

SURVEY QUESTIONS:

Talker Research team members are members of the Market Research Society (MRS) and the European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research (ESOMAR).

Talker Research is also part of the Transparency Initiative through the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) – to view the complete methodology as part of this initiative, please visit the [Talker Research Process and Methodology page](#).

For more information on the survey or any additional questions, please contact: questions@talkerresearch.com

PROJECT NAME: Debt and The Pursuit of Happiness

SAMPLE: 2,000 respondents total: 1,000 Census-representative Hispanics (split evenly between Spanish-speaking and non-Spanish speaking) and 1,000 Census-representative non-Hispanics.

SPLITS: Age, gender, region, SQ1 (Hispanics vs. non-Hispanics), SQ2, Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4

Survey Questions:

1. What is your gender? [SINGLE SELECT, MAINTAIN ORDER]

1. Male
2. Female
3. Non-Binary
4. Other
5. Prefer not to say

KEEP NON-BINARY/OTHER/PNTS IN TOTAL, REMOVE FROM GENDER SPLIT

QSEX. HIDDEN GENDER RECODE

1. Male
2. Female

If D1=1, QSEX=Male

If D1=2, QSEX=Female

D2. What is your age in years?

[NUMERICAL OPEN-END; RANGE 0-99]

[**TERMINATE IF UNDER 18**]

D2a. Please select the year in which you were born.

[Dropdown list of years from 2008 to 1927]

[**TERMINATE if age and birth year do not align +/- 1 year**]

QAGE: HIDDEN AGE RECODE BY GENERATION

IF D2a=1997-2008, QAGE=Generation Z

IF D2a=1981-1996, QAGE=Millennials

IF D2a=1965-1980, QAGE=Generation X

IF D2a=1946-1964, QAGE=Baby Boomers

IF D2a=1927-1945, QAGE=Silent Generation

D3. Which state do you live in?

[DROP DOWN OF 50 U.S. STATES AND "I DO NOT LIVE IN A U.S. STATE".

TERMINATE IF OUTSIDE THE U.S.]

QRGN5: HIDDEN REGION RECODE

1. Northeast
2. Southeast
3. Southwest
4. Midwest
5. West

**[SPLIT] SQ1. Which of the following best describes you?
[select all that apply]**

1. American Indian or Alaska Native
2. Asian
3. Black or African American

4. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
5. White
6. Mixed race
7. Hispanic/Latino [Quota 1000]
8. Other
9. Prefer not to say [Exclusive]

[DP_HISP **HIDDEN PUNCH**

IF Hispanic selected DP_HISP = 1
ELSE DP_NONHISP = 2]

[SPLIT] [SHOW IF SQ1=G] SQ2. Which language do you primarily speak in your household? [select one]

1. English [QUOTA = 500]
2. Spanish [Quota 500][1]

c. Survey Questions:

1. **[SPLIT] How many family members/generations live in your household? [select one]**
 - a. None – I don't live with any family members
 - b. Only immediate family members live in my home (e.g. only parents and their children, if any)

c. Multiple generations of family/extended family live in my home (e.g. grandparents, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and or nephews live in the home)

2. **[SPLIT] What is your current annual household income before taxes? [select one]**

- a. Less than \$50,000
- b. \$50,000 to \$75,000
- c. \$75,001 to \$100,000
- d. \$100,001 to \$125,000
- e. \$125,001 to \$150,000
- f. \$150,001 to \$200,000
- g. More than \$200,000

3. **[SPLIT – Show IF SQ1 = G] Thinking about Hispanic culture, would you say you are.... [select one]**

- a. Acculturated in Hispanic culture: Regularly engaging with and/or enjoying Hispanic culture, including things such as cuisine, entertainment, and sports, and feeling connected to, and a sense of belonging to, Hispanic culture
- b. Not acculturated in Hispanic culture: Not regularly engaging with and/or enjoying Hispanic culture,

including things such as cuisine, entertainment, and sports, and not feeling connected to, nor a sense of belonging to, Hispanic culture

4. **[SPLIT[2]] Which of the following kinds of debt, if any, do you currently have? [select all that apply] [RANDOMIZE, ANCHOR LAST 2]**

- (1) Credit card debt with a balance carried month-to-month
- (2) Student loan
- (3) Buy now, pay later
- (4) Mortgage
- (5) Auto loan
- (6) Personal loans (bank, credit union, from a friend/family member, etc.)
- (7) Medical bills
- (8) Other (please specify)
- (9) N/A: I don't have debt accumulated [EXCLUSIVE]

5. **[HIDE IF Q4 = N/A] How much outstanding debt do you have from the following sources? [select one grid]**

[GRID]

a. Pipe in options selected in the previous question

[GRID BY]

- i. Less than \$1000
- ii. \$1000 - \$10,000
- iii. \$10,001 - \$20,000
- iv. \$20,001 - \$30,000
- v. \$30,001 - \$40,000
- vi. \$40,001 - \$50,000
- vii. \$50,001 - \$60,000
- viii. \$60,001 - \$70,000
- ix. \$70,001 - \$80,000
- x. \$80,001 - \$90,000
- xi. \$90,001 - \$100,000
- xii. More than \$100,000

6. **[HIDE IF Q4 = N/A] How does having debt make you feel?**

[select all that apply] [RANDOMIZE, ANCHOR LAST 2]

- a. Overwhelmed
- b. Ashamed
- c. Anxious
- d. Stuck
- e. Regretful
- f. Hopeless
- g. Indifferent
- h. Unworried
- i. Other (please specify)

j. No way in particular [EXCLUSIVE]

7. When did you take on debt for the first time?

- a. [AGE DROP DOWN RANGES FROM 16 UP TO AGE INPUT IN D2] [SELECT ONE]
- b. N/A: I have never taken on debt

8. [HIDE IF Q7 = N/A] When you took on debt for the first time, how well or poorly do you feel like you understood the entire impact that debt would have on your life and future? [select one]

- a. 5 - Very well
- b. 4 - Somewhat well
- c. 3 - Neither well nor poorly
- d. 2 - Somewhat poorly
- e. 1 - Very poorly

9. [HIDE IF Q4 = N/A AND/OR Q7 = N/A] How has having debt (either currently or previously) impacted you? [select all that apply] [RANDOMIZE, ANCHOR LAST 2]

- a. Made me more cautious about borrowing money in the future
- b. Caused tension in my relationships
- c. Delayed buying a home

- d. Delayed starting or growing a family
- e. Felt stuck at a job I don't enjoy because I needed the money
- f. Took on extra work or side jobs
- g. Delayed pursuing further education
- h. Limited my career choices
- i. Motivated me to work harder
- j. Had a negative impact on my mental health
- k. Made it difficult to invest
- l. Lowered my credit score
- m. Limited my ability to save money
- n. Kept me trapped in a non-ideal living situation
- o. Kept me from doing things I enjoy and/or pursuing hobbies or interests
- p. Kept me from leaving a bad relationship
- q. Kept me from being able to move to a new location
- r. I have less room in my budget to send money to family outside of the country/help family financially
- s. Other (please specify)
- t. No way in particular [EXCLUSIVE]

10. **In your family, how often is the topic of money discussed in your family/household, if at all? [select one]**
- a. Always discussed
 - b. Often discussed

- c. Sometimes discussed
- d. Rarely discussed
- e. Never discussed

11. **Which of the following topics, if any, would you prefer to talk about with your parents rather than discussing any personal money/financial issues you might have? [select all that apply] [RANDOMIZE, ANCHOR LAST 2]**

- a. Politics in general
- b. My love life
- c. My medical issues
- d. My mental health
- e. Issues with the way my parents raised me
- f. Generational trauma in our family
- g. Conflict within the family
- h. My parents' end-of-life plans
- i. My own end-of-life plans
- j. My personal failures or regrets
- k. My non-traditional family plans (not getting married, not having kids, etc.)
- l. Other (please specify)
- m. Nothing in particular [EXCLUSIVE]

12. In your opinion, which of the following financial topics are appropriate to discuss between a parent and their child? [select all that apply] [RANDOMIZE, ANCHOR LAST 1]

- a. How much money the parent makes
- b. Opening a savings account
- c. How much debt the parent has
- d. Creating and following a budget
- e. How credit cards work
- f. The risks of debt
- g. How taxes work
- h. Financial strain experienced by the family
- i. Investing basics
- j. The cost of household expenses
- k. Financial mistakes the parent has made
- l. How to plan for retirement in general
- m. The parents' plans for retirement
- n. None of the above [EXCLUSIVE]

13. What types of financial education or learning, if any, have you received? [select all that apply] [RANDOMIZE, ANCHOR LAST 2]

- a. Finance tips and instruction from family
- b. A high school finance course
- c. A college finance course
- d. A self-guided finance course or program

- e. Getting financial advice/guidance from a credentialed expert
- f. Self taught (reading articles or watching videos online)
- g. Other (please specify)
- h. N/A: I have not received any type of financial education or learning ever [EXCLUSIVE]

14. **How often, if at all, do you use AI (artificial intelligence) tools, such as ChatGPT, for financial advice? [select one]**

- a. Multiple times per day
- b. About once per day
- c. A few times per week
- d. About once per week
- e. A few times per month
- f. About once per month
- g. About once per year
- h. Never

15. **In general, how much access do you feel like you have to trustworthy and culturally-relevant financial guidance? [select one]**

- a. A lot of access
- b. Some access
- c. Not much access

d. No access at all

16. **Which of the following things do you wish you knew more about in general? [select all that apply]**

[RANDOMIZE, ANCHOR LAST 1]

- a. Debt
- b. Retirement planning
- c. Savings
- d. Taxes
- e. Mortgages and home buying
- f. Insurance
- g. Inflation
- h. Cryptocurrency
- i. Building credit
- j. None of the above [EXCLUSIVE]

17. **In general, how comfortable or uncomfortable are you...?**
[select one grid]

[GRID]

- a. Making small purchases (e.g. buying lunch, buying a bus ticket)
- b. Making large purchases (e.g. buying a car, buying a home)

c. Doing financial planning (e.g. making insurance decisions, creating an investment strategy)

[GRID BY]

- i. Very comfortable
- ii. Somewhat comfortable
- iii. Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable
- iv. Somewhat uncomfortable
- v. Very uncomfortable

18. **How would you rate your financial literacy? [select one]**

- a. A+
- b. A
- c. A-
- d. B+
- e. B
- f. B-
- g. C+
- h. C
- i. C-
- j. D+
- k. D
- l. D-
- m. F

19. **In general, how do you feel about your future? [select all that apply] [RANDOMIZE, ANCHOR LAST 1]**

- a. Fearful
- b. Anxious
- c. Uncertain
- d. Overwhelmed
- e. Hopeful
- f. Excited
- g. Optimistic
- h. None of the above [EXCLUSIVE]

20. **Thinking about your previous financial choices, what things, if any, do you wish you had done differently? [select all that apply] [RANDOMIZE, ANCHOR LAST 1]**

- a. Spent less on my wedding
- b. Not lived in such an expensive area/location
- c. Better understood the impact of taking on debt
- d. Not gone to college
- e. Went to a less expensive college or trade school
- f. Not purchased a home
- g. Not bought a new car
- h. Not taken on credit card debt
- i. Not taken on student loans
- j. Not moved out of my parents'/guardians'/family's home so early

- k. Not moved away from the area/region I grew up in
- l. Saved more
- m. Taken part in my employer-sponsored 401K
- n. Tracked my spending and stuck to a budget
- o. Started building credit sooner
- p. Waited to have children/start a family
- q. Taken out different types of loans
- r. None of the above/Nothing in particular [EXCLUSIVE]

21. At what age did you become 100% financially responsible for yourself (e.g. paying all your own bills and expenses)?

- a. [AGE DROP DOWN OF RANGES FROM 16 UP TO AGE INPUT IN D2] [SELECT ONE]

N/A: I have yet to become 100% financially responsible for myself

22. The “American Dream” is the belief that anyone in American society – regardless of where they were born or what social class they started in – can achieve success and upward mobility through hard work and determination. Do you believe the American Dream is still possible for those who want it? [select one]

- a. Yes
- b. No

c. Not sure

23. **What things do you think are included in the definition of the American Dream today? [select all that apply]**
[RANDOMIZE, ANCHOR LAST 2]

- a. Being debt-free
- b. Owning a home
- c. Having a college degree
- d. Having a child or children
- e. Getting married
- f. Being able to retire at age 65
- g. Being able to travel as much as you want to
- h. Being able to prioritize my personal life over my professional life
- i. Working fewer than 40 hours per week
- j. Working only 40 hours per week
- k. Working more than 40 hours per week
- l. Having a career, not just a job
- m. Working a job that pays more than \$100,000 per year
- n. Having multiple streams of income
- o. Starting a business
- p. Being able to pay for your children's college education
- q. Being able to pay for your parents' retirement
- r. Being able to send money to family outside of the country/help family financially

- s. Creating financial stability in general for your children
- t. Creating financial stability in general for your parents
- u. Being “self-made” (e.g. building your own wealth or status through your own effort rather than inheriting it)
- v. Building generational wealth
- w. Being able to afford healthy food
- x. Having enough money to be able to afford an unexpected expense without financial impact
- y. Not having to worry about money in general
- z. Other (please specify)
- aa. Nothing in particular [EXCLUSIVE]

24. **Do you want to achieve any aspects of the American Dream in your lifetime? [select one]**

- a. Yes
- b. No

25. **[SHOW IF Q24 = A and SHOW IF Q23 = A-Z] What aspects of the American Dream do you most want to have or achieve in your lifetime? [Select up to five]**

- a. [Show answer options from Q23]

26. **In general, do you think the American Dream is more or less achievable than it was 20 years ago? [select one]**

- a. Much more achievable

- b. Somewhat more achievable
- c. Neither more nor less achievable
- d. Somewhat less achievable
- e. Much less achievable

27. **How likely or unlikely do you think it is that you'll achieve the American Dream in your lifetime? [select one]**

- a. Very likely
- b. Somewhat likely
- c. Neither likely nor unlikely
- d. Somewhat unlikely
- e. Very unlikely

28. **[SHOW IF Q27 = D,E] Why do you think it's unlikely you'll achieve the American Dream in your lifetime? [select all that apply] [RANDOMIZE, ANCHOR LAST 1]**

- a. I'll never get ahead financially
- b. I'll never get out of debt [show to those who currently have debt]
- c. My gender limits my opportunities for success
- d. My ethnicity limits my opportunities for success
- e. The cost of living is too high
- f. Wages have not kept up with inflation

- g. Housing is unaffordable
- h. Healthcare costs are too expensive
- i. Caregiving responsibilities limit my career options
- j. Childcare costs are too high
- k. I lack generational wealth or family financial support
- l. The system feels stacked against people like me
- m. Other (please specify)

Occasionally, the media may contact us wanting to interview respondents in the survey for further information to boost the article with qualitative data. These experiential quotes are used to add something unique to their reporting and boost the authority of the story which can then aid SEO performance.

To facilitate this, we sometimes ask respondents if they're open to being contacted by the media for further interview. This consent must be gained prior to running the survey. This enables us to share certain respondents with the media in adherence with our data protection protocols. Please note, a respondents' answer to this question does not impact their eligibility for the survey in any way.

29. **We're looking to hear from everyday Americans. If you consent, you may be contacted for a short interview by phone or email from a journalist for further comment. There is no financial incentive for taking part, but your name and responses may be cited in a national publication.**

I'm interested in participating

I'm not interested in participating

30. **[SHOW IF "I'm interested in participating" in PREVIOUS QUESTION] Please enter your details below.**

Name:

Email: