

## ABSTRACT

### Towards a Restorative Reentry Framework: Supporting Desistance from Crime and Enhancing Re/Integration

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Jamaica, a post-colonial society in the Caribbean, has one of the highest murder rates in the world. Extensive research has been conducted on crime aetiology, and solutions for crime control have been proposed to stymie the country's increasing crime rate. Contributing to this, Jamaica has a recidivism rate of approximately forty per cent per annum. Despite a plethora of international research on re/integration and desistance from crime, there is a dearth of information about these processes for local desisting males in Jamaica. Further, little is known about how these processes can be supported and enhanced. A restorative re-entry conceptual framework was developed to guide the study and interpretation of findings using international literature. This exploratory study employs narrative methodology to explore the re-entry narratives, experiences, factors, and actors that support desistance from crime and enhance re/integration into the society for formerly incarcerated Afro-Jamaican males from inner-city communities. Through interviews, data were collected from twenty-one formerly incarcerated Afro-Jamaican males, four desistance supporters, two non-governmental organisation (NGO) service providers, an employer, one Probation Aftercare Officer and a policy level informant. Findings from this study suggest that desistance from crime and re/integration into society can occur within a restorative re-entry framework. Firstly, the findings demonstrate the role prison plays in desistance and re/integration. Secondly, it reveals how desisting persons navigate societal resettlement. Thirdly, it highlights the participant's desistance journeys and the restorative society's process of expressing compassionate love, the relational quality that connects and strengthens bonds. Fourthly, it narrates a prototype experience of restorative re-entry into Jamaican society. The study concludes by describing "utopian integrative spaces" that support desistance and re/integration within the prison and broader society. The developed conceptual framework was also amended to reflect the Jamaican re-entry experience. Implications of the findings and future research are discussed.

**Keywords:** prisoner re-entry; prisoner reintegration; desistance from crime; corrections; restorative justice; recidivism; ex-offenders; Jamaica; Caribbean; developing country.