Human Trafficking

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**Introduction**

With the growing population of the world, the number of exchanges taking place between the people is also increasing (Olimpia & Stela, 2017). Most of these exchanges are lawful and profitable, however, a considerable amount of these exchanges is illegal (Phelps, Biggs & Webb, 2016). The illegal share of these exchanges makes organized criminal groups thrive under the nose of authorities (van Liempt, 2016). These criminal organizations move drugs, supply arms, traffick human beings, and transfer parts of endangered animals. These illegal exchanges have dreadful consequences for countries. These consequences make the economy of a country cripple, its institutions weaker and engender conflict (Bojicic-Dzelilovic & Turkmani, 2018). The issue of transnational organized crime has become a point of contention among different countries at international forums. That is because the global economy suffers due to the illegal exchange of goods and various other items (Weiss, 2018). Undoubtedly, these facts portray a grim picture when it comes to transnational crimes. Moreover, the shocking effects of the goods and items exchanged illegally on an individual can be dreadful. Drug addiction and sexual exploitation can have adverse effects on an individual (Lallerstedt, 2018). Additionally, environmental hazards also increase due to the trade of endangered species of plants and animals (Bisschop, 2016). As far as transnational organized crimes are concerned, many researchers acknowledge its existence. However, there is divergence on the view that whether or not criminal organizations are capable of carrying out these crimes (Cressey, 2017). This point of contention will be analyzed further.

**Discussion**

There were times when the domain of organized criminal activities was dominated by the notorious Sicilian mafia (Watts, 2016). Referred to by the name of “Cosa Nostra” by its members, Sicilian mafia hailed from Sicily, Italy. Sicilian mafia is a loosely bound association of criminal groups that have a shared organizational structure (Armiero, 2019). The criminal groups in the mafia are formally known as “clan”. Each clan wields influence over a piece of land from where they operate and perform their activities. The functionalities that the mafia performs include providing protection to racketeers, resolving conflicts between criminals and overseeing illegal agreements. The mafia was originally based in Italy, but due to the increase of emigration and a surge in globalization, the mafia was able to spread its operations to countries belonging to South America, Central America and North America (Calderoni, 2016). Taking into account the discussion so far, it is evident that organized criminal groups like Sicilian mafia is able to operate transnationally with impunity.

However, According to Zhang and Chin, there is an increased number of criminal groups documented that are not affiliated to any centralized group like the Sicilians of Italy or the Triads of China (Hofmann & Gallupe, 2015). The newer organized criminal groups are dominating the illegal transnational criminal arena. These newer groups do not have strong connections like the Sicilians and the Triads. Still, they outperform their traditional counterparts when it comes to human trafficking and heroin smuggling. What sets these newer groups apart from their counterparts is the highly sophisticated tasks and complex operations (Hagan & Daigle, 2018)

. However, sometimes the highly sophisticated operations procedures of these newer groups fail in disaster. For instance, illegal Chinese immigration was always an issue simmering under the surface, however, it caught the attention of the media when 58 illegal Chinese immigrants were found dead in a refrigerator in which they were being transported (Zhang & Chin, 2015). This is one of many instances which reflects the power of these newer groups, unlike the traditional groups.

**Conclusion**

Traditional criminal organizations were famous for providing protection to racketeers and overseeing illegal transactions. However, these newer groups are found to operate in the domain of human trafficking and heroin smuggling. Although traditional organized criminal organizations like the Sicilians and the Triads have previously been known to operate transnationally, their influence over the global illegal market seems to be declining. Of many reasons for this decline, one of them is the increase of the groups of criminals that are not bound to a centralized organization like the Sicilians and the Triads. One can conclude that the newer groups have outperformed traditional criminal organizations.

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