

Cornell National Social Survey 2010

Report 2: General Results

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Introduction

This report summarizes the findings of the 2010 Cornell National Social Survey (CNSS), conducted by the Survey Research Institute (SRI) at Cornell University. The 2010 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:

- Meals and eating habits
- Household spending and saving
- Health and pain management
- National healthcare policy
- Immigration and foreign policy
- Voting and voter registration
- Employment through job referrals
- Environmental and social participation

Methodology¹

- A total of 1,000 telephone interviews were conducted between September 15, 2010 and January 9, 2011. 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 58.0% 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. All results are reported as un-weighted percentages of respondents who provided valid answers. Those who refused to answer and those who responded that they did not know how to

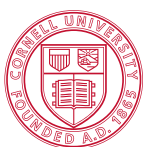
answer are excluded.

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>.

Meals and Eating Habits

The majority of the respondents have their main meal, which they typically refer to as "dinner," in the evenings, although some take their main meal toward the middle of the day or some other time – especially on weekends. Nearly half of those living with family members eat dinner together with their family seven days a week. More than a third of the respondents typically include canned or frozen food as part of family dinner.

- 78.9% of the respondents have their main meal in the evening during the weekdays and 66.9% of them have their main meal in the evening during the weekends.
- Nearly three quarters (72.1%) of the respondents live with family and, of those, 46.1% have dinner with their family every day. More than a third of the respondents (36.9%) have dinner at the home of relatives or friends at least once a week.
- 76.5% of the respondents living with family eat home-cooked dinner at least five days a week. At least once a week, 47.4% of the respondents have dinner at a fast food place and 55.7% of them have dinner at a restaurant while 48.1% of them order take-out food to eat at home.
- About a third of the respondents (34.8%) report that individual family members typically prepare different foods for themselves for the main meal. 21.2% of them typically grab something quick instead of preparing a meal.
- 24.3% of the respondents typically skip lunches and even more (36.1%) typically skip breakfasts. Only 11.2% of respondents typically miss eating evening meals with family.



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Household Spending and Saving

Spending Behavior

About half of the respondents spend \$100 or less per week on groceries, \$30 or less per week eating out, \$50 or less per week on gasoline, and \$150 or less in the past 3 months on clothing.

- Exactly half of the respondents report spending \$100 or less per week on groceries, with 1.9% spending less than \$25 and 21.4% spending \$76-\$100. 5.4% of respondents spend over \$250/week on groceries and the remaining 44.6% spend between \$101 and \$250.
- 71.1% of the respondents report spending \$50 or less per week on meals and snacks eaten outside of the home, with 21.2% spending less than \$10. 4.7% of the respondents report spending over \$150 per week eating out.
- About half (50.8%) of the respondents report spending \$50 or less per week on gasoline, with 10.4% spending less than \$10. About 7.5% of the respondents report spending over \$150 per week on gasoline.
- 61.8% of the respondents report spending \$200 or less in the last 3 months on clothing, with 17.7% spending less than \$25. 5.6% of the respondents report spending more than \$800 in the past 3 months on clothing.

although only one-third have at least one child under age 18. The majority of those with children under 18 consider college savings an important issue despite the fact that more than a third of them do not have any money saved for their children’s education.

- 32.3% of the respondents have at least one child under age 18.
- 68.3% of the respondents with children under 18 consider college savings to be *very important* with an additional 16.3% of them considering college savings *important*.
- 36.1% of the respondents have no savings for their children’s college education. 33.9% of the respondents have some college savings, but less than \$20,000.

Impressions of National Economy

Slightly more than half of the respondents feel that the nation’s economy has worsened in the past year.

- The majority of the respondents (56.2%) feel that the nation’s economy has gotten worse over the past year while 23.0% of them think the economy got better. More than a third of the respondents (35.6%) think the economy has gotten much worse while only 3.0% of them consider the economy much better.

Table 1 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	129	13.6	691	71.1	487	50.8
\$51-100	345	36.4	179	18.4	307	32.0
\$101-150	248	26.2	57	5.9	93	9.7
\$151-200	130	13.7	25	2.6	39	4.1
> \$200	95	10.0	20	2.1	33	3.4
Total	947		972		959	

Health and Pain Management

Chronic Pain

Less than a third of the respondents have experienced chronic pain during the past three months and most of them know the cause of the pain. A majority of the respondents with chronic pain experienced such pain for three or more years and cut down their physical activities because of the pain.

- 30.6% of the respondents have experienced chronic pain (i.e. pain, aching, burning, or throbbing sensations on most days for the past three months).
- Of those respondents who experienced chronic pain, 90.4% of them know the cause of the pain.
- 77.1% of those with chronic pain have experienced the condition for at least one year; 56.8% have experienced it for three years or more. 19.9% have experienced it for 6 months or less.
- When asked to rate their pain intensity on a scale from 0 (no pain) to 10 (worst pain one can imagine), half of the respondents with chronic pain rate the intensity in the

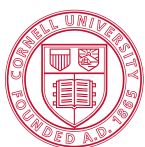
Investment

Excluding assets in IRA accounts, Keogh accounts, 401ks or similar defined contribution pension plans, nearly two-thirds of the respondents do not invest in stocks.

- 37.2% of the respondents invested in stocks.

College Savings

More than three quarters of the respondents have at least one child,



range of 4 to 6.

- 57.7% of the respondents with chronic pain cut down their usual activities during the past month because of the pain.

Weight

Nearly half of the respondents described themselves as overweight, while less than half of respondents describe their weight as “about right”. Close to half of the respondents are trying to lose weight.

- Less than half of the respondents (45.2%) describe themselves as “about right”, while 5.6% of the respondents describe themselves as underweight and 49.1% described themselves as overweight.
- Half of the respondents (52.9%) are neither trying to gain nor lose weight, while 43.6% of them are actively trying to lose weight.

National Health Care Policy

The majority of respondents oppose recent changes to the health care system and would like to go back to the previous health care system. Although nearly half of the respondents think the new health care bill will make things worse for their families, the majority of the respondents believe it will make things better for lower-income families.

- 55.7% of the respondents oppose the changes to the health care system enacted at the federal level in 2010.
- More than half (59.9%) of the respondents would choose to go back to the health care system that existed before passage of the 2010 health care bill.
- 41.0% of the respondents think the new health care bill will make things worse for them and their family, while 24.3% of them think the new bill will make things better.
- On the other hand, more than half of the respondents (53.7%) believe the new health care bill will make things better for lower-income families, while 29.3% of them think it will make things worse for lower-income families.

Immigration and Foreign Policy

Immigration

About half of the respondents personally know immigrants in their city or town and nearly a third of those respondents personally know illegal immigrants. Among them, the majority consider some of the immigrants (not necessarily illegal immigrants) to be close friends or have been invited to immigrants’ homes. Most of the people who have

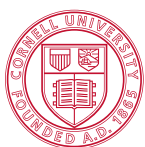
close immigrant friends established their relationship at work. The majority of the respondents consider immigration to be good for the United States.

- The vast majority of the respondents (91.5%) were born in the United States. Among those who were not born in the U.S., 79.8% of them are U.S. citizens.
- Slightly less than half (48.3%) of the respondents personally know immigrants (other than family relations) from a foreign country who live in their city or township.
- Among the respondents who know unrelated immigrants personally, 59.2% of them consider some of the immigrants to be close friends. 56.2% of them have been invited to immigrants’ homes. A quarter of them (24.9%) met their immigrant friends at church; a third of them (33.0%) at school events; 28.1% of them at community meetings; and 64.2% of them met immigrant friends at work.
- Nearly a third of the respondents (31.2%) personally know unrelated *illegal* immigrants.
- A majority of the respondents (58.3%) think that immigration is a good thing for the United States, while 27.2% of the respondents consider immigration bad.
- 59.7% of the respondents approve of Arab profiling by law enforcement agencies (e.g. stopping or searching people of Arab or Middle Eastern descent to see if they may be involved in potential terrorist activities).

Foreign Policy

The majority of the respondents do not think that military force makes problems worse. On the other hand, there is an even division of opinions about whether the United States should play an active role in world conflicts.

- More than a third of the respondents (36.7%) agree with the statement “The use of military force only makes problems worse”, while 28.6% of them disagree and 34.7% of them strongly disagree.
- Half of the respondents (50.3%) disagree with the statement “The U.S. needs to play an active role in solving conflicts around the world”.
- The majority of the respondents (56.2%) oppose using the U.S. military to destroy potential terrorist bases in Yemen without the permission of Yemen’s government. On the other hand, 26.1% of respondents strongly favor such a proposal.



Voting and Voter Registration

Voting Behavior

The majority of respondents voted in their states' 2010 primaries. Just over half of the respondents voted for a Republican candidate. During the 2010 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. More respondents are registered as Democrats than Republicans.

- Most of the respondents (92.5%) were registered to vote.
- For the 2010 primaries, 32.8% of the respondents registered as Democrats, 29.6% as Republicans, 16.2% as Independents, while 12.6% were not asked to register by party.
- In 2010, the majority (55.3%) of the eligible respondents participated in a primary or caucus to select a candidate for the U.S. congress.
- More than half of the respondents (51.3%) who participated in their primary voted for a Republican candidate, while 42.2% voted for a Democratic candidate with the remaining respondents voting for some other candidate.
- More than two-thirds of the respondents (71.3%) were contacted by a candidate or political party during the 2010 campaign to encourage a vote.
- More than a quarter of the respondents (28.3%) were contacted by a labor union or advocacy group during the 2010 campaign to encourage a vote.
- Almost exactly a quarter of the respondents (25.1%) were contacted by friends or neighbors during the 2010 campaign to encourage a vote.

Employment through Job Referrals

The majority of the respondents are currently employed with most of them working full-time. The vast majority of them have not looked for new jobs in the past four weeks and they are satisfied with their current jobs. A third of the respondents found their jobs through a referral from family members or friends. Although the vast majority of the respondents reported that their employers do not offer a "referral bonus", nearly half of them have told other people about job opportunities. Among them, nearly half of the job opportunities are with their own employers. The majority of their referrals applied and nearly half of them got the job. Almost all of the referrals are the respondents' relatives, friends and acquaintances and most of them are white.

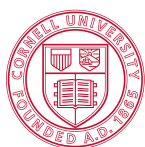
- 58.5% of the respondents are currently employed, with 80.5% of them working full-time. Among them, 27.6% work 40 hours a week and 46% work more than 40 hours a week.
- 16.9% of the respondents are currently unemployed. Less than a quarter (22.6%) of the respondents who are working are self-employed.
- Most of the respondents (85.6%), including those who are unemployed, have not looked for new jobs in the past four weeks.
- Most of the respondents (87.3%) are satisfied with their current jobs.
- More than a third of the respondents (38.6%) first found out about their current or most recent job through a family member, friend, or acquaintance. Among them, 70.2% indicate that the person who told them about the job opportunity was already working for the employer.
- 89.0% of the respondents report that their employers do not offer a referral bonus. Of those respondents that report their employers do pay a referral bonus, the average bonus is \$1129 with a range from \$1-\$10,000.
- Nearly half of the respondents (45.6%) have personally told at least one of their family members, friends or acquaintances about job opportunities during the past year.
- Of the respondents who made job referrals, 42.0% report that they told someone about a job opportunity with their own employer at the time. 58.5% of them report that the person they told about the job opportunity actually applied. And nearly half of the respondents (48.9%) report that the person they referred actually got the job.
- More men (58.3%) were referred to a job position by the respondents than women (41.7%). The majority of the referrals (71.4%) are white.
- A third (32.9%) of the job referrals were for respondents' relatives. 43.8% of them were for respondents' friends. And 16.9% of them were for acquaintances of the respondents.

Environmental and Social Participation

Environmental participation

The vast majority of respondents report that they have taken actions to improve the environment; on the other hand, most of them do not volunteer for any environmental activities.

- 81.3% of the respondents report that they have done things to improve and/or conserve the environment.



- However, among those who have taken some actions for the environment, most (86.1%) have not participated in any volunteer environmental activity.
- Among those who participated in volunteer environmental activity, 93.8% of the respondents spend less than 20 hours per month, with nearly two-thirds of them (63.7%) spending 5 hours or less per month.

Social participation

The vast majority of the respondents hardly ever felt lack of companionship or isolation from others over the past month.

- Nearly three quarters of the respondents (73.6%) have hardly ever felt lack of companionship during the past month, although one out of ten respondents (10.8%) report that they often lacked companionship.
- Most of the respondents (80.3%) report that they hardly ever felt isolated from others over the past month. The remaining respondents felt isolated from others some of the time (13.1%) or often (6.4%).

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