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Drug Abuse and Smuggling Crimes: Causes, Methods, and Interconnections

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Abstract:

Drugs are the scourge of the age that has ravaged humanity and terrorized the international community without distinguishing between developed and developing ones. It is indeed one of the most serious crimes that constitute a source of concern for governments because of its worst effects and frightening dimensions in the economic, health, security and political fields. Rather, it has become a dangerous corrupt criminal activity that has contributed to Destroying social values and squandering the productive energies of peoples, causing human wealth to decay and public security to turmoil, as well as affecting the vital interests of states.

Despite the prevention efforts and the multiplicity of specialized international agencies to study criminal phenomena and find solutions to combat them, drug crimes are getting more complex day after day, especially after the use of information networks and the media, which has increased the ability of production and promotion gangs to exchange experiences that help them develop their criminal activities. And the completion of deals quickly, in addition to the use of advanced techniques in drug smuggling operations, which contributed to the spread of this scourge to become one of the most prominent complex crimes that break into abuse and smuggling in many fields that have repercussions on societies and herald disasters

***Rahmani Hassiba**

1. Introduction

The contemporary world is witnessing a massive scientific and technological revolution that is accompanied by multiple forms of crimes across all spheres of life. Drug crimes are regarded as the linking thread between all criminal activities; which poses a real threat to national and international security. This kind of crimes is no longer merely a local phenomenon affecting one particular state to the exclusion of others. Rather, they are global crimes in their dimensions and effects. These illegal practices are particularly increasing with the use of media and modern systems of software and international networks which contributed to the spreading of specialized and organized drug smuggling gangs. This phenomenon has consequently become one of the largest forms of illegal trade at the international level, spreading anxiety and resulting in destructive repercussions that encompass all aspects of life.

In fact, researching drug-related crime; namely relating to smuggling and consumption is not an easy matter as these are crimes with complex dimensions in every aspect, especially since their danger lies in the clandestine operations through which they are conducted. Their operations begin with the farmer, producer, transporter, and trader, all the way to the consumer represented by the drug user due to the smugglers. This ultimately leads to the destruction of individuals and families after drug dealers succeed in flooding markets with various types of these poisons. Yet, criminal organizations have managed to expand their operational networks across multiple sectors covertly infiltrating all different strata of society. These operations have become so skillful and concealed through specialized networks that controlling them is an extremely difficult task due to the ever-present material incentives behind smuggling and trafficking in them. Drug trafficking became an activity known for generating revenues in the billions of dollars. In this context, international reports indicate that drug barons achieve enormous gains, reflecting the vast dangers threatening the security and safety of peoples as well as the spread of crime and corruption.

To examine the reality of preventing these crimes, we have chosen to focus in this study on identifying the causes of drug use and their spread, since they are linked to crimes involving harm and danger that produce destructive effects at all levels. Confronting the danger of these crimes has become an urgent necessity that extends beyond the penal policies and preventive measures to the need of identifying the reasons behind the rapid spread of such crimes, which are attentively committed on a wide global scale, making them among the most prominent complex practices regarding corruption.

1.1 Study problem:

With regard to the idea of combating corruption in general, the exacerbation of drug smuggling is among the sensitive issues mostly affecting the youth, who

represent the most vulnerable segment of society. It is also one of the most prominent complex crimes in the sphere of corrupt practices. This led the study to pose the following research questions:

What are the reasons behind the spread of drugs?

How do smuggling gangs contribute to exacerbating this problem?

What are the most dangerous concealment methods employed in this crime?

To address this issue and answer the questions raised, a descriptive and analytical approaches were adopted given their appropriateness to the nature of the subject, which is classified as a serious phenomenon from a social and legal perspective. Accordingly, a precise description of the phenomenon as well as an analysis of the reasons behind its spread and its critical effects on societal stability were necessitated. Furthermore, the dangerous impact of this illegal practice extends beyond the national borders due to the drug trafficking committed by professional gangs, particularly in the context of the information revolution. The study also focuses on the link between drugs and corruption to highlight the seriousness of the phenomenon and the necessity of curbing it to mitigate its social and economic harm to societies. To this end, the researcher relies on information from diverse and reliable sources to provide a clear scientific analysis that includes useful data.

Accordingly, a plan consisting of two main axes was developed to understand the topic: the first addresses the concept of drugs and the causes of their consumption, while the second addresses the drug problem and the smuggling process.

2. THE CONCEPT OF DRUGS AND REASONS FOR THEIR USE:

The phenomenon of drug use is not a modern occurrence; it is an ancient social phenomenon known to the earliest civilizations in the world. Historical references indicate that the Sumerians used opium in the fourth millennium BC as a narcotic substance, and they called it the "plant of happiness" during that era (Al-Marashda, 2018, p. 23). It is considered one of the earliest narcotic substances used by humans, especially natural drugs like the poppy plant and cannabis (hashish), which have been consumed since ancient times and continue to be used today. It was found that some of these substances have therapeutic properties, while others have an effect on human sensations.

In reality, drug abuse has taken on a catastrophic global dimension today. If we do not eliminate it, it will eliminate us. Ruthless organized gangs have managed to expand their networks and extend their control over vast areas of the globe (Shallala, 2010, p. 48), turning drugs into a pervasive specter that roams and covers the entire world. It has become one of the most prominent aspects of corruption crimes. There is hardly a place untouched by its spread, nor a place free from the negative effects created by the drug market on public health. It is

also important to understand how developments in the drug market contribute to the spread of organized crime and other forms of criminality, leading to increased levels of violence, corruption, exploitation of vulnerable individuals, and environmental damage (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction in collaboration with Europol, 2019, p. 03). These issues arise from both the evolution of drugs themselves and the advancements in scientific knowledge and industrial transformation technology.

Drugs represent one of the most dangerous types of crimes, with a deadly impact on the youth, who constitute the workforce of any country. Wherever drugs are present, crime and criminals follow. Drug use can lead individuals to commit heinous crimes such as murder and rape, among others (Rahmania, 2018, p. 438). Drugs also represent the highest degree of criminality because they affect fundamental interests essential to the stability and balance of society and can harm its core interests. We are convinced that no one can consider themselves immune from the dangers of drugs. Moreover, the terrifying consequences of drug abuse and its harm across various fields are evident. For this reason, we have sought to clarify in this section the definition of drugs from various perspectives—as a problem, a phenomenon, or a crime—to highlight their complex nature and their harmful and dangerous impact, which transcends the regional boundaries of a single state due to the illegal operations conducted by smuggling gangs and traders of these toxins.

2.1 General Idea about Drug Crimes and Their Connection to Corruption:

The phenomenon of corruption is one of the serious issues facing countries worldwide, particularly in developing nations. This phenomenon has begun to corrode the fabric of these societies, leading to paralysis in the processes of construction and development (Kafi, 2014, p. 09). The means through which corruption infiltrates any country are numerous and varied, and the existence of corruption has been linked to the presence of the drug scourge. Despite stringent security measures, large-scale drug operations manage to escape detection and evade control. This is due to the ability of smuggling gangs to employ complex methods characterized by deceit, adaptability, and replication in various forms, which enable them to bypass the imposed surveillance and ensure their continued existence. For instance, they sometimes resort to diversifying smuggling methods, and at other times, they use routes involving pharmaceutical drugs, various chemicals, and activities that mostly take the form of pills, among other forms of drugs (Marouk, 2010, p. 10).

In this section, we will attempt to define drugs and elucidate their meaning as a phenomenon. This will be followed by clarifying a significant aspect related to the issue of drug abuse and how it benefits corruption, aiming to grasp the overall and useful meaning of this problem.

2.1.1 The Various Definitions of Drugs

Jurisprudential Definition of Drugs: Drugs are defined as "natural or synthetic substances, many of which are used for medical and scientific purposes. However, when misused, they cause harm to public health (Abdel Ghani, 2009, p. 16)." Another definition states that drugs have specific properties, and their use or addiction outside of therapeutic purposes has a detrimental impact, whether physically, mentally, or psychologically (Awad, 1966, p. 25).

Scientific Definition of Drugs: There are multiple definitions of drugs by scholars, all agreeing on the meaning that "a drug is a chemical substance that causes drowsiness, sleep, or loss of consciousness accompanied by pain relief." The word "drug" is a translation of the Greek word narcotic, derived from the word Narcoticus, meaning to numb or to make numb (Al-Marashda, 2018, p. 17). Drugs are also defined as chemical substances that induce sleep, drowsiness, or unconsciousness, accompanied by pain relief.

Legal Definition of Drugs: Drugs are defined as "a group of substances that cause addiction and burden the nervous system. They are prepared, traded, cultivated, or manufactured only for purposes specified by law and are used exclusively by those licensed to do so." This is the prevailing legal definition found in most comparative laws, including the definition found in Article 02 of the Algerian law related to the prevention of drugs and psychotropic substances (Law No. 04-18, 2004). Although the legislator did not explicitly define drugs, the same article described their connotation by mentioning two types: natural (plant-based) drugs and synthetic drugs, which are subject to criminalization (Al-Arfi & Al-Adwani, 2010, p. 34). This definition aligns with the World Health Organization's definition.

International Law Perspective on Drugs: The 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and its amended version in the 1972 Protocol define drugs in Article 1 as "any natural or synthetic substance listed in Schedules I and II of the Convention (Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, 1979)." The 1994 Arab Convention for the Fight Against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances defines drugs as "any natural or manufactured substance listed in the first section of the unified schedule (Article 16/1 of the Arab Convention, 1994)."

Medical Definition of Drugs: The World Health Organization in 1964 defined drugs as "any raw material that enters the body of a living organism, altering its functions and causing dependence on these substances." Here, dependence refers to addiction and habituation (Hayasat, 2018, p. 38). Drugs are also defined as any substance that causes varying degrees of consciousness loss in humans and animals, potentially leading to a coma followed by death (Abu Haltem, 2014, p. 390).

Given the difficulty of providing a comprehensive and universally accepted definition of drugs at the international level, narcotic substances have been classified, and drug lists have been established according to their degree of danger and their anesthetic properties. These classifications follow the specific schedules set out in the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances. All signatory countries to these conventions are committed to adhering to these schedules, with each country having the right to move a substance from a less dangerous schedule to a more dangerous one (Saqr, Drug Crimes in Algerian Legislation, 2006, p. 07).

2.2 Drug Abuse as a Problem that Fuels Corruption :

The issue of drug abuse no longer pertains to just one country or a group of countries; recently, most countries worldwide have been grappling with the dangers posed by narcotic substances. This comes as drug consumption, addiction, and smuggling have taken on increasingly complex forms, leading to widespread and alarming dissemination (BraKhlia & Jallab, 2021, p. 06). The primary dangers include undermining public health, destroying individuals, families, and communities, and rapidly escalating rates of crime, violence, and corruption. There are also indications that drug abuse, like other crimes, is increasingly raising concerns for the international drug monitoring authority. This is largely due to internet pharmacies that promote the use of drugs among vulnerable groups, particularly youth. Cybercrime related to drugs is a significant concern because illicit drug traders are the primary users of internet message encryption technologies, which they use to evade law enforcement, coordinate drug shipments, and launder money (Shallala, 2010, p. 52). Thus, drugs have become an increasing global threat, posing frightening consequences for the international community as a whole (Al-Marashda, 2018, p. 209).

Drugs have become an escalating global threat with potentially disastrous consequences for the international community as a whole (Al-Marashda, 2018, p. 209). In recent years, numerous countries have witnessed instability and a marked rise in the rates of crime associated with drug trafficking and consumption. A report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) indicates that the number of drug users worldwide reached approximately 316 million persons in 2023, which is equivalent to 6% of the population aged between 15 to 64 years (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2025). Compared to 5.2% in 2013, this reflects a clear increase over the past decade.

The report further indicates that cocaine is among the most rapidly spreading narcotics as the number of its users rose to 25 million persons in 2023 with a recorded global production that reached 3,708 tons in 2023. This has contributed to the expansion of criminal networks and the spread of corruption due to the competition over smuggling routes and illicit markets (Reuters, 2025).

Within regard to Algeria, official statistics for the year 2024, issued by the National Office for the Fight against Drugs and Addiction, reveal that the total number of processed drug-related cases reached 148,078, some of which pertain to smuggling and trafficking, while some others are related to possession and consumption (The National Office for Combating Drugs and Addiction, 2024). A total of 168,336 individuals were implicated in these cases. The statistics further indicate an increase in the number of cases during this year by 16,902, representing a rise of 12.88% compared to the total of 2023. During the same year, large quantities of various categories of drugs were seized, including cannabis, cocaine, heroin, and opium. This is in addition to a marked increase in the quantities of psychotropic substances, which reached 33,493,389 tablets and 211 bottles compared to 2023 (Radio, 2024). This reflects the growing activity of the smuggling and trafficking networks of psychotropic substances. These statistics also confirm the intensification of security and oversight efforts to confront this phenomenon and put a limit to it.

The fundamental idea explaining the link between drugs and corruption lies in the dangers posed by the rapid and unbounded spread of this phenomenon (Hayasat, 2018, p. 55). Among the most significant dangers of drugs, which pose a genuine threat to nations by harming both individuals and society, are the illicit trade and use of these substances. This behavior represents one of the most critical forms of smuggling faced by both developing and developed nations, whether they are technologically advanced or economically disadvantaged. It stands as one of the most prominent security issues confronting the international community. The urgency and significance of this issue are further underscored by the fact that drug abuse—and consequently drug trafficking—has become a global phenomenon affecting all countries, to the extent that it is now considered one of the most dangerous forms of organized and transnational crime (Kaddour, 2020, p. 65).

It is useful to note that there is a symbiotic relationship between drug problems and corruption. Corruption facilitates the production and trafficking of illicit drugs, which, in turn, benefits corruption. For example, a criminal organization might attempt to bribe a customs' official to facilitate the smuggling of drugs (WorldDrug Report, 2018). Corruption is evident throughout the drug supply chain, especially considering that drug trafficking and abuse mafias can be more powerful than state authorities and more organized in spreading corruption. They lead society toward ruin and destruction to achieve the goals of a few, obtaining a handful of dirty money derived from drug trafficking, arms smuggling, terrorism, prostitution, bribes, and various forms of corruption (Shafi, 2014). Therefore, both international and domestic legislation have been established to combat these issues. However, legislation alone constitutes only the

legal framework; it is ineffective if the necessary enforcement agencies are not available or if preventive and therapeutic institutions are not established.

The issue of drugs, drug-related crimes, and addiction has become one of the most significant crimes fueling corruption, which the international community addresses through organizations such as the United Nations, the Arab League, and the Gulf Cooperation Council. In addition to these international efforts, individual countries are also taking measures independently, through bilateral cooperation with other nations, or through multilateral collaboration, highlighting agreements and making joint efforts in the field of drug control and prevention (Fattouh, 2011, p. 13).

Moreover, the significant impact of drug crimes on societies is evident through the actions of criminal gangs that smuggle drugs into other countries in violation of existing laws. This activity has led to the development of smugglers' capabilities to move and transfer their funds globally, equipping themselves with the latest advanced technology (Al-Marashda, 2018, p. 20). This has exacerbated smuggling problems, giving rise to serious scourges. The reality confirms that a portion of the proceeds from this illicit trade is sometimes used to finance the activities of terrorists and terrorist organizations. This fact is clearly demonstrated in a country like Afghanistan, which alone produces nearly 90% of the world's opium, and where a part of the proceeds still funds the activities and operations of the extremist Taliban movement and previously the Al-Qaeda organization (Kaddour, 2020, p. 66).

In truth, drugs can be considered to fuel all forms of corruption and are a genuine obstacle hindering all forms of social and economic development. Studies in this regard at various international, regional, local, and Arab levels indicate that drug use and addiction, although predominantly concentrated among young people, significantly impair productive, creative, and innovative capacities, and stall economic progress. Development relies on the capabilities of the members of society; therefore, when individuals' minds, health, and psyche are affected by drug use, corruption ensues, the nation deteriorates, and the economy collapses (Saleh, 1977, p. 34). We all know that individuals represent a significant economic asset upon which governments rely and place their hopes for building the state's economy (Ghoneim, 2002, p. 56).

In this context, it is certain that despite the annual and official statistics provided by the relevant authorities on the spread of drug crimes, they do not reflect the actual volume of drug production or trade. The United Nations report of 2000, for instance, indicated that the quantity seized compared to what is smuggled is negligible, and the problem continues to worsen and become more dangerous. Despite international efforts to combat these crimes and mitigate their effects, those familiar with the inner workings of the situation estimate that only

about 33% of the narcotics produced, exported, and distributed to new users and existing addicts are seized (Al-Marashda, 2018, p. 61).

Given that drug crimes, in general, are exceedingly severe and complex security issues, completely eradicating them has become difficult, if not impossible, especially in the era of communication, information, and technological revolutions (Hayasat, 2018, p. 17). Therefore, it is logical to recognize the gravity of these crimes and their underlying causes to address them with a strategy aimed at curbing their spread in all forms. This aligns with the crime prevention policies imposed by countries and human rights organizations in response to the spread of so-called "organized crime," which has renewed hope for stability within international criminal law, thereby reducing the social harm to societies as a whole (Shallala, 2010, p. 18).

3. REASONS FOR THE SPREAD OF DRUGS:

Due to the tremendous scientific advancements in communication, transportation, and other areas, drug addiction has become widespread among various social segments and age groups. A report by the United Nations Development Program confirmed that the "globalization system" has increased risks to human security and life worldwide. It also pointed out that organized crime gangs in their various forms make enormous amounts of money illegally due to drug and arms smuggling and trafficking. Experts further emphasize that these risks can be avoided and corruption can be combated. In the same context, recent studies agree that numerous reasons have led to the spread of these substances. They affirm with certainty that "if we truly know our enemy, we can defeat it." Therefore, we will attempt to shed light on these reasons in general, as follows:

3.1 Factors Related to the Individual User:

The reasons that drive individuals to use drugs are numerous and varied, with the most important being:

The psychological and physical state of the individual: Some individuals suffer from psychological crises linked to adolescence, which generate feelings of tension, frustration, and inadequacy. Additionally, individuals with weak personalities or those who feel or believe they are incomplete due to deformities, disabilities, or biological imbalances (Boubidi, 2012, p. 50) may resort to drug use to seek psychological comfort and to forget these problems.

Weak religious and moral awareness: This factor leads individuals away from living a righteous life, causing their principles to deteriorate and resulting in the violation of prohibitions, including the use of various types and forms of drugs (Saleh, 1977, p. 72).

Bad company and the desire to imitate others in behaviors associated with smoking or drug use to try to assert oneself (Mohyeddin, 2014, p. 225):

Psychological and social studies and research conducted on the causes of drug use have shown that curiosity and the insistence of bad company are the most significant motivators for participating in drug use and contributing to its spread in various forms (Bin Abdullah, 2014, p. 96).

Academic failure and the ensuing emptiness, along with the excessive and improper use of modern technological means, and not utilizing them for beneficial purposes: Following programs that promote immorality, violence (Ben El Nawi, 2020, p. 153), and similar behaviors are factors that greatly and directly contribute to providing opportunities for various forms of deviance and the increase of moral decay. Drug use becomes normalized due to its widespread consumption, especially when there are no appropriate venues for youth to channel their energy, such as the absence of clubs. This becomes another strong factor driving the adoption of some deviant behaviors (Mohyeddin, 2014, p. 225).

3.2 Factors Related to the Family:

Neglect by the family in shaping the children's personalities is one of the leading causes of deviance, due to the weak or nonexistent supervision of children by families (Bin Abdullah, 2014, p. 94). Parents' preoccupation with their own matters has led to the lack of proper Islamic upbringing for their children, which would have been a safeguard against deviance (BraKhlia & Jallab, 2021, p. 09). Some studies have identified a set of indicators that are considered among the most important factors leading to deviance and drug use within the family context, including:

Family disintegration, neglect, and the breakdown of family relationships: This can occur due to divorce, absence, abandonment, death, or the inability of one or both parents to fulfill their expected roles (Rahmania, 2018, p. 445). A disrupted relationship within the family will lead to children suffering from psychological disturbances, severe crises, and problems they do not know how to solve. This difficult and tragic situation will push them to resort to drugs to alleviate their pain and escape their painful reality into a world they believe will grant them the happiness they seek (Al-Arfi & Al-Adwani, 2010, p. 57).

Excessive harshness toward children or excessive indulgence, along with parents' preoccupation and failure to take responsibility for their children (Al-Marashda, 2018, p. 80).

Negative role models from parents: This occurs when one or both parents are addicted to drugs or mind-altering substances and exhibit abnormal behavior while under the influence. This behavior can lead individuals to deviate, use drugs, and try to imitate their parents' deviant actions, as parents are supposed to be the ideal and good example for their children (Mohyeddin, 2014, p. 229).

There is no doubt that the fragility of family bonds and the negligence of guardians are among the primary reasons for the widespread issue of drugs in all countries around the world.

3.3 Social and Cultural Factors:

Progress in various fields, particularly in transportation and communication, is one of the most significant factors that have exacerbated the problem of drug misuse. Consequently, the spread of drug abuse in developed societies is more complex compared to less developed ones (Qazan, 2005). The cultural aspect also plays a role in the spread of drug use and addiction. With the proliferation of satellite channels and their programs, there has been a significant influence, especially from artists such as singers and actors. Many of our youth now strive to imitate the artists they admire, copying their habits of drinking alcohol, smoking, and drug use (Amrouche, 1993, p. 310).

The main social and cultural reasons can be summarized as follows:

The social conditions and changes surrounding an individual throughout their life stages, where these factors have the most significant impact on shaping their personality (Saleh, 1977, p. 73).

The breakdown of moral and ethical values, and the spread of vice, debauchery, entertainment venues, nightclubs, and places for drinking alcohol.

The spread of foreign cultures within society, some of which promote the necessity of drug use.

Migration and the resulting psychological pressures due to cultural differences, and the divergence of values and traditions infiltrating society (Al-Marashda, 2018, p. 79).

The negative role of various media outlets in addressing the drug problem by allowing non-specialists to describe the dangers of drugs, their types, and methods of use in an unscientific manner (Mohamed, 2008, p. 102).

Foreign labor in the Arab world, especially in the Gulf region, which, through developmental activities, contributes to drug trafficking and promotion. As a result, these Arab societies have become focal points for the unemployed worldwide (Hayasat, 2018, p. 76).

3.4 Economic Factors:

The poor economic conditions in some countries significantly contribute to creating poverty, hunger, and challenging living realities. This situation causes psychological pressures on young people, such as stress, anxiety, and frustration, which in turn affects their behavior and may lead them to drug use. The main economic factors can be summarized as follows:

Issues of poverty, unemployment, and high living costs in society.

The decline in workers' wages and the dismissal of employees due to increased reliance on technology.

The widespread phenomenon of drug trafficking and smuggling, which has become a part of some countries' economies and products. Additionally, some young people turn to drug dealing to seek quick profits (Hajjaj, 2021, p. 283).

Financial and technological weaknesses of governments, leading to their inability to combat drug cartels effectively, resulting in the infiltration of these cartels into society (Al-Marashda, 2018, p. 79).

4. DRUGS AND THE CRIME OF SMUGGLING:

The cases and crimes associated with drug-related offenses have increased and diversified. Due to their prevalence, we will focus on a particularly serious crime: smuggling, which is one of the most prominent economic and financial crimes associated with drugs. Smuggling is one of the most dangerous global phenomena in most countries around the world due to the difficulties in proving it, coupled with the ingenuity of smugglers who use highly advanced methods and means that are difficult for security forces and customs to detect due to their transnational nature (Bassaid, 2014-2015, p. 34).

The problem of drugs escalated significantly in the 1980s (in terms of use, trafficking, and marketing), and with it, the sense of danger grew. The threat is not only from the devastating effects on society as a whole but also from the enormous profits generated, which entice perpetrators of drug smuggling (Al-Marashda, 2018, p. 193). These profits incentivize them to use the money to manufacture various drugs and distribute them for illicit use.

Drug trafficking and smuggling are activities that generate billions of dollars, primarily in cash. Drug money is essential for these cartels; without it, international cartels cannot finance their operations, which include manufacturing, transportation, smuggling, distribution, murder, and promotion—activities that are fundamental to this illegal trade (Saqr, 2015, p. 108).

Smuggling generally refers to the act of bringing goods into or taking them out of a country in violation of legal or regulatory provisions concerning the possession and transport of goods within the customs territory. This concept is broad and encompasses several specific actions, such as maneuvers aimed at avoiding customs offices. Drug smuggling, in all its forms—natural or synthetic—refers to transporting drugs from production areas to major importers in consumer countries by any means, even in small quantities* (Law No. 04-18, 2004).

In this context, the Global Action Plan, as a comprehensive framework for national, regional, and international action to combat drug production, demand, and illicit trafficking, asserts that "illicit drug trafficking and smuggling are prime examples of organized crime due to the professionalism, capabilities, and

* It should be noted that the production, manufacture, extraction, offering for sale, selling, distributing, or sending of any drug or psychotropic substance, etc., in an illegal manner is considered a drug crime

expertise of those who commit these crimes, as they plan meticulously before carrying them out (Belgraf, 2015, p. 29)." People from different nationalities are involved in these crimes, extending their criminal activities across several countries using cunning and diverse methods to market their products through flooding, extortion, and even recruiting individuals to promote, distribute, and smuggle drugs, thereby increasing the number of users (Kaci, 2007-2008, p. 69). Large quantities of illegal drugs and toxins are smuggled from within or outside the country or across various routes and countries.

Drug smuggling has become a corrupt trade akin to arms smuggling and financing terrorism, representing a crisis in the context of organized crime. These activities occur regularly, away from public, governmental, and judicial oversight, and are deliberately committed by individuals or organized companies with their own rules and regulations, operating in complete secrecy for an extended period to gain as much economic control and financial profit as possible (Shallala, 2010, p. 16).

It is noteworthy that drug smuggling methods differ from one country to another depending on the geographical location of the country and the strictness of surveillance (Fattouh, 2011, p. 14). Moreover, it is widely known that smugglers employ countless means to bring in drugs. However, the common methods of smuggling are almost exclusively confined to three routes: by land, sea, and air, either through official or unofficial crossings. The method used for smuggling also varies according to the quantity of drugs intended for smuggling, depending on the volume (Abu Al-Rous, 1990, p. 82).

4.1 Methods of Drug Smuggling:

Based on the experience of countries involved in addressing illicit drug trafficking and money laundering, it has been observed that the primary methods used by criminals to smuggle drugs and all types of psychotropic substances involve concealing them through various familiar means of transport by land, air, or sea. This is followed by body smuggling, either inside or outside the body. Additionally, smuggling can occur by mixing drugs with liquids or sending them through postal packages (Fattouh, 2011, p. 14).

Researchers interpreting the crime of drug smuggling in its various forms note that smugglers use numerous, almost unimaginable methods. Every day, they devise new ways to smuggle, posing ever-new and evolving challenges for drug enforcement agents. This is due to the increasingly sophisticated methods of drug consumption and the trade itself, which is carried out using cunning tactics that are not easy to detect. There has been a notable increase in skill and fraudulent deception in smuggling these toxic substances through specialized, covert criminal networks that use the same methods of global trade, financing, and transportation.

The perpetrators of drug smuggling crimes are the masterminds who manage complex production networks, promotion, and distribution. They also efficiently manage intermediaries who skillfully and professionally transfer their funds worldwide, using the same methods as legitimate traders. This situation makes it increasingly difficult to distinguish between legal and illegal operations. Consequently, it is not possible to cover all the methods of smuggling comprehensively. Therefore, we will attempt to provide a general overview as follows:

4.1.1 The Self-Smuggling Method:

The human body is considered a vessel for smuggling. It is not surprising to hear that both human and animal bodies are used to smuggle drugs of various types and forms. This method involves attaching drugs to the body externally to transport them from production areas to major importers in consumer countries. It also involves internal concealment within the body, a trick that is among the oldest in smuggling tactics. Several techniques are employed for this purpose, such as:

Using Plastic or Rubber Wraps: Drugs intended for smuggling are wrapped in plastic or rubber packets, which the person swallows while continuing with their usual activities, including eating and drinking regular meals (Abdel Ghani, 2009, p. 289). This deceptive method can only be detected using a device that consists of a radiation source and an image receiver. This device examines the human body and detects instances of drug concealment. The danger of this practice lies in the possibility of these packets bursting if they are not sealed and wrapped securely, which could result in the death of the person involved * (Hayasat, 2018, p. 79).

Surgical Operations to Conceal Drugs: For example, a smuggler who is disabled might exploit their disability to garner sympathy, such as having a limb amputated. In such cases, surgical operations might be performed to conceal drugs under the skin or in internal organs for smuggling purposes. The situation is even more alarming as drug smugglers may resort to using women, children, and the elderly, as they are perceived as less suspicious. Additionally, drugs can be secured under clothing using specially designed harnesses for this purpose (Abdel Ghani, 2009, p. 15).

4.1.2 Smuggling Through Various Means of Transportation:

Drug smuggling can be carried out by land, sea, or air. It should be noted that drug smuggling operations are not simple endeavors; they involve a variety of activities, including preparation, extraction, offering, distribution, or delivery in any capacity, brokerage, shipping, or transit (Saqr, 2015, p. 187). In other

* A similar incident occurred at Queen Alia International Airport in Jordan when one of the capsules exploded inside a person's stomach after the plane's departure was delayed due to a technical malfunction

words, smuggling is a series of interconnected steps that start with the cultivator of the drug-producing plant, which initiates the nucleus of illicit drug trafficking. It then involves the manufacturer who produces the narcotic substance, the dealer who buys drugs for the purpose of illegal trading, and ultimately reaches the importer who purchases drugs from the dealer on their behalf and then promotes them.

It is evident that drug smuggling operations, being illegal, unregulated, and constantly evolving, have become more organized and sophisticated, utilizing information technology. These operations have transformed from social phenomena into a global issue, even evolving into a transnational organized crime that is nearly uncontrollable (Bassaid, 2014-2015, p. 86). This is due to the management of smuggling deals and oversight of all activities related to drug trafficking by specialized criminal networks, often operating as mafia gangs. These gangs feel the necessity to assert their independence from public authorities and their regulations (Hayasat, 2018, p. 81).

More alarmingly, these gangs engage in drug trafficking and human exploitation, generating illicit profits. Societies have come under their influence, sometimes through bribery and other times through force, to the extent that these gangs have amassed enormous financial resources and revenues that exceed ordinary capabilities. They are products of globalization (Al-Arabi, 2007, p. 84) to the extent that they have built land, sea, and air fleets for the purpose of smuggling and distributing drugs across the globe. They own secret airports, private planes, and helicopters to transport large drug shipments wherever they wish. These gangs have also succeeded in creating markets for the illicit drug trade and have managed to buy off agents with money and sexual favors (Ghoneim, 2002, p. 42).

Based on the aforementioned points, it is evident that the world of drugs knows no boundaries or barriers, particularly in light of the significant influence exerted by drug trafficking gangs and their financiers over politicians and individuals working within the criminal justice system. These activities not only violate national criminal laws and international drug conventions, but drug trafficking and smuggling are also associated with other criminal activities, such as organized crime, conspiracy, bribery, and corruption, among others (Akkoun, p. 171).

It cannot be denied that there remain smuggling methods that have not been detected by security agencies, which require continuous monitoring and the adoption of modern and effective intelligence techniques to uncover smuggling and all forms of illicit drug trade and brokerage. Intelligence methods, such as infiltrating smuggling groups to attempt to thwart smuggling operations from within, are necessary to combat these activities (Fattouh, 2011, p. 15).

4.2 Expertise in Concealing Drugs for Smuggling Purposes:

In our current era, drug-related crimes have become a source of enormous wealth, accompanied by the necessity for concealment, money laundering, and smuggling. This is due to the increasing sophistication, complexity, development, and support of these crimes with advanced technological means (Ghazaf, 2010, p. 113). The opening of Arab markets and other economies to foreign countries, along with the widespread internal crimes within societies—particularly financial and occupational corruption, bribery, and similar issues—have all facilitated or paved the way for illegal trade and expertise in concealing drugs for smuggling purposes. This is achieved through various concealment methods that are difficult to catalog or detect.

Drug smugglers have mastered the art of hiding their contraband and are willing to go to any lengths to achieve their malicious objectives. Among these methods or tricks are:

Concealment within various transport vehicles, such as cars, motorcycles, trucks, and horse transport vehicles. Drugs can be hidden inside car tires, fire extinguishers, air filters, headrests, or fuel tanks (Bassaid, 2014-2015, p. 145).

Concealment within shipments of spices, pickles, and olives, after being wrapped in plastic or rubber material for preservation. Drugs can also be hidden inside food and beverages.

Concealment within different types and shapes of furniture, as well as ceramic and pottery items, and decorative objects.

Concealment within books, stationery items, and photo albums. Even holy books have been used as a means of drug smuggling, including the Qur'an, which has not been spared from these malicious and cheap methods.

Exploiting children's toys for hiding and smuggling drugs.

Cleaning tools and washing powders by placing drugs inside these containers.

Concealment within electrical devices, such as video and television sets, where drugs are placed inside these devices after being opened and reassembled securely (Hayasat, 2018, p. 86).

Concealment within the clothing of the transporter, depending on the type and size of the drug. It may be hidden inside the shoulder pads of a coat, within a belt cavity, inside trouser folds, or in women's underwear (Bassaid, 2014-2015, p. 143).

Concealment within shoes and even inside prosthetic limbs of disabled persons, such as amputated legs or feet. These individuals' sympathetic treatment by drug enforcement officers can be cunningly exploited (Hayasat, 2018, p. 87).

Hiding drugs among hair strands, behind the ears, by taping them to the back between the shoulders, above the chest, or around the legs.

Concealment within personal luggage, as well as the double sides and surfaces of suitcases.

Using live human organs to hide the merchandise from sight, with the intestines being the most commonly used "mobile storage" by cocaine trafficking networks. Cocaine capsules are also hidden inside genital organs* (Bassaid, 2014-2015, p. 145).

In general, smugglers continuously use innovative methods, employing strange and unusual means to achieve drug smuggling, ranging from simple to complex methods for various types of drugs. There is no place that smugglers do not use for concealing drugs.

The world of drug smuggling and marketing is full of tricks, especially land smuggling, as most countries have more land borders than maritime ones. According to the records of anti-smuggling agencies at both the international and national levels, the general rule among drug enforcement officers is that it is possible to hide and smuggle drugs in any conceivable place, whether related to the human body, animals, or plants. Smugglers belong to ingenious smuggling networks that specialize in the process of concealing and promoting drugs from one country to another (Abdel Ghani, 2009, p. 148). They have gone so far as to use the elderly and women; there have even been cases uncovered of smuggling networks using their own children for drug smuggling (Bassaid, 2014-2015, p. 149).

5. CONCLUSION:

This study has revealed that drug-related crimes, including use and trafficking, represent some of the most complex social, legal, and humanitarian issues due to their multifaceted nature. On the one hand, they are individual phenomena because they are committed by human beings. On the other hand, they are among the most prominent corruption crimes, involving criminal networks and gangs with various forms and methods used in their commission. The study has identified the driving causes behind the spread and exacerbation of drug problems and has explored the extent of their danger, especially since they are linked to smuggling crimes. Smuggling represents a form of contemporary and complex crime that fuels corruption and is connected to active and professional smuggling networks in this field.

Given the continuous circulation of marketing and promoting these toxins, especially using bizarre concealment methods for consumption outside the licensed framework, eliminating the problem of drugs and their related crimes has undoubtedly become a difficult and complex issue. However, overall, these issues can be mitigated through concerted efforts.

* In this regard, there were judicial cases in Algeria, the most famous being the case of "Angela Ougama," a Nigerian national who was found to have capsules inside her intestines

5.1 Recommendations:

Preventive Recommendations:

It is recommended for all communities to adopt a preventive approach to prevent or reduce drug and psychoactive substance-related crimes by combating the conditions or factors that lead to their commission, while encouraging studies that address the preventive dimension of these crimes.

The researcher suggests incorporating a course on "The Danger of Drug Crimes and Their Combating," into the academic curriculum particularly in law faculties. This aims to raise awareness among students as a youth demographic particularly vulnerable to delinquency. This course would also play a role in sensitizing them to the dangers of addiction and its critical effects on their physical and mental health, as well as their academic and social future, in view of the serious repercussions that threaten the community's security, national stability, and the overall development and progress.

It is important to raise awareness among the members of society, particularly the youth, about the dangers of narcotics and the harms arising from drug trafficking and consumption, in order to curb the spread of this phenomenon and prevent it before it takes place.

It is necessary to conduct awareness and educational campaigns targeting families in the context of protecting children from deviance, clarifying the dangers of narcotics and psychoactive substances and the methods of their prevention. In this regard it is crucial to particularly emphasize the family's role in supervising children, monitoring their behavior, academic performance, and companions in order to detect any behavioral deviations before they escalate. In addition, the continuous dialogue within the family contributes to instilling moral values and sound principles in children and immunizing them against falling into the scourge of narcotics and psychotropic substances.

It is recommended to eradicate the pervasive problem of unemployment by creating employment opportunities and vocational training programs aimed at integrating the youth into society and engaging them in the labor market, thereby keeping them occupied and productive. This reduces their exposure to drug consumption and deviance into an environment dominated by corruption and crime.

Security Recommendations:

It is imperative to develop and implement a national security program specialized in investigation and inspection in all forms of drug dealing and consumption. This is essential to combat drug smuggling crimes in all their forms and pursue traffickers and addicts, particularly criminal networks and neighborhood gangs that exploit the young people.

It is important to strengthen cooperation and sustain efforts among states and security and judicial bodies to combat drug crimes and dismantle international drug trafficking gangs using all available means

It is highly advisable to intensify local security measures on a periodic basis in the locations most vulnerable to the spread of the drug phenomenon, such as public places, schools, and universities, in order to apprehend traffickers and consumers, limit the phenomenon and criminal behaviors, protect the youth from addiction, and achieve social stability.

Legislative Recommendations:

It is suggested to impose strict international sanctions on states that fail to comply with the international treaties and agreements concluded within the framework of confronting the drug phenomenon.

It necessary to remedy the legislative deficiencies and tighten penalties on all the persons involved in drug and trafficking crimes. This in parallel with updating anti-smuggling and anti-drug laws to align with the current conditions, especially given the use of sophisticated methods and modern techniques in the field of smuggling and promoting for drugs.

Therapeutic Recommendations:

It is important to establish treatment and rehabilitation centers for addicts in Algeria in order to reintegrate recovered individuals into society and professional life.

The researcher emphasizes the importance of psychological, health, and rehabilitative care to assist drug addicts in recovering and restoring their balance as this aspect is essential to preventing relapse into addiction and deviance. Furthermore, providing psychological, social care and support aligns with the policy of integrating consumers into society and contributes to reducing trafficking and consumption.

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