

Survey on Public Attitudes towards the Television Announcements in the Public Interest series on “Our Home Our Country”

Executive Summary

Objectives of the Survey

The Home Affairs Bureau commissioned the Center for Communication Research of the Chinese University of Hong Kong to conduct a survey to gauge public’s opinions on the television announcements in the public interest (TV API) series on “Our Home Our Country” with the following objectives :

1. To assess public awareness of the TV API;
2. To assess public attitudes towards the content of the TV API;
3. To understand public opinions on the mode of broadcasting the TV API;
4. To find out public expectations of the theme of the next series of the TV API; and
5. To make appropriate comparisons with the findings of the 2006 survey.

Methodology of the Survey and Sample size

Public’s opinions on the TV API were collected by ways of focus group discussions and telephone survey. A total of ten focus group discussions were held between January to March 2007. All the participants, aged 15 or above, were Cantonese-speaking Hong Kong residents. The telephone survey was conducted in March 2007. A total of 2 609 respondents, aged 15 or above (Cantonese / Putonghua-speaking Hong Kong residents), were successfully interviewed through random sampling. The overall response rate of the telephone survey was 43.0 %.

Findings of the Survey

Focus group discussions

Most of the participants of the focus group discussions did not consider

themselves as Chinese more, or saw Hong Kong as part of China more, or had different feeling towards the national anthem and national flag after viewing the third series – “Chinese Heritage” of the TV API. But after further discussions, it was noted that quite a few of the participants had a better understanding about the national anthem and became less resistant and more receptive towards the national anthem or the Mainland after watching the three series of the TV API in the past years. With regard to the opinions on the third TV API series, many participants said they liked the scene of flag-raising, while some considered the scene did not go with the melody and lyrics of the national anthem.

Participants also provided a lot of opinions concerning the next TV API series. Some suggested the content to cover both China and Hong Kong elements. The theme may revolve around (1) the achievements and future developments of our country (2) the daily lives of the people on the Mainland and (3) ties between the Mainland and Hong Kong. Regarding the performance of the national anthem, most of the participants preferred a powerful version. Some suggested using Chinese musical instruments to perform the national anthem in order to add a stronger Chinese flavour, and performers should also wear Chinese costumes. Moreover, participants believed the audience would be more engaged and the performance would be more educational if there were voices singing along with the national anthem played. On the other hand, some participants indicated that instrumental performance of the national anthem alone could give the audience more room for imagination. When asked whether the lyrics should be shown, some participants thought it would be clearer with lyrics shown and this could allow people to learn the lyrics and the anthem. However, some expressed it would be better without the lyrics shown because the lyrics of the national anthem did not go with the context of modern society and they could be distracting.

Telephone survey

Of the 2 609 respondents successfully enumerated, 62.3% indicated that they were aware of the TV API - “Chinese Heritage” (with the national anthem) being broadcast on television, and 60.6% had watched it. Among the 1 582 respondents who had watched the TV API, 7.0% expressed they “liked it very much”. The figure was more than that in the 2006 survey (4.8%). 33.5% said they “liked it” (30.5% in last year). 46.3% expressed their feeling towards the TV API was “half - half” (50.9% in last year). 7.1% indicated they “strongly disliked / disliked it” (8.7% in last year). Besides, 72.9% and 74.1% of the respondents thought the TV API was helpful in understanding the Chinese culture and fostering a sense of national identity

respectively, while 38.0% thought the TV API could increase the understanding of our country. In addition, among the 1 625 respondents who were aware of the TV API (with the national anthem) being broadcast on television, 61.3% “strongly agreed / agreed” to continue broadcasting the TV API on television. This figure was about the same as that in last year (61.9%). Those who indicated “half - half / no preference” constituted 24.5%, which was higher than that in last year (19.0%). 11.4% said they “strongly disagreed / disagreed”. The figure was about the same as that in last year (12.2%).

Of the 1 363 respondents who had watched the TV API and agreed (strongly agreed / agreed / half and half) to continue broadcasting the TV API with the national anthem on television, the majority had experiences in the Mainland or had contacts with the people on the Mainland. Among them, more than half expressed they “liked it very much / liked it”. The percentage was higher than that of those who did not have experiences in the Mainland. Also, the percentages of those who considered the TV API helpful in understanding the Chinese culture, fostering a sense of national identity and in understanding of our country were higher among those respondents with richer experiences in the Mainland. The above results evidently reflect the acceptance of the TV API was higher among those with experiences in the Mainland / contacts with the people on the Mainland than those without such experiences.

For the opinions regarding the next TV API series, among the 1 363 respondents who had watched the TV API and were more inclined to agree to continue broadcasting the TV API with the national anthem on television, a larger portion preferred the national anthem “with vocal accompaniment” (59.8%), “to foster a magnificent feeling to listeners” (71.6%) and “to use Chinese musical instruments to perform” (54.1%). When asked whether the lyrics of the national anthem be shown in the TV API, 82.8% agreed. Regarding the content, the majority of the respondents preferred the content of the new series to be “half on China and half on Hong Kong” (65.7%). The theme could be about “the achievements and future developments of our country” (83.5%), “how Hong Kong people capitalise on their advantages to contribute to the developments of our country” (80.9%) or “the daily lives of the people on the Mainland ” (50.3%).