

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.12894023>

NEO-REALISM VERSUS NEO-LIBERALISM IN WEST AFRICA'S REGIONAL SECURITY: ECOWAS AGE OF RETROGRESSION

Adel M Abdulaziz Al Geriani and Saleh Idrissa Ibrahim

University Islam Sultan Sharif Ali, Brunei Darussalam

Email: adel.mabdulaziz@unissa.edu.bn

*** Corresponding author:**

Saleh Idrissa Ibrahim, academic advisor, R.E.A.L Education Group Sdn Bhd,
Lot 217, Batu 13, Jln Hulu Langat, Taman Koperasi Uda, 43100 Ampang Jaya, Selangor

Email: mutabaruka33@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study intends to deliberate upon the decay, the decline, and the weakness in the vitality of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the area of collective regional security management in the 21st Century of the new millennium. Comparatively, the regional organization has clearly lost its security vitality of the 1990s that once depicted the application of the theory of neo-liberal institutionalism into practice. This is the reality today that came about as a result of the predominance of many significant factors. ECOWAS has gradually lost ground to neo-realist power politics, giving way to many extra-regional powers to find easy loopholes to encroach upon the institution's regional sovereignty and weaken its efficiency in West Africa. Military coups, ECOWAS-unsanctioned penetration of indirect extra-regional powers like Russia in Mali, several European forces in Niger, unilateral actions of new local political leaders, the startling increase in the collapse of national security in several of its most prominent member states particularly Nigeria, all contribute to the marginalization of the organization in the field of political and military events in the region. It is well observed that the West African neo-liberal regional institution stands hopeless vis-à-vis the "invited" violation of its regional sovereignty, as well as the increasing unilateral dependency of some of its member-states on outside powers to take charge of their regional security affairs. It is worth mentioning that this article focuses on the situation of ECOWAS prior to the military coup of Niger Republic that took place in July 2023. That is because that event was of an international sensation and needs an article on its own.

Keywords: ECOWAS, Military coup, Neo-liberalism, Neo-realism, Pan-Africanism, Regional Organization.