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Call for Papers - JECS
Civil Society Consultation in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM): Why Conceptual Clarity Matters

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Department of Government, Sociology and Social Work
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Abstract

This article uses a social constructivist approach to evaluate the ways in which the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has communicated the need to institutionalise civil society participation in the region’s decision-making processes. This article analyses the CARICOM’s construction of language pertaining to ‘civil society’, ‘consultation’ and other participation related terms. What emerges from this discourse analysis is the observation that for just over twenty years, the CARICOM as an institution has transmitted unclear and sometimes contradictory signals surrounding the identity of individuals and groups to be included in proposed consultative arrangements. CARICOM’s failure to imbue terms such as ‘civil society’ with meaning for this institution’s context is connected to the institution’s inability to create participatory mechanisms for CARICOM.

Key words: Caribbean Community (CARICOM), civil society, consultation, participation, regional integration, social partners, stakeholders.
Introduction And Overview

CARICOM official communications are replete with pronouncements relating to the need to enhance participatory channels for civil society inclusion in decision-making processes. *The Grand Anse Declaration, The Time for Action Report of the West Indian Commission, The Charter of Civil Society for the Caribbean Community, The Liliendaal Statement of Principles on Forward Together*, and *The Rose Hall Declaration* comprise some of the noteworthy documents that mark just over two decades of regional assertions regarding the significance of revamping regional integration processes by incorporating civil society (CARICOM, 1989; Ramphal, 1992; CARICOM, 1997; CARICOM, 2002a; CARICOM, 2003). However, the pronouncements have not come to life in the form of mainstreamed practices of engagement or institutionalised mechanisms to ensure that consultation occurs.

In light of the foregoing, it may seem logical to ask why participatory structures have not yet been created for the CARICOM. However, the concern here is how CARICOM’s use of language surrounding participation has been structured over time. In this article I argue that unclear and inconsistent language use regarding the role of civil society in the CARICOM project should not be overlooked when considering the non-implementation of participatory mechanisms for the CARICOM. This analysis provides some insights into the oft-stated problem of limited policy implementation by the fifteen-member CARICOM grouping.

In attempting to make connections between communicated language and (non-)action, I employ a social constructivist approach which views practices as bound up with language. To be clear, I am not claiming that language is a causal factor. To assert that words lead to action or policy implementation would be more than naïve as any observer of politics knows too well. Instead, I argue that what is said is important for creating and expressing the meaning which is needed in order to inform actions. Although understanding meaning does not cause action, understanding helps to make action possible. I will delve into further discussion regarding the insights that a social constructivist approach which centres language offers this analysis to follow. For now though, I offer the proposition that attempts at explaining the reasons for action or inaction may be served by understanding how an issue is discursively constructed and employed within a policy setting.
Within the CARICOM context one too often hears the phrase ‘lack of political will’ employed as the explanation for limited policy implementation. Yet, one might ask whether ‘political will’ can be generated on the basis of blurry concepts? So, I seek to chart the link between language communicated by the CARICOM and the persistence of a glaring gap between decision-making processes which are controlled by Heads of Governments (constituting the supreme CARICOM body: the Conference of Heads of Governments) and ‘the people’. My observations lead me to assert that the failure of this inter-governmental integration initiative to provide structured and consistent opportunities for civil society engagement can be connected to the continued conceptual haziness on the part of the CARICOM.

This article proceeds in the following manner. To begin with, I present a discussion of social constructivist approaches which inform both my research question and the methodological approach which I employ. In the section that follows I outline the status of civil society consultative frameworks in CARICOM; provide some background on the emergence of civil society language within CARICOM; and discuss the contested meanings of the term civil society. This background allows me to move forward to my analysis of official CARICOM texts. In the discourse analysis segment of the paper I explore the ways in which obscure word use has been unhelpful in the concretisation of participatory structures. Finally, I summarise my closing thoughts and conclusions.

Framework: A Social Constructivist Approach

As previously stated, this work follows social constructivist approaches which, though varied, have been neatly summarised by Guzzini as: ‘… epistemologically about the social construction of knowledge, and ontologically about the construction of social reality’ (2000, p. 160). Social constructivists attempt to understand the ways in which actions become possible on the basis of inter-subjective meaning, ideational factors and practices. Constructivists assert that we create meaning together and shared meanings and beliefs allow for the creation of ‘social facts’. Such facts are constructed and reconstructed by our interactions. Therefore, social interactions and the resulting construction of knowledge and meaning can contribute to the creation of some aspects of reality (Pouliot, 2007, p. 362; Ruggie, 1998, p. 856). However, not all facts are ‘social facts’. The material world exists and is of impact on human behaviour, but human interactions
which generate meaning, ideas and beliefs can also create real ‘things’ which are important. Ruggie notes that:

Social facts include money, property rights, sovereignty, marriage, football and Valentine’s Day in contrast to such brute observational facts as rivers, mountains, population size, bombs, bullets, and gravity which exist whether or not there is agreement that they do’ (1998, p. 856).

For constructivists language is important since language is integral to crafting social reality and knowledge. Language can provide clarity when the meaning which it is intended to convey is understood. Language can also confuse when the meaning it is meant to convey is not understood or is communicated in ways which mystify. Language can render invisible, reinforce unequal power relations and can devalue individuals and groups. Words have been used as tools in the kit of maintaining power relations which have at various times dehumanised, belittled or ‘othered’ the non-white, the non-western and the female for instance. Language has also been used as part of the resistance to oppressive words and deeds as feminist writer Elshtain explains:

…one must move beyond a view of language as simply or inexorably “power over,” discourse as domination, or discourse as un-avoidably masked, and toward speech as part of an emancipatory effort, a movement toward social clarity and self-comprehension. (Elshtain, 1982, p. 605).

Language has been important in creating realities as well as in altering our understandings of such realities. Language communicates claims which can be accepted or contested. The iterated use of such language can facilitate the generation of practices around socially accepted meanings and expectations, and can contribute to the evolution of norms, rules, institutions. This linguistic focus on the performance of ‘speech acts’ serves to illuminate the ways in which ‘[c]ommunicatively rational agents …construct their social world’ (Duffy and Frederking, 2009, 327). Speech acts can be classed as including assertions, directives, and commitments (Duffy and Frederking, 20091, pp. 328 and 33). Speech acts ‘get things done by instructing, directing and committing agents’ (Onuf, 1998, p. 68). Consequently, even when words communicate empty promises, their use transmits meaning in
the form of commitments and their documentation can provide the basis on which individuals and groups can make claims or around which they may protest. Even ‘hot air’ can lead to action. So although language may not independently cause (or stop) actions, discourses are important in helping to constitute the social world: ‘…language is partly constitutive of the facts’ (Searle, 1995, p. 70).

In this paper I seek to examine the construction and use of language relating to civil society consultation in CARICOM on the basis that understanding language use is important for understanding social realities.

A Note on Methods

One of the critiques often launched against social constructivism surrounds methodology. An interpretive approach may be viewed as both eclectic and failing to meet criteria of validity and reliability. However, examining language and practices can be done in a variety of systematic ways. In this paper I attempt one such systematic approach. My conclusions are drawn based on an examination of the ways in which official CARICOM communications released between 1973 and July 2012, have used terms that suggest participation. I probed the meaning that the CARICOM has created or has obfuscated with reference to civil society inclusion in decision-making activities using NVIVO content analysis software to facilitate the process of coding text.

Although I coded the texts, I did not attempt to simply count the use of civil society related words or phrases. The number of references to these terms is less important than the information which the language signals. This is a qualitative investigation into meaning not a quantitative analysis of word use. My analysis instead aligns with what Ruggie has termed ‘neo-classical constructivism’ by drawing on speech act and communicative action theorising to analyse ‘intersubjective meanings’ while maintaining a commitment to social sciences, though viewed in a broad plural way (Ruggie, 1998, p. 880).

Before moving into this analysis of CARICOM official texts I will provide some background on CARICOM consultative frameworks, on the entry of civil society language in the CARICOM context and will also critically examine the meanings ascribed to the term civil society.
Background: Connecting Civil Society And Caricom

Integration in the English-speaking Caribbean has some of its roots in the regional labour movement’s calls for the construction of a federation which can be traced to at least the year 1926 (Lewis, 2004, pp. 363-364). Additionally, Caribbean people have integrated informally through migration and a variety of formal and informal networks. The British West Indies Federation existed between 1958 and 1962, followed in 1968 by a Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA) which in 1973 was transformed into a more wide ranging integration initiative in the form of CARICOM. However, none of these formal integration arrangements has connected to the somewhat organic integration impulses which have long existed in the Caribbean.

The most significant CARICOM – civil society point of contact that ever functioned in a consistent manner was the Joint Consultative Group. The Joint Consultative Group was created in 1973 and reported to the Common Market Council. By the 1980s its members made presentations to the annual meeting of the Conference of the Heads Governments. The members of this group consisted of the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce (CAIC), The Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL) and the Caribbean Consumers Committee (defunct by the end of the 1970s). In 1996 the Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC) was added as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) representative (CPDC 2011, 9; CARICOM, n.d.(a)). However, the nature of this collaboration was limited as it consisted primarily of presentations from the Joint Consultative Group members to Heads of Governments. As of 2001, Article 26 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas mandated consultations, termed ‘stakeholder consultation’ which should be conducted at regional and national levels (CARICOM, 2001). Yet it is difficult to discern how this Article has been mainstreamed within CARICOM institutions, especially since the Joint Consultative Group members have not been invited to take part in annual meetings of the Conference of Heads of Government since 2004. Unclear too is whether ‘stakeholder’ is necessarily inclusive of CSOs.

There have been some efforts to provide interactive spaces which include civil society organisations (CSOs) within the CARICOM structure. The CARICOM’s Council on Human and Social Development (COHSOD) perhaps exemplifies the best practices for CSO inclusion within the
organisation. Within COHSOD there exists a Standing Committee on Labour; and NGOs can attend meetings of the COHSOD and of the Council on Trade and Economic Development (COTED) as observers (CPDC, 2011, p. 19; CARICOM, n.d.(b). COHSOD’s rules of procedure also emphasise the significance of wide ranging consultations including ‘Regional and international agencies as well as Non-governmental Organisations…’ in preparation for COHSOD meetings (CARICOM, n.d.(b), Rule 11, Rule 12.2).

Other consultative arrangements that have included CSOs are the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) Task Force and a task force on Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) implementation. In addition, there exists a Memorandum of Understanding between the Office of Trade Negotiations (OTN) (formerly the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery) and the Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL). The OTN also held a ‘civil society and non-state actor’ consultation on 16-19 September 2010, (CPDC, 2011, pp. 19-20; CRNM, 2009; OTN, 2010). Further, the Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV and AIDS (PANCAP) and the Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) programme are notable for providing interfaces with CSOs as a matter of course (PANCAP, 2012; CARICOM ICT4D, n.d). These collaborative activities and structures give life to CARICOM mandates to include ‘stakeholders’, as do varied ad hoc meetings and consultations. However, there is no substantive mechanism which regularises involvement in decision-making activities.

The CARICOM-Civil Society project which began in 2010 attempted to provide concrete proposals for the creation of such overarching mechanisms. This project provided opportunities for a broad spectrum of CSOs from across the region to offer suggestions for structuring consultative mechanisms. The CARICOM-Civil Society project culminated in a ‘Technical Meeting of Government and Civil Society Representatives of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)’ in November 2011 that was expected to produce firm commitments from CARICOM leaders on crafting consultative frameworks. Nevertheless, for the present CARICOM lacks a comprehensive structure for civil society participation.

**Civil Society Talk meets CARICOM**

There is a relatively well known story about the contemporary trend of using the term civil society. The story goes that the 1990s marked the arrival
of multiple conversations around the world concerning ‘good governance’ following the demise of the Soviet bloc and the initiation of a ‘new wave’ of democratisation in which CSOs played noteworthy roles (Edwards, 2004, p. 12; Kaldor, 2003). By the 1990s ‘NGOs’ and ‘CSOs’ also became noteworthy in analyses of global governance institutions as various CSOs challenged the un-democratic and elite based operating practices of institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO (Dawson and Bhatt, 2001; Clark, 2003). Civil society and CSOs sought to democratise. Additionally, CSOs gained ever more space in UN conferences during the 1990s as well as within IMF and World Bank processes (UN, 2003; Dawson and Bhatt, 2001; Howell and Pearce, 2001, p. 95).

The rise of civil society language can be connected as well to the rise of a neo-liberal approach towards economic matters. Development discourses were awash with discussions regarding the role of NGOs in delivering development programmes and as channels for donor funding viewed as less corrupt than recipient states (Howell and Pearce, 2001, pp. 40-41; Edwards, 2004, p. 14). When one considers the IMF and World Bank focus on CSOs, it becomes clear that some aspects of CSOs’ utility also lies in their roles in providing efficient service delivery in line with an emphasis on privatisation of state functions. CSO inclusion became useful for both encouraging democracy and efficiency.

Whether CSOs can democratise or whether they speak for ‘the people’ can be debated as can questions about whether representative democracies ever truly serve ‘the people’. Similarly, both CSOs and states can be inefficient in service delivery and in using donor funds. Unsurprisingly, the policy-related civil society language which has surfaced as the mainstream has been dominated by western European and American thought and has been configured in ways which place limits on the richness of the concept of civil society. More often than not we are left with the ‘NGO-ization’ of civil society and CSOs which presents distorted messages about what civil society is and what civil society can (and cannot) do in a market oriented world.³

As an organisation CARICOM participated in the civil society buzz during the 1990s. The term began to enter publicly available CARICOM communications in 1992 when the region’s Heads of Governments stated the necessity of crafting a Charter of Civil Society which would move the Community towards ‘greater accountability and transparency in governance’
Between 1992 and 1994, references to civil society revolved around discussions about the content of the proposed Charter. By 1995, a tendency to extol the importance of ‘the involvement of civil society in the decision making’ (CARICOM, 1995) became apparent and two years later the region’s leaders adopted the *Charter of Civil Society for the Caribbean Community*. In all of this CARICOM failed to provide a clear articulation of what civil society means for the region’s context.

The official pronouncements in CARICOM press releases, declarations and the CARICOM’s legal texts provide little guidance as to what civil society is. Meanwhile, donor agencies that have sought to support and to partner with CSOs have made sure that they specify how they define civil society in order to operationalise their civil society related work (Howell and Pearce, 2001, p. 111). This definitional work is political. Decisions must be made over the meaning to be taken from the words and phrases used in specific institutional contexts. Nonetheless, it does not appear that CARICOM has set about attempting to pour meaning into CS for the purposes of the organisation’s work.

CARICOM documents tell us that civil society, social partners, stakeholders, NGOs, the private sector and labour, are some of the actors that are supposed to participate in actual and proposed collaborative processes in order for the CARICOM project to move toward improving the socio-economic conditions for region’s people. How, though, can participation be structured, operationalised or properly understood when there seems to be limited clarity as to the participants? In light of the tendency towards conceptual vagueness, it is not wholly startling that more than twenty years since the early pronouncements on civil society only superficial changes have been made to the CARICOM way of doing business.

Despite the narrative which depicts the rise of civil society as a 1990s trend, the CARICOM can draw from varied traditions which can be traced (in western thought) to Plato and Aristotle’s use of ‘Politike Koinonia’ with the Latin translation ‘societas civilis’ (Cohen and Arato, 1992, p. 84-85; Cólas, 2002, p. 27). On the other hand, the long philosophical history and the diverse philosophical treatments of the term civil society which have emerged over time can make it a tricky concept with which to grapple.
Understanding CS and CSOs

One of the simplest ways to understand civil society in its contemporary use is as a public sphere of interaction and activity which is (mostly) separate from both the state and the economy/market. Civil society is sometimes used as short hand for varied CSOs. While another relatively simple way of understanding CSOs is as organisations comprising a third sector, with the public and private sectors forming the first and second sectors within a society. My interpretation is that, in order to maintain distance from the state and the market, CSOs should be viewed as entities that neither attempt to take state power nor are driven by the profit motive. Therefore, I exclude political parties and businesses. Further, criminally oriented organisations are excluded as these cannot fit into the notion of ‘civil’ but rather form the underbelly of civil society (uncivil society). This understanding of civil society and CSOs does indeed simplify since there are overlaps between the activities which occur within civil society and those occurring within the state, the market. Additionally, drawing a line between civil and uncivil is no easy task as the notion of civility is a charged one. As the social world is complex, I work with an imperfect simplification because of the richness that it offers in contrast to terms like non-state actors (NSAs) and NGOs.

The use of CSO is different from NSA which makes no qualifications about market operations or aspirations of taking control of the state. NSAs can comprise any individual, group or network operating outside of the state. These can include businesses, political parties and even criminal organisation and networks. Consequently, commentaries on international terrorism refer to terrorist groups, such as the Al Qaeda network, as NSAs (e.g.: Printer, 2003; Mendelsohn, 2005). NGOs, although understood to be organisations operating within the third sector, generally is a term that excludes professional associations and those which aggregate business or industry concerns. I contend that private sector representative associations form part of the world of CSOs. While individual enterprises which are self-seeking and profit oriented are not CSOs, their representative associations that perform the non-profit function of aggregating the varied business or employers’ concerns fall under the CSO umbrella. The term ‘non-profits’ is also used to delineate CSOs and does come closer to my understanding of CSOs. However, political parties do form part of the world of non-profits. CSO is a moniker which allows one to speak of varied groups which do not aspire to take political power or to earn profits and which do not aim to violate the rights of others operating within civil society.
On the other hand, terms like NSAs, NGOs and non-profits can be useful because they do not carry with them the imperative of ‘civility’ inherent in the notion of civil society. There is a reading of civil society which conveys the meaning of a good society: one which is good because various rights and obligations pertain. The nuance of this reading of civil society as an ideal type is in some ways different from the view of civil society as an existing (imperfectly civil) public sphere. Yet, the two readings intersect considering the Tocquevillean view that a vibrant associational life within the public sphere can contribute towards building this ideal type of society. All the same, the notion of civility is problematic as it has historically been defined in ways that have de-legitimised the activities of specific groups of people. In the colonial context of the Caribbean, this act of de-legitimising occurred in what Aimé Césaire termed two ‘dishonest equations’: “Christianity = civilization, paganism = savagery” (Césaire, 2004, p. 212- emphasis in original). So, slave uprisings can be cast as belonging to the uncivil while the various individuals and groups that comprised the anti-slavery movement were working within the bounds of civilised society (and operating in pursuit of a civil society). In light of the idea of civility contained within civil society, slaves could be viewed as outside of civil society due to African relegation to the realm of the savage.

Further, viewing civil society as a civil public sphere can also connote the history of women’s exclusion from public life if one considers the public-private divide in which women have, at different times and in different places, been confined to the private sphere of the home and family. Clearly civil society is not a perfect term but can prove a worthwhile term. Just as one may refer to existing democratic states as democracies despite their imperfections and despite imperfections inherent in the construction of the notion of democracy, I believe that one can use the term civil society, though flawed, to effectively speak about actors that operate within the public sphere of social interaction without aiming to violate others.

CSOs comprise myriad organisations and networks with vastly differing views, interests and perspectives. There is politics within and among CSOs. CSOs run the gambit from influential, financially well-off and highly professionalised organisations which operate across borders to very small resource scarce community-based organisations with limited aims and objectives. The universe of CSOs is not an easy one to analyse. Even within the small region that comprises the CARICOM, CSOs are diverse.
Additionally, civil society incorporates a variety of social movements which may (or may not) lead to the establishment of formally constituted CSOs. Women’s movements, labour movements, pan-African movements, anti-apartheid movements and environmentalist movements are but a few of such diverse movements.

Civil society, based on the understanding of the term which I have provided here, is rich in the variety of actors, groups and of politics which it encompasses. This same diversity and richness can complicate civil society inclusion in formal decision-making processes. Consulting with CSOs may be important for ‘good-governance’ and might bring efficiency, but state collaboration with diverse groups can complicate processes that have traditionally been state dominated and which (particularly in a post-communist world) may function to facilitate capital. Since some CSOs operate on the basis of norms and cultures which differ dramatically from those of state and market operatives, their inclusion in cooperative arrangements may be uncomfortable and unwanted. Moreover, increasing the number of actors and of interests in decision-making processes does little to simplify such processes.

CARICOM has asserted its desire to live up to the ideal of ‘good governance’ by including civil society in the work of the region’s integration project, but this is no easy task in light of the complexity which opening participatory processes inevitably brings. The task has been complicated all the more by the disparate ways in which official communications speak of the anticipated participation. Some of the confusion in the use of participatory language may stem from a current in the post-Cold War world that may push states in the direction of privileging the views of market operators (that is, private firms) and may even encourage states to act like corporations. Analysis of CARICOM press releases illustrates that the processes of deciding what civil society means for the region and for specifying the expected participants in consultative processes has not occurred. Therefore, the language used relating to civil society, consultation, participation and the like has been unhelpful in moving towards institutionalising any sort of consultative framework.
Analysis - Social Partners, Civil Society And Stakeholders

As previously noted, civil society enters CARICOM parlance in the 1990s in line with global trends. There are no references to the term in any of the CARICOM communiqués issued between 1973 and 1989. Civil society is also absent in the Original Treaty of Chaguaramas as is the term ‘stakeholder’ which is used once (though quite vaguely) in the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (CARICOM, 1973; CARICOM, 2001, Art. 76). The non-use of civil society language in the Original Treaty is not surprising. However, the Revised Treaty’s use of the term civil society but once, in the preamble’s reaffirmation of human rights commitments contained in the Charter of Civil Society is noteworthy. Although Article 26 of the Revised Treaty mandates national and regional consultations there is no specificity as to who will be consulted (CARICOM, 2001). Meanwhile, CARICOM press releases in circulation since the 1990s have outlined roles for civil society /CSOs in consultations, in addition to using varied words and phrases that can suggest civil society.

Consultation/Dialogue and Social Partners

Prior to the 1990s references to ‘dialogue’ and ‘consultation’ in CARICOM communiqués generally related to discussions between states. Generally ‘consultation’ and ‘dialogue’ were terms used to refer to discussions which occurred between states or between CARICOM members and inter-governmental organisations. The lone pre-1990s reference to consultation which moves away from the state centric emerges in the 1989 communiqué of the annual meeting of the Conference of Heads of Governments in which Heads:

…accepted the proposal for the establishment of a Commission of eminent West Indians under the chairmanship of Sir Shridath Ramphal, to promote the purposes of the Treaty of Chaguaramas with special emphasis on the process of public consultation and involvement of the peoples of CARICOM through leaders, teachers, writers, intellectuals, creative artists, businessmen, sportsmen, trade unionists, religious and other community organisations. (CARICOM, 1989)
Thereafter, CARICOM communiqués continued to indicate that Heads perceived liaising with actors emanating from within civil society as both important and in need of institutionalisation. So, in 1991 we see the meeting of the terms ‘dialogue’ and ‘consultation’ with the term ‘social partners’, an apparent new comer to the lingo of CARICOM official communications, as follows:

Heads of Government pledged their commitment to the process of dialogue and consultation among the social partners… They accepted the recommendations of the Regional Economic Conference itself that it be institutionalised as a Triennial Consultative Conference of the Social Partners and that during the course of the next triennium, consultations among the social partners will emphasise these priorities. (CARICOM, 1991b)

The foregoing quotation makes reference to a 1991 Regional Economic Conference held in Port-of-Spain Trinidad which some such as Rashleigh Jackson viewed as ‘…a watershed in the relations between governments and non-state actors’ (Jackson, 2008, p. 331). Representatives from private sector organisations, the labour movement and NGOs participated in the discussions at this meeting along with CARICOM member state officials. The pronouncement that institutionalising discussions with ‘social partners’ in a triennial conference was seen as desirable, marked the CARICOM’s verbal acceptance of the view that interchanges between CARICOM decision-makers and ‘social partners’ were fruitful. Consultation is needed and should be institutionalised. The actors with whom the consultations and dialogue should occur would be the ‘social partners’. Yet, who were these partners? The relationship to civil society is not specified at this point.

Peter Wickham notes that CARICOM’s granting of joint consultative status to the Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL) and the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce (CAIC) is indication of labour organisations and the private sector being traditionally viewed as ‘social partners’ (Wickham, 1998, p. 60). In fact though, consumers were also included in this framework via the Caribbean Consumer’s Committee (CCC), as previously noted (CPDC 2011, p. 9). Although the term ‘social partners’ is nowhere to be found in official communiqués until 1991, it becomes clear that the social partners are members of the Joint Consultative Group. The communiqué issued following the 1995 annual meeting of Heads of Governments enlightens its readers that the social partners are only those included in the Joint Consultative Group:
Heads of Government agreed that the NGO Community should be represented in the Joint Consultative group...

They recognised this step as an important element of the wider dialogue that was taking place among the Governments, social partners and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) of the Region... (CARICOM, 1995)

The above quote informs readers that there are social partners and there are NGOs. Social partner is an official status which is conferred by membership in the Joint Consultative Group. Since the model for having labour and private sector interests represented as social partners was based on incorporating regional umbrella associations in the Joint Consultative Group, when the Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC) was identified as a regionally representative NGO it was able to be awarded Joint Consultative status. So, NGOs were able to gain entry to the club of CARICOM social partners by the mid-1990s. Hence, a 1996 communiqué emerging from the annual meeting of Heads notes that:

Heads of Government held discussions with the Social Partners – the private sector, labour and the Non-Governmental Organisations. They agreed that it was essential to maintain fluid lines of communication and consultation with these partners... (CARICOM, 1996a).

It seems, then, that the parameters for consultation with CSOs were broadened from 1996. However, the social partnership model used was a closed and state managed approach to consultation because of its outgrowth from a structure that mimics corporatist governance patterns which aim to mediate interests through iterated processes of consultation. Although such corporatist type arrangements provide institutional frameworks for consultation, consultation occurs within strict limits (See: Thomas, 1993; Wilson, 1990). Despite utterances in 1991 regarding the significance of institutionalising regional multi-actor consultations, to be held every three years, no such forum was established. Instead the Joint Consultative Group continued to operate as the main outlet for consultation and after 2004 the Joint Consultative Group members were no longer invited to provide presentations at yearly meetings of the Conference of Heads of Governments.
Consultations with so-called ‘social partners’ have continued but in ways that are generally ad hoc and which tend to select social partners on the basis of their connection to policy issues. The language used in the press release issued at the conclusion of the fifth special meeting of Heads in 1996 is illustrative of the ways in which participation has been approached by the CARICOM. With reference to external trade negotiations the communiqué notes:

Heads of Government agreed on the composition of a negotiating team which would include representatives of Member States, Regional Institutions (CARICOM and OECS Secretariats and the CDB) and the social partners: business, labour and the appropriate NGOs. (CARICOM, 1996b)

CARICOM communications are clear on the interests that should be represented within the social partnership but the identity of these partners (that is, the actual entities/groups) is not obvious. Up to 2004 the partners appear to be the members of the Joint Consultative Group, thereafter it becomes less obvious since the categories of business, labour and (appropriate) NGOs are quite non-specific. Without question, the social partners are drawn from three groups (business, labour and NGOs) but in the business and labour categories it is not always clear whether the social partners comprise firms and individual workers or some constellation of their representative associations. It is unclear whether the CARICOM aspires to move towards a consultative process which includes CSOs as well as market entities (that is, firms) or if the terms business and labour are short-hand for their representative CSOs.

So, what is the connection between social partners and the civil society jargon?

**Social Partners and Civil Society**

The terms civil society and social partners tend to evade each other: they are hardly ever in the same place at the same time. All the same, the *Charter of Civil Society*, though non-binding on CARICOM member states, can be viewed as providing a bit of guidance as to the relationship between social partners and CSOs. The 1997 Charter begins by clarifying the notion of social partners, indicating that: ‘“Social partners” shall mean the Government of a State, Associations of Employers, Workers Organisations and such Non-Governmental Organisations as the State may recognise.’ (CARICOM, 1997).
The definition employed within the Charter is helpful for illuminating what is meant by the terms ‘private sector’ and ‘labour’ which are frequently used in discussions relating to the social partners. It would appear that Heads are not actually referring to firms or individual workers when speaking of the ‘private sector’ and ‘labour’ but about organisations representing business interests and workers’ interests. In other words these terms are used as shorthand for the CSOs which aggregate the interests of the private sector and labour. This nuance may seem insignificant but the loose use of language does allow for confusion.

If one takes the definition presented in the Charter of Civil Society, the social partners include CSOs but also an important arm of the state: the government. However, this definition in the Charter is inconsistent with CARICOM official documents which tend to separate governments from the social partners. For instance, in a 2001 communiqué social partners are separated from governments and subsumed within civil society:

Heads of Government had a comprehensive exchange of views with representatives of the Caribbean Policy Development Centre, the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce and the Caribbean Congress of Labour.

They stressed the importance of a systematic engagement at all levels between government and social partners in order to arrive at concrete proposals to advance the Region’s agenda. (CARICOM, 2001b)

Even the Charter of Civil Society vacillates on the notion of social partners by stating:

The States, recognising that integral to the concept of good governance are the complementary roles of government, the social partners and the citizenry, shall ensure that the rights and responsibilities of all are clearly established and that the appropriate environment for their exercise and discharge, as the case may be, is fostered. (CARICOM, 1997)

Curiously, in some places governments are placed under the umbrella of social partners (for example, in the Charter’s definition) but for the most part CARICOM communications leave governments outside of the social partner umbrella.
If we take the Charter’s definition of social partners, we see that it includes select organisations originating from within civil society. Yet, the Charter does not indicate what ‘civil society’ is supposed to mean. The *Charter of Civil Society* outlines the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights which should be protected by CARICOM member states and clarifies the roles that the social partners are expected to play in bettering the region. Additionally, the Charter outlines that national mechanisms should be established and includes reporting requirements which are aimed at guaranteeing that the social partners work to uphold the Charter. The document details a variety of rights and obligations which should better the CARICOM’s societies. As such, the Charter’s preamble declares the region’s commitment ‘…to respect and strengthen the fundamental elements of a civil society.’ (CARICOM, 1997). Nevertheless, nowhere does the Charter inform us as to what ‘a civil society’ is. Certainly the use of ‘a civil society’ implies some kind of ‘good’ society in which certain rights are protected. In my discussion of the meanings of civil society, I made it clear that this is quite a valid way of using the term civil society. Although I do not expect that CARICOM would necessarily provide a philosophical explanation of its treatment of civil society, the single reference to ‘a civil society’ is all that one is left with. Moreover, this use of civil society to designate an ideal type of society in which a range of rights are protected, differs dramatically from the more common treatment of the term in official CARICOM documents.

I was able to find twenty-nine uses of the term civil society in CARICOM official communications released between 1990 and 2012 which employ the term in ways which can be interpreted to refer to a category of people (i.e. the general public) or groups drawn from wider society (that is, CSOs). The following excerpts are illustrative of the ways in which civil society has generally been employed.

- Heads of Government acknowledged that a renewed focus of attention was required in addressing such social issues as the human side of development; the empowerment of the individual; the rights of the child; the rights of women; and the involvement of civil society in the decision making process. (CARICOM, 1995)

- The Heads of Government...emphasised the need for civil society to be included in discussions and decisions on matters relating to the Community. (CARICOM, 2001a)
• Agreed to sustain and seek new ways to improve the dialogue with the private sector, labour and civil society in advancing the objectives of the integration movement… (CARICOM, 2003)

• These recommendations include: the establishment of a four-person Commission; the institutionalisation of the Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians to include representatives of Government and Opposition parliamentarians as full members and representatives of Civil Society as observers... (CARICOM, 2005)

• COFCOR [The Council for Foreign and Community Relations] reaffirmed the important role of Civil Society in the regional integration process… (CARICOM, 2011a)

Though not exhaustive, the foregoing quotes show that the use of civil society in the *Charter of Civil Society* to mean a ‘good society’ is at odds with its use in CARICOM official communications. I was unable to find any other uses of civil society which even implied an ideal type of society. Either there is some haziness regarding what civil society is, or civil society is employed to refer both to an ideal type of society and to groups/individuals within society. Something more needs to be provided instead of leaving observers to guess what civil society means in the CARICOM setting and to speculate as to whether ‘CSOs’ and ‘social partners’ are synonymous.

The following textual reference is useful for signalling that the actors which in other documents have been cast as social partners (labour and private sector representative organisations and varied NGOs) do indeed comprise the actors suggested by CARICOM’s version of civil society:

Recalling its October 1999 decision for a Regional Encounter with the “widest possible participation” of Civil Society … Heads of Government endorsed the following plans for the Encounter which will be under the theme “Forward Together”.

…Participation will include representatives of the private sector, labour organisations, non-governmental organisations including Youth, Academia, and religious organisations. (CARICOM, 2000b)

The social partners (excluding government in this formulation), appear to comprise at least some of the actors encapsulated in ‘the “widest possible
"participation" of Civil Society’. Yet, nowhere is the civil society -social partner relationship made explicit in the documentation which I analysed. What is more, understanding how civil society will be incorporated in regional matters is further complicated by the introduction of the term ‘stakeholders’ to the discourse of participation during what has elapsed of the twenty-first century. It seems that a new ‘it’ word is added to the language of consultation which is not altogether helpful in specifying the anticipated reconfiguration of the relationship between CSOs and CARICOM institutions.

Stakeholders and Civil Society

From the year 2000 the term stakeholder starts to be used in CARICOM press releases, at times in combination with the civil society and/or social partners. The first use of the term which I have been able to identify is in the communiqué issued following the March 2000 inter-sessional meeting of the Conference of Heads of Governments which asserts the need for ‘stakeholders to contribute to the resolution of the difficulties confronting West Indies Cricket’ (CARICOM, 2000a). It is clear that the use of this stakeholder jargon responds to the CARICOM’s stated desire to broaden the scope for consultation or participation in decision-making processes by a wide array of actors. What is less clear is who exactly stakeholders are. Also ambiguous is the connection between stakeholder and civil society.

It is interesting to note that the term stakeholder emanates from studies of firms in business or managements studies. The notion that corporate entities are accountable to stakeholders, both internal and external, relates to corporate governance. Businesses, in this line of reasoning, should be accountable to groups including customers, suppliers, owners, employees and local communities, in order to maintain corporate legitimacy (Friedman and Miles, 2006, pp. 1-2). Ethical capitalism can be created through stakeholder accountability (Freeman et. al, 2010, Chapter 1). Although it connotes the desirability of broadening governance structures, the concept of stakeholder comes from a very different place than that of civil society. The introduction of this term from the field of management into CARICOM jargon may belie a combination of a leaning towards managing regional integration like a business and the CARICOM’s haziness regarding its conceptualisation of broadening consultation. There seems to be ambiguity as to whether the CARICOM desires a stakeholder based management approach or to democratise the region’s decision-making procedures.
Close examination of the official texts that I have studied reveals that the term ‘stakeholder’ is at times used as a synonym for CSOs and at other times as an open ended category which suggests any interested parties. Vague references to stakeholders leave one to wonder: who are these stakeholders? This is all quite ambiguous as the extracts from regional communications below help to illustrate:

• Heads of Government recognising the importance of tourism to the future economic development of the Region, unanimously accepted the proposal of the Prime Minister of Saint Lucia for the convening of a Regional Summit on Tourism…They mandated the Secretariat to establish a broad-based planning group for the Summit comprising all the relevant stakeholders. (CARICOM, 2001a)

• Heads agreed to ‘…significantly strengthen, or re-establish public sector investment programming systems…with the whole process of the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) formulation and management being the subject of ongoing, and meaningful, regular and frequent consultations with all the major stakeholder groups in the society.’ (CARICOM, 2002b)

• The Conference also called on CARIFORUM Sugar and Banana stakeholders to meet urgently in order to assess and determine their positions for the EPA negotiations in light of EU proposals and developments with unfavourable implications for these products from the Caribbean. (CARICOM, 2007b)

It is not clear if stakeholder relevance is defined by individuals or groups seeing themselves as holding a ‘stake’ in some issue; if being relevant or major stakeholders is something which is obvious; or if regional officials select the entities viewed as stakeholders. Are stakeholders comprised solely of non-state operatives? Can they be government departments or state based agencies? This is murky water.

Other communications present some clues as to who stakeholders can be. The communiqué issued following the 2007 inter-sessional meeting of the Conference of Heads of Governments, is interesting because this one document provides three different configurations of stakeholders’ identities. At one point the document configures stakeholders in a way which is
reminiscent of the social partners: ‘The Conference accepted the proposal of the Regional Task Force of Stakeholders, which includes labour, business and civil society’ (CARICOM, 2007a). But, the communiqué later informs that parliamentary opposition comprise ‘stakeholders’ along with civil society: ‘…the Conference agreed that…wide-ranging consultations should be held with other stakeholders including the Parliamentary Opposition and Civil Society. (CARICOM, 2007a)

So, now we have labour, business, civil society, parliamentary opposition and other stakeholders. But, then we are informed that policy makers, international financial institutions and individuals are also stakeholders:

…the structure of the Conference would also allow for participation by policy makers, academics, the private sector, the international financial institutions and people of the Caribbean and the United States to interface in one Conference…They urged full participation by other stakeholders in the Region and the United States of America. (CARICOM, 2007a)

The above mentioned 2007 communiqué is not peculiar in providing somewhat confusing clues as to who stakeholders are. One can find similarly diverse actors being named as stakeholders on examination of other communications released during what has transpired of the 2000s. The following extracts show that stakeholders can be drawn from intergovernmental CARICOM agencies (for example, the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) and the Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV and Aids (PANCAP); CARICOM member states; police forces; government departments; private firms; individuals; and civil society:

- The COHSOD [Council for Human and Social Development ] reviewed the findings of a preliminary assessment of the situation of Caribbean youth …The Report called for … strategic alliances with the Police, Departments of Youth Affairs, youth organisations and other key stakeholders, including persons most admired by young people. (CARICOM, 2007c)

- COHSOD agreed to support the framework for defining the sub regional co-operation strategy of the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) and agreed to provide the necessary feedback for its completion at the Caucus of Medical Officers of Health which
would allow for further consultations with other relevant stakeholders such as the CARPHA Steering Committee and the Regional Coordinating Mechanism for PANCAP. (CARICOM, 2009a)

- We the Heads of Government of the Community agree that the institutional strengthening of the CCH II [Caribbean Co-operation in Health (CCH) Phase II] Secretariat should be given highest priority, and recognise that the sustainability of our efforts will require attention to the involvement of civil society and the other specialized stakeholders. (CARICOM, 2001b)

- Heads of Government called for the fullest support of the CCYD [CARICOM Commission on Youth Development] by Member States and other stakeholders in the implementation of its work plan ... (CARICOM, 2009b)

The notion of stakeholder inclusion is either very broad based and all inclusive or very muddled. The insertion of this term from the world of business studies fits clumsily into the regional CARICOM project if the idea is to provide greater democracy within the CARICOM process. Combining a business model which seeks to legitimise the operations of profit driven organisations with a concentration on either civil society inclusion or social partnership seems odd. The influence of a market driven global political economy which prioritises businesses seems to have seeped into CARICOM language in ways that may send mixed signals about whether the CARICOM seeks to operate using corporate governance ethos or some form of democratic governance philosophy which draws either on pluralist approaches to civil society or corporatist approaches to social partnership. Shared understanding is missing in this medley of words and phrases.

Although the meaning of ‘stakeholder’ in CARICOM official usage may not be altogether clear, what becomes apparent is that, ‘stakeholder’ can include CSOs, but need not necessarily do so. It seems that employing the notion of ‘relevant stakeholders’ can open spaces and it can also close them. The imprecise use of the term stakeholder in the CARICOM allows for selective and ad hoc treatment of CSOs so that in some cases ‘relevant stakeholders’ may be firms, international financial institutions and state based entities if these are the actors perceived as ‘relevant’. The loose use of language, although it extols the utility of broadening participation, may not be helpful for institutionalising channels for consultation with civil society. Again,
the ambiguity as to whether the emphasis is on democratic governance or corporate governance rears its head.

Now, at this point it should be clear that from the 1990s CARICOM Heads of Governments have consistently voiced the significance of expanding participation within regional bodies. Additionally, and to the CARICOM’s credit, there has been some widening of consultative space with non-traditional actors. Yet, unclear is what the various appellations given to the individuals and groups who are expected to compose the participants in any consultative schema mean. Crafting firm mechanisms that move to regularise participation requires clarity. But, the language employed in CARICOM press releases shows that conceptual precision is absent. Meaningful action cannot be expected to follow from nebulous pronouncements. Stakeholder participation, civil society participation, the inclusions of social partners are all presented as mandates but there is limited shared understanding of these terms. As a result, CARICOM member states; CARICOM organs and institutions; CSOs; businesses and private individuals are all left to interpret the jargon however they wish. Since the CARICOM has not provided its own meaning, the consultants commissioned as part of the CARICOM–Civil Society project in 2010 had to provide their own definitions for civil society and CSOs. The consultants’ Draft Regional Strategic Framework Document provides this working definition:

The term civil society has traditionally referred to voluntary participation by average citizens and thus does not include behaviour imposed or coerced by the state. In more recent times, the term commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. In this way, it includes not just the individuals who participate, but the institutions in which they participate; civil society organisations (CSOs). (CPDC, 2011, p. 12)

The document goes on to indicate a wide range of associations, organisations and groups which are considered CSOs and further supplements the civil society definition by noting that:

The CARICOM Civil Society Project defined civil society as all citizens operating outside of government and public administration, and civil society organisations as all organisations whose activities are in the realm of not-for-profit. (CPDC, 2011, p. 96)
Although the breadth of the definition above leaves room for political parties (once they do not form part of the government) to be included as CSOs, the consultants did not include political parties as part of their work. Instead, they attempted to focus on the types of organisations which may have less regular contact with government officials (CPDC, 2011, p. 96). The Draft Regional Strategic Framework Document also spells out its treatment of the acronym ‘NGOs’, noting that these organisations are independent, voluntary and seek neither profit nor to serve self interests (CPDC, 2011, pp. 98-99). So, CSOs include NGOs but the two terms are not interchangeable.

The conceptual clarity which the CARICOM - Civil Society Project has begun to offer is useful. The fuzzy terms ‘private sector’, ‘business’ and ‘labour’ that have been used in CARICOM proclamations about social partners are thankfully absent from the Draft Regional Strategic Framework Document. Although the CARICOM - Civil Society Project concentrated on providing feasible proposals for creating mechanisms that could govern civil society - CARICOM interactions, the stakeholder language displayed in CARICOM communications and in the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas colours this document and seems to belie the fact that CARICOM seeks to include CSOs as well as other entities which can be encapsulated within the term ‘stakeholders’. It is not surprising, then, that the Outcome Document which emerged from the high level meeting between Government representatives and CSOs held in November 2011 extolled the need for ‘multistakeholder’ dialogue.

The Outcome Document notes that the multiple stakeholders to be included are: ‘Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) at the national and regional levels and other Non-State Actors (NSAs)’, governments, regional institutions and CARICOM organs/bodies (CARICOM, 2011b, p. 3). Unlike the Draft Regional Strategic Framework Document, the Outcome Document of this meeting does not provide much clarity as to the identity of ‘CSOs’ or ‘other NSAs’. All the same, the Outcome Document is informative because it specifies that stakeholders include, but are not limited to various CSOs and NSAs. Governments and CARICOM bodies are also stakeholders. Consequently, although there appears to be some movement towards building shared understanding relating to civil society, CSOs and stakeholders, there still is work to be done in providing further conceptual precision. There needs to be some clarity as to the aims of consultative arrangements and as to what the terms mean. A presentation provided by the CPDC, the consultants
on the CARICOM-Civil Society Project, at the November 2011 meeting made a similar point about meaning. The CPDC consultants emphasised that the CARICOM needs to construct its own definition of civil society and then establish criteria for designating various organisations as forming part of Caribbean civil society. Subsequently, CARICOM’s definition and criteria could be used to accredit organisations (CARICOM, 2011c, p. 3). The point is that CARICOM must do the work of constructing meaning. I would go further than the CPDC to assert that CARICOM needs to specify the parameters for being viewed as a stakeholder and make the connection between stakeholder and civil society parlance.

Conclusion

In 1992 the Time for Action Report noted that implementation was the ‘Achilles Heel’ of CARICOM (Ramphal, 1992, p. 462). In 2007 Duke Pollard noted that the mandate for stakeholder consultation contained in Article 26 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, could go some way towards facilitating implementation since non-implementation may result from decisions being made which are either difficult or impossible to execute because these decisions are disconnected from existing realities which consultations would reveal (Pollard, 2007, p. 5). Ironically, implementing Article 26 seems to be suffering from some of the same paralysis of which both Pollard and the West Indian Commission spoke. When one looks at the ways in which the language surrounding civil society and consultations has been constituted, one can find much obfuscation over the 20 years of pronouncements regarding civil society, dialogue and consultations. Therefore, it seems to me unspectacular that implementation has been limited.

There has been little in the way of effort to be clear about what is to be institutionalised and to specify the actors conceived as legitimate in the eyes of CARICOM. There is much space for misunderstanding in light of the inchoate use of terms. Civil society, CSO consultations, social partnerships, and stakeholder consultations have all been uttered and documented in ways that signal varied meanings. As a result, shared meaning has not been successfully created. These words and phrases hold little potential because they seem empty. Little has been done to fill the terms with meaning for the CARICOM setting either by the CARICOM Secretariat or by Heads of Governments. Those with some control over the institutional architecture of
CARICOM and over the implementation of decisions have used language loosely. The result is that meaning remains elusive.

If one holds that ‘I cannot obey an order if I do not understand it’ (Wittgenstein, 1994, p. 62), it follows that the possibility of implementation is slim if the language used is not clear. Since terms such as civil society and stakeholder do not benefit from commonly held understandings they must be moved from the nebulous to the distinct. These terms must be imbued with meaning in the institutional context into which they will be employed. The 2010 CARICOM-Civil Society project has provided definitional clarity on civil society and some clarity sounding the term ‘multi-stakeholder’ may be emerging. Still, much cloudiness surrounding various participatory terms persists. Working to create shared meaning may be of use in efforts to construct consultative mechanisms for the CARICOM integration project. Although clarity in language will not cause any mechanism to be created, operationalising meaningful arrangements for civil society - CARICOM consultation can be made easier if the terms are clear. In addition, constructing meaning for the CARICOM context does not guarantee that whatever meaning is fashioned will be uncontested. Indeed, meaning is created and recreated over time, through human interactions. Yet, providing parameters for the use of terms (which can be contested, revised or accepted) seems to me essential.

Like ‘duppies’ of the colonial era, opacity and elitism continue to haunt the CARICOM project. Whether and the extent to which providing clarity in the talk surrounding civil society inclusion will contribute to altering this status quo remains to be seen. Even as the Draft Regional Strategic Framework Document and the documentation produced from the CARICOM’s November 2011 meeting between governments and CSOs resulted from participatory endeavours, as of August 2012 these documents had only been made available to select individuals and groups (stakeholders I suppose). Ironically, even the activities created to open CARICOM processes remain quite closed. All the same, working to generate meaning can add value to the talk of participation and consultation. To be sure, addressing language is a small step to take in efforts to open the CARICOM initiative to the region’s people, but even small steps evince movement.
End Notes

1. Duffy and Frederking 2009 draw on the work of Searle, Onuf, Habermas and others in their discussion of speech acts analysis.

2. I analysed CARICOM communications issued following annual meetings of the Conference of Heads of Governments; inter-sessional and special meetings of the Conference of Heads of Governments as well as other press releases, declarations and legal texts. I coded terms such as civil society, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), stakeholders, social partners, consultation, participation and dialogue as the basis of analysis.

3. See discussions on CS provided by: Cohen and Arato, 1992; Cólas, 2002; and Howell and Pearce, 2001, Chapter 8 which present discussions that go beyond neo-liberal approaches, which draw on de Tocqueville’s pluralism (though stripped to bare bones) and refer to other constructions of CS (including non-western versions).

4. Wickham’s understanding of the social partners makes sense, in light of tripartite consultative structures which have been used in the region. The social partnership in Barbados, initiated in 1993, stands out as an exemplar of a sustained tripartite social partnership in the region.

5. This is a reference to Conference on the Caribbean held 19-21 June 2007 in Washington D.C, USA.

References


Exploring Factors Influencing Whistle-blowing Intentions among Accountants in Barbados

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Abstract

This study sought to obtain perceptions of whistle-blowing, and to examine the relationship between organisational commitment, corporate ethical values and whistle-blowing among accountants in Barbados. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to accountants working in organisations. As a result, 236 useable responses were obtained. Accountants did not perceive whistle-blowing to be wrong but were still unlikely to blow the whistle. This reluctance was cited as stemming from high personal costs in the form of retaliation and victimisation, a close relationship with the wrongdoer, and publicity that could negatively impact the organisation. Factors cited as encouraging whistle-blowing included job satisfaction, severity of the incident, anonymity, personal benefits and the need to correct wrongdoing that may harm the organisation. Accounting staff were aware of their organisation’s code of ethics and encouragement of whistle-blowing, but most seemed to be unaware of adequate mechanisms to protect potential whistle-blowers. Organisational commitment and corporate ethical values were significant predictors of internal and external whistle-blowing intentions. To encourage internal whistle-blowing, the organisation should provide training, education, improve the organisation’s code of conduct and ethical culture, create acceptance of internal reporting mechanisms, increase job satisfaction, and reward ethical behaviour.

Key words: Whistle-blowing, accountants, Barbados, organisational commitment, corporate ethical values.
Introduction

Whistle-blowing is ‘the disclosure by organisation members (former or current) of illegal, immoral, or illegitimate practices under the control of their employers, to persons or organisations that may be able to effect action’ (Near and Miceli, 1985, p.1). Whistle-blowing involves reporting internally (through mechanisms or channels within the organisation) or externally (to the media or the public) on malpractice, misconduct, corruption or mismanagement witnessed in an organisation. Generally, the misconduct is a violation of a law, rule, regulation and/or a direct threat to public interest.

With the international increase in organisational wrongdoing, fraud and corruption within companies such as Enron and WorldCom, and the alleged wrongdoings contributing to the recent global economic collapse in 2008 (Alleyne and Phillips, 2011), it has become clearer that the reporting of any unethical acts is important. Whistle-blowing plays a key role in unearthing these misdemeanours and bringing them to the attention of the proper authorities. Internal whistle-blowing can save an organisation from the embarrassment of being placed in the media’s spotlight, if the wrongdoing is exposed externally. It should be of concern to organisations how willing their employees are to stand up and defend what is right and good or how willing they are to overlook or remain quiet about any wrongdoing they may have witnessed. In this regard, one should ask the question ‘would organisational commitment and corporate ethical values have positive impacts on whistle-blowing in organisations?’

The purpose of this study is to look at accountants’ perceptions of whistle-blowing in organisations in Barbados, a small country in the West Indies, with a population of approximately 300,000. Barbados is considered to be densely populated country (Alleyne, 2010). Alleyne et al (2006, p. 625) explained that ‘Barbados has a stable political system, and a small open economy with the key productive sectors of tourism, agriculture, manufacturing and offshore financial services.’ The country’s accounting profession is regulated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Barbados (ICAB), which is a member of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC). The members of the accounting profession in the region pursue professional qualifications from international bodies such as the Association of Chartered Certified Accounts (ACCA), Certified General Accountants (CGA), Certified Public Accountants (CPA) and Certified Management Accountants (CMA).
There are several contributions from this research. Firstly, this research fills the void of research on whistle-blowing in small developing countries like Barbados and indeed the English-speaking Caribbean. In Barbados, several attempts have been made at trying to root out corruption and wrongdoing. These attempts have come in the form of anti-money laundering legislation (e.g. Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (Prevention and Control) Act, 2002-6, CAP129 and Proceeds of Crime Act, 1990-13, CAP143) (Government of Barbados, 2011). Most of this legislation has targeted terrorist and anti-money laundering activities and has fallen under the control of a recently established Financial Intelligence Unit. For example, to file a report, an individual has to go online and fill out a suspicious/unalusual transaction report. There has been much debate concerning the need to have whistle-blowing mechanisms and legislation in the island, and indeed in the Caribbean, in the face of the major corporate failure of CLICO\textsuperscript{1}, and the embarrassment emanating from the global media coverage of some of the Caribbean islands’ alleged involvement in the Allen Stanford ponzi scheme\textsuperscript{2} (Alleyne, 2010).

To root out wrongdoing in organisations, Crime Stoppers Barbados recently launched the ‘Integrity Line’ which is supposed to guarantee anonymity to those who wish to report wrong-doing in Barbadian businesses (Crime Stoppers Barbados, 2011). To date, there have not been any disclosures of whistle-blowing incidents.

A review of the literature revealed that there has only been one academic work on whistle-blowing in Barbados and the Caribbean, which was done by Alleyne (2010). Alleyne (2010) found that personal cost, personal responsibility, attitudes, independence, commitment and perceived behavioural control influenced whistle-blowing intentions among external auditors within audit firms in Barbados. Given that Alleyne (2010) did not

\textsuperscript{1} Colonial Life Insurance Company (CLICO) was an insurance company which comprised part of CL Financial, one of one of the largest conglomerates in the Caribbean. It included over 65 companies in 32 countries worldwide with total assets exceeding US$100 billion. CLICO collapsed in 2009 due to a major liquidity crisis. This collapse devastated investors and employees and has impacted the economies of the countries in which they operated.

\textsuperscript{2} Allen Stanford was a prominent Texan billionaire who established various businesses including wealth management and an international bank in the Caribbean islands of Montserrat and Antigua. In 2009, he was arrested for running an international US$7 billion Ponzi scheme and various other frauds when his empire consisting of many business entities and employees in these islands collapsed.
research the perceptions of other types of accountants working in different organisations, this research becomes critically important in order to establish how accountants feel about whistle-blowing. In addition, there has not been a lot of research on ethical issues within the Barbadian context, except for the work of Alleyne and colleagues (Alleyne and Howard, 2005; Alleyne et al., 2006; Alleyne et al., 2010; Devonish et al., 2009). Thus, this study will attempt to fill this gap.

Secondly, this study will also help to gain a better understanding of how employees in the accounting profession perceive whistle-blowing and how their perceptions are influenced by corporate ethical values and the level of organisational commitment. Some research has been done testing organisational commitment and corporate ethical values and whistle-blowing (e.g. Somers and Casal, 1994; Sims and Keenan, 1998). However, the literature seems to be inconclusive as far as these concepts are concerned. In an effort to extend the whistle-blowing literature, these variables are considered in this context. An attempt is made to determine the influence of organisational commitment and the corporate ethical values on whistle-blowing intentions. Thus, a particular strength of this study is that it looks at the drivers of the whistle-blowing decision-making process among accountants working in organisations. Finally, the results of this study may prove to be beneficial to researchers, employees and professional accountants in Barbados and the English speaking Caribbean.

The structure of the article is as follows: the next section reviews the literature on whistle-blowing, and is followed by a section which explains the research methodology adopted. Findings and analysis are then presented. The final section concludes the study.

**Literature Review**

*Whistle-blowing in an accounting context*

Professional accountants are bound to abide by the rules and codes of conduct outlined by their respective professional accounting bodies. Strict codes have been designed to govern their ethical decision-making in order to maintain the high ethical standards of the profession (e.g. AICPA, 2007). For example, the AICPA (2007) code, section 102, provides options that members
can follow when wrongdoing is discovered. Accountants can whistle-blow internally to a higher level of the organisation (e.g. board of directors, audit committee, a manager or anonymous channel such as a telephone hotline) or whistle-blow externally to the media, professional or regulatory bodies. The professional code of conduct even offers the accountant the option to consider his or her relationship with the employer. The code of professional conduct also requires that accountants be confidential. Given that accountants have privileged access to clients’ information, they will encounter instances of wrongdoing. They may be faced with the dilemma as to whether to maintain that confidentiality by not reporting or to act in the public interest by reporting the wrongdoing. Hwang *et al.* (2008, p.507) suggest that professional accountants owe their allegiance ‘to the public above and beyond their employer or client.’ Hooks *et al.* (1994) argued that whistle-blowing can be an internal control mechanism aimed at preventing and detecting financial statement fraud. Prior research has examined whistle-blowing in professional accounting contexts (e.g. Loeb and Cory, 1989; Miceli *et al.*, 1991; Somers and Casal, 1994; Shawver and Clements, 2007; Elias, 2008; Robertson *et al.*, 2011; Taylor *et al.*, 2012; Alleyne *et al.*, 2013).

There were two notable cases of whistle-blowing involving members of the accounting profession. In the Enron case, Sherron Watkins, a former auditor at Arthur Andersen, who later became an executive at Enron, whistle-blew on the wrongdoing (financial statements manipulation) being committed at the company (Lucas and Koerwer, 2004). Cynthia Cooper, the internal auditor at WorldCom, whistle-blew to the audit committee about $3.8 billion in losses caused by accounting fraud (Patel, 2006).

*Perceptions of whistle-blowing*

Previous studies identified individual factors, contextual variables, the severity of the type of wrongdoing and potential retaliation (Miceli and Near, 1988; Hooks *et al.*, 1994; Finn, 1995; King, 1997; Sims and Keenan, 1998; Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran, 2005; Robertson *et al.*, 2011; Alleyne *et al.*, 2013) as factors associated with whistle-blowing intentions. The fact that wrongdoing occurs within businesses, and that employees commonly have knowledge of wrongdoings and therefore the opportunity to report such wrongdoing, form the basis of researchers’ interest in whistle-blowing (Ayers and Kaplan, 2005).
Whistle-blowing is likely to occur when people are more conscious and in fact feel that a transgression has become harmful to the organisation. Prior research found whistle-blowing to be directly related to the personal costs of reporting a wrongdoing. Graham (1986) proposed the concept of personal cost (e.g. retaliation and victimisation) as an influential factor in whistle-blowing. Thus, potential whistle-blowers assess the degree of personal cost to them if whistle-blowing is considered. For example, when people perceive that the personal cost of whistle-blowing has become very high, they are less likely to blow the whistle, thus signifying that there are degrees of tolerable personal costs wherein individuals are still brave or willing enough to blow the whistle. However, beyond this point, whistle-blowing will be very rare, if at all. Accounting research has revealed that the fear of retaliation (i.e. personal cost) is the key hindrance to whistle-blowing (Finn, 1995; Kaplan and Whitecotton, 2001; Curtis, 2006; Curtis and Taylor, 2009; Alleyne, 2010). This is one of the main reasons why many people choose to remain silent rather than to blow the whistle against observed misconduct (Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran, 2005).

Miceli and Near (1992) also noted that employees who reported the more severe entrenched wrongdoings faced even more retaliation. Some of the most serious forms of retaliation experienced by whistleblowers are loss of job, reduction of salary or job responsibilities, having their work more closely monitored, job responsibilities changes, and harassment in the workplace. Ostracism in organisations is also one of the most significant costs of whistle-blowing. Glazer and Glazer (1989) also found that whistleblowers found it difficult to find employment after blowing the whistle. Generally, the consequences of whistle-blowing deny the individual of much-needed social support and personal comfort. Expectations of these problems will discourage individuals from blowing the whistle.

According to King (1999), whistleblowers typically have both internal and external channels available to report organisational wrongdoings. However, Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran (2005, p.282) argued that much of the research suggests that ‘nearly all whistleblowers initially attempt to report wrongdoing via internal channels before or instead of external channels.’ Chiasson et al. (1995) interviewed accountants in industry regarding their perception of whistle-blowing, and found that accountants were willing to report fraud to internal sources but not to regulators. The authors’ research
also suggests that whistle-blowing via internal channels is less threatening when compared to external reporting. The public scrutiny or legal action that could be incurred in external whistle-blowing is a deterrent. Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran (2005, p.282) highlighted that ‘whistle-blowing within an organisation is still not welcomed and furthermore reports of wrongdoing are frequently buried or ignored.’ The Sarbanes-Oxley Act (Sarbanes and Oxley, 2002) and Dodd-Frank Act (Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform & Consumer Protection Act 2010, 2013) lend regulatory support for whistle-blowing. The Sarbanes-Oxley Act also favours reporting of wrongdoing internally though developed anonymous internal whistle-blowing channels. However, Miceli and Near (2002) argued that external whistle-blowing continues to be a rare event.

Researchers have examined a number of personal characteristics related to the decision to whistle-blow: age, sex, level of education, level of job held, ethical judgment, job performance, organisational commitment, role responsibility and approval of whistle-blowing (Brief and Motowidlo, 1986; Near and Miceli, 1996; Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran, 2005). Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran (2005) concluded that whistleblowers can be categorised as persons who perform well on the job, are more highly educated, hold higher positions, score higher on tests of moral reasoning, and regard whistle-blowing as being ethical.

To encourage whistle-blowing, policies and programs have been implemented in some organisations to protect whistleblowers from harassment, punishment and other forms of retaliation. Rocha and Kleiner (2005) stated that, in the United States as more and more people came forward, the American government saw the need for allegations to be closely investigated and the creation of new laws and agencies to address the allegations. Some of the most successfully implemented steps include whistleblower protection legislation and anonymous hotlines to report fraud, waste and abuse. In 2002, in response to several major corporate and accounting scandals including those involving Enron, Tyco International and WorldCom, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, a United States federal law, was passed implementing important legislative changes to financial practice and corporate governance regulation, and introduced strict new rules, especially giving legislative support to the whistle-blower.
Should whistle-blowing be encouraged? Lewis (2006, p.77) suggests that ‘workers who first contact their managers about wrongdoing give them the opportunity to correct it before the matter escalates. Thus, whistle-blowing can be viewed as part of a strategy to maintain and improve quality.’ The author also puts forward the following arguments to persuade top management of the benefits of implementing whistle-blowing procedures. These arguments include:  a) by deterring malpractice and avoiding crisis it can contribute to the efficient running of the organisation; b) by providing accountability it can help uphold the organisation’s reputation; c) it can help to ensure conformity with the law and minimise external whistle-blowing; and d) it is a good practice which is inexpensive to put into action (Lewis, 2006). Thus, based on the above literature review, the following three research questions were posed:

**Research question 1:** What are the perceptions of whistle-blowing among accountants in organisations in Barbados?

**Research question 2:** What is the likelihood of whistle-blowing among accountants in organisations in Barbados?

**Research question 3:** What factors are likely to encourage and discourage whistle-blowing among accountants in organisations in Barbados?

The following section of the article will briefly discuss the two hypothesised relationships which incorporate the following variables: whistle-blowing intentions, organisational commitment and corporate ethical values.

**Whistle-blowing intentions**

A significant amount of research has examined whistle-blowing intentions (e.g. Curtis, 2006; Chui, 2003; Alleyne, 2010). There have been several studies that have used actual whistle-blowers. For example, Lucas and Koerwer (2004) interviewed Sherron Watkins who whistle-blew on Enron’s executives. In spite of the few cases involving actual whistle-blowers, intentions have been the major focus of whistle-blowing research. The reason for measuring intentions stems from the fact that it is quite difficult to access actual whistle-blowers. As a result, these studies have asked respondents on their likelihood of reporting wrongdoing in an organisational
Exploring factors influencing Whistle-Blowing setting. The theory of planned behavior has proposed behavioural intentions as being influenced by individual factors such as attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). Ajzen (1991) argued that intention is strongly related to actual behavior.

The relationship of organisational commitment to whistle-blowing intentions

Organisational commitment may be defined as the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in that organisation (Steers, 1977; Mowday et al., 1979). A major component of organisational commitment can be described as a strong wish to remain a member of a particular organisation (Porter et al., 1974). It has been proposed that organisational commitment may increase the likelihood of whistle-blowing, since the whistle-blower may be seen as a reformer who is aiming to end the wrongdoing that is damaging the organisation (Somers and Casal, 1994).

Prior research has found that organisational commitment can have a positive influence on whistle-blowing (e.g. Westin, 1981; Randall, 1987; Powell, 1990; Miceli et al., 1991). For example, Westin (1981) argued that corporate whistle-blowers tended to be loyal and committed in their attempts to protect the organisation. Near and Miceli (1985) argued that individuals are more likely to report internally due to some sense of loyalty and allegiance to the organisation. Miceli et al. (1991) found that there was a positive relationship between organisational commitment and whistle-blowing among internal auditors. Somers and Casal (1994) found that moderate levels of organisational commitment were likely to influence whistle-blowing intentions in their sample of management accountants.

In contrast, Sims and Keenan (1998) did not find that organisational commitment predicted whistle-blowing intentions. Shawver and Clements (2007), in a study of 89 management accountants in training sessions did not find support for organisational commitment influencing whistle-blowing decision-making. Taylor and Curtis (2010, p.29) argued that ‘although it is certainly possible to exhibit high commitment to both the organisation and to colleagues, the unique nature of whistle-blowing requires that the individual choose one over the other.’ Thus, given the mixed results from prior work in the area, the following hypothesis is put forward:
**H1:** Organisational commitment significantly predicts whistle-blowing intentions.

The relationship of corporate ethical values to whistle-blowing

It is expected that the environment in the organisation can have an impact on the intention to whistle-blow. If the environment is ethical and supportive to ethical behaviour, it stands to reason that ethical actions will be exhibited. The supportiveness of the firm to correct wrongdoing should send a signal to the individual on what is acceptable behaviour in the organisation. Thus, the concept of corporate ethical values is introduced as a possible stimulus to ethical behavior and the reporting of wrongdoing. The corporate ethical values concept can be compared to organisational culture or the company’s policies and rules (Sims and Keenan, 1998). Keenan (1990) found that the existence of clear policies and procedures can lower fears of retaliation and encourage whistle-blowing. Barnett *et al.* (1990) found that the presence of clear policies had a positive effect on internal whistle-blowing, but not on external whistle-blowing. Hooks *et al.* (1994) proposed a model which incorporated organisational culture as influencing whistle-blowing in an accounting context. Therefore the second hypothesis is now presented:

**H2:** Corporate ethical values significantly predict whistle-blowing intentions.

Research Method

The survey was designed to identify the perceptions of accountants on whistle-blowing, and the influence of organisational commitment and corporate ethical values on the accountants’ whistle-blowing intentions. The research approach taken is explained in the following sub-sections.

Description of the Instrument

A survey questionnaire was utilised as the main data collection tool in this study. The questionnaire consisted of four parts. The first part of the questionnaire asked questions pertaining to demographics such as age, sex, level of education, professional qualifications, work experience, job position, organisation size and industry worked in. The second part sought to identify the level of awareness of whistle-blowing as well as the perceptions of
whistle-blowing within the organisation. The third part of the questionnaire sought to measure whistle-blowing intentions, organisational commitment and corporate ethical values, while the final part asked respondents to identify the factors that were likely to encourage and discourage whistle-blowing. The measurement of whistle-blowing intentions, organisational commitment and corporate ethical values are explained below.

**Whistle-blowing intentions**

A six-item scale was developed to measure internal whistle-blowing intentions. Specifically, it sought to identify how likely or unlikely the respondent would be to blow the whistle on a lower level employee, middle management, senior management or a close friend, to internal targets or anonymous channels, using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ‘very unlikely’ to 5 ‘very likely’ (Chui, 2002; Chui, 2003). The six items were averaged to form a composite score for internal whistle-blowing intentions. Higher scores on this scale indicate higher intentions to whistle-blow internally. The Cronbach Alpha for this whistle-blowing scale was 0.82, thus indicating high internal reliability. To measure external whistle-blowing intentions, the study used a single item which asked respondents how likely are they to blow the whistle externally (to the media or a regulator), using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ‘very unlikely’ to 5 ‘very likely’. Higher scores indicate higher intentions to whistle-blow externally.

**Organisational commitment**

The study used a four-item organisational commitment scale developed by Hunt, Chonko and Wood (1985). It measures the degree of loyalty that the respondent would have to his or her organisation, using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ‘strongly disagree’ to 5 ‘strongly agree’. The four items were averaged to form a composite score for organisational commitment. Higher scores on this scale indicate higher levels of organisational commitment. The Cronbach Alpha for this scale was 0.74, thus indicating high internal reliability.

**Corporate ethical values**

The study used an adaptation of a five-item corporate ethical values scale developed by Hunt, Wood and Chonko (1989). The scale measures (a) the
extent to which employees perceive that management is acting ethically, (b) the extent to which employees perceive that management is concerned with ethical issues in the organisation, and (c) the extent to which employees perceive that ethical (unethical) behaviour is rewarded (punished) in their organisation. This scale is measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ‘strongly disagree’ to 5 ‘strongly agree’. The five items were averaged to form a composite score for corporate ethical values. Higher scores on this scale indicate higher levels of corporate ethical values. The Cronbach Alpha for this scale was 0.73, thus indicating high internal reliability.

Piloting the questionnaire

Before the questionnaire was distributed, it was piloted among 3 accounting employees and 3 academics to test for any ambiguities. The feedback obtained was used to refine the instrument.

Data Collection Procedures

All participants were informed about the nature of this study through communication sent by ICAB to its membership. Respondents were reassured that the results would be completely anonymous. The population sample was randomly selected, using organisations chosen from the telephone directory. The questionnaires were posted to the senior accountants in these organisations for them to fill out and return to the researchers. The research was approved by The University of the West Indies Ethics Committee. All data collected from the survey of the sample population was analysed using the statistical programme, SPSS for Windows.

Characteristics of the sample

Accounting staff from organisations in Barbados were chosen for this survey. Of the 500 questionnaires distributed, 238 were returned. Two were discarded due to incomplete data, thus resulting in 236 useable questionnaires. There were 236 persons in the sample population, consisting of 104 males and 132 females. The average age of the sample was 36. Respondents reported that the average length of time spent in the current organisation was approximately 7 years while their average work experience was approximately 13 years. Over fourteen percent (14.4%) worked in the financial services industry, 18.6% in manufacturing, 12.7% in retail
distribution, and 33.1% in the service/hospitality industry. The majority of the sample (73%) held professional accounting designations (either ACCA, CGA or CMA qualifications).

Findings And Analysis

Perceptions of Whistle-blowing

Research question 1 sought to determine the perceptions of whistle-blowing among accountants in organisations in Barbados. Table 1 presents the frequencies from responses by the accountants. It was found that only 27.1% of the respondents perceived whistle-blowing as being wrong. The majority of accountants (55.9%) did not perceive whistle-blowing to be wrong, thus indicating that most of the respondents supported whistle-blowing. The majority (62.7%) of the respondents were aware of a code of business conduct/ethics in their organisations. Approximately 56% of the employees perceived that their organisations encourage whistle-blowing internally. Results also showed that 38.9% of the accountants did not believe that their organisations had adequate mechanisms to protect whistle-blowers, while 47.5% were unsure. Only 13.6% of the sample believed their organisations to have these mechanisms in place. These findings suggest that persons may not opt to whistle-blow for fear of retaliation, given their perceptions of inadequate protection to whistle-blowers. This is consistent with the findings of Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran (2005). A surprising finding was that the majority (60.2%) of respondents were aware of instances of whistle-blowing within their own organisations, notwithstanding the absence of adequate mechanisms to protect potential whistle-blowers being in place.
Research question 2 sought to determine the likelihood of whistle-blowing among accountants in organisations in Barbados. Table 2 shows the means and standard deviations of respondents’ likelihood of whistle-blowing. Overall, the results suggest that the employees surveyed were reluctant to whistle-blow, with mean scores below each scale midpoint of 3. The average response to whistle-blowing on a lower level employee was 2.50, whistle-blowing on middle management was 2.53 and whistle-blowing on senior management was 2.35. The average response for whistle-blowing on a friend was even lower at 2.03, thus indicating that the respondents were unlikely to whistle-blow on individuals who were close to them. Accountants reported a low mean score of 2.33 for whistle-blowing to internal targets such as senior management. It was also important to note that accountants’ average response on perceptions of the use of an anonymous channel was 2.46, thus indicating reluctance to use this type of channel. The overall average likelihood of blowing the whistle internally was 2.44, compared to blowing the whistle externally which was 2.26. In general, these findings indicated

### Table 1: Perceptions of whistle-blowing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th></th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you consider whistle-blowing to be wrong?</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Does your organisation have a code of business conduct/ ethics?</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does your organisation encourage Whistle-blowing internally?</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Does your organisation have mechanisms to protect whistle-blowers?</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Are you aware of any instances of whistle-blowing in your organisation?</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Likelihood of whistle-blowing (whistle-blowing intentions)**

Research question 2 sought to determine the likelihood of whistle-blowing among accountants in organisations in Barbados. Table 2 shows the means and standard deviations of respondents’ likelihood of whistle-blowing. Overall, the results suggest that the employees surveyed were reluctant to whistle-blow, with mean scores below each scale midpoint of 3. The average response to whistle-blowing on a lower level employee was 2.50, whistle-blowing on middle management was 2.53 and whistle-blowing on senior management was 2.35. The average response for whistle-blowing on a friend was even lower at 2.03, thus indicating that the respondents were unlikely to whistle-blow on individuals who were close to them. Accountants reported a low mean score of 2.33 for whistle-blowing to internal targets such as senior management. It was also important to note that accountants’ average response on perceptions of the use of an anonymous channel was 2.46, thus indicating reluctance to use this type of channel. The overall average likelihood of blowing the whistle internally was 2.44, compared to blowing the whistle externally which was 2.26. In general, these findings indicated
that accounting employees showed general reluctance to blow the whistle internally or externally in Barbados.

**Table 2: Likelihood of whistle-blowing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal whistle-blowing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I would whistle-blow on a lower level employee</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I would whistle-blow on a middle management employee</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I would whistle-blow on a senior management employee</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I would whistle-blow on an employee I consider to be a close friend</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I would whistle-blow to internal targets such as senior management</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I tend to prefer anonymous channels in the organisation</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall internal whistle-blowing intentions</strong></td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>External whistle-blowing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I would whistle-blow to external targets (e.g the media or a regulator)</td>
<td><strong>2.26</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.09</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factors which encourage or discourage whistle-blowing intentions

Research question 3 sought to determine what factors are likely to encourage or discourage whistle-blowing among accountants in organisations in Barbados. Table 3 presents those factors that accounting employees perceived as being most likely to encourage or discourage whistle-blowing. Factors suggested as encouraging whistle-blowing included job satisfaction, severity of the incident, anonymity, personal benefits and the need to correct wrongdoing that may harm the organisation. Most respondents cited that the
major discouraging factors focused on such issues as the close relationship to the wrongdoer, publicity that may negatively impact the organisation, and fear of retaliation and victimisation. These results are consistent with the findings of the literature (e.g. Miceli et al., 1991; Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran, 2005; Alleyne, 2010).

**Table 3: Factors likely to encourage or discourage whistle-blowing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors likely to encourage whistle-blowing</th>
<th>Factors likely to discourage whistle-blowing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Privacy or anonymity</td>
<td>1. Negative short/long term impact on organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Severity of the incident</td>
<td>2. Negative publicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Positive perception of whistle-blowing</td>
<td>3. Physical harm/ Ill treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Personal satisfaction</td>
<td>4. Fear of being identified as the person making the report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Aim to improve internal procedures</td>
<td>5. Dismissal of wrongdoer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Repeat behaviour</td>
<td>6. Dismissal of whistle-blower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Prevent the undermining or closure of the business by wrongdoer</td>
<td>7. Severity of the incident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Negative relationship with wrongdoer</td>
<td>8. Friendly relationship with wrongdoer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Monetary rewards</td>
<td>10. Possible loss of job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Unfair working conditions</td>
<td>11. Fear of being victimised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14. Fear of reprisals from management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: Pearson bivariate correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age</td>
<td>35.75</td>
<td>8.17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sex</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Length</td>
<td>6.46</td>
<td>4.96</td>
<td>.55**</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Experience</td>
<td>12.97</td>
<td>7.83</td>
<td>.89**</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. OC</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. CEV</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. IWB</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. EWB</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-0.31**</td>
<td>-0.22**</td>
<td>-0.24**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Notes: 1 = Age; 2 = Sex; 3 = Length (Length of time in current organisation); 4 = Experience (Working experience); 5 = OC (Organisational commitment); 6 = CEV (Corporate ethical values); 7 = IWB (Internal whistle-blowing intentions); 8 = EWB (External whistle-blowing intentions). SD = Standard Deviation; ** P < 0.01; * P < 0.05.
**Correlations between key independent and dependent variables**

Table 4 shows the means, standard deviations and correlations between the independent variables (age, sex, length of service in the organisation, working experience, organisational commitment and corporate ethical values) and the dependent variables (internal and external whistle-blowing intentions). There was a statistically significant and positive relationship between organisational commitment and internal whistle-blowing intentions ($r = .51$, $p < .01$). There was also a statistically significant and positive relationship between corporate ethical values and internal whistle-blowing intentions ($r = .37$, $p < .01$). These findings showed that organisational commitment and corporate ethical values were statistically and significantly related to internal whistle-blowing intentions. The result for organisational commitment was inconsistent with the findings of Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran (2005), who found that organisational commitment was not related to whistle-blowing intentions. There was a statistically significant and negative relationship between organisational commitment and external whistle-blowing intentions ($r = -.31$, $p < .01$). There was also a statistically significant and negative relationship between corporate ethical values and external whistle-blowing intentions ($r = -.22$, $p < .01$). Thus, these findings showed that the variables, organisational commitment and corporate ethical values, were statistically and significantly related to external whistle-blowing intentions.

**Testing the hypotheses**

To test the two hypotheses (H1 and H2) in the study, multiple regression analyses were conducted. In these tests, the control variables were age, sex, length of service and working experience. The other independent variables of interest were organisational commitment and corporate ethical values. Separate equations were run by regressing all of the six independent variables (age, sex, length of service, working experience, organisational commitment and corporate ethical values) against each of the two dependent variables (internal and external whistle-blowing intentions), thus resulting in 2 equations.³ To test for the adequate sample size needed to run regression

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³ Preliminary tests were conducted to determine the link between economic sector and the likelihood to whistle-blow. These tests were found to be non-significant, and hence, the variable, economic sector was
Exploring factors influencing Whistle-Blowing

analysis, the literature has suggested that there should be 10-15 cases per predictor variable (Green, 1991). Based on Green’s (1991) argument, at least 60-90 cases were required. Thus, given the current sample consisting of 236 cases, the sample size was adequate to run the regressions. Preliminary tests were also performed to test for multicollinearity. Given that variance inflation factors were below 2, multicollinearity was determined not to be a problem. All regression models were found to be significant.

Tables 5 and 6 show the results of the multiple regression analyses. Findings revealed that organisational commitment significantly predicted internal whistle-blowing intentions ($\beta = .471, p <.01$), thus indicating that accounting employees were more likely to whistle-blow internally where there were higher levels of organisational commitment (Table 5). These results were consistent with the findings of prior research (Westin, 1981; Miceli et al.1991; Somers and Casal., 1994). It was also found that corporate ethical values significantly predicted internal whistle-blowing intentions ($\beta = .307, p < .01$), thus indicating that where there were higher levels of corporate ethical values in the organisation, individuals were more likely to blow the whistle internally. These results were consistent with the findings of prior research (Keenan, 1990; Barnett et al.1990).

Findings revealed that organisational commitment significantly predicted external whistle-blowing intentions ($\beta = -.136, p <.05$), thus indicating that accounting staff were more likely to whistle-blow externally where there were lower levels of organisational commitment (Table 6). Results also showed that corporate ethical values significantly predicted external whistle-blowing intentions ($\beta = -.145, p < .05$). This result suggests that accountants were more likely to whistle-blow externally in instances where perceived corporate ethical values were low in the organisation. This result was inconsistent with the finding of Barnett et al.(1990), who found that clear policies (corporate ethical values) did not have an effect on external whistle-blowing. Overall, hypotheses 1 and 2 were fully supported. Thus, organisational commitment and corporate ethical values were found to be significant predictors of internal and external whistle-blowing intentions.

excluded from further analyses. However, the other independent variables were included based on their theoretical and empirical influences as cited in the literature (e.g Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran, 2005).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Unstandardised Coefficients B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>Beta (β)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.014</td>
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<td>-.102</td>
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<td>.471**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corporate ethical values</td>
<td>.323</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.307**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Constant                      | .298                          | .410 |
F                              | 23.365**                      |
R squared                      | .380                          |
Adjusted R squared             | .363                          |
Sample size                    | 236                           |

Notes: Dependent variable: Internal whistle-blowing; *P < .05; ** P < .01; SE B = Standard errors
Exploring factors influencing Whistle-Blowing

Concluding Remarks

The results suggest that the majority of the respondents do not believe whistle-blowing to be wrong; are aware of a code of business ethic/conduct; believe their organisations encourage or support whistle-blowing; and are aware of instances of whistle-blowing. However, along with these positive perceptions, the majority of the respondents are either unsure about or unaware of any mechanisms in place to protect whistle-blowers. Although respondents believed that whistle-blowing was not wrong, and that they held positive perceptions of whistle-blowing in their organisations, the majority of the sample was still reluctant to whistle-blow. The respondents were even more reluctant to blow the whistle on someone perceived as being a close friend. Overall, the findings showed that respondents were less likely to whistle-blow internally or externally.
The fear of retaliation and victimisation from management and other employees were identified as the main discouraging factors against whistle-blowing in the organisations. Specifically, accountants identified possible job loss, demotion and physical harm as being influential factors that they consider when deciding whether or not to blow the whistle. Thus, these findings provide empirical support to the theoretical construct of personal cost as an influential factor in the whistle-blowing process (e.g. Graham, 1986; Alleyne et al., 2013).

The results of the survey indicated that corporate ethical values and organisational commitment were significant predictors of internal and external whistle-blowing intentions. These results support the findings of prior research that shows organisational commitment influences whistle-blowing (e.g. Westin, 1981; Near and Miceli, 1985; Powell, 1990; Miceli et al., 1991). For example, Near and Miceli (1985) argued that employees may have the tendency to report any misconduct internally due to some sense of loyalty and allegiance to the organisation. This article’s findings suggest that organisations may need to find ways of committing their staff to the organisations, if management wants to know about any wrongdoing in the organisation. To achieve this goal, they must embrace internal whistle-blowing as the modus operandi rather than external whistle-blowing. Thus, organisations can attempt to increase job satisfaction levels, reward ethical behaviour in the organisation and use public recognition schemes to encourage accounting staff to come forward and report any wrongdoing being committed in the organisation (Alleyne, 2010). The accounting profession can provide further support in the form of technical and legal advice on the steps to take in reporting wrongdoing.

The results of the survey suggest that there needs to be more education of accounting staff on the benefits of whistle-blowing. Although accounting employees did not perceive whistle-blowing to be wrong, they still were unlikely to whistle-blow in instances where they have seen wrongdoing being committed in the organisation. The findings suggest that accounting staff in particular, and employees in general, know the difference between what is right and wrong, but seem reluctant to do the right thing or make the right choice. A significant number of respondents perceived that their organisations did not have mechanisms to protect the whistle-blower (39%) or were not sure (48%). This finding raises some alarm bells. The results
suggestion that organisations need to implement adequate and anonymous mechanisms to protect potential whistle-blowers. Given the perceived high personal cost of whistle-blowing, no one will want to come forward and report any wrongdoing and put themselves at risk of retaliation. Thus, it becomes necessary for that protection to be encapsulated in the organisation’s code of ethics and employment handbooks. It may be argued that some support may come in the form of strong corporate ethical values which can encourage employees to come forward and report wrongdoing.

It was noticed that the findings show that respondents reported a lower score for reporting externally (M = 2.26) compared to internal reporting (M = 2.44). This may suggest that employees feel more comfortable with internal reporting and would probably never go externally. It was also found that there was a low score for reporting through anonymous channels (M = 2.46). One would have expected that respondents would have felt more comfortable reporting to anonymous channels. These results suggest that whistle-blowing may not be a welcomed approach in this context. Perhaps it is the culture of the country that can explain these results. Whereas in the USA there is much sensationalism and fame seeking associated with whistle-blowing, in Barbados, persons are considered to be conservative and tradition-following (Alleyne 2010). Since there has not been much research on the whistle-blowing phenomenon in the Caribbean, much is not known on the scale of whistle-blowing in the region’s small and close societies. It is assumed that since the whistle-blower may be known in small and close societies, there is a tendency to be reluctant in blowing the whistle (Alleyne, 2010). Future research should consider examining whistle-blowing in the context of small developing countries, given the apparent dominance of research in developed countries.

These findings also reinforce the fact that whistle-blowing is a complex issue (Miceli and Near, 1985; Alleyne, 2010). Furthermore, the results raise the issue of legislative protection. Research suggests that there is no legislation in Barbados to protect whistle-blowers, thus suggesting that some agitation to get legislation enacted would redound to the benefit of all.

The results of the survey can be very useful to organisations trying to encourage whistle-blowing and show a need for training and educating both employees and management on the topic. The results could help
management to analyse the various factors that may affect or influence an individual’s whistle-blowing decision or behaviour. As a consequence, a framework may be developed which not only encourages whistle-blowing, but also satisfies the whistle-blower and all parties to the whistle-blowing event. Management needs to delve further into the stigma associated with whistle-blowing in order to understand how to implement procedures to prevent retaliation, promote a positive organisational social culture, and increase personal benefits or incentives to whistle-blowing. Given that there may be organisational wrongdoing in corporate organisations, this study can serve to sensitise persons on the need to report such issues.

Finally, this study has several limitations. Firstly, a small sample size was obtained, which may limit the generalisability of the results to the population. Thus, future research should consider using larger and more representative samples. Secondly, the use of a self-administered questionnaire survey with closed ended questions was utilised, which did not allow for respondents to express their opinions and feelings on the topic. Future research should consider using a qualitative method such as interviews and focus groups to remedy this limitation. This study measured intentions rather than actual behaviour. It is recognised that an individual’s intentions may differ from actual behaviour. However, some literature has argued that intentions can be a proxy for actual behaviour (Ajzen, 1991; Alleyne, 2010). Nevertheless, future research can consider researching actual whistle-blowing cases among accountants. The study did not measure social desirability bias, and as a result, the possibility exists that respondents may have provided socially desirable responses. Future research should control for social desirability bias. Finally, this study found ‘severity of the incident’ as the second most important factor in encouraging whistle-blowing. Severity of the incident, which was borne out of the qualitative aspect of the survey, is conceptually similar to ‘seriousness of the act’ or ‘moral intensity.’ Future studies should consider including ‘seriousness of the act’ and ‘moral intensity’ as potential variables influencing whistle-blowing.
References


Exploring factors influencing Whistle-Blowing


The lecture explores why there has been so much activity associated with constitution reform in the Commonwealth Caribbean but so little change. It begins with a brief consideration of the reform experience and the nature of the Westminster model in the region and then goes on to identify three aspects which collectively begin to explain the lack of change: the distinctive political culture, the fact of small size and the practice of constitutional reform. It ends by considering the future of reform concluding that the Westminster model will remain dominant in the region unless or until there is a move toward federation.

**Key Words:** Commonwealth Caribbean, Westminster model, political culture, small size, constitutional reform
There have been three periods of interest and action on constitutional reform in the Commonwealth Caribbean since the achievement of independence. The first focused largely on Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago in the 1970s. In these cases it led to the adoption of a new republican constitution in Trinidad and Tobago in 1976 and the adoption of a new hybrid presidential-parliamentary constitution in Guyana in 1980. The Guyanese constitution still remains to date the only instance of radical departure from the Westminster inspired model in the Caribbean.

The second phase, in the 1990s, was intimately associated with rising concerns at deteriorating standards of governance in the region. The case was publicly aired by the West India Commission in 1992 in its report *Time for Action*. The commissioners noted ‘there has been so much complaint to the Commission of decline in the standards of governance and the erosion of the quality of civil society’ that concerns were raised about ‘whether we are going into the twenty first century on the best possible basis of governance’ (West Indian Commission, 1992: 494,495). Conferences on governance duly followed in Jamaica (1994, 2002), Trinidad (2001), and Barbados (2002).

Alongside the governance issue constitution commissions were being created or reporting in a majority of Commonwealth Caribbean countries. They included Jamaica (1995), Barbados (1998), Dominica (1999), Belize (2000), Antigua and Barbuda (2002), St Kitts-Nevis (2002) and St Vincent (2002). Some investigations and reports were more comprehensive than others. They did, however, along with the governance conferences, identify many of the issues which were exercising the public. These were summarised in the OAS conference on ‘Westminster in the Caribbean’ as the ‘excessive authority and overwhelming power constitutionally granted to the prime minister’; the ‘further concentration of power due to the ineffective separation between the executive and the legislature’; ‘the erosion of judicial independence due to infringement by the executive’; an election system based on ‘first-past-the-post’ which ‘often produces outcomes that do not accurately reflect election results’; and ‘excessive partisanship and polarisation’ (OAS, 2002).

The third phase is on-going. It includes, in recent years, the approval of the draft constitution and then its rejection in a referendum in St Vincent in 2009 and continues in the Bahamas, Grenada, Jamaica, St Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. In the last two it is relatively well advanced with Trinidad and Tobago concluding a major round of public consultations on
constitutional reform in March 2013 and the newly elected government in St Lucia tabling a report on constitutional reform in Parliament in April 2013. In design and action this new phase follows on from practices developed in the second phase which saw in some countries extensive consultation and the publication of explanatory booklets to aid discussion. For all that, however, little was achieved in the second phase by way of substantive constitution reform. The changes made were most often adjustments signalling a general satisfaction with the essential architecture of the Westminster model. It will be interesting to see if this new third phase ends differently, particularly since in St Lucia consideration is being given to a hybrid parliamentary-presidential system which will result in a significant departure from the Westminster model.

The experience of constitutional reform in the Commonwealth Caribbean since independence shows that there have been many calls for change but that not much has followed. The constitutions of eleven of the twelve Commonwealth Caribbean countries have remained in most essentials unreformed since independence. Westminster has been challenged but Westminster has also been confirmed.

How is this to be explained and will the future be any different? The rest of this lecture considers these questions but first a general comment on the Westminster model and how I approach these issues.

**Westminster Defined**

In 1964 the Professor of Public Law at the London School of Economics, S.A. de Smith, wrote: ‘The Westminster model is a term that will never appear in a legal dictionary, and the political scientist may also prefer to handle it circumspectly’ (de Smith, 1964: 77). I agree with him and he was in a position to know since he acted as a constitutional adviser during the period when many new constitutions for the Commonwealth were being devised. As such, it is necessary to proceed cautiously.

I also agree with Professor Carnegie, a former Professor of Law at University of the West Indies in Barbados, that the constitutions of the Caribbean are not ‘Westminster model constitutions’ in the sense that a constitutional lawyer might define them (Carnegie, 1966). And I further agree with Dr Hamid Ghany, a political scientist at UWI in Trinidad, that the Westminster model
as applied to the Caribbean was distinct from that of Westminster proper, and that the Caribbean model can be termed the Westminster-Whitehall model in recognition of the changes that were applied at independence (Ghany, 1994).

At the same time, I am loath to part with the term in its entirety. In spite of his qualification S.A. de Smith does talk of ‘Westminster’s Export Models’ and the term is widely used throughout the Caribbean. ‘Westminster’ does escape precise definition but it is a useful form of shorthand to describe a familiar set of institutions and associated practices codified within recognisably common constitutions. The constitutional lawyer will most likely define these institutions and practices more narrowly than the political scientist but both will agree as to what they are examining even if they go about it differently and do not agree on a precise terminology.

I am therefore following accepted usage throughout the Caribbean and bracketing together eleven of the Commonwealth Caribbean countries as variants inspired by the Westminster constitution. The exception is the constitution in Guyana which as noted earlier is a hybrid. The ‘Westminster’ I have in mind is a ‘Westminster’ that follows most of the precepts of the British constitution embodying parliamentary sovereignty above all else, even if modified to suit local circumstances. My colleague, Professor Anthony Payne, has described this as ‘Westminster Adapted’. Among the features he lists as relevant are: ‘the convention of constitutionalism, the doctrine of civil supremacy, the presumption of bureaucratic and police neutrality, the habit of competitive elections, and the practice of pluralistic representation’ (Payne, 1993:60). These suggest a very broad interpretation and that is the path I am taking, not least in the interest of connecting with a wide range of topics that ‘Westminster’ so considered can engender.

Three interest me in particular. They focus on political culture, the question of size, and the practice of constitutional reform. Together they begin to answer why so much effort and so little change.

**The Political Culture of the Commonwealth Caribbean**

Political culture is the relationship between values, political attitudes and behaviour on the hand and political institutions and political processes on the other. The combination of the two shapes political attitudes and beliefs
setting out distinct approaches to politics seen in terms of the political history of a country or a region and the typical behaviour of its peoples in their political life. In the case of the Caribbean, Henke and Reno in their book *Modern Political Culture in the Caribbean* (2003) identify variables such as race, ethnicity, migration and multifaceted dependency (which includes institutional mimicry) as having significant effects in shaping political culture and political action. The result, they claim, is a political culture which is a contested one featuring two distinct value systems: ‘One can be called the colonial mind-set, while the other could be regarded as the creolised and hybrid voice of the people’ (Henke and Reno, 2003: xix).

I do wonder if it is that clear-cut? Some twenty years ago I published a paper entitled ‘Constancy, change and accommodation: the distinct tradition of the Commonwealth Caribbean’ (Sutton, 1991). In it I argued that a distinct identity and political experience was emerging in the Commonwealth Caribbean marking it off from its Central American and South American neighbours, as well as from the non-Commonwealth Caribbean countries. In political life this was evident in: ‘a constancy to a departed colonial order, a liberal and generally constructive adaptation to socio-economic change, and an appreciation of and accommodation to geopolitical realities’ (ibid: 107). The first two of these relate directly to the Westminster experience.

The ‘constancy to a departed colonial order’ is, of course, a comment on the adoption of the Westminster model and its enduring appeal. The adoption of the Westminster model in the Caribbean was an uncontroversial decision. The political elite at independence would have no other, regarding it, to cite the Jamaican case, not as ‘foreign derived’ but as ‘autochthonous’ (Munroe, 1972: 175-8). This did not mean uncritical adoption. To cite another at that time, Dr Eric Williams: ‘the time has come when the British Constitution, suitably modified, can be applied to Trinidad and Tobago. After all, if the British constitution is good enough for Great Britain, it should be good enough for Trinidad and Tobago’ (Williams, 1955 in Sutton, 1981: 129). Note the qualification ‘suitably modified’. The Colonial Office officials in London, and the government and opposition in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, were mindful of the different experiences of the Caribbean and changes were made. Sometimes even innovations, for example the office of Leader of the Opposition was built into Commonwealth constitutions for the first time in the cases of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago (de Smith, 1964: 103).
The constitutions, in other words, may have been more ‘fit for purpose’ than has sometimes been suggested for example, ‘The circumstances under which Caribbean independence constitutions were drafted and ratified, make questionable their indigenous nature’ (Barrow-Giles, 2002: 127). Additionally, the enduring appeal of Westminster might have spread wider than the political elite. To date the best expression of this is the referendum in St Vincent when 56% voted to retain the existing constitution, including the Queen as Head of State, in spite of a long and vigorous campaign for substantial constitutional change involving the drafting of a new hybrid presidential-parliamentary system which was endorsed by a two thirds majority in the parliament (Bishop, 2011). Another example is the vexed question of the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) as the final court of appeal instead of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London (JCPC). This issue has been much discussed in the region with contrary opinions flowing from all quarters of society. In the recent constitutional exercise in St Lucia, for example, it tops the list of U-tube hits of subjects on which views have been expressed. And of course, it still remains the fact that of the twelve countries signatory to its establishment in 2001/2003 only three as yet have agreed to it as the final court of appeal.

What all this shows, I believe, is ‘a deeply conservative political culture’ (Sutton, 1991: 109). Caribbean countries are, to use the words of Anthony Maingot ‘modern conservative societies’ (Maingot, 1984) in which tradition and modernity coexist and clash and in which there are deep-rooted beliefs and values embodying religious, political and economic freedoms which are strongly held and cherished. These are not directly challenged by the Westminster model; instead they are nourished particularly when allied to a liberal and generally constructive adaptation to socio-economic change. The elements contributing to this are many and include regular ‘free and fair’ elections, institutionalised political parties that alternate in government, political leadership which mostly favours incremental as against radical change, a structured pluralism that incorporates religious, business and trade union leaders in politics via appointed senators and other mechanisms of consultation, a professional civil service, an independent judiciary and a competitive and free media. None of these are without their problems but the experience now of up to fifty years of independence suggests that a pluralistic political order has been embedded and that most political change in the Commonwealth Caribbean ‘is inherently piecemeal and instinctively peaceful’ (Sutton, 1991: 117). Pragmatism, bargaining and accommodation
are the favoured methods of resolving political conflicts in spite of a quite often strident cacophony surrounding political issues, both important and unimportant. The result, as many have commented on, is a comprehensive liberal democratic practice that has legitimised the Westminster model in the region. That model, in turn, has proved to be both robust and adaptable. On that basis it enjoys a wide measure of support throughout society and while change is necessary it is one in which there is consensus that ‘the baby should not be thrown out with the bathwater’ – a conclusion neatly expressed in the final report of the OAS conference which noted that ‘there were serious and substantial reforms that could be carried out that would go a long way toward correcting or at least alleviating imbalances and deficiencies of the current system’ (OAS, 2002).

Small Size

In his book *Winner Takes All: The Westminster Experience in the Caribbean* (1999), Selwyn Ryan raises the issue of small size in his discussion of the politics of Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. He attributes some of the characteristic features of their politics, good and bad, to small size although later in his book he is careful to state that size ‘is not in itself the independent variable that determines what takes place in the Eastern Caribbean’ (Ryan 1999: 308), but rather one of several factors, albeit a major one, in shaping the political culture.

There is now a substantial literature on the effects of small size on international relations and economic development and a growing, albeit smaller, body of academic work on the effects of small size on domestic politics. Much of this in recent years has been pioneered by Dag Anckar from Finland and his work reveals some interesting features of small states that bear directly upon their constitutional arrangements. His findings are normally based on surveys of small independent states, what he terms ‘microstates’, with populations of one million or under.

The first point to notice is that that colonial heritage is ‘an important determinant of regime choice’ (Anckar, 2004: 215), with the vast majority of microstates introducing at independence similar regimes to those prevailing in the respective metropolitan powers. In the majority of cases (because two-thirds of the states were former British colonies or protectorates) this results in the dominance of parliamentary regimes (20 out of 36 cases,
followed by absolute regimes – 9 cases, presidential regimes – 6 cases, and semi-presidential – 1). Anckar also notes the relative durability of regime type with the regime prevailing today likely to be the same as that adopted at independence. Those changing regime in the Caribbean are Suriname (from parliamentary to presidential although it has significant parliamentary features) and Guyana (from parliamentary to a mix of parliamentary and semi-presidential). In comparison to the global total, where only one quarter of the world have parliamentary regimes, just over one third presidential regimes and just under one third absolute regimes, in microstates ‘there is clearly more parliamentarism, less presidentialism and less absolutism’ (ibid.: 214). This is to the advantage of microstates, Anckar argues, since ‘the scholarly literature on regimes, empirical evidence and most writers appear to favour the parliamentary model, which is found to foster a greater ability to rule’ leaving microstates ‘well equipped in terms of institutional structure for managing political life and political affairs’ (ibid.).

The second point is the high level of constitutional stability in microstates emerging from British rule. Of the 24 countries in his survey of parliaments in former British colonies, 19 still have independence constitutions that are valid today or as in Trinidad and Tobago ‘have not altered significantly the guiding principles of the former constitutions’ (Anckar, 2007: 643). Moreover the parliamentary profiles of these states show a strong fidelity to the Westminster system. Nineteen of the 24 have first-past-the post electoral systems, 18 of the 24 require cabinet members to be recruited from parliament, and nine of the 24 have bicameral legislatures (nearly all of these being from the Caribbean) (ibid.: 644-646). Only in the case of parliamentary sovereignty is there a significant deviation from the Westminster model as 17 of the countries allow direct democracy in the form of referendums, although there is a significant restriction in the majority of them specifying these are for constitutional change only. Anckar further demonstrates that the states closest to the Westminster model are those that have experienced the longest period of British colonial rule and that the majority of these are from the Caribbean. In his words: ‘Caribbean nations are Westminster nations, whereas non-Caribbean nations are not’ (ibid: 650). He concludes by attributing the strength and prevalence of the Westminster model to a process of ‘diffusion’, in which there is divergence and diversity among the countries but among which the pattern of imitation has ‘the upper hand’ (ibid.).
The most recent published study by Dag Anckar considers constitutional amendment methods in 21 small island states, eleven of which are from the Caribbean (Anckar, 2012). The issue that concerns him is the prevalence of first-past-the-post electoral systems which can produce significant parliamentary majorities including occasions (he lists thirteen in the Caribbean to which must now be added another after the results of the February 2013 election in Grenada) in which the first place party wins all the seats in the parliament and is thus in a position to introduce sweeping constitutional change. To prevent such a possibility constitutions frequently include a strict requirement that constitutional change must have the support of either a two-thirds vote in parliament (twelve countries) or a three-quarters vote (nine countries), with additional referendum requirements in five of them. The reasons for such a provision, he claims, lays in the existence of a dominant party system (which he defines as a situation in which one party is considerably stronger than any other) and/or a fragmented social system (where a country is divided into competing ethnic, language and religious segments) and is shown by the fact that in the countries in which dominance/fragmentation is most acute the three quarters rule will almost always apply. The conclusion to be drawn from this, Ankar asserts, is that small islands are “thoughtful and purposeful political actors that design political institutions to reflect their particular needs” (Anckar, 2012: 9). This is a very positive conclusion celebrating the wisdom of small states and naturally leads to a presumption that in the processes of constitutional change now under way in the Caribbean new constitutional safeguards will be proposed. At the same time the fact of ‘small size’ constrains the choice of political regime and underpins a preference for continuities within the Westminster model.

The Practice of Constitutional Reform

I now turn to my third theme - the practice of constitutional reform in the Caribbean.

In their paper on this subject published in 2011, Elkins and Ginsburg comment as follows: ‘On average, constitutional systems have lasted nineteen years across the worldwide constitutions since 1789. English-speaking Caribbean constitutions exceed this life expectancy by a considerable margin. The region has produced a total of sixteen new constitutions with Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago the only countries no longer operating under their independence constitutions. Including amendments, just four countries
account for approximately seventy per cent of all constitutional events since 1962: Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago’ (Elkins and Ginsburg, 2011: 14).

Several reasons can account for this situation. The first is procedural difficulties associated with change. The constitutions, as we have just noted, deliberately make constitutional change difficult by specifying usually either a two-thirds majority of elected members of parliament for entrenched provisions or a three-quarters majority and a referendum in which two thirds vote in favour for deeply entrenched provisions, although it varies by country and provision and in some (Barbados, Belize and Trinidad and Tobago) even larger majorities apply. The effect this has on limiting constitutional change has recently been given in a paper by Derek O’Brien to a conference on constitutional reform in the Caribbean held in London in April 2013.

In the paper O’Brien examines three cases: the reform and referendum in St Vincent in November 2009, the attempt by the Jamaican government in 2004 to replace the JCPC with the CCJ, and the recent attempt in Belize to reform the protection accorded to the right to property (O’Brien, 2013). In St Vincent the process to reform the constitution involved a comprehensive and exhaustive consultation over some six years in which the original proposals for radical reform were revised and moderated but eventually opposed by the main opposition party and rejected at the referendum. In the case of Jamaica the right of appeal to the JCPC was not especially entrenched and therefore could be changed by a simple majority vote. This was challenged in the courts on the grounds that the effect would be to establish a superior court which could overturn decisions of the highest Jamaican courts but which enjoyed none of the entrenched protections accorded to those courts by the constitution. The JCPC in London found in favour of the appellants determining that the effect of the proposed change would be to alter the regime established in the Jamaican constitution and that this substantive change meant that the procedure to follow would need to be that appropriate for the amendment of an entrenched provision. Lastly, in Belize a group of landowners challenged the constitutionality of an amendment to the constitution in 2008 which gave the government the rights to oil that had recently been discovered. Their appeal was upheld by the Chief Justice on the grounds that the parliament in Belize cannot make laws that are contrary to the basic structure of the constitution itself for if it could ‘once the required majority for an amendment is obtained
then absolutely no constitutional provision would be beyond alteration or revocation’ (O’Brien 2013: 5). As O’Brien notes this was a controversial decision based on a particular interpretation of the constitution (following a precedent from India) which has significant ramifications. I simply note two. On the one hand the invocation of the basic structure doctrine could in the future act as a restraint on necessary constitutional reform to account for new developments. At the same time, however, the invocation of legal processes to safeguard the constitution and limit the power of parliament are essential elements of the rule of law which would enjoy wide support throughout the Commonwealth Caribbean. In this sense robust procedural requirements to enact constitutional change are necessary, indeed vital, if legitimacy in constitutional change is to continue to feature on the agenda.

The second issue concerns the content of reforms. The various reports and recommendations for constitutional reform over the years have identified a host of issues for consideration. In no particular order of merit they include the repatriation of the constitution; the role of the head of state, including whether they are to be a ceremonial president or an executive president; a limitation on the powers on the prime minister, including restrictions on the number of terms served; the method of election for the lower house and of nomination for the upper house; improving the powers of the legislature, including a limitation on the number of parliamentarians that can serve on the executive; improving executive and public service accountability through the creation of an effective legislative committee system; designing measures and mechanisms to limit patronage and corruption, including consideration of the financing of political parties at elections; reinvigorating local government; and the replacement of the JCPC with the CCJ. I am sure many others could be added. As such, there seems to be no aspect of extant constitutions that have not been examined and found wanting. It indicates the need for sweeping reform, but in practice reform has been piecemeal and the public discussions of it, to use the words of Cynthia Barrow-Giles, focused primarily ‘on the architecture of the constitution – the nuts and bolts’ and secondly ‘on correcting the defects that political practice and culture in the region have revealed’ (Barrow-Giles, 2012: 9). The broader philosophical aspects of constitutional change have been absent or more accurately, when they have been raised as in the adoption of a US presidential model as against a revised Westminster model, has seen a much higher level of support for the latter as against the former. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that there is no appetite for fundamental constitutional change among
the majority in the region and that substantial constitutional change is very much a minority interest, even among the political elites. It also indicates that when constitutional change occurs it is as or more likely to take the form of amendment to the existing constitution rather than take the form of a commitment to a wholly new one with significant departure from existing norms and practices.

Indeed, this becomes my third point. The political will to engineer real change seems missing. It does not mean that new areas of public concern can’t be added. A case in point is the adoption of a new Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms in Jamaica in 2011 which replaced the existing Bill of Rights in the Independence Constitution. This brought Jamaica more in line with other countries which have reformed their constitutions in recent years to include economic and social rights in addition to the civil and political rights which remain the staple ‘bill of fare’ in most Commonwealth Caribbean constitutions. In the Jamaican case the new Charter proved relatively uncontroversial and enjoyed an easy passage through the parliament and a good measure of public support. The reasons it did so include the fact that it did not reform in essence the Westminster model and that its measures reflected popular opinion on issues such as the death penalty and homosexuality (O’Brien and Wheatle, 2012). The lesson to be drawn from this is that constitutional change must be both popular and bipartisan. The last factor in particular assumes importance in the history of constitutional reform in the region. It was instanced in the final stages of the St Vincent constitutional debate when the main opposition party withdrew from the constitutional reform process in 2007 and campaigned against the constitutional reform bill as it went through its final stages prior to the referendum, on which it urged a ‘no’ vote. And it has been instanced on numerous occasions when issues for constitutional reform have emerged for public discussion or have on occasion reached the floor of parliament. Essentially this is a manifestation of the exaggerated bipartisanship of Commonwealth Caribbean politics which is exhaustively chronicled in Ryan’s book Winner Takes All and which led him to explore the benefits of a more consensual system of governance (Ryan, 2003). To put such a system in place, however, would be a fundamental revision of the way politics is played in the Commonwealth Caribbean in which the first obstacle to overcome would be the opposition of the political elite who directly benefit from the existing system, even when out of office given the good prospects for election to office that the established practice
of ‘alternation’ in government which two party dominant systems makes possible. In a nutshell, ‘why should turkeys vote for Christmas’?

**Which way Caribbean Constitutional Reform?**

The arguments I have just made at length indicate that the combined effects of political culture, small size and the way the Westminster system works act as a significant constraint on radical proposals for constitutional reform. Which way then for future constitutional reform?

At present there are two relatively advanced constitutional reform exercises before the region. The one in Trinidad and Tobago has been long in gestation. It began with the presentation of a draft constitution to parliament in August 2006 which was then subject to scrutiny by a specially convened Round Table of academics, technocrats and ministers followed by public discussion in a series of consultations and further scrutiny. In January 2009 a Working Document on Constitutional Reform was laid before the House of Representative by the Prime Minister, Patrick Manning. In his speech on that occasion he envisaged a further round of public consultations and the eventual production of a Green Paper by the government containing its proposals. In the event matters were delayed by a new government taking office and the process resumed only in March this year with the launch of the National Consultation followed by further consultations throughout the country which have just concluded. The next stage presumably will be a report by the Constitutional Commissioners and a new draft constitution. It will be interesting to see how radical it will be. In 2009 Hamid Ghany published a study comparing the existing constitution with the Working Document of 2009. It pointed to areas where not much was to be changed and areas where there were significant departures. These included proposals to change the presidency, to alter the balance of executive power including the abolition of the post of prime minister, and to make provision for a greater separation between the judicial and administrative functions of the chief justice (Ghany, 2009: 41-54). In the elections of 2010 the People’s Partnership, now the government, committed itself in its manifesto to constitutional reform, but of a much lesser sort. It instanced developing mechanisms for a referendum process, limiting the prime minister to two successive terms, and developing rules to better govern political competition in the election period but did not go further. The nearly three year delay in establishing the Consultation and the comments by the Prime Minister, Kamla Persad-Bissessar, at its
opening to the effect that not all problems relate to the constitution indicate that the eventual reform will not be as fundamental as was being considered in 2009.

The reform exercise in St Lucia has been equally long in the making. The Constitutional Commission began its work in November 2005 but did not complete its report until the end of March 2011. The time taken reflects the thoroughness of the report and the intensive and extensive process of research, public information and public consultation it involved, including discussion with the diaspora. It is therefore not surprising that the end result is a proposal for substantive change, especially as the Commission reached a consensus ‘that the so called ‘Westminster inheritance’ in the Saint Lucian context has at worst, not worked, or at best been a double-edged sword’ and that ‘after thirty-two years of independence, Saint Lucians were desperate for real constitutional change’ (Saint Lucia Constitutional Reform Commission, 2011: 23, 26). The proposed constitution is a parliamentary-presidential hybrid which seeks ‘to preserve the stability of the strong central government that is a defining feature of the British model, while also adopting the requisite checks and balances that are so attractive in the American system’ (ibid: 26), with the balance tilted toward parliamentarianism. In all there were 190 separate recommendations, some involving retaining existing practice such as first-past-the-post elections and a nominated senate and others seeking change as in the establishment of a republic and the creation of an executive drawn, with the exception of the prime minister and deputy prime minister, from outside parliament. The report is now before the St Lucia Parliament and the speech from the throne delivered on 23 April stated that ‘my government will, in time, initiate a debate on it’. It also noted that that the process of constitutional reform would require ‘courage, boldness and deep consciousness of the economic, social, cultural, legal and political implications’ and further demand ‘consensus and common purpose. Without the shared consensus of our political parties, reforms are unlikely to succeed’ (Government of St Lucia, 2013). The last qualification is important since the former government, now the opposition appeared to drag its feet on implementation once they had the report in their hands. To them major reform might well be a step too far.

The examples of St Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago demand a degree of caution as to how far or sweeping constitutional reform will be. So, in conclusion, what would it take to promote radical constitutional reform in
the Commonwealth Caribbean? Two considerations seem important. They derive from a large comparative project analysing constitutional reform (with a sample of 460 of the 806 national constitutions promulgated in the period 1789-2005). The first is that there is ‘an intuitive expectation and some preliminary evidence, that the most fundamental institutional and political reform is accomplished through specially convened constituent assemblies operating independent of existing government’ (Elkins and Ginsburg, 2011: 10). I note that that this is not how constitutional reform has been carried out in the Commonwealth Caribbean in large part because the convening of constitutional conventions is normally associated with major crisis and the Commonwealth Caribbean has witnessed more stability than crisis. The second is that a review of the constitutional process shows a whole variety of actors involved including ‘expert commissions, legislative bodies or committees, the executive, the judiciary, national conferences, elite roundtables, transitional legislatures, especially elected constituent assemblies, interest groups and nongovernmental organisations, foreign advisors, and the public itself’ (Ginsburg, Elkins and Blount, 2009: 5.5). While many of these have been seen in the Commonwealth Caribbean the evolving norm is the central role of the constitutional review commission and although this need not preclude the others the process itself is one where change may be held back as the commission does its best to achieve a consensus by cautious innovation. In short the reason for the absence of radical constitutional reform is the absence of context and the institutional mechanism currently in use. The only case I can see where matters would be very different would be a general crisis in the Commonwealth Caribbean that results in the convening of a constituent assembly from all the islands and the littoral and that concludes by recommending a federation, in which case my bet is that the model offered would be that of the United States of America and not the parliamentary model of the West Indies Federation that was tried and found wanting. Insofar as this prospect is not on the horizon, in spite of mounting economic and social problems throughout the region, the future in the short to medium term will be the Westminster model modified and adapted within the individual context of the single Commonwealth Caribbean state and bearing the impress of the past more than it bears the impress of the future.
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A Note on the Fuel Charge Adjustment in Barbados

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Introduction

Energy, demand and customer related costs are the three primary cost drivers that are incurred by any electric utility in the supply of electricity. These costs are reflected in the electric utility bill in Barbados as energy, demand, customer and fuel charges. The energy charge covers the variable non-fuel energy related costs; the demand charge recovers demand related costs; the customer charge regains the customer related costs; and the fuel charge returns the cost of fuel.

Fuel is the largest variable cost component in the production of electricity and its costs change significantly as a result of fluctuations in international prices of oil. In response to movements in factor prices, electric utilities are normally permitted to employ an automatic fuel clause adjustment mechanism that allows the utility to alter its electricity rates in response to changes in the cost of fuel without the need for a formal rate hearing. The use of the fuel clause adjustment mechanism has however come under increased criticism and scrutiny by consumers in Barbados in recent times, mainly as a result of significant expansions in the fuel component of consumers’ electricity bills and its perceived associated impact on the general price level within the economy.
The public has also voiced general concerns that the fuel clause adjustment charge is not closely reflecting movements in international oil prices and that other factors may be influencing changes in the adjustment mechanism. There is the perception that upward alterations in international oil prices are quickly seen in the fuel clause adjustment charge; however significant lags exist in the downward movement of the fuel charge to lower international oil prices (Nation Saturday Sun, May 21, 2011; Daily Nation, June 9, 2011; Nation Sunday Sun, July 10, 2011). Such sentiments have also come at a time when the Barbados Light and Power Company has been acquired by Emera (a Canadian Multinational). Hence the observation that a foreign multinational may be exploiting the market via higher prices to increase the profitability of the entity and therefore shareholder returns. Figure 1, however, indicates that the profits of the company (as a percentage of sales) tend to be between 20 and 40 per cent, when expressed as a ratio of sales. Thus it does not seem to have been any significant jump in corporate profitability as a result of the rising value of the fuel clause adjustment in recent years. In addition, a simple t-test of the relationship between the fuel clause adjustment and the firm’s profitability suggests that there is little or no association between the two variables.

**Figure 1: Net Profit of the Barbados Light and Power**

Source: Barbados Light and Power
The objectives of this note are therefore two-fold: (1) to identify the primary determinants of the fuel clause adjustment; and, (2) provide an assessment of the impact of changes to the fuel charge on inflation in Barbados. Past electricity demand studies for Barbados (Cox, 1983; Durant, 1991; Mitchell, 2009) have not addressed policy issues: aggregate electricity consumption is usually regressed on an income variable and a price variable over various time periods with stationary and non-stationary time series econometrics techniques. Using a structural econometric co-integration model the paper estimates the transmission process from the fuel clause adjustment to domestic prices in Barbados.

The paper is organised as follows. The next section deals with some background information on electricity supply in Barbados. Section 3 outlines the econometric methodology used. Section 4 presents the empirical results of the co-integration simultaneous equations model with the various simulation scenarios. Section 5 offers some concluding remarks.

**Background**

The generation, supply and distribution of electricity in Barbados are undertaken by a single vertically integrated electric utility company. Electricity is generated mainly from low speed diesels, steam and gas turbines plants that operate utilising heavy fuel oil (bunker C), diesel, aviation fuel and a relatively small quantity of natural gas. The limited use of natural gas is due to the utility only having access to supplies that remain after residential demand has been satisfied.

The capacity of the low speed diesel amounts to about 110 megawatts (MW) utilising heavy fuel oil and some diesel, the steam turbines has a total capacity of 40 MW and employs heavy fuel oil. Generation is also supplemented by three gas turbines that use diesel fuel at an installed capacity of 46MW and two 20MW gas turbines that employ aviation fuel. The total installed generation capacity of the utility is around 236MW. Total peak demand over the years has grown to 163 MW in 2011 and therefore requires the utility to apply a mix of generation plants to meet the demand. The mix of generation plants utilised will affect the cost of fuel used to produce electricity, which in turn will determine the level of the fuel clause adjustment charged.
The fuel clause adjustment charge was introduced in Barbados in 1965 for commercial and industrial customers and was extended to include all customers in 1974. The regulator accepted that the electric utility has to purchase fuel in order to generate electricity and permitted the utility to recover its fuel expenditure through a fuel clause adjustment charge. The charge is derived from a formula that divides the cost of fuel by the amount of electricity sales in a given month. At the beginning of each month the utility makes projections of fuel prices, fuel usage and electricity sales for the month. At the end of the month, when the actual amounts are known, there is usually a positive or negative balance left over because the utility may have collected more or less than the actual cost of fuel used given the accuracy of its projections. This balance is then carried forward to the next month and is added or subtracted, as appropriate, to the next month’s fuel cost. The actual formula utilised to calculate the fuel clause adjustment charge is therefore the projected cost of fuel plus any over or under recovery component divided by projected kWh sales for the current month. The utility therefore makes no profit from the application of the fuel clause adjustment charge, which is a direct pass through of its fuel costs.

As evidence of the relationship between oil prices and the fuel clause charge, Figure 2 plots the percentage change in the fuel clause adjustment and a measure of international oil prices (Brent Crude). One immediately notices two things from the diagram. First, the fluctuations in the fuel clause adjustment are subject to significant volatility: since 2009, the annualised monthly movement in the fuel clause adjustment has exceeded 100 per cent on more than three occasions (December 2009 as well as January and April 2010). Such large fluctuations in the fuel clause charge can result in significant swings in the monthly bills for the average customer. Second there is a strong correlation between the fuel charge and Brent crude prices. Most of the variation in the fuel clause adjustment of the utility can be largely explained by fluctuations in international oil prices. Figure 2 suggests that changes in the Brent Crude price predict most of the turning points in the fuel charge series. The relationship between the fuel clause adjustment and the Brent Crude prices has also become significantly tighter in recent years, relative to the pre-2008 period. Since January 2011, the annualised average monthly change in the fuel clause adjustment was 36 percent. The positive link between the fuel clause adjustment and the Brent Crude price is supported by the scatter plot provided in Figure 3.
Figure 2: Fuel Clause Adjustment and Oil Prices

Figure 3: Fuel Clause Adjustment vs. Brent Crude
The fuel clause adjustment mechanism, according to Graves et al. (2007), provides a number of important benefits to the utility company and its customers. Firstly, it ensures that costs are assigned to those customers who benefit from the incurrence of the costs and thus are consistent with the principles of cost causality. The lag between rate cases is usually significant, and fuel prices fluctuate substantially over time. The fuel adjustment clause therefore enables a better alignment of cost recovery with the customer usage that causes the costs to be incurred. Customers therefore face the prevailing economic cost of their consumption decisions, thereby encouraging energy efficiency behaviors. Secondly, the fuel clause adjustment streamlines the regulatory process by eliminating the need for costly and frequent formal rate hearings to determine rate adjustments for changes in fuel costs. Thirdly, it reduces the volatility of the utility’s operating margins by shortening the lag between costs incurred and receipts earned to pay for such costs. This allows the utility to pay its bills in a timely manner and, just as importantly, decreases the risk of the utility having an inadequate cash flow. Fourthly, the mechanism protects the consumer from significant rate shock that can occur if rising fuel costs are deferred and accumulated over long periods of time. Notwithstanding the benefits of the fuel clause adjustment, it is feared that the automatic adjustment may distort incentives for productive efficiency. Since the utility can pass on all fuel cost increases, they may have no incentive to choose the least cost fuel supply, generating plants and dispatch options. The fuel clause adjustment mechanism may give the utility an incentive to invest in relatively more fuel intensive technologies than would be employed by a utility that had to absorb some of the fuel costs.

**Model, Data and Estimation Method**

*Model*

The previous section suggests that much of the fluctuation in the fuel adjustment charge is due to changes in oil prices. Given that energy is such a critical input into the production process for most sectors, this section considers the potential impact of changes in the fuel adjustment charge on the general level of price inflation in Barbados. The following simple simultaneous equation model is proposed:

\[ rpi = c(1) + c(2) \times fc + c(3) \times ip + u \]  

(1)
fc = c(4) + c(5)*bco + c(6)*z + e \hspace{1cm} (2)

where \( rpi \) is the Barbados retail price index, \( fc \) is the fuel charge set by the Barbados Light and Power Company Limited, \( ip \) is the import price index proxied by the U.S. retail price index, \( bco \) is the brent crude oil price and \( z \) is a vector of control variables such as plant maintenance, dispatching of generation units, fuel procurement and technical losses that are not quantified at this time, \( u \) and \( e \) are error terms that satisfies the classical least squares assumptions. *A priori*, the parameters \( c(2), c(3) \) and \( c(5) \) are positively signed.

**Data**

This study utilises monthly data from 1986:01 to 2011:07. All the variables are the raw unadjusted series. The fuel clause adjustment series is sourced from the Barbados Light and Power Company Limited, the retail price index is obtained from the Central Bank of Barbados online statistics, the price of the Brent crude oil comes from Trading Economics online statistics and the United States consumer price index used as a proxy for import prices was collected from the International Monetary Fund International Financial Statistics database.

**Estimation Method**

A structural econometrics model (SEM) is applied to simultaneously estimate the two equations developed above as it is well suited to analyse the transmission mechanism or interdependence among the regressands. Additionally, according to Hsiao (1997a, b) the structural equation approach is still valid even when some regressors are non-stationary, provided that they are co-integrated. Hence, the estimation method of this note is to use co-integration analysis to the variables in the simultaneous equation model and then apply the structural econometric approach. Employing co-integration analysis to a simultaneous equation model is very similar to applying stationary econometrics to a simultaneous equation model. Hence inferences on Ordinary Least Squares estimates in a co-integrated system are invalid as with a stationary structural equation system. However, two-stage least squares (2SLS), three-stage least squares (3SLS), and Generalised Method of Moments (GMM) using instruments are still valid, in the case of non-stationary or non-co-integrated series. Hence any of the following
techniques- 2SLS, 3SLS and GMM can be applied. Theoretically, 2SLS and 3SLS are nested in the GMM so the focus is on the GMM which uses a heteroskedasticity and autocorrelation consistent covariance matrix so the results of the models should not be affected significantly by serial correlation or heteroskedasticity.

**Results**

According to the discussion above co-integration must first be established. A prerequisite of this is to check the temporal properties of the series. In this regard, all variables appear to be non-stationary and need to be difference once to become stationary, that is, there are all I(1), using either the Augmented Dickey-Fuller (1979), Phillips-Perron (1990) or Kwiatkowski, Phillips, Schmidt, and Shin (1992) unit root tests. The Johansen (1988, 1991) multi-equation method conducted on various lag lengths shows a rank of one, suggesting that there is a unique co-integrating vector. The single equation Engle - Granger (1987) procedure revealed that the series are co-integrated regardless of the dependent variable. Therefore the SEM seems to form a co-integrated system. The results are omitted for space considerations but are available on request.

Examining the various equations in the system, that is, Equations (1) and (2) above, the adjusted R-squared for the two models estimated by GMM are quite high (greater than 0.90). Judging by the Sargan J-statistic the instruments used are valid. All variables in the various models are significant. The impact of a 1 unit increase in $fc$ on $rpi$ is about 0.7 and the effect of a 1 unit expansion in $bco$ on $fc$ is approximately 0.3 (see Table 1).

**Simulations and Policy Analysis**

Since the equations above seem to satisfy an adequate data generation process, the models can now be simulated as a complete system. Two historical simulations (static and dynamic), followed by ex-post forecasts, are performed in order to evaluate the model’s ability to replicate the data. Looking at Figure 4, which shows the one-step ahead predictor (static solution), the model tracks the actual data quite well. Forecasting many periods ahead in the future, that is, the dynamic solution, also results in no significant deviations from the actual outcomes, and seems to follow the general trends in the data (see Figure 5).
Table 1: GMM Empirical Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>t-Statistic</th>
<th>Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C(1)</td>
<td>5.418602</td>
<td>3.221469</td>
<td>1.682028</td>
<td>0.0931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C(2)</td>
<td>0.696299</td>
<td>0.090428</td>
<td>7.700050</td>
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<tr>
<td>C(3)</td>
<td>0.872446</td>
<td>0.049169</td>
<td>17.74381</td>
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<tr>
<td>C(4)</td>
<td>2.901602</td>
<td>0.467798</td>
<td>6.202687</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C(5)</td>
<td>0.297179</td>
<td>0.016371</td>
<td>18.15225</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| J-statistic | 0.105916 |
| Adjusted R-squared (rpi) | 0.956399 |
| Adjusted R-squared (fc)   | 0.904147 |

Note: The instruments used are the lagged dependent and independent variables.

Figure 4: Static Solution (One-step ahead) Forecast
Once the performance of the models works well against the historical data, the GMM system can be used to forecast future values of the endogenous variables. The forecast horizon utilised is 6 months. The first step in producing such a forecast is to decide on the values for the exogenous variables during the forecast period. In this regard, the forecasts for bco are based on an autoregressive process of order one and a time trend while the ip depends on a simple trend (these results are available on request).

Given the exogenous variables over the forecast period, experiments simulated 6 months into the future can be done, assuming that crude oil prices first decrease by 10% and then increase by 10%. The simulation results suggest that the cut (rise) in the crude oil prices causes a substantial contraction (increase) in the fuel adjustment charge, which creates a relatively smaller reduction (expansion) in the Barbados retail price index (see Figure 6).
Figure 6a: Scenario showing a 10% Increase in Crude Oil Prices

Figure 6b: Scenario showing a 10% Decrease in Crude Oil Prices
So far, the paper has assumed that the stochastic equations hold exactly over the forecast period. In reality, however, as in the history errors can occur in the future. Also the coefficients are not fixed at known values but have to be estimated. These two conditions lead to uncertainty about the coefficients and should be reflected in some way in the system’s results. This is usually done by simulating the distributions, via a Monte Carlo approach, where the model is solved many times with pseudo-random numbers substituted for the unknown errors at each repetition (see Pindyck and Rubinfeld, 1997). This method provides only approximate results. However, as the number of repetitions is increased, the results should approach their true values. All of this introduces error bounds to the prediction. The error bounds in the resulting output graphs (Figures 7a and 7b) show that some weight can be placed on the point forecasts of the GMM system, since the bounds on the variables do not appear to be very large. In fact, the percentage fall in $fc$ is almost 20 % and that for $rpi$ is about 7%.

**Figure 7a: Scenario Showing a Six-Month Forecast and 10% Increase in Crude Oil Prices**
Figure 7b: Scenario Showing a Six-Month Forecast and 10% Decrease in Crude Oil Prices

Conclusions

This note provides an assessment of the important role that international oil prices play in relation to the fuel clause adjustment charge as well as an evaluation of the impact of changes to the fuel clause adjustment charge on the general level of prices in Barbados. The results suggest that, contrary to popular perceptions, the fuel clause adjustment charge is largely influenced by changes to international oil prices. These fluctuations in the fuel clause adjustment charge then spillover onto the general price level. Indeed there is a considerable relationship between the fuel clause adjustment charge and the retail price index: for every 1-unit change in the fuel clause adjustment charge, the retail price index rises by almost 0.7 units.

The strong spillover effect from the fuel clause adjustment charge to the general level of prices indicates that key stakeholders in energy (the Barbados Light and Power, consumers, firms and Government) in Barbados should identify opportunities to reduce the island’s exposure to fluctuations in international oil prices and its dependence on fossil fuels for electricity generation. An obvious opportunity is to increase the share of renewable energy technologies in that generation of electricity.
References


Proximate Determinants of Poverty among St. Lucians: A Cross-Sectional Household Level Analysis

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Abstract

Identification of factors that are strongly associated with poverty is imperative if sound poverty reduction strategies are to be implemented. This study employs 2006 St. Lucian household level data to examine relationships between household poverty status and selected household variables and household head characteristics. The proportion of non-poor households in rural districts was lower than the national average. Total household expenditure was higher in male-headed households than in female headed households in 8 of the 10 districts. Households headed by younger (< 25 years old) individuals tended to be poorer than those headed by older individuals. Regression analysis revealed that level of education of household heads was the strongest determinant of household welfare. Expansion of investment into secondary education may be a good initial strategy towards poverty reduction since 55.6 % of household heads in St. Lucia had no more than a basic primary education.

Key words: proximate determinants; place of residence; total expenditure; socioeconomic status; household heads; gender
Introduction

The definition of poverty, its measurement, and alleviation strategies have always been contested issues (Nyasulu 2010). While billions of dollars have been spent on social welfare programmes in many developing countries, poverty has continued to increase (UNDP-HDR 2005). Indeed, the UNDP-HDR (2005) report that most poverty alleviation programs have produced temporary results which tend to vanish when the programs are terminated. A contributing factor to this disturbing trend could be that money is being used to address the less important determinants of poverty (Nyasulu 2010). Determinants of poverty are varied and are usually identified during the process of defining poverty. The way poverty is defined influences the kind of poverty alleviation strategies that are designed and implemented and consequently the success rate of those intervention strategies. Most definitions of poverty focus on causal factors, which then influence the choice, design and implementation of alleviation strategies. Misdiagnosis of these causal factors is one of the reasons why poverty alleviation programmes that have been implemented in developing countries have failed to eradicate poverty. In order to refine poverty alleviation strategies and enhance their relevance and effectiveness, it is imperative that the determinants of poverty are identified and the strength of their relationships to the condition of being poor be statistically quantified. Sustainable poverty alleviation interventions depend on accurate targeting of the root causes of poverty which is only possible if the interrelationships between poverty determinants and the concept of poverty itself are known. This also allows development practitioners to prioritise the causal factors that need to be targeted and thereby increase the chances of success in reducing the incidence of poverty. Root causes of poverty differ across social, cultural, and historical contexts thus country-specific analyses are essential.

In 2006, St. Lucia had a population of 164,842 (Caribbean Development Bank 2006), of which 28.8% (47,474) were considered poor compared to 25.1% in 1995 (ECLAC 2008). This suggests that more people may be slipping into poverty and it is critical to identify significant explanatory variables to assist in the designing of mitigating strategies against poverty incidence. Using the Saint Lucia 2005/06 survey of living conditions and household budget disaggregated data, this study is, therefore, designed to explore statistical relationships between selected variables and various measures of poverty.
The purpose of this study was to identify and analyse the factors that influence living standards of St. Lucians. The study generates information that is crucial for policy decision-makers to ensure appropriate and effective poverty alleviation strategies are designed and implemented to address falling standards of living in St. Lucia. Fiscal constraints dictate that funds be directed to the most pertinent causal factors of poverty in order to reduce wastage. A formal study of this nature will go a long way towards unravelling the important factors that should be considered when addressing poverty. The findings may also be applicable to other Caribbean countries with similar social and economic environments.

**Literature Review**

**Background**

Surveys of Living Conditions (SLC) are used in poverty assessments and if conducted regularly, can assist in determining poverty trends over time. St. Lucia has only undertaken two such studies, in 1995 and 2006. St. Lucia had a population of 164,842 as at 2006 (Caribbean Development Bank 2006), of which 28.8% (47,474) were considered poor compared to 25.1% in 1995 (ECLAC 2008). In St. Lucia, the poverty line was EC$ 423.83 (US$ 158.74) monthly or EC$ 5,086 (US$ 1,904.87) per annum in 2006 (Caribbean Development Bank 2006).

**Defining poverty**

Poverty is a dynamic concept and is perhaps best described as a process rather than a state. Although poverty can be considered a situation that persists over time, in many cases it is variable and can change in a short space of time, especially as a function of employment and unemployment (Arriagada 2003). Nyasulu (2010) describes the following broad categories into which poverty definitions can be classified: statistical, income based, living standards, political, capabilities, expert derived and ordinary people derived. The World Bank uses different poverty lines depending on country-specific contexts (Nyasulu 2010) to define poverty. In this study, household expenditure or income are used as proxies for household utility to separate the poor and non-poor according to the welfarist approach (Sen 1979).
Poverty measures

Selecting indicators of welfare

All measures of poverty rely on household survey data from which indicators of welfare can be derived. According to Ravallion (1998), there are three steps that need to be taken in the process of measuring poverty incidence in a population. The steps are: 1) defining an indicator of welfare, 2) establishment of a minimum acceptable standard of that indicator to separate the poor from the non-poor (the poverty line), and 3) generating a summary statistic to aggregate the information from the distribution of this welfare indicator relative to the poverty line. Even though there are a number of indicators that are used to measure poverty, it is common for researchers to employ the welfarist approach (Sen 1979), where household expenditure or income are used as proxies for household utility. The assumption being that if a household has sufficient income then the members of that household know best how to deploy the income for optimum utility. This approach is based on the rationale that people are better off if they have greater command over resources. Thus poverty is measured by comparing individuals’ income or expenditure with a defined country or group specific threshold, below which they are considered poor (Haughton and Khandker 2009). Looking at poverty in monetary terms is the most conventional view and is the starting point for most poverty analyses. At first glance the use of household income appears attractive, but in practice problems such as the definition of income and measurement accuracy soon emerge. For, while it is easy to measure some components of income such as wages and salaries, it is difficult to measure income from other informal sources especially in developing countries. Indeed, the World Bank uses consumption, rather than income, as a measure of welfare due to difficulties involved in estimating the income of the informal sector or the self-employed and fluctuations in income over short periods of time (Gafar 1998).

A second approach to poverty analysis is to ask whether households obtain a specific type of consumption goods such as food, shelter, health care, and education. This non-welfarist, or a more partenalistic approach focuses on whether households have attained minimal utility levels of measures of output such as nutrition, health etc. (Haughton and Khandker 2009). The major advantage of the non-welfarist approach is that it focuses on the ‘outputs/outcomes’ rather than the ‘inputs’ (income and expenditure), which
are reflections of utility. The approach also highlights the multidimensional nature of poverty as a construct. Sen (1987) articulates a much broader approach to poverty analysis in which the state of well-being is tied to the capability of an individual to function in society. When people lack these key capabilities (adequate income, good health, security or confidence) then poverty arises. This multidimensional approach is, however, less geared towards finding mitigating strategies against poverty and is thus not employed in this study.

**Income or Expenditure?**

While it is much easier to measure income as an indicator of welfare in developed countries, the same cannot be said for poor countries. This can be explained by the fact that much of the income in developed countries comes from salaries and wages while expenditure/consumption patterns are complex and difficult to quantify. In less-developed countries the sources of income vary widely and much of it comes from self-employment while consumption is more straightforward and easier to quantify (Haughton and Khandker 2009). As such most measures of poverty in less-developed countries tend to rely on consumption as indicators of welfare (Hentschel and Lanjouw 1996). Since this study is based on survey data obtained from a developing country, only expenditure indicators and overall socio-economic status will be used as measures of well-being for statistical analyses.

**The determinants of poverty**

A number of studies have been commissioned by international agencies with the major objective of presenting a poverty profile for particular groups of people, especially in developing countries. Results of these studies, while useful as descriptors of the pattern of poverty, do not provide insight into the causes of poverty. A satisfactory explanation of why some people are poor while others are non-poor is necessary to facilitate the development of mitigating strategies against poverty. There are a number of key determinants, or at least correlates, of poverty. These include; region-level characteristics, community-level characteristics, and household and individual characteristics (Haughton and Khandker 2009). Some of these factors are discussed in detail below.
Economic factors

Unemployment is generally a high risk factor for people falling into poverty (Pribble, Huber and Stephens 2006). St. Lucia’s economy depends primarily on revenue from tourism and banana production, with a small contribution from small-scale manufacturing. Economic development may therefore have a negative effect on poverty by increasing the availability of industrial employment and thus of jobs with higher average wages than in agriculture or services (Pribble, Huber and Stephens 2006). The global recession caused reductions in tourist revenues and foreign investment, significantly slowing growth rates (US State Department 2012) in St. Lucia. Gafar (1998) states that economic growth provides governments with revenues to fund basic services like education, health care and safety nets, for the benefit of the poor, disadvantaged, and vulnerable groups in the society.

Social factors

Janjuar and Kamal (2011) determined from their study that a household whose head has attained more than just secondary school-level education is significantly better-off than households whose heads are less-educated. This is supported by considerable evidence in the literature showing positive correlations between the education levels and life-time earnings (Gafar 1998). Fissuh and Harris (2004) caution that even though education is negatively correlated with poverty, basic education alone will not suffice. Although schooling in St. Lucia is free, the additional costs associated with schooling, including transportation, lunches and books may limit the opportunities and reduce the potential benefit to subgroups that may be unable to meet these costs (Caribbean Development Bank 2006). Rupasingha and Goetz (2007) also assert that communities with a greater proportion of low-skilled workers are generally more likely to experience high rates of poverty. In the Caribbean, most of the poor in the rural areas are engaged in agricultural activities, while the poor in the urban areas seek employment in the informal sector, mainly as casual wage labour (Gafar 1998).

Political factors

St. Lucia is a parliamentary democracy. Pribble et al. (2006) state that democracies offer better protection against poverty than non-democracies as democratic leaders are more responsive to the needs of their population
because they can be held accountable for their actions through the ballot. Rupasingha and Goetz (2007) believe that the ratio of public sector maintenance expenditures such as police and health to total local government expenditures can be used as a measure of an elected official’s determination to stay in power in the short run as opposed to investing in the long term needs of the community. Governments can influence employees’ standards of living through minimum wage policies which directly increase household income, all other things constant. However, the World Bank (1995) differs from this view stating that these policies may have no impact on poverty because a large number of low-income individuals work in the informal sector and thus do not benefit from such legislation. Other scholars maintain that increases in the minimum wage may actually contribute to poverty by forcing a contraction of the formal labour market (Pribble, Huber and Stephens 2006).

**Demographics**

Ali (2010) defines three basic groups of populations: young dependant (age group 0-14 years), old dependant (65 years and over) and the working (15-64 years) class. The latest available (2005) age distribution for the world shows the average percentages for the 3 groups as 28.2%, 7.4% and 64.5%, respectively (Ali 2010). The distribution for the poor category in St. Lucia in 2006 was 39%, 7% and 54%, respectively. The dependency ratio (population of both the young and old as a percentage of the working age population) allows measurement of the burden weighing on members in the labour force within a household (Haughton and Khandker 2009). The world average dependency ratio is reported to be 55.1%, with the highest rates reported for Africa at 81.3% (Ali 2010). St. Lucia’s dependency ratio for the poor population was very high at 85.2% in 2006. Household poverty, coupled with a high burden of care for the young and aged, decreases the chances of female-headed households escaping the poverty trap without external support (ECLAC 2009). Rupasingha and Goetz (2007) concur noting that poverty rates are generally higher for female headed families and families with a larger number of children.

**Spatial factors**

The population of St. Lucia is evenly distributed between urban and rural areas although the capital city, Castries has more than a third of the population.
Poverty is generally high in areas that are geographically isolated, with a low resource base and inhospitable climatic conditions (Haughton and Khandker 2009). Poverty is therefore not independently distributed over space, with clustering occurring by geographical units (Rupasingha and Goetz 2007). The 2006 CPA Report reveals that the following rural districts had high poverty rates in excess of 35%: Anse-la-Rayé (44.9%), Soufrière (42.4%), Choiseul (38.4%), Laborie (42.1%) and Micoud (43.6%). Moreover, the number of vulnerable people appeared to be substantially higher in Sub-Urban Castries. In recognition of the existing spatial variation in poverty incidence in St. Lucia, location of household (district) was included in the statistical analyses as a main factor in this study.

Conclusions

The extent to which various factors affect poverty varies widely depending on the underlying characteristics of the population under consideration. This is because the root causes of poverty are never the same in all countries. It is for this reason that this study was designed to explore the direction and strength of the relationships between factors known to affect poverty incidence and measures of poverty for the St. Lucian population. This poverty analysis is, however, static since the raw data employed is derived solely from the 2006 Survey of Living Conditions conducted in St Lucia.

Methodology

Context of the study

St. Lucia is a Caribbean island measuring 619 km2 in size and is subdivided into 11 administrative districts. In 2006, at the time when the SLC data being used in this study was collected, St. Lucia had a population of 164,842 (Caribbean Development Bank 2006), of which 28.8% (47,474) were considered poor compared to 25.1% in 1995 (ECLAC 2008).

Population and sample

The data used in this study was obtained from the SLC 2006 for St. Lucia. The surveyed sample was selected from a sampling frame derived from the 2001 census. The sample was made up of 1,222 households representing a total of 4,319 persons. This translated into sampling fractions of 2.62 and 2.83% of total households and total population of St. Lucia, respectively.
Operational definitions

The operational definitions for the variables used in this study are presented in the St. Lucia survey of living conditions (SLC) and household budgets 2005/2006 user’s manual (ECLAC 2009). The manual presents a concise data dictionary of variables generated from the survey as well as additional variables created by ECLAC.

Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Is there a significant difference in total expenditure and socio-economic status of male and female-headed households?
2. Is there an association between age, education level and gender of head of household and socio-economic status?
3. Do household variables; size, number of children, and number of earners, affect total household expenditure and hence standard of living of household members?
4. Does the education level of head of household significantly affect household well-being as measured by total expenditure and overall socio-economic status?
5. Of the selected determinants of household welfare (age, gender, and education level of household head, household size and number of children per household), which ones can be used to best predict household total expenditure and in turn standard of living?

Based on these research questions, the following null hypotheses were tested:

1. Education level, age, gender, and occupation of head of household are independent of socioeconomic status of households.
2. Household variables; size, number of children, and number of earners, are independent of socioeconomic status of households.
3. No differences exist in total household expenditure due to variation in education level, age, religion, and gender of head of household.
Data analysis

Independent and dependent variables used in this analysis were selected from the survey data. The characteristics of household heads that were used as independent variables were age, gender, and highest education level. Household characteristics that were used as independent variables were household size, number of children per household, and number of income earners per household. The dependent variables (measures of well-being) were total expenditure and a dichotomous socio-economic status (poor and non-poor) as defined by ECLAC and CSO (St. Lucia).

The effect of independent variables on poverty measures was analysed using a two-way analysis of variance procedure of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 19. In order to take into account the spatial effects of poverty (Geda et al. 2005), districts were included in the analysis as fixed factors. Nominal relationships/associations were analyzed using Pearson’s chi-square test. The strength of the association was interpreted using Cramer’s V coefficient. A stepwise regression analysis was conducted to estimate a model that best predicts total household expenditure. In the regression analysis, head of household variables (age, gender, and education level) and household variables (size and number of children per household) were used as independent variables while total household expenditure was the dependent variable. Dummy variables were created for each determinant but only the dummy variables with the highest correlation with total expenditure in each category were included in the regression analysis. Thus the independent variables entered into the regression model were university education, small household, male heads, no children in household, and household heads aged 36 to 60 years old.

Assumptions and Limitations

Static poverty analysis (analysing poverty rates at a single point in time) employs socio-economic correlates of poverty to formulate statements about the causes of poverty but does not offer additional information on whether people that were previously poor have remained poor over time, which information can only be obtained through longitudinal poverty dynamics data tracking households over time (Yaqub 2000). Another limitation of this study is that it examines the immediate (or proximate) causes of poverty and not the ‘deep’ causes. As such it does not provide a clear understanding of
the fundamental causes of poverty, what White and Booth (2003) refer to as the ‘missing middle’.

Results And Discussion

Place of residence as a determinant of standard of living

Community-level characteristics are known to be associated with the poverty status of households (Haughton and Khandker 2009). St. Lucia’s SLC data revealed that place of residence (district) significantly (P < 0.05) affected household total expenditure. The highest overall total household expenditure figures, and hence highest standard of living, was observed for households found in Castries Sub-urban (EC$ 43 378.85 ± 873.08), Castries City (EC$ 41 322.15 ± 750.82), and Gros-Islet (EC$ 41 791.94 ± 912.90) districts (Table 1). This finding is in agreement with the Caribbean Development Bank (2006) ranking of poverty head count by district in St. Lucia. Geda et al. (2005), in their analysis of determinants of poverty in Kenya, also found that place of residence was strongly associated with level of poverty. The St. Lucian national statistical office (NSO) classified surveyed households into two socioeconomic status categories (poor and non-poor). The three districts where household total expenditure was highest i.e., Castries City, Castries Sub-Urban, and Gros-Islet, had the highest proportions of non-poor households ranging from 81.2 – 91.9%, much higher than the national average of 78.4%. The proportion of non-poor households in the rural districts of Choiseul, Dennery, Micoud, Soufriere, and Anse-la-raye/Canaries was lower than the national average at 75.0, 73.2, 65.7, 62.2, and 67.7%, respectively. This confirms that households in rural areas tend to have lower living standards compared to those in urban areas. Higher poverty prevalence rates in rural areas in many developing countries could be due to the lack, in many cases, of electricity, potable water, proper sanitation, educational and health facilities, and decent housing (Gafar 1998). The reliance on agriculture in most rural areas also makes households more susceptible to poverty. Geda and co-workers (2005) found that being employed in agriculture accounts for a good part of the probability of being poor. An appropriate poverty reduction strategy would therefore entail investment in the agricultural sector to increase productivity and profitability. Such investments would also require provision of readily accessible markets for agricultural and other economic products for rural households.
Proximate Determinants of Poverty among St. Lucians

Head of household variables

Gender

It is widely believed that the incidence of female headship has increased in both developed and developing countries and that this has increased the likelihood of households descending into poverty (Chant and Campling 1997). The gender of the head of a household is thought to have a significant impact on a household’s socioeconomic status. Indeed, Haughton and Khandker (2009) suggest that female-headed households tend to be poorer than those headed by men. It is, however, unlikely that this finding is applicable to all countries. It was observed that more households are headed by males (56.4%) than females (43.6%) in St. Lucia. Gender of head of household and district together with their interaction significantly (P < 0.05) affected total household expenditure. Household expenditure means as influenced by gender of head of household within place of residence (district) are presented in Table 2. Total household expenditure was higher in male-headed households than in female headed households in all districts except Anse-la-raye and Dennery, where total expenditure did not differ (P > 0.05). These results confirm that in terms of household structure, households headed by women are far more likely to be poor than male-headed households. Lampietti and Stalker (2000) found that poverty rates in female-headed households are 3 – 4 times as high as those for the overall population. Female headship result from a variety of causes: death of a husband, divorce and de facto headship, arising, for instance, from the illness or migration of a spouse to find work in an urban area. As such, female-headed households are likely to descend into poverty because single parent families have just one potential earner who works fewer hours due to care giving responsibilities (Rynell 2008). It is instructive that the only time when male and female-headed households appear to be at par with regards total household expenditure is when these households are located in poorer districts of Anse-la-raye and Dennery. Female-headed households are also disproportionately poor because of lower wages women receive at the work place compared to men. Women also tend to work fewer hours due to responsibilities to other members of the household (Rynell 2008). These findings suggest the need for the implementation of gender sensitive poverty alleviating strategies. Such strategies may include empowering women through additional training/education so that they become competitive in the labour market and attract higher wages. In addition, welfare strategies...
that target female-headed households will go a long way in reducing poverty incidence in these households.

Age

The life cycle effect is a major source of variation in the risk of poverty between different age groups. Households headed by young persons and the elderly are more likely to have income below the poverty line compared to households headed by people of a working age. In this study, the ages of heads of households were re-coded into 6 categories as follows: ≤ 20 years; 21 – 25 years; 26 – 35 years; 36 – 60 years; 61 – 65 years; and >65 years old. The ANOVA results showed that the two main factors (age groups and district) and their interaction significantly (P < 0.05) affected total household expenditure. Results presented in Table 3 confirm that households headed by the young and elderly are more likely to descend into poverty. For most districts in St. Lucia, the total household expenditure is significantly lower for heads that are below 25 and those older than 65 years of age. Households headed by persons aged between 26 and 65 years have earning potential. This pattern was observed in Castries City, Anse-La-Raye, Vieux-Fort, Micoud, Dennery and Gros-Islet. The largest differences between the age groups were observed in urban, well-to-do districts than in rural, poorer, districts. The risk of poverty among the elderly varies depending on the national pension systems, specifically the link between earnings while working and retirement pensions. The younger household heads lack the required skills and experience in the labour market, as such they tend to command less wages compared to their older counterparts.

Education level

In St. Lucia only 4.1 % of household heads are educated up to university level. A very high proportion of household heads (56.6 %) had, at most, a basic primary education. Geda et al., (2005) reported that heads of poor households are likely to have attained a maximum of basic primary education. Results showed that the two main factors (education level and district) and their interaction significantly (P < 0.05) affected total household expenditure. In 6 of the 10 districts, total household expenditure increased with an increase in the level of education of heads of household (Table 4). These 6 districts were Castries City, Castries Sub-Urban, Soufriere, Choiseul, Dennery and Gros-Islet. Households headed by persons with a university
education had the highest (P < 0.05) total expenditure while those headed by persons with a primary education or no formal education had the least total expenditure. Earnings from employment are the most important part of household income. Intuitively, the more educated the head of household, the more likely that he/she is formally employed and earns enough to keep a household from descending into poverty. Education can also contribute to increased productivity in other areas, such as farming and other informal enterprises. In Chile, Ferreira and Litchfield (1998) found that between 25 and 33% of household income differences can be explained by the level of education of household heads. Given that 55.6% of household heads had no more than a basic primary education, the government of St. Lucia should consider expanding investment into secondary education. Although such a drive may not necessarily improve competitiveness on the labour market, the knowledge gained could be useful in the management of informal business enterprises. When deciding which education level to expand and invest in, it is important to consider recommendations by Gemmel (1996), which are based on the economic status of the country. Gemmmel reckons that primary education is most important for economic growth in low income developing countries, secondary education for middle income developing countries, and tertiary education for rich countries. According to the human capital theory, people with higher levels of educational attainment receive higher wages because of their higher productivity (Schultz 1961). When it comes to the formulation of poverty reduction policies it is important to consider that the relationship between poverty and education operates in two directions: firstly, without an adequate education people are often constrained to a life of poverty and, secondly, poor people are often unable to obtain access to an adequate education (van der Berg 2008). This, of course, creates a vicious cycle of poverty that should be broken by carefully designed poverty alleviation strategies targeting educational attainment in poor households.

Nominal relationships: head of household variables vs socioeconomic status

The chi-square test for association was run to examine the association between household socioeconomic status (SES) (poor; non-poor) as defined by ECLAC (2009) and age, gender, and education level of household heads.
Age of household head vs SES

The results show a significant (P < 0.0005) association between age of household head and SES in all 10 districts of St. Lucia. Table 5 presents Cramer’s V scores for this relationship by district. The interpretation of Cramer’s V scores used in this study follows Bryman and Cramer (1997)’s classification: 0.00 = no relationship; ≤ 0.19 = very low association; 0.20 – 0.39 = low association; 0.40 – 0.69 = modest association; 0.70 – 0.89 = high association; 0.90 – 1 = very high association. The square of the Cramer’s V coefficient indicates the proportion of the variance in socioeconomic status that is explained by age of head of household. The highest Cramer’s V coefficients were observed in Soufriere (Cramer’s V coefficient = 0.388) and Dennery (Cramer’s V coefficient = 0.309) districts, in which the number of poor households is highest in the < 20 and > 65 years age groups. However, in both districts, age of household heads only explained between 9.5 and 15% of the variation in SES. In the rest of the districts this figure is lower than 5% indicating very weak relationships between these two variables.

The chi-square test for association confirms the reported significant effect of the age of household on the welfare of household in St. Lucia. However, it is clear that the contribution of this factor to poverty status of the household is small in most districts. This is hardly surprising considering the multidimensional nature of poverty and hence the likely discordance between a standard of living indicator such as total household expenditure (used in the analysis of variance) and poverty indices such as socioeconomic status (used in the chi-square test for association) which segregates households into poor or non-poor categories.

Gender of household head vs SES

The results show a significant (P < 0.0005) association between gender of household head and SES in all districts except for Soufriere, Laborie, Dennery and Gros-Islet. Even though a significant association between the two variables was observed, the strength of the association as measured by the Cramer’s V coefficients was mostly very low (Table 5). The most variance in SES explained by gender of household head was 4.7% in Choiseul, which is considered to be very low. This could be because SES is an aggregate measure of poverty status that incorporates a number of dimensions, as such; gender could only explain a small fraction of the variation in SES.
**Education level of household head vs SES**

The results show a significant (P < 0.0005) association between education level of household head and SES in all 10 districts of St. Lucia. Anse-La-Raye had the strongest relationship between education level of head of household and SES (Table 5). However, education level could only explain a maximum of 9.3% of the variation in socioeconomic status of households. The association between education level and SES of household was lowest in Castries City, Micoud and Dennery districts with Cramer’s V coefficients of 0.177, 0.168 and 0.144, respectively. All households headed by persons with a university or SALCC education were non-poor.

**Household variables**

**Household size**

Household sizes were re-coded into ‘small’ (1 -3 members), ‘medium’ (4 – 6 members), ‘large’ (7 – 10 members), and ‘very large’ (11 – 19 members) households for statistical analysis. The majority (55.5 %) of households in St. Lucia were classified as ‘small’ with between 1 and 3 members while ‘very large’ households had the least frequency at 1.4%. Medium-sized households made up 34.7 % while large-sized households made up 8.4% of the total households surveyed.

Table 6 shows the variation in total household expenditure with household size and place of residence (district). Very large households had the highest total expenditure figures while small households had the least expenditure figures in all districts except Anse-La-Raye, Soufriere, and Gros-Islet. There is considerable evidence of a negative correlation between household size and standard of living in developing countries (Lanjouw and Ravallion 1995). People living in large households are typically poor. The results obtained in this study do not seem to support this view at first glance since very large households had the largest total expenditure/consumption figures in all districts except in Anse-La-Raye, Soufriere, and Gros-Islet. The presence of a large number of household members may mean that total expenditure figures are higher than smaller-sized households; however, per capita expenditure could be much lower in very large households. The existence of size economies in large households means that we have to be careful not to generalize that larger households tend to be poorer (Lanjouw and Ravallion...
Larger households that are engaged in production enterprises such as agriculture may use their large numbers to increase productivity and counter the negative effects of numbers of poverty status. As such, it is possible that larger households may have more earners per household than smaller households. When comparing households of different sizes it is critical to pay attention to demographic differences. It is also possible that for each society there exist a household size threshold beyond which not even size economies will save households from descending into poverty. For effective poverty reduction policies targeted at large families, this threshold needs to be established and attention paid to the demographic properties of participating households.

Children per household

The number of children per household ranged from 0 to 8. About 47.7% of household heads reported that they had no children in their households. The proportion of households in each category declined as the number of children per household increased up to 7 or more. About 0.6% of the households had 7 or more children. The one-child category had the second highest frequency at 23.4%. Total household expenditure increased with an increase in the number of children per household (Table 7). This can partly be explained by behavioural changes in the household that has welcomed a new baby into the family. Family members may work harder or provide additional financial support to ease the financial impact of an added family member. In addition, in some societies children make financial contributions to the household at a relatively young age. However, total household expenditure figures from Castries City and Castries Sub-Urban districts seem to support the widely held view that increase in human fertility, and hence number of children per household, increases the likelihood of households descending into poverty. In these districts, households with 6 or more children have lower total expenditure indicating reduced income. The relationship between human fertility and household welfare is very sensitive to the measures used for welfare status. Indeed, Kim, Engelhardt and Prskawetz (2006) found that when total household expenditure is used as a measure of welfare, the result does not produce a decisive sign of the correlation between fertility and household welfare. On the other hand, when per capita consumption expenditure is used as a standard of living indicator, a decisive sign of correlation may be obtained. There is evidence that fertility rates, and hence the number of children per household, have an important bearing on poverty.
While in some societies children can make a financial contribution to the household, it is generally agreed that children are a financial burden in high fertility settings. Indeed, children consume more than they contribute in developing countries such that the birth of a child may reduce the standard of living in the household. It is important to note that the relationship between poverty and fertility is not always unidirectional but dependent on the stage of economic development of a society (Kim et al. 2006). In very poor countries, this relationship tends to be negative while in contemporary developing countries the relationship is actually positive. In poor countries, there is little doubt that a large number of dependent children in a household are likely to negatively affect its poverty status. As such, per capita income grows more rapidly when the number of earners is growing faster than the number of children because children are mainly consumers, making very little, if any, contribution to household finances. In high fertility societies, fertility reduction is a potentially powerful tool for reducing poverty. However, according to results obtained in this study, St. Lucia is not a high fertility society with nearly 50% of households having no children at all.

**Earners per household**

All other factors constant, the more earners residing in a household the less likely that a household could descend into poverty. This is because higher numbers of earners contribute more income to the household, thus consumption expenditure is also expected to be higher. The number of earners per household ranged from 0 to 14 yet 60% of all household heads reported that their households had no earners. Although this may seem like a strange finding, it makes sense when put in the context of the recorded data on occupational positions where 63.5% of household heads did not state their occupations. It would seem that those respondents who did not state their occupations were then categorised as not being in gainful employment causing an inflation of the number of households without an earner. The variable ‘earners per household’ was defined by the St. Lucia National Statistical Office. Given this scenario, the utility of the data on earners per household, much like the occupational positions data, is doubtful. No further analysis of this variable is presented in this study.
Nominal relationships: household variables vs socioeconomic status of household

Household size vs SES

A significant (P < 0.0005) association between the household size of and SES in all 10 districts of St Lucia was observed. A very low association was recorded for Vieux-Fort (Cramer’s V coefficient = 0.101) and Gros-Islet (Cramer’s V coefficient = 0.141) districts, while Anse-La-Raye was the only district in which a modest association (the strongest association) (Table 8). As household size increased, the proportion of non-poor households declined while that of poor households increased. This confirms the existence of a negative correlation between household size and standard of living in St. Lucia, in agreement with the findings of Lanjouw and Ravallion (1995). People living in large households are typically poor. However, household size could only explain a maximum of 18.9% of the variation seen in SES of households.

Number of children per household vs SES

A significant (P < 0.0005) association between the number of children per household and SES in all 10 districts of St. Lucia was observed. The highest Cramer’s V coefficients were observed in Anse-La-Raye (0.649), Choiseul (0.571), and Laborie (0.556) districts (Table 8). Given the Cramer’s V coefficients reported in Anse-La-Raye, Choiseul, and Laborie districts it can be calculated that the number of children per household explained 42.1 %, 32.6 %, and 30.9 % of the variance observed in SES of households, respectively. As the number of children per household increases the proportion of non-poor household declines while the proportion of poor households increases. This is particularly true for Anse-La-Raye, Choiseul and Laborie districts, which had the highest Cramer’s V coefficients. These findings confirm that in St. Lucia, children consume more than they contribute thus the birth of a child reduces the standard of living of members of a household.

Predicting total household expenditure

All five factors entered into the model (education level of household head (university education), household size (small household), gender of household head (male heads), number of children per household (no
children in household), and age of household head (household heads aged 36 to 60 years old)) emerged as significant predictors of total household expenditure ($F = 1673.7; P < 0.05$). With a standardized coefficient ($\beta$) of 0.289 ($P < 0.05$), university education was the strongest predictor of total household expenditure accounting for 7.8 % of the total variance in household expenditure (Table 9). This highlights the importance of education as a determinant of household welfare. The government of St Lucia could do well to revisit its investment in the education of its citizens. There is justification for strengthening the primary and secondary education programs as well as expanding adult literacy programs. Specific short-term training programs, such as farmer training sessions, can also be used to impart useful knowledge to improve the livelihoods of members of poor households. The second strongest factor was small household size (1 – 3 members) ($\beta = -0.277; P < 0.05$) accounting for an additional 5.9 % of the variation in total household expenditure. This shows that there is a negative partial correlation between small household size and total household expenditure, confirming earlier results.

The third strongest factor was male heads ($\beta = 0.105; P < 0.05$) followed by number of children per household size (no children) ($\beta = 0.065; P < 0.05$) and age of household head (36 – 60 years old) ($\beta = 0.023; P < 0.05$). Overall the model explains 15.3 % of the variance in total household expenditure. The unstandardised regression equation for predicting total household expenditure for a given household head is as follows:

$$Y = 29868.95 + 34939.46X_1 - 13396.18X_2 + 5069.08X_3 + 3125.32X_4 + 1085.27X_5;$$

where: $Y = \text{total household expenditure (EC$)}$; $X_1 = \text{university education}$; $X_2 = \text{small household}$; $X_3 = \text{male head}$; $X_4 = \text{no children in household}$; $X_5 = 36 – 60 \text{ years of age}$.

**Conclusions And Recommendations**

The standard of living across districts varied greatly with households in urban districts such as Castries City and Castries Sub-Urban being more likely to be non-poor. Appropriate poverty reduction strategies should be custom-made for each district or a homogenous group of districts. Male headed households tended to have higher total expenditure figures compared
to female households and this relationship was stronger in households in rural districts than those in urban districts. However, when the welfare indicator was changed from total expenditure to overall socioeconomic status, the relationship between gender of household head and poverty status of a household was very weak in all districts. Households headed by younger persons and those headed by the elderly were likely to be poor than other households. Larger households with a higher proportion of members being children have a higher probability of descending into poverty. However, human fertility is clearly not a major problem for St Lucia because nearly 50% of surveyed households have no children. Multiple regression analysis also revealed education level to be the strongest determinant of household welfare. Expanding educational programs could be one avenue through which poverty may be reduced in St. Lucia. There are numerous factors that influence the living standards in a population. Poverty is the result of a nexus of social, cultural, economic and political factors, thus strategies that address one front alone are unlikely to solve the problem of poverty entirely. However, it is hoped that this study provides a sneak preview of the dynamics of poverty as influenced by a selected group of determinants.

Acknowledgements

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References


van der Berg, S. (2008). ‘Poverty and Education.’ Education Policy Series Booklet No. 10. International Academy of Education (Belgium) and International Institute for Educational Planning (France), UNESCO.


Table 1. Total household expenditure (EC$) by place of residence (district)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total expenditure (EC$)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Castries City</td>
<td>41 322.15\textsuperscript{a}</td>
<td>750.819</td>
<td>39 850.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castries Sub-Urban</td>
<td>43 378.86\textsuperscript{a}</td>
<td>873.078</td>
<td>41 667.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anse-La-Raye</td>
<td>20 732.72\textsuperscript{b}</td>
<td>1 269.203</td>
<td>18 245.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soufriere</td>
<td>33 084.42\textsuperscript{c}</td>
<td>1 051.386</td>
<td>31 023.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choiseul</td>
<td>18 407.86\textsuperscript{b}</td>
<td>1 552.595</td>
<td>15 364.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborie</td>
<td>18 556.54\textsuperscript{b}</td>
<td>1 855.182</td>
<td>14 920.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vieux-Fort</td>
<td>35 198.62\textsuperscript{c}</td>
<td>969.106</td>
<td>33 299.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micoud</td>
<td>26 247.97\textsuperscript{d}</td>
<td>566.917</td>
<td>25 136.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennery</td>
<td>11 896.15\textsuperscript{e}</td>
<td>1 175.581</td>
<td>9 591.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gros-Islet</td>
<td>41 791.94\textsuperscript{a}</td>
<td>912.928</td>
<td>40 002.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. Effect of gender of household head and place of residence (district) on household total expenditure (EC$) (mean ± standard error)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Male heads</th>
<th>Female heads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Castries City</td>
<td>34 864&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; ± 488.7</td>
<td>28 913&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; ± 464.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castries Sub-urban</td>
<td>32 455&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; ± 263.2</td>
<td>28 013&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; ± 291.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anse-La-Raye</td>
<td>21 694&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; ± 603.3</td>
<td>22 199&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; ± 874.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soufriere</td>
<td>30 831&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; ± 658.0</td>
<td>28 009&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; ± 781.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choiseul</td>
<td>28 851&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; ± 781.9</td>
<td>16 011&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; ± 815.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborie</td>
<td>22 961&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; ± 732.3</td>
<td>18 965&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; ± 761.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vieux-Fort</td>
<td>33 395&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; ± 460.0</td>
<td>25 794&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; ± 636.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micoud</td>
<td>29 861&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; ± 465.3</td>
<td>21 361&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; ± 540.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennery</td>
<td>19 825&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; ± 568.6</td>
<td>20 612&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; ± 540.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gros-Islet</td>
<td>37 433&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; ± 353.4</td>
<td>28 106&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; ± 455.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a,b</sup> In a row, means with similar lowercase superscripts do not differ (P > 0.05).
### Table 3. Effect age of household heads and place of residence (district) on total household expenditure (ECS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Age group</th>
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<th>21 - 25</th>
<th>26 - 35</th>
<th>36 - 60</th>
<th>61 - 65</th>
<th>&gt; 65</th>
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<tr>
<td>Castries City</td>
<td></td>
<td>17 002.5&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>28 368.1&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>32 343.8&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>40 859.7&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>30 232.0&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Castries Urban</td>
<td>Sub-</td>
<td>34 207.5&lt;sup&gt;b,c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>21 982.4&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>22 787.1&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>31 648.2&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>31 802.3&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>35 654.0&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anse-La-Raye</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17 099.5&lt;sup&gt;a,b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>24 021.0&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>23 509.6&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>13 707.8&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>17 623.2&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soufriere</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>17 480.8&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>27 829.8&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>29 718.3&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>37 300.1&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choiseul</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>34 303.8&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>25 543.5&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>16 679.7&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>11 949.8&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborie</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>14 282.6&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>23 907.4&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>14 745.7&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>20 110.2&lt;sup&gt;b,c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vieux-Fort</td>
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<td>20 335.6&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>32 943.7&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>32 948.6&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>34 435.8&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>18 071.4&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>26 484.6&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>28 057.9&lt;sup&gt;l,x&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>31 784.0&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>19 369.2&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennery</td>
<td></td>
<td>9 868.7&lt;sup&gt;n&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>17 375.3&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>22 902.1&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>22 690.3&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>14 741.7&lt;sup&gt;h,b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>16 154.8&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gros-Islet</td>
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<td>41 366.8&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>32 295.5&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>24 280.7&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a,b,c</sup> In a row, means with similar lowercase superscripts do not differ (P > 0.05).

<sup>1</sup> District had no heads of households within age group
Table 4. Variation of total household expenditure (EC$) with level of education of head of household and place of residence (district)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Highest level of education</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None¹</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>SALCC²</td>
<td>Technical/Vocational</td>
<td>University</td>
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<tr>
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<td>8 557&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>27 783&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>35 100&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>38 530&lt;sup&gt;cd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>43 912&lt;sup&gt;de&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>45 623&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castries Urban</td>
<td>21 186&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>27 966&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>31 028&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>36 571&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>39 448&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>59 787&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anse-La-Raye</td>
<td>21 382&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>26 217&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>15 312&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>15 346&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>48 194&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>48 194&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soufriere</td>
<td>- 28 678&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>22 164&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>31 704&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>52 805&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>52 805&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choiseul</td>
<td>- 19 776&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>16 423&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>50 492&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>41 979&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>41 979&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborie</td>
<td>- 21 693&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>22 661&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 704&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>43 277&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vieux-Fort</td>
<td>- 28 904&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>29 024&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>55 881&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>34 649&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>57 645&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>57 645&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micoud</td>
<td>- 26 956&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>32 687&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>31 908&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>36 638&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Dennery</td>
<td>- 19 095&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>21 109&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>17 907&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>52 960&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>51 734&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>31 916&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>67 017&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>72 002&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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</table>

¹None = no formal education

²SALCC = Sir Arthur Lewis Community College graduate

<sup>a</sup>, <sup>b</sup>, <sup>c</sup> In a row, means with similar lowercase superscripts do not differ (P > 0.05).

³No heads of households had this level of education within the district
Table 5. Measures of association (Cramer’s V1 scores) between head of household variables and socioeconomic status (SES) of household by district

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Education level</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Castries City</td>
<td>0.076***</td>
<td>0.042**</td>
<td>0.177***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castries Sub-Urban</td>
<td>0.134***</td>
<td>0.068***</td>
<td>0.238***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anse-La-Raye</td>
<td>0.124***</td>
<td>0.182***</td>
<td>0.305***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soufriere</td>
<td>0.388***</td>
<td>NS²</td>
<td>0.280***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Choiseul</td>
<td>0.223***</td>
<td>0.216***</td>
<td>0.262***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborie</td>
<td>0.169***</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>0.214***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vieux-Fort</td>
<td>0.210***</td>
<td>0.176***</td>
<td>0.235***</td>
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<td>Micoud</td>
<td>0.170***</td>
<td>0.088***</td>
<td>0.168***</td>
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<td>Dennery</td>
<td>0.309***</td>
<td>NS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gros-Islet</td>
<td>0.156***</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>0.281***</td>
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</table>

¹Cramer’s V scores are only reported where results of chi-square tests are significant (P < 0.05)

²NS means $\chi^2$ test was not significant (P > 0.05); ** significant (P < 0.01); *** significant (P < 0.001)
Table 6. Variation of total household expenditure (EC$) with household size and place of residence (district)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Household size&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Large</th>
<th>Very large</th>
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<td>Castries City</td>
<td>25 754&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>41 920&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>35 576&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>45 719&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castries Sub-Urban</td>
<td>27 599&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>34 628&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anse-La-Raye</td>
<td>15 041&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>25 347&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>29 742&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>21 814&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soufriere</td>
<td>17 240&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>43 083&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>42 663&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>25 217&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choiseul</td>
<td>18 445&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>30 320&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>38 251&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>40 500&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborie</td>
<td>16 206&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>26 886&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>29 057&lt;sup&gt;bc&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>38 951&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vieux-Fort</td>
<td>23 836&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>35 196&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>50 137&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>61 662&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micoud</td>
<td>20 327&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>27 972&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>34 289&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>65 354&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennery</td>
<td>15 620&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>25 875&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>22 510&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gros-Islet</td>
<td>28 509&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>44 758&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>32 912&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>27 384&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a, b, c</sup> In a row, means with similar lowercase superscripts do not differ (P > 0.05).

<sup>1</sup>Household size: small (1-3 members); medium (4-6 members); large (7-10 members); and very large (11-19 members).

<sup>1</sup>No households in the district were of this size.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Number of children per household</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27 531&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSU&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>31 147&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALR&lt;sup&gt;11&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>18 648&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soufriere</td>
<td>24 419&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choiseul</td>
<td>13 401&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborie</td>
<td>17 937&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vieux-Fort</td>
<td>25 638&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micoud</td>
<td>21 197&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennery</td>
<td>15 003&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gros-Islet</td>
<td>32 797&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a, b, c</sup> In a row, means with similar lowercase superscripts do not differ (P > 0.05).

<sup>a</sup>No households in the district had this number of children.

<sup>9</sup>District: 9Castries Urban; <sup>10</sup>Castries Sub-Urban; <sup>11</sup>Anse-La-Raye.
Table 8. Measures of association (Cramer’s V1 score) household variables and socioeconomic status (SES) of household by district

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Household size</th>
<th>Number of children per household</th>
<th>Number of earners per household</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Castries City</td>
<td>0.329***</td>
<td>0.353***</td>
<td>0.300***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castries Sub-Urban</td>
<td>0.297***</td>
<td>0.283***</td>
<td>0.222***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anse-La-Raye</td>
<td>0.435***</td>
<td>0.649***</td>
<td>0.414***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soufriere</td>
<td>0.271***</td>
<td>0.493***</td>
<td>0.268***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choiseul</td>
<td>0.387***</td>
<td>0.571***</td>
<td>0.561***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborie</td>
<td>0.360***</td>
<td>0.556***</td>
<td>0.430***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vieux-Fort</td>
<td>0.101***</td>
<td>0.256***</td>
<td>0.258***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micoud</td>
<td>0.287***</td>
<td>0.380***</td>
<td>0.240***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennery</td>
<td>0.264***</td>
<td>0.286***</td>
<td>0.208***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gros-Islet</td>
<td>0.141***</td>
<td>0.320***</td>
<td>0.364***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Cramer’s V scores are only reported where results of chi-square tests are significant (P < 0.05)

*** Significant at P < 0.001
Table 9. Results of the stepwise multiple regression analysis: Predictors of total household expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$R$</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>$P$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University education</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>0.279</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>-0.277</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small household</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>0.371</td>
<td>-0.277</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male head</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.387</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No children</td>
<td>0.153</td>
<td>0.391</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>0.053</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36–60 years of age</td>
<td>0.153</td>
<td>0.391</td>
<td>0.053</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Human Trafficking in Barbados: Achievements and Continuing Hurdles

Tom Durbin and Jill St. George
Faculty of Law, the University of the West Indies
Cave Hill Campus, Barbados

Commentary

With the first individuals charged under the Barbados human trafficking legislation in April 2013, the offence is once again receiving significant attention across the Caribbean region. Barbados has been placed on the Tier Two Watch List by the United States Department of State and recognised internationally as both a ‘source’ and ‘destination’ state for human trafficking, as well as a trafficking route. Barbados is placed in an unenviable position, being alongside states such as South Sudan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Liberia on the Watch List, demonstrating how the only ‘developed’ state of the region has fallen behind many of its Caribbean neighbours. In response to the prevalence of human trafficking, the Barbados Government has sought to prevent, prosecute and protect, but measures remain in their infancy.

It ought to concern every person, because it is a debasement of our common humanity. It ought to concern every community, because it tears at our social fabric. It ought to concern every business, because it distorts markets. It ought to concern every nation, because it endangers public health and fuels violence and organised crime. I’m talking about the injustice, the outrage, of human trafficking, which must be called by its true name - modern slavery.'

Human trafficking involves the acquisition of people by means such as force, fraud or deception, with the aim of exploiting them. The exploitation generally consists of forced labour, sexual services, human tissue removal and/or organ removal. The movement of trafficked persons exists both domestically and internationally, and affects almost every state across the globe in one form or another.

The United Nations (UN) describes the process of human trafficking as involving three facets:

*The Act*

Recruitment; transportation; transfer; harbouring; or receipt of persons.

*The Means*

Threat or use of force; coercion; abduction; fraud; deception; abuse of power or vulnerability; or giving payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim.

*The Purpose*

For the purpose of exploitation, which includes exploiting the prostitution of others; sexual exploitation; forced labour; slavery; or similar practices and the removal of organs.

Global focus through the media has been aimed predominantly at the trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation, however the umbrella term ‘human trafficking’ includes forced labour; slavery; and organ removal, and is not gender specific. It is worthy of note however, that the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation constitutes the majority of global human trafficking. In 2007, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) reported that 43% of those trafficked globally are used for sexual exploitation, and of that 43%, 98% are female. In 2009, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) presented a report which gave the percentage break down of trafficked persons as follows; Men: 12%, Children: 22% and Women: 66%.
The prevalence of human trafficking is attributed to the lucrative and profitable nature of the crime. In 2005, the ILO estimated the global annual profits made from the exploitation of trafficked forced labour to be US$31.6 billion, with US$1.3 billion (4.1%) being generated in the Caribbean and Latin America.

The process of human trafficking involves the use of countries in three ways: as source states; transit states; and destination states. Source states are the states from which victims are taken; transit states are the states through which victims are moved through en route to their destination state. States are often classified internationally in more than one category. For example certain reports classify Barbados as a source, transit and a destination state, while other reports classify it as a source and destination state.

According to statistics compiled by the ILO in 2006, 161 countries are reported to be affected by human trafficking by being a source, transit, or destination state. People are reported to be trafficked from 127 countries to be exploited in 137 countries. Those countries of source, transit and destination cross every continent through every type of economy. There are few offences which affect such a large number of states of differing development levels, geography, GDP and population. Such figures demonstrate the very global nature of human trafficking.

**Human trafficking in the Caribbean**

‘Human smuggling, especially the trafficking of women and children is one of the most sordid features of population movements in the contemporary Caribbean’.1

Though accurate statistics are difficult to ascertain for obvious reasons, many organisations have attempted to estimate the number of forced migrants in the Caribbean region. Unfortunately, statistics encompass Latin America due to the small size of the Caribbean alone. The non-governmental organisation (NGO) Free the Slaves estimates that over 1.3 million people are enslaved in Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2009, the ILO estimated that at any one time, a minimum of 250,000 people in Latin America and the Caribbean

1Contravbanohumano en el Caribe, Dr Jorge Duany – 21st January 2011.
are engaged in forced labour, including sexual exploitation, as a result of human trafficking. The disparity in the statistics provides an example of the problems faced when ascertaining the number of people who have been trafficked, either within their own state or to another. Neither the Department of State Reports nor the United Nations Global Report on Trafficking in Persons provide any statistics on the estimated number of victims.

The prevalence of human trafficking in the Caribbean has been attributed to a number of factors. In 2010, the International Organisation for Migration published a ‘Legal Review of Trafficking in Persons in the Caribbean’, focussing on eight states in the region. Those states were The Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Dutch Antilles, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and St. Lucia. When assessing the factors which contribute to human trafficking in the Caribbean, the following were identified:

**Dependence on Tourism**

In general, states tend to have a high dependence on one or two income sources, with the predominant source of income being tourism. In the Caribbean as a whole, it is often quoted that one quarter of all employment in the region is held in the tourism sector. Such high reliance on an erratic, fickle sector leaves countries particularly vulnerable when global economic downturns occur. Such unemployment leads to a potentially higher number of victims. In addition, it is reported that a growing amount of tourism in the Caribbean is sex tourism. The Dutch Antilles\(^2\) and the Dominican Republic\(^3\) are widely reported as being ‘sex tourism’ destinations, along with Brazil and Colombia in Latin America.

**Geography of the Region**

Island states are dependent on high levels of movement into and out of the countries for tourism, but such movement affects the state’s ability to police both those arriving and leaving. Firstly, the number of people leaving and arriving daily coupled with limited financial resources make it difficult

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\(^2\)See ‘Sex Tourism and Trafficking in the Dutch Caribbean’, published in the Curacao Chronicle, November 2012.

\(^3\)See ‘Sex Tourism Booming in the Dominican Republic’ published in Caribbean 360, February 2013.
for states to adequately ensure that visitors do not overstay. Secondly, the majority of borders within the Caribbean are coastline and often spread over a large number of small islands. The extent of the coastlines makes monitoring borders very difficult, and invariably borders are permeable in places. This is particularly so where states are archipelagos with a large number of islands, such as The Bahamas (with over 700 islands) and St. Vincent and the Grenadines (32 islands). Difficult and permeable borders coupled with limited resources leave islands exposed to uncontrolled entry and exit into their states.

**Legal, Economic and Social Factors**

Many states in the Caribbean have experienced an increase in violent crime in recent years. Using data from the United States Overseas Security Advisory Council, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines all experienced increases in the number of homicides from 2010 – 2011, while from 2009 – 2010, Barbados saw an increase in the number of robberies and homicides. This leads to a strain on resources, which naturally has an effect on the ability of law enforcement, particularly with respect to preventative measures. Further, from a victim perspective, many states are experiencing high unemployment, leaving individuals more vulnerable to both internal and external trafficking.

From a social perspective, the following was noted by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM):

‘there are also several areas of ambivalence that may have an impact on the domestic willingness to combat trafficking, especially trafficking for forced prostitution (...)Aside from the problems that high flows of visitors pose for the effective regulation of migration, many of these visitors are coming to the region for the purpose of sex tourism (...)In some countries, the brothel owners seem to receive less scrutiny than the sex workers, and many irregular migrants working in the sex trade are deported without further investigation. This trend, combined with a strong history of tolerated gender-based violence in many of the states, leaves female migrants and potential trafficking victims in a vulnerable position.’ (IOM, 2010)
Social factors, such as gender inequality, are believed to have greatly impacted the level of human trafficking in the region.

**International Law**

*The Development*

International legal instruments aimed at combating forms of human trafficking date back to 1929, when the League of Nations created the Slavery Convention 1929. Article 1 of the Convention stated:

‘For the purpose of the present Convention, the following definitions are agreed upon:

(1) Slavery is the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised.

(2) The slave trade includes all acts involved in the capture, acquisition or disposal of a person with intent to reduce him to slavery; all acts involved in the acquisition of a slave with a view to selling or exchanging him; all acts of disposal by sale or exchange of a slave acquired with a view to being sold or exchanged, and, in general, every act of trade or transport in slaves.’

The 1929 Convention was strengthened though the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery (1956).

Instruments of international law which have greatly assisted in combating human trafficking include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948; the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights 1966; the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others 1949; and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women 1979.

The most recent instruments of international law designed to both prevent, and punish human trafficking are located in the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) and its two related protocols: the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish

As is the case with all international legal instruments, states have the option to become signatories or parties. Signatories are states that have demonstrated political willingness and support for the Convention or Protocol, but have not agreed to be legally bound by it. A party to a Convention or Protocol is a state that has given its consent to be bound and, subject to reservations, is legally bound by the provisions, and accepts the obligations created under the instrument.

United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC)

UNTOC is the central international legal instrument in the fight against transnational organised crime. The Convention entered into force on 29th September 2003, and is supplemented by two Protocols which address specific areas of concern. States must be a party to the Convention before they are able to become parties to any of its Protocols. By becoming a party to the Convention, states commit themselves to taking a series of measures against transnational organised crime. These measures include:

- The creation of domestic criminal offences;
- The adoption of new and sweeping frameworks for extradition, mutual legal assistance and law enforcement cooperation;
- The promotion of training and technical assistance for building or upgrading the necessary capacity of national authorities.

Barbados became a signatory to the UNTOC in 2001, but as of July 2013 is yet to become a party. 177 states in total have become parties to UNTOC, including the majority of states in the Caribbean. Those states that are a party include St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti. St. Lucia is also only a signatory.
**The Trafficking in Persons Protocol (TIPP)**

TIPP came into force on 25\textsuperscript{th} December 2003. The United Nations praised TIPP for being the first international, legally binding instrument with an agreed definition on trafficking in persons. With a global offence such as human trafficking, having an agreed definition is vital. Such a definition provides all states with a standard upon which to build their domestic criminal legislation, providing for anticipated cohesion and cooperation in both investigation and prosecution.

A further objective of the Protocol is to both protect, and assist victims of human trafficking, while maintaining respect for their human rights.

TIPP defines human trafficking through Article 3 as:

‘the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.’

As of July 2013, 165 states are parties to TIPP. Those parties to TIPP include St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Antigua and Barbuda. Barbados is currently one of nine states globally that are signatories to TIPP, but not parties. As detailed above, states are unable to become a party to either of the Protocols until they are a party to UNTOC.

**The Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air**


As with TIPP, a major achievement of the Protocol was that, for the first time in a global international instrument, a definition of smuggling of migrants
was agreed upon. The PLSA details its aims as ‘preventing and combating
smuggling, promoting cooperation among parties, and protecting the rights
of smuggled migrants.’

As of July 2013, 137 states are parties to PLSA, including Trinidad and
Tobago, Suriname, Guyana, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Barbados is
among fifteen states globally that are simply signatories to PLSA.

**United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking**

The above instruments are supplemented by a dedicated UN Global Initiative,
the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UNGIFT).
UNGIFT was established in 2007, being initially funded by the United
Arab Emirates. It was launched by a number of international organisations,
including UNICEF and the ILO. The aim of UNGIFT is to ‘mobilise
state and non-state actors to eradicate human trafficking’. This is done by
‘increasing the knowledge and awareness on human trafficking; promoting
effective rights-based responses; building the capacity of state and non-state
actors and fostering partnerships for joint action against human trafficking.’

**Universal International Law and Jus Cogens**

Although human trafficking is yet to hold an elevated position in international
law, Slavery has been recognised as a universal crime. It is therefore accepted
as a crime which holds the highest standard of prohibition in international
law- ‘juscogens’ status - which literally translated means compelling law.
Such a status as jus cogens law prohibits any derogation. Further, a crime
which is recognised as universal allows for any state to prosecute an accused,
as the crime is deemed most heinous and is in itself, an attack on humanity.
Universal crimes were heavily discussed during the trial of Otto Adolf
Eichmann (Attorney General of the Government of Israel vs. Eichmann
(1961)). Eichmann was a member of the Nazi regime who orchestrated the
‘Final Solution’, the policy which led to the death of an estimated four million
Jews during World War II. During the trial in Jerusalem, the Prosecution,
using precedent, emphasised:

‘(…) piracy, slave trading and so forth, which the arm of law could
reach over the entire world, in terms of the principle of universality.
Those committing such crimes are the enemies of mankind and it is
the obligation of every individual state to see to it that they will not
be able to cause more harm.’(The Trial of Adolf Eichmann Session
5, per Dr. Servatius)

The list of universal crimes has grown, and slavery remains one such offence
where every state is able to claim jurisdiction to prosecute, even where
their domestic legislation fails to criminalise. As such, although ‘human
trafficking’ is not a universal crime, should the actions constitute ‘slavery’,
the offender can be prosecuted by any state.

**International monitors of human trafficking**

In 2007, UNGIFT conducted a world-wide study on state responses to
human trafficking. The first study, entitled ‘Global Report on Trafficking in
Persons’ was published by UNODC in 2009, with information presented on
155 countries and territories. In 2012, a further global report was published,
with the number of participants increased to 162. It is anticipated that such
reports will be produced every three years, with the aim being to inform
about human trafficking patterns and flows. The broad criterion used by
UNGIFT includes:

- Institutional Framework (including Legislation, Constitution);
- Criminal Justice Response (including Departments which have
  jurisdiction, data on persons investigated for offences of human
  trafficking, data on cases heard on persons for offences of human
  trafficking);
- Services provided to victims;
- Any additional information (including statistics on those who have
  been prosecuted for organ removal, nationalities of victims and
  residential facilities available).

The report also provides specific information on trafficking in states where
available, such as the trafficking of children to be exploited as camel jockeys
in Qatar and the removal of organs in Chad for ‘mystic purposes’.

The United States has been particularly active in the monitoring and
reporting of states in its effort to combat human trafficking. Trafficking in
Persons (TIP) reports are published annually by the Department of State,
and described as the ‘U.S. Government’s principal diplomatic tool to engage
foreign governments on human trafficking’. The report produces detailed information on 186 states (with Somalia treated as a ‘Special Case’ and not categorised) and places them into Tiers, either Tier One, Two, Two Watch List or Three, reflecting their success in the fight against human trafficking. The benchmark used to assess the actions of states is US Federal laws, with the key piece of legislation being the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA2000). The criteria identified by the Department of State used to assess which Tier a state is to be placed are:

- The enactment of laws prohibiting severe forms of trafficking in persons and provision of criminal punishments for trafficking offenses;
- Criminal penalties with a maximum of at least four years’ deprivation of liberty, or a more severe penalty;
- Implementation of human trafficking laws through vigorous prosecution of the prevalent forms of trafficking in the country;
- Proactive victim identification measures with systematic procedures to guide law enforcement and other government-supported front-line responders in the process of victim identification;
- Government funding and partnerships with NGOs to provide victims with access to social service programmes;
- Victim protection efforts that include access to services and shelter without detention, and with legal alternatives to removal to countries in which victims would face retribution or hardship;
- The extent to which a government ensures victims are provided with legal and other assistance and that, consistent with domestic law, proceedings are not prejudicial to victims’ rights, dignity, or psychological well being;
- The extent to which a government ensures the safe, humane, and to the extent possible, voluntary repatriation and reintegration of victims and;
- Governmental measures to prevent human trafficking, including efforts to curb practices identified as contributing factors to human trafficking, such as employers’ confiscation of foreign workers’ passports and allowing labour recruiters to charge prospective migrants excessive fees.

However, it is important to note that Tier rankings and narratives are not affected by the following:
Human Trafficking in Barbados

- Efforts undertaken exclusively by non-governmental actors in the country;
- General public awareness events – government sponsored or otherwise – lacking concrete ties to the prosecution of traffickers, protection of victims, or prevention of trafficking; and,
- Broad-based law enforcement or developmental initiatives.

The criterion for each Tier is as follows:

Tier One:

Countries whose governments fully comply with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act’s (TVPA) minimum standards.

States placed in Tier One in 2013 include Colombia, Canada, Nicaragua, most European states, Israel and South Korea.

Tier Two:

Countries whose governments do not fully comply with the TVPA’s minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards.

States placed in Tier Two in 2013 include St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Jamaica, St. Maarten, Guatemala, Iraq, Antigua and Barbuda, the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas.

Tier 2 Watch List:

Countries whose governments do not fully comply with the TVPA’s minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards AND:

a) The absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing;

b) There is a failure to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons from the previous year; or
c) The determination that a country is making significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with minimum standards was based on commitments by the country to take additional future steps over the next year.

States placed on the Tier Two Watch List in 2013 include Haiti, Kenya, Liberia, Suriname, Venezuela, Thailand, and South Sudan.

Worthy of note is the fall of St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana from Tier 2 in 2012 to the Tier 2 Watch List in 2013. Space does not permit for extensive discussion on reasons for their downgrade in this paper.

Tier 3

Countries whose governments do not fully comply with the minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so.

States placed in Tier Three in 2012 include Yemen, North Korea, Cuba, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iran, Libya, and Saudi Arabia.

The report totals for 2013 are:

Tier One: 30 states

Tier Two: 92 states

Tier Two Watch List: 44 states

Tier Three: 21 states

It is worthy of note that in 2013, the European Commission have produced the first report at the EU level with statistics on human trafficking. It includes data from all EU Member States, as well as Croatia, Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, and Turkey. In total data is provided on 34 states.

For the purposes of this paper, the TIP reports will be the primary data source, as it is one of the only international monitors which produce state specific reports. The UN Global report deals with the ‘Eastern Caribbean’ rather than
individual countries in the region, and although they have some information on specific countries in the Eastern Caribbean, it is very limited.

**Barbados**

*Background*

From a regional perspective, Barbados enjoys one of the highest per capita incomes in the Caribbean. It is the wealthiest and most developed country in the Eastern Caribbean, and as of July 2013 remained the only state in the Caribbean to be ranked as having ‘Very High Human Development’ by the UN Human Development Index (HDI), sitting at 38 out of 186 countries measured. Barbados is placed with only Chile and Argentina as states on the very high list in Latin America and the Caribbean. The HDI measures factors such as poverty levels, gender equality, sustainability, and GDP.

From having achieved independence in 1966, the Barbadian economy has changed dramatically, moving from an economy reliant on sugar, to one heavily dependent on tourism. According to the Caribbean Tourism Organisation, in 2010 an estimated 532,200 tourists visited Barbados. 83% of Barbados’ GDP is estimated to derive from the service industries, with 75% of the labour force employed in the provision of services. From a sex tourism perspective, the UN reported in 2009 that ‘there are no statutes specifically prohibiting sexual tourism and no statistics on it, but anecdotal evidence suggested it occurred.’ No evidence exists that sex tourism has declined since 2009, so one assumes that the above is valid. It is worthy of note however that female sex tourism has been reported as being prevalent in Barbados, with literature rarely concerning the trafficking of persons.

*Exposure to Human Trafficking*

The TIP report 2013 notes that Barbados is recognised as a source and destination state for trafficked men, women, and children. From a regional perspective, legal and illegal migrants from Jamaica, Guyana and the Dominican Republic appear to be the most vulnerable to trafficking for sexual exploitation in Barbados. In 2009, the TIP report identified Barbados as a destination state for men from China, India, and Guyana trafficked for the purpose of labour exploitation in construction and other sectors.
Barbados is also used as a trafficking route from Caribbean states to Canada, the USA, and Europe. The 2013 TIP report recognises that the prostitution of children is known to exist in Barbados, involving both Barbadian and migrant children. Identified as a high risk group, both Barbadian and migrant children have been acknowledged by UNICEF as engaging in transactional sex with older men for material goods. Further forced labour has been reported in Barbados, with the highest risk sectors being domestic service, agriculture, and construction.

**Timeline of actions against Human Trafficking Barbados**

Barbados obtained independence in 1966, making this the appropriate starting point. Starting with the supreme law of Barbados, S14 of the Constitution (1966) states:

1. No person shall be held in slavery or servitude.
2. No person shall be required to perform forced labour.

This provision is very similar to those found in Constitutions around the world, and complies with international minimum standards.

Numerous statutes have been passed which address the individual factors which facilitate human trafficking, but none prohibited it as a single, cumulative offence. In 2005, UNICEF conducted research into the applicability of existing statute law for the prosecution of traffickers, the protection of trafficking victims and the prevention of trafficking activities in the Caribbean. Legislation existed which prohibited forced prostitution\(^4\), forced detention for sexual purposes\(^5\), facilitating the entry of persons into Barbados illegally\(^6\), kidnapping\(^7\) etc. - but all offences were individual, and no statute defined or prohibited the specific offence of ‘human trafficking’ in Barbados. The Report discussed the option of states using a ‘patchwork’ of existing criminal law to prosecute for human trafficking, but recommended human trafficking specific legislation as the preferred option.

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\(^7\)S30 Offences against the Persons Act 1994.
In 2004, Barbados first identified two adult women from Guyana as victims of sexual exploitation. Then in 2005, one female minor was found to be a victim of sexual exploitation. Although information on the cases is difficult to obtain, UNGIFT detailed the two cases in their 2009 Global Report.

During the run-up to the Cricket World Cup in 2007, two cases of human trafficking came to light, as reported in the US Department of State Country Report in 2006.

In 2005, Geoffrey Ullyett was arrested and charged with living off the proceeds of prostitution. The alleged prostitutes were two Ukrainian women who claimed that Mr. Ullyett abused them and withheld their passports. Mr. Ullyett was acquitted in 2006 following the deportation of the two women and so a lack of key witnesses.

In 2006, an Indian based construction company was convicted for trafficking foreign nationals. The workers had protested against their working conditions and terms of employment – including, according to Barbados Free Press, ‘wages of about US$1 per week’. The construction company was fined US$1000.

Recent Developments

In response to the above cases, the insufficient nature of existing legislation and in order to give effect to the UNTOC and its related Protocols, (while acknowledging in the Bill that Barbados is only a signatory), the Transnational Crime Bill (the Bill) was passed by Parliament in 2011. Part III of the Bill deals specifically with the ‘Trafficking and Smuggling of Persons’.

The offence of ‘Trafficking in Persons’ is found in Section 8 of the Bill. The components of the offence are:

Part 1:

Organising or facilitating the actual or proposed entry, exit or receipt of a person into Barbados.

Arranging or helping to arrange for a person to come into, leave or be received in Barbados.
Part 2:

With either the compliance of the person through fraud, force or threats of force, coercion, abduction, deception, abuse, or payments to obtain consent. Or being reckless as to whether on entry or exit of such a person whether they will be exploited.

_The person coming in, leaving or being received is doing so because they have been forced, threatened, lied to etc. Or the person charged is careless as to whether the person coming in, leaving or being received might be exploited._

Part 3:

Deception with regards to:

- a) Provision of sexual services;
- b) Exploitation or debt bondage;
- c) Removal of human organs or tissue; and
- d) Confiscation of travel or identity documents

Part 4:

Arranging or having knowledge of arrangements for the person to:

- a) Provide sexual services;
- b) Provide forced labour, slavery, servitude or similar practice; and
- c) Have any human tissue or organs removed

Part 5:

Deception with regards to:

- a) Nature of sexual services to be provided;
- b) Freedom to leave the area where sexual services are provided;
- c) Freedom to cease providing sexual services;
- d) Freedom to leave their place of residence;
- e) Debt owed is connected to the provision of sexual services; and
- f) Exploitation through the removal of human tissue or human organ.
Paraphrased, a defendant is guilty in Barbados if they take part in the movement of a person in or out of the country, that person is either not moving of their own free will, or the defendant knows they will be exploited, and the defendant has either arranged, taken part in the arranging or deceived the person as to their involvement in sexual services, human organ/tissue removal or forced labour/debt bondage.

Despite the above legislation, Barbados remains on the Tier Two Watch List for the fourth consecutive year. They avoided being downgraded to Tier Three only because the Government developed a written plan which would constitute efforts to meet the minimum standards required. Without the written plan, Barbados would have been downgraded to Tier Three.

The first arrests for Trafficking in Persons under the Bill were made in April 2013. The two defendants, a male and female, were arrested after five females, all reportedly Guyanese, were found dressed in bathing suits working in a bar in Bridgetown (the Capital of Barbados). On further investigation, it is alleged that the five women (aged 17-21) did not have their passports or identification documents in their possession. The two defendants have been charged under the Transnational Organisational Crime Bill Part III, detailed above, and are the first to be charged under the legislation. It has been reported in local news that the two defendants have been charged with up to thirty offences of trafficking in persons and false imprisonment, whilst in June 2013 it was reported that an immigration officer had also been arrested and charged in connection to the offences.8

In the international arena, Joyce Bourne, Deputy Permanent Representative, Charge d’affaires Permanent Mission of Barbados to the United Nations recently presented at the ‘High level meeting on the appraisal of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons’. The meeting was held at the United Nations General Assembly in May 2013.

Ms. Bourne began by assuring the delegates that:

‘As a signatory to the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime and to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish

8See the Kaieteur News, Guyana and the Barbados Advocate for updates to the case.
Ms. Bourne continued to detail developments which have occurred in Barbados, and reiterate the commitment to the fight against human trafficking. She maintained that the fight against human trafficking is one that must be dealt with both internationally and domestically in order for the cycle to be broken.

‘Trafficking in Persons is a heinous crime which requires a forceful response internationally as well as at the national and regional levels (…). It is also recognised that because we live in an inter-connected world, no country or region is immune from Trafficking in Persons. It is a global phenomenon which requires global collaboration if the cycle is to be broken.’

It is from this backdrop that the status quo of human trafficking in Barbados is assessed for its successes and continuing hurdles.

**Successes**

*The National Task Force for the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons*

In February 2012, the Government created the National Task Force for the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons (NTFPTP).

The NTFPTP was established to co-ordinate Barbados’ anti-trafficking activities and to develop and oversee the implementation of the National Action Plan for the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons.

This Task force is chaired by the Attorney General and includes representatives from a number of Government Ministries as well as the Police Force, the Immigration Department, the Professional Women’s Club of Barbados, and the Barbados Red Cross.
Sex Crimes and Human Trafficking Unit

A dedicated Sex Crimes and Human Trafficking Unit has been established within the Royal Barbados Police Force. The role of the unit is to investigate all suspected cases of human trafficking.

It has been reported regionally that the Sex Crimes and Human Trafficking Unit led the investigation and arrest of the two individuals discussed above in April 2013.

Provided individuals within the Unit are sufficiently trained in all areas of prevention, protection, and prosecution of human trafficking, the Unit will become an invaluable asset to Barbados. Having a dedicated Unit on a small island such as Barbados displays the dedication of the Government and Police Force to fighting the crime of human trafficking. Resources, both human and monetary are scarce, particularly while the global recession continues to worsen, and the creation of the Unit is to be applauded. This must however be coupled with training in all forms and the continuing allocation of resources.

The Barbadian police have appointed an inspector specifically to handle human trafficking cases, and in 2012 police conducted at least 2 trafficking investigations, an increase from zero investigations in the preceding year. Further, two victims were identified in 2012, again an increase from zero identified in the preceding year.

Broad Government Initiatives

During her speech at the High Level Meeting at the United Nations General Assembly in May 2013 (discussed earlier) Ms. Bourne detailed the following Government initiatives currently taking place in Barbados:

- Immigration officials, officers of the police force and the coast guard, and representatives of other relevant stakeholders, have benefited from specialised training through technical cooperation programmes funded by regional and bilateral partners.
- There are on-going public awareness programmes on human trafficking to assist in the recognition of instances of trafficking, and to educate the general public and potential victims and their families.
- In addition, the Government of Barbados is continuing its longstanding partnership with civil society to provide services for the recovery of trafficked persons, including the provision of health services and safe shelter.

**Implementation of detailed legislation**

While flaws exist in Part III of the Bill, the offence is detailed and thorough. The inclusion of recklessness on the part of the receiving individual as to potential exploitation and deception as to services required or removal of travel documents both represent steps to be applauded. In the past human trafficking legislation in many states has focused on the literal taking or delivering of a person, with intention, which leads to exploitation of the person. This is a simple form of human trafficking, but in reality the offence is often significantly more multifaceted. Many cases of human trafficking do not fit this basic definition, and in reality, the process can be complex and involve a great number of people, all of whose actions contribute or assist in the trafficking process. The offence must reflect this complicated nature, and the inclusion of ‘recklessness’ as a mens rea along with the deception are both welcome additions to the law.

The legislation also provides for victim restitution. In addition to any penalties enforced through conviction of the specific offence, Courts are permitted under S13 (3) of The Bill to impose the payment of restitution to the victim. This form of compensation can be for any losses deemed applicable by the Courts, and includes costs of rehabilitation, costs of medical and psychological treatment, attorney’s fees/Court costs, and compensation for emotional distress, pain and suffering. Although monetary compensation is often criticised, a benefit of the provision is both Parliament and the Courts consideration of the impact on the victim, preventing the legislation being solely focused on the offender. Bringing the victim into the sentencing process has many benefits, both to the victim and the offender.

**The work of NGOs and Government Departments**

Both Government Departments and NGOs have assisted in raising awareness and encouraging dialogue in Barbados on human trafficking. The Bureau of Gender Affairs, a Government Department, acts as the Secretariat to the National Task Force (NTFPTP). The Bureau held both a panel discussion,
and a separate workshop in September 2012, and participation came from both Government members and Non-Governmental Organisations. Topics covered in the workshop included Victim Identification, Law Review, the Protection of Victims, and Victims’ Services.

Government officials have broadcast short, public awareness messages, drawing the public’s attention to, and raising awareness of human trafficking. The messages have been broadcast both through meetings in town halls across the country, and through the mass media. The 2013 TIP report recognises such efforts as being preventative in nature.

An NGO which has been instrumental in the fight against violence against women and human trafficking is the Business and Professional Women’s association (BPW). The BPW is a member of the National Task Force (NTFPTP) and provide services to victims of human trafficking through a Shelter and Crisis Centre. The Crisis Centre is staffed by volunteers, and offers, amongst other services, a 24-hour Crisis Hotline, counselling and self-development programmes. The Shelter is the only one of its kind on the island, and provides accommodation for those exposed to all forms of gender based violence. In the 2013 TIP report, the organisation were praised for their provision of ‘very high quality services’, trained staff members and assistance of one human trafficking victim during the reporting period.

The BPW also actively participated in both the panel discussion and workshop organised by the Bureau of Gender Affairs.

In 2012, the Government had an agreement with a separate NGO to provide shelter for male victims of human trafficking. Although no male victims were assisted by the NGO in 2012, the actions of the Government with regards recognition and assistance to male trafficking victims are to be commended. As with many offences where the crime is perceived to be one which predominately affects women, services available to men can be limited. However, evidence has shown that in recent years, the number of male victims of human trafficking has increased, making the actions of Barbados progressive and well received.9

9See the Jamaica Gleaner, More Males Falling Victim To Human Trafficking, Published: Tuesday | February 7, 2013.
Anticipated human trafficking training

The Bureau of Gender Affairs disclosed in February 2013 that they hope to expose 60 people to human trafficking specific training in 2013, with 30 of those 60 to continue on to train as trainers.

Continuing hurdles and recommendations

Migration as a necessary element

Section 8 of the Bill requires ‘organising or facilitating the actual or proposed entry, exit, or receipt of a person into Barbados’. As there is yet to be a prosecution under the Bill, the judicial interpretation of this provision remains to be seen, but on the literal interpretation, international migration of some sort is necessary. The trafficked person must be brought into Barbados, taken out of Barbados or received by an individual into Barbados. Such a requirement of migration means that Barbadian citizens or residents are unable to be trafficked within Barbados. Therefore, the forced labour or forced prostitution of Barbadians it is not prohibited under the Bill. This is a very disappointing element of the legislation. It is well documented that a significant amount of trafficking occurs within domestic borders. Legislators may have argued that prohibiting trafficking domestically is unnecessary due its geography and population size (land mass of approx. 400,000 km², population of 274,000\(^{10}\)). However, Barbados is encouraged to look to its Caribbean neighbours for guidance. Both St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines have enacted legislation which prohibits both the domestic and international movement of persons, a move which has been welcomed by the Department of State. St. Vincent and the Grenadines and St. Lucia both have smaller populations than Barbados, and the landmass between the three states does not differ significantly, although St. Lucia is slightly bigger than both Barbados and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Bill as it stands prevents any Barbadian from being a recognised victim of human trafficking under the legislation. This mandatory requirement of migration is disappointing and should be removed from the legislation.

\(^{10}\)Source: World Bank Data Profiles.
Penalties are not commensurate with other serious offences

The maximum penalties for human trafficking are prescribed in Part IV of the Bill. If the person trafficked is a child, the penalty is imprisonment for life. However, where the person convicted is guilty of trafficking an adult, the maximum penalty is 15 years and/or a fine of up to $1,500,000. Firstly, the option of a fine, albeit a very expensive fine, arguably distracts from the seriousness of the offence. Secondly, the penalty of 15 years, although not lenient by any means, is not commensurate with the penalties imposed for other serious offences. Rape convictions attract life imprisonment (S3 Sexual Offences Act 1993). A conviction of ‘Endangering Life or Safety’ (S19 Offences Against the Person Act 1994 (OAPA)), the components of which are the malicious or reckless conduct which places or may place another person in danger of death, or serious bodily harm attracts life imprisonment. Kidnapping (S30 OAPA 1994) attracts life imprisonment on conviction. Finally, a conviction for buying or disposing of a slave (S33 OAPA 1994) attracts life imprisonment. The difference in severity between the offences cited above and the offence detailed in S8 of the Bill is not significant. Often, elements of the crimes detailed are present in cases of human trafficking. Yet the crimes detailed above attract much more severe sentences. In addition, within the same Bill, the offence of Human Smuggling (not discussed in the paper but found in S9 of the Bill) attracts a custodial sentence of 25 years imprisonment and/or a fine of $2,000,000. Both the custodial sentence and the fine are higher for Human Smuggling than for Human Trafficking.

The suggestion is not that life imprisonment need be the sentence imposed – in fact life imprisonment sentences for the offences above have been criticised for being too punitive. However, the sentence and/or fine should be commensurate to that of human smuggling, and preferably in line with similar, serious offences.

Law enforcement to be more proactive

Although changing with the Human Trafficking and Sex Crimes Unit, the Department of State noted that in 2011-2012, Barbados did not provide specialised training for government officials on how to recognise, investigate, and prosecute instances of trafficking. Further, the Government failed to report data on investigations of suspected human trafficking carried out under the Bill. Despite allegations, the Government also failed to report any

Data collection and analysis are essential, and should be encouraged throughout the entire Government. Publication of such data in a free and accessible manner involves the public in the fight, raises awareness, promotes questions and interaction with interested parties, facilitates improvements in standards and acts as a safeguard, all of which should be encouraged.

**Victim Protection**

Although the work of the BPW is to be commended, they are an NGO with limited resources. The Department of State called for an increase in funding to both the Shelter and the Crisis Centre to ensure assistance is available for victims. As discussed above, the BFW shelter is the only such shelter in Barbados, making its continued presence essential and invaluable. The 2013 the TIP report identified that the organisation remains under significant financial strain, despite funding being provided by the Government.

An additional area of concern for victims identified by the Department of State is that of prosecution and deportation. In the case of Geoffrey Ullyett, mentioned above, both of the Ukrainian women who were suspected victims of human trafficking were deported. Although it is impractical to expect residency to be afforded to all victims, especially in a small economy such as Barbados, relief should be offered from immediate deportation. Interim procedures have been directed at authorities to provide both temporary residence status to victims, however these measure are neither official policy nor law. No legal alternative exists to the removal of the victim to countries where they may face retribution or hardship.

Further, the Bill does not provide relief for victims from the prosecution of crimes committed as a direct result of being trafficked. Individually or combined, the fear of prosecution and/or deportation acts as strong deterrents to people who have been trafficked from seeking police assistance. Assuring victims that they will not be treated as criminals if they seek police assistance is paramount in encouraging them to feel safe in coming forward. Victims, past, present and potential are vital in the fight against human trafficking, but if they fear their own persecution, they are likely to remain silent. Again, interim procedures have been directed at authorities not to penalise victims.
for offences alleged as a result of their being subjected to trafficking, but these remain interim measures rather than legal provisions.

To compare once again, in St. Lucia, the Counter-Trafficking Act 2010 contains specific provisions to protect foreign victims from deportation and protection from prosecution for crimes committed as a direct result of being in a ‘trafficking situation’. In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Bill 2011 provides relief from immediate deportation, although not from prosecution for offences alleged due to trafficking.

The 2013 TIP report identifies the lack of a formal policy to encourage victim assistance in the investigation and prosecution of trafficking offenders.

*Amend the Constitution*

In many states around the world, Constitutions have been officially amended, many for the first time since their creation, to include a prohibition on human trafficking. A selection of states which have included human trafficking in their Constitutions, either originally or through amendments, includes:

- Mexico, who amended their Constitution in 2011 to include human trafficking;
- The Dominican Republic, who amended their Constitution for the first time in 2009 to include human trafficking; and
- India, who included a prohibition against human trafficking in their original 1949 Constitution, Article 23 prohibits the ‘traffic in human beings and forced labour’ and classifies this as a ‘Fundamental Right’.

It is worthy of note that all three states above have been placed in Tier 2 by the United States, a position above Barbados.

*Become a party to the UN Convention and the Protocols*

Why Barbados has remained a signatory rather than a party is unclear. Ms. Bourne detailed the importance of global collaboration and the need for the international arena to be working with the domestic arena due to the global nature of such an offence, yet Barbados is unwilling to dedicate and commit
to utilising the international framework available to combat the offence. While they remain a signatory rather than a full party, the message sent remains one of a ‘semi’ commitment, agreeing in principle but not being willing to commit 100%.

Raising awareness

On 8th June 2013, the Soroptimist International of Barbados held a march in Bridgetown, Barbados calling for more attention to be paid to human trafficking. The President of the Soroptimist Organisation spoke to the Barbados Advocate, stating:

‘I think events like this [would be useful], perhaps some town hall meetings where experts [or] maybe members of the National Action Task Force can educate the public.

Very often we encounter people who say ‘That [human trafficking] doesn’t happen in Barbados’ or we get people who say that has been happening for years and that can’t be an issue; why the girls can’t get up and run away… It is very difficult for the victims to escape the situation. So I think generally raising awareness by marches like this [could help] because at least one person will ask what is this about and you get an opportunity to explain’ (The Barbados Advocate Online)

Raising awareness of human trafficking with the public allows for individuals to provide potentially invaluable information to both the police and NGOs. Training the public in the key indicators of human trafficking allows for the public to become the first line of defence against the crime. The public must be aware of the signs and indicators, and persons to contact on suspicion. Examples of public awareness training include television and radio campaigns, open events, marches, and police and NGO presentations.

Conclusion

Whilst the progress made by Barbados in the area of human trafficking over the past 5 years is to be applauded, further work remains to be done. There is no justification for Barbados lagging behind their Caribbean neighbours, and with a few changes the impact could be widely felt.
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Cuba and the Question of Employment

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Commentary

As Cuba battles with methodology in attaining an economic and social evolution true to the tenets of Marxism the road to recovery is steeped in uncertainty. A 50 year trade embargo imposed by Washington, natural disasters, limited resources, and an oversized workforce are all contributing elements to the erosion of communist Cuba.

With time and changing circumstances employment and the distribution of labor within a society that toils to avoid conflict in equity drew added awareness. While the state remains the sole provider of income for over 80% of the employed recompense is below par and sparse in comparison to the black market and the private sector. An inability to rectify a dual currency regime and counterbalance the unattractive percussion attributed to foreign remittances certifies divisions and privileges. Unfortunately complicating the theme of social mobility and state revival are political reforms of contraction and race dating back to the Batista era but also applicable to a current cadre of youth faced with a disconcerting fate.

To maintain a distinction in conviction and the appearance of dissent towards western influence the Cuban authorities continue to wrestle with propositions of a market economy within an emerging global environment. Herein lies a conveyance of low productivity and accelerated levels of poverty, inequality and unemployment - all by and large are remnants of vacillation to market oriented reforms.
With the turn of a new century the Cuban government is confronted with the challenges of reinventing public policy while adhering to principles of Marxist ideology. A focus on scarce resources and novel approaches in an effort to integrate into a global economy highlights the need to balance the adoption of a market oriented economy with the entrenched beliefs of social equity.

Following the unraveling of the Soviet Union and the disruption of hefty subsidies to the tune of US$6 billion in 1989 the Castro regime retooled its machinery to adopt a growing private sector that was hospitable to natives and foreigners alike. This timeframe commonly referred to as the Special Period due to its debilitating effects is also responsible for a partial recovery of Cuban society. The acceptance of domestic entrepreneurs and foreign investments provided a cushion within an unstable economic climate as citizens gained access to an enhanced livelihood via indigenous expertise or at the hands of venture capitalists.

Modifications of this nature would soon be subject to debate as published reports evaluating the state of affairs in Cuba alluded to a reversal of economic gains attributed to a budding open society. For some analysts a change in strategy restricting permits to the self employed and requiring equal partnerships or more with international enterprises speaks to recentralising control by government over the country’s economy. Further such assessments provide data on spiral consequences associated with the latest refinements to Cuban policy. (Mesa-Lago and Perez-Lopez, 2005)

Under microscopic scrutiny is a Cuban evolution that spans nearly two decade (1989 – 2003) and in doing so addresses productivity and its impact on commerce and macroeconomics. At the onset the Rectification Process precluded paralysis with high yields in physical production areas such as sugar, cement, fertilisers, cow’s milk, eggs and citrus but output radically diminished in the preceding years. (See Table 1)
Table 1: Physical Production (thousand tons)

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<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>8,121</td>
<td>4,246</td>
<td>2,200</td>
<td>-73</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cement</td>
<td>3,759</td>
<td>1,049</td>
<td>1,345</td>
<td>-64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles (mil per sq meter)</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>-87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fertilisers</td>
<td>898</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>-91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestocks (mil per head)</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>-18</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cow’s milk</td>
<td>1,131</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>-46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs (million units)</td>
<td>2,673</td>
<td>1,512</td>
<td>1,785</td>
<td>-33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citrus</td>
<td>1,016</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>793</td>
<td>-22</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>


Disturbingly the reduction in returns in part a result of natural disasters the likes of hurricane Michelle, short term loans with unattractive penalties and a decades old trade interdiction have adversely affected external indicators which in turn altered microeconomic implications. (See Table 2 & 3)

Table 2: Commercial designators (thousand millions)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exports of goods (pesos)</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>-70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imports of goods (pesos)</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>-43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise trade deficit (pesos)</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terms of Trade (1989=100)</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>-56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External debt (dollars)</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign aid/investment (dollars)</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>-58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: Microeconomic designators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Av annual GDP growth</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>-83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per capita GDP</td>
<td>1852</td>
<td>1172</td>
<td>1538</td>
<td>-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment/GDP (%)</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflation rate (5%)</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
<td>-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monetary liquidity/GDP (%)</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal balance/GDP (%)</td>
<td>-7.2</td>
<td>-33.5</td>
<td>-3.2</td>
<td>-56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In reaction to monetary shortfalls reflecting a debt increase measured as a percentage of the value of exports of goods and services from 255% in 1997 to 262% in 2003 the Cuban administration has set in motion progressive tax reform accountable for the reduction of fiscal deficit from 33.5% of GDP in 1993 to 3.2% of GDP in 2003. She also endorsed a robust tourism industry that supplied approximately US$2 billion of gross income to the national economy in 2003 (ECLAC 2003, Mesa-Lago 2005). Nevertheless despite these complimentary initiatives and an inflow of foreign remittances valued at US$915 million in said year the nation struggles to regain its historic achievements of 1989 as only two products oil and nickel surpassed its 1989 levels by 40% and 53% respectively. (ONE 2004, Garcia Molina 2004)

Rippling consequences from economic fallout is evident through diminished exports and imports valued at 70% and 43% below the 1989 threshold thus producing a trade balance deficit of 2,957 pesos in 2003. In addition the loss of 20% in the value of exports contrasting with a 1% increase in imports amounted to a 10% trade deficit of merchandise between 1998 and 2003. The tale of deficiency also accounts for a decrease in the importation of machinery and transportation equipment from 31% to 24% during the same period whereas the agricultural sector’s incompetence in addressing local consumption ignited an increase in the importation of foods from 12% to 19% within the time span aforementioned. (ONE 2004, Ferriol 2004)

In real terms the residual effects of this economic regression bears consequences for the Cuban populace as limits to state subsidies redefines
benefits and aggravates a class structure. The loss of traction is pronounced by a slump in average gross investment per job calculated at seven times less its 1975 – 1989 level in 1995 – 2000, the redundancy of 219,600 cane farmers in 2000 due to the closure of 45% of the sugar mills and cane fields, an unemployment rate beyond 25.7% in 2001 and a reduction of the private sector from 23.4% to 20.8% between 2001 and 2002. (Ferriol 2003, Garcia Diaz 2004)

While scientific observation on the actively employed exhibit discrepancies as indicated by table 4, a consensus confirms increasing numbers of underemployed of dormant citizens at the start of the new millennium resulting from the combination of under-utilisation of labor force and a decline in productivity. (See Table 4 & 5)

**Table 4: Comparative data on employment/unemployment 1998-2000**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAP (thousands)</td>
<td>4573</td>
<td>4632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment (thousands)</td>
<td>4288</td>
<td>4379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimate of non-civil servants</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment (thousands)</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residue</td>
<td>1150</td>
<td>1173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Table 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Yield</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>-3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and Communications</td>
<td>-1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>-0.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ECLAC (2000 table A-46)
In spite of table 6’s representation of a recovery and business improvement program that relocated and/or trained workers and created 435,000 sources of income in recent years output in 1989 was 20% more than recorded in 2002. (ECLAC 2000, Perez 2004)

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Programs</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>326,000</td>
<td>part time cultivation of food crops in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>backyards/gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>238,000 (disabled)</td>
<td>gardening or studying socio-cultural courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116,000 (young adults)</td>
<td>night school enrollment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44,000 (former sugar workers)</td>
<td>study engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,500</td>
<td>ten month course in social work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,514 (redundant workers)</td>
<td>at home receiving 60% of normal salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,654 (waiting relocation)</td>
<td>at home receiving a salary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All participants were considered employed and received remuneration. Source: Perez 2004, pp. 193-198 and 214

Further more the introduction of new jobs in community, social and personnel services which grew by 68% between 1997 and 2002 experienced the worst decline in average productivity at -3.7% as wages outpace labor. Continuum of a culture of complexity is likewise shared by the national data’s questionable credibility on employment figures hence complicating the process to determine the unemployment rate on the island. (Alverez and Mattar 2004)

The lack of equity is further explained by dissimilarity in wages. The Gini coefficient soared from 0.22 to 0.407 between 1986 and 1999. Meanwhile the percentage of total income awarded the poorest quintile decreased from 11.3% to 4.3% in contrast to a boost from 33.8% to 58.8% by the richest quintile. Consequently the ratio between the average income of the wealthiest and the most indigent rose from 3.3 to 13.5. (See Table 7)
Cuba and the Question of Employment

Table 7: Calculations of inequality 1986-1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Gini coefficient</th>
<th>Income quintiles</th>
<th>Ratio of rich to poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Poorest (0.20%)</td>
<td>(80-100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>54.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996/8</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>0.407</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>58.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A fluctuating market in income distribution may also be summarised by yet another dimensional perspective of real wages which fell by 45% in 1989-1998 and by 32% in 1989-2022 amidst the growth of private sector incomes thus contributing to irregularity. (See Table 8)

Table 8: Estimates of average real monthly state sector wages 1989-2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ECLAC (index 1990=100)a</th>
<th>Togores (pesos)a</th>
<th>Perez (pesos)b</th>
<th>Variation (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>-32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ECLAC (2000a), Togores & Garcia (2003), Togores (2004), Perez (2004c)
A At 1981 prices
B At 1997 prices

Stratification illuminates with added illustrations. In 1989 the ratio between the highest and lowest wages was 45:1. According to a microcosmic estimate similar sentiments resonate within the capital as the urban population at risk rose from 4.3% to 20% in less than a decade (1988 to 1995 with variations as recorded by the poverty severity index at 0.39-0.42 in 1995. (Togores 1999, Mesa-Lago 2005)
The sequence of an unsettling nature likewise reveals the quantitative relationship between the average income of the top and lowest deciles of household in Havana at 150:1 in 1996 and 199:1 in 2001. Moreover the urban population risk tripled from 6.3% to 20% between 1988 and 1999/2001 whereas the national poverty incidence followed suit with an upward adjustment of 16% during the aforesaid duration. (See Table 9)

Table 9

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<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pop at risk (Havana)</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Urban pop at risk</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty severity index</td>
<td>0.39-0.42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty incidence</td>
<td>61-67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As a 2003 survey inflates the society’s disconnect by referencing 31% of Havana’s population as destitute more demonstrations of a social divide are captured through reduced food subsidies. These supplements account for one week per month’s coverage of basic necessities leaving additional purchases to the open market at higher prices. An upsurge in liquidity in 2003 impacted inflation by 7% within that interval and minimised the value of the local currency. As a result accessibility to acquisition of essential commodities is dependent on stature. Whereas the impoverished spent 88% of their total food budget at these markets 62% of households fared better with the aid of foreign remittances. (Espina 2003, Ferriol 2004)

A response to alleged bureaucratic red tape is transmitted via a 2002 EU document entitled ‘The Legal and Administrative Framework for Foreign Trade and Investment by European Companies in Cuba’ which outlines obstacles approving visas for prospective foreign employees, hiring, retaining and when necessary terminating local residents and securing financing (EU doc 2002). Such conditions could unintentionally work in tandem with the US/Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1995 in eliminating international stock on the island. (See Table 10)
Cuba and the Question of Employment

Table 10: Effects of the US/Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dateline</th>
<th>Outline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As of 8/05</td>
<td>24 executives of foreign companies and their spouses are excluded from entry into the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26 cases are currently under review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over 12 establishments have cancelled operations or altered plans to invest on the island</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Department of State

Can the economic crisis be explained by the government’s ambivalence towards market reform and if so is its demeanor regarding joint venture and self employment arrangements justifiable?

Against a backdrop of the loss of 198 joint ventures valued at over $500 million between 1982 and 2003, a diminishing sugar industry at a 2004 capacity of 2.3 million tons and a weakened informal sector appraised by some at 40% of the country’s economy the Castro regime is besieged by a conundrum in search of immediate remedy. (See Table 11)

Table 11: Cuba in decline

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joint ventures</td>
<td>540</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>397</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI ($mil)</td>
<td></td>
<td>448</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar output</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td></td>
<td>209,606</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>166,700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Department of State

The challenge to sustain reform demands a political consensus at the hands of an administration void of illusion and political expedience but reflective of pragmatism. As rising oil prices and terrorism defines global instability the ruling elites must display fiscal maturity beyond its commendable 2000 GDP growth rate of 5.6% by orchestrating resolve.

In the words of President Castro before the National Assembly in 2001, ‘The most serious problem that our country will face will be convertible currency revenue. This is not a new problem but today we face a very different
international situation, a world dominated by a single superpower.’ Professor emeritus at the University of Pittsburgh and expert on the Cuban economy Carmelo Mesa-Lago nevertheless concludes the Cuban crisis is embedded in the sustenance of political feasibility. (Granma Digital 2001, Garcia 2010)

Aside from utilisation of efficient personnel some of whom have ascended to ministerial portfolios since 1996 the inadequate fertility and heavy indebtedness associated with borrowing to offset world market prices requires a re-energised strategy. As succinctly articulated by a 2004 UN Economic Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean, Cuba needs to redesign the role of the state within the economy with more flexibility in self employment regulations, property diversification and economic decentralisation and elevate a role for the market. (US Dept of State bulletin 2005).

These corrective measures are undoubtedly meritorious amidst the demoralising status of unemployment. In 2006 Cuba’s newspaper Juventud Rebelde exposed paralysis within the National Assembly and linked the legislature’s inability to incite healthy debate to social dysfunction. It along with other sources contend that more individuals are jobless than suggested by official data. In East Granma 37,000 as opposed to 2,000 were lacking a source of livelihood whereas the entire province is plagued with 18 times more unemployment than documented by government data. Eastern Santiago is in play as well with 29,000 idle youths and not 16,000 as recorded by the authorities. (Peters 2007, Frank 2007)

With reduction in spending on imported food and other necessities by 34% to $9.6 billion in 2009 from $12.7 billion the previous year, a loss in basic subsidies, limited access to loan arrangements and most significantly a presidential decree to terminate 500,000 workers from the labor force in the near future Havana is at crossroads. (Garcia 2010)

Understandably discomfort and hesitance in adopting the Chinese model is rooted in ideology, viability and a lengthy and disturbing stalemate with Washington. Nonetheless a transition should not be considered betrayal of humanism or capitulation under fire from the White House but a necessity in an era annexed by globalisation.
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