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A CONCEPTUAL MODEL TO ANALYZE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONS IN COMBATING ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING ACROSS BORDERS

Globalization has facilitated cross-border exchanges of goods and services, but it has also led to the growth of transnational criminal networks and illicit activities such as drug trafficking. To counter international crimes, various cooperative efforts have emerged; however, these lack a universal performance measurement framework. This systematic review examines 23 relevant articles out of 57, aiming to propose a model for assessing international cooperation effectiveness in combating illicit drug trafficking. The study identifies six key areas for enhancing cooperation: Effective Strategies, Local and International Collaboration, Communication, Mutual Legal Assistance, Transnational Crime Rate, and Knowledge Sharing. The influence of globalization and global governance on tackling drug trafficking is also highlighted. The developed model serves as a practical and theoretical tool for academics and practitioners involved in evaluating and improving international cooperation.

Keywords: transnational organized crime, illicit drug trafficking, global governance, international cooperation

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last few decades, the number of crimes that occurred cross-borders has increased at an alarming rate. According to a report published in 2010 by the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), globalization has failed to keep the pace of Economic Globalization after the end of the cold war which resulted to have an open world for trade, finance, travel, and communication. This has developed a way for economic growth meanwhile rising opportunities for criminals (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010a). As globalization has created an opportunity for criminals, undoubtedly some people will use the maximum of it. As a result, in the 1970s the phrase “transnational crimes” emerged. Besides, there is no universal framework or model on which all the authors come to an agreement to be used for the performance of international cooperation measurement.

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There are various methods used to analyze and determine the effectiveness and performance of cooperation whether it is national, bilateral, multilateral, regional, or international although it is not the same framework. These methods assist organizations to comprehend how cooperation has been working in the past and what could be done in order to make the cooperation strengthen in the future. Performance management is an issue of growing significance among public and private organizations since it does not have mutual indicators to measure, how to measure, and how to best use to promote improved performance. However, there is a consensus that everyone believes that measuring performance is a powerful policy and tremendous impact on police work (Tiwana et al., 2015). Therefore, the primary purpose of this study is to establish an enhanced model to measure the performance of international cooperation between organizations while emphasizing the illicit drug trafficking context. Thus, this study can both be used as a base for further research and applied directly in practice by policymakers.

A systematic literature review method has been adopted to find and analyze papers relevant to these areas. This systematic literature review has focused on different areas including Illicit Drug Trafficking; Globalization and Illicit Drug Trafficking; Global Governance; Anti-transnational crimes cooperation; Barriers to Cooperation; understanding the other authors' perception of the Effectiveness of Cooperation.

The author has utilized three open-access bibliographic databases: Research Gate, Science Direct, ProQuest, and other global organizations' annual reports while utilizing the snowball sampling technique to gather relevant articles. No certain time range has been chosen as the specified areas are narrow and the number of publications in these areas is limited. In the initial gathering stage of literature, a total of 57 articles and publications were found. Then, the article abstracts were screened to remove irrelevant papers, so, finally, 23 papers were qualified for this study.

2. ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING

The issue of illicit drug trafficking has been discussed in different agendas, platforms, and conferences by almost all countries and international organizations since it is associated with national security. According to the annual data published by UNODC, over 2612761 kilograms of illicit drugs have been seized within Asia in 2016 alone (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018). The data shows Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, and Myanmar were the countries where most of the drugs had been seized in Asia within the aforesaid year. The Annual data of UNDOC is collected in coordination with respective countries' authorities.

Likewise, in recent decades the number of drug abusers in the world has been increasing at an alarming rate and most of the abusers are young people or minors. Due to this, the researchers Somani and Meghani decided to research "the increase of drug abuse among youth and its effect on other people like family and society" (Somani, Meghani, 2016). In this research, they focused on open sources to collect data, such as ScienceDirect, PubMed, CINAHL, and other platforms. The study showed that a total of 211000 youngsters died from using a substance or more. In addition, they found that poverty, age, gender, family structure & relations, and availability & accessibility of drugs as the factors that influence people/minors to abuse drugs. Parallel to this study, there was a press release by UNODC about the number of people using drugs in Afghanistan (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010). It highlighted that over one million people (age 16 to 64) abuse narcotics

in Afghanistan. One factor of increasing drug abuse in Afghanistan is the wide availability of opium in the country which is known as a drug-producing country.

3. GLOBALIZATION AND ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING

Globalization in today's era would not be a new phenomenon to anyone. In one way or another, the world has been evolving with globalization and it has helped all people and organizations in different forms. According to what a major expert in the field of global security, Phil Williams, a professor at the University of Pittsburgh, USA, emphasized in his interview, even though globalization has incredible benefits attached to the economic development of countries, one other party who is extremely benefited with the globalization is organized criminals. It is because globalization plays the role of a facilitator for the flow and organized criminal groups initiated cooperate illegal markets, he highlighted during the interview (Council on Foreign Relations, 2012). In his article on E-International Relations, James J.F. Forest agrees with it, indicating that by removing barriers to cross-national movements of goods, globalization opens for organized criminal activities to enlarge their market area of illicit tangible and intangible things (Forest, 2020). Forest also has given some examples of transnational organized crimes with continents and their highly demanding market, such as North America and Europe for drugs, Africa and Middle East for weapons, exotic wildlife, and animal parts for Asia, and at last exploitable humans everywhere in the world.

Another identified research study was devoted to transnational organized crime in India, relevant to the current research as India is a South Asian country. It highlighted that India is amongst the countries where most drugs were seized in 2016. The research was conducted by Nafiu Ahmed, who has published several articles on transnational crimes and his research concentration is terrorism, international crime, and global security. The study was motivated by the rising transnational organized crime rate in India and used the methods of literature and document review. It found globalization, poverty, unequal wealth distribution, technological advancements, inadequate governance, corruption, and geographical location as the promoting factors of transnational organized crime (Ahmed, 2017). Besides, it stressed the effects of the geographical location of India and transnational organized crime since the country has been located between the Golden Crescent and Golden Triangle. Also, it emphasized that globalization has played a significant role in transnational organized crime in India such as the trafficking of people, drugs, smuggling, and money laundering. It points out the significance of cooperation among countries in order to fight against transnational organized crime, giving examples of countries and international organizations which cooperate in order to control or minimize the number of transitional organized crimes in the world.

4. GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Global governance emerged in the world in 1945 after the end of the Second World War. The main purpose of global governance is to eliminate or reduce the challenges faced by the entire world (Orback, 2019). Those challenges have an impact on different countries in the world instead of on a single country. The primary aim of global governance is to provide global public goods, particularly peace and security, justice, and mediation systems for conflict, functioning markets, and unified standards for trade and industry. The philosopher Benedict has defined global governance as "something that encompasses

activity at the international, transnational, and regional levels. It refers to activities in the public and private sectors that transcend national boundaries” (Benedict, 2015).

The first global institute established in order to govern these global challenges is the United Nations, operating since 1945. Thereafter, other institutions were established at the global, regional, and transnational levels. The European Union in 1993, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in 1985, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1995, and many more. These organizations are formed in order to tackle and prevent the challenges faced by human behavior or natural incidents in the world or countries. Amongst these organizations, several organizations are working to control crime at global, regional, and transnational levels.

5. ANTI-TRANSNATIONAL CRIMES COOPERATION

International cooperation occurs when the actors adjust their behavior to the actual or projected preference of others in the process of policy coordination, and the term “policy coordination” is defined as adjusting a country’s policies towards another country or actor (Milner, 1992). In simple words, the countries will have a specific goal(s) or obtain a reward by cooperating.

Many scholars argue and believe that it is substantial to form cooperation in order to fight against transnational crime, i.e. crime connected with more than one country. Professor Phil Williams devoted a chapter of his 2001 book to the transnational criminal network. Since many old-style criminal hierarchies are reforming and enlarging their crime coverage, its purpose was to analyze and unfold the trends of Russian criminal networks (Williams, 2001). The study was focused on analyzing academic pieces of literature on social and business networks to comprehend these networks deeper. In his conclusions, he emphasized that in the era of the 21st century, governments should practice forming effective strategies and should be one of the priorities to attack organized criminal networks, and advocates changes in thinking, attitudes, organizational structure, and the relationship between intelligence & action (Williams, 2001). As well, he ended by enlightening that if the authorities are unable to update and change, the organized crime networks will hold more benefits over the people and authorities trying to work against it.

Zvekic studied the topic of international cooperation and transnational crime in the 1990s. The objectives of the paper were to identify transnational crime trends and international responses through international cooperation. Undoubtedly, even during the 1990s, the authors stressed identifying how international cooperation performs in order to minimize transnational crimes. He argued that transnational crimes will be a huge threat, especially to the security of a state or international security, and, similarly, it will affect political, economic, social, and financial aspects (Zvekic, 1996). It is evident that globalization has been evolving in the world since the end of the cold war. Due to that, organized criminals changed their modus operandi with the adaptation of technologies. Hence, the author underlined the significance of adequate domestic and international responses, cooperation, and coordination. Along with that, he concludes that this is not a matter of criminal law and law enforcement alone, and there should be effective prevention and control international strategies developed to confront the situation. It instructs cooperation to make more effective strategies, the significance of forming cooperation and coordination.

One recent remarkable example which proves the significance of international cooperation would be the operation conducted by the International Criminal Police Organization – INTERPOL in collaboration with different countries in September 2017. The name given for this operation was “Operation Lionfish”. Through the operation, they were able to seize over 360 million United States Dollars (USD) across Asia-Pacific and the Middle East (INTERPOL, 2017). In this operation, a total of 25 countries contributed to made it a successful operation.

Deputy Director of the Chinese Ministry of Public Security’s Narcotics Control Bureau Department of Investigation and Guidance, Li Bo said “The INTERPOL-led operation has served as an important initiative for strengthening multilateral cross-border drug enforcement cooperation, providing effective channels of communication, and enhancing mutual trust among law enforcement personnel. The successful results highlight the determination of all countries that joined to fight against drug-related crimes” (INTERPOL, 2017). Even though cooperation has been a significant strategy in order to fight against transnational crimes, different obstacles are confronted by countries.

6. BARRIERS TO COOPERATION

Cooperation among countries to confront crimes has been an effective strategy. However, since a coin has two sides, there are challenges faced by every cooperation. Some barriers to international cooperation were identified by Oleg Nekrassovski (Nekrassovski, 2013). The barriers he has mentioned are: the anarchic nature of the international system; the egoistic behavior of states; their desire to maximize their relative and absolute gains; instances of the low cost of using force in the international system; the ability of superpowers to veto international agreements; and states’ tendency to compete with one another (Nekrassovski, 2013). Even though these barriers are not aligning with international cooperation in fighting against crimes, this describes the general issues confronted by international cooperation.

The 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice held in Japan, March 7 to 12, 2021 discussed international cooperation as vital to address all forms of crime, terrorism, and new and emerging forms of crime. This recent congress has exposed several real-life challenges by the practitioners in the field, such as differences in legislation and criminal justice in states, insufficient knowledge of the applicable treaties, prevailing practices in national, and international extradition and mutual legal assistance, and lack of coordination amongst the countries and organizations (United Nations, 2020). Similarly, it was pointed out that the states and cooperation should be vigilant of the new emerging crimes since those crimes could be attached with a huge risk. On the other hand, they emphasized that a country itself cannot confront transnational crimes such as terrorism. The best option is to cooperate with countries/regional or international organizations in order to fight against them effectively.

Moreover, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) held an Anti-Bribery Ministerial Meeting which also emphasized the barriers confronted in international cooperation, such as the lack of communication, poor law enforcement ties amongst countries, insufficient mutual legal assistance (MLA) requests, differences in legal systems, criminal justice &, and varied legal processes. One commonly cited major barrier was the issue of MLA (OECD, 2016). The participants mentioned five systematic barriers to obtaining effective MLA and one important barrier regards information sharing through formal procedures.

Another relevant study, by Gregory Rose, titled “Australian Law to Combat Illegal Logging in Indonesia: A Gossamer Chain for Transnational Enforcement of Environmental Law” strived to identify the challenges in cooperation between Australia and Indonesia to fight against environmental crime (Timber Barons) using the qualitative approach, in particular the case study method (Rose, 2017). It emphasized the challenge of having no treaty on MLA related to environmental crimes in their study as one of the main problems (Rose, 2017). However, a treaty between Australia and Indonesia was signed in 1995 in order to fight against money laundering. Since the countries and cooperation are working to combat or control such crimes, it is essential for countries to strive for effective international cooperation, whether the cooperation is bilateral, multilateral, regional, or world-wide.

7. EFFECTIVENESS OF COOPERATION

Generally, there are different objectives set out by law enforcement agencies, institutes, organizations in order to fight against criminal activities. These objectives could vary from one country to another depending on the circumstances. However, the general objectives which are used by all organizations are to control the crime rate, fear of crime, and victimization in specific places and neighborhoods (WEED & SEED, 2016). The purpose of measuring the performance of an institution is to track how well the institution has been performing with the alignment of its duties. Even though there are limited studies conducted to identify the effectiveness of international cooperation fight against crime, there are numerous studies performed by law enforcement agencies from all over the world on domestic cooperation.

Another study carried out by Anton Maslov investigated current survey methods used to measure police performance in common law jurisdictions on the example of one country, Canada, and international context, to find the crime rate, number of arrests and fines, clearance rate, and response time as the key initial performance measuring factors (Maslov, 2015). These factors were better recognized during the 1990s. Soon after that, the citizens’ perspective towards policing was known as the “professionalization of policing” and the USA started to research more on public opinions when measuring the performance. In the study, the rationale behind these indicators was clearly described with the support of other researchers. For instance, the crime rate has been chosen since it is the best known factor of whether the police are doing well to control crime, although he noted that it alone cannot be taken as the only indicator to determine the performance. Likewise, the arrests and fines indicator also cannot be solely taken as a performance measurement way since some situations like petty theft or abusing a small amount of marijuana could end with a warning to the offender instead of arresting them. However, arresting and fining people are seen as the primary outcomes of police activity and thus indicate its performance to some extent. Additionally, the clearance rate factor is also widely taken among countries in order to recognize the performance as it illustrates the period taken to solve it although the trouble with using the clearance rate as a measurement of performance is that it is prone to definition and measurement errors, making cross-comparisons difficult. The last indicator he describes is the response time taken to attend the scene.

In the similar vein, the book published by the National Institute of Justice, US on police performance and productivity measurement primarily focuses on the effectiveness and productivity of police, describing how these indicators could be measured for different types of crime. The book also has emphasized effectiveness measurement tools, such as

crime rate, crime reporting rate, and clearance rate as major measurement indicators which could be used to analyze the effectiveness (Needle, 1981).

A journal article published by Alpert, Flynn, and Piquero on effective community policing performance measures has defined two types of performance measures: traditional and community policing. In traditional policing, the agencies attempt to measure their productivity by using the number of arrests, citations, contraband seized, number of reporting calls, average response time etc. Contrasting to the traditional method of policing, in community-focused policing, the reporting focuses more on quality rather than productivity, e.g. on the conformation of customer needs such as the factors which affect the daily life of a community. This approach does not fully neglect the indicators used in traditional policing, as it also may take factors like the number of arrests and response time into their consideration (Alpert et al., 2001). The main rationale of that research was to present a model on the performance management of police due to the shift of policing methods from traditional to community-based policing.

Moreover, there have been studies performed to measure the effectiveness of international cooperation in bilateral, multilateral, regional, or world-wide settings. However, most of these studies were focused on international cooperation in a country's development such as economic, poverty, education, etc. An article published by Matthew John Ribeiro Norley was focused on identifying the effectiveness of the United Nations as an effective institution (Norley, 2013). This study was written with evidence from past literature reviews. Also, it has mentioned that since the UN is known as a multi-purpose agency, there were no purpose-specific methods used to analyze its effectiveness, but on the subjective perspectives of realists and liberalists. To conclude the article, the author agreed that the UN is an effective organization working in the international context.

8. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The presented review of academic works in the field of transnational crime and international cooperation allowed to identify relevant variables listed in table 1.

Table 1. Result drawn from the literature review

Sources	Research Area	Analysis Result
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phil Williams – <i>Transnational Criminal Networks</i> • INTERPOL – <i>Drugs Worth USD 360 Million Seized in INTERPOL-Led Operation</i> • Zvekic – <i>International Cooperation and Transnational Organized Crime</i> 	Effective Strategies (Internal and External)	Strategies to enhance cooperation with international organizations and intellectual abilities in thinking, attitude, and organization structure; Effective preventative and control strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zvekic – <i>International Cooperation and Transnational Organized Crime.</i> • United Nations – <i>14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice</i> 	Local and International Cooperation	Building strong cooperation within the country and abroad

Table 1 (cont.). Result drawn from the literature review

Sources	Research Area	Analysis Result
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INTERPOL – <i>Drugs Worth USD 360 Million Seized in INTERPOL-Led Operation</i> • Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – <i>Breaking down Barriers: International Cooperation in Combating Foreign Bribery</i> 	Communication	Building effective communication channels between international, intergovernmental, and local law enforcement agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phil Williams – <i>Transnational Criminal Networks</i> • United Nations – <i>14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice</i> 	Knowledge sharing	Sharing and educating the people who are working against transnational organized crimes with advanced equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Nations – <i>14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice</i> • Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – <i>Breaking down Barriers: International Cooperation in Combating Foreign Bribery</i> • Gregory Rose – <i>Australian Law to Combat Illegal Logging in Indonesia: A Gossamer Chain for Transnational Enforcement of Environmental Law</i> 	Mutual Legal Assistance Agreements	Signing mutual legal assistance agreements between countries and actively adopting to the clauses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anton Maslov – <i>Measuring the Performance of the Police: The Perspective of the Public</i> • Needle, Jerome, American Justice Institute, National Institute of Justice – <i>Police Performance and Productivity Measurement System</i> • Alpert, Geoffrey P., Daniel Flynn, and Alex R. Piquero – <i>Effective Community Policing Performance Measures</i> 	Transnational Crime Rate	The number of crimes and incidents reported, arrest rates, and contrabands seizures.

Source: Based on author's own findings.

The diagram in Figure 1 presents this author's model of the performance measurement areas of international cooperation in combating illicit drug trafficking across borders. It emphasizes major factors that lead to successful and effective cooperation to combat transnational crimes, such as building effective strategies with countries and international organizations, proper cooperation and coordination, mutual legal assistance from the parties, the crime rate, and at last the latest knowledge on the environment and the ways of operation adopted by criminal networks.



Figure 1. Performance Measurement Areas of International Cooperation

Source: Based on author's own findings.

9. SUMMARY

The number of drug abusers is rising in the world along with the death rate regarding drug abuse. South Asia is one of the most drug-seized regions according to UNODC, in particular the countries of Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, and Myanmar. In the literature, it was evident that if the countries cultivate drugs that are available easily, there is a high chance of having more drug abusers. Moreover, globalization also opened several doors for transnational organized criminals to enlarge their area of operation because of borderless transactions among nations. Organized criminals are known as one of the primary beneficiaries of globalization. This could be connected to Asia as well since there is a study conducted on transnational crimes in India that highlight that globalization and other factors are known as the promoting factors of transnational organized crimes.

Additionally, what the authors Zvekic and Williams found in their studies strongly advise building strong bilateral, multilateral, regional, and world-wide international cooperation in order to confront transnational crime. However, the authors of prior work have also identified different challenges of having international cooperation while working against transnational organized crime. Some general challenges faced by international cooperation are issues of the anarchic world, egoistic behavior of states, their desire to maximize their relative and absolute gains, instances of the low cost of using force in the international system, the ability of superpowers to veto international agreements, and the states' tendency to compete with one another. The main challenges faced by international cooperation working against crimes are differences in legislation and criminal justice in states, insufficient knowledge of the applicable treaties, prevailing practices in national,

and international extradition and mutual legal assistance, and lack of coordination amongst the countries and organizations.

It is certain that there is no universal model or framework in order to measure the effectiveness of an organization or cooperation. One way to measure performance and effectiveness is to compare the objectives of organizations and their work. This method is generally adopted in the business environment to analyze the company's and employees' performance. There are some key indicators used to measure the performance of law enforcement agencies. However, it has been noticed that there is a change in the performance measurement indicators between traditional to community-based policing. Some of the measurement indicators are the same but additionally community-focused policing focuses more on finding out the public's opinion, unlike traditional policing. In traditional policing the indicators used to measure performance are crime rates, the number of arrests/fines, clearance rate, and response time.

After a thorough literature review, a conceptual framework has been proposed based on reoccurring and significant variables which can be used as indicators to analyze the effectiveness of international organizations. It is worth mentioning that, there is a lack of research or studies conducted in the area of evaluating the effectiveness of international cooperation working to prevent and control crime although there are academic papers published on other aspects of international cooperation. This shows an obvious direction of future work. Besides, it would be interesting to understand in depth each area mentioned in the model, specifically to what extent each area contributes to evaluating the effectiveness of cooperation.

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