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Urban Blacks' perceptions of the new identity document

D. Herbst
J. Schnetler



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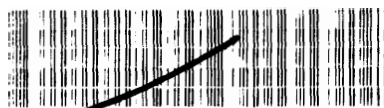
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Research Finding BM-1

Urban Blacks' perceptions of the new identity document

D. Herbst
J. Schnetler

Pretoria
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1986

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D. Herbst, M.A.
 J. Schnetler, M.Th.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and objective

The Opinion Survey Centre of the HSRC during its fieldwork identified a need among the different population groups for regular information on topical issues. Such issues will be grouped under the theme "current affairs" as an extension to more comprehensive investigations conducted by the HSRC. The aim of this programme is to obtain people's responses to a number of key questions on a particular issue without necessarily conducting an in-depth investigation into the relation between it and other issues. The choice of subject will be determined by the relevance that a particular issue has for a certain community.

This research finding is the first in the series on current affairs. The research got under way with a number of questions on the new identity document that has been introduced in the RSA. The State President in his address at the opening of Parliament on 31 January 1986 made an announcement on the matter.

1.2 Research design

1.2.1 Sample

In collaboration with the HSRC's Institute for Statistical Research (ISR) a representative sample (1 500) was selected for the purposes of the main investigation into physical and mental problems in the community. The investigation was conducted from 16 to 30 May 1986 and the sample represented the Black residential areas in the following metropolitan complexes: the PWV area, Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth.

1.2.2 Questionnaire

The purpose of the current affairs investigation was to determine by means of a questionnaire consisting of five questions, Blacks' perceptions of the new identity document (see Appendix A). Blacks in the age group 18 to 65 years were included in the investigation.

1.2.3 Method of analysis

- (a) Frequency tables of the responses were obtained for the different questions.
- (b) Two-way tables were compiled with the following variables: region, sex, age and qualifications.
- (c) A multiple analysis was performed with the help of the computer program CHAID to get an indication of the role of the above variables. For further particulars on the CHAID program consult the report by Du Toit (1982)¹⁾

2. PARTICULARS OF THE SURVEY GROUP

Of the 1 500 households included in the sample, interviews were conducted with 1 433 respondents (95,5 %) in respect of the main questionnaire. There were 11 refusals (0,77 %) among the 1 433 respondents. The responses to the different questions are indicated in Figures 1 to 5. The totals of the different tables and figures are generally slightly smaller than the total number of respondents (1 422) since all the respondents did not respond to all the questions.

Table 1 shows the number of respondents included in the random sample in the different metropolitan complexes.

TABLE 1: METROPOLITAN COMPLEXES

	PWV	Cape	P.E.	Durban	Bloem=fontein	Total
N	975	123	128	125	77	1 410
%	67,9	8,7	9,1	8,9	5,5	100

The research design was stratified according to the five areas. In other words the number of respondents selected in each area was determined by the population of the area in relation to that of the other areas.

1) Du Toit, SHC, Steyn, AGW, Stumpf, RH. Statistical Graphics. Human Sciences Research Council - Report WS-30, Pretoria, 1984.

Tables 2 and 3 indicate the distribution of the survey group according to age and sex respectively.

TABLE 2: AGE

	18-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-65	Total
N	177	278	220	168	160	113	108	181	1 405
%	12,6	19,8	15,7	12,0	11,4	8,0	7,7	12,9	100

A comparison between the age structure of the survey group and published data of the 1980 population census indicates a close correspondence. (Report 02-80-12.)¹⁾

TABLE 3: SEX

	Men	Women	Total
N	418	991	1 409
%	29,7	70,3	100

Table 3 indicates that women were overrepresented in the sample. One of the reasons for this is that hostels, the residents of which are mainly men, were not included in the investigation. Men also tend to work away from home and it could therefore be expected that more women than men would be included in the investigation.

Two thirds of the respondents (66,54 %) had qualifications of Standard 6 or higher (See Table 4). A comparison between the survey data and the 1980 census data indicates that the educational level of the survey group corresponded closely with that of the total urban Black population of the RSA.

1) South Africa (Republic). Central Statistical Services. Report No. 02-80-12 Population census 80. 1980.

TABLE 4: QUALIFICATIONS

	Never went to school and cannot read or write	Never went to school but can read or write	Std 3 or lower	Std 4	Std 5	Std 6 or Form 1	Std 7 or 8 or Form 2 or 3	Std 9 or 10 or Form 4 or 5	Post-school training	University degree	Post-graduate degree	Total
N	93	28	98	91	153	245	230	209	111	125	1	1 384
%	6,7	2,0	7,1	6,6	11,6	17,7	16,6	15,1	8,0	9,0	0,1	100

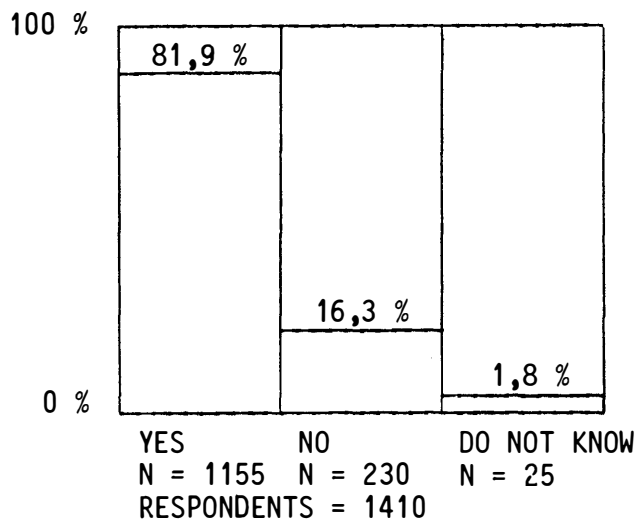
3 PERCEPTIONS OF AN IDENTITY DOCUMENT

Five basic questions were asked of the survey group in order to determine the urban Black population in the RSA's attitude towards and perception of an identity document (see Appendix A).

3.1 Attitude towards the necessity for an identity document

The first question put to the respondents was "Do you think that an identity document is necessary?" Approximately four out of every five respondents (81,9 %) did consider it to be necessary (see Figure 1).

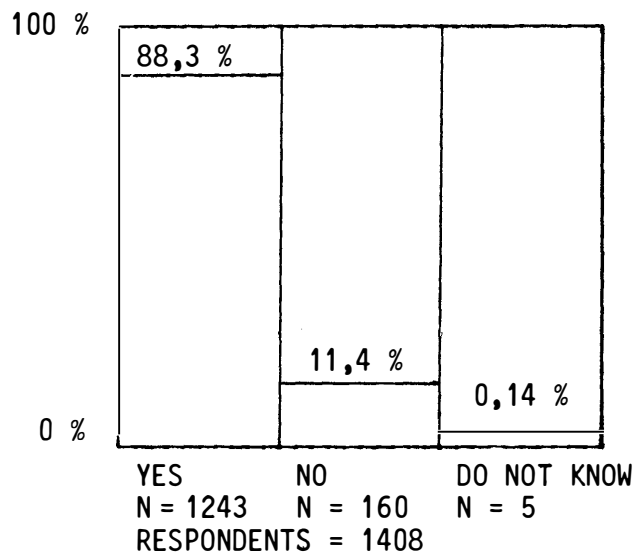
FIGURE 1 : NECESSITY FOR AN IDENTITY DOCUMENT



3.2 Awareness of the new identity document

The vast majority (88,3 %) of the survey group responded positively to the question "Are you aware of the new identity document?" Only 11,4 % of the respondents were unaware of its introduction (see Figure 2).

FIGURE 2 : AWARENESS OF THE NEW IDENTITY DOCUMENT



3.3 Problems in the Black community: the role of the new identity document

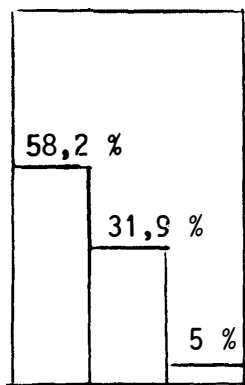
There was a largely positive response to the question whether the new identity document would help overcome problems, particularly at the administrative level, in respect of prosecution, employment, housing, crime prevention and personal movement (see Figure 3). The largest percentage of "Yes" responses was in respect of the question on personal movement (68,3 %). With regard to the other problems referred to, the response was also largely positive, with the exception of the question on crime prevention where the majority of the respondents believed that the new identity document would not provide the solution to crime-related problems.

The particularly positive response in respect of personal movement is probably related to the recent announcement on the scrapping of influx control.

FIGURE 3: PROBLEMS IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY: THE ROLE OF THE NEW IDENTITY DOCUMENT

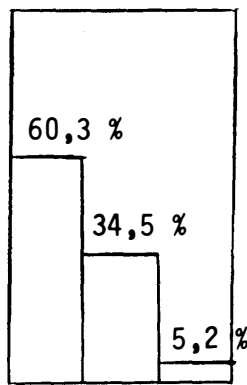
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3.1 PROSECUTION



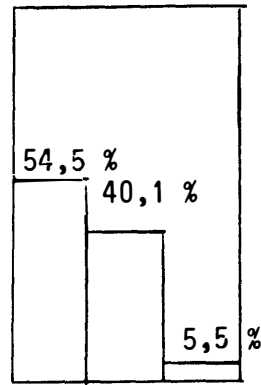
YES N=819 NO N=519 DO NOT KNOW N=70
RESPONDENTS=1408

3.2 EMPLOYMENT



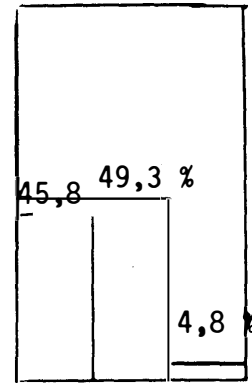
YES N=848 NO N=486 DO NOT KNOW N=73
RESPONDENTS=1402

3.3 HOUSING



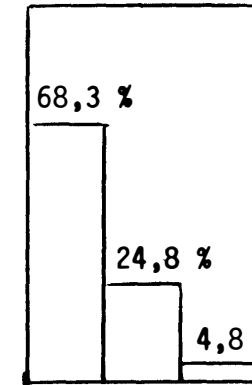
YES N=767 NO N=364 DO NOT KNOW N=77
RESPONDENTS=1408

3.4 CRIME PREVENTION



YES N=645 NO N=693 DO NOT KNOW N=69
RESPONDENTS=1407

3.5 PERSONAL MOVEMENT

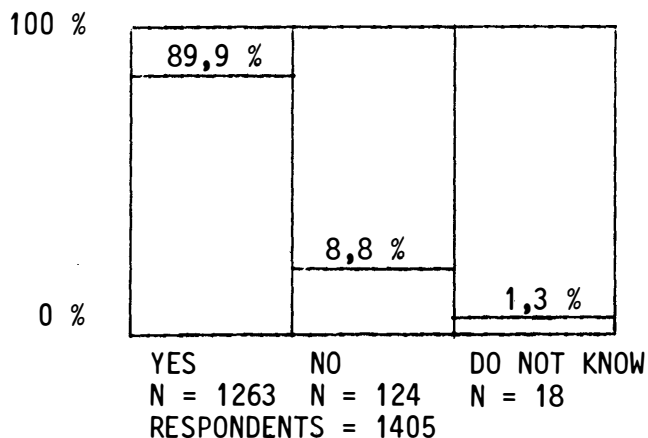


YES N=963 NO N=379 DO NOT KNOW N=68
RESPONDENTS=1410

3.4 Possession of a new identity document

There was an 89,9 % positive response to the question whether a new identity document would be obtained in the near future. Only 8,8 % of the respondents responded negatively (see Figure 4).

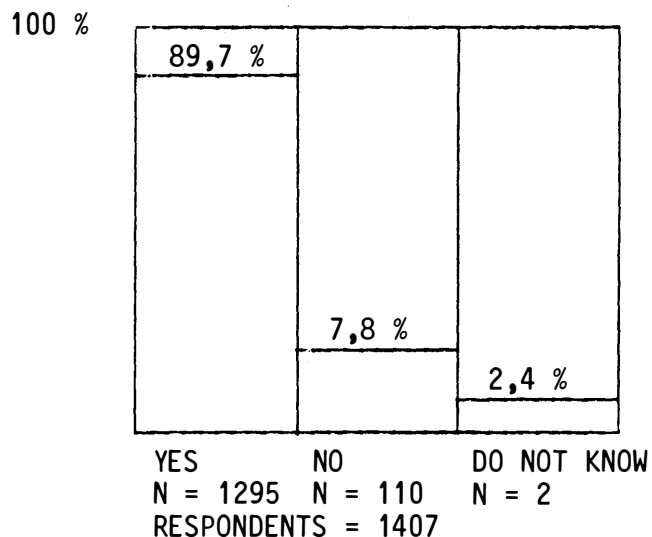
FIGURE 4 : POSSESSION OF A NEW IDENTITY DOCUMENT



3.5 Possession of an old reference book or temporary document

As a final question the respondents were asked whether they were still in possession of an old reference book or temporary document. Contrary to expectations, the majority of the respondents were willing to answer this question. Only 7,8 % of the respondents were no longer in possession of a reference book or temporary document (see Figure 5). Of the 1 407 who responded, 89,7 % were still in possession of a reference book.

FIGURE 5 : POSSESSION OF AN OLD REFERENCE BOOK



3.6 Effect of biographical variables on the responses of the survey group

As mentioned in Paragraph 1.2.3, a series of CHAID analyses were performed to determine whether there was any significant relation between sex, age, qualification and region and the responses to the different questions.

The analyses show that only the variable region had a significant effect on the percentage of YES as opposed to NO responses to the different questions. In view of the small number of respondents in most of the regions, any further deductions should be made with great circumspection.

It is important to note that respondents living in the Port Elizabeth metropolitan complex displayed the most negative attitude in respect of the possible role of the new identity document in helping to solve problems relating to prosecution, housing and crime prevention (see Appendices B1 to B3).

4. SUMMARY

A sample of 1 422 urban Blacks were interviewed on the new identity document during the latter half of May. The survey group was a representative sample of the Black population in the PWV, Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Bloemfontein metropolitan complexes. The interviews were conducted by trained and experienced fieldworkers.

The most important findings were the following:

- 4.1 Urban Blacks in the large metropolitan complexes are very positive about the need for an identity document.
- 4.2 Approximately 9 out of every 10 respondents were aware at the time of the investigation of the introduction of the new identity document.
- 4.3 The majority of urban Blacks believe that the new identity document will contribute towards the solving of problems relating to prosecution, employment, housing and especially personal movement. There is however a great deal of scepticism about whether the document will have any effect on crime prevention.

4.4 Ninety per cent of the survey group were keen to obtain the new identity document as soon as possible, while approximately the same percentage were still in possession of an old reference book.

4.5 Respondents in Port Elizabeth metropolitan complex displayed a more negative attitude than respondents in the other areas regarding the contribution that the new identity document might make towards the solving of problems relating to prosecution, housing and crime prevention.

5. CONCLUSION

The research results indicate a positive attitude towards and perception of an identity document among urban Blacks in South Africa.



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											SEX	25
											AGE	26-27
											QUALIFICATIONS	28-29

CURRENT AFFAIRS

1 Do you think that an identity document is necessary?

Yes	1	
No	2	30

2 Are you aware of the new identity document?

Yes	1	
No	2	31

3 Do you think that the new identity document will help solve the following issues?

	Yes	No	
3.1 Prosecution	1	2	32
3.2 Employment	1	2	33
3.3 Housing	1	2	34
3.4 Crime prevention	1	2	35
3.5 Personal movement	1	2	36

4 Are you going to get the new identity document in the near future?

Yes	1	
No	2	37

5 Do you still have an old reference book or temporary document?

Yes	2	
No	3	38

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APPENDIX B1: WILL THE NEW IDENTITY DOCUMENT HELP SOLVE PROBLEMS RELATING TO PROSECUTION?

RESPONSE		REGION					Total
		PWV	CAPE	P.E.	DURBAN	BLOEMFONTEIN	
N		957	123	127	125	76	1 408
Yes	N	585	88	30	64	52	819
	%	71,4	10,8	3,7	7,8	6,4	100
No	N	303	35	96	61	24	519
	%	58,4	6,7	18,5	11,8	4,6	100
Do not know	N	69	-	1	-	-	70
	%	98,6	-	1,4	-	-	100
TOTAL	%	68,0	8,7	9.0	8,9	5,4	100

APPENDIX B2: WILL THE NEW IDENTITY DOCUMENT HELP SOLVE PROBLEMS RELATING TO HOUSING?

RESPONSE		REGION					Total
		PWV	CAPE	P.E.	DURBAN	BLOEMFONTEIN	
N		956	123	127	125	77	1 408
Yes	N	545	81	44	53	44	767
	%	71,1	10,6	5,7	6,9	5,7	100
No	N	334	42	83	72	33	564
	%	59,2	7,5	14,7	12,8	5,9	100
Do not know	N	77	-	-	-	-	77
	%	100	-	-	-	-	100
TOTAL	%	67,9	8,7	9,0	8,9	5,5	100

APPENDIX B3: WILL THE NEW IDENTITY DOCUMENT HELP SOLVE PROBLEMS RELATING TO CRIME PREVENTION?

RESPONSE		REGION					
		PWV	CAPE	P.E.	DURBAN	BLOEMFONTEIN	Total
N		955	123	127	125	77	1 407
Yes	N	437	84	33	40	51	645
	%	67,8	13,0	5,1	6,2	7,9	100
No	N	449	39	94	85	26	693
	%	64,8	5,6	13,6	12,3	3,8	100
Do not know	N	69	-	-	-	-	69
	%	100	-	-	-	-	100
TOTAL	%	67,9	8,7	9,0	8,9	5,5	100

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Regional offices

Western Cape, Private Bag X40, Parow 7500
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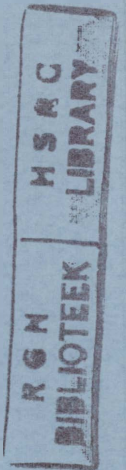
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