



# CENTER FOR APPLIED RURAL INNOVATION

A Research Report\*

**Perceptions of Well-Being Among Rural  
Nebraskans**

*2006 Nebraska Rural Poll Results*

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All of the Center's research reports detailing Nebraska Rural Poll results are located on the Center's World Wide Web page at <http://cari.unl.edu/ruralpoll/>

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## *Executive Summary*

Nebraska's economy has been relatively stable during the past year. However, some rural areas continue to be economically challenged. How do rural Nebraskans perceive their quality of life? Do their perceptions differ by community size, the region in which they live, or their occupation?

This report details 2,482 responses to the 2006 Nebraska Rural Poll, the eleventh annual effort to understand rural Nebraskans' perceptions. Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their individual well-being. Trends for these questions are examined by comparing data from the ten 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:

- ***More rural Nebraskans report being satisfied with their job opportunities this year as compared to previous years.*** After reaching a low of 34 percent in 2004, the proportion satisfied with their job opportunities increased to 42 percent this year (the highest proportion in all 11 years). (page 5)
- ***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, 52 percent of respondents with household incomes of \$60,000 or more think they will be better off ten years from now. However, only 22 percent of respondents with household incomes under \$20,000 believe they will be better off ten years from now. (page 6)
- ***More rural Nebraskans believe people are powerless to control their own lives this year as compared to past years.*** The proportion that either strongly agree or agree with the statement that people are powerless to control their own lives each year has averaged about 34 percent. The proportion agreeing with the statement increased slightly, to 38 percent this year, which matches the highest proportion in the 11 years of the Poll (1997 and 1999 were the other two years). (page 4)
- ***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-six percent of persons with a high school diploma or less education agree that people are powerless to control their own lives. However, only 25 percent of persons with a four-year college degree share this opinion. (page 9)
- ***Rural Nebraskans continue to be generally positive about their current situation.*** Except in 2003, each year the proportion of rural Nebraskans that say they are better off than they were five years ago has been greater than the proportion saying they are worse off than they were five years ago. Approximately 36 percent each year have reported that

they were better off than they were five years ago. This year, 35 percent believe they are better off than they were five years ago and 21 percent think they are worse off. (page 2)

- ***Similarly, rural Nebraskans continue to be generally positive about their future.*** The proportion that say 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 (although the two were virtually identical in 1996). The proportion stating they will be better off ten years from now has generally remained about 36 percent. This year, the proportion was 34 percent. Twenty-one percent believe they will be worse off ten years from now. (page 3)
- ***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.*** (page 5)

## *Introduction*

Nebraska has experienced relatively stable economic conditions during the past year. However, due to the ongoing drought and other factors, some rural areas continue to be economically challenged.

Given these conditions, how do rural Nebraskans believe they are doing and how do they view their future? Have these views changed over the past ten years? How satisfied are they with various items that influence their well-being? This report addresses these questions.

The 2006 Nebraska Rural Poll is the eleventh annual effort to understand rural Nebraskans' perceptions. Respondents were asked a series of questions about their general well-being. Trends for these questions will be examined by comparing the data from the ten previous polls to this year's results.

### *Methodology and Respondent Profile*

This study is based on 2,482 responses from Nebraskans living in the 84 non-metropolitan counties in the state. A self-administered questionnaire was mailed in February and March to approximately 6,200 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, work, new residents, immigration, and making a living. This paper reports only results from the well-being portion of the survey.

A 40% 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 non-metropolitan population of Nebraska (using 2000 U.S. Census data). 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. Certainly some variance from 2000 Census data is to be expected as a result of changes that have occurred in the intervening six years. Nonetheless, 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 average age of respondents is 56 years. Sixty-nine percent are married (Appendix Table 1) and 71 percent live within the city limits of a town or village. On average, respondents have lived in Nebraska 48 years

and have lived in their current community 32 years. Fifty-two percent are living in or near towns or villages with populations less than 5,000. Ninety-two percent have attained at least a high school diploma.

Twenty percent of the respondents report their 2005 approximate household income from all sources, before taxes, as below \$20,000. Thirty-six percent report incomes over \$50,000.

Seventy-two percent were employed in 2005 on a full-time, part-time, or seasonal basis. Twenty-five percent are retired. Thirty-five percent of those employed reported working in a professional, technical or administrative occupation. Fourteen percent indicated they were farmers or ranchers. The employed respondents who do not work in their home or their nearest community reported having to drive an average of 31 miles, one way, to their primary job.

***Trends in Well-Being (1996 - 2006)***

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

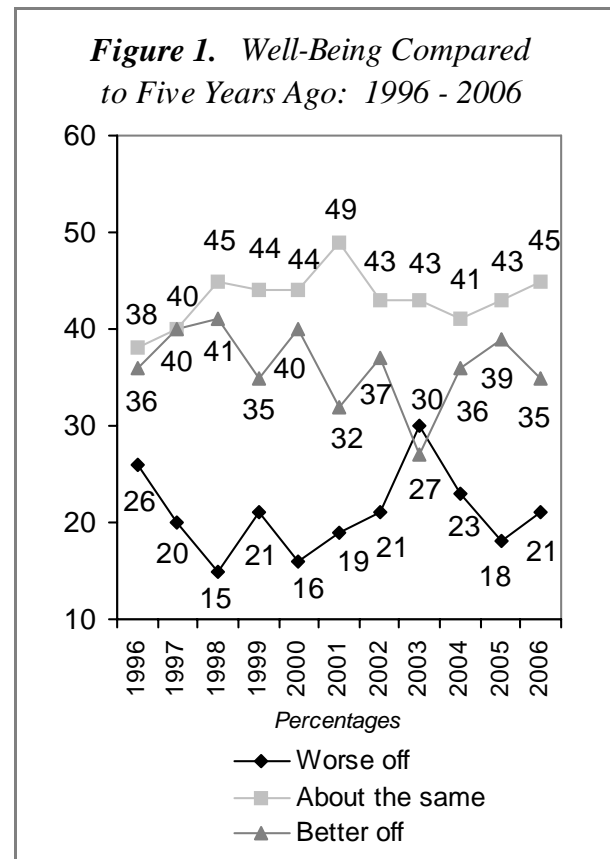
To examine perceptions of general well-being, respondents were asked four questions.

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.”

When examining the trends over the past eleven years, rural Nebraskans have generally given positive reviews about their current situation (Figure 1). Except in 2003,





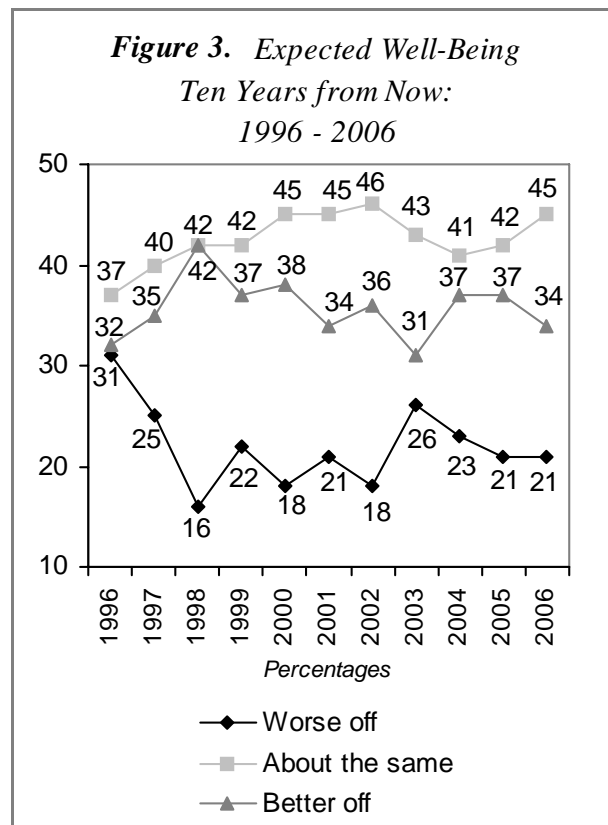
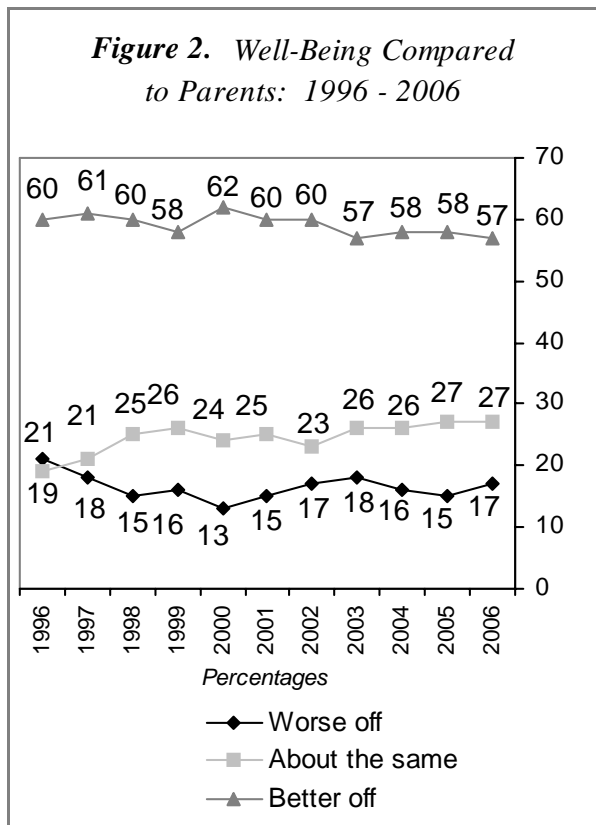
each year the proportion of rural Nebraskans that say they are better off than they were five years ago has been greater than the proportion saying they are worse off than they were five years ago. Approximately 36 percent each year have reported that they were better off than they were five years ago. However, in 2003, that proportion was 27 percent. The proportion stating they are worse off than five years ago has averaged 21 percent. The most noticeable exception to this pattern occurred in 2003 when the proportion saying they were worse off than they were five years ago hit 30 percent. The proportion believing they are about the same has generally remained fairly steady around 44 percent since 1998. It did increase to 49 percent, though, in 2001.

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 59 percent over the eleven year period. Similarly, the proportion feeling they are worse off than their parents has remained steady at approximately 16 percent during this period.

When looking to the future, respondents' views have had some variation over the eleven year period (Figure 3). The proportion that say 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 (although the two were virtually identical in 1996). The gap between the two proportions was widest in 1998 and narrowed considerably in 2003.

The proportion stating they will be better off

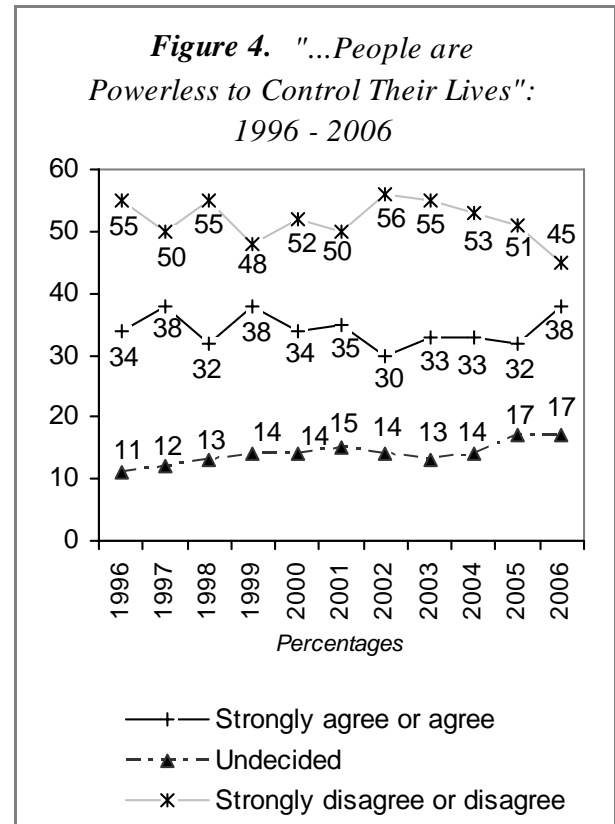


ten years from now has generally remained about 36 percent. One exception to this general pattern occurred in 1998 when 42 percent of the respondents felt they would be better off in the future. And, in 2003 the proportion fell to 31 percent, the lowest of all 11 years. The proportion of respondents stating they will be worse off ten years from now decreased from 31 percent in 1996 to 16 percent in 1998. This proportion then remained around 20 percent from 1999 to 2002. It then increased to 26 percent in 2003 and has steadily declined to 21 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 have remained fairly consistent over all eleven years (Figure 4). The proportion who either strongly disagree or disagree with the statement has remained approximately 52 percent each year, with slight deviations from this average. However, the proportion disagreeing with the statement dropped to 45 percent this year, the lowest of the 11-year period. Similarly, the proportion that either strongly agree or agree with the statement each year has averaged about 34 percent. The proportion agreeing with the statement increased to 38 percent this year from 32 percent last year. This matches the highest proportion in all 11 years of the study, also occurring in 1997 and 1999. The



proportion of those who were undecided each year has remained fairly constant, averaging 14 percent.

#### 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.”

This same question was asked in the ten previous polls, but the list of items was not identical each year. Table 1 shows the proportions very or somewhat satisfied with each item for each study period.

**Table 1. Proportions of Respondents Very or Somewhat Satisfied with Each Factor, 1996 - 2006.\***

<i>Item</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>
Your marriage	NA	NA	91	92	92	92	93	92	93	91	94
Your family	90	92	91	89	92	88	89	89	89	88	90
Your friends	83	86	86	83	87	85	85	85	86	83	85
Greenery and open space	NA	NA	90	88	86	86	88	83	82	83	85
Clean air	NA	NA	NA	NA	80	81	82	80	78	79	80
Your housing	NA	77	81	80	81	79	81	81	79	80	78
Your religion/spirituality	80	80	81	78	83	80	80	79	79	77	76
Clean water	NA	NA	NA	NA	74	76	78	77	74	73	75
Your education	73	73	74	74	75	72	75	74	73	71	73
Your health	76	80	77	74	76	71	72	74	71	69	71
Your spare time**	56	NA	71	67	72	68	70	70	68	67	70
Your job satisfaction	67	68	68	66	70	69	71	68	72	71	69
Your job security	62	63	62	59	67	65	64	62	65	64	64
Your community	67	65	69	68	69	68	64	63	65	66	63
Your current income level	54	58	52	46	51	48	48	47	49	48	50
Job opportunities	38	40	37	36	35	36	36	35	34	37	42
Financial security during retirement	45	49	41	39	43	39	40	31	37	40	41

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.

The rank ordering of the items has remained relatively stable over the years. In addition, the proportion of respondents stating they were very or somewhat satisfied with each

item also has been fairly consistent over the years. A few items have had some noticeable variation over time, however. The proportion of rural Nebraskans satisfied with their

financial security during retirement has averaged approximately 40 percent over the 11 year period. This proportion reached a high of 49 percent in 1997 and a low of 31 percent in 2003. The proportion of rural Nebraskans satisfied with their job opportunities has increased over the past few years. After reaching a low of 34 percent in 2004, the proportion increased to 42 percent this year (the highest proportion in all 11 years).

Items generally fall into three levels of satisfaction ratings. Family, friends, the outdoors, housing and spirituality continue to be items given high satisfaction ratings by respondents. Items in the middle category include job satisfaction, job security 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.

### ***General Well-Being by Subgroups***

In this section, 2006 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. Sixty-four percent of persons age 19 to 29 feel they are better off than they were five years ago. However, only 19 percent of persons age 65 and older share this opinion. Both the oldest respondents and the youngest respondents are the groups most likely to believe they are better off compared to their parents when

they were their age.

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, 52 percent of respondents with household incomes of \$60,000 or more think they will be better off ten years from now. However, only 22 percent of respondents with household incomes under \$20,000 believe they will be better off ten years from now.

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. Forty-eight percent of respondents with at least a four-year college degree believe they are better off than they were five years ago. Only 28 percent of persons with a high school diploma or less education share this optimism.

Males are more likely than females to think they are better off compared to five years ago and will be better off ten years from now. Females are more likely than males to answer “about the same” to those two questions.

When comparing the marital groups, respondents who have never married are the group most likely to believe they are better off than five years ago and will be better off ten years from now. Both the widowed respondents and married respondents are the groups most likely to believe they are better off compared to their parents when they were

their age.

Respondents with professional occupations are more likely than persons with other types of occupations to believe they are better off compared to five years ago and will be better off ten years from now. Fifty percent of persons with professional occupations believe they will be better off ten years from now, compared to only 29 percent of persons with administrative support positions (Figure 5). Persons with sales occupations are the group most likely to believe they are better off compared to their parents when they were their age.

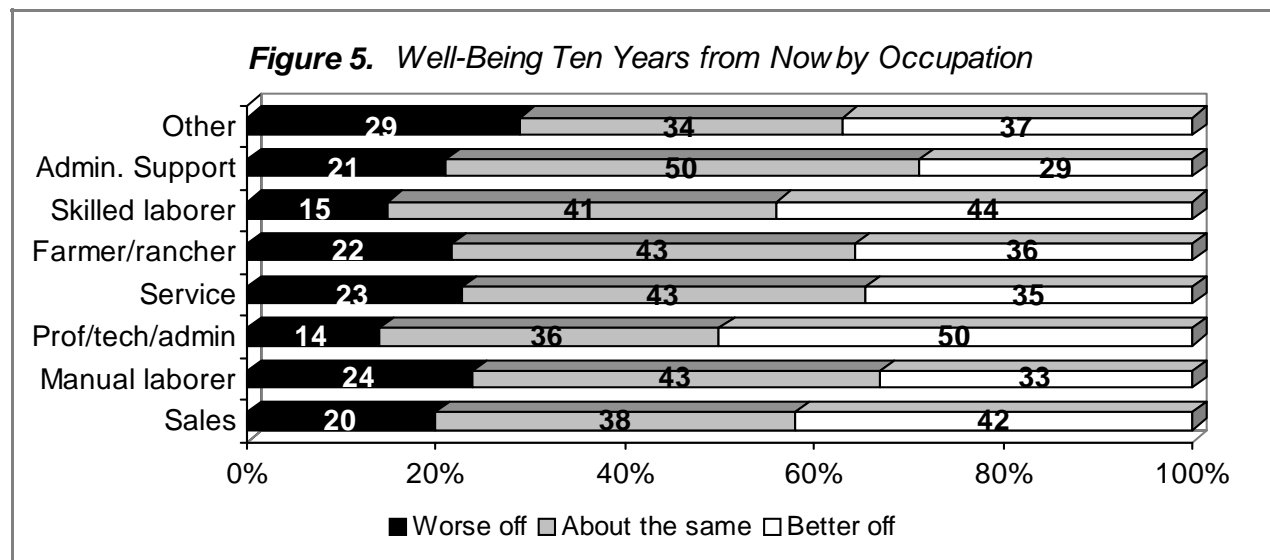
The respondents were also asked if they believe people are powerless to control their own lives. Thirty-eight percent either strongly agree or agree that people are powerless to control their own lives (see Figure 4). Seventeen percent are undecided and 45 percent either strongly disagree or disagree.

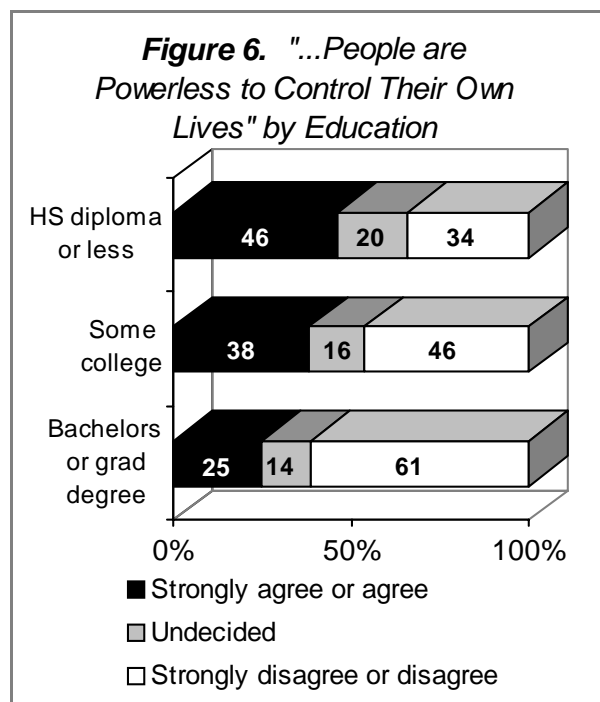
When analyzing the responses by region, community size, and various individual

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-six 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 25 percent of persons with a four-year college degree share this opinion.

Older persons are more likely than younger persons to believe people are powerless to control their own lives. Forty-six percent of persons age 65 and older agree with this statement. However, only 19 percent of persons age 19 to 29 think people are powerless to control their own lives.

Persons with lower household incomes are more likely than persons with higher incomes to agree with the statement. Approximately 43 percent of persons with household incomes under \$40,000 believe people are powerless to control their own lives, compared to 25 percent of persons with





household incomes of \$60,000 or more.

Persons living in or near the smallest communities are more likely than persons living in or near larger communities to agree that people are powerless to control their own lives. Forty-seven percent of persons living in or near communities with populations less than 500 agree with this statement, compared to approximately 36 percent of persons living in towns with more than 500 people.

When comparing responses by region, persons living in both the North Central and Northeast regions are the groups most likely to believe this statement. Approximately 41 percent of persons living in either of these regions agree with this statement, compared to 30 percent of persons living in the Panhandle.

The marital status groups most likely to

believe people are powerless are both widowed respondents and respondents who are divorced/separated. When comparing responses by occupation, manual laborers are the group most likely to agree with this statement.

### *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 one-third of respondents are very satisfied with their family (54%), their marriage (48%), greenery and open space (46%), their religion/spirituality (43%), their friends (43%), clean air (38%) clean water (37%) and their housing (33%). Items receiving the highest proportion of very dissatisfied responses include: financial security during retirement (20%), current income level (15%), and job opportunities for you (11%).

The top ten 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 both their financial security during retirement and their current income level differ by most of the individual characteristics examined. Persons with lower household incomes are more likely than persons with higher incomes to be dissatisfied with both of these items. Fifty-three percent of persons with household

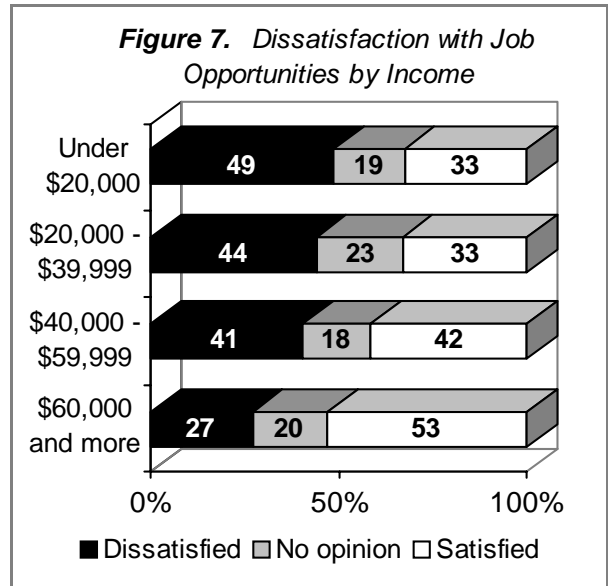
incomes under \$20,000 report being dissatisfied with their current income level, compared to 19 percent of persons with household incomes of \$60,000 or more.

Respondents who are divorced or separated are the marital group most likely to be dissatisfied with their financial security during retirement. Sixty-one percent of divorced/ separated respondents are dissatisfied with their financial security during retirement, compared to 27 percent of widowed respondents. Persons who have never married join them as the marital groups most likely to be dissatisfied with their current income level (51%).

When comparing responses by education level, persons with some college education are the group most likely to report being dissatisfied with these two items. Persons with occupations classified as “other” are the occupation group most likely to be dissatisfied with these two items.

When comparing the age groups, persons between the ages of 30 and 64 are the groups most likely to be dissatisfied with their financial security during retirement. The youngest persons (age 19 to 29) are the group most likely to express dissatisfaction with their current income level. One-half (50%) of persons age 19 to 29 are dissatisfied with their current income level.

Persons with lower household incomes are more likely than persons with higher incomes to be dissatisfied with their job, their job security and their job opportunities. Forty-nine percent of persons with household incomes under \$20,000 are dissatisfied with their job opportunities, compared to 27 percent of persons with



household incomes of \$60,000 or more (Figure 7).

Persons who are divorced/separated are the marital group most likely to express dissatisfaction with these three job-related items (job satisfaction, job security and job opportunities). As an example, 29 percent of divorced/separated persons are dissatisfied with their job, compared to 9 percent of widowed respondents.

Persons with some college education are more likely than the other education level groups to be dissatisfied with these three job factors. When comparing responses by occupation, both persons with occupations classified as “other” and manual laborers are the groups most likely to express dissatisfaction with these three job-related items. Approximately 52 percent of these two groups are dissatisfied with their job opportunities, compared to 30 percent of farmers and ranchers.

When comparing responses by age, persons

between the ages of 30 and 49 are the group most likely to be dissatisfied with their job opportunities. Persons between the ages of 30 and 64 are the groups most likely to express dissatisfaction with their job security and the youngest persons (age 19 to 39) are the groups most likely to be dissatisfied with their job.

Females are more likely than males to report dissatisfaction with their job opportunities. Forty-three percent of females are dissatisfied with the job opportunities for them, compared to 36 percent of males.

Persons living in or near the smallest communities are more likely than persons living in or near larger communities to express dissatisfaction with their job security.

The groups most likely to report being dissatisfied with their community include: persons living in or near the largest communities, persons under the age of 65, and persons who are divorced or separated.

The groups most likely to express dissatisfaction with their health include: persons living in or near the smallest communities, persons with the lowest household incomes, older persons and respondents who are divorced/separated.

Persons who are divorced/separated are more likely than other marital groups to be dissatisfied with their spare time. Twenty-four percent of the divorced/separated respondents are dissatisfied with their spare time, compared to five percent of widowed persons.

Other groups most likely to be dissatisfied

with their spare time include: persons with higher household incomes, persons between the ages of 40 and 49, and respondents with some college education.

Persons living in or near communities with populations ranging from 5,000 to 9,999 are more likely than persons living in communities of different sizes to express dissatisfaction with clean water. Twenty percent of persons living in or near communities of this size are dissatisfied with clean water. Only 12 percent of persons living in or near communities with populations ranging from 500 to 999 share this opinion.

Persons living in the Panhandle are more likely than persons living in other regions of the state to express dissatisfaction with clean water. Twenty-two percent of Panhandle residents are dissatisfied with clean water, compared to 12 percent of persons in the North Central region.

Other groups most likely to express dissatisfaction with clean water include: younger persons, persons who are divorced or separated and persons with occupations classified as “other”.

The groups most likely to be dissatisfied with their housing are: persons with lower household incomes, younger respondents, both divorced/separated respondents and persons who have never married and persons with administrative support positions.

### ***Conclusion***

Rural Nebraskans have generally positive views about their current and future situation. Just over one-third of rural Nebraskans think



they are better off than they were five years ago and will be better off ten years from now. Twenty-one percent think they are worse off than they were five years ago and the same proportion (21%) think they will be worse off ten years from now.

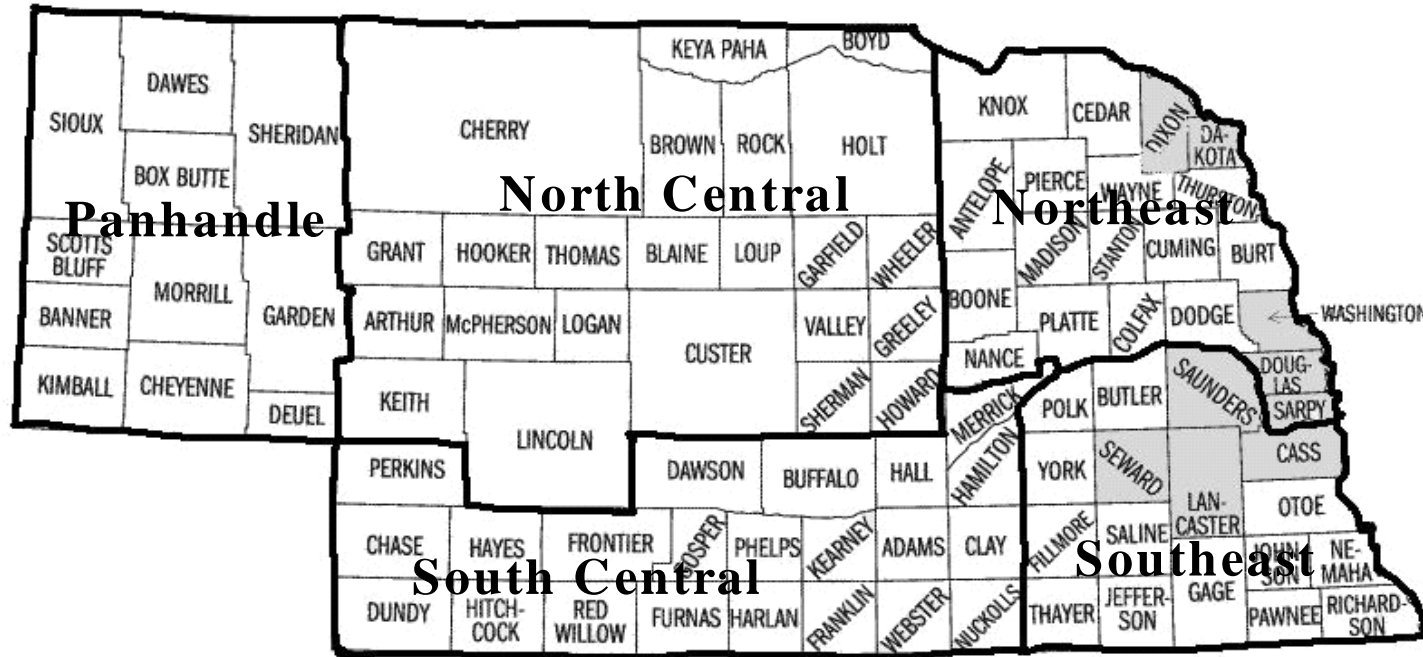
Certain groups remain pessimistic about their situation. Persons with lower household incomes, older persons, persons with lower educational levels and persons who are divorced or separated are the groups most likely to be more pessimistic about the present and the future.

When asked if they believe people are powerless to control their own lives, 38 percent of this year's respondents agreed, up from 32 percent last year. Widowed persons,

persons who are divorced/separated, persons with lower educational levels, older persons, persons with lower household incomes and manual laborers are the groups most likely to agree that people are powerless to control their own lives.

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. A positive finding is that more rural Nebraskans report being satisfied with their job opportunities this year as compared to past responses.

# Appendix Figure 1. Regions of Nebraska



■ Metropolitan counties (not surveyed)

*Appendix Table 1. Demographic Profile of Rural Poll Respondents Compared to 2000 Census*

	<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2000</b>
	<b>Poll</b>	<b>Poll</b>	<b>Poll</b>	<b>Poll</b>	<b>Poll</b>	<b>Poll</b>	<b>Census</b>
<b>Age : <sup>1</sup></b>							
20 - 39	16%	15%	18%	18%	16%	17%	33%
40 - 64	52%	51%	49%	51%	51%	49%	42%
65 and over	32%	34%	32%	32%	32%	33%	24%
<b>Gender: <sup>2</sup></b>							
Female	31%	32%	32%	51%	36%	37%	51%
Male	70%	69%	68%	49%	64%	63%	49%
<b>Education: <sup>3</sup></b>							
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	4%	7%
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade (no diploma)	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%	5%	10%
High school diploma (or equivalent)	32%	33%	34%	34%	32%	35%	35%
Some college, no degree	25%	24%	24%	23%	25%	26%	25%
Associate degree	12%	13%	12%	11%	10%	8%	7%
Bachelors degree	15%	14%	15%	16%	16%	13%	11%
Graduate or professional degree	9%	10%	8%	9%	10%	8%	4%
<b>Household income: <sup>4</sup></b>							
Less than \$10,000	7%	8%	9%	8%	8%	9%	10%
\$10,000 - \$19,999	13%	14%	15%	14%	15%	16%	16%
\$20,000 - \$29,999	14%	16%	16%	16%	17%	20%	17%
\$30,000 - \$39,999	15%	16%	16%	16%	17%	16%	15%
\$40,000 - \$49,999	15%	14%	13%	13%	14%	14%	12%
\$50,000 - \$59,999	11%	10%	11%	11%	11%	9%	10%
\$60,000 - \$74,999	11%	10%	10%	11%	9%	8%	9%
\$75,000 or more	14%	13%	11%	11%	10%	8%	11%
<b>Marital Status: <sup>5</sup></b>							
Married	69%	71%	69%	73%	73%	70%	61%
Never married	8%	7%	9%	7%	6%	7%	22%
Divorced/separated	10%	11%	10%	9%	9%	10%	9%
Widowed/widower	13%	11%	12%	11%	12%	14%	8%

<sup>1</sup> 2000 Census universe is non-metro population 20 years of age and over.

<sup>2</sup> 2000 Census universe is total non-metro population.

<sup>3</sup> 2000 Census universe is non-metro population 18 years of age and over.

<sup>4</sup> 2000 Census universe is all non-metro households.

<sup>5</sup> 2000 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.**

	<i>Compared to Five Years Ago</i>				<i>Compared to Parents</i>				<i>Ten Years from Now</i>			
	<i>Worse Off</i>	<i>Same</i>	<i>Better Off</i>	<i>Significance</i>	<i>Worse Off</i>	<i>Same</i>	<i>Better Off</i>	<i>Significance</i>	<i>Worse Off</i>	<i>Same</i>	<i>Better Off</i>	<i>Significance</i>
<b>Community Size</b>	(n = 2338)				<i>Percentages</i> (n = 2343)				(n = 2323)			
Less than 500	24	44	32		20	30	51		25	43	32	
500 - 999	18	46	37		15	27	59		17	49	35	
1,000 - 4,999	21	46	33		18	28	54		21	46	33	
5,000 - 9,999	19	44	37	$\chi^2 = 6.12$	16	29	56	$\chi^2 = 15.41$	18	49	33	$\chi^2 = 10.02$
10,000 and up	21	43	36	(.634)	15	24	61	(.052)	22	43	35	(.264)
<b>Region</b>	(n = 2371)				(n = 2377)				(n = 2350)			
Panhandle	22	44	34		15	30	55		24	45	31	
North Central	19	45	37		16	26	58		22	44	34	
South Central	21	43	36		16	26	58		19	43	38	
Northeast	22	46	32	$\chi^2 = 3.96$	18	25	57	$\chi^2 = 7.62$	23	46	32	$\chi^2 = 12.08$
Southeast	22	44	34	(.861)	17	30	53	(.471)	21	49	30	(.148)
<b>Individual Attributes:</b>												
<b>Household Income</b>	(n = 2114)				(n = 2119)				(n = 2102)			
Under \$20,000	31	50	18		26	29	45		29	49	22	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	21	49	30		17	30	53		23	51	26	
\$40,000 - \$59,999	20	43	37	$\chi^2 = 164.02^*$	16	26	58	$\chi^2 = 76.73^*$	20	43	38	$\chi^2 = 128.77^*$
\$60,000 and over	13	31	56	(.000)	11	19	70	(.000)	14	34	52	(.000)
<b>Age</b>	(n = 2330)				(n = 2336)				(n = 2310)			
19 - 29	7	29	64		11	26	63		4	18	78	
30 - 39	13	36	51		17	28	55		6	31	63	
40 - 49	21	37	42		20	31	49		11	37	52	
50 - 64	27	38	35	$\chi^2 = 212.97^*$	22	26	52	$\chi^2 = 68.27^*$	27	45	29	$\chi^2 = 498.46^*$
65 and older	20	61	19	(.000)	9	26	65	(.000)	29	62	9	(.000)

Appendix Table 2 Continued.

	<i>Compared to Five Years Ago</i>				<i>Compared to Parents</i>				<i>Ten Years from Now</i>			
	<i>Worse Off</i>	<i>Same</i>	<i>Better Off</i>	<i>Significance</i>	<i>Worse Off</i>	<i>Same</i>	<i>Better Off</i>	<i>Significance</i>	<i>Worse Off</i>	<i>Same</i>	<i>Better Off</i>	<i>Significance</i>
<i>Gender</i>	(n = 2302)				(n = 2308)				(n = 2282)			
Male	22	41	37	$\chi^2 = 24.82^*$	16	26	58	$\chi^2 = 2.06$	22	43	35	$\chi^2 = 10.49^*$
Female	20	52	29	(.000)	17	28	55	(.357)	20	50	30	(.005)
<i>Education</i>	(n = 2295)				(n = 2301)				(n = 2275)			
H. S. diploma or less	22	50	28	$\chi^2 = 72.30^*$	14	29	57	$\chi^2 = 29.92^*$	24	53	23	$\chi^2 = 89.04^*$
Some college	24	43	33		22	26	52		22	42	36	
Bachelors or graduate degree	14	38	48		(.000)	13	25		62	(.000)	16	
<i>Marital Status</i>	(n = 2314)				(n = 2320)				(n = 2294)			
Married	20	42	38	$\chi^2 = 93.40^*$	15	26	60	$\chi^2 = 48.93^*$	20	43	36	$\chi^2 = 105.74^*$
Never married	21	39	41		19	34	47		15	35	50	
Divorced/separated	29	37	34		29	31	41		26	43	31	
Widowed	20	67	13		(.000)	13	26		61	(.000)	27	
<i>Occupation</i>	(n = 1562)				(n = 1567)				(n = 1563)			
Sales	25	33	42	$\chi^2 = 32.79^*$	15	22	63	$\chi^2 = 35.83^*$	20	38	42	$\chi^2 = 36.80^*$
Manual laborer	24	47	30		21	40	39		24	43	33	
Prof/tech/admin	17	35	48		16	25	60		14	36	50	
Service	27	36	38		25	29	47		23	43	35	
Farming/ranching	26	35	38		20	27	52		22	43	36	
Skilled laborer	18	40	43		18	27	56		15	41	44	
Admin. support	23	38	39		20	23	57		21	50	29	
Other	26	43	31		(.003)	23	29		49	(.001)	29	

\* 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.*

	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Significance</u>
<i>Percentages</i>				
<b><u>Community Size</u></b>		(n = 2343)		
Less than 500	39	14	47	
500 - 999	47	18	35	
1,000 - 4,999	44	19	38	
5,000 - 9,999	46	19	36	$\chi^2 = 21.23^*$
10,000 and up	49	16	35	(.007)
<b><u>Region</u></b>		(n = 2377)		
Panhandle	51	19	30	
North Central	44	15	41	
South Central	49	17	35	
Northeast	40	19	42	$\chi^2 = 21.12^*$
Southeast	45	16	39	(.007)
<b><u>Individual Attributes:</u></b>				
<i>Household Income Level</i>		(n = 2122)		
Under \$20,000	34	22	43	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	38	18	44	
\$40,000 - \$59,999	50	13	37	$\chi^2 = 118.06^*$
\$60,000 and over	64	11	25	(.000)
<i>Age</i>		(n = 2337)		
19 - 29	63	18	19	
30 - 39	53	14	34	
40 - 49	56	15	29	
50 - 64	46	15	40	$\chi^2 = 102.82^*$
65 and older	32	22	46	(.000)
<i>Gender</i>		(n = 2310)		
Male	47	15	38	$\chi^2 = 11.15^*$
Female	41	21	38	(.004)
<i>Education</i>		(n = 2303)		
H.S. diploma or less	34	20	46	
Some college	46	16	38	$\chi^2 = 107.12^*$
Bachelors or grad degree	61	14	25	(.000)
<i>Marital Status</i>		(n = 2322)		
Married	48	16	37	
Never married	51	17	33	
Divorced/separated	42	15	44	$\chi^2 = 31.90^*$
Widowed	32	24	44	(.000)

Appendix Table 3 Continued.

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Undecided</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Significance</i>
		(n = 1567)		
Sales	55	11	33	
Manual laborer	35	18	47	
Prof/technical/admin.	60	12	28	
Service	43	20	38	
Farming/ranching	52	15	33	
Skilled laborer	48	16	36	
Admin. support	39	21	39	$\chi^2 = 49.41^*$
Other	49	11	40	(.000)

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

*Appendix Table 4. Satisfaction with Items Affecting Well-Being, 2006.*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Does Not Apply</i>	<i>Very Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Somewhat Dissatisfied</i>	<i>No Opinion</i>	<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Your family	2%	1%	3%	6%	35%	54%
Your marriage	33	1	1	3	15	48
Greenery and open space	0	1	3	10	40	46
Your religion/spirituality	3	1	3	19	32	43
Your friends	1	1	4	11	41	43
Clean air	0	3	7	11	42	38
Clean water	0	5	10	10	39	37
Your housing	0	3	8	11	44	33
Your spare time	2	5	12	13	40	30
Your education	0	2	9	16	46	28
Your health	0	6	12	12	47	24
Your community	0	5	14	18	45	18
Your job satisfaction	31	4	9	8	31	17
Your job security	32	5	9	11	27	17
Current income level	0	15	22	14	39	12
Financial security during retirement	0	20	25	15	31	10
Job opportunities for you	29	11	16	15	20	10



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

	<i>Financial security during retirement</i>			<i>Job opportunities for you</i>		
	<i>No</i>		<i>Significance</i>	<i>No</i>		<i>Significance</i>
	<i>Dissatisfied opinion</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>		<i>Dissatisfied opinion</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	
	<i>Percentages</i>					
<b>Community Size</b>	(n = 2074)			(n = 1641)		
Less than 500	49	13	38	41	21	38
500 - 999	39	18	43	34	29	37
1,000 - 4,999	50	14	36	42	17	40
5,000 - 9,999	37	19	44	39	24	38
10,000 and up	43	14	43	33	19	47
			$\chi^2 = 21.89^*$ (.005)			$\chi^2 = 23.09^*$ (.003)
<b>Region</b>	(n = 2159)			(n = 1687)		
Panhandle	44	14	42	38	16	46
North Central	45	15	40	42	17	41
South Central	44	15	41	34	23	44
Northeast	45	16	40	38	21	41
Southeast	42	15	43	41	22	37
			$\chi^2 = 1.20$ (.997)			$\chi^2 = 11.90$ (.156)
<b>Individual Attributes:</b>						
<i>Household Income Level</i>	(n = 1957)			(n = 1563)		
Under \$20,000	51	20	29	49	19	33
\$20,000 - \$39,999	52	14	34	44	23	33
\$40,000 - \$59,999	46	12	42	41	18	42
\$60,000 and over	32	13	55	27	20	53
			$\chi^2 = 84.01^*$ (.000)			$\chi^2 = 54.38^*$ (.000)
<i>Age</i>	(n = 2129)			(n = 1659)		
19 - 29	45	26	29	39	14	47
30 - 39	51	16	33	43	14	43
40 - 49	54	13	33	44	17	40
50 - 64	52	14	35	36	23	40
65 and older	26	16	58	22	30	48
			$\chi^2 = 149.72^*$ (.000)			$\chi^2 = 42.97^*$ (.000)
<i>Gender</i>	(n = 2108)			(n = 1640)		
Male	44	15	42	36	20	44
Female	44	16	40	43	20	37
			$\chi^2 = 0.92$ (.631)			$\chi^2 = 6.95^*$ (.031)
<i>Education</i>	(n = 2103)			(n = 1638)		
High school diploma or less	42	18	40	38	24	39
Some college	50	14	36	41	21	39
Bachelors or grad degree	38	12	51	34	16	50
			$\chi^2 = 40.00^*$ (.000)			$\chi^2 = 19.48^*$ (.001)
<i>Marital Status</i>	(n = 2120)			(n = 1649)		
Married	44	14	42	37	20	44
Never married	46	22	33	40	18	42
Divorced/separated	61	12	27	46	21	33
Widowed	27	19	54	28	36	36
			$\chi^2 = 65.88^*$ (.000)			$\chi^2 = 20.65^*$ (.002)
<i>Occupation</i>	(n = 1442)			(n = 1465)		
Sales	47	10	43	30	17	53
Manual laborer	56	15	29	52	18	30
Prof./technical/admin	46	14	41	34	19	47
Service	58	15	27	46	17	37
Farming/ranching	46	13	41	30	29	41
Skilled laborer	48	20	32	34	22	44
Admin. support	48	10	42	44	27	29
Other	64	15	21	53	21	27
			$\chi^2 = 30.41^*$ (.007)			$\chi^2 = 49.37^*$ (.000)

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

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

Appendix Table 5 Continued.

	<i>Current income level</i>			<i>Job security</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>	
	<i>Percentages</i>						
<b>Community Size</b>	(n = 2121)			(n = 1589)			
Less than 500	39	15	46	25	14	60	
500 - 999	34	16	50	17	21	62	
1,000 - 4,999	40	14	46	19	16	65	
5,000 - 9,999	33	17	50	16	23	61	$\chi^2 = 21.38^*$
10,000 and up	35	10	54	20	13	67	(.006)
<b>Region</b>	(n = 2204)			(n = 1627)			
Panhandle	35	13	52	21	15	64	
North Central	38	13	50	18	16	65	
South Central	36	13	52	21	15	64	
Northeast	37	16	47	21	16	63	$\chi^2 = 1.54$
Southeast	37	13	50	19	17	64	(.992)
<b>Individual Attributes:</b>							
<i>Household Income Level</i>	(n = 2005)			(n = 1506)			
Under \$20,000	53	20	27	31	24	45	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	46	16	39	24	19	58	
\$40,000 - \$59,999	36	9	55	21	13	66	$\chi^2 = 57.00^*$
\$60,000 and over	19	7	74	15	11	74	(.000)
<i>Age</i>	(n = 2172)			(n = 1599)			
19 - 29	50	4	46	14	12	74	
30 - 39	41	8	52	21	12	67	
40 - 49	41	10	49	19	18	63	
50 - 64	41	11	48	23	14	63	$\chi^2 = 21.25^*$
65 and older	22	22	56	16	24	60	(.007)
<i>Gender</i>	(n = 2147)			(n = 1579)			
Male	35	13	52	20	16	64	$\chi^2 = 0.67$
Female	40	14	46	21	15	64	(.717)
<i>Education</i>	(n = 2142)			(n = 1578)			
High school diploma or less	35	19	47	20	18	62	
Some college	44	12	45	23	15	62	$\chi^2 = 10.40^*$
Bachelors or grad degree	29	8	64	18	13	69	(.034)
<i>Marital Status</i>	(n = 2159)			(n = 1588)			
Married	35	13	53	19	15	66	
Never married	51	10	40	23	15	61	
Divorced/separated	51	11	39	26	14	60	$\chi^2 = 12.88^*$
Widowed	24	24	52	23	26	52	(.045)
<i>Occupation</i>	(n = 1515)			(n = 1477)			
Sales	35	11	55	19	16	65	
Manual laborer	44	18	38	28	18	54	
Prof./technical/admin	32	8	60	18	11	71	
Service	53	9	37	23	16	62	
Farming/ranching	42	12	47	15	24	62	
Skilled laborer	41	12	47	22	15	62	
Admin. support	44	13	43	24	14	63	$\chi^2 = 33.36^*$
Other	58	6	36	29	20	51	(.003)

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

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

Appendix Table 5 Continued.

	<i>Your community</i>			<i>Your job</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>	
	<i>Percentages</i>						
<b>Community Size</b>	(n = 2189)			(n = 1598)			
Less than 500	18	21	62	17	12	72	
500 - 999	14	14	72	15	19	67	
1,000 - 4,999	18	17	65	20	10	71	
5,000 - 9,999	23	27	50	19	16	65	$\chi^2 = 15.06$
10,000 and up	21	15	64	19	11	71	(.058)
<b>Region</b>	(n = 2278)			(n = 1637)			
Panhandle	20	21	60	19	12	69	
North Central	20	20	61	13	13	74	
South Central	19	15	66	19	11	71	
Northeast	17	18	65	22	12	66	$\chi^2 = 10.52$
Southeast	19	20	61	18	15	67	(.230)
<b>Individual Attributes:</b>							
<i>Household Income Level</i>	(n = 2063)			(n = 1515)			
Under \$20,000	20	23	57	28	14	58	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	19	18	63	19	16	65	
\$40,000 - \$59,999	20	16	64	20	11	69	$\chi^2 = 40.20^*$
\$60,000 and over	19	15	66	13	9	79	(.000)
<i>Age</i>	(n = 2245)			(n = 1608)			
19 - 29	22	16	62	24	6	70	
30 - 39	23	19	58	22	11	68	
40 - 49	23	19	58	19	13	68	
50 - 64	21	19	59	18	12	70	$\chi^2 = 19.16^*$
65 and older	11	15	74	9	16	75	(.014)
<i>Gender</i>	(n = 2223)			(n = 1589)			
Male	19	18	62	17	13	69	$\chi^2 = 7.47^*$
Female	18	17	65	21	9	70	(.024)
<i>Education</i>	(n = 2218)			(n = 1588)			
High school diploma or less	17	19	64	17	15	68	
Some college	22	20	58	23	12	65	$\chi^2 = 27.46^*$
Bachelors or grad degree	18	13	69	14	8	78	(.000)
<i>Marital Status</i>	(n = 2234)			(n = 1598)			
Married	19	17	64	17	12	71	
Never married	22	21	57	24	11	66	
Divorced/separated	28	22	50	29	11	61	$\chi^2 = 24.99^*$
Widowed	10	16	73	9	21	70	(.000)
<i>Occupation</i>	(n = 1533)			(n = 1485)			
Sales	22	15	63	14	9	78	
Manual laborer	22	21	57	30	12	58	
Prof./technical/admin	22	18	61	17	9	74	
Service	19	20	61	23	11	66	
Farming/ranching	16	15	69	9	19	73	
Skilled laborer	22	22	57	17	15	67	
Admin. support	22	15	64	29	8	63	$\chi^2 = 57.39^*$
Other	29	31	40	31	11	57	(.000)

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

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

Appendix Table 5 Continued.

	<i>Your health</i>			<i>Your spare time</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>	
	<i>Percentages</i>						
<b>Community Size</b>	(n = 2185)			(n = 2176)			
Less than 500	23	12	65	19	12	69	
500 - 999	13	13	75	15	12	72	
1,000 - 4,999	19	12	69	19	12	69	
5,000 - 9,999	17	14	69	15	19	66	$\chi^2 = 15.08$
10,000 and up	16	9	74	15	12	72	(.058)
<b>Region</b>	(n = 2281)			(n = 2268)			
Panhandle	18	11	71	19	10	71	
North Central	19	10	71	18	10	73	
South Central	17	11	73	16	14	70	
Northeast	17	14	69	17	13	70	$\chi^2 = 10.30$
Southeast	20	11	69	16	16	68	(.245)
<b>Individual Attributes:</b>							
<i>Household Income Level</i>	(n = 2063)			(n = 2050)			
Under \$20,000	30	16	55	11	22	68	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	18	11	71	17	14	69	
\$40,000 - \$59,999	16	9	74	20	10	70	$\chi^2 = 44.11^*$
\$60,000 and over	11	8	81	21	10	69	(.000)
<i>Age</i>	(n = 2247)			(n = 2235)			
19 - 29	10	7	84	20	16	64	
30 - 39	11	9	79	26	16	58	
40 - 49	18	13	69	30	15	55	
50 - 64	21	11	68	17	12	72	$\chi^2 = 165.8^*$
65 and older	18	13	70	4	12	84	(.000)
<i>Gender</i>	(n = 2224)			(n = 2211)			
Male	17	12	71	18	13	70	$\chi^2 = 1.94$
Female	21	10	69	16	14	70	(.379)
<i>Education</i>	(n = 2218)			(n = 2205)			
High school diploma or less	18	14	68	14	14	72	
Some college	20	11	69	20	14	67	$\chi^2 = 14.87^*$
Bachelors or grad degree	14	8	78	18	10	71	(.005)
<i>Marital Status</i>	(n = 2236)			(n = 2222)			
Married	16	11	74	18	10	72	
Never married	18	14	68	18	17	65	
Divorced/separated	26	13	62	24	20	56	$\chi^2 = 67.27^*$
Widowed	22	14	64	5	20	76	(.000)
<i>Occupation</i>	(n = 1529)			(n = 1528)			
Sales	12	9	79	19	10	71	
Manual laborer	18	14	69	20	12	68	
Prof./technical/admin	14	9	77	21	12	67	
Service	18	12	70	21	14	64	
Farming/ranching	12	11	76	14	15	70	
Skilled laborer	13	13	74	22	13	64	
Admin. support	11	15	75	26	11	63	$\chi^2 = 16.14$
Other	26	11	63	34	20	46	(.305)

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

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

Appendix Table 5 Continued.

	<i>Clean water</i>			<i>Your housing</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>	
	<i>Percentages</i>						
<b>Community Size</b>	(n = 2202)			(n = 2171)			
Less than 500	14	8	78	14	11	75	
500 - 999	12	9	80	9	9	81	
1,000 - 4,999	14	7	79	13	10	77	
5,000 - 9,999	20	12	68	11	11	78	$\chi^2 = 11.37$
10,000 and up	15	12	73	9	13	78	(.181)
<b>Region</b>	(n = 2296)			(n = 2256)			
Panhandle	22	5	73	13	10	78	
North Central	12	9	79	14	10	76	
South Central	15	10	75	10	11	79	
Northeast	15	10	75	10	12	78	$\chi^2 = 7.49$
Southeast	14	10	76	11	13	76	(.485)
<b>Individual Attributes:</b>							
<b>Household Income Level</b>	(n = 2071)			(n = 2044)			
Under \$20,000	18	13	70	15	12	73	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	14	10	77	13	13	75	
\$40,000 - \$59,999	16	9	76	11	11	78	$\chi^2 = 17.38^*$
\$60,000 and over	13	8	79	8	9	83	(.008)
<b>Age</b>	(n = 2261)			(n = 2223)			
19 - 29	21	12	67	21	10	70	
30 - 39	19	10	71	15	15	71	
40 - 49	16	10	73	15	13	72	
50 - 64	16	9	75	10	13	77	$\chi^2 = 55.75^*$
65 and older	10	8	82	7	7	86	(.000)
<b>Gender</b>	(n = 2238)			(n = 2201)			
Male	14	10	76	10	12	79	$\chi^2 = 7.46^*$
Female	17	10	73	14	11	76	(.024)
<b>Education</b>	(n = 2232)			(n = 2196)			
High school diploma or less	15	10	75	11	12	77	
Some college	15	11	74	13	11	76	$\chi^2 = 6.65$
Bachelors or grad degree	15	6	79	9	10	81	(.156)
<b>Marital Status</b>	(n = 2249)			(n = 2211)			
Married	14	8	77	10	11	80	
Never married	18	12	69	21	15	64	
Divorced/separated	20	12	68	21	14	65	$\chi^2 = 63.89^*$
Widowed	12	11	77	6	10	85	(.000)
<b>Occupation</b>	(n = 1535)			(n = 1525)			
Sales	14	9	76	9	8	84	
Manual laborer	18	14	69	15	14	71	
Prof./technical/admin	15	9	76	10	12	78	
Service	15	14	71	19	10	71	
Farming/ranching	9	6	85	7	10	83	
Skilled laborer	20	12	68	9	18	73	
Admin. support	16	7	76	22	9	69	$\chi^2 = 39.57^*$
Other	31	17	51	18	18	65	(.000)

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

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