

THE LINK BETWEEN POVERTY AND CRIME: UTILIZING RUBY PAYNE'S  
FRAMEWORK OF POVERTY

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE LINK BETWEEN POVERTY AND CRIME: UTILIZING RUBY PAYNE'S FRAMEWORK OF POVERTY**

by

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This study reports the findings of alternative measures of poverty and crime. A convenience sample was used in order to determine whether Ruby Payne's (2006), *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, is consistent with income. Participants in the sample responded to a survey based on their perceptions of their daily lives utilizing Payne's (2006) behavioral dimensions. The implications of these findings are profound for recognizing Payne's (2006) framework as alternative measures of poverty. Overall,

results revealed that Payne's typology was not consistent with income and that there was not enough crime in the sample to make a conclusion regarding poverty and crime.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The relationship between poverty and crime has been a controversial subject for years. Social scientists and criminologists have long measured poverty utilizing income (in dollars). They assume that if a family's income is less than the designated poverty level in that area, the family must be impoverished. At issue, here, is the notion that income alone may not be a valid or reliable indicator of poverty. In fact, there is some evidence revealing that poverty is a much more complicated measure than income and that the concept of poverty has behavioral manifestations that are not at all related to how much money a family earns. Therefore, in an attempt to identify alternative measures of poverty that have never been analyzed within a criminological context, Ruby Payne's (2006), *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* will be discussed. Additionally, an array of alternative measures will be examined utilizing three prominent researchers: Brownfield (1986), Dunaway et al. (2000), and Thornberry and Farnworth (1982).

According to the United States Census Bureau (2006-2010), people living in poverty tend to be clustered in certain neighborhoods rather than being evenly distributed across geographical areas. Payne (2006), in fact, argues that poverty manifests itself in various behavioral dimensions; it is not just a question of how much money an individual has but rather the behavioral issues that exist within that individual. Some researchers, however, argue that poverty should be viewed as more than merely the lowness of

income, as income only indirectly captures people's capabilities and material deprivation (Sen, 1999 & Brady, 2003). Payne (2006), in particular, focuses on generational and situational poverty and the effects that these types of poverty place on an individual and his/her family. Payne (2006) defines poverty as the extent to which an individual does without certain resources, which include financial, emotional, and spiritual resources, to name a few. Although most of Payne's (2006) research deals directly with the effects of poverty on the learning processes in formal education settings, I believe her framework will have a substantial effect on this research.

The common belief among social scientists' and criminological researchers is that there is a strong link between poverty and crime. However, evidence indicates that there is a weak to non-existent link, which can be attributed to the fact that quantitative researchers measure poverty using only income (in dollars). Although Payne (2006) does not relate her framework of poverty to crime, I intend to do two of the following things. First, Payne's (2006) typology will be analyzed in order to determine whether a correlation between poverty and crime exists. Second, data will be collected utilizing a convenience sample in order to determine whether Payne's (2006) typology is consistent with income.

In particular, this study is designed to refute the literature that currently exists regarding poverty and crime and redirect future research to focus on alternative measures of poverty. Several articles will be utilized to bring forward the research that has been analyzed regarding the relationship between poverty and crime. In addition, discrepancies from these articles will be examined, as well as limitations that scholars experienced in their research. Additionally, the advantages and disadvantages of self-

reported surveys and official data will be discussed in reference to obtaining a more reliable measure of poverty and crime. Ultimately, this research has been centered to focus first, on the consensus among researchers regarding the link between poverty and crime; second, the consensus among researchers regarding alternative measures of poverty; and last, the alternative measures of poverty provided by Payne (2006), in regards to their consistencies with income (in dollars).

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Statistics on Poverty**

The United States Census Bureau (2005) determines the official poverty rate using poverty thresholds issued each year. The thresholds represent the annual amount of income minimally required to support families of various sizes. In the late 1950s, the poverty rate for all Americans was 22.4 percent, or 39.5 million individuals (National Poverty Center, 2003). These numbers declined steadily throughout the 1960s, reaching a low of 11.1 percent, or 22.9 million individual in 1973. By 1983, the number of poor individuals had risen to 15.2 percent, or 35.3 million individuals. In 2010, the United States poverty rate was the highest it had ever been since 1993, with 15.1 percent of all persons living below poverty (U.S Census Bureau, 2006-2010). The poverty trend has fluctuated since the 1950s until recently and more importantly, while the poverty rate is increasing, the crime rate is decreasing.

The United States Census Bureau (2005) states that cities located in the South (Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and New Mexico) have a larger proportion of people living in impoverished areas than any other region. The United States Census Bureau (2011) also indicates that poverty exists where there are high crime rates, poor public schools, poor housing, and limited job opportunities. Additionally, the poverty rate for

children has historically been somewhat higher than the overall poverty rate, which might be why Brownfield (1986) focused his study on adolescents.

Children (anyone under the age of 18) represent a disproportionate share of those in poverty the U.S.; they are 24.0 percent of the total population but 36.0 percent of the poor population. In 2010, 22 percent, or 16.4 million children were poor. The poverty rate for children varies substantially by race and Hispanic origin. In particular, African-American and Hispanic children make up 38.2 percent and 35.0 percent, respectively, of the children living in poverty. On the other hand, Caucasian and Asian children make up only 12.4 percent and 13.6 percent, respectively. The primary reason for stating poverty statistics regarding children is because the articles examined in this paper focus on children (under the age of 18). Researchers in this study mainly focus their data collection on adolescents and not adults, hence the reason for statistics on impoverished children.

Additionally, in a single-parent household with one child, the poverty threshold is \$15,030, while a single parent household with two children is \$17,552. The poverty threshold for two adults with no children is \$14,602, while the poverty threshold for two adults with three children is \$26,023 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011).

### **How is poverty measured?**

All the measures of poverty in the United States Census Bureau (2005) report are determined by a comparison of two components: needs and resources. Needs are expressed in dollar amounts called poverty thresholds. These thresholds serve as the benchmark against which a family or person's resources are compared in order to determine whether they are in poverty. The current official poverty measure has been



criticized for ignoring factors that are increasingly critical to the material well-being of families (National Research Council, 1995, Ruggles, 1990, Short et al., 1999, Iceland, 2003). Criminologists, in particular, measure poverty utilizing social class by income (in dollars) and by father's occupation, to name a few. Dunaway et al. (2000) reveals that social class is often operationalized by the prestige of an individual's occupation, usually in the father's occupation. In contrast, Payne (2006) defines poverty as the extent to which an individual does without resources. Payne (2006) states that poverty is relative: if everyone around you has similar circumstances, the notion of poverty and wealth is vague. In addition, Payne (2006) defines two types of poverty: generational poverty and situational poverty, which differ significantly. Generational poverty is defined as being in poverty for two generations or longer; whereas situational poverty lasts a shorter time and is caused by extenuating circumstances (e.g. death, illness, and divorce). Payne (2006) adds that an individual brings with him/her the hidden rules of the class in which he/she was raised. Even though the income of the individual may increase significantly, many of the patterns of thought (social interaction and cognitive strategies) remain with the individual. As you can see, Payne's (2006) views on poverty differ significantly from other researchers, in the sense that she focuses on individuals' behavioral characteristics.

Payne (2006) does however agree with other scholars that several indicators of poverty (in surveying youth), such as, parents' occupation, education, and income, will determine an individual's status. However, regardless of the different measures used to test the poverty-crime link, criminologists are determined that the link weak to non-existent relationship. The only exception, however, is when researchers, particularly Brownfield (1986) and Thornberry and Farnworth (1982), utilize measures of

unemployment and welfare assistance, do they find a correlation between the poverty and crime. With that, we turn to Brownfield's (1986) research regarding social class and violent behavior.

### **Social Class and Violence**

Brownfield (1986) states that the relationship between social class and crime is one of the most studied issues in criminology. Particularly, Brownfield (1986) examines the relationship between violent behavior and a variety of measures of social class. In doing so, Brownfield (1986) utilizes two studies in order to determine whether a significant relationship exists between poverty and crime: the Richmond Youth Study (RYS) and Community Tolerance Study (CTS).

The dependent variable, violence, will be measured utilizing self-reports of violent behavior and official police records of offenses involving the use of force. The independent variable, social class, will be measured using occupation and education. Unemployment and receipt of welfare benefits are also measures incorporated under this conception of social class.

Over 1,500 questionnaires were completed by white males in a sample of students in 11 junior and senior high schools in California for the RYS. To measure self-reported violent behavior, respondents in the Richmond study were asked, "Have you ever beaten up on anyone or hurt anyone on purpose?" Answers to these questions were recorded as a dichotomous variable, "yes" or "no.

The second source of data used in Brownfield's (1986) Community Tolerance Study, involved 1,300 questionnaires completed by white males in both the second and third years of this study. Students from three rural high schools and three urban high

schools participated in the CTS. The urban high schools in the CTS were located in a city with one of the highest official crime rates in the United States. To measure self-reported behavior, respondents in the Community study were asked, “During the past 12 months, how many times did you beat up or hurt someone on purpose?” Answers to these questions were also recorded as a dichotomous variable, “yes” or “no.”

Wright et al. (1982), however, points out that Marxists reject the notion that occupation and class can be equated. Occupation identifies the technical content of the job, while class identifies social relations of domination and appropriation of the surplus value of labor (Wright et al., 1982). In rejecting this simplistic occupation scheme, Wright et al. (1982) advance their own scheme of the American class structure, which include the following five classes: the bourgeoisie and small employers, managers and supervisors, semiautonomous employees, the petty bourgeoisie, and the working class. Brownfield (1986) utilizes Wright et al.’s (1982) scheme, and in doing so, identifies social class for fathers’ occupation using three mutually exclusive categories. They are as follows: the working class (unskilled workers), semiautonomous employees (professional, craftsmen, entertainers), and supervisors (managers, self-employed merchants).

Utilizing Wright et al.’s (1982) scheme fails to have a significant effect on either self-reported or officially recorded instances of violence. The results of this analysis suggest that the class structure advanced by Wright et al. (1982) is not particularly useful in the explanation of violent behavior (crime). It should be noted however, that it was possible to only operationalize three of the five classes defined by Wright et al. (1982), which were recorded as three mutually exclusive categories. Also, to be fair, Wright et

al. (1982) never explicitly intended their class structure concept to be applied to the explanation of any type of crime or delinquency (Brownfield, 1986). On the other hand, Wright (1979) finds that this conceptualization of class is still very useful in predicting levels of income, even more useful than occupation. Given the lack of a significant association between violence and the American class structure, Brownfield's (1986) study now turns to alternative conceptualizations of class.

**Disreputable poor.** Matza (1996) introduces the definition of the "disreputable poor" as those who remain unemployed for long periods of time, including during periods of relatively full employment. The disreputable poor are also characterized by their lack of affiliations, presumably failing to make or maintain ties with their communities, neighborhood, family, church, friends, or other institutions and groups (Matza, 1996). Payne's (2006) definition of poverty refutes the latter statement; she claims that those living in poverty have strong ties with their family and friends, especially those in their immediate surroundings. Moreover, Matza (1996) cites disorder and violence as two of the most prominent characteristics of the disreputable poor. Unfortunately, he provides no data on the relationship between social class and violence. However, both the RYS and CTS provide information applicable to test this hypothesized relationship.

From the RYS, respondents were asked, "How much time during the past three years has your father been out of work because he could not find a job?" Answers to this question were recorded as a dichotomous variable, with either no employment or some employment. Second, respondents were asked, "Have your parents received welfare payments?" Answers to this second item were also coded as a dichotomous variable, "yes" or "no." Analysis of the RYS revealed that there is a relatively strong relationship

between the measures of the disreputable poor and the self-reported and official measures of violent behavior (Brownfield, 1986). More than half of those with some family history of welfare assistance admit to committing some act of violence, while two-fifths of those with no record of welfare assistance admit to such an act. There is also a strong, significant relationship between welfare assistance and having an official record for an act of force or violence. Results from the CTS, however, are very inconsistent with the results derived from the RYS; only 40 respondents report that their father is unemployed. Therefore, it is nearly impossible to uncover statistically significant relationships (Brownfield, 1986). Brownfield (1986) reveals that the frustrations and anger associated with unemployment and being on welfare are compounded by the lack of such fundamental necessities of food, clothing, and shelter among some of the disreputable poor. Analyses regarding the previous statement are included below (see Chapter IV); questions are specifically intended to examine individuals' behavioral characteristics regarding food and clothing.

**Gradational measures.** Income, occupation, and education are the three most commonly used measures of social class. The results from the RYS data are fairly clear: all four relationships (father's education, father's occupation versus self-reported assault and official force/violence) studied are statistically significant. Father's education has a comparatively strong effect on self-reported assault. There is also a statistically significant relationship between officially recorded instances of force and violence and father's education. However, father's occupation has a slightly stronger impact on officially recorded violence. Once again, the relationship between social class and violence do not appear to be as strong in the CTS as in the RYS (Brownfield, 1986).

Brownfield (1986) concludes that ignoring families with a history of unemployment or receipt of welfare payments may hide the true relationship between class and violence. Another explanation can be derived from the fact that poverty has not been measured utilizing an individual's behavioral characteristics. Ultimately, Brownfield (1986) finds that the strength and nature of the relationship between class and violence varies significantly, depending primarily on the measure of class used. Additionally, Brownfield (1986) reveals that nearly all carefully designed studies find that social class is either a very small or non-existent correlate of self-reported delinquency, and nearly all studies of delinquency use the occupation or education of the father as the sole indicator of social class, ignoring the potential of other measures of social class.

### **The Myth of Social Class and Crime**

The work presented in Dunaway, Cullen, Burton, and Evans (2000) study is spurred by the ongoing debate among researchers in regards to measuring social class and crime. Recent empirical research challenges the conclusions that crime is highest in the lower class. In addition, Dunaway et al. (2000) states that this empirical literature is plagued by limited measures of social class and by a failure to systematically study the effect of social class on crime in the adult general population. Beginning in the 1940s and 1950s, data from newly invented self-report surveys failed to show a close correspondence between a person's social stratum and level of criminal involvement (Dunaway et al., 2000). To this regard, the present work was undertaken in an attempt to remedy many inadequacies of the class-crime research.

Data on adult criminality were gathered through self-reported surveys on the general population age 18 and older residing in a Midwestern, urban area. Following standard mail survey methodology, 1,500 questionnaires were randomly sent to individuals within the sampling frame. Dunaway et al.'s (2000) sample represents the community from which it was drawn on a number of key attributes. The median age is 40.5, and the sample's median age is 41 years old (U.S. Census Bureau, 1992).

After examining the family income distribution more closely, Dunaway et al. (2000) find that lower income families are less present in their sample. Families earning less than \$20,000 represent approximately 28 percent of the sample compared with 38 percent for the population. On the other hand, the sample slightly over-estimates families with higher incomes. Families earning \$60,000 or more comprised 20.7 percent of the sample, whereas 13.5 percent of the population had family incomes in the same range. Dunaway et al. (2000) reveal that despite having slightly overrepresented higher income groups, other key economic characteristics suggest that the poor are adequately accounted for in the sample. An important difference to point out in this study, in relation to Brownfield's (1986) study, is that one focuses on the adult population while the other focuses on adolescent's and their father's occupation. Nonetheless, both produce results that are ultimately similar.

Dunaway et al. (2000) employed in their study, the National Youth Survey (NYS) delinquency scale, developed by Elliot and Ageton (1980). The dependent variable measured in this study was violence. Questions posed to respondents included, "Have you hit or threatened to hit a coworker or supervisor at work?" Answers were coded using a dichotomous variable, "yes" or "no." To assess adult, middle-class crime,

Dunaway et al. (2000) also included items such as income tax and insurance fraud. Just as in Brownfield's (1986), Dunaway et al. (2000) reveals that level of education, income, and occupational status are among the most common indicators to assess individual class position. The independent variables in this study include a wide range of social class measures. Respondents were asked to identify their current occupation by stating "whether they were unemployed, retired, or currently employed." In addition, respondents were asked, "whether the individual was receiving public assistance." Questions were asked as to "how many months in the past year had the respondent been unemployed, received welfare benefits, received food stamps, and received public housing." Results of the underclass measures versus crime are presented below.

After employing statistical techniques, Dunaway et al. (2000) reveal that the class on crime relationship was weak. No measure of social class had a significant effect on the prevalence of general crime in the past 12 months, with the exception of family income. In addition, education and socioeconomic status negatively and significantly affected violent crime. Hirschi (1969) found higher rates of self-reported delinquency in families that experienced some unemployment and welfare receipt as compared to families with no unemployment and welfare receipt.

Despite the richness and novelty of the data set in Dunaway et al. (2000), the results largely reject the notion that social class has a strong main effect on adult criminality in the general population and thus, they tend to support Tittle and Meier (1990) most recent evaluation of the class-crime debate. Tittle and Meier's (1990) point out that the strength of the class-crime relationship varies specifically on how social class and crime is measured. Tittle and Meier (1990) reviewed five studies that used an



underclass measure and found significant inverse relationships between measures of underclass and crime in some of the studies. Hagan (1992) suggested that the weaker relationships reported in Tittle and Meier (1990) and the stronger findings found by Brownfield (1986) may be due to the type of samples contained in their studies on the class-crime relationship. Additionally, Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) imply that crime does not come from an individual's location within an economic or social class, but rather in the degree to which a person is able to exercise self-control.

In conclusion, Dunaway et al. (2000) state that these observations are not meant to imply that social class is irrelevant to the study of crime, including less serious offenses. Perhaps focusing on individual's behavioral characteristics, rather than an individual's social class, will produce a different analysis.

### **Measurement in the Study of Class and Delinquency**

The primary goal in Thornberry and Farnworth's (1982) study is to assess the impact of measurement choices on the empirical identification of the theorized link between class and crime. In order to measure the relationship between class and crime, Thornberry and Farnworth (1982) measure class and delinquency in two ways. The first is consistent with the prior empirical literature and includes measures of class based on a status attainment (occupational prestige and educational attainment) model and a measure of delinquency. The second way measures class using indicators of sustained underclass status and delinquency as repeated involvement in more serious street crimes. Nevertheless, when measured in a manner consistent with status attainment conceptualizations, social class has been found to be either not significantly related, or only weakly related, to delinquency (Thornberry & Farnworth, 1982).

The analysis draws on the first four waves of data from the Rochester Youth Development Study (RYDS), multi-wave panels' study in which each subject and his or her parent were interviewed at six-month intervals. Data was also collected from the Rochester schools, police, and other agencies that have contact with youth. Wave 1 interviews were conducted in 1988 when the respondents were in the spring semester of their seventh or eighth grade. By Wave 4, the respondents were in the ninth and tenth grades.

Since males are more likely to engage in serious and chronic delinquent behavior, they are oversampled in this study (Blumstein et al., 1986). Socioeconomic measures are based on parents' response because juveniles' responses to questions about parental social class are of questionable validity (Blumstein et al., 1986). Parental interviews were designed specifically to elicit extensive information about the employment, occupation, and income, as well as, welfare status of respondents' households.

The analysis shows that none of the social class measures were significantly related to the general delinquency scale. When attention focuses on the more serious offenses represented by street crimes, evidence of the traditionally hypothesized inverse relationship between class and delinquency begins to emerge (Thornberry & Farnworth, 1982). Additionally, the findings are weaker and less consistent for the measures derived from the status attainment perspective but stronger and more consistent for underclass measures. On the other hand, unemployment, welfare receipt, and underclass status are all significantly related to street crimes.

Moreover, Elliot and Ageton (1980), using National Youth Survey (NYS), found that using the lowest class category had significantly greater rates of delinquency than

either of the other two categories, but the two higher categories were not significantly different from one another (middle class and upper class). The findings support Thornberry and Farnworth's (1982) hypothesis that, relationships are weak when status attainment measures of class and measures of delinquency are used. More importantly, Thornberry and Farnworth (1982) find that the strongest and most consistent class-crime associations are found between measures of continuing underclass status and sustained involvement in street crimes. According to Thornberry and Farnworth (1982), the class-crime association appears to be most evident when class is measured categorically, especially when it incorporates dimensions of poverty and need, which inevitably relates to Payne's (2006) framework of poverty.

Lastly, Thornberry and Farnworth (1982) reveal that social status is unrelated to criminal behavior in general. Indeed, the present results are consistent with Hirschi's (1969) assertion that the class of the father may be unimportant, but the class of the child most decidedly is not. In conclusion, when measures of the individual's own status are added to the model, and when the analysis shifts to the explanation of adult criminality, relatively strong inverse relationships are evident (Thornberry & Farnworth, 1982).

### **A Framework for Understanding Poverty**

In an attempt to define alternative measures of poverty, educator Ruby Payne's (2006) typology will be analyzed. At the outset, it is important to understand Payne's assumptions about poverty. Payne's (2006) states that poverty is relative; if everyone around you has similar circumstances then the notion of poverty and wealth are vague. In addition, poverty is caused by interrelated factors such as employment status and earnings, and family structure (Payne, 2006). Additionally, poverty manifests itself in

various dimensions; it is not just a question of how much money a person has. Not only does Payne (2006) focus on financial resources but also, emotional, mental, spiritual, physical, support systems, relationships/role models, and knowledge of hidden rules resources, which all play a vital role in the success of an individual.

Financial resources are defined by having the money to purchase goods and services. Not to mention, the ability to leave poverty is more dependent upon other resources than it is upon financial resources. One of the biggest difficulties in getting out of poverty is managing money because money is seen in poverty as an expression of personality and is used for entertainment and relationships. The notion of using money for security is truly grounded in the middle and upper classes. However, the reality is that financial resources, while extremely important, do not explain the differences in the success with which individuals leave poverty nor the reasons that many stay in poverty. Payne states that in poverty, when extra money is available, it is either shared or immediately spent (resulting in a loss of money). This dimension will be tested by asking the following question. In the survey, participants were asked questions, “How do you view money?” Responses were coded “to be used,” “to be managed,” or “to be conserved.”

Emotional resources are defined by being able to choose and control emotional responses, particularly to negative situations, without engaging in self-destructive behavior. This is an internal resource and shows itself through stamina, perseverance, and choices. Additionally, emotional resources provide the stamina to withstand difficult and uncomfortable emotional situations and feelings. According to Payne (2006), to move up from poverty to middle class or middle to upper class, an individual must give

up relationships for achievement for at least some period of time. Emotional resources are the most important of all resources, because when present, they allow the individual not to return to old habit patterns. Therefore, a certain level of persistence and an ability to stay with the situation until it can be learned are necessary. In the survey, participants were asked questions, “What would you say drives you the most in life?” Responses were coded “survival, relationships, entertainment,” or “work, achievement,” “financial, political, social connections.”

Mental resources are defined by having the mental abilities and acquired skills (reading, writing, computing) to deal with daily life. One of the biggest differences among the classes is how “the world” is defined for them. Upper class individuals view the international scene as their world; for example, one might say “my favorite restaurant is in Brazil.” Middle class individuals, on the other hand, tend to see the world in terms of a national picture, while those in poverty see the world in its immediate locale. According to Payne (2006), those living in poverty live in the moment and do not consider future ramifications, so being proactive, setting goals and planning ahead are not a part of poverty. In the survey, participants were asked questions, “How do you view the world?” Responses were coded “in terms of local setting,” “in terms of national setting,” or “in terms of international setting.”

Spiritual resources are defined by believing in divine purpose and guidance. Spiritual resources are the belief that help can be obtained from a higher power, that there is purpose for living, and that worth and love are gifts from God. According to Payne (2006), individuals in poverty usually have a strong belief in fate and destiny. Payne (2006) reveals that this is a powerful resource because the individual does not see

him/herself as hopeless and useless, but rather as capable and having worth and value because their spiritual beliefs. In the survey, participants were asked questions, “Do you believe that God affects your life?” Responses were coded as a dichotomous variable, “yes” or “no.”

Physical resources are defined by having physical health and mobility. According to Payne (2006), physical resources are having a body that is capable and mobile (self-sufficient). In the survey, participants were asked questions, “Are you healthy?” Responses were coded as a dichotomous variable, “yes” or “no.”

Support Systems resources are defined by having friends, family, and backup resources available to access in times of need. These are external resources. According to Payne (2006), support systems are not just about meeting financial or emotional needs; they are about knowledge bases as well; one only has other people whom to rely upon, and those relationships are important for survival. To whom does one goes to when help is needed? Those individuals available and who will help are considered resources.

In addition, connections to people and resources are an integral part of a healthy support system. Many individuals in poverty have a very limited support system and particularly missing, is procedural self-talk (the voice that talks an individual through a task). In the survey, participants were asked questions, “What are your views on family structure?” Responses were coded, “tends to be matriarchal,” “tends to be patriarchal,” or “depends on who has money.”

Relationships/Role Models resources are defined by having frequent access to adult(s) who are appropriate, who are nurturing to the child and who do not engage in self-destructive behavior. Payne (2006) reveals that relationships are more important in

poverty than is money. All individuals have role models. The question is the extent to which the role model is nurturing or appropriate. Can the role model parent, work successfully, and provide a gender role for the individual? It is largely from role models that the person learns how to love life emotionally (Payne, 2006). In the survey, participants were asked questions, “Most of my friends take care of me?” Responses were coded as a dichotomous variable, “yes” or “no.”

Knowledge of Hidden Rules resources are defined by knowing the unspoken cues and habits of a group. Knowledge of hidden rules is crucial to whatever class in which the individuals wishes to live. Hidden rules exist in poverty, in middle class, and in the upper class, as well as in ethnic groups and other units of people. Hidden rules are about the salient, unspoken understandings that cue the members of the group that this individual does or does not fit. In the survey, participants were asked questions, “When I am around rich people, I feel uncomfortable?” Responses were coded as a dichotomous variable, “yes” or “no. Utilizing these eight behavioral dimensions will determine whether the overall analyses are generally consistent with tracking income.

### **Discrepancies within the Research**

Undoubtedly, researchers are very inclined in studying the link between poverty and crime. However, the research conducted in Brownfield (1986) reveals that social class is merely not a great predictor of poverty, nor is it readily accessible in matching poverty thresholds with a certain class. This is so because many studies, just as Brownfield’s (1986) are conducted in high schools, which excludes those who actually live in poverty, such as high school dropouts. Hagan (1992) illustrates that much of self-report data has been measured utilizing high school students. In addition, Stark (1979)

and Thornberry and Farnworth (1982) state that since education is a predictor of future success, utilizing parents' social class may not be as important as utilizing an individual's own social class position. Rather, and researchers above would agree, there are alternative measures of poverty that may actually be more accessible in defining poverty, at the least.

Clearly, the majority of the articles fail to identify and analyze those living in impoverished areas. The most recurring problem that seems to be repeating itself in these studies is that jobless parents are over-represented and underclass families are under-represented in the data sample. Hagan (1992) seems to suggest otherwise, the problem between the relationship of unemployment and crime may or may not be instantaneous or simultaneous. The challenge is to conceptualize crime in order to capture the distinctiveness of the different class connections (Hagan, 1992). For example, "lack of food, shelter, and employment define one extreme of class-structured power relationships, while ownership, authority, and access to money defines another" (Hagan, 1992, p.8). Payne (2006) puts the latter statement into perfect financial perspective, see Chapter IV.

Much like Brownfield (1986), Dunaway et al.'s (2000) study has a number of discrepancies. First, their survey is limited in the amount of people living in impoverished areas; and second, they find that lower income families are not adequately represented in their sample. The authors estimated that the response rate for whites exceeded sixty percent. Dunaway et al. (2000) indicate that it might very well be argued that class effects would be more pronounced if they had achieved a more representative



sample. Needless to say, this corresponds with the approximations stated earlier in this paper, that research must focus solely where poverty exists.

Ultimately, Dunaway et al. (2000), Brownfield (1986), and Thornberry and Farnworth (1982) reveal that class effects on crime are relatively weak, even when the respondents differ in class characteristics (lower, middle, and upper class). From this, it can be inferred that these articles share similar discrepancies but more importantly, their research is dispersed across general populations, which is shown to be a weak measure of social class. Nonetheless, social class exerts a generally weak correlation to crime utilizing self-report criminality.

### **Self-report Studies v. Official Data**

Farnworth et al. (1994) present inconsistencies between using self-report data and official data. Tittle et al. (1978) and Braithwaite (1981) find stronger associations in official data rather than self-reported surveys when attempting to link poverty and crime. Further, Farnworth et al. (1994) reveals that official measures of delinquency reflect the more serious crimes.

Additionally, most studies of class and delinquency are cross-sectional, relying on self-reported measures of delinquency taken at one point in time (Farnworth et al., 1994). Farnworth et al. (1994) also reveals that such measures fail to distinguish between episodic involvement in delinquency and cumulative or chronic delinquency (Farnworth et al., 1994, p. 41). The study conducted by Thornberry and Farnworth (1982) does just that, in fact, it seems they do much more by utilizing longitudinal research. Thornberry and Farnworth's (1982) research includes measures of criminal involvement based on

both types of data using the same types of offenses for self-report and official data (Thornberry & Farnworth, 1982).

Other researchers, including Hindelang et al. (1979) indicate that a significant relationship would be found among social class and crime if self-reported studies reported effective answers in measuring illegal behavior. Hindelang et al. (1979) also indicates that self-report studies only measure ordinary offenses, whereas official data pick up the more serious, frequent, and chronic offenders not found in self-report studies. However, self-report studies that have previously included the more serious, chronic offenders have found that crime is most likely to occur in the lower class, which is found in utilizing official measures (Hindelang et al., 1979, Thornberry & Farnworth, 1982). I actually experienced this problem in my data collection. In fact, one of the respondents I interviewed told me explicitly that I should hand out my surveys instead of interviewing because I was more likely to receive a better response rate when they came across offense-specific questions. I, however, did not use official police records and the analysis from the self-reported illegal behavior showed no correlation between Payne's alternative measures of poverty and crime. In addition, the questions I included on the survey made up a majority of ordinary offenses, and some serious offenses; responses for both were categorized as "yes" or "no."

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES**

#### **Mission of Mercy**

Since 1994, Mission of Mercy has been providing free healthcare, free dental care and free prescription medications to the uninsured, underinsured and those who fall through the cracks of the healthcare system. Mission of Mercy is an independent nonprofit, nonsectarian-community based organization that receives no government funding. Because of this, they are able to provide healthcare without any pre-qualifications. Mission of mercy has eighteen clinics providing more than 25,000 free patient visits each year. In addition, none of their patients must prove their poverty or residency and although Mission of Mercy serves everyone that comes through its doors, their patients are predominately the uninsured working poor (Mission of Mercy, 2013).

#### **Current Study**

The current study is intended to extend the extant literature by examining alternative measures of poverty, aside from status attainment and receipts of welfare benefits. Building on the eight behavioral dimensions of Payne's (2006) framework, this study is designed to examine two research questions.

First, this research explores whether impoverished adults (as defined by their incomes) are more likely to commit crime. This hypothesis challenges criminologists' findings in the past, which claim that depending on the measure of poverty used the

relationship between poverty and crime is weak to non-existent. Therefore, based on past research and inconsistencies, I hypothesize that there will be a relationship when applying Payne's framework of poverty to crime. The alternative hypothesis, then, is that there will be no relationship between poverty and crime, after applying Payne's typology.

Second, this research explores whether the difference in mean incomes for participants will be consistent with Payne's typology in tracking income. For example, if the lower class answer falls in line with the lower income and the upper class answer falls in line with the higher income (of the groups), then Payne's typology is consistent with income. However, if the lower class answer exhibits the higher income and the upper class answer exhibits the lower income, then it could mean that Payne's (2006) typology taps into another aspect of poverty. It could, of course, also mean that Payne's measures do not reflect poverty. Further, the alternative hypothesis for this research question would be that Payne's typology is not consistent with income. Regardless of the outcome, I believe this analysis will contribute valuable research regarding Payne's typology (poverty) and income.

### **Research Design**

This survey was designed specifically to elicit extensive information on individuals' perceptions regarding their day to day lives. With that, I collected a convenience sample from individuals who received free healthcare from the Mission of Mercy Organization. The total number of patients seen on an average day at Mission of Mercy varied from thirty to fifty patients, I, however only collected 48 surveys on the two days I was present. The questionnaires that were used in this survey were derived from Ruby Payne's (2006), *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, and were only

given to individuals who gave consent to participate. Prior to consent, individuals were given a brief overview of the survey and research (poverty and crime), and if they agreed to participate, they received a consent form followed by the survey. In order to ensure that the surveys were kept anonymous, personal information, such as names and addresses were not taken.

The questions included in this survey were organized by placing the three, in some instances two, answer choices given by Payne (2006) to fit the lower class, middle class, and upper class responses. In other words, the first answer response for each question corresponds with the behavior dimensions of the lower class; the second answer response corresponds with the behavior dimensions of the middle class; and, the last answer choice corresponds with the behavior dimensions of the upper class.

### **Sample**

From the data collected, there was a 92.3 percent response rate for a sample size of 48; however, ten cases were removed because they did not respond to the question regarding income and four respondents declined to take the survey. An additional respondent was removed because he/she replied that they estimated their combined annual income to be \$195,000 in the past 12 months. Therefore, I considered this case an outlier and removed it from my analysis (which left a sample size of 37). Additionally, several respondents left a few questions blank, which I suspect was because they did not understand the questions. Those questions are denoted by “not applicable” (NA), which will be seen a couple of times in the analysis (tables) below.

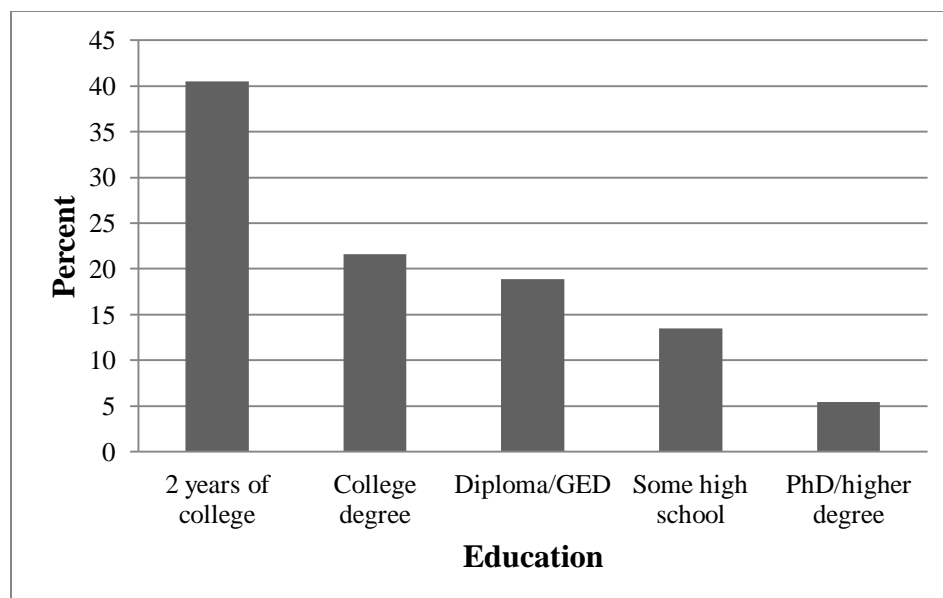
The average income for this data set (N=37) was \$33,872.43, the median income was \$23,000, and the mode was \$30,000. Values for income ranged from 0 to \$125,000.

In regards to ethnicity, the sample was comprised of 54.1 percent Hispanics and 45.9 percent non-Hispanics. Females made up the majority of the sample, accounting for 56.8 percent, while males accounted for 43.2 percent. In addition, the average individual in the sample was 56 years old, but ages ranged from 29 to 83 years old. Results are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Variables in the Analyses**

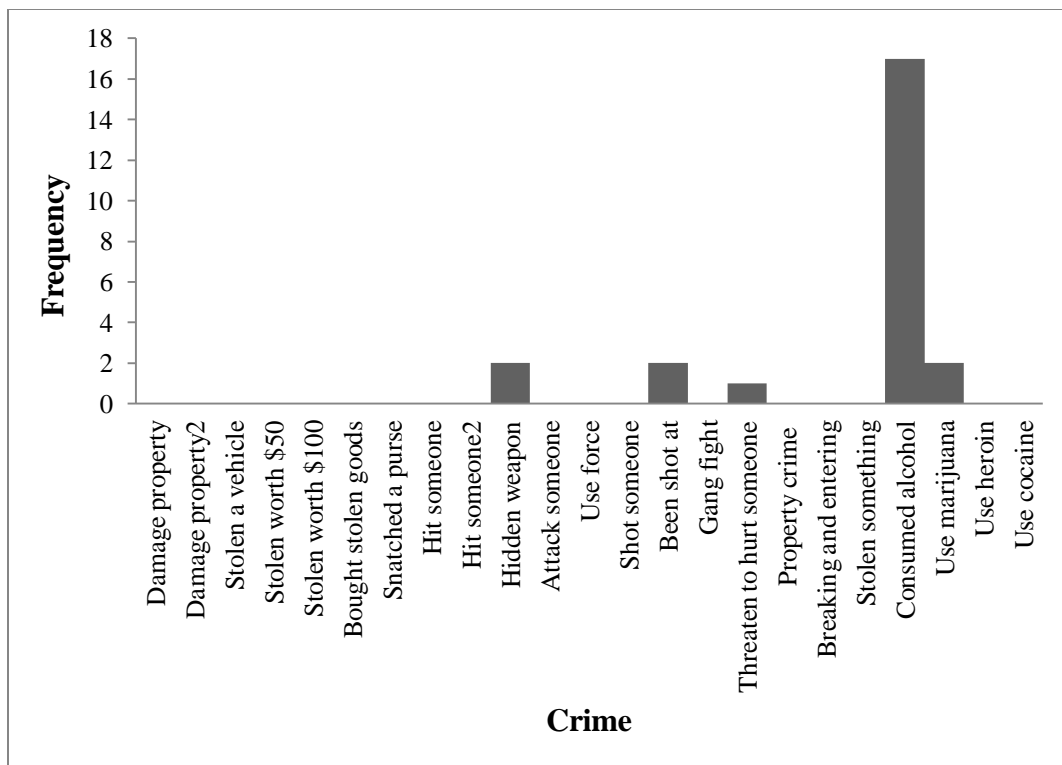
	Mean	Standard Deviation
<i>Demographic Variables</i>		
Age	56	11.80
Race	1.46	.51
Gender	1.43	.50
Income	33,872.43	30,990.14

Education was also obtained in the survey and the analysis was as follows: 40.5 percent of the sample indicated that they had two years of college; 21.6 percent of the sample indicated that they had a college degree (Bachelor' degree or Associate's Degree); 18.9 percent of the sample reported having a diploma or GED; 13.5 percent had some high school; and 5.4 percent had a higher degree (Doctoral, Dentistry). Results are shown below in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Education by percent**

In the survey, subjects were asked a combination of questions from a Self-Report Offending Measure (SRO) instrument to measure violent and property offending. The total self-report offending measure combined twenty-three offenses: ten violent offenses (e.g. carried a hidden weapon; been shot at, shot at someone) and nine property offenses (e.g. entered or broken into a building to steal something, stolen something worth more than \$50 or \$100). Of the ten violent offenses, the sample reported committing three offenses. Of the nine property offenses, subjects reported no crime and of the three drug offenses, the sample reported committing one drug offense. Essentially, only four out of thirty-seven individuals sampled admitted to committing a crime. In fact, one individual admitted to committing three of the four crimes listed above and had an income level of \$18,000. The results are shown in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2. Crimes committed by offense**



## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

#### **Hypothesis 1: Relationship between Ruby Payne's Typology and Crime**

An analysis was completed in order to test the hypothesis that Payne's (2006) framework of poverty would produce a relationship between alternative measures of poverty and crime. The analysis, however, was not indicative of any type of relationship because the sample reported a frequency of four out of thirty-seven participants who committed a crime; therefore, there was no variance to analyze. Essentially, not enough crime existed in the sample and this is a result of a couple of reasons. First, the participants in the sample reported no crime and second the sample size was not large enough to adequately measure crime. With that, future research should include a sample size above one-hundred participants in order to adequately measure the relationship between Payne's typology and crime.

#### **Hypothesis 2: Relationship of Payne to Income**

In order to determine whether Payne's (2006) typology accurately predicts income, the analysis must meet one condition: which is, that each of the behavioral dimensions provided by Payne (2006) must be consistent with income. Meaning low-income respondents would respond "to be used" when asked the question, "How do you view money?" Middle-income individuals would respond "to be managed," while high-income people would respond, "to be conserved" to the same question. Essentially if

the mean incomes for each group do not fall in line with their respective groups (low class with the lower income; higher class with the higher income), then we would conclude that the behavioral characteristics provided in the design measure a different aspect of poverty.

In some dimensions there are only two groups. Therefore, the respondents who respond consistent with Payne's typology should have the lowest mean income.

Collectively, these individual (dimension) analyses will provide insight into the concurrent reliability between income and Payne's model of poverty. The results of these analyses are summarized below by dimension.

## **Financial**

### *Question 1*

To begin, the *financial* aspect derived from Payne's (2006) dimensions was measured by comparing the mean incomes of the two groups, as defined by their responses. The first question posed was "Do you usually have enough money to buy the things you need to live?" Twenty-eight responded "yes" with an average income of \$40,795; nine responded "no" with an average income of \$12,333.

The analysis below shows that those who fall in line with Payne's typology should experience the lower income of the two groups. In this case, the lower income (\$12,333.33) corresponds with the group that responded "no," which means that this question derived from Payne's typology is consistent with tracking income. The results are shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2. Daily Necessities**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Yes	28	40,795.71	32,250.47
No	9	12,333.33	11,034.03
Total	37	33,872.43	30,990.14

*Question 2*

The next question posed under Payne's *financial* dimension was "How do you view money?" Seven individuals responded, "to be used" with an average income of \$10,857; twenty-seven responded, "to be managed" with an average income of \$35,269; three responded "to be conserved" with an average income of \$75,000.

Looking at the analysis below, it appears the responses are consistent with tracking income because the lower class individuals (\$10,857) exhibit the lower income and the upper class individuals (\$75,000) exhibit the higher income of the three groups. Additionally, the middle class answer group has an average income that falls between the lower and higher class answer group, which is consistent with Payne's typology in tracking income. The results are shown below in Table 2.1 below.

**Table 2.1. Views on Money**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
To be used	7	10,857.14	8,254.86
To be managed	27	35,269.63	30,432.82
To be conserved	3	75,000.00	25,000.00
Total	37	33,872.43	30,990.14

### Question 3

The last question posed under Payne's *financial* dimension was "How do you view the necessities of food?" Nineteen individuals responded, "did you have enough?" with an average income of \$29,315; sixteen responded, "did you like it?" with an average income of \$42,687; and one individual responded, "was it presented well?" with an average income of \$1,280.

From the analysis below, it can be inferred that this question is not consistent with Payne's typology because the mean incomes do not correspond with their counterparts (lower class, middle class, upper class). For instance, the lower class income (\$29,315) falls between the middle class and upper class incomes when it should be the lower of the three groups. Overall, the incomes do not fall in place with Payne's typology making this question inconsistent with tracking income. The results are shown in Table 2.2 below.

**Table 2.2. Views on Food**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Did you have enough?	19	29,315.79	24,200.67
Did you like it?	16	42,687.50	37,285.77
Was it presented well?	1	1,280.00	NA
Total	36	34,480.00	31,205.45

### Summary

Overall, the financial dimension derived from Payne's typology posed three questions under the analysis. Two out of three met the condition, which states that the lower class answer group should exhibit the lower income of all the groups and the upper class answer group should exhibit the higher income of all the groups. Because the

condition was met for two out three questions, this dimension is consistent with tracking income.

## **Emotional**

### *Question 1*

The first question posed under Payne’s *emotional* dimension was “What would you say drives you the most in life?” Twenty-one responded “survival, relationships, and entertainment” with an average income of \$39,000; twelve responded “work and achievement” with an average income of \$30,416; three responded “financial, political, and social connections” with an average income of \$22,666.

In order for this behavioral dimension to fall in line with Payne’s (2006) typology, the first response must exhibit the lower income of the three groups. Based on the analysis, the average income for the lower class (\$30,000) is the highest of the three groups and the average income for the upper class (\$22,666) is the lowest of the three groups. With that, it can be inferred that this question derived from Payne’s emotional dimension is not consistent with tracking income. The results are shown in Table 3 below.

**Table 3. Ambitions in Life**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Survival, Relationships, Entertainment	21	39,000.00	29,070.60
Work, Achievement	12	30,416.67	37,276.50
Financial, Political, Social Connections	3	22,666.67	11,239.81
Total	36	34,777.78	30,929.51

### Question 2

The second question posed under the *emotional* dimension was “how do you view the idea of clothing?” The results are shown in Table 3.1 below. All thirty-respondents answered, “individual style and personality” with had an average income of \$33,872. Other responses included “label is important” and “designer is important.” Not much can be derived from this analysis because the sample had no variation to analyze. The results are shown in Table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1. Views on Clothing**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Individual style and personality	37	33,872.43	30,990.14
Label is important	NA	NA	NA
Designer is important	NA	NA	NA
Total	37	33,872.43	30,990.14

### Question 3

The next question asked under Payne’s *emotional* dimension was “How would you describe your personality?” Twenty responded to “sense of humor is highly valued” (for entertainment purposes) with an average income of \$30,050; thirteen responded to “achievement is highly valued” (for acquisition and stability) with an average income of \$36,384; three responded to “financial, political, social connections are highly valued” (for connections) with an average income \$59,333.

In order for this behavioral dimension to fit Payne’s criteria, the lower income must correspond with the lower class response, “sense of humor is highly valued.” Looking at Table 3.2 below, you can see that the responses fit accordingly: the lower class answer groups exhibits the lower income (\$30,050), while the upper class answer

group exhibits the higher income (\$59,333). Additionally, the average income (\$36,384) for the middle class answer group falls between the two groups; therefore, this question is consistent with tracking income. The results are shown in Table 3.2 below.

**Table 3.2. Personality Description**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sense of humor is highly valued	20	30,050.00	25,180.34
Achievement is highly valued	13	36,384.62	37,807.71
Financial, political, social connections are highly valued	3	59,333.33	31,564.74
Total	36	34,777.78	30,929.51

### *Summary*

Overall, the emotional dimension derived from Payne's typology posed three questions under the analysis, but only one out of the three questions met the condition. Based on this fact, this dimension is not consistent with tracking income.

### **Mental**

#### *Question 1*

The first question under Payne's *mental* dimension is "How do you view the world?" Nine responded "in terms of local setting" (the city) with an average income of \$21,364; five responded "in terms of national setting" (United States) with an average income of \$37,000; and twenty-two responded "in terms of international setting" (the world) with an average income of \$38,454.

With that, the mean income of the respondents who responded "in terms of local setting" must be the lowest of the three and the income of the respondents who responded "in terms of international setting" must be the highest of three groups. This question

derived from Payne’s typology fits the criteria because the lower class answer group (city) has the lower income (\$21,364), while the upper class answer group (international setting) has the higher income (\$38,454) of the three groups. The results are shown in Table 4 below.

**Table 4. Views on the World**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
City	9	21,364.44	22,092.65
United States	5	37,000.00	52,445.21
International Setting	22	38,454.55	22,059.42
Total	36	33,980.00	31,422.73

### *Question 2*

The second question posed under Payne’s *mental* dimension is “How do you view education?” Eleven responded to “education is valued but not reality” with an average income of \$34,090; fifteen responded “education is important for success and making money” with an average income of \$36,666; eleven responded “education is necessary for maintaining connections” with an average income of \$29,843.

From the analysis above, it is clear that the average income of all three groups do not track income closely. The lower class answer group has an average of \$34,090, which is much higher than the upper class answer group (\$29,843) but lower than the middle class answer group (\$36,666). It is clear that there is no consensus among the analysis for either response (low class, middle class, and upper class) and therefore, this question derived from Payne’s typology is not consistent with tracking income. The results are shown in Table 4.1 below.



**Table 4.1. Views on Education**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Education is valued but not reality	11	34,090.91	35,353.79
Education is important for success and making money	15	36,666.67	30,665.63
Education is necessary for maintaining connections	11	29,843.64	29,348.88
Total	37	33,872.43	30,990.14

*Question 3*

The third question posed under Payne's *mental* dimension is "How do you view time?" Twenty-five responded "the present is most important" with an average income of \$32,920; seven responded "the future is most important" with an average income of \$23,285; five responded "traditions and history are most important" with an average income of \$53,456.

Looking at the analysis below, we can see that the lower class answer group (\$32,920) exhibits an income that falls between the middle class (\$23,285) and upper class answer groups (\$53,456). Further, the five who responded to "traditions and history are most important" had the highest income among the three groups, which does fall in line with the Payne's (2006) criteria regarding the upper class. However, because the other two groups are inconsistent with Payne's (2006) typology, this means that this particular question does not track income consistently. The results are shown in Table 4.2 below.

**Table 4.2. Views on Time**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
The present is most important	25	32,920.00	27,883.56
The future is most important	7	23,285.71	12,229.94
Traditions and history are most important	5	53,456.00	55,434.46
Total	37	33,872.43	30,990.14

*Question 4*

The last question posed under Payne's *mental* dimension is "How do you view love?" Twenty-nine responded "based upon whether the individual is liked" with an average income of \$32,724; three responded "based upon achievement" with an average income of \$17,666; four responded "based upon social standing and connections" with an average income of \$62,500.

If the analysis above fit Payne's (2006) typology, then the average income would be lowest for the lower class answer group. This is not, however, the case because the lowest class answer group exhibits an average income (\$32,724) that falls between the middle class and upper class answer groups. Consequently, the upper class answer group does fit the criteria because Payne (2006) states those who respond "based upon social standing and connections" should exhibit the highest average income of the three groups, which is the case here. Additionally, the middle class answer group has the lowest income, which according to Payne (2006), should have an income that falls between the two other groups. From this, it can be inferred that this question derived from Payne's typology is not consistent with tracking income. The results are shown in Table 4.3 below.

**Table 4.3. Views on Love**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Based upon whether the individual is liked	29	32,724.14	27,737.15
Based upon achievement	3	17,666.67	8,386.49
Based upon social standing and connections	4	62,500.00	50,744.45
Total	36	34,777.78	30,929.51

### *Summary*

The mental dimension derived from Payne's typology posed four questions under the analysis, but only one of the four questions met the condition. Essentially, this means that this overall mental dimension is not consistent with tracking income.

### **Spiritual**

#### *Question 1*

The only question posed under the *spiritual* dimension was "Do you believe that god affects your life?" Thirty-four responded "yes" with an average income of \$33,978; three responded "no" with an average income of \$32,666.

From this, findings should illustrate that those who strongly believe in fate will have the lowest income of the two groups. Looking at the analysis, it can be inferred that it does just the opposite. In fact, the criteria reveal that those who believe that god affects their life have a higher average income (\$33,978) than those who do not believe that god affects their life (\$32,666). Although this does not fall in line with Payne's (2006) criteria, it should be noted that the difference between the incomes is very small. It should also be noted, however, that skewness in the data may exist because the data were collected in a church setting. Nonetheless, this question derived from Payne's typology is not consistent with tracking income. The results are shown in Table 5 below.

**Table 5. Views on Religion**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Yes	34	33,978.82	30,790.88
No	3	32,666.67	40,513.37
Total	37	33,872.43	30,990.14

*Summary*

The spiritual dimension derived from Payne's typology posed only one question under the analysis and did not meet the one condition. Although the average incomes were extremely close for this analysis, it can be concluded that this overall spiritual dimension is not consistent with tracking income.

**Physical***Question 1*

The first question posed under Payne's *physical* dimension was "Are you healthy?" Twenty-six individuals responded "yes" with an average income of \$39,087; eleven responded "no" with an average income of \$21,545.

Looking at the analysis above, the group that responded "no" exhibits a lower average income (\$21,545) than the group that responded "yes." From this, it can be inferred that this question derived from Payne's typology is consistent with tracking income. It should also be noted for this specific question that the data may be skewed because data collection was conducted for individuals experiencing health issues. The results are shown in Table 6 below.

**Table 6. Health**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Yes	26	39,087.69	33,839.97
No	11	21,545.45	18,885.78
Total	37	33,872.43	30,990.14

*Question 2*

The second question posed under Payne's *physical* dimension was "Are you able to get around town easily?" Thirty-two responded "yes" with an average income of \$34,946; five responded "no" with an average income of \$27,000.

According to Payne (2006), the group that should possess the lower average income will be the group that responds to not being able to get around town easily. This is certainly the case because the group that responded "no" exhibited the lower average income (\$27,000) than the group that responded "yes" (\$34,946). Therefore, this question derived from Payne's typology is consistent with tracking income. The results are shown Table 6.1 below.

**Table 6.1. Transportation**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Yes	32	34,946.25	31,873.20
No	5	27,000.00	36,495.28
Total	37	33,872.43	30,990.14

*Summary*

The physical dimension derived from Payne's typology posed two questions under the analysis and both questions met the condition. The lower class answer group exhibited the lower income, while the upper class answer group exhibited the higher

income. Additionally, the middle class answer group exhibited the income between the lower class and upper class answer groups for both questions. Therefore, based on the analysis, this overall physical dimension is consistent with tracking income.

## Support Systems

### *Question 1*

The first question posed under Payne's *support system* dimension was "If you got sick, is there somebody that can help you with your daily chores?" Twenty-eight responded "yes" with an average income of \$40,821; and, nine responded "no" with an average income of \$12,253.

Based on this criterion, the group who responded "yes" has the highest average income (\$40,821) and the group who responded "no" has the lower income (\$12,253). From this, it can be inferred that this question is consistent with Payne's typology in tracking income. The results are shown in Table 7 below.

**Table 7. Daily Chores**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Yes	28	40,821.43	32,264.01
No	9	12,253.33	10,661.50
Total	37	33,872.43	30,990.14

### *Question 2*

The second question posed under Payne's *support system* dimension was "What are your views on family structure?" Sixteen responded, "tends to be matriarchal" (mother runs the household) with an average income of \$20,062; eight responded, "tends to be patriarchal" (father runs the household) with an average income of \$53,250; ten responded "depends on who has money" with an average income of \$32,500.

From the analysis illustrated below, the lower class answer group does possess the lower income (\$20,062) of the three groups; however, the upper class answer group does not possess the higher income. Additionally, the middle class answer group exhibits the higher income (\$53,250) of the three groups. Therefore, this question is not consistent with Payne's typology in tracking income. The results are shown in Table 7.1 below.

**Table 7.1. Views on Family Structure**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Tends to be matriarchal	16	20,062.50	16,663.20
Tends to be patriarchal	8	53,250.00	38,402.93
Depends on who has money	10	32,500.00	26,767.51
Total	34	31,529.41	28,510.74

### *Summary*

The support systems dimension derived from Payne's typology posed two questions under the analysis but only one question met the condition. Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that this overall support systems dimension was not consistent with tracking income.

### **Relationships/Role Models**

#### *Question 1*

The first question posed under Payne's *relationships/role models* dimension was "Most of my friends take care of me?" Ten responded "yes" with an average income of \$45,028; twenty-seven responded "no" with an average income of \$29,740.

Therefore, in order to fit Payne's (2006) criteria, the higher income group should respond "no" to the question posed, while the lower income group should respond "yes." Based on the analysis illustrated above, the higher income (\$45,028) group does not

respond “yes,” meaning this question is not consistent with Payne’s typology in tracking income. The results are shown in Table 8 below.

**Table 8. Support of Friends**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Yes	10	45,028.00	34,041.52
No	27	29,740.74	29,377.63
Total	37	33,872.43	30,990.14

### *Question 2*

The second question posed under Payne’s *relationship/role models* was “I have to spend a lot of time taking care of my friends who get into trouble.” Seven responded “yes” with an average income of \$27,040; twenty-nine responded “no” with an average income of \$36,413.

Based on the analysis below, the group exhibiting the lower income (\$27,040) responded “yes” and the group exhibiting the higher income (\$36,413) responded “no.” Thus, this question derived from Payne’s typology is consistent with tracking income. The results are shown in Table 8.1 below.

**Table 8.1. Troubled Friends**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Yes	7	27,040.00	25,649.91
No	29	36,413.79	32,427.41
Total	36	34,591.11	31,115.46

### *Summary*

The relationships/role models dimension derived from Payne’s typology also posed two questions under the analysis. Although one question met the condition, the



responses in the other question were distinctive enough to conclude that this overall dimension was not consistent with tracking income.

### **Knowledge of Hidden Rules**

#### *Question 1*

The first question posed under Payne's *hidden rules* dimension was "When I am around rich people, I feel uncomfortable?" Ten responded "yes" with an average income of \$37,500; twenty-seven responded "no" with an average income of \$32,528.

From the analysis illustrated below, the group that responded "yes" has the higher income (\$37,500) of the two groups, while the group that responded "no" has the lower income (\$32,528) of the two groups. Thus, this question derived from Payne's typology is not consistent with tracking income. The results are shown in Table 9 below.

**Table 9. Knowledge of Hidden Rules**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Yes	10	37,500.00	38,433.92
No	27	32,528.89	28,486.95
Total	37	33,872.43	30,990.14

#### *Question 2*

The second question posed under Payne's *hidden rules* dimension was "When I am around people who live in my neighborhood I feel comfortable?" Twenty-five responded "yes" with an average income of \$35,880; twelve responded "no" with an average income of \$29,690.

From the analysis illustrated below, the group that responded "yes" has the higher income (\$35,880) of the two groups, while the group that responded "no" has the lower income (\$29,675) of the two groups. Therefore, we can infer that this question is not

consistent with Payne's typology in tracking income. The results are shown in Table 9.1 below.

**Table 9.1. Comfort in Certain Neighborhoods**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Yes	25	35,880.00	32,000.41
No	12	29,690.00	29,675.03
Total	37	33,872.43	30,990.140

### *Summary*

The knowledge of hidden rules dimension of Payne's typology also posed two questions under the analysis, however, neither one of the questions met the condition. Based on this fact, this dimension was not a significant indicator of poverty.

### **Social Class**

Additionally, the measure of social class was examined in order to determine individual's perception of which social class they belonged to. Although social class is not considered a dimension in Payne's typology, Payne (2006) does indicate that those living in the lower class are oblivious to the fact they are a part of the poverty culture. Those living in the upper class are also oblivious to the fact that they are a part of the wealthy culture. Social class was measured in order to determine the relationship between Payne's typology and income. Therefore, in order for social class to be consistent with Payne's typology, the lower class answer group must exhibit the lower income of the three groups; the middle class answer group must exhibit the middle income of the three groups; and, the upper class answer group must exhibit the higher income of the three groups.

From the analysis illustrated below, eight responded “low class” with an average income of \$20,500; twenty-seven responded “middle class” with an average income of \$37, 333; one responded \$80,000.

From the analysis below, it can be inferred that individuals’ perceptions are precise with identifying the social class to which they believe they belong to. This is so because each group falls in the corresponding manner, such as low class with low income, middle class with middle income, and so forth. Although social class is not a dimension listed in Payne’s framework, it should still be considered as consistent with tracking income. The results are shown in Table 10 below.

**Table 10. Perception of Social Class**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Low Class	8	20,500.00	12,011.89
Middle Class	27	37,333.33	33,177.84
Upper Class	1	80,000.00	NA
Total	36	34,777.78	30,929.51

Table 11 below provides a summary of Payne’s (2006) behavioral dimensions. In order to say that Payne’s (2006) typology accurately tracks low income, one condition must be met: the difference between the mean incomes of the groups must fall within their corresponding groups. The mean income of the respondents who respond to the first response (poverty class) from the questions posed must be the lowest of the groups and the respondents who respond to the third response (upper class) must be the highest of the groups.

Looking at each individual analysis, we can see that at least one if not all of the questions posed under Payne’s (2006) typology was consistent with tracking income. Also, in the analysis, we can see in some instances, where two out of the three questions

were inconsistent with Payne's typology, therefore the overall behavioral dimension was not consistent with income.

Overall, there are relatively few dimensions derived from Payne's typology that are consistent in tracking income. Specifically, of the eight behavioral dimensions, two were found to be consistent with Payne's (2006) typology in tracking income.

Consequently, of the eight behavioral dimensions, six were found to be inconsistent with Payne's (2006) typology in tracking income. Based on the overall analyses, Payne's (2006) typology does accurately predict low income.

In addition, these results are neither consistent nor inconsistent with the results derived from the analysis conducted in Brownfield (1986), Dunaway et al. (2000), and Thornberry and Farnworth's (1982) research, which found that no link among alternative measures of poverty and crime. There was not enough crime in the sample to perform any analysis; therefore this study was not indicative of any type of relationship between poverty and crime.

**Table 11. Ruby Payne's Framework of Poverty**

	Does Payne's Typology Accurately Predict Low Income?	
<b>FINANCIAL:</b> Having the money to purchase goods and services.	✓	
<b>EMOTIONAL:</b> Being able to choose and control emotional resources, particularly to negative situations, without engaging in self-destructive behavior.		✓
<b>MENTAL:</b> Having the mental abilities and acquired skills to deal with daily life.		✓
<b>SPIRITUAL:</b> Believing in divine purpose and guidance		✓
<b>PHYSICAL:</b> Having physical health and mobility	✓	
<b>SUPPORT SYSTEMS:</b> Having friends, family, and backup resources available to access in times of need.		✓
<b>RELATIONSHIPS/ROLE MODELS:</b> Having frequent access to adults who are appropriate, who are nurturing to the child, and who do not engage in self-destructive behavior.		✓
<b>KNOWLEDGE OF HIDDEN RULES:</b> Knowing the unspoken cues and habits of a group.		✓

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

In summary, the analyses in this paper indicate that, depending mainly on the measure of poverty used, no relationship exists between poverty and crime. In addition, the results derived from this sample are neither consistent nor inconsistent with prior research conducted by Brownfield (1986), Dunaway et al. (2000), and Thornberry and Farnworth's (1982) research. This is so because participants indicated no crime in the sample, therefore there was no variance to analyze or conclusions to be made.

In order to test the first hypothesis, a survey was created composed of questions derived from Payne's (2006) eight behavioral dimensions. Based on the descriptive statistics, two of Payne's (2006) behavioral dimensions were found to be consistent with tracking income. Six of Payne's (2006) behavioral dimensions, however, were not consistent with tracking income.

A couple of things that may be applicable to future research are that the sample size should be larger (e.g.  $N > 100$ ) in order to gain a more desirable perspective into Payne's (2006) framework of poverty. Additionally, a second opinion would be beneficial in order to determine whether Payne's (2006) overall framework of poverty is indeed inconsistent with tracking income. Also, the surveys administered to participants in the future, should pose questions directly related to the research, as well as, include a more thorough description of each question. Several participants during the survey

expressed their concerns about not understanding certain questions, much less understanding the answer choices.

The findings in this paper offer a renewed proposal regarding Payne's (2006) behavioral dimensions for not only attempting to find a relationship between poverty and crime, but also for defining poverty differently. The findings here also draw attention to the two dimensions that did accurately track income; by providing some kind of consistency with income this research can be re-analyzed. Hopefully with revisions to the survey and more variance in crime, Payne's (2006) framework of poverty can be re-analyzed to reassess the relationship between Payne's typology as an alternative measure of poverty and the relationship between Payne's typology and crime. In addition, the analysis here has helped illustrate the difficulty in defining poverty.

Overall, this research has given me a new perspective for working with people in poverty and conducting research first hand. Perhaps if the sample size was larger, I could have gained much more insight regarding both research questions proposed. Nonetheless, the analysis illustrated above shows that Payne's (2006) typology, overall, was not consistent with tracking income.

## APPENDIX A

### CONSENT FORM

You are being asked to take part in a non-funded research study regarding poverty and crime. The purpose of this study is to measure poverty using income and Ruby Payne's hidden rules of poverty. We are asking you to take part in this project because you are a patient of the Mission of Mercy Organization. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

If you agree to participate in this study, we will conduct an interview with you. The interview will include questions about your age, race, education, income, and offense-specific questions. The interview will take about 10 minutes to complete. You must be 18 years and older to complete this interview.

I do not anticipate any risks to you participating in this study.

The records of this study will be kept anonymous and confidential. In any sort of report we make public we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researcher will have access to the records.

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide not to take part or to skip some of the questions, it will not affect you. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

This project EXP2013Q4422 was approved by the Texas State IRB on January 31, 2013. Pertinent questions or concerns about the research, research participants' rights, and/or research-related injuries to participants should be directed to the IRB chair, Dr. Jon Lasser (512-245-3413 - [lasser@txstate.edu](mailto:lasser@txstate.edu)) and to Becky Northcut, Director, Research Integrity & Compliance (512-245-2314 - [bnorthcut@txstate.edu](mailto:bnorthcut@txstate.edu)).

The researcher conducting this study is Jessica Marinez. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Jessica Marinez at [jlm290@txstate.edu](mailto:jlm290@txstate.edu) or 361-726-1274.

I have read the above document and consent to become a participant in the program by completing the interview.

Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher Signature \_\_\_\_\_



## **APPENDIX B**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

#### **FINANCIAL**

Do you usually have enough money to buy the things you need to live? Yes or No

How do you view money? Choose one.

- To be used?
- To be managed?
- To be conserved?

How do you view the necessities of food? Choose one.

- Did you have enough? (Quantity is important)
- Did you like it? (Quality is important)
- Was it presented well? (Presentation is important)

#### **EMOTIONAL**

What would you say drives you the most in life? Choose one.

- Survival, relationships, entertainment
- Work, achievement
- Financial, political, social connections

How do you view the idea of clothing? Choose one.

- Individual style and personality
- Label is important.
- Designer is important.

How would you describe your personality? Choose one.

- For entertainment purposes. Sense of humor is highly valued
- For acquisition and stability. Achievement is highly valued
- For connections. Financial, political, social connections are highly valued.

#### **MENTAL**

How do you view the world? Choose one.

- In terms of local setting. (City)
- In terms of national setting. (United States)
- In terms of international setting. (World)

How do you view education? Choose one.

- Education is valued but not reality
- Education is important for climbing the success ladder and making money
- Education is necessary for making and maintaining connections

How do you view time? Choose one.

- The present is most important.
- The future is most important.
- Traditions and history are most important.

How do you view love? Choose one.

- Love and acceptance is conditional, based upon whether individual is liked
- Love and acceptance is conditional, based upon achievement
- Love and acceptance is conditional, based upon social standing and connections

### **SPIRITUAL**

Do you believe that god affects your life? Yes or No

### **PHYSICALITY**

Are you healthy? Yes or No

Are you able to get around town easily? Yes or No

### **SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

If you got sick, is there somebody that can help you with your daily chores (caring for children, housework, etc.) Yes or No

What are your views on family structure? Choose one.

- Tends to be matriarchal (mother runs the household)
- Tends to be patriarchal (father runs the household)
- Depends on who has money

### **RELATIONSHIP/ROLE MODELS**

Most of my friends take care of me? Yes or No

I have to spend time taking care of my friends who get into trouble? Yes or No

### **KNOWLEDGE OF HIDDEN RULES**

When I am around rich people I feel uncomfortable? Yes or No

When I am around people in my neighborhood I feel comfortable? Yes or No

### **SOCIAL CLASS**

Which social class do you believe you belong to? Choose one.

- Low Class
- Middle Class
- Upper Class

### **OFFENSE-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS** Circle one.

In the past 12 months, have you:

- Yes or No Purposely damaged property belonging to your spouse or family?
- Yes or No Purposely damaged or destroyed property that did not belong to you?
- Yes or No Stolen a vehicle a motor vehicle, such as a car or motorcycle?
- Yes or No Stolen or tried to steal something worth more than \$50?
- Yes or No Stolen things worth between \$100 and \$200?
- Yes or No Knowingly bought, sold or held stolen goods?
- Yes or No Snatched someone's purse or wallet?
- Yes or No Hit someone you live with?
- Yes or No Hit someone you did not live with?
- Yes or No Carried a hidden weapon other than a pocket knife?
- Yes or No Attack someone with a weapon?
- Yes or No Use a weapon or force to get money or things from people?
- Yes or No Shot someone?
- Yes or No Been shot at?
- Yes or No Been in a gang fight?
- Yes or No Threatened to physically hurt someone?
- Yes or No Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to you?
- Yes or No Entered or broken into a building to steal something?
- Yes or No Taken something that didn't belong to you from a member of your family?
- Yes or No Consumed alcoholic beverages?
- Yes or No Used marijuana-hashish? (Pot, grass, hash)
- Yes or No Used heroin?
- Yes or No Used cocaine?

**DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS****GENDER**

What is your sex?

- Female
- Male

**ETHNICITY**

Please specify your ethnicity.

- Hispanic or Latino
- Non-Hispanic or Latino

**RACE**

Please specify your race.

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White

**AGE**

In what year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

**EDUCATION**

What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? \_\_\_\_\_

**HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

What was your combined (estimated) annual salary in 2012? \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

### ITEMS FOR MEASURE

#### **Criminal Involvement Measures**

##### *Violent Offending*

In the past 12 months have you:

- Carried a weapon
- Snatched someone's purse or wallet
- Hit someone you live with
- Hit someone you did not live with
- Attack someone with a weapon
- Use a weapon or force to get money or things from people
- Shot someone
- Been shot at
- Been in a gang fight
- Threatened to physically hurt someone

##### *Property Offending*

In the past 12 months have you:

- Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to your spouse or family
- Purposely damaged or destroyed property that did not belong to you
- Stolen a vehicle or motor vehicle
- Stolen or tried stealing something worth more than \$50
- Stolen things worth between \$100 and \$200
- Knowingly bought, sold or held stolen goods
- Entered or broken into a building to steal something
- Taken something that didn't belong to you from any member of your family
- Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to you

*Drug Offending*

In the past 12 months have you:

Consumed alcohol

Used marijuana

Used heroin

Used cocaine

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## VITA

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