



Assessing impact of the emerging multipolar world order and social media on ECOWAS military intervention in Niger: A perspective

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Abstract

The emerging multipolar world order, the yearnings of African countries to join the BRICS+ banks, the Chinese Belt and Road Initiatives, the urge to swap buyers of mineral resources, the inroads of Wagner Mercenary support for military Juntas against seeming highhandedness of former colonial masters could be seen accounting for the divisiveness bedeviling ECOWAS and AU in sharing common ground to condemn and militarily intervene in the Niger Coup that ousted Bezaoum. In Nigeria, the social media colourized the ECOWAS military intervention with "President Tinubu's wars" and this position was further aggravated by the unsettled 2023 political dust, the aggravated economic landscape, the deep cultural connection between Northern Nigeria and the Niger, and the fear of spillover of military interventions, all acting in the favour of the Niger Junta. It was against this fuzzy background that this desktop research, engage the theory of Prebendalism to investigate the influencing impact of the emerging multipolar world order and social media on ECOWAS military intervention in Niger. The submission that emerged from the study showed that most African countries who had their BRICS+ application pending could not be seen at the forefront against the Niger Junta who did not only deploy anti-imperialism rhetoric to whip up nationalistic sentiments but quickly aligned with Russia while China remain at the background with three of her oil giants making economic landmark inroads on Niger oilfields. Findings that emanate from the study revealed that the Nigeria government as the ECOWAS Chairman lost swift military interventions in the people's courts to the social media restraints at home, which painted the intervention as war and a needless war against her Northern region which share ethnical, families and economic ties with Niger. This study recommends that AU, ECOWAS, and other regional blocs should condemn member States leveraging on state alliance or non-alliance status to support tenure elongations, and fraudulent elections which magnetise Coups and should deepen their common ground against military incursion into the political space. The study also recommends the evolvement of strong democratic institutions whose tones can dull the misinformation trajectories that come with social media.

Keywords: BRICS+, Military Intervention, Multipolar World Order, Social Media

Introduction

The preponderances of Military, Intelligence and Law Enforcement (MILE) incursions usurping democratic institutions, is fastly becoming a common denominator in Africa particularly West Africa, with Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea-Bissau, Niger and Gabon. This pattern is reminiscence of the mid 60s, with Africa continent recording military coups and attempted coups in folds. The impact of incessant military Coups in Africa could be seen in its deteriorating effects on continual weakening of democratic institutions, quicken

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disposition to arm struggles against State, calls for secessionism, dispositions to terrorism to mirror alternate government against failed democratic set ups and prolong military occupations.

Since the 1950s Africa has recorded over 200 Coup attempts with over 100 with successful. Sudan has the highest shots at Coups with 17 incidences; Burkina Faso with the most successful Coups number is at par with Ghana and Sierra Leone on ten incidences, while Nigeria is at par with Mali, Benin, and Niger with 8 incidences (Powel & Clayton, 2011). Emerging pattern of Coups in Africa comes with deployment of anti-imperialism rhetoric which heavily whip up nationalistic sentiments (Mednick, 2023), and as it played out in Niger, the suspension of sales of uranium and gold to France, its colonial master and the alignment with Russia appease frayed nerves, who have long established link between their impoverishment with France. This cache of sentiments did only sway lots of Nigerien but inadvertently swept lots of questions under the carpet; drivers of the new found nationalistic posture, and selfish leanings of the Niger Junta under Gen Tchiani, whose pattern stereotyped Gabon, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Guinea (Thurston, 2023).

Interestingly, democratic systems require constant vigilance, accountability, and improvement, they remain the best option when compared to the alternatives that history has witnessed. It offers the most promising framework for protecting individual rights, maintaining social order, and preventing abuses of power (Kolawole, 2023). An assured democratic system is the one that quickens towards security sector reform where all MILE are subsume and made accountable to a civil structure. The pattern of coups always show vagueness and shallowness on governance, the new Nigerien junta's name (National Council for Safeguarding the Homeland, CNSP) is identical to the Malian junta's acronym (CNSP, for National Committee for the Salvation of the People). The vagueness of these names mirrors the shallowness of the ideologies, or lack thereof, deployed by the officers, while their rhetoric emphasizes accountability, dignity, sovereignty, toughness, and jettison of State colonial master, same rhetoric translates into ad hoc policymaking and ultimately into self-interest.

Furthermore, in each case, the juntas are fully aware of the illegality of their actions, hence the pains to construct a façade of legitimacy as soon as possible. While the Malian junta accused Keita of corruption and its decision to "take our responsibilities before the people and before history"; their Guinean counterparts similar script submitted that "the duty of a soldier is to save the country, the Burkina Faso junta claimed that the severity of ongoing Islamist insurgency had "imposed" the arrival of his intervention, and Nigerien junta asserted that the Coup was undertaken to avoid "the gradual and inevitable demise" of Niger. While it was unmistakably apparent that the temptation to take power in a violent, impoverished, geopolitically marginalized country must be immense, yet the wielding of that power has, time and again,

shown that militaries cannot fix their countries' problems even as Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea have not been able to stem the circle of violence after coming to power.

Ironically, Bazoum received accolades for containing the jihadists' menace in the Sahel, anti-corruption programs notably in the oil sector on past administration protégés, combating Boko Haram terrorism and banditry, focus on girl child education, improving literacy, and reducing poverty. While Bazoum made enemies in the process of curbing the autonomy and bringing into accountability Nigerien army commanders (Aksar et al., 2023). Concerningly, the absence of Security Sector Reform (SSR) in Niger, could be seen when president Bazoum, relieved the Chief of Staff of the Niger Armed Forces; Gen Mody of his role, with UAE Envoy posting which the latter refused (Gen Modi has been announced as Vice President to the Junta), also efforts at downsizing Niger presidential Guard of about 700 men, ongoing budget scrutinizing, and a review of Gen Tchiani 10yrs non posting as Presidential Guard Commander; Tchiani was not the only one who saw his job under threat this draw the ire of ECOWAS.

Multipolarity offers many centers of power, making its world order more dynamic, diverse, and complex than a unipolar or bipolar world. The relationships among the powers are characterized by a balance of power, where the actions of one power are checked by the actions of the others. Multipolarity triggers increase competition, create opportunities for cooperation and negotiation, such that no single power can dominate the international system on its own (India CRI, 2023). Disturbingly, it could also poses more challenges for global governance, trade, security, climate change, human rights, and potential conflict, particularly in Africa where Military Junta can switch from an expired Colonial master to new global power whose resource patronage, aids and economic conditionalities are more appealing as played out in Niger between France and China.

The ECOWAS military interventions decisions jointly taken by all heads of States of the regional blocs except countries under military Juntas and on suspension, was extensively seen personalized in Nigeria. The military intervention was personalized as War and ECOWAS was personalized as “Tinubu”; the Nigeria president and ECOWAS chairman. This could be seen as fallout of election hangovers after the presidential election being challenged at the tribunal and also due to the cultural, ethnical and religion affinity shared with a proximal neighbor as Niger Republic. Social Media is taken as a virtual tool of casual communication accessed through a framework of interdependent virtual existence, it captures personal, corporate, government and possibly regional blocs position whilst interlinking it – through commonalities to the immediate society. Nigeria has 122.5 million internet users with internet penetration rate of 55.4 percent of the total population as at January 2023 (Kemp, 2023)

The choice of Niger for this study is informed by the streak of Coups assailing the subregion of West Africa particularly the August 2023 Coup in Niger. The inability of ECOWAS to intervene beyond sanctions imposed on Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea, the impact of member States Africa Member States applications to join BRICS+ (Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia) could be seen to further weakens the outright condemnation of the Niger military Coup and also the sudden unifications of military juntas in fragile states to rally behind Niger. The inability of the ECOWAS bloc to respond to four existing coups in the region is seen as a litmus test to her 50yrs existence and effectiveness (Lawal, 2023).

The significance of this study could be seen in the need for Africa to beneficially manage the emerging multipolar world order that extensively rely on Africa's rare earth resources, vital sea trade routes and vast blue economy, the continent's burgeoning population, and the continent largest voting bloc of 28% representation on UN General Assembly cannot be wished away by the merging multipolar world order. The need for Africa to thirst and demand technology transfer against wanton exploration of her continent alongside further processing before raw material before exportation cannot be over emphasized (Ndzendze, 2023).

It was against this background that this study provides answers to the below stated research questions:

- a. How does the emerging multipolar world order influences military intervention in Niger?
- b. How do Social Media influence Nigeria's committal to Military intervention in Niger?

Literature Review

Multipolarity

Multipolarity is the geopolitical situation that arises when several power centers balance each other out. Such that cooperation with Russia and China can provide a healthy alternative for African states including Nigeria to raise their economies to a new level. This can happen when independent governments aim at strengthening the sovereignty of their countries and the wellbeing of their peoples. A multipolar world refers to a global system in which power is distributed among multiple states or blocs of states, rather than being concentrated in unipolar or bipolar dominant powers (India CSR, 2023). A multipolar world is often seen as more diverse, dynamic, and complex than a unipolar or bipolar world. Emerging poles of power in the world are the United States, China, India, Russia, the European Union, Japan, Brazil, and South Africa, while challenges and opportunities of a multipolar world order include managing global governance, trade, security, climate change, human rights, and development. In a multipolar world, different regions and countries have their own interests, values, and agendas, and they cooperate or compete with each other on

various issues. This can include areas like economic policy, military alliances, diplomatic negotiations, environmental regulations, and more (Adama, 2023).

The attendant complexity that usher in the multipolar world order could be seen in the increasing competition and potential conflicts across resource extraction concession, economic policy, military alliances, diplomatic negotiations, and environmental regulations amongst others. It is this dynamic landscapes that African countries, even as a possible pole are to individually and severally navigate through among her different resources sourcing and fund donor partners; United States, United Kingdom, China, Japan, France, Europe and others. These scenarios could account for the disturbing pattern of military incursions, as of the late 80s, into the civil spaces in Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Sudan and Niger. The apparent inability of the Black continent to share a common ground against military Junta is not only concerning but transmit a signal of divisiveness.

The need for a paradigm shift from framed relationships of a donor-recipient relationship between US, EU, UK France, BRICS+ and Africa is not only unhealthy as they seek to objectify the continent as such. AU and regional blocs need a rethink of her framework on multilateralism as such will crystallise clear agenda for its partnership with global players that will capture the priorities of its citizens, value chained for her natural resources, and technology transfer. It is important to understand what emerging multipolarity means for Africa. Will Africa fall victim to a new scramble over raw materials and political hegemony between superpowers or does this new multipolarity offer African countries greater room for negotiation and maneuvering, eventually leading to stronger democracy, enhanced growth, and increased possibilities to address their own problems (Vittorini & Harris, 2009).

Social Media Influence

Social Media

Social Media are cumulative group of information sharing and exchanging sites accessed via the world-wide web. Opinions, emotions and value systems all coalesce through these Media to form pictures of the individuals that utilise them (Robert, 2013). Almost all traditional media have scaled up their assets into critical information infrastructure, making all players in the media space a potential influential. The study of the power of social media and its implications, utilities and drawbacks, is concerning particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic that WHO warned the world of misinformation called Infodemic and the need for sensitisation and awareness to water down impact of infodemic (Owa-Onibiyo & Ifah, 2023). The social media networks, almost rivalling those of the traditional news Media today, have expanded the knowledge bases of societies that were once quite ignorant of each other.

ECOWAS Military Intervention

The Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) created in 1975, member States are from Francophone, Anglophone and Lusophone and the constellations of colonial background do undermine unity of the region on critical issues of trades and social integration. The Coup in Niger had the AU rolling out 15-day ultimatum (Mednick &Asadu, 2023) as against ECOWAS 7-day ultimatum (Nda-Isaiah, 2023). The role reversal in ultimatum announcement between the continent body AU and the regional blocs ECOWAS could translate to a disconnect that afforded the Junta hiding fissures. In support of ECOWAS ultimatum other regional blocs; Economic Community of Central Africa States (ECCAS) showed support amidst controversy in Gabon and other ECCAs (Gabon is presently besieged by 7yr single term tenure and 56yrs dynasty grip on power).

ECOWAS, particularly Nigeria came under social Media (SM) influences of being prodded into proxy wars for Western States particularly for France. The regional bloc whose dynamism to ensure regional stability as a inroads to Members states economic wellbeing had adopted arguably the most comprehensive protocol relating to peace and security in the region in 1999. ECOWAS member States also adopted the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance in 2001 as an instrument to promote peace and security in West Africa. The ECOMOG which is the body's monitoring Group had militarily intervened in Liberia (1990), Sierra Leone (1997), Guinea Bissau (1999), Côte d'Ivoire (2003), Liberia (2003), Mali (2013), and The Gambia (2017). Failure to deploy her monitoring troops in Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso has since become albatross to explain the urgency of military intervention in Niger.

Table I: National Media Catalogues of ECOWAS Military Interventions Niger

S/N	Captions	Media	Type	Source
1	Why Nigeria should <u>not lead ECOWAS to war against Niger</u>	Guardian	Print	Adeyemi (2023)
2	Why Nigeria Should <u>Not Go To War With Niger</u>	Leadership	Print	Alkali (2023)
3	Declaring War On Niger Republic Will Be Dangerous, BKO warns	TVC News	Electronic	Otitoju (2023)
4	<u>Niger Republic War drums</u> – Nigeria disappoints, returns to big-for-nothing status.	Vanguard	Print	ICYMI (2023)
5	Niger coup: ECOWAS and the looming <u>proxy war</u> .	Premium Times	Print	Yushau (2023)
6	ECOWAS Cannot Go To War With Niger Without The Approval of The United Nations.	Arise News	Electronics	Wali (2023)
7	Tinubu's war <u>drums on Niger Republic</u> .	Guardian	Print	Olawunmi (2023)
8	ECOWAS can't justify intervention in Niger without UN's approval – Falana	The Punch	Print	Olayiwola (2023)
9	El-Rufai warns ECOWAS against military intervention in Niger.	The Punch	Print	Adeduyite (2023)
10	PRP: <u>War With Niger Not In Nigeria's Interest</u> .	Daily Trust	Print	Shuaibu (2023)
11	Labour Party accuses Tinubu supporters of clamouring for <u>war in Niger in plot to avoid tribunal judgement</u> .	The Ripples	Print	Oladeji (2023)
12	ACF to Tinubu: <u>War with Niger</u> will bring more chaos, hardship to North.	The Sun.	Prints	Ebije (2023)

13	Arise News (2023) Tinubu Prepares for War in Niger Republic, Seeks Approval of Senate.	Arise News	Electronic	Arise (2023)
14	ECOWAS' albatross	Blueprint	Print	Agbese (2023)
15	Niger coup: Nigeria has obligation to lead in implementing ECOWAS' directives – Tinubu	Blueprint	Print	Odewale (2023)

Source: Mu'azu et al. (2023)

To the extent of media reviewed, only Punch and Blueprint online publications aligned with all international media in their reportage and article publicized while others could be seen laden with undertones that may not be unconnected with prevailing 2023 election hangover, proximal effects of Niger to Nigeria, cultural and ethnical tie. Comparatively, reportage from international media confirms the maturity and reportage stability of Punch and Leadership prints.

Table II: International Media Catalogues of ECOWAS Military Interventions Niger

S/N	Captions	Media	Type	Source
1	Nigeria's President Tinubu faces backlash over <u>military intervention</u> in Niger	BBC News	Electronic	Orjinmo (2023)
2	Nigerians react to <u>ECOWAS plan</u> for Niger	Africanews	Electronics	Africanews (2023)
3	West African leaders make plan for <u>military intervention</u> in Niger.	Al Jazeera	Electronics	Al Jazeera. (2023)
4	Tensions Rise as <u>West African Nations Prepare to Send Troops</u> to Niger.	Times.	Print	Mednick (2023)
5	ECOWAS has picked a "D-Day" for potential <u>military intervention</u> against the coup in Niger.	CNN News	Electronics	Madowo (2023)
6	ECOWAS countries prepping for <u>military intervention</u> in Niger — TV.	TASS TV	Electronic	TASS (2023)

Source: Mu'azu et al. (2023)

Security Sector Reform

Security Sector Reform (SSR) is the process of transforming a country's security system so that it gradually provides individuals and the state with more effective and accountable security in a manner consistent with respect for human rights, democracy, rule of law and principles of good governance (European Commission, 2016). The security sector of; police, the justice system, military, police, civil defence corps, gendarmerie, customs, civilian protection, waters and forests, regulatory bodies (parliament, media and organisations), to which many people add the private sector; private security companies, security and defence service companies, self-defence groups, armed groups, traditional justice. Countries in crisis are often the subject of SSR. However, other countries have benefited from this process; South Africa, Liberia,

Senegal or Ghana. In all these countries, SSR is implemented by the countries' authorities with significant aid coming from outside international donors, yet despite the significant number of countries "affected" by SSR, the results are not always up to the mark, perhaps because they do not combine key success factors (Leboeuf, 2017).

A common indicator across Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, including Chad is that the army has become so entrenched in politics over the decades and this call for complete SSR in order to restore civilian authority over the armed forces. The MILE could be seen in economic related activities in oil field, shipping and all these aggravate the essence of SSR as it makes accountability and transparency of MILE blurred. This trajectory could also be seen in Niger Republic, the very absence of security Sector Governance. The presence of security sector reforms (SSR) can play a significant role in mitigating the occurrence of military coups by addressing underlying factors that often contribute to coups and by promoting civilian control, accountability, and professionalism within the security forces. A Security sector reform is not only supposed to lead to good governance, sustainable security, the rule of law and local leadership responsibility but to socio-economic development as well (OECD 2007; Kohl , 2014).

Factors Militating against Military Interventions in Niger

Military intervention in Niger, or any other country, to restore democratic functionality is a complex and multifaceted issue that requires careful consideration of both the principles of democracy and the specific circumstances of the country in question. This could be further aggravated where the targeted State is fragile along ethnical division, terrorism impacted, food insecure amongst others.

Long-Term Commitment

Military interventions can become protracted, requiring extended deployments and long-term financial and human resource commitments from the intervening country. The inability of States contributing finances, arm forces and materiel on a long term bases could also be inhibitive leading to a half way prosecuted military interventions.

Fragmentation of Identity

In some cases, military interventions may inadvertently exacerbate divisions within society and contribute to a further breakdown of social cohesion.

Dependency

Intervening countries might inadvertently create a situation of dependency in the conflict-affected state, leading to challenges in establishing self-sufficiency and governance.

Geopolitical Complications

Military interventions can strain international relations, particularly if they are perceived as driven by ulterior motives or if they worsen existing geopolitical rivalries. This could arise when neighboring countries are at the forefront of such interventions and this could be seen as an outright war by neighbouring State and not a military interventions by the bloc.

Unintended Consequences

Interventions can lead to unintended outcomes, such as unintended regime changes or power vacuums that create further instability.

Presence of US and France in Niger

France and the United States, which together have more than 2,000 troops in the country and use it as a base to launch attacks on jihadists in the vast and volatile Sahel. The Sahel is also the route for illegal immigrants and human trafficking, and drug trafficking. A military intervention could implicate their presence and could be drawn into the picture of a proxy war, beating behind the very of their presence.

The active China's Economic Interest and the Passive Russia Interest

China is possibly now Niger's first largest foreign investor after former colonial power France, three China's oils giants PetroChina, Sinopec and China National Oil and Gas Exploration and Development Corporation (CNODC) are actively prospecting for oil in Niger on the Agadem field. Such that China's now owns two-thirds of the Agadem oil field, consequentially outstripping France, even as China's new pipeline stretches 1,200 miles from Niger's through Benin to the Atlantic, and could increase Niger's oil output by over 450%. While on the Uranium field China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) own 37.2% of the Azelik uranium mine and another 24.8% is owned by another Chinese entity. China is equally taking advantage of Niger's strong sun, as Chinese government, and companies are positioning to fund and develop solar energy, and turn it into this country's major source of renewable energy in the future, a clear BRI objective (Chinas Chamber of Commerce, 2023).

While Africa has no measures of profiling buyers of her sensitive resources even as such profiling could attract higher pricing for the growth of her economy, unlike the United State that recently banned the export of semi conductor technology chips to China on the assertion that the chips are getting to enemies for military hardware through Beijing (Willemysn, 2023). A conflict in Niger could also put at risk China's near-complete, 100,000 barrel per day oil. While China is being passive and elusive possibly hiding behind Russia's Wagner braggadocios to protect the BRICS+ narratives. At a time when the militaries of both the US and its NATO allies are outstretched at the ongoing war in Ukraine, the cost of retaining a military foothold in Africa under conditions of war would be prohibitively high. The only exception to this would

be if the US and NATO viewed any encroachment of Wagner into the region as unacceptable, triggering a proxy superpower conflict in Africa. Such a conflict would only exacerbate the dire consequences of any underlying hostilities between ECOWAS and Niger (Ritter, 2023).

Concerningly, one of the very few economic presence of Russia was the Zarubezhvodstroy dam's construction launched by a Russian company, in 2011 but stopped 2 years later for 'technical incapacity' of which China is lobbying the Nigerien government to carry the project. Chinas reluctance to contribute towards the G5 counterterrorism could be seen in the past reluctance of Burkina Faso to sever diplomatic ties with Taiwan. Could China then be using Russia's Wagner mercenary as a proxy security forces on Africa soil?

Labour and Resources Exploitation in Niger

The Azelik Uranium field was a large-scale artisanal mining, which did not much respect the local labor legislation, did not really offer opportunities for training Nigerien workers and technicians, and caused damage to the environment (Cabestan, 2018). This further amounts to sheer labour exploitation, reluctance to value-chain production process in Africa and no premised efforts for technology transfer just like other Western counterparts. There has been regular complains about Chinas CNPC's lack of transparency and this has seen to the entrants of other players in the market from UK and Algeria (Hicks, 2015). The sudden increase of donkey slaughtering and skin exports to China in 2015–16 momentarily provoked some anti-Chinese feelings, especially in the Niamey region where the number of donkeys rapidly dropped to a point that Niamey's mayor banned their slaughtering and then the country banned their export. And this problem is far from being limited to Niger (Quartz Africa, 2016).

Intrigues of Military Intervention in Niger

Concerningly, Nigeria is currently in an unconventional war with bandits, terrorists and secessionists. An ECOWAS military intervention could open up the Northern flanks to extensively constellations of terrorist incursions. The North is understandably edgy and disturbed by the potentials of intervention even before the first shot is fired, the economy of the region is on the downward spiral, the Arewa economic forum (AEF) submitted that traders are losing N13 billion weekly due to the closure of the Nigeria – Niger border. This is just as over 2,000 containers carrying perishable food items and coming into Nigeria through the border with Niger republic are trapped, products lost and prices spiraling out of control (Alkali, 2023). The incapacitation of the ECOWAS bloc could in financial, logistical, and military capacity to enforce its will in Niger, which it failed to do in Burkina Faso and Mali.

The Republic of Niger

The Niger Republic shares an approximate of 1,500km long border with six states in Nigeria, Sokoto, Kebbi, Katsina, Jigawa, Yobe and Borno. Nigerien has thriving business in these States and beyond with ethnical, cultural, family and ancestral ties with Northern Nigeria. Niger was a continuation of the northern part of Nigeria until the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, when foreign powers created Africa's current borders (Mwai, 2023). The republic of Republic of Niger is 53% Hausa, 7% Fulani and 6% Kanuri. The cultural, ethnical, and religious affinities asides, many Nigeriens dominate transborder trades in livestock, dates fruit, and many Nigeriens can easily claim to be Nigerians, and vice versa. This largely explains the northern Nigeria opposition to military action (Kolawole, 2023).

Sentiment against France is also rife, and Bazoum clamp down on protest against France could also be one of his undoing particularly embracing the France troop earlier dislodged by the Junta in Mali. Nigeriens believe France policies have not been fair to the masses (Issoufou & Ochieng, 2023). This sentiment against France also confers a seeming legitimacy and acceptance on the Junta, such that any ECOWAS military intervention could be complicated by the presence of sizeable US, French and European military personnel in Niger as structure supporting regional security counterterrorism efforts designed to defeat Islamic terrorists operating in the Sahel. The US likewise maintains two large bases, as the foundation of its military presence in West Africa checkmating illegal immigrants through Niger to Libya (Ritter, 2023), most of which are stranded between border closures crating humanitarian crisis (Associated 2023). An ECOWAS-Niger conflict could empower Islamist militants, and minority communities in every nation involved, leading to an outbreak of civil conflict which could unleash a wave of new refugees seeking to cross the Sahel into North Africa and on to Europe, whose capacity to absorb migrant populations is overstretched (Ritter, 2023).

Table I: Pattern of Military Coup de tats in Niger Republic

S/N	Coups/Coups Attempts	Year	Comment
1	Attempted Coup	1963	Decalo and Idrissa (2012)
2	Assassination attempt	1965	Decalo and Idrissa (2012)
3	Successful Coup	1974	Col. Kountché 1974- <i>Died</i> 1987
4	Coup Extension	1987	Col. Ali Saibou 1987-1989
5	Successful Coup	1996	Col. Mainassara Assassinated 1999
6	Successful Coup	1999	Maj. Wanké
7	Successful Coup	2010	Salou Djibo 2010-2011
8	Coup Attempt	2021,	Unidentified Gunmen
9	Successful Coup	2023	Presidential Guard

Source: Mu'azu et al. (2023)

The ECOWAS Chairman; President Tinubu's, tough line against coups might be rooted in his own experience. He was barely a year in office as a lawmaker in the early 1990s before elections were annulled,

parliament was dissolved and Gen Sani Abacha seized power. Despite the federal government's inability to stamp out the decade-long insurgency, Nigerian democracy has held firm, in stark contrast to Mali and Burkina Faso. The same cannot be said for Nigeria's northern neighbor, Niger (Baltoi, 2023). Nigeria tagged the giant of Africa, is not only the biggest financier of ECOWAS but has always been at the forefront for military interventions for the restoration of democratic, a cause which is remotely challenged by her fragile political dispensation and cultural affinity with the Republic of Niger.

These affinities and border proximal further complicate the responsiveness of military interventionist for which ECOWAS and particularly Nigeria is known for. Just emerging from the poll whose presidential result is being challenged at the Tribunal, the ECOWAS military intervention as usually spearheaded by Nigeria is enmeshed with political and regional undertone, such that the normal ECOWAS military intervention has been grossly substituted with war in all Nigeria's prints and electronic media except Punch Media (Table III), whose publications aligns with International media as seen in CNN, BBC, TASS and Al Jazeera (Table IV), particularly sanctions imposed on Niger by AU and ECOWAS.

Concerningly, the inability of a unified AU and ECOWAS could be seen with Algeria supporting the military Junta in Niamey against ECOWAS military interventions (Knipp, 2023), the unification of the Military Juntas in Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea to join forces with Niger against ECOWAS interventions (Thurston, 2023), the passive condemnation of the Niger Coup by South Africa (Akinyemi, 2023), the outright reluctance of China to condemn the Coup, and the outright hailing of the Coup by Wagner Russia, all could be seen resonating the desire to align with the East (Thurston, 2023) championing multi polar world order through BRICS+, as against former colonial master France whose policy of Assimilation is lately condemned as not only constrictive but blamed for the development retrogression of Francophone nations in West Africa subregion (Thurston, 2023).

Theoretical Framework

Theory of Prebendalism

This study is underpinned by the theory of Prebendalism. Prebendalism refers to primitive acquisition. The concept is credited to Joseph A. Richard (1996) who depicts the politics of corruption in Nigeria where cronies or members of an ethnic group are compensated when an individual from the group comes into power or where; "state offices are regarded as prebends that can be appropriated by office holders who use them to generate material benefits for themselves and their constituents and kin groups (Joseph, 1996). This patron client or identity politics has encouraged corruption in the country to the extent that appointments, promotions, admissions, award of contracts among others are done with consideration for one's ethnic or religious affiliations. This practice is also prevalent in military Intelligence and Law Enforcement.

The nexus between Prebendalism and study is in the idea that corrupt officeholders treat their offices as extractive opportunities for themselves and their network of supporters. In this view, in the full awareness of been about to be posted out from an office he has held for over 11yrs after same fate befell Gen. Modi the Chief of Army staff. Gen Tchiani of Niger saw his job as simply too valuable to lose even with less than two years into retirement from service. Other theories on triggers for the coup are compatible with Tchiani's self-interest being one major factor; the coup can be understood as multi-causal, a need to safeguard position and access to wealth. Tchiani's move against Bazoum also opens up questions about the triangular relationship between Bazoum, Tchiani, and Niger's immediate past president, Mahamadou Issoufou. As colleagues for over thirty years in the same political part of PNDS), Issoufou and Bazoum are close allies in the opposition battling Mamadou Tandja's third term presidency bid in 2010. When Issoufou took over power from Tandja at the completion of his two tenures, he anointed Bazoum, who then won the 2020/2021 election, although there were some very lopsided results in Bazoum's favor, particularly in the Tahoua Region (Thurston, 2023).

There is a temptation for the ex-president to attempt to control his successor, and there is a temptation for the new president to flex his independence. In the context of the Sahel, moreover, such relationships are relatively uncharted territory unlike, in Nigeria, where at both the federal and state level one can observe numerous instances of tension between "godfathers" and their protégés (Thurston, 2023).

Methodology

This study adopts thematic research design to examine influence of emerging multipolar world order and social media on ECOWAS military intervention in Niger. This study places with reliance on publicly available archive documents. The study relies solely on secondary data. The research is conducted by examining literature concerning the Africa member states applications to join BRICS+, nuances from State members on Niger military Junta, AU sanctions, ECOWAS sanctions and social media reportage on ECOWAS military intervention.

Discussion of Findings

The review of literature reveals that the reluctance of China to condemn the coup could be associated to her emerging outstripping investments in Uranium, Oil and energy above France in the Republic of Niger which also align with her disposition of non-meddlersomeness. Study also reveals that the passive position of Egypt, South Africa and Ethiopia could not be isolated from their BRICS+ membership status approach as against western States in Niger.

The result gotten from empirical literature is that government measures through official security apparatus are not doing well enough to curtail banditry. This could translates into the over concentric nature of the security architecture of the nation where command structure is overcentralised and reactive in nature which

embolden outlawry and banditry. Therefore many farmers have been uprooted and displaced from their ancestral farming communities, others are perpetually afraid for their lives and as such cannot optimally engage in farming activities.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study concludes that most African countries who had BRIC status and applications pending (South Africa, Egypt, Algeria, Ethiopia) and those ruled by Military Junta were not forthcoming in condemning the Niger military Coup. This accounted for a divided front (Algeria, Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea) and altercating comments.

The study equally concludes that the influencing Social Media position which personalized Military Intervention with War and ECOWAS Intervention as “Tinubu’s War” is largely influenced by the extension of election hangover by opposition, the deep cultural and ethnical ties of Northern Nigeria with Niger republic. This further whip up sentiment against Nigeria government.

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made;

- a. The study recommends that AU, ECOWAS BRICS+, all regional and international blocs should condemn member states leveraging on alliance or non-alliance status to support military coups, tenure elongation, constitution manipulation which magnetizes military coups but should deepen common grounds against military incursion into political space.
- b. The study recommends the evolvment of strong democratic institutions whose tones of best practices can dull the misinformation trajectories that comes with the social media be it for political ethical or cultural affinity. While all mechanisms on negotiation table should be explored and strengthen as seen in the roles by Northern clerics and traditional rulers.

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