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Motivations and Implications of Community Service Provision by La Familia Michoacána / Knights Templar and other Mexican Drug Cartels

Author Biography

Shawn T. Flanigan is an associate professor at San Diego State University. She researches nonstate organizations as health and social service providers, and has a specific interest in the role of power and potential coercion in service provision to vulnerable populations. She has examined this dynamic in faith-based service providers, providers involved in electoral politics, and providers affiliated with groups that use violence (such as insurgent and terrorist organizations).

Abstract

Research demonstrates that service provision by violent organizations can be an effective strategy for coercing the local community to accept and conceal a group's violent activities, and for creating loyalty to these groups. This has been most frequently explored among political organizations such as terrorist groups, with organizations like Hezbollah and Hamas very visibly engaged in providing social welfare in addition to their violent activities. Recent reports indicate that criminal organizations in Mexico also are involved in instances of public service provision in local communities. This article explores the extent to which drug cartels operating in Mexico are involved in public service provision to members of communities where they operate, and considers possible motivations and implications for public service provision by these criminal organizations, with specific attention to the organization *La Familia Michoacána*/Knights Templar. The article also gives attention to the consequences to citizenship and government of service provision by violent nonstate actors, and the ways such service provision may disrupt the social contract between the citizen and the state.

Introduction

At first glance, provision of public services and other types of seemingly charitable behavior by violent organizations may seem counterintuitive. However, a number of violent political groups such as insurgent groups and terrorist organizations are actively involved in public service provision, sometimes at the level of a quasi-state. Evidence suggests that terrorist organizations engage in other less formalized service provision as well. Scholars have suggested that there is a relationship between service provision by violent organizations and political support from service recipients, and have indicated that organizations use service provision strategically to generate support.¹ Research demonstrates that service provision by violent political organizations like terrorist groups can be an effective strategy for coercing the local community to accept and conceal a group's violent activities. Groups such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Palestine are very visibly engaged in providing social welfare in addition to their violent activities, and scholars suggest that effective service provision is an important factor creating loyalty to these groups.² However, fewer studies have sought to examine the extent to which provision of social aid is used as a strategy among non-political groups that use violence, such as drug cartels and other organized crime groups.³

Social service provision and other aid by criminal organizations are documented in some communities, such as Brazilian *favelas* or shantytowns and inner-city

¹ Shawn Flanigan and Mounah Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's social jihad: Nonprofits as resistance organizations," *Middle East Policy* 16 (2009): 122-137; Shawn Flanigan, "Charity as resistance: Connections between charity, contentious politics, and terror," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29 (2006): 641-655; Shawn Flanigan, "Nonprofit service provision by insurgent organizations – The cases of Hizballah and the Tamil Tigers," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 31 (2008): 499-519; Hamzeh, A.N., *In the path of Hizballah*, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2004); Judith Palmer Harik, "Between Islam and the system: Sources and implications of popular support for Lebanon's Hizballah," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 40 (1996): 41-67; James Kostelnik and David Skarbek, "The governance institutions of a drug trafficking organization," *Public Choice* (2013):156; Levitt, Matthew, *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007); Matthew Levitt, "Hamas from cradle to grave," *Middle East Quarterly* 11(2004): 1-12; G. Usher, "Historical development of Hizballah: Hizballah, Syria, and the Lebanese elections," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 26 (1997): 59-67.

² Mounah Abdel-Samad, "Exchanging favors: The predominance of casework in legislators' behavior in Jordan and Lebanon." *Journal of Legislative Studies* 15:4 (2009): 420-438; Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad"; Flanigan, "Nonprofit service provision by insurgent organizations"; Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizballah*; Harik, "Between Islam and the state; Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad*; Levitt, "Hamas from cradle to grave"; Usher, "Historical development of Hizballah"; Ora Szekely, "Social Services as Advertising for Nonstate Military Actors: The Case of Hamas," (paper presented at the International Studies Association Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, April 1st-4th, 2012.)

³ The provision of social assistance by criminal groups, which is the focus of this article, is less studied than extralegal governance and particularly protection services provided by criminal organizations. The literature on extralegal governance and protection services, which has important ties to the topics covered in this article, includes works such as Gambetta, Diego, *The Sicilian Mafia: The Business of Private Protection* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993); Hill, Peter E, *The Japanese mafia: yakuza, law, and the state*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Marina Tzvetkova, "Aspects of the evolution of extra-legal protection in Bulgaria (1989-1999)." *Trends in Organized Crime* 11:4 (2008): 326-351; Varese, Federico, *The Russian Mafia: Private Protection in a New Market Economy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); and Wang, Peng. "The Chinese mafia: private protection in a socialist market economy." *Global Crime* 12:4 (2011): 290-311.

neighborhoods in Kingston, Jamaica.⁴ Several Japanese organized crime groups, or *yakuza*, are reported to have been involved with disaster relief following Japan's 2011 earthquake.⁵ Media reports indicate that drug cartels in Mexico, in particular *La Familia Michoacána*/Knights Templar (in Spanish *Los Caballeros Templarios*), are involved in ad hoc provision of public services in local communities. However, the breadth and nature of cartels' informal giving behavior and more formalized service provision are poorly understood.⁶ This article explores the extent to which drug cartels operating in Mexico are involved in public service provision to members of communities where they operate, and considers possible motivations for public service provision by criminal organizations in Mexico. Because of the comparatively high activity of *La Familia Michoacána* /Knights Templar in this realm, this article gives particular attention to that group. This article aims to further elucidate an underexplored mechanism that violent groups use to gain compliance and support from community members. The article also examines the implications to the state of public service provision by criminal organizations, and particularly the ways such service provision may disrupt the social contract between the citizen and the state.

Methodology

The article uses qualitative data from a variety of sources. Interviews were conducted during 2010-2012 with twenty-four experts that including academics, journalists, public servants, and non-governmental organization (NGO) workers in Mexico and the U.S. border region. Because of the sensitive nature of this topic, the participants were recruited through a convenience sample, supplemented by snowball sampling. The interviews were conducted by the author by phone and in person in Mexico and the United States. All interviews were confidential and in the interest of the safety of the participants, neither the exact date, location of the interview, nor the exact profession of specific participants is included here.⁷

⁴ Enrique Desmond Arias, "The Dynamics of Criminal Governance: Networks and Social Order in Rio de Janeiro." *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 38 (2006): 293-325; Enrique Desmond Arias, "Faith in our Neighbors: Networks and Social Order in Three Brazilian Favelas," *Latin American Politics and Society* 46 (2004): 1-38; Gay, Robert, *Lucia: Testimonies of a Brazilian Drug Dealer's Woman* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005); Rivke Jaffe, "Crime and Insurgent Citizenship: Extra-state rule and belonging in urban Jamaica," *Development*, 55 (2012): 219-223

⁵ For descriptions of aid by Japan's *Inagawa-kai*, *Sumiyoshi-kai*, and *Yamaguchi-gumi*, see Jake Adelstein, "Yakuza to the rescue," *The Daily Beast*. March 18, 2011; Jake Adelstein, "Mobsters on a mission: How Japan's mafia launched an aid effort," *The Independent*. April 9, 2011; and Terril Yue Jones, "Yakuza among first with relief supplies in Japan," Reuters. March 25, 2011.

⁶ It is worth noting that some experts and government agencies prefer the term "drug trafficking organizations" to "drug cartel" because "cartel" often refers to price-setting groups, and it is not clear that Mexican drug cartels are involved in this practice, see Cook, Colleen W, *CRS Report for Congress: Mexico's Drug Cartels* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2008). However, because the term "drug cartel" still dominates, that is the term that will be used in this article.

⁷ Throughout the article I refer to "expert interviews" but do not list location, profession, or other information because I guaranteed interview participants this confidentiality. While this may seem overly cautious, some interview participants have faced threats of violence, and one had a family member kidnapped, when it was known they had spoken publicly about cartel activities. Interview participants therefore understandably were only willing to participate in this study with a very broad guarantee of confidentiality.

The interview data is heavily supplemented with data drawn from content analysis of articles from seventy-nine electronically available Mexican newspapers. An effort was made to incorporate all electronically searchable newspapers in Mexico into the study. Available newspapers ranged in publication date from 1980 to 2010, and all available articles from throughout this period were searched. Appropriate articles were identified through web-based searches using twenty-four key words and additional key word combinations. See Appendix A for a list of the newspapers examined, and Appendix B for a list of key words used. The newspaper search was used in large part to identify the types of social aid provided by drug cartels (see Table 1), and by which cartels aid was provided. In many cases the articles contained a very brief reference to or description of the aid being provided, and as such this information was used primarily to determine categories of aid. In those instances when a more detailed description was provided, that information was integrated into the literature review.

Motivations for service provision: Utilitarian or Ideological?

Why would violent organizations be involved in informal giving and more formalized public service provision? Motivations for political groups such as terrorist organizations are typically characterized as belonging to two broad categories: utilitarian or ideological.⁸ It is important to note, however, that these categories need not be mutually exclusive; in the cases of many terrorist organizations like Hamas and Hezbollah, there are clearly both utilitarian and ideological aims, and public choice economists indicate publicizing ideology such as religious ideology in fact can be a utilitarian strategy.⁹

As will be discussed in more detail later, service provision can serve as a utilitarian tool used to create dependence within the local population and/or generate good will among the local population. A relationship of dependency gives the organization substantial power over the community it serves, and thus allows the organization to demand tolerance of or active participation in its less desirable activities by the local population. Beyond the coercive power associated with dependence, service provision also may be successful at generating genuine good will toward the violent actor.¹⁰ Such has been the case for criminal groups in Jamaica, where *dons* (leaders of criminal groups) provide services ranging from welfare support and employment assistance to protection and dispute adjudication.¹¹ While a credible threat of violence is part of what underpins the *dons*' authority, Jaffe argues that inner-city residents' public demonstrations protesting the imprisonment or extradition of *dons* indicate that support for these leaders is genuine.¹²

⁸ Flanigan, "Charity as resistance."

⁹ Berman, Eli, *Radical, Religious, and Violent: The New Economics of Terrorism* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2009); Kostelnik and Skarbek, "The governance institutions of a drug trafficking organization."; Throughout the article I make occasional comparisons to Hamas and Hezbollah, rather than other terrorist organizations, because these organizations typically are familiar even to those who are not terrorism experts, and because they are very sophisticated service providers.

¹⁰ Abdel-Samad, "Exchanging Favors."; Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad."; Flanigan, "Nonprofit service provision by insurgent organizations."; Flanigan, "Charity as resistance."

¹¹ Jaffe, "Crime and Insurgent Citizenship."

¹² Ibid.

Service provision may also be motivated by political or religious ideology, as often is the case with many terrorist organizations that have clear political and/or religious goals. Taking the examples of Hamas and Hezbollah, both organizations view themselves as representing repressed minority groups, and thus have an ideological commitment to resistance. Both groups also are actively involved in electoral politics. In addition, Hamas and Hezbollah espouse an Islamic identity, and are called by their faith to engage in service to the less fortunate.¹³ While ideological motivations may not be unheard of in criminal organizations, as will be discussed later, one expects that organizations with a predominantly economic orientation like drug cartels in Mexico would be engaged in giving behavior comparatively less frequently than politically active terrorist organizations, and would engage in such behavior solely for utilitarian purposes. The article will explore the extent to which service provision occurs among Mexican drug cartels, and if ideology may play a role.

Scope of Service Provision

There is evidence that Mexican drug cartels are engaged in ad hoc service provision, though current information seems to indicate that service provision by Mexican cartels generally is less frequent and less formalized than service provision by Brazilian gangs or Jamaican *dons*. The exception in Mexico may be *La Familia Michoacána*, a cartel that disbanded and then reconfigured itself as the Knights Templar in early 2011 (and hereafter will be referred to as LFM/KT.) It is somewhat inaccurate to refer to *La Familia Michoacána* and Knights Templar as a single organization, since Knights Templar is an offshoot of *La Familia Michoacána* and at times has actively competed with the former organization.¹⁴ However, for simplicity's sake in this article I refer to the organizations jointly because of the similarity in service provision and ideology across Knights Templar and its "mother" organization *La Familia Michoacána*, and a level of continuity in the organizations' services, tactics, and leadership. In the instances where the article refers to the organizations individually, it referring to the organization before Knights Templar was formed, or because there is a distinguishing characteristic to note.

LFM/KT seems to be engaged in more extensive and formalized efforts at service provision. However, it is important to note that of the types of services listed in Table 1, only one (drug rehabilitation clinics) was found to be offered only by LFM/KT, and the content analysis generated reports that all of the major cartels in Mexico (Sinaloa, Tijuana/Arellano-Felix organization, Juárez/Vicente Carrillo Fuentes organization, Beltrán Leyva organization, Los Zetas, Gulf, and LFM/KT) have offered at least one service, even if only on a one-time or ad hoc basis.

Table 1: Scope of Service Provision by Mexican Drug Cartels

Short-term relief	Emergency food aid, housing, medication, etc.
Health services	Operation of drug rehabilitation clinics (LFM/KT)

¹³ Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's social jihad.;" Flanigan, "Charity as resistance.;" Flanigan, "Nonprofit service provision by insurgent organizations.;" Hamzeh, In the Path of Hizbullah; Harik, "Between Islam and the state; Levitt, Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad; Levitt, "Hamas from cradle to grave.;" Usher, "Historical development of Hizballah.;" Ora Szekely, "Social Services as Advertising."

¹⁴ June S. Beittel, "Mexico's drug trafficking organizations," *Trends in Organized Crime* (2012): 15.

	only); purchasing of health services/medications for individuals on an ad hoc basis
Infrastructure	Building and repairing churches, homes, roads, schools
Provision of Utilities	One-time payments/improvements enabling provision of water and electricity
Education	Provision of books and supplies for students
Agricultural assistance	Agricultural loans, assistance with applying for federal agricultural assistance from Mexican government
Loans	Low-interest personal and business loans
Justice Administration	Justice administration and dispute adjudication

In contrast to the extensive and highly formalized systems of service provision among some terrorist organizations, service provision by Mexican drug cartels is relatively less frequent, less visible, and shorter-term. As one expert who was interviewed noted,

“The patronage here usually takes the form of throwing some money around. So the local drug lord might pay for refurbishing the church or building a school, that sort of thing. Not the soup kitchens and more mundane, sustained stuff...”

However, the fact that organizations not involved in traditional politics are engaged in service provision of any sort is of interest. In some cases the level of aid is considerable, ample enough that one Mexican journalist says of certain cartel leaders, “they dignify the way of life of the poor.”¹⁵

Most reports of service provision and giving activity by cartels such as the Gulf Cartel, Los Zetas, the Sinaloa Cartel, and others are described as short-term or one-time events. These include public works projects such as repairing churches and schools, paving roads, creating parks and community centers, and building sidewalks, and occasionally larger scale projects such as ensuring the provision of electricity or potable water.¹⁶ More common are events such as giveaways of toys, food, or clothing to the poor.¹⁷ Cartels are also often reported to be involved in agricultural finance, either through grants, low-interest loans, or assistance with seeking support from Mexico’s Ministry of Agriculture. In exchange farmers are expected to shift at least part of their agricultural production to marijuana or poppies.¹⁸

¹⁵ Gabriel Zendejas, “Policía: En la mira...” *La Prensa* (April 22, 2009).

¹⁶ Expert interview, 2011; William Finnegan, “Silver or Lead,” *New Yorker* (May 31, 2010): 38-51; Kevin Flores, “Marijuana Greenhouse,” *Ovaciones* (March 15, 2010); Miguel Granados, “Blessed Money Laundering,” *Excelsior*. (April 8, 2008); Vivian Kerlegan “Cartel Parties,” *La Cronica* (May 7, 2006); Zendejas, “Policía: En la mira...”

¹⁷ Expert interviews, 2011; Finnegan, “Silver or Lead.”

¹⁸ Jose Aguilar “El narco financia al campo, afirma el Tribunal Agrario,” *El Sol de México* (February 28, 2011); Carlos Avilés, “Organized crime is taking over the field,” *El Universal* (February 17, 2010); Cruz López Aguilar “Suple narcotráfico la falta de créditos a campesinos,” *El Heraldo de Tabasco* (February 20, 2010); Organización Editorial Mexicana, “Aumenta participación de campesinos en el narcotráfico,” *El Sol de Cordoba* (August 26, 2008); Nayeli Roldán, “El Narco, modelo ideal para los campesinos mexicano,” *Milenio Online* (October 29, 2010).

As one interview participant notes, “most “social works” carried out by Mexican cartels are done largely for propaganda purposes.” Another expert states,

“I wouldn't call their behavior altruistic; rather I think they're being highly strategic and are using their impressive financial power to win hearts and minds, or at least delegitimize the federal and state government.”

According to STRATFOR Global Intelligence, cartels in Mexico generally do not provide large scale services or make a strong effort to gain popular support from the local population. Cartel leaders do occasionally attempt to “buy loyalty” from local residents by paying for basic necessities or for a child’s education, and cartel leaders have been known to provide financial support to the families of members who were captured or killed while performing services for the cartel.¹⁹ As one interview participant indicates, “The behavior of the cartels is capitalism in its purest form.” As such, cartels engage in short-term, one-time charitable events that serve a public relations purpose, not unlike the charitable activity of many businesses and corporations.²⁰

In contrast to most other Mexican cartels stands *La Familia Michoacána*, a cartel originating in the Mexican state of Michoacán, from which a second organization Knights Templar emerged in early 2011. LFM/KT provides many of the same services as other cartels, such as aid to the poor for food and medicine, public works projects, and low-interest loans.²¹ As one Michoacán resident notes, “If you were sick and had no money, they'd take you to the hospital and pay for medicine. If you couldn't afford tortillas, they'd buy some for you.”²² However, according to expert opinion and media reports, LFM/KT offers public services on a larger scale, such as more wide spread provision of low-interest loans, and operating over a dozen rehabilitation centers for alcoholics and drug addicts.²³ As will be discussed later, it is thought that these rehabilitation centers serve as recruiting ground for the cartel.²⁴ In addition, LFM/KT is reported to be engaged in governance activities far beyond the social aid activities that are the topic of this article, including regulating the prices of agricultural products and establishing harvesting periods, giving licenses for forestry activities, giving permits for festivals and religious events, and creating sanctions and punishing crimes such as domestic violence and theft.²⁵ While it is not yet empirically certain that state functions have been *replaced* by those offered by LFM/KT, it is clear that many citizens rely upon the parallel resources provided by the cartel.²⁶ In fact, given this array of parallel governance activities, Aguirre and Herrera go

¹⁹ STRATFOR Global Intelligence, *Organized Crime in Mexico* (Austin, TX: STRATFOR Global Intelligence, 2008).

²⁰ Expert interview, 2011.

²¹ Expert interviews, 2011; Finnegan, “Silver or Lead.”; Grayson, George W., *La Familia Drug Cartel: Implications for U.S.-Mexican Security* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2010).

²² Finnegan, “Silver or Lead.”

²³ Expert interview, 2011; Finnegan, “Silver or Lead.”; Grayson, *La Familia Drug Cartel*.

²⁴ Aranda, “Stories of Drug Trafficking in Rural Mexico.”; Grayson, *La Familia Drug Cartel*.

²⁵ Jerjes Aguirre and Hugo Amador Herrera, “Institutional weakness and organized crime in Mexico: the case of Michoacán,” *Trends in Organized Crime* (2013):16; Salvador Maldonado Aranda, “Stories of Drug Trafficking in Rural Mexico: Territories, Drugs and Cartels in Michoacán,” *Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe / European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* (2013): 94

²⁶ Aguirre and Herrera, “Institutional weakness and organized crime.”

so far as to say “drug trafficking is not a primary activity of *La Familia Michoacána*.”²⁷

LFM/KT’s more state-like quality is perhaps most apparent with the cartel’s administration of justice in Michoacán. Administration and enforcement of justice is not unknown among criminal organizations, and such extralegal governance activities occur in many countries including Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, and Russia.²⁸ LFM/KT first became nationally known in Mexico when members appeared at a nightclub in Uruapan, Michoacán in 2006 and dumped five severed human heads onto the dance floor. Local residents indicate that these were the heads of five men involved in the rape and murder of a local woman romantically involved with a LFM/KT member.²⁹ LFM/KT left a note behind indicating that “The Family doesn’t kill for money; it doesn’t kill women; it doesn’t kill innocent people; only those who deserve to die, die. Everyone should know. . . this is divine justice.”³⁰ Since that time, LFM/KT has become heavily involved in enforcing social order.³¹ In fact, in a newspaper advertisement, LFM/KT explains its origins as follows:

“This organization sprang from the firm commitment to fight the out-of-control crime that existed in our state...People who work decently at any activity need not worry. We respect them, but we will not allow people from here or from other states to commit crimes or try to control other types of activities.”³²

LFM/KT conducts its own investigations of crimes, determines individuals’ guilt, and administers punishment as it sees fit.³³ As a school teacher notes,

“They’re a second law...Maybe the first law. If you need to collect a debt, you go to them. They’ll charge you a fee, but you’ll get your money. The police work for them. When they arrest people, they don’t take them to police headquarters but to *La Familia*.”³⁴

The scope of LFM/KT’s activities has reached such breadth that an American official in Mexico described the organization as looking less like a cartel and more like an insurgency.³⁵

Utilitarian Motivations: Silencing, Coercing, and Generating Support

²⁷ Ibid, 225.

²⁸ Arias, “The Dynamics of Criminal Governance.”; Arias, “Faith in our Neighbors.”; O. Bandiera, “Land reform, the market for protection, and the origins of the Sicilian Mafia: theory and evidence,” *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* (2003):19; Gambetta, Diego, *The Sicilian Mafia: The Business of Private Protection* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993); Hill, *The Japanese mafia*; Jaffe, “Crime and Insurgent Citizenship.”; Tzvetkova, “Aspects of the evolution of extra-legal protection.”; Varese, *The Russian Mafia*; Wang, “The Chinese mafia.”

²⁹ Expert interviews, 2011; Grayson, *La Familia Drug Cartel*.

³⁰ Grayson, *La Familia Drug Cartel*, 1.

³¹ Expert interview, 2011; Finnegan, “Silver or Lead.”

³² Grayson, *La Familia Drug Cartel*, 102-103.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ As quoted in Finnegan, “Silver or Lead.”

³⁵ Ibid.

One way to categorize service provision by violent organizations is as a utilitarian tool to gain the acceptance and compliance of the community in which they operate. Communities do not necessarily accept or support the violent activities of organizations wholeheartedly, even in situations where politically motivated organizations such as terrorist groups claim to be fighting to address community members' social and political concerns. One would imagine support is even lower in communities where Mexican drug cartels operate since the cartels generally do not claim to address the communities' social or political grievances. In addition, the violence generated by drug wars alienates drug cartels from local communities. This gives communities more reason to cooperate with law enforcement, meaning criminal organizations have an even greater incentive to encourage the community's tolerance of their illicit activities.³⁶

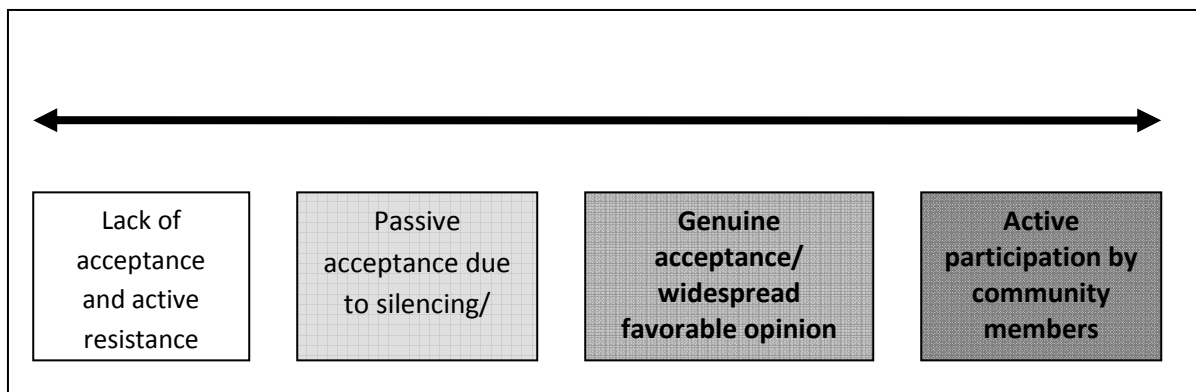
The degree to which communities accept the activities of violent organizations is variable, spanning across a continuum that ranges from a complete lack of acceptance and active resistance to violent organizations; to passive acceptance of violent activities due to subtle silencing and coercion; to widespread genuine acceptance and the general favorable opinion from the community; to the active participation of the community in violent activities. Violent organizations can use charitable service provision as a tool to move community members along this continuum of acceptance.³⁷ In the case of Mexican drug cartels, the services, employment, and other economic benefits offered by the cartel can serve to move community members in a rightward direction along this continuum in the absence of social and political goals (see Figure 1).³⁸

Figure 1: Continuum of Community Acceptance of Violent Activities by Community Members

³⁶ Kostelnik and Skarbek, "The governance institutions of a drug trafficking organization."

³⁷ Flanigan, "Charity as resistance."

³⁸ Ibid.



Service provision can be a useful tool in this regard because of the power dynamics that exist in service settings. Relationships between service providers and service recipients are governed by the amount of power each can bring to the exchange, and the amount of power a service provider has over the recipient is a direct function of the recipient's ability to obtain aid elsewhere.³⁹ Service recipients, especially the poor, often are not in a position to choose which organizations to interact with, nor are they in a position to turn away services that meet their basic human needs for food, medical care, housing, or education. The common deficiency of state services or other service providers in low income communities increases reliance on violent providers and increases the community's dependence on violent actors, particularly in countries that lack a well-developed welfare state. When community members lack other options for services, they possess little if any power and have few real options for choice.⁴⁰ Many service recipients will be reluctant to express discontent with the organization upon which they depend for their very survival, and may be willing, be it eagerly or reluctantly, to do their bidding.⁴¹ As Levitt notes when discussing service provision by a terrorist organization, "Recipients of such aid know better than to ask questions when asked for a favor by Hamas."⁴²

A void in state service provision provides an opening for violent actors to gain the allegiance of the community and undermine the authority of the state. It is important to note that in Mexico, in some cases cartels themselves have created the void by disrupting the state's ability to engage in basic public service and security functions.⁴³ However, scholars from Michoacán attest that it was an original underlying weakness of bureaucratic and political institutions in the state that allowed organized crime and drug trafficking to flourish.⁴⁴ Ideally, researchers would be able to map cartel service provision against state service provision, as well as against the activities of rival cartels, to see whether economic wellbeing and/or group competition are determinant of cartels' choice of service

³⁹ Yeshenkel Hasenfeld, "Power in social work practice," *Social Service Review* 61:3 (1987): 469–483.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Flanigan, "Charity as resistance."

⁴² Levitt, "Hamas from Cradle to Grave," 6.

⁴³ Anthony T. Bryan, "Democracy and Security: Observations from Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean," *Latin American Policy* 3:1 (2012): 88–101.

⁴⁴ Aguirre and Herrera, "Institutional weakness and organized crime."; Jerjes Aguirre Ochoa and Zoe Infante Jiménez, "Police Force Crisis and State Legitimacy in México," *Asian Social Science* 8:15 (2012).

provision as a strategy. At present, sufficiently extensive data on cartel service provision simply does not exist, and security concerns hinder its collection.

However, the important role that an absence of state services plays is noted by experts in Mexico, and experts repeatedly document high levels of poverty in Michoacán, the Mexican state where we see the most evidence of large-scale cartel service provision.⁴⁵ An expert interviewed about LFM/KT indicates that this cartel has filled a vacuum where the state and the Catholic Church have failed to provide for the community. LFM/KT operates as a “shadow government”, and has taken over what local government and what local human services agencies normally would do. In doing so, LFM/KT “has this golden opportunity. The state has just dished it up.”⁴⁶ This expert described a resident in Michoacán who told him “These people are crazy, and I am afraid of them, but if I need something they are the only game in town.”⁴⁷

This is not unlike the state incapacity often described in communities where terrorist service providers operate. Referring to armed groups like Amal and Hezbollah in Lebanon, Fawaz notes,

“The absence of the Lebanese State in providing services and the poverty of the residents opened spaces in the suburbs for various political parties to win the support of residents by providing these missing services.”⁴⁸

Whereas the Lebanese state has been slow to address the concerns of its Shiite population, Hezbollah’s “vast network of womb-to-tomb services... put Hezbollah—or Party of God—on the map as the agency that gets things done.”⁴⁹

Providing services that the Mexican state fails to provide, and providing these services well, allows cartels like LFM/KT to delegitimize government and gain genuine local support.⁵⁰ A telling quote about a conversation with a resident of Michoacán demonstrates this.

“The heavy deployment of troops and federal police in the area had forced *La Familia* to lie low. So who would look after the poor now? The government? Medina gave me an arch look, daring me to answer the question. No, it would not... Local police were poorly paid and, therefore, incompetent and corrupt. When *La Familia* was in charge, nobody stepped out of line. You didn't even need to lock your door at night.”⁵¹

⁴⁵ Michoacán as one of the poorest states in the country, with a poverty rate of 54.4 percent in 2012 and an overall Human Development Index score of .6958 in 2010, the sixth and fourth lowest scores in Mexico, see Ian Kowalski, “Security Situation in Mexico Muddled by Citizen Community Policing,” *Washington Report on the Hemisphere*, 30:17 (2013).

⁴⁶ Expert interview, 2011.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Mona M. Fawaz, “Agency and Ideology in the Service Provision of Islamic Organizations in the Southern Suburb of Beirut, Lebanon.” ; Paper presented at NGOs and Governance in the Arab Countries Conference, Cairo, Egypt, 2000.

⁴⁹ Quote from Prusher, Ilene R., “Through charity, Hizballah charms Lebanon,” *Christian Science Monitor* (April 19, 2000); Kramer, Martin, “The Moral Logic of Hizballah,” I. Cronin, *Confronting Fear: A History of Terrorism* (New York: Thunder’s Mouth Press, 2002): 282–293.

⁵⁰ Ibid; Kostelnik and Skarbek, “The governance institutions of a drug trafficking organization.”

⁵¹ Quoted in Finnegan, “Silver or Lead,” 1.

In line with this somewhat nostalgic-sounding recollection of LFM/KT's rule, Grayson states that some mothers in Michoacán praise the cartel for disciplining their disorderly adolescent children.⁵²

In Mexico, cartels' services are likely to ensure the compliance and silence of the local community. Referring to Joaquin "el Chapo" ("Shorty") Guzmán, the head of the Sinaloa Cartel, a U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency agent told the Associated Press, "With Chapo, he's got the whole Robin Hood thing going...People in close proximity to him might not be motivated to turn him in."⁵³ However, there is some indication that LFM/KT also uses its services as a tool for recruitment, using religion in its rehabilitation facilities to convert addicts into soldiers for the cartel.⁵⁴ LFM/KT's recruiters present addicts with a message of hope, offering the opportunity to enter a rehabilitation center and shed their addiction, and afterward receive a job, salary, and membership in a social group. Individuals enter a two-month Evangelical Christian program anchored in periods of silence and intensive Bible study. If they complete this training, they become part of the cartel and augment LFM/KT's ability to move drugs through Mexico and the United States.⁵⁵ This intensive training period also allows the cartel to assess individuals' loyalty to their organization before making them members.⁵⁶

Whether as a recruitment method or to generate good will, LFM/KT has shown an interest in advertising its work on behalf of the poor in Michoacán in an effort to demonstrate the value it adds to the community.⁵⁷ Consider the following public message, in which the newly configured Knights Templar described its efforts to regulate food prices in the region,

"During past days, through an invitation, our brotherhood achieved a lowering of the prices of meat and tortillas from the retailers, thus in effect lowering the cost of these products. The invitation to lower prices was accepted by our commercial and business friends and recognized by the neediest people of our state, being that for this action neither pressure, nor blackmail nor payments were made..."⁵⁸

One could reasonably question whether this price reduction was truly as non-coercive as LFM/KT described. Nonetheless, the organization clearly expects this news to be well received and generate good will among the people of the region.

Ideology as Motivation

Many violent political organizations, such as terrorist organizations, have clear religious ties and unambiguous political and social goals. These goals make an ideological motivation for service provision easy to understand. Both charitable and violent activities by these organizations are depicted as a response to political and social exclusion and grievance, and one can imagine these two types of

⁵² Grayson, *La Familia Drug Cartel*.

⁵³ Olson, Alexandra and Mendoza, Martha, "Mexico's 'El Chapo' thrives 10 years after escape," *Associated Press* (January 18, 2011). Guzman was eventually arrested in February 2014.

⁵⁴ Finnegan, "Silver or Lead"; Grayson, *La Familia Drug Cartel*.

⁵⁵ Grayson, *La Familia Drug Cartel*.

⁵⁶ Kostelnik and Skarbek, "The governance institutions of a drug trafficking organization."

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Aguirre and Herrera, "Institutional weakness and organized crime," 231.

activities as choices along a spectrum of possible actions that can be used to address political and/or social concerns.⁵⁹ In addition, many religious traditions call upon their adherents to serve the poor, so one can understand how organizations that express an explicitly religious orientation might be engaged in service provision and charitable activity.⁶⁰

In contrast, it would seem that Mexican drug cartels would be involved in service provision solely for utilitarian purposes and that ideology would not play a role. However, LFM/KT has a religious orientation, and presents itself as a representative and protector of the people of Michoacán, opening a window that ideological motivations might be at work for this organization. In a newspaper advertisement LFM/KT posed the question, "Who are we?" answering,

"Workers from the Tierra Caliente region in the state of Michoacán, organized by the need to end the oppression, the humiliation to which we have constantly been subjected by people who have always had power."⁶¹

LFM/KT, who often communicates with the public through newspapers or publicly displayed banners, also has insisted that the organization will disband once the Mexican government demonstrates that it will adequately address the needs of the people of Michoacán. These types of statements suggest that LFM/KT claims to be a representative voice for citizens in Michoacán.⁶² Though as a large commercial organization LFM/KT's social aid still may be rational and utilitarian, through these statements the organization at least purports to address the economic, political, and social grievances of the people of Michoacán.

While LFM/KT does not propose to enter mainstream elective politics, these statements nonetheless have a political premise that is unlike the motivations of other cartels in Mexico. Drug cartels' relationships with the Mexican government are characterized by high degrees of collusion, corruption, and sometimes violence.⁶³ Cartels have a great deal of influence over the activities of politicians and the bureaucracy, with some experts arguing that cartels exercise sufficient control over the state to qualify as state capture.⁶⁴ In some cases, criminal gangs in Mexico use violence to impose their will upon elected officials and the bureaucracy.⁶⁵ Sullivan and Elkus go so far as to warn that Mexico is becoming "a criminal-state largely controlled by narco-gangs."⁶⁶ However, while many

⁵⁹Flanigan, "Charity as resistance."; Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's social jihad."

⁶⁰ Shawn Flanigan, *For the Love of God: NGOs and Religious Identity in a Violent World* (Sterling, VA: Kumarian Press, 2010.)

⁶¹ Finnegan, "Silver or Lead."

⁶² Aguirre and Herrera, "Institutional weakness and organized crime."; Expert interview, 2011.

⁶³ Jennifer Hazen, "Gangs and Their Fiefdoms: Challenges to the State?" paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Montreal (March 16th-19th, 2011); For interesting analysis of *La Familia Michoacana's* relationships with the Mexican state, see Jerjes Aguirre and Hugo Amador Herrera, "Institutional weakness and organized crime in Mexico: the case of Michoacán," *Trends in Organized Crime* (2013):16; Luis Jorge Garay-Salamanca and Eduardo Salcedo-Albarán, "Institutional impact of criminal networks in Colombia and Mexico," *Crime Law and Social Change* (2012): 57.

⁶⁴ Expert interviews 2010-2011; Hazen, "Gangs and their Fiefdoms."; Adam David Morton, "Failed-State Status and the War on Drugs in Mexico," *Global Dialogue* (2011): 94.

⁶⁵ Bryan, "Democracy and Security."

⁶⁶ John P. Sullivan and Adam Elkus, "State of Siege: Mexico's Criminal Insurgency," *Small Wars Journal* (2008): 1.

Mexican cartels are very strongly entwined with the Mexican state and certainly are savvy political actors, most do not claim to voice community grievances.

LFM/KT also has a decidedly religious orientation. Members of the cartel reportedly attend church regularly, carry Bibles, and distribute Bibles in local government offices.⁶⁷ *La Familia Michoacána* spiritual leader Nazario Moreno Gonzalez was said to be a Jehovah's Witness convert who penned his own book of religious teachings, sometimes referred to as a "bible".⁶⁸ One expert describes this book as a "religious self-help tome mixed with old-time social justice sloganeering."⁶⁹ Moreno Gonzalez is reportedly highly influenced by John Eldredge, an American evangelist and author of the self-help bestseller *Wild at Heart*, who promotes a highly masculine, "muscular" form of Christianity.⁷⁰ The book is reportedly studied in Spanish translation at LFM/KT training camps.⁷¹ The more recently created Knights Templar has initiation rituals for new members that integrate religious symbols, such as wearing white robes with red crosses.⁷²

The cartel's administration of justice mentioned earlier is described as "divine justice" that is administered to those LFM/KT considers objectionable such as rapists and thieves.⁷³ The cartel's leaders haze recruits by requiring them to engage in particularly bloody and gruesome acts so they are, "prepared to do the Lord's work—that is, safeguarding women, combating competing cartels, and preventing the local sale of drugs," and leaders justify executions as "orders from the Lord."⁷⁴ While it is not clear the degree to which LFM/KT members or the public adhere to this particular religious philosophy, LFM/KT leaders certainly have used religion as a rhetorical strategy to justify some of their most brutal acts. While LFM/KT does not appear to discuss religious ideology as a motivating factor for its charitable work, it couches its policing, punishment, and conflict adjudication activities as part of a religious effort to purify Michoacán of crime, drug use, and immoral behavior.

Even *La Familia Michoacána's* new name Knights Templar seems to have been chosen with attention to its ideological goals. The banners the organization used to announce its name change declared, "Our commitment with society will be the: safeguarding of order, preventing robberies, kidnappings and extortions and to shield the state from rival organizations."⁷⁵ LFM/KT expert George Grayson notes,

"It's an interesting choice. The Knights Templar were known as a charitable organization in the 12th century and were even recognized by the pope in the 1130s for their good deeds. Also, they were the most

⁶⁷ Kostelnik and Skarbek, "The governance institutions of a drug trafficking organization.;" Grayson, *La Familia Drug Cartel*.

⁶⁸ Expert interview, 2011; Grayson, *La Familia Drug Cartel*.

⁶⁹ Expert interview, 2011.

⁷⁰ Ibid; Finnegan, "Silver or Lead"; Grayson, *La Familia Drug Cartel*.

⁷¹ Finnegan, "Silver or Lead."

⁷² Aguirre and Herrera, "Institutional weakness and organized crime."

⁷³ Grayson, *La Familia Drug Cartel*.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 37.

⁷⁵ Dave Gibson, "The Knights Templar Cartel?" *Examiner* March 17, 2011.

vicious warriors in the Crusades. That may be the message they are trying to send.”⁷⁶

Reconciling Service and Violence

While cartel violence is not the subject of this article per se, it is worth mentioning the dissonance some may feel when presented with both the social aid cartels provide and the extraordinary violence they use. Mexican drug cartels are notorious for their violent tactics, and stories of beheadings, mass graves, and other atrocities are all too common. In addition to the elaborate community services it provides, LFM/KT makes avid use of violent tactics. In fact, LFM/KT is particularly known for its use of extreme, symbolic violence, and in 2009 was declared Mexico’s most violent drug trafficking organization by Mexico’s attorney general. *La Familia Michoacána*’s former spiritual leader Nazario Moreno González, killed in 2010 in a battle with Mexican federal police, was known by the alias “*El Más Loco*” or “The Craziest One” because of his violent acts.⁷⁷ Yet in spite of this brutality, when González died, the community marched in his honor, carrying signs conveying their esteem for González and *La Familia Michoacána*.⁷⁸

This is not to say residents of Michoacán are entirely accepting of the violent acts of LFM/KT. Perhaps most illustrative of this are the self-defense units that have emerged in Mexico to impose a sort of vigilante justice upon drug cartels and other groups engaged in practices found objectionable. These volunteer vigilante groups have emerged in part as a response to cartel violence and extortion, and are particularly numerous in the states of Guerrero and Michoacán. Thought to operate in at least two dozen municipalities, these groups patrol towns, make arrests, and punish those they deem criminals.⁷⁹ As Matloff and Orlinsky explain, “Many villagers welcome vigilantes as the only answer to the drug violence that has killed so many thousands of Mexicans that hard numbers are impossible to track.”⁸⁰ However, these groups pose their own threat to security, with rumors that self-defense units may be sponsored by a rival cartel or wealthy property owners. The types of sophisticated weaponry self-defense volunteers display feeds these suspicions.⁸¹ In early 2014, Mexican troops were sent to disarm vigilante groups fighting with the Knights Templar in Michoacán, but ultimately allowed them to join Mexican forces in an effort to decapitate Knights Templar.⁸²

Since both service and violence can be used as tools of social control, perhaps there is not much to reconcile after all. Kostelnik and Skarbek explicitly describe both charitable acts and threats of violence as economically rational choices drug trafficking organizations make in an effort to reduce community resistance to their activities. As these authors explain, the benefits of service provision lure the

⁷⁶ Ibid, 1.

⁷⁷ Beittel, “Mexico’s drug trafficking organizations.”; Kostelnik and Skarbek, “The governance institutions of a drug trafficking organization.”

⁷⁸ Kostelnik and Skarbek, “The governance institutions of a drug trafficking organization.”

⁷⁹ Kowalski, “Security Situation in Mexico Muddled.”; Judith Matloff and Katie Orlinsky, “Mexico: Vigilante Justice,” *World Policy Journal* (2014): 31

⁸⁰ Matloff and Orlinsky, “Mexico: Vigilante Justice,” 63.

⁸¹ Kowalski, “Security Situation in Mexico Muddled.”; Judith Matloff and Katie Orlinsky, “Mexico: Vigilante Justice.”

⁸² “Mexican army begins disarming vigilantes in Michoacan,” *BBC News* (April 28, 2014); Matloff and Orlinsky, “Mexico: Vigilante Justice.”

community to cooperate with LFM/KT, while simultaneously fear of violence deters community members from turning against the organization.⁸³ Even formal states both provide services and use violence to control behavior, and less democratic states are well known for using violence ruthlessly and indiscriminately at times. Given this, perhaps a combination of service provision and violence is simply to be expected of organizations engaged in extralegal governance.

Conclusion

Implications of Criminal Service Provision for Citizenship and the State

This article serves as a preliminary examination of some reasons violent groups are engaged in charity and public service provision, and the ways in which violent groups use service provision as a tool. While the use of service provision by terrorist organizations to gain political support and military recruits has been acknowledged for quite some time, the fact that the strategy is used by other violent groups without political aspirations is worthy of further study. This is because public service provision by non-government actors has important implications. As Cammett and MacLean note, non-state provision of services has important political consequences including implications for state capacity, equity of access to social welfare, and experiences of citizenship.⁸⁴

Public service provision by non-state actors is essential in much of the developing world, especially considering that in many cases states in the less developed world provide very little to citizens. One might consider, for example, the essential roles that NGOs, religious congregations, and others play in providing aid in areas with high poverty and low levels of state service provision. However, service provision by non-state actors is thought to have a number of possible negative political consequences for states and for citizens. Some argue that non-state service provision can undermine state capacity for service provision by hindering the development of the state's own capabilities and increasing reliance on subcontractors and other actors.⁸⁵ Non-state service provision may limit equity in terms of the quality and quantity of services accessible to different members of the community, and the qualitative experience of these accessing services. Non-state provision may change citizens' experiences of reciprocity with the state, thereby changing their perception and practice of their citizenship rights and duties.⁸⁶

Given that the assertions above are made about a wide variety of non-state service providers such as churches and other religious bodies, informal charities, and NGOs, one can imagine how these consequences are further complicated when the non-state provider under discussion is a violent and/or criminal group. Bryan discusses the creation of alternatively governed spaces by transnational and localized criminal organizations in Mexico and Central America, where the criminal organizations serve as the effective administrations of a territory by

⁸³ Kostelnik and Skarbek, "The governance institutions of a drug trafficking organization"

⁸⁴ Melani Claire Cammett and Lauren M. MacLean, "Introduction: the Political Consequences of Non-state Social Welfare in the Global South," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 46 (2011): 1–21.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

collecting “taxes” and disciplining individuals who impede the organizations’ illegal activities.⁸⁷ There is ample literature on such extralegal governance activities by criminal organizations and other alternative authority structures.⁸⁸ Because criminal organizations rather than state institutions control residents’ behavior, alternatively governed spaces in Mexico and other parts of Latin America pose a threat to state sovereignty and the practice of democracy. Bryan goes so far as to say this dynamic “is more than a national security problem; it is a development problem that goes to the heart of democratic governance.”⁸⁹ When extralegal governance also includes the provision of social aid and public services, the problem is compounded as loyalty to the state has more potential to be divided.

Service provision by violent groups has important implications for democratic accountability and for security and stability within states. As discussed earlier, sole service provision creates dependency on a single provider and grants service providers significant power over service recipients. When service providers are criminal, violent groups, this power and dependency can have an important impact on security and stability. In addition, democracy is weakened when citizens turn to alternative sources, particularly sources that pose a threat to security, for public service provision. When cartels or terrorist organizations provide services that a government is unwilling or unable to provide, these organizations upset the social contract between citizen and the state. Government legitimacy is threatened because its leaders not only are not held accountable by the citizenry; they are no longer viewed as necessary by citizens.⁹⁰ As Hazen notes, “The more citizens that must seek security and other goods from outside the democratic system, the less they will support that system.”⁹¹

It is important to note that nonstate services by violent providers are complex and cannot be characterized *solely* as having negative implications for citizenship. Service provision by political actors is not always indicative of a lack of state political control, but may take place with the complicity and even cooperation of government. Arias described networks among criminals, civic leaders, politicians, and police in Rio de Janeiro’s *favelas* that actually serve to link favela residents into Rio’s broader political and social system in ways that may not be possible otherwise.⁹² However, most examples are less positive for citizens and for state legitimacy. Jaffe explains that in Jamaica, criminal organizations function in a state-like manner, and inner-city residents have come to understand their rights in relation to the local *don*, turning to the *don* for justice, economic and physical security, and protection of their rights. Jaffe argues that while donmanship does provide some of the rights, responsibilities,

⁸⁷ Bryan, “Democracy and Security.”

⁸⁸ Bandiera, “Land reform, the market for protection.”; Anne Clunan and Harold Trinkunas, *Ungoverned spaces: Alternatives to state authority in an era of softened sovereignty* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010); Gambetta, *The Sicilian Mafia*; Hill, *The Japanese mafia*; Tzvetkova, “Aspects of the evolution of extra-legal protection in Bulgaria (1989–1999).”; Federico, *The Russian Mafia*; S. Skaperdas, “The political economy of organized crime?” *Journal of Public Law* (2001): 20; R. Sobel and B. Osoba, B. “Youth gangs as pseudo-governments: implications for violent crime,” *Southern Economics Journal* (2009): 75; Wang, “The Chinese mafia.”

⁸⁹ Bryan, “Democracy and Security,” 92.

⁹⁰ Hazen, “Gangs and their Fiefdoms.”

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 13.

⁹² Arias, “The Dynamics of Criminal Governance.”

and participation commonly associated with citizenship, the system does so in a manner that is limited and undemocratic, ultimately providing little equality and recourse to residents.⁹³

A better understanding of the implications of service provision by violent groups should prove useful to policy makers and practitioners, particularly to criminal justice professionals and government officials engaged in decision making regarding community service provision. If service provision is shown to be an effective means of generating support in low-income communities, aid can be used strategically to undermine violent organizations and engender loyalty to other political actors by strategically funding alternative NGO service providers or local government social welfare agencies.

⁹³ Jaffe, "Crime and Insurgent Citizenship."

Appendix A: Newspapers Included in Content Analysis

Name of Newspaper	Web address
Cambio	http://www.diariocambio.com.mx/
Centros de medios independientes	http://mexico.indymedia.org/
Critica	http://www.critica.com.mx
Cronica De Campeche	http://www.cronicacampeche.com/noticias/index.php
Diario Chiapas Hoy	http://www.chiapashoy.com/notashoy/
Diario de Mexico	http://www.diariodemexico.com.mx/
Diario de Queretaro	http://www.oem.com.mx/diariodequeretaro/
Diario De Quintanaroo	http://www.dqr.com.mx/
Diario De Tampico	http://impreso.milenio.com/Tampico/2010/02/09/
Diario Del Sur	http://www.oem.com.mx/diariodelsur/
Diario La Verdad	http://www.laverdadquintanaroo.com.mx/
Diario Rotativo	http://www.rotativo.com.mx
Dossier Político	http://www.dossierpolitico.com/
El Bravo	http://www.elbravomatamoros.com/
El Cinco	http://www.elcinco.net/
El Corregidor	http://www.elcorregidor.com.mx/macnews-core00003/
El Diario de Chihuahua	http://www.eldiariodechihuahua.com.mx
El Diario De Ciudad Victoria	http://www.eldiariodevictoria.com.mx/
El Diario de Colima	www.eldiariodecolima.com.mx
El Economista	http://eleconomista.com.mx/
El Fronterizo Del Sur	http://www.elfronterizosur.com/
El Grafico	http://www.elgraficotam.com.mx/
El Heraldo Aguas Calientes	http://www.heraldoags.net/www/
El Imparcial	http://www.elimparcial.com/Home.aspx
El Informador	http://www.informador.com.mx
El Manana	http://www.elmanana.com.mx
El Manana De Reynosa	http://www.elmananarey.com/
El Mexicano Gran Diario	http://www.el-mexicano.com.mx/inicio.htm
El Norte	http://www.elnorte.com/
El Periodico De Quintanaroo	http://www.elperiodico.com.mx/
El Porvenir	http://www.elporvenir.com.mx
El Regional Buen Dia	http://www.elregionalbuendia.com.mx
El Siglo de Torreon	http://www.elsiglodetorreon.com.mx
El Sol De Mazatlan	http://www.oem.com.mx/elsoldemazatlan/
El Sol de Mexico	http://www.oem.com.mx/elsoldemex/
El Sol De San Juan De	http://www.oem.com.mx/elsoldesanjuandelrio/

Rio	
El Sol De Sinaloa	http://www.oem.com.mx/elsoldesinaloa/
El Sol de Tijuana	http://www.elsoldetijuana.com.mx
El Sudcaliforniano	http://www.oem.com.mx/elsudcaliforniano/
El Sur De Campeche	http://www.elsur.com.mx/
El Universal	http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/noticias.html
En Linea Directa	http://www.enlineadirecta.info/
Esfera Informativa	http://www.esferainformativa.com.mx/
Estesur	http://www.estesur.com/
Esto	http://www.oem.com.mx.esto/
Excelsior	http://www.nuevoexcelsior.com.mx/home
Expresion En Red	http://www.expresionenred.com/
Frontera	http://www.frontera.info/Home.aspx
La Cronica	http://www.lacronica.com/Home.aspx
La Cronica de Hoy	http://www.cronica.com.mx/
La Jornada	http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2010/02/11/index.php
La Jornada De Oriente	http://www.lajornadadeoriente.com.mx/2010/02/12/puebla/puebla.php
La Jornada en Aguascaliente	http://www.lajornadaaguascalientes.com.mx/
La Jornada En Linea	http://www.jornada.unam.mx/ultimas/
La Jornada Guerrero	http://www.lajornadaguerrero.com.mx/2010/02/15/index.php
La Jornada Jalisco	http://www.lajornadajalisco.com.mx/2010/02/15/index.php
La Jornada Michoacan	http://www.lajornadamichoacan.com.mx/2010/02/15/index.php
La Jornada Morelos	http://www.lajornadamorelos.com/
La Jornada San Luis	http://www.lajornadasanluis.com.mx/2010/02/15/index.php
La Jornada Veracruz	http://www.jornadaveracruz.com.mx/
La Jornada Zacatecas	http://www.lajornadazacatecas.com.mx/
La Prensa	http://laprensa.mx/
La Tarde	http://www.latarde.com.mx/
La Tribuna De Campeche	http://www.tribunacampeche.com/
La Verdad Del Sureste	http://www.la-verdad.com.mx
La Voz de la Frontera	http://www.oem.com.mx/lavozdelafrontera/
La Voz De Quintana Roo	http://www.lavozdequintanaroo.com.mx
La Voz Del Sureste	http://www.diariolavozdelsureste.com/lavoz/
Milenio	http://www.milenio.com/mexico/
Ovaciones	http://www.ovaciones.com.mx
Periodico El Orbe	http://elorbe.com/
Reforma	http://www.reforma.com/
Siglo 21	http://www.siglo21.com.mx/
Sipse	http://www.sipse.com/
Tabasco Hoy	http://www.tabascohoy.com.mx/
Tribuna De Los Cabos	http://www.tribunadeloscabos.com.mx/newpage/
Ultima Hora	http://www.ultimahora.com.mx/

Ultimas Noticias
Quintanaroo
Uno mas Uno

<http://www.grooultimasnoticias.com/>
<http://www.unomasuno.com.mx/>

Appendix B: Key Words Used in Content Analysis

Key Word List:	Key Word Combinations:
Asesinatos Cartel/Carteles Cocaína Crimen organizado Drogas ilícitas Guerra contra las drogas Guerra de drogas Heroína Los Zetas Mafia Marihuana Mercado negro Pandillas Narco Asesinatos Narco Guerras Narcos Narco secuestro Narco terrorismo Narco violencia Secuestros Traficantes Trafico de drogas Trafico de personas	Cartel/Carteles y ayuda a la comunidad Los Zetas ayuda a sus familias Mafia la pobreza Narcos los pobres Pandillas Traficantes