Institute of International Relations at UWI

ST. AUGUSTINE CAMPUS
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

THE UNIVERSITY
OF THE
WEST INDIES

The Political Culture of Democracy in Trinidad & Tobago: 2010

Democracy in Action

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List of Abbreviations / Acronyms

CAPE	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations
CARIBCAN	Caribbean Canada
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CEPEP	Community-Based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme
CLICO	Colonial Life Insurance Company
COP	The Congress of the People
CPI	Corruption Perceptions Index
CXC	Caribbean Examinations Council
DAC	Democratic Action Congress
EBC	Elections and Boundaries Commission
ED	Enumeration District
GATE	Government Assistance for Tertiary Education
GCE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
HDI	Human Development Index
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IIR	Institute of International Relations
ILO	International Labour Organisation
LAPOP	Latin American Public Opinion Project
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MEG	Micro Enterprise Training and Development Grant
MSJ	The Movement for Social Justice
NAR	National Alliance for Reconstruction
NJAC	National Joint Action Committee
OAS	Organisation of American States
O'Level	Ordinary Level
PDA	Personal Digital Assistants
PNM	People's National Movement
PP	People's Partnership
SLP	Street Lighting Programme
T&TEC	Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission
TCCTP	Targeted Conditional Cash Transfer Programme
TI	Transparency International
TOP	Tobago Organization of the People
TTTI	Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute
UDECOTT	Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago
ULF	United Labour Front
UNC	United National Congress
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

| URP | Unemployment Relief Programme |
| WB | World Bank |

Executive Summary

For the first time, The Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) Survey was undertaken in Trinidad and Tobago in January/February, 2010. The survey, which sought to gather citizens' perceptions on issues related to democracy, public trust and confidence in institutions in a democratic environment, was conducted using a stratified random sample of 1,503 respondents and covered 188 Enumeration districts in Trinidad and Tobago.

Additionally, 40 university field researchers were trained in practical research techniques and in the use of hand-held Personal Digital Assistants (PDA). This technological tool enabled the research team to significantly reduce the traditional methodological challenges of time constraints and data entry, among others, usually associated with the use of paper-based questionnaires.

The survey was conducted in the context of a socio-political environment which was characterised by significant citizen concern with respect to rising crime and corruption rates, an atmosphere of uncertainty about the announcement of the date for general elections and a reduction in public confidence in agencies of the state, including the law enforcement agencies and institutions such as the Elections and Boundaries Commission and the Integrity Commission among others. The survey was also conducted during a period when there also a high degree of public concern about the collapse of financial institutions such as CLICO as well as the rising levels of inflation in the economy, which was also impacted by the global economic downturn. However, the survey revealed that there was a strong sense of national pride amongst citizens and in this multi-ethnic society, a majority of the respondents in the survey indicated that there was unity among the population in spite of the challenges which face the country. In addition, the survey revealed that adherence to the rule of law is generally supported among the populace.

Trinidad and Tobago has traditionally been one of states which has shown consistent commitment to the values of democracy and, apart from one attempt at extra-constitutional takeover of power in 1990, can be seen as a shining example of a stable democratic state. The survey clearly indicated that democracy is considered as the only legitimate form of government for Trinidad and Tobago and the existing Constitutional mechanisms and procedures are unconditionally accepted by the citizenry.

When looking at the issues which have been highlighted in the report, it is clear that some take precedence over others, and of interest are democracy, crime, the economy and corruption.

The overall rate of criminal behavior has increased over the last decade to the point where there is the perception that crime is 'out of hand' and the authorities have no control of the situation. While crime has been on the rise, it is bewildering to note that the nature of the crimes such as violent crimes and murder have accounted for the majority of this increase (increase of 400% in homicides between 2000 and 2008).

There has been a growing concern over the issues of safety and security in Trinidad and Tobago and more importantly, there has been increased scepticism over the states' ability to guarantee the safety of its citizenry.

Corruption has been on the rise in the economy and, from the survey data, there is the public perception that this corruption is becoming entrenched in the system. While many have stated that the corruptions levels continue to increase, a large portion of the sample indicated that they have not been a victim of this corruption (solicited for bribes by public officials etc). The perception of the increase in corruption has been fuelled by national scandals (mega projects) such as the Tarouba Stadium, the Scarborough Hospital, the UDECOTT (Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago) scandal, the Guanapo church scandal, and allegations of corruption within the country's police service.

Of all countries ranked by Transparency International, Trinidad and Tobago did not place in the top ten, ergo, it was not ranked as one of the most transparent countries internationally. As far as public opinion goes, transparency, accountability and integrity do not seem to be high on the agenda of the past governments, regardless of the reasons for these points of view by the citizenry.

While the economy seems to be generally stable, due to a large part to its reliance on the energy sector, there are some internal problems within the system. Demand pull inflation has been on the rise recently, and the central bank has had to devote significant resources to curtailing this inflation. There is the general perception by the respondents that the economy will continue to do well as they do not predict any significant fall in the prices of oil or natural gas, two of the largest contributors to the GDP, on which the economy relies.

This is supported by the fact that approximately one third of the respondents indicated that their household incomes have actually increased over the last two years, even in the midst of the global recession where many people's household incomes fell and jobs were lost.

Historically, the government's role in the economy has been one of leadership and patronage. This perception seems to have been maintained (to a large extent over time) as the survey indicated that many of the respondents believed that the government should continue to play a large role in the creation of employment and the ownership of the commanding heights of the economy.

So while there is a general agreement that the economy has been somewhat insulated from the international financial crisis, there are other more pressing issues for the population of Trinidad and Tobago. These issues will ultimately affect the levels of democracy that is possible in the country. There issues of waning trust in the government in its ability to control the crime situation, lack of trust in the Election and Boundaries Commission and the Integrity Commissions, lack of trust in the police and other government services. These are all important as they affect the perceptions of freedoms in the country and will ultimately affect the perceptions of democracy in Trinidad and Tobago.

The survey has undoubtedly highlighted some of the major challenges to the practice of democracy in Trinidad and Tobago and was aimed at providing greater understanding of citizens' perceptions of the democratic process. It has been recognized that there is an urgent need for further study of several of the areas proved by this study. It is therefore envisaged that this report will inform and guide the relevant stakeholders and at the same time serve as a catalyst for the development of further research and analysis in an effort to advance the democratic agenda of Trinidad and Tobago.

Chapter 1 - Contextual framework

Background

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, a former British colony, is the southernmost island of the Caribbean island archipelago, and is located between the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, and to the north-east of the South American mainland country of Venezuela.

The island has a population of approximately 1.3 million people with a variety of races and cultures. This plural society is also rich in natural resources such as natural gas, petroleum and asphalt.

On July 31st, 1498, when on his final voyage, Christopher Columbus sighted the island, christened it Trinidad and claimed it for Spain. In 1797 the Spanish Crown surrendered the island to Great Britain and it remained under British control until independence in 1962.

The island of Tobago had been under the control of the British since 1803 and it joined Trinidad in 1889 to form the single colony of Trinidad and Tobago. In January 1899, Tobago formally became a ward of the colony, and British rule was maintained.

Trinidad and Tobago achieved its independence in 1962 and adopted the Westminster model of government. This model of government provided for parliamentary democracy, free, fair, open and transparent elections, the emergence and development of independent institutions and other such tenets. The country's political context continues to be characterized by efforts aimed at the consolidation of the democratic process.

In 1976, Trinidad became a republic and established the post of President as the Head of State replacing the post of Governor General.

Trinidad and Tobago has traditionally operated under a multi-party system since independence. The conventional occurrence at the time of elections however, is that this multi-party system manifests itself in a two party contest, with the People's National Movement (PNM) regularly being one of the two contending parties.

While the PNM, founded by Dr. Eric Williams in 1956, is the oldest political party in Trinidad and Tobago, there have been several other parties formed in order to oppose the PNM. The PNM's longstanding political opposition party is the United National Congress (UNC) established in 1988, by the party's former leader Basdeo Panday. The only other party to gain power through elections was The National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR), under the stewardship of Arthur Robinson, which was voted into office dramatically in 1986 with a landslide victory over the ruling PNM by 33- 3 seats. This party only served one term and has not been in power since. Most recently, The Congress of the People (COP) which is a breakaway faction of the UNC, failed to capture a single seat in 2007.

These major political parties all have had significant representation in Parliament, either ruling or in opposition. It must also be borne in mind that there are a number of minor political parties that have participated in the political process of Trinidad and Tobago. Such parties include: The United Labour Front (ULF), The Democratic Action Congress (DAC), The National Joint Action Committee (NJAC), Team Unity and several others. These minor parties have usually formed alliances with the major parties as they have seldom been able to win seats on their own.

At the time of the survey (January 2010), the PNM, UNC and COP were the major political forces, while NJAC was relatively dormant until the May 2010 elections. Since then, the UNC led by Kamla Persad-Bissessar, the COP led by Winston Dookeran, the Tobago Organization of the People (TOP) led by Ashwoth Jack, The Movement for Social Justice (MSJ) led by Errol McLeod and the NJAC led by Makandal Daaga formed a coalition party called the People's Partnership (PP).

In terms of the ethnic composition of the country, the two dominant racial groupings namely Indo and Afro Trinidadians, account for over 75% of the total population. The population also includes the Mixed, Whites, Chinese, Syrian- Lebanese and Amerindian racial groupings.
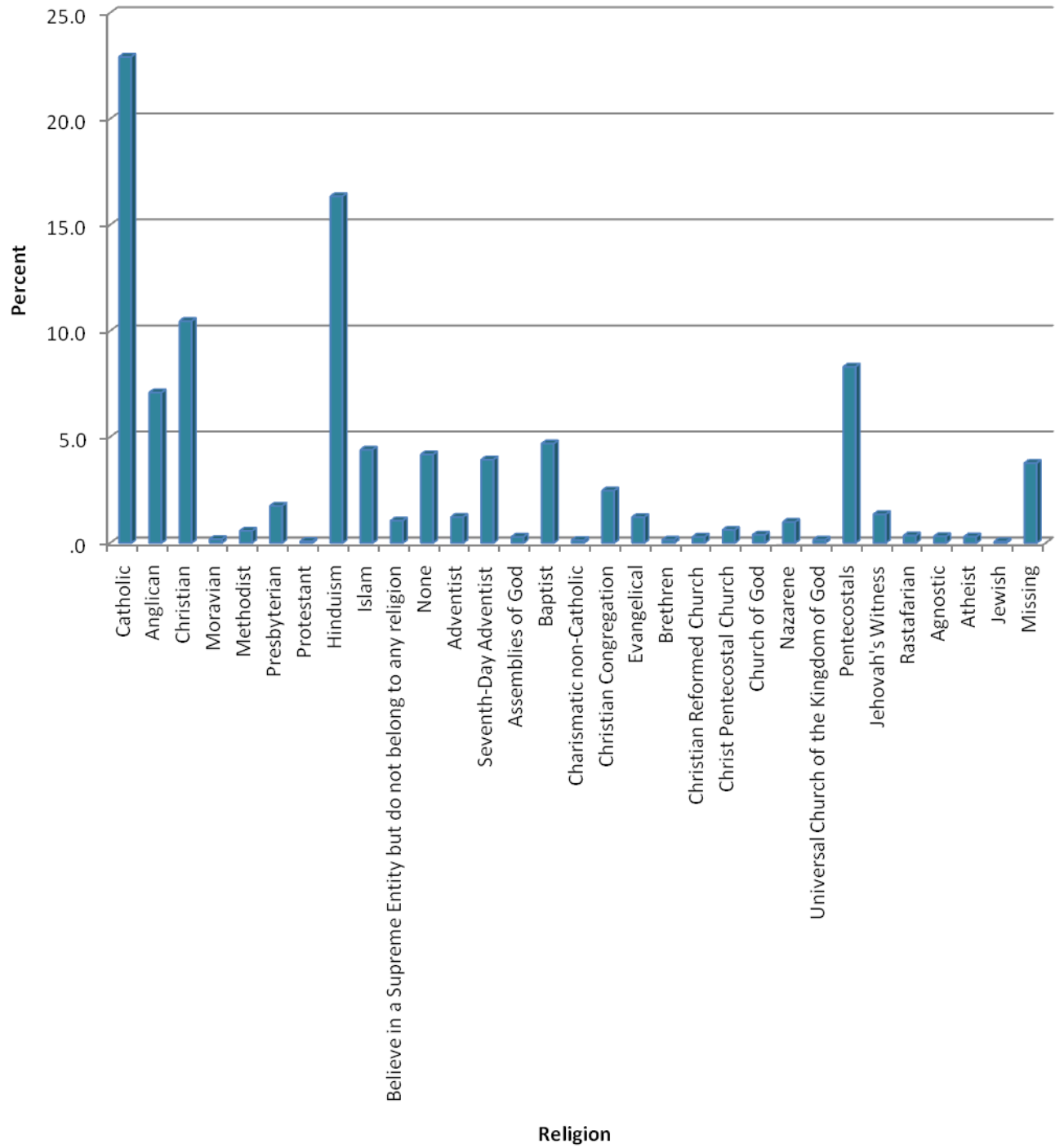
Figure 1: Ethnic Composition of Trinidad and Tobago

■ Indians ■ African ■ Mixed ■ White ■ Chinese & Other
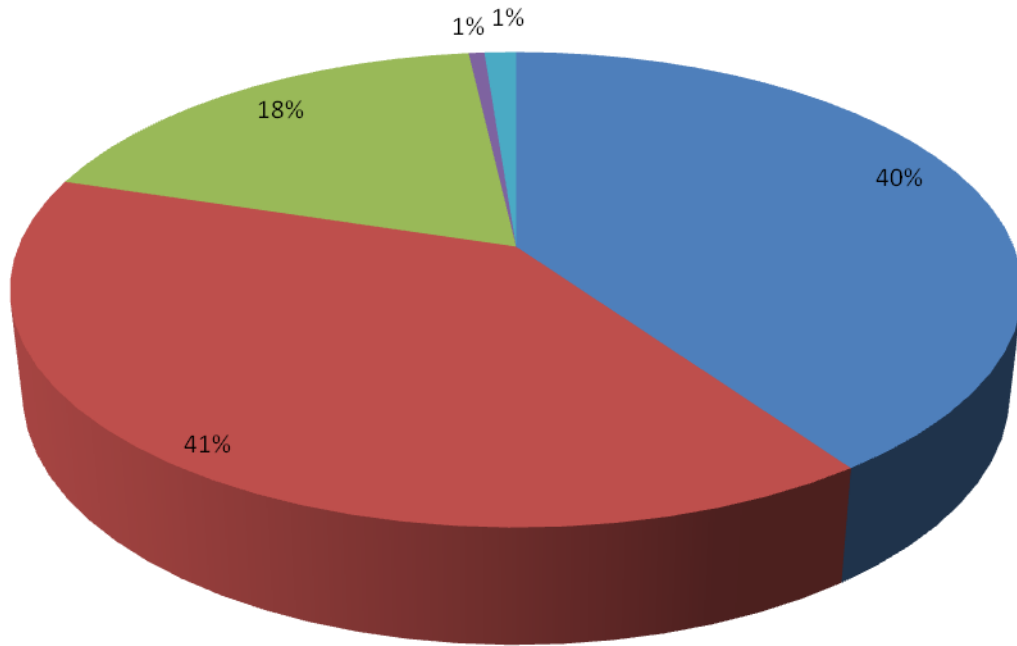
Trinidad and Tobago's plural society also encompasses a multitude of religions such as Roman Catholicism, Hinduism, Islam, Anglican, Baptist Faiths, Pentecostal, Seventh Day Adventist and others.
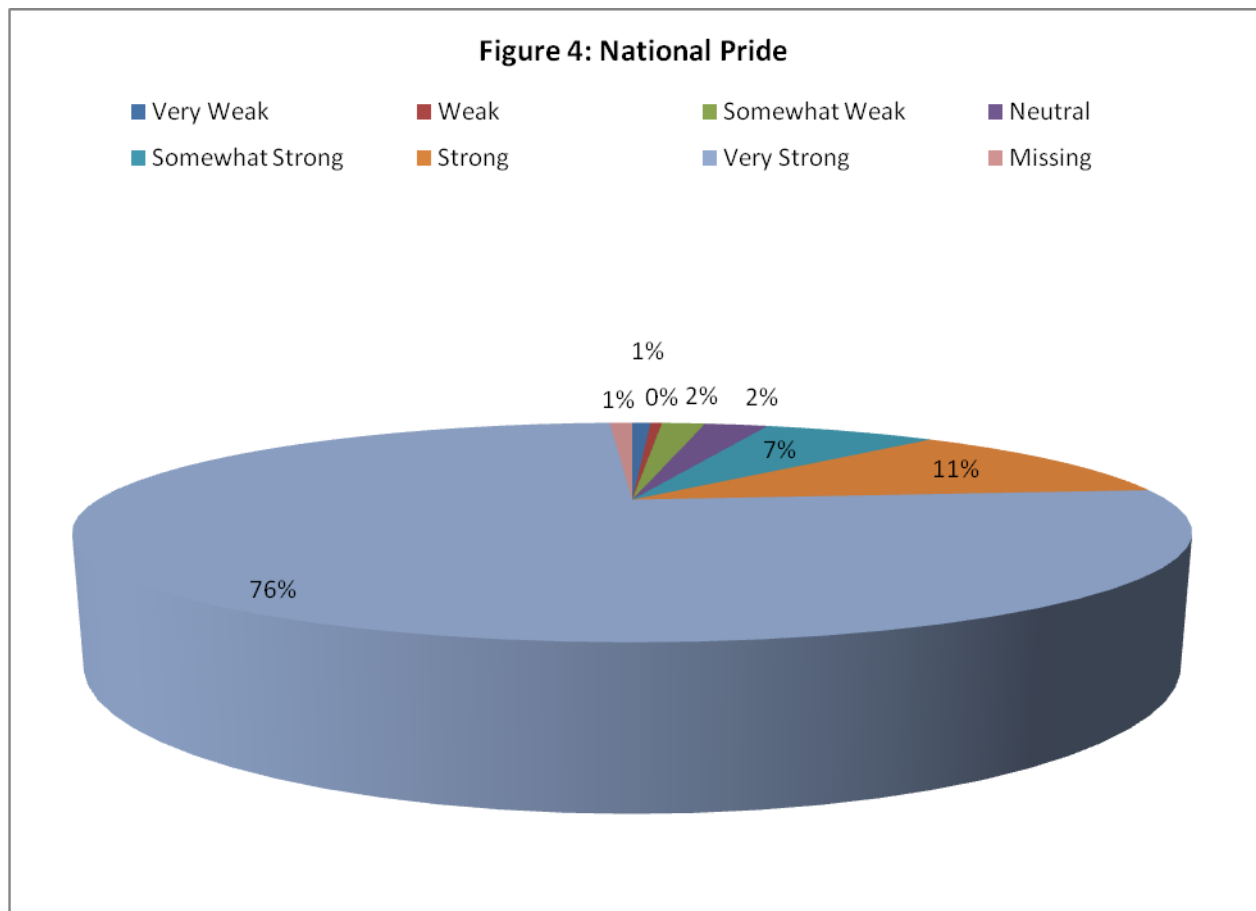
Figure 2: Religious Composition of the Respondents

The plural nature of this society is complemented by a strong sense of national pride among the citizenry as well as strong feelings of unity among the population. In the survey, two questions were asked on national pride and unity, which were "despite our differences we Trinidadians and Tobagonians have many things that unite us as a country, how much do you agree or disagree with this statement?" (**PN2**) and "to what extent are you proud of being Trinidadian and Tobagonian?" (**B43**).

Figure 3: Unity Amongst Citizenry
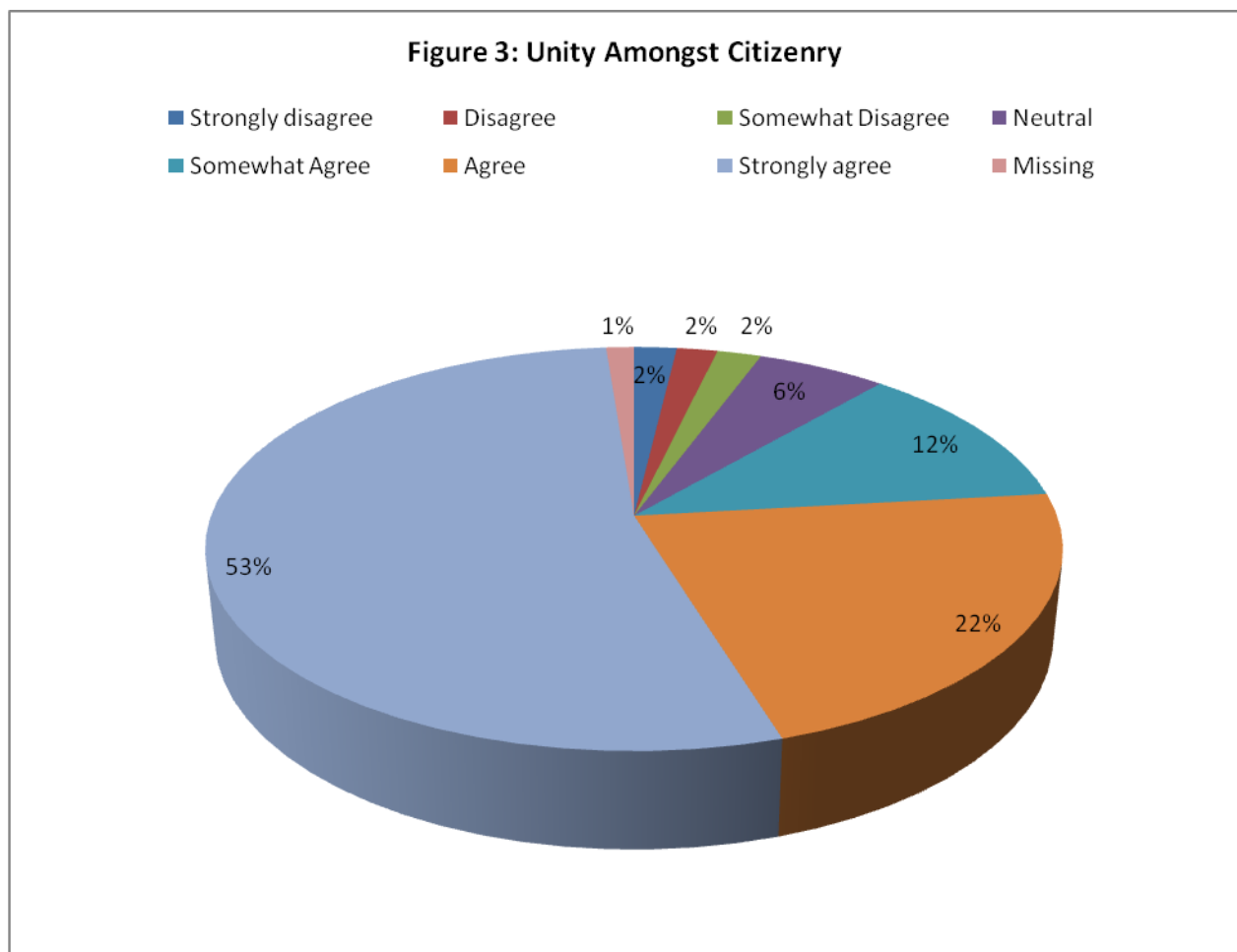
87% of the respondents indicated that they felt there was unity among the citizenry (53% "strongly agree", 22% "agree", 12% "somewhat agree") while only 6% felt that there was not unity among the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

Figure 4: National Pride

Legend: Very Weak, Weak, Somewhat Weak, Neutral, Somewhat Strong, Strong, Very Strong, Missing

Pie chart values: 1%, 1%, 0%, 2%, 2%, 7%, 11%, 76%

On the issue of national pride, an overwhelming majority of the respondents (94%) shared the perception that there is a great amount of national pride existing within the twin island republic.

With respect to Trinidad and Tobago the strong adherence to national pride can be connected to the concept of nationalism and the idea of a nation's self determination. As a concept, nationalism refers to the idea "that people identify with the collective identity based on a belief in a (real or otherwise) common inheritance or experience of history, myth, tradition, language, culture, form or existing independence – or some combination of these[1]".

Trinidad and Tobago's legal system is founded on the common law principles of its former colonizer, Britain, and statutes enacted by the country's parliament. The doctrine of precedence applies to Trinidad and Tobago's legal system and judgments of the Supreme Court of the Judicature of Trinidad and Tobago and of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council are binding.

Trinidad and Tobago has one of the highest GDP (Gross Domestic Product) per capita income rates in the Caribbean and it is generally regarded as an excellent investment site for international business. Traditionally the economy was based on agriculture as the colonizers utilized the islands for the

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[1] Kellas; 1991; in Ponton, G. and Gill, P.; Introduction to Politics; (3rd Edition); (1993); Blackwell Publishers; Oxford; pp. 239

production of sugar, coffee, cotton and cocoa. The 1970s saw an economic boom in Trinidad and Tobago with the discovery of oil off the nation's coasts, and from then onwards, the country's economy has been very heavily dependent on hydrocarbons which are exported to earn foreign exchange. In 2009, energy resources accounted for approximately 40% of Trinidad and Tobago's GDP and 80% of its exports.

Trinidad and Tobago's economy is transitioning from an oil-based economy to one which is based on natural gas. Approximately half of the country's natural gas is converted into liquefied natural gas (LNG) at the Atlantic LNG facility in Trinidad, and is exported under long-term contracts and on the spot market. According to the US State Department, Trinidad and Tobago is ranked as the fifth largest exporter of LNG in the world and the single largest supplier of LNG to the United States, providing two-thirds of all LNG imported into the United States since 2002. Further, the growth of the economy is dependent on a dynamic downstream industry consisting of oil and natural gas by-products.

Figure 5: Major Exporting Partners of Trinidad and Tobago
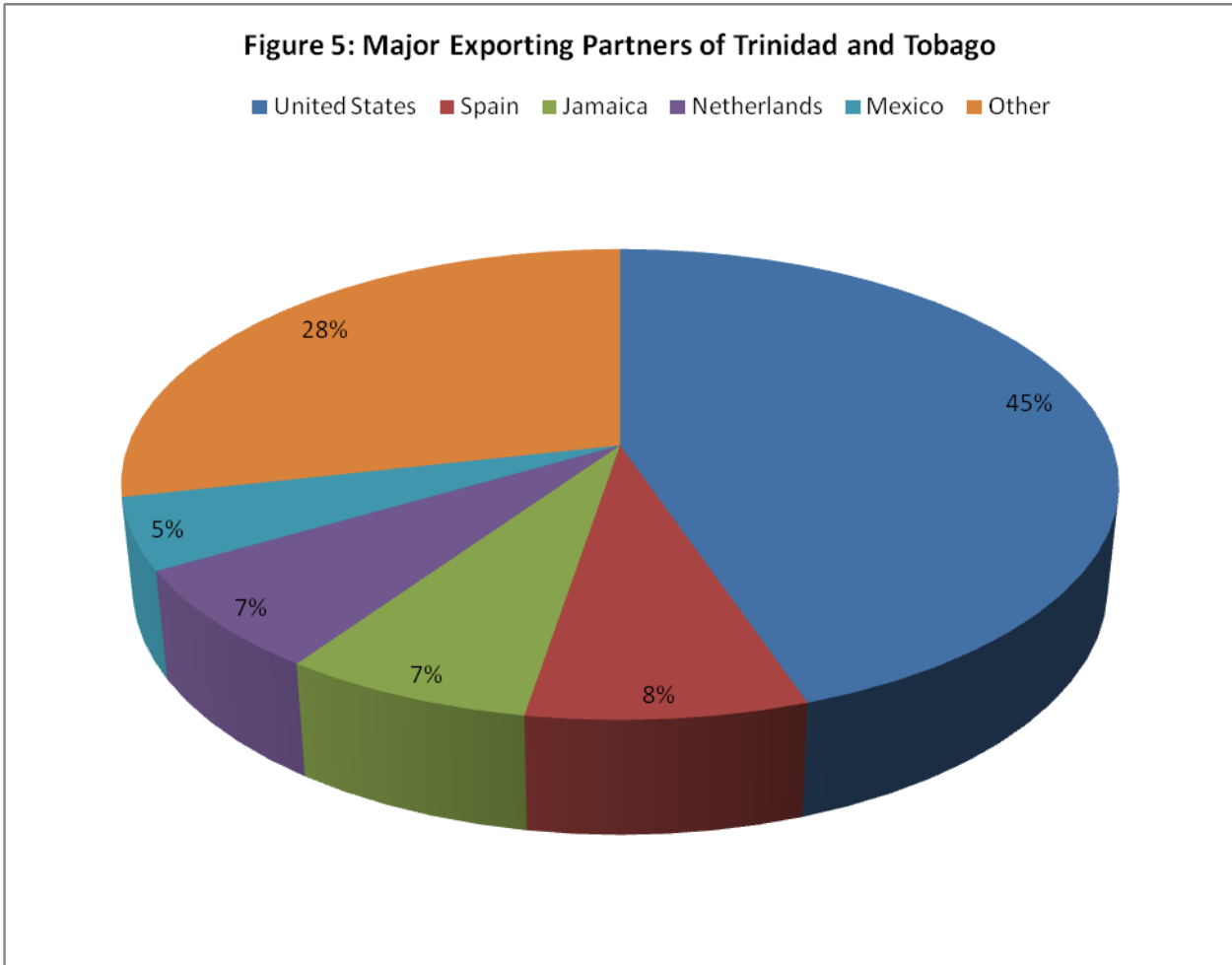
As part of its foreign and trade policies, Trinidad and Tobago has eliminated almost all investment barriers since 1992 resulting in an open investment climate. The country also has a double taxation

agreement, a bilateral investment treaty and an intellectual property rights agreement with the United States.

Trinidad and Tobago's military expenditure (by its 2006 statistics) accounted for 0.3% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In a country whose population is approximately 1.3 million people, its military branches include the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force, the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard, the Trinidad and Tobago Air Guard, and the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service.

The rapid economic growth of the country since the 1990s (due to the industrialization policies of successive governments) has impacted on democracy in Trinidad and Tobago. The myriad of democratic issues closely linked to this economic growth have both been positive and negative. Such correlations of a socio- economic/ socio- political nature will be thoroughly examined in this report.

Trinidad and Tobago's human and social development, as measured by the composite human development index (HDI), ranks the country at 64 out of 182 countries. The country enjoys a life expectancy average of 69.2 years as opposed to Suriname with 68.8 years; an adult literacy rate (ages 15 and above) of 98.7% as compared with Spain (97.9%)and a GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) of US$23,507 as compared with Saudi Arabia (US$22,935).

Remittances to Trinidad and Tobago are significantly less than most of the countries in the region, being US$69 per capita as compared with Jamaica US$790 per capita. This is significant as the overall per capita remittances for the Caribbean and Latin America stands at US$114 per capita.

LAPOP Survey in Trinidad and Tobago
This year marks the first time the Latin America Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) has undertaken the study on the Political Culture of Democracy in Trinidad and Tobago. The study was executed by the Institute of International Relations (IIR) at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus.

The IIR has also undertaken a similar study in the mainland South American country of Suriname, and this is also the first time this activity has been done in that country. These two countries are the two latest additions to a hemisphere-wide survey on issues related to democracy, initiated by LAPOP and Vanderbilt University, which traditionally have been limited to Latin American countries.

Chapter 2 - Methodology

The methodological approach which was undertaken in conducting this research utilised a stratified random sample. Both islands, Trinidad and Tobago, were stratified according to region (enumeration districts) then further sub-divided by age and gender. This was deemed necessary in order to have the most appropriate representative sample of the population. The objective was to gather information which would be representative of the entire population and this stratified random approach was deemed most suitable to achieve this objective.

In order to ensure the accuracy of data collection, a sub-sample of the population was used in a pilot study.

> Validity is defined as the extent to which the instrument measures what it claims to measure.

Validity was maintained by utilizing a rigorous set of pre-tested criteria which were held constant throughout the research exercise.

Levels of reliability were tested and confirmed by the use of the pre-test and as a result there was no significant deviation between the pre-test results and those of the study.

To ensure that objectivity was held constant throughout the research exercise, a rigorous training programme was designed and executed to a team of forty (40) university trained Researchers. The survey consisted of fifteen hundred (1,500) questionnaires which were administered by the use of Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs). The time frame in which this was undertaken in the period between January – February 2010.

The time frame of the survey was crucial as the issue of practicality arose when considering disruptions which would have been caused by the Carnival season in general, and the Carnival holidays in particular.

One factor that limited the efficiency of the process was the definite or finite number of PDAs available to the research team. While there were forty (40) trained Researchers, they were constrained by the existence and presence of only twenty-five (25) PDAs to be used in both island wide surveys.

Instruments for data collection

The main instrument used for the collection of data was the questionnaire, which was used by the Researchers in conducting the interviews. Twenty five (25) Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) were provided by Vanderbilt University to the Institute of International Relations, UWI to facilitate the execution of the survey. The questionnaire was supplied by LAPOP and Vanderbilt University as a part of its comparative regional research activity.

The use of the PDAs with the included questionnaire is indeed a unique way of collecting, storing and retrieving data. This technology enabled the Trinidad and Tobago Research team to eliminate the traditional methodological challenges of time constraints, data entry, etc. However, some challenges which emerged included the resistance by respondents to the lengthy questionnaire (over 100 questions), the scarcity of respondents in certain Enumeration Districts (EDs) and security concerns in some of areas.

In addition to the PDAs, there were consent forms and cards displaying the scale of responses to any given issue. Maps were also obtained from the Central Statistical Office and used to assist interviewers in locating the relevant EDs.

Sample Design

A random sample size of fifteen hundred (1500) respondents over the age of 18 years was selected and conducted in Trinidad and Tobago, with 1300 respondents in Trinidad and 200 respondents in Tobago. Trinidad was divided into fourteen areas made up of City Corporations, Boroughs and Regional Corporations/ Municipalities, whereas Tobago was divided into seven (7) parishes. These were further divided into Enumeration Districts (EDs) as mandated by the LAPOP survey methodology which is concurrently being used throughout the 26 countries under investigation.
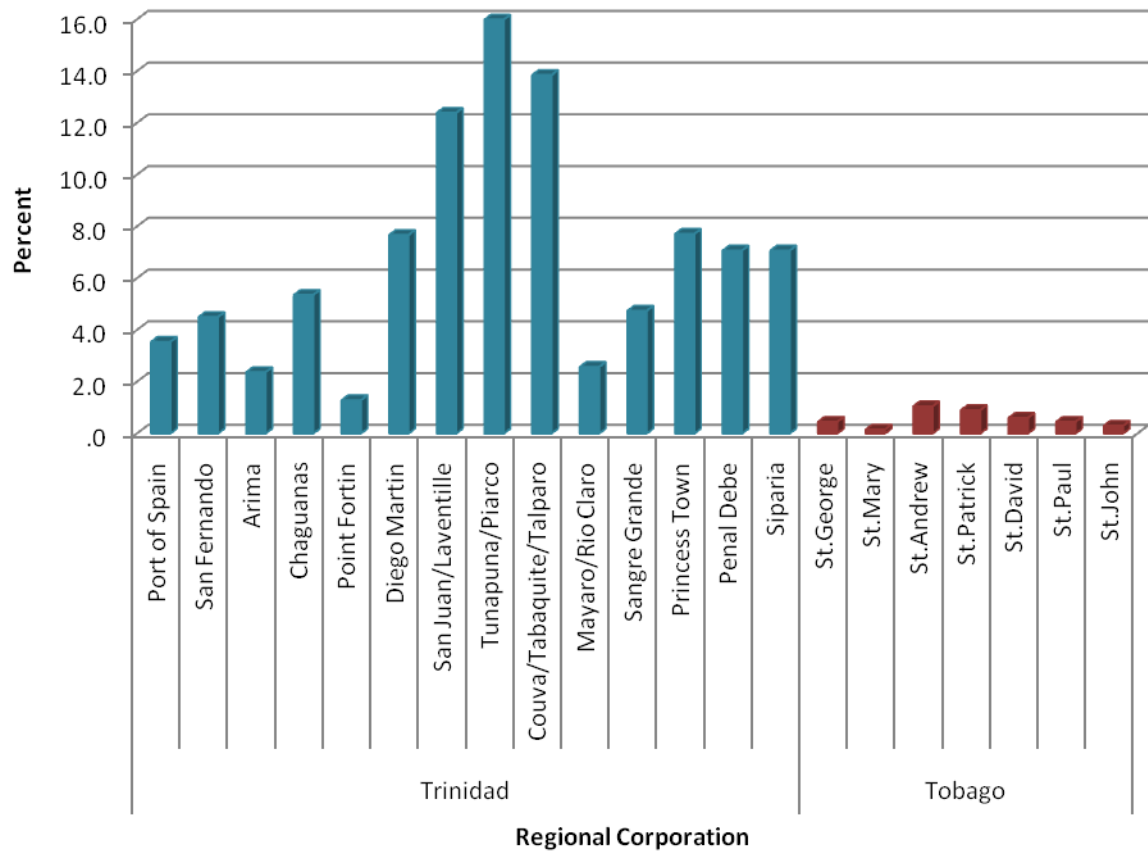
Figure 6: Regional Corporations

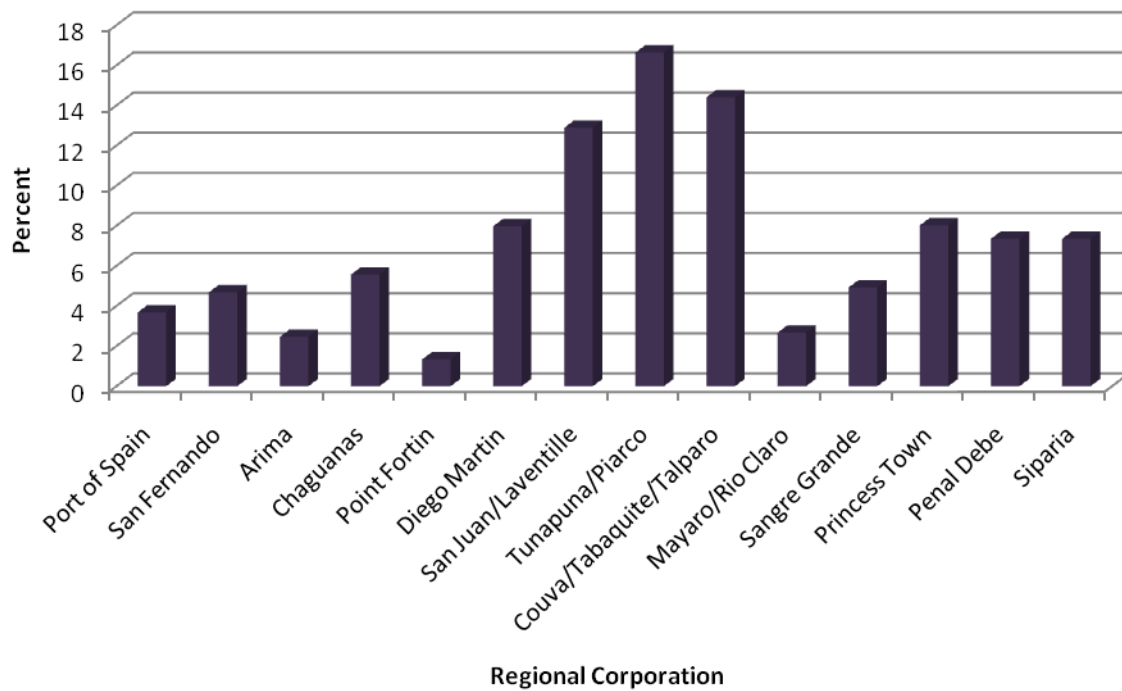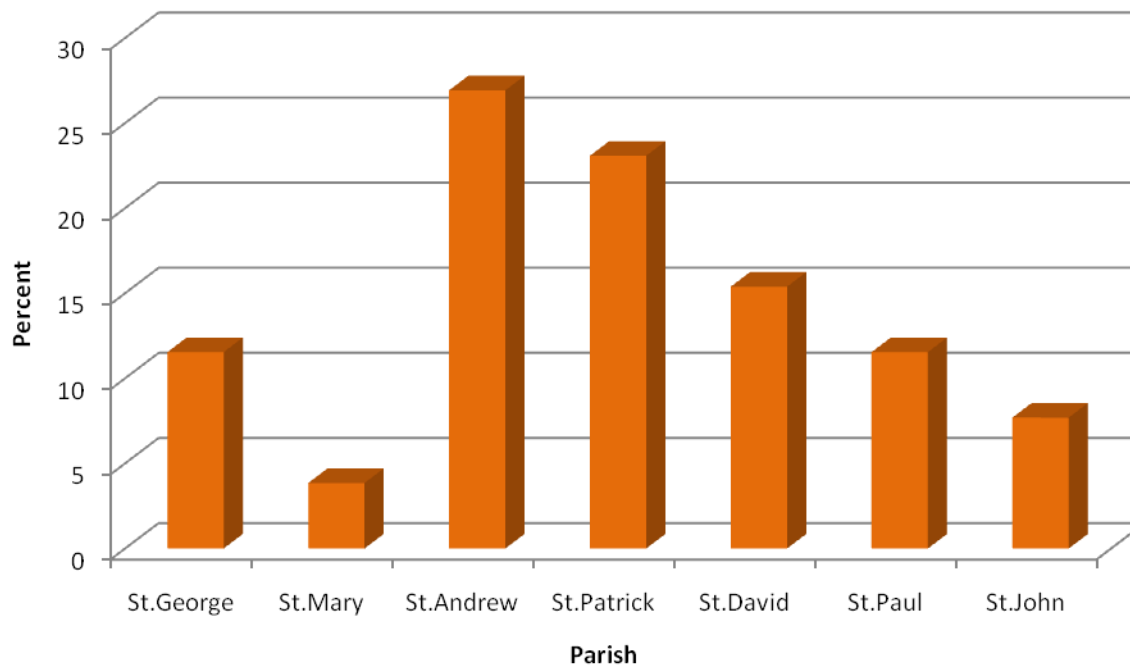Figure 7: Sample Distribution of Respondents Within Regional Corporations - Trinidad

Figure 8: Sample Distribution of Respondents Within Parishes - Tobago

Located within the divisions, one hundred and eighty eight (188) EDs were selected as the locations for the administering of the 1500 questionnaires in Trinidad and Tobago.

Further, these EDs were spread geographically in five strata, namely the East, West, South and Central areas of Trinidad, with Tobago as a separate stratum. These EDs were also further classified as either being rural or urban.

	URBAN	RURAL
Percentage of Respondents	56%	44%

Overview of the sample

This section presents the key demographic characteristics of the sample, namely the gender, age, race, income and educational levels achieved by individuals.

Gender

The gender distribution between males and females in the study was 751 males to 752 females. The additional three respondents represented an oversampling that led to a total of 1503 responses. This oversampling was intended to ensure that there was no bias in the selection of respondents according to gender, as this is a critical component of the study.

Figure 9: Gender of Respondents

■ Male   ■ Female
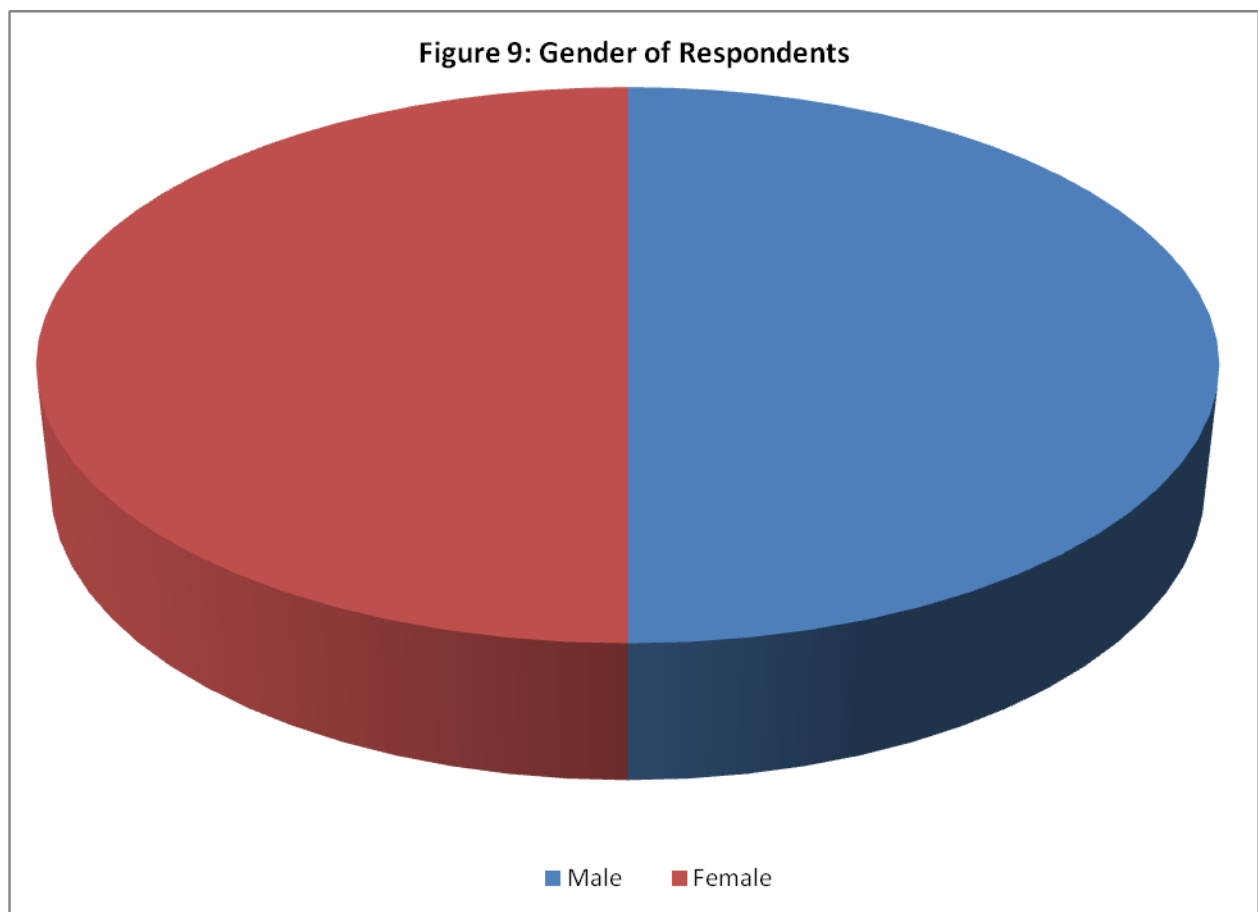
<u>Age</u>
The survey targeted four age groups which were as follows:

1. 18-25
2. 26-35
3. 36-50
4. 51 and over

These age groups were assigned to each of the 188 EDs as well as to the 2 gender groups. Therefore in each ED, eight (8) questionnaires were administered, which represented each age category for each sex. Since 8 interviews were assigned to each ED to total of 1504 interviews were assigned for the entire survey, indicating an oversample of four (4) interviews. However, the total number of interviews conducted in the survey amounted to 1503.

The 1503 respondents were spread across the identified age ranges, however 10 individual respondents declined to give their age.

Figure 10: Age Range of Respondents
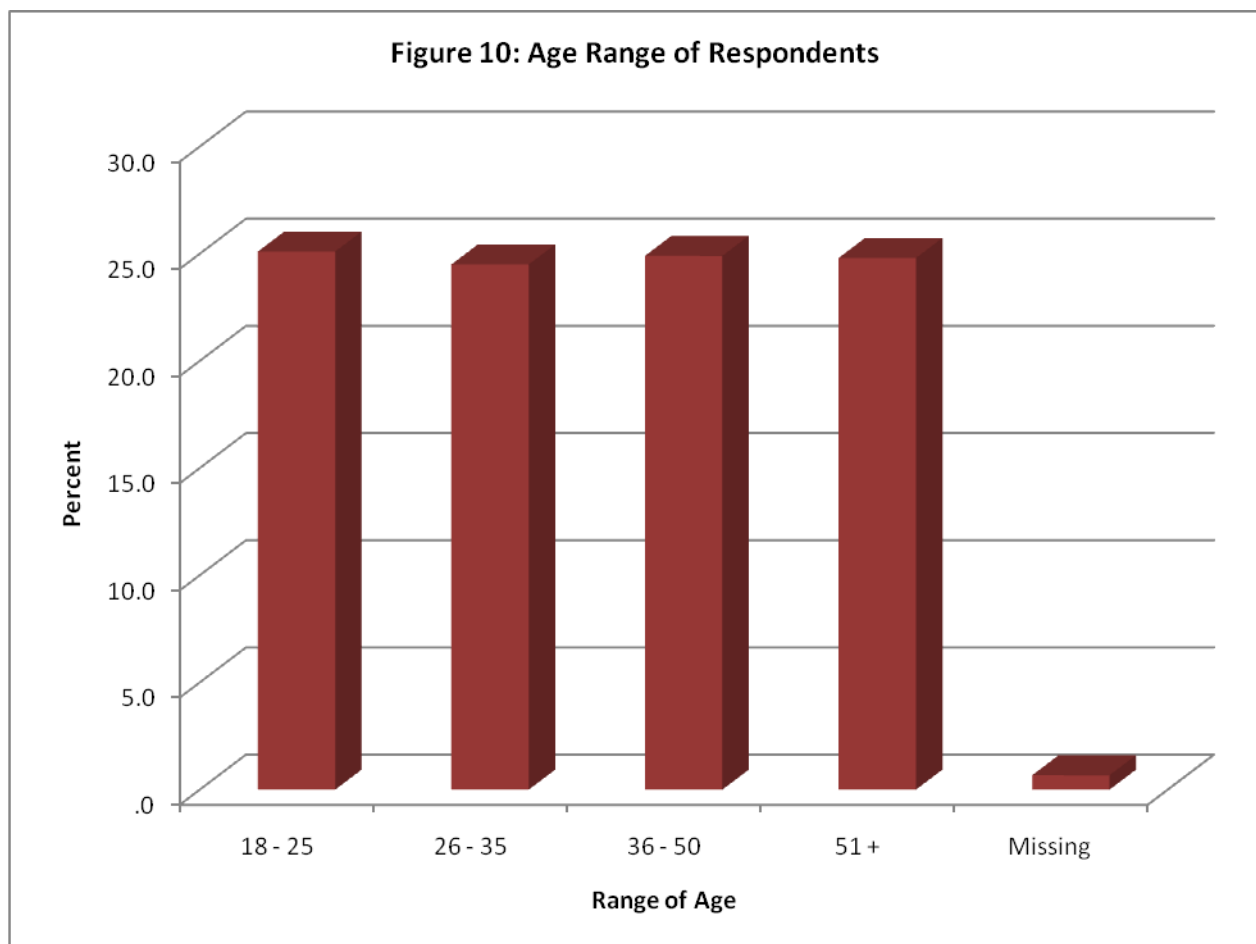
As previously mentioned in the contextual framework, Trinidad and Tobago is a multi-ethnic society which is characterized by many races and ethnic groups. Traditionally the race/ethnicity factor has been a major issue in discussions on democracy in Trinidad and Tobago. This is the case more so in Trinidad than in Tobago, because Tobago tends to have less ethnic diversity than its sister island Trinidad.

In Trinidad and Tobago the two main groups are of African and Indian descent. Over time there has been an increasing tendency for the two dominant races to mix and a sub-group has developed which is characterized as "Mixed" ("Dougla"). This does not preclude further mixes of races which give Trinidad and Tobago its unique ethnic characteristic, not only of race, but of colour, religion and culture. Trinidad and Tobago also has minority racial ethnic groups such as Chinese, Whites, Syrian/Lebanese and others.

Figure 11: Ethnicity of Respondents
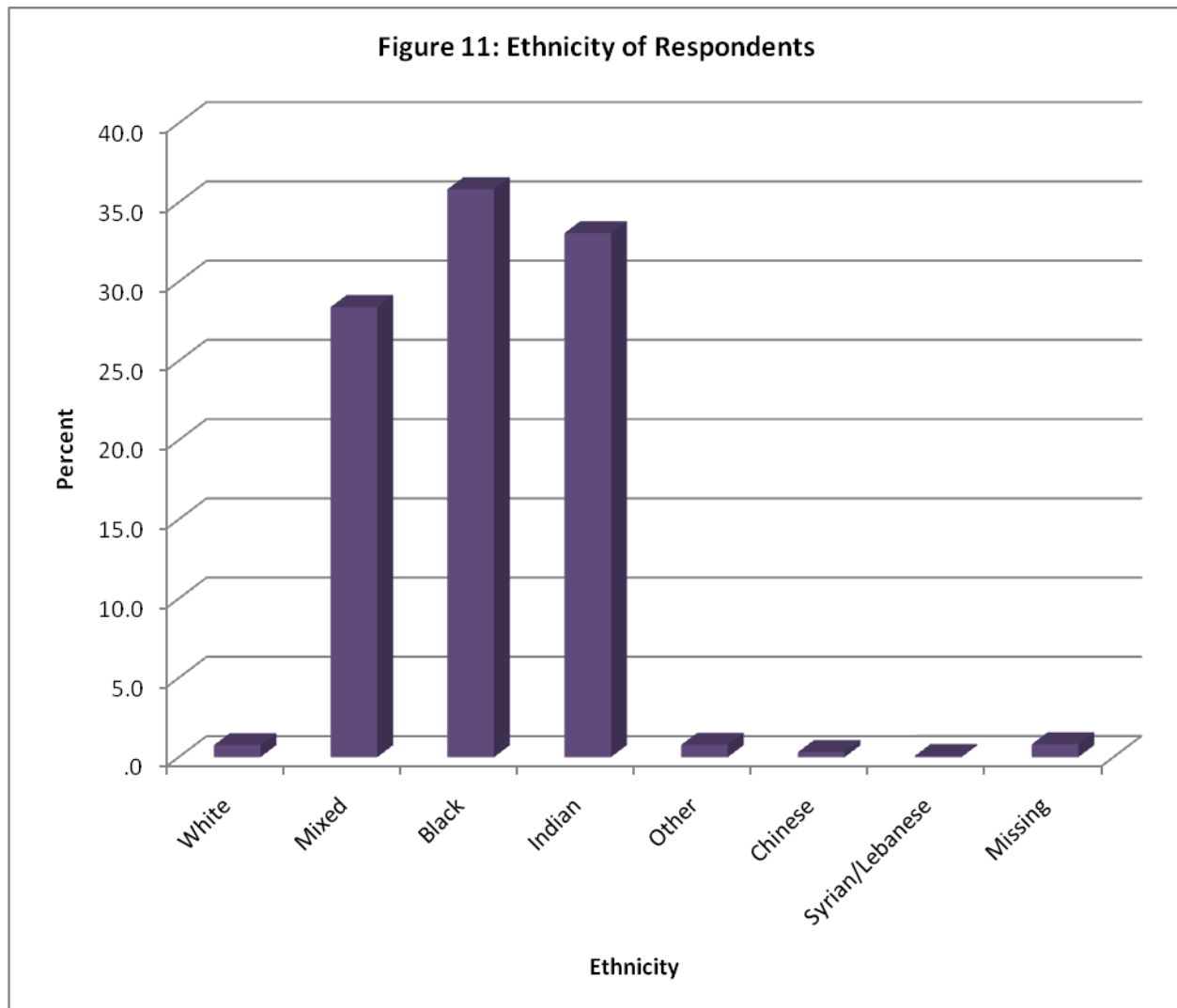
Income

The research instrument disaggregated the responses by income. This was achieved by having bands of income from which the respondents could select. This was necessary as the traditions and culture of Trinidad and Tobago do not engender the population to readily disclose their incomes. Ten (10) income brackets were presented to respondents, ranging from (1) - meaning no income to (10) - with an income of more than TT $75,000 per month.

The results highlighted the fact that income brackets of TT $2,600-$5,000 and TT $5,100-10,000 accounted for more than half of the responses by the sample population. As would be expected due to national culture, a significant percentage of the sample did not wish to reveal their income.

Figure 12: Monthly Income
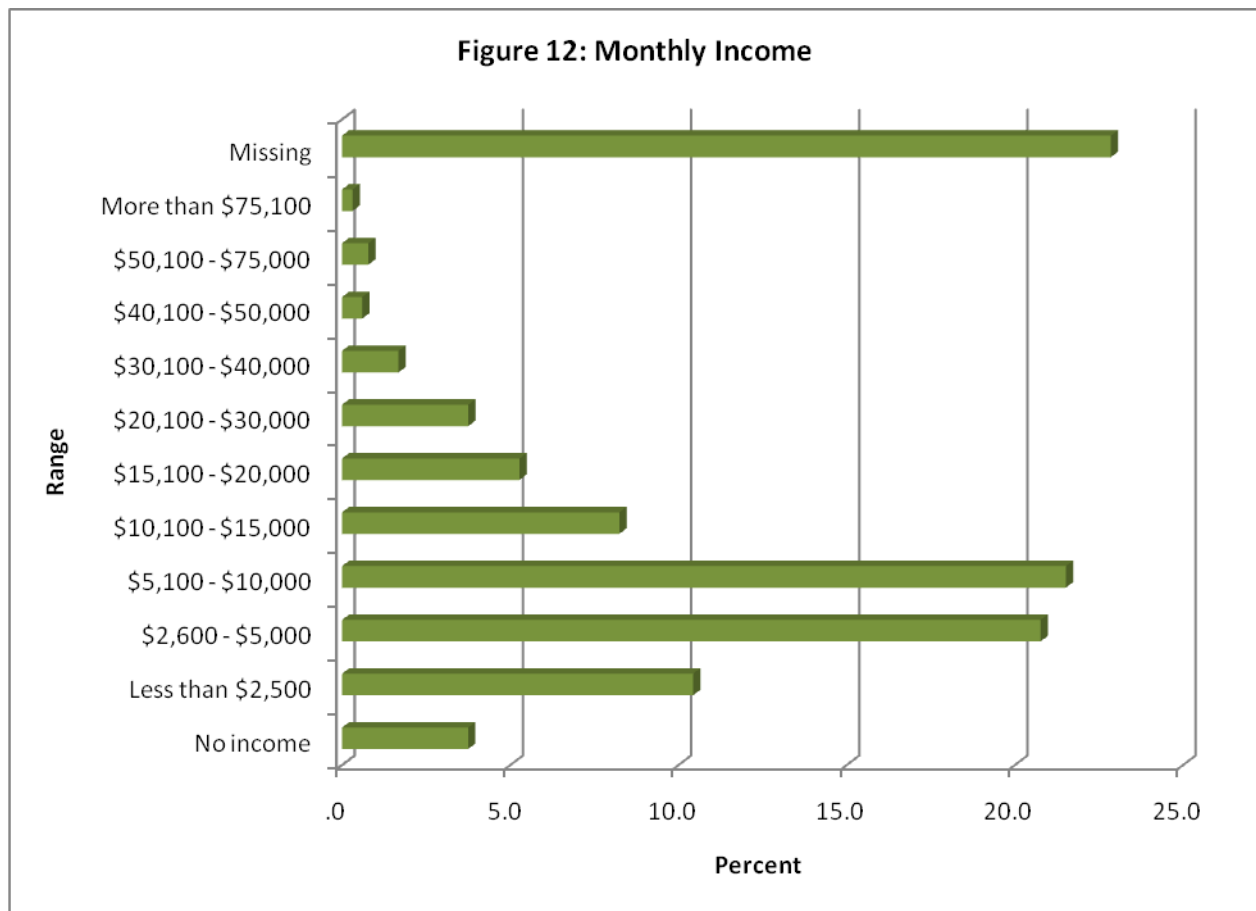
<u>Educational levels</u>
Generally, education in Trinidad and Tobago begins at the kindergarten level and the majority of this population remains in the system until secondary school level. According to the Education Act of Trinidad and Tobago (1966), the compulsory education age "means any age between six and twelve years and accordingly a person shall be deemed to be of compulsory school age if he has attained the age of six years and has not attained the age of twelve years, and a person shall be deemed to be over compulsory school age as soon as he has attained the age of twelve years." Recent trends however have suggested that the majority of the population have some form of informal education before the age of three in nurseries, and between three and five years old in pre-schools and kindergartens.

Over the last decade at all levels of the education system, there has been increased access to education, private and public, and a combination of both. This is reflected by higher enrollment levels at the secondary school level and increased participation in secondary school leaving examinations.

The Government Assistance for Tertiary Education Programme (GATE) has further facilitated citizens' access to tertiary education in Trinidad and Tobago. The programme promises to cover the tertiary education tuition costs for students attending approved local and regional higher education programmes. The aims of GATE are two-fold; endeavouring to create a more educated population base in the country and in doing so strive to successfully achieve the Millennium Development Goals targeted at increasing the country's educational standards.

In general terms, as the survey sample is representative of the population, one can come to the conclusion that Trinidad and Tobago's population is relatively well educated. Of the respondents, 41% indicated that they have access to secondary school education, where an additional 7% have gone on to additional secondary school education. As a percentage of the overall sample size, almost 25% have attained access to tertiary education. Of interest is that just over 15% have not gone beyond primary education, and this will have implications for the results of the survey.

Figure 13: Level of Education of Respondents

23
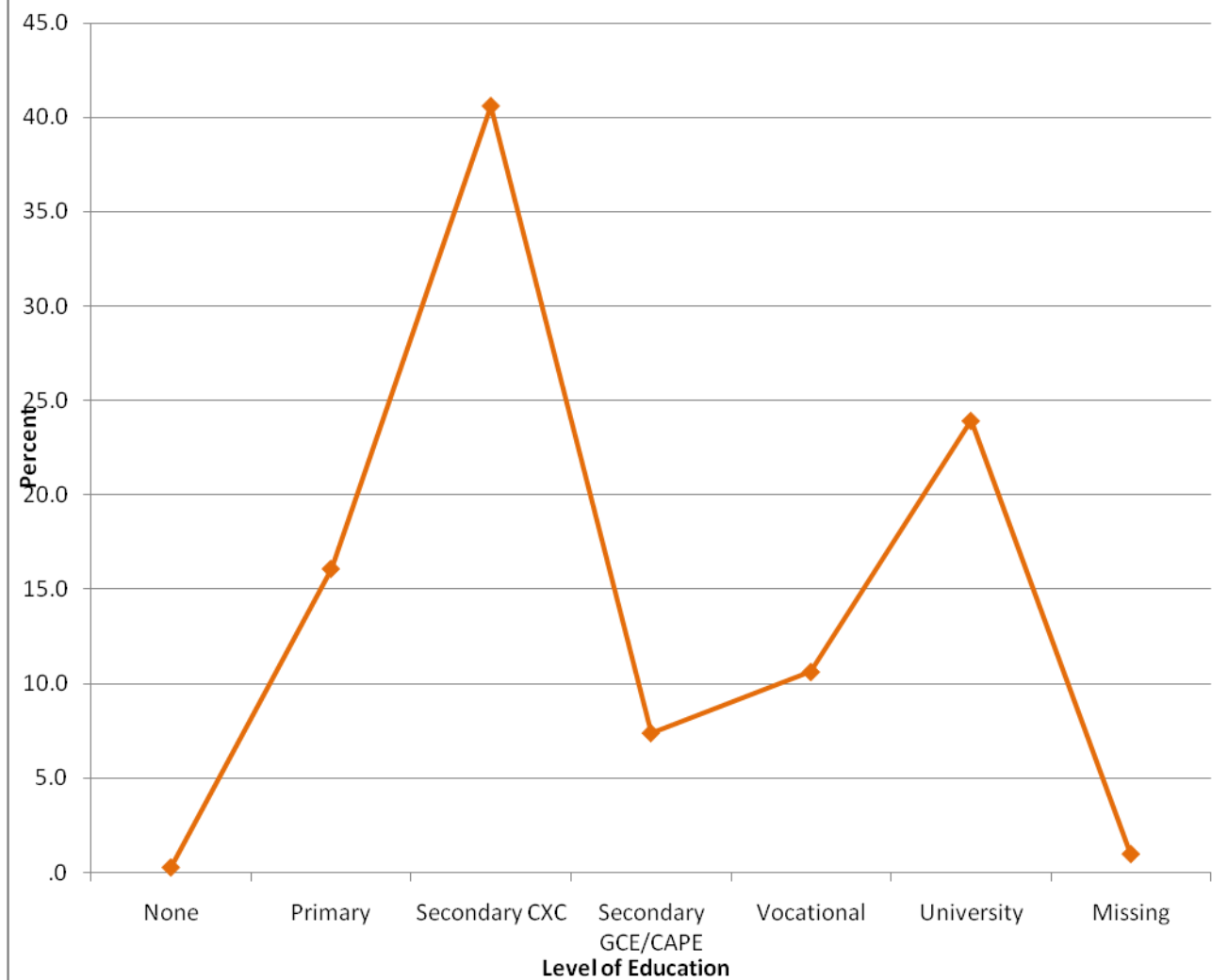
Chapter 3 – Democracy and its Practice in Trinidad and Tobago

Concepts of Democracy

The concept of democracy is a highly contested one, especially in the context of the Western hemisphere. There have been numerous challenges and successes related to the process and operationalisation of democracy in the hemisphere. While the Caribbean states have been operating under the Westminster System of government since their independence in the 1960's, the experience of the Latin American states have included a range of alternative regimes including military, populist-authoritarian, bureaucratic-authoritarian and democratic regime-types. Recently however, in Latin America, the transition to democracy has occurred with significant success and the process of democratic consolidation proceeds in contemporary times.

Before examining the perceptions of democracy by citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, it is useful to articulate a clear understanding of the concept of democracy.

At its most basic, W.S. Shively describes democracy as, "a state in which all fully qualified citizens vote at regular intervals to choose, from alternative candidates, the people who will be in charge of setting state's policies."[2] It is generally agreed that this definition has significant limitations and Brian Loveman attempts to broaden the notion of democracy by adding several characteristics. Loveman posits that, "Many different institutional and procedural forms are compatible with 'democracy' in this representative version so long as certain basic conditions are met. These include:

    a) Alternation in government offices as a result of free and fair elections;

    b) Broad public contestation both to fill government offices and to debate public policy;

    c) Freedom of the press and other mass media to permit dissemination of opposing views;

    d) Widespread respect for and implementation of civil liberties and rights and the rule of law;

    e) Those with authority to govern operate within specified legal limits;

    f) Provision is made for government accountability."[3]

The discourse on democracy has been broadened and Diamond *et al*[4] have argued that democracy denotes a system of government that meets essential conditions including meaningful and extensive competition among individuals in organised groups (especially political parties) for all effective positions for government power, at regular intervals and excluding the use of force. Further, these conditions also include a highly inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies through

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[2] W. Phillips Shively, <u>Power and Choice- An Introduction to Political Science</u> (New York: McGraw Hill, 2003)

[3] Loveman, Brian, "Protected Democracies and Military Guardianship: Political Transitions in Latin America", in the Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs, 36:2, pp. 105-189, 1994

[4] Diamond, Larry *et al*; <u>Democracy in Developing Countries: Latin America</u>; (Colorado: Lynne Reinner, 2007)

regular and fair elections, so that no major social group is excluded. Additionally, another important condition for democracy is the presence of a level of civil and ethical liberties – freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations – sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation.

In adding to the discourse on democracy, writing in "Policymaking in Latin America[5]" Stein and Tommasi supported the view that "the whole game of democracy is based on agreement and cooperation at a deeper level: that of respecting the rules of the game and letting other people rule, if that is the voters' choice and the outcome of the electoral process".

With respect to Trinidad and Tobago, democracy as a critical component of the political process has been largely stable since its independence in 1962. There have only been two instances of serious threats to democracy, with the first in 1970 (Black Power movement/military revolt) and the second being in 1990 (attempted Muslimeen coup d'état).

In 1970, there was a military revolt that challenged democracy but was quickly put down. This event occurred in the context of the Black Power movement that sought to address the struggles of black people, workers and those who were disadvantaged.

The second challenge to democratic rule in 1990 occurred within an entirely different context as the country faced serious socio-economic challenges arising out of the debt crisis of the 1980s. The government had imposed unpopular austerity measures to deal with such challenges and one pressure group, the Jamaat Al Muslimeen, attempted to overthrow the government. Reasons for this coup d'état, as expressed by its leader, Imam Yasin Abu Bakr, included the perceived inability of the government to properly address the socio- economic issues faced by the country. However, neither event had a significant impact on the strength of democratic governance in the country.

Perceptions of Democracy
Several factors have been shown to contribute to the strength and stability of democracy in a country. The importance of citizens' support and popular acceptance of the legitimacy of the system have been demonstrated, and can be used to gauge the durability of the system. Accordingly, this survey sought to determine the perceptions of democracy among the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. The following sections assess the strength of democracy in Trinidad & Tobago by analyzing indicators of the various dimensions of citizen support of the democratic process and democratic ideals.

In an attempt to gauge citizens' satisfaction with and perceptions of the manner in which democracy is expressed in Trinidad & Tobago, the following questions were asked:

- **PN4** - *In general, would you say that you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way democracy works in Trinidad and Tobago?*
- **PN5** - *In your opinion, is Trinidad and Tobago very democratic, somewhat democratic, not very democratic or not at all democratic?*

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[5] Stein, Ernesto & Tommasi, Mariano; "Policymaking in Latin America, How Politics Shapes Policies", Inter-American Development Bank; (Washington, 2008)

The general perception of democracy was gauged from the responses to those two questions. On that basis, the study set out to highlight the various aspects of democracy that would lead to the varying levels of satisfaction / dissatisfaction.

Figure 14: Respondents' Perception of Satisfaction Towards Democracy in Trinidad & Tobago
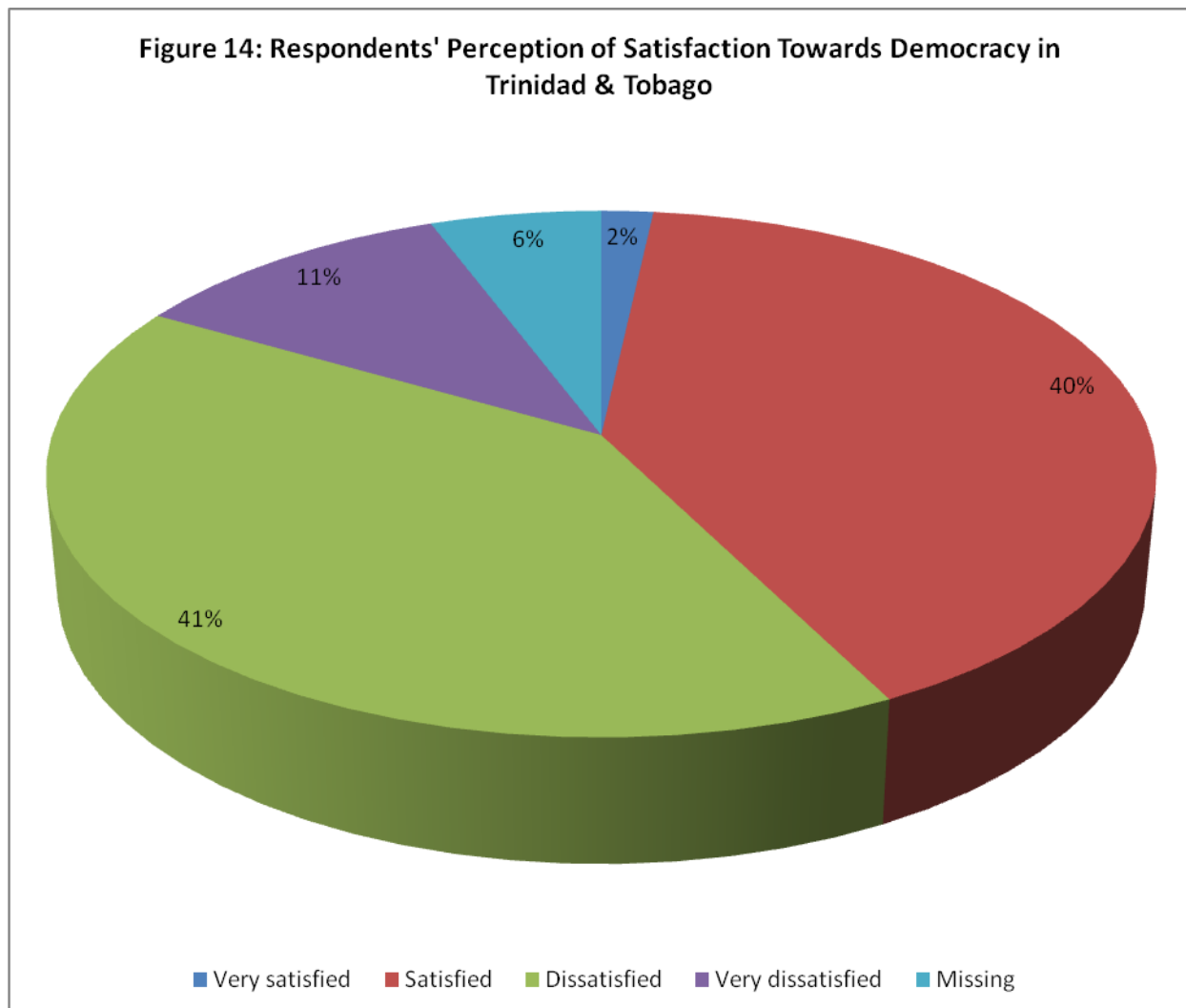
As shown in the Figure 14, 42% of all respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the way democracy works in Trinidad & Tobago, whereas 52% indicated that they were dissatisfied with the way democracy operates in the country. The remaining 6% of respondents did not give a response.

Figure 15: Perceptions of Democracy in Trinidad and Tobago

- Very democratic
- Somewhat democratic
- Not very democratic
- Not at all democratic
- Missing
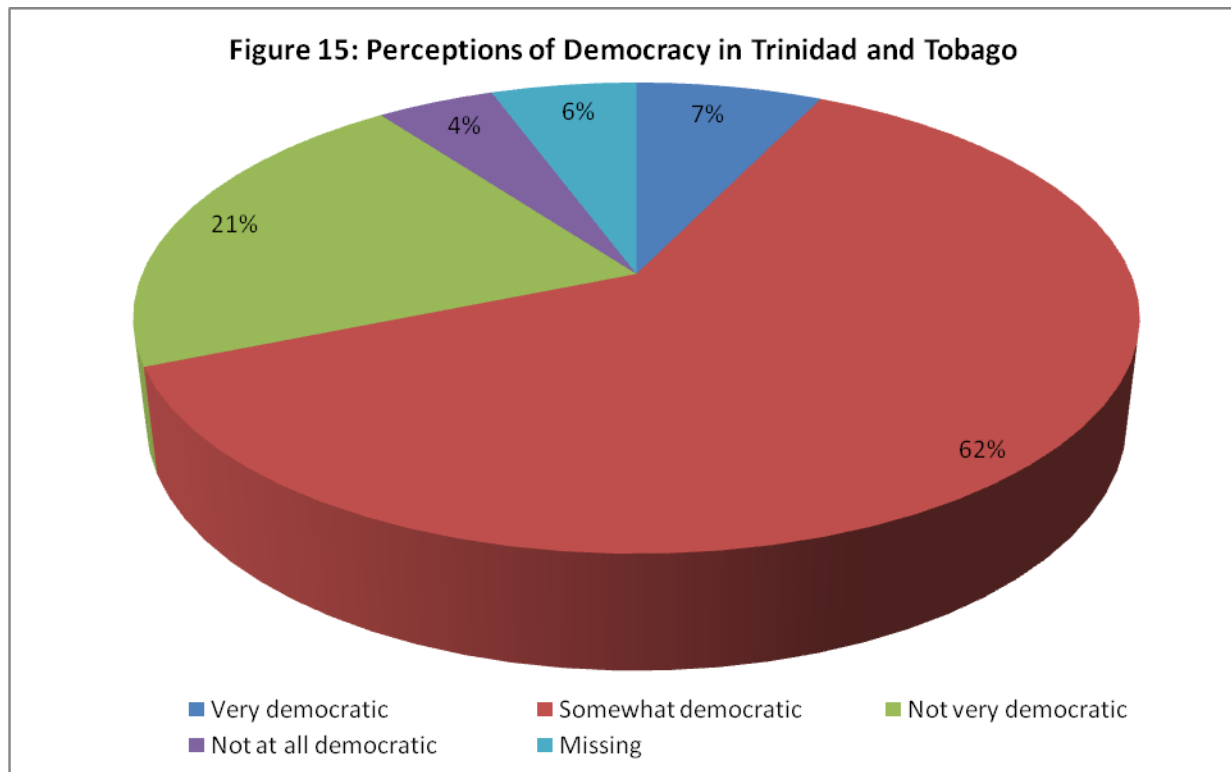
Although more than half of the respondents indicated their dissatisfaction with the way that democracy operated in Trinidad & Tobago, 69% of the survey respondents perceived Trinidad & Tobago as democratic, with 62% indicating that Trinidad & Tobago was "somewhat democratic" and 7% believing the country was "very democratic". Conversely, 21% of respondents perceived the country to be "not very democratic", and 4% believed the country was "not at all democratic".

As previously discussed, support for democracy and the democratic process is important when assessing the durability of democracy in a country. The study has examined citizens' perception of the efficacy of their democracy, including their evaluations of the degree of democratization and the level of satisfaction with the manner in which in the system operates. In this section, the study will examine the issue of system legitimacy in Trinidad & Tobago by analysing attitudes that support democracy, including the degree to which democracy is valued as a form of government and the strength of rejection of authoritarian options.

In an attempt to gauge the level of support for the idea of democracy, the study analyzed responses to the following question:

- ***DEM2 -*** *Which of the following statements do you agree with most?*
    - *It doesn't matter whether a regime is democratic or non-democratic*
    - *Democracy is preferable to any other form of government*

- *Under some circumstances an authoritarian government may be preferable to a democratic one*

Figure 16: Respondents' Opinion on Democracy

- It doesn't matter whether a regime is democratic or non-democratic
- Democracy is preferable to any other form of government
- Under some circumstances an authoritarian government may be preferable to a democratic one
- Missing
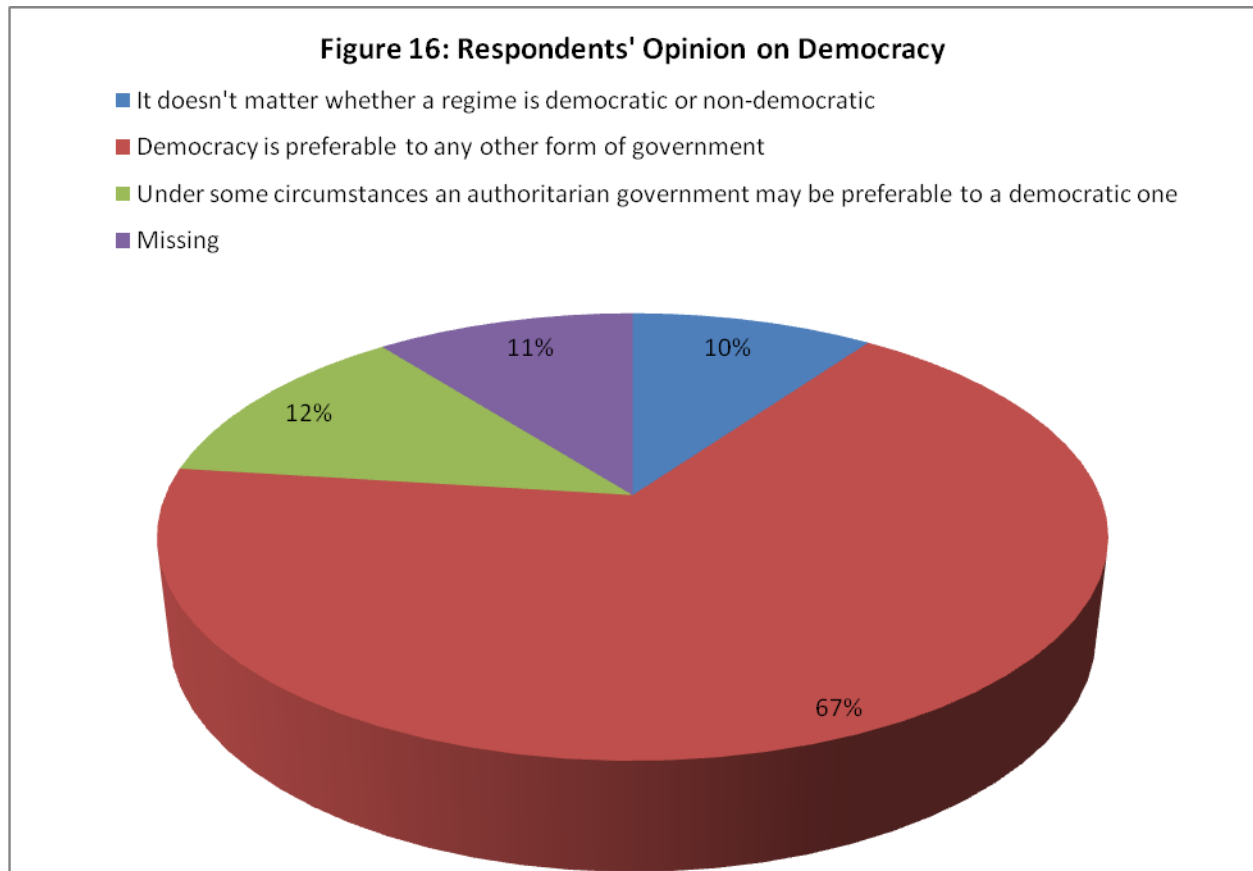
As shown in Figure 16, respondents express a clear preference for democracy as a system of government. 67% of the respondents felt that democracy is preferable to any other form of government while only 12% felt that there could be instances when an authoritarian regime might be preferable. 10% did not believe it mattered whether the regime was democratic or not. Support for the democratic regime type is strong, which suggests that democracy in Trinidad & Tobago is relatively stable. This high level of support for the regime type, however, is juxtaposed with a high level of dissatisfaction with the way democracy operates in Trinidad & Tobago.

The attitudes in support of democracy held by citizens of Trinidad & Tobago is further emphasized by responses to the following questions:

DEM11 - *Do you think that our country needs a government with an iron fist, or that problems can be resolved with everyone's participation?*

AUT1 - *There are people who say that we need a strong leader who does not have to be elected by the vote of the people. Others say that although things may not work, electoral democracy, or the popular vote, is always best. What do you think?*

Figure 17: Should the Country be Governed by an Iron Fist or by Allowing Everyone's Participation?
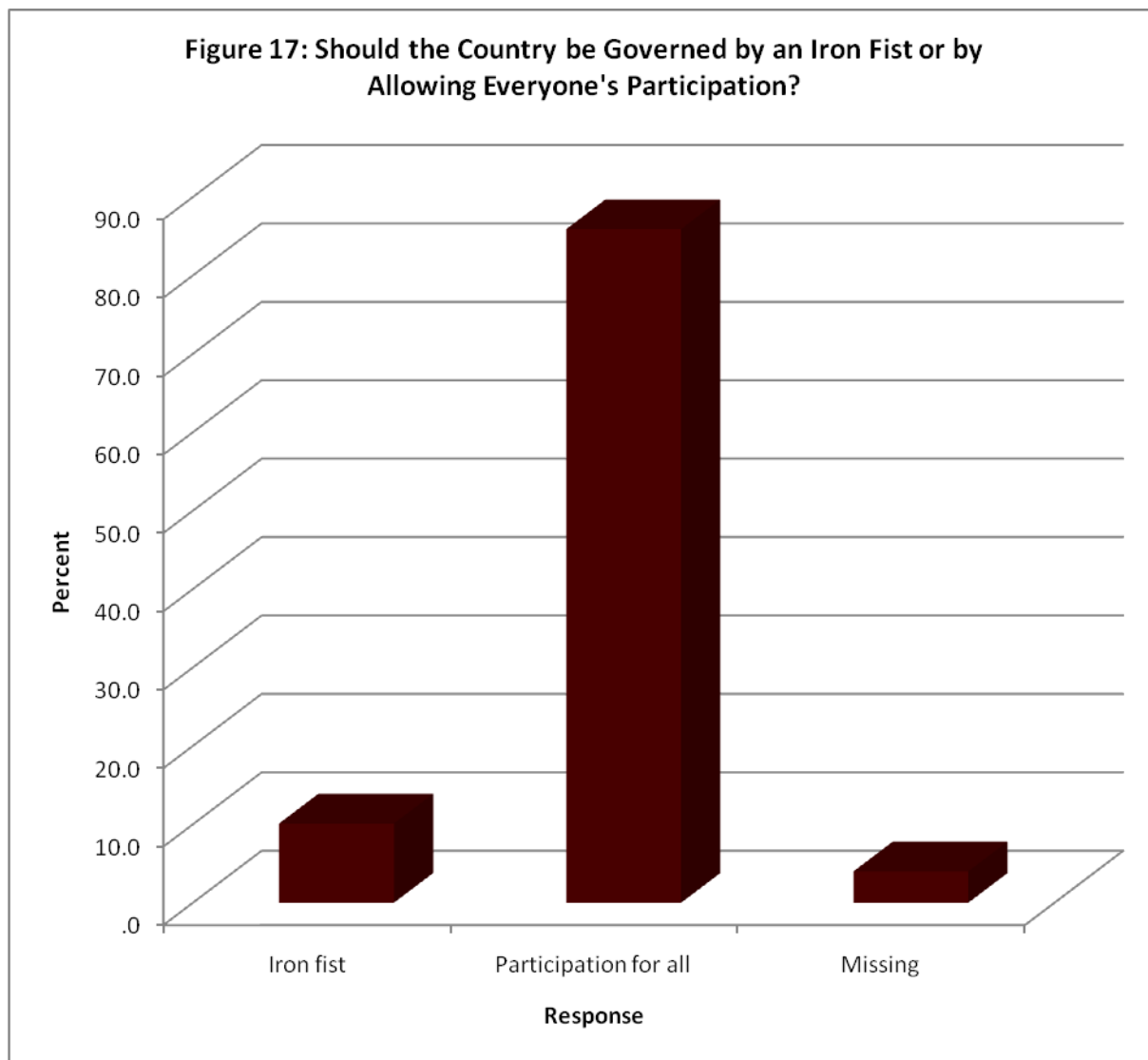
In response to question **DEM11**, 89% of the respondents indicated support for the participation of all the citizens in governing the country.

Figure 18: Respondents' Opinion on Whether Electoral Democray is Best

- We need a strong leader who does not have to be elected
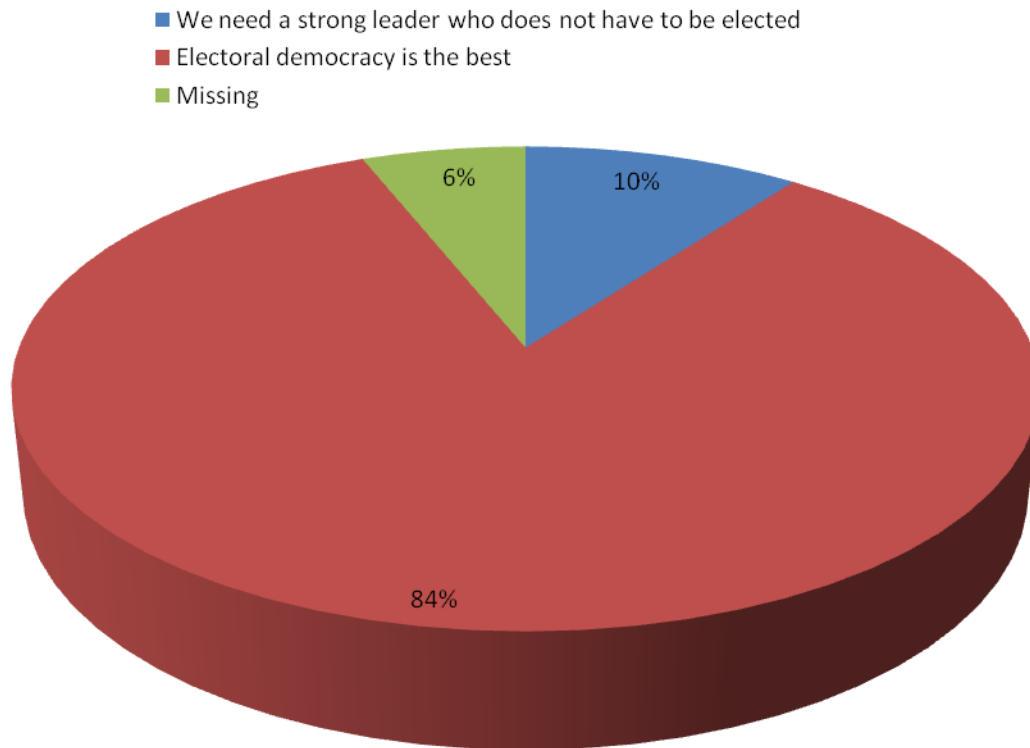- Electoral democracy is the best
- Missing

Figure 18 shows that 84% of the respondents felt that electoral democracy is the best option, even with the recognition that the elected leadership may not always operate as expected. The remaining 10% of the respondents indicated that Trinidad and Tobago needs a strong leader, even if such a leader is not democratically elected.

Although the preceding evidence suggests strong support for democracy among citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, it should be noted that there were also citizens who expressed clear preference for authoritarian or non-democratic forms of government. The percentage of the population who believed, (1) that there were circumstances under which an authoritarian government was preferable (12%), (2) that the country needs a government with an iron fist (10%), or (3) that we need a leader who does not have to be elected (10%) is small, and indicates comparatively weak support among Trinidad & Tobago citizens for non-democratic regime options.

Figure 19: Respondents' Opinions With Respect to the Participation of the Public in a Group Working to Violently Overthrow an Elected Government
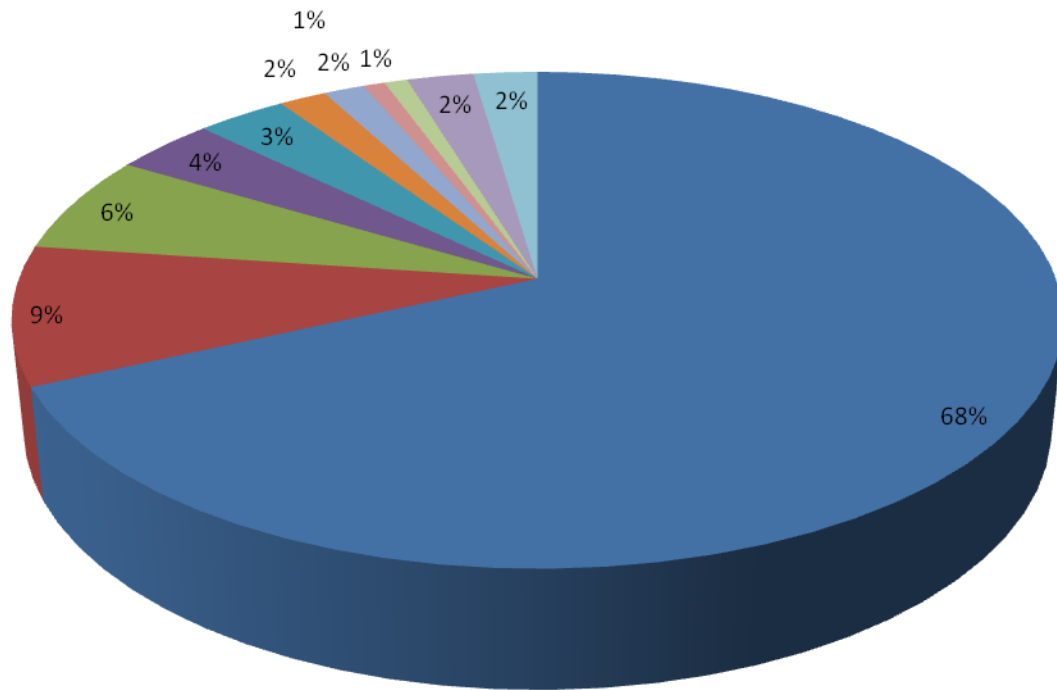
In addition to questions **DEM2, DEM11** and **AUT1,** question **E3** asked respondents' opinions of "people working in a group to violently overthrow an elected government – how much do you approve or disapprove?" In response to question **E3**, cumulatively 87% of the respondents disapproved of the participation in groups aimed at violently overthrowing an elected government. Of this 87%, 68% of respondents indicated that they "strongly disapprove" of such action. Conversely, only 2% of respondents "strongly approve" of such action.

Having established the parameters of democracy, the survey explored both the elements of democracy and the practices of democracy, as well as issues which impact the democratic process of Trinidad and Tobago. These include:

- Public Trust
- Fundamental rights and freedoms
- Voting behaviour
- Corruption
- Impact of the Media

- Political and Social Tolerance
- Economics and Trade, Unemployment and Poverty
- Security and public safety
- Role of private sector

These elements of democracy will be further analyzed in the other sections of the report.

Support for Democratic Principles

This section of the study analyses a range of elements of democracy as practiced in Trinidad and Tobago.
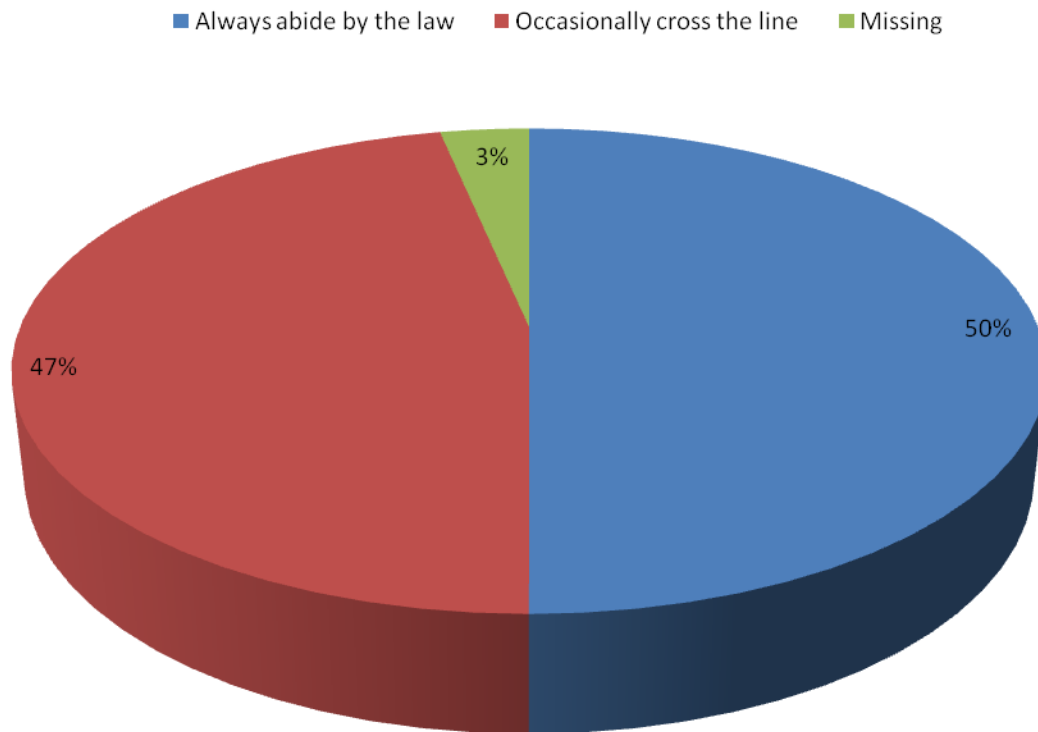
Rule of Law

As previously observed, the basic conditions of democracy include the wide respect for and implementation of civil liberties, the protection of citizens' basic rights, and the adherence to the rule of law. As a part of the democratic process, each country's Legislature, Executive and Judiciary branches are required to be guarantors of the rule of law, and facilitate access to justice and effective, transparent, ethical and accountable governance. In the most basic sense, the rule of law is a system that attempts to protect the rights of citizens from arbitrary and abusive use of government power.

To determine the extent to which citizens of Trinidad & Tobago recognize and support the rule of law and the right to due process, the following question was asked:

AOJ8. In order to catch criminals, do you believe that the authorities should always abide by the law or that occasionally they can cross the line?

Figure 20: Respondents' Opinion on Whether the Authorities Must be Held to the Rule of Law in Pursuit of Criminals

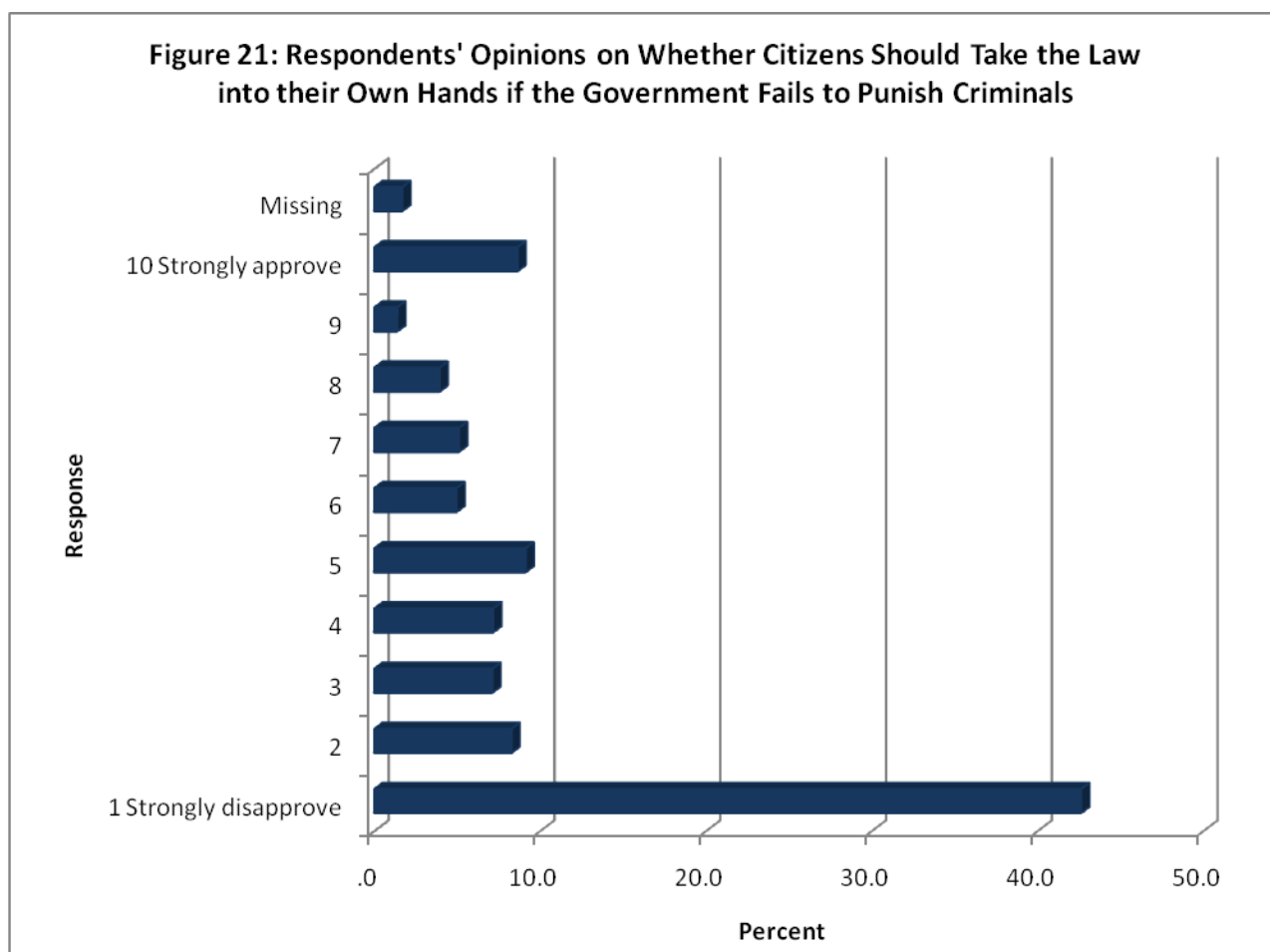■ Always abide by the law   ■ Occasionally cross the line   ■ Missing

3%

47%

50%

Results presented in the Figure 20 indicate that strict adherence to the rule of law is supported by half of the respondents interview in the survey. 50% of those expressing an opinion on the issue felt that the law should always be obeyed, but 47% of respondents were supporters of less strict compliance with the law in fighting crime. This indicates that due to serious concern about the high levels of crime in Trinidad and Tobago, the public's perception is that every effort should be made to control the crime situation in the country, if even it means non-compliance with the law by law enforcement officials in some instances.

To assess whether such concessions regarding the rule of law should also be made for ordinary citizens, the following question was posed:

E16. Of people taking the law into their own hands when the government does not punish criminals. How much do you approve or disapprove?

Although almost half of the respondents concurred with the view that law enforcement officials could occasionally cross the line in pursuit of criminals, such support was not given to ordinary citizens.

Figure 21: Respondents' Opinions on Whether Citizens Should Take the Law into their Own Hands if the Government Fails to Punish Criminals

In response to this question, cumulatively 65% of respondents disapproved of citizens taking the law into their own hands when the government does not punish criminals. Of this 65%, 43% of respondents "strongly disapprove" of such an action, while only 9% of respondents "strongly approve" of such actions. This displays a respect for the rule of law by citizens, even if they feel that the government has failed to adequately punish address issues related to criminal activities and the punishment of criminals. This shows some level of respect for the structure of the justice system and the right to due process,

Expression of Basic Rights and Freedoms in Trinidad and Tobago

The protection of basic rights and freedoms is an intrinsic democratic principle. The Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (Ch. 1, Pt. 4) recognizes certain fundamental human rights and freedoms that have existed and shall continue to exist without discrimination by reason of race, origin, colour, religion or sex." These rights and freedoms are as follows:-

a. the right of the individual to life, liberty, security of the person and enjoyment of property and the right not to be deprived thereof except by due process of law;

b. the right of the individual to equality before the law and the protection of the law;
c. the right of the individual to respect for his private and family life;
d. the right of the individual to equality of treatment from any public authority in the exercise of any functions;
e. the right to join political parties and to express political views;
f. the right of a parent or guardian to provide a school of his own choice for the education of his child or ward;
g. freedom of movement;
h. freedom of conscience and religious belief and observance;
i. freedom of thought and expression;
j. freedom of association and assembly;
k. freedom of the press"

Several questions were asked to determine the extent to which citizens believe these basic rights are and should be protected, and the degree to which these freedoms could be expressed.

B3. To what extent do you think that citizens' basic rights are well protected by the political system of Trinidad & Tobago?

Figure 22: Extent to Which the Political System Protects Citizens' Basic Rights
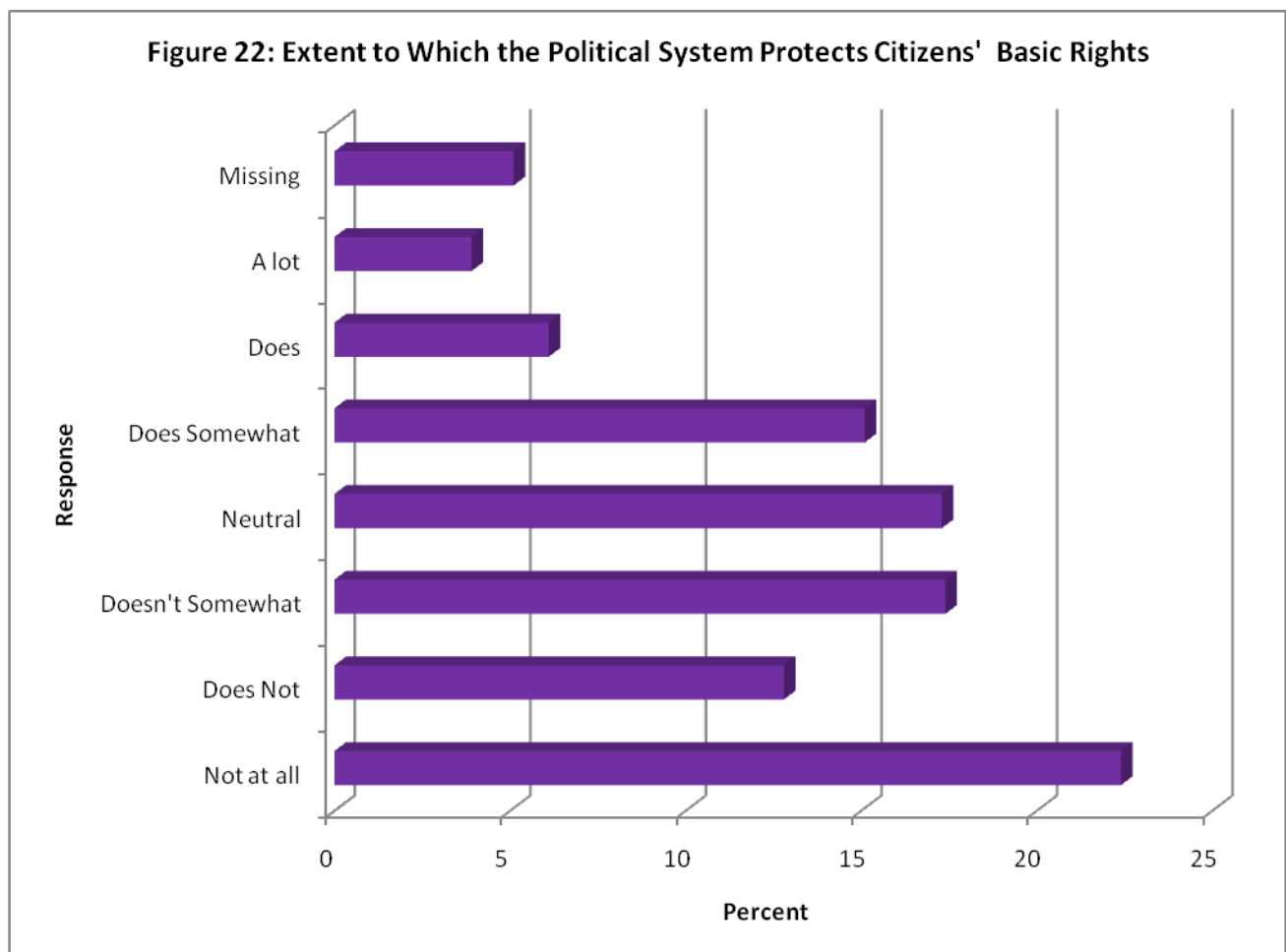
With respect to the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms as constitutionally mandated, the Trinidad and Tobago population seemed to be aware of the existence of these rights as 55% of the respondents believed that citizens' basic rights are unprotected to some degree, while 24% of that group believed that basic rights were not protected at all. (**B3**)

With respect to participation in legal protests in Trinidad and Tobago, the historical evidence indicates that traditionally protests and community actions have included strikes, marches and demonstrations, for which legal provisions are made.

Several questions were asked regarding the freedom of assembly, with particular emphasis on legal demonstrations and protest actions.

E5. Of people participating in legal demonstrations. How much do you approve or disapprove?

Figure 23: Respondents' Perspective on the Participation in Legal Protests
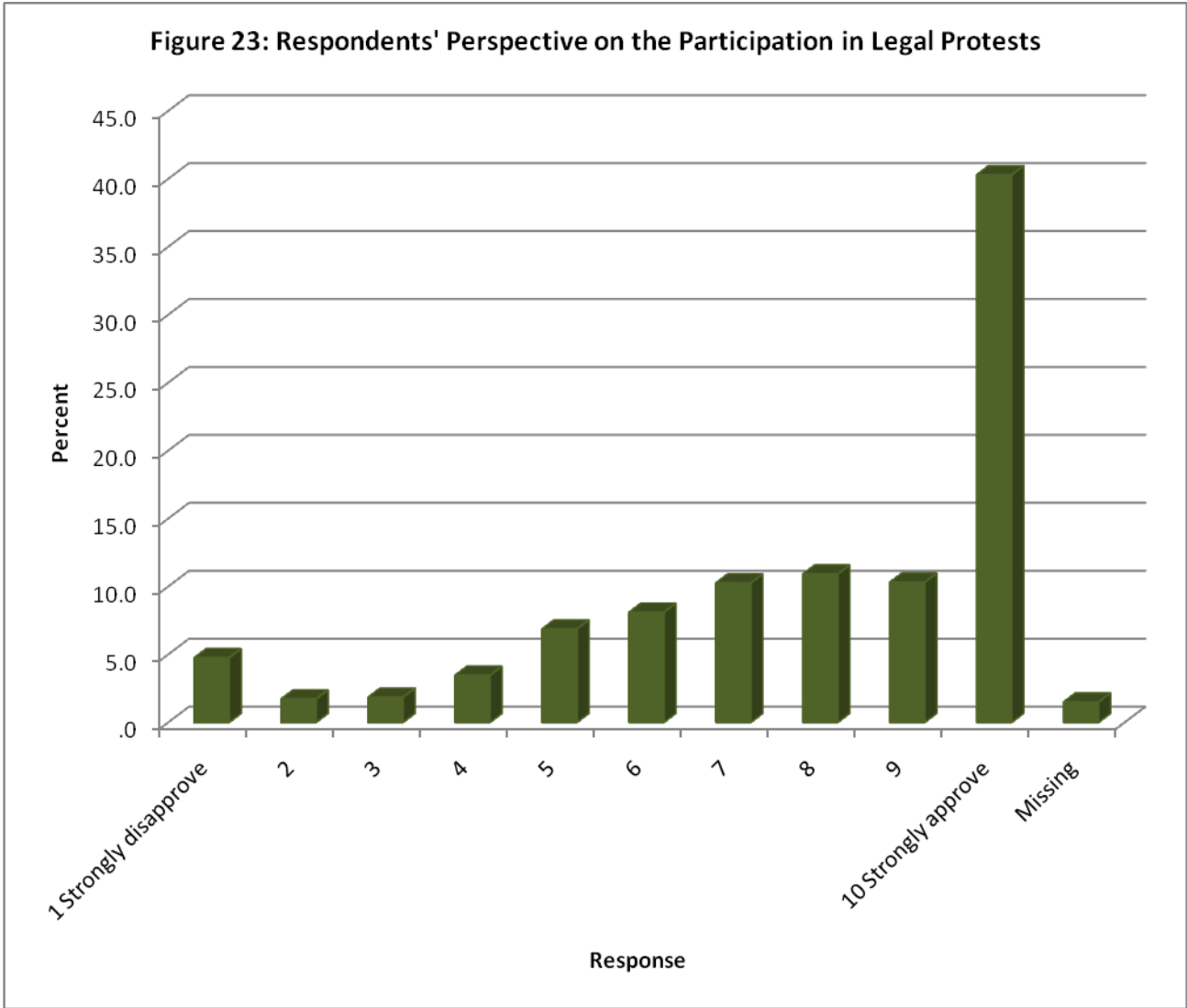
An aggregate of 79% of respondents to question **E5** showed favourable responses to people's participation in legal demonstrations. Of this 79%, 51% of the respondents **"**strongly approve" of citizens' participation in legal protests, whereas 5% of respondents "strongly disapprove" of such demonstrations.

PROT3. And now thinking about the last 12 months…In the last 12 months, have you participated in a demonstration or protest march?
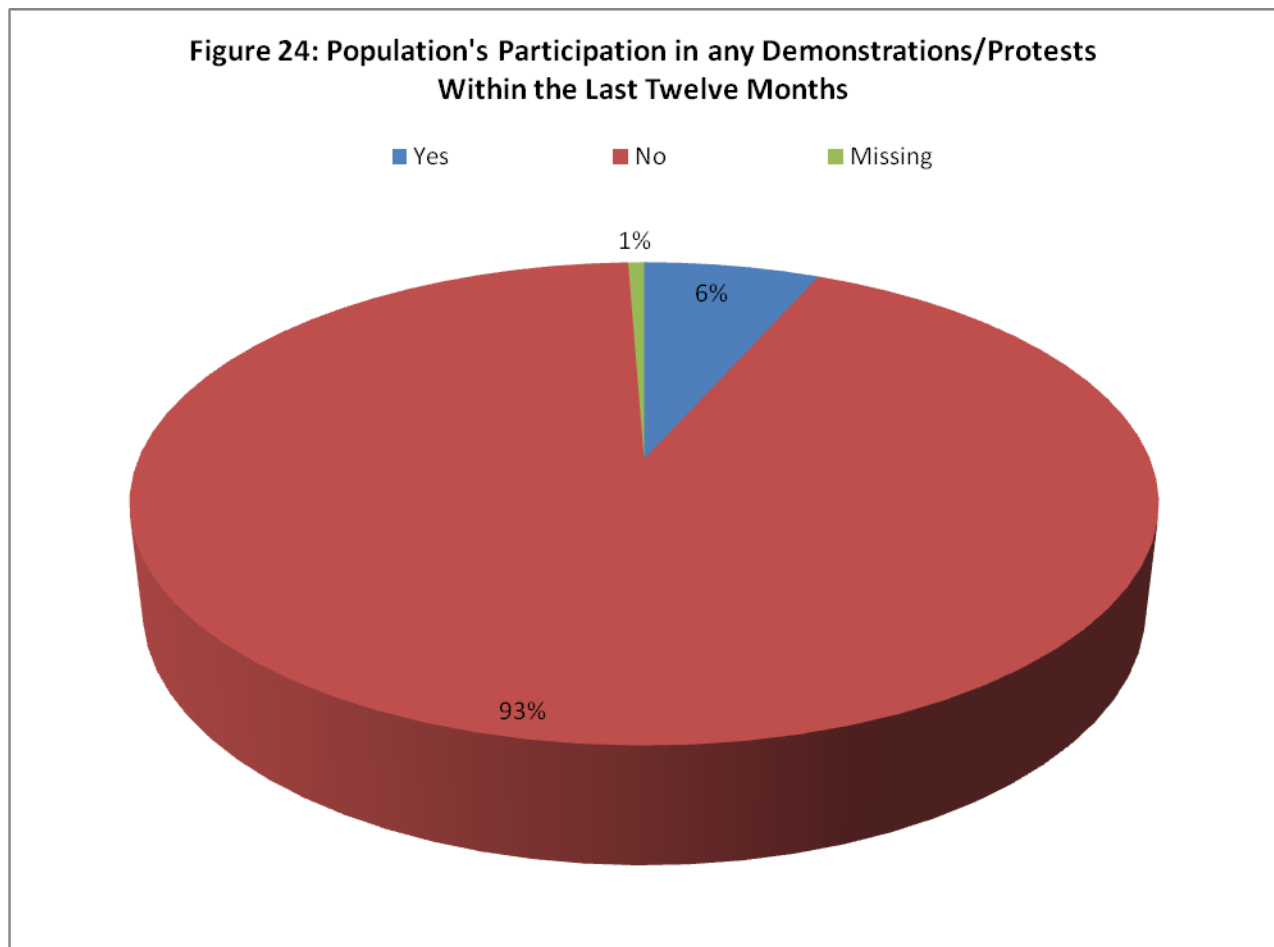
Although the approval rating of legal demonstrations was high, participation in such demonstrations was low. In response, 93% of the respondents indicated that they had not participated in any form of protest or march within the last 12 months prior to January, 2010. Only 6% of the population had actually participated in any demonstrations in the last year.

While more than three out of four respondents indicated some degree of approval for legal demonstrations, strong disapproval was expressed toward extreme forms of protest. This is further support of the respect for the rule of law which was previously examined.

With respect to the seizure of private property or land in protest action in Trinidad and Tobago, the historical evidence suggests that such action is not regular practice amongst the citizenry.

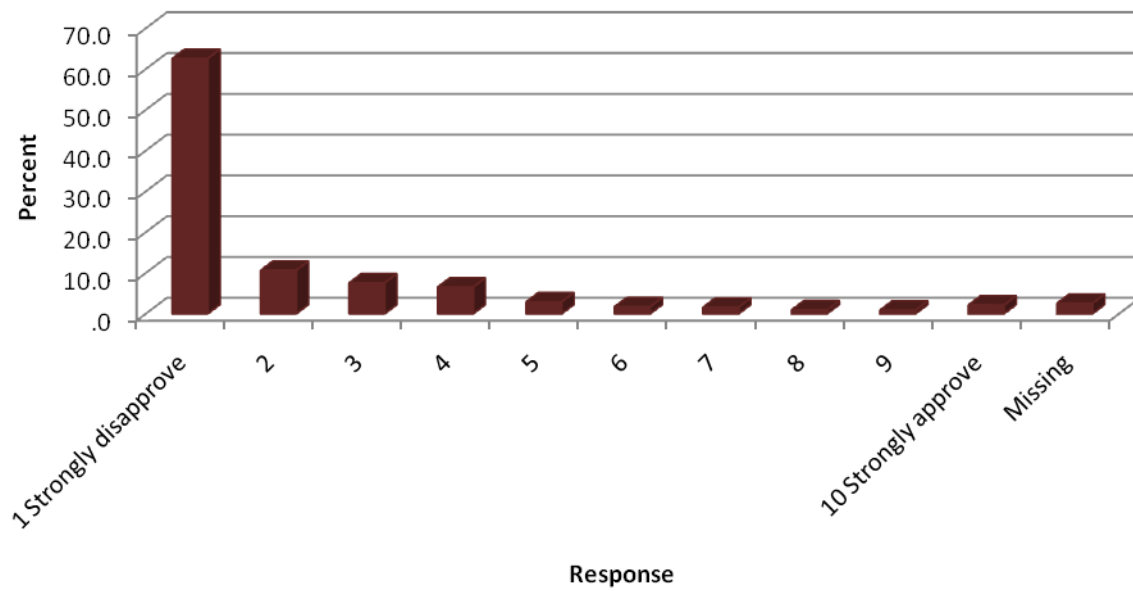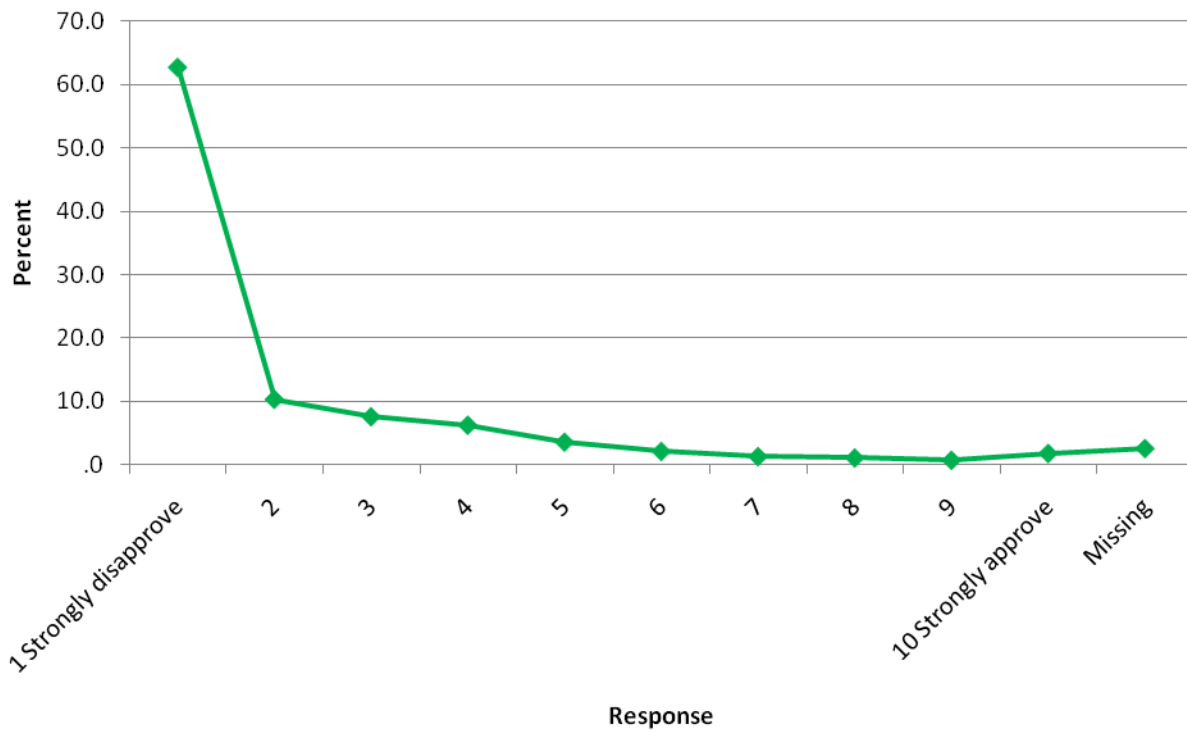Figure 25: Respondents' Opinion on the Seizing of Private Property /Land in Protest Action

Figure 26: Respondents' Opinion on the Seizing of Factories, Offices and Other Buildings in Protest Action

In response to question **E14**, 64% of the respondents "strongly disapprove" of the seizing of private property / land in protest action. In response to question **E2,** 64% of the respondents indicated that they "strongly disapprove" the action of "seizing factories, offices and other buildings as a form of protest".

As with the freedoms and rights that have been examined, citizens of Trinidad and Tobago respect the right to join political parties and to express political views.

Question **E11** asked: "of people working for campaigns for political parties or candidates, how much do you approve or disapprove?"

Figure 27: Respondents' Opinions on the Participation of the Population in Political Campaigns
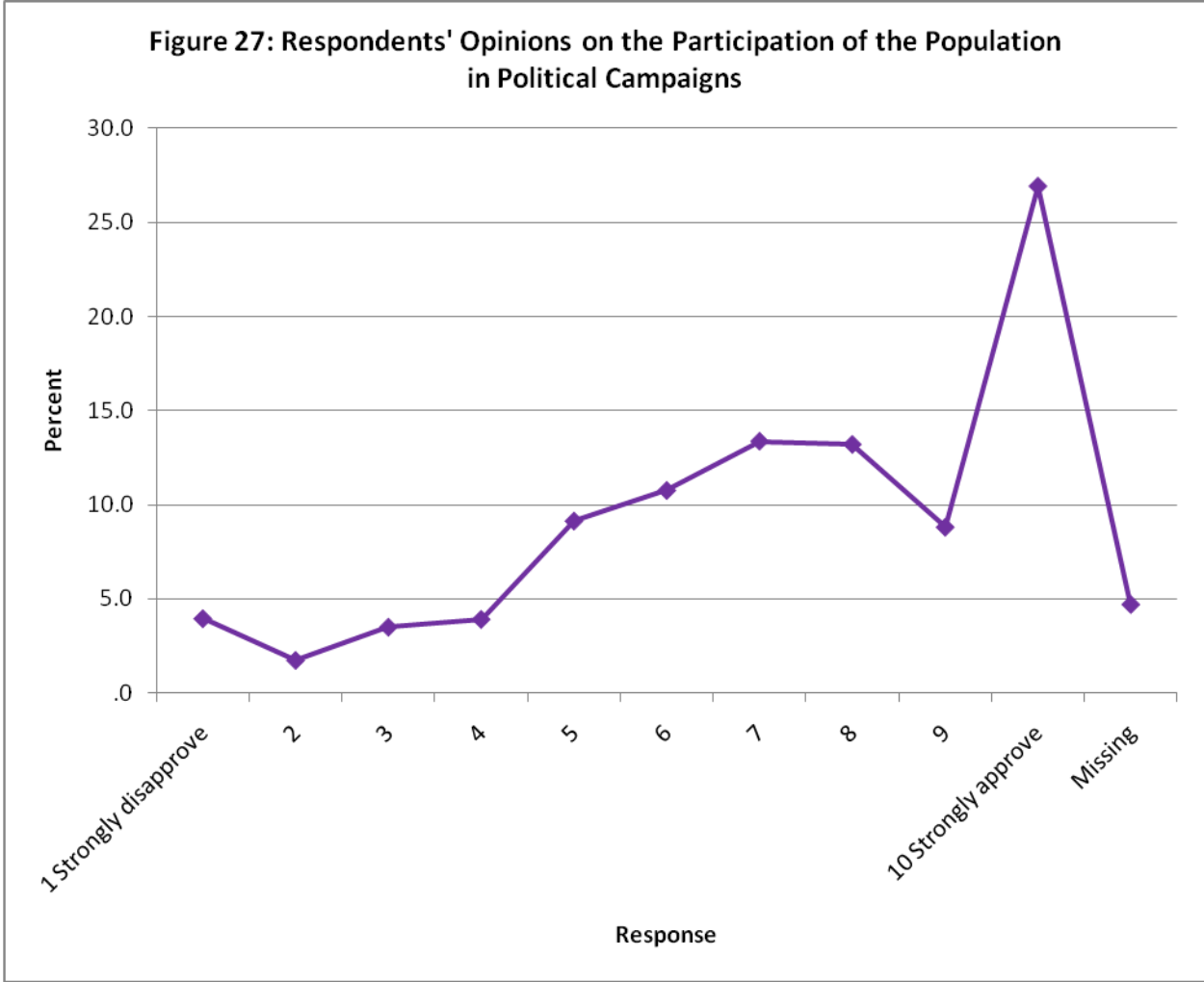
In Trinidad and Tobago, citizen participation in political campaigns has been a feature of general elections and well as local government elections. At the macro level, among the activities of nation-wide political party campaigns are mass meetings often attended by party activists and followers from several constituencies intended to demonstrate an image of party popularity and strength. At the community

level, political party activists canvas support at the grassroot level and is at times seen as an attempt at collective communal pressure for political support and solidarity.

In response to question **E11**, 73% of the respondents indicated some level of approval of people working for campaigns for political parties or candidates. Of this 73%, 38% of respondents indicated that they "strongly approve" of people working for campaigns for political parties or candidates. Alternatively, 5% "strongly disapprove" of participation in political campaigns.

Figure 28: Respondents' Attempts at Convincing Citizens to Vote for a Candidate or Political Party
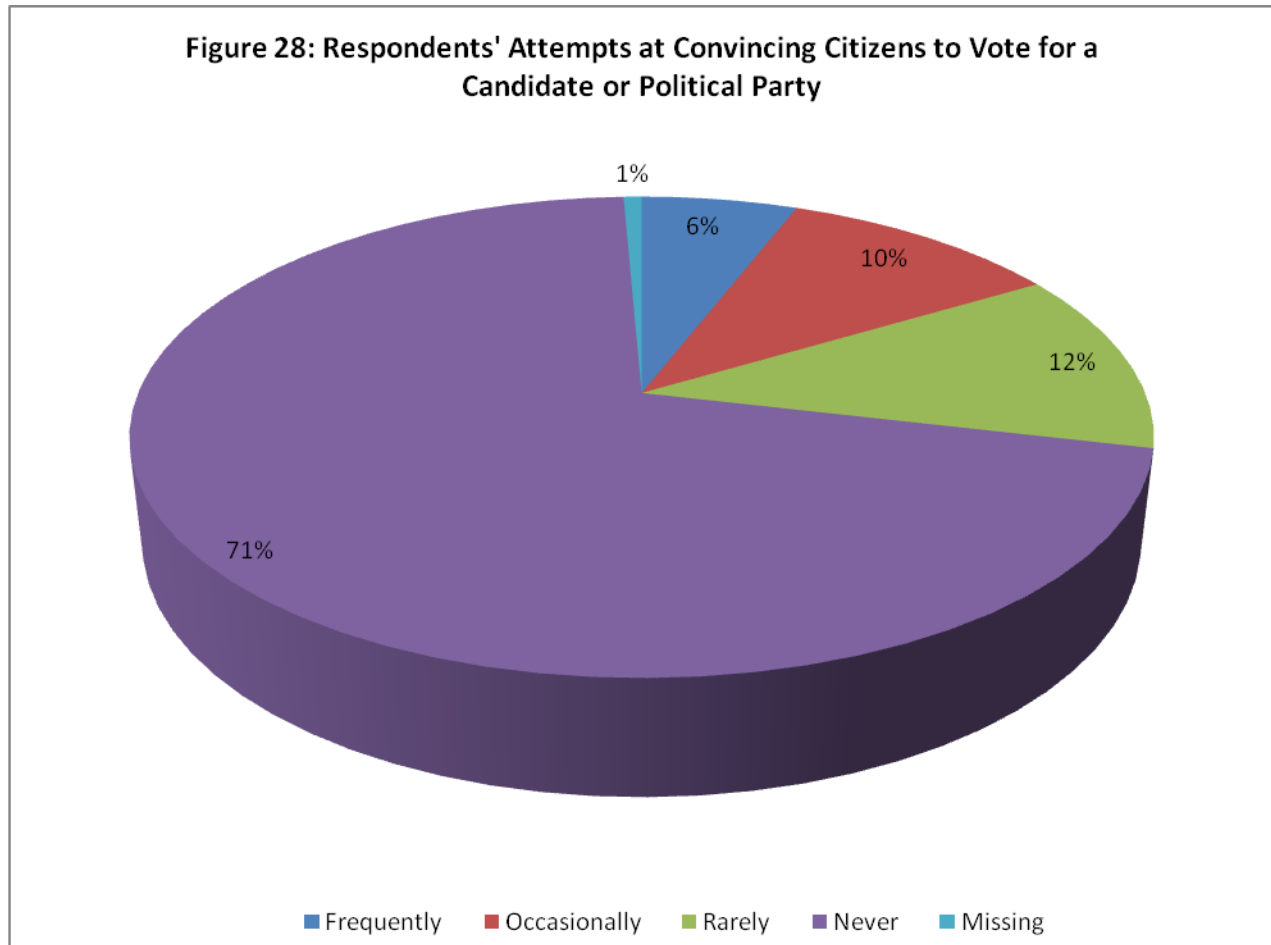
One of the pillars of democracy is freedom of choice in selecting a government. This choice can be influenced by the political process, political campaigning or political persuasions/influences. With specific reference to Trinidad and Tobago in response to question **PP1**, the data indicate that to a large extent the majority of people (71%) have never tried to influence others to vote in their interest. While 10% and 12% respectively may "occasionally" or "rarely" attempt to influence voter patterns, 6% of the respondents indicated that they regularly try to influence other people to vote in their favour.

Figure 29: Citizens' Voting Behaviour in the 2007 General Elections & Present Identification with a Political Party
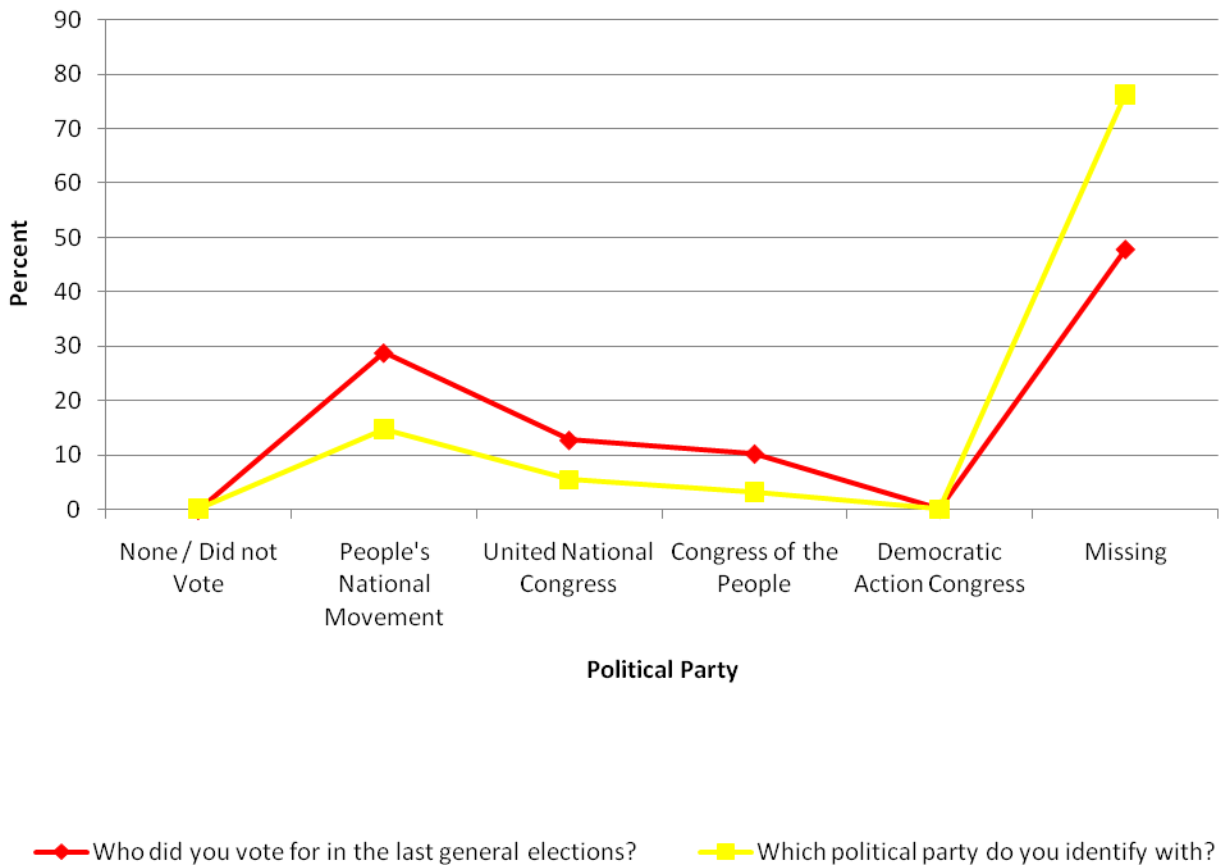
As observed earlier, one of the major elements in the democratic process is the right and freedom of individual citizens to choose their representatives in an open, free and fair electoral process whenever an election is called. In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, when the respondents are asked to address the question "who did they vote for in the last election" (**VB3**) and "which party do they identify with" (**VB11**) the responses were interesting. Whereas 48% of the respondents did not answer the question which asked who they voted for in the last election, a total of 76% declined to respond to the question which asked them with which political party they would identify. Of those who answered the question, 12% of the respondents indicated that they voted for the United National Congress (UNC), while only 5% of the respondents indicated that they identified with that party. Similarly, 13% of the respondents indicated that they voted for the Congress of the People (COP) in the last general elections, while only 3% identified with that party.

On further analysis, 50% of the respondents who indicated that they voted for the People's National Movement (PNM) in the last general elections clearly stated that they identified with the PNM. In the

case of the UNC, less than 41% of the respondents who voted for them actually identified with the party, and less than 25% of the COP's votes came from individuals who identified with the party.

Figure 30: Respondents' Action if an Election Were to Be Called This Week
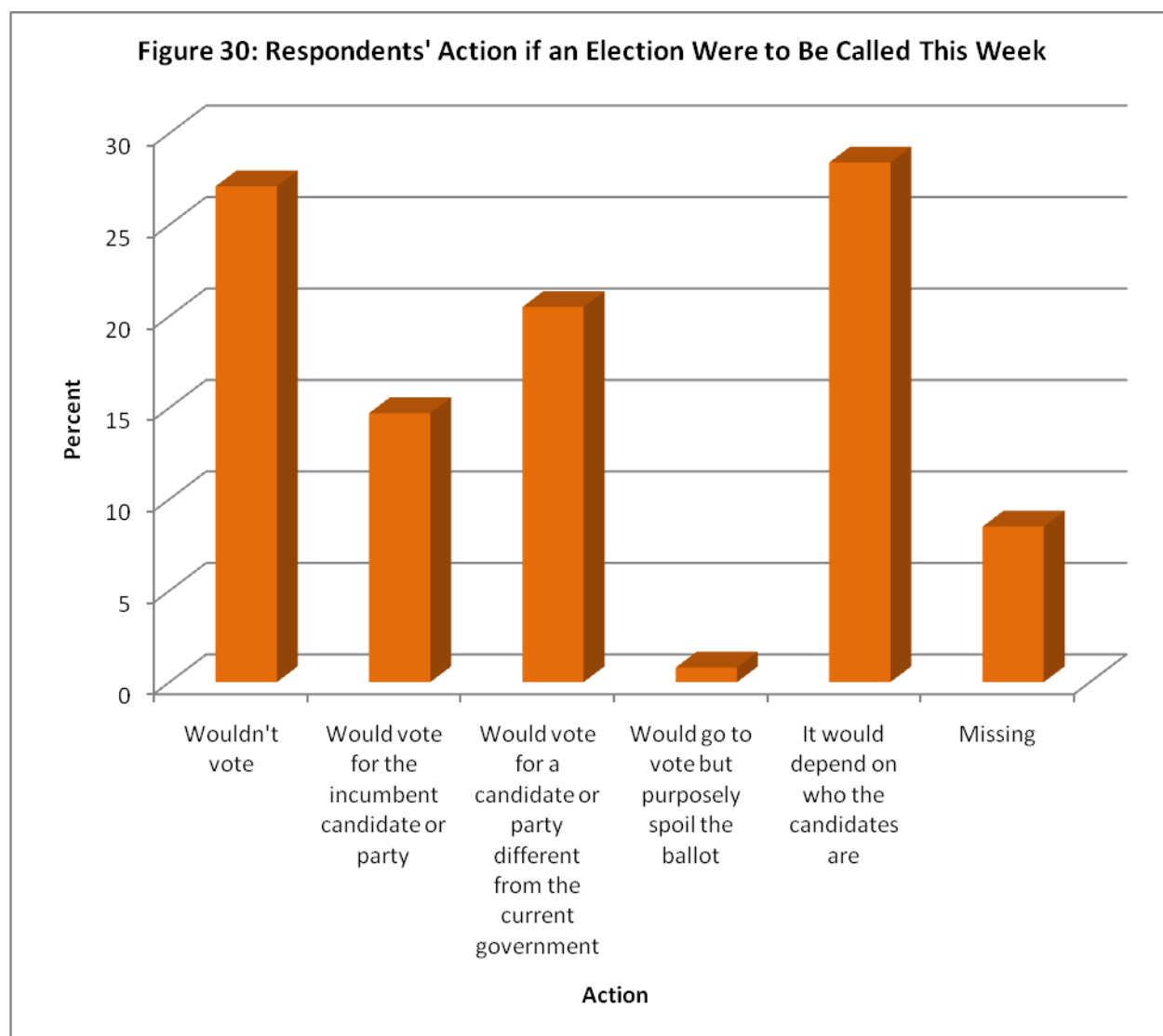
In response to question **VB2,** 69% of the respondents voted in the last general elections (2007) in Trinidad and Tobago. Of this 69%, 42% said that they voted for the incumbent PNM, 19% for the UNC and 14% for the COP (**VB3**). On the issue of identification, only 15% of the respondents identified specifically with the PNM, 6% with the UNC and 3% with the COP.

On the other hand, when asked who they would vote for if elections were called this week, 27% of the respondents indicated that they would not vote. 28% of the respondents indicated that they would vote for individual candidates as they are posted regardless of party membership. Of significance, is that only

15% of these respondents indicated that they would vote for the incumbent PNM and 21% would vote for opposition parties as they present themselves. (**VB20**)

As has been observed, elections and voting are key features of the democratic process of Trinidad and Tobago and free, fair, open and transparent elections facilitate citizens' participation in this process. The electoral process of Trinidad and Tobago has traditionally been efficient and conflict-free.

Figure 31: The Extent to Which Citizens Should Support the Political System of Trinidad & Tobago
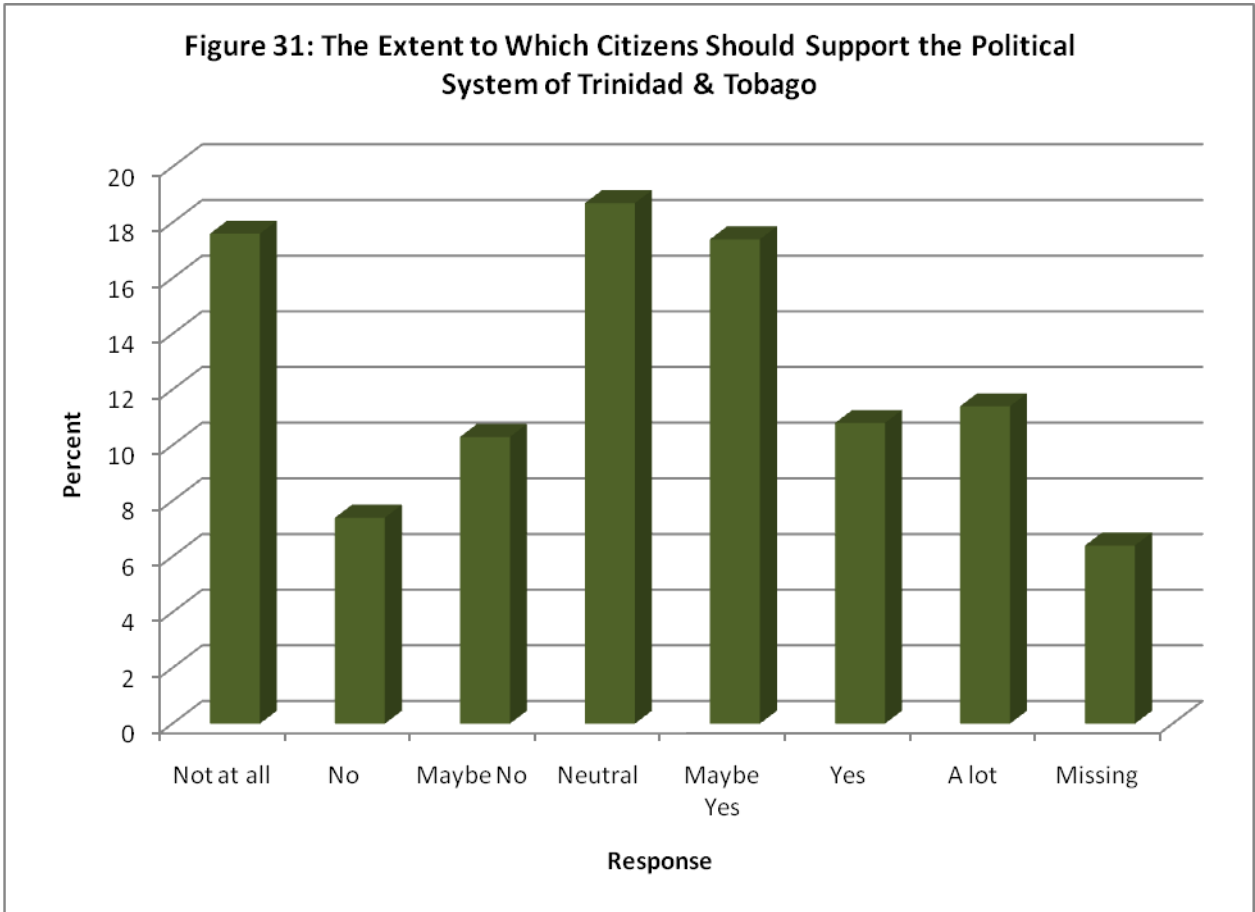
Traditionally in the English speaking Caribbean, the Westminster model has been the accepted post-independence model of governance. As indicated by the data, approximately 25% of the sample does not support the political system in its present form, 18% indicate that they do not support it at all, and similarly another 18% indicated minimal support of the current political system. Only 11% of the respondents support the political system "a lot" and this indicates that the political system is being re-evaluated by the citizenry, but this is being done in a non-violent manner. (**B6**)

Figure 32: Respondents' Opinions on Measures in Which They Can Have the Most Influence to Change Things

- Vote to elect those who support your position
- Participate in protest movements and demand changes directly
- Influence in other ways
- It is not possible to have influence in order to change things, it does not matter
- Missing

11%

10%

21%

50%

8%
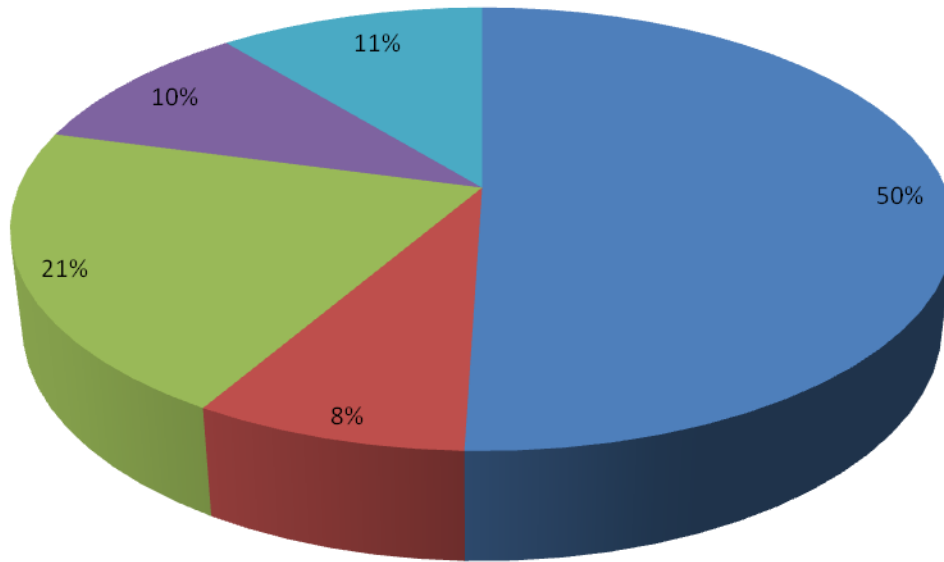
With respect of the issue of "what can be done to influence change by individuals" (**VB21**) 50% of the respondents statements indicated that they would vote for those representatives that supported their positions. 21% of the respondents indicated that they could influence change in a variety of ways, while 10% of the respondents did not think it was possible to effect change. 8% of the respondents indicated that protest movements and direct action could influence change.

Freedom of the press is one of the basic rights protected under the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago (Ch. 1, Pt. 4). In addition, the government of Trinidad and Tobago enacted the Freedom of Information Act of 1999 which extends to all members of the public the right to seek access to information about or in the possession of public authorities.

Figure 33: Extent to Which Respondents Trusts the Mass Media in Trinidad and Tobago
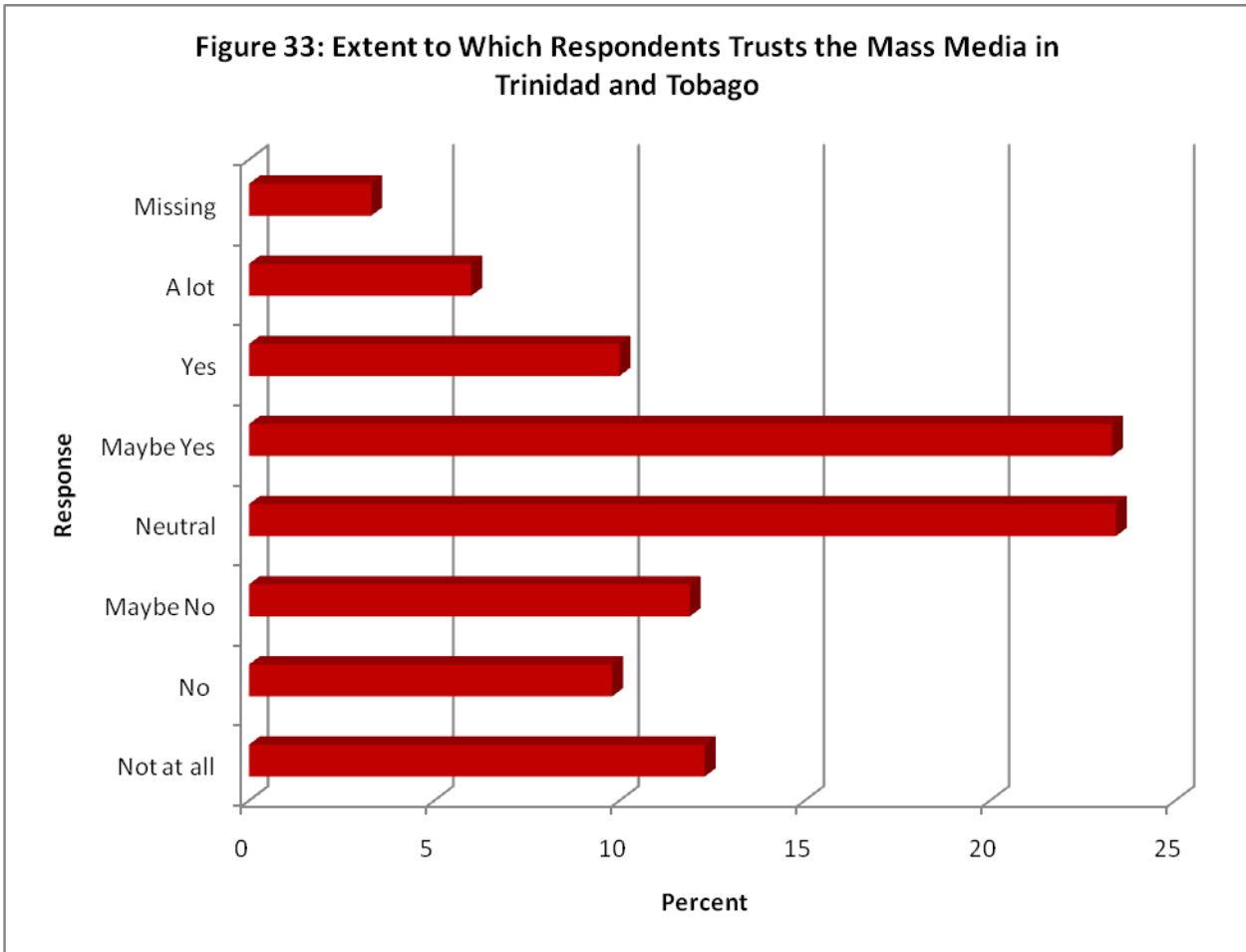
Understood internationally to be the last defence of the populace against corruption, collusion, unfair practices and the myriad other ills of society, the media globally is tasked with the responsibility of providing neutral, informative, clear-cut information to the general public on the affairs of both its home state and others abroad. The media in its general mandate should attempt to reach the majority of the population to ensure that the dissemination of information is as efficient and effective as possible. In Trinidad and Tobago, the media has often been labeled as the tool of particular interest groups, and as having no neutral voice. However, for all intents and purposes its main role, that is, the dissemination of information, is still being executed. One must also note that calls for changes in the management of media through additional laws have been made in Trinidad and Tobago.

The media seems to be neither particularly offensive nor over engaging as the survey has indicated that overall, 40% of the respondents trust the media while 35% have little faith in it. This is basically borderline as usually one would expect the population to be either highly supportive or critical of the media. This however is not the case in Trinidad and Tobago, as supported by the results of this survey. (**B37**)

The Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago also protects the freedom of thought and expression, the perception of which was tested by the following question:

D3. Still thinking of those who only say bad things about the form of government of Trinidad & Tobago, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people being permitted to run for public office?

An aggregate of 50% of the respondents expressed some level of approval of citizens who criticize the government running for public office.

Figure 34: Respondents' Opinions on Whether Citizens Who Consistently Have Bad Things to Say About the Government Should Be Permitted to Run for Public Office
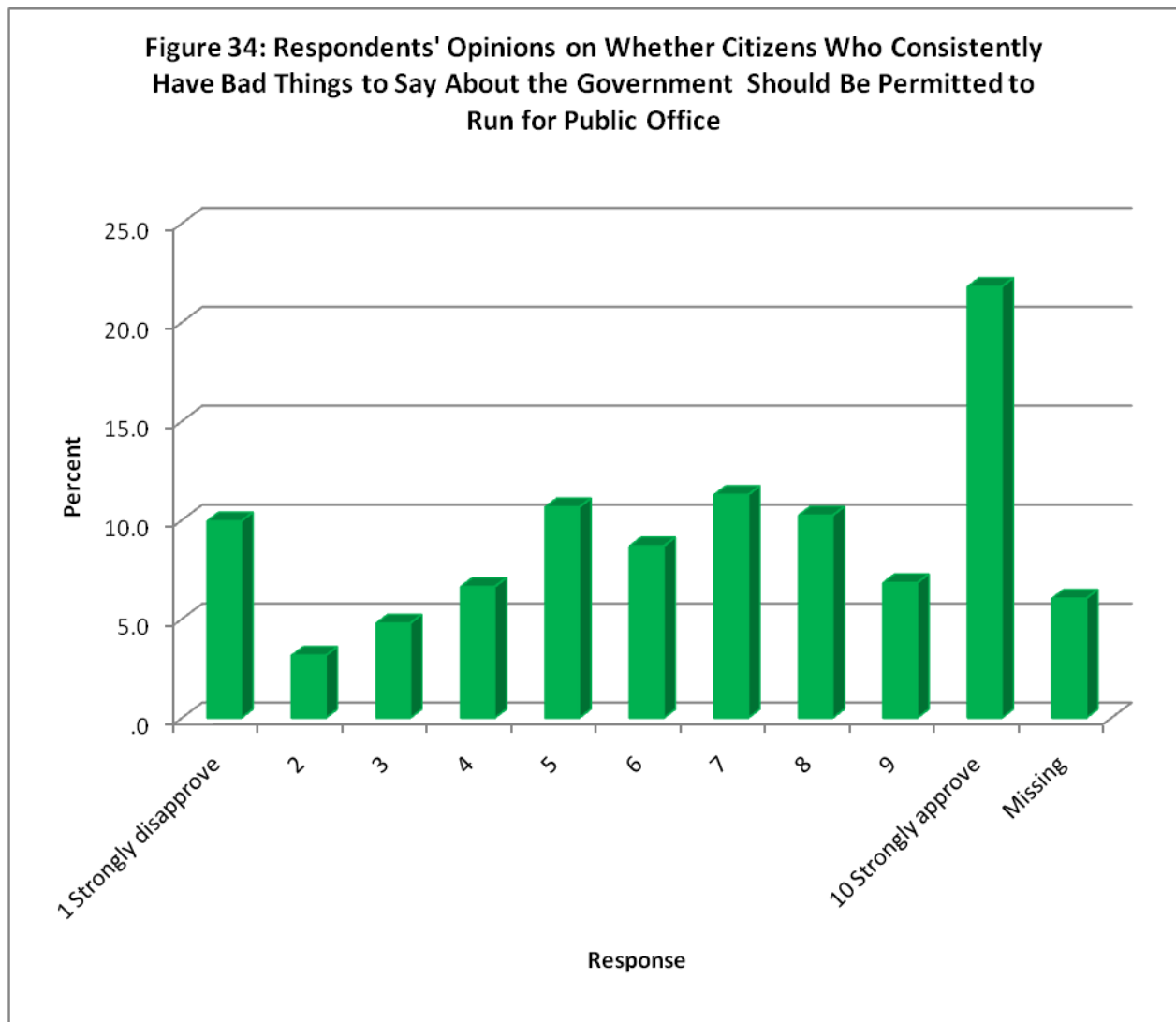
Figure 35: Respondents' Opinions on Whether Citizens Who Consistently Have Bad Things to Say About the Government Should Be Allowed to Appear on Television to Make Speeches

Legend: ■ 1 Strongly disapprove ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 Strongly approve ■ Missing
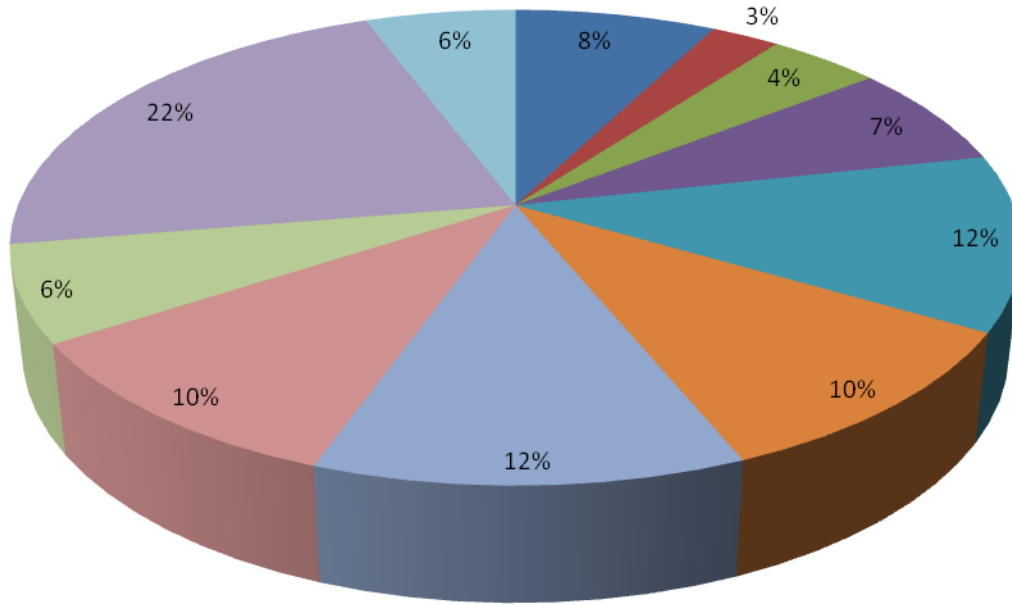
Further, when asked how strongly they "approve or disapprove of such people going on television to make speeches?" (**D4**), cumulatively, 51% the respondents approved of such activities whereas 22% of the respondents disapproved.

On the issue of social tolerance, while there is generally a high level of acceptance among races and ethnic backgrounds, there is uncertainty with regard to the issue of homosexuality. Homosexual acts are illegal in Trinidad and Tobago, but in general, there seems to be a high level of tolerance which is equated to little or no enforcement of that particular law.

Two specific questions asked were related to the topic of homosexuality, the first being the right to run for public office, and secondly, on the issue of same-sex marriages.

Figure 36: Public Opinion on Whether Homosexuals Should be Permitted to Run for Public Office

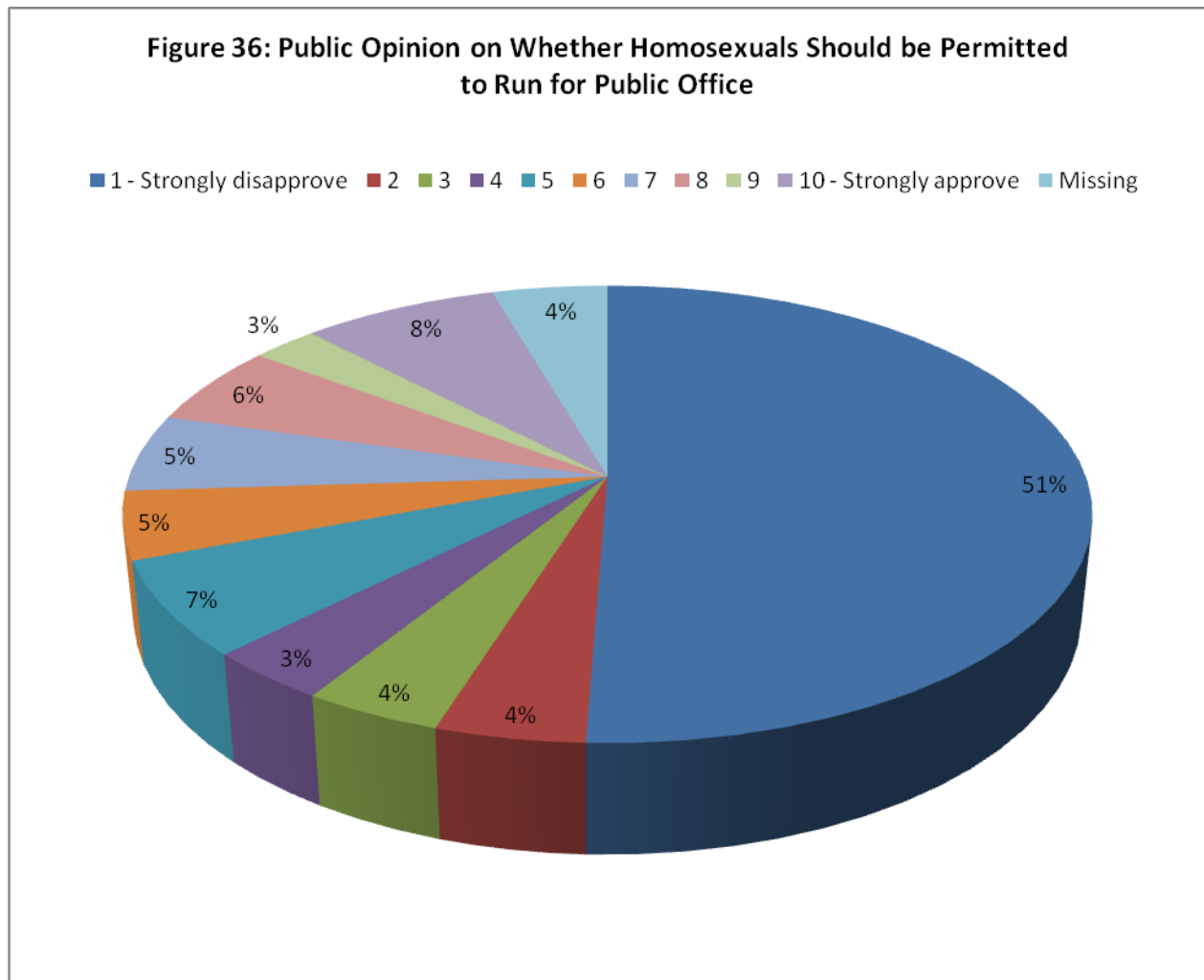The question of "homosexuals being permitted to run for public office" elicited a diverse range of response from the respondents. 51% of the respondents thought that homosexuals should not be allowed to run for public office ("strongly disapprove"). While 8% gave approval on this issue, all other eight responses were insignificant, each being less than 8%. **(D5)**

Figure 37: Public Opinion on Whether Same-Sex Marriages Should be Allowed

Legend: 1 - Strongly disapprove | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 - Strongly approve | Missing

69%, 5%, 3%, 2%, 3%, 4%, 3%, 2%, 1%, 5%, 3%
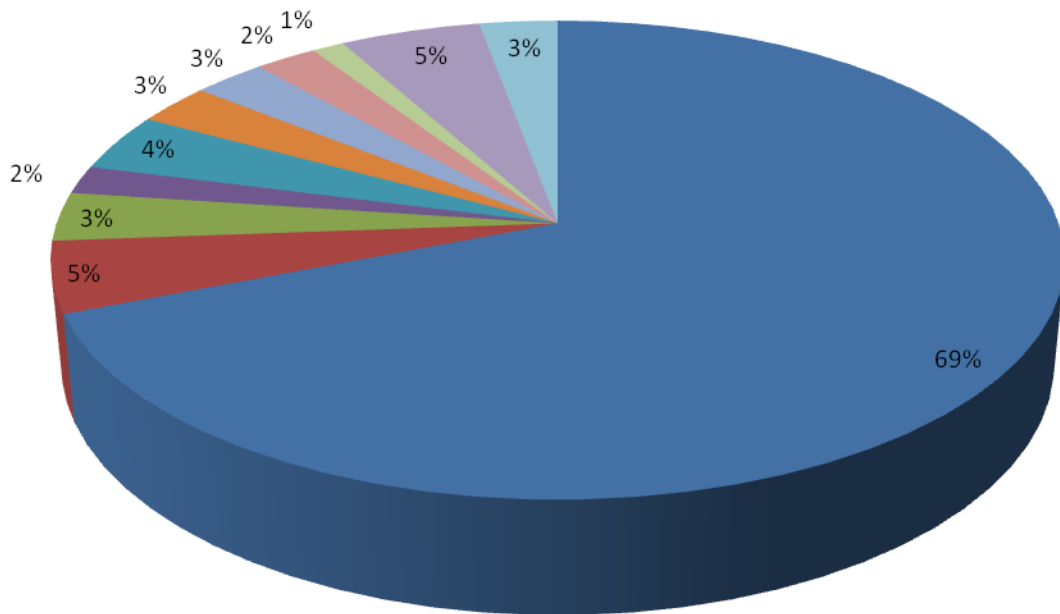
In the "National Policy on Gender and Development of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago", the government affirmed that it is opposed to same-sex relationships, did not endorse same-sex "marriage" and also rejected a proposal to re-define "gender" to include homosexuals. Further the issue of same-sex marriages is generating discussion at the national level, especially amongst the largely religion-following populace.

In response to the question on public opinion on whether same-sex marriages should be allowed, 5% of the respondents approved of same-sex marriages, while an overwhelming majority of 69% disapproved of such unions. On a scale of one to ten (with one being strong disapproval and ten being strong approval), categories 2 to 9 were marginal, and 3% either refused to answer or did not know. (**D6**)

Chapter 4 - Public Trust

Public trust speaks to the issue of confidence by citizens on the effectiveness and efficacy of institutions of the state. Generally regarded as the ultimate display of confidence in an individual or party involved in the democratic process, public trust is constructed from the building blocks of political transparency, civil society engagement, bureaucratic accountability, enforced and fair legal systems and respect for the rule of law. Garnering trust requires that state institutions address issues such as security and governance; two of the major pillars in the democratic process.
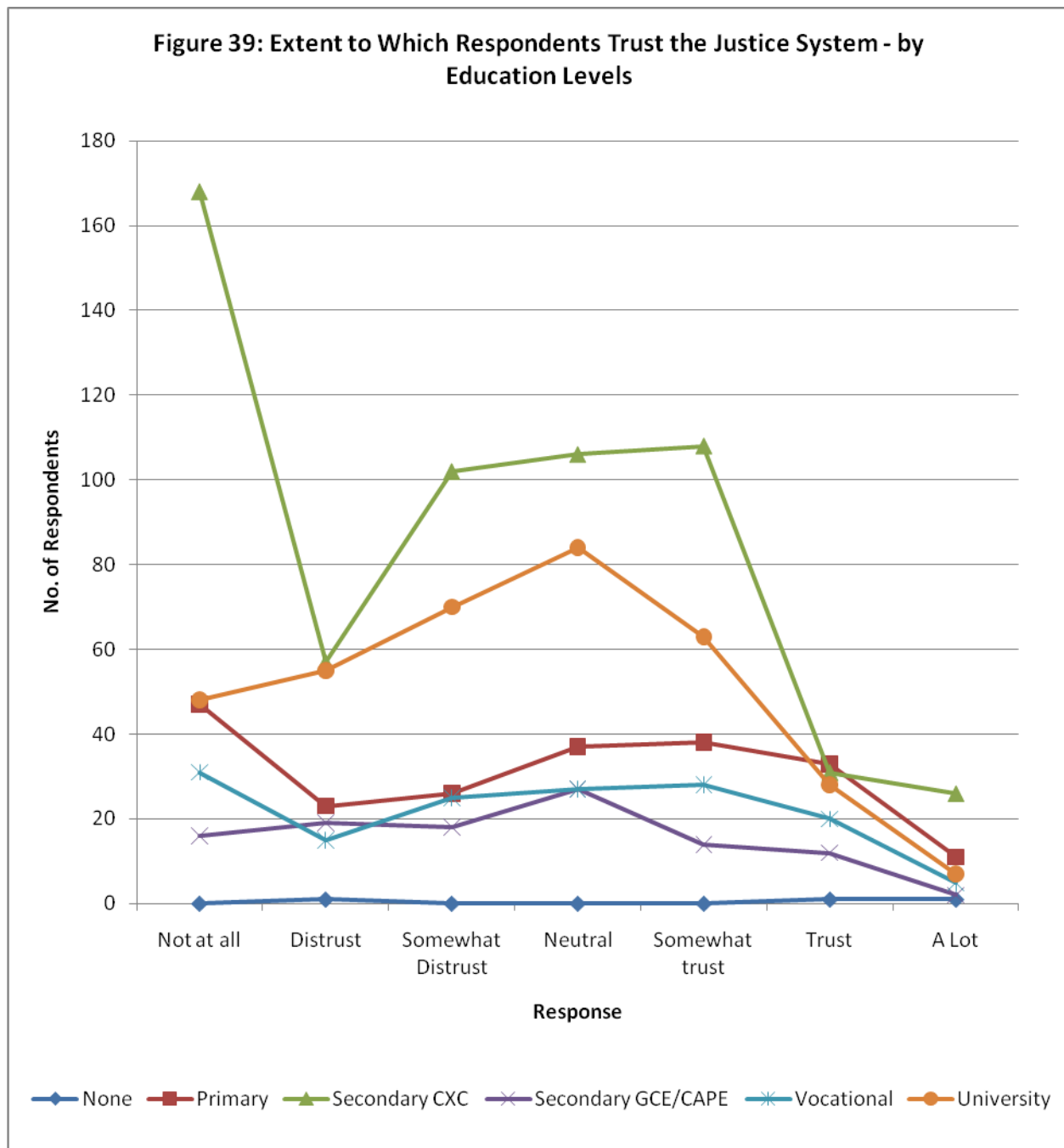

Figure 38: Public Trust in the Justice System of Trinidad & Tobago
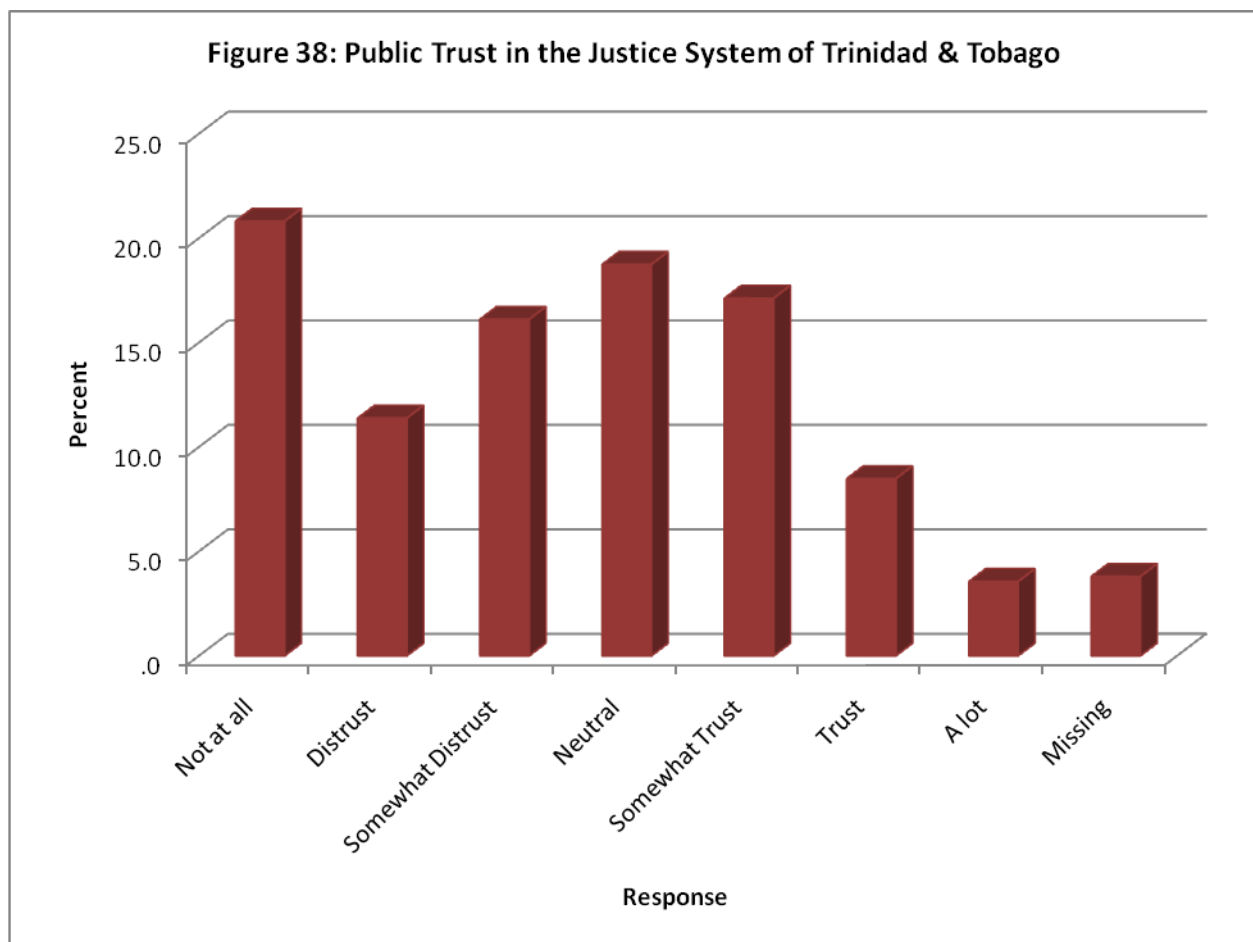
On the issue of public trust in Trinidad and Tobago, question **B10A** asked the extent to which respondents trusted the justice system of the country. The responses indicated a lack of public trust in the government and its ability to ensure justice, equity and the rule of law. 21% of the respondents have indicated that they do not "at all" trust the justice system of the country, while 19% of the respondents remained neutral on the issue. 17% of the respondents have indicated that they "somewhat trust" the justice system, with a comparable percentage (16%) somewhat distrustful of the justice system.

Figure 39: Extent to Which Respondents Trust the Justice System - by Education Levels

The public perceptions of trust in the justice system when analysed against the level of education of the respondents highlighted trends compatible with the overall responses given by the survey sample when answering question **B10A**. Cumulatively, 33% of the respondents with no education, 45% of respondents with primary level education, 55% of respondents with secondary CXC level education, 49% of the respondents with secondary GCE/CAPE level education, 47% of the respondents with vocational level education and 49% of the respondents with university level education, indicated measures of distrust in the justice system of Trinidad and Tobago. Additionally, a cumulative average of 31% of the respondents across all levels of education indicated measures of trust in the justice system to varying degrees.

Figure 40: Respondents' Opinion on How Much Faith They Have in the Judicial System to Punish Criminals If They Were a Victim of a Robbery or Assault.
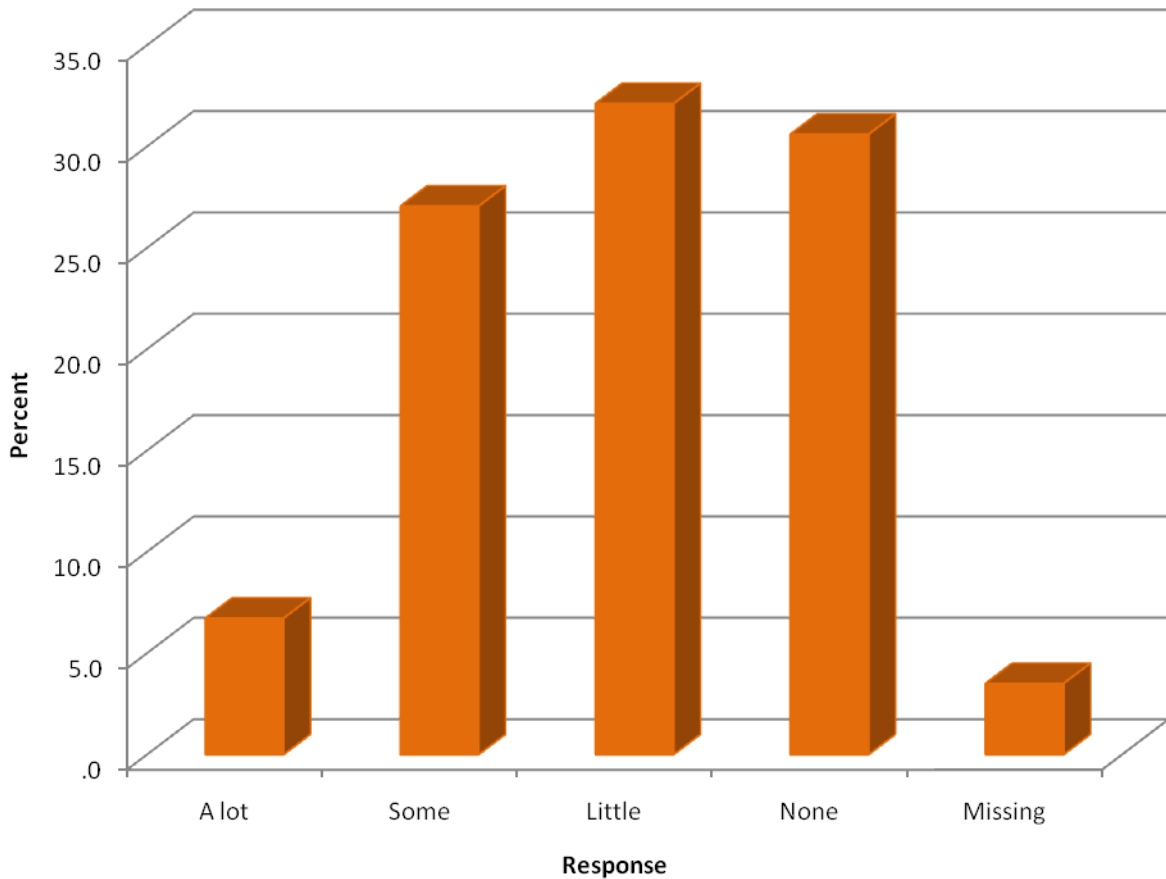
Further, when asked "if you were a victim of a robbery or assault, how much faith do you have that the judicial system would punish the guilty" (**AOJ12**), an aggregate of 63% of the respondents indicated that they had little or no faith that the judicial system would punish the guilty.

Two of the major factors that could contribute to the public's lack of faith in the judicial system are the public dissatisfaction with the slow pace at which cases are processed and the perception that the rate of solved crimes is low, even as the crime situation continues to worsen. Although there have been attempts over the last two decades to reform the judicial system into one which is more efficient and productive, these changes have been slow to implement. The citizenry, discontented with the manner in which the judicial system operates, are increasingly skeptical of the efficacy of the system. This is reflected in the responses reported above, and is likely connected to the public trust placed in the police force, which will be elaborated later in the chapter.

Figure 41: Respondents' Opinion on If They Were A Victim of a Robbery or Assault If They Would Have Faith in the Judicial System To Punish the Criminals - by Gender
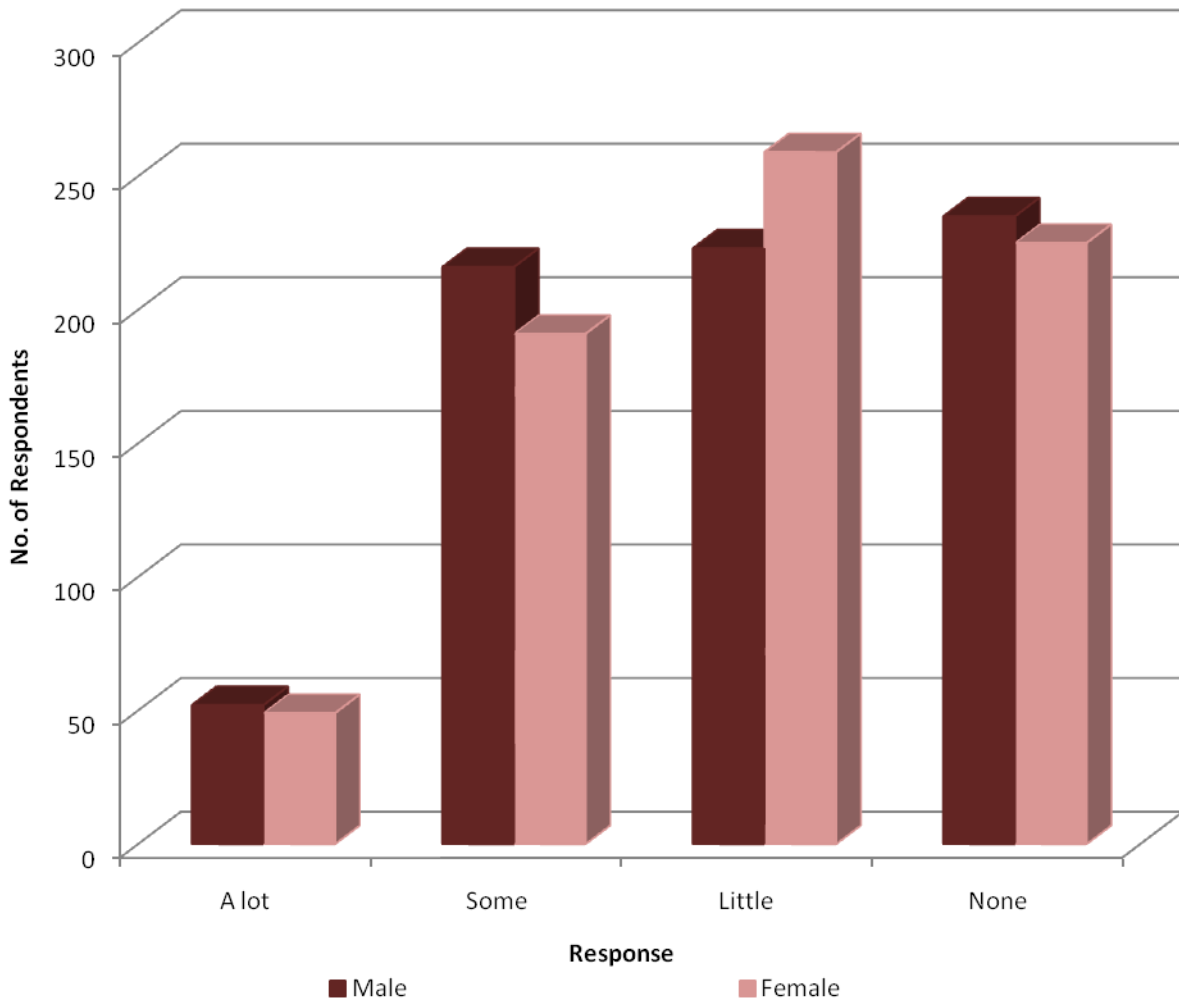
The analysis of the lack of faith in the judicial system is not significantly affected when the issue is examined along divisions of gender. 7% of both male and female respondents who provided an answer for this question had "a lot" of faith in the judicial system to solve crimes, whereas 32% of males and 31% of females had no faith in the judicial system to punish criminals. Citizens of both genders were equally lacking in faith in the judicial system, a trend that might be reflective of the widespread concern regarding the lack of an effective solution to the crime situation.

Figure 42: Public Trust in the Police Service and the Defense Force of Trinidad & Tobago
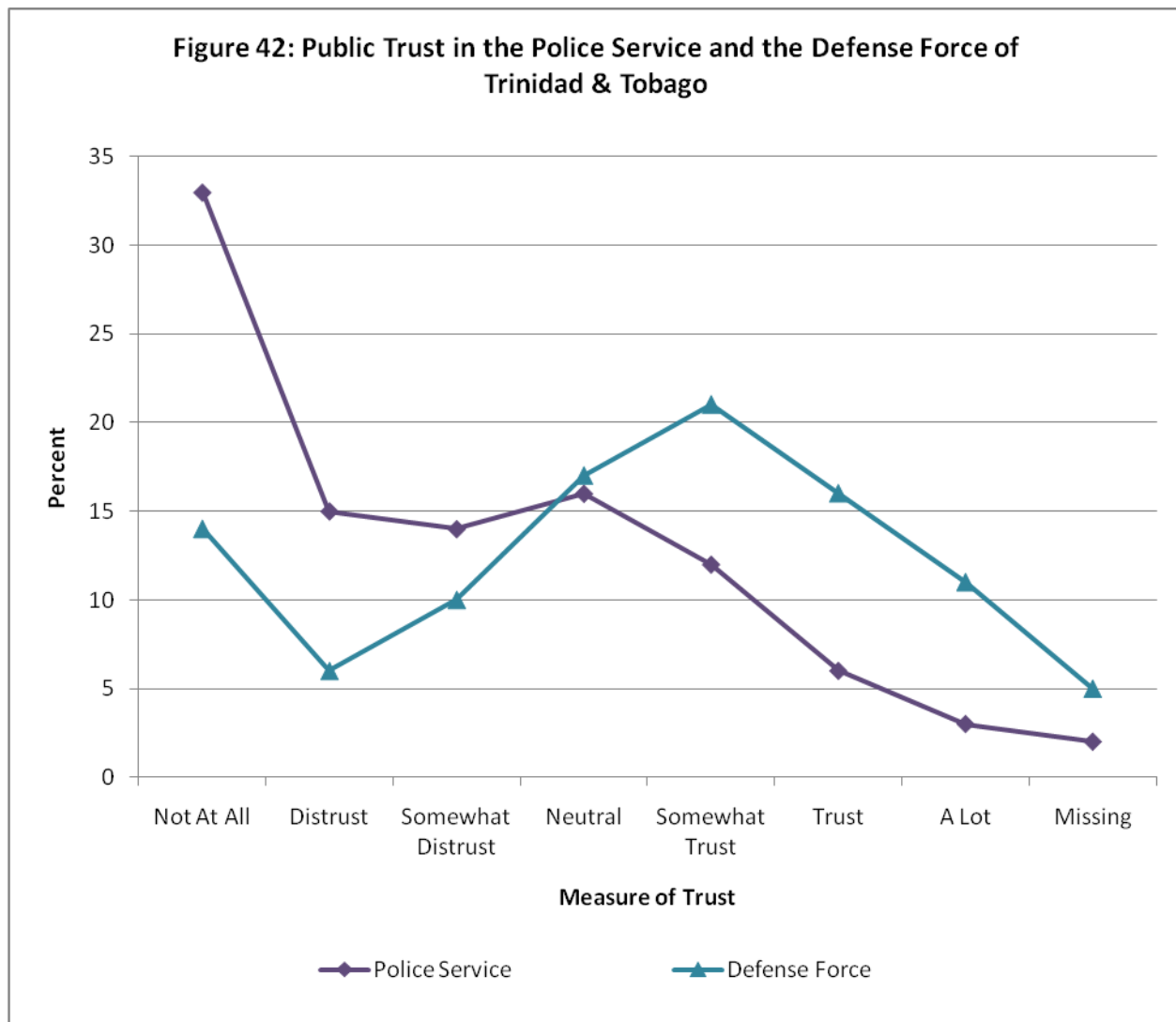
The security forces in democratic societies play a large role in securing and maintaining the confidence of the citizenry in the democratic process. In the survey, 33% of the respondents, in answer to question **B18,** indicated that they do not, in any measure, trust the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, whereas they indicated more confidence in the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force. This is supported by the fact that in response to the question **B12,** 14% of respondents indicated that they did not trust the Defence Force "at all" (as opposed to 33% for the Police Service), and 11% of respondents trusted the Defence Force "a lot" (as opposed to 3% of the respondents who trusted the Police Service "a lot").

Figure 43: Extent to Which Respondents Trust the Police Service - by Age
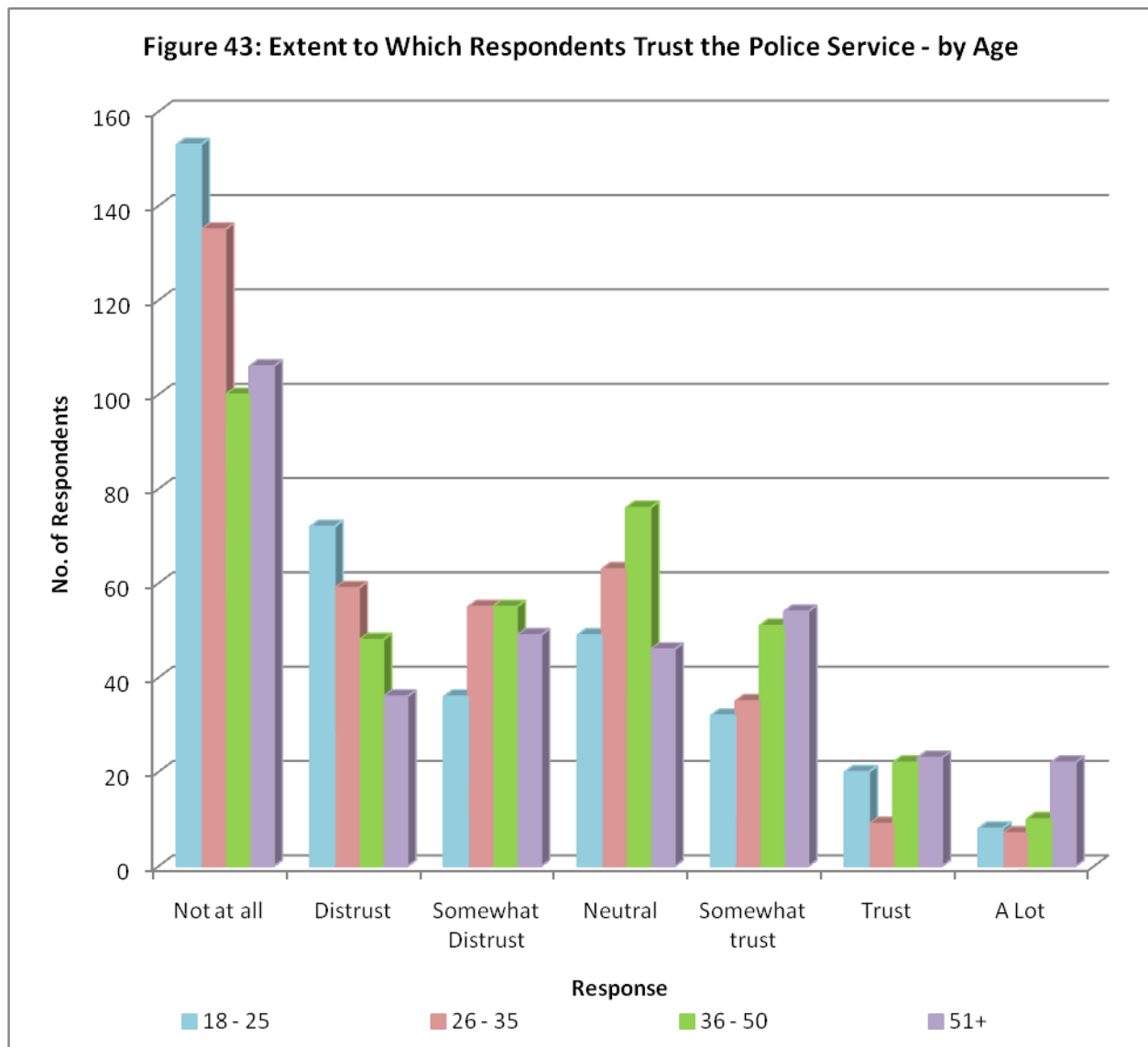
As people of different age groups may have differing types of interaction and experiences with the police service, the survey further sought to examine the level of trust in the police service as disaggregated by the respondents' age. Of the 33% of respondents who indicated that they had no trust in the police service, 31% were between the ages of 18 and 25. Conversely, of the 3% of respondents who trust the police service "a lot", 48% were over the age of 51. Although there does seem to be a greater distrust in the police by younger persons, the more significant trend remains the high level of distrust for the police service across the survey sample, with the greatest number of respondents from each respective age group indicating a complete lack of trust in the police service. Such broad distrust may be related to the perceptions of corruption and continued crime in the country, both of which will be addressed in later chapters.

Figure 44: Extent to Which the Respondents Trust the Police Service - by Gender
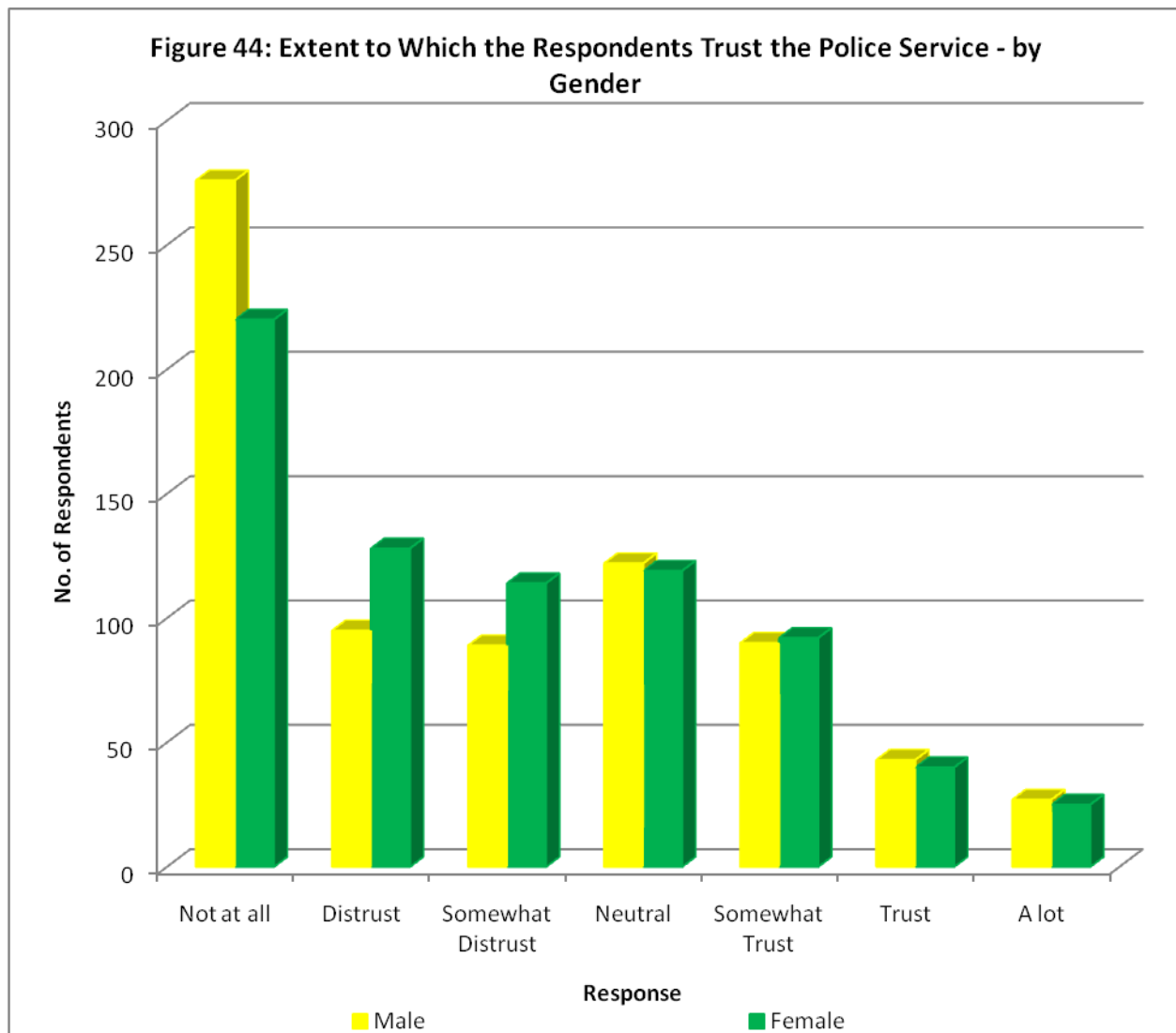
Men and women may also have varied experiences with the police service. An analysis of the police trust broken down by gender revealed that men have slightly higher levels of distrust for the police service. Of the 33% of respondents who did not express any trust in the police service, 56% were males and 44% were females. This gender trend may be affected by the fact that men are more frequently arrested by the police and could therefore be more wary of the police than women. It should be noted, however, that slightly more men than women indicated that they trust the police "a lot".

Figure 45: Public Trust in the Prime Minister of Trinidad & Tobago
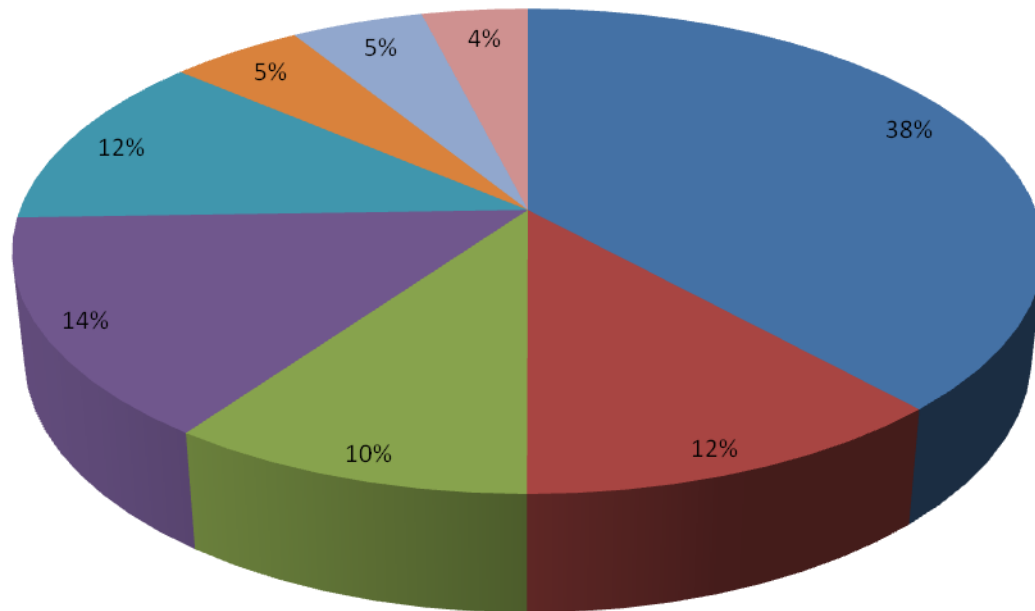
According to the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Chapter 5 Article 76:1 states, "Where there is occasion for the appointment of a Prime Minister, the President shall appoint as Prime Minister

a. a member of the House of Representatives who is the Leader in that House of the party which commands the support of the majority of members of that House; or

b. where it appears to him that party does not have an undisputed leader in that House or that no party commands the supports of such a majority, the member of the House of Representatives who, in his judgment, is most likely to command the support of the majority of members of that House; and who is willing to accept the office of Prime Minister."

The authority of the position of the Prime Minister derives from the majority support in the House of Representatives and from the power to appoint and dismiss Ministers. The Prime Minister presides over the Cabinet and is responsible for the allocation of functions among Ministers.

Apart from being the leader of the Cabinet, which has effective control of the nation's affairs, the Prime Minister keeps the President fully informed concerning the general conduct of the Government and shall furnish the President with such information as he may request with respect to any particular

matter relating to the government. The Office of the Prime Minister is also responsible for constitutional matters, national statistics, public holidays, national awards, ecclesiastical affairs and library services.

In response to the question **B21A,** 38% of the respondents indicated that they did not trust the Prime Minister "at all", whereas 5% of the respondents indicated that they "trust" the Prime Minister. A further 5% of respondents indicated that they trust the Prime Minister "a lot". Some 12% of the respondents indicated that they distrusted the Prime Minister, while similarly another 12% of the respondents indicated that they "somewhat trust" the Prime Minister. Additionally 14% were neutral and overall, 60% of the respondents answered in the negative in relation to trust in the Prime Minister.

Figure 46: Respondents' Rating of Prime Minister Patrick Manning

Legend: Very good — Good — Neither good nor bad (fair) — Bad — Very bad — Missing

2% — 3% — 17% — 20% — 22% — 36%
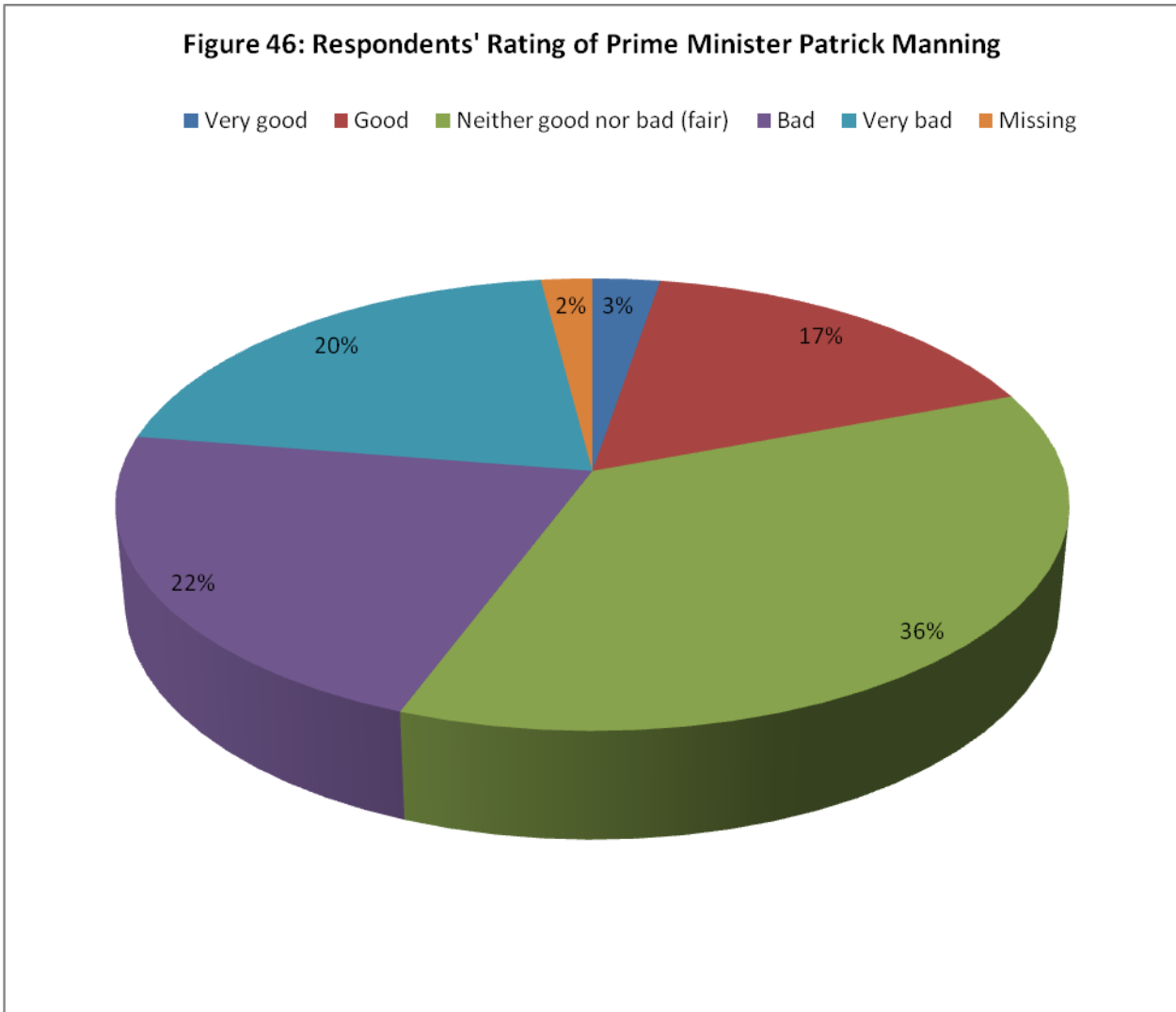
The public opinion of the government could partially be gauged by the rating of the Prime Minister's job performance, as the Prime Minister is the leader of the government. When asked to rate Prime Minister Patrick Manning's job performance, cumulatively 42% of respondents rated his performance negatively, with 22% rating his performance as "bad" and 20% as "very bad",. Cumulatively 20% of respondents

rated the Prime Minister's performance positively, with 17% rating "good" and 3% rating "very good". 36% of respondents through the Prime Minister's performance was "fair". One out of five respondents believed that the Prime Minister's performance was "very bad", which, when combined with the data on trust which indicated that 38% of respondents did not trust the Prime Minister at all and suggests a low level of confidence in the government by citizens of Trinidad & Tobago.

The Prime Minister's performance ratings were further analyzed by age and gender in an attempt to identify specific factors which may be related to a particular performance rating. Of the 20% of respondents who rated the Prime Minister's performance as "very bad", 32% were between the ages of 36 and 50 , while 49% were between the ages of 18 and 35. Respondents who rated the Prime Minister's performance as "good" or "very good" were more likely to be older than 35 years of age. One out of three respondents who rated the Prime Minister's performance as "good" was over the age of 51, while 56% of those respondents who rated the performance as "very good" were in the 51 and over age range. Older respondents may be able to recall periods when certain factors which are currently of great social concern (such as crime and corruption) were not as rampant, which could affect their evaluation of the Prime Minister.

There was also some variance of the performance rating between gender groups. Men comprised 59% of the 20% of respondents who rated the Prime Minister's performance as "very bad", but also made up 63% of the 3% of respondents who belived the Prime Minister was doing a "very good" job. Women, on the other hand, made up 55% of the group that rated the performance as "neither good nor bad". The male population seemed to hold more extreme views of approval or disapproval, while over 40% of the female population gave the Prime Minister a middling appraisal.

Figure 47: Public Trust in the Integrity Commission
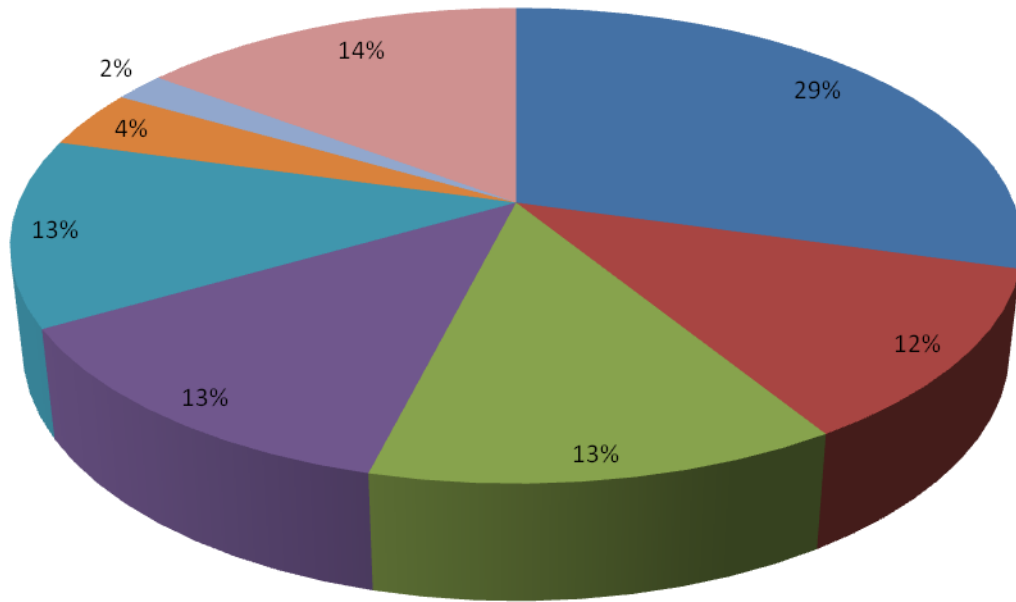
The Integrity Commission of Trinidad and Tobago was established under the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. It is an independent body comprising five members appointed by the President in accordance with Section 4 of the Integrity in Public Life Act, 2000, which prescribes the appointment and composition of the Commission and requires that the members of the Commission be persons of integrity and high standing of whom at least one shall be an attorney-at-law of at least ten years experience and one shall be a chartered or certified accountant.

The Integrity Commission's role includes the promotion of integrity, particularly among "persons in public life", from the level of Ministers of Government and Members of Parliament to Permanent Secretaries, Chief Technical Officers and members of the Boards of Statutory Bodies and State Enterprises.

In response to question **B46**, 29% of the respondents indicated that they did "not at all" trust the Integrity Commission, thereby indicating no confidence in the institution. 12% of the respondents indicated that they "distrust" the Commission, while only 4% of the respondents indicated that they "trust" and a further 2% of the respondents trust the Commission "a lot". 14% of the respondents chose not to answer, and 13% of the respondents indicated in all three categories of "somewhat trust", "neutral" and "somewhat distrust" respectively. (**B46**)

Figure 48: Extent to Which the Population Trusts the Elections & Boundaries Commission
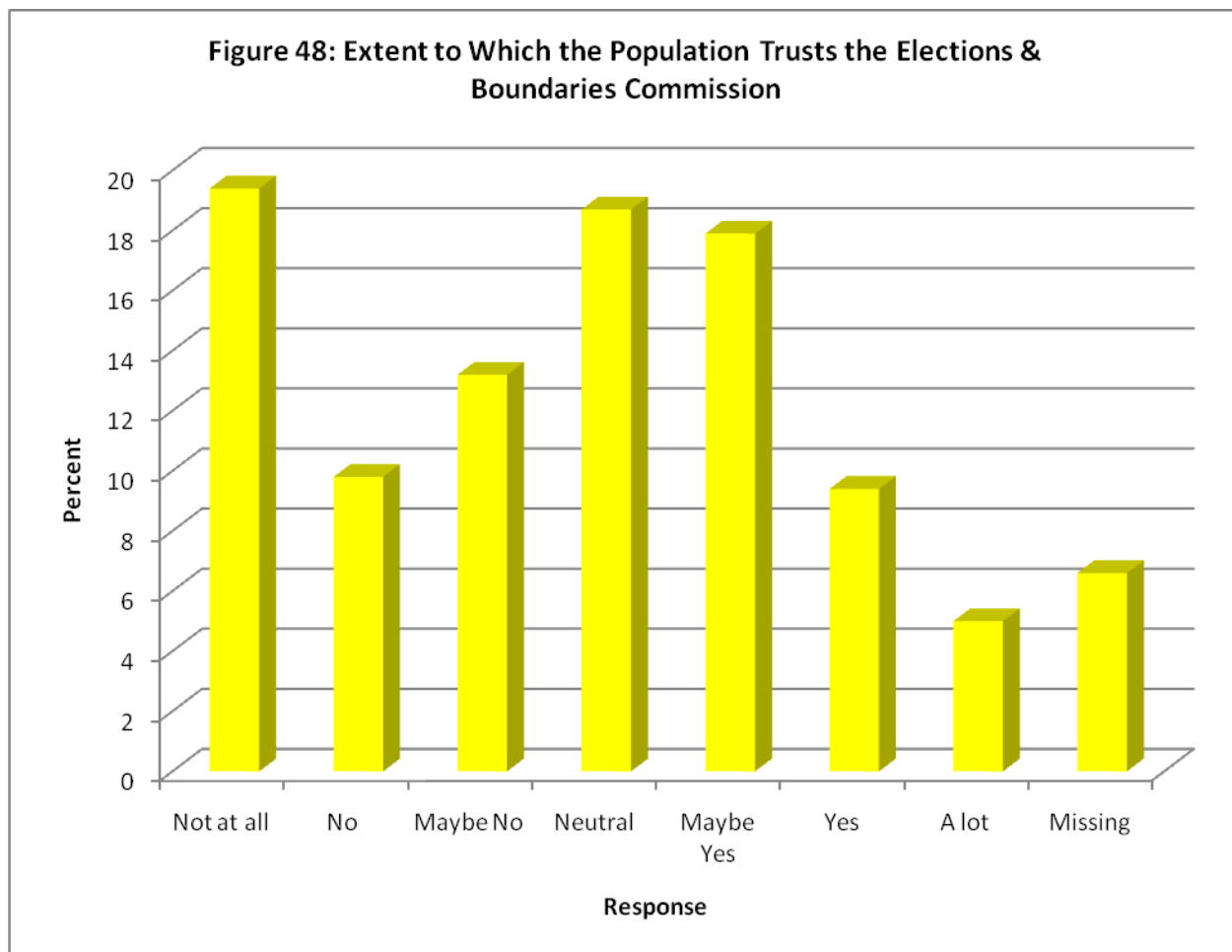
Through increased public awareness campaigns, the population has become increasingly aware of the role and function of the Elections and Boundaries Commission (EBC). The mission of the Trinidad and Tobago Elections and Boundaries Commission is "to promote and consolidate democracy through the registration of individuals in accordance with the law, the conduct of free and fair elections similarly circumscribed, and the implementation of public education plans and programmes to support these objectives."

Even with this heightened awareness, there still exists a public perception of mistrust in the EBC. Consistent with the perception of trust in the political system, it is clear that the EBC is also not very well trusted by the general population of Trinidad and Tobago. Only 5% of the respondents said that they trust the EBC "a lot" and only 14% indicated trust in the Commission "very much". Of significance is that 20% of the respondents do not trust the EBC "at all".   Since in its mission statement the EBC is seen as the primary agency for ensuring democracy through the administration of elections, it is interesting that one fifth (20%) of the respondents have absolutely no confidence in the EBC and its processes. (**B11**)

Although there is an apparent lack of trust in the EBC, when posed with the question (**AUT**1) of whether a strong leader should govern the country without the elected vote of the people, there was an

overwhelming response by 84% of the respondents who believe that electoral democracy, or the popular vote is best.

Figure 49: Extent to Which the Respondents Trust the National Elections of Trinidad & Tobago
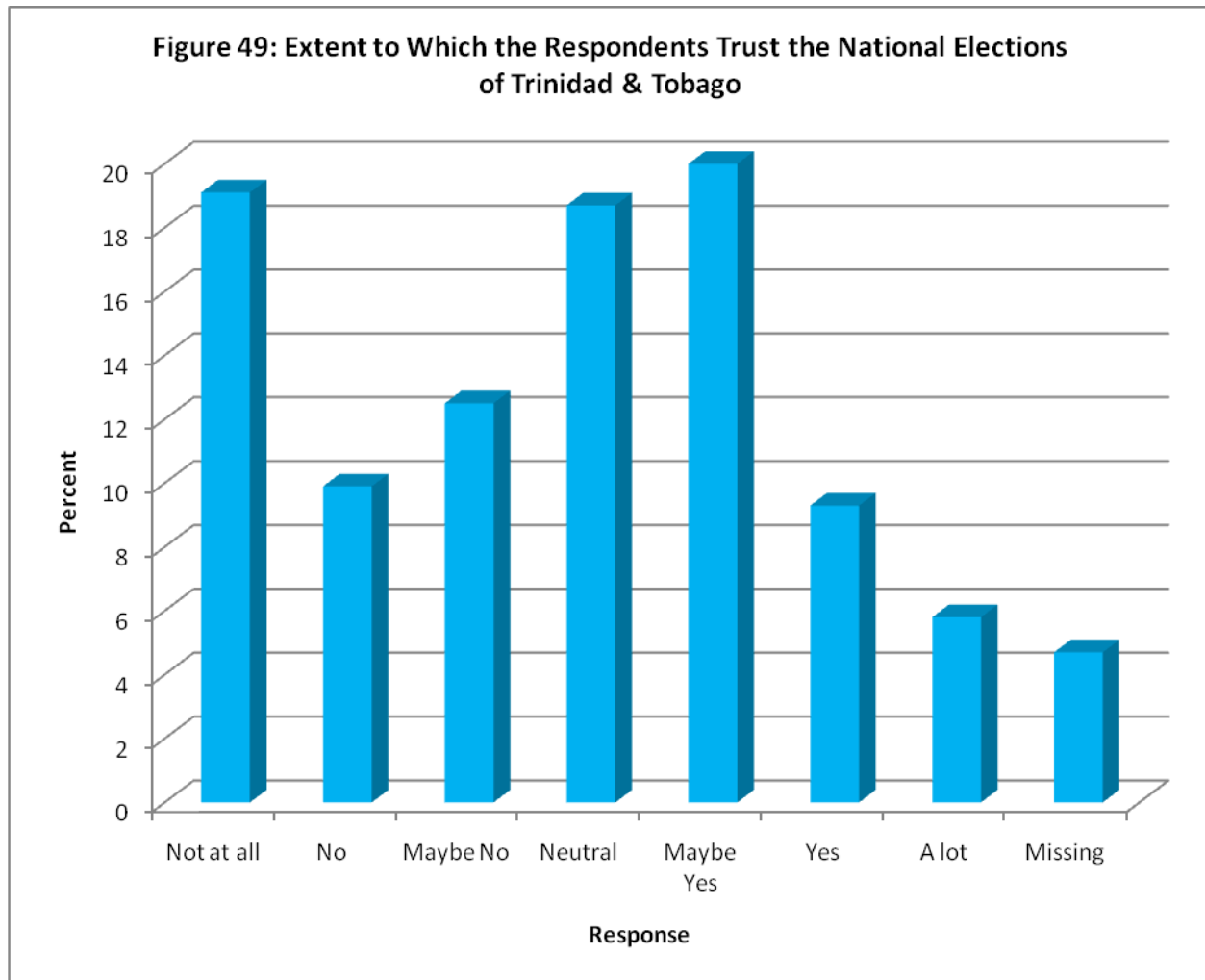
A key feature of democracy is the conduct of free, fair, open and transparent elections held at regular intervals. Consistent with what has been found by this research instrument, the population of Trinidad and Tobago, as represented by the respondents, has little trust in the electoral process of the country. This is also consistent with what has been found in this survey in relation to trust issues with the EBC as far as the population is concerned. As a matter related to democracy, in a nation where democracy is highly valued, it is important to note that the citizenry seems to have lost trust in the democratic processes of the state, with 20% having "no trust at all" and 43% of the respondents cumulatively answering negatively to the question of trust. (**B47**)

Figure 50: Extent to Which the Population Trusts the Parliament and the National Government of Trinidad & Tobago
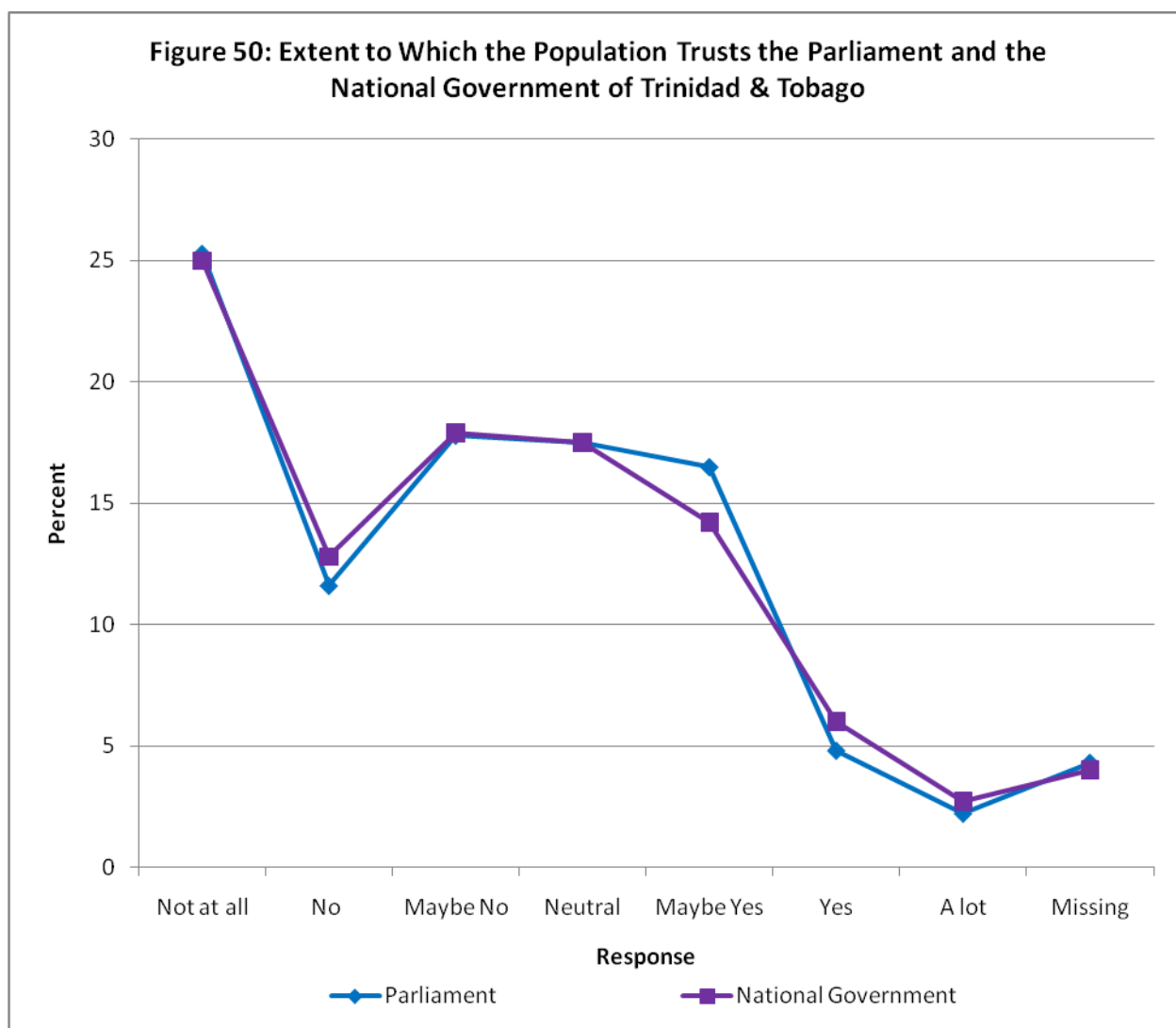
In the Commonwealth, of which Trinidad and Tobago is a member, the roles and functions of Parliament include:

- Representation – ensuring that the public's interest are protected;
- Legislation– to enact or amend laws and bills;
- Monitoring of financial expenditure of the government on the nation's behalf;
- Legitimating the passing of bills and laws via voting, thus ensuring 'fair play;'
- Accountability- convening Parliamentary sessions to allow for transparency; and debate, thus facilitating both the executive and the opposition to air their opinions in such a manner that the populace understands their positions.

With respect to the Parliament, Part 2, Section 53 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago states that "Parliament may make laws for the peace, order and good government of Trinidad and Tobago; however according to the provisions of this Constitution or (in so far as it forms part of the law of Trinidad and Tobago) the Trinidad and Tobago Independence Act, 1962 of the United Kingdom may not be altered except in accordance with the provisions of section 54."

Further, the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago, also known as the legislature, is considered the arm of state which has the major responsibility of making laws for good governance, and providing oversight of the Government or Executive. In keeping with the Westminster system of government, there are sittings of Parliament which are attended by Members of the Executive who are also members of Parliament. According to Section 39 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Parliament consists of the President of the Republic, the Senate, and the House of Representatives.

In relation to the composition of the Senate, the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (1976) (amended in 2003) under subsection (1) of section 40 states "*the Senate shall consist of thirty-one members (in this Constitution referred to as "Senators") who shall be appointed by the President in accordance with this section.*" Of the thirty-one Senators subsection (2) of section 40 of the Constitution states: "*(a)* sixteen shall be appointed by the President acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister; *(b)* six shall be appointed by the President acting in accordance with the advice of the Leader of the Opposition; and *(c)* nine shall be appointed by the President in his discretion from outstanding persons from economic or social or community organisations and other major fields of endeavour".

One of the main constitutional reforms which took place with respect to the composition of the House of Representatives was the increase of the constituency number from thirty-six (36) to forty-one (41), under the adoption of the Election and Boundaries Commission (EBC) Order, 2005. As result of this change Trinidad was divided into thirty-nine (39) constituency seats whilst Tobago remained with two (2) seats.

In addition, the national government of Trinidad and Tobago includes the executive, the legislation, as well as a judicial branch. The Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago is tasked with the responsibility of conflict and dispute resolution in the society arising out of the operation of laws, and also involves the application of remedies and the punishment of public offenders. These three branches all adhere to the strict principle of the separation of powers as enshrined in the constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

As the survey indicated, similar to the lack of confidence in the EBC, the general population has indicated that they lack confidence in the parliamentary system and the national government. 25% of the survey sample has indicated that they do not trust either system (parliament and national government) "at all". On average, less than 3% of the respondents indicated that they have the utmost trust in either the parliament or the national government. (**B13, B14**)

Chapter 5 – Security and Safety

Crime

Steadily rising crime levels remain one of the most pressing concerns facing the government of Trinidad and Tobago. In the period 2000 – 2008, the country experienced a 400% increase in the annual number of homicides to 42 per 100,000[6], more than double the Caribbean average[7]. In 2009, the rate continued to rise with a total of 511 murders recorded. Additionally, 118 murders were committed in the first three months of 2010, with 101 homicides in the two months that followed. For the period January 2010 – March 2010, the official statistics of the Police Service of Trinidad and Tobago have identified 1,378 reported cases of burglaries and break-ins, 124 reported cases of narcotics, 1,527 reported cases of larceny (including general larceny, larceny motor vehicles and larceny dwelling house), and 147 reported cases of rape, incest and sexual offenses[8].

The population of Trinidad and Tobago has expressed a growing concern for safety in light of substantially high crime rates through multiple forums such as public marches, newspaper editorials, message boards, television news broadcasts and various other social media outlets.

Taking into consideration the upsurge in crime and violence, there has also reportedly been an increase in the level of cynicism among the country's population regarding the capacity of the state to effectively contain the problem; as well as the perception of the deteriorating relationship between the Police Service of Trinidad and Tobago and civilians.

To add to an already unstable environment, the prolonged absence of a substantive Commissioner of Police may have contributed to the further reduction of confidence of the citizenry in the administration of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, and further undermine the relationship between the Police Service and the population.

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[6] Agozino, B., Bowling, B., Ward, E., & St Bernard, B.; *Guns, Crime and Social Order in the West Indies*; Criminology and Criminal Justice; (2009); 9; 287-305
[7] Townsend, D.; *No Other Life: Gangs, Guns and Governance in Trinidad and Tobago*; The Small Arms Survey Working Paper;8; 1-55
[8] Police Service of Trinidad and Tobago Serious Crime Statistics; http://www.ttps.gov.tt/Statistics/tabid/141/Default.aspx

Figure 51: Opinions of Issues Affecting the Country
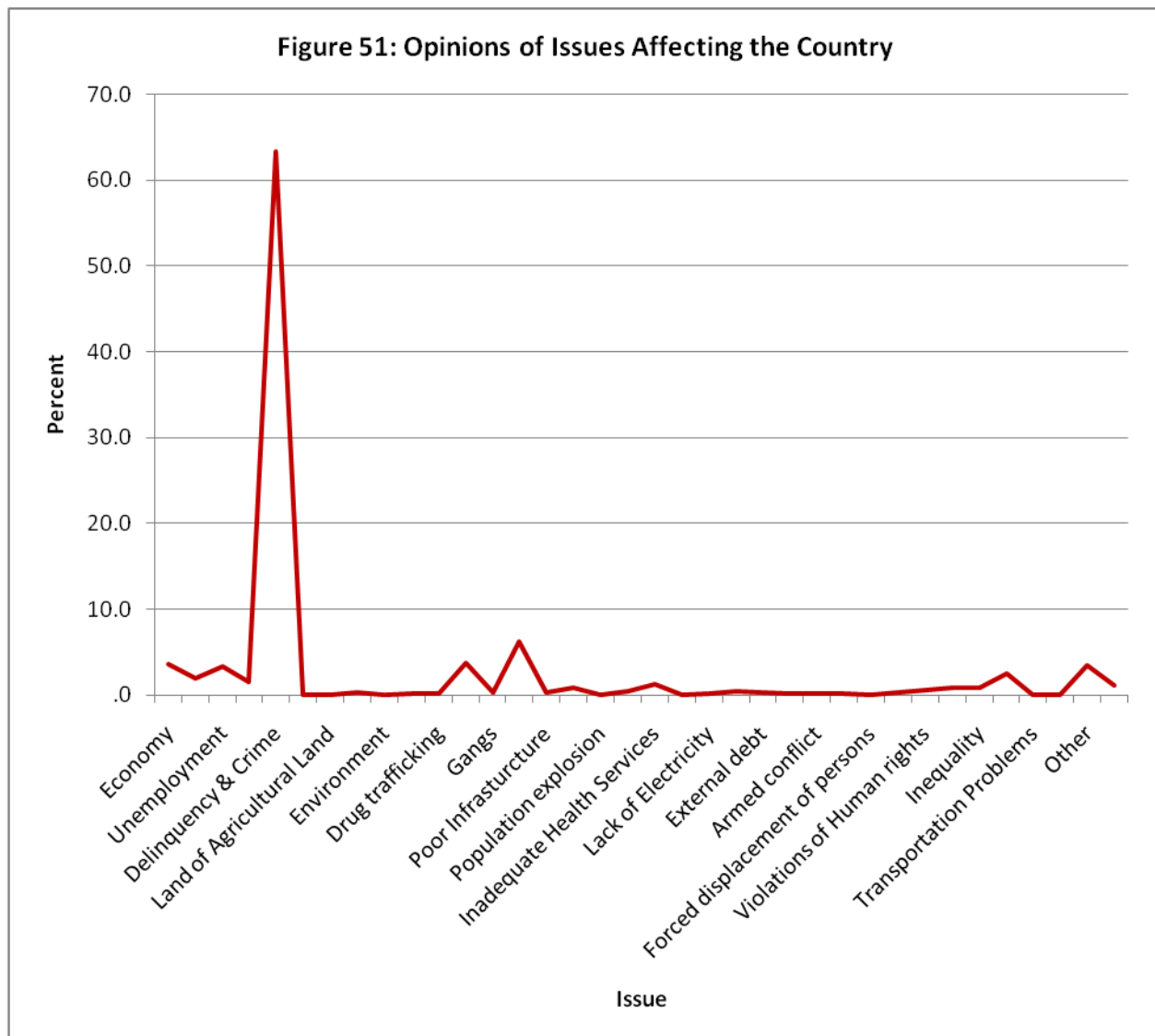
Over the last decade, a number of challenges have emerged in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, of the social, political and economic nature. These challenges cover a wide range of issues inclusive of security, transport, economic debt, environment and drugs and gangs, among others. In response to question **A4**, respondents noted that delinquency and crime were seen as the area of highest concern (63%) followed by bad government (6%), corruption (4%), economic problems (4%), unemployment (3%), politicians (3%), and health (1%).

While the latter five categories may seem to be relatively small, this is probably because the high increase in incidence and nature of crime has clearly overshadowed the other issues which are of serious concern to the population. Of importance also is that 9% of the respondents indicated that issues related to government and politicians were of great concern.

Figure 52: Respondents' Perceptions of the Most Serious Issues Facing Trinidad & Tobago
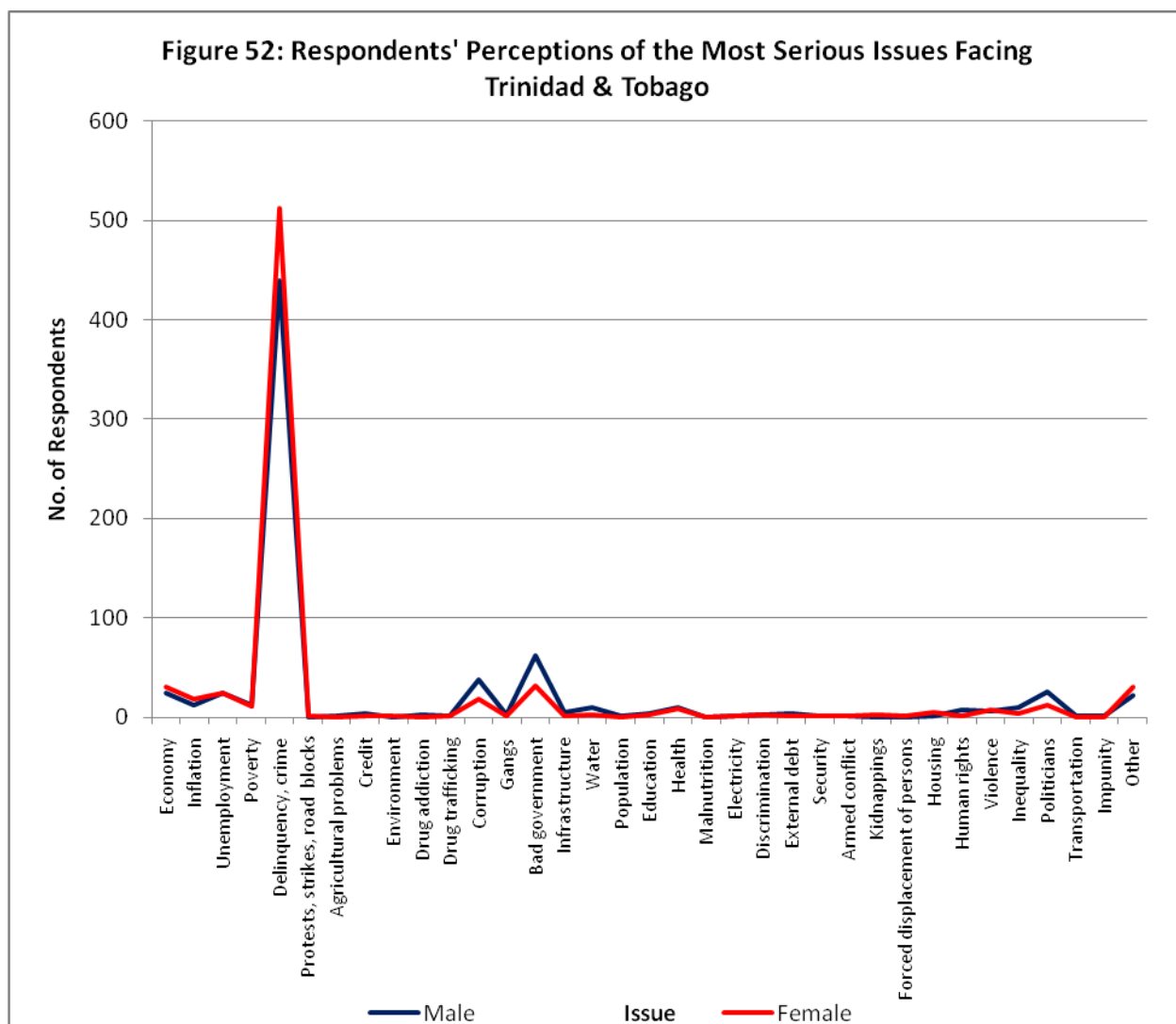
The perception of crime as being the most significant issue facing the country is consistent across dimensions of gender, age, education levels and levels of monthly income.

The data indicate that 439 male respondents and 512 female respondents are of the opinion that crime is the most serious issue facing the country. The majority of respondents when classified by age groups also identified crime as the most serious issue facing the country, with 69% of respondents aged 18-25 years old, 66% of respondents aged 26-35 years old, 64% of respondents aged 36-50 years old and 66% of respondents 51 years and older indicating such in their responses. Further concurrence of this perception among the sample transcended the levels of education of the respondents, with 50%, 71%, 67%, 59%, 64%, and 58% of the respondents whose highest level of education was none, primary level, secondary CXC level, secondary GCE/CAPE level, vocational level and university level respectively, also indicating that they believed that crime was the most serious issue facing Trinidad and Tobago. The respondents' opinion of crime as the most serious issue facing the country was further demonstrated when analysed vis a vis respondents' monthly income, as an average of 69% of the respondents in each income bracket identified crime as the most serious issue.

Figure 53: The Extent to Which Respondents Believe that the Present Crime Situation Represents a Threat to the Future Well-Being of the Country
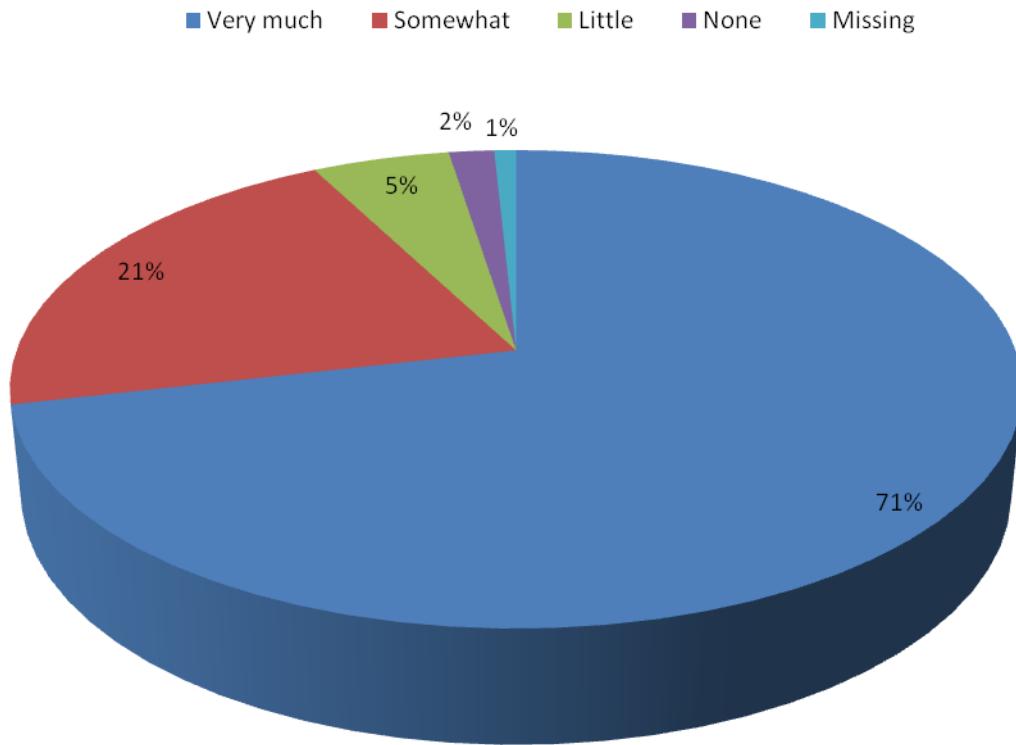
As observed in responses to question **A4**, in which respondents indicated that crime was the most serious issue facing the country, when asked the question "how much do you think that the level of crime that we have now represents a threat to the future well-being?"(**AOJ11A**), 71% of the respondents indicated that crime is "very much" a threat to the future well-being of the country. 21% of respondents were "somewhat indifferent", 5% of the respondents recorded 'little' threat, whereas 2% of the respondents indicated "none". This supports the aforementioned view that crime is the major present and future threat to the well-being of the country, and a critical concern to the citizenry.

Figure 54: Perception of Crime as a Threat to the Future Well-Being of the Country - by Age
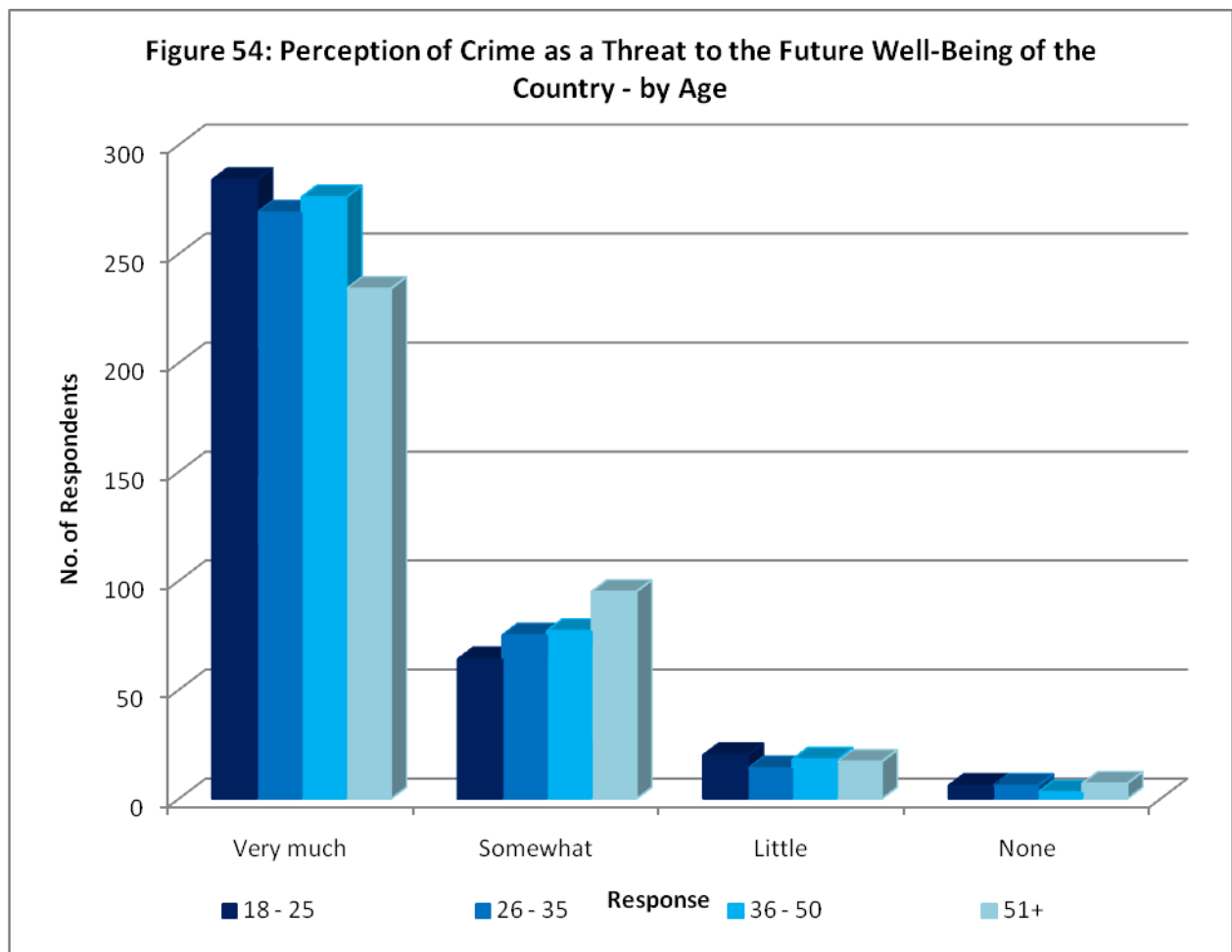
The perception that the current crime situation in Trinidad and Tobago represents a threat to the future well-being of the country (**AOJ11A**) is consistent among the respondents regardless of their age, with the majority of respondents within all age groups indicating that crime is "very much" a threat to the country's future. Further consistency was also identified along divisions of gender, with 520 males and 553 females indicating that they "very much" believe that the current crime situation denotes a threat to the future well-being of the country.

Corruption

Developing countries are usually characterized by systems that lack transparency and accountability, and as a consequence, corruption tends to be higher (in these developing countries) than in developed countries as espoused by the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) which is based on studies of Transparency International. Given the growing hemispheric concern about the potential negative impacts of corruption on economic, political and social development, in 1997 the Organisation of American States (OAS) had approved the Inter American Convention Against Corruption, and additionally the CPI has sought to rank nations' level of corruption based on "the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among public officials and politicians."

Corruption is defined by Transparency International as "the misuse of entrusted power for private gain [which can be] either financial or material gain and the non-material gain, such as the furtherance of political or professional ambitions[9]". The Anti Corruption Practice Note of the United Nations Development Programme further defines corruption as "the misuse of power, office or authority, for private benefit through bribery, extortion, influence peddling, nepotism, fraud, speed money, or embezzlement[10]". The World Bank also defines corruption as "the abuse of power for private gain"[11]

The chairman of the Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute (TTTI), Victor Hart, has described the country as "a society of corruption", after Trinidad and Tobago was ranked 72 out of 180 countries in the annual Global Corruption Report of Transparency International[12]. Although the country's appearance in the Global Corruption Report was its first ranked appearance, the report highlighted incidences of corruption regarding legal and institutional changes and overlapping directorships which gave way to conflicts of interest.

The perceptions of the regularity of bribery and lack of transparency at all levels of society has noticeably increased between 2009 and 2010 amidst the air of suspicion surrounding controversies such as the UDECOTT (Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago) scandal, the church scandal, and allegations of corruption within the country's police service.

The Executive Chairman of UDECOTT, Calder Hart, has been surrounded with corruption charges stemming from the biased granting of millions of dollars worth of contracts and from personally

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[9] Chinhamo, Obert and Shumba, Gabriel; *Institutional Working Definition of Corruption*; Working Paper -1-ACT-Southern Africa Working Paper Series – ACT/1/2007/WPS;
http://www.actsouthernafrica.org/Working%20Paper%201%20Draft%20Institutional%20Working%20definition%20of%20Corruption.pdf

[10] Ibid

[11] "The Fight Against Corruption; A World Bank Perspective"; Central America Country Management Unit, Latin American and the Caribbean Region; (Sweden; 1999);
http://www.iadb.org/regions/re2/consultative_group/groups/transparency_workshop6.htm#1a

[12] Bruzual, Alexander; *Society of Corruption*; Trinidad and Tobago Newsday online; (March 20, 2010);
http://www.newsday.co.tt/news/0,117633.html

benefitting from such contract, as well as the acceptance of bribes. Perceptions of corruption and controversy within the company were further heightened when Chinese companies were awarded UDECOTT contracts and large numbers of Chinese workers were imported to fulfill these local projects. The UDECOTT scandal earned the country a spot on Global Integrity's watch list in 2009. The 2009 Global integrity report for Trinidad and Tobago explored "the relationship between the social and economic impact of corruption and lack of transparency as they relate to the Uff Commission of Enquiry into UDECOTT and the unfolding drama surrounding the calling into account of its Chairman, Calder Hart, into the context of maneuverings by the Government and opposition and turmoil surrounding appointments and functioning of major oversight institutions"[13]. Prime Minister Patrick Manning's public statements with respect to the UDECOTT issue raised public concern with respect to the state's inconsistent approach in dealing with the matter.

Further 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 (T&TEC) in relation to jobs under the company's Street Lighting Implementation Unit which implemented the Street Lighting Programme (SLP)[14], and the CLICO Financial Limited scandal in which it is alleged that the Minister of Finance, Karen Nunez-Tesheira used insider information to conduct personal financial transactions. 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, and claims that many foreign-used vehicles roll onto the road without the proper documentation being adequately processed[15].

Allegations of corruption within the Police Service of Trinidad and Tobago have also been prevalent and have included charges of police brutality and ill-treatment of citizens[16]. Reports of police corruption also included reports of police shootings which resulted in civilian deaths, and alleged accounts that members of the police service had been implicated in abduction cases[17].

Despite the scandals over the recent years, the perception of corruption within the country's society has been further facilitated by what can be described as lack of transparency, accountability and integrity in public life. This is evidenced, as in Trinidad and Tobago in 2009 there was no sitting Integrity Commission, seven key posts demanded by the country's Constitution remained vacant, an amendment to the Integrity in Public Life Act which implicitly discourages whistle blowing was being piloted through

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[13] Voice of the People, *Trinidad and Tobago, UDECOTT Enter Global Integrity's 'Watch List'*; http://www.voiceofthepeopletnt.com/2010/03/20/tt-global-integrity-watchlist/

[14] Shah, Raffique; *Myth of All Men Created Equal*; Trinidad and Tobago News Blog; (June 27, 2010); http://www.trinidadandtobagonews.com/blog/?cat=37

[15] *The Cancer of Corruption*; Trinidad and Tobago Express Editorial; (March 4, 2010); http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_opinion?id=161603273

[16] Trinidad and Tobago: The extent of crime and corruption within the police force; the government's response to criminal activities and incidents of corruption by members of the police force in Trinidad and Tobago, including its effectiveness; the protection available to witnesses who testify and provide information against members of the police force; (January 2002-April 2004); Immigration Refugee Board of Canada; (April 24, 2004); http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/41501c6415.html

[17] Ibid

Parliament, local government elections were postponed for a third consecutive year as the Local Government Minister (who was also the Prime Minister's wife) pushed legislation to effectively shift more authority to the central government, and the Prime Minister championed a new draft constitution which opponents claim threatens to further contain the democratic spread of power in the country and subsume oversight of commissions' functions to the Attorney General.

The attention to corruption in Trinidad and Tobago, however, is not a new occurrence, but rather it began during the reign of the United National Congress (UNC) which implicated a number of public officials such as former Prime Minister Basdeo Panday and former Government Ministers Brian Kuei Tung and Sadiq Baksh, in the Piarco airport scandal.

The perceptions of corruption in Trinidad and Tobago however, cannot be attributed to a lack of legislation on the country's part. 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. In October 2000, Trinidad and Tobago also established the Integrity Commission which is responsible for "receiving declarations in writing of assets, liability and income of members in public life and such offices as may be prescribed; supervising and monitoring of standards of ethical conduct prescribed by Parliament to be observed by the holders of [public] offices; and the monitoring and investigation of conduct practices and procedures of the member in public life which are dishonest or corrupt[18]".

Some have expressed concern over the implications of corruption in Trinidad and 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. Tanzia and Davoodi (1997) posited that corruption affects economic growth by reducing the productivity of public investment, reducing the standard of infrastructure facilities and reducing government expenditure. Corruption may also hinder the integrity of regional integration movements as high levels of corruption serve as a disincentive for the cooperation and collaboration of regional public and private sectors, and will also influence the perceptions of the country held by the international community.

Public perception of corruption in Trinidad and Tobago has been described by Transparency International's Country Report as an "unfortunate combination of perceived corruption surrounding the State-owned UDECOTT and the government's failure to adequately champion the laws and agency of public accountability[19]". However 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. In such an instance, the Trinidadian and Tobagonian term "smartman" is often used

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[18] Trinidad and Tobago Public Administration Country Profile; Division of Public Administration and Development (DPADM); Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) United Nations; (March 2004); http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan023205.pdf
[19] Negative Score; Trinidad and Tobago Newsday online; (November 20, 2009); http://www.newsday.co.tt/editorial/o,111214.html

to refer to a person that successfully exploits the system to his/her benefit, indicative of the general acceptance of corruption in the country[20].

Figure 55: Payment of Bribes
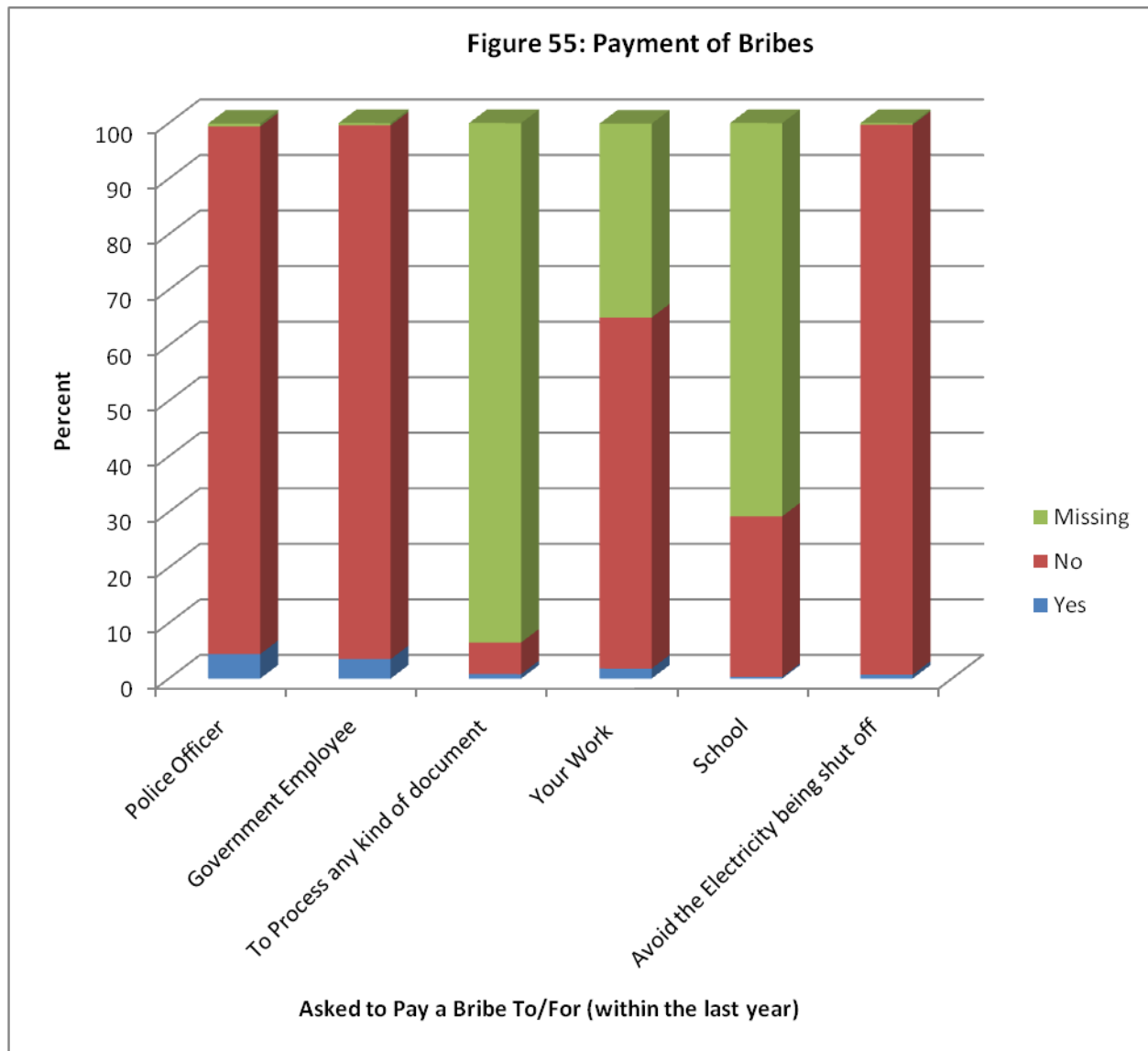
 In Trinidad and Tobago, on the issue of corruption, the data clearly indicate an identifiable pattern. In spite of public accusations and public perceptions of corruption within the state machinery, this has not been reflected in the responses of the citizens interviewed. 96% of respondents indicated that they were not asked to pay a bribe by the police, and similarly 96% also indicated that they were not asked to pay a bribe by the state bureaucracy. Interestingly, when asked about paying excess for the expedition

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[20] *The Cancer of Corruption*; Trinidad and Tobago Express Editorial; (March 4, 2010); http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_opinion?id=161603273

of processes and documents, only 6% indicated in the negative, while 94% of the respondents chose not to answer. Whereas in other territories in the Caribbean and Latin American region, there may exist the propensity to bribe public officials to ensure timely provision of essential services such as education and electricity, the data indicate that such is not the case in Trinidad and Tobago. (See questions **EXC2, EXC6, EXC11, EXC13, EXC16, EXC17**)

Figure 56: Are Bribes Justified Under Current Conditions?
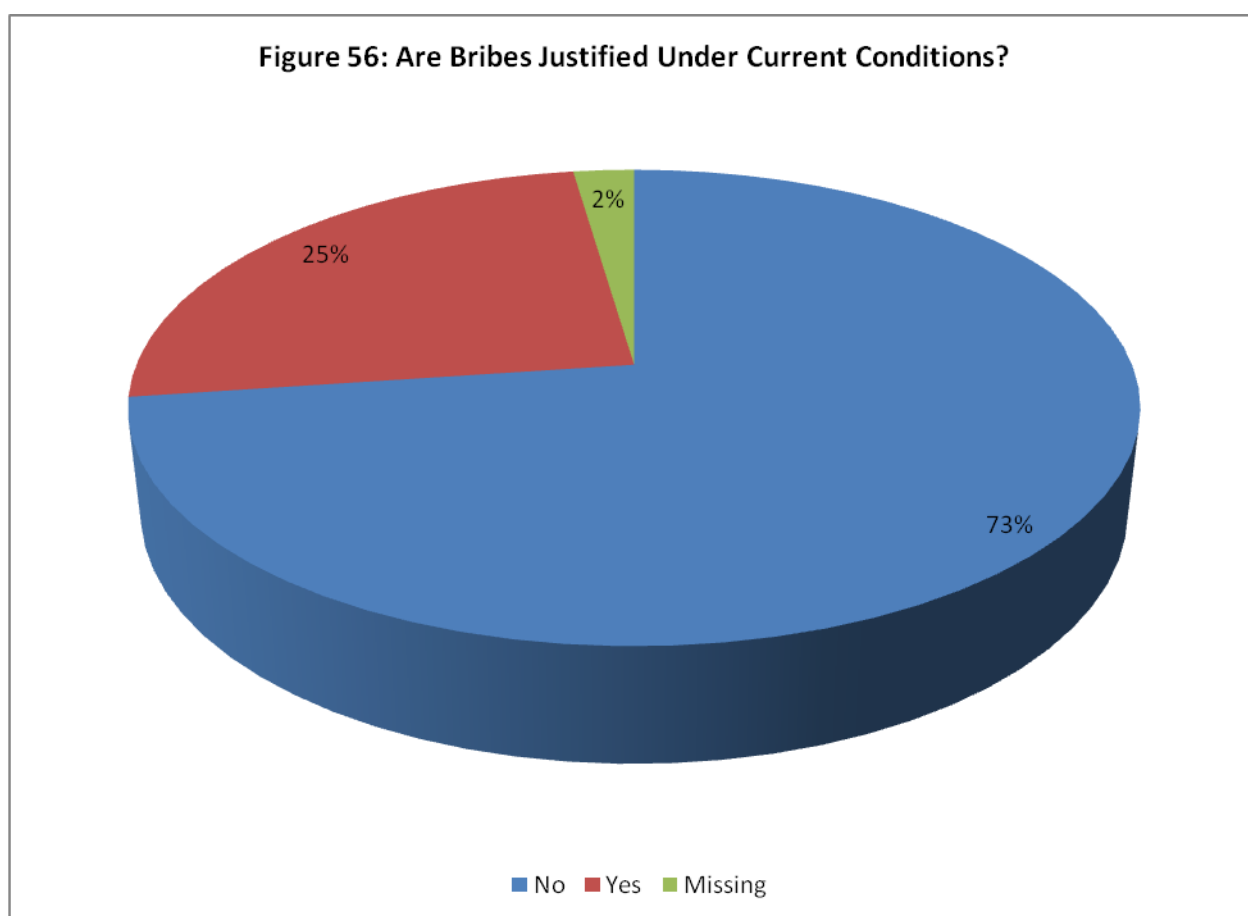
Bribery has been described as "the practice by which a person who can take decision or action on behalf of others by virtue of his authority or position is influenced by paying or offering monetary benefits for influencing him to take an action or decision which he would not have done otherwise[21]".

With respect to Trinidad and Tobago, when asked "do you think given the way things are, sometimes paying a bribe if justified" (**EXC18**), 73% of the respondents indicated definitely that bribes were not

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[21] Legal Explanations; http://www.legal-explanations.com/definitions/bribery.htm

justified under any conditions, while 25% of the respondents indicated that sometimes the payment of a bribe may be acceptable.

Figure 57: Respondents' Perception on Whether Bribes are Justified Under Current Conditions - by Age
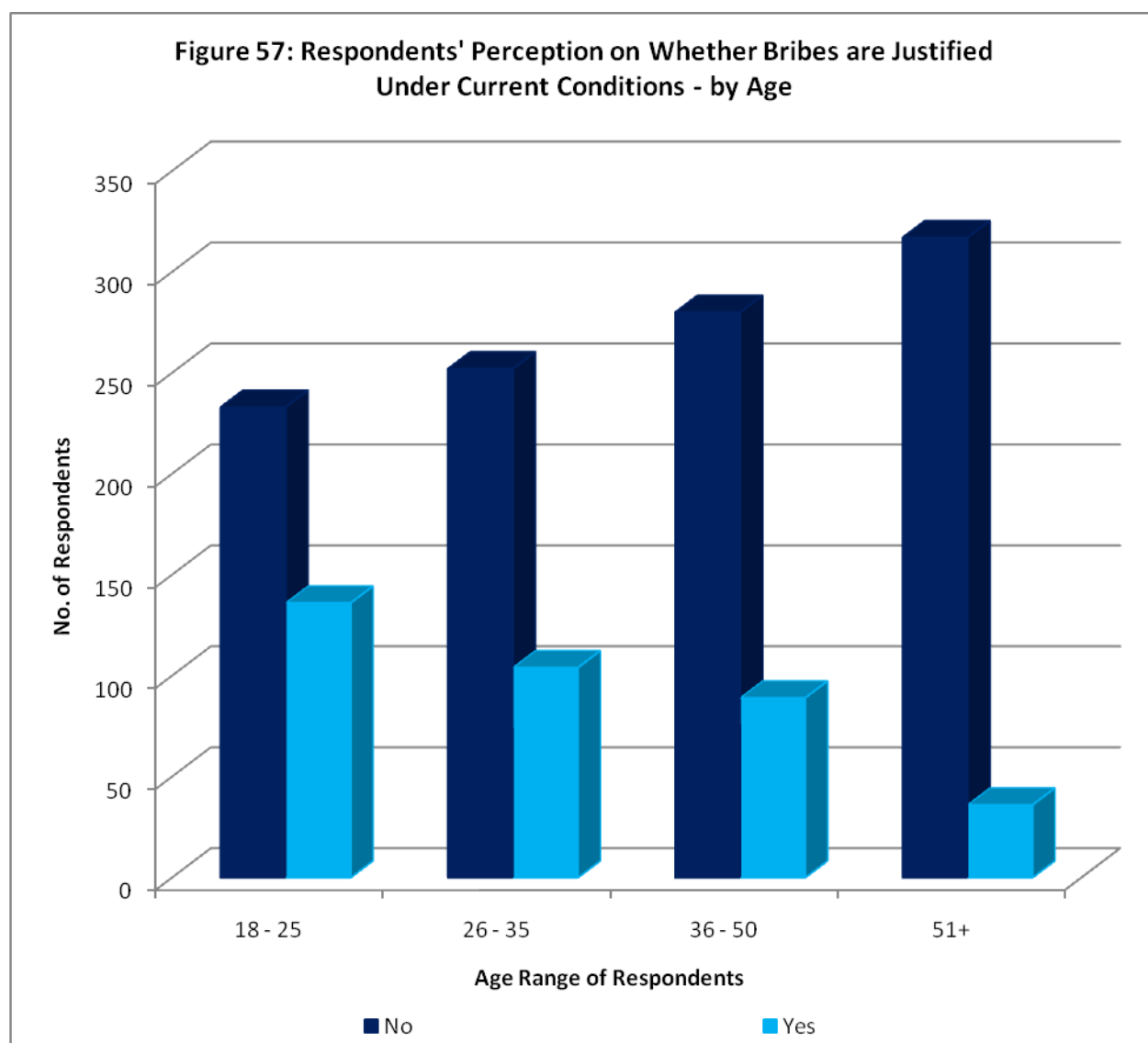
Interestingly, while 25% of the respondents indicated the payment of bribes is sometimes acceptable under the current conditions, the majority of respondents who are in favour of the payment of bribes (136 respondents) are the youngest demographic of the survey, that is of ages 18 – 25 years old. Comparably, while 73% of the respondents indicated that bribes are not justified, the eldest demographic (51 years and above) demonstrated the majority dissatisfaction with the payment of bribes (317 respondents). Therefore although the prevalent perception of the respondents is that bribes are not justified by any means, the data suggest that younger members of society are likely to be more tolerant of the payment of bribes whereas the elder citizens regard such a practice as unacceptable.

Figure 58: Respondents' Perception of Corruption Amongst Public Officials
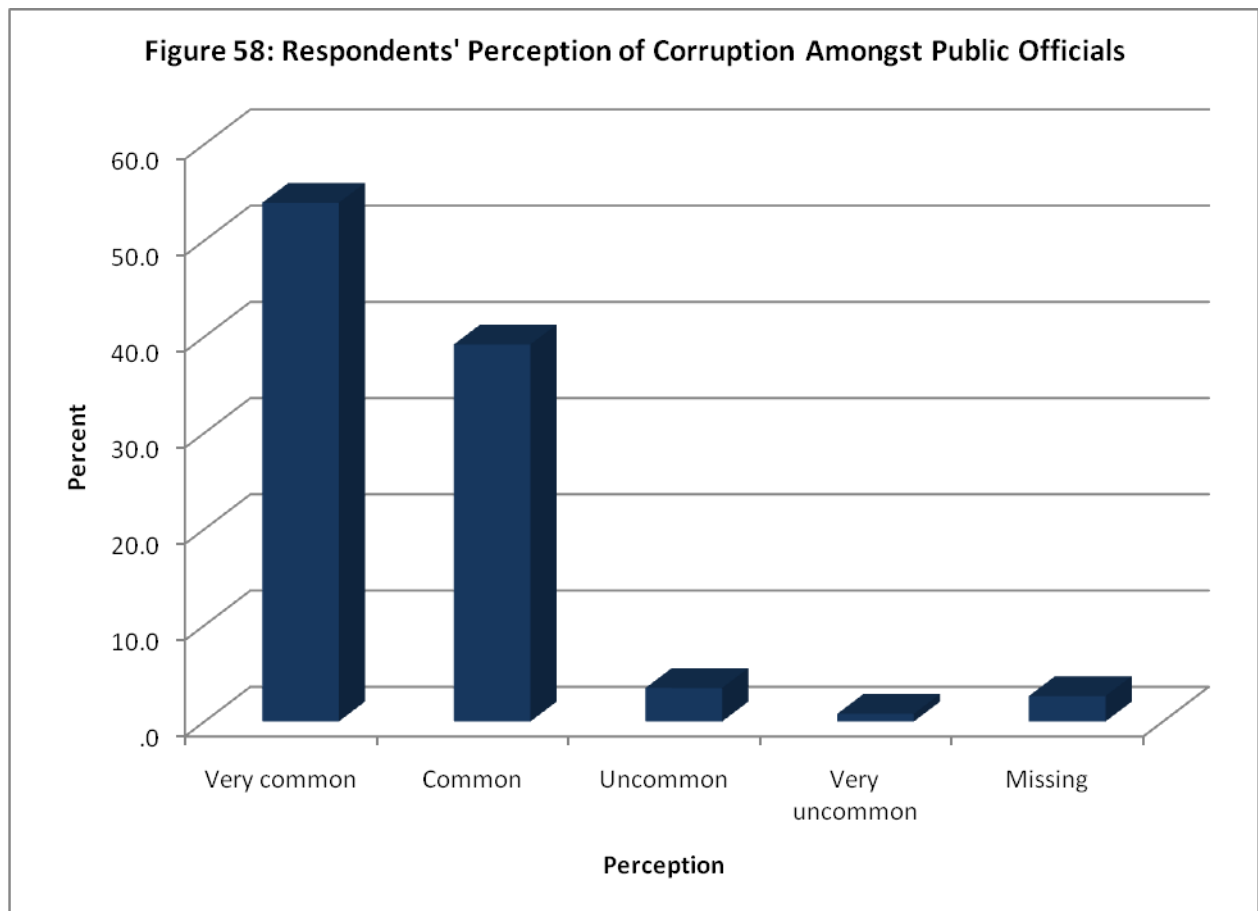
While the CPI ranks Trinidad and Tobago 79 out of 179 countries internationally, the majority of the respondents have indicated that they do not believe the giving or taking of bribes is acceptable. It must be noted however, that there is the general perception of the presence of a high level of corruption among public officials. As evidenced by the responses, 54% believe that this corruption is very common; 40% believe that it is common; therefore, an overall 94% of the respondents have this opinion of levels of corruption among public officials. This is against the background that many of them do not believe in the taking or giving of bribes. (**EXC7**)

Figure 59: Respondents' Perception of Corruption Amongst Public Officials - by Age
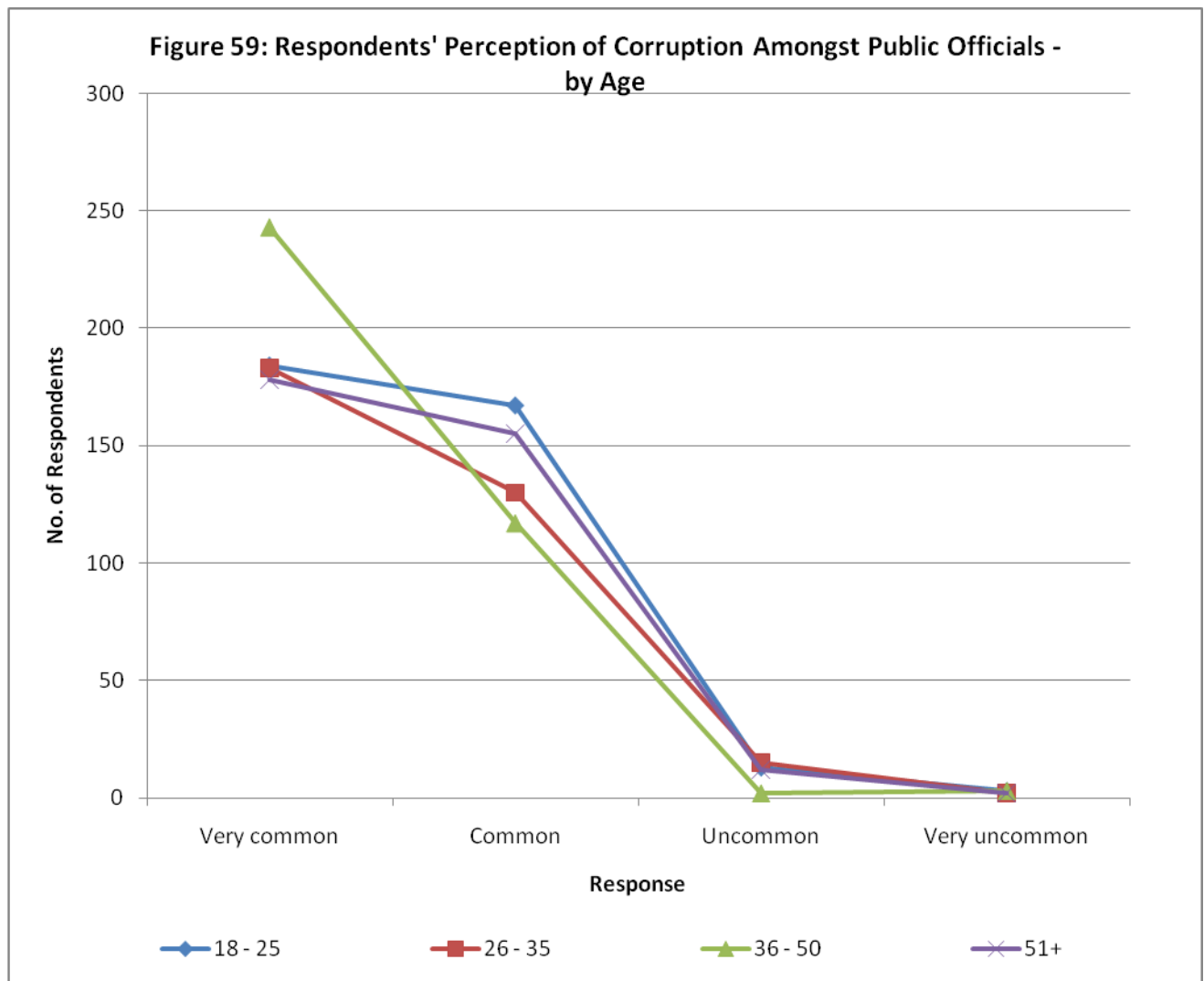
Cumulatively, 94% of the respondents hold the perception that corruption exists in varying measures amongst public officials. Interesting to note however, it that although the majority of the respondents hold the perception that corruption exists among public officials, this perception is most strongly held among respondents ranging from 36 to 50 years old.

This segment of the productive workforce is more inclined to be settled in their lifestyle, have a family, and bear financial commitments, and additionally keep themselves informed of events unfolding in the country as it may affect their stability and shape their perceptions. Of the 36-50 year age group, 55% of the demographic indicated that they are financially stable, that is their salaries are either sufficient and they can save (16%), or their salaries are enough to meet their needs without major problems (39%). Additionally 68% of the respondents within the age range of 36-50 years are married either legally or common law, with the majority of them (83%) parenting children. The majority of persons sampled within this age range (86%) are also employed.

A total of 365 persons surveyed within the age range of 36-50 years responded to question which asked their perception of the level of corruption amongst public officials (**EXC7)**, and of this total, 360 respondents indicated that they believe that corruption exists among public officials. Therefore as the data highlight that the majority of the respondents of all demographics are of the perception that corruption exist among public officials, this view is predominantly held among the 36-50 year old respondents.

Figure 60: Extent to Which the Respondents Believe the Government Combats Government Corruption
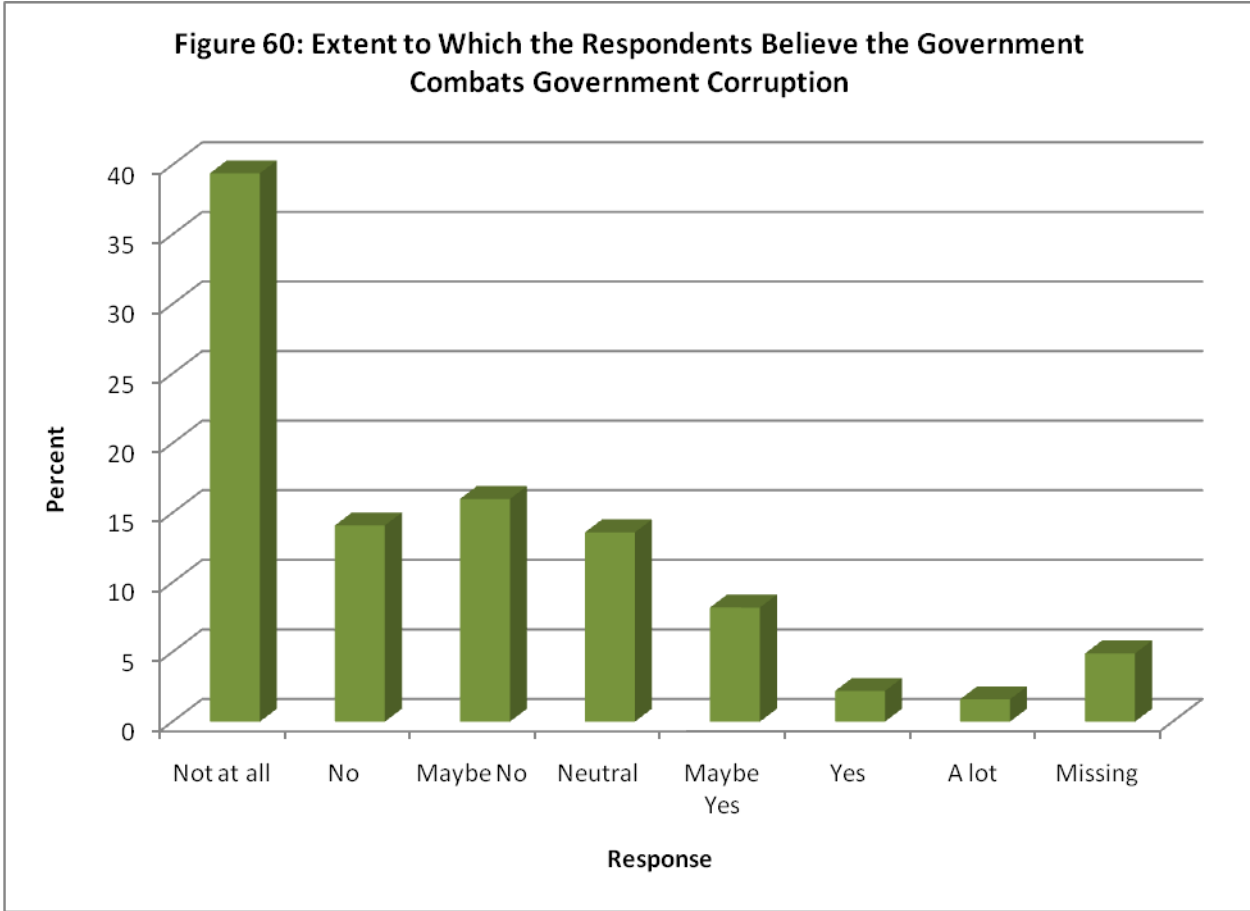
Corruption has also been described as the use of public resources for private gain. The abuse of public office for private gain occurs when public officials accept, solicit or extort bribes, or when private agents actively offer bribes in recompense for the circumvention of public polices and processes for competitive advantage and profit. Apart from bribery; patronage and nepotism, the theft of state assets, or the diversion of state revenues, also constitutes the abuse of public office for personal advantage. Although definitions of corruption place particular emphasis on the public sector, incidences of

corruption can also occur with the country's private sector and its effects among private sector activities should not be considered minimal[22].

It has been observed that generally corruption in the public sector can also serve to generate economic distortions. Additionally, corrupt practices also tend to lower compliance with construction, environmental, or other regulations, reduces the quality of government services, and increases budgetary pressures on government[23].

The survey respondents have indicated overwhelmingly with an aggregate of 73% that the current government (PNM) does not combat corruption among its officials. It is important to observe that fewer than 2% of the respondents have the perception that corruption is being combated by this government. (**N9**)

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[22] "The Fight Against Corruption; A World Bank Perspective"; Central America Country Management Unit, Latin American and the Caribbean Region; (Sweden; 1999);
http://www.iadb.org/regions/re2/consultative_group/groups/transparency_workshop6.htm#1a

[23] USAID; Democracy and Governance: Fighting Corruption;
http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/technical_areas/anti-corruption/

Figure 61: Extent to Which Respondents Believe the Government Combats Government Corruption - by Age
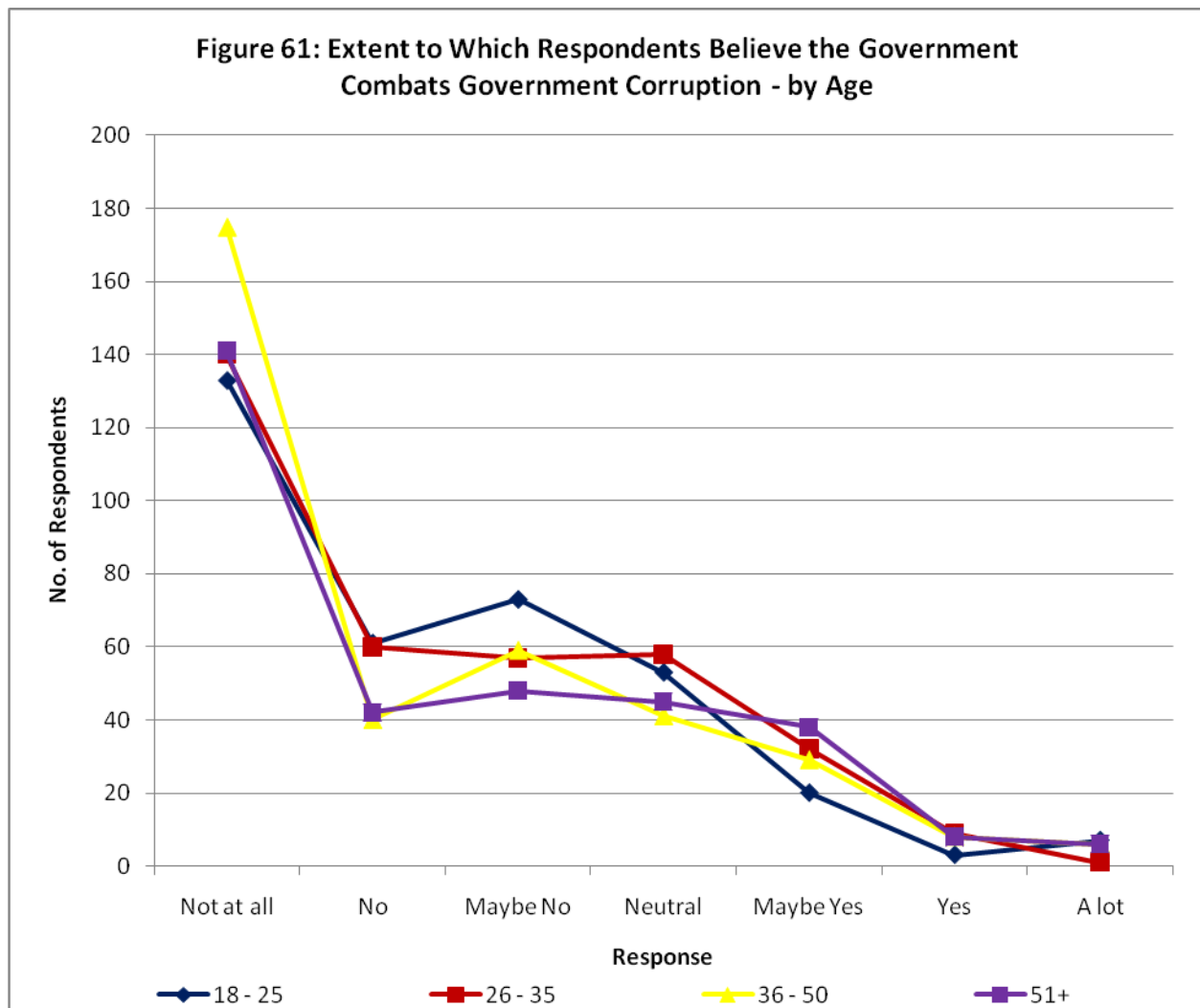
A cumulative majority of the respondents (73%) indicated that they do not believe that the government adequately combats government corruption. Consistent with the question of the respondents' perception of corruption of public officials, respondents within the 36-50 age range indicated strongest perceptions of "government does not combat government corruption. Of the 358 sampled persons within this age range who responded to question **N9**, cumulatively an overwhelming majority of 77% of those respondents indicated that they do not believe that the government is adequately combating government corruption.

Figure 62: Extent to Which Respondents Believe that the Government Combats Government Corruption - by Education Levels
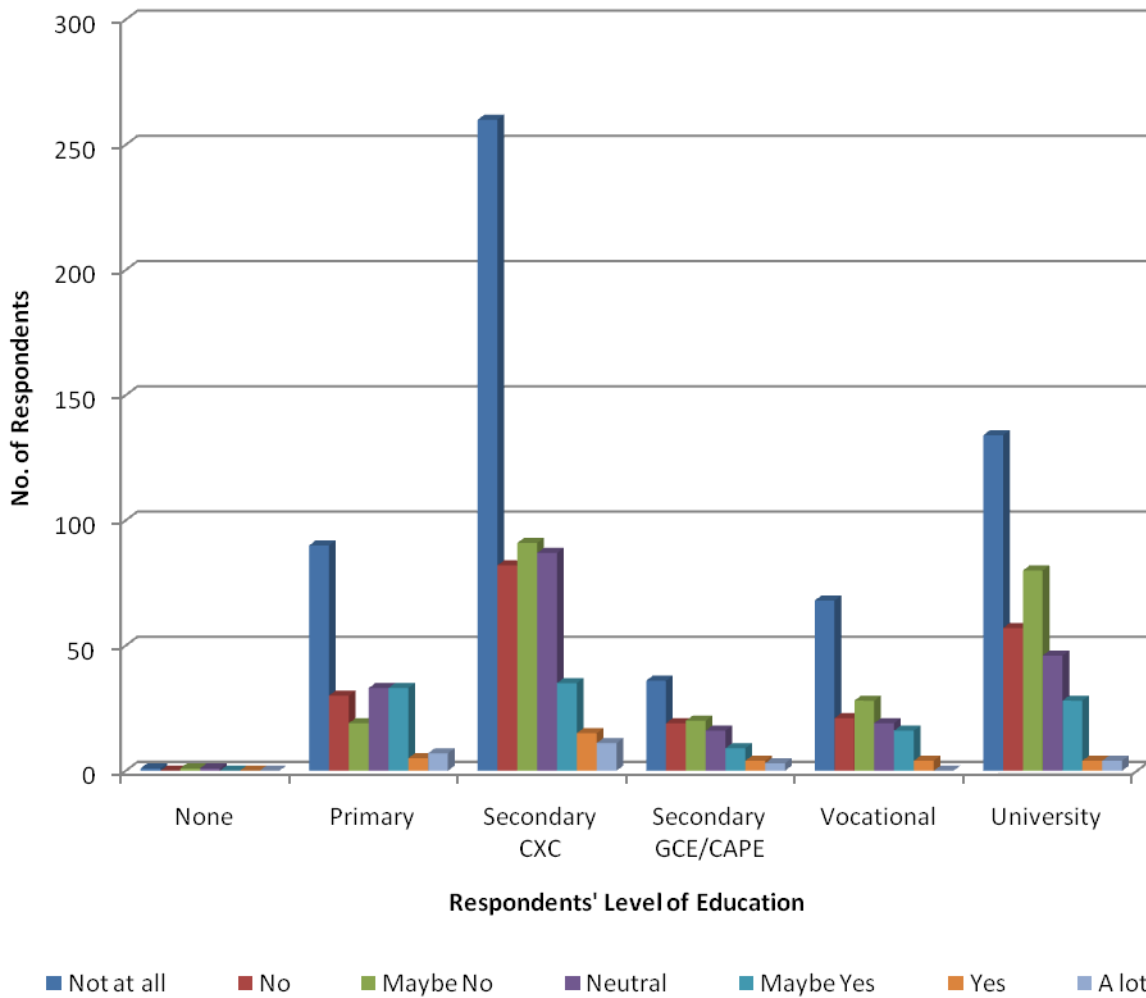
Furthermore, when analyzing the respondents' perception of the extent to which the government combats government corruption in contrast to the levels of education of the respondents, of the 581 respondents to the question whose highest level of education was Secondary CXC, 45% of these respondents believed that the government combats government corruption "not at all". Additionally, 41% of the respondents whose highest level of formal education was Primary school, 44% of the respondents whose highest level of education was Vocational, and 38% of the respondents whose highest level of education was University level, were also on the negative extreme, indicating that they believe the government does "not at all" combat government corruption.

Citizen Safety

In recent times, the Caribbean citizens have articulated significant concern with respect to challenges to their safety and security. In 2001, a CARICOM Task Force on Crime & Security identified the following principal security threats to the Caribbean region; illegal drugs, illegal firearms, corruption, rising crime against persons and property, criminal deportees, growing lawlessness, poverty and inequity.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the government has initiated several projects aimed at improving citizen safety including securing a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank of US$24.5 million for a citizen security programme aimed at reducing crime and violence. This initiative along with other interventions by the state is in keeping with the government's responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment to all citizens.

Figure 63: The Extent to Which the Government Improves Citizen's Safety
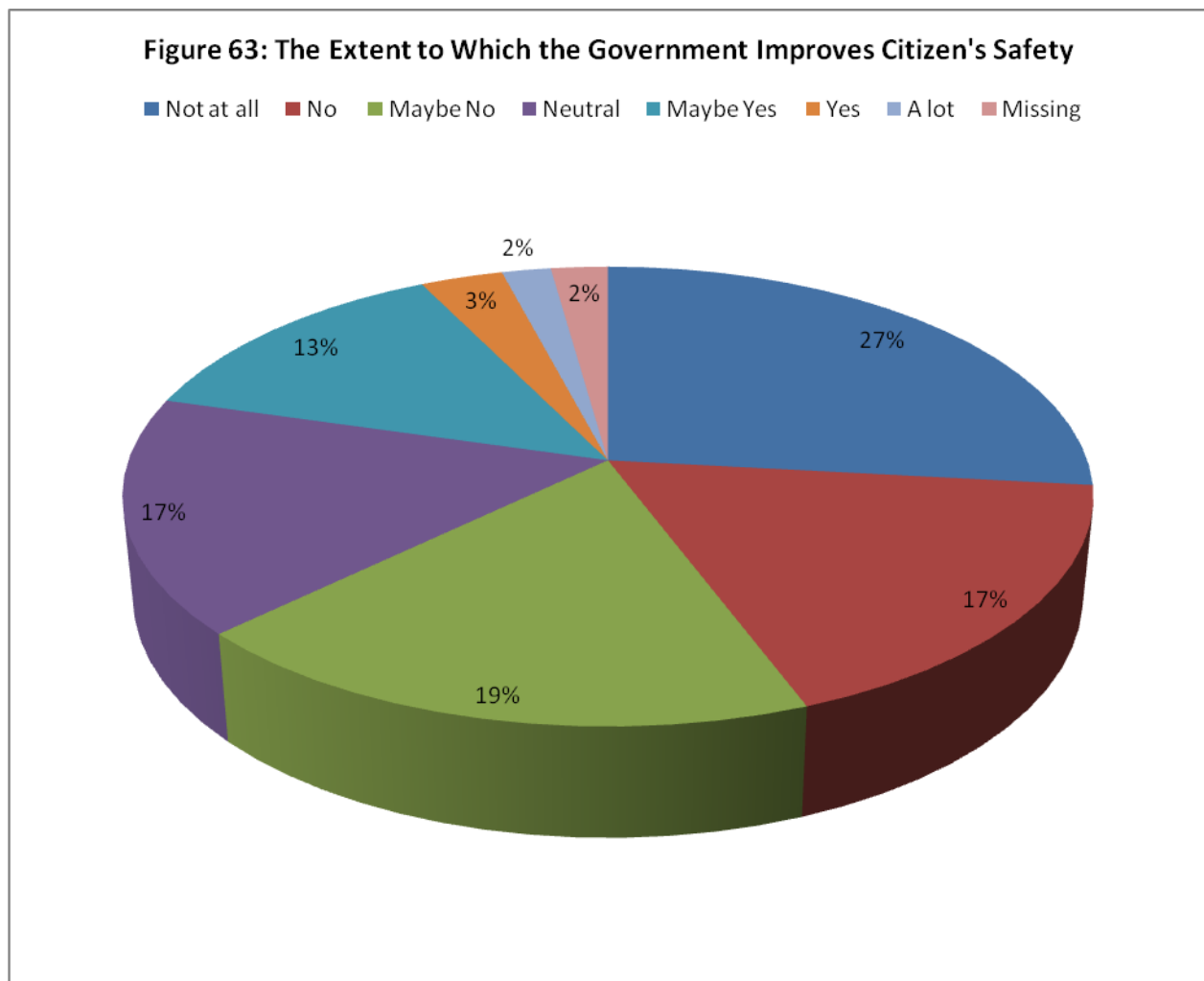
In spite of these efforts, less than 18% of the respondents believe that the government (PNM) in its activities is improving citizen safety. A further 27% believe that they are doing "nothing at all" and 63% overall responded negatively when asked the question "to what extent would you say the current government improves citizen safety?" (**N11**)

Figure 64: Extent to Which the Government Improves Citizens' Safety - by Age
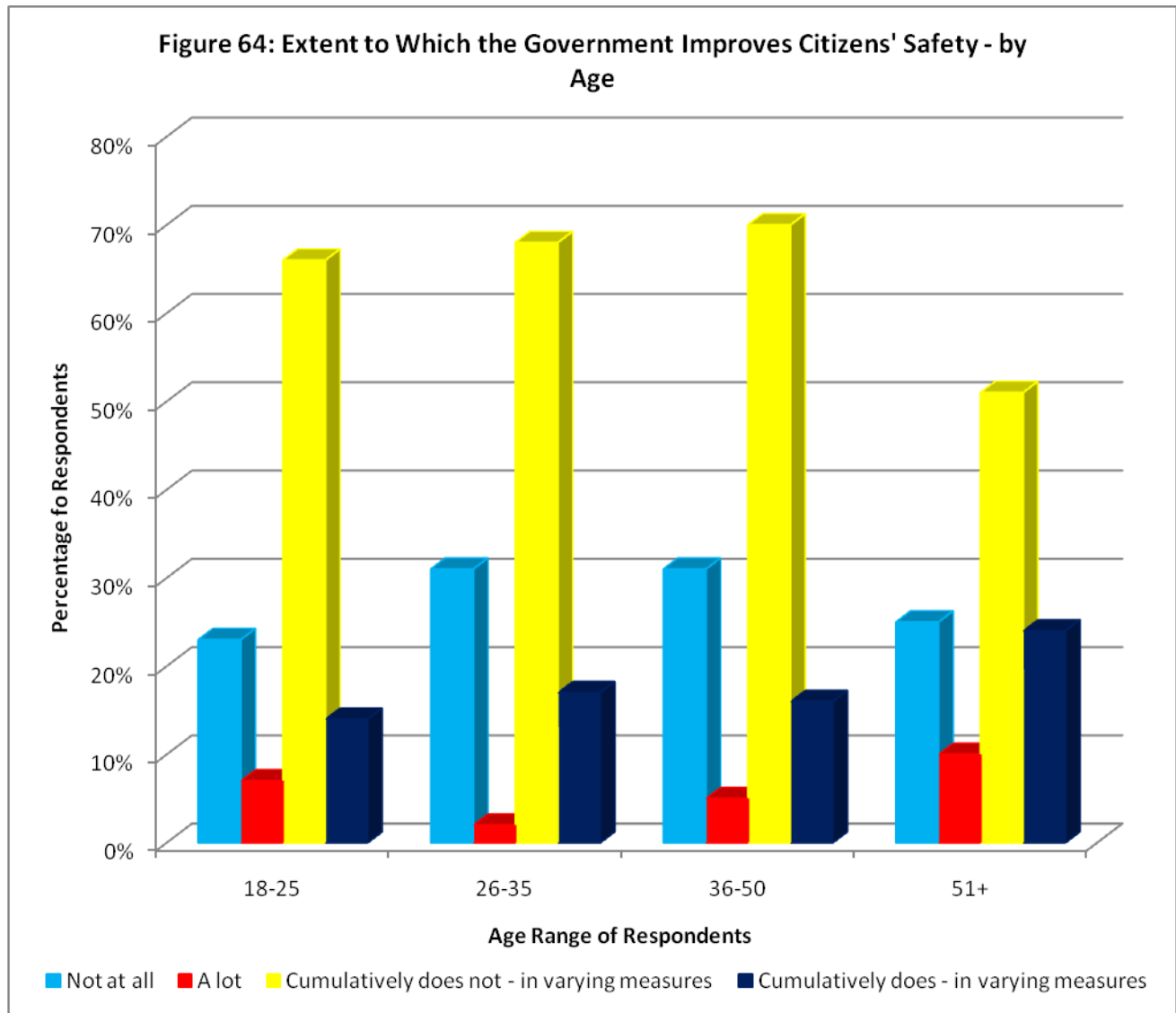
When analyzing the perceptions of the respondents on the extent to which they believe that the current government improves citizens' safety, the highest percentage of respondents who believe that the government does "not at all" protect citizens' safety are of the 26-35 and 36-50 age groups (31% each). The 36-50 year old age group of the sample revealed the highest percentage (70%) of cumulative negative responses to question of the extent to which respondents believe that the government improves citizen safety (**N11**), followed by the 26-35 year old age group with a cumulatively negative response of 68%.

Interestingly, in terms of positive responses, the highest percentage was reported from the 51 year old and above age group, with 24% of the respondents within this age range indicating a cumulatively positive response on the question of whether the government improves citizens' safety.

Figure 65: Respondents' Perception of Safety in Their Neighbourhoods
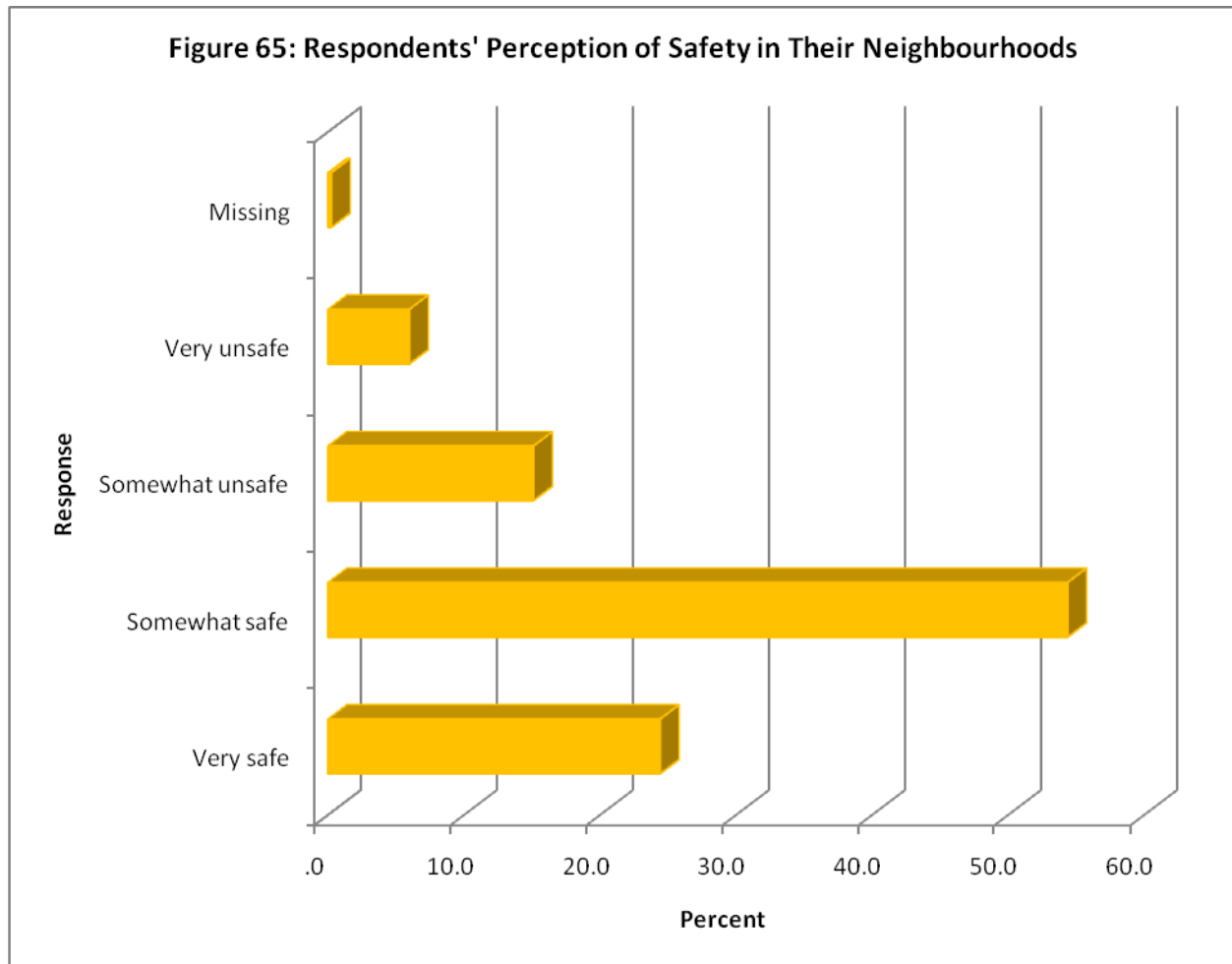
In response to question **AOJ11**, which asked the respondents, "speaking of the neighbourhood where you live and thinking of the possibility of being assaulted or robbed, do you feel very safe, somewhat safe, somewhat unsafe, or very unsafe", an aggregate of 78% of the respondents felt some measure of safety in their neighbourhood, with only 24% of the respondents indicating that they felt "very safe".

In contrast, and incongruent with trends identified by the data on the respondents' perceptions of crime as the most serious issue facing the country, and also on their perceptions of the extent to which the government improves citizens' safety, only 21% of the respondents cumulatively did not feel safe in their neighbourhoods, with a mere 6% of the respondents indicating that they felt "very unsafe".

Figure 66: Respondents' Perception of Safety Within Their Neighbourhoods - by Age
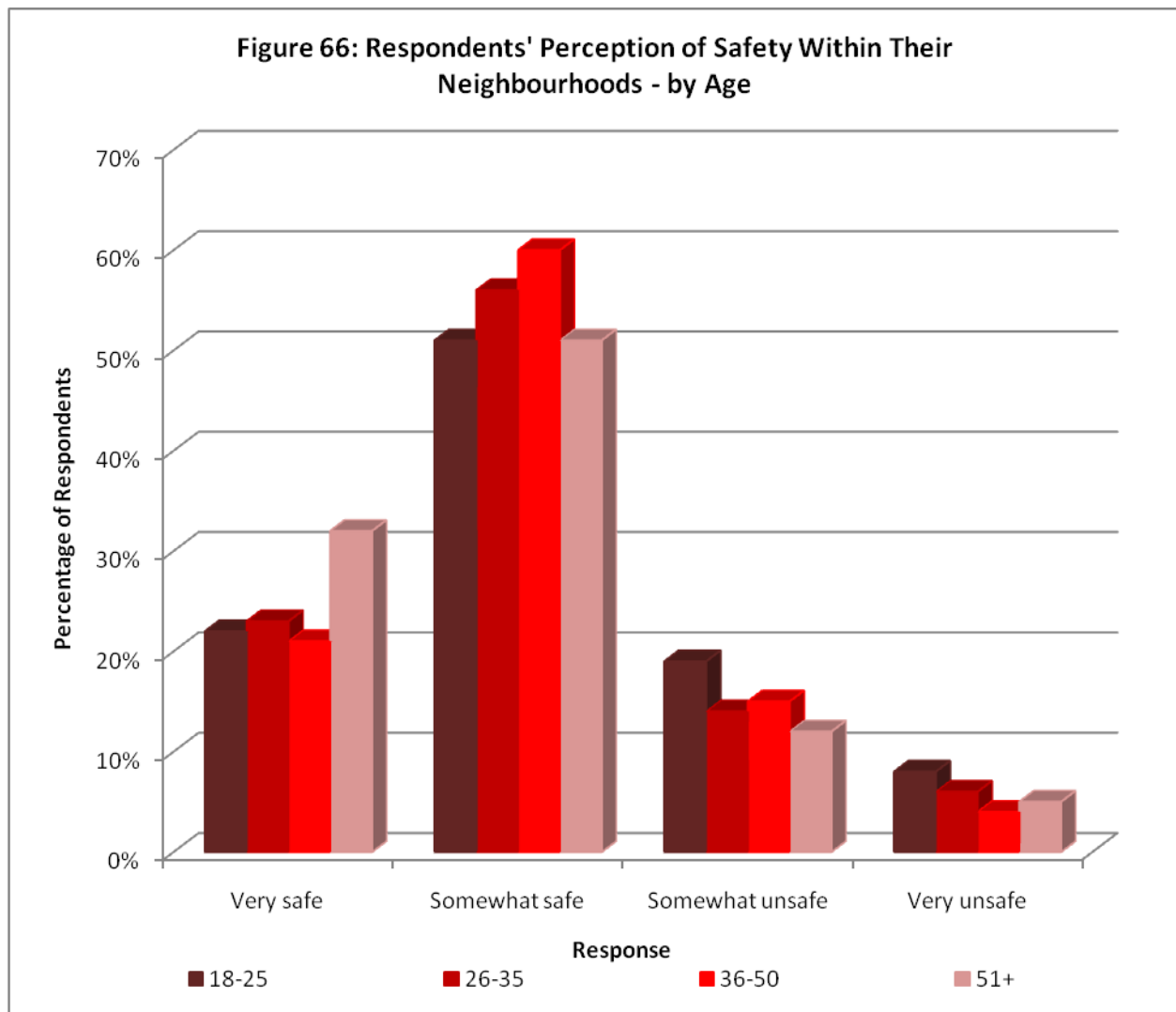
Noteworthy is the fact that the data identified an emerging relationship between the respondents' age and their perception of safety within their neighbourhoods. In response to question **AOJ11**, of the youngest age demographic of the survey sample, 18-25 years old, 22% of the respondents indicated that they felt "very safe" in their neighbourhoods, while 8% of the respondents within this age bracket indicated that they felt "very unsafe" in their neighbourhoods. On the other hand, of the eldest age range, that is 51 years old and above, 32% of the respondents indicated that they felt "very safe" in their neighbourhood, with 5% of these respondents indicating that they felt "very unsafe".

The responses from the survey sample indicated that as the age of the respondents increased, so too did their perception of safety within their neighbourhood. As the age ranges increased, the extent to which respondents felt safe in their neighbourhoods also increased. The cumulative percentage of respondents who indicated that they felt safe in their neighbourhoods was 73% within the 18-25 year old age range, 79% within the 26-35 year old age range, 81% within the 36-50 year old age range and 83% within the age range of 51 years old and above. The data therefore indicated a complementary relationship between age and perceptions of safety within one's neighbourhood.

Community Involvement

While discussing issues of democracy, security, public trust and the economy, one has to be cognizant that there are levels of analysis, and that these include the individual, the community and the society. Whereas this report has dealt with the aggregate individual perceptions and the societal views, it now takes into account the perceptions of the role of the community. Regardless of the issues which have emerged from the survey on a national level, it is believed that communities have a role to play in addressing the challenges that emerge.

Figure 67: Respondents' Attempts to Solve Problems in their Community/Neighbourhood Within the Last Twelve Months
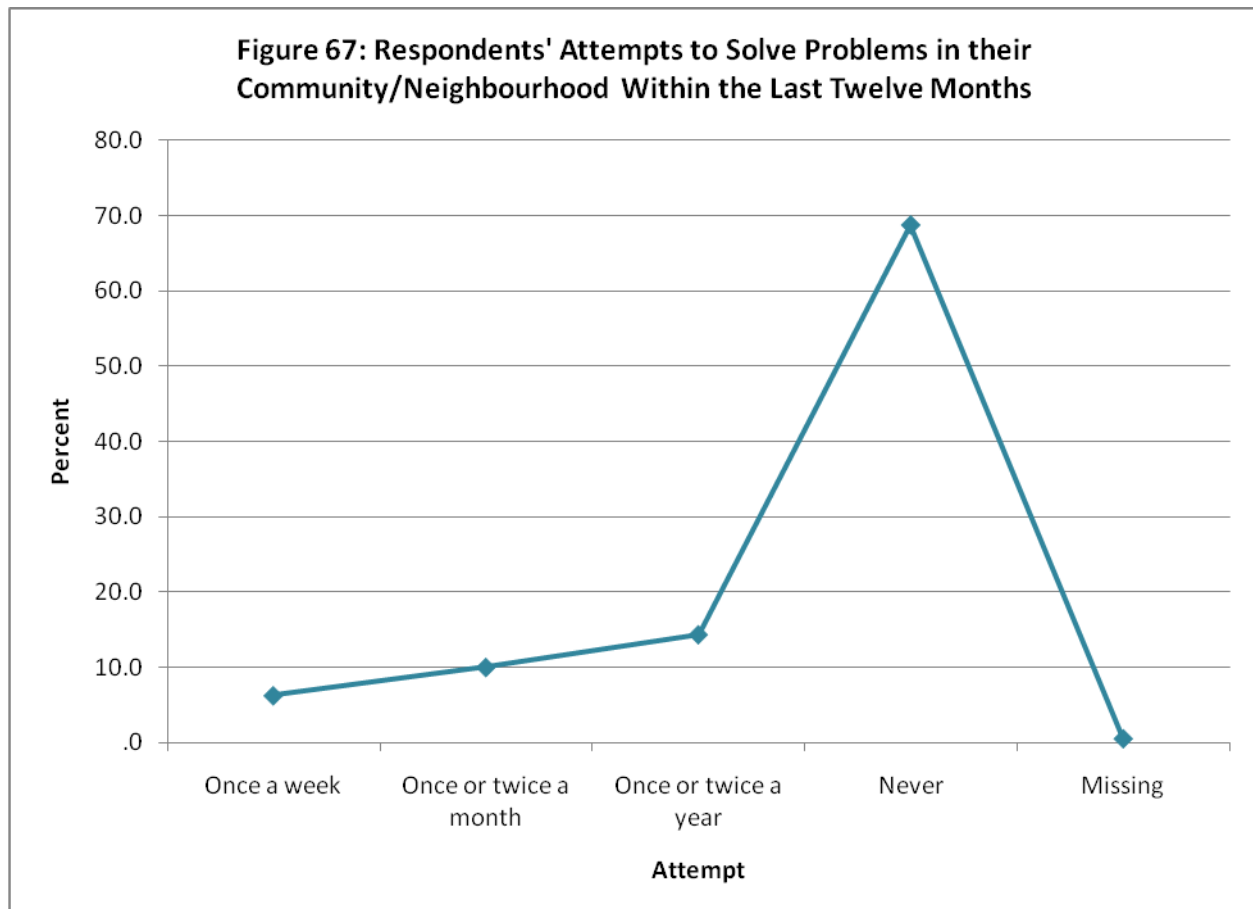
At the level of the community, the question **CP5** asked "in the last twelve months have you tried to help solve a problem in your community or in your neighbourhood?" The data indicate however, that even though challenges exist and there are concerns within communities, there seems to be a disconnect between the needs of the communities and the responses of individuals and groups. This is evidenced as 69% of respondents have indicated that they have never tried to help solve problems in the community within the last 12 months prior to January of 2010.

The youngest age demographic (18-25) appears unwilling or uninterested in becoming involved in community affairs and contributing to the solution of community problems. The highest percentage (36%) of the respondents who indicated that they attempted to solve problems in their community "once a week" belonged to the 26-35 year old age bracket, with the highest percentage of respondents who indicated that they attempted to solve community problems "once or twice a month" and "once or twice a year" belonged to the 51 year old and above age bracket (32%) and the 36-50 year old age group (41%). Of all the respondents to question **CP5** who indicated that they "never" attempted to solve community problems, the highest percentage of those who gave this response (29%) belonged to the 18-25 year old age range.

Figure 68: Monthly Income
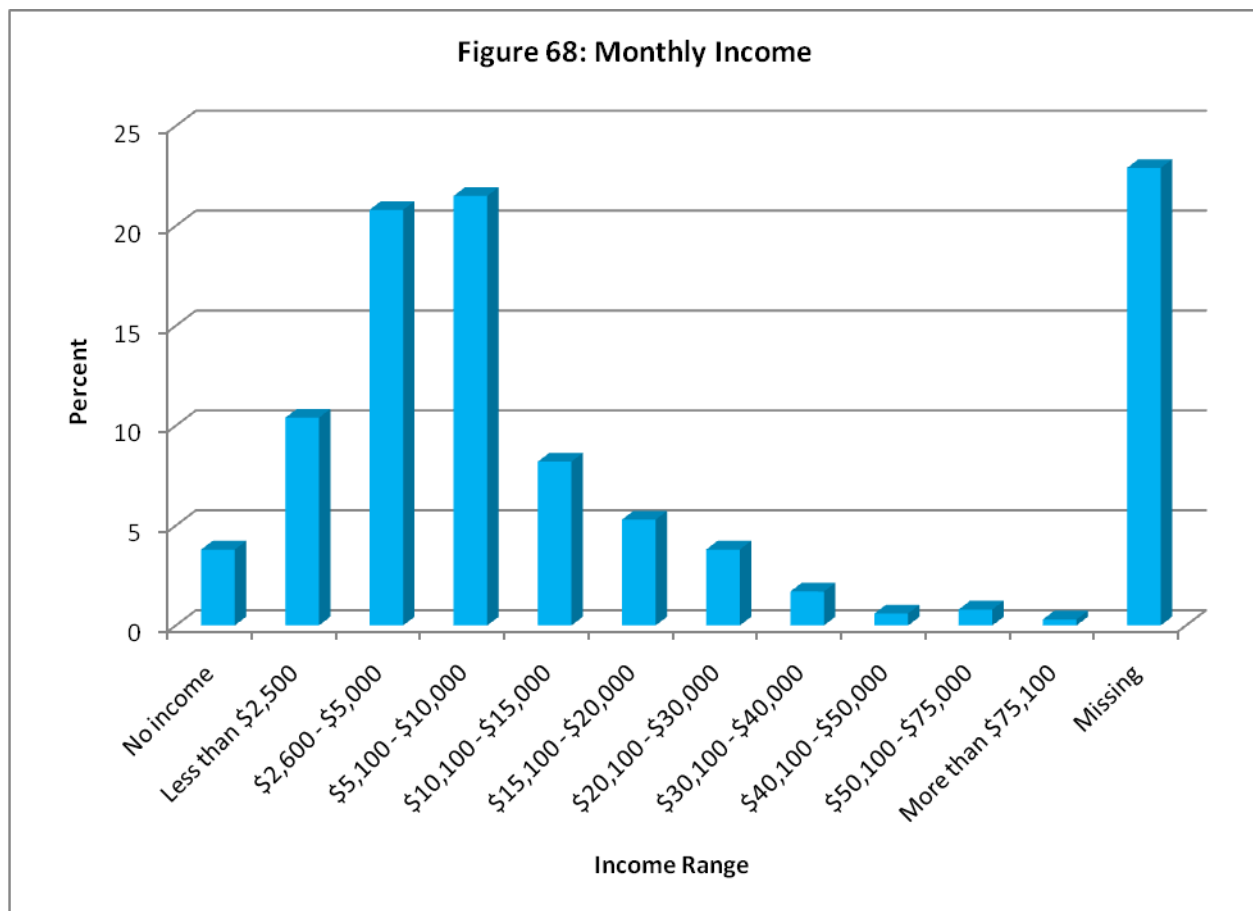
Trinidad and Tobago has one of the highest GDP per capita incomes in the hemisphere as it is a net exporter of crude oil and natural gas. Statistics indicate that a large percentage of the population exist above the poverty line. Results from this survey indicate that 21% of the respondents earn between US $400 - $900 per month, while 22% earn between US $900 - $1,500 per month.

As a percentage of the population the income of this 43% does not seem particularly high; however an additional 20% of the respondents indicated that they earn more than US $1,500 per month. In contrast to the above results 4% of the respondents have indicated no income from any source. (**Q10**)

Figure 69: Respondents' Monthly Income - by Gender
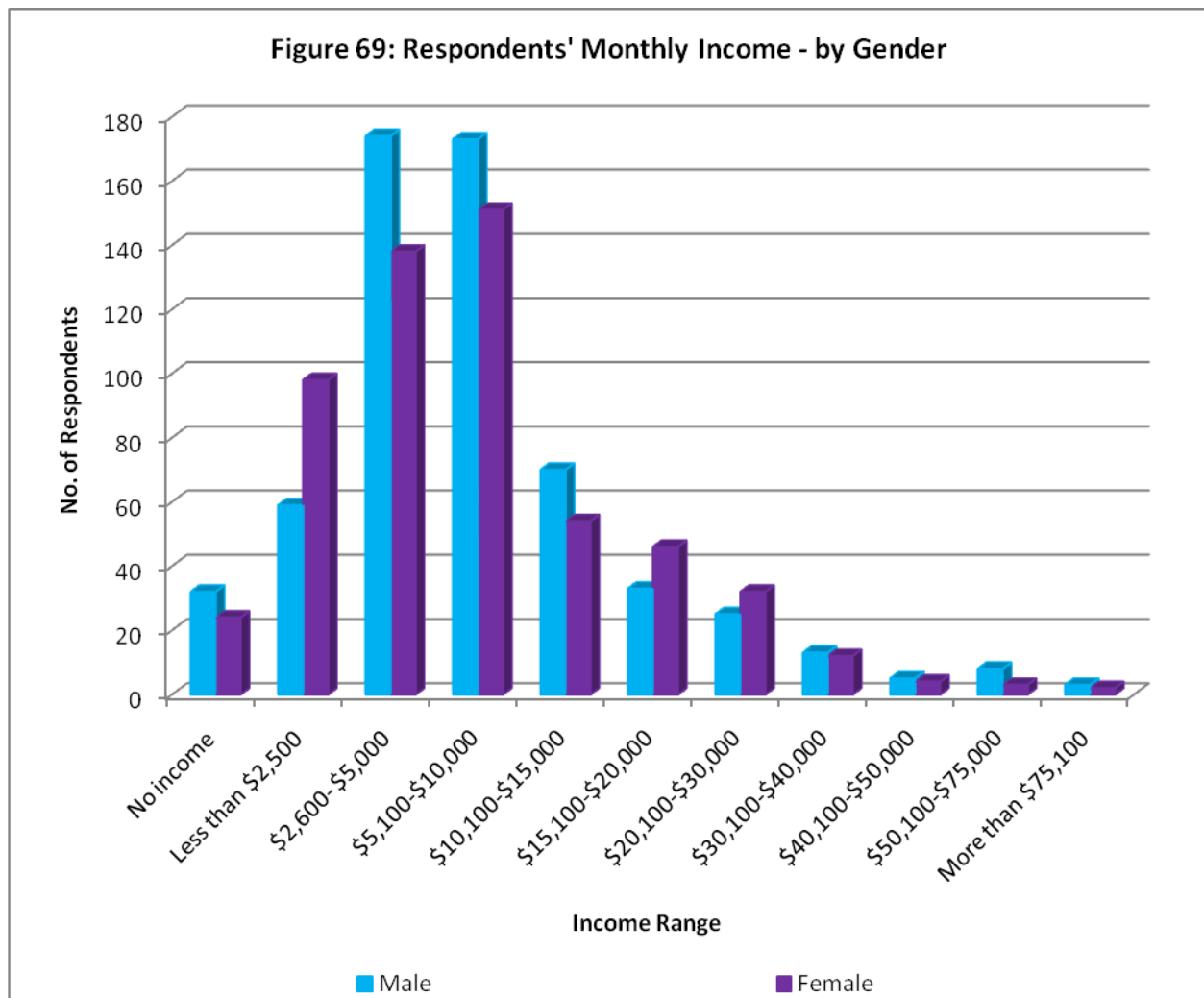
In terms of the monthly incomes of respondents by gender, 77% of the respondents chose to give their responses, ranging from "no income" to "more than TT $75100". Of the total number of responses, 51% of the respondents who indicated their monthly income levels were male, while 49% of the respondents who gave their monthly incomes were female. Further, the findings indicate that the two most popular income brackets fall between TT $2600 and TT $10000. This range accounts for 54% of the respondents of the survey who revealed their monthly income. Of this 54%, 54% were males, while 46% were females. Interestingly, 26% of the respondents earn over TT $10100 and of this total, 51% were males and 49% were females. This indicates that levels of gender equality in terms of monthly incomes are indeed quite strong.

Figure 70: Respondents' Monthly Income - by Education Levels
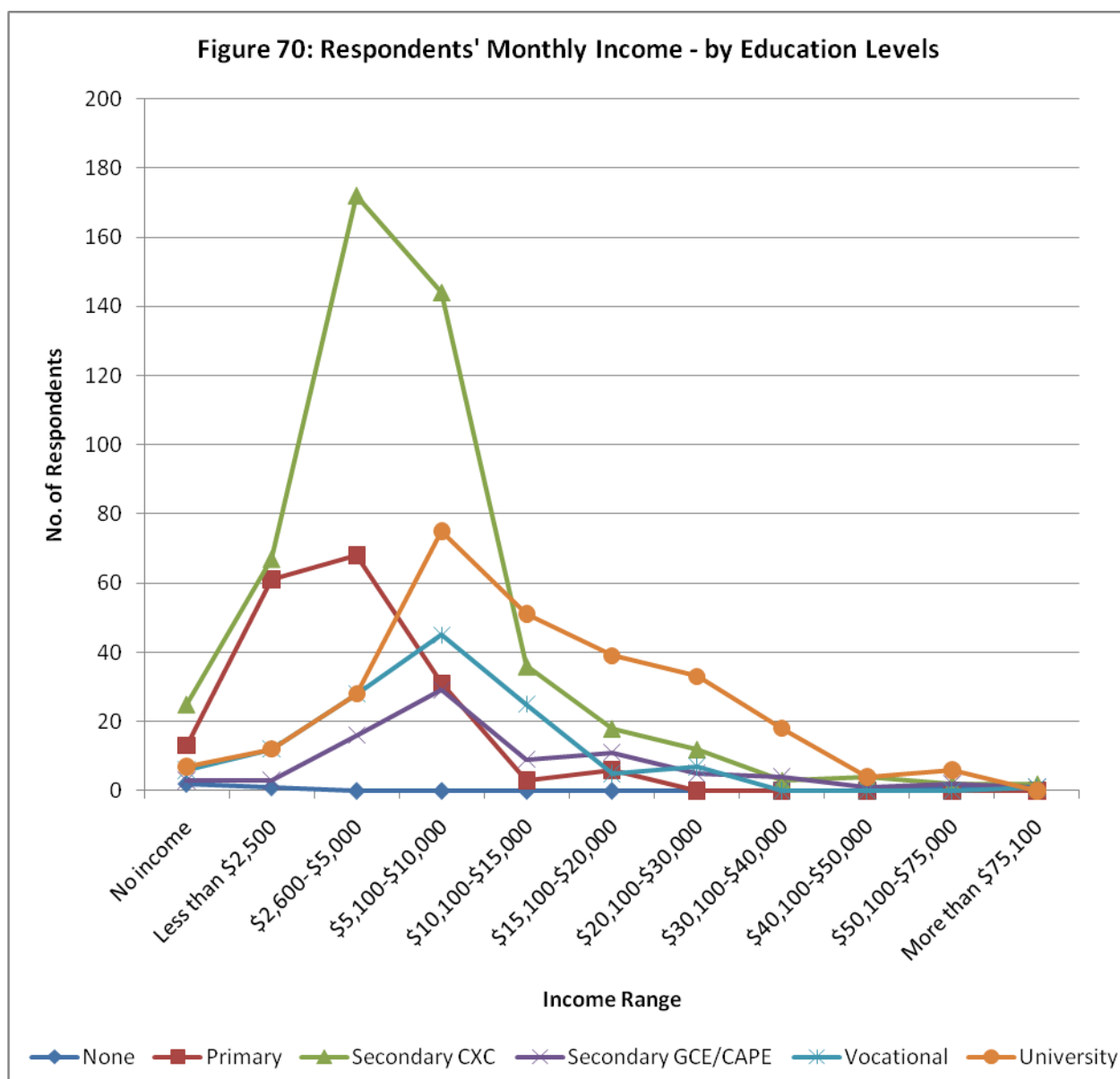
In terms of monthly incomes according to levels of education attained, it was observed that the majority of the respondents, who revealed their incomes, were those who had achieved the Secondary CXC level. Further, it must be borne in mind that as previously noted, 41% of the respondents of the survey achieved that educational level. Of that 41%, 50% of them earn between TT $2600 and TT $10000.

Figure 71: Weighting of Salaries Earned & Total Household Income

- Is good enough for you and you can save from it
- Is just enough for you, so that you do not have major problems
- Is not enough for you and you are stretched
- Is not enough for you and you are having a hard time
- Missing

10%
10%
18%
26%
36%
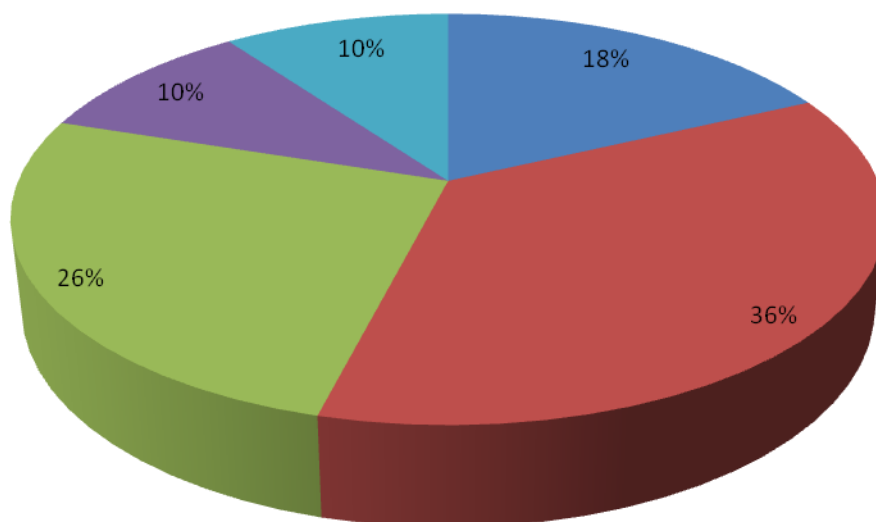
It has been said that the level of democracy in a country is dependent to a large extent on the income and standard of living of its citizenry. As such, income levels are important for surveys of this type. When asked whether their incomes were sufficient for living in Trinidad and Tobago, 18% of the respondents indicated that their salaries were in fact "good enough" for themselves and their families, while 36% indicated that their present salaries were "just enough" for them to be comfortable at their current standard of living.

26% of the respondents of the survey indicated that their current income was insufficient for them to live comfortably and as such were dissatisfied with their economic condition. 10% of the respondents indicated that they are "having a hard time" living off of their current salary and that the standards of living of their households were deteriorating; amongst these respondents there was a fear of falling into poverty unless their incomes could be increased. (**Q10D**)

Figure 72: Stability of Household Income Over the Past Two Years
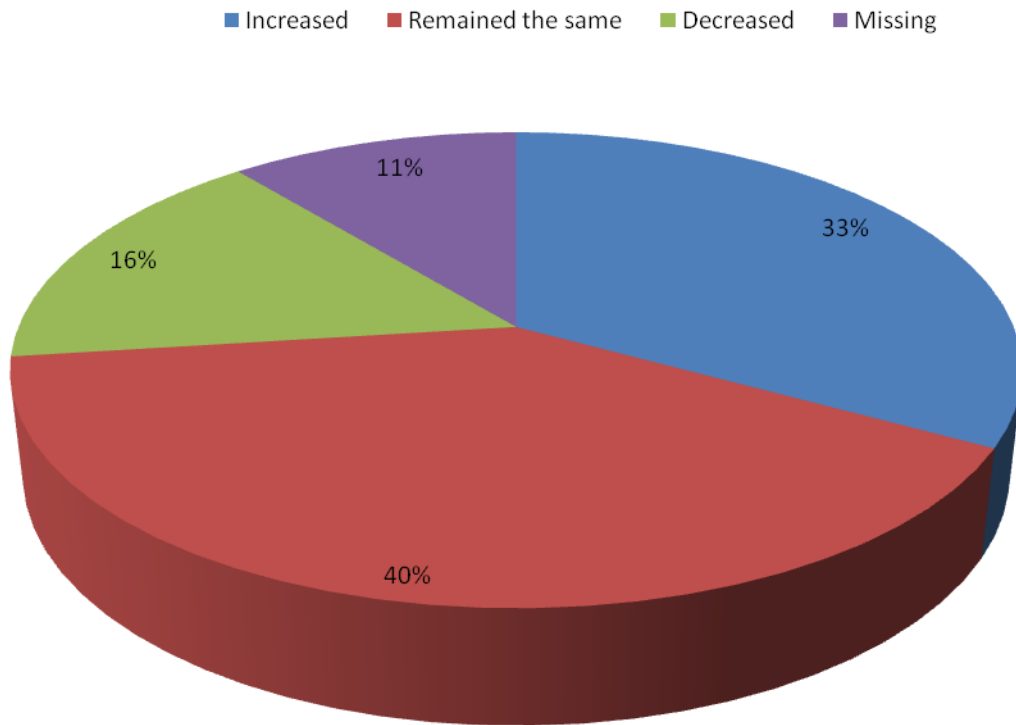
In the survey, 33% of the respondents indicated that their incomes have increased over the last two years while another 40% indicated that it has remained the same. Indicators from the survey suggest that 70% of the respondents (inflation aside) are "no worse off" than they were two years ago. 16% of the respondents indicated that they were "worse off" financially than they were two years ago and it is significant to observe that 11% of the respondents did not comment. (**Q10E**)

Figure 73: Percentage of the Population that Receive Remittances from Abroad
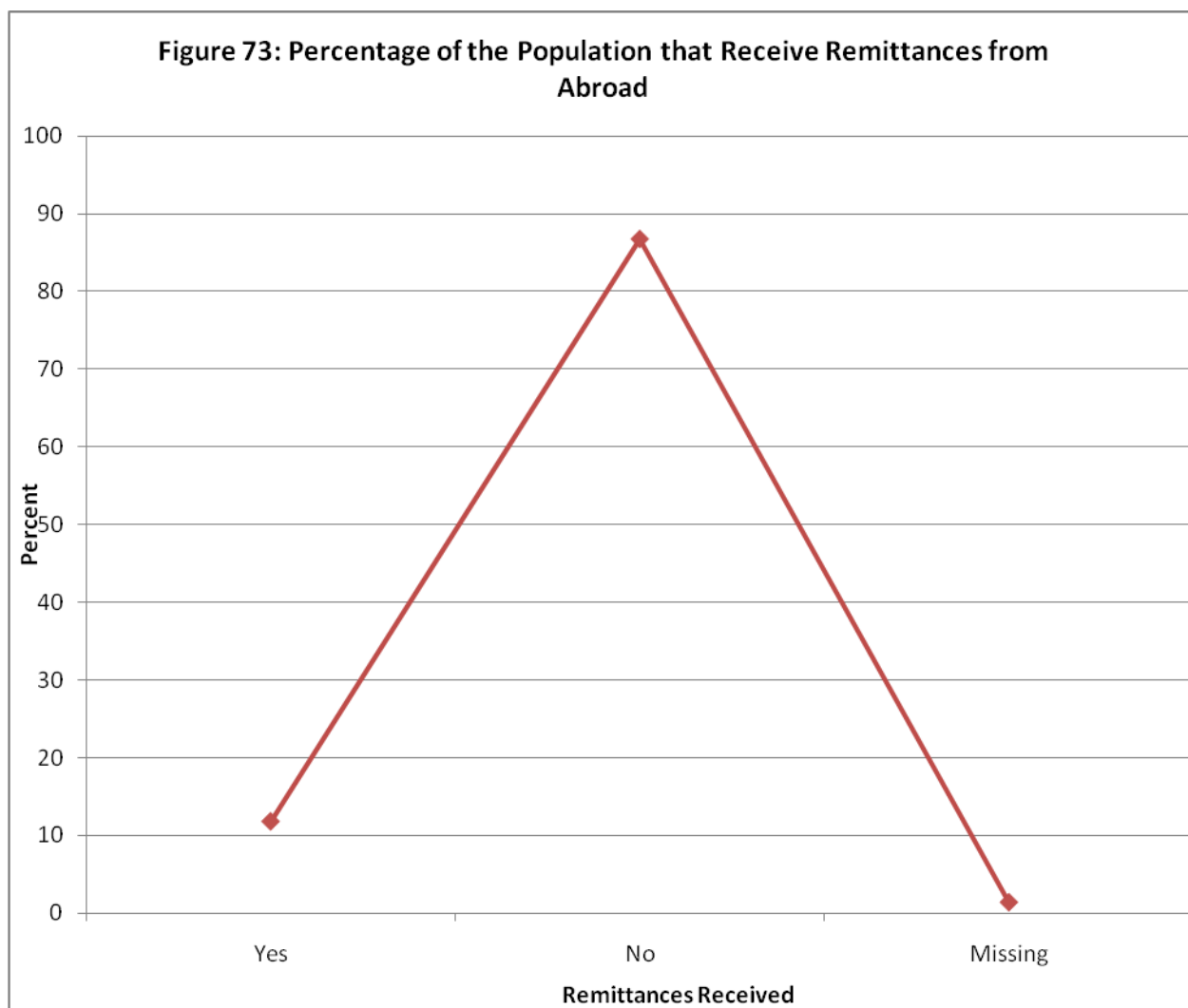
Remittances have been described as the most direct benefit of migration and the benefits are normally spread across all levels of socio-economic status in the recipient economies.

In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, the results of this survey indicate that only 12% of the sample of Trinidad and Tobago receives remittances from abroad (**Q10A**). These remittances do not normally make any significant contribution of the households' incomes. The majority of these remittances are used for consumption items such as food and clothing as opposed to education, healthcare and housing.

In response to question **Q10B,** 2% of the respondents indicated that they depended on these remittances to a great extent, and 5% of the respondents indicated that they depended on remittances to a lesser extent and 4% minimally. It must be noted that 88% of the respondents fall into the category of "missing" responses.

Figure 74: The Extent to Which the Government is Properly Managing the Economy
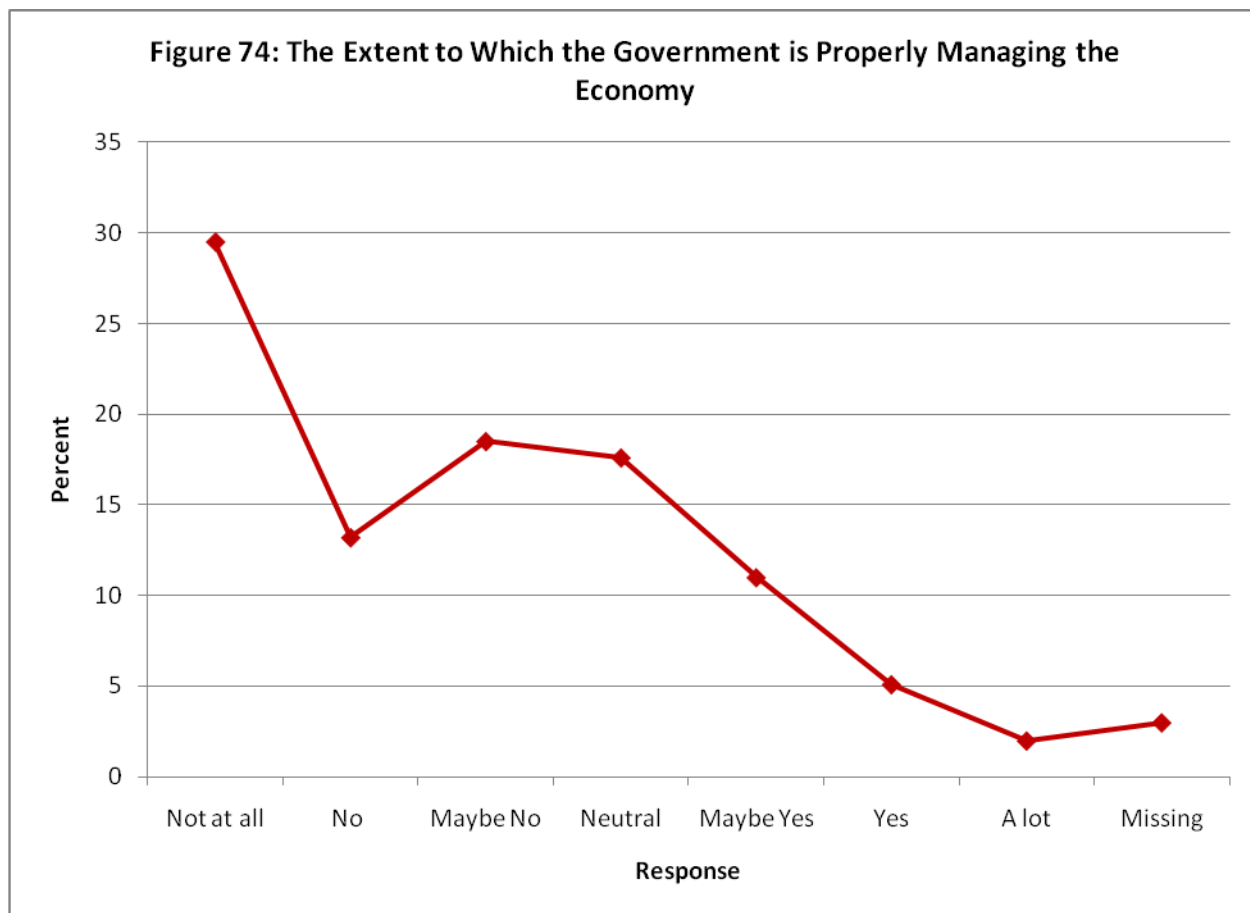
Governments are mandated to manage the economic affairs in their respective states. This is done through monetary and fiscal policies which are implemented to manage the economy. Governments of developing countries usually have more austere policies as they frequently have to deal with budget deficits, balance of payments, unequal terms of trade and the stabilization of their exchange rates. The challenges of managing the economy, especially in developing states, have been exacerbated with the onset of the international financial crisis which caused a downturn in economies globally.

In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, when responding to the question of managing the economy, less than 3% of the respondents in the survey stated that the government is doing "a lot" to manage the country's economy efficiently.   19% of the respondents agreed that the government's policies in managing the economy were successful. However, 61% of the respondents cumulatively did not think that the government was dealing with the management of the economy appropriately, with 30% indicating that the government was failing miserably. (**N15**)

Figure 75: Public's Opinion on the Extent to Which the Government Combats Poverty
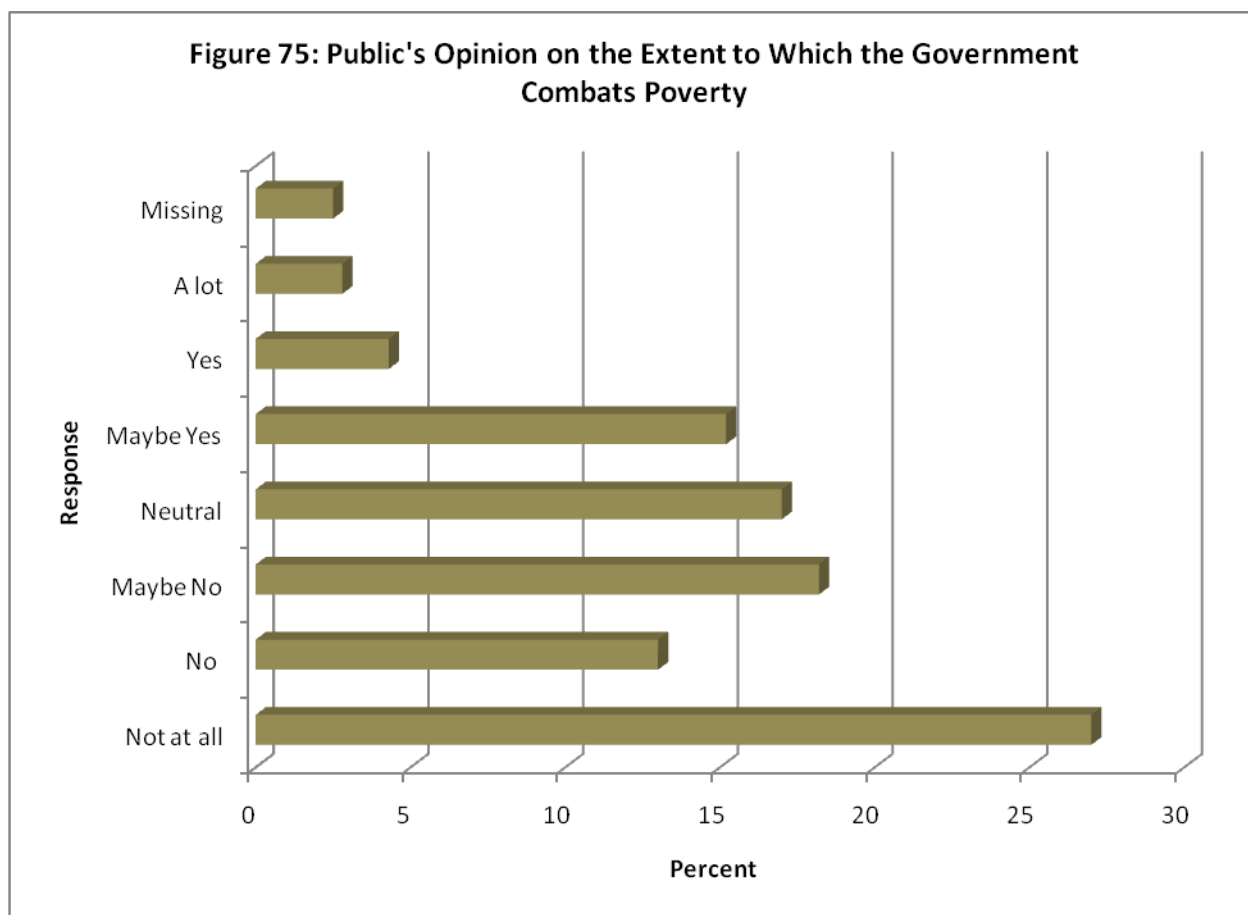
Poverty can generally be defined as the inability of the individual to meet the basic needs for survival.

Among other interpretations, poverty as described by the IDB, is seen as the unavailability of access to steady forms of income, housing, education and healthcare. The IDB in conjunction with its member countries present poverty indicators at less than two United States dollars (US $2) a day spending power.[24]

The public's perception of poverty is usually the combination of absolute and relative perceptions, and as a consequence their interpretation of poverty alleviation programmes is subjective. However, as indicated by the policy positions of the government (PNM) of Trinidad and Tobago, significant efforts have been made to alleviate basic (absolute) poverty. Some of these programmes include the Targeted Conditional Cash Transfer Programme (TCCTP) which is aimed at alleviating poverty by offsetting the effects of high food prices among the poorest members of society, the Poverty Reduction Programme which aims at helping families to emerge from a life of poverty permanently, and the Micro Enterprise

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[24] Poverty reduction and promotion of social equity – Strategy document, 2003, IDB
http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=351709 accessed 15/06/10

Training and Development Grant (MEG) which assists needy clients – including victims of domestic violence, probationers and welfare recipients - to undertake small business ventures or engage in skills training.

While the government of Trinidad and Tobago has continued to highlight its efforts, 60% of the respondents of the survey have indicated that they do not believe that this government (PNM) has effective programs to alleviate poverty in the population. Only 3% believe that the government is dedicated to its process of poverty alleviation, while another 20% have indicated by their responses that the government in some way is attempting to alleviate poverty in Trinidad and Tobago. (**N1**)

Figure 76: The Extent to Which the Government Combats Unemployment
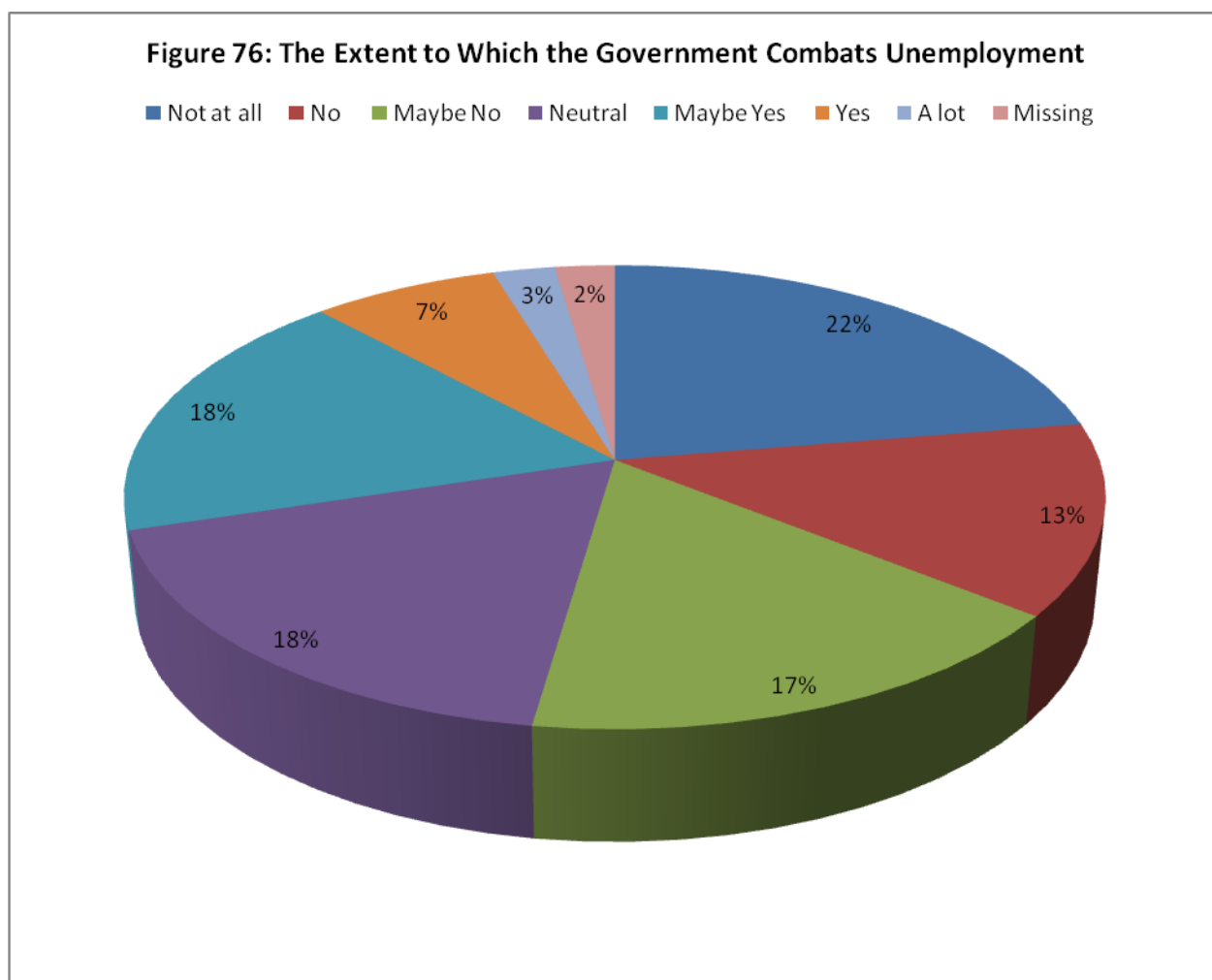
The unemployed population is made up of persons above a specified age who are available to, but did not, furnish the supply of labour for the production of goods and services[25].

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[25] International Labour Organisation; Employment and Unemployment;
http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/Statistics/topics/Employment/lang--en/index.htm

Further, unemployment can be characterised into several levels: acute (where persons have been out of the workforce for several years), seasonal (job activities are based on agricultural or other needs, and so involvement in wage labour occurs on a rolling basis), temporary (short-term job-loss.)

Unemployment has also been characterised as one of the leading factors which constrains the development of countries. In Trinidad and Tobago there are varying categories of unemployment, inclusive of seasonal, chronic, general, and transitional.

The government of Trinidad and Tobago has introduced the Unemployment Relief Programme (URP), which is managed by the Ministry of Local Government, and provides short-term employment to citizens of the country. The programme has three components:

a) Core Employment component which provides short-term employment on a rotation basis to unemployed persons
b) The Women's Programme which teaches women marketable skills while providing employment, using a "earn while you learn" approach
c) The Special Projects Delivery component which awards contracts for work in the community to small scale contractors

On the other hand, the Community-Based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP) was established in 2001 by the government as an attempt to encourage job creation and productivity in the economy.

While criticisms have been leveled against both the URP and CEPEP programmes, the URP is designed for short-term relief work for the unemployed and the CEPEP is intended to increase the potential of individuals and groups to become successful entrepreneurs.

When asked the extent to which government combats unemployment (**N12**), not disaggregating the categories unemployment, less than 3% of the respondents believe that the government is doing "a lot" to solve the unemployment problem in Trinidad and Tobago. 28% overall responded with the perception that the government was attempting to positively combat unemployment. Cumulatively, over 50% of the respondents indicated dissatisfaction with the government's attempts to alleviate the unemployment situation.

Figure 77: Extent to Which the Government Combats Unemployment - by Levels of Income
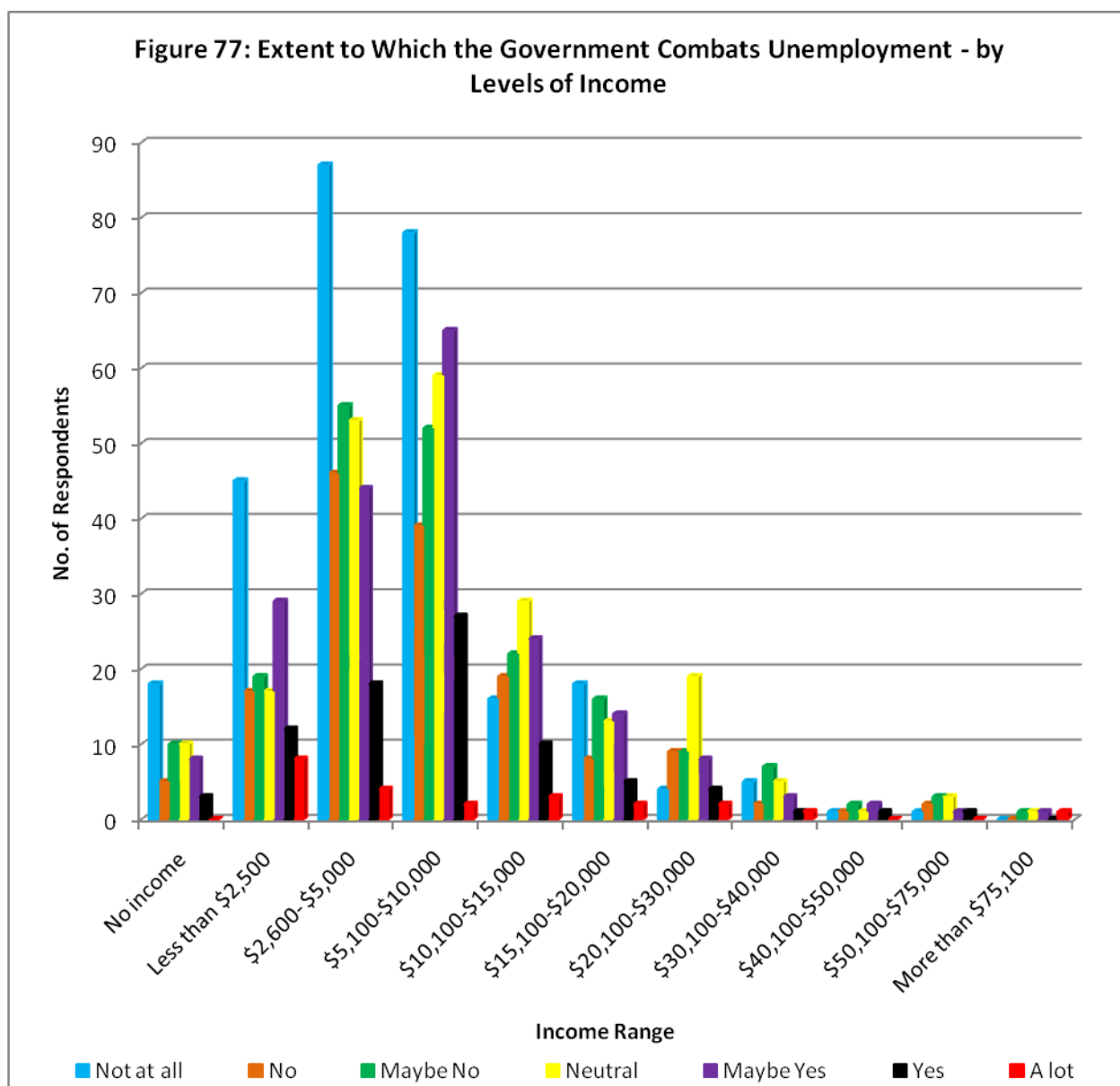
Interestingly, of the total number of respondents who indicated their dissatisfaction with the government's fight against unemployment, 45% of those respondents were those who had attained the level of Secondary School CXC O'Levels. This figure may suggest the lack of job opportunities for those with CXC passes.

Figure 78: Respondents' Opinions on Whether the Country is Suffering from an Very Serious Economic Crisis

- We are suffering a very serious economic crisis
- We are suffering a crisis but it is not very serious
- There is not an economic crisis
- Missing

45%

43%

9%

3%
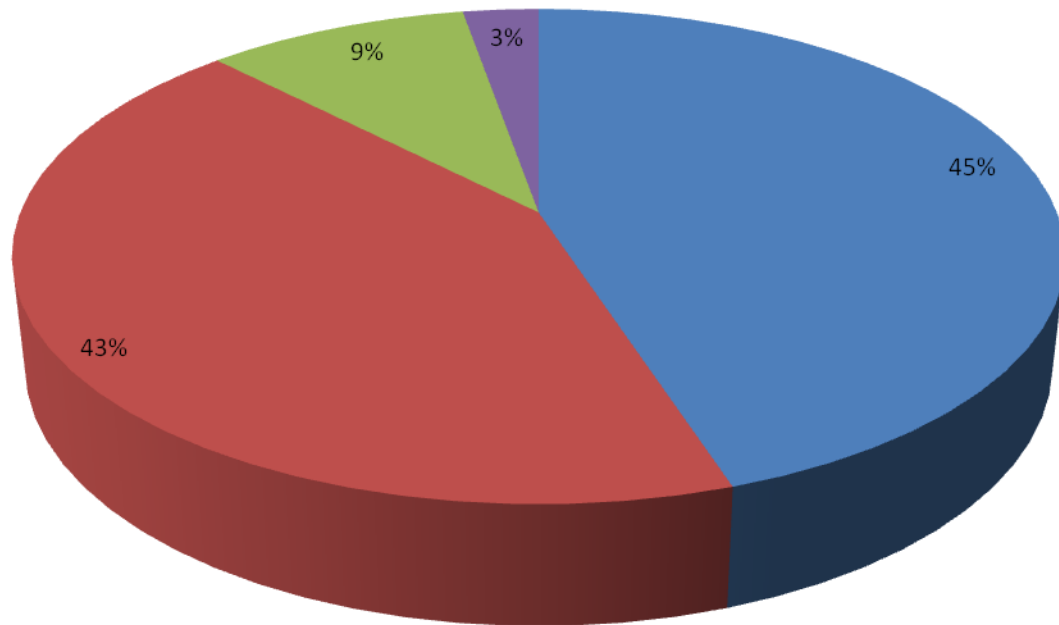
The argument has been advanced that the global financial crisis (2009) has caused significant stress to the financial systems both in developed and developing states. The global economic slowdown has brought with it commodity price changes and sluggish export markets. While the economies of some developing states have demonstrated resilience, the negative impact of the global economic slowdown has also extended to the Caribbean region.

With respect to Trinidad and Tobago and in response to the question **CRISIS1**, which asked whether or not the country is suffering from a serious economic crisis, an aggregate of 88% of the respondents indicated the belief that the country was experiencing a crisis. Of this 88%, 51% of these respondents indicated that they believed the crisis was serious.

Figure 79: Respondents' Perceptions of Who are Responsible for the Country's Economic Crisis
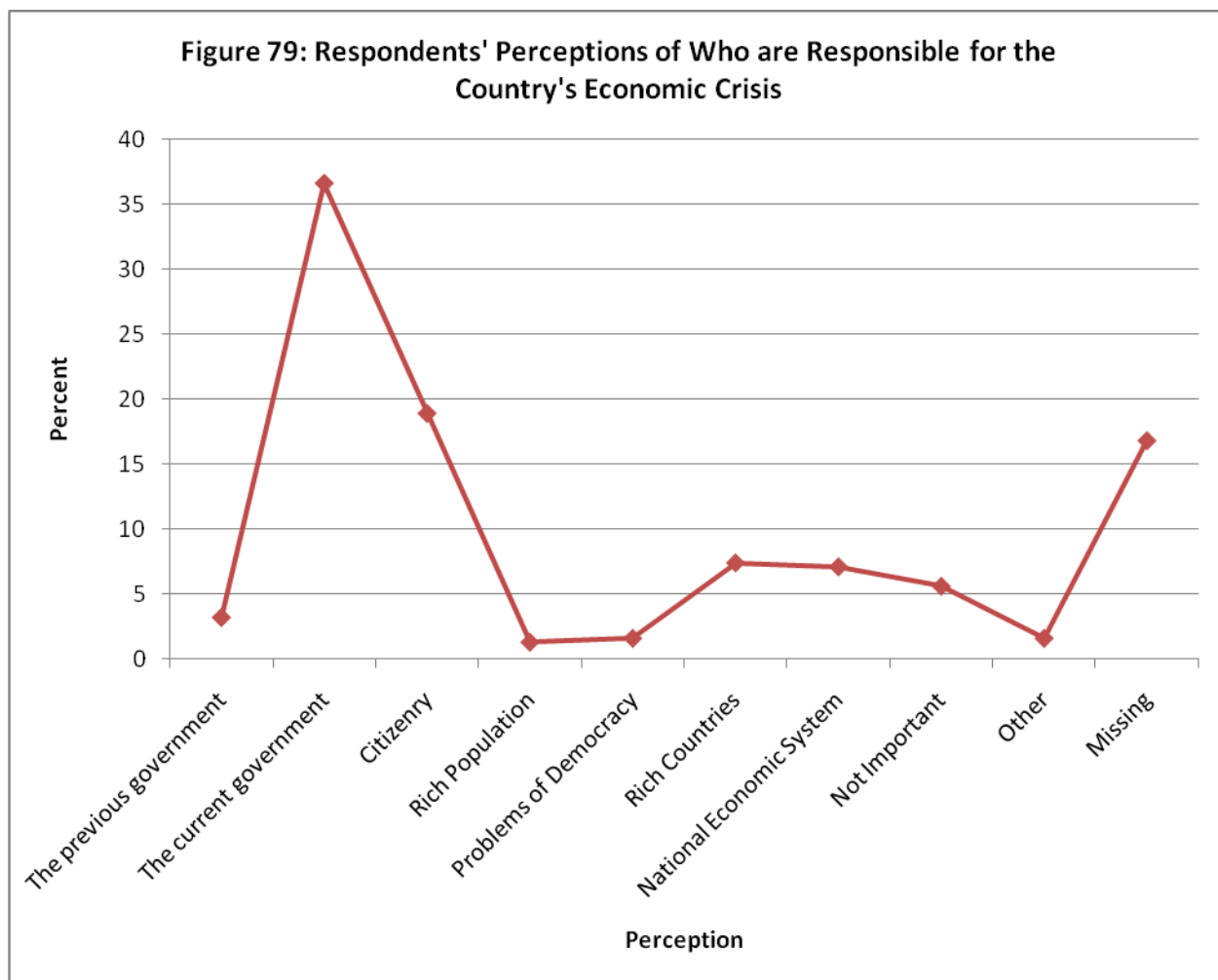
Respondents viewed the causes of the economic crisis locally in a diverse number of ways. Significantly, 37% of the respondents blamed the present government (PNM) for the state of the economy, and 19% blamed citizens of Trinidad and Tobago for the country's economic crisis. No other category is deemed significant. (**CRISIS2**)

Figure 80: Respondents' Belief on Whether Free Trade Agreements will Improve the Economy of Trinidad & Tobago
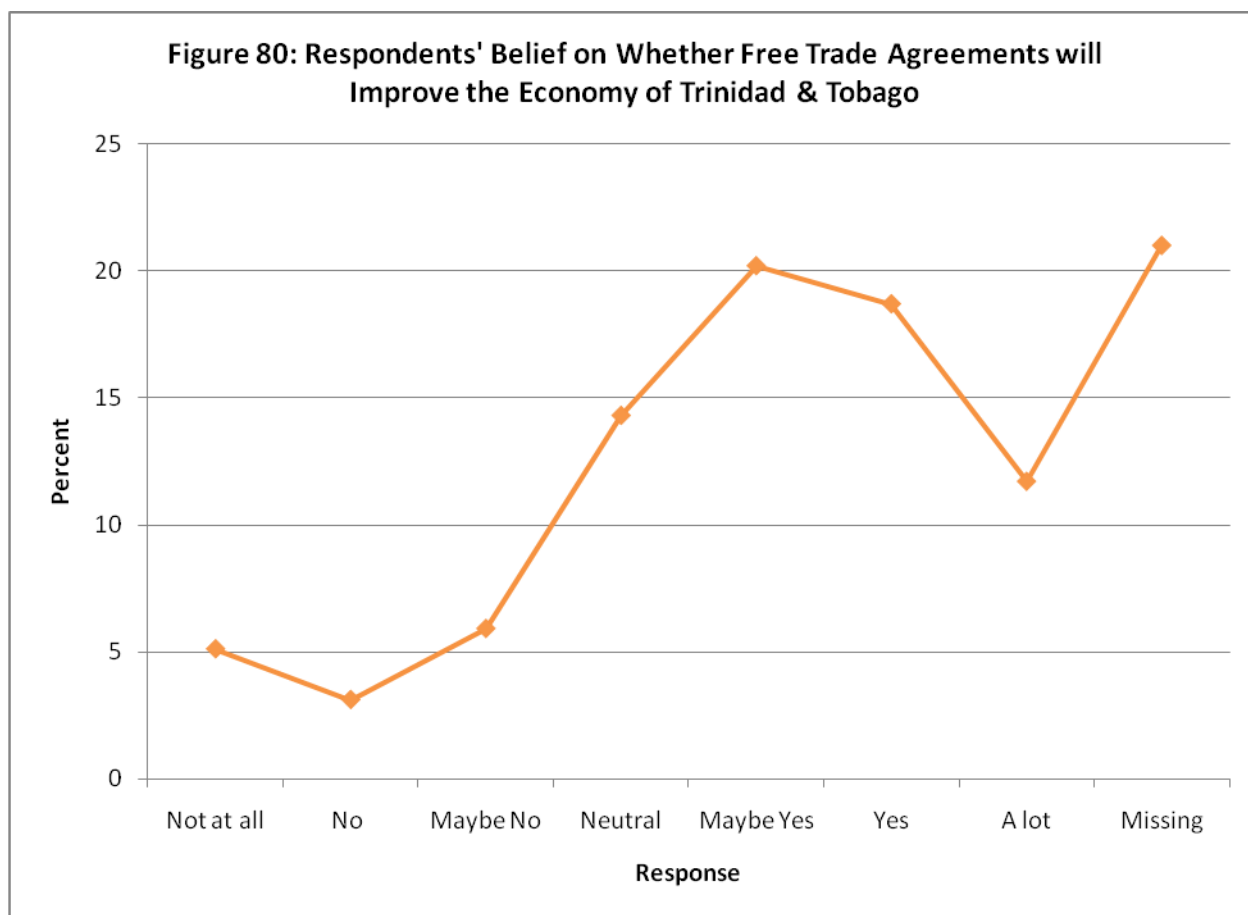
The neo-liberal paradigm in the world-system and the move towards hyper-globalisation, have strongly influenced the placement of free trade high on the international agenda in the 21st century. As a net exporter of energy products / hydrocarbons (oil and natural gas) Trinidad and Tobago is particularly interested in and influenced by free trade agreements. This has been heightened by the CARIFORUM-EU EPA, CARIBCAN and the CBI, among other arrangements.

While the majority of respondents did not answer this question (either for lack of interest or information) of those that responded, cumulatively 51% of the respondents believed that free trade would improve the state of the economy, while only 5% indicated that they have absolutely no confidence that free trade agreements would help Trinidad and Tobago's economy. (**B48**)

Figure 81: Respondents' Opinion on Whether the Government Rather than the Private Sector Should Own the Most Important Enterprises and Industries of the Country
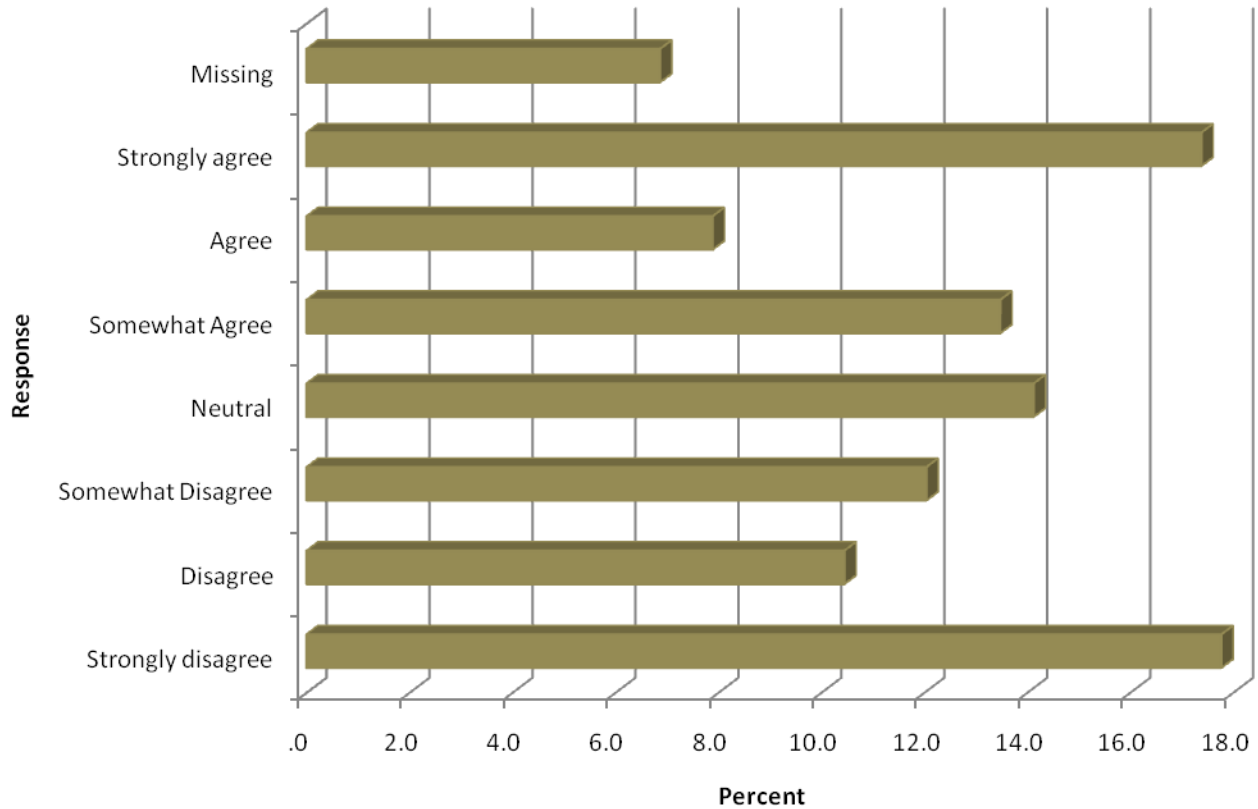
When evaluating the performance of the economy, the two major stakeholders are the private sector and the government. While the government has historically controlled the commanding heights of the economy, in contemporary times, with increased liberalisation, the private sector now has to play an increasing role as one of the engines of growth and productivity.

In seeking the respondents' opinion on who should "own the most important enterprises and industries of the country" (**ROS1**), 40% of those interviewed believe that the government should not own those important enterprises, while 37% of the respondents believe that the government should own the most important enterprises. 7% of the respondents chose not to answer the question.

This indicates that there is a significant segment (37%) of the sample who believes that government participation in the economy is justified, and that the government should control "the commanding heights of the economy".

Figure 82: Respondents' Opinions on Whether the Private Sector Rather than the Government Should be Primarily Responsible for Creating Jobs
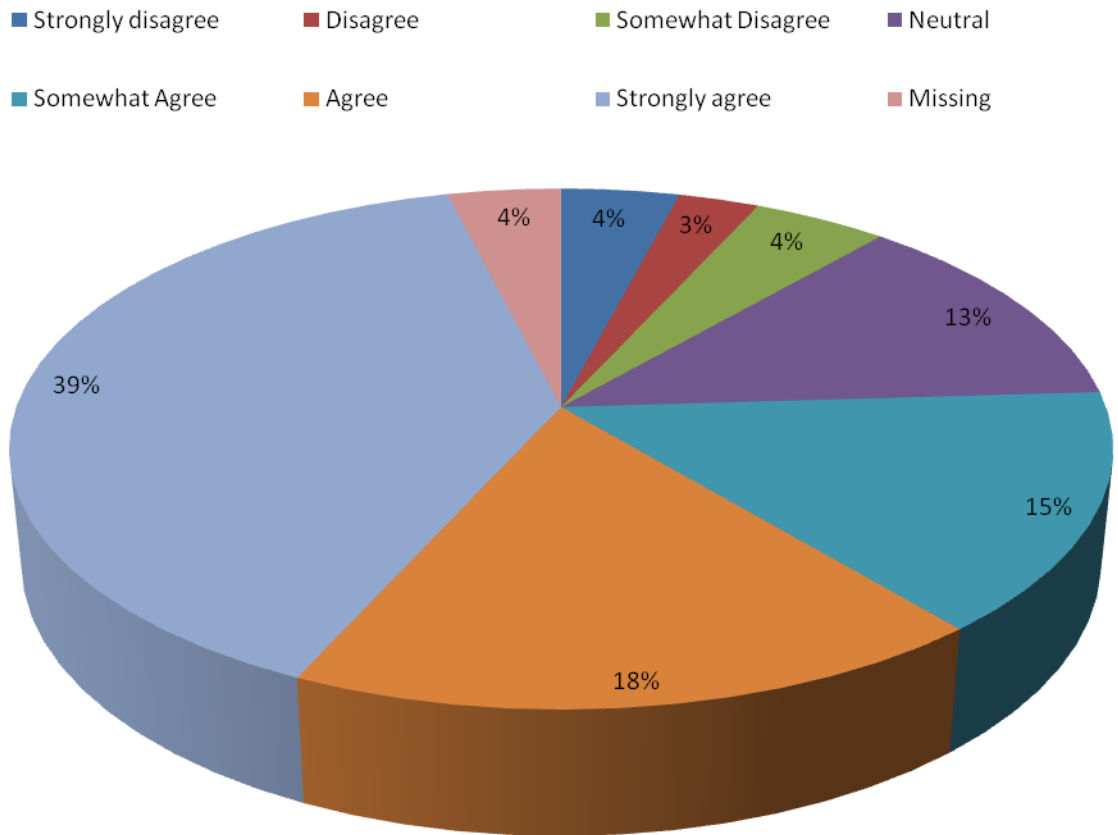
While the government has traditionally been the major employer in the economy, the private sector has increasingly been generating significant levels of employment. In response to question (**ROS3**) as to whether the private sector rather than the government should be primarily responsible for creating jobs- in an interesting contrast with the preceding response to (**ROS1**), cumulatively 73% of the respondents have indicated that they would prefer that the private sector be responsible for creating jobs in the economy, whereas only 12% of the respondents felt that responsibility for job creation should be left to the government.

Chapter 7 – Concluding Observations

After a review of the data collected in the survey, certain observations can be highlighted. Among them is the fact that the people of Trinidad and Tobago support the electoral and democratic processes of the country. Additionally there is a tradition of free and fair elections, belief in the rule of law, and the perception that the citizen's rights and freedoms are recognized and protected under the Constitution. These perceptions hold constant across the demographics of gender, age, race/ethnicity, income and educational levels.

However the survey has highlighted significant challenges to the practice of democracy and there have been noteworthy concerns expressed by the respondents as they relate to public trust, the economy, public safety and security, crime, and sexual orientation.

On the topic of democracy is was evident from the survey data that 41% of the respondents were "dissatisfied" with the manner in which democracy works in Trinidad and Tobago, while 11% of respondents was "very dissatisfied". Contrary to these findings, it was noted that almost 70% of respondents felt that democracy was alive and well in Trinidad, with a vast majority believing the country to be "somewhat democratic". Regardless of the respondents' dissatisfaction, 67% of the respondents of the survey indicated that "democracy is preferable to any other form of government".

In regard to the free and fair elections in Trinidad and Tobago, 87% of respondents disapproved of any action by any group trying to violently overthrow the government, with only a minority of 2% strongly approving such action. The survey assessed the issue of trust and included an evaluation of the EBC, which is one of the guardians of the democratic process, and it is interesting to note that approximately one third of the respondents indicated that they lack trust in the EBC. Additionally 84% of the respondents believe in the electoral process and do not regard any other system as preferable.

Interestingly, while public trust in the EBC is generally low and 43% of the respondents indicated that they did not trust the national elections of Trinidad and Tobago, the citizens of the country as represented by the survey sample, have consistently demonstrated a high rate of participation in the political and electoral processes of the country. In spite of this data, the majority of respondents still hold that an electoral democracy is preferred, with 89% of respondents in favour of a "participation for all" type democracy with only 10% of the respondents believing that the country should be governed by an "iron fist".

On the issue of the protection of citizens' basic rights and freedoms, 79% of the respondents believed that they are unprotected by the government to some degree. While 79% of respondents had favourable responses to people's participation in legal demonstrations, 93% of the respondents had not participated any such action within the last twelve months.

While the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago believe that human rights and freedoms should be upheld, it is interesting to note that 51% of the respondents "strongly disapprove" of homosexuals running for public office, and overall approximately 63% of the respondents "disapprove" of such action. Consistent

with the levels of conservatism demonstrated by the respondents in relation to homosexuals running for public office, is the fact that 69% of these respondents "strongly disapprove" of same-sex marriages.

Approximately 50% of the respondents indicated that they do not trust the Prime Minister "at all", while 41% don't trust the Integrity Commission; however the vast majority indicated that they still believe in the democratic process of the country.

50% of the respondents believe that the authorities who administer the country should always abide by the law, and 43% of respondents "strongly disapprove" of citizens taking actions into their own hands if the government fails to punish criminals.

In contrast, although the majority of respondents believe that the rule of law should be upheld in Trinidad and Tobago, only 17% of the respondents indicated that they trust the justice system of the country. This public perception of distrust in the justice system was consistent across all age demographics of the sample. Additionally, the majority of persons interviewed (63%) indicated that they have no faith in the justice system to effectively punish the guilty if they were victims of a crime.

Although the motto of the Police Service of Trinidad and Tobago is to "protect and serve… with an attitude characterised by attentiveness, reliability, responsiveness, competence, manners and fairness[26]", a significant percentage of the respondents (33%) indicated that they do not in any measure trust the country's Police Service, with only a seemingly marginal percentage of the respondents (3%) indicating that they trust the Police Service "a lot". Interestingly, the level of mistrust within the younger age demographics surpass those levels of mistrust among the older age demographics. There still exists, however a large perception of mistrust of the Police Service which transcends all demographic groupings and is not specifically limited to a particular age range.

Delinquency and crime were of the highest concern in the range of issues affecting the country (approximately 60% of the respondents), and 71% of the respondents indicated that crime is "very much" a threat to the future well-being of the country. This is assumed to be blue-collar crime as 96% of respondents indicated that they were not asked to pay a bribe to the police or any arm of the state bureaucracy. Having recorded this, the survey indicates that 94% of the respondents believe that corruption amongst public officials exists, with this perception being most strongly held amongst the 36 to 50 age range. 73% of the respondents believe that the government is not trying to combat this corruption.

While Trinidad and Tobago is one of the wealthiest islands in the Caribbean, with a relatively high GDP per capita, 36% of the respondents indicated that their current salaries and total household income were insufficient for the satisfaction of their needs. This is significant, as 40% of the respondents indicated that their household income has not increased over the last two years, while inflation in the economy has been on the rise. On the management of the economy, 22% of the respondents believed that the government was managing the economy well, 61% of the respondents believed that it was

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[26] Trinidad and Tobago Police Service; *To Protect and Serve with P.R.I.D.E.*;
http://www.ttps.gov.tt/AboutTTPS/OurMottoPromise/tabid/115/Default.aspx

being mismanaged. This was substantiated by the fact that poverty in Trinidad and Tobago was on the rise, and 60% of the respondents did not believe that the government had poverty alleviation programmes to effectively combat this situation.

Poverty is inextricably linked to unemployment, and so were the perceptions of the respondents to these two issues. Over 50% of the respondents indicated dissatisfaction with the government's attempts to alleviate unemployment, while at the same time, 88% of the respondents believed that the country was experiencing a financial crisis, of which 37% blamed the government directly.

The role of the media (print, television, radio and Internet) in influencing societal perceptions must be considered when analysing the results of such a survey. It is assumed that the media presents information in a manner which is understandable to its audience, and is the source from which many people obtain the information that form their opinions and perceptions of, among other things, risks[27].

Recent literature suggests that while the media may be only one factor that informs risk perceptions, the availability of such media (number and vividness of articles/images) does affect people's estimation and perception of risks[28]. When applied to the present context, this suggests that the frequency with which the media reports on crime and corruption may then play a role in the public's perception of these issues.

Another interesting finding is that while the media may significantly affect perceptions of general risk, it does not so greatly affect personal risk assessments, as people are more likely to be affected by direct personal experience and direct information from persons about their own experiences when assessing personal risk[29]. Therefore, although the public may identify crime and corruption as major societal problems, they may not indicate being personally affected by such issues.

While the survey data collection method is useful in collecting data from a large sample of a population, this method also presents certain drawbacks. Survey research produces empirical data on real-world observations and allows a breath of coverage of both events and people that is more likely to produce a representative sample which might be extrapolated to a greater population[30].

Additionally, face-to-face interviews, such as those conducted in this survey, often produce a higher response rate that other methods (such as postal surveys) and the researcher can select the sample of respondents to create a better balance in the demographics included in the data. Even with face-to-face interviews however, response rates are sometimes low, especially with questionnaires of severe length, as was sometimes the case in this survey.

While the close-ended types of multiple-choice questions used in the present survey are useful in that they allow many questions to be asked in a relatively short space of time which facilitates data summary

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[27] Koné, D. and Mullet, E.; *Societal Risk Perception and Media Coverage*; Risk Analysis 14; (1994); pp 21-24
[28] Af Wahlberg, Anders and Sjoberg; *Risk Perception and the Media*; (2000); Journal of Risk Research 3; pp 31-50
[29] Ibid
[30] Kelley, Kate, Clark, Brown, Sitiza; *Good Practice in the Conduct and Reporting of Survey Research*; International Journal for Quality in Health Care 15; (2003); pp 261-266

and analysis, limited response options also limit and may omit a preferred answer[31]. The pilot survey was used to create an exhaustive list of responses to alleviate this limitation.

Additionally, such closed responses require a moderate knowledge of the topic in order to select an appropriate answer. Other concerns when conducting face-to-face interviews are the possible bias/effect of the interviewer on the responses, and the cost associated with training and dispatching interviewers to conduct the survey.

In conclusion, the survey has sought to evaluate the issues as they relate to democracy, rule of law, security, public trust and the overall economy and to fulfill the objective of broadening the understanding of citizens' perceptions and involvement in the democratic process. It is therefore envisaged that the survey and this report will inform and guide the relevant stakeholders including policy makers, the international community, civil society, academics and the general populace in an effort to advance the democratic agenda.

The survey sought to look at the practice of democracy in Trinidad and Tobago and sought to provide a greater understanding of the citizens' perceptions of the democratic process. After the analysis of the data and an evaluation of the responses, it is clear that there exists a need for further study in several of the areas highlighted by this study.

It is recommended that these areas of interest and importance for democracy should be guided by this report and should speak to the needs of the major stakeholders (and the general citizenry) in the country.

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[31] Division of Instructional Innovation and Assessment; University of Texas;
http://www.utexas.edu/academic/diia/assessment/iar/teaching/plan/method/survey/survey_tables_questiotypes.pdf

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Annex 1: LAPOP Survey Questionnaire (Trinidad and Tobago 2010)

(Please refer to attached)

Annex 2: Enumeration Districts in Trinidad and Tobago

Enumeration Districts - Trinidad

Stratum Name	Regional Corporation	Enumeration District
East	Arima	Arima Proper
East	Arima	Malabar
East	Arima	Malabar
East	Arima	Mount Pleasant
Central	Chaguanas	Enterprise
Central	Chaguanas	Enterprise
Central	Chaguanas	Lendore Village
Central	Chaguanas	St. Charles Village
Central	Chaguanas	Chaguanas Proper
Central	Chaguanas	Munroe Settlement
Central	Chaguanas	Felicity
Central	Chaguanas	Longdenville
Central	Chaguanas	Charlieville
Central	Chaguanas	Montrose Village
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Carapichaima
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Chase Village
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Edinburgh Village
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Balmain
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Claxton Bay
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Couva Central
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Mc Bean
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Mc Bean
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Mc Bean
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Sum Sum Hill
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Brasso Caparo Village
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Calcutta Road No. 2
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Freeport
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Freeport
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Gran Couva
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Preysal
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Caparo

Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Freeport
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Freeport
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Chin Chin
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Chin Chin
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Cunupia
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Cunupia
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Gasparillo
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Gasparillo
Central	Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo	Piparo
West	Diego Martin	Big Yard
West	Diego Martin	West Moorings
West	Diego Martin	Simeon Road
West	Diego Martin	Diego Martin Proper
West	Diego Martin	Diego Martin Proper
West	Diego Martin	Diego Martin Proper
West	Diego Martin	Diamond Vale
West	Diego Martin	Covigne
West	Diego Martin	Victoria Gardens
West	Diego Martin	Four Roads
West	Diego Martin	Four Roads
West	Diego Martin	Four Roads
West	Diego Martin	Upper St. James
South	Mayaro/Rio Claro	Agostini Village
South	Mayaro/Rio Claro	Libertville
South	Mayaro/Rio Claro	Navet Village
South	Mayaro/Rio Claro	Radix
South	Penal Debe	La Romain
South	Penal Debe	La Romain
South	Penal Debe	Palmiste
South	Penal Debe	Debe Proper
South	Penal Debe	Debe Proper
South	Penal Debe	St. John's Village
South	Penal Debe	Penal
South	Penal Debe	Penal
South	Penal Debe	Penal
South	Penal Debe	Penal Rock Road

South	Penal Debe	Rochard Road
South	Point Fortin	Egypt Village
South	Point Fortin	Techier Village
West	Port of Spain	Belmont
West	Port of Spain	Belmont
West	Port of Spain	St. James
West	Port of Spain	St. James
West	Port of Spain	East Port-of-Spain
West	Port of Spain	Port-of-Spain Proper
South	Princess Town	Corinth
South	Princess Town	Friendship
South	Princess Town	New Grant
South	Princess Town	Robert Village
South	Princess Town	St. Mary's Village
South	Princess Town	Tableland
South	Princess Town	Malgretoute
South	Princess Town	Barrackpore
South	Princess Town	Eccles Village
South	Princess Town	Fifth Company
South	Princess Town	Sisters Village
South	Princess Town	St. Croix Village
South	San Fernando	Union Village
South	San Fernando	Vistabella
South	San Fernando	Paradise
South	San Fernando	Union Park
South	San Fernando	Cocoyea Village
South	San Fernando	Gulf View
South	San Fernando	Gulf View
West	San Juan/Laventille	Upper Belmont
West	San Juan/Laventille	El Socorro
West	San Juan/Laventille	El Socorro
West	San Juan/Laventille	El Socorro
West	San Juan/Laventille	Barataria
West	San Juan/Laventille	Barataria
West	San Juan/Laventille	San Juan
West	San Juan/Laventille	San Juan

West	San Juan/Laventille	San Juan
West	San Juan/Laventille	Laventille
West	San Juan/Laventille	Morvant
West	San Juan/Laventille	Morvant
West	San Juan/Laventille	Morvant
West	San Juan/Laventille	Cascade
West	San Juan/Laventille	Mon Repos
West	San Juan/Laventille	Malick
West	San Juan/Laventille	Gran Curucaye
West	San Juan/Laventille	Champ Fleurs
West	San Juan/Laventille	Santa Cruz
West	San Juan/Laventille	La Canoa
West	San Juan/Laventille	Lac Cuevas
East	Sangre Grande	Valencia
East	Sangre Grande	Balandra
East	Sangre Grande	Fishing Pond
East	Sangre Grande	Fishing Pond
East	Sangre Grande	Guaico
East	Sangre Grande	Turure
East	Sangre Grande	Sangre Chiquito
East	Sangre Grande	Sangre Grande
South	Siparia	Cap De Ville
South	Siparia	Dehili Settlement
South	Siparia	Harris Village
South	Siparia	La Fortune/Pluck
South	Siparia	Orpouche
South	Siparia	Quarry Village
South	Siparia	Siparia
South	Siparia	Beach Camp
South	Siparia	Waddle Village
South	Siparia	Aripero Village
South	Siparia	Vessigny
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Tunapuna
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Tunapuna
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Tunapuna
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Tacarigua

East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Tacarigua
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Macoya
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Macoya
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	El Dorado
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	El Dorado
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Arouca
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Spring Village
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Santa Magarita
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Caroni Village
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Oropuna Village/Piarco
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Mausica
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Mausica
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Curepe
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Curepe
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Cleaver Road
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Samaroo Village
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	La Horquetta
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	La Horquetta
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Maracas/St. Joseph
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Maracas/St. Joseph
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Heights of Guanapo
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Wallerfield
East	Tunapuna/Piarco	Warren Village

Enumeration Districts - Tobago

Stratum Name	Parish	Enumeration District
Tobago	St.Andrew	Bethel/Mt. Gomery
Tobago	St.Andrew	Calder Hall/Friendsfield
Tobago	St.Andrew	Cinnamon Hall (Gov't House)
Tobago	St.Andrew	Mount Grace
Tobago	St.Andrew	Idlewild/Whim
Tobago	St.Andrew	Sargeant Cain
Tobago	St.Andrew	Signal Hill/Patience Hill
Tobago	St.David	Golden Lane

Tobago	St.David	Moriah
Tobago	St.David	Moriah
Tobago	St.David	Plymouth
Tobago	St.George	Concordia
Tobago	St.George	Hope Farm/John Dial
Tobago	St.George	Mount St. George
Tobago	St.John	Charlotteville
Tobago	St.John	Lucy Vale
Tobago	St.Mary	Glamorgan
Tobago	St.Patrick	Buccoo/Coral Gardens
Tobago	St.Patrick	Lowlands
Tobago	St.Patrick	Old Range/Sou
Tobago	St.Patrick	Carnbee/All Field Trace
Tobago	St.Patrick	Bon Accord
Tobago	St.Patrick	Bon Accord
Tobago	St.Paul	Betsy Hope
Tobago	St.Paul	Delaford/Louis D'or/Lands Setl.
Tobago	St.Paul	Roxborough