

JMCC Public Opinion Poll No. 36 - Part One

On Palestinian Attitudes Towards Final Status Issues and Women and Legislation in Palestine - March 2000

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Introduction

This public opinion poll deals specifically with two issues. The first is on the political situation and opinions concerning final status issues and negotiations. This includes attitudes towards the Palestinian state, refugees and right of return, settlement and borders. The second issue deals with women issues particularly on women and law and legislation. This includes opinions, current discussions and debates within the Palestinian society on favoring civil laws or Islamic shari'a laws.

Methodology

A random sample of 1200 people over the age of 18 were interviewed face-to-face throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip on 23, 24 March 2000. The interviews were conducted in randomly selected homes, and the subjects inside each home were also selected randomly according to Kish tables. The interviews were conducted in 59 sampling points chosen randomly according to population.

In the West Bank, 762 people were surveyed from the following areas: **Jenin:** Jenin, Tubas, Jenin refugee camp, Yamoun, Ya'abd, Kafr Rai', Kufr Dan, Arraba, Zababdeh, Fahma. **Nablus:** Nablus, Salfit, 'Asira al-Shamaliya, Huwwara, Beit Dajan, Haris, 'Ain Beit-Elma refugee camp, 'Asira al-Qibliya, Beit Furik. **Tulkarem:** Tulkarem Dhinabeh, Anabta, Attil, Tulkarem refugee camp. **Qalqiliya:** Qalqilyia and Azzun. **Hebron:** Hebron, Yatta, Dahiriya, Bani Na'im, Beit Umar, Tarqumiya, a-Shyoukh, Sair, Arrub refugee camp. **Bethlehem:** Bethlehem, Beit Sahour, Battir, 'Azza refugee camp, al-Khader. **Jericho:** Jericho and Aqabat Jaber refugee camp. **Ramallah & Jerusalem:** al-Bireh, al-'Amari refugee camp, Ramallah, Beitunia, Beit Rima, Mazraa al-Sharqiya, Beit-Liqiya, Ram, al-Dahiya, Qalandiya refugee camp, Shufat, Beit Hanina, Shufat refugee camp, Old City, Wadi al-Joz, Sheikh Jarrah, Ras al-Amod.

In the Gaza Strip, 438 people were surveyed from: **Gaza North:** Jabaliya refugee camp, Jabaliya, Beit Lahiya and Beit Hanoun. **Gaza:** Sheikh Radwan, a-Darj, Tufah, Sabra, a-Zaytoun, a-Nasir, a-Shouja'ia, a-Rimal north and south and Beach refugee camp. **Deir al- Balah:** Nuseirat refugee camp, Deir al-Balah refugee camp, Deir al- Balah. **Khan Younis:** 'Absan al-Saghir , Khan Younis refugee camp, Khan Younis, Bani Suheila. **Rafah:** Rafah, Rafah refugee camp, Tal al-Sultan refugee camp.

Sample Distribution

- 57.6% of the respondents were from West Bank, 6.0% from Jerusalem, 36.4% from the Gaza Strip.
- 39.3% said they live in villages, 16.4% in refugee camps, 44.3% in towns/cities.

- 45.6% were male, 54.4% were female.
- 65.2% were married, 28.8%, single, 3.6% widowed, 1.3% divorced, 1.1% no answer.
- The average age of the respondents was 35 years.
- The margin of error is 3 percent, with a confidence level of 95.

Occupation respondents

- Students 10.7% laborers 11.3% Farmers/fishermen 2.5%
 - Craftsmen 2.5% Businessmen/private business 8.5%
 - Employees e.g. secretaries/municipal employees/teachers/nurses 17.4%
 - Professionals - e.g. doctors/lawyers/ pharmacists/engineers 2.2%
 - Housewives, unemployed and retired 44.9%
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Results

Q1. Have you used the Shari'a or ecclesiastical family courts in the last year?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Yes	18.8	15.2	24.9
No	80.3	83.3	75.1
No answer	0.9	1.5	0.0

Q2. If yes, for what purposes?*

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n=225	n=116	n=109
Marriage	45.8	38.8	53.2
Dowry claims	2.2	0.9	3.7
Maintenance	1.8	1.7	1.8
Divorce (any kind)	8.0	10.3	5.5
Separation (any kind)	0.9	0.9	0.9
Child custody	3.6	4.3	2.8
Inheritance	17.8	25.0	10.1
Marriage and Divorce (any kind)	3.6	0.9	6.4
Marriage and inheritance	4.9	5.2	4.6
Divorce and Child custody	1.3	1.7	0.9
Other	4.8	3.4	5.5
No answer	5.3	6.9	4.6

** This question was asked to those who answered "yes" in Q1*

Q3. Were you satisfied with the courts treatment of the case?*

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 225	n=116	n=109
No satisfied	71.3	31.9	20.3
Satisfied	26.1	65.5	77.0
No answer	2.6	2.6	2.7

** This question was asked to those who answered "yes" in Q1*

Q4. If so, Why?*

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n=80	n=50	n=30
It was not fair to the woman involved	7.5	8.0	6.7
It was not fair to the man involved	3.8	6.0	0.0
The court did not make a decision	33.8	32.0	36.7
The court did not work professionally	27.5	28.0	26.7
Other	9.9	14.0	3.3
No answer	17.5	12.0	26.6

** This question was asked to those who answered "yes" in question no. 1, and to those who answered "not satisfied" in Q3*

Q5. Were you satisfied with the court's ability to enforce judgments?*

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 225	n=116	n=109
No satisfied	30.2	38.8	21.1
Satisfied	63.5	56.1	71.6
No answer	6.3	5.1	7.3

** This question was asked to those who answered "yes" in Q1*

Q6. According to your direct or indirect knowledge, do the Shari'a [or ecclesiastical] courts protect and support women's right?*

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 964	n=635	n=329
Yes	66.9	65.4	69.9

No	22.0	21.1	23.7
No answer	11.1	13.5	6.4

** This question was asked to those who answered "no" in Q1*

Q7. According to your direct and indirect knowledge, do the Shari'a courts [or ecclesiastical] protect and support men's rights?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Yes	72.8	74.5	69.6
No	17.0	14.5	21.7
No answer	10.2	11.0	8.7

Q8. According to your direct and indirect knowledge, do the Sharia'a courts [or ecclesiastical] protect and support children's rights?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Yes	66.1	65.1	67.8
No	19.5	19.0	20.3
No answer	14.4	15.9	11.9

Q9. Currently, Muslim Palestinians are subject to two family laws, one in the West Bank and one in Gaza. Do you think there is a need for a unified Palestinian family law?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Yes	75.1	76.8	72.1
No	14.8	10.1	23.1
No answer	10.1	13.1	4.8

Q10. Do you think family law should respond to changes and new needs in Palestinian society?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Yes	78.9	77.2	82.0
No	12.7	12.7	12.5
No answer	8.4	10.1	5.5

Q11. Do you favor more, the same or less rights for women than the family law currently in force in your place of residence?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Women should be given more rights	49.2	51.7	44.7
Women should be given less rights	5.0	3.8	7.3
Current rights are enough	39.8	38.8	41.4
No answer	6.0	5.7	6.6

Q12. Who do you think should be mainly responsible for developing a unified Palestinian family law?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Palestinian Legislative Council	16.7	15.2	19.2
Shari'a court judges only	26.2	27.8	23.3
The president	12.1	13.5	9.6
The society should vote	33.4	30.1	39.3
The current law shouldn't be changed	3.3	3.7	2.5
The Holy Koran	1.2	0.8	1.8
Others	0.8	0.8	1.3
No answer	6.3	8.1	3.0

Q13. Under which circumstances, do you think women should be given the right to be divorced or legally separated from their husband?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
1- Husband has abandoned family	1.2	1.7	0.2
2- Husband physically abuses wife	1.1	1.4	0.5
3- Husband physically abuses children	0.3	0.4	0.0
4- Husband has a sexual disease	0.8	1.2	0.0
5- Husband is mentally ill	1.6	1.7	1.4
6- Husband is an collaborator	3.2	2.6	4.1
7- If he marries another woman	1.6	2.5	0.0
8- Women shouldn't be given the right to be divorced or legally separated in any circumstances	4.2	4.1	4.3
5+6	5.8	5.6	5.9

1+2+3+4+5+6+7	10.6	13.3	5.9
4+5+6	3.0	2.5	3.9
1+4+5+6	3.3	3.9	2.3
1+6	3.8	3.5	4.3
1+2+3+4+5+6	4.9	5.2	4.3
1+2+5+6	3.2	3.8	2.1
1+5+6	3.7	2.8	5.3
1+2+3+5+6	3.1	2.6	3.9
2+5+6	2.1	0.7	4.6
2+6	2.8	3.4	1.6
2+3+4+5+6	1.8	2.0	1.4
4+5	1.4	1.2	1.8
1+2+5	1.3	1.7	0.7
1+2+4+5	1.3	1.4	0.9
1+2+3	1.5	2.0	0.7
3+5+6	1.4	1.4	1.4
1+2+4+5+6	1.8	0.7	3.7
1+2+4+5+6+7	1.3	1.6	0.9
1+5	1.9	2.0	1.8
1+2+4+5+6	1.3	0.0	3.4
1+2+6	1.8	1.6	2.1
2+3+4+6	1.3	1.8	0.2
2+5	1.0	1.0	0.9
1+2+3+4+5	1.0	1.2	0.7
1+4+6	1.0	0.0	2.7
Others	16.8	15.9	20.5
No answer	1.8	1.6	1.6

Q14. Recently in Egypt a law passed enabling women to ask for divorce if they waive their financial rights. Would you like to see a similar law passed in Palestine?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
I agree	32.3	35.6	26.7
Disagree	60.4	55.4	69.2
No answer	7.3	9.0	4.1

Q14-1 If such law is enabled in Palestine Why do you support it?*

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 388	n=271	n=117
Enables women to ask for divorce	84.0	88.6	73.5
Women should waive her financial rights	11.6	8.1	19.7
No answer	4.4	3.3	6.8

** This question was asked to those who answered "agree" in Q 14.*

Q.14-2 Do you oppose this law because:*

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 725	n=422	n=303
Enables women to ask for divorce	50.3	49.3	51.8
Women should waive her financial rights	40.6	41.2	39.6
No answer	9.1	9.5	8.6

** This question was asked to those who answered "disagree" in Q14*

Q15. As you know Palestinian males and females of 18 years and above have the right in choosing their spouse, do you think?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Both (18 years old) males and females should have equal level of freedom in choosing their spouses	49.2	49.5	48.8
Male should have more freedom in choosing their spouses than females	10.3	10.0	11.0
Females should have more freedom in choosing their husbands than males	4.7	4.8	4.3
The freedom of both (sexes) should be limited	34.0	34.3	33.6
No answer	1.8	1.4	2.3

Q16. Do you think Palestinian young men under eighteen are mature enough to independently choose their spouses?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Yes	13.6	11.8	16.7
No	84.8	86.1	82.4

No answer	1.6	2.1	0.9
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Q17. Do you think Palestinian young women under seventeen are mature enough to independently choose their spouses?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Yes	8.9	9.8	7.3
No	89.3	88.5	90.6
No answer	1.8	1.7	2.1

Q18. Should the age of marriage for young women and men be raised to 18?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Yes	84.7	85.1	84.0
No	11.8	11.8	11.6
No answer	3.5	3.1	4.4

Q19. Do you think the law can do more to ensure that a husband's income is spent for family welfare?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Yes	82.8	85.7	77.6
No	11.5	8.8	16.5
No answer	5.7	5.5	5.9

Q20. Do you think women should contribute to family income, if possible?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Yes	81.0	82.7	78.0
No	16.3	15.2	18.3
No answer	2.7	2.1	3.7

Q21. For couples who prefer civil law, do you think they should be given the option without affecting other people's rights to use Shari'a courts?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Yes	17.1	17.5	16.7
No	56.7	55.6	58.4
No answer	26.2	26.9	24.9

Q22. What are the most important characteristics for a Palestinian state in your opinion: Independent, Democratic, Islamic, Nationalist, or secular?

First Important Characteristics

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Independent	35.5	34.4	37.5
Democratic	12.3	13.4	10.5
Islamic	43.4	42.9	44.3
Nationalist	3.7	3.4	4.1
Secular	1.8	1.7	1.8
No answer	3.3	4.2	1.8

Second Important Characteristics

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Independent	33.1	34.5	30.6
Democratic	32.8	30.8	36.1
Islamic	18.6	17.2	21.2
Nationalist	7.6	8.2	6.6
Secular	1.7	1.7	1.6
No answer	6.2	7.6	3.9

Third Important Characteristics

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Independent	19.2	18.8	20.0
Democratic	28.8	27.0	32.0

Islamic	15.2	15.6	14.6
Nationalist	22.2	21.1	24.0
Secular	3.3	3.9	2.1
No answer	11.3	13.6	7.3

Q23. Beginning with final negotiations issues, what do you think is more important for Palestinians reaching a fair solution to Jerusalem's issue or reaching a fair solution to the settlement issue?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Jerusalem issue	44.4	46.9	40.2
Settlement issue	7.2	8.4	5.0
Both are equally important	45.0	41.3	51.6
I don't know	1.7	1.4	2.1
No answer	1.7	2.0	1.1

Q24. What is more important reaching a fair solution to Jerusalem's issue or reaching a fair solution to refugee's issue?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1200	n=762	n=438
Jerusalem issue	33.0	35.6	28.5
Refugees issue	12.3	14.0	9.1
Both are equally important	52.3	47.8	60.3
I don't know	0.0	0.0	0.0
No answer	2.4	2.6	2.1