

INDUCEMENT INTO TOP-TIER GANGS IN URBAN JAMAICA: A QUALITATIVE APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Jamaica remains among the top ten countries in the world in terms of crime and violence. The Shower Posse/ Presidential Click from West Kingston was proclaimed the mother of gangs in the Americas throughout the 1980's and 1990's. Locally, serious top tier gang activities escalated through the 2000's to present which maintained its status as Jamaica's most organized criminal organization up to May 2010. The objective of this study is to evaluate gang inclusion in two of the four top tier gangs in Jamaica. The study used a qualitative approach and a series of in-depth interviews after narrowing the scope of gangs and gang study to the Jamaican geographic space; more specifically the St. Catherine North Police Division. This area houses the Clans and the One Order Gangs, two of the island's four top tier, well-organized criminal entities and presented a good basis for understanding the phenomenological significance of gangs and their recruitment activities within the Jamaican setting. The data was analysed using themes and narrations, categorizing three of the most prominent motives across a plethora of gang affected communities internationally and argued the linkage between those areas and the Jamaican context. The findings reveal that young males, ages 15-25, are more susceptible to core gang membership with half of the respondents indicating that financial reasons and a sense of belonging were the reasons for gang induction. The research concludes that both finance and the need to belong are necessary parts of the current Clans and One Order structures and seem to be so entrenched in the sub-culture that no formal system is necessary to secure the continuation of these practices.

KEYWORDS: Gang Membership, Social Deviance, Political Violence, Violence, Jamaica.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In any structured and ordered society, gangs have proven to be very destructive to social order, their general modes of survival inconclusive, and their dissolution seems evasive at least. Street

gangs are extremely prevalent in the Jamaican landscape and seem to have interwoven themselves into the very scaffold and fabric of many inner city communities.

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The reasons for joining gangs in Jamaica are many and varied with no dominant major cause established. This study is designed to identify the main motive behind joining a top tier gang in urban Jamaica and to see whether any single major cause emerged.

Generally, groups are a wonderful but complexed dynamic to study. The dynamic of groups is particularly interesting because of its influence on the individual players that make up the collective. The concept, Groupthink, was coined to explain the intricacies of how people lose their individual identity to operate collectively. The phenomena, Groupthink, could further be argued as one of the concerns about the human beings collective action (Lunenburg, 2010). In his article on the subject of Groupthink, Lunenburg posits that there may be some benefits to the concept;(Lunenburg, 2010) which outside the scope of his argument has been lambasted as a contributor for why groups, like gangs, are so problematic. The remainder of this research positions itself consistent with arguments of the popularly negative connotation whilst admiring and accepting the possibility of the concept, Groupthink, having benefits.

Under the idea of Groupthink, lies a possible reason behind why gangs are socially problematic. This specific type of group, gangs, by and large, is yet to prove beneficial to the wider society, despite possibly offering temporary satisfaction to some of its individual members or sub-cultural relevance; in communities where they are prevalent. Despite the individual benefits, Socrates taught that virtue is better than vice even without quantifiable and tangible gain(Jowett, 2012). But is it practical to expect an individual without the moral philosophy, as Socrates professes, to operate accordingly? More accurately, is it reasonable to expect persons with the moral philosophy to act unencumbered by thoughts of vice? Understanding the individual composition and the motives behind why the

group is formed may help in addressing the root problem and thus better angle society towards addressing the individual problem and by consequence the group. This individual to group interaction is a tale of cycles, which is best started by understanding the reason why people join the groups.

The arena of gang research has proven to be as vast and diverse as the subject area of gangs themselves. Under microscope, Street Gangs, one of the subsets, indicate that this particular breed of gangs is a growing, grown, and an evolving phenomenon (Manwaring, 2005). On that basis there may not be a “best” way of understanding the complexity of the gang topic or the composite parts of the contributing factors to why gangs, in general, have survived.

Further to the complications of the topic of gangs is the diversity according to geographic factors; which makes a blanket approach or any generalized statement about the whole, questionable. According to an assessment by the National Intelligence Bureau for the third quarter of 2013, the island of Jamaica housed close to two hundred and fifty (250) named and established street gangs (National Intelligence Bureau, 2013). In respect to the demography and square footage the island it should, compared to other countries, never have achieved this large number of established gangs. Also evidenced in the Bureau’s findings was that despite the 2010Tivoli Gardens centred operation which later blossomed into a nation-wide focus on gangs and resulted in a decrease in gang figures from in excess of three hundred to marginally more than two hundred gangs; the groups have rebounded (National Intelligence Bureau, 2013). If left unaffected the growth trend could reflect similar or worse figures than the record year 2009 when the country housed the highest number of gangs and its highest murder figure: one thousand six hundred and eighty murders(Jamaica Observer, 2010).

Further to the country's local problem are the international implications which ranked Jamaica as one of the fourteen most violent countries for the year 2011. The same article also highlights that among these internationally violent countries are places where there is no on-going war to justify the death tolls, per capita; Jamaica is among the list (Merco Press, 2011).

In a Gleaner Article, the Jamaican Police Commissioner expressed that, although there has been a 40 per cent drop in murder since 2010. Jamaica still ranks as the country with the fourth-highest murder rate, trailing only Honduras, El Salvador, and Venezuela [for 2011]. Our murder rate now stands at around 40 per 100,000 of the population, down from 63 per 100,000 in 2009. *Organised crime and gangs are killing too many people* (Henry, 2013).

Jamaica therefore falls within scope of an international concern bearing a violence problem comparatively larger than war but has no consistent justifiable contributor outside its gang problem. Systematically it behoves this or any similar research to narrow its scope towards a manageable and measurable question, about the country's street gangs; that can reflect valid and useful results.

As a reference point, Manwaring's article on the subject of gangs classified street gangs into three categories with third generation gangs considered the most advanced and organized tier. These groupings, he states, have the capability to launch direct attacks against the state and could challenge the state similarly for sovereignty over a specific geographic space (Manwaring, 2005). In the Jamaican context, and under the previously established geographic constraints, the subject of gangs and their contribution to violence have been one of the most topical issues for the country. Within the Jamaican society and consistent with Manwaring's definition, there are four (4) top tier or third generation gangs. These four gangs are

all based and conduct primary operations in or within close proximity of the island's major urban hub; namely Kingston, Jamaica.

The area occupied by these four top tier gangs is the major urban area of the island and is further sub-divided into three parishes namely; Kingston, St. Andrew, and St. Catherine. From a law enforcement standpoint these three parishes are further sectioned into eight of the island's nineteen police geographic divisions. Compared to the rest of the island where a parish consistently represents a division, these three parishes, due to the demography and urban structure, in tandem with financial operations, have been further divided. All four of the aforementioned top tier gangs operate within this urban echelon. It is of significant interest to note that one specific division houses two of these top tier gangs and, according to crimes statistics, has been the second violence contributing division in the nation within the past four years (National Intelligence Bureau, 2013). To date, the St. Catherine North Police Division continues to be in second place only to St. James in relations to intentional homicides. The activities of these two gangs have also resulted in increased activities within other divisions and similarly resulted in actions of violence and inter-divisional, organized criminality. The activities of these gangs further asks the question, what motivates these groups to engage and continue to engage in their activities? Similarly, what achievement, if any, would cause its members to desist their activities? A good starting point for the research was to look at the historical significance of gangs which alluded to the most likely contributor to gang membership.

Leslie (2010), in reflecting on the history of gangs in Jamaica, said that:

The roots of organized violence in Jamaica trace[s] back to electoral disputes of the late 1940s between the two political parties. Politicians reserved scarce resources such as jobs,

contracts, houses, land, cash, and overseas agricultural employment applications for party supporters to ensure they remained faithful and to entice rival party supporters to switch their allegiance (Leslie, 2010)

Via Leslie's quote it can be deduced that there was an early relationship between gangs, politicians, and the use of tangible property as a means of control within the Jamaican society.

Over the first forty years was the establishment and concretizing of the relationship between gangs, use of violence for political gain and the resulting benefits which led to "the 1980s, [where] many politicians and dons...were mutually dependent on one another. This context of political patronage and violence helped form the contemporary gangs in Jamaica"(Leslie, 2010).

According to context, and fortification from behavioural psychologists, the marriage of gangs and violence had by this time, 1980's, survived forty years and was constantly being reinforced. The resulting response and initial stimuli was now conditioned and a sub-cultural norm established. The missing factor from the triangular equation was that of motive; which when established would give rise to the possibility of later removing one stimulus whilst maintaining the unintentional effect. The danger which conditioning presents is the difficulty to be undone, particularly if the counter-measures are inconsistent. Thus a forty-year sub-cultural norm may in practice take longer to undo or require some drastic intervention. This same situation of removed stimuli is exactly what Leslie, alluded to when he said:

While political patronage towards certain gangs persists, most gang-related violence is no longer primarily political (Mogensen, 2005) ...gangs increasingly became involved in more organized forms of crime, as the drug trade became a more frequent and lucrative source of

income than political patronage (World Bank, 1997). A greater availability of guns also accompanied this reorientation of the gangs from politics to organized crime, especially to the drug trade (Clarke, 2006). Despite the reduction in political control of organized violence, however, a considerable residue remains. This is evident in the remaining territorial divisions armed with guns and ruled by a new generation of dons who are known for crimes and highly authoritarian relationships with followers (Leslie, 2010, p. 13)

The new 'don' compared to his predecessor may therefore be driven by a different end goal or motive. Becker (1968) argued that there are various inducements into crime and criminality which he entitled *The Cost of Crime and Punishment* which explains the emergence of 'dons' young people, particularly males, into gangs. Consequently, understanding the reason people, in today's society, join gangs or the lure of these organizations and the resulting impact are important steps in curtailing the power of gangs and later affecting their contribution to violence.

Currently, the Jamaican gang situation has become a cause of national concern and has implications for local and international interests. This study aimed to decipher the root causes and by extension the most pronounced reason behind membership to the overarching problem: gangs. Subsequently the research intended to position stakeholders strategically to use the findings as a dated reference point. The study offers meaningful results which will hold value to law enforcement personnel, social interests, and policy makers and future researchers.

Having achieved top tier gang status, the Clans and One Order gangs in the St. Catherine Northern Division have historically been motivated by the creation and facilitation of systems and societal sub-cultures that empowered them. The gangs are directly motivated by the need to survive and have

formulated and modified strategies towards remaining operational. As a result, their actions have reaped consequence for the local and international society.

In keeping with this humungous problem, this research proposed to assess whether or not financial incentive is the major motivator influencing recruits to join the Clans or One Order Gangs in the St. Catherine North Police Division. In doing so the research asked: what role does money and tangible possession hold in motivating gang membership? Ideally the research aimed to unearth the most prevalent reason behind why a group such as a gang is attractive and what benefits if any the group and its members obtain.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A number of theories have emerged as a result of the proliferation of gangs and their concomitant behaviours. Among them are the Social Learning Theory postulated by Sear and Bandura as well as the Psychoanalysis Theory of Freud.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As regards to these pertinent theories on the subject of gangs, Sear's work on the Social Learning Theory modified Freud's Psychoanalytical Theory towards an applicable conclusion.

Much of his, [Sears], theoretical effort was expended on developing an understanding of the way that children come to internalize, or take on as their own, the values, attitudes, and behaviour of the culture in which they are raised. His interest [centred] on issues having to do with the control of aggression, the growth of resistance to temptation and guilt...Sears stressed the place of parents in the fostering of internalization (Grusec, 1992, p. 777)

In this regard Sears' work alludes beautifully to something which this study explored, namely the

more pronounced causative factors which may explain human development. Unfortunately, from Sear's research, there appeared no single dominant factor. It is known how ever that social interaction and the influence on the individual are main stream even under the broader umbrella of Psychology which finds its major emphasis at the individual level. This position is a good balance being the two sciences, Psychology and Sociology, and very applicable under Criminology; more specifically the topic of gangs which appear to be embedded in society particularly societies with weak moral fabric. Under the topic of gangs, the exploration of how these various factors manifested and contribute are topical and will if deciphered be instrumental in the gang dismantling process. From the literature, Grusec's work also expounds on Sears' theory which envelopes other contributing theories like Freud's psychoanalytical theory as well as alludes to the behaviourist role of stimuli and response(Grusec, 1992). The importance of these two theories relative to the study of gangs is considerable, particularly against the background that reinforcement alters behaviour and from the internal perspective the establishment of personal motivation behind a behaviour should make the drive far stronger.

In narrowing the scope for a theory that maintains focus whilst explaining the interaction of the varied factors, Thornberry posits the Interactional Theory. Under his work the interplay of existent biological tendencies and the external support of social factors is enough to amplify the outcome; normally a range of deviant behaviour. The interplay is further intensified as a result of group dynamics, more specifically the interface of the individual with other like-minded persons with whom that individual can empathize and or associate(Bartol & Bartol, 2011), (Alleyne & Wood, 2010). The former researchers, Alleyne and Wood, go further in justifying the specific applicability of Interactional Theory when they state that, a drawback is that social learning

theory fails to specify how much individuals need to favour crime prior to engaging with like-minded delinquent peers (e.g. gang members) (Akers, 1997). Unlike Control Theory, Social Learning Theory, and others, which take a unidirectional perspective of delinquency involving specific risk factors that *cause* a youth to become delinquent, Interactional Theory provides a more subtle *developmental* explanation of delinquency where societal, learning and delinquency factors all interact and mutually influence one another across an individual's lifespan...Interactional Theory provides a constructive framework for exploring these individual, social, and psychological factors and how they relate to gang membership (Alleyne & Wood, 2010, p. 424)

Obviously these personal and societal factors are key focuses for the consideration of gang study. Interestingly in their study the researchers used this theory to study gang members, peripheral youth and non-gang members. The researchers found that,

like previous research findings there is fluidity to young people's involvement in gangs exemplified especially by the nature of peripheral youth's attitudes and behaviours (e.g. Spergel, 1995; Stelfox, 1998). [They] also found significant age differences between gang members and non-gang youth, i.e. gang members were older than non-gang youth; peripheral youth did not differ from either gang or non-gang youth, which suggests a developmental process involved in gang membership (Alleyne & Wood, 2010, p. 433)

For the current study these findings narrowed and separated the population into three distinct groups and further alluded to a focus population of gang members as being older adolescent and young adults. It is of interest to note that the study highlights through these same findings the varying degree of gang involvement to include a set of non-mainstream players; as previously mentioned peripheral members. The study also

highlights that there are no differences in gender and that on some level all three groups commit some level of crime at some stage, thus reinforcing the fact that society and learnt behaviour may indeed be important motivators. According to Alleyne & Wood (2010), researchers "also found that gang members were more anti-authority than non-gang youth and that both gang and peripheral youth saw social status as more important than non-gang youth" (p. 433). The emphasis on status and power are of course key elements in understanding the motivations behind gang activities; as was explored later in this research.

EMPIRICAL FRAMEWORK

By using a literature review of various articles into the subject area of Street Gangs it was borne out that both quantitative and qualitative methodology have been used to decipher the concentration of study of different aspects of gang research. The research into gangs and the motives behind their membership reveals that even on the international scale, no empirical study has yet confirmed any one motive as being universally prevalent. Analysis of methodologies and findings from both local and international works have used varied methods towards assessing the phenomena and have even been mixed with a view of offering a more comprehensive result.

INTERNATIONAL REFERENCES

Under the qualitative methods category, *The Effects of Exposure to Gang Violence on Adolescent Boys' Mental Health* was conducted on the variables of exposure to violence, gang exposure, and mental health. In narrowing the scope for a manageable sample the researchers focused on ten African American boys, all of adolescent age. The research concluded that the sampled group showed signs of mental stress, more specifically anxiety (Kelly, Anderson, Hall, Peden, & Cerel, 2012) The research indicates two

key factors which will help narrow the scope for this pending research: firstly that boys may be a higher risk population than girls for gang induction and secondly that there are individual side-effects to gang involvement which further strengthens the need for a redress of the problem at an individual level.

Similarly, the qualitative approach was used in *An Exploratory Study of Gang-affiliated Young Men's Perceptions and Experiences of Sexuality and Gender Relation*. That study opens with a declaration that:

There is no established consensus on the definition of gangs, gang members, or gang activities. Therefore, it is difficult to assess the extent of criminal gang activity and related issues such as delinquency, violence...Moreover, gang members have different images and develop different types of relationships within the various groups to which they belong (Fleury & Fernet, 2012, p. 1)

Using the authors' statement as foundation, the qualitative value of the pending research is magnified given the narrowed focus towards a specific geographic region and the need for focus on the particular motivators for gang activity and violence. In their work, the researchers, Fleury and Fernet, used interviews to look at assumptions of gender bias, insensitivity, perceived sexuality, romantic perceptions and their role in relationships of males to females in a sexually violent manner. The study found that, "generally, they dissociated themselves from all violent acts towards young women" (Fleury & Fernet, 2012, p. 11). The importance of their work bears significance in cementing the prevalence of males as a more vulnerable population for gang recruitment as also intimating the psychological consequence of the perpetrator to their actions.

With reference to this study, the pending study will need to be mindful of the innate trauma and

the possibility of post-traumatic stress resulting from the actions carried out by gang members. It would be reclusive to be empirical yet speculate, understanding the nuances of the human motivation which facilitates the ability to engage in an action which, according to the researchers, has deep internal consequence. Their study also brought to bear the necessity for an appreciation of the human being's internal conflict, similar to Freud's psychoanalytical theory which posits that, "we must delve into the abysses of human personality to find unconscious determinants of human behaviour, including criminal behaviour" (Bartol & Bartol, 2011, p. 10). Therefore, the pending study must aim to, at least, appreciate the existence of the struggle and some of the possible weight that result in the outcome.

Among other gang related studies is, *Boys Who Join Gangs: A prospective Study of Predictors of First Entry* which by contrast to the previous two studies was conducted using quantitative means. This longitudinal study was conducted on a sample of 347 boys with mixed ethnic backgrounds. The study used baseline interviews as part of the selection criteria and then employed questionnaires and self-reporting as its primary tools. The study focused on statistical representation of ethnic factors and how they biased gang membership as the primary objective.

Similar to the previous study the scope included mental factors as a variable and investigated antisocial behaviour. The study also considered other variables under the subset of ethnic prerequisite including household income, exposure to violence at the micro and macro levels, parental supervision, and family structure. The study concluded that higher rates of antisocial behaviour increased the risk of gang entry and that delinquent company also increased the likelihood of gang membership. With regards to the other variables the study was inconclusive (Lahey, Gordon, Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber, & Farrington, 1999). This

research is a good intimation for the pending study in that it appreciates the involvement of nature, the innate factors, and also progresses to attribute the influence of nurture, the environmental influence, and their twain role of human behaviour. The inconclusive results of Laheyetal give further need to a curiosity about the nurture factors and whether or not a mixed approach, matching the two methodologies could maintain this focus while incorporating the individual values and how those factors play in the gang member's consequent decisions and actions. According to *Smart Choices*, identifying the essential elements of the problem is a key step towards making better decision (Hammond, Keeney, & Raiffa, 2002). In context this research forms part of the key step in addressing a crime problem that is approaching all angles and even appreciating the implications from the research on a conditioned circumstance that has existed for almost three quarters of a century.

On the international scale, gangs have received the attention of even more researches particularly under the qualitative umbrella of research methodologies. These researches arguable have appreciated the universality of the problem and in response attempted to be as general as possible; which may hint at underlying factors but not truly explain them. In a research on gang membership and violent victimization, the quantitative methods used in various researches were queried with a view of scrutinizing the use of this methodology and its various facets. The article offered a robust and critical review commencing with a need for a linear foundation of "pre-existing differences between gang and non-gang adolescents" (Gibson, Swatt, Miller, Jennings, & Gover, 2012, p. 490). The more focused aim of the research was to investigate whether any of the research had resulted in establishing a causal relationship between their independent and dependent variables for the researched gang population.

The researchers reviewed seventeen quantitative researches and conclude that

"a causal effect of gang joining on violent victimization is not supported from the systematic review of studies discussed in the article. However, in several instances a statistically significant, positive correlation between the two exists, in other instances the relationships is non-significant, and in one case a negative significant relationship [was] observed" (Gibson, Swatt, Miller, Jennings, & Cover, 2012, p. 49).

It was concluded that under more in-depth investigation the inabilities may have been connected to the design flaws rather than the methodology. This study bears relevance to the pending study in that it highlights both the necessity for proper selection of a methodology as well as the design under that methodology as key in the validity of the study. From the findings of Gibson et al research, it is also evident that there appears a strong bias for gang research to be conducted with regards to male adolescent. Making reference to the work of Fleury and Fernet, previously mentioned, the disclosure of the individuals' study may be skewed by their shame or need to divorce themselves from their actions. With regards to the pending study, this observation of the self-reporting by adolescent males who are active members of gangs, bearing foreknowledge of their actions and the possible legal ramifications will be a key consideration.

The studies above have indicated some key elements with regards to studying gangs including the age factors, gender factors, various motivations, selection of methodology and the tools specific to those methodologies as playing roles in the outcome and findings. More intimately however will be how these factors have been examined under the Jamaican context will be addressed throughout the next section.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL REFERENCES

In the year 2000 the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) conducted a research of the crime situation with a view of making recommendations capable of addressing the problem. The research found that:

In every conversation - crime and fear of crime - were noted to be at the very top of people's minds. In fact, crime and fear of crime so preoccupied daily life that it soon became apparent the very quality of life as Jamaicans had once come to know it was at stake...The economic viability of the country is being questioned as citizen's talk openly about friends and business associates migrating off the island (Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) , 2000)

According to the PERF report some Jamaicans who were capable of affecting the country positively sought alternatives to becoming victims of the nation-wide problem. Obviously if this materialize large scale, the result would be further criminality, resulting from scarcer benefits as identified in the 1940's when the aim was social sustainability via the acquisition of tangible wealth which, under definition of the pending study, is 'financial incentive.' Another key point made in *Smart Choices* is the necessity to "zoom in and zoom out" (Hammond, Keeney, & Raiffa, 2002, p. 221) which simply means appreciating the magnitude of the problem and its impact on society. Manwaring (2007) went on to point out that

Similar to other countries...Jamaican posses (gangs) are the by-products of high levels of poverty and unemployment and lack of upward social mobility...Under these conditions, local posses have taken on a 'social investment' in the areas they control. An important part of the posses' programs of action is called 'shared government, with a welfare aspect'. As a result, gang-controlled communities are considered to be among the safest in the country, and the posses

are helping the people in their "jurisdictions" with education, public health, and employment problems

Juxtaposing Manwaring's position and Hammond et al utterance about zooming in and out, the migration of the capable would therefore also result in the increased fighting and violence with the propensity for the country sinking further into economic turmoil and unimaginable consequences if the then now existent excessive number of gangs was to engage in more desperate measures to secure their survival. The assumption may seem spurious except that the report goes on to find a distinct connection between gangs and crime or violence attributing then in 2000 "39%" of the murders to gang related activities (Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) , 2000). A more current review of the crime statistics, in 2013, conducted by the National Intelligence Bureau (NIB) via their Third Quarterly Gang Assessment attributed seventy-nine percent (79%) of all murders for the nine month period as being gang related (National Intelligence Bureau, 2013). This means that over the thirteen-year period more gang related acts of violence was attributed resulting in an increase of forty percent (40%). According to that same report by the NIB, the year 2009 boasted the highest number of murders and consistently the highest number in terms of gang figures; 1682 murders and 304 gangs respectively (National Intelligence Bureau, 2013). The statistics also confirms the necessity for legislative support, one of the recommendations carried in the PERF reports (Police Executive Research Forum, 2000).

Unfortunately, based on a review of the report, there is evidence that the PERF report was limited in that it scoped the redress of the gang problem heavily from a security force perspective. The missing elements include addressing the social value and by extension psychological factors surrounding the growing gang culture; the very same factors which were addressed in the international examples of gang

research. For example, by exploring the issue beyond the sphere of the security force, researchers could angle cause and proactively prevent future generations becoming members of the deviant subculture. Ideally a research targeting the cycle of adolescent males and the possibility of them becoming victims of gang violence is needed. That study in turn could make reference to Kelly et al which implies that being victimized by gang violence includes being a victim of violence and witnessing the violence (Kelly, Anderson, Hall, Peden, & Cerel, 2012). Thus part of the surface problem for the crime appears to be the existence of retaliatory action and is easily confirmed with statistics but this does not accurately identify or address the root cause for the feuding or how legislature will empower the law enforcement practitioners towards addressing the problem. It is therefore emphatic that the root must first be identified.

It is therefore logical that the next step towards legislative support is an exploration of the causative factors for the existence of gangs and how gangs influence and/or are influenced by societal factors which will then highlight gaps which impending research should undertake. Via this means research in other areas may be used as foundational material. The relevance of other research however must bear similar context and variables to have comparable results.

In 2011, Bailey conducted research on adolescents' perspective on violence and its effect on adolescents. Fortunately, this study was conducted to include the focal population, and it found that, "Jamaica is experiencing an epidemic of violence which adversely affects its youth who are the main perpetrators and victims" (Bailey, 2011). Bailey's study is a key step in where recent research should focus namely adolescents. With regards to Bailey's focus group, other similar studies reflect the validity of her findings that pre and young adults are the vulnerable group with regards to both carrying out and becoming victims (Fleury & Fernet, 2012), (Kelly, Anderson,

Hall, Peden, & Cerel, 2012), (Mogensen, McKenzie, Wilson, & Noble, n.d.). Bailey's study confirms the focus on the subcategory of adolescents and gangs both from the angle of the factors which make them more susceptible or from the angle of their involvement in gangs and the resulting effect on the society.

Bailey, like other researchers, believes that the socialisation process for adolescents involves an early introduction to violence which subsequently leads to the focus population portraying violent behaviours. She also believes it becomes important to study not only the effect that this early exposure has on the adolescent but how the adolescent perceive it. What can further be implied from Bailey's work is the formation of norms and values and reflected in the societal norms and foci.

The research could now temporarily divert into arguments of societal influences as embodied in Donna Hope's *Inna the Dancehall*, a book which argues the sub-cultural pleasure for the individuals who are part of that culture as a way of life that is hard to understand by outsiders particularly because of cultural and value difference. What Hope argues, which is consistent with research, is the necessity for research particularly into sub-cultures to remain objective and systematically unbiased. Hope indicates that without the ability to understand the culture invalid assumptions may be made (Hope, 2006). From this the use of ethnography, in which the researcher becomes "more of an insider" (Babbie, 2013, p. 333) appears a suitable option towards understanding the population. The drawback being the need to garner trust in a relatively short amount of time whilst maintaining ethical standards. It is therefore incumbent that the pending research takes a different approach that allows for the unbiased representation of the views of the population whilst also achieving the ability to understand their motivations. Subsequently, the clear secondary goal must be to empower the

society to reform deviant behaviour which in turn bears consequent benefit for the individual. On that basis, the focus returns to the research methodologies employed by Bailey.

In her research, Bailey conducted a study collecting data from three unrelated qualitative research projects commissioned by the Jamaican Ministries of Health and Education. Questions were directed to students from different high schools to obtain feedback on their experience in participating in violence or being exposed to violence. The participants were cognisant and accepting that violence is a part of their lives. The inner city adolescents who participated in this research reflected a higher acceptance of violent behaviour as a necessity (Bailey, 2011).

Another phenomenal research on the Jamaican gang situation was undertaken by Donna Moncrieffe and, though it predates all previously mentioned research, sets the most secure foundations on which to launch the pending investigation. In her work, *Gang Study: The Jamaican Crime Scene*, the researcher Moncrieffe introduces the "Jamaican Interactional Model of Gang Crime and Violence" which she posits integrates four levels towards explaining the inner workings of gangs. Her article goes on to expound on how three main factors, "poverty, low self-esteem, or the learned response" set the foundation for vulnerable individuals which is later magnified by living conditions, lack of adequate mentorship and other situational factors these are later compounded by socio-economic context and finally cemented at the response/ sanction level via in group and out group reinforcements. Moncrieffe's research highlights twelve findings among which the "socio-economic, age and residential zone factors" for perpetrators and victims were similar (Moncrieffe, 1998, p. 33). The finding bears similar findings to the Kelly et al research. Another finding was that "members did not join [merely for the thrill of crime]" (Moncrieffe, 1998, p. 35) and

that "members are not physically forced into the gang scene" (Moncrieffe, 1998, p. 38). These valuable findings however do not seem to have been tested since 1998 and may offer some usable perspective into the current situation or as the opening argument posits have changed and continue to change so that the results were dated.

SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

In summary, the literature surrounding the studies conducted thus far on street gangs has shown the vulnerability of male inner city youths to joining gangs for a vast array of societal reasons (Bailey, 2011), (Fleury & Fernet, 2012), (Mogensen, McKenzie, Wilson, & Noble, n.d.) (Moncrieffe, 1998). The research also showed that "adolescents exposed to violence may develop internalising symptoms such as anxiety, concern for safety, and depression (Cooley-Strickland, Quille, Griffin, Stuart, Bradshaw, & Furr-Holden, (2009); (Kelly, Anderson, Hall, Peden, & Cerel, 2012, p. 81). What research has not shown is the most prevalent factor behind joining a gang for the gang population anywhere in the world. Further, as it relates to research with regards to the Jamaican gang problem, there is no current document capable of explaining whether there has been an evolution in the previous factors behind gang membership.

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research is descriptive and cross-sectional in nature and employed a qualitative design. The study focused on in-person, open ended questions via interviews with the participants, and sought to unearth the perceived motives behind the prevalence and allure of gangs. The aim was to extrapolate from the personal and reported testimonies of the participants and garner insight into the law enforcement perception of gang membership and how the

factors interplay towards revealing the ideal gang candidate.

SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

Based on the qualitative approach the participants were interviewed using an interview schedule and supported by observations as to their knowledge and familiarity with the specific subject area. The process entailed five steps as detailed below: (1) the interviewer deployed and conducted all eleven interviews over a course of four days. Each interview was accompanied by four primary instruments as will be detailed in the instruments section of this chapter. (2) The researchers followed protocol and administered the informed consent forms and garnered the participant's permission to audio record the session. (3) The next stage included acquiring the full confidence of the participants that the security of their privacy was of utmost importance to the research process and that they were fully protected via the use of codes instead of names, ranks or any other information capable of directly connecting them to the study, thus here after the researchers noted P1-P11 on the respondents response sheet. However before the interview and recording commenced, general questions about the study, its intended audience, and impact were facilitated. The respondents were also encouraged to be as open as possible. After that the researchers started recording the emotional responses of the participants as tabled in the Interviewee Emotional Response Checklist (IERC) and taping the interview. It should also be borne out the IERC was similarly coded to reflect consistency with the interview schedule. (4) The interview then proceeded in accordance with the interview schedule. At the end the interviewer again facilitated general questions and thanked the participants for their co-operation. (5) As a post interview measure, the interviewer engaged in memoing and transcription of the audio recording as well as deciphered themes via which

to group the data. These five steps were later followed by data analysis as detailed below.

SAMPLE

The sample consisted of eleven (11) participants who are all subject matter experts within the St. Catherine North Police Division. The process used to select the sample was purposeful.

According to Creswell (2008) "In purposeful sampling, researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2008, p. 214). Patton (1990) added that the standard used in choosing participants and sites is whether they are "information rich" (p. 169). Accordingly, the research aimed to get a wide range of experience and varied perspectives on the issue of interest, thus the interviews were conducted with senior divisional officers, members of two key operational sub-divisions, members of the investigative sub-division, members of the investigative strategic division, members of the beat and foot patrol teams, and members of the intelligence community both at the divisional and strategic levels.

INSTRUMENTATION

The research used the following tools, namely: (11) informed consent forms, (11) interview schedule, (1) tape recorder, (11) emotional response checklist (observational tool) and pencil.

DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

Due to the use of the qualitative interview methodology preliminary data analysis ran simultaneous to the data collection process and was in part facilitated through the IERC and observation. Additional analysis was also garnered post interview which involved theming and coding as under the "general inductive

approach" (Thomas, 2006). As part of simplifying the data as well as making it quantifiable, descriptive statistic data was generated from the categorization of the themed data. Part of the data analysis also incorporated a triangulation matrix which was similarly theme based.

DELIMITATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The study restricted its focus to the Clans and One Order gangs both headquartered in the St. Catherine North Police Division. It undertook the research of possible motives behind individuals joining any of the two gangs and through that investigation aimed to uncover the main motivator for the recruit's interest. The research used the pre-set context with reference to Leslie's work, in an effort to prove that the need for social amenities which started the gang problem persists and, despite surface evolution, remains the prominent factor. Due to the vast array of levels of gang involvement and various types of criminal activities that could arguably support a gang, the study also focused only on the subset of gang members who are directly and integrally involved, core members, versus those who facilitate and or condone the actions of the gang members either forcefully or willingly, the latter constitutes peripheral gang members.

The attraction to vulnerable age groups, geographic layout, and housing structure were also anticipated to support the overarching thesis. Ideally the top motive for joining a top tier gang in this division was the focus and received an exploratory platform. The study did not aim to qualify motives behind joining lower tier gangs or address the motivating factors for gang membership outside the geographic space. Additionally, based on time and budget constraints, the scope of the study was very strategic and directed towards key stakeholders, capable of offering expert knowledge on the subject area.

DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

The offering, promise or acquisition of financial compensation (actual money, financial support through the payment of bills and/or living expenses, food, shelter) as motivation to join a gang.

MOTIVE

Any internal and/or external stimuli that is capable of influencing behaviour.

GANGS

A group of individuals formed for the purpose of using violence (exerting physical or emotional force with the intention of hurting, damaging, killing someone) in a criminal context. This group may also exert enough force to intimidate compliance through violence. Eurogang posits that a gang is, "any durable, street-oriented youth group whose involvement in illegal activity is part of their group identity" (Eurogang, 2006, p. 1), (Hounslea, 2011, p. 6).

MEMBERSHIP

Having been inducted and accepted in the group, membership constitutes any person who willingly participates in the activities of the group. The activities of the individuals in turn are accepted and supported by other members of the group and form part of their modus operandi.

AREA LEADER

Manwaring (2005) calls the leader of a third generation gang a drug baron. The Jamaican equivalent is a, 'strongman, area leader, or don.' This person is reputed as the most influential individual within the community or township at the local level and identified as an essential figure within other jurisdictions or by external interests. Simply put, nothing happens within his area of

control without his knowledge and approval or swift sanction follows.

FINDINGS

The research found that the eleven (11) interviewees reflected a collective years of experience totalling ninety-six (96) years which also spans personal exposure to the particular community and focus groups ranging two (2) to twenty-eight years.

Despite this fact the process unearthed that the vast array of experiences was linear and within a relatively short space of time, given a focus on

the particular groupings, the respondents were all well-endowed with pertinent information. Analysis of the correspondents' types of exposure further represented a mixture of Operational, Investigative and Intelligence interests, which gave perceptions from all three aspects of law enforcement interest in gang activity (See Figure 1). One respondent, representative of nine (9) percent of the respondents viewed the gangs as being misguided in their objectives. This was significant given that this respondent had more intimate knowledge of the division and its gangs having both lived and operated in the division for the longest time of all the respondents.

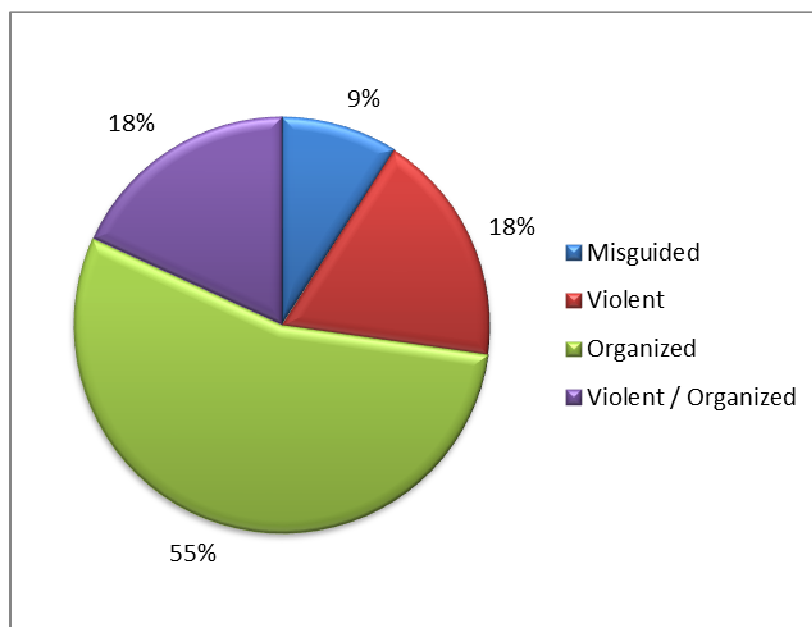


Figure 1. Perception on Clans and/or One Order Gangs

This particular respondent alluded to feelings of familiarity with the gang culture and exposure to the same norms to which the actual gang members are exposed. The respondent also showed through practical example that the stereotype of inner-city youths as being hopeless and destined to become gang members is purely mythical. The same respondent did not stand alone with regards to the prevalence of violence and early introduction, which the respondents stated, 'without adequate intervention' makes gangs appear to be the only options for survival

and 'a better life.' With regards to motives, almost half the respondents perceived them, the collective gangs, as being violent in the modus operandi. There was the general consensus that fear and intimidation are the major tools in the daily routine. Interestingly, there is also indication that the existence of fear is so strong and pronounced that the mere promise and/or mention of a well-known member is sufficient incentive to force compliance by both gang and non-gang members and this is so pronounced that a material weapon does not have to be

present. Most of the respondents also argued that the levels and varying activities of the gang in turn breeds and requires well defined lines and organization and could be posited as a reason why some people are attracted to their role.

The respondents also acknowledged that the two particular groups of interest, Clans and One Order, are perceived as functional within their communities of control and engage in myriad of activities. These activities serve two purposes, namely: maintaining their perceived law and

order and providing financial support for further gang activities and by extension in support of the ventures of members of the community including school, medical bills, care of the elderly, and other needs which the community perceives the government is not facilitating.

With regards to persons who are more likely to join gangs, ninety percent of the respondents cited young men (See Figure 2). They went on to further categorize their understanding of the group as being men ranging ages 15-25 years.

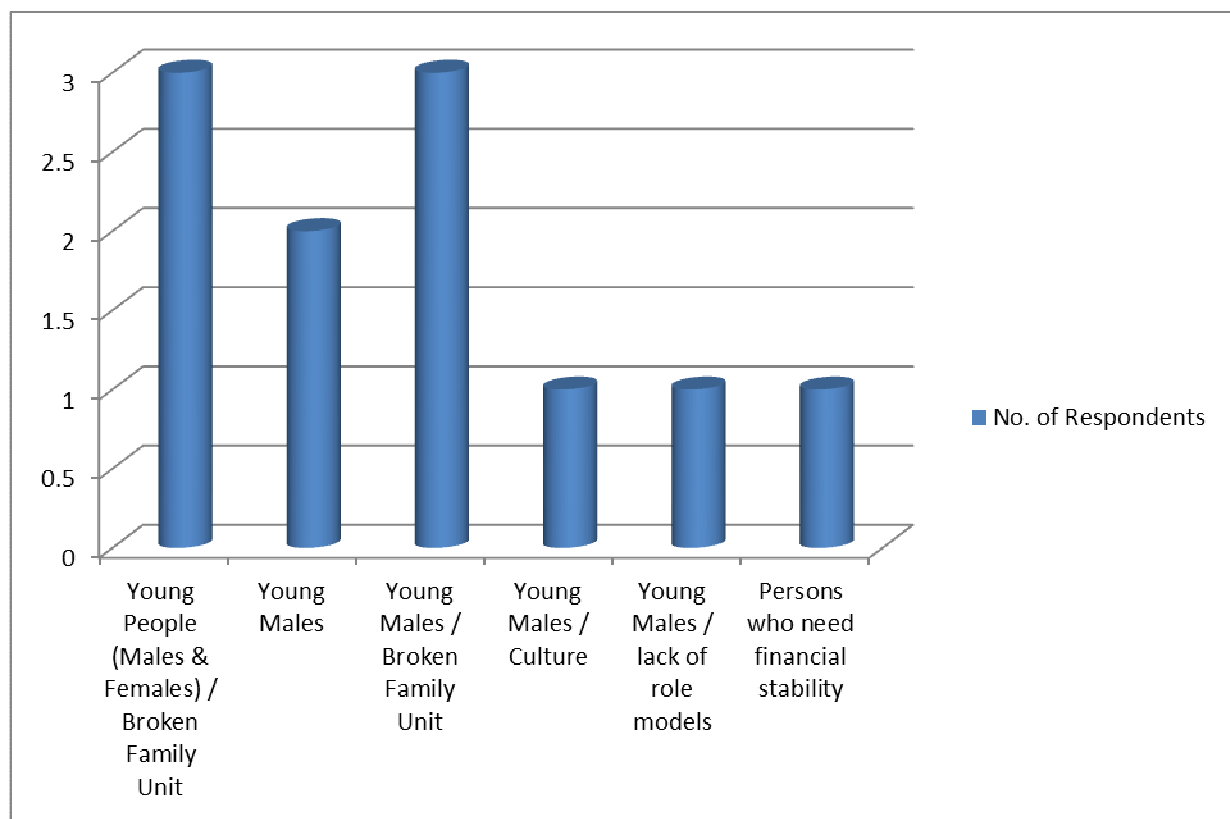


Figure 2. Persons Most Susceptible to Joining a Gang

Despite this, the respondents' view of females was not innocent. They alluded that females were still a key factor either as fellow gang members or more popularly as supporters who facilitate the gang activities either through the sexual favours, aiding and abetting via housing and harbouring fugitives and wanted men. They are also involved by running errands for the gang members and acting as informants to the gangs through informal communications between themselves and persons of influence with

knowledge of law enforcement personnel's interest in the gang members. The respondents posited that in this regard the peripheral actions of the females is damaging to law enforcement initiatives against the gang members and should be looked at if efforts intend to affect the core members.

Consequently, fifty-four percent of the respondents indicated that broken homes consisting of fatherless families, families where

both parents are absent partially or completely due to work and/or prison which is an inner-city staple, amplifies the allure to young men to joining gangs. The factor of broken homes, regardless of sex, was the second most pronounced pre-determinant for gang membership both core and peripheral. In a nutshell, the two factors combined resulted in a potent cocktail towards making a potential gang member. These factors however did not constitute what the respondents perceived as the motivating factor why gangs are attractive.

Similarly, fifty-five percent of the respondents

stated that the lifestyle of a gangster entails a sense of respect from community members, intangible benefits including females, the power to command/demand persons of various ages, and what is professed as a life free of responsibility. Part of this allure includes the ability to belong to a group that has acclaim despite its positive or negative reputation.

The second factor asserted, which accounts for forty-five percent, emanates from direct proceeds of a wide range of criminal activities (See Figure 3).

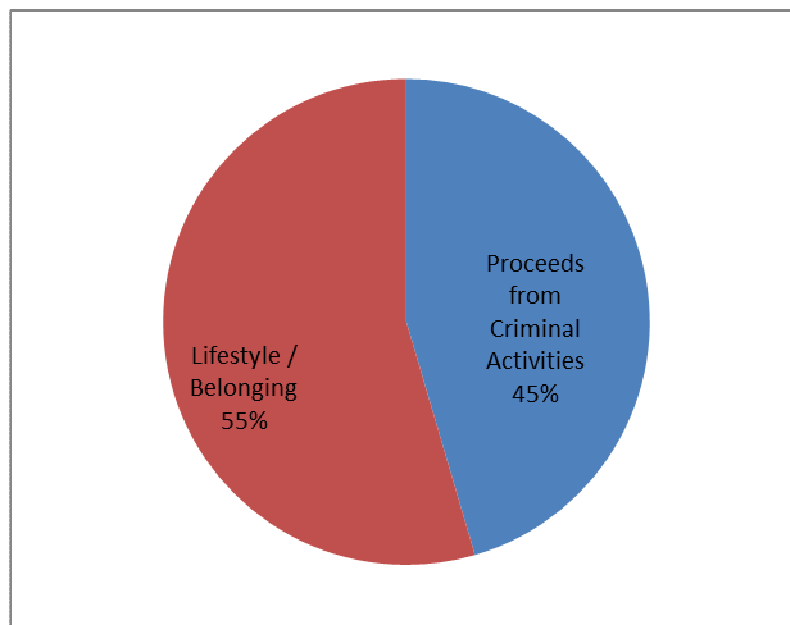


Figure 3. Profitability of Gang Membership

Some further postulations made are that profitability for gang members is not restricted to material wealth as found in the acquisition of houses, businesses, and cars. They collectively viewed the acquisition of these status related items to be more attainable for top level gang members and despite being one of the aspirations of the regular members was also seen as a possibly unattainable dream.

For lower tier members, the actualization of profits in these terms was widened to include daily supplies of food, legal fees, medical expenses, clothes, and the ability to spend frivolously and with scant regard for future

needs. The established understanding was that as long as the individual remained loyal then the gang would facilitate these needs in a marginal way. The use of the term marginal was also a prominent staple in the responses, by which seventy-two percent of the respondents stated that the dons maintained control of the masses by establishing dependence which allowed them to survive but not enough to elevate towards where they could be self-sufficient. The spin-off of the attempts at self-fulfilment outside the gang's permission was death or punishment and delivered swiftly in a bid to mitigate the

likelihood of others seeing the 'ambitions' of one member and 'getting ideas.'

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

In the end all respondents concluded that young males, ages 15-25 are more susceptible to core gang membership. It was established that financial incentive and belonging share approximately half each the motives behind why core members join gangs and that the two are arguably inseparable in today's society and are, in the respondents reasoning, far more individualistic. This could be affected by the person's status, ambitions, and personal goals which include not necessarily elevating oneself above the current status but rather just be comfortable in a society where high rent, bills, and the constraints of a strict work day are not applicable. The concept, as one respondent puts it, is to be a 'ghetto entrepreneur'.

DISCUSSION

From the findings it is borne out that the Thornberry's "Interactional Theory"(Bartol & Bartol, 2011), which pits societal factors like peer influence and role-model influence, along with learning factors like reinforced social norms and acceptable sub-cultural behaviours coupled with delinquency factors such as the need to fit in groups despite the criminal intent of the group, produces a practical and applicable fit for the gangs. The theory appropriately captures a synopsis of the issue and appears to show consistency in both gangs; thus making the theory valid. In its foundation the theory explains why some members of the society appear to be less susceptible when given a difference in peer, role-model, learning and delinquency. A variation of these sociological features could also be rooted as possibly explaining the different levels of involvement (core and peripheral) the lack of involvement (non-gang member).

Historically for the focus group, core members, financial incentive in various forms was the overarching reason for gang membership, as presented in Leslie's work (Leslie, 2010). Over time that same motive resulted in the formation of systems and practices which survived the political dependence that initiated the process of violence to coerce citizens in exchange for benefits. The system seems almost similar to a job in which the employee completes a task and gets paid. The alteration in gangs is the criminal element and the use of violence as the means of securing compliance. But this alteration does not seem sufficient to deter the acceptance of violence and the use of it as a form of survival. Arguably it appears that being a gang member is like a regular job with high risk circumstances. For one of the gang's core members, the leader, the job of the political interest becomes internalized and he through dependence allows enough to secure loyalty and dependency but not enough leverage for self-actualization and fulfilment. Obviously for this particular member, the leader, the financial and associated power benefits must outweigh those of the operational member, otherwise, how could he maintain control over his 'followers?' He must possess something to manipulate those capable of instilling fear towards carrying out his objectives and in so doing motivate their loyalty.

Further to the necessity of violence and gang lifestyle, in today's society the existence of gangs no longer seems to be tied directly to a political agenda but maintains the need to survive as a driving factor. The respondents believed lifestyle and belonging are the new most prominent factor by ten percent. What this means is that there has been and continues to be a shift in the main driving force for core gang membership. If this pattern continues the current or future generations could experience further shifts in their value systems and may possibly find other motivators as their key elements. This change is testimony of the dynamics and unpredictability of

gangs, which insights the need for constant reviews and re-evaluation. Despite the shift, the gang member's need to survive which is enveloped in the basic amenities; food, health care, shelter, clothing still hold value and may be the only way towards establishing and maintain a factor which is empirically measureable.

Furthermore, it appears that the political agenda which once was a sort of patriarchal belief and embedded in the communities, via the gang sub-culture, is now merely a spurious association and maintained conveniently every four years during national elections, or connected to usury as suits the interest of the gang and the vulnerable political interest. The politically loyal generation seems to have dissipated and has been or being replaced by a more business minded gang member who is opportunistic and driven by personal motives (Blake 2002).

It is the same convenience and usury that finds violence which previously secured votes and compliance as the tools employed in the current society, in other words to gangs continue to grow and evolve according to what is presented. This use of violence may explain why in the diminishing existence of political and gang ties, the activities of gangs can survive and may have analysed the necessity of a structure independent of politics. That being established, the new era of Jamaican top tier gang seems more controlled by its needs and wants which, in quantifiable and tangible form, is one tier of the problem.

The second tier of the problem is the existence of a motivating factor which is purely guided by the sense of belonging and participating in a group. This second tier problem, according to the research, could be the by-product of the removal of the conditioned stimuli which over the years has been changed, shifted or been completely removed. Respondents alluded to the existence of gang loyalty and membership beyond financial gain and purely out of a 'misguided' sub-cultural belief that participation is necessary. The

entrenching and interweaving of the gang sub-culture and the community acceptance of gangs bears strong allegiance with this point.

Another keen observation unearthed by the responses was the early and inevitable exposure to violence within the gang affiliated communities and yet the members appeared to gravitate to the same violence which 'enslaved' them. The suspected and reported motive, according to the respondents appears to be to 'better themselves and their families.' At best, the logic of induction into what is feared and generally unacceptable seems akin to a "Fight or Flight" response; without the immediacy of what the term usually applies to.

The same sub-cultural norms seem to explain why men, normally associated with the 'bread-winner' role, are more susceptible to the core roles which include the use of violence, need for little or no remorse and a far less emotionless disposition after committing heinous acts. As a sub-group the formative years of a man's teenage to young adult years may present a vulnerable period during which the abovementioned Interactional Theory factors could possibly produce gang members. This point is hinged on the lack of local or international suggestions of core gang membership before the adolescent stages.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In general, the findings revealed a mix of reasons both pre and post membership as to why young people, more specifically males are drawn to joining gangs and becoming core members. Interestingly from the findings the existence of females, which does not appear to be a main focus for gang studies, will require more exploration, particularly, for the Jamaican population where it appears that female existence and peripheral contribution could be considered a factor for influencing men to join groups. The male to female interaction

immediately opens room for future research to explore the strength of influence which females have over males in informing their actions.

Another noteworthy recommendation for future research in this population is the introduction of a quantitative research which asks the same question and could serve to quantify the citizen's perspective of the motives behind gang membership. Future research should also pay attention to the impact legislature plays on gang membership and whether a deterrent could recalibrate the existent systems. The contention in this regard ties back to the existence of the Groupthink phenomena which has found the ability to get many to comply for a belief which, with regards to Socrates' ideal, may not be a core belief but is instilled and reinforced through fear and the need to survive.

Despite the gloomy and seemingly inevitable incorporation of all members of the society into gang activities, the research has however found that the same factors when manipulated correctly produced positive results. Ideally if young men at the vulnerable ages being swayed towards gang membership resulting from pre-set and inherited culturally establishments then the simple redress is the induction of systems pre the vulnerable stages. Interestingly with the introduction of new legislature and increasing knowledge both theoretical and practical the country may find a smarter criminal or a more resilient strand of individuals with a more virtuous mind-set. The aim therefore is to position the society towards reforming the existing mind-set, hopefully in a far shorter time than was the case of the previous conditioning.

CONCLUSION

Gangs have evolved since their inception and are capable of adapting to circumstance as long as the key elements for survival exist. The two main factors which have now become instrumental in

informing gang membership are the need to survive thus dependence on a system capable of providing and secondly the need to belong. The research concludes that both are necessary parts of the current Clans and One Order structures and seem to be so entrenched in the sub-culture that no formal system is necessary to secure the continuation of these practices.

The existence of the gang culture can however be affected by affecting the individuals particularly males and preferably before they reach the stage that they are most vulnerable.

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