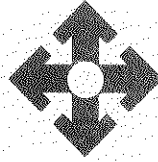


Survey



Research

Newsletter

Laboratory

No. 17

DECEMBER, 1972

IN THIS ISSUE . . .

Greetings from the Director	1
SRL Projects	2
Continuing Project	5
New Faces at SRL	5
SRL Notes	6
Interviewer Incidents	7
To Our Interviewers	8
Interviewer Profile	8
Telephone Interviewing on the NLRB Election Study by Mathew Hauck and Jeffrey Goldberg	9
Staff Publications	10

Survey Research Laboratory
 University of Illinois
 414 David Kinley Hall
 Urbana, Illinois 61801

Editor: Mary A. Spaeth

BEST HOLIDAY WISHES FROM YOUR FRIENDLY SLAVE DRIVER

Greetings:

As loyal, dedicated SRL employees, I know how sorry you all are that the Christmas Season is here. Our cruel University is again forcing you to stay home Christmas and New Year's Day to do all sorts of menial tasks around your homes when you could be reveling at work furthering the cause of survey research.

I share your misery. All I can say is that if the urge to work on those days should arise, don't fight it. Work to your heart's content, and I promise it will not be held against you. In a country like ours where all men are created equal (and women slightly more so), you should feel just as free to work on holidays as on any other day.

Even if you don't work, however, try to enjoy yourselves and have a good time, but be careful and conserve your energies so that we can all toil even harder for SRL in the year to come.

Robert (Ebenezer) Ferber



SRL PROJECTS

In the eight months that have elapsed since the end of last March, 28 new projects have been undertaken at SRL, which are considerably more than during the preceding two-thirds of a year. Some of these studies were major ones involving a large number of SRL staff members and especially the field section, while others were more minor in nature. Rather than describe all the projects here, the following listing contains the majority of those projects involving SRL's Field Operations Section.

Study 124, Environmental Action--Public Officials Survey. This was a six-phase study conducted last spring of 780 public officials and leaders in 130 Illinois communities between 10,000 and 50,000 population to learn about governmental action for environmental quality. In each community, the mayor, the public health officer, the public works director, a Chamber of Commerce official, and a newspaper editor were interviewed by phone from Urbana. The response rate on these five phases of the study was exceptionally high, with 100 percent response on all phases except the mayors, where there were two refusals and two noncontacts.

In addition to the telephone interviews, a sixth phase of the study involved a mail questionnaire sent to an environmental activist in each community.

The study was sponsored by Professor Andrew Sofranko and William Bridgeland of the Departments of Agricultural Economics and Sociology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The purpose was to provide a comprehensive picture of environmental needs and activities in middle-sized Illinois communities. The data that were collected are being used by Bridgeland in his doctoral dissertation.

The project coordinator for this study was Amy Orum.

Study 125, Academic Calendar Preference. SRL conducted this study last April at the Chicago Circle campus of the University of Illinois in collaboration with the Faculty Senate's Ad-Hoc Committee on the Structure of the Academic Calendar. The purpose was to ascertain faculty and student opinion on the desirability of the Circle's present quarter system versus alternative academic calendars such as the traditional semester system, the early semester system, the 4-1-4 system, or the trimester system. Self-administered questionnaires were mailed to the 2,223 faculty members at the Chicago Circle campus and were distributed in classrooms to a cross section of 1,237 students. The response rates were 96.5 percent for the faculty and 97 percent for the students.

The project coordinator for this study was Gloria Heinemann.

Study 126, Opinions and Activities of Decatur Community Organizations on Environment. Last spring SRL conducted a telephone survey from Urbana with a sample of 200 leaders of community organizations in Decatur, Illinois, for Professor John van Es of the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Illinois in Urbana. The objectives of the survey were to study the opinions held by these leaders on pollution and other environmental issues and to ascertain any environmental activities undertaken by their organizations.

Jutta Phillips was the project coordinator for this study.

Study 128, Citizens' Attitudes on the Solid Waste Issue. Another telephone interview survey last spring dealt with citizen attitudes toward various aspects of environmental quality. The three main areas of concern were citizen awareness, their status with regard to solid waste, and their attitudes toward possible solutions. Special emphasis was placed on solid

waste matters such as garbage collection, waste disposal, and recycling.

Telephone interviewers from both the Chicago and Urbana offices worked on the study, which involved a random sample of 2,500 residents throughout the state of Illinois. The results of the study, which was conducted for the Illinois Institute of Environmental Quality, will form the environmental attitude section of the comprehensive solid waste plan for Illinois.

The project coordinator for the study was Jeanne Sigler.

Study 129, Secondary School Home Economics Teachers in Illinois. This study, which is nearing completion, surveys the characteristics and professional interests of Illinois public secondary school home economics teachers to learn what kinds of further education they would like. Mail questionnaires were sent to one teacher in each of 628 Illinois public secondary schools outside the city of Chicago. About 87 percent of the teachers have responded so far. The study is being conducted for the Home Economics Education Division at the University of Illinois in Urbana to assist them in planning Home Ec courses to be taught on the University's campuses or at extension centers.

Mati Frankel is the project coordinator for the study.

Study 131. Proprietary Drug Use. This was a pilot study conducted last summer for Dr. Pedro J. Lecca of the College of Pharmacy at the University of Illinois Medical Center in Chicago. A sample of 100 adults in the city of Chicago were interviewed by telephone, with half of them selected from the Chicago telephone book and half selected by random digit dialing. The purposes of the study were (1) to determine the extent to which proprietary (over-the-counter) drugs are abused or misused if purchased without

professional counseling; (2) to determine what the influence of proprietary advertising has on such abuse or misuse; and (3) to identify the influence of demographic characteristics of the respondents on such abuse or misuse.

Jeanne Sigler was the project coordinator for this study.

Study 135, Methodological Study of Medical Diaries. The purpose of this study is to ascertain the effectiveness of diaries for obtaining information on people's illnesses and medical expenditures with the hope of finding a reliable method of collecting this type of data. The study will involve a sample of about 800 families in Illinois. This sample will be divided into three subgroups. Two subgroups will be asked to keep records for three months on matters such as how the members of the family feel, what kinds of drugs they buy, and what sort of medical consultation they seek each time a member of the family does not feel well. One of these subgroups will maintain a ledger-type diary and the other a journal diary. A third group will be interviewed personally each month to collect similar data based on their recollections.

The pilot test for the study has been completed and the final survey instruments are being prepared, with field work scheduled to start sometime after the first of the year.

The project is financed by a \$59,500 grant from the National Center for Health Services Research and Development of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. In charge of the study are Seymour Sudman and Robert Ferber of the SRL staff working with Wallace Wilson of the University of Illinois Medical Center.

Study 137, The Effects of Methods of Administration on Response. Another study in the Chicago area is this methodological survey being conducted

in collaboration with the National Opinion Research Center and sponsored by Seymour Sudman, Norman Bradburn, and William Locander under funding from the National Science Foundation. The purpose of the overall study is to examine the relation between four methods of questionnaire administration and response effects. The methods of administration are personal (face-to-face) interviews, self-administered questionnaires, telephone interviews, and randomized response. Of primary concern is the reliability of responses to four separate types of questions normally considered as threatening to respondents: possession of a library card, voting in elections, arrests for traffic violations, and participation in court cases.

The major part of the study, which involves a total sample of 800 respondents, is currently being conducted at NORC. SRL's part comprised screening by telephone in Chicago to obtain a list from which the final samples for the overall study could be drawn.

Project coordination for SRL's portion of the study was handled by Ron Czaja.

Study 138, Communications Study. This study was conducted last summer in the Chicago metropolitan area and Champaign-Urbana for Professor Jagdish Sheth of SRL and the Department of Business Administration at Urbana. The study involved 30 in-depth personal interviews, which had two parts. The first part was a nonstructured-nonfocused interview in which the respondent was encouraged to verbalize as many feelings and thoughts related to the telephone as he wanted. The second part was also nonstructured but was focused on several specific aspects of the telephone. Each interview was taped and transcribed. Extensive content analysis was performed.

The purpose of the study, which was for Professor Sheth's marketing segmentation research, was to determine

the general public's feelings, opinions, and attitudes toward the telephone as a mode of communication and toward various specific aspects of the telephone such as the instrument, service, type of calling, and time of calling.

Matt Hauck served as project coordinator for the study.

Study 139, University of Illinois Retiree Benefits. This is a two-phase study involving the Urbana, Chicago Circle, and Medical Center campuses of the University of Illinois and being conducted for the University Ad Hoc Committee on Retiree Benefits. In the first phase, mail questionnaires were sent the end of September to 1,600 University retirees (both academic and nonacademic) to ascertain their needs and the degree to which current retirement benefits and privileges meet those needs. Questionnaires were received back from 985 respondents, and 45 nonrespondents were later interviewed by telephone from Urbana.

The second phase of the study involves questionnaires mailed to about 200 University staff members nearing retirement. They are being asked questions similar to those asked the retirees.

Diane O'Rourke is the project coordinator for the study.

Study 143, Opinions on Waterfowl in Illinois. Earlier in the fall SRL conducted this survey on duck and geese hunting for the Illinois Department of Conservation. A sample of 300 waterfowl hunters and 500 members of the general population throughout the state of Illinois were interviewed by telephone from Urbana. The hunter sample was selected from a list of hunting license holders while the non-hunter sample was selected by (1) drawing a random sample from telephone books in selected downstate counties,

and (2) using random digit dialing within the Chicago area.

The purpose of the study was to survey opinions on waterfowl areas and management, leisure activity preferences, and demographic characteristics of waterfowl hunters and nonhunters in Illinois. The information collected will help the state develop policies on natural resources.

The project coordinator for the study was Diane O'Rourke.

Study 145, Chicago Married Couples Panel. This is a continuation and expansion of the Consumer Panel Study in Decatur and Peoria. Of concern is the economic adjustment to married life of young newly married couples. The major focus is on the lifestyles of these couples and how these lifestyles differ.

The sample consists of couples who were married in Cook County between June 1 and August 30, 1972, with the husband 32 years of age or less. These panel members will be interviewed twice yearly during the study.

The study is supported by a grant of \$163,300 from the National Science Foundation and is presently designed as a two-year panel study. The project coordinators are Francesco Nicosia of the University of California at Berkeley and Robert Ferber. Teresa de Jesus is serving as field coordinator for the study.

Study 147, Urbana Sociology Practicum II. SRL is aiding the Urbana Sociology Practicum conduct its survey, which is the major project in this graduate sociological methods course. The primary purpose of the students' survey this year is to learn about the political participation of Illinois college students on 26 campuses (both public and private) in the state.

The study is sponsored by the Sociology Department at the Urbana campus. The project coordinator is Joe Spaeth, who teaches the Practicum course.

#

CONTINUING PROJECT

Study 730, Consumer Decision Panel. The seventh wave of this study is currently under way. The study deals with the economic and social behavior of young married couples. The main focus is the decision processes involved in money management and in the accumulation of assets and debts by consumers.

The panel consists of young couples who married in Decatur or Peoria, Illinois, in the summer of 1968, with the husband having been 30 years of age or less at the time. The initial sample size of the panel was 300 couples, but it has been reduced by attrition to the current size on this wave of approximately 260 couples.

The study is under the overall direction of Robert Ferber at SRL and Francesco Nicosia of the University of California at Berkeley. Jutta Phillips is serving as field coordinator for the study.

#

NEW FACES AT SRL

The Field Operations Section in Chicago has two new research assistants. Teresa de Jesus joined the SRL staff last April. Prior to that she was studying Sociology at the Chicago Circle campus and working at the Continental Bank of Illinois. She plans to go back to school in September as well as continue working at SRL. Her major job at present involves the field work for the Chicago Married Couples Study (145).

The other new research assistant in Chicago is *Mike Collins*, who started at SRL last May as an interviewer on the Consumer Expenditure Study (119) and became a research assistant in June. He is currently involved in the Medical Diary Study (135). He did his undergraduate work at Chicago Circle, majoring in Sociology, and hopes to go back to school to do graduate work.

Two new keypunchers have joined the Data Reduction staff at Urbana. *Adrienne Washington* came to SRL early last spring. She hails from East St. Louis and was a student at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville and a telephone operator before coming to SRL. Her husband Bobby is a music major at the University of Illinois.

Virginia Baker, the other new keypuncher, also joined the SRL staff last spring. A native of Champaign, she has worked on the University of Illinois campus since 1966. She last worked as a keypunch operator for ILLIAC IV, a computer development project at the University. Her husband Neal works for Sieg Company in Champaign.

A new part-time member of the Accounting staff in Urbana is *Norma Edwards*, who handles the interviewer payroll. Norma formerly worked as an assembler at Magnavox until they closed down their facilities in Urbana earlier this year. She came to SRL in June. She drives about 18 miles in from Mansfield, where she has lived for many years.

Another new face at SRL in Urbana is *Mike Burmester*. Mike is not, however, new to the Lab, having previously been the Data Processing Section at the Chicago office. He moved down in June to take charge of the Data Processing Section in Urbana because *Nancy Morrison*, who had been in charge of data processing, is now working only half time at SRL since she has gone back to school.

Tom Jobling has taken Mike's place at SRL in Chicago. A senior at Chicago Circle, he is studying in a special experimental program, the Student Design Curriculum, in which he is specializing in psychology and computer science. Before coming to SRL, Tom worked as a consultant at the Computer Center at Chicago Circle. He is a native of Philadelphia and came to Chicago after getting out of the service.

#

SRL NOTES

In September *Mati Frankel* returned to her project coordinator's desk at SRL in Urbana after about six months in Europe, where she and their three children accompanied her husband on his sabbatical leave from the University. The family's home base in Europe was an apartment outside Zurich, Switzerland. Mati and her daughter made a 12-day trip to Russia, with stops in Leningrad, Moscow, and Kiev. While in Russia, Mati met some members of her father's family that she had never seen. The family also made a brief auto trip through Germany to Denmark and spent a month in Paris on their way home the end of the summer.

Two members of the SRL staff, *Matt Hauck* and *Seymour Sudman*, attended the fourth annual Conference of Field Directors of nonprofit survey organizations, which was held June 1 and 2 at the University of North Carolina.

Last May SRL's director, *Robert Ferber*, became a recipient of the 1972 Charles Coolidge Parlin Award at a reception and dinner in Philadelphia. This award is given for distinguished achievements in the field of marketing. In July Dr. Ferber made his semi-annual trip to South America, where he serves as a consultant to a group of Latin American research institutes working on the economic problems of Latin America. This time the meeting was in Asuncion, Paraguay.

Ed and Linda Lakner had a new addition to their household last June 13, when a second son, *Darren*, was born.

Amy Orum has left SRL and has moved with her husband *Tony* to Austin, Texas, where *Tony* has joined the faculty of the Sociology Department at the University of Texas. *Amy* is working at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University there.

On November 1 *Donna and Rich Preves* almost presented SRL with an office baby. *Donna* did telephone interviewing for the Waterfowl Study at the Urbana office until 9:30 p.m. and then went to the hospital at midnight to have *Robert William*. When the study's sponsor was informed that the results on the study were 310 hunters, 502 nonhunters, and one baby, he sent a congratulatory note saying that he was delighted at SRL's "productivity."

Due to a reorganization in the University's administration, under which the Provost's office was abolished, SRL is now under the Vice President for Academic Development and Coordination. The newly appointed vice president in charge of this office is *Barry Munitz*, who was Associate Provost of the University with offices at Urbana and at the Medical Center Campus in Chicago.

#

INTERVIEWER INCIDENTS

On one recent study, the original sample list contained many dummy addresses because these people were wetbacks who had entered the U.S. illegally. Furthermore, on the night that the interviewing was being done, the U.S. Bureau of Immigration arrested a number of the potential respondents in order to deport them. To make matters even worse, many of those respondents who could be contacted thought that the SRL interviewers were government agents.

The members of this sample represented a wide variety of nationalities, including Lithuanian, Spanish, Polish, and German. The field coordinator even had to interview two respondents in Italian, which luckily he knew.

Another study where there have been problems is the Married Couples Study in Chicago. Here the sample, which was drawn from marriage license records in Springfield, contained many wrong addresses. Whether these were actually fake addresses on the licenses or whether there were errors in the transmittal of the address information to SRL is unclear. Whatever the reason, when SRL interviewers have tried to find these newlyweds, they have come up with nonexistent addresses, no record of the couple living there, office addresses, etc. Thus, trying to contact these couples is proving to be hard.

On the other hand, there are members of the Consumer Decision Panel in Decatur and Peoria who seem to be very dedicated respondents. After the advance letter for the current wave was sent, some panel members with unlisted phone numbers called their interviewers, whom they know by this time, to set up an appointment for the interview knowing that the interviewers would have difficulty reaching them by phone since they might not have the number.

Random digit dialing provided some interesting results during the screening interviews for the Interview Methodology Study. Among the various numbers reached were the B & O Railroad, several funeral parlors, flower shops, numerous restaurants, and even the Illinois Bell Telephone office itself. Sometimes very young children answered. In one case, a little girl answered the phone and then called her "Mother." During the subsequent interview with the supposed "Mother," the woman replied to one question that she didn't have any children! And then there were the people with unlisted phone numbers

who questioned the legality of the call. However, many of these people were willing to cooperate despite their queries.

#

TO OUR INTERVIEWERS

Isn't it nice that there is a holiday season that reminds us to thank others for their friendship and help through the past year? The close working relationship that develops between office staff, field supervisors, and interviewers on a study often ends when the study is completed. We then lose touch until the next survey.

Where would SRL be without its interviewers? The resounding answer is "not very far." Since SRL was organized in 1964, telephone or personal interviewers have been involved in about 70 studies. You, the interviewers, are therefore the backbone (or should we say ears, mouth, hands and feet) of SRL.

To you then, our interviewers, we wish a happy holiday season.

We hope that all the things you wish for, the things that are important to you and that will make your life fuller and happier, will come your way in abundance.

Best wishes from all of us in the Field Operations Section:

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| Matt Hauck | Gloria Heinemann |
| Jutta Phillips | Mike Cox |
| Jeff Goldberg | Teresa de Jesus |
| Ellen Byars | Mike Collins |

#

INTERVIEWER PROFILE

*D*onna delivers
*O*n time, the
*N*umber of interviews needed, and a
*N*ew baby - -
A boy!

*P*erfect interviews bring
*R*espect from
*E*veryone at SRL for this
*V*ery special interviewer.

*E*veryone must know by now,

*S*he's Donna Preves!



TELEPHONE INTERVIEWING ON THE NLRB ELECTION STUDY

by

Mathew Hauck and Jeffrey Goldberg

The purpose of the NLRB Election Study currently being conducted at SRL is to determine what factors are at work during the course of a union election that may influence the voting behavior of the employees. Two waves of interviews are involved for each election studied, with employees being interviewed approximately two weeks before the election and then immediately after the election. At the beginning of the study, the Wave I interview was conducted in person and the Wave II interview by phone.

At the present time SRL has completed data collection on 20 NLRB union elections and will do about 10 more before June, 1973. Law students are being used as interviewers because of their training and their familiarity with the subtleties of law connected with the study.

Before the Wave I interview, employees receive an advance letter describing the survey and asking for their cooperation. It stresses the neutrality of the study and that it is not connected with the union or the company. The letter states that the employee will be contacted by an interviewer in a few days.

Since Wave I interviewing had to be done in a short period of time (to reduce conditioning from one respondent to another), the interviewer first called on the phone to set up a convenient time for a personal interview. It was felt that the Wave I interview had to be done in person for a number of reasons. First, the questionnaire had many open-ended questions that could best be asked in a personal

interview. Second, the face-to-face contact with the respondent would lend more authenticity to the study and the interviewer could better assure the respondent not only of the importance of the study but of its neutrality in relation to the company and the union.

As the study progressed, it became apparent that the sponsor needed answers to mostly closed-ended questions on Wave I and that it would be best to leave the open-ended questions until the second interview, which would be after the campaign and the election. The respondents would have much more information to give at that time. Also, by the second wave respondents would have developed more confidence and trust in the study because of the previous contact. Therefore, the Wave I questionnaire was changed to mostly closed-ended questions.

When interviewers were attempting to set up appointments for the personal interviews over the telephone, sometimes the respondents were too busy or a few of them even said, "Why not do it right now?" Rather than losing the interview, the interviewers tried proceeding right then with the now mostly closed-ended questionnaire. The results were good, and the decision was made to switch procedures. When calling on the phone, once the interviewer got the respondent he would go right into the interview itself. However, if the respondent said he was busy or that he would rather talk to the interviewer in person, then the interviewer made an appointment either to interview him over the phone later or to interview him in person.

The change in procedures has resulted in savings both in time and cost. Also, the interviewers feel that getting an interview over the phone is much easier. The only time someone has to go out in the field to do a personal interview is when the respondent requests it or when he does not have a telephone.

In preparing the revised questionnaire to be used over the telephone, elaborate precautions were taken so that the questionnaire would conform to acceptable standards for telephone schedules. Statistical comparisons were also made to insure that the information received over the phone was comparable to that obtained when interviewing in person. In order to check further the results of the two interviewing methods and their comparability, coders were asked to determine if there was any quantitative and qualitative difference between those interviews conducted in person as opposed to those conducted over the phone. Tests indicated that there was no significant difference, which furthered the changing of the design toward heavy telephone interviewing. Options continued to be presented to respondents, but interviewers were instructed to move directly into the interviewing schedules whenever possible while talking to a respondent over the phone.

As the NLRB study has progressed, SRL has learned that nearly all respondents are willing to be interviewed by telephone. We have also learned that one maximizes the likelihood of obtaining an interview if the interviewer uses a very brief introduction and moves as quickly as possible into the interviewing schedule. Accompanied by

an advance letter, such techniques appear to have been instrumental in changing the emphasis of a study that was initially thought to be best conducted in person.

#

STAFF PUBLICATIONS

Amick, Daniel J. "Implications of the 1970 Census for Professional Sociologists." In Vernon C. Pohlman (ed.), Opportunities in the Census. Normal: Illinois State University, 1972. Pp. 75-85.

Amick, Daniel J. "The Role of the University as a Processing Center for Census Data." In Vernon C. Pohlman (ed.), Opportunities in the Census. Normal: Illinois State University, 1972. Pp. 32-35.

Nemanich, Dorothy. "Is Key punch Verification Really Necessary?" Public Opinion Quarterly, v. 36, no. 2 (Summer, 1972), 260-62.

Sudman, Seymour. "On Sampling of Very Rare Human Populations." Journal of the American Statistical Association, v. 67, no. 338 (June, 1972), 335-39.