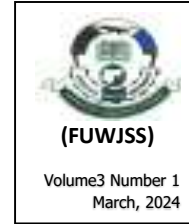


**MARITIME SECURITY THREATS AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN COASTAL
AREAS OF DELTA AND RIVERS STATES,
NIGERIA**



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Abstract

International maritime security threats, especially sea piracy and oil theft have continued to affect economic development in Nigeria's coastal areas in diverse ways. This paper interrogates possible effects of international maritime security threats on economic development in coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States, Nigeria. Data for the study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected from a sample of 385 respondents drawn from Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nigeria Maritime Administration and Safety Agency in Rivers and Delta States; diplomatic staff from Benin Republic, Togolese, and Senegalese embassies in Abuja as well as operators of shipping businesses in Bonny and Oporoza coastal areas in Rivers and Delta States. The study employed the purposive sampling technique to select 15 participants for in-depth interview. Data from questionnaire were analysed using simple percentages and absolute frequencies, while data from in-depth interview were analysed using narrative analytic technique. Also, data from secondary sources were analysed using relational-content analysis. The study's results showed, among other things, that international maritime security threats impinge on economic development of coastal areas in Delta and Rivers States. The paper concludes that sea piracy and oil theft have increased the level of poverty in coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States, Nigeria. The paper recommends that the National Assembly should enact legislations aimed at poverty alleviation and job creation to curb the negative implications of sea piracy and oil theft on the livelihood of people in coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States.

Keywords: Maritime domain, Security, Development, Economic development, Coastal areas

Introduction

Economic health of Nigeria and other states in West Africa depends on improved international maritime security in their maritime domain given that the Gulf of Guinea is major transport route for export and import of petroleum products within the sub-region. International maritime security threats such as sea piracy and oil theft in the Gulf of Guinea hamper international trade within the region. The foregoing could further hamper the economies of countries in the region through multiplicity of ways. According to Okereke (2022), international maritime domain is important for economic development in Nigeria given its large deposit of oil and gas. Nevertheless, instead of contributing largely to economic development of the country, challenges in the maritime domain including sea piracy, oil theft, internal conflicts, political instability, and poor socio-economic conditions of the people have contributed in many ways in preventing Nigeria from benefiting significantly from its strategic location in the Gulf of Guinea. Given challenges in the country's maritime domain, Nigeria loses nearly \$600 million in export revenue yearly as a consequence of threats posed by sea piracy to fishing industry alone. From January 2000 to September 2008, Nigeria lost about \$115.4 billion to oil theft. In 2011, the country also lost \$7.7 billion per day to illegal oil bunkering, which reduces the ability of Nigerian to ensure adequate development in the country, especially in the coastal areas of the country. International maritime security threats in Nigeria maritime domain affect sea business in the Gulf of Guinea as a result of increase in the number of attacks off the country's coast as well as in the neighboring waters in the sub-region's coastlines. A quick examination of international maritime security threats in Nigeria show that out of 53 incidences of sea piracy that occurred in the Gulf of Guinea in 2016, a total of 36 attacks occurred in Nigeria, which made the country the most volatile maritime domain in the sub-region. In 2018, 107 sea piracy attacks occurred in 6 countries with Nigeria having the highest incidences of attacks (International Maritime Bureau, 2019).

Though a number of measures have been taken in the past such as the establishment of Yaunde Code of Conduct and Inter-regional Coordination Center (ICC) to combat maritime security threats, sea piracy, oil theft, among other maritime criminality have continued to fester in the coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States with its huge implications for economic development in the areas. Therefore, this paper is geared toward the interrogation of the implications of international maritime security threats for economic development in coastal areas of Delta and Rivers States with a view to investigating the challenges militating against efforts at combating sea piracy and oil theft in Nigerian coastal areas.

International Maritime Security

Before defining international maritime security, it is important to define the concept of security. Okereke and Okoli (2020) asserted that security was originally used in describing situations related to liberation from two Latin words "se" which means "without" and "curus" which means "uneasiness". The authors further stressed that security is usually perceived as a largely contested concept. For them, security is a policy objective that is targeted at protecting cherished values of the state. Though the authors identified the origin of security, their perception of security is over-generalised. More so, United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] (1994) cited in Adeleke (2021) noted that the concept of human security is comprised of increased access to healthcare (health security), freedom from hunger (food security), freedom from physical threats (personal security). Also, human security is comprised of protection of cultures and ethnic groups from attacks (community security), as well as preservation of natural resources and protection of the people from environmental destruction (environmental security). For national security to be impactful, all components of security comprising of environmental security, human security, cyber security, food security, maritime security, border security, among others, must be adequately secured. However, the Adeleke did not define international maritime security, which is the focus of this paper. Similarly, Okereke (2022) asserted that international maritime security is concerned with the absence of acts that adversely affect the natural integrity as well as the resilience of any navigable waterways. Such effects on the international maritime environment in the seas as well as security of individuals carrying out legal businesses in international waters shows that having an adequate maritime security policy would go a long way in enhancing the protection of oceanic trade, protect coastal communities and their livelihoods, ensure the safety of navigation as well as protect the fauna and flora in the ocean. The foregoing further shows that maritime security is vital in facilitating international trade which could ultimately leads to economic development of a state. However, the Okereke did not define international maritime security to show that it is better prosecuted through multilateral arrangement.

Agbai, Aliegba and Muhammad, (2023) defined international maritime security threats as a consequence of deteriorating regional security in the Africa. International maritime security is threatened by poverty, economic deprivation, bad governance, environmental degradation, spread of transnational criminal activities, among others. International maritime security threats have raised concerns in many areas of human lives because of geo-strategic implications of the crime. However, the Agbai, Aliegba and

Muhammad did not define international maritime security in line with the purpose of this study.

From the foregoing, international maritime security is defined, in this study, as ensuring the safety of maritime professionals, vessels, environment and businesses resulting in social and economic loss in coastal areas of Delta and Rivers States. International maritime security include issues relating to sea piracy, maritime kidnappings, sea robbery, oil theft, oil bunkering, vessel theft, kidnapping of crew members, sea terrorism, among others, in the coastal waters of Rivers and Delta States. The foregoing reveals that international maritime security, if not properly managed, could impinge on the development of coastal states in Rivers and Delta States and beyond due to its diplomatic, political, economic and other implication for security in a state. Therefore, international maritime security involves mitigation of security threats in Nigeria's maritime domains in order to engender economic development in coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States through promotion of safety of individuals and maritime-related businesses in the coastal areas.

Conceptualising Economic Development

Literature on development showed that the concept can be better understood by looking at social and economic aspects of development. Nahar (2014) noted that development is a concept that is flexible, broad and holistic depending largely on our own disciplinary traditions, manner of thinking and orientations. Development involve improvement in the quality of lives of people in a state; efficiency and equity in the distribution of natural resources, increase in the number of people that participate in the process of decision-making, continuous improvement in the welfare of the individuals as well as that of the society. Development equally involves the process of conscious changes that brings about better linkages between social policies as well as programmes and human needs. Development involves the process that is defined in conceptual sense as possessing three categories: the first is a pre-existing social circumstance that efforts at social development wants to change; the second category is the process of change itself, while the third category is the end which development goals are sometimes designed to accomplish. Nevertheless, the foregoing definition of development is not linked to employment creation and poverty reduction in Rivers and Delta states, which is needed in this paper.

More so, literature on development show that the common dimensions of development are education, employment, health, poverty, justice, gender, equity, access to basic infrastructure as well as services and inequality. Soft aspects of development include morality, culture, ethics and spirituality (Adam, Mohammed & Bin-Baron, 2019). This definition of

development is slightly related to the meaning of the concept in this paper because it touches on poverty; however, the definition did not touch on unemployment which is vital in the definition of development in this paper. Therefore, development is defined, in this paper, as adequate protection of maritime businesses and individuals in the coastal areas with a view to achieving steady increase in the wellbeing of people in coastal communities in Delta and Rivers States. Development, in this study, is targeted at reduction in the level of unemployment and poverty in coastal communities in Delta and Rivers States.

Many scholars have defined the concept of economic development in diverse ways. According to Litwinski (2017), economic development means a process that involves holistic change in a state involving qualitative, quantitative as well as structural transformations that result from the actions of people of a state. For a change to be regarded as economic development, such changes must impact on the material circumstances of the people of a state with the aim of meeting their needs in the area of consumption of goods and services. This shows that economic development has to do with improvement in healthcare, improvement in access to education, provision and access to public goods as well as services, and promotion of entrepreneurship. The Litwinski further stressed that economic development is measured in terms of life expectancy, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as well as employment level in a state. The definition of economic development in this study is related to the meaning of the concept in this study, but it did not incorporate poverty which is an important variable in the definition of the concept in this paper.

For Bilgaev, Dong, Cheng, Sadykova, and Mikhowa (2020), economic development cannot be defined without linking it to sustainable development, which means judicious utilisation of natural resources, growth of social as well as economic indicators and safeguarding of the lives of individuals. The author further stressed that economic issues include inequality, poverty as well as issues relating to health of people in the country. Though the Bilgaev, Dong, Cheng, Sadykova, and Mikhowa defined economic development to include poverty, the important variable of unemployment in the coastal waters of Delta and Rivers was not omitted. Similarly, Migala-Warchal (2019) asserted that determinants of economic development include GDP per capita, unemployment rate, gross domestic expenditure, number of people with lower secondary education, number of people who cannot meet their unexpected expenditure, the number of people who are at the risk of poverty, number of people who live in slums in cities, and number of people who have access to quality education. Migala-Warchal's definition of economic development captures unemployment rate which one of the variables in the definition of the

concept in this study, but omitted poverty rate which is equally vital in the definition of the concept in this study.

Economic development is defined by Dudley Seer as occurring when a country experiences reduction or elimination of poverty, inequality and unemployment (Impalure & Dore, 2020). This definition of economic development is adopted in this study because it captures poverty, inequality and unemployment which are indicators of economic development in this paper. In view of the foregoing, economic development is defined, in this paper, as prevention of sea piracy and oil theft in Nigeria coastal waters with a view to reducing poverty and unemployment rates in the coastal communities in Rivers and Delta States. In this study, economic development is measured in terms reduction in the level of poverty and unemployment in coastal areas in Delta and Rivers States.

Empirical Review of Related Literature

With respect to the implications of international maritime security threats for economic development in coastal areas of Delta and Rivers States, Similarly, Anele (2015) wrote on the economic affect of piracy in Nigeria focusing on the fishing industry. The purpose of the study was to examine sea piracy as well as its effects on the fishery industry in Nigeria with a view to recommending measures to counter the crime. It was found that piracy has hampered employment as well as food production in the fishery sector of the Nigerian economy. However, the study did not interrogate the implications of international maritime security threats for economic development of coastal areas in Delta and Rivers States, which is part of the objectives of this paper.

Similarly, Soremi (2020) identified the implications of oil theft on social and economic development in the Niger Delta. The study was built around the "resource curse" theory in order to clearly understand the reasons behind the high level of piracy in the Niger Delta in particular and Africa in general despite abundance of natural resources in the region. Data for the study were collected from secondary source and analysed using content analysis. Findings showed that economic implications of sea robbery and oil theft include reduced revenue, increased unemployment, while its social impact include displacement of persons and sustained conflict in the region. However, the study did not interrogate the implications of international maritime security threats for economic development in coastal areas of Delta and Rivers States. In addition, Ezirim (2018) studied oil crimes, national security and the Nigerian state from 1999 to 2015. The study was built around the frustration-aggression model in order to understand the driver of oil crimes in Nigeria and its impacts on economic development in Niger Delta. Data for the study were collected

from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected from focus group discussion with experts in the oil sector, while secondary data were collected from observations from Nigerian Navy, Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation, and Nigeria Customs Service. Data collected were analysed using Logical Validation method. Findings from the study revealed that illegal oil bunkering, pipeline vandalisation, attacks on oil installations, kidnapping, sea piracy, among others pose huge threats to national security. Nevertheless, the study did not interrogate the implications of international maritime security threats for economic development in coastal areas of Delta and Rivers States.

In a study by Elim, Affi and Muhammed (2015), the challenge of sea piracy in the coastal waters in Africa was examined. Data for the study were collected from secondary source of data and analysed using content analysis. Findings from the study showed that international maritime security in coastal waters in Africa cost the global economy above USD \$18 billion per annum from 2005 to 2015. In the year 2012 alone, sea pirates carried out 74 attacks on ships off the coast of Somalia. The study equally identified some of the maritime security threats in the coastal areas in Africa as poverty and unemployment. However, the study did not interrogate the implications of international maritime security threats for economic development in coastal areas of Delta and Rivers States.

Finally, Onuoha (2013) wrote on piracy and maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea focusing on trends, concerns and propositions. The purpose of the study was to examine the dynamics of piracy in the GoG in the past two decades. Data for the study were generated from secondary data source and analysed qualitatively using content analysis. It was found that between 1991 and 2012, 734 pirate attacks occurred in the Gulf of Guinea region, with the attacks in Nigeria accounting for 335 which represented 46 percent of the total attacks took place within the period through piracy in the region impacted negatively on energy security, escalated insurance premiums, and increased the potentials in terrorism financing. It was recommended, among other things, that cooperative security approach should be adopted in combating the challenge of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, especially in the Nigeria maritime domain. However, the study did not interrogate the implications of international maritime security threats for economic development of coastal areas in Delta and Rivers States, which the paper is focused on.

Generally, scholars that wrote on the implications of international maritime security threats for economic development of Nigeria did not focus on reduction of poverty and unemployment levels in Delta and Rivers States through fight against sea piracy and oil theft, which are the focus of this study. The works on the foregoing subject matter were written largely

from 2013 to 2018, and this shows that the findings may have been overtaken by events given the increase in international security threats in Nigeria from 2019 to 2022. With respect to the investigation of the challenges militating against efforts at combating international maritime security threats in Nigerian coastal areas for enhanced economic development in Delta and Rivers States, Aboh and Ahmed (2021) examined maritime security threats in the Niger Delta by appraising the development of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea. Data for the study were collected from secondary source and analysed using content analysis. Findings revealed that piracy and armed robbery at sea in worsened through its linkage to other criminal gangs. It was further revealed that USD \$326 million was given to Tompolos's Global West Specialist Vessels Limited as contracted by NIMASA. Nigeria has spent huge sums of money in counter-piracy bills which would have provided adequate revenue to operators of maritime businesses. The National Assembly has equally abandoned the bills for the establishment of maritime justice system for tackling the menace of sea piracy in the coastal areas of Nigeria. It was also found that the flawed legal standard for local market operators called "black market" for petroleum products makes it easy for pirates to sell their stolen products with impunity. However, the study did not investigate the challenges militating against efforts at combating international maritime security threats in Nigerian coastal areas for enhanced economic development in Delta and Rivers States.

More so, Ifedi (2020) studied security challenges in Nigeria's maritime sector focusing on its implications for sustainable development goals. The study was built around the Marxist Political Economy approach in order to clearly understand the class character of the international system in relation to the international maritime security threats in Nigeria. Data for the study were collected through synchronic interview method. This involved the collection and analysis of opinions of stakeholders that work in the wharf using purposive sampling method. 50 respondents were purposively selected. Data collected were analysed using content analysis. Findings from the study showed that piracy, kidnapping, poaching, among others, constitute security challenges in the coastal areas in Nigeria. It was equally found that activities of criminal gangs facilitated the proliferation of AK-47 in the coastal areas. Nevertheless, the study did not investigate the challenges militating against efforts at combating international maritime security threats in Nigerian coastal areas for enhanced economic development in Delta and Rivers States.

In a study by Abiodun and Dahiru (2020), maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea and the quest for security intelligence deployment in combating the menace was studied. The research design of the study was

quantitative research design involving the use of structured questionnaire and interviews that have significant reliability index. Data collected from questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics, while data collected from interview and secondary sources were content analysed. Findings from the study showed that there are many dimensions of insecurity afflicting the Gulf of Guinea, which include: terrorism, piracy, kidnapping, illegal oil bunkering, among others, and these raise the need for the use of functional security intelligence gathering in combating the treat of maritime insecurity in the region. However, the study did not investigate the challenges militating against efforts at combating international maritime security threats in Nigerian coastal areas for enhanced economic development in Delta and Rivers States, which is part of the focus of this paper.

In addition, Omeje (2014) studied the state, conflict and evolving politics in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Data for the study were collected from secondary source and analysed qualitatively using content analysis. Findings from the study showed that maritime security threats in West Africa originated from coastal areas in Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Congo and Sierra Leone and the threats reverberate to the littoral states. Maritime security threats pose huge threats to seaborne trade in the coastal areas as well as increase the cost of shipping of oil and merchandise trade and ship-related activities. Nevertheless, the study did not investigate the challenges militating against efforts at combating international maritime security threats in Nigerian coastal areas for enhanced economic development in Delta and Rivers States.

Finally, Uadiala (2012) examined the security implications for sea piracy and maritime security threats in then contemporary economy in the coastal areas in Africa. Data for the study were collected from secondary source of data and analysed using content analysis. Findings from the study showed that poor implementation of international instruments such as the Yaounde Code of Conduct established by Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of East Central African States (ECCAS) is responsible for increase in piracy in the coastal areas in Nigeria. It was also found that sea piracy has negative effects on oil production, fishing and maritime transportation in the coastal areas. Nevertheless, the study did not investigate the challenges militating against efforts at combating international maritime security threats in Nigerian coastal areas for enhanced economic development in Delta and Rivers States.

Generally, scholars that studied the efforts at combating international maritime security threats in Nigerian coastal areas did not focus on the challenges militating against efforts at combating international maritime

security threats such as sea piracy and oil theft in Nigerian coastal areas for enhanced reduction in the levels of poverty and unemployment in coastal areas of Delta and Rivers States, which is part of the objectives of this study. The studies were conducted before 2022 and the locations of the studies are equally different from the location of this study. The scholars did not also build their study around the neo-functional theory which would have shown how concerted efforts could be used by countries affected by international maritime security threats in combating the menace of piracy and oil theft in Nigerian coastal waters.

Theoretical Framework: Rational Choice Theory

Rational choice theory of behavioural paradigm and at individual level of analysis was examined in this study. Rational choice theory was popularised by Gary Becker in 1992. The theory is used in modelling and understanding of human behaviour. The theory originated as part of behavioural revolution in the United States of America Political Science of the 1950s and 1960s which focused on the investigation of behaviour of individuals using empirical methods of enquiry. The starting point of rational choice theory is that the individuals are perceived as interacting together in groups or social institutions (Ogu, 2013).

According to Adanali (2016), one of the basic assumptions of rational choice theory is that complex social phenomenon can be explained in terms of the fundamental individual actions they are comprised of. The primary unit of social life is the individual action and it is these actions that can help in the understanding of social institutions as well as social change. Individuals act in specific terms in view of challenges that confront them as well as on the basis of information available to them, which forms the basis of their actions. The theory views the individuals as rational beings because they must predict the outcomes of alternative courses of action and calculate that which will be best for them (Burns & Roszkowska, 2016). This shows that rational individuals select the alternatives that would possibly give them the highest level of satisfaction.

Rational choice theory is anchored on behalf of individuals who freely choose their behaviour and are largely driven by the need to avoid pains and pursue pleasure. Individuals choices are evaluated on the basis of each of individual's options capacity produce happiness, pleasure as well as advantage. This shows that the theory provides a micro perspective on the motivation for individuals to indulge in crime, because of its profitable nature, relative ease with which the crime is committed and satisfaction derivable from such crime. Individuals are perceived as rational beings whose behaviour can be modified or controlled by fear of punishment. In view of the foregoing, it is expected that offenders can be deterred from

committing crime for fear of punishment. Punishment for crimes should be restricted to the level necessary for deterring offenders from committing the crime (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Sciences, 2020). The theory is vital in the understanding of the motivating factors for indulgence in sea piracy and oil theft in the coastal areas of Delta and Rivers States as well as how appropriate punishment for such crimes can bring about employment creation and poverty reduction in the areas.

Research Methodology

The design of this paper involved descriptive research design. The target population was 9,925 which comprises of respondents drawn from Nigeria Customs Service (1,658), Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja (815), Nigeria Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (1,133), from Rivers and Delta States. The target population also included diplomatic staff in Benin Republic (57), Togolese (61), and Senegalese (53) embassies in Abuja as well as operators of shipping businesses and fishing groups in Port Harcourt and Warri (262) and oil servicing firms in Bonny and Oporoza (186). Sample size of 385 was determined from the target population using Rakesh sample size formula. Proportional stratified random sampling technique was deployed in the administration of questionnaires to the population units. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting 15 experts on the basis of depth of knowledge and experience on the issues under study. Out of 361 questionnaires administered to the population units, 318 questionnaires were duly-filled and returned for analysis. Secondary data were also collected from previous studies on maritime security threats and economic development in Nigeria. Data collected from questionnaire and in-depth interview were analysed using simple percentages, and absolute frequencies, while data from in-depth interview were analysed using narrative-analytic technique.

Implications of International Maritime Security Threats for Economic Development in Coastal Areas of Delta and Rivers States

Findings from questionnaire showed that 125 representing 39.3% of the respondents strongly agree that sea piracy and oil theft are largely responsible for increase poverty level in the coastal areas in Rivers and Delta States, while 106 representing 33.3% of the respondents strongly agree that sea piracy impinges on maritime transportation in coastal areas of Delta and Rivers States. Also, 125 representing 39.3% of the respondents agree that oil theft is responsible for job losses in oil servicing firms in coastal areas of Delta and Rivers States, while 110 representing 34.6% of the respondents strongly agree that oil theft is largely responsible for increase in poverty level in the coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States. In

view of the foregoing, 130 representing 40.9% of the respondents agree that sea piracy largely impinge on efforts at job creation in the coastal areas of Delta and Rivers States, while 141 representing 41.2% of the respondents were of the opinion that the implication of sea piracy and oil theft for economic development in Nigeria is that both crimes increase poverty in the coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States through job losses.

Findings from in-depth interview largely support findings from our questionnaire. It was found that sea piracy and oil theft have huge implications for maritime businesses in Rivers and Delta States. Accordingly, sea piracy poses huge threats to the economic security of the people in Rivers and Delta States, especially in coastal areas where major means of livelihood of the people depends on the seas and its resources. Sea piracy negatively impacts on economic development in the coastal areas through job losses in sea transportation and oil exploration and production sectors in the coastal areas. Sea piracy reduces the income and revenue that would have been accrued to fishermen and women in the coastal areas, while at the same time narrows the level of opportunities for employment in the coastal areas due to the fact that some of the companies and organisations involved in maritime businesses have relocated to other environments due to threats to their lives and businesses. It was found that sea piracy and oil theft negatively impact on the number of companies investing in oil businesses in the coastal areas. Sea piracy and oil theft equally reduced the level of FDI flowing into the coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States, hence narrowing opportunities for employment and poverty reduction among the residents of coastal communities. It was equally found that sea piracy and oil theft are responsible for increasing level of underdevelopment of infrastructures as well as increased level of impoverishment and poverty in the coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States.

Findings from this study are slightly similar and different from the findings from previous studies. In this regard, Anele (2015) focused on economic effects of piracy in Nigeria with particular reference to fishing industry in Nigeria, which is slightly related to the focus of this study. Just like the findings from the study by Anele (2015), sea piracy hampered employment and food production in the fishery sector of Nigerian economy, which is slightly related to the findings from this study.

The study by Onuoha (2013) focused on sea robbery and maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, which is slightly related to the findings of this study. The study equally found that between 1991 and 2012, 734 pirate attacks occurred in the Gulf of Guinea, with attacks in Nigeria accounting for 46 % of the total attacks. The study found that sea piracy has negative implications for energy security, increased insurance premiums as well as terrorist financing, which is slightly related to the findings of this study.

Also, oil theft and sea robbery are found to be responsible for capital flight worth over ₦2 trillion per annum from Nigeria to foreign countries. Nigeria equally loses over \$26.2 billion per annum to maritime criminal activities, especially sea piracy and oil theft, which is related to the findings of this study in terms of issues covered, but differ from it in terms of method adopted in the study. Since 95 % of goods imported into Nigeria are sea borne trade (Onuoha, 2013), sea piracy and oil theft largely hamper international trade between Nigeria and other countries, which has negative implications for the economy of coastal areas in Nigeria.

Findings from a study by Elim, Affi, and Mohammed (2015) showed that maritime insecurity in the Horn of Africa cost the global economy, especially Nigeria above \$18 billion USD per annum. Somali pirate activities were found to have negatively impinged on sea transportation in the Horn of Africa, especially in the Gulf of Aden, Red Sea, the Arabian Sea, the Indian Ocean, and Oman. This led to loss of \$ 1.09 billion to Egyptian economy. Every year, Egypt loses 10 % of its revenue to sea piracy. The foregoing findings are largely related to the findings of this study in terms of identification of the global implications of sea piracy and oil theft on the economies of coastal areas in Nigeria, especially in Rivers and Delta States. The foregoing findings are related to the findings of this study in terms of issues identified, but differ significantly in terms of depth of coverage of the issues.

A study by Herbert (2012) found that shipping companies paid ransom worth \$159 million USD in 31 cases of vessel hostages. This shows that an average of \$4.97 million was paid per vessel hostage. The foregoing is related to the findings of this study in terms of examinations of implications for sea piracy and oil theft on economic security of the residents of coastal areas of Delta and Rivers States in Nigeria. Table 1 shows adverse implications of oil theft and sea piracy on oil production in Nigeria.

Table 1: Time Series Data on Quantity of Crude Oil Produced and Quantity Lost from 2011 to 2022

Year	Quantity of Crude Oil Produced	Quantity of Crude Oil Lost from Trailers	Number of Pirate Attacks on Crude Oil Vessels
2011	185,100	18,420	15
2012	919,285	11,240	16
2013	813,950	31,428	12
2014	900,600	30,246	42
2015	299,790	19,438	40
2016	255,910	38,241	29
2017	227,900	5,883	19

2018	217,030	18,204	10
2019	655,060	21,100	27
2020	789,500	34,683	18
2021	912,500	328,000	12
2022	817,160	145,220	12

Source: Okereke (2022)

Findings from Table 1 show that oil theft and sea piracy have adverse implications for oil production and other maritime businesses in Nigerian coastal area which result in increase in the levels of unemployment and poverty in the areas. In view of the foregoing, majority of the findings from questionnaire, in-depth interviews, and previous studies supported our research proposition (i). Therefore, our research proposition (i), international maritime security threats largely impinge on economic development of coastal areas in Delta and Rivers States, was accepted.

Challenges Militating against Efforts at Combating International Maritime Security Threats in Nigeria Coastal Areas for enhanced Economic Development in Delta and Rivers States

Findings from questionnaire showed that 125 representing 39.3% of the respondents strongly agree that lack of adequate coordination among littoral states in combating piracy in Nigerian coastal areas hamper revenue generation from maritime from maritime businesses in coastal areas in Delta and Rivers States, while 126 representing 39.6% of the respondents agree that lack of adequate implementation of relevant international laws on maritime security increase unemployment level in coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States through incessant attacks on maritime businesses. Also, 122 representing 38.4% of the respondents agree that competition among Asia, Europe and America in the international maritime domain drives oil theft with its negative implications for poverty reduction in the coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States, while 113 representing 35.5% of the respondents agree that lack of adequate fight against oil theft is responsible for increase in unemployment in coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States. In addition, 119 representing 37.4% of the respondents strongly agree that inadequate strategies in combating sea piracy in Nigeria maritime domain are responsible for increase in poverty level in coastal areas in Delta and Rivers States. In view of the foregoing, 139 representing 43.7% of the respondents were of the opinion that inadequate trans-border cooperation in combating oil theft and sea piracy increases poverty level in coastal areas of Delta and Rivers States.

Findings from in-depth interview showed that there are many challenges militating against efforts at combating sea piracy and oil theft in

Nigerian coastal areas for enhanced economic security in Nigeria, especially in Delta and Rivers States. It was found that sea piracy and oil theft are responsible for job losses in the coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States. Also, sea piracy and oil theft are largely responsible for loss of lives and properties in the coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States, and this has led to massive reduction in the number of shipping companies and associated businesses in the coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States. In view of the foregoing, findings further showed that sea piracy and oil theft are equally responsible for increase in the level of poverty in Rivers and Delta States.

It was also found that the major challenges confronting the government in the fight against sea piracy and oil theft are: lack of political will by the government to effectively fight against the crime; international conspiracy due to demand for stolen oil; inadequate knowledge of Nigeria's maritime territories; and huge profits from sea piracy and oil theft motivate more and more people to indulge in the crime, hence making maritime criminal gangs resist attempts by the government to fight the crime almost at all costs. Also, findings showed that inadequate national and international legislation for combating sea piracy and oil theft; pervasive poverty in the coastal areas; poor awareness of maritime crimes; corruption among maritime security agencies; inability to establish a joint security operations involving other countries to pursue sea pirates and oil thieves to territorial waters that are governed by national laws pose challenge to combating sea piracy and oil theft in the coastal areas of Delta and Rivers States. Findings from in-depth interview and questionnaire are slightly different from the findings of this study. A study by Abiodun and Dahiru (2020) focused on maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea and the quest for security intelligence deployment in combating the crime of maritime insecurity. The study identified security threats in the GoG including piracy, terrorism, kidnapping, and oil theft and emphasised on the need for intelligence gathering in combating the challenge of maritime insecurity, which is slightly related to the findings of this study in terms of approach adopted in arriving at the conclusion.

Sea piracy attacks and oil theft in Nigeria maritime domains have huge implications not only for Nigeria, but for West Africa, Africa and the entire world. In this regard, findings from a study by Uadiala (2012) showed that because of the international nature of sea piracy and oil theft as well as other maritime security threats, the Economic Community of West African States and Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in 2013 organised the Yaounde Summit to adequately tackle sea piracy, pollution, issues of unsettled maritime boundaries, poor enforcement of maritime international laws in order to combat maritime insecurity. However, the

challenges of sea piracy, oil theft and many other maritime criminal activities have continued to constitute hiccups to the economic activities of people.

Similarly, a study by Omeje (2014) found that the stiff competition among global oil players over oil and gas in the Gulf of Guinea prepares the grounds for likely arms confrontations as Europe, United States, and Asia, especially China compete for energy resources in West Africa. The competitors usually create client states, which in some cases arm dissidents with a view to defending their national economic interests. Maritime security threats in the country originate largely from Guinea, Liberia, Congo Republic, and Sierra Leon, and these threats reverberate to other littoral states. The findings of this study are largely related to the findings of this study because the challenges identified by Omeje (2014) have continued to pose hiccups to efforts of Nigerian government in working in synergy with other littoral states in adequately combating sea piracy and oil theft in its maritime domains in order to improve the livelihood of residents of coastal areas in Rivers and Delta States. In view of the foregoing, majority of findings from questionnaire, in-depth interview and previous studies support our research proposition (ii). Therefore, our research proposition (ii), Poor knowledge of maritime domain and inadequate implementation of relevant international laws hamper efforts at combating international maritime security threats in coastal areas in Nigeria for enhanced economic development in Delta and Rivers States was accepted.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper examined international maritime security threats and economic development of Nigeria with particular reference to the coastal areas in Delta and Rivers States in order to adequately combat the menace of sea piracy and oil theft, which have posed huge challenge to job creation and poverty reduction efforts in the coastal areas in Rivers and Delta States. The study observed that international maritime security threats impinge on economic development of coastal areas in Delta and Rivers States; and poor knowledge of maritime domain and inadequate implementation of relevant international laws hamper efforts at combating international maritime security threats in coastal areas in Nigeria for enhanced economic development in Delta and Rivers States. In view of the foregoing, the paper concludes that sea piracy and oil theft increased the level of poverty in the coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States.

The following recommendations are vital in mitigating the problems identified in the paper. That the National Assembly should come up with legislations aimed at poverty alleviation and job creation with a view to

cushioning the negative implications of sea piracy and oil theft on the livelihood of people in coastal areas of Rivers and Delta States. There should be immediate declaration of war against sea piracy and oil theft in the coastal areas of Rivers and Delta states by the federal government through multilateral actions with a view to mitigating the challenges confronting the government in combating international maritime security threats in the country.

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