

## Political Participation and Its Correlates in Jamaica: An Empirical Viewpoint

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### Abstract

The inquiry of political science, in Jamaica, has been predominantly qualitative, with the exception of voting behavior. Among the many areas in this discipline to adapt the qualitative approach is political participation. This paper focuses on assessing political participation from a quantitative perspective. Firstly, we have constructed a political participation index using primary data, which was collected in May, 2007. Secondly, we have built an econometric model, aimed at predicting political participation in Jamaica. The model seeks to establish determinants of political participation, by selecting from the literature all factors identified and proposed as having some influence on political participation. An analysis of the model has identified several testable hypotheses about political participation. We found that there are seven factors that can be used to predict political participation. The model explains (adjusted R<sup>2</sup>) 18.8% of the variation in political participation, of which Age accounts for 11.5%, Confidence, 2.1%, Perception of Corruption, 1.6%; employment, 1.3%; parental education, 1.0%; Religiosity, 0.8%, and subjective psychological well-being, 0.5%. The present findings provide insights to the phenomenon, sets the platform for policy implementation and a comprehensive understanding of the framework for future empirical work.

**Keywords:** Civic engagement; Determinants of political participation; Political engagement; Political participation; Public involvement; Modes of participation; Jamaica

### Background

In the Caribbean, particularly Jamaica, the literature found on political participation has mainly focused on voting behaviour and/or elections [1-8]. However, the phenomenon of political participation extends beyond voting behaviour and elections to include peaceful demonstrations, all forms of protests, political blogging, and political discussions in the media among others [9-13]. According to Verba et al. [13] "...political participation provides the mechanism by which citizens can communicate information about their interests, preferences, and needs and generate pressure to respond", which according to Uhlaner [14] is political engagement or civic involvement in the decision making process. Even prior to the aforementioned scholars, Verba and Nie [12] ushered in the concept of political participation, which they defined as "Those activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take" that clearly has been modified since its early conceptualization. Another group of scholars' definition is succinct and all-encompassing to be "All voluntary activities intended to influence either directly or indirectly political choices at various levels of the political system" [15] and another indicated that it is an "Activity by private citizens designed to influence government decision-making" [16].

Munroe [7] makes the distinction between orthodox political participation (i.e., conventional political participation) – this includes voting, electoral matters, - and that of unorthodox political participation (i.e., unconventional political participation) – demonstrations, protests, political blogging, and political media discussion [10,17], which dates back to Marsh and Kaase [18]. However, Marsh and Kaase listing of unconventional forms of political participations were more extensive than that of Munroe's to include blocking of traffic, boycotts,

demonstrations, destruction to property, tactics as petitions, rent or tax occupations of buildings, personal violence, strikes, and unofficial industrial strikes [15,18]. Such perspectives give rise to legal and illegal sub-classifications of political participation [19], which some scholars have argued can be democratic (i.e., legal methods of political engagement that are enveloped in conventional and unconventional practices) and aggressive (i.e., civil disobedience and political violence) political engagement [20,21].

Before we commence any examination of political participation, we must understand what constitutes political participation. Political participation is a byproduct of political behaviour, which is not always congruent to political attitude, and which could also include political inaction. An appreciation of this construct will therefore help us to better classify its constituents.

Marsh and Kaase's definition of political behaviour will be used throughout this study. Political behaviour, according to Marsh and Kaase [15,18], relates to the actions of individuals with regards to authority – including the schools, clubs, churches, civic organizations – and government, which include parliament and its related institutions. Hence, it is easy to understand why voting behaviour is used as the measure of political participation and an indicator of political behaviour

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because voting is critical to democracy, and, democracy establishes stability within societies, and provides an understanding of the governance of that society. Voting is the medium of political behaviour [22-25,7] and is pivotal as it provides the basis upon which all modern democratic societies are fashioned, structured and becomes operative in contemporary nations. Thus, political participation is a component of political behaviour; and is major in the former phenomenon. Powell et al. [26] argued that one's political behaviour is derived from one's political culture. Political culture is the shared consensus – which includes orientations, beliefs, customs, and preconceptions that a society/group embraces politically. Homogeneity within the group should result in less tension than a non-homogenous group and should augur well for activities that require some degree of trust.

The issue of trust in civic engagement, therefore, should be evident and critical to the process of political behaviour. Powell et al. wrote that “A ‘democratic’ or ‘civic’ culture, then, is a political culture in which there is a widespread consensus on, and endorsement of, basic norms of democracy” [26]. Jamaican political scientists, despite the importance of trust to democracy and in particular political behaviour, reference the dearth of literature, which exists on the two phenomena. A critical study on Jamaica's democratic culture conducted by a group of Caribbean scholars, primarily from the Department of Sociology, Psychology and Social Work, of the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, Jamaica – omitted any examination on trust and political culture [27]. The study examined conventional political participation including the determinants of this participation without an investigation of trust. Despite this limitation, the study highlighted the issue of social capital and trust, which can be useful in understanding political participation as social capital is an identified factor that helps to shape political attitude and behaviour [28]. Bourne [1] conceptualized a model for political participation focusing on unconventional methods of participation. Using the model ‘Unconventional Political Participation’, Bourne found that 79% of unconventional political participation is explained by

- 1) Educational level;
- 2) Age cohort;
- 3) Gender;

- 4) Trust (or mistrust) in government; and
- 5) Interpersonal trust.

He defined unconventional political participation as “... political involvements which are outside of the traditional measure of political involvement. These included protests, demonstrations, road blockages, boycotts and participation in organized strikes [1]. The unconventional participation Model's contribution to the literature rests on the insights gained on the utility of modeling political participation. This approach allowed for the inputting of country specific variables and thus extrapolating attendant outcomes to guide policy directors. Thus, similarly, this study seeks to do two things one, examine political participation and its correlation to trust using a Jamaican example and two, build a model that will be beneficial in analyzing trust and political participation in societies.

This article will explore selected variables impacting on the dual concepts of trust and political participation and further analyze their significance while accepting the view that trust is relevant to political participation.

### Conceptual framework

Among the contemporary forward conceptual perspective of political participation is the two branch of conventional and unconventional political engagement. It can be encapsulated in diagrammatical form as represented by Lamprianou [17] (Figure 1).

According to Klesner [28], the general definition of participation spans four groups of factors that shape the attitude and behaviour of participating politically: resources, political values, social capital and institutional opportunities and constraints. However, all groups do not have equal influence in their contribution to an understanding of political participation. Of the four, social capital seems to be the most influential and thus requires further analysis at this stage of the paper to be able to follow more clearly the arguments to be made later on.

Putnam [29] sees social capital as the “dealings with one another that are built on networks, norms and trust, which enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives”. Due

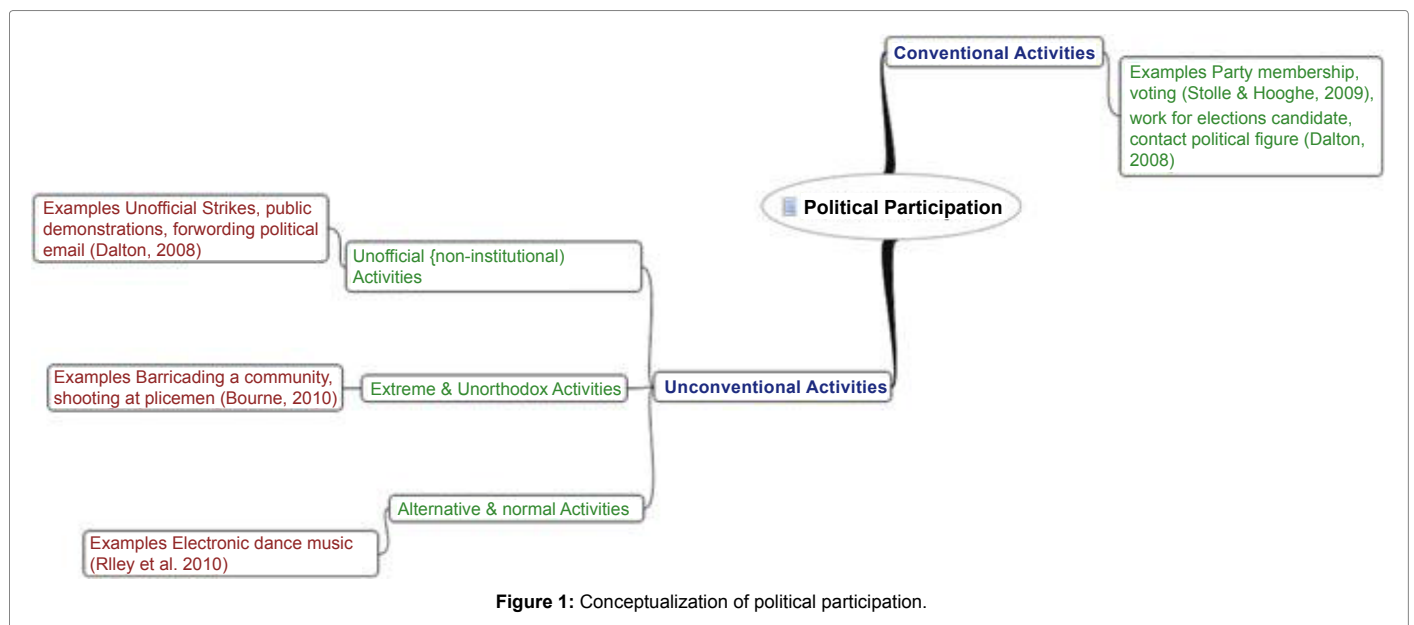


Figure 1: Conceptualization of political participation.

to the intangible nature of social capital, it is important to clearly state how this ethereal but ever present concept is understood in relation to political participation. Putnam [29] understands political participation as one and one relations with political institutions. One can infer then that one's participation will strongly correlate with one's social capital. The World Values Survey (WVS) forwards a complementary understanding of social capital which will further aid in our understanding of political participation. Social capital is defined in terms of attitudes that reflect interpersonal trust. This interpersonal trust can be traced through membership in nonpolitical organizations, voluntary work for nonpolitical organizations and social networking through interaction with friends, work, school, church colleagues or sport clubs. In essence it is about relationship building whether at the individual or the organizational levels, which forms the nexus on which all other genre of activities takes place. This is a dual relationship first, with the people and second with the structural systems which become the driving force for political participation. This dual relationship is inextricably linked to available resources and helps to shape the prevailing political values.

Political values are attitudes individuals develop towards the system of which they seek to influence, whether it is in favour of or against change in the status quo especially as these changes relate to the distribution of scarce resources. Resources are conceptualized as being material and non-material and also renewable or non-renewable sources that can be drawn on when needed, for e.g., money, property or assets. These resources are then used to define institutional opportunities and constraints. From a general framework, institutional opportunities and constraints relate to the systems or social structures that exist within society to either mitigate against or enhance an individual's ability to advance socially in that society.

With this definition one must further distinguish between political participation which again there are different variables that are developed to understand political participation; our analysis however will depend heavily on Klesner [28], cross-national analysis of political participation, 1999-2001 World Values Survey (WVS). This survey solicited a wide cross section of responses spanning three main categories – political participation, well-being and national issues. Political participation includes non-traditional methods of participation and solicited response to as to whether a respondent had ever or would ever sign a petition, join a boycott, attend a demonstration, join an illegal strike, or occupy a building. Additional variables in, Klesner's index of political participation use voluntary work for political parties, local political action group, human rights or third world development organizations, environmental groups, women's organizations, and the peace movements. In this scenario, the issue of political participation is furthered through voluntary associations, which create social trust that spills over into political trust and thus greater attempts at political participation. Having a high participate rate, however, might be sufficient but it is not enough as there is no guarantee that this increase in political participation rate is synonymous with quality participation.

Munroe [7] encourages a healthy combination of what he calls orthodox (traditional) and unorthodox (non-traditional) participation methods in a bid to strengthen the quality of the participation. This healthy combination of methods, however, does not guarantee that the participation quality will be high as a number of variables geographical and socio economic in nature can intervene [9,30].

## Social

Klesner [28] argues that there is a causal link between socio-

economic and demographic factors and political activity. Using age as variable older persons are more likely to participate in political activities as opposed to younger persons? Those who are endowed with economic resources - income and or property tend to use this to contribute to political arenas in order to protect their self-interest. The correlation between education and participation is thoroughly examined by Verba et al. [31]. The educational variable is an integral enabler of political participation empowering the more educated citizens to participate more frequently in the political process. Closely linked to education is residential status. Areas of residence also factor significantly in political participation, Klesner [28]. Having presented this argument however, Klesner hastens to remind us that there are mixed conclusions on which area, rural or urban is more likely to show a higher level of participation. From a sociological perspective, modernization theorist had suggested that urbanization would trigger higher participation in cities; this, however, according to Klesner [28], was countered by Asher et al. [32] who argued that there is less connectedness in cities hence a deterrent to collective endeavors and by extension political participation by members of the society. A web of socio economic factors therefore has casual links to the quality of political participation. This web can be difficult to untangle when politically charged variables like gender are included. The variable though that seems to offer the most insight on political participation yet would have received the least attention is trust.

## Defining Trust

Trust is a concept that spans a wide range of daily human relationships. Trust, however, as a concept has not received much attention within the Caribbean academic space. This is not unique to the Caribbean. According to Earle et al. [33], research on trust has been confined to a particular discipline until recent occurrences which have caught the attention of the social scientists. According to Earle et al. [33] trust is defined as the "willingness, in expectation of beneficial outcomes, to make oneself vulnerable to another based on a judgement of similarity of intentions or values" [34,35]; This trust, Earle et al. [33] continue, is "based on social relations, group membership and shared values"; a definition which he alludes is supported by Rousseau et al. [36]. The common principle of shared values and social relations; the work of Earle et al. points to trust that is reflective through shared moral principles in-group membership, benevolence, integrity, inferred traits and intentions, fairness and caring.

The narrative on trust shows it is distinguished on two levels - within and across groups. Trust within groups is a social phenomenon displayed at a distance or in close proximity. On the other hand, trust that is across groups is deemed as general trust [35,37,38]. Trust also entails choosing among alternatives based on what the outcome may dictate. This selection involves risks, which of course can be positive, that is, acting in one's favor or negative- acting against one's wishes or desires. Trust therefore is a deliberate activity based on thinking that the outcome for the individual desirous of trust will be positive. In taking this stance it is also echoed by Earle et al. [33] that trust is a forward looking phenomenon that can elicit change.

## Materials and Methods

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted by the Centre of Leadership and Governance (CLGS), the University of the West Indies at Mona, July and August 2006, on the political culture of Jamaicans along with their psychosocial state. A nationally representative sample of 1,338 people from the 14 parishes of Jamaica was randomly collected using a descriptive research design. The sample frame is representative

of the population based on gender and ethnicity. A total of 1,338 respondents aged 16 years and older were interviewed for this study, with a sampling error of approximately  $\pm 3\%$ , at the 95% confidence level (i.e., CI). The average age for the sample is 34 years and 11 months  $\pm 13$  years and 7 months. The results that are presented here are based solely on Jamaicans' opinion of their political orientation. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. The questionnaire is a standardized instrument of a 166-item. The questionnaire consists questions on civic culture and orientation to democracy; generalized trust which constitutes the following core variables - interpersonal trust, institutional trust - and confidence, perception of wellbeing, crime and corruption, and political participation as well as the standard demographic variables. Data were collected and stored using the Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Dummy variables were created using demographic and other variables - sex, race, and religiosity, area of residence, generalized trust, unemployed person, perceived social class and justice. Wellbeing and political participation were computed from a number of scale questions. Descriptive statistics were done to provide background information on the sample; tests were done for Cronbach alpha to examine the validity of the construct - i.e., wellbeing and political participation.

## Measures

Sex, 'X': This variable is being male or female. It is a binary variable, where 1=male and 0=female.

Area of Residence, 'A': This variable is the parish in which the individual lives while the study was being conducted.

AreaRes1 1=Kingston and St. Andrew, 0=Other<sup>1</sup>

AreaRes2 1=St. Catherine, 0=Other

Subjective Social Class, 'S': This is people's perception of their social and economic position in life, based on social stratification.

Class1 1=Middle class, 0=Other

Class2 1=Upper class, 0=Other

The reference group is 'Lower Class'

Crime: These are social deviant behaviours that breach prevailing norms, specifically cultural standards as to how humans ought to behave.

Crime Index,  $CI = \sum f_i \cdot d_i$ ,  $f_i \geq 0$ , which denotes the frequency with which an event occurs, and  $d_i \geq 0$  that represents the types of crimes witnessed or perpetrated against the victim. Thus,  $0 \leq CI \leq$  (Appendix I).

Marital Status, 'M': This is defined as a conjugal arrangement between people, which is based on the law of the country or its customs. These arrangements must be between consensual adults (from ages of 16 years and older).

Marstatus1 1=Single and Visiting, 0=Other

Marstatus2 1=Married, divorced/remarried, 0=Other

Marstatus3 1=Common-Law, 0=Other

Marstatus4 1=Separated, 0=Other

Widow is the reference group.

<sup>1</sup>Jamaica is subdivided into fourteen parishes of which there are Kingston and St. Andrew. The Others are - St. Thomas; Portland; St. Mary; St. Ann; Trelawny; St. James; Hanover; Westmoreland; St. Elizabeth; Manchester, Clarendon, and St. Catherine.

Employment status, 'E<sub>m</sub>'.

Employ1 1=Employed, part-time, temporary and seasonal, 0=Other

Employ2 1=Self-employed, 0=Other

Employ3 1=Unemployed, 0=Other

The 'full-time' employed person is the reference group.

Income, 'Y<sub>i</sub>'. Income is an ordinary variable with twenty-categories, ranging from (1) under \$5,000 to (20) \$250,000 and above (see Appendix II, for extended listing). Based on the nature of this variable, it will be treated as a continuous variable.

Justice, 'J': This variable is a non-metric variable, which speaks to people's perception of the 'fairness' (or 'fairness, for that matter) of the governance of the country. The construct will be dummy coded as 1=Yes, and 0=No.

Perceived Corruption Index, PCI=

Ethnicity, 'E<sub>i</sub>'.

Ethn1 1=Black, 0=Other

Ethn2 1=White, 0=Other

Ethn3 1=Brown, 0=Other

The reference group is Chinese, Indians, et cetera.

Religiosity, 'R': The frequency with which people attend religious services, which does not include attending functions such as

(1) Graduations,

(2) Weddings,

(3) Christenings,

(4) Funerals.

This variable begins with 0 being the most attended to 7, being none at all.

Educational Level, 'E'.

Edu\_level1 1=Primary/Preparatory, 0=Other

Edu\_level2 1=All age, secondary and vocational skills, 0=Other

Edu\_level3 1=University, and professional training, 0=Other

The reference group is 'No formal' education.

Note that IndEdu\_level represents the educational level of the respondent, Fat Edu\_level, denotes the educational level of the respondent's father and Mot Edu\_level means the educational level of the interviewee's mother.

Confidence Index, 'CFI'. The  $CFI = \sum f_i \cdot c_i$ , where  $f_i$  indicates the frequency of the occurrence of the event, and  $c_i$  denotes the event.  $F_i$  ranges from 1=no confidence, 2=a little confidence, 3=some confidence, and 4=a lot of confidence.

Trust, 'T': This is people's perception of their 'trust' in other people. It will be a dummy variable, where 1=Yes, and 0=No.

Subjective Psychological Wellbeing Index, 'SPWI'.  $SPWI = \sum Q_i / \sum f_i$ , where  $Q_i$  is the selected value from each ladder of Maslow's Hierarchy of Need, and 'f' being the frequency of the event. The Cronbach  $\alpha$  being 0.762 for the 5-item variables, which are used to constitute this Index.

Political Participation Index, 'PPI'. Based on Trevor Munroe's work, 'political participation' "...the extent to which citizens use their rights, such as the right to protest, the right of free speech, the right to vote, to influence or to get involved in political activity" (Munroe, 2002:4; See also, Munroe, 1999:33), we used those construct to formulate a  $PPI = \sum b_i$ ,  $b_i \geq 0$ , and  $b_i$  represents each response to a question on political behaviour, such as voting, involvement in protest (Appendix III); and  $0 \leq PPI \leq 19$ , where greater values indicate a higher level of political participation. Cronbach alpha for the 19-item scale is 0.83 (i.e. it reflects a good reliability for measuring the variable of PPI).

Of the 1,338 respondents interviewed for the study, 55.7% are females (n=723) compared to 44.3% males (n=574), with a response rate of 96.7% (Table 1). The average age of the sample is 35 years  $\pm$  14 years. Substantially more of the sample classify themselves as being part of the lower social class (59.0%, n=766), 36.6% are of the middle class (n=476) compared to 4.4% who are in the upper class (n=57). The findings revealed that most of the respondents have attained the secondary level education (69.0%, n=892), while 26.2% (n=339) have acquired post-secondary training, and 3.1% (n=40) primary or preparatory level education compared to 1.5% which have no formal education whatsoever. Based on Table 1, Trelawny is the parish with the least number of interviewees, 3.8% (n=50), even though there are other areas of residence showing a similar percentage of respondents. Another demographic variable of importance to this research is ethnicity/race, with 90.0% of the interviewed being Blacks and Browns, while 8.0% are Whites (or Caucasians) compared to 2.0% who indicate 'Others' such as Chinese, Indians, and other races.

The findings in Table 2 have shown that 'Political Participation' in Jamaica is very low (4 out of 19, that is, 21%)  $\pm$  3.7. Furthermore, the 'Confidence Index' shows that Jamaicans are not confident about the 'running' of the country among other things (2.6 out of 22)  $\pm$  0.5. The subjective psychological well-being, on the other hand, is very high (i.e. 6.9 out of 10)  $\pm$  1.7. When the sampled population were asked about their 'trust' in other Jamaicans, 62.7% (n=795) said other people cannot be trusted compared to 37.3% (n=472) who thought others could be trusted. With respect to 'justice in the governance' of the society from the perspective of the society being managed in the interest of 'rich', 74.1% (n=929) of sampled population indicated 'Yes' compared to 25.9% (n=324) said 'No'.

Characteristics	Percentage (Count)
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	44.3 (574)
Female	55.7 (723)
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
White	8.0 (106)
Black and Brown	90.0 (1,201)
Other	2.0 (26)
<b>Subjective social class</b>	
Lower	59.0 (766)
Middle	36.6 (476)
Upper	4.4 (57)
<b>Age</b>	35 $\pm$ 14
<b>Respondents' educational level</b>	
No Formal	1.5 (20)
Primary/Preparatory	3.1 (40)
Secondary	69.0 (892)
Tertiary	26.2 (339)

Table 1: Findings: Demographic variables, N=1,338.

An examination of trust in government and the sex of respondents (Table 3) revealed that there is a statistical relation between the two aforementioned variables -  $\chi^2(1)=7.095$ , p value=0.005. The association is weak negative one - single correlation is - 0.077. Further analysis of Table 2 shows that approximately 11% of males trust the government compared to 6.3% of the females. Thus, males are approximately two times more (1.7) trusting of government than their female counterparts.

Further investigation of trust in government and sex of the respondents controlled for by age group revealed that the statistical association between trusting in government and sex could be explained using age -other adults and elderly - p value<0.5 - and not by youth (p value > 0.05). Looking at the cross-tabulation results in Tables 2 and 3 below, 10.6% of males who are within the other adult's category reported that they trusted government and 25% of elderly males trusted the government. These can be compared to, 5.8% of other adults females who indicated that they trusted the government; and 5.9% of elderly females who trusted the government (Table 4).

We have identified 12 variables from the literature in an attempt to arrive at a model that will be used to predict 'political participation'. Based on Table 5, five factors came out to be determinants.

### Hypotheses

General Hypothesis:  $PPI = f$  (SPWI,  $Y_p$ , CFI, E, R,  $E_p$ , J,  $E_m$ , CI, S, A, X)

$$PPI = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7 \quad (1)$$

Thus, using the data, we found these factors to be determinants, which give this model:

$$PPI = -3.396 + 0.099A + 0.063CFI + 1.347PCI + 0.188R - 1.388E_{fat} - 1.154E_m - 0.922E_m - 0.6E_{mot} \quad (2)$$

We found that there are seven factors that can be used to predict

Characteristics	Percentage (Count)
Political Participation Index	4.0 $\pm$ 3.7
	Mode=0, max=19
Subjective Psychological Well-being Index	6.9 $\pm$ 1.7
	Mode=7.8, max=10
Confidence Index	2.6 $\pm$ 0.5
	Mode=2.6, max=22
Crime Index	0.3 $\pm$ 1.1
	Mode=0, max=17
<b>Employment Status</b>	
Employed	55.1 (732)
Unemployed	25.9 (345)
Self-employed	19.0 (252)
<b>Individual Trust in Others</b>	
Yes	37.3 (472)
No	62.7 (795)
<b>Justice in Governance</b>	
Yes	74.1 (929)
No	25.9 (324)

Table 2: Findings: Other Variables, N=1,338.

Gov't Trust	Male	Female
No	89.5	93.7
Trust	10.5	6.3
Total	532	668

$\chi^2(1)=7.095$ , p value= 0.005

Table 3: Trusting in government and the Sex of respondents, N=1,200.

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
Constant	-1.041	1.043	-	-0.998
Age	0.089***	0.01	0.318	8.92
Confidence Index	0.089***	0.275	0.171	4.989
Dummy - Perception of Corruption (1=Yes)	1.372***	0.309	0.119	3.458
Religiosity	0.143*	0.062	0.08	2.315
FatEdulevel3	-1.496**	0.517	-0.102	-2.892
Employ3	-1.154***	0.332	-0.124	-3.472
SPWB	-0.178**	0.075	-0.082	-2.356
Employ1	-0.922**	0.374	-0.087	-2.416
MotEdulevel2	-0.600*	0.298	-0.071	-2.011
F (9,700)= 19.281, P < .05				
R=0.446; Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> =0.188				
N=710				
*significant P value < 0.05				
**significant P value ≤ 0.01				
***significant P value ≤ 0.001				

**Table 4:** Multiple Regression – Determinants of Political Participation and Dependent Variable Political Participation Index.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	3.576	0.165		21.616	<0.0001
Dummy Trust (1=Trust)	-0.127	0.224	-0.017	-0.568	0.57
Trust- gov't	1.495	0.392	0.113	3.812	<0.0001
Sex (1=Male)	0.898	0.216	0.122	4.158	<0.0001

**Table 5:** Political Participation.

political participation. The model explains (adjusted R<sup>2</sup>) 18.8% of the variation in political participation, of which Age accounts for 11.5%, Confidence, 2.1%, Perception of Corruption, 1.6%; Religiosity, 0.8%, and father's education 0.7%, employment status3, 0.7%, employment status1, 0.6, subjective psychological well-being, 0.5%, and mother's education2, 0.3%. Using the regression model in eqn. (2), the coefficient for religiosity, 0.14, denotes that the less religious Jamaicans are the more they will participate in politics, and the same goes for perception of corruption, 1.1, confidence, 1.4, with the older Jamaicans being more involved, 0.09. Father's educational level and mother's education level are found to be predictors of political participation. Embedded in this finding is the importance of fathers and mothers in encouraging children to become involved later in life in political activities. The coefficient of father's level of education, -1.5, means that fathers with post-secondary level of training (i.e., education) compared to fathers who have 'no formal' education are less likely to encourage their children to exercise their political rights. Furthermore, mothers whose education is a secondary level compared with those who have 'no formal' are less likely to encourage political participation. In other words, the educated parent when compared to the parent with no formal education is less likely to encourage his/her children to participate politically.

Other revealing findings were discovered, based on Table 3. The self-employed were found not to be a significant predictor of political participation. It was found that, full-time employed persons were more likely to participate politically than their part-time colleagues, -0.922.

The unemployed when compared to the 'full-time' employed Jamaicans are less likely to be political involved, -1.154. Thus, full-time employed Jamaicans are more likely to participate politically than either:

- (1) The part-time employed or
- (2) The unemployed.

Based on the regression model, fathers with secondary and primary level education when compared to the fathers with 'no formal' education, show no difference between how they influence their children. Mothers who indicated that their level of education was at the secondary level compared to those without 'formal' education was less likely to encourage their children to participate politically, -0.600. This means that mothers who do not have any formal education were more likely to encourage their children to participate politically than those with secondary education. It should be noted that there is no statistical association between mothers whose educational level is at the tertiary or primary level and political participation

The regression model unearthed a number of insights also revealed that

- Jamaicans believe higher political participation is directly related to greater corruption and confidence.
- Jamaicans who reside in Kingston and St. Andrew are not more involved in political activities than those who dwell in other parishes of the island.
- There is no statistical difference between the political involvement of males and females.
- There is an inverse relationship between subjective psychological well-being and political participation. This implies that the greater someone's subjective psychological well-being is, the lower that individual's level of political involvement.
- An invaluable finding is, based on the model, there is no statistical difference between the political participation of the lower, middle or upper classes.

#### Modeling Political Participation and Different types of trust

In this section of the study, we tested the general hypothesis

$$PP=f(T_p, T_g, X) \tag{3.1}$$

The rationale behind the use of three predisposed variables in this model was to ascertain whether interpersonal trust, trust in government and sex of respondents affected political participation. Given that we had already established a number of factors on political participation, we wanted to isolate the effect of trust outside of any other variable with the exception of sex.

Of the two types of trust – generalized interpersonal and trust in government – we found that there is no statistical relations between interpersonal trust and political participation (P value=0.570 > 0.05), whereas there is a statistical association between trust in government and political participation (P value=0.001<0.5) as well as sex of respondents and political participation (P value=0.001<0.05). Further examination of the different typologies of trust, sex of respondents and political participation revealed that people who trust the government are more likely to participate in political activities compared to those who do not (β=0.113); and that males are more likely to participate in political events in Jamaica than their female counterparts (β=122) (Table 5)

Trust in government and sex of respondents are weakly statistically related to political participation ( $R=17.2\%$ ;  $R\text{-square}=0.03$ ,  $F[3, 1136]=11.5$ ,  $P\text{ value}=0.001$ ). Hence, the final model is

$$PP=f(T_G, X) \quad (3.2)$$

We established that perceived corruption affected political participation, and can also conclude that trust is a factor used to explain people's participation (or lack of participation) in political activities.

## Discussion of Findings

There are many assertions made on the brand and quality of political participation that represents the Jamaican experience. These assertions have arisen primarily from reflective observation of the society, resulting in theory building which informs policies. Qualitative methods have dominated the inquiry of political participation in Jamaica with the exception of voter behaviour. This study, however, may be used to complement and bolster studies on political behaviour utilizing qualitative methodologies as it provides a statistical model for analyzing political behaviour. Using multiple regressions from a national sample survey, we were able to test a number of hypotheses. Substantially, the hypotheses have been drawn from subjective notions among the intelligentsia class. Having tested those notions, we are concluding that seven factors can be used to predict political participation of Jamaicans.

Within the political landscape of Jamaica, men are said to be more of a political animal, that is, more aggressively active than their female counterparts in participating politically. We have come to accept the notion that females are less likely than men to be involved in various political events. However, this representative sample survey has found that there is no statistical difference between the sexes political involvement. This reveals a misnomer that exists within the national psyche on political participation of the sexes in Jamaica. Simply using the number of males in the representational political sample as an indicator of men's political involvement is a misrepresentation of the socio-political reality. By extension, the female's political participation is far more extensive therefore than mere seat counts in Parliament.

One of the many perspectives that exist within the Jamaican political landscape is that, people in Kingston and Saint Andrew are more politically involved than individuals who reside in other parishes. Our findings revealed that there is no difference between the political participation of residence of Kingston and Saint Andrew and dwellers in other parishes. Embedded in this finding is the socio-political reality that despite high percentage of garrison communities in the Corporate Area in Jamaica, residents in other parishes are equally participating in political events like their counterparts in Kingston and Saint Andrew. It is reasonable to conclude that the widely held perception that persons in Kingston and St. Andrew are more actively participating in the political arena is as a result of the disproportionately larger population in quantity and density that reside in these parishes than in other parishes.

One of the surprising findings of this study is that there is no statistical association between social class and political participation (Pearson's  $P\text{ value} > 0.05$ ). The researchers used working class as a reference group and found that when middle class was investigated, there is no statistical association between that class and political participation (Pearson's  $P\text{ value} > 0.05$ ,  $0.473$ ); similarly when he upper class was examined it was also found not to be significant (Pearson's  $P\text{ value} > 0.05$ ,  $0.480$ ). Many Caribbean scholars have alluded to the lower class being more politically involved than other perceived social

classes. But this nationally representative sample survey has not found this to be the case in Jamaica.

Jamaicans have been socialized also to believe that Blacks are more so willing to participate politically than other ethnic groups. The research results have revealed that using Caucasians (or Whites) with other ethnic groups as a reference group, yield no statistical relationship between the groups and political participation (Pearson's  $P\text{ value} > 0.05$ ,  $0.147$ ). The study used the Blacks as a dummy variable with other ethnic groups being the reference group and we found that no relationship exists here (Pearson's  $P\text{ value} > 0.05$ ,  $0.400$ ). Furthermore, when those persons who reported that they are brown (or mixed) with other ethnicities being used as a reference group, we again found no association (Pearson's  $P\text{ value} > 0.05$ ,  $0.078$ ). Therefore, we have concluded that Jamaicans irrespective of their race will be involved politically to a similar extent.

In concluding, this study also revealed that people who are less frequent in church attendance are more likely to participate politically compared to their more ardent religious counterparts. This is not surprising given the perception of Jamaican that politics is generally equal to corruption. Even though adherence to the laws of the land are seen as critically important, adherence to laws that would allow one to feel that one is condoning corruption is to be scorned. Persons with lower religiosity are therefore expected to exhibit great levels of political participation, which has inferences for the quality of the participation. Another expected finding is the predictability of age and political participation. Most Caribbean scholars have agreed that age is a factor in political involvement, with youth participation being lower than older adults. This study concurred with the literature finding an association between age and participation. We, however, went further to include this variable as a predictor of political participation ( $\beta=0.318$ ,  $P\text{ value} < 0.05$ ,  $0.001$ ).

Although this is not new, as it was purported by Trevor Munroe [6] from a qualitative perspective, this research has computed a subjective psychological index of Jamaicans, and we have found that subjective psychologic wellbeing is inversely related to political participation ( $\beta=-0.082$ ,  $P\text{ value} < 0.05$ ,  $0.01$ ). Embedded in this position is how politics is a vehicle that is used by the less fortunate to express their dissatisfaction with a system, and how they use this as a medium of expressing their need for assistance. This could explain why there is no statistical relationship between political participation and income. Such a socio-political reality speaks to a degree of frustration and apathy in political involvement as people's socioeconomic resources do not need the intervention of political involvement in its broadest definition to attain any particular outcome from the political process.

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