

Corruption and Development

Making the link between corruption and development: An Appraisal of Selected SIDS

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Abstract: The development strategies of small island developing states have promoted extensive, ongoing and intense debate in academia. In assessing the political economy of SIDS it is useful to note not only the factors that give way to development but also the ones that impede it. While a variety of models have been used to describe the development strategies of SIDS, the extent to which some of these models have been able to adequately capture the major constraints to development in Caribbean SIDS is questionable. Having said this, the overarching argument in the discourse which follows is that corruption can be a major hindrance to the development efforts of Caribbean SIDS. In addition to this, an investigation will be launched into the impact that corruption has had on the development of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

For all intents and purposes, the selected duo consists of one largely homogenous state and one heterogeneous state which will be juxtaposed to determine whether any similarity exists in the degrees of corruption in both countries. The model of democracy which exists in these countries is also crucial in seeking to appraise the link between corruption and development. Some of the hypotheses which will be tested in this research include but are not limited to the following: There is a negative correlation between corruption and development, corruption levels tend to be higher in heterogeneous SIDS than homogenous ones and an increase of public participation in decision making processes will lead to a decrease in the level of corrupt activities in SIDS.

Keywords

Corruption, democracy, development, governance

Situation Analysis

Within the contemporary framework of Caribbean politics, many sovereign island states pride themselves in the relatively stable democracies they have been able to sustain since the postcolonial era. In general, the Caribbean is widely acclaimed for its longstanding courtship with regional integration, its reification of the Westminster model and its adherence to the liberal democratic ideal; though some countries have in the past flirted briefly with socialism. Most of the countries in the Anglophone Caribbean have inherited and modeled their systems of government based on that of the British Westminster model of government. Therefore many of the political systems and administrative structures that are present today bear a close resemblance to that which exists in the domain of the region's former colonial masters, under the aegis of the Westminster-Whitehall model.

In 1962 both Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica gained their independence from Britain. Trinidad and Tobago went on to become a republic in 1976, while today Jamaica is yet to experience republicanism. By and large, the political atmosphere in the both countries since gaining independence has been one of relative calm and stability. In Trinidad and Tobago this has been tainted only by the Black Power uprisings of the 1970's and the Jamaat al Muslimeen led coup de tat in 1990. On the other hand, the Jamaican experience has been one where electoral violence was a common feature in the newly

independent nation stemming from 1966 and culminating in the Walter Rodney Riots of 1968. Much of this violence however, dissipated prior to the turn of the 21st century. Whilst the presence of garrison gangs and dons are still very influential in electoral outcomes in Jamaica, the incidence of political violence today, pales in comparison to what existed in the immediate post-independence era.

The Caribbean's past has often been captured and depicted not only in the works of historians like Hilary Beckles and regional integrationists such as Norman Girvan but also by literary contributors such as Derek Walcott. Just as Walcott's poem 'The Castaway' can be deemed as a celebration of nothingness; so can the present fanfare which surrounds the jubilee of both Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica (Walcott, 1993). This projection can be made in light of the fact that the region's current political landscape, suggests that Walcott's continuous calls for Caribbean men to become New Adams and create their own identities has been largely ignored (ibid). In much of his works, the Caribbean poet laments the fact that although the region had gotten past the era of slavery and colonialism, much of its people had remained mimic men. Further analyses of the works of past and present commentators on Caribbean history have consolidated the view that in spite of the transition away from colonial rule the old adage '*plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*' applies, as change in many of the systems and structures throughout the region has been cosmetic, rather than structural.

Bishop (2010) for instance, noted that in spite of the proliferation of democratic stability in the Caribbean, countries of the region continued to adhere to ill-suited models, refusing to construct any that were truly representative of their societal structures and needs. This echoes a similar idea which permeates the poem 'Parades, Parades'; which points to the fact that "politicians plod without imagination...the same lines rule the White papers, the same steps ascend Whitehall, and only the name of the fool changes under the plumed white cork-hat" (Walcott 1993, 72). Walcott's 'mimic man' motif is also pervasive in another notable feature of the Anglophone Caribbean's past and present political landscape; the two-party system. In much of the Caribbean region, there is the entrenchment of a two-party system in which third parties are virtually shut out from government.

This feature of the Westminster model which has been transplanted in the region gives way to a winner-take-all type of politics, which has been

ridiculed for being contrary to the idea of democracy. According to one commentator who observed the misfit between the transplanted model and the sociopolitical environment in the region, democracy is based upon the premise that all who are affected by a decision should have the chance to participate in making that decision (Lewis, 1965). Contrary to this, the politics of the region has traditionally been one where the winning parties make all the decisions and the losers; though they criticize and agitate, do not govern (Ryan, 1999). This system allows for what has been referred to as the 'tyranny of the majority' (de Tocqueville, 1981). As such, it can be argued that the two-party system is particularly inappropriate for plural societies such as Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago which are divided along racial lines.

On one hand, the Westminster-Whitehall model has enabled many countries in the region to have reputable and consolidated democracies; the benefit of which is substantial when compared to the region's Latin American counterparts who have had a history of authoritarianism and dictatorships. On the other hand, the fact that the region has consolidated its democracy has not had any major positive impacts on its' level of development. This can also be explored vis a vis the Latin American region which has the emerging powers of Brazil and Venezuela making great strides in development in spite of their turbulent histories. This calls into question whether the inherited system of government has been of greater advantage or disadvantage to citizens throughout the Caribbean region.

The Caribbean is often commercialized as a paradise and in many respects rightly so. However, the governing of several countries throughout the region over the past few decades has been marked by a steady increase in corruption, a lack of accountability and transparency among public officials, abuse of power by political factions and increasing crime rates. Consequently, these developments have significantly tainted the region's pristine imagery. The challenges which have confronted Caribbean SIDS since the post-independence era can no longer be solely attributed to the colonial experience and the subsequent adoption of a model of democracy that is unresponsive to the region's needs. Nevertheless, the point must be made that the view that what is good for Britain is good for the Caribbean can no longer be regarded as tenable, especially in a region where populations are acutely small in comparison to those of Western Europe; where the Westminster model

seems to have occupied a comfortable position overtime (Williams, 1955)¹.

Having given a brief synopsis of the region's background the subsequent section will explore the topic of corruption as relates to Caribbean development. Next, Section II will primarily examine the political economy of corruption in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago on a comparative basis. Finally, Section III will focus mainly on the prospects for a thrust toward good governance and greater public participation in Caribbean SIDS. This section will also seek to determine whether the possibility exists for these variables to reduce the incidence of corruption not only in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago but in the region at large.

SECTION I

The concept of development can in many ways be considered to be a relative phenomenon which is subject to great differences in interpretation. Even so, for the purpose of this discourse a traditional approach to the subject matter will be taken. This approach purports that development involves the creation of conditions for the realization of human well-being and an overall reduction in the areas of poverty, unemployment and income inequality (Seers, 1970). Today, as Caribbean SIDS struggle to maintain some form of equilibrium between the dual complexities of vulnerability and resilience, questions continue to be raised as to why many countries across the region have experienced such low levels of development since becoming independent.

The usual response to this growing concern is that underdevelopment has been caused by the manner in which countries of the region have been traditionally incorporated into the global political economy. This view has been endorsed by Gunder Frank (1988) who alluded to the fact that underdevelopment in the third world was not a natural condition but an artifact which was created by the long history of colonial domination. The works of (Prebisch, 1950; Girvan, 1975; Addo, 1996) have also toured a similar line of argument. In spite of the continued popularity of these views, it might be both unfair and inaccurate to continue to attribute the region's present lack of development primarily to its colonial heritage.

¹ Former Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago at a public lecture in Woodford Square, Port of Spain, Trinidad.

Since gaining their independence, many countries throughout the region have had their fair share of experiments with development models that were native to the Caribbean, inclusive of industrialization by invitation and export oriented industrialization. Many of these development models however, proved to be short lived and inadequate for addressing the issue of underdevelopment. Amidst all the development experiments tampered with in the immediate post-independence era, it was ultimately felt that the best bet was to reduce the presence of multinational corporations in the region and to delink from metropolitan countries altogether. However, by the 1970's it became evident that sovereign independence and delinking would not automatically give way to development and as a result the state began "commanding the heights of the economy" (Ramsaran, 1994).

The emergence of this state led model of development was fuelled by the widespread perception that the region was in need of an indigenously conceived of developmental model, that was more sustainable and more feasible than its predecessors. Until recently, the role of institutions such as the bureaucracy in aiding or inhibiting development has been considerably sidelined. Indeed, structural adjustment has had a debilitating impact on the development of much of the region. However, had it not been for the oversized and bloated bureaucracies which surfaced in the post-colonial period, the conditionalities that were imposed by international lending agencies in order to curb them, could have been avoided (La Guerre, 1994). Ideally, the government is meant to play a facilitating role in the development of any country's economy but with the absence of a vibrant private sector in many Caribbean SIDS in the post-independence era; the government's primary role became that of development agent (Ramsaran, 1994). As such, citizens quickly bought in to the idea that the government would be the sole provider of services ranging from education to health.

Since the structural adjustment period, there has been a growing acceptance of the neoliberal ideology which has seen robust attempts by states throughout the region to retreat to a facilitating role. However, the mindset that the state should be the caretaker of its citizenry has proven to be difficult to change. Nevertheless, the doctrine of good governance is one which many Caribbean SIDS have been trying to adopt since the turn of the 21st century. It represents a combination of democracy, development and public management and it is a notion which implies the utilization of a plethora of formal tools and

machinery in order to effectively run a state². One such machinery is the bureaucracy.

Today, the bureaucracy continues to occupy a prominent position in the context of many small island developing states. Though it cannot function as an *instrumental* means for creating opportunities for development; the current socio-economic scenario in the Caribbean region conjures sufficient evidence to suggest that failures in the bureaucracy can inhibit development. Bureaucratic failure may arise from a number of issues ranging from maladministration to corruption. Having said this, due to the fact that corruption has become a major part of political and administrative systems in Caribbean SIDS it is important that academics seek to assess the relationship between corruption and development. There are various perspectives from which the topic of corruption could be analyzed. This paper is mainly concerned however, with bureaucratic corruption.

Bureaucratic corruption can be defined as the utilization of one's official bureaucratic position for personal benefit (Danns, 1980). Bureaucratic corruption has also been described as "a particularly viral form of bureaupathology...Once it enters the blood of the public organization, it spreads quickly to all parts...and can eventually destroy public credibility and organizational effectiveness" (Hope 1985:, 7). Another school of thought states that:

"Bureaucratic corruption can be explained within the context of the nature and character of the bureaucratic institution itself...at times the bureaucracy outgrows its organizational structure and as such becomes dehumanized and monolithic, hence due to undefined structure, lack of social values, integration of selfish interest over and above that of the organization, the absence of rules and procedures, corruption has the likelihood of evolving, persisting and spreading" (Lawal et al., 2006: 645).

According to Dwivedi (1967) few visitors to countries of the developing world could escape hearing about various types of corruption. He further indicated that corruption and maladministration were essentially two sides of the same coin (ibid). Administrative corruption has proven to be the most prevalent form of corruption in the Caribbean, where the state has traditionally played an active role in chartering the process of development and where

state activity has largely extended into economic ownership, management and control (Danns, 1980). Because corruption can include the embezzlement of public funds for private usage, the consequence of this may be the reduction in financial capital which may have otherwise gone toward the provision of public goods and services that contribute to the health and longevity of individuals (Blackburn & Sarmah, 2007).

Corruption is an issue which was once largely ignored by academics, mainly because no appropriate means for measurement existed. This has since changed and today it has become the subject of much scholarly work as various fields have come to recognize its political, economic, and social effects (Berrios, 2010). While the issue of measurement continues to be a contentious one, the Corruption Perceptions Index is currently the most commonly used tool for a methodological approach to corruption. Critics have complained however, that the CPI reinforces stereotypical perceptions about the geography of corruption, and that the perversity of its rankings reflects the general confusion and inadequacy of the current corruption discourse (Christensen, 2007).

Though an overwhelming amount of literature on corruption currently exists, the extent to which academics have sought to analyse the effects of corruption on development in SIDS vis a vis their larger counterparts has been minimal. An analysis of the Corruption Perceptions Index would reveal that there is a general pattern whereby developed countries rank high and less developed countries rank low. An analysis of the Human Development Indices would also reveal that many of the countries in the global north tend to be more developed than those in the global south. Although many in the Caribbean attribute their economic underdevelopment to their legacies of imperialism and slavery, at each level of analysis it should be noted that corruption continues to be inextricably linked to factors of income inequality and the inability of individuals to meet their basic needs (Collier, 2002).

Several countries in the Caribbean region can be considered to be soft states and as a result the climate is one which facilitates corruption. In such a state Myrdal contends that, "various types of social indiscipline manifest themselves in the form of deficiencies in legislation and in the observance and enforcement of law" (Myrdal, 1970 cited in Hope 1985:, 10). Caribbean states are therefore faced with the double jeopardy of being both small states and soft states. Knack and Azfar (2002, 7) are cognizant

² <http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/governance/>

of the negative correlation between small size and corruption as evidenced by the idea put forward that “the relationship between corruption and country size is ultimately an empirical issue”. For instance in small nations where there are greater kinships and family ties than in large ones there is a greater propensity for acts of corruption to take place.

Notwithstanding, although corruption tends to be more pervasive in the smaller, lesser developed countries in the global sphere it is not an issue which is limited to the south. A problem which is more acutely linked to regions of the south is the absence of quality administrative structures; which are considered to be important in the development of modern democracies. Zaman and Rahim (2009) also express the view that coupled with the notable absence of adequate and efficient administrative systems, the publicizing of acts of corruption; particularly the ones which go unpunished, lead persons to emulate them. Accordingly, the view that people tend to be as corrupt as the system allows them to be, fits neatly into the context of Caribbean SIDS³.

Developing states continue to be regarded by several commentators as the most vulnerable to corruption (Ksenia, 2008; Webb, 2010). The sentiment that corruption tends to hurt the process of development in SIDS is echoed by (Francis, 2003 cited in Ampratwum, 2008) who states that acts of corruption tend to divert money away from development. Because of this, corruption can be regarded not only as an immoral issue but one which can potentially increase the likelihood of poverty (ibid). It must be emphasized that smallness itself is not a barrier to development, as can be determined by the levels of development that have taken place in the small states of Singapore and Malta. However, it can be seen as a given that the smaller states in the global system are more vulnerable than their larger counterparts and corruption represents one of these many vulnerabilities (Bishop & Payne, 2011). According to (Bishop & Payne 2011, 7) “the idea of vulnerability suggests that development is markedly more fragile, ephemeral and potentially threatened than in larger societies”. Therefore, if left unchecked bureaucratic corruption can erode the social, political and economic fabric of SIDS.

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http://www.transparency.org/news_room/faq/corruption_faq

The most heated debate on corruption in recent times concerns whether its effects on the welfare of a society are positive or negative (Otusanya, 2011). It has been suggested that one of the major negative impacts of bureaucratic corruption is the fact that it affects economic performance by undermining the effectiveness of public policy in enhancing human development (Blackburn& Sarmah, 2007). Corruption has also been labelled as a critical obstacle to social development in a number of developing countries, further entrenching already pervasive issues such as hunger and poverty (Otusanya, 2011). In spite of this, some have been less pessimistic about the effects of corruption, insisting that it could aid development rather than be a hindrance to it. For instance (Leff, 1964; Huntington, 1968 cited in Bardhan, 1997) purport that corruption is the much needed grease to propel the wheels of action in a rigid administration. They further advocate that an honest and over centralized bureaucracy may actually stymie economic growth rather than encourage it.

Due to the fact that there has been increasing evidence emerging from the findings of organisations such as the World Bank (cited by Blackburn& Sarmah, 2007) which indicates otherwise, it can be agreed that corruption in SIDS currently represents “the single greatest obstacle to economic and social development”⁴. Sen (1999, 275 cited in Blackburn& Sarmah, 2007) also declared corruption as “one of the major stumbling blocks in the path to successful economic progress”. Therefore, it can be concluded that corruption and development are strongly connected in a relationship that is both negative and two-way causal since generally; higher levels of corruption tend to be associated with lower levels of development (Mauro, 1995).

It would seem that in the Caribbean, the issue of corruption as a factor that retards economic development on a regional level is often overlooked (Collier, 2002). However, history has proven corruption to be self-defeating over a sustained period, with the possibility of widening social barriers and undermining incentives to perform. Corruption not only hinders development but it can also victimize individuals and groups who are in need of accessing government goods and services (Johnston et al, 1999). Moreover, there is a high

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http://www.transparency.org/global_priorities/poverty/corruption_aid/best_practice

probability that society would perform better and development will accelerate if corruption levels are brought to a minimum in Caribbean SIDS (Caiden et al., 2001).

Some have suggested that the low ranking of developing states in the Corruption Perceptions Index is because acts of gift giving and favours are natural features of small societies. However, in many instances it has been revealed that gestures of rewarding civil servants for the performance of their duties are often done in a clandestine manner and this is what renders the act to be a corrupt one. In the context of Caribbean SIDS, it is not uncommon for cultural relativism to be used as a justification for those who wish to act in ways that are detrimental to others (Hodder, 2007). Again, this can be linked to the issue of income inequality and the inability of humans to achieve a desired state of well-being. This situation resonates well in Mbaku's observation that when civil servant remuneration levels are relatively low, a significant part of their total compensation may be derived from engagement in outside activities, resulting in a significant increase in bureaucratic corruption (Mbaku, 1991).

Conversely, the analysis of Rose-Ackerman (1999) best sums up the debate surrounding cultural relativism and universalism as relates the topic of corruption. It is also most fitting to sum up this section by way of conclusion, as it clearly enunciates the endemic nature of corruption as follows:

“Subtle differences in culture and basic values exist across the world...But there is one human motivator that is both universal and central to explaining the divergent experiences of different countries...That motivator is self-interest...Critics call it greed. Economists call it utility maximization. Whatever the label...endemic corruption suggests a pervasive failure to tap self-interest for productive purposes” (Rose-Ackerman 1999, 2).

Having surveyed the academic literature on corruption and development, the following section will now seek to examine the country cases of Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica.

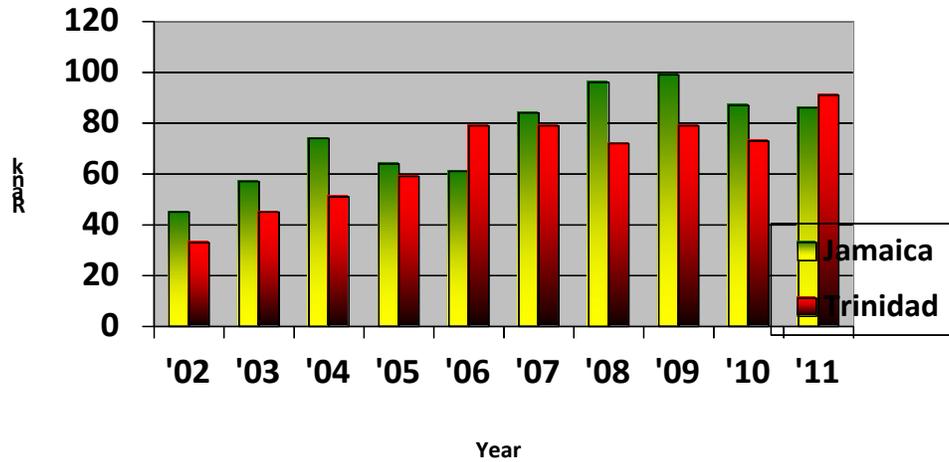
SECTION II

Based on the scholarly literature examined to this point it can be deduced that there is a correlation between small size, development and the prevalence of corruption. For small states in particular, corruption acts as a heavy tax on foreign direct investment, diverting much needed capital and entrepreneurial activity away from them (Johnston, 2004). That said, at this stage it is important to assess the extent to which factors including but not limited to; societal composition and political environment, have allowed for the proliferation of corruption in the small island developing states of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

The concept of pluralism has often been used in political discourse to explain the social structures of diverse societies such as Malaysia, Fiji, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago (Lijphart, 1968). The underlying motif which pervades the plural society model as relates to politics, is that deep seated cleavages exist, rendering it difficult to effectively govern without one cultural, religious or ethnic group experiencing a sense of marginalization or ostracization in the process (ibid). By and large, the concerns about plural societies raised by Lijphart have been influential in generating the hypothesis which sets out to determine whether any differences exist in corruption levels in homogenous and heterogeneous societies. Figure 1 which appears hereunder will be used as the point of departure for an appraisal of the country cases of Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica. At a glance, the information presented in Figure 1 underscores the fact that plural societies are not necessarily more prone to corruption than homogenous ones. Figure 2 which will be presented later in this section, will reveal the precise ranking of both countries over a ten year period in an effort to show the extent of the disparity between them.

Figure 1 - Data adapted from Transparency International 's CPI

Corruption Perception Index for Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica over 10 year time span



An analysis of the CPI for the past five years conjures the image of rampant corruption existing not only in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago but also of a very corrupt Caribbean. In response to the reportedly high levels of corruption which have been detected in SIDS, the argument is often made that the umbrella definition which is used to explain corruption, is inappropriate for the classification of societies where gift-giving is a traditional practice. However, gift-giving to the civil servant is not a cultural element in the Caribbean as it may be in Pacific SIDS, particularly if it is not preceded or succeeded by the provision of a good or service. Therefore when both regions are juxtaposed and countries such as Papua New Guinea rank exceedingly low on the CPI it may very well be that acts of gift-giving are being factored in, when in truth and in fact corruption might be higher in Jamaica or Trinidad and Tobago.

In Jamaica corruption tends to be defined in political terms rather than in the day to day terms of obtaining one's driver's license, avoiding a traffic ticket, arranging for favourable treatment for one's child in a school, and getting quicker medical care (Lyday et al., 2008). As such, one commentator lamented the fact that for a number of years, corruption in Jamaica had enjoyed a field day⁵. It has also been commented

that corruption amongst public officials can be partly attributed to the attitude of the public which facilitates such practices through their general acceptance of corruption in everyday activities (Kirton et al, 2010). In the context of the multi-ethnic society of Trinidad and Tobago, when persons get into positions of power they tend to feel an obligation to reward their hitherto marginalized family and friends. It should be noted that such a scenario takes place against the backdrop of a socio-economic environment where resources are already scarce and limited and everyone is seeking to gain a piece of the national pie.

Relatedly, attention was also drawn to the fact that Jamaican leaders have displayed a lack of political will to effectively battle corruption; many of them condemning a great proportion of the Jamaican populace to a future of relative poverty and hopelessness (Christie, 2011). A similar situation obtains in Trinidad and Tobago where corruption has translated into disenfranchisement for many citizens. As such, the following has emerged in response to the excessive levels of corruption which exists in Trinidad and Tobago:

“Some have expressed concern over the implications of corruption in Trinidad and

⁵ <http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/Corruption-reached--systemic--levels-in-Jamaica---Christie> The Jamaican Contractor General Greg Christie made this

comment at a regional anti-corruption conference in 2011.

Tobago as it has the capacity to negatively affect the standard of living of the majority since corruption reduces the efficiency and in many cases the quality of government services to the public, and the economic viability of the country” (Kirton et al 2010, 73).

This has occurred to the extent where citizens who require a public service can either face the horrors of delays and inertia in obtaining that service which

should be delivered not only on a cost free basis but also in an efficient manner; or otherwise offer the public servant ‘a grease hand’ in order to have the service sped up. In other words as Noonan (2004) puts it, bribes or gifts act as lubricants in order for public servants to perform efficiently. This has contributed to the continuation of a situation where bureaucrats are deliberately tardy in the execution of their duties in order to receive some form of bribe to perform their jobs.

Case 1

While on vacation in the island of Jamaica I had a firsthand experience on how corruption could be encouraged. I observed the ease with which a police officer wills himself to give you an ultimatum between conceding to a bribe and paying a ticket for a traffic offence. In contravention of at least three traffic laws which I was ignorant to being that I was a visitor, I was told by a member of the Jamaican Constabulary that I could either treat him to an alcoholic beverage of his choice or receive a ticket.

Such unscrupulous acts are not uncommon among public officials in Trinidad and Tobago who also seek to fill the void in their monthly incomes with money derived from their engagement in underhanded activities. One case in point is the health sector which is in dire need of revamping. I was informed by an employee of one of the regional health authorities that in a public hospital one can spend up to five years on a waiting list for a life and death procedure to be performed, or pay a hefty price to get approximately from page 100 to page 10 on that list.

A Latin American Public Opinion Poll survey conducted on democracy in the Caribbean in 2010 highlighted the way in which corruption amongst public officials was perceived by the citizenry of Trinidad and Tobago. In a question where respondents were asked to give their view about corruption based on their own experience or what they heard about corruption amongst public officials, 55.4% felt that it was very common, 40.2% felt that it was common, 3.6% felt that it was uncommon and 0.8% felt that it was very uncommon (Kirton et al., 2010). Additionally, 9.1% of respondents felt that they were victimized by acts of corruption at least once during the past year (ibid). Cumulatively, 95.6% of the respondents held the perception that corruption existed in varying measures amongst public officials.

Consider Figure 2 below which gives an insight into the corruption levels in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago respectively.

**Figure 2- Adapted from Transparency International's CPI
Corruption Perception Index for Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago**

Year	Jamaica	Trinidad and Tobago
2002	45	33
2003	57	45
2004	74	51
2005	64	59
2006	61	79
2007	84	79
2008	96	72
2009	99	79
2010	87	73
2011	86	91

The data presented in Figure 2 reveals that only in two instances Trinidad and Tobago has been ranked more corrupt than its regional counterpart Jamaica. Between 2002 and 2006 there was a steady increase in the levels of corruption in Trinidad and Tobago. In Jamaica on the other hand corruption increased from 2002-2004 and since then the levels of corruption have fluctuated. A similar degree of oscillation has taken place in Trinidad and Tobago after 2006, although Jamaica's level of corruption has generally remained higher. These precise figures dispel the notion of corruption being more prevalent in societies where divisions along ethnic lines are deeply entrenched. Incidentally, development has also occurred at a much slower rate in Jamaica than in Trinidad and Tobago. Whilst this cannot be *solely* attributed to the high levels of corruption in the former when compared to the latter, the survey of the academic literature which speaks to corruption and development has confirmed the negative correlation between the two.

Appraising the background and context in which corruption has become engrained in the society, the former chairman of the Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute, Victor Hart, described the country as "a society of corruption", after Trinidad and Tobago was ranked 72 out of 180 countries in the

2008 Global Corruption Report of Transparency International⁶. That year, incidences of corruption within some of the country's key national companies included reports on breaches in tendering procedures by the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission. Like Jamaica, the country's licensing offices have also fallen prey to allegations of corruption which have included accusations of a widespread practice of licensing officials receiving bribes to pass citizens taking driving tests.

Corruption in Jamaica is said to flourish due to three major existing factors. Firstly, there is a tolerance for corruption and anti-corruption efforts have been largely undermined; secondly, the winner takes all political model allows for the tradition of clientelism and inadequate checks and balances in administrative systems; finally, corruption-related offences go largely unpunished via a legal element (Lyday et al, 2008). Similar to Hart's "society of corruption" argument, it has been lamented that the Jamaican population had grown up in a society where high levels of corruption prevailed on a daily basis; whether it entailed payments to get goods cleared on

⁶ <http://www.newsday.co.tt/news/0,117633.html>

ports, or get building plans approved⁷. This type of widespread petty corruption was a prominent feature of the Jamaican society and encouraged grand corruption (ibid).

The point has been made about Jamaica that “the law provides criminal penalties for official corruption; however, corruption is entrenched, widespread and compounded by a judicial system that is poorly equipped to handle complex criminal prosecutions in a timely manner” (ibid). In both the case of Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica corruption seems to be intricately linked to politics. Accordingly it is stated that “Jamaica’s corruption did not originate with incompetence, administrative failure or inadequate accountability structures, but with the political system itself” (Lyday et al., 2008: 7). According to Lyday et al (2008, 8) the situation in Jamaica is one where:

“Dons have grown up alongside an educated civil society and been given control of patronage and political turf. Past poor performance suggests that there is no real way forward for the country except the hard way: society must insist that its leaders ‘sever the umbilical cord’ by demanding accountability from nearly 100 public enterprises, curtailing the abuses present...”
Likewise, although the law of Trinidad and

Tobago provides criminal penalties for official corruption, and the country has adopted the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill of 2001 which amended the Prevention of Corruption Act, No. 11 of 1987 it is yet to be passed as an Act of Parliament. In October 2000, Trinidad and Tobago also established the Integrity Commission whose main function was supposed to be to act as a watchdog for corruption which might have arisen in the execution of one’s duties while in public office. The extent to which this Commission has managed to curb corruption to date remains uncertain and the Commission itself has continuously fallen prey to public scrutiny since its inception.

SECTION III

No state in the international system can profess to be totally free of corruption. Also, few states in the global system can profess to have no developmental challenges. The foregoing discourse was an attempt

⁷ <http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/Corruption-reached--systemic--levels-in-Jamaica---Christie>

to show that the issues of development and corruption cannot be viewed in isolation; particularly in the case of small island developing states. It must be made clear that the primary issue is not the presence or absence of corruption but the extent to which political systems foster it and the consequences that not only the political system but also the citizenry have to face (Scott, 1972).

My approach was to problematize bureaucratic corruption to underscore the impact that it has had on the Caribbean region since the post-independence era. More importantly, it was necessary to shed light on the cases of Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica not only because they lie at two opposite ends of the spectrum where societal composition is concerned but also due to the fact that much celebration surrounds their fiftieth independence anniversary. In recognition of the fact that over the past fifty years neither Jamaica nor Trinidad and Tobago has had notable degrees of success in the establishment of sustainable systems that work to significantly monitor and punish corruption, it is hoped that the notion of good governance can provide the impetus for leaders and citizens alike to rectify this situation.

Reducing corruption in Caribbean SIDS may require a movement in the direction of a more people centered approach towards development. Collectively, governance and participative democracy can help to curtail the high incidence of corrupt practices which are prevalent in Caribbean SIDS. Though there seems to be a degree of inertia in Caribbean SIDS to heed this call, the relation between corruption and good governance continues to be a central issue in much of the discourse amongst development specialists and policy makers (Knack & Azfar, 2002). Corruption in the Anglophone Caribbean is still very much symptomatic of the politicization of bureaucracies. For instance, in the case of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago some political parties have held on to power for eighteen years on end and as such feel a sense of ownership of the bureaucracy. This in turn creates a bureaucracy which is rife for corruption whereby the performance of the public sector is undermined and the state’s capacity to deliver public services is compromised.

The fact remains that many of the systems of government in Caribbean SIDS have been an adaptation of the British Westminster system. As a result, there tends to be consistency with the way in which issues such as corruption, development and good governance are regarded. Some academic approaches have advocated for a relative approach to corruption rather than a universal one. Additionally,

over the years leaders have displayed a penchant for only selecting components of exogenous models in which bad habits can flourish without difficulty, while wanting to dispose of the components which would detect and punish deleterious acts such as corruption. However, in order to promote good governance, leaders of Caribbean SIDS must discontinue the importation of only segments of political models that are favourable to them and work towards the creation of their own that would be more attuned to their development trajectories.

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