

# ABSTRACT

This thesis examines crime in the Kingston Metropolitan Area (KMA), Jamaica, as a reaction to social exclusion, a condition in which a large segment of the society is shut out from systems which determine their level of social integration in the society. The methodology adopted is triangulation, a mixed methodology that, metaphorically, has the strengths of the geometric triangle. Interviews were conducted in four social areas in the KMA, and these were supported by focus group sessions with young men in two age cohorts in two of the areas as well as with the police. The instruments probed the socio economic conditions under which the participants lived; their achievements, aspirations, and perceived barriers to the realizing of their goals. They also investigated the experiences of residents of the four areas of different types of crimes and these were compared with statistics from the Police and Correctional Department.

The study revealed that many of the young men, locked out of a dual education system and therefore of the labour market, subject to discrimination because they lived in the inner city, were drawn, sometimes against their will into criminal activity. A social exclusion index was created and its relationship with the experiences of crime in the four areas measured. The expected relationship between social exclusion and personal crime held. However, the expected relationship with property crime was not supported because of problems with census data.

The thesis supports the need for bold decisive actions to end disparity and eliminate the structures of injustice which breed discontent.