

Newsletter
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RC 09

Social Transformations and the Sociology of Development

a Research Committee of the
International Sociological Association



Remarks from Ulrike Schuerkens &

Habibul Khondker, Co-Presidents of RC 09

Dear RC 09 members,

The focus of this Newsletter is mainly the RC 09 members' survey that Josh Dubrow conducted. We are very grateful to Josh for adding this piece of work on RC 09 to our common history. Let us make some comments on the results.

The open question responses are very interesting and we will reflect on them. Most of the survey respondents argued that RC 09 is useful for their professional career. But they have also asked for more information on funding and publications. Please note that a research committee depends on the information the members transmit to the secretary and newsletter editor. Also note that ISA research com-

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mittees can distribute information on common research interests, but they have few monetary funds. So long as the only financial inputs are the membership fees and limited funding from the ISA, we are not able to give more than small financial support to some members wishing to participate in congresses. If we had donations as a basis of RC 09 finances, we would be able to do more, but for the moment this is not the case. Again, we thank you for your participation and we look forward to the ongoing discussion that this survey will generate among RC 09's executive board and general membership.

We would like to address the elephant in the room and add some comments on the US elections that should be the occasion to think about topics related to our research field. The results of the vote are based on facts that are linked to the politics of globalization that have meant in the last years an increase of inequalities among the US population as in other countries in the world (see the recent book of S. Sassen: *Expulsions*). The US middle class voted against the candidate that supported the "establishment". As US Senator Bernie Sanders explained:

"People are tired of working longer hours for lower wages, of seeing decent paying jobs go to China and other low-wage countries, of billionaires not paying any federal income taxes and of not being able to afford a college education for their kids..."

(source: <http://www.sanders.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/sanders-statement-on-trump>)

As long as political elites are not able to suggest policies against this trend, "anti-establishment" candidates will continue to attract parts of the unsatisfied middle classes in northern democracies. Fiscal measures that are suggested by these popular candidates such as lower taxes on profits of enterprises may continue the increase of inequalities in the North and may mean even lower expenses for public services such as the education system, the health system, and public infrastructure. Recent elections in several European countries show that for the moment the success of right-wing parties is based on this inca-

capacity of the political elites to change economic policies. Probably, intellectual elites should suggest other ways of functioning of economic sectors so that economic elites are obliged to change their policies regarding taxes.

For the South, this tendency may mean a number of things. First, many of the authoritarian rulers of the Global South will be emboldened by the electoral success of Mr. Trump and the popularity of right-wing political leaders in several Northern democracies. The contentious and uncivil presidential campaigns and the bitter rivalry between the two front-

The only silver lining in a rather gloomy situation is the promised isolationism of the US under the Trump presidency provided he does not resort to opportunism.

runners in the United States of America have maligned the image of democracy and exposed some of the dark sides of the US politics, thanks to WikiLeaks and other revelations. A *New York Times* reporter put it poignantly that the driving force of the 2016 US presidential elections was “venom, not hope” (*The New York Times*, November 9, 2016 p. 6). The military-industrial complex and the role of the Deep State were not unknown to the discerning social scientists but to the general public in the rest of the world, the bitter presidential contest was an education about US politics.

Some analysts have pointed out the rage of the US white working class towards the Washington establishment and to the educated professional class for which Secretary Hillary Clinton had to pay a price. It was a tremendous opportunity for shattering the proverbial glass ceiling; the defeat of Mrs. Clinton shattered the hopes and aspirations of the feminists and others, sympathetic to the cause of gender equity around the world – both the North and the South.

The only silver lining in a rather gloomy situation is the promised isolationism of the US under the Trump presidency provided he does not resort to opportunism. Many in the Global South are weary of American interventionism and adventurism in the rest of the world. But such optimism may be defeated by some of the hawkish advisers of the new president and their power of persuasion. What is worrisome to the world is the promised economic nationalism of the President-elect Trump. If he stands by and implements his electoral pledges of economic nationalism, de-globalization and building a wall on the US-Mexican border, the world may see even darker economic scenarios. What the world needs a saner global economic architecture not an annihilation of the structures of the globalized economy. There is much to worry about the consequences of the Trump's economic policies and brash diplomacy. At the same time, the turn to the (ultra) right in the US politics may be seen in the longer run as compatible with and a visible sign of a declining hegemon. An optimistic scenario is that the US civil society, a promised land of equality and civility will in due course overcome the challenge and live in peaceful coexistence with the rest of the world. The triumphalism of Mr. Trump will be toned down in due course as the Reality TV host meets the realities of world politics.

We wish all of you a peaceful end of the year and send you our heartiest seasons' greetings.

Best regards,

Ulrike Schuerkens

Habibul Khondker

Co-chairs of RC 09

Report on Member Survey 2016

International Sociological Association Research Committee 09

Social Transformations and the Sociology of Development

Prepared by Joshua K. Dubrow, ISA RC 09 Newsletter and Website Editor

Introduction

The Executive Committee of the International Sociological Association's Research Committee 09 on Social Transformations and the Sociology of Development wanted to better understand the interests and needs of the members of this Research Committee. A main goal is to understand the daily life of RC 09 scholars and the role of the RC in members' lives, including how the RC can better serve the membership.

The usual method to find out about the interests and needs of the membership is to talk informally with individual or small groups of members at ISA events such as the World Congress or Forum, engage in formal conversation during the publicly advertised Business Meetings, or communicate via email and the newsletter. While these methods are useful, we attempted another method: a survey. Though the range of topics in the discussion would be limited, and full representation of the whole membership is unlikely, a survey is a useful tool if seen as a way to bring more voices to the RC.

This report details the methods and findings of the ISA RC 09 member survey that was conducted online during May-June 2016. Voluntary associations such as ISA RC 09 should be democratic and err on the side of transparency. In this spirit, this report is designed to present the facts, with little interpretation. We identified a few main themes, but the meanings in the data should be something that the Executive Board and the membership, now and in the

future, should discover and interpret themselves. Moreover, the report is not intended to be written as a typical academic research article. Rather, it is written with sufficient information for RC 09 members to understand the methodology and results, and for future Executive Boards to replicate the survey and conduct new surveys of their own.

Additional Motivations for the Survey

The survey is intended to include more voices, but the choice of methods and the topics reveal additional motivations that structured the survey instrument. To start, the idea of the survey and its initial design was that of the Newsletter and Website Editor, who researches inequality in political voice and in the World Science System.

The Executive Board enthusiastically embraced the idea of the survey, and in critiquing the early drafts of the survey instrument, they wanted to understand the underlying motivations of the survey's initial design. In an email exchange on this matter, I tried to outline these motivations. These motivations are inspired by discussions with the RC 09 Executive Board over the years about these issues, and from my personal inclinations.

I believe that mutual understanding of the work-life situation of colleagues in different regions of the world could foster solidarity among the membership. In addition, and very much related to this, we should understand what the membership wants from the Research Committee. Is RC 09 valuable to them? Could it help their careers, even in a small way? I suspect that RC 09 is not central to anyone's career, and the membership may not see the point of it beyond some professional obligations (it fulfills a "service" role) and some minor benefits. However, research committees can do more to build research communities and help people's careers. Can RC 09 become something that helps build strong-

er ties among researchers and build stronger research in academic fields? Can it be more inclusive and bring in the researchers who work in developing countries? To start, I suggest a short survey of who RC 09 is.

The survey has four main sections: (i) characteristics of the respondents; (ii) the daily life of scholars, including their research interests, hours spent on tasks, funding for research projects, and barriers to attending ISA events; (iii) attitudes toward the role of RC 09 in their lives, and suggestions for improvement in governance and services provided; and (iv) an “other” category that allows respondents to write in anything that they want to report.

I assumed that scholars are busy people who are not inclined to fill out long surveys, and as a result this online survey was designed to be short, with few and uncomplicated items. Expecting a low response rate similar to that of surveys of the elite, I wanted a mix of open and closed-ended items that can be analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively.

Methods

In April 2016, the co-Presidents of RC 09 approved of the general plan for a survey and a questionnaire was developed. The survey administrator was Josh Dubrow. English-language versions of the questionnaire were sent to the entire RC 09 Executive Committee and, after discussions that led to several revisions, the co-Presidents of RC 09 approved the final version. There were two versions of the survey: English and Spanish. The final English version was sent to Tamara Heran, Secretary of ISA RC 09, who translated into Spanish both the survey and the survey solicitation letter sent to the membership. The entire English language version of the survey is in Appendix A.

Survey mode was online only and the software was Google Forms. Google Forms is, like the entire Google suite of software, free of charge and relatively flexible: it allows both open ended and fixed choice items within the same survey, and even within an item's set of response categories. It offers various ways to distribute the survey. We chose the simplest way, which was to send a link to the survey within a solicitation letter.

The solicitation letter that introduces the survey to respondents was in English and in Spanish, and included links to the appropriate versions of the survey. There was only one link per language-version, which introduces a potential problem: anyone with that link could have answered the survey, even multiple times. Other delivery options include a unique username and password, which I believed potential respondents would consider as more of a barrier than a desired feature. Considering the content of the survey responses, I have no reason to believe that persons other than the intended recipient used the link to the survey; it appears that each respondent sent only one response.

In survey solicitation, a “best practices” approach is to send reminders at regular intervals, but without being too intrusive (e.g. avoiding the dreaded LinkedIn approach). As such, we sent the solicitation letter twice within the survey administration period. The letters were approved by the current co-Presidents and signed by them. The Secretary sent from the official RC 09 email account the solicitation letter to the RC 09 membership using the same email list as is used for distributing the Newsletter. We sent the first letter on May 17. On that day, I put a notice on the RC 09 website that informed the membership of the survey (but without the link to the survey). A second letter was sent May 26. A third “wave” of the survey was announced in the Summer RC 09 newsletter, sent to the membership on May 31. The third wave did not generate new responses to the survey. I officially closed the survey on June 9, 2016.

We received 47 unique respondents. While RC 09's official records (as of May 2016) showed 172 members, we had 167 usable email addresses. The response rate was 47 out of 167, or 28 percent. There were zero Spanish responses (this is not due to a technical error, as the link was functioning throughout the entire survey administration period).

In data collection, our primary concern was anonymity and confidentiality, and as such I took the following steps. Data collection was automatic, meaning that Google Forms records all responses as they are submitted. Google Forms also allows responses to be placed automatically in Google Sheets (a spreadsheet program). Only the survey administrator and the Secretary's official email address had access to these responses. The only "meta data" that was automatically recorded and received by me was the date and time (called, "timestamp") when the survey was submitted by the respondent. Each respondent has a unique timestamp. We have no information about the respondent other than the timestamp and what the respondent recorded in the survey. After we closed the survey, the raw data was retained by the survey administrator and a copy was sent to the Secretary, for archiving with the Executive Board. To maintain anonymity, in this report, we removed any and all information that could potentially identify individual respondents.

Part I: Characteristics of the Respondents

How Representative Are the Respondents?

The first issue is whether the respondents of the survey are representative of the membership as a whole. Since this was an attempt to contact the population of RC 09 members, and the resulting response rate was low, it is unlikely that the survey respondents are repre-

sentative. We do not have sufficient matching information between the survey respondents and the entire membership to determine the direction of bias in the data.

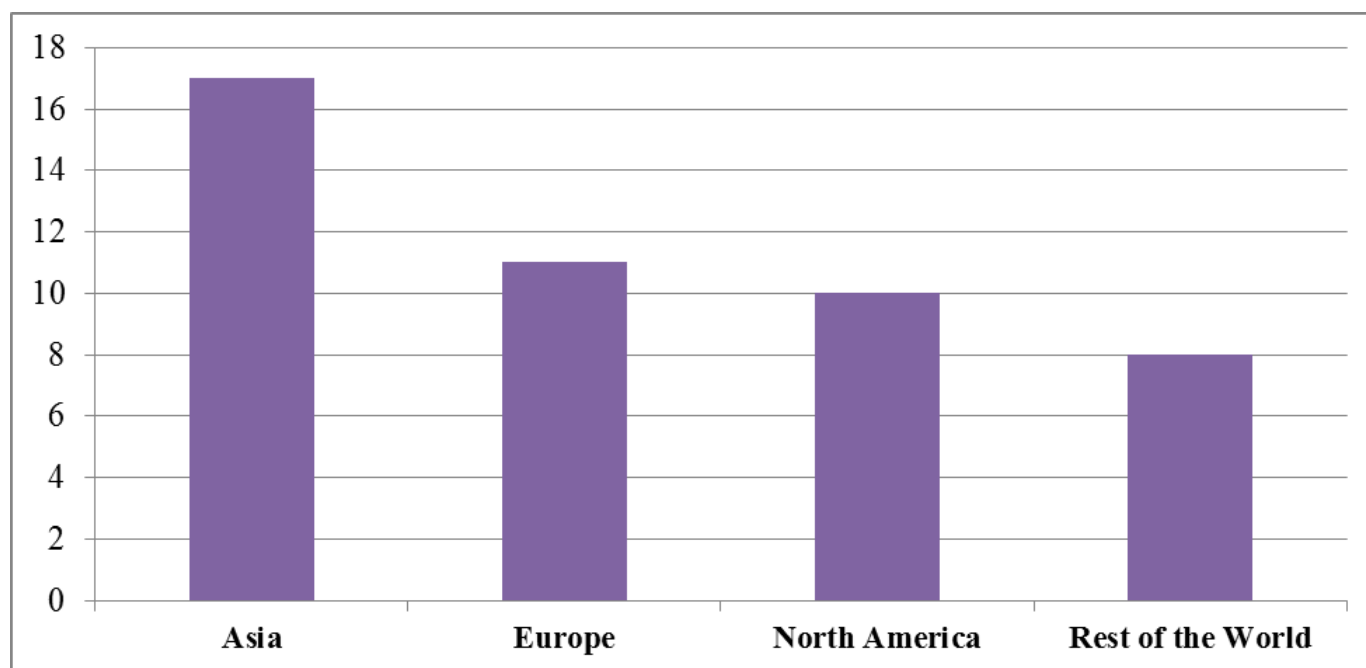
The best we can do is to compare RC 09 official membership data -- which is not connected to the survey -- with regard to ISA's official A, B, C country indicator to our sample. Based on "the Gross National Income per capita", ISA officially divides the world into three categories -- A, B and C countries; the source of income data is the World Bank. ISA presents this classification in the "Table of Economies by Category." In this scheme, ISA provides the fee structure for individual membership, wherein A, B and C are rank ordered. Specifically, individual sociologists in the poorest countries (category C) pay lower fees than their counterparts in A and B countries; people in A-countries pay higher fees than those in B-countries. ISA's A, B, C scheme has substantial within-group variation. For example, countries as diverse as Finland, Bermuda, and Kuwait are all "A" countries.

During the survey administration period, RC 09 officially had 172 members, of which 54 percent are from A countries, 16 percent are from B countries, and 30 percent are from C countries. ISA does not make clear the economic thresholds that separate A, B, and C countries, and as such I do not consider this scheme as a useful marker of the characteristics of ISA members.

In our survey, the only related item was, "What is the world region of your main place of employment?" Respondents were given a choice of 16 regions, plus an "other" open ended category. Of the 46 respondents to this item, 47 percent are from the following set of regions that are more likely to be in "ISA: A": Western Europe, Central and Eastern Europe, Southern Europe, and North America. The rest, or 53 percent, could be "ISA: B & C."

Figure 1 presents the respondents to the survey grouped in world regions of Asia, Europe, North America, and the rest of the world.

Figure 1. Raw Number of Respondents by Major Regions of the World



Demographics

Table 1 presents other main characteristics of the survey respondents. Survey respondents are slightly more likely to be male (57 percent) and 45 years of age or older (59 percent). They are much more likely to hold a doctorate (76 percent), be employed in an academic institution (81 percent), and report that their main academic orientation is sociology (89 percent). Considering that ISA is a professional association for sociology that mostly caters to academics, there is little surprising about these statistics.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Survey Respondents (n = 47 unless otherwise indicated)

Characteristic	Percent
<i>Gender</i>	
Women	43
Men	57
<i>Age</i>	
26 -34	13
34 – 44	28
45 – 55	23
56 and older	36
<i>Highest Level of Education (n = 46)</i>	
Doctorate	76
MA degree only	22
<i>Current Employment Status</i>	
Academic Institution	81
Non-governmental Organization	6
More than One Place of Employment	11
Main Academic Orientation is Sociology (n = 46)	89

Part II: Life of Scholars

What do our fellow RC 09 members do all day? The survey was designed to measure four main aspects of the daily life of ISA RC 09 members: their research interests, hours spent on scholarly activities, funding for research, and attending ISA events.

Research Interests

Respondents were asked for their three current research interests. The breadth of interests is great. I attempt to summarize in two ways. First is by word count within an open ended item. The second is a visualization of the word count in the form of a “word cloud.”

Word count provides a rough idea as to the ways in which RC 09 members describe their research (aside from words directly related to the RC such as development, social, transformations, and sociology, which were among the most popular words to use). Table 2 includes the main words, which I designated as occurring more than two times.

Most categories are straightforward, containing the exact words or grammatical permutations of them. Those that need more definition include: *Economy and Economic Relations* includes economic(s), market(s), finance(ialization), unemployment, entrepreneur, labor, business, corporations, and precarization; *Politics* includes politic(s)(al), state, and mobilization; *Migration* includes migration, immigrant, cross-border, and trafficking; *Health and Sexuality* includes health, HIV, sex, and sexuality; *Natural Environment* includes environment, climate change, natur(e)(al).

Table 2. Word Count by Topic

Topic	Word Count
Economy and Economic Relations	22
Gender	12
Politics	12
Migration	11
Conflict and Violence	6
Globalization	6
Health and Sexuality	6
Poverty	6
Social Class	6
Africa	5
Inequality	5
Education	4
Food	4
Natural Environment	4
Youth	4
Community	3
Technology	3
Urban	3

Table 3. Hours Spent per Week on Scholarly Activities (n = 40)

Activity	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
Teaching	8.16	7	6.94
Research	22.88	20	16.40
Other Professional	10.09	9	7.72
Total	41.13	40	19.06

Responses on “hours spent on teaching” were the most creative. While some simply put a number, others detailed their calculations and offered a range of numbers, e.g. “6 (in classroom) + 6-10 outside classroom (prep, grading, meeting students).” In an attempt to quantify, I made some coding decisions, most of which are obvious (“fourteen” becomes 14, “mostly one to two hours a day” becomes, in a five day work week, 5 to 10 hours). If offered a range, I took the midpoint, e.g. “mostly one to two hours a day” becomes 7.5. In the end, I could code 40 out of 47 responses. (For example, I could not code the response, “5 hours plus preparation,” because I do not know how many hours the preparation takes)

Table 3 presents the hours spent per week on scholarly activities of teaching, research, and other professional duties. The average work week is around 41 hours long with an extremely large standard deviation (19). The number of hours spent per week on teaching was around 8, for research nearly 23, and for other professional duties, 10. Of these subcategories, research had the widest variation in responses (sd =16.) Perhaps this is because teaching is often done on a fixed schedule.

Table 4. Details of Hours Spent on Scholarly Activities

<i>In a typical week, hours spent on...</i>	
Teaching	Percent
None or Occasional	17
2 to 6	29
7 to 11	22
12 to 19	20
20 or more	12
Research	
10 or Fewer	20
11 to 20	27
21 to 39	31
40 or more	22
Other Professional Duties	
None	11
2 to 6	24
7 to 11	22
12 to 19	28
20 or more	15

Table 4 presents more detail on hours spent for each scholarly activity. While variation for the other activities was lower, some (12 percent) spend twenty or more hours a week on teaching, and some do not teach much (17 percent).

Funding for Research

For many, research consumes a substantial proportion of the work week. The survey item, “Do you have funding -- from your places of employment or from any other outside source -- for any of your current research projects?” Most, but not overwhelmingly so (64 percent), said yes.

Attending ISA Events

Next to publications and team research outputs as key forms of scientific knowledge production, professional events – such as the ISA world congresses and forums that feature face-to-face interaction of scholars from across the world – are vital scholarly activities. Attendance at international social science events is important for three reasons. First, scholarly knowledge, as recorded in academic journals, builds on the presentation of papers at international scientific conferences. Second, scholars gain the opportunity to learn from, and connect to, scholars from different countries with whom they do not regularly interact; this spurs creativity and forms the foundation for new scientific collaborations. Third, scholars gain access to the personal networking that is intrinsic to professional development and status building. Attending international conferences is important in the building and evaluation of academic careers.

We know, too, that scholars also face barriers to attending international scholarly events. Western countries tend to dominate professional meetings (if measured in terms of published conference proceedings) and, at least since the 1990s, ISA conferences (Dubrow et al 2015). Margaret Abraham, now President of ISA, noted the over-representation of sociologists from the USA and the under-representation of other countries in the 2010 World Congress at Gothenburg: “While the United States had the largest number of registrants

(517), this number should be kept in perspective by underscoring the economic, political, and social factors that limit participation from poorer countries” (Abraham, 2010).

To understand RC 09 member participation, and barriers to participation, we included two items. Since the survey was fielded before ISA Forum of Sociology in Vienna, Austria in July 2016, we asked if they planned to attend the Forum. Of survey respondents, 66 percent reported “yes,” 25 percent reported “no,” and 9 percent chose, “I Don’t Know.”

We also asked about the main barriers that they face to attend ISA conferences held outside of their home country. This was an open-ended question and respondents could mention multiple barriers, e.g. one respondent reported three: “Lack of funding; lack of time; other family commitments.” By far, the dominant barrier is financial costs (84 percent), e.g. “cost,” “financial,” “lack of financial contribution from the institution.” Secondarily, some (16 percent) mentioned that “time” was a barrier. Only 11 percent wrote that they face no barrier.

Part III: Attitudes toward RC 09

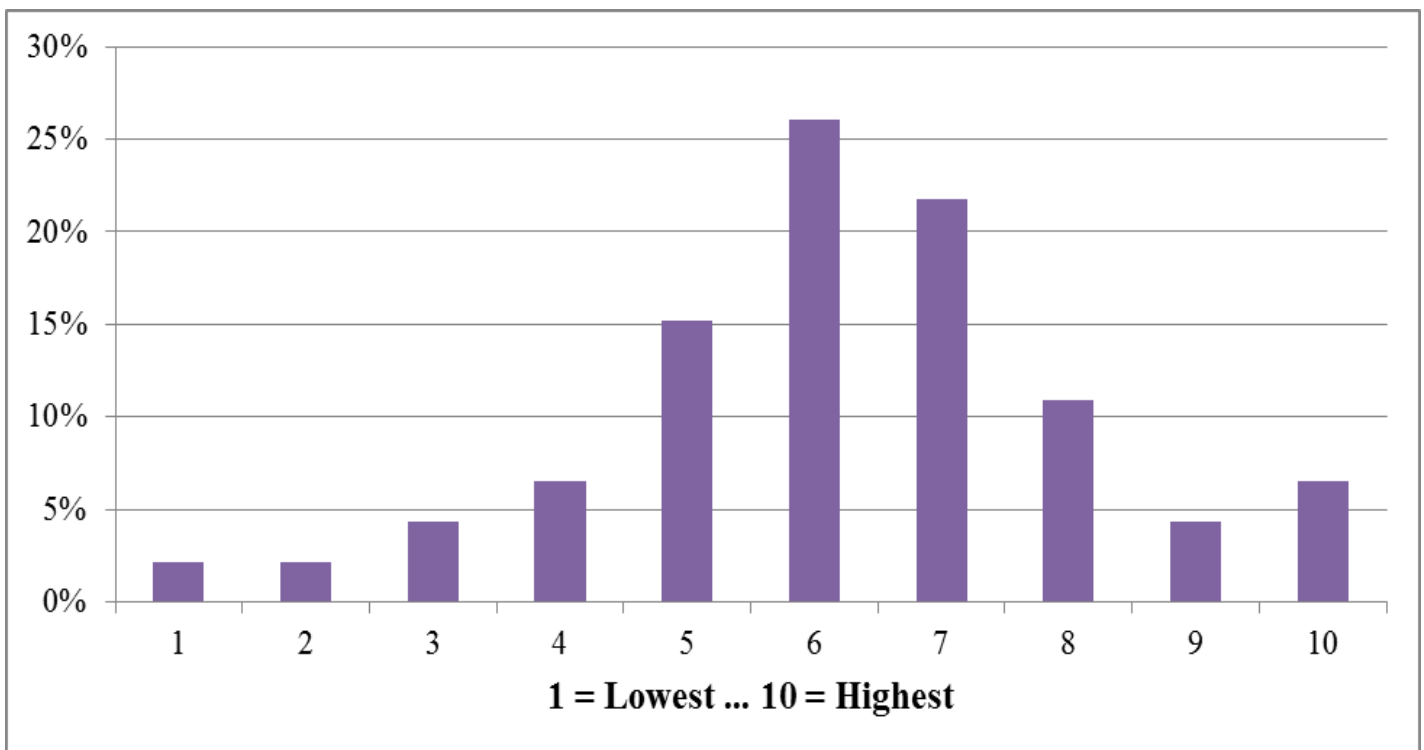
RC 09 members are engaged in a wide variety of activities that consume their working lives -- teaching, research, and other professional duties -- and on a variety of topics related to social transformations and development. In the RC 09 statutes, “It is the main objective of RC 09 to promote the research on social transformations and the sociology of development within the social sciences. RC 09 is a non-profit association of scientific purposes. Its function is to represent sociologists working about social transformations and the sociology of development everywhere, regardless of their school of thought, scientific approaches or sociological opinion.”

How do the RC 09 members themselves perceive as the role of the RC in their scholarly lives? To address this, we included two fixed choice items and two open ended items.

Usefulness for Career

We asked, “On a scale of one to ten -- where one is low, and ten is high -- to what extent do you feel that ISA RC 09 is useful for your professional career?” For most, the RC plays a non-dominant, yet positive role. The mean and median on the scale is 6, with a standard deviation of 2 (n = 47).

Figure 3. Extent RC 09 Members Feel That the RC Is Useful for their Professional Career



We also wanted to understand better the motivations for being in the RC through an analysis of the perceptions of potential membership benefits. The first was a check-all-that-apply fixed choice item (with an open-ended “other” category) on potential benefits of being an RC 09 member: “In your opinion, what are the main benefits of being a member of the ISA’s Research Committee 09 Social Transformations and the Sociology of Development (ISA RC 09)?” All 47 survey respondents responded. The great majority of respondents listed more than one. Table 5 details the responses to these benefits in the order in which the response categories appeared in the survey.

Table 5. Responses to Benefits of Being an RC 09 Member

Benefits	%	Number of responses
Be informed of current research in my field	77	36
Be informed of publication opportunities	47	22
Be informed of funding opportunities	30	14
Learn new information that I can use in the classes that I teach	38	18
Feeling that I belong to a community of scholars	60	28
It fulfils a professional obligation that others expect of me	26	12

The most popular responses have to do with being informed about current research (77 percent) and feeling that they belong to a scholarly community (60 percent). Note that a quarter of the respondents also felt that being an RC 09 member fulfills an expected obligation, but none put this as their one and only “benefit.”

There were very few (6) who wrote in the “other category,” so I repeat their responses here: “It is one of the best RC,” “to meet people with similar interests,” “Networking with fellow scholars in the same field,” “Have the opportunity to share research results,” “access to debates in other regions of the world,” and “Learning new things that may be relevant to my research in a different field.” Most of the “other” category is about connecting to other scholars which indicates that such a response category should have been included.

What RC 09 Can Do for You?

The first of the two open ended items was, “What would you like ISA RC 09 to do for you?” Placed immediately after the fixed-choice item on the usefulness to their career, this was designed to elicit creative responses on how the RC can benefit their lives. There were 40 codable responses. Of these, four wrote that the RC is fine as it is, or at least does not have to do anything for them (e.g. “Everything is OK”). Responses were short: some are as little as two words, and the longest was 57 words.

The remaining 36 responses often contain multiple ideas. For example, one respondent wrote, “It would be great to have more information of funding opportunities (related to research grants, conference attendance) for those of us located in institutions in the Global South (including South Asia and the South Pacific.) It would also be great if junior scholars could be mentored more for the publication process by senior scholars in the group.” This response encompasses themes such as Publications, Funding, Conferences, Mentoring, and Attention to More World Regions.

Responses can be categorized in the following way:

Publications (31%)

Examples of Responses: “Sharing opportunities for publication...”, “provide opportunities for publication,” “...help with internationally visible publications.”

Promote, Publicize, and Be Informed about Research (25%)

Examples: “Support Development Sociologists Giving Them the Capacity to Present Their Work...”, “For dissemination of information about the contemporary issues in the society,” “keep me updated on current research trends.”

Networking and Collaboration (22%)

Examples: “Reinforce international academic networks,” “I want the RC should connect to the World of Scholar,” “Open a directory of researchers interested in making joint projects.”

Conferences (22%)

Examples: “Convene separately e.g. have an one-day workshop or mini-conference just for RC 09 before ISA,” “Ideally, organize conference or seminar on critical issues of development,” “Funds their members to attend the conferences.”

Funding (17%)

Examples: “Provide grant and publication opportunities/news,” “Funds their members to

attend the conferences and publish the articles,” and “Provide fiscal support for attending the ISA/ RC 09 events.”

Communication and Engagement Generally (11%)

Examples: “Provide funding information and opportunities,” “More scholarly engagement,” and “regular news letter.”

Mentoring (8%)

Examples: “I'd like RC09 to organize some mentoring events between graduate students and more senior scholars in the field during the ISA Forum of Sociology in Vienna, Austria this July” and “help and guide me about way of join and share with your very rich and valuable academic resources and libraries which some interested young scholar like me is deprived from it in our very poor and deprived country while I need it in the way of my [career].”

Attention to More World Regions (8%)

Examples: “More attention to researchers in the Middle East...” and “recognize the academic productions/contributions from developing economies.”

Other (25%)

Examples: “to give the free links to electronic libraries, databases,” “temporary job offers [abroad] as a visiting scholar,” “Support comparative research among countries in themes

like community development,” and “What can ISA RC 09 can do for me?”

Improving RC 09

The other open ended question asked about how RC 09 can be improved: “In what ways can the Research Committee 09 Social Transformations and the Sociology of Development be improved?” There were 33 responses, of which 25 suggested an improvement (e.g. they did not say, “I don’t know,” “I just joined...”, or “all good”). As with the other open-ended question on this topic, responses were short and many contained multiple ideas. The shortest response was a symbol (“?”) and the longest was 40 words:

“Members from every part of the globe should be given opportunities to serve in all the committees; encourage members by publishing their works as generated from their environment and the outcome of the works will assist in improving their regions”

Below is a representative selection from each category.

Democratization, Inclusion of Young Scholars, and Diversity of Regions (44%)

“democratize leadership and create successor generation”

“include the members more into the process of setting up the panels for the meetings...”

“put some members also from south-Asian developing countries in management committee...”

“Induction of younger social scientists with fresh ideas and knowledge of new instructional technology”

“be more present and accommodating to young scholars...”

“conducting new research based on Eastern viewpoint.”

Publications (40%)

“...creating and distributing opportunities for publication...”

“Promote and produce publications...”

Conferences (28%)

“yearly get together and must arrange fund to visit conference”

“...provide venues for more focused trainings and seminars...”

“...regular seminars and conferences...”

“Being more active in organizing regional reunions”

Funding (20%)

“...funding to needy researchers for presenting papers and regular publications”

“...greater funding and publication avenues...”

More Communication (20%)

“monthly updating about research.”

“Making members aware of specific opportunities for research grants related to these topics; creating and distributing opportunities for publication...”

“Reach out to its members more.”

“Lots of emails communications”

“created a Google group, FB group, other communication platforms”

Connections, Networking, and Collaboration (16%)

“Dialogue with & among different academic fields”

“Affiliated regional Research committees should be formed across countries.”

“More links with the [colleagues] of Committee 09”

Other -- This includes the “all good” and “I don’t know” comments (52%)

“To do more action oriented research.”

“mentoring of junior scholars.”

Part IV: Anything Else?

At the end of the survey, we invited respondents to make any further comments. Only 14 (30%) did, and of these, only 11 are codable. Of the 11 codable responses, four simply thank us for the survey, one looks forward to the results, and one wrote a letter that describes who they are and what they want from RC 09. We report the rest below:

“Networking among the members may be increased through organizing regional level conference and region-focused conferences.”

“Many of us are also members of other RCs, it would be really helpful in all communication from this RC to put the title of the RC in all communication as well

as list who the major office holders are.”

“I hope that the ISA Forum 2016 in Vienna will truly be opportunity to meet and have meaningful talks with fellow researchers. It is expected that there will be many of us who will be in attendance. I hope that the research committee will be able to organize our group well given our number. Thank you.”

“Internet connectivity and power and power outages are serious bane to our development”

“We also need to encourage the inclusion of more scholars from the Economic South.”

Summary

We conducted a survey to understand the daily life of the membership of RC 09, the role of the RC in their lives, and how we can improve the RC to better suit their needs. We administered the online survey May – June 2016, with a response rate of 28 percent (n = 47). While the survey respondents are unlikely to be representative of all 172 members, the data does contain a significant proportion. The survey has four main sections: (i) characteristics of the respondents; (ii) the daily life of scholars; (iii) attitudes toward RC 09; and (iv) an open-ended “other” category that allowed respondents to write in anything they wanted.

A profile of the respondents can be gleaned. Most respondents are from Asia, Europe, and North America. A little over half are middle aged and male. Respondents are very

likely to be sociology PhDs working in academia. On average, they work over 40 hours a week and a substantial proportion of that time is spent on research. Their current research typically revolves around development and transformation topics such as economy and economic relations, gender, politics, and migration, though the interests vary quite a bit. Well over half of them report that they have some funding for their current research project.

Most planned to go to the ISA Forum in Vienna held in July 2016. The dominant barrier to attending ISA events in general is financial costs; time was also considered a barrier. Very few report that they face no barrier at all to attending ISA events.

On average, they do consider the RC to be of moderate usefulness for their professional career. Many joined because they perceived certain benefits, primarily information about current research in their field and wanting to feel that they belong to a community of scholars. They would like the RC to inform them about opportunities for publications; to promote, publicize, and be informed about research; for networking and collaboration with colleagues; to hold conferences and other kinds of meetings with scholars in their field; to share opportunities for funding (especially for conference attendance); to reach out in terms of communication and engagement with the RC; for mentoring opportunities; and for the RC to pay greater attention to more world regions. Most of what they want the RC to do for them is echoed in their suggestions for improving the RC. A primary concern not listed above is the combination of democratization, inclusion of young scholars, and diversity of regions. This is a summary: The specifics of what they suggest for improvement should be studied in detail.

References

Abraham Margaret. 2010. "Sociology on the Move in Gothenburg: International Sociological Association XVII World Congress of Sociology. Footnotes: *Newsletter of the American Sociological Association*.

Dubrow, Joshua Kjerulf, Marta Kolczynska, Kazimierz M. Slomczynski and Irina Tomescu-Dubrow. "Sociologists Everywhere: Country Representation in Conferences Hosted by the International Sociological Association, 1990 to 2012." Forthcoming in *Current Sociology*. [authors contributed equally and listed alphabetically]

Appendix A: The Entire English Language Survey

Dear Members of ISA RC 09,

We, the Executive Committee of the International Sociological Association's Research Committee 09 on Social Transformations and the Sociology of Development, would like to better understand the interests and needs of the members of this Research Committee. This survey is anonymous and confidential. This brief confidential survey was designed to be completed within ten to fifteen minutes. We will remove any personally identifying information from these survey data. These survey data will be kept by RC 09's Executive Committee.

A report on the results of the survey will be distributed – without any personally identifying information – in the RC 09 Newsletter for Fall 2016 that is emailed to all RC 09 members and at the Research Committee's official website, rc09socialtransformations.org.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact the survey administrator, Joshua Kjerulf Dubrow (Website and Newsletter Editor of ISA RC 09) Associate Professor, Institute of Philoso-

phy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences, 72 Nowy Swiat, Room 211, 00-330 Warsaw, Poland, dubrow.2@osu.edu.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ulrike Schuerkens and Habib Khondker, co-Presidents of ISA RC 09

Survey Items

First, we would like to know about your research interests. Please name three research topics that you are currently working on.

[open ended]

Do you plan to attend the International Sociological Association Forum of Sociology in Vienna, Austria, in July 2016?

[Yes/No]

What are the main barriers that you face to attend ISA conferences (World Congress or Forum) that are held outside of your home country?

[open ended]

In your opinion, what are the main benefits of being a member of the ISA's Research Committee 09 Social Transformations and the Sociology of Development (ISA RC 09)?

Choose up to three:

Be informed of current research in my field

Be informed of publication opportunities

Be informed of funding opportunities

Learn new information that I can use in the classes that I teach

Feeling that I belong to a community of scholars

It fulfils a professional obligation that others expect of me

Other [open ended]

On a scale of one to ten -- where one is low, and ten is high -- to what extent do you feel that ISA RC 09 is useful for your professional career?

[1 to 10 scale]

What would you like ISA RC 09 to do for you?

[open ended]

Now, we would like to ask you about your typical work week. In a typical work week, how many hours do you teach?

[number]

In a typical work week, how many hours do you conduct research (includes reading, writing and analyses)?

[number]

In a typical work week, excluding teaching and research, how many hours do you work on other professional duties?

[number]

Do you have funding (from your places of employment, or from any other outside source) for any of your current research projects?

[yes/no]

Gender

[Male/Female/I do not identify with a particular gender]

Age

[18 – 25] [26 – 34] [35 – 45] [45 – 55] [56 or older]

Education

[Baccalaureate] [MA only] [Doctorate] [other]

Employment Status (Check all the apply)

[Unemployed] [student] [private business] [academic institution] [government] [non-governmental organization] [other (write in)]

World Region of your main place of employment

Northern Africa, Eastern and Middle Africa, Western Africa, Southern Africa, South America, Central America, North America, Caribbean, Central Asia, Eastern Asia, Southern Asia, South-Eastern Asia, Western Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Southern Europe, Western Europe, Oceania

My main academic orientation is

[Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology, Economics, Business and Management, other (write in)]

In what ways can the Research Committee 09 Social Transformations and the Sociology of Development be improved?

[open ended]

If you have any other comments, please write them here.

[open ended]

Member Publications

Jaime Jiménez and Mónica N. Velasco E. 2016. "Alternative Learning and Research Leading to Development." *Athens Journal of Social Sciences* 3(2): 113—125.

"The objective of this work is to report an experience of learning and research not following the traditional track, which is successful in preparing individuals to get a doctoral degree and, while getting the credentials, engage in research related to the needs and desires of the regions where they live."

Khutkyy, Dmytro. 2016. "Review of the book *Modern Societies: A Comparative Perspective*, by Stephen K. Sanderson." *International Sociology Reviews* 31(5): 567-570.

Sociology of Shi'ite Islam: Collected Essays (2016) by Saïd Amir Arjomand, Stony Brook Institute for Global Studies Brill Publishing, ISBN:9789004312258, Hardback €150

Sociology of Shi'ite Islam is a comprehensive study of the development of Shi'ism. Its bearers first emerged as a sectarian elite, then a hierocracy and finally a theocracy. Imamate, Occultation and the theodicy of martyrdom are identified as the main components of the Shi'ism as a world religion. In these collected essays Arjomand has persistently developed a Weberian theoretical framework for the analysis of Shi'ism, from its sectarian formation in

the eighth century through the establishment of the Safavid empire in the sixteenth century, to the Islamic revolution in Iran in the twentieth century. These studies highlight revolutionary impulses embedded in the belief in the advent of the hidden Imam, and the impact of Shi'ite political ethics on the authority structure of pre-modern Iran and the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Saïd Amir Arjomand also published the following articles that apply the approach to integrated social theory and regional studies:

“Unity of the Persianate World under Turko-Mongolian Domination and Divergent Development of Imperial Autocracies in the Sixteenth Century,” *Journal of Persianate Studies*, 9.1 (2016), pp. 1-18.

“State Formation in Early Modern Muslim Empires: Common Origin and Divergent Paths,” *Social Imaginaries*, 2.2 (2016), pp. 35-51.

“The Rise of Interdisciplinary Studies in Social Sciences and Humanities and the Challenge of Comparative Sociology,” *European Journal of Social Theory*, 20.2 (2017).

Social Changes in a Global World (2017) by Ulrike Schuerkens Université Rennes 2 and EHESS, France, Sage Publications, Paperback ISBN 9781473930223 £26.99

Ulrike Scheurkens presents an in-depth exploration of social transformations and developments. Combining an international approach with up-to-date research, the book: Has dedicated chapters on contemporary topics including technology, new media, war and terror; political culture and inequality Includes an analysis of societal structures – inequality, global-

ization, transnationalism. It contains learning features including: discussion questions, annotated further reading, chapter summaries and pointers to online resources to assist with study.

Global Management, Local Resistances: Theoretical Discussion and Empirical Case Studies (2016) edited by Ulrike Schuerkens, Université Rennes 2 and EHESS, France, Routledge Publishers, paperback ISBN 978138700765 £34.99

Job Announcement

Associate Professor, Policy Studies University of Alberta Faculty of Arts, Department of Political Science, careers.ualberta.ca. Closing Date - November 30, 2016

The Department of Political Science is establishing a Masters of Policy Studies and is seeking a full-time continuing Associate Professor, effective July 1, 2017, to assist in building the new degree program. The successful candidate will be expected to play a leading role in curriculum design and development, recruiting students, launching, and overseeing the new program. A standard academic appointment includes expectations of the pursuit of an innovative and externally-funded research program, regular engagement in relevant domestic and international professional/research networks, teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels, supervision and mentorship of graduate students, and service to the Department, the Faculty and the University, as well as engagement with professional and external communities. The initial appointment will include more than typical administrative responsibilities and therefore a reduced teaching load along with active participation in research.

Change in Newsletter and Website Editorship

by Joshua K. Dubrow, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences

As of 2017, the RC 09 Newsletter and Website will change editors. **Dr. Zophia Edwards**, Assistant Professor at Providence College (USA,) will become the Newsletter Editor. Dr. Edwards received her PhD from Boston University. Dr. Edwards' research examines the impacts of colonialism and local labor movements on state formation and long-term development in the Global South, with a particular focus on resource-rich countries. **Ilona Wysmulek** is a PhD Candidate at the Graduate School for Social Research, Polish Academy of Sciences (Poland) and will become the Website editor. Her research is on attitudes toward corruption in cross-national perspective, and she has been a lead research assistant in a major cross-national survey data harmonization project at The Ohio State University (USA) and the Polish Academy of Sciences.

I had been Newsletter and Website editor since Fall 2012. I am stepping aside because the Newsletter and Website need fresh ideas and new leadership. During my tenure as editor, I attempted to transform the Newsletter from a bulletin-board information outlet into a vibrant platform for scholars of social transformations and the sociology of development to publish original articles, voice their concerns about the field, and promote their research. It has been my privilege to edit and promote the work of the excellent scholars of RC 09 in this Newsletter. The incoming editors informed me that they will work together to combine the Newsletter and the Website into a single distribution platform that will reach more scholars around the world. This is exactly the kind of energy and new thinking that RC 09 needs.

Newsletters depend on content. I hope that members of RC 09 will continue the tradition of using the Newsletter as their research voice. Quite frankly, RC 09 needs more and diverse members to answer the call for content and publish in the Newsletter. A vibrant and democratic RC depends on your direct participation. **Members of RC 09, this is your newsletter: it will only be as good as what you put in it.** I hope that you will support the incoming Newsletter and Website Editors Dr. Zophia Edwards and Ilona Wysmulek in their roles as promoters of your ideas and research.

**Join ISA and the Research Committee on
Social Transformations
and the Sociology of Development!**

Established in 1971, RC 09 strives to represent sociologists interested in the study of social transformations and development around the world, regardless of their theoretical persuasion, methodological approaches or ideological perspective. The goal RC 09 is to advance sociological knowledge on social transformations and development and to support research on this topic among scholars worldwide.

To join, please see visit either the RC 09 website, rc09socialtransformations.org, or the ISA website, isa-sociology.org.

Board Members of RC09

Nina BANDELJ, University of California-Irvine, USA

Samuel COHN, Texas A&M University, USA

Nikolai GENOV, School for Advanced Social Studies, Slovenia

Dieter NEUBERT, University Bayreuth, Germany