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Appendix B: QSI Experimental Survey, Section III

(Form CP-21BX, June 23, 1964,
U.S. Department of Commerce,
Bureau of the Census)

EDITING OF RESPONSES

Aside from the normal editing for errors by the Census Bureau, I decided to edit two types of probability-scale responses. A few households (less than twenty) reported that their probability of buying within twelve months (or twenty-four) was less than their probability of buying within six months (or twelve). This pattern of response is logically inconsistent, although it is easy to see why respondents would not have realized the inconsistency. Clearly, if the chances of buying within six months are five in ten, there must be at least five in ten within a more extended period of time; the extended period evidently includes the original period.[1] Inconsistent responses of this sort were recoded to make the probability for the longer period the same as that for the shorter.

A few households reported that while their six-month probability was zero, they "didn't know" about their twelve- or twenty-four-month probabilities. Since these respondents had already said that their six-month probability was zero, their (unknown) twelve- and twenty-four-month probabilities must be higher or they would have reported zero for these periods also instead of reporting "don't know." I arbitrarily assigned these households probabilities of 0.5 for both the twelve- and twenty-four-month periods.[2]

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this problem is that so little editing was required. No more than a handful of respondents reported that they did not know about their purchase prospects, and fewer than a score gave responses that were logically inconsistent. In contrast, about forty respondents reported "don't know" about their buying intentions (meaning, I think, that they did not know how to interpret the question), and all of these households reported a numerical value on the probability scale.

Finally, a number of cases had to be eliminated completely from the original sample. These included households with whom an interview was not obtained on either the regular intentions survey, the experimental probability survey, or the survey used to determine actual purchases, and a few households that purchased one of the specified durables within the few days' period between the survey of intentions and the survey of probabilities.

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[1]Households reporting that their six-month probability is 0.5 and their twelve-month probability 0.2 are presumably saying that, although there is a fair chance of their buying within six months, if they do not buy within that time it is unlikely that they will buy at all.

[2]One or two households reported that they did not know about purchase probabilities for any of the periods. These cases were assigned values of zero for all periods, since it is impossible to tell anything at all about the appropriate levels. The difference between these cases and the ones discussed above is that it is known that the latter understood the question because they reported a definite number for their six-month probabilities—zero. No informamation at all, however, is available for the former cases.

COL.	Section III — INTENTIONS

Part A — MOVING TO ANOTHER RESIDENCE

We would like to know what the prospects are that some member of your family will be moving to another residence sometime during the next 6 months.

Hand respondent answer sheet. Under no circumstances should you suggest an answer to the respondent.
If respondent replies with a word description such as "good possibility," ask: **What number is that?**

The answers you may give are on this sheet, arranged on a scale like a thermometer. If you are certain or practically certain that some member of your family will move to another residence during the next 6 months, choose the answer "10." If you think there is no chance or almost no chance of moving, the best answer would be "0." If you are uncertain about the prospects, choose another answer as close to "0" or "10" as you think it should be.

1. What answer would you choose for the prospects that some member of your family will move within the next 6 months; between now and next January?

(42)

											X		V
6 MONTHS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		NA

(If 10, circle 10 in questions 2 and 3 below and go to part B)

2. What about the next 12 months, that is, between now and next July?

(43)

											X		V
12 MONTHS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		NA

(If 10, circle 10 in question 3 below and go to part B)

3. What answer would you choose for the next 2 years?

(44)

											X		V
24 MONTHS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		NA

Part B — PURCHASE OF AUTOMOBILES

Now I will ask a few questions about the prospects of your buying either new or used automobiles. Please use the scale to select answers.

1. Taking everything into account, what are the prospects that some member of your family will buy either a new or used car sometime within the next 6 months; between now and next January?

(45)

											X		V
6 MONTHS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		NA

(If 10, circle 10 in questions 2 and 3 below and go to question 4)

2. What about the next 12 months; that is, between now and next July?

(46)

											X		V
12 MONTHS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		NA

(If 10, circle 10 in question 3 below and ask question 4)

3. What answer would you choose for the next 2 years?

(47)

											X		V
24 MONTHS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		NA

(If 0, go to part C on page 4. Otherwise ask question 4 below)

4. If some member of your family does buy a car during the next 2 years, what are the chances that it will be a brand-new car?

(48)

											X		V
NEW	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		NA

COL.	Section III – INTENTIONS – Continued													

Part C – PURCHASE OF APPLIANCES

Under no circumstances should you suggest an answer to the respondent

1. As I read the list of appliances again, please choose an answer from the scale for each item covering the next 12 months. I am only interested in possible purchase of brand-new appliances. If some member of your family expects to buy a newly-built house containing some of these items, please count these as possible purchases. **What are the prospects that someone will buy a brand-new – – during the next 12 months?**

COL.		12 MONTHS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (X)	NA (V)
(49)	Kitchen range	12 MONTHS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	NA
(50)	Refrigerator or freezer	12 MONTHS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	NA
(51)	Washing machine	12 MONTHS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	NA
(52)	Clothes dryer	12 MONTHS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	NA
(53)	Room air conditioner	12 MONTHS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	NA
(54)	Television set	12 MONTHS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	NA
(55)	Dishwasher	12 MONTHS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	NA

Part C – PURCHASE OF APPLIANCES – Continued

Under no circumstances should you suggest an answer to the respondent

2. Now, as I read the list again, please choose an answer from the scale for each item covering the next 2 years. What are the chances that someone will buy a brand-new – – during the next two years?

COL.															X	V
(56)	Kitchen range	2 YEARS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		NA
(57)	Refrigerator or freezer	2 YEARS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		NA
(58)	Washing machine	2 YEARS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		NA
(59)	Clothes dryer	2 YEARS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		NA
(60)	Room air conditioner	2 YEARS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		NA
(61)	Television set	2 YEARS	0	2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		NA
(62)	Dishwasher	2 YEARS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		NA

ANSWER SHEET

10 — CERTAIN, PRACTICALLY CERTAIN (99 in 100)

9 — ALMOST SURE (9 in 10)

8 — VERY PROBABLE (8 in 10)

7 — PROBABLE (7 in 10)

6 — GOOD POSSIBILITY (6 in 10)

5 — FAIRLY GOOD POSSIBILITY (5 in 10)

4 — FAIR POSSIBILITY (4 in 10)

3 — SOME POSSIBILITY (3 in 10)

2 — SLIGHT POSSIBILITY (2 in 10)

1 — VERY SLIGHT POSSIBILITY (1 in 10)

0 — NO CHANCE, ALMOST NO CHANCE (1 in 100)