



Survey Research Lab

Spring 1970

Newsletter

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NEW PROJECTS

Intergenerational Economic Relationships (052) is a personal interview survey of Black and white couples in Chicago and Jackson County, Illinois, 30 years of age or younger, to seek information on their economic and social background. The sample of 200 includes an equal number of whites and Blacks both below and above the poverty level. Interviews will be sought with the parents and adult siblings of the respondents--about 1,600 interviews in total. The study is sponsored by Professor Harold Guthrie, Bureau of Economic and Business Research (Urbana) and Professor A. J. Heins, Department of Economics (Urbana). Mati Frankel at Urbana is coordinating the study and completion is planned for July 1970.

Chicago Housing Vacancy (053) is a personal interview survey of 13,000 Chicago residents to determine housing conditions and existing housing vacancies. The study is sponsored by the Department of Development and Planning, City of Chicago. Dick McKinlay is coordinating the study at Chicago. Completion is planned for June 1970.

Public Opinion (054) is a telephone survey of Chicago residents on public opinion toward Vice President Agnew's speeches criticizing the media as well as opinions on recent protests and demonstrations. The study is sponsored by Professor Mildred Schwartz, Department of Sociology (Chicago Circle). Dick McKinlay is coordinating the study.

Racial Attitudes (055) involved data processing of 350 questionnaires on Atlanta racial attitudes. The study was sponsored by Professor Tony Orum, Department of Sociology (Urbana). Jo Cobin coordinated this recently completed study.

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Editor: Linda Ardakani

Attitudes Toward Campus Health Service (056) is a survey of 1,600 University students at Urbana on their attitudes toward the University Health Service. A mail questionnaire will be sent to 500 students and 1,100 questionnaires will be distributed to students by nurses at the Health Service. The study is sponsored by L. M. Hursh, Acting Director of the Urbana Health Service. Wallace Wilson is coordinating the study.

Changing Mores (057) is a study of three generations to ascertain changing mores by interviewing 40 families to obtain 240 interviews, with two interviews from each generation. The study is sponsored by Director Charles E. Osgood, Center for Comparative Psycholinguistics, Institute of Communications Research (Urbana). Tulsi Saral is coordinating the study and completion is planned for May 1970.

Married Students Housing (058) is a mail survey of 900 married students at the University to determine housing accommodations of married students on the Urbana campus and in community housing. The study was sponsored by the Real Estate Corporation in Chicago (for the University of Illinois). Mati Frankel coordinated this recently completed study.

Auto Accident Victims in Illinois (059) is a mail and telephone survey of adult auto accident victims in Illinois who received an insurance settlement of \$100 or more, to determine their satisfaction with method of payment, etc. The study is sponsored by Professor Jeffrey O'Connell, College of Law (Urbana) and Professor Rita Simon, Department of Sociology (Urbana). Wallace Wilson is coordinating the study and completion is planned for July 1970.

Handicapped Children (060) will provide a pre-interviewed control sample of 50 families for comparison with an already existing sample of 100 families of handicapped children. The study is sponsored by the Center for Handicapped Children (Medical Center). Dick McKinlay is coordinating the study and completion is planned for March 1970.

Illinois Training (061) involves coordinating and handling various aspects of a

survey on social participation conducted as part of a graduate course on theory and method in sociology at the Chicago Circle campus. The study is sponsored by the Department of Sociology at Chicago Circle with Professor William Erbe as their liaison person. Dick McKinlay is coordinating the study.

Personnel Managers in Illinois (062) is a survey of 200 manufacturing firms in Illinois on personnel practices, especially effects of civil rights legislation on personnel testing. SRL will obtain 100 telephone interviews with non-respondents to the sponsor's mail questionnaire. The study is sponsored by Professor K. M. Rowland, Department of Business Administration, College of Commerce (Urbana). Matt Hauck is coordinating the study.

Consumer/Product Interaction (063) is a survey of 400 heads of households in the Chicago SMSA to measure and assess meaning of product and brand use, media exposure, and store choice of consumers in Chicago. The study is sponsored by Professor Arnold M. Barban, Department of Advertising (Urbana). Tulsi Saral is coordinating the study.

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SPRING WORKSHOP ON SURVEY METHODS

This spring SRL at Urbana is offering a non-credit workshop on the fundamentals of survey methods. This is the third in hopefully a series of non-credit workshops and seminars offered by SRL staff, both here and at Chicago Circle, to supplement the social sciences courses offered by the University. SRL's first two workshops given last year were on analyzing survey data with computers.

The introduction to survey methods workshop will be a six-week course, one evening a week, open to 40 faculty, staff, and graduate students. Topics will include: survey methods and applications, different kinds of surveys, questionnaire design, sampling, coding, content analysis of unstructured responses, and proposal writing. Tulsi Saral is in charge of the workshop.

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PANEL ON CONSUMER DECISION PROCESSES: SOME FINDINGS

SRL's Panel on Consumer Decision Processes is a continuing study of young married couples' decisions on financial planning and purchases. This article presents some findings from the second wave of interviews conducted with the panel of 300 newly married couples living in Peoria and Decatur.

MONEY MATTERS

Purchase Decisions

More than half the decisions to buy, how much to spend, where to buy and what brand to choose were made jointly by the husbands and wives. However, in almost as many cases the husband made all these decisions on his own. Wives were totally responsible for making these purchase decisions in only a few cases (eight of 160 couples who made purchases).

Savings Accounts

Almost everyone (98 percent) thinks accumulating money in a savings account is a good idea. Two-thirds of the respondents think money should be saved for future expenses and emergencies, and the rest are divided between saving for major expenditures and saving to earn interest.

Spending

Though two-thirds of the wives and slightly more than half of the husbands admit they enjoy spending money, a fourth of the wives and a third of the husbands feel they have extravagant tastes. More than a third of the wives but less than a third of the husbands said they are usually short of money before a payday.

A third of the respondents try to watch every penny they spend but sometimes find it hard to make ends meet. A third of the husbands and almost half of the wives feel they spend more than they mean to. Two-thirds of the respondents always check their change after making a purchase.

Though more than a fourth of the respondents prefer the old, established brands, half of the husbands and two-thirds of

the wives enjoy trying new products. Two-fifths of the respondents compare all prices before deciding where to shop. However, a third of all respondents said they forget the price of half the goods they buy. Two-thirds of the respondents feel it pays to read weights on cans and packages. A fourth feel more expensive brands taste better.

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Almost two-thirds of the couples purchase beer or ale for home consumption, a third buy mixed cocktails, a fourth buy straight liquor and less than a fifth buy wine. Among more than a third of the couples only the husband drinks beer, and among another fourth of the couples both husband and wife drink beer. Among those couples consuming other alcoholic beverages, usually both husband and wife drink them.

ATTITUDES

About Current Issues

Over half the respondents said they tend to take up causes and fight for them. A fourth of the respondents said they are inclined to lecture others on religious, political, social and economic issues.

About Themselves

A third of the husbands but only a fourth of the wives worry a great deal about where they are in life. Over half the respondents often feel angry with themselves. Almost two-thirds of the respondents enjoy a wild party where people let themselves go.

About the Community

Most of the respondents like the community in which they live, but would be willing to move for an increase in income.

About the Future

Most of the respondents (90 percent of the husbands and 95 percent of the wives) have ambitions to go further in life and feel they have the ability to progress. Many of the husbands and most of the wives feel that the balance between success and failure is due largely to one's own efforts.

NEW FACES AT SRL

IN CHICAGO...

SRL at Chicago has recruited the following impressive bunch of research assistants to work on the mammoth Chicago Housing Vacancy Study (053).

Sally Haimo from Portland, Oregon, got her bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Chicago, a master's degree at Stanford in child development and is working toward a second master's at the University of Chicago in human development. Sally is interested in cross-cultural psychology.

Philip Haber from White Plains, New York, got his bachelor's degree in social relations at Harvard and is working toward a Ph.D. in philosophy at the University of Chicago. Next fall he plans to enter law school; he is interested in civil rights law.

Richard Horevitz from Athens, Georgia, got his bachelor's degree in animal husbandry at the University of Michigan and a master's in marine biology at the University of Chicago. But neither field really interested him--what he enjoys is working with numbers, so somehow he landed at SRL. Besides helping to prepare an interviewer training manual, Rick seems to be the Chicago Branch's roving photographer--he was recently seen outdoors (enjoying early spring weather?) taking pictures of houses for Study 053.

Gayle Kaplan from Hollywood, Florida, got her bachelor's degree in speech therapy from the University of Florida last June. She's not sure about plans for the future, but if she goes on for a master's it might be in sociology. Besides working on Study 053, she is field supervisor for Study 061.

Sherry Kelley got her bachelor's degree in history from Indiana University. She first started working for SRL as an interviewer and recently became a research assistant.

Lillian Lahr from Wyoming, Pennsylvania, got her bachelor's degree in psychology from Syracuse University and is working

toward a Ph.D. in human development at the University of Chicago.

Mike Lipkin got his bachelor's degree in sociology at the Chicago Circle campus and is now writing his master's thesis on job dissatisfaction and racial prejudice using data from the National Opinion Research Corporation. Besides working on Study 053, Mike is also doing some computer work for other SRL studies and recently set up some tables for the Faculty Benefits Study (045).

Irwin Miller from Franklin Square, New York, got his master's degree from the University of Chicago in social thought. Besides working on Study 053, he is also coordinating the Handicapped Children Study (060).

Jean Smith from Chicago got her bachelor's degree in sociology from Roosevelt University. If she goes on for a master's, it will be either in dance or (more practically, she says) in urban studies. Before coming to SRL Jean worked for almost two years in the survey research field--in marketing research for Beldo & Willmarth and for American Oil and as an interviewer for Wade-West Associates.

IN URBANA...

There is a tall, silent stranger in our midst. He is Friedmar Franz Smuda. To those of us who have met him, he is Fred. Fred is in charge of the clerical work in Data Reduction and is taking the place of Mike Stasko who left us in January.

Fred was born in Eneshiem, Germany, and has lived in the United States for 18 years. He attended Newman Central High School in Sterling, Illinois, for the required four years and graduate in 1966. He spent his freshman year in college at St. Benedicts in Atchison, Kansas, and transferred to the University of Illinois as a sophomore. Currently a senior in marketing, he plans to enroll in the MBA program.

Fred is married to a wonderful little lady named Cindy. They are expecting a child (Fred prefers a boy) in June. "His name will be Eric," says Fred.

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Fred is no different from the rest of us. He has a pet peeve about the University, "They put too many restrictions on undergraduate students. Students should have a voice in policies governing both educational requirements and overall University policy." And on Champaign, "They don't shovel streets (in winter, of course)."

*** (by Sandra Booth)

A visitor from Yugoslavia is SRL's latest staff member. Svetlana Bingulac will be working from March until June with Padmini Ramaswamy on the Intergenerational Economic Relationships Study (052).

Last September Svetlana came to the University of Michigan from the Institute for Population Studies in Social and Biological Sciences in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, through a fellowship from the Institute in Belgrade. While at the University of Michigan, she worked at the Institute of Social Research, primarily in the field section, and also took courses on survey methods.

Since the Institute in Belgrade is a new survey research organization, her purpose in coming to the United States was to learn as much as possible about conducting surveys. She will return to Belgrade this summer with notebooks full of ideas on survey research.

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INTERVIEWERS PAID PROMPTLY AT SRL

by Delores Biehl

Last December SRL initiated a new system for paying independent contract interviewers soon after their time sheets are received at Urbana. Previously all interviewers were paid weekly or every two weeks through the University's accounting office. Now paychecks for two-thirds of SRL interviewers are handled directly by SRL. (The remaining interviewers are on the University's payroll as Temporary Academic Staff and will continue to be paid every two weeks.)

Time and expense sheets received at the Urbana office by Tuesday afternoon are processed so that by Thursday afternoon paychecks are mailed to the interviewers. The Tuesday cutoff point is necessary to allow time for checking and processing the time and expense sheets.

Interviewers are asked to return the postcard sent along with each paycheck so that SRL will know whether the check has been received. This also facilitates processing of each interviewer's next paycheck.

SRL interviewers benefit from payment directly by SRL because: (1) With each paycheck interviewers receive a check stub which can be kept as a record for income tax purposes. (2) In case of error or lost checks, SRL staff at Urbana can quickly check payment records and make corrections. (3) Interviewers are paid promptly.

Mileage and other expenses, however, are still paid by miscellaneous voucher through the University's accounting office, so those payments may not be as prompt.

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INTERVIEWER PROFILE

Mrs. Brenda Beckett is one of SRL's most active interviewers; her I.D. number (003) is proof she has been with SRL since its struggling childhood years. Her interest in people, gentle friendliness, and easy ability to establish rapport with respondents all contribute to her excellence as an interviewer.

Now a resident of Decatur, Mrs. Beckett is from near London, England, where she met and married an American pilot during World War II.

She has worked at a variety of jobs, beginning as a school teacher in England during the war. She taught 12 to 14-year-old boys ("They were segregated in those days.") who were not going on to college. At the school for boys she

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"learned soccer the hard way." Did she suffer many scars? "No, dents mainly!"

Mrs. Beckett also worked for American Airlines in Dallas, for a department store in Decatur as a gift buyer, and for the U. S. Census in 1960 as an office worker where she "did a little bit of everything." And now along with interviewing for SRL, she works part-time welcoming newcomers for Decatur's city welcoming service.

She really enjoys interviewing "unless it's 12 below!" She explained that after bundling up to face the cold, once inside the respondent's door an interviewer sometimes has to suffer in her hot overcoat. An interviewer hesitates to take off her coat, though, because the respondent "might think you are going to stay forever!"

But the cold is Mrs. Beckett's only pet peeve and is one many interviewers must surely share. Of the respondents she said, "The majority of them want to help. Ninety-five percent of them are really wonderful people."

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"You're interviewing for Planned *what*?"