The situation remained until the 1950s Local Government Reforms caused by the agitations of the Nigerian nationalists. The 1950 local government ordinance marked the birth of responsible and democratic Local Government system in the country". Commenting on the local government ordinance of 1950, Wraith (1972) explains that, it was a pioneer measure which foretold the end of philosophies and practices that held the stage for nearly fifty years. While the Eastern Nigeria led the way in 1950, it was followed by the Western Region in 1952. In 1954, the Northern Region enacted Native Authorities Law (Adeola, 2009: 161).

Having attained political independence in 1960, the independent government inherited the British model of local government which was predominantly the "county" system. Thus, between 1960 and 1976, several local government reforms were introduced by successive civilian and military governments that emerged in the country. Of these reforms, the 1976 reform, which was introduced by General Olusegun Obasanjo was the most spectacular. It recognized local government as the third tier system of government in the country, and was inserted in the 1979 Constitution (Alex, 1987:175). The reforms also gave practical application which in December 1976, made nine of the nineteen states (Bendel, Imo, Benue, Rivers, Kwara, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo and Oyo States) to conduct direct election into the councils (Alex, 1987:175). Thus, since 1976, local government has continued to be recognized as a third tier system of government governed by either elected council members, sole administrators or caretaker committees. This development was facilitated by the creation and conduct of local government elections by successive governments. For example, in 1985, Buhari/Idiagbon administration set up a 21-Man Committee headed by Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki. The objective was to depoliticise Local Government activities, make it efficient as the third tier of government (Awotokun, 2001:45). Also, Babangida's regime began its political transition programme with elections into the local government councils, first on non-party basis in December 1987 and later on party basis in 1990 and later introduced a Sole Administratorship in 1989. The Babangida's administration eventually created 149 new Local Governments Council thereby bringing the total to 453 (Akindele and Olaopa, 1998:100-105). It is against this background that this paper historicises the evolution and development of Ejigbo Local Government under Osun State between 1991 and 2021

The Land and People of Ejigbo in Osun State

Ejigbo town in Osun State is one of the prominent and ancient towns in Yorubaland. According to oral tradition, Ejigbo town which is one of the ancient towns in Yoruba land is dated back to around 15th century. Geographically, Ejigbo town is found in Osun state, it is located around 7.902920 latitude and 4.314190 longitudes and it is situated at elevation 353 meters above sea level. Ejigbo town has population of 138,357 making it the 9th biggest city in Osun State (Nwanchukwu, etal, 2020:1). The history of Yoruba people is associated with the town of Ile-Ife, it was there they first became conscious of themselves. Ejigbo town was formally one of the towns under Oyo State but its now one of the towns in Osun State after Osun State was carved out of old Oyo State in 1991 (Oloyede, 2020:33). Also, the town is about 40 kilometers from Osogbo, the capital of Osun State. According to the 2006 population census, the estimated population of 138,357 making it 9th biggest city in Osun state. Ejigbo town area falls within the Tropical Savannah climate and has an average temperature of 29 degrees centigrade, the humidity level of Ejigbo town area averages 62 percent while the average wind speed in the area is 13km/h (Ashimolowo et al, 2017:10).

According to oral history, Ejigbo is one of the ancient settlements in Yorubaland founded by AkinjoleOgiyan. Ogiyan has a rich pedigree been a descendant of Oduduwa and the ruling family of Ife. Together with his brother, particularly the Akinrere, the founder of Ikire Ile, they both left lle-Ife with Oranyan (Oranmiyan) the founder of old Oyo, to establish their own towns (Tella, 2025:4). The fact that Ogiyan, is from Ile-Ife is confirmed by EjigboMekun' the name of a market in Ile-Ife. Akinjole settled many other villages spread

around Yorubaland. He is the paramount ruler and prescribed authority over many, if not all of them. The following towns and villages, among others were under him, Ika, Igbon, OlosinOlogede, Inisa, Aato, Ijimoba, Afake , Ilawo, InisaEdoro, Isundunrin, Olia, Ado Ori-oke, Ayegunle, Idigba, Ibogunde, Songbe, OlorinOsuntedo and Iwata (Tella, 2025:4).

Historically, around 1835, Ejigbo came under Ibadan, when the Ibadan army moved to protect Osogbo from Ilorin invaders. In fact, detachments from Ejigbo assisted the Ibadan army in the ijaye, jalimi, and kiriji wars between 1860 and 1866. Ajayi Ogboriefon, balogun and leader of the Ibadan army in the Jalumi war circa 1860 and 1878 was a native of Ejigbo from the Akala compound and his mother, Alagbabi was the daughter of an Ogiyan of Ejigbo. In 1934, when the then government retained to the terms of the 1893 treaty which recognized Ibadan's independence and gazettes the bale and divisional council of Ibadan as an independent native authority, five district Obas including the Ogiyan were made members of the Divisional Council (Abigbinde, 2016:10). Ejigbo town is located in a warm tropic region of the rain forest of South Western Nigeria. The town also located in plain and hilly terrains with beautiful climate and favourable vegetation is noted for agricultural activities and located in plain and hilly terrains with beautiful climate and favourable vegetation is noted for agricultural activities (Abigbinde, 2016:9). The people of Ejigbo are very fashionable, most especially their women also specialized in palm oil productions and trader within Ejigbo and outsider. Also, most of their women like to dress in Ivory coast style which include Ginea, Brasel, aside from their native dress which include, Buba, Sokoto, Agbada, Iro and others. Apart from the above mention, there is also no Ivory Coast product that one cannot find in Ejigbo. it is important to note that there is no way one will talk about Ejigbo town without making reference to Ivory coast and also it very rare that there is no family that is now in Ejigbo town that does not have any relative in Ivory coast not too common in Ghana and Togo. The social engineering of the Ejigbo people in French West Africa and how the ability of the Ejigbo – Yoruba to quickly assimilate into their new environment have influenced and contributed to shaping the culture in Ejigbo and its environment to the extent that colloquial Abidjan French and France have become legal tender in Ejigbo, Osun State (Tella, 2025:7).

A History of Ejigbo Local Government under Oyo State, 1976-1991: An Overview

The history of the existence of Ejigbo Local Government was traced to the colonial period. Then, it was referred to as the Ejigbo District Council, which was created as a result of the Western Regional Local Government Law of 1952. The Council, which operated under Western Regional Government between 1952 and 1966, came under the Western State, created General Yakubu Gowon in May 1967. In that year, twelve states were created. Ejigbo District Council came under the Western State, with its capital in Ibadan. Also, with the creation of nineteen states in 1976 by General Murtala Mohammed, Ejigbo District Council came under the control of old Oyo State. The defunct Western State was polarized into three states, namely Oyo, Ondo and Ogun States. With this development, the defunct Ejigbo District Council of Osun West Division, was later transformed into Local Government status in April 1st, 1976. Thus, between 1976 and 1991, Ejigbo Local Government existed under old Oyo State. During this period, the local government was under successive sole administrators and Chairmen (both elected and caretaker). Ejigbo Local Government building was officially commissioned by the then military Governor of old Oyo State, Colonel Adetunji Idowu Olurin on Monday 19th October, 1987 (Jayeola, 2023). The table below shows the list of former chairmen of Ejigbo Local Government under old Oyo State.

TABLE 1: LIST OF EJIGBO LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHAIRMEN UNDER OLD OYO STATE

SN	NAME	DATE
1	Chief Bisi Akinpelu	1976-1979
2	Hon. Folorunso A Adeyemo	1979-1983
	Hon David Oyedele Alabi	1983-1985
	Mr. Femi Osunro	1985-1988
5	Mr. K. O Bolaji	1988-1989

Source: Tella, O.A. 2025. Leadership, Management and Stewardship in Local Governance in Ejigbo, 1991-2021. Unpublished M.A Thesis, Department of History and International Studies, Osun State University, Osogbo

A Historical Trajectory of Ejigbo Local Government under Osun State, 1991-2021

The period between 1991 and 2021 marked a new phase in the political history of Ejigbo Local Government. This phase was characterized by the creation of Osun State out of the old Oyo State by the military regime of General Ibrahim Babangida. On 27 August 1991, General Ibrahim Babangida created nine states, namely Abia, Delta, Enugu, Jigawa, Kebbi, Kogi, Osun, Taraba and Yobe states. Ejigbo Local Government, which hitherto was under old Oyo State fell under the newly created Osun State. With the creation of Osun State, a military governor, known as Col (later Major General) Leo Segun Aborisade, was appointed by General Babangida to govern the state. Prior to the creation of Osun State, the then military governor of old Oyo State, Colonel SaseniaOresanya had already appointed Mr Toni Osanyin as a sole administrator, over Ejigbo Local Government in 1989. MrOsanyin served as the sole administrator of the local government up till when Osun State was created in 1991 as well as when the local government election was conducted in December 1991. However, with the successful conduct of local government election in December 1991 by the National Electoral Commission (NEC) under the chairmanship of Professor Humphrey Nwosu, across the country, democratically elected local council members took over the administration of local governments. With respect to Ejigbo Local Government, the election was won by the candidate of Social Democratic Party (SDP) in person of Alhaji Abdu Salam Abbas. Thus, Alhaji Abbas became the first democratically elected Executive Chairman of Ejigbo Local Government under the newly created Osun State. He governed the local government up till the overthrown of the Interim National Government (ING) by General Sani Abacha in November 1993 (Adewuyi, 2023).

With the demise of the aborted Third Republic occasioned by the emergence of General Sani Abacha as the military Head of State of Nigeria, military governors were appointed to govern all the states of the federation. In Osun State for example, Navy Captain Anthony Udofia was appointed in December 1993 as the third military governor. Having taken over the reins of power, he appointed sole administrators over all the local government areas in the state. In Ejigbo Local Government for example, three different sole administrators were appointed to govern the local government, namely Major Ademola Abayomi, 1993-1994, Prince Oyeweso Akande, 1994-1995 and Mr Michael Ajibade Falade, 1995-1998. The two of them were in charge of the management of Ejigbo local government between 1993 and 1995 during the military governor of Navy Captain Anthony Udofia (Ayegbayo, 2023). With the reshuffling of the military governors of the thirty states in the country in August 1996 by General Sani Abacha, Navy Udofia was replaced with another military governor known as Lt. Col. Anthony Obi. He was the fourth military governor of the state and served between August 1996 and August 1998 (Ademola, 2020). Although Lt. Col Obi appointed some new sole administrators to govern some local governments, with respect to Ejigbo Local Government, he retained the sole administrator appointed by Navy Captain Udofia known as Mr. Michael Ajibade Falade (Ademola, 2020).

Prior to the mysterious death of General Sani Abacha on 8 June 1998 and the appointment of General Abdulsalam Abubakar as the new military head of state of Nigeria, General Abacha government initiated a transition programme, which affected the administration of local government. In 1995, General Abacha regime drew a three year transition programme, which was to end in 1998. In a bid to implement this new transition to civil rule, the regime through Decree No. 9 of 1997 set up new electoral commission known as National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON). With this, ban on politics was lifted. Out of fifteen political associations that showed interest in participating in the transition programme, only five political parties were eventually registered by NECON. The five political parties were National Centre Party of Nigeria (NCPN), Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN), Grassroots Democratic Party (GDP), United Nigeria Congress Party (UNCP) and Congress for National Consensus (CNC). Following the conduct of primaries by all the registered five political parties, elections were conducted into Local Government councils, state and National Assemblies and Governorship positions. In Ejigbo local government, the chairmanship election was contested by four major political parties, namely Hon Bada Buade of Congress for National Consensus (CNC), Deakin Simon Adebowale of the United Nigeria Congress Party (UNGP), Mr. Rasaaq Akande of the Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN) and Hon Michael Falade of the Grassroots Democratic Party (GDP). At the end of the election, Hon Michael Falade of the GDP was declared winner with Prince Jubreel Afolabi as the Vice Chairman (Adewuyi, 2023). Hon. Michael became the second democratically elected Executive Chairman of Ejigbo Local Government in Osun State between 1997 and 1998 (Adewuyi, 2023).

With the emergence of General Abdulsalam Abubakar, the elected local council officials were removed. General Abdulsalam reshuffled the cabinet and appointed new military governors for the thirty-six states of the federation. In Osun State for instance, Lt. Col. Anthony Obi was removed and Col. Theophilus Bamigboye was appointed as the new military governor of the state. Col Bamigboye later appointed sole administrators for all the local government areas. In Ejigbo Local Government for example, Mr. Moses Tokunbo Sadejo was appointed as the sole administrator. He remained the sole administrator of the local government until the conduct of local government election in December 1998 across the country by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) under the chairmanship of Professor Maurice Iwu, marking the birth of the Fourth Republic, which began on 29 May 1999 (Adesote&Ofogbor, 1998:222). The local government election (which involved chairmanship and councillorship) was the first election to be conducted by INEC. The election which was held on 5 December 1998 across the federation was mainly contested by the three registered political parties by INEC. These political parties were All People's Party (APP), Alliance for Democracy (AD) and People's Democratic Party (PDP) (Akinbi and Adesote, 2014:99). With respect to Ejigbo Local Government, the Chairmanship election was contested between Hon. Kunle Jayeola of the PDP and Hon. Jamiyu Olarewaju of the AD. At the end of the election, Hon. Kunle Jayeola of the PDP was declared as the winner of the election with Hon. Yinka Adigun as his Vice-Chairman (Akindele, 2022).

After the 1998 local government election, which was conducted by INEC, subsequent local government elections across the 36 states of the federation in general were handled by the State Independent Electoral Commission of each state. This development was in line with the Section 197 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) which establishes for each state, State Independent Electoral Commission (SIEC). Third Schedule Part II of the Constitution establishes the functions of SIEC to include the commission shall have power to organize, undertake and supervise all elections to local councils within the state {1999 Constitution (as amended)}. By this provision, the successive administrations that emerged in Osun state between 2003 and 2021 oversaw the administration of local government areas through the appointment of Caretaker Committee and the conduct of local government elections. The

details of these administrations vis-à-vis the administration of Ejigbo Local Government during this period would be discussed subsequently. Between 1999 and 2021, Osun State was governed by four successive Executive Governors namely Chief Bisi Akande (1999-2003, Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola (2003-2010), Engr Rauf Aregbesola (2010-2018) and Mr. Gboyega Oyetola (2018-2022).

The emergence of Chief Adebisi Akande as the first civilian governor of Osun State under the Fourth Republic was facilitated by the conduct of the 1999 gubernatorial election, which was held across the 36 states of the Nigerian federation on 9th January 1999. With respect to Osun State, the election was contested by Chief Adebisi Akande of the AD and Senator Olu Alabi of the PDP. At the end of the election, Chief Adebisi Akande of the AD was declared by INEC as the winner of the election, securing a total votes of 295,557 against the PDP candidate who had 136,105 votes. He was inaugurated on 29 May 1999, thus becoming the second civilian governor of Osun State as well as the first executive governor of the state in the Fourth Republic. During Chief Bisi Akande administration, Hon. Kunle Jayeola served as the Executive Chairman of Ejigbo Local Government. Other elected council members of the local government were Hon. GafaruOyolola (Ward 2), Hon. Samson Owalude (Ward 1), Hon. Taiwo Ogundapo (Ward 4), Hon. Deloye (Ward 3), Hon. Taiwo Ogunwobi Baba (Ward 8) and Hon. Jacob Olateju (Ward 6) (Ayegbayo, 2023). After the expiration of the administration of Hon Jayeola, rather than the state government to conduct another local government election, Caretaker Committees headed by Caretaker Chairmen were appointed by Chief Adebisi Akande administration to govern all the 30 local government areas in the state. In Ejigbo for instance, Barrister WaliuSalimon was appointed. He was administered the local government between 2002 and 2003 (Ayegbayo, 2023).

The second civilian governor of Osun State during the Fourth Republic was Prince OlagunsoyeOyinola. His emergence was made possible by the 2003 gubernatorial election. In the build up to the 2003 governorship election in the state in particular and general elections in Nigeria in general, INEC registered some new political parties such as National Conscience Party (NCP), All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) and so on. Unlike the 1999 governorship election, which was contested by only three political parties, the 2003 election was contested by several political parties. Although several political parties participated in the election, the contest was mainly between Chief Bisi Akande of the AD (incumbent governor) and Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola of the PDP. At the end of the election, which was held on 19 April 2003, the candidate of the PDP was declared winner by INEC polling 493,509 votes to defeat the AD candidate, who polled 237,041 votes. Other political parties polled 13,669 votes (African Elections Database, 2003). On 29 May 2003, Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola was inaugurated as the third Executive Governor of the State. Following the emergence of Prince Oyinlola as the governor of the state, he dissolved all the appointed Caretaker Chairmen by the previous administration and appointed new Caretaker Chairmen to manage all the 30 local government areas of the state. In Ejigbo Local government for instance, Hon. Yinka Adigun was appointed as the Caretaker Chairman. He was in control of the local government between 2003 and 2004. However, in April 2004, the government of Prince Oyinlola conducted the second local government election during the Fourth Republic. The election was mainly contested by two major political parties namely the PDP and the AD. In Ejigbo Local government, the election was won by the then incumbent Caretaker Chairman, Hon Yinka Adigun. He administered the local government between 2004 and 2007. After the expiration of Hon. Adigun's tenure in 2007, Hon (Prince Jacob Oladipupo Oyetunde was appointed as the Caretaker Chairman of Ejigbo Local government by Governor Oyinlola. He administered the local government between 2007 and 2008 (Ayegbayo, 2023).

On 14 April 2007, the third governorship election was held in the state and was mainly contested by Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola of the PDP and Engr. Rauf Aregbesola of

the Action Congress (AC) (Olakunle and Ogundele, 2018). Although INEC initially declared the candidate of the PDP as the winner of the election and was sworn in, the candidate of the AC and his party challenged the result of the election in the court of law, first at Election Tribunal and later at the Court of Appeal. The judgments of the two courts were favourable to the candidate of the AC. With the Court of Appeal judgment on 26 November 2010, which nullified the election of Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola, Engr. Rauf Aregbesola, the AC candidate was declared the winner of the 2007 governorship election. Prior to the swearing in of Engr Aregbesola on 27 November 2010 as the Fourth Executive Governor of Osun State, the second local government election under the administration of Prince Oyinlola was conducted in 2008 by the Osun State Independent Electoral Commission (OSSIEC). With respect to Ejigbo local government, the election was worn by the Hon Samuel Ajiboye Adegboyega of the PDP. He was in control of the local government until he was sacked in December 2010 by the Supreme Court judgment led by Justice Maria Aloma Mukhtar. With the sacking of the elected local government chairmen of the state in December 2010, Governor Aregbesola appointed caretaker chairmen to administer all the 30 local government areas.

On 9 August 2014, the fourth governorship election was held in Osun state. Although twenty political parties fielded candidates for the election, in reality, the contest was between the APC and PDP candidates (Egwemi, 2015). These political parties and their candidates were Engr. Rauf Aregbesola of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Senator Iyiola Omisore of the PDP, Senator Sunday Fajinmi of the AD, Elder Olusegun Akinwusi Male SDP, COM. Afolayanka O. Jimoh of the NCP, Alhaji Fatai Akinbade of the Labour Party (LP) and so on. According to the election results released by INEC on the morning of August 10, 2014, the APC candidate won the majority vote and was declared the winner of the election. Engr. Rauf Aregbesola who won in 23 local government areas polling a total vote of 394,684, was re-elected as the Executive Governor of the State, while the PDP candidate, Senator Iyiola Omisore, who came second won in seven local government areas with a total vote of 292,747 (Durotoye, 2014:5). Engr. Rauf Aregbesola became the first Executive Governor to serve for two terms, making a total of eight years as the civilian governor of the state. Between 2010 and 2017 that Engr. Aregbesola was in control of Osun State, he did not make any attempt to conduct local government elections. The state government adopted caretaker system of administration to govern the entire 30 local government areas during this period. With respect to Ejigbo Local Government, between 2012 and 2017, the local government was under the leadership of two different leaders namely Hon Tiamiyu Abiodun Akinwale as the caretaker chairman and Alhaji Hassan Olaniyi as Executive Secretary (Ayegbayo, 2023). However, after ten (10) years, the state government constituted a new State Electoral Commission known as Osun State Independent Electoral Commission (OSIEC) under the Chairmanship of Otunba Segun Olaitan and charged the commission to conduct parliamentary election in all the 30 local government areas including 31 Local Council Development Areas created by the administration of Engr Rauf Aregbesola. The election was conducted on Saturday 27 January 2018. With respect to Ejigbo Local Government, at the end of the election, Hon. Ayegbayo Gbenga Olafimihan was elected as the Chairman of the local government under the platform of All Progressives Congress (APC). He remained the Executive head of the local government up till the emergence of a new administration under MrGboyega Oyetola. He died in 2020 and was succeeded by his Deputy in person of Hon Ogunmola Teslim Sola (Aderohunmu, 2024).

Importantly, the leadership of Ejigbo Local Government was also affected by the emergence of new administration in the state under Mr Gboyega Oyetola. The emergence of Mr Gboyega Oyetola was facilitated by the 2018 gubernatorial election held on 22 September 2018. The election, which was the fifth governorship election in the state, was contested by forty-eight political parties (Tella, 2025). Of these political parties, five were the major

actors. These five political parties and their candidates were Mr. Gboyega Oyetola of the APC, Senator Nurudeen Adeleke of the PDP, Senator Iyiola Omisore of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), Fatai Akinbade of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), and Adeoti Moshood of the Africa Democratic Party (ADP). The election, which was under the supervision of the Returning Officer, Prof Joseph Fuwape, the Vice-Chancellor of the Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA) was declared inconclusive (The Punch 2018). Quoting INEC's Standing Rules, Prof. Afuwape said the reason behind the decision was that margin between the two leading candidates (that is candidates of the PDP and APC) was lower than the registered cancelled votes. While the PDP candidate polled 254, 698 votes, the candidate of the APC polled 254, 345 votes. While the number of votes in which the PDP candidate had ahead of the APC was 353, the number of cancelled votes was 3,498. As a result, a rerun election was fixed for September 27, 2017 in seven polling units in Ife North (one polling unit), Ife South (two polling units), Orolu (three polling units) and Osogbo (one polling unit) local government areas, where elections were initially cancelled due to electoral irregularities, malfunctioning of card readers and ballot box snatching (The Punch, 2018). At the end of the rerun election, which was mainly contested by two major leading political parties, PDP and APC, the candidate of the APC was declared winner, polling 255,505 votes against PDP candidate who polled 255, 023 votes (The Vanguard, 2018). The declaration of the APC candidate as the winner of the governorship election was later challenged by the PDP candidate at the Election Petitions Tribunal. On 22 March 2019, the Election Petitions Tribunal sitting in Abuja ruled in favour of the PDP candidate (The Premium Times, 2019). However, the ruling of the Election Petitions Tribunal was later challenged in the Court of Appeal by Mr. Gboyega Oyetola and his party. On 9 May 2019, Appeal Court ruled in favour of the APC candidate (The Premium Times, 2019). The PDP candidate also challenged the ruling of the Appeal Court at the Supreme Court. On 5 July 2019, Supreme Court affirms Mr. Gboyega Oyetola of the APC as the winner of Osun State governorship election held in September 2018 (The Premium Times, 2019). Following the expiration of the administration of the elected Chairmen in 2021, Mr. Oyetola appointed new caretaker chairmen for all the 30 local government areas. With respect to Ejigbo Local Government, Hon. Gbolahan Muyiwa Ayegbayo was appointed as the caretaker Chairman. (Ayegbayo, 2023). See below the list of sole administrators/chairmen of Ejigbo Local Government between 1991 and 2021.

TABLE 2: LIST OF EJIGBO LOCAL GOVERNMENT SOLE ADMINISTRATORS/CHAIRMEN UNDER OSUN STATE, 1991-2021

SN	NAME	DATE
1	Mr Toni Osanyin	1989-1991
2	Alhaji Abdu Salam Abass	1992-1993
3	Major Ademola Abayomi (retd)	1993-1994
4	Prince Oyeweso Akande	1994-1995
5	Mr Michael Ajibade Falade	1995-1998
6	Mr Moses Tokunbo Badejo	1998-1999
7	Hon. Kunle Jayeola	1999-2002
8	Barrister WaliuSalimon	2002-2003
9	Hon Yinka Adigun	2003-2007
10	Hon (Prince) Jacob Oladipupo Oyetunde	2007-2008
11	Hon Samuel Ajiboye Adegboyega	2008-2010
12	Hon. Tiamiyu Abiodun Akinwale	2012-2015
13	Alhaji Hassan Olaniyi	2015-2017
14	Hon. Ayegbayo Gbenga Olafimihan	2018-2020

15	Hon Ogunmola Teslim Sola	2020-2021
16	Hon. Gbolahan Ayegbayo,	2021-2022

Source: Tella, O.A. 2025. Leadership, Management and Stewardship in Local Governance in Ejigbo, 1991-2021. Unpublished M.A Thesis, Department of History and International Studies, Osun State University, Osogbo

Concluding Remarks

The foregoing has critically examined the evolution and development of Ejigbo Local Government between 1991 and 2021. It argued that the history of local government administration was not new to the Nigerian peoples. However, the western system of local government was traced to the British, which took the form of native administration that was introduced to govern the country after the 1914 amalgamation. It witnessed new reform in 1950s, occasioned by nationalist agitations. Following the attainment of political independence in 1960, several local government reforms were introduced by successive governments. Local government wore a new garment as a result of the 1976 Local Reforms leading to its recognition as a third tier system of government within the federation. It was this reform that led to the creation of Ejigbo Local Government, which was formerly known as Ejigbo District Council. The local government initially existed under the old Oyo State between 1976 and 1991. However, with the creation of Osun State in 1991 out of old Oyo state, Ejigbo Local Government came under the newly created state. Between 1991 and 2021, the local government was governed by elected council members, sole administrators and caretaker committees.

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Interview with Hon. Kunle Jayeola, 70+, Ex-Chairman, at his resident, Ejigbo, 20April, 2023

Interview with Mr. Akindele E.O, 70+, Civil Servant, at his resident, Ejigbo town, 10 December, 2022

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Interview with Chief Bayo Ademola, aged 75 at Osogbo on 10 February 2020.

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DEMOCRACY AND MILITARY TAKE-OVERS IN WEST AFRICA: AN ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT
This paper is on Democracy and Military Take-Overs in West Africa: An Analysis. African countries, West Africa in particular have witnessed series of military intervention into politics that abruptly ended the democratic regimes. The recent military take-overs in West Africa countries such as Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and Niger have been an issue of concern. Therefore, the paper specifically analysed the nature of the military take-overs with reference to the selected West African countries, the causes and it determined the implications and the possible remedies to reverse the trend for a sustainable democratic regime. Data for the study were gathered from the secondary sources which include relevant articles, documents and online materials. The data were presented and analysed thematically based on the research questions of the study. Systems Theoryis adopted for this study. It was revealed among others that West African turbulent democracy that led to the resurgent of the military coups is being related to bad leadership, high rate of poverty, pervasive corruption, weak institutions and insecurity among others. The paper concludes that democracy is ideally a good system of government towards realising good governance. Nevertheless, the practice in West African countries is far from realising its ideal tenets. Therefore, the paper suggests among others that the West African countries that were affected by the recent coups should develop a blueprint for smooth transition programmes into democratic rule. Also, the African Union and Economic Community for West African Countries should lead the struggle toward ensuring that the tenets of democratic governance are entrenched.

Keywords: Democracy, military, take-overs, West Africa

INTRODUCTION
Democracy has been regarded as a modern system of government especially in developed countries. Some of the features of democratic settings include ensuring the conduct of elections, guaranteeing fundamental human rights, allowing the practice of a multiparty system, ensuring that civil society groups are part of the process of governance, broadening political participation, promoting accountability and transparency in governance among other laudable features of democracy.

However, the early 1980s witnessed the return of stability in Africa's democracy following the first coup era of the post-independence period in Africa. It can be recalled that in the period between the 1960s and 1980s, numerous democratically elected governments saw their regimes toppled by military forces which led to the overthrow of elected governments in Benin, Ghana, Nigeria, and Uganda, among others (Clark, 2007 cited in Christian, 2024).

Africa has seen more coups or military interventions in polity than any other continent in the world both in the 20th and 21st centuries (Falola, 2022). Historically, coups in Africa began

most, immediately after independence in the 1960s. And so far, the continent has experienced over 200 hundred coups – both successful and failed coups (Barka & Ncube, 2012). The general manifestations of coups in Africa in recent times have been attributed to several issues such as the absence of democratic practice, leadership failure, economic crisis, the greed of military officers, youth and citizens' discontents (Isilow, 2022).

To put it into context, Mwai (2022) opined that a coup is any illegal and overt attempt by the military or other civilian agencies to unseat sitting leaders. It is instructive to note at this juncture that a study by two US researchers, Jonathan Powell and Clayton Thyne, has identified over 200 such attempts in Africa since the 1950s.

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

This resurgence of coups in the region has been implicated in the failure of democracy to be intensified and deepened in West Africa (Falola, 2022). There have been several cases of poor governance indices across the region ranging from corruption, lack of free and fair elections and pervasive security crisis, among others.

Therefore, the resurfacing of coups in West Africa has come with several political, economic and security implications for ECOWAS. One evident implication has to do with the capacity of ECOWAS in preserving democracy in the sub-region. Scholars have argued that the increasing spate of coups in West Africa is a signpost that democracy has continued to fail in the region (Barka & Ncube, 2012; Falola, 2022; Suleiman, 2021; Suleiman &Onapajo, 2022). The failure of democracy in the region comes with a serious implication for ECOWAS in maintaining regional peace and security.

Based on the foregoing, the pertinent questions that need to be raised are: what are the natures of military take-overs in the West African countries? What are the likely causes, implications and possible remedies? The study focuses on selected countries such as Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea. Data for the study were sourced from available published and unpublished written texts and articles in journals, newsletters and other documented materials and were reviewed with the aid of thematic analysis.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section concentrates on the conceptual review and theoretical framework for the study.

Conceptual Review

Attempt is made here to conceptually review the key concepts of democracy and military take-overs or coups from scholarly perspectives.

Democracy

Democracy which is viewed as the government of the people by the people and for the people by Lincoln is also seen in different perspectives by scholars. According to Frempong (2012), democracy means different things to different people, but what the concept represents is ultimately the expression of the will of the people. However, democracy is a system of government in which authority to exercise power is derived from the will of the people. He further opines that democracy as a system of government in which rulers are held accountable for their actions in the public realms of citizens acting indirectly through competition and co-

operation of their elected representatives. But certain procedural and institutional conditions must be met and civil and political rights must be recognized and observed for democracy to triumph.

The features of democracy include popular sovereignty, the conduct of free and fair elections that lead to a regular and peaceful transition of power, political pluralism, the rule of law, independence of the judiciary, free and independent press, accountability and transparency, independent election body, checks, and balances, and protection of individual rights and liberties as well overall good governance and development (Ayoola, Ojo &Kugbayi, 2024).

Military Take-Over/Coup

The concept of military take-over is otherwise known as coup or rather coup d'état in this paper. Scholars in political science and related fields define coup d'état as a sudden, illegal, and often violent change of government, particularly by a faction of the armed forces. It involves the unconstitutional takeover of power by the military or other state security actors, either against a civilian-led government or the military itself, irrespective of the regime type, be it monarchical, democratic, authoritarian, or ideological.

According to Powell and Thyme (2011), coups are "overt attempts by the military or other elites within the state apparatus to unseat the sitting head of state using unconstitutional means. The term military resurgence has been used by scholars to refer to the renewed emphasis on military power in Africa, particularly in the context of the resurgence of conflict and instability on the continent (Nyovani, 2021). It is argued that the resurgence of military power is being driven by a combination of internal and external factors, including domestic power struggles, competition for resources, and the legacy of colonialism and imperialism (Mohammed & Adamu, 2022). It may lead to the suspension of the constitution and the installation of a new government, frequently headed by the coup plotters themselves (MO Ibrahim Foundation, 2023).

With reference to this paper, military take-over or coup is defined as a renewed incursion by military into the politics of West African nations, which is regarded as illegal, because it is often violent change of government, particularly by a faction of the armed forces. It involves the unconstitutional takeover of power by the military or other state security actors. It is used mainly with reference to Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso and Niger.

Theoretical Framework

The theory underpinning this study is the Systems Theory. The Systems Theory is related to the David Easton (1973). According to Easton, the political system functions by getting inputs from its environment. These inputs then undergo a conversion process within the political system as outputs promulgated by the authorities, these decisions now hit the environment as outcomes and from the outcomes, feedbacks are received (Enemou, 1999). Other elements or assumptions of the theory include that organisations can be regarded as open or close system. The open ones interact with the environment.

In terms of application, the system theory therefore, presupposes that the whole is not greater than the parts and the parts cannot be greater than the whole, that each component within the political process plays a very important role to ensure the survival of the system as a whole. The theory suggests that when a part of the system (Democratic regime of government) malfunctions or if it is not working up to optimal, it inevitably affects the functionality of the entire system. The crux of the matter is, it is difficult for the military to intervene into politics when there is a working system, therefore, the failure of the system (leadership under the democratic regime) itself is one of the most legitimate credentials that military politicians use

as justification to involve in politics. Therefore, the West African countries that recently experienced coup as a result of the system failure.

The theory submits that citizens' support for authoritarian alternatives to democracy is spurred by their disillusionment with the performance of elected office holders and representative institutions, which includes parties, elections, and parliaments. "In virtually all African societies, there exist forms of political challenge arising from conjunctures of dysfunctional political structures such as failure of the leadership to meet the demands of its citizens" (Anyoko-Shaba, 2022).

This therefore leaves the door open for authoritarians to attack democratic norms and practices and the emergence of strongman leaders. This is evident in the pattern of the coup resurgence in Africa. As citizens feel disillusioned with democracy and seek alternatives, the members of the military therefore see it as an opening for them to legitimize their attack on democracy. For instance, Tuki (2023) found out that in Niger, 50% of the population either at least "approved" military rule and about 70% either at least "agrees" with the military intervening if the democratically elected government is corrupt.

Scholars criticised the theory for emphasising on stability and equilibrium at the expense of social inequalities, power dynamics and change. Also, the elements of the theory which include input, process output and feedback are too broad and vague, hence, they are difficult to be operationalized.

Nevertheless, the theory is relevance to the study as it suggests that when a part of the system which is the case of this study is related to the democratic regime of government malfunctions as reflected in failure to conduct free and fair election, insecurity, unemployment and poverty among others, it inevitably affects the functionality of the entire system which eventually lead to the resurgent of military takes-over especially in the West African countries.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section focuses on the results and discussion. It covers the nature of the recent military coup in some West African countries, causes and implication.

Nature of Recent Military Take-Overs in West Africa

The first indication of military take-overs took place early on March 22, 2012, when reports of a military resurgence in Mali surfaced. The main justification given by the coup leaders for their action was a lack of sufficient tools and resources to combat Tuareg insurgents in the country's north. Amadou Toumani Toure's presidency of Mali is essentially over with the coup leaders' declaration made on public television. The 2021 coup in Mali ousted the government of President Bah N'Daw and the military took over the government citing ongoing security concerns as the reason for the coup. The 2021 coup was the second of the two coups that occurred in Mali in the period between 2020 and 2021. The military after the 2020 coup agreed to cede power to a civilian-led interim government that would oversee an 18-month transition to democratic elections in February 2022.

Tension however ensued between the civilian leadership and the military (ABC News, 2023; Zulueta-Fulscher, 2021). The process which began in Mali quickly appeared to be a recipe that worked well, and was duplicated almost identically in Burkina Faso and Niger.

With respect to Guinea, in September 2021, the government of President Alpha Conde was ousted by a military coup led by Colonel Mamady Doumbouya. They cited poverty and endemic corruption as the justification for their overthrow of the government. Colonel

Doumbouya however installed himself as interim president with a promise of transitioning to democratic elections within three years. Less than three weeks later, on April 12, 2012, the military in Guinea-Bissau overthrew the government amid reports that the former was planning to reduce the number of the armed forces. It's interesting to note that just a few weeks before the planned presidential elections, both coups took place. He went further to suspend the constitution and detained President Conte. All regional governors were replaced with military commanders and the function of the executive was temporarily delegated to the National Rally and Development which he established (Zulueta-Fulscher & Noel, 2021).

Before the military coup, the democratic election of 2010 that brought President Alpha Conde into office was Guinea's first democratic election since it gained independence from France in 1958 (Chin & Kirkpatrick, 2023). This manipulation of the constitution and the subsequent manoeuvre of the election by President Alpha Conde heated the polity in Guinea (Rosenje, Onyebuchi & Adeniyi, 2021). In the same vein, Alpha Conde's attitude to democratic principles, institutions, and culture was regarded as disappointing and was a threat to democratic consolidation.

In Burkina Faso,between January 2022 and September 2022, two successful took place. The government of President Roch Marc Christian Kabore was ousted by a military coup. Consequently, Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba was installed as interim President. However, he was also ousted by another military coup. Martin and Lebovich (2022) noted that for months, grievances existed within the armed forces, in addition to tension between the military and the democratically elected government. Later, in January 24, President Kabore was detained by soldiers, with the government and national assembly dissolved. The coup plotters declared him unfit to lead Burkina Faso in the face of new challenges such as the rise of the Jihadist insurgency that had accounted for the loss of lives of thousands of people (Munshi, 2022).

Eight months after the installation of Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba as the interim President, another coup happened in Burkina Faso on September 30, 2022, in what MacDougall (2022) described as a "coup within a coup." Mutinous soldiers blocked roads near the presidential palace and the state television broadcaster RTB subsequently went off the air for a brief period (Maclean, 2022).

In Niger, following a period of democratic rule in Niger since the previous coup of 2010, in July 2023, a military coup led by General Abdourahamane Tchiani toppled the government of President Mohamed Bazoum. ABC News (2023) reported that "members of Niger's presidential guard detained President Mohamed Bazoum inside his palace and appeared on national television saying they were seizing power to end the deteriorating security situation and bad governance in the country." The July 2023 coup in Niger, according to Choudhury (2023), is a mix of simmering tension and historical underpinnings. Furthermore, he stated that before the coup, electoral fraud and considerable disenchantment and dissatisfaction were on the front burner of the allegations levelled against the government of President Bazoum.

Causes of the Military Take-Overs/Coupin West Africa

The internal causes of Africa's military resurgence in politics vary from one nation or area to the next and are intricate and multidimensional in character. For instance, the recent military resurgence in Africa's politics has been attributed to a number of issues, including poverty, insecurity, corruption, and weak democratic institutions. In addition to the aforementioned, factors such as political factionalism, debt dependency, military dominance, and ethnic variety and rivalry all indicate an African military resurgence in politics (Yusuf, 2023; Chukwuemeka, 2023).

Leadership Crisis: The return of military officers to politics in various African nations was linked to leadership vacuum. Military resurgence occurs when a nation experiences a leadership crisis, that is, when its president exhibits incompetence, tries to hold onto power despite opposition from within the government, or when the populace loses faith in the ability of their leaders to rule and provide for their needs (Chukwuemeka, 2023; Singh, 2022). For instance, in August 2020, President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita of Mali was toppled by the military due to the country's fragile democratic institutions.

Corruption: Corruption has remained a cankerworm that permeated the African countries. The African military had resurgence in politics due in part to economic challenges and corruption. For instance, the military deposed President Alpha Condé of Guinea in September 2021 on the grounds of corruption which has the multiplier effects on the government's inability to deal with the nation's social and economic issues (Vanguard, 2023). Therefore, the frequency of military resurgence in politics in Africa was exacerbated by corruption which is a proxy of leadership failure to bring about decent governance as well as growing institutional deterioration (Yukawa et al., 2019).

Weak Institutions: The predominant presence of weak institutions is connected with democratic backsliding in Africa (Akinyetun, 2022). Africa is represented by fifteen of the top twenty countries on the Fund for Peace's index of fragile states for 2021 (FFP, 2021). Many African countries continue to struggle to expand and institutionalize their democracies and effectively deal with abuse of executive power and human rights violations. Human rights, the rule of law, and citizen engagement in government are unquestionably important democratic ideals that may be protected by a strong institution, promoting good governance (Mbaku, 2020). In countries with weak institutions, it is difficult to meet any of these values, including the ability to prevent or resolve conflict, prevent state capture, guarantee the provision of public services, and fight corruption.

Insecurity: A security void brought about by insecurity and the growth of armed groups in some African nations encouraged a military resurgence in politics. In an environment where extremist groups were threatening the country's security and planting the seeds of instability and fear, then there was justification for military resurgence in politics since the government's attempts to resolve internal conflicts and safeguard its citizens were hindered, leaving the most vulnerable communities at the whim of violence and uncertainty (Saaida, 2023).

Growing armed conflict and threats from non-state actors, inter- and intra-state conflict, political repression, and human rights violations have all combined to destabilize several African states, derail the democratization process (undermining the legitimacy and capacity of democratic regimes), and exacerbate domestic instability in other countries (Perez, 2021). The rise of military regimes in the West African sub-region has been linked to these variables (Al Jazeera, 2023), which often time result in the displacement of millions of people, the death of thousands, and the escalation of humanitarian crises in various parts of the continent.

Poverty: It was revealed that Burkina Faso, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, Niger, and Chad all had GDPs of less than $22 billion in 2022, according to a World Bank projection (2022), while Sudan had a GDP of $52 billion. Despite Gabon's abundant natural oil, manganese, and timber resources, its citizens experience widespread poverty (Archibald and Murray, 2023). Meanwhile, Niger is one of the world's poorest and least developed countries (CRS, 2023).

Tenure Extension: The military's take-overs in politics to the continent were also caused by African governments' attempts at unconstitutional tenure extension. Leaders that try to stay in power longer sometimes cause dissatisfaction and tensions that could spark military

resurgence in politics. For instance, in April 2021, President Idriss Deby of Chad, who had been in government for 30 years and was running for a sixth term, was slain in combat with rebels. Elections were scheduled to take place in 18 months by the military council that assumed power after his death (Yusuf, 2023; Rosenje, Onyebuchi, & Adeniyi, 2022).

Power Mongering: African military resurgence in politics is influenced by a combination of hunger for power and military frustration. Any nation's military is essential to its sovereignty because it defends its borders against outside threats, upholds law and order, and acts as a deterrent to prospective aggressors and discontent. Thus, the military may take steps to reverse these activities by seizing power as a result of growing unhappiness with pay, policies, and mounting corruption (Emina &Ikegbu, 2020). For example, politicians start a military resurgence in order to take control of the state machinery and increase their political power throughout the nation and the surrounding area (Yukawa et al., 2019).

Regional organizations like the African Union and ECOWAS encounter significant challenges in handling threats to peace and security that impact their member states. ECOWAS, for instance, has continually struggled to contain a democratic backslide in West Africa, and previous appeals to the military juntas in Burkina Faso, Guinea, and Mali to return political power to democratic government were not headed.

In the heat of the Niger crisis, the military regimes in neighbouring Guinea, Mali, and Burkina Faso pledged their support to the new regime. Specifically, they warned, "that any military intervention against Niger would be tantamount to a declaration of war against Burkina Faso and Mali" (APA News, 2023).

The convergence of the views of the leaders of these countries led to the announcement of their coordinated and simultaneous withdrawal from ECOWAS in January 2024 (Westcott 2024), which had taken restrictive measures against them in response to the coups. These countries had already announced the creation of their own regional structure, the Alliance of Sahel States (AES), in September 2023 (TV5 Monde 2024).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study is An Analysis on Democracy and Military Take-Overs in West Africa: An Analysis. It is concluded that the abrupt of constitutional order caused by the military take-overs or resurgence in politics in many African countries rocked the fundamental foundations of democracy, which the nations had fiercely defended.

It is also concluded that the experience of coups in West Africa can also be traceable to the general manifestations of coups in Africa. Some of the reasons include the need for political stability, addressing the failure of leadership, the growing discontent of citizens in civilian rule and administration, the poor level of development despite the abundance of natural and human resources, electoral malpractice, political corruption, elections without credibility among other socioeconomic and political anomalies among others.

Therefore, the paper recommends that ECOWAS should as a matter of fact intensifies their efforts at deepening democracy in the region by ensuring smooth transitional programmes that will bring back the democratic regime. As a corollary to that, there should be effective monitoring of the election process to make the exercise credible. Again, the regional body should strengthen economic development through coordinated policies targeted at improving the conditions of the citizens.

Also, African political elites should intensify their efforts at tackling the issues and challenges of democratic regimes in Africa that the military always leverages to overthrow

their governments. These ranges from political instability, bad leadership, corruption, sit tight syndrome, poverty and insecurity amongst others, to legitimize their unlawful overthrow of the government.

Finally but not the least, Africa's democratic institutions should be reformed and strengthened so that democracy can achieve the desired results in the region. Strong institutions engender good governance.

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