

## Murder and Politics in Jamaica: A Historical Quantitative Analysis, 1970-2009

<sup>1</sup>Paul Andrew Bourne, <sup>2</sup>Damion K. Blake, <sup>3</sup>Charlene Sharpe-Pryce and <sup>4</sup>Ikhalfani Solan

<sup>1</sup>Socio-Medical Research Institute (Formerly, Department of Community Health and Psychiatry, the University of the West Indies, Mona)

<sup>2</sup>Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 409 Major Williams Hall

<sup>3</sup>Chair, Department of History, Northern Caribbean University, Mandeville, Jamaica

<sup>4</sup>Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, South Carolina State University

---

**Abstract:** The electoral process in Jamaica has been uninterrupted since 1944. Two major political parties, the People's National Party (PNP) and the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) have dominated the process of competing for the loyalty, affection and the votes of the populace. In a bid to exercise and/or capture the franchise of the electorate, violence and bloodshed have marred the electoral process. This study: 1) examines the murders during the governance of each political party in Jamaica from 1970 to 2009; and 2) explores patterns and distribution of murders over four decades. The current study uses secondary data from various Jamaican government publications, namely the Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions, Statistical Digest, Jamaica Constabulary Force and Economic and Social Survey of Jamaica. Between 1969 and 2010, on average  $722 \pm 453$  (95% CI: 575-869) Jamaicans were murdered annually. Comparatively, there were  $762 \pm 431$  people murdered during the time the People's National Party (PNP) governed Jamaica to  $631 \pm 507$  in the tenure of the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP), which was not statistically different ( $t$ -test = 0.830, 0.412). However, the average number of murders in each decade (1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s) was statistically different ( $F$ -statistic = 55.071,  $p < 0.0001$ ). The probability of being murdered in the 1970s was 0.09 compared to 0.16 in the 1980s, 0.27 in the 1990s and 0.48 in 2000s. The number of people murdered during the tenure of each political administration shows no statistical difference, which indicates that neither of the two political parties as a single variable can take credit for a lower murder rate. It also strongly forecasts the urgency needed to address the increased rate of murder experienced since 2000 in Jamaica.

**Keywords:** Inequality, Jamaica, Jamaica Labour Party (JLP), maldistribution of income, murder, political administration, People's National Party (PNP), politics, power relations

---

### INTRODUCTION

Homicide statistics from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2007) list Jamaica among the top ten (10) countries with the highest homicide rates per 100,000 of the population in the world. Jamaica is a high violence society with a comparable murder rate to Colombia, South Africa and Honduras.<sup>2</sup> In 1994, statistics show that murder was 62 per 100,000 in Kingston, Jamaica, which place the city second to Bogota, Columbia (UNDP, 2000); and in 2008, the murder rate rose to 96.2 per 100,000 (Leslie, 2010). As a region, murders in the Caribbean are extremely high and greater than other regions in the world-30 per 100,000 (UNODC, 2007). The UNODC (2007) opines that Caribbean nations' overall homicide rate is 34% points higher than countries with similar macroeconomic conditions. Previous research indicates that the bulge in political violence and murders in these countries is largely associated with the trafficking

of drugs and guns as well as inter-gang warfare (Colak and Pearce, 2009; Harriott, 2004a, 2004b; Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2008; Leslie, 2010; Sullivan, 2006; Clarke, 2006).

Ostensibly, Jamaica has a subculture of violence which manifests itself in diverse ways but more so in the consistently high rates of murder since the 1960s. There is a notable established interrelation between politics and violence (Gray, 2003a; Sives, 2003; Clarke, 2006; Sives, 1997). In this study we examine the causal (or associational) link between governmental administration and the rate of murder. A discourse of murder and politics cannot be comprehensive without the inclusion of economics and the social structure. The scope of this study, therefore, also extends to an inquiry into economics and murder in order to establish linkages that are outside of governmental administration as these may offer powerful explanations of the crime pandemic.

Jamaica gained independence on August 1, 1962, which signifies the reality of a relatively young democratic nation. The people of this nation began voting long before the country received statehood. In 1938, Norman Washington Manley formed the People's National Party (PNP) while Sir Alexander Bustamante (born Alexander Clarke) birthed the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) in 1943. Although the PNP was formed before the JLP, the first general election which was held in 1944 was won by the JLP headed by Sir Alexander Bustamante. Norman Manley had structured the PNP around the rights of workers and Sir Bustamante had fashioned the JLP around issues of justice for the poor and working class. Both political parties were therefore targeting and competing for the loyalty and votes of the mass of the population.

In modern political Jamaica voting behaviour (Bourne *et al.*, 2010a) is primarily competed for by the two main political parties. In an effort to capture the voting interest and preference of people, the competitiveness has resulted in bloodshed of people from both sides of the political divide (Gray, 2003a). Over time, the political parties have become institutionalized in the society and have fashioned people around their philosophies and what emerged is political segregation of Jamaicans along party lines, with violence oftentimes being used in poor urban communities to manage political power around a particular party (Sives, 2003). The political structure had different rhetoric, programme, colour (PNP-orange; JLP-green), symbol (PNP-clenched fist; JLP-indexed and second finger formed in a V) and philosophies. All of these are used to capture the attention of the voters and party loyalists are given resources once their party is victorious. Political rivalry therefore constitutes:

- Governance
- Power
- Control of resources
- Patronage
- The distribution of favours to individuals whom aid in the attainment of political power

Gun ownership is an outgrowth of the drug trade and, in some countries, a legacy of party politics and associated garrison communities...Long run and sustained reduction in the demand for guns, however, will hinge on progress in combating drugs and on changing the cultural factors which increase the demand of young men for weapons. (UNODC, 2007)

The political rivalry between the parties (PNP and JLP) has become so intense among followers that there are:

- Confrontations
- Bloodshed

- Political garrisonization of the society
- The distinction of people by political philosophies
- People who cannot logically dialogue with each other on political philosophies without physical confrontations

The political division has become highly intense that the year 1980 is remembered as a year marred by political bloodshed. In 1980, 889 Jamaicans were murdered (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 1981) which represents 153.3% points increase over 1979. The general election of 1980 is retained in the nation's psyche as the most violent election in the nation's history blemished by the high incidence of murder preceding the event murderous year in the nation's history, which has never been equaled between 1969 and 1996 and not until after 1995. The bloodshed which occurred in Jamaica in the general elections of 1980 is not atypical, as Sives (2003) postulates that violence in Jamaica has some historical roots to the 1940s-which can be associated to the rivalry between the two political parties' members. Political activism-which is sometimes violent-is protected under party leadership because this has come to be accepted in the politics and party culture (Gray, 2003a). This justifies the co-opting of criminals into the political parties to become enforcers in order to attain/maintain political power (Gray, 2003a, b; Sives, 2003).

Within the context of the intense political rivalry among members of the two traditional political parties (PNP and JLP), the confrontation of the members to protect resource allocation has led to violent crimes (Sives, 2003; Gray, 2003a) and electoral crimes (Figueroa and Sives, 2003). The economic climate in Jamaica has contributed to the proliferation and continuation of the political division among the people, which supports 'badness' and killings. Gray (2003b) aptly captures this:

The failure of economic policies, near-weekly accounts of human rights abuses and recurrent disclosures of the corruption of power, the political bosses have retained their predominance and the political apparatus that supports them has remained largely unchanged... (Gray, 2003a)

Even prior to Gray's postulations, discourses on the contribution of violence in Jamaica, has been narrated. The Library of Congress (1987) laid the foundations that accounted for violence, particularly political violence. The Library of Congress writes:

The nation's political violence derives from the socioeconomic structure of Jamaican politics, that is, social stratification along racial and economic class lines. Increasing political, social and economic

polarization in Jamaica has contributed to both political and criminal violence ((Library of Congress, 1987) chap. 2. The page number would have been more appropriate than the chapter since it is a direct quote)

Both Obika Gray and the Library of Congress suggest that politics accounts for some aspect of violent crimes in Jamaica, which would include murders. This is keeping with the political rivalry between hardliners of the two main political parties in pursuit of political power and patronage. Studies have established the interrelation between politics and crime in Jamaica (Harriott, 2003, 2004a, 2004b; Robotham, 2003). The current reality in Jamaica is well documented by Boxill *et al.* (2007) who posit:

The murder rate moved from 19.2 per 100,000 to 39 per 100,000 in the same period [1977 and 2000]. In 2004, Jamaica was ranked as a country with one of the highest murder rates in the Caribbean (Boxill *et al.*, 2007)

The murder phenomenon identified by Boxill *et al.* (2007) has worsened between 2004 and 2009, which increased by 14.2% (March and Bourne, 2011). All the murders committed in Jamaica have been during a particular political party's tenure in governance. On examining the literature, no study emerged which evaluates murders from the perspective of the political party in governance. The aim of the current study is to comprehensively examine murders committed from 1970 to 2009 within the context of which political party is in government. It makes an assessment of the association among the country's murder rate, its economic and social structure.

## METHODOLOGY

**Data management:** The current work is a secondary data analysis. Data were collected from Jamaican Government Publications, namely Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (JSLC), Bank of Jamaica, Jamaica Constabulary Force and Economic and Social Survey of Jamaica (ESSJ). The Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (JSLC) (Planning Institute of Jamaica and Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 1989-2010) provided data on health care utilization (that is, health care seeking behaviour), illness rate and poverty; Economic and Social Survey of Jamaica on poverty (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 1989-2009); Statistical Digest on inflation and annual exchange rate (Bank of Jamaica, 2010a, b) and the Demographic Statistics on mortality, crude death rate (Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 1988-2010) and the Statistical Department of the Jamaica Constabulary Force

on murders. The period for this work is from 1989 to 2009.

The JSLC is jointly conducted by the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN). The JSLC is a nationally representative cross-sectional descriptive survey which uses stratified random sampling and comprises data on households' characteristics, health, education, expenditure, social programmes and other information. An administered questionnaire modelled from the World Bank's Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS) household survey (World Bank, 2002) is used to collect the data. There are some modifications to the LSMS, as JSLC is more focused on policy impacts.

The JSLC uses a two-stage stratified random sampling design where there is a Primary Sampling Unit (PSU) and a selection of dwellings from the primary units. The PSU is an Enumeration District (ED) which has a minimum of 100 dwellings in rural areas and 150 in urban areas. An ED is an independent geographic unit that shares a common boundary. This means that the country is grouped into strata of equal size based on dwellings (EDs). Based on the JSLC, the PSU is a listing of all the dwellings and this is used as the sampling frame from which a Master Sample of dwellings is compiled. According to the JSLC, the sample is weighted to reflect the population of the nation. The households in the JSLC have been interviewed over a 3-4 year period, after which a new representative sample is drawn. In this study, we use aggregate to the parish level, which means that analysis can be made across periods (or over time).

The Economic and Social Survey of Jamaica (ESSJ) is a publication of the PIOJ which collates information on social and economic indicators of Jamaica. We collect data mainly on unemployment rate in Jamaica from 1989 to 2009 (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 1988-2010).

The annual exchange rate of the Jamaican to the United States' dollar has been collected from the Bank of Jamaica's (BoJ) publication (Bank of Jamaica, 2010a, b) and the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) information is had from the International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook (International Monetary Fund, 2009). Data on murder have been obtained from Statistical Unit, Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) for the period 1970-2010, while the others are for the period 1989-2010. Data on murders are cross referenced with later years and from the Economic and Social Survey to ensure accuracy of earlier years.

**Statistical analyses:** Data gathered have been entered and stored into Microsoft Excel and SPSS for Windows version 17.0 (SPSS Inc; Chicago, IL, USA) which have been used to analyse the data. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (correlation matrix) is used to assess the bivariate correlation between particular macroeconomic

variables (log exchange rate, log poverty, log unemployment, log inflation, GDP) as well as with log murder. Scatter diagrams and best fit models are used on the data. Ordinary least square (OLS) regression analyses are used to establish the model for log murder. Ordinary least square regressions are utilized to analyse the possible explanatory variables. A p-value of 5% was chosen to indicate statistical significance. The variables that are entered into the model were significant in the bivariate correlation (Pearson's Product Moment Correlation). In any instance where collinearity existed ( $r > 0.7$ ) the variables have been entered independently into the model to determine which of those should be retained during the final model construction. The final decision regarding whether or not to retain the variables has been based on the variables' contribution to the predictive power of the model and its goodness of fit. Each scatter plot has been modelled by a linear, power, exponential or polynomial best fit function based on the data, with the aid of Excel as well as in SPSS.

Murder denotes the number of people unlawfully killed (a crime causing death without a lawful excuse) within a particular geopolitical zone (excluding police killings or homicides).

Murders for 2007 were ascribed to the PNP's administration as it was in office (governance of country) from 1989 up to November 2007.

Murders during the PNP government's administration mutually constitute those committed in 1972-to-1976 and 1989-to-2007.

Murders during the JLP government's administration mutually constitute those for 1970-1971 and 1980-to-1988, 2008 and 2009.

Marginal probabilities are computed using number of events in that category divided by the total number of events in the sample-marginal probability of being murdered during the PNP's administration in government equals the total number of murders which occurred in the PNP's administration in government (20,581) divided by the total number of murders in Jamaica (28, 156).

Conditional probabilities are calculated based on the number of events in a specified category divided by the total number of events within the specified category.

Gini coefficient is an approach in measuring the percentage difference between actual distribution and a perfect equal distribution of income. Gini varies from 0 to 1, in which zero represents perfect income equality and 1 being perfect inequality.

**Model:**

**For this research:** murder (M) is expressed as a function of annual exchange rate (E), prevalence of poverty (P) and the unemployment rate (U) in Eq. (1).

$$M = \alpha E^{\beta_1} P^{\beta_2} U^{\beta_3} \tag{1}$$

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of murders by political party in governance and by decade, 1970-2009

Characteristic	Mean±SD
<b>Political party in administration</b>	
PNP	762±431
JLP	631±507
<b>Decade</b>	
1970-79	266±102
1980-89	492±151
1990-99	761±173
2000-2009	1343±301
<b>Number of murders for the period (1970-2009)</b>	
General election, (year)	721±452
Non-general election, (year)	718±465

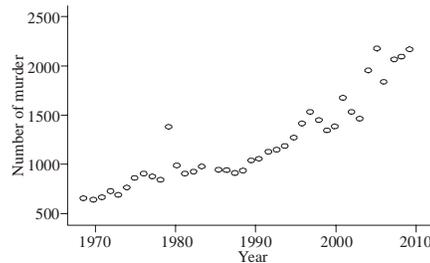


Fig. 1: Annual number of reported murders, 1970-to-2009

It can be deduced from Eq. (1) that by natural logging both sides of Eq.(1) would give Eq. (2):

$$\ln M = \omega + \beta_1 \ln E + \beta_2 \ln P + \beta_3 \ln U + \epsilon_i \tag{2}$$

where  $\omega$  is  $\ln \alpha$ ,  $\beta_i$  ( $i = 1 \dots 3$ ) denotes the coefficients of each factor and  $\epsilon$  signifies the error term of  $i$ th factors-in Table 10.  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_3 > 0$  and  $\beta_2 < 0$ .

**Findings:** Table 1 depicts information on the average murders for the political administration while in governance, the average number of murders for each decade and average annual number of murders from 1970 to 2009. On average, there were 722 murders (SD: 453; 95% CI: 575-869) per annum in Jamaica from 1970 to 2009. This means that on average 2 persons died per day. There were 762±431 Jamaican murders (95% CI: 599-924) during the PNP administration's governance of the country compared to 723±502 (95% CI: 344-917) in the JLP administration's governance of the nation.

Between 1969 and 2010, there have been nine general elections in Jamaica-including the snap election of 1983-a year that witnessed 6,600 people murdered compared to 21,556 in the non-general election years. Table 1 shows that the average yearly number of murders for the general election periods are 733 people compared to 718 in the non-general election years, which has no statistical significant difference (t-test: 0.83; p: 0.934).

Figure 1 presents a diagrammatic display of annual number of reported murders in Jamaica from 1970 to 2009. The scatter graph shows that murder can be best depicted by an exponential function and not a linear

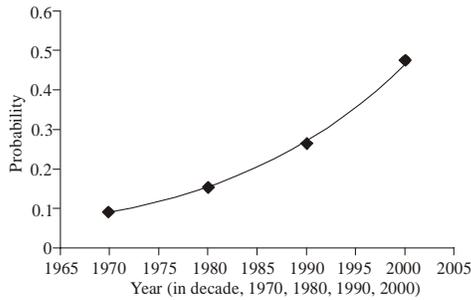


Fig. 2: Probability of murders for each decade

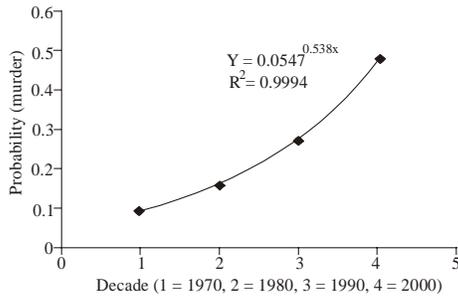


Fig. 3: Equation of the probability of being murdered, 1970-2009

curve. Using Microsoft Excel (Trendline analysis), 83.3% ( $R^2$ ) of the data can be fitted by a linear curve (Mortality =  $1.0659+34.97x$ ) compared to 88.7% ( $R^2$ ) of the data which is fitted by an exponential equation (Mortality =  $191e^{0.0544x}$ ).

The probability of murder for each decade is presented in Fig. 2. The probability of a Jamaican being murdered in the 1970s was 0.095, which increased to 0.158 in the 1980s; 0.271 in the 1990s and 0.477 in 2000s.

Using 1970 as the base year, the probability of dying increased by 1.7 times in the 1980s followed by 2.9 times in the 1990s and 5.0 times in the 2000s. This means that the rate of being murdered up to 2010 was 5 times more than the rate in the 1970s.

The probability of being murdered in Jamaica over the 4 decades (1970-2009) can be expressed as an exponential function, which accounts for 99.94% of the data points (Fig. 3).

Figure 4-7 displays a disaggregation of the number of murders for each decade, beginning with 1970. Clearly, the exponential movements in murder is shown to begin in the 1970s then changes to linear in the 1980s, reverts to an exponential function in the 1990s and then changes back to a linear function in 2000s.

Figure 5 presents annual number of murders for the decade of the 1980s (1980-1989). The annual number of murders can be best fitted as a non-linear function. For the 1980s, murder is a cyclical function indicating a trough and a peak.

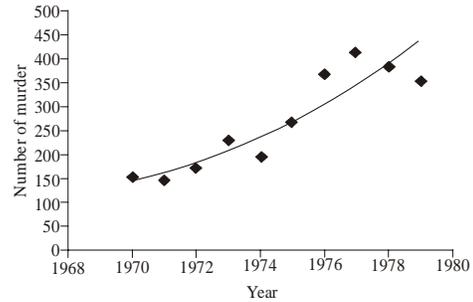


Fig. 4: Reported number of murders from the 1970s (1970-1979)

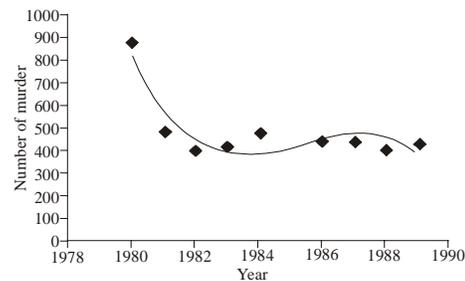


Fig. 5: Reported number of murders from the 1980s (1980-1989)

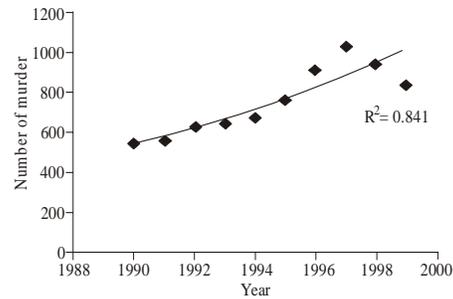


Fig. 6: Reported number of murders from the 1990s (1990-1999)

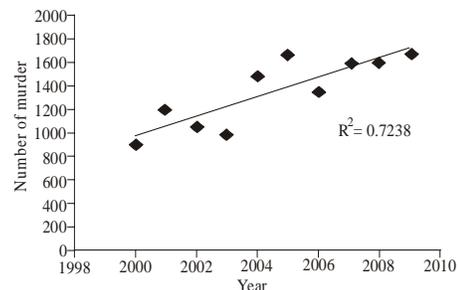


Fig. 7: Reported number of murders from the 2000s (2000-2009)

During the 1990s, the rate of change in annual murder displayed in Fig. 6 is increasing at a geometric rate.

Figure 7 shows that annual murders in the period of 2000 are increasing at a constant rate.

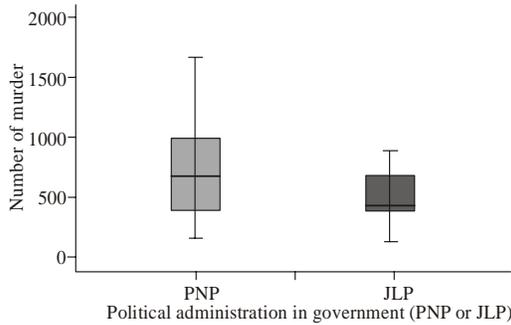


Fig. 8: Number of murders in a political administration in governance of the country

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of murders for political administration

Party	N	Mean	SD	SEM
murder PNP	27	762.26	430.846	82.916
JLP	12	631.25	506.759	146.289

The median number of murders in the administration of the People’s National Party (PNP) is greater than that in the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) (Fig. 8). Figure 8 shows that during the administration of the PNP, there have been more murders at the upper quartile (75%) compared to governance by the JLP.

Table 2 presents information on particular descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation and standard error of mean) in regards to murder based on the governing political administration over a four (4) decade period in Jamaica (from 1970-2009). During the PNP governance of Jamaica between 1969 and 2010, the mean number of murders are 762 (SD = 431) compared to 631 (SD = 507) in a JLP administration of government.

Using Student Independent Sample t-test, it was found that there is no statistical difference between the mean number of murders in a PNP administration of government and that of the JLP ( $t = 0.830, P = 0.412$ )-Table 3.

Table 4-6 present information to test the hypothesis that the mean number of murders for each decade is not equal, equality of variances can be assumed and there is a statistical difference between the means. Table 4 shows that equality of variance cannot be assumed (Levene statistic = 6.2 98,  $p = 0.002$ ) and Table 6 displays that

Table 4: Test of homogeneity of variances

Levene statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
6.298	3	35	0.002

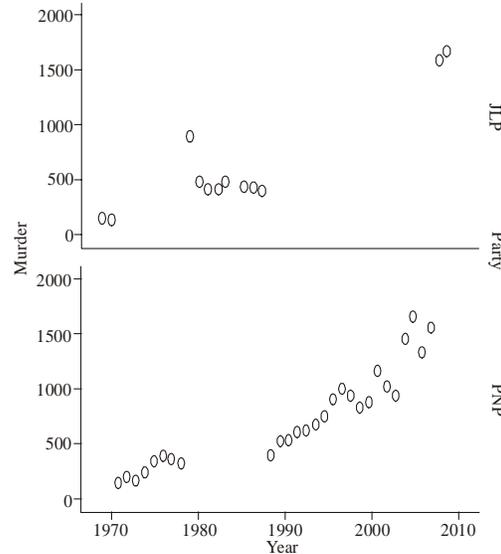


Fig. 9: Number of murders per political administration in government (decades)

there is a statistical difference between the means for each decade (F-statistic [3, 35] = 55.071,  $p < 0.0001$ ). Further information on the statistical differences between the mean numbers of murder for each decade is shown in Table 5. Table 5 illustrates that the smallest mean number of murders have been in the 1970s ( $266 \pm 102$  people) followed by the 1980s ( $493 \pm 151$  people), the 1990s ( $762 \pm 173$  people) and 1,344 people  $\pm 301$  in 2000.

Table 7 provides a multiple comparison of the mean number of murders for the four decades as well as gives information on whether the difference is statistically the same. There is no statistical difference between the number of murders in the 1970s and 1980s ( $p = 0.077$ ) and the other decades (1990s, 1970s, 1980s and 2000; as well as 2000s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s).

Figure 9 summarizes the number of murders in Jamaica based on the political administration (i.e. PNP or JLP) in government and the annual numbers of murders. The pattern of geometric movement in murders in Jamaica over the past 4 decades emerged during the

Table 3: Independent samples test

	Levene's test for equality of variances		t-test for equality of means				95% confidence interval			
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	Upper	Lower	
Murder	Equal variances assumed	0.073	0.789	0.830	37	0.412	131.009	157.770	-188.662	450.681
	Equal variances not assumed			0.779	18.400	0.446	131.009	168.153	-221.718	483.737

Table 5: Descriptive statistics of murder by decade

Decade	N	Mean	SD	SE	95% confidence interval			
					Lower	Upper	Min	Max
1970s	10	266.30	102.477	32.406	192.99	339.61	145	409
1980s	9	492.89	151.288	50.429	376.60	609.18	405	889
1990s	10	761.90	173.244	54.785	637.97	885.83	542	1037
2000 to 2010	10	1343.80	300.871	95.144	1128.57	1559.03	887	1680
Total	39	721.95	452.879	72.519	575.14	868.76	145	1680
Model								
Fixed effects			197.300	31.593	657.81	786.09		
Random effects				234.756	-25.15	1469.05		

Table 6: Analysis of variance

	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between groups	6431324.409	3	2143774.803	55.071	0.000
Within groups	1362451.489	3	538927.185		
Total	7793775.897	38			

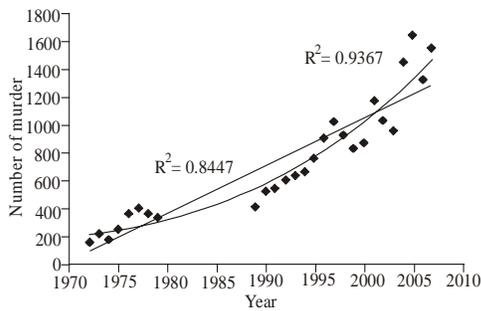


Fig. 10: Model fit of the number of murders in PNP administration, 1972-1979 and 1989-2007

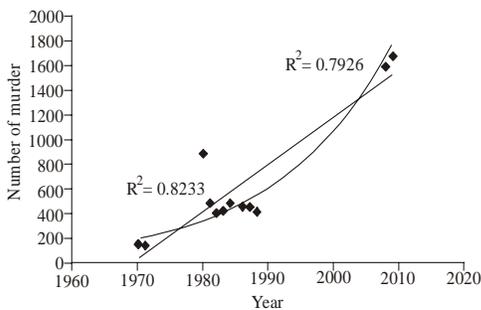


Fig. 11: Model fit of the number of murders in JLP administration, 1970, 1971, 1980-1988, 2008 and 2009

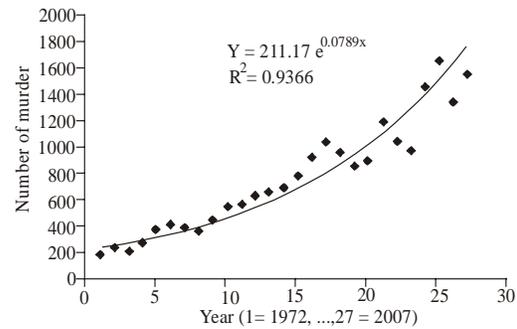


Fig. 12: Model fit of the number of murders in PNP administration, 1972-1979 and 1989-2007

period in which the PNP's administration was in government (Fig. 9).

Figure 10 shows that the number of murders in the PNP administration of governance of Jamaica is best fitted by an exponential function ( $R^2 = 0.937$ ) than a linear function ( $R^2 = 0.845$ ).

Figure 11 depicts a model fit of the number of murders during the JLP's administration of government for 1970, 1971, 1980-1988, 2008 and 2009. The diagram displays that murder is best fitted with a linear function ( $R^2 = 0.823$ ) than an exponential function ( $R^2 = 0.7926$ ).

Figure 12 and 13 present information on equation which best summarized the data along with the appropriate explanatory power ( $R^2$ ).

The number of murders in the 1980s is seen to have fallen in comparison to the rate of increases which began

Table 7: Multiple comparisons of mean number of murders for each decade

(I) decade(J) decade	Mean difference (I-J)			95% confidence interval			
	Lower Bound	SE	P- value	Upper	Lower		
Tukey HSD	1970s	1980s	-226.589	0.653	0.077	-471.07	17.89
		1990s	-495.600*	88.235	0.000	-733.56	-257.64
		2000s	-1077.500*	88.235	0.000	-1315.46	-839.54
	1980s	1970s	226.589	90.653	0.077	-17.89	471.07
		1990s	-269.011*	90.653	0.026	-513.49	-24.53
		2000s	-850.911*	90.653	0.000	-1095.39	-606.43
1990s	1970s	495.600*	88.235	0.000	257.64	733.56	
	1980s	269.011*	90.653	0.026	24.53	513.49	
	2000s	-581.900*	88.235	0.000	-819.86	-343.94	
2000s	1970s	1077.500*	88.235	0.000	839.54	1315.46	
	1980s	850.911*	90.653	0.000	606.43	1095.39	
	1990s	581.900*	88.235	0.000	343.94	819.86	

\*: The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

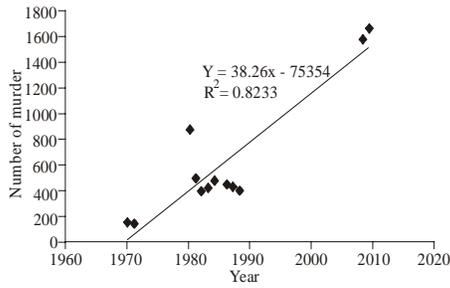


Fig. 13: Model fit of the number of murders in JLP administration, 1970, 1971, 1980-1988, 2008 and 2009

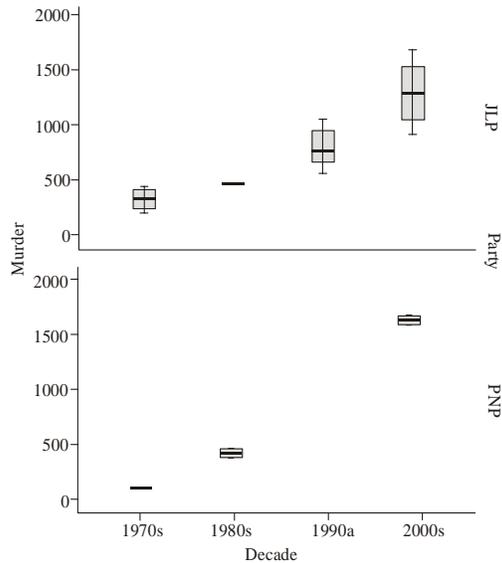


Fig. 14: Number of murders by political administration in government by decade

in the 1970s during the PNP's administration in government, which reverted to geometric increases in the 1990s under the PNP's administration in government and

this momentum rose even more in the 2000s (up to 2007) when the JLP's administration took over governance of the country (November 2007)-Fig. 14.

this momentum rose even more in the 2000s (up to 2007)0

Figure 15 displays the bivariate correlation between two macroeconomic variables and/or murder. Unemployment positively influences GDP per capita ( $r_{xy} = 0.478$ ); poverty and unemployment are positively correlated ( $r_{xy} = 0.473$ ), a strong direct relationship between the annual exchange rate and murders ( $r_{xy} = 0.904$ ) and a negative correlation between the annual exchange rate and GDP per capita ( $r_{xy} = -0.574$ ).

Fig. 15: Bivariate correlation between selected macroeconomic variables or murder NB: Correlation between poverty and murder is  $r_{xy} = -0.853$  and exchange rate and murder is  $r_{xy} = 0.904$

It should also be noted that the correlations are based on the natural log of all the variables except for GDP per capita.

Figure 15: Correlation matrix of selected macroeconomic variables and murder The probabilities, murders and murders within a particular political administration in government are listed in Table 8. The probability of being murdered is registered as 0.73 in the PNP's administration while in government, indicating that the odds of being murdered in that administration was 2.7 times more than in a JLP led administration in government over the last 4 years. Further information on the conditional probability over the same period reveals more findings on the probabilities of being murdered during a particular administration in government for a certain period within the four (4) decades.

The natural log of murder is a function of log annual exchange rate, log poverty and log unemployment-F statistic [5, 16] = 47.363;  $p < 0.0001$ . Of the five selected macroeconomic variables used in this model, the aforementioned three (3) factors account for 94% of the variance in log murders (Table 9). The majority of the

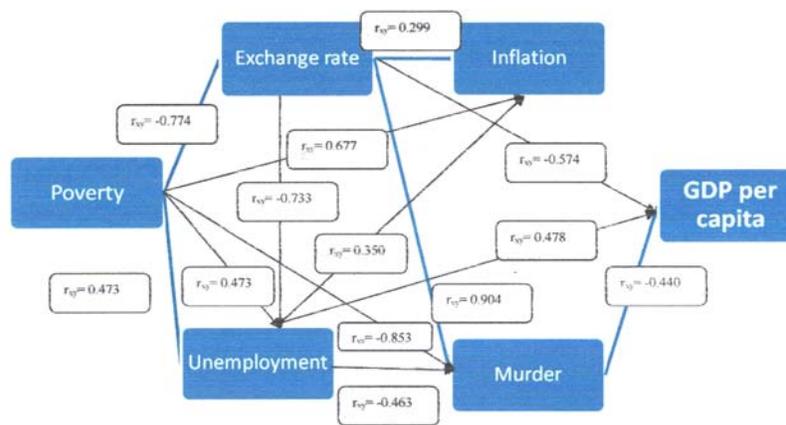


Fig. 15: Bivariate correlation between selected macroeconomic variables or murder



Fig. 16: Map of Jamaica

DISCUSSION

Table 8: Probabilities of being murdered

Characteristic	Murders			Marginal probability	Conditional probability	
	Total	PNP	JLP		if PNP	if JLP
<b>Political administration</b>						
PNP	20, 581		0.73			
JLP	7, 575		0.27			
Total	27, 15		61.00			
<b>Decade</b>						
1970s	2, 663	297	2, 366	0.095	0.89	0.11
1980s	4, 436	3, 997	439	0.158	0.10	0.90
1990s	7, 619	0	7, 619	0.271	1.00	0.00
Pre 2010	13,43	83, 281	10, 157	0.477	0.73	0.24
Total	27, 156	7, 575	20, 581	1.00		

It may not be accidental that the language of empowerment is lifted from Nietzsche via postmodernist thought, a popular intellectual trend among First World petty bourgeoisie. It is, of course, a sanitized version of what Nietzsche had to say about the topic, for Nietzsche argued that in a society that has divested itself of moral ties between great and meek-between masters and slaves-the meek will not uplift themselves but will exist for the glory of the great (Rapley, 2002)

For some time, Jamaica has been at a crossroads at wanting to effectively address the crime problem of how to reduce murders and institute measures that can effectively lower violent crimes. Murders particularly have been the focus of two of our main political institutions (PNP and JLP) that have formed the government of the nation for five decades. The nation's crime phenomenon

contribution to the change in lnMurder is explained by the log annual exchange rate ( $r^2 = 82.3\%$ ) followed by log unemployment ( $r^2 = 5.7\%$ ) and log poverty (5%).

Table 9: OLS of log murder and selected macroeconomic variables

Characteristic	Unstandardized coefficients	SDE	$\beta$	t-Statistic	Prob.	95% CI	R <sup>2</sup>
Constant	4.733	0.808		5.856	0.000	(3.019)-(6.446)	
lnExchange rate	0.460	0.073	0.840	6.269	0.000	(0.305)-(0.616)	0.826
lninflation	0.048	0.052	0.080	0.921	0.371	(-0.062)-(0.158)	
lnPoverty	-0.454	0.137	-0.396	-3.301	0.005	(-0.745)-(0.162)	0.050
GDP	-0.004	0.017	-0.022	-0.254	0.803	(-0.041)-(0.032)	
lnUnemployment	0.711	0.192	0.305	3.708	0.002	(0.305)-(1.117)	0.057

R<sup>2</sup> = 0.937; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.917  
 F statistic [5, 16] = 47.363 ; p<0.0001  
 Durbin-Watson test = 1.84  
 Standard error = 0.115  
 N = 21  
 Dependent Variable: lnMurder; The highlighted variables are the factors that influence log murder (p<0.5)

Table 10: OLS of log murder and selected macroeconomic variables

Characteristic	Unstandardized Coefficients	SE	$\beta$	t-statistic	Prob.	95% CI	R <sup>2</sup>
Constant	4.733	0.808		5.856	0.000	(3.019)- (6.446)	
lnExchange rate	0.460	0.073	0.840	6.269	0.000	(0.305)- (0.616)	0.826
lninflation	0.048	0.052	0.080	0.921	0.371	(-0.062)- (0.158)	
lnPoverty	-0.454	0.137	-0.396	-3.301	0.005	(-0.745)- (-0.162)	0.050
GDP	-0.004	0.017	-0.022	-0.254	0.803	(-0.041)- (0.032)	
lnUnemployment	0.711	0.192	0.305	3.708	0.002	(0.305)- (1.117)	0.057

R<sup>2</sup> = 0.937; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.917

F statistic [5, 16] = 47.363 ; p < 0.0001

Durbin-Watson test = 1.84

Standard error = 0.115

N = 21

Dependent Variable: lnMurder

Note: The highlighted variables are the factors that influence log murder (p < 0.5).

began long before the 1980s (Sives, 2003); but it is more so ascribed to the 1980s, especially 1980 (Harriott, 2003, 2004a, 2004b; March and Bourne, 2011) as has been confirmed by this current work. The reality is that on average since 1970 up to 2009; two (2) Jamaicans have been murdered by their fellow citizens per day. The record number of murders in 1980 (889) pale in significance to post 2000. In 2009, 1.9 times more murders were committed compared to 1980. Simply put, on average, 2 Jamaicans were murdered daily in 1980 compared to 5 in 2009. During the period of the JLP’s administration, 16 persons are murdered every 10 days compared to 21 per 10 day during the PNP’s administration. The current findings however, reveal that there is no significant statistical difference between murders in one political administration and the other-either in JLP’s or the PNP’s administration:

There has been a deterioration or decay in systems of democracy or what is sometimes called democratic governance. One area that stands out in this regard is the criminal justice system. This can be attributed to corruption in the police forces, abuse of citizens’ rights by the police, delays in the court system and deplorable prison conditions, which rank among the worst in the world. Within the executives, there are at least three countries in which ministers of government have been implicated in corruption in the last two decades of the twentieth century: Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas and Jamaica, as well as in the leadership of the political parties in St. Kitts and Nevis (Munroe, 2002):

There have been claims and counter claims as to which of the two main political institutions initiated the confrontational and tribal nature of politics into the political landscape in Jamaica. From Sives’ work (Sives, 2003), peace agreements were brokered as early as 1949 (May 16, 1949) between the two pioneers of the Trade Union Movement and the main political parties (National Workers Union (NWU) and the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU))-Normal Washington Manley and

Alexander Bustamante respectively. Political murder dates back to the 1940s with Benjamin Taylor, aged 57, killed in his yard on May 20, 1949 (Sives, 2003) and political strong-arm politicking noted by Norman Washington Manley in 1942. Empirical evidence exists to show that on Election Day in 1949, Hugh Shearer pulled a gun on a crowd of people from the rival’s party (Sives, 2003). This type of politicking has evolved, shifted and framed the spiraled violence of the 1960s. The 1970s characterizes a political ideological period which saw sparring between socialism and capitalism, which can ostensibly account for the re-birth of mass political murders that culminated in the homicide figure noted at the end of 1980, which accounts for the high level of socio-political distrust among Jamaicans (Bourne, 2010a, 2010b; Bourne *et al.*, 2010b; Waller *et al.*, 2007).

An examination of the decades reveals that in the 1970s, seven (7) people were murdered every 10 days compared to 12 per 10 days in the 1980s; 21 in every 10 days in the 1990s and 37/10 days in early 2000s. The aforementioned statistics suggest that 19 people are killed every 10 days, which denotes that almost 2 Jamaicans are slaughtered daily. The rate of being murdered in the 2000s therefore is an alarming 5 times more than was likely to occur in the 1970s while the rate of homicides in 2000s is 1.8 times compared to the 1990s. There is another piece of the statistics which indicates that on average one (1) Jamaican is murdered daily while the JLP was in government compared to two (2) murders daily during the PNP’s administration. What explains and accounts for the homicide statistics during the political administration of the two main parties in Jamaica:

By 1949 both political parties were engaged in violence to achieve political goals: the JLP to keep the PNP off the streets of Kingston and the PNP to force their way back, to campaign for their party union movement (Sives, 2003)

The exponential increase in the number of murders in 1980 is a product of a political system which is tribal,

factionalistic, functionalistic of patronage because of the failure of the state to provide economic benefits to the masses and a political culture that seeks power which dates back to the 1940s. Evidence is well documented in the literature which supports the link between murder and politics (Sives, 2003). An example here is Benjamin Taylor of Tamarind Tree, St. Andrew whose murder was connected to the by-election for the Kingston and St. Andrew Council's seat of Eastern St. Andrew in the Gordon Town area. The feuds and divisions have been primarily ascribed to the JLP, with PNP supporters in Western Kingston being preyed upon by those of the JLP (Sives, 2003). This is an explanation for grouping and retaliation of the PNP in order to reside in this locality.

Between 1960 and 2010, homicide statistics show that there have been 28,156 murders, mainly from urban spaces averaging two (2) Jamaicans daily. The PNP, controlling its own urban spaces has been in power for most of the 1970s (1972-1979) and the probability of being murdered during the 1970s was 0.09. The 1980s was mostly dominated by the JLP's administration (1980-1988) which also controlled its own urban spaces. During this time, the probability of being murdered exponentially rose to 0.16. A part of the explanation for the murdering of Jamaicans during the two decades was the political tension between the PNP, (which supported a left-wing political ideology) and the JLP, which was more right winged. The fighting between the two traditional political parties, using the murders for 1980, expresses intense rivalry especially within its urban spaces, and epitomizes the 'badness-honour' and marks the cost of political power-lives lost and socio-political distrust.

With the proliferation of urban garrison communities in Jamaica which extend beyond Western Kingston (Fig. 1)-namely Dela Vega City, Rivoli, March Pen Road, Johns Road, Central Village, March Pen, Waterford in St. Catherine; Riverton City, Payne Land, Seaview Gardens, Waterhouse, Drews land, Nanny Ville, Rockfort, McGregor Gully, Jarrett Lane, Tavern, Standpipe, Jacques Road and Olympic Gardens in St. Andrew; Norwood, Railway Lane, Gutters, Flankers in St. James; and May Pen in Clarendon (Map of Jamaica Fig. 16) the same political culture, patronage and division which had come to define politics in Western Kingston as an urban space seeped into other urban communities. Some of these urban spaces had become garrisonized and it is within the context of these garrisonized spaces that an explanation for the spike in the probability of being murdered to 0.27 between 1989 and the decades of the 1990s is to be understood. (Clarke, 2006; Leslie, 2010) for 1989 and the decade of the 1990s under the PNP's administration spiked the. Another fact which accounts for the exponential rise in homicides is the worsening of the economics of the nation and the alienation of the poor from the general society. Gray (2003b) ably expresses this in an article

entitled 'Badness-Honour'. He says "acts of badness-honour occur among the poor across all societies. It is the assertive form that moral alienation takes in contexts of inequality and social domination" (Gray, 2003a). He also opines that "poverty has ...led to resignation, disengagement or even flight by the poor. Deprivation need not lead to rebellion and it need not provoke the kind of outlawry discussed here" (Gray, 2003b). Historically, poverty has characterized Western Kingston and can explain the high homicide rates in this geo-political area as well as the infighting in all areas exhibiting similar feature (Moser and Holland, 1997).

In the past, when violence in Kingston (ie Western Kingston) dissipated, there has generally been a low violent crime in the rest of the society, which accounts for Clarke's narrative in times gone by:

One ray of hope in Kingston has been the willingness of gunmen (in 1978 and 1997-2001) to opt for peace, when given the appropriate political backing. In both cases the problem has been the security forces (the police and the army), who believe that peace can be achieved down the barrel of a gun, rather than through community policing in the garrison (Clarke, 2006)

Guns, trans-Atlantic drugs network, gangs, socio-economic marginalization, deprivation and violence to enforce political areas have extended outside of Western Kingston and into the Kingston Metropolitan Area, indicating that the violence has been proliferated into more than the traditional areas of Tivoli Gardens, Southside, Madden Lane, Wildman Street, Matthews Lane, Hanna Town, Rose Town, Rema, Denham Town, Pink Lane and Luke Lane. Between 1995 and 2000, Jamaica underwent an economic recession and has increased socio-economic challenges, accounting for the higher rates of homicides. The recession translates into new and deepened marginalization of many people, increased human suffering and increased destitution of the poor. Poverty has been identified and widely studied as causal factor of crime (Robotham, 2003; Ellis, 1991; Tremblay, 1995) and those whom have not used the term causality have employed association (Harriott, 2004a, b; Ellis, 1992; Levy, 1996), as a probable explanation accounting for the rise in homicides in the 1990s, during the PNP's administration. Within the context of Becker's seminal work, it could be forwarded that the crime pandemic is derived from the economic situation in the society (Becker, 1968) and the social injustices and inequalities (Gordon, 1987; Stone, 1987).

According to the World Bank (2003), the crime problem in Jamaica (murder rate) is about the same as that of New York in 1970. By 2000 however, it had exceeded New York's by seven times. Homicide statistics show that

the 1980s marks a transition in wanton murders, although its genesis began in the 1970s. This exponential rise in murders in the 1980s and beyond cannot be interpreted and deconstructed without an examination of neo-liberalism. Neo-liberalism which became a global phenomenon in the 1980s because of the ethos of Margaret Thatcher's radical right winger policies which was expressed as structural adjustment programmes in many developing nations holds the key to the murder pandemic. The neo-liberalism policies envelope privatization, job insecurity, increased wealth for the upper class, reduced welfarism and resulted in a rapid proliferation of 'under class' people (Osborne, 2001). Neo-liberalism, therefore, brings with it the systematic marginalization of the 'under class', social exclusion, immense wealth for the bourgeoisie and deregulation which heightened the economic hardship among those in the margins of society. Historically, the 1970s and 1980s are transitional periods in Jamaica between ideology (social communism and capitalism) and introduction of neo-liberalists' policies, which have some political explanations for violence and social divisiveness.

Obika Gray (2003a) opined that:

- "...unforgiving garrison (politics) during the party civil wars in the 1970s"
- (The focus on the 1970s as) "a time of great upheaval, political violence and social polarization in Jamaica"
- Activists during the 1970s reported familiarity with former CIA agent Philip Agee's critique of U.S. imperialism. (Gray, 2003b)
- The late 1970s urban gangster for both the political and criminal underworlds were becoming a growing source of patronage with which politicians had to compete" (Gray, 2003a).

These issues highlight the emergence of intense criminality, as well as embed the informal industry as a consequence of the failure of the formal economy to adequately provide for the needs of the people. These issues also highlight a vulnerable populace now tired of wanton killings the widening of the gap between with the rich and the poor and the increased self-interest of the ruling group thus leading to a new consciousness.

Harriott (2003) postulates that "between 1977 and 2000, the rate of violent crime had increased from 254.6 incidents per 100,000 citizens to 633.4/100,000 and the murder rate from 19.2/100,000 to 39/100,000", suggesting that self-interest would dictate that the PNP's administration during most of the 2000s should be concerned about a divorce of crime and politics link as the rate of murders was haemorrhaging the socio-economic fibre of the society. The probability of being murdered in

the decade of 2000 was 0.48 compared to 0.27 in the 1990s, 0.16 in the 1980s and 0.09 in the 1970s, suggesting that the composition and rationale for violent crimes (particularly murders) had shifted, as well as the geo-political coverage. In an address to the nation in 2006, then prime minister of Jamaica, P.J. Patterson recognising the murder pandemic postulated "without a doubt, the high level of violent crime remains our most troubling and pressing problem." The JLP could argue that it was the irresponsiveness of the PNP to grapple with the complexities of crimes, especially murders, which accounts for this murderous decade. When the JLP took over governance in 2007, the number of murders rose by 1.7% (to 1601) 12 months later. In 2009 it reached a record 1680, suggesting that there was some difference between murders rates in 2000s compared to when they left office in the 1980s. The murder pandemic is no different in periods when the PNP is in governance to that of the JLP however the disparity is with the rate and the average number of cases reported and this offers no honour for either the JLP or the PNP, as crimes are changing composition and type.

The current work shows that there was no significant statistical difference between mean numbers of homicides committed during the years of the general election in Jamaica-including the snap election of 1983-and non-general election years. The reality which is embedded in the figures shows average killings per year over the years of general elections being 733 people during general election years and 718 in non-general election years which denote the wanton murder of poor Jamaicans. On the practice of ascribing the homicides to political maneuverings, political, ideological and remarked differences in general elections years would be incorrect and further away from the truth. While this could be used for 1970s leading to the 1980 general elections, the homicide statistics are indicating some changes away from this wholesale usage of politics and politicking. Criminality has extended its composition and structure and killings were in keeping with the new face of criminal apparatus, which had substantially by-passed the politically linked violent murders being perpetrated.

The types and degree of criminal violence in Jamaica have of necessity, occasioned a shift in emphasis and resources to major incidents such as murder, shootings, guns for drugs trade and gang related activities as the incidence of issuing threats to politicians is growing and the 'macro-climate' is demanding a solution to the problem. The volume of calls from the public to the police and other bodies has helped to set the organizational priorities the populace seek in order to protect their assets and life. Perceived fear factors demand a separation of crime and politics as this is believed to account for

increased violent crimes. And, while the mere volume of calls may be an important prescription for action, the types of calls are critical for action. Within the ambit of the mandates of the police force as well as the political administration, decisions are made primarily based on perception, interpretation and the expectations from outside bodies such as Amnesty International and United Nations. Individuals will therefore weigh the cost and benefit of participating in legitimate or illegitimate activities, with punishment if caught, serving as the primary deterrent of their participation and survivability outside of their involvement.

Guns, violent crimes and the volume of unsolved serious crimes are now well heralded as these have reached the international arena. Fear and victimization have become rampant and the police are increasingly pressured to address these issues. The wired media had headlines which read: '*Jamaica's murder rate continues to soar*' in 2008 and '*Jamaica record the highest murder rate* in 2009', thus propelling Jamaica's unenviable position to become among the 10 top countries with the most murders in the world. Crime, violence and drugs in the Caribbean have become so much of an issue internationally that this caught the attention of the United Nations and the World Bank. UNODC (2007) conducted a study on 'Crime, violence and development: Trends, costs and policy options in the Caribbean' which reveal: The Governments of the Caribbean countries recognize the seriousness of the problem and are exploring innovative policy responses at both the national and regional levels. Civil society organizations are doing their part as well by designing and implementing violence prevention programs targeting youth violence, violence against women and other important forms of violence (UNODC, 2007).

The seriousness of the crime problem in the Caribbean, particularly Jamaica, means that peoples' fear of crime and victimization have heightened to an alarming level thus forcing them to take justice into their own hands so much so by circumventing the role of the security forces. This is reported by Harriott (2003), when he said "... in response to a series of incidents of violent crime, citizens mobilized themselves as vigilante groups and rioted and attacked a police station in an effort to "lynch" three men whom they erroneously thought were criminals and who had sought refuge in the police station". Such a response from the citizenry is the value they now place on the asset of life, property and their psychological wellbeing; these are ultimately worthy of protection. Based on Manunta (1998) postulations, "*asset*" is anything that can be threatened and damaged and is consequently defended by the protector..." This may account for the populace's willingness to see an end to the marriage between politics and crime as this twin-

phenomenon threatens existence and property. Similarly, some politicians are relinquishing their ties with criminality as it no longer serves their interest.

There is extensive empirical evidence showing that the Caribbean is experiencing a period of terrorism that emerged from narcotic transshipments and gun smuggling, which does not serve the interest of politicians (Griffith, 2004a, 2004b). Given that gang members (or underground traders) are no longer serving the interests of politicians as they used to in the 1940s, 1970s and beyond, it follows that macroeconomic climate as well as the micro-climate causing the gradual expansion of the crime is outside of the remit of the politicians. Within the context of Robotham's perspective that "probably the most intractable factor contributing to violent crime in Jamaica is the interconnecting network of criminal gangs, drug running, politics and the police" (Robotham, 2003), then Munroe's comment (Munroe, 2002) offers an understanding of the pressing demand of the public (international and local) to 'break the back' of the marriage between crime and politics, as politicians and the state find it more difficult to control the criminals and their activities.

The nascent dismantling of the crime-politics link in Western Kingston, especially Tivoli Gardens, emerged from a societal stance against the nation experiencing further violence emanating from or being projected unto the community. Clearly the violent threats which once existed in Western Kingston have been lowered and this is slowing changing the perception of Jamaicans outside of Kingston on physical harm, crime and violence in Kingston. People are now expressing confidence in the police being able to man the streets, without fear, political interference, favour and apprehension and many of the basic challenges of insecurity can now be addressed by law enforcement. Despite this reality, prior to the capture of Christopher 'Dudus' Coke and renewed talks of dismantling Tivoli Gardens in 2011, murders had begun to see a decline by 15% in 2010 compared to 2009 when Western Kingston, particularly Tivoli Gardens and Christopher Coke, ostensibly ruled all garrisons in the nation. Christopher 'Dudus' Coke who is associated with the Jamaica Labour Party and Western Kingston, particularly Tivoli Gardens, could be interpreted as another scapegoat for the murder pandemic in Jamaica. Instead of addressing the socio-economic marginalization and deprivation of countless Jamaicans in garrison communities, Coke is used to poison people away from the real issue of failure of the state-sub-standard housing, financial difficulties, unemployment, socio-political exclusion and people being robbed of their dreams because of structural relationships embedded in the society. The politics has captured and exploited the inequality inherent in the social structure (Sives, 2003; Gray, 2003b) and the relationship between politics and high-end crime is well documented (CaPRI and Thwaites, 2007) and magnified by economic mal-distribution of income.

Harriott postulated that “The seeds of the crime-politics phenomenon in Jamaica were planted and nurtured over decades of competitive party politics” (Harriott, 2003). Both political parties have left Jamaica with a murder epidemic and none can claim a better understanding of the crime problem as the statistics indicate no difference between the average number of murders during each administration between 1969 and 2010. The reality is, politics has played a part of the murder pandemic and while murders are more so outside of politicking like in the 1970s through the 1980s, murder now has a life of its own and is fuelled by a plethora of factors which are outside of the control of the political directorates. This does not indicate that the political institutions and government cannot adequately address the problems as violence still supports the political structure. Its tentacles are embedded in the political landscape, supports political power and re-election of some politicians.

The failure of the political institutions and government of the nation to address the socio-economic deprivation of many Jamaicans accounts for the murderous society. Politics should not be blamed for murder pandemic in the country as people’s engagement in criminal activity is simply an economic (survival) phenomenon. This was aptly captured by Levy (1996), “all around, the cost of living was more tolerable [in the 1960s and 1970s] and certainly (more than) the oppressive burden it is today [1990s]”. Politics is a scapegoat for the economic deprivation of many people, which explains people’s involvement in criminal activities in order to survive. The engagement and involvement of Jamaicans in criminal activities is an alternative medium of income to provide assistance and satisfy the basic daily needs of the family (housing, food, health and education). The state has failed to adequately provide for the general society and to label politics as the sole rationale for the murder epidemic is to hide mass economic deprivation, degradation, socio-economic human suffering and socio-political exclusion of many Jamaicans.

The economic burden of Jamaicans is captured in a national cross-sectional study by Waller *et al.* (2007) who found that 3 in every 5 people indicated that their current economic situation (in 2007) was at most the same as in 2006; 31 out of every 50 persons mentioned that their salaries were unable to cover daily expenses; 18 out of every 25 expressed a concern of the probability of being unemployed in the next 12 months and 21 out of every 50 reported that they were presently worse off than their parents. The economics of survivability is a widespread reality which affects many Jamaicans and cannot be limited to inner-city residents. This argument is ably captured in the factoid that an additional 103, 973 Jamaicans became poor in 2010 compared to the previous year (Bourne, 2011) highlighting how the economic base

of many middle-class residents have been eroded. With this erosion of the economic base on some people who were once in the middle-class, it can be extrapolated that the difficulty of the survivability would have intensified among those who were already poor and many people who are still in the middle-class will be increasingly concerned about their economic future. The crime problem in Jamaica cannot be singly superimposed on the politics as the economic conditions of the society is a make for such a society being among the 10<sup>th</sup> leading murderous nation in the world (Bourne *et al.*, 2012).

Crime can be interpreted an economic phenomenon (Becker, 1968) and to deny this fact is to knowingly deny the society a solution to the murder pandemic, as other measures will be futile. A study by March and Bourne (2011) found a positive statistical correlation between murder and the exchange rate, which suggests that as cost of living rise, people will murder each other in an attempt to defend their survivability. Like the politics, the guns and drugs trade is one more approach in the game of exploiting vulnerable people; but it provides an economic means to those who are involved. The band aid measures to the crime problem have not and will not work because they are not addressing the root of the pain and frustration that of the economic deprivation as well as the socio-political and economic exclusion of the masses. Jamaica has an exploitative and yet exploited and degraded class of garrison residents most of whom are starved of socio-economic opportunities. The legacy of this exploitative phenomenon dates to post-slavery and was captured by Buddan (2001):

Post-slavery conditions in Barbados were nowhere as bad as in Jamaica and the Barbados ruling class was not as oppressive as their counterparts in Jamaica. It was this oppressiveness that forced the British government to take away power from the Jamaican planters in the local House of Assembly but which it did not do in Barbados (Buddan, 2001)

Economic deprivation and inequality are rarely used to explain the crime phenomenon in Jamaica. Politics is the scapegoat and the rigid class and exploitative structure pales in the discussion of crime solutions. The ruling class does not see the importance of opportunities and a more equitable distribution of income as the imperative to solve the crime problem, which is the rationale fuelling politics emergence as the reason for the problem. The economics of crimes, particularly murders, is outside of the political spectrum although politics have exploited the economic deprivation of the people. The difficult realities of Jamaicans is aptly captured in these sentiments:

- “Encouragement to young girls to ‘go get a man’ sometimes come from parents without the economic resources to satisfy them” (Levy, 1996)
- “Economic frustration is also said to be one of the reasons leading especially women to abuse their children” (Levy, 1996)

- “Youth remark that they have less time and energy for crime and stealing when working. They also admit to have less need to steal: it is a means of survival, but listed as the last resort” (Levy, 1996)
- Social isolation. A society that has accomplished the aforementioned socio-economic realities cannot singly blame politics as a corrupt institution.

Indeed, there are other institutions that people deemed corrupt such as police force, customs, public works, inland revenue, immigration, some executive agencies and statutory organizations (Waller *et al.*, 2007; Harriott, 2000).

In 1987, Gordon (1987) opined that “... social mobility in Jamaica must confront the paradox of large scale social mobility generated by the opening up of new positions coexisting side by side with gross and, perhaps, even widening inequalities of opportunity between the minority at the top and majority at the bottom of the social order”. March and Bourne (2011), in retrospect forwarded some statistics which revealed the state of income and social inequalities in the society, when they wrote that:

The reality is captured fully in the income distribution among the social hierarchies and how such maldistribution of economic resources is a determination of social opportunities (or social exclusion). Banskota *et al.* (1987) showed that 1.2% of the income is earned by those in the 10% decile compared to 35% of those in 90<sup>th</sup> decile (in 1977). Although in 1958, those in the poorest decile (10%) was earning 0.6% and those in the 90<sup>th</sup> decile 44% of the income, the amount of the income that was distributed to the other deciles remained relatively the same (March and Bourne, 2011)

Changes in the Gini coefficient, therefore, are a good assessment of social inequalities, marginalization, exploitation and disadvantage of particular groups within a nation. In 1958, the Gini coefficient for Jamaica was 0.58, which fell to 0.46 in 1977 (Banskota *et al.*, 1987). The income inequality among Jamaicans seem to be relatively consistent since the 1970, which was in the general area of 0.42-0.45 (Gini coefficient- Bourne, 2008; King and Handa, 2000; March and Bourne, 2011)

Even though Jamaica’s GDP has been increasing since the 1940s, its income distribution has been relatively the same over the periods (Gupta, 2003). Increased income is associated with high prices (using inflation rates), relatively constant income distribution, higher rates of unemployment, higher exchange rate of the Jamaica dollar and other hard currencies (like United States dollars, British Sterling and Canadian dollar) and has resulted in arise in vulnerability of those on the economic margins. During the 1990s, when Jamaica was experiencing an economic recession, its Gini coefficient was 0.41, which was about the same as in the 1970s, while the cost of living was higher than in 1970s and 1980s. The maldistribution of income had not ceased as, Ian Boxill

*et al.* (2007) found that 0.8% of respondents owned most of wealth and 69 out of every 100 participants had at most secondary level education (Boxill *et al.*, 2007). Within the context of March and Bourne (2011) work that found a statistical correlation between:

- The exchange rate and murder ( $r_{xy} = 0.934$ )
- The exchange rate and poverty ( $r_{xy} = -0.748$ )

and the fact that in 1989 the exchange rate was Jamaican \$5.72 for one United States dollar (USD) and that this had exponentially increased to Jamaican \$87.38 (March and Bourne, 2011), one can conclude that the economic challenge is related to the mass homicides in the society.

In 2009, when homicides had reached its highest in Jamaican history (1,680 murders), there was a global economic recession. Remittance inflows (which is an income for many poor families) to the island declined by USD 230 million (approximately 11%) over the previous year (Ramacon, 2011):

- Poverty increased by 34%
- The exchange rate rose by 21% (March and Bourne, 2011).

Clearly, the economic difficulty for many Jamaicans will strongly account for their increased involvement in criminal activity as is supported by Becker (1968) and March and Bourne (2011). Low economic opportunities, maldistribution of income, economic marginalization, socio-economic deprivation and exploitation, within the context survivability in the new economic environment, have fostered the murderous society that is now the Jamaican experience. Again, politics is only capitalizing on the economic conditions in the society and utilizing it for its advantage like the other social institutions.

Crime being a social deviance, therefore, is germinated by the socio-political inequalities, economic hardships for many and the difficulty in survivability of those on the margins as well as the oppressors’ fuelling and maintaining an environment that supports the engagement into acts of violence. The aforementioned reality is enveloped in Levy’s postulation which states “in a context of prolonged unemployment and unrelieved poverty, this appears to many males as the only way to gain respect and status [involvement in criminality]” (Levy, 1996) and 2) “They deeply want respect and they deserve it” (Levy, 1996). Jamaicans do not perceive a sense of fairness and justice in the governance of the society which is expressed in the findings that:

- 69 out of every 100 indicated that the nation is governed to benefit a few powerful interests
- 69 out of every 100 reported that justice favours the affluent class (Waller *et al.*, 2007) as well as Bourne (2010b)

Which supports the continued calls for justice, equality and fairness in the society and that violent crimes embody those social imbalances. Crimes are, therefore, a part of retaliatory mechanism of people to the social imbalances (Lacy, 1977), with little focus on this fact in the crime discourse. Although Jamaica's crime problem has its roots in post-emancipation, the catalyst of this can be ascribed to the 1980s and it can be extrapolated from John Rapley (2002) work that this is associated with the economic climate which developed following liberations (or neoliberalism) led by Western governments in the 1980s, the reduction in state interventionism and social programmes.

Rapley's postulations offer some insight into the low level of:

- Interpersonal trust
- Political trust

In Jamaica as people do not perceive the society to be fair and equitable. With less than 1% of Jamaicans owing most of the wealth (Boxill *et al.*, 2007), the issue of inequity is established and this cannot be argued to be a construction of people's social position. The income maldistribution translates into socio-political inequalities and is a make for the low confidence in many societal institutions. Powell, Bourne and Waller's study reveals that less than 20% of Jamaicans have confidence in these institutions-local government council, political parties, police, parliament, judiciary, large companies, government, private sector, trade unions, newspaper, armed forces and general government (Waller *et al.*, 2007), suggesting that the crime problem extends beyond politics. Hence, any societies that have low social capital (i.e., interpersonal trust), socio-economic inequality, systematic discrimination and marginalization like Jamaica will experience the endemic crime problem that continues to cripple socio-economic development.

## CONCLUSION

The murderous society that Jamaica has become is a creation of its entire social structure, it transcends politics. Bourne (2011) argues that "some Caribbean scholars (Derick Gordon, Carl Stone) have postulated that the class stratification and the legacies of plantation autocracy are still evident in contemporary Jamaica (Gordon, 1987; Stone, 1987) a privileged few; prosper from the activities and the masses desire the opened display of economic successes" (2011, p.101). Robotham (2003) contends that, "probably the most intractable factor contributing to violent crime in Jamaica is the interconnecting network of criminal gangs, drug running, politics and the police" (2003, p. 215), which indicates that the crime phenomenon is a result of the influence of social institutions including

politics. People get into criminal activities in response to being 'shut out' and socially excluded from the formal structure of their society. This is particularly so in some Latin American and Caribbean developing countries where limited attention is given to the crime-economic and inequality paradigm.

Extraditing all dons-including Christopher "Dudus" Coke (Leslie, 2010)-and confronting 'donmanship' in Jamaica will not alleviate the root cause of the crime problem. Socio-economic marginalization, limited opportunities for upward social mobility, income inequality and the social exclusion of the urban poor (in Jamaica's case, garrison residents) from mainstream society are at the core of crime pandemics. This study shows that in the Jamaican context, politics is not absolved of its equal share and contribution to the high rates of homicide and violent crimes. The Hearne Report 1944 (Sives, 2003), Amanda Sives (1997, 2003) study, as well as Obika Gray (2003a) work have established the interconnectivity between politics and violence-including murders-and politics and inner-the city phenomenon.

Kingston, Jamaica, emerged out of the socio-economic exclusion of the poor. The poor here includes the former slaves and free people-labourers, artisans and small property owners (Simmonds, 2003). In response to economic marginalization, the urban poor became involved in anti-social behaviours as a means of resistance and survivability. Crime became a parcel of social deviance, particularly murders and attempted murders of plantation owners (Simmonds, 2003). Simmonds suggests that the crime problem has been an economic phenomenon which dates back to the post-emancipation period of Jamaica's history.

The Jamaican state and its institutions of governance (governmental and civil society) must recognize the importance of all classes to the development of its society. Those in the economic margins within the society must be given a place in the formal structure; they must have equal opportunities, choices and socio-economic options. If the deep social cleavages of social inequality are left unattended, the nation's crime problem will continue to escalate.

Explanation and interpretations of the roots of violent crimes continue to elude scholars, policy specialists and social workers because its causes are wrongly diagnosed. Harriott (2004) aptly argues that "the marginalization of a high proportion of the urban poor who inhabit the slums of Kingston and the large towns of Jamaica (Spanish Town, Montego Bay) indirectly contributes handsomely to the problem of violent crime" (Harriott, 2004b). Gray (2003b) analysis of the crisis of violence in Jamaica adds to that of Harriott's. It can be concluded from this study that there is an invisible hand in influencing the crime pandemic in Jamaica. The invisible hand is the social structure, particularly social stratification

expressed through socio-economic inequality. Unemployment, marginalization, socio-political exclusion, socio-economical exploitation and resource constraints are elements of the Jamaican social structure that facilitate perpetuation of violent crimes. This paper shows that in periods of increased employment and economic boom-murders fall, however the social structure that generates deviant and criminal behavior is left untouched.

Politics is, therefore, not the core of the crime pandemic in Jamaica and as such a divorce of crime-and-politics will not solve the crime phenomenon. This was also captured by the Library of Congress (1987), which forwarded that "The nation's political violence derives from the socioeconomic structure of Jamaican politics, that is, social stratification along racial and economic class lines. Increasing political, social and economic polarization in Jamaica has contributed to both political and criminal violence." There is an inherent structural weakness in the Jamaican society which pre-dates slave emancipation in 1838; it was modified in post-emancipation period. Social stratification, which we argue is the invisible hand that contributes to violent crimes is constantly overlooked in discourses about the solutions to crime. The invisible hand is captured in the quotation from John Rapley at the beginning of this paper's discussion, that the poor are used at the expense of the rich and the power elite.

In summary, Harriott's belief that Jamaica is experiencing a crisis of 'public safety' (Harriott, 2000) is a relevant and valid description. However we are arguing that the problem is more extensive and transcends the issue of insecurity. An understanding of the crime phenomena must expand beyond public safety and the impact of political institutions to include:

- Economic and political exploitation
- Marginalization
- Power relations
- Language and educational deficiencies
- Neoclassical liberal thinking
- Institutionalized norms including the justice system
- Dominant class structure
- Moral codes in the political economy
- The disorganized poor as well as the manoeuvres of the petty bourgeoisie

## REFERENCES

- Bank of Jamaica (BoJ). 1981-2010. Statistical Digest, 1980-2009. Bank of Jamaica.
- Banskota, K., S.R. Johnson and G.L. Stampley, 1987. Income distribution in Jamaica. Staff Report 87-SR36, Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development. Iowa,
- Becker, G.S., 1968. Crime and punishment: An economic approach. *J. Polit. Econ.*, 76: 69-217.
- Boxill, I., B. Lewis, R. Russell, A. Bailey, L. Waller, C. James, P. Martin, L. Gibbs and M.A. Seligson, 2007. Political Culture of Democracy in Jamaica: 2006. Americas Barometer. The University of the West Indies, Kingston.
- Bourne, C., 2008. Economic growth, poverty and income inequality. Paper Presented at the Sir Arthur Lewis Memorial conference, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago, Friday, September 26.
- Bank of Jamaica (BOJ). 2010a. Remittance report, 2010. BOJ, Kingston
- Bank of Jamaica BOJ. 2010b. Economic statistics, 2010. BOJ, Kingston
- Bourne, P.A., 2010a. Crime, tourism and trust in a developing country. *Current Res. J. Soc. Sci.*, 2(2): 69-83.
- Bourne, P.A., 2010b. Modelling political trust in a developing country. *Current Res. J. Soc. Sci.*, 2(2): 84-98.
- Bourne, P.A., A. Best, C.G. Francis and O.W. Beckford, 2010a. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Voters in Jamaica. *Current Res. J. Soc. Sci.*, 2(2): 114-122.
- Bourne, P.A., O.W. Beckford and N.C. Duncan, 2010b. Generalized trust in an English-speaking Caribbean nation. *Current Res. J. Soc. Sci.*, 2(1): 24-36.
- Bourne, P.A., 2011. Re-visiting the crime-and-poverty paradigm: An empirical assessment with alternative perspectives. *Current Res. J. Econ. Theory*, 3(4): 99-117.
- Bourne, P.A., C. Pinnock and D.K. Blake, 2012. The influence of violent crimes on health in Jamaica: A spurious correlation and an alternative paradigm. *J. Clin. Diagnostic Res.*, 6(1): 5-12.
- Buddan, R., 2001. The Foundations of Caribbean Politics. Arawak Publishers, Kingston.
- CaPRI (Caribbean Policy Research Institute) and P. Thwaites, 2007. Crime, Violence and Justice. Discussion Paper for National Planning Summit, November 2-4, Private Sector Organization of Jamaica, Kingston.
- Clarke, C., 2006. Politics, violence and drugs in Kingston, Jamaica. *B. Lat. Am. Res.*, 25: 420-440.
- Colak, A.A. and J. Pearce, 2009. Security from below in contexts of chronic violence. *IDS Bull.*, 40: 11-19.
- Ellis, H., 1992. Identifying Crime Correlates in a Developing Society: A study of Socio-Economic and Socio-Demographic Contributions to Crime in Jamaica, 1950-84, Peter Lang, New York.
- Ellis, H., 1991. Report on Research into the Causes of Crime and Violence in Jamaica: A Study of Prison Inmates. National Task Force on Crime and Violence, Kingston.

- Figueroa, M. and A. Sives, 2003. Garrison Politics and Criminality in Jamaica: Does the 1997 Election Present a Turning Point?" In: Harriott, A., (Ed.), *Understanding Crime in Jamaica: New Challenges for Public Policy*. University of the West Indies Press, Kingston, pp: 63-88.
- Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2008. *Global Burden of Armed Violence*, Geneva: Geneva Declaration Secretariat. Retrieved from: <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/fileadmin/docs/Global-Burden-of-Armed-Violence-full-report.pdf>
- Gordon, D., 1987. *Class, Status and Social Mobility in Jamaica*. Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston.
- Gray, O., 2003a. Rogue culture or avatar of liberation: The Jamaican lumpenproletariat. *Econ. Soc. Survey*, 51: 1-34.
- Gray, O., 2003b. Predation politics and the political impasse in Jamaica. *Small Axe*, 13: 72-94
- Griffith, I.L., 2004a. *Caribbean Security in the Age of Terror: Challenge and Change*. Ian Randle Publishers, Kingston.
- Griffith, I.L., 2004b. Introduction: Understanding Reality, Interpreting Change. In: *Caribbean Security in the Age of Terror: Challenge and change* by Ivelaw L. Griffith. Ian Randle Publishers, Kingston, pp: 23-33
- Gupta, S., 2003. *Income distribution and Tax and Government Social Spending Policies in Developing Countries*. Fiscal Affairs Department International Monetary Fund, Washington D.C.
- Harriott, A., 2000. *Police and Crime Control in Jamaica: Problems of Reforming ex-Colonial Constabularies*, the University of the West Indies Press, Kingston.
- Harriott, A., 2002. The Jamaican crime problem-taking a new turn and presenting new challenges. *IDEAZ*, 1(2): 44-52.
- Harriott, A., 2003. Editor's Overview. In: Harriott, A., (Ed.), *Understanding Crime in Jamaica: New challenges for Public Policy*. University of the West Indies Press, Kingston, pp: 9
- Harriott, A., 2004a. Introduction. In: Harriott, A., F. Brathwaite and S. Wortley, (Eds.), *Crime and Criminal Justice in the Caribbean*. Arawak Publishers, Kingston, pp: 238-264.
- Harriott, A., 2004b. The Jamaican Crime Problem: Some Policy Consideration. In: Harriott, A., F. Brathwaite and S. Wortley, (Eds.), *Crime and Criminal Justice in the Caribbean*. Arawak Publishers, Kingston, pp: 238-264.
- International Monetary Fund (IMF). 2009. *World Economic Outlook, April Update*. IMF, Washington, DC
- King, D. and S. Handa, 2000. Changes in the distribution of income and the new economic model in Jamaica. *Reformas Económicas Series*, 57(57) (LC/L.1353), Santiago, Chile, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).
- Lacy, T., 1977. *Violence and Politics in Jamaica: 1960-70*. Totowa, Frank Cass, N.J.
- Leslie, G., 2010. *Confronting the Don: The Political Economy of Gang Violence in Jamaica*, Small Arms Survey. Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva.
- Levy, H., 1996. *They Cry 'Respect': Urban Violence and Poverty in Jamaica*, Kingston: Centre for Population, Community and Social Change, Department of Sociology and Social Work, the University of the West Indies, Mona.
- Library of Congress, 1987. *Caribbean Islands: A Country Study*. Library of Congress, Federal Research Division, Washington, D.C., Chapter 2.
- Manunta, G., 1998. *Security: An Introduction*. Cranfield University Press, Bedfordshire.
- March, C. and P.A. Bourne, 2011. The influence of macroeconomic factors on murders in Jamaica: Should the police be cautious in interpreting the murder statistics? *Asian J. Bus. Manage.*, 3(4): 257-277.
- Munroe, T., 2002. *An Introduction to Politics: Lectures for First-Year Students*. 3rd Edn., Canoe Press, Kingston.
- Moser, C. and J. Holland, 1997. *Urban Poverty and Violence in Jamaica*. World Bank, Washington.
- Osborne, R., 2001. *Megawords: Crowns Nest NSW*. Allen and Unwin, Australia.
- Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), 1970-2011. *Economic and Social Survey*. Jamaica, 1971-2010, PIOJ, Kingston.
- Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) and Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN) (1989-2010). *Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions, 1989-2009*, PIOJ and STATIN. Kingston,
- Ramacon, E.G., 2011. *Remittances Survey 2010*, Kingston: Bank of Jamaica (BOJ). Retrieved from: <http://boj.org.jm/uploads/pdf/remittance-survey-results-2010.pdf>. (Accessed on: February 1, 2012).
- Rapley, J., 2002. The petty bourgeoisie and the changing nature of class politics. *IDEAZ*, 1(2): 1-18.
- Robotham, D., 2003. *Crime and Public Policy in Jamaica*. In: Harriott, A., (Ed.), *Understanding Crime in Jamaica: New Challenges for Public Policy*. University of the West Indies Press, Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, Kingston, pp: 197-238.
- Sives, A., 2003. The Historical Roots of Violence in Jamaica: The Hearne Report 1949. In: Harriott, A., (Ed.), *Understanding Crime in Jamaica: New Challenges for Public Policy*. University of the West Indies Press, Kingston, pp: 49-62.

- Sives, A., 1997. Violence and politics in Jamaica. Unpublished ph.D. Thesis, University of Bradford, Bradford.
- Simmonds, L.A., 2003. The Problem Crime in an Urban Slave Society: Kingston in the Early Nineteenth Century. In: Harriott, A., (Ed.), *Understanding Crime in Jamaica: New Challenges for Public Policy*. University of the West Indies Press, Kingston, pp: 8-34.
- Stone, C., 1987. *Crime and Violence: Socio-Political Implications*. University Press, West Indies.
- Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 1988-2010. *Demographic Statistics, 1987-2009*. Kingston: STATIN.
- Sullivan, M.P., 2006. *Jamaica: Political and Economic Conditions and U.S Relations*.: Congressional Research Service, the Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
- Tremblay, R., 1995. Developmental Crime Prevention. In: Tonry, M. and D.P. Farrington, (Eds.), *Building a Safer Society*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), 2000. *Human Development Report 2000*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and World Bank, 2007. *Crime, Violence and Development: Trends, Costs and Policy Options in the Caribbean*, UNODC and World Bank, Washington D.C.
- Waller, L., P. Bourne, I. Minto and J. Rapley, 2007. *A landscape Assessment of Political Corruption in Jamaica*. Kingston, Jamaica: The Jamaican Economy since Independence Project. Retrieved from: <http://www.capricaribbean.org/research/corruption-report>, (Accessed on: February 6, 2012).
- World Bank, 2002. *Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions 1988-2000*. World Bank, Washington DC.
- World Bank, 2003. *Jamaica: The Road to Sustained Growth-Country Economic Memorandum*. World Bank, Washington DC.