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主 論 文 の 要 旨

論文題目 *Man A Badman*: An Ethnographic Exploration of Male Juvenile Delinquency in a Low-Achieving School in Jamaica
(マン・ア・バッドマン—ジャマイカ底辺校の少年非行に関する民族誌的探査)

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論 文 内 容 の 要 旨

Context and Background

Juvenile delinquency is a major social problem for many countries worldwide, with adverse implications for sustainable development and human security. It is a social phenomenon that can disrupt national development, especially in under-resourced, developing country contexts, leading to adverse social impacts such as economic stagnation and crime. A correlation between juvenile delinquency and crime exists but is not precisely understood. However, studies have shown juvenile delinquency to be a stable predictor of delinquency in adulthood, and substantial evidence links most adult criminals to delinquency in their youth. Therefore, a deeper understanding of juvenile delinquency will likely positively impact crime-fighting and aid in combating human security threats.

A deeper understanding of juvenile delinquency is particularly urgent in Jamaica, which consistently features at the top of global crime statistics. Homicides are particularly grave. Crime in Jamaica is severe, costly, and dominated by young males. Crime costs Jamaica about four percent of its annual GDP, with young males (ages 15 – 29) accounting for more than 85% of all major crimes. These realities call into question the socialization of Jamaican males and how it interprets, transmits, and alters dominant cultural values.

While the transfer, negotiation, and updating of cultural values is the prerogative of

numerous agents and institutions within society, the school is perhaps the most pivotal institution outside of the family and the focus of this research. Schooling in the modern era positions itself as an egalitarian system that rewards hard workers regardless of class or social background. School failure, particularly among members of the underclasses, has been seen as a rejection of the dominant system of social values, which leads to delinquency and crime.

To better understand these dynamics, this doctoral study explores the experiences of working-class boys with low academic abilities as they negotiate their “low-achieving” school environment. The study revealed that the dominant view of delinquency as a subcultural rejection of dominant values lacks nuance when applied to the Jamaican context. *Agentive* perspectives cloud our view of the numerous existing *structural* factors that taint working-class kids’ schooling experience, devalue their cultural capital, and traditionally thwarted their ambitions for and efforts at social mobility. By looking at delinquency in schools as a microcosm of broader society and Jamaican urban (dancehall) culture, the study shows how “low-achieving schooling” is correlated with a society-wide undervaluing of schooling as the primary route to success. I argue that this undervaluing threatens the existing Jamaican social order.

Research Objectives and Questions

The study’s objective is to understand low-achieving boys’ affinity with non-dominant behaviors and academic underachievement in Jamaica. It details how schooling policies, subcultural adaptations, and normative expectations influence the boys’ navigation of schooling, their behaviors, and the perception of their abilities. The analysis highlights class tension, struggle, conflict, and harmony between dominant and sub-cultural spheres. Against this backdrop, the salience of delinquency from the boys’ perspective is theorized.

Main Research Question:

Why are low-achieving boys attracted to delinquent behavior?

Sub-questions:

1. What are the characteristics of low-achieving delinquent boys?
2. How do low-achieving boys experience schooling?
3. How does male juvenile delinquency intersect with broader social and cultural dynamics?

Methodology and Fieldwork

This qualitative study employed the ethnographic approach. It mainly comprised of close observation of and participation in the daily activities of 13 “delinquent” boys at a low-achieving secondary school in Western Jamaica. The on-the-ground fieldwork was carried out from November 2018 to February 2019. Following the on-the-ground data collection, data were continuously collected via online interaction on WhatsApp. The boys’ ages ranged from 13 to 15. The boys came from a mixture of urban, inner-city, rural, and suburban settings and were mainly from lower or lower-middle-class backgrounds. The boys’ academic abilities were mostly low. Most of the data collected came from observation and informal conversations with the boys, usually at their preferred hang-out spots. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers and staff. I also had informal discussions, direct interactions, and class/lesson observations with more than twenty teachers. Data was also gathered from interactions with the boys’ guardians. The study comprised an action component, the jerk chicken project, wherein the boys prepared and sold Jamaican grilled chicken.

Outline and Summary of Dissertation

Chapter One, the *Introduction*, provides an overview and outline of the entire study and dissertation. It provides an overview of Jamaica’s history and current situation. It also outlines the research objectives and explains the significance of the study.

Chapter Two, *Literature Review*, grounds the study in the existing academic discourse on delinquency, youth crime, and culture. The chapter starts by defining delinquency from a sociological perspective, making distinctions from criminological definitions based on “criminal conduct by non-adults.” Sociological explanations of juvenile delinquency encompass both criminal and sociocultural violations. The literature review also incorporates critical sociological theories and concepts such as structural-functionalism, conflict theory, and social reproduction. Legacy theories such as Strain, Subcultural, and labeling theories are also explored. Other concepts of relevance to the study’s analysis, such as Jamaican masculinity and criminality, are also discussed. The chapter ends by summarizing and critiquing the existing studies on juvenile delinquency in Jamaica.

Chapter Three supplements the literature review presented in Chapter Two by looking at schooling in Jamaica from an official standpoint. Next, the chapter uses labeling theory to

explain how success and failure are socially constructed in the Jamaican context. The chapter explains how achievement and underachievement are understood and reinforced in the Jamaican consciousness. The chapter starts with an overview of the Jamaican education system, including the government's expectations for students. The chapter then shows how these expectations, combined with other factors such as the feminine nature of schooling and the social stratification of secondary education, set a relatively "high bar" for students. To elucidate this "bar," the chapter discusses dominant policies and standards used in schools, such as testing, ranking, streaming, and dress codes, arguing that they inadvertently marginalize low-achieving students. Finally, the chapter describes a class-based "divide" among secondary students.

Chapter Four, *Methodology and Analytical Framework*, discusses the ethnographic method before outlining its use in the study. Next, the chapter describes the study site, West Hill High, in detail. A description of how access to the study site and participants was gained follows. The second significant section of the chapter is dedicated to describing the study's analytical framework, which is based on the concept of moral fluidity in the Jamaican context. The framework's basic idea elaborates Merton's strain theory, outlining how differences in societal goals and available means to attain them lead to varying behavioral outcomes, of which delinquency is one. Finally, the chapter clarifies Merton's framework to show the peculiarities of the Jamaican context, such as the overcommitment to capitalist conceptions of success, dignity, and respect. I theorize that overzealousness to meet these cultural goals warps previously rigid moral ideals, thus nurturing delinquency.

Chapter Five is dedicated to describing and analyzing the 13 West Hill Boys. Set against a backdrop of the Jamaican urban subculture – dancehall, the chapter offers thick descriptions of the boys' interactions within their preferred domain, The Courtyard. These descriptions include accounts of the boys' beliefs, tendencies, behaviors, and dreams. The chapter contrasts the 13 boys' behaviors to their non-delinquent counterparts by describing the boys' nemeses, "good boys, bright boys, nerds, and *likkle bwoys*." Unlike mature deviant peer groups, which have rigid structures and ardent following and subscription to group-defined values, the West Hill Boys lacked such rigidity. This "fluidity of relations" is theorized and explained in this chapter. Subsequently, the boys' protective alter ego, "badman," is described. Finally, the chapter introduces one of the study's key arguments: delinquency is dignifying for the West Hill boys.

Following the exclusive focus on the boys in Chapter Five, Chapter Six broadens the discussion to include the boys' interaction with the official school system. The chapter begins with thick descriptions of teachers' perceptions of delinquency and pedagogy. Next, accounts of the boys' navigation of dominant schooling, such as their interactions with streaming, ranking, testing, and other academic obligations, are given. The chapter also offers thematic descriptions of conflicts between teachers and the boys, followed by accounts of harmonious relations and the conditions that facilitate them.

As the last empirical chapter, Chapter Seven explains delinquency in a broadened societal context. First, the chapter discusses how the interactions discussed in previous chapters necessitate a rethinking of the resistance thesis, making the argument for "protective delinquency." Next, the influence of changing familial and community contexts regarding financial endowment and cultural values is discussed. Third, the influence of dancehall culture on deviance is discussed, as well as the ambivalence of cultural values. I argue that this ambivalence signals a transition toward the neutralization of morality, as elaborated by the study's analytical framework. Finally, the chapter argues that the tacit normalization of delinquency threatens the Jamaican social order.

Chapter Eight summarizes the study's findings, arguments, and analysis and offers recommendations for policy and future research.

Main Arguments and Conclusion

Based on the study's objectives, the following insights have emerged:

- (1) Delinquency among low-achieving high school boys is emblematic of a clash between mainstream and subcultural values as they vie for control of the Jamaican status quo.
- (2) Delinquency in a low-achieving school mirrors urban Jamaican male culture, which revolves around 6Gs: Guns, Gal (girls), Ghetto, Gays, Ganja, and God, in addition to Gold (Money), which proved to be the most salient.
- (3) Contrary to the portrayal of schooling as "feminized," low-achieving boys experience both "masculinized" and "feminized" schooling. While classroom spaces tend to be more tailored to "female tendencies," the boys also experience schooling that appeals to their subcultural values and offers opportunities to acquire, reinforce and refine deviant skills while earning respect from peers and validation from females.

- (4) Male delinquency in a Jamaican low-achieving high school reflects a society-wide cultural shift away from a values system that highly espouses educational attainment as the entry point to social success.
- (5) The idea that deviance and resistance to education are socially reproductive seems culturally contextual. In the contemporary Jamaican context, working-class deviance (delinquency) is not necessarily self-victimizing amidst what appears to be a cultural shift in its encapsulating social values system. Contrarily, delinquency's rapid normalization poses threats to the Jamaican status quo.

The study explored various theoretical perspectives on delinquency, male underachievement, and deviance and found them lacking in several ways. From a micro perspective, this study captures delinquency through the lens of the “delinquent boy,” showing him being forced to navigate a harsh environment rife with victimization and humiliation. The study shows how delinquency starts as a relatively benign tool of reflex against this harsh school environment but transforms into an appetite for criminality, which is seen as having instrumental value in precipitating wealth – the de-facto symbol of social success in contemporary Jamaica.

From a macro perspective, delinquency in Jamaica should be seen as an urgent and “innovative” remedy to the displeasure among urban youths with the process of acquiring dignity. It is also a claiming of the personhood of the ghetto youth that notions of black inferiority, working-class underperformance in education, and a lack of cultural capital among the underclasses have undermined. Nonetheless, delinquency, as a radical form of dissent, is on a collision course with Jamaica's dominant ideology and values system, which demands urgent attention and action.