

ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY OF JAMAICA BUS TERMINAL:

RESULTS OF A SURVEY

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I. Introduction

The Jamaica Chamber of Commerce is apprehensive about proposed changes in bus routes that use the Jamaica Bus Terminal because of the potential impact on shopping in the adjacent area.

The MTA did an origin and destination study in 1979 addressing the number of early morning and evening commuters who travel in and out of Manhattan. The MTA was (and is) concerned with ridership on the F Train and operating costs, as well as with maximizing passenger conveniences such as shorter waiting lines and fewer transfers. The current study, on the other hand, took into consideration other travelers who use the same buses during off-peak hours and their economic importance to the businesses in the area.

Is business economically dependent on the people who utilize the bus terminal? Do the commuters who pass through the area shop? Will the businesses in the area be affected by a change in bus routes? Do people shop in Jamaica because the terminal is convenient? Has the MTA taken businesses and shoppers into account when determining changes in bus service? This study addresses these questions.

A. How this study was done.

A questionnaire was administered in person to a sample of passengers to determine their destinations and/or other reasons to be in the area (shopping, visiting, etc,). The questionnaire was designed by the Office of Community Studies in consultation with the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce.

Data was computerized and analyzed for this report.

B. When the survey was done.

The questionnaire was conducted at the following times on several weekdays: 9:30 A.M. to 11:00 A.M.; 12:30 P.M. to 2:00 P.M.; and 4:30 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. These times were selected to include people who work in the area both full- and part-time; senior citizens who prefer to travel during daylight hours; and mothers with small children who also shop in the daytime. Only people utilizing the Q4, Q4A, Q5, Q42 and Q85 bus lines were interviewed based on the MTA's plan to reroute these buses from the Merrick Boulevard Corridor.

C. Where the survey was administered.

Interviewers surveyed respondents at the Jamaica Bus Terminal located on 165th Street.

D. How many were surveyed.

200 people were interviewed, in person, over a two week period in late April. Data from this survey provided the following profile:

53% of bus riders shop in the area

61% transfer at this point

54% of shoppers shop frequently (2 or more times a month)

54% responded that convenience of buses was a reason for shopping in the area

32% spend less than \$20

35% of the shoppers spend between \$21-50

26% spend between \$51-100

7% spend over \$100

38% of those surveyed were in the area to shop but 62% were there for other reasons, such as: paying bills, visiting friends or relatives, doctors' visits, or transferring to bus or subway. When asked if they shopped on the day of the survey, 50% of those there for other

reasons also shopped. Incidental shoppers are an important part of any business's success.

Clearly, most people shop when they come to this area.

II. Profile of who shops in the Jamaica area.

The Jamaica Bus Terminal draws people from the following areas:

	<u>Percent of</u> <u>Respondents</u>	<u>Number of</u> <u>Respondents</u>
Cambria Heights	9.6%	16
Laurelton	9.6%	16
Springfield Gardens	10.3%	17
Jamaica	24.6%	39
Hollis	6.0%	10
Queens Village	4.2%	7
St. Albans	24.2%	40
Rosedale	9.0%	<u>16</u>
Total Surveyed		161

Frequent shoppers (those who shop twice a month or more) from these areas number 58% (96); those who shop sometimes (once a month or more), 29% (48). 10% shop once a year.

32 people, 14% of the sample, work in the area. 18% are full time employees, while 10% work part time. Of those who work, 13 (40%) shopped on the day of the survey.

Transfers were 61% of the group. Of this group of

transfers, 81% transferred by bus and 19% by subway. Out of this group of 123 transfers, 42% (52) of them were incidental shoppers. A profile of respondents who shopped on the day of the survey, broken down by time, includes:

18% (19).....9:30 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.

49% (51).....12:30 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.

33% (34).....4:30 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.

III. Profile of shopping pattern.

Clothing is the most predominant purchase for both those who shopped on the day surveyed and all shoppers. 38% of shoppers shop for clothing. Incidentals were bought by 28% of the shoppers who had shopped on the day surveyed and 29% of all shoppers. Food was bought by 25% of the day's shoppers and 11% of all shoppers. There are some specialty stores close to the Terminal that carry a wide variety of ethnic foods. Major appliances, furniture, small appliances and Jewelry constitute 9% and 22% of the remaining purchases for the two groups.

Table 1: Percentage of Shoppers

	Day Surveyed	All Shoppers
Clothing	38%	38%
Major Appliance	1%	4%
Furniture	2%	4%
Small Appliance	2%	7%
Jewelry	4%	7%
Incidentals	28%	29%
Food	25%	11%

32% of all shoppers spend under \$20, 35% spend between \$21 and \$50, 26% spend \$51 to \$100, and 7% spend over \$100.

54% of shoppers shop frequently (two or more times a month), 33% shop once a month, and an additional 13% shop once a year.

The time of day that shopping is the heaviest is the early afternoon. 49% (51 of 104 respondents) shopped from 12:30 P.M. to 2:00 P.M., 18% shopped from 9:30 A.M. to 11:00 A.M., and 33% shopped between 4:30 P.M. and 6:00 P.M.

IV. Why do they shop there?

When asked why they shopped in the area, 54% of respondents felt convenience of buses was a reason. 58% of respondents suggested that the (good) price of merchandise in the area was a reason. 47% of the respondents felt that the variety of merchandise was also important. These answers would suggest that people enjoy coming into this area to shop because they would probably find what they want for the price that they want to pay.

The convenience of the buses makes it a most desirable area to shop in.

V. Other

55% of people surveyed eat in the area. 93% of these eat in fast food restaurants. Only 7% eat in mid-priced restaurants. The restaurants in the area are predominately fast food.

61% of those asked had friends who also shopped in the area. Another 16% had some friends who shopped in the area. Thus, 77% of respondents knew others who shopped in the area.

VI. Conclusion

On the day of the survey, 104 of 197 people, or 53%, shopped in the area. In total, 184 of 200 respondents (92%) shop in the area at some time during the year.

54% of the time convenience of buses was cited as the reason people shopped.

Merchandisers dealing in clothes would be the first to feel the loss if the buses are rerouted because they are frequented most often.

Food stores in the area would also suffer losses because a large portion of their merchandise is perishables that people buy just before they get on buses. A food market in the area specializes in gourmet fruits and vegetables and is frequented by bus riders.

The majority of respondents interviewed were women.

Comments received by our interviewers included criticism of the conditions of the Terminal. It was foreboding and uninviting to many of the respondents. In addition, many respondents complained of the lack of benches of any kind. Few, if any, female bus riders ever entered the Terminal

because of it's appearance. Most respondents entered the Terminal from the street side to avoid entering the Terminal itself. The terminal is in sharp contrast to the rest of the remodeled shopping area.

Many of the afternoon riders were retired people who often come to the area to pay bills and/or shop. These respondents would be greatly inconvenienced if the buses are changed. There are also incidental shoppers whom the area would lose if they are re-routed.

The proposed re-routing would involve another transfer for people who wish to continue to the Terminal. Some shoppers may choose to walk the distance, which is approximately 550 feet. Shoppers might also get off at other stops along Archer Avenue and frequent stores closer to the stops. Incidental shoppers who transfer at the terminal will no longer shop in the area. All these shoppers are important to the Jamaica shopping area.

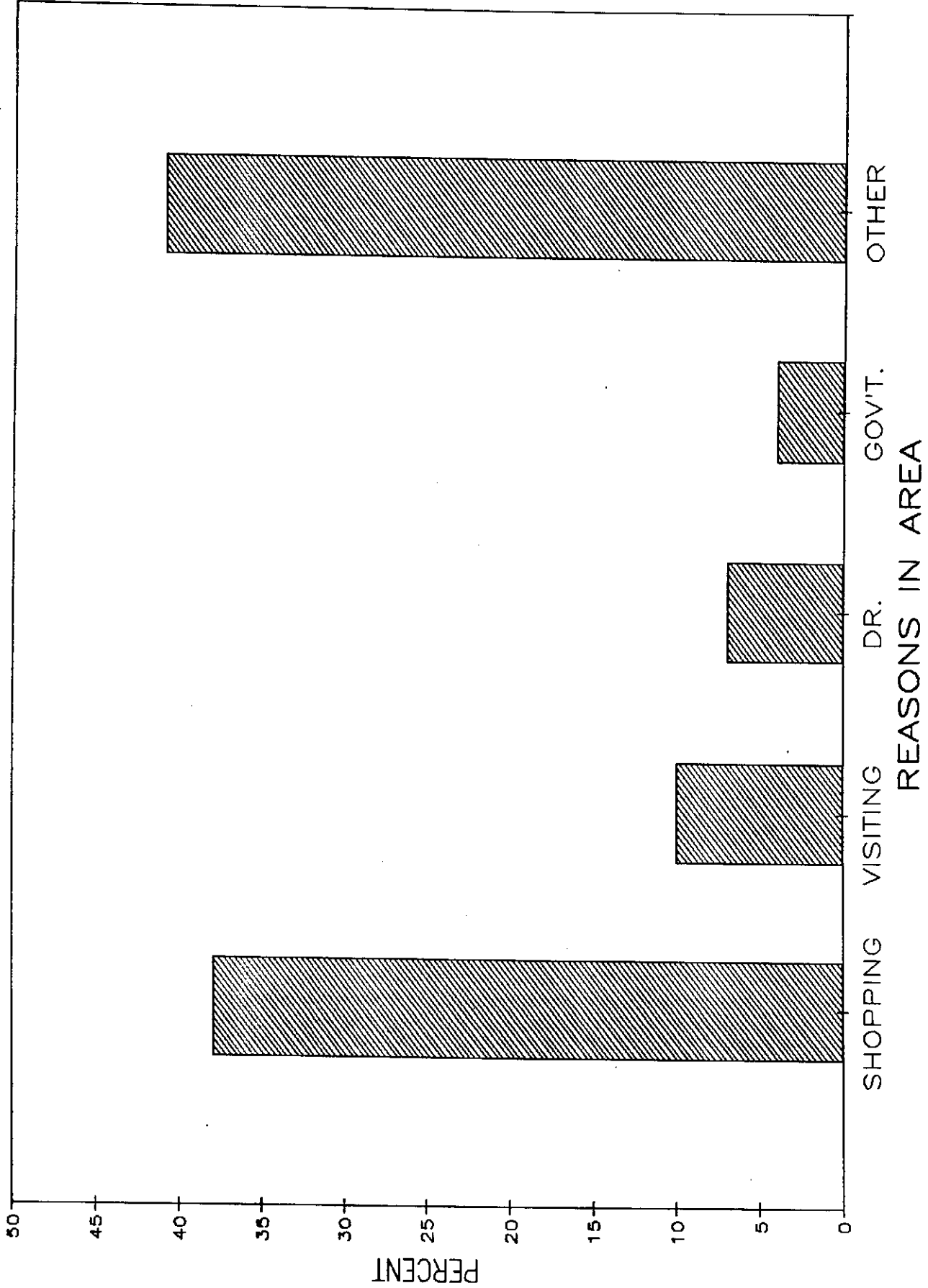
PROFILE OF BUS USERS AT JAMAICA BUS TERMINAL

- 61% OF BUS RIDERS TRANSFER AT JAMAICA TERMINAL
- 53% OF BUS RIDERS SHOP IN THE AREA
- 15% OF SHOPPERS ARE INCIDENTAL -- THEY SHOP IN THE AREA EVEN THOUGH THEY HAVE COME FOR ANOTHER REASON
- 54% OF SHOPPERS SHOP FREQUENTLY IN THE AREA -- ONE OR MORE TIMES A MONTH
- 54% OF SHOPPERS SAY THAT CONVENIENCE OF BUSES IS A PRIMARY REASON FOR SHOPPING IN THE AREA
- 68% OF SHOPPERS SPEND OVER \$21 EACH TIME THEY SHOP
- 33% OF SHOPPERS SPEND OVER \$51 EACH TIME THEY SHOP

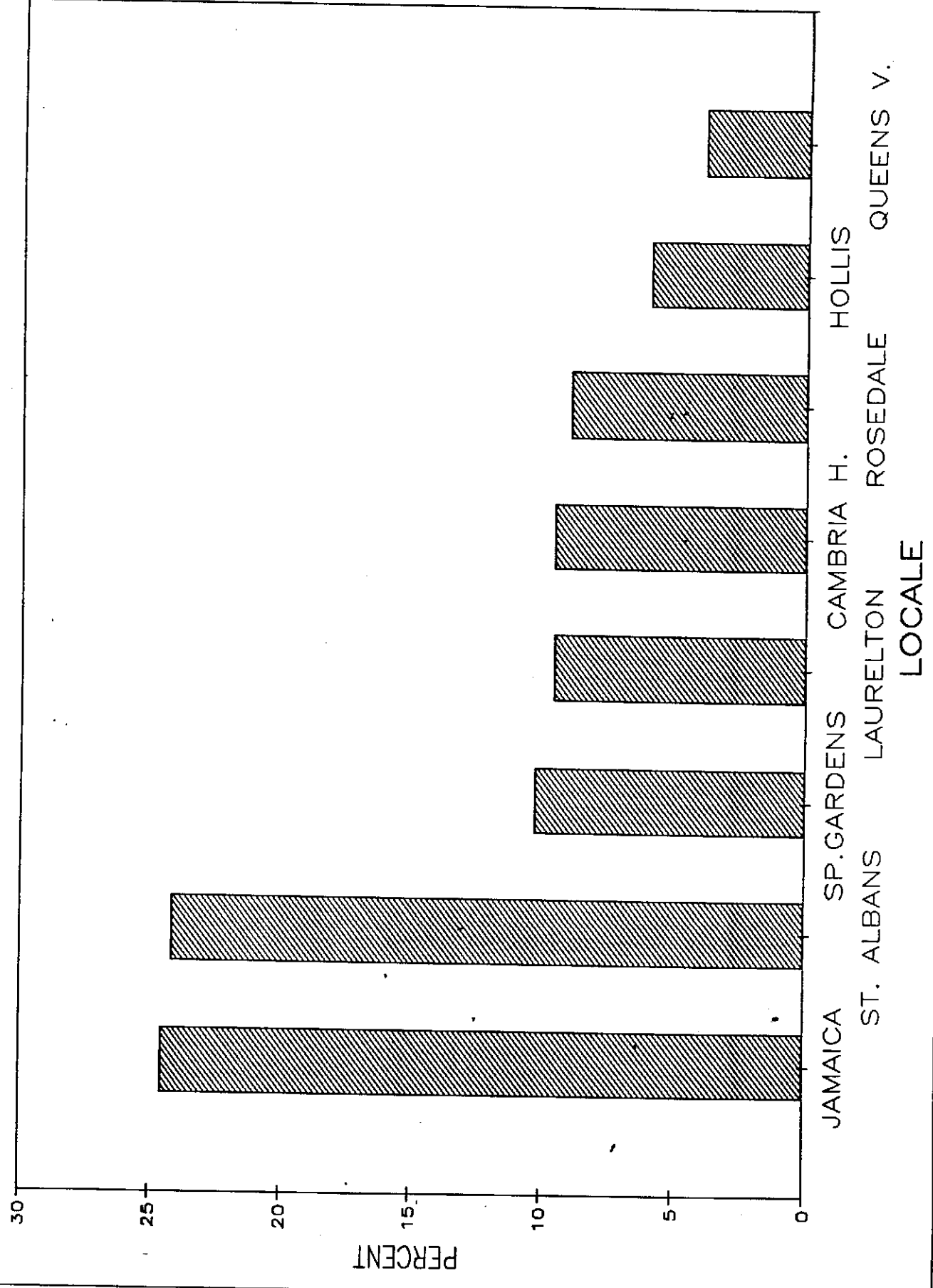


Source: Results of OCS Survey of April, 1988

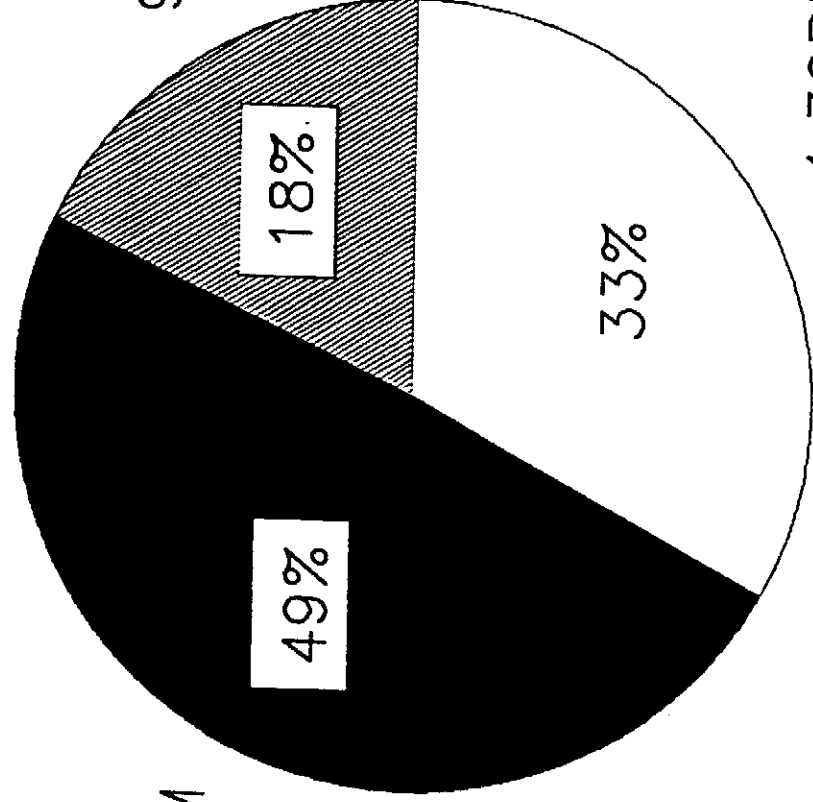
REASONS FOR BEING IN AREA



WHERE SHOPPERS COME FROM



TIMES WHEN PEOPLE SHOP



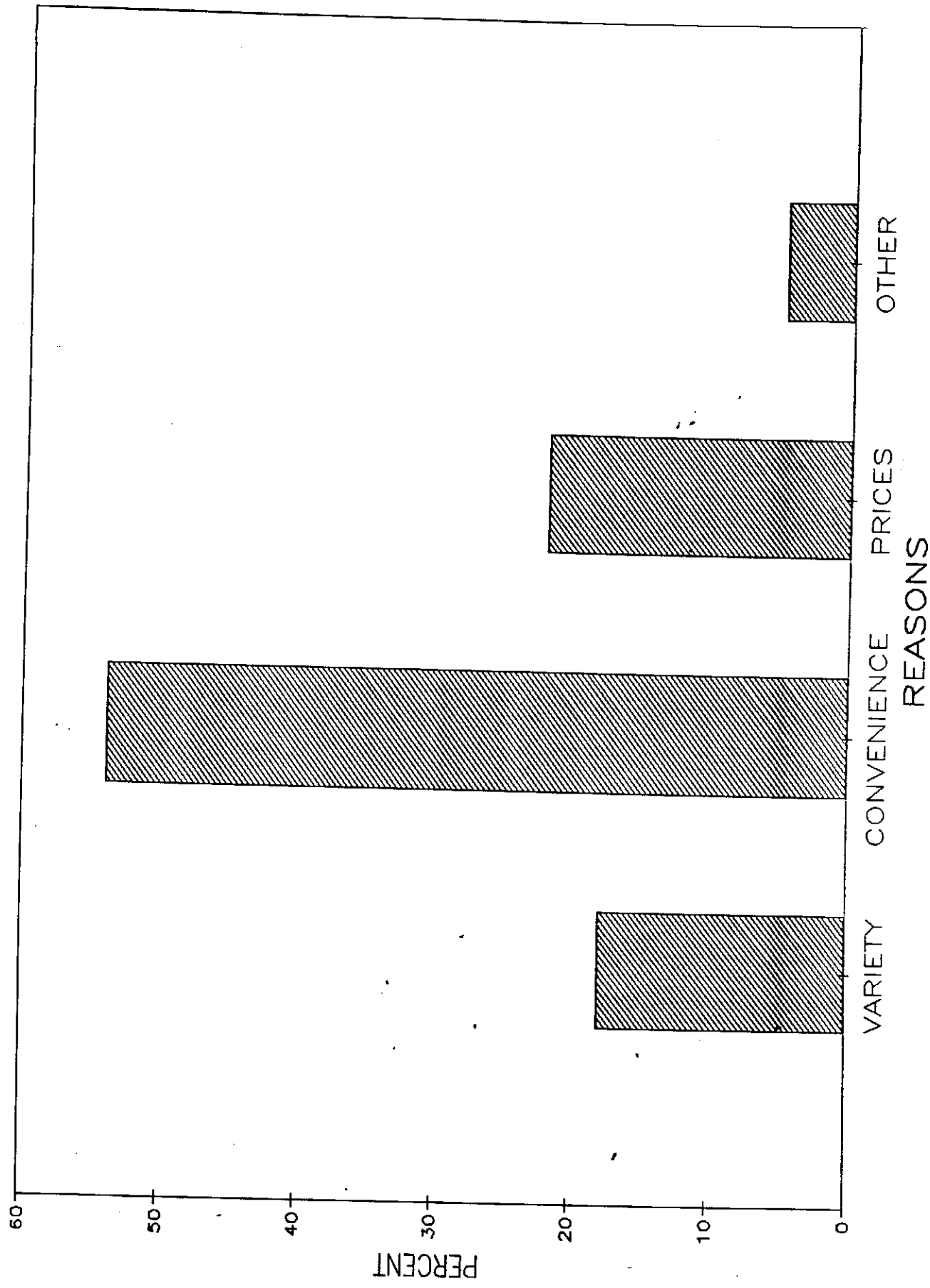
12:30PM-2:00PM

9:30AM-11:00AM

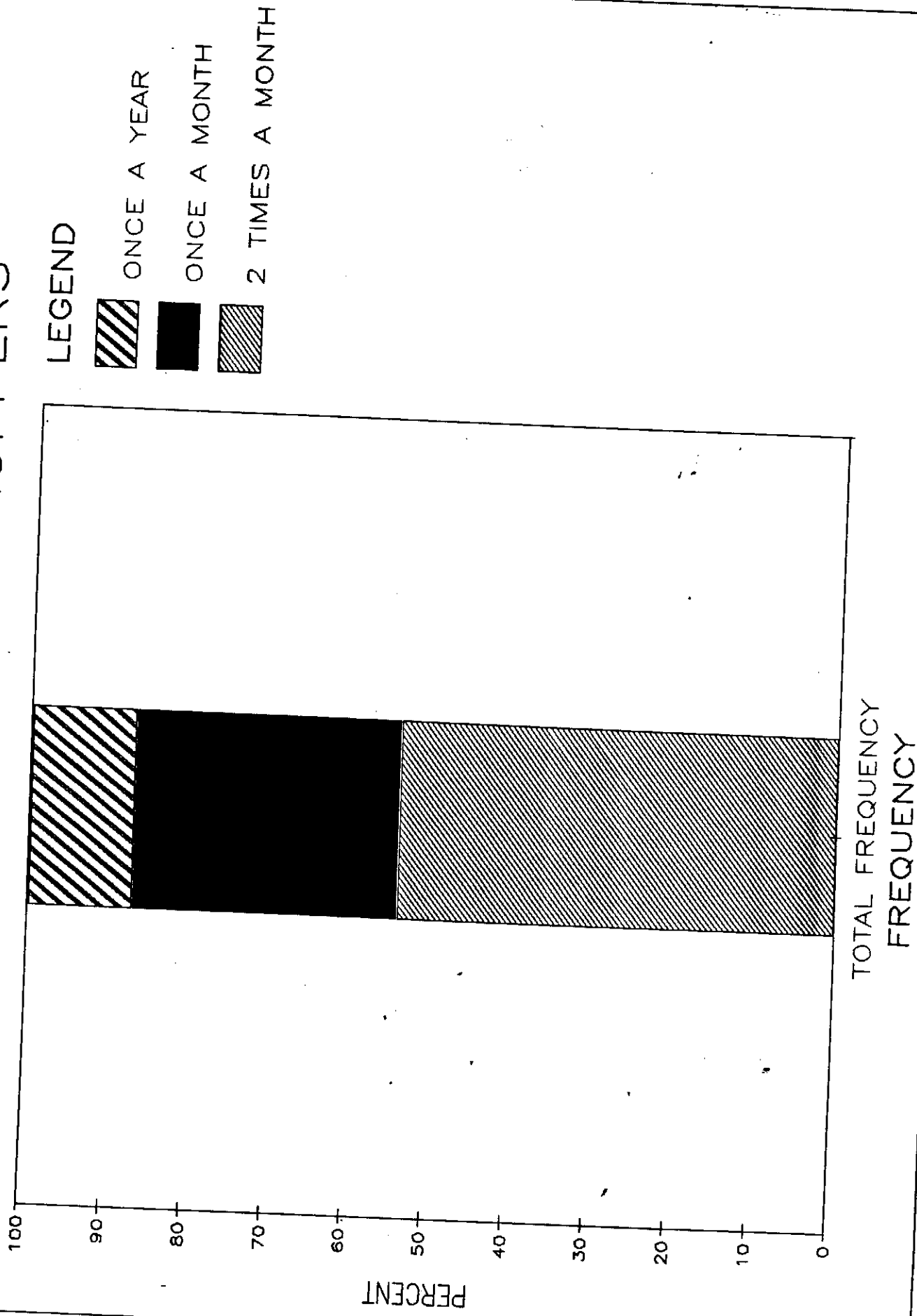
4:30PM-6:00PM

TIMES

REASONS FOR SHOPPING

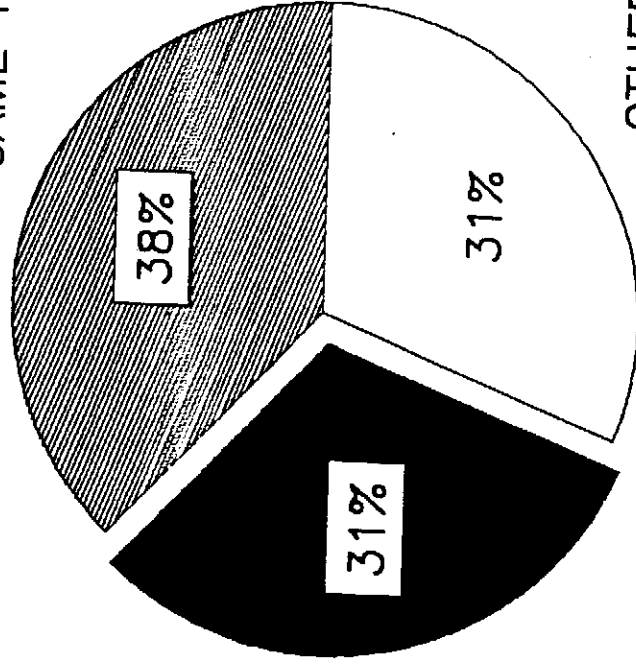


FREQUENCY OF SHOPPERS



INCIDENTAL SHOPPERS

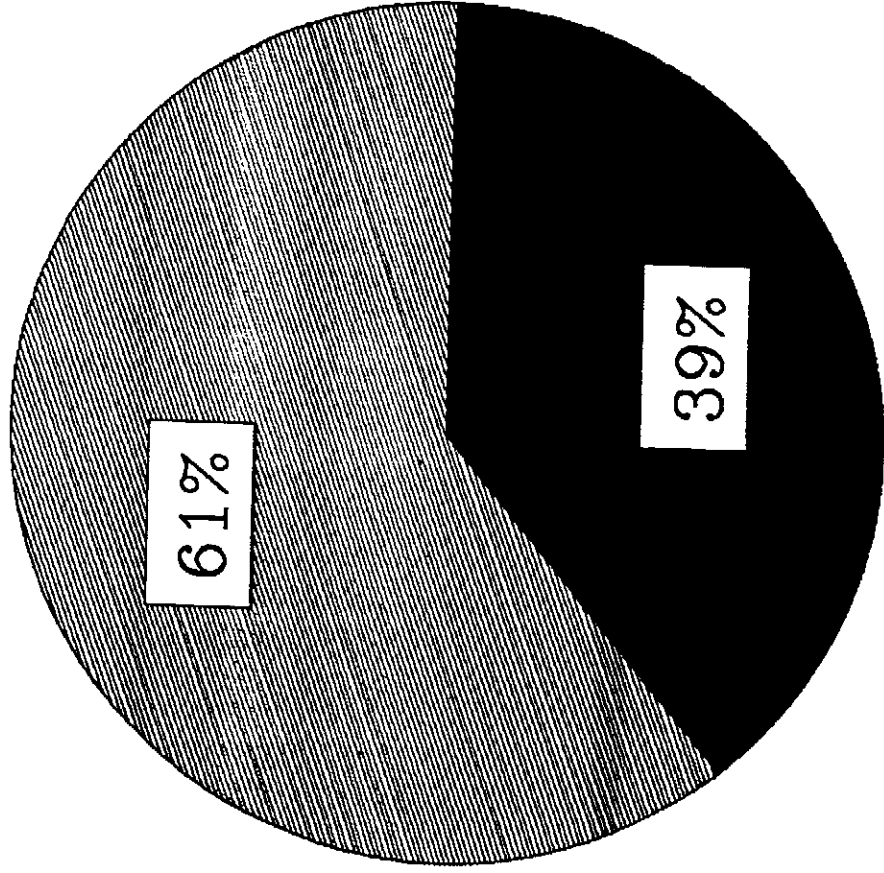
CAME TO SHOP



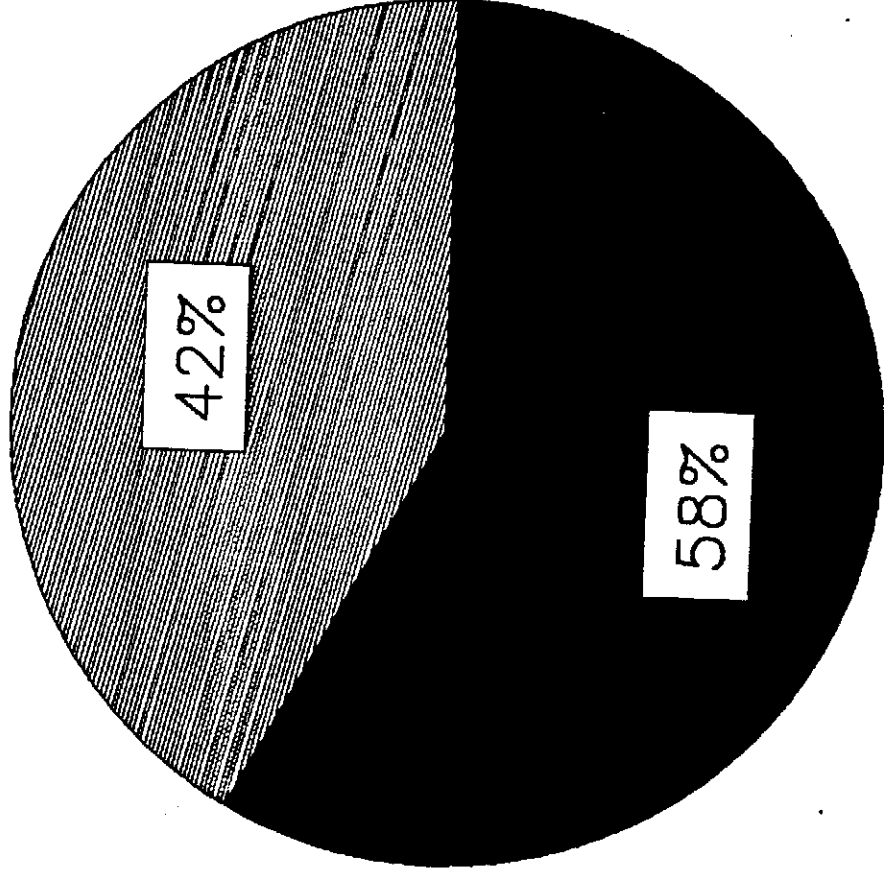
INCIDENTAL SHOPPERS

OTHERS

INCIDENTAL SHOPPERS

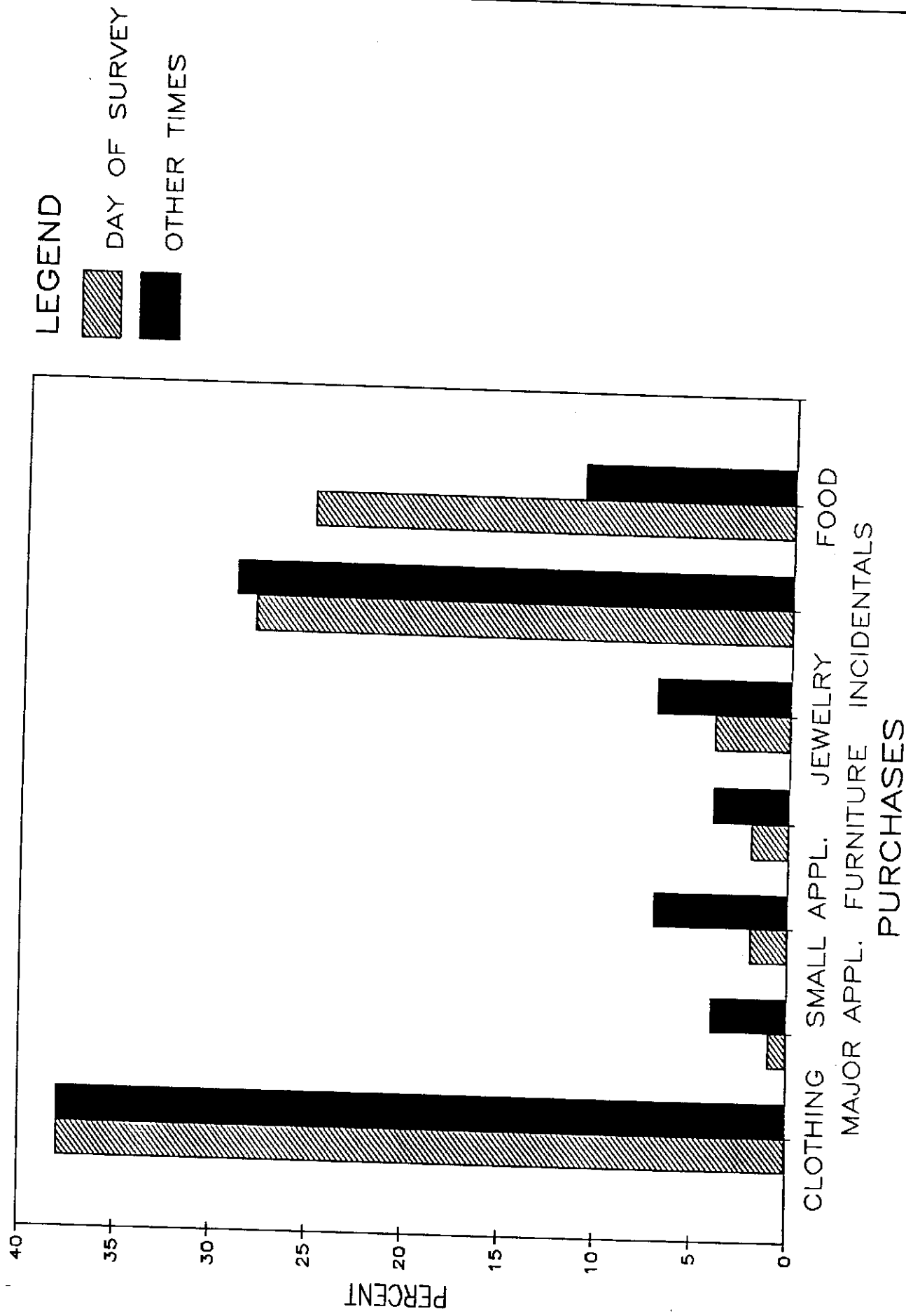


RESPONDENTS WHO TRANSFERRED 61%

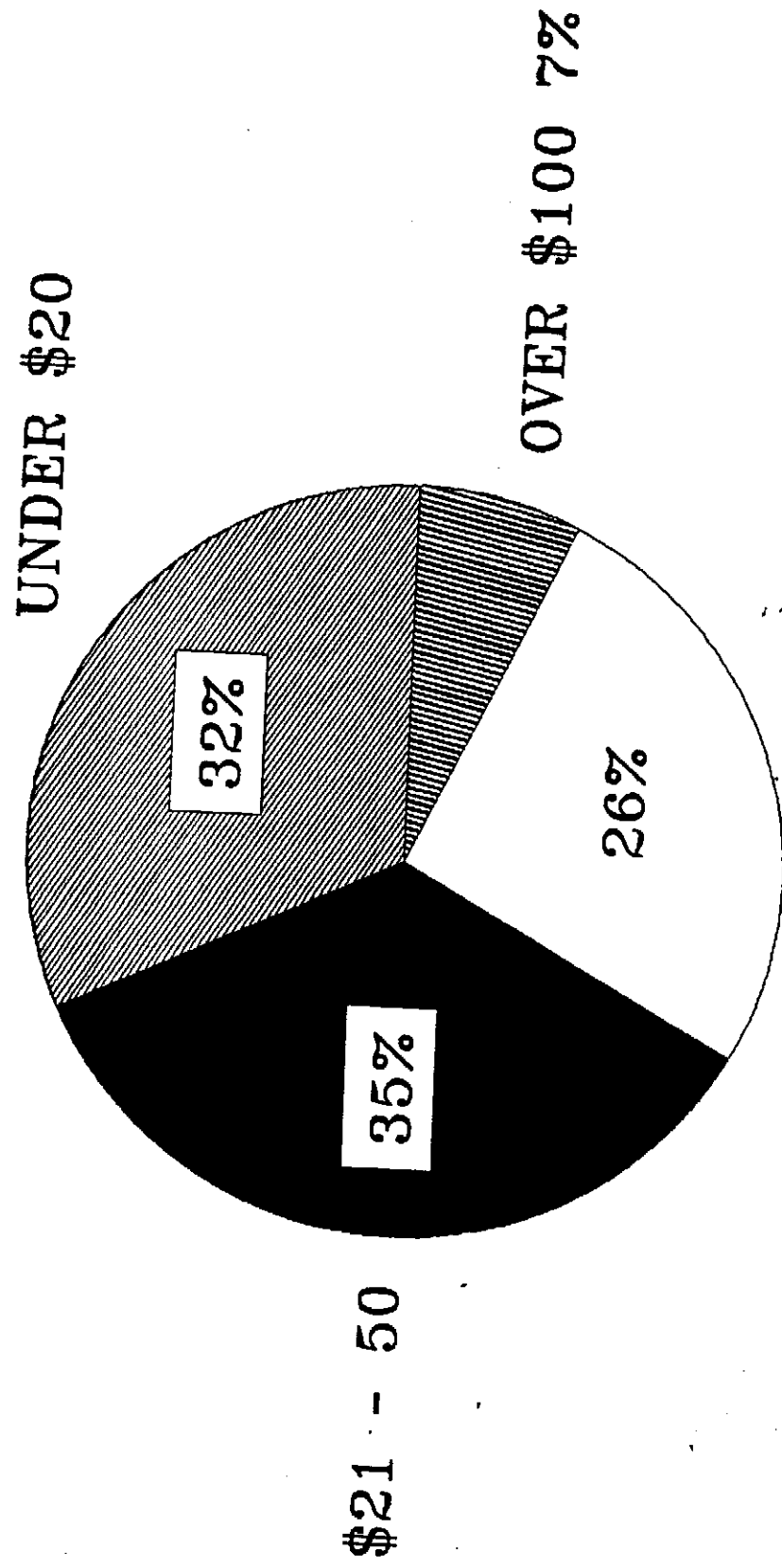


TRANSFERS WHO SHOPPED 42%

WHAT SHOPPERS BUY



HOW MUCH SHOPPERS SPEND



AMOUNTS