

Cornell National Social Survey 2009

Report 2: General Results

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Introduction

This report summarizes the findings of the 2009 Cornell National Social Survey (CNSS), conducted by the Survey Research Institute (SRI) at Cornell University. The 2009 CNSS queried continental United States residents regarding a wide range of topics through questions developed by Cornell University faculty and researchers. Questions were presented as modules that included topics on:

- Health and Emotional Well-being
- Political Identity
- Consumer Identity
- Religious Beliefs
- Ethnic Profiling
- Attitudes toward Immigration
- Attitudes in the Workplace
- Virtual Worlds

Methodology¹

- A total of 1,000 telephone interviews were conducted between October 1, 2009 and November 30, 2009. All participants were asked core demographic questions as well as all questions from the omnibus modules.
- The CNSS utilizes a random digit dial (RDD) sample of all telephone exchanges within the continental United States. Eligible respondents must be at least 18 years old.
- The cooperation rate was 61.3% using American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) standards.
- The margin of error (MOE) for questions with two response options is 3.1% among the 1,000 respondents.

Some highlights of results from the CNSS are described below.

¹ See Report 1: Introduction & Methodology for a full description at www.sri.cornell.edu. A copy of the questionnaire and data file is available at: <http://sri.cornell.edu/sri/CNSS.cfm>

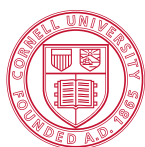
Health and Emotional Well-Being

Happiness

About half of the respondents would purchase a treatment for depression if the treatment cost 5% of their household income. The majority of those respondents would also purchase the treatment if it cost 10% of their household income. In contrast, about half of the respondents that would not purchase the treatment at 5% of their household income would not even take the treatment if it was offered to them at no cost. The median respondent identifies in the middle of the happiness scale. Regardless of the options available, over 75% of the respondents indicate a job with lower pay that allows for more sleep would make for a happier life than a job with higher pay that allows for less sleep.

- 51.0% of the respondents would purchase a fast and effective treatment for depression if it cost 5% of their household income.
- Of those respondents that would purchase the treatment for depression at 5% of their household income, 65.8% would also purchase the treatment at 10% of their household income.
- On the other hand, of those respondents that would not purchase the treatment for depression at 5% of their household income, 38.4% would purchase the treatment at 1% of their household income, 15.1% would not purchase it but would take it for free and about 46.5% would not even take the treatment if it were free.
- 70.8% of the respondents indicate they felt quite/very/extremely happy over the past 24 hours, while 30.3% of the respondents indicate they felt somewhat/not so happy.
- About 80% of the respondents indicate that a job with lower pay that allows for more sleep would make for a happier life than a job with higher pay that allows for less sleep.
- When options are limited to only the two hypothetical job options, 74.2% of the respondents indicate that a job with lower pay that allows for more sleep would make for a happier life.

Table 1 Depression Treatment Purchase Behavior at Various Cost



Levels

Purchase Incidence	Count	Percent
No at 5% of income	469	49.0
<i>No, not even for free</i>	213	46.5
<i>No, but would take for free</i>	69	15.1
Yes at 1% of income	176	38.4
Yes at 5% of income	489	51.0
<i>No at 10% of income</i>	164	34.2
<i>Yes at 10% of income</i>	316	65.8

Diet

Close to half of the respondents described themselves as overweight, while over half of respondents describe themselves as “about right”. Of those respondents self-described as overweight, the majority are trying to lose weight while the majority of those respondents self-described as underweight are not trying to gain or lose weight. Some of the respondents self-described as “about right” are nonetheless trying to lose or gain weight.

- Over half of the respondents (54.3%) describe themselves as “about right”, while 4.2% of the respondents describe themselves as underweight and 41.5% described themselves as overweight.
- The majority of the respondents (57.4%) are not currently trying to either gain or lose weight, while almost 40% are actively trying to lose weight.
- Over half (54.8%) of those who describe themselves as underweight are not currently trying to gain or lose weight, while 68.8% of those who describe themselves as overweight are currently trying to lose weight.
- Of the respondents who describe themselves as “about right”, 18.9% are trying to lose weight and about 3% are trying to gain weight.

Political Identity

Political Beliefs

The majority of the respondents indicate that they rarely or never seriously question their political beliefs. The majority of respondents believe that staying informed about national political issues is very important to them personally.

- More than half (61.5%) of respondents seriously question or rethink their political beliefs rarely or never, 34.4% and 27.1% respectively.

- The remaining respondents seriously question or rethink their political beliefs sometimes (22.3%) or frequently (16.2%).
- 17.7% of the respondents view staying informed about national political issues as a top personal priority while 6.7% view it as no personal importance. The remaining 75.6% view staying informed about national political issues as somewhat (22.8%) to very (52.7%) important.

Voting Behavior

The vast majority of respondents voted in their state’s 2008 primaries as well as the 2008 presidential election. Just over half of the respondents voted for a Democratic candidate in the 2008 primaries and almost half of the respondents voted for Obama. During the 2008 presidential campaign, the majority of respondents were contacted by a candidate or political party to encourage a vote, were not contacted by a labor union or advocacy group to encourage a vote, and were not contacted by friends or neighbors to encourage a vote.

- For the 2008 election, 36.0% of the respondents were registered as Democrats, 34.1% as Republicans, 14.8% as Independents, while the remaining 15.2% were not registered, not eligible to vote, etc.
- 79.8% of the respondents participated in their state’s primaries to select a presidential candidate in 2008.
- More than half of the respondents (50.6%) voted for a Democratic candidate for president in the 2008 primaries, while 46.5% voted for a Republican candidate with the remaining respondents voting for some other candidate.
- 92.0% of the respondents voted in the 2008 presidential election.
- 49.3% of the respondents voted for Obama in the 2008 presidential election, while 45.2% voted for McCain with the remaining respondents voting for some other candidate.
- About two-thirds of the respondents (66.5%) were contacted by a candidate or political party during the 2008 presidential campaign to encourage a vote.
- Less than one-third of the respondents (30.2%) were contacted by a labor union or advocacy group during the 2008 presidential campaign to encourage a vote.
- Less than one-third of the respondents (31.0%) were contacted by friends or neighbors during the 2008 presidential campaign to encourage a vote.

Table 2 Voting Behavior in 2008 Elections by Registered Party

Election	Democrat		Republican		Other	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
State Primaries						



Democrat	276	92.6	19	6.8	45	53.6
Republican	19	6.4	255	91.4	29	34.5
Other	3	1.0	5	1.8	10	11.9
Presidential						
Obama	276	87.9	37	12.3	54	43.2
McCain	31	9.9	257	85.4	46	36.8
Other	7	2.2	7	2.3	25	20.0

Economic Views

The majority of respondents view being well off financially as somewhat to very important personally. The majority of the respondents believe the nation's economic has gotten worse over the past year.

- 8.4% of the respondents view being well off financially as a top personal priority while 14.9% view it as no personal importance. The remaining 76.7% view being well off financially as somewhat to very important.
- 62.8% of the respondents believe that over the past year the nation's economy has gotten worse, to some degree. 19.7%/17.6% of the respondents believe the nation's economy has gotten better/stayed the same, respectively.

Religious Beliefs

Over half of the respondents never seriously question their own religious beliefs. Regarding the Bible, close to half of the respondents believe the Bible is inspired by the word of God, rather than the actual word of God or a book of history recorded by men. The majority of respondents also agree that the Bible should not help guide political decisions, the Bible is not to be read literally, the Bible is not without contradiction, but the Bible is an authoritative document which has moral rules I must follow.

- The majority of respondents (54.4%) never seriously question or rethink their own religious beliefs.
- The remaining respondents seriously question or rethink their own religious beliefs rarely (27.3%), sometimes (9.7%) or frequently (8.6%).
- Almost half of respondents (48.2%) believe that the Bible is inspired by the word of God, while about a quarter of the respondents believe the Bible is the actual word of God (27.3%) or the Bible is an ancient book of fables and history recorded by men (24.5%).
- More than half of the respondents (53.2%) do not agree that the Bible should help guide political decisions.
- 60.2% of the respondents do not agree that the Bible is to be read literally.
- Almost two-thirds of the respondents (64.6%) do not agree that the Bible is without contradiction.
- 62.0% of the respondents agree that the Bible is an authoritative document which has moral rules I must follow.

Ethnic Profiling

Consumer Identity

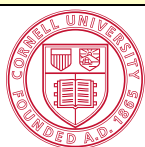
Spending Behavior

The majority of the respondents spend \$100 or less per week on groceries, \$50 or less per week eating out, \$50 or less per week on gasoline, \$200 or less in the past 3 months on clothing, and \$25 or less in the past 3 months on electronics.

- About half (50.2%) of the respondents report spending \$100 or less per week on groceries, with 2.0% spending less than \$25 and 20.4% spending \$76-\$100. 6.7% of respondents spend over \$250/week on groceries and the remaining 43.0% spend between \$101 and \$250.
- 70.7% of the respondents report spending \$50 or less per week on meals and snacks eaten outside of the home, with 21.4% spending less than \$10. 5.1% of the respondents report spending over \$150 per week eating out.
- 55.5% of the respondents report spending \$50 or less per week on gasoline, with 8.8% spending less than \$10. About 8.3% of the respondents report spending over \$150 per week on gasoline.
- 62.3% of the respondents report spending \$200 or less in the last 3 months on clothing, with 18.0% spending less than \$25. 9.8% of the respondents report spending more than \$600 in the past 3 months on clothing.
- 61.6% of the respondents report spending \$25 or less in the last 3 months on electronics. Only 5.9% of the respondents report spending more than \$1000 in the past 3 months on electronic, with 18.9% spending between \$100 and \$1000.

Table 3 Weekly Purchase Amount for Food, and Gasoline

Amount	Groceries (per Week)		Eating Out (per Week)		Gasoline (per Week)	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
< \$50	153	16.1	698	70.8	543	55.4
\$51-100	327	34.3	187	19.0	265	27.0
\$101-150	270	28.3	50	5.1	91	9.3
\$151-200	100	10.5	28	2.8	46	4.7
> \$200	104	11.0	23	2.3	35	3.6
Total	954		986		980	



Almost half of the respondents never seriously question their beliefs about racial or ethnic groups different from their own. Close to three-quarters of the respondents believe that ethnic profiling since the September 11th terrorist attacks is a long term change. The majority of respondents approve of ethnic profiling by law enforcement.

- Almost half of respondents (42.1%) never seriously question or rethink their beliefs about racial or ethnic groups different from their own.
- The remaining respondents seriously question or rethink their beliefs about racial or ethnic groups rarely (37.2%), sometimes (13.5%) or frequently (7.2%).
- 70% of the respondents believe that profiling and discrimination based on people's ethnic background constitutes a long term change since the September 11th terrorist attacks. The remaining respondents believe it is a temporary change (26.0%) or believe there has been no such change (4.0%).
- The majority of respondents (51.7%) approve of law enforcement agencies stopping or searching people of Arab or Middle Eastern descent to see if they may be involved in potential terrorist activities.
- Just over half of the respondents (55.7%) personally know a Muslim.

Attitudes Toward Immigration

The majority of the respondents believe that the number of foreign immigrants of all types should be decreased to some degree, while the number of legal immigrants should remain the same. The majority of respondents indicate that factors such as education and family should play a role in immigration policy regarding restrictions to entry. The majority of respondents favor the requirement of immigrants learning English as well as the use of public funds to help immigrants learn English. The majority of respondents oppose issuing drivers licenses to undocumented immigrants and the detention of anyone that is suspected of being an undocumented immigrant.

- Over half (52.3%) of the respondents believe that the number of foreign immigrants of all types coming into the United States should be decreased to some degree.
- On the other hand, only 7.1% of respondents believe the number of foreign immigrants entering the United States should be increased to some degree, while the remaining 40.5% believe the number of immigrants should remain the same.
- 35.2% of the respondents believe that the number of legal foreign immigrants of all types coming into the United States should be decreased to some degree.
- On the other hand, only 9.9% of respondents believe the

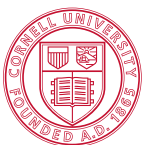
number of legal foreign immigrants entering the United States should be increased to some degree, while the remaining 54.9% believe the number of legal immigrants should remain the same.

- Regarding immigration policy, education/skills and reuniting families are viewed as top factors for determining admittance into the United States capturing 39.3% and 40.0% of the responses, respectively.
- The remaining 20.7% of respondents indicate that either foreigners should not be admitted (7.6%) or there should be no restrictions on admittance (13.1%).
- 80.6% of the respondents favor, to some degree, the requirement of learning English before immigrants receive documents for legalization.
- 70.3% of the respondents favor, to some degree, publicly funded programs to help immigrants learn English.
- 74.3% of the respondents oppose, to some degree, allowing undocumented immigrants to receive driver's licenses in the United States.
- 59.0% of the respondents oppose, to some degree, allowing local police to detain anyone they suspect is an undocumented immigrant even if the person has not broken any laws.

Attitudes in the Workplace

About half of the respondents indicate speaking up about specific work problems or ideas 6 or more times over the past year. Similarly, close to half of the respondents indicate they are never quiet about specific work problems or ideas while the remaining respondents are most likely not to speak up because they believe it is a waste of time. In contrast, the majority of respondents have never spoken up to managers regarding unfair or unjust treatment. The majority of the respondents that, at times, do not speak up about inequalities or injustices remain silent because they have had no unfair or unjust experiences. Also, over three-quarters of respondents have never spoken up to managers regarding illegal or unethical issues. The overwhelming majority of the respondents that, at times, do not speak up about illegal or unethical issues remain silent because they have had no illegal or unethical experiences or observations.

- Almost half (49.8%) of the respondents indicate that over the past year they have spoken up to managers 6 or more times about specific work problems or ideas, while only 15.5% of respondents indicate they have not spoken up at all over the past year.
- 4.1%, 18.5% and 12.1% of the respondents indicate that over the past year they have spoken up to managers about specific work problems or ideas 1 time, 2-3 times and 4-5 times, respectively.



- Close to half (47.1%) of the respondents indicate that they are never quiet about specific work problems or ideas.
- The remaining respondents indicate that, at times, they have chosen not to speak up to managers about specific work problems or ideas because they have no problems or ideas to share (27.4%), it is a waste of time to speak up (41.1%) and they are concerned about personal consequences (31.4%).
- The majority (54.8%) of the respondents indicate that over the past year they have never spoken up to managers about unfair or unjust treatment.
- 9.9%, 16.7%, 5.7%, and 12.8% of the respondents indicate that over the past year they have spoken up to managers about unfair or unjust treatment 1 time, 2-3 times, 4-5 times, and 6 or more times, respectively.
- 31.1% of the respondents indicate that they are never quiet about unfair or unjust treatment.
- The remaining respondents indicate that, at times, they have chosen not to speak up to managers about inequities or injustices because they have had no unjust or unfair experiences (56.6%), it is a waste of time to speak up (22.9%) and they are concerned about personal consequences (20.5%).
- Over three-quarters (78.0%) of the respondents indicate that over the past year they have never spoken up to managers about something illegal or unethical.
- 7.8%, 8.5%, 2.3%, and 3.4% of the respondents indicate that over the past year they have spoken up to managers about something illegal or unethical 1 time, 2-3 times, 4-5 times, and 6 or more times, respectively.
- 20.3% of the respondents indicate that they are never quiet about illegal or unethical issues.
- The remaining respondents indicate that, at times, they have chosen not to speak up to managers about illegal or unethical issues because they have had no illegal or unjust observations or experiences (80.6%), it is a waste of time to speak up (8.1%) and they are concerned about personal consequences (11.3%).

Virtual Worlds

Virtual worlds are familiar to the majority of the respondents. While the majority of the respondents have a neutral to negative view of virtual worlds, almost half of the respondents would encourage use of virtual worlds in education and business.

- 29.1% of respondents have never heard of virtual worlds before, while 9.4% of respondents spend time in a virtual world.
- Only 12.4% of respondents have a positive view of virtual worlds, while 59.1% have a neutral view 28.4% have a negative view.
- 49.0% of respondents would encourage use of virtual worlds in education and business, while 15.9% would discourage use of virtual worlds. The remaining 35.1% have a neutral view.

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Citing Results from the CNSS:

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Table 4 Reasons for Choosing not to Speak Up

Reasons	Problems/ Ideas		Inequity/ Injustice		Illegal/ Unethical	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
No Experience	62	14.5	168	39.0	279	64.3
Waste of Time	93	21.8	68	15.8	28	6.5
Personal Consequences	71	16.6	61	14.2	39	9.0
Never Quiet	201	47.1	134	31.1	88	20.3
<i>Total</i>	427		431		434	

