

MARITIME SECURITY AND ITS IMPACT ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF INDO-PACIFIC NATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Maritime security and other factors significantly define the economic growth and continued stability of countries within the Indo-Pacific region. Therefore, the rationale for this research is to understand the intricacy of maritime security and its relation to economic development among the major powers in the Indo-Pacific Region. The study emphasizes the correlation between security measures of trade flows and economic performance such as GDP rate, FDI, and employment rate. According to the findings which have revealed that factors like anti-piracy, naval, and international cooperation measures have achieved certain levels of trade flows, cost reductions, and better investor returns. On the other hand, the research demonstrates that security threats such as territorial conflicts and piracy are undesirable because they have negative impacts on the economic output in that they foster insecurity and increase costs. Thus, the study also emphasizes the required need for sustaining maritime security assets alongside paying emphasis on cooperation for economic growth and development in the region.

Keywords: Maritime Security, Indo-Pacific Region, Economic Development, Maritime Trade, Regional Security, Geopolitical Tensions, Naval Power, Piracy, Trade Routes, Maritime Law, International Relations, Regional Stability

INTRODUCTION

Global economic and geopolitical interest has focused firmly on the Indo Pacific area, home to some of the world's most strategically and economically important maritime routes. The uninterrupted movement of commodities, energy resources, information, and the like is important for the security of the region; it is also of vital importance to global economic health and to global stability. Maritime trade interdependencies between Indo-Pacific nations create economic fates across the sea and maritime security is the element in the objective of the development of economic. (Jiang, 2022)

It is a vast marine space, made up of vast and varied geographies, through which passes vital sea lanes – like the South China Sea and the Malacca Strait, and, to the north, the Indian Ocean. These sea lanes are the arteries of global trade and they are the veins: it is along these sea lanes that goods and resources flow between the major centers of global economy, Asia, Middle East, Africa and Americas. But, these maritime routes remain vulnerable to a whole gamut of problems; piracy, territorial disputes, illicit fishing, and maneuvers by the big powers. These challenges and impediments to trade increase shipping costs, make for an uncertain environment

and can hinder investment and economic cooperation. Take the South China Sea for example, this artery of global trade is a hotspot of territorial disputes between several nations leading to routine naval confrontation and an uneasy security environment. The Malacca Strait, a vital passage for energy transit that has been targeted by pirates and all manner of maritime crime for years, is another. (Thia-Eng, 2000)

The sheer weight of China as a maritime power and the U.S strategy pivoting towards the Indo-Pacific has layered on complexity to the security dynamics the region. They both compete in a strategic contest with a regional power such as India, Japan, and Australia, whose maritime security policies and practices make a significant difference. The geopolitical competition not only determines regional security but also has an economic aspect, being a case of competition and cooperation of countries. Besides historical developments – colonial legacies and the post-World War II naval dynamics – are also responsible for the current maritime security landscape in the Indo-Pacific. Evolution of the international maritime law has also effected in influencing policies and strategies of various countries located in this region. (Hu, 2020)

One of the objectives of this research is to study the role of maritime security in the economic development of the Indo-Pacific nations in an all factors approach. It will study the historical context of the maritime security in the region, current challenges including the economic matters of maritime security. This study will examine key themes such as the protection of sea lines of communication, economic consequences of maritime security challenges and the role of regional cooperation, and assess how maritime security affects economic growth by basing its analysis on these themes. Furthermore, research will also explore the strategic interests of the relevant major powers in the Indo – Pacific as well as their naval capabilities which them and their interactions contribute the security environment in the region. Our focus will be U.S.-China rivalry, the Indian maritime strategy, and the roles of Japan and Australia. (Boraz, 2009)

Literature Review

Indo-Pacific region is crucial strategically and economically to ensure maritime security which

would enable region's stability and prosperity and that too depends on a secure maritime environment. This major sea lanes, abundant natural resources and dynamic economic activity make the Indo-Pacific, in the Indian Ocean and the western and central Pacific Ocean, including the South China Sea, highly valued. Therefore, developing security in the maritime environment is essential for maintaining the stability and economic development of the region. (Bueger, 2019)

The work being done on the geopolitical tensions in the Indo-Pacific including the South China Sea is considerable. This area is the subject of extensive overlapping territorial claims and China's increasingly assertive policies, which have been extensively studied by scholars such as Kaplan and Brewster. These researchers raise red flags about freedom of navigation and regional stability. It cannot be stressed enough how strategically important the South China Sea is, as a third of global shipping goes through its waters. Unresolved territorial disputes raise a profound concern for regional and worldwide peace. (Brewster, 2015)

With this approach, Bouchard and Crumplin focus on the economic side of maritime security by underscoring the importance of uninterrupted maritime routes to global world trade and energy markets. This underscores the significance for the Strait of Malacca as a life line for oil shipments from the Middle East to East Asia. Any disruption in this chokepoint could rock energy markets, and possibly world stability in terms of economic security. In addition, the problem of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing has been addressed. Pomeroy explore the economic and environmental ramifications of IUU fishing specifically in the Indo-Pacific region, pointing out how IUU fishing drains fish stocks, undermines local economies, and fosters increased stigmatization amongst nearby nations. (Bouchard, 2010) (Parks, 2017)

In one aspect, the literature also involves different regional cooperation initiatives for maritime security purposes. Bateman (2009) talks about how ASEAN serves as a vehicle promoting dialogue and cooperation among its member states and external partners, listing the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) as in these efforts to confront security issues, such as maritime security problems.

Likewise, Bueger and Edmunds (2018) point to the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), established to promote collaborative relationship among Indian Ocean region states, and in particular sustainable development and maritime security. Besides strengthening maritime safety, facilitating trade and investment along with the environment concern is in IORA's agenda. Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), an alliance of the US, India, Japan and Australia to build a free and open Indo-Pacific, is discussed by Pant and Joshi (2017). The Quad is centred around collaboration in the protection of the international law as well as in efforts against coercive application of power and maritime security. (Bateman, 2009) (Bueger, 2019)

The current study aims to address these gaps by adopting a holistic approach to examine the economic impact of maritime security in the Indo-Pacific. It will integrate the economic, environmental, and security dimensions to provide a comprehensive understanding of how maritime security initiatives can foster long-term economic development. Additionally, the study will explore the role of non-traditional security threats and propose integrated strategies to enhance maritime security and regional stability. By addressing these gaps, this research will contribute to the existing body of knowledge and provide actionable insights for policymakers and stakeholders in the Indo-Pacific region. The findings will underscore the importance of a secure maritime environment for sustainable economic growth and regional stability.

The importance of maritime security in the Indo-Pacific is evident when considering the intricate web of geopolitical rivalries, economic interests, and security challenges that characterize the region. A coordinated and comprehensive approach is necessary to mitigate these threats and harness the full economic potential of the region. Strengthening regional cooperation, enhancing naval capabilities, and promoting sustainable practices are crucial steps in this direction. As the future of maritime security in the Indo-Pacific will significantly influence global trade dynamics, regional stability, and the economic development of the nations within this pivotal region, it is imperative to prioritize these measures.

The literature on maritime security in the Indo-Pacific provides a robust foundation for understanding the current challenges and potential

solutions. However, the dynamic and evolving nature of the region's geopolitical landscape requires ongoing research and adaptive strategies. Future studies should continue to explore the interconnectedness of economic, environmental, and security dimensions, offering holistic insights into how maritime security initiatives can drive sustainable economic growth and regional stability. By building on the existing body of knowledge and addressing the identified gaps, scholars and policymakers can work towards a more secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific region.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical model from which to study the impact of maritime security on the economic development of Indo-Pacific nations is constituted of advanced international relations, maritime economics, and regional security studies theories. This framework is a combination of regional security complex theory, maritime commons, economic interdependence theory, which advances the understanding of complex dynamics involved.

Regional Security Complex Theory

Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver's Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT), has been used as the guiding security dynamics within the Indo-Pacific region. Regional security is thus defined as an interaction of the security relationships and interdependencies of states within a geographically coherent area (an alternative to the common definition of state security). This theory can help explain how the security of any particular state is tied to the security of other states in same region and thereby forming a security complex.

The RSCT framework presents the perspective that maritime security concerns in the Indo-Pacific region are interconnected. There is a large number of interdependent security interdependencies between major powers such as the United States, China, India, Japan and Australia and regional powers. For example, the security dynamics unfolding in the South China Sea are not only felt by a group of claimant states, but they extend to the region and international maritime trade routes more broadly. With RSCT, we gain a more complex understanding of how countries' regional security interdependencies impact national security policies,

naval strategies and patterns of economic cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. (Buzan, 2003)

Concept of Maritime Commons

The concept of maritime commons is fundamental in order to develop the economic and strategic significance of the oceans. This concept of global marine commons is rooted in the idea of global commons, that is, the high seas and exclusive economic zones (EEZs) beyond national jurisdictions and represent areas essential to international trade, resource exploitation and environment sustainability. Maritime commons are essential in order to be governed and ensure for free navigation, resources management and environmental protection.

In the Indo-Pacific, the maritime commons are composed of vital sea lanes of communication (SLOCs), abundant fishing grounds and possible energy resources. The principal idea of the concept lies in cooperative governance mechanisms for effective management of these shared resources. Based on this theoretical perspective, it also emphasizes the practical significance of multilateral agreements, international maritime law or regional cooperation for sustainment of maritime commons in the secured manner. The effective governance of these areas is imperative for economic stability and for the growth of the economics in the region. Disruptions to these areas have long lasting impacts on global trading and region economies. (Paul van Hoof, 2022)

Economic Interdependence Theory

The theory of economic interdependence, or liberal international relations theory, claims that as states become more economically interdependent they will be less and less likely to be at war with one another, and promote cooperation among themselves. Since the theory is especially applicable to the regional security dynamics of the Indo-Pacific region, and as economic interdependence constitutes a main driver in those dynamics, continued economic interdependence is not viewed as an adequate remedy.

Economic interdependence in the Indo Pacific is deep and countries derive their trade, energy and economic integration on secure maritime routes. The theory is that states with weighty economic

interdependence have a need and tendency to cooperate over security issues in order to protect their shared economic interests. Collaborative efforts to secure maritime security are apparent through the converging of maritime security efforts around regional forums such as ASEAN, IORA, and the Quad. The economic interdependence theory serves as a theory of how economic linkages can both maintain regional stability and impel collective security initiatives thereby encouraging economic development. (Copeland, 1996)

Integrated Maritime Security Approach

An integrated maritime security approach combines traditional naval power with non-traditional security aspects, including economic, environmental, and social dimensions. This comprehensive approach recognizes that maritime security encompasses more than just military capabilities; it also involves safeguarding economic interests, protecting the marine environment, and addressing human security concerns.

In the Indo-Pacific, an integrated maritime security approach involves enhancing maritime domain awareness, strengthening regional maritime governance, and promoting sustainable practices. Theories of integrated security emphasize the need for coordinated efforts among states to address complex security challenges such as piracy, illegal fishing, and environmental degradation. This approach underscores the importance of building resilient maritime infrastructures, fostering regional cooperation, and developing comprehensive policies that link security and development objectives. By integrating various dimensions of security, this approach aims to create a stable and secure maritime environment conducive to economic growth.

Application of Theoretical Framework

Combining these advanced theories provides a robust framework for analyzing the impact of maritime security on the economic development of Indo-Pacific nations. The Regional Security Complex Theory helps explain the interconnected security dynamics of the region, while the concept of maritime commons highlights the importance of cooperative governance for shared maritime resources. Economic interdependence theory elucidates how economic linkages drive regional

cooperation and stability. An integrated maritime security approach offers a holistic view that addresses both traditional and non-traditional security challenges, promoting regional stability and economic growth.

This theoretical framework allows for a comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between maritime security and economic development in the Indo-Pacific. It guides policymakers and researchers in developing strategies that ensure maritime security while promoting sustainable economic growth. The nuanced understanding provided by this framework is essential for addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by Indo-Pacific nations in their pursuit of economic prosperity and regional stability.

Material and Methods

The principal methodological approach of this research is secondary data analysis. Secondary data analysis is the use of data that has already been collected on the same or similar activities by other researchers, government agencies or organizational entities for reasons other than the intended purpose of the given study. Even though a considerable amount of research, reports and datasets on maritime security issues exist, with various geographic elements, this method is particularly suitable for economic development among Indo-Pacific nations' maritime development analysis.

Data Analysis Techniques

Both qualitative and quantitative methods will be used for the analysis to gain a full understanding of the relationship between maritime security and economic development in Indo-Pacific.

1. Qualitative Analysis

To this end, content analysis of policy documents, government reports, and published academic

literature will be undertaken to identify key themes and trends on maritime security challenges and their economic impacts. It will examine how Indo-Pacific nations responded to this with policy and strategic frameworks and geopolitical narratives.

2. Quantitative Analysis

The economic impact of the maritime security issues will be assessed utilizing statistical analyses. It will take the analysis of trade volumes, shipping costs, and performance-economy indicators, all in relation to maritime security events including piracy, territorial disputes, as well as naval confrontations. They will apply correlation and regression analysis to find the strength and nature of relationship between these variables.

3. Case Studies

To contextualize this, detailed case studies of specific Indo-Pacific countries will be conducted, contextualizing insights from this and providing illustrations of the real world consequences of maritime security on economic development. Key maritime nations such as China, India, Japan, and Indonesia will be the focus on these case studies, their unique challenges and responses.

4. Comparative Analysis

Using the comparative analysis approach, this dissertation will undertake an analysis of various sub-regions and countries within the Indo-Pacific to discover common findings, differences, and best practices used in addressing maritime security and economic development.

The findings of this thesis will add to the existing knowledge base thus providing practical insights for policymakers, scholars and stakeholders dealing with regional security as well as economic affairs.

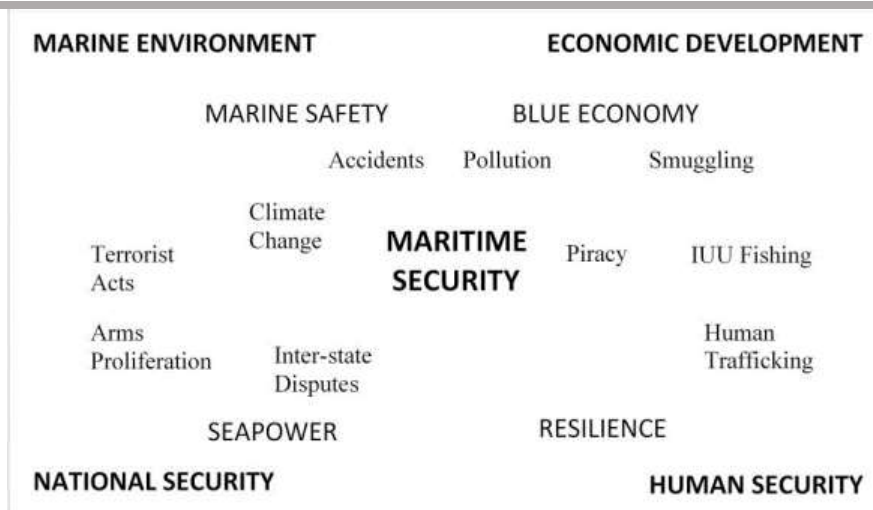


Figure 1. The matrix of maritime security

Geopolitical Dynamics and Maritime Security Analysis of Major Power Strategies (USA, China, India, Japan, Australia)

United States

Since long the United States has been a major maritime power in the Indo Pacific region playing wide naval facilities and very important tactical alliances to safeguard marine environment stability and security. The US vision in the region can be summed up as a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” (FOIP) vision, which integrates promotion of an international order based on rules, a freedom of navigation, and the respect of international law, especially the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The Seventh Fleet, carrying an American presence at sea in the area, is commanded by the U.S. Navy with headquarters in Japan. Prolonged patrolling is then carried out as well as freedom of navigation operations (FONOPs) and joint exercises with regional allies and partners. Meant to challenge excessive maritime claims such as China’s in the South China Sea, they also are designed to show U.S. commitment to keeping sea lanes open. Moreover, U.S. has enhanced its defense accords and joint military exercises, along with capacity building programs, as part of bilateral security relationships with major regional actors.

One key pillar of U.S. strategy is the informal grouping of India, and the U.S. and other Pacific powers – Australia and Japan – known as the Quad, or Quadrilateral Security Dialogue. The Quad's goal

is to combat regional security challenges through joint exercises, sharing information and a coordinated response to promote a free, open and inclusive Indo Pacific. The Quad’s activities, which include the Malabar naval exercises, deepen the navy’s interoperability and illustrate a joint effort at a collective response to actions that seek to coerce through the maritime domain. (Khan, 2021)

China

One aspect of Chinese maritime strategy is one of greater assertiveness; another is driven by a strategic ambition to be the dominant power in the Indo-Pacific. This strategy is at its core the “Blue Water Navy” strategy of projecting Chinese naval power out to and beyond the immediate sea as China itself projects power worldwide and grows interests there. In all, the South China Sea converges China’s maritime strategy. China's wide ranging land reclamation and militarization campaign has included extensive land reclamation to create artificial islands brimming with runways, ports and military infrastructure. They are intended to buttress China’s long contested territorial claims and to increase control over vital sea lanes. China bases its expansive claims to the South China Sea on a line, commonly referred to as the 'Nine Dash Line,' that runs around most of the Sea, but which was invalidated in 2016 by the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

For example, China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Maritime Silk Road give example of China’s

strategic ambitions. Investments in infrastructure and port acquisitions across the Indo-Pacific expand China's economic and strategic approach. Situated on important maritime routes, the Gwadar Port in Pakistan and the Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka are advantageous to China in that they offer China logistical, and possibly, military advantages.

In this modernization she is developing advanced submarines, aircraft carriers, and antiaccess/ area denial (A2/AD) capabilities. The intent of these enhancements are to deter potential adversaries and project control in contested areas that are gaining increasing attention as maritime domains. In addition, establishment of the China Coast Guard, together with its intensified patrol around the islands, demonstrates China's expansion of enforcing claims as well as safeguarding of China's maritime interests. (Scott, 2019)

India

Regional stability, Economic security and Balancing China's influence are India's three principles of its maritime strategy. While India's "Act East" policy and "Security and Growth for all in the Region" (SAGAR) initiatives, it is an effort of India to promote its maritime engagement with countries of the Southeast Asia and the rest of the Indo-Pacific region.

This has modernized the Indian Navy, which now wishes to expand its blue water capabilities of projecting power and guarding the sea routes. These are principal acquisitions of advance frigates, destroyers, submarines and start of indigenous aircraft carrier. India's capabilities for such things afford it the ability to defend a long coastline, defend Indian maritime interests, and extend Indian strategic realm into the Indian Ocean and beyond.

India's strategic partnership with U.S., Japan and Australia will help it counterbalance China. Besides the two talks on maritime security and infrastructure development in India and regional stability, the Quad is also being used as a platform. The U.S., Japan and Australia are building up interoperability, and those same four nations have expressed their commitment to a free and open Indo Pacific through these Malabar naval exercises with India, which in October will be the second such iteration.

India's maritime strategy also secures all of their key chokepoints, including the strategically vital sea

lanes like the Strait of Malacca and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Due to increasing India's presence in Indian Ocean Region and participation in Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) and Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), India has become more forward looking to regional maritime security. (Mishra, 2014)

Japan

Japan's strategy for use of its sea forces is underpinned by its strategic interests in the East China Sea and the wider Indo-Pacific in which secure sea lanes for energy imports and trade are the key. Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF) key role is Maritime Security including anti-submarine warfare, mine countermeasures and disaster response.

Japan's security policy rests on the principle of an alliance with the United States. The U.S. Japan Security Treaty is a strong framework for defense cooperation in joint exercises, intelligence sharing and U.S. deployed forward forces in Japan. If a case of a potential danger of any kind occurred, the JMSDF seeks to enhance interoperability and deterrence with U.S. Navy in performing a relatively active role in joint exercising on a regular basis.

Japan's 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' (FOIP) vision is very similar to that of the United States: Instituted in favor of Southeast Asian nations under the façade of the rule of law, freedom of navigation and capacity building. On defense and security issues, Japan also proactively works with India, Australia and ASEAN countries to advance regional stability and collective security.

With China, islands in the East China Sea, called the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, are contested. Japan's claim is buttressed constantly by JMSDF and Japan Coast Guard patrols and for dealing with Chinese intrusions. Japan has chosen to make strategic investments in its maritime surveillance and defense capabilities, to defend its territorial waters and critical infrastructure. (Wang, 2023)

Australia

Australia's maritime strategy is to protect Australia's maritime trade supply routes and protect trade, on maritime routes, from a regional security threat, and to directly assist in creation of a stable Indo Pacific region. In its part, Australia will enhance its

maritime capability through the acquisition of new submarines, frigates and patrol vessels, as outlined in the 'Defence Strategic Update 2020', according to the government paper.

In the case of Australia its security strategy and policies are inseparable from the alliance with the United States. The ANZUS Treaty and US forces in Australia (as, for example, the US Naval Station at Sydney) are also furtherance by close defense cooperation, joint exercises, and intelligence sharing. Including Australia in the Quad further underlines Australia's commitment to a rules based order and collective security in the Indo Pacific.

An example is Indo Pacific Endeavor whereby for instance Australia offers the region security cooperation including deployment of navals and implementation of joint exercises with partner countries in the region. Australia's proactive approach in engaging with ASEAN and IORA for their strategic engagement with the region to enhance stability of and maritime security.

Australia's maritime strategy also deals with non-traditional security threats: They also cover piracy, illegal fishing and environmental degradation. In collaboration with Australian Border Force and the Royal Australian Navy, work is under way to protect Australia's maritime interests, our EEZ and support regional capacity building. (Medcalf, 2019)

Impact of Territorial Disputes and Military Build-Up

Territorial disputes and military build-up in the Indo-Pacific significantly impact regional stability and maritime security, creating a complex and often volatile security environment.

Territorial Disputes

China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have overlapping territorial claims in the South China Sea, a major flashpoint. Most of the South China Sea, a region of significant natural resources and strategic sea lanes, is covered in China's expansive claims represented by the 'Nine Dash Line.' Increasing cases of land reclamation and militarization by China of artificial islands, like in the Spratly and Paracel Islands, have heightened tension and sparked frequent confrontation with other claimant states and the U.S. (Jia, 2013)

Another significant source of tension is the territorial dispute between China and Japan in the East China Sea over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. They both assert their claims by regularly dispatching naval and coast guard vessels and the risk of accidental clashes, and for regional stability, is growing.

Nationalistic sentiments, historical grievances and importance of the disputed region for the local countries further complicate these territorial disputes. But the absence of a mutually agreed upon framework with which to resolve these issues makes for an unravelling environment where persistent tensions and the difficulties of reaching long term stability reign. (Friedman, 2015)

Military Build-Up

Strategically, the Indo Pacific is becoming an arms race region and a place for increased defense spending among major powers. Modernization of naval capabilities, and acquisition of advanced submarines, aircraft carriers, and anti-access area denial (A2/AD) systems continues as nations secure their maritime interests, and deter potential adversaries.

More specifically, China's military buildup is quite noticeable. Rapid modernization in the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) has seen it build new aircraft carriers Liaoning and Shandong, Type 055 destroyers, and nuclear powered submarines. China is developing A2/AD capabilities—such ASBMs and advanced surveillance systems—to deny passage to potential adversaries and establish control of access to contested maritime areas.

Other regional powers have also beefed up their naval capabilities, in response. Thinking it won't update, Japan has expanded its submarine fleet, developed Aegis-system equipped destroyers, and commissioned new helicopter carriers. India is modernizing its navy with high end frigates, destroyers and submarines, including the indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant. Australia's defense is to get new submarines, frigates and patrol vessels in order to improve Australia's maritime security posture. (Medcalf, 2019)

The development of the military buildup in the Indo-Pacific is needed in order to protect national interests, keep sea lanes open and deter potential threats. But it also opens the door to miscalculation, to accidental clashes and the arms race that could

destabilize the region and work against efforts to promote peace and stability. (Mapp, 2014)

Role of Regional Organizations

Regional organizations play a crucial role in fostering maritime security cooperation and mitigating tensions in the Indo-Pacific, providing platforms for dialogue, confidence-building, and collective action.

ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is central in the regional security architecture, fostering dialogue and cooperation within its membership and between its members and external partners. Forums including Trust building, enhanced, with ASEAN led mechanisms to include ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus. (Desker, 2015) ASEAN's approaches to maritime security must be guided by these approaches: ASEAN principles of noninterference, consensus decision making, peace resolution of disputes. Most evident is that ASEAN has been able to maintain and foster its ongoing working methodologies that are supported by the Declaration on the conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and the ongoing negotiations for a code of conduct (COC) as a means of ASEAN in managing disputes and conflict via diplomacy. Nevertheless, ASEAN's effectiveness at some points is obstructed by different national interests as well as the consensus requirement of several members.

In real cooperation, ASEAN attempts to deepen cooperation in areas such as the maritime domain awareness, search and rescue operations, piracy and combating illegal fishing. ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) and Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) is an opportunity for member of ASEAN and its external partners to talk about maritime security and cooperation. (Castro, 2021)

Quad

The strategic mechanism that was established by the United States, India, Japan and Australia to assure a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific is known as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue – or Quad in short. In the military domain, the Quad does joint exercises, shares information and coordinates response to regional challenges.

The Quad's Malabar naval exercises also are activities that enhance the Quad participants' navies' interoperability and provide an indication that the Quad participants are collectively committed to the defense of international law and a disincentive to coercive behavior in the maritime space. While traditional security threats are challenged, the Quad also focuses on combating non-traditional security threats such as disaster relief, infrastructure development, and humanitarian assistance.

The Quad is not and will never be an alliance, but the strategic alignment of its shared values and its interests does provide a basis for a coalition, which can engage in collective action in pursuit of regional stability and security. Along that vein, the Quad's Vaccine Partnership and infrastructure development project initiatives work into the larger regional development goals. (Jesse Barker Gale, 2018)

IORA

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) is the organization for sustainable development in addition to the security of the Indian Ocean region. Items of IORA's agenda are enhancing maritime safety, trade and investment and resolving environmental challenges.

IORA's work in this area is focused on capacity building, information sharing and cooperation on maritime safety and security in IORA's Maritime Safety and Security Working Group. There are two initiatives through which regional security and sustainable development are discussed — the Indian Ocean Dialogue and the IORA Blue Economy Ministerial Conference.

IORA's focus on the blue economy underscores the interrelationship between security and economic development and creates a vehicle through which benefits can be drawn from regional cooperation. The IORA progresses by promoting the practice of sustainable development, enhancing maritime domain awareness and promoting capacity building regional to a secure and prosperous Indian Ocean. (Sooklal, 2023)

Case Studies: South China Sea and Malacca Strait

South China Sea

They rely on the South China Sea as a critical case study of maritime security in the Indo-Pacific.

Having enormous sea natural resources, as well as proximity to mainland China, this border region overlaps the territorial claims of multiple countries, creating a geostrategic hotspot for geopolitical tensions and an area for strategic competition. (Scott, 2019)

China says the 'Nine Dash Line' (the expansive one that basically claims all of the South China Sea at itself) includes some 90 percent of the sea and overlaps Vietnamese, Philippine, Malaysian, Bruneian, and Taiwanese claims. Numerous features in the Spratly and Paracel Islands have been claimed and undermined by land reclamation and the militarization of features by China including construction of runways, ports, and military facilities. These actions have escalated tensions and frequently produced confrontations with other claimant states as well as the U.S. (Jia, 2013)

China's excessive maritime claims are challenged by the United States through Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPS) in conformance with the principle of free navigation. With these operations, and at the diplomatic level, we seek to uphold the international maritime law laid out within UNCLOS. The U.S. Navy's Seventh Fleet routinely sails the South China Sea to patrol, and conduct joint exercises with regional allies and partners to improve interoperability and maritime domain awareness. (SCOBELL, 2018)

ASEAN's platform for attempts to negotiate a Code of Conduct (COC) with China is a regional approach to managing tensions and stability promotion. Thus, the COC is designed to set rules and norms for conduct of the states of the South China Sea, and reduce the possibility of conflict and promote confidence-building measures. But the talks have been tortuous and arduous, as the matter is complicated and the parties have different interests. (Thayer, 2023)

The South China Sea disputes are important not just for their direct impact on regional security and stability, but also because they are a key test case for how countries in the region will respond to each other in this context. Diplomatic efforts will need continued to be sustained, and regional cooperation will be required to reduce the potential for miscalculation, for accidents, of clashes and of escalation. (Scott, 2019)

Malacca Strait

Another vital case study is the Malacca Strait, one of the world's busiest maritime choke points. Its strategic importance for world trade and energy supplies ensures that keeping the strait secure is vital for regional, and indeed global, stability.

The Malacca Strait is a narrow watercourse linking the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea through which about 40 percent of world trade, and a slice of global oil shipments, transit. As it is strategically located, and a high traffic volume, the strait is vulnerable to many maritime threats like piracy, armed robbery, and maritime terrorism. (FREEMAN, 2019)

Regional cooperation with the littoral states, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, has been essential to keeping the sea lanes of the Malacca Strait safe and secure. The Malacca Straits Patrol (MSP) is a trilateral initiative for coordinated maritime patrols, information sharing and joint exercises aimed at the prevention of piracy and other maritime threats. Through the MSP, the security of this critical sea line has been greatly enhanced and the number of piracy and armed robbery incidents greatly reduced.

These cooperative efforts have proven successful to add to the effectiveness of regional cooperation in increasing maritime security and protecting precious sea lanes. In addition, the external partners like the United States and Japan, which got involved in supporting capacity building and provide technological assistance, strengthens the security framework of the Malacca Strait. (Thia-Eng, 2000)

Economic Implications of Maritime Security

The economic implications for global trade, regional economy and sustainable development are high for maritime security in the Indo Pacific region. Within this section, we examine the keystone issues behind secure maritime route, the effects of a potential leakage of the funds generated by the economic activities on the use of maritime resources such as piracy and illegal fishing, the new blue economy paradigm and the long term economic value of secure maritime environments. (BRADFORD, 2011)

The importance of Secure Maritime Routes to Global Trade

A noteworthy share of trade brings on the global markets takes place at sea, so the security of maritime routes is vitally important. The Indo Pacific region is home to some of the world's busiest and most strategic maritime choke points, including the Strait of Malacca, the South China Sea, and the Strait of Hormuz. As a matter of fact, these are the arteries for moving these goods and raw materials, also energy supplies, and to a certain extent people, within an economy that does not exist without them. (Boraz, 2009)

As an example, the Strait of Malacca is a critical artery, along which 40 percent of global trade and 80 percent of oil imports to Japan and South Korea move. On top of which, the South China Sea is where more than one third of the world's shipping transits, accounting for over \$5 trillion a year. Such disruption, whether due to geopolitical tensions, piracy cases or natural disasters, can have cascading effects on global trade including higher shipping cost, broken supply chains, risk of poor economic stability. (Thia-Eng, 2000)

It is not just the volume of trade which passes along secure maritime routes that is important. Besides, it encompasses the reliability and predictability of shipping operations, which are highly valuable to maintain the efficiency and competitiveness of International supply chains. It will burden all consumers and all businesses in the world with higher insurance premiums, higher operational cost to shipping companies, and slower delivery of goods. (Bateman, 2009)

Major maritime security threats

It includes piracy, illegal fishing and territorial disputes have alarming economic consequences for the Indo pacific region.

Piracy

In the strait of Malacca, off the coasts of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden piracy is still a problem of the Indo-Pacific. Piracy attacks are a material threat to the lives of seafarers, but a much greater threat is the colossal economic losses that piracy incidents represents. Ransom payments, rising insurance costs, extra operational costs triggered by rerouting and the prices of safety measures are such losses.

Piracy in the area has massive impact running into billions of dollars annually. In addition, it kills investor confidence, discourages maritime trade and affects the stability of the economy of coastal communities that mostly depend on the activities in the maritime industry. (Bateman, 2010)

Illegal Fishing

Illegal fishing is another main economic threat in the Indo-Pacific. Illegal fishing is depleting fish stocks and undermining sustainability of marine resources, in addition to causing economic losses to legitimate fishing industries. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), IUU fishing costs the global economy between \$10 billion and \$23 billion a year. Illegal fishing is particularly critical to the Indo Pacific which comprises many communities along the coastal areas which depends on fisheries as the principal source of living and food security. All are threatened: fish stocks sustainability, the local economies' revenue generation, food security. (BATEMAN, 2017)

Territorial Disputes

Territorial disputes in the South China Sea, and in other parts of the Indo-Pacific region, most especially in the East China Sea, have economic implications. Creating an unpredictable and unstable environment, they slow down investment and economic growth. For instance, the South China Sea houses well-endowed natural resources, including fisheries and potentially hydrocarbon reserves. The difficulties of such, exploration and development of these resources, and the deprivation of those economies of such enormous revenue which might be derived by her, are the causes of this.

The militarization of disputed areas through the construction and militarization of artificial islands as well as military base building also diverts resources away from activities that are economically productive, and into defense spending. In addition, maritime trade can be affected by territorial disputes, which complicate, or worsen, the already existing security problems due to the obstacles that might be faced, and also the risk of a collision at sea. (Arya, 2022)

Analysis of the Blue Economy Paradigm and Sustainable Resource Management

The blue economy paradigm offers a comprehensive approach to leveraging ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and environmental sustainability. It emphasizes the sustainable use of marine resources to maximize economic benefits while preserving the health of ocean ecosystems. (Attri, 2018)

Fisheries and Aquaculture

Sustainably managed fisheries and aquaculture compose the blue economy. As the Indo-Pacific countries embrace sustainable practices, their fisheries will become more productive ahead of more sustainable longer term food security and significant economic benefits. Efforts will be made to prevent overfishing, prohibition of activities in critical habitat and promoting responsible fishing methods. Aquaculture managed sustainably can help support fisheries, and supply a steady source of seafood to secure food and support economic growth. (Attri, 2018)

Tourism and Coastal Development.

Marine and coastal tourism is a big component of the Indo-Pacific blue economy. Pristine beaches, coral reefs and marine life are visited by millions of tourists annually adding greatly to local economies. Many natural assets are to be conserved, and sustainable tourism practices are important as tourism industry needs to be long term viable. They also involve measures to protect coral reefs, regulate coastal development and promote 'eco' tourism activities amongst others. (Conor M. Savoy, 2023)

Renewable Energy

The Indo Pacific waters hold enormous potential for offshore wind, tidal as well as wave energy. These resources could provide us with a clean and low-cost energy supply, reducing dependence on fossil fuels, and create economic opportunities. Investment in marine renewable energy infrastructure can yield innovative, job creating, and regionally more resilient and sustainable economy. (Quirapas, 2021)

Marine Biotechnology

Marine biotechnology presents exciting new economic growth and innovation opportunities for

the Indo Pacific region. The region's oceans have high biodiversity that serves as the most valuable source of bioactive compounds to be applied in pharmaceutical industry, cosmetics and other. Under these conditions, therefore, sustainable bioprospecting can become a responsible and equitable mechanism of exploitation of marine resources that contributes to economic development and to conservation of biodiversity. (Sakhuja, 2015)

Long-Term Economic Benefits of Secure Maritime Environments

Secure maritime environments provide numerous long-term economic benefits, fostering regional stability, attracting investment, and promoting sustainable development.

Enhanced Trade and Investment

A secure maritime environment facilitates smooth and reliable maritime trade, reducing operational costs and boosting investor confidence. Secure sea lanes ensure the uninterrupted flow of goods, contributing to the efficiency and competitiveness of global supply chains. This, in turn, attracts investment in maritime infrastructure, ports, and related industries, creating jobs and stimulating economic growth. (Frost, 2021)

Sustainable Resource Utilization

Maritime security enables the sustainable exploitation of marine resources, ensuring that these resources are available for future generations. Effective governance and enforcement of maritime laws prevent illegal activities such as IUU fishing and environmental degradation, promoting the long-term sustainability of marine ecosystems. Sustainable resource utilization supports the livelihoods of coastal communities, enhances food security, and contributes to the overall health of the regional economy. (Quirapas, 2021)

Regional Stability and Cooperation

Maritime security is a cornerstone of regional stability and cooperation. Secure maritime environments reduce the risk of conflicts and promote peaceful resolution of disputes. Regional cooperation mechanisms, such as ASEAN, IORA, and the Quad, play a crucial role in fostering dialogue, building trust, and enhancing collective

security. These efforts create a stable and predictable environment that is conducive to economic development and prosperity. (Brewster, 2019)

Innovation and Technological Advancements

Investment in maritime security drives innovation and technological advancements. The development of advanced surveillance systems, maritime domain awareness technologies, and sustainable maritime infrastructure creates new opportunities for research and development. These innovations not only enhance security but also contribute to the growth of high-tech industries and the overall competitiveness of regional economies. (Frost, 2021)

Environmental Protection and Resilience

Secure maritime environments support environmental protection and resilience. Effective maritime governance and enforcement of environmental regulations prevent pollution, protect marine habitats, and mitigate the impacts of climate change. Healthy marine ecosystems provide a range of ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration, coastal protection, and biodiversity conservation, which are essential for the long-term resilience and sustainability of regional economies. (Parks, 2017)

Role of International Maritime Law and Multilateral Agreements

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is the cornerstone of international maritime law, providing a legal framework for the rights and responsibilities of states in maritime zones. UNCLOS delineates maritime zones such as territorial seas, exclusive economic zones (EEZs), and continental shelves, outlining the rights and obligations of coastal and flag states. The convention's provisions on freedom of navigation, passage rights, and dispute resolution mechanisms are fundamental to maintaining order and stability in the maritime domain. Compliance with UNCLOS is essential for ensuring the peaceful and sustainable use of the world's oceans. (Nations, 2020)

Regional Cooperation Agreements

Several regional cooperation agreements complement UNCLOS and address specific maritime security challenges in the Indo-Pacific. For example, the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) is a multilateral agreement that aims to enhance regional cooperation in combating piracy and armed robbery. ReCAAP facilitates information sharing, capacity building, and joint operations among member states, contributing to the reduction of piracy incidents and improving maritime security in the region. (Bhatt, 2021)

Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea

The ongoing negotiations for a Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea represent a significant multilateral effort to manage disputes and promote stability in this contested area. The COC aims to establish rules and norms for the behavior of states in the South China Sea, reducing the risk of conflicts and fostering confidence-building measures. While negotiations have been challenging, the successful adoption of the COC would be a milestone in regional maritime governance and conflict prevention. (Thayer, 2023)

Case Studies of Successful Regional Cooperation **Malacca Straits Patrol (MSP)**

The Malacca Straits Patrol (MSP) is a successful example of regional cooperation in maritime security. The MSP is a trilateral initiative involving Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, aimed at enhancing the security of the strategically important Malacca Strait. The MSP includes coordinated maritime patrols, aerial surveillance, and information sharing to combat piracy, armed robbery, and other maritime threats. Since its inception, the MSP has significantly reduced incidents of piracy and armed robbery in the Malacca Strait, demonstrating the effectiveness of collaborative efforts in enhancing maritime security. (Thia-Eng, 2000)

Operation Atalanta

Operation Atalanta, also known as the European Union Naval Force Somalia (EU NAVFOR Somalia), is a successful case of multilateral cooperation in combating piracy off the coast of

Somalia. Launched in 2008, Operation Atalanta aims to protect World Food Programme (WFP) vessels, deter and disrupt piracy, and monitor fishing activities. The operation involves naval forces from various EU member states and partners, working together to safeguard maritime routes and ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid. The success of Operation Atalanta in reducing piracy incidents highlights the importance of international cooperation in addressing maritime security threats. (Papastavridis, 2015)

Policy Recommendations

Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Governance Mechanisms aims at addressing these challenges.

Yet, to confront the sophisticated and cross-border character of maritime security threats, it is necessary to build on collective regional cooperation and governing mechanisms. Well-functioning regional frameworks work as a basis for collaboration, building trust and ensuring collective solutions to common problems.

ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

For regional security dialogue and co-operation, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus serve as key platforms. These mechanisms have capacity to become stronger, better at crisis response and coordination. Regular exercise of joint mechanisms, enhanced information sharing systems, and increased allotment for building capacity would serve this purpose. For example, the Malacca Straits Patrol (MSP) has proven to be a success, in reducing pirate's incidents with coordinated regional efforts. Extension of such endeavors to other key waterways will further improve maritime security across the area. (Desker, 2015)

Institutionalizing the Quad

The United States, alongside India, Japan, and Australia, should institutionalize and framework cooperation by means of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad). This includes creating a permanent secretariat; formalizing joint exercises; and special working groups in the areas of maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Greater scope for the Quad's initiatives such as the Malabar

naval exercises should include more comprehensive scenarios that reckon, and include cyber-attacks on the maritime infrastructure. (Gomez, 2024)

Expanding IORA's Role

The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) could put emphasis on maritime security by forming a maritime security task force under it. In this second instance, a task force could serve as a coalescing point for regional effort against piracy; illegal fishing; and environmental destruction. IORA's Maritime Safety and Security Working Group should get more funding and technical support to put in place advanced surveillance and monitoring technologies. (Brewster, 2019)

Effective addressing of maritime security threats requires strengthening of naval capabilities, and strengthening of maritime domain awareness (MDA). Timely and effective responses require investments in advanced technology and infrastructure. (Boraz, 2009)

Investments in the advanced Surveillance Systems

Investments into satellite based surveillance systems, like automated identification systems (AIS), and integrated maritime surveillance platforms should be made by countries in the Indo-Pacific to develop MDA. For instance, the application of satellite-based monitoring by the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) has greatly increased maritime situational awareness in the European water. These systems are also applicable for looking for illegal activities and for navigation safety and disaster response purposes in the Indo Pacific. (O'Hara, 2023) (Christian Bueger, 2023)

Modernizing Naval Fleets

Naval modernization, with advanced vessels and submarines, and air assets is crucial in order to maintain a credible deterrent and protect maritime security. Instead, countries should focus on acquiring multi role vessels that are capable of performing a myriad of functions including combat operation, or humanitarian assistance. Thus, for instance, Japan's absorption of Aegis installed destroyers has given it a force capable of closely monitoring and being able to respond to regional

threats. (RAYMOND, 2017) (Hinata-Yamaguchi, 2018)

Sustainable Practices and Blue Economy Initiatives

For long term economic growth and environmental health, the sustainable use of ocean resources is paramount. Sustainable practices and blue economy projects are promoted for the sake of conservation and marine ecosystems as well as the creation of economic potential from ocean resources. (Sakhuja, 2015)

The Concept of Sustainable Fishing Practices

Regulations to encourage practicing sustainable fishing should be adopted in and enforced by countries. This encompasses the development of marine protected areas (MPAs), catch limits and responsible fishing techniques. If managed sustainably, New Zealand's Quota Management System (QMS) — which has proved able to sustainably manage fish stocks — could serve as a model for other countries in the Indo-Pacific. (Damon, 2012)

Renewable Marine Energy

Renewable marine energy sources, offshore wind, tidal and wave energy, if invested in, will lessen our reliance on fossil fuels and help in the sustainable economic development. The United Kingdom, for instance, through investments in offshore wind farms, now has become the global leader in renewable energy, which has now accounted for a considerable share of its energy mix and reduced carbon emissions. In the Indo-Pacific, too, similar investments can provide clean energy, create jobs, and spur economic growth. (Quirapas, 2021)

Promoting Marine Tourism

Described is marine tourism, which had the potential of generating great fiscal returns while protecting the marine environment. Governments need to design eco-friendly tourism policies that conserve marine lives and foster a sustainable development. An exemplary model is the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in Australia, which balances tourism with conservation. And this is something that can be done again and again in other areas to create sustainable

tourism and protect marine ecosystems. (Scott, 2021)

The adoption of an Integrated Maritime Security Strategy

An integrated maritime security strategy would include the military, economic, environmental and human security dimensions and its adoption should be taken by countries. The protection of the most critical maritime infrastructure, the sustainable use of marine resources and the setting up of maritime police should be the priority of these strategies. For example, the United States' National Strategy for Maritime Security provides a vision for securing US waters and economic interests against a wide range of threats from maritime threats through whole of Government engagement.

Enhancing Legal and Institutional Frameworks

Effective maritime governance requires strengthening of legal and institutional frameworks. These include aligning national laws with international maritime law, strengthening enforcement capacity and promoting transparency and accountability. In addition, dedicated maritime security agencies should be created by countries to take a holistic approach and actually coordinate the multitude of players, among other sectors. It shows the value of a maritime security agency geared to enforcing maritime laws and protecting the marine environment. (Jiang, 2022)

Collaborative public private partnerships

The public private partnership (PPP) may have a part to play in improving maritime security. Governments too should work with the private sector to design and administer new advances in technology, infrastructure and environmentally sustainable practices. For example, the cooperation of the United States Coast Guard with the private sector in the Automated Identification System (AIS) development has greatly enhanced maritime domain awareness and navigation safety. (Conor M. Savoy, 2023)

Conclusion

In this research, it is argued that maritime security in the Indo-Pacific is complex and has numerous functions, including economic stability, region

cooperation, and sustainable development. Various findings of the study showed that the actions and decisions of the leading countries including United States, China, India, Japan, Australia impacted the maritime security environment of the region. Thus, the challenges and struggles in the south China sea as well as in east China sea highlight the significance of stable maritime structure to foster increase in trade and economic development.

Safe sea lines of communication are crucial to world trade with around a third being carried out in the Indo-Pacific region through sensitive narrow channels such as the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea. Such disturbances in these said routes because of piracy, fishing or political instability bring nth degree of financial difficulties such as affectation of global supply chain, rise in cost of shipping and political economy of the region.

Acquisition of modern naval forces, building of MDA and encouraging the blue economy principles are potent ways of achieving maritime security and marine related-economic development. The improvement of regional cooperation structures also as ASEAN, the Quad and IORA, as well as the development of PPM strategies are also crucial for the achievement of these objectives too.

Stability on the seas is the foundation that guarantees prosperity for the south and southeastern Asia countries. Unimpeded use of supply chains and an unobstructed non-interference of sea lanes plays a significant role in world trade and economic welfare. Maritime security prevents perils like piracy, poaching, and boundary squabbles making the climate favorable for prospecting and growth.

Commitment to sustainable practices and the concepts of a blue economy entrench the extractive resources and support the economy of the coastal populations. Thus, include non-traditional security threats in their maritime security policies would allow countries to view maritime security in its broad sense, as climate change, environmental degradation, and human security issues are at least as much important as physical security threats.

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