



Michelle Obama: Meeting the Mark?

*** Complete Tables for Poll Appended ***

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This Marist Poll Reports:

Favorable First Lady

Overall, registered voters nationally like First Lady Michelle Obama. 68% have a favorable impression of her compared with 20% who hold an unfavorable view of her. Even a majority of Republicans -- 53% -- think well of Mrs. Obama. 85% of Democrats and 61% of Independents say the same.

High Marks for Mrs. Obama's Performance as First Lady

Michelle Obama is also scoring points in how she is doing as First Lady of the United States. 57% of registered voters nationwide think Mrs. Obama is doing well in her position. 24% report she is doing a fair job, and 10% rate her poorly. The First Lady is receiving kudos from more voters than she did when Marist last asked about her approval rating in March. At that time, 50% of voters thought she was doing either an excellent or good job. And, more voters have formed an impression of Mrs. Obama since March. Currently, just 9% report they are unsure how to rate her compared with 24% when Marist last asked this question.

Voters also think that Mrs. Obama is keeping up her end of the bargain. Nearly six in ten voters -- 57% -- say the First Lady has met their expectations. 15% report she has exceeded their expectations while 16% say she has fallen below their expectations.

Like her husband, Mrs. Obama is not immune from partisan politics. However, even a majority of Republicans -- 52% -- think she is meeting their expectations. 63% of Democrats and 53% of Independent voters agree.

But, Mrs. Obama Is Not Revolutionizing the Role of First Lady

More voters have formed an opinion about the impact Mrs. Obama is having on the role of First Lady, but the reviews aren't great. 37% of registered voters nationally say Michelle Obama has changed the role for the better. This is down from 43% in April. The proportion of voters who think Mrs. Obama has adversely affected the position is now 10% compared with 5% in April, and 46% of voters report Mrs. Obama has not changed the role at all. 32% thought this way eight months ago.

Mixed Reviews on Issue of Work-Family Balance

One of the issues Mrs. Obama professed to feeling passionately about prior to the start of her husband's presidency was the issue of work-family balance. What kind of an impact has she had on changing the view of that issue? A plurality -- 45% -- says she has made no change at all while 40% believe she has made positive strides. Just 5% report she has made the image worse.

Fashionable First Lady?

There was a lot of buzz surrounding Mrs. Obama's fashion sense when she first entered the White House, but has her style lived up to the hype? 41% of registered voters believe she has changed fashion for the better while 8% think she has impacted it negatively. 39% say she has had no impact on it at all, and 12% are unsure. In April, 37% of voters said Mrs. Obama's style had a positive affect on fashion, 5% thought she made it worse, and 34% said she had little impact on it. 24%, at that time, were unsure.

Nature of the Sample: 1034 U.S. Residents

This survey of 1034 United States residents was conducted on December 2nd, 3rd, and 7th, 2009. Residents 18 years of age and older were interviewed by telephone. Telephone numbers were selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the nation. The exchanges were selected to ensure that each region was represented in proportion to its population. To increase coverage, this land-line sample was supplemented by respondents reached through random dialing of cell phone numbers. The two samples were then combined. Results are statistically significant at $\pm 3.0\%$. There are 858 registered voters. The results for this subset are statistically significant at $\pm 3.5\%$. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.

Marist Poll December 2009 National Survey Tables

		Registered Voters		
		Overall, do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of Michelle Obama?		
		Favorable	Unfavorable	Unsure-Never Heard
		Row %	Row %	Row %
Registered Voters		68%	20%	12%
Party ID	Democrat	85%	9%	5%
	Republican	53%	28%	19%
	Independent	61%	25%	14%
Gender	Men	67%	21%	12%
	Women	68%	20%	12%
Race	White	66%	23%	12%
	African American	86%	7%	6%
	Latino	67%	24%	9%
Age	Under 45	71%	21%	8%
	45 or older	66%	20%	14%
Education	Not college graduate	66%	21%	13%
	College graduate	71%	19%	10%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	70%	20%	10%
	\$50,000 or more	67%	21%	12%
Region	Northeast	68%	20%	13%
	Midwest	71%	18%	10%
	South	65%	23%	13%
	West	69%	19%	12%

December 2009 Marist Poll National Registered Voters "N=858 MOE +/- 3.5%" Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

		Registered Voters				
		Would you rate how Michelle Obama is doing as First Lady as excellent, good, fair, or poor?				
		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
Registered Voters		23%	34%	24%	10%	9%
Party ID	Democrat	44%	39%	12%	2%	4%
	Republican	6%	26%	38%	16%	13%
	Independent	15%	34%	27%	14%	11%
Gender	Men	19%	31%	25%	12%	12%
	Women	27%	36%	23%	8%	7%
Race	White	20%	32%	28%	10%	10%
	African American	51%	29%	14%	5%	1%
	Latino	24%	46%	14%	8%	8%
Age	Under 45	19%	41%	23%	9%	9%
	45 or older	25%	29%	25%	11%	10%
Education	Not college graduate	21%	36%	25%	9%	8%
	College graduate	26%	30%	23%	11%	10%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	24%	39%	21%	9%	8%
	\$50,000 or more	23%	29%	26%	12%	10%
Region	Northeast	24%	40%	20%	7%	10%
	Midwest	26%	38%	24%	6%	6%
	South	21%	30%	25%	15%	9%
	West	23%	30%	26%	8%	12%

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		Registered Voters			
		Since becoming First Lady, has Michelle Obama met your expectations of her, exceeded your expectations, or fallen below your expectations of her?			
		Met your expectations	Exceeded your expectations	Fallen below your expectations	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
Registered Voters		57%	15%	16%	12%
Party ID	Democrat	63%	22%	7%	7%
	Republican	52%	6%	22%	19%
	Independent	53%	13%	20%	13%
Gender	Men	58%	12%	17%	14%
	Women	56%	18%	16%	11%
Race	White	56%	12%	18%	14%
	African American	66%	23%	10%	1%
	Latino	51%	27%	10%	12%
Age	Under 45	64%	14%	12%	10%
	45 or older	53%	15%	18%	14%
Education	Not college graduate	58%	13%	18%	11%
	College graduate	56%	18%	13%	13%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	58%	15%	15%	12%
	\$50,000 or more	55%	16%	18%	11%
Region	Northeast	63%	14%	12%	10%
	Midwest	60%	17%	11%	12%
	South	53%	13%	22%	12%
	West	53%	17%	14%	16%

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		Registered Voters			
		Has Michelle Obama changed the overall role of the First Lady for the better, the worse, or has not changed the overall role of the First Lady at all?			
		Better	Worse	Not change at all	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
Registered Voters		37%	10%	46%	7%
Party ID	Democrat	58%	2%	35%	4%
	Republican	15%	18%	57%	10%
	Independent	31%	11%	51%	8%
Gender	Men	32%	11%	49%	8%
	Women	42%	9%	44%	6%
Race	White	29%	9%	55%	6%
	African American	69%	3%	26%	1%
	Latino	52%	9%	25%	14%
Age	Under 45	42%	7%	48%	3%
	45 or older	34%	11%	46%	9%
Education	Not college graduate	40%	8%	44%	7%
	College graduate	31%	12%	51%	6%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	45%	8%	40%	7%
	\$50,000 or more	30%	11%	53%	6%
Region	Northeast	42%	9%	45%	5%
	Midwest	39%	6%	50%	6%
	South	34%	12%	47%	6%
	West	35%	9%	44%	12%

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		Registered Voters			
		Has Michelle Obama changed how people view the balance between work and family for the better, the worse, or has not changed how people view the balance between work and family at all?			
		Better	Worse	Not change at all	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
Registered Voters		40%	5%	45%	10%
Party ID	Democrat	59%	1%	32%	8%
	Republican	17%	7%	65%	11%
	Independent	37%	7%	44%	12%
Gender	Men	36%	5%	48%	11%
	Women	44%	4%	43%	9%
Race	White	31%	5%	52%	11%
	African American	78%	1%	19%	3%
	Latino	57%	3%	26%	14%
Age	Under 45	48%	3%	43%	6%
	45 or older	35%	5%	47%	13%
Education	Not college graduate	41%	5%	44%	10%
	College graduate	38%	4%	48%	10%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	46%	4%	39%	11%
	\$50,000 or more	36%	5%	53%	7%
Region	Northeast	43%	5%	43%	9%
	Midwest	44%	4%	41%	10%
	South	38%	6%	47%	9%
	West	35%	4%	48%	12%

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		Registered Voters			
		Has Michelle Obama changed fashion for the better, the worse, or has not changed fashion at all?			
		Better	Worse	Not change at all	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
Registered Voters		41%	8%	39%	12%
Party ID	Democrat	57%	3%	31%	8%
	Republican	23%	14%	47%	16%
	Independent	37%	6%	42%	15%
Gender	Men	37%	7%	41%	15%
	Women	45%	8%	38%	9%
Race	White	34%	8%	45%	13%
	African American	78%	4%	17%	2%
	Latino	49%	3%	35%	13%
Age	Under 45	46%	3%	40%	11%
	45 or older	39%	10%	39%	13%
Education	Not college graduate	44%	7%	38%	12%
	College graduate	37%	8%	42%	13%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	48%	8%	33%	11%
	\$50,000 or more	37%	7%	46%	10%
Region	Northeast	43%	6%	42%	9%
	Midwest	46%	3%	39%	12%
	South	40%	12%	36%	11%
	West	34%	6%	42%	17%

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