

JMCC Public Opinion Poll No. 29 - Part II

On Palestinian and Media

August 1998

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Introduction

- Less than one third of Palestinians in West Bank and Gaza read a newspaper daily.
- "Al-Quds" is the most popular newspaper, 68% in West Bank and 48% in Gaza Strip.
- One-third of readers and non-readers are unsatisfied with status of press freedoms in Palestinian areas.
- 56% believe some topics should not published so that Israel cannot exploit them.
- Over one-third of Palestinian households have satellite dishes, 34%.
- Qatar-based Al-Jazira TV station is the most popular among Palestinians.
- Palestine TV is the most popular in Gaza, 65% while Jordan TV is the most popular in West Bank, 42%.
- Jordan TV is the most-trusted source of news in West Bank, 30% while Palestine TV is the most-trusted source of news in Gaza, 37%.
- Overall, the most popular station is Israel Radio's Arabic Service, 29%.
- Voice of Palestine is the most-trusted source of news, 21%, in West Bank while Israel Radio's Arabic Service is the most-trusted source of news in Gaza, 34%.

The poll found that less than one-third of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip read a newspaper daily. Newspapers come fourth as far as sources of news. Television is the primary source of news (35 percent), with radio following (28 percent), and friends and family third (18 percent). The Internet's presence is virtually non-existent.

Of the newspapers, Al-Quds is the most popular. Sixty-eight percent of newspaper readers in the West Bank and 48 percent of newspaper readers in the Gaza Strip say that Al-Quds is their no. 1 paper. Al-Ayyam comes in second (19 percent) and Al-Hayat Al-Jadida third (14 percent).

One-third of readers and non-readers said they were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the state of press freedoms in the Palestinian areas. Another one-third said they were undecided, while 19 percent said they were satisfied.

Twenty-nine percent of those surveyed said they felt that all of the local newspapers belong to the Palestinian Authority. Eight percent said they believed the press was independent.

Of television stations, the Qatar-based Al-Jazira is dominant as the no. 1 station for households with satellite dishes. Over one-third (34 percent) of Palestinian households have satellite dishes, and most dish owners (23 percent) said Al-Jazira was their favorite station. Al-Jazira was also the most-trusted source of news for owners of satellite dishes (46 percent).

For households without satellite dishes, the Gaza-based Palestine TV was the no. 1 station for Gazans (65 percent) and Jordan TV was the no. 1 station for West Bankers (42 percent).

In the West Bank, Palestine TV has weak viewership (13 percent), almost equal to that of the Israeli television stations (11 percent). West Bankers consider Israeli and Palestine TV news to be equally trustworthy (13 percent), and Jordan TV to be the most-trusted source of news (30 percent).

The largest majority of Gazans (37 percent) consider Palestine TV to be the most-trusted source of news, with Israel second (25 percent).

Radio is the second-most popular medium in the Palestinian areas. Overall, the most popular station is Israel Radio's Arabic Service, with 29 percent of those surveyed saying it is their favorite. The Ramallah-based Voice of Palestine comes in second in the West Bank (24 percent) and fifth in the Gaza Strip (9 percent). However, reception of the Voice of Palestine is not strong in the Gaza Strip.

In the West Bank, the Voice of Palestine is the most-trusted source of news (21 percent), with Israel coming in second (17 percent). In the Gaza Strip, Israel Radio's Arabic Service is the most-trusted source of news (34 percent), with the BBC's Arabic Service coming in second (20 percent).

Results

Q.6 How often do you read the newspaper?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Every day or nearly every day	27.6%	29.1%	25.1%
At least once a week	28.0%	29.1%	26.2%
At least once a month	13.3%	13.3%	13.3%
Never	31.0%	28.4%	35.4%
No answer	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%

Q.7 Name two newspapers you read the most and second-most (asked only of those who said they read newspapers)?

	Total		West Bank		Gaza Strip	
	First	Second	First	Second	First	Second
Al-Quds	61.3%	21.0%	68.2%	17.7%	48.2%	27.4%
Al-Ayyam	19.2%	30.9%	15.0%	30.1%	27.5%	32.4%
Al-Hayat	13.7%	20.7%	9.8%	18.1%	21.4%	25.6%
Another	5.1%	10.7%	6.1%	11.9%	2.5%	8.6%
No answer	0.7%	16.7%	0.9%	22.2%	0.4%	6.0%

Q.8 Why do you prefer (the first newspaper)... is it because...

	Total			West Bank			Gaza Strip		
	Quds	Ayyam	Hayat	Quds	Ayyam	Hayat	Quds	Ayyam	Hayat
It's always available	35.3%	19.6%	37.2%	37.2%	19.8%	39.6%	29.6%	19.5%	35.0%
It's cheaper	2.4%	7.0%	23.0%	2.4%	7.4%	26.4%	2.2%	6.5%	20.0%
It's content better	58.9%	67.1%	38.1%	56.4%	63.0%	32.1%	65.9%	71.4%	43.3%

No answer	3.4%	6.3%	1.7%	4.0%	9.8%	1.9%	2.3%	2.6%	1.7%
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Q. 9 I will list now pages of the newspaper, which you will state whether you show interest or not?

Total

	Interested	Not Interested	No answer
Politics	74.9%	24.3%	0.8%
Classifieds	46.0%	50.7%	3.3%
Deaths/Congratulations	59.7%	38.7%	1.6%
Opinion	55.8%	42.1%	2.1%
Sports	38.7%	59.9%	1.4%
Economy	33.1%	65.1%	1.8%
Religious	69.5%	28.6%	1.9%
Caricatures	66.7%	30.8%	2.5%
Culture	71.2%	27.6%	1.2%
Entertainment	66.2%	32.2%	1.6%
Celebrities	58.4%	39.8%	1.8%

West Bank

	Interested	Not Interested	No answer
Politics	77.6%	21.6%	0.8%
Classifieds	45.3%	49.9%	4.8%
Deaths/Congratulations	64.5%	33.8%	1.7%
Opinion	57.9%	39.6%	2.5%
Sports	37.5%	60.6%	1.9%
Economy	32.9%	64.9%	2.2%
Religious	66.4%	31.2%	2.4%
Caricatures	68.6%	28.7%	2.7%
Culture	71.9%	26.4%	1.7%
Entertainment	63.2%	34.6%	2.2%
Celebrities	57.9%	39.6%	2.5%

Gaza Strip

	Interested	Not Interested	No answer
Politics	69.8%	29.5%	0.7%

Classifieds	47.3%	52.3%	0.4%
Deaths/Congratulations	50.5%	48.0%	1.5%
Opinion	52.0%	47.0%	1.0%
Sports	40.9%	58.4%	0.7%
Economy	33.5%	65.5%	1.0%
Religious	75.4%	23.5%	1.1%
Caricatures	63.0%	34.9%	2.1%
Culture	69.8%	29.9%	0.3%
Entertainment	71.9%	27.8%	0.3%
Celebrities	59.4%	40.2%	0.4%

Q.10 From the previous list, what is the first page you read?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Politics	47.8%	52.1%	39.5%
Classifieds	4.0%	4.1%	3.9%
Deaths / Congratulations	10.1%	12.2%	6.0%
Opinion	1.8%	0.9%	3.6%
Sports	5.7%	5.2%	6.8%
Economy	2.2%	2.0%	2.5%
Religious	2.8%	2.0%	4.3%
Caricatures	3.3%	.3.5%	2.8%
Culture	4.9%	4.1%	6.4%
Entertainment	6.4%	3.9%	11.4%
Celebrities	6.8%	5.4%	9.6%
No answer	4.2%	4.6%	3.2%

Q.11 What is the subject you show most interest in as with regards to news ?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Peace Process	33.8%	35.1%	31.3%
Local Palestinian news (other than peace process)	42.2%	42.0%	42.7%
Arab World news	9.0%	9.2%	8.5%
Regional news	11.7%	10.7%	13.5%
No answer	3.3%	3.0%	4.0%

Q 12. How satisfied are you with the newspaper you read?

		Total			West Bank			Gaza Strip	
	Quds	Ayyam	Hayat	Quds	Ayyam	Hayat	Quds	Ayyam	Hayat
Satisfied	46.4%	49.4%	30.1%	46.9%	48.1%	30.2%	45.2%	50.6%	30.0%
Sometimes satisfied/ sometimes not	44.0%	42.4%	54.9%	43.4%	44.4%	45.3%	45.9%	40.3%	63.3%
Unsatisfied	7.5%	5.7%	11.5%	7.3%	3.7%	18.9%	8.1%	7.8%	5.0%
No answer	2.1%	2.5%	3.5%	2.4%	3.8%	5.6%	0.8%	1.3%	1.7%

Q 13. The reason why I do not read a newspaper / magazine is because - in decreasing order:

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Price	2.7%	1.9%	3.9%
Lack of time to read	29.7%	23.6%	38.3%
Newspaper is boring	6.8%	6.9%	6.5%
I have no interest in news (Political)	11.9%	13.0%	10.4%
I do not trust the newspaper	7.0%	4.6%	10.4%
Other (Specify)	29.5%	35.6%	19.5%
No answer	12.4%	14.4%	11.0%

Q 14. Who is the best writer in the local press?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Hasan Al-Kashef	2.8%	2.3%	4.4%
Hafeth Al-Barghouthi	1.7%	1.6%	1.8%
Other (specify)	21.7%	20.5%	22.5%
No one	2.9%	2.0%	5.1%
No answer	70.9%	73.6%	66.2%

Q 15. Do you think that the local newspapers are being exploited by the PNA?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Independent	8.4%	11.4%	3.2%
Backed by PNA	29.5%	28.9%	30.6%
Some independent, some backed by PNA	47.0%	42.0%	55.6%
No answer	15.1%	17.7%	10.6%

Q 16. Do you know of any newspaper related to opposition?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	25.2%	17.8%	37.9%
No	58.6%	61.3%	54.0%
No answer	16.2%	20.9%	8.1%

Q 17 What is it?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Al-Haq	13.3%	25.2%	3.6%
Al-Risalah	37.7%	15.6%	55.8%
Al-Istiqlal	14.3%	9.6%	18.2%
Other	18.7%	31.8%	7.9%
No answer	16.0%	17.8%	14.5%

Q.18 How often do you buy newspaper?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Every day or nearly every day	21.7%	25.2%	15.6%
At least once a week	25.9%	28.1%	22.1%
At least once a month	10.5%	10.3%	10.8%
Never	37.8%	32.5%	47.1%
No answer	4.1%	3.9%	4.4%

Q.19 Name the local newspaper sold in your country?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Al-Quds	41.3%	44.3%	36.9%
Al-Ayyam	31.2%	30.8%	31.8%
Al-Hayat	27.5%	24.9%	31.3%

Q. 20 Do you think that the newspaper should cover problems in our society?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	69.5%	65.1%	77.2%
No	20.5%	23.0%	16.1%
No answer	10.0%	11.9%	6.7%

Q 21. Do you believe that there are issues that should not be published so Israel will not take advantage of the information?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	55.4%	54.8%	56.3%
No	33.4%	31.7%	36.3%
No answer	11.2%	13.5%	7.4%

Q. 22 In your opinion, how satisfactory is press freedom in our country?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Extremely satisfactory	2.4%	2.2%	2.8%
Satisfactory	18.5%	18.6%	18.2%
Sometimes satisfactory, sometimes not	33.4%	34.7%	31.0%
Unsatisfactory	21.1%	19.7%	23.7%
Extremely unsatisfactory	12.1%	10.7%	14.5%
No answer	12.5%	14.1%	9.8%