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MARITIME INSECURITY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE NIGERIAN SECTION OF THE GULF OF GUINEA, 2015-2025

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Abstract
The study examined maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea and the attendant consequences on the socio-economic development in Nigeria. Notwithstanding extant efforts to address the issue, it seems thorny to resolve. This study therefore aimed at finding effective strategies for surmounting the challenges to security in the Gulf of Guinea. Anchored on the Social Exclusion Theory, the study adopted survey design for collection of primary data. Analysis was done using the Chi-square instrument. The study found out that lack of effective mechanism for monitoring, as well as lack of synergy and transparency in reporting threats among littoral states constituted serious challenges which have undermined the efforts to achieve security in the region and socio-economic development in Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study recommended the need for modern communication equipment as well as productive collaboration among littoral states for early detection and neutralization of threats to security in the Gulf of Guinea.

Keywords: Gulf of Guinea, Maritime Insecurity, Socio-economic Development, Nigeria, Pirates

1.0 Introduction

The Gulf of Guinea is substantially endowed with mineral wealth to make all the littoral states within the region to be comfortably selves reliant. Unfortunately, maritime insecurity such as piracy, kidnapping and cargo theft pose great challenges to the sincere effort to have stable and suitable socio-economic development especially in the Nigerian section of the Gulf. Many countries mostly within West Africa have tried to tackle poor socio-economic development but it has always been effort in futility hence persistent insecurity seems to undermine the efforts for meaningful and impactful progress in the area (Okeke & Omojuwa, 2022). It is so worrisome to the extent that the more efforts are geared towards curbing the menace; the more the illicit activities intensified. There has been high rise of piracy activities since 2015 till date, 2022 had 115 armed robbery cases against the 120 incidents in 2023 with higher number in 2024. All the countries in the Gulf region may not have the capacity to provide the needed security personnel and equipment to mitigate the efforts of the criminals in the waterways (Onyenucheya, 2024).

The challenges to maritime security and its consequences on the socio-economic development of Nigeria are unarguably disturbing. A focus on the Nigerian section helps to appreciate the complex developmental situation the country has been battling with. The country has great potentials but constantly dwarfed by high poverty rate and rising unemployment (Okeke, 2022). Productive jobs to sustain progressive poverty reduction are scarce and so very difficult to lift people out of the poverty circle. Nigeria, in particular, hosts more of the world's extreme poor today than any other country despite being a lower-middle income country that is large and richly blessed (Nwanolue, Obiora & Okeke, 2021; World Bank, 2019). It is pertinent to note that the choice of the maritime sector is borne out of the fact that oil, international trade and investment are part of the major indices to measure development in the African region through Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Per Capita Income, Human

Development Index (HDI), Poverty, Infant Mortality and Literacy Rates. The period covered by the study is to ensure contemporary analysis of the happenings within the time under review.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Maritime Insecurity

Maritime Insecurity denotes the absence of totality of safety policies and implementation of such policies to avoid incursion within the territorial sea jurisdiction of a nation. It reflects a situation where international best practices are not integrated into municipal maritime regulations to achieve desired security result, which is the reason it does not speak well of a country whose territorial waterways are unsafe for maritime activities. As a result, Burke (2012) opines that maritime insecurity presupposes lack of freedom from the risk of serious incursions against a nation's sovereignty launched from the maritime domain, and from the risk of successful attack against a nation's maritime interest. Thus, it encompasses the absence of regulations and protections against illegal fishery and other unwholesome activities along the waterways of any nation.

Jamoh (2021) states the need for enhanced stakeholders' collaboration in tackling maritime security challenges in Nigeria and in the Gulf of Guinea. He emphasized the obvious need for stakeholders to learn to share their toys so as to close and tighten the widening insecurity gap in the Gulf region. His views are germane as he notes that despite the overwhelming rich potentials of the maritime sector, it is still being undermined by maritime insecurity. Such synergy will raise the consciousness of the concerned institutions and persons towards a pragmatic and robust approach for possible minimizing of the infamy. In a similar development, Corte-Real (2022) notes that lack of harmonized legal framework and jurisdictional shortcomings in many countries in the region constitute a major challenge. He maintains that very few trials of arrested individuals and ships are made as even shipping companies pay ransoms to get their crew back. Those patrolling the coastal lines lack the capacity to control the waters as illegitimate transactions of official matters negate their roles. It is regrettable to note the unstable maritime security in the GOG region which seems to grossly undermine genuine efforts geared towards salvaging the ugly situation is still persistent. More so, sovereign concerns of GOG member countries with regards to security and allied matters are posing great challenge in tackling insecurity in the region. There is glaring political unwillingness by states to practically demonstrate readiness to fight the issue as a common enemy. The Gulf of Guinea is weakly governed as can be seen that making good law does not mean good law enforcement which remains the crux of maritime management. It is more argued that the driving forces to maritime insecurity are greed, poverty and lack of information sharing. Culture of impunity among citizens gives lead to illegal activities (Safe Sea 2022). The view that maritime managers have divergent concerns makes it hard for a common policy and priority to be achieved. There is therefore, the need for actors in the sector to act in a common spirit for sustainable goal to be achieved and capacity transparency built.

2.1.1 The Gulf of Guinea

The Gulf of Guinea is situated at the north easternmost part of the tropical Atlantic Ocean and it stretches from Cape Lopez in Gabon, north and west to Cape Palmas in Liberia. Uniquely, the Gulf intersects the Equator and Prime Meridian (zero degrees latitude and longitude). It covers a surface area of about 2,350,000 km2 (910,000 sq ml). Its sources are from the Atlantic Ocean and the River Niger (Okafor-Yarwood, Eastwood, Chikowore, & Oliveire, 2024). The Gulf of Guinea region is made up of nineteen (19) maritime countries located in the African continent. It includes the following countries bordering the Atlantic Ocean: Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, Sao Tome and Principe, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Senegal and Sierra Leone. The States which made up the Gulf were colonized by these European States: Britain, France, Germany, Spain and Portugal (Maverick, 2021).

There are myriad of problems confronting the coastal states and shipping industry in tackling insecurity in the maritime sector. Though the problems are not peculiar to the Gulf of Guinea region but they seem to be more noticed because of the fragile security architecture in the African states especially Nigeria where the discovery and production of oil has created environmentally-related conflicts depth of which is alarming and dangerous (Nwanolue, Ezeamama & Okeke, 2022). Maverick (2021) notes that illegal arms and drug trafficking, piracy and armed robbery (especially in the Gulf of Guinea) are leading threats. More so, the persistent bunkering of oil and maritime terrorism in the Gulf region are posing weighty challenges to efforts in tacking maritime insecurity. The numerous unresolved maritime boundary disputes such as the Kenya – Somalia are pointer to the nagging issue. Most of the maritime crimes in Africa are transnational in nature which justifies the lack of symbiotic

relations in tackling the problem. Maritime insecurity fuels corruption and restiveness among the people. The problem admittedly seems to defile singly and states joint efforts because even the African Union Peace and Security Council intervention could not bring permanent solution to the problem (Maverick, 2021).

In a similar development, Okafor-Yarwood et al (2024) collaborates with the views of Maverick as they maintain that maritime security threats undermine safety and question the capacity of coastal states' efforts to adequately harness the resources in their maritime domain. The continued reliance on the maritime sector by the littoral states with others for food, energy and other environmental needs of man calls for more security options to tackle the common sea enemy of man. They further note that the assertion that the GOG has become one of the global hotspots of maritime insecurity is a serious plague to the efforts aimed at overhauling the security of the area for anticipated optimal service. Though the use of technology has helped to solve some of the problems in tackling maritime insecurity, it is however not without challenges. For instance, surveillance systems do not put generated data into context.

Ojo (2015) lamented that the intractable violence has invariably constituted an enduring image of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. He maintained that the changing dimension of the crises go beyond the aggression of the militants to communal hostility and piracy. The seeming believe that militia activities are aimed at development in one hand is fundamentally false because every supposed infrastructure built is usually destroyed in the attempt to define their demand and make the government and other stakeholders responsive to their supposed plight. Truly nothing is done by the militant youths without trace to their benefits. The youth feels that both the explorers and government only allow crumbs of products to them as unmistakable proof of their ruthless exploitation. Youth restiveness undoubtedly brought those who accepted it to political, economic and social servitude hence the glaring inequalities. The negative and insincere dispositions of the government with the explorers of the mineral resources taught the Nigerian youths and by extension Africa that violence was an accepted life style for the achievement of a purpose. The end they believe really justifies the means according to the Machiavellian principle which buttresses the point that economic malady is the worst punitive legacy bequeathed on Africa. The youths as such engage in militancy and other associated social vices to attend to some of their financial needs.

2.1.2 Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria

Socio-economic development occupies strategic position at the level of social interactions on which economic development can thrive. It presupposes creation of an enabling environment for social wealth through such issues as the attraction of tourism and the inflow of trade and investment. It connotes the activities embarked upon by government and various agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank etc to develop the country in that regard and includes the maritime areas of easy channel of criminal activities made possible by the vulnerability of maritime security in the littoral states. It is in this light that Iyatse (2021) asserts that reduction in employment shrinks disposable incomes and consumption. Waitsfield-Adams and Andrezjewski (2008) also contended that human poverty encompasses the multiplicity of dimensions associated with poverty and includes deprivation on a material level, social deprivation such as denial of employment, participation in social institutions, and education. The scholars, thus, maintained that poverty and social tensions will set in if the condition continues uninterrupted. Such situation which makes the society unsafe as in Nigeria threatens economic fortunes of the country.

Nigeria currently is faced with the three evils of unemployment, poverty and rising insecurity on daily basis. Poverty, for instance, remains a major challenge that has shown progressive increase over the years and has successfully defied policies of government to curb (Ochi, Okeke & Ezeamu, 2024). The uncertainty of the trine is actually depressing the economy of Nigeria as no implementable plan can be made under such biting condition. Human poverty goes further to mean that the people will be unable to contribute to the development of their immediate environment because they are not exposed to what it entails to do so. They may be endowed with the potentials to so contribute but ideally incapacitated hence the undeveloped and raw nature of such seeming potentials. Unemployment creates poverty which gives birth to hunger and starvation that negates and violates human dignity by all standards and definitions. This is why Oshewolo (2010) sees poverty to encompass different aspects of deprivation that relates to human capabilities such as consumption and food security, health, education, rights, security, dignity, decent employment. Also, Boltvinik (2002) posits that poverty is a living condition which exists when an entity or individual is faced with some economic, social, political, cultural and environmental deprivations such as lack of good food, poor drinking water, low life expectancy, poor health

services, general lack of economic infrastructure and lack of active participation in the decision making process as it affects the individual.

Conversely, at the macro-economic manifestation, poverty impacts much on a nation because the individuals deprived of decent living will aggressively show their frustrations on the state by engaging in unwholesome acts. It makes a country to be absolutely dependent on external borrowing and debt servicing. Poverty depicts perpetual pitiable nature of the economies of the littoral states especially Nigeria in such a way that survival of the individual person cannot be guaranteed. It is the condition that forced. Nigeria's record on poverty has remained consistently disappointing. In fact, the horrible record has, over the years, rubbished all efforts at addressing the challenge including the adoption of foreign aids as a strategy. Thus, Obiora, Nwanolue & Okeke (2021) contended that an often astonishing paradox in the discourse on Nigeria's high poverty rate centres on the inability of the foreign aids received by her over the decades to alleviate the poverty scourge. As a result, Nigeria's record on poverty has remained consistently disappointing. In fact, the horrible record has, over the years, rubbished all efforts at addressing the challenge including the adoption of foreign aids as a strategy (Okeke, Nwanolue & Obiora (2021). Abubakar (2016) observes that all the major economic activities in the Gulf region such as petroleum exploration, port operations, mining and gas flaring together with some other negative activities going on more frequently in the region such as piracy, kidnappings and poor waste management culture are all pointing to stagnation in development through decline in the economic income of the nations in the region which goes to throw light on the reasons for the poor state of affairs in the region, particularly as there is remarkable reduction in the number of vessels going through the GOG region.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The Social Exclusion Theory

The theory which is an offshoot of the poverty theory became prominent in the 1970s and 1980s in Europe particularly in France. Rene Lenoir in his book titled *Les Exclus* in 1974 discussed the abiding relationship between poverty and social exclusion hence the inseparable nature of the two theories. Other notable scholars of the theory include Amartya Sen, Peter Townsend and Hilary Silver. The theory examines the deliberate marginalization of a group of people or individuals who are supposed heirs to what they are excluded or denied access to (Cuesta, Lopez-Noval & Nino-Zarazua, 2024). The denial of opportunities to equal access to resources and social services causes friction and crises which are inimical to socio-economic development. The key aspects of social exclusion include but not limited to lack of access to essential services and social benefits, deliberate marginalization, discrimination and social isolation. Among other things, the theory has the following limitations: It is complex, hard to define and measure because both are relative; it focuses on relational aspects and overlooks individual responsibilities; its application seems to be selective hence there is no universal solution that can be applied to all societies and cultures; the theory is multidimensional in nature and so difficult to translate to practical policies and interventions; the causes and consequences of social exclusion are usually oversimplified. In essence, exclusion is subjective as different people perceive and experience it differently.

The above limitations notwithstanding, the descriptive powers of social exclusion theories are very enormous and overwhelming hence their deliberate adoption for the study. It is clear to deduce that the activities of pirates in the Gulf of Guinea region which negate maritime security are consequent upon seeming social exclusion of those living within the area. Such act causes insecurity as the end point of frustration. It could appear to be legitimate or illegitimate depending on the prevailing circumstance. Most of the pirates took to the infamous act out of desperation and glaring evidence of neglect. There is therefore overwhelming logical chain of evidence which shows that the innocent users (innocent target) of the waterways are those who bear the brunt of the nefarious dispositions of the pirates who are already feeling frustrated and aggrieved. The problem is that users of the waterways are the unfortunate victims of piled up injustices which they know nothing about. Worst still is that the victims cannot in any way wrestle themselves from the unmerited infamy which is also dehumanizing unless help comes from outside. The social exclusion theory is very apt and convincingly necessary for analyzing the issues of this study. It enhances the understanding of the working techniques of the perpetuators of insecurity in the GOG region and the reasons for the perpetuation. It brings to the limelight the fact that insecurity is the after effect of social exclusion.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a survey research design because of its suitability and appropriateness in generating the primary data for the study from which inferences and generalizations may be made from the population. Thus, primary data for the study were collected through the use of a structured questionnaire and administered on the staff of Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), the Nigeria Navy and Nigerian Ports Authority with requisite knowledge about maritime safety. The instrument contained items structured on a 5-point Likert scale response options of Disagree (1) Strongly Disagree (2) Neutral (3) Agree (4) Strongly Agree (5). The instruments of the questionnaire were subjected to both validity and reliability tests. The validity and reliability tests of the questionnaire instrument passed through an expert who gave it the needed touch. Also, pilot tests of the questionnaire were carried out to verify the capability of the capability of the questionnaire in sourcing out the required information.

3.1.1 Population of the Study

The Gulf of Guinea region is made up of Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of Congo, Sao Tome and Principe, Angola, Benin, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Nigeria, Senegal, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Togo which are considered too large to be studied. Nigeria was therefore made the focus of the study because of its strategic position within the Gulf region. The study was not concerned with the entire population of Nigeria but the workers of the maritime industry which includes Nigeria Ports Authority, the Nigerian Navy and NIMASA The Nigeria Ports Authority has about 1484 employees; Nigerian Navy has 15000 officers and men while Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) has about 595 staffers (Gazettengr.com). That brings the work force of the three above named establishments to 17,079 which is the population of the study.

3.1.2 Sample Size

The Taro Yamane formula (1964) was applied to determine the sample size. The choice of the formula was to ensure that every member of the population of study has equal and independent chances of being selected in the sample to be studied. Respondents were determined out of the study population of 17,079 thus:

$$n = \frac{N}{(!+ N(e)^2}$$

N = Population of the study which is 17,079
e = Margin of error (0.05)
n = Sample size
if N (population size) is 17, 079
Sample size =

$$n = \frac{17,079}{(1+17,079\ (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{17,079}{(1+17,079\times 0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{17,079}{1\times 42.697}$$

$$n = \frac{17,097}{43.6975}$$

n = 391
Sample size for the study = 391

4.0 Data Presentation

Collected data from the field survey were presented, classified and analyzed in this section. The different respondents in the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA); Nigerian Port Authority (NPA); and Nigerian Navy (NN) in Lagos State received a total of 391questionnaires. Out of the 391 questionnaires that were distributed to various respondents, six questionnaires were not returned to the

researcher, while five questionnaires were deemed to be invalid due to unclear choices on the part of study respondents. As a result, the analysis was predicated on the 380 copies of filled questionnaires that were retrieved. The data analysis was divided into two sections. Section A was about demographic information of the respondents of the study, while Section B provided answers to the research hypotheses. Specifically, statistical inferences of the study are the main focus of the study's statistical analysis based on the collected data from the fieldwork. Raw data collected from respondents in the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA); Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA); and Nigerian Navy (NN) in Lagos State returned a total of 380 questionnaires as shown in the tables below. Respondents were given opportunity to select the option that best reflected their opinions on the topic that was presented to them. The statistical values for A (Disagree), B (Strongly Disagree), C (Neutral), D (Agree), E (Strongly Agree) were assigned with 5,4,3,2, and 1, respectively. To analyze the hypothesis of the study, the chi-square analysis of inferential statistic was employed. The test accepted the hypothesis with a positive outcome (V) and rejected the hypothesis with a negative coefficient (V).

4.1 Method of Data Analysis

The mean benchmark for answering the research questions was arrived at by finding the average of the 5 points scale thus:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{(1+2+3+4+5)}{5}$$

$$\bar{x} = \frac{(15)}{5}$$

$\overline{x} = 3$

The value for the decision rule was a mean score of 3 and above. This means that where the calculated mean is less than the decided value mean, the responses will not be accepted but where the calculated mean is equal to or more than the decision rule mean, it will be accepted.

Table 1: Respondents Opinion on Noticeable Lack of Effective Mechanism for Monitoring

Opinion	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	187	49.2%
Agree	85	22.4%
Neutral	13	3.4%
Disagree	44	11.6%
Strongly Disagree	51	13.4%
Total	**380**	**100%**

Source: (Fieldwork, 2024)

From the above table (1), it shows respondents' opinion about the noticeable lack of effective mechanism for monitoring. In the first category of response, one-hundred and eighty-seven (187) respondents which represent 49.2% strongly agreed that there is noticeable lack of effective mechanism for monitoring challenges that undermine efforts to achieve security in the Gulf of Guinea region. In the second category of respondent' opinion, a total number of eighty-five (85) respondents that represents which represents 22.4% agreed that there is noticeable lack of effective mechanism for monitoring. Third category of responses show that thirteen (13) respondents that represents 3.4% remain neutral as to whether that there is noticeable lack of effective mechanism for monitoring. On fourth category of responses, forty-four (44) respondents that represent 11.6% disagreed that there is noticeable lack of effective mechanism for monitoring in the Gulf of Guinea. Finally, fifty one (51) respondents which represent 13.4% strongly disagreed that that there is noticeable lack of effective mechanism for monitoring challenges that undermine efforts to achieve security in the Gulf of Guinea region.

Table 2: Respondents Opinion on How Some Highly Placed Individuals are Behind Criminal Activities in the Region

Opinion	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	191	50.3%
Agree	79	20.8%
Neutral	9	2.4%
Disagree	43	11.3%
Strongly Disagree	58	15.2%
Total	**380**	**100%**

Source: (Fieldwork, 2024)

From the above table (2), it reveals respondents' opinion on how some highly placed individuals are behind criminal activities in the region. In the first response, One-hundred and ninety-one (191) respondents which represent 50.3% strongly agreed that some highly placed individuals are behind criminal activities in the region. The second response has seventy-nine (79) respondents that represent 20.8% agreed that some highly placed individuals are behind criminal activities in the region. For third response, nine (9) respondents that represent 2.4% of the total sample are neutral in their responses on how some highly placed individuals are behind criminal activities in the Gulf region. In the fourth response, forty-three (43) respondents that represent 11.3% disagreed that some highly placed individuals are behind criminal activities in the region. Lastly, fifty-eight (58) respondents that represent 15.2% of the total sample strongly disagreed that some highly placed individuals are behind criminal activities in the region.

Table3: Respondents Opinion on the Absence of Transparency in Reporting Threats.

Opinion	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	174	45.8%
Agree	98	25.8%
Neutral	14	3.7%
Disagree	41	10.8%
Strongly Disagree	53	13.9%
Total	**380**	**100%**

Source: (Fieldwork, 2024)

As evident in the above table (3), it shows respondents' opinion on the absence of transparency in reporting threats in the Gulf of Guinea. On the first category of response, One-hundred and seventy-four (174) respondents which represent 45.8% strongly agreed that there is absence of transparency in reporting threats in the Gulf of Guinea region. Ninety-eight (98) respondents representing 25.8% agreed on the absence of transparency in reporting threats in the Gulf of Guinea. Fourteen (14) respondents representing 3.7% were neutral on the question posed to them; and Forty-one (41) respondents representing 10.8% disagreed about the absence of transparency in reporting threats in the Gulf of Guinea.; while fifty-three (53) respondents representing 13.9% strongly disagreed on the absence of transparency in reporting threats Gulf of Guinea.

Table 4: Respondents Opinion on Whether There Should be Synergy among the Littoral States so as to Adequately Secure the Maritime Boundaries

Opinion	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	175	46.1%
Agree	99	26.1%
Neutral	8	2.1%
Disagree	42	11.1%
Strongly Disagree	56	14.7%
Total	**380**	**100%**

Source: (Fieldwork, 2024)

From the above table (4), it shows respondents' opinion about whether there should be synergy among the littoral states so as to adequately secure the maritime boundaries. In the first category of response, one-hundred and seventy-five (175) respondents which represent 46.1% strongly agreed that there should be synergy among the littoral states so as to adequately secure the maritime boundaries. In the second category of respondent'

opinion, a total number of ninety-nine (99) respondents' opinion which represents 26.1% agreed that there should be synergy among the littoral states so as to adequately secure the maritime boundaries.

Third category of responses show how eight (8) respondents that represent 2.1% of the total sample chose to be neutral about whether there should be synergy among the littoral states so as to adequately secure the maritime boundaries .On forth category of responses, forty-two (42) respondents that represents 11.1% of the total sample disagreed with the opinion that there should be synergy among the littoral states so as to adequately secure the maritime boundaries. Lastly, fifty-six (56) respondents that represent 14.7% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the opinion that there should be synergy among the littoral states so as to adequately secure the maritime boundaries.

Table 5: Respondents' Opinion on Lack of Adequate Training for Security Personnel who Police the Waterways Based on International Best Practices

Opinion	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	181	47.6%
Agree	95	25%
Neutral	8	2.1%
Disagree	39	10.3%
Strongly Disagree	57	15%
Total	**380**	**100%**

Source: (Fieldwork, 2024)

As evident in the above table (5), it shows respondents' opinion that there is no adequate training to security personnel who man the waterways and so not exposed to periodic trainings based on international best practices. On the first category of the responses, One-hundred and eighty-one (181) respondents which represent 47.6% strongly agreed that there is no adequate training to security personnel who man the waterways and so not exposed to periodic trainings based on international best practices. Also, ninety-five (95) respondents representing 25% agreed that there is no adequate training to security personnel who man the waterways and so not exposed to periodic trainings based on international best practices. Eight (8) respondents representing 2.1% of the total sample were neutral on the question posed to them. Also, thirty-nine (39) respondents representing 10.3% of the total sample disagreed that there is no adequate training to security personnel who man the waterways and so not exposed to periodic trainings based on international best practices. Lastly, fifty-seven (57) respondents that represents15% of the total sample strongly disagreed that there is no adequate training to security personnel who man the waterways and so not exposed to periodic trainings based on international best practices.

Test of Hypothesis

H_O: There is no significant relationship between the challenges that undermined the efforts to achieve security and socio-economic development in the Nigerian section of the Gulf of Guinea region

H_1: There is significant relationship between the challenges that undermined the efforts to achieve security and socio-economic development in the Nigerian section of the Gulf of Guinea region

$$X^2 = \frac{(\qquad)\ (FO-FE)^2}{FE}$$

Where;
O = Frequency Observed or Observed Frequency (FO)
FE= Frequency Expected (FE)\

Contingency Table
Table (**a**)

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)

Strongly Agree	177	46.6%
Agree	83	21.8%
Undecided	12	3.2%
Strongly Disagree	47	12.4%
Disagree	61	16.1%
Total	**380**	**100%**

Source: field survey 2024

Hence, the Chi-Square analysis is presented below;

Total observation = **380**

$X^2 = \frac{(\quad)}{FE} \frac{(FO-FE)^2}{FE}$ five

If the H_O (null hypotheses) were true, the expected outcome for each of the **responses** that depicts how some challenges undermined the efforts to achieve security and socio-economic development in the Nigerian section of the Gulf of Guinea region would be ($\frac{1}{5}$ X 380) = **76.** Hence, this (**76**) is utilized to determine (FE) as expected count of the chi-square

$X^2 = \frac{(FO- FE)^2}{FE}$

Table (b): Chi-Square Analysis with Expected Frequency (FE)

$\dot{FO}$	$\dot{FE}$	$(fo \dot{-} fe)$	$(fo - fe)$	$\frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$
177	76	101	10,201	134.22
83	76	7	49	0.63
12	76	-64	4,096	53.89
47	76	-29	841	11.07
61	76	-15	225	2.96
				$\sum$ =202.8

Source: (Fieldwork, 2024)

$X^2 =$ 202.8

DF = K – 1 where K is number of observations to determine the critical value of 5 -1 = 4 at (9.448)

Level of significance = 0.05

4.2 Statistical Decision/Result

Since the calculated values of X^2(202.8) is greater than critical values from chi-square table (9.448), the null hypothesis (H_O) is therefore rejected. This is because X^2 (202.8) >9.448, where P < 0.05. Based on the rejection of Null Hypothesis (H_0) and acceptance of Alternate Hypothesis (H_I), this study states that there is enough statistical evidence to show significant relationship in statistics. Also, there is significant relationship between how some challenges undermined the efforts to achieve security and socio-economic development in the Gulf of Guinea region etc. Therefore, this study states that the two variables (challenges to undermine the efforts to achieve security and socio-economic development in the Gulf of Guinea region) can be statistically measured together within chi-square analysis.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The abysmal security situation in the Gulf of Guinea continues to engage the attention of stakeholders, especially in the face of lack of effective mechanism for monitoring, synergy among littoral states as well as transparency in reporting threats in the region. There is lack of effective measure to deter perpetuators of criminal acts in the region. It is the belief that if there is sincerity in applying the measures against oil theft and other nefarious activities in the region and the penalty for the act placed

far above the possible gain, those whose stock in trade is piracy and other mischievous acts will be discouraged. It therefore, calls for sincere commitment and determination to adhere strictly to the acceptable standard. The battered security situation in Nigeria should be wrestled out of the present defeatist situation so that the country can return to the path of rectitude hence the following recommendations:

1. Challenges such as effective mechanism for monitoring and synergy among littoral states, as well as transparency in reporting threats in the GOG region require trans-national efforts and international cooperation to manage them effectively. Intelligence gathering, information sharing and building cutting edge technological capabilities are essential panacea for curbing the menace. There should be sincere commitment on the part of all concerned stakeholders especially international partners. In response to the challenge, the concerned maritime states especially Nigeria should come up with multi-dimensional interventions which should include a review of local and international laws concerning maritime crime.

2. There should be serious push for the enactment of the anti-piracy laws by the respective countries and strict adherence to international best practice standards. For instance, Nigeria has taken the lead to present such Bill to the National Assembly. The country will be the first in the region to have a well defined anti-piracy law that will harmonize operating standard procedures for arrest and detention of vessels involved in illegal activities. Nigeria has also affirmed that there should be a joint initiative by the Ministries of Transportation and Defence to strengthen response capabilities of the military through the Deep Blue Project to be executed by NIMASA. Regional coalition and cooperation initiated by NIMASA have been consummated by the signing of an MOU with Ghana and Sierra Lone maritime Authorities to further strengthen regional collaborations. It is hoped that other maritime nations will borrow a leaf from the positive actions taken by Nigeria.

3. Acquisition of special monitoring aircraft, helicopter and vessels with modern communication equipment for early detection of any illegal activity is necessary. There should be the establishment of combined Maritime Policing and Security Patrol Committee to further enhance timely detection of seeming security flash points at the Gulf of Guinea. More so, it is necessary to install special satellite surveillance systems, Coastal Radar Systems, and Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) in the areas with serious security challenges. The special satellites should be launched to be able to detect and retransmit data. Ships cannot therefore be hijacked without being detected and it will deter attempts to either hijack ship or steal cargo with another ship.

4. The governments of the GOG countries especially Nigeria should cultivate the culture of good fiscal administrative framework in the cooperative form so that there could be balance of state interests if the menace can be dealt with at the regional level. This is because of the seeming obvious bleak nature of any single state trying to solve the problem. As Nigeria continues to navigate the complexities of maritime security challenges, it is imperative that the government prioritizes the enhancement of maritime security measures as a cornerstone of its socio-economic development strategy. By doing so, Nigeria can unlock its full potential as a maritime nation, fostering sustainable growth, attracting investment, and ensuring the well-being of its citizens.

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