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2014

Abstract

Cross-Border Violence of Mexican Drug-Trafficking Organizations

by

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M.S., Bellevue University, 2007

B.S., University of Houston-Downtown, 2005

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Mexican drug-trafficking organizations operate with impunity throughout the United States. Many scholars believe the spread of these organizations into the United States will inevitably lead to higher levels of violence. The lack of a singular, accepted definition of *cross-border violence* makes it difficult or impossible to create law, policies, or directives to combat it. The lack of studies on the causal conditions associated with cross-border violence reduces the effectiveness of policies and procedures in the sense that the government rarely uses high-leverage strategies, ones that would effectively address the root causes of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations. The purpose of this classical grounded theory study was to define the phenomenon of cross-border violence. In addition, the causal conditions of cross-border violence were identified and theory was generated. A complex systems perspective was the conceptual framework used to guide this study. Twenty-one chief law enforcement officers with jurisdictions along the Southwest border of the United States comprised the sample. Procedures associated with classical grounded theory include the “all-is-data” approach, constant comparative method, and theoretical sensitivity. Key results included an agreement about (a) the different crimes most commonly associated with cross-border violence, (b) a concise definition of cross-border violence, and (c) the cause of cross-border violence. The definition should be immediately implemented in order to reduce confusion, educate the public, assist policymakers in effective decision-making, and create law or regulation. The complex systems should be used to identify better ways to combat drug-organizations and the subsequent cross-border violence. Finally, the study should be used as the basis for future studies into the phenomenon of cross-border violence.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this to my father Edwin and my mother Gail. I know this will mean more to you than it will ever mean to me. I would also like to dedicate this to my beautiful wife Anna. I love you more than anything and thanks for putting up with me working all the time for all these years. I don't know what I would do without you. Finally, I would like to dedicate this work to my daughters Megan and Shelby. You can do anything if you work for it. As Theodore Roosevelt (1910) stated so well

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

The purpose of this classical grounded theory study was to define the phenomenon of cross-border violence in order to be able to measure the phenomenon. In addition, the causal conditions and complex systems involved in cross-border violence were identified. Identification of complex systems could assist lawmakers in writing high-leverage law and policy. High-leverage strategies are strategies that reduce or alleviate the underlying causation of the problems (McGee et al., 2011). Thus, the study could have social change implications in policy, advocacy, program development, and human services.

This chapter consists of 11 sections: background, problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions, conceptual framework, nature of the study, definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and significance.

Background of the Problem

Mexican drug-trafficking organizations operate with impunity in the United States; their business has expanded throughout the entire country (Brophy, 2008). For example, two members of the paramilitary organization, Los Zetas, claimed in a television interview that they were operating freely in the United States and it is well known that the Sinaloa drug-trafficking organization have an extensive network in United States (Brophy, 2008; NDIC, 2011). In 2008, Mexican drug-trafficking organizations had a presence in between 230 and 270 cities throughout the United States (Corchado, 2009; Lairsey, 2011; Longmire, 2011). In 2009, the National Drug Intelligence Center

(NDIC; 2010) indicated that Mexican drug-trafficking organizations had a presence in at least 1,286 cities throughout the country. Some of the difference between the years may be the result of differences in reporting methodologies ([NDIC, 2010].). Lairsey (2011) argued that (a) it is only logical to conclude that violence will increase with Mexican drug-trafficking organizations having a presence in that many cities; (b) the growth and spread of drug-trafficking organizations in the United States will inevitably lead to higher levels of violence.

Cross-Border violence, also known as spillover violence and border violence spillover, is a problem that faces many Americans, especially those who live along the Southwest border of the United States including California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas (Longmire, 2011). However, an accepted definition of cross-border violence does not exist among federal, state, and local governments (Rush, 2012).

As a result, the same violent crime committed by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in two separate jurisdictions might be considered cross-border violence in one jurisdiction, but not cross-border violence in the other (Longmire, 2011). The differences in definition will result in more cross-border violence in some jurisdictions and less in other jurisdictions. For example, kidnappings and home invasion robberies are not, in many instances, considered cross-border violence, even when they are directly linked to Mexican drug-trafficking organizations (Longmire, 2011). In another example, the Drug Enforcement Administration's definition of cross-border violence excludes drug trafficker on drug trafficker violence in the United States (Finklea, Krouse, & Randol,

2011). As a result, the crimes most likely associated with cross-border violence may not be classified as such.

Olson and Shirk (2011), Bunker and Bergert (2010), and Grillo (2011) argued that the war on drugs and the policies associated with border security have been highly ineffective and are an overall failure. The United States government mainly relies on drug law enforcement to combat Mexican drug-trafficking organizations (McGee et al., 2011). McGee et al. (2011) argued that drug law enforcement alone will not produce long lasting change. Long lasting change can only be accomplished by understanding relationships, processes, wholes, parts, complexities, and causal conditions of a system (McGee et al., 2011; Senge, 2006). High-leverage strategies must be executed in order to combat Mexican drug-trafficking organizations and the resulting cross-border violence (McGee et al., 2011; Senge, 2006).

Few studies have examined the causal conditions and complex systems associated with cross-border violence. McGee et al. (2011) argued that the reliance by the government solely on drug law enforcement to reduce the effects of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations is highly ineffective. The lack of studies reduces the effectiveness of policies and procedures in the sense that the government rarely uses high-leverage strategies that truly address the root causes of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations' influence (McGee et al., 2011).

For example, the alleviation of drug abuse in the United States could be a high leverage strategy. Addressing drug abuse is in direct contradiction to the strategies currently employed by the United States government to address problems superficially.

Therefore, in this study the causal conditions and complex systems associated with cross-border violence are explored in order to identify high-leverage strategies to combat cross-border violence.

Problem Statement

The failure to develop a single appropriate definition of cross-border violence creates many problems (Longmire, 2011). It is difficult if not impossible to create law, policies, or directives to combat cross-border violence. Furthermore, jurisdictions report crimes differently, and the lack of a definition of cross-border violence creates confusion, as well as difficulties measuring the phenomenon (Longmire, 2011; Shirk, 2006). The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Uniform Crime Report (UCR) does not maintain statistics associated with cross-border violence (Rush, 2012).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this classical grounded theory study was to define the phenomenon of cross-border violence. To generate theory, the causal conditions and complex systems associated with cross-border violence were identified. The participants of this study included the chief law enforcement officers at the federal, state, county, and local levels, with jurisdictions along the Southwest border of the United States. These municipal chiefs of police, supervisory federal agents, and county sheriffs all had direct experience with cross-border violence.

Since the purpose of this study was to define cross-border violence, it should be noted that at the start of the research, cross-border violence was generally defined as violence perpetrated by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States.

However, the definition generated by the study was much different than the initial definition.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to answer two research questions:

RQ1: How do chief law enforcement officers with jurisdictions along the Southwest border define cross-border violence?

RQ2: What complex systems or causal conditions affect cross-border violence?

Conceptual Framework

Cross-Border violence is a complex system that contains many dynamic components. For example, it requires the examination of economics, history, drug abuse, immigration policy, drug law enforcement, counterdrug policy, sociology, and other components. The interconnectedness of the dynamic components is an important consideration because each component affects the others (Senge, 2006). Therefore, a complex systems perspective was used as the conceptual framework to guide this study. This framework is similar to the one used by McGee, Joel, and Edson (2011) to examine the interplay between the dynamic components associated with the operations of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in Mexico.

The complex systems perspective assisted in pointing out weaknesses in current policies and attempts to solve the underlying problems of cross-border violence. For example, the government relies on the argument that increased law enforcement will reduce drug-related violent crime (McGee et al., 2011). However, Werb et al. (2011) found that increased drug law enforcement actually increased drug-related violent crime.

A complex systems perspective might consider how treatment of individuals addicted to drugs in the United States might reduce demand, competition, and violence.

Nature of the Study

Since the purpose of the study was to generate theory, a classical grounded theory design was used to define cross-border violence and to identify the causal conditions and complex systems associated with it. Interviews, government documents, scholarly journal were data sources. Interviews of 21 chief law enforcement officers were conducted. The initial set of research questions were developed by using complex systems theory. However, the data guided the direction of the study

Definitions

Chief law enforcement officer: Municipal chiefs of police, supervisory federal agents, and county sheriff's with direct experience with cross-border violence.

Cross-Border violence: Violence perpetrated by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States. However, one of the purposes of the study is to define cross-border violence. As a result, the definition may change as a result of further data collection and analysis.

High-leverage strategies: Address the underlying causation of cross-border violence (McGee et al., 2011).

Mexican drug-trafficking organizations: Includes drug cartels, organized crime syndicates, transnational criminal organizations, or foreign terrorist organizations whose intent is to smuggle drugs into the United States whether they are operating internationally or in the United States (Rush, 2012).

Assumptions

A key component and assumption of this study was that cross-border violence existed in communities along the Southwest border in some form, such as kidnappings, armed robberies, home invasions, murders, and other violent acts conducted by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States. Another assumption was that chief law enforcement officers openly and honestly. Because many are politically appointed or elected, they could have offered politically expedient answers. However, because their participation was and will remain confidential, they provided their views regardless of political pressure. In addition, my unique knowledge and experience as a federal investigator assisted in identifying any politically expedient answer.

Scope and Delimitations

The population and sample for the study was limited to chief law enforcement officers with jurisdictions in states along the Southwest border of the United States. While many communities not along the Southwest border claim to have experienced cross-border violence, the scope of the study was limited because it was not economically feasible to examine every one of these communities.

Limitations

This study was subject to three limitations: definitions, sample size, and bias. Given the limited research, this study focused on the definition of cross-border violence and the causal conditions and complex systems associated with it. The definition of cross-border violence is disputed. Some claim that gang violence associated with the sale of drugs is cross-border violence because the drugs were most likely provided by Mexican

drug-trafficking organizations. Others claim that violent crimes committed by individuals under the influence of drugs are incidents of cross-border violence because the drugs likely originated with Mexican drug-trafficking organizations. However, this limitation was addressed by the fact that chief law enforcement officers with jurisdictions along the Southwest border of the United States experience cross-border violence directly and indirectly related to Mexican drug-trafficking organizations. For example, chief law enforcement officers deal with gang members, individuals under the influence of drugs, and other violent crime associated with cross-border violence. As a result, they are in the best position to define cross-border violence. In addition, chief law enforcement officers must understand the complex systems or dynamics of the drug trade in their jurisdictions, which provides them with specific knowledge of cross-border incidents.

The second limitation was the relatively small sample size. In order to overcome this limitation, (a) a broad sample of chief law enforcement officers from different jurisdictions including urban, rural, urban/rural, and urban/rural/international was used as were jurisdictions with differing levels of cross-border violence.

As an investigator of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations, I could have some preconceived notions or biases that might affect the study. In order to overcome this limitation, I am disclosing this fact and implementing three safeguards to help protect against bias: the constant comparative method of analysis (Glaser, 2012), member checking, and triangulation.

Significance

This study could have many potential practical implications for social change in public policy, advocacy, program development, and human services. Defining cross-border violence could be of great value because it is the first step in being able to measure the phenomenon. In addition, a definition would assist lawmakers and policymakers in writing laws or creating policies that might reduce or prevent the effects of cross-border violence.

Government agencies have sent many mixed signals (Corchado, 2009). For example, Mexican drug-trafficking organizations have been named in testimony before Congress as the single greatest threat from organized crime to the United States and its security (Corchado, 2009; Finklea et al., 2011). On the other hand, some United States officials have claimed that only isolated instances of cross-border violence occur in the United States (NDIC, 2011). This study addressed the confusion by defining cross-border violence and created a framework for examining the phenomenon.

Summary

This chapter included a discussion of how the lack of an accepted definition of Mexican drug-trafficking organization cross-border violence does not allow researchers, politicians, policymakers, or citizens the ability to determine or measure the extent to which cross-border violence affects the national security of the United States. Adding to this problem is the lack of studies on the complex systems or causal conditions that affect cross-border violence. As a result, the purpose of this study was to define and examine the causal conditions or complex systems that affect Mexican drug-trafficking

organization cross-border violence. A complex systems perspective was used as the conceptual framework. The population was 21 chief law enforcement officers with jurisdictions along the Southwest border of the United States. Chapter 2 consists of a literature review on cross-border violence. In Chapter 3, I discuss the methodology of the study. Chapter 4 consists of the results. The summary, conclusions, and recommendations make up Chapter 5.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The lack of a singular, accepted definition of *cross-border violence* makes it difficult or impossible to measure cross-border violence, create law, or implement directives that focus on the root causes of cross-border violence. The purpose of this classical grounded theory study was to define and examine the complex systems associated with cross-border violence. The study could result in enhanced policy, advocacy, program development, and human services. A complex systems perspective was the conceptual framework used to guide this study. Chief law enforcement officers with jurisdictions along the Southwest border of the United States comprised the sample.

Chapter 2 includes seven sections: (a) conceptual systems theory as the framework for examining the contradictory definition of cross-border violence, causal conditions, and complex systems associated with cross-border violence; (b) an examination of the impact of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations on the United States; (c) the history, culture, and social aspects of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations; (d) the operation of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States; (e) the policy response of the United States; (f) proposed federal legislation on defining and measuring cross-border violence; and (g) the methodology used to study the problem. All these sections are vital to generating the definition of cross-border violence and the causal conditions or complex systems associated with it.

The literature obtained for this review was identified through several databases: EBSCO, Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, ERIC, Military &

Government Collection, PsycARTICLES, PsycBOOKS, PsychEXTRA, PsycINFO, SocINDEX with Full Text, Homeland Security Digital Library, International Security & Counter Terrorism Reference Center, Political Science Complete, and ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Full Text. The following keywords were used: Mexico, border, violence, spillover, cross-border, United States, drugs, and traffic. The time period was limited to the last 10 years. I reviewed every journal article and government document found.

In addition, I searched the official websites of Texas, California, Arizona, and New Mexico for government documents associated with Mexican drug-trafficking organizations and cross-border violence that might not have shown up in the databases.

Complex Systems Theory

According to Glaser (2009), grounded theory is a conceptual framework. In classical grounded theory, the conceptual framework is flexible in order to allow for unanticipated data, such as the concerns, interests, and ideas of the participants as they emerge (Christiansen, 2011; Glaser, 2011; Glaser, 2009; Xie, 2009). Initially, I started with no framework other than the one embedded in classical grounded theory. However, I found that the complex systems perspective was a useful tool in guiding the development of the research questions and the interview questions. It should be noted that I let the data speak for itself as classical grounded theory suggests.

The basis of complex systems perspective is Bertalanffy's general systems theory (2008). The general systems theory has evolved throughout time and has been useful in studies in many different disciplines, including physics, medicine, and philosophy

(Bertalanffy, 2008). Complex problems, such as cross-border violence, tend to be broken down into their smallest components in order to make them more easily understood (Senge, 2006). For example, cross-border violence relates to drug abuse, immigration, firearms and drug trafficking, organized crime, economics or a multitude of different components or systems (Brophy, 2008; Bunker et al., 2010; Bunker & Bergert, 2010; Finklea et al., 2010; Rush, 2012).

Governments do not tend to address Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in a manner that addresses the complex underlying causes (McGee, Joel, & Edson, 2011). Governments tend to focus on singular components of a system separately which is ineffective at solving major problems. However, the individuals and the government ignore or cannot comprehend interconnectedness systems and the influence that one system has on another (Senge, 2006). Senge (2006) made the analogy that “dividing an elephant in half does not produce two small elephants” (p. 66). As a result, a complex systems perspective is a conceptual framework to identify patterns, causal conditions, and even possible solutions to cross-border violence. In order to extensively understand cross-border violence, it was important to see the entire system, examine the interrelationships, and identify patterns.

According to Senge (2006), many of yesterday’s solutions have created the problems of today. For example, Werb et al. (2011) found that increased drug law enforcement increases drug-related violent crime. Since increased drug law enforcement actually increases drug-related violence appears contrary to common sense, increased

drug law enforcement has been one of the major components of United States policy to combat drug-trafficking and the violence associated with it.

Increased drug law enforcement increases violence because internal and external conflicts begin with the killing or arrest of drug-trafficking organizational leadership (Werb et al., 2011). The conflicts occur as individuals struggle for control over the organization. It could be argued that the policy of increased law enforcement and military involvement in both the United States and Mexico has resulted in unprecedented levels of violence.

In addition, the complex systems perspective also accepts that many of the threats to society occur gradually through time (Senge, 2006). In the case of Cross-Border violence, it is probable that the level of violence has increased gradually over time (Rush, 2012). In addition, the drastic measures taken by President Calderon to send the Mexican military to combat drug-trafficking organizations may have resulted in a dramatic increase in the level of violence associated with Mexican drug-trafficking organizations (Rush, 2012).

McGee, Joel, and Edson (2011) argued that a complex systems perspective of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations provide understanding of the dynamic relationships and feedback associated with these organizations. They used causal loop diagrams and “Conceptagon” to define the Mexican drug-trafficking organization system and underlying configurations that allow these organizations to operate. Conceptagon is a process that allows researchers to understand the systemic attributes of a problem by examining the relationships, processes, wholes, parts, or transformations of a system. In

addition, McGee et al. argued that law enforcement measures alone will not produce lasting change.

McGee et al. (2011) argued that high leverage strategies need to be implemented in order to address the causal conditions and curb the associated illegal activities conducted by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in Mexico. Specifically, institutional reform needs to occur in the Mexican educational, judicial, law enforcement, and economic systems in order to address systemic failures associated with Mexican drug-trafficking organizations. Many of these components may also be associated with the complex systems related with cross-border violence.

For example, Figure 1 illustrates systems, such as competition amongst drug-trafficking organizations, captures of drug-trafficking leadership, governmental counter-drug operations, inter-cartel competition, and other disturbances among the drug-trafficking organizations. The figure enabled me to form my research questions as well as determine the questions that I asked chief law enforcement officers to answer the research questions. In addition, the chart provided me insight into some of the possible high leverage responses that could be implemented in order to curb the effects of cross-border violence.

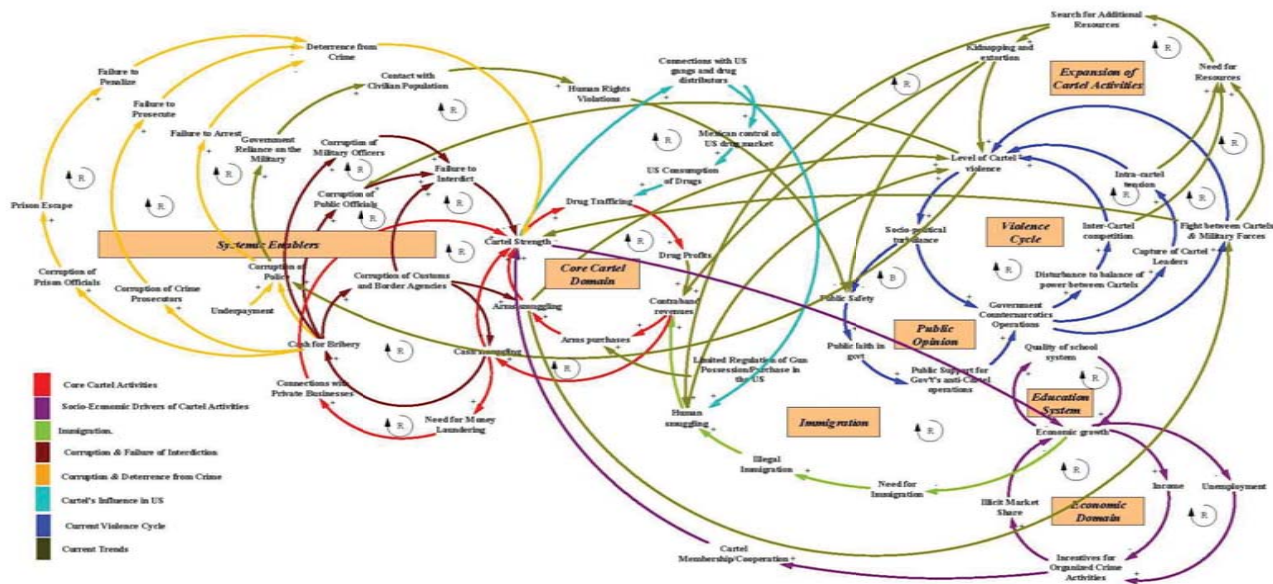


Figure 4: Complete Causal Loop Diagram of Mexico's Cartel Problem

From “Mexico’s cartel problem: A systems thinking perspective” by S. McGee, M. Joel, M., and R. Edson, 2011, *Analytic Services Incorporated*, p.6. Copyright 2011 by Analytic Services Incorporated. Reprinted with permission.

Mexican Drug-Trafficking Organization Impact

Mexican drug-trafficking organizations dominate the illicit drug supply, distribution, and wholesale in the United States and make an estimated \$7 billion to \$38 billion in revenue every year from trafficking drugs to the United States (Corchado, 2009; Faux, 2009; Finklea, Krouse, & Randol, 2011; NDIC, 2011; Pacheco, 2009). To put the revenue into perspective, the Central Intelligence Agency estimated that Mexico's combined exports were \$370 billion in 2012 (CIA, 2013). If drug-trafficking organizations made \$40 billion in profit, this figure would equate to approximately 9% of Mexico's economy.

Forbes Magazine listed one leader of a major Mexican drug organization, Chapo Guzman, one of the world's most powerful individuals in one article and listed him as one of the richest men on earth in another article (Beith, 2011). In addition, Mexican drug-trafficking organizations produce, ship through Mexico, or control an estimated 70–90% of the illicit cocaine, methamphetamine, and marijuana entering the United States (Brouwer et al., 2006; Corchado, 2009; Grillo, 2011; McDonald, 2005). Mexican drug-trafficking organizations produce or ship an estimated 30% of all heroin entering the United States through Mexico (McDonald, 2005).

Since 2006, massive profits, fighting between drug-trafficking organizations, breakdowns in the Mexican legal system, and the Merida Initiative have increased the death toll in Mexico dramatically (Bunker et al., 2010; Finklea, Krouse, & Randol, 2011). Although estimates of drug trafficking-related murders in Mexico vary, Finklea et al. (2011) and Rush (2012) estimated around 30,000 to 50,000 murders attributed to

Mexican drug-trafficking organizations between 2006 and 2010 in Mexico with the vast majority occurring in 2010. Gruesome forms of violence (e.g., torture and beheadings) are frequently employed by drug-trafficking organizations for political, as well as economic gains, and psychological warfare (Bunker et al., 2010; Bunker, Campbell, & Bunker, 2010; Grayson, 2010).

In order to combat drug trafficking and violence in Mexico, the United States spent over \$1 billion on the Merida Initiative (Pacheco, 2009; Rush, 2012). The intent of the initiative was to increase the rule of law, disrupt organized crime, build communities, and create a new border structure (Rush, 2012). In Mexico, the United States also spent money to train law enforcement, fund youth drug abuse centers, and reform the penal system (Pacheco, 2009). Rush (2012) claimed the leading factor in the increase in the level of violence is the result of the Mexican government combating drug-trafficking organizations with the Mexican military.

Mexico's political and social deterioration is a major concern for the United States Government (Faux, 2009). For example, massive unemployment and underemployment exists among those living in rural Mexico (McDonald, 2005). The lack of jobs and economic opportunity in Mexico has given individuals little choice of occupation and has increased the breakdown of Mexico (Bowden, 2011; McDonald, 2005). According to McDonald (2005), Mexicans who live in rural Mexico can be farmers, migrate to the United States, or become involved in the drug trade. Legitimate and illegitimate business are intertwined because banking, communications, services, and other businesses rely upon drug traffickers spending their proceeds (McDonald, 2005;

Valdez & Kaplan, 2007). The drug industry has a mix of professionals, criminals, and immigrants in both Mexico and the United States (Valdez & Kaplan, 2007). For example, carpenters and mechanics have legitimate businesses, but also develop load vehicles and concealed compartments to traffic narcotics (Valdez & Kaplan, 2007). Additionally, the lack of opportunity has driven many individuals to the drug trade which has resulted in a social context where “killing is not deviance, it is a logical career decision for thousands floundering in a failing economy and a failing state” (Bowden, 2011, p. 74).

The United States implemented the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in order to provide economic opportunities to Mexico (McDonald, 2005). However, an estimated 1.3 million jobs were lost in rural Mexico. Migration to the United States has increased as a result of the limited ability to make a reasonable living.

According to Brophy (2008), NAFTA has created open borders exploited by drug-trafficking organizations in order to ensure efficient and uninterrupted distribution of drugs and humans into the United States (Brophy, 2008). This situation is very possible since United States ports of entry process around 4.3 million trucks, 41.3 million pedestrians, and 70.3 million private vehicles through United States ports of entry in the 2009 alone (Longmire, 2011).

Faux (2009) claimed that NAFTA has reduced barriers for drug-trafficking organizations, as well as legal commerce. The intent of NAFTA was to reduce lack of opportunity, poverty, and inequality in Mexico that promotes the culture of violence (Faux, 2009). However, the extent to which NAFTA has facilitated drug transportation is unknown (Brouwer et al., 2006).

Mexico is the second most critical trading partner of the United States (Rush, 2012). As a result, Rush (2012) pointed out the violence and other problems associated with Mexican drug-trafficking organizations threaten the trading relationship critical to border communities and industry in the United States. Pacheco (2009) went so far as to say that a drug-related criminal insurgency takes place in Mexico because of increased drug abuse in Mexico, international firearms trafficking, fall of cocaine consumption in the United States, and increased border enforcement.

Some scholars argued that Mexico is quickly approaching failed state status (Grayson, 2010). Other United States officials, such as Director of Central Intelligence Michael Hayden, claimed the political instability in Mexico was one of the two national security directives that were a priority for the United States (Faux, 2009). According to the United States Forces Joint Command, an American response would be needed in Mexico if they continue to decline into chaos as a result of drug trafficker's war with the government because of the homeland security implications (Beith, 2011; Grillo, 2011).

The NDIC (2011) suggested Mexican drug-trafficking organizations are highly competitive and affects the national security of both the United States and Mexico (NDIC, 2011). McCaul asserted the result of intensified violence in Mexico and increased spillover violence requires decisive steps to end the war in Mexico that go beyond securing the border (U.S. Homeland Security, 2011).

Probably, the most profound concern of the United States is that violence in Mexico is spilling or will spill over the border from Mexico, especially along the

Southwest border of the United States, often associated with activities, such as drug, human, and firearms trafficking (Beittel, 2011; Finklea et al., 2011; Rush, 2012).

Beittel (2011) suggested violence is an inherent characteristic of the drug trade and drug-trafficking organizations use violence to settle disputes, maintain discipline, and ensure order. Mexican drug-trafficking organizations are commonly called drug cartels, organized crime, transnational criminal organizations, or foreign terrorist organizations (Rush, 2012).

For the purpose of this paper, Mexican drug-trafficking organizations is the term to describe the organizations. The violence perpetrated by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States or across the border is commonly called border violence spillover, spillover violence, and cross-border violence (Finklea et al., 2011; H.R. 2124, 2011; Stratfor Analysis, 2011; Turbiville, Jr., 2010). However, the term cross-border violence is synonymously descriptive of the violence since a lack of a precise agreed upon name exists for the phenomenon.

In addition to not having an agreed upon name, there are many contradictory definitions of cross-border violence throughout different levels of government (Finklea et al., 2011; Longmire, 2011). For example, Stratfor Analysis (2011) defines cross-border violence as any instance of violence committed by drug-trafficking organizations or independent smuggling organizations along the Southwest border of the United States. The Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) definition of cross-border violence does not include trafficker on trafficker violence (Finklea et al., 2011). The DEA's definition is perplexing in that it discounts the crimes most likely to be associated with cross-border

violence that being trafficker and trafficker violence (Longmire, 2011). For example, kidnappings and home invasion robberies are not cross-border violence, even linked directly to Mexican drug-trafficking organizations (Longmire, 2011).

The NDIC (2011) observed that Mexican drug-trafficking organizations frequently conducted kidnappings and home invasion robberies in border communities in the United States. Beith (2011) reported that Phoenix had over 700 kidnappings between 2006 and 2008 making it the kidnap capital of the United States. The City of Phoenix blamed many of the kidnappings on drug-trafficking organizations. In 2008 alone, there were at least 340 kidnappings in Phoenix (Longmire, 2008). Also 35 reported abductions of American citizens kidnapped on the Southwest border of the United States occurred between May of 2004 and May of 2005 (Longmire, 2011).

Of note, some scholars and government officials disputed the kidnapping figures released by Phoenix Police Department. In addition, newer statistics for kidnappings are not an offenses listed in the UCR. However, many citizens do not report incidents of kidnappings to the police involving drug-trafficking organizations because they fear retribution (Longmire, 2011). In addition, the government does not consider many of the kidnappings cross-border violence because kidnappings do not fall within the government's definition (Longmire, 2011).

Mexican drug-trafficking organizations have conducted documented home invasion robberies in the United States (Longmire, 2011). Home invasions are raids by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in order to kill, abduct, coerce, steal, or assert control over a territory (Longmire, 2011; Turbiville, Jr., 2010).

Two examples are as follows, Mexican drug-trafficking organizations have also been known to dress up as United States law enforcement officers while doing home invasions (Campbell, 2010; Longmire, 2011). Eight drug-trafficking organization assassins dressed as Phoenix Police Department Special Weapons and Tactics (SWOT) Officers murdered a man in his home at the direction of a Mexican drug-trafficking organization on June 22, 2008 (Burton & Stewart, 2008). Again, these violent crimes may be considered cross-border violence depending upon the definition.

Another failure of not having a succinct agreed upon definition of cross-border violence is that the same crime in two jurisdictions might be considered cross-border violence in one jurisdiction and not in the other (Longmire, 2011). The debate over cross-border violence is polarizing and politically charged (Rush, 2012). Conflicting definitions of cross-border violence allow for misrepresentations about the phenomenon. The determination of cross-border violence is in the eye of the beholder (Longmire, 2011; Rush, 2012).

Simple stated, based upon political or economic considerations, jurisdictions tend to decide whether or not cross-border violence occurs (Stratfor Analysis, 2011). Individuals who believe cross-border violence exists are more likely to seek funding to combat the problem (Stratfor Analysis, 2011). Alternatively, those who do not believe cross-border violence exists are concerned about tourism decreasing. Citizens need to a sense of security, because threats of retaliation, or governmental authorities cited that statistics do not support a conclusion that cross-border violence is a problem (Olson & Shirk, 2011; Stratfor Analysis, 2011).

For example, many jurisdictions on the Southwest border claim they are some of the safest locales in the United States (Longmire, 2011). Also, some scholars (e.g., Olson & Shirk, 2011), argued that few documented cases of cross-border violence exist.

Del Bosque (2009) and Rush (2012) argued violence has spilled from the United States into Mexico for a long time, and both countries are only now sharing the violence to a greater extent. Albuquerque (2007) studied the levels of violence in border cities in Mexico and the United States by using panel data analysis and did not report that crime tended to spill from Mexican to United States cities (Albuquerque, 2007). However, the rates of homicides in many American cities along the border are well below the national average and are among the safest 50% in the United States (Albuquerque, 2007).

In either case, one could conclude that governmental authorities define cross-border violence based on a concern to safeguard each particular side's interests or set a political agenda (Rush, 2012; Stratfor Analysis, 2011). Unfortunately, the definition of cross-border violence results in supporting a political agenda rather than understanding the reality of the situation (Rush, 2012). However, Rush pointed out that the Federal government committed millions of dollars to secure the border, which would validate the argument that the border is not secure and cross-border violence is a reality.

Mexican drug-trafficking organizations commit many different criminal actions on United States soil, which could be considered cross-border violence by definition (Arizona Criminal Justice Commission [ACJC], 2012). According to the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (n.d.b.), drug traffickers commit assaults, kidnappings,

murders, home invasions, and other criminal activities that could be associated with violence on a daily basis along the Southwest border.

For example, Mexican drug-trafficking organizations conduct transport cargo theft, auto theft, extortion, money laundering, property crimes, shootings across the border, criminal gangs, identity theft, smuggling, protection rackets, human smuggling, firearms trafficking, sexual exploitation, forced labor camps, money laundering, kidnapping for debt collection, kidnapping for extortion, assassinations, arms procurement, harvesting human kidneys, oil siphoning, corporate equipment theft, and illegal CD/DVD marketing (ACJC, 2012; Campbell, 2010; Turbiville, Jr., 2010; U.S. Homeland Security, 2011). Each of these crimes has the potential for violence.

According to the testimony of Texas Zapata County Sheriff Gonzales, cross-border violence occurs in the form of kidnappings, carjacking, extortion, gang affiliation with drug-trafficking organizations, child molestation, auto theft, home invasion, intimidation, shootings, human trafficking, weapons trafficking, and murder (Rush, 2012). The Texas Department of Public Safety includes trafficker on trafficker violence, extortion, aggravated assault, torture, kidnapping, rape, and murder.

Finklea, Krouse, and Randol (2011) claimed cross-border violence could be broken down into crimes committed by individuals under the influence of drugs, economic crimes associated with obtaining drugs, and crimes that result from trafficking drugs. The Southwest Border Task Force concluded it is difficult to combat cross-border violence because the lack of a uniform definition created uncertainty (Homeland Security Advisory Council [HSAC], 2009).

As a result, the task force recommended the Department of Homeland Security define different violent crimes associated with cross-border violence in a coordinated manner (HSAC, 2009). Defining different cross-border violent crimes would create common terminology to discuss different components of cross-border violence (HSAC, 2009). The task force recommended that border-related organized crime violence, violence against law enforcement, criminal violence, border violence, and spillover violence should be defined (HSAC, 2009; Rush, 2012).

For example, the council defined border violence as violence in the United States directly linked to international criminal organizations within 25 miles of the border (HSAC, 2009). Furthermore, the council defined spillover violence as violence in the United States or Mexico whereby international criminal organizations targets United States citizens (HSAC, 2009). The council created a definition for border-related organized crime violence in the United States is associated with border crimes involving drugs, firearms, human smuggling, and money (HSAC, 2009).

According to Rush (2012), conceptualizing a definition of cross-border violence must include an examination of how drug-trafficking organizations associate with transnational gangs. Corruption, kidnapping, and extortion less than 50 miles from the border may need to be recognized as cross-border violence and a threat to the United States (Rush, 2012).

Also, Finklea et al. (2011), Rush (2012), and Shirk (2006) pointed out how difficult it is to quantify cross-border violence since an accepted definition or sufficient statistics are not available to measure the phenomenon. Finklea et al. (2011) continued by

pointing out that no comprehensive public source of data that can determine the amount of spillover of drug-trafficking-related spillover violence. For example, the NDIC (2011) admitted they could not conduct a trend analysis study on drug-related crime on the Southwest border because of the insufficient data or data limitations.

Finklea et al. (2011) also brought up the point that drug control is very complex, and many different agencies participate in the program (i.e., not all agencies report to it). The FBI (2012) warned individuals that UCR statistics are rough rankings, and each jurisdiction has a range of conditions that uniquely affect each community (FBI, 2012).

Taylor et al. (2011) pointed out that although records of arrests, incarcerations, and prosecutions exist, it is not advantageous to use them when examining drug markets because of their lack information about the dynamics and characteristics of the market. Furthermore, clandestine drug markets create problems with validity and reliability because drug addicts are unreliable and sellers tend to fear reprisals.

The unique set of conditions affecting the communities could influence crime analysis and FBI cautioned individual comparison of statistical data associated with the different communities (FBI, 2012). Also, individuals did not report over 50% of all violent crime and property crimes to the police in 2009 (Arizona Criminal Justice Commission [AZDJC], n.d.a.). Many crime victims thought that the crime was not worth reporting, the criminal justice could not stop the victimization, and some believed the crimes should not involve the criminal justice system (AZDJC, n.d.a.).

To complicate matters further, the definition of cross-border violence could greatly affect the outcomes of a study. For example, Naylor (2009) pointed out how

violence can occur in different forms, such as physical violence, threats, and psychological or social coercion. In most instances, an implicit threat or coercion occurs prior to the use of physical acts of violence (Naylor, 2009).

In my experience as a federal investigator, I have interviewed Mexican firearms and drug traffickers with most claiming that the trafficker or the trafficker's family were threatened or coerced. However, it is unknown the extent to which Mexican drug-trafficking organizations use threats or coercion in the United States. Once again, this ambiguity demonstrates a further difficulty or impossibility to quantify cross-border violence.

An accurate definition and measureable statistics could assist in raising awareness about the threats from drug-trafficking organizations, including tactics used by drug-trafficking organizations. This definition could draw attention to the burden local law enforcement authorities face when dealing with the phenomenon (Rush, 2012; Stratfor Analysis, 2011). According to Rush (2012), the United States cannot gauge or monitor the threat from Mexican drug-trafficking organizations to the United States. The lack of metrics does not allow the United States to appropriately place resources to combat cross-border violence (Rush, 2012).

History, Culture, and Social Aspects

In order to better understand the threats from Mexican drug-trafficking organizations to the United States, it is extremely important to understand the history of violence, drug trafficking, and corruption in Mexico because it shapes the way in which drug-trafficking organizations operate (Beith, 2011). Violence has been a part of Mexican

culture throughout history and is a source of pride for many Mexicans (Beith, 2011). For example, violence has occurred during the age of the Mayans, the Aztecs, the Spanish conquest of Mexico, and the Mexican Civil War (Beith, 2011). More recently, violence is part of the drug-trafficking persona, as can be seen or heard in Mexican movies, ballads, and songs that celebrate the drug-trafficking culture (Grillo, 2011).

In regards to drugs, the first government report on the growth of opium in Mexico was in 1886 and Mexican drug-trafficking organizations have conducted operations in Mexico for more than 100 years (Beittel, 2011; Grillo, 2011). In 1908, the United States appointed its first Opium Commissioner Hamilton Wright in order to stop drug use (Grillo, 2011). In 1914, the United States Congress passed the Harrison Act in order to control opium and cocaine usage (Grillo, 2011).

Grillo argued that the result of this bill was the birth of the Mexican drug trafficker. Mexican drug-trafficking organizations began to smuggle drugs and humans into the United States in the 1920s and 1930s (Brophy, 2008). After World War II, the Sinaloa drug-trafficking organization became very powerful as many returning soldiers required morphine for pain (Beith, 2011).

The Cultural Revolution in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s created a major demand for marijuana (Beith, 2011). However, the Colombian cartels were much more powerful than the Mexican cartels until the early 1990s (Brophy, 2008). The counter-drug operations in the Caribbean quelled much of the Colombians drug trafficking in that area. As a result, the Colombians found an alternate route to traffic drugs into the United States through Mexico. Furthermore, Mexican drug-trafficking

organizations began to assume the risk of trafficking narcotics into the United States and expanded their power dramatically.

One of the first major drug-trafficking leaders, Miguel Angel Felix Gallardo, was born in 1946 and known as “El Padrino” or Godfather (Beith, 2011). By the 1980s, Gallardo had almost complete control over the drug-trafficking industry in Mexico. However, a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Special Agent was kidnapped and murdered after he infiltrated the drug-trafficking organization in 1985. At that point in time, Gallardo decided to divide the drug-trafficking organization into many different sections in order to be more efficient and less likely to be dismantled by his impending arrest, which eventually occurred in 1989.

Gallardo broke the drug-trafficking organization into the geographical areas of Tijuana, Ciudad Juarez, Sonora, Sinaloa, and Gulf areas (Beith, 2011). A different leader chosen by Gallardo controlled each area (Beith, 2011). This system had a major impact on the level of violence along the border because the new leaders began to fight amongst themselves in order to gain control over each other’s trafficking routes into the United States.

The history of corruption has also played a role in the level of violence currently in Mexico (Beith, 2011; Brophy, 2008; Grillo, 2011). According to Naylor (2010, p. 97), “Corruption is not a characteristic of the system in Mexico... it is the system.” McDonald (2005) estimated that cocaine traffickers spend over \$500 million per year in order to bribe government officials. Some local police officers have been involved in kidnappings, protection rackets, firearms trafficking, as well as drug trafficking (Brophy,

2008). Faux (2009) claimed that about half of all law enforcement officers in Mexico and a high percentage of military members are on the payroll of drug-trafficking organizations. According to Molloy and Bowden (2011), one Mexican assassin claimed that at least 50 out of 200 graduates in his Mexican police academy worked for drug-trafficking organizations prior to graduation.

The corruption was mainly due to the control of power by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in Mexico from 1929 and 2000 (Beith, 2011; Snyder & Duran-Martinez, 2009). The government during this period was so corrupt the PRI is widely blamed for the rise of the drug-trafficking organization's power (Beith, 2011). However, the PRI is also credited for one of the longest stretches of peace in Mexico (Grillo, 2011).

Although Snyder and Duran-Martinez (2009) admitted violence did occur to some extent during this period, they cited most of the violence was the result of retaliation among drug-trafficking organizations. In the mid-1980s, the Mexican Attorney General's Office (PGR) instituted mandatory relocation of officials, created or eliminated state offices, and fired corrupt officials (Rush, 2012; Snyder & Duran-Martinez, 2009). This action created many problems with state-sponsored protection rackets whereby public officials refrained from or selectively enforced laws in exchange for proceeds of criminal organizations (Snyder & Duran-Martinez, 2009).

In the 1990s, the breakdown of the protection rackets in Mexico resulted from shared political power between the PRI and the National Action Party (PAN; Snyder & Duran-Martinez, 2009). The result was that the PRI could no longer solely control guarantees of selective enforcement that existed in former state-sponsored protection

rackets (Snyder & Duran-Martinez, 2009). Since the drug-trafficking organizations could no longer trust government officials to protect their operations, this resulted in drug-trafficking organizations creating their own paramilitary organizations to protect themselves, which increased drug-related violence.

Several factors contribute to the use of violence by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations. According to Bunker and Sullivan (2010, p. 44), “Killing and torture are part of the business plan for market domination,” Friman (2009) proposed that violence occurred as a result of an addict’s need to commit crimes to finance their drug usage, psychological effects of drug usage, or violence attributed to the drug trade. However, he argued that the primary source of violence was drug trafficking-related violence (i.e., territorial disputes, enforcing codes, and disputes between dealers and others).

Systemic violence occurred as a result of market shares of drug distribution and disputes over territory, retaliation, punishment, and debt collection (Friman, 2009; Reuter, 2009; Sarrica, 2008). Valdez and Kaplan (2007) suggested highly volatile situations occur frequently when normative behaviors are not followed.

Many scholars cited the lack of a legal system that can maintain contracts, payments, profits, social control, and solve disputes or enforce agreements (Brophy, 2008; Friman, 2009; Molloy & Bowden, 2011; Valdez & Kaplan, 2007). Therefore, disputes frequently become solved with selective threats or use of physical violence (Brophy, 2008; Friman, 2009).

Violence is also used to terrorize rivals, informants, journalists, police officers, and citizens (Brophy, 2008; Pacheco, 2009). In addition, lower-level members of drug-

trafficking organizations use violence for upward mobility within the organization (Reuter, 2009). Some scholars (Friman, 2009; Pacheco, 2009) also cited drug law enforcement and government policy influence violence. For example, Pacheco (2009) argued the Mexican Government's position of non-negotiation with drug-trafficking organizations and drug law enforcement as major factors in high rates of violence. Friman (2009) argued that successful drug law enforcement may decrease violence temporarily, but risks that inter- and intra-organizational violence may occur when a leadership position becomes vacant, and power shifts occur as lower level operatives scramble to gain power.

Other theorists suggest drug-trafficking organizations use violence for other purposes. For example, Mexican drug-trafficking organizations use violence against law enforcement officials, because they limit the drug trade (Friman, 2009). Beith (2011) claimed drug traffickers are beginning to use more violence as less experienced operators' traffic drugs and experienced operators are killed or captured. As a result, they pose a significant risk because they are much more inexperienced and are more likely to commit violent crime (Beith, 2011).

Sarrica (2008) believed importation points were more likely to experience systemic violence because of the amount of drugs entering the area. According to Beith (2011), some Mexican experts believed that corruption reduced the need for violence and Mexico should revert to its ways of allowing drug trafficking.

Violence has become one of the mainstays of drug-trafficking organizations after the creation of paramilitary organizations. The Gulf Cartel formed the first major

paramilitary unit, Los Zetas, in the 1990s (Brophy, 2008). The United States Special Forces and Mexican government reportedly trained Mexican Special Forces to conduct counterdrug operations (Bowden, 2011; Brophy, 2008). In addition, Israeli Defense Forces also allegedly trained the Mexican Special Forces units in urban combat techniques (Grillo, 2011). The Mexican government naively believed that giving them the status of an elite force would prevent them from being corrupted (Naylor, 2010).

Many members of the Mexican Special Forces units deserted the Mexican military to work for Mexican drug-trafficking organizations because the drug-trafficking organizations could pay much better wages (Brophy, 2008). As time progressed, organizations, such as Los Zetas, began to recruit Special Forces units from Central America, Mexican street gangs, former military members, and American prison and street gangs (Brophy, 2008; Bunker & Sullivan, 2010; Corchado, 2009; Grillo, 2011; Longmire, 2011; NDIC, 2011; Pacheco, 2009).

For example, Los Zetas recruited members of the Guatemalan Special Forces Unit known as Kaibiles (Brophy, 2008). Campbell (2010) and Grillo (2011) suggested many of the extreme violent acts seen today, such as beheadings, may have been inspired by the Kaibiles because they used those tactics in the Guatemalan Civil War.

Drug-trafficking organizations use paramilitary organizations as a private army to impose their will, murder, kidnap, maintain order within their organization, and combat other drug-trafficking organizations (Brophy, 2008). Paramilitary organizations are extremely dangerous because they are willing to kill anyone including police officers, military members, and citizens (Brophy, 2008). Although most of the original Zetas are

dead, many of their tactics (e.g., military attacks and beheadings) are now a model for other paramilitary organizations (Bowden, 2011).

In addition, drug-trafficking organizations have set up camps to train their assassins and paramilitary organizations (Grillo, 2011). Many have shooting ranges, assault courses, and an arsenal of military grade weapons. Grillo claimed many of the courses last around two months and includes special training on .50 caliber machine guns, explosives, and grenade launchers. Mexican drug-trafficking organizations train recruits in insurgency tactics for use against United States Law Enforcement (Longmire, 2011). Reports have claimed that many trainees are Americans as many American gangs operate in both the United States and Mexico for the drug-trafficking organizations (Corchado, 2009; NDIC, 2011).

Besides being extremely violent, the United States government is concerned that paramilitary organizations can overpower most law enforcement agencies because of their high-tech weaponry (Brophy, 2008). Firearms and explosives purchased in the United States or stolen from the United States Military are items used to wage war against the government and traffic narcotics (Grillo, 2011).

Many firearms are trafficked into Mexico, and some return to the United States to protect drug shipments. Although difficult to determine the actual number of firearms trafficked to Mexico, tens of thousands of firearms purchased in the United States were for the drug-trafficking organizations in Mexico.

Hughes (2011) even suggested Mexican drug-trafficking organizations were conducting terror attacks on rivals, journalists, law enforcement officers, and politicians.

For example, Mexican drug-trafficking organizations terrorized the media and affected the way in which reporters conducted their jobs (Brophy, 2008). They have the ability to determine what information is released and the stories that may be covered (Brophy, 2008). Basically, media outlets are required to self-censor in order to survive (Corchado, 2009).

Members of the media who fail to comply with drug-trafficking organization directives are commonly threatened or killed (Brophy, 2008). As a result, it is difficult to determine the accuracy of media reports associated with drug-trafficking organizations. Many newspapers in the United States forbid their reporters to visit some border towns because they have received threats (Olsen, 2008).

U.S. Operations

Further complicating matters, there is no doubt Mexican drug-trafficking organizations operate with impunity in the United States and their business has expanded throughout the entire country (Brophy, 2008). Drug markets are social organizations that are complex, dynamic, and sensitive to change (Valdez & Kaplan, 2007). Some drug organizations in the United States have built a business structure into their illicit business. For example, they may have quarterly meetings, business ledgers, determine pricing, bonus structures, determine shipments, and vote on assassinations (Campbell, 2010).

Turbiville, Jr. (2010) cited a rise in the number of murder of informants, low-level Mexican traffickers, and senior leaders of drug-trafficking organizations in the United States. Mexican drug-trafficking organizations are also believed to have training camps in the United States to train their operatives in kidnappings, firearms, and home invasions

(Campbell, 2010). Overall, Mexican drug-trafficking organizations have a presence in between 230 and 270 cities throughout the United States (Corchado, 2009; Lairsey, 2011; Longmire, 2011). However, the organizations purportedly operate in more than 1000 cities in the United States (Alexander, 2012; NDIC, 2011).

Mexican drug-trafficking organizations have a network of safe houses, methamphetamine production labs, and marijuana fields in the United States (Bunker & Sullivan, 2010; Longmire, 2011). Many of the Mexican marijuana farms in the United States use armed guards, guard dogs, trip wires, and other booby traps in order to protect their operations (Longmire, 2012).

It is widely known organizations (e.g., Sinaloa drug-trafficking organization) have an extensive network in the United States (NDIC, 2011). For example, the National Gang Intelligence Center (2012) stated that many Sinaloa cartel members in Los Angeles use gangs to traffic drugs, collect debts, and commit assassinations.

In one DEA operation, known as Project Xcellerator, the Sinaloa drug-trafficking organization was moving tons of cocaine through Stow, Ohio to California (Hesterman, 2010). The operation uncovered 70 cells of Sinaloa operatives in 26 states. Other organizations, such as Los Zetas, are highly connected to domestic gangs and can operate freely in the United States (Brophy, 2008; Keller & Pipitone, 2010).

According to Campbell (2010), Los Zetas are active in Texas, Arizona, Oklahoma, Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee. Many high ranking members of Los Zetas live in the United States, as well as have many familial ties throughout the country. At times, drug-trafficking organization leaders ordered their operatives to engage law

enforcement if necessary (Campbell, 2010). Also, La Familia Michoacana drug-trafficking organization has command and control structure responsible for managing street-level distribution (NGIC, 2011).

According to Brophy (2008), corruption of law enforcement officers and politicians is a major problem along the Southwest border of the United States. For example, Naylor (2010) cited that around 200 corruption investigations of United States Border Patrol Agents and Customs Inspectors on the Southwest border were associated with Mexican drug-trafficking organizations. The FBI has created six Border Corruption Task Forces to combat bribery and corruption of government officials along the Southwest border of the United States (Hesterman, 2010).

Females are now becoming subject to drug-related violence, required to pay drug debts of family members, conceal their family's activities, and keep drug stashes (Campbell, 2008). The risk associated with physical harm, imprisonment, loss of communication with children, and loss of income is of great concern to women who live with drug traffickers. In addition, some are forced into drug trafficking and victimized by family members. The lower-level female drug traffickers are the most likely to be victimized.

According to one Mexican assassin, the respect for the lives of women and children began to diminish in the Mexican drug-trafficking organizations (Molloy & Bowden, 2011). Women are now being tortured, raped repeatedly, and murdered the same as men.

In addition, therapists who live along the Southwest border of the United States see patients who have personally or know individuals that have been raped, tortured, murdered, or kidnapped in Mexico (Hixson, 2009). The war on drugs has brought kidnapping, torture, drug abuse, human smuggling and violence to the United States. Cross-Border violence is significant enough for Hixson to ask mental health professionals to recognize the needs associated with these problems.

The lack of economic opportunity in Mexico has resulted in pervasive migration to the United States (McDonald, 2005). According to Keralis (2011), a displacement crisis of Mexicans has been occurring as a result of the drug war in Mexico. Middle class Mexican professionals, such as police officers and journalists, are applying for political asylum in the United States and Canada at a much higher rate than ever before (Keralis, 2011). Many of these individuals are threatened by drug-trafficking organizations and migrate because of the instability in Mexico (Keralis, 2011).

Olson and Shirk (2011) argued that a very small percentage of individuals apprehended at the border are felons involved in drug trafficking or other criminal activities. However, undocumented immigrants are commonly targeted by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations (Longmire, 2011). Since drug-trafficking organizations recognize migrants travel in large groups, do not generally carry firearms, and had enough money to pay human smugglers, they are commonly kidnapped during the course of their migration.

Slack and Whiteford (2011) interviewed 71 illegal immigrants about violence associated with migration to the United States. Sixteen were robbed, nine had contact

with drug-trafficking organizations, seven were kidnapped, and four witnessed rapes during the course of their migration (Slack & Whiteford, 2011).

Gangs are also of concern to the United States because inter-gang disputes, high turnover, and willingness to use violence in order to enhance their reputation are common in gang culture (Reuter, 2009). Other factors of gang culture lead to violence including the age of the participants, value of drugs, intensity of law enforcement, and indirect consequences associated with drug abuse.

Mexican drug-trafficking organizations are major wholesalers of drugs, but are becoming even more powerful at the retail street in the United States (Beittel, 2011). Mexican drug-trafficking organizations are known to recruit street gangs, prison gangs, white supremacist organizations, and outlaw motorcycle gangs to conduct attacks on both sides of the border, smuggling drugs, commit assassinations, conduct debt collection, and enforce their rules (Brophy, 2008; Bunker & Sullivan, 2010; Campbell, 2010; Hesterman, 2010; Longmire, 2011; National Gang Intelligence Center, 2011; Rush, 2012; Turbiville, Jr., 2010).

For example, Turbiville, Jr. (2010) described a 13-year-old killer recruited by the Zetas drug-trafficking organization in Laredo, Texas. In many instances, Mexican drug-trafficking organizations have ordered gangs to commit acts of violence, such as assaults, kidnappings, and murders in Texas (Rush, 2012). However, Longmire (2012) claimed some gangs are more closely tied to Mexican drug-trafficking organizations than others, but they pay close attention to their product in the United States. Some gangs that are affiliated with drug-trafficking organizations include the Latin Kings, Bandidos, Barrio

Azteca, MS-13, Mexican Mafia, Crips Nortenos, Mongols, Gangster Disciples, Valluco Soldiers, Mexikanemi, Tri-city bombers, 18th Street, La Linea, Los Negros, Hells Angels, Texas Syndicate, Tango Blast, and Hermanos de Pistoleros (Bunker & Sullivan, 2010; Campbell, 2010; Longmire, 2011; Pacheco, 2009).

Many of these gangs are transnational gangs that may be criminally active in more than one country, controlled by leadership in another country, are highly mobile, and transcend borders (Bunker & Sullivan, 2010). The challenge with threats from transnational gangs include overwhelming the legal system by the sheer number, challenge to the legitimacy of states, they may act as a surrogate, infiltrate police organizations, and may dominate the informal economic sector.

Almost every state has seen activity by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations (Hesterman, 2010). According to Grillo (2011), the vast majority of drug-related violence in the United States is the result of gaining disputes over turf. However, since the drug-trafficking organizations train many gang members, the concern is that eventually the same tactics used in Mexico will become prevalent in the United States (Grillo, 2011; NDIC, 2011).

The United States pays more than \$5.5 billion each year for gang suppression, prevention, and correction programs (NDIC, 2011). However, the threat associated with gang involvement in drug trafficking is increasing along the southwest border of the United States (NDIC, 2011). In simple terms, the violence, international reach, and a vast connection to a network of gangs has strengthened drug distribution routes and increased the threats from Mexican drug-trafficking organizations to the United States (Corchado,

2009). Lairsey (2011) argued that logically violence in the United States will increase with the expansion of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations networks in the United States.

U.S. Policy Response

In order to combat Mexican drug-trafficking organizations, President Nixon was the first President to proclaim a war on drugs (Beith, 2010). According to Pacheco (2009), the policies associated with the war on drugs have largely remained unchanged over the last 20 years. The United States has spent over one trillion dollars over the last 40 years on the drug war (Associated Press, 2010).

In 1981, federal spending for drug law enforcement alone was approximately \$1.5 billion (Shepard & Blackley, 2005). By 2002, the spending on drug law enforcement rose to over \$12 billion per year (Shepard & Blackley, 2005). Now over 20,000 Border Patrol Agents guard the Southwest Border of the United States (Bowden, 2011). State spending for drug law enforcement efforts has been estimated to be much higher (Shepard & Blackley, 2005).

In addition to the cost of drug law enforcement, drug abuse cost the United States approximately \$193 billion in 2007 and over 17,000 people die annually in the United States from drug abuse (Corchado, 2009; Longmire, 2011). In 2010, law enforcement in the United States seized approximately 2,535,003 pounds of drugs along the Southwest border of the United States (Rush, 2012). However, only 10-20% of the total amount of drugs trafficked into the United States were actually seized according to federal law enforcement estimates.

A great deal of literature related to United States policy and associated with cross-border violence is concerned with drug law enforcement, border security, immigration, information sharing, economic trade, and drug reduction (Arizona Criminal Justice Commission [ACJC], n.d.b.; Finklea et al., 2011; Rush, 2012, Werb et al., 2010). The United States Government considers Mexican drug-trafficking organizations a transnational or international organized crime problem (Finklea et al., 2011; National Security Council [NSC], 2011; U.S. Department of Justice [DOJ], 2008). Transnational or international organized crime are

self-perpetuating associations of individuals who operate transnationally for the purpose of obtaining power, influence, monetary and/or commercial gains, wholly or in part by illegal means, while protecting their activities through a pattern of corruption and/or violence, or while protecting their illegal activities through a transnational organizational structure and the exploitation of transnational commerce or communication mechanisms (DOJ, 2008, p. 2; NSC, 2011, p. iii).

The Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime and the prevailing multifaceted counternarcotic strategy is to (a) protect Americans, (b) enhance border security, (c) assist partner governments, (d) target organized crime financial systems, (e) disrupt trafficking networks, (f) combat corruption, (g) reduce the flow of contraband, and (h) build cooperation with organizations to defeat organized crime (NSC, 2011). In this strategy, transnational organized crime organizations are a public safety problem (NSC, 2011).

According to the National Security Council (2011), the size, scope, and influence of organized crime have increased intensely and are a significant threat to the security of the United States. In part, committing violent acts, intimidation, and threats of violence, which threatens the security of the public, economic well-being of communities, and law enforcement characterize international organized criminal organizations (DOJ, 2008). Furthermore, the strategy's priority actions include increased information sharing, partnerships, intelligence, interdiction, investigations, and prosecutions (NSC, 2011). Organized crime networks have major implications for public safety, health, democracy, and economic stability (NSC, 2011).

Experts and policymakers are concerned about connections between organized criminal organizations, such as Mexican drug-trafficking organizations, and terrorism (Finklea, 2010). Organized criminal enterprises may provide support to terrorists, smuggle individuals, exploit financial systems, target United States citizens using the internet, corrupt public officials, and use violence or threats of violence (Finklea, 2010).

Organized crime characteristics include structure, continuity, violence, illegal business, corruption, and legitimate business penetration (Finklea, 2010). Mexican drug-trafficking organizations are expanding their operations including trafficking drugs and smuggling or trafficking individuals into the United States (NSC, 2011). President Barack Obama asserted the United States has a shared responsibility for drug violence and needed to reduce the demand for drugs that fuel drug-trafficking organizations (NSC, 2011).

Many scholars (e.g., ACJC, n.d.b.; Finklea et al., 2011) believe that cross-border violence will be the most prevalent in states along the Southwest border of the United States. Here they are arrival zones for most drugs entering the United States, have national level drug storage, and are the transshipment area for drugs destined throughout the United States. In addition, they all share similar climactic, cultural, and geographical conditions that contribute to the violence along the border (Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, n.d.). Border States receive federal grants to combat drug-trafficking organizations and gangs, fund law enforcement, prosecution, courts, education, corrections, drug treatment, and technology (AZDJC, n.d.a.). The Arizona strategy for drug, gang, and violent crime control provided funding to combat illicit drugs, drug proceeds, and reduce violent crime across Arizona (AZDJC, n.d.a.).

As a result, all the Southwest Border States have implemented policies, procedures, boards, task forces, reports, press releases, letters to federal leaders, or some combination of the foregoing to combat drug-trafficking organizations and cross-border violence. For example, Texas Governor Rick Perry announced the activation of the Texas Spillover Violence Contingency Plan, enacted as a result of the increasing threat of violence from Mexico and the lack of federal assistance in securing the border (Office of the Governor Rick Perry, 2010). The plan's goal was to secure the border through increased law enforcement and technology (Office of the Governor Rick Perry, 2010).

The New Mexico Attorney General has implemented a Border Violence Division (Office of New Mexico Attorney General Gary King [NMAG], n.d.). The creation of the

division was to work with the Mexican Government in law enforcement matters, money laundering, human smuggling, and extraditing criminals (NMAG, n.d.).

The State of Arizona announced the implementation of a border security plan in order to provide safety and security of their citizens as well as secure the border (Arizona Office of the Governor [AZOG], 2010). Arizona Governor Janice Brewer claimed “The federal government has failed in its obligation and moral responsibility to secure our border” (AZOG, 2010, para. 1). The plan, created by Governor Brewer and her Border Security Cabinet, provided additional funding for law enforcement operations, border security training, and activating Arizona National Guard troops (AZOG, 2010). The State of Arizona’s comprehensive strategy used a balanced approach to supply/demand reduction, information sharing, prevention and education, treatment priorities (ACJC, n.d.b.). According to the ACJC (n.d.b.), enhanced funding is needed in order to support local agencies, because local law enforcement agencies are overloaded or unable to handle cases. The least information about cross-border violence was in the State of California website. However, on February 17, 2011, California Attorney General Kamala Harris announced the arrest of three suspects from the Tijuana drug-trafficking organization that planned the murder of five family members in California believed to owe the organization money (California Office of the Attorney General [COAG], 2011). Attorney General Harris suggested organized crime gangs were a serious threat to the State of California and did not respect the borders (COAG, 2011).

Recent Proposed Federal Legislation

Three recently proposed acts are in the United States House of Representatives. The Southwest Cross-Border Violence Recognition Act of 2011 went before the House of Representatives on June 3, 2011. The design of the bill was to

Improve safety, security, and operational control of the international border by providing the Department of Homeland Security with an accurate definition of the term cross-border violence, to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop measures to quantify cross-border violence data for reporting to Congress and other entities, and for other purposes. (H.R. 2124, 2011, p. 1)

In addition, the United States House of Representatives passed H.R. 6368, also known as the Border Security Information Improvement Act of 2012. The bill would require the United States Department of Justice and Department of Homeland Security to provide a joint report to Congress on their “ability to track, investigate, and quantify cross-border violence along the Southwest Border and provide recommendations to Congress on how to accurately track, investigate, and quantify cross-border violence” (H.R. 6368, 2012). However, neither bill passed Congress.

President Obama signed the third bill, the Jaime Zapata Border Enforcement Security Task Force Act, H.R. 915, on December 7, 2012 (H.R. Res. 915, 2012). The act established a Border Enforcement Security Task Force program to coordinate efforts of federal, state, and local law officials to prevent “transnational crime, including violence associated with drug trafficking, arms smuggling, illegal alien trafficking and smuggling,

violence, and kidnapping among and across the international border of the United States” (H.R. Res. 915, 2012, p. 1). According to the Act,

Mexico’s northern border with the United States has experienced a dramatic surge in border crime and violence in recent years due to intense competition between Mexican drug cartels and criminal smuggling organizations that employ predatory tactics to realize their profits (H.R. Res. 915, 2012, p. 2).

However, cross-border violence still has neither a definition nor metrics to determine the level of cross-border violence.

Olson and Shrik (2011) argued that no specific policies associated with border security in the last 20 or 30 years have reduced the flow of people or drugs into the United States. Many other scholars (e.g., Bunker & Bergert, 2010; del Bosque, 2009; Grillo, 2011) claimed the war on drugs and their policies were failures. In order to determine whether drug law enforcement decreased drug-related violent crime, Werb et al. (2011) conducted a study with PRISMA guidelines in order to systematically examine the impacts of drug law enforcement on drug-related violence. Fourteen of the 15 studies demonstrated that drug law enforcement had an adverse impact on drug-related violence and actually resulted in increased violence. The researchers suggested that drug prohibition had not decreased supply, and alternative regulatory methods of drug control were needed to reduce drug market violence. In simple terms, drug law enforcement did not decrease drug-related violence as commonly thought (Werb et al., 2011).

In addition, Layne, Decker, Townsend, and Chester (2002) interviewed 34 high-level cocaine drug smugglers in order to determine the deterrent effects of law

enforcement. They found that most drug traffickers considered government interdiction as manageable risks that could be overcome by altering methods, routes, and careful selection of associates. Overall, the most significant deterrents to the participants of the study were the threats from confidential informants, long prison terms in excess of 25 years, and the ability to be prosecuted when not caught in possession of drugs (Layne et al., 2002).

Grillo (2011) claimed the policies of interdiction, eradication, and criminalization had not worked, and violence remained at a critical level. Shirk suggested that interdiction of firearms, drugs, and money could not effectively combat drug-trafficking organizations (The U.S. Homeland Security, 2011). From a complex systems perspective, history, culture, sociology, economics, corruption, violence, immigration policy, drug trafficking, human smuggling, and public policy played a major role in cross-border violence. Rush (2012) pointed out that cross-border violence was one part of a larger system that could include economic development, corruption, a poor educational system in Mexico, and drug demand in the United States.

One of the most common arguments found in literature today relates to some form of legalization or decriminalization of drugs as a way to reduce cross-border violence. According to del Bosque (2009), the underlying assumptions should be that United States demand for drugs is the major problem, not cross-border violence. The United States must control or reduce demand in order to reduce violence because criminalization has been ineffective in reducing drug-related crime (Hughes, 2011).

The problem with Mexican drug-trafficking organizations cannot be solved in Mexico (Faux, 2009). Recommended was a concerted effort to reduce the market for illegal drugs in the United States and a reduction of firearms trafficking to Mexico. The only way to probably reduce the market for drugs may be through the regulated legalization.

Grillo (2011) argued one of the most realistic ways to combat drug trafficking and violence is to discuss legalization. The billions of dollars spent every year attempting to stop drug trafficking and violence may be better spent treating individuals who are addicted to drugs. In addition, Shirk advised Congress to examine drug legalization and other methods of curbing drug trafficking (The U.S. Homeland Security, 2011). According to Carpenter (2009), many solutions (e.g., increased border security and firearms enforcement) have been attempted to isolate the Mexican drug-related violence. The only way to reduce drug violence was to defund drug-trafficking organizations by ending the prohibition of drugs in the United States.

Legalization or decriminalization of drugs may seem extreme and may inadvertently cause other issues. For example, Bretteville-Jensen (2006) suggested that drug users may harm others physically, increase healthcare costs, and need to be protected from harming themselves. In addition, they asserted that non-drug users could be offended by another's drug use; individuals should be protected from exposure to drugs; and drug users are less productive (Bretteville-Jensen, 2006). Legalization could lead to a decrease in drug prices, which in turn could lead to increased drug use (Bretteville-Jensen, 2006). According to this contagion model, drug users could

contaminate nonusers and enhance the likelihood that nonusers begin using drugs.

Furthermore, according to the stepping stone hypothesis, legalization of soft drugs could lead to the use of hard drug use.

However, legalization or decriminalization could overcome many of these arguments. Taxation could ensure that consumption is not increased by a decrease in drug prices as the result of legalization (Bretteville-Jensen, 2006). Specifically, increased use of legalized soft drugs could reduce the use of hard drugs because they would be cheaper. The forbidden fruit character of drug use could actually decrease drug use. Drug-related crime might be reduced if drugs become cheaper.

Bunker and Bergert (2010) argued that the United States should use a blended counter-demand approach to combating drug-trafficking organizations. Demand needs to be extinguished using educational campaigns and behavioral modification. The use of deterrence and punishment needs to provide incentives for not using or trafficking drugs. Finally, individuals addicted to illicit narcotics should be provided with other drugs, such as methadone for heroin addicts.

A provision needs implementation to provide illegal narcotics to users, decriminalization of drugs, and legalize the commodity (Bunker & Bergert, 2010). This approach would provide hardcore abusers the ability to have a special narcotics user status, in which they could be treated, as well as drug courts to provide an alternative to incarceration for crimes associated with illegal use of drugs. Harsh penalties would be implemented in order to ensure that hardcore addicts obtain treatment, mandatory

counseling, and other provision. The researchers argued that the cost associated with incarcerating marijuana users was not sustainable, and marijuana should be legalized.

Methodology to Study the Problem

Classical grounded theory was chosen as the methodology for this study for two reasons. First, grounded theory is inductive and fits my personality. Secondly, classical grounded theory allowed for the collection of unanticipated data to emerge and the creation of theory. In addition to classical grounded theory, a complex systems perspective guided the study.

Bertalanffy's general systems theory is the basis for the complex systems perspective (An Outline of General System Theory, 2008). The general systems theory has been used in many different disciplines, which makes it well suited for a study of cross-border violence. The main tenets of the complex systems theory is that complex problems tend to be broken into smaller issues that can be more easily understood (Senge, 2006). In addition, problems occur generally over time, and systems are interconnected.

A systems perspective guided the study in many different respects. Cross-Border violence encompasses many different disciplines. Also, cross-border violence is combatted by the government in individual components, such as immigration and border security. However, the components of cross-border violence are all interconnected and each decision tends to affect another system. Chapter 3 will discuss the methodology in further detail.

Summary

Chapter 2 provided a discussion of the literature review. The chapter discussed the complex systems theory and how it can be used to study cross-border violence. In addition, the threat Mexican drug trafficking organizations pose to the national security of the United States was examined. Furthermore, the different definitions of cross-border violence were discussed. The literature review demonstrated how the history, culture, and social aspects of drug-trafficking organizations affect the current debate on drug trafficking. An examination of Mexican drug-trafficking organization operations in the United States was discussed. In addition, the ways in which drug traffickers exploited NAFTA was debated. The declaration of war on drug trafficking and the implications of the war were summarized. Finally, proposed legislations was examined. I did not find any similar studies specifically examining cross-border violence in the literature review. Chapter 3 is a discussion of the research design, role of the researcher, participants, instrumentation, data analysis plan, trustworthiness, and ethical procedures associated with the study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The lack of a singular definition of *cross-border violence* and limited understanding of complex systems associated with the phenomenon reduces the effectiveness of law, policies, or directives to combat it. The purpose of this classical grounded theory study was to define and examine the complex systems associated with cross-border violence. The study could have social change implications in policy, advocacy, program development, and human services. A complex systems perspective was the conceptual framework used to guide this study. Chief law enforcement officers with jurisdictions along the Southwest border of the United States comprised the sample. This chapter includes the conceptual framework, operational definitions, participant selection, instrumentation, data analysis, trustworthiness, ethical procedures, and role of the researcher.

Conceptual Framework

In classical grounded theory, the literature review was not designed to formulate a theoretical framework because classical grounded theory is a theoretical framework in itself (Xie, 2009). However, I used the complex systems perspective in order to assist me in identifying patterns, causal conditions, and even possible solutions to cross-border violence. The complex systems perspective assisted me in extensively understanding cross-border violence and its underlying systems, as well as identifying the interrelationships within the different systems associated with cross-border violence.

Additionally, the complex systems perspective assisted me in identifying patterns that exist within the systems (Senge, 2006). The rationale for using the complex systems perspective in conjunction with the classical grounded theory approach is the complementary and broadening of a researcher's worldview. Complex systems approach theorists recognize that a problem may be rooted in many different disciplines at the same time (Senge, 2006).

For example, cross-border violence may have a function of multiple coexisting factors (e.g., economic, history, sociology, psychology, and various other disciplines). Consequently, the complex systems approach provided an opportunity and/or broadened my understanding of cross-border violence, as opposed to the limited view I initially had about the phenomenon when I started the study.

The theoretical framework was flexible in order to allow for unanticipated data to emerge, such as the concerns, interests, and ideas of the participants of the study (Christiansen, 2011; Glaser, 2011; Glaser, 2009; Xie, 2009). In addition, the literature review was not designed to identify gaps or frame research questions in classical grounded theory (Xie, 2009).

The research problem could be significantly different from the preconceived notions that could be assumed based upon the literature review (Christiansen, 2011). The substantive interests and agendas of the participants of the study determine the course of the research (Christiansen, 2011).

Operational Definitions

Chief Law Enforcement Officer: Municipal chiefs of police, supervisory federal agents, and county sheriff's with direct experience with cross-border violence.

Cross-Border Violence: Violence perpetrated by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States. However, one of the purposes of the study is to define cross-border violence. As a result, the definition may change as a result of further data collection and analysis.

High-leverage Strategies: Address the underlying causation of cross-border violence (McGee et al., 2011).

Mexican Drug-Trafficking Organizations: Includes drug cartels, organized crime syndicates, transnational criminal organizations, or foreign terrorist organizations whose intent is to smuggle drugs into the United States whether they are operating internationally or in the United States (Rush, 2012).

Participant Selection

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2012), there are 58 counties and 480 incorporated municipalities in California. The State of Arizona has 90 incorporated municipalities and 15 counties (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). The State of New Mexico has 33 counties and 102 incorporated municipalities (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). The State of Texas has 254 counties and 1214 incorporated municipalities (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

The population consisted of chief law enforcement officers who have jurisdictions along the Southwest border in the states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.

The population was purposefully large in order to maintain the confidentiality of participants. The total number of supervisory federal law enforcement agents was estimated at 300. The total population for this study was approximately 2,546 assuming that all of the cities and counties had a chief law enforcement officer.

According to Breckenridge and Jones (2009), classical grounded theory acknowledges that researchers cannot predict the relevance of data and that strict procedures found in typical qualitative data analysis can manipulate or bias the data. The sampling process was determined based upon:

1. A purposeful sample enabled the researcher to determine and select individuals knowledgeable about cross-border violence at the initial stage of data collection. The sampling criterion was chief law enforcement officers with jurisdictions in one of the four Border States along the United States/Mexico border. Chief law enforcement officers included county sheriffs, municipal chiefs of police, and supervisory federal agents. The initial sample included five chief law enforcement officers with communities that claim cross-border violence is a significant problem and five chief law enforcement officers with communities that claim cross-border violence does not exist. In either case, chief law enforcement officers have to define the phenomenon in order to determine the existence or absence of cross-border violence.
2. After the initial sampling, I conducted theoretical sampling as a co-occurring process of data collection, coding, analysis, and determining what information

to be collected next (Breckenridge & Jones, 2009; Pergert, 2009). Theoretical sampling allowed me to add participants to the sample based on gaps identified during the data collection or constant comparative analysis phase of the study. Breckenridge and Jones (2009) suggested that theoretical sampling is data-driven and based upon the needs of the study. According to Xie (2009), theoretical sampling requires the possibility of informant and site-spreading. If any major changes to sampling methods or interview questions, however unlikely, I will submit them to the Institutional Review Board for approval. Once data is adequately dense and does not generate new leads, sampling ceased (Breckenridge & Jones, 2009; Pergert, 2009). However, an estimated 20 to 30 interviews were required to ensure saturation.

Instrumentation

The primary data form was the 20–30 interviews of chief law enforcement officers. The interviews were semi-structured and conversational in nature. They used open-ended questions and an interview protocol. I created an interview protocol to standardize the interviews (Creswell, 2007). The interview protocol has a heading with the date, place, and participant information. The questions were determined based upon the research questions. For example, the interview questions included (a) What is your definition of cross-border violence?; (b) What causes cross-border violence?; and (c) What are the different ways to reduce cross-border violence?. Finally, a thank you statement was added (see Appendix B for the Interview Guide). However, the interview protocol was only used as a reminder to ask the most vital questions.

According to Glaser (2011) and Xie (2009), open conversations are much more effective in allowing codes to emerge from the data. Participants of the study were debriefed after the interview, informed that a future interview may be necessary to clarify information, and asked to review the findings.

Secondary data from Chapter 2 was used during the analysis phase of the study. However, it is impossible to determine the type of specific secondary data needed at this point in the study. The constant comparative method and interviews guided the collection of any further secondary data. The secondary data included articles from scholarly journals, government reports, government websites, books, and other sources of information.

Data Analysis

According to Xie (2009), the procedures associated with classical grounded theory include the “all-is-data” approach, constant comparative method, and theoretical sensitivity. An “all-is-data” approach was useful in combining the data needed for conceptualization in order to generate theory (Glaser, 2012).

Bracketing, critically analyzing, and constantly comparing the data in the literature review with emerging data obtained from interviews (Christiansen, 2011; Dedy, 2011; Glaser, 2009; Xie, 2009). Some data not explicitly identified in Chapter 2 was used during the subsequent data analysis phase of the study.

The sample included theoretical similar and different categories to ensure saturation and the emergence of the core category (Breckenridge & Jones, 2009). The constant comparative analysis allowed me to conceptualize patterns that may not be

obvious to the participants (Glaser, 2012). The joint collection and coding of data ensured that the data is objective and corrected for bias (Glaser, 2012). Constant comparison continually occurred during the data analysis phase. The steps for data analysis included the following:

1. Eliciting codes through theoretical sampling and memo-writing (Breckenridge & Jones, 2009).
2. Open coding or developing different categories of information (e.g., documents, interview transcripts, and field notes) (Creswell, 2007). The constant comparative method allowed me to determine instances that characterize to a specific category and conducting interviews to determine if the new information provided further insight (Creswell, 2007). The process of open coding was designed to reduce the data into a limited number of themes associated with cross-border violence.
3. Axial coding determined the interconnectedness of different categories (Creswell, 2007). Categories were developed based upon the causation of cross-border violence, effects of cross-border violence, possible actions to combat the phenomenon, and the consequences of possible actions.
4. Selective coding or developing propositions, statements, or hypotheses that inter-relate the different coding categories (Creswell, 2007).

Trustworthiness

Various methods ensured the trustworthiness of the data in this study:

1. The process was transparent in the respect that each attempt in generating theory includes the document in an appendix.
2. Through member checking data, the participants of the study had an opportunity to review the accuracy of their statements and the conclusions drawn from the participant's statements.
3. Classical grounded theory is concerned with saturation as opposed to the sample size (Pergert, 2009). Saturation occurred prior to completing the study through recording thick rich descriptions of the participant's concerns, interests, and ideas (Christiansen, 2011; Creswell, 2007; Glaser, 2011; Glaser, 2009; Xie, 2009).
4. Theoretical sampling provided variation in the sample. For example, some jurisdictions were rural, and some were urban. In addition, the sample included locales with different populations and differing levels of cross-border violence.
5. The initial sample included five chief law enforcement officers with communities that claim cross-border violence is a significant problem and five chief law enforcement officers with communities that claim cross-border violence does not exist. In either case, chief law enforcement officers had to define the phenomenon in order to determine the existence or absence of cross-border violence.

Ethical Procedures

The confidentiality of the participants was protected using various techniques:

1. All participants were allowed to choose a four digit code for identification purposes. I maintained a separate file with the four digit code and the participant's confidential information.
2. The interviews took place in private areas, whenever possible. At times, however, it was not possible to interview individuals in these conditions. As a result, semi-private areas were needed during interviews. I attempted to ensure there were physical barriers, guard against possible eavesdroppers, and asked if the participant was comfortable.
3. I wrote memos during the course of the interview and immediately after the interview whenever possible in order to ensure that I accurately document the data. Memos documented quotations, paraphrases, and my insights into their responses.
4. I asked the participants of the study to member-check statements in order to ensure the accuracy of the data.
5. While a potential for risk for participating chief law enforcement officers, the threat of physical harm from Mexican drug-trafficking organizations is always present for chief law enforcement officers who work along the Southwest border of the United States. However, this study did not place them in any higher risk than they are currently under.
6. The political and economic risks associated to the fact that many chief law enforcement officers have political appointments or elected to their position, may affect their perspectives. As a result, it is possible, although unlikely, that

a chief law enforcement officer could be removed from their position if they provide information contrary to the political agenda of politicians. However, due to the large sample size, their anonymity was protected.

7. It was extremely important to maintain confidentiality of participants of this study. In order to ensure confidentiality, the information from interviews was purposefully from an extremely large population in order to ensure that chief law enforcement officers could not be identified easily.
8. I disclosed my employment with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) to the participants. No conflicts of interest or power differentials existed due to my job description.
9. I notified participants that participation in the study is voluntary, and a participant may withdrawal from the study at any time.
10. Informed consent disclosures included the purpose of the study, risks associated with participating in the study, importance of the study, conflicts of interest, and the right to withdrawal from the study.
11. No incentives were involved for participation in the study.
12. Finally, all confidential information is stored in a safe or a password protected file.

Role of the Researcher

I worked for the United States Customs Service and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosive (ATF) for over 13 years. As a result, I am an insider in

the respect that I have personally conducted numerous investigations related to firearms trafficking involving Mexican drug-trafficking organizations.

During the course of the investigations, I conducted several interviews of drug and firearms traffickers. Many of the investigations involved violent crimes, including murders in Mexico. However, I am an outsider in the respect that I have limited experience with Mexican drug-trafficking organization cross-border violence.

I have worked with numerous law enforcement officers from many jurisdictions throughout the country. As a result, I may have some intrinsic biases associated with working as a federal investigator, which I noted as I conduct the interviews to separate out perspectives of the respondents and my views.

Finally, my experience as a federal investigator allowed chief law enforcement officers to be more candid because they know that I can be trusted to ensure their confidentiality as well as understand the challenges associated with law enforcement. I have rarely worked directly with chief law enforcement officers and do not believe there is a power differential in my favor.

Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the grounded theory methodology of the study. Originally, a purposeful sample was conducted of chief law enforcement officers with jurisdictions in states located on the Southwest border of the United States with Mexico and knowledge of cross-border violence. Then, theoretical sampling was conducted, which was based on gaps in knowledge. The number of interviews needed to reach saturation was 20-30. However, saturation was achieved at 21 interviews. Data analysis

was conducted using the all-is-data approach. Theoretically similar and different categories were examined. The ethical procedures were discussed, including the location of interviews, memo writing, and member-checking. I will discuss the methodology of the study in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 is the discussion, including the interpretation of the study, limitations of the study, reflections on the researcher's experience, recommendations for action, implications for social change, and the conclusion.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The lack of a singular, accepted definition of *cross-border violence* creates confusion, and makes it difficult or impossible to create law, policies, or directives to combat it. The lack of studies on the causal conditions and complex systems associated with cross-border violence reduces the effectiveness of policies and procedures. The purpose of this classical grounded theory study was to define and examine the complex systems associated with cross-border violence. The study could have social change implications in policy, advocacy, program development, and human services. A complex systems perspective was the conceptual framework used to guide this study. Chief law enforcement officers with jurisdictions along the Southwest border of the United States comprised the sample. This chapter includes the setting, demographics, data collection, results, and trustworthiness.

Setting

Most of the participants of this study were interviewed in private offices at their respective law enforcement agency. All of the interviews were done between November 14, 2013 and February 28, 2014. The participants were not influenced by any known personal conditions, such as financial difficulties, divorces, or other conditions at the time of the study.

There are multiple social, political, and economic considerations that impact the perception of cross-border violence within jurisdictions. The media plays a major role in the thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions of citizens regarding cross-border violence.

According to many of the participants, the media have exaggerated the level. In addition, some participants claimed cross-border violence is a way for law enforcement agencies to obtain federal grants. For example, Participant 14 stated that

Cross-Border violence is no worse than it has ever been. The media reports on it more now. In the current context, most places are completely ignorant to cross-border violence except when Diane Sawyer gets on the news to talk about it. I think that with less media coverage, it decreases. As media coverage decreases, incidents will decrease. It is big counties with little budgets that are cashing in on it. It behooves them to have it present. They are selling it, and the time is now.”

In addition, some of the participants claimed that city managers denied the existence of cross-border violence because tourism is negatively affect.

These participant’s statements demonstrate the various influences that sway the discussion of cross-border violence. For example, the jurisdictions with high levels of cross-border violence may just be seeking federal funding; the jurisdictions with low levels of cross-border violence may just be seeking to promote the understanding that the community is safe, only to economic considerations associated with tourism.

Demographics

The specific agencies, locations, names of participants, or any other specific demographical data will not be specified in order to maintain confidentiality. The participants of this study included county sheriffs, chiefs of police, state police supervisors, and supervisory federal officers/agents. During the course of the study, I determined that interviewing supervisory task force officers would be beneficial to the

study. The addition of task force officers to the participant pool added a great deal of experience and expertise of individuals working with multi-jurisdictional initiatives aimed at combating Mexican drug trafficking. In one instance, the chief of police for a jurisdiction advised me to interview the public information officer on his behalf. In addition, one Sheriff directed me to a command officer to complete the interview on his behalf. Table 1 contains the participant's characteristics. The agency is specified as local police, sheriff's office, state police, or federal agency. The participants had an average of 22.7 years of law enforcement experience.

Table 1

Table of Participant Characteristics

Participant	Agency	Jurisdiction	General Years of Experience
1	Sheriff's Office	Rural County	26-30 years
2	Local Police	Urban City	Over 30
3	Federal Agency	Rural/Urban	11-15 years
4	Local Police	Urban City	Over 30
5	Local Police	Urban City	Over 30
6	State Police	Rural/Urban	Over 30
7	Federal Agency	Rural/Urban	11-15 years
8	Federal Agency	Rural/Urban	11-15 years
9	Task Force	Rural/Urban	21-25 years
10	Local Police	Rural Town	26-30 years
11	State Police	Rural/Urban	16-20 years
12	Task Force	Rural/Urban	11-15 years
13	Local Police	Urban City	16-20 years
14	Federal Agency	Rural/Urban/International	Over 30
15	State Police	Rural/Urban	11-15 years
16	Sheriff's Office	Rural County	Over 30
17	Sheriff's Office	Rural County	26-30 years
18	Federal Agency	Rural/Urban	16-20 years
19	Local Police	Local Police / Urban	16-20 years
20	Task Force	Rural/Urban	11-15 years
21	Federal Agency	Rural/Urban	11-15 years

Data Collection

I collected data through 21 interviews consisting of open-ended questions. Interviews commenced after receiving the permission of the IRB on November 13, 2013 (Approval No. 11-13-13-0275873). All of the interviews took place between November 14, 2013 and February 28, 2014. All interviews were conducted in-person, at private offices, except for the interviews of Participant 14 and Participants 17 which were conducted via telephone interview due to my inability to travel to their locales. The duration of each interview varied based upon the information provided by the participant. The shortest interview was 25 minutes in length and the longest interview lasted 1 hour. The participants declined to be recorded, but lengthy notes were taken during the course of the interviews. In addition, I read my notes back to the participants in order to ensure accuracy. The notes were immediately transcribed following the interview to ensure accuracy and shared with the participants.

Results

Cross-Border Violence

The participants were asked if cross-border violence exists and if it exists within their jurisdictions. All of the participants, with the exception of participants 4, 5, 11, 14, and 19, stated that cross-border violence exists and that it exists within their jurisdictions. Two of the participants stated that limited cross-border violence existed. They claimed that it was impossible to say that it did not exist but cross-border violence was not a major issue. Cross-Border violence was much more covert and difficult to determine if crimes were the result of it.

Participant 19 stated that, “The city council has a policy that cross-border violence does not exist within the jurisdiction. If the mayor or city council knew police had identified cartel members living in their city, they may change their minds.” Even though the city denied cross-border violence existed in their jurisdiction, participant 19 admitted that cross-border violence existed in his jurisdiction.

Overall, Participants 11 and 14 stated that cross-border violence does not exist. However, their argument is not based on the premise that Mexican drug-trafficking organizations do not conduct violent crimes in the United States. They merely argue that the phenomenon of cross-border violence is not a new phenomenon. For example, Participant 14 made the argument:

In the current context, or a recent phenomenon of the drug war in Mexico, cross-border violence does not exist. Violence from Mexico has always existed. You could go back 100 years and it has continued throughout time... Today, kidnappings and murder are mostly considered cross-border violence.

Definitions of Cross-Border Violence

The definition of cross-border violence varied greatly between different participants of the study. Some participants had a broad definition. For example, one participant argued that any crime committed by immigrants of Mexico was cross-border violence, regardless of legal or illegal status. Some participants argued that any crime conducted at the direction of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States was cross-border violence.

There were only three components that all of the participants agreed upon. Mexican drug-trafficking organizations had to conduct the violent activities themselves. Even when transnational, street, prison, and outlaw motorcycle gangs committed violent crimes in the United States at the direction of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations, there was a disagreement as to whether or not the act was cross-border violence. Secondly, the crime had to be a violent crime. However, the crimes most closely associated with cross-border violence in Table 2, 3, and 4 demonstrated that most participants agree there are a few crimes that may be non-violent that would still be considered cross-border violence. For example, participants agreed (except for Participant 11) that threats of violence were cross-border violence. Thirdly, the violent crime must be committed in the United States. For example, participants disagreed as to whether or not violent crimes committed against United States citizens in Mexico by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations is cross-border violence.

Crimes Most Closely Associated with Cross-Border Violence

In order to further define cross-border violence, I used the literature review to create a list of close-ended questions in order to determine crimes or types of incidents that may be considered cross-border violence. Specifically, the participants of the study were asked if the crimes of murder, aggravated assault, kidnapping, threats of violence, vehicle pursuits, accidental cross-border shootings incidents, purposeful cross-border shooting incidents, drug smuggling, human smuggling, firearms trafficking, home invasion robberies, extortion, trafficker on trafficker violence in the United States, and

financial crimes committed by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States is considered cross-border violence.

Accidental cross-border shooting were explained to the participants as incidents that occurred when Mexican drug-trafficking organizations get into a firefight in Mexico, and through happenstance, move across the border. Purposeful cross-border shootings are incidents where Mexican drug-trafficking organizations shoot at law enforcement or civilians in the United States from Mexico. Trafficker on trafficker violence are instances where Mexican drug-trafficking organizations commit violent acts against other Mexican drug-trafficking organizations within the United States.

Furthermore, the participants were asked if attacks against U.S. citizens abroad (in Mexico) committed by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations were incidents of cross-border violence. The participants were also asked if transnational, street, prison, and motorcycle gang violence conducted at the direction of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States was cross-border violence. Furthermore, the participants were asked if violent crimes committed by Mexican citizens in the United States who are not members of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations were incidents of cross-border violence. Finally, participants were asked if individuals under the influence of drugs who were not members of drug-trafficking organizations, whether United States citizens or foreigners, that commit violent crimes were acts of cross-border violence.

I asked the participants close-ended questions to determine if the specific crimes would be incidents of cross-border violence if the crimes were directly conducted by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations. Table 2 is a table that I created to synopsise the

answers provided by the participants. Some participants declined to answer a question at times because they did not conduct certain types of enforcement activities or they just did not have an opinion. It should be noted that Participant 11 stated that none of the crimes were cross-border violence because cross-border violence does not exist. He did not object to the fact that Mexican drug-trafficking organizations conducted violent crimes in the United States.

Table 2

Crimes most closely associated with Mexican drug-trafficking organization Cross-Border violence

Participant	Murder	Aggravated Assault	Kidnapping	Threats of Violence	Vehicle Pursuits	Accidental Cross-Border Shootings	Purposeful Cross-Border Shootings
1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>	Yes	Yes
3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	Yes
4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>	Yes	Yes
5	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>Some</u>	<u>No</u>	Yes	Yes
6	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>Some</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes
7	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
8	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>Some</u>	Yes	Yes
9	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
10	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	Yes
11	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
12	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>Some</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes
13	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
14	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>Some</u>
15	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
17	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
18	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
19	Yes	<u>Some</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
20	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>Some</u>	Yes	Yes

Threats of Violence

As shown above, most participants, with the exception of participant 11, agreed that murder, aggravated assaults, and kidnappings were considered cross-border violence. In addition, the threat of violence from Mexican drug-trafficking organizations was considered cross-border violence by chief law enforcement officers. The inclusion of threats of violence into cross-border violence makes it almost impossible to measure the level of cross-border violence, and would only increase the level of cross-border violence throughout the United States dramatically. As Participant 21 noted, “threats keep everyone in line” and Mexican drug-trafficking organizations rely heavily upon threats to operate efficiently. Implied threats of violence existed in drug trafficking organizations. Participant 14 summarized it best by stating that you do not need to be told you will be killed if you pay for drugs.

Vehicle Pursuits

The participants disagreed as to whether or not vehicle pursuits were incidents of cross-border violence. One participant argued that most of the vehicle pursuits were individuals that were “homegrown” and most did not involve Mexican drug-trafficking organization members. Some participants argued that it depended on what the trafficker had with them at the time of the pursuit or arrest. Participant 15 made the point that

Vehicles are a 4000 pound weapon. Most are pretty sad, especially when one crashes into innocent civilians. Most are loaded with illegal aliens that are forced, or required, to pay. They may have 10-20 people that fly out into the brush when they crash. Many are hurt, and a lot are killed.

Cross-Border Shootings

Although there was some disagreement in regards to cross-border shootings, whether accidental or purposeful, most participants stated they were acts of cross-border violence. Many of the participants argued that there was no such thing as accidental cross-border shooting or the intent was not to harm individuals in the United States. One individual stated that cross-border shootings were mainly directed at law enforcement. As a result, shootings at officers were not cross-border violence because it is part of a law enforcement officers job to accept risk.

Table 3

Additional crimes associated with Cross-Border violence

Participant	DTO Directed Gang Violence	Drug Smuggling	Human Smuggling	Firearms Trafficking	Home Invasion Robbery	Trafficker on Trafficker Violence	Extortion
1	<u>Assoc.</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2	<u>No</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>Some</u>
3	<u>Assoc.</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	<u>Assoc.</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5	<u>Assoc.</u>	<u>Some</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>Some</u>
6	<u>Assoc.</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>Some</u>
7	<u>Assoc.</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
8	<u>Assoc.</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
9	<u>Assoc.</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
10	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
11	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
12	<u>Assoc.</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
13	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
14	<u>Some</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>Some</u>	Yes	Yes
15	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>	Yes
17	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
18	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
19	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
20	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
21	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Gangs

Some participants stated that transnational, prison, street, and outlaw motorcycle gangs committing violent crimes at the direction of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations was cross-border violence. Some participants argued that violence conducted at the direction of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations was cross-border violence because the order came from Mexico. Other participants argued that gangs and Mexican drug-trafficking organizations were associated because they were reliant upon one another. The association was due to a co-dependence for profit and drug distribution. However, some participants argued that gangs are in the business for their own benefit. As a result, they do not commit cross-border violence. Furthermore, they are already committing violent crime in the United States and would continue to do so without orders from Mexican drug-trafficking organizations. ”

Smuggling, Trafficking, Robberies, and Extortion

In addition, all of the participants except for Participant 11 agreed that drug smuggling, human smuggling, firearms trafficking, home invasion robberies, and extortion were incidents of cross-border violence when conducted by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States. Furthermore, all of the participants except for Participants 11 and 16 agreed that Mexican drug trafficker on trafficker violence in the United States was cross-border violence. For example, Participant 16 stated “Trafficker on trafficker violence is not cross-border violence. I say fuck them. Let them kill each other if they want to.”

Table 4 (Continued)

Other crimes commonly associated with Cross-Border violence

Participant	Financial Crimes	Attacks against U.S. Citizens Abroad	Violent Crime Committed by Non-DTO Foreigners	Individuals Under the Influence of Drugs Not Associated with DTOs
1	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>
2	<u>No</u>	Yes	<u>Some</u>	<u>No</u>
3	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	Yes	<u>No</u>
4	Yes	Yes	<u>Some</u>	<u>No</u>
5	<u>Some</u>	Yes	<u>Some</u>	<u>Some</u>
6	<u>Decline</u>	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>
7	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
8	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
9	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>
10	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>
11	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
12	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>
13	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
14	Yes	<u>No</u>	Yes	<u>Decline</u>
15	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
16	<u>No</u>	Yes	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
17	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>	Yes
18	Yes	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>
19	Yes	Yes	<u>Some</u>	<u>Some</u>
20	<u>Associated</u>	Yes	Yes	<u>No</u>
21	<u>Associated</u>	<u>No</u>	Yes	<u>No</u>

Financial Crimes

There was disagreement as to whether or not financial crimes should be considered cross-border violence. Many of the participants believed that the financial crimes themselves were not cross-border violence unless the financial crimes resulted in violence. However, many of the participants agreed that financial crimes were significantly associated with cross-border violence. For example, extortion, fraud, money laundering, and corruption are a vital tactic used by Mexican drug-trafficking

organizations. Participant 19 stated that “they have infiltrated the banking and financial system in this country, it could potentially destabilize economy if they gain too much power.” Participant 2 stated “Non-violent crimes are usually associated with cross-border violence when there is a rip-off, not the act itself.” Participant 5 stated “As far as money crimes are concerned, only criminal enterprise conflicts and violent resistance would count.”

Attacks Against U.S. Citizens Abroad

Most participants considered Mexican drug-trafficking organization attacks against United States citizens in Mexico as cross-border violence. Participant 8 summarized the argument by stating “Threats or attacks against United States facilities should be cross-border violence because they are directed at United States citizens. The main consideration is that the threat is directed towards the U.S.”

Only participants 3, 14, and 21 stated that attacks against United States citizens in Mexico were not cross-border violence incidents. Participant 14 made the point that

My understanding is that most of the United States citizens being kidnapped or murdered in Mexico are either actively members of the drug trade or have family members of drug traffickers. For instance, a brother might go across the border and he might get kidnapped because his brother is involved in the drug trade. They are victimized because they are related to the drug trafficker. Individual United States citizens being accidentally killed or kidnapped is the exception, not the rule. If an individual is involved in the drug trafficking, it is not cross-border violence. It is excluded or doesn't count in my book.

Participant 21 argued “DTO attacks against US threats overseas are not cross-border violence because it seems it is all happening down there. There has to be a nexus with the border.”

Violent Crime Committed by Non-DTO Foreigners

There was little agreement about violent crimes committed by Mexican citizens who were not members of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations. Some Participants thought that being a member of a drug-trafficking organization was not a requirement to be considered cross-border violence. For instance, Participant 1 argued “Cross-Border violence is any crime or resulting action of a crime that involve citizens of Mexico who have immigrated either illegally or legally.” However, most of the participants stated that any individual involved in illegal activity that crosses the border are not independent of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations. As Participant 15 stated, “Along the border there are no independents. They are all associated with drug-trafficking organizations or gangs.”

Individuals Under the Influence of Drugs

Some have claimed that individuals under the influence of drugs, whether United States Citizens or Foreigners, that are not members of a drug-trafficking organization committing a violent crime is cross-border violence. The vast majority of the participants stated that it was not cross-border violence. Participant 14 summed up the argument by stating

Individuals under the influence of drugs are happenstance. They help some agencies pad the numbers to get funding. Including them as cross-border violence

is like declaring war on China because the bird flu originated there. Is China really at fault for the bird flu?

Participant 7 stated

I might be the odd ball, but I think individuals under the influence of drugs committing violent crimes is cross-border violence. The drugs are coming from there. One thing that really pisses me off are the people that smoke joints and say it is only a joint. If they realized the violence committed to bring that shit in, then they might think differently. They have no understanding of the repercussions of the trafficking of drugs. Innocent people die every day for that.

Participant 17 argued that individuals under the influence of drugs who commit violent crimes should be considered cross-border violence because “Turf wars are moving to Chicago and all over the nation.”

Zone of Cross-Border Violence

All of the participants agree cross-border violence occurs throughout the entire United States except for Participants 11 and 14. Participant 11 and 14 stated cross-border violence does not exist, but they agreed to the premise that Mexican drug-trafficking organizations commit violent crimes throughout the entire United States. Participants 11 and 14 stated the crimes committed by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States were the same type of “crime” or “violent crime” as those committed by any other individual or group. However, the participants noted that jurisdictions closer to the Southwest border are more likely to experience cross-border violence. For example, Participant 3 stated “There is not a specific distance where cross-border violence ceases.

Part of the DTO network will do something within the network; they will carry out enforcement action. It diminishes further away from the border, but it does exist.”

Participant 15 stated

The highway spreads out as you go north. Narcotics go north to fuel the illness that United States citizens have. As long as they need their fix, there will be drug-trafficking organizations and violence. The drugs go down major corridors to hubs and it's a spider web from there but it's going all over the country.

Rating the Level of Cross-Border Violence in Participants' Jurisdictions

All of the participants stated that cross-border violence occurs in their jurisdiction at least occasionally. Participants were asked how they would rate the level of cross-border violence in their jurisdiction. Participants 1, 2, 5, 13, 17, 19, 20, and 21 rated the level of cross-border violence in their jurisdictions as low. Participant 3 stated “Cross-Border exists in this jurisdiction. It is exaggerated because of the proximity to the border but it does occur.” Participant 6 stated “There is not a lot of cross-border violence here. I sit there and say that but it's here and present.” Participant 7 stated “Cross-Border violence could be described as significant in my jurisdiction. What is and is not reported.” Participant 12 stated “I would rate the level of cross-border violence at a four on a scale of one to 10. It's here. I've seen it but not to a drastic measure that the media portrays it or that it puts things or people at risk.” Participant 13 stated “The level is low (in my jurisdiction) based on major crimes and crimes against people. If you count the other associated crimes, it is high. For example, the Southwest Border Sheriff's Coalition is coming here and pushing the subject [of cross-border violence] for money. The city

says no because it is affecting tourism.” Participant 15 stated “On a scale of one to 10, I believe I’d give it [the level of cross-border violence in my jurisdiction] a solid seven. Even though there is a low rate of murders; assaults, threats, and money laundering is high. I’d rate the level of cross-border violence throughout the country a seven for the same reasons.”

Rating the Level of Cross-Border Violence throughout the United States

Participants were asked to rate the level of cross-border violence throughout the United States. The participants fell into different categories. Some participants stated that cross-border violence reduces as the distance from the border increases. For example, Participant 5 stated “Cross-Border violence diminishes as they move away from the border but there is still some major metro areas in northern cities like New York. There is still some in the country but it is not as prevalent.” Participant 11 stated “There is violence associated with DTOs further north. Two thousand miles from the border, there are different cells still operating. They are killing each other but it may decrease.” Participant 20 stated “Cross-Border violence could apply across the United States. The violence diminishes as we go from the border but the financial part is all throughout the U.S.”

Some participants stated that cross-border violence was not as noticeable further from the border. For example, Participant 6 stated “It is still prevalent throughout the country. It is blended down as we go further from the border. I am not sure that it really lessens. It just spreads out.”

Other participants argued that cross-border violence is significant throughout the United States. For example, Participant 1 stated “Throughout the country, there is more cross-border violence than people realize.” Participant 9 stated the level of cross-border violence is “alarming.” Participant 10 stated “It needs to be heavily addressed.” Participant 17 stated “I think it [cross-border violence] happens daily everywhere. It is not reported and there is an agenda.” Participant 19 stated “[The level of cross-border violence across the United States is] high. I am of the old school thought. If you trace back to the root, most crimes go back to gangs and go back to Mexico.”

One participant stated that cross-border violence was much more prevalent on the Southwest border and “non-existent” throughout the rest of the United States. “It is centered on the Mexican border.”

Fear of Cross-Border Violence

One common theme that emerged across the different interviews was that the fear of cross-border violence was greater than the actual instances of cross-border violence. Participant 2 stated that “Fear is greater than the reality of cross-border violence. They gain compliance through fear.” Participant 4 stated that “They psychological fear is greater than the crime. There is an underlying covert influence. It is not out in the open.” Participant 8 stated that “They used to stay low key, but that is a thing of the past. Now, they are relying upon fear. Fear is moving the possibility of violence into the United States. The fear is a very real fear.” Participant 10 stated that “Fear is greater and the reason why is because it is hard to penetrate. The people involved are tied to the

community, it's hard to ID an actor, and it's under-reported. This is more of an impact.

They join groups, gangs, and bigger crimes.” Participant 14 stated that

You hear “Oh my God, Mexico is so dangerous.” If it is present in your mind, you fear it. For example, you could go down a street and not think anything of it. If you are told it is bad before you go down the street, you will fear it. The news media didn't broadcast or report it in the past as much and people did not notice it as much. I think that with less media coverage, it [cross-border violence] decreases. As media coverage decreases, incidents will decrease. It is big counties with little budgets that are cashing in on it. It behooves them to have it present. They are selling it and the time is now.

Participant 15 stated that “I believe that everyone is scared at some level. Many are fearful. There is no idea the numbers here or in Mexico.” Participant 16 stated that “People are concerned. There are some instances where the Zetas sent out a text that they were going to kill some people. The people don't want to go out because of the fear of violence. They would rather stay at home than go out.” Participant 19 stated that

The majority of the value of cross-border violence is fear of what could be? Cross-Border violence spreads out as you move away from the border. There are jurisdictions around mine that claim cross-border violence does not exist for mainly economic reasons. The city council has a policy that cross-border violence does not exist within the jurisdiction. If the mayor or city council knew police had identified cartel members living in their city, they may change their minds. Cartel members feel safe living here. However, we are lucky the violence is only spilling

over the border at this time. We couldn't handle some of things that police in Mexico respond to. I don't think we are truly prepared.

Participant 21 stated that "Cross-Border violence in my jurisdiction is more of a what-if than reality. A what could be? We do not want to turn into Mexico. It is definitely a concern."

Participant 17 was the only participant that disagreed. Participant 17 stated that the fear of cross-border violence is not greater than the actual instances of cross-border violence "because when it happens at home, it is violent. It is scary. It is warranted. It is decisive murders, home invasions where victims have to live with that shit."

Measuring Cross-Border Violence

There were many different thoughts about ways in which to measure cross-border violence. Many participants stated that they did not think it was possible to measure cross-border violence. Participant 7 summarized this argument by stating "I don't think you can. You don't know how much violent crime is attributable to them." Participants brought up many challenges that would make measuring cross-border violence difficult or impossible. First, Participant 5 stated "You would need a clear definition to measure cross-border violence." Secondly, Participant 6 made the point that

A lot of the larger police cities are concerned with clearing cases. Do they really care why they were killed? It is hard to prove and they are more interested in the clearance rate. As a result, it is hard to know how much crime is associated with drug-trafficking organizations. Does it really benefit them if it is?

Participant 16 stated

I know of some sheriffs that say that cross-border violence does not exist at all in their jurisdictions. It's all about money. We want to say it's safe and it does not exist even when there are actual instances. One sheriff finally admitted that an incident occurred after one of his deputies was shot but that was the only time. I know they have gotten up before Congress and told them it does not exist. I did an interview for a television station a while back with other sheriffs and the sheriff said that cross-border violence did not exist. I could see the people in the control room taking phone calls from the public. After the show was finished, I went up to one of them and asked what the public was saying. The guy said that people from the community were calling in saying the sheriff was an idiot. They lived there and it happened all of the time.

Participant 17 stated that

It would take a national program similar to the UCR program. There would have to be specific crimes and it depends on the stats you are after. It would take a fed mandated program. For example, there have been attempts to measure cross-border violence in Texas. However, we are not accounting for all the incidents in California or Arizona. Throughout the nation, it is the same. We do not really know how many instances are cross-border violence and it does not give us the real picture of what is going on.

Participant 1 stated: "At the current time, it would be difficult because there would not be the same policy in different jurisdictions."

Another difficulty with measuring cross-border violence is the inclusion of threats of violence in the definition. All of the participants, with the exception of Participant 11, stated that threats of violence is cross-border violence. It is difficult to measure threats of violence because most threats are implied. Finally, drug trafficking is illegal. As a result, many victims of crimes committed by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations are not going to report crimes because they are also involved in illegal activities.

Primary Causes of Cross-Border Violence

Participants identified numerous different causations of cross-border violence.

The causations fell into four broad categories:

1. Financial incentives
2. Reliance on fear to conduct business
3. The border itself
4. The high demand for narcotics

Most participants cited the financial incentives of trafficking drugs. Participant 1 summed it up for this particular group by stating that

Criminals on the other side of the border, exactly the same as here, are looking for easy profit. To obtain the objective, in violation of our nation, they are willing to do the same as our criminals. They are willing to kill, smuggle dope, smuggle humans for money, all in pursuit of the almighty dollar.”

In addition to the financial incentives of trafficking drugs, some participants cited using fear to conduct drug trafficking operations. For example, Participant 2 argued “Fear keeps underlings in line the same way as the mob did in Chicago.” Similarly, Participant

4 stated “Greed and jealousy cause cross-border violence. It is better to be feared than loved.” Participant 8 stated “They used to stay low key, but that is a thing of the past. Now, they are relying upon fear. Fear is moving the possibility of violence into the United States. The fear is a very real fear.” Participant 9 argued cross-border violence is the result of “power struggles, intimidation, retaliation, and the nature of the narcotics business”

Some participants argued that the border is the actual cause of cross-border violence. The argument is similar to criminals in Houston committing violent crimes in a city neighboring Houston. Criminals will commit crimes even if there is an artificial border between the cities. Participant 21 stated “The international boundary causes cross-border violence. There is a line in the sand. DTOs are trying to move something illegal.” Participant 14 stated “The border causes cross-border violence. If the border wasn’t there, it wouldn’t be there...It [the border] is the only thing that distinguishes violence on the border versus say violence in Chicago.”

Finally, only one person cited the high demand of drugs as the causation of cross-border violence. The argument falls in line with the complex systems theory which would suggest that the underlying cause of cross-border violence is drug abuse. If there was not drug abuse, the complex systems theory would suggest there would not be a need to commit violent acts associated with trafficking drugs. Participant 13 stated cross-border violence was the result of “the high demand of drugs in the United States.”

Trustworthiness

Participants were provided the opportunity to member check the data in order to ensure the accuracy of the findings. In-depth notes were taken during the interviews. I immediately transcribed the notes after the interviews and provided a copy of them to the participants to check for accuracy. Saturation was achieved after 21 interviews. The participants were chief law enforcement officers from federal, state, local, and task forces. The addition of supervisory task force officers added depth to the study because they work with multiple jurisdictions responsible for combating Mexican drug-trafficking organizations. The jurisdictions were rural, urban, or both rural and urban. The populations of the jurisdictions differed greatly.

The initial sample was designed to include five chief law enforcement officers from communities that claim that cross-border violence exists and five that claim cross-border violence does not exist within their jurisdictions. However, only two participants stated that cross-border violence did not exist. The two participants objected to using the term cross-border violence since Mexican drug-trafficking organizations have committed violent crime in the United States throughout history. As a result, the two participants objected to the use of the term cross-border violence because it is not a new phenomenon. Two other participants stated that the city's official standing was that cross-border violence did not exist. However, the participants stated that cross-border violence did, in fact, exist in their jurisdictions. Two other participants stated that cross-border violence existed within their communities, but it was a "qualified yes." They stated that it was

difficult to say that cross-border violence did not exist at all, but the level of cross-border violence was minimal.

Summary

Chapter 4 presented data obtained from interviews on specific data points. The issue of cross-border violence is complex and is the topic of many discussions within the criminal justice system. The media plays a major role in the thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions of citizens regarding cross-border violence. According to many of the participants, the media have exaggerated the level. The level of cross-border violence depended upon political and economic considerations. Many jurisdictions argued that cross-border violence occurred in order to obtain federal grants. Other jurisdictions argued that cross-border violence did not occur because it affected tourism. There were only three components that all of the participants agreed upon when defining cross-border violence. Mexican drug-trafficking organizations had to conduct the violent activities themselves, the crime had to be violent, and the crime had to be committed in the United States. Also, the primary causes of cross-border violence fell into four broad categories. The categories included financial incentives, reliance on fear to conduct business, and high demand for narcotics. Chapter 5 will discuss the interpretation of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, and implications of the study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The lack of a singular, accepted definition of *cross-border violence* creates confusion, and makes it difficult or impossible to create law, policies, or directives to combat it. The lack of studies on the causal conditions and complex systems associated with cross-border violence reduces the effectiveness of policies and procedures. The purpose of this classical grounded theory study was to define and examine the complex systems associated with cross-border violence. The study could have social change implications in policy, advocacy, program development, and human services. The purpose of this classical grounded theory study was to define the phenomenon of cross-border violence. In addition, the causal conditions of cross-border violence were identified and theory was generated. A complex systems perspective was the conceptual framework used to guide this study. Chief law enforcement officers with jurisdictions along the Southwest border of the United States comprised the sample. This chapter includes the interpretation of the findings, theoretical propositions, limitations, recommendations for research, recommendations for action, social change implications, and conclusion.

Interpretation of the Findings

The definition of cross-border violence that evolved out of this study is similar to the definitions generated by the Texas Border Sheriff's Coalition and the Southwestern Border Sheriff's Coalition. That similarity may give more credibility to this study. The

major difference between the sheriffs' the one that evolved out of this study is that the latter included specific crimes commonly associated with cross-border violence.

The participants believed that cross-border violence can be defined as any violent crime or threat of violence committed directly by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States that result in a law enforcement response, economic impact, or social consequence. Cross-Border violence includes the crimes of murder, aggravated assault, kidnapping, purposeful cross-border shootings, drug smuggling, alien smuggling, firearms trafficking, home invasion robberies, and extortion. In addition, trafficker on trafficker violence in the United States is cross-border violence.

Although two of the participants objected to the use of the term *cross-border violence*, all of the participants agreed that Mexican drug-trafficking organizations commit violent crimes in the United States. The two participants who objected to the term argued that Mexican drug-trafficking organizations have committed violent crimes throughout history in the United States, cross-border violence is not a new phenomenon, and the violence conducted by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations is the same as violent crime committed by any other individual or group.

However, there was a lot of disagreement about the specifics and the extent of cross-border violence. Individuals who claimed cross-border violence was a widespread problem tended to be seeking federal funding; individuals who claimed cross-border violence was minimal or did not exist tended to be from jurisdictions where tourism was affected, or where there was a need to make citizens feel safe. The reality, however, is likely between the two claims.

There was a great deal of disagreement about whether or not specific crimes were incidents of cross-border violence. However, at least 95% of the participants agreed. Participant 11 declined to respond if the following crimes, committed by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States, were acts of cross-border violence: murder, aggravated assault, kidnappings, purposeful cross-border shootings, drug smuggling, human smuggling, firearms trafficking, home invasion robberies, and extortion.

The participants agreed that trafficker on trafficker violence in the United States is cross-border violence. As a result, the level of cross-border violence could be significantly higher than any measurement would reflect. The drug trade is illegal and there are no legal remedies for drug traffickers to use. As a result, the majority of trafficker on trafficker crimes would be less likely to be reported than regular crime. For example, a home invasion robbery would likely not be reported if the individual's home that was broken into was used to distribute drugs.

In addition, the participants believed that threats of violence committed by Mexican drug traffickers in the United States was cross-border violence. As a result, accurately measuring cross-border violence would be difficult or impossible since threats of violence are implicit throughout the drug distribution network. Individuals do not need to be told that they could be killed if they become an informant or do not pay for drugs. The measurement of implicit or overt threats of violence is not feasible and the level of cross-border violence would be significantly lower than any amounts reported to or investigated by law enforcement.

The threat of cross-border violence is greater than the reality. Many individuals are more concerned about the possibility of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations conducting operations similar to those found in Mexico. For example, many individuals are concerned that Mexican drug-trafficking organizations will be conducting brutal attacks, such as beheadings, mutilations, or other similar crimes in the United States. In addition, many individuals are concerned that United States law enforcement may not be capable of defeating Mexican drug-trafficking organizations if these organizations choose to directly confront United States law enforcement. In fact, United States law enforcement would probably be at a major disadvantage at directly confronting a highly trained paramilitary force with superior weaponry. Thus, the threat Mexican drug-trafficking organizations pose to the national security of the United States is immense and should not be ignored. However, it appears that Mexican drug-trafficking organizations would rather operate covertly in the United States because overt action would be bad for business. Secondly, it is plausible that the United States would be required to militarily intervene if Mexican drug-trafficking organizations began to overpower United States law enforcement.

There was not a specific distance from the border where cross-border violence could not occur, although incidents of cross-border violence were more likely to occur along the southwest border of the United States. As a result, incidents of cross-border violence could occur in cities throughout the United States, such as New York City, Chicago, or Seattle. Mexican drug-trafficking organizations have a drug distribution network throughout the United States. As a result, Mexican drug-trafficking

organizations will use violence to maintain control of areas and ensure that individuals are complying with rules set forth by the organization throughout the United States.

Individuals disagree as to whether or not United States prison, street, or motorcycle gangs conducting violent crimes in the United States at the direction of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations is cross-border violence. However, gang violence at the direction of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations is significantly associated with cross-border violence. This is the result of a symbiotic relationship between the two organizations. Gangs rely upon Mexican drug-trafficking organizations for their product. Mexican drug-trafficking organizations rely upon gangs for their distribution network and their ability to enforce rules through violence. The relationship is based upon supply, demand, and profits.

The main causes of cross-border violence were financial incentives, reliance on fear, the border itself, and the high demand for narcotics. Financial incentives and greed were cited the most often as the root cause of cross-border violence. Obviously, the primary objective of drug-trafficking organizations is to make money through the sale of drugs. Thus, financial incentives play a major role in drug trafficking and the consequential violence.

In addition, many individuals believed that another main cause of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations cross-border violence was the reliance on fear to traffic drugs. The reliance on fear is the result of the illegality of the drug trade. There are no legal remedies to settle disputes or maintain discipline within the organization. Thus, Mexican drug-trafficking organizations must rely upon fear.

Only a couple individuals stated that the border was the main cause of cross-border violence. In the United States, city limits, county lines, or state borders do not stop criminals from conducting violent crimes in other jurisdictions. In a similar fashion, some individuals argue that the border will not stop foreign criminals from conducting violent crime in the United States.

Finally, only one person argued that drug abuse or the high demand for drugs was a root cause of cross-border violence. This is a little surprising since drug abuse and the high demand for drugs is the primary reason that drug traffickers make money. If there was no demand, there would not be a supply or financial incentive to traffic drugs. It is almost as if the United States fails to accept responsibility for the drug trade. In addition, it is also possible that law enforcement officers are so concerned with enforcing laws associated with the supply of drugs that they fail to consider the importance of the demand.

Theoretical Propositions

1. Cross-Border violence does exist. Naming the phenomenon does not change the fact that Mexican drug-trafficking organizations commit violent crimes in the United States.
2. A better definitions of cross-border violence would make it easier to track.
3. Different agendas make agreeing on definitions and methods of measurement difficult. Some individuals do not really want to accurately measure cross-border violence as a result of political, economic, or social conditions within the respective jurisdictions.

4. Jurisdictions that claim cross-border violence does not exist at all are likely to not receive federal funding. These jurisdictions may be better served to admit that cross-border violence did occur, but cross-border violence was under control in their respective jurisdictions.
5. Fear is a major component in cross-border violence even when the actual violence is not perpetrated. United States law enforcement is more concerned about the possibility that Mexican drug traffickers will conduct operations in a similar fashion to the way they operate in Mexico. This demonstrates the threat Mexican drug-trafficking organizations pose to United States law enforcement and the overall national security of the United States.
6. Mexican drug-trafficking organization trafficker on trafficker violence in the United States is cross-border violence.
7. Threats of violence is cross-border violence. The measurement of cross-border violence would be significantly lower than any reported number of incidents because it would be difficult to measure actual or implicit threats of violence.
8. Cross-Border violence can occur anywhere throughout the United States and there is not a specific distance from the border where cross-border violence stops. This may be the result of the drug distribution network that exists throughout the United States.
9. The media plays a significant role in the perception of the level of cross-border violence. If the media increases reports on cross-border violence, then there will be an increase fear of cross-border violence. If the level of fear

increases, then the threat posed by Mexican drug trafficking organizations will increase.

10. If jurisdictions are attempting to obtain more federal funding for homeland security, then the level of cross-border violence will be over-reported within the jurisdiction.
11. If jurisdictions are concerned about tourism and negative economic impact, then the level of cross-border violence will be under-reported within the jurisdiction.
12. If cross-border violence is higher in jurisdictions along the Southwest border, then the level of cross-border violence throughout the country decreases in Northern states.
13. If a researcher measures cross-border violence in states not along the Southwest Border, cross-border violence incidents will not decrease. Cross-Border violence will spread out and not be as noticeable.
14. If victims or perpetrators of cross-border violence are illegally in the country, then the reported number of incidents of cross-border violence will be less than the actual number of incidents.

Limitations

Disagreements regarding the definition of cross-border violence will continue to exist. However, the definition of cross-border violence in this study was generated based upon the agreement of virtually all participants. Any component of the possible definition that did not have at least 90% agreement among participants was discarded.

There were 21 participants in this study. The limited number of participants could result in potential issues with validity and reliability. However, a broad sample of participants was obtained. Some participants stated cross-border violence did not exist while others claimed that it did exist. Some participants had rural jurisdictions while others had urban jurisdictions. The population of the jurisdictions varied greatly. In addition, some jurisdictions were along the border while others were over 400 miles from the border. Some jurisdictions were along a drug-trafficking corridor while others were not. Each participant had a differing level of cross-border violence in their respective jurisdictions.

Different political and economic philosophies could impact the way in which chief law enforcement officers defined cross-border violence. Some chief law enforcement officers might have a more liberal or narrow definition based upon the need of the jurisdiction. For example, some jurisdictions need increased federal funding. As a result, chief law enforcement officers may define cross-border violence liberally to increase the level of cross-border violence. Other chief law enforcement officers might want to limit the level of cross-border violence in their jurisdiction. As a result, the chief law enforcement officer may constrict the definition of cross-border violence.

Recommendations for Research

Based upon the study, I make the following recommendations for further research.

1. A quantitative study of cross-border violence should be conducted. The study should be designed to measure cross-border violence within a jurisdiction

using the definition created by this study. In addition, a study that examines a greater number of participants should be conducted.

2. A study of the fear of cross-border violence should be conducted. The fear of cross-border violence was found to be higher in the opinion of participants than the actual level of cross-border violence.
3. A study of cross-border violence in jurisdictions that are not along the Southwest border of the United States should be conducted.
4. A study of the causal or complex systems associated with cross-border violence should be examined further.
5. The association between prison, street, and outlaw motorcycle gangs and Mexican drug-trafficking organizations should be studied further.
6. The political and economic impact of cross-border violence should be examined.

Recommendations for Action

1. Cross-Border violence should be used as the primary term to describe any violent crime committed by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States.
2. The definition of cross-border violence generated by this study should be used for further research, policy, and lawmaking.
3. The complex or causal conditions of cross-border violence should be considered when conducting further research, creating policy, or making new laws.

4. Threats of violence and trafficker on trafficker violence should be included in any definition of cross-border violence.
5. A copy of the study will be sent to each respective member of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security

Social Change Implications

This study is the first of its kind in the respect that cross-border violence was defined based upon an agreement between chief law enforcement officers in different jurisdictions along the Southwest border of the United States. As opposed to anecdotal definitions not based on any scientific evidence, this study has defined cross-border violence, clarified characteristics of cross-border violence, and identified the crimes most closely associated with cross-border violence using scientific rigor. The definition should be implemented immediately in order to reduce confusion, educate the public, assist policymakers in effective decision-making, and creating law or regulation. In addition, the definition should be used in order to more accurately measure the levels of cross-border violence within a single or multiple jurisdictions. A measurement of cross-border violence will assist in determining the actual need for federal resources.

In addition, the complex or causal conditions of cross-border violence were identified. The complex or causal conditions should be used to identify better ways in which to combat drug-trafficking organizations and the subsequent cross-border violence. The identification of complex or causal conditions demonstrated the need to further examination of the economic considerations that result in individuals becoming involved in the drug trade, such as the need for a larger percentage of middle class in Mexico.

Assisting Mexican citizens to obtain gainful employment with good wages may reduce the need to become involved in the drug trade. In addition, the United States may want to begin to accept responsibility for their part in the drug trade and begin to affect social change by providing citizens with more drug abuse prevention education, drug abuse counseling, and attack the overall demand for illegal narcotics.

At this time, the fear of cross-border violence was much greater than the actual instances of cross-border violence. The chief law enforcement officers were more concerned about the possibility or likelihood that Mexican drug-trafficking organizations will begin to conduct operations in the United States in a similar fashion to the way in which they operate in Mexico. As a result, the threat that Mexican drug-trafficking organizations pose to the national security of the United States is significant. Further research should be conducted in order to determine the best ways to combat drug-trafficking organizations in the future and prepare law enforcement if a situation similar to Mexico begins to manifest itself.

Conclusion

Cross-Border violence is influenced by historical, cultural, economic, and social factors. The participants were extremely concerned about the threat Mexican drug-trafficking organizations pose to the national security of the United States. As a result, the United States needs to begin measuring the actual level of cross-border violence in order to determine the actual level of threat drug trafficking organizations pose throughout the United States. In addition, a study of the fear of cross-border violence should be conducted. Finally, the association between prison, street, and outlaw motorcycle gangs

and Mexican drug-trafficking organizations needs to be studied. The recommended studies would help policymakers to determine the level of funding needed for homeland security.

Complex systems associated with cross-border violence should also be examined further. Since many Mexicans that become involved in the drug trade are impoverished, economics play a major role in the recruitment of individuals into drug-trafficking organizations. In addition, drug abuse in the United States one of the most significant reasons drug-trafficking organizations operate. It is time to consider alternate options for drug abusers than harsh penalties. Limited decriminalization and treatment for drug offenders would probably be more cost effective and would target the actual causal conditions of cross-border violence.

Mexican drug-trafficking organizations are using terror attacks similar to those in Columbia in order to traffic drugs effectively and efficiently. However, it is important to note that Mexico is unlike Colombia in the respect that Mexico is situated across a river, an invisible line, or just over a fence from the United States.

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Appendix A: Request for Use of Causal Loop Diagram

Subject : RE: Request

Date : Fri, Jan 18, 2013 09:18 AM CST
From : "McGee, Sibel" <Sibel.McGee@anser.org>
To : Clint Osowski <clint.osowski@waldenu.edu>
CC : "Edson, Robert" <Robert.Edson@anser.org>

Hi Clint,

We are ok with your use of the causal loop diagram as long as it is properly cited. Good luck with your dissertation!

Best,
Sibel

From: Clint Osowski [mailto:clint.osowski@waldenu.edu]
Sent: Friday, January 18, 2013 1:13 AM
To: McGee, Sibel
Subject: Request

Dr. McGee,

I am currently working on a doctoral dissertation related to cross-border violence. Specifically, I am conducted a grounded theory study that seeks to define cross-border violence, and examine the complex systems or causal conditions of cross-border violence from the perspective of chief law enforcement officers. I read your article *Mexico's cartel problem: A systems thinking perspective* and would like to request the use of your causal loop diagram for use in my dissertation. I do not know if this is possible but it never hurts to ask.

Thanks much
Clint Osowski

|

Appendix B: Interview Guide

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewee ID Number: _____

(RQ1) What is the definition of Cross-Border violence?

1. Does Cross-Border violence exist at all? Does Cross-Border violence exist in your jurisdiction?
2. What crimes would you consider Cross-Border violence?
 - a. Violent crime resulting from an individual under the influence of illegal drugs?
 - b. Illegal Economic crimes?
 - c. Gang violence?
 - d. Vehicle Pursuits?
 - e. Non-violent crimes?
 - f. Independent actors not associated with DTOs?
 - g. Attacks against U.S. citizens abroad?
 - h. Cross-Border shootings?
3. How would you rate the level of Cross-Border violence in your jurisdiction? Throughout the country?
4. How could you measure the level of Cross-Border violence?

5. What happens to the level of Cross-Border violence as you move away from the border?
 - a. Does it decrease?
 - b. Does it increase?
 - c. Does it spread out?

(RQ2) What complex systems or causal conditions affect Cross-Border violence?

1. What are the underlying causes of Cross-Border violence?
 - a. Underlying causes in the United States?
 - b. Underlying causes in Mexico?
2. How can Cross-Border violence be measured?
3. What recommendations do you have to combat Cross-Border violence?
4. Is the fear of Cross-Border violence greater than the actual instances of Cross-Border violence?

Thank you for your assistance in completing this study.

Appendix C: Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Name of Signer: *Joel Turry, President*

During the course of my activity in collecting data for this research: "Grounded Theory Study of Mexican Drug Trafficking Organization Cross-border Violence" I will have access to information, which is confidential and should not be disclosed. I acknowledge that the information must remain confidential, and that improper disclosure of confidential information can be damaging to the participant.

By signing this Confidentiality Agreement I acknowledge and agree that:

1. I will not disclose or discuss any confidential information with others, including friends or family.
2. I will not in any way divulge, copy, release, sell, loan, alter or destroy any confidential information except as properly authorized.
3. I will not discuss confidential information where others can overhear the conversation. I understand that it is not acceptable to discuss confidential information even if the participant's name is not used.
4. I will not make any unauthorized transmissions, inquiries, modification or purging of confidential information.
5. I agree that my obligations under this agreement will continue after termination of the job that I will perform.
6. I understand that violation of this agreement will have legal implications.
7. I will only access or use systems or devices I'm officially authorized to access and I will not demonstrate the operation or function of systems or devices to unauthorized individuals.

Signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read the agreement and I agree to comply with all the terms and conditions stated above.

Signature: *Joel Turry, President* **Date:** *10/24/15*

Appendix D: Memos

11/13/2013

Cross-border violence exists but it is limited. However, there is great concern that Mexican DTOs will begin to conduct paramilitary operations in the U.S. similar to those conducted in Mexico.

11/13/2013

Cross-border violence does exist. Mexican drug trafficking organizations are narco-terrorists but the United States will not call it what it is.

11/27/2013

Participant is in a rural area that is not along a drug trafficking corridor. However, the participant still has at least a few incidents of cross-border violence which is interesting. The participant defined cross-border violence as any crime or resulting crime that involves any immigrant from Mexico even if they are here legally. That is an extremely broad definition. I wonder how this is going to hold up among the other participants. Also, the definition of cross-border violence includes threats of violence which would have a significant impact on the level of cross-border violence. Financial incentives cause cross-border violence.

11/27/2013

Cross-border violence exists in the jurisdiction. Again, I am surprised that the participant included threats of violence to the definition. Transnational gangs are not committing cross-border violence because they are going to commit crime in the U.S. anyway. Financial incentives and fear cause cross-border violence.

11/27/2013

Participant 4 stated that cross-border violence existed but it was a qualified yes. It is much more overt. Gangs are associated with cross-border violence. The psychological fear is greater than the reality. Many instances of cross-border violence are not readily identifiable. Financial incentives and jealousies cause cross-border violence.

11/27/2013

Cross-border violence exists but it is a qualified yes. He could not say that it did not exist at all but it is not a significant issue. Cross-border violence diminishes as you travel away from the border.

12/3/2013

Participant 3 noted that the media exaggerates the level of cross-border violence but it does exist. Cross-border Violence can occur throughout the United States.

12/3/2013

Cross-border violence diminished as you travel away from the border.

12/3/2013

The fear of cross-border violence is much greater than the reality.

12/9/2013

Cross-border violence exists and is any crime committed by non-U.S. citizens. Cross-Border violence is difficult to identify. Cross-border violence is blended down as you go north. Many larger police departments are concerned about clearing cases and don't care if DTOs are committing the crime. Could this result in decreased levels of cross-border violence.

12/9/2013

Cross-border violence is "significant" in the jurisdiction, which is the first time a participant has made this statement. Cross-border violence may not be reported because many times the crime is illegal or the individual involved might be illegally in the United States.

12/17/2013

The level of cross-border violence is alarming. There is a lot of difference among participants in regards to how bad the problem is.

12/23/2013

Mexican drug traffickers operate covertly in the United States. It is difficult to determine what is and is not cross-border violence is. However, cross-border violence does exist. Cross-Border violence is medium in the jurisdiction and throughout the country.

12/23/2013

Cross-border violence exists but it is not reported as cross-border violence. The fear of cross-border violence is massive. The claim that cross-border violence does not exist is the result of the economic impact.

1/8/2014

This is the first participant to say that cross-border violence does not exist. It is interesting that he admits that Mexican drug trafficking organizations commit violent crime in the United States but does not believe that cross-border violence exists. The argument is that the level of violence associated with Mexican drug trafficking organizations is no different than it always has been. He has seen it throughout his career.

1/22/2014

Cross-border violence is difficult to identify. The media plays a major role in the level of attention to cross-border violence.

1/23/2014

Cross-border does not exist. Mexican drug traffickers commit violent crimes in the United States and always have. The media just reports on it more. The drug trade relies upon implied threats of violence. Cross-border violence is a way for jurisdictions to get federal funding.

1/31/2014

Cross-border violence exists. The fear associated with Mexican drug trafficking organization is extensive. Cross-border violence spreads out as you go north.

1/31/2014

Cross-border violence occurs everywhere but there is always an agenda. It is all about obtaining money.

2/4/2014

The jurisdiction does not believe that cross-border violence exists but it really does. The level is low in the jurisdiction but it would be much higher if you consider the associated crimes. Violence spreads out as you go north. He did not think it really decreased.

2/6/2014

It is interesting that the participant rated the level of cross-border violence in his jurisdiction as low but it was high throughout the entire United States. Cross-border violence is all about money. Money for federal funding or a negative impact as a result of tourism.

Appendix E: Bracketing

I have conducted numerous investigations related to Mexican drug trafficking organizations during my career as a federal investigator. As a result, I may have a good understanding of how Mexican drug trafficking organizations operate. However, my experience could result in bias during data collection and analysis.

Originally, I did even consider the impact of the media on the perception of cross-border violence. However, as the research continued, I started to realize that the media appeared to have a major impact on the perception of cross-border violence.

I thought that cross-border violence occurred from the beginning of the study. I had to pay particular attention to asking questions in an unbiased manner to ensure the participants answers were not influenced as much as possible. Most of the individuals admitted that cross-border violence did exist even when their city councils or county commissioners claimed that it did not exist. However, there were two individuals that stated cross-border violence did not exist. The argument was based on the premise that Mexican drug trafficking organizations have committed violent crime since the inception of the border. The argument was a very good point. From a complex systems perspective, it is quite possible that the level of violence has not increased. It is possible that more attention has been given to cross-border violence. However, I do not think that naming a phenomenon, whether it occurred previously or is a new phenomenon, changes the fact that Mexican drug trafficking organizations conduct violent crimes in the United States. Thus, I would contend that cross-border violence exists.

I thought that chief law enforcement officers would all agree that prison, street, and outlaw motorcycle gangs conducting violent crimes at the direction of drug trafficking organizations would be considered cross-border violence. As a result, I had to pay close attention to the questions that were asked to chief law enforcement officers. During the course of the interviews, I found that my assumption was incorrect. Gangs were really just associated with drug trafficking organizations and would still commit violent crime even if they were not associated with Mexican drug trafficking organizations.

The list of crimes closely associated with cross-border violence was created through a review of the literature. I thought it was likely that murder, aggravated assault, kidnapping, home invasion robberies, trafficker on trafficker violence, extortion, purposeful cross-border shootings, and attacks against United States citizens abroad would be considered cross-border violence. Again, I had to pay close attention to the ways in which I asked questions in order to avoid influencing participants. I cannot really say I was surprised (based on my experience) that the most violent crimes were cross-border violence. However, I was quite surprised that there was disagreement about attacks against United States citizens abroad. However, I think that chief law enforcement officers considered that many of the individuals attacked abroad were actually working for drug trafficking organizations so it was not an issue.

I did not even consider threats of violence as cross-border violence at first until one of the very first participants mentioned it. I had to go back to the participants that I had already interviewed. However, I was quite surprised that the vast majority of

participants stated it was cross-border violence. In my experience, drug trafficking organizations commonly use implicit threats of violence during the course of drug trafficking. I do not think this component of cross-border violence could be measured. I was unsure how chief law enforcement officers would classify vehicle pursuits, accidental cross-border shootings, drug smuggling, human smuggling, and firearms trafficking. The reason that I was unsure is that most of the crimes are not, in themselves, violent crimes. It turned out that there was mixed thoughts about vehicle pursuits, accidental cross-border shootings. However, drug smuggling, human smuggling, and firearms trafficking were all considered cross-border violence.

I did not believe that financial crimes, violent crimes committed by foreigners who were not members of drug trafficking organizations, and individuals under the influence of drugs were incidents of cross-border violence. I had to pay real close attention to the questions that I asked chief law enforcement officers to ensure that I did not influence their responses. I was quite surprised that a few chief law enforcement officers actually thought the crimes were incidents of cross-border violence.

Late in the study, some of the participants brought up the point that vehicle theft rings were also incidents of cross-border violence. However, I was almost completed with the study at the time this aspect was brought to light. As a result, I did not ask the participants about the crime.

I was unsure how chief law enforcement officers would rate the level of cross-border violence in their jurisdictions. I figured it might give a general idea of how bad cross-border violence was within their jurisdictions. However, the responses varied greatly. I realized at the end of the study that the question should have been adjusted because different chief law enforcement officers were using different definitions of cross-border violence. Cross-border violence had not even been defined at the point I was asking the participants. As a result, I would not put a great deal of emphasis on the levels stated by the participants.

I thought that most participants would say that cross-border violence could occur throughout the entire United States. I figured it was probable since Mexican drug trafficking organizations operate in almost every state in the United States. I had to watch the questions that I asked in order not to influence the participants. However, I was quite surprised that many of the participants stated that they thought the rate of cross-border violence really did not reduce farther from the border. Many thought incidents of cross-border violence merely spread out and were not reported as such. Other participants thought that the level of cross-border violence decreased farther from the border. I am really not sure which thought is correct.

I was unsure if there was a way in which to measure cross-border violence. The participants had a hard time thinking of any way of measuring it. Based upon the interviews, I am still not sure cross-border violence can be measured effectively. Threats of violence are very difficult to measure. In addition, the illegal nature of the drug trade make it less likely that crimes are reported. One participant also brought up the fact that many larger police departments are more concerned about clearance rates than determining if the crime is associated with Mexican drug trafficking organizations. In my experience, this is true.

Finally, I thought that chief law enforcement officers would say the primary causes of cross-border violence were the poor economic conditions in Mexico and the demand for drugs in the United States. I had to pay close attention to the ways in which I asked questions. However, chief law enforcement officers stated the financial incentives of drug trafficking, reliance on fear to conduct business, and the border were the main causes. Only one officer stated that the high demand for drugs was a cause of cross-border violence. Although I understand each of the arguments, I would still probably say reduced demand would reduce supply. In turn, the need for violence would reduce.

Appendix F: Evolution of the Theory

Definition of Cross-Border Violence

Attempt 1: Cross-border violence is violence perpetrated by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations in the United States.

Attempt 2: Cross-border violence is any violent crime committed by Mexican nationals in the United States.

Attempt 3: Cross-border violence is any violent crime committed by Mexican drug trafficking organizations in the United States. Cross-border violence includes murder, aggravated assault, kidnappings, vehicle pursuits, cross-border shootings, threats of violence, gang activity directed by Mexican drug trafficking organizations, drug smuggling, alien smuggling, firearms trafficking, financial crimes, home invasion robberies, extortion, non-drug trafficking organization violence, attacks against United States citizens abroad, trafficker on trafficker violence, and individuals under the influence of drugs committing violent crimes. (Note: Many of the crime listed above do not hold true. There is a great deal of dispute about adding certain crimes. As a result, the definition needs to be changed. In addition, participants agreed that threats of violence are cross-border violence)

Attempt 4: Cross-border violence is any violent crime or the threat of violence committed by Mexican drug trafficking organizations in the United States. Cross-border violence includes the crimes of murder, aggravated assault, kidnappings, purposeful cross-border shootings, drug smuggling, alien smuggling, firearms trafficking, home invasion robberies, and extortion. In addition, trafficker on trafficker violence in the United States is cross-border violence.

Fear of Cross-Border Violence

Attempt 1: The threat of cross-border violence is greater than the actual instances of cross-border violence.

Gangs

Attempt 1: Gangs committing violent crimes at the direction of Mexican drug trafficking organizations in the United States is cross-border violence.

Attempt 2: Gangs committing are significantly associated with Mexican drug trafficking organizations.

Cross-Border Violence throughout the United States

Attempt 1: Cross-border violence does not decrease away from the border. It merely spreads out.

Attempt 2: Cross-border violence decreases away from the border.

Attempt 3: Cross-border violence occurs throughout the United States.

Complex Systems or Causal Conditions of Cross-Border Violence

Attempt 1: Cross-Border Violence is the result of poverty in Mexico and drug abuse in the United States.

Attempt 2: Cross-Border violence is the result of financial incentives.

Attempt 3: Cross-Border violence is the result of financial incentives, reliance on fear to conduct business, the border itself, and high demand for narcotics.

Existence of Cross-Border violence

Attempt 1: Cross-border violence does exist. – Two of 21 participants stated that cross-border violence did not exist. However, Mexican drug trafficking organizations commit violent crime in the U.S. (Note: Over 90 percent of participants believed that cross-border violence existed. In addition, I am not sure if naming the phenomenon affects the level of violence committed by Mexican drug trafficking organizations in the United States.

Appendix G: Curriculum Vitae

Clint Osowski, CPP, CFE
830 Fasken Blvd.
Laredo, Texas 78045

Education

- Ph.D. in Human Services– Concentration in Criminal Justice 2014
Dissertation Topic – Cross-Border Violence of Mexican Drug Trafficking Organization
Walden University, Minneapolis, Minnesota
GPA – 3.93
- Masters of Science in Security Management 2007
Bellevue University, Bellevue, Nebraska
GPA – 3.78
- Bachelors of Science in Criminal Justice 2005
University of Houston – Downtown, Houston, Texas
GPA – 3.0
- Associates of Science – Life Support 2005
Community College of the Air Force - Maxwell AFB, Alabama

Professional Experience

Texas A&M International University
Assistant Clinical Professor of Criminal Justice

- Instruct students about financial investigations, criminal investigations, white collar crime, police systems and practices, Mexican drug trafficking, and organized crime.
- Conduct research activities in order to solve complex problems
- Maintain proficiency and expertise in the field of criminal justice
- Write and publish journal articles related to criminal justice
- Orally present materials and findings to conferences and other professionals

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives
Investigator/Intelligence

- Conduct and direct sensitive and complex audits, inspections and investigations that result in civil and criminal prosecutions.
- Testify in federal court cases and administrative hearings

- Plan and conduct seminars for Federal, State and Local law enforcement officials, as well as industry members.
- Act as a liaison between International, Federal, State and Local officials, as well as businesses.
- Analyze facts and estimates from numerous sources in order to ensure compliance with laws.
- Advised senior leadership on regulatory matters.
- Requested by name to speak at the US Attorney's National Project Safe Neighborhood Convention. Audience included top local state and federal law enforcement officers from across the US.
- Selected to mentor and provide on the job training for junior investigators.
- Recognized for successfully developing cooperative relationships across varied industry and law enforcement organizations that often have conflicting goals.
- Southwest Border Initiative Coordinator: Coordinated six teams of 20 investigators at multiple locations across Texas resulting in the identification and prosecution of numerous corrupt firearms dealers and traffickers
- Developed intelligence related to international firearms trafficking and drug trafficking organizations resulting in successful prosecution of numerous felons.

U.S. Customs Service
Customs Inspector

- Conduct and direct sensitive and complex inspections and investigations that result in civil and criminal prosecutions.
- Analyze facts from various sources to determine smuggling trends.
- Act as a liaison between International, Federal, State and Local officials.
- Well versed in conducting interviews, firearms and smuggling.

Other Experience

United States Marine Corps
Twenty-nine Palms, California/Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

- Conducted surveillance and provided security for the U.S. Naval base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.
- Served as Corporal of the Guard
- Supervised ten personnel during dangerous operations.
- Analyzed facts gathered by security personnel.
- Advised senior leadership on security conditions.
- Participated in Joint Task Force 6 Anti-Drug Operations
- Well versed in firearms, explosives and combat tactics.

Associations

Association of Certified Fraud Examiners – Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE)	2012
ASIS International – Certified Protection Professional (CPP)	2012

Professional Presentations and Papers

Osowski, C. (2014). *Grounded Theory Study Defining Mexican Drug Trafficking*

Organization Cross-border Violence. Retrieved from

<http://www.smallwarsjournal.com>

Osowski, C. (2013). *Mexican Drug Trafficking Organization Cross-border Violence*,

ASIS National Convention, September, 2013.

Osowski, C. (2012). *ATF Advanced Firearms Training*. ATF Martinsburg National

Facility, May, 2012.

Osowski, C. (2012). *U.S. Customs Firearms Importation Training*. U.S. Customs

Houston Division, June, 2012

Osowski, C. (2012). *ATF Advanced Firearms Training*. ATF Martinsburg National

Facility, May, 2012.

Osowski, C. (2010). *ATF intelligence functions and familiarization*. ATF National

Academy. July, 2010.

Osowski, C. (2009). *Firearms compliance inspections and trafficking investigations*.

ATF National Academy. August to September, 2009.

Osowski, C. (2008). *Mexican drug cartel firearms trafficking*. A workshop for the ATF

Nashville field division. January, 2008.

Osowski, C. (2007). *Mexican firearms trafficking and corrupt firearms dealers*. A

Workshop for the United States Attorney's Office at the Annual National Project

Safe Neighborhoods Convention. August, 2007.

Training

ATF National Academy – Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, Glynco, GA

U.S. Customs Basic Police Training – Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, Glynco, GA

Spanish Immersion for Law Enforcement Training

State and Local Antiterrorism Training

Advanced Financial Investigation Training

Advance Money Laundering Training

Advanced Explosives Training

Alcohol and Tobacco Diversion Training

Marine Corps School of Infantry

Marine Combat Training

Community Service

Ancient Free and Accepted Masons 2007 to Present

Shriners International, Galveston, Texas 2007 to Present

Honors and Award

Two Letters of Appreciation from the Deputy Assistant Director ATF for teaching at the ATF Martinsburg National Facility.

One Letter of Appreciation from the Deputy Assistant Director ATF

Eight ATF Certificates of Superior Performance and other Performance Awards

One U.S. Customs Certificate of Superior Performance and other Performance Awards

Two Letters of Commendation for teaching at the ATF National Academy

Letter of Commendation from the United States Customs Service

Letter of Commendation from the United States Marine Corps

Iraqi Campaign Medal

Global War on Terrorism Service Medal

National Defense Medal with One Device

Humanitarian Service Medal