

Military intervention in politics

INTRODUCTION

The main role of the military as a bureaucratic organization is to defend the country against external threats. The military bureaucracies are expected to carry out defense policies formulated by legislative and executive branches. However, in developing countries, the military has had some other functions like contributing to development, and protecting the regime from internal and external sources, etc. The distinctive characteristic of military bureaucracy from civilian bureaucracy is that they have more hierarchic, authoritative, and a legitimate source of coercion makes it easy for them to influence political institutions.

There are many forms of military intervention. Until the last decade or so, military force was used most often to achieve a state's geopolitical goals of protecting or enhancing its territory, population, and other critical resources.

The National Guard function of the military makes it very powerful, and sometimes unquestionable. For example, in Turkey, criticizing the military can easily be recognized as a crime assuming that as an assault of Turkish Military Identity. Even in developed countries, although the military is restricted to national defense and obedient to the civil authority, it still has significant influence on the governmental policies.

Author Fourney states that no individual can have a significant effect on military budget. The military has almost complete discretion in their specialization or professional area, and this is accepted as normal in a certain extent even in developed countries. Military interventions in the form of a coup or military regimes are the most extreme forms of the military having an impact on the policy process. (Coup is an irregular transfer of the state's chief executive by

the regular armed forces or internal security forces through the use or threat of the use of force.)

One can also see that since the close of the cold war, military intervention for humanitarian ends and conflict resolution has increased dramatically. This can include the use of troops in traditionally unconventional ways such as disaster relief, for example, when the United States sent troops to help Hondurans recover from a devastating hurricane in the 1990s. Far more common and far more controversial is the use of combat troops to help end the fighting in an intractable conflict.

By means of military interventions, the military wants to control the policy process largely. Hence, the military uses either legislative or executive power or in some cases judiciary power. With military interventions, the military not only changes the executive or legislative powers of government but also tries to exert strict control over other interest groups or society.

THEORIES ON MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

Explaining military interventions is not an easy task, because they are results of a complex mix of historical, political, economic, personal, military, social, ethnic, and cultural factors. Although some authors argue that military interventions are random phenomena unrelated to the structural characteristics of societies and international settings many structural theories see the causal relations to explain military interventions in politics.

Socio-Economic Development

One of the most common arguments relates the propensity of military intervention with socio-economic development. Finer (1988) argues that the density of military interventions is more likely to decrease with increased socio-economic development status. Nations with high socio-economic situations have higher urbanization, industrialization and literacy level, and so have increased mass participation into the social activities. Socio-economic development creates awareness of political events and capacities for political actions. In other words, it increases the number of potential political actors and diffuses increased political resources to these actors who would be willing and able to sustain civilian institutions. On the other hand,

the industrialization diminishes the propensity for military interventions since the increased socio-economic complexity puts public administration beyond the skills of armed forces.

Hence generally military interventions generally take place in countries of lower income status. According to economic dependency arguments, economically out-dependent countries that are not self-sufficient have more coups where there is sometimes very violent internal competition for very limited internal sources. Foreign debt problems contribute to coup.

Political Development

Huntington's (1977) theory of political development and decay stresses the importance of institutionalization of political organizations and procedures. In the case of social mobilization, if there are weak political institutions that regulate participation, it will be unable to respond to these demands, and regulate social conflict, thereby succumbing to military interventions and related instabilities.

The Centrality of Military

The stronger the military's resources, either as a per cent of state resource or relative to the national economy, the weaker the institution of civil society and thereby the greater the probability of military interventions. Several studies have found that larger armies and those with greater claims to the government revenues have been more coups prone. A second view argues that a centralized chain of command, military discipline, and extensive communication make military officers a cohesive group, capable of organizing effective seizure.

CONCLUSION

A group of military officers supported by civil servants and by deeply disaffected popular forces often respond to a crisis by seizing democratic representative power. The institutional design of these weak democracies correlates with the success of military coups. Almost all of

developing countries experienced at least one catastrophic breakdown such as, suspension of the constitutions, the abolition of legislature, and rule by appointed officials, and led by military officers directly. The rule by military officers continues for a short period of time but, its impact continues and brings uncertainty to the expectations of people in the long range.