Youth Crime in Barbados: The Way Forward from a Social Justice Perspective

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Abstract

Many researchers use a combination of methods to obtain the views of youths, but the results of these efforts are hardly reflected in the policies and programmes developed to address the causes of youth crime. This research study sought to bridge this gap and aimed to: determine the multidimensional causes of, and accompanying solutions to, youth crime in Barbados from the perspective of youths who have been involved in crime, identify the extent to which youths have participatory parity in Barbados, inform the way forward for addressing youth crime in Barbados from a social justice perspective, and empower youths through a participatory approach to be agents of social change in youth crime. The study was grounded in Nancy Fraser’s theory of social justice, and adopted a participatory approach rooted in standpoint epistemology and principles espoused by Paulo Freire. To ensure depth and breadth of findings, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect data. The researcher conducted a series of life history interviews with youths who were previously involved in crime/delinquency, and used the results from the analysis of these interviews to inform the other data collection instruments, ensuring that the lived experiences of youths remained central to the data collection process. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with policymakers and government officials, and surveys were conducted with youths who were involved in crime/delinquency. The research findings revealed that youth crime is not the result of one factor, but of several interrelated and interdependent factors. The most identified contributing factors to youth crime were anger issues, lack of money, absence of a father, hanging out on the blocks, and disrespect from persons in society. The findings also revealed that, while some youths are consulted regarding policies and programmes, such consultation appears to hardly extend to at-risk youths. As such, efforts to address youth crime are undermined by a culture and an environment that lacks the systems and processes to foster participatory parity among all youths, and are also impeded by a weak legislative and judiciary environment surrounding youth and youth crime. Additionally, the findings revealed the need for programmes that provide stronger structures and support to families, especially those of incarcerated youths since it is this environment that they return to after incarceration. Therefore, this study revealed the importance of going beyond an individual multidisciplinary approach and
towards an overall systemic multidisciplinary approach that must address all aspects of the system: not just the programmes and interventions designed to prevent and reduce youth crime, but the legislative and regulatory environment that is so often a bottleneck to justice. Future research should seek to engage even more youths to determine if the views expressed in this study are representative of all at-risk and incarcerated youth.
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And ultimately, all glory to God for everything He has done during this process.
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# List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BDF</td>
<td>Barbados Defence Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLP</td>
<td>Barbados Labour Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPS</td>
<td>Barbados Police Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CJRPU</td>
<td>Criminal Justice Research and Planning Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CXC</td>
<td>Caribbean Examinations Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DLP</td>
<td>Democratic Labour Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GII</td>
<td>Gender Inequality Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JLS</td>
<td>Juvenile Liaison Scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MYCE</td>
<td>Ministry of Youth and Community Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MYSCE</td>
<td>Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAR</td>
<td>Participatory Action Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFB</td>
<td>Prison Fellowship Barbados</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Introduction

“Listening to youths’ concerns is…critical to both understanding and participating in social change” (Cahill, 2007a, p. 297). However, if all one does is listen, it can be argued that this is mere tokenism. Many researchers use a combination of methods to obtain the views of youths, but the results of these efforts are hardly reflected in the policies and programmes developed to address the causes of youth crime (Bailey, 2016). As highlighted by Devonish (2018), crime policies and interventions must be consistent with the needs of the target groups. Therefore, this study seeks to adopt a participatory action research (PAR) approach to investigate youth crime from the perspective of youths involved in crime, and provide findings grounded in their lived-experiences that can inform evidence-based approaches to addressing the issue in Barbados.

1.1. Context and Rationale

Barbados is a small island measuring 166 mi² located in the Eastern Caribbean. Despite its small size, it is acknowledged that crime among youths (defined in the Barbados National Youth Policy as those aged 15-29) is a significant problem. A study commissioned by the Ministry of Youth and Community Empowerment (MYCE) and the UNICEF Fund (2020) revealed that most youth crimes were committed by males aged 16–18, while 18–35-year-olds accounted for half of all victims between 2010 and 2013 (MYCE and UNICEF Fund, 2020). Similarly, Bailey (2016) reports that the 18-35 age group comprised the largest percentage of criminal offenders and accounted for 54% of all murder victims in Barbados.

These studies represent just two of a very small sample of research on youth crime, reflecting a significant dearth in research that seeks to understand the causes of youth crime in Barbados. This has implications for intervention efforts, since policy and programmes need a continuous supply of research that will inform evidence-based decisions on the interventions that are needed (Bailey, 2016). Additionally, no research has been conducted in Barbados to determine the extent to which this at-risk group is given the opportunity to have a say in decisions that affect them. As a young adult, native in Barbados, I have often felt that youth participation in this country has been
tokenistic at best, with only “expert youths” allowed at the decision-making table. Therefore, this research, using elements of Paulo Freire’s PAR approach, and Nancy Fraser’s approach to social justice as it’s theoretical foundation, will aim to contribute to the dearth of research in these areas, give voice to youths who are traditionally silenced, and provide a body of knowledge that will aid in the development of effective policies, interventions, and legislature to address youth crime in Barbados.

1.2. **Research Objectives**

Using a mixed-methods research approach, that combines life history interviews and surveys with youths, with semi-structured interviews with government officials, policymakers and gatekeepers, this study will aim to:

1. Determine the multidimensional causes of, and accompanying solutions to, youth crime in Barbados from the perspective of youths who have been involved in crime;
2. Identify the extent to which youths have participatory parity in Barbados;
3. Inform the way forward for addressing youth crime in Barbados from a social justice perspective;
4. Empower youths through a participatory approach to be agents of social change in youth crime.

This dissertation is structured as follows. Chapter 2 reviews the literature surrounding youth, youth crime and participatory parity, Chapter 3 outlines the research design and methodology adopted for the study, Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study, while Chapter 5 discusses the findings in the context of the literature presented in Chapter 2. Finally, Chapter 6 presents the conclusions and recommendations emanating from the research.
2. Review of the Literature

This chapter outlines the key literature surrounding youth crime in Barbados and the wider Caribbean. First, it provides a brief overview of Barbados, including some general facts about the country. Following, it discusses the key literature that outlines the current status of youths in Barbados as it relates to crime and violence, the perception of youth crime in Barbados, and the various policy responses to this issue. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of the current literature gaps that exist, and how the study will address these gaps.

2.1. Barbados: The Socio-economic and Cultural Landscape

Barbados, a small, tourism-dependent country located in the Caribbean, has a population of approximately 288,266 persons (Alvarez et al., 2019; Worldometer, 2023). With a Human Development Index (HDI) value of 0.790 and a Gender Inequality Index (GII) value of 0.268, Barbados is ranked #70 in the world (as of 2021) and is considered to have high human development (UNDP, 2022). While tourism has been the main driver of economic growth, since the 2008 financial crisis, growth has significantly stagnated. Barbados recorded an average annual growth rate of -0.1% between 2010 and 2018, a period which also saw increases in household poverty levels and a recording of the highest debt level of all Latin American and Caribbean countries in 2018 (Alvarez et al., 2019). As a result of this dire economic situation, Barbados approached the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to obtain financial support through their Extended Fund Facility in 2018, a move described as the only feasible financing programme for the country (Arthur, 2019). The Executive Board of the IMF approved the loan for approximately US$290 million to “restore macroeconomic and debt sustainability, address falling reserves, and increase growth” (IMF, 2018, p.1), and in December 2022 approved another loan of US$113 million for 36 months, in addition to a Resilience Sustainability Fund (RSF) of US189 million (IMF, 2022). The conditionalities attached to these programmes have helped the economy, for example, a restoration of macroeconomic stability through a combination of fiscal consolidation, comprehensive debt restructuring and structural reforms, and a reduction of public debt.
But, the stringent fiscal austerity measures have led to an increased cost of living in Barbados, causing further struggles for the poor.

2.2. The Status of Youths in Barbados

The Barbados National Youth Policy defines youths as those between 15 and 29 years old. According to the Youth Development Index (YDI), which measures the status of youths on the domains of education, health and wellbeing, employment and opportunity, political participation, and civic participation, Barbados was ranked the highest among eleven Caribbean countries in 2015. Overall, it received a score of 0.75 (scores range from 0 to 1), with education being the highest ranked dimension at 0.96. Notably, the categories in which the country performed the poorest were employment and opportunity (0.5) and civic participation (0.62) (Camarinhas and Eversley, 2020).

The latter two ratings are unsurprising given research on youths in Barbados and the wider Caribbean. The impact of the global financial crisis mentioned above has resulted in negative effects on the unemployment rate for persons between the ages of 15 and 24 in the Caribbean (Camarinhas and Eversley, 2020). Although youth unemployment rates in the Caribbean are among the highest in the world, for Barbados especially, youth unemployment accounts for almost 30% of total unemployment in the country, despite youths only comprising 12% of the labour force (Camarinhas and Eversley, 2020; OECS Commission and UNICEF, 2021). This figure is three times the national unemployment rate (MYCE and UNICEF, 2020).

With youth unemployment in Barbados at dangerously high levels, this situation is set to worsen if youths leave school without the necessary certifications to actively contribute to the labour force. In Barbados, youths are required to sit the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Examinations in core subjects. These examinations are seen as a springboard to further education and as a general entry point into the workforce. However, at the ceremony for the official release of the May/June 2022 CXC regional examination results, CXC registrar, Dr. Wayne Wesley expressed that the organization is concerned by the number of students leaving the education system without CXCs (Loop News Caribbean, 2022). While it was acknowledged that CXC is working on developing a programme to address this situation, the short-term
impact on those currently leaving school without such certifications cannot be understated, given its potential effect on the already high youth unemployment rate in Barbados, which in turn has implications for crime and delinquency among youths.

2.3. **Perceptions of Youth Crime in Barbados**

In Barbados, it is acknowledged that crime negatively impacts youths, their families, friends, and the wider society (Loop News, 2021). The former Minister of Home Affairs, Edmund Hinkson, indicated that most crime in Barbados is committed by youths against youths, positioning this age category as the primary perpetrators and victims of crime in Barbados (Loop News, 2018). The Director of Economics at the Caribbean Development Bank, Dr Justin Ram, posited that there appears to be a connection between high levels of youth unemployment in Barbados and increased crime (Madden, 2019). *Table 1* below provides an overview of the most recent crime statistics for youth perpetrators of crime. As illustrated in this table, most crime is committed by males between the age of 25 and 29, closely followed by those in the 20-24 age category. These crimes are categorized by the Barbados Prison Service (BPS) as major crimes against person and property, minor crimes against person, sex related crimes, theft and related crimes, and public order breaches.

**Table 1: Crimes Committed by Youths between 2018 and 2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>15-19</th>
<th>20-24</th>
<th>25-29</th>
<th>Overall Total</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>556</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: the reduction in crime from 2020 to 2021 is likely the result of the lockdowns and restrictions on movement imposed by the Barbados Government during the COVID-19 pandemic.

While many leaders in Barbados and the Caribbean have spoken about youth crime, research on its causes in Barbados is limited. Nevertheless, there is a consensus in the literature that youth crime is not the result of one factor, but several interrelated and interdependent factors (MYCE and UNICEF, 2020). Economic factors have been
purported as key causes of youth crime in Barbados. These include materialism, poverty, poor living conditions, low socioeconomic status, unemployment, and limited opportunities for success and mobility in Barbados (Bernard, 2014; Sealy-Burke, 2015; Idris, 2016; MYCE and UNICEF, 2020), the latter of which can be attributed to the inability of the public and private sectors across Barbados to create enough productive employment opportunities for residents (Heron and Piggott, 2019). A few studies have mentioned other risk factors such as drug abuse (Idris, 2016; MYCE and UNICEF, 2020), and psychological issues such as attention deficit disorder and hyperactivity (Bernard, 2014).

From a social point of view, one of the most cited causes of youth crime in Barbados is familial issues, including problematic parenting, absence of a father figure and violence and abuse in the home. This is synonymous with findings from both developed and developing countries (Bernard, 2014; Sealy-Burke, 2015; Idris, 2016; Bailey, 2016; MYCE and UNICEF, 2020). Specifically, research has found a link between youth crime and single female headed households. According to MYCE and UNICEF (2020), of the 274 cases of gang violence examined, 113 of the perpetrators came from single parent families, 97 of which were single female headed households. Single female headed households remain very prevalent in Barbados, with 46% of all Barbadian households headed by women, 47% of poor households headed by women, and 56% of households with adolescents or young adults more likely to be headed by women (MYCE and UNICEF, 2020; Heron and Piggott, 2019).

These findings are unsurprising, given that youths and women represent two of the more vulnerable categories of individuals in Barbados. Heron and Piggott (2019) note that while Barbados has achieved high human development, such development has not been accompanied by equality and inclusion, especially as it relates to women and youths, as well as persons living with disabilities. While youths are considered in policy development and programming, such programmes have not maximized their potential, and women continue to face systemic discrimination and negative cultural attitudes in Barbados (Heron and Piggott, 2019). The latter has a ripple effect on society, as it contributes to women having an unfair share of care work for the elderly and children, and thus their individual career development and ability to seek formal employment is hindered. This results in women having lower labour force
participation, less entrepreneurial activity, and higher unemployment rates than men (Heron and Piggott, 2019). Additionally, women that are part of the labour force tend to earn about 75% of what men make for similar work (Heron and Piggott, 2019).

In addition to familial issues, socialization with delinquent or idle peers is also identified as a risk factor, given that it often leads to peer pressure to engage in criminal activity (Yeboah, 2002; Bernard, 2014; Sealy-Burke, 2015; Idris, 2016; Bailey, 2016; MYCE and UNICEF, 2020). A key aspect of the socialization narrative has emerged around the “block” culture in Barbados. “Blocks” are physical spaces where mostly young, unemployed men often socialize. These groups, though not as structured as gangs, have been flagged by the BPS as sometimes involved in acts of violence (Bailey, 2016) and there are over 50 blocks in both rural and urban areas of the country (Criminal Justice Research and Planning Unit (CJRPU), 2015). Devonish (2018) found that perceptions about blocks vary, depending on the perspective of the individual. Youths within at-risk communities view blocks as a form of escape, where they can socialize with similar minded peers. On the other hand, older persons within these same communities believe that blocks are perceived negatively by ‘outsiders’ such as the police because of stigma attached to blocks that they are breeding grounds for drugs and gang related activities (Devonish, 2018).

2.4. Youths and Gangs in Barbados

The existence of gangs in society is a major cause for concern in Barbados and was identified as a priority area in the 2011 National Youth Policy. However, there is no consensus as to the extent of the prevalence of gangs in Barbados. Some note that there are only two (Russell, 2022), while others believe there are at least six (CJRPU, 2015; Global Organized Crime Index, 2021). Gang membership ranges from 15 to 50 people (male and female), who are between 17 and 40 years old, and includes “dons”, hit men, legitimate businessmen, and persons within the higher social and economic positions in society, thus exerting influence over both communities and political circles (CJRPU, 2015; Smith, 2017; Global Organized Crime Index, 2021; Devonish, 2018). One consensus is that gangs have infiltrated the school system. In 2010, Faith Marshall-Harris, in her previous role as Magistrate in the Juvenile Court, posited that gang culture had infiltrated the secondary school system and, though in its infancy, is
something to be urgently addressed (Carter, 2010). Twelve years later, her assertions were echoed by prominent youth activist, gang interventionist, and Director of the Drug Education and Counselling Services (DECS), Roger Husbands. He confirmed the presence of gangs in schools and stated that one gang even has children as young as nine years old (Henry, 2022). The relatively young age of persons in gangs is no surprise as Katz and Nuño (2016) found that the average age of joining a troublesome youth group (i.e., a gang) in the Caribbean, ranged from nine to thirteen, and in Barbados, is age eleven.

The issue of gangs in Barbados mirrors the overall issue of youth crime: it is not a simple, one-dimensional problem. Research has shown that while economic factors such as poverty, unemployment and the need for financial support are reasons persons join gangs, there is also evidence to support socio-cultural reasons, such as social exclusion, lack of access to social programmes and services, peer pressure, and the need for belonging and relationship (CJRPU, 2015; Smith, 2017; The Ministry of Family, Culture, Sports and Youth, 2011; Katz and Nuño, 2016). These findings are consistent with international literature on gangs (Maclure and Sotelo, 2004; Cunningham et al., 2013). In Barbados, some persons also indicated that they joined gangs after feeling neglected by government due to the geographical areas they originated from (Smith, 2017). Other related factors included familial and environmental conditions, poor academic performance, location of gang activity, and the influence of entertainment media (CJRPU, 2015; Katz and Nuño, 2016). Such findings were supported by studies that looked at the link between youth unemployment and violence in developing countries, where the impact of the economic crisis on familial and social support was a more critical determinant of criminal and gang activity than the direct effects of poverty and unemployment (Idris, 2016). In fact, it was reported that 42% of youths in Trinidad and Tobago joined gangs for friendship, 29% for protection and safety, and only 8% for economic reasons. In Dominica, home issues and living in vulnerable communities were key factors in gang activity and juvenile offending (Idris, 2016).
2.5. Governmental and Policy Response to Youth Crime

Though it is generally acknowledged that many youths in Barbados are doing excellent things, former Minister of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment, Dwight Sutherland, highlighted that more needs to be done to tackle deviant behaviour and crime (Barbados Today, 2020). Accordingly, the government, in partnership with organizations such as Prince’s Trust International, The BPS, the Rotary Club of Barbados, and other social development agencies, responded through various programmes. These programmes target at-risk young men and women, gangs, boys on the block, students, youth groups, and community members, and are primarily preventative in nature. They involve anti-violence campaigns, provision of life skills, opportunities for employment and self-development, psycho-educational interventions geared towards the promotion of behavioural change, improving social skills, reinforcing positive behaviour, conflict resolution, provision of entrepreneurial assistance, and retraining of youths to meet the requirements of local, regional, and international labour markets (Barbados Today, 2020; Henry, 2021; Barbados Today, 2022; Forde-Craigg, 2020). Two other anti-crime initiatives are Crime Stoppers Barbados and Operation Restore Order. While Crime Stoppers Barbados provides Barbadians with a mechanism to anonymously report information surrounding a crime already committed or one that is being planned, Operation Restore Order targets persons who engage in crime, specifically fire-arm related crimes (Joseph, 2022).

While these are commendable efforts to address the issue, there is a significant lack of legislative and policy responses to youth crime. Juvenile justice is governed by outdated laws in Barbados¹, as two key pieces of legislation, the Juvenile Offenders Act Barbados and the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Act, date back to 1932 and 1926 respectively. The Juvenile Offenders Act, in addition to being outdated, is silent on key issues such as diversion and restorative justice, and establishes age eleven as the age of criminal responsibility, even though age twelve is the regional standard (Sealy-Burke, 2015). The Reformatory and Industrial Schools Act, which governs the island’s primary juvenile facility, was established by the colonial legislature, and is highly punishment oriented rather than treatment and rehabilitation oriented (Sealy-

¹ This current study found that there have been efforts made to repeal these laws and replace them with more current legislation (See Chapters 4 and 5).
Burke, 2015). Additional issues include the lack of a family court in Barbados, and the fact that many of the interventions for children do not extend to the family members in the potentially dysfunctional homes from which they originate (Sealy-Burke, 2015). An individual from the Probation Department made the following observation: “juveniles are often coming from dysfunctional homes and yet we target only the child, offering very little to the rest of the family” (Sealy-Burke, 2015, p.80). Therefore, policy and government responses should extend beyond youth in conflict with the law and must address their families. Furthermore, despite the issue of gangs being recognized as an area of concern in the outdated National Youth Policy, anti-gang legislation has yet to be implemented in Barbados.

2.6. The Participation Narrative

Despite the strides made in the governmental and policy response to youth crime, one area that needs to be addressed is increased participation of children and young people. Many of the initiatives mentioned above centre around employment and education. However, a focus on education and employment as the key foundational pathways to productivity (and responsibility) is restrictive. Social inclusion, i.e., providing opportunities for children and young people to engage in meaningful participation, is just as important (Head, 2011). According to United Nations (2009), participation is defined as a series of ongoing processes inclusive of information sharing and dialogue between both children and adults, where children can see how their views, and the views of adults, shape outcomes. Several articles reveal that participation in practice falls well short of this definition, as efforts to include children and youths are often tokenistic (Shier, 2009; McMellon and Tisdall, 2020), occur on adult/organizational terms (Percy-Smith, 2010), are hindered by adult attitudes and systems, as well as the power dynamics between adults and children; and lack impact on decision making (McMellon and Tisdall, 2020). Additionally, youths are rarely given feedback on the final decisions made and how their views impacted on such decisions. Thus, despite what is outlined by the United Nations, youths tend to face challenges in the recognition and realization of their right to participate (McMellon and Tisdall, 2020).
Moving past tokenistic participation means moving towards empowerment of children and young people (Shier, 2001). Several models of participation have been proposed which depict how youth participation could, and should, look. These include: Hart’s (2008) Sherry Arnstein-inspired ladder of participation depicting the eight different degrees to which individuals and adults allow children and young people to participate; Shier’s (2001) five-level model of participation emphasizing different levels of individual and organizational commitment at each level; and Lundy’s (2007) model highlighting the importance of children and young people having a space, voice, audience, and influence in the participation process. Improved participation of youths has a multiplicity of benefits, inclusive of increased self-esteem, confidence, social, personal, emotional, civic, and political competence, sense of ownership and responsibility, and reduced social exclusion (Shier, 2001; Horwath, Kalyva and Spyru, 2012). Other key benefits include improved quality of services developed and improved effectiveness, appropriateness, relevance, and sustainability of various youth-designed interventions (Shier, 2001; Horwath, Kalyva and Spyru, 2012; Corney et al., 2022; Head, 2011).

Efforts at improved participation of children and young people must also be inclusive. As Corney et al. (2022) noted, working with a diverse range of voices, and giving voice to those that are usually silent, is important for good and effective participation. Additionally, it is important that a diverse range of viewpoints are sought, especially from socially excluded, marginalized, and vulnerable children, to avoid inequities in access (Lundy, 2007; McMellon and Tisdall, 2020; Horwath, Kalyva and Spyru, 2012; Head, 2011). Furthermore, lived experiences should not be taken for granted. This was made evident by the findings of Horwath, Kalyva and Spyru’s (2012) study, which found that young people who had experienced violence in the past had a wealth of knowledge to offer in the planning and delivery of programmes and services. Nevertheless, it is evident from the literature that most participation initiatives target easy to access youths, and those who are the most articulate, literate, and of higher socio-economic backgrounds, while others are marginalized and overlooked for a variety of reasons, including their personal circumstances (Lundy, 2007; Horwath, Kalyva and Spyru, 2012; McMellon and Tisdall, 2020).
With that said, it is key to acknowledge that not all children and young people may be interested in participating. According to Corney et al. (2022) this can be due to young people simply being uninterested in the type of opportunities for participation presented to them. But what is important is that there must be space created to allow young people to feel that they at least have the option, confidence, and ability to participate (Hart, 2008), and the need for strong, established structures and practices that support participation (Weckström et al., 2021). Hence, true participation:

…is not just about having views represented in decisions about resource allocation or how services should be provided, it is also about having equal opportunities ‘to take part’ and ‘be involved in’ the life of the community, organisation or project, and feel valued for that contribution. (Percy-Smith, 2010, p.111).

This in essence is what Nancy Fraser meant when she coined the term participatory parity; that a just society is one that makes participation for everyone possible in all spheres of life, but particularly in social interaction (Fraser, 2005; Ferrarese, 2015).

2.7. Gaps

The proposed research aims to address several research gaps regarding youth crime in Barbados. First, there is little academic research on the causes of youth crime in Barbados, and the data that exists does not sufficiently address adult youths (those between 18 and 29) (Sealy-Burke, 2015; Bailey, 2016). Given that research across this age group is central to the development of effective policies, interventions, and law reforms, this has implications for addressing youth crime in Barbados (Bailey, 2016; Bailey, Cresser and Coore-Desai, 2019). Secondly, though some research includes youth voices, narratives surrounding youth crime are dominated by academic voices and those of “experts”. As highlighted by Bailey, Cresser and Coore-Desai (2019), however, basing policy and interventions solely on expert knowledge has its limitations. In their study, they noted that although experts in Barbados claimed that involvement in sports can be a key intervention in averting criminal behavior among youths, it was found that due to hypermasculinity, sports can contribute to an increased likelihood of delinquent behavior. Hence, there is need for research that identifies the root causes of, and possible solutions to, youth crime from the perspective of youths involved in crime. This claim is further supported by Devonish (2018), who stated that
intervention solutions for crime and violence must be consistent with the needs of the target group and must be grounded in scientific and empirical data since the latter can assist in the development, execution, and monitoring of such interventions.

Finally, prevention programmes tend to focus on the individual’s behavior, and little attention is paid to situational, familial, or community factors (Bailey, 2016). By adopting Fraser’s (2005) multidimensional approach to social justice in identifying the causes of youth crime (see Section 3.1.2), it is anticipated that the findings of this study will be instrumental in contributing to the development of more effective and holistic policies, as well as more multidimensional crime prevention initiatives.
3. Research Design and Methodology

This research seeks to: determine the multidimensional causes of, and accompanying solutions to, youth crime in Barbados, from the perspective of youths who have been involved in crime, identify the extent to which youths have participatory parity in Barbados, inform the way forward for addressing youth crime in Barbados from a social justice perspective, and empower youths through a participatory approach to be agents of social change in youth crime. This chapter therefore outlines the methods employed to achieve the research objectives. The research design for the study, inclusive of the epistemological and theoretical framework, is first outlined, followed by the sampling methods used to recruit participants for the study. The qualitative and quantitative methods used to collect the data, the data analysis methods employed, and the potential limitations of the overall methodological approach, are then presented. Finally, the chapter concludes with a brief discussion on positionality and ethical considerations.

3.1. Research Design

To achieve the research objectives, a mixed-methods approach called triangulation was used. Triangulation of different research methods and sources is useful for developing rich accounts of social life by supplementing deep qualitative accounts with broader quantitative ones, thereby improving the quality of the research (Plows, 2008; Anderson, Reinsmith-Jones and Mangels, 2011). Triangulation has been identified as key for research on youth crime and deviancy. The use of multiple methods aids in eliciting interconnected and complex overarching themes, helps to confirm, clarify, and deepen the researcher’s interpretation of findings, and enhances the researcher’s understanding of a particular situation or phenomenon (Gabriel et al., 2018; Devries et al., 2020; Moon, 2019; Mishra and Rasundram, 2017). Additionally, the primary benefits of triangulation are the reduction of biases and the mitigation of the disadvantages of certain research methods, which enhance the validity and reliability of research (Ayoub, Wallace and Zepeda-Millán, 2014; Turner, 2016; Plows, 2008; Davis, 2009). In research, establishing validity (i.e., the accuracy and the “truth” of the data collected) and reliability (i.e., the extent to which a study’s results
can be consistently replicated using the same methods) is crucial, as they ensure data are replicable and accurate (IGNOU, 2017; Mohajan, 2017). Validity and reliability are enhanced through method triangulation, since the use of multiple methods (and sources) can provide verification and credibility of the data obtained, thus strengthening conclusions generated and reducing risks of false interpretations (Mishra and Rasundram, 2017).

Given the topic under consideration, a complete participatory research approach that engaged youths as co-researchers would have been ideal. PAR is an approach that provides participants with a central role in some or all stages of the research process (Cahill, 2007a, Cahill, 2007b) inclusive of: problem identification, development of research questions, data collection, analysis and interpretation, development and communication of conclusions and, where pertinent, communication of any action plans arising from the research (Schugurensky, 2014). Additionally, it is an approach that focuses on the subjectivity and lived experiences of the participants in the research process, where the latter is usually the starting point for the research (Orlowski, 2019; Cahill, 2007b; Schensul, Berg and Williamson, 2008). Some have questioned the validity, rigor, and generalizability of PAR research, and whether it leads to valid, reliable, and usable research outcomes (Walter, 2009). Nonetheless, this methodology has proven to be an excellent research approach for use with young people, since it aims to amplify their voice, opinions and lived experiences which are often excluded when decisions about their lives are made at the policy and programme level (Cahill, 2007a).

However, as suggested by Davis (2009), this approach was deemed to be unrealistic within the current Barbadian context. As a native of Barbados, and based on experience as a researcher, persons in this country may feel “over researched” and thus hesitant to engage as co-researchers, especially without any incentives being offered. Though some may not necessarily require a financial incentive to participate (Ripley, 2006), the researcher was mindful that co-researchers invest a significant amount of time in their role and should be compensated in some way to show their commitment is valued (Cahill, 2007a; Davis, 2009). Research hesitancy was also mentioned in the academic literature as a hindrance to PAR, since persons may not want to invest time and energy into the research, either because they are uninterested...
or simply sceptical of the potential benefits of the research (Walter, 2009). Another consideration is the significant time and resource investment required by the researcher to train youths about research (Shamrova and Cummings, 2017), which in the context of a year-long dissertation, is unrealistic. Due to these barriers, the researcher decided against complete participation in the research process but ensured some elements of PAR, particularly relating to the work of Paulo Freire, guided this study. Specifically, the participants’ life histories guided all other instruments used in the study (see Section 3.3), ensuring that though the research could not be fully participatory, youth experiences were central to the data collection process.

3.1.1. Epistemological Framework

This research adopted a standpoint epistemology. Consistent with Harding (2004), since standpoint theory is a way of empowering oppressed groups and valuing their experiences, standpoint epistemology privileges the voice of the “oppressed”, giving them a public voice. This epistemology has been criticized for its lack of objectivity due to its roots in the knowledge of the oppressed (Harding, 2004). However, one can argue that, in attempts to be objective, researchers can end up reinforcing the dichotomies that perpetuate injustices among the researched, and between the researcher and the researched, which can compromise one of the key aims of the current study – empowerment of youths. Thus, two methods were employed to combine the need for objectivity in this research, with the challenging of traditional researcher-researched dichotomies. One of those methods was triangulation. With it being a self-corrective mechanism that tackles researcher positionality (see Section 3.6.1), triangulation ensures that the research process and its subsequent findings are objective. The second method involved adopting several concepts from Paulo Freire’s approach to PAR. Specifically, Freire posits an approach that aims to break the traditional dichotomies in research and encourages more collaboration and participation, where “subjects” are seen as co-producers of knowledge to be involved in some or all stages of the research process (Lather, 1986; Cahill, 2007a).

PAR grounded in a standpoint epistemology was suited for this research study as it embedded a research approach that recognizes that the experiences of historically marginalized or oppressed groups are an important source of critical insight (Harding,
Therefore, the voices and experiences of those involved in youth crime were central to this study. Adopting both qualitative and quantitative methods added breadth and depth to their voices and ensuring that data analysis occurred at multiple stages helped to produce research findings that emanated from their experiences. Adopting a standpoint epistemology and elements of Freire’s PAR approach significantly oriented this research towards striving for social change and social justice, which constitutes meaningful research according to Freire (Orlowski, 2019).

3.1.2. Theoretical Framework

Nancy Fraser’s approach to social justice guided this research study. According to Fraser (2005), an adequate theory of justice must be three-dimensional, incorporating economic, socio-cultural, and political dimensions in solutions to social problems. Central to Fraser’s theory of justice is parity of participation, i.e., justice requires that all persons are able to participate as peers in social life (Fraser, 2005). In reality however, persons can be impeded from full participation due to lack of economic resources (distributive injustice or maldistribution), cultural norms or values that deny them standing in society (status inequality or misrecognition), and political boundaries and/or decision rules (political injustice or misrepresentation) (Fraser, 2005). These three social justice concerns were the central themes against which the issue of youth crime was analysed.

Combining Freire’s approach to PAR with Fraser’s approach for social justice added depth to the research process, as well as the conclusions and recommendations generated. Though Freire was highly influenced by Marxist principles, his approach to PAR was grounded in the notion that social justice (which for him meant complete liberation from oppression [Joldersma, 2001; Schugurensky, 2014]) could be achieved by the subjects of research themselves. That is, research should be a collaborative process, where subjects are made conscious of their situation and are empowered to do something about it themselves (Schugurensky, 2014). This study sought to do this by allowing participants to tell their story through life histories (see Section 3.3), which: 1) allowed the data collected, the research findings, and recommendations to be grounded in the lived experiences of the youths, and 2) empowered youths by
involving them in the identification of social problems affecting them. As Schugurensky (2014, p.5) notes: “by investigating their reality, people feel ownership of the process of knowing, and this, in turn, nurtures a confidence in their capacity that leads to community action”. Subsequently, Fraser’s theoretical approach guided the analysis of the findings generated from the study, thus ensuring that each aspect of the research process adopted a social justice-centred approach.

Therefore, by grounding this research in Fraser’s theory of social justice, and by adopting a participatory approach rooted in Freirean principles, the multidimensional nature of youth crime, from the perspective of those involved, was revealed. This can contribute to the development of more wholistic multidimensional policy and programme interventions, as far too many of the programmes currently dedicated to addressing youth crime are grounded in the views of experts rather than the lived experiences of youths previously involved in and crime, and operate in silos, resulting in an often disjointed approach to crime.

3.2. Sampling

This research engaged fifty-five individuals inclusive of: youths previously involved in crime (who were between the ages of 15 and 29 at the time of data collection), policymakers, gatekeepers (those involved in the interventions geared towards helping youths involved in crime), and government officials involved in addressing youth crime. To access youths previously involved in crime, the organizations that work with these individuals were first identified and approached for assistance with the process. Following, snowball sampling was employed. This was instrumental in accessing individuals who were willing to participate in the life history interviews (n=5) and the surveys (n=45). This sampling method was ideal, since it is useful for hard-to-reach target populations, such as youths previously involved in crime (Turner, 2020). Regarding the policymakers, gatekeepers and government officials, purposive sampling was used, where a total of five individuals were selected from various governmental and non-profit organizations that address youth crime. Purposive sampling was the ideal method for this population, as this method targeted individuals with unique characteristics pertinent to the study’s objectives (Turner, 2020). Specifically, the policymakers, gatekeepers and government officials possess
knowledge and experience relating to policies, laws and programmes surrounding youth crime in Barbados.

3.3. **Data Collection Methods**

To ensure depth and breadth of information regarding the causes of youth crime, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect data. These methods are outlined in further detail below.

3.3.1. **Qualitative Methods**

Qualitative research aims to obtain detailed, informative views of individuals (Plows, 2008). In the process of sharing experiences, persons also share the solutions they employ to address the challenges they experience, thus offering potential solutions to policymakers (Sandoval and Rongerude, 2015). This study employed two qualitative methods: life history interviews and semi-structured interviews.

Firstly, a series of life history interviews was conducted with youths previously involved in crime/delinquency to elicit narratives on their lives (della Porta, 2014c; Ballie Smith and Jenkins, 2017). This has been touted as a method to access subjugated voices (Bosi and Reiter, 2014), and is ideal for this population. By allowing the analysis of these interviews to shape the research, this approach reflected Freirean epistemology by involving the “researched” in some stages of the research process (Cahill, 2007a; Cahill, 2007b). For this method, a guideline of topics to be covered in the interview (e.g., family background, social experiences, and a background of their involvement in crime/delinquency) was developed. This provided space for the respondent to speak freely and potentially expose new themes for further inquiry that may have been outside the study’s original scope (Bosi and Reiter, 2014). The results from the analysis of these interviews informed the other data collection instruments. While life history interviews are valued for their focus on the subjective reality of individuals (della Porta, 2014c), and the way they are used to amplify the voices of individuals (Jessee, 2019), they also are criticized for the subjectivity in both the interpretation and presentation of the results emanating from these interviews (della Porta, 2014c). Additionally, this method is viewed as time consuming and lacking in
reliability and validity due to the low number of cases usually involved (Curtis and Curtis, 2011b; Jessee, 2019).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with policymakers, government officials, and gatekeepers. This mode of data collection was critical to obtain information from the structural perspective and, for analysis purposes, was useful for identifying gaps and commonalities between their views and the views of youths. Interviews were chosen for this population so that the themes emanating from the life history interviews could be discussed in greater detail with persons who oversee the implementation of programmes and policies to tackle youth crime. As noted by della Porta (2014b), in-depth interviews are usually conducted with two categories of individuals: informers and participants, the former of which are deemed to be experts in a specific area. Such interviews allow for easier rapport building which leads to a greater willingness and time to discuss and pursue themes of interest (Curtis and Curtis, 2011a). They also facilitate a richer discussion than that which can be gathered from surveys and allow for follow up of key points raised throughout the interview (Curtis and Curtis, 2011a). Similar to life history interviews, however, they are time consuming and lack the reliability of surveys (Curtis and Curtis, 2011a). This limitation of life history and semi-structured interviews was mitigated through method triangulation as previously discussed.

3.3.2. Quantitative Methods

Quantitative methods such as surveys are generally broader in scope and scale than qualitative ones and use statistical data and analysis (Plows, 2008). Therefore, to supplement the research gathered from qualitative methods, surveys consisting of closed and open-ended questions were distributed to youths who were involved in crime/delinquency. This allowed for patterns to be identified across a larger sample size, and in combination with the qualitative methods, provided even more depth to the findings. Surveys are one of the best methods to gain large amounts of data from participants, thus enhancing the statistical power of any information obtained (Albudaiwi, 2017; Jones, Baxter and Khanduja, 2013). Since the findings of the life history interviews informed survey development, the survey was developed and distributed after completion, transcription, and analysis of the life history interviews.
The instrument was short, consisting of twenty-two questions (excluding demographic information), and designed to facilitate a better response rate among the population.

Prior to distributing this instrument, a brief pilot study was conducted and feedback from this process led to minor revisions of the instrument. Pilot studies are critical to research involving quantitative methods as they can highlight areas of the survey that may need addressing prior to data collection, including spelling errors and ambiguous questions (Jones, Baxter and Khanduja, 2013). Upon completion of the pilot study, the surveys were distributed to key organizations such as The Probation Department, the Juvenile Liaison Scheme (JLS), and the BPS. For the Government Industrial School (a residential facility for juveniles) and all underage participants in the study, the survey was conducted face-to-face in case some questions needed further explanation. This method of face-to-face data collection has also been proven to result in higher response rates for surveys (Jones, Baxter and Khanduja, 2013). Nevertheless, surveys have their drawbacks: low response rates due to survey fatigue among the population (Curtis and Curtis, 2011c), and participants sometimes misunderstand the questions and give random answers to questions, both of which can affect data quality (Albudaiwi, 2017).

From a sampling perspective, one key limitation was accessing sufficient respondents to participate. Thus, it was useful to discuss the importance of the research with those through whom access to the groups of interest was gained. Still, there was a risk that many would agree to participate but then drop out. To mitigate this, approval was obtained from more participants than was needed (della Porta, 2014a).

3.4. Limitations

There is no perfect way to do research and there are always pitfalls in any methodology chosen (Davis, 2009). For example, combining mixed methods with a participatory action design, while having its benefits, can significantly limit the extent to which the research can be considered participatory. Due to limitations in the local context and with finances, complete participation was not feasible for this study. Also, enlisting the usual scientific methods of quantitative and qualitative research without the participation of those most affected by the research, could perpetuate many of the
same injustices discussed earlier in the chapter. Therefore, by allowing the life history interviews to shape the other data collection methods in the study, the lived experiences of the participants remained central to the research process, which is the essence of PAR (Cahill, 2007b; Schensul, Berg and Williamson, 2008). Furthermore, from a qualitative data collection standpoint, the interaction between the interviewer and interviewee can influence what is shared by the respondent (della Porta, 2014c). As such, this interaction can cause interviewees to either share what the researcher wants to hear or be intentionally vague. The researcher mitigated this by being self-reflexive (see Section 3.6.1) during this process and asked questions in different ways to determine consistency of responses (della Porta, 2014b).

Quantitatively, surveys tend to produce superficial responses and do not capture the more personal responses of respondents (della Porta, 2014a). Moreover, obtaining a robust response rate can be challenging. By using triangulation and snowball sampling respectively, however, the depth lacking from the surveys was negated, and the most willing participants were identified, thereby improving the response rate of the study. Additionally, while it was advisable that the researcher was physically or virtually present in a non-invasive way while the questionnaire was being completed, this was not able to be facilitated by all the organizations.

Finally, as this research employs three different methods, time was also a significant limitation. By nature, life history and semi-structured interviews are time-consuming. Additionally, given that the results from the life history interviews were used to inform the other data collection methods, the semi-structured interviews and surveys could not occur before the life histories were completed, transcribed and analysed. Consequently, the researcher engaged in rigorous time management to ensure that each phase of the research process that impacted on another phase was completed in a timely manner.

3.5. Data Analysis

Information gathered from the qualitative methods was transcribed prior to analysis. This involved using the transcription software Express Scribe to document all that was said throughout the interviews. Afterwards, the information was manually
coded and thematically analysed. The quantitative surveys were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) programme, which generated both descriptive and inferential statistics.

By collating the information from the three methods used, patterns and variations in responses of individual participants and between groups, were identified through thematic analysis. The variations identified through each data analysis technique used, served to further highlight which voices hold the power to influence policies and interventions designed to address youth crime in Barbados. This mode of analysis is critical to amplify youth voices and shape the development of more effective interventions to challenge this power imbalance.

3.6. **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations are critical for any research, and this research process is guided by the ethical standards of the university as outlined in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Framework (CREF). Still, there are a few unique considerations. First, life history interviewing can cause painful memories to be elicited, thus causing individuals to be re-traumatized and experience emotional pain (Bosi and Reiter, 2014; della Porta, 2014c; Malthaner, 2014). It was essential to inform the participants of this possibility and assure them that participation was voluntary. From the researcher’s point of view, it was important to allow the participants to shape the direction of the interview towards areas that they were comfortable discussing, even if that meant bypassing a particular theme of interest. The researcher also needed to be cognizant of any vicarious trauma that she experienced during the data collection process. It was therefore vital for the researcher to have an outlet (cognitively, physically, spiritually, socially, and verbally) to manage and mitigate this impact (Sexual Violence Research Initiative, 2016).

Other ethical considerations included how the data was stored and used. When debriefing participants at the beginning of any interview, the researcher assured them that everything they said will only be used for the intended research purposes, no one outside of the research team will have access to any information they provided, data files will be encrypted, and, upon completion of the study, all transcripts, files, and
recordings will be destroyed in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Furthermore, the researcher assured the participant of anonymity and confidentiality, by ensuring that no identifying information was collected.

3.6.1. Positionality

One of the major ethical considerations for this study was the potential of researcher bias. An individual’s attachment to a particular research theme can result in biases creeping into the work, causing the researcher to inadvertently shape the data. Accordingly, the triangulation research design was used to decrease the likelihood of researcher bias and increase both the validity and reliability of information elicited (Ayoub, Wallace and Zepeda-Millán, 2014; Turner, 2016; Plows, 2008; Davis, 2009).

Additionally, the researcher needed to reflexively critique and adjust her positionality when needed (Gillan and Pickerill, 2012). Positionality acknowledges that individuals are shaped by their identities and experiences and, given that these influence how knowledge is constructed and how research is conducted, they need to be made explicit in the research (Gillan and Pickerill, 2012). Thus, it was important that the researcher remained constantly self-reflexive about her positionality; that is, aware of her political, social, and personal characteristics, and how they impact on the research process, for example, on the development of questions and analysis of responses (Plows, 2008; Balsiger and Lambelet, 2014).

Positionality, i.e., knowing who you are and how you relate to the research and its “subjects”, was key to ensuring the research process and its outcomes were ethical. As a 32-year-old woman living in the parish that accounts for 50% of the crime in Barbados, I have always been passionate about the issue of crime and violence. I have observed the struggles (e.g., peer pressure and drugs) faced by most young people around me, and I have also been a victim of crime in this neighbourhood. Though my physical location positions me as an “insider”, I am also an outsider to this community. I have used positive activities such as the pursuit of higher education and religion to help forge a different path than those around me, thus ensuring such activities have a greater impact on me than my physical environment. Therefore, I acknowledged that I would never truly understand the situation of youths around me, especially those who
choose to follow a different path and, to account for this, I needed to ensure that I was consistently reflexive at all areas of this research process; spanning from data collection to the development of the final paper (Balsiger and Lambelet, 2014). Also, there was an understanding that my identity as both an insider and an outsider could shape the research process both negatively and positively. Positively from the extent that I can position myself as having a little exposure to some of the issues they have faced; negatively in that I may inadvertently position myself as superior to them in my role as researcher. As Balsiger and Lambelet (2014) note, it can be an advantage in certain instances to have an insider role in research, specifically if one shares a similar social status of the group being investigated. On the other hand, it can be difficult to have the necessary critical distance from the research. Thus, I needed to keep an analytical lens, regardless of my personal opinions and beliefs, and be constantly reflexive throughout the process (Balsiger and Lambelet, 2014; Plows, 2008). My duality as an outsider also helped maintain a level of objectivity and critical distance in the research (Balsiger and Lambelet, 2014). In my interactions with the youths, I did not position myself as an expert “other”, or even as an insider, but rather allowed them to shape our interactions, as we co-produced knowledge together in a collaborative way.

Moreover, I ensured that my passion for achieving social change did not create biases in the research process. As a young adult, I often felt that youth participation in Barbados has been tokenistic at best, with only “expert youths” allowed at the decision-making table. This has also influenced my decision to give voice to youths who are traditionally silenced. It was important that I remained objective throughout this process, not demonstrating any partisanship towards the views of the youths whose voices I aimed to amplify. A key part of this was not asking any leading or loaded questions, and not imposing my own opinions in the data collection process, thus allowing the respondent to take a leading role. I was constantly aware of my position, my identity, and my passions, and implemented self-corrective mechanisms to check the credibility of my data and minimize the effect of researcher bias (Lather, 1986). One such self-corrective method was triangulation, and this, in combination with the data analysis approach which sought to identify patterns and variations in perspectives, was critical to producing bias-free findings.
4. Presentation of Findings

The mixed methods approach adopted to investigate the research objectives produced interesting findings on the key themes of the research study, namely the causes of youth crime and delinquency, participatory parity, or lack thereof in Barbados, and the country’s policy and legislative framework for addressing youth crime. This chapter therefore provides a summary of these findings using a combination of statistics and quotes from participants.

4.1. Demographics

A total of 45 individuals participated in the surveys, most of whom were male (95.6%) and incarcerated at Dodds prison (75.6%). There was a relatively even split among the age categories, with 31.1% of the sample falling in the 15-19 category, and an equal number (33.3%) in the 20-24 and 25-29 category.

4.1.1. Personal and Social Characteristics

Just over half of the sample (55.6%) completed some secondary school education, and two persons reported having a disability. The majority of the sample (75.6%) grew up in a female-headed single parent household, and the average number of siblings across the sample was four. More individuals reported being closer with their mother growing up (73.3%) than their father (42.2%), and the average age of first criminal/delinquent behaviour was 15.1 years (see Appendix D for additional demographics).

4.2. Factors contributing to Youth Crime and Delinquency

To determine the factors that contribute to youth crime and delinquency in Barbados, youths were asked to identify the factors that they believed contributed the most to their engagement in crime/delinquency. As depicted in Figure 1, the most identified factors were anger issues (55.6%), lack of money (53.3%), absence of a father (44.4%), hanging out on the blocks (40%), and disrespect from persons in society (35.6%).
Although the interviews with the policymakers, gatekeepers, and government officials (referred hereafter as key stakeholders) cited some of the risk factors most identified by the youths, inclusive of peer pressure, gang involvement, and the lack of an adult male role model, as highlighted in the below excerpts, there was a consensus that drugs, the education system, and deep-rooted familial issues were some of the primary risk factors contributing to crime and delinquency among youths.

“Drug use is really one of the major ones particularly for juveniles, and young adults too, people using drugs or actually selling the drugs.” – Government Official #2

“The lack of parental guidance, the strong adult male role model, low academic attainment which limits their employability, they gravitate towards persons who indulge in deviant behaviour.” – Prison Official

“Some parents are focused on self, so much that their wards, their children, don’t even feature in their daily equations. And all of that I... think, contribute a lot comprehensively towards the factors of crime, for youth, particularly in Barbados.” – Government Official #1

One key stakeholder highlighted the role of personal and collective trauma and the inability to adequately deal with it, as well as a Western Individualistic culture in Barbados with its emphasis on self, as key contributors to youth crime. Thus, he posited that there is no single cause of crime but rather a combination of factors working together:
“I right now looking at this thing called the cocktail of crime, or the cocktail of success. And it’s like if you add in lewwe say two pounds of no love, four ounces of poor parenting, you know, a scoop of poverty, you stir it up, right, what will happen? So, I believe it’s a lot of combining factors.” – Government Official #1

For analysis purposes, factors contributing to crime and delinquency were grouped into six categories: economic, social, cultural, political, personal/individual, and familial (See Figure 2). As depicted in Figure 3, 77.8% of the youths selected at least one economic factor, while 66.7% selected at least one personal/individual factor.

**Figure 2: Factors Contributing to Crime and Delinquency among Youths by Category**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Lack of money</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unemployment (no job)</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Desire for money</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limited work opportunities</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Underemployment (lack of full-time work)</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poorly paid work</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Disrespect from persons in society</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling ignored by society</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative labelling from others</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Neglect from the government</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling excluded by the government</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of representation in political</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of a voice in society</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Hanging on the blocks</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being part of a gang</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Substance/drug use</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Issues at school</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling isolated from others</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal /</td>
<td>Anger issues</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Emotional Neglect</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional abuse</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of academic achievement</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Abuse</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sexual abuse</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familial</td>
<td>Father not involved in my life</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of parental guidance</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family member involvement in crime</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family conflict</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mother not involved in my life</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3: Percentage of Youths Selecting at Least One Risk Factor in Each Category

Given that the life history interviews revealed that bullying influenced individuals at some point in their life cycle, whether as a perpetrator or a victim, and that these youths experienced some form of personal trauma in their lives, the survey sought to investigate the extent to which this was true across a larger sample of youths who had been involved in crime. The results indicated that 51.1% of the sample had been a perpetrator of bullying, and 17.8% had been victims of bullying in the past. Most notably, 91.1% of the sample experienced some form of personal trauma in their lives including but not limited to death of someone they loved (64.4%), repeated serious conflicts or physical fights between parents and adults in the home (22.2%) and a parent who had issues with alcohol or drugs (20%). Though the Pearson’s Correlation revealed no significant relationship between age of first trauma and age of first illegal activity ($p=0.66$), it was noted that the average age at which the survey participants experienced their first personal trauma was approximately 10.7 years old, and 66.7% of them experienced personal trauma before they committed a crime or engaged in delinquent behaviour (See Figure 4).
4.2.1. Youths and Gangs

While 31.1% of the survey participants indicated that being part of a gang contributed to their crime/delinquency and 57.8% believed that gangs encourage young people to engage in criminal activity, 51.1% of the sample admitted to being a member of a gang at some point in their life. The top 10 reasons identified for joining gangs are depicted in Figure 5 below, with the proximity of the gang to the youths in question being the most common reason. This was supported by a key stakeholder who noted that some youths would identify as being part of a specific gang or block based on the geographic location of their home.

Figure 5: Top 10 Reasons for Gang Membership
From the key stakeholder perspective, there was no consensus as to the presence of gangs in Barbados – a theme that was evident from the literature. This is likely as there appears to be no clear differentiation between gangs and blocks among key stakeholders across the country. Government Official #2 noted that there is a strong presence of gangs in Barbados, but in his organization’s outreach, gangs are categorized as blocks, while another key stakeholder noted:

“So, people in Barbados...they kind of mix up the word gang and blocks together... So, when people say they are 32 gangs in Barbados, what we really have is 56 known active blocks in Barbados. And then there are two main gangs. And they've always been two main gangs in Barbados.” – Government Official #1

Although only 30.4% of the survey participants indicated that they joined a gang for love and care, a few interesting comments were made by youths and key stakeholders regarding this reason:

“So, people in Barbados...they kind of mix up the word gang and blocks together... So, when people say they are 52 gangs in Barbados, what we really have is 56 known active blocks in Barbados. And then there are two main gangs. And they've always been two main gangs in Barbados.” – Government Official #1

Although only 30.4% of the survey participants indicated that they joined a gang for love and care, a few interesting comments were made by youths and key stakeholders regarding this reason:

“Some or at least most young men in the street are without fathers so they run to the block for love and guidance and end up with guns.” – Male, 25-29, Incarcerated

“Poor socialization at home, poor socialization in the home, including lack of love and appreciation and guidance, they gravitate towards those who make them feel welcome, which is 98 or 99% on the block and they adapt or are inculcated into behaviours that are prevalent there, including gang activity.” – Prison Official

“...when the dads are missing from the household, as good as a mother is she cannot teach a boy to be a man. So, he looks out there and the gangs become more appealing because they give you a sense of belonging, a sense of brotherhood....” – Non-Profit Representative

When asked what can be done to keep young people out of gangs, a running thread throughout the responses from the youths who were surveyed was participatory parity; that is, engaging youths as productive citizens in society through positive activities such as more youth work. This includes paid work and employment, sports programmes, social development programmes, and educational programmes that focus on more than just traditional academic subjects. In explaining this, some of the survey participants noted the following:

“I believe that more sporting programmes should be put into place and any youths that have anger issues or anything to cause them to get involved need to seek counselling early.” – Male, 20-24, Incarcerated
“I think they should have a lot of educational activities for the young people to take part in to help keep their mind on the right path.” – Male, 20-24, Incarcerated

“Give them more positive activities to do and positive people to talk to.” – Male, 25-29, Incarcerated

“...programmes teaching them how to be men and women rather than just school teaching.” – Male, 25-29, Incarcerated

Conversely, one of the younger survey participants reported being unsure of whether anything can be done to keep young people out of gangs, as “you can’t stop someone from doing something if they have their mind set on doing it”. A similar sentiment was voiced by a key stakeholder, who stated that:

“...you have to start with the mind first. You can do whatever. But if you don't get a shift in the mindset of people, you really wasting time and I find that with most social ills. Whether it's getting people out of poverty, getting people out of antisocial behaviours etc, you gotta start with the mind first.” – Government Official #1

4.3. Participatory Parity

To determine the extent to which youths have participatory parity in Barbados, key stakeholders were asked if at-risk or incarcerated youths are consulted when crime reduction and prevention programmes are developed. A few noted that it is something their individual organizations aspire to do, and others noted that although their organizations do not do it, it is crucial for programmes as it increases the likelihood that they will be both effective and suited to youth needs.

“I too believe that you can’t plan programmes for young people without involving young people... The benefits are numerous, because if I buy into a programme, I’m going to be more cooperative, right? If I don't, on the other hand, I'm going to be resistant. ...for years, I've been pushing that you can’t plan programmes with people, if they don't have an input because they will know their needs. And at the end of the day, if you bring something to me and it don't suit my needs, then it's not going to be beneficial.” – Juvenile Expert

“It's like me making policies for a maternity department...I don't know nothing about maternity...You can’t make policy for someone, for having a child when you've never had a child or don’t know the experience.” – Non-Profit Representative

As Barbados recently took steps to amend the 2011 version of the National Youth Policy, the key stakeholders were asked the extent to which at-risk youths, or those
previously involved in crime and delinquency, were consulted in this process. While many of them did not know, one stated that:

“… we've had a number of meetings, with a lot of youth stakeholders, schools, groups, we've had conferences, we've had as you said the stuff online. So, we have reached out to young people in major ways to be able to get their views and opinions because obviously, what you don't want is for people to say that the policy is not reflective of the views of the young people. And some of those stakeholders included the same groups that you have identified, those groups that are "at-risk".” – Government Official #2

The quality of such consultations was an issue raised by another key stakeholder who acknowledged that:

“The issue with those particular policies...is that when the system engages in those things, a lot of the times the “well to do youth” usually dominate the discussion because that is their space. And then sometimes you get a sprinkling of the at-risk youth as a kind of tokenistic type window dressing to say we've ticked that box, we have that, but there's no real deep engagement of that target audience... And why it's perpetuated really, it's easier to get people in that space that already articulate and into that space and then the other segments are kind of intimidated by the space. So even if they do participate, they will tell you things that again, they believe that you will find acceptable. So, there must be a greater effort to include them at a more genuine and deep level.” – Government Official #1

Simultaneously, he cautioned that such consultations are not always a fruitful endeavor as most persons either suggest what is already in their own frame of reference (i.e., what they already know), what they believe others want to hear, or what would be easily accepted. Nevertheless, he noted that his organization adopts a collaborative approach where it makes its own suggestions for initiatives, while taking the suggestions of youths on board.

According to feedback from the survey participants, inclusion in the policy and programme development process is of interest to them. In total, 71.1% of youths expressed an interest in being a part of the process in the future. While some wanted to participate because they believed that it would be beneficial for their future self, others wanted to do so to help people learn from their mistakes. In sharing their desire, some of them noted the following:

“I have a young son and I would love to do anything to prevent him and any other youngsters from being in my position today.” – Male, 20-24, Incarcerated
“With the current position I’m in, I can help and prevent youth from facing what I am going through.” – Male, 25-29, Incarcerated

“I think it would help me and keep me out of jail.” – Male, 15-19, Ward of State

One youth highlighted that he believes former inmates should be consulted in policy and programme development, a viewpoint also supported by a key stakeholder.

“Some of the policies and programmes really are not going to work, and being in a position such as I am, people from the neighbourhoods where violence is and begins, former inmates are the best participants.” – Male, 25-29, Incarcerated

“In my view prisoners and ex-offenders should be interviewed, to hear from their experiences and get their ideas and opinions as well.” – Prison Official

The survey also sought to assess the extent to which being an active participant in society is something that matters to youths, if they think they have functioned as such in the past, and if they can do so in the future. Regarding if being an active participant matters to them, 64.4% of youths responded in the affirmative. Notably, two of them shared that it mattered to them because:

“I believe working keeps the mind active and doing something for your community is a great thing. I actually do feel good when I do both.” – Male, 25-29, Incarcerated

“Cause I like to help, and I want to be a productive person to society.” – Male, 25-29, Incarcerated

On the other hand, among those who said that it did not matter to them, two of them admitted that such is the case because of the way in which they are perceived and treated by society:

“You are always being think of as the small guy and no one ever really listen to the small guy - sad but true.” – Male, 25-29, Incarcerated

“Young people don't get enough help from the government. They are quick to throw us in jail.” – Male, 15-19, Ward of State

Further enquiry into their ability to be active members of society revealed that 68.9% of them have considered themselves to be an active participant in society in the past, and 73.3% believe that they could be in the future. When asked why they thought it possible to do so, some voiced the following:
“Cause I have a lot of potential and willing to be better in life.” – Male, 25-29, Incarcerated

“Due to my experience in crime and of wanting better for the younger generation.” – Male, 25-29, Incarcerated

“I will be able to motivate others that are going down the same path that I went down and give them encouragement I never had.” – Female, 15-19, Former Ward of State

One of the survey participants who said that he never considered himself an active participant in society in the past, indicated that he now believes that he can be an active member in the future because he has acquired the necessary knowledge to do so. Conversely, another who admitted to being unsure about if he could be an active participant in society in the future noted that while he has the ability to be, he anticipates “a lot of negativity”. Regardless of their desire to be more involved in various aspects of their society, as acknowledged by a key stakeholder, youths are historically marginalized and powerless in Barbados:

“...youth have historically been marginalized... we always see young people in a situation, you know, you are supposed to be seen but not heard.” – Government Official #2

“...we also want to stress also too the socio economic factors that pervades the situation for most young people, and cause them to be poor and powerless... Powerlessness in the sense that, you know, in terms of being able to participate in, you know, the economic system within the country, to be able to participate, even at the higher level of the social aspect of the system also too. You would find that young people, generally, the majority of young people, there are some who breakthrough, but the majority of young people generally, you know, find challenges in being able to find their place and find their space in the society that we have created within Barbados.” – Government Official #2

4.4. Reduction and Prevention of Youth Crime and Delinquency

4.4.1. Programmes

To identify the means via which youth crime in Barbados can be reduced and/or prevented as perceived by youths who have been previously involved in crime, the survey participants were asked to share their thoughts on what they believe could have prevented them from engaging in crime/delinquency. As highlighted in Figure 6, having positive influences in their lives (55.6%) and greater involvement in positive activities (53.3%) were the most common responses.
Accordingly, when asked what could prevent them from re-offending, sports programmes and counselling (See Figure 7) were the most identified responses. With respect to those who selected ‘other’, guidance, having jobs for inmates when they leave jail, and learning a trade were the preventative measures identified. Notably, these responses were congruent with the measures previously identified by the survey participants that could help prevent gang membership.

**Figure 7: Factors that Could Prevent Re-Offending in the Future**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Programs</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Work</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentorship</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Service</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Similarly, when asked what they thought organizations in society can do to aid in the prevention and/or reduction of youth crime in Barbados, most of the suggestions centered around hosting sports and educational programmes for the community, as well as economic programmes that are geared towards the provision of more employment. In contrast, a few of the youths highlighted the need for greater inclusion, stating the following:

“Honestly the youth in this country hardly are given opportunities to elevate based on the facts of where they live and who they are connected to or who they know.” – Male, 25-29, Incarcerated

“The government need to give the young people more chances like help them out. More trades, more work, more love. That is the key. We feel left out, we go to school to learn to work for the government and not to learn for myself. They can do better than that for us.” – Male, 25-29, Incarcerated

“Help with jobs, proper jobs, find the reason or cause of what causes the problems in every household, help society to give those who are considered criminals a second chance.” – Male, 25-29, Incarcerated

While 44.4% of them admitted to being aware of policies and programmes aimed at crime prevention in Barbados, an equal number of them indicated that they were unaware of the existence of such programmes. Nevertheless, desk research and feedback from the key stakeholders revealed that there are numerous programmes available, inclusive of the types deemed potentially beneficial by the youths. In accordance with the key stakeholders, there are programmes geared towards addressing social, personal/individual, and economic factors (e.g., the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme, the Prison Fellowship Barbados (PFB) Landscaping Programme, the PFB Soup kitchen, the Next Steps Training Initiative Programme, Project Oasis, and the Barbados Youth Advanced Corps). There are also sports and psychology-related programmes, as well as programmes that offer parenting education and life coaching. The work of organizations such as the JLS and the Probation Department, and the BPS community policing programme were also noted as key initiatives in preventing crime in Barbados. Moreover, the Division of Youth Affairs was identified as an organization that has implemented a few programmes to help persons who have come into contact with the law. Specifically, they host a transition programme for inmates, whereby entrepreneurship development training and academic courses are offered before they leave prison.
Despite the efforts of these organisations and the existence of these programmes, it was acknowledged that more needs to be done for the youths. In explaining this, a key stakeholder stated that:

“...when guys come out... there is no follow up programme. Another issue, and this ties into youth crime, when young men come from prison there is no community programming for such persons. No halfway houses...halfway house may have a certain negative connotation, resettlement homes or whatever you call them, where ya could help a guy to fit in, work, learn a skill, farm, what have you, to help him settle into society, rather than going straight back where he came from, and that's the block.” – Prison Official

Additionally, it was noted that while many are trying their best to create programming for this cohort of individuals, a broader coordinated effort is needed. This was the viewpoint of another key stakeholder, who stated that:

“...there’re a slew of people who go into prison and do a little patchwork programme. So, when you put it all together it’s patchwork. What has been proposed and what we are seeking to roll out is to bring all of those players together, find out what it is they want to do, find out what their strengths are, find out what they’ve been effective in and have one massive, coordinated programme... – Government Official #1

Moreover, the key stakeholders revealed that greater attention and effort needs to be placed into monitoring and evaluating such programmes, as it is an area in which many are currently falling short. The following excerpts highlight this issue:

“Barbados and the region have a very serious problem when it comes to monitoring and evaluation and research” – Government Official #1

“Like most government programmes, that is our weakness. ... I know that in every programme you should have built into it checks and balances which will be the evaluation to see how change has taken place. But no, I can't say right now we have those built into our programmes. And that is something that we will have to look at.” – Juvenile Expert

4.4.2. Policy and Legislative Framework

To investigate the policy and legislative framework guiding juvenile justice in Barbados, the key stakeholders were asked about the two Acts that guide juveniles and justice in Barbados, namely: the Juvenile Offenders Act and the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Act, both of which were created in the 1900s. In response to the query, they highlighted that in addition to actively working against the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, these Acts are archaic, colonial, and have highly punitive
foundations, making them far from sufficient to guide Juvenile Justice. Highlighting the inadequacies of the archaic legislations, one key stakeholder reported that they were instrumental in criminalizing youths who were at-risk, especially those who left home because of different forms of abuse, but under the old Act were charged for “wandering”:

“...if you just wander, and that's no longer a thing, if you leave home, and the parents don't know where you are, and you may be found out there in circumstances of prostitution, that's a child in need of care and protection you know. That's not the child who should be prosecuted and criminalized. So, you have the Child Protection Act now to deal with it. So, they stop criminalizing them for leaving home and looking to protect them under the Child Protection Act.” – Juvenile Expert

As indicated in the above excerpt, fortunately, the Child Justice Bill has been drafted to repeal the two archaic legislations and is supported by the new Child Protection Bill which helps cover the status offenses\(^2\) repealed in the old Acts. These acts are soon to be passed in Parliament. When asked why such changes were not made two or three decades prior, one key stakeholder highlighted that efforts were made to repeal the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Act in 2019, but the process was delayed because of political elections:

“... it was under the DLP, but before Adriel Brathwaite who, was the attorney general then, before he could get it to cabinet, they lost the election. And when the BLP came in they realize that you couldn’t have the schools and reformatory act repealed and don’t have a child protection, because they go hand in hand. Because the question that we were asking under the DLP is when you take status offenses off the book, what is going to happen to those children?” – Juvenile Expert

Another key stakeholder however believed that the process of passing these Acts is still taking too long:

“But it [The Child Justice Bill] has been discussed at various levels but ridiculously so, it has not been passed in Parliament as yet. Cause we ain’t serious. We good at talking, putting on a show. We ain’t serious.” – Prison Official

When asked about the need for a family court in Barbados and whether it could be effective in reducing crime, the key stakeholders provided mixed responses. One key

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\(^2\) These refer to offenses that only children under the age of 16 can be charged for, e.g., wandering way from home, living in circumstances of prostitution, and refractory behaviour (i.e., children acting up and behaving badly in childcare homes).
stakeholder said that it was doubtful that it would, while some noted otherwise, stating that:

“There’re parents who turn a blind eye, or parents who allow certain things to happen to their children in order to finance the house. Now if you have a situation where you can get swift decisions made that can make that household a lil bit more stable, you reduce the need for these things which can help in the grand scheme of things. So, a family court could be one of those things in the arsenal that assists with the reduction of crime.” — Government Official #1

“I would not claim to be an expert in family court, but from my understanding of it, it would, things would happen at a quicker rate, because I understand the criminal justice system. And I know that it's clogged with a lot of waiting on reports, a lot of, what you call them, adjournments and so on. ...I believe that a dedicated family court would really not only expedite things, but it would give families a feeling that they're being supported and not criminalized.” — Juvenile Expert

“...there need to be more mediation than court. Mediation should be the first thing, especially when it comes to families and young people. We were quick to go to the very punitive action aspect of it and go bam, you did something wrong, pay the penalty. Let’s have a little bit of mediation, a little give and take.” — Non-Profit Representative
5. Discussion of Findings

The findings presented in Chapter 4 revealed some commonalities with the literature presented in Chapter 2, specifically as it relates to the causes of youth crime and delinquency in Barbados and the existence of gangs. This chapter discusses the key themes emanating from the findings, their link to existing literature, and their implications for future programmes and policies on youth crime in Barbados.

5.1. Factors contributing to Youth Crime and Delinquency

The findings of this study on the causes of youth crime and delinquency in Barbados are mostly congruent with the literature presented in Chapter 2. The selection of at least one economic factor by 77.8% of the youths surveyed as the reason for their crime and delinquency, and the finding that 75.6% of them grew up in a female-headed single parent household, lends strong support to the findings of Bernard (2014), Sealy-Burke (2015), Idris (2016), and MYCE and UNICEF (2020), who posited economic factors and the absence of the father in the household as key causes of youth crime in Barbados. The most identified contributing factors to youth crime and delinquency were anger issues, lack of money, absence of a father, hanging out on the blocks, and disrespect from persons in society. While lack of money and absence of the father as highlighted previously were supported by the literature, factors such as hanging out on the blocks, anger issues, and disrespect from persons in society, were relatively novel findings. Additionally, over half of the youths in this study indicated they had been perpetrators or victims of bullying in the past, while the majority (91.1%) indicated they experienced some form of personal trauma in their lives, with over half of them (66.7%) experiencing this trauma prior to engaging in crime and delinquency. These findings were also novel, as the literature reviewed for this study did not point to the existence of a possible relationship between bullying, personal trauma, and youth crime. Additionally, such findings indicate the influence of social and personal/individual factors as key contributors to youth crime, thus emphasizing that crime is indeed a multidimensional issue.
Often purported as a key contributor to youth crime in Barbados is the concept of gangs. However, any findings on gangs and gang membership must be carefully weighed against the context that there is no clear delineation between a gang and a “block” in Barbados. This assertion was evident in the literature (CJRPU, 2015; Global Organized Crime Index, 2021; Russell, 2022) and from the interviews with key stakeholders, some of whom indicated that there is a practice of using the terms gang and block interchangeably. Therefore, it is evident from this study and research that has gone before, that there needs to be a clear definition for what constitutes a gang and what constitutes a block in Barbados, so that there is an effective policy response to this area. Despite the lack of a clear delineation between the terms, the findings that only 31.1% of the youths indicated that gang membership contributed to their crime and delinquency is unsurprising, given what was reported in Devonish’s (2018) study. Devonish (2018) posited that youths believe that blocks (likely what persons referred to as gangs in this study) are a form of escape, rather than breeding grounds for criminal activity, the latter of which is deemed a stigma attached to the group, rather than a reality.

Interestingly, if the divide that exists between the two terms is set aside, the primary reason for gang membership highlighted in this study also lends evidence to the fact that what many refer to as gangs are really blocks. Most of the youths in this sample who expressed that they had been a member of a “gang”, noted that their primary reason for joining was proximity, an assertion supported by one key stakeholder. There is also support in this study for the increasing impact of individual and social factors for “gang membership”, such as the need for friendship, belonging, love and care, as was emphasized in the literature (CJRPU, 2015; Smith, 2017; The Ministry of Family, Culture, Sports and Youth, 2011; Katz and Nuño, 2016; Idris, 2016). Such findings have implications for policy and programme development (see Section 5.3 below).

5.2. Participatory Parity

This study also revealed the extent to which the country is lagging in creating participatory parity for youths. Particularly, it was found that although youths are consulted when policies and programmes geared towards addressing youth crime are
being developed, the consultation process is not widescale. At-risk or incarcerated youths are hardly consulted when crime reduction and prevention programmes are developed. Instead, participation spaces are dominated by the most easily accessible and eloquent youths. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that youths that have been involved in crime are indeed interested in participating in policy and programme development in the future. As such, a space for these youths must be created so they can feel as if they at least have the option to participate (Hart, 2008), which is the essence of participatory parity posited by Fraser. The literature reveals the widespread benefits that can accrue for individuals involved in this process (Shier, 2001; Horwath, Kalyva and Spyru, 2012) and critically, for the effectiveness of such programmes delivered to youths (Shier, 2001; Horwath, Kalyva and Spyru, 2012; Corney et al., 2022; Head, 2011), sentiments which were also shared by a key stakeholder. Such benefits are not tapped into when the most easily accessible, eloquent, and intelligent youths are those primarily consulted on policy and programme development, as this research indicated is likely the case in Barbados. Hence, Barbados needs to move towards more empowering, inclusive participation, and a greater effort must be made to show at-risk and marginalized youths that their lived experience matters.

5.3. **Reduction and Prevention of Youth Crime and Delinquency**

The findings on the factors contributing to youth crime are congruent with existing literature that purports that youth crime is not the result of one factor, but of several interrelated and interdependent factors (MYCE and UNICEF, 2020), particularly economic, personal/individual, social, familial, cultural, and political factors. These findings have implications for policy and further reinforce the need for a multidisciplinary approach to the reduction and prevention of youth crime. Although there are several organizations that are making concerted efforts to address youth crime in different ways, a more wholistic approach to youth crime is needed, where there is better implementation, streamlining, and collaboration of initiatives across the board.

While there appears to be no shortage of social and economic programmes to address youth crime, the lack of support structures and programmes in place for the families of at-risk and incarcerated youths, and a lack of easily accessible psychological interventions for all youths, are glaring gaps in programme and policy
that need to be addressed. This study highlighted the key role that familial and personal issues play in youth crime. Specifically, anger issues and the absence of the father in the home were two of the major factors that contributed to crime/delinquency among youths in this sample, while familial affiliation with gangs, and the need for love, care and belonging all featured in the top ten reasons youths join gangs. Although there are parenting programmes in existence to help the family, according to the key stakeholders, there appears to be very few (known) interventions designed for families of at-risk and incarcerated youths, a finding that is synonymous with the research conducted by Sealy-Burke (2015). Congruent with Sealy-Burke’s (2015) work, this study highlighted that when youths are released from prison or from juvenile detention, they usually return to the same, dysfunctional environments they inhabited prior to their confinement, which can lead to recidivism.

Therefore, having family support programmes that go beyond parenting programmes, providing access to qualified social services (e.g., counselling, psychological interventions) to help youths deal with personal issues (e.g., anger, personal trauma), and seeking to replicate the positive aspects of gang and block culture (belongingness, brotherhood, care, guidance) in programmes, are all key interventions needed to help address youth crime in Barbados. Consequently, the wholistic approach that is needed to address youth crime should be rooted in Fraser’s social justice theory, and treat all aspects of the individual, not just the economic and the social, which Head (2011) describes as restrictive on productivity, but the familial and the personal as well.

Additionally, when seeking to address the factors that contribute to youth crime and delinquency, one must look beyond the individual and towards the systemic. The existing culture in Barbados seems to be more of an inhibiting rather than enabling environment for policies and programmes designed to tackle youth crime. According to several of the key stakeholders, Barbados has a few deep-rooted systemic issues, such as classism, individualism, and marginalization of youths, that have pervaded the country for decades. As a result of these issues, programming will always fall short because the right environment does not exist for them to be successful. Part of this inhibiting culture is the weak legislative and regulatory environment that exists to monitor and police youth crime in Barbados. Specifically, the two outdated and
punitive legislations guiding juvenile justice have only recently been repealed and replaced by the Child Protection Act and the Child Justice Bill, both of which have been drafted and put before Parliament. Additionally, though the key stakeholders identified that a family court can be beneficial in addressing youth crime, serving to reduce the strain on an already taxed judicial system, and aid youths and their families by combining legal interventions and strong, social service interventions (Sealy-Burke, 2015), there have been minimal developments towards achieving this despite talks in the media (Barbados Today, 2023). Such a legislative environment is inadequate for overseeing the protection of and justice for youths, especially those most at-risk. To enhance the effectiveness of existing and future programmes, a drastic improvement in the legislative and judicial environment (e.g., swift justice, implementation of a family court, and adequate laws) is needed.
6. Conclusions

Youth crime in Barbados has been a concern for key stakeholders for years, and hence has elicited a policy and programme response from the public sector and various NGOs to address it. To effectively address youth crime, however, a thorough understanding of the factors that contribute to it is needed, both from an individual and systemic perspective, as well as from the perspective of youths involved in crime. Due to the dearth of research in Barbados in this area, this study aimed to: determine the multidimensional causes of, and accompanying solutions to, youth crime in Barbados from the perspective of youths who have been involved in crime; identify the extent to which youths have participatory parity in Barbados; inform the way forward for addressing youth crime in Barbados from a social justice perspective; and empower youths through a participatory approach to be agents of social change in youth crime.

As expected, the research findings confirmed what was stated in the literature: youth crime is multidisciplinary and hence requires a multidisciplinary approach. The most identified contributing factors to youth crime were anger issues, lack of money, absence of a father, hanging out on the blocks, and disrespect from persons in society. Additionally, over three quarters of the sample selected at least one economic factor, while personal/individual and social factors were the next most chosen category of responses. Results also indicated that over half of the sample had been a perpetrator or victim of bullying in the past, while a similar percentage experienced some form of personal trauma in their lives prior to engaging in crime/delinquency. These findings were unique to the literature reviewed for this study, and hence future research should investigate the possible relationship between bullying, personal trauma, and youth crime.

Many organizations have embarked on various steps to address the multidisciplinary causes of youth crime and delinquency, by adopting direct, indirect, and early intervention approaches, combined with several family, community, school, and economic initiatives. However, the potential link between personal traumas and crime/delinquency, also indicate the need for psychological interventions that allow such traumas to be adequately addressed. Additionally, better implementation,
streamlining, and collaboration is needed across the board to ensure that all youth crime prevention and reduction initiatives complement, rather than compete, and that any new initiatives plug gaps that might exist in programme and service delivery. One such gap that exists pertains to familial interventions. It was noted at various stages of the research that the family environment is key, both in terms of contributing to crime in the first place and enhancing recidivism rates. There needs to be more programmes that provide stronger structures and support to families, especially those of incarcerated youths since it is this environment that they return to after incarceration.

Furthermore, the multidisciplinary approach to youth crime and delinquency needs to move beyond the individual and treat the system in a multidisciplinary fashion. Currently, these efforts are being undermined by a culture that historically marginalizes and renders youths powerless, and an environment that lacks the systems and processes in place to foster participatory parity among all youths including those at-risk. In investigating participatory parity in Barbados, it became evident that even though there is some level of engagement with youths, especially as it relates to programme and policy development, this engagement tends to be limited to the most easily accessible and articulate youths. This can indirectly contribute to increased marginalization of youths and further inhibit participatory parity. Engagement first needs to involve all youths, especially those involved and affected by youth crime. Research (e.g., Shier, 2001; Horwath, Kalyva and Spyru, 2012; Corney et al., 2022; Head, 2011) has shown that this type of involvement of youths can enhance the effectiveness of programmes and services, and by extension policy, but also bear tremendous individual benefits for the youths themselves. Thus, it is critical that safe spaces be provided to ensure that all youths are at least given the opportunity to address issues that directly impact them.

Efforts to address the multidimensional nature of crime are also being impeded by a weak legislative and judiciary system. Although government has taken steps to address the legislative system through the development of the Child Justice Bill and Child Protection Act, more work needs to be done, specifically as it relates to implementing a family court. This court can aid in the speedier processing of matters that do not need to be brought to the already overloaded and slow magistrate courts, and offer an environment that focusses on support rather than criminalization of
youths. This study therefore shows that Fraser’s approach to justice is needed in this context to treat all aspects of the individual, as well as all aspects of the system and processes surrounding these individuals, for true justice to be achieved.

This research also used a participatory approach to give voice to, and empower the traditionally marginalized in society: at-risk and incarcerated youths. While it is acknowledged that complete participation could not be achieved due to various limitations, most of the research elements, from conceptualising instruments to the presentation of findings, have been grounded in the lived experience of at-risk youths. It is critical that policy makers act on the findings of this research, first by seeking to achieve participatory parity through an active and non-tokenistic engagement of all youths. The participatory models mentioned in Chapter 2 provide a good foundation for starting such a process. This study showed that there is not only interest but a willingness from incarcerated youths to use their lived experiences to help others like themselves, and hence they need to be supported in this process. As such, a space needs to be created for these youths to effect the social change they would like to see and help develop the policies that will enable that social change to occur.

From an academic perspective, future research should aim to engage even more youths to determine if the views expressed in this study are representative of all at-risk and incarcerated youths. The sample was heavily skewed towards incarcerated youths, but future research should also aim to engage more youths at the other end of the spectrum, i.e., those who are at-risk for deviance. Additionally, given that a full and comprehensive examination of all the policies, programmes, and services in existence to tackle youth crime was outside the scope of this study, future research can seek to provide this analysis to identify and address gaps in programme and service delivery.

The main takeaway from this study is that using Fraser’s approach to social justice to inform a more multidisciplinary approach to youth crime reduction and prevention, cannot be solely done at the individual level. The system, whether that be the legislative and regulatory environment, the judicial system or even social service provision in Barbados, needs significant reform and intervention. However, an individualistic culture means that there is an over-emphasis on the individual, and therefore the systems that contribute to the manifestation of individual problems
remain untargeted. Therefore, a systemic multidisciplinary approach that addresses all aspects of the system is needed: not just the programmes and interventions designed to prevent and reduce youth crime, but the legislative and regulatory environment that is so often a bottleneck to justice.
References


The IMF (2022) *Barbados: Request for an arrangement under the extended fund facility and request for an arrangement under the resilience and sustainability facility—press release; and staff report*. Available at:


Appendices

Appendix A: Life History Interview Guide

Opening Question: Tell me about your life.

Themes and Sub-themes

1) Family background
   - What was your family home life like when you were a child?
   - What was your relationship with your family (parents, guardians, siblings) like?
   - What kind of responsibilities did you have at home (e.g., domestic work, financial responsibilities etc.)
   - Looking back over this part of your life, do any difficult events or periods stand out? (Use this question to probe shocks, coping strategies, channels of support [relatives, friends, NGOs, church, moneylender etc])
   - Looking back over this part of your life are there any positive events or periods that stand out? (Use this question to probe opportunities, aspirations, resilience)

2) Educational background / School experiences
   - Looking back over this part of your life do any difficult events or periods stand out? (Use this question to probe shocks, coping strategies, channels of support [relatives, friends, NGOs, church, moneylender etc])
   - Looking back over this part of your life are there any positive events or periods that stand out? (Use this question to probe opportunities, aspirations, resilience)

3) Major Influences in adolescence
   - Links with ‘friends’ – how have these affected you?
   - Social networks (clubs, church, peer groups) – how have these affected you?
   - Family relationships – how have these affected you?

4) Open Questions:
   - What are some of the best events you can remember from your life? When did they happen? How did they affect you?
   - What are some of the worst things you can remember from your life? When did they happen? How did they affect you?

5) Criminal Background
   - Age
   - Year committed
   - The offence
   - Circumstances surrounding the offence
   - Persons involved
o In your opinion, what led to this crime being committed?
  ▪ Probe for:
    • economic-related reasons (i.e., lack of certain resources)
    • Socio-cultural related reasons (i.e., influence of peer groups, norms in this group, values held by this group)
    • Political reasons (e.g., political boundaries/decision rules, Impact of politics/ crime on interviewee; Relationship with government associations, community representatives etc.)

6) Wrap-up Question:
  o Describe 2 key moments in your life? How did these moments shape you/your life?
Appendix B: Survey Instrument

Youth Survey on Crime and Delinquency

Despite its small size, crime among youths in Barbados is a significant problem and there is a dearth of research that seeks to understand the root causes of the issue. This has implications for intervention efforts since policy and programs need a continuous supply of research that will inform evidence-based decisions on the interventions that are needed. Hence, this research is being conducted to do just that, by amplifying the voices of the individuals these interventions will benefit the most: youths previously involved in crime. This survey asks a series of questions about the factors that led you into crime/delinquency, as well as what YOU think should be done to address these issues in Barbados. This survey should take no longer than 30 minutes, and your participation is entirely voluntary, meaning that if you wish to withdraw, you can do so at any time without providing any reason. If you have any questions about the research, my email is: m.s.chandler@sms.ed.ac.uk and my supervisor’s contact email address is: andie.reynolds@ed.ac.uk.

I agree to take part in this study, fully aware of all the risks of doing so.

Demographics

1. Age
   - [ ] 15-19
   - [ ] 20-24
   - [ ] 25-29

2. Sex
   - [ ] Male
   - [ ] Female

3. Please tick the box which best describes your current situation.
   - [ ] On probation
   - [ ] Incarcerated at Dodds Prison
   - [ ] Ward at GIS
   - [ ] Part of the Juvenile Liaison Scheme
   - [ ] Other (Please Specify): ________________________

4. What is your highest level of education? (Select ONE option)
   - [ ] Some Primary School
   - [ ] Completed Primary School
   - [ ] Some Secondary School
   - [ ] Completed Secondary School
   - [ ] Some Technical/vocational
   - [ ] Completed technical/vocational
   - [ ] Some College/University
   - [ ] Completed College/University
5. Do you have a disability?
   □ Yes  □ No

6. Employment Status (please skip if incarcerated)
   □ Student  □ Employed
   □ Self-employed  □ Unemployed

7. Age where you first did something that could be seen as wrong or illegal:
   __________

8. Think of where you live/lived most of the time growing up. Who lives/lived there with you?
   □ One parent present in the home (mother)
   □ One parent present in the home (father)
   □ Both parents present
   □ No parents present

9. How many siblings do you have? __________

10. Did you have a close relationship with your mother when you were growing up?
    □ Yes  □ No

11. Did you have a close relationship with your father when you were growing up?
    □ Yes  □ No

**Main Survey**

1. Which of the following factors do you think **MOST** contributed to your criminal behaviour/delinquency? *(Tick all that apply)*
   □ Lack of money  □ Desire for money
   □ Poverty  □ Underemployment (lack of full-time work)
   □ Unemployment (no job)  □ Poorly paid work
   □ Limited work opportunities  □ Negative labelling from others
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling ignored by society</th>
<th>Disrespect from persons in society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neglect from the government</td>
<td>Feeling excluded by the government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of a voice in society</td>
<td>Lack of representation in political areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
<td>Feeling isolated from others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance/drug use</td>
<td>Hanging on the blocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being part of a gang</td>
<td>Issues with others at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical abuse</td>
<td>Sexual abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional abuse</td>
<td>Anger issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional neglect</td>
<td>Lack of academic achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father not involved in my life</td>
<td>Mother not involved in my life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of parental guidance</td>
<td>Family member involvement in crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family conflict</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other (please specify): __________________________________________

2. Were you bullied at school? (teased or called names, had rumours spread about you, been deliberately left out of things, threatened physically, or actually hurt)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3. Have you ever bullied another student at school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4. When growing up, did you ever experience any of the following serious events/personal traumas? (Tick all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Death of a sibling</th>
<th>Death of a parent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Death of somebody else you love</td>
<td>Separation/divorce of your parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A long or serious illness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long or serious illness of a parent or someone close to you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A parent who had issues with alcohol or drugs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated serious conflicts or physical fights between your parents/adults in the home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
None of the above
Other (please specify):

5. If you experienced any of the personal traumas listed in question 4, how old were you when you experienced your first personal trauma?

6. Which of the following do you think would have stopped you from engaging in crime/delinquency? (Tick all that apply)

- More/better parental guidance
- More positive influences
- Counselling
- More extra-curricular activities
- A job
- A Mentor
- Having a sense of purpose/ambition
- More involvement in positive activities
- A safe space to go when having issues
- Talking to a current/former inmate
- Other (please specify):

7. Which of the following do you think can keep you from repeating your past behaviours? (Tick all that apply)

- Community service
- Volunteer work
- Sporting programs
- Counselling
- Mentorship
- Other (please specify):

8. Is being an active participant in society something that matters to you? (This speaks to the ability to contribute to society in various ways for example, through working, engaging in social activities such as clubs, groups etc. and political activities such as voting, helping political campaigns etc.).

- Yes
- No

9. Please give a reason for your response.
10. In the past, have you ever considered yourself able to be an active participant in society?
☐ Yes  ☐ No

11. **If you answered no to question 10**, which of the following factors do you think limited your ability to be an active participant in society? *(Tick all that apply)*

- Lack of finances
- People thinking negatively of me
- Exclusion from things that directly affect me
- My family situation (please describe):
- Personal issues (please describe):
- Social issues (please describe):
- Other (please describe):

12. Do you think you can be an active participant in society in the future?
☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Unsure

13. Please give a reason for your response.

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

14. Are you aware of policies or programmes aimed at crime prevention in Barbados?
☐ Yes  ☐ No

15. In the future would you like to be included in the development of these policies and programmes?
☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ I Don’t Care

16. Please give a reason for your response.

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

75
17. Have you ever been a member of a gang? (If no, please skip to question 19)

☐ Yes  ☐ No

18. If you have been a member of a gang, what was your main reason for joining? (Tick all that apply)

Financial support  Unemployment  Poverty
To feel like I belong  Need for a family  Retaliation/revenge
Need for love and care  To make friends  Social exclusion
Need for relationship  Peer pressure  Protection and safety
To feel powerful  Friend in a gang  For something to do
To get drugs  Because it’s cool  Issues at home/with family
Felt abandoned by government  Gang was near me  Family member in a gang
Other (please specify):

19. What do YOU think can be done to keep young people out of gangs?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

20. Do you think gangs encourage young people to engage in criminal activity?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

21. What do you think can be done by organizations in society to reduce youth crime in Barbados?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

22. What ideas do you have about how violence can be reduced among youths?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Appendix C: Semi-structured Interview Guide

Despite its small size, it is acknowledged that crime among youths (aged 15-29) in Barbados is a significant problem. There is a dearth in research that seeks to understand the causes of youth crime in Barbados. This has implications for intervention efforts, since policy and programs need a continuous supply of research that will inform evidence-based decisions on the interventions that are needed. Hence, this research is being conducted to do just that by amplifying voices of the individuals these interventions will benefit the most: youths previously involved in crime.

You have been identified as a person who plays a key role in the regulatory, policy and programming aspect of Crime Prevention. As such, this interview seeks to gain your perspective on the causes of youth crime in Barbados and the programmes, laws, and policies in place to manage youth crime in Barbados.

Factors that Contribute to Youth Crime and Delinquency

1) What do you think are some of the factors that contribute to youth crime and delinquency in Barbados? (Probe economic, cultural, political (as it relates to exclusion), social, familial, and personal factors)
2) Are gangs a contributing factor to youth crime and delinquency? Is there a strong gang presence in communities and schools across Barbados?
3) What do you think is the primary reason(s) young people join gangs?

Prevention of Youth Crime and Delinquency

4) What types of programmes and policies have your organization implemented to aid in the prevention of youth crime and delinquency?
5) What types of programmes and policies have your organization implemented to aid in the rehabilitation of youths who have come in contact with the criminal justice system?
6) Do any of these programmes target the families of at-risk/delinquent youths? If no, why not? If yes, explain.
7) Are these programmes evaluated for their effectiveness? If yes, how are they evaluated and how frequently?
8) Are youths who have been involved in crime and delinquency consulted when such programmes are being developed? Why or why not? Do you believe if this is done that it increases the likelihood that such programmes are effective?
9) What are the benefits and drawbacks of having a more collaborative and inclusive approach to policy and programme development with at-risk, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated youths? Please provide reasons for your response.
10) The old and current National Youth Policy of Barbados have sought out the opinions of various youths in its development. Were efforts made to target the opinions of those at-risk, incarcerated, or released from prison?

**Laws**

11) Are you familiar with the Juvenile Offenders Act and the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Act?
12) Do you think these Acts in their current state are sufficient to guide policy and programme development for at-risk youth in Barbados?
13) Are you aware of any efforts to update the Juvenile Offenders Act and the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Act? If not, why do you think there have no efforts been made to amend them.
14) In your opinion, what difference would a family court make to the rates of youth crime in Barbados?
15) Given the noise surrounding gangs in society, have there been any movements towards developing anti-gang legislation?

**Gaps**

16) What more do you think can be done to prevent youth crime in Barbados?  
   *(Probe: generally, and from their organization’s perspective)*
**Appendix D: Key Statistics**

*Table 2: Breakdown of the Demographics for the Survey Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>95.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highest Level of Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Secondary School</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Secondary School</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Technical/Vocational</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Primary School</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College/University</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Primary School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Technical/Vocational</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incarcerated at Dodds Prison</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>75.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward at GIS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Probation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Ward at GIS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disability</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Household</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One parent present in the home (mother)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>75.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents present</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One parent present in the home (father)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No parents present</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>