

Journal of

Advanced Sociology

(JAS)

**Media and Murder in Military Barracks: Sociological Analysis of
the Murder of Isaah Mobila in the Northern Region of Ghana.**



CARI
Journal

Media and Murder in Military Barracks: Sociological Analysis of the Murder of Isaah Mobila in the Northern Region of Ghana.

Eliasu Alhassan

Department of Sociology and Social Work, Faculty of Social Sciences,

University for Development Studies

aeliasu@uds.edu.gh

Mahama Seth Sayibu

Department of Journalism, Faculty of Communication and Media Studies

University for Development Studies

Email: smahama@uds.edu.gh / Mahamaseth10@yahoo.com

Abstract

Purpose: Military brutalities continue to occur in Africa notwithstanding a momentous drop in military coups. Military-civilian relations are still problematic and complex since in some cases civilians die in military custody. This article is a sociological study and analysis of how Ghana's Convention Peoples Party's Northern Regional Chairman, Issah Mobila was brutally murdered in military custody in Tamale, the Northern Regional capital and the effect the murder had on the family and the people of the Region.

Methodology: The study was purely qualitative hence qualitative procedures and processes were used. Interview guides as well as observation were used for the primary data while the secondary data were sourced via internet and written documents like the newspapers. The data were thematically analysed and, in some cases, individual responses were quoted verbatim.

Findings: The study asserted that Mobila was murdered by the military hence two of the military officers were convicted. The study also asserted that Mobila was wrongly accused by the security services and murdered in military custody. The study found that the family of the deceased continued to suffer psychological discomfort hence the elder's son contemplated committing suicide. The Regional Security Council gave conflicting statements which angered the youth and the opinion leaders which created insecurity in the municipality resulting in hunger in the capital of Tamale as food sellers refused to sell for the fear that they might be killed. Also, the wives of the military men in the barracks also seized going to the market for fear of reprisal. Tamale therefore came to a standstill in the midst of heavy military patrols in the municipality. Media reportage was prominent as the murder issue was discussed thoroughly.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Policy and Practice: This murder case was unprecedented in the history of the military in Tamale hence it provoked calls on government to ensure cordial and effective relationship between the civilian population and the military to obviate a recurrence. Constant lectures and dialogue on military-civilian relationship are being encouraged in order to strengthen coexistence between the military and the civilians.

Keywords: *Military, Civilian, Murder, Media, Sociological Analysis*

INTRODUCTION

Akdag (2006), suggests that civil-military relations is like Two Hands on the Sword. He argues that the civilian hand regulates when the sword is drawn while the military hand keeps it sharp and exerts it in combat, always guided by the purposes for which the war is being fought. Brement (1988) argued that US civil-military relations constitute a bargain, regarding the allocation of prerogatives and responsibilities. As a result, military and civilian agencies have been collaborating to nib violent conflicts in the bud, enhance governments' capacity and reinforce national security. Notwithstanding the above efforts, more needs to be done to improve mutual understanding and cooperation among organizations that provide this assistance as deficiency in understanding has led to duplication of effort, ineffective use of limited resources and inadvertent consequences like brutalities in the military barracks (Bruneau and Goetze, 2006).

Cloud and Clarke (1999) explained that military brutalities of civilians in Africa have recorded a hefty body of works because of the history of coups d'état in Africa. Military brutalities continue to occur and have distressed the civilian populations, leaving in their wake, enormous consequences for military-civilian relations (Agyeman-Duah, 2002, & Hutchful, 2007). Even though African countries have noted a momentous drop in military coups, the military-civilian relations are still problematic, complex and not all that harmonious (Ngoma, 2010 & Asante, 2020). In East Africa in Kenya, residents of the country's North Rift continued to suffer disproportionate brutality from series of actors, including the military (Broeck, 2021). Between 2009 and 2010, military and police personnel were involved in large scale violence and also distributed weapons to armed militia in the North Rift region of Turkana, Pokot and Toposa to engage in endless circle of violence (Broeck, 2021).

In Cameroon in francophone West Africa, both government forces and armed separatists fighting for independence in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon in the late 2016 had killed at least 1,800 civilians and torched hundreds of homes. Millions of people were displaced, many of whom the aged, women and other vulnerable groups (Human Rights Watch, 2021). Exploring the claims of human rights abuses in Nigeria in Anglophone West Africa by the military, (Adeakin, 2016) posits that internal security challenges have erupted and is threatening the existence of the country because of military violations of human rights of civilians. Further to Adeakin's claim, under the

rule of President Mahammadu Buhari, army officers opened fire at protestors at a toll gate at Lagos in October 2021, killing at least 11 of them (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

In Ghana human rights abuses in the hands of the military continue to occur despite calls by human rights groups and pro-democratic movements to stem the tide. To mention a few, in 2018, four boys aged 13 to 16 were arbitrary arrested for allegedly thieving a mobile phone of a senior military officer. They were stripped and whipped with pestle, cutlasses stick and metal rods by soldiers (IHRDA, 2021). At Nuaso in the Eastern region, soldiers beat up eight people who rioted while refusing to accept prepaid electricity meters that were being installed by the electricity provider, Volta River Authority (Citi News, 2022) while in Wa in the Upper West region, scores of soldiers stormed Tindama, a suburb and beat up several people indiscriminately in search of a colleague's smart phone that had been allegedly stolen.

On December 8 2020, a combined force of police and military shot and killed two persons and injured eight at Techiman South in the Bono region at an election results collation centre (Joy news, 2020). The military again shot and killed two people at Ejura who were protesting the mob killing of a colleague (Africa News, 2021). Arguably, the goriest of all military brutalities in Ghana was in 2004 regarding the torture of Issah Mobila, the Northern Regional Chair of the opposition Convention Peoples Party (CPP), who died in military custody in Tamale. This barbaric torture remains a dent on the collective conscience of the military and many wonder whether there still exists a cordial relationship between the military and the civilians in the Northern Region of Ghana. Notwithstanding, this particular issue has received very little scholarly attention and this makes current study significant, especially for human rights groups, political scientists, military historians and media and conflict scholars.

Theoretical Bases of the study

According to Day (1999), frantic efforts to develop civilian-military relationship as an academic investigation and discipline were initiated and out-doored after World War II that is between 1950s and 1960s. For a long period, it was a dominant American-centred academic field that dealt mostly with the dynamics between the army and social intelligentsia with a key focus on the contributions of military commanders and high profile politicians in shaping US bilateral relations and defence policy and guidance.

Right from the beginning, Deukmejian (2021) explained that military civilian- relationship has been a multidisciplinary field of study which combines information from analysts on political scientists, sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, economists and historians. During the middle of the last century, Samuel Huntington's thoughts cited in Feaver (1999) have more or less dominated civilian-military issues in the world. Up till now, Huntington's book, '*The Soldier and the State*' (1957), cited in Feaver (1999), has become one of the key works on democratic control and guidance. It has been used as a guide for educating top ranked military officers in American military academy. Huntington's thoughts have one way shaped civilian-military concepts and

theoretical frameworks in the United States of America and-as the United States, a global super power-, many other Western and European Countries as well as African countries to follow the trend.

Huntington explained that there is a specific mind-set, a military mind that is featured by dogmatic realism, that is, a belief that a very strong defensive capability and an efficient military role are the most significant for all states in the world. Real civilian control is realised and achieved by making more emphasis and reinforcing the beliefs and convictions held by the military all over the world and not by subjecting them to civilian thinking.

Huntington further explained that the objective of ideal civil control and dominance is to reach the highest possible height of military professionalism. This can be achieved by drawing a clear cut lines between military and civilian activities throughout the world. Civilians should make political and economic plans and military leaders should make military and defence plans. Politicians within the government should define strategic aims and objectives for national policy and national defence without interfering tactically. Holsti (1998) noted that top military leaders should be independent of the politicians in pursuing military agenda and strategy and that this very clear separation of civilian and military functions and roles are considered to be the weak point in Huntington's theory.

Huntington's theory was appropriate in 1957 and also suitable in the bipolar world when matching with clarity and symmetry of the Cold War era. However, modern conflicts are much more complex and asymmetric. According to Horowitz (1983), the symmetry between military and civilian functions and roles have become blurred and in addition to national military units, every art and theatre of operations usually involves international agencies like the. NATO, EU and the UN units, mercenaries, security guards, NGOs and people like the journalists, private businesses observers and educationists. It might be the reason why it has become difficult to separate civilian and military duties, tasks and roles.

Janowitz's book, cited in Khorram-Mensah et al. (2022) *Professional Soldier* published in 1960 offered the best alternative theory to Huntington's thoughts. Unlike Huntington, Janowitz has been able to attract many academicians and many followers and admirers among investigators interested in civilian -military relationship. The dilemma between Huntington and Janowitz focused on whether more efficient and effective civilian control over the military is achieved by strict and real divorce or full cohesion between civilian and military in decision-making processes.

Huntington (1957) views the military as unique in nature, hence they do not have anything to do with the civilian world and this is how it should be. However, the military and social system form a complex whole that should remain integrated (Schiff, 1995). Janowitz (1960) explained that it is very diabolic to consider the military as an institution that is not part of the whole society or to alienate the military from the entire society. The military life should follow the same process of

development as the rest of society and should keep up with any political party that comes into power.

Civilian-military relations are regulated by ensuring competition for scarce resources and attention. The United States military in the 20th century contained an analysis of the social background, origin, motives, lifestyle, status and other similar characteristics of people in the military. Janowitz further explained that the Allied victory in the World War II and new ideas in military techniques have brought about dynamics in the scope of military operations and society as a whole that have shifted attentions on the role of the military. Khorram-Mensah et al. (2022) explained that the thoughts of Huntington have bedevilled many African countries where there is no cordial relationship between civilians and the military and as a result some civilians die via military brutalities.

Normative Theorist Eliot Cohen cited in Mastroianni is a well-known social investigator who studied the modalities for the usage of military force, military leadership and civilian military relationship. In his book entitled '*Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen, and Leadership in Wartime*' (2002), he gave good explanatory indication of the affiliation between civilian authorities and top military hierarchy in a democratic state. Cohen has formulated his theory cited in Redenti (2018) after evaluating and analysing the activities and roles of different statesmen in wartime, which complements Huntington's classical thoughts. Institutional theory in Peter Feaver's book, '*Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight and Civil-Military Relations*' (2003), offers yet another theoretical base for exploring the relations between civilians and the military in the post-Cold War world. Feaver uses sociological terms and institutional theory for analysing civilian-military relationship and claimed that political authorities who are civilians, give orders and high professional military personnel carry on the orders as they have been hired or told to implement defence and security policies defined by civilians. The military may be reluctant to act exactly what they were told to do. They can choose to decide whether to obey the rules they were given or to do as they pleased. According to Weeks (2012), top politicians, who give orders and instructions can in their turn, choose between four options; they can either check or not check to see whether their orders were achieved or realised and they can also decide whether shirking responsibilities deserves punishment or does not deserve punishment.

METHODOLOGY

The study used case study design hence it employed qualitative processes and procedures for this investigation and therefore purposive sampling was used as well as convenient sampling technique. The target population was the military officials, the police, the media and the family of the victim and the sample size was twenty-five (25). Ten from the police, five (5) from the military, five (5) from the media and five (5) from the family of the victim.

The data was collected using an interview guide and some discussions with few people within the municipality. Observations as part of the tools for data collection was used which yielded positive

outcome. Primary data was sourced via the interviews while the secondary data was sourced using the internet and newspapers and television news within the period of the case. Content analysis was used for the data gathered from the field. It was described, explained and interpreted using examples and literature from the secondary data. In some instances, some quotations were used to support the media claims. In coding, the data was categorised into censorship and sub categorised into different types of censorship, including intimidation and harassment. These categories were used for the analysis through the use of thematic and textual analysis.

Sociological Analysis of Mobila's Case

Samuel Huntington (1957) thoughts anchored the study and the analysis. Many states in Africa still believe that the military mind-set override the civilian mind set and as a result the civilians are inferior in the eyes of the military. These thoughts are more or less dangerous to the efficient and effective military-civilian relationship in Africa. Civilian-military discussions in the world up to present day still lay emphasis on conservative realism of the military. That is, a belief that a strong defence of the military and efficient military roles and function are most important themes for all states and not the protection of civilians.

Civil control is achieved by reinforcing the beliefs held by the military and not by subjecting them to civilian thinking. Huntington asserts that the aim of ideal or 'objective' civil control is to reach the highest possible level of military professionalism. As a result of this thinking, the military has no regard for civilians in some African countries, including Ghana, hence treat civilians cruelly which sometimes result in death.

On December 9, 2004, residents of Tamale in the Northern Region of Ghana woke up to a traumatising news that one of the region's political bigwigs and Northern Regional Chair of the opposition Convention Peoples' Party (CPP) Issah Mobila had been killed in military custody at the 6th Infantry Battalion (Kamina Barracks) in Tamale. Earlier in the day, he had reported to the Northern Regional Police Command in Tamale on accusations of hiding deadly weapons in his vehicle which he allegedly planned to use to cause post-election violence. The region, like the rest of the country had just witnessed the end of nationwide Presidential and Parliamentary elections that were won by the incumbent New Patriotic Party (NPP). Its candidate, John Kufuor polled 4,524,074 representing 52.45 percent of valid votes cast against his closest rival, Professor Evans Attah Mills (d. 2016) of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), who polled, 850,368 representing 44.64 percent. Even though the chairman of the CPP, Mobila was widely known to be sympathetic to the opposition NDC. He was told that the police were after him and at that time the whole Tamale was under a State of Emergency declared in March 2002 after the gruesome murder of the Dagbon king, Yaa Naa Yakubu II.

Mobila reported to the police and while at the police station, soldiers from the military detachment at the Kamina barracks seized him from the police and carted him to the barracks where he was tortured to death. In a statement to the media, the Northern Regional Security Council (NRSC)

claimed that Issah Mobila complained of stomach pains after sipping water and collapsed and died while being rushed to the hospital (Mahama, 2020). The NRSC is a body of heads of security, including the police and the military in the region. This development incensed the general public that demanded investigations to unravel the truth surrounding his death.

Following from this development, soldiers on duty at the time of Mobila's murder were arrested and charged with conspiracy to murder and causing murder (Graphic, February, 2013). Government commissioned a coroner's inquest into the matter. The Military High Command also commissioned an enquiry into the matter (The Ghanaian Chronicle, June I, 2012). The coroner's and military enquiry reports suggested that the deceased died of violent causes contrary to what the NRSC had claimed. The coroner's report suggested that Mobila had 'multiple abrasions all over his body and fractured ribs' and attributed the cause of death to 'collapse in the left lung, fractured ribs and multiple abrasions'. (Ghana News Agency, March 31, 2010). The military enquiry report said Mobila died in military custody three hours after he arrived there fit and strong. In his testimony before a High Court, in Accra, the secretary of the military enquiry who appeared through a subpoena said one of the military men in connivance with two other unidentifiable persons beat up the deceased who was brought to the barracks in a 'normal and healthy state' (The Ghanaian Chronicle, June I, 2012).

Subsequently, the military indicted seven military officers, including Lieutenant Colonel W. Omane Agyekum, who was the head of the Battalion (The Ghanaian Chronicle, June I, 2012). However, the military high command's report was not made public until they were subpoenaed to do so by the Accra Fast Track High Court eight years after the incident.

The Northern Regional Co-ordinating Council in the midst of public anger, following the murder, met with some opinion leaders in Tamale, including some chiefs and family members of the deceased to try to persuade them to inter the remains of the deceased. The council argued that as a Muslim he needed to be buried in line with Islamic tradition while the family awaited the results of the autopsy (Mahama, 2020). Meanwhile pictures of the deceased taken during the post-mortem and leaked to the media revealed Mobilla lying prostrate with marks of torture suggesting unnatural death.

This enraged the general public, including some opinion leaders and some family members of the deceased who demanded that the autopsy report be made public and the culprits punished before he could be buried. Consequently, initial arrangement for his burial in advance of the coroner's report was stalled following the decision of some youth chiefs to mobilise the youth of Tamale to object to the burial arrangements that started at the Tamale Teaching Hospital morgue precinct. The youth chiefs were inspired by some other opinion leaders and chiefs who believed that the only way the truth about Mobila's murder would be uncovered was to have his burial postponed to put pressure on government and the military authorities to act.

A massive crowd had gathered to pray on his remains in line with the Islamic tradition only to be told to disperse because the body would not be interred until his cause of death was established and the culprits punished. The chiefs believed that since the Regional Security Council claimed that Mobila died a natural death, burying him would be tantamount to burying evidence of torture and murder. They told the youth that as a Muslim if he was buried, his body could not be exhumed and this would make it convenient for the security to hold on to their position that Mobila died a natural death, thus compromising investigations into the matter.

On December 31, 2004, Lieutenant Colonel W. Omane Agyekum's reply to the military enquiry report, claimed Mobila's death was accidental and that he fell from the guard room and broke his ribs. He claimed that as a supporter of the Andani, family in the Dagbon Chieftaincy dispute, Mobila's enemies could have inflicted harm on his body even before he was arrested and that no soldier should be blamed for it since there was no evidence that any soldier inflicted harm on him (The Insight Newspaper, February 17, 2010). Two soldiers were later jailed for his murder (Graphic Online, February 18, 2013).

Media Reportage of the Case

Both regional and national newspapers and radio stations gave detailed coverage on the event from the time of the murder, through to the botched burial, the burial itself and the arrest of the soldiers as well as the court proceedings and the convictions. Local radio stations like Radio Justice and Fiila FM devoted much of their news time and Talk-Show programmes to broadcast and discuss events connected to the story, especially the gory details of Mobila's murder, the initial botched attempt at interring him and the court proceedings. Opposition political parties, including the Convention Peoples' Party (CPP) organised press conferences and issued press statements calling on government to find justice for Mobila. These events were also adequately covered by the media. Radio Justice and Fiila FM however incurred the displeasure of government, leading to the resignation of two of their staff members (Mahama, 2020). The reporter at Radio Justice and another at Fiila FM both resigned as pressure was allegedly brought to bear on their employers to sack them. Some of the reporters who covered the event we spoke to, revealed the intimidating tactics used by the security agencies against them.

Media Censorship and Mobila Murder Reportage

Media reportage, as argued elsewhere in this paper was very prominent in exposing critical issues about the murder, the botched burial, the publication of the autopsy report and proceedings in court. The media however suffered censorship as techniques of intimidation, harassment and the use of national security interest were employed by the security against the media. Censorship occurs when information is scrutinized for reasons of suppressing or deleting objectionable material (Webster's dictionary) and the officially approved clampdown on means of expression (Moore, 2013). As argued above, two journalists lost their job because of their reportage on the Mobila murder case. A reporter at Radio Justice and Fiila FM both resigned as pressure was

brought to bear on their employers to sack them. This technique of harassment is wide spread in censorship literature across the world and epitomizes the fate of Gary Webb, a journalist in the U. S. who lost his job after his credibility was destroyed by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) for reporting American government's involvement in the distribution of cocaine to destroy the black community in the 'Dark Alliance' case in the 1990s (Taylor, 2009). Using national security interest as technique of censorship, security agencies in Tamale severally invited some media persons and complained that their reportage was a concern to some people that constituted a threat to the security of the area. A reporter said '*...they invited us severally and said what we were discussing some people were not happy about it...threat to the peace...*' (Interview, December 2022).

Another reporter intimated that:

...Because we were recording our programmes, any time they invited us we played the tape for them to listen and hear what we discussed...they said some people were uncomfortable with the subject we were discussing...(Interview, December 2022).

This harassment tactic is grounded in Bakir (2013) who hold the view that the intelligence officers use 'national security interest' argument to convince journalists not to publish unfavourable news.

The use of national security interest and harassment were arguably prominent in the reportage of the Issah Mobila murder case.

Social and Psychological Effects of Mobila Murder

The murder was a surprised murder since nobody in Tamale expected it hence its effects were not envisaged. In addition to physical and economic costs, the family often experienced psychological discomfort and social consequences.

The family's history, life situation, drive, incomes and method of dealing with the issues influenced the reaction of the people of Tamale and the extended family of Mobila. Strong emotions were brought about regarding what could happen to the family in future. For some people, an experience of crime against them may cause harm; for others it can be a very tragic experience that could lead to a traumatic crisis among members of the family. After Mobila's murder, two soldiers were convicted for the murder (Graphic Online, February 18, 2013) and their families suffered as a result. Our interactions with the culprit's family revealed a sense of insecurity, fear and anxiety and they suddenly ended up in a situation they did not anticipate. It was like a nightmare to the family of the culprits and anxiety took over an unnecessary amount of their mind, causing pain and the sense of worthlessness. Guilt and shame were intertwined and they have never been happy again.

For the murderers, they felt guilty about what had happened and what was believed to have caused or enabled the murder. In such situations, the usual thoughts might be: "If I hadn't murdered him,

“If I hadn’t listened to my superiors”. Arguably, the sense of shame prevented the two culprits from telling anyone about their situation after the conviction. It can be argued that once the blame game had started, it was difficult to seize. Although in their minds they could be saying that what had happened was not their fault, the shame was not going away. Such thoughts are part of a defensive mechanism. Denying the barbaric act was an experience of the psyche’s methods to ease pain.

The family of the deceased even though welcomed the conviction of the murderers, said that the sentence was lenient but did not appeal it. They suffered from depression, eating disorders or self-destructive behaviour. Suicidal thoughts and attempts were possible in the same way as the use of alcohol and drugs. The thought of the pain easing over time did not always bring comfort because after a traumatic experience, the wives and the children’s ability to shape the future was uncertain. Emotions of anger, aggression, depression and anguish may vary and resentment or revenge could poison their mind. The eldest son of Mobila said he was ‘...*contemplated committing suicide to avenge the death of his father*’ (Peacefmonline.com, February 19, 2013).

The bereaved family needs help as experiences like this could be bizarre. Support of the people of Tamale was massive. Memories related to the event may even confuse the family who arguably may not remember nearly anything about what had happened. Such happenings could paralyse performance and affect concentration and interest in normal everyday tasks.

Some resort to reading, listening to music or just being lonely as an escape route. Situations like this call for external support from loved ones whose intervention could help psychosocially, thereby affecting positively their ability to handle practical matters of concern to them. For militaries who take part in such barbaric acts, talk therapy which is highly recommendable is often not opted for, rather they choose to find comfort in drugs or alcohol, forgetting that “*Every blade has two edges; he who wounds with one wounds himself with the other*”

It is argued that apart from about two percent of individuals classified as “psychopaths,” who due to extreme personality flaws, are less worried about the act of killing, many soldiers are unprepared for the mission of ending other’s life circle. One of the military men when interviewed explained that: “*killing one person is enough to worry them with painful memories and nightmarish flashbacks*”. This he explained could render them physically ill that could last forever.

Contextualising opinion leadership in decision making, Cartano and Rogers, (1962) described opinion leaders as those who exercise personal influence upon people or individuals who seek advice and information from them. They receive and modify the information, (Lazarsfeld et al., 1948) and serve as source of social pressure to a particular choice, and are duty bound to reinforce that choice (Glock and Nicosia, 1963). Their influence on people is exemplified in the Mobila murder case, where opinion leaders, including youth chiefs of Tamale updated the youth on happenings surrounding the murder and mobilised them to reject attempt at interring the deceased until autopsy was performed. Their argument was that since the Northern Regional Security

Council had claimed that he died of stomach pains; and given that he was muslim and once buried his body would, in line with muslim custom, be very difficult to exhumed, burying him would amount to burying evidence of torture and killing.

As a source of social pressure and duty bound to reinforce it, the opinion leaders led the youth to defy attempts by government in conjunction with some members of the bereaved family to surreptitiously inter the remains of the deceased ahead of the release of the autopsy report. The situation disorganised the municipality and many people left the town to seek refuge in the nearby communities. Those in Tamale were leaving in fear and panic and there was hunger in the municipality since the food sellers refused to sell for fear of attacks from the military. One of the food sellers in an interview said:

“I was afraid to come out and sell my food since the military were still patrolling the streets in town, I did not know what would happen next and it was like the military was on a killing expedition...”

About 65% of teachers who were not natives of Tamale left the classrooms and travelled to their home town. The few who remained were not teaching. One of them said:

‘I will not risk my life in this situation, there is fear and panic throughout the Municipality why should I teach...I am on guard’...it is better to leave and come back later than to stay over and suffer the consequences...

It was observed that health workers also refused to go to work for the fear and panic that engulfed the entire municipality and this actually affected health delivery and retarded the growth of the municipality.

The role of opinion leaders as modifiers of information and source of social pressure contributed significantly to the successful burial of the deceased, and the delivery of justice. Given the initial claim by the Regional Security Council that *the deceased died of stomach pains*, if opinion leaders had not modified the information that burying him would mean burying the evidence, the Council could have held on to its claim that he died a natural death. The case of murder would therefore have been difficult to prove given that muslims, in line with Islamic tradition, very hardly exhume bodies once they are buried. We argue that the role of opinion leaders in the Mobila murder issue was critical in finding justice for him and this arguably gave the family partial satisfaction.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The relationship between the military and civilians remains scarcely encouraging as found in this article. It is clear that in a bid to get favour in media coverage, the military often adopted censorship techniques against the media. Opinion leaders’ role in facilitating delivery of justice through

influencing of pressure groups has demonstrated that thesis on opinion leadership in the two-step-flow hypothesis is still relevant.

The accoutrements and insignia worn by the army personnel along with their uniform reveal a lot about the military personnel. These accessories of the military, including the military uniform, boots caps, badges, headgear, inscriptions and colours if not managed well will continue to pose danger to the civilian-military relationship. This is because their sight provokes fear in the eyes of the public. Huntington (1957) thoughts on military civilian relations need a complete explanation to the military. Government should also sensitise civilians on Huntington's (1957) thoughts in order to ensure a healthy military civilian relationship in Ghana.

For cordial and effective relationship between the civilian population and the military and to obviate any civilian manhandling in military custody, constant lectures and dialogue on civilian relationship with the military should always be encouraged.

The military's handling or mishandling of suspects has again been brought to the fore in this study. Right to life of the individual is a guaranteed right and to facilitate this, the powers of the police to handle suspects should be given more priority in African nations, including Ghana so as to obviate occurrences of unprofessional conduct of the military in the handling of civilian suspects since in many instances, including in this study, suspects are often tortured to death. The police should therefore be more equipped with the necessary personnel and logistics to carry out their mandated responsibilities.

References

- Adeakin, I. (2016). *The military and human rights violations in post-1999 Nigeria: Assessing the problems and prospects of effective internal enforcement in an era of insecurity*. Taylor and Francis online <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10246029.2016.1148064?journalCode=raser20>
- Africa News. (2021). *Two protestors shot dead in Ghana* <https://www.africanews.com/2021/06/30/two-protesters-shot-dead-in-ghana/>
- Agyeman-Duah, B. (2002). *Civil-military relations in Ghana's Fourth Republic*. Accra: Centre for Democratic Development
- Akdag, İ. (2006). *Civilian-military relations in the Argentinean democratization (1983-1995)* (Master's thesis, Middle East Technical University).
- Asante, R. (2020). *Democratic Civil Military Bargain: Examining the Ghanaian Experience, Civil Wars*. Sage.

- Bennett, W. L. & Manheim, J. (2006). *The one-step flow of communication*: The Annals 608, 213-232.
- Bremont, M. (1988). *Civilian-Military Relations in the Context of National Security Policymaking*. *Naval War College Review*, 41(1), 27-32.
- Broeck, J. & den, V. (2021). *Conflict Motives in Kenya's North Rift Region: International Peace*. Information Service, Google scholar.
- Bruneau, T. C., & Goetze, R. B. (2006). *Civilian-military relations in Latin America*. *Military Review*, 86(5), 67.
- Cartano, D.G. & Rogers, E.M. (1962). *Methods of measuring opinion leadership*: The Public Opinion Quarterly: Vol. 26(3), pp.435-441
- Chaudhry, S. A. & Irshad, W. (2013). *Opinion Leadership and Its Role in Buyer Decision Making*: Academy of Contemporary Research Journal: Volume 2, Issue 1, 16-23. Accessed January 19, 2017
- Citi News (2023): *Nuaso Military Brutality. 2 Discharged, 6 Others Still at Hospital*
<https://www.theghanareport.com/nuaso-military-brutality-2-discharged-6-others-still-at-hospital/>
- Cloud, J., & Clarke, K. C. (1999). *Through a shutter darkly: the tangled relationships between civilian, military and intelligence remote sensing in the early US space program*. *Secrecy and knowledge production*, 36-56.
- Day, D. A. (1996). *Invitation to struggle: the history of civilian-military relations in space*. *Exploring the Unknown: Selected Documents in the History of the US Civil Space Program*, 2.
- Dekmejian, R. H. (2021). *Egypt and Turkey: The Military in the Background*. In *Soldiers, Peasants, and Bureaucrats* pp. 28-51. Routledge.
- Feaver, P. D. (1999). *Civil-military relations*. *Annual review of political science*, 2(1), 211-241.
- Ghanaian Chronicle in Modern Ghana.com (2010). *Mobila was tortured to death*.
<https://www.modernghana.com/news/356964/mobila-was-tortured-to-death.html>
- Glock, C. Y. and Nicosia, F. M. (2003). *Sociology and the study of consumers*; Journal of Advertising Research, 3 21-27
- Graphic Online (2013). *Mobila murder trail-two to serve 30 years in Prison*
<https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/mobila-murder-trial-two-to-serve-30-years-in-prison.html>
- Holsti, O. R. (1998). *A Widening Gap between the US Military and Civilian Society? Some Evidence, 1976-96*. *International Security*, 23(3), 5-42.

Horowitz, D. (1983). *Israel's war in Lebanon: New patterns of strategic thinking and civilian-military relations*. *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 6(3), 83-102.

Human Rights Watch (2021). *Nigeria: Officials Indicted in Abuses of Protesters*. Routledge.

[https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/11/19/nigeria-officials-indicted-abuses-protesters#:~:text=\(Abuja\)%20E2%80%93%20A%20judicial%20panel,Human%20Rights%20Watch%20said%20today.](https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/11/19/nigeria-officials-indicted-abuses-protesters#:~:text=(Abuja)%20E2%80%93%20A%20judicial%20panel,Human%20Rights%20Watch%20said%20today.)

Hutchful, E. (2006). *Ghana In W. Omitoogun & E. Hutchful (Eds.), Budgeting for the military sector in Africa: The process and mechanisms of control* (pp. 72–80). Oxford, England.

IHRDA (2021). *Victims of military brutality sue Ghana before ECOWAS Court for remedy*

<https://www.ihrda.org/2021/11/victims-of-military-brutality-sue-ghana-before-ecowas-court-for-remedy/#:~:text=Banjul%2C%205%20November%202021%3A%20IHRDA,treatment%20by%20Ghanaian%20military%20officers.>

Jan V. Broeck (2021). *Conflict motives in Kenya's North Rift Region: International Peace Information Service*, Google scholar

Joy News (2020). *Techiman South Election Day Shooting: The incident that led to death of persons at collation centre*

<https://www.myjoyonline.com/techiman-south-election-day-shooting-the-incident-that-led-to-death-of-persons-at-collation-centretechiman-south-election-day-shooting-the-incident-that-led-to-death-of-persons-at-collation-centre/>

Khorram-Manesh, A. et al (2022). *Civilian-military collaboration before and during Covid-19 pandemic A systematic review and a pilot survey among practitioners*. *Sustainability*, 14(2) 624.

Lazarsfeld, L. Berelson, B. & Gaudet, H. (1948). *The people's choice: How the voter makes up his mind in a presidential campaign*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Mahama S. S. (2020). *Propaganda Censorship and the Media: An Ethnographic Study of Ghana Dagbon Chieftaincy Crisis-2002-2016*. PhD Thesis: Bangor University, United Kingdom.

Mastroianni, G. R. (2011). *The person–situation debate: Implications for military leadership and civilian–military relations*. *Journal of Military Ethics*, 10(1), 2-16.

Nisbet, M & Kotcher, J. E. (2009). *A Two-Step Flow of Influence? Opinion-Leader Campaigns on Climate Change*: Science Communication: SAGE Publications: Volume 30

- Ngoma, N. (2006). *Civil Military Relations in Africa: Navigating the Unchartered Waters*. Africa Security Review
- Oriola, T. B. (2022). *Nigerian Troops in the War against Boko Haram: The Civilian–Military Leadership Interest Convergence Thesis*. *Armed Forces & Society*,
- Taylor, P. M. (2003). *Munitions of the mind: A History of Propaganda from the Ancient World to the Present day: 3rd edition*: Manchester University Press.
- Peacefmonline.com (2013). *I will commit suicide to bombing to avenge my father, Issah Mobila Son*. <https://www.peacefmonline.com/pages/local/social/201302/156656.php>
- Richard Asante (2020). *Democratic Civil-Military Bargain: Examining the Ghanaian Experience*, *Civil Wars*, 22:2-3, 333-352, DOI: 10.1080/13698249.2020.1730641 To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13698249.2020.1730641>
- Ridenti, M. (2018). *The Debate over Military (or Civilian-Military?) Dictatorship in Brazil in Historical Context*. *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 37(1), 33-42.
- Snider, D. M., Priest, R. F., & Lewis, F. (2001). *The civilian-military gap and professional military education at the recommissioning level*. *Armed Forces & Society*, 27(2), 249-272.
- Stansberry, K. (2015). *Identifying and engaging online influencers through the social web*: Prism 12(1): <http://www.prismjournal.org/homepage.htm>
- Te Kulve, H. & Smit, W. A. (2003). *Civilian–military co-operation strategies in developing new technologies*. *Research policy*, 32(6), 955-970.
- The Insight Newspaper in Peaceffonline.com (2010), *Mobila’s death; was there a cover up?* <https://www.peacefmonline.com/pages/local/news/201002/38553.php>
- Turcotte. J. York, C. Irving J. Scholl R. M. and Pingree, R. J. (2015): *News Recommendations from Social Media Opinion Leaders: Effects on Media Trust and Information Seeking*: *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, pp.520–535, International Communication Association
- Weeks, G. (2012). *Civilian Expertise and Civilian–Military Relations in Latin America*. *Latin American Policy*, 3(2), 164-173