

Methodology

Harris Interactive® fielded the study on behalf of National Endowment for Financial Education from November 5-7, 2012 via its QuickQuerySM online omnibus service, interviewing 2,059 U.S. adults aged 18+. Data were weighted using propensity score weighting to be representative of the total U.S. adult population on the basis of region, age within gender, education, household income, race/ethnicity, and propensity to be online. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated; a full methodology is available.

Key Findings – Diminished Financial Decision Making

Among U.S adults....

- 12% have themselves or had family members exhibit a diminished capacity in financial decision making
- 81% have not themselves or have not had any of their family members exhibit a diminished capacity in financial decision making
 - Women (84%) are significantly more likely to indicate this than men (79%)
- 6% are not sure if they or any of their family members exhibit a diminished capacity in financial decision making
 - Men are significantly more likely to indicate this than women (9% vs. 4%, respectively)

Key Findings – Instances Led To Believe There Was Diminished Capacity In Financial Decision Making

Among those who have themselves or have family member(s) that exhibited diminished financial capacity...

- 47% had trouble with bills
 - 41% forgot to pay bills, had unpaid bills, or paid bills late
 - 14% mistakenly paid bills twice
 - Men (21%) are significantly more likely to report this than women (6%)
- 36% had trouble calculating simple math problems
- 35% made irrational purchases
- 21% depleted savings accounts
 - Men (30%) are significantly more likely to say this than women (12%)
- 18% reported family/caregiver stole money
 - 13% had family member(s) steal money from me/them
 - 7% had caregiver(s) or legal advisor(s) steal money from me/them

- 18% suffered serious credit problems
- 12% made inappropriate investment decisions
- 11% were victimized by fraud (e.g., scams, identity theft)
- 4% had their home go into foreclosure
- 27% reported other instances led to believing there was a diminished capacity in financial decision making

Key Findings – Trust To Make Financial Decisions

Among those who have themselves or have family member(s) that exhibited diminished financial capacity ...

- 86% trust family to make financial decisions on their/their family member's behalf
 - 36% trust themselves (if they are a family member caring for someone with diminished capacity)
 - 25% trust other family members (e.g., siblings for those who have a parent who is experiencing diminished capacity in financial decision making)
 - 18% trust a spouse or partner
 - 7% trust their children (if they themselves have experienced diminished capacity in financial decision making)
- 6% trust an attorney or legal guardian
- 2% trust a financial advisor
- 1% trust a health care provider
- 6% trust someone else

Key Findings – Disagreements/Conflicts/Confrontation

Among those who have themselves or have family member(s) that exhibited diminished financial capacity ...

- 58% had any disagreements/conflicts/confrontation with others with regards to themselves or their family member's diminished capacity in financial decision making
 - 52% with family
 - 20% among siblings
 - 19% with other family members
 - 15% between parents and children
 - 11% with their spouse or partner
 - 8% among parents
 - 3% with financial advisors and/or lawyers
 - 7% with other people
- 42% have not had disagreements/conflicts or confrontation

Key Findings – Major Barriers Toward Open Communication With Family Members About Cognitive Decline Issues Related To Finances

Among U.S adults....

- 69% say there are any major barriers toward openly communicating with family members about possible cognitive decline issues related to finances
 - 34% report the person who has experienced diminished capacity in financial decision making has fear of losing independence
 - Women (38%) are significantly more likely to indicate this than men (28%)
 - 32% say refusal by family members to recognize a problem exists
 - Women are significantly more likely to say this than men (36% vs. 28%, respectively)
 - 31% indicate embarrassment by person who has experienced diminished capacity in financial decision making
 - Women (35%) are significantly more likely to report this than men (26%)
 - 26% say their family doesn't talk openly about money
 - 23% report the person who has experienced diminished capacity in financial decision making does not want to give up privacy
 - Women are significantly more likely to say this than men (28% vs. 18%, respectively)
 - 23% say a pre-existing tension among family members
 - Women are significantly more likely to indicate this than men (26% vs. 20%, respectively)
 - 22% indicate neither parents, children nor other family members know how to open the discussion about diminished capacity issues
 - Women (26%) are significantly more likely to indicate this than men (17%)
 - 19% report the distrust of family members
 - 16% say feelings that "I am the exception" or "this won't happen to me"
 - 13% indicate the misconception that the family is already prepared to handle cognitive decline issues
 - 3% say there are other barriers
- 31% say there are no barriers toward openly communicating with family members about possible cognitive decline issues related to finances

Key Findings – Participate In Cognitive Exam

Among U.S. adults....

- 50% would participate or encourage their family members to participate in a cognitive exam for those over 50 to help identify possible "red flags" of diminished capacity in financial decision making
 - 43% would encourage their family members to participate

- 36% of those over 50 say they would participate
- 13% would not participate or would not encourage their family members to participate
 - 11% say they would not participate
 - 10% would not encourage their family members to participate
- 29% are not sure if they would or would encourage their family members to participate
- 8% felt the question was not applicable to them

###