Anti-Extradition Bill Movement
People’s Public Sentiment Report

Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute
Project Citizens Foundation

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Chapter 1: Background

Context for this Report

On February 13 this year, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) government proposed to amend the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance Cap. 503 (hereafter called “the Extradition Bill”), which stirred up a major social controversy. On June 9, the Civil Human Rights Front (CHRF) organized an anti-extradition bill march and claimed that over 1 million people participated. On June 12, a protest consisting predominantly of students and youths surrounded the Legislative Complex to prevent the HKSAR government from resuming the 2nd reading of the Extradition Bill. Police cleared the area using tear gas, bean bag bullets and rubber bullets. Their use of weapons was criticized by society as an excessive use of force and abuse of power. They injured numerous people and created dissatisfaction from the media.

On June 15, Chief Executive Carrie Lam announced the suspension of work on the Extradition Bill, but members of society were still unsatisfied. The following day, June 16, about 2 million people reportedly took to the streets and sought for five key demands to be addressed. These demands included the complete withdrawal of the Extradition Bill, establishment of an independent commission of inquiry to investigate the fired shots by the police, amnesty for all arrestees, retraction of the labelling June 12 rally as a riot, and the resignation of Carrie Lam. Aside from the rallies organized by the CHRF, citizens placed newspaper advertisements, marched to embassies and consulates, and surrounded police headquarters as some of the ways to express their dissatisfaction towards the government. On the July 1 march of this year, allegedly 550,000 people took to the streets, shattering attendance the records of previous July 1 marches. On September 4, although Chief Executive Carrie Lam officially announced the full withdrawal of the Extradition Bill, she refused to accede to the other key demands, and social unrest continued up to this date.

For over six months now, Hong Kong people continue to use a variety of ways like marching and rallying to express their demands. Its proliferation into various districts and locations in Hong Kong without a clear leadership can be viewed as a self-initiating anti-extradition bill movement. During the course of its development, the movement was marked by major social events like the “White Shirt People Incident” in Yuen Long on July 21, the “Prince Edward MTR Station Incident” on August 31, the first live round shot at a protester on October 1 and

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1 The full name of the Extradition Bill is Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019. The Extradition Bill actually consists of amendments to two ordinances, the first ordinance, Fugitive Offenders Ordinance Cap. 503, being at the center of controversy. This ordinance was in focus due to its significant changes, as “people living in Hong Kong can be removed from Hong Kong to stand trial in the Mainland or serve a criminal sentence there.” (HKBA, 2019: 2).
the implementation of the anti-mask law on October 4. These incidents escalated the stakes of the entire Anti-Extradition Bill incident and the aggravated the relationship between the police and citizens.

Organization of this Study

Crowdfunding Stage

To thoroughly understand the controversy surrounding the introduction of the Extradition Bill, its subsequent events, and changes in the public sentiment, Project Citizens Foundation (PCF) took the initiative to produce an objective, comprehensive and Hong Kong-based public sentiment report of the movement. In July 2019, PCF commissioned the Hong Kong Public Opinion Program (HKPOP) under the auspices of the Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute (HKPORI) to compile the Anti-Extradition Bill Movement - People’s Public Sentiment Report after conducting three phases of studies.

PCF used the crowdfunding platform Collaction\(^2\) to raise funds for this study setting a goal of HK$1 million. The goal was reached on July 11 within 30 hours. The project received funding from nearly 4,300 supporters, with each person contributing on average HK$250.

First Phase

In the first phase of the study, HKPOP conducted a Hongkong-wide public opinion survey by means of random telephone sampling and interviewed 1,007 people aged 14 or above. HKPOP published the results on August 2. Questions in the survey measured citizens’ support for the Extradition Bill, assessed the factors which contributed to the governance crisis, gauged people’s satisfaction of the Hong Kong Police Force, their tolerance of the protesters, and their views on how the government should respond to the protesters’ demands, as well as their views on the mentality of the youths.

Second Phase

The second phase of the study consisted of some follow-up studies to understand the opinions of the youths, reasons behind their participation in the protests, and their ideas and demands regarding the anti-extradition bill movement. This phase included two focus groups and one youth deliberative engagement meeting. The results were announced by HKPOP on September 12.

\(^2\) [https://www.collaction.hk/project/story/854/](https://www.collaction.hk/project/story/854/)
The two focus groups were conducted on August 14 and 15, 2019, with twenty young people aged between 19 to 30. The research team recruited participants using random telephone sampling followed up by social media contacts using the application WhatsApp.

The deliberative meeting was held on August 24 from 9:30am to 3:30pm. A total of 98 participants attended, between the ages of 18 and 30. A total of 94 participants attended the entire meeting, and completed the pre- and post-deliberation questionnaires. All participants were recruited through the random telephone survey, followed up by WhatsApp, SMSs and/or emails. Briefing materials were provided to participants prior to the deliberative meeting. The meeting consisted of plenary and small group sessions, both before and after deliberation. During the sessions, the participants filled out a questionnaire so that the research team can measure their opinion change across various items of interest. The participants spent the day deliberating on different topics, such as the Extradition Bill, the government’s position, the options offered by the protesters, as well as the roles of different sectors and political parties, and the options available for resolving the stalemate.

Third Phase

Having conducted public opinion surveys in Stage 1 and follow-up studies in Stage 2, HKPOP compiled a public sentiment report (“this Report”) which documents public opinion as via four different channels: marches/processions, public opinion polling, traditional media and new media, in order to present a holistic picture of public sentiment from a civil society perspective.

The study period covered events from February 13, 2019 when the HKSAR government first proposed to amend the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance to October 22, 2019 shortly after Chief Executive Carrie Lam delivered her 2019 Policy Address. The period spanned over 36 calendar weeks covering most of the important events of the anti-extradition bill movement.

Report Content and Limitations

This report consists of nine chapters. Other than this opening chapter, Chapter 2 describes an overview of the research design including the methods used and their limitations. Chapter 3 lists and summarizes the key events of the Extradition Bill controversy. Chapter 4 compiles all opinion surveys relevant to the Extradition Bill controversy and describes the trends of change in public sentiment. Chapter 5 examines processions and rallies and studies the mobilization of the anti-extradition bill and pro-extradition bill camps. Chapter 6 explores campaigning via traditional media such as crowdfunding, printed newspaper advertisements and related materials. Chapter 7 explores campaigning via new media, focusing on the usage, strengths, and limitations of the LIHKG forum, Twitter and Telegram. Chapter 8 provides a focused analysis on youth opinion which is taken to be an important driving force of the movement.
Almost all materials in this report are gathered by HKPOP. After the publication of this report, Project Citizens Foundation welcomes any individual or organizations to provide supplementary materials to contribute to this collective effort for the public good.

The research design and relevant materials were designed independently by HKPOP after consulting PCF. HKPOP independently implemented the research, collected the data, and conducted data analysis without the influence of any particular individuals or organizations. In other words, the design and execution of this research is fully independent and autonomous. Everything contained in this report is the sole responsibility of HKPOP under the auspices of HKPORI.

Chapter 2: Research Design

This report is based on a study of information collected from a wide array of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include focus group discussions, deliberative meetings, and social media software-derived data. Secondary sources include news articles, public opinion surveys, and supplementary online materials. We now explain chapter by chapter the type of data we used in each chapter, how we collected and analyzed them, and also the limitations associated with such analyses.

Chapter 3 is basically a compilation of event chronology using content analysis. We compiled the anti-extradition bill event timeline based on the “opinion daily” approach developed by the Public Opinion Programme at The University of Hong Kong. Using this approach, within any given day of the study period, we examined and counted the headlines and editorials of all Hong Kong newspapers. If an event related to the extradition bill is reported by over 25% of the total count, it would be included in the chronology. We then use WiseNews to gather news articles related to the extradition bill event to provide a more nuanced description. Our search concurred with our study period of February 13 to October 22, 2019, and we included keyword searches using “Anti-extradition Bill”, “anti-mask law”, “public opinion polling”, “marches/rallies” and “gatherings” and so on. The purpose of Chapter 3 in listing the important events of the movement is to provide readers with a timeline and context to interpret the public sentiments in the chapters that follow.

Chapter 4 is a collection of opinion surveys, and the method we used is somewhat like a “survey of surveys”. We used a variety of channels including WiseNews search to locate and compile opinion polling data over the study period. Due to time and resource constraints, we only included publicly reported opinion polls and surveys within the examined period. They included surveys conducted by universities, political parties and organizations, think tanks, media outlets, and members of civil society. In terms of analysis, we drew upon publicly accessible press releases and reports from different organizations. If such documents were
unobtainable, content from news reports were used as reference. Indeed, due to time and resource constraints, we could only conduct some basic analyses of all the polls.

In Chapter 5, we used a variety of channels to search for content on relevant rallies, gatherings and protests. We also conducted WiseNews keyword search to find the information. Because of resource constraint, we could only record reported marches, gatherings and protests. Because many of the events were self-initiated, across many districts and organized by citizens and netizens sometimes on the same day, we could only estimate attendance based on observations of reporters or from photographs. We therefore cannot be too accurate about the attendance figures of different rallies and processions. It is important to note that most of the marches, gatherings and processions did not have a neutral academic institution to estimate the attendance figures. Given the lack of a scientific methodology and uncertainty of political motivations, we had to rely on the organizers or observations from reporters to determine the attendance figures, we can only take these numbers as crude references to define the scale of the events. Furthermore, because many flash protests in the forms of gatherings, mass singing, and human chains were similar in nature, we could only rely on news reports to group these activities under one category. As there were also many smaller-scale activities taking place alongside the major protests, we may have underestimated the number and extent of such activities.

Chapter 6 deals with the role of traditional media using content analysis. We made use of the findings from Stages 1 and 2 of this study to conduct different online searches, including WiseNews keyword searches, to locate all relevant stories reported by the tradition media. Due to resource constraints, we could only conduct some rough collations and analyses to show how traditional media mobilized protesters and aroused the attention of the international community to the movement.

Chapter 7 studies the role of new media, and we again made use of the findings from Stages 1 and 2 of this study to kickstart our content analysis. This time we examined the uptake of Twitter as an instrument for the anti-extradition bill movement to reach overseas audiences. We conducted a Twitter analysis using software from Crimson Hexagon, a social media analytics company. Access to the software was provided with the permission from the School of Journalism of The University of British Columbia. We supplemented the analysis from Crimson Hexagon with news articles from WiseNews, along with anecdotal observations on Telegram and the LIHKG Forum. Due to time and resource constraints, we can only provide an overview and preliminary assessment of how new media may have facilitated the anti-extradition bill movement.

Chapter 8 is a study of youth opinion primarily based on the result of Stages 1 and 2 studies. As explained in Chapter 1 of this report, we first conducted a representative survey in July 24 to 26 covering 1,007 Hong Kong residents over the aged 14 or above, amongst whom 251 were aged below 30. To garner a deeper understanding of the youth’s sentiment, two focus groups and one deliberative meeting were held in Stage 2, engaging 20 and 98 youths respectively.
This chapter highlights our findings on youth opinions through these qualitative and quantitative studies.

Chapter 9 being our conclusion is technically not a research narration, so we may not need to explain the methodology. Nevertheless, it may be helpful to explain at this juncture that there could be a variety of ways to conclude this study – by describing the public sentiment and its course of development over the period of study, by describing the roles played by different stakeholders in shaping public opinion, by addressing some popular questions about the causes and effects of the movement, or by digging deep into the level of core values and divergent beliefs which have generated the movement, and possibly many more perspectives. The research team, however, has chosen to conclude the study by posting more questions than answers at different levels of analysis, not just because many facts are hitherto hidden but because this may help Hong Kong, China and the international community to reflect better and more on what this lesson can bring to anyone and everyone who cares about Hong Kong and the world.

Chapter 3: Key Events Related to the Extradition Bill and Anti-Extradition Bill Movement

Overview of Key Events in the Anti-Extradition Bill Movement

On February 13, 2019, the Security Bureau proposed to amend the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Ordinance (hereafter “the Extradition Bill”). These amendments would allow the Chief Executive to sign off an authorization order, which must then be transferred to the courts to issue a temporary arrest warrant for extradition. To fulfill the demands of extradition to the People’s Republic of China (Mainland) and the Republic of China (Taiwan), this amendment would establish a system for extraditing Hong Kong citizens alleged to have committed offences (abroad or domestically) to the jurisdiction where they committed the crime for trial.

On March 13, after twenty days of consultation for the Extradition Bill, the Security Bureau through Secretary for Security John Lee announced that the government received approximately 4,500 submissions, of which around 3,000 were in support of the Extradition Bill, and cited that the Bill ascribed to justice in the hope that Hong Kong would not become a place for escaping legal responsibility. The remaining 1,400 submissions opposed the Extradition Bill, citing political concerns and concerns for the legal framework in Mainland China. The pro-democracy camp also opposed the Extradition Bill while the business sector also raised concerns around the Mainland legal framework infiltrating that of Hong Kong, thereby affecting the viability of the business environment in Hong Kong.
Due to the overwhelming opposition from the commercial sector, on March 27, the HKSAR government adopted some of their feedback and announced the *Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019* with minor changes. In the list of 46 types of crimes covered under the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance, only 37 of them would be covered under the single-case extradition arrangements, thus alleviates the uncertainties of the commercial sector regarding the nine most concerning types of offences. Chief Executive Carrie Lam reiterated that the amendment served two purposes. First, it would resolved the Chan Tong-kai Taiwan murder case and second, it would plug an institutional loophole and thereby allow Hong Kong to cooperate with jurisdictions it did not have a long-term extradition agreement with. Carrie Lam said this amendment would prevent Hong Kong from becoming a refuge for criminals, and expressed hope that the public would support the amendment bill.

On March 31, the CHRF organized its first march, demanding that the HKSAR government immediately should withdraw the Extradition Bill. If the government insisted on “ramming” the Bill the legislative process, CHRF said it would respond by launching a campaign to surround the Legislative Complex. CHRF estimated that 12,000 people attended the rally, while the Hong Kong Police Force estimated that the peak attendance was 5,200 people.

The Extradition Bill finished its first reading in the Legislative Council on April 3. The pro-democracy camp launched a filibuster campaign which prevented the Bill from moving forward to a second reading. Upon taking questions from Legislative Councilors, Chief Executive Carrie Lam criticized Legislative Councilors who were “undermining” the judicial system of Hong Kong and “failing” to live up to the standards of Hong Kong citizens. Legislative Council Speaker Andrew Leung announced the suspension of the second reading of the Extradition Bill, and he allowed the House Committee to decide whether to establish a Bill Committee to review the Bill.

The Bill Committee for the Extradition Bill launched its inaugural meeting on April 18. The pro-democracy camp asked for a Point of Order, and the pro-establishment camp questioned whether Speaker of the Committee James To had the power to manage this situation. Councilor Kwok Wai-Keung of the Federation of Trade Unions was subsequently taken out of the meeting room, and after two hours of meetings, the Committee had yet to initiate the process to elect a vice-speaker. Meanwhile, in the Legislative Council meeting on the annual budget, councilors of the pro-democracy camp called for motions to a quorum multiple times, which resulted in the adjournment of the meeting.

On April 28, the CHRF launched its second anti-extradition bill march, and cited that 130,000 people attended. The police stated that their estimate of peak attendance was 22,800 people. CHRF further stated that if the government went ahead with the Extradition Bill, they would definitely surround the Legislative Complex. Near the end of the march, Chief Secretary Matthew Chung replied that the attendance turnout was not the main point, and insisted that
there was a practical need to amend ordinances in order to resolve the Taiwan murder case and plug existing legal loopholes regarding matters of extradition.

On April 29, Chan Tong-kai was convicted for four counts of money laundering and sentenced to two years and five months of prison time. The judge emphasized that no matter the brevity of crimes the defendant had committed, the defendant deserved a fair trial. The judge also emphasized that this case only dealt with the defendant’s money laundering crimes and not the murder itself. If Chan Tong-kai maintained lawful behavior during prison time, he would be expected to be out by October 2019. Chief Executive Carrie Lam stated that the Taiwan murder case was regrettable, and that although Taiwanese authorities had submitted requests for extradition, the HKSAR Government had no legal basis to move forward on extradition due to existing legal constraints. Furthermore, Lam reiterated the need to completely plug the legal loophole, which was why the HKSAR government was proposing to amend the Extradition Bill.

On May 4, The House Committee meeting, with 37 votes for and 19 votes against, passed a petitioned request from the pro-establishment camp councilors to issue a notice to the Bill Committee to replace Councillor James To of the Democratic Party with Councillor Abraham Shek for the position of Committee Chair in order to elect the Committee Speaker. During the meeting, the pro-democracy camp attempted to bring the meeting to a halt. Some councilors of the camp were removed from the meeting chamber.

On May 11, pro-establishment and pro-democracy camp councilors clashed in the Extradition Bill Committee meeting. The Committee was unable to elect the Committee Speaker, and the HKSAR government issued an afternoon press release expressing their regret over the chaos in the Committee meeting.

On May 15, Hong Kong Macau Affairs Office Director Zhang Xiao Ming stated that the Extradition Bill amendment was necessary, acceptable and reasonable. He further stated there was no need for further consideration, and that any handling of the issue must rest on three points: safeguarding the law and justice, return to reason and professionalism, and respect for the One System within the “one country, two systems” principle. Twelve current and former members of the Hong Kong Bar Association subsequently issued a petition, expressing that it was extremely regrettable that the HKSAR government had proceeded to pass the Extradition Bill with insufficient consultation.

On May 17, the China Liaison Office convened over 200 HKSAR representatives to the National Peoples’ Congress and members of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference. Participants from the meeting quoted that Director of Beijing’s liaison office in Hong Kong Wang Zhimin spoke in full support of passing the Extradition Bill, noting that the Extradition Bill was urgent, and that the pro-establishment camp must unite to pass and promote the Bill across Hong Kong and in various sectors. Wang also stated that other options on the table regarding the Extradition Bill were unfeasible.
On May 20, the HKSAR government decided to move the Extradition Bill directly to the Legislative Council floor and resume the second reading. Regarding the decision to bypass the Bill Committee, Secretary of Security Bureau John Lee stated that the Bill Committee had lost its function, and that this was a tough decision for the HKSAR government to make. On May 21, Vice Premier of the State Council Han Zheng said that the Chinese Central government fully supported the HKSAR government’s efforts in conducting work related to the Extradition Bill.

On May 29, thirty-nine Legislative Councilors of the pro-establishment camp passed a petition to Secretary of Security Bureau John Lee, proposing two major amendments. On May 30, Lee announced that the HKSAR government would include six safeguarding measures to ensure a fair trial for extradited suspects. Some of these measures were to raise the bar to ensure the Bill only applied to offences punishable by seven years’ imprisonment rather than three, remove seven of the offences for extradition, affirm presumption of no charge under extradition, and ensure that suspects would not be forced to admit to charges. Hong Kong would also accept and process transfer request only from top judicial authorities from Mainland China, such as rendition requests directly from Supreme People’s Procuratorate.

On June 5, the Law Society of Hong Kong issued an Additional Observations statement on the Extradition Bill, indicating that the government should not pass the Extradition Bill without adequate consultation. Even if the government persisted in the Bill, the Law Society of Hong Kong noted that it must incorporate more safeguards, raise the transparency of the extradition process and enhance the power of the courts to adjudicate. The Law Society of Hong Kong also recommended introducing a committal proceeding, allowing suspects to gather evidence to prepare a defense before the courts.

On June 9, the CHRF organized its third anti-extradition bill march which lasted approximately for eight hours. Participants poured onto the streets between Fortress Hill and the government Headquarters in Admiralty. The CHRF subsequently announced that it estimated 1.03 million people participated, surpassing the 500,000 people that attended the July 1, 2003 march. The Hong Kong Police Force announced that their estimate of peak attendance was 240,000 people. After the march, some demonstrators attempted to break into the Legislative Complex, with altercations with the police. Late into the night, the HKSAR government announced that while they would continue to listen to various sectors and alleviate concerns, the Extradition Bill would go ahead as planned on the Legislative Council floor.

On the morning of June 10, Chief Executive Carrie Lam, together with Secretary of Justice Teresa Cheng and Secretary of Security Bureau John Lee held a press conference. They expressed appreciation to the Hong Kong people for expressing their views, but reiterated the need for the Extradition Bill. She later announced four areas of work, which included intensive explanations to the purpose and content of the Extradition Bill, enhanced legal standing to
ensure additional human rights protections, reports to the Legislative Council on the execution of the Bill, and work towards long-term extradition agreements with other jurisdictions.

On June 12, the Legislative Council session resumed and began debates regarding the second reading of the Extradition Bill. A large crowd gathered outside the Legislative Council building. This protest blocked Lung Wo road and Harcourt road around Admiralty. In the afternoon, protesters began to charge into the Legislative Council building and the police cordon outside the Central Government Complex. The police force deployed many rounds of tear gas, bean bag rounds and rubber bullets to disperse the crowd. The protesters subsequently occupied roads in Central. In the evening, Chief Executive Carrie Lam delivered a televised speech, which effectively described the protests as an organized action and strongly condemned the actions of protesters. She further pointed out that there was a line to draw when it came to expressing opinions, reiterating that if it was done through violent means, it would lead to more outcomes that would surely be detrimental to Hong Kong. Lam urged Hong Kong society to return to order and to stay away from violence.

On June 15, Carrie Lam held a press conference, announcing that the HKSAR government had decided to suspend work on the Extradition Bill. She said she would seek to re-establish dialogue with various sectors of society and be open to fully listening to views from members of Hong Kong society.

On June 16, the CHRF organized another march, which renewed its demands for the withdrawal of the Extradition Bill and the resignation of Carrie Lam from the position of Chief Executive. The Hong Kong Police Force subsequently opened up many major roads on Hong Kong Island, and the march lasted for eight hours. The CHRF announced that almost two million people participated, while the police announced that their estimate of attendance following the originally planned route peaked at 338,000 people. Another organization announced their estimate of attendance being around 400,000 people.

On June 18, Carrie Lam held a press conference to “sincerely” apologize to Hong Kong citizens, admitting that challenges to come in governing, but also emphasizing that she and her team were committed to both restoring public trust in the HKSAR government and improving economic livelihoods. Lam further stated that work on the Extradition Bill was suspended on June 15th, and that no timeline was set to reinitiate the work. The pro-democracy camp councilors criticized Carrie Lam for not being publicly accountable to her actions, while the CHRF was dissatisfied that Carrie Lam did not respond to the five demands of citizens which included calls for her to resign, the withdrawal of the Extradition Bill and investigation into police violence.

On June 21, netizens launched a call to surround important government buildings. Several thousand protesters encircled the Central Government Complex, the Legislative Council Complex, the Hong Kong Police Headquarters, Revenue Tower, Immigration Tower, and the Queensway Government Offices. These demonstrations resulted in early closures. The
protesters further surrounded the Hong Kong Police Headquarters for half the day and engaged with confrontations with the police into the night. A number of major thoroughfares on Hong Kong Island were blocked, disrupting road traffic. A government spokesperson called for protesters to express their views peacefully and considerately.

On June 30, pro-establishment Legislative Councilor Junius Ho and Politihk Social Strategic organized a rally at Tamar Park, under the theme, “Support Hong Kong Police, Safeguard the law, Protect Public Safety”. The organizers announced that over 165,000 attended, while the police stated that their estimate of peak attendance was 53,000 people. During the event, some anti-extradition bill protesters called out slogans such as “establish the independent commission of inquiry, prove the innocence of the police”, which caused dissatisfaction among the rally attendees. Both sides got into a war of words, and the Police had to step in to separate the two groups.

Anti-extradition bill protesters participated in the July 1 march to express their demands. In the afternoon, protesters used metal rods and a cart to destroy the glass doors and walls of the Legislative Council Complex where police officers were nowhere to be seen. Later that night, the protesters broke into the Complex and pried open office doors. Several hundred protesters occupied the Legislative Council chamber, graffiting the SAR emblem, destroying portraits of previous Legislative Council chairpersons, and vandalizing computers and files. Some protesters took off their masks, and shouted “we cannot lose anymore”, stating that they were in to fight for the long run. After protesters had occupied the Legislative Council Complex for three hours, thousands of riot police were deployed at midnight to clear the Complex. Chief Executive Carrie Lam, together with Chief Secretary Matthew Cheung, Secretary of Security Bureau John Lee and Police Commissioner Stephen Lo met with the press at 4:00am on July 2. During the press conference, Carrie Lam stated that the lawless, violent actions of the protesters seriously damaged the rule of law, a core value of Hong Kong society. She expressed anger, pain, and condemnation, also stressing that any criminal activity would be thoroughly investigated. She reiterated that the HKSAR government had apologized and would open up to listening to voices from different sectors and to young people.

On July 9, Chief Executive Carrie Lam announced that any work on the Extradition Bill had been “put to rest” and that “the bill is dead”. She urged the public to not focus on the characterization and misinterpretations. On July 11, Director of the liaison office Wang Zhimin stated that the Central Government of the People’s Republic of China affirmed the Chief Executive and the HKSAR government’s mandate to continue governing under the “one country, two systems” principle, and affirmed the efforts made to integrate Hong Kong with the development of the country. Wang further stated that Hong Kong society must return to normal ahead, and give an opportunity to the HKSAR government to govern effectively.

On July 14, during the Sha Tin district anti-extradition bill march, police and protesters clashed in the vicinity of Sha Tin Town Centre. Into the night, police began to clear the crowds. Riot
police closed the Sha Tin MTR station, and nearby shopping malls, and began confronting protesters. One riot police office was attacked by several protesters and fell to the ground.

On July 21, the CHRF organized its sixth march demanding the withdrawal of the Extradition Bill. Large gatherings of protesters continued onwards after the finishing point of Luard Road in Wan Chai and headed towards Admiralty and Central. Into the night, a number of protesters threw eggs and black paint onto both the gates and the Chinese emblem hung on the façade of the liaison office building. Meanwhile, at Yuen Long MTR station, over a hundred white-clad individuals unequivocally assaulted citizens and journalists. Although many people and the MTR staff called for the police, the police force arrived on the scene half an hour well after the white shirted people had withdrawn from the scene. Citizens shouted at police officers, urging them to leave and subsequently, there were at least two more incidents of groups of white shirted individuals beating up citizens. The police returned and went to the nearby village to investigate the incident. At around midnight, the HKSAR government strongly condemned the attacks and vowed to investigate the incident.

On July 27, a large number of people attended the “Liberate Yuen Long” march, demanding an investigation into the white-clad mobster incident and the alleged police-triad collusion in the July 21 incident. Protesters blocked roads in the Yuen Long district and tried to barge into the villages adjacent to Yuen Long MTR station. In the afternoon and early evening, police and protesters engaged in violent clashes. Police shot tear gas, rubber bullets and sponge grenades to disperse the crowds. Inside Yuen Long MTR station, police deployed pepper spray while protesters responded with fire extinguishers and hoses. The police cleared the crowds after midnight.

On July 29, the State Council Information Office held a press conference. Spokesperson Yang Guang stated that the central government of the People’s Republic of China would not tolerate violence in Hong Kong and expressed support for Chief Executive Carrie Lam and the HKSAR government to unite and lead Hong Kong and all its sectors towards a prosperous and stable order. He emphasized that the Central government strongly supported the Hong Kong Police Force and relevant departments and judicial institutions in their efforts to curb violence and illegal acts, prosecute violent offenders, immediately restore societal order, and protect the personal security and property of citizens.

On August 5, Chief Executive Carrie Lam and other secretaries held a press conference in response to the multiple instances of violent conflicts, recent days of protester-led general strikes and intentional delays of traffic. Lam stated that violent acts had pushed Hong Kong onto a very dangerous path that challenged both national sovereignty and the “one country, two systems” principle and thereby pushing Hong Kong over the edge. She further claimed, “some people described this approach as self-destruction, and would push Hong Kong onto a road of no return”. That afternoon, a general strike and rallies across seven districts were held. The Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions Chairwoman Carol Ng estimated that the number of workers responding to the general strike was upwards of 350,000, of which 290,000
participated in the various rallies. The rallies eventually turned into roadblocks and conflicts, which resulted in major traffic blockages on roads and tunnels in at least fourteen districts. Protesters also surrounded and vandalized a number of police stations, leading police to fire tear gas and rubber bullets in order to disperse the protesters.

On August 6, Hong Kong-Macau Affairs Office Spokesperson Yang Guang stated that the nature of the protests had changed and seriously affected the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. This, Yang remarked, would turn Hong Kong into a dangerous territory and that the most important task at hand was to calm the civil unrests and restore order. Yang further stated that the central government remained committed to support Chief Executive Carrie Lam and the HKSAR government in their mandate to effectively govern Hong Kong.

On August 7, Hong Kong-Macau Affairs Director Zhang Xiaoming stated that the situation in Hong Kong was the most dire it had been since the handover and that there was an urgent need to calm the civil unrests and restore order. He further stated that if the situation in Hong Kong worsened and the HKSAR government was unable to control the situation, the central government had the authority to swiftly calm different unrests. Zhang further stated that the anti-extradition bill incident had changed in nature, with hints of “colored revolution”. He pointed out the solution would be to support the Chief Executive and the Hong Kong Police Force in order to reverse and stabilize the situation.

On August 11, the anti-extradition bill protests in Sham Shui Po and Causeway Bay turned into confrontations across twelve districts. Police went to various MTR stations to initiate enforcement actions and arrest. At Kwai Fong station, police officers shot tear gas and rubber bullets inside the paid areas where protesters were located. At Causeway Bay station, police officers, allegedly not wearing their badges, disguised as black-clad protesters and engaged in an arrest of protesters. Furthermore, protesters threw petrol bombs at Tsim Sha Tsui police station, and one police officer received medical treatment for burns on his foot. When the police tried to disperse the crowds using tear gas and bean bag rounds in the vicinity of the police station, one female protester was allegedly shot in her right eyeball with a beanbag round.

From August 9 to 13, netizens called for five consecutive days of rallies at Hong Kong International Airport. The rally on August 12 called attention to the police’s abusive use of force against protesters, particularly for the female protester who was shot in the eye the previous night. Thousands of protesters attended, occupying the departure and arrival halls and disrupting operations, which subsequently led to the Airport Authority cancelling all flights for the day. On August 13, protesters continued to clog the departure areas in Terminals 1 and 2, which led the Airport Authority to cancel the remaining flights for the day. At night, several hundred protesters surrounded and strapped a black-clad man suspected to be a Mainland police officer in disguise. He was subsequently taken to hospital. The police arrived on the scene but were surrounded by protesters, and at one point had to hoist the gun. The Airport Authority received a temporary injunction from the court to prevent any form of protests within the terminal building.
On August 18, the CHRF organized an “ebb and flow” style rally at Victoria Park, themed as “stand against police brutality and police-triad collusion, respond to the five demands”. The rally took over seven hours, and concluded at 9pm. The CHRF announced that an estimated 1.7 million people attended the rally, while the police stated that their estimate of peak attendance was 128,000 people. Into the night, several thousand people gathered around Government Headquarters in Admiralty. This was the first weekend in August where there were no clashes between protesters and police.

On August 23, protesters of the Anti-Extradition Bill Movement organized a 60-kilometre long Hong Kong Way, a human chain that followed the route of the three urban MTR lines. Some participants even climbed the Lion Rock. On the same day, the MTR received a temporary injunction effective on August 30. The injunction banned any persons from illegally or intentionally blocking or disrupting the entire MTR network or damage any property or train cars.

On August 24, the Kwun Tong march was to go ahead after receiving the police letter of no objection. The MTR announced in a rare move the closure of seven MTR stations along the Kwun Tong line prior to the Kwun Tong march. Marchers were dissatisfied, and began to block roads and surround police stations. Traffic in Eastern Kowloon came to a standstill. Some protesters also used a chainsaw to disassemble a smart lamp post on Sheung Yuet Road in Kowloon Bay. The following day, the Tsuen Wan-Kwai Tsing march and rally took place in the afternoon to early evening. Large groups of protesters blocked roads by Nina Tower and Yeung Uk Road in Tsuen Wan. Police responded by firing rounds of tear gas to disperse the crowds. Several police officers were chased and attacked by black-clad people. Police responded by firing a blank shot in the air. The police also deployed water cannons for the first time, alongside the riot police and Special Tactical Squad (also known as “Raptors”) to disperse the crowds.

On August 31, netizens responded to the call for a march on Hong Kong Island, which turned into flash protests and road blockages in many districts. Meanwhile, in the evening at Prince Edward MTR station, a blue-clad man in a train took out a hammer and started beating protesters, which escalated into a confrontation in the train coach. Protesters then tried to respond. After receiving calls, several hundred Raptors and riot police entered the platform area to disperse crowds and rushed into the train coach and beat passengers. Passengers on the platform were pressed on the ground and several people’s heads were gushing blood. The MTR Corporation immediately closed the station, and subsequently announced suspension of services on the Tsuen Wan and Kwun Tong lines, and then the Island, South Island, and Tseung Kwan O lines.

On September 2, a number of protesters of anti-extradition bill movement launched a general strike. Schools also launched a two-week strike of classes. Around 30,000 students from ten different post-secondary institutions joined the school strike rally at the Chinese University of
Hong Kong. The protesters issued a final warning to Chief Executive Carrie Lam, stating that if the five demands were not met by September 13, they would not rule out escalations, such as an all-out general strike across Hong Kong.

On September 3, the Hong Kong-Macau Affairs Office organized a press conference to express their views on Hong Kong’s situation. Spokesperson Yang Guang indicated that the current anti-extradition bill movement had completely changed in nature, with a small number of rioters using violent means to create chaos and cripple the HKSAR government. Yang asserted that their aim was to displace the rule of the HKSAR government and as such, the protection of the “one country, two systems” principle reached a critical point. In response to calls for the HKSAR government to use Emergency Regulations Ordinance to settle the unrest, spokesperson Xu Luying stated that the central government fully supported the Chief Executive and HKSAR government to use any lawful means to calm the civil unrest. That same day, Chief Executive Carrie Lam responded to a leaked recording from a closed meeting she had with the business sector which revealed her intentions to step down. Lam stated that she had not brought her resignation to the central government and not resigning was her choice. She reiterated confidence in herself to lead Hong Kong out of the current situation.

On September 4, Carrie Lam delivered a televised speech to formally announce the withdrawal of the Extradition Bill. She proposed four measures in response to the demands. Upon the resumption of Legislative Council session, Secretary for Security Bureau would formally withdraw the Extradition Bill. She further appointed two new members, Paul Lam Ting-kwok and Helen Yu Lai Ching-ping, to the Independent Police Complaints Council, and planned on inviting experts and academics to conduct an independent investigation and assessment to the deep tensions affecting Hong Kong society.

On September 15, protesters joined in the Hong Kong Island action after the original CHRF rally was called off. Protesters occupied the roads and headed towards the direction of Central, blocking roads in the vicinities of Wan Chai and Admiralty, and vandalizing MTR station entrance facilities. Protesters also destroyed banners, “celebrating” the National Holiday and burned the Chinese flag. At night, white-clad people with hand-held weapons battled protesters in North Point and Fortress Hill.

On September 26, Carrie Lam and other top officials held the first community dialogue session. The 150 participants were selected from a pool of internet registrants. Thirty participants were allowed up to three minutes to ask the officials questions. Some participants criticized Carrie Lam that she was incapable of governing and refused to establish an independent commission of inquiry. They asked her and Secretary for Justice Teresa Cheng to resign. A total of twenty participants mentioned police brutality and suppression, raising questions surrounding the use of masks by police, and not displaying their badges. 12 participants clearly urged the government to establish an independent commission of inquiry, as most of them thought the Independent Police Complaints Council could not execute concrete action, while other participants criticized the speed in handling complaints. On the other hand, some participants
expressed support for the government and believed that the Extradition Bill incident was a matter for the Hong Kong judicial system. They thought that the government should arrest suspects according to the law.

The CHRF organized the rally to commemorate the beginning of the Occupy movement on September 28 in 2014. A large crowd gathered at Tamar Park. The CHRF estimated that between 200,000 to 300,000 people attended, while the police stated that their estimate of peak attendance was 8,440. Two of the trio primarily responsible for the Occupy movement, Pastor Chu Yiu-ming and Benny Tai spoke on stage. Just outside the rally, some protesters blocked roads and incinerated items on the streets. The CHRF received notice from the police that they had to stop 45 minutes ahead of the original finishing time and evacuate. Protesters on the streets clashed with police cordons, and occupied Harcourt Road. They threw bricks, lit the National flag on fire and threw petrol bombs. The police fired tear gas and deployed a water cannon to disperse protesters.

On the eve of the Chinese National Holiday, netizens launched a global, 60-city wide “Global Anti-Totalitarianism” march on September 29. The march started from Causeway Bay and headed towards the Government Complex in Admiralty. However, not only did the police declare the march an illegal gathering, both sides also clashed. Police subsequently shot tear gas, and protesters retaliated with bricks and petrol bombs. Protesters then marched towards the Government Complex and threw petrol bombs. The riot police responded with tear gas, rubber bullets and bean bag rounds. The raptor squad engaged in arrests of large numbers of protesters.

On October 1, netizens organized a six-district gathering on National Day, which subsequently escalated into a ten-district confrontation between the police and protesters. In Tsuen Wan, an officer shot a protester at close range. It was the first time a live bullet was used in the anti-extradition bill movement.

On October 3, due to the escalation of violence and destruction of storefronts across Hong Kong, a group of pro-establishment figures, including Legislative Councilors, formed a concern group urging the government to enact the anti-mask law. On October 4, the government announced the invocation of the Emergency Regulations Ordinance to implement the anti-mask law. That evening, protests took place across many districts, turning to unrests, road blocking, arsons, and vandalism of MTR stations and Chinese-backed stores. The MTR suspended services on all lines. In Yuen Long, a police officer shot at close range the leg of a 14 year old. On the afternoon of October 5, the Chief Executive and key officials delivered a televised speech, describing that the radical actions of the rioters left Hong Kong in a very dark night. She stated that the widespread danger to public safety in Hong Kong was the basis for implementing the anti-mask law. She called for support for the government to settle the unrests, and the general public to disassociate with the rioters. On October 6, the second day the anti-mask law in effect, netizens organized rallies opposing the anti-mask law. The Kowloon march started in Tsim Sha Tsui and along the way, engaged with the police multiple times,
subsequently turning into large scale road blocking, arsons, and vandalism of MTR facilities. Government service buildings, Chinese-backed banks, shops and restaurants located across Kowloon were also vandalized. Into the night, some protesters directed laser pointers and flashlights towards the People’s Liberation Army barracks in Kowloon Tong.

On October 10, Chief Secretary Matthew Cheung announced that the total number of arrestees from the anti-extradition bill movement had reached 2,379, 104 of whom were 16 years old or under while 750 of whom were 18 years old or under, making up 30% of the total arrestees. Cheung also praised the police for combating violence, helping restore peace in Hong Kong, and de-escalating the violence.

The Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act rally took place at Chater Garden on October 14, the first police approved rally since the implementation of the anti-mask law. Crowds rushed onto the streets, people wore masks and many U.S. flags were placed around the venue. The organizers announced that 130,000 attended. The government spokesperson expressed regret for the U.S. passing the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act, reiterating that foreign legislative bodies should not interfere in the internal affairs of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

On October 20, the originally planned CHRF march in Kowloon was declined by the police. Instead, four democracy camp figures, including CHRF vice-convener Figo Chan led the march. The march sought to ask the government to respond to the five major demands, and to abolish the anti-mask law. The CHRF spokesperson subsequently announced that over 350,000 attended the march. The police dispersed the crowds and clear roadblocks along Nathan road numerous times. They also deployed water cannons and sprayed the vicinity of the Kowloon Mosque with blue dye.

On October 22, Chan Tong-kai was released after serving his sentence for money laundering charges. Taiwanese authorities submitted requests to the government for documents and confirmation for Taiwanese personnel to come to Hong Kong to take Chan into custody. The HKSAR government did not directly respond to the requests. In a press release at midnight, the government stated that Taiwan’s request to administer the law across the border was disrespectful of Hong Kong’s jurisdiction and that this was completely unacceptable.

Chapter 4: Opinion Surveys

Description and Configuration

Based on the searched results, we found 33 polls related to the Extradition Bill within the time frame (see Appendix 2 for poll description, sample and executive summary). Commissioning groups and organizations included universities and academics, political parties, think tanks,
media outlets, and members of society. Due to their different standards in polling, the sample sizes ranged from 442 to 138,000 people. The polling methods included telephone interviews, internet polls, and questionnaires. Due to the needs of each survey, their target populations were different, but the majority of them targeted Cantonese speaking adults. Some polls also expanded the youth age cohort to include 14 to 15 years old.

We relied on the August 2014 Guideline for Public Opinion Research from World Association for Public Opinion Research to establish the major criteria for the polls within the description and analysis. Backgrounds of groups and organizations were not a factor in consideration. After applying the criteria, 13 polls remained. Table 4.1 summarizes the total count by groups or organizations, and Figure 4.1 lists the distribution of polls by month.

### Table 4.1. Initiators of polls by groups or organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiating groups/organizations</th>
<th>University-Related pollsters/academics</th>
<th>Political parties/Political groups</th>
<th>Thinktanks</th>
<th>Media outlets</th>
<th>Members of society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Count</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 4.1. Number of polls per month related to the extradition bill and anti-extradition bill movement (March 28 to October 22, 2019 inclusive)](image)

We can distinguish three phases of opinion polling. The first phase is between February 13 to June 8, which includes the government consultation work on the Extradition Bill until the eve of the June 9 march organized by the CHRF. The second phase is between June 9, effectively inaugurating the anti-extradition bill movement, to September 4, when Carrie Lam announced the official withdrawal of the Extradition Bill. And the third phase is between September 5 to October 22.
Aside from PORI polls, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) conducted most consistent polling indicating the shift in public opinion from major events and eventually towards antagonism of the Hong Kong Police Force.

The first phase contained three related polls that fulfilled the criteria. Poll questions centered on support or agree with passing the Extradition Bill amendment, and the amendment to the system for subjecting fugitives in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong Research Association released a poll in mid-April, finding that approximately 45% of respondents supported and 35% opposing the Extradition Bill amendment. On June 6, the Centre for Communication and Public Opinion Survey at CUHK and Public Opinion Programme at The Hong Kong University (HKUPOP) released findings suggesting that more Hong Kong citizens were opposed to than in support of the extradition bill. CUHK poll reported 47.2% opposed and 23.8% supported, while HKUPOP reported 66% opposed and 17% supported. The polls suggest that opposition to the Extradition Bill amendment gradually increased between April to June.

The second phase contained five related polls that fulfilled the criteria. Polls focused on whether the government should respond to the five demands, such as the full withdrawal of the Extradition Bill amendment. The polls asked about the satisfaction of the Hong Kong Police Force in handling the situation and their appropriate use of force. There were also polls conducted at the sites of protests to gather demographic information.

Out of the five demands, the polls suggested that other than most agreeing that the government should formally withdraw the Extradition Bill amendment, it should establish an independent commission of inquiry to investigate the incidents in previous months.

In the CUHK and PORI polls, respondents paid attention to police conduct in handling the protests. The CUHK poll found that approximately 67.7% of respondents thought the police used excessive force; the PORI one found that 58% of respondents thought the police used excessive force. In the PORI poll on August 8, over 61% of respondents were dissatisfied with the overall rating of the police.

However, the CUHK and PORI polls also found that 39% and 44% of respective respondents also thought the protesters used excessive force.

Onsite survey findings from the CUHK poll released on August 12 found that participants of protests in July and August consisted mainly of 20 to 30 years old, with 68% to 80% of protest participants holding higher education degrees. The survey also found that middle and lower classes who participated in the protests were fifty-fifty in proportion.

The third phase contained five related polls that fulfilled the criteria. Poll questions included respondents’ opinions towards the government’s withdrawal of the Extradition Bill, the other
four key demands, the implementation of the anti-mask law, and attention regarding police issues. When asked about the opinion of Chief Executive Carrie Lam’s four areas of action in response to the five major demands, the CUHK poll largely found that respondents were dissatisfied, and thought that an independent commission of inquiry was needed. Other demands included reinitiating electoral reform for universal suffrage.

The CUHK polls have noticed the consistent trend among respondents in view of escalating violent tactics on both sides of the police and protesters. Between 69% to 71% of respondents agreed that police used excessive force. Similarly, between 39% to 41% of respondents agreed that protesters used excessive force. In the poll from CUHK’s Hong Kong Institute for Asia-Pacific Studies, almost 60% of respondents agreed that while pursuing the major demands, protests must remain peaceful, reasonable and non-violent. Roughly one third of respondents respectively supported, opposed or remained neutral in using radical means to pursue the major demands, signaling there was mixed sentiment in using radical approaches.

Citizens have also attended to the issues among the police. The PORI poll on October 22 found that over 60% of respondents thought that the police colluded with the triads in the July 21 incident. A similar level of respondents thought that the People’s Armed Police had become part of the Hong Kong Police Force.

The Centre for Communication and Public Opinion Survey at CUHK and PORI further conducted polls on views on the anti-mask law, finding that citizens generally opposed the anti-mask law. The CUHK poll found that around 71% of respondents opposed the anti-mask law. The younger and more educated the respondents, the more they agreed that protesters had the right to wear masks in protests. Polling by PORI’s Public Opinion Panel corroborated similar levels of opposition, finding that 68% of respondents opposed the anti-mask law.
Figure 4.2. Satisfaction rating of the Hong Kong Police Force between June 2012 to August 2019 (Source: Public Opinion Programme at The University of Hong Kong; Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute)

Figure 4.3. Support of Chief Executive Carrie Lam between July 2017 to October 2019 (Source: Public Opinion Programme at The University of Hong Kong; Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute)
Concept and Introduction

Public opinion polling originated in the nineteenth century society. Early use of public opinion polling was to study voting preferences and marketing promotion. Since 1824, media in the United States have used straw polls to understand voter intentions before the presidential elections. With the popularization of printed media and radio, corporations have used newspapers to understand product preferences of the public. Up until the early twentieth century, the use of public opinion in informing policy making became gradually more important. Governments began to put a heavier emphasis on public opinion polling.

It is not hard to imagine that democratic governments, compared to other forms of government, are more considerate of the views of the public on policy and the preferences towards their political parties, whereas authoritarian governments have a love-hate relationship with public opinion polling. When these governments are weak in their ability to deliver on policies, but require public support, they would begin to sway public opinion by generating discourses in their favor.

Hong Kong public opinion polling began in the 1960s. After the 1967 riots, the British Hong Kong government conducted a series of polls to understand citizens’ well-being and economic statuses. As references for promoting and assessing different policies, these polls went unnoticed by society or the media. As issues of the sovereignty of Hong Kong became on the agenda, institutional democratization enabled academic institutions, political and civil
organizations to conduct public opinion polling to understand the policy preferences and voting intentions of citizens. Although the media is glad to report different public opinion polling results, the methodologies of public opinion polling are mixed together. How they accurately represent public opinion remains to be examined; therefore, there is a need to establish in Hong Kong a set of professional public opinion polling standards.

The World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) revised the Guideline on Public Opinion Polls and Published Surveys in August 2014. The Guideline requires that groups or organizations conducting the polls to increase the transparency in public opinion polling, allowing the public to clearly understand the basis behind the public opinion numbers. Below are WAPOR’s thirteen requirements for any groups or organizations when publishing results of public opinion polling:

1. The name of the organization conducting the poll, and its sponsor of the poll
2. The universe effectively represented, i.e. the target sample
3. Sample size and geographical coverage
4. Polling date
5. Sampling method
6. Polling method
7. Weighting
8. Percentage of respondents who give “don’t know” answers
9. The relevant questions asked
10. Clearly any ambiguities in question wording when readers interpret the findings
11. When tabular data are given, the full question wording must be included, including the publication of weighed answers, including “don’t know/refuse to answer”
12. A general indication of the placement of a key question and its context should be provided if it follows other questions that may impact on the way that question is understood by respondents
13. Where the questions form a part of a more extensive or ‘omnibus’ survey, this must be made clear to any enquirer, including a general indication of the placement of the questions in the questionnaire

Out of the thirteen requirements from the WAPOR Guideline, we think that there are seven mandatory requirements in assessing public opinion polling in this case. Any polls that do not meet these requirements were not given further analysis.

**Observation and Analysis**

Major events became turning points in the overall movement and shifted public opinion. While there was some support for the Extradition Bill early on, public opposition to the extradition bill increased and maintained prior to the onset of the anti-extradition bill movement. Meanwhile, at the start of the anti-extradition bill movement, the focus began to shift towards
the relationship between the police and citizens. The Yuen Long incident on July 21 and the incident at Prince Edward MTR station on August 31 became the focal events that drastically elevated public attention towards the conduct of the Hong Kong Police Force. With the deteriorating relationship between police and citizens, citizens’ satisfaction ratings of the Hong Kong Police Force drastically dropped. Satisfaction rating went from 61 points in early June, prior to the onset of the anti-extradition bill movement, to 34 points in early August (Figure 4.2). These indications suggest that citizens were not only worried for personal and public safety, they increasingly concerned the authority of the police, the balance of power and its composition.

Despite withdrawing the Extradition Bill, the anti-extradition bill movement remained vocal with the remaining demands. People not only saw the threat of the Extradition Bill amendment, but also the increasing brutality, surveillance, and antagonism of the Hong Kong Police Force as the emanating issue. While the Chief Executive withdrew the bill and commenced a community dialogue on September 26 in an attempt to salvage public trust, this dialogue occurred only once. There were no signs indicating that the withdrawal of the Bill or the community dialogue facilitated the repair of the lack of trust between the public and the government and Hong Kong Police Force.

These measures are further compounded by substantial decreases in approval ratings of the Chief Executive, HKSAR government, and public sentiments. Chief Executive Carrie Lam’s rating had an overall decrease of 23.3 points over the course of June to October (Figure 4.3). It dropped from 43.3 in early June, to 25.4 in early September, and down to 20.2 in the last round of polls between October 17-23. Satisfaction of the HKSAR Government Performance went from a net value of -16.8 percentage points at the launch of the Extradition Bill amendment legislation in February, to -53.3 percentage points after the first week of massive protests in mid-June (June 17-20), and to -68.7 percentage points in mid-October (October 17-23). The Public Sentiment Index dropped from 66.6 in early June to 50.5 by October 23, an overall drop of 16.1 points within the four months (Figure 4.4). Within the societal appraisal measure, economic, livelihoods and political appraisals reached -42, -57, and -85 percentage points respectively. The political and economic appraisals reached new lows since 1992 and 2003 levels respectively. Under the circumstances of prolonged, broken trust, this would only lead towards worsening tensions between the public, the HKSAR government and the Hong Kong Police Force, and exacerbating the governance crisis.

Chapter 5: Rallies and Processions

Description and Configuration

A total of 212 instances of marches, rallies and protests (see Appendix 3) happened in the study period. Political groups and opinion leaders could be divided into two large camps,
namely, the anti-extradition bill camp and the pro-extradition bill camp. The former demanded the government to respond to the protesters’ five key demands, notably to fully withdraw the Extradition Bill, retract the label of riot of June 12 protests, establish an independent commission of inquiry, seek the resignation of Chief Executive Carrie Lam, and to restart the process for constitutional reform. Meanwhile, the latter camp supported the HKSAR government in amending the Extradition Bill, and subsequently the anti-mask law. People in this camp argued that Hong Kong should not become a refuge for criminals, criticized the escalating violence of protesting tactics in the past few months, as well as blamed external forces for intruding in Hong Kong and Mainland affairs. They further supported the Hong Kong Police Force in enforcing the law in order to halt further violence and lawlessness.

Among the anti-extradition bill camp, marches, rallies and protests were initiated by diversified individuals and groups. However, the CHRF was the primary political organization responsible for initiating large-scale marches and rallies with attendance between 12,000 to 2 million. Furthermore, the CHRF claimed that attendance figures on June 9, June 16 and July 1 further exceeded the record attendance of 500,000 of the July 1 march in 2003. Although other political parties have also organized other small to medium scale protests when the Extradition Bill began gaining attention, quite a number of other rallies and protests among this camp were from the civil society at large. These civil society organizations and individuals included netizens, ordinary citizens, professional groups and individuals, post-secondary and secondary school concern groups, concern groups from various districts and many individuals organizing under their own name. The focus of these groups and individuals have also kept in pace with developments of the anti-extradition bill movement. For example, the surrounding, sit-ins, and submitting petitions to foreign consulates.

Actions in July and August consisted of major marches and rallies in various districts (e.g. the Kowloon march, Liberate Tuen Mun Park action, Sha Tin march, Tsuen Kwan O march, East Kowloon march). These events also involved staging obstructions to major public infrastructure, such as the Legislative Council, Revenue Tower, and the Hong Kong International Airport). Professional organizations and groups of different socio-demographics launched their respective rallies, marches and flash demonstrations (e.g. Hong Kong mothers against Extradition Bill rally, “silver hair” silent march, rallies by doctors, civil servants, and lawyers).

From August to October, different post-secondary student unions and secondary school concern groups, along with trade/workers unions and citizens initiated general strikes. Besides that, netizens, citizens and students also initiated other sorts of mass activities, such as human chains, as well as concerts at schools, shopping malls and on the streets. The evolvement of mass activities has been dynamic in a way that, quite many groups and individuals organized rallies, marches and protests in response to major social events, including “Liberate Yuen Long” which was responding the July 21 incident happened in Yuen Long MTR station, whereas the flash rallies and marches in Central, the October 6 Anti-emergency Law and “Kowloon
Revolution” were immediate reactions to oppose the Chief Executive Carrie Lam’s implementation of anti-mask law.

On the other hand, there were several groups and organizations in the pro-extradition bill camp held marches, rallies and protests. The largest and most well-known ones organized by Safeguard Hong Kong Alliance, pro-establishment Legislative Councilors and other well-known political figures. They organized several large-scale actions such as “Support HK Police, Safeguard the Law, and Ensure Public Safety” rally, “Safeguard Hong Kong” rally and the “Clean Hong Kong” movement. Other professional and business groups also launched marches such as the “Safeguard Hong Kong, through Wind and Rain” action co-organized by the Hong Kong Taxi Drivers and Operators Association and Safeguard Hong Kong Alliance, as well as the coach bus “slow drive” march by the Hong Kong Tourism Association. Furthermore, several civic society groups, such as Politihk Social Strategic’s rally Defend Hong Kong Campaign and Public Group also organized smaller marches and rallies.

Figure 5.1 shows that the number of related protests reached a peak in September totaling 71 instances, comprising 34% of rallies and processions within the study period. In August and October, related rallies and processions also reached 48 and 39 times respectively, comprising 23% and 18% of rallies and processions within the research period respectively. These instances were largely medium to large scale rallies and marches organized by the anti-extradition bill camp. By attendance size, large and medium scale rallies and processions were most frequent among the anti-extradition bill camp, comprising 27% and 64% of its events respectively (Figure 5.2). On the other hand, those organized by the pro-extradition bill camp were mostly small and medium size rallies and processions, comprising 58% and 29% of its rallies and processions respectively (Figure 5.3).
Figure 5.1. Frequency of rallies and processions within the Anti-Extradition Bill camp and Pro-Extradition Bill camp by month

![Graph showing frequency of rallies and processions within the Anti-Extradition Bill camp by month.](image)

Figure 5.2. Number of protests, rallies and processions of the Anti-Extradition Bill camp, by attendance size and by month

![Graph showing number of protests, rallies and processions of the Anti-Extradition Bill camp by attendance size and by month.](image)

Figure 5.3. Number of protests, rallies and processions of the Pro-Extradition Bill camp, by attendance size and by month

![Graph showing number of protests, rallies and processions of the Pro-Extradition Bill camp by attendance size and by month.](image)
Large-scale Rallies and Processions

There was a total of 53 rallies and processions involving over 10,000 people happened during the study period, which were regarded as “large-scale rallies and processions” in this report. Among these events, 20 of them even had an attendance of over 100,000 people, 17 of which were by the anti-extradition bill camp while 3 of which were by the pro-extradition bill camp.

On March 31, the CHRF and pro-democracy councilors launched the first anti-extradition bill march. The CHRF claimed that 12,000 people participated in it, while the police stated there were 5,200 people at the peak moment. Participants included various tertiary institute associations, professional groups and independent student groups. Participants called out slogans such as “No Extradition Bill” and “If extradited to the Mainland, Hong Kong will become a prison for extradition”. On April 28, the CHRF launched the second anti-extradition bill march. The CHRF announced that 130,000 people participated in it, while the police stated that the peak attendance was 22,800 people. Both figures outnumbered any attendance of marches since the 2014 Occupy movement. The CHRF attributed the high attendance to the sentencing of the nine members involved in the Occupy movement, and four of whom pleaded the public to oppose the Extradition Bill before they went into jail. If the government refused to withdraw the Bill, then a demonstration surrounding the Legislative Council Complex would be launched, according to the CHRF.

On June 9, the CHRF launched the third anti-extradition bill march. The march extended from Victoria Park to the Government Complex in Admiralty with major streets and sidewalks, such as Hennessy Road and Lockhart Road, being completely occupied with people, and lasted for over 7 hours. The CHRF announced that 1.03 million people participated in the march, shattering the former record of 500,000 people participating in the July 1 march in 2003 to become the largest scale rally since the handover. The police stated that there were 240,000 people participating at the peak moment. Commissioned by the Hong Kong Development Centre, Dr. Francis Lui of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology estimated that attendance ranged from 187,000 to 212,000 people. March attendees chanted slogans demanding the withdrawal of the Extradition Bill and for the Chief Executive to step down. At the end of the rally, some protesters initiated a demonstration surrounding the Legislative Council Complex and got into confrontations with the police. Some protesters attempted to barge into the building, and the police eventually dispersed the crowd with pepper spray and batons.

Several thousands of protesters gathered overnight on the evening of June 11 outside the Legislative Council Complex. On the morning of June 12, over tens of thousands of protesters surrounded around Admiralty. They rushed onto Lung Wo Road, Harcourt Road and Queensway, using crowd control barriers to block the roads, and chanting “withdraw”. In the afternoon, the police started to disperse the crowds using pepper spray, bean bag bullets, rubber...
bullets, and tear gas. The use of weapons with such force was equivalent to that in the 2014 Occupy movement.

On June 16, the CHRF initiated another march demanding the government to withdraw the Extradition Bill. The CHRF also put forward five major demands, including the withdrawal of the Extradition Bill, investigation into police shooting, amnesty for all protesters, and retraction of the label of June 12 as riots, and the resignation of Chief Executive Carrie Lam. The pro-democracy legislative camp also demanded the government to immediately initiate work on an one-time extradition agreement regarding the Taiwan murder case. The march started from Victoria Park to the Government Complex, with many citizens joining in the march mid-way. Because so many people rushed onto the main arterial sections of Gloucester Road, Lockhart Road, Jaffe Road and Johnston Road, the MTR announced that Causeway Bay and Tin Hau MTR stations were closed. The CHRF announced that 2 million people attended the march, while police estimated that peak attendance following the original route was 338,000 people. Commissioned by the Hong Kong Development Centre, Professor Francis Lui, Emeritus Professor of the Hong Kong University for Science and Technology estimated an attendance of 400,000 people. Professor Ron Hui of University of Hong Kong tentatively estimated that there were least 1.5 million, while Professor Michael Tse of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University estimated the figure should be around 1.26 million. Into the night, several thousand protesters occupied Harcourt Road and Lung Wo Road. The police did not clear the occupation.

On June 30, Legislative Councilor Junius Ho and Political Social Strategic organized an assembly at Tamar Park, with the theme of “Support Hong Kong Police, Safeguard the Law, Protect Public Safety”. The organizers announced that 165,000 people attended, while the police stated that the peak attendance was 53,000. Attendees of the rally applauded the Hong Kong Police Force for being restrained and professional in their actions, while also condemning the protesters surrounding the Police Headquarters as disregarding the law and demanding the police to hold hardcore protesters accountable for their actions. A number of pro-establishment legislative councilors, entertainers, and former police officials attended, including former Commissioner of Police Tang King-shing, and Deputy Commissioner of Police Peter Yam.

On July 1, the CHRF organized the annual July 1 march. The theme of the march this year was “Withdraw the Bill, Carrie Lam step down”, and reiterated the five key demands from the June 16 march. The CHRF claimed that 550,000 people participated in the march, while the police stated that there were 190,000 people at the peak moment. Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute estimated that 234,000 passed through the footbridge at the intersection of Hennessy Road and Arsenal road in Wan Chai. This estimate did not include people outside of this checkpoint, and the estimated upper range of people was 374,000. Ming Pao, in collaboration with Cable TV, and a team of academics from The University of Hong Kong and US universities tentatively estimated that 265,000 participated. Professor Francis Hui of the Hong Kong Science and Technology estimated that 215,000 participated.
Citizens started to initiate rallies at different districts at the first weekend of July. On July 6, the Tuen Mun Park Public Health Concern Group organized the “Liberate Tuen Mun Park” action, demanding the government to address the issues of noise nuisance, and indecent singing and solicitation activities. The organizer claimed that over 10,000 people joined the rally, while police estimated peak attendance at 1,800. On July 7, citizen Ventus Lau organized the Kowloon district march. The march extended from Tsim Sha Tsui to Hong Kong West Kowloon Station, aiming to inform Mainland tourists of the Extradition Bill incident. Lau claimed that 230,000 attended, while the police stated a peak attendance of 56,000.

On July 13, the North District Parallel Traders Concern Group organized the “Liberate Sheung Shui” march. Concern Group convenor Leung Kam Shing announced that 30,000 people participated, while the police stated a peak attendance of 4,000. On July 14, netizens organized the Sha Tin district march and rally with Local group Sha Tin Commons and Sha Tin District Councilor Billy Chan applied for the letter of no-objection. At night, the conveners announced that 115,000 joined the rally, while the police stated a peak attendance of 28,000. As the march ended, protesters and riot police faced off in the area around Sha Tin town center. Protesters were chased into Sha Tin New Town Plaza, while the police surrounded many entrances and exits around Sha Tin MTR station. Subsequently, the protesters and police confronted each other inside the central atrium of New Town Plaza. The MTR subsequently announced that trains would not stop at Sha Tin MTR station.

On July 20, the Safeguard Hong Kong Alliance organized the “Safeguard Hong Kong” assembly in Tamar Park, which consisted of four themes: “oppose violence, support the police”; “safeguard the law, ensure public safety”; “against destruction, protect the economy”; and “protect Hong Kong, support all citizens”. The rally also invited individuals from the political and commercial sectors, professional group representatives and entertainers to speak on stage. The organizer claimed that 316,000 people attended the assembly, while the police stated the peak attendance to be 103,000.

On July 21, the CHRF initiated another anti-extradition bill march on Hong Kong island, focusing on the investigation into police brutality and demanding the government to establish an independent commission of inquiry. The CHRF announced that 430,000 people participated, while the police stated that peak attendance following the originally planned route was 138,000. Although the march terminus was set at the intersection of Hennessy Road and Luard Road in Wan Chai, attendees continued onwards, following the route of the July 1 march and headed towards the Government Complex. Some protesters initiated a demonstration at the liaison office, with about 1,000 people joining the protest. They threw eggs and black paint at the gates of the office, smearing the national emblem as signs of protest. They further criticized the government in using the police as shields and abusing protesters, and requested a dialogue with representatives from the liaison office. Into the night, riot police dispersed the crowds, clashed with protesters in front of Central District police station, and subsequently deployed tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse protesters. As the same time, a white-clad mob used clubs to beat
black-clad protesters and civilians at Yuen Long MTR station, which was later commonly called the “July 21 incident”.

On July 26, workers in the aviation sector staged an approximately 10-hour silent protest at Hong Kong International Airport. Attendees raised signs that read “Protect my city” and “establish an independent commission of inquiry”, chanted slogans such as “Liberate Hong Kong, Revolution of Our Times”, and distributed Chinese and English leaflets and signs to arriving passengers. The organizers claimed that 15,000 people participated in the protest at the peak moment, while the police said there were 4,000 people at that moment. On July 27, one week after the July 21 incident at Yuen Long MTR station, citizens initiated the “Liberate Yuen Long” march after Max Chung, the applicant for the march, received a letter of objection from the police. Many citizens still turned out to “shop” in Yuen Long. Many shops and banks in the district were closed for business, but restaurants, convenience stores and some bakeries remained open. Max Chung later estimated that 288,000 people came out to “shop”. Into the night, the police began dispersing the crowds using tear gas, sponge grenades, and rubber bullets. Later on, the police went into the concourse of Yuen Long station to beat protesters.

Marches and rallies occurred in many districts one week later. On August 2, civil servants organized an assembly themed “Civil Servants for All, Walking Together with the Public”. Organizers claimed that 40,000 people attended the assembly, while the police stated that the peak attendance was 13,000. It was the first time since the handover for civil servants to organize a protest. Many current and former Legislative Councilors and top-tier officials spoke on stage, including former Secretary for the Civil Service Joseph Wong. Wong stated that civil servants in attendance enjoyed the same rights as ordinary citizens in reasonably expressing their demands as individuals, and should not fear repercussions. On the same day, medical professionals organized another assembly at Edinburgh Place, insisting for the five key demands. They also proposed four demands relevant to their profession, such as condemning the Hospital Authority for its failure in assuring the confidentiality of patients’ information, condemning the government in quietly consenting the police to abuse their powers in mass arrests, condemning the police in preventing immediate rescue operations and threatening the lives of paramedics, the press and civilians. The organizers claimed that 10,300 people attended the assembly, while the police estimated a peak attendance of 1,300. On August 3 and 4, citizens organized the “Mong Kok march revisited” and the “Tsuen Kwan O” march, calling for a city-wide general strike on August 5. The Mong Kok march turned into a march from Mong Kok to Tsim Sha Tsui, which resorted to a flash operation where the protesters barricaded at the Cross Harbor Tunnel entrance, while other protesters threw bricks into and attempted to set fire outside Tsim Sha Tsui police station.

On the morning of August 5, netizens mobilized a non-cooperative movement, resulting in an 8-line MTR shutdown, only to recover around noontime. In the afternoon, anti-extradition bill rallies and a general strike were held in seven districts, including Tuen Mun, Admiralty, Wong Tai Sin, Mong Kok, Tai Po, Sha Tin and Tsuen Wan. The Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions Chairperson Carol Ng estimated that the number of workers participating in the strike
reached 350,000, with 290,000 attending rallies across various districts. The rallies subsequently turned into barricading entrances of tunnels, blocking traffic in nearby districts and surrounding police stations and the police and disciplinary forces staff quarters. Multiple news sources estimated around five to twelve police stations suffered damage or were set on fire.

From August 9 to 13, netizens called for five consecutive days of assembly at Hong Kong International Airport. Over 10,000 people attended on the first day, August 9, while another over 10,000 people joined on August 12. The latter event was a direct protest to the police’s abusive use of force against protesters across many districts on August 11, including a woman whose eye was shot by a beanbag round. The massive turnout in the protest brought the traffic to the airport to a halt, severely disrupting operations and subsequently led to the Airport Authority’s cancellation of all flights for the day. On August 13, roughly 10,000 people continued to protest at the airport. Protesters blocked the departure lounges, which led to the Airport Authority again cancelling the remaining flights for the day. At night, several hundred protesters surrounded and strapped a black-clad man suspected to be a Mainland police officer in disguise. The police arrived on the scene and clashed with protesters.

Both the anti-extradition and pro-extradition bill camps organized respective events from August 16 to 18. On August 16, the Hong Kong Higher Institutions International Affairs Delegation and the “Stand with Hong Kong Fight for Freedom” LIHKG campaign organized “Stand with Hong Kong - Power to the People” rally and brought forward two major demands. The first demand was to urge the U.K. to declare that China had unilaterally violated the Sino-British Joint Declaration. The second demand was to urge the U.K. and the U.S. to sanction ranking officials of Hong Kong who were eroding Hong Kong’s freedom and democracy. The organizers claimed that 60,000 people attended, while the police stated that there were 7,100 people at the peak moment. On August 17, Safeguard Hong Kong Alliance from the pro-extradition bill camp organized a “Ban violence, rescue Hong Kong; refuse mutual destruction, let’s rescue Hong Kong” assembly, at Tamar Park in Admiralty. Their seven key demands included: stop the illegal marches, rallies and road occupations; stop the molotovs, arsons, brick throwing and other violent acts; stop impacting the daily lives of civilians in the non-cooperative movement; stop smearing the national emblem and destruction of police stations and public infrastructure; restore the tradition of law and order, and reinforcing “one country, two systems”; civilians with political differences should not attack each other; and allow society to return to normal, and move forward to reform the government.

On the same day, the anti-extradition bill camp respectively organized marches on Hong Kong island and in the districts of Hung Hom and To Kwa Wan. The Professionals’ Teachers Union organized a rally themed “Safeguard future generations and speak from your conscience”. The rally began in Chater Garden and finished outside Government House. The organizer estimated that 22,000 people participated, while the police stated a peak attendance of 8,300. That afternoon, netizens launched the “Liberate Hung Hom and To Kwa Wan” rally, reiterating the five key demands and protesting against the impacts of Mainland tourists on local residents.
Rally applicant Timothy Lee estimated over 10,000 people joined the rally, while the police estimated around 3,500 attended.

On August 18, due to the objection by the police to a march, the CHPF subsequently organized an “ebb and flow” style assembly at Victoria Park, with the theme called “Stand against police brutality and police-triad collusion”, and reiterated the five key demands. People poured into Victoria Park, and spilled onto the streets, marching towards Central. This was the first weekend in the month where there were no clashes between protesters and police. The CHRF estimated that at least 1.7 million people participated in the event, while the police stated the peak attendance at Victoria Park was 128,000.

On August 23, people across different districts formed human chains, creating the “Hong Kong Way” to reiterate the use of peaceful, rational and non-violent ways to highlight the determination of Hong Kong people to strive for the five key demands. The organizers estimated that over 210,000 people participated, forming a 60 kilometer long human chain that was inspired by and in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Baltic Way. On August 25, citizens organized the Tsuen Kwai Tsing march. Different news sources reported the attendance to be from several thousands to 100,000. Legislative Councilor Andrew Wan estimated roughly 100,000 people gathered at the Kwai Chung Sports Ground. The rally ended up as another clash between police and protesters. Protesters erected barricades, and police responded with tear gas and pepper pellets. Alongside the riot police and raptor squads, the police also deployed water cannons for the first time to disperse the crowds. On August 28, the Hong Kong Women’s Coalition on Equal Opportunities organized the “Anti-Extradition Bill #metoo” assembly at Chater Garden to protest against the alleged use of sexual violence by the police towards protesters. The organizers claimed that 30,000 people participated in the assembly, while the police stated that 11,500 people attended.

On September 2, the first day of school, The Hong Kong Higher Institutions International Affairs Delegation staged a school strike at the University Mall at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Student Unions of 10 tertiary institutions launched a two-week strike campaign. The organizer claimed that 30,000 people attended. According to The Chinese University of Hong Kong Student Union President Jacky So, this number was higher than any other school strike rally at the university since the 2012 protests against the moral and national education and the 2014 Occupy movement. Furthermore, another 20 sectors launched a back-to-back general strike on September 2 and 3. The general strike included an assembly at Tamar Park, themed as “General Strike, Hongkongers at a point of No Turning Back. Five demands. Not one less.” The organizers stated that they had set September 13 as the deadline. If the government did not respond to the five key demands, they would consider escalating their actions. The organizers claimed that respectively 30,000 and 40,000 people joined the event on the two days respectively.

On September 4, Chief Executive Carrie Lam announced the official withdrawal of the Extradition Bill. On September 6, the Social and Political Organization Workers Union
organized the “Oppose Abusive Arrests, Stop Oppressive Powers” assembly at Chater Garden to protest against the many cases of exploitative use of force against protesters, with around 23,000 people attending. On September 8, netizens organized the “Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Prayer Rally”, adopting an “ebb and flow” style to march to the U.S. Consulate in order to pass on a petition letter, urging the U.S. to pass the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act. A variety of news sources reported an attendance of between several thousand to the organizer’s preliminary estimates of 250,000. After the rally and march, police and protesters faced off in various parts of Hong Kong Island.

On September 15, despite the objection from the police, the CHRF continued to hold a rally across Hong Kong Island, with 100,000 people joining. In the afternoon, protesters began to destroy MTR station facilities, and headed towards the Government Complex in Admiralty and threw bricks and petrol bombs. The police dispersed the crowd with multiple rounds of tear gas and water cannons. Riot police showed up and forced the protesters to retreat to Wan Chai and Causeway Bay.

On September 27, citizens gathered at Edinburgh Plaza in Central to stand in solidarity with arrestees held at San Uk Ling Holding Centre and called on public attention to the issue of police brutality. The organizers announced 50,000 people attended the event, while the police stated the peak attendance size was 9,520. On September 28, the 5th anniversary of the Occupy movement, the CHRF organized an assembly in Tamar Park. It estimated that between 200,000 to 300,000 people attended the event, a record high of the same event in five years. The police later stated that there were 8,440 people attending at its peak moment. On September 29, netizens organized the “Global Anti-Totalitarianism” rally, with the theme of “Connect the World, Fight against Tyranny”. Multiple news sources reported “large crowd of people” participated but no concrete estimates were reported. When the rally first started, police attempted to disperse protesters using tear gas. The march proceeded towards the Government Complex. Police moved in to disperse the crowds, deploying water cannons and arresting protesters.

On October 1, the CHRF organized the National Day rally with a theme called “There is No National Day; Only Remembrance”. Despite the objection from the police, Albert Ho from the Democratic Party, Leung Kwok-hung of the League for Social Democrats, Figo Chan from the CHRF, staged a rally under their individual capacity in place of the CHRF to lead the march on its planned route. The protesters re-iterated the slogan “Five demands, Not One Less”. The CHRF estimated that around 100,000 joined the rally. Upon arriving at Sai Wan, riot police fired multiple rounds of tear gas to disperse the crowd. Aside from this march, netizens also called for protests across six districts, which led to clashes between police and protesters in Wong Tai Sin, Sha Tin, Tuen Mun, Tsuen Wan and Sham Shui Po. Police fired six real bullets that day. In Tsuen Wan, One police officer fired a live round at a Secondary 5 student at close range and hit his left chest. This student became the first protester who got shot by a live round in the anti-extradition bill movement. Close to midnight, the MTR announced the closure of 47 stations, constituting over half of all stations in the system.
On October 3, sources revealed that the government was ready to use the power granted by the Emergency Regulations Ordinance to implement the Prohibition on Face Covering Regulation (commonly known as the anti-mask law) that would be in effect immediately on October 5. Around noontime on October 4, roughly 10,000 people gathered at Chater Garden to protest against the anti-mask law, which in turn occupied a portion of Connaught Road Central. Protesters chanted slogans such as “no crime in wearing masks, no reason behind the legislation” and “Hongkongers, Resist”. In the afternoon, Chief Executive Carrie Lam made an announcement of passing the anti-mask law. In response, citizens marched in various districts. Into the night, protesters erected barricades, started fires, and destroyed facilities in MTR stations and stores with Chinese-backed capital. That night, the MTR subsequently announced a shut-down of all lines. On October 6, citizens organized the Anti-Emergency Regulations Ordinance march. Several thousands to tens of thousands of people marched from Causeway Bay to Wan Chai. Meanwhile, netizens organized the “Kowloon Revolution” march, starting in the Tsim Sha Tsui area and proceeding through Mong Kok and Prince Edward. That afternoon, police fired tear gas to disperse the crowds. Later in the night, Causeway Bay, Wan Chai, Mong Kok and Kowloon Tong stations were being damaged.

On October 14, on the eve of the tabling of the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act before the U.S. House of Representatives, citizens called a “Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act Rally” at Chater Garden to urge the U.S. to pass the Act. The organizers claimed that over 130,000 people joined. The police stated that there were 25,200 people at the peak moment. On October 20, the CHRF’s originally planned Kowloon march was opposed by the police. Despite opposition, the CHRF’s vice-convener Figo Chan and some former pro-democracy legislative councilors carried on leading the march. The march theme centered on demanding the government to respond to the five demands and to abolish the anti-mask law. Chan later claimed that over 350,000 people participated in the march.

Concept and Introduction

Rallies and processions have long been a way for Hong Kong citizens to express their views and participate in politics in an orderly manner. Historically, the most major protests in Hong Kong are linked with circumstances nationally.

Before the handover in 1997, Hong Kong had its largest ever march, the “cross-island march” on May 21, 1979. Various news sources reported that 1 million people joined the march. The goal of the march was to show solidarity with the student-led democracy movement in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square and to protest against the Beijing government’s implementation of martial law. One week later, on May 28, the “Global Chinese march” further showed solidarity with the movement in Beijing. On that same day, the then newly established Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China, organized a march in Hong Kong. Reports estimated that close to 1.5 million people participated in the event.
After the handover, civil society organizations and the right to assembly, of procession and of demonstration, were protected under Article 27 of the Basic Law. However, the Public Ordinance also regulates this right, such that if the number of people participating in the assembly is over 30, then one must apply for a letter of no objection from the Hong Kong Police Force. According to the Hong Kong Police Force database, the number of rallies and processions increased almost every year. The most noticeable rise was the increase from 4,222 cases in 2009 to 13,158 in 2016, representing a 311% increase over the seven years.

On July 1, 2003, because the HKSAR government proposed moving forward on the National Security Bill under Article 23 of the Basic Law, a large swath of citizens participated in the march on Hong Kong Island. Public Opinion Programme at The University of Hong Kong estimated that on that day, close to 429,000 to 502,000 joined the march. The police estimated around 350,000, while the CHRF estimated around 500,000. Since then, the CHRF has been holding marches on the day of the handover on July 1 to demand for democracy in Hong Kong. Despite the different attendance estimates between the CHRF, the police and academic institutions, it can be said that the July 1 march is the largest annual procession for Hong Kong people to fight for democracy.

Nevertheless, Hong Kong’s electoral reform and pace towards democracy has been slow-moving. As the many years of rallies and processions have yet to deliver any concrete outcomes, someone finally proposed using the tactic of civil disobedience to occupy the major streets of Central in 2013, in the hope that the central and HKSAR governments would fulfill the promises made towards democratization in Hong Kong.

Occupy Central with Love and Peace co-founder Benny Tai stated that, “Civil disobedience became a way to understand that people can truthfully grounded in justice, not just for personal gain but for societal gain, to engage in open, intentional and limited acts of breaking the law, to try and change an unjust system”. To garner people’s acceptance for the legitimacy of civil disobedience as a tactic to fight for fairness and demands, civil disobedience actions have to be non-violent, exhausted all other legal means to reach the objective, and satisfied proportional and reasonable chances of succeeding. People who engage in civil disobedience are more obliged to accept the responsibility for their crime to show that they respect the law”. Based on this understanding, the focus of civil disobedience is not about whether one has violated the law, but how the law was violated. Similarly, organizations, or protesters organizing or participating in rallies and processions must pay a greater cost than voting or petitioning. If it entails civil disobedience, then participants would have to face the consequences for their criminal penalties, and thus have to pay a greater cost.

The recent months, what began originally were the CHRF and other political parties launching rallies and processions in opposition to the Extradition Bill. In preparation for the June 9 anti-extradition bill march, the CHRF stated that if the government still did not withdraw the Bill,
then it would escalate their actions, rounding up citizens to surround the Legislative Council Complex to prevent the second reading of the Extradition Bill. Despite the 1.03 million people who attended the anti-extradition bill march on June 9, the Chief Executive’s unwavering attitude to proceed with the Bill became the flashpoint for the anti-extradition bill movement. At the same time, the movement has highlighted the widespreadness of civic conscience. Regardless of one’s age, profession or religion, and especially among the youth, one was able to take part in the movement. Indeed, the distribution of self-initiated activities across districts and sectors was also prominent.

The anti-extradition bill movement tested the public’s tolerance of hardcore protestor tactics. On the one hand, a majority of citizens insisted using peaceful, rational and non-violent means to organize and participate in rallies and processions of various sizes. On the other hand, hardcore protesters considered the inherent injustices within the current system, compounded with the years of negligent by the government to the peaceful rallies and processions joined by hundreds of thousands to a million people. To them, forceful tactics became the means in the hope that the government would respond. As the movement evolved, principles of “the state of leaderless” and “no pointing fingers, not abandoning each other” resonated as mottos. Eventually an attitude of banding and leaning upon one another was fostered and became one of the core values and elements of the movement.

Aside from this, the longevity of this movement is inextricably linked with the use of new media platforms. Compared to movements in the last century, contemporary social movements differ in the use of web-based platforms, including social media applications to facilitate collective action. Any person can become a netizen. When netizens band together to discuss society and politics and are provided with a platform to raise political demands, these platforms can become sites for organizing social movements. Netizens could become movement strategists, campaigners, media distributors, and executors. This balance of strategizing and launching actions, with the on-the-ground execution of actions, reinforce each other to propel social movements.

**Observation and Analysis**

Since June, large numbers of people have come onto the streets to express their opposition to the Extradition Bill. The anti-extradition bill movement further expanded in a variety of ways. Core to the movement, the five key demands became expressed in a variety of different ways, such as marches, rallies, demonstrations, surrounding a place, prayer meetings, general strikes, human chains, mass choirs and petition campaigns. These rapid uptakes hoped that the government would respond to their demands. Through major incidents such as the July 21 incident in Yuen Long, the August 31 incident in Prince Edward MTR station, and October 1 marches on National Day, these trends indicate that after major societal incidents, protesters not only directed their attention towards the government, but also towards the police and their
management. This resulted in a series of clashes and violent escalations between protesters and police.

As the anti-extradition bill movement enters its sixth month, the public opinion towards the movement has not seen any polarization between the movement as a whole, nor the tactics of the protesters. It has maintained a generally high level of support for the five key demands, especially towards establishing the independent commission of inquiry. This reflects that public sentiment has seeped into different socio-demographics, sectors and arenas of Hong Kong society. It eventually took more than two and a half months for the Chief Executive to officially withdraw the Bill. Various commentators and scholars considered the responses from the Chief Executive being too late. Over the course of the movement, the government allowed various issues to simmer.

The escalating use of force by the police, in handling protesters and dealing with protest tactics has received much scrutiny. On the demonstration surrounding the Legislative Council Complex on June 12, the use of multiple rounds of tear gas, rubber bullets and pepper pellets to disperse protesters was immediately perceived as a violent use of force, marking the beginning of the worsening relations between the police and citizens. The five key demands not only included the withdrawal of the Extradition Bill, but also the retraction of labeling the June 12 protest as riots, and the investigation into the use of force by the police. As protest tactics escalated, the police stated that they used equivalent levels of force to combat these levels of violent acts. Police drawing out guns, deploying water cannons and firing a live round at a protester in October normalized the level of violence in protester and police confrontations. When the people perceived the white-clad mob incident as a form of collusion between police and the triads, and that there was no fair treatment of white-clad mobs, citizens and protesters perceived the police as selectively enforcing the law, raising the perception of citizens of a phenomenon of police-triad and villager collusion. This incident and the police’s immediate response became the turning point in the movement and laid the ground for the developments of the movement in August, September and October. Public opinion polling also showed that the public satisfaction towards the police dropped significantly. People were less tolerant of police’s use of force than the protester’s use of force.

The mode of protest has shifted, reflecting the pro-activeness in self-initiating protests of citizens. In March and April, the beginning of the Extradition Bill controversy, the anti-extradition bill camp was confined mainly to the protests initiated by the CHRF. Aside from June 9 and June 16 or other centralized forms of protests, the movement morphed into a movement sustained by self-initiating individuals or groups. The protesters used different ways to express their demands. For example, various individuals, civil and professional bodies organized rallies and processions. In July and August and later into the movement, netizens seeped into various districts with rallies and processions, large and small. Different rallies also turned into more hardcore protests, including barricading entrances of tunnels, road blocking, and attacking police stations and vandalizing Chinese-backed stores to express dissatisfaction towards the police and supporters of police. Pro-democracy camp opinion leaders and political
organizations did not interfere, but rather became a mediator and overseer of the clashes between police and civilians, thus becoming a line of support for protesters. What started as peaceful rallies and processions, evolved into “flash” protests, vandalism of public facilities and protesters throwing petrol bombs. Some citizens have raised their tolerance towards the forceful tactics of hardcore protesters. However, other citizens believe that these protesters used excessive force. The anti-mask law implemented in October seemed to have little effect in deterring protesters from engaging in unauthorized rallies and processions.

The protesters used a variety of tactics to sustain the movement. They used social media to distribute messages, such as the “protest schedule” to let citizens organize, participate in low-cost and strategic protests. Furthermore, the number of large-scale rallies and processions reached a peak in June. As the movement developed, rallies and processions became more frequent, and more decentralized. Students became the major participants in the movement, such as the organization of the High Schoolers School Strike Platform, or the student unions or concern groups from many tertiary institutions. The movement also mobilized a large number of groups and individuals from the medical, financial, insurance, social welfare, education, legal, aviation, and civil service sectors. Different groups self-initiated various activities according to the social situation and own capacity.

The pro-extradition bill camp primarily used centralized means to mobilize people, in the hope of creating counter-rhetoric in response to the continuous mobilization from the anti-extradition bill camp. From March to June, the pro-extradition bill camp had some relatively small-scale activities. Only until June to August did the pro-establishment camp organize three major rallies. The organizers of the activities inclined to the pro-establishment camp, business sectors, and other pro-Beijing groups and individuals. Compared to the anti-extradition bill camp, the expansiveness and representation of the pro-extradition bill camp was relatively confined.

Chapter 6: Campaigns via Traditional Media

In general, people use traditional media, such as newspaper, television and radio, to express political demands. However, with the growing trend of online social movement as a modal, mobilization via traditional media may also require the use of the internet, to a certain extent. The definition of “traditional media” has become more ambiguous ever since. Considering the above factors, the following analysis of mobilization during the study period took into account the broader definition of tradition media which includes all ways of expressing one's political demands or stance without the use of the internet.

Traditional media described in this chapter include petitions, crowdfunding and newspaper advertisements, manifestations of human chains and mass choirs, a variety of printed media, and citizens’ press conferences.
Description and Configuration

Petitions

Because the number of petitions happened in study period was huge and in view of limited time, we covered only petitions that received broad coverage or categorization (please refer to Appendix 4 for the list of petitions).

On May 25, the CHRF launched a petition “Global Signing: Against Extradition to China”, which accumulated over 590,000 signatures. Aside from this, hundreds of civil society organizations and individuals launched similar anti-extradition bill petitions. These included professional groups, different community, religious, human rights and other groups. Post-secondary, secondary and elementary concern groups and relevant individuals also launched petitions. Notably, the petitions were signed by over 222,000 secondary and elementary school students, alumni and staff members from over 400 schools, as well as at least 35,000 post-secondary students, alumni and staff members.

Groups within the pro-extradition bill camp also launched similar petitions. On April 16, citizens from the industrial and commercial, legal, technological and grassroots sectors formed the “Unison support for Extradition Bill and Justice Group” and launched the “Safeguard Hong Kong public safety, Support Extradition Bill Petition”. As of June 14, the Group claimed that over 935,000 people signed the online petition. The “Safeguard Justice, Support Extradition Bill Alliance” subsequently formed the “Safeguard Hong Kong Alliance” on July 21. In response to the government’s implementation of the anti-mask law, the Alliance initiated the “Anti-black Clad Violence, Anti-Mask, Protect Our Home” online petition. As of October 20, the Alliance claimed that over 250,000 people signed the petition. Aside from the main petitions from Safeguard Hong Kong Alliance, the “Protect Electoral Reform, Against Occupy Central Signatories Group” launched the “Rejection of Legislative Council Violence” petition on May 12 and collected over 1,500 signatures in one day.

Aside from the proactive petitioning from both camps, former high-ranking officials, civil servants and councilors also published four open-named petitions over June and July. The petitions urged the government, to seek reconciliation, approach the issues with a controlled manner. They demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Extradition Bill, retraction of the riot categorization of June 12 events, and establishment of the independent commission of inquiry.

Crowdfunding and Newspaper Advertisements

LIHKG users launched three rounds of crowdfunding to place advertisements in widely influential newspapers of at least 10 neighboring or western countries and regions. They aimed to increase the awareness of the Extradition Bill and Hongkongers’ demands among the international community.
In mid-June, LIHK users used the platform “GoGet Funding” to fundraise for placing advertisements in newspapers during the period of the G20 summit. The advertisement mentioned that the government’s lack of response after over a million people took to the streets twice to protest the Extradition Bill. The crowdfunding raised over HK$6.7 million within 9 hours, surpassing its goal of HK$3 million. The initial rounds of advertisements were published in The Guardian of the U.K., Süddeutsche Zeitung of Germany, Washington Post and New York Times of the U.S.A., The Globe and Mail of Canada, and the EU web version of Politico. The advertisements reiterated the key demands and urged governments from various countries to step up the pressure towards China.

In mid-August, LIHKG users launched another round of crowdfunding in the hope of further raising the awareness of Hong Kong situation, particularly the allegedly excessive use of force by the police among the international community. They fundraised over US$1 million. Advertisements were posted on August 19 to 20, in newspapers from 10 countries and regions, such as The New York Times, The Globe and Mail, and Le Monde. In September, netizens launched the third round of crowdfunding and raised over HK$8.5 million. Advertisements were published in newspapers from 9 countries ahead of the National Holiday of China. The aim was to call people from these countries to put pressure on their governments to demand the central and HKSAR governments to respond to the five key demands. Furthermore, in line with the theme of anti-global totalitarianism, they called for people to resist Chinese influence in their countries.

The HKSAR government also ran one offshore newspaper advertisement. After announcing the withdrawal of the Extradition Bill, the HKSAR government placed a full-page advertisement in the Australian Financial Review, expressing that the government was committed to supporting “one country, two systems”, open to dialogue from different sectors, reiterating its determination in guarding the safety of Hong Kong.

Different well-known individuals also published rare advertisements in local newspapers in response to issues arising from the Extradition Bill incident. On August 20, Sir Gordon Wu from Hopewell Holdings published a full-page advertisement. Hong Kong tycoon Li Ka-shing also published advertisements twice. Li first published two versions of full-page advertisements in several local newspapers on August 16 that generally called for respect for “one country, two systems, an end to the violence, and a warning towards worse outcomes despite best intentions. Li, subsequently published a second advertisement, together with his son Richard Li, on September 5, under the theme, “Protect one country, two systems, Stop Violence, Restore Order”.

**Human chains and mass choirs**

Since August, there were more frequent appearance of self-initiating human chain and mass choir activities. For example, netizens organized the “Hong Kong Way” on August 23. It was estimated that more than 135,000 people participated in the 60-kilometre chain, stretching from
Lion Rock, Victoria Peak, “Garden” peak, and three main MTR lines. The Hong Kong Way was replicated after the 2 million strong Baltic Way human chain in 1989, where people fought to break away from the Soviet Union. The organizers issued a statement that urged the government to commit to “one country, two systems”. They hoped other countries and Hong Kong people were on the same page, asking for unity, despite the label of peaceful and frontline protesters. Other groups followed suit, and began incorporating human chains into their districts and schools, such as the September 5th human chain activity involving over 100 schools.

The beloved “Glory to Hong Kong” song from the anti-extradition bill camp was frequently played in many street and shopping mall performances and mass choirs. It was also used in conjunction with human chain activities. In response, the pro-extradition bill camp launched similar activities where their supporters sang the Chinese national anthem. Several news sources pointed out that during some of these activities turned into scuffles between the two camps.

**Lennon Walls and other protest symbols**

On June 12, the day where protesters surrounded the Legislative Council Complex, a Lennon Wall re-appeared outside the Government Complex. That was a significant landmark during the time of Occupy Movement in 2014, while it now was covered in messages/slogans like “Anti-Extradition”, “Withdraw the Evil Law”, “Hong Kong Add Oil”, “Insist till the end” and “I love my city” and so on.

Lennon Walls originated in Prague of the Czech Republic, by citizens opposing the communist regime to put on John Lennon-inspired graffiti, pieces of lyrics from Beatles’ songs, and other designs relating to local and global causes, symbolizing the pursuit of peace. The Hong Kong version of the Lennon Wall filled with not only people’s demands to the government, but also encouraging messages to fellow Hongkongers. It became a message board showing anti-extradition bill promotion materials and ventilating public anger.

Lennon Walls began to appear in many parts of Hong Kong, such as local streets, footbridges, tunnels, shopping malls, and Councilor offices. Walls were posted with protest slogans, photos from the internet, “LIHKG pigs”, and encouragements in support of the protesters, five demands, as well as expressing dissatisfaction towards the HKSAR government and Hong Kong Police Force. The pedestrian tunnel connecting Tai Po MTR Station, also popularly referred to as Lennon Tunnel, at one point became one of the biggest Lennon Wall displays in Hong Kong.

In mid-August, LIHKG netizens, on behalf of a group of citizens who were passionate about art and design, crowdfunded over HK$200,000 to construct the Lady Liberty statue. The group explained that the statue symbolized the bravery and strength of Hong Kong citizens who was confronting in the anti-extradition bill movement.
Furthermore, citizens folded origamis in peaceful gatherings. Participants of human chain activities have also used Pepe the Frog as a symbol of solidarity with protesters, redefining the perception of Pepe and its associations with alt-right nationalist movements and racial discrimination in the Western world.

Other physical support: materials, frontline medical support, “free-ride” and promotion of “Yellow Economy”

Movement supporters and citizens donated various materials, such as frontline gear, food, drinks, and money to protesters. During the events, supporters were always seen at the back, forming a human supply chain to pass water and umbrellas to the frontline protesters.

In addition, people from all walks of life volunteered to provide various support to the frontline protesters. Among them, frontline first aiders are most visible. Some individuals self-initiated “free-ride” services to deliver supplies to the scenes and also send protesters away from the scenes. The most significant days were July 21, where individuals helped young protesters escape from Yuen Long MTR station, and September 1, where many drivers helped send the citizens who joined the Airport sit-in leave Lantau Island.

Furthermore, members in the anti-extradition bill camp also initiated “Yellow Economy” in the hope of infilling the protesting tactics into daily lives, where they encouraged citizens to support shops that support the movement and boycott those who supported the government, the police and being backed by Chinese capital. Some netizens even created special maps which showed “yellow”, “blue” and “green” shops to help other citizens join in their actions.

Citizens Press Conference

Since August, netizens periodically held Citizens Press Conferences. These conferences directly responded to recent events, invited key opinion individuals from the anti-extradition bill camp, and sometimes released polls of opinions from people within the camp. The media provided extensive coverage of the press conferences.

Concept and Introduction

Traditional media has been used in previous mass movements in Hong Kong to spread the messages of each camp. Launching petitions has been one of the major ways to express public sentiments. At the same time, each camp has been building on the foundations from the 2014 Occupy Movement, where Lennon Walls were also one of the prominent civic platforms for expressing demands. Other consequences of the 2014 Occupy movement were the heightened sense of political divides, and the political stereotyping of “yellow” and “blue” ribbons. In the
aftermath of the Occupy movement, this political consciousness has remained in the daily lives of people.

**Observation and Analysis**

The use of traditional media in campaigning is one of the key features at the beginning of the anti-extradition bill movement, and that sustained onwards. The many petition activities before the 1 million rally on June 9 helped raise the public awareness of the Extradition Bill, and later bring the issues in Hong Kong to the international limelight. Netizens tried to push the petitions and advertisements to an international level in the hope of attracting international attention to the right of basic freedom in Hong Kong, its progress of democratic development and the deteriorating rule of law.

Compared to the 2014 Occupy movement, the anti-extradition bill movement has amassed large number of material and monetary resources to fuel the movement. Furthermore, because the threshold for participation was self-selected, this criterion enabled multitudes, ranging from different sector professionals, students, parents and children, even the “silver haired” elders to find their own ways to support the movement. This heightened sense of civic responsibility was further highlighted in the enormous rate of participation.

There are also signs that the movement has entrenched itself into Hong Kong society. The Citizens’ Press Conference has become a staple in generating rhetoric and directing the public anger towards the HKSAR Government, and subsequently towards the Hong Kong Police Force. At the same time, we also witness the rising sentiment for boycotting Mainland corporates brands, with some radical protesters going further to damage these premises. There has yet to be a fine line drawn on acceptable tactics.

**Chapter 7: Campaigns via New Media**

New media could be defined as online platforms that allow interactions and exchanges among users. They include Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Telegram, websites for promotion and forums. These platforms played a crucial role in the anti-extradition bill movement, such as enhancing communication and mobilizing support. In particular, the uses of the LIHKG forum, Telegram and Twitter in the movement have received the most attention. This chapter thus explores their roles in the movement.

**Description and Configuration**

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4 See Lee et al. (2015) and Chu (2018) for further analysis.
LIHKG forum

The LIHKG forum was one of the major communication platforms in the movement. Founded in 2016, the users of the forum appeared to come from diverse backgrounds but were primarily young Hong Kongers. With identities kept anonymous, they disseminated information, discussed future actions, as well as conducted evaluations and discussed the direction of the movement. By interacting and giving thumbs-up or thumbs-down, forum users decided on the most popular and relevant topics and set the focus of the forum.

The forum was seen as one of the thrusts of the movement since June. As a matter of fact, LIHKG users started noticing the Extradition Bill in March. In April, there was a spike in discussion regarding the Extradition Bill, such as the severity of the subject matter and sharing of information regarding the anti-extradition bill rally organized by the CHRF. In May, users further mobilized. They created promotional materials, set up street counters to distribute leaflets, put up posters, and launched petitions to the White House.

Later into the movement, users organized rallies in various districts, replacing traditional political parties and individuals in their roles in assembling the people. Sometimes, they even rescheduled their rallies in view of the actual circumstances. Meanwhile, they also took prompt responses to breaking social events. They crowdfunded for advertisements to be put up in multiple countries, as well as reminded participants of the October 20 Tsim Sha Tsui march not to attack South Asian citizens and to protect Chungking Mansions and Kowloon Mosque.

The forum also brought together people to form groups for further action. Since August, LIHKG forum users held “Citizens’ Press Conferences”, trying to shift people’s focus back to the demands of the movement and to respond to comments from the Hong Kong Police Force and the government. Other LIHKG users formed a political alliance called “Hi! Freedom” which consists of 30 people, who ran for District Council Elections in Kwun Tong, Southern and Sham Shui Po districts.
LIHKG forum users have also sought to include more people in the loop, such as by creating a version of the forum for seniors\textsuperscript{13}, and creating channels on Reddit\textsuperscript{14} to reach overseas and English-speaking audiences.

Based on our focus groups, there were young participants who used LIHKG as the primary means of obtaining information or to learn about other people’s opinions:

(1) “I usually go on LIHKG. Why do I choose LIHKG but not other media? Because I think news reports have to be reviewed and so some time has already passed when they are finally published. You can really see what is happening live and others’ immediate reactions on LIHKG. Thus I would constantly check on LIHKG to catch up with the latest developments.” (2) “After the conflicts, I would go back to LIHKG and see how most people thought of the incident.”

Despite the prevalent use of LIHKG forum among participants of the focus groups to read the threads, less than half of the participants said they took part in the discussions.

**Telegram**

Telegram became a primary communication platform for the movement. Messages sent through “secret chats” are encrypted end-to-end and self-destruct timers can be set to delete messages after being read, making it seemingly more private and secure than other instant messaging platforms. Also, users can use usernames instead of phone numbers to start conversations with others, meaning that people’s phone numbers can be kept private. In addition, “channels”, one-way broadcasting groups, can be set up and can have an unlimited number of members. Votes can also be launched on Telegram, allowing for quick polling of people’s views.

The use of Telegram is not new in Hong Kong protests. It was used in the 2014 Occupy movement. Not only were the messages used for daily communication, but they were also used in organizing on-the-ground activities, and adapting in response to the situation and upon challenges\textsuperscript{15}. Whereas Telegram was largely used among the hardcore protesters in 2014, The use of Telegram in this movement had proliferated to general smartphone users. However, some people also reported being overwhelmed by the vast amount of information.

The use of Telegram in the anti-extradition bill movement could be classified into various types, including for general discussion, news coverage, scouting and traffic information, designing promotional materials, resources pooling, doxxing, etc. The membership size of the largest

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\textsuperscript{13} https://www.facebook.com/%E8%93%AE%E7%87%88%E8%A8%8E%E8%AB%96%E5%8D%80-453913128519622/

\textsuperscript{14} https://lihkg.com/thread/1199526/

channel could reach as high as close to 200,000. Various digital and online media outlets, political parties as well as student organizations have also set up their own Telegram channels.

**Twitter**

Twitter has been argued to have fueled social movements in the last decade, such as Occupy Wall Street and the Arab Spring. This time too, Twitter was noted by many as one of the key sites of message dissemination by the anti-extradition bill camp to overseas audiences.

Supporters of the anti-extradition bill movement were preliminarily observed to have used the following hashtags: #hongkong, #hongkongprotests, #hkprotests, #antiELAB, #standwithHK, #freedomHK, #weareHongKongers, #sosHK, #antimasklaw, #FollowBackHongKong, #hkpolice, #hkpolicestate, #policebrutality, #hkpoliceviolence, #hkpoliceterrorism, #teargas, #光復香港時代革命, #五大訴求, #缺一不可, #手足互科, #手足科勞, #圍爐.

To explore the relationship between the use of hashtags and the major events in the first four months of the anti-extradition bill movement, a trend analysis was conducted looking into six hashtags (#hongkongprotests; #antiELAB; #antimasklaw; #hkpolicestate; #hkpolice; #freedomhk) that brought to our attention at various points using a tool developed by Crimson Hexagon.

![Figure 7.1. Total volume of six hashtags of the Anti-Extradition Bill Movement from June 1 to October 22.](image)

As shown in figure 7.1, the peak usages of #hongkongprotests and #antiELAB, the two most often used hashtags, generally coincided. Their uses saw major rises on June 12 and from then on they fluctuated together and surged when there were major protests, which usually happened every weekend. For #freedomhk, its use spiked on June 28 and August 19 due to advertisements.
being put up in major news outlets in various countries. Likewise, the introduction of the anti-mask law led to the rise of the #antimasklaw hashtag around October 3, 4 and 5. Interests in #hkpolice and #hkpolicestate picked up in late August, and rose at the end of September and at the start of October, peaking respectively on October 13th and 20th. The overall trend shows that contents about the movement on Twitter increased over time and with the use of different hashtags for different major events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hashtags</th>
<th>Total Posts</th>
<th>Date of Peak Postings</th>
<th>Posts on Date of Peak Postings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#hongkongprotests</td>
<td>2,759,274</td>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>139,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#antielab</td>
<td>1,714,864</td>
<td>August 31</td>
<td>71,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#antimasklaw</td>
<td>256,406</td>
<td>October 5</td>
<td>47,598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#hkpolicestate</td>
<td>263,807</td>
<td>October 13</td>
<td>21,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#hkpolice</td>
<td>485,348</td>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>38,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#freedomhk</td>
<td>443,292</td>
<td>August 19</td>
<td>34,006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.1. Hashtags, total posts, and date and volume of posts on days of peak postings.\(^\text{16}\)

Another way to examine how Twitter was used was to examine the top retweets. Retweets allow for fast reposting of original content, and allowing user to insert their own views to continue and enrich the discussion. One of the most common hashtags used by protesters was #hongkongprotests. It was found that the top influencer was Hong Kong Free Press, with a follower base of 231k. The top retweet went to Alexandre Krauss on August 12 on military activity took place north of Hong Kong in Shenzhen\(^\text{17}\), which received 47.5k retweets and 73.4k likes (Figure 7.2a). The second top retweet from Alex Hofford on July 28 on the innovative tactics of protesters in combating tear gas\(^\text{18}\), which received 34.5k retweets and 90.1k likes (Figure 7.2b). Alex Hofford is a Hong Kong-based photojournalist, while the other user, Alexander Krauss, is a Senior Political Advisor of a EU-based advocacy group. These uses demonstrate that Twitter users based in Hong Kong and abroad used Twitter to engage in the protests.

\(^{16}\) Caution is advised in referencing the exact large numbers, as the data is only exploratory and has yet to be filtered for bot presence.

\(^{17}\) https://twitter.com/alexandrekrausz/status/1160947525442056193

\(^{18}\) https://twitter.com/alexhofford/status/1155514310308896768
Hong Kong activists have also used Twitter to engage overseas audiences. LIHKG forum and its associated Telegram channels were active in introducing members to the basic commands of Twitter, and particularly on how to effectively push the Hong Kong protests to trend\(^{19}\). However, protesters’ uses of Twitter was not totally effective. Many users tweeted in Chinese, thereby limiting the reach to the overseas audiences. LIHKG users were observed to follow each other but were unable to expand beyond their networks. There were instances where other Hong Kong-based Twitter users would provide guidance or tips to such users.

**Observation and Analysis**

New media has become the new normal of social movements in Hong Kong. It is the platform for both internal and external communication. Internally, it synergized with the decentralized and bottom-up nature of the movement. The use of new media, the LIHKG forum and Telegram in particular, facilitated ordinary citizens in becoming significant stakeholders in the movement. Externally, Twitter was used as a platform to communicate important information about the movement to the international community.

\(^{19}\) [https://lihkg.com/thread/1488630/](https://lihkg.com/thread/1488630/)
Chapter 8: Focused analysis on Youth Opinions

Description and Configuration

Stage 1: Quantitative Survey

The first question of our Stage 1 survey (conducted in late July 2019) asked directly whether respondents opposed or supported the Extradition Bill proposed by the government. Results showed that close to 70% of all participants either very much opposed (56%) or somewhat opposed (13%) the Bill. About 7% of participants were in the middle, 7% somewhat supported and 12% very much supported the Bill. Age analysis further revealed that, over 90% (91%) of those between 14 and 29 years old opposed the Bill which was the highest among all age groups. 72% of those between 30 and 49 years old opposed the Bill, 65% of those between 50 and 64 years old opposed the Bill and the opposition figure was the lowest among those aged 65 or above which was 47% only. Meanwhile, opposition to the Bill seems to be highly correlated with the respondents’ education level where 83% of those with tertiary education or above opposed the Bill, 67% of those with secondary education, and 49% of those with primary education or below opposed the Bill. Further, for those with primary education or below, 6% were in the middle, 29% supported the Bill and 17% did not know. And, for those who participated in the protests of the Bill, as many as 96% of them opposed the Bill whereas only 53% of the non-participants opposed the Bill, 29% supported the Bill, 11% in the middle and 7% no idea.

When it came to the most important factors that had contributed to Hong Kong’s current governance crisis, CE Carrie Lam, the HK Police Force, and the Central Government took the top 3 places and their overall rating was 7.6, 7.1, and 7.1 marks respectively, out of a 10 point scale, where 10 meant ‘very important’, 5 ‘half-half’ and 0 ‘not important at all’. In descending order, the other contributing factors were the China Liaison Office, John Lee (Secretary of Security), Teresa Cheng, (Secretary for Justice), Executive Council, Pro-establishment camp, youngsters, Pro-democracy camp, and external forces, with an overall rating ranging from 4.7 to 6.8 marks. The sub-group analysis trends were similar to that of question 1. Respondents aged between 14 and 29 years old gave much higher ratings to CE Carrie Lam, the HK Police Force, and the Central Government as the most important factors causing the governance crisis than other age groups. Those older than 65 years of age rated the entire list of possible factors lower than other age groups while their highest score went to the Police Force (6.9). For education level, respondents with higher education levels rated the CE Carrie Lam, the HK Police Force, and the Central Government much higher than those with less education. And, between the participants and non-participants of the Bill protests, the participant group gave higher ratings to all factors listed except the youngsters, pro-democracy camp and external forces. The only factor that respondents rated below 5, out of the 10 point scale, was external forces (3.4).
The respondents were further asked whether the lack of universal suffrage, Central Government intervention, and institutional violence were factors contributing to the present crisis. Overall, the respondents rated these 3 factors between 6.5 and 6.8 marks on a 10 point scale, where again 10 meant ‘very important’, 5 ‘half-half’ and 0 ‘not important at all’. Young respondents aged between 14 and 29 rated the lack of universal suffrage and Central Government’s intervention as the most important factors, scoring 7.8 and 8.0 respectively. On the other hand, those who did not participate in the protests rated all factors generally lower than other groups, with an average rating between 5.8 and 5.9 only.

On the performance of the Police in handling the mass incidents triggered by the Extradition Bill, overall speaking, 60% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction. And same as some previous observations, over 90% of the young respondents aged 14 to 29 (91%) were dissatisfied with the Police’s performance. Yet only 34% of respondents aged 65 or above thought the same, with 20% in the middle, and 43% reported satisfaction with the Police’s handling. Same pattern was observed for the education breakdowns that those with tertiary education level or above showed highest dissatisfaction (78%) and those with primary education level or below showed highest satisfaction (32%) towards the Police.

Next, in terms of their assessment on the performance of the protesters, respondents were asked whether they thought the protesters were restrained or resorted to excessive violence. Results showed that 29% of the overall sample were of the view that the performance of the protesters was restrained, 25% were in the middle, and 44% thought the protesters resorted to excessive violence, including sometimes and often. The trends observed in age and education groups were similar to that of the previous questions. More young respondents thought the protesters were restrained (43%), with another 30% in the middle, and 26% thought they resorted to excessive violence. And the corresponding figures for respondents 65 years old and above were 20%, 23% and 53%. Obviously their views were opposite to that of the young group. As for education, the percentage of those who thought the protesters used excessive violence decreased with education (with 56% for primary, 48% for secondary and 31% for tertiary).

With regard to the protesters’ demands of this anti-extradition movement, first of all, 79% of respondents supported the demand to call for an independent commission of inquiry. 73% thought the Bill should be completely withdrawn. On related matters, 63% called for a restart of the constitutional reform process, 59% demanded that the protests should not be labelled as riots. Next, 50% thought CE Carrie Lam should step down, and 46% supported to release the arrested protesters. As with the previous sub-group analyses, a much higher proportion among the young respondents, tertiary educated people and those who participated in the protests supported all these demands than their counterparts. Taking the set-up of an independent commission of inquiry as an example, as high as 92%, 88% and 97% of these 3 sub-groups respectively showed support to this demand.

When asked the reasons behind young people’s dissatisfaction, the most commonly cited answers of the overall sample were distrust of the Central Government (81%), distrust of One
Country, Two Systems (75%), distrust of the CE (75%), and their pursuit of democracy (71%). Among respondents between 14 and 29 years old, over 90% believed the distrust of the Central Government was one major reason (91%), the other 3 reasons were not far behind all attaining around 85%. On the other hand, only 67% of those 65 years and above believed the youngsters’ dissatisfaction was mainly caused by their distrust of the Central Government and also the One Country, Two Systems.

Stage 2: Qualitative Focus Groups

Views gathered from the Stage 2 focus groups showed that an overwhelming majority of the young people interviewed supported the anti-extradition bill movement and sustained high levels of interest in acquiring information related to the movement. Key information sources included mainstream media outlets, social media, Telegram, and the LIHKG forum. Some participants said they would also pay attention to people with opposite views. Many participants often shared information about the movement, participated in discussions, and engaged in various ways in the movement, such as participating in assemblies, rallies, strikes, petitions, donating money or supplies as well as writing on Lennon Walls.

Here are some direct-quote statements extracted from the focus group participants:

“In my friends circle, basically when we see each other we talk about these things. Often we meet up on Saturdays or Sundays which is when different rallies take place.... My friends in this age group, we all know what’s going on, so our conversations essentially revolve around these events/issues”

“No doubt a majority of people at my age are “yellow ribbon”, or would support this movement. Actually I don’t see anyone in my age group who don’t support but I do see many people who are indifferent to the issues ....as if they were living in a parallel universe....they would not mention a single word of what has happened in the past two months.”

“There was a period where I kept watching every night, even if there was no protest out there, the online discussions just didn’t stop, so I would keep following. It really tires you out, so I just... I don’t know if you know about Telegram. There are some channels that keep popping up. I would just turn off all notifications so that I can escape for a while.”

“Apart from reading from sources that align with my views, actually I am really curious what people from the other side think, like what was said by others just now, some people have said the protesters were paid. And some started to doubt the cause of injury of that female protester’s eye... Actually I was really curious why they would think of that? So I would sometimes check out their pages too to learn more.”

From the focus group discussions, there were a few recurring points as summarized below:

1. Young people felt that the movement failed to get some across-the-board support from the non-young generations. Some older people thought the movement would not succeed, so
would persuade the young people not to participate, while others would even oppose the movement. Disagreements over the movement between young people and their families, especially parents, seriously jeopardized the relationship and harmony with their family members.

“I may try to change topic as some of their comments are really difficult to take in. Sometimes it’s really irritating, some makes my heart pounding, and I would want to get away by going to the washroom, or going out for a walk.”

2. Young people first participated in the movement solely because of their opposition to the Bill, while later the reasons expanded to their dissatisfaction of the government’s total neglect of the public’s voices, and then their discontent with the Police Force, along with the broader constitutional issues. Among all, responses to police brutality and negligence towards people’s demands evoked the strongest emotional reactions.

“Up to this moment, the reason why we keep coming out is because our bottom line is being trampled upon one after another. It’s not just the government but also the law enforcers. They are bending the rules to their liking, to the point they have absolutely overridden the law.”

“At that time, I still had a bit of hope for the Police. At least for some emergency situations, we could still rely on their help. However after the July 12 incident, I realized the Police would not do that... For the August 11 incident, I saw the guy who was clearly pinned to the ground. There was also a pool of blood, but he was still held down by the Police who pressed his head against the floor. At that moment I thought, is that necessary? (Began crying) I now realized not only that the Police could not protect us, they would even hurt us. I was disheartened by this. Why has Hong Kong become like this? I was raised up with kids of my age would still say, ‘When I grow up, I want to be a police’. But now, Hong Kong people would view the Police with shame.”

“I think what makes me most angry is that what you do bears no consequences. For protesters, what you face is a maximum of ten years imprisonment under rioting charges. But then, the Police have done so many unlawful things, but there is nothing that can overrule them...what can you do to ensure that they receive the equivalent treatment under law, or some consequences? There aren’t any.”

3. Acceptance and tolerance level were found to be very high towards the anti-extradition bill demonstrations and protests. Many people believed that as long as protesters did not harm civilians or innocent people, they can accept all kinds of force and will not distant from the protesters. They also strongly agreed that a “leaderless movement” was better.

“Till death (atomic bomb) do us part!”
“I do not mind you shooting the Police with a real gun, but I am rather against using violence against those innocent citizens. I can accept whatever actions if they are directing right towards the regime or the Police only.”

“I somewhat agree that, after occupying the LegCo building, there was a statement “It is you who tell me peaceful marches do not work” as written on the pillar there. I think it got the point, I went to demonstrations peacefully, but you ignored me, and used tough means to suppress me. Then I had no other choice but to escalate my actions, it was you who forced me to do so.”

“I think it is good not to have a “central stage”, because protests can happen in any form anywhere. But then, at the same time, we have to keep reviewing. Without a “central stage”, there need to be continuous feedback, ideas and everyone has to help think of solutions and suggest for improvement.”

4. Young people in general were pessimistic about the result of the movement. They thought the government would not accept the five demands at the end. Regarding the “five demands are indispensable”, they had different thoughts though.

“If we do not grasp the momentum of the movement to get our demands answered, we may not have another chance to fight for these demands again. This is why ‘five demands are indispensable’.”

“I do not agree on ‘five demands are indispensable’, because it is an ‘Utopia’... No doubt the most ideal situation is fulfilling all the demands but the government will not do so.”

“I think setting up an independent commission of inquiry is the most basic thing to do, then people will think what to do next. However, this is just one of the five demands, I doubt whether the movement will end even if this demand is answered.”

“Let’s see what the investigation will reveal, people will continue to observe the situation. Of course people will be relieved a bit and need not go to demonstrations every week.”

5. Young people were pessimistic about the future of Hong Kong. Quite some of them hoped the political situation in China would get improved, and some were also considering migrating to other countries.

“I am quite pessimistic and the most pessimistic part is that the result of this movement does not lie in Hong Kong people’s hands. Facing such a strong enemy – the Communist Party, Hong Kong people’s power is not strong enough to have a decisive battle.”
“I hope the Communist Party will be collapsed by 2047. Of course, we, Hong Kong cannot do much to end it. I hope that it will end by itself, or maybe someone from USA fight against it. If the Communist Party still exists in 2047, I believe Hong Kong will become a municipal or just a province under China.”

“It is normal to think about moving to other countries. It is because in Hong Kong, even now, I feel like I am no different from a second-class citizen... I will become a second-class citizen if I move to other countries. I’m a second-class citizen even if I stay in Hong Kong, then why not move to other countries?”

**Deliberative Meeting Findings:**

The pre- and post-deliberation survey findings were described first, followed by views collected from the group discussions of the Deliberative Meeting (held on August 24, 9:30am to 3:30pm).

Prior to deliberation, 68% of the participants very much opposed to the Extradition Bill proposed by the government and gave 0 score, on a 0-10 scale. After deliberation, this percentage increased further to 76%. In examining the percentage of participants that opted for 0 to 4 marks on the scale, the percentage slightly increased from 95% to 96%. With regard to the performance of the Police, 99% of participants showed dissatisfaction (by choosing 0-4) prior to deliberation, which decreased slightly to 97% after deliberation.

Participants’ support for all “five demands” was found to be very high in general. On the complete withdrawal of the Bill, those who chose “very much support”, which is 10 on a 0 to 10 scale, was 81% before deliberation and became 83% after deliberation. The overall ‘support’ figure, somehow, decreased slightly from 92% to 89%. On setting up the independent commission of inquiry, those who indicated “very much support” (10 marks) decreased from 72% to 67% after deliberation. The overall support also dropped from 97% to 94%. On the need for a constitutional reform, those who gave 10 marks decreased from 71% to 69%. However, the overall support for constitutional reform increased from 85% to 92%. This was the largest increase among the five demands and its mean score jumped from 8.7 to 9.0. On not labeling the protests as riots, those who indicated “very much support” decreased from 69% to 67% while the overall support figure for this demand increased from 92% to 96%. And, the last demand of releasing the arrested protesters, the “very much support” figure remained the same at 57% before and after deliberation, and the overall support slightly increased from 89% to 90%.

With respect to the possible ways forward for the movement, first of all, to dismiss the principal officials responsible for the work related to the Bill, participants who opted for “very much support” (10 marks out of a 0-10 scale) decreased from 53% to 49%. And so, the overall support figure also decreased from 88% to 84%. Participants were also asked if Chief Executive Carrie Lam should step down because of this incident. Those who chose “very much support” slightly decreased from 33% to 32%, but the overall support increased from 71% to 72%. As to whether
there should be public consultations that represent people of Hong Kong. Participants who gave “10 marks” dropped from 27% to 22% and the overall support decreased sharply from 64% to 50%. This was the most substantial drop registered and its mean score has dropped from 6.5 to 5.7 marks. The remaining two items received much less support among the participants – only 16% before deliberation, and 29% after deliberation, who showed support to letting things unfold naturally. At the same time, its opposition rate decreased from 64% to 53%. Finally, regarding the PLA intervention, the support figure for this increased slightly from 15% to 16% while the overall opposition rate decreased from 71% to 68% after deliberation.

**Observation and Analysis**

**Stage 1**

Overall, the Stage 1 survey results revealed that almost 70% of Hong Kong people opposed the Extradition Bill. Younger and higher educated respondents are more opposed to the Bill and felt more dissatisfied with the current situation. There was a clear differentiation between respondents who were younger and older, who were more educated and less educated as well as who were protest participants and who were not. However, it is important to note that while there were differences, the overall sentiment was in opposition of the Bill, albeit some demo groups had much stronger views than others.

The CE Carrie Lam, the Police Force, and the Central Government were named as the most critical factors contributing to the governance crisis at the time. External forces were considered to take up an unimportant role among all groups.

60% of the people were dissatisfied with the overall performance of the Police in handling the mass incidents. Views on whether the protesters were restrained or have resorted to excessive violence were divided, though more people tended to think excessive violence had been in place.

All the major demands of the anti-extradition bill were supported to a great extent by the public. Among these demands, setting up an independent commission of inquiry and complete withdrawal of the Bill received across-the-board support. Young respondents’ views were found to be different from other sub-groups, while it is generally believed their dissatisfaction mainly stemmed from their distrust of the central government, the “one country, two system” principle and the CE as well as their pursuit of democracy and freedom.

**Stage 2**

Combining young people’s views expressed in the focus groups and the Deliberative Meeting, participants were increasingly more concerned and agitated regarding the Extradition Bill. The prolonged protests created more confrontations between the people and the government.

Prolonged protests and anger among young people drove them to challenge and rebel against the frontline police officers. This sentiment of combating institutional violence with people
violence had a spiral effect in escalating violence in all levels of our society. The heightened conflict between the police and the people triggered more young people to resort to violence as a means to fight for the demands. Slinging stones, setting fire and other actions became justified provided that they did not inflict injuries to the innocent citizens.

Our deliberation with the young participants has facilitated certain opinion changes, but most are nominal. Their views with the police and their determination to stand for the major demands, especially the call for an independent commission of inquiry, were already so deep-rooted that more deliberation was not going to change their views much. Regarding the ways forward, young people after deliberation felt more pressing to revive constitutional reform and less insistent on the dismissal of government officials. Meanwhile, more of them thought that government-initiated consultations or dialogues were just meaningless.

Civic society should build its own dialogue platforms for the CE and the leading government officials to genuinely interact and listen to people’s views, especially the young people.
Chapter 9: Conclusion

The year of 2019 marks the history of Hong Kong and the world not simply as a year of social unrest and people’s rebellion within a tiny city under the rule of China, it is a story of the East clashing with the West.

As described in Chapter 3 of this report and the chronology appended, the index event of the movement happened on February 13, 2019 when the HKSAR government introduced the Extradition Bill amidst severe opposition from some Legislative Councilors. While the government later amended the Bill in response to some criticisms from the commercial sector and even the pro-establishment camp, it stopped short of easing the concerns of the general public. On June 9, allegedly one million Hong Kong people took to the streets, and when Chief Executive (CE) Carrie Lam ignored the demand and decided to press on, thousands of people surrounded the Legislative Council on June 12 and violent confrontations started. Three days later, CE announced that she would suspend the bill but refused to withdraw it. By then, police violence came into the agenda, and CE’s prolonged non-response to the protesters drove more people to demonstrate. It took CE more than two and a half months to respond by proposing four measures to answer the core demands including the withdrawal of the Extradition Bill. By then, numerous mass protests had already involved millions of Hong Kong people, and many of the original demands became outdated.

Due to the massive scale of these activities, Hong Kong society has become more polarized than ever. Starting from a relatively minor mistake of the CE, which could have been corrected within a couple of weeks if not just days after the first mass protest in early June, the anti-extradition bill movement gradually developed into an anti-CE cum anti-police cum anti-authoritarian movement. Meanwhile, as described in Chapter 4 of this report, the entire government sank into a governance crisis never seen before, and the popularity rating of the CE herself dropped lower and lower, each time poorer than the previous historical low.20

Up to the end of the study period (October 23) and then the date of publishing this Report (December 13), the Movement has not ended. It is still an open question whether this anti-authoritarian movement would end up becoming an anti-Beijing cum anti-communist movement if it is not well contained by stakeholders at both sides of the divide.

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20 Hong Kong’s records of leadership popularity started in 1992. A variety of indicators is used to measure the popularity of the last Governor under the British rule, and then the CE under “one country two systems”. Most media cited the popularity scale of 0-100 marks with 50 meaning “half half”. Experience shows that 55 marks is considered “normal”, Carrie Lam scored less than 20 at the time of writing this report.
From a historical perspective, Hong Kong has only experienced its truly anti-government mass protest starting from 2003\(^{21}\), when more than half a million people\(^{22}\) marched peacefully on the street protesting the proposed legislation of Article 23 of the Basic Law and demanding the resignation of Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa who eventually resigned in 2005. After that experience, Hong Kong people apparently had high hope on the effect of non-violent mass rallies until this anti-extradition bill movement in 2019. Mass violence set in this time after repeated rallies on massive scales failed to achieve their aims. One question being asked by the researchers of this study is: Why has the HKSAR government not learnt from previous experiences and ventilated public anger by making some concessions to the people? Without evidence compiled by any independent commission of inquiry, even the most serious researcher is left with a set of hunches and possibilities like:

- CE Carrie Lam is too arrogant by her character and personality to admit mistakes and make concessions;
- CE Carrie Lam has misread her successes over the past two years in pushing forward various unpopular measures like building the Hong Kong Palace Museum without consultation, implementing the co-location arrangement at West Kowloon, the jump start of some mega reclamation projects before the end of public consultation, and so on, which made her overconfident that she could push through the Extradition Bill in the same manner;
- CE Carrie Lam was hand-tied by the central government to act according to her wishes;
- ..... 

There can be countless conjectures but whatever they are, Carrie Lam has clearly misunderstood the symbolic meaning of passing the Extradition Bill, as well as Hong Kong people’s subsequent demands on her to withdraw the Bill and to investigate the police violence. To the people of Hong Kong, the issue at stake is the gradual encroachment and erosion of Hong Kong’s core-of-the-core value – freedom\(^{23}\) – and Hong Kong people would fight to the very end to defend their freedoms. When Carrie Lam pushed through the Mainland-Hongkong co-location arrangement at the West Kowloon Station in July 2017 shortly after she came into office, many people had already expressed grave concern on the possibility of Mainland Chinese officials using this co-location arrangement to enforce Chinese laws across the border of Hong Kong. One notable example cited was the alleged secret arrest of Lam Wing-kee, the manager of Causeway Bay Books, in 2016 by Chinese officers or agents operating inside Hong Kong. Lam’s book store sold anti-Beijing books which only had a small readership in Hong Kong, but his outlet was seen as a symbol of Hong Kong’s freedom testing the tolerance of the mainland leaders. When Carrie Lam pushed through the co-location arrangement, her government and the pro-establishment camp mistakenly took people’s opposition as a

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\(^{21}\) The riots of 1967 instigated by the Cultural Revolution in Mainland were not considered as representative of Hong Kong people’s sentiment then even by the pro-communist organizers of the riots. 

\(^{22}\) The number is academically verified. 

\(^{23}\) The distinction between “freedom” and “liberty” is an important academic and legal discussion, where “liberty” usually refers to the exercise of one’s freedom limited by the rights of all others. However, in the discussion of core values here, “freedom” is taken as a synonym of “liberty” because most Hong Kong people understood that freedom is limited by legal and social constraints.
challenge against her leadership, against Mainland China’s sovereignty, and against the entire social and political order of Hong Kong. They mobilized all their resources in the executive and legislative branches of the government, plus the patriotic media under their control, and adopted the “procedures” which subsequently became part of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (Co-location) Bill. They do not quite understand that most Hong Kong people actually do not care too much about what books were being sold at the Causeway Bay Books, whether Falun Gong is a subversive religion or not, and whether the co-location arrangement is a national pride or not, most Hong Kong people just want to live freely and if they have committed an offense, be trialed fairly and openly.

It was therefore the fear of losing freedom which had driven Hong Kong people to protest against the co-location arrangement, to fight against the government and the police during the anti-extradition bill movement. Added together the mass rallies of June 9, June 16, July 1, August 18 and October 1 engaged millions of Hong Kong people, many of whom chanted demands for freedom, democracy and the rule of law. From the perspective of Hong Kong people, their continued freedoms guaranteed by the Basic Law is the basic tenet of “one country, two systems”, and these freedoms are to be protected by the rule of law guarded by the courts. Learning from modern history, it seems to many of them that freedom and rule of law are best guaranteed under democratic institutions. Therefore, as the movement continued, people’s demand gradually shifted from the controversial content of the Extradition Bill itself to demands for rectifying police injustice and developing universal suffrage, as described in Chapters 4 and 5 of this report.

While some people including the CE herself might have mis-read Hong Kong people’s sentiment, there must be somebody in the pro-establishment camp and even in the think tanks of the central government who understood the situation well. Afterall, Hong Kong is still a free city, so all information including scientific findings of people’s opinion and sentiment is readily available. This brings up another question asked but not easily answered by the researchers of this study: Why has the central government not learnt from previous experiences and made better use of Hong Kong under “one country, two systems”? As political outsiders, the researchers could only come up with these conjectures:

▪ The central government does not have a think tank to tell them the truth;
▪ The regime cares more about their survival than people’s well-being;
▪ The leaders could not find a way out of the philosophical turned practical dilemma between paternalism and egalitarianism;
▪ …..

Due to the history of China’s development over the past century and the nature of the communist regime itself, it may be not easy for the Chinese leaders and the Chinese people to resolve the dilemmas of communism versus capitalism, paternalism versus egalitarianism, liberty versus responsibility, unity versus diversity, and finally, humanism versus patriotism. According to the teachings of Marx, Lenin and Mao, social order only changes via violent
means and proletariat revolution is supposed to be the final revolution of the human race, before everybody enjoys life in a utopia. The history of modern China, however, has injected the elements of (1) national fights between the Chinese people and the Japanese conquerors, (2) internal fights between the Chinese Communist Party and the Nationalist Party Kuomintang, and (3) since the establishment of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, the crave for a strong nation to compensate for people’s suffering from late Ching Dynasty to the early rule of PRC. To the central government and many pro-establishment followers in Hong Kong, they consider patriotism and national pride to be their ultimate target, while individual freedoms and human rights can be curtailed, especially when they themselves are not the sufferers. This may explain why many more people in the older generation of Hong Kong are more sympathetic to the central government than the younger generation. Many of these elders have themselves migrated to Hong Kong in escape of communism or have followed their parents doing so. Likewise, there are also those who have newly migrated to Hong Kong but still maintain a paternalistic view of political development where patriotism versus humanism is concerned. However, at the other end, those born in Hong Kong and educated with a global perspective understand the strength of liberty and diversity, those who have experienced genuine freedom understand its power in generating creativity, solidarity and unity based on humanity. Patriotism requires an enemy, humanism does not. Hong Kong being an international city has embraced many global values for a long time. Hong Kong youths have much wider and deeper exposure to the international world than their counterparts fed and bred under the communist system. There is thus no coincidence that when the movement developed to a critical point, the young protesters turned their attention to the international community for spiritual and political support, through proactive media campaigning and political lobbying. These activities were unseen before even during the Occupy movement five years ago.

Likewise, riding on the global trend of cyber development, the anti-extradition bill movement in Hong Kong on a very technical cum practical level has also witnessed the widespread use of new social media like Twitter, Telegram, online local forums like LIHKG and online real-time live broadcasts of mass events, capturing protester violence and police brutality as they occur. Such a proliferation of new media, as described in Chapters 6 and 7 of this report, other than adding strength to the entire movement, has also resulted in an almost complete diffusion of protest leadership. This “lack of a big stage” among Hong Kong protesters especially those young people who spearheaded it can be seen as a direct continuation of the global trend of social movement starting from the Arab Spring Revolution. Many of the young protesters in Hong Kong have termed this a “Water Revolution” meaning that it does not have a form nor

24 The term was used by many protesters, but the article written by Jamil Anderlini in the Financial Times on September 2 “Hong Kong’s ‘water revolution’ spins out of control” was an impetus. He wrote, “Every revolution needs a name. The pro-democracy demonstrations that have roiled Hong Kong for three months will be known as the “water revolution”. Since massive protests erupted in June, demonstrators have adhered to what they call a “be water” strategy. This pays tribute to Hong Kong’s most famous son and has utterly confounded the police, the government and the politburo in Beijing. “Be formless, shapeless, like water,” said Bruce Lee, the kung-fu movie star and most influential martial artist in history, in a rare TV interview in 1971. “Water can flow, or it can crash – be water, my friend.”
a leadership, and protesters do not follow commands but act individually according to their own conscience and individual understanding of the situation. Put it in a nice way, this is a totally egalitarian movement which has rebelled against paternalism both in theory and in deeds. This made counter-measures taken by the establishment ineffective and out of date. Be it the central government, the local government, the police force or the pro-establishment campaign organizers, they found it difficult to interact with the young protesters except by undercover infiltration, overt police brutality and secretive triad-type suppressions. Even Hong Kong’s number one television media has become powerless in dampening the protests, not to say those communist-led newspapers which could only appeal to their small circle of supporters. This also explains why the central government had to switch on their state and party media to propagate their agenda, on a tiny revolt in Hong Kong. The state is also worried about the proliferation of new media.

The emergence of new media based on the philosophy of almost-extreme egalitarianism can be a problem in the long run, if put in a worrying way. The lack of leadership and key opinion leaders, the counter-measures of spying and infiltration, and the incitement to violence by undercovers, coupled with fake news generated by cunning forces, can steer the consumers of these news media into enclosed echo chambers, which would jeopardize creativity and humanistic development at its best, and incubate its own paternalism and even terrorism at its worst. This is an important question we generated after compiling Chapters 6, 7 and 8. The answer probably lies in the evolution of a new form of integration based on egalitarian principles – riding on the advanced uses of rational deliberation online and onsite, adoption of peace polls and civil referendums, cultivation of mutual respect bottom-up from the community level, and of course, a timely and serious review of the political system and constitutional arrangements which helps liberate people’s innate commitment to help themselves while helping others.

To conclude, the anti-extradition bill movement which happened in Hong Kong in 2019 should not be taken as simply a story of Hong Kong people protesting against a specific bill or against a local government, its police force, or even against a regime. It is a clash between liberalism versus paternalism, it is a debate between patriotism versus humanism. More by historical accident than by design, Hong Kong has become a window between the East and the West for more than a century. During this period, the world saw the end of the Ching Dynasty in 1911 overthrown by a national hero educated in Hong Kong, the first genuine cultural revolution of China in 1919 – the May Fourth Movement which advocated science and democracy, the establishment of the PRC in 1949 and all the goods and bads which followed, the Cultural Revolution under the PRC between 1966 and 1976, the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1989, the beginning of the “one country, two systems” experiment starting from 1997, and since then

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25 Sun Yat-sen who overthrew the Ching Dynasty and is respected as the “Father of the Nation” by both the Nationalists and Communists studied at the Diocesan Boys’ School in Hong Kong in 1883, then at The Government Central School from 1884 to 1887, and then proceeded to study at the Hong Kong College of Medicine for Chinese which was the forerunner of The University of Hong Kong. Sun had repeatedly told people that most of his revolutionary and modern ideas were inspired by his experience in Hong Kong.
a series of mega scale protests and movements sparked by clashes of deep rooted values. Fortunately, such clashes are still well contained within the framework of civility and absence of the military.

From 1919 to 1949 to 1989 to 2019, the history of China and Hong Kong has been punctuated by exclamation marks each followed by a semi-colon. What would happen next is probably beyond the tele- or micro-scopes of the social scientists. However, what can be learnt from Hong Kong now and before should be of great practical value to Hong Kong, China and the world.

Postscript

The study period of this Public Sentiment Report was from February 13 to October 23, 2019 covering exactly 36 weeks. While the start date appears obvious, the end date is not. When this study project was planned in July, there was no idea when the movement would end. Nevertheless, after the mega scale mass rallies of June 9, June 16 and July 1, and in light of the government’s non-response to people’s demands, it was felt that another one or two months may be needed for the dust to settle, so the study period was set to end on the last day of August, and a public sentiment report should be compiled by the middle of October concurring with the beginning of a new policy year. People’s general expectation then was that all public protests would subside after the summer holidays, before the Legislative Council reconvened.

All expectations were proved wrong as the movement got fueled continually by triad violence and police brutality, apparently with the blessing of the top leaders. The researchers therefore had to extend the study period time from the end of August to early October and then late October, one week after the CE gave her policy address of the year (which was already one week behind the original schedule). The movement still continued but the researchers have decided to wrap it up, since they had already extended the study period for two more months.

After cutting off data collection on October 23, and before publishing this report on December 13, more protests and demonstrations occurred, punctuated by an election. This postscript documents briefly some major events which happened during this period and discusses their implications if any on the main findings.

On November 12, after unrest broke out throughout the territory triggered by the call for a citywide strike and class boycott, riot police besieged The Chinese University of Hong Kong, firing tear gas and projectiles almost at will, while protesters set up roadblocks at a footbridge at the edge of the campus.
On November 17, again as a result of conflict between protesters and police triggered by the call for strike and boycott, riot police besieged Hong Kong Polytechnics University for the next 13 days and arrested almost 1,400 people.

November 24 was the election day of the Hong Kong District Council. A record turnout of 2.94 million people was recorded giving a super-high turnout rate of 71.2% never seen before in any direct elections in Hong Kong. The democrats won 388 out of the 452 seats and became the majority camp in 17 out of 18 District Councils. According to an opinion survey conducted by the Hong Kong Public Opinion Program after the election, most voters have treated the election as a quasi-referendum of the Movement and casted their votes in support of it.

It is difficult to estimate how much of the democrats’ landslide victory on November 24 was due to events happened before October 23 as documented in the main body of this report, and how much of it was due to the events listed in this postscript. However, judging from the stagnancy of CE’s popularity figures over this period so as shown in the following table, it was rather unlikely that the events happened after October 23 have affected the result of the election too much.

Recent popularity figures of CE Carrie Lam

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample size</td>
<td>1,038</td>
<td>1,016</td>
<td>1,008</td>
<td>1,014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response rate</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
<td>69.4%</td>
<td>74.1%</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rating of CE Carrie Lam</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote of confidence</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote of no confidence</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net approval rate</td>
<td>-71%</td>
<td>-71%</td>
<td>-72%</td>
<td>-72%</td>
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In other words, after more than six months of frequent and widespread protests, the anti-extradition bill movement has apparently consolidated strong support from the Hong Kong people in demanding the government to protect their freedoms, to honor the promises of the Basic Law, and to maintain Hong Kong’s position as an international city between the East and the West. Such demands are clearly seen in peaceful elections, mass protests, and if needed be, aggressive fights.

The final event recorded in this postscript – the “World Day of Human Rights Rally” which took place on December 8 allegedly participated by 800 thousand people – can also be seen under this light as part of an ongoing campaign to solicit international support for the protection of personal freedom.