

# DO INTENTIONAL HOMICIDES IN THE US, POLITICAL GOVERNANCE, AND MACROECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN JAMAICA IMPACT ON HOMICIDE AND RAPE RATES IN JAMAICA? A GOVERNANCE EXPLANATION

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## ABSTRACT

Political rhetoric aside, the matter of criminality in the context of a society that takes its cues from the governing classes, entrenched generationally, the plantocracy from which it was born, is a grave matter, and begs for empirical lens to be applied. The study seeks to examine links with politics, economics, and violent crimes (homicides and rapes) with a view of adding to the empirical body of works in the English speaking Caribbean. Time series data from 1970-2015 from various sources, were analysed through multivariate analysis employing Pearson Product Moment correlation. A significance  $P \leq 5\%$  (i.e. 0.05) was employed. For the periods under study homicide rate per 100,000 under the PNP was  $32.8 \pm 15.0$ , 95% CI: 26-38.9, which is not statistically different from the JLP:  $28.7 \pm 18.1$ , 95% CI: 18.6-38.7 ( $t = 0.601$ ,  $P = 0.554$ ). Under the PNP, rape per 100,000 was  $46.3 \pm 11.9$ , 95% C.I.: 41.5-57.1 compared to that of the JLP, which is not statistically different:  $40.6 \pm 8.7$ , 95% C.I.: 35.7-45.4 ( $t = 1.785$ ,  $P = 0.083$ ). The macro-economic indicators and governance accounted for 83.8 % of the variance of homicides in Jamaica, while these indicators and governance having influence accounting for 30.9% of the variance in rape rate in Jamaica. Governance was shown to positively affect homicide and rape rates in Jamaica, which empirically establishes that the governance of Jamaica positively influences both homicide and rape rates.

**KEYWORDS:** Crime, Homicide, Governance, Politics, Political Violence, Macro-Economic Indicators, Jamaica

## INTRODUCTION

Jamaica was once considered by many within the region to be the pearl of the Caribbean (Davis, 1998). In many ways, it sets the standard for how

things were to be done economically, socially, and even culturally for many other regional governments and states.

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However, just as a volcano is born from much pressure and violence, so in addition, has the country of Jamaica been born from a lot of factors and that their influences have not always been positive in origin or nature. One of the indicators of how well a society has been doing is captured in whether or not criminality is contained within the society.

In Jamaica, murder and other violence crimes have not only been echoed in the undertones and enunciations of the locally originating reggae music but are reflected in the annual crime statistic reports (Harriott, 2003; Sives, 1997, 2003; Levy, 1996; Gray, 2003a, 2003b). Jamaica as a country, based on size and population, is among the countries with the highest rates of murder, violent crimes, and rapes (adult, children, elderly, and infants), when compared to most countries of similar size (Bourne, 2016, 2017). A study conducted by Bourne, et al. (2015), found that Jamaica had a higher homicide rate than that of New York, which has a population that is 20 times higher than Jamaica.

For decades, Jamaica like many developed and developing nations have been plagued by high rates of homicide and this seems unabated (Bourne and Hudson-Davis, 2016; Bourne and Solan, 2012; Bourne, Hudson-Davis, Sharpe-Pryce, et al., 2015a, 2015b, 2015c; Harriott, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c; Koppensteiner and Manacorda, 2015; WHO, 2012). The state of major crimes in the Caribbean, especially homicide (murder), have led to studies being conducted on the matter, with one being sponsored by the World Bank (Levy, 1996) and another by the Department of Government, University of the West Indies (Powell, Bourne and Waller, 2007). There is no denial that the Caribbean has been experiencing a homicide pandemic (Griffiths, 2004, 200b; Bourne, et al., 2015a), and Okeba Gray ascribed this situation to the state of the economy and the societal culture (Gray, 2003a, 2003b).

This revelation in data, news reports, and crime statistics, begs for an answer, introspection as a society, and deeper empirical examination. Whatever it is that has created and fed this phenomenon, has been around for over 45 years, dating to the 1930s (Williams, 2011; Simmonds, 2003). Anything that is this prominent and this pervasive, over such a protracted time, is not only embedded in the psyche, but overtime would have become part of the cultural and societal norm. Some theories that provide early insights into how the scourge of criminality is so deeply embedded and reinforced is possibly explicated by cultural learning and operant conditioning. Cultural learning, which is also characterized as cultural transmission, speaks to how people or citizens within a society or culture learn and pass on information, which influence behaviour. While Skinner (1938) in his conceptualization of the term **operant conditioning**; clarifies how the change, or lack of change in behavior, is due to how reinforcement is given, after the desired response.

According to Gray (2003), in his review of historical Jamaica, violence and criminality are directly linked to the political governance of Jamaica, which dates back to Norman Manley and Alexander Bustamante era (see also, Williams, 2011). Hence, inferring that what we see manifested in the society as violence and criminality is influenced by a governance structure that was directly or indirectly created, and continue to allow an environment to exist within which criminality can be perpetrated and sustained. However, beyond various inferences and opinions (Gray, 2003a, 2003b) there has not been empirical studies that examine the variables of political governance and economics and how they influence homicide and rape.

According to Harriott, (2003), electoral crimes, are in some areas of the country, treated as normal political activity, the expected, and in some measure, the accepted way of conducting

electoral campaigns (p.5). Data available at the time would have clarified the emerging changes in the patterns of ordinary criminal offending and would have indicated that while the problem may have been intensified by political competition, and armed militancy, it could be reduced to the political (p.8).

While the qualitative arguments as to the relationship between political governance and homicides have remained open over time (to include the work of Williams, 2010), the empirical gap in literature will now be explored and evaluated in this study. This study seeks to examine the following hypotheses:

- H<sub>1</sub> Political governance does not influence homicide rates in Jamaica
- H<sub>2</sub> Political governance does not influence rape and carnal abuse rates in Jamaica
- H<sub>3</sub> There is no difference in the rape and carnal abuse rates in Jamaica by political governance
- H<sub>4</sub> Political governance and macro-economic conditions do not influence homicide/rape rates in Jamaica

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Just over a decade ago, an august team of researchers headed by Dr. Lawrence Alfred Powell and coordinated by Dr. Lloyd Waller and Mr. Paul Andrew Bourne conducted a series of biannual surveys. The aim of the study was to tap into the consciousness and thinking of the Jamaican people, on various topical areas of discourse. Some that were of import for our current review included elements from the sociopolitical domain such as orientations to democratic and authoritarian governance, trust and confidence in societal/political institutions, perceptions on the state of the economy, citizen well-being and their perceptions of corruption, and crime and equity (justice) before the law. According to Powell, Bourne & Waller (2006), in the resulting report, "Probing Jamaica's Political

Culture," the stability and success of any democratic society is heavily dependent on the ability of the governing class to "nurture" and "sustain" its citizens and as Almond and Verba (1963) put it, their "civic culture." Stone, Pye, Almond et al. (in Powell, Bourne and Waller, 2007), have put forward a theory and position that would suggest that those who have governed in a Jamaican context have reneged on the responsibility to maintain and champion the cause for a sustained and healthy democracy. Gates (1999) in his work *Creating a Healthy Democracy* cited some of the key factors leading to breakdown of democracy as being: (a) frustrated and angry citizens, (b) presumption of bad intent, (c) media focus on the negative, and (d) dysfunctional politics being the primary reason for citizens not becoming involved in the community, resulting in nonfunctioning and unhealthy communities.

Additionally, empirical research carried out by Mustard (2010) has shown that there is a positive association between unemployment and crimes related to property (house, land, etc.). Further studies carried out by Lin (2008) and Mustard (2010) could not find a significant positive relationship between unemployment and violent crimes. Levitt (2004) further purported that violent crimes are rarely economically based and supports the economic theory as put forward by Ehrlich (1973) that labour market or economic opportunities affect the citizens' choice between legal and illegal activities.

Research has shown, in many cases that crime is most highly concentrated in areas of the city where poor, long-term unemployed and marginalized citizens are concentrated (Harriot, 2001). Additionally, in the Jamaican context, Professor Anthony Harriot noted that in the year 2000, 62 percent of all murders in Jamaica were committed in the city of Kingston, which accounts for only 26 percent of the island's population! Most of these crimes were focussed in the most impoverished areas of the city, where the people,

especially the young males, are largely excluded from the labour force (P57-58). Further investigation in these areas has revealed a strong leaning towards the two prominent political parties, which at various times held political sway, hence determining the direction of policies that would impact the macroeconomic and socioeconomic climate.

Harris(2009)noted the effect that the macroeconomic indicator of inflation has on crime. According to him, high inflation rates tend to increase income inequality and a protracted period of high inflation rates and economic instability may alter people's time horizons for achieving key life goals. People lose confidence in the economic future. They believe that 'tomorrow' will be worse. Material acquisitions thus become "now or never" predicaments. Shorter time horizons for achieving major life goals may give an impulse to criminality and the use of corrupt acquisition methods.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank (Report No. 37820), countries with higher average incomes tend to have lower murder rates and higher robbery rates. Higher inequality, on the other hand, is correlated with higher murder and burglary rates, the report further states. For Jamaica, the patterns of crime victimization by consumption level-of both households and communities-mirror the trends in the cross-national data: increases in wealth are associated with lower levels of violent crimes and higher levels of property crimes (robbery and the theft of agricultural goods).

Additionally, households in poorer areas, even after controlling for the household-level consumption, suffer higher risk of violent crimes such as murder and wounding. The wealth and property crime relationship can be seen in Figure 3.3, which shows a scatter plot of robbery rates

versus mean consumption by neighbourhood (census enumeration district).

Most victims of homicide are male, young, uneducated, and poor. In 2013, 90 per cent of all homicide victims in Jamaica were male (Harriott& Jones, 2016).According to Harriott (2002), international research has consistently reported a positive relationship between economic inequality and crime. This is especially true for violent crimes, including homicide. Preliminary empirical work indicates that Jamaica conforms to this general international pattern, but there is no consistent pattern within the Caribbean.

It is the understanding that respective governments and their resulting governance and policy framework are key determinants of the economic climate and macroeconomic realities of their nation. It, therefore, is no stretch of the imagination to assert that where we are today as a country as it relates to rapes, murders, and other serious crimes are directly linked to decisions in governance of those who have led this nation (Harriot, 2001). This study has revealed much as it relates to elucidation of the misconceptions put forward by the two primary parties (i.e. the People's National Party [PNP] and the Jamaica Labour Party [JLP]) about their respective impact on crime. The data paints a clear picture of none of the two making any real inroads in the arresting and reversal of these upward trends in criminality, rapes, murders, and other serious crimes.

The data also demonstrates that while there have been more resources dedicated to policing than at any othertime in Jamaica's history, the crime numbers continue to balloon! The links asserted to, in the local media, between political players and the criminal underworld, have been less than flattering and are essentially a cause for grave concern. This seminal work opens the doors for further studies and starts the discourse in a fulsome way of the impact of governance on

macroeconomics and criminality in a local context. The further studies can help to provide fodder for setting flame to those things that act contra to the development and prosperity of our people.

## **METHODS**

In the Jamaican context various governmental agencies are tasked with the substantive duty of collection, collation, and storage of data to be utilized in analysis, calculation, and forecasting for policy direction and strategic planning. The ensuing information, when employed properly by the respective government of the day, can empower the respective ministries, governmental departments, and their underlying entities with the relevant datasets, databases and repositories to drive proper programme implementation in tandem with their strategic mandates.

Among the primary information gatekeepers and central repositories are the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN). These two entities are collectively responsible for framing, collecting, collating data on poverty rates, unemployment rates, and intentional homicide rates along with other population characteristics and other macroeconomic indicators within the Jamaican context.

Further to same, these institutions have had the arduous task of collecting data for the respective Jamaican government for in excess of 45 years, which the study covers. Prior to the nomenclature change, the agency formed in 1984 as STATIN, had operated within the Department of Statistics, also formerly called the Bureau of Statistics that began operating in 1946 (STATIN, 2014).

The Central Planning Unit, which was established in 1955 to assist and provide the government with structured and prescriptive information on economic and social issues, was later, renamed

the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ, 2008-12). In this review, the data, which we examined to establish the links with politics, economics, and violent crimes (homicide and rape) came from various sources including datasets from STATIN, and economic and social data from published reports by the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ, 1960-2015).

Another rich source was the Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (JSLC), a derivative and adaptation of the World Bank's Household Living Standards Survey, an annual household survey that collects data from Jamaicans on health, education, and general living conditions (PIOJ, 2012; World Bank, 2016a, 2016b). In 1989, the JSLC began collecting data on variables that are considered in this study. This data is further augmented by the respective reports over the last several decades from the PIOJ, STATIN, et al., with the various methods of analysis employed to the respective datasets to compute the microeconomic indicators for examination.

As it relates to the variables of homicide and rape, the data reported by the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) and corroborated by the Statistics department of the government, and the Economic Survey of Jamaica provided these datasets. The Bank of Jamaica (BOJ) is responsible for collecting, collating and calculating macroeconomic indicators such as inflation rate, exchange, rate and Gross Domestic Product on the behalf of the government. Those data are published in Economic Reports, Statistical Digest, and the World Bank's website (BOJ, 1960-2015; World Bank, 2016c). In addition, data were obtained for intentional homicide rates in the United States (US) from the Disaster Center (<http://www.disastercenter.com/crime/uscrime.htm>, 1997-2015). The data on infant mortality rates are published by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica in a document entitled 'Demographic Statistics (Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 1970-2015).

## FINDINGS AND RESULTS

### SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for selected macroeconomic indicators (exchange rate, inflation rate, GDP per capita [in US dollars], unemployment rate, poverty rate) and intentional homicide rate per 100,000 populations, as well as rape and carnal abuse per 100,000 mid-year population for Jamaica, using data from 1970-to-2015. Over the last four and one-half decades in Jamaica (1970-2015), on

average, intentional homicide rate stood at 40.4±13.1 per 100,000 mid-year population compared to 50.5±8.2 per 100,000 mid-year population for rape and carnal abuse rate. It can be deduced from the data that substantially more people are raped and carnally abused in Jamaica compared to those who are intentionally killed by others. For the period (1980-to-2015), the poverty rate averaged double-digit (21.3%±7.5%, 95%CI: 18.2%-24.3%) and this is similar for the inflation rate, for the period 1979-2015, 17.6%±16.2%, 95%CI: 10.9%-24.3%.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for selected macroeconomic indicators (i.e., exchange rate, inflation rate, GDP per capita, unemployment and poverty rates) and intentional homicide rates for Jamaica, 1960-2015**

Details	Descriptive Statistics
Exchange rate	US\$52.28±US\$25.43, 95%CI: US\$41.78-US\$62.77
• Skewness	0.227
• Kurtosis	-0.775
Inflation rate	17.6%±16.2%, 95%CI: 10.9%-24.3%)
• Skewness	2.595
• Kurtosis	7.485
Intentional Homicide rate/100,000	40.4±13.1,95%CI: 35.0-45.8)
• Skewness	0.242
• Kurtosis	-0.893
GDP per capita (in US \$)	US\$3,508.8±US\$1273.5,95%CI: US\$2983.2-US\$4034.5
• Skewness	-0.058
• Kurtosis	-1.264
Unemployment rate	14.0%±2.14%, 95%CI: 13.1%-15.0%
• Skewness	-0.672
• Kurtosis	-1.08
Poverty rate	21.3%±7.5%, 95%CI: 18.2%-24.3%
• Skewness	1.421
• Kurtosis	2.88
Rape	50.5±8.2, 95%CI: 47.2-53.9
• Skewness	0.949
• Kurtosis	0.302

Since December 12, 1944, Jamaica has been governed by either the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) or the People's National Party (PNP). From the

1970s to 2015, the PNP has governed Jamaica for 67.4% of the times compared to the JLP of 32.6%.

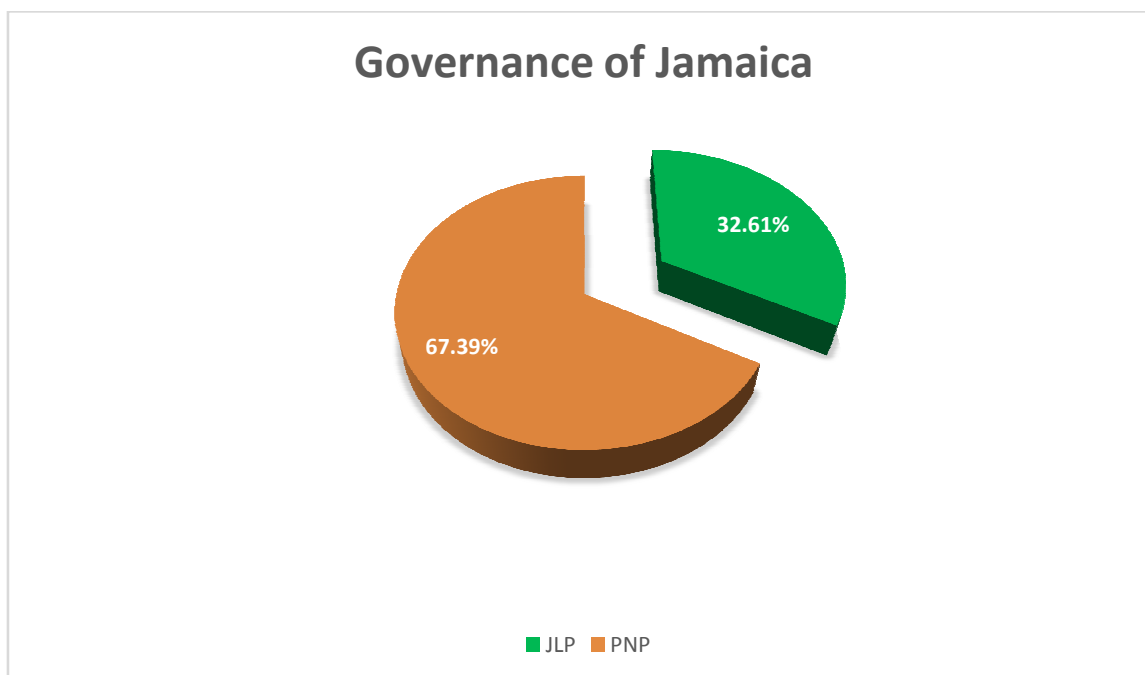


Figure 1. Governance of Jamaica by the Two Main Political Parties, 1970-2015

For the studied period (1970-2015), on average, the intentional homicide rate for the period of time the PNP governed Jamaica is  $32.8 \pm 15.0$  per 100,000 population (95%CI: 26.8-38.9) compared to  $28.7 \pm 18.1$  per 100,000 population for the JLP's governance (95%CI: 18.6-38.7). Although in absolute term the figures are different, statistically they are the same ( $t=0.601$ ,  $P = 0.554$ ). This means that intentional homicide rate in Jamaica is statistically the same and that none

of the two main political parties can argue that murders were lower during its tenure in administration of the society. Likewise, is the case of rape and carnal abuse rates- $46.3 \pm 11.9$  per 100,000 during the PNP's governance of the nation, compared to  $40.6 \pm 8.7$  per 100,000 during the JLP's governance of the nation ( $t=1.785$ ,  $P = 0.083$ ). The statistics reveal relatively low skewness with the exception of intentional homicide rate for JLP.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for intentional homicide rate, and rape and carnal abuse rate by political party in governance, 1970-2015

Details	Political Party in Governance of Jamaica	
	PNP	JLP
Homicide rate	$32.8 \pm 15.0$ , 95%CI: 26.8-38.9	$28.7 \pm 18.1$ , 95%CI: 18.6-38.7
• Skewness	0.188	0.858
• Kurtosis	-0.591	-0.659
Rape and Carnal Abuse rate	$46.3 \pm 11.9$ , 95%CI: 41.5-51.1	$40.6 \pm 8.7$ , 95%CI: 35.7-45.4
• Skewness	0.018	-0.074
• Kurtosis	-0.052	0.101

**Hypothesis One-Model 1**

$H_0$ : Intentional homicide rates in Jamaica are not influenced by exchange rates, inflation rates, GDP per capita, unemployment rate, US homicide rates, infant mortality, and political governance

$$H_t \neq f(ER_t, I_t, GDP_t, U_t, M_t, Hom_t, P_t) \dots\dots\dots [1.1]$$

Where  $H_t$  represents intentional homicide rate per 100,000 population in time period  $t$  (for Jamaica);  $ER_t$  is the exchange rate (Jamaican and US \$) in time period  $t$ ;  $I_t$  denotes the inflation rate

in time period  $t$ ;  $GDP_t$  symbolizes Gross Domestic Product (in US\$) in time period  $t$ ,  $U_t$  means unemployment rate in time period  $t$ ;  $Hom_t$  represents US homicide rate per 100,000 population,  $M_t$ , is under 5 mortality rate in Jamaica per 1,000 births,  $P_t$  denotes political governance of Jamaica (PNP and JLP).

Using Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression, the model is a significant linear one ( $F [8, 35] = 18.2$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ). Furthermore, of the eight macroeconomic indicators, US homicide rate per 100,000 population, under 5 mortality rate in Jamaica per 1,000 births, and political governance of Jamaica (PNP and JLP), only one individually influences homicide rate per 100,000 in Jamaica-GDP per capita of Jamaica (in US \$)-Table 3. Such findings means that collectively the eight explanatory factors influence homicide rates in Jamaica; but that political governance, unemployment rate, US homicide rate per 100,000 US population, inflation, and under 5 mortality do not by themselves influence the

homicide rate per 100,000 Jamaican population. This means that collectively, the eight factors account for 80.6% of the variability in homicide rate per 100,000 Jamaican population. It should be noted here that while political governance of Jamaica, as a subset of the explanatory variables, contributes to the homicide rate in Jamaica, there is no significant statistical difference between murder rates during governance by the PNP or the JLP.

Although there were moderate to strong statistical bivariate correlation between selected explanatory variables, there was no problem with multicollinearity as reflected by the Durbin Watson value of 1.7. Such a reality means that there is stability in using the results to evaluate the dependent variable, homicide rate per 100,000 Jamaican population. This indicates that the economic and social environment in Jamaica, as well as homicide rates in US and political governance in Jamaica are influencing the homicide rates in Jamaica.

**Table 3. Ordinary least square (OLS) regression of selected macroeconomic indicators, US homicide rate, under 5 mortality and political governance of Jamaica on homicide rates in Jamaica, 1960-2016**

Particular	Unstandardized Coefficients		t-statistic	P value	95% CI
	B	Std. Error			Lower-Upper
Constant	27.7	21.269	1.296	0.203	-15.610-70.746
Exchange rate	-0.161	0.122	-1.328	0.193	-0.408-0.085
Inflation	0.127	0.116	1.092	0.282	-0.109-0.363
Unemployment	-0.081	0.447	-0.180	0.858	-0.989-0.828
GDP per capita (in US\$)	0.009	0.004	2.591	0.014	0.002-0.016
US Homicide rate	0.868	1.991	0.436	0.666	-3.175-4.910
National Political Governance (1=PNP)	-0.747	3.399	-.220	0.827	-7.648-6.154
Local Political Governance (1=PNP)	-5.879	3.050	-1.928	0.062	-12.071-0.313
Mortality rate under 5 (per 1000 live births)	-0.604	0.306	-1.971	0.057	-1.226-0.018

**Hypothesis Two-Model 2**

$H_0$ . Rape and carnal abuse rates in Jamaica are not influenced by exchange rate, inflation rate, GDP per capita, unemployment rate, US homicide rate, infant mortality and political governance

$$R_t \neq f(ER_t, I_t, GDP_t, U_t, M_t, Hom_t, P_t) \dots [2.1]$$

Using Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression, the model is a significant linear one ( $F [8, 30] = 6.861$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ). Furthermore, of the eight macroeconomic indicators, US homicide rate per 100,000 population, under 5 mortality rate in Jamaica per 1,000 births, and political governance of Jamaica (PNP and JLP), only one



individually influences rape and carnal abuse rate per 100,000 in Jamaica-infant mortality rate (Table 4). Such findings means that collectively the eight explanatory factors influence rape and carnal abuse rates in Jamaica; but that political governance, unemployment rate, US homicide rate per 100,000 US population, and inflation do not by themselves influence the homicide rate per 100,000 Jamaican population. This means that collectively the eight factors account for 64.7% of the variability in rape and carnal abuse rate per 100,000 Jamaican population. It should be noted here that while political governance of Jamaica as a subset of the explanatory variables contributes to the rates of rape and carnal abuse cases in Jamaica, there is no significant statistical

difference between the level of rape and carnal during governance by the PNP or the JLP.

Although there were moderate to strong statistical bivariate correlation between selected explanatory variables, there was no problem with multicollinearity as reflected by the Durbin Watson value of 1.5. Such a reality means that there is stability in using the results to evaluate the dependent variable, rape and carnal abuse rate per 100,000 Jamaican population. This indicates that the economic and social environment in Jamaica, as well as homicide rates in US and political governance in Jamaica are influencing the levels of rape and carnal abuse in Jamaica.

**Table 4. Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression of selected macroeconomic indicators, US homicide rate, under 5 mortality and political governance of Jamaica on rape rates in Jamaica, 1960-2016**

Particular	Unstandardized Coefficients		t-statistic	P value	95% CI
	B	Std. Error			Lower-Upper
Constant	54.319	22.426	2.422	0.022	8.520-100.119
Exchange rate	0.187	0.170	1.105	0.278	-0.159-0.534
Inflation	-0.086	0.124	-0.691	0.495	-0.340-0.168
Unemployment	0.661	0.562	1.175	0.249	-0.488-1.809
GDP per capita (in US\$)	-0.003	0.004	-0.764	0.451	-0.011-0.005
US Homicide rate	1.143	1.931	0.592	0.558	-2.800-5.086
National Political Governance (1=PNP)	2.621	3.575	0.733	0.469	-4.679-9.922
Local Political Governance (1=PNP)	4.245	2.963	1.433	0.162	-1.806-10.296
Mortality rate under 5 (per 1000 live births)	-1.032	0.300	-3.435	0.002	-1.646--.419

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

On examining of the literature on crime in Jamaica, with special reference to the influence of politics thereon, Caribbean scholars have alluded to a marriage between both phenomena (Figueroa and Sives, 2003; Gray, 2003a; 2003b; Harriott, 2008; Headley, 1994; Leslie, 2010; Robotham, 2003; Sives, 1997; 2003). There are plethora of qualitative evidence, which undoubtedly support the marriage of politics and violence in Jamaica to include accounts of violent confrontations between gangs that were associated with both political parties-the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and the People’s National

Party (PNP). In fact, Amanda Sives (2003) in an article entitled “The Historical Roots of Violence in Jamaica: The Hearne Report 1949,” spoke of the clear linkage between ‘gunmanship’ and politics in Jamaica and provided some graphic accounts of such instances in the 1940s as documented in the Hearne Report of 1949 (see also, Figueroa and Sives, 2003; Gray, 2003b; Henry, 2010). Despite those historical records and qualitative perspectives on both phenomena, some were even purported by scholars;the matter was never empirically examinedwith respect to the macroeconomic milieu. However, for the first time in 2012, a group of Caribbean scholars, using econometric analysis, empirically

established a clear quantitative association between politics and homicide in Jamaica (Bourne, Blake, Sharpe-Pryce and Solan, 2012).

Despite those facts, political governance and the macroeconomic environment have been excluded from an empirical discourse of crime in the Caribbean. The present study, using time series data, has moved away from the banter and blame game between the two political parties (JLP and PNP) as it relates to crime in Jamaica, and points right back to politics itself. Leadership and governance of the people are roles and responsibilities that come with the territory of being the government of a nation.

There are enough narratives on the marriage of politics and ‘gunmanship’ in Jamaica, and one of the Caribbean’s leading anthropologists, Professor Don Robotham, for years, have been arguing about this marriage and even forwarded that the crime monster cannot be tamed without some severing of the ties between politics and crime (Robotham, 2003). Then from a criminologist perspective, Harriott (2008) dedicated an entire book to ‘Organized Crime and Politics in Jamaica: Breaking the Nexus,’ suggesting that ample narrative has existed on the twin-monster in Jamaica. In the Jamaican context, the Jamaica Constabulary Force, and to a lesser extent the Jamaica Defense Force are mechanisms of control for murders, violence, and enforcement of the rule of law. The ecology of the justice system sees those playing varying roles in the investigation and apprehension of criminals, so they can be formally prosecuted and held to justice. But what happens when the government and opposition at any given point in

history allow the need to access the corridors of power, to thwart and detract from their core governmental duties, which include creating an equitable and fair opportunity for all citizens to be safe, to be educated, to access healthcare, to develop and contribute to the national agenda, and this is spelt out in blood on the streets? The unprecedented violence and trauma within communities over the last 45 years makes it abundantly clear that whatever has gone wrong in our society is present in both sides of the political aisles and works against the common good of the country and the safety of its citizenry. On reading the works of Robotham (2003), Bourne, Peterkin, Anderson, Pabarue and Higgins (2016), Ayres (1998), United Nations (UN) and World Bank (2007), Anderson and Bourne (2016), and Harriott (2008), it is evident that the Caribbean and Latin America’s violence epidemic is equally traced to politics.

While the local press and other external bodies of import may spin a tale that our justice system has failed, or will continue to fail its citizens, what happens in Jamaica as it relates to politics and serious crimes is far from random. It is perpetrated through the positions held by the chief actors that govern and directly influences the criminal justice system in a cacophonous way. This work has served to highlight empirically that politics, macro-economic indicators and violent crimes (homicide and rape) are linked and should be further examined and explored through empirical investigation and interrogation.

Regardless of political governance, whether it is PNP or JLP that is in power, the homicide and rape rates are statistically the same,  $P > .05$ :

<b>Null Homicide rate</b>	32.8±15.0, 95%CI: 26.8-38.9	28.7±18.1, 95%CI: 18.6-38.7
<b>Ho accepted Null Rape and Carnal Abuse rate</b>	46.3±11.9, 95%CI: 41.5-51.1	40.6±8.7, 95%CI: 35.7-45.4

Peter Bunting in the Jamaica Observer, Wednesday, February 22, 2012, proposed yet another plan at that time with the aim for less

than one murder per day by 2017. According to Mr. Bunting, the implementation of a National Security Policy to tackle the country's ballooning

crime rate with intent to reduce murders from the current three per day to less than one over the next five years was in the pipeline of his administration. Those announcements were triggered by the release of police statistics, which showed at that time that 165 persons had been murdered in the first seven weeks of 2012, 30 more than the corresponding period in 2011. Bunting also asserted that the murder rate would fall from the 41 per 100,000 ratio in 2011, to a projected 12 per 100,000 in 2012 (Brown, 2012).

In a bold and collaborative move, the National Security Minister Robert Montague hosted Chairman of the People's National Party (PNP) Robert Pickersgill and General Secretary, Julian Robinson, at the Ministry's Oxford Road office, in a meeting to brief the two men who represented the PNP in this forum, on the national crime management strategies and security initiatives. In this meeting, the PNP team was briefed within the context of the Government's five-pillar strategy: effective policing, swift and sure justice, situational prevention, crime prevention through social development, and rehabilitation and redemption. Commenting on the outcome of the meeting, Pickersgill said that, "The meeting was productive. It was good to hear from the senior officers within the Ministry of National Security of plans, and the progress being made on these plans for the future. I am very impressed. I look forward to seeing the plans, especially for social development; unfold because I believe that this is at the root of the crime problem, as well as, the approach to the swift and sure justice pillar." The variables of political governance and macro-economic indicators explain close to 90% of the variability of homicide and rape rates in Jamaica. However, while this is a strong relationship one cannot from this draw causation because of the method of data collection.

When the data is disaggregated, it becomes clear that the politics by itself does not directly influence homicide and rape rates. However, all the factors together create the macro-economic

and social climate, which is the ecosystem within which criminality thrives (Gray, 2003). The present work has expanded on the initial work of Bourne, Blake, Sharpe-Pryce & Solan (2012), by adding the economic and the social environment to explaining the current state of violence in the Jamaican society.

This study revealed that both local and national governance of the Jamaican society are among the socioeconomic indicators of violence in the society and that it is not a simple one-dimensional marriage of politics and violence. However, a multidimensional issue must be critically and carefully examined before any amicable solution to the problem can be reached. Such findings means that collectively the socio-political and the economic environment of Jamaica are accounting for the violence-pandemic, and not singly political governance, and that any solution must coalesce all those elements without which the problem will continue unabated in the distant future.

The socio-political and economic environment in Jamaica is fashioning murders and violence, and this is a fact that is highlight by the present study. As a result, by merely designing social programmes that are void of rare economic and political solutions, the current violence statistics will be our downfall, and in fact will be worse than the current trends. Essentially, this work goes beyond all its predecessors to include intentional homicide rates in the US and infant mortality. The empirical data, herein, showed that there is imported violence in Jamaica as intentional murders in the US are influencing the homicide and rape rates in Jamaica and this is a clear worrying signal. Because Jamaica, like the US or any other nation for that matter, is unable to restrict migration of people from or to its shores, this means that the violence pandemic is complexed and must be examined outside of all the present paradigms as this fact was not included in past investigations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been made based on the empirical nature of the findings of this study:

1. A funding framework is to be developed that provides a liquid and accessible pool to underwrite further research into the link between politics and violence.
2. Additional research is to be conducted to explore the relationship between socialization in inner cities and garrisons and violence and crime in the society.
3. Create a social assistantship programme that is to be tied to a development and training programme to reframe the worldviews and thinking of the most vulnerable and impoverished in the society.
4. Investigate and create a national response to socio-political marginalization of people in the society with a view of detribalization.
5. Explore rehabilitation of current security force efforts possibly scaffolded by a merger with the Jamaica Defence Force to provide a broader spectrum of responses to crime and violence.
6. Advance legislative amendments that give greater powers to the police force and other security related efforts.
7. Launch a sensitization campaign to guide citizens as it relates to crime reporting, deterrence, and prevention.
8. Expand the community policing effort that has shown positive impact in the piloted communities.
9. Expand tax net to provide better fiscal support of the economy and making it more equitable to all citizens within the country.
10. Target income inequalities and disparities within the workforce and promote a culture of transparency and fairness.
11. Use empirical research to gain an understanding of the citizens' view of crime and violence and use that data to create

responsive programmes and campaigns to curtail it.

12. Pursue stringent restrictions on Gun Control Law relating to purchase and import of arms and ammunitions.
13. Strengthen port and coastline security to restrict the inflow of drugs, guns, and other elements that fuel the criminality and violence noted in society.
14. Increase monitoring and detection capacity at all ports of entry.
15. Increase the fines and legal implications on any contraband that is detected in imports or exports.
16. Allow technology innovation to drive cooperative efforts across region.

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