

Public Opinion of Government Security Forces, Career Ambitions and Graduate's
Willingness to Join Government Security Forces in Uganda


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November, 2022

Declaration

I, Nabulya Ritah, hereby declare that this Dissertation titled “Public Opinion of Armed Forces, Career Ambitions and Graduate’s Willingness to Join Government Security Forces in Uganda” is my original work and that it has never been submitted to any University, college or institution of higher learning for any academic award.

Signature: 

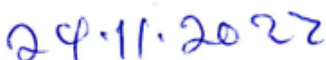
Date: 23/Nov/2022

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Approval

This Dissertation titled "Public Opinion of Armed Forces, Career Ambitions and Graduate's Willingness to Join Government Security Forces in Uganda" has been under my supervision and is ready for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor.

Signature: 

Date: 

Dr. Martin Baluku (PhD)

Supervisor

Dedication

This research Dissertation is dedicated to my parents, siblings and my friends who have been my full-time support in my studies.

Acknowledgment

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge the Almighty God for his grace, strength and protection during my academic struggle.

I thank my supervisor Dr. Martin Baluku for accepting to spend his valuable time to supervise my work especially for his support and guidance that made this successful.

In a special way I express my sincere gratitude to my family who have been my rock through my entire academic journey; my dearest mother Ms Grace Nasejje, my father the late Leo Lubowa, my brothers Kintu Ronald, Lubowa John Bosco, Ssenabulya Robert and Julius Kyazze, my sisters Sylvia Nakintu and Rose Nannono, for the financial and emotional support they have always shown. I truly appreciate.

I am also very grateful to my best friend Phionah Kigozi for being with me through the thick and thin of my academic journey, and last but not least, my classmates with special recognition to Uwineza Sandra for being the best study partner, and also my lecturers who have always been there in my academic journey at this mighty school to help me accomplish my goal.

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between public opinion of government security forces, career ambitions and graduate's willingness to join government security forces in Uganda. The study intended to achieve the following objectives; to examine whether there is a relationship between public opinion of government security forces and career ambitions among graduates. To find out whether career ambitions and graduates' willingness to join government security forces are significantly related among graduates. To examine whether public opinion of government security forces and graduates' willingness to join government security forces are significantly related. Table 7 showed that there is a significant relationship between public opinion of armed forces and graduate's willingness to join government security forces, there is a significant relationship between career ambition and graduate's willingness to join government security forces, and that there is a significant positive relationship between public opinion of armed forces and career ambition. Findings implied that the general public in Uganda held negative perceptions and impressions of the armed forces especially about human rights abuse and their professionalism which has greatly affected how graduates perceive the armed forces through expression of low interests in joining Ugandan security agencies despite the unemployment rate in Uganda. In conclusion, the results and recommendations will act as a 'steppingstone' for the direction and future of armed forces and policing at large in Uganda and if implemented, could produce better armed forces and citizens relations in the short term and with further research, in the long term. It was recommended that Uganda should establish an Army and Citizens Networking system in the country to bring a working connection between the public and the armed forces.

Chapter One

Introduction

Background

The modern democratic military cannot exist without support of the public. The public must be convinced that the military serves the nation's interests, and in case of need the military is capable of defending these interests and that the public can rely on it. It must be also convinced that budget allocated to the military is adequate, and money is spent legitimately. Public opinion in democratic society has after all the decisive and final control function. Its influence to the military is exercised not only through elected representatives but also directly. The expression of civilian control from the side of the public is its confidence in the military, and among others, the prestige of military profession in society.

At present trend of strengthening social ties of the military family prevails. Spouses of professional soldiers are being less dependent upon the military and they seek their jobs outside the military environment. The military profession is in stage of considerable changes and some specializations face disintegration of "esprit de corps"; the military experts identify themselves more to their civilian peers than to a group of professional soldiers. The higher importance is given to the possibility of the professional knowledge transfer into civilian positions. This trend will gain in relation to enlargement of category of professional noncommissioned officers who will serve in the military only during the relatively short time of their active life.

The graduate students are a crucial human resource for promoting the development of a country. They are also changers, in the field socio-economic and technological innovation. The present graduate students have possessed certain career goals, which seem to be strong desire and achieve something high or great. According to Supper (1999) says that the career ambitions which refers to setting of goals, objectives and achieves desired Profession or aspirations of the graduate students. The graduate students' career ambitions includes,

teaching, Clerical jobs, Business, Administrative, technical, defense & security and legal services. According to Kim (2004), Domenico (2007) the development of individuals' career ambitions could be influenced by gender, socioeconomic status, family support, parental expectations and cultural values. The graduate students' ambitions are generally higher than their expectations, but it is ambitions that tend to decline as children mature into young adults, in response to a growing awareness of the world (Armstrong, P. I. and Crombie, G. 2000). There is growth in the demand for analytical and managerial work like that of scientists, engineers, attorneys, executives and perhaps an economist. Services workers: such as security guards, truck drivers, housekeepers, waiters, salespeople etc. White collar jobs like that of secretaries, bookkeepers, insurance adjusters, bank tellers, telephone receptionists has collapsed. These changes have resulted in a polarization of work the hollowing out of the distribution of job tasks (Agarwal and Pawan: 2006).

In December 2015, the importance of engaging young women and men in shaping lasting peace was recognized by the Security Council in a ground breaking resolution on Youth, Peace and Security. Resolution 2250 urges Member States to increase inclusive representation of young people in institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflict and for countering violent extremism and calls for an increase in political, financial, technical and logistical support the participation of youth in peace efforts and to take account of their needs.

Problem Statement

The perception and relationship that exist between citizens and the government security forces like the Army, The Police and Local Units are vital issues that need to be addressed here in Uganda. The strained and turbulent relations between both parties have created the need for improved relationship and changes to the institution's practices and policies. Together citizens and these institutions are key stakeholders in the different

communities and they both contribute towards an important role in providing and maintaining the highest levels of safety, security and welfare. Failure to provide safety, security and welfare often results in community decay and citizens' negative perception of the police may result in loss of lives and liberty due to lack of communication and networking. If citizens of Uganda most especially young people who have graduated have a negative perception of the forces, it is more likely for the strategies of these forces like joining them after school to become weakened and elements such as communication, transparency and accountability might collapse.

Purpose

To examine the relationship between public opinion of government security forces, career ambitions and graduate's willingness to join government security forces in Uganda.

Objectives

1. To examine whether there is a relationship between public opinion of government security forces and career ambitions among graduates.
2. To find out whether career ambitions and graduates' willingness to join government security forces are significantly related among graduates.
3. To examine whether public opinion of government security forces and graduates' willingness to join government security forces are significantly related.

Scope

Geographically, the study took place at Makerere University which is found along Sir Apollo road on Makerere Hill and the area was chosen because of its biggest number of graduate students it puts out every academic year.

Conceptually, Government security forces were created by the law or Act of the Parliament to ensure security and safety in Uganda and around its boundaries; these include

the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF), the Uganda Police, intelligence organisations such as the Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence, and internal and external security organisations. These agencies and organisations are governed by laws and regulations.

Career ambition is regarded as a proxy for students' future career success. Both internal locus of control and ambition lead to proactive behaviors that are relevant for employability and consequently result in securing a sustainable job.

Significance

This study may play a vital role by making contributions towards filling the deficiency 'gap' in literature associated to citizen's perception of government security forces in Uganda. This research may be considered relevant and necessary due to the increasing amount of negative cases mounted against government security forces like the police institution made by citizens because of poor levels of service, unnecessary use of coercion and officers' involvement in delinquent activities. As a result, this poses questions on the efficacy of these institutions and the need for reform in the institution.

The results of the study may highlight strengths and weaknesses relative to particular variables that influence the relationship between citizens and the government security forces. These could assist citizens, the police and local government to establish working relationships in an effort to assist each other, the creation of new policies and the updating of existing policies which could forge safer communities, reduce/eliminate fear of crime and promote better citizen and police engagement in Uganda.

The findings and conclusions of this study may provide much better insight and understanding of people's experiences and expectations relating to citizens engagement with government security forces. Positive social change and adjustments are necessary in a society where perception/perspectives create strained and fragile communication and relationships between citizens and these which could prevent or interrupt human growth and economic

development.

This study might have contributed positively towards social changes by highlighting actions that could be implemented by stakeholders to develop and maintain transparency, accountability and engagement that could promote positive relations between citizens and the government security forces leading to positive and favorable perceptions.

Conceptual Framework

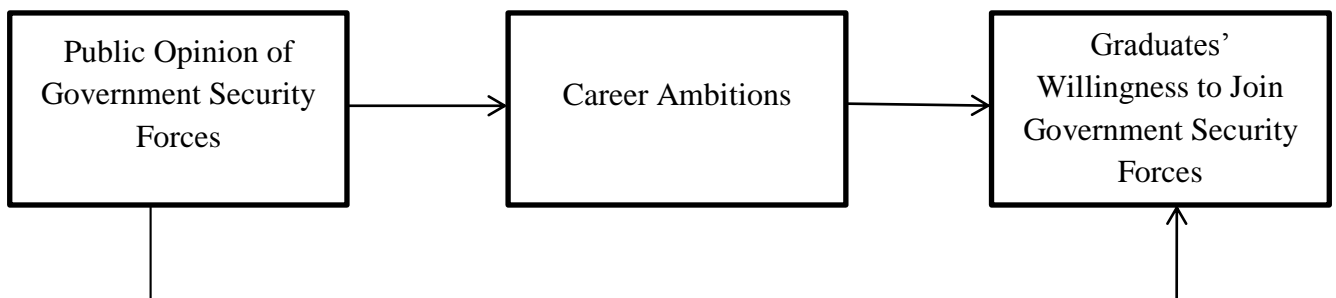


Figure 1; Conceptual framework showing the relationship between public opinion of government security forces, career ambitions and graduate's willingness to join government security forces

Public opinion of armed forces directly influences graduates' willingness to join the armed forces. Career Ambitions affects the relationship between public opinion of armed forces and graduates' willingness to join the armed forces.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter focused on reviewing the existing literature on the variables to be studied. It paid particular attention to the relationships between these variables, that is, examining the relationship between public opinion of armed forces and graduates' willingness to join government security forces, career ambition and graduates' willingness to join government security forces, and lastly, public opinion of armed forces and career ambition. It ended by formulating appropriate hypotheses of the study.

Public Opinion of Armed Forces and Graduates' Willingness to Join Armed Forces

Using a multi-university survey, the study assessed public perception of the Ugandan armed forces across a number of analytical aspects. Evidence from multivariate regression analysis suggests that in addition to impacting attitudes toward the military, demographic and political characteristics may also moderate the effects of age, tribe, gender, and political affiliation (Curt Nichols, 2015). The majority of the populace of the nation generally has a low opinion of the armed forces. There are groups who contend that the forces solely work to forward the agendas of the politicians currently in office; some claim that the forces treat some tribes in the nation preferentially while tormenting those who do not.

Literacy levels are another important aspect that has a big impact on how the general public feels about the armed services. According to the Ugandan example, a large portion of the populace thinks that enlisting in the military is only for people who have little or no education. That does not mean, however, that the armed forces do not continue to enjoy strong support from a sizeable portion of the same populace. According to Lindy (2014), the general population is not only indifferent to the military but also lacks information about military issues.

The public's interest in the army and awareness of defense issues were both low in previous decades, but in recent years, an empirically supported transformation has taken place. Military spending is now regarded by the people as a legitimate and desirable expense of the state, and the defense department is no longer seen as a reserve for the state budget. According to the Ministry of Defence's 2016 study on the army and security in the Czech Republic, there is also support for the introduction of military training and an apparent rise in public confidence in the armed forces. Public faith in the army is very high. Over 70% of respondents said they have faith in the army (Frank Libor, 2017).

There is little information available about how the armed forces are viewed globally, but survey results from Europe show that the public generally supports the armed services. Following the United States were Great Britain and Canada in terms of reported favorable attitudes. When the UK public was polled on the military, more than eight out of ten people said they had a high or very high view of the armed services. Public opinion of the armed forces was consistently higher than other jobs across countries (Alyson., et al., 2017). The responses show minor gender differences, with men slightly more likely to express a very high opinion of the armed forces while women are slightly more likely to say they have a great deal of respect for them. Attitudes do differ slightly by age group, though, with 73% of respondents aged 18 to 34 saying they have a high or very high opinion of the armed forces, which is lower than the 91% of respondents aged 65 and over saying the same. In fact, the percentage of people in the oldest age group who report having a very high opinion 50% is almost twice as high as the number of people in the youngest age group 30%.

With age, the public's favorable perception of the armed services is seen to rise consistently, while the relatively small percentages expressing a negative attitude that is neither high nor low diminish from 21% to 6%. Among respondents ages 18 to 34, 7 out of

10 say they appreciate the military. Another group less likely to enlist are the young people, who show less excitement than their elders (as opposed to virtually eight out of ten in the two oldest age groups) (Rachael Gribble, et al., 2012).

The military services are viewed more favorably by conservative Britons—5 out of 10 than by members of the opposing political party. Four out of ten liberal democratic voters value the military highly (Wessely, et al 2012). In America, liberals were less inclined than conservatives to advocate joining the military (David Leal, 2005). In a 2011 Gallup survey, 78 percent of Americans said they had a lot of confidence in the military. In a 2009 Pew Research Center survey, 48 percent of Americans said they would advise a young person to join the military, while 41 percent said they would not. Veterans are more enthusiastic, saying they would advise a young person to join the military, with three quarters saying they would. By age group, young adults aged 18 to 29 made up 51 percent of the respondents. Another study carried out in America Texas 89.9 percent of Texas respondents viewed the military favorably, only 50.6 percent would encourage the young to join the military (David Leal, 2005) Latinos are more likely than Anglos to favor military enlistments African Americans don't have unique views.

Career Ambition and Graduates' Willingness to Join the Armed forces

Today more than ever, a state's military capability depends on its ability to attract the correct kind and amount of human resources. For militaries that need highly skilled individuals to operate cutting-edge weapon systems, this becomes even more crucial. Given the high levels of unemployment, South Africa does not face a challenge in terms of recruiting sufficient personnel to serve in the SANDF. Youth unemployment currently stands at 52.9 percent of the age group 15-24. Attracting youths with the required abilities in mathematics and science is vital in to staffing a modern technologically advanced army.

With regard to the younger generation, the national research council in the United States discovered that the things that young people value most are an interesting job, security, stable employment, decent salaries, and job opportunities that have promotion potential. These factors lead many graduates to ship in during enlistments. Discipline, subordination, and obedience are the pillars on which the military is built. Today's educated youth are not drawn to this kind of culture or lifestyle, which leaves little opportunity for flexibility and innovation.

In a research on South African students, when asked if they had ever considered a career in the military and if not, the majority said they did not, primarily because they know little to nothing about the military and some students think it is an extremely dangerous job.

Simson (2019) demonstrates that the army is perceived as a reliable employer when jobs are hard to come by. The article also highlights that Uganda's graduates, the majority of whom are unemployed, have a high demand for a stable government job. The general public community also holds the army in high regard, with over one-fifth of Ugandans between the ages of 18 and 30, which is the most suitable for enlistment in the armed forces.

Youth unemployment the South African national defense forces fail to recruit recruits who have both an interest and possess the required academic profile. Attracting youth with the required abilities in mathematics and science is vital to staffing a modern technological advanced defense force. Given the high levels of unemployment in South Africa, recruiting personnel to serve in the country's armed forces is an easy task with few challenges (Megan Smith & Lindy Heineken 2014).

President Museveni recently ordered the recruitment of 2000 graduates nationwide into the Uganda People's Defense Forces. This was met with mixed reactions from Ugandans, especially the hundreds of Ugandan youth graduates who flocked to the recruitment exercises. The Uganda People's Defense Forces are changing, and in 2016 they were more

focused on planned and executed operations than on small-scale combat (Matogo Phillip daily monitor Sunday September 2021 daily monitor).

Simply put, there isn't enough data to demonstrate the extent of this support, its consistency across the nation, or whether it is exhibited by particular population groups.

In the local context, there is generally a lack of understanding of the military, what it does, its missions, and objectives; in addition, a lot of references don't really explain what the military is or its foundations, and the public's opinions are frequently based on just a few aspects of the military. As a result, it is not entirely evident from the data that is currently available how public perceptions affect graduates' willingness to enlist in the armed forces and their employability.

Public Opinion of Armed Forces and Career Ambition

Numerous promising non-formal education programs for young people who are not in school are highlighted in the Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) study on the plight of South Sudanese adolescents. These consist of youth pastoralist programs, accelerated learning initiatives, and radio education. 18 The research also identifies extremely limited opportunities for training and employment. Since 2005, there has been a rise in training interventions in South Sudan; however the effectiveness of these initiatives is in doubt. According to the paper, vocational training is frequently "focused more on learner preferences than on labor market research." 19 Perhaps not unexpectedly, the WRC discovered that training providers must contend with learners who are not only highly illiterate but also lacking in "employability skills," such as the capacity to maintain time, operate in a team, and effectively communicate.

The modern democratic military cannot exist without the support of the public. The public must be convinced that the military serves the nation's interests and in case of need, the military is capable of defending these interests and that the public can rely on it. It must

also be convinced that budget allocated to the military is adequate and money is spent legitimately. Public opinion in a democratic society has the decisive and final control function according to the 1995 constitution of Uganda. The expression of civilian control from the side of the public is its confidence in the armed forces and

Improving social ties between the government armed forces and public will positively influence graduates to look for careers in these agencies with no bias. Public opinion of armed forces is negatively related to career ambition in a sense that an unfavorable public opinion towards these forces will lower the desire of graduates to pursue career in them

Hypotheses

1. Public opinion of armed forces does not significantly influence graduates' career ambitions.
2. Career ambition does not significantly influence graduates' willingness to join government security forces.
3. Public opinion of armed forces does not significantly influence graduates' willingness to join government security forces.

Chapter Three

Methods

Research methodology is something that people undertake in order to find things out in a systematic way, thereby increasing their knowledge (Saunders et al. 2009). Kothari (2004) ensures that the endeavor of any research is to uncover the concealed reality that is yet to be revealed. The study will include: study design, population, sample design, instruments and measures, procedure, data management, data analysis and limitations of the study.

Research Design

This study adopted a correlation research design using a quantitative approach of health literacy and knowledge examining the relationship between the variables; public opinion of government security forces, career ambitions among graduates and graduates' willingness to join government security forces

Study Population

The study population of this study included graduated students who are above the age of 18 years and only those willing to participate in the study were targeted for selection. The study covered the views these individuals towards public opinion of government security forces, career ambitions among graduates and graduates' willingness to join government security forces.

Sample Size

According to Kothari (1990), sample size refers to the number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample. This study was limited to 90 participants both male and female graduated students who studied at Makerere University who are to be selected from a population of 180 respondents.

Sampling Techniques

The study used the sampling procedure of accidental sampling (also known as convenience sampling) to select respondents. In accidental sampling, the researcher determined the sample depending on the ease and convenience. The researcher selected members of the population that are easily accessible, readily available and willing to participate. In the study, respondents were contacted through the different social media platforms like whatsapp, emails to be able to receive the online questionnaire

Instruments

The study employed an online questionnaire with closed ended questions divided into sections that are section A for career ambition, section B for public opinion of armed forces, section C for graduate's willingness to join armed forces and section D for Background information.

Procedure

Participants were informed about the study through various means of communication, and at the start of the questionnaire an informed consent form, with all necessary explanations that needs to be signed before they can start with the survey to be presented. The questionnaires were completed anonymously. For those who provided their email addresses voluntarily, a separate protected Master file linking names to anonymous unique identifiers were created for proper protection. The raw data themselves were linked to the unique identifier, not to the email addresses. A password protected computer was used to store completed returned questionnaires. The master file was kept separately and password protected.

Quality Control

Quality of the research was ensured through establishing validity and reliability of the research instruments.

Data Management

Data was coded according to the results got from the questionnaires after the participants are done filling them. Here data coding refers to a number, letter, character, symbol or a combination used to represent a data item. Collected data was then crosschecked for completeness before being entered into the SPSS computer program for analysis.

Data Analysis

This involved both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. In the descriptive statistics, there were frequency and percentage tables that summarize the respondents' bio-data information. For inferential statistics, Pearson Correlation (r) coefficient was used to test the significance of the hypotheses 1, 2 and 3. The tested relationship of the above variables was interpreted and discussed in relation to literature review of other researchers.

Ethical Considerations

Ethics are standards for proper conduct that differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable behavior (Resnick, 2013). The researchers informed all participants, of the purpose of the study, built rapport and ensured them of confidentiality of the information provided. Respondents were free to make their own consent either to accept or to reject participation in the study and they were also free to quit in case there are feelings of little interest. Additionally, all information gathered was used for the sole purpose of this research study.

Limitations

Some respondents failed to cooperate via being negative towards the questionnaires provided by the researcher while others might not provide genuine answers to items provided in the questionnaire.

Some respondents delayed filling in the questionnaires which led to time consumption.

Chapter Four

Results

This chapter contains all the presentations and the descriptions of the demographic data including, ages of all the respondents, the descriptive statistics as well as the correlations that were carried out in this study.

Bio-Data

The respondents were asked to indicate their age in years, sex, class residence and guidance; the results are shown in the tables below.

Table 1: Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	135	52.3
Female	121	46.9
Prefer not to say	2	.8
Total	258	100.0

Findings in the table above shows that the majority of the respondents were male with 135(52.3%), and the least were female with 121 (46.9%).

Table 2: Age of the Respondents

Age(Years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-23	139	53.8
24-29	108	41.9
30-35	5	1.9
36-41	3	1.2
42-47	3	1.2

From the table above majority of respondents were between 18 – 23 years (53.8%).

Table 3: Level of Study/ Highest Academic Achievement

	Frequency	Percent
High school	20	7.8
Vocational certificate	6	2.3
Diploma	11	4.3
Bachelor's degree	212	82.2
Master's degree	8	3.1
Ph.D.	1	.4
Total	258	100.0

Results from the table above indicated that the majority of the respondents were degree holder with a percentage of 212(82.2%), followed by those who were high school graduate with a percentage of 20 (7.8%) and diplomas with the a percentages of 11(4.3%),

next where those who held masters degrees with a percentage of 8(3.1%) and those with PhD where the least with a percentage of 1(0.4%).

Table 4: Specialty/ discipline of study

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	a. Social and behavioral sciences	41	15.9
	b. Natural sciences	5	1.9
	c. Humanities	70	27.1
	d. Medicine	15	5.8
	e. Engineering	19	7.4
	f. Fine art	3	1.2
	g. Computing and information technology	13	5.0
	i. Law	22	8.5
	j. Agriculture	3	1.2
	k. Veterinary medicine	2	.8
	m. Business and management studies	28	10.9
	n. Education	31	12.0
	o. Health sciences	4	1.6
	p. Vocational studies	2	.8
	Total	258	100.0

Findings in the table above shows that the majority of Respondents are professionals from Humanities with 70(27.1%), and the least were coming from Veterinary medicine and vocational studies with 2 (0.8%).

Table 5: Closeness to security forces

	Frequency	Percent
Not at all close	138	53.5
Relatively close	91	35.3
Very close	29	11.2
Total	258	100.0

Findings in the table above shows that the majority of the respondents were not at all close to security forces with a percentage of 138(53.5%), followed by those who are relatively

Table 6: Interaction with Security Forces

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Rarely interacts with security forces	158	61.2
	Interacts when I seem to be on the wrong side of the law (e.g. during strikes/ demonstrations)	17	6.6
	Collegiate (interacts with security personnel in everyday life situations e.g. on the road, in bars, church, restaurant...	53	20.5
	Professional (interacts with security personnel in work situations, e.g. as co-workers, in workshops and meetings)	30	11.6
	Total	258	100.0

Findings in the table above shows that the majority of the respondents rarely interacts with security forces with a percentage of 1158 (61.2%), followed by those who interacts with security personnel in everyday life situations with 53(20.5%) and the least were those who Interacts when they seem to be on the wrong side of the law with 17 (6.6%).

Table 7: Pearson's Product Moment Correlational Coefficient Results

		Public opinion	Career ambition	Willingness
Public opinion	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	301		
Career ambition	Pearson Correlation	-.209**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		
	N	271	271	
Willingness	Pearson Correlation	-.672**	.170**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.005	
	N	301	271	301

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 shows that hypothesis one which stated that Public opinion of armed forces does not significantly influence graduates' career ambitions, has results that show a significant relationship between the two variables ($r = -.209^{**}$, $p \leq .01$). Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that Public opinion of armed forces significantly influences graduates' career ambitions.

On the other hand, hypothesis 2 which states that career ambition does not significantly influence graduates' willingness to join government security forces, has results that show a significant relationship between the two variables ($r = .170^{**}$, $p \leq .01$), thus the null hypothesis is rejected and its concluded that career ambition significantly influence graduates' willingness

to join government security forces. Lastly, hypothesis 3 which states that public opinion of armed forces does not significantly influence graduates' willingness to join government security forces has results that show a significant relationship between the two variables ($r = .672^{**}$, $p \leq .01$), hence the stated hypothesis is rejected and it's concluded that that public opinion of armed forces significantly influence graduates' willingness to join government security forces.

Chapter Five

Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

This chapter consists of discussions of the findings obtained in the study, the conclusions and the recommendations for further research. It is divided into sections in which the first section presents discussions and conclusions of the results to the correlation between the variables. The second section presents the recommendations that can be referred to for future studies.

Public Opinion of Armed Forces and Graduates' Willingness to Join Government

Security Forces

The first hypothesis stated that Public opinion of armed forces does not significantly influence graduates' willingness to join government security forces and the results revealed that there is a relationship between the two variables hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

This is in agreement and disagreement with various previous authors as stated below,

The current findings are in disagreement with those of Curt Nichols, (2015) who found out while using a multi-university survey; the study assessed public perception of the Ugandan armed forces across a number of analytical aspects. Evidence from multivariate regression analysis suggests that in addition to impacting attitudes toward the military, demographic and political characteristics may also moderate the effects of age, tribe, gender, and political affiliation. The majority of the populace of the nation generally has a low opinion of the armed forces. There are groups who contend that the forces solely work to forward the agendas of the politicians currently in office; some claim that the forces treat some tribes in the nation preferentially while tormenting those who do not.

Additionally, literature has continued to be in disagreement with the current findings when it was reported that literacy levels are another important aspect that has a big

impact on how the general public feels about the armed services. According to the Ugandan example, a large portion of the populace thinks that enlisting in the military is only for people who have little or no education. That does not mean, however, that the armed forces do not continue to enjoy strong support from a sizeable portion of the same populace. According to Lindy (2014), the general population is not only indifferent to the military but also lacks information about military issues.

Also it should be noted that the public's interest in the army and awareness of defense issues were both low in previous decades hence it being inn disagreement with the new findings , but in recent years, an empirically supported transformation has taken place. Military spending is now regarded by the people as a legitimate and desirable expense of the state, and the defense department is no longer seen as a reserve for the state budget. According to the Ministry of Defence's 2016 study on the army and security in the Czech Republic, there is also support for the introduction of military training and an apparent rise in public confidence in the armed forces. Public faith in the army is very high. Over 70% of respondents said they have faith in the army (Frank Libor, 2017).

Career Ambition and Graduates' Willingness to Join the Armed forces

The second hypothesis stated that career ambition does not significantly influence graduates' willingness to join government security forces and the results revealed that there is a relationship between the two variables hence the null hypothesis is rejected. This is in agreement and disagreement with various previous authors as stated below,

A case in point is that today more than ever, a state's military capability depends on its ability to attract the correct kind and amount of human resources. For militaries that need highly skilled individuals to operate cutting-edge weapon systems, this becomes even more crucial. Given the high levels of unemployment, South Africa does not face a challenge in terms of recruiting sufficient personnel to serve in the SANDF. Youth unemployment

currently stands at 52.9 percent of the age group 15-24. Attracting youths with the required abilities in mathematics and science is vital in staffing a modern technologically advanced army. This is in agreement with the current findings even here in Uganda.

On top of the above, it is noted that with regard to the younger generation, the national research council in the United States discovered that the things that young people value most are an interesting job, security, stable employment, decent salaries, and job opportunities that have promotion potential. These factors lead many graduates to ship in during enlistments. Discipline, subordination, and obedience are the pillars on which the military is built. Today's educated youth are not drawn to this kind of culture or lifestyle, which leaves little opportunity for flexibility and innovation; these findings are in disagreement with the current ones which show a relationship.

In a research on South African students, when asked if they had ever considered a career in the military and if not, the majority said they did not, primarily because they know little to nothing about the military and some students think it is an extremely dangerous job, this is in a disagreement with the current studies.

The current findings are in agreement with those of Simson (2019) demonstrates that the army is perceived as a reliable employer when jobs are hard to come by. The article also highlights that Uganda's graduates, the majority of whom are unemployed, have a high demand for a stable government job. The general public community also holds the army in high regard, with over one-fifth of Ugandans between the ages of 18 and 30, which is the most suitable for enlistment in the armed forces.

Public Opinion of Armed Forces and Career Ambition

The third hypothesis stated that public opinion of armed forces does not significantly influence career ambitions and the results revealed that there is a relationship between the two

variables hence the null hypothesis is rejected. This is in agreement and disagreement with various previous authors as stated below,

The current findings are in agreement with numerous promising non-formal education programs for young people who are not in school are highlighted in the Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) study on the plight of South Sudanese adolescents. These consist of youth pastoralist programs, accelerated learning initiatives, and radio education. The research also identifies extremely limited opportunities for training and employment. Since 2005, there has been a rise in training interventions in South Sudan; however the effectiveness of these initiatives is in doubt. According to the paper, vocational training is frequently "focused more on learner preferences than on labor market research." Perhaps not unexpectedly, the WRC discovered that training providers must contend with learners who are not only highly illiterate but also lacking in "employability skills," such as the capacity to maintain time, operate in a team, and effectively communicate.

Still on, the current findings are in agreement with the belief that modern democratic military cannot exist without the support of the public. The public must be convinced that the military serves the nation's interests and in case of need, the military is capable of defending these interests and that the public can rely on it. It must also be convinced that budget allocated to the military is adequate and money is spent legitimately. Public opinion in a democratic society has the decisive and final control function according to the 1995 constitution of Uganda. The expression of civilian control from the side of the public is its confidence in the armed forces.

Conclusion

This study was undertaken to provide a better understanding and knowledge on the public perception of armed forces in Uganda. Having completed the study where interviews with members of the public was carried out to obtain their views and opinions of how they

felt and their experiences with armed forces, data was obtained and analyzed to produce results. These findings were aimed at answering the research questions which was the focal point of this study.

The results and recommendations will act as a 'steppingstone' for the direction and future of armed forces and policing at large in Uganda and if implemented, could produce better armed forces and citizens relations in the short term and with further research, in the long term.

Recommendations

This study would recommend the establishment of an Army and Citizens Networking system in the country. This could foster and promote better networking and communication between citizens and the armed forces which can be done by through a customer-oriented style of policing. This system could allow shared information and knowledge of citizens' needs and concerns and simultaneously allow the communities to have an input on possible solutions for the problems in their communities.

Enhanced Police Accountability (EPA) is another possible recommendation based on the results obtained in this study. Police deviance was demonstrated as major impact on how citizens perceived the police and many officers were not being held accountable for their actions. If EPA is established, all officers should be made accountable for their actions which could be used to inform citizens of police officers acting within the law and simultaneously obtain legitimacy. EPA could become instrumental in promoting effective police performance as officer's time and activities would be better managed.

Future Research

This study was based on the urban parts of the country and should not be interpreted as a representation of the general population. Therefore, it would be useful for further research to be conducted in different geographic locations of Uganda which

can be added to this study thereby formulating a more comprehensive understanding of the public's perception of the Armed Forces in Uganda.

During this study it was highlighted that there is a lack of previous studies on the public's perception of armed forces in Uganda. As a result, it would become beneficial to extend this study into an African setting to obtain a better understanding of the subject, which could present vital information on contemporary armed forces methods and strategies that other post-colonial African countries might have adopted to replace their colonial legacy which could be useful to Uganda. Therefore, this study could be extended based on the results of any further studies.

This study was focused at gaining knowledge and understanding about citizens' perception of armed forces in Uganda. Samples were taken from members of the public and not armed officers.

It would become beneficial for future research to take samples from armed officers to gain knowledge and understanding about officer's perception of the public and also how officers of armed forces perform their duties.

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Appendix: 1 Questionnaire

Dear Sir, Dear Madam,

You are invited to participate in this study assessing the role of career ambition, public opinion of the security forces in predicting the readiness to join state security agencies.

The questionnaire takes 20-30 minutes. Your responses will be kept anonymous and confidential. You are required to work quickly through the items, giving your first intuitive response. There are no wrong or right answers.

Thank you very much for your time.

Section A: Career ambition

On a scale of 1-6 where 1= totally disagree and 6=totally agree, kindly indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

I achieve high grades in relation to my studies

Totally disagree						totally agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	

I regard my academic work as a top priority

Totally disagree						totally agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	

Employers are eager to employ graduates from my university

Totally disagree						totally agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	

The status of this university is a significant asset to me in job seeking

Totally disagree						totally agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	

Employers specifically target this university in order to recruit individuals from my subjectarea(s)

Totally disagree

totally agree

1 2 3 4 5 6

My university has an outstanding reputation in my field of study

Totally disagree

totally agree

1 2 3 4 5 6

A lot more people apply for my degree than there are places available

Totally disagree

totally agree

1 2 3 4 5 6

My chosen subjects rank highly in terms of social status

Totally disagree

totally agree

1 2 3 4 5 6

People in the career I am aiming for are in high demand in the external labor market

Totally disagree

totally agree

1 2 3 4 5 6

My degree is seen as leading to a specific career that is generally perceived as highly desirable

Totally disagree

totally agree

1 2 3 4 5 6

There is generally strong demand for graduates at the present time

Totally disagree

totally agree

1 2 3 4 5 6

There are plenty of job vacancies in the geographical area where I am looking

Totally disagree totally agree

1 2 3 4 5 6

I can easily find out about opportunities in my chosen field

Totally disagree totally agree

1 2 3 4 5 6s

The skills and abilities that I possess are what employers are looking for

Totally disagree totally agree

1 2 3 4 5 6

I am generally confident of success in job interviews and selection events

Totally disagree totally agree

1 2 3 4 5 6

I feel I could get any job as long as my skills and experience are reasonably relevant.

Totally disagree totally agree

1 2 3 4 5 6

Section B: Public Opinion of Armed Forces

On a scale of 1-6 where 1=totally disagree and 6=totally agree, indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements

I have favorable impressions of the Ugandan state security forces

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

I have much respect for the Ugandan state security forces for the work they are doing with in the country

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

I have much respect for the Ugandan state security forces for the work they are doing within the country

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

I have much respect for the Ugandan state security forces for the work they are doing in other countries such as Somalia and DRC.

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

There are many icons with in the state security forces that I am proud of

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

I regard Ugandan state security forces as largely professional

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

I have much trust in the Uganda security forces

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

The composition of the Ugandan security forces is largely representative of all regions and ethnicities in the country

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

I am very proud of the human rights record of the Uganda security agencies?

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

Section C: Graduates' willingness to join the armed forces

On a scale of 1-6 where 1=totally disagree and 6=totally agree, indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

I am ready to do anything to join the Ugandan state security forces

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

My professional goal is become one of the high profile personnel in the Ugandan security agencies

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

I will make every effort to join one of the security forces in Uganda

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

I have a firm intention to join the army/police/prison service

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

I would advise young people close to me to join the Uganda state security forces

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

Among the different career options I have, joining the army/police/prison service is one of them

Totally disagree totally agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6

Kindly indicate below your level of willingness to join the following armed forces

The army (Updf)

Very unwilling highly willing
 1 2 3 4 5 6

The police

Very unwilling

highly willing

1 2 3 4 5 6

The Uganda prisons service

Very unwilling

highly willing

1 2 3 4 5 6

Private security agencies

Very unwilling

highly willing

1 2 3 4 5 6

Section D: background information

1. Male
2. Female
3. Prefer not to say

What is your age in years?

What's your current level of study?

1. High school
2. Vocational certificate
3. Diploma
4. Bachelor's degree
5. Master's degree
6. Ph.D.

What's is your discipline of study

1. Natural sciences
2. Social and behavioral sciences
3. Humanities
4. Medicine
5. Engineering
6. Fine art
7. Computing and information technology
8. Performing arts and film
9. Law
10. Agriculture
11. Veterinary medicine

12. Food science

13. Business studies

14. Education

15. Health sciences

16. Vocational studies

What's your level of closeness to state security

forces?Not at all close

Relatively

closeVery

close.

THANK YOU