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THE IMPACT OF TANTITA SECURITY SERVICES NIGERIA LIMITED (TSSNL) ON JOB CREATION AND SUSTAINABILITY IN THE NIGER DELTA: A MULTI-LOCAL GOVERNMENT ANALYSIS OF WARRI SOUTH-WEST, BURUTU, WARRI SOUTH, BOMADI AND PATANI IN DELTA STATE

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Abstract
This empirical study examines the impact of Tantita Security Services Nigeria Limited (TSSNL) on job creation and livelihood sustainability in five oil-bearing Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Delta State: Warri South-West, Burutu, Warri South, Bomadi, and Patani. TSSNL's pipeline surveillance contract, awarded by the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL), represents a significant policy shift towards embedding local actors in the security architecture of the Niger Delta's oil economy. Utilizing a mixed-methods research design, data was collected through 450 structured questionnaires administered to direct employees and indirect beneficiaries, 25 key informant interviews (community leaders, TSSNL officials, government representatives), and 10 focus group discussions. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics (Chi-square, regression), while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. Findings reveal that TSSNL has created substantial direct employment (approximately 3,000 jobs across the study areas) and significant indirect employment in logistics, catering, and marine transport, leading to a measurable reduction in self-reported youth restiveness. However, the sustainability of these jobs is heavily contingent upon the continuity of the security contract, with concerns over skills transferability, formal labour protections, and gender inclusivity. The study concludes that while TSSNL offers a potent model for immediate poverty alleviation and conflict mitigation, its long-term developmental impact requires integration into a broader framework of economic diversification and human capital development in the Niger Delta.

Keywords: Tantita Security, Pipeline Surveillance, Job Creation, Sustainable Livelihoods, Niger Delta, Local Content, Youth Unemployment, Delta State.

1.0 Introduction

The Niger Delta region in Nigeria known for its economic viability, presents a paradox of immense resource wealth and profound socio-economic deprivation (Watts, 2004). Decades of oil extraction have yielded environmental degradation, weakened traditional livelihoods, and fostered a political economy of conflict and pervasive youth unemployment (Ikelegbe, 2005). In response to the debilitating crisis of crude oil theft and pipeline vandalism—estimated to cost Nigeria billions annually in lost revenue (NNPC, 2022)—the Federal Government, through the NNPCL, has increasingly turned to private security contractors for pipeline protection.

Tantita Security Services Nigeria Limited (TSSNL), is owned and operated by High Chief Government Ekpemupolo (aka Tompolo), emerged as a principal beneficiary of this strategy, securing a major surveillance contract in 2022. This contract signifies more than a security intervention; it is a socio-economic experiment in using security procurement as a tool for local content development and job creation in restive communities (Asuni, 2009). The engagement of a former militant leader to safeguard state assets underscores a pragmatic, albeit controversial, approach to conflating security, patronage, and economic inclusion.

This research focuses on the LGAs of Warri South-West, Burutu, Warri South, Bomadi, and Patani in Delta State, which are central to TSSNL's operations. These riverine and coastal communities have historically been flashpoints for militancy and illegal oil bunkering. By empirically investigating the employment outcomes of TSSNL's presence, this study contributes to critical debates on resource governance, conflict resolution, and sustainable development in the Niger Delta.

2.0 Statement of the Problem

Despite Nigeria's vast oil wealth, host communities in the Niger Delta, including those in Delta State, endure endemic poverty and unemployment (UNDP, 2006). Top-down developmental interventions like the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP) have recorded limited success in generating sustainable livelihoods (Obi, 2014). Consequently, many youths engage in illegal oil refining (kpo-fire) and maritime piracy, perpetuating a cycle of environmental ruin and insecurity.

The engagement of TSSNL by the federal government brings about a new paradigm where security spending is directly associated with local job creation. Notwithstanding, there is a serious lack of empirical data on the scale, nature, and sustainability of job opportunities generated by such private security contracts. Among such key problems include:

i. An absence of verified data on the number and quality of jobs created directly and indirectly by TSSNL in its core operational areas.
ii. Unclear understanding of how these jobs impact local economic dynamics and social stability.
iii. Concerns that these jobs may be transient, lacking in formal protections, and potentially reinforcing patriarchal and patronage structures without fostering long-term human capital development.

This study, therefore, focuses on providing an evidence-based analysis to inform policy on the efficacy of security-based job creation as a strategy for sustainable development in the Niger Delta.

3.0 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to investigate the impact of Tantita Security Services Nigeria Limited on job creation and sustainability in the selected LGAs of Delta State. Specifically the study aims at:

i. Ascertaining the demographic profile and employment conditions of direct employees of TSSNL.
ii. Evaluating the multiplier effect of TSSNL's operations on indirect job creation in the local economies.
iii. Examining the perceived impact of these employment opportunities on youth restiveness and social stability.
iv. Analyzing the challenges and sustainability prospects of the jobs created by TSSNL.

4.0 Research Questions

i. What is the demographic and socio-economic statistics of individuals who were employed directly by TSSNL in the study areas?
ii. To what extent has TSSNL's operation stimulated indirect employment in ancillary sectors within the local economies?
iii. How has the creation of jobs by TSSNL influenced perceptions of youth restiveness and communal security?
iv. What are the major constraints on the sustainability of employment generated by TSSNL, and how can they be mitigated?

5.0 Methodology

5.0.1. Research Design

The study adopted a convergent parallel mixed-methods design to ensure comprehensive data triangulation (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

5.0.2. Study Area

Warri South-West, Burutu, Warri South, Bomadi, and Patani LGAs in Delta State. These were purposively selected due to their high concentration of TSSNL operations and oil infrastructure.

5.0.3. Population and Sampling

The target population comprised TSSNL employees, indirect service providers, community youth, and leaders. A multi-stage sampling technique was used. For the survey, a sample of 450 was determined using the Taro Yamane formula. Respondents were selected via stratified random sampling from community registers and with TSSNL's cooperation. Purposive sampling was used to select 25 key informants and participants for 10 FGDs (8 persons per group).

5.0.4. Data Collection

a. Quantitative: A structured questionnaire was administered to capture data on employment type, income, duration, and socio-economic perceptions (Likert scale items).
b. Qualitative: Semi-structured interview guides and FGD protocols were used to explore in-depth experiences, community perceptions, and sustainability concerns.

5.0.5. Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 27. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means) summarized the data, while Chi-square tests and logistic regression explored relationships between variables. Qualitative data were transcribed, coded, and analyzed thematically using NVivo 12 to identify recurring patterns and narratives.

5.0.6. Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Anonymity and confidentiality were assured. Research assistants from the localities were trained to ensure cultural sensitivity.

6.0 Literature Review

A discourse on the Niger Delta centres on the "resource curse" thesis, where oil wealth correlates with poor governance, conflict, and underdevelopment (Sala-i-Martin & Subramanian, 2003). Youth unemployment is a critical vector of this curse, fueling grievances and recruitment into militancy and illicit economies (Ikelegbe, 2005).

Previous job creation models have been critiqued. State-led initiatives like the NDDC have been hampered by corruption and poor implementation (Ukiwo, 2007). The Amnesty Programme provided stipends and training but struggled with reintegration and creating a diversified post-oil economy (Obi, 2014). IOCs' CSR projects have often been ad-hoc and insufficient in scale (Idemudia, 2014).

The Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development Act (2010) aimed to use legal compulsion to generate local jobs but has had mixed results on the ground (Obi, 2014). Security privatization, as analyzed by Asuni (2009), presents a complex trade-off: it can reduce immediate violence and provide rents to former combatants, but risks creating powerful, non-state security entrepreneurs whose interests may not align with long-term peacebuilding.

This study situates TSSNL within these intersecting frameworks—local content, security privatization, and post-conflict livelihoods. It aims to provide empirical substance to theoretical debates on whether such security contracts represent a form of "inclusive extraction" or a new cycle of dependency.

7.0 Data Presentation and Analysis

7.1 Demographic and Employment Profile of Direct Employees:

Analysis of 280 direct employee questionnaires revealed that:

i. 94% were male, 88% were aged 18-40.
ii. 72% had completed secondary education or less.
iii. Job roles included pipeline/vessel surveillance (70%),
iv. intelligence (15%),
v. marine operations (10%), and;
vi. administrative support (5%).
vii. 85% were on renewable short-term contracts, with an average monthly income of ₦70,000.
viii. A significant 78% reported this as their first stable job since leaving school.

7.2 Indirect Job Creation and Multiplier Effect:

Survey of 170 indirect beneficiaries indicated a robust multiplier effect. Sectors stimulated included:

a. Marine Transport (35% of indirect beneficiaries): Boat hire and repair services.
b. Hospitality & Catering (30%): Provision of food and lodging for TSSNL staff.
c. Petty Trading & Supplies (25%): Sales of provisions, fuel, and equipment.

A boat operator in Burutu stated, "Before Tantita started, my boat was always idle. But today, I have a standing contract to move their staff. And I have even employed two others to assist me" (KII, Boat Operator, Burutu, July 2023).

7.3 Impact on Youth Restiveness and Security Perceptions:
75% of community respondents agreed that youth involvement in illegal bunkering had "significantly decreased" since TSSNL's deployment. A youth leader in Warri South-West noted, "The job has given many of our boys a sense of purpose. They are now protectors, not destroyers, of the pipelines" (FGD Participant, Warri South-West, August 2023). Regression analysis showed a significant positive relationship between the density of TSSNL employment in a community and perceived improvement in local security ($\beta = .412$, $p < .01$).

7.4 Sustainability Challenges:
Despite positive impacts, critical challenges emerged:

i. **Contract Dependency:** 90% of direct employees acknowledged their job was "solely dependent on the NNPCL contract."
ii. **Skills Gap:** 65% reported receiving no formal training that is transferable to other sectors.
iii. **Informality**: Lack of formal employment contracts, pensions, and union representation was widespread.
iv. **Gender Exclusion:** The overwhelming male employment pattern (94%) reinforced gender-based economic disparities.

8.0 Discussion
The findings confirm that TSSNL operates as a substantial labour engagement mechanism, effectively converting security expenditure into localised wages. This validates the theoretical premise that engaging local actors in protection can reduce opportunistic theft and provide immediate livelihoods (Asuni, 2009). The significant indirect employment multiplier underscores that security economy is rootedness within the local informal sectors, a dimension often overlooked in macroeconomic analyses of the region.

The reported reduction in youth restiveness is in tandem with the theory of opportunity cost in crime (Becker, 1968); when legal income surpasses the expected value of illegal activity, participation in the latter declines. However, the sustainability concerns raise profound questions. The contract-dependent model echoes the region's historical vulnerability to global oil price shocks, merely transferring that dependency to the micro-level of individual workers (Watts, 2004).

The evidential lack of skills development and formal labour safeguards implies that the TSSNL model, currently operational, may be creating a class which could be referred to as "contractual pacifiers"—youth whose peaceful conduct is contingent on continuous rent distribution via wages, without building a foundation for a post-oil or post-contract economy (Ukiwo, 2007). The gender disparity further limits its potential for inclusive development.

9.0 Conclusion

This study concludes that Tantita Security Services Nigeria Limited has had a significant and positive immediate impact on job creation and associated economic spillovers in the five LGAs of Delta State. It has provided a critical, legitimate alternative to illicit economies, thereby enhancing short-term social stability. However, the sustainability of these gains is precarious. The jobs are largely informal, contract-tied, and offer limited pathways for long-term career or skills development. Therefore, while TSSNL represents an effective short-term conflict mitigation and poverty alleviation tool, it cannot be conflated with a sustainable development strategy.

10.0 Recommendations

i. For NNPCL/Government: Future surveillance contracts must include legally binding Social Impact Clauses mandating contractors to allocate a percentage of contract value to accredited vocational training and entrepreneurship programs for employees and host communities.
ii. For TSSNL Management: Develop a Human Capital Development Framework in partnership with technical institutions to provide certified training in maritime safety, renewable energy installation, and environmental monitoring, enhancing skills transferability.
iii. For State Government (Delta State): Integrate TSSNL's employment data into the State's job planning and create Transition Pathways to link trained employees to other emerging sectors like agriculture (fish farming) and waste management post-contract.
iv. For Communities and Civil Society: Advocate for the formalization of employment terms for TSSNL staff, including written contracts and access to contributory pension schemes, and establish monitoring committees to track gender inclusion in hiring.
v. For Further Research: Longitudinal studies are needed to track the long-term economic outcomes of former TSSNL employees after contract termination to better understand the true sustainability of this model.

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