



RESURGENCE OF MILITARY COUPS IN WEST AFRICA: IMPLICATIONS FOR ECOWAS

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ABSTRACT: *The resurgence of military coups in West Africa has been alarming in the last decade. With over 20 failed and successful coups in recent times, the implication of this to the peace, security and stability of the region has raised serious concerns among scholars. This growing concern comes from the argument that democracy is dying as well as failing in the sub-region. More so, the sub-region is confronted with grave security, (banditry, terrorism, arms proliferation, drug trafficking, among other forms of crimes and criminality) economic (rising poverty, declining economic growth), citizens' discontent and leadership crisis. As such, the spate of coups has been seen as the product of the aforementioned issues. ECOWAS as a sub-regional body with the task of promoting economic and political development through integration cannot fulfil this goal in the current state of coups. Therefore, this study seeks to interrogate the implications of these coups on the effectiveness of the sub-regional institution in promoting peace and maintaining democracy. Relying essentially on qualitative data, predicated on the regulative capability analytical framework, which is an integral part of Almond's General Systems theory, the paper argues that the current approach of sanctions as a deterrent to coups is not effective enough as it affects the citizens than the military. Given this, the paper recommends that ECOWAS strengthens sub-regional democracy, promotes good governance and addresses the challenges of leadership in West Africa.*

KEYWORDS: Coups, ECOWAS, Democracy, Sub-Regional Security and West Africa



INTRODUCTION

Africa has seen more coups or military interventions in polity than any other continent in the world both in the 20th and 21st centuries (Falola, 2022). Historically, coups in Africa began most, immediately after independence in the 1960s. And so far, the continent has experienced over 200 hundred coups – both successful and failed coups. Hence, one can describe Africa as a continent of frequent coups with about 41 states in the continent experiencing either failed or successful coups (Barka & Ncube, 2012). The general manifestations of coups in Africa in recent times have been attributed to several issues such as the absence of democratic practice, leadership failure, economic crisis, the greed of military officers, youth and citizens' discontents, etc (Isilow, 2022).

In Africa, West Africa has been the epicentre of military coups on the continent (Suleiman, 2021). The region accounts for 51.3 per cent of coups in the early period of Africa's postcolonial phase between 1960 and 1969, 49.5 per cent from 1970 to 1989, and a shocking 53.7 per cent from 1990 to 2010. In total, West Africa accounts for 104 coups (failed and successful) out of the 200 coups that Africa has experienced (Barka & Ncube, 2012; World Atlas, 2022).

The resurgence of coups in Africa and especially in West Africa in this present decade 2010-2022 has been alarming (Suleiman & Onapajo, 2022). This resurgence of coups in the region has been implicated in the failure of democracy to be intensified and deepened in West Africa (Falola, 2022). With the several cases of poor governance indices across the region from corruption, to the lack of free, fair and credible elections, to deepening security crisis, among others. It becomes unsurprising that the citizens celebrate the return of the military in politics.

The alarming and contagious nature of these coups in West Africa has led to several calls on the international community especially regional institutions such as ECOWAS to respond to this existential threat to democratic rule, security and political stability in the region. In their effort at responding to coups, the regional body (ECOWAS) has initiated and adopted different modalities. These modalities include; the imposition of economic sanctions, severance of diplomatic relations, suspension of military leaders from the international community, etc.

The resurfacing of coups in West Africa has come with several political, economic and security implications for ECOWAS. One evident implication has to do with the capacity of ECOWAS in preserving democracy in the sub-region. Scholars have argued that the increasing spate of coups in West Africa is a signpost that democracy has continued to fail in the region (Barka & Ncube, 2012; Falola, 2022; Suleiman, 2021; Suleiman & Onapajo, 2022). The failure of democracy in the region comes with a serious implication for ECOWAS in maintaining regional peace and security. Also, is the criticism against ECOWAS as a regional body and how effective is their strategy in mitigating coups. As pointed out by Brack (2022) that the imposition of economic sanctions hurts the people more than the government, hence, it is crucial that ECOWAS adopts more relevant strategies that are effective for mitigating the coups in West Africa.



Military Coups in Africa: Issues, Perspectives and the Roots

Over the years, coups have been seen as an endemic feature of African politics. The overthrow of elected governments by the military has come to be common and even in some quarters a normal process of regime change. The endemic nature of coups in Africa has been described as a worrisome trend to the political development of countries in Africa. Africa has seen more coups or military interventions in polity than any other continent in the world both in the 20th and 21st centuries (Falola, 2022). Historically, coups in Africa began in the 1960s. And so far, the continent has experienced over 200 hundred coups - both successful and failed coups (Barka & Ncube, 2012, p.1).

In Africa, the basic assumption behind coups and military intervention in governance stems from the belief that the military acts as an agent of political and economic stabilization. That is, the military steps in order to arrest the collapse of the political process from instability, bad governance, electoral crisis, insecurity from factional groups seeking political power, corrupt leaders and leadership, the rule of autocratic regimes that suppresses opposition, among others, (Akinwotu, 2022). Economically, the military has been alleged to act to ensure better economic management, create employment for youths, fairly distribute resources and improve the conditions of living for the society (Barka & Ncube, 2012).

Other assumptions for the intervention and involvement of the military in Africa exist. According to McBride (2004) and Collier and Hoeffler (2007), the rationale for political and economic stability that the military officers put forward is rather false. These scholars argued that military coups are the product of the greed of the military and the desire to partake of the state resources as their civilian counterparts. Therefore, they argue that coups are the product of the primitive accumulations of wealth that have enveloped and distracted the military from their professional conduct of maintaining territorial integrity. Scholars such as Luckham (2001) and Coleman and Brice (1962) are of the view that coups are frequent in Africa because of the complex social realities of African society. The complexity is manifested in the fact that the military in Africa pays allegiance to their ethnic cleavages and not to the state. This is why military coups in Africa have a characteristic feature of pandering to ethnic or tribal justifications rather than national (Barka & Ncube, 2012).

While the assumptions for the reasons for military involvement in the political process in Africa are true as evidenced in the failure of African countries to effectively consolidate the gains of democracy to ensure a broader political process and the development of policies that impact the wellbeing (economic conditions) of the citizens, the military itself has also failed to ensure that coups facilitate the process of change politically and economically for the citizens. Even more disturbing is the fact that military regimes have more than ever deepened the socio-economic and political crisis of these countries in addition to their practice of shrinking the civil space for civil society organizations to thrive, human rights abuses, extrajudicial killings and wanton disregard for the constitution (Falola, 2022).

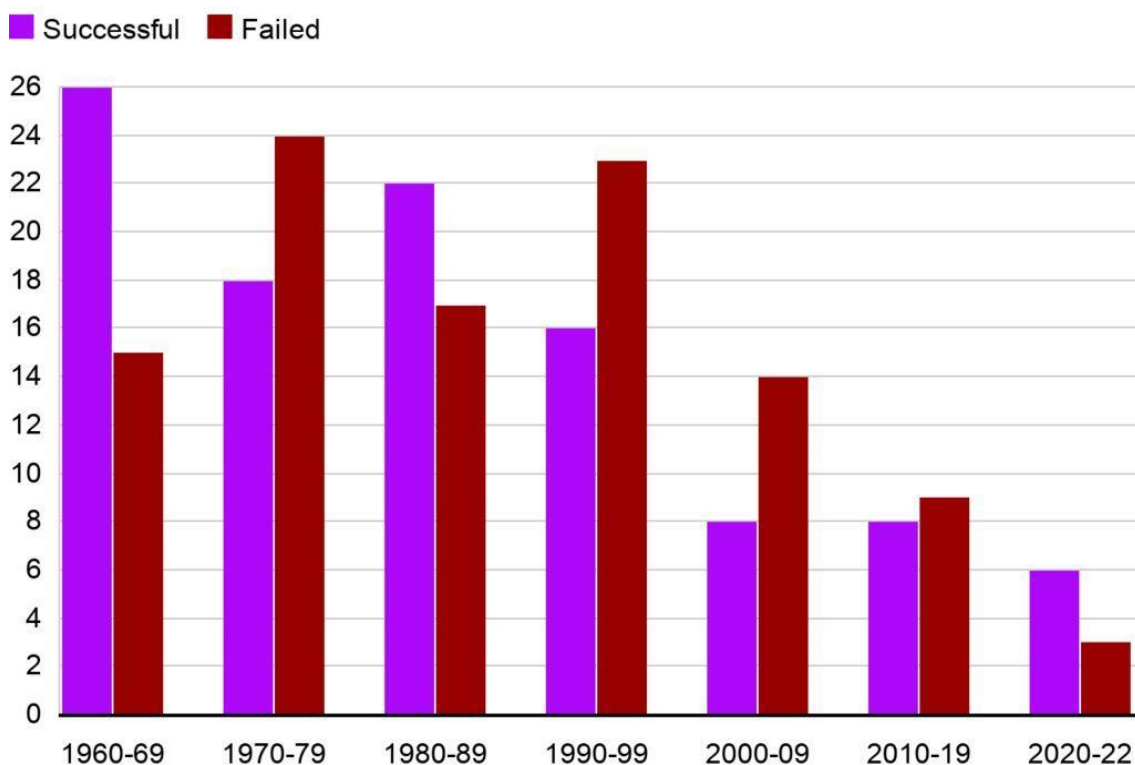
One implication of the increasing coups and military takeovers in Africa and West Africa is the risk of democratic stagnation in the continent and region (Enonchong, 2021). The practice of the military in governance (an aberration in every sense) is antithetical to democracy. The military in their attempt at preserving stability initiate and implement actions that takes the progress of democracy steps backwards. Actions such as the suspension of the constitution, the dissolution of the parliaments (people's representatives) and the atmosphere of fear they create



for the participation of the civil society only collapse the efforts at democratic progress made in the past.

The experience of military coups in Africa has had a long, torturous and treacherous history in the political process of the continent. In Africa, coups and military intervention quickly replace the civilian rules across nearly all the newly independent nations in the continent. Between the 1950s and 2010, Africa accounts for about 36.5% of coups in the world (Suleiman, 2021). In some nations, coups replaced the democratic process of leadership recruitment as military officers engaged in coups in order to oust a military leader for staying longer in government.

Military coups in Africa over the decades



*2022 up to 1 February

Source: Research by Central Florida and Kentucky Universities



Coups in Africa are both a cause and a consequence of the failures of African governments to uphold democratic rule and ensure its consolidation in the polity. As democracy fail, the return of coups in Africa and West Africa is attributable to the failings of civilian administration across the continent and the region (so-called democratic nations) to ensure they uphold the promise of preventing authoritarianism in governance that led to the fourth democratic wave between the 1990s to date. In fact, (2020) noted that democratic elections in Africa and Nigeria, in particular, are recipes for authoritarianism and have enthroned civilian impunity.



Theoretical Perspective

This paper adopts the regulative capability analytical framework, which is an integral part of Almond's General Systems theory. According to Almond and Powell (1966), the system's capability framework is an analytical construct designed as a basis for comparing different political systems in terms of their capacities to fulfil certain functional prerequisites necessary to ensure the maintenance, adaptation and survival of the political system (Chilaka, 2010). The notion of systems capabilities defines the extent to which the system can, as David Easton (1953) has noted that some demands can be challenging to the system and the system has to possess the necessary elements and mechanisms to meet them in order to survive. Essentially, Almond and Powell's systems capability scheme consists of five capabilities—the extractives, the regulative, the distributive, the symbolic, and the responsive; the fulfilment of which is necessary to ensure systems adaptation, change and survival. It is really the “regulative capability” that is our concern here, but it is necessary that we first briefly explain what the others involve.

The extractive capability addresses the issue of the ability of the political system to obtain the relevant resources, both from within and outside the system, to sustain itself. The symbolic capability addresses the need and ability of the political system to create, develop and maintain relevant and adequate symbols with which to attract to itself and its institutions the support, loyalty and affection of its citizens. The distributive capability focuses on the ability of the political system to adequately and equitably distribute “values” —goods and services to, and among its citizens both as individuals and as social groups throughout the society. The responsive capability focuses on the capacity of the political system to respond adequately and vigorously to the demands made upon it both from the domestic and international environment. In short, the responsive capability addresses the issue of the need and ability of the political system to make available to its citizens, both in their individual and group capacities, those characteristics of democracy which they desire (Chilaka, 2010).

The regulative capability that this study analysis address is the issue of the capacity of the political system to penetrate and exercise control over individuals and groups throughout the society. By its nature, the regulative capability involves the issue of the maintenance and use of the states' instruments of force to ensure the protection and defence of the society against external aggression and internal insurrection as evidenced in military coups as well as the maintenance of law and order in the society. The regulative capability is so important and crucial function to be adequately fulfilled to guarantee that military coups do not succeed in West Africa. This is because it is through it that the political system responds to pressures that are likely to mar and endanger the peace and security of a state. This is particularly so in a rentier continent like Africa where politics is seen as a means of wealth accumulation and becomes a zero-sum game. In such societies, as is the case with Africa, the political system is confronted with not only the problem of having to strive to maintain its institutions but more importantly, it has the added problem of how to contain diverse groups that intend to use arms and violence to acquire state power.

Our foregoing discussion clearly shows that there exists a positive relationship between the ability of, and the degree to which, a political system adequately fulfils its regulative capability functions and the extent to which order is maintained in the state. It, therefore, follows that ECOWAS member-states have not been able to exercise their regulative capability function. As a result of this, military coups have become a recurring incident in



the sub-region. In the main, our decision to adopt this regulative theoretical orientation for this paper is predicated on its explanatory capacity as it enables us to establish a causal relationship between the ability of the political system to respond to threats and the loyalty it gets from its citizens including its security forces.

Coups in West Africa: Historical trends, manifestations and resurgence

West Africa is aptly described as the “coup belt” of Africa (Suleiman, 2021). With about 44.4% of all the coups in Africa in the region, the political history of West Africa has half of its history involved in documenting coups across the majority of the 15 countries in the continent (ECOWAS, 2022; World Atlas, 2022). Since the first coup was staged in Togo in 1963, the region has experienced several others coups (Barka & Ncube, 2012).

In the recent decade, and as the debate on democracy intensifies across the continent and the region. West Africa has proved that coups are still an ever-present feature of the political milieu of the region as soldiers still involve themselves in the struggle for power. Unfortunately, evidence has proved that rather than democracy intensifying, it is either failing or dying (Falola, 2022) or has not even begun as argued by some scholars (Ake, 2001). As estimated by Suleiman and Onapajo (2022) that of all the 40 successful and attempted coups in Africa, the West Africa sub-region has experienced about 20 of them accounting for 50% of coups in the recent decades.

In Africa, the West African sub-region has been the epicentre of military coups. The region accounts for 51.3% of coups in the early period of Africa’s postcolonial phase between the period 1960-1969, 49.5% in 1970-1989 and a shocking 53.7% of coups in 1990-2010 despite the fact that this period was described as the period of democratic wave in Africa, where most African countries accepted and adopted the practice of democracy. On the whole, in all of the 200 coups (failed and successful) that Africa has experienced West Africa accounts for 104 coups of the sixteen countries (16) in West Africa (Barka & Ncube, 2012; World Atlas, 2022).

Sadly, despite the majority of the countries in West Africa being described as a democracy. That is, ensuring the conduct of elections, guaranteeing fundamental human rights, allowing the practice of a multiparty system, ensuring that civil society groups are part of the process of governance, broadening political participation, promoting accountability and transparency in governance among other laudable features of democracy, the practise of democracy has not helped in preventing the occurrence of coups in West Africa. As in recent times, there has been a resurgence of military coups in the region (United Nations, 2022). The resurgence of these military coups that have been greeted by popular support and applause in these West African countries has raised the question of whether democracy has failed in West Africa and Africa in generally Africa or the case of its death in the sub-region (Suleiman & Onapajo, 2022).

Mushoriwa (2021) decried this worrisome trend of increasing coups in West Africa and the reversal of democratic progress that the region has experienced in the post-1990 fourth wave of the democratic experience across Africa. This alarming situation is revealed in the five (5) coups that have happened across Africa with four (4) within the West Africa sub-region and one in Sudan of North Africa. More shocking are the timelines of the coups in the region and their contagious effect on the nations that experience a manifestation of the early 1960s era (United Nations, 2022).

**Table1.0 Coups in West African countries in recent times**

Countries	Year(s) of occurrence	Causes	Military leaders of the coup	Targeted government	Nature of the coup
Mali	August 19 th , 2020 (first coup); May 24 th 2021(second coup)	Electoral malpractice (parliamentary elections), growing insecurity in the country, corruption.	Asimi Goita is the leader of both coups	In the first coup the government of President Ibrahim Keita was targeted and the second led to the ousting of President Bah Ndaw.	Both coups were successful as it led to the overthrow of the civilian regimes present
Guinea	2021	Autocratic (civilian) government, economic mismanagement, eroding and faulty democratic practices	Col. Mamady Doumbaya	This coup resulted in the overthrowing of the civilian rule of President Alpha Conde	Successfully carried out and ousted the civilian rule
Niger	2021	Insecurity, deficiency in the governance of the present civilian rule	The leader (s) of this coup was said to be unclear.	The government and leadership of President-elect Mohammed Bazoum	Unfortunately, for the coup plotters the coup did not successfully oust the leadership of the military.
Guinea Bissau	2022	Insecurity, bad governance, citizens' discontent, youth unemployment, etc	The leadership of this coup is uncertain	The leadership of President Umaro Embalo was the target of this coup criticized by the coup plotters for his failing leadership	The coup was described as a failed coup. This is because it did not successfully oust President Umaro Embalo



Burkina Faso	2022	Insecurity, Political corruption, lack of opportunity for the young and growing population, etc	The coup was led by a top military officer named Lt. Col. Paul Henri Damiba	President Roch Kaboré was toppled and ousted from the government as a result of this coup	It was generally described a success as it saw to the imposition of the military in the affairs of government and the removal of the president.
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Author's adaption (2022)

Coups in West Africa as in other parts of Africa are simply a microcosm of the broader issues of the failing governance process in the continent. As can be aptly attributed to other regions, states and their governments in West Africa have been characterised by several issues in governance, failing economy, rising poverty, burgeoning youth population and the nerve-racking unemployment, insecurity, lack of credible elections, absence of accountability, transparency and rule of law in governance (De Rogatis, 2022).

Mushoriwa (2021) stressing the view of the foregoing noted that the implication of the above is the resurgence of military coups across West Africa. This resurgence is what is evidenced in the coups that took place in four (4) out of the five (5) in Africa that were present in West Africa. Coups in Mali (twice) in August 2020 and May 2021; Chad, April 2021; Guinea, September 2021 (Mushoriwa, 2021) and the recent coup in Burkina Faso, in 2022.

The role of ECOWAS in managing coups in West Africa

According to Maiangwa (2021) the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was established in 1975 by West African states to promote the economic growth and development in the region. Benin Republic, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Nigeria are among its members. The signing of the Non-Aggression and Defense Accord in 1978 marked the beginning of ECOWAS's foray into security regionalism as a precondition for economic integration. It was within this purview that ECOWAS acts to mitigate the coups in the region.

Due to the event of the Liberian civil war in December 1989, and the ensuing humanitarian crisis that resulted from it, several ECOWAS leaders felt that deliberate measures and efforts were required to institutionalize collective security in West Africa and avoid ad hoc responses to future conflicts. As a result, in 1990, ECOWAS established a Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) (Bekoe & Mengistu, 2002).

As the years go by, the region has been faced with several other issues that go beyond its initial economic framework to address issues that relate to politics - in the form of governance issues, political instability, elections and elections monitoring, coups, etc. These issues which are salient issues create the condition for economic development. Also, given that economic development cannot occur in a society disturbed by conflict and other forms of instability.



ECOWAS has a long history of fighting coups and advancing democracy in West Africa by establishing measures to sanction coup leaders and their supporters. One of the political crises that ECOWAS has been confronted with has been the recurrent nature of military coups in the region. With the region described as the epicentre of coups in Africa, the task to promote political stability in West Africa has remained daunting for the body. As such, ECOWAS has deployed several strategies in responding to and managing the occurrence of coups in West Africa. Among the roles and strategies adopted by ECOWAS include;

1. The imposition of Economic sanctions: According to Avoulete (2022), the imposition of sanctions by ECOWAS has been one of its major strategies in responding to coups in the region. Even in recent times, ECOWAS deployed the use of sanctions in Mali to facilitate a speed up in the return to civilian rules. Broadly, sanctions by ECOWAS cover; the freezing of assets, the cutting of financial aid from countries involved in coups, closing of borders of the country from relating with other ECOWAS member states and the withdrawal of Ambassadors by making the state a pariah state in the region. Despite, the regional body's efforts at sanctioning the military, there have been arguments against the potency of the sanctions against the military as it affects the people more.
2. Diplomatic intervention for the return back to civil or democratic rule: the use of economic sanctions has been seen as the frequently used strategy by ECOWAS in responding to coups in the region. The regional body has also implemented the use of diplomacy and other missions to stem the growing tides of coups across the region. For instance, in the wake of a military coup in Burkina Faso, the regional body gathered its members to discuss the relevant strategies in adopting in tackling the issue (Aljazeera, 2022).

Resurgence of Coups in West Africa and its Implications for ECOWAS

The period between 2010 and 2022 has exhumed the question of whether military coup is a phenomenon of the past or an inevitable part of Africa and West African politics. This is because the last decade is seen as the decade of the intensification of democracy across the continent and the region has been dotted with coups. Sadly, the conduct of elections in the region has not led to good governance or development for the people of the continent. As observed by Suleiman and Onapajo (2022) this decade has been characterised by the presence of over 40 military coups across Africa and 20 have been domiciled in West Africa – making it 50% of all coups in West Africa.

The increasing resurgence of coups and the alarming rate that they occur in West Africa remains a major challenge for ECOWAS as a regional body. The experience of coups in Africa and in West Africa highlights the fact that coups are contagious and their ramifications are grave for the democratic and political stability of the region. This means that coups create conditions for political, economic and socio-cultural crises. As observed by Yabi (2010), the incessant coups across West Africa have a huge cost implication for the (ECOWAS) both financially and humanly.

The recent spate of coups and military takeovers that has engulfed West Africa calls into question the capacity of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) as a regional body to uphold democratic principles and maintain peace in the region (Maluleke &



Bennett, 2022). The role of ECOWAS in responding to conflicts and political instabilities such as coups can be traced to the expansion of the capacity of the institution beyond its original role of economic integration. Over the years, the potential for economic integration has been tied to its ability to manage its existential security issues (ECOWAS, 2022).

Brack (2022) stated that one of the far-reaching implications of the resurgence of military coups in West Africa for ECOWAS is the constant challenge that the regional body faces on its credibility in maintaining peace, security and stability in the region. He noted that, in the case of the coup in Mali, the military administration has constantly refused to implement the calls of the regional body to ensure elections despite the sanctions placed on them. Furthermore, the military has further blamed ECOWAS for worsening the economic conditions of the country with the sanctions placed on them. This has created a dilemma on the effectiveness of sanctions on coups in the region.

Challenges hampering effective ECOWAS response to Coup

According to Sayid (2022) military coups hardly occur on their own, but rather it is a product of internal irregularities in governance that render certain countries amenable to the military takeover of power. Political and socioeconomic issues such as ethnic violence, armed factions, insurgent attacks, terrorist manifestations and political deadlocks over resource and power-sharing have characterized most countries that have seen military coups, including the majority of African republics. In West Africa, the growing discontent among citizens in the failure of democracy to facilitate development stands tall among the reasons for the recent military coups across the region.

1. **Resource Scarcity:** the financial cost implication of managing the recurrent nature of coups in West Africa has greatly affected the capacity of ECOWAS in maintaining peace, security and stability in the region. As observed by Kaplan (2004), the region faces different forms of existential crises that threaten its stability - issues such as drug trafficking, arms proliferation, crimes and criminality is already draining the resources of the regional body. Coups adding to this signifies a huge financial burden for the regional institutions and hence, impact heavily on the capacity of the body.
2. **Failure of nation-states that act as diplomatic machinery to uphold good governance:** all across most parts of Africa and West Africa in particular, there has been a serious decline in the democratic rule as exemplified in the failure of leadership, and lack of good governance, economic underdevelopment, among others. These issues have been noted to account for the interference of the military in the past and also in recent times. Hence, it becomes very difficult for member states in ECOWAS to criticise the very same problems they have. According to ThisDay Newspaper (2022) in their publication titled "*The Return of Military Coups to Africa*" noted that "indeed, a military dictatorship is not a viable option to democratic rule, because it is widely assumed that even the worst democracy is preferable than the best military rule. However, when looking at the big picture, the ECOWAS and African Union (AU) leadership's continued failure to take a proactive and preventive role in dealing with these threats to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law has unquestionably contributed significantly to recurring coups and unconstitutional government changes in many countries".



3. Poor democratic practices among West African states: one of the difficulties faced by ECOWAS in responding to the increasing spate of coups in the region is the fact that most of its member-states are undemocratic. The undemocratic nature of these states provides the military with the excuse of intervening in the political process. As shown by studies according to Maiangwa (2021) the majority of West African countries from the 1990s to date have very poor democratic ratings. And therefore, following the coups happening in 2020 and 2022, the issue of the failing state of democracy is a problem to ECOWAS if any serious efforts are to be put in place to address the frequent coups. Tejpar and Albuquerque (2015, p.3) observed that:

Nearly two-thirds of ECOWAS member nations are not completely democratic, and poor governance, aggravated by high levels of corruption, continues to be a problem. In addition, unconstitutional government changes have occurred in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, and Niger in the recent five years.

4. Absence of a coordinated leadership by the regional body

CONCLUSION

Majority of African countries and those in the West African region have continued to fail in their practice of democracy. This failure accounts for the justification (issues that border on good governance and intensification of democratic principles) for these coups in recent times. More so, the failure is revealed in the lack of conduct for free, fair and credible elections for leadership succession in the region, the clampdown on political opposition, one-party rule in the guise of a multiparty system and the absence of rule of law in governance.

The experience of coups in West Africa can also be traceable to the general manifestations of coups in Africa. Some of the reasons attributable to the incessant intervention of the military in the political process are the following, the need for political stability, the need to address the failure of leadership, the growing discontent of citizens in civilian rule and administration, the poor level of development despite the abundance of natural and human resources, electoral malpractice, political corruption, elections without credibility among other socioeconomic and political anomalies.

A sad reality is a fact that many of these coups in the continent of Africa are in West Africa. The implication of this is the fact that the recurrent nature of coups in the region poses a serious threat to the peace, security and stability of the region. One that has grave implications for the economic development of the region and its people. A manifestation that goes contrary to the very reason for the establishment of ECOWAS, a regional institution with the mandate of ensuring economic development as well as preventing the manifestation of conflicts and other forms of instabilities of which coups are a part.

With the re-emergence of coups in the region's political space. The challenge for ECOWAS has been broadened and hence, its impact on the effectiveness of the body cannot be overlooked. Beyond the implication of the effectiveness of the regional body in driving the process of democracy. The occurrence of coups in Mali (2020 and 2021), Niger (2021) and



Guinea (2021) and Burkina Faso (2022). Another implication is the questioning of the relevance of sanctions: the fact that sanctions have more severe economic implications for the citizens than the government throws up issues for the need to ensure adequate response to coups beyond the frequent deployment of sanctions.

The study highlighted the fact that several challenges such as the lack of resources, the absence of coordinated leadership, and the absence of good governance in other member-states make the explosion of the coups across the region eminent. The paper suggests that ECOWAS should as a matter of fact intensifies their efforts at deepening democracy in the region through the effective monitoring of the election process, and the implementation of accountability and transparency in governance. As such, the regional body must ensure good governance at all levels as a means for coup mitigation across the region. Again, economic development should be strengthened through coordinated policies targeted at improving the conditions of the citizens. The facilitation of the broadening of the political space to give room for civil society groups that would raise concerns of bad government, when necessary, should be strengthened as it would serve as a monitor for coups and finally, the professionalization of the military should be prioritized.

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