Security Implications of Using the Military in Maintaining Peace through Internal Security Operations, a Case of Central Equatoria State—Juba

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Abstract

The research studies security implications for military personnel maintaining peace through internal security operations in Central Equatoria State (CES), Juba, South Sudan. The overarching objective of the study is to examine the continued rising insecurity despite the deployment of Military personnel and other Law enforcement agencies to suppress internal security operations in CES. The research assesses the type of threats that compelled the deployment of the military to control internal security operations in CES; explores civilians' experiences and interactions with the military personnel, executing internal security operations and their propensity to influence insecurity; and establishes the impact of using military combat orientations to suppress violence and quell armed groups in CES. The research utilizes mixed research methodology, such as qualitative and quantitative data. The study also reviewed the literature and included the Separation Theory by Huntington. The study reveals significant threats, as explained by empirical statistics outcomes from the key indicators such as unabated inter-ethnic conflicts fueled by warlords (13%), incapacity of the police (73%), presence of militias and violence meant to undermine government (9%), political conflicts (8%), and generals who were not well compensated (6%), and illegitimate military (26%). These empirical data signify that civilian experience life threats with the military personnel executing internal security operations. The life threat includes human rights abuses such as; deaths, rape cases, gunshot injuries, burning down houses and corporal punishments. Finally, the research provides recommendations.

Keywords

1. Introduction

Sovereign states in the contemporary international system are expected to guarantee peace and security to all its citizens and territory (Kenney & Dumm, 2010; Mueller, 2008). Apparently, this has been a challenge to many states especially in the developing countries. Globally, the emerging new trend is the increasing requirement in the ability to safeguard states from both internal and external security threats faced by society today that are apparently more complex than in the past. In line with this global security demand, many states have mooted both regional and National security strategies such as in Sweden, Norway, Poland, the UK, Germany and the US aimed at mitigating these challenges (Derblom, 2015). According to Derblom (2015) some of the global security challenges that the security sector grapples with especial in the developed world include; organized crime, cyber space threats and democracy and governance deficit amongst other challenges.

Conversely, the security sector challenges cited in most developing countries include, low security sector capacities, proliferation of small arms, governance crises, challenges of social reconciliation, illegal renditions of regime opponents, militarization of the public, insurgency, targeted ethnic killings and unprofessional security agencies amongst other challenges (Aeby, 2018). However, the recent and emerging trend in most developing countries that has escaped the attention of most scholars is the use of the military in internal security operations. Whereas states worldwide are responsible for protecting their citizens against external aggression and internal violence, the first responsibility is charged to the military; in contrast, the second one falls on the police.

The emerging trend in some parts of the world, and pertinently in Africa is the rising use of the military to quell internal conflicts and disorder. This is largely due to the inability of the police to contain violent conflicts, particularly in areas where armed groups are active. Arguably, this has been associated with increased insecurity and other atrocities that boarders on human rights violations. There are few documented studies that have tried to explore this area, that this study assumes have a boomerang effect on the security itself, hence the rationale of this study.

Using the military for internal security operations (ISOPs), otherwise known as military aid to civil authority (MACA), comes with its own challenges. One relates to the training of military personnel, which is not suited for use in an internal role in society. The orientation of the military is focused on defense, war and the infliction of collective violence, unlike the police whose main function is law enforcement (Harris, 2003; Weiss, 2012). Where they work in collaborative units, or as a hybrid security force with the police and other civilian agencies, the military tends to dominate. Typically, this occurs in states that have no constabulary forces or gendarmeries. Hybrid forces consisting of joint police and military units create several problems in terms of command and control, the nature of operations, and organisational culture. Several scholars have pointed out that

numerous difficulties emerge when personnel of different combat orientation strategies, tactics, training and instructions have to work together as a team (Crelinsten, 1998; O'Hanlon, 2000; Weiss, 2012). There are several other concerns pertaining to the internal use of the military in society. Key among these are the military's excessive use of force, militarism and the militarisation of society, as well as the restriction of civil liberties (Odoemene, 2012). Often, the problems arise because military training and the combat orientation of soldiers are not suited for crowd control and law enforcement purposes (Weiss, 2012). In fact, Weiss (2012: p. 462) argues that while it is "capable of controlling crowds, the military still remains a force to fight wars, which is very distinct from the police." Typically, this is because, "the most core competency of soldiers is skill in inflicting pain, killing people, and breaking things".

Given the incompatibility of this with internal security duties in society, it accounts for numerous challenges when the military is deployed in an internal role, especially when this entails the use of force. Nonetheless, as Enloe (1977), Dasuki (2013) and Okoli & Orinya (2013) argue, the state often has no choice but to use the military in this way to protect its citizens against external and internal "enemies" where they threaten social and political stability. According to this study use of the military to for instance quell violence may end up exacerbating and not ameliorating insecurity. This has been the phenomenon in Northern, West, Central and Eastern African counties, including the country South Sudan.

The Security situation in South Sudan and across Central Equatoria State deteriorated just two years after independence when political tensions among key South Sudanese leaders erupted into violence in December 2013. The political dispute triggered the crisis in the leadership of Sudanese People Liberation Movement (SPLM) party and. Then it turned to ethnic conflict that overlapped with preexisting ethnic and political grievances, sparking armed clashes and targeted ethnic killings in the capital city, Juba. Consequently, this led to a state of lawlessness in South Sudan after the Security Sector lost control over the monopoly of the use of force to maintain order.

Hundreds of civilians died in South Sudan ensuing attackers reportedly from security operatives just because the victim is either a Nuer or a Dinka. Mass movement of civilians to United Nations Internal Displacement Camps was seen across South Sudan, Central Equatoria State as several senior Nuer military commanders, subsequently declared a rebellion. The Security situation in South Sudan worsened as fighting continues unabated for more than 20 months while regional mediators made halting progress in peace negotiations under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The warring parties periodically recommitted themselves to a January 2014 cessation of hostilities deal, but repeatedly violated it. In May 2014, they agreed to form a transitional government, but failed to agree on its composition and responsibilities. After missing multiple deadlines set by regional leaders to sign a deal and under threat of international sanctions, including a proposed arms embargo, the war-

ring parties reached an agreement in August 2015. The President of Republic of South Sudan signed the deal, with reservation, more than a week after Machar, calling the agreement divisive and an attack on South Sudan's sovereignty. The first peace agreement didn't bring stability but increased instability and insecurity especially after Dr. Riek Machar arrived in Juba and a fight erupted again in State House (J1) in July 2016 (De Waal, 2017).

De Waal (2017) argued that although the Challenges of Security sector in maintaining peace in South Sudan Central Equatoria State is mostly shaped by the pathetic first history of independent of South Sudan, the Challenges of the security sector became more critical after the defection of the Sudan People Liberation Army (SPLA) former deputy chief of General Staff for Logistics, Gen. Thomas Cirilo. The latter's defection caused a severer division within the security sector in Central Equatoria State. Many security operatives defected while others remain in the city to sabotage the government using on road ambushes and violence armed robberies in Central Equatoria State and Eastern Equatoria State (De Waal, 2017).

Previous other studies, that examined the internal use of the military to maintain peace such as those conducted by Dode (2012), Omede (2012), Okoli & Orinya (2013) and Dambazau (2014), highlighted military abuse, but do not evaluate whether the military decreases or exacerbates insecurity. To fill this void, this study examines the internal use of the military in Central Equatoria State and Eastern Equatoria State, Juba. This study will try to investigate the experiences of civilians with the military in Central Equatoria State and Eastern Equatoria State, Juba to understand whether the South Sudan state exercises adequate civil control over the use of coercive force by the military, and how this affects the security of citizens. Lange & Balian (2008) argue that the use of coercive force by states perpetuates insecurity by inciting violence, especially where there is regular abuse of power and where the liberties of citizens are eroded. Clearly, it undermines civil-military relations (CMR) when the government fails to curb the military when they act unprofessionally or beyond their legal mandate. It is on this back ground that this study intends to assess the security implication of military deployment to undertake internal security operations in peace building, a case study of Central Equatoria State, Juba.

2. Problem Analysis

Even though the Southern Sudan government has put in place a vibrant security sector to deal with the problem of insecurity in the country, serious crimes and targeted killings are still increasing especially in South Sudan Central Equatoria State Juba. As has been the case with several African Countries, the government of South Sudan has resorted to using the military to undertake internal security operations to suppress violence and enforce law and order. Despite this, insecurity is still persistent and has been on the increase than decrease trend. Arguably, this has been associated with military's combat orientation that this study as-

sumes is ill-suited to deal with law enforcement, hence exacerbate rather than ameliorate insecurity. There are few documented studies that have tried to explore this problem, that this study assumes have a boomerang effect on security itself, hence the rationale of this study. Hence, this study attempts to bridge the gap by advancing the theoretical debate beyond the traditional focus of military interventions to act in internal role of law enforcement for which it neither trained nor specializes in. This is important because it will provide a means to examine how the interaction affects the professional stature of the military.

3. Methodology

This study utilized descriptive survey design that deployed random sampling and utilized Questionnaires to enlist respondents into the study. Descriptive research involves assessment of attitudes and opinions from individuals, organizations and procedures. The study comprised of 195 public respondents and 5 Key Informants (senior officers from security Sector Agencies) who purposefully selected to inform the study based on their knowledge and experience of security issues in South Sudan. Interview method was used to collect data.

4. Results and Discussion

Type of Threats that Compelled the Deployment of the Military to Undertake Internal Security Operations

The first objective established the types of threats that compelled the deployment of the military to undertake internal security operations. These included; weak agencies of the justice system (14%), Youth violence aligned to ethnic groups (13%), Violence out of ethnic marginalization (13%), failure of the security sector reform (11%), presence of militias undermining government (9%), political conflicts (8%), Uncompensated generals seeking to control the territory (6%). The results reveal that many of these factors are connected to the history of the interrupted state formation in Sudan where South Sudan was part. The results are presented in Figure 1.

The above findings were corroborated by Key informant's findings. For example, a respondent, stated,

> "South Sudan is experiencing a wide range of issues which influence the deployment of the Military to carry out policing activities. For example, South Sudan has a problem of hundreds of generals who cannot be paid well, but who command a lot of influence and want to control their regions. In addition police to incapacity, this is exacerbated by cattle rustling, the police corruption, ethnic violence and heavily armed militia (Interview in Juba, on 30th March, 2022).

Another official who was also interviewed stated that;

> "The police as an institution are very weak and the training is not that good given that South Sudan is a young state, the same police have to handle a

society which has ethnic violence with guns all over the place. Now how do you leave issues of ethnic violence and militias in a state which has a failed security sector reform. The problem is that even the army is not profession-al" (Interview held in Juba, 15th March 2022).

The above finding lends support to what was described by other scholars as new wars with capacity to plunge this country into unending warfare (Hoffman, 2007). The implication here is rise of new wave of hybrid wars that may lead to state collapse.

Civilians' Experiences with the Military while Executing Internal Security Operations and Propensity to Influence Insecurity

The second objective established civilians' experiences with the military while executing internal security operations and its propensity to influence insecurity. As shown in **Figure 2**, the military killed innocent civilians (18%) raped women (16%), shot and injured people (15%), harassed people (12%), burnt people's houses (10%), and tortured people (14%).

Factors that compel deployment of the military to do Internal security operations
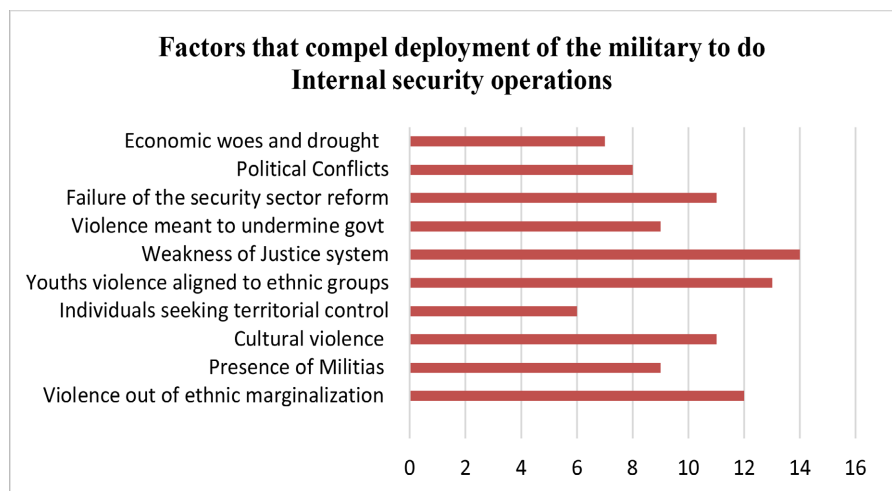
Source: Primary Data, 2022.

Figure 1. Showing the inducing the use of the military in internal security operations.

Description of the Military Attrocities
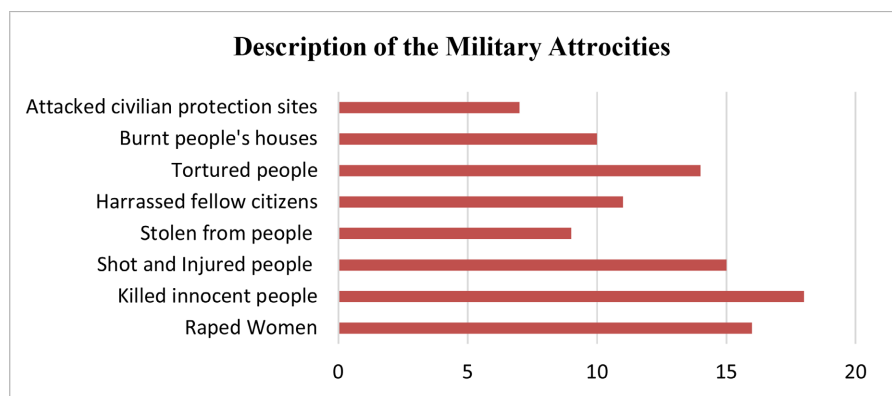
Source: Primary Data, 2022.

Figure 2. Military atrocities to civilians.

Other military abuses include; corporal punishment (29%). Typical cases of corporal punishment experiences of the army in quelling civilian protests and violence, include; beating by use of sticks or batons (21%), poking with front of gun with sword (9%), kicking with soldier boots (18%), rolling on ground and in mud (10%), hitting with gun butt (12%), and frog jumping (13%). Typical cases of military abuses are presented in Figure 3.

As a result of civilian abuses by the military cooperation and information sharing with the military was put in jeopardy as many people often distance themselves from the military. The results also indicated a lost legitimacy. The military will lose a source of information. In his words one of the officials who was interviewed argued that:

"…when you hear citizens say that they do not want to share information with the security personnel then, you know that there is a problem with the security personnel, sometimes it indicates that they are fearful of the security personnel or the security personnel is not acceptable and many times there is often the thinking that the security personnel are very corrupt. Security personnel will hold person to get money out of them or relatives will be asked to give money to secure their person. Sometimes it is ethnic problems. Once people keep away from security, intelligence is lost" (Interview held in Juba, 14th April, 2022).

The above finding lends support to findings by Elbadawi and Sambanis (2000) that when civilians feel their security is threatened by belligerents and the coercive force of the state, they are likely to resort to arms, or join armed groups whom they feel can guarantee their security. The implication here is that this situation may plunge the state into a conflict trap of spiraling violence.

Impact of using Military Combat Orientations to Suppress Violence and Quell Armed Groups on Society in South Sudan Central Equatoria State Juba

The last objective established the impact of using military combat orientations
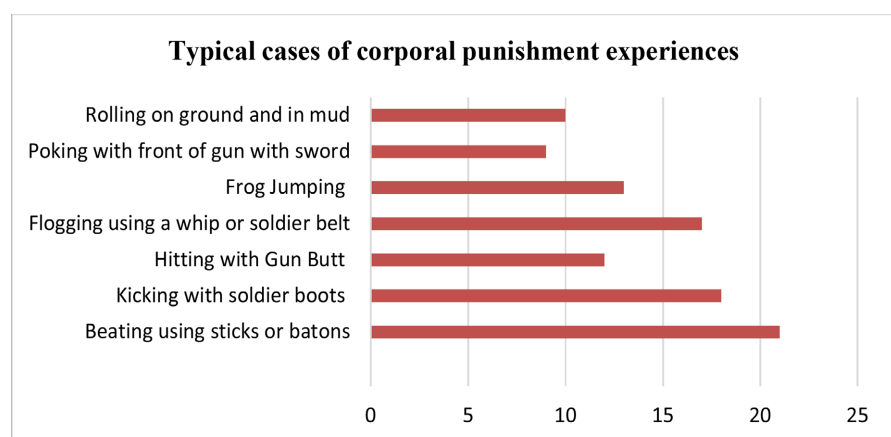
Source: Primary Data, 2022

Figure 3. Showing the typical cases of corporal punishment experiences by citizens.

to suppress violence and quell armed groups in South Sudan Central Equatorial State Juba. The majority (26%) indicated that they would see the military as illegitimate. Additionally, 12% of the respondents, will act violently against the military, while 14% would get used to the military deployment and seek ways to deal with the situation, 16%, will form or ally with armed groups to protect themselves, and 21% indicated that they will form ethnic based militias once the military targeted them as an ethnic group. The implication of the above finding is strained Civil-Military relations that would lead to civilian contestation, confrontation and militarization leading to a failed state. This lends support to findings by Foucault (1978) that confrontation could be moderately used in the form of contestation or resistance and sometimes revolutionary connotation which involves the use of threats, force, or/and violence (Verweijen, 2015).

5. Findings

The study has established major threats that compelled the deployment of the military to undertake internal security operations included; unabated inter-ethnic conflicts fueled by warlords, Incapacity of the police, Failure of the security sector reform and cultural practices, presence of militias and violence meant to undermine government, and the generals who were not well compensated and therefore demanding influence in their regions seeking to control of territory.

Further, the study has established serious human rights abuses perpetrated by the Military which included; killing of innocent civilians, Rapes, Gunshot injuries, burnt civilian houses, torturing innocent civilians, and corporal punishment meted on innocent civilians that included beating, kicking, and hitting civilians with the soldier's boot, or floggings using a whip or a military belt.

The study also established the impact of using military combat orientations to suppress violence and quell armed groups on society in South Sudan Central Equatoria State Juba. The implication here was strained civil-military relations that would lead to civilian contestation, confrontation and militarization leading to a failed state.

6. Recommendations

The government should form a national commission to assess all the threats that compelled the deployment of the military to undertake internal security operations and come up with appropriate solutions.

Secondly, the government should urgently capacity build the police to effectively take over their constitutional mandate of internal security operations to lessen the civilians' pain under the military hands. This will avert the nation from being one of the failed states.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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