



THREATS OF TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIMES IN THE GULF OF GUINEA AND ITS PANACEA

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ABSTRACT

There are several categories of transnational crimes capable of disrupting the economy of countries across the globe including the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) region. These crimes are Sea Piracy, hijacking of land, organ trafficking, insurance fraud, money laundering and so on. Specifically, the Coast for years, has been notoriously known for the flowing of cocaine from the Andes via West Africa to Europe, flowing of methamphetamine from West Africa to Asia, smuggling of migrants to Europe, trafficking of fire arms, transportation of fraudulent essential medicines from Asia to West Africa and maritime piracy. However, globalization and its dynamics, has enabled new forms of Transnational Organized Crimes (TOC). These are: Petro-Piracy, kidnapping, Pirate-fishing also known as Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, and illicit Fishmeal and Fishoil Producing Factories atrocities along the GoG shorelines and many others. The study seeks to investigate the factors that are responsible for the transnational organized crimes in the region under study. The study will also suggest tentative options that will help to combat emerging crimes in the area of study. The study applies content analysis of secondary data. Data were sourced from journals, non-governmental organization annual reports, internet sourced materials. The study adopts Routine Activity theory of crime and Queer Ladder Mobility theory to analyse the various arguments of the discourse. The study finds that contemporary TOCs in the GoG have grave implications on political, environmental and Socio-economics of the region. The study finds that, lack of surveillance equipment, corruption lack of security personnel, lack of political will, security complexity as a result of globalization, capitalism and other factors are responsible for the numerous transnational organized crimes in the region. The study suggests that, governments in the GoG area should invest in offshore in order not to create vacuum for criminal networks to perpetrate crimes in the area.

Keywords: Globalization, Piratical-Kidnapping, Gulf of Guinea, Transnational, Organized Crimes.

INTRODUCTION

Organized crime has evolved into new form of Transnational Organized Crime (TOC). While TOC has existed for many years, e.g. international drug smuggling (traditional organized crime forms still exist), TOC has further evolved in recent decades due to the new globalized criminal opportunities arising from developments in international transactions. Practices, which are facilitated by changes in global capital created by new mobile technologies, particularly the internet and social network media. TOC groups, like traditional organized crime groups, appear to be bound by bonds such as family, ethnicity or business. These can be traditional hierarchical lines of authority, rooted in geographical location, ethnicity or culture. Alternatively, they can be bonds formed out of the

desire to make money or to exact vengeance, or to change a political landscape (Wall, 2008). In practice, combinations of these factors exist. New communications and technologies facilitate these and new types of bonding (e.g. reputation) across international boundaries. At the center of each of these trust bonds is the expression of power which can take place overtly (coercion), covertly (manipulating the agenda) or unconsciously (via ideology) (Wall, 2008). TOC groups prefer to give an illusion of coercion to achieve compliance and express power through manipulating agendas and ideologies so that they do not bring police and state attention to their activities, although this depends upon their overall goal as some TOC groups with political goals will want the opposite, especially in failed states, where they might actually represent the only form of law (Wall, 2008). Transnational organized criminal activity takes place within a changing socio-political and socio-technical environment,

especially with e-commerce technologies, which means that new patterns of demand and supply now make TOC activities more attractive as a choice of crime and also as a choice of career, which incentivizes the formation of online crime organizations to protect criminals. TOC has expanded dramatically in size, scope and influence. Transnational organized criminals threatens the entire international system (the formation of al-Qaeda, its eventual attack of the World Trade Center in America and the huge ripple effect of the attack is still very fresh in the mind) by co-opting some governments and weakening governance in others, forging alliances with government elements including security services and big business figures, undermining competition in strategic markets, providing funds and logistical support for terrorist/insurgent activities, stealing intellectual properties, expanding Narco trafficking and engage in arms smuggling as well as human trafficking, using cyber technologies to perpetrate sophisticated frauds, using facilitators who operate in the licit and illicit worlds, and as well provide services to criminals and terrorists alike. Twenty first century TOCs has greatly evolved and immensely diversified. Contemporary Transnational criminals are very adaptive to any environment they intend to operate and possess huge mastery of cyber technologies.

Statement of the problem

There are several categories of transnational crimes capable of disrupting micro and macroeconomics of countries in the globe including the GoG region. These are Sea Piracy, hijacking of land, organ trafficking, insurance fraud, money laundering and so on. Specifically, the GoG Coast for years, has been notoriously known for the flowing of cocaine from the Andes via West Africa to Europe; flowing of methamphetamine from West Africa to Asia; smuggling of migrants to Europe, trafficking of fire arms; transportation of fraudulent essential medicines from Asia to West Africa and maritime piracy (UNODC, 2013). However, globalization and its dynamics, has enabled new forms of TOCs. These are - Petro-Piracy, kidnapping, Pirate-Fishing also called Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, and illicit Fishmeal and Fish Oil Producing Factories atrocities along the GoG shorelines and many others. The ripple effects of transnational organized crimes are very dire to the region's tranquility and socio-economic stability. To save time and space, the paper will analyze just four emerging forms of TOC in latter part of the paper.

The Objectives of the study

The aim of the study is to unravel the various underlying factors instigating crimes and to explore the dynamics of contemporary crimes in the GoG. The study is also undertaken to suggest various ways to combat TOCs in the GoG.

Conceptual Analysis

Transnational Organized Crimes

Transnational organized crime (TOCs) refers to crime that are organized and coordinated across national borders of more than one country and which involves groups or networks of individuals planning and executing illegal business ventures utilizing systematic violence and/or

corruption (Sangiovanni, 2005). This type of crime has inadvertently been a significant beneficiary of globalization (Sangiovanni, 2005). Transnational organized crime (TOC) groups are self-perpetuating associations of individuals who operate, wholly or in part, by illegal means and irrespective of geography. They constantly seek to obtain power, influence, and monetary gains. There is no single structure under which TOC groups function they vary from hierarchies to clans, networks, and cells, and may evolve into other structures (Sangiovanni, 2005). These groups are typically insular and protect their activities through corruption, violence, international commerce, complex communication mechanisms, and an organizational structure exploiting national boundaries. With few exceptions, TOC groups' primary goal is economic gain and they will employ an array of lawful and illicit schemes to generate profit. Crimes such as drug trafficking, migrant smuggling, human trafficking, money laundering, firearms trafficking, illegal gambling, extortion, counterfeit goods, wildlife and cultural property smuggling, and cybercrime are keystones within TOC enterprises (FBI Report, 2021). The vast sums of money involved can compromise legitimate economies and have a direct impact on governments through the corruption of public officials. TOC poses a significant and growing threat to national and international security with dire implications for public safety, public health, democratic institutions, and economic stability across the globe. It jeopardizes our border security, endangers our health through human trafficking and counterfeit pharmaceuticals, and seeks to corrupt officials domestically and abroad. These threats also include criminal penetration of global energy and strategic material markets that are vital to national security interests, and logistical and other support to terrorists and foreign intelligence services (Sangiovanni, 2005).

Gulf of Guinea

According to Onuoha (2012) there is no universally agreed geographical definition of the GoG. The region is defined here as that part of the Atlantic Ocean of South West of Africa. The region encompasses over a dozen countries from West and Central Africa. These are, Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Congo, Nigeria, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo (Onuoha, 2012). The GoG is fast emerging as an important region because of its landward as well as its maritime domain. Its large population offers a potential market combined with abundant energy resources typified by the proximity of large oil producers (Nigeria and Angola), and maturing oil producer (Congo Brazzaville). The matured producers showing signs of decline (Cameroon and Gabon) and new producers, (Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Sierra Leon and Chad) continue to demonstrate a lot of potentials. (Francois, 2009). In addition to the maritime sphere and energy resources, other commodities are also important minerals like diamonds, the region's rain forest habitat, agricultural commodities such as Cocoa and Cotton. All of these, form hubs of economic importance with international appeal (Francois, 2009). The GG contains 50.4 billion barrels of proven reserves and it produces 5.4 million barrels of oil per day. Its low Sulphur oil and proximity to Europe and the

U.S further raise its strategic importance in global energy supply (Onuoha, 2012). The rich nature of resources and commercial potentials of the GoG made it attractive to transnational organized criminals. When the focal point of, wealth and power is situated offshore, Maritime boundaries are disputed and interstate tensions tend to escalate quickly (Francois, 2009). Moreover, these Volatile conditions would not only favour insurgent-styled activities at sea, but also all manner of criminality. Since majority of the states in the GoG are from West Africa, the GoG is seldom referred to as West African coast or West Africa. So in the study, West Africa and GOG will be used interchangeably.

Theoretical Framework Routine Activity Theory of Crime

The study anchored its theoretical analysis on the Routine Activity Theory of Crime (RATC). The names of Lawrence Cohen and Marcus Felson are mostly associated with this approach (Musa, 2019). RATC by definition is an approach to crime which explains crime as a product of the combined result of three essential elements; namely (a) potential offenders or persons who are motivated to commit crimes, (b) suitable targets that is, the presence of things that are of some economic value and which can be easily transported and (c) absence of capable guards or persons who can prevent crime taking place (Musa, 2019). Scholars who adopt the RATC to explain the causes of crime contend that crime takes place or increase when these three critical elements converge in space and time. Wikipedia (2021) further explains the three basics of RATC, thus Motivated offender: Motivated offenders are individuals who are not only capable of committing criminal activity, but are willing to do so. This element that has received the most criticism due to the lack of information regarding what it truly is. A motivated offender can be pointed out as any type of person who has true intent to commit a crime against an individual or property. However, the motivated offender has to be someone who is able to commit the crime, or, in other words, has everything he or she needs to commit a crime, physically, and mentally. Suitable target: A suitable target is any type of individual or property that the motivated offender can damage or threaten in the easiest way possible. If a target is suitable, this means that there is a greater chance that the crime can be committed, rather than, a target that is hard to achieve. There are four different attributes of what makes a target actually suitable, in the judgement of the offender. The attributes are; Value (The value of achieving the target, in a real or symbolic manner) Inertia (The physical obstacles of the target: weight, height, strength, etc.) Visibility (The attribute of exposure which solidifies the suitability of the target) Access (The placement of the individual, or object that increases, or lessens, the potential risk of the intended attack). Absence of a suitable guardian: Guardianship can be a person or an object that is effective in deterring offense to occur and sometimes crime is stopped by simple presence of guardianship in space and time.

The vast territory of the GoG marine domain is inadequately policed due to lack of political will and other factors. Therefore, the untapped resources therein, are open to criminals to explore (Ebiotubo & Paul, 2021)

Queer Ladder Mobility Theory

The study also adopts the Queer Ladder Mobility Theory (QLMT) as its theoretical framework. QLMT was influenced by an American Sociologist, Daniel Bell (1919-2011) (Chukwuma & Fakumo, 2014) that coined the idea of queer ladder mobility in an attempt to explain the instrumental essence of organized crime as a desperate means of economic empowerment and social climbing. This theoretical perspective has since fertilized into a popular theoretical framework widely used in contemporary crime studies. The basic assumptions of QLMT are thus: (a) organized crime is an instrumental behaviour (b) it is a means to an end. (c) It is an instrument of social climbing or socio-economic advancement. (d) It is a means to accumulate wealth and build power. Often ascribed to this theory is the notion that organized crime thrives in contexts where the governments capacity to detect, sanction and deter crime is poor; where public corruption is endemic and where prospects for legitimate livelihood opportunities are slim (Nwoye, 2000; Lyman, 2007; Okoli & Oyinya, 2013). A situation whereby most of the governments across West African States have failed to execute their quintessential responsibilities, especially in terms of the provision of social welfare security. Therefore, the resultant effect of it, is poverty, hardship and economic stagnancy. Thus, engaging in organized transnational crime could be an enticing alternative option to eliminate socio-economic malaise. The idea of ladder in QLMT denotes untoward pattern of social mobility. In effect those who take to TOC such as human trafficking does so as a desperate means of social climbing (mobility). Nobody wants to remain at the bottom of the social stratification of a society forever. The desire to move upward of the ladder of social hierarchy in order to remain influential and economically secured is inborn in everyman. Thus, if the society does not create a legitimate means to achieve the above, then achieving it through TOC could be an option. Meaning that TOC is a means to a socio-economic end. The theory provides some reasonable analytical assumptions for one to understand the foundation of the study at hand.

Emerging Forms of Transnational Organised Crimes in the Gulf of Guinea Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing (Piratical-Fishing).

Illicit fishing activities pose a significant threat to Africa, which is surrounded by some of the most diverse and high-yielding waters on earth. Marine resources in and around the continent provide an important (and often the only) source of revenue and food for millions of people. Marine fisheries in Africa provide direct employment to about 2.8 million people and indirect employment to more than 14 million (Berh & Sowman, 2016). In 2016, it was estimated that the continent's share of the global IUU catch was about 4.7 million tons of fish, valued at about US\$10 billion and representing about 80% of reported catches. IUU fishing is widespread in Africa, with an estimated one in four fish caught illegally (Daniels, Miren, Gonzalo & Arantxa, 2016). The continent is surrounded by diverse ocean basins –the East Atlantic Ocean, the West Indian Ocean, the Gulf of Guinea and the Mediterranean and Black Sea. Of the 54 African countries 38 have a coastline, placing much of the continent at risk of illicit fishing activities. African has the

highest record of IUU fishing in the world. In East Africa countries with coasts along the Indian Ocean are estimated to lose approximately US\$400 million per year in landings and nearly US\$1 billion in related processed products. In the north, five countries border the Mediterranean Sea, which has been labelled the most overfished sea in the world. West Africa, in particular, has regularly been cited as an epicentre, with studies suggesting that more than 40% of the catch is illegal (Daniels *et al.*, 2016). It is estimated that the region loses about US\$1.3 billion annually to IUU fishing, with Senegal, Guinea and Sierra Leone losing US\$300 million, US\$110 million and US\$29 million annually respectively (Daniels *et al.*, 2016). It has also been suggested that eliminating IUU fishing could bring 300 000 new jobs to the region. Several countries outside of Africa, including China, Taiwan, Russia, South Korea, Spain, France and Thailand, have been known to engage in illicit fishing activities along the continent's coast (Kaysser & Adal, 2020). Increasing sophistication, internationalization and convergence with other crimes make the fight more pressing than ever, but also more difficult.

The transnational aspect of the fishery crime can derive from elements such as; the nationality of the fishers, (who may be of various nationalities and are often recruited by criminal groups due to their knowledge of the high seas and ability to move undetected across borders); the nationality of the vessel; the water in which the fishery crime takes place; the port where the vessel docks or where the catch is landed. While IUU fishing is often transnational and organized in nature, it has tended to receive insufficient attention by the international community, precisely because it is not well understood as crime. It is reported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2013) that 'unregulated fishing vessels are used by criminal networks for drug, arms and human trafficking in the GoG'. Local and international actors of IUU fishing uses the following illegal methods of fishing: Bottom trawling: Bottom trawling is a method that uses a large net that scrapes against the sea floor to collect large groups of fish and various aquatic plants and animals. Bottom trawling is unselective or the fishes and plants it catches. The use of the heavy and large nets in this method is harmful in several ways, such as (a) bottom trawling stirs up sediment that may be poisonous, at times creating muddy water that gives aquatic species a difficult time surviving. (b) aquatic species that are edible and non-edible that makes the ecosystem what it is to aquatic creatures might be considerably damaged, consequently making the habitat uncomfortable. Dynamite or Blast Fishing: This is done easily and cheaply with dynamite or home-made explosives. Fish and other marine species are killed by the shock from the blast. Killed fishes by the explosion are collected from the surface or water and the beneath of it. Explosions indiscriminately destroys the marine ecosystem and the physical environment. Bycatch: Bycatch means accidentally catching numerous types of aquatic life in the process of targeting a particular specie to catch. Bycatch could lead to catching the wrong size of fish and inedible creatures or species that are almost in extinction. Large quantity of bycatch are often thrown overboard, unwanted injured or dead (Ebiotubo, 2021)

Atrocities of Fishmeal/Fish oil producing factories in the shorelines of GoG

The establishment of Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) in the 20th century enabled coastal states to exercise sovereign rights for the exploitation of fisheries occurring in a wide area of their coastal waters (Morin, 2020). Theoretically, GoG states were expected to have converted this huge opportunity to graciously utilize the aquatic resources in their EEZs that will bring wealth to its population. Unfortunately, the reverse is the case. Countries from Europe and Asia that are into fishery are the ones exploiting GoG EEZs' marine resources. Foreign fishing fleets uses all manner of ways to catch fishes and grind same mechanically into Fish-meal and fish-oil (FmFo). A strong demand for FmFo, as an ingredient in livestock and aquaculture feeds, has led to a rapid development of Fish-meal and fish oil producing factories in African states (FAO, 2020). These countries are mostly in Southern, Eastern and Western Africa (FAO, 2020). More than 50 FmFo plants line up in the GoG coast especially in Gambia, Mauritania and Senegal (ADF Report, 2021). A single factory can process 7,500 metric tons of fish a year. Mauritania agreed in 2017 to phase out fishmeal factories by 2020, but the country's 25 foreign owned factories have tripled production instead (ADF Report, 2021). The US Department of Agriculture estimates that Senegal exports 12,000 metric tons of fishmeal per year. One metric ton of fishmeal requires about 5 metric tons of fresh fish to produce (ADF Report, 2021). The UN reported that 90 per cent of Senegal's fisheries already are fully fished or facing collapse (ADF Report, 2021). In contemporary times, fish bones, offal and fish left overs are no more used for producing FmFo that used to be traditionally. Rather, entire fishes like round sardinella, flat sardinella and bonga (family of Pelagic) are grilled into FmFo (Standing, 2019).

Predominantly, fishmeal is used to feed animals and farmed fish while that of fish oil is used in pharmaceutical companies and cosmetic industries in Europe and Asia, mostly especially in Turkey and China (Standing, 2019). FmFo processing factories in W/A especially in Mauritania, Gambia and Senegal are owned and controlled by Chinese companies. Foreign owned FmFo processing factories uses destructive and illegal methods to exploit the sub region fisheries and grind same into FmFo. Some fishing vessels also have the technology in-built to mash their catch instantly into fmfo. Some actors have the FmFo producing factories on sea and along the shorelines of the GoG. IUU fishing and illegitimate FmFo industries have grave implications for the region some of the consequences are: Overfishing Repercussions: is the phenomenon when more fish are caught than the population can replace through natural reproduction; it occurs due to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. In the GoG specifically, this reduction is attributed to an increased presence of foreign commercial fishing vessels, and an increased foreign demand for fish-based products such as oil and farm feed. Economically, their presence costs Western African economies \$2.3 billion a year and is a detriment to private and national income (Ebiotubo, 2021). Fishing in this region contributes significantly to the macroeconomic improvement of the nations and the microeconomic level as it creates a diversity of jobs and generates income for local economies. But the stability that fishing creates for the nations and peoples of West Africa is

threatened by the presence of large, foreign fleets and the depletion of fishing stocks. The decreased amount of fish exacerbates the poverty in this region and forces the local fishermen to resort to unsustainable tactics to meet their economic needs. Threats of Extinction: environmentally in marine waters from Mauritania to Angola, 37 species of bony fish are threatened with extinction and 14 species are near-threatened (Ebiotubo, 2021). All of which are imperative and staple sources of food. In conjunction with lower numbers due to the slowed natural re-population of a species, the slowed rebound reduces the gene-pool and reduces the ability to adapt to the effects of climate change. Furthermore, the increased presence of boats searching for a fewer amount of fish has turned both local and foreign boats to more destructive, habitat-decimating techniques like dynamite, bottom trawling, beach seining and increased capture of endangered marine life. The turn towards unsustainable and environmentally hazardous practices allow for temporary economic relief, but will ultimately result in the destruction of an imperative industry, food, and job security and the environment (Ebiotubo, 2021).

Piratical-Kidnapping in the Gulf of Guinea

Global piracy and armed robbery numbers increased in 2020, according to the international maritime bureau center. Global piracy and armed robbery numbers increased in 2020, according to the International Maritime Bureau Piracy Reporting Centre (IMB, 2020). Its latest annual report lists a total of 195 actual and attempted attacks in 2020, up from 162 in 2019. The agency attributes the rise to an increase of piracy and armed robbery reported within the GoG as well as increased armed robbery activity in the Singapore Straits. The figures are broken down as three vessels hijacked, 161 vessels boarded, 20 attempted attacks, and 11 vessels fired upon. The report also warns of an alarming trend in kidnap for ransom incidents. Globally 135 crews were kidnapped from their vessels in 2020, compared to 134 in 2019, with the GoG accounting for more than 95% of crew numbers. There is no doubt that the GoG presents a serious and immediate threat to the safety and security of crews and vessels operating in the region. The IMB PRC recorded a total of 84 armed robbery incidents against vessels in the Gulf of Guinea in 2020, a year-on-year increase of more than 30% for this region alone. The region accounted for all three vessel hijackings that occurred in 2020, as well as nine out of 11 vessels that reported coming under fire. The Gulf of Guinea region also recorded the highest ever number of crews kidnapped, with 130 crews taken in 22 separate incidents. Of particular concern is the fact that attacks are increasingly violent, the use of guns were reported in more than 80% of the incidents in the region, in 2020. They occur farther from shore, and larger groups of seafarers are kidnapped per incident (IMB, 2020). The situation off Nigeria continues to be the main concern for vessels and crews trading to the Gulf of Guinea. While the majority of incidents and number of crew kidnapped in the region can still be attributed to Nigeria, the fact that pirates are being observed attacking vessels further out to sea also affects Nigeria's neighbouring countries. According to the IMB PRC, Benin, Ghana, Angola and Guinea, in addition to Nigeria, represented the top five locations for incidents recorded in the Gulf of Guinea in 2020 (See Table 1).

Table 1: Types of violence to crew by location, January - December, 2020

Location	Assault	Hostage	Injured	Kidnap	Killed	Threat
(S/E Asia) Indonesia		2				2
Malaysia				5		
Philippines			1			
Singapore straits	1	1				2
(Americas) Brazil	1					1
Ecuador	2					
Haiti	1					
Mexico			1			
Peru	2	2				2
(Gulf of Guinea) Angola	1					
Benin				29		
Equatorial Guinea			2	6		
Gabon				10		
Ghana			1	6		
Guinea	5					
Ivory Coast		18				
Nigeria	6			62		
Sao Tome and Principe			1	14		
Congo						1
Togo				3		
Sub total	5	34	9	135		8

Source: IMB Annual Report, 2020

Total = 191

From table 1, out of 135 kidnap attacks perpetrated globally, 130 attacks took place in the GoG region of which 62 persons were kidnapped in Nigerian territorial waters, whereas Benin and Sao Tome and Principe territorial waters recorded 29 and 14 respectively. However, kidnapping activities in the jurisdiction of GoG littoral states are attributed to Nigerian criminals. The indicators that corroborate this assertion are: first, all pirates arrested in the year 2020 were from Nigeria, second, majority of the hijacked vessels or kidnapped crew were brought into Nigerian territorial waters, held in captivity in Nigeria and got released on payment of ransom (Kamal-Deen, Yussif, Stephani & Arsene, 2020)

Effects of piratical-kidnapping

The costs imposed by Piratical-Kidnapping are significant. IMB estimated that maritime kidnapping in the Indian Ocean and Pacific resulted in US \$13 - 15 billion a year (IMB Report, 2016). This awesome cost imposed by Piratical-Kidnapping stems from stolen goods and cargoes (and sometimes the theft of the ship itself), and also from delay in ports and increase in insurance rates when transiting through known pirate infested waters. For instance, Nigeria accounts for over 60 percent of the total seaborne traffic for the 16 nations in the West Africa Sub-region. As warnings to mariners in and near Nigerian water become more common; increased shipping costs for Nigerian and Gulf of Guinea destinations are likely as shippers begin to factor higher insurance premiums into their pricing.

Due to the fact that increased shipping costs are typically passed on to consumers, there are likely to be inflationary pressures on vital goods and services throughout the region. Balogun (2012) states that economists predict sustained attacks in the region could translate to serious financial consequences in the region (Balogun, 2012). Nigerians are currently feeling the pinch in terms of increased costs for imported goods like fish, rice, poultry products and electronics. Nigeria is currently the most afflicted country by maritime threats pervading the GoG region. It loses about \$8 -million yearly to poaching, \$9billion per annum to activities of pirates and \$15.5 billion annually to oil theft. At a micro level, constrained economic activities limit employment opportunities and the income- earning potential of coastal population. Unemployment and low wages further exacerbate human security concerns in the GoG region. Perhaps the most significant losses derive from lots of investment. Piratical-kidnapping is one reason many investors and entrepreneurs have shown relatively little interest in the region's potentially lucrative tourism industry. The safety of shipping routes is important because an overwhelming proportion of trade in the GoG region traverses the maritime domain. Insecurity constraints trading activities and raise both transportation costs and insurance premiums.

Piratical-Kidnapping also imposes significant costs on the local fishing industry in most countries in the African continent. Fishing is one of the main occupations in Africa, (Gulf of Guinea States inclusive). For instance, the fishing industry, as part of Nigeria's agricultural sector, is among the top non-oil foreign exchange earners for the country. The industry is worth over N364 billion (Naira) and provides employment for over 500,000 unskilled and skilled workers in Nigeria (Onuoha, 2011). Pirate attacks on fishing trawlers have reached the point that many fishing boat captains refuse to sail. The attacks range from minor harassment to theft of fish cargoes, engines and other materials on board; and the killing of fishermen. Pirate attacks worldwide are considered to be vastly under-reported, particularly when it comes to attacks on fishing vessels.

Petro-Piracy

A type of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is theft of cargo, mainly oil. There are three key aspects to oil-related piracy activities. Firstly, such theft of cargo also referred to as 'petro-piracy' or 'hijacking- of- oil- cargo' has increasingly come to be associated with violence against crew members. In the case of kidnappings-for-ransom, the crew is 'valuable' (without them, there is of course no ransom). However, in the case of hijacking-for-cargo, pirates are only interested in the cargo and are therefore less reluctant to use violence against crew members that get in the way. Secondly, these activities are very well organized and involve "tasks of considerable logistic complexity. Emptying a vessel of tons of oil is not a simple task but requires sophisticated equipment and know-how. It does not only requires navigational knowledge to maneuver a merchant vessel around for days, but, since an oil tanker has a complicated pipe system, it also requires the knowledge of an engineer to understand where to open and close various pipes, how to start pumps. Finally, it also requires the requisite logistics and a good network to be able to sell oil illegally to refineries or to re-circulate it back into

the market through an oil terminal in the region. Indeed, questions about where to transport the stolen cargo and where to sell it are also indicative of the high levels of organization and sophistication, something, which characterizes this type of piracy. The third and final key aspect of oil theft is that it too is not just a maritime problem; particularly in the Niger Delta region, oil is being stolen from the 6,000 kilometers of pipeline through which the oil is transported (Jacobsen & Nordby 2015). Criminals also vandalize the various oil pipelines that crisscrosses the GoG's maritime domain, to siphon crude oil, an act popularly known as oil bunkering. Nigeria has been labelled the most tormented country by oil robbers among her counterparts of Indonesia, Russia, Iraq, and Mexico (Bodo, Batombari & kemetonye, 2020). It has been reported that Nigeria is losing up to US\$1.7-billion per month (Bodo *et al.*, 2020). This misfortune contrasted with total oil theft of 5,000 to 10,000 barrels for every day and only 2,000 to 3,000 barrels for each day in Mexico and Indonesia respectively (Bodo *et al.*, 2020). This whole system of illegal oil bunkering and pipeline vandalism in the Niger Delta is a clear indication of the various compromises of the government and exposes the illegality in the establishment of the oil industry(Bodo *et al.*, 2020). The challenge posed by illegal oil bunkering in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria is disturbing. Directly, Nigeria is losing more than 300,000 barrels of unrefined petroleum every day to oil robbers, pipeline vandalism, and related criminal indecencies in the nation's oil (Bodo *et al.* 2020). The Nigerian economy is faced with a peculiar challenge with a financial crisis phenomenal among the oil-producing countries of the world and needs an urgent remedy to avoid total loss or collapse of the economy in the future

Causes of organized crimes in the GoG Globalization and TOCs

Globalization refers to integration internationally through the exchange of world views, products, ideas and other cultural aspects. This is facilitated by advances in transportation and telecommunications infrastructure enabling openness in trade, finance, travel and communication (Scholte, 2000). These are the major factors that have generated economic and cultural interdependence, creating economic growth and well-being, and unfortunately, also giving rise to significant opportunity for criminal activities and business (Nelken, 2008). With these developments and economic globalization, global governance has failed to keep pace and has enabled the diversification and internationalization of crime which is presently deemed to have reached macro-economic proportions. Globalized crime includes trafficking and marketing of illegal and counterfeit goods across continents, smuggling of migrants in modern day slavery, organized crime gangs in various urban centers and insurgency, cybercrime and fraud, piracy, and money-laundering, among other vices. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2000 identified four elementary aspects of globalization: movement of capital and investment, trade and transactions, migration, and dissemination of knowledge, aspects which lead to the emergence of an international network of social and economic systems (Jones, 2010). Globalization is therefore defined as the intensification of social relations across the globe linking distant localities in such a way that happenings at a local level are shaped by events far and wide

and vice versa. The processes of globalization do affect and are affected by the organization of business and work, social and cultural resources, economics, and the natural environment (Kohler and Chaves, 2003).

Globalization and capitalism

Taylor cited in Stella (2016) suggests that capitalism has benefited from globalization, allowing it to spread across to the developing world. Stella (2016) suggest that globalization has led to a 'disorganized capitalism' with decreased regulations for businesses who employ in developing countries, where there are less strict rules on health and safety and no minimum wages. Taylor argues that this has overall lead to increased inequality, with less job opportunities in the West, and more exploitation in Less Developed Countries (LDCs) This undermines social cohesion and leads to increased crime. Economically, globalization has, on the whole, reinforced the economic marginalization of African economies and their dependence on a few primary goods for which demand and prices are externally determined. This has, in turn accentuated poverty and economic inequality as well as the ability of the vast number of Africans to participate meaningfully in the social and political life of their countries. Globalization introduces anti-development by declaring the state irrelevant or marginal to the developmental effort. Development strategies and policies that focus on stabilization and privatization, rather than growth, development and poverty eradication, are pushed by external donors, leading to greater poverty and inequality and undermining the ability of the people to participate effectively in the political and social processes in their countries. Welfare and other programs intended to meet the basic needs of the majority of the population are transferred from governments to non-governmental organizations that begin to replace governments making them to lose the little authority and legitimacy they have for the state (Stella, 2016).

Growing individualization

Stella (2016) suggests that there is growing individualization, meaning that individuals are self-dependent for their success. Stella (2016) suggests that individuals now see it as up to them as to whether they achieve the rewards which are based on a western ideology of consumerism. This leads to people putting more importance on personal gain than community benefit, and thus being more likely to turn to crime which could harm others for their own benefit. Globalization created a platform where by individuals are allowed to stand alone or fall according to his worth unaided by the state. Individuals are left to work out their destiny without the assistance of the government. It means those that cannot withstand the vagaries of life are meant to remain suffering or die. The desire to become rich and thereby eliminate poverty is innate in every human and at the same time no one wants to die because of suffering. Hence if TOC will make the unfit, weak and vulnerable ones to get rid of poverty and suffering, then it will become attractive and enticing option of survival.

Complication of security

As a result of globalization, it is now difficult to track down non-state actors, especially crime syndicates due to the

borderless nature of the world. The vast marine domain is even worst as there are no security-mounted physical border demarcations, separating states territorial space. In the same vein, Patrick (2010) states that 'on the security side of globalization, state security has become complex and multi-dimensional. The consequence is that traditional national border settings and security perceptions are less capable of recognizing new threats that transcend national borders'. He further contend that transnational criminal organizations have become globalized by forming strategic alliances. These alliances are disturbing because they can weaken the regional states'. This explanation of globalization as an enabler of piracy, also explain why the exclusive economic zones of states in the GoG domain are easily invaded and exploited by foreign fishing vessels and the kidnappers that engaged in illegal business activities with impunity.

Intensified commerce and technological revolution

With increased interconnectedness of the world with communication and transportation availability across almost every country and space in the world, has led to criminality occurring at ease. The growing interdependence between states, improved international transportation and deregulation within states as well as the explosion in information technology are the catalyst of the commercial distribution systems. The distribution systems often carry more products, people, currencies and information across it at rate that exceed the ability of nation states to either monitor or regulate (Uadiale, 2010). A study by Liss as stated in Donna's work (2008) opines that, as over 90 per cent of world trade by volume is carried by ships, globalization will only lead to an increase in maritime trade, providing a favourable number of potential targets for attacks. Globalization with the aid of technological revolution and advances, allow transnational criminals access to modern weapon, fast moving vessels, sophisticated offshore communication gadgets, telescope and GPS. The above explanation increases the success of illicit operation of TOCs. Some vessels and trawlers involved in IUU fishing has the requisite technology to instantly convert full fledged fishes into Fishmeal and fish oil for exportation to feed farmed fishes inland in Europe and Asia. Kidnappers has sophisticated weapons to scared their victims

Lack of political will

Despite the important contribution that fishing makes to the livelihood of Nigerians, government neglects this sector. This is evident in the marginal budgetary allocation the sector receives yearly. The government of the West African states including Nigeria is engulfed by land-centered issues and challenges. This is because most of the leaders lack the knowledge of maritime opportunities. This explains why the presence of the government is very remote from the littoral village and towns. For instance, naval formations are sporadically located in the region. Maritime police are found in major cities like Warri, Lagos, Accra, Abidjan, Cotonou, Lome. The interior areas that linked the various rivers to the major Atlantic sea are not policed. (Yonmo & Nwala, 2021). Because of the foregoing, the river lanes from the numerous littoral villages to the sea are policed by criminal gangs, private militaries and warlords that are usurping the responsibility of the federal government by collecting taxes

from foreign fishing trawlers, cargo ships, Jacobsen and Nordby (2015) rightly noted the intractability of maritime security challenges in the region is magnified by what might be described as a long history of policy blindness towards coastal waters. In other words, a lack of political interest in maritime security issues meant that little effort has been made to combat IUU fishing.

Social Acceptance: The inability of the government to provide the basic needs of the people in the West African states, has made criminal gangs to provide government functions security, employment, and social amenities to villages. Therefore, making individuals to become members of such criminal gangs. Ransoms gotten from kidnapped crew members, the sales of illegal oil, funds gotten from fishing trawlers illegitimately makes the economy of the riverine villages to boom. It stimulates an inflow of capital, which makes the local industries to thrive and create other economic opportunities. Thus, locals provide safe havens for criminals away from government security forces (Yonmo & Nwala, 2021).

III Equipped Naval: The ill equipped security agencies, like the Nigerian Navy that lacks surveillance equipment, speed boats, sophisticated weapons, state of the art patrol boats, airplanes to guarantee the required security of the domain is also a huge problem. Couple with the fact that the maritime architecture of West Africa is a trajectory of traversed diverse creeks, rivers, swamps and forest. The Navy lacks the mastery of the terrain. Conversely, pirate gangs have access to sophisticated weapons and most times they were born and bred in the region, so they understand the difficult terrain (Yonmo & Nwala, 2021).

Lack of surveillance equipment

The monitoring, control and surveillance unit of the Nigeria's Federal Fisheries Department within the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development lack budgetary allocation, patrol boats, enough personnel and surveillance equipment to effectively do their job. Government fishery management institutions in West Africa are not given the required funds and logistical support to battle crimes offshore. For instance, as rightly reported by Barthelmy, Fatimata & Diallo (2015). The Benin Republic Directorate of Fisheries (DF) and the Institute for Fisheries and Ocean Research (IFOR) two important actors in the development, control, protection and conservation of fishery resources lack the requisite resources technicality, funds, technology and specialized personnel to curtail the excesses in their marine domain. This partly explains why Benin does not have recent data of fishing activities in its waters, except the data from IPAO, IUU index.

Physical and environmental elements

The West African region which is highly ranked among the world's richest fishery grounds teeming with sardines and mackerel stretches thorough millions of kilometres off a vast coastline and Exclusive Economic Zones. The sheer size of this key unprotected frontier of fishing along the Atlantic Eastern central and the Gulf of Guinea current has made it the focus of major scramble in the daily activity of illegal trawlers of various nations from the EU, Asia and others.

(Merem, 2018). Even though international regulations of the sea prohibit fishing operations outside of a stipulated 200-mile area off the territory of another nation without permits, the capacity to enforce those rules are hindered due to the shortage of both the expertise and of the massive assets necessary for patrolling such wide maritime areas. (Merem, 2018). Since only quite a few nations in the region, possess the capacity to monitor their coastal fishing waters satisfactorily. Foreign trawlers fishing in the coastal waters of West Africa operate with impunity regardless of the legality of global conventions.

Corruption

Corruption in governmental institutions has ripped the essence of such institutions in Africa. Many countries in western Africa require observers to be present on board fishing vessels, in some cases these observers are paid by the vessel operators. The incentive to expose illegal trade is accordingly limited (Daniels *et al.*, 2016). Corruption is another barrier to effective action. One third of the countries in western African were in the bottom quarter of Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index for 2014. The consequences can be seen in the governance of the fisheries sector. In Senegal, for example, highly placed political figures have been investigated and, in some cases, prosecuted for selling illegal permits to foreign fleets for personal gain. (Daniels *et al.*, 2016). Still on corruption, the Nigeria Maritime Administration Safety Agency Act (NIMASA) established by law in 2007 that has its own fleet for search and rescue, as well created to cooperate with the Nigerian Navy in case of criminal attacks was negatively revitalized and infiltrated by corrupt politicians since 1999. The agency has a huge record of corruption (Yonmo and Nwala, 2021). The agency remains a toothless bull dog because of the above explanation.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study established that Transnational organized crimes ranging from human trafficking, drug trafficking, piracy, money laundering, organ trafficking, cyber-crime, arms trafficking and so on are age long menaces that has being hindering socio economic development and peace in the GoG. Recently, globalization has enabled new types of TOC in the said area - kidnapping, IUU fishing and FmFo processing industries illicit activities. These new threats have colossal implications for the region's political, economic, social, environmental and health architectures

Transnational crime is taking advantage of the globalization process to enhance the speed and frequency of its conduct of illicit activities, and as well to avoid detection and adverse consequences of law in various jurisdictions. Criminals are increasingly adapting to quick changes and developments in technology, people and goods mobility to cross borders through social networks while exploiting the lack of international cooperation between countries. They also exploit different legal frameworks between countries to successively undermine states efforts in curbing their illicit Activities. The study finds that globalization and its parameters sets the enabling environment for TOC to thrive. Globalization made West African countries in the GoG area dependent and volatile economies, to be constantly exploited by the Western countries because African countries

generally, were wrongly integrated into the global economy. It is also the findings of the study that, ToCs in the GoG flourishes because technology and effective communication gadgets at disposal of criminal organizations to utilize their nefarious activities. Globalization has made the world to be borderless, therefore criminals can perpetrate their illegitimate businesses from any corner of the world. Excessive liberalism and individualism as indices of globalization create the gap between the poor and rich in the GoG states; communalism is almost eroded. Due to the forgoing, people will always take to crime in order to survive. Apart from globalization as enabler of TOCs, the lack of political will to secure the marine region, official corruption, lack of surveillance system, lack of security personnel in the GoG are also causes of TOCs. Nevertheless, to curb the excesses of transnational organized crimes the study suggests that TOC in the GoG region takes place because the area's governance is weak and TOC is more profitable than legal enterprise. States should be able to correct the imbalances by strengthening up governance in the region.

- i. West African navies need to work more closely together to monitor and protect their coastal waters.
- ii. African Union should work in harmony with the Interpol to blacklist IUU fishing vessels
- iii. IUU fishing should be tagged transnational crime, by so doing the local and international security personnel would possess the security powers necessary to investigate and prosecute cases concerning IUU fishing and illegal Fmfo
- iv. Government in the region should form a formidable intergovernmental organization that will control activities offshore
- v. African states should also invest offshore in order not to create vacuum for invaders
- vi. The political will of governments in the region concerning offshore matters, security and ways to utilize the resources therein should be given a top priority.

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