

Most S'poreans perceive Govt to be non-consultative, a larger majority believe in obeying authority: IPS report

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SINGAPORE — Most Singaporeans and permanent residents (PRs) here perceived the Government to be non-consultative, with 40.8 per cent thinking that the Government makes decisions first before asking for views from Singaporeans.

Another 22.3 per cent thought that the authorities generally make the right decision without asking for the views of Singaporeans, while 36.9 per cent believed that the Government takes the views of Singaporeans into account before making decisions.

These were the findings of an Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) survey of about 2,000 Singaporeans and PRs on national identity and pride that was released on Thursday (Sept 23).

Respondents to the survey also expressed relatively lower levels of pride in having the same ruling party for a long time, as well as in the idea that the Government is able to do what it wants to do.

At the same time, pride in Singapore's Covid-19 response was relatively high.

While most Singaporeans felt that the Government was non-consultative, the proportion of higher-educated respondents who thought this way was bigger (42.5 per cent) compared with lower-educated respondents (36.9 per cent).

More Singaporeans and PRs, however, believed in obeying authority and following the rules.

Some 77 per cent of respondents said that Singaporeans benefit from following the rules and obeying authority, while the rest believed that they lose out by following the rules and "not challenging authority".

Respondents with higher socio-economic status and who were more educated were more likely to believe in challenging authority.

"Specifically, 32.6 per cent of higher socio-economic status respondents and 25.5 per cent of higher-educated respondents endorsed the view that Singaporeans lose out by not challenging authority, while only 19.7 per cent of lower socio-economic status and 18.6 per cent of lower-educated respondents endorsed that view," the report stated.

Most respondents were also supportive of having more political parties in Parliament and said that this would benefit Singapore (68.9 per cent), while the rest disagreed.

The proportions were similar across demographic groups.

SAME RULING PARTY

Respondents were also asked to decide how proud they were of 24 [“sources of pride”](#) that covered various aspects of Singapore such as the healthcare system, Covid-19 pandemic management, sporting achievements and degree of global influence.

For each source, respondents were asked, among other questions, to indicate on a five-point scale if they were very proud, proud, somewhat proud, not very proud or not proud of it.

Two that ranked the poorest as sources of pride were "having the same ruling party for a long time" and "government autonomy" — meaning the idea that the Government is able to do what it wants to do. They ranked 19th and 20th respectively out of the 24 sources.

Some 46.8 per cent of respondents were proud or very proud of having the same ruling party for a long time, with 44.2 per cent being proud or very proud about the Government's level of autonomy.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

On the other hand, 68.8 per cent of the respondents said that they were either very proud or proud of how Singapore has handled the Covid-19 pandemic.

The survey was done in September to November last year, before the roll-out of vaccines and when daily Covid-19 case numbers were mostly in the single digit.

However, respondents who were higher-educated and of higher socio-economic status remained more critical of Singapore's pandemic response.

Only 29.1 per cent of higher-educated and 25.7 per cent of higher socio-economic status respondents said that they were very proud of Singapore's handling of the pandemic, compared to 36.5 per cent of lower-educated and 38 per cent of those of lower socio-economic status indicating the same.