

New Study Shows That S'poreans More Open to Non-Chinese Prime Minister

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We all remember the awkward unfolding of events that occurred during a university forum event in 2019 when former Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat was asked if Singapore was ready for a non-Chinese Prime Minister.

Yeah.

Or the drama-filled presidential race in 2017 which triggered a barrage of interesting debates on how Malayness could be defined in Singapore.

This time, get ready for another round of discussion at the *kopitiam* or during your next supper run with your fellow friends about the study conducted by CNA and the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) which has revealed that more Singaporeans (aka the Chinese majority) have grown more open to the idea of having a non-Chinese Prime Minister or President.

Purpose of study conducted by CNA-IPS

The study done by CNA-IPS was first conducted in 2016 to uncover and learn more about the race relations that are present in Singapore.

This also includes the production of the CNA flagship series *Regardless of ...* which first aired in 2016 that includes a detailed investigation of how race relations had developed within Singapore in their episodes titled *Regardless of Race* on CNA.

If you are curious, here's one full episode from the flagship series available:



Climb in Acceptance for Non-Chinese as Prime Minister

In the recent study that was conducted by CNA-IPS, the survey has shown that more Singaporeans are open to the idea of having a non-Chinese in comparison to the results shown in 2016.

The study done this year shows that 69.6 percent of participants were accepting of a Singaporean-Malay Prime Minister and 70.5 percent of participants were accepting of a Singaporean-Indian Prime Minister.

This was an **increase** from the 2016 results which showed that 60.8 percent of participants were accepting of a Singaporean-Malay Prime Minister and 64.3 percent of participants were accepting of a Singaporean-Indian Prime Minister.

For the role of President, the proportion for acceptance was higher with 82 percent of the participants showing that they were okay with either a Singaporean-Malay or Indian President, a substantial increase from 65.5 percent (for a Singaporean-Malay President) and 70.6 percent (for a Singaporean-Indian President) in 2016.

Majority uncomfortable with new citizen selected as Prime Minister or President

Fewer than 10 percent of the survey participants felt that they were comfortable with a new citizen being elected as Prime Minister or President.

The study was conducted since last year with a total of 2,007 participants which consists of Singaporean citizens and permanent residents.

With the conclusion of the study, IPS researchers have noted that Singaporeans back in 2016 were definitely not as comfortable with the idea of having a non-Chinese Prime Minister.

However, the researchers have also suggested that perhaps the ruling party can “work towards naming a minority candidate as Prime Minister in the near future” even if some part of the populations are not ready for a minority to be fulfil “such as political role”.

Another interesting find from the study also showed that Chinese living in private property were less accepting of having a minority to be Prime Minister.

Interesting indeed.