura, 2019, as cited in Mazzoni and Mincigrucci, 2022, p. 224).

This personalization is supposed to have a positive impact on elemtns of democracy like political participation. The story told through these persoalizations are an important analytical lens as well and can reveal a great deal about the leadership style or character of the leader that uses them. But what story is Hanna using the images to tell? How does this influence the political discourse found on her page? Firstly, I argue that these images help to tell the story that she is more than just a politician, she has a personal identity and shares similar characteristics and attributes with those that she represents. It can also be perceived that she uses this method of self identification to demonstrate her intersectional position, that is, distinguishing herself as a Black woman politician in the developing world, who practises politics in a different manner than her western counterparts and local male counterparts.

On May 02, 2022 and August 20, 2022, Hanna made posts that represented her as someone who takes fitness into account. The image demonstrated Hanna jogging up a hill, which she claimed in the text, was part of her daily routine and more specifically, as part of her personal fitness goals. If one thinks about democratic discourse in a classical sense, we draw upon the conception by Habermas, Benhabib, Cohen, Dryzek, and Chambers (1993) (as cited in van Mill, 1996). One assumption is that "the procedure has to allow free and equal access for all participants" (van Mill, 1996, p. 736). This type of discourse ought to feature robust interrogation of ideas and debates but absent polarization or groupthink. The latter are perceived to be dangers to democracy. I then ask, how does a post containing images that promote health and fitness advance the democratic process or strengthen democracy? The apparent answer is that it does not. The question then becomes a matter of what purpose does this post serve? The explanation that makes most sense is that provided by Mazzoni and Mincigrucci (2022), in which they argue that political leaders who hinge on a populist regime make these types of posts

in order to create emotional bonds with their communities, which in turn improves their political chances or aspirations. The argument is that, if they become more of a 'person' than a representative of a political party, the communities will find it easier to vote for them and keep them in power, which is why affective personalization becomes so crucial for these leaders. With this in mind, the remainder of posts made by Hanna were analyzed for affective personalizations.

Another way that Hanna personalized her messages was found in the post that Hanna made about standing up for herself against the British tabloid press. She wrote in the post that she affirmed and was in fact quite proud of her background as a farmer's daughter. In this way, we see Hanna accepting a message, that whilst intended as an insult within the context that the creators of the article had written, and using it to affectively personalize the way in which she self-identifies. From the perspective of being a farmer's daughter, Hanna is better able to relate to the issues that lower and middle class Jamaican women face. In the screenshot that she posted, one user had responded to the tweet sharing her experience as being a farmer's daughter growing up in Jamaica and the levels of discrimination she faced as a result. Hanna expressly stated in the post that she is who she is today as a result of her background, thus further inciting relatability and giving the impression to her constituents that 'I am one of you'. From an intersectional perspective, we see that Hanna is able to represent her female followers in a manner that historically, was not available to them. In that, her story and the way it is represented allowed the follower to see herself represented through Hanna's story. Here too was a Black Jamaican woman in politics, contending against a 'powerful' tabloid press and reclaiming how she chooses to define herself. The overwhelming support for Hanna in the comments section of said post also indicated the importance of an intersectional approach. That is, the power that Hanna has as a Black woman and politician enable her to utilize her platforms and relative position in society, to

argue against the stereotypes and misinformation hurled at her in the post and comments section of the *Daily Mail* article, and emerge somewhat triumphant, which was not historically available to Black women. Therefore, telling her story in this way will also serve to empower other Black women to always stand up for themselves when faced with adversity, and break the cycles of oppression and powerlessness (Coles & Pasek, 2020; Crenshaw, 1989; Hills- Collins, 2002 and Hull, et al, 1982) that has characterized the stories of Black women historically and presently. Therefore, I conclude from the above postulations that there is clear evidence of Hanna personalizing the content published to her Facebook page and sometimes using affect to resonate with her followers or those that interact and engage with her posts. This findings is argued by a number of authors.

In addition to the personalized messages, the tool that is used to facilitate these types of exchanges is also critical to the process as well. Therefore, Facebook as a tool and the ways in which it is used to alter discourses, is looked at in the subsequent section.

Populist Leaders Rely Heavily on Digital Media Platforms Like Facebook as Messages Aren't as Filtered as Traditional Media Forms

Mazzoni and Mincigrucci (2022) specifically mention Facebook as the social networking site preferred by populist leaders. Hanna does in fact have a strong presence on Facebook, however, she utilizes the three most popular social networking platforms in a similar manner. As mentioned earlier in this section, Hanna has also amassed a large following on each platform. Being that this study concentrated on Facebook, the findings can only be analyzed and understood based on what she posts to that site. However, briefly perusing the other platforms (Instagram and Twitter), there seems to be a replication of the same content on each platform. A

number of scholars have argued that replicating content across media spaces facilitates the process known as reverberation. Reverberation, simply put, is the process of sharing and resharing content with key messages that will resonate with the intended audiences. Boler and Davis, (2020), Kuntsman, (2020), and O'byle and Pardun, (2019) argue that populist leaders rely on reverberation to ensure that their messages are constantly reaching their intended audiences. As a result, users who engage with their content become oversaturated with the same types of contents across platforms, and are rarely exposed to differing views and arguments. Therefore, their biases also become entrenched and their democratic positions cemented. In Jamaica, where there has been a history of tribalism and clientelism in politics, a situation where there is no opposing narrative can be extremely dangerous to democracy. Hence the reason why the absence of robust debates and interrogation of ideas on Hanna's page was a crucial finding, and when looked at within the context of reverberation as opined by the authors above, it makes a lot of sense as to why her self presentation and representation by interaction, on Facebook, could be classified as populist. Additionally, the algorithms of social networking platforms, like Facebook help to form echo chambers and filter bubbles that exclude content that are contrary to what the users regularly consume and the ensuing discourse becomes less nuanced. Algorithms play a vital role in getting these messages to the audiences repeatedly, but for the messages to resonate with the audiences requires the neuro-marketing capabilities of affect as looked at by Aral (2021). The findings of this research, as well as the arguments by Kuntsman (2020), Hirschensen (2019) and Hong (2020) corroborated Aral's argument and further demonstrated that on their own, algorithms do not achieve much. The argument thus stands, for the populist messages to be effective, there has to be an affective nature to the posts that are shared and then reshared across platforms. Algorithms powering affective messages and transporting them across social media

spaces do have powerful impacts on the ways in which democratic discourse unfolds on social media. This was also found to be the case in this present study, which I will elaborate on below.

For the purpose of anonymity, names of users were not included in this study and the discussion of my findings, however, as a result of being very immersed in the data collection process, it became evident to me over time that it was the same group of people commenting on Hanna's posts. They rarely engaged with each other in the manner that Habermas had intended. What was also interesting is that Hanna did not respond to a single post or comment during the period of March 24, 2022 to October 31, 2022. The discourse was basically users responding to each other and agreeing or disagreeing with what Hanna posted and stating reasons. How then can we say that this discourse has contributed to the democratic process as there is no evidence of the leader engaging with the ideas, recommendations or criticisms put forward by the followers?

In addition, Hanna's intersectional position as a woman politician adds another layer of complexity to the issue. Hanna self presents, based on the discourse, as an advocate for the rights of women. Considering that women have historically been and still are in some contexts marginalized and often ostracized from the political arena, is this representation found on her Facebook her way of redefining what democratic discourse looks like? According to Rheault, Rayment and Musulan (2019), social media platforms do provide greater access to women and other historically marginalized groups, to give them a voice in the discourse. To further understand the expression of democratic discourse found on Hanna's Facebook page, we also have to take into consideration the structural barriers exist in a hetero-normative patriarchal Jamaican society, which have impacted the ways in which women are able to express themselves

on social media and the opportunities or lack thereof that influence them being able to contribute to solutions driven discourses.

Let us look at this comment for example. “This Prime Minister is very smart, always lead with the hot girl you can never lose”. This comment emerged from discourse under a post where Hanna was welcoming the President of India and his wife to Jamaica on official state matters. Hanna expressed in the post a few interesting facts about India, their economy and opportunities for Jamaicans to benefit from knowledge sharing and partnerships. Hanna was representing in an official capacity on behalf of the elected Leader of Opposition. However, the majority of the comments from the discourse were not about her interaction with the president nor the political aspect of the visit, but rather centered around what Hanna was wearing and how she stood out in the presence of the other representatives in attendance. Analyzing this finding prompted a series of questions. Would the discourse be the same were it a male leader? Was this why the male Leader of Opposition assigned her this task? Of course, Hanna is more than just her looks and her ‘feminine’ attributes, but the fact that those elements seemed to generate the most discourse speaks to the larger issue of how women are constantly perceived in a hetero-normative patriarchal society. As Crenshaw (1999) argued, these systems of inequality characterized by imbalances of power perpetuates stereotypes and marginalization of certain groups, particularly Black women. As I explained in an earlier chapter, the continued perpetuation of these narratives that seek to define women, particularly Black women, in ways that they themselves do not subscribe to, is a prevailing legacy of western patriarchy. The ideologies that have always given the voice to men and suppressed the voices of women, has resulted in the dominance of the male voice, not just physically, but their ideas of how a woman should be defined and the ways in which they are treated. I imagine the powerlessness one may feel living in a society I am not

even able to define myself on my terms. Therefore I argued that similarly, such powerlessness experienced by Hanna, further proves the need for an application of intersectional analysis on a wider scale across society, even in the creation of these platforms. As I mentioned before, powerlessness in the sense that she too tries to curate and direct the narrative in a a certain way that she hopes to be perceived or represented, however, the aforementioned systems of patriarchy (of which social media is a key cornerstone), have seized the discourse and represented her in another way than she intended. The discourse proves one main thing for the vast portion of the users, Hanna remains a 'Queen" and thus they unreservedly express their love, adoration and admiration for the way she adorns herself, but as far as the political discourse goes, there aren't many who engage with that aspect on her Facebook page.

The evidence from the research is substantial: 'Affect' was the largest coding category to emerge with over 2,000 coded segments and more specifically over 1,000 of those comments from the discourse admiring or adoring Hanna for her physical appearance in the images she shared. Even though this study is not concerned with making generalizations, the findings here help to paint a picture of the way democratic discourse unfolds within the realm of social media, particularly for this woman politician. The implications cannot be immediately determined, however, because Hanna, unlike the other woman politicians in the region, was in fact a beauty queen (Miss World, 1993), is from a multi-ethnic background, and could also be classified as someone who experienced upward social mobility, moving from a lower-middle class farmer's daughter, to an upper class politician, married to one of Jamaica's billionaires—all of which uniquely separate this case as a stand alone to be analyzed within the context it emerges. Therefore the presentation, representation and subsequent discourse on Facebook could be thought of as Hanna's version of what democratic discourse looks like to a woman politician

in a political culture that is still male dominated and a society that remains largely unidimensional in their view of a woman's work and the ways in which she can 'safely' represent without having to endure 'baptisms by fire' in the media, from constituents and political rivals. The next step was to discuss the ways in which the findings from this research indicated that affect was a successful tool in amplifying messages posted by Haanna to Facebook and the impacts they had on her audiences, as captured in the discourse.

Populist Leaders Rely on Affect to Amplify Their Messages and Resonate with Their Audiences

Affect has been a major theme that has resonated throughout this study. As mentioned in the preceding chapters and sections of this discussion, affect was the largest coding category with over 2,000 coded segments. Hanna did in fact utilize emotive language within her posts that were found to have intended consequences among the target audience. Affect was looked at from two main perspectives within this study. First, Sara Ahmed's (2014) conception of affect was utilized in the manner that emotions aren't shared from individual to individual, but rather one individual expresses their attitudes and feelings towards a subject, which in turn leaves an impression on the audience who responds based on the emotions they feel towards the subject. In another approach, affect was looked at from the perspective that it is used as part of a neuromarketing ploy, to sensationalize messages for long-term effect and behavioral influences among consumers (Aral, 2021; Boler and Davis, 2020; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2019). Findings from the study did corroborate the distinct arguments made by Ahmed (2014), Aral (2021), Boler and Davis (2020), and Nemorin (2018).

Taking Ahmed's conception into focus, there are multiple findings from the research that demonstrated where Hanna shared her feelings on a particular subject and the discourse that

unfolded within the comment section of the post endorsed those same feelings, or the users reported having differing emotional responses. One such example from the discourse was when advocating for the reproductive rights of women. The post contained a series of emotive language and undertones that convey her feelings and attitudes toward the subject being discussed. A snippet from the post made on May 8, 2022, wherein Hanna expressed her thoughts and feelings surrounding abortion rights is quoted below verbatim:

> "My public and parliamentary stance on this matter are well known. I have an[d] continue to courageously support the mission of abortion rights for all women. A woman's right to choose what happens to her body should not make her a criminal[.]We now have a record number of female MPs in the house, but this agenda remains in flux. Silence is a decision. Let's not embrace the doctrine of doing nothing." Lisa Hanna (2022)

Abortion rights continues to be a highly polarizing issue, whereby the discourse follows the arguments of the 'pro-lifers' and the 'pro-choicers'. As was discussed earlier, a characteristic of populist leadership is polarization. This inhibits the avenue for robust debates and generation of new ideas, but rather facilitates the process of 'othering' as expressed by Ahmed, which is a crucial component to the effectiveness of affect in politics. Ahmed (2014) describes 'othering' as a concept that identifies and highlighs the traits that make the 'Us' group different, and dare I say, better than the 'them' group. Political leaders, like Hanna, use affective language to create close bonds and a sense of shared community with the people that they represent, and in so doing curate the 'Us' group. It is by virtue of these close bonds that allows for the 'Us' group to sometimes identify with the emotions expressed by the populist leader towards the 'Them' group and share similarly. The example that immediately comes to mind from another context is

Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign tagline and all it connoted in the US at that time. The people he represented identified and shared the same emotions and sentiments towards the 'Them' groups such as migrants and non-Republicans within the US. Trump's case demonstrated how he concept of othering was useful in weaponzing emotions (using emotions as a weapon to incite people to certain types of action, sometimes violent), and prompting people to desired actions, as evidenced by the Capitol Hill riots of 2021.This phenomenon was widely documented and the role that affect played, in the sense that Trump identified and expressed his feelings towards the 'other' which was then translated to his supporters who then developed their own emotions towards the 'other' and in turn influenced their actions, was underscored by authors such as Aral (2021) and Hong (2020). In Hanna's case, and the example from the discourse on abortion rights, Hanna would have named the politicians who have chosen not to act- as it pertains to debating and passing the necessary legislation to afford women abortion rights, and those opposed to abortion as the 'other' group. There was also an undertone of slight outrage and disdain for the lawmakers and policymakers who refuse to implement safeguards that protect the rights of women. As mentioned prior, the discourse reflected what Ahmed (2014) contended in that the audience would also develop attitudes and feelings towards the 'other' group and express them in a like manner. An example of the discourse that unfolded in the comment section of the post is quoted verbatim below ([anonymized username], 8 May 2022):

> Comment A: Beautifully written and so accurate.Ignore the negative comments that people send your way. Most people haven't given as much thought to this issue as you have. I'm a mother. When my child was born, people kept asking me when I would pierce her ears. I never did. Why do we pierce little girls' ears creating permanent scars? Scars they will have to cover for the rest of their lives. The answer is simply that from

birth, we are taught that as women our bodies are not our own. I commend you for speaking up on a issue that must be addressed, if Jamaica truly wants to become a modern society of equity and fairness.

Reply 1: There is no other Other thought to the issue Than " iT IS WRONG" IF Something Doesn't Appeal To Our Conscience As it Relates to Abortion, our Soul is Dead. Is There a Soul or any Substance in you?

Comment A replies: Nice rant. Tell me something. The women being raped in the Ukraine now during the war, should they be forced to give birth to and raise their rapist's children?Perhaps it is you who has no conscience. Men like you speak so freely about an issue that you have given very little thought. How many women in Jamaica have been thrown into poverty or even deeper poverty, because they got pregnant - an act that requires two people - and were left to raise children on their own? The cost to do so depleting them not just financially, but emotionally, psychologically, and even spiritually.And think of these children who grow up living with very little means. How many end up in jail? How many go on to commit violent crimes? You see the problem lies within men like you like to sit on a "high horse" and judge people from a place of self-righteousness rather than a place of compassion. Perhaps we should make it a crime for men to go around having children all over the place, holding your kind accountable for shamelessly fathering and abandoning your children. But no, it's easier to burn the woman at the stake. It's time for Jamaican society to stop oppressing its women. The legalization of abortion, thereby protecting those women who choose to undergo the

> procedure, especially those who end up getting black market procedures, is an absolute necessity.

The polarization is apparent: we see the pro-life advocate disagreeing and strongly expressing it to the pro-choice advocate. Both individuals proceed to use strong language to express their stance and to make jabs at the arguments and character of the 'other'group. A noteworthy point from the discourse, when the main commenter said "...the problem lies within men like you [who] like to sit on 'high horse' and judge people from a place of self-righteousness rather than a place of compassion". This brings to the fore that it is not only an issue of abortion rights but also one of inequality in the way issues affecting men and women are treated and who is most disadvantaged. Hanna presented the issue from an intersectional perspective, as she spoke about the women who aren't able to afford healthcare, highlighting two social issues that women in Jamaican society contend with- autonomy over their bodies and poverty. The intersectional theme carries through the discourse as highlighted above, as the main commenter also highlighted some of the reasons why women stand to suffer the most from the reversal of the Roe v Wade ruling and the fact that it is men who aren't affected that are at the forefront of these decisions. However, what stood out to me, is that the commenter that is part of the 'Us' group with Hanna, evidently was influenced by the emotional undertones expressed by Hanna in the post and thus explicitly expresses their emotional response towards the 'other' that they were contending with in the comment section.

Even though intersectionality helps us to best understand the inequalities and highlight the systems of oppression that exist, there still remains a finding that intersectional theory doesn't quite capture. Hanna also highlighted the fact that in that year, there was a recorded increase in the number of elected Members of Parliament that are women, however, they too

have been ‘radio silent’ on the issue of affording women abortion rights in Jamaica. She even argued that two national reports on the topic of abortion rights were submitted to Parliament on separate occasions, but were never debated in the House of Represenatives and nothing came of them. This is interesting because issues affecting women’s rights affect all women and numerous studies have shown that empowering women serves to improve a country’s economic capabilities. Considering that the other members of parliament would be privy to the issues affecting their constituencies, if abortion rights were at the top of the agenda, wouldn't they have coalesced around the issue to advocate for some action to be taken, as opposed to the silence? Do we then conclude that Hanna has raised this issue, presented it as pressing among women in Jamaica, in order to control the narrative and further a populist agenda? Or is it that the other female members of Parliament are out of touch with their constituencies and the issues affecting Jamaican women? It could be either, it could be both, or it could be neither. Unfortunately the scope of this research did not include making that determination, and so we return to the democratic discourse found on Hanna’s page.

As mentioned prior, the issue of abortion is polarizing, therefore, an equal number of contributors to the discourse were affectively stating that they were not in support of Hanna’s stance and that there were more pressing issues affecting women in Jamaica. One thing is for sure emerging from this discourse, Hanna utilizes affect, which was translated into the discourse and the polarizing effect was evident from the discourse. Does this finding, however, characterize her as a populist leader who thwarts democratic discourse to advance a populist agenda where power is concentrated in her hands and she mobilizes the masses around issues that she deems important? I believe there is more to be explored before such determination can be made.

Aral (2021), Boler and Davis (2020), and Nemorin (2018) argued that populist leaders incorporate affect into their messages in a manner that triggers the sensory neurons in the brain to retain the messages and ultimately influence certain behaviors. The process of neuromarketing, as explored in the literature, is not always obvious to the audiences, however it can be an effective tool used to maintain power. Social media is a key driver in ensuring the success of neuromarketing. As highlighted in chapter five of this study, a slew of consecutive posts made by Hanna that depicted her on official state business from April 14, 2022 to April 19, 2022, where she was also filling the capacity as Leader of Opposition was perceived as a marketing ploy within the discourse. Isolating this finding witin the context of what was argued by Nemorin (2018) and Hong (2020) and Lim (2020), we see a picture where Hanna does in fact seem to be employing neuro-marketing tools in the manner that she presents her discourse on Facebook. That is, Hanna is constantantly portrayed within the time period listed above, as the Leader of Opposition. Even though she technically is filling the capacity as the Leader of Opposition in the absence of Mr. Mark Golding, MP on these occasions, the manner in which she represents and continually reverberates the message of herself in the capacity as Leader of Opposition was found to have an impact on the users. The discourse followed questions being asked as to why Golding always seemed to be missing in action and Hanna was fulfilling the role? The discourse also saw a resounding narrative centered around followers calling for Hanna to be appointed as the Leader of Opposition in Golding's stead, as she executed the duties so well. Also noteworthy among the findings was the fact that Hanna shared the same content on her social media pages, thus contributing the reverberation effect of the messages and discourse. As explored earlier, this phenomenon has an impact on the way these followers will perceive the information shared to them. That is, it is not unlikely that the users will perceive Hanna as the

legitimate Leader of Opposition, as this message has reverberated throughout her discourse and based on the affective nature of the mesaegs, is bound to resonate with the followers (Aral,2021; Bakir and McStay, 2020; Hong, 2020).

Taking into consideration what authors have argued about the role of algorithms in perpetuating reverberation and neuro-marketing in that algorithms reward engagement, meaning that the content most interacted with, are those that will receive priority in terms of visibility and are then pushed to other users. Thus, the constant perpetuation of these images do resound the idea of Hanna as Leader of Opposition. In addition to that, the images posted to Facebook and the subsequent discourse revealed that affect was a major theme within the discourse. The audience were admiring how Hanna represented physically and politically. From the code leadership, Hanna was referred to as future Prime Minister (variations included PM, Pm or pm) a total of 200 times, which was a significant finding within the category of Leadership. The references were often accompanied by sentiments of admiration, respect or adoration. I argue that the evidence shows that Hanna was deploying neuromarketing tactics to have the images and messages resound in the minds of the audience, and to aid in shaping the perception they have of her as a political leader. This, unironically, also falls within the scope of populism as advanced by a number of authors within the extant literature. Interestingly, the audience were also able to recognize it as a marketing ploy, as one user said, “I like the way how Lisa is marketing herself to be the next Leader of the Opposition”. Once again, the discourse was mostly dichotomous with one set of users commenting that it was her job responsibility to represent in that capacity, while others were either saying she was strategically positioning for the role, or that she was deserving of and should fill the role.

Thus taking into context all that has been explored thus far, it does become apparent that Hanna presents herself and is represented by the discourse as a populist leader. The evidence of affectively personalizing her Facebook messages, the manner in which she utilizes Facebook to have her messages reverberate and market herself toher follers as the Leader of Opposition and the manner in which she uses affect to amplify her messages, all contribute to the conclusion that these findings present as populism. In the next section, I look at how affect influences the way women, specifically woman politician Lisa Hanna, is treated on Facebook by virtue of how she is represented within the democratic discourse.

How does affect influence democratic discourse and the treatment of women?

At this stage, it is reasonable to argue that that affect has been a crucial component in the way the discourse unfolds on Hanna's page and ultimately defining the way that Hanna is treated on Facebook. The findings demonstrated that Hanna was treated with respect and civility during the period of March 24, 2022 to October 31, 2022. The findings signaled a positive relationship between affect and the democratic discourse. As expressed earlier in this chapter, the adoration/admiration category accounted for the largest coding segment within the dataset. Comments from the discourse revealed sentiments of love and adoration for Hanna. As the methodology indicated, treatment would be measured by the levels of civil and or uncivil comments that were targeted at the subject of this research. The data studied did not yield any uncivil words, comments or interactions within the discourse. The users referred to Hanna in respectful terms and lauded her for her positive attributes. In moments of criticisms, the users also expressed their criticisms in a respectful and civil manner. In analyzing the discourse surrounding Hanna's work within her constituency, one user wrote: "Continue your good work my SESA MP, I know the people in McNie truly appreciated your good work. We believe in

you always❤❤❤❤". From the 299 segments of the discourse coded as 'Lisa's work ethic', there was not a single anomaly found. All of the comments were praising and encouraging MP Hanna for her results-driven work within the constituency and the country.

Users are prone to express themselves with truth and openness on social media based on the affordances of the platforms (Lesage and Natale, 2019). For example, Facebook facilitates direct feedback and users have the option to post anonymously. The assumption by a number of scholars is that users use the opportunity to share unsparingly and unreservedly on how they feel about their leaders. This they believed would result in a complex network of discourses ranging from the debating of ideas and robust discussions, characteristic of democratic discourse, to discourse airing dissatisfaction with elected officials, which were often accompanied by express negative emotions. Therefore finding that the users all admire Hanna's work ethic and are in full support of her representation is an interesting finding. This is also contrary to what was found in a similar research by Rheault, Rayment and Musulan (2019) within the Canadian context. Their research proved that 11% of the messages geared towards female politicians were uncivil, from a sample of approximately two million tweets. However, the study by Rheault, Raymen and Musulan (2019) did not measure for affect and its impact on the democratic discourse on social media, thus this high level of affect found within the present research may be the reason for the discrepancy. Additionally, the authors conducted their research during the election period and within a totally different socio-historical, socio-cultural and socio-economic context.

In another post that Hanna made about standing up for herself against the British tabloid press, and agreeing with the comment about being a 'Farmer's daughter', we see Hanna explain that even though being a Farmer's daughter is a part of who she is, it is not the only means by which she defines herself. As mentioned before in preceding sections, by virtue of being a

farmer's daughter, Hanna is better able to relate to the issues that lower and middle class Jamaican women face. Even though Hanna did not allude to her social status, gender or ethnicity on her Facebook page during the period of March 24, 2022 to October 31, 2022, I make the argument that her advocacy has been influenced by her own unique socio-cultural background and has influenced the way in which she is perceived by her audiences. This is another example of affect helping to shape the democratic discourse and the way in which Hanna is treated. As Mazzoni and Mincigrucci (2022) opined, if the leader is perceived to be 'one of us', they elicit empathy from their communities, and empathy greatly influences the way in which people relate to one another. This finding also highlighted what Wahl-Jorgensen (2019) argued, in that "Leaders utilize the media to create a shared community and an emotional bond between themselves and the people" (p. 47).

The findings above are further compounded by the fact that users who commented on Hanna's posts oftentimes shared personal stories that related to or contributed to the discourse generated by the post. This form of perceived relatability helps to cement the bond as expressed by Wahl-Jorgensen (2019). Despite being different contexts, this finding concurs with Wahl-Jorgensen's arguments and thereby validates it within the Jamaican context as well. The argument here is that Lisa Hanna utilizes social media, particularly Facebook, to create a shared community and emotional bond between her and her constituents and other supporters. To what end would Lisa need to curate and actively maintain these bonds? Wahl-Jorgensen (2019) had further posited that the politicians observed in the US did this in order to advance a new form of governance: populism.

Even though some scholars perceive the communities formed by emotional connections and banded to political leaders as having severe negative impacts, as in the case of Salvini

explored earlier by Boler and Davis (2020) and Mazzoni and Mincigrucci (2022), I believe that this example from Hanna's discourse shows another side to the story. In Hanna's case, the emotional community that she formed responded positively despite the malicious attack on their avowed and beloved leader. I also argue that this finding further proves that affect translated from leader to followers in social media discourse, is pivotal to the types of actions ensued against the identified 'other'. That is, Hanna responded with 'grace and dignity' to the *Daily Mail* article that prompted this study, according to the discourse and the comments section of the post shared similar sentiments. There were comments that spoke about the level of grace in Hanna's response to the situation and some that spoke about the media's agenda of pitting women against women. The commenters opined:

> "Lisa Hanna...you were nothing short of graceful encompassed with your dignified outlook...dont bother with the naysayers..Im looking forward to you being Jamaica's next well learnt..experienced..compassionate.. classy and down to earth Prime Minister.".

In another response, a commenter wrote:

> "I don't see any disrespect. There are those out there who want to pin one woman against the other. I agree…problems will only be solved if they are honestly discussed. Let's keep talking".

We can also interpret these findings from an intersectional perspective. Racism, sexism and classism have historically been the points of intersection by which Black women in particular have been oppressed. The pitting of Hanna, a Black woman against Duchess Kate, a white woman from the Royal family, would perpetuate certain stereotypes of racism and classism, as well as potentially sour diplomatic relations which could also have economic repercussions on the country of Jamaica. Therefore, Hanna addressing the issue in the manner that she did, was

not only ‘standing up for herself’, but singlehandedly fighting against several systems of oppression that seek to oppress Black people in general.

The great extent to which Lisa Hanna is admired and adored by her constituents and others who support her within the social media domain does speak volumes to the way that affect influences discourse and consequent treatment of political leaders. It can also be an indication of a wider phenomenon unfolding, and one characterized by an ideological and political shifting. In this case, the users freely and openly expressed their love and admiration of Lisa Hanna, specifically her physical appearance and how she presented herself, which often resulted in them treating her in a respectfully positive manner, which according to Mazzoni and Mincigrucci (2022), is characteristic of a populist regime.

For the most part, the findings were uni-dimensional, as the findings suggested that those commenting on Hanna’s posts,were primarily those who admired her personally or politically. There was an indication that Hanna or her team may have been engaging in removing data/discourse that was not in support of her or viewed her favorably. For example, one user commented, “ENTITLEMENT - Mrs Hanna remove this comment too like all the others comments that disagree with your entitled behaviour... The Guardian”. It was the only one of its kind, and while it may be an anomaly or someone trying to make a baseless accusation for affective impact, I believe it is still crucial to this discussion. Of course, there are many factors that could have influenced such a find. As Van Dijck (2015) and Aral (2021) contended, when it comes to social media platforms, there is no presumption that every member of a democracy has equal access to these social media networks, nor an equal voice in the political discourses that take place online. There are certain power structures that ostracize some voices from the discourse, therefore, what has been found on Hanna’s page may not reflect the entire truth, even

though there is no empirical evidence to the contrary found within the discourse. Despite this, the fact is, Hanna is treated civilly, with love and respect by those who interact and engage with her posts on Facebook. There is clear evidence which shows that affect drives the discourse and impacts the treatment received. Hanna's case, like Salvini's (as reported by Mazzoni and Mincigrucci, 2022), demonstrated that she operated in a like manner to a celebrity. She arguably implemented a strategy of self-personalisation through a very varied use of images to resonate and identify with her constituents as well as evoke their love, adoration and empathy. Even though Hanna only had 12 posts that represented her personally, the political posts often pictured Hanna in the crowd, hugging her constituents, working alongside them or even eating from the same pot as them. I further argue that, like Salvini, Hanna has successfully curated an image as a 'woman of the people' or the 'common man'. A number of scholars have identified this rhetoric of the 'common man' to be characteristic of a populist leader (Aalberg et al., 2018; Canovan, 1999; Kriesi, 2014, as cited in Mazzoni and Mincigrucci, 2022).

Conclusion

This study has several limitations and insights that may serve as a guide for future studies on the subject. The platform chosen can be perceived as a limitation. Even though Facebook was chosen because it is the most widely used social networking platform in Jamaica at the time (Bianchi, 2022), and while Hanna shares a great deal on Facebook, I have observed her being more engaged with discourse on Instagram and Twitter. Therefore, future research might benefit from incorporating multiple media sources.

The study could also have benefited from a comparative analysis of Hanna and a Jamaican male politician like the current Prime Minister, Andrew Holness, for example. Holness is observed to utilize similar affective personalizations on his social media pages. For a more robust analysis, the study could have compared the ways in which discourse unfolds similarly or differently on the social media pages of both leaders, and this would in turn strengthen the intersectional analysis of Hanna's representation.

Finally, the time frame chosen for the study was restrictive as Hanna had posts on her Facebook page that generated more robust discourse. For future studies, a randomized approach may prove more useful. That is, utilizing a randomizer tool to determine the posts that are selected for analysis over a longer period of time might be useful.

Another methodology could have been employed to get a wider section of data to analyze. A mixed-methods research that employed a Survey methodology and Qualitative Content Analysis, could have potentially captured a wider range of discourse with present attitudes and perceptions of Hanna, as well as her politics. An interview with Hanna herself might have yielded more fruits as well. For future research, a multiple media approach could be taken to get a better sense of the discourse across platforms. In addition, Hanna presented on her

Facebook that she had a standing column in one of the local Jamaican newspapers; it might have been beneficial to explore that discourse, as well.

While the study has limitations, there are also significant findings. My research objective was to explore the representation and treatment of a woman politician on Facebook in Jamaica between March and October 2022. I set out to determine how politician Lisa Hanna self-presented personally and politically on Facebook, how the discourse emerging from the comments on her posts represented her, and how affect shaped the democratic discourse surrounding Hanna on Facebook. During this time, two significant political events involving Hanna occurred, which were captured in the findings. First there was the alleged snubbing of Duchess Kate that generated a significant amount of discourse in the public domain, and the second was the announcement made by Hanna that she would not return to representational politics at the end of her current term.

I found that Hanna presented personally as a mother, a dog-lover, a fan of horseracing, someone who is keen on exercise, makes time to celebrate the birthdays of her loved ones, and someone who stands up for herself. From the total number of posts, Hanna had only twelve that represented her personally, which can be perceived as Hanna seeking to maintain some semblance of privacy in her personal life and focusing more publicly on her political career. Hanna's background, as she presented it on facebook, firstly facilitated the use of intersectionality to explain the findings of this research, as the way Hanna self-presented added layers of analyses beyond just the fact that she is a politician. It expanded the discourse to reflect how a Jamaican woman politician shapes democracy on her Facebook page and how her audiences respond. There was a wealth of data that showed that while Hanna had some autonomy in the way she presented herself and the discourse she wanted to facilitate, sometimes

this was not translated into the discourse unfolding within the comments section, as the users would often rather focus on her physical appearance than the nature of what she posted. In other instances when the discourse translated from the posts to the comments section, the followers who engaged with her posts were sometimes polarized on the issues being discussed or their world-view that influenced those discourses. For example, the commenters were polarized on the issues of abortion rights, the naming of Reggae Icon Bob Marley as a National Hero, the discourse on child abuse, and some instances listed below.

Even though Hanna was found to tell various stories through personalization and affect, from an intersectional perspective, her ability to define herself was eroded when she came in contact with a hetero-normative patriarchal culture. There was not an active erasure of her identity, however, the ways of thinking entrenched in the population surfaced in instances where she was sharing knowledge or solutions for development and the discourse followed what she was wearing or how she stood out aesthetically from the crowd.

Politically, Hanna presented herself as an advocate for abortion rights and the reproductive rights of women, a hardworking and results-driven Member of Parliament, a solutions-oriented leader, and an advocate for local development. The findings were conclusive as they answered the research questions in earnest and highlighted prevailing gaps that future research might be able to address. The study was also able to highlight the democratic discourse that unfolds in the realm of social media, concerning a woman politician within Jamaican society. Approaching the findings from Mendis's (2022) and Ruess's (2023) definition of what democratic discourse is and ought to look like, my study concludes that what existed was not democratic per se, in the sense that the types of debate and interrogation of ideas that needed to take place within an environment free of suppression and manipulation were non-existent. The

findings alluded to the fact that Hanna utilized affective personalization to form emotional attachments with her audiences. This is characteristic of a populist leader and as such, the discourse became more aligned with populism (polarizing, absent critical debates and interrogation of ideas). There was even a suggestion from the findings that Hanna and her team may have been engaging in censorship of discourse by deleting unfavorable comments on her posts, an act that is directly contrary to the tenets of transparency and accountability— pillars of modern democracies. The question was asked, What does democratic discourse on Lisa Hanna's Facebook page look like? The answer is that the discourse was mostly polarizing regardless of the issue being addressed. In instances where the discourse was not two opposing factions, it featured users admiring Hanna for her physical appearance and the manner in which she advocated for the issues of those that she represented electorally.

Affect was the single most powerful force driving the discourse on Hanna's facebook page. The study found that the posts that had the highest recorded coded segments of affect were the posts with the discourse in agreement with Hanna. The implication of which is that those who loved and adored Hanna were often in agreement with the discourse she presented and the way she presented herself personally and politically.

Additionally, the findings alluded to the fact that the discourse on Hanna's Facebook page lacked the nuances that qualify it as democratic discourse because of the nature of social media and the types of interacrions it facilitates. That is, majority of the discourse was found to be affective, with a vast portion of the comments admiring Hanna physically or for her work ethic. This could mean that Hanna was followed mostly by people who support her politically or admire her greatly as a person. Thus, I argued that users who are from Hanna's constituency but do not support her politically may not necessarily follow her on facebook and as such, their

voices are missing from the discourse. A key element to a thriving democracy is a strong and viable opposition, therefore, with the absence of such opposing voices to interrogate the ideas on Hanna's page, the democratic discourse was not as robust or it was non-existent.

Hanna's use of affective personalization had a negative impact on the type of democratic discourse found on her page. Whereas such personalization is used to create closer bonds with the communities that the leaders represent (Mazzoni and Mincigrucci, 2022). The discourse found was contrary to what Habermas (1989) and Ruess, et al (2023) defined as democratic discourse online. That is, the images shared by Hanna to present herself personally and politically often swayed the discourse from what the post itself was about. The resultant discourse was sometimes polarizing and absent of critical analysis of the subject, robust interrogation of ideas, and generation of solutions through debate – all of which Habermas (1989) and Ruess, et al, (2023) described as necessary for strengthening democracy. This affective personalization of posts also highlighted an important issue of discourse presentation within the public realm, which is, that which presents as democratic discourse within contemporary democracies is a result of manifest or latent populist ideologies influencing the discourse.

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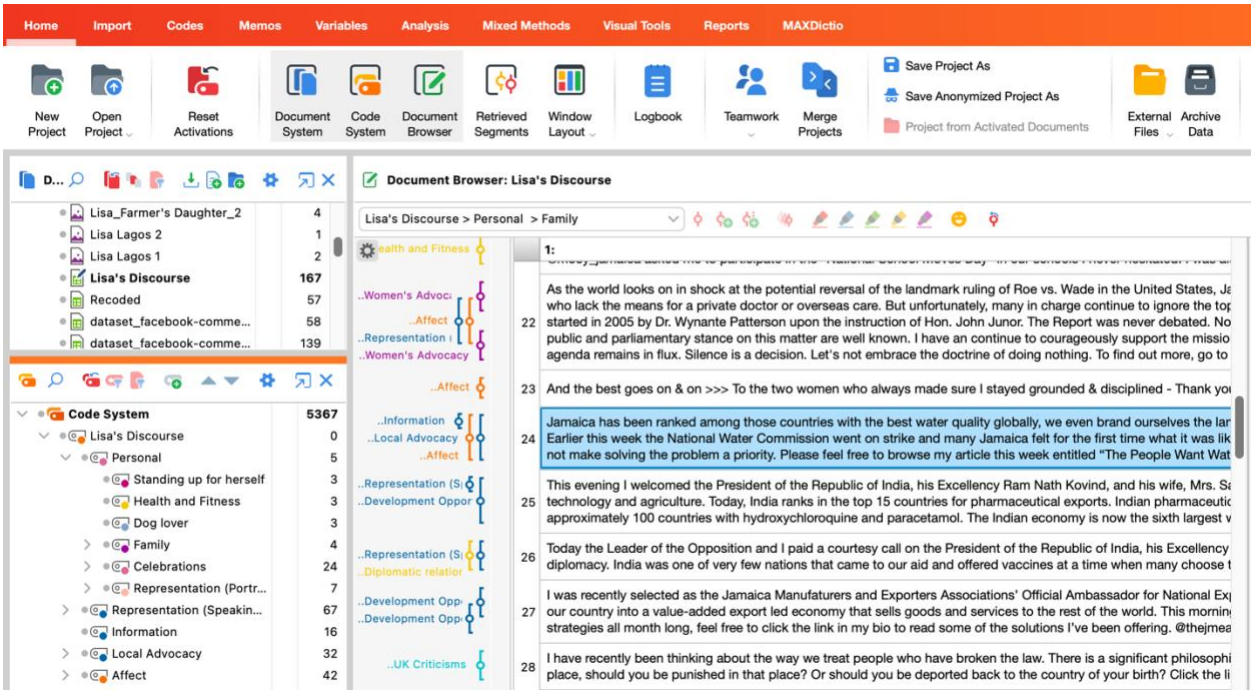
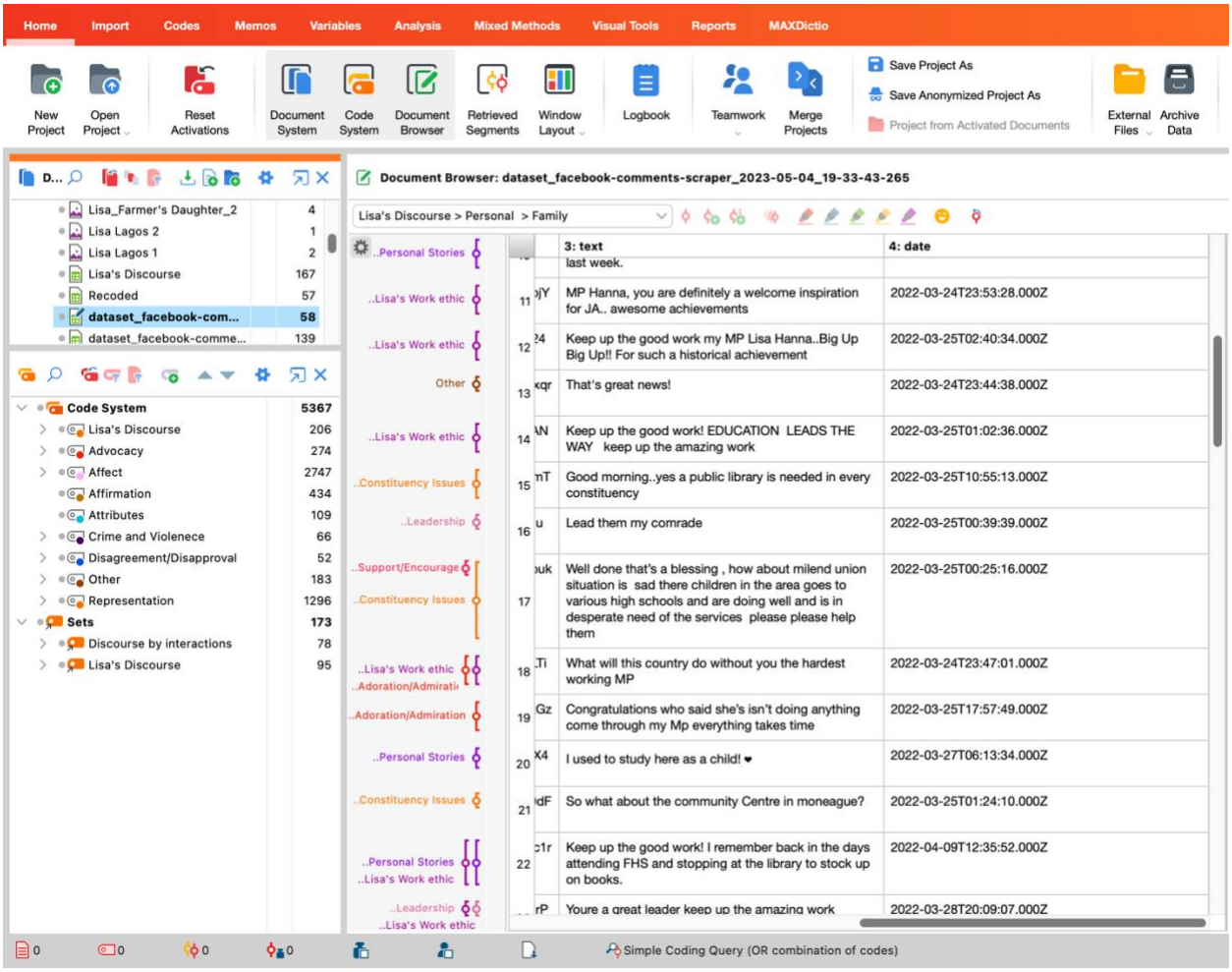
Appendices



Appendix A: Final codes from the posts made by Hanna, which forms the discourse that presents her personally and politically on Facebook.



Appendix B: Final codes that represent Hanna through interactions found within the comment section of her posts on Facebook.