

Public Opinion on Coronavirus- Palestine

Juzoor for Health and Social Development, in collaboration with Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre, conducted a poll to examine public awareness and perceptions regarding the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, in Palestine, as well as changes in behaviors, and trust in the government's handling of the outbreak.

The sample size of 600 was estimated based on confidence level (95%), confidence interval (4), and population size (1714620 Palestinian adults living in the West Bank)¹. Multistage random sampling was used to randomly select 600 Palestinians 18 years and older residing in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem (J2). Phone numbers were randomly generated for each district to select households. One participant was then randomly selected from each household using the Kish Table. Phone interviews lasted around 10 minutes, and the response rate was 83%. Data was collected between March 29-31, 2020.

Around 52% of poll respondents were female; the mean age of respondents was 40 years; 26% were single and 68% were married; 57% had completed their education up to high school; 10% were students; around 30% were employed; 58% operated their own private business; and 8% were unemployed.

Main Findings

Based on the poll, there is a general level of awareness regarding the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, in Palestine. While 81% of respondents see COVID-19 as a real threat, 16% believe its risk is generally exaggerated. According to the poll, 54% of those asked believe that the situation will worsen in the coming period, while 36% believe that the worst of the outbreak has passed. Around 69% of respondents reported knowing a lot about the outbreak, 88% knew that COVID-19 may be asymptomatic, and more than 87% were able to correctly identify common symptoms of the virus. Furthermore, 85% of respondents were concerned/very concerned about the outbreak of the virus in Palestine, and around 78% were concerned/very concerned about its spread to themselves or to a close family member.

Regarding preventative measures, 93% had been practicing social distancing, and 91% reported that they now wash their hands more frequently. 20% of shisha smokers quit shisha as a result of the outbreak. When asked who they would call first or go to if they suspected they or a family member had a symptom of the virus, 49% said they would call the Ministry of Health, 20% said a physician, 18% said they would go to the hospital, and 13% said they would call the designated hotline. When asked about the number they would call, however, only two respondents listed the correct number.

Overall, based on the poll findings, people support the government's handling of the outbreak: 96% trust the government's response, 88% trust the results of laboratory tests for the virus, and

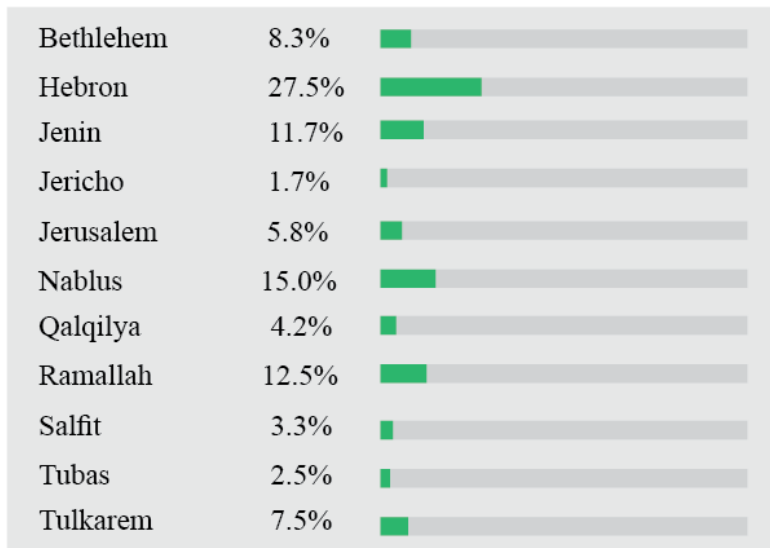
¹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. The Palestinian Children's Situation On The Eve Of The Palestinian Child's Day, 05/04/2019

96% support the Palestinian government imposing a total curfew on the West Bank and Gaza Strip if it is necessary to contain the spread of COVID-19.

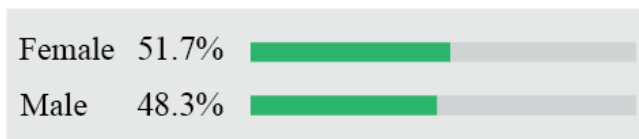
Below are more detailed results.

Demography of Respondents

1. Geographical distribution of poll respondents

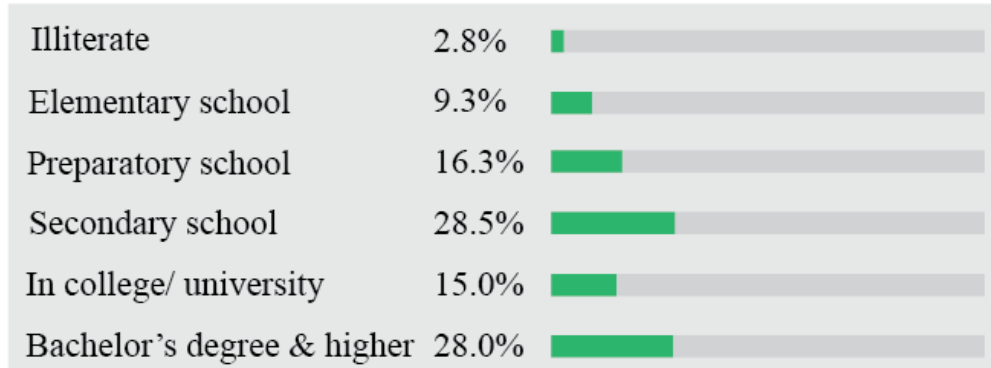


2. Sex

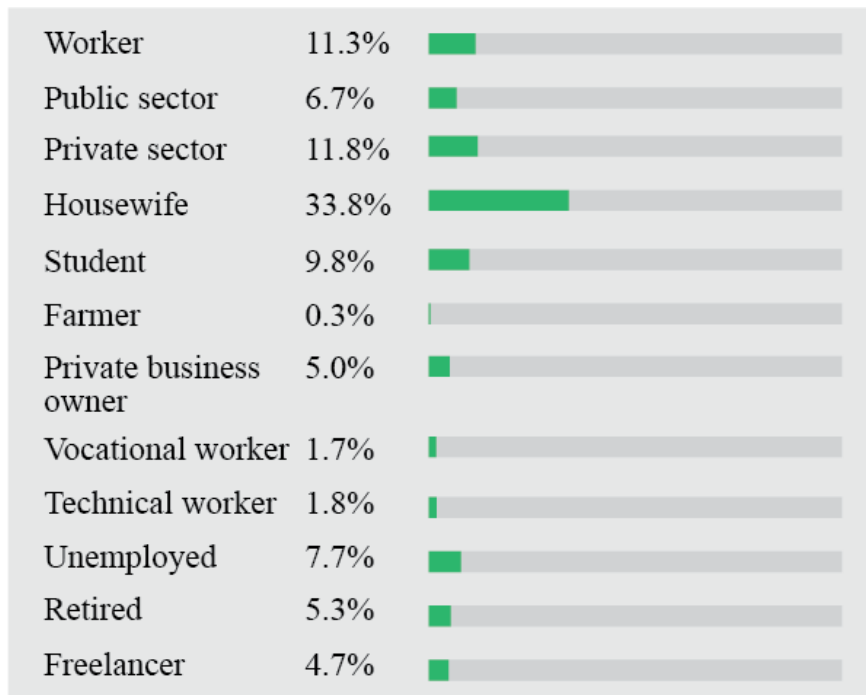


3. Mean age (minimum, maximum): 40 years (18, 86)

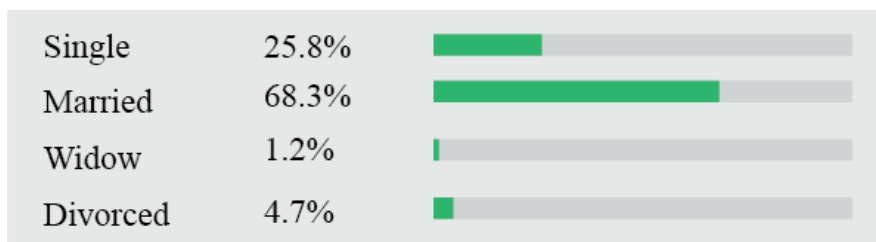
4. Education level



5. Employment

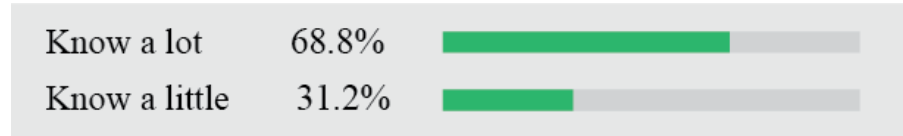


6. Marital status

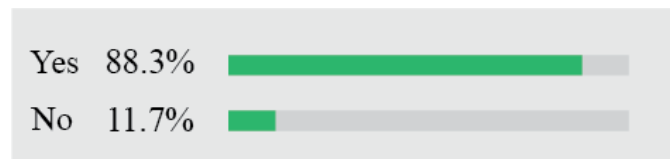


Coronavirus-specific Questions

1. How much do you know about the spread of COVID-19 throughout the world?

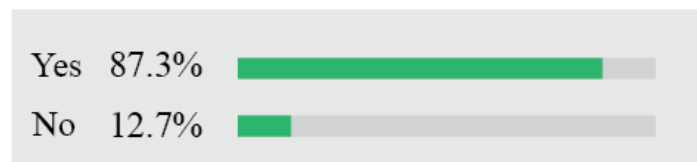


2. According to your knowledge, can a person be infected with COVID-19 and have no symptoms?

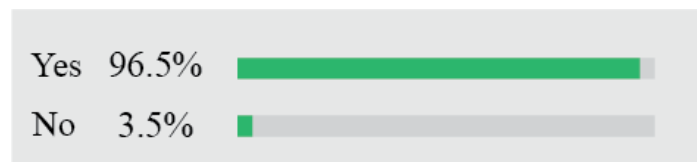


3. In your opinion, are the following among the common symptoms of COVID-19?

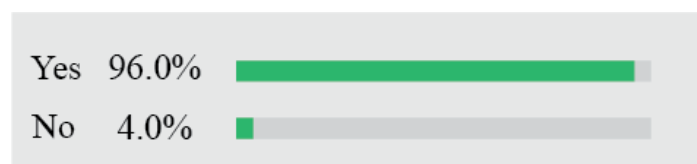
3.1 Cough



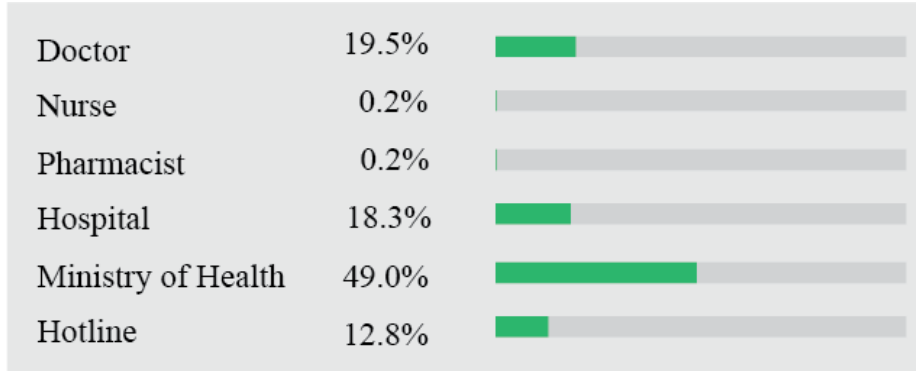
3.2 Fever



3.3 Difficulty breathing

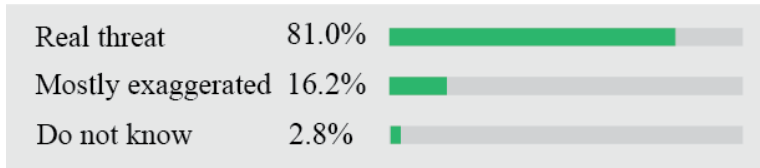


4. If you suspect that you or a family member has a symptom of the virus, who will you first call/go to?

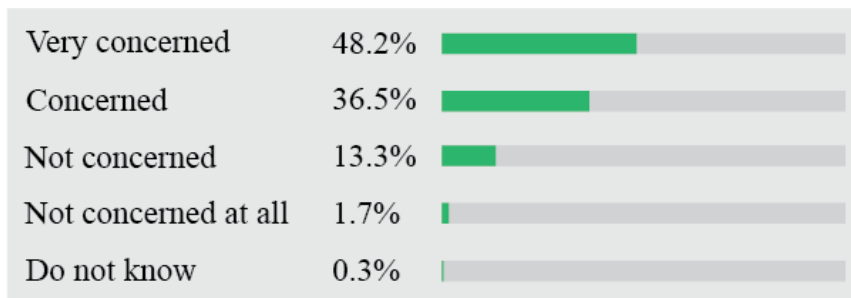


Note: Among the 77 respondents that said that they will first call the hotline, only 2 correctly listed the hotline number, 4 said it is saved in their cell phone, and the rest gave wrong numbers.

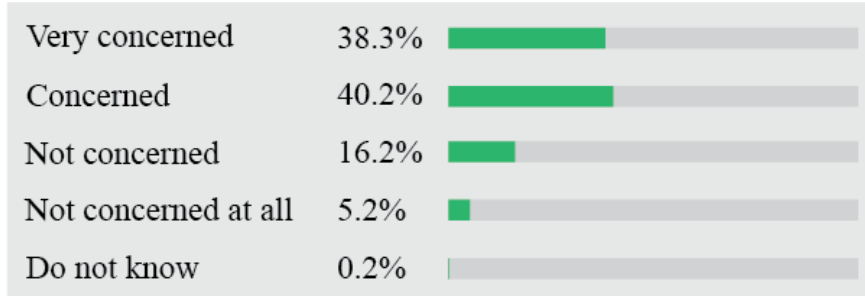
5. Some believe that COVID-19 poses a real threat while others think its risk is mostly exaggerated. What do you think?



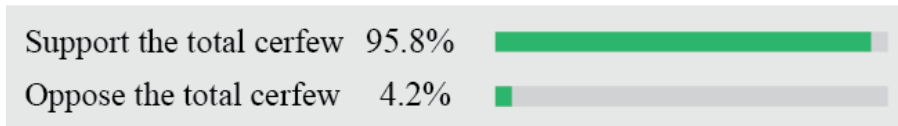
6. How concerned are you about the possible wide spread of COVID-19 in Palestine?



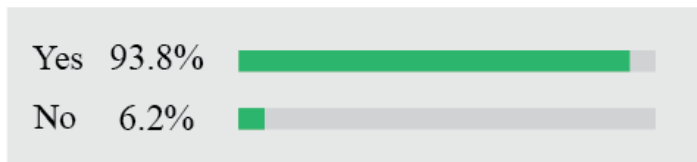
7. How concerned are you about the spread of COVID-19 to a close family member or to yourself?



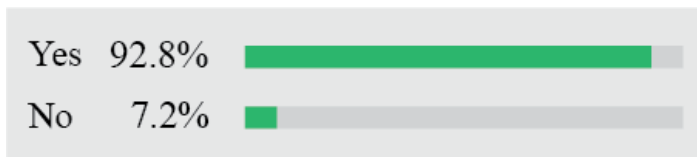
8. Do you support or oppose the Palestinian government imposing a total curfew on the Palestinian territories if it is necessary to contain the spread of the virus?



9. After hearing about the spread of the virus, have you changed your daily routine in an effort to protect yourself?

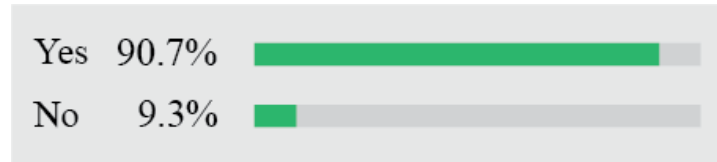


10. Was social distancing among the measures that you took to protect yourself from COVID-19 (not shaking hands, reducing visits, avoiding gathering in public places)?



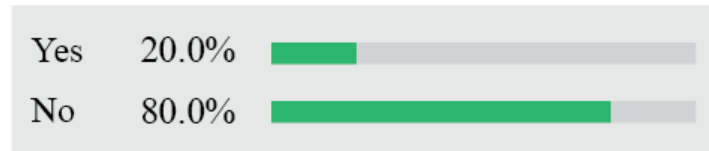
Note: 99% of those who changed their daily routine to protect themselves, practiced social distancing (557/563)

11. Are you now washing your hands more frequently as a measure of self-protection from the virus?

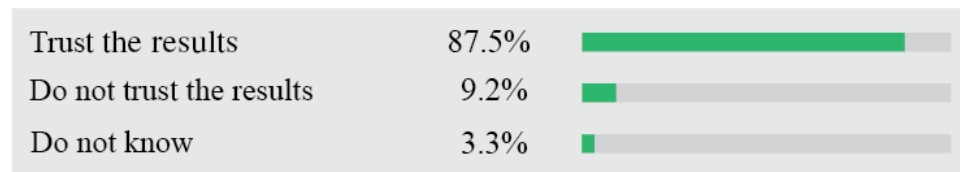


Note: 96.6% (544/563) of those who change their daily routine to protect themselves now wash their hands more frequently

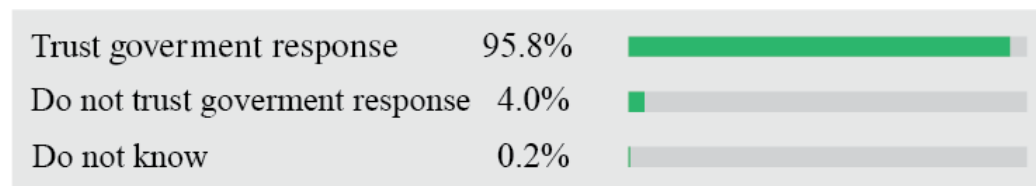
12. If you smoke shisha, did you stop smoking shisha, as one of the measures to protect yourself from COVID-19?



13. In general, do you trust or do not trust the results of laboratory tests for the Coronavirus in Palestine?



14. In general, do you trust or not trust the way the government is dealing with COVID-19 outbreak?



15. Regarding the outbreak of COVID-19 in Palestine, do you think the worst has passed, the worst is yet to come, or the virus outbreak does not seem to be a big problem?

