

Poll shows some prejudice against Muslims

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In the Muslim village of Jalah, Egypt, the local imam, Haliz Muhammed Fazar (center), and village leaders gather on a porch to meet visitors and discuss the Quran. (BP photo courtesy of IMB)

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Poll shows some prejudice against Muslims

By Adelle M. Banks

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Four Americans out of 10 acknowledge having some prejudice against Muslims, but those with Muslim acquaintances are more likely to show favorable attitudes, a recent [USA Today/Gallup Poll](#) shows.

Thirty-nine percent of Americans asked to honestly assess themselves said they have at least some feelings of prejudice against Muslims while 59 percent said they did not.

Respondents were divided fairly evenly about whether Muslims are respectful of other religions, with 47 percent agreeing and 40 percent disagreeing. There was clear disagreement about whether Muslims are too extreme in their religious beliefs, with 44 percent saying yes and 46 percent saying no.

A substantial minority—39 percent—of Americans favors more strict security measures for Muslims than other U.S. citizens, such as requiring Muslims to carry a special ID; 59 percent said they would oppose such a requirement. Forty-one percent favored Muslims undergoing more intensive security checks at U.S. airports, while 57 percent opposed such action.

When comparing feelings based on whether respondents personally know a Muslim, pollsters found dramatic differences. Forty-one percent said they personally knew a Muslim.

Nearly a quarter of those who said they know a Muslim—24 percent—favored a special ID for Muslims; 50 percent who do not know someone of that faith favored the special ID. Ten percent of those who know a Muslim said they would not want a Muslim as a neighbor, compared to 31 percent of those who did not know one.

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