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|  | [Opinion Polls](http://home.birzeit.edu/dsp/opinionpolls/)  Poll No. 5  **Public Opinion Poll (5): The Intifada, & America's Relations with the Arab World**  **[ Analysis of Results ] [** [**Detailed Results**](http://home.birzeit.edu/cds/opinionpolls/poll5/results.html) **] [** [**Sample Distribution**](http://home.birzeit.edu/cds/opinionpolls/poll5/sample.html) **] [ PDF Format ] [** [**In Arabic**](http://home.birzeit.edu/dsp/arabic/opinionpolls/poll5/) **]**  Analysis of Results  Analysis of the Results  1. The Aftermath of the September 11 attacks in the United States   * The majority of Palestinian respondents are against any military action directed at Afghanistan. 89% said that the U.S. is not justified in attacking Afghanistan. Only 7% said that it is justified. At the same time, 69% said that the U.S. is not justified in attacking those responsible for the attacks in New York and Washington. However, about 26% felt that it is justified in attacking them. Palestinians are generally more concerned about attacking Afghanistan than about attacking those responsible for the attacks in New York and Washington. * Attacks on civilians such as the ones taking place in New York go against Islamic Sharia'. A majority of Palestinian respondents (64%) feel that these attacks are inconsistent with Islamic Sharia'. Only 26% feel that such attacks are consistent with Islamic Sharia'. In addition, 77% of students and professionals feel that attacking civilians in the United Sates is inconsistent with Islam. 72% of the age group 48-52, and 80% of those who carry a two –year college degree share this view. The percentage of those who feel that these attacks are inconsistent with Islam in the West Bank (66%) is higher than it is in Gaza (61%). * At the same time, nearly half of Palestinians polled (48%) feel that these attacks are not in the best interests of Palestinians and Arabs. In contrast, 43% feel that such attacks are beneficial to Arab interests. Over 51% of city residents feel such attacks are not in the best interest of Arabs. A majority of the educated, professionals, students, and middle class and wealthy respondents share the view that such attacks are not in the best interests of Arabs. * Palestinians are split over the ramification of the attacks in the U.S. on the Palestinian – Israeli conflict. About 33% believe that the attacks will lead to even more American support for Israel, while 37% believe that the September 11 events will lead to a more balanced approach in the region. In addition, 22% believe that the attacks will have no impact on American policy in the region. Men are much more optimistic that the September 11 events will lead to a more balanced approach, as 43% of them believe the approach will become more balanced when compared with 31% among women who feel this way. Over 41% of the age group 33-47 share the same view. Over 52% of those holding college and university degrees believe that the attacks will lead to a more balanced approach in the region. The most optimistic are government employees as 58% of them share this view.   2. Perceptions of the United States   * Palestinian respondents perceive the U.S. as democratic and respectful of the rights of its citizens. On the other hand, they perceive the U.S. as not respecting the rights of minorities within its borders and as having high crime rates. On the international level, the U.S. scored lower in the areas of promoting democracy and human rights abroad. Respondents also felt that the U.S. encourages the proliferation of arms and wars, and that it is rich at the expense of poor nations around the world.  |  |  | | --- | --- | | Perception of the U.S. (% of those who said definitely yes) | | | Rich at the expense of poor nations | (86.5%) | | Has a high crime rate | (84.4%) | | Encourages the proliferation of arms and wars | (71.0%) | | Respects the rights of its citizens | (66.5%) | | Practices democracy within its boarders | (52.6%) | | A society that is unaware of the world | (42.3%) | | Respects the rights of its minorities | (22.3%) | | Promotes democracy around the world | (22.0%) | | Promotes human rights around the world | (17.8%) |   About 40% of the respondents believe that the American people don't know what their government is doing in other countries. In contrast, 36% believe that Americans know what their government is doing. In addition, 15.4% believe that they know to some extent.   When asked about the number of Muslims residing in the U.S. (approximately 2.6% of the country's overall population or about 7 million), only 23% guessed correctly. The largest group of respondents – 30% thought the percentage was higher than 5%.   Despite these relatively negative evaluations, over 45% would still like to see some features of the American system implemented in the Arab World. In contrast, 48% would not like to see features of this system implemented.  3. Perceptions of Arab regimes  Arab regimes received low ratings in various areas of democratic practices. When asked if Arab regimes practice democracy, only 18% gave a definite positive answer. In terms of treating all citizens equally, only 20% said that Arab regimes treat their citizens equally.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Perceptions of Arab Regimes (% of those who said definitely yes) | | | Respect the rights of minorities | (37%) | | Respect the rights of citizens | (27%) | | Allow freedom of the press | (25%) | | Treat citizens equally | (20%) | | Practice democracy | (18%) |   The largest group of respondents (47%) believes that the people of the Arab world don't know what their governments are doing concerning issues of importance to them. In contrast, 36% believe that they know and another 15% believe that they know to some extent.  4. Sources of animosity against the United States  Less than 10% of the respondents view relations between America and the Arab world as being positive. In contrast, 47% see these relationships as negative. Another 39% see them as positive at times and negative at other times. Only 16% see that relations between Arabs and Americans are improving. This compares with 47% who see these relations as deteriorating. In addition, 30% see that no change is taking place concerning these relations.  *Palestinian respondents confirmed that they are in disagreement with U.S. policy but that they have no negative feeling against the people of the U.S.*  -Over 66% of the respondents said that they have no negative feelings against people in the U.S.  -87%, however, said that they have negative feelings against the policies of the U.S.  -Another 31% said that they have negative feelings against both the policies and the people of the U.S.  -In contrast, about 10% said that they have no negative feelings against either U.S. policies or the people.  In general, the perceived American bias towards Israel was considered to be the most important source of animosity against the U.S. in the Arab World. This was followed by perceived American animosity towards Islam and continued sanctions against Iraq. The perceived exploitation of Arab oil resources scored high as a source of animosity. It is also interesting to note, however, that a majority feels that "widespread prejudice" against the West in general is a source of animosity against the U.S. At the same time, a majority feels that the Arab media, in general, distorts the image of the U.S.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Factors shaping the relationship between the Arab world and the U.S.  (% Of those who said a "very important" source) | | | Perceived American bias towards Israel | (90%) | | Perceived American animosity to Islam | (88%) | | Continued actions against Iraq | (87%) | | Perceived U.S. exploitation of Arab oil resources | (79%) | | Perceived Arab Media's distortion of the U.S. | (60%) | | Perceived widespread prejudice in Arab World against the West | (58%) | | Perceived U.S. support of undemocratic regimes in the region | (54%) | | Perceived lack of reliable information about the U.S. | (52%) |   Regardless of these feelings, the results show that 38% of the respondents have a relative residing in the U.S. or carrying an American passport. In the West Bank, this percentage is almost 46%. In contrast, only 27% of Gaza respondents could say that they have a relative residing in the U.S. or carrying an American passport.  At the same time, 44% of the respondents of all age groups watch American movies or TV shows. This percentage is as high as 54% among younger respondents, and is about 58% among students and professionals. The percentage in the West Bank (48%) is higher than in Gaza (37%). Also, the rate of viewership increases with wealth, with over 85% of the wealthy watching American movies.  5. The Intifada   * 46% of Palestinians say that they are "dissatisfied" with how the Intifada is proceeding. This is an increase of 13% from February 2001. About 37% say that they are "satisfied" (a decline of 7%) and 16% say they are "somewhat satisfied." A large percentage (72%) believes that "losses" associated with the Intifada have been greater than "gains." Previous polls have shown the degree of economic deterioration and other negative impacts suffered by Palestinians as a result of the continued closure imposed by Israel. In addition, 46% feel optimistic that the Intifada will bring about positive results in achieving Palestinian goals. This is a (19%) decline from when the Intifada started, as 63% of the respondents said that they were optimistic at that time.   Dissatisfaction with how the Intifada is proceeding is much higher among women than men. Over 58% of the women surveyed said they were "dissatisfied", compared with 32% among men. NGO employees are the most satisfied with how the Intifada is proceeding, as 58% of them said that they were satisfied. This compares with 44% among private sector employees and government employees. Dissatisfaction with how the Intifada is proceeding increases with household income. However, dissatisfaction declines with education. For example, 53% of those who are illiterate are dissatisfied with how the Intifada is proceeding, while 29% of BA holders share the same feelings.   The poorest segments of society felt the most losses during the Intifada; 75% of the respondents (with income less than $450 per month) felt that the losses of the Intifada have been greater than the gains. This compares with lower percentages among other income brackets.   * The majority of respondents (75%) feel that meetings between President Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres are useless and that they will not help in bringing peace to the Palestinians. In addition, over 91% feel that the current Israeli government, led by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, is not serious about reaching an agreement to end the conflict with the Palestinians (compared with 64% in February 2001). At the same time, many Palestinians are hesitant to support the latest ceasefire declaration by President Yassir Arafat. About 57% oppose a ceasefire declaration, while only 39% support it. The percentage of those supporting such a declaration declined from over 50% [[1](http://home.birzeit.edu/cds/opinionpolls/poll5/analysis.html#foot1)] in June 2001, to only 39% now. Opposition to the ceasefire is higher among the residents of Gaza and refugee camps. Opposition is also higher among NGO employees (71%) when compared with 57% of private and government sector employees.   Palestinians feel that the Intifada will continue for a long period of time; 62% said that it would continue for years. Only 11% said that it would continue for months. The majority (73%) declared that Palestinian society is ready for a long confrontation with Israel (compared with 55% in November 2000). Only 22% said otherwise.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [1] According to a JMCC poll, June 2001    [Top of this page](http://home.birzeit.edu/cds/opinionpolls/poll5/analysis.html#top)    |    [DSP Home](http://home.birzeit.edu/dsp/) | | |  |
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