

Example of research paper on the rise of organized crime and racketeering during ...

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



Introduction

Organized crime can be defined as crime perpetrated by any grouping that could be international, nationwide or local that is highly centralized with a central point of control that exist for the purpose of committing illegal activities. Most organized crime gangs exist for the sole purpose of financial gains by engaging in illegal activities such as racketeering. Other gangs such as terrorist groups may be politically motivated. A familiar association that exists among organized crime groups is the manner in which they carry out their activities. Some criminal groups are extremely organized and are said to influence the highest and mighty in different parts of the world. In the United State the idea of organized crime has been an issue of distress for law enforcers for many decades. The debate into the existence of organized crime came to the fold in 1920s and has since generated much interest in the country. Other countries are not immune to this problem. Italy, France, United Kingdom, China, Mexico, Japan and other Asian nations are plagued by organized crime. Globalization has improved the reach and organization methods employed by organized crime groups to the extent that they now span several continents. This research evaluates the origins of organized crime. Additionally the paper will review the conditions and circumstance the allowed organized crime to flourish during the great recession of early 1930s.

Background

In order to appreciate the existence of organized crime, it is therefore vital to review the origins of organized crime. The idea of organized crime is

believed to have originated from the Italian island of Sicily (Lunde, 16). An organized group referred to as the Mafia is believed to have started in West Sicily near the capital Palermo. Records indicate that after the end of the Napoleonic rule in Sicily there was leadership vacuum that was created. By 1870 a clandestine influential organization had emerged in Sicily that controlled much of the Island. Citizens were forced to pay taxes in the name of ' protection fee' to this group and the manner in which the money was remitted was quite orderly. Sicily's population grew at tremendous rate forcing some Italians to ship to the United States to ease the population density. Some of the Mafia families were among those who shipped to the United States at the turn of the 20th century.

In the United States, the Italian Mafias established themselves after settling in New Orleans. Italian groups that were largely identified by families and were able to identify themselves and soon began their organized criminal activities The kind of organization that was used by the Mafias as they set up businesses in the United States is referred to as the Patron-Client Network. In this kind of organization criminal groups function in smaller units (client) that make up the bigger organization (patron). A common kind of distribution is using cells in which a region is subdivided into cells and these cells join up to form a bigger territorial unit (Mallory & Mallory, 11).

Here hierarchies based on naturally forming structures such as families or cultural traditions define the relation between the gang members. This kind of organization places importance on fraternal standards and member of the gangs are to respect the context such hierarchies. Families defined the nature of operations and thus each Mafia respected the other group and did

not interfere with each other's operations. In this sense, family rivalries, territorial disputes and recruitment of members are emotive issues. Family rivalries are entrenched in the beliefs of the gang and it is prohibited to have association with rival camps.

Additionally, in this kind organization there is strict manner in which orders and communication are passed. The organization structure of the gangs define to the member how, where and whom to report to. Decision making is also defined by a council that regularly meets in secret to map future operations. Promotion of members from one hierarchy to another is also structured. Any criminal activity is sanctioned by the ruling council. This kind of arrangement was unusual to law enforcement authorities and thus this allowed the mafias to cement management of the group. While some members and senior officials of governments debated about its existence, the Mafias took time to organize themselves (Woodiwiss, 25).

The patron-client organization model was very effective as they groups looked to have total control of illegal businesses. Mafias managed to build big businesses empires in the 1920s soon after the First World War ended. The Prohibition laws were the point in which the mafia would increase their businesses were soon one of the most powerful and wealthy Americans in the country. However, in 1929, the US economy faced one of the greatest recessions commonly referred to as the Great Recession. In this recession, the economy was faced deep inflation and collapse of huge businesses that provided income for many Americans. Shanty argues that while other organizations were suffering huge losses, the Mafia was getting even stronger (28). This is due to the fact that, the desperation of many citizens

who had lost their livelihood in the recession increased the influence of the Mafias. These unemployed citizens now turned o gambling any other activities that would eventually provide them with a source of income. For this reason, brothels, illegal casinos and other illegal businesses flourished (Mallory and Mallory, 58). Many American were now working for the mafias even without their knowledge. The mafias managed to subdivide territories in order to avert conflict and were able to bribe law enforcement bodies to look the other way.

Many cities in the United State were able to survive the Great depression due to the economic activities developed by illegal activities of criminal gangs. For instance, Atlantic city was able to thrive from illegal gambling that was going on in the city. Gamblers used several consumer products and also increased the consumption of alcohol and tobacco. Another instance, perhaps the most successful, is the case of Galveston, Texas run by the Maceo Syndicate. The city grew to be a lavish resort city due to the large number of illegal casinos that flourished as law enforcement allowed them to conduct business (Mallory and Mallory, 60). Here unemployment was unheard of and the mafias frequently rewarded their employees with huge houses and good schools. Other cities such as Las Vegas emerged from the desert due to illegal businesses. In the end, huge businesses were able to grow that could employ thousands of Americans to work through the great recession.

The idea of big businesses enterprise from organized crime spread after the recession to other cities like a ' bush fire'. By mid 1930s, organized crime in New York City was already big business . Two families, the Maranzano family

and the Masseria family were in perpetual competition for territory. Without much concern from the authorities and other law enforcing bodies the Mafia took the time to organize into much larger and ordered organizations.

However, in order to strengthen an 'Italian grip' of the cities, the Italians themselves started to assassinate each other in pursuit of supremacy. After some time, most organized criminal groups were now controlled by Italians who valued secrecy more than anything else. Oaths were administered and members were sworn to allegiance and secrecy.

The success of the Italian mafia heralded the wider aspects of organized crime as we know to today. Other incoming immigrants noted the great success as portrayed by the Italians and copied their operations. Russian gangs, the Japanese Yakuza, Latin American Drug Cartels and The Chinese Triads in West Coast America now dominate the scene of nationalized drug syndicates (Mallory & Mallory, 81). There also exist small criminal groups that operate from small locations and neighborhoods. These small gangs make use of young men and women without sufficient resources to pursue education and put such youth into gangs that control streets in order to sell drugs. These small gangs are the very violent and are responsible for violent confrontation in the streets.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is vital to appreciate the degrading nature that organized crime poses on to the society. The society suffers from the activities of crime syndicates and it is upon the authorities to understand these issues and act against organized criminal gangs. Providing enough education resources

such as scholarships would assist in keeping the youth out of the streets. In general, the advantages the criminal gangs provided during the great recession do not justify their existence.

Works Cited

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