

June 28, 2019



## Happening in SRO

You can find this "Happening in SRO" and all similar newsletters on the SRO Intranet Home Page, located at: <http://isr-wp.isr.umich.edu/srointranet/> under Recent News.

***If you have items for the newsletter or if you would like to highlight an event, please let Ann Vernier or your unit director know.***



Friday, July 5 is an SRO Closure Day. Staff have the option of taking this day off as vacation or making alternate arrangements with their supervisor, if that is preferred.

## Our Work in the World (Gregg Peterson)

The relationship between having a sense of purpose in life and mortality:

You may have seen this link in a recent "ISR Weekly" digest, but in case you missed it, we thought it was worth sharing again. It is an interesting example of the value of our work over time -- how a series of questions asked on the HRS study in 2006 can become a study published in 2019 which generates real scientific and general public interest.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/daviddisalvo/2019/05/28/could-having-a-sense-of-purpose-really-extend-your-life-new-research-finds-clues-worth-considering/#76e52806d2ac>

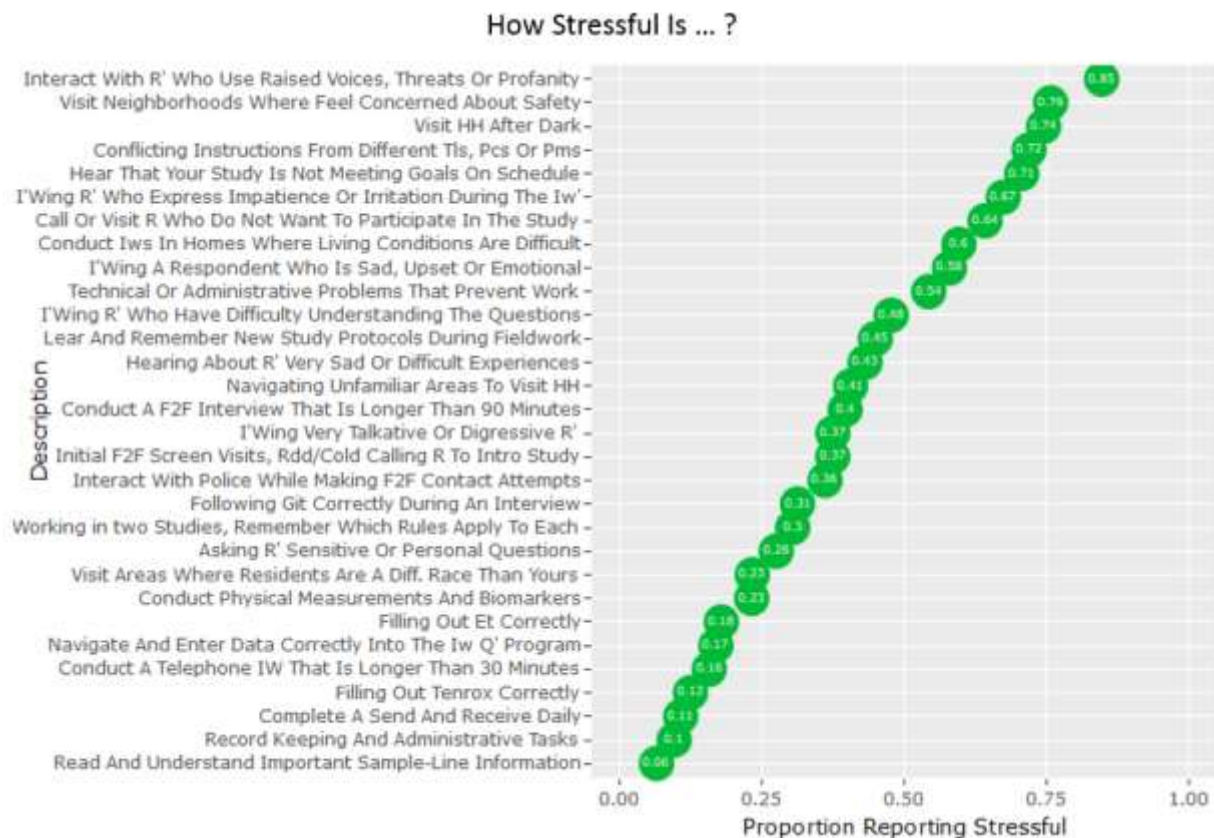
## What Stresses Our Interviewers? Findings from the SRO Interviewer Satisfaction Survey

(Carlos Macuada, Pete Batra, Grant Benson, Heidi Guyer, Andrea Sims, Ken Szmigiel)

SRO fielded an Interviewer Satisfaction Survey during the summer of 2018 to our SSL and Field interviewers. We have been reviewing the data for areas where we can improve job satisfaction and staff retention, and released an executive summary of key findings in December 2018.

One of the key areas of concern for us was better understanding what makes interviewing work stressful. We asked participants for their assessment of how stressful (“very stressful”, “somewhat stressful”, “not at all stressful”) they found different activities.

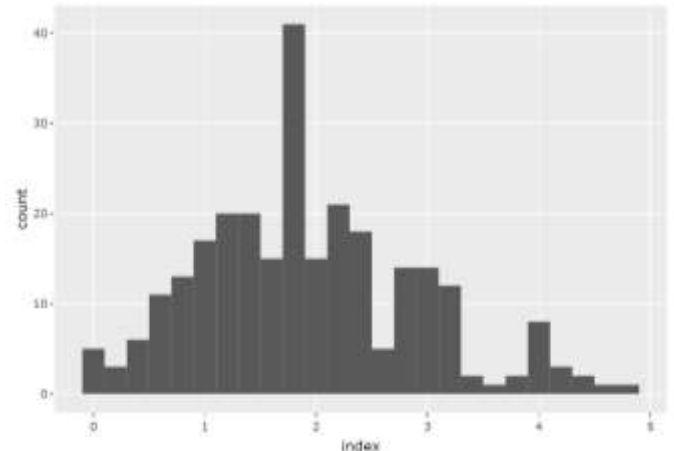
As an overall summary, the following graph shows the most stressful (very stressful + somewhat stressful) tasks that interviewers perform. The number (from .006 to 0.85) reflects the proportion of interviewers and Team Leaders reporting finding the activity either somewhat or very stressful.



As seen in the graph, the tasks that have a higher level of stress for interviewers are “Interacting with respondents who use raised voices, threats or profanity” (85%), “Visiting neighborhoods where you feel concerned about your safety” (76%, field interviewers only), “Visiting households after dark” (74%, field interviewers only), “Conflicting instructions from different TLs, PCs or PMs” (72%), and “Hearing that your study is not meeting goals on schedule” (71%).

Another way of looking at the results is to analyze how the perception of stress around the different tasks may be associated with Engagement with SRO. For example, interviewers finding their job tasks more stressful may be less engaged with their work, with the causal direction being interactive (if you are more engaged, you will experience less stress; conversely, if you have less stress, you may be more engaged).

To test this, we constructed an index that ranges from 0 to 5, where 0 indicates low stress perception and 5 indicates high stress perception.



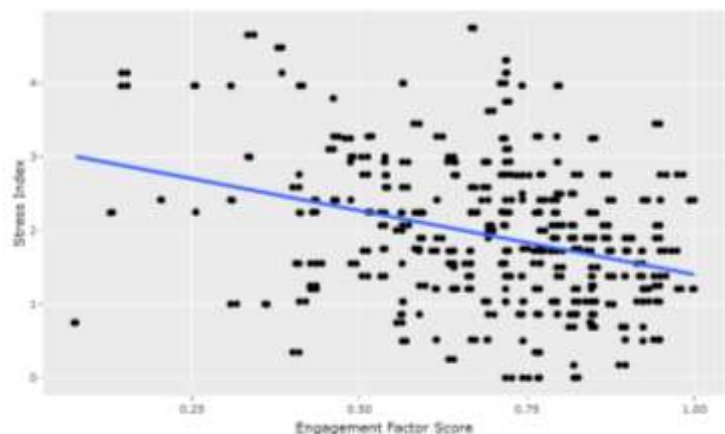
Overall, we observe that the stress perception mean is 1.93, which could be interpreted as in the lower range in the stress scale. As seen in the graph, 41 interviewers have a score of 1.8 and no one had the maximum score, which means that no interviewer thought that all the tasks presented were stressful.

Variable	Category	n	Average	Min	Max
IWER location	SSL	56	1.96	0.00	4.75
	Field	214	1.92	0.00	4.66
Experience	< 1 year	67	1.81	0.00	3.97
	1 – 3 years	70	1.97	0.17	4.75
	4 – 9 years	53	2.09	0.00	4.66
	>= 10	80	1.88	0.00	4.31
Satisfaction with SRO	Not Satisfied	42	2.46	0.34	4.66
	Satisfied	223	1.82	0.00	4.75
<b>Total</b>		<b>270</b>	<b>1.93</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>4.75</b>

When looking at subgroups, it is possible to say that there is not a significant difference between the mean stress perception by SSL interviewers (1.96) and field interviewers (1.92).

Surprisingly, when looking at years of experience, those that have worked at SRO between 4 and 9 years present a score of 2.09 in the stress index, while, on the other hand, those that have been working for less than a year, present the lower score (1.81). When looking at the group of interviewers that say they are satisfied with SRO, the score in the stress index is 1.82, which is lower than those that are not satisfied (2.46).

When plotting the stress index score with the engagement score (the higher the engagement score, the more engaged the interviewer is with SRO), we can see that there exists a slightly inverse or negative association, which means that those who perceive the work as more stressful (higher stress index) tend to have a lower engagement level (Pearson correlation ( $r$ ) = -0.33).



We know that many interviewer activities can be demanding. Knowing what stresses our teams the most, provides us useful information to support each other. We have increasingly engaged our Clinical Contact Program (CCP) staff with our data collection staff and hope to do more of that. Our CCP staff are all clinically licensed and provide support to our respondents, but have increasingly also been involved with designing stress-reducing modules for our own staff (Friday 6/21 Aimee Miller hosted a stress management seminar with TLs and PCs). We are also working to streamline instructions from different leadership levels through the implementation of a common set of values and a common underlying data collection mission.

A new wave of the SRO Interviewer Satisfaction Survey will be in the field during the upcoming months, allowing us to have a first comparison of the results and see how these estimates vary over time.

### **SRO Wellness News (SRO Wellness Committee)**

The SRO Wellness Committee kicked off their first activity to coincide with National Employee Health Day. It is a series of lunch walks to the Ann Arbor Farmer's Market the third Wednesday of every month (May-December) in connection with the Chef Demos that the market has launched. The first walk was on May 15th and had a good group of over 17 people participating.



A lunch walk also took place on June 19th from 12p-1p with the Chef Demo hosting *Nikolas Bardt* from *Fustinis Oils and Vinegars*.



Nutrition and Healthy Eating were two topics that came up from your feedback which is why we decided to combine our physical walk with the visit to the Farmer's Market for fresh produce and locally sourced food. M-Healthy is also using this season to generate a lot of new (or refreshing) knowledge around vegetables. They have a MHealthy Vegetable of the Week newsletter coming out that might spur new ideas on eating habits.



You can sign up below. All it takes is your email and campus location.

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1X1B3pmFgyEiVj1qvaMfgpk7Oftl\\_CMUjcnj8wr7ohOo/viewform?ts=5ce3e0f1&edit\\_requested=true](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1X1B3pmFgyEiVj1qvaMfgpk7Oftl_CMUjcnj8wr7ohOo/viewform?ts=5ce3e0f1&edit_requested=true)

The Wellness Committee appreciates the feedback from the Google form that went out two weeks ago and look forward to implementing feedback into future activities. We are planning more activities and seminars at Perry geared towards the interest of our staff.

We have a page on the SRO intranet for our planned activities. Check us out at: <http://isr-wp.isr.umich.edu/srointranet/home/sro-wellness-program/>

You can reach us at: [srowellcomm@umich.edu](mailto:srowellcomm@umich.edu)

## **From the Archives (Kelly Chatain)**

In the late 1960s and early 70s, there was a growing gap between revenues collected by the federal government and those collected by state and local governments. Federal revenue was predominantly driven by income taxes while state and local revenues were predominantly generated by property and sales taxes, which were not as responsive or progressive as income taxes. This gap led to a bipartisan effort to reallocate revenue from the federal level to state and local governments to the tune of \$30 billion over the course of five years. It was called The State and Local Fiscal Assistance Act of 1972. By 1974, the general revenue sharing program (GRS) had been in place for almost three years and Congress was expected to start evaluating the continuation of the program the following year. Studies being conducted at the time on revenue sharing weren't broad enough to be able to draw general conclusions on the effects across all types of government jurisdictions. Therefore the National Science Foundation contracted with SRC to collect data on a nationally representative sample to help inform the policy debate. The time frame was tight. There was less than a year to design the study, collect the data, and provide a comprehensive report to Congress before their evaluation began in the spring of 1975.

Sample was drawn from state and municipal units excluding those with 100 inhabitants or less, Native American tribes, or units with a per capita tax effort of \$1,000 and above. For each jurisdiction selected, 2-3 respondents were chosen that, broadly speaking, fell into the chief executive role, a chief financial role, and a chief administrative role. Depending on the governing unit, that included governors, county commissioners, mayors, township supervisors, and city administrators, etc. The interviews were approximately an hour in length and 2052 interviews were completed. The response rates were high, ranging between 72% for governors to 100% for county-level chief administrative officers. Governors were the most difficult to schedule and by late October the project staff were sending out questionnaires that were cut in half, down to 30 minutes, specifically for that role.

The state and municipal units receiving shared revenue were already required to fill out and submit Use Reports on planned and actual money spent, so the questionnaire was designed to capture the qualitative experiences via a combination of questions both economic and political in nature. On the economic side, they were asked about how the budget situation would have been different without the program. They were also asked which programs would have been eliminated without the revenue sharing, and which populations would be most affected by the

elimination of those programs. On the political side, they were asked how the program affected the decision making processes and whether or not it had an effect on how local governments provided services to their populations.

There were big differences in experience between big cities and mid-size and smaller municipal units. Larger units used GRS funds to continue current operations, smaller units used their funds to update their capital equipment stock. A few classes of local governments passed funds through to their citizens in the form lower taxes or smaller tax increases. In the large cities, there were more hearings on how to spend the revenue and more involvement with the public. In mid-size areas, experience showed funds being used for already decided needs that were not much different than how they would spend their own sourced revenues. Generally speaking, more funds were used to maintain or expand operating programs than to reduce or stabilize taxes. And the reduction or stabilization of borrowing was relatively unimportant. Across all units, there were issues with how funds were allocated, the yearly variations in allotments causing problems for local budgeting efforts. And the impermanence of the program had a significant effect on how funds were used, resulting in new capital purchases as opposed to new operating programs, for example. A majority recommended stricter eligibility requirements to avoid encouragement of inefficient government units, but also gave more weight to the needs of poorer communities.

The General Revenue Sharing program was extended three times and expired in 1986.

Budget: \$517K (\$2.6 million in 2019 dollars)

Sponsor: National Science Foundation

Project Director: Thomas Juster

#### References:

University of Michigan. Survey Research Center. Anton, T. Julius., Juster, F. Thomas (Francis Thomas)., National Science Foundation (U.S.). (1977). *The economic and political impact of general revenue sharing*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.

Project 466111, "Revenue Sharing", SRO Archive.

Maguire, S. (2009). *General Revenue Sharing: Background and Analysis* (CRS Report No. RL31936). Accessed on June 25, 2019. <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL31936.html>