An Analysis of Tijuana’s Police Activity Reports Following the Mexican “Narcomenudeo” Reform

Jaime Arredondo
Joint Degree Program Global Public Health
LEPH conference
Amsterdam – 10/6/2014
jarredon@ucsd.edu

Steffanie Strathdee - UCSD
Leo Beletsky – Northeastern University, UCSD
Arnulfo Bañuelos – SSPM Tijuana
Overview

• Background
  – Tijuana and Mexico
  – Public Health and Safety: From Conflict to Collaboration

• Methods
  – Objectives and Hypotheses

• Analysis
  – Preliminary Results
  – Limitations

• Discussion and Next Steps

Source: Jaime Arredondo
Context: Personal Background

• 2005 - 2009 Quintana Roo, Mexico.
  – Chief of Staff, State Ministry of Public Safety.
  – Design and management of the state’s annual budget.

• Current
  – Joint Doctoral Program Global Public Health, 3rd year PhD candidate.
  – Focus: Examining the relationship between policing and public health.

Source: Jaime Arredondo
Theoretical Framework

• Illicit drug use and trafficking \[^{1}\]
  – Violence.
  – Infectious diseases.
  – Mass incarceration.

• Structural factors and risk environment\[^{2}\].
  – Shape attitudes and behaviors.
  – Law and its enforcement\[^{3}\].
  – At high risk - people who inject drugs (PWID)\[^{4}\].

• Need for research on how to integrate public health and safety globally, but especially in Mexico.

Public Health and Safety
Tijuana - Mexico

- Border region.
  - High-risk populations - sex workers, PWID and deportees.[5]
  - Higher HIV prevalence (2X national).
  - Large homeless population.[7]
  - Higher rates of heroin, other drug consumption.[6]
  - Street Injection.

- Policing – risk environment.
  - Arrests associated with receptive syringe sharing.[8].
  - Dispersion of viral infections.
  - Hinders work of public health efforts.
A dual strategy for the drug problem (2006-2012)

- Army enforcing federal law – fight DTOs\textsuperscript{[11]}.  
  - Homicide increase\textsuperscript{[12]}.  
  - Tijuana rate 83 per 100,000 in 2010.
A dual strategy for the drug problem (2006-2012)

- “Narcomenudeo” minimal possession decriminalization reform - 2009.
  - New state crime.
  - 3 strike rule.
  - Lack of knowledge among PWID.[13]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narcotic</th>
<th>Maximum level of personal and immediate doses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opium</td>
<td>2 gr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diacetylmorphine or heroin</td>
<td>50 mg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannabis Sativa, Indica or</td>
<td>5 gr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>500 mg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lysergide (LSD)</td>
<td>0.015 mg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDA, Methylenedioxyamphetamine</td>
<td>Powder, granular or cristal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40 mg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDMA, dl-34-metilendioxi-n-dimetilfeniletamina</td>
<td>40 mg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methamphetamine</td>
<td>40 mg.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. General Health Law, article 479.
Collaboration
UCSD – GH / TJ police

• UCSD-Global Health MoU with Tijuana police (SSPM).
  – Access to crime data for academic research.
  – Provide harm reduction training.
    • Avoiding accidental needle stick injuries (NSI).
    • Recent survey -16% prevalence of ever experiencing a NSI while working on the street.

• The Tijuana police force has around 2,000 officers – among biggest in Mexico.
  – 15 police precincts.
  – Average annual turnover 6.2%.
  – Salaries among the best.

Source: SSPM Tijuana
Objectives and Hypothesis

- Analyze roll out of the “narcomenudeo” reform in Tijuana.
- Measuring changes in policing trends.
- Focusing Drug possession.

  - Enactment modified trends.
  - Political variables play a role.
  - Increased police encounters with PWID.
  - Higher risk of transmission of infectious diseases.

Source: Jaime Arredondo, 2014
Data Sources and Collection

- Municipal police activity reports – Anonymized data.
  - Drug possession, Violent Death, Injuries, Robbery (violent and non-violent) and Car theft.
  - # of events indicator of productivity.

- Two broad categories
  - “Asegurados” – Stopped & Arrested
  - “Turnados” – Arraigned & Charged

Police detains suspect

City judge ruling

Ministerio Publico

Administrative sanction

Narcomenudeo Crime

UES
SECRETARIA DE SEGURIDAD PÚBLICA MUNICIPAL
UNIDAD DE INFORMACIÓN Y ESTADÍSTICAS
Police Arrest Data

Monthly Incidence Report - Turnados

- Drug Possession
- Homicides
- Injuries
- Robbery Violent
- Robbery Non Violent
- Car Theft

August 2010 New Law formally enacted in Baja California State

December 2010, 2013 New Local Government
Drug Possession Data

August 2010 New Law formally enacted in Baja California State

December 2010, 2013 New Local Government
Data analysis
Preliminary results

• Linear statistical model
  – Dependent variable: # Crimes.
  – Control for different factors.
  – Decline before and soon after enacting law.
    • In average 125 fewer arrests.
    • Part of secular trend?
  – Effect dissipates with time.
  – No political effects across all crimes.

Source: INACIPE, 2010
Results in Context

• El Cuete phase IV – PWID Tijuana study.
  – Self-reported data.
  – Socio-economics, risk behaviors, law and police encounters.
  – Longitudinal, mixed methods study.

• Drug user knowledge and experiences
  – “It is illegal to possess any amount of heroin” - 90%
  – “It is illegal to possess clean syringes” - 83%
  – “It is illegal to possess condoms” - 16%
  – “Police conduct does not reflect formal law” - 85%
Limitations

- The law on the street vs the books.
  - Statistical models unable to determine direct causal relations.
  - Data Quality from police statistics[14].
  - Police reform factors[15].
    - Informal rules, lack equipment.
  - Need for additional factors.
    - Mixed Methods approach.

• Statistical model.
  – Variation among police precincts in the city (Panel model).
  – Spatial regression analysis.

• Police Education Program – Occupational Health
  – HIV knowledge, law reform and harm reduction strategies.
  – Promote evidence based policing policies.
Thank you

- Research reported in this publication was supported by the Fogarty International Center of the National Institutes of Health under Award Number D43TW008633.

- Open Society Foundation

- UCSD – CFAR

- Advisors/Mentors UCSD
  - Steffanie Strathdee
  - Leo Beletsky
  - Tommi Gaines
  - David Mares

- The Tijuana Municipal Police Department
  - Arnulfo Bañuelos
  - Victor Alaniz

- The “El Cuete” Participants

Source: Jaime Arredondo, 2014
References

7. Velasco, L., Albicker S.L. Estimacion y caracterizacion de la poblacion residente en el Bordo del canal del rio Tijuana. COLEF. 2013