**Drug Trafficking: The Threat to Mexico**

Name

Course

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**Mexico: Drug Trafficking**

Each nation-state is faced with a plethora of threats, from conventional threats, such as those posed by another nation-state's military to non-conventional threats, such as terrorism, immigration, and the many forms of trafficking. Although most of these threats are experienced by each nation-state in varying degrees, Mexico's trafficking threat has been one of the most prolonged and fastest growing issues in the world. The threat was exacerbated by the formation of cartels, drug trafficking organizations (DTOs), and the loyalty the people had shown to them. One of Mexico's most significant threats is not the act of drug trafficking alone but the reliance that the nation's economy has on it. Another threat Mexico faces with the rise in drug trafficking is the sheer violence it perpetrates within the nation. As drug traffickers continue to extend their territorial reach throughout the nation, specifically near drug production focal areas, homicide rates had increased on average about 17.5% between 2015 and 2017. One of the leading countries that have seen the rise of several issues in Mexico.[[1]](#footnote-1) In Mexico, one of the main problems that have been experienced is drug trafficking. Several of the most notable drugs that are sold throughout other countries in the world trace back to Mexico, where they are produced in large amounts. In this case, the rate of drug trafficking in Mexico is exceptionally high. With the high rates of drug trafficking in Mexico, it means that more people are getting introduced into drug abuse while others are consuming more. Therefore, this paper aims to investigate drug trafficking in Mexico and how it has become a significant threat to the country.

Drug abuse has been a critical issue for many years. In Mexico, the number of people who have used or produced drugs has been substantially high. One of the main reasons why the number is so high is that there are many drugs that are being manufactured, and there are a plethora of ways in which the drugs can be distributed with little to no fear of the government. The drugs are readily available and protected by some of the most dangerous DTOs in the nation. This has led to the increased rates of drug trafficking where the producers of these drugs use various means to ensure that they are able to reach their customers. For many years, drug trafficking has been a booming business in Mexico.[[2]](#footnote-2) These drug traffickers have been able to organize themselves sufficiently to ensure their products are delivered consistently and efficiently to their customers and other distributors.

Mexico perceives the threat of drug trafficking as a considerable risk to its citizens and its economy. It has been stated that the violence alone that is instigated between the DTOs regarding trafficking routes, distribution, and control over certain areas has incited an increase in other crimes as well. This can have a massive effect on the economy for many areas in that most businesses will begin to change their decisions regarding investment opportunities, location, and production options. Thereby lessening the labor market for the surrounding communities.[[3]](#footnote-3) Drug trafficking has also been linked with the formation of various drug cartels. The primary purpose of these cartels is to control the flow of drugs from one place to another.[[4]](#footnote-4) Also, many cartels have been divided into various groups based on their territories.[[5]](#footnote-5)

These cartels have been equipped with all sorts of weapons to guard themselves against any attack, be it the government or another rival cartel. Tensions between rival cartels in regard to drug trafficking can lead to many victims' lives being lost and many homes being destroyed, thus harming the communities in which they are operating.[[6]](#footnote-6) In some places, the cartels have formed gangs that are used as "enforcement" to attack people to instill fear and force loyalty, and sometimes innocent people are killed.[[7]](#footnote-7) The presence of these cartels is just another threat Mexico faces that was brought about by drug trafficking. These actions have ultimately led to increased cases of national instability.

The other issue that has made drug trafficking a concern in Mexico is that the number of people who utilize drugs has increased. Drug trafficking has made many drugs too readily available, so anyone that uses the drugs being produced can easily get to them. The resulting cases are that the number of people using these drugs has increased.[[8]](#footnote-8) This brings the threat of increased sicknesses and health-related issues to the nation. The two most popular drugs that are consumed by a majority of the population of Mexico are methamphetamine and cocaine.

These drugs have a devastating health effect on the people that are using them. It becomes hard to treat these individuals since some of the conditions that they may get might not have a treatment available.[[9]](#footnote-9) In other cases, the use of drugs results in financial problems since there are many people who will look for any possible means that they can to access the drugs. These individuals, drug addicts, will then use any money that they get to feed their drug addiction.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Due to the effects that have been experienced from this threat in Mexico, the nation has come up with strict measures to deal with the matters.[[11]](#footnote-11) One of the first measures is to focus on dismantling the cartels or DTOs. Arresting and charging the members of these cartels will ensure that the number of people who are taking part in drug trafficking is mostly reduced.[[12]](#footnote-12) By arresting some of the leading cartels' prominent members, the government hopes that it will cripple the chain of those who are supplying the drugs to the people. Hopefully, allowing for more opportunities to seize more members from within.

Another measure the government has implemented is harsh punishments for those who are found guilty of drug use.[[13]](#footnote-13) Those individuals who have been arrested as a result of drug trafficking are taken through harsher punishments. The main purpose of implementing harsher penalties is to deter other individuals from taking part in drug trafficking operations. The government has also attempted to hit the drug cartels financially by seizing their known banking accounts. This was done with the thought that if you stop the money, you can at least slow down the forward movement of the drug trafficking operations.

It is evident that drug trafficking has been one of Mexico's biggest threats in many different ways. It has had an effect on the nation's security, economy, political stance, and even how its communities are run. Mexico has been known globally for its diversity in drug trafficking and violence, but it has been slowly becoming more of an issue than the government can handle. Since the beginning, drug trafficking has led to the creation of drug cartels, smaller drug trafficking organizations, and even small drug trafficking networks crossing oceans and national lines. Drug trafficking is a gateway to many other issues that Mexico could consider threats; it is not a self-contained issue. It spans a myriad of other concerns that could ultimately amplify those the Mexican government currently faces, such as human trafficking, illicit arms trafficking, and other non-conventional threats.

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