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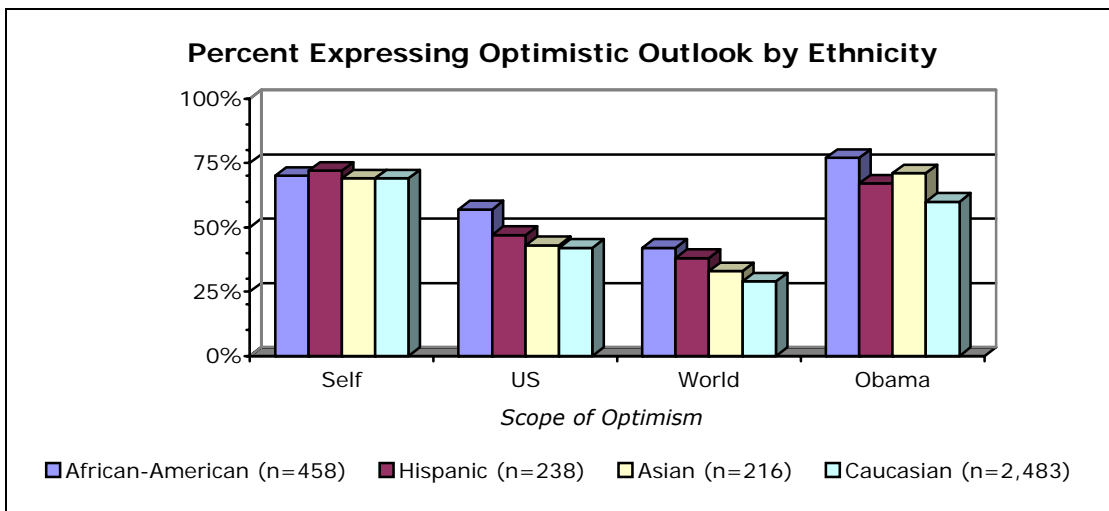
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CONTENT: Brief summary of findings from a recent online survey including (1) measures of optimism regarding one's self, the US, the world, and Obama's presidency; and (2) New Year resolutions made for 2009. Total sample size = 3,552.

1. Personal Optimism Runs High Despite Broad Uncertainty

An online study conducted recently by Resolution Research® of Denver, Colorado, found that despite the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression and the variety of domestic and international problems ushering in the New Year, over 70% of more than 3,500 study participants said they were optimistic about their personal future for 2009. This optimism diminished, however, when the participants were asked about their outlook for both the US and the World. Only 44% said they felt optimistic about the US and only 32% felt optimistic about the World's prospects. And yet when asked about President Obama, nearly two-thirds (63%) of the respondents described their attitude as optimistic – with nearly four times as many saying they were very optimistic about President Obama (33%) than those saying they were very pessimistic (9%). Not surprisingly, optimism about President Obama differed significantly by political party affiliation (82% of Democrats, 63% of Independents, and 32% of Republicans described an optimistic outlook). Optimism for the new president did not, however, vary significantly by gender or by other demographic variables.

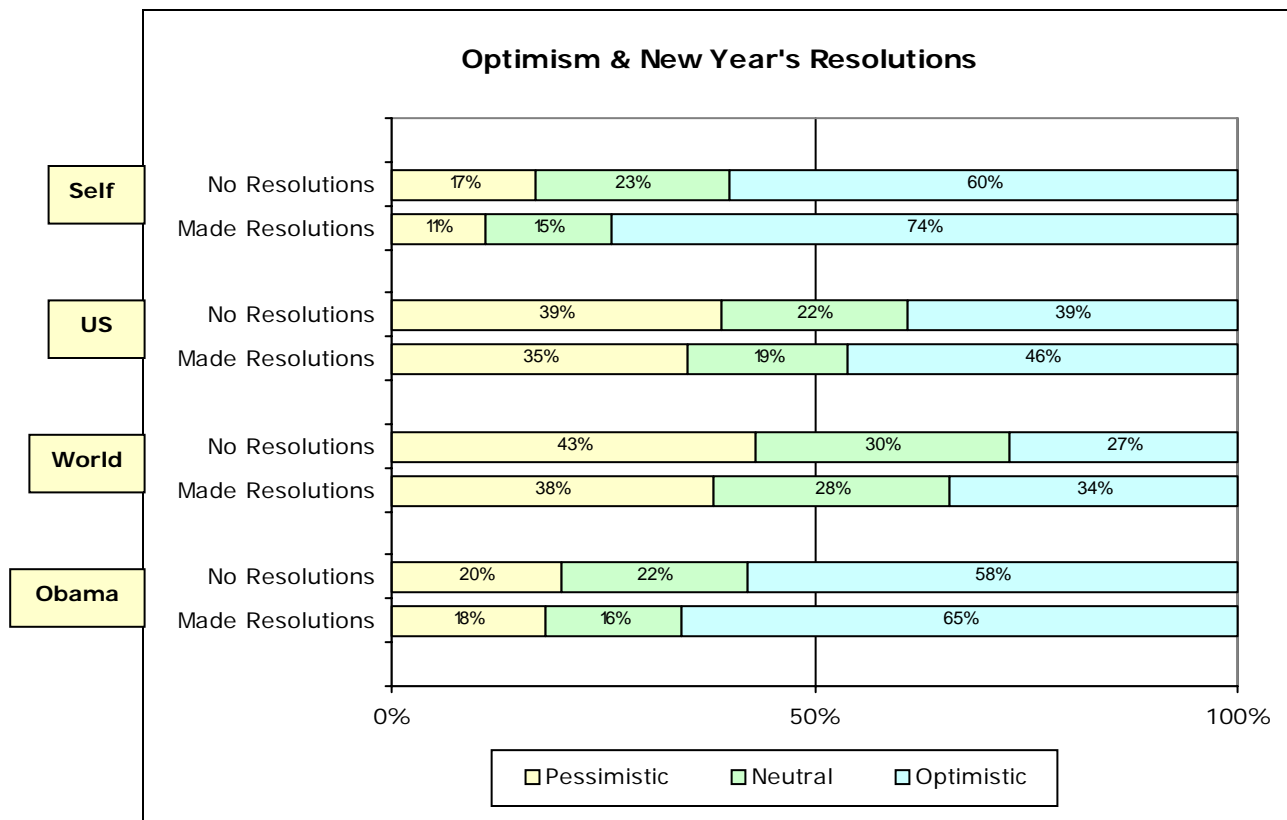
Although personal optimism was consistently high across all ethnic groups, African-American respondents expressed higher optimism regarding the US, the World, and President Obama than all other groups, while Caucasian respondents expressed the lowest levels of optimism across the same measures (see Graph below).



The survey results suggest that despite the economic crisis, continuing international conflict, and concern over social and environmental issues most people remain personally optimistic about 2009. The findings also suggest that this optimism weakens as the frame of reference expands; perhaps indicating that we are far less certain about those things over which we have less personal control.

2. Those who made New Year's Resolutions for 2009 are more Optimistic

Possibly even more interesting, those making New Year's resolutions for 2009 were more likely to be optimistic about their personal situation, the US, the World, and about Barack Obama's presidency (see Graph below).



If making New Year's resolutions in any way translates into a successful year, 2009 ought to be good year indeed. Based on the survey results, 74% of those who completed the Resolution Research® online questionnaire said they had made at least one resolution for 2009; a dramatic increase over the 43% of them who made resolutions at the start of 2008.

Another surprising finding about the positive impact of resolutions is evidenced by those who kept all or even some of their 2008 New Year's resolutions. This group was more optimistic about the outlook for their personal life, the US, and the World when compared to those who did not keep any of their 2008 resolutions. So, maybe there is something to this Resolution thing!

A large majority – 75% – of all respondents who made resolutions in the past reported being *extremely* proud of having kept at least one resolution. Respondents reported being most proud of keeping their resolutions to eat healthier (15%), exercise (12%), and stop seeing people who were not good in their lives (10%). Respondents were asked to describe the resolution they were most proud of keeping. As the quotes below indicate, keeping New Year’s resolutions can have a long-term, positive impact on people’s lives.

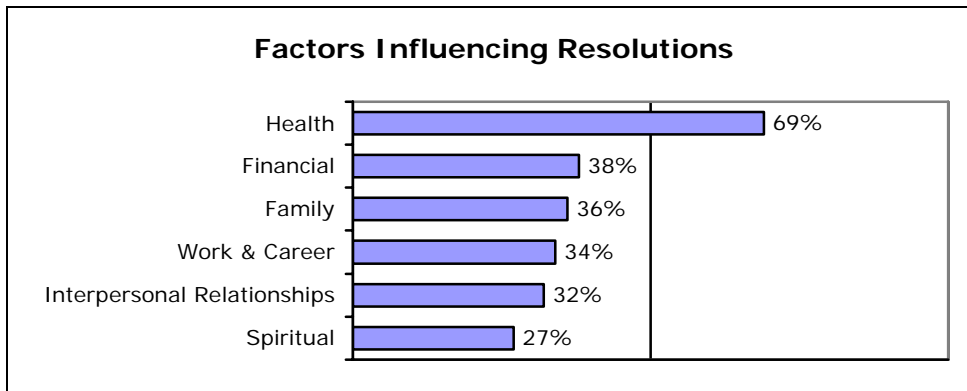
- *Paid off debt*
- *Stood up for myself*
- *Now with SOULMATE!!*
- *Learned Salsa dancing*
- *Ran my first marathon!*
- *Stopped biting my nails*
- *Stopped using credit cards*
- *Following my dream career path*
- *Unpacked moving boxes after 7 years*
- *Left my job and embarked on a new career*
- *Lost 40 pounds and still have not gained a pound extra*
- *Recycling and reducing energy usage, especially driving less*
- *Made time to dedicate to reading and memorizing Scripture and praying....VITAL!*
- *In good control of my health, no longer diabetic, no high blood pressure or cholesterol*

What helps people succeed at keeping their resolutions? Apparently making several resolutions and writing them down aids in success.

- Roughly half of those making only one resolution in 2008 succeeded in keeping it while 82% of those making 4 or more resolutions kept at least some of them. (For 2009, a majority of the respondents reported making 2 or 3 resolutions.)
- Only about one-third (32%) actually wrote down their 2008 resolutions; while two-thirds (68%) just “thought about them.” Among the respondents who wrote down their resolution(s), 81% kept all or some of them, compared to 66% of those who did not write them down.

Among those who made resolutions in 2008, 91% also made resolutions in 2009. Over 70% of those making resolutions in 2009 admit to making the same resolution(s) they previously failed to keep. If at first you don’t succeed ...

What kind of New Year’s resolutions did people make for 2009? Considering today’s muddled monetary climate, it’s interesting that economic concerns ranked a distant second on the list of factors influencing the choice of resolutions. In all, only 38% of those who reported making a resolution focused on fiscal concerns. Apparently the stimulus that matters most is health. More than two-thirds (69%) of the 2,625 respondents who made resolutions said they were motivated to do so out of concern for their health. The influence of health on New Year’s resolutions is more pronounced with age, increasing from about 60% of those under age 25 to 84% of folks age 65+. Overall, one-third of all persons making resolutions resolved to lose weight, another third pledged to either develop a healthy habit (20%) or break an unhealthy one (13%). Evidently, most people find truth in the adage – If you have your health, you have everything (see Graph below).



Overall, results from Resolution Research's® recent online survey indicate that most people made New Year's resolutions for 2009 and enter the year with a general feeling of optimism about their personal situation and about the new presidency of Barack Obama. Perhaps the one will lend itself to successful change at the personal level and hopefully the other will lead to constructive progress on issues faced worldwide.

For more information: A complete summary of findings can be obtained by contacting ResolutionResearch.com at mary@re-search.com or at 800-800-0905. Data for the online survey was collected from Resolution Research® (www.ResolutionPanel.com) panelists between December 30, 2008 and January 6, 2009. The 3,552 respondents represent every state in the USA as well as mix of gender, age, ethnic backgrounds.

About Resolution Research®

Resolution Research & Marketing, Inc. was founded in Denver, Colorado in 1990 and is one of the country's leading full service market research firms. Resolution conducts numerous types of market research studies including online surveys, telephone surveys, focus groups, in-home product tests, taste tests, clinical trials, mock juries, bulletin boards and more. A growing research panel including consumers, business executives and medical professionals also increases Resolution's ability to rapidly serve its clients. Client industries include healthcare & medical organizations, tech companies, utilities, major colleges & universities, retail organizations, service businesses and government institutions. Resolution Research is [BBB approved](#) and [WBENC certified](#).
