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Research Brief

EPL IMPACT

Presented by

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Ethnic Minorities and Hong Kong Protests



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The Joseph Lau Luen Hung Charitable Trust
Asia Pacific Centre for Leadership and Change
劉鑾雄慈善基金 亞太領導與變革研究中心



Introduction

This public policy research project provided a comprehensive and critical understanding of the attitudes and views of ethnic minorities (EM) towards the Hong Kong protest movement, the nature of their involvement, any intergenerational differences in attitudes, and relationship between their attitudes and the government's policies for ethnic minorities. The project also aimed to produce a concrete list of policy recommendations the government may adopt taking into account the views of ethnic minorities.

25 participants from five EM groups were interviewed including Filipinos, Indians, Pakistanis, Nepalese and Bangladeshis. Of them 13 are ethnic minority community leaders and 12 are individuals, from varieties of professional backgrounds including teacher, business person, journalist, NGO professional, student, domestic helper, social worker, business consultant, building management professional and marketing professional.



DIVERSITY

Key Issues and Significant Findings

- 1** There is a tendency to see ethnic minorities as a homogenous group in Hong Kong. This research has made the point clear that there is much diversity within the ethnic minority communities. They are made up of distinct social, economic and cultural groups who may view things in different ways, and this includes how they viewed the protests and social movement. This diversity among ethnic minority groups is not always acknowledged but is explored in this research.
- 2** The research identified multiple views within the ethnic minority communities about the protests and social movement in Hong Kong. The views range from support to rejection. This is in contrast with some media representation of ethnic minority views only highlighting a supportive attitude.
- 3** Generally, younger EMs have tended to be more supportive of the protests because most were born and educated in Hong Kong. Therefore, they feel a stronger sense of belonging to HK. On the other hand, older generation EMs may feel more negatively about the protests because they were more conservative supporting cultural norms such as harmony and stability. They also feel marginalised in HK due to the government's ongoing policy for them. Furthermore, they think the protests have nothing to do with them.



Main Stakeholders and Engagement with Them

- Government policy makers
- This research engaged with policy makers by making specific policy recommendations in the project report.



Research Impact and Recommendations

Nine specific policy recommendations were made in the project report. Some highlights are:

- An audit should be undertaken to determine the distinctive characteristics of different ethnic minority groups in Hong Kong. Overtime, ethnic minorities have been considered as a single group despite wider variation in their political values and attitudes as found in this research. Individual ethnic minority groups need to be given specific attention to develop subtle understanding(s) of their group's political and social behavior; and
- Setting up an EM Council overseen by the Chief Executive's office to ensure at least one representative from every EM community is represented so that diversity among the EM groups is properly addressed.
- Some EM participants shared they were afraid of being labelled as “troublemakers”, so avoided getting involved in the protests, and also fearing they may trigger an ethnic riot. Therefore, an anti-racist philosophy should guide EM-friendly public policies to ensure ethnic minorities are living and participating safely in social and civic activities.
- Many participants feel vulnerable and marginalised in education and employment, therefore, public policies should focus on using education and employment to break intergenerational poverty.



For more Information:

- 1 Acknowledgement**
The research reported here was supported by the Public Policy Research Funding Scheme from the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office of the Government of the HKSAR.
- 2 For the detailed report and enquiries, please contact Dr Miron BHOWMIK at mbhowmik@eduhk.hk.**



Video Interview