



HONG KONG PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH INSTITUTE
香港民意研究所

Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute Hong Kong Public Opinion Program (HKPOP)

Special Report on the Effect of CE's Announcement of Formal Withdrawal of the Fugitive Offenders Bill

Research Report

10 September 2019

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Background

Hong Kong Public Opinion Program (HKPOP) under the Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute (PORI) conducts regular surveys to measure public sentiment on various issues like the popularity of Chief Executive (CE), and publish the results for public consumption. In the course of conducting a tracking survey on 2-4 September 2019, CE Carrie Lam on 4 September at around 5pm announced the withdrawal of the Fugitive Offenders Bill once the Legislative Council resumes. In order to gauge the effect of this announcement on CE's popularity, HKPOP immediately made the following arrangements: 1) conduct a special analysis of the survey findings by splitting the survey sample into two, namely, those collected before and after the announcement; 2) design a HKPOP Panel follow-up survey on 5-7 September.

The regular telephone survey which started on 2 September did not touch on the Fugitive Offenders Bill, and 731 successful cases have been collected when the CE made the announcement on 4 September. HKPOP proceeded to collect another 315 successful cases after that, making a total of 1,046 successful cases for the entire survey. In order to examine the effect of CE's announcement, other than running a split-sample analysis of the tracking survey, HKPOP quickly conducted an online survey from 5-7 September with a non-probability based HKPOP Panel known as the Hong Kong People Volunteer Panel and successfully interviewed 13,647 citizens. It is an opt-in panel started in July 2019 open to any person in Hong Kong of age 12 or above. Because it is an opt-in panel, the views collected cannot be taken as representative of the Hong Kong population. However, when analyzed together with the findings of the random sampled tracking survey, findings from different sub-sectors of the panel have added to the explanatory power of the random telephone survey, as explained in the latter part of this report.

By design, the panel survey has copied two questions from the random telephone survey questions, namely, CE rating and CE approval, then added one question on CE's announcement. The first two questions were then used as controls for running more in-depth analyses.

Survey Findings

Herewith the contact information and results of the tracking survey followed by those of the panel survey:

HKPOP Tracking Survey

Table 1: Contact information of tracking survey

| | |
|--|---|
| Date of survey | : 2-4/9/2019 |
| Survey method | : Random telephone survey conducted by real interviewers |
| Target population | : Cantonese-speaking Hong Kong residents aged 18 or above |
| Sample size ^[1] | : 1,046 (including 518 landline and 528 mobile samples) |
| Effective response rate ^[2] | : 69.5% |

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Sampling error ^[3] | : Sampling error of percentages not more than +/-4%, that of net values not more than +/-6% and that of ratings not more than +/-2.2 at 95% confidence level |
| Weighting method ^[4] | : Rim-weighted according to figures provided by the Census and Statistics Department. The gender-age distribution of the Hong Kong population came from “Mid-year population for 2018”, while the educational attainment (highest level attended) distribution and economic activity status distribution came from “Women and Men in Hong Kong - Key Statistics (2018 Edition)”. |

- [1] The landline and mobile sample ratio was revised to 2 to 1 in April 2018 and further revised to 1 to 1 in July 2019.
- [2] Before September 2017, “overall response rate” was used to report surveys’ contact information. Starting from September 2017, “effective response rate” was used. In July 2018, POP further revised the calculation of effective response rate. Thus, the response rates before and after the change cannot be directly compared.
- [3] All error figures in this release are calculated at 95% confidence level, meaning that if we were to repeat a certain survey 100 times with different random samples, we would expect 95 times having the population parameter within the respective error margins calculated. Because of sampling errors, when quoting percentages, journalists should refrain from reporting decimal places, whereas one decimal place can be used when quoting rating figures.
- [4] In the past, the mobile sample would be rim-weighted according to the basic Public Sentiment Index (PSI) figures collected in the landline sample. In July 2018, POP further refined the weighting method. The landline sample and the mobile sample would no longer be processed separately. The mobile sample would also no longer be adjusted using the basic PSI figures collected in the landline sample. The overall effect is that the importance of the mobile sample would be increased.

Table 2: Results of tracking survey by survey date

| Date of survey | <u>2/9/19</u> (before announcement) | <u>3/9/19</u> | <u>4/9/19</u> (after announ.) | Change last day | <u>2-4/9/19</u> (Full sample) |
|--|--|---------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| Sample size | 394 | 337 | 315 | -- | 1,046 |
| Rating of CE Carrie Lam | 26.5+/-3.3 | 22.9+/-3.4 | 26.6+/-3.7 | +3.7 | 25.4+/-2.0 |
| Vote of confidence in CE Carrie Lam | 21+/-4% | 18+/-4% | 19+/-4% | +1% | 19+/-2% |
| Vote of no confidence in CE Carrie Lam | 71+/-5% | 80+/-4% | 74+/-5% | -5% | 75+/-3% |
| Net approval rate | -50+/-8% | -62+/-8% | -56+/-9% | +6% | -55+/-5% |

HKPOP Panel Survey

Table 3: Contact information of panel survey

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Date of survey | : 5-7/9/2019 |
| Survey method | : Online survey |
| Target population | : Members of HKPOP Hong Kong People Volunteer Panel |
| Sample Size | : 13,647 |
| Response rate | : 69.7% |

Tables 4-5: Results of panel survey

After adjusting the findings of the key question of the panel survey according to the distribution of CE popularity figures in the random telephone survey (313 respondents interviewed on 4 September after CE's announcement), the findings of the Panel Survey are as follows:

| | |
|---|------|
| CE Carrie Lam yesterday announced the withdrawal of the Fugitive Offenders Bill once the Legislative Council resumes, but she did not accept other demands. How much do you support or oppose to this approach? | |
| Support | 24% |
| Half-half | 8% |
| Oppose | 65% |
| Don't know / hard to say | 2% |
| Net support rate | -41% |

Further cross-tabulating the key question with panel sub-groups yield the following results:

| | CE Carrie Lam yesterday announced the withdrawal of the Fugitive Offenders Bill once the Legislative Council resumes, but she did not accept other demands. How much do you support or oppose to this approach? | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------|--------|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| | Support | Half-half | Oppose | Don't know / hard to say | Net support rate | Valid sample size |
| CE rating: 0 mark | 1% | 2% | 96% | 1% | -96% | 10,175 |
| CE rating: 1-100 marks | 11% | 9% | 78% | 2% | -67% | 2,639 |
| Those approving Carrie Lam as CE | 69% | 8% | 21% | 1% | 48% | 169 |
| Those disapproving Carrie Lam as CE | 1% | 3% | 94% | 1% | -93% | 13,041 |

Observations

The telephone survey conducted from 2 to 4 September shows that the popularity rating of CE Carrie Lam stood at 25.4 marks overall. Breakdown analysis shows that her popularity rating per day hit a record low of 22.9 marks on 3 September before she made a sudden announcement. Her previous record low per poll was 24.6 registered in 15-20 August. After making the announcement, her popularity rating rebounded 3.7 marks to reach 26.6 on 4 September, while her net approval rate also rebounded 6 percentage points overnight. Using the post-announcement CE popularity figures as controls, results of the panel survey projects that about two-thirds of the general population objected to CE's announcement, and for those who gave zero marks to the CE, or who disapproved Carrie Lam as CE, opposition rate was as high as 94% to 96%. For those who approved Carrie Lam as CE, 69% supported CE's announcement.

Commentary

Robert Chung, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute observed, “If the purpose of CE Carrie Lam in making the announcement is to put a halt to her popularity plunge, then evidence shows that she has achieved that aim. However, evidence also shows that her popularity remains extremely low at critical conditions. Less than one-quarter of the people supported her salvation package. Her move has apparently come too little too late. Her next opportunity would revolve around how she would hold direct dialogues with the people, and I have reminded her on 5 September not to be partial in hearing views, not to enclose herself behind doors, and not to make presuppositions before listening. These dialogue platforms should be designed and managed by independent people, and should be used to address the remaining four demands as a top priority.”

Please click on https://www.pori.hk/pori_release20190905_eng to view Chung’s full statement delivered on 5 September 2019.