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The Quality of Life of Rural Nebraskans

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THE CENTER FOR RURAL COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT

A Research Report*

The Quality of Life of Rural Nebraskans

1999 Nebraska Rural Poll Results

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Executive Summary

Nebraska's economy has shown growth during recent years. However, the agricultural economy has been experiencing a decline in market prices for most commodities. How have these changes affected rural Nebraskans? How do they perceive their quality of life? Do their perceptions differ by the size of their community, the region in which they live, or their occupation?

This report details results of 3,036 responses to the 1999 Nebraska Rural Poll, the fourth annual effort to take the pulse of rural Nebraskans. Respondents were asked a series of questions about their general well-being and their satisfaction with specific aspects of well-being. Trends are examined by comparing data from the three previous polls to this year's results. In addition, comparisons are made among different subgroups of the respondents, i.e., comparisons by age, occupation, region, etc. Based on these analyses, some key findings emerged:

- ***Rural Nebraskans were not as optimistic about their current and future situations as they were in previous studies.*** The proportion of respondents who said they were better off compared to five years ago had steadily increased between 1996 and 1998 (from 36% to 41%). However, it declined to thirty-five percent in 1999. This pattern continued when asked how they thought they would be ten years from now. In 1996, thirty-two percent believed they would be better off ten years from now. This increased to forty-two percent in 1998, yet decreased to thirty-seven percent in 1999.
- ***Some groups' pessimism regarding their current situation increased noticeably between 1998 and 1999.*** The groups who were considerably more likely to say they were worse off than five years ago in 1999 compared to 1998 include: those living in communities with less than 500 people, people living in the Panhandle, those between the ages of 50 and 64, respondents with less than a 9th grade education, and farmers/ranchers.
- ***Despite the decline from previous studies, rural Nebraskans still remain relatively optimistic about their current and future situations.*** Thirty-five percent believe they are better off than five years ago. When asked about the future, thirty-seven percent believe they will be better off ten years from now.
- ***Farmers and ranchers were less optimistic about the present and the future than respondents with other occupations.*** When asked how they were doing compared to five years ago, only twenty-seven percent of the farmers or ranchers felt they were better off, compared to fifty-five percent of the respondents with professional occupations. And when considering their future, only thirty-four percent of farmers or ranchers believed they would be better off ten years from now; yet fifty-five percent of the respondents with professional occupations felt they would be better off ten years from now.
- ***Overall, age, household income and occupation (whether or not a farmer) affect expected future well-being.*** A multiple regression analysis revealed that these factors are

the primary influences on expected future well-being. As age increases, expected future well-being scores decrease. As household income increases, well-being scores also increase. Farmers report lower expected future well-being scores than non-farmers.

- ***Respondents living in or near smaller communities were more likely than those living in larger communities to feel that people are powerless to control their lives.*** Forty-three percent of the respondents living in or near communities with populations less than 500 either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that people are powerless to control their lives. However, only thirty-two percent of respondents living in or near communities with populations greater than 10,000 agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
- ***Manual laborers and farmers/ranchers were more likely than respondents with different occupations to agree that people are powerless to control their lives.*** Forty-four percent of the manual laborers and forty-one percent of the farmers or ranchers agreed or strongly agreed that people are powerless to control their lives. Only twenty-three percent of the respondents with professional occupations shared this opinion.
- ***More than one-half of rural Nebraskans are very satisfied with their family and their marriage.*** This is similar to findings of the previous studies.
- ***Farmers and ranchers were more likely than those with different occupations to express satisfaction with their religion/spirituality.*** Eighty-four percent of farmers and ranchers stated they were very satisfied or satisfied with their religion/spirituality, while only sixty-five percent of the manual laborers felt the same.
- ***Respondents living in the Panhandle and the North Central region of the state were more likely than those living in other regions to be satisfied with clean air and water.*** Eighty-five percent of the respondents in these regions were satisfied with clean air and water, while only seventy-six percent of those in the South Central region were satisfied.

Introduction

Overall, Nebraska's economy has been fairly strong in recent years. The state unemployment rate has continued to be among the lowest in the nation for the last nine years (2.3 percent in March 1999, compared to 4.2 percent nationally). Also, Nebraska's per capita income grew 4.8% between 1997 and 1998, compared to a 4.4% increase nationally.

However, the state's farm economy has experienced an economic downturn during the past few years. Average farm profitability for 1998 was down significantly (average net farm income for 1998 was \$4,446 compared to \$45,632 in 1997), mainly due to a decline in market prices. As an example, the average price received for corn in 1998 was \$2.17, compared to \$2.52 in 1997 and \$3.15 in 1996. Hog prices declined drastically during the year; the average price received per cwt in 1998 was \$37.53, compared to \$54.61 in 1997 for farrow-finish operations.¹

Given all these changes, how do rural Nebraskans perceive their quality of life? When they consider their future, do they see a positive or negative one? Have these views changed over the past four years? Do respondents' perceptions of their present and future situations differ by the size of their community or their region of the state? Are farmers seeing an optimistic future? This paper addresses all these questions.

¹ Source: Nebraska Farm Business Association and Nebraska Farm & Ranch Management data collected from 178 Nebraska farms and ranches.

The 1999 Nebraska Rural Poll is the fourth annual effort to take the pulse of rural Nebraskans. Respondents were asked a series of questions about their general well-being and their satisfaction with specific items that may influence their well-being. Trends will be examined by comparing the data from the three previous polls to this year's results.

Methodology and Respondent Profile

This study is based on 3,036 responses from Nebraskans living in the 87 non-metropolitan counties in the state. A self-administered questionnaire was mailed in February and March to approximately 6,100 randomly selected households. Metropolitan counties not included in the sample were Cass, Dakota, Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy and Washington. The 18 page questionnaire included questions pertaining to well-being, community, work, the future of rural Nebraska and local finance issues. This paper reports only results from the well-being portion of the survey.

A 50% response rate was achieved using the total design method (Dillman, 1978). The sequence of steps used were:

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.

The average respondent was 54 years of age. Seventy-six percent were married (Appendix Table 1²) and fifty-one percent lived within the city limits of a town or village. On average, respondents had lived in Nebraska 47 years and had lived in their current community 34 years. Eighty-one percent were living in or near towns or villages with populations less than 5,000.

Fifty-eight percent of the respondents reported their approximate household income from all sources, before taxes, for 1998 was below \$40,000. Twenty-seven percent reported incomes over \$50,000. Ninety-two percent had attained at least a high school diploma.

Seventy-six percent were employed in 1998 on a full-time, part-time or seasonal basis. Twenty percent were retired. Twenty-nine percent of those employed reported working in a professional/technical or administrative occupation. Twenty-six percent indicated they were farmers or ranchers.

Organization of Report

This particular report focuses on two different aspects of well-being: general well-being, as assessed by four broad questions (three related to how the individual respondent assesses his/her overall situation and another question on “powerlessness”); and satisfaction with specific aspects of life (e.g., satisfaction with health, family, marriage and 13 other specific items). And,

² Appendix Table 1 also includes demographic data from previous rural polls, as well as similar data based on the entire non-metropolitan population of Nebraska (using 1990 U.S. Census data).

as was noted earlier, these data on the two different aspects of well-being — the general and specific — are available for the past four years and allow examinations of trends. Comparisons among different subgroups of the respondents will also be made, e.g., comparisons by age, occupation, income, etc. Hence, this report is divided into three sections:

1. Trends in well-being (both the general and specific dimensions of well-being) during the past four years.
2. General well-being in 1999 by subgroups of respondents.
3. Specific aspects of well-being in 1999 by subgroups of respondents.

Trends in Well-Being (1996 - 1999)

Comparisons are made between the well-being data collected this year to the three previous studies. These comparisons begin to show a clearer picture of the trends emerging in the well-being of rural Nebraskans. It is important to keep in mind when viewing these comparisons that these were independent samples (the same people were not surveyed each year).

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.”

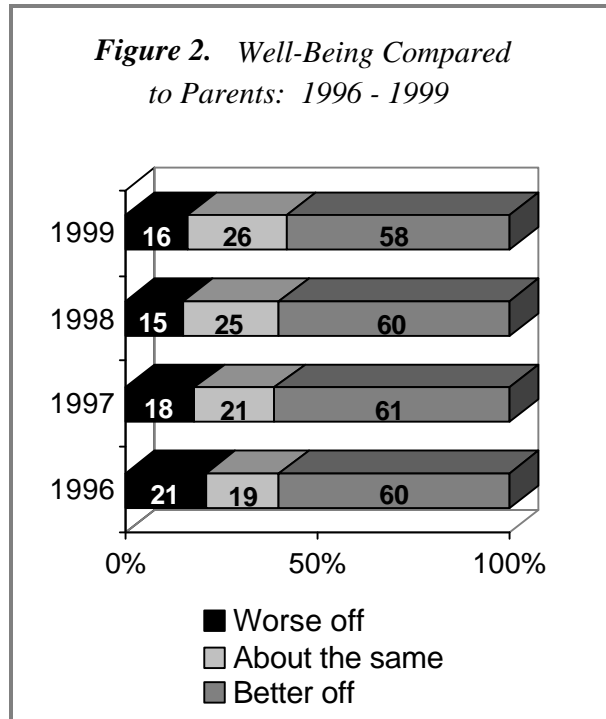
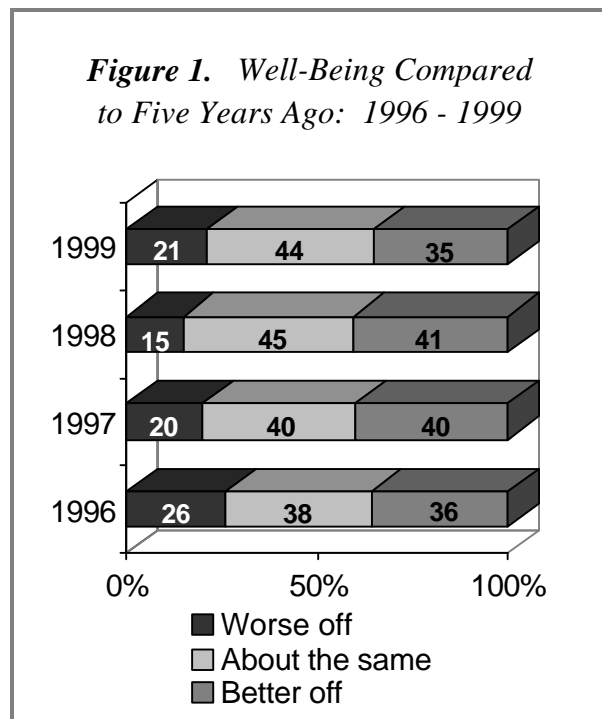
In 1999, rural Nebraskans did not view life as positively as they have in the past. The proportion of respondents who felt they were better off compared to five years ago had increased between 1996 and 1998, from 36% to 41%. However, it declined to 35% in 1999 (Figure 1). Conversely, the proportion feeling they were worse off than five years ago had steadily decreased since 1996 (from 26% to 15% in 1998), but then increased to 21% in 1999.

When asked to compare themselves to their parents when they were their age, the proportion feeling they were better off has

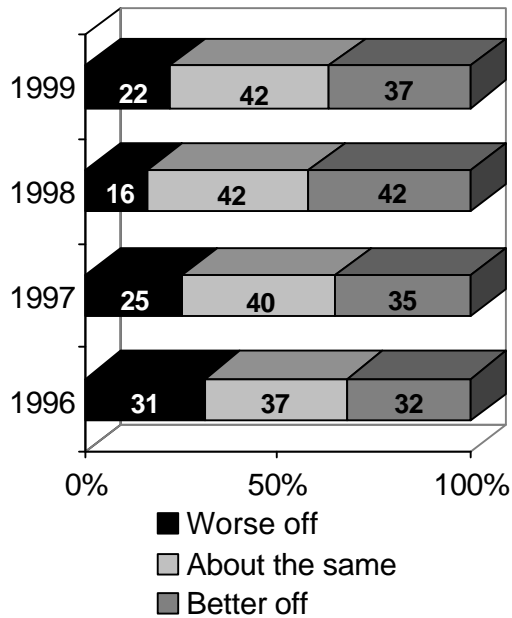
remained fairly constant between 1996 and 1999 (Figure 2). The percentage who feel they are worse off than their parents had steadily decreased from 1996 to 1998 and remained fairly constant between 1998 and 1999.

Respondents’ decreased optimism was also apparent when asked how they would be ten years from now (Figure 3). In 1996, thirty-two percent felt they would be better off ten years from now. This increased to thirty-five percent in 1997 and forty-two percent in 1998. However, this proportion decreased to 37% in 1999. The proportion feeling they would be worse off steadily decreased from 1996 to 1998 (from 31% to 16%) but then increased to 22% in 1999.

Upon further analysis, it was discovered that certain groups were more likely to show an increase in pessimism about their current situation between 1998 and 1999. The



**Figure 3. Expected Well-Being
Ten Years from Now: 1996 -
1999**

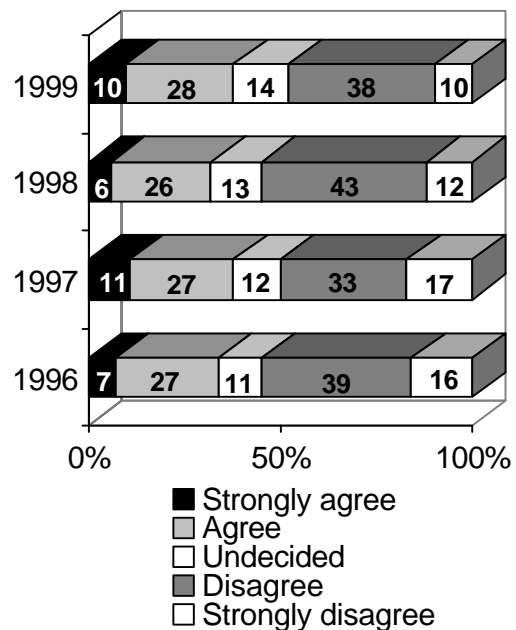


following groups showed noticeable increases between 1998 and 1999 in the proportion who said they were worse off compared to five years ago: those living in communities with less than 500 people, people living in the Panhandle, those between the ages of 50 and 64, respondents with less than a 9th grade education, and farmers/ranchers. As an example, the proportion of farmers and ranchers who said they were worse off compared to five years ago increased by seventeen percentage points between 1998 and 1999. Twenty percent of the farmers and ranchers in 1998 said they were worse off compared to five years ago; however, thirty-seven percent of the farmers and ranchers responding in 1999 felt they were worse off compared to five years ago.

After seeing how rural Nebraskans view their current and future situations in comparison to previous studies, we will now examine their perceptions of 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."

In 1999, thirty-eight percent of the respondents either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with this statement (Figure 4). This is an increase from the proportion reported in 1998 (32%), but is identical to the proportion that agreed or strongly agreed to the statement in 1997. In 1996, thirty-four percent either agreed or strongly agreed.

**Figure 4. "...People are
Powerless to Control Their Lives":
1996 - 1999**



Comparisons of the data for 1998 and 1999 revealed that certain groups felt more powerless than they did last year. Groups that had considerably higher proportions agreeing that people are powerless in 1999 than in 1998 include: respondents living in communities with less than 100 people, those living in the Panhandle, those with incomes under \$10,000, and respondents without a high school diploma. To illustrate, forty-one percent of the 1998 respondents with household incomes less than \$10,000 agreed or strongly agreed that people are powerless to control their own lives. This proportion increased to fifty-nine percent for this group in 1999.

Satisfaction with Specific Aspects of Life

Respondents were 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.”

This same question was asked in the three previous polls, but the list of items was not identical each year. Table 1 shows the proportions “very satisfied” with each item.

The rank ordering of the items is relatively stable. In addition, the proportion of respondents stating they were “very satisfied” with each item also has been fairly consistent over the years, particularly between 1998 and 1999. Family, the outdoors, spirituality, friends, and clean air and water continue to be items given high

Table 1. Proportions of Respondents “Very Satisfied” With Each Factor, 1996 - 1999.*

| <i>Item</i> | <i>1999</i> | <i>1998</i> | <i>1997</i> | <i>1996</i> |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Your marriage | 71 | 67 | NA | NA |
| Your family | 58 | 62 | 62 | 51 |
| Greenery and open space | 52 | 52 | NA | NA |
| Your religion/spirituality | 46 | 48 | 48 | 42 |
| Your friends | 46 | 47 | 47 | 37 |
| Clean air and water | 41 | 41 | NA | NA |
| Your housing | 39 | 35 | 34 | NA |
| Your spare time** | 30 | 29 | NA | 13 |
| Your health | 29 | 29 | 34 | 26 |
| Your education | 28 | 28 | 27 | 24 |
| Your job satisfaction | 25 | 24 | 25 | 22 |
| Your job security | 24 | 25 | 24 | 19 |
| Your community | 19 | 16 | 20 | 17 |
| Job opportunities for you | 12 | 11 | 12 | 10 |
| Your current income level | 12 | 12 | 15 | 12 |
| Financial security during retirement | 11 | 10 | 14 | 10 |

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.

satisfaction ratings by respondents. On the other hand, respondents continue to be less satisfied with job opportunities, current income level, and financial security during retirement.

General Well-Being in 1999

In this section, 1999 data on the four general measures of well-being are first summarized and then comparisons are made among different subgroups of the respondents based upon the size of the respondent's community, the region of the state they reside in, income, age, gender, education, marital status and occupation. The differences between these groups are examined using two different approaches. First, the data is presented for these characteristics or categories of respondents. Second, a more sophisticated analytic technique called multiple regression is used to gain a clearer understanding as to how each of these factors may influence general measures of well-being.

The four general well-being questions asked the respondents how they are doing compared to five years ago, how they are doing compared to their parents when they were their age, how they expect to be ten years from now, and the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that people are powerless to control their own lives. The specific question wordings are included on pages 2 and 3 of this report. The overall responses to these questions can be viewed in Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Generally, rural Nebraskans appear to be relatively optimistic about their current situation. Thirty-five percent believe they are better off than five years ago and fifty-

eight percent feel they are better off than their parents were when they were their age. Rural Nebraskans are also optimistic about the future, with thirty-seven percent stating they believe they will be better off ten years from now. When asked about their feelings of control over their lives, forty-eight percent "strongly disagreed" or "disagreed" that people are powerless to control their own lives.

Next, various demographic subgroups of the respondents will be examined to see if these attitudes are shared by all respondents. Responses were analyzed by the size of the respondent's community, the region of the state they reside in, household income, age, gender, education, marital status, and occupation. These comparisons are shown in Appendix Table 2.

Most of these subgroups showed statistically significant (at the .05 level) differences in their responses to these questions. The respondents living in larger communities were more likely than those living in the smaller communities to see themselves as better off compared to five years ago and better off ten years from now. Forty-six percent of those living in communities with populations of 10,000 or more believed they were better off than five years ago, compared to only twenty-nine percent of those living in communities with less than 500 people. Similarly, almost one-half (49%) of the respondents in the largest communities thought they would be better off ten years from now, but only thirty-one percent of the respondents in the smallest communities felt the same.

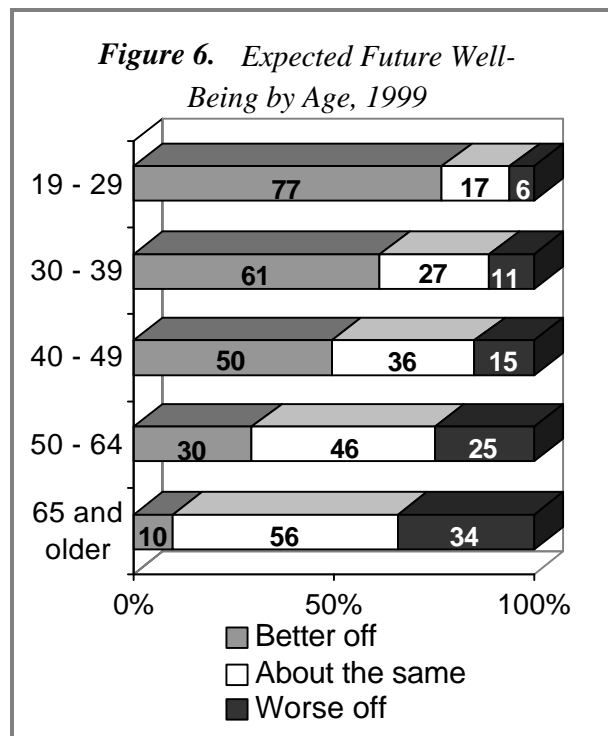
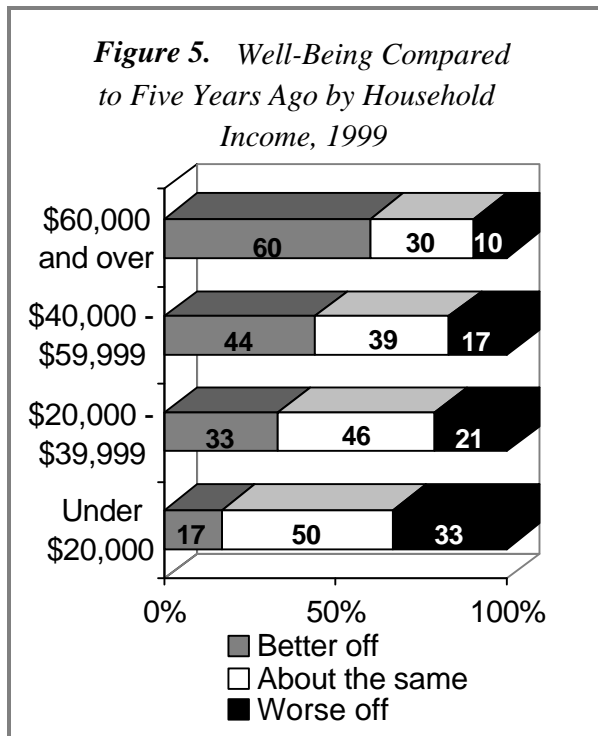
Differences were also detected among respondents in different household income

categories. Sixty percent of the respondents with household incomes of at least \$60,000 felt they were better off than they were five years ago; however, only seventeen percent of those with incomes less than \$20,000 thought they were better off (Figure 5). Respondents with higher income levels were also more likely to believe they would be better off ten years from now. Fifty-five percent of the respondents with incomes of at least \$75,000 thought they would be better off ten years from now, compared to only seventeen percent of the respondents with incomes under \$10,000.

Age is another area where differences between groups emerged. Younger respondents were more likely than older respondents to believe they were better off compared to five years ago and would be better off ten years from now. For example, seventy-seven percent of the respondents under the age of 30 thought they would be

better off ten years from now; yet only ten percent of those age 65 or older felt they would be better off in ten years (Figure 6).

Gender, education, marital status and occupation groups also differed when assessing their current and future situations. Males, respondents with a college degree, those who have never married, and respondents with professional or administrative occupations were the groups most likely to see themselves as better off compared to five years ago and better off ten years from now. Regional differences occurred when assessing their situation compared to five years ago. Respondents in the Southeast region were more likely than the other regional groups to feel they were better off, while those in the Panhandle were more likely to feel they were worse off (see Appendix Figure 1 for the counties included in each region).



These same demographic groups were analyzed to see if differences emerged in their feelings of powerlessness (Appendix Table 3). Certain groups were more likely to agree with the statement that people are powerless to control their own lives than others.

Respondents with less education were more likely than those with more education to agree that people are powerless to change their lives. Sixty percent of the respondents with no high school diploma either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, while only twenty-nine percent of those with at least some college education agreed or strongly agreed (Figure 7).

Likewise, people living in smaller communities were more likely than those living in larger communities to agree with the statement. Forty-three percent of the

respondents living in or near communities with less than 500 people agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that people are powerless. However, only thirty-two percent of the respondents living in or near communities with at least 10,000 people strongly agreed or agreed with the statement.

Other groups more likely to agree with the statement include those with lower income levels, older respondents, those who are widowed and respondents with manual laborer occupations.

What really influences general well-being?

It was noted earlier that community size, income, age, gender, education, marital status, and occupation were all related to respondents' well-being compared to five years ago. However, many of these characteristics are also related to each other. As an example, older respondents are more likely to have lower household income levels, lower educational levels, are more likely to be involved in farming and ranching, and live in or near the smallest communities. Given that, is the well-being of rural Nebraskans primarily influenced by age, or do education and income have an effect on well-being independent from age?

To determine how each variable affects well-being compared to five years ago, a multiple regression analysis was performed (Table 2). Multiple regression helps determine the effects of each variable on well-being while holding the effects of the other variables constant. For example, one is able to hold age, gender, community size, income, occupation and marital status constant to determine the effect education has on well-being. This is done for each of

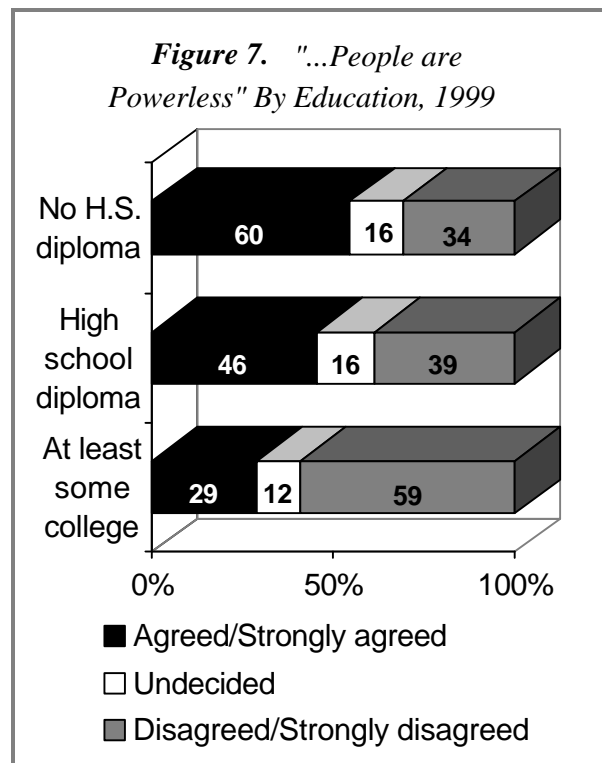


Table 2. Prediction of Well-Being Compared to Five Years Ago by Individual and Community Characteristics

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>Beta coefficient</i> | <i>Significance</i> |
|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Age | -.161 | .000 |
| Household income | .255 | .000 |
| Education | .045 | .045 |
| Gender | -.018 | .421 |
| Farmer | -.145 | .000 |
| Marital status | -.053 | .021 |
| Community size | .050 | .024 |
| $R^2 = .151$ | | |

the variables.

The “beta coefficients” represent the effect of each variable on the well-being score. Because these coefficients are standardized units, this allows one to directly compare the effects of each variable. The significance level indicates whether or not the relationship of each variable can be generalized to the general population from which the survey sample was drawn (in this case, all rural Nebraskans).

The R^2 value indicates how much of the variance in the well-being scale is explained by the variables chosen for the analysis. In this case, 15.1% of the variance in the well-being scale is explained by age, household income, education, gender, marital status, occupation and community size.

First of all, by looking at the significance levels we find that age, household income, education, occupation, community size and marital status are statistically significant variables. Gender did not have an effect on well-being once the other variables were held constant. Thus, the other variables did have independent effects on well-being compared to five years ago.

To see which of these characteristics have the largest influence on the respondents’ well-being compared to five years ago, the beta coefficients of each variable will be examined. Of these variables, the beta coefficients indicate that household income has the largest effect on well-being, followed by (in order of their importance) age, occupation, marital status, community size and education.

Age has a negative relationship with well-being. This means that as age increases, well-being scores decrease. Household income, education, and community size have a positive relationship with the well-being scale. Therefore, as one moves into higher categories of these variables, well-being scores tend to increase. The farmer and marital status variables have a negative relationship with well-being. This indicates that farmers and married respondents are more likely to report lower well-being scores than non-farmers and respondents who are not married.

A similar analysis can be performed to see which characteristics influence expected future well-being. The individual and community characteristics used in this

Table 3. Prediction of Expected Future Well-Being by Individual and Community Characteristics

| <i>Variables</i> | <i>Beta coefficient</i> | <i>Significance</i> |
|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Age | -.343 | .000 |
| Household income | .153 | .000 |
| Education | .026 | .243 |
| Gender | .006 | .800 |
| Farmer | -.067 | .003 |
| Marital status | -.010 | .652 |
| Community size | .043 | .052 |
| $R^2 = .168$ | | |

analysis are the same ones used in analyzing well-being compared to five years ago. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 3.

These variables together account for 16.8% of the variation in expected future well-being scores. In this analysis, education, marital status and community size are no longer statistically significant. Even though these variables had statistically significant relationships with expected future well-being scores when analyzed separately, when all the variables are included in the analysis these relationships are no longer apparent. Thus, age, household income and occupation are the only three variables which have an effect on expected future well-being once the other variables under consideration are held constant.

These three variables have the same relationship with expected future well-being as they did with well-being compared to five years ago. As age increases, expected future well-being scores decrease. As income increases, well-being scores also increase. Farmers reported lower expected future well-being scores than non-farmers. In this analysis, however, age has the largest

influence on expected future well-being. Household income has the next largest effect, followed by occupation.

A third multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine which variables have the most influence on feelings of powerlessness. The results are shown in Table 4. The individual and community characteristics account for 9.5% of the variation in feelings of powerlessness.

Age, household income, education, and marital status are the statistically significant predictors of feelings of powerlessness. Age has a positive relationship with powerlessness; as age increases, feelings of powerlessness also increase. Household income and education have a negative relationship with powerlessness. As people obtain higher levels of household income and higher educational levels, the less likely they are to believe that people are powerless. Marital status also has a positive relationship with powerlessness; married people are more likely than those not married to believe that people are powerless to control their lives. Gender, occupation and community size had no significant effect. When comparing the respective beta coefficients,

Table 4. Prediction of Feelings of Powerlessness by Individual and Community Characteristics

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>Beta coefficient</i> | <i>Significance</i> |
|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Age | .105 | .000 |
| Household income | -.176 | .000 |
| Education | -.146 | .000 |
| Gender | -.014 | .550 |
| Farmer | .033 | .164 |
| Marital status | .046 | .049 |
| Community size | -.041 | .069 |
| $R^2 = .095$ | | |

we find that household income, education, and age have the largest effects on feelings of powerlessness.

Specific Aspects of Well-Being in 1999

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. More than one-half of the respondents were very satisfied with the following: their family (58%), their marriage (54%) and greenery and open space (52%). Items receiving the highest proportion of very dissatisfied responses include: financial security during retirement (20%), current income level (18%), and job opportunities for you (12%).

The top ten items people were satisfied with (determined by the largest proportions of “very satisfied”) will now be examined in more detail by looking at how different demographic subgroups viewed each item. These comparisons are shown in Appendix Table 5.

Satisfaction with the respondents’ family had statistically significant relationships with

income, age, education, marital status and occupation. Respondents with higher income levels, younger respondents, those with higher educational levels, married respondents and respondents with administrative support occupations were the groups most likely to be satisfied or very satisfied with their family.

Satisfaction with the respondents’ marriage had a statistically significant relationship with only one of the characteristics. Respondents living in larger communities were more likely than those living in smaller communities to report they were satisfied or very satisfied with their marriage. However, those living in the smaller communities were more likely to report having “no opinion” on this item.

Regional differences were detected with regard to satisfaction with greenery and open space. Respondents living in the North Central region of the state were more likely than those living in other regions to report being satisfied or very satisfied with greenery and open space. Ninety-two percent of the respondents in this region were satisfied with this item, compared to eighty-six percent of the respondents living in the South Central and Southeast regions

of the state.

Differences in satisfaction with greenery and open space also occurred with regard to income, age, education, marital status, and occupation. Certain groups were less likely to be satisfied with greenery and open space: respondents with incomes under \$10,000, younger respondents, those with less education, respondents who have never married or are widowed, and skilled laborers.

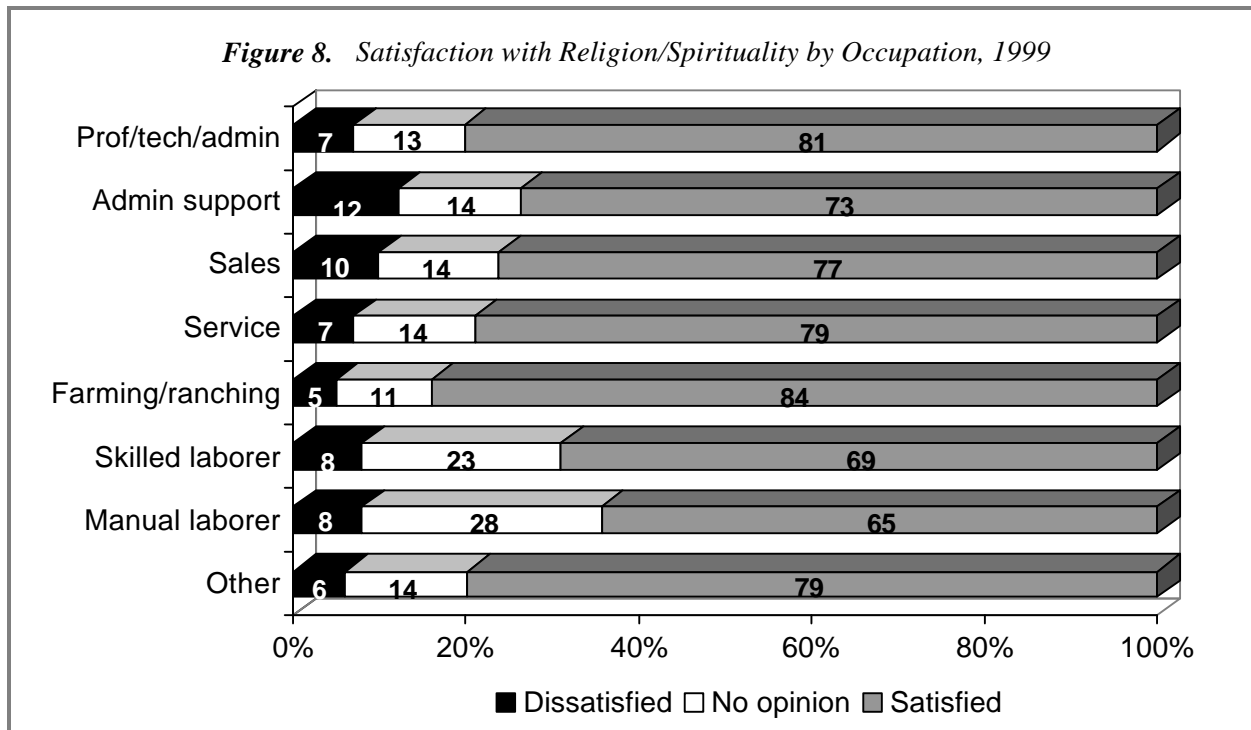
Respondents of different marital status varied in their reported satisfaction levels with their religion/spirituality. Eighty-four percent of the widowed respondents reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their religion/spirituality, compared to only sixty-six percent of those who have never married.

Differences in satisfaction with this item were also detected by occupation. Farmers

or ranchers were more likely than those with other occupations to report being very satisfied or satisfied with their religion/spirituality. Eighty-four percent of the farmers or ranchers said they were satisfied with this item, compared to only sixty-five percent of manual laborers (Figure 8). Age and gender also showed statistically significant differences in their reported satisfaction with religion/spirituality. Older respondents and females were the groups most likely to report being satisfied with their religion/spirituality.

Satisfaction with friends showed differences by age, education, and marital status. Respondents between the ages of 30 and 39, those with higher educational levels and the married respondents were the groups most likely to be satisfied with their friends.

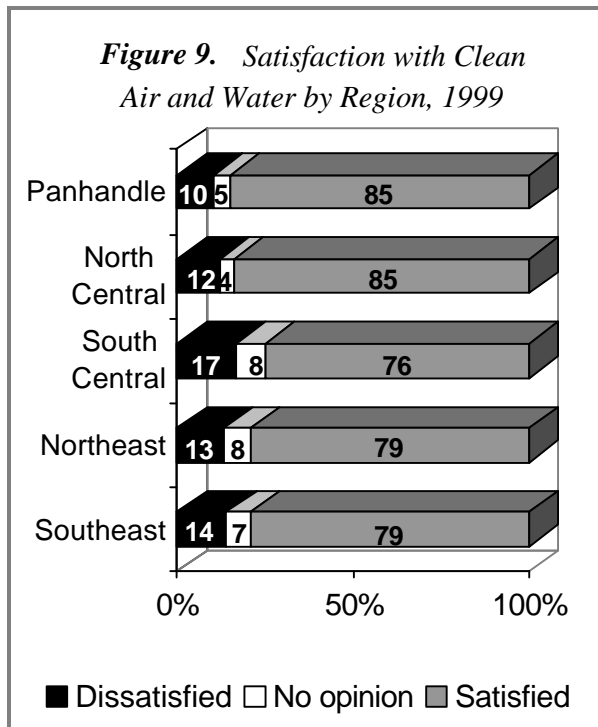
Respondents living in the Panhandle and the North Central region of the state were more



likely than those living in other regions to report being satisfied with clean air and water. Eighty-five percent of the respondents in those regions were either satisfied or very satisfied with clean air and water, compared to seventy-six percent of the respondents in the South Central region of the state (Figure 9). Other groups more likely to be satisfied with clean air and water are respondents with higher incomes, those with higher education levels and married respondents.

Satisfaction with the respondents' housing differed by region, household income, age, and marital status. Respondents living in the Southeast region of the state, those with higher income levels, older respondents and those who are married were the groups most likely to report being satisfied with their housing.

Older respondents were more likely than



younger respondents to be satisfied with their spare time. Eighty-one percent of the respondents age 65 or older said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their spare time, compared to fifty-five percent of those between the ages of 30 and 39.

Other groups more likely to express satisfaction with their spare time include those with lower education levels and the widowed respondents. Respondents with higher income levels expressed more *dissatisfaction* with their spare time, as compared to those with lower incomes.

Differences in respondents' satisfaction with their health were detected by community size, household income, age, education, marital status, and occupation. Respondents expressing more satisfaction with their health were those living in larger communities, those with higher incomes, younger respondents, those with higher education levels, the married respondents, and those with professional occupations and farmers and ranchers.

Respondents with higher incomes, those with higher education levels, and respondents with professional occupations were the groups most likely to express satisfaction with their education.

Conclusion

This analysis of rural Nebraskans' sense of well-being reveals that their optimism about their current and future situations has decreased from previous studies. In 1996, 36% believed they were better off than five years ago and 41% of the 1998 respondents believed they were better off. However, this proportion declined to 35% this year.

The same trend was evident when asked how they thought they would be ten years from now. The proportion believing they would be better off had increased from 32% in 1996 to 42% in 1998. Yet, it declined to 37% this year. Despite these declines, rural Nebraskans still remain relatively optimistic about their current and future situations.

Some groups showed noticeable increases in pessimism about their current situation between 1998 and 1999. Those living in communities with populations less than 500, respondents in the Panhandle, those between the ages of 50 and 64, people with less than a 9th grade education, and farmers/ranchers all showed considerable increases from last year in their proportion of respondents who felt they were worse off compared to five years ago.

Overall, age, household income, and occupation are the primary influences on expected future well-being. Older respondents, those with lower income levels and farmers and ranchers continue to be

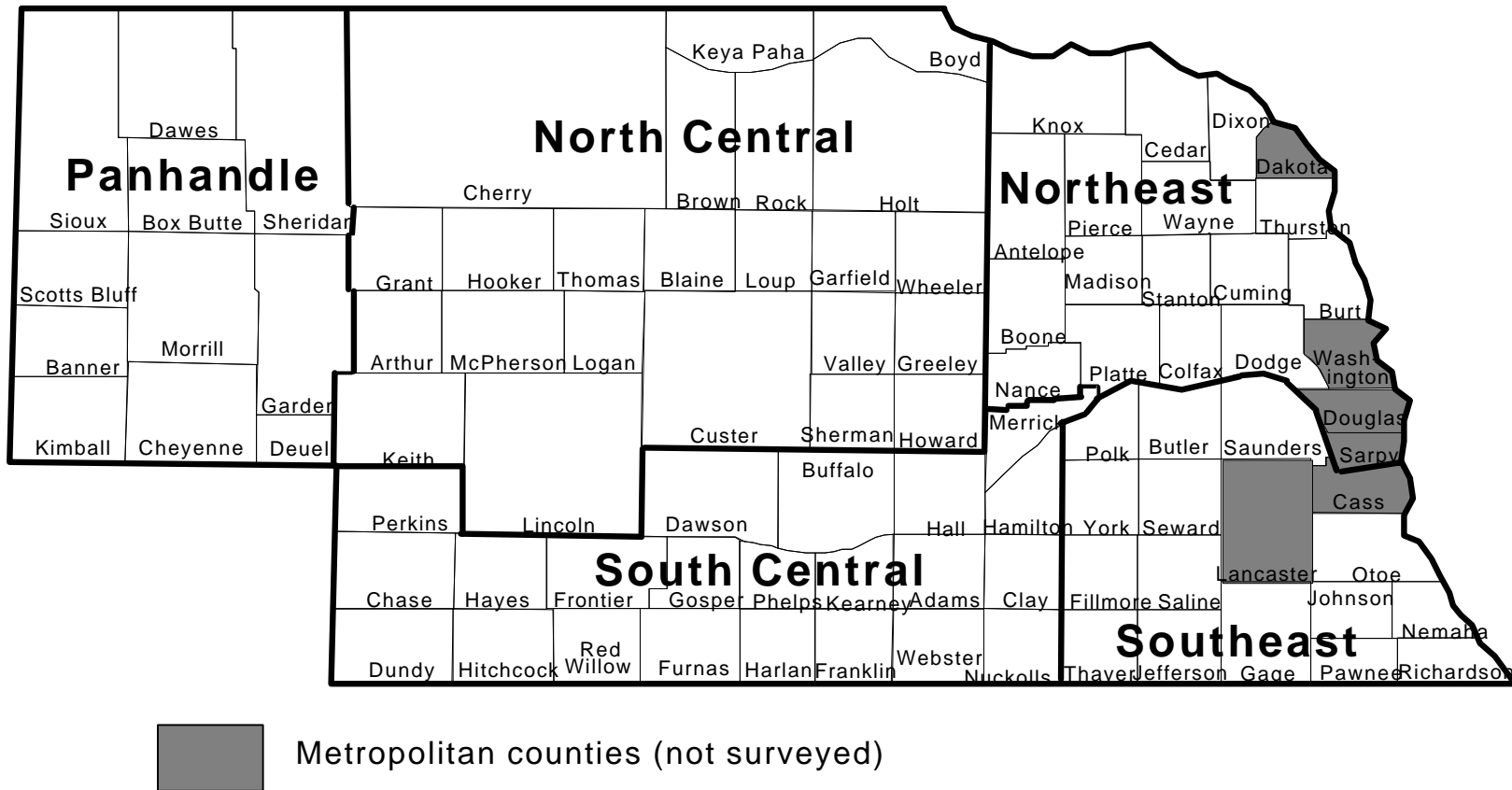
more pessimistic about the future than those who are younger, wealthier and non-farmers.

Are rural Nebraskans also beginning to feel more powerless? The proportion agreeing or strongly agreeing that people are powerless to change their lives did increase from 1998 to 1999. However, this proportion was very similar to the proportion agreeing to the statement in the 1997 study. Thus, no overall increase has been detected.

Factors contributing to powerlessness were income, education, age, and marital status. The older respondents, those with lower incomes and education levels, and the married respondents tend to exhibit more feelings of powerlessness.

When examining satisfaction with specific items, rural Nebraskans are satisfied with their family, their marriage and greenery and open space. The areas where the most dissatisfaction occurs include their current income level, their financial security during retirement, and job opportunities.

Appendix Figure 1. Regions of Nebraska



Appendix Table 1. Demographic Profile of Rural Poll Respondents Compared to 1990 Census

| | 1999 | 1998 | 1997 | 1996 | 1990 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| | Poll | Poll | Poll | Poll | Census |
| Age : ¹ | | | | | |
| 20 - 39 | 21% | 25% | 24% | 22% | 38% |
| 40 - 64 | 52% | 55% | 48% | 49% | 36% |
| 65 and over | 28% | 20% | 28% | 29% | 26% |
| Gender: ² | | | | | |
| Female | 31% | 58% | 28% | 27% | 49% |
| Male | 69% | 42% | 72% | 73% | 51% |
| Education: ³ | | | | | |
| Less than 9 th grade | 3% | 2% | 5% | 3% | 10% |
| 9 th to 12 th grade (no diploma) | 5% | 3% | 5% | 5% | 12% |
| High school diploma (or equivalent) | 36% | 33% | 34% | 34% | 38% |
| Some college, no degree | 25% | 27% | 25% | 26% | 21% |
| Associate degree | 9% | 10% | 8% | 7% | 7% |
| Bachelors degree | 15% | 16% | 14% | 14% | 9% |
| Graduate or professional degree | 8% | 9% | 9% | 10% | 3% |
| Household income: ⁴ | | | | | |
| Less than \$10,000 | 8% | 3% | 7% | 8% | 19% |
| \$10,000 - \$19,999 | 15% | 10% | 16% | 17% | 25% |
| \$20,000 - \$29,999 | 18% | 17% | 19% | 19% | 21% |
| \$30,000 - \$39,999 | 18% | 20% | 18% | 18% | 15% |
| \$40,000 - \$49,999 | 15% | 18% | 14% | 15% | 9% |
| \$50,000 - \$59,999 | 9% | 12% | 10% | 9% | 5% |
| \$60,000 - \$74,999 | 8% | 10% | 7% | 7% | 3% |
| \$75,000 or more | 10% | 10% | 8% | 7% | 3% |
| Marital Status: ⁵ | | | | | |
| Married | 76% | 95% | 73% | 75% | 64% |
| Never married | 7% | 0.4% | 8% | 7% | 20% |
| Divorced/separated | 8% | 1% | 9% | 8% | 7% |
| Widowed/widower | 10% | 3% | 10% | 10% | 10% |

¹ 1990 Census universe is non-metro population 20 years of age and over.

² 1990 Census universe is total non-metro population.

³ 1990 Census universe is non-metro population 18 years of age and over.

⁴ 1990 Census universe is all non-metro households.

⁵ 1990 Census 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, 1999.

| | <i>Compared to Five Years Ago</i> | | | | <i>Compared to Parents</i> | | | | <i>Ten Years from Now</i> | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------|------------------|---------------------|
| | <i>Better Off</i> | <i>Same</i> | <i>Worse Off</i> | <i>Significance</i> | <i>Better Off</i> | <i>Same</i> | <i>Worse Off</i> | <i>Significance</i> | <i>Better Off</i> | <i>Same</i> | <i>Worse Off</i> | <i>Significance</i> |
| <u>Community size</u> | (n = 2920) | | | <i>Percentages</i> (n = 2909) | | | | (n = 2869) | | | | |
| Less than 100 | 18 | 49 | 33 | | 52 | 25 | 24 | | 26 | 41 | 34 | |
| 100 - 499 | 30 | 46 | 24 | | 55 | 29 | 17 | | 32 | 43 | 25 | |
| 500 - 999 | 33 | 47 | 20 | | 57 | 26 | 17 | | 36 | 42 | 22 | |
| 1,000 - 4,999 | 38 | 41 | 21 | | 60 | 24 | 16 | | 38 | 43 | 19 | |
| 5,000 - 9,999 | 45 | 40 | 16 | $\chi^2 = 58.93$ | 62 | 25 | 13 | $\chi^2 = 18.53$ | 40 | 45 | 15 | $\chi^2 = 50.28$ |
| 10,000 and up | 46 | 38 | 16 | (.000) | 65 | 22 | 14 | (.047) | 49 | 35 | 16 | (.000) |
| <u>Region</u> | (n = 2979) | | | (n = 2965) | | | | (n = 2922) | | | | |
| Panhandle | 32 | 39 | 29 | | 53 | 25 | 23 | | 36 | 40 | 24 | |
| North Central | 33 | 45 | 22 | | 58 | 25 | 17 | | 35 | 43 | 23 | |
| South Central | 36 | 45 | 19 | | 60 | 25 | 15 | | 39 | 41 | 20 | |
| Northeast | 35 | 43 | 22 | $\chi^2 = 18.01$ | 57 | 26 | 18 | $\chi^2 = 17.80$ | 38 | 41 | 21 | $\chi^2 = 6.94$ |
| Southeast | 37 | 44 | 19 | (.021) | 59 | 28 | 13 | (.023) | 34 | 45 | 21 | (.543) |
| <u>Individual Attributes:</u> | (n = 2717) | | | (n = 2710) | | | | (n = 2680) | | | | |
| <i>Income Level</i> | (n = 2717) | | | (n = 2710) | | | | (n = 2680) | | | | |
| Under \$10,000 | 13 | 51 | 36 | | 39 | 34 | 28 | | 17 | 47 | 37 | |
| \$10,000 - \$19,999 | 19 | 49 | 32 | | 52 | 26 | 22 | | 21 | 48 | 31 | |
| \$20,000 - \$29,999 | 31 | 46 | 23 | | 52 | 30 | 18 | | 37 | 41 | 22 | |
| \$30,000 - \$39,999 | 36 | 45 | 19 | | 55 | 29 | 16 | | 35 | 47 | 18 | |
| \$40,000 - \$49,999 | 44 | 40 | 16 | | 63 | 23 | 15 | | 48 | 34 | 18 | |
| \$50,000 - \$59,999 | 45 | 37 | 18 | | 67 | 20 | 13 | | 49 | 38 | 14 | |
| \$60,000 - \$74,999 | 61 | 30 | 9 | $\chi^2 = 265.55$ | 71 | 19 | 10 | $\chi^2 = 120.70$ | 47 | 40 | 13 | $\chi^2 = 192.49$ |
| \$75,000 and over | 60 | 30 | 10 | (.000) | 76 | 16 | 8 | (.000) | 55 | 35 | 11 | (.000) |
| <i>Age</i> | (n = 2943) | | | (n = 2930) | | | | (n = 2890) | | | | |
| 19 - 29 | 61 | 29 | 10 | | 58 | 25 | 17 | | 77 | 17 | 6 | |
| 30 - 39 | 54 | 30 | 16 | | 57 | 27 | 16 | | 61 | 27 | 11 | |
| 40 - 49 | 40 | 36 | 24 | | 57 | 23 | 20 | | 50 | 36 | 15 | |
| 50 - 64 | 30 | 43 | 27 | $\chi^2 = 260.23$ | 56 | 25 | 19 | $\chi^2 = 38.69$ | 30 | 46 | 25 | $\chi^2 = 537.61$ |
| 65 and older | 21 | 61 | 18 | (.000) | 62 | 28 | 10 | (.000) | 10 | 56 | 34 | (.000) |

Appendix Table 2 Continued.

| | <i>Compared to Five Years Ago</i> | | | | <i>Compared to Parents</i> | | | | <i>Ten Years from Now</i> | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| | <i>Better Off</i> | <i>Same</i> | <i>Worse Off</i> | <i>Significance</i> | <i>Better Off</i> | <i>Same</i> | <i>Worse Off</i> | <i>Significance</i> | <i>Better Off</i> | <i>Same</i> | <i>Worse Off</i> | <i>Significance</i> |
| <i>Gender</i> | (n = 2950) | | | | (n = 2937) | | | | (n = 2895) | | | |
| Male | 38 | 41 | 22 | $\chi^2 = 25.41$ | 60 | 24 | 16 | $\chi^2 = 7.00$ | 38 | 40 | 22 | $\chi^2 = 7.74$ |
| Female | 30 | 50 | 20 | (.000) | 55 | 29 | 16 | (.030) | 34 | 45 | 21 | (.021) |
| <i>Education</i> | (n = 2906) | | | | (n = 2896) | | | | (n = 2855) | | | |
| Less than 9 th grade | 22 | 50 | 28 | | 56 | 31 | 13 | | 7 | 62 | 31 | |
| 9 th to 12 th grade | 23 | 55 | 22 | | 62 | 29 | 9 | | 20 | 48 | 32 | |
| H.S. diploma | 29 | 48 | 23 | | 57 | 26 | 17 | | 30 | 45 | 26 | |
| Some college | 34 | 43 | 23 | | 57 | 24 | 19 | | 40 | 38 | 22 | |
| Associate degree | 43 | 35 | 22 | | 56 | 25 | 18 | | 49 | 35 | 16 | |
| Bachelors degree | 52 | 34 | 14 | $\chi^2 = 123.44$ | 60 | 25 | 15 | $\chi^2 = 27.72$ | 52 | 38 | 11 | $\chi^2 = 156.69$ |
| Grad/prof degree | 46 | 44 | 10 | (.000) | 70 | 20 | 10 | (.006) | 42 | 42 | 16 | (.000) |
| <i>Marital Status</i> | (n = 2960) | | | | (n = 2947) | | | | (n = 2905) | | | |
| Married | 37 | 42 | 21 | | 59 | 25 | 17 | | 38 | 41 | 21 | |
| Never married | 42 | 37 | 21 | | 56 | 26 | 18 | | 49 | 33 | 18 | |
| Divorced/separated | 42 | 36 | 23 | $\chi^2 = 90.90$ | 55 | 26 | 20 | $\chi^2 = 13.00$ | 41 | 40 | 20 | $\chi^2 = 90.90$ |
| Widowed | 13 | 68 | 19 | (.000) | 59 | 31 | 10 | (.043) | 12 | 55 | 34 | (.000) |
| <i>Occupation</i> | (n = 2061) | | | | (n = 2058) | | | | (n = 2041) | | | |
| Professional/ technical/admin. | 55 | 34 | 11 | | 67 | 21 | 12 | | 55 | 34 | 11 | |
| Admin. support | 41 | 44 | 15 | | 61 | 25 | 14 | | 48 | 35 | 17 | |
| Sales | 39 | 36 | 25 | | 55 | 24 | 21 | | 43 | 40 | 18 | |
| Service | 42 | 40 | 19 | | 56 | 28 | 16 | | 43 | 37 | 20 | |
| Farming/ranching | 27 | 37 | 37 | | 48 | 27 | 26 | | 34 | 41 | 25 | |
| Skilled laborer | 42 | 40 | 18 | | 57 | 28 | 15 | | 48 | 34 | 18 | |
| Manual laborer | 25 | 56 | 20 | $\chi^2 = 172.77$ | 56 | 26 | 18 | $\chi^2 = 58.26$ | 35 | 45 | 20 | $\chi^2 = 68.90$ |
| Other | 31 | 52 | 17 | (.000) | 63 | 25 | 13 | (.000) | 43 | 43 | 14 | (.000) |

Appendix Table 3. Life Has Changed So Much in Our Modern World that Most People Are Powerless to Control Their Own Lives, 1999.

| | <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> | <i>Undecided</i> | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Strongly Agree</i> | <i>Significance</i> |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Community Size: | | | | | | |
| | (n = 2919) | | | | | |
| Less than 100 | 5 | 25 | 16 | 37 | 17 | |
| 100 - 499 | 9 | 34 | 16 | 30 | 11 | |
| 500 - 999 | 9 | 42 | 12 | 26 | 10 | |
| 1,000 - 4,999 | 10 | 39 | 14 | 28 | 8 | |
| 5,000 - 9,999 | 14 | 37 | 15 | 25 | 10 | $\chi^2 = 51.14$ (.000) |
| 10,000 and up | 14 | 43 | 11 | 25 | 7 | |
| Region | | | | | | |
| | (n = 2977) | | | | | |
| Panhandle | 12 | 37 | 10 | 30 | 11 | |
| North Central | 9 | 34 | 14 | 32 | 11 | |
| South Central | 11 | 41 | 14 | 27 | 9 | |
| Northeast | 9 | 39 | 15 | 29 | 10 | $\chi^2 = 18.48$ (.297) |
| Southeast | 11 | 39 | 15 | 27 | 9 | |
| Individual Attributes: | | | | | | |
| <i>Income Level</i> | | | | | | |
| | (n = 2720) | | | | | |
| Under \$10,000 | 6 | 18 | 17 | 42 | 17 | |
| \$10,000 - \$19,999 | 5 | 32 | 14 | 34 | 15 | |
| \$20,000 - \$29,999 | 8 | 35 | 17 | 30 | 10 | |
| \$30,000 - \$39,999 | 10 | 41 | 12 | 30 | 7 | |
| \$40,000 - \$49,999 | 14 | 38 | 14 | 25 | 9 | |
| \$50,000 - \$59,999 | 13 | 51 | 12 | 20 | 5 | |
| \$60,000 - \$74,999 | 14 | 54 | 10 | 17 | 5 | $\chi^2 = 217.53$ (.000) |
| \$75,000 and over | 19 | 50 | 8 | 20 | 4 | |
| <i>Age</i> | | | | | | |
| | (n = 2942) | | | | | |
| 19 - 29 | 15 | 46 | 15 | 21 | 3 | |
| 30 - 39 | 16 | 40 | 14 | 23 | 7 | |
| 40 - 49 | 12 | 45 | 10 | 24 | 8 | |
| 50 - 64 | 8 | 41 | 13 | 28 | 11 | $\chi^2 = 153.64$ (.000) |
| 65 and older | 6 | 27 | 17 | 38 | 12 | |
| <i>Gender</i> | | | | | | |
| | (n = 2949) | | | | | |
| Male | 11 | 38 | 13 | 28 | 10 | $\chi^2 = 14.94$ (.005) |
| Female | 9 | 38 | 17 | 29 | 8 | |
| <i>Education</i> | | | | | | |
| | (n = 2906) | | | | | |
| Less than 9 th grade | 5 | 19 | 12 | 50 | 15 | |
| 9 th to 12 th grade | 7 | 15 | 20 | 40 | 17 | |
| H.S. diploma | 6 | 33 | 16 | 34 | 12 | |
| Some college | 12 | 39 | 15 | 26 | 9 | |
| Associate degree | 14 | 43 | 11 | 24 | 8 | |
| Bachelors degree | 16 | 53 | 10 | 15 | 5 | $\chi^2 = 243.62$ (.000) |
| Grad/prof degree | 14 | 52 | 8 | 21 | 6 | |

Appendix Table 3 Continued.

| | <u>Strongly Disagree</u> | <u>Disagree</u> | <u>Undecided</u> | <u>Agree</u> | <u>Strongly Agree</u> | <u>Significance</u> |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Marital Status</i> | | | (n = 2959) | | | |
| Married | 11 | 39 | 13 | 28 | 9 | |
| Never married | 13 | 43 | 14 | 25 | 5 | |
| Divorced/separated | 9 | 40 | 13 | 28 | 10 | $\chi^2 = 45.22$ |
| Widowed | 5 | 28 | 21 | 33 | 14 | (.000) |
| <i>Occupation</i> | | | (n = 2061) | | | |
| Professional/ technical/admin. | 18 | 50 | 8 | 18 | 5 | |
| Admin. support | 13 | 45 | 17 | 22 | 4 | |
| Sales | 14 | 37 | 11 | 29 | 9 | |
| Service | 11 | 36 | 17 | 30 | 6 | |
| Farming/ranching | 8 | 40 | 11 | 29 | 12 | |
| Skilled laborer | 10 | 40 | 16 | 25 | 8 | |
| Manual laborer | 6 | 33 | 17 | 31 | 13 | $\chi^2 = 117.83$ |
| Other | 9 | 36 | 13 | 38 | 5 | (.000) |

Appendix Table 4. Satisfaction with Items Affecting Well-Being, 1999.

| <i>Item</i> | <i>Does not apply</i> | <i>Very dissatisfied</i> | <i>Dissatisfied</i> | <i>No opinion</i> | <i>Satisfied</i> | <i>Very satisfied</i> |
|---|---------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Your family | 1% | 2% | 3% | 6% | 30% | 58% |
| Your marriage | 25 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 15 | 54 |
| Greenery and open space | 1 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 35 | 52 |
| Your religion/spirituality | 1 | 2 | 5 | 15 | 32 | 46 |
| Your friends | 1 | 1 | 5 | 11 | 37 | 45 |
| Clean air and water | 1 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 38 | 41 |
| Your housing | 2 | 4 | 8 | 8 | 41 | 38 |
| Your spare time | 2 | 7 | 15 | 11 | 36 | 30 |
| Your health | 1 | 5 | 11 | 10 | 44 | 29 |
| Your education | 2 | 3 | 11 | 12 | 45 | 28 |
| Your job satisfaction | 14 | 4 | 12 | 13 | 35 | 22 |
| Your job security | 15 | 7 | 12 | 16 | 30 | 20 |
| Your community | 0* | 3 | 14 | 14 | 49 | 19 |
| Current income level | 3 | 18 | 23 | 12 | 33 | 12 |
| Financial security during retirement | 7 | 20 | 22 | 14 | 26 | 10 |
| Job opportunities for you | 16 | 12 | 20 | 22 | 20 | 10 |

* Less than 1 percent.

Appendix Table 5. Satisfaction with Items By Community Size, Region and Individual Attributes, 1999.*

| | <i>Your family</i> | | | <i>Your marriage</i> | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------|---------------------|
| | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | | |
| | <i>Dissatisfied</i> | <i>opinion</i> | <i>Satisfied</i> | <i>Significance</i> | <i>Dissatisfied</i> | <i>opinion</i> | <i>Satisfied</i> | <i>Significance</i> |
| Community Size | (n = 2841) | | | | (n = 2189) | | | |
| Less than 100 | 3 | 13 | 84 | | 4 | 11 | 86 | |
| 100 - 499 | 5 | 6 | 89 | | 5 | 4 | 92 | |
| 500 - 999 | 4 | 6 | 90 | | 5 | 5 | 91 | |
| 1,000 - 4,999 | 5 | 6 | 89 | | 4 | 4 | 92 | |
| 5,000 - 9,999 | 6 | 6 | 89 | $\chi^2 = 12.26$ | 3 | 4 | 94 | $\chi^2 = 19.00$ |
| 10,000 and up | 6 | 6 | 88 | (.268) | 6 | 1 | 93 | (.040) |
| Region | (n = 2893) | | | | (n = 2224) | | | |
| Panhandle | 5 | 7 | 88 | | 6 | 4 | 90 | |
| North Central | 4 | 7 | 89 | | 6 | 4 | 90 | |
| South Central | 5 | 6 | 88 | | 4 | 5 | 91 | |
| Northeast | 5 | 6 | 90 | $\chi^2 = 3.96$ | 4 | 2 | 94 | $\chi^2 = 8.14$ |
| Southeast | 6 | 7 | 88 | (.861) | 4 | 5 | 92 | (.420) |
| Individual Attributes: | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Income Level</i> | (n = 2657) | | | | (n = 2039) | | | |
| Under \$10,000 | 6 | 15 | 80 | | 4 | 9 | 87 | |
| \$10,000 - \$19,999 | 5 | 10 | 85 | | 3 | 3 | 94 | |
| \$20,000 - \$29,999 | 5 | 6 | 89 | | 5 | 5 | 90 | |
| \$30,000 - \$39,999 | 4 | 5 | 92 | | 5 | 5 | 91 | |
| \$40,000 - \$49,999 | 5 | 5 | 90 | | 4 | 2 | 94 | |
| \$50,000 - \$59,999 | 4 | 4 | 92 | | 5 | 3 | 92 | |
| \$60,000 - \$74,999 | 3 | 4 | 93 | $\chi^2 = 52.86$ | 4 | 5 | 92 | $\chi^2 = 12.47$ |
| \$75,000 and over | 6 | 3 | 91 | (.000) | 6 | 4 | 91 | (.569) |
| <i>Age</i> | (n = 2863) | | | | (n = 2204) | | | |
| 19 - 29 | 6 | 1 | 92 | | 7 | 5 | 88 | |
| 30 - 39 | 4 | 4 | 92 | | 4 | 3 | 93 | |
| 40 - 49 | 6 | 4 | 90 | | 6 | 5 | 89 | |
| 50 - 64 | 4 | 8 | 88 | $\chi^2 = 40.63$ | 3 | 4 | 93 | $\chi^2 = 13.48$ |
| 65 and older | 6 | 10 | 85 | (.000) | 4 | 4 | 92 | (.096) |
| <i>Gender</i> | (n = 2867) | | | | (n = 2203) | | | |
| Male | 5 | 6 | 89 | $\chi^2 = 0.82$ | 4 | 4 | 92 | $\chi^2 = 3.29$ |
| Female | 5 | 7 | 88 | (.664) | 5 | 5 | 90 | (.193) |
| <i>Education</i> | (n = 2829) | | | | (n = 2185) | | | |
| No H.S. diploma | 6 | 14 | 80 | | 4 | 5 | 91 | |
| High school diploma | 5 | 8 | 87 | $\chi^2 = 44.72$ | 4 | 5 | 92 | $\chi^2 = 2.43$ |
| At least some college | 4 | 4 | 92 | (.000) | 5 | 4 | 92 | (.657) |
| <i>Marital Status</i> | (n = 2878) | | | | | | | |
| Married | 4 | 5 | 91 | | | | | |
| Never married | 6 | 14 | 80 | | | | | |
| Divorced/separated | 10 | 12 | 78 | $\chi^2 = 70.68$ | | | | |
| Widowed | 7 | 11 | 82 | (.000) | | | | |
| <i>Occupation</i> | (n = 2028) | | | | (n = 1654) | | | |
| Prof./technical/admin. | 5 | 4 | 91 | | 4 | 3 | 93 | |
| Admin. support | 5 | 0 | 95 | | 1 | 3 | 96 | |
| Sales | 6 | 5 | 89 | | 7 | 4 | 89 | |
| Service | 2 | 5 | 93 | | 3 | 4 | 93 | |
| Farming/ranching | 4 | 3 | 93 | | 3 | 2 | 94 | |
| Skilled laborer | 6 | 8 | 86 | | 7 | 5 | 88 | |
| Manual laborer | 7 | 14 | 79 | $\chi^2 = 41.85$ | 7 | 7 | 87 | $\chi^2 = 17.58$ |
| Other | 3 | 8 | 89 | (.000) | 4 | 4 | 92 | (.226) |

| | <i>Greenery and open space</i> | | | <i>Your religion/spirituality</i> | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> |
| | <i>Dissatisfied opinion</i> | <i>Satisfied</i> | <i>Significance</i> | <i>Dissatisfied opinion</i> | <i>Satisfied</i> | <i>Significance</i> |
| Community Size | (n = 2846) | | | (n = 2829) | | |
| Less than 100 | 4 | 10 | 86 | 7 | 21 | 72 |
| 100 - 499 | 6 | 6 | 88 | 6 | 14 | 80 |
| 500 - 999 | 6 | 5 | 89 | 7 | 13 | 80 |
| 1,000 - 4,999 | 6 | 5 | 89 | 8 | 14 | 79 |
| 5,000 - 9,999 | 7 | 7 | 86 | 6 | 16 | 78 |
| 10,000 and up | 9 | 8 | 83 | 9 | 18 | 73 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 13.09$ (.219) | | | $\chi^2 = 14.06$ (.170) |
| Region | (n = 2897) | | | (n = 2880) | | |
| Panhandle | 8 | 3 | 89 | 6 | 19 | 75 |
| North Central | 4 | 4 | 92 | 5 | 15 | 80 |
| South Central | 7 | 7 | 86 | 8 | 16 | 77 |
| Northeast | 5 | 7 | 88 | 6 | 12 | 82 |
| Southeast | 8 | 7 | 86 | 8 | 14 | 78 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 19.63$ (.012) | | | $\chi^2 = 12.40$ (.134) |
| Individual Attributes: | | | | | | |
| Income Level | (n = 2659) | | | (n = 2641) | | |
| Under \$10,000 | 9 | 13 | 78 | 7 | 17 | 76 |
| \$10,000 - \$19,999 | 6 | 3 | 91 | 6 | 14 | 80 |
| \$20,000 - \$29,999 | 8 | 7 | 86 | 8 | 15 | 78 |
| \$30,000 - \$39,999 | 7 | 5 | 88 | 6 | 14 | 80 |
| \$40,000 - \$49,999 | 4 | 5 | 91 | 6 | 15 | 80 |
| \$50,000 - \$59,999 | 6 | 6 | 89 | 8 | 14 | 79 |
| \$60,000 - \$74,999 | 7 | 4 | 89 | 7 | 16 | 77 |
| \$75,000 and over | 8 | 3 | 89 | 10 | 13 | 77 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 38.93$ (.000) | | | $\chi^2 = 9.17$ (.820) |
| Age | (n = 2867) | | | (n = 2849) | | |
| 19 - 29 | 6 | 13 | 81 | 10 | 16 | 74 |
| 30 - 39 | 7 | 5 | 88 | 7 | 19 | 75 |
| 40 - 49 | 7 | 5 | 89 | 8 | 15 | 77 |
| 50 - 64 | 6 | 5 | 88 | 6 | 16 | 78 |
| 65 and older | 7 | 7 | 86 | 6 | 10 | 84 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 17.67$ (.024) | | | $\chi^2 = 25.30$ (.001) |
| Gender | (n = 2870) | | | (n = 2853) | | |
| Male | 7 | 6 | 87 | 7 | 16 | 77 |
| Female | 7 | 6 | 88 | 7 | 11 | 82 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 0.32$ (.851) | | | $\chi^2 = 13.57$ (.001) |
| Education | (n = 2834) | | | (n = 2816) | | |
| No H.S. diploma | 10 | 8 | 83 | 7 | 15 | 78 |
| High school diploma | 6 | 7 | 87 | 7 | 17 | 76 |
| At least some college | 6 | 5 | 89 | 7 | 13 | 80 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 10.58$ (.032) | | | $\chi^2 = 8.22$ (.084) |
| Marital Status | (n = 2881) | | | (n = 2864) | | |
| Married | 6 | 5 | 89 | 6 | 14 | 80 |
| Never married | 8 | 11 | 82 | 10 | 24 | 66 |
| Divorced/separated | 9 | 7 | 84 | 10 | 22 | 69 |
| Widowed | 11 | 7 | 82 | 7 | 9 | 84 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 24.32$ (.000) | | | $\chi^2 = 38.60$ (.000) |
| Occupation | (n = 2031) | | | (n = 2017) | | |
| Prof./technical/admin. | 6 | 6 | 89 | 7 | 13 | 81 |
| Admin. support | 8 | 4 | 89 | 12 | 14 | 73 |
| Sales | 9 | 5 | 87 | 10 | 14 | 77 |
| Service | 6 | 3 | 92 | 7 | 14 | 79 |
| Farming/ranching | 4 | 4 | 92 | 5 | 11 | 84 |
| Skilled laborer | 11 | 7 | 82 | 8 | 23 | 69 |
| Manual laborer | 5 | 6 | 89 | 8 | 28 | 65 |
| Other | 6 | 6 | 87 | 6 | 14 | 79 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 24.13$ (.044) | | | $\chi^2 = 50.86$ (.000) |

| | <i>Your friends</i> | | | <i>Clean air and water</i> | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> |
| | <i>Dissatisfied opinion</i> | <i>Satisfied</i> | <i>Significance</i> | <i>Dissatisfied opinion</i> | <i>Satisfied</i> | <i>Significance</i> |
| Community Size | (n = 2845) | | | (n = 2866) | | |
| Less than 100 | 3 | 21 | 76 | 11 | 15 | 74 |
| 100 - 499 | 6 | 11 | 83 | 14 | 6 | 80 |
| 500 - 999 | 6 | 10 | 83 | 12 | 8 | 81 |
| 1,000 - 4,999 | 5 | 10 | 85 | 14 | 6 | 80 |
| 5,000 - 9,999 | 8 | 9 | 84 | 14 | 8 | 79 |
| 10,000 and up | 6 | 11 | 83 | 15 | 7 | 78 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 17.35$ (.067) | | | $\chi^2 = 17.37$ (.067) |
| Region | (n = 2894) | | | (n = 2917) | | |
| Panhandle | 7 | 11 | 83 | 10 | 5 | 85 |
| North Central | 5 | 12 | 83 | 12 | 4 | 85 |
| South Central | 6 | 11 | 83 | 17 | 8 | 76 |
| Northeast | 5 | 10 | 85 | 13 | 8 | 79 |
| Southeast | 8 | 11 | 82 | 14 | 7 | 79 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 6.59$ (.582) | | | $\chi^2 = 25.47$ (.001) |
| Individual Attributes: | | | | | | |
| Income Level | (n = 2656) | | | (n = 2675) | | |
| Under \$10,000 | 6 | 18 | 75 | 19 | 15 | 66 |
| \$10,000 - \$19,999 | 5 | 12 | 83 | 13 | 7 | 79 |
| \$20,000 - \$29,999 | 5 | 10 | 84 | 14 | 6 | 80 |
| \$30,000 - \$39,999 | 5 | 10 | 85 | 12 | 6 | 82 |
| \$40,000 - \$49,999 | 7 | 8 | 85 | 12 | 7 | 81 |
| \$50,000 - \$59,999 | 6 | 10 | 85 | 12 | 6 | 82 |
| \$60,000 - \$74,999 | 5 | 12 | 83 | 17 | 4 | 80 |
| \$75,000 and over | 8 | 9 | 84 | 15 | 3 | 82 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 22.49$ (.069) | | | $\chi^2 = 45.10$ (.000) |
| Age | (n = 2865) | | | (n = 2885) | | |
| 19 - 29 | 8 | 9 | 83 | 16 | 8 | 76 |
| 30 - 39 | 6 | 8 | 86 | 15 | 7 | 78 |
| 40 - 49 | 8 | 10 | 83 | 13 | 5 | 82 |
| 50 - 64 | 4 | 12 | 84 | 13 | 7 | 80 |
| 65 and older | 5 | 12 | 83 | 15 | 7 | 78 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 16.88$ (.031) | | | $\chi^2 = 8.63$ (.374) |
| Gender | (n = 2868) | | | (n = 2890) | | |
| Male | 6 | 11 | 84 | 13 | 7 | 80 |
| Female | 6 | 11 | 83 | 15 | 7 | 78 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 0.51$ (.776) | | | $\chi^2 = 1.66$ (.436) |
| Education | (n = 2831) | | | (n = 2854) | | |
| No H.S. diploma | 5 | 18 | 78 | 17 | 11 | 72 |
| High school diploma | 5 | 12 | 83 | 14 | 7 | 80 |
| At least some college | 6 | 9 | 85 | 13 | 6 | 81 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 18.37$ (.001) | | | $\chi^2 = 13.22$ (.010) |
| Marital Status | (n = 2879) | | | (n = 2901) | | |
| Married | 5 | 10 | 85 | 13 | 6 | 82 |
| Never married | 10 | 13 | 77 | 14 | 9 | 78 |
| Divorced/separated | 8 | 14 | 78 | 19 | 9 | 71 |
| Widowed | 7 | 15 | 78 | 20 | 11 | 69 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 21.17$ (.002) | | | $\chi^2 = 33.17$ (.000) |
| Occupation | (n = 2028) | | | (n = 2037) | | |
| Prof./technical/admin. | 7 | 9 | 84 | 14 | 5 | 80 |
| Admin. support | 8 | 8 | 85 | 13 | 6 | 81 |
| Sales | 5 | 9 | 87 | 18 | 6 | 76 |
| Service | 8 | 10 | 83 | 12 | 6 | 82 |
| Farming/ranching | 6 | 7 | 88 | 9 | 6 | 85 |
| Skilled laborer | 5 | 14 | 81 | 15 | 9 | 75 |
| Manual laborer | 7 | 17 | 76 | 14 | 8 | 78 |
| Other | 5 | 12 | 84 | 9 | 9 | 81 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 21.52$ (.089) | | | $\chi^2 = 21.90$ (.081) |

| | <i>Your housing</i> | | | <i>Your spare time</i> | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> |
| | <i>Dissatisfied opinion</i> | <i>Satisfied</i> | <i>Significance</i> | <i>Dissatisfied opinion</i> | <i>Satisfied</i> | <i>Significance</i> |
| Community Size | (n = 2826) | | | (n = 2834) | | |
| Less than 100 | 14 | 12 | 74 | 30 | 19 | 52 |
| 100 - 499 | 11 | 8 | 81 | 23 | 9 | 68 |
| 500 - 999 | 11 | 6 | 82 | 23 | 11 | 67 |
| 1,000 - 4,999 | 12 | 8 | 80 | 22 | 10 | 68 |
| 5,000 - 9,999 | 11 | 9 | 79 | 22 | 14 | 65 |
| 10,000 and up | 12 | 9 | 80 | 22 | 11 | 67 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 6.67$ (.756) | | | $\chi^2 = 17.14$ (.071) |
| Region | (n = 2876) | | | (n = 2881) | | |
| Panhandle | 17 | 6 | 77 | 25 | 12 | 63 |
| North Central | 11 | 8 | 81 | 23 | 9 | 68 |
| South Central | 13 | 7 | 80 | 23 | 10 | 67 |
| Northeast | 11 | 11 | 79 | 22 | 13 | 66 |
| Southeast | 10 | 7 | 83 | 21 | 11 | 68 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 20.15$ (.010) | | | $\chi^2 = 7.41$ (.493) |
| Individual Attributes: | | | | | | |
| Income Level | (n = 2646) | | | (n = 2657) | | |
| Under \$10,000 | 16 | 14 | 70 | 17 | 21 | 62 |
| \$10,000 - \$19,999 | 16 | 7 | 77 | 21 | 11 | 68 |
| \$20,000 - \$29,999 | 14 | 9 | 78 | 24 | 11 | 65 |
| \$30,000 - \$39,999 | 12 | 9 | 80 | 21 | 9 | 70 |
| \$40,000 - \$49,999 | 9 | 6 | 85 | 23 | 9 | 69 |
| \$50,000 - \$59,999 | 10 | 7 | 83 | 28 | 10 | 63 |
| \$60,000 - \$74,999 | 8 | 8 | 84 | 24 | 9 | 67 |
| \$75,000 and over | 8 | 4 | 88 | 27 | 8 | 64 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 44.57$ (.000) | | | $\chi^2 = 38.99$ (.000) |
| Age | (n = 2846) | | | (n = 2853) | | |
| 19 - 29 | 19 | 10 | 70 | 31 | 8 | 61 |
| 30 - 39 | 14 | 7 | 79 | 34 | 11 | 55 |
| 40 - 49 | 15 | 7 | 77 | 32 | 10 | 58 |
| 50 - 64 | 9 | 9 | 82 | 18 | 12 | 70 |
| 65 and older | 8 | 8 | 84 | 8 | 11 | 81 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 35.44$ (.000) | | | $\chi^2 = 180.17$ (.000) |
| Gender | (n = 2849) | | | (n = 2857) | | |
| Male | 11 | 8 | 80 | 22 | 11 | 67 |
| Female | 13 | 7 | 80 | 24 | 10 | 66 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 3.70$ (.158) | | | $\chi^2 = 1.24$ (.539) |
| Education | (n = 2814) | | | (n = 2824) | | |
| No H.S. diploma | 9 | 12 | 79 | 12 | 13 | 75 |
| High school diploma | 11 | 7 | 82 | 20 | 11 | 70 |
| At least some college | 12 | 8 | 80 | 26 | 10 | 65 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 8.25$ (.083) | | | $\chi^2 = 27.42$ (.000) |
| Marital Status | (n = 2861) | | | (n = 2867) | | |
| Married | 10 | 8 | 82 | 23 | 9 | 67 |
| Never married | 19 | 8 | 73 | 25 | 17 | 58 |
| Divorced/separated | 20 | 10 | 70 | 24 | 15 | 62 |
| Widowed | 12 | 9 | 79 | 10 | 15 | 75 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 29.88$ (.000) | | | $\chi^2 = 41.90$ (.000) |
| Occupation | (n = 2033) | | | (n = 2028) | | |
| Prof./technical/admin. | 11 | 8 | 81 | 27 | 9 | 64 |
| Admin. support | 25 | 8 | 67 | 28 | 12 | 60 |
| Sales | 12 | 5 | 83 | 30 | 11 | 58 |
| Service | 13 | 7 | 80 | 28 | 11 | 62 |
| Farming/ranching | 12 | 8 | 80 | 26 | 11 | 64 |
| Skilled laborer | 14 | 9 | 77 | 24 | 12 | 64 |
| Manual laborer | 14 | 10 | 76 | 25 | 10 | 66 |
| Other | 13 | 11 | 77 | 26 | 12 | 62 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 20.72$ (.109) | | | $\chi^2 = 6.29$ (.959) |

| | <i>Your health</i> | | | <i>Your education</i> | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>No</i> |
| | <i>Dissatisfied opinion</i> | <i>Satisfied</i> | <i>Significance</i> | <i>Dissatisfied opinion</i> | <i>Satisfied</i> | <i>Significance</i> |
| Community Size | (n = 2861) | | | (n = 2791) | | |
| Less than 100 | 26 | 12 | 62 | 17 | 16 | 67 |
| 100 - 499 | 19 | 10 | 71 | 15 | 12 | 74 |
| 500 - 999 | 14 | 11 | 76 | 14 | 13 | 74 |
| 1,000 - 4,999 | 15 | 9 | 76 | 13 | 12 | 75 |
| 5,000 - 9,999 | 13 | 9 | 78 | 13 | 10 | 78 |
| 10,000 and up | 14 | 9 | 78 | 12 | 11 | 76 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 21.11$ (.020) | | | $\chi^2 = 6.50$ (.772) |
| Region | (n = 2915) | | | (n = 2842) | | |
| Panhandle | 18 | 10 | 72 | 14 | 14 | 72 |
| North Central | 16 | 11 | 72 | 14 | 12 | 74 |
| South Central | 17 | 9 | 74 | 14 | 12 | 74 |
| Northeast | 14 | 10 | 75 | 13 | 12 | 75 |
| Southeast | 17 | 10 | 73 | 14 | 12 | 75 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 4.27$ (.832) | | | $\chi^2 = 1.56$ (.992) |
| Individual Attributes: | | | | | | |
| Income Level | (n = 2674) | | | (n = 2618) | | |
| Under \$10,000 | 24 | 18 | 58 | 12 | 25 | 63 |
| \$10,000 - \$19,999 | 21 | 12 | 67 | 12 | 14 | 74 |
| \$20,000 - \$29,999 | 16 | 12 | 72 | 14 | 14 | 72 |
| \$30,000 - \$39,999 | 14 | 8 | 78 | 14 | 11 | 75 |
| \$40,000 - \$49,999 | 14 | 8 | 78 | 16 | 10 | 75 |
| \$50,000 - \$59,999 | 13 | 7 | 80 | 14 | 9 | 77 |
| \$60,000 - \$74,999 | 14 | 6 | 81 | 12 | 8 | 80 |
| \$75,000 and over | 13 | 6 | 81 | 13 | 6 | 81 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 67.78$ (.000) | | | $\chi^2 = 55.47$ (.000) |
| Age | (n = 2885) | | | (n = 2815) | | |
| 19 - 29 | 10 | 3 | 87 | 16 | 9 | 75 |
| 30 - 39 | 10 | 9 | 81 | 15 | 11 | 74 |
| 40 - 49 | 14 | 9 | 77 | 18 | 9 | 74 |
| 50 - 64 | 19 | 10 | 71 | 12 | 13 | 76 |
| 65 and older | 21 | 13 | 66 | 11 | 16 | 73 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 61.52$ (.000) | | | $\chi^2 = 32.71$ (.000) |
| Gender | (n = 2889) | | | (n = 2818) | | |
| Male | 15 | 10 | 74 | 13 | 12 | 74 |
| Female | 19 | 9 | 72 | 15 | 12 | 74 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 4.85$ (.088) | | | $\chi^2 = 1.06$ (.589) |
| Education | (n = 2849) | | | (n = 2783) | | |
| No H.S. diploma | 23 | 18 | 58 | 15 | 30 | 55 |
| High school diploma | 18 | 11 | 71 | 17 | 14 | 69 |
| At least some college | 14 | 8 | 78 | 11 | 8 | 80 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 50.28$ (.000) | | | $\chi^2 = 114.46$ (.000) |
| Marital Status | (n = 2899) | | | (n = 2828) | | |
| Married | 16 | 9 | 75 | 14 | 12 | 75 |
| Never married | 15 | 11 | 74 | 17 | 10 | 73 |
| Divorced/separated | 21 | 11 | 69 | 13 | 13 | 73 |
| Widowed | 20 | 17 | 63 | 9 | 18 | 74 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 25.17$ (.000) | | | $\chi^2 = 13.87$ (.031) |
| Occupation | (n = 2036) | | | (n = 2029) | | |
| Prof./technical/admin. | 11 | 8 | 81 | 8 | 5 | 87 |
| Admin. support | 21 | 5 | 75 | 16 | 17 | 67 |
| Sales | 16 | 10 | 74 | 17 | 9 | 74 |
| Service | 14 | 6 | 79 | 16 | 14 | 70 |
| Farming/ranching | 12 | 7 | 81 | 14 | 11 | 75 |
| Skilled laborer | 17 | 11 | 72 | 20 | 16 | 64 |
| Manual laborer | 19 | 16 | 65 | 21 | 11 | 68 |
| Other | 22 | 13 | 65 | 16 | 14 | 70 |
| | | | $\chi^2 = 38.31$ (.000) | | | $\chi^2 = 80.21$ (.000) |

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