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Examining the Reasons For and Effects of Military Coups in West Africa since 1990: The Obstacles to Democracy and Progress

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Abstract

Purpose: This article sought to understand the reasons for military coups in West Africa Since 1990. With this, we would be able to assess their effects and the obstacles these coups present to democracy in West Africa. It is clear that military takeovers have posed a constant threat to democratic rule in West Africa. There are many different reasons why military coups occur in West Africa, including ethnic conflicts, economic grievances, and corruption. Military leaders have occasionally defended their actions by arguing that they were required to reestablish order and solve perceived shortcomings in civilian authority. This is why it's necessary to investigate these claims. Coups have wide-ranging effects which include violations of human rights among others, warranting mitigating circumstances.

Methodology: The article uses a qualitative research design. Information on the research came purely from the review of scholarly articles and reports on the topic and it covers the whole of West Africa. The information presented is based on a synthesis of findings from these sources, with a focus on identifying the obstacles to democracy and progress posed by military coups in the region.

Findings: From synthesization of information from other reviews, we discovered that West Africa is one of the most affected parts of Africa as far as military coups are concerned. We equally found out that though not so unique to West Africa, poor governance, political instability, neocolonialism, plays a major in promoting military coups.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Knowledge acquired from this study would be able to make readers gain specific knowledge on why military coups are frequent in West Africa and to see how such coups can be avoided in other parts of Africa so as to promote democracy and human rights. One unique point included in this research that has been too investigated by many authors is the part played by neocolonialism in coups in West Africa. From a practical standpoint, the analysis and recommendations would inform policymakers, and stakeholders working on issues related to democracy, governance, and security in West Africa.

Keywords: *military coups, reasons, effects, obstacles, prevention*

1. INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Since the 1960s, military takeovers in West Africa have become commonplace, with certain nations witnessing several takeovers. In 1963, the military overthrew President Sylvanus Olympio in Togo in one of the first military coups in West Africa. In the 1970s and 1980s, there were numerous coups in nations like Nigeria, Ghana, and Burkina Faso that came after this (Ojo, 2018). According to Adebanwi and Obadare (2011), Ojo (2018), there are a number of intricate and varied elements that contribute to military coups in West Africa, including political unrest, economic hardships, corruption, socioeconomic disparities, ethnic conflicts, and weak institutions. For many years, military takeovers have been a common occurrence in West Africa. In recent times, coups have occurred in Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali. These coups have many different root causes, including weak institutions, political unrest, economic hardships, corruption, and ethnic conflicts. These coups pose a threat to regional stability and democracy. President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta was overthrown in Mali in 2020 following a military coup, while President Blaise Compaoré was overthrown in Burkina Faso in 2015 following a military coup (BBC News, 2020; The Guardian, 2015). It is imperative to tackle these fundamental causes if we hope to avert such coups and advance democracy and stability in the area.

Coups can take many different shapes, depending on the players and techniques used. According to Kew (2019), military, institutional, and constitutional coups are the most prevalent forms of coups. In order to overthrow a government, institutional coups entail manipulating already-existing institutions like the parliament or the court. Political elites who control these institutions and utilize them to justify their actions frequently carry out this kind of coup (Kew, 2019). President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso was overthrown by the Burkinabe military in October 2014, following his attempt to amend the constitution to prolong his reign. A transitional administration was subsequently imposed by the military to supervise elections.

Constitutional coups entail the use of legal tactics, such as an impeachment or vote of no confidence, to overthrow an administration. With the backing of the majority, opposition parties or lawmakers frequently carry out this kind of coup by using constitutional measures to overthrow the government (Kew, 2019). After 22 years in office, President Yahya Jammeh made an effort to hold onto power in December 2016 by refusing to accept the outcome of the presidential election. But after regional leaders intervened and threatened to use force, he was compelled to resign.

In August 2020 in Mali, the country's armed forces toppled President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, blaming the coup on incompetence and corruption. The earlier argument is highlighted by the three military takeovers that have occurred in West Africa in the last two years. Guinea in 2021 and Burkina Faso this year followed the military coup in Mali, which set off a chain reaction.

This month's attempted coup in Guinea-Bissau by a few armed men raises the possibility that there may be more of these kinds of assaults. In Africa's postcolonial history, periodic coups such as these have become commonplace, yet the principal actors and their goals have changed on each occasion. The goal of the most recent coups in Burkina Faso and Mali was to overthrow the elected government, which had been unable to deal with the rise in terrorist attacks while President Conde was subverting the constitution in Guinea to maintain his hold on power, the coup was carried out to safeguard the constitution. Following a coup, Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba, the new military dictator of Burkina Faso, was proclaimed president by the nation's highest constitutional body.

From the above, we are faced with the problem of trying to know why West Africa continue to be Africa,s most affected by military coups.

Table 1: Military coups in West African countries since 1990

Country	Year	Leader
Mali	1991	Amadou Toumani Touré
Sierra Leone	1992	led by Valentine Strasser
Niger	1996	Baré Maïnassara
Guinea	1999	Moussa Dadis Camara
Ivory Coast	2000	Robert Guéï
Guinea-Bissau	2003	Veríssimo Correia Seabra
Togo	2005	Faure Gnassingbé
Mauritania	2008	Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz
Guinea	2010	Moussa Dadis Camara
Mali	2012	Amadou Haya Sanogo
Burkina Faso	2014	Isaac Zida
Mali	August 19th, 2020 (first coup);	Asimi Goita
Mali	May 24th 2021(second coup)	Asimi Goita
Guinea	2021	Col. Mamady Doumbaya
Burkina Faso	2022	Lt. Col. Paul Henri Damiba
Niger	2023	AbdouramaneTchiani

(Source: Writers' modification, 2023)

Acemoglu and Robinson's "Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy" is a pertinent theory that was applied in this study on military coups in West Africa (2006). This theory postulates that economic variables like inequality and resource distribution may have an impact on the likelihood of military takeovers. Acemoglu and Robinson contend that the desire of political elites to carry out coups in order to seize control of important resources or to retain their privileged status in society can be influenced by economic factors. This paradigm can be used to explain why military coups are more common in West African nations that are heavily dependent on natural resources and have significant levels of economic disparity.

These scholars have improved their comprehension of the intricate relationship among political instability, economic conditions, and military coups in West Africa by applying this theory to their examination of military coups in the region. This has given important new information about the elements that lead to military takeovers and how they affect the region's democratic government.

Despite this theoretical study, one aspect that has been largely overlooked in the literature is the potential role of neocolonialism in the recent military coups in West Africa. Numerous writers have focused on factors that are similar to those in other African nations, ignoring a crucial aspect that appears to have a greater influence in the rise of military takeovers in West Africa.

Consequently, one would be tempted to wonder why neocolonialism is not taken into account as a contributing factor to military coups in West Africa. Nonetheless, a lot of people, particularly the average person, don't think that military coups in West Africa are directly related to neocolonialism.

2: West African military coups' causes

Political instability is a primary factor contributing to military coups in West Africa. The governments of many nations in the region have changed frequently, frequently by force. As a result, there is a lack of faith in democratic institutions and processes, with the military frequently viewed as a more dependable and acceptable substitute (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011). The military coups in West Africa have been largely attributed to this political unrest. For instance, since Nigeria gained its independence in 1960, the military has meddled in politics multiple times; the most recent coup occurred in 1993 (Ihonvbere, 2006). Thus, in West Africa, political instability has emerged as a primary catalyst for military takeovers. The democratic process and its institutions have become less trusted as a result of frequent changes in government, many of which have been achieved violently. For instance, in 2015, protests against President Blaise Compaoré's attempt to amend the constitution to prolong his tenure resulted in a coup by the military in Burkina Faso (Bøås & Hagberg, 2016). The fundamental tenet of coups and military takeovers in Africa is the idea that the armed forces serve as a catalyst for political and economic stability. This includes using force to stop the political process from collapsing due to factors like instability, poor leadership, election crises, factional groups vying for power, corrupt officials, autocratic regimes that repress opposition, and more (Akinwotu, 2022).

Economic problems are another element that leads to military coups in West Africa. The region has seen widespread struggles with poverty, unemployment, and inequality—problems that are frequently made worse by mismanagement and corruption (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011). This has sparked public unrest and rallies, which the government has occasionally suppressed. For instance, following demonstrations against the government's handling of the Tuareg uprising and economic crises, the military in Mali conducted a coup in 2012 (Lecocq & Raffestin, 2015).

Poverty, unemployment, and inequality are major issues in many of the region's nations, and they are frequently made worse by corruption and poor management. For instance, in 2010, protests against President Mamadou Tandja's attempt to consolidate and extend his control resulted in a coup by the military in Niger (Bøås & Hagberg, 2016).

Military coups in West Africa can also be caused by weak institutions and ethnic tensions. Ethnic groups may experience conflict and anger when they believe they are excluded from political power or marginalized. In certain instances, ethnic groups may feel marginalized or excluded from political power, which can lead to resentment and conflict. Weak institutions can also make it easier for the military to seize power because there may be little resistance from other branches of government or civil society. In Mali, for instance, the military staged a coup in 2020 in response to protests against President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta's handling of corruption and insecurity (Lecocq & Raffestin, 2021). Therefore, weak institutions can facilitate military coups.

There are several theories on military involvement and intervention in Africa. The military leaders' justification for political and economic stability is mostly erroneous, according to McBride (2004) and Collier and Hoeffler (2007). According to these academics, military coups result from the military's avarice and desire to use public resources in the same way as their civilian counterparts. They contend that, as a result, coups are the result of rudimentary financial accumulations that have engulfed and diverted the military from their official duty of preserving territorial integrity. According to academics like Coleman and Brice (1962) and Luckham (2001), the complicated socioeconomic dynamics of African society are the reason coups are often there. The fact that the African military is loyal to its ethnic divisions rather than the government is one way in which the complexity is displayed. For this reason, appealing to ethnic or tribal rather than national reasons is a defining trait of military coups in Africa (Barka & Ncube, 2012).

One of the main causes of military coups in West Africa has also been neocolonialism. Military coups in West Africa have been significantly influenced by neocolonialism, which is the term used to describe the ongoing political and economic influence of former colonial powers in a region. Many West African nations still rely economically on former colonial powers, have poor institutions, and corrupt governments as a result of colonialism. Because of this, there are now more opportunities for military intervention and coups, as military leaders frequently believe that their approach is the only one that can deliver stability and address the shortcomings of the post-colonial state.

Therefore, when researching political instability in the region, it is crucial to take into account the role that neocolonialism played in military coups in West Africa. It can take many different forms, such as cultural dominance, political meddling, and economic exploitation. Numerous academics have emphasized how neocolonialism affected military takeovers in West Africa. Adebayo Oyebade, for instance, contends that the persistence of economic reliance on former colonial powers and the legacies of colonialism have produced unstable and unequal environments that encourage military involvement in politics (Oyebade, 2007). Similarly, Amadu Sesay argues that the cycle of poverty and underdevelopment in West Africa has been sustained by neocolonialism, resulting in a general dissatisfaction and grievances that might serve as fodder for military coups (Sesay, 2015). This cooperation has kept the region in a cycle of authoritarian governance and instability.

3: Military coups' implications in West Africa

A notable consequence of military takeovers is the disturbance of democratic establishments and procedures. Martial law is frequently imposed, the parliament is dissolved, and the constitution is suspended during military coups. This may result in the breakdown of democratic norms and principles as well as the degradation of the rule of law.

In West Africa, military takeovers can have dire and protracted repercussions. Apart from causing instantaneous chaos and violence, coups can also result in the disintegration of democratic institutions and procedures. This can impede economic growth and foreign investment, as well as the rule of law and human rights (Ihonvbere, 2006). Moreover, military governments might be more prone to authoritarianism and corruption, which could make already-existing social and economic issues worse (Lecocq & Raffestin, 2015).

The long-term ramifications of military coups for democracy in West Africa exist in addition to their immediate repercussions. A culture of political instability and ambiguity that is fostered by coups might impede the establishment of democratic institutions. They may also erode public confidence in democratic institutions and procedures, which will make it more difficult to establish a democratic system that will last.

Additionally, there is evidence that suggests military coups may be detrimental to human rights and economic growth. Coups have frequently been followed by times of social turmoil and economic downfall. They may also result in further violations of human rights, such as limitations on the ability to assemble and speak freely.

The consequences of military takeovers on African democracies are intricate and varied overall. Even if coups are occasionally justified as a response to political unrest or democratic inadequacies, they frequently have unfavorable long-term effects. Therefore, cooperation between African countries and foreign players is crucial to averting coups and advancing democratic processes throughout the continent.

The military has also failed to ensure that coups help the process of change for the citizens, both politically and economically, even though the assumptions for the reasons for military involvement in the political process in Africa are true, as evidenced by the inability of African nations to successfully 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.

Even more concerning is the reality that military regimes, in addition to their practice of reducing the space for civil society organizations to flourish, human rights violations, extrajudicial killings, and wanton disregard for the constitution, have worsened these countries' socioeconomic and political crises more than before (Falola, 2022).

The possibility of democratic stagnation throughout the continent and region is one effect of the rise of coups and military takeovers in Africa, particularly in West Africa (Enonchong, 2021). Democracy is incompatible with the military's form of government, which is abnormal in every way. In an effort to maintain peace, the military takes the initiative and carries out policies that regress democratic advancement. A climate of terror is created by acts like suspending the constitution and dissolving parliaments, which are assemblies of people's representatives.

To sum up, military takeovers in West Africa are a multifaceted phenomenon with a variety of origins and outcomes. Coups can be caused by a variety of circumstances, including weak institutions, political unrest, economic crises, corruption, and ethnic tensions. Military coups can have serious, long-lasting repercussions that harm democracy, human rights, and economic growth. Therefore, in order to stop future coups, it is crucial that governments and civil society organizations fight to promote good governance and build democratic institutions.

4: Obstacles impeding the efficient ECOWAS reaction to the coup

Sayid (2022) contends that internal faults in governance make some countries vulnerable to military takeovers of power, rather than military coups occurring on their own. Most countries that have experienced military coups have political and socioeconomic problems such as ethnic conflict, armed factions, insurgent attacks, terrorist manifestations, and political deadlocks over resource and power sharing. Most African republics are also affected by these concerns. One of the main causes of the numerous military takeovers that have occurred throughout West Africa is the growing dissatisfaction among the populace with democracy's inability to promote development.

Resource scarcity: The ECOWAS's ability to uphold peace, security, and stability in the area has been significantly impacted by the financial costs associated with managing the frequent coups in West Africa. According to Kaplan (2004), the region is dealing with a variety of existential crises that put its stability in jeopardy. Problems like drug trafficking, the proliferation of weapons, crime, and criminality are already depleting the regional body's resources. Coups that add to this indicate a significant financial strain on the local institutions, which has a negative effect on the body's capacity. The limited capabilities and resources of ECOWAS institutions, including the ECOWAS Commission and the ECOWAS Standby Force, present another difficulty. These organizations can find it difficult to keep an eye on and respond to crises in member states, especially when there are several crises going on at once (Bach, 2020).

Failure of nation-states that serve as the diplomatic apparatus to maintain good governance: There has been a significant deterioration in democratic rule throughout most of Africa, and West Africa in particular. This is demonstrated, among other things, by the underdevelopment of the economy and the failure of leadership. It has been observed that these problems explain why the military has interfered both historically and more recently. As a result, it becomes extremely difficult for ECOWAS member states to criticize the issues that they themselves face. In an article headlined The Return of Military Coups to Africa, This Day Newspaper (2022) stated that while it is generally believed that even the worst form of democracy is preferable to the best military rule, military dictatorships are not a realistic alternative to democratic governance. But in the grand scheme of things, it is undeniable that the leadership of the ECOWAS and African Union (AU) has greatly contributed to the recurrent coups and unconstitutional government changes in many countries by continuing to fail to act pro-actively and preventively in responding to these threats to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

Inadequate democratic procedures in West African states: The majority of ECOWAS's member states lack democracy, which makes it difficult for the organization to respond to the region's growing number of coups. The military's justification for meddling in politics stems from these regimes' lack of democracy. According to surveys, most West African nations from the 1990s onward have extremely low democratic ratings (Maiangwa, 2021). Therefore, if any significant attempts are to be made to address the frequent coups, ECOWAS must confront the issue of the deteriorating state of democracy in the wake of the coups that occurred in 2020 and 2022. According to Tejpar and Albuquerque (2015, p. 3),

The majority of ECOWAS members are not fully democratic, and the region still struggles with bad governance that is made worse by widespread corruption. In the last five years, there have also been unlawful changes to the governments of Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, and Niger.

Lack of coordinated leadership by the regional organization: The inability of ECOWAS member nations to adopt a common strategy is one of the obstacles impeding the organization's ability to respond to coups in West Africa. While some nations value civilian rule and democratic governance, others might be more receptive to military engagement in politics (Bach, 2020). As demonstrated by the recent coup in Mali, when some ECOWAS members called for immediate sanctions while others pleaded for negotiation, this might result in disagreements and inconsistencies in the response to coups (BBC News, 2021).

Furthermore, some academics contend that in order to handle security issues in the region, ECOWAS has depended too much on outside parties, including France. This could jeopardize ECOWAS's credibility and impair its capacity to handle coups and other emergencies (Schoenfeld, 2020). The last issue is the threat of outside meddling in the area, especially from non-state entities like terrorist organizations. This may make the security issues already present worse and make it more difficult for ECOWAS to deal with coups and other crises (Bach, 2020).

A further obstacle is that certain member nations lack the political resolve to hold one another responsible for coups and democratic reversals. As a result, there may be a culture of impunity whereby leaders are free to disregard democratic principles without worrying about repercussions from their peers in the region (Bach, 2020). Furthermore, it could be challenging to come to an agreement on how to respond to coups due to conflicting interests and goals in some member states. According to Schoenfeld (2020), certain nations may place greater emphasis on trade and economic cooperation with regimes that are prone to coups, whereas others may prioritize human rights and democracy.

5: Reducing the likelihood of military coups in West Africa or taking preventive action

A multifaceted strategy that addresses the underlying political, economic, and social reasons that contribute to coups is necessary to mitigate military coups in West Africa. The following are some actions that can be taken to stop military coups:

Building robust and independent institutions, such as the court, election commission, and civil society organizations, is a necessary step in strengthening democratic institutions. These organizations can serve as the executive branch's checks and balances, preventing the misuse of authority. Strengthening democratic institutions is essential to preventing military takeovers in Africa. Building robust and independent institutions that can serve as checks and balances on the executive branch and stop power abuses is necessary to achieve this (United Nations Development Programme, 2014). These institutions include the judiciary, the electoral commission, and civil society organizations. Furthermore, preventing political instability and unrest can be aided by fostering good governance, accountability, transparency, and the fight against corruption (Diamond, 1999).

Encouraging transparent, responsible, and citizen-responsive governments is a key component of good governance. It also entails advancing the rule of law and battling corruption.

Resolving socioeconomic disparities: This entails tackling problems like unemployment, poverty, and inequality, which can lead to political instability and disturbances. In order to overcome socio-economic inequalities—which can contribute to political instability and unrest—we must address problems like poverty, unemployment, and inequality (Bratton & van de Walle, 1997). Preventing military coups also requires addressing socioeconomic disparities. This entails tackling problems that can lead to political instability and unrest, such as poverty, unemployment, and inequality. Preventing military takeovers in Africa also requires bolstering regional collaboration. African nations can contribute to regional stability and conflict avoidance by fostering collaboration and integration.

Increasing regional integration and collaboration among West African nations is part of strengthening regional cooperation. This could support regional stability and conflict avoidance. Preventing military takeovers in Africa requires a strong regional cooperative effort. African nations can contribute to regional stability and conflict avoidance by fostering collaboration and integration on a regional scale (Harsch, 2020).

Getting involved with the military entails cooperating with it to advance civilian authority and respect for democratic procedures. It also entails making certain that the armed forces have the necessary tools and training to fulfill their constitutional obligations. Military coups can be avoided by collaborating with the armed forces to uphold civilian rule and respect for democratic procedures, as well as by making sure that they have the necessary tools and training to fulfill their constitutional obligations (United Nations Development Programme, 2014).

A multifaceted strategy that addresses the underlying political, economic, and social reasons that contribute to coups can help prevent military coups in Africa (Harsch, 2020). In Africa, military takeovers can have disastrous consequences, including political unrest, economic downturns, and violations of human rights (Kuenzi, 2013).

6: Contributions of the study to theory, policy and practice

This work is the first to explore the influence of neocolonialism on military coups in West Africa. By illuminating the past and current impact of outside actors on the political and economic affairs of the region, it advances knowledge. Scholars and decision-makers can view the region's political unrest and military involvement from a more nuanced perspective thanks to this understanding, which helps to contextualize the underlying causes of these issues.

In general, taking into account how neocolonialism affected military coups in West Africa offers an invaluable framework for creating more thorough and long-lasting solutions to the region's political problems. This entails dealing with the fundamental political and economic causes of instability as well as attempting to provide local players the capacity to fend against outside influence and manipulation.

Aside from neocolonialism, the knowledge gathered from researching military takeovers can support initiatives aimed at fortifying democratic institutions and governance in West Africa. Understanding the motivations for military intervention can help politicians build a more responsive and inclusive democratic system that attends to the concerns of various societal groups. This could entail fostering civic engagement, defending civil freedoms, and constructing strong systems of accountability and openness.

Researchers might advance our theoretical understanding of how military coups affect democracy and growth in the region by thoroughly reviewing the literature and integrating the findings. Future studies on the subject can benefit from this perspective, which can also help create more sensible laws and approaches to deal with the problems brought on by military coups.

Conclusion

Since the 1960s, military coups have been a common occurrence in West Africa, frequently caused by elements including political instability, economic hardship, ethnic tensions, and corruption. Military takeovers have frequently resulted in short-term advantages for the military commanders but long-term drawbacks for the afflicted nations, such as political isolation, economic penalties, violations of human rights, and defeats for democracy. International and regional organizations that have demanded adherence to democratic values, human rights, and the constitution, like the UN, ECOWAS, and the African Union, have denounced them. Sometimes public demonstrations, diplomatic pressure, or military interventions from regional or international players have stopped or reversed military coups. Nonetheless, these approaches have also faced criticism regarding their efficacy, validity, and inadvertent outcomes. While some military officials have defended their acts by claiming that they are required to settle disputes or restore order, opposition parties and civil society organizations have frequently disputed these claims. A coordinated effort involving all local, regional, and international stakeholders is necessary to prevent and resolve military coups. This effort must include respect for human rights, democratic principles, and constitutional order.

Recommendations

Significant barriers to democracy and regional advancement exist in West Africa as a result of military coups. To tackle this matter, it is imperative that decision-makers take into account the subsequent suggestions:

For the purpose of averting military takeovers, it is imperative that democratic institutions in West African nations be strengthened. This can be accomplished by guaranteeing free and fair elections in addition to encouraging accountability, transparency, and good governance.

Encourage the media and civil society: In order to promote democratic values and keep governments responsible, civil society and the media are essential. By assisting these players, we can build a democratic system that is more durable and strong, making it less vulnerable to military intervention.

Address the socioeconomic issues: In West Africa, socioeconomic problems are a major motivator behind a number of military coups. Stability can be aided by addressing problems like unemployment, inequality, and poverty as they can lessen the chance of military involvement.

International assistance as well as regional cooperation are essential in tackling the problems brought on by military coups in West Africa. Institutions that support democratic standards and mediate disputes include the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Supporting initiatives to stop military takeovers in West Africa is another way that the international community can help. This may entail exerting diplomatic pressure, offering financial support, and offering technical assistance in order to preserve democratic values.

Bolstering human rights and the rule of law: Preventing military takeovers can be achieved by bolstering the rule of law and making sure that every citizen is treated equally before the law. Legal changes, judicial staff training, and encouraging equal access to justice for all citizens can accomplish this (United Nations Development Programme, 2020). A more democratic and stable society can be achieved through increasing respect for individual freedoms and upholding human rights. Campaigns for education and awareness as well as holding governments responsible for violations of human rights can help achieve this (Asante, 2002).

Economic growth and employment possibilities: Encouraging economic growth and employment opportunities can assist in resolving socioeconomic grievances, which frequently result in military takeovers. This can be accomplished by making investments in entrepreneurship, infrastructure, and education in addition to fostering an atmosphere that encourages the expansion of businesses (United Nations Development Programme, 2020).

Investing in attempts to resolve conflicts and promote peace can help stop tensions from getting out of hand and necessitate military involvement. This can be accomplished by encouraging a culture of peace and tolerance as well as by using mediation, dialogue, and reconciliation procedures (Murray, 2011).

Encouraging youth empowerment and engagement: By giving West African youth more opportunities and voice, we can assist shield them from being lured in by extremist groups. This can be accomplished by providing chances for adolescents to participate in decision-making processes, as well as by implementing educational and vocational training programs (Asante, 2002).

By taking into account these extra suggestions, decision-makers might endeavor to develop a more all-encompassing strategy to tackle the challenges to democracy and advancement presented by military takeovers in West Africa.

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