CENTER FOR APPLIED RURAL INNOVATION

A Research Report

Quality of Life in Nonmetropolitan Nebraska

2011 Nebraska Rural Poll Results

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Executive Summary

Nebraska appeared to survive the recent economic recession better than most other states. The state's unemployment rate has been one of the lowest in the nation in recent years. The agricultural economy has also been strong. Farm income levels reached record levels in 2010 and are expected to remain strong this year. Given the challenges and uncertainties of recent years, how do rural Nebraskans believe they are doing and how do they view their future? Have these views changed over the past sixteen years? How satisfied are they with various items that influence their well-being? How happy are rural Nebraskans? Do they believe they are entrepreneurial or leaders in various areas of their lives? This paper provides a detailed analysis of these questions.

This report details 2,490 responses to the 2011 Nebraska Rural Poll, the sixteenth annual effort to understand rural Nebraskans' perceptions. Respondents were asked a series of questions about their individual well-being. Trends for some of the questions are examined by comparing data from the fifteen previous polls to this year's results. In addition, comparisons are made among different respondent subgroups, that is, comparisons by age, occupation, region, etc. Based on these analyses, some key findings emerged:

- ***Most rural Nebraskans believe they are better off than they were five years ago.*** Over one-half (52%) of rural Nebraskans believe they are better off than they were five years ago, up from 50 percent last year. This represents the second highest proportion of persons believing they are better off compared to five years ago in the study's history (behind 53% occurring in 2008). Correspondingly, there was a slight decrease in the proportion of rural Nebraskans who believe they are worse off than they were five years ago, from 21 percent last year to 18 percent this year.

- ***Rural Nebraskans continue to be generally positive about their future.*** The proportion stating they will be better off ten years from now has generally remained about 42 percent. This year, that proportion increased to 45 percent. The proportion of respondents stating they will be worse off ten years from now has been approximately 20 percent each year. The proportion this year is 20 percent, down from 23 percent last year.

- ***Most rural Nebraskans disagree that people are powerless to control their own lives.*** The proportion that either strongly disagree or disagree that people are powerless to control their own lives sharply increased from 43 percent last year to 51 percent this year. The proportion that strongly agree or agree with the statement declined from 35 percent last year to 29 percent this year.

- ***Following trends in previous years, rural Nebraskans are most satisfied with their marriage, family, friends, religion/spirituality and the outdoors. They continue to be less satisfied with job opportunities, current income level and financial security during retirement.*** Some of the items in the latter category had increases in the levels of satisfaction this year as compared to last year. As an example, 55 percent of rural Nebraskans are satisfied with their current income level this year (the second highest proportion reported in all 16 years of the study), compared to 50 percent last year. And, satisfaction with financial security during retirement increased from 32 percent last year

to 38 percent this year. However, satisfaction with job opportunities decreased from 42 percent last year to 38 percent this year.

- ***Persons with the highest household incomes are more likely than persons with lower incomes to feel they are better off compared to five years ago, are better off compared to their parents when they were their age, and will be better off ten years from now.*** For example, 70 percent of respondents with household incomes of $60,000 or more think they are much better off or better off than they were five years ago. However, only 28 percent of persons with household incomes under $20,000 believe they are much better off or better off than they were five years ago. And, 57 percent of persons with household incomes over $60,000 think they will be much better off or better off ten years from now, compared to 30 percent of persons with household incomes under $20,000.

- ***Persons with lower education levels are more likely than persons with more education to believe that people are powerless to control their own lives.*** Forty-three percent of persons with a high school diploma or less education agree that people are powerless to control their own lives. However, only 18 percent of persons with a four-year college degree share this opinion.

- ***The majority of younger persons are dissatisfied with their job opportunities.*** Over one-half (57%) of persons age 19 to 29 are dissatisfied with their job opportunities. In comparison, only 22 percent of persons age 65 and older are dissatisfied with their job opportunities.

- ***Most rural Nebraskans say they are very happy or fairly happy.*** Over one-quarter (27%) of rural Nebraskans are very happy and 61 percent report being fairly happy. Eight percent say they are not very happy, one percent are not at all happy and two percent don't know.

- ***Persons living in the Southeast region are more likely than persons living in other regions of the state to report being very happy.*** Just under one-third (32%) of Southeast region residents are very happy, compared to one-quarter (25%) of Panhandle residents.

- ***Most rural Nebraskans rate themselves as entrepreneurial.*** One in ten rural Nebraskans (10%) rate themselves as very entrepreneurial and just under one-half (47%) say they are somewhat entrepreneurial. Just under one in five rural Nebraskans (19%) rate themselves as somewhat non-entrepreneurial and 11 percent say they are very non-entrepreneurial. Fourteen percent answered don't know.

- ***Persons living in or near smaller communities are more likely than persons living in or near larger communities to report being entrepreneurial.*** Sixty-four percent of persons living in or near communities with less than 500 persons say they are very or somewhat entrepreneurial, compared to 54 percent of persons living in or near communities with populations ranging from 1,000 to 4,999.

- ***Most rural Nebraskans consider themselves a leader in their family and their work/career.*** Three-quarters (75%) of rural Nebraskans consider themselves a leader in their family and just over one-half (53%) say they are leaders in their work/career. One-quarter (25%) say they are a leader in social organizations/activities and 14 percent consider themselves a leader in their local community.

Introduction

Nebraska appeared to survive the recent economic recession better than most other states. The state's unemployment rate has been one of the lowest in the nation in recent years. The agricultural economy has also been strong. Farm income levels reached record levels in 2010 and are expected to remain strong this year. Given the challenges and uncertainties of recent years, how do rural Nebraskans believe they are doing and how do they view their future? Have these views changed over the past sixteen years? How satisfied are they with various items that influence their well-being? How happy are rural Nebraskans? Do they believe they are entrepreneurial or leaders in various areas of their lives? This paper provides a detailed analysis of these questions.

This report details 2,490 responses to the 2011 Nebraska Rural Poll, the sixteenth annual effort to understand rural Nebraskans' perceptions. Respondents were asked a series of questions about their well-being. Trends for these questions will be examined by comparing the data from the fifteen previous polls to this year's results. They were also asked some questions about their happiness, their entrepreneurial nature and areas of their lives in which they consider themselves a leader.

Methodology and Respondent Profile

This study is based on 2,490 responses from Nebraskans living in the 84 non-metropolitan counties in the state. A self-administered questionnaire was mailed in March and April to approximately 6,400 randomly selected households. Metropolitan counties not included in the sample were Cass, Dakota, Dixon, Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, Saunders, Seward and Washington. The 14-page questionnaire included questions pertaining to well-being, community, animal welfare, technology and work. This paper reports only results from the well-being portion of the survey.

A 39% response rate was achieved using the total design method (Dillman, 1978). The sequence of steps used follow:

1. A pre-notification letter was sent requesting participation in the study.
2. The questionnaire was mailed with an informal letter signed by the project director approximately seven days later.
3. A reminder postcard was sent to the entire sample approximately seven days after the questionnaire had been sent.
4. Those who had not yet responded within approximately 14 days of the original mailing were sent a replacement questionnaire.

Appendix Table 1 shows demographic data from this year's study and previous rural polls, as well as similar data based on the entire nonmetropolitan population of Nebraska (using the latest available data from the 2010 U.S. Census and the 2009 American Community Survey). As can be seen from the table, there are some marked differences between some of the demographic variables in our sample compared to the Census data. Thus, we suggest the reader use caution in generalizing our data to all rural Nebraska. However, given the random sampling frame used for this survey, the acceptable percentage of responses, and the large number of respondents, we feel the data provide useful insights into opinions of rural Nebraskans on the various issues presented in this report. The margin of error for this study is plus or minus two percent.

Since younger residents have typically been under-represented by survey respondents and older residents have been over-represented, weights were used to adjust the sample to match the age distribution in the nonmetropolitan counties in Nebraska (using U.S. Census figures from 2010).

The average age of respondents is 51 years. Sixty-six percent are married (Appendix Table 1) and 69 percent live within the city limits of a town or village. On average, respondents have lived in Nebraska 43 years and have lived in their current community 28 years. Fifty-four percent are living in or near towns or villages with populations less than 5,000. Ninety-six percent have attained at least a high school diploma.

Forty-three percent of the respondents report their 2010 approximate household income from all sources, before taxes, as below $40,000. Forty-seven percent report incomes over $50,000.

Seventy-three percent were employed in 2010 on a full-time, part-time, or seasonal basis. Eighteen percent are retired. Thirty-five percent of those employed reported working in a management, professional, or education occupation. Twelve percent indicated they were employed in agriculture.

Trends in Well-Being (1996 - 2011)

Comparisons are made between the well-being data collected this year to the fifteen previous studies. These comparisons show a clearer picture of the trends in the well-being of rural Nebraskans.

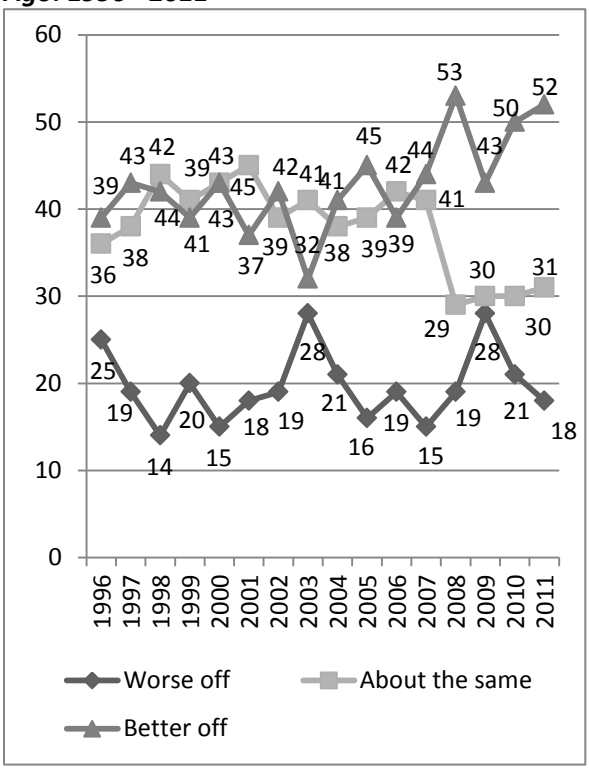
General Well-Being

To examine perceptions of general well-being, respondents were asked four questions.
1. "All things considered, do you think you are better or worse off than you were five years ago?" (Answer categories were worse off, about the same, or better off).
2. "All things considered, do you think you are better or worse off than your parents when they were your age?"
3. "All things considered, do you think you will be better or worse off ten years from now than you are today?"
4. "Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Life has changed so much in our modern world that most people are powerless to control their own lives."

The responses to the first three questions were expanded in 2009 to a five-point scale, where responses included much worse off, worse off, about the same, better off, and much better off. To compare the data to prior years, the much worse off and worse off categories are combined as well as the better off and much better off categories.

When examining the trends over the past sixteen years, rural Nebraskans have generally given positive reviews about their current situation (Figure 1). Each year the proportion of rural Nebraskans that say they are better off than they were five years ago has been greater

Figure 1. Well-Being Compared to Five Years Ago: 1996 - 2011



than the proportion saying they are worse off than they were five years ago.

In addition, rural Nebraskans are slightly more positive about their current situation than they were last year. Just over one-half (52%) of rural Nebraskans believe they are better off than they were five years ago, up from 50 percent last year. This represents the second highest proportion of persons believing they are better off compared to five years ago in the study's history (behind 53% occurring in 2008). Correspondingly, there was a slight decrease in the proportion of rural Nebraskans who believe they are worse off than they were five years ago, from 21 percent last year to 18 percent this year.

When asked to compare themselves to their parents when they were their age, the responses have been very stable over time (Figure 2). The proportion stating they are better off has averaged approximately 59 percent over the sixteen year period. Similarly, the proportion feeling they are worse off than their parents has remained steady at approximately 17 percent during this period.

When looking to the future, respondents' views have also been generally positive (Figure 3). The proportion saying they will be better off ten years from now has always been greater than the proportion saying they will be worse off ten years from now. The gap between the two proportions was widest in 1998 and 2005. The gap narrowed somewhat in 2003.

Rural Nebraskans' outlook on their future is slightly more positive compared to last year. The proportion stating they will be better off ten years from now has generally remained about 42 percent. This year, that proportion increased to 45 percent.

The proportion of respondents stating they will be worse off ten years from now has been

Figure 2. *Well-Being Compared to Parents: 1996 - 2011*

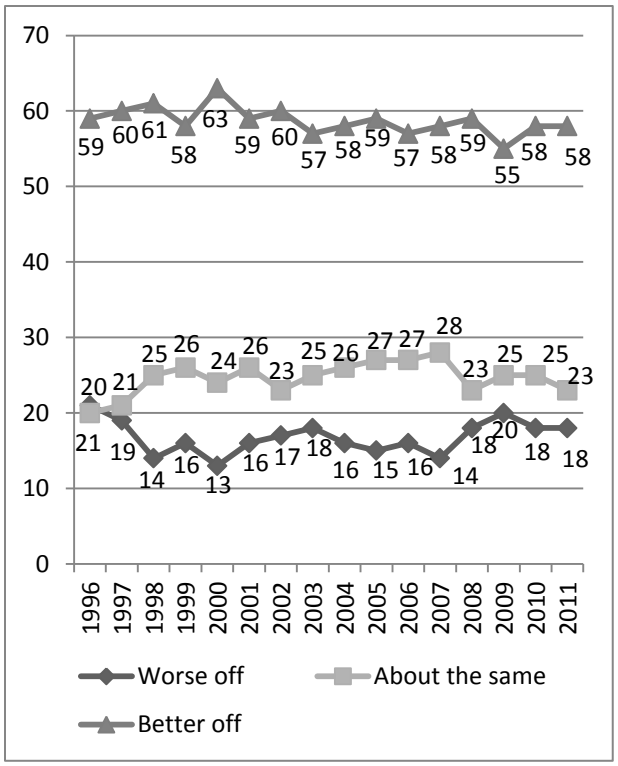
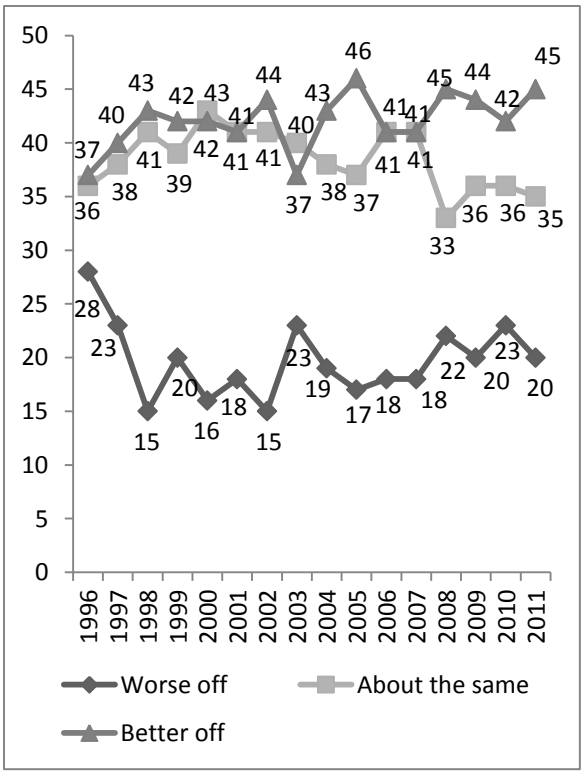


Figure 3. *Well-Being Ten Years from Now: 1996 - 2011*



approximately 20 percent each year. In 1996 the proportion saying they would be worse off ten years from now was 28 percent, the highest of all 16 years. The proportion this year is 20 percent, down from 23 percent last year. The proportion stating they will be about the same ten years from now had remained fairly steady around 40 percent over the first 12 years of the study, declined to 33 percent in 2008, increased slightly to 36 percent in both 2009 and last year and declined slightly to 35 percent this year.

In addition to asking about general well-being, rural Nebraskans were asked about the amount of control they feel they have over their lives. To measure this, respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statement:

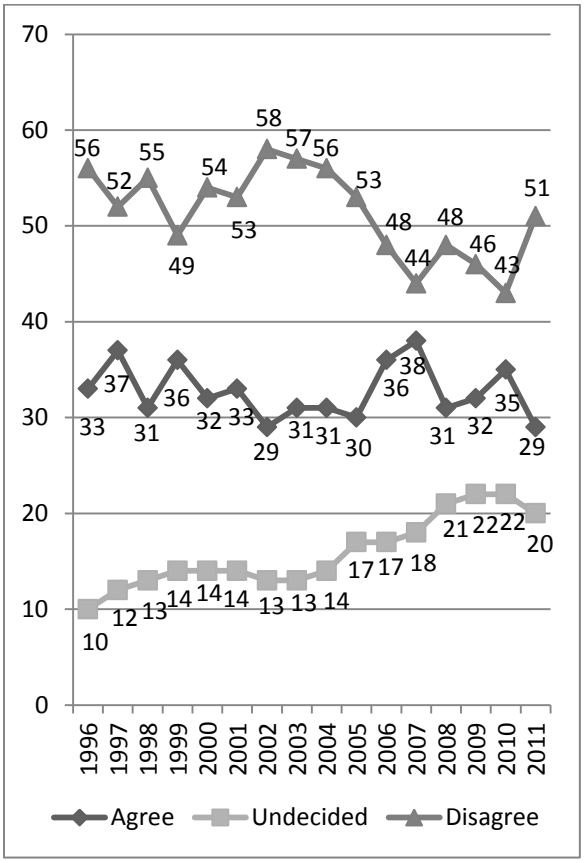
"Life has changed so much in our modern world that most people are powerless to control their own lives."

Responses to this question remained fairly consistent over the first ten years (Figure 4). The proportion that either strongly disagree or disagree with the statement generally declined between 2002 and 2010, from 58 percent to 43 percent last year (the lowest in the 16 year period). However, the proportion sharply increased to 51 percent this year. The proportion that either strongly agree or agree with the statement has remained fairly consistent each year, averaging around 33 percent. That proportion declined from 35 percent last year to 29 percent this year. The proportion of those who were undecided each year has gradually increased over time, from 10 percent in 1996 to 20 percent this year.

Satisfaction with Specific Aspects of Life

Each year, respondents were also given a list of items that can affect their well-being and were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with each using a five-point scale (1 = very dissatisfied, 5 = very satisfied). They were also given the option of checking a box to denote "does not apply."

Figure 4. *"…People are Powerless to Control Their Own Lives": 1996 - 2010*



The rank ordering of the items has remained relatively stable over the years (Table 1). In addition, the proportion of respondents stating they were very or somewhat satisfied with each item also has been fairly consistent over the years.

Items generally fall into three levels of satisfaction ratings. Family, friends, the outdoors, spirituality, their health and education continue to be items given high satisfaction ratings by respondents. Items in the middle category include job satisfaction, job security, their spare time and their community. On the other hand, respondents continue to be less satisfied with job opportunities, their current income level, and financial security during retirement.

Table 1. *Proportions of Respondents Very or Somewhat Satisfied with Each Factor, 1996 - 2011.**

Item	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Your marriage	NA	NA	91	92	93	92	93	92	94	92	94	90	92	92	90	90
Your family	90	93	92	89	93	89	90	90	90	89	91	88	91	85	89	89
Your general quality of life	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	82	84	86
Your friends	84	85	87	84	87	86	85	85	86	83	84	82	85	82	84	84
Your general standard of living	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	77	79	83
Greenery and open space	NA	NA	90	87	86	86	87	82	80	83	85	80	82	80	81	82
Clean air	NA	NA	NA	NA	80	81	82	79	78	79	80	74	80	75	79	82
Clean water	NA	NA	NA	NA	73	75	76	75	73	73	74	68	76	72	77	78
Your housing	NA	75	81	80	80	78	78	79	77	78	76	73	77	73	76	77
Your education	73	73	74	74	76	72	74	74	72	71	74	74	77	67	74	77
Your religion/ spirituality	79	79	81	78	83	79	79	78	78	75	75	78	79	75	77	76
Your health	78	81	78	75	77	74	74	75	73	71	73	74	77	66	73	75
Your job satisfaction	68	69	69	66	70	69	70	68	72	72	69	68	76	71	70	72
Your spare time**	54	NA	71	65	71	66	67	67	66	65	68	68	71	66	67	72
Your job security	63	64	63	59	68	66	65	62	66	65	66	64	73	59	66	67
Your community	65	64	70	68	70	67	63	62	64	66	62	62	66	63	64	65
Your current income level	54	58	53	46	51	48	48	47	49	48	50	50	53	47	50	55
Job opportunities	39	41	38	37	36	38	37	35	34	39	43	40	48	32	42	38
Financial security during retirement	43	47	43	38	43	37	38	30	34	38	39	39	38	24	32	38

Note: The list of items was not identical in each study. "NA" means that item was not asked that particular year.
* The proportions were calculated out of those answering the question. The respondents checking "does not apply" were not included in the calculations.
** Worded as "time to relax during the week" in 1996 study.

Some of the items in the latter category had increases in the levels of satisfaction this year as compared to last year. As an example, 55 percent of rural Nebraskans are satisfied with their current income level this year, compared to 50 percent last year. And, satisfaction with financial security during retirement increased from 32 percent last year to 38 percent this year. However, satisfaction with job opportunities decreased from 42 percent last year to 38 percent this year.

General Well-Being by Subgroups

In this section, 2011 data on the four general measures of well-being are analyzed and reported for the region in which the respondent lives, by the size of their community, and for various individual characteristics (Appendix Table 2).

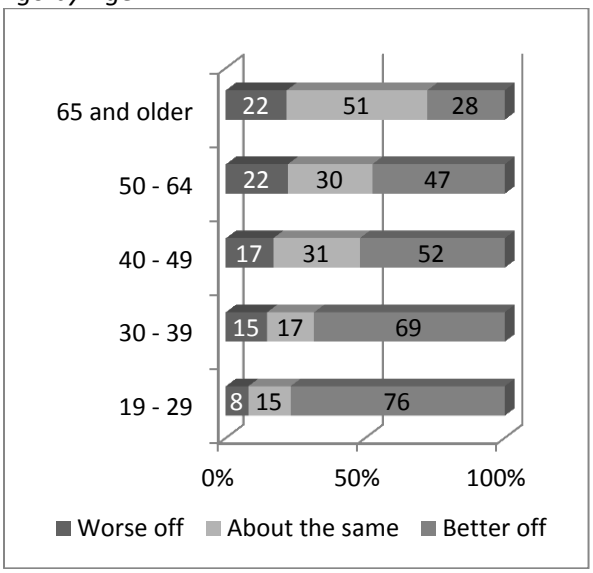
Younger persons are more likely than older persons to believe they are better off compared to five years ago and will be better off ten years

from now. Just over three-quarters (76%) of persons age 19 to 29 feel they are much better off or better off than they were five years ago (Figure 5). However, just over one-quarter (28%) of persons age 65 and older share this opinion. Similarly, 80 percent of persons age 19 to 29 believe they will be much better off or better off ten years from now, compared to only 12 percent of persons age 65 and older.

Both the youngest and oldest respondents are more likely than the other age groups to believe they are better off compared to their parents when they were their age. Approximately 65 percent of persons age 19 to 29 and persons age 65 and older believe they are much better off or better off compared to their parents when they were their age. In comparison, just under one-half (49%) of persons age 40 to 49 share this opinion.

Persons with the highest household incomes are more likely than persons with lower incomes to feel they are better off compared to five years ago, are better off compared to their parents when they were their age, and will be better off ten years from now. For example, 70 percent of respondents with household incomes of $60,000 or more think they are much better off or better off than they were five years ago. However, only 28 percent of persons with household incomes under $20,000 believe they are much better off or better off than they were five years ago. And, 57 percent of persons with household incomes over $60,000 think they will be much better off or better off ten years from now, compared to 30 percent of persons with household incomes under $20,000.

Figure 5. *Well-Being Compared to Five Years Ago by Age*



Persons with higher educational levels are more likely than persons with less education to think they are better off compared to five years ago, are better off compared to their parents when they were their age, and will be better off ten years from now. Fifty-eight percent of respondents with at least a four-year college degree believe they will be much better off or better off ten years from now than they are today. Only 30 percent of persons with a high school diploma or less education share this optimism.

Persons living in or near larger communities are more likely than persons living in or near the smallest communities to believe they are better off compared to their parents when they were their age. Sixty-three percent of persons living in or near communities with populations of 10,000 or more believe they are much better off or better off compared to their parents when they were their age, while approximately 53 percent of persons living in or near communities with populations less than 5,000 share this opinion.

Respondents living in the South Central region are more likely than persons living in other regions of the state to believe they are better off than they were five years ago (see Appendix Figure 1 for the counties included in each region). Fifty-five percent of the South Central

region residents think they are much better off or better off than they were five years ago, compared to 47 percent of residents of the North Central region.

Females are more likely than males to believe they will be better off ten years from now. Just under one-half (48%) of females say they will be much better off or better off ten years from now, compared to 41 percent of males.
When comparing the marital groups, respondents who have never married are the group most likely to believe they are better off than they were five years ago and will be better off ten years from now. As an example, 61 percent of persons who have never married believe they will be much better off or better off ten years from now, compared to 16 percent of widowed respondents. The married respondents are the marital group most likely to believe they are better off compared to their parents when they were their age.

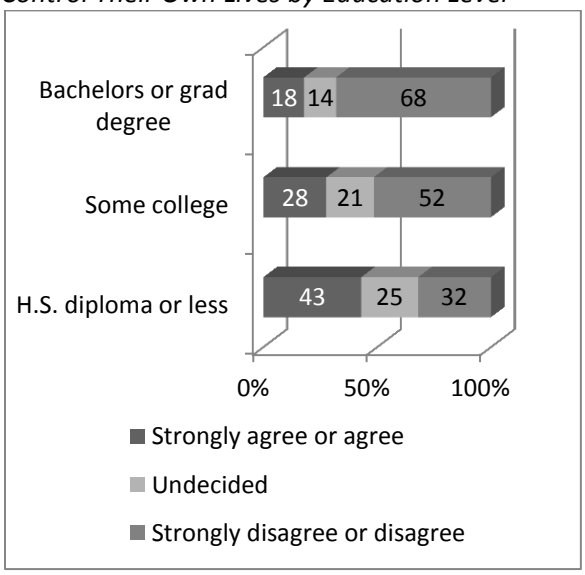
Persons with agriculture occupations are the occupation group most likely to believe they are better off compared to five years ago and better off compared to their parents when they were their age. Sixty-nine percent of persons with occupations in agriculture believe they are better off than they were five years ago, compared to only 43 percent of persons with construction, installation or maintenance occupations. Persons with healthcare support or public safety occupations and the persons with sales or office support occupations are the groups most likely to believe they will be better off ten years from now than they are today. Fifty-eight percent of persons with these types of occupations think they will be better off ten years from now, compared to 36 percent of persons with occupations classified as other.

The respondents were also asked if they believe people are powerless to control their own lives. When analyzing the responses by region, community size, and various individual attributes, many differences emerge (Appendix Table 3). Persons with lower educational levels are more likely than persons with more education to believe that people are powerless to control their own lives. Forty-three percent of persons with a high school diploma or less education agree that people are powerless to control their own lives (Figure 6). However, only 18 percent of persons with a four-year college degree share this opinion.

Persons with lower household incomes are more likely than persons with higher incomes to agree with the statement. Forty-one percent of persons with household incomes under $20,000 believe people are powerless to control their own lives, compared to 17 percent of persons with household incomes of $60,000 or more.

Older persons are more likely than younger persons to agree that people are powerless to control their own lives. Forty-two percent of persons age 65 and older agree with the statement, compared to 18 percent of persons age 30 to 39.

Figure 6. *Belief that People are Powerless to Control Their Own Lives by Education Level*



Persons living in the North Central region are more likely than persons living in other regions of the state to think people are powerless to control their own lives. Over one-third (36%) of North Central region residents agree with this statement, compared to 24 percent of persons living in the South Central region.

Males are more likely than females to think people are powerless. The widowed respondents are the marital status group most likely to believe people are powerless. When comparing responses by occupation, persons with production, transportation or warehousing occupations and persons with construction, installation or maintenance occupations are the groups most likely to agree with this statement. Approximately 38 percent of persons with these types of occupations agree that people are powerless to control their own lives, compared to 17 percent of persons with either professional, management or education occupations or persons with sales or office support occupations.

Specific Aspects of Well-Being by Subgroups

The respondents were given a list of items that may influence their well-being and were asked to rate their satisfaction with each. The complete ratings for each item are listed in Appendix Table 4. At least four out of ten respondents are very satisfied with their family (57%), greenery and open space (47%), their marriage (46%), their friends (46%), their religion/spirituality (45%), clean air (44%), clean water (41%) and their general quality of life (40%). Items receiving the highest proportion of very dissatisfied responses include: financial security during retirement (19%), current income level (13%), and job opportunities for you (13%).

The top five items people are dissatisfied with (determined by the largest proportions of "very dissatisfied" and "dissatisfied" responses) will now be examined in more detail by looking at how the different demographic subgroups view each item. These comparisons are shown in Appendix Table 5.

Respondents' satisfaction level with their financial security during retirement differ by all of the individual characteristics examined. Persons with lower household incomes are more likely than persons with higher incomes to be dissatisfied with their financial security during retirement. Sixty percent of persons with household incomes under $20,000 report being dissatisfied with their financial security during retirement, compared to 35 percent of persons with household incomes of $60,000 or more.

Persons age 40 to 49 are the age group most likely to be dissatisfied with their financial security during retirement. Fifty-seven percent of persons age 40 to 49 are dissatisfied with their financial security during retirement, compared to 32 percent of persons age 65 and older.

Other groups most likely to be dissatisfied with their financial security during retirement include: females, persons with some college education (but less than a four year degree), divorced or separated respondents and persons with healthcare support or public safety occupations.

Persons with healthcare support or public safety occupations are more likely than persons with different occupations to be dissatisfied with their job opportunities. Sixty-one percent of persons with these types of occupations are dissatisfied with their job opportunities, compared to 25 percent of persons with occupations in agriculture.

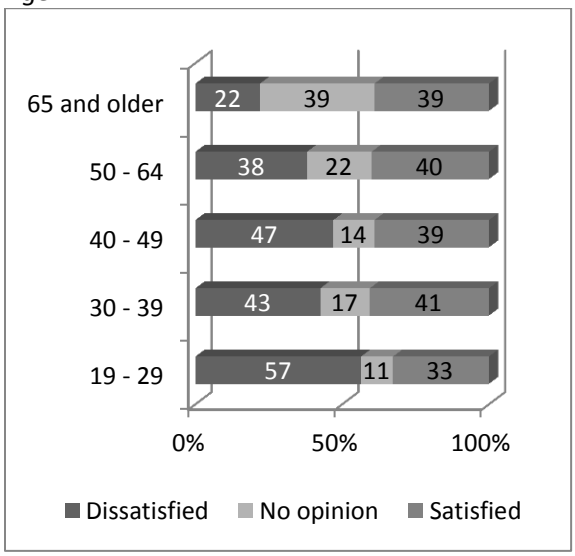
Younger persons are more likely than older persons to report dissatisfaction with their job opportunities (Figure 7). Over one-half (57%) of persons age 19 to 29 are dissatisfied with their job opportunities. In comparison, only 22 percent of persons age 65 and older are dissatisfied with their job opportunities.

Females are more likely than males to be dissatisfied with their job opportunities. Just under one-half (48%) of females are dissatisfied with their job opportunities, compared to 36 percent of males.

Other groups most likely to say they are dissatisfied with their job opportunities include: persons with lower household incomes, persons with some college education (but less than a four year degree), divorced/separated respondents, and persons who have never married.

Persons with lower household incomes are more likely than persons with higher incomes to be dissatisfied with their current income level. Over one-half (54%) of persons with household incomes under $20,000 report being dissatisfied with their current income level, compared to 15 percent of persons with household incomes of $60,000 or more.

Figure 7. *Satisfaction with Job Opportunities by Age*



Younger persons are more likely than older persons to report being dissatisfied with their current income level. Over one-third (37%) of persons age 19 to 29 are dissatisfied with their current income level, compared to 26 percent of persons age 65 and older. Other groups most likely to report being dissatisfied with their current income level include: females, persons with lower education levels, persons who are divorced or separated, and persons with food service and personal care occupations.

Persons with lower household incomes are more likely than persons with higher incomes to be dissatisfied with their job security. Approximately one-third (32%) of persons with household incomes under $20,000 report being dissatisfied with their job security. In comparison, only 13 percent of persons with household incomes of $60,000 or more are dissatisfied with their job security.

Almost one in three (29%) of persons with healthcare support or public safety occupations are dissatisfied with their job security. However, only five percent of persons with occupations in agriculture are dissatisfied with their job security. Other groups most likely to express dissatisfaction with their job security include: persons living in or near the largest communities, younger persons, females, persons with some college education (but less than a four year degree), persons who have divorced or separated, and persons who have never married.

Persons living in or near larger communities are more likely than persons living in or near smaller communities to report dissatisfaction with their community. Approximately 18 percent of persons living in or near

communities with populations of 1,000 or more are dissatisfied with their community, compared to 11 percent of persons living in or near communities with less than 500 people.

Panhandle residents are more likely than residents of other regions of the state to express dissatisfaction with their community. Just under one-quarter (24%) of Panhandle residents are dissatisfied with their community, compared to approximately 16 percent of persons living in the other four regions of the state.

Persons with production, transportation and warehousing occupations are more likely than persons with different occupations to express dissatisfaction with their community. One-third (33%) of persons with these types of occupations are dissatisfied with their community, compared to 12 percent of persons with food service or personal care occupations.

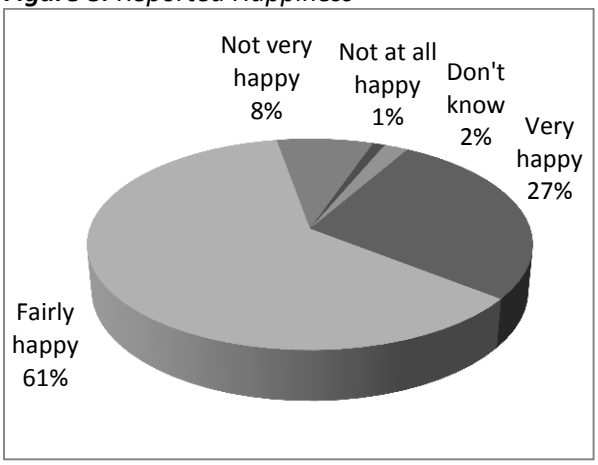
Other groups most likely to report dissatisfaction with their community include: persons with lower household incomes, persons under the age of 65, persons with some college education (but less than a four year degree) and persons who are divorced/separated.

Happiness

To further determine how rural Nebraskans view their well-being, they were asked how happy they are. This was a new question added this year. The specific question asked was, "If you were to consider your life in general these days, how happy or unhappy would you say you are, as a whole?" The answer categories included: very happy, fairly happy, not very happy, not at all happy, and don't know.

Most rural Nebraskans say they are very happy or fairly happy. Over one-quarter (27%) of rural Nebraskans are very happy and 61 percent say

Figure 8. *Reported Happiness*



they are fairly happy (Figure 8). Eight percent say they are not very happy, one percent are not at all happy and two percent don't know.

Their reported level of happiness differs by region and some individual characteristics (Appendix Table 6). Persons living in the Southeast region are more likely than persons living in other regions of the state to report being very happy. Just under one-third (32%) of Southeast region residents are very happy, compared to one-quarter (25%) of Panhandle residents.

Persons with higher household incomes are more likely than persons with lower incomes to say they are very happy. Over one-third (35%) of persons with household incomes over $60,000 are very happy, compared to 19 percent of persons with household incomes under $20,000.

Married respondents are the marital status group most likely to report being very happy. Thirty-one percent of married respondents are very happy, compared to 17 percent of persons who are divorced or separated.

Persons with higher education levels are more likely than persons with less education to say they are very happy. Just under one-third (32%)

of persons with a four year college degree are very happy, compared to just under one-quarter (24%) of persons with a high school diploma or less education.

Entrepreneurial Nature and Areas of Leadership

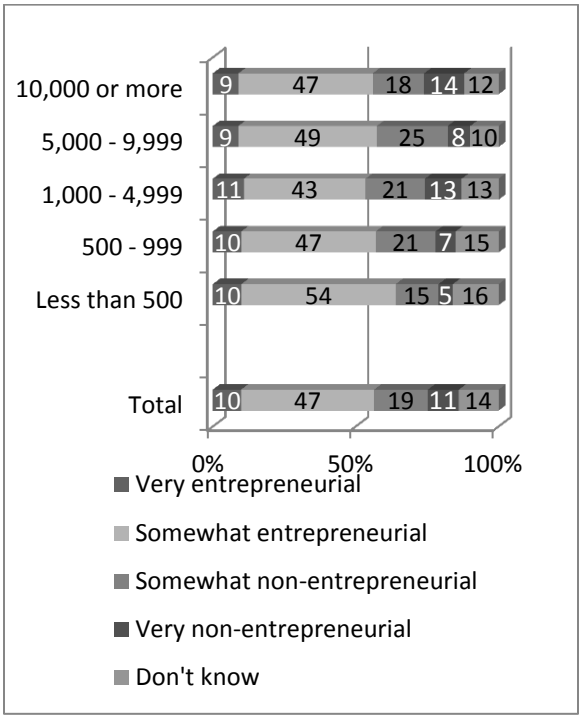
Two other areas of individual well-being were explored this year. First, respondents were asked how entrepreneurial they are. The specific question asked, "An entrepreneurial individual can be described as an innovative person who is open to change and recognizes and pursues opportunities irrespective of existing resources, such as time, money, personal support and/or technology. As an individual, how entrepreneurial are you?" The answer categories included: very entrepreneurial, somewhat entrepreneurial, somewhat non-entrepreneurial, very non-entrepreneurial and don't know.

Most rural Nebraskans report being very or somewhat entrepreneurial. One in ten rural Nebraskans (10%) rate themselves as very entrepreneurial and just under one-half (47%) say they are somewhat entrepreneurial (Figure 9). Just under one in five (19%) of rural Nebraskans rate themselves as somewhat non-entrepreneurial and 11 percent say they are very non-entrepreneurial. Fourteen percent answered don't know.

Ratings of their entrepreneurial nature are examined by their community size, region and various individual attributes (Appendix Table 7). Many differences emerge.

Persons living in or near smaller communities are more likely than persons living in or near larger communities to report being very or somewhat entrepreneurial. Sixty-four percent of persons living in or near communities with less than 500 persons say they are very or

Figure 9. *Entrepreneurial Nature by Community Size*



somewhat entrepreneurial, compared to 54 percent of persons living in or near communities with populations ranging from 1,000 to 4,999 (Figure 9).

Persons with higher household incomes are more likely than persons with lower household incomes to report being entrepreneurial. Almost two-thirds (66%) of persons with household incomes of $60,000 or more say they are very or somewhat entrepreneurial, compared to 44 percent of persons with household incomes under $20,000.

Younger persons are more likely than older persons to say they are entrepreneurial. Almost two-thirds (66%) of persons age 19 to 29 rate themselves as very or somewhat entrepreneurial, compared to 41 percent of persons age 65 and older.

Persons with occupations in agriculture are more likely than persons with different

occupations to rate themselves as entrepreneurial. Almost three-quarters (73%) of persons with agriculture occupations say they are very or somewhat entrepreneurial, compared to 51 percent of persons with food service or personal care occupations.

Other groups most likely to rate themselves as entrepreneurial include: males, persons who have never married and persons with higher education levels.

Finally, respondents were asked in which areas of their life they consider themselves a leader. The exact question wording was, "In which of the following areas of your life do you consider yourself a leader?" They were allowed to circle all the answers that applied.

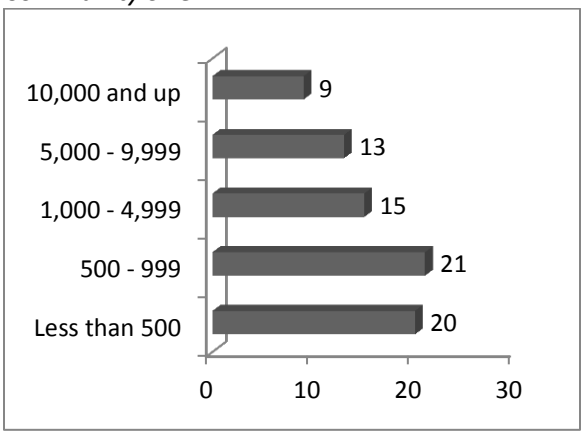
Most rural Nebraskans consider themselves a leader in their family (75%) and their work/career (53%). One-quarter (25%) say they are a leader in social organizations/activities and 14 percent consider themselves a leader in their local community. Six percent say they are a leader in student life and 13 percent say they are not a leader in any of the listed categories.

Responses to this question are examined by region, community size and various individual attributes (Appendix Table 8). Many differences emerge.

Persons living in or near smaller communities are more likely than persons living in or near larger communities to consider themselves a leader in their local community. Approximately 20 percent of persons living in or near communities with less than 1,000 people consider themselves a leader in their local community, compared to nine percent of persons living in or near communities with populations of 10,000 or more (Figure 10).

Persons living in the South Central region are

Figure 10. *Leadership in Local Community by Community Size*



more likely than persons living in other regions of the state to say they are a leader in their work/career as well as their student life. Fifty-eight percent of South Central residents believe they are a leader in their work/career, compared to 47 percent of the Northeast region residents. However, residents of the North Central region are the regional group most likely to consider themselves a leader in their local community. Nineteen percent of the North Central residents consider themselves a leader in their local community, compared to 12 percent of the residents of both the Panhandle and South Central region.

Persons with higher household incomes are more likely than persons with lower incomes to consider themselves a leader in the following areas of their lives: family, work/career, social organizations/activities, and local community. As an example, 85 percent of persons with household incomes of $60,000 or more consider themselves a leader in their family, compared to 63 percent of persons with household incomes under $20,000.

Younger persons are more likely than older persons to consider themselves a leader in the following areas: family, work/career, student life and social organizations/activities. However, older persons are more likely than younger

persons to consider themselves a leader in their local community.

Females are more likely than males to consider themselves a leader in their family, student life and social organizations/activities. Males are more likely than females to consider themselves a leader in their work/career.

Persons with higher education levels are more likely than persons with less education to consider themselves a leader in each of the categories listed. As an example, 70 percent of persons with at least a four year college degree consider themselves a leader in their work/ career, compared to 35 percent of persons with a high school diploma or less education.

When comparing responses by occupation, persons with management, professional or education occupations are the group most likely to consider themselves a leader in each of the listed categories. As an example, 84 percent of persons with management, professional or education occupations believe they are a leader in their family, compared to 62 percent of persons with construction, installation or maintenance occupations.

Conclusion

Most rural Nebraskans are positive about their current situation. And, they continue to be generally positive about their future situation. Over one-half (52%) of rural Nebraskans think they are better off than they were five years ago and just under one-half (45%) think they will be better off ten years from now.

Certain groups remain pessimistic about their situation. Persons with lower household incomes, older persons, persons with lower educational levels and persons who are divorced or separated are the groups most likely to be pessimistic about the present and the future.

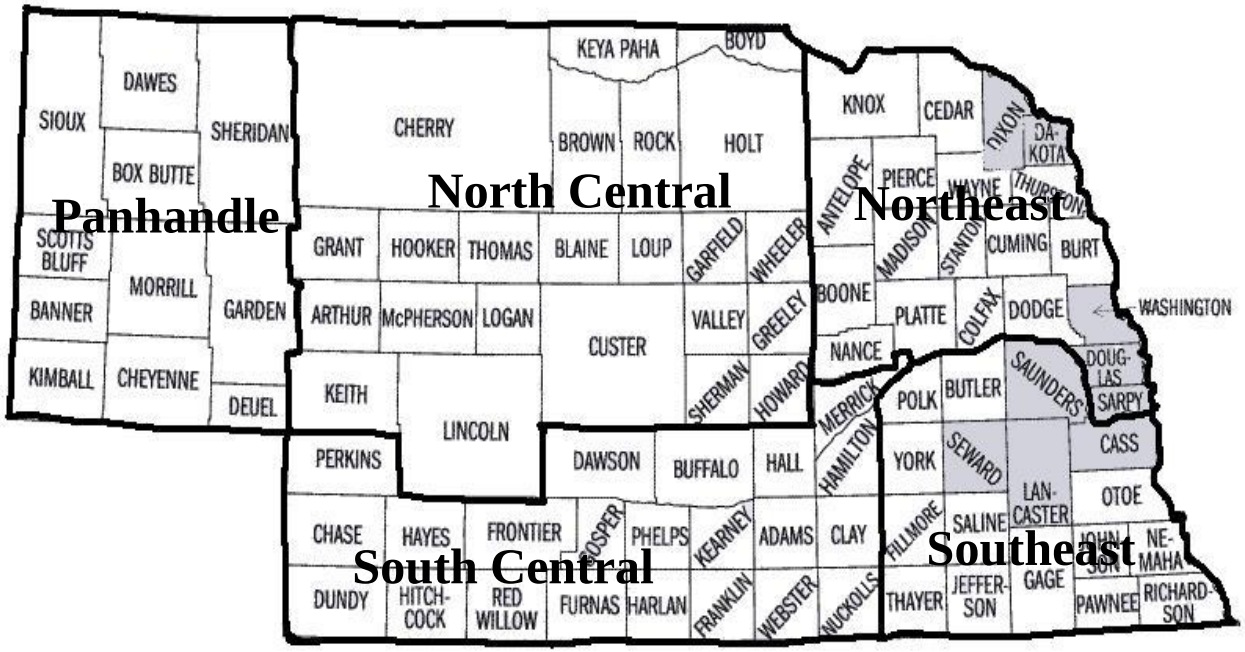
When asked if they believe people are powerless to control their own lives, most rural Nebraskans disagree. The proportion that either strongly disagree or disagree with this statement sharply increased from last year.

Rural Nebraskans continue to be most satisfied with family, spirituality, friends, and the outdoors. On the other hand, they continue to be less satisfied with job opportunities, their current income level, and financial security during retirement. However, many of these latter items saw increases in their satisfaction levels this year as compared to last year. However, satisfaction with job opportunities decreased.

Most rural Nebraskans say they are very happy or fairly happy. Persons living in the Southeast region, persons with higher household incomes, married persons and persons with higher education levels are the groups most likely to report being very happy.

Most rural Nebraskans rate themselves as entrepreneurial. Persons living in or near smaller communities, persons with higher household incomes, younger persons, persons with occupations in agriculture, males, persons who have never married and persons with higher education levels are the groups most likely to see themselves as entrepreneurial. In addition, most rural Nebraskans consider themselves a leader in their family and their work/career.

Appendix Figure 1. Regions of Nebraska



Metropolitan counties (not surveyed)

Appendix Table 1. *Demographic Profile of Rural Poll Respondents*[1] *Compared to 2010 Census and 2009 American Community Survey*

	2011 Poll	***2010 Poll***	***2009 Poll***	***2008 Poll***	***2007 Poll***	***2006 Poll***	***2009 ACS***
Age : [2]							
20 - 39	31%	32%	32%	32%	31%	33%	31%
40 - 64	44%	44%	44%	44%	44%	43%	46%
65 and over	24%	24%	24%	24%	25%	24%	24%
Gender: [3]							
Female	60%	59%	57%	56%	59%	30%	50%
Male	40%	41%	43%	44%	41%	70%	50%
Education: [4]							
Less than 9th grade	1%	1%	2%	2%	4%	2%	5%
9th to 12th grade (no diploma)	3%	3%	3%	3%	6%	4%	8%
High school diploma (or equiv.)	26%	25%	26%	26%	26%	28%	34%
Some college, no degree	23%	25%	25%	25%	23%	25%	26%
Associate degree	16%	14%	15%	12%	14%	13%	10%
Bachelors degree	19%	20%	20%	21%	18%	18%	13%
Graduate or professional degree	12%	11%	10%	10%	10%	10%	5%
Household Income: [5]							
Less than $10,000	6%	6%	6%	7%	7%	6%	7%
$10,000 - $19,999	10%	10%	9%	10%	13%	12%	14%
$20,000 - $29,999	13%	13%	13%	14%	15%	14%	14%
$30,000 - $39,999	14%	12%	13%	14%	14%	15%	13%
$40,000 - $49,999	11%	13%	12%	13%	13%	16%	11%
$50,000 - $59,999	12%	11%	13%	11%	12%	12%	9%
$60,000 - $74,999	12%	13%	14%	13%	11%	12%	11%
$75,000 or more	22%	23%	21%	18%	16%	13%	21%
Marital Status: [6]							
Married	66%	71%	68%	70%	70%	70%	58%
Never married	14%	9%	10%	10%	10%	11%	24%
Divorced/separated	11%	11%	11%	11%	10%	9%	11%
Widowed/widower	10%	9%	11%	9%	10%	10%	8%

[1] Data from the Rural Polls have been weighted by age.

[2] 2010 Census universe is non-metro population 20 years of age and over.

[3] 2010 Census universe is total non-metro population.

[4] 2009 American Community Survey universe is non-metro population 18 years of age and over.

[5] 2009 American Community Survey universe is all non-metro households.

[6] 2009 American Community Survey universe is non-metro population 15 years of age and over.

Appendix Table 2. *Measures of Individual Well-Being in Relation to Community Size, Region and Individual Attributes*

	Compared to Five Years Ago					
	Much Worse Off	*Worse Off*	*About the Same*	*Better Off*	*Much Better Off*	*Chi-square (sig.)*
			Percentages			
Total	4	14	31	39	13	
Community Size			(n = 2279)			
Less than 500	2	15	34	36	13	
500 - 999	4	13	29	44	10	
1,000 - 4,999	3	15	28	41	13	
5,000 - 9,999	5	12	31	43	11	χ^2 = 19.00
10,000 and up	4	13	30	37	16	(.269)
Region			(n = 2371)			
Panhandle	4	17	28	41	11	
North Central	5	14	34	36	11	
South Central	3	12	29	38	17	
Northeast	5	16	29	37	13	χ^2 = 35.56*
Southeast	2	13	34	42	9	(.003)
Income Level			(n = 2169)			
Under $20,000	8	19	46	23	5	
$20,000 - $39,999	5	17	31	36	11	
$40,000 - $59,999	2	16	30	38	15	χ^2 = 209.92*
$60,000 and over	2	8	20	51	19	(.000)
Age			(n = 2380)			
19 - 29	2	6	15	50	26	
30 - 39	3	12	17	47	22	
40 - 49	4	13	31	41	11	
50 - 64	5	17	30	38	9	χ^2 = 343.87*
65 and older	4	18	51	24	4	(.000)
Gender			(n = 2335)			
Male	3	16	29	39	12	χ^2 = 10.22*
Female	4	12	31	39	14	(.037)
Marital Status			(n = 2336)			
Married	3	13	29	41	14	
Never married	2	10	22	49	17	
Divorced/separated	6	22	26	33	14	χ^2 = 142.55*
Widowed	7	16	56	18	3	(.000)
Education			(n = 2309)			
H.S. diploma or less	7	16	39	28	10	
Some college	3	14	30	37	15	χ^2 = 116.01*
Bachelors degree	2	12	22	51	14	(.000)
Occupation			(n = 1688)			
Mgt, prof or education	2	9	23	50	15	
Sales or office support	1	13	24	48	15	
Constrn, inst or maint	5	18	35	36	7	
Prodn/trans/warehsing	4	19	32	29	16	
Agriculture	1	8	22	52	17	
Food serv/pers. care	3	14	28	40	16	
Hlthcare supp/safety	9	9	24	41	18	χ^2 = 94.67*
Other	1	25	26	37	11	(.000)

* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

Appendix Table 2 continued

	Compared to Parents When They Were Your Age					
	Much Worse Off	*Worse Off*	*About the Same*	*Better Off*	*Much Better Off*	*Chi-square (sig.)*
			Percentages			
Total	3	15	23	43	15	
Community Size			(n = 2275)			
Less than 500	2	16	26	45	11	
500 - 999	2	14	32	41	12	
1,000 - 4,999	3	17	23	42	14	
5,000 - 9,999	4	14	23	49	11	χ^2 = 46.89*
10,000 and up	4	14	18	44	20	(.000)
Region			(n = 2377)			
Panhandle	3	14	24	44	16	
North Central	3	15	23	44	15	
South Central	3	15	23	44	16	
Northeast	4	16	23	42	15	χ^2 = 3.87
Southeast	3	16	22	42	16	(.999)
Income Level			(n = 2176)			
Under $20,000	7	26	24	32	11	
$20,000 - $39,999	5	18	25	42	11	
$40,000 - $59,999	2	16	27	42	13	χ^2 = 143.60*
$60,000 and over	2	9	18	48	24	(.000)
Age			(n = 2385)			
19 - 29	5	10	18	53	14	
30 - 39	2	15	22	43	18	
40 - 49	4	19	28	37	12	
50 - 64	4	21	23	40	13	χ^2 = 89.79*
65 and older	1	10	23	45	20	(.000)
Gender			(n = 2339)			
Male	3	15	23	42	18	χ^2 = 6.87
Female	4	15	23	44	14	(.143)
Marital Status			(n = 2339)			
Married	3	14	22	46	16	
Never married	6	16	22	41	16	
Divorced/separated	4	26	27	30	14	χ^2 = 48.73*
Widowed	2	13	26	42	17	(.000)
Education			(n = 2312)			
H.S. diploma or less	6	14	24	41	16	
Some college	2	19	24	41	14	χ^2 = 38.42*
Bachelors degree	2	13	21	48	17	(.000)
Occupation			(n = 1695)			
Mgt, prof or education	2	13	24	43	18	
Sales or office support	5	17	19	45	14	
Constrn, inst or maint	3	21	27	39	11	
Prodn/trans/warehsing	2	16	26	41	14	
Agriculture	2	14	17	53	14	
Food serv/pers. care	5	21	23	33	19	
Hlthcare supp/safety	7	20	20	38	15	χ^2 = 53.54*
Other	3	23	29	32	13	(.003)

* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

Appendix Table 2 continued

	Ten Years From Now					
	Much Worse Off	*Worse Off*	*About the Same*	*Better Off*	*Much Better Off*	*Chi-square (sig.)*
			Percentages			
Total	3	17	35	36	9	
Community Size			(n = 2261)			
Less than 500	2	19	34	37	8	
500 - 999	1	20	33	40	6	
1,000 - 4,999	3	16	37	36	9	
5,000 - 9,999	3	19	34	36	9	χ^2 = 16.54
10,000 and up	4	16	35	35	11	(.416)
Region			(n = 2352)			
Panhandle	2	18	37	31	12	
North Central	4	17	36	36	7	
South Central	3	16	33	36	11	
Northeast	2	19	35	37	7	χ^2 = 18.24
Southeast	3	17	37	34	9	(.310)
Income Level			(n = 2159)			
Under $20,000	7	29	35	23	7	
$20,000 - $39,999	3	20	35	32	9	
$40,000 - $59,999	1	16	37	34	11	χ^2 = 143.86*
$60,000 and over	1	10	32	47	10	(.000)
Age			(n = 2363)			
19 - 29	2	6	13	56	24	
30 - 39	1	6	22	57	14	
40 - 49	2	11	35	44	8	
50 - 64	3	24	44	26	4	χ^2 = 656.70*
65 and older	6	31	51	10	2	(.000)
Gender			(n = 2317)			
Male	3	20	37	34	7	χ^2 = 23.51*
Female	2	16	34	37	11	(.000)
Marital Status			(n = 2316)			
Married	2	17	35	37	9	
Never married	3	11	25	45	16	
Divorced/separated	3	18	35	34	9	χ^2 = 108.95*
Widowed	5	27	52	12	4	(.000)
Education			(n = 2294)			
H.S. diploma or less	5	25	41	22	8	
Some college	2	17	34	38	10	χ^2 = 136.95*
Bachelors degree	2	11	29	47	11	(.000)
Occupation			(n = 1691)			
Mgt, prof or education	2	11	31	42	13	
Sales or office support	1	13	28	48	10	
Constrn, inst or maint	3	21	39	34	3	
Prodn/trans/warehsing	1	25	31	35	9	
Agriculture	2	13	40	39	6	
Food serv/pers. care	3	19	28	31	19	
Hlthcare supp/safety	2	12	28	45	13	χ^2 = 87.09*
Other	7	24	33	32	4	(.000)

* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

Appendix Table 3. *Life Has Changed So Much in Our Modern World that Most People Are Powerless to Control Their Own Lives.*

	Disagree	*Undecided*	*Agree*	*Significance*
		Percentages		
Total	51	20	29	
Community Size		(n = 2280)		
Less than 500	48	24	28	
500 - 999	54	19	27	
1,000 - 4,999	51	20	29	
5,000 - 9,999	52	16	32	χ^2 = 7.43
10,000 and up	52	19	29	(.491)
Region		(n = 2377)		
Panhandle	51	17	32	
North Central	44	20	36	
South Central	55	21	24	
Northeast	48	21	32	χ^2 = 21.83*
Southeast	51	20	29	(.005)
Household Income		(n = 2175)		
Under $20,000	32	27	41	
$20,000 - $39,999	43	22	35	
$40,000 - $59,999	50	20	30	χ^2 = 149.44*
$60,000 and over	68	15	17	(.000)
Age		(n = 2388)		
19 - 29	51	23	26	
30 - 39	66	16	18	
40 - 49	57	18	25	
50 - 64	52	19	29	χ^2 = 109.35*
65 and older	34	23	42	(.000)
Gender		(n = 2341)		
Male	49	18	33	χ^2 = 13.90*
Female	52	22	27	(.001)
Education		(n = 2315)		
H.S. diploma or less	32	25	43	
Some college	52	21	28	χ^2 = 188.93*
Bachelors or grad degree	68	14	18	(.000)
Marital Status		(n = 2338)		
Married	53	19	28	
Never married	54	20	26	
Divorced/separated	49	18	33	χ^2 = 23.00*
Widowed	37	26	37	(.001)
Occupation		(n = 1695)		
Mgt, prof or education	66	17	17	
Sales or office support	53	30	17	
Constrn, inst or maint	45	17	38	
Prodn/trans/warehsing	40	20	40	
Agriculture	54	17	30	
Food serv/pers. care	50	21	30	
Hlthcare supp/safety	58	15	27	χ^2 = 89.88*
Other	49	15	36	(.000)

* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

Appendix Table 4. *Satisfaction with Items Affecting Well-Being, 2011*

Item	*Does Not Apply*	*Very Dissatisfied*	*Somewhat Dissatisfied*	*No Opinion*	*Somewhat Satisfied*	*Very Satisfied*
Your family	4%	1%	2%	8%	29%	57%
Greenery and open space	0*	1	5	12	35	47
Your marriage	33	1	1	4	14	46
Your friends	2	2	3	12	37	46
Your religion/spirituality	4	1	2	19	29	45
Clean air	0*	2	5	11	39	44
Clean water	0*	5	8	10	37	41
Your general quality of life	0*	1	5	8	46	40
Your housing	0*	4	8	12	42	35
Your general standard of living	0*	1	7	9	48	35
Your education	0*	2	7	15	43	33
Your spare time	3	3	11	14	40	29
Your health	0*	3	10	13	47	28
Your job satisfaction	27	4	8	9	31	22
Your job security	27	6	8	10	28	21
Your community	0*	4	14	17	48	17
Current income level	0*	13	18	14	42	13
Job opportunities for you	22	13	21	15	20	10
Financial security during retirement	0*	19	27	16	30	9

0* = Less than 1 percent.

Appendix Table 5. *Satisfaction with Items By Community Size, Region and Individual Attributes.***

	Financial security during retirement				***Your job opportunities***			
	Dissatisfied	*No opinion*	*Satisfied*	*Significance*	*Dissatisfied*	*No opinion*	*Satisfied*	*Significance*
				Percentages				
Total	46	16	38		43	19	38	
Community Size		(n = 2054)				(n = 1816)		
Less than 500	44	18	38		46	16	39	
500 - 999	51	13	36		45	18	37	
1,000 - 4,999	45	15	40		47	17	36	
5,000 - 9,999	41	16	43	χ^2 = 10.26	42	22	36	χ^2 = 7.12
10,000 and up	49	16	36	(.247)	41	20	39	(.524)
Region		(n = 2128)				(n = 1871)		
Panhandle	41	14	45		51	16	34	
North Central	47	17	36		42	20	37	
South Central	50	13	37		44	16	39	
Northeast	45	18	38	χ^2 = 12.67	39	20	41	χ^2 = 12.21
Southeast	45	17	38	(.124)	43	22	36	(.142)
Individual Attributes:								
Household Income Level		(n = 1962)				(n = 1760)		
Under $20,000	60	19	22		54	19	27	
$20,000 - $39,999	52	17	31		55	18	28	
$40,000 - $59,999	54	16	30	χ^2 = 125.07*	42	20	38	χ^2 = 65.36*
$60,000 and over	35	12	53	(.000)	35	18	47	(.000)
Age		(n = 2133)				(n = 1878)		
19 - 29	52	20	29		57	11	33	
30 - 39	52	16	32		43	17	41	
40 - 49	57	12	31		47	14	39	
50 - 64	45	15	40	χ^2 = 88.59*	38	22	40	χ^2 = 106.42*
65 and older	32	16	53	(.000)	22	39	39	(.000)
Gender		(n = 2092)				(n = 1848)		
Male	41	16	43	χ^2 = 19.39*	36	21	43	χ^2 = 24.80*
Female	50	15	35	(.000)	48	17	35	(.000)
Education		(n = 2076)				(n = 1835)		
High school diploma or less	42	20	38		38	25	37	
Some college	52	14	34	χ^2 = 30.28*	48	18	34	χ^2 = 28.24*
Bachelors or grad degree	44	13	44	(.000)	42	15	43	(.000)
Marital Status		(n = 2090)				(n = 1844)		
Married	44	14	41		40	19	41	
Never married	55	18	27		52	14	34	
Divorced/separated	61	16	23	χ^2 = 61.40*	52	21	28	χ^2 = 30.90*
Widowed	32	19	50	(.000)	32	29	40	(.000)
Occupation		(n = 1532)				(n = 1591)		
Mgt, prof or education	47	14	39		41	17	42	
Sales or office support	54	14	32		43	21	36	
Constrn, inst or maint	50	17	33		41	22	37	
Prodn/trans/warehsing	47	17	36		45	23	32	
Agriculture	37	17	47		25	18	56	
Food serv/pers. care	46	22	32		48	21	31	
Hlthcare supp/safety	56	10	34	χ^2 = 31.57*	61	9	31	χ^2 = 68.12*
Other	44	27	29	(.005)	55	20	26	(.000)

* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

** Only the five items with the highest combined proportion of very and somewhat dissatisfied responses are included.

Appendix Table 5 continued

	Your current income level				***Your job security***			
	Dissatisfied	*No opinion*	*Satisfied*	*Significance*	*Dissatisfied*	*No opinion*	*Satisfied*	*Significance*
				Percentages				
Total	31	14	55		19	14	67	
Community Size		(n = 2127)				(n = 1693)		
Less than 500	31	16	53		17	14	69	
500 - 999	30	14	56		21	17	62	
1,000 - 4,999	31	14	56		15	13	72	
5,000 - 9,999	29	16	54	χ^2 = 9.91	13	17	70	χ^2 = 27.94*
10,000 and up	33	11	56	(.272)	25	14	62	(.000)
Region		(n = 2208)				(n = 1744)		
Panhandle	32	15	53		15	17	68	
North Central	32	15	53		18	14	68	
South Central	32	11	57		24	12	64	
Northeast	31	14	55	χ^2 = 7.65	17	17	67	χ^2 = 15.42
Southeast	30	17	54	(.468)	18	13	69	(.051)
Individual Attributes:								
Household Income Level		(n = 2050)				(n = 1640)		
Under $20,000	54	21	25		32	28	41	
$20,000 - $39,999	46	16	38		28	15	57	
$40,000 - $59,999	30	13	57	χ^2 = 318.47*	17	14	69	χ^2 = 112.81*
$60,000 and over	15	8	77	(.000)	13	9	78	(.000)
Age		(n = 2213)				(n = 1744)		
19 - 29	37	15	49		23	15	62	
30 - 39	29	9	62		19	9	72	
40 - 49	34	12	53		22	10	68	
50 - 64	31	12	57	χ^2 = 34.87*	18	14	68	χ^2 = 66.04*
65 and older	26	20	54	(.000)	9	33	58	(.000)
Gender		(n = 2176)				(n = 1722)		
Male	27	14	59	χ^2 = 14.19*	15	15	70	χ^2 = 10.73*
Female	35	13	52	(.001)	22	14	64	(.005)
Education		(n = 2159)				(n = 1710)		
High school diploma or less	38	19	43		18	20	62	
Some college	34	14	52	χ^2 = 88.81*	22	13	65	χ^2 = 23.41*
Bachelors or grad degree	24	8	68	(.000)	17	11	72	(.000)
Marital Status		(n = 2175)				(n = 1718)		
Married	29	13	59		16	14	70	
Never married	37	15	48		27	12	61	
Divorced/separated	44	14	42	χ^2 = 44.18*	27	17	56	χ^2 = 32.79*
Widowed	28	21	52	(.000)	23	19	58	(.000)
Occupation		(n = 1634)				(n = 1589)		
Mgt, prof or education	24	10	66		17	11	72	
Sales or office support	37	10	52		21	16	63	
Constrn, inst or maint	35	13	52		22	20	58	
Prodn/trans/warehsing	33	17	50		23	12	65	
Agriculture	15	17	68		5	14	81	
Food serv/pers. care	45	16	40		23	18	59	
Hlthcare supp/safety	42	9	50	χ^2 = 81.23*	29	6	66	χ^2 = 63.34*
Other	35	18	47	(.000)	27	19	55	(.000)

* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.
** Only the five items with the highest combined proportion of very and somewhat dissatisfied responses are included.

Appendix Table 5 continued.

	Your community			
	Dissatisfied	*No opinion*	*Satisfied*	*Significance*
		Percentages		
Total	17	18	65	
Community Size		(n = 2230)		
Less than 500	11	17	72	
500 - 999	13	18	69	
1,000 - 4,999	19	16	65	
5,000 - 9,999	22	15	63	χ^2 = 21.04*
10,000 and up	18	19	63	(.007)
Region		(n = 2316)		
Panhandle	24	21	55	
North Central	16	18	66	
South Central	17	16	67	
Northeast	16	19	65	χ^2 = 16.74*
Southeast	16	15	69	(.033)
Individual Attributes:				
Household Income Level		(n = 2136)		
Under $20,000	22	19	59	
$20,000 - $39,999	17	22	61	
$40,000 - $59,999	16	18	66	χ^2 = 22.03*
$60,000 and over	16	14	70	(.001)
Age		(n = 2325)		
19 - 29	18	20	62	
30 - 39	19	16	65	
40 - 49	21	17	62	
50 - 64	19	16	65	χ^2 = 28.04*
65 and older	10	18	72	(.000)
Gender		(n = 2282)		
Male	19	17	63	χ^2 = 3.86
Female	16	18	66	(.145)
Education		(n = 2265)		
High school diploma or less	17	23	60	
Some college	20	17	63	χ^2 = 39.25*
Bachelors or grad degree	14	13	73	(.000)
Marital Status		(n = 2283)		
Married	17	17	66	
Never married	18	18	64	
Divorced/separated	24	19	57	χ^2 = 14.83*
Widowed	11	18	70	(.022)
Occupation		(n = 1668)		
Mgt, prof or education	15	14	71	
Sales or office support	19	22	59	
Constrn, inst or maint	20	20	59	
Prodn/trans/warehsing	33	19	48	
Agriculture	15	11	74	
Food serv/pers. care	12	21	68	
Hlthcare supp/safety	26	18	57	χ^2 = 62.25*
Other	16	19	65	(.000)

* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

** Only the five items with the highest combined proportion of very and somewhat dissatisfied responses are included

Appendix Table 6. *Happiness by Community Size, Region and Various Individual Attributes*

	If you were to consider your life in general these days, how happy or unhappy would you say you are, as a whole?					
	Very happy	*Fairly happy*	*Not very happy*	*Not at all happy*	*Don't know*	*Chi-square (sig.)*
			Percentages			
Total	27	61	8	1	2	
Community Size			(n = 2282)			
Less than 500	29	59	8	1	3	
500 - 999	26	64	7	1	2	
1,000 - 4,999	28	61	9	1	1	
5,000 - 9,999	28	59	9	2	2	χ^2 = 15.97
10,000 and up	26	63	8	2	2	(.455)
Region			(n = 2380)			
Panhandle	25	61	9	4	2	
North Central	28	61	9	0*	2	
South Central	27	64	6	2	1	
Northeast	26	62	9	1	2	χ^2 = 35.64*
Southeast	32	55	10	0*	3	(.003)
Income Level			(n = 2175)			
Under $20,000	19	60	15	3	4	
$20,000 - $39,999	22	63	12	2	1	
$40,000 - $59,999	28	63	8	0*	1	χ^2 = 120.25*
$60,000 and over	35	61	3	1	1	(.000)
Age			(n = 2388)			
19 - 29	28	59	10	2	2	
30 - 39	31	58	9	2	1	
40 - 49	23	67	8	1	2	
50 - 64	27	63	8	1	1	χ^2 = 24.30
65 and older	29	59	8	1	3	(.083)
Gender			(n = 2342)			
Male	25	65	7	1	1	χ^2 = 9.08
Female	29	59	9	1	2	(.059)
Marital Status			(n = 2341)			
Married	31	60	6	1	1	
Never married	20	64	13	1	2	
Divorced/separated	17	66	14	2	2	χ^2 = 71.49*
Widowed	24	63	8	1	5	(.000)
Education			(n = 2316)			
H.S. diploma or less	24	63	9	2	3	
Some college	26	63	8	1	1	χ^2 = 22.92*
Bachelors degree	32	59	7	1	1	(.003)
Occupation			(n = 1698)			
Mgt, prof or education	32	61	6	1	1	
Sales or office support	22	65	9	2	1	
Constrn, inst or maint	22	68	8	1	1	
Prodn/trans/warehsing	22	69	7	1	1	
Agriculture	32	60	5	1	2	
Food serv/pers. care	23	65	9	3	1	
Hlthcare supp/safety	24	63	11	2	0	χ^2 = 35.68
Other	30	59	8	1	1	(.151)

* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.
0* = Less than 1 percent.

Appendix Table 7. *Entrepreneurial Nature by Community Size, Region and Individual Attributes*

	An entrepreneurial individual can be described as an innovative person who is open to change and recognizes and pursues opportunities irrespective of existing resources, such as time, money, personal support and/or technology. As an individual, how entrepreneurial are you?					
	Very entrepreneurial	*Somewhat entrepreneurial*	*Somewhat non-entrepreneurial*	*Very non-entrepreneurial*	*Don't know*	*Chi-square (sig.)*
			Percentages			
Total	10	47	19	11	14	
Community Size			(n = 2262)			
Less than 500	10	54	15	5	16	
500 - 999	10	47	21	7	15	
1,000 - 4,999	11	43	21	13	13	
5,000 - 9,999	9	49	25	8	10	χ^2 = 43.45*
10,000 and up	9	47	18	14	12	(.000)
Region			(n = 2347)			
Panhandle	10	47	20	14	10	
North Central	8	47	20	12	13	
South Central	12	45	19	11	14	
Northeast	8	50	19	10	13	χ^2 = 20.37
Southeast	9	46	19	9	17	(.204)
Income Level			(n = 2158)			
Under $20,000	8	36	14	11	31	
$20,000 - $39,999	9	47	19	9	15	
$40,000 - $59,999	7	49	22	12	11	χ^2 = 186.7*
$60,000 and over	14	52	21	11	3	(.000)
Age			(n = 2358)			
19 - 29	10	56	17	6	12	
30 - 39	15	49	18	9	9	
40 - 49	12	48	21	13	7	
50 - 64	9	49	22	12	9	χ^2 = 184.2*
65 and older	5	36	18	12	29	(.000)
Gender			(n = 2314)			
Male	13	49	20	9	10	χ^2 = 30.48*
Female	8	46	19	12	15	(.000)
Marital Status			(n = 2311)			
Married	10	49	21	11	10	
Never married	14	48	17	8	12	
Divorced/separated	10	45	17	11	17	χ^2 = 108.5*
Widowed	4	32	18	13	34	(.000)
Education			(n = 2289)			
H.S. diploma or less	8	37	18	13	25	
Some college	10	49	20	10	11	χ^2 = 133.1*
Bachelors degree	12	53	20	10	6	(.000)
Occupation			(n = 1687)			
Mgt, prof or education	13	50	23	10	5	
Sales or office support	8	51	19	15	8	
Constrn, inst or maint	18	46	21	8	7	
Prodn/trans/warehsing	3	49	23	13	13	
Agriculture	15	58	13	5	9	
Food serv/pers. care	7	44	13	15	21	
Hlthcare supp/safety	10	50	20	11	8	χ^2 = 97.84*
Other	20	40	20	9	11	(.000)

* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

Appendix Table 8. *Areas of Life Consider Themselves a Leader in by Community Size, Region and Individual Attributes*

	In which of the following areas of your life do you consider yourself a leader?					
	Family	*Work/career*	*Student life*	*Social organizations/ activities*	*Local community*	*None of the above*
			Percent circling each response			
Total	75	53	6	25	14	13
Community Size			(n = 2315)			
Less than 500	74	48	4	28	20	14
500 - 999	75	58	10	30	21	13
1,000 - 4,999	75	55	5	24	15	11
5,000 - 9,999	78	53	6	26	13	15
10,000 and up	75	54	7	23	9	13
Significance	(.798)	(.174)	(.040)*	(.107)	(.000)*	(.359)
Region			(n = 2412)			
Panhandle	75	53	6	31	12	15
North Central	76	52	4	23	19	12
South Central	76	58	9	22	12	11
Northeast	75	47	7	25	15	15
Southeast	74	53	4	26	14	13
Significance	(.879)	(.002)*	(.004)*	(.053)	(.043)*	(.323)
Income Level			(n = 2210)			
Under $20,000	63	27	7	17	11	26
$20,000 - $39,999	69	48	7	20	12	17
$40,000 - $59,999	78	60	6	27	13	8
$60,000 and over	85	71	6	32	18	4
Significance	(.000)*	(.000)*	(.788)	(.000)*	(.001)*	(.000)*
Age			(n = 2420)			
19 - 29	83	69	16	29	9	4
30 - 39	81	69	9	26	16	7
40 - 49	77	61	6	26	14	9
50 - 64	75	55	3	24	14	15
65 and older	64	25	2	20	16	25
Significance	(.000)*	(.000)*	(.000)*	(.028)*	(.042)*	(.000)*
Gender			(n = 2371)			
Male	70	58	5	22	15	14
Female	79	51	8	27	13	12
Significance	(.000)*	(.000)*	(.002)*	(.001)*	(.064)	(.032)*
Education			(n = 2349)			
H.S. diploma or less	71	35	3	14	10	20
Some college	76	55	7	26	13	12
Bachelors degree	79	70	10	34	19	6
Significance	(.001)*	(.000)*	(.000)*	(.000)*	(.000)*	(.000)*
Occupation			(n = 1708)			
Mgt, prof or education	84	78	10	35	20	4
Sales or office support	81	64	7	33	11	9
Constrn, inst or maint	62	71	1	23	11	14
Prodn/trans/warehsing	78	53	6	15	8	11
Agriculture	69	62	5	22	19	12
Food serv/pers. care	76	62	10	19	9	12
Hlthcare supp/safety	77	65	7	18	7	10
Other	78	45	4	15	12	15
Significance	(.000)*	(.000)*	(.006)*	(.000)*	(.000)*	(.000)*

* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

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