

Public Opinion Survey of California Ethnic Groups About Criminal Justice Issues

JANUARY 8, 2004

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The criminal justice system is one of the most powerful entities in our nation, and the issues that define its policies are constantly setting boundaries for millions of Americans. The way various citizens view criminal justice issues is not only important to the system but also to society as a whole. This first-ever comprehensive "ethnic" poll on criminal justice issues interviewed 1,854 California adult residents – 450 Latinos; 401 Asians from China, Vietnam, Korea, the Philippines, Japan and India; 401 Middle Easterners from Armenia, Iran and several Arab nations; 200 African Americans; 200 American Indians; and 202 non-Latino whites – in 12 languages during May 2003. The findings reveal that racial and ethnic groups have strong, at times near unanimous, opinions on crucial criminal justice issues that range from alternative sentencing to police misconduct. They command the attention of California legislators, who write the criminal justice laws; of prosecutors and judges, who enforce those laws; and of advocates who wish either to reform the system or to maintain its status quo. A summary of the major findings of the study follows.

- I.** The most important finding of this poll shows that California minorities overwhelmingly prefer alternative sentencing and rehabilitative programs for minor offenders. There is unanimous agreement among all racial and ethnic groups that people with drug problems who commit a minor crime should be sent to drug treatment programs rather than to prisons. There is also evidence in the polls that California residents firmly support community service as a form of punishment over imprisonment for those who have committed minor crimes such as shoplifting or petty theft. More than four out of five Latinos, Asians/Middle Easterners, African Americans and American Indians would prefer to punish petty theft offenders by requiring them to work in homeless shelters. Solid majorities of ethnic and racial groups in California also favor rehabilitation programs for prisoners that will enable them to get high school and college diplomas while they are still in prison. They are strongly supportive of the notion that former convicts should be eligible for government college loan programs.
- II.** Another important finding of this poll reveals that the image of California's criminal justice system is in trouble. Surprisingly, in a country where the criminal justice system is supposed to be the strongest and the most dependable, majorities of the poll's 12 racial and ethnic groups think California's system favors the rich and powerful. Eighty-eight percent of African Americans and 75 percent of American Indians agree with that concept. Moreover, the state's criminal justice system scored low on the most important criterion: its fairness. More than two out of three African Americans, Latinos and American Indians indicated that they have only "some" or "very little" confidence in the fairness of the criminal justice system of California.

- III.** The study indicates that California's racial and ethnic groups have decidedly mixed feelings about the death penalty. The groups that most strongly oppose the death penalty for people convicted of murder are Koreans and African Americans. In contrast, Chinese, Arabs and American Indians strongly favor the death penalty. But the poll reveals that there is a strong consensus when racial and ethnic groups are asked about the death penalty for juveniles convicted of murder. All of the groups that are strongly in favor of the death penalty for adults are staunch opponents of the death penalty for juveniles (those 16 and 17 years old). The biggest shift is seen with Asian/Middle Eastern respondents. Sixty-three percent support the death penalty for adults, but only 26 percent favor the death penalty for juveniles.
- IV.** California "ethnics" also support more lenient sentences for juveniles in general. They are opposed to Proposition 21, a law that allows juveniles in California who commit serious felonies or are involved in gang-related crimes to be sent to adult prison. Sixty-five percent of African Americans, 55 percent of Latinos and 52 percent of Asians/Middle Easterners are opposed to the idea of treating juveniles like adults. These racial and ethnic groups want their state government to change its priorities. They would like to see California increase its spending on rehabilitation and crime prevention programs rather than funding the construction of more prisons and juvenile detention facilities. Racial and ethnic minorities also support spending money on expanding education opportunities for juveniles.

- V.** The results of the poll reveal good news and bad news for California's police departments. On the positive side, all of the groups are satisfied with the job that their local police departments are doing in protecting their neighborhoods. More than half of all the groups and four out of five Arabs and Armenians rate their job performance as "good" or "excellent." On the negative side, a majority of California's racial and ethnic groups believe that their local police tend to harass and detain people with darker skin or with foreign accents more than they harass and detain other Americans. Namely, three-quarters of African Americans and nearly half of all Latinos believe that their local police officers often abuse their power.
- VI.** Most racial and ethnic groups in California get their information about the criminal justice system from local television news programs in English, where images of crime are often sensationalized. These poll results are in stark contrast to results of similar polls of California "ethnic" groups on other major issues, such as medical care and international events, that revealed that minority groups, especially immigrants, prefer ethnic media as their primary source of information. This is clearly not the case here. Ethnic media in California needs to accept the challenge of covering the state's criminal justice system in a more comprehensive way.

PURPOSE OF THE POLL

For many months, the JEHT Foundation and the Open Society Institute jointly had wanted to research the opinions of California’s minorities on criminal justice issues. An ideal opportunity arose when Sandy Close, executive director of the Pacific News Service and of its offshoot, New California Media, proposed the present study. Close has been active in criminal justice issues in California since the late 1960s. In 1996, she and a dozen other San Francisco-area journalists founded New California Media to give organized voice to – and a common-interest meeting place for – the burgeoning number of minority-language broadcast, print and Internet outlets in California. NCM’s membership, now beyond 400 outlets, is still growing.

In requesting funding for this, NCM’s fourth multilingual poll conducted by Bendixen & Associates of Coral Gables, Fla., since 2002, Close noted: “As NCM’s first multi-lingual poll documented, 54 percent of California’s new ethnic majority identifies ethnic media as their primary daily source of news, and 84 percent report accessing ethnic media on a regular basis. These figures suggest that ethnic media is emerging as the most powerful new force in American journalism since alternative media emerged in the 1960s. [Just as] alternative media once helped give a voice to the ‘disaffected,’ so ethnic media now provides critical reassurance on a daily basis that communities disconnected by language, culture, race, poverty and other factors now have a presence in the American media culture.”

Helena Huang, senior project manager for JEHT, and Tanya Coke, OSI’s senior counsel for U.S. programs, explained in a joint statement from Huang why their foundations supported this study.

“OSI and JEHT funded this work as a way to complement prior OSI work testing/polling white swing voters on issues of crime and incarceration – we wanted to hear from communities of color as well,” Huang said. “Secondly, [we wanted] to tease out what we suspect will be nuanced views within a range of communities of color – to better arm our grantees/advocates with accurate information. So many advocates make problematic assumptions about the views of people of color when it comes to criminal justice reform. These assumptions can weaken their effectiveness. Finally, we saw this project as an excellent way to engage the ethnic press and get them covering issues of crime and incarceration in their communities – hopefully in the most nuanced ways possible.”

Huang added: “California is among the nation’s incarceration leaders. It is a state where regressive policies, like ‘three strikes’ laws and juvenile transfer to adult court, have flowered. At the same time, California is also a bellwether state for progressive criminal justice policy, exporting promising alternatives to incarceration models, such as Proposition 36, and youth movements against incarceration, including the Bay Area’s Books Not Bars campaign. What Californians think about who goes to prison and how to treat them impacts criminal justice policies across the country.

“The results from the poll are designed to promote more nuanced coverage of crime and incarceration in the ethnic press. Engaging the ethnic press by surveying its constituency is increasingly important in states like California, where immigration is changing the local demographics and, along with it, local politics. The ethnic press now plays a powerful role in shaping the views and opinions of its growing readership. These ethnic groups represent a new, substantial voting force that those concerned about criminal justice – particularly politicians and policymakers – can no longer afford to ignore.”

The poll’s data, Huang concluded, “will be used by advocacy groups to further refine messages for their public education campaigns directed at these [minority] populations.”

This poll’s questions were propounded and vetted by Sergio Bendixen, founder and president of Bendixen & Associates, and his colleagues in Coral Gables. After the English-language questions were approved as to content and clarity by a team of experts¹, they were sent to qualified professional translators for translation into the poll’s other 11 languages: Spanish, Arabic, Persian, Armenian, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean, Tagalog, Hindi and Japanese. The translations then were forwarded to a second panel of experts in each language for screening. The screeners’ job was to change into everyday terms familiar to speakers of each language any words or phrases deemed translated too literally to make sense if uncorrected.

¹ Vincent Schiraldi, Justice Policy Institute; Joe Domanick and Julie Silvers, Institute for Justice and Journalism, USC Annenberg School for Communication; Van Jones, Ella Baker Center for Human Rights; Raul Ramirez, KQED Radio; Angela Arboleda, National Council of La Raza.

“Too literal” can be complicated to explain, but here’s a real-life illustration. A few years ago, *The Miami Herald’s* Spanish-language sister paper, *El Nuevo Herald*, was translating into Spanish a *Miami Herald* story containing the English phrase “a grassroots movement.” The translator, a literalist at least at that moment, rendered the phrase into Spanish as “a movement of the roots of the grass.” This gaffe caused considerable amusement (and embarrassment) in both newspapers’ newsrooms. It also engendered head-scratching bemusement among *El Nuevo Herald’s* Spanish-only readers. Unlike *El Nuevo Herald’s* many English-fluent readers, who could readily make the back-translation into English, Spanish-only readers could only wonder what on earth the phrase meant.

Once corrected by the panel of screeners, the poll’s questions all were clear and unambiguous to all respondents in all 11 translated languages. Experienced interviewers then telephoned respondents who were scientifically chosen from throughout Northern California, the Central Valley and Southern California to represent fairly the subgroups in the 1,854-person sample. The subgroups included 450 Latinos, 401 each of Asian and Middle Eastern origin, and 202 non-Latino whites, 200 African Americans and 200 American Indians.

All respondents were asked to identify themselves as to which of the included groups they belonged. Next, all then were asked whether they preferred to be interviewed in English or in their self-chosen group’s native tongue. The interviews then proceeded in the language of each respondent’s choice.

The interviewers marked all responses to all questions, in all languages, on a common score sheet tabulated in a-b-c-d fashion. This eliminated the need to translate back into English the responses rendered in the other 11 languages. All responses then were totaled and collated by computer.

The margin of error for the sample of 1,854 respondents is plus or minus two percentage points. For the subgroups of 450 Latinos, 401 Asians and 401 Middle Eastern immigrants, the error margin is about five percentage points. For the subgroups of American Indians, non-Latino whites and African Americans, the error margin is seven percentage points.

MAJOR FINDINGS

I. Minorities' Priority: Alternatives to Prison

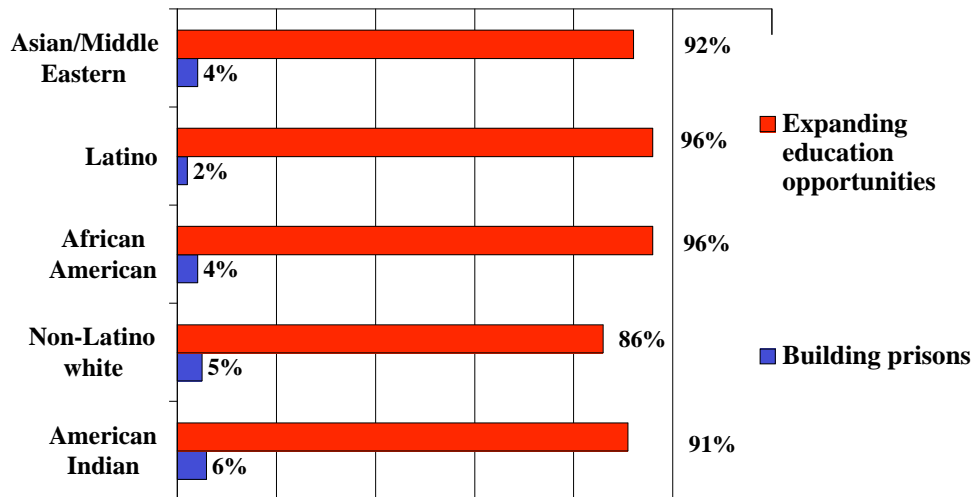
If this poll had been a statewide referendum on California's sentencing priorities, the result would have been a Vesuvian eruption of shouts of "*Change the priorities!*" The strongest single finding, ranging from 82 percent to 98 percent agreement across all groups, was the belief that society would benefit more by spending money on education for young people than on building more prisons. From two-thirds to nine-tenths of respondents in all 12 groups say that people convicted of minor felonies, such as possessing personal quantities of marijuana, should be sent to drug treatment rather than to prison.

Similar overwhelming support, across all groups, favors sentences such as "working in a homeless shelter" instead of prison for people convicted of petty theft, such as shoplifting. Majorities of all groups, less strong but still clear, say that crime prevention and rehabilitation programs for prisoners are effective. Pluralities or majorities of all groups prefer cutting criminal justice spending or raising taxes rather than cutting spending on education or social services. Solid majorities of 11 of the poll's groups, and a strong plurality of the 12th, American Indians, favor making ex-convicts eligible for government education loans. A majority of all the major groups support restoring ex-convicts' right to vote. Finally, there is overwhelming support – from 80 percent to 90 percent, depending on the group – for diverting a portion of prison funds to programs that fight child abuse. Clearly, California's minorities – now a majority of the state's 34 million people – see alternative sentencing and emphasis on rehabilitation over mere incarceration as more productive both for the individual criminal and for society.

California's minority groups also have strong suggestions for the government when it comes to dealing with the issue of budget priorities. As California faces a budget crisis, with one of the largest deficits in the state's history, a plurality of all of the minority groups in this survey, particularly African Americans and Latinos, prefer the state government to cut spending on criminal justice, which funds the building of new prisons, rather than cut spending on social services, such as health care for poor people.

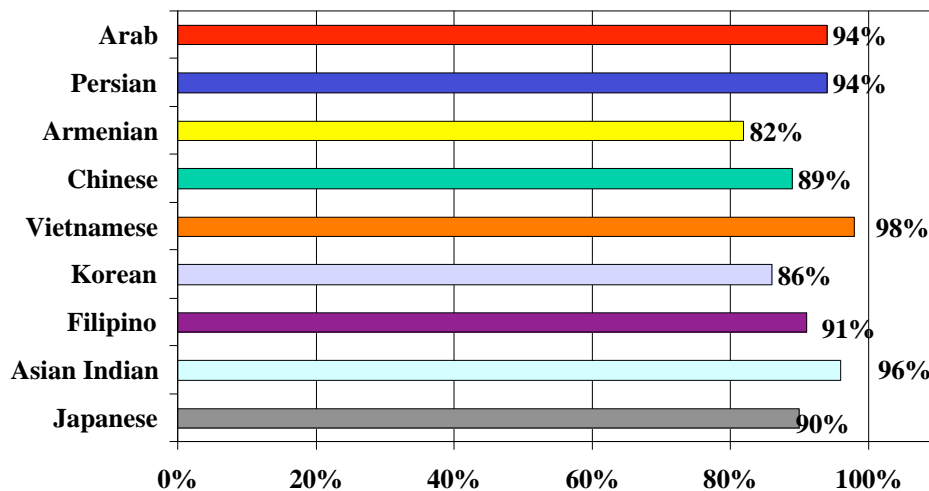
(The top charts show the major ethnic and racial groups. The bottom charts show the breakdown of Asian and Middle Eastern languages.)

What would be better for our society: to spend money on expanding education opportunities for young people or to spend money on building prisons?

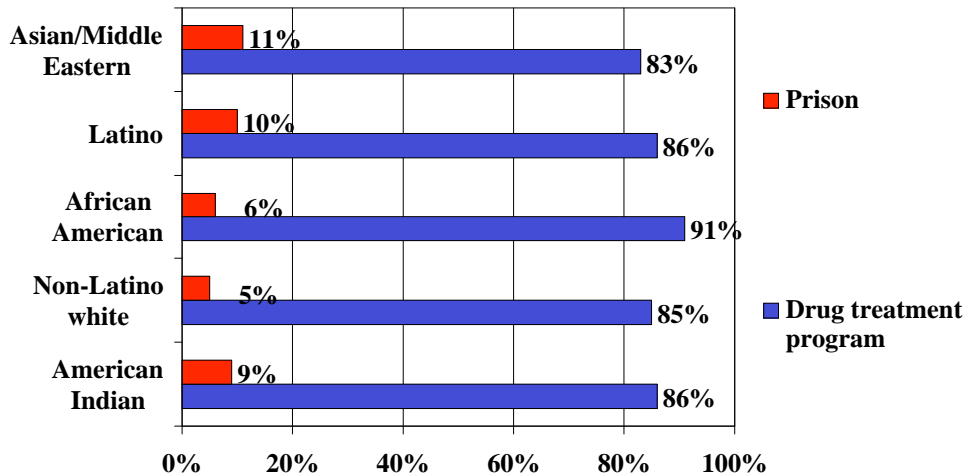


What would be better for our society: to spend money on expanding education opportunities for young people or to spend money on building prisons?

“expanding education opportunities” answers

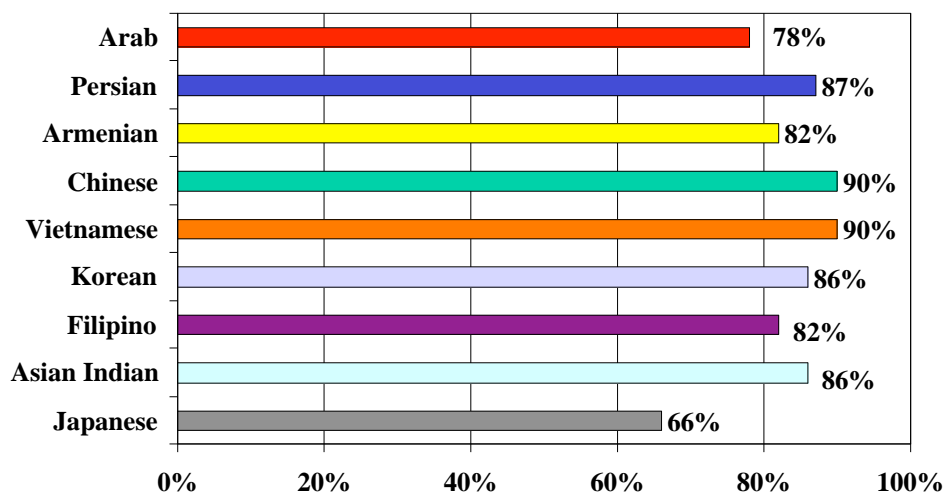


What about the people with drug problems who commit minor crimes – like carrying a small amount of marijuana – should they be sent to prison or should they be forced to complete a drug treatment program?

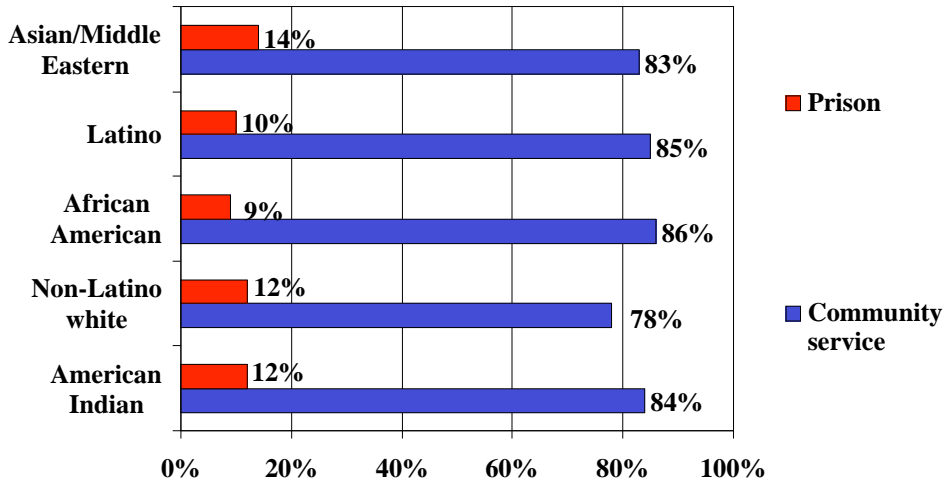


What about the people with drug problems who commit minor crimes – like carrying a small amount of marijuana – should they be sent to prison or should they be forced to complete a drug treatment program?

“drug treatment program” answers

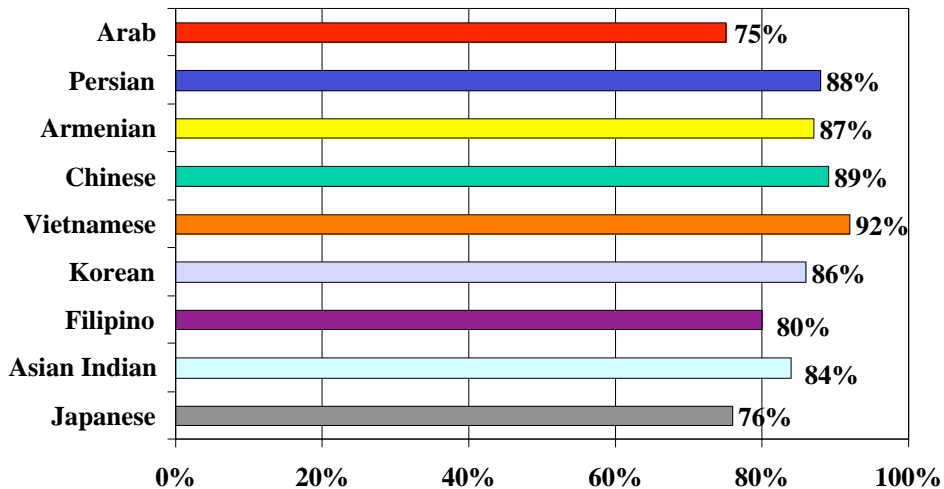


How about people who commit petty theft – like stealing clothing from a store – do you think they should be sent to prison or should they be given some other punishment, such as working in a homeless shelter?



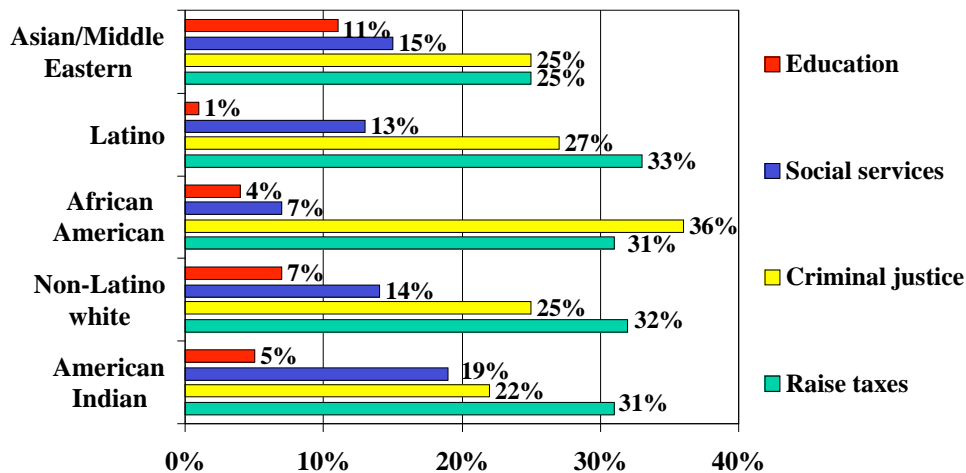
How about people who commit petty theft – like stealing clothing from a store – do you think they should be sent to prison or should they be given some other punishment, such as working in a homeless shelter?

“community service” answers

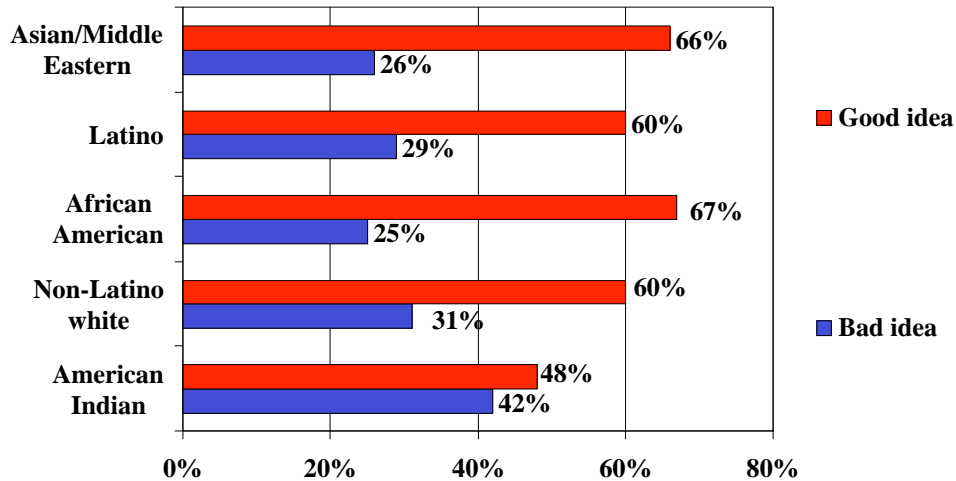


California faces a budget crisis with a large deficit. Some people want to cut money for education, which funds public schools. Other people want to cut money for social services, which fund health care for poor people.

Other people want to cut money for criminal justice, which funds the building of new prisons. Other people want to increase taxes to minimize budget cuts. What do you think the state government should do?

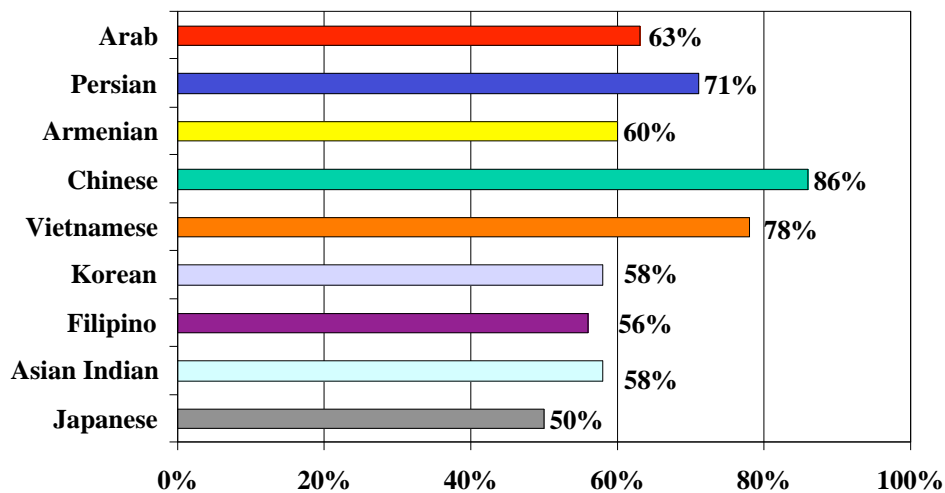


Do you think it is a good idea or bad idea to allow former convicts to be eligible for government college loans like other citizens?

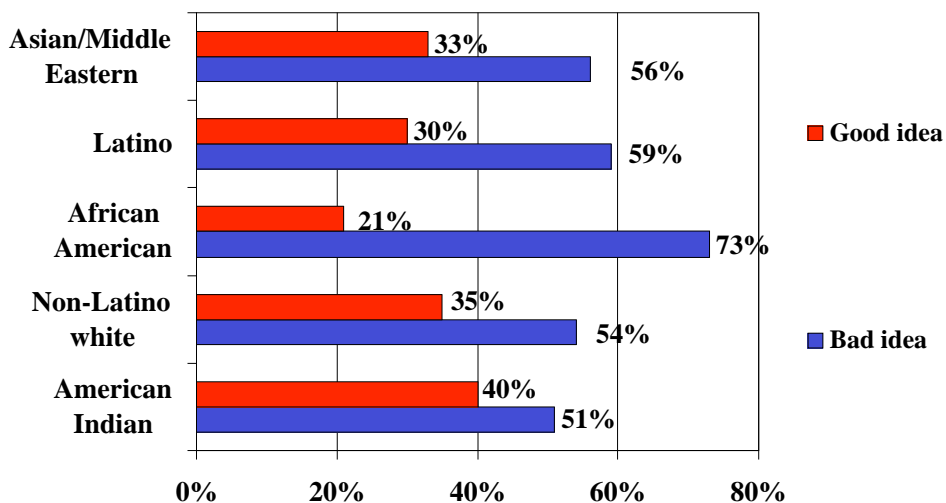


Do you think it is a good idea or bad idea to allow former convicts to be eligible for government college loans like other citizens?

“good idea” answers

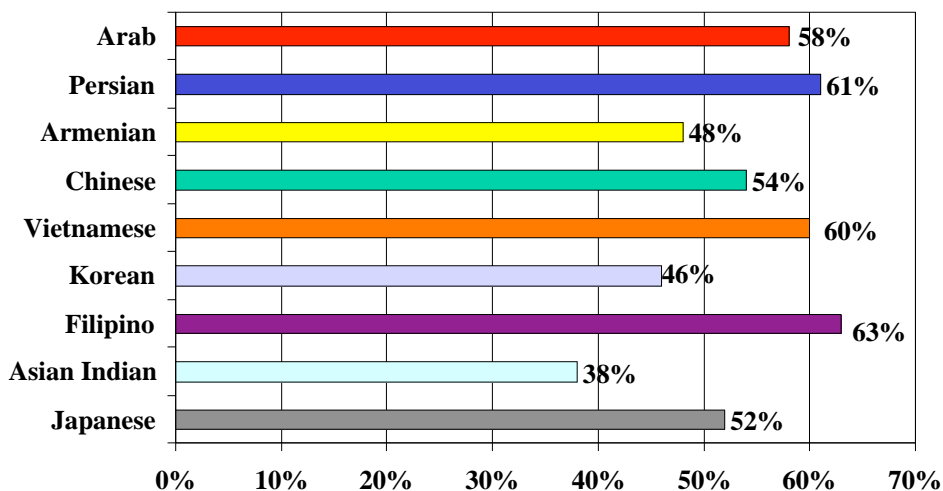


Do you think it's a good idea or a bad idea that former convicts lose the right to vote?

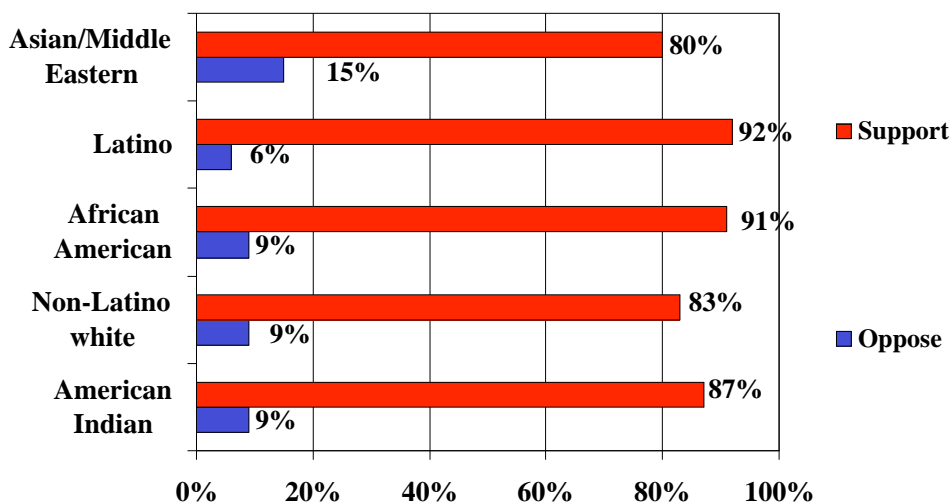


Do you think it's a good idea or a bad idea that former convicts lose the right to vote?

“bad idea” answers

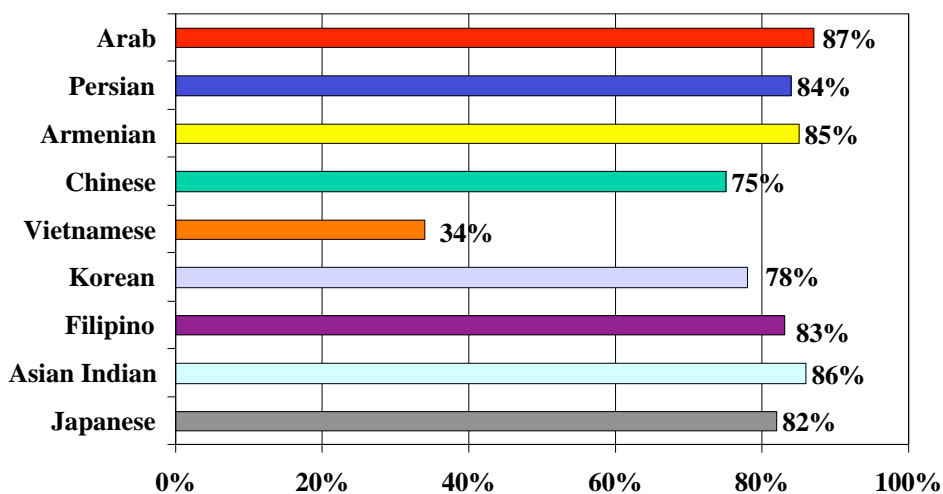


Would you support or oppose taking a small percentage of the money that is used to build prisons and using that money for programs that fight child abuse?



Would you support or oppose taking a small percentage of the money that is used to build prisons and using that money for programs that fight child abuse?

“support” answers



2. *How Fair Is California's Criminal Justice System?*

In evaluating these respondents' opinions of the fairness of California's criminal justice system, it's perhaps helpful to begin with their experience with it. That experience is, in a word, scant. About two-thirds to nine-tenths of the respondents said they have not been personally involved in the system in the last few years. Yet people's opinions rarely are based solely on personal experience. Rather, they're most often based on a mix of personal experience and what the person has read in the newspaper, seen on TV and heard on the radio or from friends.

Against that background, these findings perhaps become clearer. Majorities of almost all of this poll's 12 groups think the system favors the rich and powerful. That includes 88 percent of African Americans, 75 percent of American Indians, 60 percent of non-Latino whites, 59 percent of Latinos and 54 percent of the Asian and Middle Eastern immigrants. The overall opinion could hardly be stronger.

Could O.J. Simpson's acquittal on criminal charges, facilitated by his wealth and his high-profile attorneys, have fueled at least part of this belief that California's system favors the rich and powerful? That's possible, perhaps probable. But it's a fact of life, not just in California but in every state, that people who can hire the best attorneys stand a better chance of being acquitted of criminal charges than do people of little means. To acknowledge that fact is not to be content with it. But to deny that fact would be to deny reality.

Views of the death penalty among this poll's major groups are decidedly mixed. The largest group, Asian and Middle Eastern immigrants, favors the death penalty by a two-to-one margin. The next-largest group, Latinos, opposes the death penalty by 47 percent to 41 percent. Most African Americans polled oppose it (55 percent to 31 percent). Two-thirds of non-Latino whites and American Indians support it.

(By comparison, national polls over the past two years have shown that about 70 percent of Americans support the death penalty.)

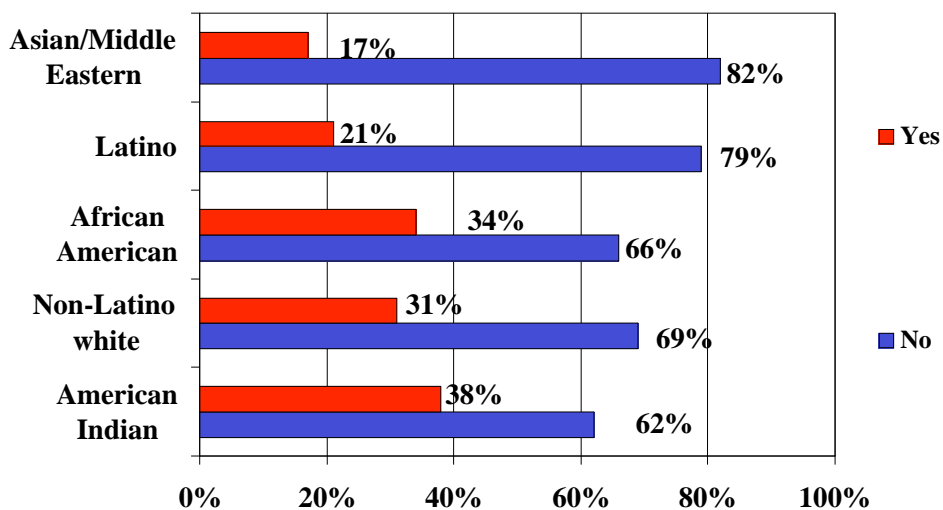
Support for California's "three strikes and you're out" law, which imposes sentences of 25 years or more on people convicted of three crimes, is decidedly mixed. The only majority support among the major groups comes from Latinos (61 percent). Among the

largest group, from Asia and the Middle East, 48 percent support it, 41 percent oppose it. Seventy-six percent of African Americans and 51 percent of non-Latino whites oppose it.

When respondents who had said they support the “three strikes” law were told that many convicts sentenced under this law had committed nonviolent crimes, “like stealing a pair of sneakers or forging a check,” strong majorities of the “supporters” in those groups oppose applying this penalty to such offenses, especially Latinos, by 64 percent. This figure proves that the law’s strongest supporters, Latinos, easily become its strongest opponents when the law requires such a severe penalty to be applied to minor offenses. Most of those non-Latino whites (60 percent) and American Indians (53 percent) who had supported it in the first question still supported it, however.

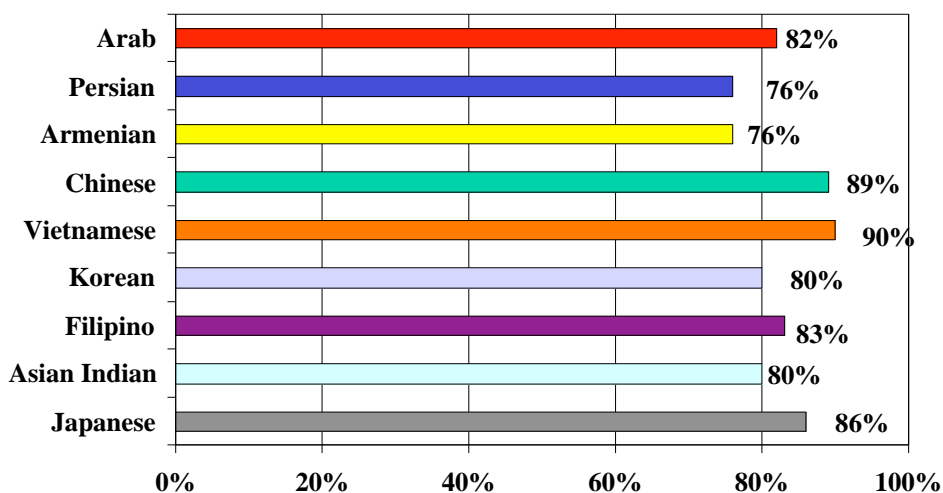
The survey reveals that California has a lot of work to do when it comes to changing the opinions of minorities on their perceptions of the criminal justice system. California is part of a country that prides itself on its judicial impartiality, and yet it is surprising to see that less than one out of six minorities in the state has a great deal of confidence in California’s criminal justice system. Only 7 percent of African Americans, 11 percent of American Indians and 12 percent of non-Latino whites have a great deal of confidence in the system. Asian/Middle Eastern immigrants and Latino respondents show similar results, with only 14 percent of them having a great deal of confidence. Also, 55 percent of Latino respondents and 73 percent of African American respondents said the criminal justice system treats them worse than it treats other groups. The results of this poll strongly suggest that minorities do not consider California’s Lady Justice to be as blind and as impartial as she claims to be.

Have you been involved with the court system in California in the last few years?

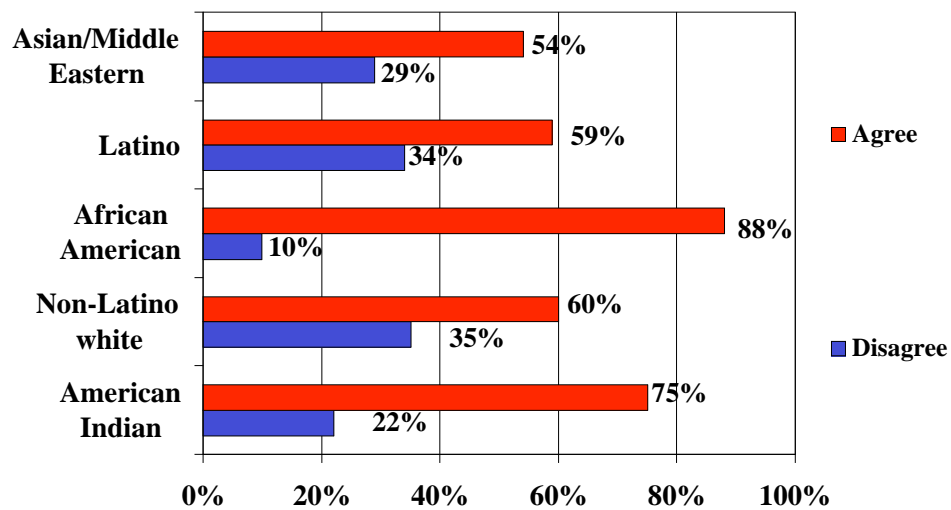


Have you been involved with the court system in California in the last few years?

“no” answers

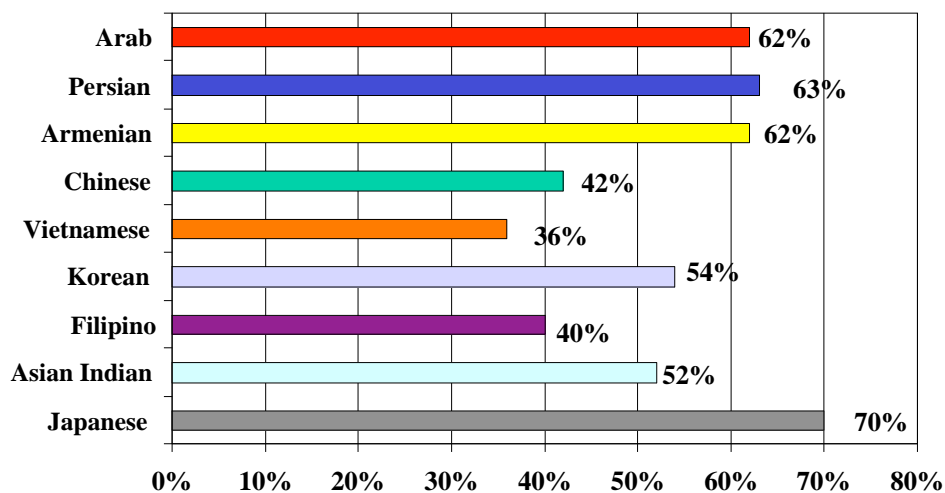


The criminal justice system in California favors the rich and powerful

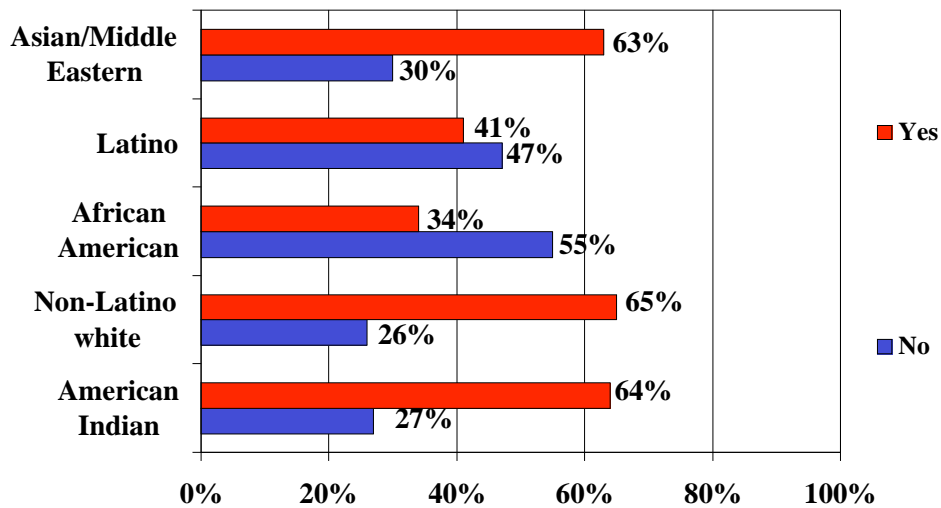


The criminal justice system in California favors the rich and powerful

“agree” answers

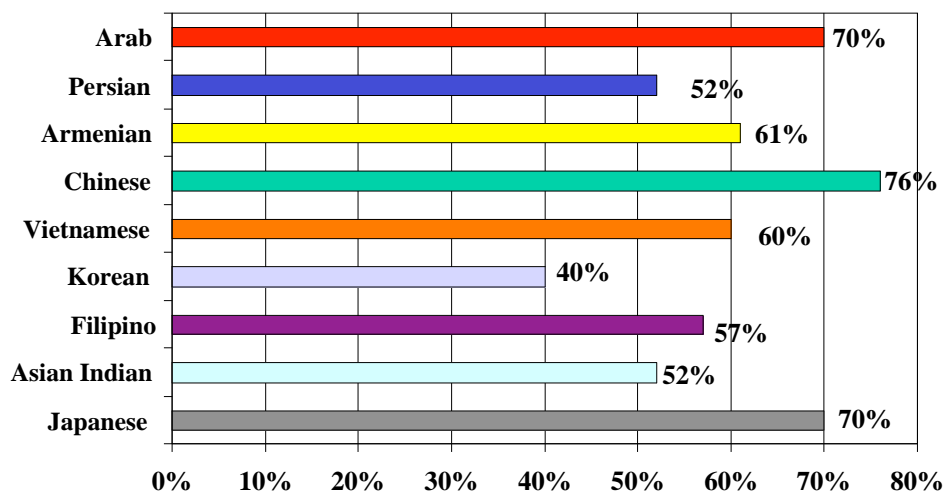


Are you in favor of the death penalty for a person convicted of murder?

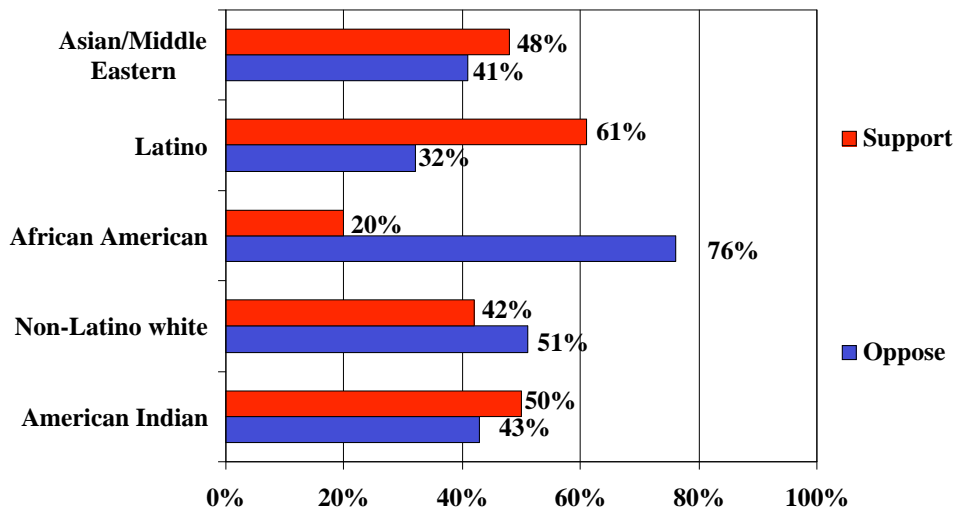


Are you in favor of the death penalty for a person convicted of murder?

“yes” answers

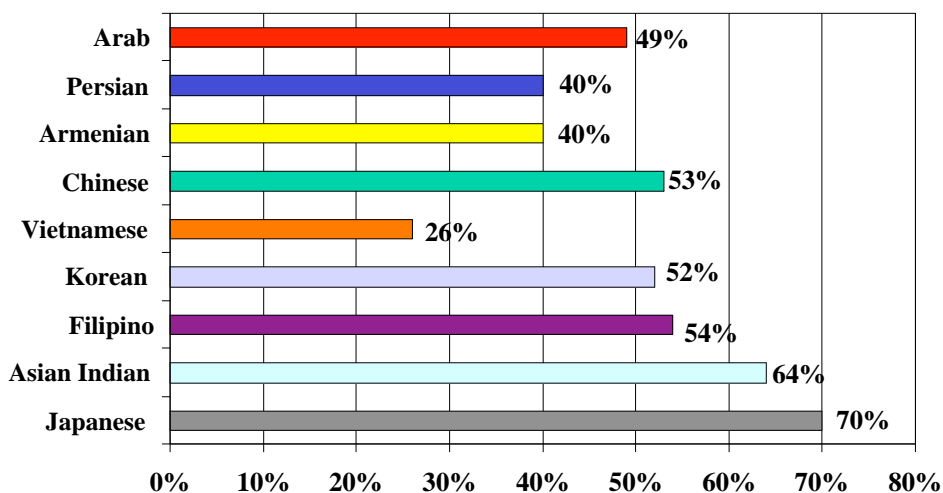


Do you support or oppose the “three strikes and you’re out” law?

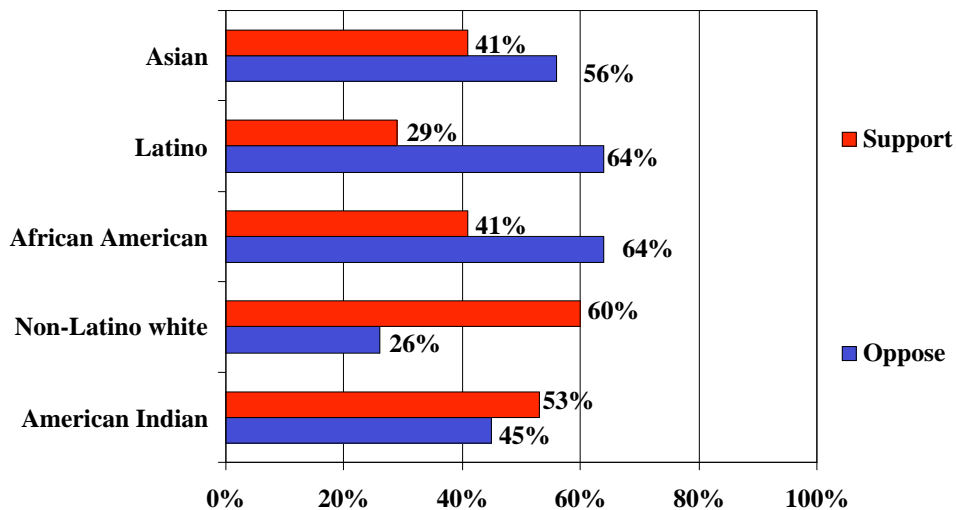


Do you support or oppose the “three strikes and you’re out” law?

“support” answers

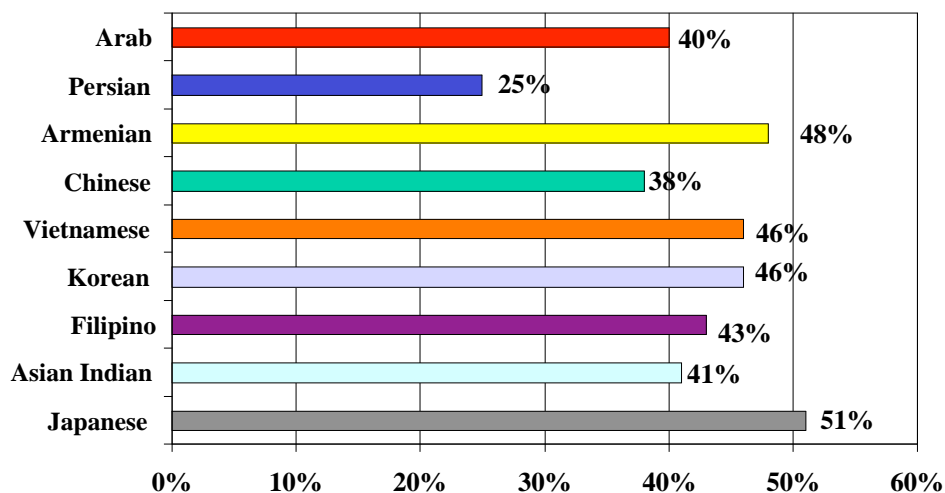


Many people serving life in prison because of “three strikes and you’re out” committed nonviolent crimes, such as forging a check or stealing a pair of sneakers. Now that you have this information, do you support or oppose the law?
(asked only of those who had supported it in previous question)



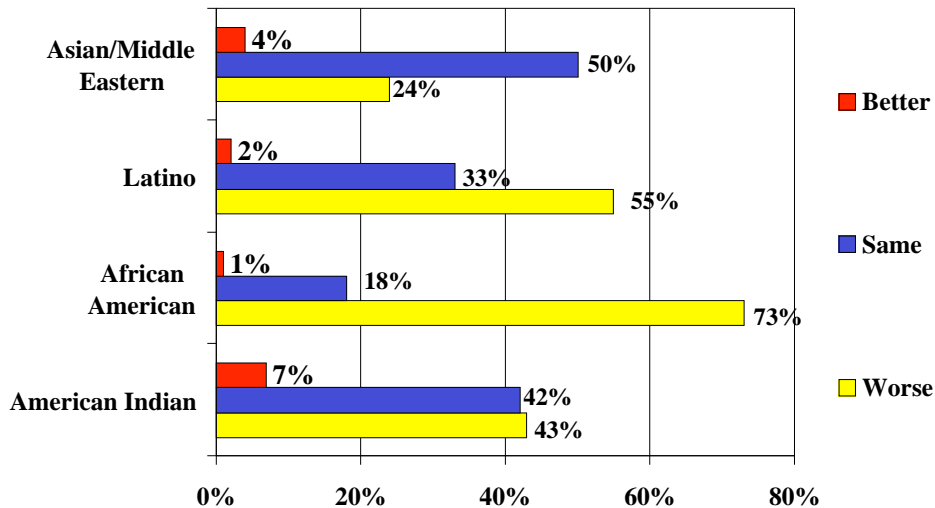
Many people serving life in prison because of the “three strikes and you’re out” law committed nonviolent crimes, such as forging a check or stealing a pair of sneakers. Now that you have this information, do you support or oppose the law?

“still support” answers



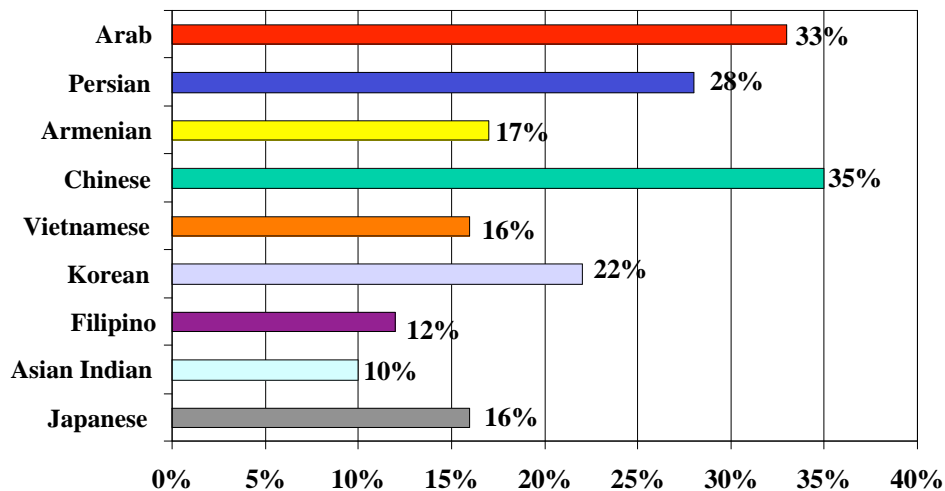
Thinking about the court system in California – the judges, prosecutors and attorneys – do you think that _____-Americans get treated better, the same or worse than other Americans by the system?

(the blank was the name of the respondent's own group)

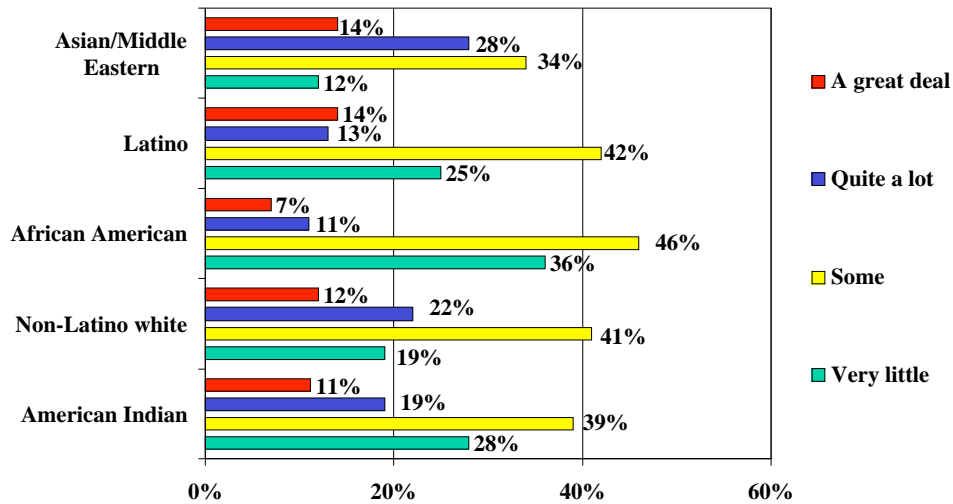


Now, thinking about the court system in California – the judges, prosecutors and attorneys – do you think that _____-Americans get treated better, the same or worse than other Americans by the system?

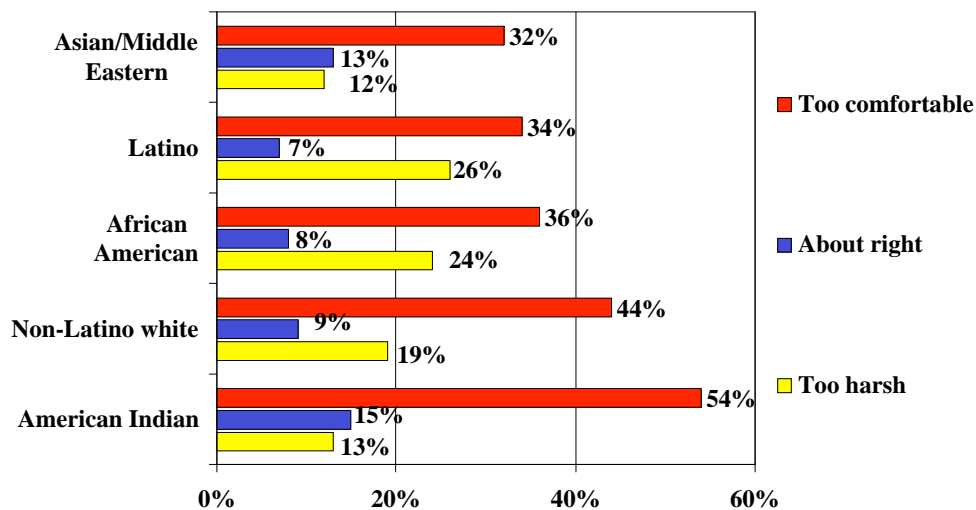
“worse” answers



How much confidence do you have in the fairness of the criminal justice system in California: a great deal, quite a lot, some or very little?



How would you describe the conditions in prison for criminals – would you say prison conditions are too comfortable or too harsh?



3. Views on crime, police protection and personal freedom

Some 90 percent of this poll’s major groups – Latinos and the Asian/Middle Eastern group – said they had *not* been crime victims in the past year. More than 80 percent of American Indians, non-Latino whites and African Americans said the same. This finding is interesting in light of the perception, reflected in nationwide polls, that Americans’ fear of crime is pervasive. It could be that, at least among this poll’s respondents, the perception far exceeds the reality.

In this poll, pluralities of the Latino, Asian/Middle Eastern and non-Latino white groups said that their neighborhood crime is “about the same” as before. Conversely, pluralities of American Indians (48 percent) and African Americans (41 percent) said it is increasing.

Given the major groups’ plurality view that neighborhood crime hasn’t changed much, it’s not surprising that most respondents think that their local police do a good job of protecting them. In fact, approval of local police protection soars to about two-thirds among the major groups when the percentages of “excellent” and “good” protection are combined. This finding should comfort California’s local police departments.

The next two findings *won’t* comfort the police, though.

Three-fourths of African Americans and a plurality of Latinos agree that “police tend to harass and detain people with darker skins or with foreign accents more often than they harass or detain other Americans.”

Second, the poll’s major groups overwhelmingly reject the idea that “police should be allowed to ask people who are stopped for a traffic offense for a copy of their immigration papers.” The strongest opposition (82 percent) comes from Latinos, but 62 percent of the Asian/Middle Eastern group and of African Americans also oppose the idea. Pluralities of non-Latino whites and American Indians support the proposal.

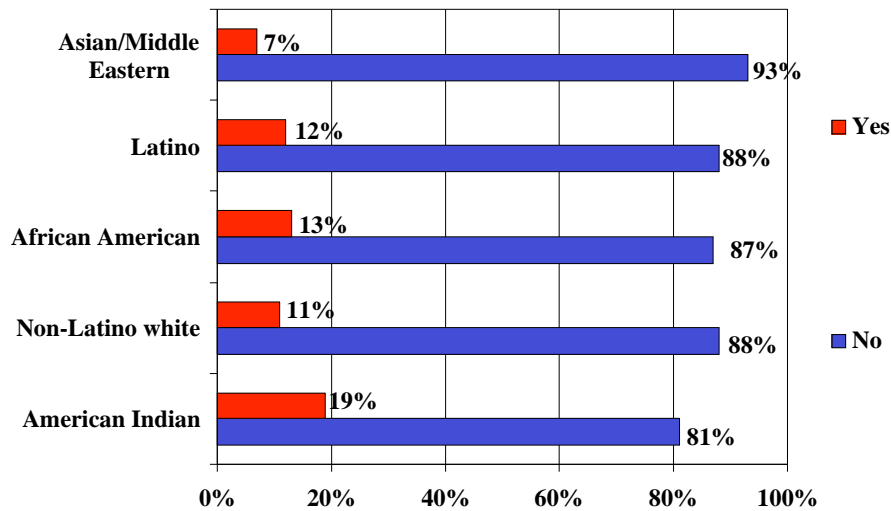
Latinos’ overwhelming opposition to this proposition is easily understandable. Huge numbers of Latino immigrants are in this country illegally, particularly in California, Texas and Florida. Those illegal immigrants, lacking official immigration papers, share such fear of deportation by *la migra* – the immigration authorities. Small wonder, then, that four-

fifths of Latinos in this poll oppose this proposition. Respondents were not asked their citizenship status, but past polls indicate that about 10 percent to 20 percent of the Latino population in California is undocumented.

It's worth noting that U.S. citizens *do not* have to carry any official identification to prove their identify to police or anyone else. Sure, a driver's license or a credit card usually is required to cash a check or for other commercial transactions. Those, however, are private, voluntary endeavors. They don't involve government agents or scrutiny.

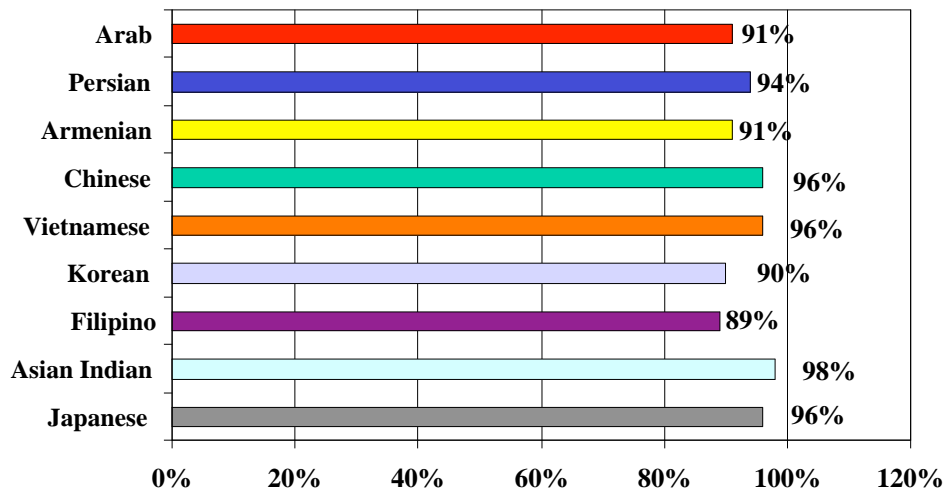
Indeed, Americans long have fought on First Amendment grounds – so far successfully – against all efforts to institute a national identity card that they would have to carry with them at all times. The climate of personal liberty has changed radically for the worse since Sept. 11, however. Given that shift, it's anyone's guess how long – or even whether – this opposition to requiring national identity cards can prevail.

Have you been a victim of a crime in the last year?

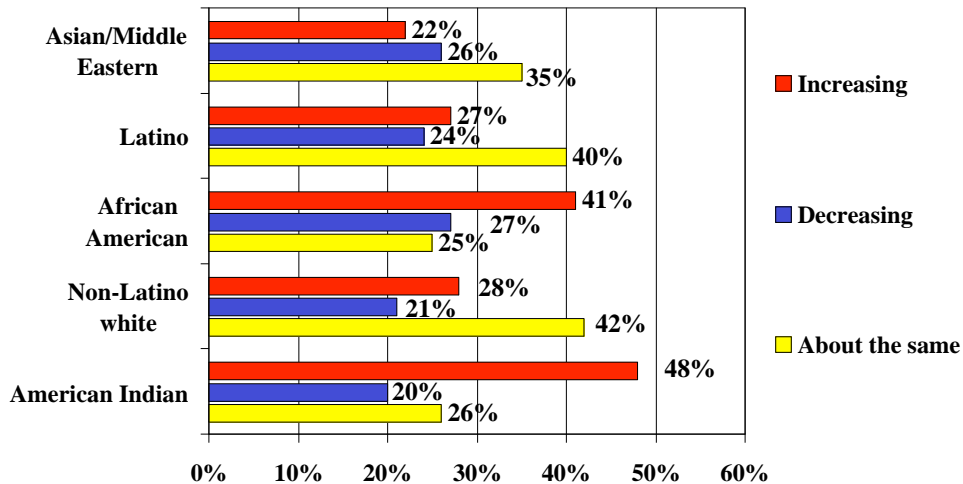


Have you been a victim of a crime in the last year?

“no” answers

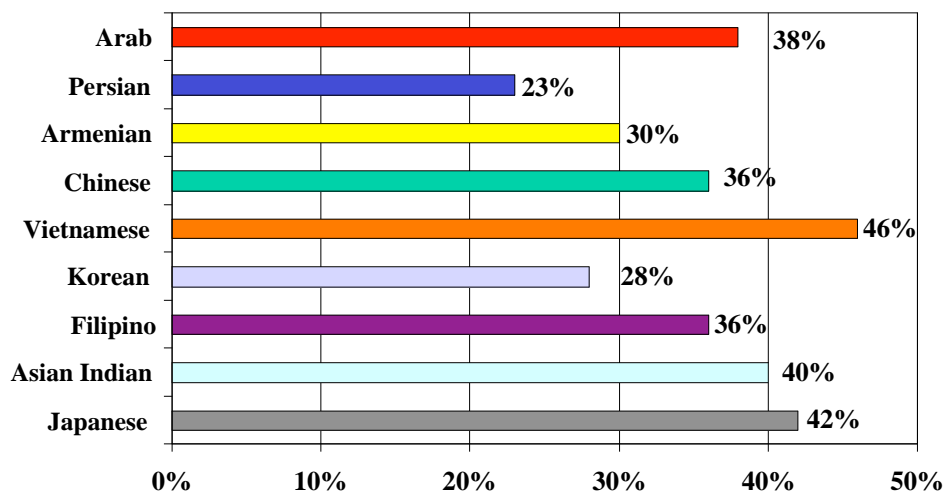


Do you think crime is increasing or decreasing in your neighborhood?

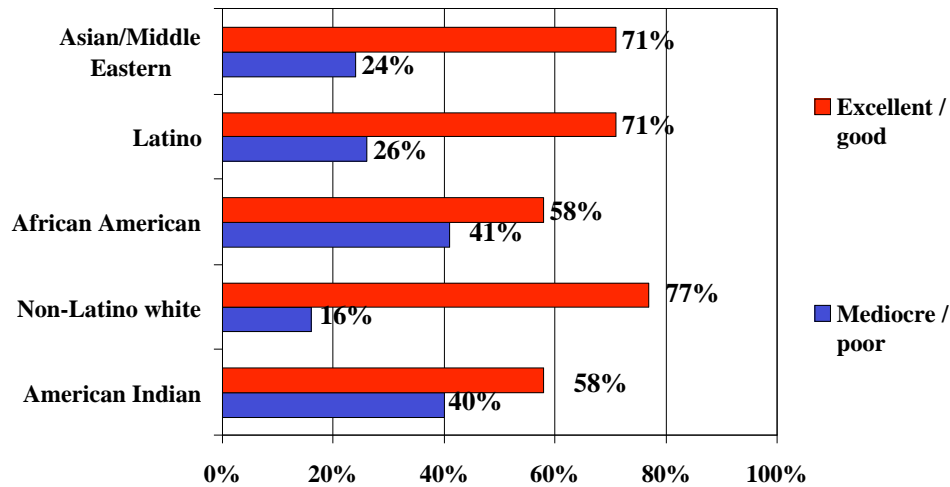


Do you think crime is increasing or decreasing in your neighborhood?

“about the same” answers

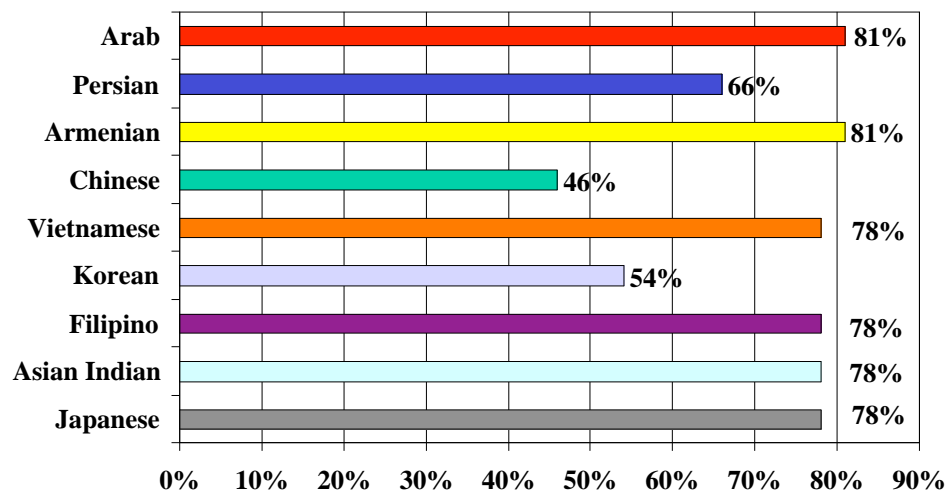


How would you rate the job your local police are doing in protecting your neighborhood: excellent, good, mediocre or poor?

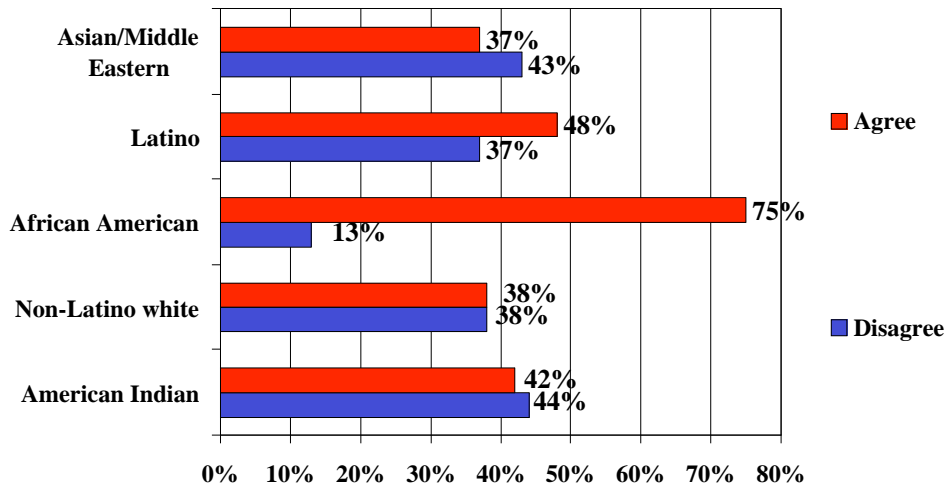


How would you rate the job your local police are doing in protecting your neighborhood: excellent, good, mediocre or poor?

“excellent / good” answers

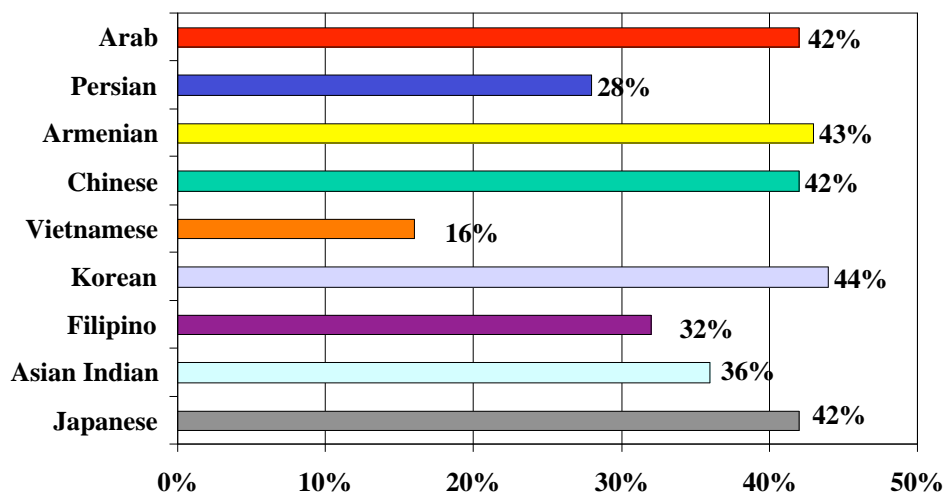


Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The police tend to harass and detain people with darker skin or with foreign accents more often than they harass and detain other Americans.

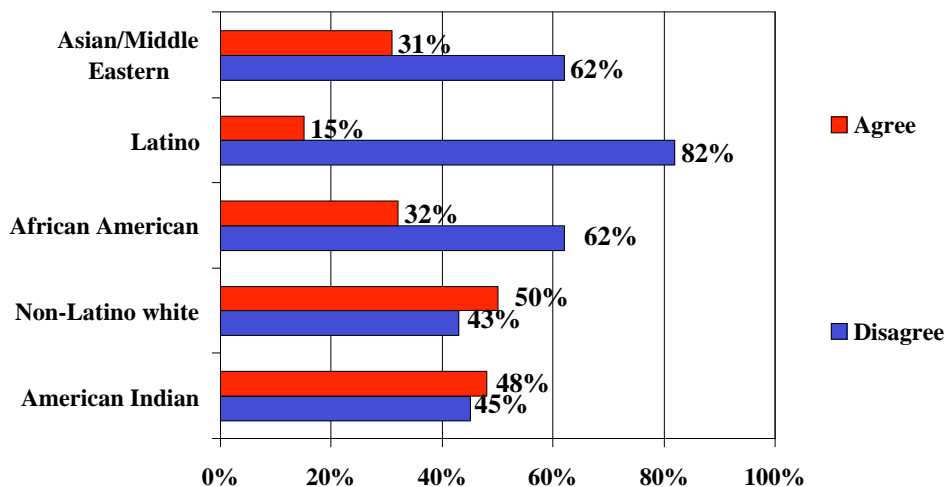


Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The police tend to harass and detain people with darker skin or with foreign accents more often than they harass and detain other Americans.

“agree” answers

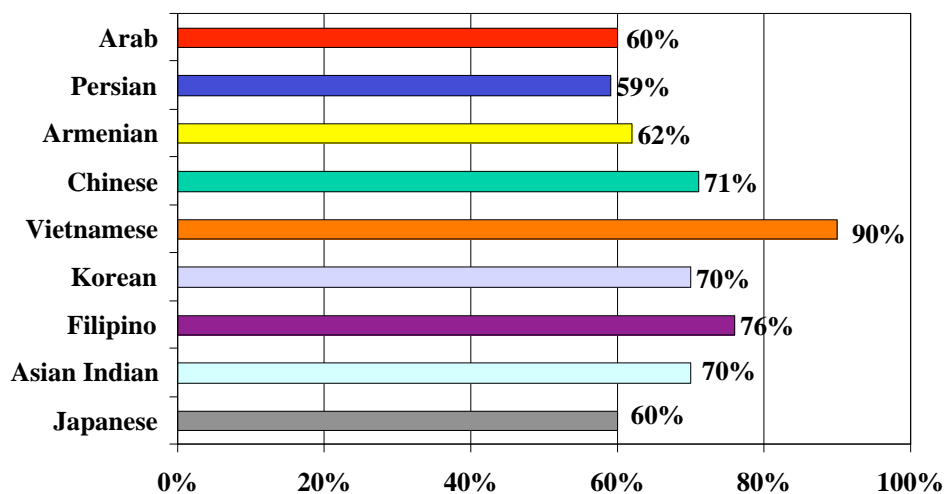


Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The police should be allowed to ask people who are stopped for traffic offenses for a copy of their immigration papers.



Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The police should be allowed to ask people who are stopped for traffic offenses for a copy of their immigration papers.

“disagree” answers



4. Juveniles and the death penalty, and sentences for young adults

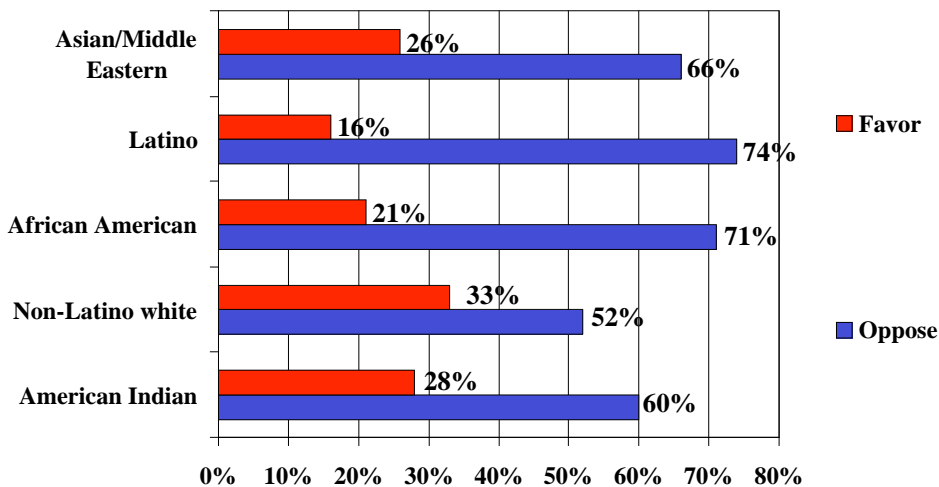
Two-thirds to three-fourths of this poll's major groups oppose applying the death penalty to 16- and 17-year-olds. Majorities of these groups, and pluralities of American Indians and non-Latino whites, also oppose Proposition 21. This California law allows juveniles who commit serious felonies or who are involved in gang-related crimes to be sent to adult prison.

The survey shows a stark contrast between respondents' views of the death penalty for adults convicted of murder and their views on applying that same sentence to juveniles convicted of murder. There is strong evidence in the poll that respondents who once favored the death penalty overwhelmingly change their opinions about the issue when there is a juvenile involved. The groups most likely to change their minds are Asian/ Middle Eastern immigrants and American Indians. For example, 63 percent of Asians/Middle Easterners favor the death penalty for adults; however, when asked about applying the death penalty to juveniles ages 16 and 17, only 26 percent favor the death sentence. It is clear that all groups prefer more lenient sentences for juveniles.

As mentioned earlier, three-fourths to four-fifths of the poll's respondents prefer alternative sentencing for juveniles and prefer spending money on rehabilitation and crime prevention among young people than on sending people 25 or younger to prison.

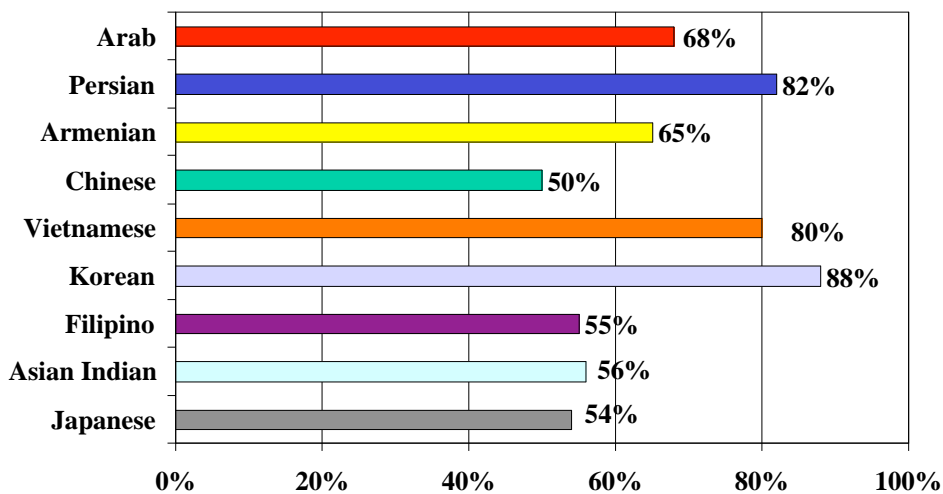
This poll doesn't document it, but there's ample reason for its respondents' concern about sending young offenders to adult prison. The sordid national record shows that teen inmates housed with adults often are victims of homosexual rape or virtual enslavement by older, stronger inmates. This can warp a life. Moreover, unless inmates are offered education opportunities while in prison, experience also shows that younger felons, when released, often leave prison mainly with enhanced criminal skills learned from older, craftier inmates. This is perhaps the strongest argument for enhanced education opportunities for prisoners – which respondents to this poll strongly support.

Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for juveniles 16 and 17 years old convicted of murder?

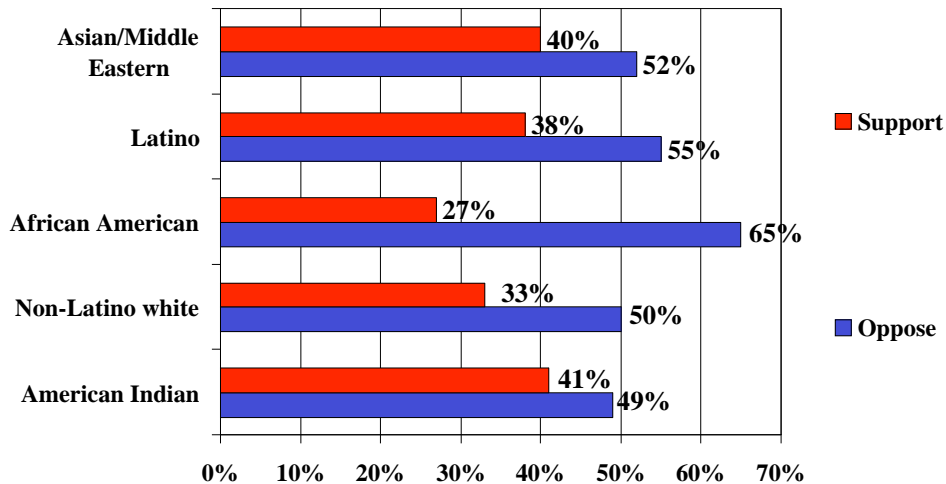


Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for juveniles 16 and 17 years old convicted of murder?

“oppose” answers

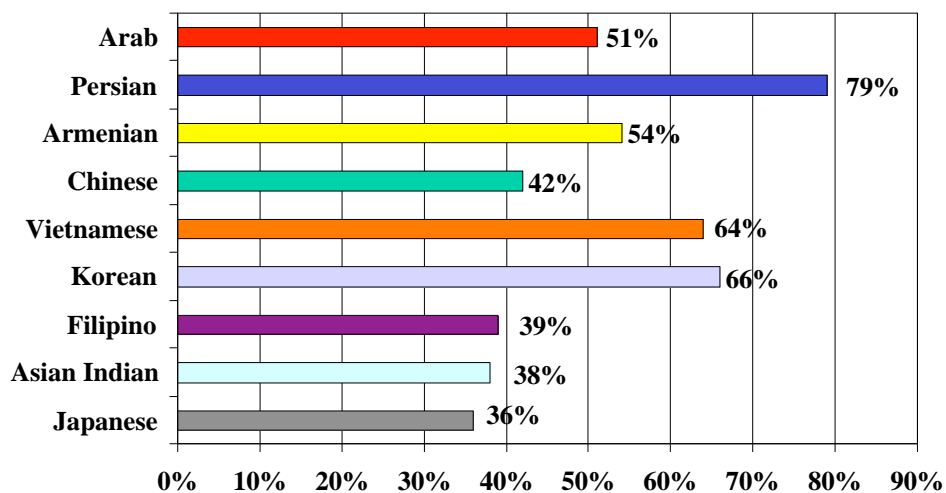


Do you support or oppose Proposition 21?

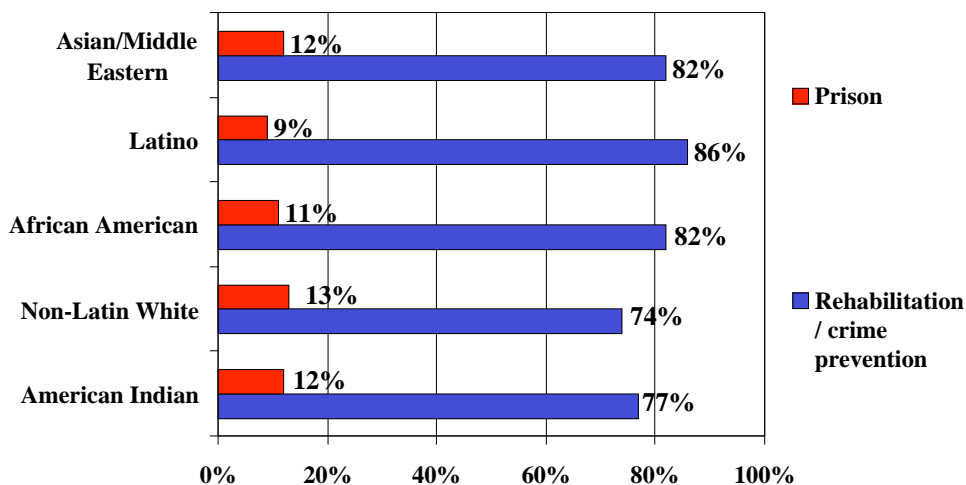


Do you support or oppose Proposition 21?

“oppose” answers

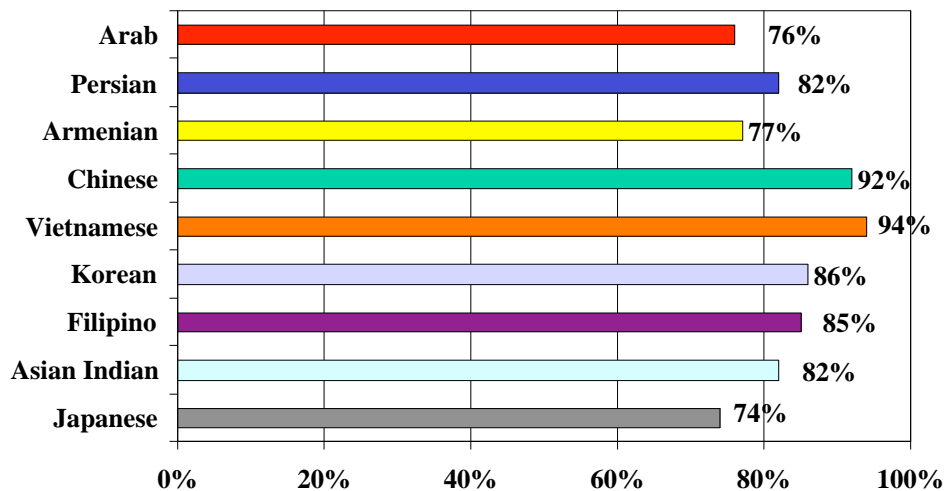


In your opinion, which is a better: to spend money on sending young people, those 25 years of age or younger, who commit a crime to prison or to spend money on rehabilitation and crime prevention programs for young people?



In your opinion, which is a better: to spend money on sending young people, those 25 years of age or younger, who commit a crime to prison or to spend money on rehabilitation and crime prevention programs for young people?

“rehabilitation and crime prevention program” answers



5. *Where minorities get their information about the criminal justice system*

Clear pluralities or majorities of all of this poll's respondents get most of their news about California's criminal justice system from local television. Cable television runs a far distant second among most groups. As might be expected, 78 percent of Latinos prefer their TV news in Spanish. Among the larger Asian/ Middle Eastern group, however, 54 percent prefer their TV news in English.

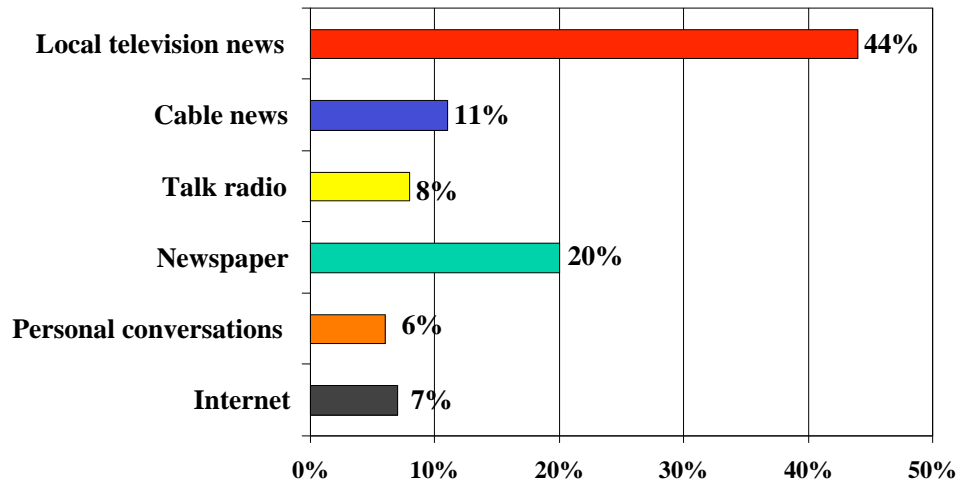
These preferences among the poll's major groups continue when they're asked about talk radio. Some 57 percent of the Asian/ Middle Eastern groups prefer English radio, while 71 percent of Latinos prefer Spanish.

English is also the preferred language when these groups read newspapers. A slight majority of the Asian/ Middle Eastern group prefers newspapers in English. Rather surprisingly, Latinos also prefer English newspapers by 79 percent, compared with 21 percent who prefer Spanish newspapers. This Latino preference could be an artifact of income and social status. It's quite common for higher-income, bilingual Latinos to prefer newspapers in English.

Internet users overwhelmingly – from two-thirds up to 97 percent, depending on the group – prefer English when connecting online. The only (barely) competing language was Spanish, which 29 percent of Latinos prefer, versus 65 percent who prefer the Internet in English.

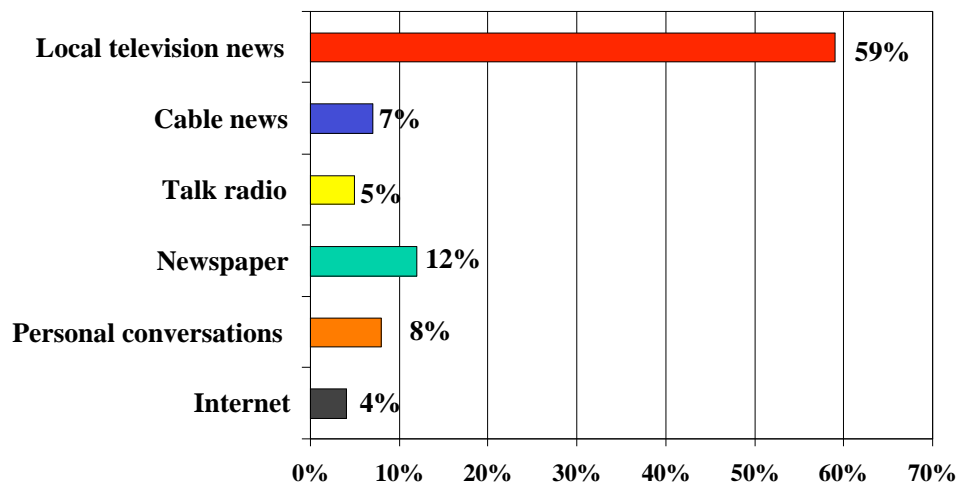
Where do you get your information about the criminal justice system – from local television news, from cable news, from talk radio, from newspapers, from personal conversations or from the Internet?

Asian/Middle Eastern sample



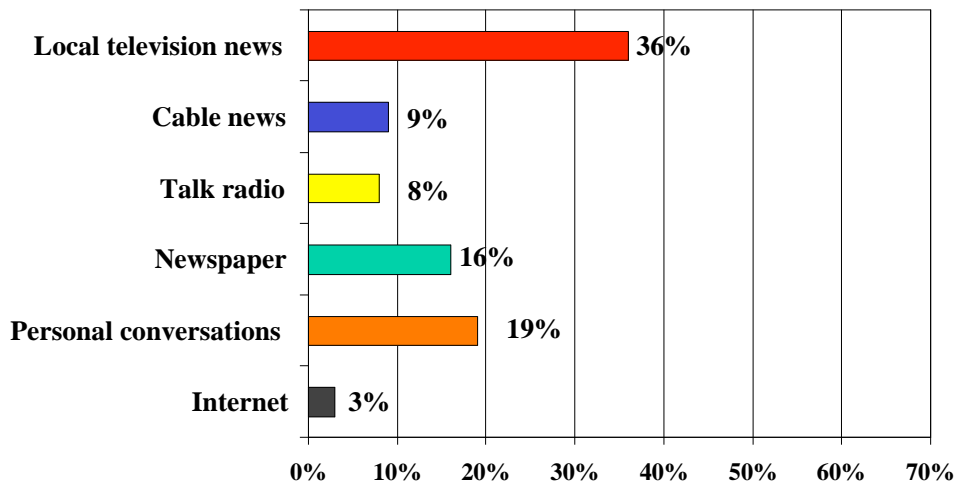
Where do you get your information about the criminal justice system – from local television news, from cable news, from talk radio, from newspapers, from personal conversations or from the Internet?

Latino sample



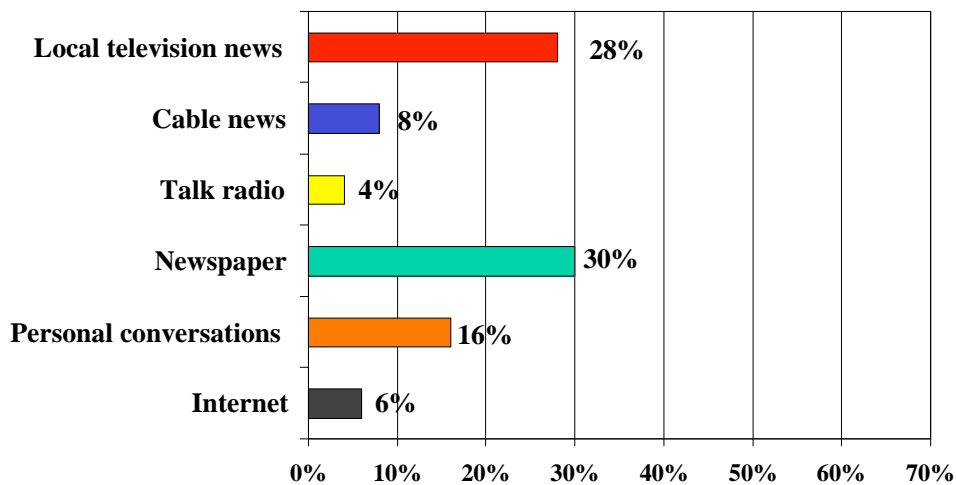
Where do you get your information about the criminal justice system – from local television news, from cable news, from talk radio, from newspapers, from personal conversations or from the Internet?

African American sample



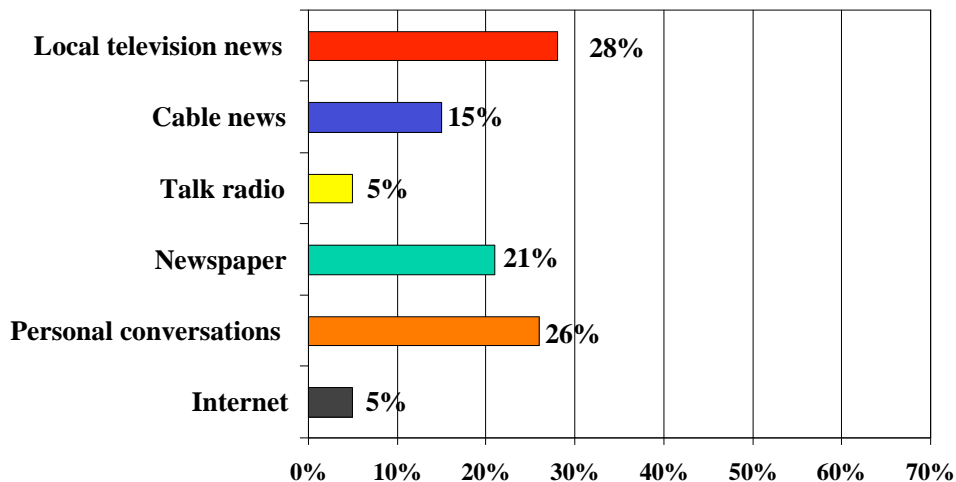
Where do you get your information about the criminal justice system – from local television news, from cable news, from talk radio, from newspapers, from personal conversations or from the Internet?

Non-Latino White sample



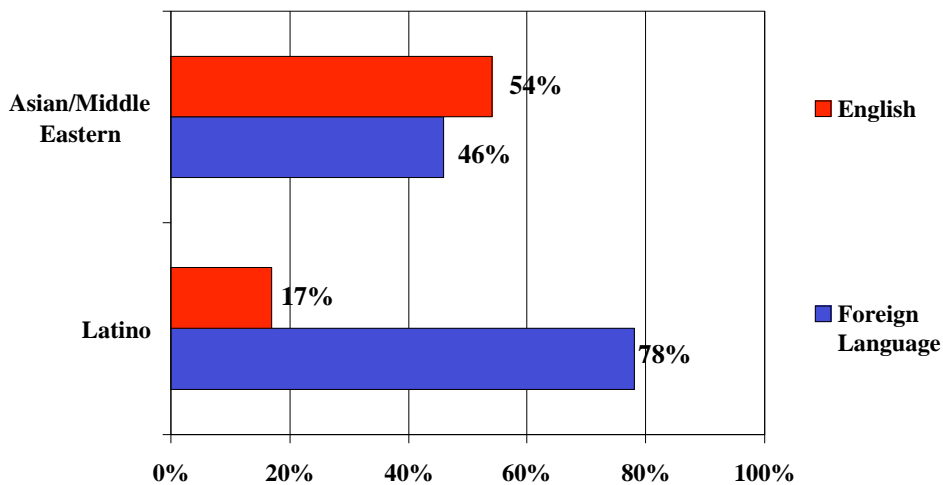
Where do you get your information about the criminal justice system – from local television news, from cable news, from talk radio, from newspapers, from personal conversations or from the Internet?

American Indian sample

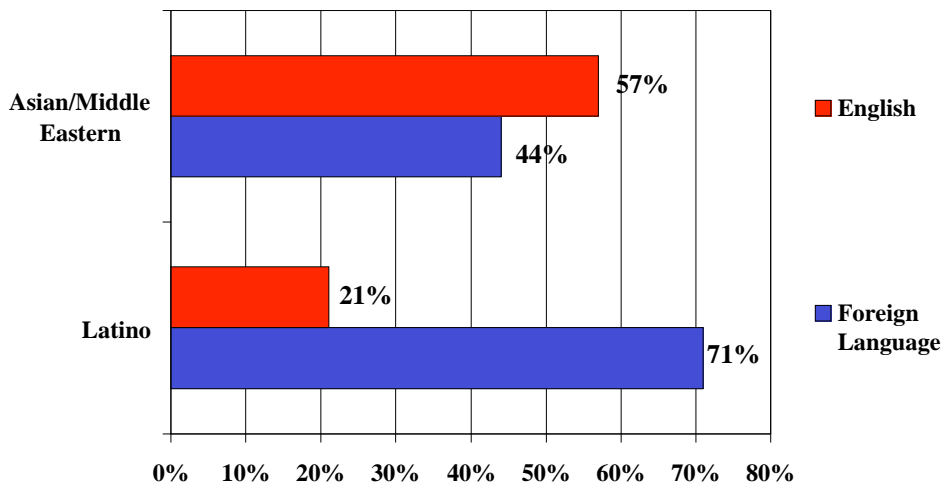


Do you prefer local television news in _____ or in English?

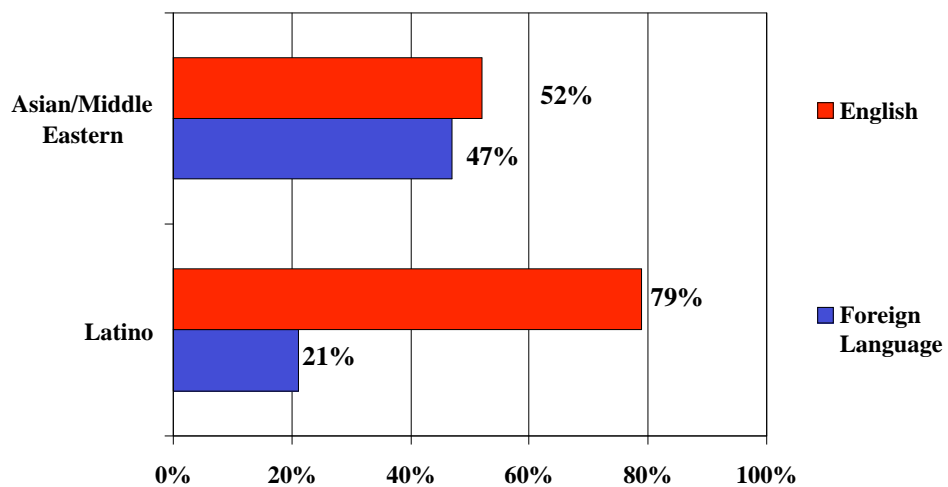
(the blank was the respondent's native language)



Do you prefer talk radio in _____ or in English?
 (the blank was the respondent's native language)



Do you prefer newspapers in _____ or in English?
 (the blank was the respondent's native language)



Do you prefer the internet in _____ or in English?
(the blank was the respondent's native language)

