



# **Pakistani and Indian Public Opinion on Kashmir and Indo-Pakistani Relations**

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C. Christine Fair, Clay Ramsay, and Steven Kull designed the questionnaire and wrote the analysis for this study, with contributions from Stephen Weber, and Evan Lewis. Abe Medoff, Melanie Ciolek and Melinda Brouwer managed the editing and production of the report, with contributions from Emily Majka and Mamiko Saikawa.

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## INTRODUCTION

Kashmir is one of the long-running conflicts whose birth was almost coeval with that of the United Nations—along with the Israel-Palestinian conflict and the Cold War. Though the Kashmir conflict gets less attention than the Israel-Palestinian conflict, in one regard it may be the more important of the two: both parties to the conflict, not one, have nuclear weapons. Indeed, many analysts see the world's most likely scenario for a nuclear exchange as hostilities between India and Pakistan over Kashmir spiraling out of control. Less than ten years ago, such a war seemed a serious possibility.

Militant activity by Pakistani extremist organizations has the potential for reigniting the conflict. In December 2001 militants attacked the Indian Parliament. Recently the largest anti-India demonstrations in two decades were sparked by fears that a government donation of land to a Hindu shrine would lead to new Hindu settlement. On July 10 fire was exchanged between Pakistani and Indian forces at the Line of Control, apparently set off by militants trying to infiltrate Jammu and Kashmir.

Much is assumed but little is known about how ordinary people in India and Pakistan view the conflict. Knowledge of public opinion on this subject is a crucial asset for policymakers, because a true war over Kashmir would affect millions of civilians. How do the Pakistani and Indian publics feel about the importance of pressing their own countries' positions? How do they view their respective governments' recent approaches to the Kashmir conflict? Kashmir may still ignite nationalist passions for many people in both countries—but how many people?

In high-level talks between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, confidence-building measures are understandably more feasible now for the two governments to work on than Kashmir's ultimate status. But the publics of the two countries are not subject to the same strictures. When Pakistanis and Indians think about the ultimate status of Kashmir, are there outcomes that would be acceptable to both publics? What do Pakistanis and Indians assume that Kashmiris themselves would prefer to be the ultimate status of Kashmir, and what role do they think these attitudes should play?

Pakistan-based militant groups have been active in Jammu and Kashmir for decades. But how deep is the support among ordinary Pakistanis for the use of force over Kashmir—either by non-state actors, or by the Pakistani military? For that matter, how widespread is acknowledgement of links between militant groups and the security services?

A fundamental question for US policy in South Asia is how much the United States should try to lend its good offices to the Pakistani and Indian governments in efforts to cool tensions and open constructive approaches. Do Pakistanis and Indians perceive the United States as an honest broker on Kashmir—or on the countries' rivalry overall? How would they feel about more or less US involvement?

To probe deeper into all these issues, WorldPublicOpinion.org conducted surveys in Pakistan and India. The majority of questions asked were identical (or closely complementary) in both countries; some additional questions were asked in Pakistan only. In both countries the samples were primarily urban. The survey of the urban population of Pakistan was carried out by AC Nielsen–Pakistan, using a questionnaire developed by WorldPublicOpinion.org. All interviewing was conducted in Urdu. A total of 907 face-to-face interviews across 182 primary sampling units in 19 Pakistan cities were carried out between September 12 and September 28, 2007. Sampling error for a sample of this size is approximately +/- 3.3 percentage points.

In India, the survey was carried out by Team CVoter, using a questionnaire developed by WorldPublicOpinion.org. A face-to-face survey with 1,258 respondents was conducted in two waves during October and November of 2007 in 10 of the largest metropolitan areas. India’s population is about 30 percent urban. Sampling error for a sample of this size is approximately +/-2.8 percentage points.

The questionnaires were developed in close collaboration with C. Christine Fair, now of RAND Corporation. Some financial assistance for the Pakistan side of the study was provided by the US Institute of Peace.

Key findings of the study are:

**INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS**

***1. India-Pakistan Tensions***

A large majority of Pakistanis and Indians perceive the tensions between their countries as an important if not critical threat. Pakistanis express low confidence in India to act responsibly and tend to perceive the Indian government as not assuring the security of Muslims in India. However, neither Indians nor Pakistanis favor increasing defense spending .....5

***2. Government Handling of India-Pakistan Relations***

Two in three Pakistanis endorse their government’s approach to the relationship, while just half of Indians approve of their government’s handling of it.....6

**KASHMIR**

***3. Ultimate Status of Jammu and Kashmir***

The status quo in Kashmir, with Jammu and Kashmir remaining part of India, is strongly opposed by Pakistanis. Indians, while not opposed, are surprisingly unenthusiastic—only a minority sees this situation as desirable.

While there is no approach for Jammu and Kashmir that gets majority support on both sides, there are three approaches that are not opposed by a majority on either side. For Kashmir to become an independent country is endorsed by a majority of Pakistanis; Indians show little support for the idea, but only half reject it. The ideas of dividing the territory between Pakistan and India, or of the two countries managing it jointly, get little support on either side, but are also not strongly opposed on either side.

Two ideas get strong opposition. Pakistanis strongly reject the solution of giving Jammu and Kashmir greater self-rule within India. Unsurprisingly, Indians are strongly opposed to Jammu and Kashmir becoming part of Pakistan.....6

***4. Letting the Kashmiri People Decide***

If a majority of all Kashmiris (on both sides of the Line of Control) were to choose independence, the level of opposition to an independent Kashmir is just one in three among Indians and one in five among Pakistanis. At the same time, neither side is enthusiastic about such an outcome.....9

**5. Assumptions About the Kashmiri Public**

Pakistanis and Indians have highly divergent assumptions about the preferences of the Kashmiri people. In regard to the people living in Jammu and Kashmir, Indians lean toward supposing that they want to be part of India, while Pakistanis are divided between believing that they want to be part of Pakistan and to be independent. In regard to Kashmiris living in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, a majority in Pakistan believe they wish to remain as part of Pakistan, while a plurality of Indians assume they wish to become part of India..... 10

**6. Assessment of Governments' Performance on Kashmir**

Both sides endorse their own governments' approach to the conflict over Kashmir, especially Pakistanis. Only minorities on either side call for their government to take a harder or softer line on the Kashmir issue in its dealing with the other country. Pakistanis say that the Indian government is not being effective in assuring the security of Muslims in Kashmir, while a slight majority of Indians say that it is..... 11

**7. Pakistanis on Seeking to Free Kashmiri Territory from Indian Control**

Less than half of Pakistanis approve of Pakistan seeking to free Kashmiri territory from Indian control by using military force, adding forces along the Line of Control, or by supporting militant groups operating in Jammu and Kashmir. At the same time, support is greater than opposition. A plurality of Pakistanis think Pakistan's government does not provide material support to militant groups fighting in Jammu and Kashmir, while a plurality of Indians think that it does. Less than half believe that Pakistani militant groups operating in Kashmir ["askari tanzeem"] help either the security of Kashmiris or of Pakistan, though few are directly critical. .... 13

**8. Attacks on Indians**

In the context of the conflict in Kashmir, large majorities say that attacks on Indian government officials are rarely or never justified, and very large majorities say that attacks on women and children, and on the wives and children of the military, are never justified. Attacks on security-related personnel in India—policemen, intelligence agents, military and paramilitary troops—are rejected by a plurality.

Pakistanis do not believe that Pakistan's government is providing support to militant groups who conduct attacks against civilians in India, while Indians believe it is. .... 14

**ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES**

**9. Role of US in India-Pakistan Relations**

Pakistanis largely believe that the US takes India's side in the conflict, while Indians are divided on the question of which side the US favors. Both publics, especially Pakistanis, worry about the possibility of closer relations between the US and the other country. There is little sentiment on either side for the US to increase or decrease its level of involvement. Were the US to give Pakistan a security guarantee against an attack by India, four in ten Pakistanis think this would enhance Pakistan's security at least slightly—though fewer think Pakistan would then be more free to make policy changes ..... 16

***10. Relations with the United States and Other Major Powers***

Indians lean toward approving how their government is dealing with the United States, while Pakistanis lean toward disapproving. Only one in four Pakistanis and four in ten Indians express trust in the United States to act responsibly in the world. Regarding China, Pakistanis express high levels of trust and believe it would be positive if China caught up with the US economically. Indians lean against trusting China, and are divided as to whether China catching up economically with the United States would be positive. A modest majority of Pakistanis and a plurality of Indians express high levels of trust in Japan.....18

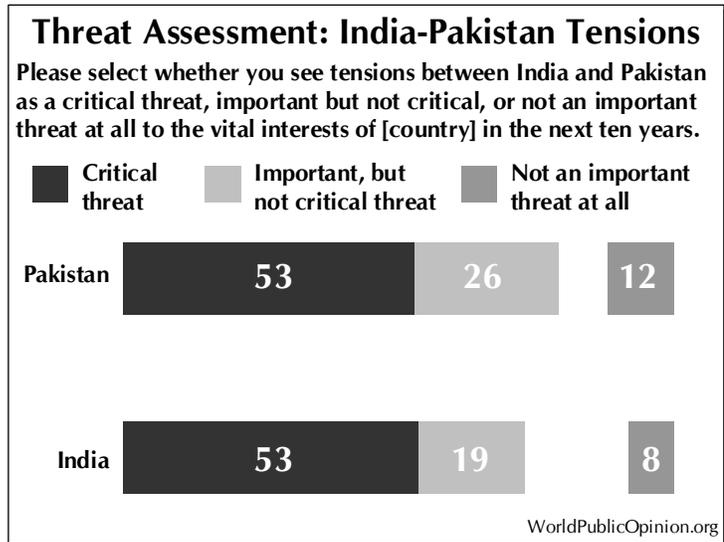
**FINDINGS**

**INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS**

***1. India-Pakistan Tensions***

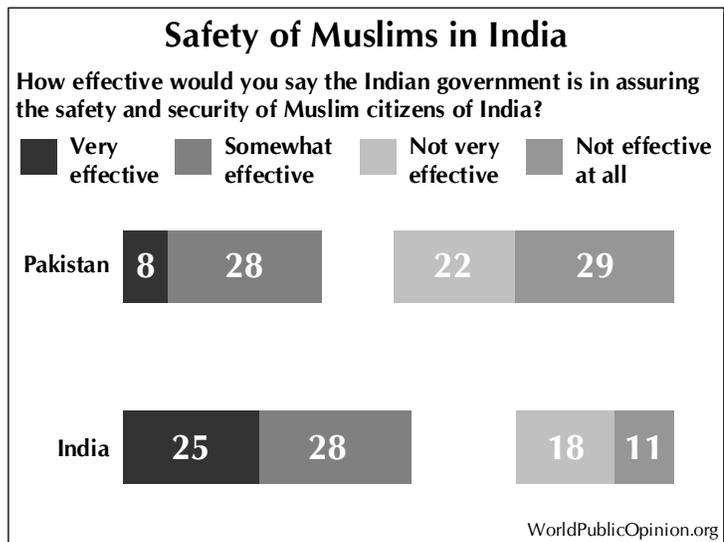
**A large majority of Pakistanis and Indians perceive the tensions between their countries as an important if not critical threat. Pakistanis express low confidence in India to act responsibly and tend to perceive the Indian government as not assuring the security of Muslims in India. However, neither Indians nor Pakistanis favor increasing defense spending.**

The Pakistani and Indian publics show similarly high levels of concern about tensions between their countries. Asked how they assess the threat from tensions between India and Pakistan over the next ten years, a large majority said they saw it as a critical threat (53% in both cases) or important, but not critical (Pakistanis 26%, Indians 19%). Only 12 percent of Pakistanis and 8 percent of Indians said the tensions were not a threat.



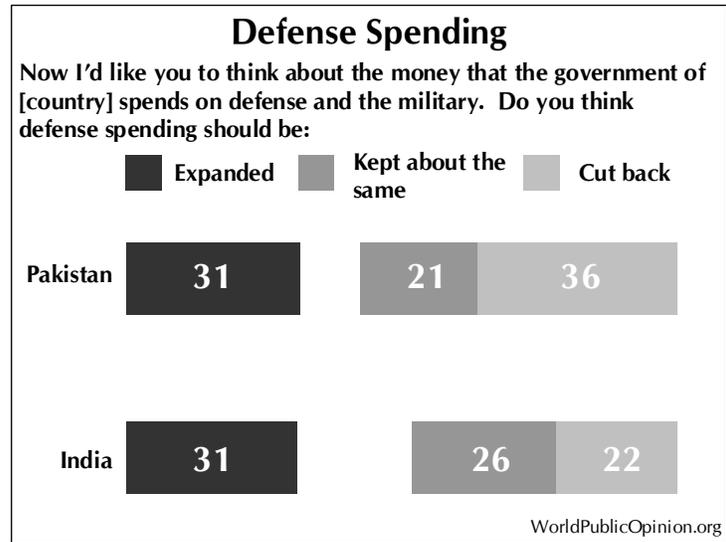
Pakistanis express low confidence in India to act responsibly in the world. Only 19 percent said they trusted India somewhat (15%) or a great deal (4%), while 68 percent said they trusted India not very much (30%) or not at all (38%). (Indians were not asked this question regarding Pakistan.)

A key source of tension between Pakistan and India has been the issue of Indian government protection of Muslims in India. Fifty-one percent of Pakistanis said India was not very effective (22%) or not effective at all (29%) in “assuring the safety and security of Muslim citizens of India.” Just 36 percent thought India was somewhat effective (28%) or very effective (8%).



As might be expected, Indians view their government more favorably on this issue. Fifty-three percent thought the Indian government is very (25%) or somewhat (28%) effective in assuring Muslim citizens’ safety, while 29 percent called it not very effective (18%) or not effective at all (11%).

Despite the majorities' concerns in both countries over Indian-Pakistani tensions, it is noteworthy that neither Indians nor Pakistanis actually favor increasing defense spending. Asked "to think about the money that the government...spends on defense and the military," only 31 percent of Pakistanis—and 31 percent of Indians—thought this spending should be expanded. A clear majority of Pakistanis—57 percent—wanted to either keep defense spending the same (21%) or cut it back (36%). Among Indians, a 48 percent plurality wanted to keep defense spending the same (26%) or cut it back (22%).



**2. Government Handling of India-Pakistan Relations**

Two in three Pakistanis endorse their government's approach to the relationship, while just half of Indians approve of their government's handling of it.

Both publics were asked whether they approved of their own government's handling of India-Pakistan relations. About two-thirds of Pakistanis (64%) approved their government's approach, while a lesser 50 percent of Indians approved of theirs. However, in both countries only about a fifth approved strongly (21% in Pakistan, 19% in India). Twenty-seven percent of Pakistanis disapproved, as did 29 percent of Indians.



**KASHMIR**

**3. Ultimate Status of Jammu and Kashmir**

The status quo in Kashmir, with Jammu and Kashmir remaining part of India, is strongly opposed by Pakistanis. Indians, while not opposed, are surprisingly unenthusiastic—only a minority sees this situation as desirable.

While there is no approach for Jammu and Kashmir that gets majority support on both sides, there are three approaches that are not opposed by a majority on either side. For Kashmir to become an independent country is endorsed by a majority of Pakistanis; Indians show little

support for the idea, but only half reject it. The ideas of dividing the territory between Pakistan and India, or of the two countries managing it jointly, get little support on either side, but are also not strongly opposed on either side.

**Two ideas get strong opposition. Pakistanis strongly reject the solution of giving Jammu and Kashmir greater self-rule within India. Unsurprisingly, Indians are strongly opposed to Jammu and Kashmir becoming part of Pakistan.**

Both publics were asked to assess a series of possible outcomes for the current Indian-held state of Jammu and Kashmir. These included:

- Maintaining the status quo
- Independence
- Joint management by India and Pakistan
- Division between India and Pakistan
- Annexation by Pakistan
- Greater self-rule within India

For each outcome respondents were asked whether it would be desirable, acceptable, tolerable or unacceptable.

#### *Status Quo*

Pakistanis are strongly opposed to an outcome in which “Jammu and Kashmir remain under Indian control in its present status.” Seventy-one percent of Pakistanis called this unacceptable. Only 18 percent called it either tolerable (7%), acceptable (9%), or desirable (2%).

Indians, while not opposed, are surprisingly unenthusiastic—only a minority sees continuing the status quo as desirable. A quarter of Indians called it desirable (26%), while another 29 percent called it acceptable, and 10 percent tolerable. Thus, though a 65-percent majority saw continuing Jammu and Kashmir’s current status as at least tolerable, only a quarter were warm about the prospect.

#### *An Independent Kashmir*

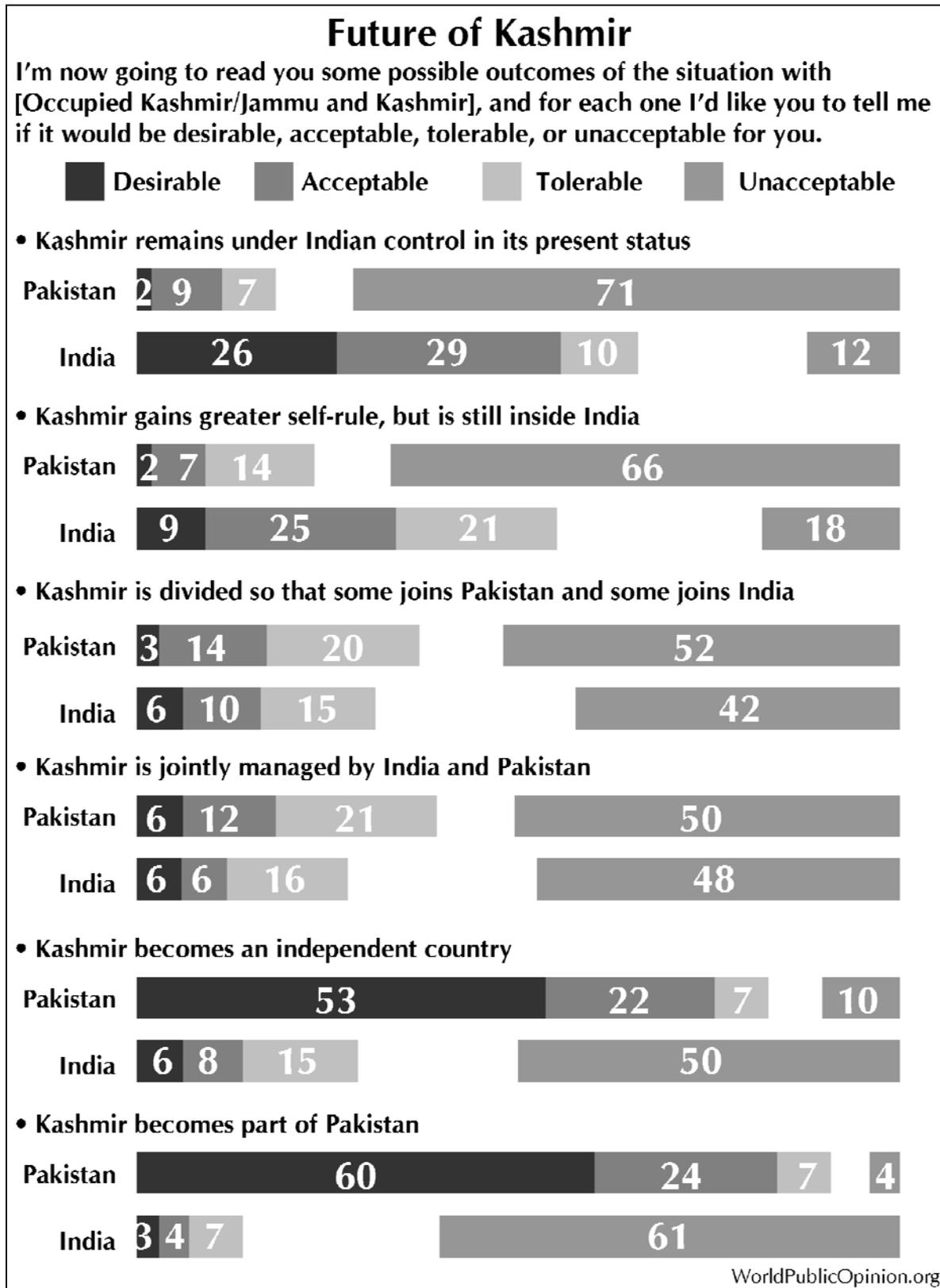
The idea that receives the lowest level of opposition is for Jammu and Kashmir to become independent. Fifty-three percent of Pakistanis called this outcome desirable, and another 29 percent said it was acceptable (22%) or tolerable (7%). Only 10 percent thought it was unacceptable.

Indians show little support for the idea of an independent Kashmir, but only half simply reject it. Fifty percent said independence was unacceptable. Twenty-nine percent said it was tolerable (15%), acceptable (8%), or desirable (6%). Twenty-one percent did not provide an answer.

#### *Joint Management*

Another idea that does not get majority opposition on either side is for India and Pakistan to jointly manage Jammu and Kashmir. However, neither side is positive about the idea.

Pakistanis’ and Indians’ antipathies to the idea of jointly managing Jammu and Kashmir are roughly parallel. Fifty percent of Pakistanis and 48 percent of Indians find the idea unacceptable. Thirty-nine percent of Pakistanis and 28 percent of Indians find the idea at least tolerable.



*Dividing Jammu and Kashmir*

The idea of dividing Jammu and Kashmir between Pakistan and India gets little support on either side, but is also not opposed by a large majority. The largest resistance comes from Pakistanis, among whom 52 percent found the idea unacceptable, while 37 percent said it was tolerable (20%), acceptable (14%), or desirable (3%). Among Indians, 42 percent found division unacceptable, while 31 percent said it was tolerable (15%), acceptable (10%), or desirable (6%). (Among Indians, 26 percent did not provide an answer.)

*Annexation by Pakistan*

Unsurprisingly, Pakistanis like the idea of Jammu and Kashmir becoming part of Pakistan, while Indians strongly oppose the idea. Among Pakistanis, 60 percent thought incorporating Jammu and Kashmir into their own country was desirable; 31 percent saw it as acceptable (24%) or tolerable (7%), while just 4 percent saw it as unacceptable. A 61-percent Indian majority called this outcome unacceptable and only 14 percent thought it tolerable (7%), acceptable (4%), or desirable (3%).

*Giving Jammu and Kashmir Greater Self-Rule*

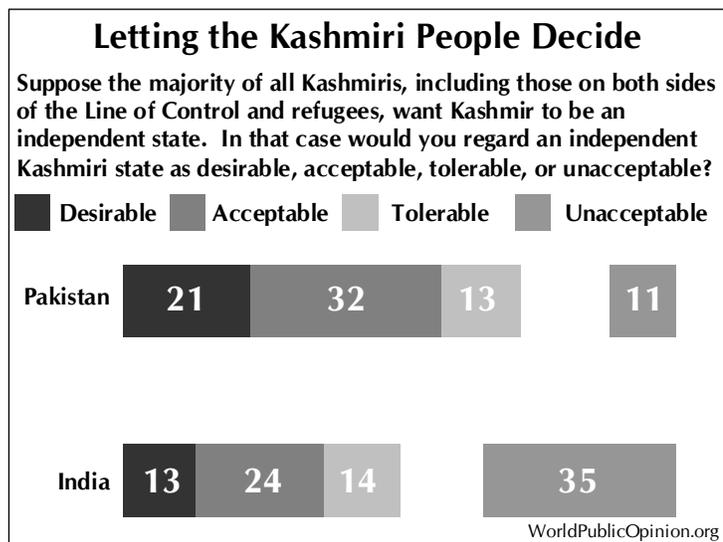
Pakistanis reject the approach of giving Jammu and Kashmir greater self-rule within India; Indians show little enthusiasm, though a majority would find it at least tolerable. Two in three Pakistanis (66%) found the outcome of greater self-rule unacceptable, while only 23 percent thought it tolerable (14%), acceptable (7%), or desirable (2%). Among Indians, it is striking that only 9 percent thought this outcome desirable, though another 46 percent thought it acceptable (25%) or tolerable (21%)—making a 55-percent majority who did not flatly reject the idea. Only 18 percent of Indians found greater self-rule for Jammu and Kashmir unacceptable.

**4. Letting the Kashmiri People Decide**

**If a majority of all Kashmiris (on both sides of the Line of Control) were to choose independence, the level of opposition to an independent Kashmir is just one in three among Indians and one in five among Pakistanis. At the same time, neither side is enthusiastic about such an outcome.**

Indians as well as Pakistanis express a readiness to have the Kashmiri people play a key role in determining their fate. Respondents were asked:

“Suppose the majority of all Kashmiris, including those on both sides of the Line of Control and refugees, want Kashmir to be an independent state. In that case would you regard an independent Kashmiri state as desirable, acceptable, tolerable, or unacceptable?”



Among Indians, only 35 percent found independence under such conditions unacceptable—down from the 50 percent, discussed above, who simply opposed independence for Jammu and Kashmir without this provision. A slight majority said they found it at least tolerable—tolerable (14%), acceptable (24%), or desirable (13%).

Among Pakistanis, only 11 percent said they found this outcome unacceptable. If the Kashmiris wanted an independent state, 66 percent said this would be at least tolerable: 13% called it tolerable, 32 percent acceptable and 21 percent desirable.

The level of support among Pakistanis is significantly lower than it was for the prospect of an independent Jammu and Kashmir—presumably because this question asked about independence for Kashmir on both sides of the Line of Control, which would require Pakistan as well as India to relinquish territory. While 53 percent of Pakistanis called an independent Jammu and Kashmir desirable, and another 22 percent acceptable, only 21 percent called an independent Kashmir on both sides of the Line of Control desirable and 32 percent acceptable.

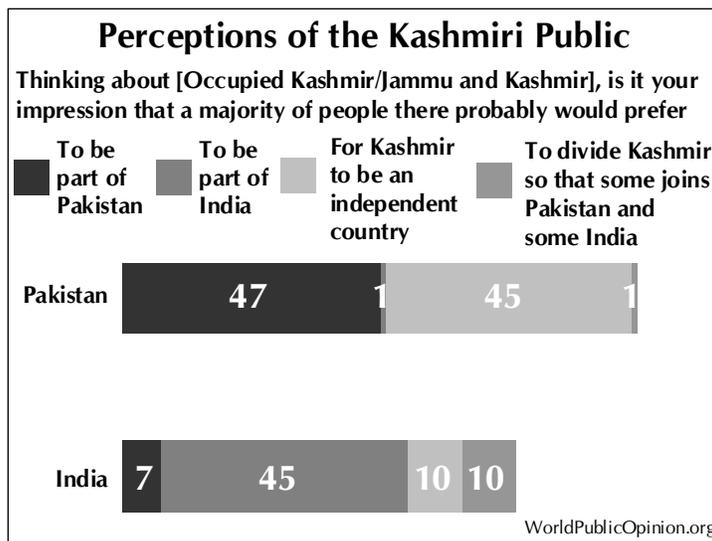
Thus, while an independent Kashmir on both sides of the Line of Control, if chosen by the Kashmiri people, is seen as tolerable by the largest number, neither side is truly enthusiastic about such an outcome.

**5. Assumptions About the Kashmiri Public**

**Pakistanis and Indians have highly divergent assumptions about the preferences of the Kashmiri people. In regard to the people living in Jammu and Kashmir, Indians lean toward supposing that they want to be part of India, while Pakistanis are divided between believing that they want to be part of Pakistan and to be independent. In regard to Kashmiris living in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, a majority in Pakistan believe they wish to remain as part of Pakistan, while a plurality of Indians assume they wish to become part of India.**

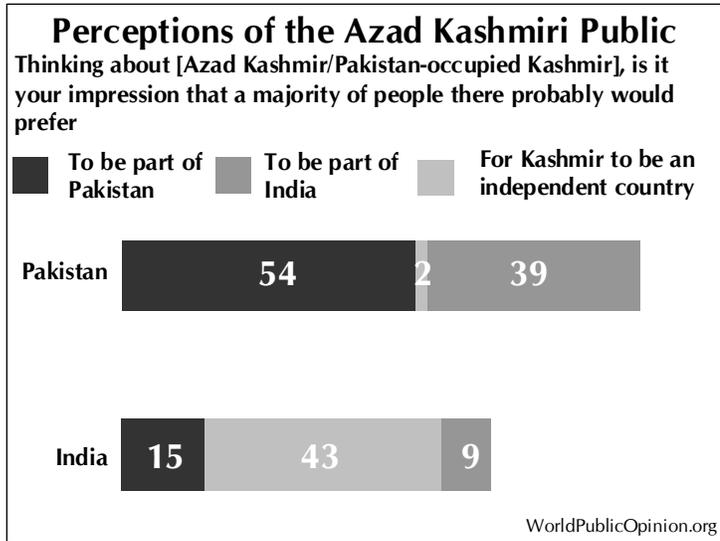
Respondents on both sides were asked to think about the majority of people living in Indian-controlled Jammu and Kashmir, and what ultimate status they thought this majority would prefer: to be part of Pakistan, part of India, independent, or for the territory to be divided.

Among Indians, 45 percent thought Kashmiris want to stay within India, and only 10 percent thought they want independence. Just 10 percent thought Kashmiris want a division of territory and 7 percent that they want to be part of Pakistan.



Among Pakistanis, 47 percent thought Kashmiris want to be within Pakistan, while nearly as many (45%) thought they want independence. Almost no one thought Kashmiris want either a division of territory (1%) or to be part of India (1%).

This study asked the same question about Azad Kashmir, the section of Kashmir held by Pakistan. Among Pakistanis, 54 percent thought the majority of Kashmiris there want to be part of Pakistan, while 39 percent thought they want to be part of an independent Kashmir. Only 2 percent thought Azad Kashmiris want to be part of India. Among Indians, 43 percent believed a majority in Azad Kashmir want to be part of India; only 9 percent thought a majority want to join an independent Kashmir. Fifteen percent believed a majority want to remain in Pakistan.

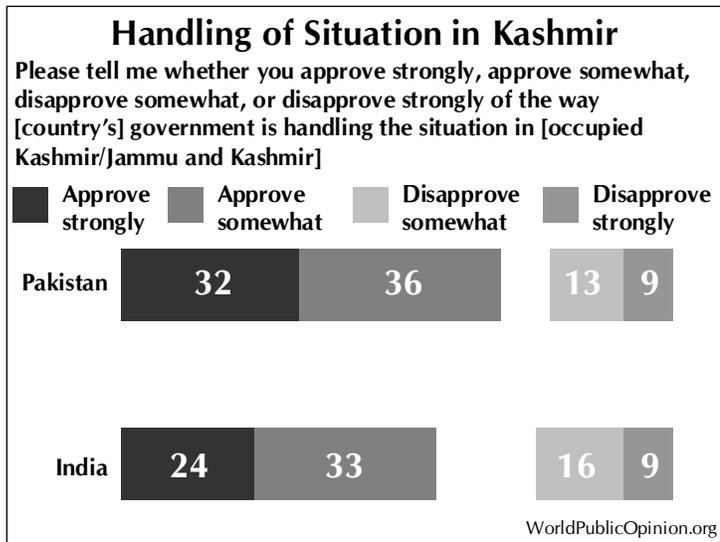


**6. Assessment of Governments' Performance on Kashmir**

**Both sides endorse their own governments' approach to the conflict over Kashmir, especially Pakistanis. Only minorities on either side call for their government to take a harder or softer line on the Kashmir issue in its dealing with the other country. Pakistanis say that the Indian government is not being effective in assuring the security of Muslims in Kashmir, while a slight majority of Indians say that it is.**

A large majority of Pakistanis endorse their government's handling of the Kashmir problem. Sixty-eight percent expressed approval "of the way Pakistan's government is handling the situation in occupied Kashmir" (32% strongly). Only 22 percent disapproved (9% strongly).

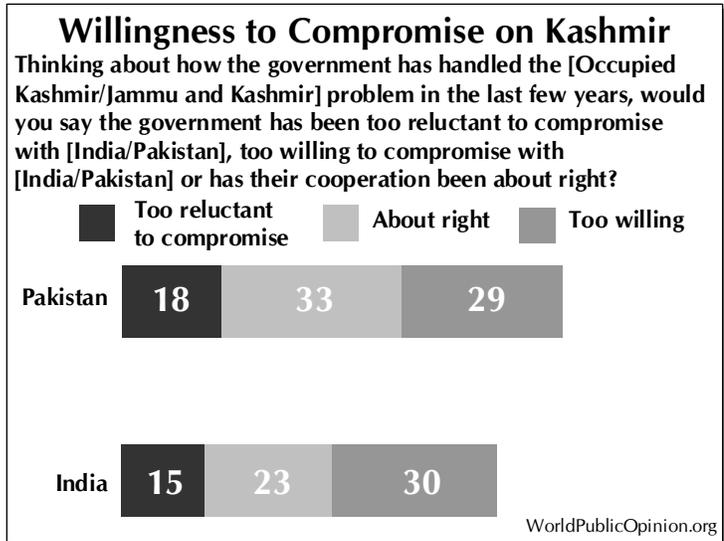
Among Indians, the majority endorsing their government's performance is slightly smaller, with 57 percent who approved "of the way India's government is handling the situation in Jammu and Kashmir" (24% strongly). However, the percentages disapproving their government on this issue (25%, 9% strongly) were virtually the same as in Pakistan.



Only minorities on either side call for their government to take a harder or softer line on the Kashmir issue. Asked to evaluate how their government deals with the other country's government on Kashmir issues, in Pakistan three in ten (29%) said their government had been too willing to compromise with India, 18 percent said it had been too reluctant and one in three (33%) said the government had been about right. In India, a very similar 30 percent said their government had been too willing to cooperate, 15 percent too reluctant, and 23 percent about right.

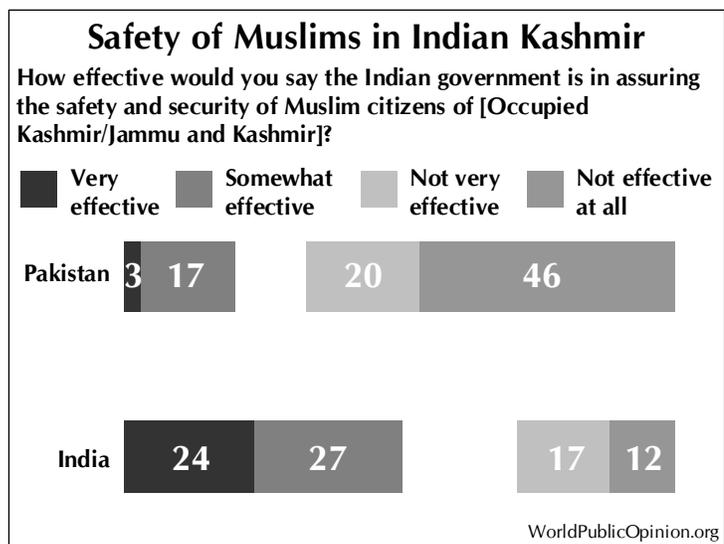
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It would be natural to imagine that the minority in each country who say they *disapprove* of their government's handling of Kashmir would want their government to compromise less—or to compromise more. But in fact, there is no concerted view among this group in either Pakistan or India. Among Pakistanis who said they disapprove of their government's approach, 30 percent said it is too willing to compromise, 20 percent that it is too reluctant to compromise, and 27 percent thought the level of cooperation has been about right. Among Indians who disapproved of their government's handling of Kashmir, 31 percent said it is too willing to compromise, 9 percent that it is too reluctant and 24 percent that cooperation has been about right. Thus the disapproving are not a unified group, and some of them may be expressing a broader dissatisfaction that Kashmir remains a problem.



Pakistanis are quite conscious that their country's development is trailing behind that of India, but most see little connection between this and their government's long-term focus on Kashmir. In a related study ("Pakistani Public Opinion on Democracy, Islamist Militancy, and Relations with the US") 56 percent of Pakistanis knew that India is growing faster and only 27 percent believed that Pakistan is keeping pace. In the present study, respondents were asked whether "the way the government has handled the problem of occupied Kashmir" has hurt the economy, helped the economy, or made no difference. There was no majority view: 37 percent thought it had made no difference, while 22 percent thought it had hurt and 16 percent that it had helped. (However, those aware of India's faster growth were slightly more likely than others to think the government's treatment of the Kashmir problem has hurt Pakistan's development.)

Pakistanis say that the Indian government is not being effective in assuring the security of Muslims in Kashmir, while a slight majority of Indians say that it is. Two out of three in Pakistan (66%) said the Indian government was not very effective (20%) or not effective at all (46%) "in assuring the safety and security of Muslim citizens of occupied Kashmir." Only 20 percent saw the Indian government as somewhat effective (17%) or very effective (3%) in this regard.



A bare majority of Indians view their government as effective in assuring Kashmiri Muslims' security, but this is not an overwhelming vote of confidence.

Fifty-one percent see the Indian government as somewhat (27%) or very (24%) effective at this, while 29 percent see it as not very effective (17%) or not effective at all (12%).

**7. Pakistanis on Seeking to Free Kashmiri Territory from Indian Control**

Less than half of Pakistanis approve of Pakistan seeking to free Kashmiri territory from Indian control by using military force, adding forces along the Line of Control, or by supporting militant groups operating in Jammu and Kashmir. At the same time, support is greater than opposition. A plurality of Pakistanis think Pakistan’s government does not provide material support to militant groups fighting in Jammu and Kashmir, while a plurality of Indians think that it does. Less than half believe that Pakistani militant groups operating in Kashmir [“askari tanzeem”] help either the security of Kashmiris or of Pakistan, though few are directly critical.

Pakistanis were asked a series of questions about possible steps with the aim of “freeing [Jammu and Kashmir] from Indian control”: adding more regular army units along the Line of Control; actually attempting to annex territory; or pressuring India through support of militant groups. None of these received majority support, but support was greater than opposition as many declined to answer.

Less than half of Pakistanis approve of Pakistan seeking to free Kashmiri territory from Indian control by using military force. The most extreme approach—“the Pakistan Army trying to take control and annex territory in occupied Kashmir”—was endorsed by just 35 percent. However, only 26 percent were opposed and 39 percent did not answer.

Another approach that did not explicitly call for action but for beefing up forces in the region—“adding more Pakistani troops along the Line of Control and along the international border”—received a bit higher support (42%), though still less than half favored it. Only 22 percent were opposed and 35 percent did not provide an answer.

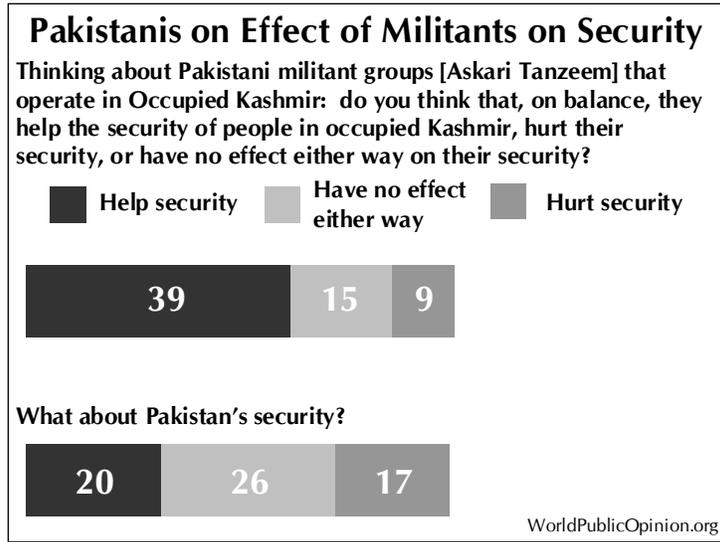
The approach of “putting pressure on India by supporting militant groups in occupied Kashmir” did not garner more support than the more overt ones just discussed. Only 37 percent favored this policy, with 26 percent opposed and 37 percent not answering.

A plurality of Pakistanis think Pakistan’s government does not provide material support to militant groups fighting in Jammu and



Kashmir, while a plurality of Indians think that it does. In both countries, respondents were asked: “Do you think the Pakistani government does or does not give weapons and money to some militant groups that fight in the Indian-controlled region of [occupied Kashmir/Jammu and Kashmir]?” Among Pakistanis, 40 percent believed their government does not provide such support; only 13 percent believed that it does. Among Indians, a 47 percent plurality believed the Pakistani government does give support to such groups, though 23 percent believed the Pakistani government does not do this.

Pakistanis express little support for the efforts of Pakistani militant groups operating in Kashmir [“askari tanzeem”]. Respondents were asked whether, on balance, these groups help, hurt or have no effect on “the security of people in occupied Kashmir.” Only 39 percent of Pakistanis said that such militant groups actually help Kashmiris’ security. Fifteen percent said these groups do not affect Kashmiris’ security either way; another 9 percent said that they hurt security; and 37 percent did not provide an answer.



Even fewer believe that these Pakistani militant groups help the security of Pakistan. Only 20 percent believed this, while 26 percent thought they had no effect and 17 percent believed they hurt Pakistan’s security.

**8. Attacks on Indians**

In the context of the conflict in Kashmir, large majorities say that attacks on Indian government officials are rarely or never justified, and very large majorities say that attacks on women and children, and on the wives and children of the military, are never justified. Attacks on security-related personnel in India—policemen, intelligence agents, military and paramilitary troops—are rejected by a plurality.

Pakistanis do not believe that Pakistan’s government is providing support to militant groups who conduct attacks against civilians in India, while Indians believe it is.

To understand how the Pakistani public evaluates the various types of attacks that militant groups have conducted in Kashmir, the study asked about a wide range of targets, including civilian targets, and asked whether attacks were justified—“often, sometimes, rarely, or never.” In every case, more respondents than not said that the given type of attacks were rarely or never justified. At the same time, there was wide variation in the level of condemnation; the more clearly civilian the target was, the higher the level of condemnation.

Large majorities say that attacks on Indian government officials are rarely or never justified, and very large majorities say that attacks on women and children, and on the wives and children of the military, are never justified. Sixty percent called attacks on Indian government officials rarely (19%) or never (41%) justified; 25 percent thought them sometimes (14%) or often (11%) justified. For attacks on women and children, or on the wives and children of the military, 75-76 percent saw them as never justified.

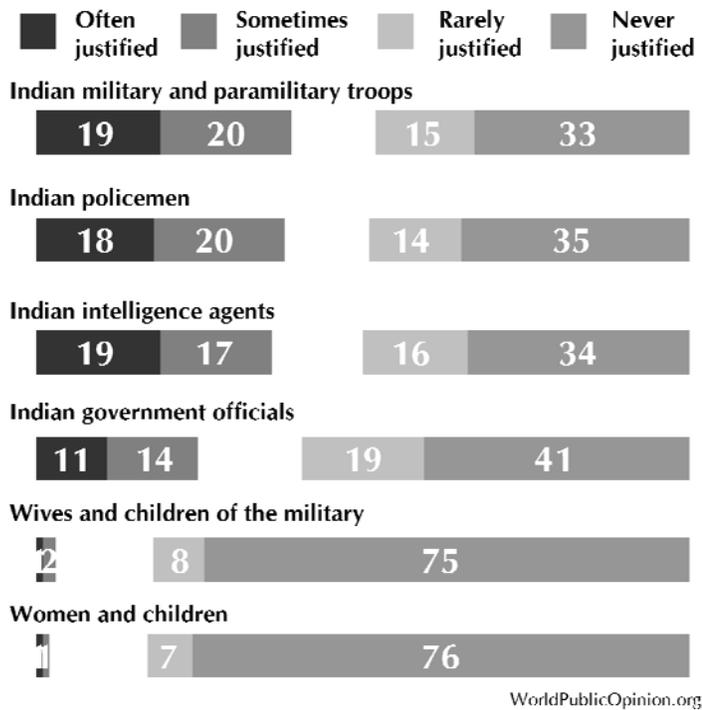
Attacks on security-related personnel are rejected by smaller numbers, but still pluralities. About half (49%) said attacks on Indian policemen are rarely (14%) or never (35%) justified; 38 percent, though, say they are sometimes (20%) or often (18%) justified. Responses were nearly the same when the target was Indian intelligence agents (16% rarely and 34% never justified); again, 36 percent saw this as sometimes (17%) or often (19%) justified. The targeting of Indian military and paramilitary troops is not seen any differently; 48 percent said this is rarely (15%) or never (33%) justified.

Asked about their impressions on whether “Pakistan’s government is [or is not] providing support to militant groups that conduct attacks against civilians living in India,” a modest majority of Pakistanis (53%) said Pakistan’s government was not doing this. Only 10 percent said the government was providing such support (37% did not respond).

Predictably, a majority of Indians hold the opposite view. Fifty-three percent said Pakistan’s government was supporting militant groups that

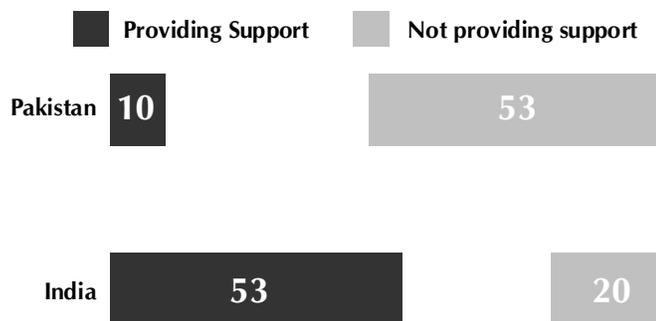
**Pakistanis on Justification of Kashmir Attacks**

In the context of the conflict in occupied Kashmir, for each of the following types of people, please tell me if you think that attacks against them are:



**Pakistani Government Support for Militants**

Just based on your impressions, do you think Pakistan’s government is providing support or is not providing support to militant groups that conduct attacks against civilians living in India?



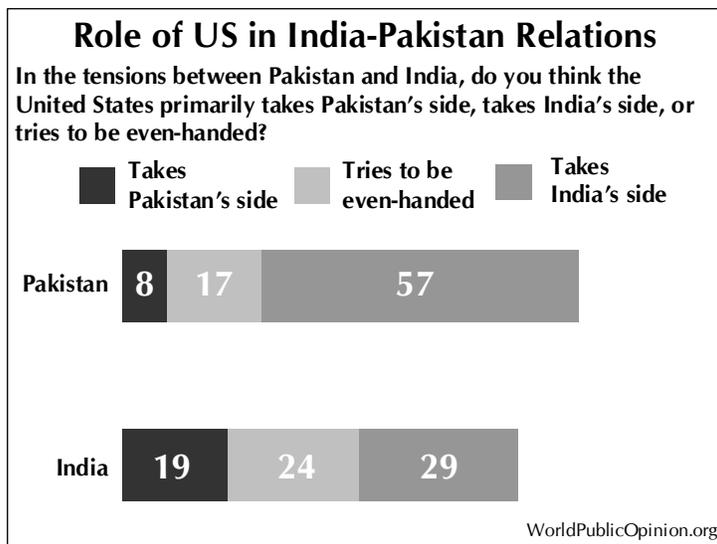
attack civilians in India, while 20 percent thought it was not.

## ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES

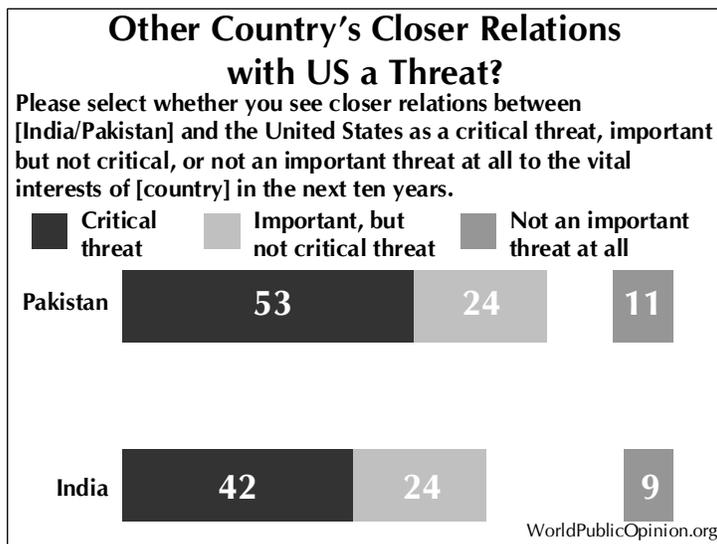
### 9. Role of US in India-Pakistan Relations

Pakistanis largely believe that the US takes India’s side in the conflict, while Indians are divided on the question of which side the US favors. Both publics, especially Pakistanis, worry about the possibility of closer relations between the US and the other country. There is little sentiment on either side for the US to increase or decrease its level of involvement. Were the US to give Pakistan a security guarantee against an attack by India, four in ten Pakistanis think this would enhance Pakistan’s security at least slightly—though fewer think Pakistan would then be more free to make policy changes.

Both Pakistanis and Indians were asked, “In the tensions between Pakistan and India, do you think the United States primarily takes Pakistan’s side, takes India’s side, or tries to be even-handed?” A clear majority of Pakistanis—57 percent—said the United States primarily takes India’s side; only 8 percent thought the United States takes Pakistan’s side, and only 17 percent thought that it tries to be even-handed. Among Indians, though, there was no concerted view. Only 19 percent said the United States tends to take Pakistan’s side, and slightly more (29%) said it takes India’s side. A quarter of Indians thought the United States tries to be even-handed.



Both publics, especially Pakistanis, worry about the possibility of closer relations between the United States and the other country. In each country, respondents were asked whether closer relations between the United States and the other country were a possible threat to their own country’s vital interests over the next ten years. Seventy-seven percent of Pakistanis thought closer US-Indian relations were a threat, and a modest majority (53%) called it a critical threat. Among Indians, two-thirds (66%) perceived improved US-Pakistani relations as a threat, and 42 percent called this threat critical.



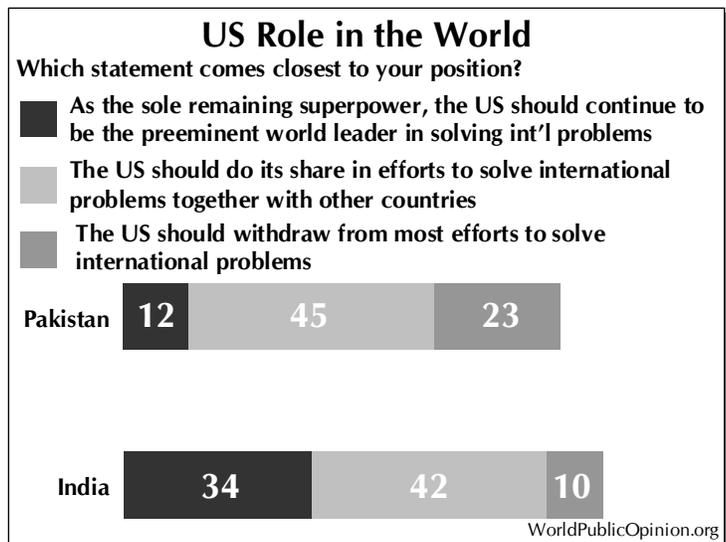
Only very small minorities in each country viewed improved US relations with the neighbor as not being a threat at all (11% of Pakistanis, 9% of Indians).

Given the low enthusiasm suggested by the findings just discussed, it is perhaps understandable there is little sentiment on either side for the US to increase or decrease its level of involvement. Asked, “How involved would you like to see the US be in diplomatic efforts to improve relations between Pakistan and India—more than it is now, less than it is now, or about the same as it is now?” neither Pakistanis nor Indians had a majority view. Twenty-seven percent of Pakistanis said the United States should be more involved than it is now; 26 percent, less involved; and 22 percent thought its involvement should stay about the same. Among Indians, 18 percent said the United States’ involvement should increase, 25 percent that it should decrease, and 19 percent that it should stay about the same.

In an effort to probe for some flexibility in Pakistanis’ attitudes about their country’s relations with the United States, this study asked about the hypothetical idea of a US security guarantee for Pakistan vis-à-vis India. “Suppose the US gave Pakistan a guarantee that it would defend Pakistan against an attack by India,” the question asked Pakistanis. “Do you think this would enhance Pakistan’s security a great deal, somewhat, not very much, or not at all?” Of these four responses, the largest number, 37 percent, chose not at all; 18 percent said not very much; 20 percent said somewhat; and only 4 percent said a great deal. Thus 42 percent thought that a US guarantee would enhance Pakistan’s security at least slightly.

While the idea of a US security guarantee clearly exerts only a weak influence on Pakistanis, among those who thought it could enhance Pakistani security somewhat, more people than not were then also ready to favor more far-reaching changes. Those who thought a US guarantee would enhance Pakistani security to some degree were asked more questions about whether, in that circumstance, they would favor various policy changes. Twenty-five percent of the whole sample said they would then favor having normal relations with India (12% were opposed). Twenty-one percent said they would be willing to turn the Line of Control into a normal international border (13% were opposed). And 24 percent of the whole sample said they would then favor decreasing Pakistan’s spending on defense (15% were opposed).

These findings are quite consistent with Pakistanis’ and Indians’ larger views about the United States’ role in the world. In each country, respondents were offered three possible preferences for US actions in relation to international problems:



--As the sole remaining superpower, the US should continue to be the preeminent world leader in solving international problems

--The US should do its share in efforts to solve international problems together with other countries.

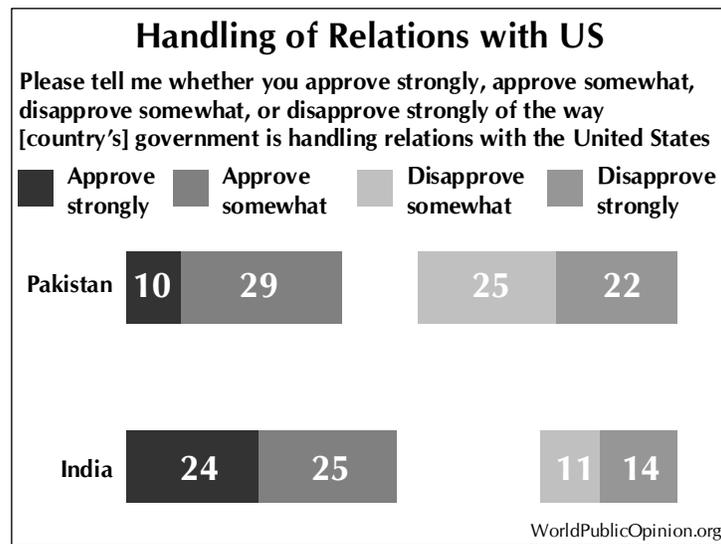
--The US should withdraw from most efforts to solve international problems

In both countries, pluralities—45 percent of Pakistanis and 42 percent of Indians—preferred that the United States do its share together with other countries in addressing international problems. Only 12 percent of Pakistanis preferred that the United States act as the preeminent world leader; in India, this number was somewhat greater at 34 percent. And in both countries only small minorities wanted the United States to withdraw from such efforts—23 percent in Pakistan and 10 percent in India.

**10. Relations with the United States and Other Major Powers**

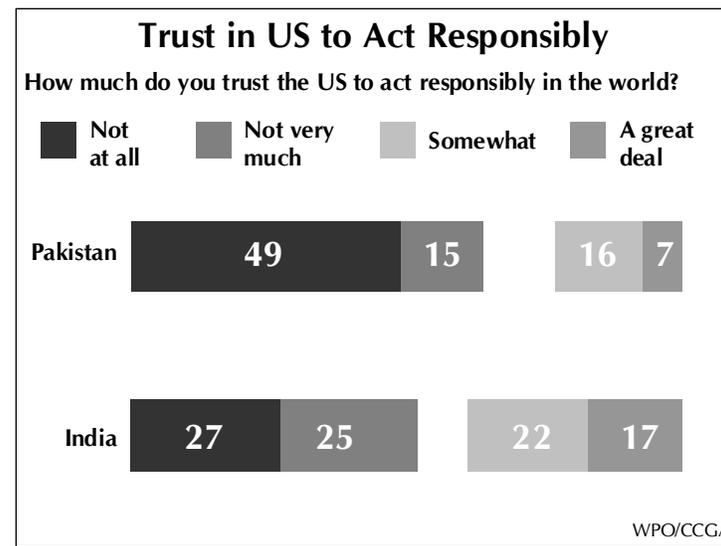
**Indians lean toward approving how their government is dealing with the United States, while Pakistanis lean toward disapproving. Only one in four Pakistanis and four in ten Indians express trust in the United States to act responsibly in the world. Regarding China, Pakistanis express high levels of trust and believe it would be positive if China caught up with the US economically. Indians lean against trusting China, and are divided as to whether China catching up economically with the United States would be positive. A modest majority of Pakistanis and a plurality of Indians express high levels of trust in Japan.**

Indians and Pakistanis were each asked how they viewed their own government’s handling of its relations with the United States. A plurality of Indians—49 percent—approved of their government’s performance in this regard (24% strongly). Only a quarter (25%) disapproved, 14 percent strongly. Pakistanis leaned the other way: 47 percent disapproved of their government’s handling of relations with the United States (22% strongly), though 39 percent did approve (10% strongly).



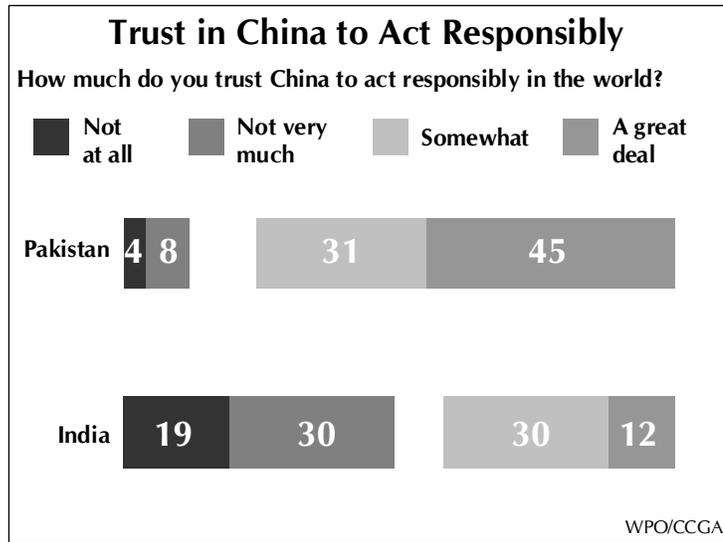
Asked how much they trust the United States to act responsibly in the world, 64 percent of Pakistanis said not very much (15%) or not at all (49%). Only 23 percent of Pakistanis trusted the US somewhat (16%) or a great deal (7%).

While Indians were comparatively more positive, they also were not very trusting of US actions. Fifty-two percent said they trusted the US not very much (25%) or not at all (27%), while 39 percent trusted the US somewhat (22%) or a great deal (17%). (Indian data—for this section only—is from a July 2006 poll by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.)



**Views of China**

Where China is concerned, three-quarters of Pakistanis are positive, and while Indians are negative on balance, it is not to the degree that might have been expected. Seventy-six percent of Pakistanis trust China somewhat (31%) or a great deal (45%) to act responsibly in the world; only 12 percent trust China not very much (8%) or not at all (4%). Among Indians, on the other hand, only 42 percent trust China somewhat (30%) or a great deal (12%), while a 49% plurality trusts China not very much (30%) or not at all (19%).



Three in five Pakistanis (60%) think “China’s economy will someday grow to be as large as the US economy,” and only 18 percent disagree, but Indians are much more skeptical; only 22 percent think China will come abreast of the US and 36 percent think it will not (42% did not venture a guess). If this were to take place, 55 percent of Pakistanis think it would be a positive development; only 7 percent see it as negative (equally positive and negative: 14%). Indians are agnostic on the subject: 28 percent say this development would be positive, 31 percent negative, and 20 percent equal.

**Views of Japan**

A modest majority of Pakistanis and a plurality of Indians express high levels of trust in Japan. Fifty-four percent of Pakistanis trust Japan to act responsibly somewhat (38%) or a great deal (16%); only 28 percent trust it not very much (17%) or not at all (11%).

Among Indians, 46 percent trust Japan somewhat (30%) or a great deal (16%), while 41 percent trust it not very much (22%) or not at all (19%).

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