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A Study to Determine the Effect of the Repeal of the Sunday Blue Law on the Placement of Distributive Education Cooperative Students in Hampton

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A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE EFFECT OF THE
REPEAL OF THE SUNDAY BLUE LAW ON THE
PLACEMENT OF DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION
COOPERATIVE STUDENTS IN HAMPTON

A PROJECT PRESENTED TO
DR. JOHN RITZ
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

IN FULFILLMENT
OF THE COURSE REQUIREMENTS
EDUCATION 636

BY
CAROL S. ROLLINS
APRIL, 1979

This research paper was prepared by Carol S. Rollins under the direction of Dr. John M. Ritz in Education 636, Problems in Education. It was submitted to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education.

APPROVED BY: John M. Patterson
ADVISOR

4-30-79
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John M. Ritz
GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

4-30-79
DATE

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

On December 19, 1978, voters in the cities of Hampton and Newport News went to the polls to decide whether the Sunday Closing Law, commonly known as the Blue Law (1950 Code of Virginia, §18.2-341), would be repealed. The repeal of this law would mean that retail establishments may open seven days a week. Since Distributive Education students work in retail stores, the majority could be affected by the change in the law.

By law, the referendum can only be proposed for a vote on the even years. Hampton and Newport News voted in November 1972 not to repeal the Sunday Closing Law, while James City and York Counties voted to repeal the law. In November 1978, Norfolk and Virginia Beach voted not to repeal the law. On December 19, 1978, Hampton and Newport News residents voted once again not to repeal the law. If the law is repealed in Hampton in a future year, it would have some effect on the Distributive Education student. This study is seeking to determine the extent of the effect of a repeal of the Sunday Closing Law on the placement of Distributive Education students.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The primary purpose of this study is to determine the effect of the repeal of the Sunday Closing Law on the employment of Distributive Education students and how the employment needs of retail establishments would be effected based on the repeal of the Sunday Closing Law.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is concerned with Distributive Education students in the City of Hampton which operates under the Sunday Closing Law and employers providing placement for these students.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study will be limited to the cooperative Distributive Education students and their employers in distributive businesses. A random sample will then be taken consisting of one-third of the employers of Distributive Education students in Hampton.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The terms used in this study consist of the following meanings:

Cooperative Student -- a student who is enrolled in Distributive Education program and is employed at a distributive business. Instruction both in school and at the training station is based upon the student's career goal (Mason and Haines, 1976).

Distributive Education -- a vocational instructional program designed to meet the needs of persons who enter, or are preparing to enter, a distributive occupation or an occupation requiring competency in one or more marketing functions (Crawford and Meyer, 1972).

Distributive Occupations -- The many distributive occupations found in retailing, wholesaling, manufacturing and service industries, and in many specialized marketing enterprises, such as transportation, warehousing, banking, real estate, and insurance (Crawford and Meyer, 1972). See Appendix A for list of distributive occupations.

Employment Needs -- the projected job openings of retail establishments.

Hampton City High Schools -- the following five high schools: Bethel, Hampton, Kecoughtan, Pembroke, and Phoebus.

Peninsula Retail Merchants Association -- the merchants' association serving the retailers in Hampton and Newport News.

Placement -- selection of an appropriate training establishment and assisting a student in obtaining an appropriate job with the training station (Law, 1973).

Repeal -- to revoke, to do away with the law.

Save Our Sundays Committee -- a committee of retailers and concerned citizens operating through the Peninsula Retail Merchants Association to maintain the Sunday Closing Law.

Sunday Closing Law (Blue Law) -- 1950 Code of Virginia, §18.2-341 which prohibits the working or transacting of business on Sunday, except for businesses specified in the law.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

At this time little information has been found on the Sunday Closing Law and the placement of cooperative students on Sunday. No valid research or studies have been uncovered. Therefore, the major source of information pertaining to the topic will come from personal interviews and newspaper articles.

The review of literature will be divided among four topics:

(A) history of the Sunday Closing Law, (B) moral implications, (C) preference of retailers and their employees, and (D) placement of students.

A. History of the Sunday Closing Law

According to the 1950 Code of Virginia, §18.4-341, as amended, the Sunday Closing Law was originally adopted for religious reasons in 1776 in the Virginia Declaration of Rights. The law states, "On the first day of the week, commonly known and designated as Sunday, no person shall engage in work, labor or business or employ others to engage in work, labor or business except in the following businesses:...." These businesses in the Virginia Code related to retailing and the placement of Distributive Education students include, "(1) Transportation, (4) Servicing, fueling and repair of motor vehicles, (5) Operation of motion picture theaters, (7) Entertainment and recreational facilities, (9) Preparation and sale of non-prescription drugs and the sale of medical and hygienic supplies and baby supplies, (11) Restaurants and

delicatessens, (13) Hotels and motels, (15) Sale of food, ice, and beverages, and (18) Sale of novelties, cameras and photographic supplies." The 1978 amendment allows for the sale of auto parts. Food dealers were also permitted to sell non-food items.

One provision in the law states, "This section (Blue Law) shall not be applicable to works of charity conducted solely for charitable purposes by any person or organization not organized or engaged in business for a profit." Brannan (1978) reported that during the Christmas season in 1972 many department stores in Hampton remained open by donating the profits of the store for that day to charity. According to Frink (1972), reports filed with the Commonwealth Attorney showed net profits averaged less than \$50.00.

Brannan (1978) reported that when the law was brought up for a vote in 1972, it remained in effect with 8448 to 6672 voting against the repeal. James City and York Counties, however, repealed the Sunday Closing Law. The law was voted on in Hampton on December 19, 1978, and upheld as it stands. The next opportunity for repeal will be 1980.

B. Moral Implications

In a sermon by Clarke (1961) he made reference to the Ten Commandments which reads, "Remember the Sabbath and Keep It Holy." Clarke stated, "We need the pause that Sabbath rest can give us. We need the reverence that Sabbath worship can give us. If all church members and citizens give this subject deep thought, there will be no question that the Virginia Sunday Law will be maintained, with some

necessary minor revisions... The Virginia Retail Merchants Association is to be warmly congratulated for its effort to retain Sunday as a day of rest, family union, healthy recreation, and public worship." In a letter to peninsula churches, Rawlinson (1978) writes, "Those who live on the Peninsula know that the Peninsula Retail Merchants Association and the majority of its members and employees have historically opposed making Sunday another commercial day. The present law makes it possible to keep Sunday a day set aside for worship or spiritual observance, rest and relaxation, and for being together with the family."

C. Preference of Retailers and Their Employees

Aponte (1972) interviewed several employees of stores that had opened on Sundays in the fall of 1972. He reported that the majority opposed working on Sunday. Some were paid a straight salary for the week and, therefore, did not receive extra pay. Others on commission were able to make extra money but preferred to be home with the family. Those employees not strongly opposed to working on Sunday were receiving overtime pay. In an interview with Rawlinson (1978) he stated that the majority of the retailers will spread out the existing employees over a seven-day week and will rotate the Sunday shift rather than hire additional employees. There is a constant need of management skills regardless of the day. If the law is repealed, the retailers may ban together to keep stores closed. Peninsula Retail Merchants Association, through the

Save Our Sundays Committee, sent letters to retailers urging employees to vote against the repeal. In a letter to retailers Rawlinson (1978) states, "The purpose of this united effort is to check the trend toward seven-day-a-week selling. As you know, most stores are now open 60-72 hours a week, adding another five or six hours on Sunday would definitely create extra expenses for you, and it would certainly disrupt many families."

D. Placement of Students

Brannan (1978) quotes John Hechinger, Jr., director of development for Hechinger's Hardware Store, as saying, "The fact is that we know that opening Sunday will create more jobs. We will do more business, which means more sales tax." Mason and Haines (1976) states that one of the initial strategies in local program planning... is to see the goals as dictated by the changing nature of the labor market." The local programs need to meet the needs of the community. The State Department of Education in a handbook for manages states, "Generally speaking, the D.E. student is available for store work during the afternoon hours of week days and all day Saturday. However, as there is some variation in schedules in the various communities of the state, specific schedules are worked out to meet the individual needs of each locality." In an interview with Daniel (1978), she stated that James City County has no Sunday Closing Law. Ninety percent of the Distributive Education students of Bruton High School in James City County work on Sundays. The students expect to work on Sunday when they enter the program.

In conclusion, no literature was found that expressed the opinion that students should not be placed on jobs where they would be expected to work on Sunday.

Chapter 3

DESIGN OF STUDY

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the procedure employed in the collection of data. The problem as stated was to determine the effect of the repeal of the Sunday Blue Law on the placement of Distributive Education cooperative students in Hampton.

Collection of Data

A questionnaire was used to gather the data for the study. The questionnaire was developed to answer the questions stated in the problem and was distributed to the employers of the Distributive Education cooperative students. Multiple choice and short answer questions were used. (See Appendix C, page 30).

Sample

Employers of the Hampton City Distributive Education students made up the population from which the sample was drawn. The first step in narrowing the sample was to list the distributive businesses that employ Hampton City Distributive Education students. The names of the businesses were obtained from the Hampton Distributive Education Supervisor through the D. E. 4046 reports submitted by the Distributive Education coordinators in the City. The businesses were listed in alphabetical order. A survey was mailed to one-third or approximately thirty-five employers. This list was also given to the Hampton City Distributive Education coordinators. The Distributive Education students employed by the businesses surveyed served as secondary contacts in obtaining a high return of surveys.

Data Analysis

After the questionnaires were returned, the data was compiled.
The findings were reported in written explanations.

Chapter 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The problem of concern in this study was to determine the effect of the repeal of the Sunday Blue Law on the placement of Distributive Education cooperative students in Hampton. This chapter contains the presentation of data and accompanying analysis relative to the questionnaire response from employers of these students.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE

The population of this study consisted of employers of cooperative Distributive Education students in Hampton. One-third or thirty-five, employers were selected at random from an alphabetized list of employers of the D. E. 4046 reports submitted by Hampton City Distributive Education coordinators.

A questionnaire was mailed to these employers. Thirty-two, or ninety-one percent, completed and returned the survey. A summary of the responses is presented in the following data.

QUESTION 1. At the present time how many Distributive Education students are in your employment?

Number of Students	Percentage
1	40
2	32
3	19
4	0
5	3
6	0
7	6

QUESTION 2. Is your establishment open for business on Sunday?

Response	Percentage
Yes	37.5
No	62.5

The following questions were answered by the twelve employers whose establishments were open on Sunday.

QUESTION 3. Generally, what is the classification of the employees who work on Sunday?

Response	Percentage
Full time	0
Part time	42
Both	58

All employers relied on some part-time employees to work on Sunday.

Distributive Education students were included among the Sunday employees.

QUESTION 4. When you hire new employees, is it with the understanding that they will be expected to work a fair share of Sundays?

Response	Percentage
Always	42
Usually	58
Occasionally	0
Never	0

Employees of establishments open on Sunday were expected to work their fair share of Sundays. Any student hired by an establishment open on Sunday could be expected to work on Sunday.

QUESTION 5. How do the Sunday sales compare to the average sales for a given day?

Response	Percentage
Excellent	33
Above Average	16.5
Average	33
Fair	16.5
Poor	0

Sunday sales were varied among the businesses, ranging from fair to excellent for a given day. This would not cause any increase in the overall demand for employees on Sunday.

QUESTION 6. How do the hours of operation for Sunday compare to the hours of operation for a week day?

Response	Percentage
Open more hours on Sunday	0
Open the same number of hours	67
Open less hours on Sunday	33

All establishments were open less or the same number of hours on Sunday. Therefore, there was no need for increased man hours due to longer shifts.

QUESTION 7. In your opinion, if the Sunday Blue Laws were repealed, how would it affect your business in terms of employment needs and in particular the employment of Distributive Education students?

The answer to this question was varied. The majority of employers responded that there would be no effect. One employer stated that his business would increase if other stores were open and this could cause a need for an additional student. Another stated that their business would be hurt and this could cause a decrease in employment.

The following questions were answered by the twenty employers whose establishments were closed on Sunday.

QUESTION 8. Are you authorized to be open for business on Sunday under the current Sunday Blue Laws?

Response	Percentage
Yes	20
No	80

Twenty percent of the establishments closed on Sunday were authorized to be open by law but remained closed due to manager preference. If the law were to be repealed these establishments would probably remain closed.

QUESTION 9. If the Sunday Blue Laws were repealed would you be open for business on Sunday?

Response	Percentage
Yes	55
No	25
Do not know at this time	20

Since fifty-five percent of those employers of the establishments closed on Sunday would open if the laws were repealed it would increase the man hours necessary for Sunday operation.

QUESTION 10. If open, who would be required to work?

Response	Percentage
Regular full time employees	5
Regular part time employees	10
Both	70
Newly hired personnel	0
Other	0
Do not know at this time	15

Seventy percent of the employers would use current full and part time employees to work on Sunday. Only ten percent would use strictly part time employees and only five percent would use only full time employees on Sunday. Employers did not indicate that they would hire new employees to work on Sunday.

QUESTION 11. In your opinion, if the Sunday Blue Laws were repealed, how would it affect your business in terms of employment needs and in particular the employment of Distributive Education students?

The answers to this question varied with the majority indicating that they would use employees from their present staff. Most felt that they would be able to accommodate a Sunday work schedule by giving their present staff more hours for the week. New employees would only be hired if regular employees would not work. Others did not know at the present time and would have to make a decision when and if the laws were repealed.

COMMENTS. Please feel free to make any additional comments that might aid in this study.

All of the employers who responded to this section have their comments listed as stated below:

1. I do not want the law repealed. I am 100% in favor of the Blue Law.

2. D. E. students are a great asset to our business and weekends and Sundays are essential to our needs and theirs.

3. We are now open on Holiday Sundays for a few hours for pick ups. I would never feel right if I had to make an employee work on Sunday if they were not willing.

4. Sunday is a profitable day due to many fixed expenses and high customer counts. We are open in many areas where there are no blue laws and also closed in areas without blue laws so I am not sure of our official position.

5. I feel we would be open on Sunday if this would be passed to compete with our competition.

6. I feel Sunday Blue Laws are archaic and should be repealed. This would provide more jobs for more people.

7. I am not able to hire anyone under eighteen except stock workers. This limits my use of Distributive Education students.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is a summary of the study, including the background of the problem, statement of the problem, population of the study, and procedures utilized in collection of data. Secondary, a summary of the findings are reported. Conclusions of the study are then presented based on the findings. Finally, recommendations for utilization of this study and development of further research are cited.

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Background of the Problem

In December, 1978, voters in Hampton voted not to repeal the Sunday Blue Law. By law the referendum can be proposed for a vote on the even years. Another vote may be proposed in 1980. If the law is repealed, it would have some effect on the Distributive Education cooperative students, since they work in retail establishments. With the repeal all retail establishments could open on Sunday, possibly changing the employment outlook for Distributive Education students.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of the repeal of the Sunday Blue Law on the placement of Distributive Education cooperative students in Hampton. This study furnished the information necessary to determine what the effect would be if the law were to be repealed.

Population

The population of this study consisted of one-third of the employers of the Hampton City Distributive Education cooperative students. The names of the employers were obtained from the D. E. 4046 reports submitted by the Hampton City Distributive Education coordinators to the Hampton City Distributive Education supervisor.

Procedures Utilized in Collection and Treatment of the Data

A questionnaire was developed and used in this study to collect the data. The questionnaire was mailed to the employers. After completing the questionnaire the employer returned it in a self-addressed envelope. Distributive Education coordinators and students of these employers followed up with the employer to ensure a high rate of return of the questionnaires.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

A summary of the findings of the study are reported in this section in relation to the research questions. The employers employed between one and seven students, all on a part-time basis. Of the thirty-two employers responding, twelve are presently open on Sunday and twenty are closed on Sunday.

Five questions were directed to those twelve employers whose businesses were open on Sunday. Fifty-eight percent relied on both full and part-time employees to work on Sunday, while forty-two percent used

strictly part-time employees on Sunday. New employees were usually or always informed that they would be expected to work a fair share of Sundays. Sunday sales were varied among the businesses, ranging from fair to excellent. Two-thirds of the businesses were opened for business the same number of hours on Sunday, while one-third were open less hours on Sunday. Responses varied to the open question of how the repeal of the Sunday Blue Law would affect the business in relation to employment. The majority of employers said that employment would not be affected. One employer would possibly have to reduce the number of employees, because the sales would decrease.

Four questions were directed to the twenty employers whose businesses were closed on Sunday. Twenty percent were authorized under the law to be open and chose to remain closed. If the Sunday Closing Law was repealed, fifty-five percent would open, twenty-five percent would remain closed and twenty percent did not know at this time. Seventy percent would use current full and part-time employees to work on Sunday. Only ten percent would use strictly part-time employees and five percent would use full-time employees to work on Sunday. Employers did not indicate that they would hire new employees to work on Sunday. When asked how the repeal of the Sunday Closing Law would affect the business and the employment of Distributive Education students, the majority would use current employees. New employees would only be hired if regular employees could not work.

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

Conclusions drawn from the reported findings are presented in this section as they relate to the research questions.

The repeal of the Sunday Closing Law would not make any significant change on the placement of cooperative Distributive Education students in Hampton. Retail establishments presently open on Sunday use regular full and part-time workers for the employment demands on Sunday. Sales on Sunday represent an average day and pose no problem in terms of employment.

Employers in businesses not currently open were undecided as to whether they would open if the law was repealed. In most cases the decision would be decided either by the home office or would be based on what other area stores decided to do. However, if the stores did open, they would depend upon the currently-employed personnel to share the Sunday work shifts. Any extra personnel hired, whether they be Distributive Education students or not, may be offset by the loss in personnel in establishments presently open, as they lose business to other stores.

The vote on the repeal has been presented in 1972 and 1978, and Hampton citizens voted to retain the law as established. Retailers in the area expressed a desire also to keep it as it is written. Without a repeal, there would be no effect on the placement of cooperative Distributive Education students in Hampton.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

Recommendations based on the findings and conclusions of the study are presented in this section.

Recommendations for the Placement of Cooperative Distributive Education Students

Since there would be no significant change on the employment demands of retail establishments if the Sunday Closing Law were to be repealed, there would be no significant change in the placement of cooperative Distributive Education students. There would be no increased demands for cooperative Distributive Education students. As a result, it would be unnecessary to increase the enrollment of the Distributive Education programs in the City if the law were to be repealed at a future date.

Recommendation for Further Research

The results of this research led to the following recommendation:

Since retail establishments that are currently open on Sunday make use of part-time employees for a large percentage of their Sunday man hours, further research to determine the attitude of cooperative Distributive Education students toward Sunday employment could lead to increased placement of students in these establishments if the students desired to work on Sunday.

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APPENDIX A

DISTRIBUTIVE OCCUPATIONS

<u>Category</u>	<u>Job Titles</u>
General Merchandise	Salesperson, stockperson, cashier, receptionist, display helper, buyer, merchandise manager, advertising manager, personnel manager, store manager
Food Distribution	Bagger, checker, grocery, produce, meat clerk, manager
Food Services	Waitress, cashier, busboy, hostess, manager
Petroleum	Service station attendant, manager of service station, salesman, fuel-oil manager
Hotel and Lodging	Bellman, room clerk, reservation manager, purchasing agent, service superintendent, catering manager, sales manager, re-creation director
Wholesaling	Salesman, vending machine specialist, buyer, warehouseman, receiving-shipping supervisor
Real Estate	Salesman, appraiser, property manager
Automotive	Automotive parts counterman, automobile salesman, franchised dealer
Insurance	Health and accident insurance salesman, life insurance salesman, investigator, claims adjuster
Finance and Credit	Bank messenger, bank cashier, loan officer, salesman, credit investigator
Transportation	Information clerk, reservation clerk, ticket salesman, traffic agent, traffic manager
Personal Services	Salesman in photographic studio, customer service worker in dry cleaning, manager of beauty parlor, barber shop, funeral home, shoe repair shop

APPENDIX B



Hampton High School

1491 WEST QUEEN STREET

Hampton, Virginia 23669

OFFICE of the PRINCIPAL

March 29, 1979

Name of Manager
Distributive Business
Street Address
Hampton, Virginia

Dear _____,

As a Distributive Education Coordinator at Hampton High School and a graduate student at Old Dominion University, I am involved in a research project entitled, *A Study to Determine the Effect of the Repeal of the Sunday Blue Law on the Placement of Distributive Education Students in Hampton.*

According to the records of the Distributive Education coordinators in the City of Hampton, you are an employer of one or more D. E. students. It would be greatly appreciated if you could take a few minutes of your time to answer the enclosed questionnaire. An envelope is provided for your convenience so you may return your response as soon as possible. Thank you for your cooperation. It will be most valuable to my study.

Sincerely,

Carol Rollins

Carol Rollins, Coordinator
Distributive Education

CR:lsa

APPENDIX C

HAMPTON CITY DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION EMPLOYER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Firm _____

Address _____

Survey completed by _____

Position _____

Please give your response to the following questions:

1. At the present time how many Distributive Education students are in your employment?

_____ Full time

_____ Part time

2. Is your establishment open for business on Sunday?

_____ Yes

_____ No

*If the answer to question #2 is "Yes", please complete questions #3-7.
If the answer is "no", please go to question #8.*

3. Generally, what is the classification of the employees who work on Sunday?

_____ Full time

_____ Part time

_____ Both

4. When you hire new employees, is it with the understanding that they will be expected to work a fair share of Sundays?

_____ Always

_____ Usually

_____ Occasionally

_____ Never

5. How do the Sunday sales compare to the average sales for a given day?

_____ Excellent
 _____ Above average
 _____ Average
 _____ Fair
 _____ Poor

6. How do the hours of operation for Sunday compare to the hours of operation for a week day?

_____ Open more hours on Sunday
 _____ Open the same number of hours
 _____ Open less hours on Sunday

7. In your opinion, if the Sunday Blue Laws were repealed, how would it affect your business in terms of employment needs and in particular the employment of Distributive Education students?

If the answer to question #2 was "No", please complete questions #8-11.

8. Are you authorized to be open for business on Sunday under the current Sunday Blue Laws?

_____ Yes
 _____ No

9. If the Sunday Blue Laws were repealed, would you be open for business on Sunday?

_____ Yes
 _____ No
 _____ Do not know at this time

10. If open, who would be required to work?

_____ Regular full-time employees

_____ Regular part-time employees

_____ Both

_____ Newly hired personnel

_____ Other (explain) _____

_____ Do not know at this time

11. In your opinion, if the Sunday Blue Laws were repealed, how would it affect your business in terms of employment needs and in particular the employment of Distributive Education students?

Please feel free to make any additional comments that might aid in this study.

Please return as soon as possible in the enclosed envelope.

