

# THE MEDIA AND THEIR ROLES IN THE CONTINUATION OF CRIME AND CRIMINAL VICTIMIZATION: SILENCE, MISTAKE AND CRIMES

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## ABSTRACT

The Caribbean has been experiencing a crime problem for some time, which dates back even before the 1980s. As a result of the crime problem, a conference was held in 2001 to address the causes, consequences, challenges and the way forward and this was aided by the World Bank which sponsored a study to examine crime and poverty. The crime pandemic has resulted in heightened fear of victimization in the region, much so that people are afraid to report threats. Although the media provides an account and makes the cases of crimes to the general public, they oftentimes disregard individual and collective security in the pursuit of reporting the information. Within the context of the crime problem experienced in many Caribbean societies, particularly Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados, the media play increases the fear factor as in their desire to report and inform people of crimes who make it difficult for the individual as well as the society. The aim of this study is to explore, evaluate and critically examine what accounts for business entities and appears to have a fear of reporting threats and the media displays a disregard for individual and collective security. The first person to postulate that crime is a normal part of the functioning of a society was Emile Durkheim. He contended that "*Crime is needed a maintain itself and that there is no society that does not have crime.....*" (Durkheim, 1895), suggesting that crime must be managed in order to deal with threats to the individual, safety and rights of the individual as well as those of the society. Because a society must continue to coexist with crime, threat will also be a normal part of the society and the media can play a role in the safety and stability of the society through its actions (or inactions).

**KEYWORDS:** Business Crime, Media, Fear Of Reporting Threats, Crime, Safe And Stable Community.

## INTRODUCTION

There is no secret and definitely no surprise that in the Caribbean, particularly Barbados, Trinidad

and Tobago and Jamaica, have been experiencing a crime pandemic that is resulting in the silencing

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of many people including the business class. The Caribbean has been experiencing a crime pandemic that resulted in a conference on the matter in 2001 to address the challenges, find solutions, examine the consequences and control the escalating crime and violence phenomena (Harriott, 2004, 1). The crime pandemic explains why the World Bank sponsored a study on 'crime and poverty' in the late 1990s (Levy, 1996). The extent of the crime problem is aptly captured in study which was conducted by Powell, Bourne and Waller (2007) which found that crime and violence were the leading national problems identified by Jamaicans. The consequences of the crime problem in the region are expressed in high levels of fear and distrust as well as the unwillingness of people to report threats in whatever form, including the business class.

In 2007, 7/100 Jamaicans indicated that they trust other people, 3/25 said the 'war against crime and delinquency in Jamaica is being won', 9/50 people have been assaulted and attacked, 16/25 believed that the police can be bribed (Powell, Bourne and Waller, 2007), which speaks to the fear of reporting threats to life and/or property. Even many of social commentators in the region have offered their take on the social challenges experienced by the people. Some of the social commentaries include 1) 'Informer fi dead', 2) 'If mi hungry again you ago see mi nine (i.e. gun)', 3) 'No skin not too tough fi bore', which epitomize how criminality has crippled people's actions.

There are some social commentaries which speak to how vicious people can become because of their social realities. These commentaries including "Emergency", "Look into my eyes" and "Ghetto Anthem" are not only for record sales or "forwards" but act as a means of voicing the cries of the disadvantaged majority. It is difficult to identify exactly when this crime problem begun but it is obvious that there is indeed one and that it now serves to threaten the very existence of the country. Newspaper headlines such as "Three

slaughtered today", "Bodies found in Barrels downtown", "Man stabs woman to death", "Police raid finds 800 kg coke and ganja", "Businessman murders" and "Eye witness killed" are another expression of why people have become silent in speaking out on the crime threat and incidences. Crime and violence is not a new phenomenon as this dates back to Cain and Abel, and Durkheim opined that it is a normal part of society and that it is critical to the functioning of a society (Durkheim, 1895 p. 65), which is known by all individuals in the Caribbean and account for their unwillingness to speak on threats including 1) bribe, 2) extortion, 3) money laundering, 4) murders, 5) cybercrimes, and 6) other financial crimes including lottery scams.

The influence of crime on businesses extend beyond the actual activities (i.e. cybercrimes, fraud, bribery, extortion, embezzlement, arson, looting, et cetera) to 1) increased security costs, 2) reduced worker productivity, 3) influence investment and productivity, 4) increased health care costs because of fear and stress, 5) closure of business owing to crimes, 6) mortality (i.e. reduced life expectancy because of murder), 6) injury and 7) other socio-economic and psychological costs. With Jamaica having one of the highest violent crime rates in the world and being among the top 10 most murderous nations (Bourne, Pinnock and Blake, 2012; World Bank, 2004) despite the influence of crimes on businesses, many business operatives are highly fearful of reporting any likely threat owing to fear of becoming a victim. The crime problem in Jamaica and how it has produced fear of victimization, speechlessness and has crippled people's willingness to report threat to the police is typical in Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados (Brathwaite, 2003; Chadee, 2003). The business class continues to amass billions of dollars in security cost and financial crimes; yet there is a high unwillingness to speak out about the threat, and media is aiding in increasing the fear of victimization and indirectly fostering the crime

pandemic. Therefore, this study aims to explore, evaluate and critically examine what accounts for business entities and appears to have a fear of reporting threat, and the media displays a disregard for individual and collective security.

The fear of crime and victimization are well documented in Caribbean literature (Harriott, 2003; Chadee, 2003) and when these are interpreted within a socio-historical context, the media plays a critical role in glamorizing crimes and increasing fear of reporting incidences in the region. In a study entitled "They Cry Respect" (by Levy, 1996), the researcher opined that Jamaica has moved from that state of verbal violence or stick fights which existed in the 1940s, 50s and 60s to the use of the gun since the 1970s, and more so post 1979. Chevannes believed that nothing is more swift and irreversible than the modern gun (Levy, 1996). Already the crime rate here in the Caribbean has surpassed that level of tolerance. Headley (1994) asserted that over the last 40 years, annual homicides in Jamaica averaged in the vicinity of forty (40) or more murders per 100,000. However crime runs the entire gamut-ranging from the common property crime to fraud, racketeering and corruption in the highest places. But the most worrisome has been the high numbers of homicides which has crippled societies like Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago as well as Jamaica.

In the last two decades, the Caribbean has not only seen a rise in murders but also 1) embezzlements, 2) money laundering, 3) lottery scams, 4) bribes, 5) arson, 6) security costs, 7) relocation of firms, 8) loss of output owing to injuries and murders, and 9) fear and victimization. A survey on Business Victimization in Jamaica revealed that 13/20 businesses indicated being a victim of some crime in 2001; 11/50 experienced fraud; 9/10 experienced weekly theft; 1/20 had to pay extortion and 2/25 had to pay protection money (2004). Even outside of the Caribbean, a Business Survey was conducted in 2008 by The Gallop Organization &

United Nations Inter-regional Crime Research Institute (2008) which found that there has been a rise in crimes against and in businesses, including 1) theft; 2) assault; 3) burglary, 4) extortion and intimidation, and 5) corruption.

Many of the cases of crimes in a society are reported upon by the media. Although the media provides an account and publicized cases of crimes to the general public, it oftentimes disregards individual and collective security in the pursuit of reporting the information. Within the context of the crime problem experienced in many Caribbean societies, particularly Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados, the media play increases the fear factor as in their desire to report and inform people of crimes makes it difficult for the individual as well as the society. In fact, there have been cases in which the media's handling of the matter resulted in further victimization of an individual, a community or the wider society. By disregarding the interest, safety and security of the individual and/or wider society, the media has made security increasingly more difficult. There are instances in which further victimization, stigmatization, and crimes against people, institutions and community happened because of how the media reported and handled the matter.

The aforementioned situations highlight the additional challenges on security when the media is brought into a discussion of crime and victimization. In the thrust to report crimes (including theft, embezzlement, fraud, money laundering, et cetera), the media may play the inadvertent role of increasing the crime problem and allowing criminals to go free because of how they handle a matter. Within the context of wanting to address the crime problem in the Caribbean, 'How can a safe and stable community be assured' when the media sometimes disregards individual and collective security. Another rationale is the value of research in policy implementation as the underpinnings of the crime phenomenon silencing business people

away from reporting threats and the media's disregard for individual and collective security must be examined in order to create a synergy as to how we can have a safe, secure and stable community.

## **RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

The marriage between politics and crimes extends beyond Jamaica to other geographic localities in the Caribbean (United Nations and World Bank, 2007). There is a long history of political tribalism and crime in Haiti dating back to "Papa Doc" Duvalier (1957-71). Other Caribbean nations in which the marriage between politics and criminality include Trinidad and Tobago, St. Lucia and Dominica Republic (Ryan, 1997; United Nations (UN) and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 2008; United Nations and World Bank, 2007). The historical context of how politics has contributed to crimes in the region (Simmonds, 2003), how politics and crimes are related (Robotham, 2003; Sives, 1997, 2003), the high rates of violent crimes and how many of these are committed have driven fear in people in the Caribbean. In addition to the aforementioned issues, business people are equally cognizant of the crime problem in the region, the extent and nature of crimes and how reporting of crimes have accounted for people's refusal to report threats to the police. Instead of reporting likely threats of criminality to the police, many businesses in Caribbean have increased private security.

Instead of the media playing a delicate role in handling of the reporting of crimes against businesses or otherwise, sometimes they blatantly disregard the individual and collective security at the cost of reporting crimes. There is no denial that the media should not report cases of crimes to the general public, what the security forces argued is that it must recognize the sensitivity of some cases before they venture into reporting the matter. Another area of concern is

how the media sometimes sensationalized delicate matters, and as a result posed future problems for people or institutions involved.

With a new thrust of collectively combating crimes and corruption in the Caribbean region, the media must be brought on board as it can play a critical role in 'arresting' the crime and victimization problems. A safe and stable community cannot be solely the role of 1) politicians, 2) security forces, and 3) private citizens, if the media will stay on the outskirts and undermine the collaborative efforts of the other stakeholders. The media has a critical role in the security of the society, while it continues to inform, entertain, educate and report matters of public interest. In keeping with the abovementioned issues, this researcher believes that media must be brought onboard within a collective framework of crime reduction and eradication strategies.

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The first person to postulate that crime is a normal part of the functioning of a society was Emile Durkheim (Durkheim, 1895). He contended that "Crime is needed for society to evolve and maintain itself and that there is no society that does not have crime ....." (Durkheim, 1895), suggesting that crime must be managed in order to deal with threats to the individual, safety and rights of the individual as well as those of the society (Jones, 2000; Durkheim, 1895), and that threat will also be a normal part of the society. It follows, therefore, that the issue of security must be a shared responsibility in order to co-exist with crime as an inevitable component of societal functioning. Giovanni Manunta (1998) argued that security is 'The Interaction (antagonism) between the three factors of Asset, Protector and Threat'. Maxwell Fyffe; however, defined security as 'Protection of the realm as a whole from acts of sabotage, espionage' which denotes that security must address i) Personal individual; ii) Household/assets; iii) Community, and iv) Nation,

particularly in reference to Durkheim's theory that crime will continue as long as there is a society.

Giovanni Manunta (1998) postulated that socio-economic and political factors should not be emphasized in security as this is more a function of asset, protector, threat and specific situation. Among the factors identified by Manunta for security is the situation. Manunta argued that one must assess the situation, suggesting that security uses empiricism to determine actions. He opined that "Situational factors are seen in different ways at academic and professional levels...Academic research is mostly directed to analyze the influence of situational factors on motivation. Situation appears to be related to opportunity and influences the offender's choice, considered as rational" (Manunta, 1998, 58). The aforementioned perspective offers some explanation for how the situation can be a crime preventive mechanism.

In evaluating the situation, an assessment of the environment is critical to the security conditions. The security environment constitutes the Asset, its setting and security apparatuses ('including the Protectors, and not the threat'). Another aspect to the milieu is the local setting that entails the threat as well as the 'macro-climate' (or outside milieu). Manunta contended that the 'macro-climate' includes political, ethical, socio-economic, legislature, normative and so on. Such perspectives offer explanation for the examination, policy formulation and publication of documents by the police on anti-corruption strategies (JCF, undated) as the 'macro-climate' demands corruption prevention and reduction (Powell, et al., 2007; Waller, et al., 2007; Pantry, 2010; Bernard-Madden, 2010; Transparency International, 2000-2009). Powell and his colleagues found that corruption was the 4<sup>th</sup> 'most pressing problem faced by Jamaica at this time' (Powell, et al., 2007, 49), which provides the coverage for the dictates of politics anti corruption stance, documentation, strategy and

programs. Eight-five and four tenths percentages of Jamaicans indicated that the 'war against crime and delinquency in Jamaica is not being won' and that corruption will take between 1 and 11 years (64.7%) to be addressed, and that 64.7 percentages indicated that a police officer can be bribed (Powell, Bourne and Waller, 2007). Those findings highlight the inherent threat that is perceived by Jamaicans, including business operatives.

Understanding the present situation in Jamaica, people's willingness to change the current crime-problem and demands of the 'macro-climate' as well as the 'micro-climate, the merger between politics and crime can be drastically reduced as people recognize the need for separation because of historical under-currency and threat level, which accounts for the heightened fear of crime and victimization. There is enough evidence that exists to show that the socio-economic situation as well as the demographic factors have not provided an explanation, which when applied have reduced the crime-problem in Jamaica. On the other hand, the 'macro-climate' as well as the 'micro-climate' was able to provide a platform for the reduction of violence in Western Kingston, especially Tivoli Gardens. Using threat assessment, assessment of the situation, even with the lingering reality of politics, crimes, particularly murders have been exponentially reduced in Western Kingston, although economics or any other social factors have not been addressed. It is this reality that is used by Jamaicans to examine the threat levels, and who they should operate with including disclosing information to the police.

The dismantling of marriage between politics and crime in Western Kingston, especially Tivoli Gardens, was reached because influence of the situational constraints the tactics in execution of the threat analysis. Clearly the threat which once existed in Western Kingston has been lowered and this has changed the perception of Jamaicans outside of Kingston on physical harm, crime,

violence and protection. People are not expressing confidence in the police being able to man the streets. Although the Western situation has happened, many people still do not believe that the 'fight' against crime has been won, which would result in them disclosing critical information to the police or even relating a threat because of the fear of crime and victimization.

The issue of extortion was once popular and rampant in Kingston. Business people were extorted, had to pay protection money and this continued for years. Many business operatives would informally report the matter to a friend; but were tight-lipped about the matter when the police sought to investigate it. The reality is, people were cognizant of the corrupt nature of the police force (Waller, et al., 2007; Powell, et al., 2007) and other public officials which retarded reporting of the situation. In wanting to protect their lives, Jamaicans including business people, analyze the threat of insecurity and would be unwilling to report such a matter to the police. Extortion and protection money were not the only crimes committed against business people in Jamaica; but they have to fear i) threat; ii) arson; 3) murder; 4) injury from criminals if they had spoken to the police. Crimes against business are not typical in Jamaica as the literature shows that this is prevalent in other geo-political spaces too (Slapper, 2009; Burrows, et al., 2001).

According to Don Robotham (2003), the contributory factors to the high incidence of crime and violence in Jamaica are general demographic, economic, political and social factors. These factors have been found to contribute significantly to the creation of an environment conducive to the high rates of violent crimes. He continued that there is a plethora of such factors: the size and growth of the 15-29 years age group, population urbanization and density. The slum communities around parish capitals, particularly Kingston, St. Andrew and St. Catherine continue to grow as

unemployed and under-educated youths migrate from rural communities in search of better conditions in the city. Professor Trevor Munroe (2002) asserts that often these "better conditions" that they seek are non-existent and the conditions are often times much harsher in urban areas than they are in rural areas. However; many choose to remain in the urban areas and hence have helped to increase the hopelessness of the area. Robotham continued to list housing and social services, levels and duration of unemployment, levels of literacy and education, cognitive and moral development, inequality and social distance and value changes in Jamaican societies in recent years, as influence on the crime rate in Jamaica. The arguments that were previously forwarded in Jamaica are equally so true for Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and other Caribbean nations (Chadee, 2003; Harriott, 2003a, 2004; Mars, 2004; Braithwaite, 2004).

In Barbados, Braithwaite (2004, 92) opined that the fear of crimes is widespread because of the spatial characteristics of criminal victimization, which is equally found in Jamaica (Harriott, 2003a, 2003b) and Trinidad and Tobago (Chadee, 2003). In Becker's seminal work on crimes, he noted that crime is an economic phenomenon (Becker, 1968). Becker (1968), using econometric analysis – regression technique - a tool in objectivism, established factors that influence an individual's choice to engage in criminality. Becker's seminal work empirically establishes what is widely known as the economics of crime. Becker's 'utility maximization crime' framework expresses crime as a function of many variables. This is encapsulated in Equation (1), below:

$$y = f(x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4, x_5, x_6, x_7) \quad (1)$$

Where  $y$  = hours spent in criminal activities,

$x_1$  = wage for an hour spent in criminal activity,

$x_2$  = hourly wage in legal employment,

$x_3$  = income other than from crime or employment,

$x_4$  = probability of getting caught,

$x_5$  = probability of being convicted if caught,

$x_6$  = expected sentence if convicted, and

$x_7$  = age

It can be extrapolated from Becker's work that poverty is positively related to criminality, and a rise in unemployment will increase probability of engagement into criminality. Some Caribbean scholars also examined the matter of crime and found that it is an economic issue (Alfred, et al. (2001)), indicating that 1) economic and financial crises; 2) lower of remittances to a society; 3) increase in unemployment and poverty and 4) a deterioration in the socio-economic conditions of the society will increase lawless, corruption, and crimes, particularly against business that people assess as having the economic resources.

In addition to poverty, other factors that influence crimes can be classified under the heading of social, cultural, economical and political conditions (Robotham, 2003; Tremblay, 1995; Ellis, 1992; Bourne 2011). Policy makers continue to rely on empirical inquiry to implement policies in the Caribbean, because of the validity of utilizing positivistic theoretical perspectives. Harriott aptly summarized the failure of conventional theorizing, when he opined that "Traditional law enforcement methods have similarly proved to be ineffective" (Harriott, 2004a, 262), which would include the long-established factors of crime.

Using econometric analysis, Nobel prize winner Gary Becker (1968) established that involvement in crime activities can be explained by income received from criminal activities, legal employment, probability of being caught, probability of being convicted, duration of sentencing if caught, age and income from non-

criminal engagements. It can be deduced from Becker's work that crime is predominantly an economic phenomenon, which was supported by Alfred Francis and his colleagues (2001), using data for Jamaica. Although Alfred Francis et al. did not include politics among the independent variables; they found that the economic factors contributed significantly to involvement in criminality, which does not eliminate the political factor as well as socio-demographic correlates. With Becker's work (1968) showing that the probability of being caught and the likely sentencing of the guilt party are element of engagement in crimes, the low rates of conviction of many crimes in the Caribbean is interpreted by indicator to avoid reporting threats and crimes.

"Political crimes and crime-politics relationships may be most sharply manifested in the garrisons, but are evident in political activities outside of them", Harriott (2003b, xi) said. He went to say that "Much has been said about the crime-politics nexus in popular discourse, and some of this is shared by authors in this volume (Harriott, 2003b, xiii). It can be extrapolated from Harriott's perspective that political mobilization is pivotal to the social roots of crime in the Caribbean, especially in Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana. According to Sives reporting a respondent said that "When the JLP declared war on the PNP in 1942, JLP ruffians began to attack PNP meetings" (Sives, 2003, 54). She went on to say that "The Battle of Rose Town demonstrated that the PNP had developed an ability to match the JLP on the streets of Kingston. ....The PNP were not attacking anybody but they would defend themselves now that they were powerful and strong, they would match the Labourites" (Sives, 2003, 56). This suggests that politics in Jamaica was accounting for violent crimes. It should be noted here that nexus between politics and crime is typical in the Caribbean – Haiti (United Nations and World Bank, 2007). A statement by United Nations and World Bank

(2007) highlights the crime-politics paradigm in the Caribbean:

Political violence is not a novelty in Haiti's history, and it neither started nor ended with the Duvalier regime, although this regime's violent record was unprecedented. "Papa Doc" Duvalier (1957-71) began to institutionalize political violence soon after he was elected in 1957, by establishing a force of *cagouards* ("hooded men") charged with silencing supporters of rival candidates (who challenged the election results), as well as other dissidents, which gradually developed into a more extensive network of spies for the Duvalier regime (United Nations and World Bank, 2007, 28).

Gun ownership is an outgrowth of the drug trade and, in some countries, a legacy of party politics and associated garrison communities. Within these environments which promote the demand for weapons, reducing gun ownership is a difficult undertaking. At the regional level, coordination between law enforcement agencies on intelligence and interdiction are important. At the national level or sub-regional level, better gun registries, marking and tracking can help, as can improved gun interdiction in ports. 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 (United Nations and World Bank, 2007, 153).

The extraordinary crimes in the Caribbean (Harriott, 2003a, 2003b, Chadee, 2003; Brathwaite, 2003; Harriott, 2004; Baldwin, 2010), particularly in the capital city of Kingston, Jamaica, are mostly prevalent in the communities on the economic margins. Harriott (2003b) held that for the most part, these areas are deprived of the material economic base whereby its members can reproduce and adequately maintain themselves. Harriott goes further to speak of blocked legitimate opportunities and social exclusion that result in the alternate

illegitimate opportunity structure that engenders aggressive behavior and violence. The alternative structure created by these individuals is the means through which they "get paid" and are able to "survive". This structure goes against the societal norm that dictates that a legitimate 9 to 5 job is the acceptable means of getting money. These inner city members resort to what Professor Bernard Headley (1994) describes as basic street leveled crime and violence, which includes robbery, petty larceny, house breaking, stickups or even murder as their means of survival.

At first glance, the statement: *Poverty causes violence*, appears simple and truthful, evoking no real form of objection as we sit back and observe what is happening in parts of the world today, for example, 'Third World' developing countries. This is further reinforced by the availability of a plethora of rather convincing scholarly writings that put forward the same idea -in more or less the same way.

After perusing a number of articles and texts, the one thing that becomes clear is that the term poverty is synonymous with an undesirable social problem or state. These writings suggest that individuals or groups, who find themselves in a *state of poverty*, usually want to escape and as such require the help of forces greater and more influential than themselves. However, this classification is limited in scope as there are many more dimensions to the term poverty.

Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, maintain Haralambos et al. (2000), researchers have tried to establish a fixed standard against which to measure poverty. First, there is relative versus absolute poverty. Measures of absolute poverty are usually based on the idea of subsistence. In other words, people are in poverty if they do not have the basic resources to maintain human life. Here poverty is defined in purely material terms and is essentially viewed as material deprivation (for example shortage of money). However, the term

can be expanded beyond simple material deprivation to multiple deprivations. For example, inadequate educational opportunities, unpleasant working conditions, or powerlessness can be regarded as aspects of poverty. None of these conditions is necessarily directly related to the income of the individual. Each implies that broader changes than simply increasing the income of worst-off individuals are necessary if poverty is to be eliminated. Measures of relative poverty suggest that the term must be used in relation to the standards of a particular society at a particular time. Here, poverty is seen as a by-product of inequality. According to this view, the point at which the dividing line that separates the poor from other members of society is drawn will vary according to how affluent the society is. The poor in a society then can be identified as those whose income or resources fall so far short of the average that they do not have the particular society's acceptable standard of living (Haralambos).

The existence of different categories and forms of violence also calls for a rigorous classification that is free of biases, ambiguity and short comings (Salmi 1993). Barak (2003) asserts that violence is "the threat, attempt or use of physical force by one or more persons that results in physical or non-physical harm to one or more persons". Barak's definition is instrumental as it sets the boundaries (for example violence as physical) that are necessary for every definition. Though Barak's definition of violence will be the type mostly referred to, the definition provided by Salmi will also be useful. Essentially, Salmi sees violence as "any act that threatens a person's physical or psychological well-being, integrity or wholeness". Note carefully, in all but one instant (which will be pointed out) Barak's violence will be the type that this article speaks of.

As indicated in the introduction, many people believe that there is a clear link between poverty and violence. Using the *Frustration Aggression Thesis* (FAT) of Dollard et al. (1939) it can be

understood why this belief would seem logical. Influenced by Freudian ideas, and anchored in the Behaviorist school of thought, this thesis suggests that aggression is always a consequence of frustration and cyclically, frustration always leads to aggression. This aggression may be disguised, deflected, or delayed, however it is always there. Under the umbrella of this theory, poverty whether material or multiple deprivation, would be an instigator of frustration which would undisputedly lead to aggression (violence).

This analysis or reasoning finds its support, for example, amongst the literature of many scholars. Harriott (2003) maintains that the extraordinary high inclination to violence in the Jamaican inner cities or 'ghettos' is not surprising as, for the most part, these are the areas deprived of a material economic base whereby its members can adequately maintain themselves. Harriott goes further to speak of blocked legitimate opportunities and social exclusion (characteristics of poverty) that result in an illegitimate opportunity structure, (created by frustration with the legitimate structure) that engenders aggressive behavior and violence. To this, Headley (1994) added that the root causes of the alarmingly high levels of Jamaican street crime and violence in a society are that it "either withholds or denies prized possessions from a significant number of its citizens". He maintains that these citizens resent their situation and "resentment has a way of developing into acrimony and bitterness, which later influences crime and violence", suggesting that people are cognizant of those realities and their behavior as it relates to the absence of relating crimes, and threats will be based on what they obtain in the society.

Pfannl (2004) asserted that poverty appears as both the cauldron for violence and the result of the violence exerted by society on the weakest, most vulnerable of its members. In situations of hopelessness, without work or any chance for upward socio-economic mobility, people become

desperate and frustrated. As in real life, the poor Brazilian children in the movie, *City of Gods*, grow up in desperation in the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. For them, violence by way of guns, drugs and killings appears the only way out. With all this being said, we must be careful to realize that these authors never indicate that one factor (poverty) explicitly or directly causes the other (violence). The above literature merely reiterates the view that there is a relationship between the two factors. Where poverty is persistent, there appears a rising trend towards violence; however, this is not the same as saying poverty causes violence.

There are host of reasons why we cannot take this assertion for granted. The first and most important reason lies in the criteria necessary for establishing a causal relationship. According to Haralambos et al., scientific quantitative methodology dictates that for A) (poverty) to cause B) (violence), 'A' must occur before 'B'. This criterion evokes a number of controversial arguments. For example, many authors put forward the view that it is violence that causes poverty and indeed not the other way around. Pfannl, in his study of the violence ridden slums of Brazil, purports that violence does not originate from poverty. It is poverty, he argues, that is produced and sustained by direct and indirect violence. When poor children are abandoned by society in their most basic needs of care and decent education, this constitutes an extreme form of violence, albeit indirect, exerted by society. This violence, we may recall, is essentially covered by Salmi in his definition. Pfannl continued that without the opportunity to go to school and receive quality education, there is no hope for personal advancement or a better future.

The media's role which is to inform and educate the public on matter of importance, oftentimes report crimes as they happen, reveal threats against individuals and business, provide insights into fear and victimization by members of the

society against other groups and eagerly report incidences and cases with an understanding that it has a role in individual and national security. If security is to 'protect from harm or attack', then the media must ensure that reporting any matter should not open the individual and/or business to unsafe conditions.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **CONSTRUCTIONISM**

Max Weber (1949, 1974, 1981) was the first to argue that an 'Interpretivism' approach can be employed in the examination of social phenomenon. Weber opined that why humans behave the way they do is lost in quantitative methodologies (or positivism). He therefore, forwarded the use of subjectivity (feels, beliefs or meanings) in social inquiry, which began the use of interpretivism in the social sciences (Rabinow and Sullivan, 1979). For years, the inquiry of social phenomenon was based on objectivity until Weber introduced an alternative paradigm. This gave rise later to the emergence of (i) ethnography, (ii) phenomenology, (iii) case study, (iv) grounded theory, (v) feminism, (vi) biography, (vii) historical comparative analysis, and other methodologies (discourse analysis, heuristic inquiry, action research and context analysis) were in keeping with an alternative paradigm in scientific examination as approaches in understanding human behaviors.

One such subjective methodology which is long established in the literature is phenomenology (Flick, 2006; Silverman, 2005). Phenomenology is one of the methodologies in qualitative research that evolved as an alternative paradigm to objectivism. It focuses on constructing meanings instead of discovering meanings. Crotty ably provided a classic argumentative of meaning constructions in understanding human realities. He contended that "From the constructionist viewpoint, therefore, meaning (or truth) cannot be described simply as 'objective'. By the same

token, it cannot be described simply as 'subjective'. Some researchers describing themselves as constructionist talk as if meaning are created out of whole cloth and simply imposed upon reality" (Crotty, 2005, 43). Suggesting that understanding people's behavior can be interpreted from a perspective of meaning constructions and more than from an objectivistic approach-which emphasizes precision,

measurement, and falsification. In keeping with the constructionist perspective on reality that it is a construction of meanings; this work is seeking to understand the phenomenon of transnational organized gangs (or networks) and strategies to address them in the Caribbean region employed social constructionism as the matter requires some construction of meaning in order to grasp the complexity in this area.

### Constructionism



Figure 1. Four Elements of Constructionism

### DOCUMENT REVIEWS

The researcher reviewed written documents including books, journal articles, and scholarly articles online. The review was to determine 1) theoretical framework, 2) employed strategies, and 3) epistemological framework for the study, and 4) how to interpret the information. A major reason for the document review was to assist in triangulating and validating information obtained in one secondary source.

### OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

#### THREAT

The Oxford Dictionary defines threat as "a statement of an intention to inflict injury, damage our other hostile actions as retribution" which will be used for this study.

#### HUMAN SECURITY

According to Saunders (2012), national security is "...a school of thought or foreign policy that holds security on the individual level, to be necessary for national, regional and global stability. It focuses on the effects of violence, poverty,

disease and other threats to individual safety and rights."

#### SECURITY

According to Fyffe, security is the "Protection of the realm as a whole from acts of sabotage, espionage", which is used in this article.

#### VIOLENCE

According to Salmi, violence is "any act that threatens a person's physical or psychological well-being, integrity or wholeness".

#### ECONOMICS

This terminology refers to 1) money, 2) financial resources.

#### BUSINESS CRIME

Crime committed in the normal course of business, for economic reasons, by or on behalf of business organizations.

#### VIOLENT CRIME

"(number of violent crimes) constitutes nine offences as labeled by the Jamaica Constabulary

Force (murder, shooting, rape and carnal abuse, robbery, manslaughter, infanticide, suicide, felonious wounding, and other offences against the person)" as said by Bourne, Pinnock and Blake (2007) which is used for this work.

## **MURDER**

According to Bourne, Powell and Blake (2012) "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) ...", which provides the interpretation for murders in this study.

## **DISCUSSION**

There is no denial that the Caribbean has been experiencing a crime problem. The matter has reached such an alarming situation that a conference was hosted in Barbados on 'Crime and Criminal Justice in the Caribbean' in order to ascertain measures, policies, programs and intervention that can be instituted to remedy the crime pandemic (Harriott, 2004, viii). Harriott (2004) noted that "The problem of crime in the Caribbean – its causes, its consequences, and its control – emerged as a major concern during the 1990s" (p. 1). He opined that crime and HIV/AIDS "are wreaking havoc on our population" (p. 1), suggesting that the crime pandemic is polarizing many people including businesses and that globalization has significantly increased the crime problem, especially business crimes (Dixon, 2003) and hence has increased the need for new laws to address the problems (Slapper, 2009).

Coming out the exponential increased murders in the 1970s and again in the 1980s, the high risk of criminal victimization had result in the need for close protection of many key individuals within the Jamaican society. Even before the 1970s, there were cross fertilization of violence between the two main political parties, which called for the protection of critical stakeholders in the

society such as 1) the Governor General, 2) Prime Minister, 3) Ministers of Government, and 4) Opposition Leader. The rationale is embodied in the "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 and their union movement" (Sives, 2003, 59). The germination of political garrisonization of Jamaican political landscape had seeped into the psyche of many individuals including members of the JCF to the extent that police personnel were known political activists and terminators.

One anthropologist, Professor Don Robotham (2003), contended that a part of the crime problem in Jamaica must be attributable to the Jamaica Police Force. He opined that the police are corrupt (see also, Waller, Bourne, Minto and Rapley, 2007; Transparency International, 1997-2011), political enforcers, involved into criminality and among the least trusted public institution in the society (see also, Powell, Bourne and Waller, 2007; Gray, 2003). Citizens' high level of distrust for the police (Powell, Bourne and Waller, 2007) was expressed in their unwillingness to 1) share information, 2) come forward and relate interpersonal issues, 3) be watchdog, 4) co-operate with law enforcement, and 5) respect decisions taken from law enforcement officers. The crime problem has reached soaring heights and people want remedy, and they postulated that reforming the Jamaican Police Force was critical to the 'crime fighting' threat analysis and apparatus.

There is extensive empirical evidence that the Caribbean is experiencing a period of terrorism that emerged from narcotic trans-shipment, gun smuggling and that this does not serve the interest of politicians (Griffith, 2004a, 2004b; Jessop, 2009). As the gang members (or underground traders) are not serving the interest of politicians as in the 1940s, 1970s and beyond, it follows that macroeconomic climate as well as

the micro-climate causing the gradual eradication of the crime and politics paradigm. 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, 215), Munroe's comment (Munroe, 2002) offers an understanding of the pressing demand of publics (international and local) for the 'breaking of the back' of the crime and politics marriage, the culture of victimization and this explains the heightened fear of victimization.

The seriousness of the crime problem in the Caribbean, particularly Jamaica (Baldwin, 2010), means that peoples' fear of crime and victimization had reached an alarming level that they were now willing to circumvent reporting threats to the police because of fear of victimization and reprisal. Harriott (2003), when he says that "There, 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" (Harriott, 2003). Such a response from the citizenry is the value they now place on asset of life, property and their psychological wellbeing, and that these are worthy of protection. In addition to aforementioned, 'jungle justice' is used because people interpret the difficulty of convicting criminals as an indication that the justice system is ineffective. It follows, therefore, that threats are lowly likely to be reported coming out of the fear factor produced because of the high crime rates, particularly murder. Based on Manunta's postulations that "The term 'Asset' is anything that can be threatened and damaged, and is consequently defended by the Protector" (Manunta, 1998, 54), which explains the economics of crime and the reluctance of people, including business people,

to report threat out of fear of victimization and the low level of trust in the police.

Like Harriott (2003a) and Chadee (2003a) opined the fear of victimization had held many people hostages to silent, Braithwaite (2003) contended that Barbadians have become so fearful because of the crime problem that fear of victimization had entrapped many people into silence. Following the high proportion of people who feared victimization as well as the types of violent crimes in addition to their scope and viciousness, there was a consorted effort of Caribbean people to arrest the crime pandemic. Various stakeholders were brought to a crime conference in 2001 to examine the issues, evaluate causes, explore consequences and determine the way forward. The media was present at the conference, and highlighted difference issues that emerged.

While those beyond the region have to do more to reduce demand for the narcotics trafficking that fuels criminality in the Caribbean, perhaps the only real answer lies in the public demonstration of moral leadership by those in politics, the Church, the media and business who can see the longer-term consequence of inaction (Jessop, 2009).

The media has been highlighting the crimes, the viciousness, the individuals involved; the types of crimes and sometimes by forwarding the issues open the individuals and/or institutions to more victimization. In reporting some incidences, the media would have an individual stating what is happening without hiding the person, distorting the voice and other identifiers. In so doing the individual to exposed and later become target for crimes and victimization. In the wanting to inform, educate and present issues, the media sometimes does not protect the individual and/or business. People have been murdered, victimized and injured because of the report of the media.

Furthermore, businesses have been destroyed, 'burnt', and other crimes have been committed because of how information was brought on the media. Security means that the individual and/or business cannot be harmed on reporting a matter, which has repeatedly happened in the Caribbean. Such realities have increased people's apprehension, fear and unwillingness to report a threat to the police, and the crime problem has resulted in some people, including business operatives, turning to criminals for protection them, which was also the case outside of the Caribbean (Tulyakov, 2004).

Businesses experienced different crimes (theft, bribe, protection money; extortion; financial matters) (Gottschalk & Solli-Sæther, 2011; Baldwin, 2010) and media wanting to highlight the issues often disregards people safety. The media does not report issues with a keen sense of individual and collective security. They are primarily concerned with forwarding information more than recognizing the importance of safety and security. It appears that the coverage of crimes is more in keeping with sensationalization of the information than individual and collective security. Even in the case of presenting the issues on extortion in Kingston, the media featured the information without paying critical attention to safety of the victim. It followed that people were further victimized, injured and murdered because of the media's failure to recognize the importance of securing the victim(s).

The crime pandemic in the Caribbean is sometimes aided by the carelessness of the media's handling of issues, and the neglect of protection of individual and society. The media has a collective responsibility in individual and national security, and plays the sensationalized game; they fail to recognize the value of security of all concerns. Blatantly reporting anything without recognizing the value and their role in individual and collective security, the media opens individuals to further harm and thereby expands the fear factor as well as victimization.

The media's role is not primarily to report and inform the public at all costs without paying attention to security of all concerned.

Wanting to reduce crime must involve the role of the media. If the media is primarily concerned about its interest to inform and educate without recognizing their role in security; then a safe and stable community in the Caribbean will be a farfetched reality. People must feel safe, and by disregarding this reality the media is helping to destroy stability in the society. While the researcher recognizes the importance of media's role in highlighting crimes, injustices and social ills (i.e. poverty, income inequality, social marginalization), they cannot disregard individual and national security in the pursuit of reporting issues. The crime phenomenon is a component of all societies, which is opined by many scholars including Emile Durkheim, but the media cannot take the stance that reporting issues will not add to crime as crimes are by nature the actions of other people.

The actions of the media are critical to safety and stability regarding the crime pandemic in the region. They must recognize that while crimes are a part of the society, its stability has to be the role of all individuals collectively playing a role. Hence, if reporting a matter will cause injury, harm, victimization and will make it unsafe for someone or a collective group (including a nation), the media must ensure that this does not happen. Security is a collective effort, and for this to be achieved in a society the media must actively play their role. Stability of the crime does not merely involve the victim and perpetrator, it also involves the actions (or inactions) of the media. In that, failing to protect an individual or a collective group cannot increase stability in a society as this will increase victimization and crimes.

The crime problem in the Caribbean must be addressed from a multi-faceted approach. Stability and reduction in crime as well as safety

of individual and society cannot be achieved and attained with the media blatantly disregarding individual and collective security. Guns, violent crimes and the volume of unsolved serious crimes were now well known, these had reached the international arena, fear and victimization had become rampant, and the police were increasingly pressurized to address these issues. The wired media had headlines which read 'Jamaica's murder rate continues to soar' in 2008 and 'Jamaica records the highest murder rate in 2009', and Jamaica was now among the 10 top countries with the most murders in the world. Crime, violence and drugs in the Caribbean had become such a big issue internationally that this caught the attention of the United Nations and the World Bank. The media and other stakeholders can report issues; but these must be within the context of unbridled freedom of reporting issues.

Safety and stability in the Caribbean, particularly as it relates to crime and victimization as well as fear of reporting crimes, must be taken into consideration by the media when deciding to report issue. Other approaches include: 1) laws protecting the media from reporting issues that can harm an individual or a collective group; 2) the media must have a moral conscience in reporting matter; 3) charge the media for crimes that are committed which result from their reckless negligence to protect someone or institution from being exposed to harm. While there is no sensible argument to be purported that the media are solely responsible for crimes; there is an argument that can be forwarded for their indirect involvement in unsafe and unstable situations. Interestingly, the crime problem which continues to plague business entities (Elliott, 2008) and individuals cannot be addressed without the contemplation of individual safety and protection, while different stakeholders seek to play their part in arresting the crime pandemic. Carelessness, eagerness and exuberance cannot substitute for individuals' and collective safety as

this will fuel instability and more criminals, which must be taken into consideration by the media as this must guide their actions (or inactions).

## CONCLUSION

The crime pandemic in the Caribbean has reached such an alarming proportion that a conference was held in 2001 to address consequences, issues, challenges, causes and approach to be taken to lower the crime problem. Over the last decades, the Caribbean has seen a rise in major crimes, particularly those committed to or against businesses. The nature, culture, typology, viciousness and degree of criminal activities against individuals and business have propelled various stakeholders to recognize the importance of coming together to 'fight' crime. The reality is the culture of crime and its tenets have forced many people in silence because of fear of victimization. Another reality is that the cost of crime on businesses in Jamaica was estimated to be Jamaica \$12.4 billion, yet still many business people are silent and reluctant to speak of threat to their establishment because of the fear factor, which is also the case in Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados.

The general populace as well as business operatives understands the 'inform' culture that has developed over the years and how reprisal killings have emanated out of this situation. With the corruption of public officials, including the police and the seriousness of crimes committed against 'informer', people as well as business operatives are fearful to be labeled as such. The media, although cognizant of the culture, oftentimes disregards it. There have been instances when the media reporting from crime scenes makes coverage of expressions given by people without disguising them. The result which follows is the killing of the informer or witness.

Even though, crime is an inevitable a part of society, the media must recognize that they have a role to play in safety and security of people. The

media is not solely responsible for reporting issues irrespective of the negative consequences on the individual or institution as their role can create unsafe environments and destabilize situations. Safety and stability of a society can be aided by the media's responsible role in recognizing that they can destabilize a society, create fear, increase victimization and crimes owing to their actions (or inactions). Hence, the researcher is not forwarding a perspective that the media should be 'bridled' or freedom of press be curtailed, the researcher is guarding the media about irresponsible journalism as the safety and stability must be equally a part of its focus in reporting on sensitive situations.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The media can partner with law enforcement in publicizing high profile cases which have been successfully prosecuted in an effort to build confidence with the public and business operatives.

The media in collaboration with law enforcement can make the public and communities aware about crime prevention measures and increase public awareness of developing crime trends.

The media can publicize list of wanted persons and persons of interest during prime time news.

The police and businessmen can form partnerships in developing and implementing preventive strategies that aim towards the concerns of business operations.

The media should take preventive measures to not jeopardize witnesses at scenes of crime or during interviews.

The media should create a more balanced and objective reporting of serious crimes.

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