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THE IMPACT OF MILITARIZATION ON GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES

By

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ABSTRACT
The Civil-Military Relations (CMR) paradigm is used in this study to examine "The Impact of Militarization on Governance and Democracy in African countries". The research clarifies the complex effects of militarization on the African continent by examining the complex relationships between the military, democratic processes, and governance frameworks. The study emphasizes how military intervention has a negative impact on democratic underpinnings, as seen by coups and power seizures. It highlights the significance of civilian monitoring and institutional balance, illuminating how power disparities can obstruct the development of strong democratic institutions. The study also emphasizes how important security sector reform is to maintaining accountability and coordinating military operations with democratic ideals. Observations derived from particular case studies—Nigeria, in particular—provide specific instances of how militarism affects the democratic environment in various African countries. The paper uses mixed method approach to gather information. In its conclusion, the paper makes a case for strategic reforms that include a security sector that is well-managed, enhanced civilian authority, and focused initiatives to promote democratic principles among historically militaristic forces. Overall, this paper adds to a thorough understanding of the problems that militarization poses in African nations and calls for customized responses that balance intellectual understanding with real-world actions to promote democratic resilience in a range of national situations.
Keywords: militarization, Governance, Democracy, Political Stability, Military Rule.

Introduction:
The term "militarization" describes how the military is becoming more and more prevalent in society, politics, and government (Bonga and Mahuku, 2022). This phenomenon may have profound effects on a nation's democratic institutions and procedures, including giving rise to authoritarianism, violations of human rights, and a dearth of civilian supervision. There are discernible trends toward militarism in modern-day Africa. The consolidation and expansion of democracy are under threat from militarism and militarization (Kraska, 2007; Flores-Maciás and Zarkin, 2019; Magaloni, 2020). Ironically, Robert Dahl was spot on when he claimed that the distribution and allocation of resources is the main focus of politics. nations that are dominated by the military and non-military nations have different allocation formulas for scarce resources. According to Felice (1998), militarization primarily favours individuals in the military while diverting resources from the civilian sector. Economics from the classical and neoclassical schools views development as the effective distribution of limited productive resources to support optimal growth and the production and expansion of a wide range of commodities and services (Coccia, 2019). The military elite and those who support them stand to gain the most from the limited resources intended to advance public welfare. According to Schofield (2007), a state's decision-making process becomes warped when militarization is prevalent, leading to less successful tactics to manage and advance economic development and democratic evolution in that nation, as was the case in Nigeria under Sani Abacha. The Abacha instance demonstrates how human rights are compromised, growth is skewed, and corruption levels soar when the military is in control (Bonga and Mahuku, 2022).

Concern regarding the militarization of Africa's governance space and civil service is growing, as it is frequently associated with weak institutions, corruption, and unstable political environments. Angola, Chad, Congo, Mali, and Zimbabwe are among the numerous African nations where the practice of using military troops for civilian tasks is common, according to a report published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2020). Occasionally, the armed forces seize control of

crucial governmental entities, such the national oil company or the finance ministry, and utilize these establishments to retain political authority and manage assets (UNDP, 2020). Historically, militarization in African nations has been associated with a number of issues, such as colonial legacies, power conflicts that followed independence, and outside interventions. In order to comprehend this subject, one must look at the ways that military institutions have impacted political systems, decision-making procedures, and the continent's general attempts at democratization. A recurring issue in the political landscapes of many African nations, militarization has an impact on democratic processes and governance frameworks. The objective of this research is to investigate the complex effects of militarism on democracy and governance inside the African nation-states.

Objectives of the Study:

The main objective of the study is to examine the Impact of Militarization on Governance and Democracy in African Countries and the specific objectives are to:

i. analyze the correlation between militarization and governance structures in African countries.
ii. assess the influence of militarization on democratic processes and civic engagement in the African political context.

Research Questions:

i. Does the presence of a strong military influence governance structures in African countries?
ii. Does militarization impact the democratic processes and civic engagement of citizens in African nations?

Propositions:

i. Militarization tends to concentrate power within the military establishment, affecting the balance of governance structures in African nations.
ii. The presence of a strong military often leads to a suppression of democratic processes and citizen participation in the political arena.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Drawing from political science theories, the theoretical framework will examine the impact of militarization on democracy and governance in Africa, with a focus on the role of the military in governance and civil-military relations. The literature review will examine academic works that discuss historical and contemporary instances of militarization in Africa.

Conceptualization

Militarization refers to the process by which military influence extends into various aspects of a society beyond its traditional defense roles. This can include involvement in politics, economics, and even domestic affairs (Huntington,1957). Militarization is the process by which a society organizes itself for military conflict and violence. It is related to militarism, which is an ideology that reflects the level of militarization of a state. The process of militarization involves many interrelated aspects that encompass all levels of society (McAlister,2016).

In general, militarization can be defined as the material, symbolic, and cultural preparation for war. Recent anthropological research has demonstrated that the existence of state militaries and militarization affect many aspects of "everyday life" in many societies and cultures around the world, both overtly and covertly. Above all, militarization is an intentional process that a state or organization must initiate; as Margaret Mead noted, war is not a "biological necessity," nor is the preparation for war in this instance (Mead, 1940). Instead, the establishment of military institutions and militarization are deliberate endeavours that are frequently concealed by claims of biological inevitable. While sociobiological notions of "natural" soldiers are politically convenient, these arguments sidestep analyses of power and process and can be used to naturalize and depoliticize militarization processes and war (Bickford, 2011: 6–7; Ferguson, 2009; Fry, 2006, 2007) as a way to make them seem inevitable and irresistible. Militarization programs frequently trade in and promote ideas about innate violence and the naturalness of military values (see Ferguson, 2009: 33–34; Fry, 2006, 2007).

Individual life trajectories, as well as historical and cultural settings, are both shaped and drawn upon by militarization. In general, militarization refers to the conversion of civilians into soldiers, as well as the development of specific types of men and women as soldiers; it also refers to the emergence of new categories and ways of thinking about "citizens," as well as the acceptance of these new forms of categorization and behaviour. According to Hajat, Rowhani-Rahbar, and Willits (2019), it is a process of social, political, and military reproduction; the state reproduces itself through military identities and values; and the state's creative and (re)productive violence is naturalized within and through the very bodies of its citizens.

Governance

The literature on governance presents a somewhat hazy definition which can be explained by the concept's dual meaning. Pierre (2000, p. 3) argues that "on one hand it refers to the empirical manifestations of state adaptation to its external environment as it emerges in the late twentieth century and on the other hand, governance denotes a conceptual or theoretical representation of co-ordination of social systems and, for the most part, the role of the state in that process". Both the old and new definitions of governance are used by academics: governance is the institutional ability of public organizations to deliver public and other goods in a way that is efficient, transparent, unbiased, and accountable—subject to resource limitations—to the citizens of a nation or their representatives. Although this definition is wide and mainly abstract, it gives all the various governance techniques a common foundation. It should be noted that this concept of governance is characteristic of international organizations, which aim to assist reforms and strengthen the recipient governments' steering capabilities through "good-governance" programmes. Given that society as a whole needs better and more effective government, the goal of these initiatives is to strengthen and encourage civil society's participation in governance (Katsamunska, 2016).

According to Pierre and Guy (2000). both writers, that, the term governance is "notoriously slippery" and is frequently employed by practitioners and scientists alike without a universally accepted definition. Though it is a confusing term, governance has come to refer to a broad range of phenomena, including public management, corporate governance, policy networks, public-private partnerships, coordination of economic sectors, and "good governance," which is a reform goal supported by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Because of the potential for misunderstanding regarding the meaning of the term, scholars are now thinking about governance from both a structural and procedural perspective. Furthermore, from a diachronic as well as a synchronic standpoint, four common governance systems have existed: hierarchies, markets, networks, and communities. Furthermore, the processes of steering and coordination are the two main dynamic perspectives that characterize governance in the literature as it stands today (Katsamunska,2016).

Defining Democracy

Democracy is a prime example of an "essentially contested" notion (Gallie, 1956), as its meaning and content are still up for debate and are unlikely to be settled upon in the near future. However, there are some aspects of democracy that are widely agreed upon, and there are innumerable instances of democratic practices that have developed over extended periods of time and are being practiced throughout wide geographic areas. It is still widely accepted that democracy is a system of government predicated on a certain amount of popular sovereignty and group decision-making. However, the worry over the additions to this fundamental concept has given rise to a substantial and thoughtful discussion concerning the various meanings of democracy. These concepts of democracy, which are now examined sequentially in this chapter, comprise procedural democracy, liberal democracy, and social democracy (Landman, 2006).

Two characteristics of participation and contestation are included in procedural conceptions of democracy, which were most prominently presented in Robert Dahl's groundbreaking work (Polyarchy, 1971). Contestation is a principle that assumes the legitimacy of some opposition, the right to challenge incumbents, the protection of the twin freedoms of expression and association, the existence of free and fair elections, and a consolidated political party system. It captures the uncertain peaceful competition required for democratic rule. The concept of popular sovereignty—which

presupposes both the existence of universal suffrage and the safeguarding of the right to vote—is embodied by participation. Liberal notions of democracy include more overt allusions to the defence of specific human rights while retaining worries about participation and contestation. Liberal formulations incorporate an institutional dimension that encompasses concepts of accountability, leader constraint, public representation, and universal involvement, all of which help to articulate the idea of popular sovereignty. However, it also includes a dimension of rights—civil, political, property, and minority rights—that are protected by the rule of law. Social definitions of democracy extend the range of rights that should be safeguarded, including social and economic rights, while preserving the institutional and rights components included in liberal definitions of democracy. When combined, these three definitions of democracy have elements in common, such as the idea of peaceful, competitive politics and some kind of involvement, but they also include additional elements designed to safeguard people and groups in ever-widening domains of their lives. The minimal conditions necessary to maintain competitive, participatory politics are determined by procedural conceptions of democracy. To mitigate the potential drawbacks of democratic administration predicated solely on majority rule, liberal definitions encompass the complete safeguarding of civil, political, property, and minority rights. Extra safeguards for economic and social rights are included in social definitions because it is believed that these rights are necessary for citizens to fully engage in collective decisions that have the potential to impact their lives. Thus, "thin" and "thick" definitions of democracy exist, and the distinctions between them are closely related to the extent to which researchers have been able to quantify and evaluate the patterns in the establishment, upkeep, and functioning of democracy (Landman, 2007).

Political Stability

Political stability is the capacity of an administration to uphold law and order and avoid disturbances. It is an essential component of both successful governance and sustainable development. Within the purview of political science, the idea of political stability is extremely pertinent. The primary reason is that it has a strong prediction capacity in addition to being able to assess specific political situations. Furthermore, it is feasible to identify specific indices in stability empirical study that can be applied as heuristics. Equipped with statistical and analytical instruments, the research offers significant insights into the situation within a certain political framework. This consequently makes it possible to perform comparative study and even rate different political entities according to how stable they are (The World Bank, 2020). For instance, it can influence several key publications, such the Human Development Index, which is solely focused on human rights issues (Khan et al., 2020), in addition to assisting in the estimation of political risk for foreign investment (Brink, 2016). Other research areas that demand stability studies include democracy and the rule of law (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2020). The aforementioned instances demonstrate the applicability of the notion of political stability. It is important to acknowledge that this category is essential for analyzing political systems, including their composition, roles, and interactions with their surroundings (Hurwitz, 1973).

Empirical Review

The influence of the military on African political governance and its reappearance have been the subject of much scholarly writing. ever since Africa's democratic revolution. For example, in Monga and Mahuku's study (2022). On the impact of militarization on African democracy and development Africa's political democracy and economic growth are still in dire straits, and there is little chance that they will improve in line with Africa Agenda 2063. Africa is the least developed continent in the Third World despite having an abundance of natural resources and mineral wealth Monga and Mahuku's, (2022). Numerous self-inflicted catastrophes have halted the countries' economic advancement. The influence of militarization on African development and democracy was discussed in this research using both descriptive and analytical methodologies. Many African countries' development paths lack a clear structure to spur the urgently needed advancement. Without much progress, numerous policies have been proposed to direct development. The way the institutions are managed may be one of the reasons why policies fail. The study's definition of militarization could increase the impacting elements. There are various forms of militarization, and some of these have an impact on African democracy and development. This essay provides data from throughout Africa showing military political power undermines the benefits of democracy and consequently development. Wherever there is militarization of a nation, corruption increases and impedes growth.

These countries are characterized by political and economic instability as a result of militarization-related human rights abuses. The study highlights, among other recommendations to ensure the achievement of inclusive development and praised democracy, the appropriate demilitarization process for many African nations, the establishment of successful civil-military relationships, the maintenance of the rule of law, the protection of human rights, the avoidance of racial and cultural discrimination, the autonomy of institutions, and a transparent and cooperative political environment. Economic growth and militarization are unrelated; militarization only serves to prolong war and demolish states. Africa after colonialism is in desperate need of real economic development, which can only come about through the implementation of sound policies. from the study of Ahmad (2024). On political, social, and military globalization interact with sustainable development, using data from the G-7 economies. that because sustainable development reduces unsustainable production and consumption patterns, it can serve as a stimulus to improve human wellbeing and environmental sustainability. It becomes clear that political globalization is essential to advancing environmental governance worldwide. Furthermore, militarization, democracy, and social globalization can all have an impact on sustainable development. This study examines the diverse impacts of political globalization, militarization, social globalization, and democracy on sustainable development in the G-7 panel from 1990 to 2019 in light of the critical variables' overlooked effects on sustainable development in earlier research studies. The application of moment quantile regression techniques yielded results that, from the 10th to the 90th quantiles, ranged from 0.015 to 0.017%, indicating a considerable improvement in sustainable development for every percentage point increase in political globalization. In contrast, due to a 1% increase in social globalization, sustainable development shows a fall between the 10th and 90th quantiles, ranging from 0.025 to 0.028%. Similarly, militarization has a marginally greater impact on sustainable development from the 10th to the 90th quantiles. While the relationship between democracy and sustainable development shows a negative correlation that has not reached statistical significance across most quantiles, gross fixed capital formation reduces sustainable development. Additional regression tests are used to confirm these unexpected results. A comprehensive policy framework is then put forth with the intention of promoting long-term development among the G-7 members.

In the study of Omilusi's (2015). On Developing Model for Nigerian Governance: Transitioning from Civil Rule to Militarized Democracy. That authoritarianism has taken root in Nigeria as a result of years of military administration that was characterized by intimidation, and a lack of discussion, contempt for civil liberties, and a disrespect for the law. This has led to the creation of an intolerable atmosphere where people continue to use violence to resolve conflicts and politicians continue to speak in a military manner. People who had been holding pent-up feelings released their emotions when democracy was restored in 1999, sometimes using it as a platform to express themselves more loudly and freely. Nigeria's survival is undoubtedly in jeopardy due to the multifaceted conflicts (and the terrorism of Boko Haram) in which the nation has become embroiled since the establishment of the current civilian government. However, the current administration's use of the army and other security services to monitor routine civic activities like campaigning and legislative proceedings, to harass opposition parties, or to set up roadblocks in the nation's largest cities gives the impression that the current civilian political leadership is unable to solidify democracy without the use of force. This essay analyzes Nigeria's democratic experiment since 1999 in the light of widely accepted democratic principles and the country's decline toward authoritarian civilian control. from the study of Frank and Ukpere's (2012). On the impact of military rule on Nigerian democracy was discussed by, aiming to provide an explanation for the reason behind the militarized attitudes of politicians in the country today. It takes a descriptive and case history approach, claiming that the lengthy years of military rule are to blame for the current behavioural pattern. The judicial system, legislative, executive branch, and civil society are all impacted by military rule. The current democratic practice is a manifestation of the ingrained ideals and customs. This explains the use of force instead of discussion in the repression of opposition in "Odi" and "Zaki-biam," as well as in defiance of court orders, media outlet closures, journalist arrests, and militancy in the Niger Delta. Democracy ought to be founded on its ideals, which the players should acquire from the Centre for Democracy in order to replace the military mentality that they carelessly exhibit in a democratic setting. It is essential to remember that only sound governance can bring an end to the military's reign.

Sandorb and Gelot (2019). Studied global militarism and African security. That, what role does militarism currently play in African security? The study seeks to investigate the various ways through which militarism and security are articulated in African contexts and to add to the growing body of discourse on these topics. In order to investigate militarized security politics as a domain of contested practices and logics, we propose an international political sociological (IPS) approach to militarism. We go over the reasons behind this method's ability to reveal the interwoven historical patterns and power dynamics that allow militarism and security practices to become ingrained in both local and transnational African contexts.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on the civil-military theory which is a branch of political science that focuses on the relationship between civilian government institutions and military organizations within a society. Proponents of civil-military theory include scholars such as Samuel Huntington, Morris Janowitz, and R. E. Caves. The theory emerged primarily in the 1950s and 1960s during a period of military coups in various countries around the world.

Basic assumption: According to the civil-military doctrine, a stable civil-military relationship is necessary for a democratic society to remain stable. According to the view, the military should not participate in political decision-making and should instead report to civilian authority. It can be complicated to determine how military affects democracy and governance in African nations. Numerous African countries have in the past witnessed military takeovers and autocratic governments headed by military officials. Human rights violations, deterioration of democratic institutions, and a lack of civilian control are all consequences of militarization. Analysis of the effects of militarization on democracy and governance in African nations must take into account a number of variables, including the historical background, the influence of outside parties, the socioeconomic landscape, and the robustness of civil society. We can gain a better understanding of the obstacles African countries face in establishing stable and efficient governance by looking at these variables.

The Civil-Military Relations theory explores the interactions between the military and the civilian government within a state. In the context of the subject matter which is to examined how military involvement in governance influences democratic processes and institutions in African countries align with this theoretical framework.

Key aspects to consider within the Civil-Military Relations theory include:

Military Intervention: Assess the degree to which the military is involved in political decision-making and governance. Military coups, direct rule by the military, or significant military influence in political affairs can have a profound impact on the democratic processes.

Institutional Impact: Examine how the presence of a powerful military can shape the institutional landscape. A strong military might weaken civilian institutions and create a power imbalance that hinders democratic development.

Democracy and Authoritarianism: Consider how the military's influence may tilt the balance between democratic governance and authoritarian rule. Military regimes might suppress democratic institutions, limit political freedoms, and curtail civil liberties.

Security Sector Reform: Analyze efforts to reform and democratize the security sector. Effective reforms can contribute to improved governance by ensuring civilian control over the military, reducing corruption, and promoting transparency.

Political Culture: Explore the impact of militarization on the political culture of a society. The military's involvement can shape public attitudes towards authority, governance, and democratic values. It's important to note that other theories such as the "Resource Curse," "Dependency Theory," or "State Building" may also offer insights into the dynamics of militarization and its impact on governance and democracy in African countries. The choice of theory depends on the specific aspects of the topic you want to emphasize and analyze.

Methodology

The study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative analysis of historical data and quantitative surveys to gather perspectives from citizens, policymakers, and military personnel. Interviews and content analysis of relevant documents supplement the research.

Data Interpretation

Oral interview (2024). The presence of a robust military often holds significant sway over governance structures in African countries. Throughout history, military coups have frequently served as a means to seize power, resulting in the rule of military regimes in various nations across the continent. Even in countries where civilian rule appears established, military institutions often wield substantial political influence behind the scenes, actively shaping policies and decision-making processes. This influence manifests in diverse forms, including resource allocation, suppression of dissent, and control over key government institutions (Avuya, Muson and Saleh, 2024).

Oral interview (2024). Militarization significantly impacts democratic processes and civic engagement in African nations by creating an environment where civil liberties are often curtailed in the name of national security. The presence of a strong military can intimidate citizens and discourage political participation, leading to a culture of fear and self-censorship. Furthermore, militarization tends to prioritize security concerns over democratic principles, resulting in the erosion of institutional checks and balances, electoral integrity, and freedom of expression. This undermines the ability of citizens to hold their leaders accountable and participate meaningfully in the political process, ultimately weakening the foundations of democracy (Avuya, Muson and Saleh, 2024).

Findings

The findings of the study suggest that militarization significantly impacts democratic processes and civic engagement in African nations. It highlights that the presence of a strong military creates an environment where civil liberties are often curtailed in the name of national security. Citizens may feel intimidated and discouraged from participating in politics due to the influence and power wielded by the military. This can lead to a culture of fear and self-censorship, ultimately weakening the foundations of democracy. Furthermore, the study indicates that militarization tends to prioritize security concerns over democratic principles, resulting in the erosion of institutional checks and balances, electoral integrity, and freedom of expression. As a consequence, citizens may find it challenging to hold their leaders accountable and participate meaningfully in the political process. The study also notes the historical significance of military coups in African countries, highlighting how military regimes have governed nations and shaped policies and decision-making processes. Overall, the findings underscore the complex relationship between a strong military presence and governance structures in African countries, emphasizing the need for efforts to promote accountable and inclusive governance while addressing the challenges posed by militarization.

Conclusion:

The study "The Impact of Militarization on Governance and Democracy in African Countries" concludes by highlighting the intricate and nuanced interactions that exist between the military, democratic processes, and governance throughout the African continent. By using the theory of Civil-Military Relations, it is clear that the level of military participation in politics has a big impact on how well democratic institutions function. The analysis highlights the dangers of military intervention, as seen by coups and power grabs, which can significantly weaken democratic ideals. The report also emphasizes how important institutional balance and civilian control are in reducing the detrimental effects of militarization. A power imbalance brought about by weak civilian oversight of the armed forces might impede the growth of strong democratic institutions. Reforming the security sector is necessary because it provides a way to guarantee accountability and match the military's function with democratic ideals. Analyzing political culture in armed environments emphasizes how critical it is to overcome deeply rooted authoritarian tendencies. Lessons from particular case studies—like

Nigeria—offer verifiable proof of the complex ways that military affects democracy in various African countries. In summary, this study advances our knowledge of the potential and problems that militarization in African nations presents. It emphasizes the need for more civilian control, a well-managed security sector, and a coordinated effort to promote democratic ideals in the face of historical militaristic influences. It asks for strategic reforms. In the end, combating the effects of militarism on democracy and governance in Africa necessitates an all-encompassing strategy that combines intellectual understanding with workable solutions adapted to the particular circumstances of each country.

Recommendations:

- Conduct an in-depth cross-country comparative analysis focusing on the historical trajectories of militarization and its correlation with governance structures in African countries.
- Undertake a comprehensive survey and qualitative interviews with diverse stakeholders, including citizens, civil society organizations, and political leaders, to assess the perceptions and experiences regarding the influence of militarization on democratic processes and civic engagement.
- Strengthening civilian oversight mechanisms to ensure a balance of power between the military and civilian authorities.
- Promoting civic education and engagement to empower citizens and safeguard democratic processes.

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