



UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

**“DECIPHERING COUP OUTCOMES: AN EXPLORATION OF SUCCESSFUL
AND FAILED COUPS IN NIGERIA”**

JOSHUA WAKANGA

S21B56/023

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES IN THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF A
BACHELOR'S DEGREE OF GOVERNANCE AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS OF UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY, 2024.**

DECLARATION

I, **Joshua Wakanga**, hereby declare that this dissertation is based on my original work. It has never been submitted to any institution of higher learning for the award of my course. All the sources that have been used have been cited according to the best of my knowledge. I therefore, submit my original work for the partial fulfillment for the award of Bachelors of Governance and International Relations.

Signature:A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JAW', is written above a horizontal line.**Date:**

05/09/2024

APPROVAL

This is to certify that this dissertation titled; “**Deciphering Coup Outcomes: An Exploration of Successful and Failed Coups in Nigeria**” was under my supervision and the dissertation is now ready for presentation to the Department of Undergraduate Studies in the School of Social Sciences at Uganda Christian University.

Rev. Prof. Omona Andrew David

Signature: _____

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

Date: 05/09/2024

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the Almighty Lord that has provided me with the wisdom, knowledge, and strength needed to accomplish this task.

I also wholly dedicate this work to my family especially my mother, my aunties and uncles for the support, prayers, guidance and for being genuine points of reference for me throughout my life on earth. I dedicate this to my friends especially Ninsiima M Akiiki, Senay Daniel, and my class discussion group for encouraging me when the going went tough and for also advising me appropriately.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I want to extend my sincere appreciation to my academic supervisor, Rev. Prof. Omona Andrew David, for his exceptional guidance and support throughout my dissertation and for the time he spent teaching me in the first semester of my second year. Without his assistance, I would have faced significant challenges along the way.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the rest of the lecturers who have taught me throughout my time pursuing this degree, especially Dr. Kizito Martin for wonderfully teaching the topic of military involvement in African politics in the course unit of Governance and Politics in Africa, Mr. Jonathan Tabalanga for advising me along the way, Dr. Feta Simon for encouraging me to be critical to all pieces of knowledge I come across and have a truly holistic view of information before I make a decision, and Ms. Edith Nagadya for being there to support my class and I in case we were faced with any challenge.

Thank you all for playing a crucial role in my academic career so far and this wouldn't have been possible without you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
APPROVAL	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
ABSTRACT	ix
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background of the study.....	1
1.3 Problem statement	3
1.4 Primary Research Objective	3
1.5 Specific Research Objectives	3
1.6 Research Questions.....	3
1.7 Justification.....	4
1.8 Significance	4
1.9 Scope of the study	4
1.9.1 Geographical scope.....	4
1.9.2 Content scope.....	4
1.9.3 Time scope.....	5
1.10 Limitations of the Study.....	5
1.11 Theoretical Framework	5
CHAPTER TWO	7
LITERATURE REVIEW	7
2.1. Introduction.....	7
2.2 The Occurrence of Military Coups in Africa	7
2.3 The Factors that contribute to the success and failure of Military coups	10
2.4 How the aftermath of the military coups was handled.....	12
CHAPTER THREE	15
METHODOLOGY	15
3.1 Introduction.....	15
3.2 Research design	15
3.3 Data Sources	15

3.4 Key Sources	15
3.5 Data Collection Methods	16
3.6 Data Analysis	16
3.7 Ethical considerations	16
3.8 Limitations of the study	16
CHAPTER FOUR	17
DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS	17
4.1 Introduction	17
4.2 Causes of Military Coups in Nigeria	17
4.3 Factors contributing to the success of military coups in Nigeria	20
4.4 Factors contributing to the failure of Military Coups in Nigeria	21
4.5 How the aftermath of military coups in Nigeria were handled	22
CHAPTER FIVE	24
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	24
5.1 Introduction	24
5.2 Summary of the findings	24
5.3 Conclusion	24
5.4 Recommendations	25
5.5 Implications of the study	26
5.6 Final Reflections	27
APPENDIX	29
REFERENCES	30

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Overview of Military coups in Nigeria.....	16
--	-----------

ABSTRACT

Military coups have been a regular fixture in the politics and governance of many developing examples with a significant example being the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Nigeria has been purview to eight significant coup attempts with six successful ones and two failed ones since its independence in 1960 (Akinola, 2018; Omotola, 2011). This research sought to explore the successful and failed military coups in Nigeria with a key focus on identifying the key factors that decide either outcome to understand the challenges of consolidating democracy in Nigeria and the African continent in general (Nwokoma, 2021; Onapajo, 2014). It also explored the different actions taken by the incumbent and successive governments in their bids to avert the possibility of the outbreak of further military. The research also sought to analyse the different factors that contributed to the outbreak of coups in Nigeria with ethnicity and mal-administration the common denominators in the different coup attempts that Nigeria has experienced. Realism is the bed-rock of this research study explaining how the quest for power is responsible for the outbreak of coups in Nigeria. This research is structured as follows: Chapter One that provides a detailed foundation of the study detailing the objectives, background etc. Chapter Two thereafter provides a literature review of the existing academic literature on military coups exploring the different causes of coups and highlighting the crucial determinants that separate a successful coup from a failed one in Nigeria (Decalo, 1990; Londregan & Poole, 1990). Chapter 3 contains the methodology of the methods the different methods of data collection analysis (Collier & Levitsky, 1997; Huntington, 1968). Chapter 4 presents the findings after exploring the occurrence of military coups spotlighting key factors that determine the outcome of the coup attempts in Nigeria (Adeagbo, 2021; Danjibo & Oladeji, 2007). The final one is Chapter 5 which presents the different conclusions and recommendations after the analysis of the data (Adejumobi, 2000; Agbese, 2004).

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the following: Chapter One provides the Background, Problem Statement, Major Research Objective, Specific Research Objectives, Research Questions, Justification of the Study, Significance of the Study, Scope of the Study, Limitations of the Study, and the Theoretical Framework.

1.2 Background of the study

According to Jonathan Powell and Clayton Thyne, a military coup is an illegal and overt attempt by the military or other elites within the state apparatus to unseat the sitting executive (Powell and Thyne, 2011). There are two major types of coups; combat-officer coups and elite-officer coups. The combat-officer coups happen when combat-experienced military officers express concerns about national security and its provisions that affect its ability to function adequately. The elite-officer coups, on the other hand, occur when well-connected and highly educated military officers take advantage of their connections to gain support to enact coups that change the governance and power structures according to their visions (Albrecht, 2018). Military coups have been an ever-present mark on the histories of developing countries around the world especially among African countries which have had their fair share since 1952 in Egypt when the Free Officers Movement led by Muhammad Naguib and Gamal Abdel Nasser overthrew the state monarchy of King Farouk (Poljarevic, 2009). Other notable examples include the 1971 Ugandan coup when General Idi Amin ousted President Milton Obote who was attending a Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference in Singapore (Otunnu, 2016). West Africa has had the greatest share of coups in Africa with an example of Lt. Jerry Rawlings who led two coups in Ghana; the first coup was on June 4, 1979, which ousted General Frederick Akuffo, and the second on December 31, 1981, ousting Hilla Limann. (Antwi-Boasiako, 2022). Burkina Faso also experienced a coup in 1987 when Blaise Compaoré betrayed and assassinated President Thomas Sankara with whom he carried out the 1983 Upper Volta coup against President Jean Baptiste Ouédraogo (Sawo, 2017). More recently as 2023, the states of Gabon and Niger also had coups

that saw the overthrow of Presidents Ali Bongo and Mohamed Bazoum and the ascent to power of Gen. Brice Oligui Nguema and Gen. Abdourahamane Tchiani (Vines, 2024). Each coup had its own political and socioeconomic conditions showcasing the different governance challenges that affect the world today.

Nigeria has had eight military coups that have significantly impacted its political and socioeconomic development since it attained independence from the British in 1960. The first military coup that Nigeria encountered was in January 1966, when a group of primarily Igbo officers led by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu and General Aguiyi-Ironsi overthrew and assassinated key leaders in Nigeria like Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. This is an example of an Elite-Officer coup. Six months later, General Aguiyi-Ironsi himself was deposed and assassinated in a bloody coup by northern officers led by Lt. Col. Murtala Muhammad which saw the killings of many Igbos in Northern Nigeria and the installation of Yakubu Gowon as the head of state (Maiangwa, 2016). This is an example of a combat-officer coup. This trend continued into the 70s and 80s with notable examples like the successful coups of 1975 when Col Joe Garba and Murtala Muhammad carried out a coup to overthrow Yakubu Gowon and install Murtala Muhammad as the leader. Murtala Muhammad himself was assassinated during the 1976 failed coup attempt carried out by Lt. Col. Buka Suka Dimka. Nigeria saw democracy for the first time under the civilian government of Shehu Shagari who ascended to power in 1979 but he was ousted in a coup led by Maj. Gen. Muhammadu Buhari on December 31, 1983. Two years later, Buhari was also ousted by General Ibrahim Babangida on August 27, 1985. During these periods, the military tried to implement democratic and economic reforms but instances of corruption, limited democratic accountability, and human rights violations still existed (Njoku, 2019). Nigeria returned to civilian rule in 1999 after the death of dictator General Sani Abacha who himself also got power by deposing Ibrahim Babangida on November 17, 1993, but the legacy of military intervention in politics is a contending topic. (Obi, 2007). These rich examples of military coups in Nigeria have been the subject of inquiry by scholars and policymakers alike all trying to decipher the factors that determine the outcome of coup attempts. This study aims to build on the existing literature on military coups in Nigeria to identify these critical factors and potentially lead to a more nuanced understanding of the

challenges facing democracy in Nigeria and Africa in general to avert future military coup attempts.

1.3 Problem statement

Military coups have been a stain on Nigeria's efforts to sustain its democracy and political stability. Nigeria returned to civilian rule in 1999 for the first time since 1979 when Shehu Shagari was elected as the first civilian executive President but was ousted in a coup in 1983 led by Muhammadu Buhari but this has never watered down the threat of military interference in the politics of Nigeria (Akinola, 2018; Onapajo, 2014). The military has created a significant obstacle to the development of stable and accountable political institutions because it limits the capacity of civil society to engage in meaningful political reforms (Agbese, 2004; Nwokoma, 2021). The past military regimes of leaders like Muhammadu Buhari, Ibrahim Babangida, and Sani Abacha faced different accusations like widespread corruption, human rights violations, and the comprise of civil society that made it difficult to achieve national unity on political issues that affected everyone in Nigeria (Akinboye, 2015; Ojo, 2014). Tackling the challenge of military coups in Nigeria is important for consolidating the institution of democracy and contributing to sustainable socioeconomic development and unity in Nigeria (Luckham, 1971; Ojiako, 1980). Military coups not just in Nigeria but in numerous developing countries especially in Africa can be avoided by comprehending the different factors that determine the success or failure of coup attempts (Decalo, 1990; Londregan & Poole, 1990).

1.4 Primary Research Objective

To analyze the key determinants that differentiate successful military coup attempts resulting in a change of government from those that do not in Nigeria.

1.5 Specific Research Objectives

To investigate the occurrence of military coups in Nigeria.

To investigate factors leading to the success of military coups in Nigeria.

To investigate the factors leading to the failure of military coups in Nigeria.

To understand how the aftermath of military coups in Nigeria was handled.

1.6 Research Questions

What are the historical contexts and circumstances surrounding successful and failed military coups in Nigeria since independence?

What were the factors that led to the success of military coups in Nigeria?

What were the factors that led to the failure of military coups in Nigeria?

How was the aftermath of military coups in Nigeria handled?

1.7 Justification

Exploring the differences between successful and failed coups in the context of Nigeria does not facilitate academic inquiry but it also has a real-life effect in areas like Political Science, International Security, and Peace and Conflict Resolution. Policymakers and different scholars can formulate sustainable mitigation strategies for averting military coups even before they happen by carefully scrutinizing the factors that lead to the outbreak and the outcome of these attempts. The exploration of both the successful and failed military coup attempts helps to reveal the determinants of each scenario thereby potentially filling a crucial gap in the existing literature on the subject of Military coups on the African continent.

1.8 Significance

Military coups have been a significant problem in Nigeria's history with the coup attempts affecting the country's political background since its independence in 1960. The study will contribute to a better understanding of the factors that affect Nigeria's democracy through the thorough study of these different coup attempts starting from Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu's January 1966 coup. The research will explore the causes the origins of these coups what influenced their different outcomes and how the Nigerian society looked after these coups which in turn helps to facilitate informed decision-making when addressing the potential threat of continued military interventions in the politics of Nigeria.

1.9 Scope of the study

1.9.1 Geographical scope

The study is focused on the West African state of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in its six geopolitical zones.

1.9.2 Content scope

The study will be focused on analyzing the differences in the outcomes of the different coup attempts that have happened in Nigeria. There will be a critical examination of the different political and socio-economic factors that have led to

the outbreak of these coup attempts. These factors are essential in determining the role that civilian support plays in the outcome of the different coup attempts that occurred in Nigeria starting in 1966. The study will also delve into understanding how the period after the coup attempts both successful and failed was looking into what the incumbent and successive governments did in their pursuit of averting the potentiality of the outbreak of other coup attempts. The study finally will provide recommendations based on the findings that can potentially help strengthen democracy by taking the necessary steps to eliminate the different military coup triggers in our societies.

1.9.3 Time scope

This research will be carried out between June and August 2024. This will enable the gathering of up-to-date information on the coups that have transpired in Nigeria. The study will revolve around the coup attempts that happened in Nigeria from the first one in January 1966 to the last one in November 1993 focusing on Nigeria's experience with military coups.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

There might be challenges in attaining reliable and substantive data on the coup attempts that have taken place in Nigeria because some official records and archive documents are not posted online. The available data might be tainted by media censorship and author's bias which might not present the real picture of the events that led to and transpired during the coup attempts in Nigeria. These will potentially hinder the accuracy of the findings of the research thus imploring a proper analysis of the available data to scope out any potential limitations.

1.11 Theoretical Framework

a) Realism

This study revolves around the theory of realism to explain the phenomenon known as military coups in the West African country of Nigeria. Realism is a central theory in the fields of international relations and political science explaining that players are mainly driven by their self-interests which revolve around power. Knowledge of this helps one to understand why Nigeria was marred by military coups in the twentieth century after they attained independence in 1960. Realism explains why soldiers are driven by a desire to attain and maintain power. It perhaps also explains why external actors get involved in the outbreak of coups either supporting the

plotters or the incumbent government that is at risk of losing power (Sandrina Antunes, 2018).

The desire to attain power is apparent in the several coups that engulfed Nigeria. An example is the very first coup of January 1966 led by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu and other officers who stated that the reason for their coup was the alleged corruption and inefficiency of Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa's government. Tafawa Balewa and other key leaders were assassinated in this coup which led to the takeover of Major General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi (Siollun, 2016). This shows how self-interest and the desire to wield political and economic state power motivated a group of soldiers to plan and execute a coup that demonstrates the basic principle of realism. On the other hand, realism is also seen through incumbent governments' actions to maintain absolute control of the state and its territory as illustrated in the failed 1990 coup attempt against General Ibrahim Babangida's government. Babangida himself had come into power through a coup in 1985 against Muhammadu Buhari's government. This explains why he took extreme measures to foil the attempt of Major Gideon Orkar and his allies to seize power. Babangida's government and his allies in the military responded quickly and arrested and subsequently executed the coup plotters and their allies (all 69 of them). This illustrates how the desire to maintain power drives people to do what it takes not to lose it (Ihonvbere, 1991).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The literature on *Deciphering Coup Outcomes: An Exploration of Success and Failure in Military Coups in Nigeria* is extensively reviewed in this chapter. The study objectives divide the chapter into sections. Each section summarizes the relevant studies and offers opinions from scholars like Stanislav Andreski, Samuel P. Huntington, and Edward Mansfield to mention a few.

2.2 The Occurrence of Military Coups in Africa

Socio-economic factors are responsible for the outbreak of coups on the African continent. In his book *"Military Organization and Society,"* published in 1968, Stanislav Andreski argues that periods of economic decline can lead to the occurrence of a military coup because they (the military) feel that their interests are threatened by the inability of the incumbent government to handle economic downturns (Andreski, 1968). A coup that illustrates this is the 1981 coup in Ghana that was led by Lt. Jerry John Rawlings. Ghana had experienced a severe economic crisis during the 1970s and the 1980s which was marked by high inflation rates, high unemployment rates, and corruption. The public grew disillusioned with these conditions under Hilla Limann's government. The military staged a coup because the nation's stability was at risk and they also desired to protect their position within the socio-economic structure, as articulated by Jeffries (1989) in *"Rawlings and the Political Economy of Underdevelopment in Ghana."* This coup was justified in the eyes of the Ghanaians especially since the rate of inflation was at a staggering 140% and the industries were producing at less than 20% of their capacity as emphasized by Thomas Akwasi Aidoo (1989) in *"Ghana: Social Class, the December Coup, and the Prospects for Socialism."* Hilla Limann had no one else to blame for the occurrence of this coup and leaders must promote realistic and unbiased socio-economic development in their countries to reduce the possibility of an outbreak of coups.

In addition to the above in the context of Nigeria, in his book, *"The Roots of Political Instability in Nigeria: Political Evolution and Development in the Niger Basin"* (2011), Ejiogu examines the role that socio-economic factors play in causing military

interventions in Nigeria's political landscape. His analysis puts into context the economic grievances that led to the coups explaining how economic mismanagement, unemployment, corruption, and pervasive poverty created a ticking time bomb for military interventions in Nigeria. The economic decline was seen especially during the early 1980s during the regime of civilian President Shehu Shagari characterized by unpaid wages, bloated public sector wages, high costs of food, and corruption. This played a key role in the popular acceptance of Maj. Gen. Muhammadu Buhari's coup on December 31st, 1983. This analysis provides a holistic understanding of how economic conditions merge with political factors and give birth to coups (Ejiogu, 2011).

A country's political and institutional environment also influences coup occurrence. Samuel P. Huntington's examination of the "military-industrial complex" in his book "The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations," published in 1957 explains how the military's economic and political agenda can influence it to interfere in politics driven by their own material goals such as resource control and political power. An example is the 1999 Coup in Côte d'Ivoire, which brought General Robert Guéï to power. The relationship between the government and the Ivorian military was worsening and the military was growing unhappy with President Henri Konan Bédié' who was accused of encouraging tribal and regional divisions (North vs South) within the army. This dissatisfaction, along with poor governance accusations of mismanaging the economy led to the military staging a coup (McGovern, 2011). President Bédié' from the Akan ethnic group that occupied central and southern Côte d'Ivoire coined the term 'Ivorite' to define the Ivorian way of life in a way that favored other ethnicities in the country such as the Yacoubou based in Northern Côte d'Ivoire where 1999 coup leader Gen. Guéï was from. This 'Ivorite' term alienated other groups in the country and made the coup inevitable (Akindès, 2003). This example from Côte d'Ivoire highlights that leaders of countries with multiple ethnic groups should always try to remain neutral when running various state apparatus otherwise failure to do so can have disastrous consequences as seen in this situation.

Democratization inadvertently also leads to coups in Africa. In "Democratization and the Danger of War," published in 1995, Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder argue that

a move to democracy can heighten the risk of military coups because the military feels that their interests are threatened by democracy. Democracy in an ideal sense isn't meant to induce coups because everyone's opinion and civil liberties are respected but this wasn't the case for Mauritania in 2008 when a coup transpired. Mauritania like many other African countries had experienced authoritarian rule for about 21 years from 1984-2005 until the election of Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi in 2007 who was a civilian. Among other reasons, his rule was characterized by internal power struggles between him and the military. He dismissed senior army officers including coup leader Gen. Mohammad Ould Abdel Aziz who retaliated through a coup in August 2008. This coup stalled the democratic process and brought the military back to power (N'Diaye, 2009). Dorina Bekoe's "The 2005 Coup d'état: Causes and Consequences. In Mauritania: On the Road to Democracy or Just More Violence?" highlights the hypocrisy of Ould Abdel Aziz's 2008 coup. Abdel Aziz was one of the leaders of the 2005 coup against then-incumbent dictator Ould Taya. The military junta took power from Taya and granted Mauritians elections in 2007 to which they voted for Ould Cheikh Abdallahi but, ironically, they didn't stick to their word to let a democratically elected civilian rule without fear or favor to anyone including the military.

The occurrence of coups in Nigeria validates Max Siollun's findings that political instability and ethnic tensions were pivotal for the outbreak of early coups. In his book, "Oil, Politics, and Violence: Nigeria's Military Coup Culture (1966-1976)". It provides detailed accounts of how these factors influenced the dynamics of the 1966 coups. Siollun articulates the events that led to these coups, emphasizing the ethnic rivalries (North vs South) and political grievances like electoral fraud that gripped Nigeria's post-independence landscape. The January 1966 coup by Maj. Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu and Gen. Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi happened because of electoral fraud during the 1964 federal elections and the 1965 Western regional elections. The counter-coup in July 1966 happened because of ethnically motivated mandates like the Decree No.34 which sought to create a unitary Nigeria. This incited the Northern officers led by Lt. Col. Murtala Mohammed to enact a bloody coup that saw the massacre of Igbos in Northern Nigeria. Siollun's work highlights the critical role that ethnic identities play in shaping the direction of Nigeria's military coups during this chaotic period (Siollun, 2009)

In summary, the above literature from various sources spotlights the intricate interaction between socio-economic, political, and economic factors and democracy that leads to coups in Nigeria and other African countries. Understanding coup triggers can help governments make the necessary changes in their leadership actions to avert them.

2.3 The Factors that contribute to the success and failure of Military coups

Factors like surprise, speed, and taking control of key infrastructure and communication channels are crucial in deciding whether a coup attempt will succeed or fail. Naunihal Singh in his book "Seizing Power: The Strategic Logic of Military Coups," published in 2014, reveals the importance of these factors in ensuring coup success. This is seen in the 1983 Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) led by Capt. Thomas Sankara (RIP). The coup was notable for its fast execution and takeover of key locations like Camp Guillaume, which housed the army's armored unit, and the Gendarmerie Headquarters. This allowed Sankara and his supporters to quickly consolidate power and establish control (Englebert & Dunn, 2013). The surprise element lay in the fact that Sankara was arrested beforehand at President Ouedraogo's request because he got intel of Sankara's intention to stage a coup but other key planners like Captain Blaise Compaore escaped. Compaore organized about 250 paratroopers in Po (a border city near Ghana) and marched towards the capital Ouagadougou. There he took over the aforementioned key locations and took over the statehouse during a period when Ouedraogo was waiting on Sankara to decide on a truce agreement that they had negotiated. Compaore used this time to set up an attack and storm the Presidential Palace capturing the President and on arrival, Sankara called it a Revolution (Martin, 1987).

External factors, such as foreign military aid also contribute to determining the success or failure of coup attempts. "Global Instances of Coups from 1950 to 2010: A New Dataset," published in 2011 by Jonathan Powell and Clayton Thyne, examines the role of foreign support in leading to the success or failure of coup attempts (Powell & Thyne, 2011). Through this research by Powell and Thyne, one realizes that external actors like continental neighbours should they choose to intervene during and after a coup can shape the coup's success and failure because of the logistical support and legitimacy that they offer and shape the country's future

direction. The 1989 Sudan coup by Omar al-Bashir vividly reveals this. Al-Bashir received crucial military support from neighboring governments like Muammar Gaddafi's Libya which led to him securing power and strengthening his hold over it until his removal from power in the 2019 Sudan coup (Flint & de Waal, 2008). This support from Libya was due to Gaddafi's need to propagate Islamic unity in Africa and strain Israel and the West's relations with African countries. In addition to Sudan, he also supported uprisings in Chad, DR Congo, Mali, Senegal, Algeria and so many others to remove the incumbent leaders (Solomon, 2005). Ironically, Gaddafi offered this support to al-Bashir who later denounced him after he died in 2011 which goes to show that there are no permanent friends and foes in the international arena, just partnerships of convenience united in the desire to achieve common goals.

Popular mobilization on the other hand is a banana skin for coup plotters and in most cases, contributes to the failure of military coups in Africa. In "Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict," published in 2011 by Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan it is noted that popular mobilization amongst citizens can importantly undermine the legitimacy of the coup plotters. The 2015 Burkina Faso coup attempt, led by elements of the Presidential Security Regiment loyal to deposed Blaise Compaore against the transitional government led by Michael Kafando failed because of the strong local resistance, demonstrating the role of domestic responses in shaping the outcome of the coup events discussed by Harsch (2017) in "Burkina Faso: A History of Power, Protest, and Revolution." The civil society especially the common people and the trade unions united to carry out street demonstrations and stalling of business activities which crippled the local economy of Burkina Faso. This coup attempt by the PSR was a move by Blaise Compaore to regain power after he was ousted in political upheaval after trying to lift the term limits in 2014 to extend his rule. This shows that citizens even without sophisticated weapons can make a difference for as long as they are in a collective can be real seals for democracy.

Larry Diamond also presents the role that civilian frustration with the administration of Nigeria played a crucial role in ensuring a successful outcome of coup attempts in Nigeria. Diamond explains how the military took advantage of this in his book, "Class, Ethnicity, and Democracy in Nigeria: The Failure of the First Republic". His

analysis of Nigeria's First Republic of 1963-65 explains how there were pressing issues like corruption, ethnic tensions, and economic decline that created a perfect recipe for military intervention. The young military officers justified their January 1966 coup as a means to end the rampant economic mismanagement and restore national unity in Nigeria. Diamond explains how the military's success in gaining power was not only because of its strength and training but also because of the active support from the disillusioned populace with the existing political order in Nigeria (Diamond, 1988)

2.4 How the aftermath of the military coups was handled

The aftermath of successful and failed military coups on the political development of Africa has been extensively analyzed. Successful coups often result in the suspension of democratic institutions, instability, and the consolidation of military rule which undermines the legitimacy of the state and public trust in democratic governance. Yahya Jammeh upon grabbing power through his 1994 coup subsequently suspended the constitution and carried out widespread human rights abuses in The Gambia as detailed by Perfect (2010) in "The Gambia under Yahya Jammeh: An Assessment." Samuel Doe also did the same to a worse degree when he grabbed power in the 1980 coup in Liberia. This created a decade of military rule characterized by a reign of terror, economic mismanagement, and an eventual civil war in 1989, as illustrated in "The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimension of an African Civil War" by Ellis (2006). These two coups scared the citizens of both countries and it goes on to show that in most cases, coup plotters are just power-hungry tyrants looking for an opportunity to exercise executive power with no holds barred.

Over time, military coups are harmful and complicated. Scholars like Hutchful and Bathily (1998) in "The Military and Militarism in Africa" have noted that extended periods of military rule often result in the militarization of politics the solidification of authoritarian regimes, and the weakening of democratic institutions. In Uganda, for instance, Idi Amin's military regime created a culture of violence and authoritarianism that has had long-lasting effects on the country's political landscape like the decision of Museveni to stage a war against Milton Obote's government in 1980 because he accused him of rigging the elections. This is

advanced by Kasozi (1994) in “The Social Origins of Violence in Uganda 1964-1985.” Uganda since Amin has been a military state with a questionable human rights record at times which ought to be scrutinized. On the other hand, failed coup attempts can sometimes strengthen democratic governance. When coups are averted, it shows the mortality of existing political systems and mobilizes civil society, which is crucial for upholding democratic norms and institutions. For example, the failed coup in 1983 in Ghana against Jerry Rawlings’ government by Halidu Giwa and Sgt. Abdul Malik. This forced Rawlings to re-think his leadership style which culminated in the establishment of a democracy and a constitution in 1992 (Boafo-Arthur, 1999). This example drawn from Rawlings’ government shows that leaders should never rest on their laurels even if their ascent to power was celebrated like Rawlings and they should work hard to put their manifestos in action.

In addition to the above, regional and international opinions can significantly shape the perception of the aftermath of coup attempts. The willingness of external powers to support or condemn coup plotters, as well as regional geopolitical dynamics, influence the outcomes and long-term consequences of these military interventions. For example, a string of West African military coups in 2020 (Mali), 2021 (Mali, Guinea), 2022 (Burkina Faso), and 2023 (Niger, and Gabon) were influenced by internal political dynamics and external inspirations from each other with reasons such as the desire to remove perceived puppet leaders and put an end to French neo-colonialism in West Africa as noted by Acho, Mannjong & Tacham, Follah. (2023). Moreover, the involvement of regional organizations like the African Union (AU), and ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) plays a vital role in ensuring the outcome of coup attempts. The AU’s stance against unconstitutional changes of government, as well as ECOWAS’s intentions to use military action, play a role in addressing the aftermath of coup attempts and trying to restore democratic rule. The aforementioned countries were all condemned by the regional body ECOWAS which threatened military action unless democracy was restored to which these countries responded by exiting the regional body over desires for political autonomy as noted by Onapajo (2024) in; ECOWAS and the challenge of preventing a resurgence of coups d’état in West Africa: An assessment of the ‘Zero Tolerance’ policy. These coup attempts happened in quick succession because these countries weren’t scared of the warnings of the AU and ECOWAS. This

serves to ask the question of whether these continental bodies hold significant political influence when it comes to reducing the likelihood of coup outbreaks in Africa. Perhaps they should think of alternative methods rather than putting out vague statements of being for democracy and the re-installation of the deposed leaders.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains how the research will be conducted demonstrating the choice of the research design and methods of data collection and analysis of the information concerning successful and failed military coups in the history of Nigeria.

3.2 Research design

The research will be conducted using qualitative, exploratory research design to understand the factors contributing to the success and failure of military coups in Nigeria's history (Stebbins, 2001). Exploratory research helps to identify the underlying themes, patterns, and relationships within the existing secondary data. A thorough review of scholarly articles, reports, and other type of literature will facilitate a thorough exploration of the research topic offering an insight into the multidimensional history of military interventions in the history of Nigeria.

3.3 Data Sources

The research will be conducted using secondary data. This secondary data will be collected from reputable sources eg;

Databases like Google Scholar and Jstor.

Academic journals.

Media articles and credible news sources.

Previous research dissertations.

Historical archives.

3.4 Key Sources

The study relies upon secondary data that is got from a literature review of some books published about the instances of political instability and regime change in the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

The collection of data included a thorough exploration of the secondary data and the following steps were taken;

Literature review on academic journals and articles from reputable databases like Google Scholar and Jstor.

Archival research on documents and reports from government publications.

Media analysis on reputable newspapers and magazines online.

3.6 Data Analysis

Qualitative content analysis (Schreier,2012) and comparative analysis (Mahoney,2003) facilitated the analysis of the secondary data. Qualitative analysis was used to identify the recurring themes and patterns associated with the success and failure of military coups in Nigeria. Comparative analysis, on the other hand, was used to identify the similarities in the collected data facilitating a holistic analysis of the collected data.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Since the study involved secondary data, proper citation of sources was taken into account and efforts were made to adequately explain the viewpoints of the different scholars and authors. Proper permissions were also sought for the use of copyrighted archive material.

3.8 Limitations of the study

The limitations of the secondary data collected were potential bias from the authors of the content and reliability of the historical sources. There was also limited access to classified information which was potentially useful.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the collected secondary data on the history of military coups in Nigeria. The collected data aims to identify the reasons that contribute to the success of some coups and the failure of other coups. The data collected from academic literature, historical archives, and media sources are collected to provide answers to the research questions. This chapter provides an extensive analysis of the events, key factors, and outcomes of the different coups in Nigeria's history.

4.2 Causes of Military Coups in Nigeria

The table below provides an overview of the significant military coups that Nigeria has had since its independence with the key figures of each coup attempt indicating the successful and failed ones.

S/N	Date	Outcome	Key Causes	Key Actors
1.	January 15th, 1966	Success	Ethnic tensions, corruption.	Maj. Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu, Gen. Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi
2.	July 29th, 1966	Success	Ethnic tensions and revenge for the January 1966 coup.	Lt. Col. Murtala Mohammed, Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon
3.	July 29th, 1975	Success	The unhappiness of junior officers towards Gowon's rule.	Col. Joseph Nanven Garba,

				Brig. Murtala Mohammed, Brig. Olusegun Obasanjo
4.	February 13th, 1976	Failure	Accusations of maladministration by Murtala Mohammed's government including corruption and arbitrary arrest.	Lt. Col. Buka Suka Dimka
5.	December 31st, 1983	Success	Corruption and economic mismanagement by the civilian government.	Maj. Gen. Muhammadu Buhari
6.	August 27th, 1985	Success	Lack of progress, economic mismanagement, and authoritarianism.	General Ibrahim Babangida
7.	April 22nd, 1990	Failure	Marginalization of people of the Niger Delta and accusations against Babangida for planning to install himself as life President.	Major Gideon Orkar
8.	November 17th, 1993	Success	The stagnant nature of Ernest	General Sani Abacha

			Shonekan's government with his failure to handle the progress of democracy in Nigeria.	
9.	1997	Failure	Dissatisfaction with Sani Abacha's government.	Lt. Gen. Oladipo Diya

Source: EduGist, 2024.

Qualitative analysis of the data collected on the causes of military coups in Nigeria revealed the following;

Political instability and dissatisfaction with the government were the leading cause of coups in Nigeria. This is observed from the coups of 1966. Political instability includes the occurrences of electoral fraud, ethnic tensions, and sub-standard governance that diminish the public's confidence in the ruling government. For example, the January 1966 coup transpired because there was widespread public disillusionment with the government's inability to handle ethnic tensions and corruption, problems that plagued the First Republic of Nigeria. There were also allegations of electoral fraud and conspiracy of concentration of power amongst the political elite. The electoral fraud in question was during the 1964 federal elections and 1965 Western regional elections where the dominant Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) and the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) were accused of extensive vote rigging, ballot stuffing, and intimidation (Diamond,1966). This caused dissatisfaction amongst the public and the military stepped up deeming themselves as the protectors of the country's democratic rights (Siollun,2009)

In addition to the above, ethnic and regional rivalries triggered the outbreak of coups in Nigeria. This was observed in the January and July 1966 coups. Nigeria is home to 250 tribes. The Hausa-Fulani dominate Northern Nigeria, the Yoruba

dominate South-Western Nigeria, and the Igbo dominate South-Eastern Nigeria. Each of these 3 major tribes competes with each other to wield political and economic power in Nigeria. The January 1966 coup led by Maj. Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu, an Igbo officer, and his allies saw the assassination of key political leaders from the north and west like Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Sardauna Sir Ahmadu Bello, and the Premier of Western Nigeria, Chief Samuel Akintola. These seemingly targeted assassinations worsened ethnic tensions that graduated into the violent counter-coup of July 1966. This coup was led by northern officers, Lt. Col. Murtala Mohammed and Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon, and it saw the assassination of the Igbo head of state Gen. Johnson Aguiyi Ironsi, and other Igbo civilians in the north (Siollun, 2009).

Poor economic conditions were also responsible for causing coups in Nigeria. This was prevalent in the coups of 1983 and 1995. The 1983 coup happened because the civilian government of Shehu Shagari was unable to address the economic downturn of Nigeria. This was characterized by unpaid wages, bloated public sector wages, high costs of food, and corruption. When Shagari came to power, the foreign currency reserves stood at US \$7.5 Billion and by 1983, they had virtually been eliminated to less than US \$1 Billion and the external debt stood at US \$12 Billion an increase of 200% in 4 years. Prices of staple food rose by over 500% between 1979 and 1981. Maj. Gen. Muhammadu Buhari took advantage of this and led a successful coup on December 31st, 1983 (Ekwe-Ekwe, 1985). Buhari's ascension to power didn't record the reduction of this dire economic situation and instead, his military government continued with the poor economic mismanagement and the repression of the citizens. General Ibrahim Babangida seized this opportunity to enact his successful coup on August 27th, 1985 with a promise of economic reforms and political reforms (Ejiogu, 2011)

4.3 Factors contributing to the success of military coups in Nigeria

Popular support was critical in determining the success of military coups in Nigeria. This support from the people stemmed from widespread disillusionment with the sitting government which created the perfect excuse for military intervention. Notable examples include the coups of 1966 and 1983. The Shagari government was widely viewed as corrupt and ineffective in solving the dire economic crisis that had

engulfed Nigeria. This disillusionment cut across various socio-economic and regional groups in Nigeria. Buhari capitalized on this and enacted a coup. The civilians tired of the economic mismanagement welcomed the coup as a necessary change. This support meant that there was little opposition to the hope that the military would solve this crisis. The January 1966 coup was also driven by widespread opposition against the federal government over accusations of electoral fraud amongst a bevy of other reasons that included inciting ethnic and regional divides. This civilian support in both cases provided the military with the necessary backing and legitimized the military regimes that took after the coups (Diamond, 1988).

Meticulous planning and coordination also went a long way in ensuring the success of military interventions in Nigeria. This was exemplified in the 1975 coup led by Brig. Murtala Mohammed. Although the coup transpired on July 29th, 1975, its planning had been in the works since April primarily by Col. Joe Garba, the Brigade of Guards commander charged with protecting the President. The day of the coup saw the seizure of command of strategic locations like Lagos Airport and all the approach roads towards it and external communications were also destroyed that allowed Col. Garba to announce the coup on the radio. This was facilitated in part by the collaboration of core officers in the army like Lt. Colonels; Yar' Adua, Abdullahi Mohammed, Ibrahim Taiwo, Babangida, Buhari, and Col. Garba's Brigade of Guards. The coup took place when Yakubu Gowon was in Kampala attending an OAU summit that eliminated the possibility of him rallying support against the coup plotters. The irony of this coup lay in the fact that Brig. Murtala Mohammed who took power from Gowon was responsible for installing Gowon as leader after the overthrow of Gen. Ironsi after the July 1966 counter-coup proving the point that in politics, there are no permanent friends and foes (Siollun, 2009).

4.4 Factors contributing to the failure of Military Coups in Nigeria

The lack of military and civilian support contributed to the failure of coup attempts in Nigeria exemplified in the 1976 coup attempt led by Lt. Col. Buka Suka Dimka against Murtala Mohammed's government. Murtala Mohammed was a very popular leader amongst the populace and his military because he enacted a host of measures to eliminate corruption and improve the efficiency of the administration of Nigeria. Many individuals were sacked or retired from public service without benefits for various offenses including corruption. With all that Murtala Mohammed had

accomplished in a year of his rule, it rendered Buka Suka's coup purposeless because he failed to garner the support of the public and his peers in the military who adored Brig. Murtala Mohammed. Murtala Mohammed had also initiated the process of transferring power from the military to the civilians democratically before he was assassinated. His deputy Gen. Obasanjo achieved this by transferring power to the first executive President of Nigeria, Shehu Shagari (Kieh, 1993).

Strong government resistance and poor coordination, on the other hand, also led to the failure of coup attempts especially the 1990 coup attempt by Maj. Gen. Gideon Orkar against Gen. Babangida's regime. Babangida was not a popular leader in Nigeria during this time because unemployment was high, student scholarships were frozen, the crime rate was at an all-time high, and corruption, and inflation to mention but a few which contradicted his promise when he came into power after the ousting of Buhari in 1985. He at first had survived an alleged coup attempt in 1986 led by Maj. Gen. Mamman Vasta, the then Minister of Defense denied these accusations of leading the coup and he was subsequently executed. Fast forward to 1990, Orkar managed to secure key locations like the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN), military posts in Lagos, and Dodan Barracks which were the Presidential residence when Babangida managed to escape through a back route allowing him to rally support to crush the attempts. Poor coordination lay in the fact that in his speech to the Nigerian public, Orkar used ethnic undertones like the expulsion of five northern states from Nigeria; Bauchi, Borno, Katsina, Kano, and Sokoto. This move failed to gain him popular support from Nigerians especially the important northerners which resulted in the failure of his coup attempt and subsequent execution by firing squad (Ihonvbere, 1991).

4.5 How the aftermath of military coups in Nigeria were handled

Successful coups in Nigeria saw the implementation of decrees and governance measures as seen after the January 1966 and 1975 coups. After ascending to power, Gen. Ironsi initiated Decree No.34 which was meant to unify Nigeria by abolishing the federal structure that favored some tribes, for example, the Northern tribes in favor of creating a unitary state. Ironsi envisioned that this would eliminate divisions and promote national unity but it backfired spectacularly because it increased ethnic tensions when the northern elites perceived it as a move to establish southern dominance over Nigeria. Failure to effectively address these tensions led to the July

1966 counter-coup led by Murtala Mohammed that installed Yakubu Gowon as the head of state and as a mass execution of Igbos in Northern Nigeria (Okupu,1992). On the other hand, Brig. Murtala Mohammed after the 1975 coup conducted a host of measures including the purge of civil service, removal of corrupt officers' reduction of government spending, the promotion of industrialization, and the creation of 7 additional states bringing them to 19 from 12 to bring services closer to the people (Phillips, 1980).

Failed coup attempts in Nigeria often saw the execution of the conspirators showing the realistic nature of the governments in their desire to retain power. Lt. Col. Buka Suka Dimka and his allies after the coup attempt of 1976 that saw the assassination of Murtala Mohammed, were quickly arrested, tried, and executed by Gen. Obasanjo's regime highlighting a clear message of intolerance towards such unsanctioned moves in the military (Igwe,2021). Likewise, Gen. Babangida did the same first in 1986 with the execution of the alleged coup leader of the supposed coup, Minister of Défense, Mamman Vasta, and in 1990 he also executed Maj. Gen. Orkar and 41 others in July and 27 others in September of the same year bringing the total number to 69 executions. These examples highlight the desire of these regimes to maintain power by all means necessary even if it meant the execution of key figures like a full Minister of Défense. Babangida also employed public relations measures to legitimize his actions terming Orkar's attempts as a means to destabilize Nigerian society (Ihonvbere,1991).

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This final chapter explains the different conclusions and recommendations of the study that explored the differences between the success and failure of military coups in Nigeria. The study objectives were to identify the different causes of military coups in Nigeria, identify the key factors that separate a successful coup from a failed coup attempt, and to finally identify how the aftermaths of these coups were handled.

5.2 Summary of the findings

This research revealed several key factors leading to the outbreak of coups in Nigeria and these included economic decline, ethnic tensions, electoral fraud, and abuse of political power. Other factors were central in ensuring the success and failure of coups in Nigeria and they included planning and coordination, civilian support, and government response to the coup attempts. The coups of 1966, 1975, 1983, and 1985 were successful because the coup plotters took advantage of civilian frustration with the government's inability to handle the ethnic tensions, economic mismanagement, and the tendency to rig the elections. Additionally, the success of coups depended on diligent planning and coordination among the military as evidenced in the 1975 coup led by Col. Joe Garba and Lt. Col. Murtala Mohammed against Yakubu Gowon who was attending an OAU summit in Kampala. Whereas, the failure of coups was because of the lack of military and civilian support as seen in the 1976 coup attempt by Buka Suka Dimka, and poor coordination and strong government resistance as seen in the 1990 coup attempt by Gideon Orkar.

5.3 Conclusion

Military coups in Nigeria were often caused by political and socio-economic factors like political instability, ethnic tensions, and economic decline. Coup plotters used these factors to gain the support of the civilians which helped to legitimize their actions. On the other hand, some coup attempts failed because of strong government resistance, lack of military and civilian support, and poor planning. The

aftermath of these coups both successful and failed involved a means to strengthen the hold over power and prevent further uprisings.

5.4 Recommendations

To mitigate the risk of future coups, it is essential to address the root causes of these attempts like ethnic tensions, economic decline, poor governance, and civil-military relations and this is discussed below as follows;

Efforts should be made to promote ethnic harmony in Africa through an equitable distribution of resources. Africa is home to 3,000 tribes and Nigeria is home to about 250 of these tribes (Atienza, 2019). This diverse ethnic background has often been a source of tension taken advantage of by coup plotters to incite coups. Implementing policies that foster representation of all ethnic groups in government and public service no matter how complex it might seem can help reduce the feelings of neglect amongst a few tribes. Resources like infrastructure, education, and healthcare can reduce regional imbalances. This in the long-term when every tribe feels like they have a say at the decision-making table can strengthen national unity and help avert the impact of ethnic tensions on political stability thus reducing the possibility of a a coup attempt.

The implementation of broad economic reforms can address the challenge that economic decline poses to the political stability of a country. The 1983 coup led by Buhari against Shagari's regime was based on an economic crisis that had plagued Nigeria. Key reforms include diversification of the economy to reduce oil dependency by leveraging technology and its immense potential, improving fiscal discipline, and creating an enabling environment for the private sector to blossom. Investments in education (both formal and informal), healthcare, and infrastructure can improve human capital and productivity contributing to sustainable economic growth.

In addition to the above, governments especially the African ones must improve their administration of their countries. Poor governance manifests in corruption, abuse of the rule of law, and inefficient public service delivery. This led to the coups of 1966, 1983, and 1985. Corruption destroys public trust in government institutions and the government must implement anti-corruption measures such as independent probe committees into allegations of corruption, enhancing transparency in government

transactions, and the prosecution of corrupt public officials without bias. Examples of such probe committees are the UNRA and Land inquiries headed by now Supreme Court Justice Her Lordship Catherine Bamugemereire of Uganda (Rickard,2019). Such inquiries help to restore hope in citizens that corruption can be curtailed and the recommendations in the reports they make must be implemented otherwise it just defeats the purpose. Efforts should be made to improve the capacity of public service bodies through training individuals, monetary investments in activities, and infrastructure to improve public service delivery. Lastly and crucially, governments need to uphold the rule of law and ensure that it applies to everyone because the law is meant to be the most powerful equalizer in our societies. The failure to do so can lead to civilian frustration thus giving coup plotters a golden excuse to enact a coup.

Creating strong and transparent civil-military relations is crucial to reduce the possibility of coup attempts. Efforts have to be made to ensure that the military remains apolitical and professional because failure to do so increases the likelihood of the outbreak of coups. This could be through establishing clear legal frameworks that define the role of the military in a democratic society and reinforcing the principle of civilian authority over the military in the social hierarchy. The military should not get involved in the public service of their countries because it contributes to their entrenchment in the civic space and it is hard to remove them from these spaces. Resources should be provided to the military so that they do not have an excuse to intervene in the governance of their country. All this in the long term can reduce grievances and the likelihood of military intervention in the politics of their countries.

5.5 Implications of the study

This research has compelling implications for policymakers in Nigeria and in African countries that share a similar political background. Governments can improve political stability and prevent military coups in their countries by addressing the underlying causes of military coups before they become an unavoidable problem. Good governance and national unity are important for achieving long-term peace and stability on the African continent.

5.6 Final Reflections

This research has painted a broad picture of the factors that led to the success and failure of the different military coups in Nigeria. Military coups are not just singular events that result in a change of governments, they change lives forever often disrupting the standards of living, destroy communities and leave deep scars on the national soul and spirit. Most of the soldiers that take power through these means often are snake oil salesmen promising stability and prosperity for all but that couldn't be further from the truth. This is because their subsequent rule is marked by violence, repression, erosion of democracy and entrenchment of the national military in all sectors of the state apparatus which goes against the ideals of a military that is set up to be non-partisan and defenders of democracy and its people. The people that have been blessed to see the day after coups like the bloody July 1966 Coup often tell harrowing tales that involve bloodshed, sexual abuse, separated families, and the destruction of their means of survival. On the other hand, the governments in power are just as much to blame for the carnage that coups produce. They are characterised by incidences of corruption, nepotism, economic mismanagement bordering on financial suicide with the way they operate the economy through inequitable taxation and insane salaries that are paid to high level public servants. This power perhaps makes them blind and immune to the suffering of the civilians that they swore an oath to advance their interests and rule in their favour. These actions make the civilians disillusioned which makes them give their support to the coup plotters who later on are revealed as wolf in sheep skin. Reducing the risk of coups does not only require the creation of robust state institutions, it requires a commitment to the basic democratic principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity. Underlying issues that lead to discontentment with the leadership of a country e.g. corruption and lack of opportunity should be tackled head on by first ensuring transparent dialogue with the civilians. It shouldn't just end at dialogue, there needs to be deep wide-scale change that germinates from this even if it means a destruction of the power structures and powers that be in a county that propagate and worsen corruption and lack of opportunity. Failure to do this leaves violence as the only means of change for a nation and nothing good or sustainable is born out of bloodshed. The fight against the occurrence of coups is to ensure that power is earned through the right means of the will of the people and it

is crucial that leaders in the twenty-first century especially those of developing countries join their populace in creating a society built on the aforementioned democratic ideals so that they can be proud of their countries and have positive aspirations not only for them, but for their future generations. For God and my Country!

APPENDIX

Below is a literature review protocol that guided the inquisition and selection of the relevant secondary data for this research study.

INTRODUCTION
Objective: To analyze the key determinants that differentiate successful military coup attempts resulting in a change of government from those that do not in Nigeria.
Scope: Focus on secondary data sources like academic journals, books, reports, and historical documents.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS
<p>What are the historical contexts and circumstances surrounding successful and failed military coups in Nigeria since independence?</p> <p>What were the factors that led to the success of military coups in Nigeria?</p> <p>What were the factors that led to the failure of military coups in Nigeria?</p> <p>How was the aftermath of military coups in Nigeria handled?</p>
SEARCH STRATEGY
<p>Databases: Jstor, Google Scholar, and university library databases.</p> <p>Keywords: “military coups in Nigeria”, “failed coups in Nigeria”, “successful coups in Nigeria”, “coup aftermath in Nigeria”, “coup outbreak in Nigeria”, “Nigeria political history”</p> <p>Inclusion criteria: Articles published in English, peer-reviewed articles, books, and credible reports, sources published from 1964.</p> <p>Exclusion criteria: Non-English publications and sources unrelated to Nigerian military coups.</p>
DATA EXTRACTION
<p>Themes: Ethnicity, timing and planning, foreign influence, public and military support.</p> <p>Data points: Date of the coup, outcome of the attempt (successful or failure), key players involved, reasons for the outcome.</p>
QUALITY ASSESSMENT
<p>Evaluation of the credibility and relevance of each source.</p> <p>Cross-referencing of findings across multiple sources to ensure reliability.</p>
SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS
<p>Comparison and contrast between factors identified in the literature.</p> <p>Highlighting any gaps in the literature that might require further exploration</p>
REPORTING
<p>Summarizing the literature review in a structured manner.</p> <p>Providing a clear narrative link to each of the research questions.</p>

REFERENCES

- Acho, Mannjong & Tacham, Follah. (2023). Examining the Reasons For and Effects of Military Coups in West Africa since 1990: The Obstacles to Democracy and Progress. *International Journal of Humanity and Social Sciences*. 1. 20-33. 10.47941/ijhss.1536.
- Adeakin, I. (2015). The military and politics in Nigeria: From Buhari to Buhari (1983-2015). *African Studies Quarterly*, 15(4), 27-44.
- Adejumobi, S. (2000). Elections in Africa: A fading shadow of democracy?. *International Political Science Review*, 21(1), 59-73.
- Agbaje, A. (2015). Nigeria's fourth republic and the challenge of a faltering democratization. *African Studies Review*, 58(1), 93-114.
- Agbese, P. O. (1990). The Military and Politics in Nigeria: From Abubakar to Babangida. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 28(2), 307-339.
- Aidoo, T. A. (1983). Ghana: Social Class, the December Coup, and the Prospects for Socialism. *Contemporary Marxism*, 6, 142-165. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29765727>
- Ajayi, A. I., & Buhari, L. O. (2014). Methods of conflict resolution in African traditional society. *African Research Review*, 8(2), 138-157.
- Akhaine, S. O. (2011). Reflections on democratic governance in Nigeria. *Review of African Political Economy*, 38(128), 315-321.
- Akindès, F. (2003). Côte d'Ivoire: Socio-political Crises, "Ivoirité" and the Course of History. *African Sociological Review / Revue Africaine de Sociologie*, 7(2), 11-28. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43657700>
- Akinola, O. (2018). Poverty, inequality and the challenges of inclusive development in Nigeria. *Africa Development*, 43(2), 117-142.
- Akinrinade, S. (1992). Military Professionalism and the Challenge of Military Intervention in Nigerian Politics. *Africa Today*, 39(3/4), 43-59.

Alabi, M. O. A., Alabi, J. O., & Fashagba, J. Y. (2017). The Nigerian military and the challenges of democratic consolidation: Interrogating the civil-military relations. *Covenant Journal of Politics and International Affairs*, 5(1), 16-31.

Alao, A. (2012). *Mugabe and the politics of security in Zimbabwe*. McGill-Queen's University Press.

Albrecht, H. &. (2018). How to keep officers in the barracks: Causes, agents, and types of military coups. *International Studies Quarterly*, 62(2), 315-316.

Amuwo, K. (2009). The political economy of Nigeria's post-military elections, 1999-2007. *Review of African Political Economy*, 36(119), 37-61.

Ani, K. J., & Ojakorotu, V. (2017). Democratization and the military in West Africa: Assessing Nigeria's experience. *Africa Review*, 9(1), 52-66.

Antwi-Boasiako, K. B. (2022). Jerry Rawlings: An Officer, a Statesman, and a Pan-Africanist. In K. B. Antwi-Boasiako, *Jerry John Rawlings: Leadership and Legacy: A Pan-African Perspective* (pp. 81-97). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Assanvo, W., Abatan, J. E., & Sawadogo, W. A. (2019). Violent extremism, organised crime and local conflicts in Liptako-Gourma. *West Africa Report*, (26), 1-28.

Atienza, E. (2019). Meet the Tribes in Africa | An Overview by Region. Whileinafrica. Whileinafrica Web site; <https://whileinafrica.com/meet-the-tribes-in-africa/>

Bah, A. B. (2013). Democracy and civil war: Citizenship and peacemaking in Côte d'Ivoire. *African Affairs*, 112(448), 372-390.

Bamidele, O. (2016). Boko Haram catastrophe in north-eastern Nigeria. *African Security Review*, 25(2), 190-206.

Bamidele, O. (2018). Democratization and the military in Nigeria: The Abacha regime in perspective. *African Security*, 11(1), 1-23.

Bekoe, D. A. (2012). The 2005 Coup d'état: Causes and Consequences. In *Mauritania: On the Road to Democracy or Just More Violence?* (pp. 1-2). Institute for Defense Analyses. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep26947.5>

- Belkin, A., & Schofer, E. (2003). Toward a structural understanding of coup risk. *Journal of conflict resolution*, 47(5), 594-620.
- Decalo, S. (1990). *Coups and army rule in Africa: Studies in military style*. Yale University Press.
- Diamond, L. (1988). *Class, Ethnicity, and Democracy in Nigeria: The Failure of the First Republic*. Syracuse University Press.
- Diamond, S. (1966). The End of the First Republic. *Africa Today*, 13(2), 5-9. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4184689>
- Ejiogu, E. C. (2011). *The Roots of Political Instability in Nigeria: Political Evolution and Development in the Niger Basin*. Ashgate.
- Ekwe-Ekwe, H. (1985). The Nigerian Plight: Shagari to Buhari. *Third World Quarterly*, 7(3), 610-625. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3991967>
- Ellis, S. (2006). *The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimension of an African Civil War*. New York University Press.
- Englebert, P., & Dunn, K. C. (2013). *Inside African Politics*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Fayomi, O., Chidozie, F., & Ayo, C. (2015). Nigeria's national image and her foreign policy: An exploratory approach. *Open Journal of Political Science*, 5(03), 210.
- Flint, J., & de Waal, A. (2008). *Darfur: A New History of a Long War*. Zed Books.
- Gambo, A., & Danjibo, N. D. (2019). Military intervention in Nigerian politics: Revisiting the 1966 coups. *Defence Studies*, 19(3), 288-302.
- Harsch, E. (2017). *Burkina Faso: A History of Power, Protest, and Revolution*. Zed Books.
- Howe, H. M. (1996). *Ambiguous Order: Military Forces in African States*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Hutchful, E., & Bathily, A. (Eds.). (1998). *The Military and Militarism in Africa*. CODESRIA.

Igwe, P. I., & Amadi, L. (2021). Democracy and political violence in Nigeria since Multi-Party Politics in 1999: A critical appraisal. *Open Political Science*, 4(1), 101-119.

Ihonvbere, J. O. (1991). A Critical Evaluation of the Failed 1990 Coup in Nigeria. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 29(4), 601-626.

Ihonvbere, J. O. (1991). A Critical Evaluation of the Failed 1990 Coup in Nigeria. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 29(4), 601-626.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/161140>

Iloegbunam, C. (2016, July 29). Vanguard Nigeria. From Vanguard Nigeria Web Site:
<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/07/july-291966-counter-coup-africas-bloodiest-coup-detat/>

Jeffries, R. (1989). Rawlings and the Political Economy of Underdevelopment in Ghana. *African Affairs*, 88(350), 53-74.

Jolaoso, O. A. (2016). The impact of military regimes on Nigeria's foreign policy. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 2(1), 1209874.

Kandeh, J. D. (1996). What does the 'militariat' do when it rules? Military regimes in West Africa. *Review of African Political Economy*, 23(69), 387-404.

Kareem, T. (2024). 10 Military coups that shaped Nigeria's history. Derived from EduGist Website. <https://edugist.org/10-military-coups-that-shaped-nigerias-history/>

Kasozi, A. (1994). *The Social Origins of Violence in Uganda, 1964-1985*. McGill-Queen's University Press

Kieh, G. K., & Agbese, P. O. (1993). From Politics Back to the Barracks in Nigeria: A Theoretical Exploration. *Journal of Peace Research*, 30(4), 409-426.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/424484>

Mahoney, J., & Rueschemeyer, D. (2003). *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge University Press.

Maiangwa, B. (2016). REVISITING THE NIGERIA-BIAFRA WAR: THE INTAN GIBLES OF POST-WAR RECONCILIATION. *International Journal on World Peace*, 33(4), 39-67. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45014352>

Martin, G. (1987). Ideology and Praxis in Thomas Sankara's Populist Revolution of 4 August 1983 in Burkina Faso. *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, 15, 77-90. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1166927>

McGovern, M. (2011). *Making War in Côte d'Ivoire*. University of Chicago Press.

N'Diaye, B. (2009). To "Midwife" - and Abort - a Democracy: Mauritania's Transition from Military Rule, 2005-2008. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 47(1), 129-152. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30224926>

Njoku, O. N. (2019). TOWARDS BUILDING NIGERIA INTO A NATION: RETROSPECT ON A BROKEN COVENANT. *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 28, 1-30. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48618988>

Nwankwo, O. (2015). The politics of conflict over oil in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria: a review of the corporate social responsibility strategy of the oil companies. *Field Actions Science Reports. The journal of field actions*, (Special Issue 17).

Obi, C. I. (2007). Democratizing Nigerian Politics: Transcending the Shadows of Militarism. *Review of African Political Economy*, 34(112), 379-384. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20406404>

Ojo, E. O. (2006). Imperatives of sustaining democratic values. In E.O. Ojo (Ed.), *Challenges of Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria* (pp. 3-18). Ibadan: John Archers.

Ojo, E. O. (2019). Military-paramilitary relations in Africa: The case of the Nigerian military and the Odua Peoples' Congress. *Armed Forces & Society*, 45(4), 676-694.

Okupu, U. (1982). THE POLITICS OF STATE CREATION AND THE OUTBREAK OF THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR. *Transafrican Journal of History*, 11, 147-166. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24328538>

Olaniyan, A. (2019). The military and the democratic process in Nigeria. In *The Military and Politics in Africa* (pp. 207-220). Routledge.

Omitoogun, W., & Hutchful, E. (2006). *Budgeting for the Military Sector in Africa: The Processes and Mechanisms of Control*. Oxford University Press.

Omodia, S. M., & Aliu, M. (2013). Governance and threats to national security in emerging democracies: A focus on the Nigerian Fourth Republic. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(4), 36-42.

Omotola, J. S. (2011). Mechanisms of post-military election conflict management in Nigeria. *Conflict Trends*, (2), 48-56.

Onapajo, H., & Babalola, D. (2024). ECOWAS and the challenge of preventing a resurgence of coups d'état in West Africa: An assessment of the 'Zero Tolerance' policy. *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 1-22.

Onapajo, H., & Uzodike, U. O. (2018). Nigeria's military in peace operations: Peacekeepers or peace-wreckers?. *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 25(1), 105-124.

Onapajo, H., & Uzodike, U. O. (2020). Electoral violence in Nigeria: The case of the 2015 general elections. *South African Journal of Political Studies*, 47(1), 1-20.

Otite, A. (2017). The impact of military rule on Nigeria's democratic culture. *Journal of African Military History*, 1(1), 35-54.

Otunnu, O. &. (2016). The Amin Regime and Political Violence, 1971-1979. . *Crisis of Legitimacy and Political Violence in Uganda, 1890 to 1979,*, 237-320.

Perfect, D. (2010). The Gambia under Yahya Jammeh: An Assessment. *The Round Table*, 99(406), 53-63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00358530903513681>

Phillips, C. S. (1980). Nigeria's New Political Institutions, 1975-9. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 18(1), 1-22. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/160408>

Poljarevic, E. (2009). Egypt, Revolution of 1952. *The International Encyclopedia of Revolution and Protest*,, 1-4.

Powell JM, Thyne CL (2011) Global Instances of Coups from 1950 to 2010: A New Dataset. *Journal of Peace Research* 48: 249-259.

Powell, J. M., & Thyne, C. L. (2011). Global instances of coups from 1950 to 2010: A new dataset. *Journal of Peace Research*, 48(2), 249-259.

Powell, J. M., & Thyne, C. L. (2011). Global instances of coups from 1950 to 2010: A new dataset. *Journal of Peace Research*, 48(2), 249-259.

Rickard, C. (2019). Controversy follows this Ugandan judge, from roads to land. African LII. African LII Web Site; <https://africanlii.org/articles/2019-05-01/carmel-rickard/controversy-follows-this-ugandan-judge-from-roads-to-land>

Saliu, H. A. (2006). Some reflections on forty-six years of Nigeria's foreign policy. In E.O. Ojo (Ed.), *Challenges of Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria* (pp. 257-273). Ibadan: John Archers.

Sandrina Antunes, I. C. (2018). Introducing Realism in International Relations Theory. *E-International Relations*, 1-5.

Sawo, A. (2017). The Chronology of Military Coup d'états and Regimes in Burkina Faso: 1980-2015. *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, (48), , 1-18.

Schreier, M. (2012). *Qualitative Content Analysis in Practice*. Sage Publications. DOI: 10.4135/9781446288126

Siollun, M. (2009). *Oil, Politics and Violence: Nigeria's Military Coup Culture (1966-1976)*. Algora Publishing.

Siollun, M. (2016, January 15th). BBC. From BBC Web Site: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35312370>

Solomon, H., & Swart, G. (2005). Libya's Foreign Policy in Flux. *African Affairs*, 104(416), 469-492. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3518725>

Stebbins, R. A. (2001). *Exploratory research in the social sciences*. Sage Publications. DOI: 10.4135/9781412984249

Tcompletely, T. (2020). Military coups in West Africa: Causes, dynamics, and responses. *Conflict Studies Quarterly*, 32, 54-70.

Vines, A. (2024, April 13). Georgetown Journal of International Affairs. From Georgetown Journal of International Affairs Web Site: <https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2024/04/13/understanding-africas-coups/>