

The Role of Security Personnel and their Involvement in the General Election of Ghana: A Case Study of Ghana Armed Forces (GAF)

Olivia Mawutor*

Abstract

Ghana has achieved notable progress in its electoral processes, conducting nine successive peaceful elections and undergoing four changes of power. The threat of election-related violence persists, as polarisation, intolerance, and distrust provide risks of conflict and instability. This study investigated the role of the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) in Ghana's general elections, with a specific focus on public perceptions of the GAF's presence, their contributions during the electoral process, and the impact of these contributions on national peace and stability. The research employed a quantitative methodology. The study's target population comprised GAF personnel. A simple random sampling method was utilised to select 347 people for the study, and t-tests together with structural equation modelling were applied to examine the acquired data. SPSS version 26 and Stata 17 were utilised as the analytical tools. The theoretical framework guiding the study was the Copenhagen School of security theory which looked at the political security (the stability of political systems and governance structures) in relation to election and how military involvement in election duties leads to perception and how it also affects the peace and stability of a country. The study revealed that Ghanaians regard the military's involvement in elections as detrimental to the democratic process, with military presence at voting locations intimidating voters. The study revealed that the GAF demonstrates a greater commitment to preserving national stability and sovereignty, deterring electoral violence, and effectively collaborating with the Electoral Commission at various polling stations during the election. The study revealed a statistically significant association between military contributions before, during, and after elections and Ghanaians' perceptions of these contributions. It also found that military involvement is positively linked to the peace and stability of Ghana. Furthermore, Ghanaians' perceptions were significantly associated with national peace and stability, and served as a mediating factor in the

relationship between military contributions and peace and stability across the electoral period.

Keywords: Election, Ghana Armed Forces, Ghanaians' Perception, Military Contribution, Security, Peace and Stability.

* mawutor68@yahoo.com

1.0 Introduction

Since 1992, Ghana has conducted nine elections characterised by freedom, fairness, and transparency, establishing itself as a stable democratic republic with a record of successful political transitions, a free press, an engaged civil society, and an independent judiciary (Kofi Annan Foundation, 2024; Kumi, 2024). Elections may fortify, institutionalise, enhance, and solidify democracy and governance systems. The democratic landscape in Africa has seen substantial transformation over the last two decades. Numerous governments have consented to conduct frequent elections in response to the pervasive demand of their populations for participatory governance.

In many African countries, such as Ghana, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, and Burkina Faso, elections have facilitated the establishment of democratic governments. The percentage of African countries conducting democratic elections has markedly risen since 1990 (Freedom House, 2021). The regular conduct of general elections through popular mandate is a fundamental attribute of democracy. The election's conclusion can only be deemed free, fair, and credible when all parties engaged in the electoral process maintain impartiality and neutrality in executing their respective duties (Adekeye & Chima, 2022).

Notwithstanding Ghana's democratic advancements, Edu-Afful and Allotey-Pappoe (2016) contend that elections are marred by predominantly limited violence. Intimidation, physical assaults, and the destruction of electoral materials characterise the political environment within parties. Internal security issues are increasingly attracting scrutiny towards Ghana's armed forces, particularly during general elections. Their involvement may be necessary; nonetheless, it is imperative that their function is well defined, deliberated upon, and minimised. The Ghana Armed Forces are tasked with managing complex domestic threats, including election-related violence, and are regarded as competent and efficient, whereas the Ghana Police Service is viewed by the public as more corrupt and ineffective (Aubyn & Albrecht, 2021).

This security arrangement contains several paradoxes that require meticulous examination. Ghana seems to possess a bifurcated security sector framework, comprising one system dedicated to state security and another focused on electoral security, as evidenced by the National Security Council and the Elections Security Taskforce. This allocation of responsibilities sometimes leads to overlapping roles between the IGP's supervision of election security and the president's management of the national security framework (Lartey & Kwesi Aning, 2013).

While the Ghanaian Constitution permits military involvement in elections, instances of human rights violations and perceived politicisation of the military have led to tensions, including political and civil-military conflicts. (Aubyn & Albrecht, 2021). The challenge of synchronising the activities of both "systems" is questioned by the evident duality of duties (Lartey & Kwesi Aning, 2013). Their involvement has raised concerns regarding the government's propensity to employ military measures to resolve matters related to Ghana's electoral process (Aubyn & Albrecht, 2021). The latest Afrobarometer study indicates that 67% of Ghanaians oppose military rule, which is increasing popularity in the West African sub-region, while 76% advocate for a democratic governance system.

Ghana's peace has markedly deteriorated; the 2024 Global Peace Index (GPI) ranks it 55th, a decrease from 51st in 2023 and below its 40th position in 2022. Ghana was once listed as the second most peaceful nation in Sub-Saharan Africa; however, it is now ranked fourth. Ghana presently holds a worse position on the peace index compared to Mauritius, Madagascar, and Botswana (Citi Newsroom, 2024).

The Commonwealth Observer Mission commended the 2024 Ghanaian general election as free, fair, and transparent, describing it as a testament to the nation's stability despite incidents of violence that resulted in at least four fatalities and a tense postelection period. During a debriefing with the national election security task force, the leader Mokgweetsi Masisi, expressed appreciation for the role played by Ghana Police Service (Kumi 2024). This emphasis on the police suggests a narrow focus on a single arm

of the national security apparatus, implicitly positioning the Police Service as the sole agency responsible for the electoral security. However, in practice, the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) also plays a strategic and sometimes controversial role, particularly in high-risk zones and during post-election stabilization. Despite this involvement, scholarly attention has largely overlooked the GAF's contributions to electoral processes. This study addresses that research gap by investigating the specific roles, perceptions, and implication of the GAF's involvement in Ghana's general elections.

This study specifically seeks:

- To examine the perception Ghanaians, have in relation to military (GAF) presence during general election and the contribution of GAF towards the general election.
- To examine the influence of military contribution on the perception of Ghanaians and peace and stability before, during and after elections.
- To examine the influence of the perception of Ghanaians on the peace and stability of Ghana before, during and after elections.
- To examine the mediating role of Ghanaians' perceptions in the relationship between military contributions and peace and stability before, during, and after elections

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical framework

The Copenhagen school of securitisation theory serves as the foundation for this study. The Copenhagen School created the theory of "securitisation" to examine how governments and other influential actors perceive a certain phenomenon as an existential threat and justify taking drastic measures to counter it. By emphasising how certain issues are framed as matters of urgent and existential threat, the concept of securitisation challenges the conventional understanding of security as something that can be objectively given. This, in turn, leads to extreme and potentially excessive responses that occur outside the bounds and control of the legal and political system (Flohr, 2025).

Traditionally, the idea has been understood in military terms, referring to the state's ability to protect itself from outside threats to its existence. The identification of new referent objects, such as national sovereignty (political security), national economies (economic security), collective identities (societal security), or species and habitats (environmental security), is made possible by expanding the concept of security beyond the military sector and the state as the sole actor (Emmers, 2011: p 137). Political security and general elections are the study's main topics. The most fundamental requirement and the cornerstone of a nation's survival and progress is political security, which is closely linked to the survival of the system and the stability of political power. Without political security, national security is impossible (Global Times, 2023).

Thus, the Copenhagen School offers a theoretical framework for evaluating and contesting the political processes that enable and justify the emergency measures in the modern world (Flohr, 2025). More precisely, securitisation refers to speech acts that justify the use of emergency measures by framing certain phenomena as immediate and existential (Buzan, Waever & De Wilde, 1998).

John Langshaw Austin's contention that language is both performative and descriptive—that is, that speech has the power to alter the world in addition to describing it—is where the idea of a "speech act" originated (Flohr, 2025). Emmers (2011, p 140) asserts that every securitisation consists of a political act (a political choice to present the threat in a way that persuades the target audience) and a security act (by using the language of security and requesting the adoption of extraordinary countermeasures). These two elements demonstrate how difficult it is to distinguish between politicisation and securitisation, particularly when securitisation is motivated by political factors, such as when politicians aim to increase their popularity in order to improve their chances of winning reelection (Emmers 2011, p.144).

According to a study by Okechukwu, Chukwuka, and Chikwado (2019), the Nigerian military has the constitutional authority to provide security

during elections, guaranteeing the safety of voters, INEC employees, and election materials. According to Nivada and Rassanjani (2024), the government's policy response to maintain stability alongside the police will inevitably involve the military, particularly the Indonesian National Army (TNI), in addressing security threats during the 2024 elections.

According to Maringira and Masiya (2017), generals in the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) have an impact on election politics and endanger democratic processes. Because military might frighten opponents and sway election results, their participation in elections jeopardises political security. Rozenas and Zeigler (2019) also talk about how elections are frequently followed by military interventions because the results of the elections give coup perpetrators information about the legitimacy of the regime. Vote share has a major impact on coup propensity in information-poor environments, underscoring the military's role in maintaining political security during general elections.

2.2 Structural Adjustment Programme of the GAF

Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) often means changing public institutions to meet global standards, work better, and fix problems that happen all the time. The Ghana Armed Forces started SAP through partnerships to improve their skills. One example is the U.S. Army Africa hosting a medical readiness exercise to help the GAF stop the spread of infectious diseases. The U.S. Naval Forces Africa helped make the GAF Navy's Maritime Operational Centre better. This centre keeps an eye on the waters around the clock to enforce maritime laws in the area (Loch, 2019).

The U.S. Air Forces Africa is helping the Ghana Air Force expand its air operations to make it easier to quickly deploy troops and evacuate people by air. The U.S. Marines Forces Europe and Africa want to help the Ghana Navy's Special Boat Squadron stop and respond to illegal activities at sea, such as drug and human trafficking, piracy, and illegal fishing. The GAF was included in the planning for the 2020 Flintlock exercise by U.S.

Special Operations Command Africa. This gave African countries the tools they needed to fight violent extremist groups, protect their borders, and keep their citizens safe (Loch, 2019). Loch (2019) also indicates that the bilateral action plan specifies the initiatives each of AFRICOM's component commands intends to undertake in support of Ghana's regional partnership efforts to promote peace, security, and development in West Africa.

The Elsie Initiative Fund (EIF) funded project for the GAF is similar to SAP in that, it wants to make the GAF a more gender-inclusive organisation. The project works to remove obstacles that keep women from participating in peacekeeping, such as poor infrastructure (for example, a lack of accommodation for women) and a small number of trained female staff. The EIF helps the GAF make structural changes to better prepare it to send women into peacekeeping roles, including command positions. It does this by paying for the building of housing for 300 women recruits and supporting targeted training through the Women Peace and Security Institute. This fits with the bigger goal of structural adjustment, which is to bring institutions up to date so that they can meet international standards, in this case, UN standards for gender equality in peace operations (The Elsie Initiative Fund, 2022).

The Ministry of Defence sent about 2,660 troops and equipment to help with international peace efforts. This was done at the request of the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission, which wanted to strengthen Ghana's role in world affairs. This has changed how the world sees the country (Ministry of Defence, 2024). Ghana is currently taking part in a number of peacekeeping and peace support operations, such as the UN, regional, and subregional missions. Some of these are the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the ECOWAS Stabilisation Support Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ESSMGB), and the United Nations Interim Security Force for ABYEI (UNISFA). According to the Ministry of Defence (2024), the government will continue to implement the "Earned Dollar Payment Policy" as an

incentive to motivate deployed troops to maintain peace and security globally

2.3 People's perception concerning Military presence during election

A number of historical, political, and social factors influence how the military is perceived in various contexts prior to, during, and following elections. According to Feaver (2023), the public does not believe that the military is hyper partisan, but many partisans would be in favour of a more partisan role if it matched their beliefs. Most people assume that members of the armed forces belong to a political party, and they frequently assume that these affiliations are equally divided between Democrats and Republicans.

Military endorsements can sway independent voters, but they have little effect on the partisanship of the majority of Republicans and Democrats, who stick with their party's candidates regardless of military participation. According to Lin and Lunz Trujillo (2024), people in rural areas may view the military as an essential check on elected governments, especially those with a higher level of rural resentment. This implies that citizens' opinions of the military's involvement in elections can differ greatly depending on their emotional and geographic circumstances, which can affect their faith in democracy and the government.

People view the military's involvement in elections negatively, linking it to electoral violence, intimidation of opposition candidates, and the disruption of democratic processes, according to Eguegu and Iwara (2023). A climate of fear and instability is fostered by the use of military forces during elections, which is perceived as having no constitutional basis. According to Okechukwu, Chukwuka, and Chikwado (2019), the deployment of military personnel during elections has been a regular practice since 1999, indicating that citizens' perceptions of the military's role in elections are complex. A military presence may be seen by some as essential to maintaining security in the face of growing insecurity, but there are worries that politicians may abuse it for illicit purposes. According to

research by Tomz, Weeks, and Yarhi-Milo (2020), voter opinions regarding security policy have a big impact on election results in democracies.

Experiments in the US and Israel revealed that security policy outperformed nonpolicy factors like gender and race in terms of electoral significance and was just as important as economic and religious policies. Voters' opinions on military matters are empowered to influence political dynamics, encouraging incumbents to support the public's views on military force and influencing the choice of candidates based on their stances on security policy.

2.4 Military and their contribution to general election

"Election security" has become a buzzword for commentators, academics, and practitioners in recent years, especially when it comes to political violence (Birch, Daxecker & Höglund, 2020), cyber-security (Tenove, Buffie, McKay & Moscrop, 2018), and foreign meddling (Bordeleau, 2021). Nwigwe (2024) found that security agencies have a major influence on free, fair, and credible elections.

To effectively address electoral violence, various security agencies must coordinate with one another. Security organisations should set up systems for real-time information sharing, operation coordination, and intelligence sharing (Nwigwe, 2024).

Engagement with civil society organisations, election management bodies, and other pertinent stakeholders should be part of this partnership. Consistent joint training exercises and joint operation planning will improve overall security readiness, streamline efforts, and increase synergy. In collaboration with civil society organisations, election management bodies, and community leaders, security agencies can play a critical role in advancing voter education and engagement initiatives. They can also assist in educating voters about their rights and responsibilities, the electoral process, and the significance of peaceful participation (Nwigwe, 2024). Security forces may be used in elections where there has been a high incidence of electoral violence in the past to prevent and deal

with it. Moreover, the deployment of security forces during that phase of the election cycle may result from prior cases of severe electoral malpractice (Norris, 2014).

Election management organisations may work with security forces in the run-up to and during the election to ensure the physical security of electoral materials, including ballot boxes and ballots, either by securing important facilities or by transporting ballot boxes and ballots to counting stations. According to Condra, Callen, Iyengar, et al. (2019), security personnel may be most noticeable at polling stations on election day. Notably, security forces may be in operation for regular security purposes during the election cycle, creating an environment conducive to peaceful elections. It is essential to maintain electoral integrity even though it may be peripheral to electoral management (Garnett & Bordeleau, 2022).

2.5 Hypothesis development and conceptual framework

The study by Condra, Callen, Iyengar, et al. (2019) found that citizens' perceptions may be negatively impacted by increased military involvement in election security because they may perceive security forces as predatory and corrupt. In fragile states, this perception may result in lower voter turnout, threatening the validity of the electoral process. Tomz and Weeks (2020) suggest that military engagement in election security is not consistent with public opinion regarding foreign electoral interference, as Americans typically reject military responses to foreign electoral intervention, even when their own political party is targeted.

Democratic stability is greatly influenced by views of electoral integrity; people's belief in fair elections builds trust in leaders and institutions. On the other hand, questions about electoral fairness might cause a crisis of faith that compromises the basic values of democracy and social stability (Daniller & Mutz, 2019). The perception of citizens shapes peace and stability during elections by affecting their confidence in the electoral process. While negative opinions can increase conflicts and cause war, positive ones encourage collaboration and good discussion among political

parties (Ngwenya, 2024). Otaola and Angel (2014) found that, although the electoral process's actual fairness may be in question, if elections are seen as unjust it increases the likelihood of instability and violence, as underlined in their study.

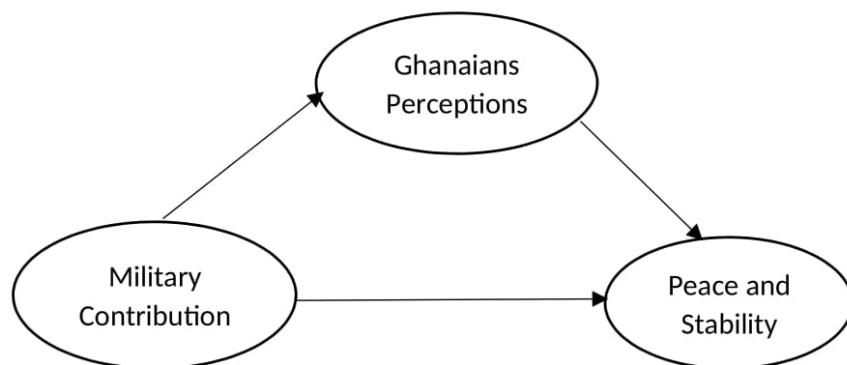
The deployment of peacekeeping forces can enhance peace and stability while mitigating electoral violence, particularly when they ensure electoral security. Conflicts between democratisation and stability objectives might adversely affect electoral security, highlighting the complex nature of their influence on national peace (Gunawan, 2022). Security professionals are essential in maintaining peace and stability during elections by safeguarding electoral processes, protecting stakeholders, and ensuring the integrity of election outcomes (Okoye, Ezeanya & Chikezie, 2025). Okoye, Ezeanya, and Chikezie (2025) assert that their presence can significantly reduce electoral violence and enhance public confidence in democratic processes. Idris (2024) examines the efficacy of electoral assistance interventions in preventing political instability, violence, atrocities, and election-related conflict.

The principal findings indicate that enhancing election administration organisations and engaging the security sector are the most efficacious methods for mitigating violence. Fjelde and Smidt (2021) assert that a negative association exists between the probability of electoral violence and the deployment of peacekeeping forces. The research by Fjelde and Smidt (2021) indicates that the deployment of peacekeeping forces can improve election security, therefore fostering the overall peace and stability of a nation during post-conflict elections.

Tomz, Weeks, and Yarhi-Milo (2020) demonstrated that public opinion significantly influences military decisions in democracies, as citizen preferences can motivate incumbents and influence electoral results, thereby shaping military engagement policies that subsequently impact national peace and stability. Tomz and Weeks (2020) argue that public perception mediates this relationship by promoting a preference for non-military solutions, potentially aiding in the preservation of peace and stability despite electoral disruptions.

Figure 1 below presents the relationship that exists between the variables, that is, Military contribution, Ghanaian's perception and peace and stability.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Researcher's construct, (2025).

Ho is the null hypothesis and ***Ha*** is the alternate hypothesis. Thus, the study hypothesis that:

H1 - *Ho*: Military contribution positively influences Ghanaian's perception
Ha: Military contribution positively does not influence Ghanaian's perception

H2 - *Ho*: Ghanaian's perception positively influences the peace and stability of Ghana before, during and after election.
Ha: Ghanaian's perception positively does not influence the peace and stability of Ghana before, during and after election.

H3 - *Ho*: Military contribution positively influences the peace and stability of Ghana before, during and after election.
Ha: Military contribution positively does not influence the peace and stability of Ghana before, during and after election.

H4 - *Ho*: Ghanaian's perception positively mediates the association between military contribution and peace and stability before, during and after election.

Ha: Ghanaian's perception positively does not mediate the association between military contribution and peace and stability before, during and after election.

3. Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative approach using a survey research design. The survey design enabled the researcher to develop a questionnaire to gather data on Ghanaians' perceptions of the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) and their involvement in general elections, as well as the GAF's contributions and their impact on peace and stability in Ghana.

A simple random sampling technique was used to select 347 respondents (Military personnel) for the study. Questionnaires were drafted, prepared and administered to the military personnel. After data collection, both descriptive and inferential statistics analyses were conducted. Descriptive statistics analysis was employed to describe the demographic profile of the respondents using frequency and percentages. Inferential statistics using **T-test** was employed to ascertain how Ghanaians perceive the Military at general election and the contribution of the Military before, during and after election.

T-test formula

$$t = \frac{\bar{x} - \mu}{\frac{\sigma}{\sqrt{n}}}$$

Where:

σ/\sqrt{n} is the standard error

Inferential statistics using structural equation model (SEM) was employed to examine the relationship that exists between the latent variables (Military contribution, Ghanaian's perception and peace and stability). Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a multivariate statistical framework that is used to model complex relationships between directly and indirectly observed (latent) variables (Bollen, 1989). SEM is a general framework that involves simultaneously solving systems of linear equations and

encompasses other techniques such as regression, factor analysis, path analysis, and latent growth curve modeling. Recently, SEM has gained popularity in the analysis of complex genetic traits because it can be used to better analyze the relationships between correlated variables (traits), model genes as latent variables as a function of multiple observed genetic variants, and assess the association between multiple genetic variants and multiple correlated phenotypes of interest (Stein, Morris & Nock, 2012). Before conduction, the SEM item analysis and exploratory factor analysis using KMO and Bartlet test was employed.

The purpose of the item analysis was to identify and eliminate any items that were thought to be problematic by assessing the instrument's internal consistency and reliability in gathering data on Ghana's peace and stability as well as the military's contribution prior to, during, and following elections. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2014), items that had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient less than 0.70 were deemed problematic and were eliminated in order to improve the instrument's construct's reliability. For the item-total correlations to be accepted, items value must be 0.30 or higher (Andrich & Marais, 2019). KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) and Bartlett's test assess the suitability of data for factor analysis. KMO measures sampling adequacy, while Bartlett's test checks for sphericity, indicating whether correlations among variables are sufficient for factor analysis to be valid (Ambo, 2022).

Tabachnick and Fidel (2007) established that the acceptable KMO value should be above 0.5 and Bartlett's test should be below 0.05 significant level. SPSS version 26 and STATA 17 were the analytical tool used to analyze the data gathered. Table 1 below presents the measurement of the latent variables and figure 2 presents the measurement model.

Table 1: Measurement of Variables

Variables	Items	Code
Ghanaians' perception	Ghanaians think that military personnel at polling stations intimidate voters.	Perc1
	Ghanaians perceive that military involvement in elections can lead to human rights violations.	Perc2
	Ghanaians think that the military should only intervene in elections if there is a significant threat of violence.	Perc3
	They think that military's role in elections undermines the democratic process.	Perc4
	They perceive the government uses the military for political gain during elections.	Perc5
Military contribution	The GAF were stationed at Ghana borders to ensure security during the 2024 general election.	Con1
	The involvement of the Ghana Armed Forces helped to deter electoral violence.	Con2
	The GAF effectively collaborated with the Electoral Commission in some polling stations during the election.	Con3
	The military were deployed upon request by the GPS.	Con4
	GAF reiterates its commitment to safeguarding the stability and sovereignty of the nation.	Con5
	GAF protected the integrity of the election process.	Con6
	The communication from the Ghana Armed Forces regarding their role in the election was clear and effective.	Con7
Peace and Stability	The 2024 elections served as a vital catalyst for peace by providing a legitimate and peaceful mechanism for transferring power.	PecSt1
	The 2024 election endorsed the democratic expression of citizens' will.	PecSt2
	The 2024 elections triggered a lot of violence, particularly irregularities at the polling stations.	PecSt3
	There were existing tensions post-election	PecSt4
	The defeated party followers danced with the victorious party campaign songs.	PerSt5

	Other African countries have taken Ghana election as a case study to strengthen their electoral process.	PerSt6
	The African and international observers witnessed a smooth and peaceful election in Ghana.	PerSt7

Source: Researcher's Work, (2025).

Figure 2: Measurement Model

Source: Researcher's construct (2025).

SEM goes with the measurement model, not the equation. SEM is more advanced than regression analysis. If the study was based on regression analysis, then there would be an equation. KMO and Bartlet test was used to check for the validity of the variables.

4. Results

This section presents the findings from the data gathered. The section examines the demographic profile of respondents, Ghanaians' perception about the Military in election, the Military contribution before, during and after election, assessment of measurement model and finally assessment of SEM.

4.1 Demographic profile of respondents.

Table 2 below presents the profile of the respondents.

Table 2: Profile of respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	57	16.4
	Male	290	83.6
	Total	347	100.0
Educational level	1st Degree	97	28.0
	Diploma/ HND	75	21.6
	Masters and above	120	34.6
	SHS	55	15.9
	Total	347	100.0
Religion	Christianity	335	96.5

	Muslim	12	3.5
	Total	347	100.0
Marital Status	Married	241	69.5
	Single	106	30.5
	Total	347	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2025).

According to table 2, majority of the respondents used for the study were males (83.6%) while minority were females (16.4%). In terms of their educational background, a higher percentage of the personnel have attained Master's degree or beyond (34.6%), followed by 1st Degree (28%), Diploma/ HND (21.6%) and lastly SHS (15.9%). With regard to religion, a higher percentage of the respondents were Christians (96.5%) while a lower percentage were Muslims (3.5%). In relation to their marital status, majority of the respondents were married (69.5%) while minority of the respondents (30.5%) were single.

4.2 Ghanaians perception about the Military in election

Table 3 below presents the military personnel's views on how they believe Ghanaians perceive their involvement in Ghana's general elections.

Table 3: T-test -Perception of the military in election

	Codes	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Ghanaians think that military personnel at polling stations intimidate voters.	Perc1	40.671	.000
Ghanaians perceive that military involvement in elections can lead to human rights violations.	Perc2	40.139	.000
Ghanaians think that the military should only intervene in elections if there is a significant threat of violence.	Perc3	35.693	.000
They think that military's role in elections undermines the democratic process.	Perc4	43.108	.000

They perceive the government uses the military for political gain during elections.	Perc5	39.886	.000
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Source: Field Survey (2025).

All the items were statistically significant. The item with the higher t-value indicates how Ghanaians mostly perceived the military (GAF) in general election. According to table 3, “Ghanaians think that military personnel at polling stations intimidate voters” had a t-value of 40.671, “Ghanaians perceive that military involvement in elections can lead to human rights violations” had a t-value of 40.139, “Ghanaians think that the military should only intervene in elections if there is a significant threat of violence” had a t-value of 35.693, “They think that military's role in elections undermines the democratic process” had a t-value of 43.108, and finally “They perceive the government uses the military for political gain during elections” had a t-value of 39.886. From table 3, it is evident that Perc4 and Perc1 had a higher t-value and this implies that Ghanaians think that military's role in elections undermines the democratic process and their presence at the polling stations intimidates voters.

4.3 Military contribution before, during and after the general election
 From table 4 below, “The GAF were stationed at Ghana borders to ensure security during the 2024 general election” had a t-value of 43.321, “The involvement of the Ghana Armed Forces helped to deter electoral violence” had a t-value of 44.605, “The GAF effectively collaborated with the Electoral Commission in some polling station during the election” had a t-value of 44.455, “The military were deployed upon request by the GPS” had a t-value of 38.759, “GAF reiterates its commitment to safeguarding the stability and sovereignty of the nation” had t-value of 50.754, “GAF protected the integrity of the election process” had a t-value of 40.299 and “The communication from the Ghana Armed Forces regarding their role in the election was clear and effective” had a t-value of 37.180.

Also, table 3 indicates that all contribution items had a significant value less than the 0.05 significant level. From table 4, Con2, Con3 and Con5

had a higher t-value and this implies that the Ghana Armed Forces' (GAF) contribution to the 2024 general election included a strong commitment to safeguarding the nation's stability and sovereignty. They played a key role in deterring electoral violence and collaborated effectively with the Electoral Commission at various polling stations during the election.

Table 4: T-test -Military contribution

	Codes	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
The GAF were stationed at Ghana borders to ensure security during the 2024 general election.	Con1	43.321	.000
The involvement of the Ghana Armed Forces helped to deter electoral violence.	Con2	44.605	.000
The GAF effectively collaborated with the Electoral Commission at some polling stations during the election.	Con3	44.455	.000
The military were deployed upon request by the GPS.	Con4	38.759	.000
GAF reiterates its commitment to safeguarding the stability and sovereignty of the nation.	Con5	50.754	.000
GAF protected the integrity of the election process.	Con6	40.299	.000
The communication from the Ghana Armed Forces regarding their role in the election was clear and effective.	Con7	37.180	.000

Source: Field Survey, (2025).

4.4 Assessment of measurement variables

Item Analysis

Table 5 reveals that; Ghanaians' perceptions had an alpha value of 0.837 which is consistent with Tabachnick and Fidell (2014) reliability test. In relation to corrected item-total correlation, the value of all the items was above 0.3 and hence were retained for the factor analysis.

Table 5: Item analysis of Ghanaians' perceptions

Reliability Statistics				
Cronbach's Alpha		N of Items		
.837		5		
Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Per1	9.79	12.664	.735	.776
Per2	9.69	13.059	.629	.809
Per3	10.78	16.320	.492	.841
Per4	9.45	12.959	.630	.809
Per5	10.12	13.456	.739	.778

Source: Field Survey, (2025).

Table 6 below reveals that perception (Ghanaians' perception) had an alpha value of 0.707 which is consistent with Tabachnick and Fidell (2014) reliability test. In relation to corrected item-total correlation, Con4 had a value of 0.279 which was below 0.3 and thus was dropped. When dropped,

Reliability Statistics				
Cronbach's Alpha		N of Items		
.707		7		
Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Con1	11.62	10.519	.397	.681
Con2	12.01	10.985	.459	.664
Con3	11.76	10.904	.390	.681
Con4	11.90	11.278	.279	.714
Con5	12.50	12.378	.390	.687
Con6	12.04	9.943	.601	.624
Con7	12.22	10.650	.470	.660

it will help improve the reliability test.

Table 6: Item analysis of military contribution

Source: Field Survey, (2025).

Table 7: Item analysis of peace and stability

Reliability Statistics				
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items			
.627	7			
Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
PecSt1	12.90	9.089	.327	.597
PecSt2	13.22	8.644	.628	.545
PecSt3	11.61	8.181	.225	.642
PecSt4	12.55	8.734	.182	.648
PecSt5	11.94	7.263	.406	.567
PecSt6	12.88	7.842	.599	.518
PecSt7	12.80	8.834	.289	.605

Source: Field Survey, (2025).

Table 7 reveals that peace and stability had an alpha value of 0.627 which is not consistent with Tabachnick and Fidell (2014) reliability test. In relation to corrected item-total correlation, PecSt3, PecSt4, and PecSt7 had values below 0.3 and thus were dropped. When dropped, it will help improve the reliability test.

Improvement of reliability test

According to the reliability test, Ghanaians' perception, Military contribution and peace and stability had 0.837, 0.714 and 0.722 respectively and thus were consistent with the cut-off point of Tabachnick and Fidell (2014) reliability test.

Table 8: Reliability test

	Number of items	Cronbach Alpha
Ghanaians' Perception	5	0.837
Military Contribution	6	0.714
Peace and Stability	4	0.722

Source: Field Survey, (2025).

Exploratory factor analysis

Table 9: KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		Perce	MiliCont	PeaceSta
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.750	0.516	0.736
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	789.110	407.930	372.081
	Df	10	15	6
	Sig.	.000	0.000	0.000
Perc stands for Ghanaians' Perception, MiliCont stands for the Military Contribution and PecSt stands for Peace and Stability				

Source: Field Survey, (2025).

When Table 9 was examined, it was found that Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was 0.595 and Bartlett Sphericity value was found to be significant at $p < 0.05$ level. The fact that KMO value is greater than 0.50, and Bartlett Sphericity test result is significant ($p < 0.05$) indicates that there is a sufficient sample size for factor analysis and that there is a desired relationship between scale items (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2007). Also, it indicates that structural equation model can be employed.

4.5 Assessment of Structural Equation Model

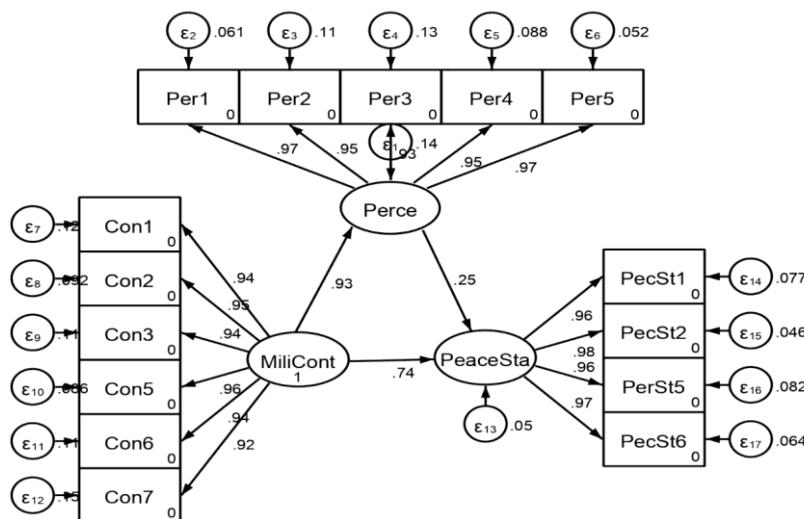
This section is comprised of the fitness threshold, the path diagram and the test of hypothesis.

Table 10: Fitness threshold

	Cut off point	
Chi-square	Below 0.05	0.000

Source: Field survey, (2025).

A chi-square (X^2) goodness of fit test is a goodness of fit test for a categorical variable. Goodness of fit is a measure of how well a statistical model fits a set of observations (Turney, 2022). The chi-square was below 0.05 and hence was acceptable, thus consistent with Hair et al., (2014).

Figure 3: Path diagram

Source: Researcher's Construct, (2025).

Table 11: Test of hypothesis

		Beta	p-value	Decision
Direct effect				
H1	MiliCont → Perce	0.93	0.000	Ho was accepted
H2	Perce → PeaceSta	0.25	0.000	Ho was accepted
H3	MiliCont → PeaceSta	0.97	0.000	Ho was accepted
Indirect effect				
H4	MiliCont → Perce → PeaceSta	0.17	0.000	Ho was accepted

Source: Field Survey, (2025).

Military Contribution: Ghanaians' perceptions had a beta value of 0.93 and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates a positive relationship between military contributions before, during, and after the election and Ghanaians' perceptions of those contributions (Beta = 0.93). The relationship is statistically significant (p-value = 0.000). **Ghanaians' perception: peace and stability** had a beta value of 0.25 and a p-value of 0.000. This means that there is a weak positive relationship between Ghanaians' perception and peace and stability in the country before, during and after election and

the relationship is statistically significant. The path relationship that exists between Military contribution and Peace and Stability was positive and statistically significant with a beta value of 0.97 and a p-value of 0.000. Military Contribution - Ghanaian's perception - Ghanaians perception had a beta value of 0.17 and a p-value of 0.000 which implies that Ghanaians' perception mediates the relationship that exists between Military contribution and peace and stability of Ghana before, during and after election. Thus, the null hypothesis of H_1 , H_2 , H_3 and H_4 were accepted.

5. Discussion

The empirical study indicates that an increase in the presence of the military in Ghana general election will undermine the democratic process leading to bias in election results, violence at polling stations and death of many. According to Feaver (2023), most people assume that members of the armed forces belong to a political party. This implies that their political affiliation will cause them to favor the party they find themselves in when monitoring and providing security during the election. The empirical study also established that the military presence intimidates voters. This implies that the use of military personnel for election will lead to a lower voter turnout. People view the military's involvement in elections negatively, linking it to electoral violence, intimidation of opposition candidates, and the disruption of democratic processes, according to Eguegu and Iwara (2023).

In contrast, military presence may be seen by some as essential to maintaining security in the face of growing insecurity (Okechukwu, Chukwuka & Chikwado, 2019).

With regard to military contribution, the study established that GAF has a higher commitment to safeguarding the stability and sovereignty of the nation. Therefore, the country's stability will be significantly increased if the GAF (the military) supports the police service. Deployments of peacekeeping forces can promote peace and stability and lessen electoral violence, especially when they provide electoral security (Gunawan,

2022). Also, Okechukwu, Chukwuka, and Chikwado (2019) note that the Nigerian military is constitutionally mandated to provide security during elections, ensuring the safety of voters, INEC officials, and electoral materials, which is an observation consistent with the current study's finding that the GAF also contributed to deterring electoral violence. This means that the military presence alone before, during and after election will prevent citizens from malpractices, that is, citizens will be afraid they will be beaten when they do something which is not in line with election or voting practices.

In line with the study finding, Nwigwe (2024) argued that, to address electoral violence, various security agencies must coordinate with one another and this will have a major influence on free, fair, and credible elections. The study also indicates that the GAF collaborated effectively with the Electoral Commission at selected polling stations during the election. This suggests that certain polling stations faced heightened security challenges that the police alone were unable to manage. The presence of the military at these locations helped ensure that the elections were conducted peacefully and without major incidents or malpractices. The study also indicates that the GAF effectively collaborated with the Electoral Commission in some polling station during the election.

This implies that, there are higher insecurity issues at some polling station and the police have not been able to handle, thus, there is the need for a higher security enforcement and according to Candra et al. (2019), security personnel may be most noticeable at polling places on Election Day. Security forces may be used in elections where there has been a high incidence of electoral violence in the past to prevent and deal with it. Moreover, the deployment of security forces during that phase of the election cycle may result from prior cases of severe electoral malpractice (Norris, 2014).

This study shows that Ghanaians' perceptions of the military are positively influenced by its involvement in general elections. In fact, the findings suggest that public confidence may increase with greater military

participation. However, Condra et al. (2019) offer a contrasting view, arguing that increased military involvement in election security can negatively affect citizens' perceptions, particularly in contexts where such involvement is associated with intimidation or political interference.

The study has further demonstrated that Ghanaians' perceptions regarding elections positively influence the peace and stability of Ghana. This suggests that an elevated perception will result in peace and stability in Ghana, which will be favourably low. This indicates that post-voting, there is increased tension regarding the election outcomes, and individuals may also lose their lives due to their support for a candidate. In line with the study findings, citizens' perception of elections influences peace and stability, with positive opinions fostering collaboration and discussion among political parties, while negative opinions can lead to conflicts (Ngwenya, 2024).

The study indicates that the path relationship that exists between military contribution and peace and stability is positive and statistically significant. This means that the use of the GAF (the Military) more often for election in Ghana will lead to an improvement in the peace and stability of Ghana before, during and after election. In line with the study findings, security personnel play a critical role in preserving peace and stability during elections by protecting electoral procedures, safeguarding stakeholders, and guaranteeing the integrity of election results (Okoye, Ezeanya & Chikezie, 2025).

The study further demonstrated that the perceptions of Ghanaians mediate the relationship between military contributions and peace and stability. The perspectives of Ghanaians regarding the deployment of the Military in general elections positively influence the extent of Military involvement and their contributions to the electoral process, ultimately fostering peace and stability in Ghana. Tomz et al. (2020) demonstrated that public opinion significantly influences military decisions in democracies, as it influences incumbents, electoral results, and military engagement policies, ultimately impacting national peace and stability.

6. Practical Implication

The Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) should focus on enhancing their role in elections by balancing their commitment to national stability with the need to uphold democratic principles. To address public concerns about intimidation at polling stations, The Ghana Armed Forces should enhance their involvement in general elections to positively influence public perception, which in turn contributes to the peace and stability of the nation.

This can be achieved by increasing their presence and support before, during, and after elections. Additionally, the Armed Forces should engage in community outreach to foster positive perceptions among Ghanaians regarding their role in the electoral process. By doing so, they can strengthen the relationship between military contributions and the overall stability of Ghana, ultimately leading to a more peaceful electoral environment. GAF should continue collaborating with the Electoral Commission to ensure a peaceful electoral process while maintaining transparency and public trust in their role.

7. Theoretical Implication

In the context of the Copenhagen School of securitization theory, the findings of this study suggest significant theoretical implications regarding the role of military involvement in the electoral process as a securitizing act. The positive perception of Ghanaians towards military contributions during elections indicates that the military's role is not merely a functional one but is also constructed as a security measure that enhances societal stability.

This aligns with the Copenhagen School's notion that security is a socially constructed phenomenon, where the perception of threats and the legitimacy of responses are crucial. The study highlights that the perception of Ghanaians mediates the relationship between military involvement and peace, suggesting that the act of securitization is contingent upon public perception. This implies that for military

contributions to be effective in promoting peace and stability, they must be framed and accepted as legitimate by the populace.

8. Conclusion

Ghana has exhibited a robust dedication to democracy through nine free and fair elections since 1992, characterised by political changes, a free press, and an independent judiciary. Nonetheless, obstacles like localised electoral violence and military participation in election security persist. Although the Commonwealth Observer Mission has classified recent elections as free and fair, the 2024 Global Peace Index indicates a deterioration in Ghana's peace ranking. This study examined the role of the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) and their participation in the general election of Ghana.

The study revealed that, although Ghanaians view the military's participation in elections as potentially detrimental to democracy and intimidating to voters, the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) were instrumental in preserving peace and stability throughout the electoral process. The GAF were committed to national security, prevention of electoral violence, and cooperated with the Electoral Commission. The study reveals that military involvement/ contribution in general elections positively influences Ghanaians' perceptions of the election and peace and stability. The study also found a positive relationship between military contributions before, during, and after elections with peace and stability. The study further established that the perception of Ghanaians mediates the relationship between military contribution and peace and stability. Future studies should investigate the long-term implications of military participation in elections and its effects on democratic processes and civil-military relations in Ghana. Future studies can also focus on military involvement, perception of citizens and voter turnout during election.

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