

Mixed picture on Singapore's racial and religious harmony

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SINGAPORE - A landmark study that sought to track Singapore's racial and religious ties has thrown up a mixed picture.

Most Singaporean Malay and Indians (nine in 10) did not perceive that as minorities, they were treated worse than other races when using public services such as hospitals.

But the study, conducted by the Institute of Policy Studies and racial harmony advocates OnePeople.Sg, showed that the majority of Singaporeans do not have any close friend of another race. About 45 per cent of respondents had one cross-racial friend.

There is also a perception that minorities have to work harder to get to top positions at work. Some four in 10 said this was so for Malays and Indians.

The survey tapped the views of 4,131 Singaporeans, and the overall profile mirrored the national demographic profile.

The questions covered 10 indicators of racial and religious harmony, ranging from whether there was minority discrimination in using public services, minority discrimination in the work place, and interracial and religious social trust.

To ensure that minority views were adequately represented, an additional sample of 492 Malays and 489 Indians were included in the study for indicators where minority views were sought.