

Investigating the Impact of Border Security Measures in Mitigating Smuggling: A Case Study of the Namibia-Angola Border

Anastasia N. Nadunja¹, Tunde Ahmed Afolabi^{1*} 

¹The International University of Management, Windhoek, Namibia.

* Corresponding author: Tunde Ahmed Afolabi (afolabit831@gmail.com)

Abstract

This study explores the interaction of border security and illicit trafficking at the Namibia-Angola border, utilizing a thorough research methodology based on theoretical concepts and real-world data. The research investigates the demographic characteristics of people engaged in smuggling, the extent of illegal trading, and the impact of existing border security measures through semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis, and content analysis. Discoveries show that there is a large number of young to middle-aged men involved in smuggling activities, with a variety of smuggled items from alcohol to firearms, and face significant obstacles in enforcing laws and coordinating actions. The research highlights the importance of implementing customized interventions that target socio-economic factors, improving surveillance technologies, and enhancing collaboration across borders to effectively reduce smuggling. Furthermore, suggestions include enhancing teamwork between Namibian and Angolan officials, raising fines on smuggled items, and enforcing harsher punishments for those who break the law. These observations add to academic discussion, guide policy creation, and identify areas for future study in border security and preventing transnational crime. Moreover, the study highlights the need for customized interventions that target socioeconomic variables, the advancement of surveillance technologies, and more cooperation between officials from Namibia and Angola. The recommendations include stronger cross-border cooperation, higher fines for illegal goods, and harsher punishments for violators. These observations enhance scholarly discourse, guide policy formulation, and identify areas that require more investigation in border security and transnational crime prevention. The final goal of the research is to address the underlying issues and current difficulties associated with smuggling to promote a more secure and cooperative border environment.

Keywords: Border security, Smuggling, Transnational borders, Namibia-Angola border, Qualitative approach, Interpretivism, Law enforcement.

1. Introduction and Background of The Study

1.1 Introduction

Jenny, Alvarez and Daphe (2020), stated that, borders play a crucial role as significant intersections within the global landscape, where they exert control over the movement of commodities, individuals, and illicit goods. Within southwestern Africa, the Namibia Angola

ARTICLE INFO

Research paper

Received: 15 June 2024

Accepted: 10 August 2024

Published: 14 August 2024

DOI: 10.58970/JSR.1043

CITATION

Nadunja, A. N. & Afolabi, T. A. (2024). Investigating the Impact of Border Security Measures in Mitigating Smuggling: A Case Study of the Namibia-Angola Border, *Journal of Scientific Reports*, 7(1), 40-59.

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border serves as a distinct case study, offering valuable insights into the challenges and prospects inherent in border security measures. Katercan, (2019), points out that, the escalation of border security and the difficulties presented by smuggling grow in both the national and international realms of security. The act of smuggling, which entails the illicit transportation of goods, individuals, or contraband across borders, poses a threat to economic stability, public safety, and sovereignty. Governments across the globe implement various measures to curb smuggling and mitigate its adverse consequences (Katercan, 2019).

The Namibia-Angola border hosts establishing border patrol units, deploying technology, developing infrastructure, and cooperating range of illicit goods and activities, such as drugs, weapons, wildlife, counterfeit goods, and human trafficking. The repercussions of these activities are severe in terms of economic, social, and security implications for the involved countries. Over time, Namibia and Angola employ diverse border security measures, including the establishment of border patrol units, deployment of technology, development of infrastructure, and cooperation between the two nations. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these measures remains a matter of great concern according to (Katercan, 2019). United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, (2020), elaborates that, the geographical and environmental challenges encountered along the border between Namibia and Angola are not distinctive to this specific area but are prevalent in numerous international borders globally. Nations grappling with similar obstacles adopt diverse approaches to bolster border security and counteract smuggling activities. For example, in regions characterized by rough terrains and extensive wilderness, like the boundary between the U.S. and Mexico or Afghanistan and Pakistan, governments deploy sophisticated surveillance technologies such as drones, satellite imagery, and ground sensors to effectively monitor border regions (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2020).

Furthermore, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, (2020), urges that, countries utilize natural obstacles and physical structures like fences and walls to discourage unauthorized border crossings and smuggling endeavors. Drawing insights from these encounters, the Namibia-Angola border could benefit from tailored solutions to address the distinctive geographical and environmental hurdles present in the area. According to African Union, (2019), the economic and humanitarian impacts of smuggling transcend the borders of Namibia and Angola, impacting neighbouring nations and the wider international community. Acknowledging the cross-border nature of smuggling networks, countries increasingly emphasize regional and international collaboration to combat illegal trade and trafficking operations. Platforms such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union (AU) facilitate member states in coordinating border security activities, exchanging intelligence, and aligning legal frameworks to collectively address smuggling and associated offenses (African Union, 2019). Furthermore, SADC, (2020), explained that, entities like INTERPOL and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) provide technical support, training initiatives, and capacity-building programs to assist countries in fortifying border controls, strengthening law enforcement capabilities, and tackling the underlying causes of smuggling, including poverty, corruption, and governance deficiencies. By leveraging the lessons learned and best practices of other nations and international bodies, Namibia and Angola improve their border security measures and effectively combat smuggling while advancing regional stability, economic progress, and human security (SADC, 2020).

1.3 Problem Statement

The 1,376-kilometer border between Angola and Namibia is vital for trade and transit but faces significant challenges from widespread illicit activities (Abrahamsen, 2018). Despite advanced surveillance technologies and increased patrols, smuggling persists, destabilizing the region and straining international relations (Wittemyer, 2019). This illegal trade undermines government revenues, distorts markets, and exacerbates poverty and exclusion. It also fuels corruption and organized crime, as noted by Steenkamp (2020). Addressing these issues requires a

comprehensive approach that includes law enforcement, socio-economic development, and regional collaboration (Mendelsohn, 2018; Steenkamp, 2020). Enhancing border security, improving institutional readiness, and bridging knowledge gaps are essential steps for combating cross-border illicit networks (Smith, 2018). By implementing these strategies, Angola and Namibia can mitigate the negative impacts of illegal activities and promote sustainable development in the region.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

To investigate the impact of border security measures in mitigating smuggling, taking Namibia-Angola as a case study. To achieve this objective, the specific aims are as follows: (i) To examine the border security measures currently in place on both sides of the border, (ii) To assess potential areas for improvement in border security strategies, (iii) To analyse the effectiveness of border security measures in combating smuggling, and (iv) To identify the nature of smuggling activities at the Namibia-Angola border.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This research advances the academic understanding of border security, transnational crime, and international relations. It lays the groundwork for future studies on similar border regions facing security issues. By thoroughly analysing border security management, the study offers valuable insights into effective strategies for addressing transnational crime and highlights the need for regional and international cooperation. The research is particularly relevant for policymakers, law enforcement, and border security officials in Namibia and Angola. It provides evidence-based recommendations to improve current security measures and effectively combat smuggling. The findings are crucial for enhancing cross-border law enforcement and regional security cooperation. The Angola-Namibia border's strategic significance for Southern Africa's stability makes assessing the effectiveness of border security measures essential for regional security and economic development. Additionally, the study contributes to the broader academic discourse on smuggling dynamics, border security, and transnational crime. By examining the unique challenges and opportunities of the Namibia-Angola border, the research can enrich scholarly discussions, inspire further investigation, and enhance our understanding of border security issues in Southern Africa.

1.6. Delimitations of the Study

This study is focused exclusively on the Namibia-Angola border, providing an in-depth analysis of smuggling patterns specific to this region. It examines contemporary border security tactics while limiting its review of historical advancements, aiming to address current smuggling challenges effectively. The research assesses the effectiveness of existing security measures without delving into broader societal, economic, or political contexts that may also influence smuggling patterns. Methodological limitations, such as data availability, restricted area access, and ethical considerations, are acknowledged to ensure a clear and focused examination of the primary factors. This approach aims to offer practical recommendations for enhancing border security in the Namibia-Angola region.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Empirical Literature

2.1.1 Border security

Brown, (2019), suggested that, investigating the several kinds of border security measures put in place both internationally and in this particular location is crucial to fully comprehending the effect of border security measures in reducing smuggling between Namibia and Angola. The countermeasures fall into four main categories:

Physical Barriers: utilizing natural barriers more skilfully and strengthening the border posts that already exist.

Technological Surveillance: deploying increasingly sophisticated surveillance tools, including as sensors and drones, particularly in isolated and challenging-to-monitor regions.

Patrols: Increasing the quantity and regularity of cooperative patrols along the border will guarantee ongoing observation.

Legal Frameworks: To enable smooth collaboration in border security and anti-smuggling operations, bilateral agreements should be strengthened and harmonized legislative frameworks should be ensured (Brown, 2019).

2.1.2 Smuggling activities

Patel, (2020). elaborate that, Smuggling is the illicit cross-border movement of individuals or goods while eluding customs laws and paying no taxes. Smuggling has major effects on the economy, society, and security and is a global problem. The four primary categories of smuggling activities are summarized as follows:

Whiskey: Because of the large price differential between the two countries and the huge demand for high-value alcoholic beverages like whiskey, these goods are frequently trafficked. To get around taxes and restrictions, these goods are often shipped over international borders.

Bales of Second-Hand Clothing: Used clothing bundles are frequently smuggled. Due to their high demand in both nations, these bales are illegally transported across the border by smugglers who take advantage of the lower costs and avoid paying import charges (Benjamin, 2019).

Fuel (Oil): Due to pricing differences, where fuel is frequently less expensive in one country than another, fuel smuggling is common. To take advantage of these pricing differentials, smugglers move fuel oil across the border. This is known as "gungula oil," which is heavily trafficked between Namibia and Angola, particularly to the northern region of Namibia, causing considerable revenue losses for governments.

Tobacco Products (Cigarettes): Because tobacco goods are subject to severe laws and heavy taxes, yes cigarette smuggling is widespread. To avoid paying taxes, smugglers transport cigarettes across international borders, driving down black-market costs and increasing their profit margins (Benjamin, 2019).

2.1.3 The Extent and Nature of Smuggling Activities

To understand the scope and characteristics of smuggling along the Namibia-Angola border, a detailed evaluation of documented incidents and trends is essential. This analysis helps policymakers identify recurring trends, key geographical areas, and emerging smuggling patterns (Global Financial Integrity, 2020). According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2019), reviewing past smuggling occurrences allows for assessing the effectiveness of current security measures and identifying areas for improvement. Data from in-depth assessments by countries like the United States and Mexico provide valuable insights for policy and resource allocation (Global Financial Integrity, 2020). Understanding the types of illicit goods involved in smuggling such as narcotics, weapons, counterfeit products, and wildlife is crucial for effective enforcement (INTERPOL, 2018). The Government of Australia (2021) notes that analysing these goods enables policymakers to prioritize resources and develop targeted strategies. Specialized task forces, as seen in Australia for drug and human trafficking, could similarly enhance Namibia and Angola's capabilities in disrupting smuggling networks (INTERPOL, 2018). By studying these methods, law enforcement can develop targeted strategies to disrupt operations. Countries like Italy and Spain have specialized units for investigating such networks, and Namibia and Angola can benefit from similar approaches, including intelligence-sharing and international collaboration (Europol, 2020; Financial Action Task Force, 2019).

2.1.4 The Border Security Measures in Place

According to the African Union Commission (2018), documenting the border security measures currently implemented on both sides of the Namibia-Angola border provides a comprehensive overview of the existing infrastructure and resources dedicated to border enforcement. Namibia

and Angola deploy various tactics, including physical barriers, surveillance technology, and border patrol units, to deter smuggling activities (African Union Commission, 2018). By analysing these measures, policymakers can assess the strengths and weaknesses of current border security frameworks and identify areas for improvement. Countries like the United States and Canada establish comprehensive border security strategies that combine physical infrastructure with advanced surveillance systems to enhance border enforcement. By studying these approaches, Namibia and Angola can adopt best practices and leverage technology to strengthen their border security capabilities (INTERPOL, 2018). Additionally, the African Union Commission (2018) states that analysing the infrastructure, personnel, and resources dedicated to border enforcement offers insights into the capacity and readiness of both countries to address smuggling challenges. Namibia and Angola may face resource constraints and logistical challenges in effectively patrolling their vast and diverse border areas. By conducting a thorough analysis, policymakers can prioritize resource allocation and invest in critical areas such as training, equipment, and infrastructure development (African Union Commission, 2018). Countries like Australia and New Zealand implement innovative approaches to border security, such as the use of mobile surveillance units and aerial drones, to enhance border surveillance and response capabilities. Drawing lessons from these experiences helps Namibia and Angola optimize their border security efforts and improve operational effectiveness (INTERPOL, 2018).

2.1.5 The Areas for Improvement in Border Security Strategies

Identifying gaps and deficiencies in current border security strategies is crucial for understanding the shortcomings of existing measures and addressing areas of vulnerability. Namibia and Angola may face challenges such as inadequate resources, limited technological capabilities, and porous border areas that facilitate smuggling activities. By conducting a thorough assessment, policymakers can pinpoint areas where current strategies fall short and develop targeted interventions to strengthen border security (United States Department of Homeland Security, 2020). Countries like Israel and South Korea implement advanced border security technologies, including biometric identification systems and unmanned aerial vehicles, to enhance surveillance and detection capabilities. Studying these approaches provides valuable insights for Namibia and Angola in addressing gaps in their border security strategies and improving overall effectiveness (International Centre for Migration Policy Development, 2019). Proposing recommendations for enhancing border security effectiveness based on identified shortcomings is essential for guiding policy and resource allocation decisions. Recommendations include investing in technology upgrades, increasing personnel training, enhancing intelligence-sharing mechanisms, and improving coordination between law enforcement agencies (African Union Commission, 2018). By implementing targeted interventions, Namibia and Angola can address weaknesses in their border security frameworks and enhance their ability to deter and detect smuggling activities (Government of Canada, 2020). According to the International Organization for Migration (2018), countries like Singapore and Malaysia adopt comprehensive border security strategies that leverage data analytics and predictive modelling to enhance risk assessment and target high-risk cargo shipments. Drawing lessons from these experiences helps Namibia and Angola develop evidence-based recommendations to strengthen their border security capabilities. Exploring innovative approaches and technological solutions to strengthen border surveillance and enforcement is critical for adapting to evolving smuggling threats. Namibia and Angola can benefit from leveraging emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and unmanned aerial vehicles to enhance border surveillance and detection capabilities (African Union Commission, 2018). By embracing innovation, policymakers can stay ahead of smugglers' tactics and improve the effectiveness of border security measures. Countries like Estonia and Finland implement digital border control systems that leverage biometric authentication and automated border clearance processes to enhance security while facilitating legitimate cross-border movements. By exploring similar technological solutions, Namibia and Angola can modernize their border security infrastructure and improve overall efficiency (European Border and Coast Guard Agency, 2019).

2.2 Theoretical framework

Rational Choice Theory posits that individuals engage in a deliberate decision-making process by assessing the costs and benefits of available options and selecting the alternative that maximizes their utility or satisfaction. In the context of smuggling activities along the Namibia-Angola border, individuals involved in illicit trade carefully weigh the potential gains against the risks involved. This decision-making process involves evaluating various factors, including the likelihood of detection by law enforcement agencies, the severity of potential punishment, the expected financial profit, and personal motivations (Cornish & Clarke, 2019). Kendra (2021) situates the investigation within a multidisciplinary theoretical framework, drawing on concepts such as Rational Choice Theory (RCT) to elucidate the motivations and behaviors underlying smuggling activities. By employing these theoretical lenses, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of border security dynamics at the Namibia-Angola border and inform evidence-based policy interventions (Kendra, 2021). Individuals engaged in smuggling operations engage in a cost-benefit analysis when considering their involvement in illicit activities. They assess the potential benefits, such as financial gain or the attainment of personal objectives, against the potential costs and risks associated with their actions. These costs may include the possibility of arrest, prosecution, imprisonment, financial loss, or harm to oneself or others. Rational actors aim to maximize their utility by selecting the option that offers the greatest net benefit after considering these factors (Reuter, 2021). Furthermore, Reuter (2021) states that Rational Choice Theory assumes that individuals are rational actors who make decisions based on logical reasoning rather than impulse or emotion. This perspective suggests that individuals involved in smuggling activities carefully consider the consequences of their actions and choose the course of action that best aligns with their objectives. By adopting this rational approach, individuals seek to optimize their outcomes and minimize potential negative consequences (Reuter, 2021). In the context of criminology and border security, Rational Choice Theory provides valuable insights into the decision-making process of individuals engaged in smuggling operations. By understanding the factors that influence smugglers' behaviour, such as the perceived risks and rewards associated with illicit activities, policymakers and law enforcement agencies can develop more effective strategies to deter and combat smuggling along the Namibia-Angola border (Cornish, 2019).

2.2.1 Theory Link to the Study

Felson (2020) argues that Rational Choice Theory presents a valuable framework for understanding the decision-making processes of individuals engaged in illicit activities along the Namibia-Angola border. Researchers can explore the rational calculations undertaken by smugglers by analysing perceived benefits, such as financial profit, and costs, such as the likelihood of detection and subsequent penalties. This understanding is crucial for assessing the efficacy of border security measures, as it elucidates the factors influencing smuggler behaviour (Felson, 2020). Furthermore, the Rational Choice Theory enables an evaluation of the impact of border security measures from the smugglers' standpoint. Through an examination of factors like the probability of detection and the severity of punishment associated with different security protocols, researchers can assess how these measures impact the decision-making process of smugglers. This evaluation is essential for pinpointing the most effective security measures in deterring smuggling activities and recognizing those that may inadvertently worsen the situation (Clarke, 2018). Moreover, Clarke, (2018), points out that Rational Choice Theory proposes that policymakers law enforcement agencies can formulate more efficient border security strategies by comprehending the rational calculations made by smugglers. Security measures should focus on heightening the perceived costs of smuggling, such as the risk of detection, in comparison to the perceived benefits, such as financial gain. Insights derived from this theory can guide the development and execution of security measures tailored to the specific challenges encountered at the Namibia-Angola border (Clarke, 2018). Additionally, Tibbetts, (2022), notes that, Rational Choice Theory can play a pivotal role in pinpointing areas where current border security measures may be inadequate. For example, if smugglers believe the risk of detection to be

minimal due to surveillance or enforcement gaps, this highlights an area requiring enhancement. By addressing these weaknesses, policymakers can boost the efficiency of border security measures and diminish smuggling activities (Tibbetts, 2022).

2.2.2 Relevance to the Study

This study leverages Rational Choice Theory (RCT) to offer a structured understanding of smugglers' decision-making, focusing on their cost-benefit analyses rather than impulsive actions. RCT highlights that interventions aimed at increasing the perceived risks and penalties can effectively deter smuggling (Tibbetts, 2022). By evaluating current border security measures through this lens, policymakers can identify strengths and weaknesses, leading to more targeted strategies such as enhanced surveillance and stricter penalties (Clarke, 2018; Felson, 2020). Drawing from international practices, such as those in the U.S., Mexico, Thailand, Myanmar, and European countries, reveals that comprehensive strategies incorporating physical barriers, advanced technologies, and robust cross-border cooperation are crucial. For Namibia and Angola, adopting similar multifaceted approaches and integrating lessons from these nations can significantly enhance border security and regional cooperation (U.S. Customs and Border Protection, 2020; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018; European Commission, 2019; European Border and Coast Guard Agency, 2020). Scrutinizing the experiences of other nations grappling with comparable border security challenges imparts valuable lessons for Namibia and Angola in improving their own border security measures. By adopting a comprehensive approach that integrates physical infrastructure, advanced technologies, inter-agency collaboration, and international partnerships, Namibia and Angola can effectively mitigate smuggling activities and enhance regional security cooperation along their shared border (European Border and Coast Guard Agency, 2020).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Philosophy

The study adopts an interpretivist perspective to understand border security and smuggling at the Namibia-Angola border, emphasizing the importance of subjective interpretations and contextual factors over purely quantitative data (David, 2019). This approach explores diverse viewpoints and experiences of individuals and communities, taking into account historical, economic, and geopolitical contexts. Interpretivism allows for introspection and methodological flexibility, enabling researchers to adapt their approaches based on new insights and evolving conditions. The aim is to bridge theory and practice, offering practical solutions and policy recommendations that address the root causes of border insecurity and smuggling (David, 2019).

3.2 Research Design

The research design utilized in this study is a case study, selected due to the somewhat limited comprehension of the subject matter relating to border security and smuggling at the Namibia-Angola border. The adoption of an exploratory research design is particularly appropriate when dealing with intricate and poorly understood phenomena, such as the dynamics of border security and local concerns in this particular area. Through embracing a case study research design, the study seeks to extensively examine the complexities of the research issue, revealing underlying factors, patterns, and dynamics that might not be readily apparent (Kenwick, 2023).

3.3 Research Approach

The research approach employed in this study is a qualitative one, selected for its capacity to acquire detailed information regarding border security and smuggling at the Namibia-Angola border. The rationale for choosing this approach lies in the intricate nature of the research problem, as it permits researchers to systematically accumulate and scrutinize narrative data for exploring theoretical frameworks and evaluating the efficacy of border security measures within a real-world setting (Paul, 2020). This methodology facilitates a rigorous examination of patterns, trends, and correlations present in the data, thereby enabling a profound

comprehension of the factors influencing border security outcomes and the frequency of smuggling activities along the Namibia-Angola border (Paul, 2020).

3.4 Population and Sampling

The population for this study includes residents and communities within the immediate border areas of Angola and Namibia, as well as border security personnel such as customs officers, immigration officials, and police officers on both sides of the border. Specifically, the study targets two primary groups: border security personnel and local residents at Wakasamane border post. The research sample consists of 20 participants, carefully selected using purposive sampling to provide relevant insights into the research topic. The sample comprises 20 participants, including 5 border security workers from Namibia, 5 border security workers from Angola, 5 residents from Ondjiva (a community near the border in Angola), and 5 residents from Okalongo (a community near the border in Namibia). This balanced representation ensures that diverse perspectives and experiences are captured, providing a comprehensive understanding of border security and smuggling dynamics from various vantage points.

3.6 Sampling Procedures

The utilization of purposive sampling in this research involves the deliberate selection of participants based on their relevance to the study objectives (Angelica, 2023). This methodology is particularly suitable for investigating border security and smuggling at the Namibia-Angola border, as it allows researchers to target individuals with first-hand knowledge or direct experiences related to these phenomena. By purposive choosing participants directly affected by border security measures or engaged in smuggling activities, the study gathers detailed information crucial for comprehensively understanding the research topic. Purposive sampling enables researchers to concentrate on specific groups or individuals who can offer valuable insights into the complexities and nuances of border dynamics, including border patrol agents, local community members, smugglers, and individuals impacted by smuggling operations (Angelica, 2023).

3.7 Research Instruments

In line with the research methodology adopted for this study, data collection primarily relies on qualitative methods, with a particular focus on semi-structured interviews. The decision to utilize interviews as the primary data collection method is informed by their versatility and capacity to elicit rich, detailed insights from key stakeholders involved in border security and smuggling activities at the Namibia-Angola border. Interviews offer a dynamic platform for exploring complex phenomena and allow a nuanced exploration of participants' perspectives, experiences, and attitudes (Helmut, 2020). The researcher meets the participant at Wakashamane border post, the semi-structured interview protocol is meticulously crafted to align with the specific objectives of the study and the theoretical underpinnings drawn from the reviewed literature. By employing a semi-structured format, the interview guide strikes a balance between flexibility and structure, enabling the exploration of predetermined themes while allowing for spontaneous follow-up questions and probes. This approach facilitates the generation of in-depth, contextually rich data that is essential for addressing the research questions and objectives effectively (Angelica, 2023).

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

The study's methodology involves collecting primary data through purposively selected participants. Participants are informed about the research through written communication, consent documents, and interview guides to ensure transparency and informed consent (Benjamin, 2019). Face-to-face interviews are conducted to deeply explore participants' perspectives on border security and smuggling at the Namibia-Angola border. The data collection process follows these steps:

Coordination: The researcher arranges interviews with the senior customs officer at Wakashamane border post, Ms. Jacobina Shalumbu, and ensures that customs and immigration officials are informed and access is granted.

Data Collection: The researcher conducts surveys and interviews with border security personnel, including customs and immigration officials, police officers, and local residents near the Wakashamane border post.

Data Management: Collected data is securely organized and stored, with survey and interview responses entered into a database.

Interviews are held at mutually convenient locations to ensure participant comfort during data collection.

3.9 Data Analysis

The analytical approach used in this study involves thematic analysis for examining the gathered primary data sources. This qualitative method is particularly well-suited for handling the intricate and context-dependent nature of the data, facilitating a nuanced comprehension of the patterns and trends linked to border security and smuggling at the Namibia-Angola border (Helmut, 2020). To conduct the thematic analysis, the collected data are meticulously coded and categorized based on emergent themes. This iterative process involves close reading and re-reading of the data, followed by the systematic identification and labeling of significant segments of text. Through this process, the study aims to pinpoint key patterns, themes, and relationships that offer insights into the multifaceted aspects of border security and smuggling. By adopting a thematic analysis approach, the research produces a thorough and contextually rich depiction of the research problem, highlighting the diverse factors and forces shaping the dynamics at the Namibia-Angola border (Benjamin, 2019).

3.10 Ethical Considerations

In any research involving human participants, ethical considerations are paramount to ensure the integrity and credibility of the study, as well as the well-being and rights of the participants. In this study, particular attention is paid to various ethical aspects to uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct. Before participating in the study, all participants are provided with comprehensive information regarding the research objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. Written informed consent is obtained from each participant to ensure they voluntarily agree to partake in the study with a clear understanding of what it entails (Benjamin, 2019).

To protect the privacy of the participants, all data collected are treated with strict confidentiality. Personal identifiers are removed, and pseudonyms or codes are used in place of actual names. Data are stored securely and accessed only by authorized personnel involved in the research. Participants are informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without any repercussions. This ensures that participation is entirely voluntary and that participants feel free to discontinue their involvement if they choose to do so (Creswell, 2018). The principle of non-maleficence is upheld throughout the research process to ensure that no harm comes to the participants as a result of their involvement in the study. This includes both physical and psychological harm. The research is designed to contribute positively to the understanding of border security and smuggling issues, with the aim of providing insights that can inform policy and practice for the betterment of communities involved (Creswell, 2018).

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Demographic Data of Participants

The demographic data obtained from the Namibian participants provide a nuanced understanding of the individuals involved in smuggling activities at the Namibia-Angola border. The diversity in ages, ranging from 26 to 59 years, reflects a broad spectrum of life experiences and perspectives among participants. This age range suggests that individuals from different stages of their careers and lives are drawn to smuggling activities, indicating the complex socioeconomic factors influencing their involvement. Furthermore, the presence of both males

and females in the sample highlights the gender diversity among smugglers, challenging traditional stereotypes associated with illicit activities. Understanding the demographic composition of smugglers is essential for designing targeted interventions and enforcement strategies that address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of different groups within the population. Conversely, the demographic profile of Angolan participants reveals a more homogeneous sample consisting solely of males aged 18 to 49 years. This gender disparity suggests potential cultural or societal factors influencing the participation of women in smuggling activities in Angola. Additionally, the predominance of younger individuals with less than a decade of professional experience indicates a vulnerability among this demographic group, who may be more susceptible to engaging in illicit activities due to limited economic opportunities. The educational qualifications primarily consisting of diplomas, with only one individual holding an honours degree, highlight the educational disparities among participants. This suggests that individuals with varying levels of educational attainment are drawn to smuggling, further emphasizing the importance of targeted interventions aimed at addressing educational barriers and providing alternative opportunities for livelihoods.

4.3 Nature and Extent of Smuggling Activities

Namibia

Participants identified various smuggled goods, including whiskey, bales of unspecified goods, cigarettes, and fuel oil. The prominence of whiskey and fuel oil smuggling indicates a high demand for these goods and potential weaknesses in border control measures. Literature supports these findings, highlighting that economic disparities and high tariffs often drive smuggling activities (Harrison, 2018; Davis & Zolberg, 2019). The prevalence of whiskey smuggling suggests a lucrative market driven by high consumer demand and potentially lower prices compared to legally imported alternatives. Similarly, the smuggling of fuel oil indicates economic incentives for circumventing official channels, likely due to disparities in fuel prices and taxation between Namibia and Angola. The presence of bales of unspecified goods further underscores the complexity of smuggling operations, with smugglers exploiting opportunities across various product categories to maximize profits (Smith, 2020).

Angola

At the Angolan border, the primary smuggled items include beef, rhino horns, and firearms. The smuggling of rhino horns is particularly concerning, reflecting the illegal wildlife trade that threatens biodiversity (Nellemann et al., 2019). Firearms smuggling underscores security challenges, potentially fueling violence and instability in the region (Small Arms Survey, 2018). The presence of firearms in smuggling activities raises serious security concerns and highlights the need for enhanced border control measures and law enforcement efforts to prevent the illicit trafficking of weapons. Additionally, the trafficking of rhino horns poses significant conservation challenges, threatening endangered species and undermining conservation efforts in the region. The findings underscore the urgent need for coordinated efforts between law enforcement agencies, conservation organizations, and international partners to address these multifaceted threats effectively (International Union for Conservation of Nature, 2021).

4.4 Measures to Combat Smuggling Activities

Namibia

Participants in Namibia recommended several measures to combat smuggling activities, reflecting a recognition of the multifaceted nature of the problem. One proposed strategy is the enhancement of law enforcement capabilities, which could involve increasing the presence of border patrol agents and customs officials to improve surveillance and deterrence. Additionally, participants suggested the implementation of educational programs aimed at raising awareness about the negative impacts of smuggling on the economy, society, and environment (Reichel, 2020; Andreas, 2022). These programs could target both border communities and potential smugglers, emphasizing the importance of compliance with legal regulations and the benefits of

legitimate trade. Furthermore, improving cross-border coordination emerged as another key recommendation, highlighting the need for enhanced collaboration between Namibia and Angola in sharing intelligence, conducting joint operations, and harmonizing regulatory frameworks. By strengthening cooperation at the regional level, law enforcement agencies can better address the transnational nature of smuggling networks and disrupt illicit activities more effectively (Reichel, 2020; Andreas, 2021).

Angola

In Angola, key strategies for combating smuggling include increased penalties, fines, and joint operations. Elevated penalties and fines are intended to deter smugglers, but their effectiveness hinges on robust enforcement and judicial processes. Joint operations involving multiple agencies and jurisdictions are also emphasized, as they allow for better resource allocation and expertise to target smuggling networks more effectively. Coordination across law enforcement entities can enhance Angola's ability to detect, intercept, and prosecute smuggling activities. Additionally, international cooperation is deemed crucial for tackling the cross-border nature of smuggling, with a focus on working with neighbouring countries and global partners to disrupt transnational networks (Levi & Maguire, 2019; Shelley, 2022). Further exploration of these recommendations could involve assessing the feasibility and impact of specific measures. For instance, Namibia could pilot educational programs and engage stakeholders to evaluate their effectiveness. In Angola, the implications of increasing penalties on law enforcement resources and judicial processes should be examined. Innovative approaches, such as establishing joint task forces or information-sharing platforms, could improve cross-border coordination between Namibia and Angola. Understanding the unique factors influencing smuggling in each country is vital for developing tailored strategies to address the root causes of illicit trade.

4.5 Effectiveness of Current Measures

Namibia

The perception among a majority of Namibian participants that current measures are effective underscores the importance of continuous evaluation and improvement in border security strategies. Improved law enforcement and inter-agency coordination have been identified as key factors contributing to this perceived effectiveness. Strengthening these aspects further could involve investing in advanced training for law enforcement personnel, enhancing surveillance capabilities through the adoption of new technologies, and streamlining communication channels between relevant agencies. Additionally, addressing the concerns raised by some participants regarding persistent smuggling activities requires a proactive approach to identify and rectify existing gaps in border control measures. This could involve conducting regular assessments to identify vulnerabilities, implementing targeted interventions to address specific smuggling routes or methods, and fostering partnerships with neighboring countries to enhance cross-border cooperation in combating illicit trade.

Angola

The perception among many Angolan participants that current border security measures are ineffective underscores the need for comprehensive reforms in border security governance. Persistent smuggling activities and inadequate enforcement point to systemic issues that require addressing for substantial progress. Tackling root causes such as poverty and corruption is crucial, as these factors perpetuate illicit trade networks. Anti-smuggling efforts should be paired with broader socio-economic reforms to improve livelihoods, reduce inequalities, and enhance governance structures. The findings align with existing literature on the interconnectedness of socio-economic factors and smuggling dynamics, suggesting that enforcement efforts alone are insufficient without addressing underlying vulnerabilities (Marenin, 2018).

4.6 Proposed Strategies for Improvement

Namibia

The recommendations put forth by participants in Namibia highlight the importance of legal reforms and enhanced enforcement mechanisms in combating smuggling activities. Making smuggling an explicit crime sends a strong message of deterrence and clarifies the legal repercussions for engaging in illicit trade. Moreover, increasing arrests and prosecutions serve to disrupt smuggling networks by holding perpetrators accountable for their actions. This not only deters individuals from participating in smuggling but also dismantles the organizational structures that facilitate such activities. Stricter legal penalties further reinforce the consequences of smuggling, discouraging individuals from taking part in illegal activities. By imposing harsher punishments, authorities can effectively deter potential smugglers and weaken the incentive for engaging in illicit trade. These recommendations align with existing literature emphasizing the importance of clear legal frameworks and robust enforcement in deterring illicit activities (Morselli, 2019).

Angola

In Angola, proposed strategies focus on innovative approaches to disrupt smuggling operations and mitigate the impact of illicit trade on communities. Burning confiscated goods sends a strong signal of zero tolerance for smuggling activities and prevents seized items from re-entering the market. Additionally, confiscating identity cards of smugglers serves as a punitive measure and can impede individuals' ability to engage in further illicit activities. However, it is crucial to implement these measures within a broader context of socioeconomic development and legal reforms. Addressing root causes such as poverty, corruption, and lack of economic opportunities is essential for sustainable progress in combating smuggling. Furthermore, legal reforms are necessary to strengthen institutional capacities, improve governance structures, and enhance transparency and accountability in border management. By addressing underlying vulnerabilities and implementing targeted interventions, Angola can effectively disrupt smuggling networks and promote socio-economic development (Van Duyne, 2020; Passas, 2022).

5. Discussions of the results

The illicit trade of goods across borders poses significant challenges to the security and stability of nations worldwide. At the Namibia-Angola border, smuggling activities thrive, driven by a complex interplay of economic, social, and regulatory factors. Understanding the nature and extent of smuggling, as well as the demographic profiles of those involved, is crucial for devising effective strategies to combat this illicit trade. This study delves into the gender and age dynamics of smuggling participants, shedding light on the predominance of young to middle-aged males in illicit trade networks. Additionally, it explores the educational and work experience backgrounds of participants, highlighting the diverse skill sets and vulnerabilities present within smuggling networks. Moreover, the study investigates the types of commodities being smuggled across the Namibia-Angola border, revealing a diverse array of goods ranging from everyday items like cigarettes and whiskey to high-value contraband such as rhino horns and firearms. Understanding the economic, social, and regulatory influences driving smuggling activities is essential for devising targeted interventions to disrupt illicit trade networks effectively.

5.1 Demographic Insights

Gender and Age Dynamics

The study's findings concerning the predominant demographic involved in smuggling activities at the Namibia-Angola border, primarily young to middle-aged males aged between 18 to 50 years resonate with existing literature on transnational crime and illicit trade networks. This demographic profile reflects the strategic recruitment strategies employed by smuggling networks, which often target individuals within this age range due to their physical capabilities,

economic vulnerabilities, and perceived willingness to take risks (Williams & Godson, 2019; Andreas, 2020). The prevalence of young males in smuggling operations underscores the need for targeted interventions that address the underlying socio-economic factors driving their involvement in illicit activities. Initiatives such as youth employment programs, vocational training, and skills development can provide alternative pathways for these individuals, steering them away from the allure of smuggling and towards legitimate livelihoods. Moreover, the gender dynamics observed in the study highlight the predominantly male participation in smuggling activities, both in Namibia and Angola. This gender disparity aligns with broader trends in illicit trade, where men often outnumber women in roles involving the transportation, distribution, and facilitation of contraband (Williams & Godson, 2020).

Educational and Work Experience Background

The diversity observed in the educational backgrounds and work experience levels of participants from both Namibia and Angola underscores the heterogeneous nature of smuggling networks. Smugglers come from varied socio-economic backgrounds, with some possessing diplomas or honours degrees and others having limited formal education. This diversity reflects the adaptability and flexibility of smuggling operations, which leverage a range of skills and expertise to facilitate illicit trade (Zaitch, 2022). Implementing educational programs that focus on vocational training, entrepreneurship, and skills development can offer viable alternatives to individuals engaged in smuggling activities. By equipping them with the necessary tools and resources to pursue legitimate employment opportunities, these programs can address the root causes of involvement in illicit trade and promote socio-economic empowerment. Furthermore, addressing disparities in educational attainment and work experience levels among participants is essential for ensuring inclusive and effective interventions to combat smuggling. Tailored programs that cater to the specific needs and aspirations of individuals with diverse educational and professional backgrounds can maximize their impact and relevance. Additionally, fostering partnerships between government agencies, educational institutions, and community organizations can enhance the reach and sustainability of educational initiatives aimed at preventing and reducing smuggling activities.

5.2 Nature and Extent of Smuggling Activities

Smuggled Commodities

The study's identification of a diverse range of smuggled items, including whiskey, cigarettes, and bales in Namibia, and beef, rhino horns, and firearms in Angola, underscores the complexity of illicit trade dynamics at the Namibia-Angola border. This observation aligns with existing literature on the economic and social drivers of smuggling, which emphasizes the influence of differences in demand, regulatory frameworks, and market values on the types of smuggled commodities (Shelley, 2014). The presence of such a wide array of smuggled goods highlights the adaptability and resilience of smuggling networks, which exploit variations in market conditions and regulatory environments to maximize profits. Moreover, the diversity in smuggled commodities reflects the multifaceted nature of the illicit trade, with smugglers exploiting opportunities across various product categories to meet demand and evade law enforcement efforts. The prevalence of high-value items such as rhino horns and firearms underscores the significant economic incentives driving illicit trade, as well as the serious conservation and security implications associated with the trafficking of such commodities. Conversely, the smuggling of everyday goods like cigarettes and whiskey highlights the role of consumer demand and price differentials in shaping smuggling patterns. Understanding the dynamics of smuggled commodities is essential for designing targeted enforcement strategies and regulatory interventions that effectively disrupt illicit trade while minimizing unintended consequences (Shelley, 2018).

Economic, Social, and Regulatory Influences

The diversity of smuggled items uncovered in the study underscores the intricate interplay of economic incentives, social dynamics, and regulatory discrepancies driving illicit trade at the

Namibia-Angola border. Research indicates that economic disparities and stringent regulations often compel individuals to resort to smuggling as a means to bypass high tariffs and access lucrative markets (Morselli & Giguère, 2019; Reuter & Peter, 2021). The findings suggest that addressing these underlying factors through economic reforms and harmonized regulations holds the potential to diminish the incentives for smuggling by reducing the disparities in market prices and mitigating the risks associated with engaging in illicit activities (Morselli & Giguère, 2019; Reuter & Peter, 2018). Furthermore, the social and cultural factors influencing smuggling activities, such as consumer preferences, cultural norms, and social networks, play a crucial role in shaping smuggling patterns and dynamics. Understanding these social dynamics is essential for designing targeted interventions that address the root causes of involvement in illicit trade and promote alternative livelihoods. Additionally, regulatory frameworks that are overly burdensome or poorly enforced can inadvertently create opportunities for smuggling by fostering a black-market economy and undermining legitimate business activities. Therefore, streamlining regulations, enhancing enforcement capabilities, and fostering collaboration between government agencies and stakeholders are essential for combating smuggling effectively while promoting economic development and social cohesion (Shelley, 2022).

5.3 Border Security Measures

Current Security Initiatives

Namibia and Angola have implemented a range of strategies to combat smuggling, reflecting a multifaceted approach that combines enforcement, educational, and collaborative initiatives. In Namibia, strategies encompass a combination of law enforcement efforts, educational programs aimed at raising awareness about the consequences of smuggling, and cross-border coordination with neighboring countries (Andreas, 2018). These initiatives aim to enhance surveillance, deterrence, and information sharing to disrupt smuggling networks effectively. Conversely, Angola's approach focuses on increasing penalties for smugglers, conducting joint operations involving multiple agencies, and fostering international cooperation to address the transnational nature of smuggling networks (Friman, 2020). By leveraging these diverse strategies, Namibia and Angola aim to strengthen border security and mitigate the threats posed by illicit trade activities.

Challenges and Effectiveness

Despite the implementation of various security initiatives, significant challenges persist in effectively combating smuggling at the Namibia-Angola border. Respondents expressed mixed views on the efficacy of current measures, highlighting issues such as enforcement capacity, resource allocation, and inter-agency coordination as key areas of concern (Marenin, 2010). These challenges underscore the complexity of border security governance and the need for comprehensive, coordinated efforts to address illicit trade effectively. Literature suggests that successful border security hinges on adequate resources, effective inter-agency cooperation, and continuous evaluation to adapt to evolving smuggling tactics (Donnan & Wilson, 2018). Enhancing these aspects is critical for improving the overall effectiveness of border security measures and reducing vulnerabilities exploited by smuggling networks. By addressing these challenges and adopting a holistic approach that integrates enforcement, prevention, and international collaboration, Namibia and Angola can enhance their capacity to combat smuggling and promote regional security and stability (Marenin, 2010).

5.4 Recommendations for Improvement

Strengthening border security requires increasing law enforcement personnel and utilizing advanced surveillance technologies. Theoretical findings suggest that a robust enforcement presence and technological integration are crucial for effectively detecting and deterring smuggling activities (Dunn, 2019; Golunov, 2023). Augmenting border patrols and customs officials can enhance surveillance capabilities, improve detection rates, and disrupt smuggling networks. Integrating technologies like drones, thermal imaging, and satellite monitoring

provides real-time intelligence, enabling proactive responses to illicit activities (Dunn, 2021; Golunov, 2019). Investing in training programs and fostering cross-border cooperation are also essential. Literature highlights the importance of specialized training and international partnerships in addressing transnational smuggling (Andreas & Nadelmann, 2021; Bigo, 2020). Specialized training in border security techniques and investigative procedures improves enforcement effectiveness and coordination. Collaboration with neighboring countries and international partners through information sharing and joint operations strengthens the collective response to smuggling (Dunn, 2019; Golunov, 2018). Targeted socio-economic programs that address poverty and unemployment can reduce reliance on smuggling. Economic development and community engagement help tackle the root causes of smuggling (Shelley, 2019; Nordstrom, 2020). Community initiatives that address social inequalities and promote entrepreneurship contribute to long-term stability and resilience (Shelley, 2018; Nordstrom, 2020). Enforcing stringent penalties and combating corruption are crucial for deterring smuggling. Legal deterrence and transparency are key in curbing illicit activities (Becker, 1968; Rose-Ackerman, 1999). Harsh penalties, including fines, asset confiscation, and imprisonment, deter participation in smuggling. Anti-corruption measures, such as transparent recruitment, internal audits, and whistleblower protections, enhance accountability and integrity, reducing opportunities for collusion with smugglers (Becker, 2021; Rose-Ackerman, 2023).

6. Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Implications of the findings

The findings presented in Section 4 have significant implications for policy, enforcement, and regional cooperation in combating smuggling activities at the Namibia-Angola border. Firstly, the demographic insights highlight the diverse profile of individuals involved in smuggling, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions that address the specific vulnerabilities and motivations of different groups. Tailored programs focusing on vocational training, alternative employment opportunities, and gender-sensitive policies could effectively deter individuals from engaging in illicit activities, thereby reducing the pool of potential smugglers. Secondly, the nature and extent of smuggling activities underscore the importance of addressing underlying economic disparities and regulatory discrepancies. By understanding the demand for smuggled goods and the drivers behind such activities, policymakers can develop more effective enforcement strategies and regulatory frameworks. Enhancing law enforcement capabilities, fostering international collaboration, and implementing stricter penalties for offenders are critical steps toward mitigating smuggling at the border. Additionally, investing in socioeconomic development programs and legal reforms can address the root causes of illicit trade, promoting stability and prosperity in the region. Overall, the implications of these findings emphasize the need for a comprehensive and coordinated approach involving multiple stakeholders to effectively combat smuggling at the Namibia-Angola border.

6.1.1 Managerial implications

The findings presented in Chapter 4 carry significant managerial implications for border security agencies, law enforcement authorities, and policymakers involved in combating smuggling activities at the Namibia-Angola border. Firstly, the demographic insights shed light on the diverse characteristics of individuals engaged in smuggling, highlighting the importance of tailored strategies in enforcement and prevention efforts. Managers and policymakers can use this information to design targeted interventions that address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of different demographic groups, such as young males and individuals with varying levels of education and work experience. By understanding the demographic profile of smugglers, authorities can deploy resources more effectively and implement proactive measures to disrupt illicit networks. Secondly, the nature and extent of smuggling activities underscore the necessity of adopting a multifaceted approach that combines enforcement with socioeconomic development initiatives and international cooperation. Managers responsible for border security can utilize these insights to prioritize resource allocation, enhance surveillance capabilities, and

strengthen collaboration with neighbouring countries and international partners. Additionally, the findings emphasize the importance of addressing underlying economic disparities and regulatory loopholes to reduce the incentives for smuggling. Managers and policymakers can work towards harmonizing regulatory frameworks, implementing stricter penalties for offenders, and promoting economic development programs aimed at alleviating poverty and unemployment in border communities. Overall, the managerial implications derived from these findings provide valuable guidance for designing more effective strategies to combat smuggling and enhance border security at the Namibia-Angola border.

6.1.2 Theoretical implications

The theoretical implications of the findings presented in Chapter 4 offer valuable insights into the broader understanding of illicit activities and border security dynamics. Firstly, the demographic insights provide empirical support for existing theoretical frameworks that emphasize the role of socioeconomic factors in driving involvement in smuggling. By confirming that young to middle-aged males are predominantly involved in smuggling activities, the study reinforces theoretical propositions suggesting that individuals facing economic vulnerabilities are more likely to engage in illicit trade. This aligns with theories such as strain theory, which posits that individuals resort to illegal means when they perceive a disjunction between their societal goals and the legitimate means available to achieve them. Additionally, the diversity in educational backgrounds among participants underscores the multifaceted nature of smuggling networks and supports theories highlighting the importance of skill diversity in enhancing operational efficiency within illicit networks. Secondly, the nature and extent of smuggling activities uncovered by the study provide empirical validation for theoretical models that explain the drivers and patterns of illicit trade. The identification of specific smuggled commodities, such as whiskey, fuel oil, and firearms, corroborates theories highlighting the influence of economic incentives, market demand, and regulatory discrepancies on smuggling behaviour. Furthermore, the findings underscore the significance of contextual factors, such as economic disparities between countries and regulatory enforcement capabilities, in shaping the dynamics of illicit trade. This supports theoretical frameworks emphasizing the importance of understanding the socio-political and economic contexts in which smuggling occurs to develop effective countermeasures. Overall, the theoretical implications derived from these findings contribute to a deeper theoretical understanding of illicit activities and inform the development of more comprehensive theoretical frameworks to guide research and policy efforts in the field of border security and transnational crime.

6.1.3 Policy implications

The policy implications drawn from the findings outlined in Chapter 4 offer valuable guidance for policymakers tasked with addressing illicit activities and enhancing border security measures. Firstly, the demographic insights highlight the importance of targeted interventions that address the specific vulnerabilities and characteristics of individuals involved in smuggling. Policymakers could design gender-sensitive programs tailored to the predominant demographic of young to middle-aged males, focusing on providing alternative employment opportunities and vocational training to steer them away from illicit activities. Additionally, initiatives aimed at addressing socioeconomic disparities and promoting youth empowerment could help alleviate the economic pressures that drive individuals towards smuggling, thereby reducing the pool of potential recruits for illicit networks. Secondly, the nature and extent of smuggling activities identified in the study underscore the need for nuanced and context-specific policy responses. Policymakers should prioritize the development of tailored enforcement strategies that account for the diverse range of smuggled commodities and the unique regulatory environments of each border region. This may involve strengthening border control measures, enhancing international cooperation and information sharing, and implementing targeted interventions to disrupt illicit supply chains. Moreover, addressing the underlying economic and social drivers of smuggling through policy measures such as economic reforms, poverty alleviation programs, and anti-

corruption initiatives is essential for long-term success in combating illicit trade. By integrating these policy recommendations, policymakers can develop more effective and sustainable strategies to enhance border security and mitigate the negative impacts of smuggling on communities and economies.

6.2 Conclusions

In conclusion, this dissertation significantly contributes to discussions on border security, regional stability, and socio-economic development. It emphasizes the need for comprehensive approaches to border security, advocating for increased enforcement, stricter penalties, enhanced coordination, and targeted socio-economic interventions to address the root causes of smuggling. Despite challenges such as data accessibility and the evolving nature of smuggling, the study offers valuable insights for policymakers, stakeholders, and scholars. The findings underscore the need for targeted interventions based on demographic insights into smuggling activities. Tailored programs that offer vocational training and alternative employment opportunities can help deter individuals from engaging in illicit trade. Addressing economic disparities and regulatory gaps is also crucial. Policymakers can develop more effective enforcement strategies and regulatory frameworks by understanding the demand for smuggled goods and the drivers behind smuggling. Overall, the dissertation offers actionable recommendations for enhancing border security and combating smuggling. By adopting a holistic approach that integrates enforcement, socio-economic development, and international collaboration, countries can improve their capacity to address illicit trade and promote regional security and prosperity.

6.4 Recommendations

Increasing law enforcement presence at the Namibia-Angola border is crucial for improving border security. Deploying additional personnel, such as border patrol agents and customs officials, enhances surveillance and response capabilities. Comprehensive training is necessary to ensure that officers can effectively address complex smuggling networks and adapt to evolving tactics. Advanced equipment, including CCTV cameras, drones, and sensors, is essential for monitoring remote or vulnerable areas and detecting suspicious activities. Strategic deployment of these technologies, informed by intelligence, helps optimize resource use and response times. Regular patrols and inspections further support these efforts by serving as both a deterrent and an immediate intervention against smuggling. Effective border security also relies on collaboration among law enforcement agencies, border communities, and international partners. Sharing information and resources, alongside community engagement programs to raise awareness and encourage reporting, strengthens overall effectiveness. Cross-border cooperation between Namibia and Angola, including bilateral agreements for intelligence sharing, joint patrols, and legal assistance, is vital for addressing the transnational nature of smuggling and ensuring that security measures remain responsive to evolving threats.

6.5 Future research and contribution to academia

This study sheds light on the complexities of border security and smuggling at the Namibia-Angola border, emphasizing the need for enhanced enforcement and targeted socio-economic interventions. Future research should delve into the socio-economic factors driving smuggling, such as poverty and economic disparities, and explore comparative studies of border security strategies in different regions to identify best practices. Additionally, investigating the role of emerging technologies like drones and satellite imagery in border monitoring could offer new solutions. Interdisciplinary approaches combining insights from criminology, political science, and economics are crucial for developing comprehensive policy responses.

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