

ABSTRACT

The Kenya army's infantry history can be traced from the colonial period when it was known as the King's African Rifles to the present as the Kenya army. The study focuses on the role that Lanet Barracks has played in the progressive history of various army units and formations of the Kenya Army. This study does not however imply that Lanet Barracks has solely contributed to the development of the Kenya army. The study analysed the impact of various policies and the structural formations on the operations of the Kenya army. It also examined the army's relations with the civilians, the state, and its peacekeeping role in operations and mandates. The study was informed by Carl von Clausewitz's military theory that sees war as an extension of politics (policies) by other means. The theory also argues that war is a result of a combination of drastic changes in the international security environment, diplomacy, domestic politics, economics and advances in technology, since there is a relationship between the army, the government and people. This relationship is well represented with his trinitarian triangle. Data was obtained from both primary and secondary sources on the military. Annual reports on the Kenya Defence Forces, newspaper articles, and relevant internet sources were used as secondary data. Oral information was collected from the military informants and residents of Lanet town and its environs. Relevant data on the same topic was accessed from the Kenya National Archives. The study used purposive and snow-ball sampling procedures in data collection. Data analysis and interpretation was carried out in line with the objectives which comprised the tentative chapters. The study found out that Lanet barracks played a major role in the inceptional histories of various army units and formations. This had led to the development of a distinct structural command in which Lanet Barracks and its entities (the various army units and formations) play a major role in how the Kenya army operates. The study also found out that, to date most of its operations are influenced by civil and politico-military relations. These relations are at both local and international levels. At the local level it has been beneficial for both the state, the Kenya army in terms of developmental projects and fostering inter-institutional cooperation. At the international level (especially in the PMRs), these relations have laid out a subsequent trajectory that does not only involve diplomatic ties, but also the economic and trade relations between Kenya and the allied countries. The study therefore contributes to the military historiography on Kenya by providing a historical understanding on the development of the Kenya army.