SURVEY – WEST INDIAN IMMIGRANTS IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

Dear Sir or Madam,

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey.

It is part of a 4 month research I am conducting for my Master’s thesis as part of the program Latin American & Caribbean Studies at Utrecht University in The Netherlands. For this research I want to look at the experiences of immigrants from the English speaking Caribbean countries\(^1\), commonly referred to as West Indians, living in the San Francisco Bay Area, and explore some of the ways in which the economic crisis affects them.

Your answers will be completely anonymous and by completing this survey you will help me get a better understanding of the West Indians in this region. The data collected through this survey will be used only for my final thesis and will not be used for any other purposes. I would really appreciate your help.

Filling out the survey will take about 30 minutes of your time. There are 3 parts: Part I includes general background questions such as age and occupation; Part II are a few questions about coming to the U.S.; and Part III is the longest, with questions about social contacts and being West Indian.

You can e-mail the completed survey to josienbrands@gmail.com. Your e-mail address will not be connected to the survey, the information you provide will remain anonymous and confidential. If you prefer to send it anonymously, you can log on to westindiansurvey@gmail.com, with the password ‘westindian’, and send it from there. Or if you prefer to print it, you can return the survey to:

Josien Brands
41 Sutter Street
# 1684
San Francisco, CA 94104

On the next page you will find a short instruction on how to complete the survey.

If you have any questions about the research or the survey, please contact me at josienbrands@gmail.com (preferred) or call 415.307.6735

Also, if you know others who migrated from the West Indies to the U.S. and are 18 years or older, and who would like to help me by taking part in this research as well, you can forward the survey to them by e-mail, contact me or give them my contact information.

Thanks again for your time and effort in completing this survey,

Josien Brands
Master student
Utrecht University

\(^1\) Antigua & Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago
Survey Instruction

- The survey consists of mostly multiple choice questions and sub questions. You can check the answer which applies to you by putting an X in front of your answer, for example:
  What is your favorite color?  _X_ Red
  ___ Blue

- Please only check only ONE answer, unless it says “multiple answers possible”.

- If your answer is not amongst the options, you can write it down at the “other” option.

- There are a few open questions to clarify or explain your answer. You can keep these answers short, but it would be a great help if you would fill these in as well.

- Please read carefully and try to answer all the questions.

- There are no correct or wrong answers here, I am interested in your personal situation, views and experiences. All answers will remain anonymous.

- Please return the completed survey no later than May 17th.
Part I: general background questions.

1. In what year were you born? _____

2. What is your sex? ___ Male
   ___ Female

3. What is your marital status?
   ___ Single (never married) ___ Relationship (not married)
   ___ Married ___ Divorced
   ___ Widowed

4. Do you have any children?   ___ No  ___ Yes
4a. If yes, how many children under 18? ____  And how many children over 18? ___

5. Do you consider yourself...   ___ White         __ _ Brown        ___ Black
   ___ Other, (please specify) …

6. What is your current place of residence? (city/town) …

7. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (If currently enrolled, mark the highest degree received)
   ___ No schooling completed   ___ High School
   ___ Attended College ___ Undergraduate Degree
   ___ Graduate School ___ Other, (please specify) …

8. What is your current occupation? Are you ...
   ___ Employed for wages   ___ Employee of non-profit or charitable organization
   ___ Self-employed ___ Working in family business without pay
   ___ Out of work & looking for work ___ Out of work & not currently looking for work
   ___ A homemaker ___ A student
   ___ Retired ___ Unable to work
   ___ Other, (please specify) …
8b. If a student, could you please specify the level of education? …
8c. If employed, could you please describe your work in a few words? …
8d. If unemployed since October 2008, do you believe this to be related to the current economic crisis? ___ No   ___ Yes

9. Is the house or apartment ...
   ___ Owned by you or someone in this household with a mortgage or loan?
   ___ Owned by you or someone in this household free and clear (no mortgage/loan)?
   ___ Rented for cash rent?
   ___ Occupied without payment of cash rent?
10. What is your **total** household income?

- ___ Less than $10,000
- ___ $10,000 to $29,999
- ___ $30,000 to $49,999
- ___ $50,000 to $69,999
- ___ $70,000 to $89,999
- ___ $90,000 to $109,999
- ___ $110,000 to $129,999
- ___ $130,000 to $149,999
- ___ $150,000 or more

11. How has the current economic crisis affected you and your household, on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much)?

11b. If it did affect you and your household, could you please describe how? (multiple answers possible)

- ___ Job loss
- ___ House loss
- ___ Limited career opportunities
- ___ Difficulty finding employment
- ___ Income decline
- ___ Increasing debts
- ___ Problems paying rent/mortgage
- ___ Problems paying bills (such as phone, electric…)
- ___ Other, (please specify) or further explanation ...

**Part II: moving to the United States and the San Francisco Bay Area (SFBA).**

12. What is your country of origin? ...

13a. In what year did you arrive in the U.S.? ____

13b. And how old were you at the time? ____

13c. Did you arrive in the U.S. alone? ___ No ___ Yes

13d. If not, with whom did you come to the U.S.? ...

14. Are you a U.S. citizen? ___ No, but I do intend to apply for citizenship

___ No, and I have no intention to apply for citizenship

___ Yes, since ____ (year citizenship was granted)

15a. Did you move directly from your country of origin to the SFBA? ___ No ___ Yes

15b. If not, what was your first place of residence in the U.S.? ...

15c. And in what year did you move to the SFBA? ____

16. Could you explain in a few words why you moved to the SFBA?

17. Are you a member of an organization, network or club in the SFBA? For example a student organization, church or neighborhood committee, music group, cooking club and so on.

___ No ___ Yes, (please specify) ...
Part III: Social contacts and being West Indian.

18a. How often do you go back to your country of origin?
   ___ Never   ___ Less than once a year \(\rightarrow\) once every ___ years
   ___ Once a year   ___ More than once a year \(\rightarrow\) ___ times a year

18b. If you do go back there, for what purpose? (multiple answers possible)
   ___ Visit family and friends
   ___ Vacation (not with intention to visit family/friends)
   ___ Business
   ___ Other, (please specify) ...

19. How likely is it that you will return to your country of origin in the future to stay there permanently, on a scale from 1 (not likely) to 5 (very likely)? 1 2 3 4 5

20. Do you know persons from the same country of origin living in the SFBA? ___ No   ___ Yes

20a. If yes, could you estimate how many? ...

20b. If yes, could you estimate the percentage that are .... (multiple answers possible)
   ___% Family   ___% Friends
   ___% People from work   ___% People from study
   ___% Acquaintances   ___% Other : ...

21. Do you know persons from other West Indian countries living in the SFBA? ___ No   ___ Yes

21a. If yes, could you estimate how many? ...

21b. If yes, could you estimate the percentage that are .... (multiple answers possible)
   ___% Family   ___% Friends
   ___% People from work   ___% People from study
   ___% Acquaintances   ___% Other : ...

22. How often do you have contact with the people you know, on average?
   b. Other West Indians: ___ Daily   ___ Weekly   ___ Monthly   ___ Yearly   ___ Never

23. In what type of contexts does this contact take place? (multiple answers possible)
   a. Country of origin b. Other West Indians
      In public places such as on the street, in the supermarket ___ ___
      Public events such as Carnaval or festivals ___ ___
      Organized social events at your home, such as birthdays, parties ___ ___
      Organized social events at someone else’s home ___ ___
      Personal visits ___ ___
      At work or for business purposes ___ ___
      At college/university, for example during class or in the hallway ___ ___
      Student activities/events, for example from a student organization ___ ___
      When going out, for example in a club or restaurant ___ ___
      Other (please specify) ___ ___
      ...
      ...
24a. Do you believe there is a West Indian community in the SFBA? ___ No (→ go to 26) ___ Yes
24b. If yes, how would you describe this community? (for example its members, activities, function, organization) ...

25a. Do you yourself feel part of this community? ___ No ___ Yes
25b. If yes, could you please describe in a few words how you feel part of the community? ...

25c. If not, would you want to be part of this community? ___ No ___ Yes

26. Do you plan to participate in the annual Carnaval in the final weekend of May this year?
   ___ No ___ Yes, as an organizer
   ___ Yes, as a member of a Carnaval group ___ Yes, as a spectator
   ___ Other, (please specify) ...

27. For the following items, could you please describe how important these are to you on a scale from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important)?
27a. Contact with people still living in your country of origin: 1 2 3 4 5
27b. Contact with people from your country of origin living in the SFBA: 1 2 3 4 5
27c. Contact with people from other West Indian countries living in the SFBA: 1 2 3 4 5
27d. Being part of a West Indian community in the SFBA: 1 2 3 4 5

28a. Do you think having a West Indian background is...
   ___ Very advantageous
   ___ Somewhat advantageous
   ___ Neutral
   ___ Somewhat disadvantageous
   ___ Very disadvantageous

28b. Could you please explain your answer in a few words? ...

28a. Are you familiar with the idea of West Indian immigrants as a “model minority”? ___ No ___ Yes

West Indians are at times portrayed as an example that color is not an obstacle to success in the U.S., for they often seem to fare better on many economic measures compared to African Americans.

29b. Do you recognize yourself in this? ___ No ___ Yes
29c. What do you think about the idea of West Indians as a “model minority”?
   ___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree
29d. Could you please explain your answer in a few words? …

30. There is a lot of discussion about how immigrants identify themselves when living in the U.S. Could you please rank the next possible identities in the order that they are important to you at this moment, living in the SFBA, on a scale from 1 (least important) to 3 or 4 (most important)?

___ American  ___ country of origin (for example Jamaican, Guyanese, Trinidadian…)
___ West Indian  ___ other (please specify) …

31a. Have you heard of the “CaribID 2010” initiative? ___ No  ___ Yes

The aim of this initiative is to have the US Census Bureau add the category “American Caribbean” or “West Indian” to the census forms, and asks Caribbean immigrants to fill this in at the “other” option.

31b. What is your opinion about this initiative?
___ Very Important  ___ Important  ___ Neutral  ___ Unimportant  ___ Very Unimportant

31c. What category do you choose on the census form for origin/ancestry? …

32a. How often do you experience racism?
___ Never  ___ Hardly ever  ___ Sometimes  ___ Often  ___ Constantly

32b. If you have experiences with racism, in what situation(s) was this? (multiple answers possible)
___ In public places, such as on the street, in stores, clubs or on public transport
___ At institutions and organizations such as banks, government offices
___ At work, from customers/clients/patients/visitors or other non-colleagues
___ At work, from colleagues
___ At school/college/university from teachers and other personnel
___ At school/college/university from other students
___ Other, (please specify) …

33. How would you rate your relationship with the following groups of people in general, on a scale from 1 (very bad) to 5 (very good)? If you have no experience with a group, please check 0.

33a. People from same country of origin: 1 2 3 4 5 0
33b. Other West Indian immigrants: 1 2 3 4 5 0
33c. Asian immigrants: 1 2 3 4 5 0
33d. Latino/Hispanic immigrants: 1 2 3 4 5 0
33e. European immigrants: 1 2 3 4 5 0
33f. White Americans: 1 2 3 4 5 0
33g. African Americans: 1 2 3 4 5 0
33h. Native Americans: 1 2 3 4 5 0

33i. Do you care to comment on your ratings in question 33?
34. How would you rate your opinion regarding the following groups of people in general, on a scale from 1 (very bad) to 5 (very good)? If you have no opinion regarding a group, please check 0.

34a. People from same country of origin: 1 2 3 4 5 0
34b. Other West Indian immigrants: 1 2 3 4 5 0
34c. Asian immigrants: 1 2 3 4 5 0
34d. Latino/Hispanic immigrants: 1 2 3 4 5 0
34e. European immigrants: 1 2 3 4 5 0
34f. White Americans: 1 2 3 4 5 0
34g. African Americans: 1 2 3 4 5 0
34h. Native Americans: 1 2 3 4 5 0

34i. Do you care to comment on your ratings in question 34?

Part IV: Comments and possible follow up.

35. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?

Besides this survey, I also would like to conduct interviews and organize focus or discussion groups for my research. Therefore I am looking for people who I can interview or invite to a discussion with 5 or 6 people about several topics such as migration, the crisis or the upcoming Carnaval.

A. Would you be interested in possibly being interviewed? ___ No ___ Yes
B. Would you be interested in possibly participating in a discussion group? ___ No ___ Yes

If you are interested, could you please write down your name, e-mail address and/or telephone number, so I can contact you in case I would like to interview you and/or invite you to participate in a discussion group? This personal information will be kept separate and will not be used for the analysis of the survey, which will remain anonymous, nor will it be passed on to other parties.

Contact information:
Name:
E-mail: Telephone:

If you have questions or want more information first, you can mail me at josienbrands@gmail.com or call me at 415.307.6735

Thank you very much for your time and effort filling out this survey.

Josien Brands