

# University Opinion Measurement Centers: Scientific Neutrality in the Face of Political and Commercial Marketing

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of university-based opinion poll centers in analyzing public opinion and their relationship with governmental bodies. Using a qualitative research design, semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven professors from leading Jordanian universities, selected based on their expertise in public policy, social research, and media studies. A thematic analysis approach was applied to extract patterns in the responses, categorizing themes such as institutional challenges, funding constraints, and political influences on data neutrality. The findings indicate that while these centers hold significant potential in shaping policy discourse, they face structural limitations including inadequate governmental support, limited financial resources, and challenges in sustaining academic independence. The study concludes that greater collaboration between universities and international research bodies is essential to strengthening the credibility and impact of opinion polling centers in the Arab world.

**Keywords:** Public opinion, scientific neutrality, universities, commercial marketing, opinion measurement.

مراكز قياس الرأي الجامعي: الحياد العلمي في مواجهة التسويق السياسي والتجاري

الدكتورة حنان كامل الشيخ □ الدكتورة سارة يعقوب ناصر الدين

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يتناول هذا المقال مدى فاعلية مراكز استطلاع الرأي في الجامعات ودورها في تحليل الرأي العام وعلاقتها بالجهات الحكومية والتحديات التي تعوق أدائها. وقد تم استخدام منهجية نوعية، باستخدام مقابلات شبه منظمة مع سبعة أساتذة من الجامعات الأردنية. وقد كشفت النتائج أن هذه المراكز تلعب دورًا حاسمًا في المجالات التسويقية والاجتماعية والأكاديمية وفي قياس الرأي العام حول القضايا ذات الأولوية. ومع ذلك، كشفت الدراسة أيضًا أن العلاقة بين هذه المراكز والجهات الرسمية ضعيفة وغير تكاملية. وتشمل العقبات الرئيسية عدم كفاية التمويل الحكومي والقيود المالية المفروضة من الدولة واتجاه متزايد لهجرة الأدمغة. وتوصي الدراسة بأن تشكل الجامعات العربية شراكات مع المؤسسات المحلية والدولية لتعزيز تأثير مراكز استطلاع الرأي لديها.

الأهداف: يهدف المقال إلى التعرف على المهام والأدوار البحثية الحالية التي يجب أن تقوم بها مراكز الدراسات والبحوث في الجامعات، وكذلك التعرف على طبيعة العلاقة الحالية والمفترضة بين مراكز الدراسات والبحوث والجهات الرسمية، كما يهدف المقال إلى الكشف عن أبرز المعوقات التي تحول دون فاعلية مراكز الدراسات والبحوث في الجامعات، وأهم المقترحات لتعزيز فاعليتها.

المنهجية: تتبنى المقالة الحالية المنهج النوعي، والذي يطلق عليه أحياناً البحث النوعي، والذي يعتمد على دراسة السلوكيات والمواقف البشرية. ويعتمد المنهج النوعي أيضاً على التفاصيل والتفسيرات الشاملة للظواهر والمشكلات الاجتماعية المستمدة من الوثائق والتقارير والمنشورات وما إلى ذلك. وعادةً ما يقدم الباحث فهماً متعمقاً وتفسيراً شاملاً لمجال موضوع البحث. وللقيام بذلك، يتم جمع المعلومات والبيانات من خلال مجموعة من الوسائل مثل المقابلات والملاحظات. وفي المنهج النوعي، يكون الباحث نفسه هو الأداة الرئيسية في جمع المعلومات، لذلك يستخدم الباحث بشكل كبير المقابلات والملاحظات والمشاهدات وما يحصل عليه من معلومات (كوبر وشيندلر، 2014؛ سوندرز وآخرون، 2009).

النتائج: المهام والأدوار البحثية الحالية التي يجب أن تغطيها مراكز الدراسات واستطلاعات الرأي في الجامعات.

الخلاصة: أظهرت النتائج أن مراكز الاستطلاع في الجامعات توفر مجال تسويقي واجتماعي وأكاديمي من خلال قاعدة بيانات حول الرأي العام واتجاهاته وتساهم في تحديد مؤشرات الرأي العام بشأن القضايا التي تمثل اهتمامات ذات أولوية للمواطنين في تلك المجالات، وهذا بدوره يعزز قنوات الاتصال بين أفراد المجتمع ومؤسسات الدولة والمجتمع المدني. كما ظهر أن العلاقة بين مراكز الدراسات والجهات الرسمية غير فعالة وضعيفة، وكان من المفترض أن تكون تكاملية. ومن أبرز معوقات فعالية مراكز الاستطلاع في الجامعات ضعف التمويل الحكومي والقيود التي تفرضها الدولة على التمويل، بالإضافة إلى تفاقم ظاهرة هجرة الأدمغة إلى الخارج. وتعد الجامعة البيئة الأكثر ملاءمة لمراكز البحوث ودراسات الرأي العام لأنها توفر تخصصات علمية متنوعة تساهم في تعزيز مجالات البحث والدراسات في مراكز الاستطلاع والرأي العام، بالإضافة إلى الجو الأكاديمي الذي يشجع على التشاور والحوار وتبادل الآراء، مما ينضج منهجية وأدوات البحث ويعزز عمق تحليل النتائج. وقراءتها. وعلى أية حال فإن البيئة الجامعية مقارنة بغيرها من البيئات التي تتمتع أكثر بالحياد العلمي والموضوعية في بناء المنهجية والاستطلاع وقراءة النتائج.

الكلمات الدالة: الرأي العام، الحياد العلمي، الجامعات، التسويق التجاري، قياس الرأي.

## 1. Introduction

Public opinion polling has become an essential tool for analyzing societal trends and shaping public policy. In modern democracies, polling centers play a crucial role in informing decision-makers by providing evidence-based insights into public sentiment (Salmi, 2003; Kausch, 2015). However, in several Arab countries, these centers face institutional, financial, and political challenges that hinder their effectiveness (Mahmoud, 2013). The integration of public opinion research into governance remains limited, and many policymakers' express skepticism about the reliability of polling data. This study seeks to examine the role of university-based opinion polling centers in Jordan, assessing their impact on governance and the barriers that limit their effectiveness.

Public opinion measurements provide a method of participation in decision-making and a scientific means by which the public expresses their opinions, positions, and trends that reach decision-makers directly (Suleiman, 2014). Identifying the trends of public opinion in everything related to society and its internal or external environment is an urgent need in drawing up development, political, and social plans in society and presenting appropriate proposals to decision-makers in making decisions using a scientific and objective approach. Considering the changes taking place in the world and the intersection of relationships and influences, which have affected all aspects of political, economic, and social life, research centers and public opinion studies have become more necessary and important. Centers for Public Opinion Studies mainly encourage public opinion studies that are concerned with public issues, coordinate research efforts in a way that achieves integration between them, strive to increase the scientific and practical outcome of researchers, activate the university's real role in serving society and

the state, ensure positive interaction with societal issues, and provide studies with real objective results based on to planners and decision-makers.

On the other hand, public opinion is considered one of the pillars of democracy, and its marginalization and absence in society is considered a marginalization and absence of democracy. So how can the authority claim that it is democratic and believes in the principle that the people govern themselves when, at the same time, it does not even care about knowing the people's opinion on the nation's issues? Arab regimes are confronted with an evident paradox, as they openly support democracy while concurrently disregarding and marginalizing the pivotal institution of public opinion. This institution, which functions as the fundamental cornerstone and basis for any authority that obtains its legitimacy from the populace, maintains the conviction that the people possess the capability and strength to manage their matters autonomously (Kausch, 2015).

In Iraq, the National Strategy for Education and Higher Education (2011-2020) recognized a lack of collaboration between the higher education system, state institutions, and the private sector in terms of advisory tasks. To address this issue, the government sought assistance from research centers in universities. These centers were tasked with resolving technical, economic, administrative, and social problems that hindered the implementation of development programmes. The aim was to leverage their expertise to foster innovation, creativity, and the connection between ministries and scientific research institutions.

Additionally, these centers were responsible for providing the necessary resources and personnel to utilize scientific capabilities, as well as training students in industrial and agricultural projects to enhance their ability to select appropriate technologies for their work (Abdel-Hay, 2012; Al-Haidari, 2011).

### **1.1. Problem Statement**

Research and study centers are essential indicators of a nation's developmental trajectory. These centers not only evaluate scientific research and anticipate future needs but also serve as gauges of cultural, political, and economic achievements. In many developed nations, these institutions significantly influence political and social trends, providing data-driven insights that inform policy decisions. However, in the Arab world, the role of university-based poll centers remains limited, raising the critical question: What role do these centers play, and how are they connected to decision-making processes?

### **1.2. Research Questions**

The primary research question is: What are the tasks and roles that university-based opinion poll centers should undertake? Sub-questions include:

1. What tasks and roles should these centres perform?
2. What is the current and ideal relationship between poll centres and official bodies?
3. What are the main obstacles hindering the effectiveness of university opinion poll centres?
4. What strategies can enhance the functionality of these centres?

### **1.3 Objectives**

This study aims to:

- Analyse the tasks and roles that university-based opinion polling centres in Jordan should undertake.
- Evaluate the current relationship between these centres and official bodies, identifying existing gaps.
- Uncover the main obstacles limiting the effectiveness of opinion polling centres in universities.
- Provide scientific solutions to enhance the role of these centres in public decision-making.
- Suggest future research directions to develop more effective models for opinion polling centres.

The study aims to identify the current research tasks and roles that study, and opinion poll centers in universities should cover, as well as to identify the nature of the current and supposed relationship between poll centers and official bodies. The article also aims to reveal the most prominent obstacles to the effectiveness of opinion polling and studies centers in universities, and the most important proposals to enhance their effectiveness.

### **1.4 Related concepts**

Public opinion refers to the political values, attitudes, and opinions held by the public of a country or political unit. It encompasses voting patterns and other political behaviors. Public opinion is considered crucial in a democracy due to the vital role of "the people." It has a significant impact on political decision-making.

The consideration of political choices is crucial in evaluating the level of democracy within a political system (Finifter, 1996).

Public opinion centers are "centers for research and education and are not like universities or colleges. Their main goal is to research the public policies of the state and have an effective influence in discussing those policies." It also focuses its attention on economic and social development, public policy, defense, security, and foreign affairs. It also does not attempt to provide superficial knowledge of these issues, as much as it discusses and researches them in-depth and draws the public's attention to them, as they are institutions whose primary goal is to provide research and studies related to society and public policies, and to influence pressing issues that concern people (Wiarda, 2009).

#### **1.1. Limitations of the study**

- Objective boundaries: represented by survey centres in universities
- Human limits: Jordanian university professors
- Time limits: The study was conducted in January 2024
- Spatial borders: The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

## **2. Review of the theoretical framework**

### **2.1. Functions of research centers and public opinion studies in universities**

Public opinion research centres serve as key institutions for data collection, policy analysis, and social research. Their primary role is to provide accurate, evidence-based insights that inform decision-makers and contribute to the democratic process. These centres enhance public discourse by identifying societal trends, gauging policy effectiveness, and fostering community engagement. Additionally, universities provide an ideal environment for such research, as they facilitate academic neutrality, interdisciplinary collaboration, and methodological rigor. By consolidating research efforts and fostering stronger relationships with policymakers, these centres can serve as credible sources of public opinion analysis, ultimately strengthening democratic governance.

Accordingly, survey centers in universities will provide essential services to society, the most important of which are (Al-Nadawi, 2007):

#### **• Contributing to decision-making**

The majority of research and study centers in the world seek to provide the necessary information to political, economic, or military decision-makers, among others. They also sometimes provide some valuable studies that help the decision-maker decide on a specific issue or a position against it. This also happened when the Research and Development (RAND) Corporation presented a study to expand the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which was later adopted as a basis for expanding the alliance mentioned above.

#### **• Contributing to preventive diplomacy**

Some research and study centers play even more effective roles than states or international organizations in diplomatic work to find solutions to complex regional or international problems, for example, the establishment of the American Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

In the mid-eighties of the last century, a series of studies and meetings were held in which a group of clergy, politicians, businessmen, and representatives of the South African Liberation Movement were hosted, along with members of Congress and employees of the US State Department and the US National Security Council. These

activities helped establish the transitional phase between the rule of Apartheid and the black majority, thus solving the problem in South Africa.

- ***Developing programs and plans***

Most of the research and study centers contribute to developing organized programs linked to the action plans initiated by various government institutions, as well as identifying the challenges and weaknesses facing them and providing appropriate solutions to address them.

- ***Investing in scientific competencies***

Research and study centers invest in the scientific energies present in universities and encourage scientific competencies to provide the state with strategic plans that protect it from confusion in implementing its various projects. The presence of research and study centers also encourages students to compete and strive diligently to reach the most successful solutions to society's problems.

- ***Providing job opportunities***

Research centers provide many job opportunities for holders of advanced degrees and specialized cadres in communities with the aim of benefiting from their experience and protecting them from leaving outside their countries.

- ***Intellectual mobilization***

Educating the public on foreign issues and mobilizing their support for a specific policy is one of the most prominent tasks carried out by research centers within the framework of their general work, as is the case in the role of the Gulf Research Center through its various publications and its monthly magazine (Opinions on the Gulf). Research centers also contribute through their research, studies, and periodic publications aimed at establishing a unified vision regarding many of the challenges facing societies. They also contribute to enriching previous research, studies, and experiences and adapting it to suit the specificity of the community for which this research is intended.

- ***Preparing senior leaders***

Research and study centers contribute to preparing and developing scientists, researchers, and specialists in various scientific fields and preparing them as distinguished leaders in the various corridors of power, official institutions, and the private sector in their countries, and benefiting from the talented scientific elite of scientists, researchers and specialists to develop performance levels in various leadership institutions. In society, for example, Colin Powell, Madeleine Albright, Dennis Ross, Regard Haas, Paul Wolfowitz, and dozens of others were appointed to sensitive positions in American administrations due to the distinguished research and studies they provided in American research centers.

- ***External coordination***

Research and study centers contribute to building bridges of cooperation and communication with scientific figures and institutions in various countries of the world, with the aim of benefiting from the expertise and experiences of others, as well as exchanging benefits, in a way that enhances scientific, political and economic feasibility at the global level.

## **2.2. The Scope of Work of Public Opinion Centres in Universities**

University-based opinion polling centres are not merely data collection institutions; rather, they function as research hubs that contribute to policy formulation and the analysis of social and economic issues. According to recent literature, these centres serve as an effective tool for evaluating public opinion and guiding governments toward evidence-based decision-making (OECD, 1998; Si, 2019). However, these centres face significant challenges, including insufficient funding, political interference, and the influence of non-academic stakeholders in the data collection and analysis process (Alizadeh et al., 2021). This study highlights how universities can enhance the independence of these centres and utilize them more effectively in public decision-making.

The scope of work of public opinion research centers can be summarized in three areas:



- Descriptive, exploratory, and forward-looking scientific studies and research, following up on issues of interest to the public and decision-makers and measuring public opinion trends on important topics.
- Enhancing scholarly connections with specialized academic departments, research centers, international and regional organizations, federations, ministries, and local bodies; fostering social and cultural consciousness; and bolstering the Arab library through the publication of scholarly and acclaimed books and peer-reviewed studies across political, economic, social, and media domains; as well as by orchestrating conferences, seminars, and other educational events; and serving the community.
- The activities of the public opinion research center are to take possible measures to encourage and motivate researchers to delve deeper into studying the issues and problems facing the Arab region, organizing training courses in specific fields for workers and training researchers working in the fields of media, politics, and social studies and developing their scientific expertise and practical skills in the field of preparing studies and research.

### ***2.3. Features and controls of public opinion studies***

Among the most important characteristics of public opinion studies that achieve objectivity and impartiality are (Brooker & Schaefer, 2015) :

- Conducting surveys of public attitudes fearlessly investigating a wide range of social and political topics on an ongoing basis. Periodic scientific measurement in objective and accurate ways can help avoid high risks that can arise from not measuring public opinion, assuming knowledge of it without real field knowledge, or ignoring its measurement.
- It is necessary to follow scientific foundations in measuring public opinion by identifying the problems and topics required to measure public opinion regarding them, as well as choosing samples that correctly represent the population to which the measurement is to be applied, designing data collection tools using correct and accurate means, and carrying out analysis processes and integrating the measurement results with other indicators in a scientific way.
- Not being limited to a specific party in measuring public opinion and striving to achieve the greatest degree of integration between the efforts of research institutions and research centers. This necessarily leads to a diversity of points of view, as well as expanding the scope of knowledge, including the outlook, and providing a degree of neutrality and objectivity.
- In order to ascertain the genuine worth of public opinion polls, they must maintain the utmost objectivity, credibility, independence, and accuracy while avoiding any form of bias towards particular individuals or ideas. This entails adherence to the methodological and procedural guidelines of research and the integrity associated with interpreting poll results. Furthermore, the work of these centers should not be overshadowed by their commercial nature or marketing, partiality towards short-term objectives, or restricted interests.

### ***2.4. The vital role of universities in public opinion studies***

Universities are an appropriate environment for establishing research centers that conduct public opinion studies, as specialists in survey studies and public opinion have confirmed that the most proficient bodies for survey studies are academic institutions (universities and academies) and applied research institutes affiliated with the ministries of labor, health, engineering, and economics, and some large companies (OECD, 1998).

Consequently, since the beginning of the 21st century, universities have faced unprecedented challenges, most of which lie in the growing importance of knowledge as a driver of growth in many economic, social, political, cultural, and other fields (Hijab, Oreqat, & Al-Badri, 2024). Consequently, the role of universities has increased more than ever before in building knowledge economies and democratic societies. Universities are responsible for creating the intellectual capacity that depends on the production and use of knowledge (Salmi, 2003).

As universities in the knowledge society have begun to lead the community's economy through the increasing value of knowledge, with the powers they possess for education and training, they also help society by possessing a

set of high skills through knowledge and understanding of the outputs that scientific research provides that require investment, and rates have increased. The return on education in the 20th century was a result of the knowledge economy. Universities all over the world are the key to achieving all individual and societal aspirations. At the individual level, universities are the path to achieving social respect, obtaining better jobs and businesses, expanding life choices, and achieving cultural stimulation. For societies, universities are the key to technology, productivity, and all components of international competition and economic growth (Kretovics & Michael, 2005).

The World Bank report in 2002 also made it clear that there is a group of opportunities resulting from the knowledge society that developing countries must take advantage of if they want to improve their societies. For example, Egyptian universities must analyze these opportunities and try to benefit from them in the future. There is also a group of risks facing these opportunities. Societies must be confronted, and hence, the role placed on Egyptian universities increases now and in the future (Salmi, 2003).

### **2.5. Political and commercial marketing**

Elections are the cornerstone of civil society, and thus, their conduct can reasonably be expected to reflect the weight of legal requirements, state institutions, and the democratic mandate. The contribution of political marketing becomes more important as election-related unrest continues to be a paradox across the world. Political marketing still seems to feel obligated to defend itself and justify itself to critics (Si, 2019).

From the importance of the political role played by public opinion measurements in some countries, attention is paid to them to confront false, misleading, or biased public opinion polls. Polls that ignore scientific methods overlook ethical standards regulating work and falsify the public's attitudes, which extends to threatening the democratic process and misleading decision-makers (Suleiman, 2014).

Political marketing has found a system that has gradually developed as a tool that facilitates the efforts of political parties to establish long-term relationships with voters and stakeholders. Political marketing involves the use of marketing concepts, principles, and techniques on political issues by individuals, groups, organizations, and countries. Political marketing involves the analysis, planning, evaluation, and control of political activities by individuals, groups, political parties, government, and pressure groups (Al-Masshaqbah & Abuhassirah, 2023). In business marketing, sellers offer goods, services, and information to a market and get money, information, and customer loyalty in return. Still, in election campaigns, candidates offer their political commitments and preferences in exchange for votes, efforts, and voter support. In his political marketing process model, Niffenger (1989) asserts that political marketing involves integrating the four traditional marketing factors of product, promotion, price, and place into effective control of voter behavior (Niffenegger, 1989). In the same context, politics, like any other industry, has a product, marketing strategy, and purchasing opportunity that includes political, campaign, and voting and needs management and planning to achieve the desired goals (Alizadeh et al., 2021).

To effectively promote a political or commercial party, it is crucial to have access to data that can assist party leaders in developing strategies, creating operational plans, and selecting suitable advertising materials. This data will enable them to target the appropriate audience, persuade them, and secure their support or endorsement. Hence, survey centers in universities will be best able to build a marketing plan that is objective and impartial and provides the public with correct, non-fake, or exaggerated data to identify the party or company.

### **2.6. Challenges or obstacles that limit the neutrality and objectivity of public opinion studies centers.**

The most prominent challenges or obstacles faced by research centers are as follows (Al-Nadawi, 2007):

- **Funding**

Due to the absence of impartial support for scientific research, this issue takes on several dimensions. Therefore, the centers are either left to their own devices or risk closure and abandonment if they continue to depend on foreign finance, which can cause them to participate in illegal and questionable activities. Notably, only a limited number of models could utilize local and Arab sources without resorting to dubious financing.

- ***Brain drains.***

Research and study centers suffer from the escalation of the phenomenon of brain drain abroad. For example, studies by the Arab League revealed that 54 percent of Arab students studying abroad do not return to their countries (Baruch et al., 2007). The Arab world contributes 31 percent to the migration of skilled workers from developing countries, about 50 percent to the migration of doctors, and 23 percent to the migration of skilled workers from developing countries as a whole. One hundred percent of engineers and 15 percent of scientists, out of the total number of Arab talents, immigrated to Europe, the United States of America, and Canada in particular. Western countries are the biggest winners from the migration of no less than 450 thousand Arab minds, and the losses of Arab countries from this phenomenon are estimated at no less than \$200 billion (Corm, 2020).

- ***Human resources***

The low general level of scientific and technical knowledge, the lag in the technological level, and limited familiarity with electronic databases, in addition to the high rate of illiteracy in the majority of third world countries, leads to a decline in benefiting from the scientific products of these centers.

- ***Databases***

The scarcity of reliable scientific sources and information on the subjects that need to be investigated in the majority of countries globally is a significant challenge for research and study institutions. This is particularly true given that the provision of data is regarded as the foundation of research and study centers, which are indispensable for conducting research in the subject area under investigation. Failure to do so will result in distorted findings that deviate significantly from the subject matter under investigation and fail to confront the societal deficiencies that form the foundation of their endeavors and rationale for their existence, as ought to be the case. This pertains to the liberation from constraints on the confidentiality of information and the facilitation of access to necessary data.

- ***Political Problems and the Impact on Opinion Polling***

University-based opinion polling centres in the Arab world face complex political challenges that impact their independence and the credibility of their results. Recent studies indicate that some governments exert direct or indirect pressure on these centres, which can lead to data manipulation or restrictions on research freedom (Corm, 2020). Additionally, the absence of legal frameworks protecting the freedom to conduct public opinion surveys poses another major challenge, as some countries impose restrictions on publishing poll results if they do not align with governmental agendas (Qirat, 2013). These obstacles highlight the urgent need to develop clear legal frameworks to protect researchers and ensure the neutrality and integrity of data produced by these centres.

Political disputes, wars between countries, and the instability of the political situation prevent the implementation of the research plans drawn up by these centers on a regular basis.

- ***Limited coordination***

Weak scientific coordination between research and study centers, whether at the internal or external level of the country, the lack of encouragement from parties consuming research and studies, and the low financial return for them lead to the reluctance of scientists and researchers to provide their research and thus migration to other countries that attract them. They are provided with high material and scientific incentives to benefit from their scientific potential.

- ***Ideological principles***

Some research and study centers, especially in third-world countries like Arab countries, obscure the line between their official role as a place to think and plan and the role of the political party that funds them. As a result, many of them become platforms for political parties. People from the party or the government were encouraged to use their ideas, which took away their independence in the field of science.



- ***Freedom of expression***

Studies and research centers cannot carry out their work without providing the required information and being given the opportunity to be free from political restrictions. This is what most research and study centers in developing countries lack, which suffer from countless restrictions, in addition to besieging independent opinions and preventing their development.

- ***Arab Politics and the Role of Public Opinion Centres***

Policy development in the Arab world often lacks structured mechanisms that enable effective integration between academic research and government decision-making (Qudah, 2023). In many cases, public opinion polling faces resistance, particularly when survey findings challenge the existing governmental narratives or policy directions (El-Said & Harrigan, 2023). Recent studies indicate that university-affiliated polling centres in the region frequently operate in isolation from the political process, limiting their potential to influence legislative and administrative decisions (Benstead, 2022). According to research by the Jordan Strategy Forum (2024), the absence of institutionalized collaboration between policymakers and research centres weakens the role of evidence-based decision-making in governance (Wafi, 2023). To bridge this gap, formal policy mechanisms must be developed to ensure structured engagement between polling institutions and governmental agencies, while simultaneously safeguarding academic independence to maintain the credibility and objectivity of research findings (World Bank, 2023).

- ***Negative Effects of Polls***

One of the negative effects of the poll is that participants falsify their true opinions, either because they want a certain result to come out or because they are convinced of a certain intellectual or political position that is different from the majority of society, which will expose them to feelings of alienation and difference, such as their religious convictions, position on the current regime, or the many survey questions and their desire to finish them (Epstein, 2006).

- ***Trust concerns***

The lack of confidence in the credibility and accuracy of measurement tools remains a significant challenge for opinion polling centers, particularly in the Arab world, where skepticism toward survey methodologies, concerns over political biases, and the perceived lack of transparency undermine public trust in polling results (Jaber, 2006). Recent studies highlight that this skepticism is often driven by methodological inconsistencies, lack of standardized sampling techniques, and political influence over survey design and interpretation (Benstead, 2022; El-Said & Harrigan, 2023). According to Benstead (2022), polling centers in Middle Eastern countries often struggle with securing public cooperation due to fears of government surveillance or concerns that responses may be misrepresented for political agendas. Additionally, a comparative analysis of polling credibility in democratic and non-democratic systems found that countries with greater transparency, regulatory oversight, and independent verification processes tend to have higher levels of public confidence in survey data (World Bank, 2023).

- ***Doubt in public opinion***

Existing research suggests that public opinion polling remains underutilized in some Arab countries due to institutional scepticism and concerns over methodological reliability. Previous studies indicate that policymakers may perceive opinion poll data as lacking scientific rigor or as being susceptible to external biases (Brooker & Schaefer, 2015). This perception creates barriers to integrating public opinion research into governance structures, limiting its influence on policy formulation.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, which is commonly used to explore complex social phenomena, human behaviour, and attitudes. Unlike quantitative research, which focuses on numerical data and statistical analysis, qualitative research prioritizes rich, descriptive insights derived from subjective experiences and

social contexts. This approach is particularly suited for examining public opinion measurement in university-based polling centres, as it allows for an in-depth exploration of institutional, political, and economic factors influencing their effectiveness.

### **3.2. Data Collection Methods**

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with seven academics and policy experts from leading Jordanian universities. Participants were purposively sampled to ensure representation from various disciplines, including political science, media studies, and sociology. The semi-structured interview format allowed for flexibility, enabling the researchers to probe deeper into key themes while maintaining a structured set of guiding questions. The interview protocol covered:

- The role and effectiveness of university opinion polling centres.
- Institutional and financial challenges facing these centres.
- The relationship between opinion polling and governmental decision-making.
- The impact of political and commercial influences on polling neutrality.

### **3.3. Data Analysis**

To analyse the qualitative data, the study employed thematic analysis, a method widely used in qualitative research to identify, interpret, and report patterns (themes) within the data. The process followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework for thematic analysis:

1. Familiarization with Data: Transcribing, reading, and re-reading interview transcripts.
2. Generating Initial Codes: Systematically coding significant segments of the data.
3. Searching for Themes: Identifying recurring patterns and organizing them into themes.
4. Reviewing Themes: Refining themes by cross-checking them against the data.
5. Defining and Naming Themes: Developing clear, coherent definitions for each theme.
6. Writing the Report: Integrating themes into a cohesive narrative with supporting evidence.

### **3.4. Validity and Reliability**

To ensure rigor and credibility, the study incorporated triangulation by cross-verifying data from multiple sources, including previous research, academic reports, and government documents. Investigator triangulation was also employed, where multiple researchers independently analysed the data to reduce bias. Additionally, member checking was conducted, wherein participants were given the opportunity to review and validate key findings to ensure accuracy and authenticity.

Ethical approval for this study was obtained in accordance with research ethics guidelines. All participants provided informed consent, ensuring they understood the study's purpose, their rights, and data confidentiality. To maintain anonymity and privacy, interview responses were anonymized, and no personally identifiable information was disclosed in the final report.

By adopting this rigorous qualitative framework, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and impact of university opinion polling centres in Jordan, ensuring methodological soundness and academic reliability (Cooper & Schindler, 2014; Saunders et al., 2009).

### **3.5. Tool: Interview**

Interviewing in all its forms - structured, semi-structured, and irregular - is a common tool for obtaining data on characteristics and classifications of interests. Other sources include focus groups, observation (without taking into account previously established theory such as statistical theory), reflective field notes, texts, drawings, photographs, and other images, audio- or visually recorded interactions and practices, public (i.e., official) personal documents, historical events, and websites and social media (Murphy, 2017; Savin-Baden & Major, 2023). The interview is divided into three types: An organized interview, in which all participants receive the same questions in the same order and method, and the role of the researcher, which is neutral. The unstructured interview: it includes open and in-depth questions. Group interview: It is an interview in which the researcher works with a group of people at the

same time. In this type, the role of the researcher is to manage the dialogue, facilitate its procedures, and record the interactions and behaviors between individuals (Althamen, 2007; Atwi, 2004)).

In this study, a semi-regular interview was adopted, as one open-ended question was prepared for seven academics working in Jordanian universities. Then, the two researchers collected their responses and the details of their explanations and addressed them in the explanation, interpretation, and conclusions that answered the study's questions.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

The interview findings with academics indicate that university-based opinion polling centres face multiple institutional challenges, including insufficient funding, lack of official recognition of poll results, and restrictions on data publication. Participants in the study highlighted that government funding for these centres is often inadequate, leading to reliance on external funding sources, which may raise concerns about research independence. Additionally, some participants pointed out a gap between the data produced by these centres and its actual use by policymakers. According to the interviews, enhancing institutional collaboration and developing more transparent mechanisms could strengthen the role of these centres in the academic and political landscape.

##### 4.1. *Current research tasks and roles that study and opinion poll centers in universities should cover.*

Dr. Salim Sharif (12/4/2023) (Dean of Student Affairs at Middle East University and Assistant to the University President for Public Relations) says: The presence of university opinion poll centers is a priority in the short and long term to measure predictions and measure the impact of events. According to Al-Nadawi (2007), survey centers contribute to providing the necessary information and studies to the political, economic, or military decision-makers, etc. (Al-Nadawi, 2007). In addition to playing more effective roles than even states or international organizations in diplomatic work to find solutions to complex regional or international problems, on the other hand, the majority of research and study centers contribute to developing organized programs linked to the action plans initiated by various government institutions, as well as identifying challenges. And the aspects of weakness that you face and provide appropriate solutions to address them. For his part, Associate Professor Dr. Muhammad Hussein Saad Al-Momani (9/12/2023) (a graduate of political science and teaches in the Department of Journalism and Media at the Middle East University, Jordan): These centers are very important because they provide accurate information from researchers, and both missions can benefit from it.

It also provides an accurate diagnosis of social phenomena and surveys of all political, economic, and social phenomena. Dr. Amjad Badr Al-Qadi (12/7/2023) (Dean of the Faculty of Information at Yarmouk University, Jordan) says that university opinion poll centers add scientific value to the university, increase its societal and scientific importance, help it draw a map for success, and address local, regional and international issues in various fields. Political, economic, and security." For his part, Professor Dr. Hisham Abu Saima (12/6/2023) (Dean of the Faculty of Information Technology at the Middle East University, Jordan) says that university opinion poll centers contribute in the long term to developing skills and knowledge. In the short term, interaction with the scientific community also encourages innovation and leadership and provides financial resources. Thus, according to Dr. Nahida Makhamda (12/7/2023) (who is Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Information, Yarmouk University, Jordan), university opinion poll centers focus on measuring public opinion about issues of concern to society.

Research and study centers also invest in the scientific energies present in universities and encourage scientific competencies to provide the state with strategic plans. They encourage students to compete and strive scientifically to reach the most successful solutions to society's problems. They provide job opportunities for those with higher degrees and specialized cadres to benefit from their experience and protect them from dropping out of their countries. Developing scientists, researchers, and specialists in various scientific fields and preparing them as distinguished leaders in various corridors of power, official institutions, and the private sector in their countries.

This was confirmed by Engineer Sakhr Marwan Dudin (9/12/2023) (an architect who owns a consulting engineering office in Jordan), indicating that "study and opinion poll centers in universities constitute sensors for the general orientation of students and the impressions they have regarding a number of public matters." And private

adding that opinion poll centers contribute to covering the needs of students to determine their future because the changes in the world are so large and complex that students feel lost without such research centers that help guide them to their future choices. In the same context, Professor Dr. Hussein Al-Khuzai (12/7/2023) (a professor of sociology at Princess Alia University College, Al-Balqa Applied University, Jordan) says, "University opinion poll centers help to know public opinion and society's trends on some social and economic issues." And educational and also contributes to the implementation of service studies to the student, local, and Jordanian community."

It appears from previous literature and interviews that the work of public opinion research centers is focused on conducting descriptive, exploratory, and forward-looking scientific studies and research, following up on issues of interest to the public and decision-makers, and measuring public opinion trends on important topics, in addition to providing community service by strengthening scientific relations with international and regional organizations and federations, ministries, local authorities, research centers, and specialized academic departments in the world, and contributing to increasing social and cultural awareness and enriching the Arab library by publishing serious and distinguished peer-reviewed books and studies in various political, economic and social fields (Aleessawi, 2022). And media, organizing conferences, seminars, seminars and lectures through which media and public opinion studies are discussed, their practical applications are examined, strengthening the bonds of cooperation with scientific institutions, strengthening communication between professors, experts, and specialists, and thus preparing research competencies: In this field, the activities of the Research Center are represented. Public opinion should take possible measures to encourage and motivate researchers to delve deeper into studying the issues and problems facing the Arab region, organizing training courses in specific fields for workers and training researchers working in the fields of media, political, and social studies, as well as developing their scientific expertise and practical skills in the field of preparing studies and research.

#### **4.2. *What is the nature of the current and supposed relationship between study and opinion poll centers and official bodies?***

One of the most key features of successful study centers is their connection with decision-makers. Perhaps the example of the American research centers we highlighted is their influence in formulating the outcomes of the administrations of Bill Clinton and George Bush regarding their foreign policy regarding certain issues. The best evidence of this is the strategic studies centers that are being established. More than twenty years have passed, and its research and studies are still neglected and do not receive the required attention from decision-makers. It must reconsider its research approach by issuing studies that monitor the movement of the phenomenon and the dynamics of change in it and thus enlighten the decision maker knows what is really going on and predicts what will happen in the future and try to create a close relationship.

Regarding the relationship of polling centers with official bodies, although they are oversight bodies, they are limited to providing information, as pointed out by Muhammad Al-Momani and journalist Sakhr Marwan Dudin, stressing the need for studies and research centers to become an intellectual reservoir for the state to monitor and anticipate the features of the future. Some researchers believe that the relationship is coordinated in determining the topics of studies, as Al-Khuzai pointed out, and Mukhatama described it as a complementary relationship. On the other hand, most observers describe this relationship as weak, typical, and even inverse, as Salim Sharif, Hisham Abu Saima, and Amjad Al-Qadi explained.

The results of public opinion polls are a particularly valuable information base for the authority to use as a compass in making decisions and setting its policies in various areas of life, such as politics, economics, culture, sports, education...etc. Public opinion polls are a type of interaction between authority and active forces in society, and they are a link between the people and society. On the other hand, public opinion polls represent a direct assessment of the public's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the authority's performance of its duties and its management of the affairs of the people and the country (Qirat, 2013).

The university helps establish harmonious community relations in which diverse groups exchange knowledge and cultures and make science, knowledge, and artistic skills relevant and appropriate. This requires the university to develop and use socially relevant skills and areas of knowledge within the teaching plan and adapt them to current social needs. Through its programs, the university also examines different points of view on all issues, old and new,

reconsiders stable and accepted intellectual references, and reorganizes data according to new standards, whether intellectual, ethical, or aesthetic. Accordingly, the university is working through its plans to develop a dynamic relationship with the labor market. The university is also morally and legally responsible for adhering to academic and institutional integrity and embedding this in the mission of every educational institution to reflect the values of honesty, accountability, and responsibility as basic values, as well as respect for scientific honesty and freedom, and respect for equal opportunities and pluralism (Badrawi, 2021).

#### ***4.3. What are the most prominent obstacles to the establishment of effective opinion polling and studies centers in universities?***

The most prominent challenges or obstacles faced by research centers are as follows:

**Funding:** This is a multi-dimensional problem, as there is an absence of neutral funding that could come in the form of allocations for scientific research, and thus, the centers either fall prey to foreign funding in all its forms, which may push them to fall into the prohibited and suspicious, or they must face the specter of desolation and closure. There are a few models that have been able to provide local and Arab sources without the need for suspicious funding (Al-Nadawi, 2007). Accordingly, the weakness of government funding and the restrictions imposed by the state on funding issues constitute a major obstacle in the face of intellectual centers and institutions active in the field. What drives it to search for external funding, which is no less dangerous than the complexities of government funding, as it could pose another problem related to intellectual freedom and the independence of the center in defending the issues and goals it adopts and challenging its agenda, and therefore the picture appears bleak with regard to the issue of financing Arab think tanks and research centers. Therefore, it represents the biggest obstacle to the work of these centers and institutions.

Qirat (2013) explains this by the prevailing commercial trend in some of these centers, which causes them to carry out inaccurate studies to meet the demands of groups with limited political or economic interests and aspirations to distort reality or to support their trends and inflate their size or maximize their weight in society, far from reality (Qirat, 2013). This is the trend indicated by Dr. Salim Sharif, Dr. Hussein Al-Khuzai, and Dr. Amjad Badr Al-Qadi.

Existing research suggests that public opinion polling remains underutilized in some Arab countries due to institutional scepticism and concerns over methodological reliability. Previous studies indicate that policymakers may perceive opinion poll data as lacking scientific rigor or as being susceptible to external biases (Brooker & Schaefer, 2015). This perception creates barriers to integrating public opinion research into governance structures, limiting its influence on policy formulation.

Also, the fact that most research and study centers, especially public opinion studies, are under the authority of governments and thus subject to official will does not always guarantee neutrality and objectivity (Qirat, 2013). This is what Sakher Dudin and Muhammad Al-Momani pointed out.

#### ***4.4. What are the most prominent proposals for activating opinion polling and study centers in universities?***

Experts see the need for officials to focus on objectivity and impartiality without bias towards interests or alliances with some lists, acknowledge the problems facing the survey methodology, and settle them instead of claiming absolute scientific knowledge and complete neutrality. Re-examining the poll methodology and its working mechanism in order to correct it through evaluation and experimentation and reconsidering opinion polls constitute an important source of knowledge of society's trends on many issues (Jaber, 2006).

There is a need to establish pioneering research leaders because they may provide information and facts that serve the country and the Arab region and are consistent with national constants and Arab values (Almtawwe', 2019). In order for research centers to be proactive, they must form internal work teams that interact with the rest of the agencies around the clock and that research be a mixture of the human mind, machine, programming, and smart applications (Alnuaimi, 2020).



On the other hand, the academic relations that universities enjoy with their regional and international counterparts enable them to learn about the experiences of those countries and benefit from them in providing in-depth studies that serve society and the state. The university environment makes it easy to monitor the performance of research centers and document their procedures, unlike other centers, especially those that are not subject to scientific or official oversight. Finally, the presence of centers for public opinion studies in universities represents a field environment for qualifying researchers and students, providing them with the appropriate expertise to be competent researchers and investing them in those centers.

Scientific neutrality and objectivity in scientific research are the basis from which scientific institutions, research centers, universities, and all academic bodies concerned with community studies proceed. The abundance of tools and the abundance of research, and even the universality of scientific publishing, are not sufficient unless true objectivity and scientific neutrality are reflected in the research output, which, in fact, leads to a clear and specific diagnosis of society's problems and the development of solutions and proposals to overcome them and confront the challenges that prevent human progress, and this is what It was proposed by Dr. Muhammad Al-Momani, calling for more neutrality and academic freedom and increasing the number of polling centers, and for the polling centers to have a regional and international dimension (Hisham Abu Saima). Sakher Dudin proposes activating the vision of King Abdullah II by putting his discussion papers into practice - complementarity is required in the roles of these centers and close interconnection, openness to the world, and attracting competencies and experienced people in light of solid plans and strategies, and cooperation between media and academic institutions and planning ministries to develop a road map (Amjad al qadi).

On the other hand, Dr. Salim Sharif emphasizes the necessity of creating spaces for research devotion, reducing academic and office burdens, investing in the principle of rewards for unique, qualitative, distinguished, rare, and new research, holding workshops and brainstorming meetings with those interested, encouraging joint research work and not linking it to the culture of Scopus and its siblings. In addition, the importance of appropriate financial support for polling centers confirmed by Dr. Hussein Al-Khuzai and Dr. Nahida Makhamma.

What is required today is the establishment of centers for strategic studies that would provide a comprehensive analysis to the decision maker and not be a policy promoter or an advocate, as we find many centers for marketing government policies in contrast to the absence of policy centers. Honor the future of the region. We should also build and produce knowledge instead of buying it from abroad by supporting the local researcher who possesses many experiences and knowledge related to the nature of his surroundings and environment.

Regarding the technical and formal aspects of survey studies, Kamel (2016) suggests that surveys be formulated in a way that allows quick answers to provide psychological comfort to the participant while providing the greatest possible degree of confidentiality in the survey by preserving the identities of the participants, and not confronting them face to face while they answer the questions or provide training. The interviewers are completely neutral (Kamel, 2016).

#### **4.4 Linking the Findings to Recommendations**

The findings of this study underscore the crucial role that university-based opinion polling centres play in shaping public discourse and policy decisions. However, the challenges identified—such as weak institutional support, financial constraints, and political influences—highlight the urgent need for strategic interventions. Addressing these barriers requires a multi-faceted approach that integrates academic research with policy implementation, fosters stronger collaborations between universities and government bodies, and ensures the scientific integrity of polling methodologies. The following recommendations are designed to provide practical steps toward enhancing the effectiveness, credibility, and impact of university opinion polling centres in Jordan and the wider Arab region.

#### **4.5 Key Observations:**

- University-based polling centres play a crucial role in documenting public sentiment but struggle to influence policy due to limited government collaboration.

- Financial constraints and a lack of institutional integration prevent these centres from achieving their full potential.
- Participants emphasized that scepticism toward survey methodologies in Arab countries weakens the credibility of public opinion research.

#### **4.6 Proposed Solutions:**

- Establish formal collaborative frameworks between universities and government agencies to integrate polling data into decision-making.
- Secure sustainable funding mechanisms through national and international research grants to ensure operational continuity.
- Implement capacity-building programs to enhance research methodologies, increasing the credibility of public opinion studies.

### **5. Conclusion and Future Research Directions**

This study has demonstrated that university-based opinion polling centres in Jordan hold significant potential for informing public policy but face several institutional and political obstacles. The lack of financial resources, government collaboration, and public trust in polling methodologies has limited their effectiveness. To ensure these centers fulfill their intended role, it is necessary to establish stronger partnerships between universities and policymakers. Creating independent funding mechanisms and enhancing methodological transparency will also play a crucial role in increasing the credibility of polling data.

#### **5.1 Future Research Directions**

Given the findings of this study, several areas warrant further exploration:

- **Comparative Studies:** Future research could compare the effectiveness of polling centres in different regions, examining how legal and institutional frameworks impact their success.
- **Digital Polling Methods:** With technological advancements, studying the potential of AI-driven polling and social media analytics in opinion measurement could offer innovative solutions to current challenges.
- **Impact Assessment:** Further studies could focus on how polling results influence policy decisions, analysing case studies where public opinion has successfully shaped governance.
- **Public Trust and Awareness:** Investigating the level of public confidence in polling methodologies and identifying ways to increase transparency can contribute to broader participation in opinion surveys.

As public opinion polling continues to evolve, future research should focus on bridging the gap between academic research and policy implementation, ensuring that opinion polling centers become central pillars in evidence-based governance.

The results showed that survey centers in universities provide a marketing, social, and academic field through a database regarding public opinion and its trends and contribute to identifying indicators of public opinion regarding issues that represent priority concerns of citizens in those areas, and this, in turn, enhances communication channels between members of society. State institutions and civil society. It also appeared that the relationship between study centers and official bodies was ineffective and weak, and it was supposed to be complementary. One of the most prominent obstacles to the effectiveness of survey centers in universities is the weakness of government funding and the restrictions imposed by the state on funding, in addition to the escalating phenomenon of brain drain abroad. The university is the most appropriate environment for research centers and public opinion studies because it provides diverse scientific specializations that contribute to strengthening the areas of research and studies in polling and public opinion centers, in addition to the academic atmosphere that encourages consultation, dialogue, and exchange of opinions, which matures the research methodology and tools and enhances the depth of analysis of the results. And read it. In any case, the university environment, compared to others, is one of the environments that can most enjoy scientific neutrality and objectivity in constructing methodology, surveys, and reading the results.

## **6. Recommendations**

To enhance the effectiveness and credibility of university-based polling centers in the Arab world, it is imperative for Arab universities to establish strategic partnerships with international institutions that specialize in opinion polling, policy research, and data analytics. Collaborative agreements with global research bodies, such as the Pew Research Center, Gallup, and European Social Survey, can facilitate knowledge exchange, methodological improvements, and access to advanced analytical tools. Prior research suggests that international collaborations significantly improve the quality of opinion polling by integrating global best practices, ethical standards, and advanced data verification techniques (Si, 2019; Alizadeh et al., 2021). Moreover, such partnerships can open avenues for funding opportunities through international grants and research collaborations, reducing financial dependency on local governmental bodies, which often impose political constraints on research independence.

At the same time, government institutions should play a more proactive role in supporting university-based polling centers through financial investments and logistical facilitation. Findings from this study align with existing literature indicating that polling centers struggle with financial sustainability, leading to inconsistent research output and limited impact on public policy (Corm, 2020). Government agencies, rather than viewing these centers as oppositional entities, should recognize them as critical instruments for evidence-based governance. Providing institutional backing, funding for large-scale surveys, and logistical support such as access to national databases and survey respondents can significantly enhance the reliability and policy relevance of polling research. In return, polling centers can help governments assess public sentiment on pressing socio-political issues, evaluate the effectiveness of policy initiatives, and strengthen civic engagement mechanisms. Ensuring a balanced collaboration where universities maintain methodological independence while benefiting from state facilitation can transform these centers into key advisory bodies that contribute to democratic governance and sustainable policy development in the Arab world.

## **7. Further Research**

Given the findings of this study and the challenges identified, several areas warrant further research to deepen our understanding and improve the effectiveness of university-based opinion polling centers. Future research should focus on methodological advancements, comparative analyses, policy integration, and technological innovations in the field of public opinion polling.

### **1. Comparative Analysis of Polling Centers in Different Political Contexts**

Future studies could conduct comparative research between university-based polling centers in democratic, semi-democratic, and authoritarian systems to analyze how political environments impact the credibility, influence, and operational challenges of polling centers. A cross-national study could assess how legal frameworks, political freedoms, and media openness influence polling accuracy and policy adoption.

### **2. The Impact of Digital and AI-Driven Polling Technologies**

With the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) and big data analytics, future research should investigate the role of AI-driven sentiment analysis and social media polling in complementing traditional survey methodologies. Studies could explore how AI-powered tools can enhance real-time public opinion tracking, detect misinformation, and improve data reliability while addressing ethical concerns related to privacy and bias.

### **3. The Role of Polling Centers in Policy Formulation and Public Trust**

Research should assess the extent to which government policymakers incorporate polling data into legislative and administrative decisions. Case studies examining instances where polling results have influenced policy shifts would provide empirical insights into the effectiveness of public opinion research in governance.

Additionally, future research could explore public trust in polling methodologies, investigating how transparency, ethical standards, and media representation impact public willingness to participate in surveys.

## 4. Funding Models and Sustainability of University Polling Centers

Given the financial constraints faced by university polling centers, research could explore alternative funding models, such as public-private partnerships, international grants, and subscription-based funding. A systematic study on the financial sustainability of polling institutions could provide recommendations on how to create self-sustaining centers that operate independently from political influence.

## 5. The Ethics and Regulation of Public Opinion Polling in the Arab World

Another critical research avenue involves examining the ethical considerations, legal restrictions, and media regulations governing opinion polling in the Arab world. A comparative policy study could investigate how different Arab countries regulate polling data, control survey methodologies, and censor politically sensitive results. Identifying the best practices from international legal frameworks could inform advocacy efforts for more transparent and ethically sound polling regulations.

## 6. The Effectiveness of University-Government Partnerships in Enhancing Polling Accuracy

Given the findings that university-based polling centers struggle with government engagement and recognition, further research could evaluate the success of university-government collaborations in other regions. Studies could explore which models of collaboration lead to the most effective policy outcomes, ensuring that polling centers maintain scientific integrity while influencing governance.

## 7. Public Opinion Polling in Conflict and Crisis Situations

Future research could explore the role of polling centers in assessing public sentiment during political crises, economic downturns, and conflicts. Examining how polling data informs humanitarian responses, security policies, and peacebuilding efforts could shed light on the adaptability of survey research in unstable political environments. By addressing these future research avenues, scholars can contribute to strengthening the credibility, relevance, and impact of university-based opinion polling centers in the Arab world and beyond. These studies would not only enhance methodological rigor but also help create a sustainable framework for integrating public opinion research into democratic governance and policy planning.

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