

OPINIONS AND PRACTICES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS SURVEYED

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Here follow the results from the survey mentioned in the News Briefs section (p.6).

1) The first part highlighted certain social phenomena among students, such as smoking, drinking, drug consumption, and sex. Percentages and numbers in this study revealed cultural stereotypes.

- In Lebanon, unlike in the industrialized world, the rich students are the ones who smoke.

- The difference in religious sect does not reflect a difference in the habits of smoking, drinking, drug taking, or even sex before marriage. The main behavioral difference appears to be prayer: *i.e.*, students who pray versus those who do not.

- Students in universities of a Western orientation/profile come out on top in all aspects of the study (smoking, drinking, drug taking, and sex before marriage). This result might be explained by cultural and economic factors. The influence of Western society is felt less in the Lebanese or Beirut Arab Universities. Moreover, students in the latter universities are not financially capable of behaving like students in the other universities.

- Peer pressure is an obvious factor regarding such habits as smoking and drinking, in particular.

- Sex definitely requires more socio-physiological studies, because students' replies seemed sometimes "liberated", at other times "extreme" and contradictory to their announced beliefs.

2) The second part of the study focused on civil rights such as civil marriage, the deletion of the religious sect from the identity card, capital sentence, and crimes of honor.

- The Christian students in the Lebanese American University (LAU) and the American University of Beirut (AUB) supported civil marriage the most (*i.e.*, those Christians who are in colleges of a mixed orientation/profile). The basic criterion for accepting or rejecting civil marriage is praying. Students who do not pray are more likely to support the concept of civil marriage. The percentage of their acceptance is 60.5% as compared to 25.5% among students who pray.

- As for the issue of deleting the indication of sect from the identity card, it turned out that the poorer students supported the idea more. Sixty-six percent of them were for the idea.

- Half of the students interviewed at AUB and LAU accepted homosexuality, as compared to more than one third of the students at Saint Joseph. The lowest rate of acceptance was in Beirut Arab University.

3) The third part dealt with students' civic education and their commitment to the building of a civil society. Obviously, the role of students in the building of a civil society will not be

essential. Results of the survey emphasized the concept of cultural reproduction.

- The student's family monthly income reflects the economic reality represented in the universities included in the survey. The fact that most students at the Lebanese University and the Beirut Arab University come from limited-income families explains their attendance at these two universities.

- The great percentage of students from middle-class families and who are pursuing higher education reflects their desire of improving their socio-economic status. The satisfaction of students from upper-class families with the B.A./B.S. degree indicates their content with their social status, whereas the difficult economic conditions of poorer students prevent them from pursuing their higher education due to their need to work.

- The pattern of spending among university students was directly related to the family's monthly income. Most of the students at LAU and AUB are looser with money, whereas students in the Lebanese University and the Beirut Arab University follow a more careful/tight spending pattern.

- The main source of students' education is the media (radio and T.V.), much more so than reading. The students' favorite authors are mostly script-writers. It is worth noting that one third of interviewees could not recall the name of the last book they had read.

- One third of the students do not read newspapers.

- Students at Saint Joseph University watch the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC) most frequently, whereas Beirut Arab University students tend to watch Future TV more often.

4) The fourth part, which examined the students' religious behavior and their political and national affiliations, confirmed the idea that students of the 1990s are essentially different from those of the sixties and seventies - and this not only in Lebanon but all over the world.

- Most students are believers, and the percentage of religious indifference which was widespread among students in the 60s and 70s has considerably decreased. The percentage of students who pray is 67, and the most popular international person is Pope John Paul II.

- The percentage of students who are affiliated with a specific political party has considerably decreased.

- Seventy-five percent of the students considers that the peace with Israel is already determined and is not a Lebanese or regional decision. Moreover, three-quarters of Saint Joseph University students would support a student exchange-program with Israel.

- The vision of students of Saint Joseph University towards what they consider the cause of the Arab problem reflects a kind of racism and indifference.

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