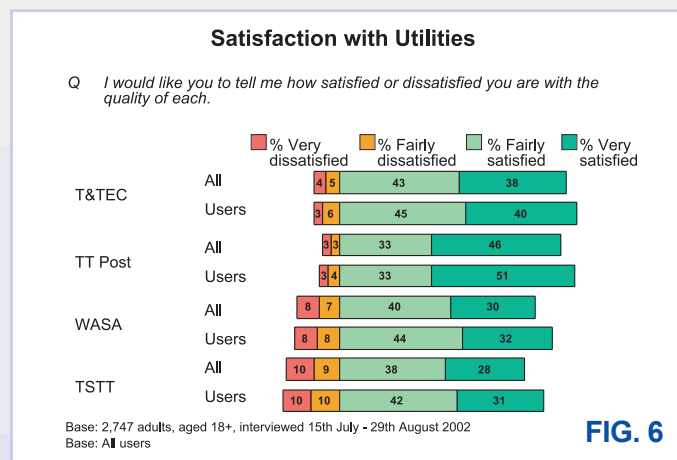


Service Delivery

Most actual users of a public service perceive those services as positive more readily than the general public. The following data is based on recent usage/contact.

Popular/Unpopular facilities

T&TEC and TPOST enjoy the most favoured positions among public services (refer to **Fig. 6** below) with over eight in ten users satisfied. Other services receiving high levels of satisfaction are the other utilities - WASA and TSTT - emergency services, education, libraries and transport (the airport and PTSC).



Users expressed average satisfaction with the fire service, social services and community centres.

In most cases, a high proportion of people using welfare offices (over half their users) are very satisfied with the service. However, many people are displeased with the services provided by the police and hospitals (both receiving a negative score of 39 percent). Facilities for young people are also highly criticized.

Internet Usage

One in five persons have access to a computer and or the internet, either at home or at work. Access to both is markedly lower among older citizens and those in the lower social brackets.

Thanks again for your participation. The Opinion Leaders Panel is a very important tool for the Government in determining ways and means to make its services more responsive and more efficient. We need your fullest support in helping us to shape our Public Services for the betterment of all our citizens. More updates will be provided in later issues of Opinion Leaders News.



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Use of the internet as a means of getting information on public services is not widespread though, with only two percent reporting its use for this purpose.

Government Performance

There are clear demographic differences in the ratings of the Government.

Overall, a third of the population is satisfied with Government's performance (translating to approximately half Afro-Trinidadians, those over 65 years, and persons living in Port of Spain and Princes Town).

Conversely, 46 percent are dissatisfied with Government's performance (particularly Indo-Trinidadians, young people, and residents of Central and South Trinidad).

Election promises recall

People are well tuned in to Election promises, with most (75 percent) recalling at least one. People readily remembered promises made regarding education, pensions and schools.

Those who stood to benefit from the particular service remembered it more readily.

Achieving goals

Of persons remembering at least one Election pledge (75 percent), three quarters believe that the Government has done a good job in achieving its goals in the areas of pension, education and schools, but is unsuccessful in achieving its targets in crime, relieving unemployment and providing adequate healthcare.

Similarly, most of this group remain confident that the Government will continue to deliver in the areas of pensions, education and schools but will make no significant headway with the issues of health, crime and job provision/creation, by the end of 2003.

METHODOLOGY

Results are based on 2,747 face-to-face interviews with residents of Trinidad and Tobago. Respondents were picked from a random pre-selected sample, representing a response rate of 69 percent.

Data are weighted to age and ethnicity.

Where results do not sum up to 100, this may be due to multiple responses, computer rounding or the exclusion of don't knows/not stated.

The fieldwork was conducted by HHB and Associates under the direction of MORI.



MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND INFORMATION



Results from the Opinion Leaders

ISSUE NO.1 MAY 2003

Overview

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago embarked on a renewed drive to reenergize the country's Public Service in 2002, with a view to improving the quality of its service-delivery.

In a critical stride toward achieving the targeted reform, the Ministry of Public Administration and Information engaged the services of UK-based Market & Opinion Research International (MORI) to establish a national Panel that would serve as a reservoir for obtaining citizen feedback on a wide range of issues and services provided by Government.

The Opinion Leaders Panel comprises 2,747 randomly selected individuals representative of the country's full range of demographics. Over a six-week period (15 July to 29 August 2002), these individuals reflected the feelings of, and became the voice for, all 'Trinbagonians' by contributing their opinions to the first of a series of surveys, aimed at informing Government policy development and its strategic direction in meeting the needs of citizens.

This newsletter outlines the findings of the baseline survey, and in so doing seeks to bring Panelists, Government and the General Public up-to-date on the research findings.

National Priorities

Citizens of Trinidad and Tobago place local priorities above national issues.

Crime

While local priorities centre around street-scene issues, facilities for young people and jobs, crime is perceived as the most important issue facing Trinidad and Tobago by over half the public (56 percent).

HIV/AIDS

There is also a high level of concern about the issue of HIV/AIDS especially among the 18 - 24-year-old group (45 percent). Other issues of national concern include unemployment and drug abuse as shown in **Fig. 1**.

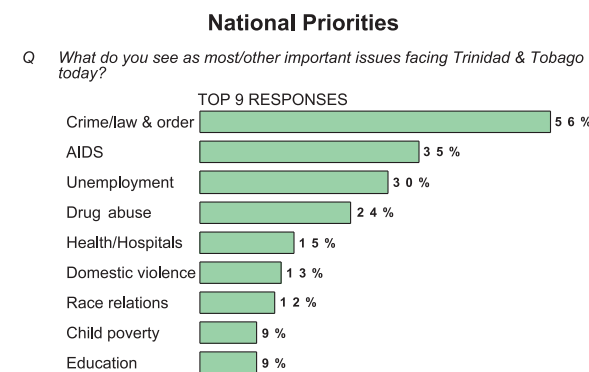


FIG. 1

Health Priorities

Identifying health priorities

Most people believe that top priority should be placed on access to health services and health education (**Fig. 2**), towards improving the health of the country.

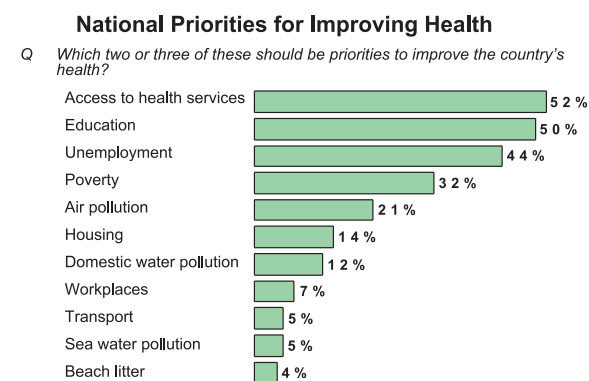


FIG. 2

Two-thirds of adults say that Government should place first priority on dealing with the HIV/AIDS issue (especially among young persons, Afro-Trinidadians and the middle-class).

Thirty-eight percent of persons think that drug misuse is a problem in their neighbourhood. A quarter also highlighted pregnancy (particularly young people) and cancer as other health concerns for the Government to tackle.

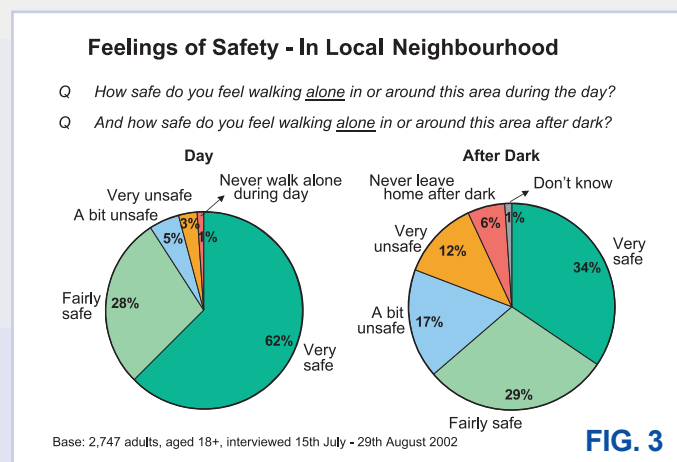
Because of hospital centralisation, resulting in the absence of quick access in some cases, people generally feel that community health centres should remain open round-the-clock, giving residents fast and easy access to emergency healthcare.

Community Safety

Crime is the number one priority of the country.

Safety within the neighbourhood

A significant number (35 percent - particularly women, senior citizens and Indo-Trinidadians) either feel unsafe walking alone in their area at nights or never leave their house at nights - See Fig. 3.



However, nine people in ten (90 percent) feel safe walking around in their neighbourhood during the day, while 76 percent, feel safe at home alone during the night. The concern is that quarter of the population, three people in four, feel unsafe in their own homes after dark.

The national perception of the crime situation is that it is not improving. The key crime-related problems are drug dealing, drug abuse, robberies, assaults, people hanging around in the streets, burglaries and house-breaking. There is also a perception that poor streetlighting contributes to crime in the community.

Major types of offences

Fifteen percent (across all subgroups, but highest among the middle-class) are recent victims of crime. Burglary is the most common experience, particularly among people in the middle to upper social classes and those living in Port of Spain and San Juan/Laventille.

Reporting crimes

Nearly half of those affected by crime have not reported at least one incident of crime to the police.

The most common reasons given are:

- Will not be taken seriously (20 percent)
- Felt it was not important enough (14 percent)
- Because the item damaged or stolen was not important enough (10 percent)

Quality of Life

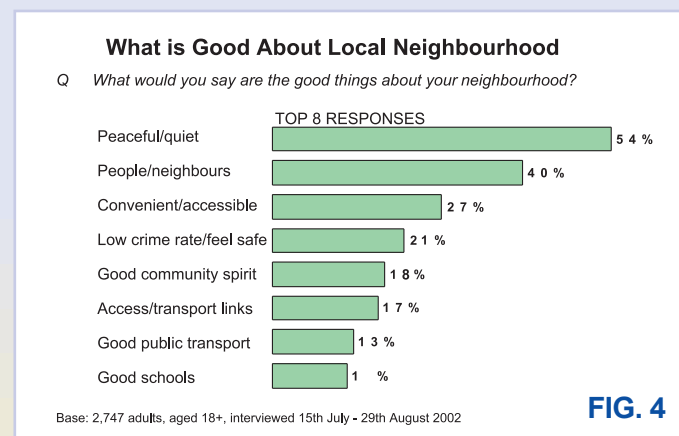
The neighbourhood

Nearly the entire adult population (82 percent), even more markedly older citizens, Indo-Trinidadians and residents of Central Trinidad, view their neighbourhood as a good place to live.

The perception of the neighbourhood having improved within the last three years is split down the middle, with 44 percent believing that their community has gotten better while 49 percent believe things have remained pretty much the same, and one in six, 18 percent, say things have gotten worse.

Quality determinants

People believe the good things about their neighbourhood is the peace and quiet, their neighbours, convenience and easy accessibility - See Fig. 4 below.



Dissatisfactions

Although there are variations across regional corporations, environmental issues, lack of facilities for young people, drugs and high unemployment are considered the worst aspects of the local area.

Improvements needed

Most people feel that the following will improve their neighbourhood and should be top priority issues:

- Facilities for young people
- Better and more streetlighting
- Improved maintenance of the area
- More and better jobs.

Community Involvement

Community spirit

There are relatively high levels of satisfaction with their neighbourhood, however community involvement is low. Most people do not feel very involved in their community (65 percent).

Seven people in ten say they are not involved in any community or voluntary activities.

Awareness of community programmes is high with YTEPP (83 percent) being the most widely recognised programme followed by On The Job Training (45 percent).

The Image of the Public Service

The top eight words people use to describe Public Services (like schools or hospitals) include *slow* (27 percent), *poor service* (27 percent), *unsatisfactory* (20 percent), and *inadequate* (18 percent), but also *efficient* (23 percent), *friendly* (22 percent), *keen to help* (18 percent) and *hardworking* (17 percent).

Awareness of local services is varied as shown in Fig. 5 below.



Service requirements

It has been established that **quality**, and not process of **delivery**, is what matters most to citizens.

Knowledge of service bodies

Most people are not aware of the full range of services provided by the various public services.

Contact with Public Services

Most contacted services

The most frequently contacted facilities are those providing electricity, telephone, postage, and water and sewerage services.

Contact preferences

A large majority (65 percent) prefer to have personal contact with these agencies when conducting business. In fact, most persons contacting public offices for the first time, do so in person as they feel this is the only way in which they will receive good service. This group (pensioners and those in the working and skilled working classes) felt that using the telephone meant "too many voices to talk to."

About one in five (21 percent - middle to upper classes) however, prefer to use the telephone to contact public offices.

Results satisfaction

Most are generally satisfied with the results of their enquiries and with the speed of delivery. Those dissatisfied (21 percent) identified the major problem as the speed of delivery.

Demand for extended opening hours

There is little demand for opening hours to be extended to 24x7 except in the case of emergency services (healthcare and police) and community centres. Longer opening hours are preferred on weekdays, again especially for community centres and provision of opening hours are favoured on Saturdays, especially for utility bill payments.

Complaints Handling

Lodging a complaint

It was discovered that many people do not bother to lodge complaints. The following reasons were given:

- Not sure who to complain to
- Unsure of how to lodge complaint

Most persons lodging a complaint were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the results. Major reasons for this were:

- The problem was never resolved
- The length of time taken to address problem
- Too much effort has to be spent monitoring progress
- Most public services do not take complaints seriously
- Fear of victimization

Perception/Importance of claims

Opinion is evenly divided on whether the public service is ready to listen to complaints (40 percent agree versus 46 percent disagree) and whether they are now better at listening to complaints than they were a few years ago (39 percent versus 36 percent respectively).