



**Jerusalem Office**

**Tel.: +972-2-532 83 98**

**Fax: +972-2-581 96 65**

**Email: [info@fespal.org](mailto:info@fespal.org)**

**Web: [www.fespal.org](http://www.fespal.org)**



**POBox: 25047 Jerusalem**

**Tel: 02-2976555**

**Fax: 02-2976557**

**Email: [poll@jmcc.org](mailto:poll@jmcc.org)**

**Website: [www.jmcc.org](http://www.jmcc.org)**

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**Poll no. 66\_November 2008**

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## **Press Release**

### **A majority opposes men having more than one wife**

#### **A majority believes that Islamic Sharia must be part of the source for legislation**

#### **Around 42% of the sample believes that the husband does not need to inform his first wife of his intention to marry a second wife**

A social survey conducted by Jerusalem Media and Communication Center showed that a majority (65.9%) of the Palestinian society believes that women do not enjoy equal rights with men. Moreover, a majority thinks that women need to be granted equal rights in the area of education while the majority of Palestinians tends to move closer towards religion and support al-Sharia to be the source of legislation.

On the issue of men having more than one wife, the survey showed that a majority (68.4%) opposes this phenomenon compared with a ratio of 30.7% who support it. A majority of the sample (56.3%) believes that the husband needs to tell his first wife on his plans to get married a second time compared with a ratio of 41.8% who do not see any need for that.

The JMCC poll which was conducted during the period November 20-23, 2008, included a sample of 1,200 persons. An overwhelming majority of the sample (92.8%) opposes in principle the beating of wives compared with a ratio of 6.9% who support this act.

With regards to women pursuing education, a ratio of 22.3% supported women pursuing education till the age of 30 while a ratio of 12.7% said they support women pursuing education until the age of 18 only.

The poll showed that people note the negative impact of soap opera series on the image of Arab women; a ratio of 74.6% said these programs have negative impact on the image of Arab women while a ratio of 8.5% said the opposite.

With regards to women wearing Hijab, the poll results showed a major split on this matter; a ratio of 44.5% said the woman covering her head or wearing Hijab is a matter of personal freedom or choice while a ratio of 54.2% said it is compulsory for women to wear Hijab. Upon a closer look, one can find difference in ratios between Gaza Strip and the West Bank on this matter. A ratio of 47.6% in the West Bank said the Hijab is compulsory while the ratio rises to 65.5% in Gaza Strip.

With regards to religious ideas, a ratio of 94% said religion is an important factor in their lives. Moreover, a ratio of 55.1% said Islamic Sharia must be the sole source for legislation compared with a ratio of 40.1% who said that Islamic Sharia must be one of the legislation sources. A ratio of 2.4% said Islamic Sharia must not be a source for legislation.

When asked whether they attended at least one religious seminar in a house, mosque or any other place, a ratio of 50.7% said they did compared with a ratio of 49% who said they never attended such a seminar. There is also notable difference between the West Bank and Gaza Strip on this matter. The ratio of Palestinians who attended such a seminar in Gaza Strip reached 64.3% compared with 42.8% in the West Bank.

Finally, the survey showed that a majority does not support mixed marriages between people from different religions; the idea was supported by 19.9% only with a ratio of 78.6% opposing this kind of marriage.

## **Methodology:**

A random sample of 1200 people over the age of 18 was interviewed face-to-face throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip between 20-23 November 2008. 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 60 sampling points chosen randomly according to population.

In the **West Bank** 760 people were surveyed from the following areas: **Hebron:** Hebron, Tarqoumia, As-Samou', Dura, Halhoul, Arroub RC, Sourif, Biet Awwa. **Jenin:** Jenin, Jenin RC, Ya'bad, Arrabeh, Kaferet, Serees, Maithaloun, Toubas, Aqqabeh. **Bethlehem:** Bethlehem, Biet Jala, Dar Salah, Battir, Hindaza, Dhesheh RC, **Ramallah & al-Bireh:** Ramallah, Al-Bireh, Silwad, al-Jalazon RC, Der Ghassaneh, Biet Rima, Kufr Nimeh, Ras Karkar. **Jericho:** Jericho, 'Ein Es-Sultan RC. **Jerusalem:** Abu Dies, Al'Izariya, Biddo, Shufat RC, Shufat, Old City, Biet Hanina, Biet Hanina Tahta, al-'Issawia, Wadi el-Joz, Jabal el- Mukaber, Sour Baher. **Nablus:** Nablus, Kufr Qalil, Roujib, Salfit, Yasouf, Der el-Hatab, Askar RC, Burqa, Der Sharaf. **Tulkarem and Qalqilya:** Tulkarem, Tulkarem RC, Iktabeh, Far'oun, Qalqilia, Kufr Jammal.

In the **Gaza Strip**: 440 people were surveyed from: **Gaza:** Shati RC, a-Shuja'ia, Attufah, Al-Durj, Sheikh Radwan, a-Nasser, a-rimal a-Shamali, a-rimal, a-Janoubi, Sabra, A-Zeitoun. **Khan Younis:** Absan al-Saghira, Khan Yunis, Bani Suheila, Abasan al-Kabira, Khan Yunis RC. **Rafah:** Rafah, Rafah RC. **Gaza North:** Jabalia, Beit Lahia, Jabalia RC, Beit Hanoun. **Deir al-Balah:** Deir Al Balah, Nussirat RC, al-Maghazi RC.

The margin of error is  $\pm 3$  percent, with a confidence level of 95%.

### **Sample Distribution**

51.7 % of the respondents were from West Bank, 11.6 % from Jerusalem, 36.7 % from the Gaza Strip.

29.2% said they live in villages 15.0% in refugee camps, and 55.8 % in towns/cities.

50.9% were male, 49.1% were female.

64.7% were married, 29.0%, single, 3.5% widowed, 1.4% divorced, 1.4% no answer.

The average age of the respondents was 35 years.

### **Occupation of Respondents**

- Students 12.8%
- laborers 11.8%
- Farmers/fishermen 3.3%
- Craftsmen 1.3%
- Businessmen/private business 6.9%
- Public Sector Employees 11.8%
- Private Sector Employees 6.8%
- Professionals (e.g. doctors/lawyers/ pharmacists/engineers) 1.6%
- Housewives 32.8%
- Unemployed 8.4%
- Retired 2.0 %,
- No answer 0.5%.

## **Results**

**Q1. What, in your opinion, is the age level to which women should pursue their education in our country (lessons, courses, universities, colleges, etc)?**

	<b>Total n= 1200</b>	<b>West Bank n= 760</b>	<b>Gaza n= 440</b>
Until the age of 18	12.7	13.9	10.5
18-22	42.5	42.6	42.3
23-30	22.3	23.3	20.7
31-40	5.7	4.5	7.7
41-60	4.6	2.1	8.9
61+	10.0	10.4	9.3
It is not necessary for women to pursue education	0.8	1.3	0.6
I don't know \ No answer	1.4	1.9	0.0

**Q2. What is your opinion on the age level to which men should pursue their education in our country (lessons, courses, universities, colleges, etc)?**

	<b>Total n= 1200</b>	<b>West Bank n= 760</b>	<b>Gaza n= 440</b>
Until the age of 18	2.5	3.9	0.0
18-22	21.5	23.2	18.6
23-30	31.6	34.6	26.4
31-40	15.8	14.2	18.6
41-60	10.3	4.9	19.8
61+	16.1	15.9	16.4
It is not necessary for men to pursue education	0.8	1.2	0.0
I don't know \ No answer	1.4	2.1	0.2

**Q3. In general, have you participated in a seminar or religious course in the past five years whether at a home or in a mosque or any other place?**

	<b>Total n= 1200</b>	<b>West Bank n= 760</b>	<b>Gaza n= 440</b>
Yes	50.7	42.8	64.3
No	49.0	56.8	35.5
I don't know \ No answer	0.3	0.4	0.2

**Q4. In general, have you participated in an educational non-religious seminar or course in the past five years (outside the field of formal instruction in a school or university or college)?**

	<b>Total n= 1200</b>	<b>West Bank n= 760</b>	<b>Gaza n= 440</b>
Yes	43.1	40.0	48.4
No	56.5	59.3	51.6
I don't know \ No answer	0.4	0.7	0.0

**Q5. To what extent do you feel that we need awareness campaigns on sexual education in our schools?**

	<b>Total n= 1200</b>	<b>West Bank n= 760</b>	<b>Gaza n= 440</b>
Strong need	43.8	49.6	33.9
Moderate need	28.1	27.5	29.1
We don't need awareness campaigns on sexual education in our schools	24.4	18.2	35.2
I don't know	3.7	4.7	1.8

**Q6. In general, is religion an important part of your life?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
Yes	94.0	91.7	98.0
No	5.8	7.9	2.0
I don't know \ No answer	0.2	0.4	0.0

**Q7. Do you support marriage of young women under the age of 18?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
Yes	26.5	23.2	32.3
No	73.3	76.7	67.3
I don't know \ No answer	0.2	0.1	0.4

**Q8. In general, do you think the cover of Hijab or women is an issue of personal freedom or a compulsory practice?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
A matter of personal freedom and choice	44.5	50.5	34.1
It is a compulsory practice	54.2	47.6	65.5
I don't know \ No answer	1.3	1.9	0.4

**Q9. Do you think that the Palestinian Personal Statute law must be based on the principles of Islamic Sharia or the civil law?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
The Islamic Sharia	77.3	73.6	83.9
The civil law	15.8	19.9	8.6
Both	3.2	1.8	5.5
I don't know \ No answer	3.7	4.7	2.0

**Q10. From your own perspective, how do the soap opera series shown on Arab Satellite TV Channels affect the image of Arab women? Negatively, positively, or no impact at all?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
Negative impact	74.6	73.0	77.3
Positive impact	8.5	8.8	8.0
They don't have any impact at all	14.7	15.7	13.0
I don't know \ No answer	2.2	2.5	1.7

**Q11. Do you think that the Islamic Sharia must be the sole source of legislation or one of the sources of legislation or must not be part of the sources of legislation?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
The Islamic Sharia must be the sole source of legislation	55.1	57.2	51.4
The Islamic Sharia must be one of the sources for legislation	40.1	36.6	46.1
The Islamic Sharia must not be part of the sources for legislation	2.4	3.0	1.4
I don't know \ No answer	2.4	3.2	1.1

**Q12. Do men and women enjoy equal rights in our country?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
Yes	32.8	35.4	28.2
No	65.9	62.6	71.6
I don't know \ No answer	1.3	2.0	0.2

**Q13. In terms of principle, do you support the act of beating wives?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
Yes	6.9	6.8	7.0
No	92.8	92.8	93.0
I don't know \ No answer	0.3	0.4	0.0

**Q14. Do you support having multiple wives?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
Yes	30.7	31.2	29.8
No	68.4	67.5	70.0
I don't know \ No answer	0.9	1.3	0.2

**Q15. Do you feel there is a need for a law to force the husband to inform his first wife about his second marriage?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
Yes	56.3	55.5	57.7
No	41.8	41.8	41.8
I don't know \ No answer	1.9	2.7	0.5

**Q16. Do you support mixed marriage between different religions?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
Yes	19.9	22.0	16.4
No	78.6	75.9	83.2
I don't know \ No answer	1.5	2.1	0.4