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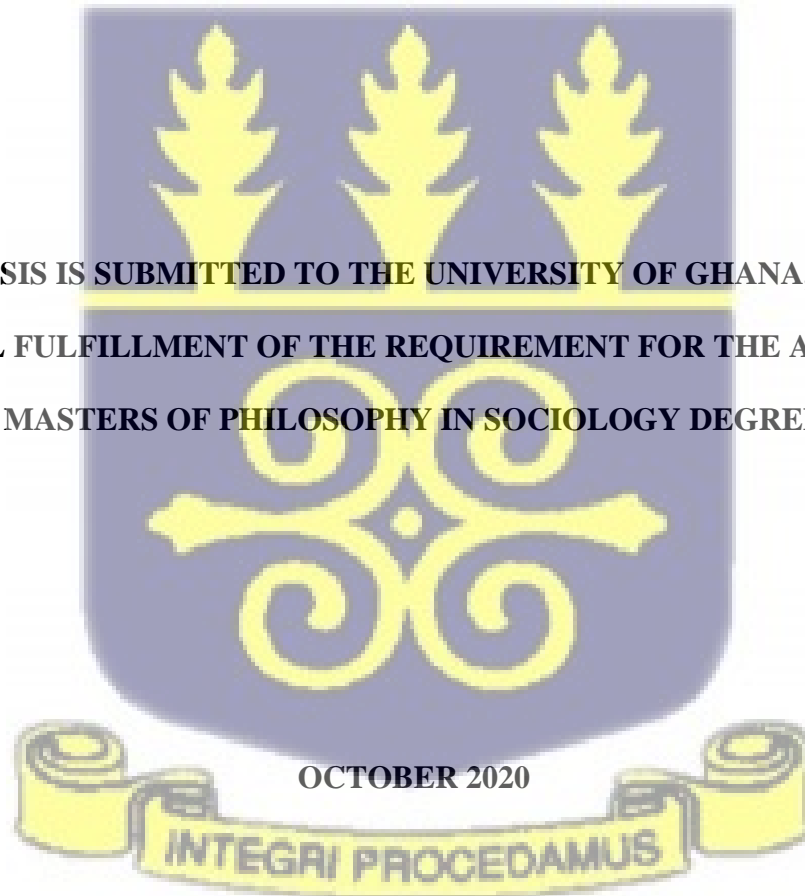
EXPLORING THE RISE OF COMPETITIVE POLITICAL VIGILANTISM IN GHANA

BY

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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF
MASTERS OF PHILOSOPHY IN SOCIOLOGY DEGREE**





DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is a result of my own research work, carried out in the Department of Sociology, University of Ghana under the supervision of Prof. Akosua Keseboa Darkwah and Dr. Mark Kwaku Mensah Obeng. References cited in this work have been duly acknowledged and all errors found in this work are solely mine. I also declare that, to the best of my knowledge, this thesis has never been presented in whole or part to another academic institution for a degree or certificate.



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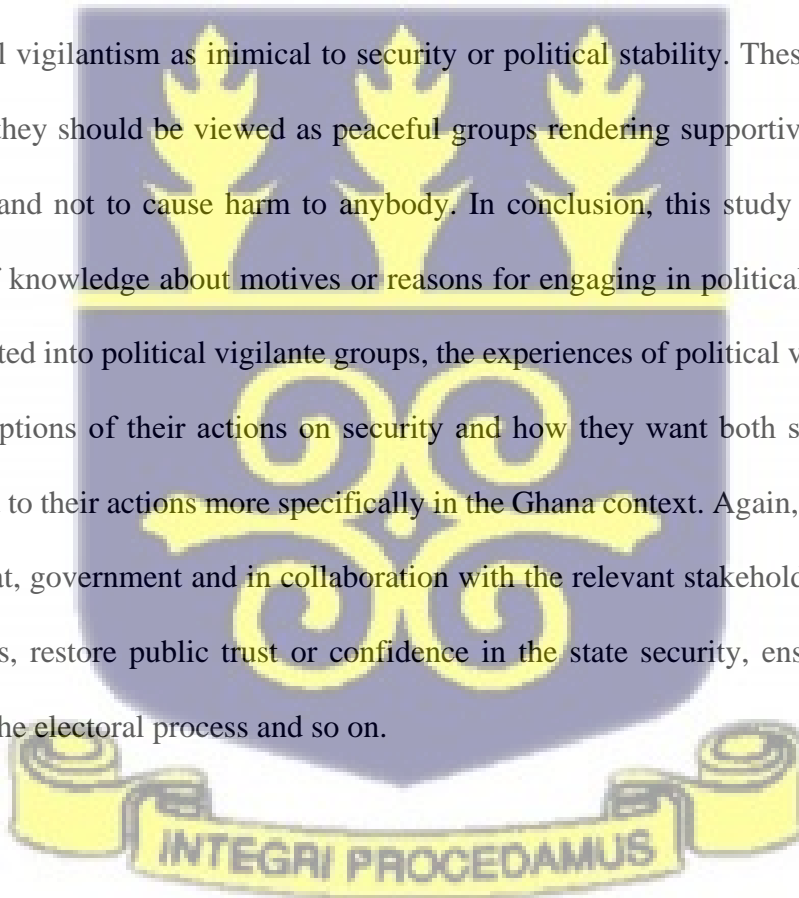
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ABSTRACT

Political vigilantism as a form of social movement has become pervasive in Ghanaian politics, especially, in the last decade. Ghanaian political parties' desire for political power is gradually making political vigilantism a part of Ghanaian politics. This threatens the democratic fabric of the Ghanaian society due to the crimes and brutalities perpetrated by these political vigilante groups. This social phenomenon has been widely discussed in Ghanaian media due to the crimes and other obscene acts that such groups tend to be associated with. In recent times, political vigilantism has gained much attention in the works of sociologists, criminologists, and other disciplines. However, among the diverse body of studies, few have been done on how people who are recruited into political vigilante groups, explain their motivation(s) for participating and their perceptions of the implications of their actions on political stability or security. This study therefore examines how people who are recruited into political vigilante groups, explain their motives or reasons for participating and their perceptions of the implications of their actions on political stability or security since the activities of political vigilantism is rising in Ghana in recent times. Guided by the qualitative research approach; - a semi-structured interviews were conducted with fifteen political vigilantes from two famous political vigilante groups in Ghana. Additional data was solicited from two females who are members of a female party youth group which work with one of the political vigilante groups. During the interviews, participants gave a full and rich narratives of how they were recruited into their political vigilante group, their motives or reasons for joining and participating in political vigilantism, their experiences during their operations, their perceptions of their actions or operations on security or political stability and how they think state and non-state actors should respond to political vigilantism. However, for some of the participants, this topic was difficult to discuss because of the sensitive nature of their activities and the current law in Ghana disbanding the activities of political vigilantes. The findings revealed that, political

vigilante group recruit its members on the basis of trust, political affiliation, ethnic affiliation, recommendation from party members or peers and previous knowledge in security. In addition, it revealed that, lack of decent jobs and poverty, lack of trust in state security institutions, lack of trust or integrity in the electoral commission, access to social support, access to social capital, a desire party recognition and ethnic support are the reasons participants gave for joining and participating in political vigilantism. On the downside, participants experienced physical and verbal assault, threat and intimidation, exploitation, regret and psychological pains as part of the operations and membership of these groups. The findings also revealed that contrary to the dominant position that vigilantes are necessarily and desirable by participants, participants perceive political vigilantism as inimical to security or political stability. These notwithstanding they desire that they should be viewed as peaceful groups rendering supportive services to their political parties and not to cause harm to anybody. In conclusion, this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge about motives or reasons for engaging in political vigilantism, how people are recruited into political vigilante groups, the experiences of political vigilantes, political vigilantes' perceptions of their actions on security and how they want both state and non-state actors to respond to their actions more specifically in the Ghana context. Again, the finding of this study implies that, government and in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders need to create more decent jobs, restore public trust or confidence in the state security, ensure diligence and transparency in the electoral process and so on.



DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my mother and siblings who have been my strength and continue to give me financial, moral and spiritual support throughout these long years of my academic journey.

And also, to Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Foundation and Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholarship Foundation for their monumental financial support. God bless you for your financial support.



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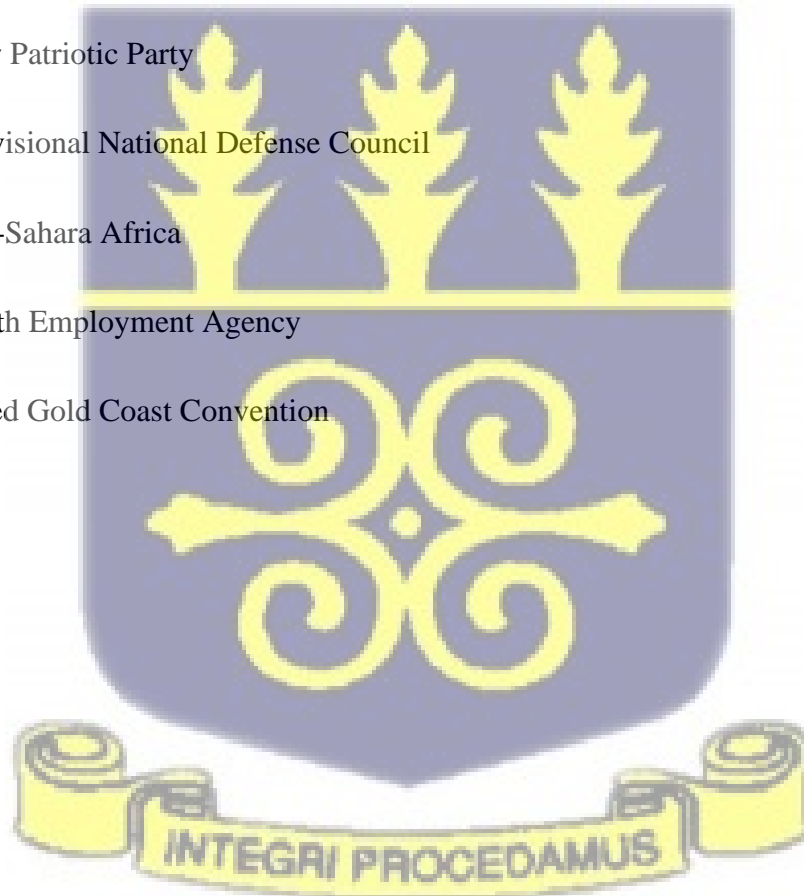
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ACRONYMS

CPP	Convention People's Party
EC	Electoral Commission of Ghana
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NABCO	Nation Builders Corpse
NHIS	National Health Insurance Scheme
NLM	National Liberation Movement
NPP	New Patriotic Party
PNDC	Provisional National Defense Council
SSS	Sub-Sahara Africa
YEA	Youth Employment Agency
UGCC	United Gold Coast Convention





CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Political vigilantism, a not so new politically interested social movement has become pervasive in Ghanaian politics, especially; in the last decade in the quest for political power by political parties (Gyampo et al., 2017; Paalo; 2017; Asamoah; 2019). This social phenomenon in recent times has caused a great deal of public concern in Ghana (Gyampo et al., 2017; Asamoah, 2019). The growing antagonism between the two major political parties in Ghana which has resulted in the mistrust in the ability of the state or public institutions to maintain fairness is gradually making political vigilantism a part of Ghanaian politics. This threatens the democratic fabric of the Ghanaian society due to the crimes and brutalities that tend to be perpetrated by members of these social movements in their quest to ensuring victory for their respective parties (Bob-Milliar, 2014a; Gyampo et al, 2017; Paalo, 2017; Tankebe; 2019). This has necessitated public demand on governments, to disband the operations and activities of such political groupings (CODEO, 2017). This came to head-on when the by-elections in Ayawaso-west Wuogon constituency in the Greater Accra region of Ghana even turned into a bloodbath event. In response to the wide condemnation, the president of Ghana, took two major decisions, first was the setting of the Presidential Commission of Enquiry to investigate the course of the disturbances and also directed the Attorney general and minister of justice to promote a bill that will lead to the disbandment of all such groupings. The President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo eventually signed in 2019 the

vigilantism and related offences bill into law and to criminalize membership of such groupings among others.

Empirical evidence indicates that political vigilantism as a form of social movement has several negative impacts including the destruction of private and public property, physical violence, loss of life and deformation of people (Anderson, 2002; Smith, 2004; Meagher, 2007; Pratten, 2008; Tankebe, 2009; Bob-Milliar, 2014a; Gyampo et, 2017; Paalo, 2017; Asamoah, 2019; Tankebe; 2019; Dumenu and Adzraku, 2020). For instance, in the year 2017, 2018 and 2019 in Ghana, political vigilantes confronted and abused countless individuals, brutalized and tortured numerous state security officials, politicians and judiciary officials as well as destroyed state properties (Gyampo et al, 2017; Asamoah, 2019; Dumenu and Adzraku, 2020). The above situation is not only peculiar to Ghana but also happening across several African countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania among others (Anderson, 2002; Smith, 2004; Meagher, 2007; Di Nunzio, 2014; Paalo, 2017). For instance, in 2002, vigilantes killed 20 people and injured over 31 people in Kenya (Anderson, 2002). In the light of the pervasiveness of the practice, this study investigates the reasons for which political vigilantes operate, the process by which people are recruited into political vigilantism groups, experiences of political vigilantes and their impact on security.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

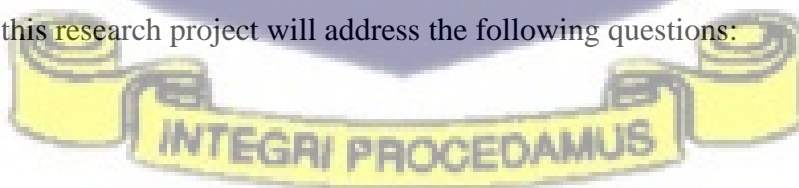
The unhealthy political competition between the two main political parties in Ghana threatens the social and political stability of the country. This is particularly because of the usual intimidation, threats, physical confrontations, destruction of properties, snatching of ballot boxes among others by opposing political vigilante groups during Ghana's general elections and political party elections which have become a norm in Ghanaian elections. Quite apart from that, the activities

and operations of political party vigilantes have transitioned beyond elections into post-elections activities and support for incumbent or recumbent political party operations. This implies that, political vigilantism is almost normalized and their perpetual disregard for rule of law which undermines Ghana's democracy and their unabated violation of human rights with impunity (Gyampo et al, 2017; Dumenu and Adzraku, 2020) which threatens the peace and security of the country have become a great concern for many Ghanaians. These concerns have propelled several scholars (Anderson, 2002; Smith, 2004; Meagher, 2007; Pratten, 2008; Bob-Milliar, 2014a; Di Nunzio, 2014; Gyampo et al; Paolo, 2017; Tankebe; 2019) to undertake studies that sheds light on this critical social phenomenon. For instance, Gyampo et al (2017) investigated how political vigilante groups play a key role in securing electoral victory vis-a-vis causing electoral defeat for their political parties and how the activities of political vigilantes undermine Ghana's drive towards democratic maturity. Bob-Milliar (2014a) explored how Ghanaian political parties mobilize and recruited party foot soldiers to engage in electoral misconduct to win elections or continue to have command over state resources using event catalogues and in-depth interviews. He further examined how winner-take-all politics in Ghana contributes to low-intensity electoral violence in Ghana.

Paolo (2017) studied the relationship between political violence and political party youth wings (vigilantes) in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) since 1990 to 2016 using Ghana as a case study. The conditions that sustain and propel political party youth wings or vigilantes to perpetrate low intensity electoral violence across SSA, the differences and similarities of political party youth wings (political vigilantes) across SSA. Also, the significance of the support, mobilization, and organizational skills of political vigilantes to their mother parties or affiliates in Africa has been explored (Smith, 2004; Meagher, 2007; Bob-Milliar, 2014a; Paolo, 2017). Norman (2019) also

investigated the relationship between political party vigilantism and bodybuilding, the role political party vigilantes play in election violence as well as an attempt to find out if bodybuilding predisposes one to political party vigilantism using a sample size of 16 participants who were all bodybuilders in Accra, Ghana. For Adinkrah (2005), using newspaper accounts in Ghana from 1990 to 2000 examined the social, political, and economic factors that contribute to vigilante killings in Ghana. Adinkrah (2005) also examined how, when, where and when victims of vigilante killings experienced this phenomenon as well as the official efforts put in place to combat this phenomenon.

Basically, we know about political vigilantism at the organizational level, but not at the individual level that is we know why the groups exist. We know of political vigilantism as a form of political participation in Ghana, but has not reorganized political vigilantism as a form of social movement in Ghana, the functions it performs for political parties but not how individuals are recruited to join these groups, their reasons for participating, their experiences during elections or their operations and the perceptions of the implications of political vigilantes' actions on political stability or security in Ghana. It is for these reasons that, this study investigated the motives behind political vigilantes' operations and activities, how political vigilantism groups recruit their members, political vigilante's experiences and their perceptions about their actions on political stability as well as how political vigilantism can be stopped as a type of social movement in Ghana. To achieve, this, this research project will address the following questions:



1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

General Objective:

To explore how people who are recruited into political vigilante groups, explain their reasons for participating and their perceptions of the implications of their actions on political stability or security.

Specific Objectives:

1. To find out how participants in political vigilantism explain their reasons for participating in their group.
2. To explore the process by which people join or are recruited into political vigilante groups
3. To examine the experiences of political vigilantes during their operations
4. To find out political vigilantes' perceptions of their actions on political stability or security
5. To find out how political vigilantes think state and non-state actors should respond to political vigilantism

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How does those who participate in political vigilantism explain their reasons for participating in their group?
2. What is the process by which people join or are recruited into political vigilante groups?
3. What are the experiences of political vigilantes during their operations?
4. What are political vigilantes' perceptions of their actions on political stability or security?
5. How do political vigilantes think state and non-state actors should respond to political vigilantism?

1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The outline of this study consists of seven chapters. Chapter One comprises an introduction of the study, problem statement which addresses the research gap. This is followed by the research objectives or significance of the study and the research questions.

Chapter Two presents a review of the existing literature on political vigilantism. This chapter reviewed and analyzed the position of other related and relevant literature in connection with the study. The section discusses key concepts such as social movement, vigilantism, types of vigilantism, political vigilantism, reasons for engaging in political vigilantism, political vigilante recruitment and perceptions of political vigilantes and security. The chapter ends on the discussion of the theoretical framework for the study.

Chapter Three presents the research methodology, it highlights the research approach, a brief profile of the study areas (Bolgatanga in Upper East region and Accra in the Greater Accra region), the target population for the study, the sampling method, how data was collected and analysed. The chapter ends with a discussion on ethical considerations and field experiences of the researcher.

Chapter Four presents the history of political vigilantism in Ghana. The chapter deals with the nature and purpose of political vigilantes during the colonial and post-colonial era in Ghana.

Chapter Five presents the profile of the two political vigilante groups that participated in the study, the profile of a political party female youth group that works with one of the political vigilante groups. It also presents the findings, analysis and discusses the empirical results under various key themes regarding what is political vigilantism from the perspective of political vigilantes, how political vigilantes are recruited and factors determining participation in political vigilante groups.

Chapter Six presents the data and findings, sociodemographic characteristics of the participants, analysis and discussions of the empirical results under various key themes regarding experiences of political vigilantes, political vigilantes' perceptions of their actions on security and the implication of their actions on security or social stability.

Lastly, Chapter Seven focuses on the summary of the major findings, conclusions, implications of the study for future research, and limitations of the study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

To understand the contributions of this research, it is important to review the existing research on the subject. I begin by examining the concept social movement, the works on vigilantism in general and various typologies of vigilantism. Following this, I focus on political vigilantism, emergence of political vigilantism in Ghana, including its causes and its impact on society.

2.2 SOCIAL MOVEMENT

Social movement as a concept in academia has varied definitions. Goodwin, Jasper and khattra (1999:43) defines social movement as “an organized and self-conscious field of actors with grievance and common purpose, however shifting and negotiable”. Social movements are very important means of organizing for social and political change, they also have the capacity to promote as well as resist change (Staggenborg, 2012; McCarthy and Zald, 1973). Social movements can also be defined as a form of association in which its members share a common purpose and solidarity in sustained partnership with elites, authorities or other groups usually to challenge disruptive actions against authorities, elites or established codes (Tarrow, 1994 cited in Goodwin et al, 1999).

Guided by Tarrow’s 1994 cited by Goodwin et al (1999) perspective on social movements, one can classify political vigilantism and their activities as a form of social movement. In fact, scholars who conceive political vigilantism as a form of social movement like Porta and Diani (2006) construes social movement as a social group which is connected through thick informal systems

and engages in conflict with obviously defined rivals or opponents that they share a separate collective goal. For Meyer Zald (2000), the concept could be defined as “ideologically structured actions” as a movement activity. Zald (2000), further argues that social movement-related activity occurs within a variety of institutional arenas including electoral competition, legislative processes, political parties, and government agencies with supporters often from families, schools and so on. This understanding presupposes that, social movements can equally and do often engage in political activities or support political parties and even sometimes take the state laws into their own hands in order to achieve their predetermined goals for group members or their allies. This definition allows the activities of political vigilantes in Ghana such as engaging in organized collective action, promoting or resisting social and political change, supporting political activities and so on as a form of social movement, irrespective of the fact that, they sometimes use illegitimate means to achieve their goals.

2.3 VIGILANTISM

The etymology of the word vigilantism is traced to the Latin word, “vigilantem” which literally means watchful. Vigilantism (vigilantem) was initially used to refer to a committee or group organized to suppress and punish crime as and when the processes of the law appeared inadequate. The term vigilantism is also associated with the word “vigil” and to be “vigil” means to be in a constant state of alertness. Vigilantism may, therefore, denote a phenomenon where groups organise to detect and contain dangers or crimes.

Several scholars have attempted to define vigilantism in different ways. For instance, Abraham (2003) defined it as an endeavour by a gathering of community members to authorize standards and keep up lawfulness for the benefit of their networks,- in the apparent nonattendance of compelling state authority action through the police and court, frequently by falling back on

brutality. For Gyampo et al (2017: 114), vigilantism simply refers to “being watchful and fully awake to ensure that nothing untoward happens, has nothing to do with violence”. Vigilantism is also concerned with the exercise of power by individuals who do not have state legitimate power to do so (Tankebe, 2009). Again, vigilantism according to Rosenbaum and Sederberg (1974: 4) is simply “establishment violence” that is, taking the law into one’s own hands and using violence or brute force to protect the interest of a group that one belongs to.

It is worth noting that, even though, several scholars have attempted defining vigilantism, some of these scholars did not explicitly provide a working definition for the purpose of empirical analysis (Brown, 1975; Rosenbaum & Sederberg, 1974) whereas those scholars who did provide one, often provide their definition by situating it on the widely accepted definition of vigilantism by Johnston (1996). Johnston (1996) defines vigilantism as; any social movement or activity conducted by autonomous private voluntary citizens, who engages in planning and premeditation, uses or threatens to use force in response to perceived or actual transgression of institutionalized norms, with the aim of controlling crime or other social infractions and offering assurance of security to both participants and to others.

Despite the bone of contention by scholars as to what exactly is the definition of the concept vigilantism, some scholars (Rosenbaum & Sederberg, 1974; Juliano, 2012 Schubert, 2015; Gyampo et al, 2017) have come to the conclusions that, vigilantism is indeed broad and encompass many possible activities. Based on these various activities that characterizes vigilantism, various typologies of the concept emerged for purposes of understanding which aspect of the phenomenon a society or group might be experiencing at any point in time. Below is a discussion of the various typologies of vigilantism with much emphasis on the aspect or type of vigilantism known as

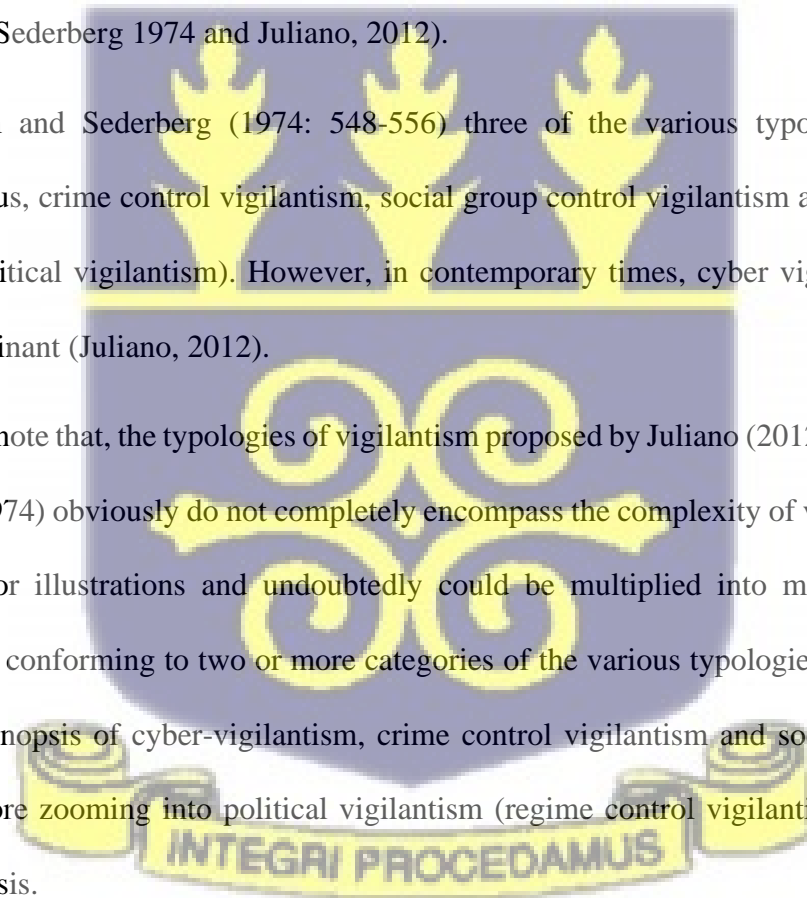
political vigilantism which is of great concern to the Ghanaian populace and the main focus of this study.

2.4 TYPOLOGIES OF VIGILANTISM

As already indicated that the definitions of vigilantism are broad and encompass many possible activities, it led to the formulation of various typologies of vigilantism by some scholars such as; Rosenbaum & Sederberg (1974), Juliano (2012) and Schuberth (2015). These various typologies are basically related to the intended purpose of the vigilante action or vigilante behaviour (Rosenbaum & Sederberg, 1974). These typologies include crime control vigilantism, social group control vigilantism, political vigilantism (regime control vigilantism) and cyber vigilantism (Rosenbaum & Sederberg 1974 and Juliano, 2012).

For Rosenbaum and Sederberg (1974: 548-556) three of the various typologies apparently predominate; thus, crime control vigilantism, social group control vigilantism and regime control vigilantism (political vigilantism). However, in contemporary times, cyber vigilantism has also become predominant (Juliano, 2012).

It is pertinent to note that, the typologies of vigilantism proposed by Juliano (2012) and Rosenbaum & Sederberg (1974) obviously do not completely encompass the complexity of vigilantism but are simply better for illustrations and undoubtedly could be multiplied into many categories or characterized as conforming to two or more categories of the various typologies. The subsequent write up is a synopsis of cyber-vigilantism, crime control vigilantism and social group control vigilantism before zooming into political vigilantism (regime control vigilantism), which is the focus of this thesis.

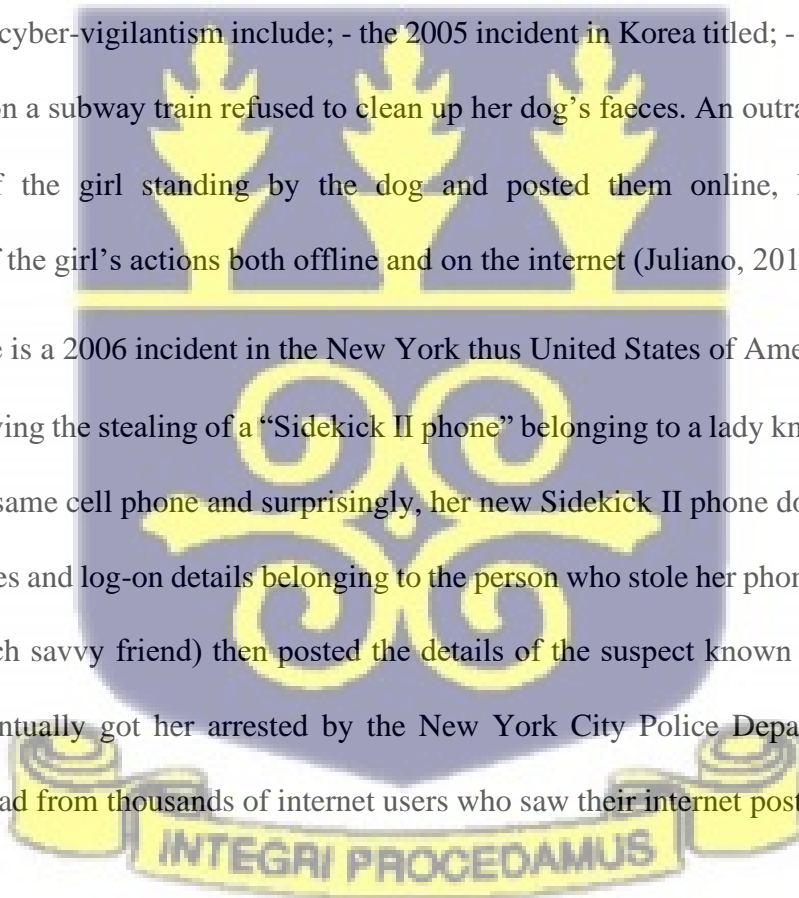


2.4.1 Cyber-vigilantism

This type of vigilantism is usually engaged in by an independent crime fighter, who uses the internet and its tools such as YouTube videos, social media sites and blogs to expose or deliver personal justice to those who violates the existing law and order (Juliano, 2012). Cyber-vigilante(s) usually take the law into their own hands and uses the internet as a medium to ensure or restore law and order, try to alter the regime in an event where it does not deliver to its mandate or even provide personal justice to private individuals or government officials who violate or neglect real-world citizens and “netizen” (an amalgamation of the words “net” and “citizen” as cited in Juliano, 2012) code of conduct (Juliano, 2012).

An example of a cyber-vigilantism include; - the 2005 incident in Korea titled; - the “dog-shit girl” in which; a girl on a subway train refused to clean up her dog’s faeces. An outraged bystander took pictures of the girl standing by the dog and posted them online, leading to public condemnation of the girl’s actions both offline and on the internet (Juliano, 2012).

Another example is a 2006 incident in the New York thus United States of America, specifically New York involving the stealing of a “Sidekick II phone” belonging to a lady known as Ivana. She later bought the same cell phone and surprisingly, her new Sidekick II phone downloaded emails, messages, pictures and log-on details belonging to the person who stole her phone. Ivana and Evan Guttman (her tech savvy friend) then posted the details of the suspect known as “Sasha” on the internet and eventually got her arrested by the New York City Police Department due to the assistance they had from thousands of internet users who saw their internet post (Juliano, 2012).



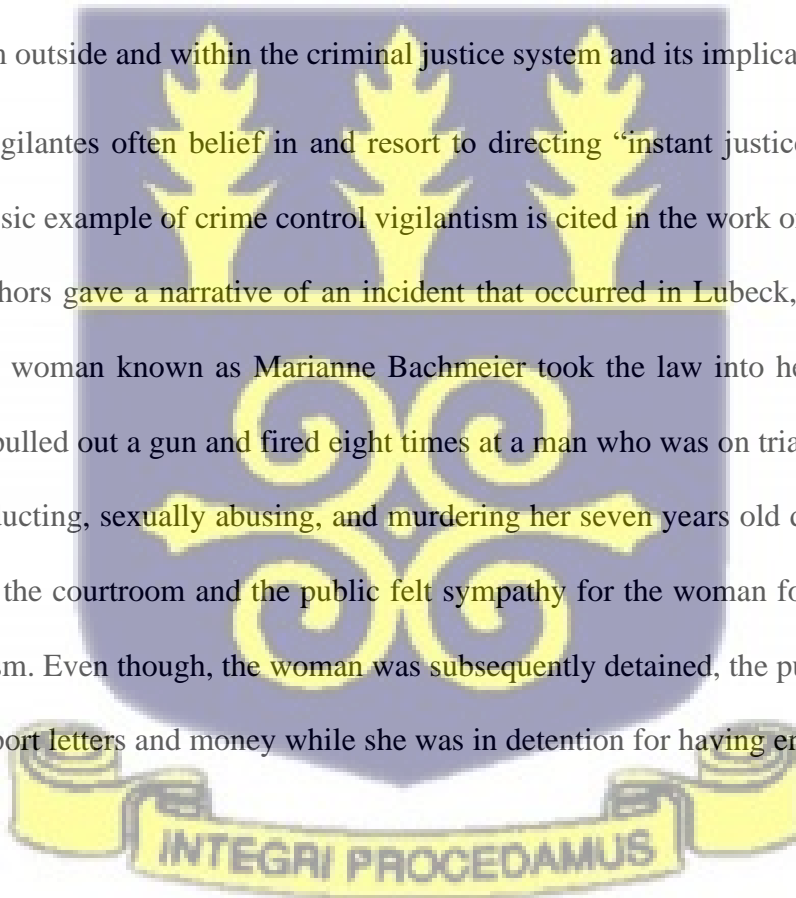
2.4.2 Crime control vigilantism

This type of vigilantism is directed against individuals perceived or noted to be committing acts proscribed by the state laws. Those acts usually harm people and both private and public property, but the perpetrators escape justice due to government inefficiency, corruption, or the leniency of the formal legal system. For Rosenbaum and Sederberg (1974), this type of vigilantism is the kind most associated with vigilantes and often engaged by private individuals. These kind of vigilante groups or private individuals usually aim at ensuring or restoring law and order where state formal apparatus for enforcing law and order has not yet been effective or there is a breakdown of law and order in society. Vigilantes under this typology are often mobilized and led by representatives of the higher socioeconomic classes in the crime-plagued community, though the followers have tended to represent broader class back grounds. Crime control vigilantes often receive popular or public support for their actions or behaviour even in circumstances where they go the extreme of brutalizing or killing an alleged offender (Haas et al, 2012).

Crime control vigilantism can occur in any society where the government is believed to be ineffective in protecting people and property. For scholars such as Haas et al (2012) and Tankebe (2009) there is often popular support for crime control vigilantism, which implies that there is a decline in public confidence in the criminal justice system. Examples of crime control vigilantism groups across the world include; the Esquadrao da Morte (Death Squad) in Brazil, “The Gentlemen” founded in 1971 in Argentina, the "Afro-American Group Attack Team" vigilantes in Chicago-USA, black and Puerto Rican vigilantes in New York- USA, the "Spades Unlimited" vigilantes in Washington USA, the “Sungusungu” or “Busalama” (meaning “Safety and Security” or “Poison of black biting ant/arrow” in Swahili) of northern Tanzania among others (Rosenbaum & Sederberg, 1974; Abrahams, 1987; Fleisher, 2000; Schuberth, 2015).

The primary correlates for the emergence of crime control vigilante groups include;- dissatisfaction with the government's inability to enforce the laws, the belief that the police are corrupt and the belief that the judicial institutions or procedures are inadequate (Rosenbaum & Sederberg, 1974; Tankebe, 2009; Haas et al, 2012; Schuberth; 2015). For Rosenbaum and Sederberg (1974), crime control vigilantism is often associated with private persons, however, there are few instances where, state security personnel may engage in this kind of vigilantism, for instance, by applying coercion to criminals during or off duty in order to fulfil their duties and give trust and confidence to the general public. For Haas et al (2012), little is known about the actual predisposing factors that leads to popular support for those who often take the law into their own hands, how the public view justice from outside and within the criminal justice system and its implication on society.

Crime control vigilantes often believe in and resort to directing “instant justice” to their alleged offenders. A classic example of crime control vigilantism is cited in the work of Haas et al (2012) in which the authors gave a narrative of an incident that occurred in Lubeck, west Germany in 1981 in which a woman known as Marianne Bachmeier took the law into her own hands in a courtroom. She pulled out a gun and fired eight times at a man who was on trial in the courtroom for allegedly abducting, sexually abusing, and murdering her seven years old daughter. The man died instantly in the courtroom and the public felt sympathy for the woman for engaging in this kind of vigilantism. Even though, the woman was subsequently detained, the public keep sending her flowers, support letters and money while she was in detention for having engaged in this kind of vigilantism.



2.4.3 Social group control vigilantism

This type of vigilantism is directed against a group(s) that are competing for or advocating for a redistribution of values within the system. This kind of vigilantism is usually not directed towards criminal activities within the system or society. But rather, just the application of illegal coercion in response to those who advocate for a significant change in the distribution of values or the existence of upwardly mobile segments of society (Rosenbaum and Sederberg, 1974). Thus, their existence is mostly to react violently towards the formal political system which becomes supportive of a new distribution of values. This type of vigilantism is further distinguished into whether the identity of the target group is basically communal (i.e., having a primordial characteristic such as race, religion, caste, tribe, and the like), economic, or political (Rosenbaum & Sederberg, 1974). This kind of vigilantism is intended to regulate outcast social groups rather than ensuring crime control, this type of vigilantism is usually less rooted in government ineffectiveness per se but in the irrelevance of formal avenues of redress or the inability of government to protect the interest of certain communal (racial, religious, tribal and so on) groups through the formal procedures.

The primary cause for social group or communal vigilantism is usually the attempt of a lower ranked social group to rise above its socially prescribed position. Examples of social group vigilantes include the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in USA who were intended to terrorize and made sure Negroes were in the proper position in the society. The traumatizing experiences the lower 'Jatis' in India had to go through in their attempted to raise their ritual status in society. The communal tension of 1969 in Malaysia that led to bloody riots and the Chinese who were the sub social group including other minority groups were killed (200 estimated killing), the "anti-Ibo" attacks in northern Nigeria in 1966, the Muslim Brothers of Egypt fighting moral decay in the name of Islam

and Morality, the victimization of Catholic minority periodically by the dominant Protestants mostly the “Protestant B-Specials (a branch of police force) in Northern Ireland, the attempt by a dominant group known as “Pogrom” in West Pakistan to preserve their position from the threat of the “Awami League” which was striving for a redistribution of political and economic values (Rosenbaum & Sederberg, 1974).

2.4.4 Political Vigilantism

This type of vigilantism also known as “regime control vigilantism” (Rosenbaum and Sederberg, 1974) is usually directed against the government or regime, in situations, where the established sectors find government inadequate or lack of capabilities very frustrating. Political vigilantism or Regime control vigilantism, is therefore, a kind of vigilantism intended to alter the regime, to make the "superstructure" into a more effective guardian of the "substructure" (Rosenbaum and Sederberg, 1974). This type of vigilantism may be engaged in by private individuals or groups who are often occupants of official positions in the military or bureaucracy or are allies to powerful political officials or elites. Political vigilantism could be defined as, an instance where organized armed or unarmed groups are deployed as private armed forces to safeguard the electoral prosperity of political parties (Amankwah, 2017). Political vigilantes may also be used to refer to individuals or groups usually youth groups, who are recruited and hired as affiliates or members of a political party for security purposes (Schuberth, 2015). It should be noted that most of such groups are often informal in nature and as such they might be known by few party Executives. According to Prempeh (2012) and Paolo (2017), there is an alarming proliferation of political party youth wing or vigilantes who mostly offer voluntary and significant support to their mother parties and their candidates during election season and, in turn, receive employments or private payoffs in return for their continued loyalty.

The key functions of such political vigilante groups include but not limited to, the use of violence or illegitimate means to control or reduce the power of the regime, political parties' bureaucracies, canvassing for votes and safeguarding the political parties as well as their office holders (Paalo, 2017; Gyampo et al, 2017; Bob-Milliar, 2014; Smith, 2004; Rosembaum & Sederberg, 1974). Examples of both private persons and groups engaging in this kind of vigilantism include; the political assassinations which proliferated during Philippine election campaigns, the “Movimiento Costa Rica Libre” (Free Costa Rica Movement) in Costa Rica, a far-right anti-communist group, the Nasser in Egypt, Bakassi boys of Nigeria among others (Rosenbaum and Sederberg, 1974; Smith, 2004; Meagher, 2008).

In Ghana, political vigilantism groups are made up of the mass unemployed youth usually muscular in nature (macho men) either armed or unarmed who are directly and indirectly affiliated to the two major political parties in Ghana, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and are perceived to attain notoriety in the political sphere (Safo, 2019; Gyampo et al, 2017). There are many political vigilantism groups in Ghana such as the: Bamba Boys, Kandahar Boys, Aluta Boys, Nima Boys, Veranda Boys, Mahama Boys, Azorka Boys, Invincible Forces, Bolga Bulldogs, NATO forces, Nana Addo fun club, Bugri Nabu fun club, John Mahama fun club, Delta force, just to mention a few (Gyampo et al, 2017; Paalo, 2017; Dumenu & Adzraku, 2020; Bjarnesen, 2020).

Political vigilantism in Ghana dates as far back as the 1940s (before political independence) and became much pronounced in the early phase of the political independence in Ghana (Bob-Milliar, 2014a, Bob-Milliar; 2014b; Paablo, 2017). Even though, the operations, activities, and dynamics of political vigilantism in Ghana has evolved in Ghana since the inception of political independence, their operations and activities continue to violate the norms of modern democracy

or society (Bob-Milliar, 2014a; Dumenu & Adzraku, 2020). Despite their violation of the norms of liberal democracy in Ghana, Ghana is still seen as a point of reference for good governance and stable democracy in Africa (Dumenu and Adzraku, 2020).

Since the fourth republic, Ghana has experienced some form of electoral violence during the numerous by-elections, the re-runs and the seven presidential and parliamentary elections. The various forms of political violence which has fortunately not resulted in civil wars like elsewhere in Africa is often perpetuated by these political vigilantes (Bob-Milliar, 2014a; Paolo, 2017; Dumenu & Adzraku, 2020). Examples of by-elections since the start of the forth republic that were characterized by all forms of electoral violence perpetuated by political vigilantes affiliated to both NDC and NPP include; Akwatia by-election in Eastern Region in August 2009, the Chereponi byelection in the Northern Region in September 2009, the Atiwa by-election in the Eastern Region in August 2010, the Tallensi by-election in the Upper East Region in July 2015 (Edu-Afful and Allotey-Pappoe, 2016 cited in Dumenu and Adzraku, 2020).

The most recent by-election in Ghana that was characterized by violence, fear and panic perpetuated by political vigilantes was the Ayawaso West Wuogon constituency by-elections in which shooting occurred and several people suffered various injuries due to clashes between NDC political vigilantes known as the “Hawks” and purported national security operatives (Dumenu and Adzraku, 2020). Political vigilante groups affiliated to the leading political parties in Ghana thus the NPP and NDC are known for causing all forms of violence, fear and panic during interparty and intra-party elections with the aim of intimidating their political opponents and safeguarding the electoral process due to their perceived lack of trust in the state security (Gyampo et al, 2017; Paolo, 2017; Dumenu and Adzraku, 2020). The subsequent discussions will focus on the predisposing factors that leads to political vigilantism.

2.5 REASONS FOR POLITICAL VIGILANTISM

2.5.1 Provision of Security

First and foremost, the services of political vigilantes are often demanded to provide security or protection for their clients (Smith, 2004; Meagher, 2007; Gyampo et al, 2017; Paalo, 2017; Bjarnesen, 2020). It is indisputable that the security agencies in Ghana to some extent are discharging their roles professionally. Nonetheless when it comes to election security, they seem unenthusiastic to a large extent in dealing with deviant and aggressive individual or groups whose actions disturb the electoral process (Bob-Milliar, 2014a; Gyampo et al, 2017; Bjarnesen, 2020). Hence, the mistrust and inability of state security agencies in Ghana and Africa at large to deal with political vigilantes before, during and after national or by-elections often necessitates employing sub-state security actors known as political vigilante groups (Smith, 2004; Meagher, 2007; Gyampo et al, 2017; Paalo, 2017). Most political figures in opposition often express their dissatisfaction in the state security apparatus while pointing a looming bomb that the Government Security system cannot act in their political interest (Bob-Milliar, 2017). For instance, there has been situations where the opposition has raised the concern that the Police services usually have a hand in assisting the incumbent in stealing ballot boxes (Gyampo et al, 2017; Asamoah, 2019). Hence, the need to resort to the services of political vigilantes to safeguard the electoral process. In addition, the unlawful takeover or seizure of state offices such as the National Youth employment offices, the National Health Insurance Schemes, lorry parks, public toilets and sometimes the abuse or physical assault of government appointees or persons who work in public offices that the state security cannot or are unwilling to address creates an atmosphere of popular

support for the presence and operation of political vigilante activities (Anderson, 2002; Smith, 2004; Meagher, 2007; Gyampo et al, 2017; Paalo, 2017; Bjarnesen, 2020).

2.5.2 Political patronage or Clientelism

A plethora of scholars such as; Smith (2004), Meagher (2007), Gyampo et al (2017) among others have opined that, one of the predominant and leading reasons for political vigilantism is political patronage or political opportunism. Political patronage basically refers to the appointment of someone into the public sector based on party loyalty or the award of state resources to individuals for their political support. Political vigilantes operate on the notion that, their political patrons who are often politicians or public office holders control resources, are very influential and wealthy (Smith, 2004; Gyampo et al, 2017). Hence, their vigilante service to their political patrons would lure their political patrons to in turn provide them with their wants or needs (Smith, 2004; Gyampo et al, 2017). For instance, political vigilantes after working hard and protecting the electoral process for their political patrons to either gain or retain power expect their political patrons to reciprocate their effort by providing them employment into public offices or sharing the state resources. Political clientelism is a concept that became popular in African studies during the 1960s and 1970s, in which electoral studies in developing countries described electoral politics in Africa as being “clientelistic” (Gyampo et al, 2017). Political clientelism basically has to do with political patrons giving material favours to citizens in exchange for political favours at the polls. Hence, unlike political patronage in which political vigilantes work for their political patrons to gain power and then offer them jobs, with the political clientelism, the vigilantes work for their political patrons in order to receive money or other material favours during elections.

Also, the ability of political vigilantes in Africa to combat violent criminals or forces that threatens the existing social order that the police cannot or are unwilling to combat makes the vigilantes attractive to political patrons who takes advantage of their vigilante capabilities for their political benefit (Smith, 2004; Asamoah, 2019).

2.5.3 Insecure or lack of Integrity of the electoral Processes

Again, some political elites or patrons of political parties, who occupy various positions of trust or are public officers, and are wealthy and control massive resources often recruit, train and fund political vigilantism groups in Africa to provide them personal security and assist them attain electoral victory (Smith, 2004; Bob-Milliar, 2014; Gyampo et al, 2017). The fact worth noticing is that the alarming rate at which intra-party (groups) and inter-party (groups) conflicts (BobMilliar, 2014) and the insecure electoral processes that often occur during presidential and parliamentary elections, by-elections and primaries in Ghana anytime there is the need to vote people into positions within the party or public offices, requires flag bearers or aspirants of political parties to intensify their security (Gyampo et al, 2017; Paolo, 2017). Hence politicians are often likely to resort to the use of political vigilantes for their safety and security to escape the frequent wrangling and intimidation within and without their various political parties as well as the uncertain electoral process.

In addition, opposition or recumbent political parties in Ghana over the years finds Ghana's electoral process as lacking integrity due to their perceptions grounded on experience that the incumbent or ruling political party often interfere and control the decisions or activities of the "so called" independent electoral commission (Gyampo et al, 2017; Dumenu and Adzraku, 2020). For instance, during the 2012 and 2016 presidential and parliamentary elections, Atiwa by-election,

the Chereponi by-elections, the Tallensi by-elections among others, incidence of snatching of ballot boxes, suspension of voting, violation of voting procedures among others perpetrated by political vigilantes reported by the media was believed to be linked to the lack of integrity in the police and the electoral commission (Gyampo et al, 2017; Dumenu and Adzraku, 2020).

2.5.4 Unemployment

Another, source of political vigilantism could be linked to the recruitment of individuals from among the teeming population of unemployed youth, often with low level or no formal education who are directly and/or affiliated to the two major political parties - the NPP and the NDC (Bob-Milliar, 2014a; Gyampo et al, 2017). The principle of reciprocity, nepotism and favoritism in the appointments of individuals to the portfolios of the various Government security agencies, the judiciary and other public institutions based on political affiliations often lure party youth wings to form such groups, render services to their mother party with the hope of gaining employment when their affiliate political party wins elections (Bob-Malliar, 2014a; Paalo, 2017).

The security agencies are often used as means of rewarding party faithful or political vigilantes who contributed earnestly in bringing a party to power by employing them into the police service, national security, military, immigration amongst others (Bob-Milliar, 2014a; Gyampo et al, 2017; Paalo, 2017). Other political vigilantes who are unemployed or underemployed also gets the opportunity to work in offices such as the National Youth Agencies or Youth Employment Authority, National Health Insurance Scheme, Nations Builders Corpse (NABCO) just to mention but a few. This situation sometimes pushes some individuals who are unemployed or underemployed to join such political vigilantism groups with the aim of getting access to various

employment opportunities when their political party gains or retains political power. It is also interesting to note that employment of political vigilantes by their political party is often not based on merit and even in situations where political vigilantes lack the necessary qualifications to get access to certain jobs, such vigilantes still have access to other job opportunities such as being in charge of public toilets, toll boots, lorry parks and likes. This situation also predisposes employed individuals to participate in political vigilantism.

2.5.5 Poverty

Furthermore, most individuals whose financial background is nothing to write home about often want to belong to political vigilantism groups since they see it as an avenue for soliciting for money or private pay-offs from the politicians in order to satisfy their basic human needs per the human need's theory (Meagher 2007; Pratten, 2009; Gyampo et al, 2017). In the same vein, it has been revealed through studies that there is a direct linkage between poverty and political vigilantism (Meagher, 2007; Bob-Milliar, 2014a). For instance, in Ghana it has been established that areas with the high level of unemployment and poverty particularly the northern part of Ghana which falls within the poverty zone in Ghana have become host areas for political vigilante groups. There is ample evidence to back this claim, for example, studies reveal that individuals who are members of; Bolga bulldogs, Azorka Boys, Bukurisung, Nana Addo fun club, Mahama fun club and the likes mostly come from the northern part of Ghana which falls within the poverty zone in Ghana (Bob-Milliar, 2014a; Gyampo et al; 2017; Bjarnesen, 2020).

The operations and activities of political vigilantes now goes beyond elections and election related activities (Dumenu and Adzraku, 2020) to include providing day to day security for their political patrons, providing security and other services during government ceremonial functions such as

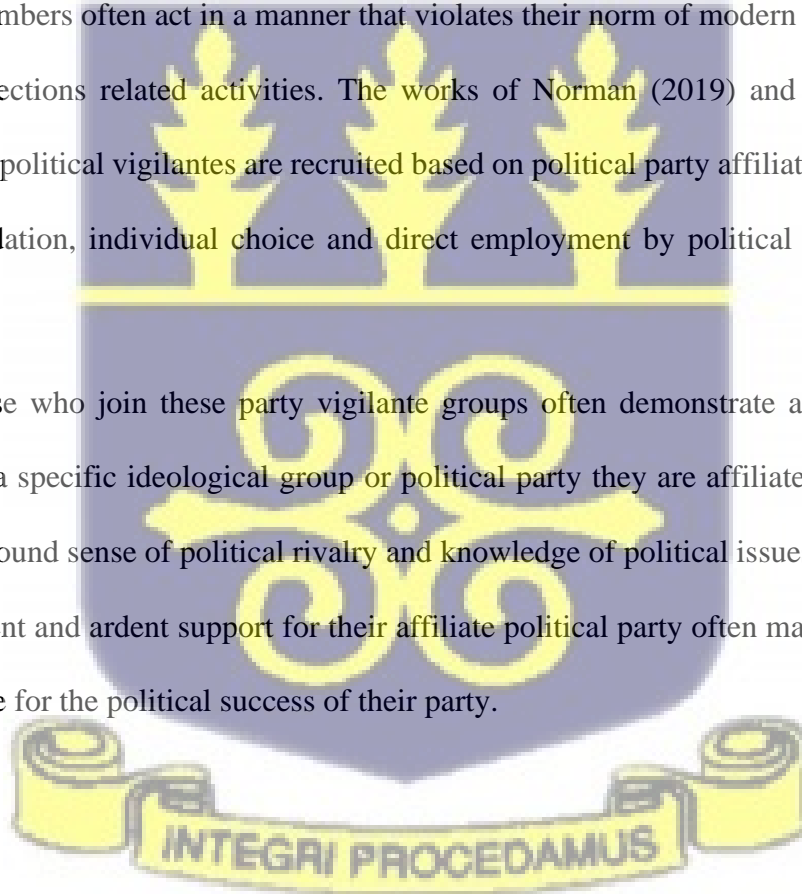
celebration of Independence Day, farmer day and the likes as well as commissioning or cutting of sword for state project. Hence, political vigilantes' involvement in these functions often put them in a position to receive material favours or exchanges for their rigid support and service to their political party (Gyampo et al, 2017). Therefore, this situation also serves as a predisposing factor that pushes some individuals who are poor to join and participate in political vigilantism activities in order to also enjoy these material favours and ameliorate their plight.



2.6 RECRUITING POLITICAL VIGILANTES

A plethora of academic research has been published on various aspects of political vigilantism in Africa which include but are not limited to the works of; Anderson (2002); Smith (2004); Meagher (2007); Di Nunzio (2014); Gyampo et al (2017); Paolo (2017); Asamoah (2019) and Bjarnesen (2020). However, very few (Norman, 2019; Bjarnesen, 2020) academic works examined how vigilantes in Ghana and Africa at large are recruited. The ways through which political vigilantes are recruited is worth knowing because, the nature of their activities and operations are often unlawful (Meagher, 2007; Gyampo et al, 2017; Paolo, 2017; Asamoah, 2019; Dumenu & Adzraku, 2020) and sensitive. Therefore, knowledge of how they recruit their members will inform us as to why all their members often act in a manner that violates their norm of modern democracy during elections and elections related activities. The works of Norman (2019) and Bjarnesen (2020) established that, political vigilantes are recruited based on political party affiliation, peer pressure, peer recommendation, individual choice and direct employment by political patrons and party “strongmen”.

In addition, those who join these party vigilante groups often demonstrate ardent support and commitment to a specific ideological group or political party they are affiliated to and seems to have a very profound sense of political rivalry and knowledge of political issues (Norman, 2019). Their commitment and ardent support for their affiliate political party often make them loyal and ready to sacrifice for the political success of their party.



2.7 PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF POLITICAL VIGILANTISM

In sub-Saharan Africa, political party grassroot groups, party foot soldiers, bodybuilders and the likes have been perceived as party vigilantes and often metamorphose into political vigilante groups, who then often becomes the perpetrators of electoral violence in Africa (Anderson, 2002; Asamoah, 2019; Norman, 2019; Bjarnesen, 2020). The public perception that those who often engage in vigilantism are bodybuilders also known as “macho-men” is partly factual, based on Norman’s (2019) studies on the relationship between bodybuilding and vigilantism in Ghana.

Political vigilantism is perceived as a better option over state institutions such as the security due to people perceived failure of the police and other state institutions to ensure security or due diligence in the electoral process (Smith, 2004; Gyampo et al, 2017; Bjarnesen, 2020). In addition, the use of the military and the police by several African governments since their independence to violently deal with those who break or threatens to break the existing social order has not only normalized violence as a mechanism for dealing with people who breaks or threatens to break the existing social order but has also created the perception and expectation that violence is an acceptable mechanism to handle people who breaks or threatens to break the existing social order (Smith, 2004).

Moreover, since the attainment of political independence in the sub-Saharan African countries, the police, military and other state security agencies have been extorting monies from individuals for various obscured reasons and such behaviours and attitude of the perpetrators symbolizes the corrupt nature and lack of trust in those institutions, hence serves as a bases for people’s preference for political vigilantes over the above institutions (Smith, 2004). For instance, Smith (2004) indicated that, “popular perceptions of the military and police, grounded in experience, created a

climate in which people believed that these institutions were not only incapable of combating crime but were complicit in its commission”.

It is also worth noticing that political vigilantism to a lesser extent is perceived by society as a tool of social control (Smith, 2004; Bjarnesen; 2020). For instance, political vigilantes also help in ensuring social control by manipulating violence and using violence as a means or tool for ensuring the existence of social order (Smith, 2004). Again, political vigilante groups in Ghana is perceived groups that helps broaden the political influence of their political parties, helps their political parties achieve electoral victory since, they have the youthful exuberance to collaborate with their party youth wings and foot soldiers make their political party visible across every nook and cranny of the country as well as engage in the selling of party products or paraphernalia in order to generate revenue for their political party (Gyampo et al, 2017; Paalo, 2017).



2.8 POLITICAL VIGILANTISM AND STATE SECURITY

Empirical studies report from both governmental and non-governmental agencies and the media establishes the point that political vigilantism is mostly associated with offending behaviors (Norman, 2019). The above claim explains why some scholars such as Norman (2019) and Bjarnesen (2020) have established that, political party foot soldiers, bodybuilders or political party youth groups who are political vigilantes often employ the techniques of intimidation and sometimes violence to drive home their wishes and desires especially during elections and elections related activities.

Some scholars also opined that, the failure of state security and other state institutions to ensure the protection, justice and equality for all citizens in recent democratic transformation in Africa serves as the basis for political vigilantism (Smith, 2004; Meagher, 2007; Bjarnesen, 2020). For instance, Meagher (2007) indicated that the inability or lack of motivation by state security and the judiciary to protect citizens or ensure that those who violent the law face the full rigor of the law could result in popular support for political vigilantism, which obviously will threaten the security or social stability of any nation.

In addition, Smith (2004) and Paolo (2017) attributed the rise of political vigilantism in Ghana and Nigeria to the perception among the general populace that, the democratic transitions in Africa have created state institutions that lack the motivation to ensure the reduction of inequality and injustice in the country. One could attribute the lack of motivation at the institutions to diligently perform their functions to the perception that the incumbent government normally appoint the leaders or appointees of such state institutions and can disappoint them at any time in case they take decisions that will make their patrons unpopular.

2.9 CRITIQUE OF LITERATURE

There have been many influential empirical studies on political vigilantism in various aspects of this social phenomenon in Ghana and Africa at large. However, some of these studies failed to examine some relevant aspects of political vigilantism. For instance, Norman (2019) studied a group of bodybuilders to ascertain whether body building predisposes one to political vigilantism and the role body builders play in election violence. One of the issues with Norma's (2019) studies is that, the author studied a group of people whose group is not a political vigilante group but rather a gym group at an Accra city gym which might make it very difficult to really ascertain the relationship between body building and political party vigilantism because it is not all the actors of political vigilantism or political violence in Ghana who engages in gym neither is it all that all bodybuilders would engage in political party vigilantism given the empirical reasons that predisposes people to political vigilantism. Quite apart from, Norman (2019) used 16 participants in his study which makes the sample size inadequate for a relationship analysis since the author was also interested in finding out the relationship between body building and political party vigilantism. Additionally, Paalo's (2017) study on the relationship between political vigilantism and political violence in SSA specifically in Ghana as well as the kind of environment that sustains political vigilantes' deviance, aggression and political party engagements is also relevant in understanding the political vigilantism in Ghana and SSA at large. However, the findings of Paalo's (2017) study cannot be generalized in Ghana and SSA as a whole particularly because, the author employed a qualitative method of data collection to find out the effects of political vigilantes' participation in political parties, their contributions to social stability and democratic consolidation. Another lacuna in the studies conducted on political vigilantism in Ghana is the fact that, most of these scholars (Norman, 2019; Gyampo et al, 2017; Paalo, 2017; Bob-Milliar, 2014;

Adinkrah, 2005) often use only male participants or respondents during their primary data collection and to some extent only secondary data is employed in their studies.

2.10 THEORETICAL LENS

Scholars such as Neuman (2014:88), admonishes the use of a theoretical underpinning in every research because “researchers who proceed without theory rarely conduct top-quality research and frequently find themselves in a quandary”. The use of a theoretical underpinning, lens or pattern is very relevant and necessary in research because it helps sharpen our thinking, directs our investigations and explains the social phenomena under study (Kubrin et al, 2009; Creswell, 2014; Neuman, 2014). A theory serves as a lens to view a social phenomenon in both logic and experience as well as provide answers to research questions (Kubrin et al, 2009; Creswell, 2014). A theory according Neuman (2014:56) could be defined as “an entire worldview, or a way of seeing, interpreting and understanding events in the world”. For Creswell (2014:86), a theory “might appear in a research study as an argument, a discussion, a figure, or a rationale and helps explain or predict a phenomenon that occur in the world”.

It is worth noting that, in explaining a social phenomenon sometimes, a single theory may not be capable of offering complete explanation to the social phenomenon and it is because different theories provide different explanations and the types of explanations tells us the world works in different ways (Neuman, 2014). Hence, a researcher may expand a theory or add another theory to give an ample explanation of a social phenomenon or social behaviour (Neuman, 2014). In line with Neuman’s (2014) assertion, the study adopts the resource mobilization theory, political process theory and Kowalewski’s countermovement theory. These theories are relevant to the study because they are examples of social movement theories and elaborate on how social movements emerge and why individuals join social movements.

2.10.1 RESOURCE MOBILISATION THEORY

Resource mobilization theory also known as collective action program is a theory of social movement in the field of Sociology. The proponents and originators of the resource mobilization theory include John D. McCarthy and Meyer Zald (1977). The theory argues that, a social movement is a rational social institution created by individuals who can mobilize resources towards the achievement of predetermined goals. In other words, resource mobilization theory views social actors as rational actors who mobilize resources from resource providers with the aim of pursuing a collective action (Staggenborg, 2012). The theory also argues that the mobilization and success of a social movement for a collective action depends on the availability and efficient use of resources (Staggenborg, 2012).

For resource mobilization theorists, resources are paramount and required for the successful execution of a collective action or political action. Resources include; participants or volunteers, money or funding, participants time, participants skills and experience, participants social networks, alliance with the media, office space and all other apparatus needed for a social movement to exist and operate (Staggenborg, 2012). It is also important to note that, according to the resource mobilization theorists, resources do not necessarily come from individuals who are victims of a social issue and stand to benefit from the success of a social movement but rather may come from individuals who contribute to the social movement but do not personally gain from their success (Staggenborg, 2012).

McCarthy and Zald (1977) argue that the reasons why people participate in social movements or collective action is because first, participation helps in the enhancement of career opportunities and second, people participate for monetary reasons since money is the most important resource.

Basically, people will do a costs and benefits analysis and if they will get money from participation they will participate. In addition, constant discontent or grievances in modern, politically pluralistic societies would often trigger people to participate in social movements one's there is the availability or aggregation of resources. Lastly, participation converts an individual into a participant. That is, participation in social movements especially developed countries is seen as a social responsibility.

McCarthy and Zald (1977) also suggested that, at any point in time where social movements try to seek redress for social wrongs, they may end up creating social problems or grievances that they as members will not experience.

In short, the theory views individual actors as rational, who will always participate in social movements once it will lead to career development and gaining of incentives. In addition, the proponents of resource mobilization theory argue that people are rational and will participate in collective action because of the availability of the most important resource which is money. Lastly, the availability and access to resources that a particular group member who share the same discontent are able to mobilize and take action that other groups cannot mobilize to participate in a social movement influence people join social movement groups to participate in collective action.

2.10.2 POLITICAL PROCESS THEORY

Political process theory also known as political opportunity theory is a theory of social movement that has great influence in the field of Sociology. Prominent scholars such as Peter Eisinger, Sidney Tarrow, David Meyer and Doug McAdam are considered the proponents and key contributors of the political process theory. This theory postulate that, for any social movement activity to occur, the political atmosphere within a certain political context must present favourable political

opportunities. These theorists argue that, the actions of the social movement actors are dependent on the existence or the absence of political opportunity (Staggenborg, 2012).

Political opportunity as a concept differs from various scholars. However, the concept generally refers to features of the political environment that determines the emergence and success of social movements (Staggenborg, 2012). Staggenborg (2012) suggests that, Tarrow's (1998) conceptualization of political opportunity is most appropriate and widely accepted definition of political opportunity. Tarrow (1998) conceives the elements of political opportunity to include: increased access to political participation or the power to make decisions, shifts in political alignments, the presence of conflict between ruling elites, the presence of influential allies, and propensity of the state to repress or facilitate social movements (Staggenborg, 2012). Hence, people participation social movement is influenced by the own interest and political factors such as the ability of a social movement to make mainstream political groups their allegiance or partners (political opportunity), cohesiveness of the social movement (organizational strength) and a belief in the success of a social movement that is formed (cognitive liberation).

According to the argument of the political process theorists, people join social movements in order to enable them have access to political opportunity or political connections and then through collective action, they can expand or create new political opportunities for themselves or change the status quo in their society, community or group (Staggenborg, 2012). Political opportunities are more important to social movement actors than economic or material resources because these actor's belief that political leverage can help them mitigate social wrongs well as the same time ameliorate their frustrations and pressures. Therefore, when the political environment is promoting the rise or expansion of political opportunities within any given political system or society, it will motivate people to join social movements.

2.10.3 KOWALEWSKI'S COUNTERMOVEMENT THEORY

In researching the scholarly literature on the topic, political vigilantism, one of the theories found that explicitly explains participation in political vigilante groups is Kowalewski's countermovement theory (1996). The subsequent paragraphs discuss the above theoretical perspective which has been applied in the study of political vigilantism.

Countermovement is a concept in sociology, which basically posit that, a social movement or social group emerges to oppose another social movement or social group. Thus, anytime a social movement or a social group is established, another social movement or social group emerges with the aim of undermining the previous social movement or social group. Several social movements or social groups emerge as a vehicle to facilitate political activism towards issues with which the group disagree.

Political vigilantism is best considered as an unconventional countermovement by one social movement against an opposing social movement of aggrieved or deprived citizens (Kowalewski, 1996). The proponent of the countermovement theory, Kowalewski (1996) argues that, when a social movement(s) or government is unable to cope or fight opposing social group(s) or movements, the former then resort to recruiting and employing vigilante groups or supportive citizens to suppress the opposing social group. For Kowalewski (1996), the key propositions to the countermovement theory is broadly categorized into; the origins, behavior and consequence of political vigilantism and under these three categorizations, we have 16 propositions. Below is a brief discussion of all 16 propositions under the 3 rubrics;

According to Kowalewski (1996), the origins of political vigilantism can be explained using the first 8 propositions of his theory. He argues, that; for political vigilantism to originate, first, political vigilantes must have been widespread in a nation's past and have been justified and lauded

in its national tradition. Hence, the greater the likelihood that they will be formed in the nation's present. He argues that political vigilante groups are most prevalent in nations where the frequency of political vigilantism in the past has been high. In such instances, the youth emulate or are socialized into the legitimacy of taking the law into their own hands using mostly violent act to achieve their demands. Secondly, the sharper the increase in political dissatisfaction, the greater the likelihood of political vigilantism. Thus, once there is increasing political dissent by private citizens towards the regime government or the controlling social movement, there is a greater likelihood that, another social movement or political vigilante group will be formed to oppose the conventional means that the regime government is using to stir dissatisfaction towards them.

Thirdly, political vigilantism is sponsored by elites and rarely arises spontaneously from nonelites. In most instances, it is the political elites in society who often mobilize, organize, fund, train, and arm counter-dissident social groups when they feel that the regime government is causing economic stress. The argument of the resource mobilization theorists discussed earlier is in tandem with this proposition. This is because, according to the resource mobilization theorists, resources particularly money which is often required to make a social movement possible often come from the elite which they refer to them as "conscience constituents" thus people who contribute their resources to the social movement but may not personally gain or benefit from the success of the social movement. Unlike the nonelites which they refer to as "beneficiary constituents" thus people who are often in need or desire a certain outcome and stands to gain from the success of the social movement (McCarthy and Zald, 1977 cited in Staggenborg, 2012). Fourthly, the greater the dependency of a regime on more powerful nations, the greater the likelihood of sponsorship by the elites of those nations. This proposition basically says that, it is not only political elites of a nation who encounter political opposition that feel threatened; those countries with extensive interests in

that nation could also feel threatened. Hence, foreign political elites are likely to encourage a dependent and besieged regime to use private citizens to counter the dissatisfied and opposing social group or movement, especially when political pressures at home constrain any direct military intervention in that nation. Fifthly, political vigilantes exhibit characteristics of the authoritarian personality syndrome. That is, political vigilante groups are most likely to be established by authoritarians who find political vigilantism attractive; since it offers ample opportunities for sadistic and aggressive personalities to play out their psychic dramas in the countermovement against their opposition. The sixth proposition states that; political vigilante groups have a disproportionate number of criminals, alcohol and drug abusers, and religious extremists as members. Political vigilante groups represent the use of unconventional means against an opposition or regime government. Hence, they often have a disproportionate number of socially unconventional or "deviant" members and since political vigilantism provides these citizens a chance to reverse their marginal social status and gain acceptance by elites into the conventional order, political vigilante groups are most likely to be established. The last but not one proposition says that; vigilantes forcibly recruit new members. An increase in dissatisfaction among political elites normally put pressure on the political elites to establish a countermovement group thus a vigilante group. In the process of mobilizing and recruiting a large number of private citizens quickly against a social movement and in the course of their recruitment drive, the right of citizens to free association is often violated. The last proposition says that; vigilantes are poorly trained and supervised. Political vigilantism often represents an ad hoc response by political elites to a surge in dissent. Since conventional control mechanisms fails to ameliorate the movement, the training of political vigilantes in those mechanism offers little payoff.

Kowalewski (1996) also used his theory of countermovement to explain the behaviors of political vigilantes using 4 propositions. In his first proposition, he argued that; political vigilantes engage in illegal economic activities. Kowalewski (1996) indicated that; since political vigilantism itself represents an unconventional mode of behavior, political regimes are likely to look the other way when political vigilantes commit economic crimes. Hence, this encourages political vigilantes to engage in deviant or criminal behaviors. The most common economic illegalities may include;- extortion; theft and on rare occasions, kidnapping for profit. The second proposition is that; political vigilantes' behaviors are perhaps the most violent of all political groups. Thus, political vigilantes often engage in behaviors that terrorize or torture dissident groups and even a times vandalize properties of dissident groups or unsupportive citizens, media and so on. The third proposition says that; vigilante violence becomes more indiscriminate over time. After a period of existence of a political vigilante group(s), vigilantes quickly conceive that, countering the wave of dissent for their political elite sponsors is more important than obeying the law of the nation. In addition, to the inadequate or poor training and supervision allows political vigilantes a wide latitude to act in an unlawful manner towards all citizens either knowingly or unknowingly. The last proposition states that; vigilantes are prone to interfere in conventional politics. Kowalewski (1996) argued that, if political elites use political vigilantes as unconventional means against unconventional dissident groups, there is a higher likelihood that, political elites are also tempted to use them against their opponents in conventional political groups.

The third rubric of Kowalewski's (1996) countermovement theory is used to explain the consequences of political vigilantism using 4 propositions. Kowalewski (1996) argued that the first consequence of political vigilantism is the ability of; political vigilantes to operate with judicial impunity. Political vigilantes are rarely, if ever, called into legal account for their abuses. Since

legal prosecution would be tantamount to admitting that their counter-dissidents are as guilty of breaking the norms as are the dissidents. Secondly, vigilantism causes cleavages among the officials of the sponsoring regime. Some regime officials or political elites are less enthusiastic about the unconventionality of political vigilantism than others. Usually, most of these officials remain silent about their qualms. However, when their own political interests begin to be affected then they begin to express their dissatisfaction. The last but one, proposition states that; - public opposition to vigilantes increases over time. Due to the high degree of public anxiety caused by political vigilantes, they often encounter public opposition over time after their establishment. The final proposition states that; - the greater the violence of the vigilante group, the greater the likelihood that counter-vigilante groups will form. Both dissident and non-dissident citizens often mobilize and recruit their own special movements to counter political vigilante violence. The lack of legal protection from the regime, often compels private citizens to form groups or political vigilantism groups that would often take the law into their own hands against those who have taken the law into their own hand.

In a nutshell, Kowalewski's (1996) countermovement theory basically postulates that, political vigilantism is most likely to arise in nations with a tradition of political vigilante violence. Also, political vigilantes behave the way they do because they have been established and supported by regime officials or political elites, police officers who seek to counter attacks from dissidents yet these vigilantes lack the appropriate knowledge and skills for fighting crime. Lastly, the consequences of political vigilantism such as vigilante threats and attacks on political elites who expresses dissent towards the regime government rather leads to the formation of political vigilantism groups.

2.11 CONCLUSION

In summary, the resource mobilization theory provides a general outlook on social and cultural factors that influences the success and failure of social movements, why resources are central and access to resources are required in social movements and more importantly why people participate in social movements often by paying attention to costs and benefits analysis and will only participate if the risk taking is less as compared to the gains. The political process theory in addition, provides a general political outlook on factors that influence the emergence of social movements and why people participate in social movements. It is worth noting that, both political process theorists and resource mobilization theorists treat individuals as rational actors (Staggenborg, 2012) and as such, the choice to participate in political vigilantism is still based on costs and benefits analysis of participation. While the resource mobilization theory explains why people participate in social movements by focusing on economic factors, the political process theory focuses on the political factors. Kowalewski's (1996) countermovement theory in also, provides a general political outlook on how social movements emerge, an explanation on the behavior of social movement members and the consequence of social movements. The existing literature shows that, some of the people who engage in political vigilantism as a form of social movement do so because of poverty, the unavailability of jobs or underemployment. Hence, some of these people would wish to engage in a social movement such as political vigilantism because it will help them get access to the most important resource which is money. It will also help them develop their career opportunities or have access to certain incentives. Again, it is evident from the literature that the reasons why people often engage in political vigilantism as a form of social movement is because of political opportunism or political patronage, electoral insecurities, state repression of political dissent groups and so on. Hence, participation in political vigilantism as a form of social movement enables an individual to execute his social responsibility of fighting for

the course of social equality or justice, it will also enable individuals have access to an important resource such as political connections or political leverage, it will also enhance their social network of movement members because social movements often partner with mainstream political groups or political elites. Hence, an individual participates because it will enable him benefit more such as create or expand his political opportunities than he would lose if he does not participate. These theories will be more appropriate in explaining the reasons people give for participating in political vigilantism, offer an explanation on the origin, behaviour and consequences of political vigilantism.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A qualitative research approach that, focuses on eliciting people's account for participating in political vigilantism, how they are recruited into vigilantes' group, their experiences during their operations and their perceptions of their actions on security was employed. According to Creswell (2014:31), a research approach refers to the "plans and procedures for research that spans the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collections, analysis and interpretations". A qualitative research approach was utilized because the research questions outlined above requires a detailed understanding of how people make sense of a political vigilantism (Creswell, 2014; Neuman, 2014). The study focuses on analyzing in-depth interviews and ethnographic study of the vigilantes specifically a non-participant observation of the vigilantes. Narrative analysis, a style of presenting data analysis in the form of a story, explaining data in terminology and concepts of the subjects under study within a social context in order to capture the rich, concrete detail, is used to analyze the interview data (Creswell, 2014; Neuman, 2014; van den Hoonaard, 2015).

3.2 BRIEF PROFILE OF STUDY AREAS

3.2.1 BOLGATANGA

Bolgatanga is the regional capital of the Upper East Region of Ghana. It is also the district capital of the fifteen (15) administrative districts of the Upper East Region. The Bolgatanga Municipality is one of the 260 Metropolitan, Municipality and Districts assemblies in Ghana. Bolgatanga Municipality was established in 2004 by Legislative Instrument (LI) 1997 and it is in the center of

the upper east region. The Bolgatanga Municipality shares boundaries to the south with the Tallensi district, east with the Nabdam district, to the north with the Bongo district and to the west with the Kassena Nankana Municipal.

The predominant economic activities there include farming, basket weaving, smock weaving and hunting (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). According to GSS (2014), about eighty percent of the economically active population in the municipality engages in agriculture. Farming stands as the main economic activity and it is done for both subsistence and commercial purposes. Farming is mostly carried out in a more traditional way and the most common crops cultivated annually include millet, maize, guinea-corn, beans sorghum, rice, and groundnuts and dry season tomatoes and onions (GSS, 2014). About ninety two percent of the households in the municipality are engaged in crop farming (GSS, 2014). The most common economic trees are “dawadawa” trees, baoba trees and acacia trees. The dawadawa and baoba seeds are usually processed by the women for subsistence and commercial purpose. Animal rearing also serves as an important source of revenue for the farmers because, almost all the farmers rear at least one type of livestock (cattle, goats, sheep and pig) or poultry (chicken, guinea fowl, duck, turkey) mostly for commercial purpose and sometimes for its relevance during rites of passage or as a source of protein for the populace. About eighty percent of the households are engaged in livestock farming (GSS, 2014).

Industrial activities in the municipality are not yet well developed. The few industrial activities that are carried out in the municipality include small-scale agro-processing of shea nuts, groundnuts, rice, dawadawa, millet, maize and handicrafts works like basket and hats weaving, smock weaving, smock sewing, production of leather sandals, bags, and hats (GSS, 2014). The weaving of baskets and smocks are mostly done by the women whereas the sewing of the smocks, leather works are mostly done by the men within the municipality.

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The population of the Municipality according to 2010 population and housing census stands at 131,550 with 62,783 males and 68,767 females. The municipality is characterized by dispersed settlement with most of the building being mud-walled compounds. The vegetation is that of the savannah characterized by short scattered resistant trees and grass that is often burnt by bushfires during the dry season. They often experience one rainy season annually from May/June to September/October. Usually around November towards early of February, they experience dry, dusty harmattan.

3.2.2 ACCRA (KWAME NKRUMAH CIRCLE)

Accra is the both the national and regional capital of Ghana and the Greater Accra Region, respectively. It is also administrative capital and forms part of the twenty-nine (29) Metropolitan, Municipal and Districts assemblies in the Greater Accra Region. The Accra Metropolitan is one of the 260 Metropolitan, Municipality and Districts assemblies in Ghana. The Accra Metropolitan was established by the Legislative Instrument (LI) 2030. The part location specifically within Accra for the study is Called Kwame Nkrumah Circle or Alajo. The Accra Metropolitan shares boundaries to the east with the La-Dade Kotokpon Municipal, to the west with the Ga South Municipal, Ga West Municipal and Ga Central Municipal assembly as well as common boundary with the Gulf of Guinea.

The economic activities in Accra include, fishing, financial and commercial services, manufacturing and so on (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). According to GSS (2014), the most common occupation is service, and sales work and it is dominated by females. In addition, self-employed with employee(s) is the main employment and it is also dominated by the females (GSS, 2014). Fishing at the shores of the coast stands as the main agricultural economic activity for most of the indigenes of Accra and it is done for both subsistence and commercial purposes. Fishing is

usually done across the shore and majority of the fish harvested is consumed locally while a small portion is exported. The men usually engage in the fishing while the women engage in fish mongering. Vegetable cultivation and poultry rearing is also carried out for commercial. It is worth noting that, agricultural activities are not very common in the metropolis due to its urban nature and it is just about three percent of the households that are engaged in agriculture (GSS, 2014).

Financial, insurance, manufacturing and commercial activities are very common in the metropolitan. The most common means of transport is “trotro” (minibus) and they are usually the most cost-effective means of transport to get around the metropolitan. There are also taxis and motorcycles popularly known as “okadar” which are other popular means of transport around the metropolitan. According to GSS (2014), the major employers in the metropolis are both the formal and informal private sector with about sixteen percent and seventy four percent avenue for employment, respectively. The poor neighborhoods often known as slums are overcrowded and lacks basic amenities in this area.

The population of the Municipality according to 2010 population and housing census stands at 1, 665, 086 with 800, 935 males and 864, 151 females. The municipality is characterized by well-planned building, condensed settlement with most of the building being cemented or block-walled compounds. The vegetation is that of the coastal savannah characterized by a mixture of tall trees and scrubs. They often experience a double rainy season annually, with the chief rainy season which starts from April and ends June with a break in July and August and then again, a cheap rainy season occurs again in September and October. Usually around August it is often humid and the city experiences breezy dry heat.

3.3 STUDY POPULATION

According to Neuman (2014), population refers to the abstract idea of a large collection of many cases from which a researcher draws a sample and to which results from the sample could be generalized. The study population are members of two political vigilantism group which are affiliated to the two major political parties in Ghana thus, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Party (NDC). One of the political vigilante groups named as “Do or Die” political vigilante group (for the purposes of this research) which is affiliated to NPP is in the Upper east region of Ghana and the other one named “Super Die-Hard” political vigilante group (for the purposes of this research) which is affiliated to the NDC is in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. This population was selected mainly due to geographical location; one in the southern part of Ghana and one in the northern part of Ghana to get a sense of variability. Accessibility (Creswell, 2013), their active participation in electoral processes in Ghana and their involvement in political violence in Ghana (Gyampo et al, 2017; Dumenu and Adzraku, 2020) was also given due consideration.

3.4 SAMPLING METHOD

Sampling is basically the process of selecting individuals from the study population who really participated in the study. Nonprobability sampling methods was adopted to foster the collection of data. Nonprobability sampling method is a sampling technique in which the researcher selects his or her sample based on the subjective judgement of the researcher rather than a random selection (Neuman, 2014). Notably, nonprobability sampling method is used in sociological research when a sampling frame cannot be obtained from the study population or a random sampling is not feasible. There was no existing sample frame for the target population. Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used for the study. Purposive sampling refers to a method where the researcher chooses subjects who, in his/her opinion, are relevant for the purposes of the study. The

selection of participants is guided by the judgment of the researchers. However, in this technique the important criterion for inclusion was the knowledge and expertise of the participant with political vigilantism (Creswell, 2014; Neuman, 2014). Snowball sampling is particularly appropriate when the population you are studying is hard-to reach or hidden (Creswell, 2014; Neuman, 2014). Hence, this technique was very helpful in the accessibility and recruitment of participants based on established network with journalists who have worked with political vigilantes in Ghana. After each interview, the participant was asked by the researcher to refer him to another respondent that he or she think is qualified for the interview.

The participants for the study were initially identified using the researcher's established contacts with leaders of political vigilantism groups who participated in the study and in turn led or redirected the researcher to an individual(s) they think are qualified for the study. Following this, snowball sampling was used to identify further participants. The number of participants that was expected to participate in this study was between 20 to 30 respondents from both political vigilante groups. This expected number was chosen because, Creswell (2014) recommends 20 to 30 respondents for a qualitative study or the application of the point of saturation in recruiting participants for a qualitative study. Even though the researcher expected to interview not less than 20 participants, the researcher was able to interview 15 participants. The participants for the study were recruited until theoretical saturation was reached. Theoretical saturation refers to the moment when the collection of new data on a study issue no longer reveals new themes or information about the subject being studied (Charmaz, 2006 cited in Creswell, 2014). Interviews started from 8th March 2020 and ended on 27th July 2020. Whereas the non-participant observation started from 4th March and ended on 28th August 2020.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

Data refers to information or evidence grounded in human sensory experience that has been carefully gathered according to established scientific rules or procedures (Neuman, 2014).

Qualitative interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide. The semi structured interview guide was used mainly to gather data from political vigilante group members who participated in this study. With the participants' permission, interviews were recorded and later transcribed verbatim. In circumstances where participants did not wish to be recorded, the responses of the participants were handwritten in a field notebook.

An interview guide and a non-participant observation was used to gather data from the participants.

The interview guide contained open-ended questions. The questions were informed by literature.

The interview guide was used to gather data on the socio-demographic metrics of participants such as their age, sex, ethnicity, occupation, and educational level. It also enquires about the respondent's motives for engaging in political vigilantism, perception of political vigilantism, how vigilantes think political vigilantism can be stopped, under what condition are participants of political vigilante groups prepared to act outside the law and so on (See Appendix 2). The

researcher also had the opportunity and permission from political vigilantes to be present during some of their meetings, activities, or operations to observe, take notes and sometimes ask the vigilantes questions relating to the research topic. Again, during the data collection, what informed the additional use of the non-participant observation was because, the researcher looked for information that will be used to complement and make sense of the data that was collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews. As such, the researcher during the field work at the two sites

where the data was collected wrote field notes about a plethora of issues occurring in these locations where the participants resided. The social issues that were also observed included the

natural environment in which the participants live; their economic activities for livelihood including farming, trading, okadar business and other casual work activities; the kinds of housing they stay in and other infrastructural facilities and social amenities such as water supply, schools, health facilities, electricity, sanitation, drainage system, community political youth groups, what goes on at their meeting grounds and informal gatherings among others. The non-participant observation was very useful in a number of ways. It was an effective and efficient method of assessing the livelihood conditions of the participants as well as the sort of income earned by these participants. It also ensured that the information obtained related to what was currently happening among members of the political vigilante group and the female party youth group rather than relying on what people say they do in such groups.

3.6 ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF DATA

Additional data for the study was gathered from tv reports, documentaries, commission of inquiry sitting that was aired before, during and after my field data collection was conducted. Other sources of information were from the internet through online websites of some leading English-speaking private radio stations such as Citi FM, Joy FM among others with affiliates in other regions. I also interviewed two ladies from NPP female youth group in Bolgatanga which works in partnership with one of the political vigilantes that participated in the study since, almost all the political vigilantes from the said political vigilante group referred to this lady's group in the course of our interview. Interviewing these ladies also gave the researcher more insight about the perspective of ladies on political vigilantism and why ladies would also form a group to facilitate the work of a political vigilante group.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS APPROACH

The data was analyzed using narrative analysis with emphasis on the key issues that are being investigated for the purpose of this study. Narrative analysis is a research method of identifying,

analyzing and reporting collected data or verbal material from individuals or groups in the form of storytelling as they account for their personal experience and so on (Creswell, 2014; van den Hoonaard, 2015). The researcher used detailed readings of raw verbal data to derive stories, terminologies, and concepts.

The data was analyzed manually and organized into manageable pieces that was guided by the research objectives. The process of identifying what was relevant, what was to be learnt and what exactly to report was guided by the research objectives coupled with non-participants observations and the prolonged period spent at the study areas. This led to the attainment of transcripts and field notes that reflected the opinions of the participants. The researcher then looked through the transcripts and identified stories that characterize each interview. A story refers to a refined version of narrative or events (van den Hoonaard, 2015). Recurring stories that were identified in the transcripts and field notes were coded. Codes according to van den Hoonaard (2015:159) “are simply names for topics, activities, events and people that comes up in transcripts and field notes”. Hence coding stories in this study means finding stories or phrases that are similar in meaning across the various transcripts and labelling them as concepts, terminologies, and stories under the various research objectives for analysis.

Specific attention was paid to narratives or statements that provide an understanding of why people engage in political vigilantism, how vigilantes think both state and private citizens should react to political vigilantism and vigilantes’ perceptions about political vigilantism. This led to a textual and narrative analysis with content analysis being the tool used describe and explain the motives, knowledge, perceptions of political vigilantism and provides an understanding of the common motives, knowledge, and perceptions of the respondents.

3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

The reliability and validity of a qualitative enquiry depends on four important components of trustworthiness; the credibility, transferability, dependability and the confirmability of the findings (Guba, 1981). Quality reliability means that the researcher's approach to the study is consistent across different projects whereas quality validity means that the researcher ensures accuracy of findings by employing certain mechanisms or strategies (Creswell, 2013; Creswell 2014; Neuman, 2014). To ensure that quality data was collected to ensure that the findings of the study is accurate, reliable, objective, and transferable from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant and the reader (Creswell, 2014; Guba, 1981), the researcher adopted the following mechanisms.

3.8.1 Credibility

To ensure credibility of the research, in keeping with the arguments of scholar such as Guba (1981), the researcher employed the following strategies;

First, the researcher prolonged involvement at the study site and time spent with the participants during the fieldwork increased the level of trust between the researcher and the participants which reduced respondents bias since the participants subsequently became adjusted to the presence of the researcher and felt convinced that the researcher is not a threat to their security. The trust that was built between the researcher and participants enabled the participants to give the researcher credible or accurate responses to questions that were posed to them.

Secondly, the researcher engaged in persistent observation to enable him identify themes and characteristics about the participants that were pervasive and relevant to the study while at the same time ignored the irrelevant aspects of the observations but nevertheless taking into serious considerations the observations that were not pervasive and consistent but critical to the study (Eisner, 1979 cited in Guba, 1981). Field notes obtained by the researcher during the non-

participant observation showed that questions of what was pervasive qualities were addressed as the researcher continued to have prolonged engagements with political vigilantes and other participants.

In addition, the strategy of asking the same questions in different ways in order to determine if the participant was consistent in response to questions allowed the researcher to incorporate credibility procedures during the in-depth interviews to ensure that quality data was collected.

Also, the researcher collected data from different equal methods that is through in-depth interviews and non-participant observation. In addition, the researcher examined information or evidences from different data sources including; newspapers, journals, participants perspective and used them to build a coherent justification for the various themes in the study. The fact that, the researcher cross-checked the data that was obtained and his interpretations against different methods ensures validity, Denzin (1978) as cited in Guba (1981) confirms this. Creswell (2014) and Neuman (2014) agrees with the above assertion that; if themes are established based on converging sources of various data and participants perspectives it adds to validity.

Again, the researcher did member checks. This was done after transcriptions and during data analysis where the researcher called and sometimes “whatsuped” the participants seeking for clarifications on the information they provided, their views on the findings and interpretations of the data collected before conclusion to ensure credibility.

3.8.2 Transferability

To ensure transferability or external validity of the research, in keeping with the arguments of scholar such as Creswell (2013) and Guba (1981), the researcher employed the use of rich, thick description to convey the findings as recommended by Geertz (1973) as cited by Guba (1981). The researcher offered a detailed description of the research setting, enough details about the

participants in the study and offered several perspectives about the themes discussed in the research in order to paint a more realistic and richer picture of the findings. This procedure also gives a reader(s) a clear picture of the research setting and ensures validity.

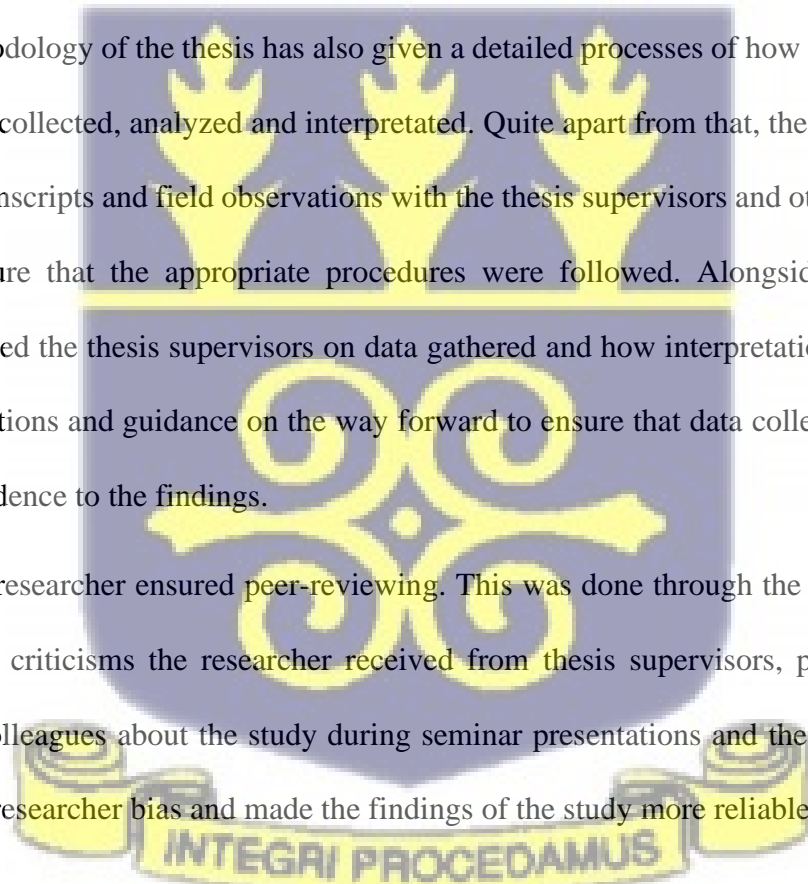
3.8.3 Dependability

To ensure dependability of the research, in keeping with Guba (1981) trustworthiness framework, the researcher employed the following strategies;

To begin with, the researcher ensured dependability by ensuring that, the various stages of the field work was outlined partly in the ethics committee forms and the workplan document submitted to the Ethics Committee for Humanities at the University of Ghana via email dated 20th January, 2020. The methodology of the thesis has also given a detailed processes of how and when the data was going to be collected, analyzed and interpreted. Quite apart from that, the researcher shared his interview transcripts and field observations with the thesis supervisors and other professors for scrutiny to ensure that the appropriate procedures were followed. Alongside, the researcher constantly updated the thesis supervisors on data gathered and how interpretations were done for auditing, suggestions and guidance on the way forward to ensure that data collected was relevant and added confidence to the findings.

In addition, the researcher ensured peer-reviewing. This was done through the various feedback, suggestions and criticisms the researcher received from thesis supervisors, professors, faculty members and colleagues about the study during seminar presentations and thesis defense which helped reduced researcher bias and made the findings of the study more reliable.

Also, the researcher ensured that quality audios were recorded and the audios were transcribed verbatim from the in-depth interviews to obtain the crucial and trivial responses from the



participants. The researcher also paid keen attention to field notes from the in-depth interviews and non-participant observations to ensure reliability in the findings.

3.8.4 Confirmability

To ensure confirmability of the research, in keeping with the argument of Guba (1981), the researcher employed the following strategies;

First is triangulation which is already discussed above. The researcher used different sources of data to curtail researcher bias since the continuous involvement and prolonged stay of the researcher among the participants could have influenced the researcher to begin having certain assumptions just like the participants and since assumptions can impede the discovery of realities.

Secondly, the researcher ensured confirmability by practicing reflexivity, that is, by being conscious and critically reflecting on how the researcher previous knowledge, political ideology and prior assumptions could affect the participants responses and the interpretations. Hence, the researcher had to constantly engaged in debriefing with thesis supervisors, other professors and colleagues during the data collection and interpretations to ensure that the researcher does not change the mode of inquiry and reporting to suit his cultural and political orientation.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethical clearance for the study was sought for from the Ethics Committee for Humanities at the University of Ghana, Legon (see Appendix 2). The study was conducted in an atmosphere that respected the rights and dignity of the participants. Thus, voluntary participation, informed consent, protection from harm, confidentiality, anonymity, and the absence of invasion of privacy and deception was ensured. Respondents were briefed at the beginning of the data collection on their rights and debriefed at the end of the data collection. Appropriate language was also used. Pseudonyms were used in the report to protect the identity of the participants and their groups.

Consent from participants to participate in the study was done verbally due to the following reasons outlined by van den Hoonaard (2015); to avoid the insensitivity of using signed documents among a study population that is more likely to comprise of illiterates or have a sense of collectivity. In addition, to avoid some collectives from interpreting the researcher's seeking individual consent on a form as an affront to the larger group and to help participants who might want to protect their anonymity by not attaching their names to an "official" document. Again, to avoid some participants from seeing the need to sign a consent form as a serious betrayal of the trust that has developed over the course of previous interactions with the researcher. Lastly, a verbal consent unlike a signed consent will reduce the hopelessly unnatural relationship and rather enhance a friendly relationship to solicit for the perspective and insights of the participant.

The researcher assured respondents that the study is strictly academic, and that utmost confidentiality would be observed. Besides, no participant was forced to provide information unwillingly. The data to be collected and used in this study was anonymously coded so that no information could be traced back to individual respondents.

Participants in the study were identified and recruited into the study not only through their leaders but through other members who have participated in the study in order to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. That is, instead of just asking leaders to lead me to other individuals who were qualified for the study, participants in the study were also used as contact person. Again, under no circumstance will the conversations that went on between the researcher and a participant(s) be disclosed to another participant or third party.

There is a potential risk that participants especially participating political vigilantes in the study may be subject to attacks, violence or arrest by state security agents, their opposing political vigilantes or even by political parties who are against them. Therefore, no identity or names of

participants or vigilantes and the political vigilantism groups they belong to will ever be disclosed to third parties or the public. Since third parties can use the identity of the participating political vigilantes or their groups to narrow their search leading to discovery of the participants and possibly statements made by them. Hence, this is to ensure security, confidentiality, and anonymity of the participants. Lastly, the COVID-19 safety protocols were duly observed during the interviews and field observations.

3.10 FIELD EXPERIENCE

Generally, the fieldwork proceeded well but it was not easy to be carried out because of the sensitive nature of the kinds of activities political vigilantes embark on as well as the legal implications of their operations. Most of the people who fall within the target population of the study who initially expressed interest in participating in the study prior to the signing of the 2019 vigilantism and related offences bill into law by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, subsequently opted out of the study due to the recent laws disbanding political vigilantism and its related activities in Ghana.

Each study area presented a unique challenge to me in terms of having access to potential participants. For instance, it was very difficult having access to potential participants in Accra than in Bolgatanga and it was simply because potential participants in Accra were much engaged in time consuming and highly competitive commercial activities than those in Bolgatanga. In addition, those in Accra were very busy and mostly working or hustling throughout the week as compared to those in Bolgatanga, which made it difficult if not impossible for some of the potential participants in Accra to make time for the interview. Again, Potential participants in Accra were more security conscientious and feared to participant in the interview than those in Bolgatanga and this could be linked to the fact those in Accra were members of a political vigilante group affiliated

to a political party currently in opposition and may not be able to salvage them in case the interview landed them in trouble. Some of interviews in Bolgatanga were conducted at drinking spots or beer bars because that was where the participants invited me to for our interviews. Even though I did not feel comfortable because I do not take alcohol, yet I honoured their invitations with the appropriate appearance since that was where they felt comfortable for our interview to be conducted.

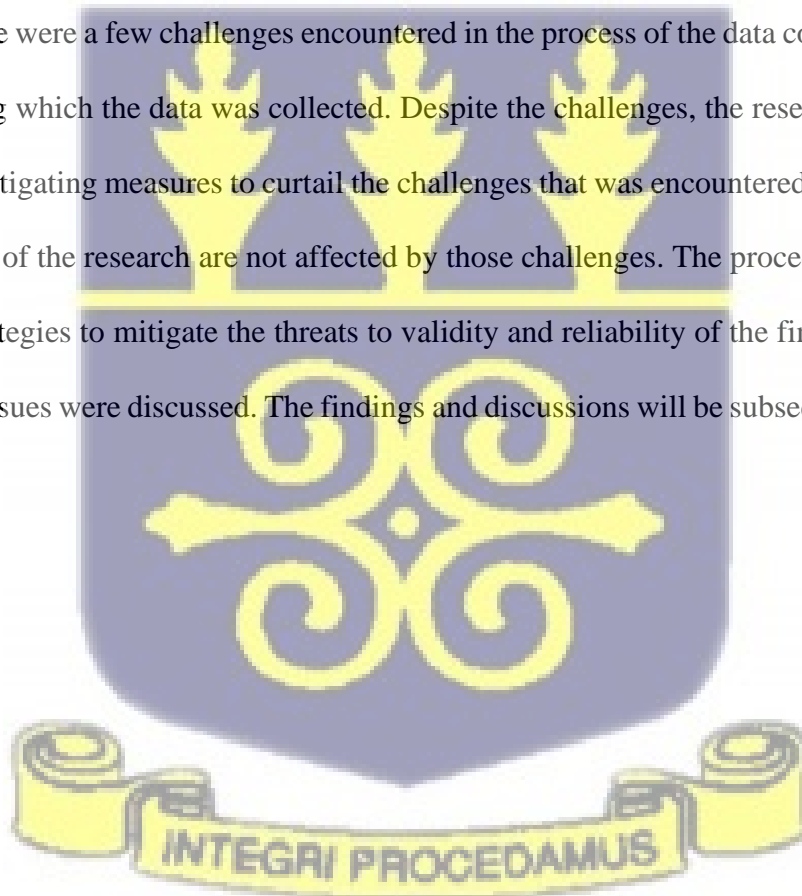
Although the political vigilantes who participated in the study were willing, ready, and very enthusiastic about the study, my request to use a recorder for our interviews were sometimes met with suspicion, fear and even sometimes disapproval. These participants expressed fears because they were not completely convinced that I am not an undercover journalist or “Anass” who may be deceiving them and they would later hear their voices or even see videos of them being played on radio, social media or the television. Hence, the researcher had to constantly give them assurances about the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses and identity. There were few instances where the interviews were unpleasant because some of the political vigilantes occasionally deviate from the focus of the study. In most of their deviations, they mostly talked about their disappointments or regrets for joining and sacrificing for their political vigilante group and their affiliated political party without gaining any benefit from their affiliated political party.

There is the existence of limited empirical or firsthand data and relevant literature on the phenomenon under study, especially in Ghana. Despite the approval from the Ethics Committee for Humanities at the University of Ghana, Legon to collect data and my constant assurance of anonymity and confidentiality, some political vigilantes were still reluctant to participate in the study due to fear of possible legal implications. Notwithstanding all these challenges, the researcher did well to overcome most of them by explaining the relevance of the study to the

participants. Eventually, some of the political vigilantes really understood the essence of the study and were willing and ready to participate in the study. The study was carried out with a setting that was convenient to the participants, respect for the rights and dignity of the participants was keenly observed.

3.11 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter discussed issues pertaining to data collection method. A qualitative research approach was found to be the suitable research approach for the reason being that, the researcher aimed acquiring a detailed understanding of people's account for participating in political vigilantism, how they are recruited into vigilantes' group and their experience during their operations. There were a few challenges encountered in the process of the data collection including the period during which the data was collected. Despite the challenges, the researcher was able to adopt various mitigating measures to curtail the challenges that was encountered in order to ensure that the findings of the research are not affected by those challenges. The procedure for analyzing the data, the strategies to mitigate the threats to validity and reliability of the findings were stated and the ethical issues were discussed. The findings and discussions will be subsequently elaborated on as follows.



CHAPTER FOUR

POLITICAL VIGILANTISM IN GHANA: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to gain a proper understanding about the reasons or motives behind political vigilantes' operations, how they are recruited and their experiences, it is very pertinent to gain an insight about the origin of political vigilantism in Ghana and the historical issues pertaining to it. Therefore, the propositions of Kowalewski's (1996) theory which explains the origin of vigilantism makes his theory more relevant for Ghana's case. Kowalewski (1996) argued that, for political vigilantism to originate in any country, there must first; - be widespread political vigilantism in a nation's past that was justified and lauded in its national tradition. Secondly, the sharper the increase in political dissatisfaction, the greater the likelihood for political vigilantism to emerge. Thirdly, political vigilantism is sponsored by elites and rarely arises spontaneously from nonelites. In addition, it is not only political elites of a nation who encounter political opposition that feel threatened; those countries with extensive interests in that nation could also feel threatened. Hence, foreign political elites are likely to encourage a dependent and besieged regime to use vigilantes to counter the dissatisfied and opposing social movement. Also, a country whose leader has authoritarian personality is most likely to find political vigilantism attractive since they can counter dissent groups. Furthermore, an increase in dissatisfaction among political elites normally puts pressure on the political elites to establish a countermovement group thus a vigilante group.

This chapter, therefore, presents the historical antecedents of political vigilantism in Ghana and unveil what existed before the current situation pertaining to political vigilantism. This chapter

focuses on the origin of political vigilantism during pre-dependence Ghana and the post-colonial era in Ghana. The nature and purpose of political vigilantism and how political vigilantes operated is described and explained in each of these eras.

4.2 POLITICAL VIGILANTISM DURING PRE-INDEPENDENCE GHANA

During British colonial rule in Ghana, some notable Ghanaians who were educated and businessmen believed that the colonial administration should respect them and grant them opportunities or positions of responsibility to serve under the colonial administration. They also believed that, given their level of education, it was their responsibility to make their country a politically independent nation. This idea from such Ghanaians led to the formation of the first political party or nationalist movement known as the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) (Bob-Milliar, 2014b). The UGCC was founded in 1947 by some educated Ghanaians most of whom were legal professionals such as J. B. Danquah, A. G. Grant, R. A. Awoonor-Williams, Edward Akufo Addo among others with the aim of demanding for self-government “in the shortest possible time” from the colonial masters (Berry, 1994; Bob-Milliar, 2014b). They also demanded for the replacement of chiefs with educated Ghanaians on the Legislative Council. For these political leaders, they felt the exercise of indirect rule through the traditional leaders was a smoke screen employed by the colonial masters to enhance or achieve their own interest. The leadership of the UGCC also criticized the government at the time for its failure to solve issues of unemployment, inflation and other critical issues that confronted the Ghanaian society after the end of the second world war (Berry, 1994; Bob-Milliar, 2014b).

Even though, members of the UGCC and their party activist group known as “Reactionary Lawyers” opposed the British colonial rule at the time (Bob-Milliar, 2014b), the leadership of the UGCC was conservative in that, they did not seek for a revolutionary or quick change at the time.

Berry (1994) attributed their inability to execute their demands in a revolutionary manner to the kind of educational training these leaders had from the British. They were trained to do things with gentility. The gentlemanly ways of doing politics was then changed when Dr. Kwame Nkrumah formed the Convention People's Party (CPP) in 1949 (Berry, 1994)

Prior to Nkrumah's formation of the CPP in 1949, he was invited by the UGCC which was formed in 1947 to return from London and to become their movement's general secretary (Berry, 1994; Bob-Milliar, 2014b). Nkrumah's tenure with the UGCC has been described as a radical one. Due to his level of radicalism and political activism, Nkrumah was arrested together with other leaders of the UGCC and detained in March 1949 (Berry, 1994). Subsequently, when some members of the UGCC were invited to make recommendations to the Coussey committee which was advising the governor on how they wanted to arrive at political independence, Nkrumah broke with the UGCC and formed the CPP. For the UGCC, they were demanding self-government "in the shortest possible time" whereas Nkrumah and his CPP were demanding for "self-government now" (Bob-Milliar, 2014b). The leadership of the CPP was made up of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Kojo Botsio, Komla A. Gbedemah and a group of young political activists and professionals who were ready to associate themselves with people of the lowest social class known as "Verandah Boys" (Berry, 1994; Bob-Milliar, 2014b).

The CPP identified itself more with the masses or people on the lowest rank of the social ladder than the UGCC (Bob-Milliar, 2014b). Nkrumah's style of leadership and promises appealed more to ordinary Ghanaians at the time. Majority of the working class, farmers, market woman and the youth heard of him and saw him at the time perceived him as a national leader in whom they could focus their hopes and aspirations on. He also won the support of very influential women at the time who served as his channel of effective communication at the local level (Berry, 1994). Hence, by

June 1949 when the CPP was formed with a section of youth group known as “Verandah Boys”, with the mantra of seeking immediate self-governance, Nkrumah had mass following (Berry, 1994).

With increasing backing from the well enlightened commoners and the masses, the CPP and Nkrumah’s “Verandah Boys’ initiated and embarked on a campaign of “positive action”. This led to the conduct of the first election in 1951 held for the legislative assembly. During the 1951 elections, two groups of political party activists known as the UGCC reactionary lawyers and CPP verandah boys emerged to mobilize votes for their various political parties (Bob-Milliar, 2014b).

Nkrumah was in jail during the first elections, yet he won that election and was made head of government business. This made it evident to the CPP that their fight for political independence and immediate self-governance could become a reality. Although the CPP agreed to work with the constitutional order at the time, it was not what they wished for because, the ministries of external affairs, finance, defense, and justice was still controlled by the British who were not accountable to the legislative council (Berry, 1994).

In 1954 the constitution was amended, and the position of prime minister was created. In that same year, another election was conducted, and Nkrumah was duly elected as the prime minister, the legislative assembly increased in size and all members and every member of the legislative assembly was elected by his constituency. The elected assembly was then given control over all internal affairs of the Gold Coast. The CPP after the 1954 elections pursued the centralized form of government, which encountered serious opposition. Shortly after the 1954 elections, a new political party known as National Liberation Movement (NLM) an Asante-based political party was formed. The NLM was advocating for a federal form of government with increased powers from the various regions (Berry, 1994). The NLM worked in cooperation with another regional

political party known as the Northern People's Party (NPP). The NLM criticized the CPP government for its perceived dictatorial tendencies (Berry, 1994). The political party activists' group for the NLM at the time was the Action Troopers (Dumenu and Adzraku, 2020). According to Bob-Milliar (2014b), during the campaigns of the CPP and the NLM towards the 1954 elections to determine whether the country was going to become a unitary or federal state, it was characterized by violence and intimidation perpetuated by the radical political activists of the NLM who increasingly advocated for Asante secession from the Gold Coast.

In a nutshell, the then political leader and founder of the CPP known as Osagyefo Dr. Francis Kwame Nkrumah) incited and guided a section of youth activists within the Convention People's Party (CPP) known as "Verandah Boys" to successfully capture political sovereignty from the British (Bob-Milliar, 2014a; Bob-Milliar, 2014b; Gyampo et al, 2017; Paalo, 2017). During the struggle for political sovereignty from the British and during the conduct of the first election in the Gold Coast in 1951, the only two political parties at the time had formed their respective social movement groups known as party activists' groups and their respective political party activists' groups or movements both aimed at mobilizing votes for their various political parties (Bob-Milliar, 2014b). The respective political party activists or movement groups at the time also pursued their political activism on the bases of ideological preferences, they were known as the UGCC "reactionary lawyers" and CPP "verandah boys" (Bob-Milliar, 2014b). According to Bob-Milliar (2014b: 288), the UGCC reactionary lawyers were mostly "Middle Temple trained barristers-at-law and successful merchants" while the CPP veranda boys were mostly were mostly "Standard VII graduates and many were unemployed or informally employed".

Hence, political vigilantism in Ghana during the colonial era can be traced to political parties youth activism in Ghana politics during the epoch of the British colonial rule in Ghana, when the first

president of Ghana paved way for political party youth activism in Ghana with the aim of freeing the nation from foreign domination and subsequently the conduct of the 1951 elections which was contested by the UGCC and the CPP (Bob-Milliar, 2014a, Bob-Milliar, 2014b; Gyampo et al, 2017; Paalo, 2017). In addition, the origin of political vigilantism during the colonial era is in tandem with Kowalewski's (1996) argument that, the sharper the increase in political dissatisfaction, the greater the likelihood of political vigilantism. Thus, once there is increasing political dissent by private citizens towards the regime government, there is a greater likelihood that, a social movement or political vigilante group will be formed to oppose the regime government which is causing the dissatisfaction towards them. For instance, due to the failure of government during the pre-colonial era to address issues such as unemployment, inflation and other social issues that was causing dissatisfaction among Ghanaians at the time led to the formation of different political parties and their respective political vigilantes such as the UGCC and their "reactionary lawyers", the CPP and their "verandah boys" among others to oppose or counter the existing regime or government at the time in order to achieve their desired goals.

Kowalewski (1996) also argued that, for political vigilantism to emerge, it must originate from the elite who also becomes the sponsors of such movement. For Kowalewski (1996), the social movement does not rarely arise spontaneously from nonelites. In most instances, it is the political elites in society who often mobilize, organize, fund, train, and arm counter-dissident social groups when they feel that the regime government is causing economic stress. This argument of Kowalewski (1996) also explains how political vigilantism originated in the then God Coast. The Ghanaian elites during the colonial era were the very people who mobilized, organized and funded some section of their respective party youths to oppose the regime government whom they perceived as a threat to their political and economic interest.

4.3 POLITICAL VIGILANTISM DURING POST-COLONIAL GHANA

Political parties in Ghana during the post-colonial rule have replicated the services of party youth groups since they were very instrumental to political parties during the era of pre-colonial Ghana. Some of these party youth groups are known as political vigilante groups and are affiliates of political parties in Ghana (Gyampo et al, 2017; Paalo, 2017). After the 1981 coup in Ghana that gave birth to the fourth republican constitution which brought about a new regime in Ghana by the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), political vigilantism or party youth activism still did not end there. For instance, during the period of the PNDC, some political vigilante groups namely the "Mobisquad", Committee for the Defense of the Revolution (CDR), Workers Defense Committees (WDCs), Peoples Defense Committees (PDCs) and others were trained and armed to defend the revolution (Gyampo et al, 2017; Paalo, 2017). Also, since the inception of the two major political parties in Ghana during the 1992 elections, die-hard or core foot soldiers of the two major parties have formed various vigilante groups across the country, namely; the "Invincible Forces", the "Azorka Boys", "Bolga Bulldogs" and so on (Gyampo et al, 2017). Political vigilantes are noted for contributing to or perpetrating electoral or political violence in Ghana and across Africa (Smith, 2004; Meagher, 2007; Bob-Milliar, 2014a; Paalo, 2017).

Political violence, rioting and vandalism in Ghana can be traced to actors of political vigilantism since the start of the multi-party system in Ghana (Paalo, 2017). Political related violence such as rioting or chaotic demonstrations, police brutality, voter and opponent intimidation and the likes in Ghana and across Africa can be traced to political vigilantes or party youth groups (Smith, 2004; Meagher, 2007; Bob-Milliar, 2014a; Paalo, 2017). Political or electoral violence in Ghana and Africa at large and the apparently bad experiences or destruction associated with the activities is seen by some as contributing to a threat to democracy or political stability in Ghana and across

Africa (Smith, 2004; Meagher, 2007; Pratten, 2008; Bob-Milliar, 2014a; Paalo, 2017). Political violence refers to the application of threat or application of physical coercion to achieve a political outcome, or the application of physical coercion to achieve a transformation in the nature of the political order, or to defend that political order in its existing state (Schwarzmantel, 2010). Unlike during the pre-colonial era that political vigilantes were formed for the purpose of political activism, they were now formed during the post-colonial era for the purpose of violently assisting political parties to capture political power using any means possible and this is the more reason why political or electoral violence keeps rising in recent times. The origin of political vigilantism in Ghana during the post-colonial era can also be understood from Kowalewski's (1996) theoretical argument that, in order for political vigilantism to emerge, it must have been widespread in a nation's past and have been justified and lauded in its national tradition. Hence, the greater the likelihood that they will be formed in the nation's present. His argument is that political vigilante groups are most prevalent in nations where the frequency of political vigilantism in the past has been high thereby, serves as a reference for the youth to emulate taking the law into their own hands using mostly violent act to achieve their demands, offers a better explanation for the origin of political vigilantism in contemporary and post-colonial Ghana.

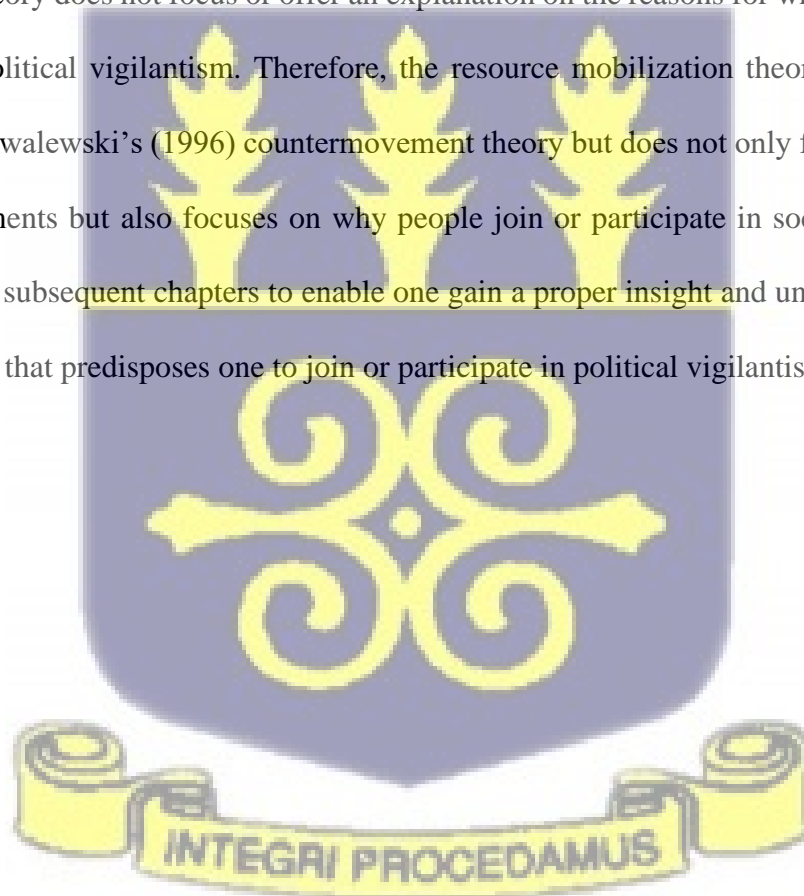
4.4 CONCLUSION

The above gives an account of how Ghana has moved through the various phases of political vigilantism. Political vigilantism in Ghana has evolved since the colonial period. During the colonial era, political vigilantes were only radical in nature with respect to their demands but; less violent and intimidating compared to political vigilantes during the early period of post-colonial Ghana and contemporary Ghana. In addition, political vigilantes during the pre-colonial era aimed at assisting their affiliated political party to rescue the country then Gold Coast from foreign

domination and to attain political sovereignty. On the other hand, political vigilantes during the early days of post-colonial Ghana aimed at mobilizing votes for their respective political parties.

Subsequently, political vigilantes in the post-independence era throughout the various republican governance and then to Ghana's democratic governance still engage in mobilizing votes for their respective political parties. Kowalewski's (1996) theoretical perspective on how social movements such as political vigilantism originates, does not only offer a better explanation and understanding of the origin of political vigilantism in Ghana but it also helps one to gain insight into why political vigilantes in Ghana behave the way they do as well as the consequences of their behaviour.

However, his theory does not focus or offer an explanation on the reasons for which people join or participate in political vigilantism. Therefore, the resource mobilization theory which is partly embedded in Kowalewski's (1996) countermovement theory but does not only focus on the origin of social movements but also focuses on why people join or participate in social movements is employed in the subsequent chapters to enable one gain a proper insight and understanding of the possible reasons that predisposes one to join or participate in political vigilantism.



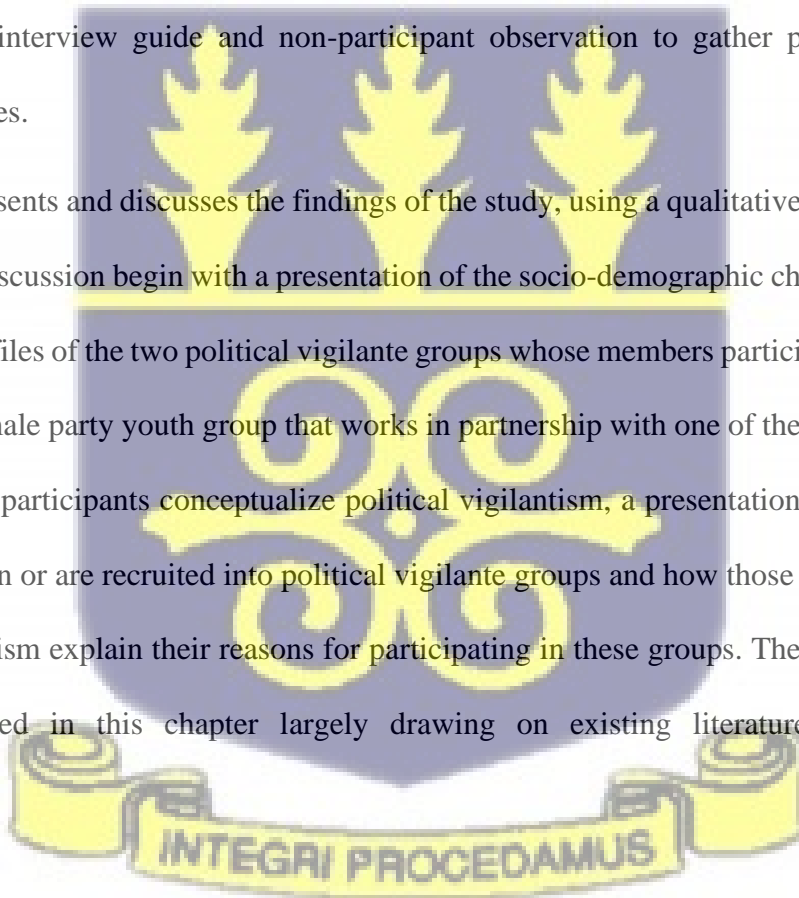
CHAPTER FIVE

SELECTED VIGILANTE GROUPS, MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL VIGILANTISM

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The main goal of the study is to explore how people who are recruited into political vigilante groups, explain their reasons for participating and their perceptions of the implications of their actions on political stability or security. Based on the research objectives, the researcher used a semi-structured interview guide and non-participant observation to gather primary data from political vigilantes.

This Chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study, using a qualitative narrative analysis approach. The discussion begins with a presentation of the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants, profiles of the two political vigilante groups whose members participated in the study, a profile of a female party youth group that works in partnership with one of the political vigilante groups, how the participants conceptualize political vigilantism, a presentation of the process by which people join or are recruited into political vigilante groups and how those who participate in political vigilantism explain their reasons for participating in these groups. The following themes will be discussed in this chapter largely drawing on existing literature and theoretical underpinnings.



5.2 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTES

In sociological research or sociology of deviance, factors that predisposes people to engage in certain actions or deviate from societal norms is sometimes attributed to specific human socio-demographics characteristics. It is therefore prudent and necessary to know the socio-demographics characteristics of political vigilantes in Ghana since, it helps us to know the trends in disposition of behaviours of political vigilantes and any other related characteristics. The sociodemographic characteristics will as well give the reader an idea of the kinds of people who engage in political vigilantism or who participated in the study.

5.2.1 Socio-economic Background of Political Vigilantes from Both Groups

Below is a background presentation of the participated political vigilantes from both political vigilante groups. It gives an idea of their age, religion, level of Education, marital Status, number of children (if any) and occupation of political vigilantes.

TABLE 5.1: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF POLITICAL VIGILANTES

	Age	Religion	Level of Education	Marital status	Number of children	Occupation
1. Papa J	31	Christian	Junior High School (JSS)	Single	2	Okadar Driver
2. Rambo	46	Christian	Senior High School (SHS)	Married	4	Dealer in Art and Craft
3. Big Joe	39	Traditionalist	SHS	Married	3	Sewing, Smokes and Making of Leader Sandals
4. Babscamali	37	Christian	Tertiary	Married	3	Painting and Decoration
5. Jones	42	Christian	SHS	Married	3	Electrician
6. Hamza	34	Islam	SHS	Married	4	Maison
7. Sampson	42	Christian	Tertiary	Married	3	Teacher
8. Uriah	35	Christian	SHS	Married	3	Tailor and Forestry Commission
9. Macho	31	Christian	SHS	Married	2	Okada driver
10. Azonto	28	Christian	SHS	Cohabitation	0	Sells phones and accessories.
11. Terminator	38	Christian	Tertiary	Married	3	Worker at

12. Kadiru	41	Islam	JHS	Married	5	Forestry Commission and Carpenter Electrician
13. Van Dame	31	Islam	SHS	Married	1	Security man/Bouncer at a night club
14. Mallam	42	Islam	SHS	Married	3	Trade in cattle, sheep, and goats
15. Bulldozer	33	Christian	SHS	Single	2	Okada driver

Source: Author's own compilation

5.2.2 Socio-economic Background of “Stubborn Ladies” Who were Interviewed

Below is a background presentation of two ladies from an NPP female youth group known as “Stubborn Ladies” affiliated to “Do or Die” political vigilante group who were also interviewed in during the data collection. It also gives an idea of their age, religion, level of Education, marital Status, number of children (if any) and occupation of political vigilantes.

TABLE 5.2: LIST OF FEMALE PARTICIPANTS

Name of Participant	Age	Religion	Level of Education	Marital status	Number of children	Occupation
1. Sister Teni	33	Christian	Senior High School (SHS)	Single	3	Trader, and Cook for School feeding
2. Sister Matter	30	Christian	Senior High School (SHS)	Single	2	Trader

Source: Author's own compilation

5.3. PROFILE OF BOTH POLITICAL VIGILANTE GROUPS

Firsthand information from participants through in-depth interviews and non-participant observation was carried out from two known and active political vigilante groups affiliated to the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) known as “Do or Die”

and “Super Die-Hard” groups respectively. Note, the names of these two vigilante groups in this study are pseudonyms.

5.3.1 DO or DIE GROUP

This political vigilante group is affiliated to the NPP and is duly recognized by their affiliated political party at their constituency, regional and national level. It was formed in 2012 and launched in 2013 in the Upper East region of Ghana and has over 200 members. This political vigilante group operates only within the upper east region of Ghana and has not established branches or affiliate vigilante groups across the country. It does not permit people who does not belong to a specific ethnic group in Ghana to join them. It was formed in response to the perceived failures of state security or government to fight the perpetration of political violence and intimidations from their political opponents during national and by-elections in Ghana. Also, the proliferation of violent and intimidating political vigilantism groups within the region and the country at large led to the formation of their vigilante group.

In addition, this political vigilante group has nearly all its members as former NDC member who defected and joined the NPP. Their major reason for cross-carpeting was based on their disappointment in NDC political leaders or patrons who often promise them security service work or jobs but fails to fulfil it when they retain or gain political power. The leadership structure of this political vigilante is composed of the Chairman (who is the head of the group and gives instructions to the rest of the executives and members to follow), the Vice Chairman followed by the Secretary and his Deputy Secretary, the Treasurer and his Deputy Treasurer and lastly, the Organizer and his Two (2) Deputy Organizers. The main purpose for forming this political vigilante group is to provide security or protection for their political patrons, party leaders, party members and more

importantly fight for the welfare, development and progress of a specific ethnic group members within the upper east region of Ghana.

Again, this political vigilante group indicated that their sources of funding and other forms of support needed for their operations comes from their affiliated political party, party patrons, “Stubborn ladies” (a female party youth group that works in partnership with the group), party leaders and sometimes party members or their vigilante group members. “Do or Die” political vigilante group works in partnership with a lady’s political youth group within their political party in the upper east region of Ghana. This political vigilante group often use these ladies as a strategy to track or grab their political opponents in an event where they may want to confront or physical attack such person(s). Sometimes they also use these ladies to verbally abuse or bully their political opponents on campaign platforms or rallies especially in situations where their political opponents make denigrating comments against women. For this study, the female party youth group that partners with “Do or Die” is known as “Stubborn ladies”.

5.3.1.1 “Stubborn ladies”

It was formed in 2012 in Bolgatanga and currently has close to 150 members. It is the first NPP female youth group in the upper east region of Ghana. The group has since been able to form and launch other branches of “Stubborn ladies” in some parts of the upper east region in areas such as Navrongo, Bongo and Pwalugu. The group has become larger and useful to the NPP and to the “Do or Die” political vigilante group. In some areas such as Zebilla in the upper east region, some NPP youth ladies are currently mobilizing themselves to join “Stubborn ladies” and to eventually call on the mother group to also launch a branch in that part of the upper east region. The leadership structure comprises of, the Chairperson and her Deputy, the Secretary, and her Deputy, the Organizer and her Deputy and then the Treasurer and her Deputy. The group also has a Disciplinary

Committee and Mother of the house, but then, the disciplinary committee and mother of the house are not part of the executives of “Stubborn ladies”. According to the founder and chairperson of “Stubborn ladies”, their main motivation for forming their ladies’ group is as follows:

We formed the group to win souls for the NPP and help our men group to fight for our party. In fact, our main reason for forming the group was that we realized that Akuffo Addo has suffered a lot in trying to become president, so we wanted to help him. So that when he gets power, he will also help us. Since majority of our group members are single mothers, widows, or market women, so we wanted to help him, so that he can also help us when he wins power (Sister Teni).

The secretary of the group gave a similar narration as follows:

our main reason for forming and launching the group was to campaign for the party, support the needy and do the bidding of our men group thus “Do or Die” during occasions such as campaigning, going to funerals, weddings and so on. (Sister Matter).

Quite apart from their main reason for forming the group which is to give support to both their male vigilante group and political party, another very important but covert reason for forming their group is for economic benefits. Based on the interviews and non-participants observations, it was discovered that, the inherent and possibly the leading reason why these ladies formed the group was because of issue of unemployment, lack or inadequate capital to start or inject into their businesses, lack of regular flow of income to support their families particularly their children education among others. Hence, for them, the most compelling reason though inherent for joining their group is to enable them get jobs, contracts, financial capital for their business as well as scholarships for the group members or their children. For instance, according to sister Teni:

When the party came to power, I was given a school feeding program contract in basic school but it was later taken away from me by the former regional minister thus Mr. Rockson who used to come to my shop and we will sit and chat hmmm, in fact, the group members were very angry with him and I even wanted to leave the group but the party executives had to beg me hmm, I don’t even want to talk about it but some of our members got loans from MASLOC, some had scholarships to go to school and others to are now in the forestry work....

For sister Matter:

I haven't gotten what I really wanted for joining the group but at least I have gotten few and others have benefited a lot like getting jobs, support for their businesses and there is a saying that, God's time is the best. Some will get in the morning, some in the afternoon and others in the evening, so I know my own to will come.

According to "Stubborn ladies" because they usually work with and for "Do or Die" political vigilante group or the NPP there are countless instances where their ladies are often confronted, threatened or abused by their political opponents before, during and after the election process.

According to sister Teni:

Sometimes we will go to some places during elections and would want to campaign, and men will come and say we should leave if not they will beat us hmm. Sometimes, people say all manner of things about us and insult us hmm. People who do not really know what we do call us all kinds of bad names, some insult us and some even say we are "spoilt", we are "baasii" (a Frafra word literally meaning "Dogs" which implies, ladies who easily permits any man to have sex with them without paying), we are "Ashawoos" (Meaning "prostitutes") and that we are just going round sleeping with the NPP men's group that we always partner with and some say the big men in the party are using us, just having sex with us and a whole lot. So, it is not easy, but we are strong and focused because we know what we are doing, and we are never bad people like they think. My brother, as you can see me, you see the way I am well built, tall with a very beautiful stature, that is how most of our group members look like. So, when you see us at an occasion, you would really admire us and we are friendly, neat, and peaceful, so sometimes others are intimidated by our looks and think we are bad women.

From the above narrative, one can also infer that, women involved in political vigilantism or grassroots politics are prone to gender oppression or abuse similar to those faced by their men counterpart if not even worse. Again, the attacks and insults they regularly receive from their opponents or general public can be attributed to the gender discourse that undermines women participation in politics. Some of these people who insult, victimize, or threaten them still hold the fundamental assumptions that there are differences between what women and men can do in politics. These assumptions are embedded in their cultural and social constructions that describes women as more law abiding, peaceful, less aggressive and non-violence as compared to men, hence for such people, they find it abnormal and weird to see a female group that supports a vigilante group which engages in unlawful, aggressive and violent activities or operations. In a nutshell,

how these women are viewed and treated by the public can be attributed to the stereotypical and simplistic views as to what women can do or cannot do in politics.

Recruitment of ladies into this group is almost the same as the processes used by “Do or Die” in recruiting new members with the exception of the fact that they have recently established sister branches in some parts of the region to do the bidding of the NPP and not necessarily the bidding of both NPP and their male vigilante group. Their venue for having general meetings for all members is very close and directly opposite the venue “Do or Die” often hold their general meetings. Their days and time for holding such general meetings except for their executives and emergency meetings is the same days and time “Do or Die” also have their general meetings.

5.3.2 SUPER DIE-HARD GROUP

This political vigilantism group is affiliated to the NDC, based and operates in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. However, it is important to note that, this group was formed in the year 2007 and initially operated in the Northern region of Ghana. This political vigilantism group hitherto operated only within the northern region of Ghana and subsequently established branches or affiliate political vigilante groups in some regions in Ghana. This political vigilante group permit people from all walks of life to join them once the individual is a Ghanaian, can be trusted, supports their political party thus the NDC or its political ideology and is ready and committed the course of the group.

The initial main reason for forming the group was to provide security and political support for only one notable, respected, and benevolent political patron or individual who is an indigene of the northern region and resides in the northern region of Ghana. Few years later after the formation of the group, their initial main reason for forming the group was extended to include; providing security or protection for their party patron, party leaders and their political party at large

particularly, before, during and after general and by-elections across the country as well as policing polling stations and ballot boxes on the day of elections. This political vigilante group members often take their instructions or directives from the said political figure during elections or party programs. This political vigilante group also have leadership who oversee the mobilization of group members for party actives or programs. Their leadership comprise of the Chairman and His Deputy Chairman, the General Secretary and his Assistant Secretary and their Organizers. At the various branches they have just a Representative and Organizers leading the branches.

Again, this political vigilante group indicated that their sources of funding and other forms of support needed for their operations mostly come from one specific individual or political patron and sometimes from their affiliated political party or political leaders. This political vigilante group also works in partnership with their affiliated political constituency executives, regional executives and national executives depending on the situation at hand. Aside their main rational for forming the group as stated above, they also provide security for their party members during party sponsored demonstrations as well as providing security for their group members.

5.4 UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL VIGILANTISM

The researcher explored what the participants referred to as political vigilantism from the perspective of the participants due to the difficulties surrounding the conceptualization of political vigilantism by various scholars. The interview revealed that the term political vigilantism even to the participants revealed inconsistency and some challenges despite some similarities in how they described or defined the concept.

5.4.1 Political vigilantism

According to Johnston (1996) political vigilantism could be defined as; any social movement or activity conducted by autonomous private voluntary citizens, who engages in planning and

premeditation, uses or threatens to use force in response to perceived or actual transgression of institutionalized norms, with the aim of controlling crime or other social infractions and offering assurance of security to both participants and to others. For Schubeth (2015), political vigilantism could also be described as individuals or groups usually youth groups, who are recruited and hired as affiliates or members of a political party for security purposes. A very relevant and common feature of these two definitions is that, political vigilantes often operate for security purposes and this is to suggest that their focus is usually to ensure law and order in order to protect the interest of their group. However, political vigilantism in Ghana and Africa at large has taken a different feature which is often not to ensure security or the existing of law and order.

In view of this, the study adopted scholarly definitions of the concept from the perspective of African scholars particularly Ghanaians because their conceptualization of political vigilantism fits well within the Ghanaian context. According to Bjarnesen (2020), political vigilantism refers to “informally mobilized groups of largely unemployed male youth, charged with providing security during electoral campaigns and other political events”. Amankwah (2017) conceptualize the term political vigilantism as an instance where organized armed or unarmed groups are deployed as private armed forces to safeguard the electoral prosperity of political parties. The common feature from these two definitions is that political vigilantism is basically about doing the bidding of political parties and their affiliates during elections under the guise of ensuring crime control. In attempt to conceptualize political vigilantism, the participants were asked how they understood the term and varied responses were given. For instance, Sampson referred to political vigilantism as below:

...a voluntary group for people who are willing and ready to sacrifice for the party. In fact, it is a sacrificial job. When I say it is a sacrificial job I do not mean as in killing but hard

work and commitment. People do not buy forms to join, they do not go through interview to join and they can leave the group anytime they want.

In addition, Papa J understanding of political vigilantism as follows:

...party leaders normally mobilizing the youth and using them for rallies or programs, and they are protecting them so that if some bad people are coming to harm them, they will not get close to them.

For another participant known as Hamza, political vigilantism could be referred to as:

...the forming of a group against people who want to cheat us. Sometimes, it comes like some people want to cheat us, then someone will be like this I don't like and another person will be like I don't also like it because what they are doing is annoying me and someone will be like then lets go and see our party Chairman then, Chairman will be like, we should gather the boys and let fight against it because we don't like what they are doing (Hamza)

According to Jones political vigilantism is:

A group of people who go round on election day to scare people who do not belong to their political party from coming out to vote. A times they hold guns and cutlasses around on the day of election just to scare people.

Rambo's narrative of what is political vigilantism is very similar to Jones. He narrated as follows:

It a group of macho men who are doing the bidding of a political party on election day. Others are using it in the name of helping political parties just to hide and do other things such as fighting or intimidating others who does agree with them (Rambo).

Interestingly, unlike most of the other participants who perceive political vigilantism as characterizing the use of violence or intimation by a group of individuals affiliated to a political party against another individual or group that serves as an obstacle or a threat to their interest, Uriah referred to political vigilantism as characterizing peacefulness, according to him political vigilantism is:

A peaceful group and just formed to promote or work for our party and to uplift the youth in our area who have qualifications but no jobs or for them to get education.

Based on the findings of the study nearly all the participants described political vigilantism as any sacrificial, violent or intimidating action taken by a voluntary and informal group of individuals whose actions are either influenced by passion or material exchanges (usually money) to work or act in the interest or favour of his political patron, political party or political vigilante group.

It was observed and noted that, most of the participants did not perceive their own political vigilante groups as engaging in political vigilantism but were rather pointing at their opposing political groups as engaging in political vigilantism. There were even instances where participants would mention names of their opposing political groups as examples of groups they think or believe are engaging in political vigilantism. The few participants who perceived their own groups as engaging in political vigilantism did not see political vigilantism as a bad thing and sometimes, they were against the disbandment of political vigilantism in Ghana with reasons being that, they politicians will never stop using their groups because they help them in so many ways such as providing them better security than the state security because the politicians do not trust them, they campaigning for them during elections and so on.

It was also observed and noticed in the participants narratives that, those who belongs to political vigilante groups whose political party is currently in power supported the disbandment of political vigilantism by the government and mostly applauded the government for doing so. However, most of the participants whose political party is in opposition were never in support of the disbandment of political vigilantism by the government even though the mostly admitted that political vigilantism is bad yet their reasons why they did not support the disbandment was based on their fear that, either the state security will never be on their side during elections or the president and the appropriate state authorities will not have the muscles to stop their own political vigilantes from operating. Hence, they felt the disbandment was deliberate to mafia or prosecute only opposition political vigilantes who would engage in the act during elections and election related activities.

Again, it was observed and established that most of the participants are aware or have heard of the disbandment of political vigilantism and its related offences. However, most of them indicated

that, they have only heard about it in the media but have little or no knowledge about the law regarding political vigilantism, how it will work or what it entails.

5.3.2 Forms of Political Vigilantism

It was found out from the participants that political vigilantism was in two forms, thus passionate political vigilantism, and opportunistic political vigilantism.

Passionate political vigilantism according to the participants refers to a kind of political vigilantism engaged by individuals who are not induced by money or material exchanges to work or act in the interest of his political patron or political vigilante group. They have the will, are committed, and genuinely want to work and sacrifice for their political party or political vigilante groups to work for the success of their political party. Violence or intimidation is mostly their tool used to derive home their demand. Van Dame refer to this category of political vigilantes in his narration as follows.

You see, we have two types of political vigilantism, some people are very passionate in their party and formed their group to work for their party.... those who are passionate nuh, I swear, if you give him 100 million self he will not take, just to influence him, he wont take because for him whatever his party says that is what he will follow. Those who are passionate they do not take money before they work for the party, even the party does not give them anything. Those are the die-hard people....

Similarly, Big Joe referred to this category of political vigilantism as follows:

My brother, working for a political party is all about passion. So those of us who have the passion for the political party comes together to form the group and work for the party. So political vigilantism is all about people who have passion for your party coming together to form a group and fight for the interest of the party. Usually for those people the party do not pay us but one day when they come to power, they can also help us because of our love for the party.

Opportunistic political vigilantism according to the participants refers to a kind of political vigilantism engaged by individuals who are induced by money or material exchanges to work or act in favor of his political patron or political vigilante group. These kinds of political vigilantes'

work or act in favour of their political patron, political party or join political vigilante groups based on immediate material gains or opportunities they will benefit from. This group of political vigilantes a times can easily be influenced with money by their political opponent to act against anybody including his affiliated party members. Violence or intimidation is also a tool used in this form of political vigilantism to derive home their demand. Van Dame also referred to this category of political vigilantes in his narration as follows:

...others to go with their stomach, they feel like they are hungry, and they are the hungry... during the elections, I tell you, some people they can work for here and work for here, some people them just the follow their stomach and I know what I am telling you and whoever comes to them with money, they just follow the person. I can tell you that, I know some of them, they work for some people in circle here and at the same time they work for Kasoa, because nobody knows them at Kasoa, I am talking about what I know....

To understand why the participants joined their respective groups it was critical to understand their understanding of the concept political vigilantism. The following paragraphs will discuss the findings of how people join these groups and people's explanations for joining and participating in their respective groups.

5.5 RECRUITMENT OF POLITICAL VIGILANTES

The participants in the study which comprises members of the selected political vigilant groups offered six (6) major ways in which they were recruited. The most important is Trust. It is worth noting that, trust is the leading and most considered criteria used by both vigilante groups in recruiting their members. Trust is considered very important for both groups due to the nature of their operations or activities they often engage in which are often sensitive and mostly violates state laws. Hence, political vigilantism groups require their members to be trustworthy in order to ensure that their opponents or state security agents cannot track and arrest them in situations where

they might engage in illegal activities or actions. In addition, trust is key to ensure that their members do not betray them by giving out vital information about their group's action plan, strategies and identity of its members to their political opponents or state security under the influence of money or threat. Most of the political vigilantes also added that, trust is needed to be guaranteed that members would obey instructions particularly during their operations without fear, retreat or betrayal at a critical point during their operations. For instance, when a participant was asked how he was recruited into his group, he narrated as follows:

...the first thing is, that they have to trust you (Papa J)

Bulldozer gave a similar narration as follows:

if you cannot be trusted! or be loyal to our group, there is no way you will ever be permitted to join the group, so it is something important that the leaders always look at before allowing a new member to join our group yeah.... (Bulldozer)

Likewise, Macho expressed similar narration as follows:

one other thing they wanted to be sure before making me a member of our group was whether I really like our party, can be trusted so that I won't betray them when I join the group (Macho)

In addition to the trust, Political party affiliation is another most important criteria that political vigilante groups consider in recruiting its members. A sense of belonging and attachment to a specific political party was critical and used by both vigilante groups in recruiting their members. This sense of belonging and attachment is needed in political vigilante groups in order to ensure that political vigilantes of a particular group support and believes in a common political ideology and aspirations. In addition, a strong sense of belonging to a political party was to ensure that political vigilantes were solely committed to that political party and ever willing and ready to sacrifice their resources for the success of that political party. Most of the participants also add

that, political affiliation is one of their keyways used in recruiting vigilantes because it will help prevent the infiltration of individuals into the group who may betray the group or their political party. This finding confirms the studies on political vigilantism in Ghana by Norman (2019) and Bjarnesen (2020) who also discovered in their studies that political party vigilantes and recruited based on political affiliation. Norman (2019) also discovered that, those who join these party vigilante groups often demonstrate ardent support and commitment to a specific ideological group or political party that they are affiliated to and seems to have a very profound sense of political rivalry and knowledge of political issues and this is also on tandem with the finding of this study. This practice was common among the participants. For instance, Rambo who is a founding member of one of the political vigilante groups narrated as follows:

...in terms of political party, we those who are all in my group, we all belong to the NPP....

Sampson gave a similar narration as follows:

the process of joining our group is a choice but, If you belong to the NPP group, if you belongs to the NPP house, you think you can sacrifice for the party....our doors are opened

Azonto who belongs to a political vigilantism group affiliated to the NDC also gave a similar narration as follows:

...before you can join our group, you must! like and support NDC if not you cannot join our group because we are there to fight for NDC to win power....

Likewise, Hamza who also belongs to a political vigilante group affiliated to the NDC gave a similar narration as follows:

...more importantly you should be a member of the NDC before you are permitted to join us.

Four (4) other important ways or criteria political vigilante groups used to recruit it members included: Background checks of the individual. According to the participants, one of the ways

political vigilantes use to recruit its members is that, they do investigations about the past and current political life of an individual(s) who wish to join their political vigilante group before approving his membership. These background checks are to ensure that, a potential political vigilante genuinely subscribes to the goals of their political vigilante group and has genuine support for the political party in which their political vigilante group is affiliated to. The background checks also help them to prevent imposters who have bad intentions against their group or political party from finding their way into their group. With regards to background checks of the individual which is another important way or criteria used to recruit members of a vigilante group, a participant known as Papa J narrated that:

...they'll come your area then come and ask who is this person and what party he belongs to and blah blah blah and at the end of the day when they confirm then you'll be part (Papa J)

Likewise, Azonto gave similar narration as follows:

...aside that, the senior men in our group will task some of us to do proper background checks and find out if you really, really support the party and ready to sacrifice for our party below you can join us.

Again, ethnic affiliation is one of the important ways some political vigilante groups consider when they are recruiting their members. Ethnic affiliation as a criterion for recruiting political vigilante members is only peculiar and necessary in only one of the political vigilante groups that participated in the study. Unlike one of the political vigilante groups which does not consider the ethnicity of an individual before recruiting him into their group, the other political vigilante group does not open its doors to individuals who are not members of a specific ethnic group in Ghana, that is to say that people who are not members of or strongly affiliated to that specific ethnic group cannot join their political vigilante group. For the said political group, ethnic affiliation is very important for them and even comes first before any other criteria, since an individual can never join their political vigilante group as long as you are able to pass the rest of the other ways, they use

to recruit vigilantes yet you are not a member of their ethnic group. For instance, when a participant who is a member of the said political vigilante group was asked, what will make an individual fit or qualified to join their vigilante group, he responded by saying that:

...you are only qualified in terms of you being a native of "nyeteyah" that is, being a Frafra speaking person because, if you are not a Frafra speaking person you can't join (Rambo).

Atinga gave similar narration as follows:

You must come from the "BONABOTO" catchment area (that is someone who is a native of Bolga), you speak the "Frafra" language very well and you are ready to fight for people from "BONABOTO" who belong to the NPP....

Likewise, Sampson narrated as follows:

Before an individual is recruited into the group, you must be loyal and belong to both the NPP and the BONABOTO catchment areas....

For the said political vigilante group, their reason why ethnic affiliation is important for them is that, they seek to fight for the progress and success of both their political party and their ethnic group in which they are all affiliated to. For that vigilante group, their reason for limiting the recruitment of their vigilante member to the a specific ethnic group is also because, they think their members will not only be committed to fighting for the victory of their affiliated political party but they will also be committed to fighting against the negligence of a particular political party in Ghana that they think anytime the said political power wins power, the development of their region is ignored and mostly their ethnic members group members are not appointed the said political party during their regime.

Another way through which political vigilantes are recruited is based on recommendation from political vigilante group members or peers. That is to say, people who are identified by political vigilante group members as having the capability and will to join their political vigilante group have the opportunity to recommend individuals who are fit to join their political vigilante group. In such instances where peers who are already members of a political vigilante group makes such

as recommendation, the potential political vigilante is then contacted and persuaded to join their political vigilante group. This finding also confirms the studies on political vigilantism in Ghana by Norman (2019) and Bjarnesen (2020) who established that, political vigilantes are usually recruited based on peer recommendations. According to Uriah:

For me, I was invited by one of my brothers to their meeting and they told me that, they know I am NDC and my brother told them I can help their group to work for our party, so since they trust my brother who brought me to their meeting, they will want me to just join the group so that we can all help the party to win power and also help us....

Bulldozer gave a similar narration as follows:

...sometimes, members are also allowed to join the group based on recommendations from group members who are trusted.

Likewise, Atinga also gave similar narration as follows:

...quiet apart from that, at times an individual can be allowed to join our group if he has been approached and recommended by executives or the senior members of the group to join

Lastly, previous knowledge or experience in either private or state security training. It was discovered that, one of the ways political vigilante groups use to recruit its members have to do with the previous knowledge in any form of security training. Potential political vigilantes who have any kind of previous knowledge, skills and experience in security training or tactics and handling of weapons served as a plus to such individuals who wished to be recruited in a political vigilante group. As part of their reasons why political vigilante groups use previous knowledge in security to recruit its members is that, they indicated that the most paramount reason for which their group exist is to provide security for their political patrons or political party. hence, individuals who already possess some level of security knowledge as their strength or “macho” will be able to corporate and work with the state security and other private security during party programs. Participants added that, at times new recruits of political vigilante groups are not able to go through their group security training due to time and cost yet these new recruits are sometimes deployed to provide security services and other security protocols for high-ranking members

within their political party during occasion. Hence, political vigilantes will know how to relate to people during party functions and be very vigilante at the same time in order to be able to detect anybody around who is a threat to the life of their political patrons, know how to deal with them without causing a unnecessary scene during their operations that may destruct their program.

According to Fatawu:

Boss, you see, most of the senior men in our group who recruit us into the group are retired policemen, soldiers, and national security officers, so they like it when they know you have ever gone through any kind of security training before. Because sometimes, when we go for rallies or campaigns, we do security stuff over there eerhee, so when the group is recruiting you, apart from making sure that you are a member of our political party, they also consider your security knowledge level before you are allowed to join the group (Fatawu).

Likewise, Papa J narrated as follows:

I have training in security. It was a security company that I was in, so we went for training for about 3 months 3 weeks, so I have some small knowledge about security.... So see, sometimes you have to be the security protocol during party programs and if you do not have security knowledge you can't do it well because who have to know who can greet the big man and who cannot greet him at the party program

And for Papa J, during his narration, he indicated that his previous knowledge in security issues or training was considered when his group was recruiting him into his vigilante group. Like the narrative of Papa J, Rambo narrated as follows:

...again, the group sometimes consider people who have been in these private, private security work to join. Even some of our group members still as private security and at the same time the work in the group. Some are even security men in big churches in Ghana. So, people like that the know how to handle security issues during rallies, campaigns etc. eehehh, so the person knowledge about security is also something the group always want to know before recruiting you into the group.

It is interesting to note that, some of these political vigilantes are not just serious and committed Christians or Muslims according to them but they were previously or currently working as security guards for some renown charismatic churches in Ghana. Hence, one would have thought that, due to their jobs as security guards at churches or their various religious beliefs that admonishes them to refrain from engaging in illegal or violent activities, they would have been constraint from

participating in political vigilantism or engaging in all forms of violence during their operations. Unfortunately, religion or religious beliefs had no influence on their behaviors during their operations at any party program or election related activity.

5.6 FACTORS DETERMINING PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL VIGILANTE GROUPS

This section focuses on how those who participate in political vigilantism explain their reasons for participating in their group. This knowledge was needed to enable the researcher to gain a better understanding of why those who participate in political vigilantism do so. Therefore, the resource mobilization theory which explains the reasons why people participate in social movements makes the theory fit and relevant for explaining and understanding the reasons that predispose people in Ghana to participate in political vigilantism. The resource mobilization theory argued that, for people to participate in any social movement (political vigilantism), it means that, they have first and foremost done a costs and benefits analysis of participating in the movement and will only participate in the social movement if only the benefits of participating outweighs the cost of participating. For the resource mobilization theorists, the most important benefits that, a potential participant of a social movement often consider when doing the costs and benefits analysis of participation include; access to money, access to career benefits or opportunities, opportunity to fulfil one's social responsibility, access and control over resources (McCarthy and Zald, 1977). The subsequent paragraphs, therefore, present the reasons why people participate in political vigilantism in Ghana. The following were seven (7) reasons political vigilantes in Ghana gave for participating in political vigilantism:

5.6.1 Security

One major and leading reason why individuals participate in political vigilantism is for security purpose or to prevent their political party opponent(s) from intimidating or stopping their affiliated political party patrons, leaders or members from carrying out their campaigns, rallies or programs. It was obvious from the narratives and non-participant observation that, political vigilantes often mobilize themselves and engage in their activities and operations due to their mistrust for the state security, threats, intimation and a times physical confrontations from their political opponents before, during and after national elections, by-elections, primaries and also during their campaigns. Hence, the deviant and aggressive behavior of individuals and groups during electoral processes in which the state security agencies in Ghana cannot or seems to be reluctant in dealing with these individuals or groups which often push some individuals to either form or join and participate in political vigilantism in order to safeguard their political patrons and the electoral process. This observation is in tandem with the assertion of several scholars such as, Smith (2004); Meagher (2007); Gyampo et al (2017); Paolo (2017) and Bjarnesen (2020) who equally indicated that when it comes to election security and election related issue, state security actors often seem to be weak or unperturbed in dealing with deviant and aggressive individual or groups whose actions disturb the electoral process. This finding reflects the resource mobilization theory. The resource mobilization theorists argue that, an individual participation in any social movement is always based on a costs and benefits analysis of participating in the movement and will only participate in the social movement if only the benefits of participating outweighs the cost of participating. It could be explained that before an individual will participate in political vigilantism to enable them offer security services to their political patrons, political party, and political vigilante group members then, it means that, the said individual first of all did a costs and benefits analysis of participating in political vigilantism and realized that, it will benefit him more than it will cost him

to participate in the movement. For instance, if an individual realizes that if he participates in a political vigilante group which provides security services to a political group or political patron and they will intend give him access to an important resource like money as well as personal security against attacks from his political opponents during elections or elections related activities, then he is most likely to participate in political vigilantism ones the gains of participation outweighs the risk of participation. From the field interviews, it is obvious that, the participants will participate in political vigilantism when they weight the costs and benefits of participating in it and if the benefits outweigh the cost, they will participate in it. Papa J was one of such individuals who gave their reasons for participating in political vigilantism as for security reasons. He shared his reasons as follows:

It's like, I'm a Party member so whenever my party get program, I used to go there so you will go and meet your friends there some kinds of big man. So, one day, one day the person will be going somewhere and will say Charlie come and help me to eerhh or come and escort me to this place or something like that. So, for me what I know is that we were protecting our party members

A participant known as Big Joe, a founding member and executive of one of the political vigilante groups gave a similar reason for participating in political vigilantism. He narrates as follows:

...we formed our group because, there are some people who are either leaders or influential, so if those people are at anywhere! and tells the youth or his boys to do this or that, that is exactly what they will do. Soo, a politician may go somewhere and wants to campaign, and he will come out with his group and say, you won't campaign! Or intimidate! you and you won't be able to do it. So that has led to why, every party needs to have its vigilante group, so wherever they are going to campaign the vigilantes will go with them, so that someone cannot intimidate the other and say that, you cannot do what you want to do. Erhm, so we formed the group purposefully because, they used to say that, NPP is an Akan party and the Akan party to is a party for "feardos" or "pokniidooru" (a Frafra word meaning, men behaving like women or with the fear and strength of women), whereas, they classified the NDC party as a part for those without fear or "borasii" (Frafra word meaning men with the strength of real men or men without fear). So, because of that, the misbehaviour of the NDC party youth or vigilantes was too much and that is why, some of us came out to also form our NPP vigilante group.

Likewise, according to Azonto:

Sometimes may be an MP or a politician wants to go and campaign in an area that is the stronghold of his opponent but cannot go because of fear and all that, so we have to be around to guard them and all that.

The above quote from Azonto highlight the idea that, politics in Ghana is antagonistic and involves some power enclaving. Hence, the antagonistic nature of the Ghanaian politics could also be the basis for forming and participating in such groups.

5.6.2 Economic

A second major reason why individuals participate in political vigilantism is for economic or financial purpose. Most of the participants in the study stated that high rate of unemployment in the country has often triggered them to join and participate in political vigilantism since it serves as an avenue to link them to political patrons who can possibly help them gain employment or receive financial support as start-up capital to make a living or rescue themselves from the shackles of poverty. Quite apart from that, political patrons often make promises of providing job opportunities as incentives for political vigilantes or party grassroots members who fight for their party to either retain or gain power, which then lure people into joining and participating in political vigilante groups. This finding is completely in tandem with the resource mobilization theory which postulate that, an individual costs and benefits analysis of economic opportunities such as access to money and access to career opportunities is what propel people to participate in a social movement or political vigilantism. In line with the above reason, Bob-Milliar (2014), Gyampo et al (2017) and Dumenu and Adzraku (2020) have all established in their findings that, indeed inadequate job opportunities in the country also propel the youth, often with low level or no formal education who are directly and/or affiliated to the two major political parties - the NPP and the NDC to participate in political vigilantism.

Again, the use of the principle of reciprocity, nepotism and favouritism in recruiting individuals into various government security agencies, the youth employment agencies and other public institutions based on an individual's affiliation to a political vigilante group often lure party youth wings to form such groups in order to contribute to the victory of their political party with the hope of having access to financial support, jobs and contracts. Recruitment of political vigilantes into youth employment offices, the security services such as the police, national security among others are often used as means of rewarding political vigilantes who are at the forefront and fight to bring their political party to power. The recruitment of such political vigilantes into various aspect of the public sector tends to portray what political patrons are capable of doing for those that are loyal to them, and this keeps other political vigilantes committed to the political patron or politician, with the hope that it would get to their turn soon. It is crystal clear that, the resource mobilization theory offers a better explanation for this particular finding as to why people participate in a social movement grounded on their argument that argue that, an individual participation in any social movement is always based on a costs and benefits analysis of participating in the movement and will only participate in the social movement if only the benefits which are mostly economic benefits such as access to jobs, money and career opportunities outweighs the cost of participating in the movement. For instance, if an individual realizes that if he participates in political vigilantism, he stands to gain more such as receiving monies or getting a job from his political party or political patron to rescue him from the shackles of poverty, unemployment or underemployment then he is most likely to participate in political vigilantism since their participation will give them benefits that they would not have gotten if they do not participate in the movement. From the field interviews, it has been established that, a participant will participate in political vigilantism when they weight the costs and benefits of participating in it and if the

benefits outweigh the cost, they will participate in it. Rambo was one of such individuals. He shared his reasons as follows:

...I have been able to get jobs for 1 or 2 people and I know it is because I am a member of my group (Rambo).

During Rambo's narration, he added that:

...some of our group members have even gotten work for themselves because our group work for our party and they are now in power. We are also fighting for others who are not even members and they are getting positions like Rockson and some are getting uniform work and so on (Rambo).

Papa J gave a similar reason for participating in political vigilantism. Even though, he concluded by stating that, his reason for participating in it has not been materialized. He states that: ...maybe one day, one day when my party come to power and maybe I will get work, and that is the reason why we are also putting in an endless effort but at the end of the day it can happen that the party will come to power and they will not help you and it has happened to me before.

According to Babscamali, his reason for also participating in political vigilantism was for economic or financial purpose. For instance, he indicated in his narration that:

there are other opportunities I get but I prefer going for contracts, a times I take contracts, do it and get my money and I can tell you now, the party fully has not supported me with cash but there is a saying that you teach a person how to fish than giving the person fish and I think this training that they have trained me to be a fisher man, I can fish for myself and it has helped me a lot and when I say it is helping me a lot I mean I gain a lot of money from the contracts and I also use the money to buy "CAN DOs" (Tricycles) for my boys, yes, others are here using my "Can Dos", they have wives, they have children and they are using mine to take care of their families too, so am proud!, I am proud of that because who am I for them to call me master, master, because they also get something from it to feed their families. It equally tells you that, if I say this, they will take, yes, so am proud because it has helped me a lot.

5.6.3 Political

A third major reason why individuals participate in political vigilantism is for political purpose or political opportunities. Another pertinent reason why people participate in political vigilantism is

their useful contributions to the fortunes of political parties in Ghana as well as an avenue for one to create or expand his political opportunities and political connections. The political process theory offers a better explanation of this finding. The political process theorists argue that, individuals participate in a politically interested social movement such as political vigilantism because of political opportunities that is, it gives the individual access to political participation or the power to participate in decision making process. Again, people will participate in political vigilantism when they are convinced that, their participation will can enable them to create or expand their political opportunities. Hence, their political opportunities will then enable them to have to have access to a very important resource which is political leverage. Since political leverage can then be used to pursue their self-interest as well as the interest of their main political group which is access to political power and the likes

It was established that while political vigilantes attempt to create or expand their own political opportunities, they are often actively engage in political campaigns and education of electorates in the local language about their political party ideology, policies or manifesto at the grassroots level and policing of ballot boxes on elections day in order to avoid cheating from their political opponents as well as give courage to electorates who support their political party to show up on election date and vote without fear or intimidation from their opposing vigilante groups or macho men. This particular finding confirms the studies done by Smith (2004), Meagher (2007), Gyampo et al (2017), Bjarnesen (2020) among others who indicated in their studies that political capital, political patronage or political opportunism also serves as bases for establishing political vigilante groups. Sampson was one of such individuals. He shared his reasons as follows:

To fight for the party. We fight for the party in different ways, one! we mobilize the people for them to vote so that the number of votes for our party will increase. While we are doing that for the party, you are also creating opportunities for yourself and people around you.

Sampson continued his reason for participating in political vigilantism by adding that:

...because we were having low turn outs for NPP, the numbers were very, very, very insignificant. So, we realized that, how can you go to a polling station and then you get 10 votes then you go to another polling station and then you get 10 votes, so we realized that no! why can't we sit and move this party forward so that people will recognize it, that was the idea....when we came up with the idea, I could remember that one of the polling stations we used to record 30 after the group being launched, after the elections, we recorded 200 votes in that particular polling station, so we actually jubilated because we have achieved our aim

Babscamali gave a similar reason for participating in political vigilantism.

... to support the party and may be win people for the party.... you can also get chances in the party to may be contest or something

Likewise, Jones narrated as follows:

You also get personal protection from political vigilante group members aside the protection we give to our party leaders. You know, we also need personal protection because sometimes other people may want to attack you because you don't support their party but when they know you belong to a vigilante group they won't even attempt because if they try our group will also go after them

5.6.4 Social support

Members of vigilante groups also supported each other strongly during rites of passage. That is to say that, it was discovered that, political vigilante groups render social support in cash and in kind to its members during naming ceremonies, marriage rites, funeral rites of political vigilante close relatives and even in situations where their members are sick or hospitalized. For most political vigilantes, these social support in times of need or distress encouraged them to join and participate in political vigilantism since joining and participating in such groups also gave them happiness and a feeling of sense of belonging anytime they are in need and members comes around to pay homage. It is clear from this finding that, the participants usually participate in political vigilantism because of the social support benefits one stands to gain which outweighs their risk or cost of participation. This finding therefore in tandem with the argument of the resource mobilization

theorists who are off the view that, people will only participate in political vigilantism after doing a costs and benefits analysis of participation and realizing that it will pay more to participate than it will cost one to participate. For instance, if an individual makes a costs and benefits analysis and realizes that if he participates in a movement such as political vigilantism, it will bring him a benefit such as assistance in paying hospital bills, funeral donations in the form of cash, cash donations during marriage ceremonies and so, then, he is most likely to participate in political vigilantism ones the gains of participation will outweigh the risk of participation. Uriah was one of such individuals. He shared his reasons as follows:

...any of our member that gets a problem, if it is about sickness, then we all have to see what we will do, if the problem is about the victim needs money, or it is about blood donation, then we would call for a meeting and inform them about the problem of our group and ask them?, maybe there is someone in our group whose is a donor or if even he is not a donor may be he say tell us that ooh I have a relative somewhere who is a donor and our group leaders can go and talk to that donor that, ooh someone in our group has a problem and we need help from him to help our member so if he is a donor, he may come and donate to help us rescue our member from that situation. That is number one, number two, may be another person may be sick and not just need blood donation and if even we don't have enough money to help that person but just able to go and visit the sick person in the name of our group it gives the person some happiness or joy and we have done that several times for members of our eerhh

Babscamali reason for also joining and participating in political vigilantism was not too different from the narration given by Uriah. According to him:

... as a member of my group, I get support from my group not only when I have a funeral, I mean not only supporting ourselves during funerals but weddings, naming ceremonies and other. Others are there they are Christians, Muslims, we have people from the Muslims side they have their marital rites and other things, naming ceremonies, we always support and we go with the party t-shirts to support our members (Babscamali).

Terminator gave similar reason for participating in political vigilantism, and according to him:

We also felt that, when you join some of these groups, you can get their support when you are sick or there a funeral that you have. Sometimes they even support you when your family members are sick and need money for operation at the hospital.

5.6.5 Party recognition

Again, members of political vigilante groups participate in political vigilantism in order to be noticed within their political party. Party youths who are not recognized or known within their political party often stand to gain almost nothing from their party in terms of access to job opportunities, financial support, among others. Hence, the youths within political parties often wish to join political party youth groups such as vigilante groups in order to enable them contribute their quota in diverse ways towards the victory of their political party and more importantly give room for them to be recognized within their political party since party recognition serves as a ticket for accessing various opportunities. This finding is also a reflection of the resource mobilization theory in the sense that, the basis for which people participate in political vigilantism is based on an important benefit which is party recognition since party recognition gives an individual to have access to financial support, job openings and other political opportunities. Therefore, the argument of the resource mobilization theorists that, people are most likely to participate in political vigilantism when they weight the costs and benefits of participating in it and realizes that the benefits or gains outweigh the cost or risk of participation. For instance, if an individual is convinced that, joining and participating in political vigilantism will make him well known in his political party, which can intend enable him create or expand their political connections or opportunities and get money, he is most likely to participate in this kind of movement that can help him to pursue his self-interest and their main political group interest since the gains of participation outweighs the risk of participation. For instance, according to Hamza as part of his reasons for participating in political vigilantism, is that:

My brother, one of the reasons why we do this vigilante work is for the party to know us very well so that when the party comes to power, we can also go and ask for contracts. I

am a maison and sometimes you don't get work but if your party is in power and they know you very well, you can get some building contracts

Similarly, Azonto as part of his reasons for participating in political vigilantism, narrated as follows:

When I am going to my constituency, they know me very well and known what I have done for the party because I am a member of our group. So now I have access to job opportunities and even helped people get work....

Likewise, Babscamali narrated as follows:

... if I am not recognized in the party and I am just there, it means I am just even there for nothing, then I just have to switch to a place where they can know me. So, I decided to switch to NPP and then I joined our vigilante group, so when they have meetings, I go but I am not an executive in our group.

5.6.6 Enhance Social Network or Social Capital

Last but not the least, political vigilantes indicated that participating in political vigilantism widens one's social network or social capital. Some participants in the study point to the fact that, their participation in political vigilantism gave them the opportunity to meet and establish relationships with new people especially the big politicians or political patrons within their political party who often serves as a mechanism to access various opportunities in the future. This finding can be explained using Bourdieu's concept of social capital, the concept basically posit that individuals ties and connections to others can be converted to economic capital. Hence, an individual participation in political vigilantism serves as a tool or avenue for him to create or enhance his social network with other people particularly influential politicians within his party. Ones the individual is able to successfully build or enhance his social network, he can later convert such social capital or connections into economic capital such acquiring jobs or access to financial capital from their political patrons or influential individuals to either start or expand his business. The discussion of this finding is also in sync with the explanation given by the resource mobilization

theorists as to why people participate in social movements. Therefore, based on the resource mobilization theorist's argument, individuals who knows that they are most likely to gain more than it will cost them to participate in political vigilantism will not hesitate to participate it. For instance, if an individual is convinced that, when he participate in political vigilantism he will be able to widen his social capital which can then be used to pursue his economic benefits such as being able to get a desired job, develop a dream career, help friends and family in financial distress and so on that he would not be able to get in case he does not participate in it, then he is most likely to participate because of the gains or benefits which will outweigh the risk of participation.

Bulldozer was one of such people and he narrated as follows:

You see, when you join this group, you will get to know more people especially people who can help you find a job or something you want

Jones gave a similar narration as follows:

...again, when they invited me to their meeting, they said, if we join the group it will help us meet big, big politicians in the party and as we all know, in Ghana its all about who you know in order to get a job or whatever opportunity you want

Likewise, according to Macho:

Aside providing security for these big men, we also get connections to support some family members and even friends. For instance, this was able to get scholarship for my brother's son who is attending polytechnic all because of my connection I got after joining our group (Macho).

5.6.7 Ethnic support

Finally, members of political vigilante groups participate in political vigilantism to enable them to support their ethnic group members especially ethnic members who are politicians or those who have so much influence. Most members of a particular vigilantism group that participated in this study pointed to the fact that, as part of the reasons why the join and participant in the activities and operations of their political vigilante group is to enable them fight for the development and progress of their ethnic group as well as fight for their ethnic group members particularly those

who are politicians to have equal access to the national cake without marginalization from opposing individuals or groups. The resource mobilization theory further offers an appropriate and insightful explanation for this finding. It could be explained based on the argument of the resource mobilization theorists who posit that, those individuals who participate in a social movement usually engage in a costs and benefits analysis of participation before they participate in such social movements. Therefore, an individual will only participate in political vigilantism after doing his calculations and realizing that, his benefits of participation will outweigh his risk of participation. For instance, those individuals who realizes that their participation in political vigilantism has more benefit for them and their ethnic group members than it will cost him to participate in such movement then they are most likely to participate in political vigilantism as long as the gains of participation outweighs the risk of participation. It is imperative to note that, this particular finding was not found in the views expressed by members of the two political vigilante groups that participated in the study but was only peculiar to the views expressed by members of “Do or Die” political vigilante groups which is both an ethnic based group in the upper east region and a partisan group. The main purpose and activities of this particular political vigilante group is similar to that of the Action Troopers of the National Liberation Movement (NLM) thus an Asante based political party was formed during the 1950s. Meagher (2007) study confirms the above finding as part of the reasons why people engage in vigilantism. Rambo was one of such individuals. He shared his reasons as follows:

...we were formed to rather help our communities in terms of the municipality. There was a time, when the president of Ghana give any government position or appointment to somebody from Bolga and those who are not from Bolga or natives of Bolga will say oh!, "gaamu! gaamu!, kakarmu abaayi frafra, baamuyara!" thus in Hausa meaning "they don't want them to give any position to a person or man from Bolga" and that kinds of things ... for instance, there was a time when Rockson Bukari was appointed as the minister of Upper East, there was a particular group of people who said, ooh! we will demonstrate

against that appointment and make sure that, they will not give it to Rockson. Why should! they give that position to Rockson? And so on, so when we heard that, we thus our group had to approach them and had to ask them, who they are! and asked them to tell us why they should not! give the minister to Rockson...

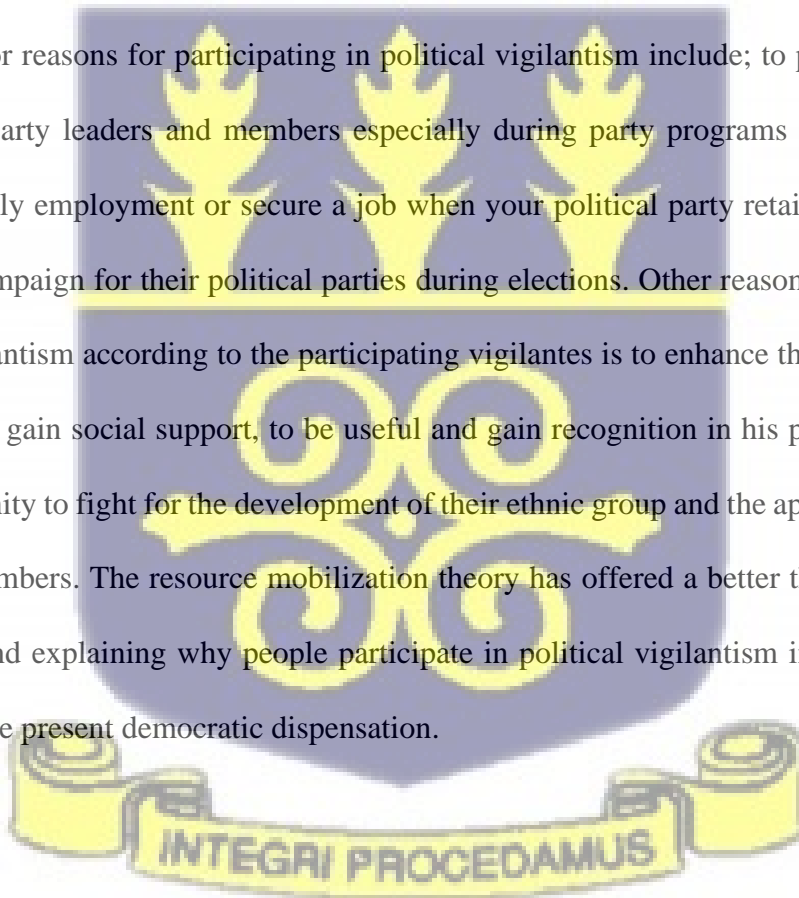
Rambo then goes on to conclude on the above narrative by saying that:

...so, we believe that those who says they should not give positions to our tribe, we will fight those people...

Big Joe gave a similar narrative as follows:

...let me add one important thing that made us form the group and do what we do. Our dream is to help project our own ethnic people not just to campaign for only our party. We believe that if one member of our ethnic group success it will raise his name and the name of our ethnic group very high. That alone makes us happy and the youth will also learn from them to go far and bring us development.

In sum, the major reasons for participating in political vigilantism include; to provide protection or security for party leaders and members especially during party programs or elections, have access to gainfully employment or secure a job when your political party retain or gain political power and to campaign for their political parties during elections. Other reasons for participating in political vigilantism according to the participating vigilantes is to enhance their social network or social capital, gain social support, to be useful and gain recognition in his political party, and also, an opportunity to fight for the development of their ethnic group and the appointment of their ethnic group members. The resource mobilization theory has offered a better theoretical lens for understanding and explaining why people participate in political vigilantism in Ghana since the colonial era to the present democratic dispensation.



CHAPTER SIX

EXPERIENCES OF POLITICAL VIGILANTISM, POLITICAL VIGILANTISM AND POLITICAL STABILITY AND HOW BOTH STATE AND NON-STATE ACTORS SHOULD RESPOND TO POLITICAL VIGILANTISM

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I discuss the experiences of political vigilantes, political vigilantes' perceptions of their actions on political stability or security and how political vigilantes think state and non-state actors should respond to their activities. The following themes will be discussed in this chapter largely drawing on existing literature and theoretical underpinnings.

6.2 EXPERIENCES OF POLITICAL VIGILANTES

The third objective of this study focuses on the experiences of political vigilantes during elections or their operations. Based on what the vigilantes themselves said and non-participant observation, the experiences of political vigilantes have been categorized into four (4). The following are their experiences:

6.2.1 Physical and Verbal assault or confrontation

A major and leading experience of political vigilantes is that they often encounter physical and verbal assault or fights during elections, rallies, and other party programs. According to the participants, there were even instances where their political opponents or political vigilantes confronted them with weapons such as guns, machetes and the likes during elections or other election related activities. They added that physical assault, insults, intimidation, and threats has always been the norm of the day during elections most especially by-elections. According to the

participants the by-elections are usually characterized with high tension than any other elections because politicians and party supporters from various part of the country will all gather in one constituent try to secure just one parliamentary seat for their party candidate. Some participants indicated that, there were instances where they personally witnessed their group members either insulting or beating people during rallies and elections. In fact, some of the participants added that, unlike some of their colleagues who easily beat up individuals who wish to cause trouble or destruct the success of their party programs, they only threatened to beat such individuals during rallies and elections. It is interesting to note that, most of these participants think it is normal and right to beat or insult any individual or group of individuals who insulted, threatened or confronted any of their party member or political patron first during any election or political function because such individuals annoy and disrespect them or their political party. Hence, for these participants, there's usually the need to use them as a scape goat for others to learn that disrespect, insults and all that has a price to pay for. When a participant was asked his experience during an election or a party program, he narrated as follows:

At times you see some of us I don't think if there's a program and they called some of us or they give us positions and somebody is coming to cause confusion or something like that I don't think I will fight with that person, I only beg you to calm down or stop and those things but more times, you just see some of them holding cutlass and more things trying to fight each other. I mean it can happen in my group and it can happen in other group and maybe your opponent will just come and make like hey hey, hey, hey, and they will just come and be making hey, hey, hey and at the end of the day you see bottles and people injured so that is the thing that I didn't like (Papa J)

Another participant known as Babskamali gave a similar experience. His narration is as follows:

when it comes to elections, when it comes to elections, you know, (then laughs) every party has foot soldiers and mainly a group like this will not just stay back and watch because the Tallensi/Nabdan by-elections had a lot of confusion! I was there, NPP, NDC. NDC wanted the seat, NPP wanted the seat, there were a lot of challenges, they brought in a lot of groups but our group to was there erhm, just also to support our party member to also win and we whenever we see each other like that there is always a lot of problems because, those vigilante groups, they had to bring some from Tamale and erhm, our group to was also

there. Although, eerhm, that election was violent, but we thank God nobody was hurt. The violence was caused by our group because when a group like that comes from nowhere and we are also in the region here, there will be exchange of words, exchange of weapons all over but the security guards were also all over making sure that nobody has to sneak in with any weapon but still there were weapons because there are other routes that you can pass in with the weapon but actually both sides of the groups were having weapons. Others were holding machetes, but you cannot just hold it for people to see it, you either wear long dress and hide it and others to were holding weapons like pestles.

Likewise, Rambo narrated as follows:

Sometimes at the elections ground, you go and see Macho men around or some parties will bring group of Macho men to be intimidate people, insulting or even beating their oppents, well, we will also go and organise ourselves and come around and face you even though we are not vigilantes but we will make ourselves vigilantes and confront your group or beat them.

This finding can be explained using Agnew's general strain theory. They physical assaults and insults they usually experience during their operations sometimes makes these political vigilantes experience negative emotions such as anger that predisposes them to committing crimes such as also physically assaulting or beating up individuals who confronted them in such manner.

6.2.2 Threat and Intimidation

In addition to physical and verbal assault, political vigilantes often experience threats and intimidation from political opponents during elections or political activities. According to the participants, their political opponents often deploy "macho" vigilantes on the day of election to intimidate them and create fear and panic for voters, their party members and even polling staff with the aim of frustrating them in order to be able to manipulate the election outcome in their favour. For the participants, intimation and threats are usually used as a strategy by their political opponents to reduce the voter turnout in areas that is not their strongholds, since intimidation is one of the best strategies to create fear and panic among voters who are present or yet to show up at the polling station. Some participants added that, the threats and intimidations used by political opponents on the day of elections is often the major cause of election violence because it annoys and frustrate politicians due to the fact that, intimidation and threats can reduce voter turnout and

ultimately reduce the margin of votes within their strongholds. These views expressed by the participants concur with the views expressed by Dumenu and Adzraku (2020), Johnston (1996) and Rosenbaum and Sederberg (1974) who established in their studies that, intimidation is often one of the leading tactics political vigilantes use to achieve their desirable outcome. When a participant known as Big Joe was asked his experience during an election or a party program, he narrated as follows:

Sometimes, during campaigns or elections, we can go somewhere and our opponents or a politician will come out with his group and say who are they?!, they can't be here and start threatening and intimidating! you eerhh. So, sometimes we experience some of these things....

Hamza gave a similar narrative as follows:

...because those politicians know that as for our area, they cannot win, they use intimidation, cause fear and all kinds of things to prevent the voters here from coming out to vote....

Another participant was also of the view that:

Usually on election day, it is very common to see vigilantes from a party come around riding motor bikes, disturbing everywhere just to scare people so that they won't come out and vote so that it will favour their party. So sometimes their behaviour, annoy people or even scare them and they won't come out to vote that is why our group will have to come out and go round telling the people to come out and vote because nobody can harm them them. Even if they try, we will not spare them.... (Jones).

This finding can be explained using Agnew's general strain theory. These political vigilantes usually engage in criminal behaviors such as threatening their political opponents during their operations because these political vigilantes sometimes experience negative emotions such as anger and frustration which stems from the fact that they feel their political opponents wants to cheat them by deliberately causing fear and panic on the day of election within their strongholds. As a result of this anger and frustrations caused by their political opponents, they are then predisposed to committing crimes such as also threatening their opponents, trying to fight them for the sake of obtaining instance justice and so on.

6.2.3 Regret and Psychological pain

Another major experience of political vigilantes is that they sometimes encounter regret as well as psychological pain after carrying out most of their assigned roles during party programs, elections, or other election related activities. Participants expressed the view that regret of action was a common thing during their operations. The regret was often based on the fact that, their political vigilantes' leaders or political patrons will sometimes instruct them to take certain actions such as fighting or denying their political opponents access to certain places on the day of election, campaign or rallies. Some of the participants were also of the view that, sometimes they are even instructed to fight or confront individuals who are friends or relatives who do not support our political party. In such instance, you may act based on the command of the political vigilante leader, but you will later think about it and regret that you insulted or fought your own brother or even an innocent person. Again, the afterthought of how a political vigilante manhandled an innocent person just to scare or deter other people during their operations sometimes makes them feel bad and suffer psychological pain. When a participant was asked his experience during an election or a political party program, he narrated as follows:

erhhhhmmmm, most times I'm in the group and me, I actually don't fight with people but you can see that sometimes somebody or my opponent can come across me and does somethings I don't like and me too, I have a quick temper and when it happens like that at the program, I will fight the person but small time, often after the fight ends, you will see that I will regret because I don't like that, so after I do those things and finish, you will see that I won't be happy those times erhhh (Papa J)

According to another participant:

...one time I visited my polling station to help my old lady who couldn't vote because they said her name was not in the register but when I got there, one of the polling agents from my area who knows me very well said he won't allow me to go through the register and when I asked why, he said nothing but he won't let me and I knew very well that they intentionally denied my old lady the chance to vote because she won't vote for their party. So I got angry and invited my people to come and we had to beat him and all those who were supporting him that day but after all that, we realized we had also beaten innocent

people who tried to stop us from fighting, so some of these things torment us after the fight because we feel guilty and stupid a times for also beating innocent souls (Mallam).

6.2.4 Exploitation

Again, it was observed that political vigilantes especially political vigilantes who were just members and does not have any position within their political vigilante group mostly experience exploitation after rendering their services during rallies, elections, and other party programs. The ordinary political vigilantes who usually engage in the dangerous vigilante activities are often given a meagre amount of money as travelling and transport allowance by close of day or after the end of their programs or election related activities. Most of the participants indicated that, they usually suffer from exploitations on election day because the politicians will make promises of paying them an appreciable amount of money if only the political vigilantes do their bidding but fails to honor their promise especially instances where politicians who hire them lose their election. Participants also added that, even though they are aware they are being used by their political patrons or political parties yet they find solace in the belief that when their political party or preferred candidate wins an upcoming election, we would have access to opportunities such as jobs, scholarships and so on. A participant for instance narrated that:

...I don't see any big man giving us money before, I always see the seniors within the group giving us money. When we have a program and we go and come the seniors will just find maybe some 10, 10 cedis for us or 5, 5 cedis for us just for maybe our lorry fare and that's all! (Papa J).

Bulldozer gave a similar narrative as follows:

Sometimes when we go for rallies and campaigns, we are just given maybe 10 Ghana cedis to buy fuel for our motorbikes and if you are lucky sometimes, we are given 20. After this money for fuel, we are not given even water, yet we will go and spend the whole day there. It is not easy, but it is just because we like the party and may be hope that we will also benefit from the party when they come to power.

Likewise, according Uriah:

...there are also times that, after our operations they will take all our members to a spot and just refresh each of us with only one bottle of beer and that's all for all the hard work

and sacrifice we do for the party on the day of election. Sometimes, I even feel the leaders are just using us to get whatever they want....

6.3 POLITICAL VIGILANTES AND SECURITY/POLITICAL STABILITY

Scholars such as Bjarnesen (2020), Gyampo et al (2017), Paalo (2017) have argued that the actions or activities of political vigilantes during elections or election related activities are inimical to the peace and security of Ghana. Indeed, most of the members of the political vigilantes' groups we interviewed shared this same view.

In the words of Babscamali:

Actually, it is not good because we don't know when things will happen that will get you so much angry and that is, then you will use a weapon. Actually, when there was a decision to ban all vigilante groups, actually I was happy, and I think it mean good. Because the group should not be used as an opportunity to harass people or do all sort of things (Babscamali).

Another participant narrated that:

I can see that when we go for a rally or a program or something like that you see that the party leaders is like, they don't trust the police, it is we that they trust. So when we reached a certain point, I was not happy because, how can Ghana security and the Ghanaians don't trust those people and we the vigilante group that they are trusting so it is something I didn't like at all! (Papa J).

According to Jones:

Political vigilantism is not good because it disturbs the peace of people and people are complaining. They come out and terrorize people not to come out and vote and that's not good at all for the peace and security of this country....

Terminator was also one of the numerous participants who gave similar narration as follows:

...you don't need anybody to tell you how vigilantism is in this country. We have seen it on tv how they have beaten people on election days, vandalize cars and all that. So as for vigilantism it's not good for our country because it can cause serious security problems because recently there was even shooting of guns

Most of the participants who expressed their views that political vigilantism is inimical or a serious threat to Ghana's security or democracy based on their position on the fact that political vigilantes often take the law into their own hands during their operations with violence and intimidation as

their tactics which sometimes leads to physical assault, destruction of properties and sometimes human lives are destroyed among others. Hence, these painful experiences predispose them to revenge or victim equalization which can then escalate into fear and insecurity among civilians in the country.

However, some of the participants had a contrary view that political vigilantism is rather good and not inimical to the security of the country. These participants expressed the view that political vigilantism contributes positively to ensuring the maintenance of peace and security in the country and as such it is not detrimental to the security or political stability of the country. Rambo was one of such participants, he narrated as follows:

...for me, I think our actions rather supports security in this country. Because our duty is to make ensure that nobody intimidate our party members and the youth to come out vote during elections without feeling fear.

Sampson gave a similar narration as follows:

...we are helping the security to have enough time to do other work if not there will be pressure on the state security since the police personnel are not enough in this country. Usually on the day of our elections, sometimes you will go to some polling stations and they have just one or no policeman at that polling station to ensure that people will comply with the voting procedures but when we go to those areas during the elections, you will see that people will not disturb because we are around and we are not going to spare you if you want to cause any trouble. So, we rather help the security to relax.

Likewise, Hamza narrated as follows:

For us I don't think our group is doing anything that have any negative effect on the peace and security in the country. In fact, sometimes when there are programs, the police even invite us for the programs because we know how to relate very well with people and handle vigilantes who are there better than them. So, they always invite us to come and support them at programs.

The above quote from Hamza calls for further interrogation or investigation and stakeholders' engagement with the state security to gain an insight and understanding of why some of these groups are sometimes invited by the police to assist them during public programs.

6.4 RESPONSE OF STATE AND NON-STATE ACTORS TOWARDS POLITICAL VIGILANTISM

In recent times, political vigilantes have become more visible during national, run-off and byelections. Their presence during these elections and other election related activities often creates fear, panic, and insecurity in voters. In some instances, voters have been verbally abused, physically confronted, properties destroyed and so on. These experiences of victimization of citizens have made the public to continually demand that both state and non-state actors should respond to or deal with political vigilantes in accordance with the state laws. The study then explored the perspective of the participants on how they think both state and non-state actors especially the police, should deal with the actions of political vigilantes during their operations. It is interesting to note that, although most of the participants expressed the view that political vigilantism is bad and inimical to state security or political stability. However, most of them who expressed such views still think that the phenomenon is a normal issue and as such civilians and security personnel should deal with the actions of political vigilantes as a normal issue.

In terms of how political vigilantes think state and non-state actors should respond to political vigilantism, the participants expressed the view that, they are rational, very useful, responsible, and friendly people who know what is right and wrong and are just offering services to their political patrons or parties with no intentions to harm anyone. In addition, they are bread winners of their families and change makers within their community who wish to bring joy, pride and positive impact within their respective families and communities. However, accidents or misunderstandings do occur in every profession especially pertaining to the security agencies where instances of police brutally, civilians are tortured by the military among others yet these security agencies or personnel are often not sacked or penalized with the justification that, they

have the mandate to do so. Therefore, some of the participants think that, the various actors within the state and non-state agencies should not deal with them as though they are irresponsible and irrational in circumstances where misunderstanding(s) may arise between them and opposing parties which often result in illegalities because for such participants, what is good for the goose is good for the gander. For instance, a participant known as Big Joe, a founding member and executive of one of the political vigilante groups gave the following narrative as to how and why the various actors should deal with their actions as they wish. According to him:

All those in the vigilante groups are not useless. What serious thing a tall have we done that people are always saying band vigilantes, arrest them? years back NPP was doing their demonstrations and police went to beat them and even destroyed someone's eye, did they break the police?, did they break the police that they shouldn't work again? But it was NDC time, so the news came out that, NDC made uniform people to go and beat them and spoil someone's eyes, so did they break the police and say they should not work again? So, there's nothing that does not have it good and bad side, so why should it be that as for the vigilantes, just the slightest move and they will say, they should stop or band vigilantes? So, then we should also consider the incidents where people in uniforms made mistakes, yet they have not said they should stop their work. uniform people always beat people byhard, where do we take them to? We have not heard that police does not exist anymore or they have break the police, they have break the fire service, they have break the military or they have break the immigration and we have seen people smuggling goods through our borders, how does it always happen that they are able to do that?, why are the immigration there? Did they break them? so why? Just a small thing and they will say let break vigilante....

Big Joe added that, as part of the reasons why both state and non-state actors should perceive and deal with them as useful actors in society is that there is lack of confidence in the law enforcement agencies. For him, the failure of the law enforcement agencies or the security services to provide satisfactory security services to the public or a political party makes them resort to political vigilantism as an alternative means to achieving what every rational person could have done. Therefore, political vigilantes should not be perceived as irrational and irresponsible but should rather be perceived and treated as rational and responsible people who seeks to ensure that people

who tries to violate the existing state laws or use illegitimate means to disadvantage their affiliated political party during election are unable to do that. He narrated as follows:

.... I will also state it here that, the leaders should also think deep that, being vigilante does mean that you are just a donkeyman or we do things and we don't even know what we are doing. They should know very well that we married and we have children to, we think of family and everybody thinks of how to cater for his children and wife and the way the politicians or leaders and thinking that's the way we also think. So, they should not always think that vigilante is about that, we should always come out and consume "wee", tramol and misbehave and go, no no, we think a lot.... (Big Joe).

Big Joe then concludes by also indicating that, the various actors of both state and non-state agencies should not undermine political vigilantes because some of their members are educated and knows the kinds of actions or activities that is illegal. Therefore, it is not as though, political vigilantes are a bunch of notorious people but rather a reservoir of goodwill directed at ensuring the existing norms work and people get what they deserve since they feel the state in recent times does no longer recruit better or capable individuals into the state security agencies who can handle security issues. Again, for them, their participation in political vigilantism is a means to acquiring their human basic needs. Hence, the various actors within the state and non-state agencies should note that, their aim is not to cause a form of illegalities but rather participate in vigilantism operations as one of the available means to surviving or fending for their families and even helping their community members. He expressed his view as follows:

.... We have people in us who have attended school very well and know what is good and what is bad, yet we are all in it together. So, it is not like vigilantes are just by-hard boys, so they should take us as by-hard boys, we don't have use. So, if people even get to know the kinds of roles, we play in our various communities they will respect you more than the MP self. So, I want to make it clear to the leaders and everyone that it is like they have underrated vigilantes paaa and I think they shouldn't underrate us because I think the government should rather be recruiting the security from the vigilante group because if you want to speak the truth, these days when you see someone wearing a uniform these days some of them honestly does fit to wear the uniform but when you see the vigilantes they are fit. So, the government should have taken a step to recruit strong guys who can do the work from the vigilante groups and the country would have moved forward.... So, for

me people must know that we are just like any other human being and that what we do to also eat. So, they should not be saying break vigilantes (Big Joe).

According to Rambo:

The state security and everybody should see our group as a good group and not try to fight us during elections because we are rather giving people protection and our party people the morale to be able to come out to campaign and vote during elections without fear.

Likewise, Macho narrated as follows:

... as for vigilantism work, it is just like normal security. So anytime we go for operations, it is not our wish to beat anymore but if you disturb, we will not spare you. So, people have to know that we are good people and doesn't disturb but if you disturb us or want to spoil our program, we won't spare you. So, the police have to deal with us just like the private security.

Some few participants were of the view that, they think the state actors particularly the security should make it a conscious effort to stop political vigilantes from operating because they cause more harm than good. Based on non-participant observation, it was discovered that those participants who were of the view that the state actors should disband and stop the operations of political vigilantes were those participants who felt their political vigilante group and political party to a lesser extent only used them for their selfish gains. In fact, those political vigilantes who expressed such views were those who sacrificed for their group or party but had little or no benefit for their sacrifice or their commitment to their vigilante groups. According to Jones:

Political vigilantism is not good because it disturbs the peace of people and people are complaining. They come out and terrorize people not to come out and vote and that is not good at all for the peace and security of this country. For instance, the last elections that is what they were doing in my area. So, the police and military must make sure that they are everywhere during the elections to stop this kind of people from terrorizing innocent people around.

Papa J also gave a similar narration as follows:

... if you look at vigilante in Ghana, it is not good and it can come and destroy Ghana so if we don't do something about it, it's not good so what the president did by stopping vigilante in Ghana here is good for me, so I think the police should not forgive anybody who they see engaging in it.

For the participants who think that political vigilantism is inimical to the peace and development of the country and wish an end to political vigilantism also expressed the opinion that, they are

excited that, the president has passed a law disbanding political vigilantism and are optimistic that, if the law properly implemented it will end the rise of political vigilantism in Ghana which is threatening the peace and political stability of the country.



CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY.

7.1 REFLECTIONS

In Africa, the prevalence of political vigilantism is on the rise and Ghana is not an exception. It has been established that this is as a result of opposition political parties or political patrons lack of trust or mistrust in the state security, failure of state institutions to ensure the protection, justice and equality for all citizens, the ability of political vigilantes in Africa to combat forces that threatens the existing social order that the police cannot or are unwilling to combat, political patronage or political opportunism, (Paalo, 2017; Di Nunzio, 2014; Meagher, 2007; Smith, 2004; Anderson, 2002). The extant literature also shows that political vigilantism in Ghana and across Africa mostly result in inequality, injustice, insecurity, loss of lives and property (Asamoah, 2019; Gyampo et al, 2017, Meagher, 2007; Smith, 2004) which is a serious threat to the democracy in Africa due to the crimes and brutalities perpetrated by these vigilante groups (Bjarnesen, 2020; Paalo, 2017; Gyampo et al, 2017; Bob-Milliar, 2014a). In addition, political vigilantes often employ the techniques of intimidation and sometimes violence to drive home their wishes and desires especially during elections (Dumenu and Adzraku, 2020).

Kowalewski's (1996) countermovement theory explains the origin, behaviour and consequences of political vigilantism. His theory does not treat political vigilantism as a crime-control vigilantism, and this makes it fit in the Ghanaian context. His theory refers to political vigilantism as government's illegitimate means of countering a social movement of dissatisfied citizens who

are opposing the regime government. The resource mobilization theory and other theories that has been applied in the study of vigilantism are embedded in Kowalewski's (1996) countermovement theory.

The resource mobilization theory explains that people are rational and for that matter, they will always do a costs and benefits analysis of why they should participate in a social movement before they participate in it. Therefore, ones they conclude that, they will benefit more from participating that they will risk or lose when they participate in it, then they are most likely to participate in the movement. In addition, the resource mobilization theorists argue that the most important thing people consider in their costs and benefit analysis is resources particularly money or economic gains. Hence, the most important reason that lure people to participate in a kind of social movement such as political vigilantism is economic benefits or money. In other words, the underlying reason or latent reason for participation in political vigilantism is ultimately to get economic benefits or have access to resources. Therefore, an individual will participate in political vigilantism after doing his calculations and realizing that, his benefits particularly economic benefits for participation will outweigh his risk of participation.

The political processes theory is viewed by some scholars as an extension of the resource mobilization theory. However, the distinction between the two theorist is that, the proponents of the political process theorists argues that people engage in social movements because of political factors such political opportunities rather than economic factors or access to resources as postulated by the resource mobilisation theorists. For the political process theorists, the underlying or most important reason for which an individuals will participate in a social movement referred to political vigilantism because of political opportunities since political opportunities can be used by an individual to create or expand their political opportunities which can then enable him to

pursue his personal interest such as participating in political processes, political decision making, expansion of his political connections among others.

In a nutshell, resource mobilisation and political process theorists treat social movements as a political phenomenon (Staggenborg, 2012) and individual participants in social movements are perceived as rational social actors pursuing self-interest and they often employ both controlled and uncontrolled behaviors or illegitimate means to achieve their predetermined goals (Staggenborg, 2012).

7.2 MAJOR FINDINGS

The study was carried out to investigate how people who are recruited into political vigilante groups, explain their reasons for participating and their perceptions of the implications of their actions on political stability or security. To achieve this objective, the study was guided by the need to explore how political vigilante groups recruit its members, the explanations given by people for participating in political vigilantism, their experiences during their operations and their perceptions of the implications of their actions on political stability or security.

To achieve this objective, information was collected using a face-to-face in-depth interview guide and non-participant observation. From the interview with fifteen political vigilantes from two political vigilante groups in Ghana, interviews with two ladies from an NPP female's youth group affiliated to one of the political vigilante group and non-participant observation the following major findings were discovered:

1. The main actors of political vigilantism include political party youth, female party youth groups, political patrons, political leaders, political parties, retired security personnel and state security (particularly the police).

2. Largely, the participants identified trust, political affiliation, ethnic affiliation, recommendation from party members or peers, previous knowledge in security issues as things that political vigilante groups use to recruit its members,
3. Largely the participants identified lack of jobs or decent jobs and poverty, lack of trust in state security institutions, lack of trust or integrity in the electoral commission, access to social support, access to social capital and ethnic support as the reasons why they participate in political vigilantism
4. Largely the participants identified physical assault, exploitation, regret, and psychological pains political vigilantes often experience doing their operations or activities.
5. Largely, the participants perceived political vigilantism as being inimical to security or political stability even though, a few of them think political vigilantism rather contributes to the maintenance of security. Hence, for such participants political vigilantism is good.
6. Largely, the participants think both state and non-state actors should consider them as peacefully groups that are just supporting their various political party and wish not to harm anybody who will not harm them. Hence, they should relate to them in a nice manner.
7. Most of the political vigilantes also admitted hearing about the disbandment of vigilantism and its related activities but have no idea what the law regarding it entails.
8. Most of the political vigilantes indicated that, suspicion that the incumbent government wants to use state authority or macho men to deny voters perceived to belong to the opposition party often trigger electoral violence.
9. The participants are very optimistic that political vigilantism will not stop anytime soon even though it has been disbanded in the country. In addition, they are very confident that,

the politicians will continue to demand their services because the lack of trust in the state security and the electoral commission has not been resolved. In addition, the issue of unemployment in the country has not been solved.

10. The participants also mentioned they often witness political vigilantes from other groups holding weapons such as guns and cutlasses during elections and election related activities. In addition, some of the participants mentioned that most of the political vigilantes often use of illicit drugs such as “wee” during their operations.

11. Most of the participants indicated that political vigilante groups are formed around very influential people within various political parties.

In conclusion, the phenomenon of political vigilantism is a social canker and has become pervasive in the Ghana society. This is because most of the participants in the study admits that political vigilantism causes human abuse, destruction of both private and public properties, blatant disregard for rule of law and a threat to national security yet for most of these participants political vigilantism will not end anytime soon. For those who join political vigilantism groups, mostly have very little option by way of employment opportunities. They are also used by influential political parties’ actors who does not trust the electoral process.

7.3 RECOMMENDATION

Based on the above findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

For policy direction or consideration, the government in collaboration with the private sector should create decent and sustainable jobs for the youth to keep them away from engaging in political vigilantism.

In addition, the government and the electoral commission should always ensure that there is strict application of electoral laws without fear or favour. The electoral commission should also ensure that the electoral processes is diligently carried out. This will boost the confidence and trust of the public, especially the leaders and followers of the opposition political parties.

Again, the national commission of civic education, the civil society organisations, the media, and religious leaders have to continuously and collectively embark on public sensitization and education on elections or election related activities and preaching of patriotism and peace at public gatherings or events.

Also, government in collaboration with the various political parties should always ensure that polling agents are properly trained and educated on the electoral laws during elections. Some of these polling agents or the youth should also be trained as ambassadors of peace which will go a long way to nurture a generation interested in peace.

7.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

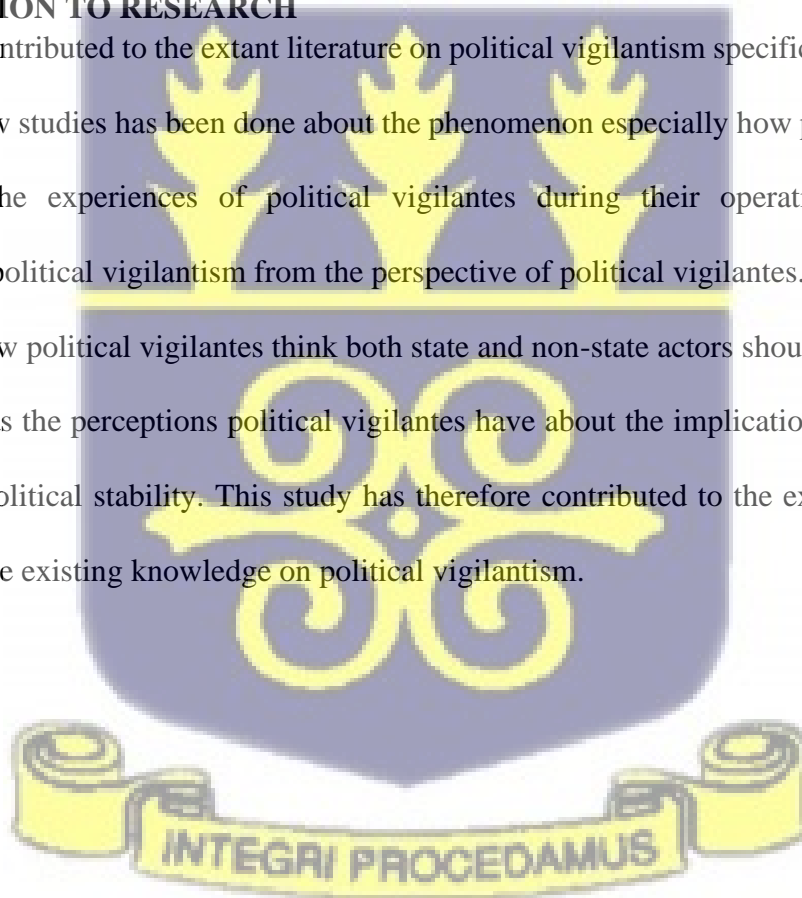
Notwithstanding the strategies employed to ensure that quality, reliable and valid findings were obtained, the study still encountered some setbacks. The most basic limitation of the study is that it was conducted only among two political vigilante group out of the over twenty political vigilante groups that exist in the country. This means the sample size used cannot be representative and therefore does not permit generalization of the findings, as it is often the disadvantage of qualitative research. However, the research approach used was still appropriate because the intent of the study was not to generalize the findings but to obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon at stake.

Another limitation of the study has to do with the fact that, more participants did not permit recording of the interviews and handwritten notes were taken and this could have led to some relevant information being overlooked.

Further studies could focus on other political vigilantism groups or add other political vigilantism groups in Ghana to conduct quantitative research so that the findings could be generalized. In addition, similar study could be conducted to focus on the families of political vigilantes and the experiences of their family members. Also, a grounded theory approach could be employed to conduct a similar study to generate a theory.

7.5 IMPLICATION TO RESEARCH

The study has contributed to the extant literature on political vigilantism specifically in the case of Ghana where few studies has been done about the phenomenon especially how political vigilantes are recruited, the experiences of political vigilantes during their operations, reasons for participating in political vigilantism from the perspective of political vigilantes. More literature is also silent on how political vigilantes think both state and non-state actors should respond to their actions as well as the perceptions political vigilantes have about the implications of their actions on security or political stability. This study has therefore contributed to the existing knowledge and the gap in the existing knowledge on political vigilantism.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: ETHICS CONSENT FORM

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



Ethics Committee for Humanities (ECH)

Official Use only
Protocol number

PROTOCOL CONSENT FORM

Section A- BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Title of Study:	Exploring the Rise of Competitive Political Vigilantism in Ghana
Principal Investigator:	Benjamin Baba Ayamga
Certified Protocol Number	ECH 095/19-20

Section B- CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

General Information about Research

This study is being undertaken at the Department of Sociology, University of Ghana-Legon as part of academic work in partial fulfilment of a Master's degree in sociology. The interview is expected to take a time period between thirty (30) minutes to fifty (50) minutes. The study is to explore or investigate the phenomenon of political vigilantism in Ghana among political vigilantes. I will be very grateful if you can spare part of your time to participate in this study. Participation is voluntary and comes with no financial benefits.

The study employs the qualitative approach and in-depth face-face interview on a one-on-one basis. Questions will be asked by the researcher which will be followed by the responses from the participants. In case of clarification, the researcher will probe further on the same question.

Benefits/Risks of the study

The benefit of the study is to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on Political vigilantism and even help policy makers in enacting the appropriate laws regarding political vigilantism. There will be no direct benefits such as giving out money to participants for their participation, since participating in the study will be voluntary. I will humbly request respondents to willingly participate in the study.

Respondents will not be exposed to any risks that I know of.

Confidentiality

Section C- PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT

"I have read or have had someone read all of the above, asked questions, received answers regarding participation in this study, and am willing to give consent for me, my child/ward to participate in this study. I will not have waived any of my rights by signing this consent form. Upon signing this consent form, I will receive a copy for my personal records."

Name of Participant

Signature or mark of Participant

Date

If participant cannot read and or understand the form themselves, a witness must sign here:

I was present while the benefits, risks and procedures were read to the volunteer. All questions were answered, and the volunteer has agreed to take part in the research.

Name of witness

Signature of witness

/ Mark

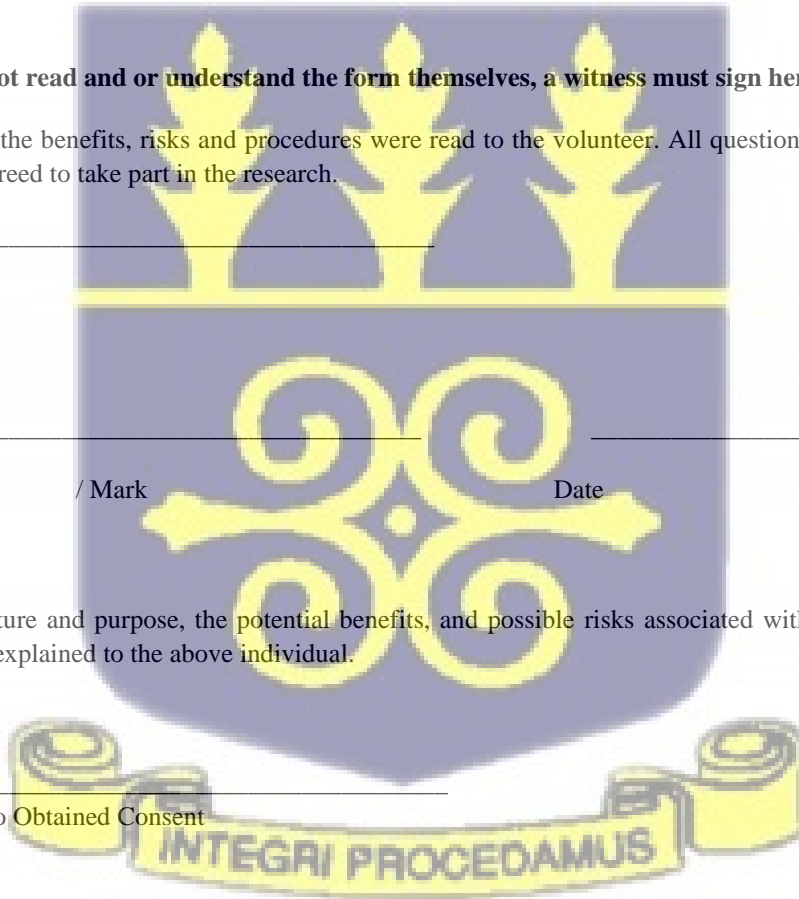
Date

I certify that the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research have been explained to the above individual.

Name of Person who Obtained Consent

Signature of Person Who Obtained Consent

Date



APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR POLITICAL VIGILANTES

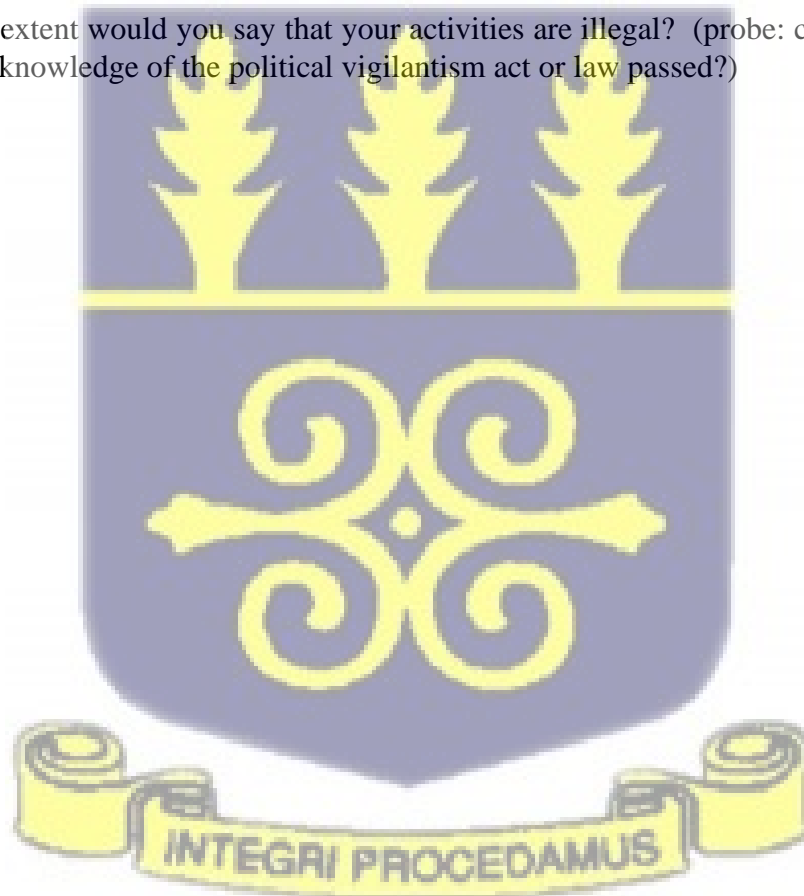
A: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

1. Age:
2. Religion:
3. Level of Education:
4. Marital Status:
5. Number of children (if any):
6. Occupation:

B: POLITICAL VIGILANTISM AND RELATED ISSUES

- 1) When did you become a member of your group?
- 2) How were you recruited into your group? (probe: whether an individual must have certain political affiliation, skills, knowledge, skills and abilities that that makes you special, willing and ready to adhere to the group rules etc)
- 3) Why did you become a member of your group? (Probe to find out more and to determine if they are the same reason(s) for other group members?) 4) Describe the group to me?
 - a. Formation (history of its formation, founders or initiators)
 - b. Objectives /motivations for the formation of the group
 - c. Mandates of the group
 - d. Structures
 - e. Hierarchies
 - f. Are there wings or other units within the group
 - g. Leadership structures -chain of command etc
- 5) Can you tell me how roles are assigned? (probe: how did you learn what you do?, if he/she was given a job description before starting to work with his/her group)
- 6) Could you describe to me what sort of things you do as a member of your group? (probe: how does your group decide what actions it should take or what it should do, specific things they did earlier, decisions that were made to do those things, problems encountered)
- 7) Can you share with me the experiences of your group members during elections or the operations? (probe; their experience with other group members, electorates or individuals, party officials etc).
- 8) Can you share with me whether your group has the relevant tools and resources to perform your duties or responsibilities? (probe: funds, vehicles, weapons or ammunitions in use, sources of these resources etc)
- 9) Tell me about how you learned what you were supposed to do and how you were supposed to do these things (probe: security and tactics training programs attended, capacity training, ideological training).
- 10) How do you want to be perceived? (How others individuals who are not security to perceive you)

- 11) How do you think state security should act towards groups like yours? (probe, do you think state security can fight vigilantes, how should the act etc).
- 12) How do you think state and non-state security should act towards groups like yours? (probe, do you think state security can fight vigilantes, how should the act etc).
- 13) What kinds of relations is your group having with any formal institutions, organization, political parties or community?
- 14) What benefits do you get from being a member of this group? (probe: for material and non-material if any)
- 15) What regrets do you have for joining this group? (victimization, equalization, fear of victimization, revenge, frustration with the justice system)
- 16) In what ways do you think your group members' actions impact on political stability or security (probe: is your actions relevant to political stability or security, is it detrimental? Etc).
- 17) What do you think of your work as a political vigilante? (probe: if and how they think it's a good or bad thing?)
- 18) To what extent would you say that your activities are illegal? (probe: can you share with me your knowledge of the political vigilantism act or law passed?)



APPENDIX 3: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
ETHICS COMMITTEE FOR THE HUMANITIES (ECH)

P. O. Box LG 74, Legon, Accra, Ghana

My Ref. No...**ECH 095/19-20...**

April 17th, 2020

Mr. Benjamin Baba Ayamga
Department of Sociology
University of Ghana, Legon

ETHICAL CLEARANCE (ECH 095/19-20)

The protocol title below has been reviewed and approved by the ECH Committee.

TITLE OF PROTOCOL: POLITICAL VIGILANTISM: COMMUNITY PERCEPTION AND EXPERIENCES

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: MR. BENJAMIN BABA AYAMGA

Please note that the final review report must be submitted to the Committee at the completion of the study. Your research records may be audited at any time during or after the implementation. Any modification of this research project must be submitted to ECH for review and approval prior to implementation.

Please report all serious adverse events related to this study to ECH within seven (7) days verbally and in writing within fourteen (14) days.

This certificate is valid till April 16th, 2021. You are to submit annual reports for continuing review.

Please accept my congratulations.

Yours Sincerely,

Professor C. Charles Mate-Kole

ECH Chair

Cc: Professor Kojo Sena, Department of Sociology, UG
Dr. Alhassan Sulemana Anamzoya, Department of Sociology, UG

Tel: +233-303933866

Email: ech@ug.edu.gh



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



Official Use only
Protocol number

Ethics Committee for Humanities (ECH)

PROTOCOL AMENDMENT FORM

REQUIREMENT

- i. Please complete all sections of this form
- ii. Attach a detailed version of reason for change(s); this should include justifications for the change.
- iii. Submit 11 hard copies of the form to the ECH administrator and send a soft copy to these address ech@ug.edu.gh

Section A- BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Title of Study:	Exploring the Rise of Competitive Political Vigilantism in Ghana		
Principal Investigator:	Benjamin Baba Ayamga	Study start date:	29 th February, 2020
Certified Protocol Number	ECH 095/19-20	Anticipated end date:	31 th March, 2020

Section B- PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Amendment type (e.g. Protocol amendment, modification of consent etc.)	Modification of Project title, Modification of Research proposal, Modification of Data Collection Instrument, Change of Names of Supervisors
Proposed by:	The Principal Investigator (Benjamin Baba Ayamga) and current Supervisors (Prof. Akosua Keseboa Darkwah and Dr. Mark Kwaku Mensah Obeng)
Reason for change:	My current research proposal seeks to only focus on political vigilantes and does not include community members who experienced vigilantism as was included in my previous proposal due to the main aim of the proposed research which seeks to gain detailed and concrete information about political vigilantism from the perspective of the

	vigilantes themselves. The new proposed title is, “Exploring the Rise of Competitive Political Vigilantism in Ghana”
Will change increase risks to participants in any way	No

Section C– SIGNATURE

Name of Person completing this form: Benjamin Baba Ayamga	
Contact Address: P. O. LG 65, Legon-Accra	
Email: bbayamga@st.ug.edu.gh	Phone No: 0500125123/0545910976
Signature:	Date: 10th March, 2020

Please do not fill this section (For official use only)

Reviewed By:
Date Reviewed:
Comments:
Action(s):

