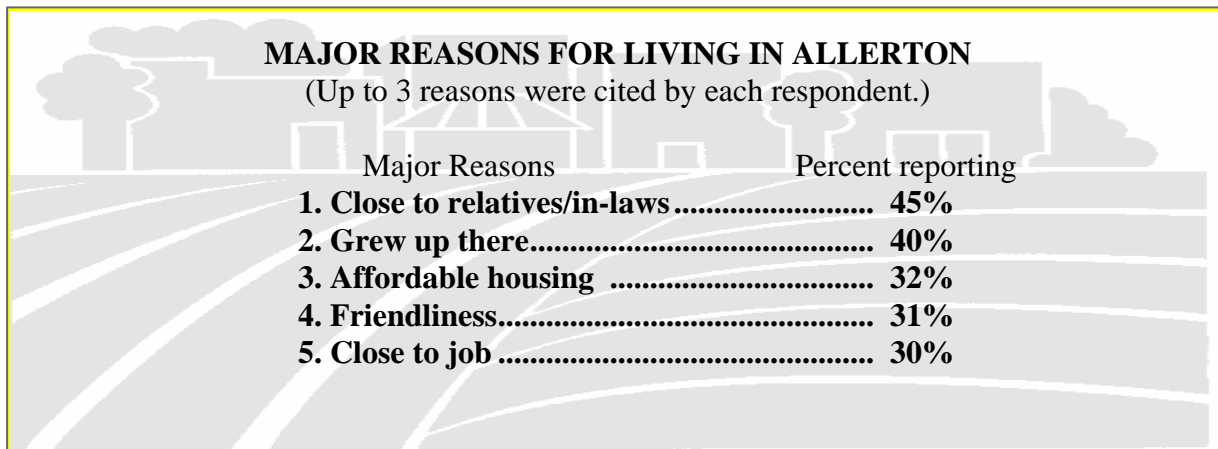


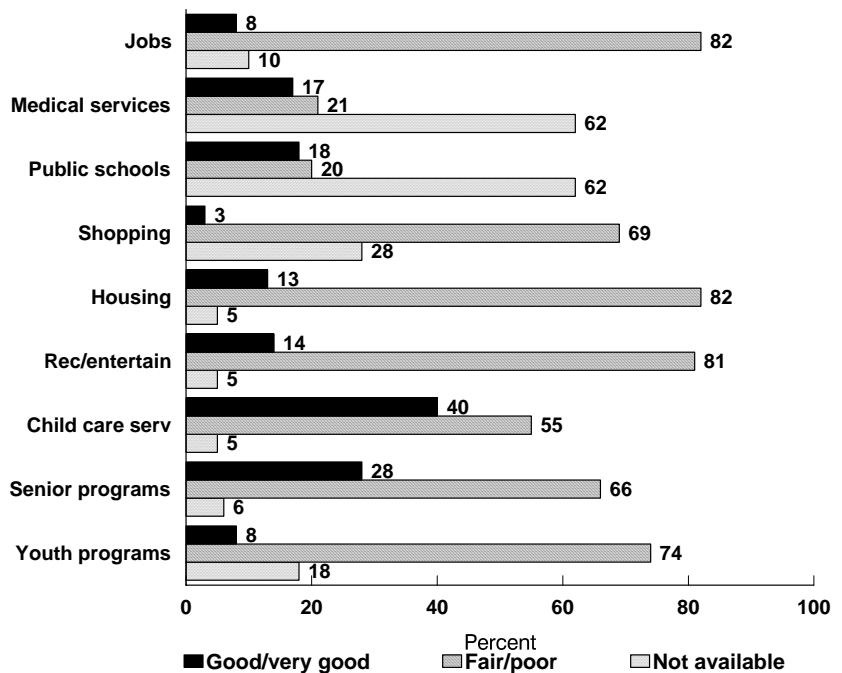
RESIDENTS OF ALLERTON SPEAK OUT

During July 1994, you were one of 15,000 households asked to participate in a statewide survey. The purpose of this survey was to identify the problems and opportunities facing Iowa's rural communities. The households asked to take part in the study were randomly selected from telephone directories of 100 Iowa communities (150 households per directory). Selection of communities was also random where one community with 500-10,000 residents was selected from each of Iowa's 99 counties. (Because of its geographic size, two communities were included for Pottawattamie County, one from West and another from East Pottawattamie.) Of the 15,000 questionnaires mailed out, 10,798 (or 72%) were completed and returned. Below are highlights of the results as reported by Allerton's 99 survey participants.



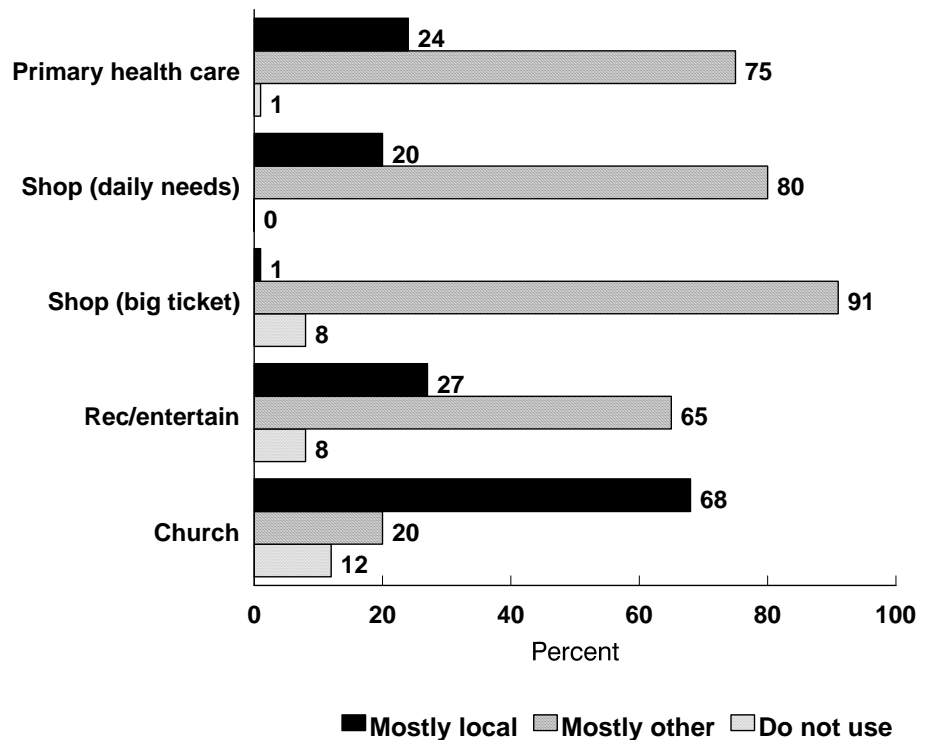
RATING SERVICES AND FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN ALLERTON

Nine local services and facilities were listed on the questionnaire along with the instructions to rate each as "very good," "good," "fair," "poor," or "not available." Of the 99 respondents from Allerton, half or more rated jobs, shopping, housing, child care services, senior citizen programs, recreation/entertainment, and youth programs no better than fair. For medical services and public schools, at least half of the respondents indicated the services were not available in Allerton.



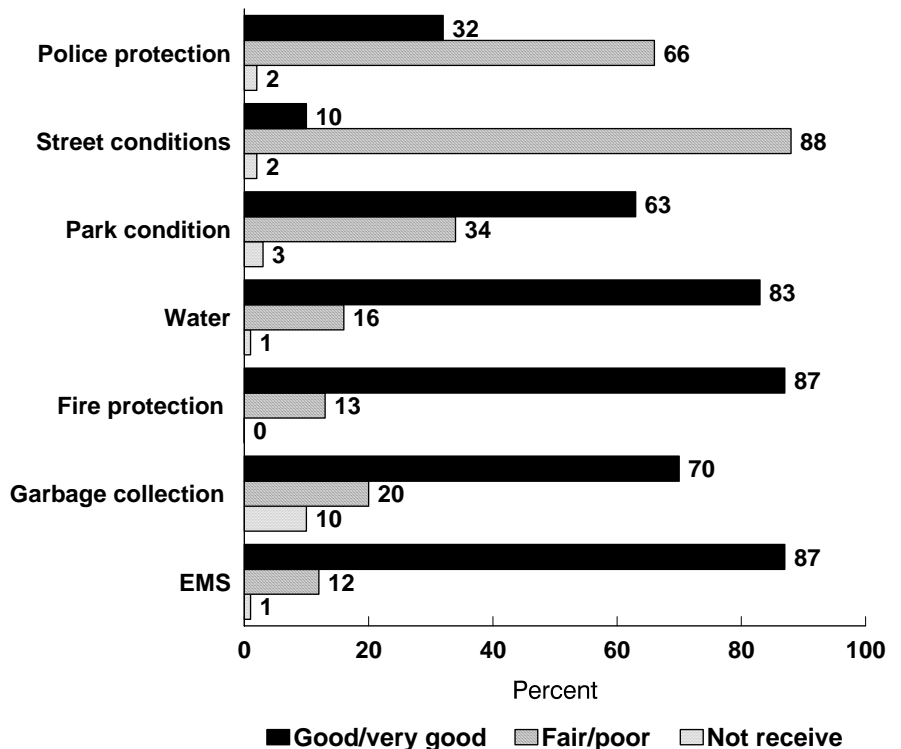
LOCAL PURCHASING PATTERNS

For a variety of reasons, many residents of Iowa's smaller towns rely on neighboring cities for services. Based on returned questionnaires, Allerton residents follow this pattern. At least three-fourths of the people reported leaving Allerton for primary health care, shopping for daily needs, and shopping for 'big ticket' items. In fact, church was the only service where at least half of the people reported remaining in Allerton.



RATING GOVERNMENT SERVICES

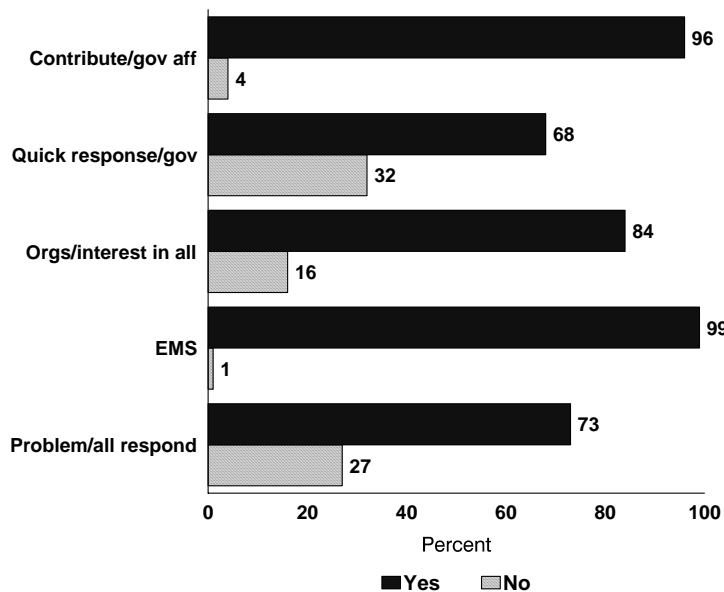
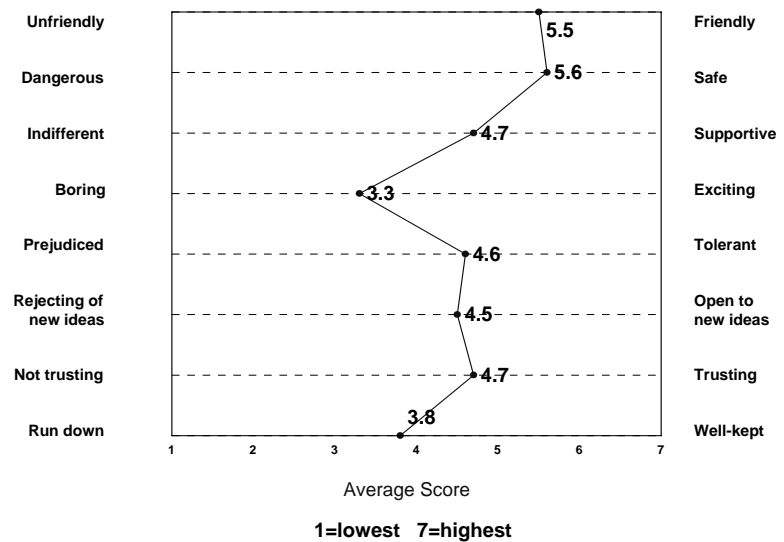
Seven services normally provided through local governments were included with the instructions to rate each as "very good," "good," "fair," or "poor". Fire protection and emergency response service (EMS) were rated highest with 87 percent giving it a positive (very good or good) rating. Over half of the individuals also rated park conditions, water, and garbage collection positively, while police protection and street conditions received lower ratings (fair or poor) by a majority of the respondents.



FRIENDLINESS AND EVIDENCE OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT

In spite of the frequently publicized economic problems recently experienced by many of Iowa's smaller communities, reference often is made of their favorable social climates. However, no information to date has been available to determine the extent to which Iowa's rural communities do in fact possess favorable social environments. Accordingly, questions were included in the survey asking residents to evaluate various social attributes of their communities.

Of the eight attributes evaluated on a 7-point scale, Allerton residents assigned the highest rating to the safety of Allerton, followed closely by the friendliness of its resident. The lowest rating was given to the amount of excitement offered to Allerton residents.



respond in regards to a complaint where 31 percent of the respondents reported dissatisfaction in this area.

According to survey respondents, Allerton's responsiveness to personal and community problems is generally quite favorable. Most everyone agreed that all are allowed to contribute to local governmental affairs and that in the case of an emergency all residents would help. At least three-fourths also felt that organizations are interested in what is best for all residents. If any concern was noted about how Allerton responds to problems, it pertained to how quickly a city office would

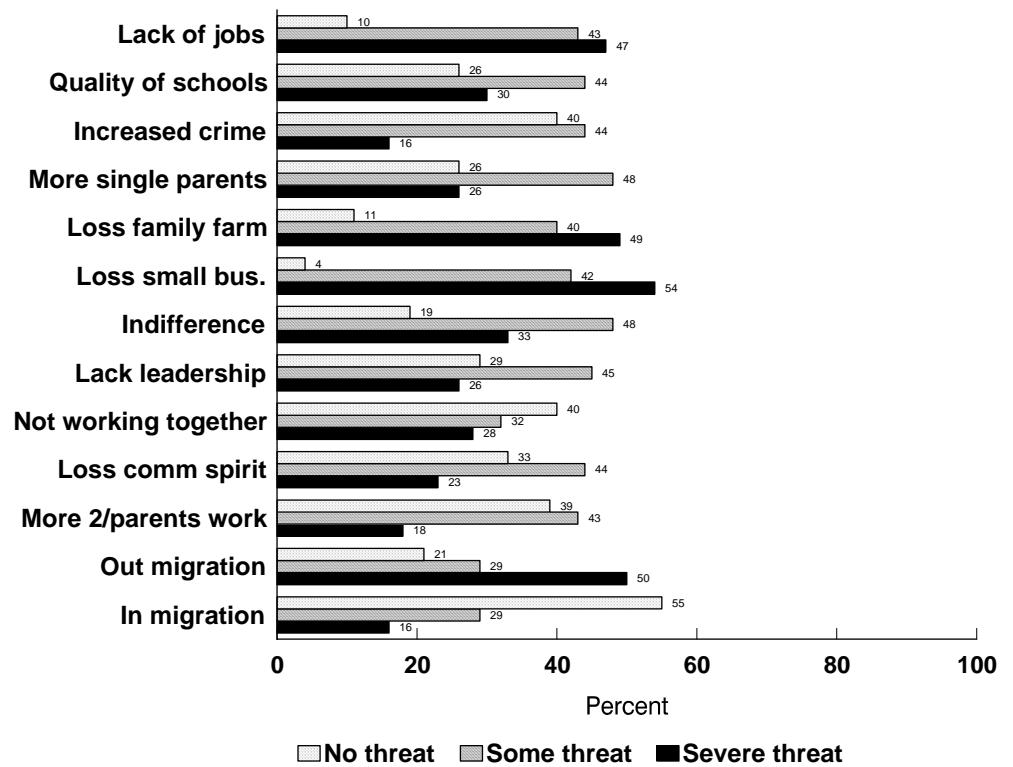
INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION IN ALLERTON ACTIVITIES

Over three-fourths of Allerton residents are interested in being informed of community activities. Yet only about 49 percent reported having participated in any community improvement project over the past year. When asked to describe their level of involvement in local community improvement activities and events, 42 percent indicated being very or somewhat active.

Ties with other local residents often are an indication of their commitment to the community. In Allerton's case, 62 percent of the respondents indicated knowing the name of half or more of the adult residents. Also, 44 percent indicated that half or more of their close personal friends live in Allerton. As for their adult relatives and in-laws, 16 percent indicated that half or more of them live in Allerton.

PERCEIVED COMMUNITY THREATS

The future of Iowa's rural communities will probably depend on whether or not important trends will continue over the course of the next few years. In the case of Allerton, at least half of the residents see loss of small businesses and people moving out of the community as conditions that pose serious threats to the future of the community. Lack of jobs, loss of family farms, and residents' indifference about the community, were considered serious threats by at least one-third of Allerton residents. Minimal concern was expressed with people moving into the community.



Minimal concern was expressed with people moving into the community.

OVERALL COMMUNITY ATTACHMENT

How important is it for Allerton residents to feel a part of this community? When asked this question, 84 percent responded that it was important for them to feel a part of the community. When asked whether they feel "at home" in Allerton, 90 percent said that they did. Furthermore 75 percent indicated they would be sorry to move away from Allerton. In spite of the community concerns as indicated in the previous charts, the majority of residents see Allerton as their home and are reluctant to move away from the community.

Prepared by Paul Lasley, Terry Besser, Jan Flora, and Vern Ryan, Department of Sociology, Iowa State University. For further information about this report, contact Sandy Scholl, Union County Extension Office, 105 W. Adams, Suite B, Creston, IA 50801; Tele (515) 782-8426; Fax (515) 782-8426; x1scholl@exnet.iastate.edu. For information on other reports in the RDI series, contact Paul Lasley, 304 East Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011; Tele (515) 294-0937; Fax (515) 294-2303; x1lasley@exnet.iastate.edu.