Navigating Complexities: African Union's Peace and Security Strategy Challenges after Niger and Gabon Coups

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Abstracts: This study examines the intricate challenges that the African Union (AU) confronts in its pursuit of effective peace and security strategies following recent coup incidents in Niger and the ongoing situation in Gabon. The research analyzes the complex dynamics surrounding coup attempts, exploring their ramifications for regional stability, rising political intolerance, internally displaced populations, intricate government structures, enduring colonial legacies, and the emergence of global threats. Employing content analysis, the research draws from a diverse range of sources, including published and unpublished materials and references to news outlets. The study also compares coup scenarios in Niger and Gabon with similar instances globally to shed light on the multi-dimensional challenges that the AU faces. This research highlights historical factors, such as colonialism, that underpin coup occurrences and broader governance issues. It underscores the connection between persistent insecurity, hindered economic growth, exclusionary economic governance, and low development indicators, all contributing to an elevated risk of coup occurrences across Africa. The primary goal of this study is to contribute to a deeper understanding of the AU's evolving peace and security landscape and to offer recommendations aimed at bolstering its strategies for achieving lasting peace and security.

Keywords: African Union, Peace and Security, Coup Incidents, Regional Stability, Colonial Legacies.

1. INTRODUCTION

Amid ongoing political turmoil in West and Central Africa, a series of significant coup events has captured attention and highlighted the region's challenges. Notably, a coup d'état took place in the Gabonese Republic on August 30, 2023, following the contentious re-election of President Ali Bongo Ondimba on August 26. This marked the culmination of the Bongo family's 56-year rule. This event is part of a broader trend of coup activities since 2020, encompassing successful coups in Mali, Chad, Guinea, Burkina Faso, and Niger.A prominent coup unfolded in Niger on July 26, 2023, orchestrated by the presidential guard, leading to the detention of President Mohamed Bazoum. General Abdourahamane Tchiani assumed control of the military junta.

ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States, played a pivotal role in addressing these coup scenarios. In response to the Niger coup, ECOWAS issued a one-week ultimatum on July 30, 2023, demanding the restoration of President Bazoum or facing potential sanctions and military intervention. While the deadline expired without the use of force, ECOWAS activated its standby force on August 10, 2023, emphasizing regional stability.

These coup events underscore the intricate challenges involved in political transitions across the region. Concurrently, the Niger crisis involves ongoing diplomatic negotiations, military preparations, and international engagement.

The resurgence of coup events in recent years across Africa presents significant hurdles to peace, stability, and democratic governance. This study delves into the complex dynamics faced by the African Union (AU) in responding to coup attempts in Niger and the evolving situation in Gabon. The prevalence of such incidents raises concerns about democratic institution fragility, political intolerance potential, population displacement, complex governance structures, historical legacies, and global threats. By delving into these complexities, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the formidable obstacles the AU must navigate as it devises strategies for effective peace and security.

1.1. Defining Coups and their Implications

Within the discourse surrounding coup incidents lies a multifaceted terrain of ongoing debates concerning their implications for democratization and stability [1]. exploration of the relationship between coups and democratic transitions contributes to this discourse. Their analysis underscores the nuanced outcomes that can result from post-coup scenarios, emphasizing that democratization or autocracy hinges on factors such as popular mobilization and external pressures. This perspective underscores the significance of considering contextual variations and the intricate interplay between regime vulnerabilities, mobilization, and the success of coup attempts.

1.2. Coup Characteristics and Implications for Peace and Security

Building upon this foundation [2]. introduces the concept of asymmetric interdependence in the context of security cooperation between host nations and external forces. Challenging conventional assumptions, this perspective underscores the necessity for host nations to assert autonomy and ownership over their security responses to ensure effective cooperation. Drawing from the G5 Sahel Joint Force and its engagement with external actors, Sandnes highlights disparities between intended and realized outcomes in security force assistance. This perspective transcends security forces and offers insights into broader interactions among international, regional, national, and local entities.

1.3. Historical Context of Coup Attempts in Niger and Gabon

Contextualizing the study [3]. delve into the OAU's mediation efforts during the Nigerian Civil War. This historical analysis illuminates the OAU's role in conflict resolution, examining catalysts for intervention and factors impeding effective reconciliation. The research underscores the OAU's contributions to nurturing peace, even when mediation processes do not lead to immediate conflict cessation. This historical understanding reveals the complexities inherent in mediation efforts and highlights the significance of comprehending historical factors that shape conflict dynamics.

Table: Coup Attempts and Successful Coups in the Central African Republic (1966-2021)

Year	Successful Coups	Attempted Coups
1966	Jean Bedel Bokassa overthrows David Dacko	
1974		Police General Martin Lingoupou attempts to overthrow Bokassa
1975		Another attempt to overthrow Bokassa
1976		A group of army soldiers attempts to overthrow Bokassa
1979	David Dacko overthrows Bokassa	
1981	André Kolingba overthrows Dacko	
1982		Patassé, Bozizé, and Alphonse Mbaïkoua attempt to overthrow André Kolingba
1996		Soldiers attempt to overthrow Patassé
2001		Bozizé tries to overthrow Patassé
2002		Bozizé tries to overthrow Patassé
2003	François Bozizé overthrows Ange-Félix Patassé	
2013	The Seleka Rebel Movement overthrows Bozizé	
2021		On 13 January 2021, around 200 rebels from the Coalition of Patriots for Change attacked the capital city, Bangui, in a failed attempt to overthrow the government

Summary: Table: Historical Instances of Successful and Attempted Coups in Central African Republic (1966-2021)

1.4. Logical Sequence and Consistent Argumentation

The logical sequence of this study is rooted in the comprehensive exploration of coup incidents' implications for democratic transitions, security cooperation dynamics, and historical contexts. The study progressively moves from theoretical insights on coups to their practical implications for peace and security. This cohesive progression enables a holistic analysis, bridging theoretical underpinnings with real-world implications and contributing to a nuanced understanding of the challenges encountered by the AU.

As the prevalence of coup incidents continues to influence the African peace and security landscape, the complexities facing the AU become more pronounced. By drawing on theoretical perspectives, practical insights, and historical contexts, this study seeks to offer a nuanced understanding of the challenges arising from coup attempts in Niger and Gabon. By contextualizing these incidents within broader governance and historical frameworks, this research contributes to the discourse on strategies for nurturing enduring peace, stability, and democratic governance across the region.

2. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

In order to comprehensively address the research objectives, this study employs a robust and comprehensive methodology that draws upon a diverse array of sources and analytical techniques. The research utilizes a content analysis framework to extract valuable insights from a wide spectrum of both published and unpublished materials, coupled with references to regional as well as global news outlets. By amalgamating insights from multiple sources, the study endeavors to present a comprehensive and well-rounded perspective regarding the challenges that the African Union (AU) faces in the aftermath of coup attempts.

2.1. Research Design

The research design adopted for this study is qualitative in nature. This choice stems from the aspiration to delve into and grasp the intricate challenges and dynamics associated with peace and security strategies following coup incidents. Qualitative research proves adept at capturing the nuances, context-specific elements, and multidimensional facets of the matters under examination.

2.2. Data Collection

1. Document Study: The research embarks on a meticulous review of scholarly articles, reports, policy documents, and news articles related to coup incidents, peace and security strategies, and the AU's role in these contexts. This thorough document review serves as the bedrock for comprehending the subject matter and identifying key thematic threads.

2. Monitoring News Sources: Regional and international news sources are vigilantly monitored to capture the latest developments, reactions, and evolving narratives concerning the coup attempts and the AU's responses.

2.3. Data Analysis

1. Content Analysis: The gathered data, including documents, and news articles, undergoes rigorous content analysis. This process entails discerning recurring themes, patterns, and pivotal messages within the data corpus.

2. Comparative Examination: Comparative analysis is conducted to identify parallels and disparities between the coup incidents in Niger and Gabon. This technique aids in contextualizing the challenges that the AU grapples with, and in extracting insights and lessons that are pertinent to both situations.

3. Ethical Considerations:

Adherence to ethical guidelines is maintained, ensuring proper citation and recognition of sources to uphold the integrity of the research.

4. Enhancing Validity And Reliability

Triangulation is employed as a strategy to enhance the validity and reliability of the research. By triangulating multiple sources, methodologies, and data points, the study fortifies the credibility of its findings and overall research endeavor.

The methodology section illuminates the research design, data collection methods, and analytical techniques that steer the exploration of challenges, lessons, and recommendations for the AU following coup attempts in Niger and the ongoing developments in Gabon. Through the adoption of a qualitative methodology, the study seeks to offer a comprehensive and nuanced comprehension of the intricate landscape of peace and security strategies in the region. By methodically collecting and diligently analyzing data, the research aspires to provide insightful contributions to the ongoing discourse on efficacious peacebuilding and security endeavors in the African context.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW: COMPLEX FACTORS SHAPING POST-COUP SCENARIOS

4.1. Internally Displaced Populations (IDPs) and Fragility

The presence of Internally Displaced Populations (IDPs) within a nation presents a multifaceted challenge that reaches beyond their immediate displacement status [4]. delve into the implications of IDPs for societal dynamics and political fragility. Displaced populations often find themselves in precarious situations, uprooted from their homes due to conflicts and crises. This displacement disrupts not only their lives but also the social fabric of both their host communities and their places of origin. The strained resources in both the host and IDP communities create competition for necessities, leading to heightened tensions. These tensions, coupled with existing grievances and societal fault lines, can provide fertile ground for conflicts to escalate, further destabilizing regions already grappling with fragility. Moses and Ige's study underscores the need to consider the specific challenges faced by IDPs and to address their potential to exacerbate fragility, necessitating comprehensive strategies for sustainable conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

4.2. Government Structure Complexities and Governance Gaps

Examining the intricacies of complexities within government structures reveals the elements that influence the efficiency and responsibility of governance [5]. Government structures in many African countries are often shaped by historical legacies and post-colonial transitions. These complexities contribute to governance gaps, which impede the proper functioning of state institutions. The study emphasizes that these gaps hinder citizen participation in the governance process, leading to public dissatisfaction and increased risks of unrest and coups [6].complements this perspective by delving into the intricate dynamics of government structures in coup dynamics. The addition or removal of military officers from government positions serves as a signaling mechanism for power-sharing possibilities. This signaling can influence the likelihood.

of military intervention, showcasing the intertwined relationship between governance structures and coup attempts. Together, these studies underline the need to address governance deficiencies and to create inclusive governance systems that foster accountability and citizen engagement.

4.3. Colonial Legacies and Governance Challenges

The impact of colonialism on contemporary governance is a recurring theme explored [7]. The authors emphasize that the enduring effects of colonialism persist in postcolonial politics and development. The power dynamics established during colonial rule continue to shape present-day governance structures, race relations, and national identities. This influence is particularly evident in situations marked by right-wing nationalists and racism, which exploit historical legacies for political gain[8].study on Francophone African nations further illustrates how European colonial projects have left lasting traces, affecting political landscapes and societal dynamics. Governance challenges are thus deeply rooted in historical contexts and addressing them requires a nuanced understanding of power relations and the legacy of colonial rule. These studies collectively call for governance reforms that address historical inequities and foster inclusive national identities.

4.4. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Regional Security

In the context of West Africa's security, an [9] examination of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) role highlights the organization's evolving mandate. Initially focused on economic integration, ECOWAS has expanded its scope to include conflict management and security cooperation. However, challenges such as

capacity constraints, lack of political commitment, and shifting socio-economic environments have tested ECOWAS's effectiveness in preventing and managing conflicts. As Kohnert notes, the organization's ability to influence post-coup scenarios is intricately linked to its capacity to navigate these challenges and adapt its strategies. ECOWAS's evolution from an economic bloc to a regional security actor reflects the complex demands placed on such organizations in addressing the multifaceted nature of security challenges.

4.5. Rise of Global Threats: Terrorism and Extremism

The rise of global threats, specifically terrorism and extremism, has significant implications for post-coup scenarios, particularly in the Sahel region [10]. apply the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) to examine the security dynamics in the Sahel. The upsurge in violent activities and militant groups in the region has led to security threats that extend beyond geographical boundaries. The persistent challenges posed by terrorism and insurgency have spurred a collective response from various nations, highlighting the importance of regional cooperation to combat this menace. Notably, the European Union (EU) member states have embraced a unified approach called Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Insurgency (CT-COIN) to address transnational security threats. Similarly, in West Africa, efforts like the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) have been revitalized to confront cross-border terrorism in the Lake Chad Basin. These initiatives reflect the integral components of regional cooperation in the area.

However, the effectiveness of these regional strategies has been hampered by a range of challenges intrinsic to security collaboration at the regional level. To address this, the article critically examines the dynamics of terrorism and insurgency in West Africa, focusing on CT-COIN initiatives. It delves into the regional framework designed to counter these threats, highlighting the obstacles to successful regional cooperation. Furthermore, the article proposes strategies to enhance collaborative efforts for more effective CT-COIN in West Africa.

The complex interplay between global threats and regional dynamics, as underscored by [11], further accentuates the necessity for comprehensive regional approaches. [11] highlights how the G5-Sahel's endeavors in the face of coup attempts and terrorism exemplify the intricate relationship between these threats and regional dynamics. This intricate context demands concerted action to address multifaceted security challenges, necessitating collaborative endeavors to effectively mitigate these complex issues.

This comprehensive literature review illuminates the intricate web of factors that shape post-coup scenarios in Africa. From the influence of IDPs on fragility to the challenges posed by government structure complexities, colonial legacies, and the rise of global threats, these studies offer a deep and nuanced understanding of the multifaceted dynamics at play. This logical sequence of interconnected factors provides a framework for comprehending the complex nature of post-coup challenges and their implications for peace, stability, and democratic governance across the continent.

4.6. Impediments to the African Union's Strategy

The African Union (AU) grapples with multifaceted challenges in executing its strategies for peace and security, as illuminated by a range of scholarly studies [12]. explores the AU's prospects for collaboration with the G20 to address sustainable development issues. The study underscores the significance of forming partnerships to tackle complex developmental challenges, recognizing that the AU cannot address such issues in isolation. This underscores the need for the AU to navigate intricate diplomatic networks to realize its goals effectively.

Diving into the African Union's capacity to mediate in conflicts carrying substantial environmental and geopolitical consequences, such as the case of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam [13]. reveals its intricate role in navigating complex regional dynamics. This study highlights the limitations the AU faces in navigating complex disputes and underscores the need for robust conflict resolution mechanisms that account for nuanced political and environmental dynamics. [14]. examination of the Niger coup sheds light on the fragility of Francophone African countries and shifting geopolitical dynamics. The study emphasizes the AU's need to adapt its strategies to address the evolving challenges posed by political instability and power struggles.

Addressing peace and security issues forms a central challenge for the AU, as demonstrated [15].in the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The study assesses the AU's policy implementation for peace and security in the DRC since 2004. The findings highlight the importance of comprehensive strategies that consider the complex dynamics of conflict, the roles of different stakeholders, and the implications of regional and global factors.

In the context of conflict, the analysis of the African Union's Peace and Security Council's role in addressing the Darfur conflict underscores the organization's multi-faceted approach [16]. The AU's efforts encompass not only addressing immediate security concerns but also tackling underlying root causes and promoting sustainable solutions [17]. extend the discussion to consider whether the AU's efforts will be able to adapt to the evolving challenges of maintaining peace and security on the continent. This perspective raises questions about the flexibility and agility of the AU's strategies in responding to changing conflict dynamics.

Examining [18]. offers valuable insights into the patterns of violence in Africa and their significance for the African Union's efforts in conflict resolution. The study highlights that conflict patterns are evolving and becoming more complex, necessitating adaptable strategies and responses from the AU [19]. examination of the impact of xenophobia on African unity emphasizes the significance of addressing divisive issues that undermine regional cooperation. This study highlights that promoting peace and security requires addressing social and political tensions that can contribute to conflicts.

In conclusion, these studies collectively emphasize the multifaceted impediments that challenge the African Union's peace and security strategies. From regional conflicts and environmental disputes to evolving violence trends and issues of regional unity, the AU's efforts are complex and necessitate adaptable and holistic approaches to effectively address the diverse challenges it faces.

5.   DISCUSSION AND RESULTS: COMPLEX FACTORS SHAPING POST-COUP SCENARIOS

In this comprehensive article, a detailed analysis of complex factors shaping post-coup scenarios in Africa has been presented, culminating in a comprehensive discussion of challenges, lessons learned, and recommendations for the African Union (AU) to enhance its peace and security strategies in the aftermath of coup incidents. This discussion aims to synthesize insights from the literature review, providing a thorough understanding of the intricate landscape the AU must navigate.

5.1. Internally Displaced Populations (IDPs) and Fragility
The discussion underscores the critical role of internally displaced populations (IDPs) in exacerbating fragility within coup-affected regions. The presence of IDPs disrupts social cohesion, strains resources, and escalates conflicts, amplifying challenges to stability. This highlights the imperative for AU strategies to address the socio-economic ramifications of displacement alongside political considerations.

5.2. Government Structure Complexities and Governance Gaps
The discussion delves deeper into the nuanced relationship between complex government structures and coup dynamics. The intricate governance landscape can lead to governance gaps that pave the way for coup attempts. Acknowledging historical legacies, social norms, and state institutions' weaknesses equips the AU with insights to craft strategies that bolster governance accountability and prevent exploitable power vacuums.

5.3. Colonial Legacies and Governance Challenges
Expanding on the impact of colonial legacies, the discussion explores how they continue to shape governance structures and politics. By recognizing the enduring influence of colonial history on power dynamics, the AU can formulate strategies to rectify deep-rooted inequalities and address power imbalances that can contribute to instability.

5.4. ECOWAS and Regional Security
The discussion provides a nuanced examination of ECOWAS's evolving role in regional security. While achievements are acknowledged, the discussion unveils challenges stemming from capacity constraints, shifting

socio-economic contexts, and varying political commitment levels. This analysis emphasizes the complexity of regional cooperation dynamics and the necessity to tailor strategies to evolving circumstances.

5.5. Rise of Global Threats: Terrorism and Extremism

Contextualizing the rise of global threats, the discussion explores their implications for African security. The interconnectedness of regional geopolitics and global terrorism underscores the necessity of holistic strategies. Recognizing the interplay between global and regional factors equips the AU to design responses that encompass both internal and external dimensions.

5.6. Impediments to the African Union's Strategy:

Shifting focus to the AU's strategy implementation challenges, the analysis underscores adaptability as a crucial element. The importance of tailoring strategies to specific contexts, exemplified by the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam dispute, is highlighted. Additionally, the vulnerabilities of Francophone African countries reveal the broader regional implications and complexities that the AU must address.

5.7 Future Prospects and Concluding Remarks:

The discussion concludes by addressing the future prospects of peace and security. It underscores the ongoing challenges of political violence, extremism, and external influences, emphasizing the importance of adaptability, collaboration, and addressing root causes. This forward-looking perspective situates the AU as a pivotal actor in steering the region towards lasting stability.

6. RESULTS

The article's findings elucidate the multi-dimensional nature of challenges confronting the AU in post-coup scenarios. The intricate web of factors, spanning from instability and violence to historical legacies and global threats, necessitates holistic, context-sensitive approaches. The lessons learned advocate for the transformative power of the peace innovation (PI) approach, built on collaboration, inclusivity, and respectful partnerships.

The recommendations, a product of rigorous analysis, offer actionable insights. Addressing socioeconomic disparities, historical legacies, and global cooperation mirrors the intertwining of internal and external factors shaping security landscapes. These findings spotlight the AU's pivotal role in shaping an enduringly stable future, where innovative strategies and inclusive approaches work in tandem to foster sustainable peace across the African continent.

6.1. Strengthening Peace and Security Strategies

Amid the African Union's (AU) efforts to bolster its strategies for peace and security, scholarly research offers valuable recommendations that offer practical insights for shaping policies and their effective implementation.

In the work of [20]. a compelling case is made for the adoption of a peace innovation (PI) approach, aimed at addressing complex and prolonged conflicts. This approach revolves around collaborative endeavors among innovators, academics, and stakeholders, focusing on solutions driven by end-users and tailored to incorporate local nuances. Furthermore, the call for the active involvement of civil society, particularly youth and women, underscores the significance of inclusive strategies that harness the expertise and viewpoints of diverse sections of the population.

This article contends that the implementation of coup-proofing strategies does not necessarily diminish the inclination of military officers to orchestrate coups against authoritarian leaders. Despite coup-proofing measures curtailing the likelihood of coup cascades and prolonging the rule of incumbent autocrats, the underlying susceptibility to coups persists, even if these rulers manage to stay in power for extended periods. Drawing upon a novel dataset encompassing coup occurrences in the Middle East and North Africa from 1950 to 2013, the research notes a decline in the number of coup instances over time. Nonetheless, the vulnerability of incumbents to coup attempts remains constant, even within coup-proofed autocratic systems. The timing of coup plotting, coupled with the role of central military leadership, emerges as crucial factors.

Further delving into the subject, [21] illuminates the multifaceted strategies that counter-revolutionary regimes employ to consolidate their authority. These strategies encompass the adoption of coup-proofing measures, avoidance of popular uprisings, and obstruction of external backing for regime change. These insights underscore the intricate equilibrium between stability and potential instability. The study emphasizes the importance of addressing socioeconomic disparities and historical legacies, highlighting the necessity of addressing root causes and promoting inclusive approaches for nurturing peace and security.

The case study of Nigerien President Mohamed Bazoum's strategy, as discussed [22]. demonstrates the potential benefits of leveraging Western partnerships to counter jihadist groups. This recommendation highlights the effectiveness of collaboration in bolstering security measures and underscores the importance of international cooperation in addressing shared threats.

The recommendations provided by these studies collectively offer a pathway for the African Union to strengthen its peace and security strategies. By adopting innovative approaches, addressing historical legacies, and fostering collaboration with international partners, the AU can enhance its capacity to effectively respond to the diverse and evolving challenges to peace and security on the African continent.

6.2. Multifaceted Approach to Addressing Instability:

Amid the complex landscape of peace and security challenges, adopting a multifaceted approach is imperative for the African Union (AU) to effectively address underlying factors that contribute to instability. Socioeconomic disparities, historical legacies, and the fostering of respectful partnerships are all interconnected elements that demand thoughtful consideration.

Socioeconomic disparities, as emphasized [23]. are often linked to grievances that can fuel conflict and coup attempts. The AU should prioritize strategies that promote sustainable economic development, job creation, and poverty alleviation. Such initiatives not only address immediate grievances but also create a foundation for social inclusivity and stability.

Historical legacies, as elucidated [24]. have enduring effects on governance, power dynamics, and identity formation. The AU can facilitate processes of historical reconciliation and dialogue that address the lingering impacts of colonialism, promoting national cohesion and reducing sources of tension.

Respectful partnerships, as underscored [25]. are essential for crafting effective strategies. Engaging civil society, particularly marginalized groups like youth and women, ensures diverse perspectives are integrated. Additionally, collaborating with regional organizations, governments, and non-state actors enhances the AU's capacity to address complex challenges holistically.

6.3. Enhancing International Collaboration

International collaboration is a cornerstone of successful peace and security strategies for the AU. The AU's partnerships with international organizations, states, and agencies can significantly amplify its efforts to prevent and manage coup-related crises.

Drawing lessons from Bazoum's strategy highlighted [26]. the AU can engage in intelligence-sharing and capacity-building partnerships to counteract extremist threats. Collaborating with international organizations experienced in counterterrorism measures, such as the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, enables the AU to tap into global expertise.

Furthermore, fostering collaboration with regional bodies like ECOWAS, as discussed [27] allows for the pooling of resources and collective action in response to regional security challenges. The AU can work closely with ECOWAS to develop joint strategies that address common threats and promote stability in West Africa.

6.4. Unveiling Dynamics of Contemporary Security Interventions and Foreign Policy in Africa: A Comprehensive Literature Review

The strategic role of private military companies as instruments of foreign policy has gained prominence in recent years, with the Wagner Group being a notable example [28].extensively investigates the Wagner Group's status as a de facto foreign policy instrument employed by Russia, particularly in Africa. Neethling emphasizes the Wagner Group's unique position as a proxy institution of the Russian state, acting as a quasi-state actor with a global footprint. This aligns with the Wagner Group's engagements in Africa, marked by controversies and geopolitical tensions, as Russia endeavors to challenge Western influence on the continent.

Adding to the discussion, [29]. examines the complex dynamics between the G5 Sahel Joint Force (G5S-JF) and external stakeholders such as the UN, EU, and France. Sandnes' study underscores the substantial influence that external actors wield over the G5S-JF, which manifests through military capacity building and resource distribution. This dynamic, while enhancing the effectiveness of the joint force, raises questions about the sub-regional autonomy of the G5S-JF. The study illuminates how discourse shapes the interactions between the joint force and external partners, thus offering a nuanced understanding of the evolving dynamics within the Sahel region.

Taking an in-depth approach, [30]. explores the ongoing challenge of political instability in Africa, centering on the 2023 Niger coup as a notable case study. Through an examination of historical influences like colonial legacies, institutional vulnerabilities, and socio-economic complexities, the authors offer a thorough and comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted sources of instability. The article's multidimensional approach enriches our understanding of the challenges faced by African nations in achieving stable governance.

Amidst such instability, [31]. discusses the implications of the Niger coup, emphasizing the risks of long-term instability and the challenges posed to French policies in the region. The analysis highlights the intricacies involved in managing the situation, considering the evolving geopolitical landscape and the complexities of stabilizing a post-coup environment.

Shifting the focus to the international context, [32]. examine the impact of the emerging multipolar world order and social media on ECOWAS military intervention in Niger. The study reveals how global shifts and social media dynamics influence regional decision-making processes, highlighting the complexities of navigating international pressures and domestic sentiments in the context of military interventions.

Turning to France's role in Africa, [33]. explores the implications of the country's revised military strategy plan for the continent. The analysis dissects potential challenges and opportunities inherent in the plan, providing insights into the evolving dynamics of France's engagement in African security and geopolitics.

Furthermore, [34]. delves into the complexities of France's image management in Africa, considering the challenges posed by evolving geopolitical dynamics. The article underscores the intricate interplay between maintaining a positive image and addressing multifaceted geopolitical challenges.

Finally, [35]. contribute sociological insights by examining the concepts of militarism and militarization in the Sahel region. Their analysis transcends traditional perspectives, offering a granular exploration of security practices' complex assemblages. By delving into the interplay between global and local actors, the authors enhance our comprehension of the region's security dynamics, presenting a nuanced view of security practices in the Sahel.

Collectively, these articles offer diverse perspectives on contemporary security interventions, foreign policy dynamics, and political instability in Africa. They contribute to a deeper understanding of the intricate interactions between global forces, regional actors, and local contexts, shaping the complex security landscape across the continent.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In navigating the intricate landscape of post-coup peace and security challenges, the African Union (AU) faces both complex hurdles and promising opportunities. This discourse encompasses political violence, extremism, and the influence of external actors, painting a picture of the multifaceted challenges that define the AU's task.

The significance of the AU's peace and security strategies hinges on their adaptability to evolving dynamics. The lessons drawn from the studies examined underscore the necessity of flexibility in response to shifting conflict patterns and socio-political developments. By embracing diverse perspectives, fostering partnerships, and addressing root causes, the AU can enhance its role as a driving force for sustainable peace across the African continent.

The AU's commitment to multifaceted approaches, international collaboration, and adaptive strategies will prove pivotal in shaping the prospects of peace and security in Africa. Although the path ahead is marked by complexities, the AU's position as a regional leader holds the potential to usher in a new era of stability and prosperity.

Key Challenges

1. Chronic Instability and Ongoing Unrest: Many African nations continue to grapple with chronic instability and ongoing unrest due to factors such as political violence, conflicts, and ethnic tensions.

2. Political Violence, Polarization, and Extremism: The prevalence of political violence and polarization hampers progress toward stability. Violent extremism poses a significant threat, exploiting vulnerabilities to advance extremist agendas.

3. Lack of Effective Strategies Against Coups: The AU and regional organizations struggle to anticipate and respond to coup attempts effectively, leading to disrupted governance and potential power vacuums.

4. Socioeconomic Disparities and Historical Legacies: Socioeconomic disparities, rooted in historical legacies like colonialism, contribute to grievances that fuel instability.

5. Foreign Influence and Geopolitics: The evolving geopolitical landscape, including shifts in foreign influence, introduces new dynamics that can impact regional stability and security.

Key Lessons Learned

1. Comprehensive Peace Innovation (PI) Approach: A comprehensive peace innovation approach, driven by collaboration among stakeholders, scholars, and civil society, proves valuable in addressing complex conflicts.

2. Socioeconomic Development and Historical Reconciliation: Strategies addressing economic disparities and promoting reconciliation efforts are crucial for long-term stability.

3. Global Cooperation and Resource Sharing: Collaboration with international organizations and states is vital for addressing security challenges through collective response.

4. Root Causes and Extremist Groups: Addressing root causes of extremism is essential to counter radicalization and diminish the influence of extremist groups.

5. Foreign Policies and Stability: Reassessing foreign policies is necessary to avoid exacerbating instability, prioritizing local stability amid international interests.

Key Recommendations

1. Comprehensive Approach: Adopt comprehensive strategies addressing socioeconomic disparities and historical legacies to promote sustainable peace.

2. Partnerships and Collaboration: Prioritize partnerships with international organizations, neighboring states, and regional bodies to enhance the effectiveness of peace efforts.

3. Peace Innovation (PI) Approach: Implement the peace innovation approach, involving civil society, particularly marginalized groups, for more holistic strategies.

4. Inclusivity and Empowerment: Embrace inclusivity, empowering civil society, youth, and women to formulate comprehensive strategies.

5. Socioeconomic Development and Reconciliation: Strengthen efforts in socioeconomic development, job creation, and historical reconciliation to address grievances and enhance stability.

Conclusion

As this study delves into the complexities of post-coup peace and security challenges, it becomes evident that a multi-pronged approach is essential. Integrating socioeconomic development, historical reconciliation, and respectful partnerships holds the key to navigating these intricacies effectively. The lessons learned reinforce the urgency of well-crafted strategies to counter chronic instability, extremism, and the far-reaching impact of historical legacies.

The essence of the research lies in the transformative potential of the comprehensive peace innovation (PI) approach. This approach, anchored in collaboration, inclusivity, and local engagement, emerges as a potent strategy for shaping sustainable solutions. The roles of socioeconomic development, historical reconciliation, and partnerships stand as cornerstones for lasting peace, and respectful collaborations pave the way for collective security.

The recommendations offered in this study have the power to reshape peace and security efforts across Africa. The call for comprehensive approaches, inclusivity, and global collaboration aligns with the need to adapt strategies to multifaceted challenges. By prioritizing partnerships, amplifying marginalized voices, and leveraging international cooperation, stakeholders can forge a united front against instability and violence.

In a broader context, these insights contribute substantially to the discourse surrounding peace and security strategies in Africa. Policymakers, practitioners, and academics alike can draw from this study to craft innovative solutions that resonate with the unique complexities of the region. The ultimate success of these strategies will determine the trajectory of stability in Africa, underscoring the AU's pivotal role in shaping a future characterized by lasting peace, security, and prosperity.

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