

Democracy and Resurgence of Coup d'état in West Africa: Exploring the Role of Natural Resource Wealth

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Abstract

The study explores the link between natural resource wealth, democracy, and coup vulnerability in West Africa using the Resource Curse Theory. Despite its abundant resources, the region has experienced a resurgence of coups, posing threats to democratic gains and economic development. The study uses an ex-post facto research design and documentary data collection and content analysis to analyze the influence of natural resource wealth on democratic consolidation and coup vulnerability. The study posits that the abundance of resources has created a curse, fostering corruption, political instability, and military interference, increasing coup vulnerability. The study reveals that coups are more common in nations with weak democratic institutions, reliance on natural resources, and inadequate economic management. While democratic consolidation and economic diversification reduce coup risk, resource curse phenomena and weak democratic institutions increase susceptibility. To encourage sustainable development in West Africa and reduce coup risk, efficient management of natural resources, democratic consolidation, and economic diversity are needed. This study contributes to the discourse on the resource curse and the establishment of democracy.

Keywords: Coup Vulnerability, Democratic Consolidation, Economic Management, Natural Resource Wealth and Political stability

Introduction

The resurgence of coup d'états in West Africa has raised concerns about the fragility of democratic gains in the region (Adebayo, 2022). Despite significant progress toward democratization in the 1990s and 2000s (Huntington, 1991; Bratton & van de Walle, 1997), the recent wave of military interventions in politics threatens to undermine democratic consolidation (McFerson, 2019). The factors contributing to this trend are complex and multifaceted, including political instability, economic hardship, military interference, external interference, and weak democratic cultures and practices (Nwosu, 2021; Akiyode-Afolabi, 2020).

Several coups and attempted coups have been reported in the West African area lately. President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta of Mali was overthrown by a military coup in 2020, with accusations of corruption and economic incompetence made (BBC, 2020). Comparably, Colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba conducted a military coup in Burkina Faso in 2022, citing political unrest and security issues (Al Jazeera, 2022). President Alpha Condé's contentious campaign for a third term in Guinea in 2021 sparked large-scale demonstrations and a military takeover (The Economist, 2021). The region's susceptibility to military interventions is demonstrated by the coups and multiple coup

attempts that have occurred in Niger (Reuters, 2021; Cline Coup d'état Project Dataset Codebook v2.1.3, 2024).

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has been criticized for its ineffectiveness in preventing these coups, despite its mandate to promote regional security and democracy (Akiyode-Afolabi, 2020). According to Adebayo (2022:1), the recurrence of coups in West Africa suggests a deeper malaise in the region's democratic experiment. Similarly, McFerson (2019:12) notes that the rise of coups in West Africa highlights the need for a more nuanced understanding of the region's political dynamics.

Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo are among the sixteen countries that comprise West Africa. The remarkable progress made in battling hunger and malnutrition, food and nutrition insecurity, changes in food consumption habits, growing reliance on processed foods, rising consumption of foods consumed outside the home, increased use of edible oils and sugar-sweetened beverages, sharp increases in the rates of obesity and overweight in both urban and rural areas, and a shift in the region's diet from plant protein to animal protein were identified by Ayuk and Kabore (2013) as the region's primary cultural, economic, and social traits.

West Africa is endowed with natural resources such as oil, gas, minerals, gold, uranium, diamonds, and timber; however, this endowment has not led to economic prosperity or political stability for many countries. However, West Africa has recorded several coup events, political instability, and conflict (Ulfelder, 2019). The nexus between natural resource wealth and coup vulnerability is complex. While natural resources can drive economic growth and development, they also create economic and political tensions. Natural resource wealth can be both a blessing and a curse for developing countries. While it has the potential to provide substantial economic benefits, it can also lead to increased coup vulnerability and political instability.

It is impossible to overstate how important this event is economically. Poverty and suffering have produced a climate that is conducive to military participation. According to Oladunjoye (2020), the rise of coups in West Africa can be attributed to economic instability and low living conditions. In addition, outside meddling has been a major factor in the revival of coups in West Africa. To undermine democratic institutions and procedures, foreign powers have frequently backed military operations in West Africa (Akiyode-Afolabi, 2020:10).

The implications of this trend are far-reaching and have significant consequences for democratic consolidation and economic development in West Africa. Nwosu (2021:18) affirms that the resurgence of coups in West Africa threatens to undermine democratic gains and perpetuate economic instability. Against this backdrop, this study investigates the relationship between natural resource wealth and coup vulnerability in West Africa.

Natural Resource Wealth, Resource Curse and Coup Vulnerability

Natural resource wealth can bring economic prosperity and political instability to developing countries, often referred to as the "resource curse." (Basedau & Mehler, 2014). This phenomenon, which increases coup vulnerability and political instability, has been a topic of interest in political science and economics. Scholars argue that the abundance of natural resources can increase the likelihood of coup events. This review explores how natural resource wealth influences coup vulnerability, focusing on the mechanisms and contextual factors that mediate this relationship.

Natural resource riches refer to a nation's abundance of minerals, metals, oil, and gas (Bøås, 2017). However, this wealth often leads to slower economic growth, political instability, and war, known as the "resource curse" (Auty, 1993:1). Countries with a wealth of natural resources experience higher levels of political instability and economic downturns compared to those with less resource. Moreover, coup vulnerability refers to a nation's likelihood of facing political upheaval or military intervention, indicating its susceptibility to military intervention or political unrest (Houngnikpo, 2019; Oyewole, 2020). The possibility of a coup d'état or other political instability is measured by coup vulnerability, which is a key indicator of a nation's potential for political instability (Mehler, 2017).

The resource curse theory suggests that nations with abundant natural resources, such as oil and minerals, experience slower economic growth and higher rates of political instability, war, and corruption (Auty, 1993; Ross, 1999; Wantchekon, 2002). This paradox is most evident in West African nations like Nigeria, Mauritania, and Sierra Leone, where resources like oil, gold, and diamonds have led to mismanagement, resulting in war, inequality, and even coups. The contradiction highlights the need for effective governance and addressing the inefficiencies and incentives that can lead to corruption and instability.

Studies show a correlation between the availability of natural resources and coup susceptibility. Nations heavily reliant on primary commodities are more likely to experience social unrest, including coups, due to increased rent-seeking behaviour and political instability. Resource wealth can lead military leaders to take control of resources for an advantage (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004). In oil-rich countries like Nigeria and Venezuela, natural resource wealth has been associated with recurrent political crises and coup attempts. Nigeria's oil wealth has been a significant factor in its political instability, contributing to several military coups since gaining independence (Watts, 2013). The control of oil revenues has been a major driver of political competition and conflict, contributing to several military coups in the country's history (Ikein, 1990). Sierra Leone's diamond wealth also played a critical role in the civil war and subsequent political instability (Keen, 2005).

The correlation between natural resource wealth and coup vulnerability in West Africa is significant, with countries with high levels of natural resource rents more likely to experience coups (Smith, 2019; Jones, 2020). The abundance of natural resources, such as diamonds and timber, can increase coup vulnerability (Ulfelder, 2019).

The link between natural resource wealth and coup vulnerability can be explained by several mechanisms. Firstly, resource revenues can empower autocratic leaders by providing them with financial resources to consolidate power and suppress dissent (Ross, 2012). The rentier state theory suggests that states that derive a significant portion of their revenue from natural resources tend to develop weak institutions, leading to authoritarianism and instability. This creates incentives for political elites to monopolize resource wealth, leading to governance failures and social unrest.

Secondly, the volatility of resource revenues can exacerbate economic instability and social inequality. Countries heavily reliant on natural resources are susceptible to commodity price fluctuations, which can destabilize the economy and exacerbate grievances among marginalized groups (Karl, 1997). The political economy perspective emphasizes the role of resource wealth in shaping political incentives and governance structures (Ross, 2001). However, effective management of natural resource revenue can foster economic growth and reduce coup vulnerability (Adeleke & Zubairu, 2021).

Case studies have shown that natural resource wealth can significantly impact coup vulnerability in West Africa. For instance, the 2012 Mali coup was influenced by the abundance of gold and uranium in Mali, which created economic and political incentives (Brown, 2018). Other studies have found that Nigeria's oil wealth and Senegal's natural gas wealth also contributed to its coup vulnerability (Olorunfemi, 2020; Samb 2019).

Regional patterns also show that countries with significant oil and mineral resources, such as Equatorial Guinea and Guinea-Bissau, have experienced frequent coups and political instability. The concentration of resource wealth in the hands of a few elites has undermined governance structures and perpetuated cycles of instability (Auty, 2001).

Recent scholarship has expanded the discourse on natural resource wealth and coup vulnerability by examining the role of international actors and global markets. The concept of "resource wars" has been introduced, highlighting how global demand for natural resources can exacerbate conflicts and increase coup risks in producer countries (Le Billon, 2001). The governance of extractive industries emphasizes the need for transparency, accountability, and inclusive decision-making processes (EITI, 2020).

On the other hand, resource-rich countries like Botswana have managed to avoid coups by implementing prudent resource management policies, including transparent revenue distribution and investment in human capital (Molutsi, 2008). This highlights the importance of institutional capacity and good governance in mitigating the negative effects of natural resource dependence.

To address coup vulnerability in resource-rich nations, comprehensive national and international policy solutions are needed. Strengthening institutional capacity, enhancing transparency in resource management, and promoting equitable economic growth are essential. International programs like the EITI and the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for diamonds support responsible resource governance and reduce violence risks (Auty, 2010). Empowering stakeholders and supporting civil society groups and communities affected by resource exploitation are also beneficial.

The relationship between the resource curse, coup vulnerability, and natural resource wealth is complex and multidirectional. Countries with high natural resource wealth are more likely to experience the curse, leading to coup vulnerability and political instability (Bøås, 2017), while countries with high coup vulnerability and political instability experience the curse and lower economic development (Mehler, 2017).

Empirical evidence suggests that a wealth of natural resources, like those in West Africa, significantly increases coup vulnerability. The "resource curse" idea has been confirmed, with various mechanisms linking the abundance of natural resources to coup danger. Wealth from natural resources creates economic and political incentives that support corruption, favouritism, and clientelism, fueling political discontent and instability. To support stable democracies, these issues must be addressed.

Methodology

The study employed the Resource Curse Theory to examine the correlation between natural resource wealth, democracy, and coup vulnerability in West Africa. The theory suggests that rich natural resources can lead to political instability and conflict, including coups. This study employed a qualitative research approach, using a documentary method of data collection and content analysis to investigate the relationship between natural resource wealth, democracy, and coup vulnerability in

West Africa. The study used an ex-post facto research design, which allowed for the examination of existing data and documents to identify patterns and trends. Data were sourced and collected from existing documents such as academic articles, books, government reports, news articles and media sources, and international organization reports (e.g., the World Bank dataset on natural resources, and coup data from the Coup d'état dataset). The study conducted a content analysis of the collected data, using qualitative data analysis software (NVivo) to identify themes, trends, and patterns. The analysis focused on the following: the relationship between natural resource wealth and democratic consolidation, the impact of natural resource wealth on coup vulnerability, and the role of economic management, corruption, and political instability in shaping the resource curse phenomenon. The study ensured data quality by using multiple sources, triangulating data, and conducting member checking to verify the accuracy of the findings.

Natural Resource Wealth and Coup Vulnerability in West Africa: A Cross-Sectional Study.

The link between natural resource richness and coup susceptibility in West Africa has been a topic of interest for decades. Factors such as political leadership, institutional strength, and economic diversification impact this relationship. Natural resource wealth is often linked to a higher chance of coups as it can fuel political and economic conflicts used by coup plotters (Ross, 2001; Collier & Hoeffler, 2004). The "resource curse" theory suggests that an abundance of natural resources can lead to political instability, corruption, and conflict. On the other hand, the "rentier state" theory argues that countries reliant on natural resource rents are prone to authoritarianism and political instability (Fearon, 2005).

In West Africa, nations like Nigeria, Burkina Faso, and Côte d'Ivoire have often experienced coup occurrences and political instability due to their substantial riches in natural resources (Smith, 2020; Oyewole, 2020). This is linked to the "oil curse" theory, which contends that the concentration of money and power in the hands of a small number of people can result in political instability and war when there is an oil boom (Ross, 2015). Other variables such as military spending, political instability, economic inequality, and rent-seeking behaviour have also been linked to this phenomenon (Dunne, 2017; Borenstein, 2017).

The role of minerals and timber in increasing coup vulnerability has also been significant in West Africa. Countries like Sierra Leone and Liberia have experienced repeated coup events and political instability, despite their significant mineral wealth (Carey, 2019). This has been attributed to the "mineral curse" hypothesis, which suggests that mineral wealth can lead to political instability and conflict due to the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few individuals.

To address the resource curse, coup vulnerability, and political instability in West Africa, it is essential to promote economic diversification and development (Oyewole, 2020), ensure transparent and accountable management of resources (Houngnikpo, 2019), strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law (Alie, 2019) and encourage regional cooperation and conflict resolution mechanisms (Basedau & Mehler, 2014). The table below highlights the complex relationship between natural resource wealth and coup vulnerability with emphasis on political instability, economic factors, democratic institutions, and regional dynamics in West Africa. It also underscores the need for sustained efforts to build resilient institutions and promote democratic governance in the region.

Table 1: Natural Resource Wealth and Coup Vulnerability in West Africa

Country	Natural Resource Wealth (NRW)	Coup Vulnerability (CV)	Political Instability (PI)	Economic Inequality (EI)	Democratic Institutions (DI)	Regional Dynamics (RD)
Nigeria	Oil, gas, minerals	High	High	High	Weak	High
Mauritania	Oil, diamonds	High	High	High	Weak	High
Côte d'Ivoire	Oil, cocoa, minerals	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Sierra Leone	Diamonds, minerals	High	High	High	Weak	High
Liberia	Iron ore, rubber, timber	High	High	High	Weak	High
Ghana	Gold, oil, cocoa	Medium	Medium	Medium	Strong	Medium
Senegal	Phosphates, oil, gas	Medium	Medium	Medium	Strong	Medium
Guinea	Bauxite, iron ore, diamonds	High	High	High	Weak	High
Mali	Gold, uranium, livestock	High	High	High	Weak	High
Burkina Faso	Gold, copper, zinc	High	High	High	Weak	High
Niger	Uranium, gold, livestock	High	High	High	Weak	High
Gambia	Peanuts, fish, tourism	Medium	Medium	Medium	Weak	Medium
Cape Verde	Salt, fish, tourism	Medium	Medium	Medium	Strong	Medium
Benin	Cotton, cashews, shea nuts	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Guinea-Bissau	Cashews, fish, timber	High	High	High	Weak	High
Togo	Phosphates, cotton, coffee	Medium	Medium	Medium	Weak	Medium

Sources: Author's compilation from various independent sources: (World Bank, Smith, 2020, Fearon, 2005; Borenstein, 2017; Ulfelder, 2019 & Carey, 2019).

Table 1 supports the "natural resource curse" theory by demonstrating the high levels of political instability, economic inequality, and coup vulnerability found in nations with abundant natural resources, such as Nigeria, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Liberia. Political instability and coup risk are less common in nations with medium levels of natural resource richness, such as Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Cape Verde, Benin, Togo, and Senegal. Additionally, the table also demonstrates how more susceptible to coups are nations with weaker institutions, for example, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Guinea-Bissau and Liberia, and those with stronger institutions like Ghana, Senegal and Cape Verde.

Overall, this table provides a more comprehensive analysis of the relationship between natural resource wealth and coup vulnerability in West Africa, and highlights the importance of considering multiple variables when analyzing this complex issue.

Findings

The abundance of natural resources in West Africa creates economic and political incentives that foster corruption, patronage, and clientelism, leading to political instability and conflict, as different groups and interests compete for control over resources, which in turn increases coup vulnerability. The resource curse theory is applicable in the West African context, where natural resource wealth has led to political instability, corruption, and conflict. Country-specific examples: Case studies of countries like Mali, Nigeria, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, and Niger demonstrate how natural resource wealth has contributed to coup vulnerability in each country. These findings suggest that natural resource wealth is a significant factor in coup vulnerability in West Africa and that addressing the resource curse is essential to promoting political stability and economic development in the region.

Some potential implications to the study

- Resource wealth can be a curse: The table suggests that natural resource wealth can increase the vulnerability of a country to coups, which can have negative consequences for political stability and economic development.
- Diversification is of essence: Countries that rely heavily on a single natural resource may be more vulnerable to coups, while countries with diversified economies may be less vulnerable.
- Institutional factors matter: The table suggests that institutional factors, such as the strength of democratic institutions and the rule of law, may also play a role in determining coup vulnerability.
- Regional dynamics: The table suggests that regional dynamics, such as the presence of neighbouring countries with high natural resource wealth, may also play a role in determining coup vulnerability.

In general, the table provides a useful overview of the relationship between natural resource wealth and coup vulnerability in West Africa, and highlights the need for further research and analysis to better understand this multifaceted issue.

Coup Events, Attempted Coups and Political Instability in West Africa: A Comparative Analysis.

As of August 30, 2023, out of the 486 coup attempts, 242 successful coups and failed coups carried out globally since 1950, Africa accounts for the largest number with 214 coup attempts, of which at least 106 have been successful and 108 failed. At least 45 of the 54 countries across the African continent have experienced at least a single coup attempt since 1950 (Powell & Thyne, 2023). Currently and very importantly, West Africa accounts for the largest number in Africa, with 58 successful coups and 121 attempted, failed, alleged, and/or plot coups.

Coup events and attempted coups have been a persistent feature of West Africa's political landscape, undermining democratic consolidation and economic development in the region. West Africa has experienced a high incidence of coup and attempted coups, leading to political instability in the region. A comparative analysis of coup events and attempted coups in West Africa reveals that these events are often driven by a complex interplay of factors, including historical legacies, political and economic grievances, and external interference.

Historical legacies, such as colonialism and military rule, have contributed to the prevalence of coup events and attempted coups in West Africa (Adebayo, 2016). The region's political and economic structures, shaped by colonial powers, often prioritized extractive institutions over inclusive development (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012).

Political grievances, such as electoral disputes and corruption, have also fueled coup events and attempted coups in West Africa. According to Houngnikpo (2019), coup events and attempted coups in West Africa are often driven by political and economic grievances, such as corruption, electoral disputes, and economic mismanagement. Similarly, Basedau and Mehler (2014) argue that political instability in West Africa is fueled by factors like weak institutions, ethnic and religious tensions, and external interference. In some cases, military interventions have been justified as necessary to restore democracy and stability (Oyewole, 2020).

External interference, including support for opposition groups and military interventions, has also played a significant role in West Africa's coup events and attempted coups (Basedau & Mehler, 2014). Regional organizations like ECOWAS have attempted to address these issues through diplomatic interventions and economic sanctions (Alie, 2019).

To mitigate coup events and attempted coups in West Africa, we recommend strengthening democratic institutions, promoting economic development, and enhancing regional cooperation (Oyewole, 2020). External actors must also refrain from interfering in the region's political affairs and support democratic consolidation (Basedau & Mehler, 2014). Equally, external interventions, like those by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), can also play a crucial role in stabilizing the region (Alie, 2019). The table below (Table 2) provides a comprehensive overview of coup events and attempted coups in West African countries, highlighting the year, number of successful coups, number of attempted coups, causes, effects, and way forward, for each country, offering a valuable resource for understanding political stability and instability in the region.

Table 2: Comprehensive Overview of Coup Events and Attempted Coups in West African Countries

Country	Year	Coups	Attempted Coups	Alleged Coup	Causes	Effects	Way Forward
Benin	1963,1965, 1965,1967, 1969,1972,	6	3	1	Political instability	Political unrest,	Consolidate democracy

	1972, 1975, 1975, 1977					economic decline	
Burkina Faso	1966, 1974, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1987, 1989, 2003, 2014, 2015, 2015, 2016, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2023.	11	5	0	Political instability, economic mismanagement	Political unrest, economic decline	Strengthen institutions
Cape Verde	-	0	0	0	-	-	Maintain stability
Côte d'Ivoire	1991, 1999, 2000, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2012	2	3	2	Political instability, economic mismanagement	Political unrest, economic decline	Consolidate peace
Gambia	1981, 1994, 1994, 2006, 2014, 2022	1	3	2	Political instability, economic mismanagement	Political unrest, economic decline	Strengthen democracy
Ghana	1961, 1966, 1967, 1967, 1972, 1972, 1978, 1979, 1979, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 2019	5	5	4	Political instability, economic mismanagement	Political unrest, economic decline	Consolidate democracy
Guinea	1965, 1969, 1970, 1984, 1985, 1996, 2008, 2009, 2011	2	5	2	Political instability, economic mismanagement	Political unrest, economic decline	Strengthen institutions
Guinea-Bissau	1980, 1985, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2012, 2022, 2023	4	8	3	Political instability, economic mismanagement	Political unrest, economic decline	
Liberia	1963, 1980, 1980, 1984, 1985, 1985, 1986, 1988, 1990, 1990,	4	5	4	Political instability, economic mismanagement	Political unrest, economic decline	Strengthen institutions

	1994, 1994, 2003						
Mali	1968, 1969, 1971, 1978, 1991, 1991, 1993, 1996, 2012, 2012, 2020, 2021, 2022	5	3	5	Political instability, economic mismanagement	Political unrest, economic decline	Consolidate peace
Mauritania	1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1984, 1987, 2003, 2004, 2004, 2005, 2008	6	3	3	Political instability, economic mismanagement	Political unrest, economic decline	Strengthen institutions
Niger	1974, 1975, 1976, 1983, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2010, 2015, 2021, 2023	5	3	3	Political instability, economic mismanagement	Political unrest, economic decline	Consolidate stability
Nigeria	1962, 1966, 1966, 1975, 1976, 1983, 1985, 1985, 1990, 1993, 1993, 1995, 1997, 2004	6	3	5	Political instability, economic mismanagement	Political unrest, economic decline	Strengthen institutions
Senegal	1962	0	1	0	Political instability	-	Maintain stability
Sierra Leone	1967, 1967, 1967, 1968, 1971, 1978, 1992, 1992, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1996, 1997, 1998, 2023, 2023	7	6	3	Political instability, economic mismanagement	Political unrest, economic decline	Consolidate peace
Togo	1963, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1967, 1970, 1986, 1991, 1991, 1991, 1991, 2005	4	7	4	Political instability, economic mismanagement	Political unrest, economic decline	Strengthen institutions

Sources: Author's compilation from different independent sources: (Cline Coup d'état Project Dataset Codebook (v2.1.3), 2024; Lobban, 2019; Oyewole, 2020).

Table 2 provides a comprehensive overview of coup events, attempted coups and alleged coups or coup conspiracies in West African countries. Countries with the highest number of coup events; with Nigeria (14), Ghana (14), Mali (13), Guinea-Bissau (15), Niger (11), Togo (15), Burkina Faso (16), Sierra Leone (16), Mauritania (12), Liberia (13), and Benin (10) having experienced multiple coups. A few of them have experienced lesser coup events such as Gambia, Guinea, and Côte d'Ivoire, while Cape Verde and Senegal recorded no coup and one coup attempt respectively. These countries have maintained political stability and economic growth, with strong institutions, economic diversification, and good governance being key factors. Senegal, in particular, has been cited as a model of democracy and economic development in West Africa.

Countries that experienced coup events recently includes Burkina Faso (2022, 2023), Guinea (2021), Mali (coup in 2020; 2021 and alleged coup in 2022), Niger (attempted coup in 2021 and coup in 2023), Gambia (alleged coup in 2022), Guinea-Bissau (attempted coup in 2022 and 2023), and Sierra Leone (alleged and attempted coup in 2022).

The causes of coups in these countries are varied, but common factors include political instability, economic mismanagement, corruption, military interventions, ethnic and religious tensions. The effects of coups in these countries have been significant, leading to political unrest, economic decline, human rights abuses, and in some cases, civil war.

The way forward for these countries is uncertain, with some countries still struggling with political instability and economic challenges. However, strengthening institutions, consolidating democracy, and promoting economic development are essential for preventing future coup events.

In conclusion, countries that have experienced coups have generally had weaker institutions, greater political instability, and poorer economic performance than countries that have not experienced coups. Countries that have not experienced coups have generally had stronger institutions, greater political stability, and better economic performance than countries that have experienced coups.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The analysis has shown a significant correlation between natural resource wealth and coup vulnerability in West Africa. The abundance of natural resources in the region has created economic and political incentives that foster corruption, patronage, and clientelism, leading to political instability and conflict. The findings suggest that the resource curse theory is applicable in the West African context, and that natural resource wealth is a significant factor in coup vulnerability in the region. We recommend therefore, that West African countries should prioritize democratic consolidation, economic diversification, and transparency in natural resource management. By implementing these recommendations, West African countries can reduce coup vulnerability, promote political stability, and achieve sustainable economic development.

Need for Further Research:

Future studies should investigate the role of specific natural resources (e.g., oil, gold, uranium, minerals) in shaping coup vulnerability and democratic consolidation. In-depth country-specific studies are required to understand the specific contexts and dynamics of each country and other non-resource factors that may contribute to coup vulnerability in West Africa. Research is needed to understand the specific institutional capacities and strengths required to manage natural resources

effectively and to identify effective economic development strategies that can reduce dependence on natural resources.

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