

ABSTRACT

Mediated Political Communication in Modern Jamaica: Lessons from Michael Manley, Edward Seaga and P.J. Patterson

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This dissertation examines issues of mediated political communication in modern Jamaica, through lessons from former Prime Ministers and leaders of the political parties, Michael Manley, Edward Seaga and Percival James Patterson.

The purpose of the thesis is to analyse some of the factors contributing to the apathy among citizens towards the political process, focusing primarily on the communication strategies used by leaders and their administration. The fundamental questions to be answered are: What is the relationship between leaders leading individuals and the wider society they seek to influence? What are the communication methods and techniques that have been deployed in the exercise of power in relation to the perceived popular source of that power - the people? How is change effected or stymied by political communication?

The central argument of the thesis is that the success or failure of a leader and his or her administration in modern Jamaica is closely linked to an effective communication strategy to support their programmes and policies. Using a qualitative methodology, the research employed elite interviews and documentary analysis to describe, interrogate and analyse the communication strategies used to communicate programmes and policies to citizens. The findings indicate that effective communication plays a major role in the success or failure of a leader and his or her administration in Jamaica.

Keywords: Floyd E. Morris; political communication; political leadership; Michael Manley; Edward Seaga, P.J. Patterson; modern Jamaica.