State Reactions towards Street Protests in Hong Kong – A glance of the year of 2012

by

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Abstract

Hong Kong is a city of protest (Ng 2008).By empirical data, this paper suggests the state tended to ignore most street protests occurred in 2012 in Hong Kong, making the majority of these demonstrations 'fruitless' in outcomes. While in some rare cases, the state did respond positively to protesters. With inabilities of existing literatures as well as protest nature and participant number of protests in explaining such patterns, this paper turns to a political regime approach as an alternative, arguing liberal authoritarianism operating in Hong Kong is the main reason for both low state responses and its responsiveness, and, to certain cases, positive reactions. Elements of liberal authoritarianism like absence of electoral competitiveness, a politics/administration dichotomy and a political culture created by existence of civil liberties in Hong Kong help to explain the complicated phenomenon. By doing so, the research aims to contribute to studies of governmental responses to protests with a different and new light.

Keywords: Hong Kong, street protests, outcomes of protests, McAdam, governmental responses, liberal authoritarianism.

Table of Content

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter serves as an overview of the whole research. In order to do so, the chapter outlines (1) Research Background; (2) Research Objective; (3) Significance of the Research and finally (4) Structure of the Research.

1.1 Research Background

Street protests are not a new social phenomenon in Hong Kong. During the past years, Hong Kong people have kept participating in a great deal of protests and assemblies in order to voice out their dissatisfactions. There are some annually large-scaled events like the July 1st mass demonstration against government for certain political, social and economic demands, not to mention those relatively small but plentiful protests. All these street protests have made Hong Kong the 'City of Protest' (Ng 2008)[1], a nickname called by media to best describe the situations of mass demonstrations in the former

[1] Online search results for 'Hong Kong City of Protest' reach around 50,100,000 on Google. The large number of results reveals the view that Hong Kong is widely regarded as a 'City of Protest' is quite popular.

British colony.

Despite the large number of street protests in Hong Kong, their effectiveness to change the society remains a question to the public. Some protests do succeed in bringing about social and political changes in Hong Kong. The July 1st mass demonstration against the legislation of Article 23 of Basic Law in 2003 serves as a good illustration of successful protest as it pushed the government to pause the legislation process of Article 23 of Basic Law, which has not been discussed publicly again in Hong Kong since then. Nevertheless, most protests do fail completely in a sense that the demands of demonstrators cannot be satisfied by the government. For example, after C.Y. Leung was elected as the new Chief Executive by the Election Committee in 2012, there were some large protests against him, demanding him to resign from the post. However neither positive nor meaningful responses regarding the issue was seen from the government and C.Y. Leung is still in office ruling Hong Kong.

Therefore street protests in Hong Kong are interesting. The huge number of streets protests has proved that Hong Kongers treat mass demonstrations as a tool to change the society from outside the establishment even though the effectiveness of mass demonstration is not yet clear to the public. The effectiveness of mass demonstration is

crucial to Hong Kongers as it provides us with a way to understand how much the people can achieve and change through street protests. Without understanding the effectiveness, all the efforts spent on street protests would be useless to all the participants, leaders of demonstrations as well as the public.

As a result, under such a circumstance, this research is designed to investigate the effectiveness of mass demonstrations by looking at the responses of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (Hong Kong SAR Government in short) towards street protests in the year of 2012.

1.2 Research Objectives

Fundamentally, the research studies how the Hong Kong SAR Government responded to street protests in 2012 through integrating the state responses towards street protests and the political regime type of Hong Kong into discourse. By doing so, this research hopes to achieve the following objectives:

- To examine the state responses towards street protests in Hong Kong;
- To examine the responsiveness of state responses towards streets protests in

Hong Kong;

- To establish the relationship between the political regime of Hong Kong and the state responses as well as their responsiveness towards street protests;

1.3 Significance of the Research

The research is of essence to academia. In general the paper attempts to open a new research direction of state responses towards mass demonstration in academia. Currently theorists like political scientists and sociologists tend to study why mass demonstrations and social movements occur and thus issues that how and why governments react differently to these demonstrations and movements are often neglected. Taking Hong Kong as a case study, the paper tries to showcase the relationship between political regimes and state responses towards mass demonstrations at a very initial stage. Serving as a cornerstone, the research results can assist in the theory-building process of state responses towards mass demonstration as further research of this topic develops.

1.4 Structure of the Research

This paper has a total of five chapters including chapter one which is the 'Introduction'.

Chapter two is the Literature Review. The paper reviews existing literatures in three orientations. The first one is the discussion on the political regime of Hong Kong; then a short historical development of street protests in Hong Kong would be outlined. Reviews of related theories and studies on state responses towards street protests with illustrations drawn from other countries would be done as the last session of this chapter.

Chapter three describes the Research Method. Research questions and hypothesis would first be offered. Definition of key terms in the research would be put out in the following. Afterwards, the research would describe the data collection, recording and process so as to provide readers with a view to explaining how this project is produced.

Chapter four provides us with the 'Findings and Analysis'. This research project would firstly present the general characteristics of the data, and describe the state responses and responsiveness of state responses before explaining the pattern of state responses

towards street protests from the perspectives of attributes of street protests. The final section of the chapter would attempt to introduce relationships between Hong Kong's Liberal Authoritarianism and state responses towards street protests as a possible explanation of the phenomenon in mass protests.

Chapter five is the 'Conclusion and Discussion' which is the last major part of the research. Major findings in the research would be recaptured here and implications of further development of street protests and social actions in Hong Kong would be concluded as well.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter aims to review literatures related to the research. (1) The Political Regime of Hong Kong; (2) A Short Historical Development of Street Protests in Hong Kong and (3) Related Theories and Studies on State Responses towards Street Protests would be examined in this chapter so as to promote our scholarly understanding of the research topic.

2.1 The Political Regime of Hong Kong

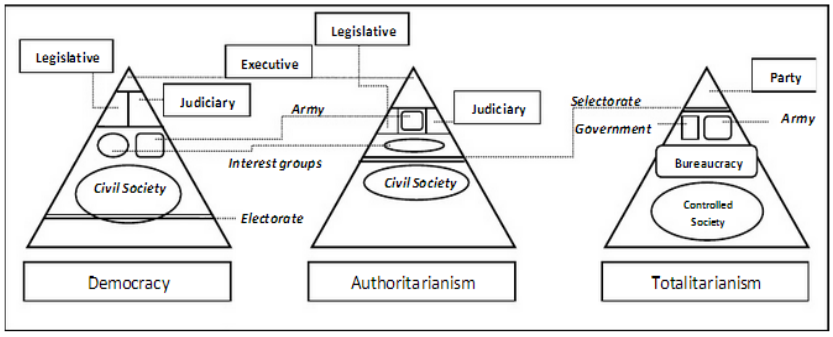
In Comparative Politics, a political regime has been described as a set of institutions and procedures by which state power is organised, exercised, and transferred. In other words, according to Siaroff, a political regime is

> 'the formal and informal structure of state and governmental roles and processes. The regimes includes the method of selection of the government and of representative assemblies (election, coup, decision within the military, [royal prerogative,] etc.), formal and informal mechanisms of representation,

and patterns of repression' (2013:2).

Briefly speaking, under such a framework, three main types of political regimes, which are (1) democratic regimes, (2) authoritarian regimes and (3) totalitarian regimes can be identified (see Figure 1). Democratic regimes have 'clear formal rules to identify the group of power holders and institutionalize them' (Van den Bosch, 2013:87). Authoritarian regimes mean 'self-rule and leans closer to terms like dictatorship, despotism and personalism' with 'emphasis on the leader and the concentration of power in the hands of this person' (Van den Bosch, 2013:82). Totalitarian regimes are organized by the 'presence of an ideology, a single mass party and concentrated power in the hands of an individual or small group' (Van den Bosch, 2013:85). All countries and territories including Hong Kong can be categorised into the abovementioned types of political regimes.

Figure 1 Basic Typology of Political Regimes



Source: Adapted from Van den Bosch 2013

In fact, academic discussions on the political regime of Hong Kong have already made by a number of scholars. As Joseph Cheng summarises, '[m]ost academics categorise Hong Kong's political system as a hybrid regime with varying degree of democracies in various political institutions' (2013: 224). Current studies tend to acknowledge the fact that Hong Kong is a hybrid regime and more specifically, a liberal authoritarian regime in which 'civil liberties are tolerated, but electoral competitiveness is not' (Case 2008:368).

On one hand, Hong Kong is a hybrid regime in a sense that a high degree of civil liberties exists in the city-state. Brian Fong indicates that the high degree of civil liberties in Hong Kong has been 'on a par with many Western democratic regimes' for many decades (2013: 858). Similarly, as Ma Ngok analyses, '[s]ince 1997, Chapter Three of the Basic Law has guaranteed [Hong Kongers] a full set of civil liberties that rivals Western liberal democracies' (2008:162). Hong Kong's high degree of civil liberties is evidenced by international reports. According to Freedom House, Hong Kong scores 2 out of 7 in the item of Civil Liberties (see Figure 2) in its annual report *Freedom in the World* (2013) which means that Hong Kong can be generally regarded as a place of freedom. The report continues by stating that '[u]nder Article 27 of the Basic Law, Hong Kong residents enjoy freedoms of speech, press, and publication.

These rights are generally respected in practice, and political debate is vigorous' (Freedom House 2013).

Figure 2 Scores of Hong Kong in *Freedom in the World*

Source: Freedom House 2013

On the other hand, competitive elections have yet been organised in Hong Kong which drives the regime to accommodate authoritarian features. Though elections are organised for the Legislative Councilors, there are factors affecting the competitiveness of elections. First, 'the electoral system was designed so that the pro-democracy cannot secure a majority of seats, despite the fact that it often manages to secure about 60 per cent of the votes in the direct election' (Cheng, 2013:224). Given that Hong Kong

adopts a voting system of proportional representation, although the pro-democracy camp, who supports western political values, can secure more votes in direct elections than those received by the pro-establishment camp, who is in favour of Beijing, in total, it still fails to secure more seats in geographical constituencies. Second, as a result of the existence of functional constituencies, 'popularly elected members never have constituted more than half of the legislature' (Ma 2008:162). Since seats in the legislature are divided into two board categories - geographical and functional constituencies, whose voters are establishment-leaning in general. Even the democrats gain a majority in geographical elections, they hardly dominate in the Legislative Council (LegCo) .Therefore the LegCo cannot be as democratic as other parliaments of foreign countries like the United Kingdom, whose House of Commons is composed of 650 directly elected members only (Parliament of the United Kingdom 2014). As a result, it is not surprised to uncover why Hong Kong can only score 5 out of 7 in terms of Political Rights in *Freedom in the World* (see Figure 2), which is quite negative (Freedom House 2013).

Apart from elections for the legislature, elections of the Chief Executive in Hong Kong are insufficiently competitive too. According to Fong, 'the Chief Executive, who replaced the colonial Governor as government head after 1997, remains handpicked by

an election committee controlled by Beijing and cannot be held accountable to the Hong Kong people' (2013: 859). In such an electoral system, '[e]lections were not contests between the incumbent government and its challengers, and consequently could not serve to ensure political accountability' (Lam & Kuan 2008:190).

Therefore, with the existence of civil liberties but not electoral competitiveness, Hong Kong can only be regarded as 'Partly Free' (see Figure 2) (Freedom House 2013). Subsequently, 'the HKSAR's political regime, in its present-day functioning, closely approximates liberal authoritarianism' (Case 2008:370). Such a discussion that Hong Kong is a liberal authoritarian regime would definitely contributes to this research which aims to sketch out the relationship between political regime and state responses towards street protests.

2.2 A Short Historical Development of Street Protests in Hong Kong

Generally speaking, political activism including mass protests has been a 'hallmark of Hong Kong's political culture' since the 1997 handover (Lam 2012:206), in which Hong Kong was returned to China. Some scholars likewise pinpoint that protests have

been 'a common way in which public opinion is expressed in Hong Kong' (Lee & Chan 2011:2). Due to its significance in Hong Kong politics, it is impossible for us to understand how the Hong Kong government respond to street protests without knowing about the social contexts of protests in the former British colony first.

In fact, street protests are hardly a new phenomenon in Hong Kong. One should notice that streets protests in Hong Kong have a long historical root that can be traced back to as early as the 1960s which witnessed the happening of the 1966 Star Ferry riot, a historical event beginning with mass protests of people against the rent hikes of the Star Ferry. The riot successfully constructed a local Hong Kong identity which have become dominant in the society since then (Soctt 1989; Turner 1995; Matthew 1997; Ngo 1999; cited in Lam 2012:200). Such an occurrence of the Hong Kong identity was one of the major factors to result in the 'rise of social movements in the 1970s in Hong Kong' (Ma 2009:47), in which street protests did play an important role as a form of the mass movement.

From 1970s to 1997, it was a period of growing street protests for the then British colony. According to Cheung and Louie, there were 882 major cases of social conflicts which were reported and recorded in newspaper from 1975 to 1986. The numbers

represent around 80 social conflicts occurred every year or more than 6 every month (1991:9). Out of these 882 cases, labour nature accounted for 169 cases, or 26.1% in total, being the most dominant area of demands for participants (1991:13). What follows was housing nature, which was responsible for the outbreak of 169 cases (Cheung & Louie 1991:13). They two continue by stating that the research period had 'definitely pointed to an increasing trend of social conflicts' in Hong Kong and the people had been 'becoming relatively more socially aware, right-conscious and increasingly susceptible to organised articulation of their wants and demands' (Cheung & Louie 1991:53). As a part of the social conflicts studied, without much doubt, the significance of street protests in 1970s and 1980s should be remembered.

Lau and Wan studied social conflicts in Hong Kong between the years of 1987 and 1995, displaying that the numbers of street protests recorded and reported in newspaper were stunningly 3,661, averaging 407 a year or 34 on a monthly basis (1997:6). The research showcases that labour and employment had been the most frequently occurring nature in social conflicts during the period, accounting for around 20.6% of the total on a basis of 9 years. Issues of civil rights and liberties came second with a nine-yearly average of 15.4% (Lau & Wan 1997:30). As the authors points out, '[t]he past decade (1980s) saw an expanding zone of conflicts, involving more and more social groups of

various natures and individuals from different walks of life' (Lau & Wan 1997:102). Thus, social conflicts including street protests in Hong Kong experienced an expansive growth in this period.

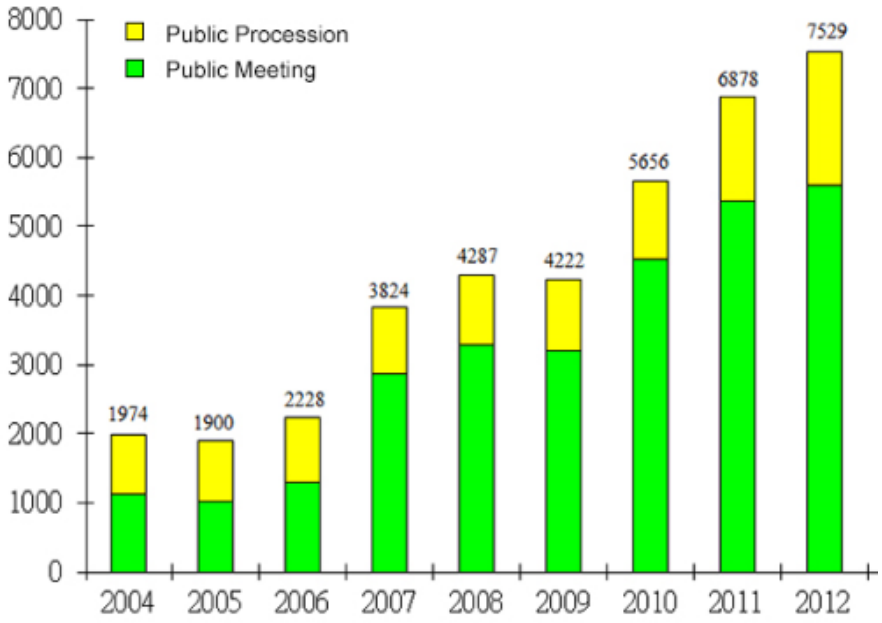
The circumstances of street protests were not undermined even after the 1997 handover. According to Ma, 'after 1997, the constitutional framework (in Hong Kong) more or less provided a shelter for social movements and civil society activities' (Ma 2009:52) in which street protests are embedded. As mentioned above, Hong Kong is a territory of civil liberties after 1997, which guarantees local people rights of assembly and rights to protest. Based on such a context, Ma further discusses the feature of social movement in the post-handover Hong Kong by pinpointing that 'CSOs (Civil Society Organisations) had been effective in using protests to resist perceived infringement by the state on civil society' (2009:52). Therefore, according to the Hong Kong Council of Social Service (2013) (see Figure 3), numbers of public procession and meeting in Hong Kong had undergone drastic increases from 1986 to 2003. More specifically, the numbers had been enlarged from 1,190 in 1997 to 2,705 in 2003, suggesting that the development of street protests in Hong Kong is not hampered by the return to China.

Figure 3 Selective Numbers of Public Procession and Meeting in Hong Kong, 1986-2003

Year	1986	1991	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
No.	247	1234	1008	1190	2247	2326	2064	2347	2303	2705

Source: Adapted from the Hong Kong Council of Social Service 2013

Figure 4 Recent Numbers of Public Procession and Meeting in Hong Kong, 2004-2012



Source: Adapted from the Hong Kong Police Force 2014

Subsequently, it can be described that Hong Kong is highly active in mass protests presently. According to the Hong Kong Police Force (2014), the number of public procession was 1,930 while the figure of public meetings reached 5,599 in 2012 (see

Figure 4), which is the research year of this thesis. There was a nearly fourfold increment in the numbers of mass demonstrations between 2004 and 2012 with the total number of the public procession and meeting combined rose from 1,974 in 2004 to 7,529 in 2012 (HKPF 2014).With such a large expansion in the numbers, Hong Kong is doubtlessly experiencing a growing activism in mass protests.

It is noticeable that the phenomenon of widespread street protests in Hong Kong is in accordance with the prime feature of liberal authoritarianism that civil liberties are well-respected. As the abovementioned showcases, Hong Kong is in a state of prevailing mass demonstrations. Civil liberties of people in the city are well-preserved by law, leading to a large number of mass protests without much interferences or interruptions from authorities. Therefore, it is not surprised to see protests and demonstrations occur frequently in Hong Kong as they are guaranteed by law for the people under the current liberal authoritarianism of the ex-British colony.

Following the discussion of the brief development of street protests, this paper is to further investigate how street protests looked like in 2012. Major attributes of street protests such as numbers and demands of participants and would be drawn out later in this essay so as to construct a dialogue between attributes of demonstrations and the

state responses towards street protests.

2.3 Related Theories and Studies on State Responses towards Street Protests

Existing literatures on social movements, including street protests tend to deal with the sources and causes of movements rather than the mechanism of how states respond towards mass demonstrations. Presently, scholars concern more with why social movements and protests occur than how different governments respond to them. As a result, there is only a very little literature dealing with the issue of state responses towards street protests which is the central focus of this research. Nevertheless, the related literatures on state responses to insurgency and social movement, though limited, can still offer us valuable perspectives on the topic.

Principally, two factors affect the responses from other groups like states and social elites to insurgency such as street protests. In *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970,* the pioneering sociologist McAdam discusses the issue entitled 'The Social Control Responses to Insurgency' (1999:56-8). According to him, these two factors are (1) 'the strength of insurgent forces' (McAdam 1999:56) and (2) 'the degree to which the movement poses a threat or an opportunity to other groups'.

To be more in detail, the degree of threat/opportunity posed by the movement is defined by (1) tactics of insurgents and (2) goals of the movement (McAdam 1999:56-7). All these elements constitute the social control responses to insurgency, which is 'a crucial factor affecting movement (street protests included) development' (McAdam 1999:56).

Firstly, 'the strength of insurgent forces' contributes to the responses mechanism (McAdam 1999:56). If insurgency like street protests occur in a weak condition, repression is encouraged and vice versa. As McAdam analyses, 'the costs and risks involved in repressing a weak target are minimal when compared with those associated with repression of a powerful opponent' (1991:56). A powerful opponent is difficult for crackdown 'because of the potentially graver repercussions associated with an unsuccessful attempt at repression' (McAdam 1999:56-7). Based on the point if the strength of street protests is adequately sufficient, outsiders of the demonstrations like the state are not that likely to launch repressive responses towards movements and vice versa.

Secondly, 'the degree to which the movement poses a threat or an opportunity to other groups' also affects the responses mechanism (McAdam 1999:57). There are generally three types of responses generated from this. Those elites who 'perceive the movement

as a threat' tend to neutralise or destroy it; those who see the movements as opportunities for interest would support the insurgents and those whose interests would hardly be affected by the movements would remain 'uninvolved' (McAdam 1999:57). McAdam continues by saying that '[t]he mix of these three responses determines,…, the relative balance of supporting and opposing forces it (insurgency) must confront'(McAdam 1999:57).

Tactics of insurgents decide the degree of threat/opportunity posed by the movement. As McAdam points out, there are institutionalised and noninstitutionalised tactics (1999:57). The former can be viewed as 'proper ways of protest like demonstrating with police permit while the latter is those 'improper' forms of procession like deliberately violating the rules set by authorities during protests. No matter what goals the insurgents intend to achieve, institutionalised tactics 'convey an acceptance of the established, or ''proper'', channels of conflict resolution' (McAdam 1999:57). On the contrary, noninstitutionalised tactics pose 'a distinct challenge to elite groups' as it firstly 'communicates a fundamental rejection of the established institutional mechanisms for seeking redress of group grievances' and then 'deprives elite groups of their recourse to institutional power' (McAdam 1999:57). Put them simple, if demonstrators have greater reliance on noninstitutionalised means of protests, the movement is more likely

to broaden opposition while 'decreased use of such tactics will usually diminish the intensity of movement opposition' (McAdam 1999:58).

Likewise, goals of the movement influence the degree to which the movement poses a threat or an opportunity. There are two types of goals which are the reform goals and the revolutionary goals (McAdam 1999:58). Reform goals refer to the desire of protesters for 'piecemeal reform' of existing political and economic structure of a society while revolutionary goals indicate the embodiment of fundamental challenges to those structures amongst the populace (McAdam 1999:58). McAdam states that reform goals 'stand to engender the opposition of only those few elite groups', making them divided (1999:58). Therefore 'reform movements are frequently aided in their efforts by their ability to exploit existing division among the elite' (McAdam 1999:58). As for revolutionary goals, they can only 'mobilise a united elite opposition' whose interests are at stakes if such movements succeed (McAdam 1999:58). As a result, it can be summed up that revolutionary movements have higher likelihood of being accompanied by an intensification of movement opposition compared with reform movements.

Applying the concept of the 'degree of threat/opportunity' to street protests, how states

respond to street protests depends on how states perceive those activities i.e. they are either opportunities or threats based on the tactics and goals of protesters. As McAdam writes, 'recourse to institutionalise tactics and moderate goals is likely to diminish opposition to the movement' (1999:58). Hence, three major scenarios of state responses towards street protests can be summarised. (1) With the help of institutionalised tactics, if the goals of protests generate reform movements (protests), states would definitely give supportive reactions. For illustration, people protesting against the government for a decrease of public transportation fare under the guidance of police would be answered positively by the state, given that the reaction would assist the state in gaining higher popularity among the population. By contrast, (2) if the goals of mass demonstrations only provide threats through creating revolutionary movements (protests), states would destroy them. For example, if street protesters demand a radical change of current governments with the use of violent means during such as arson, states are inclined to ignore their demands as the movement is against the interest of the government and involves noninstitutionalised tactics which lead to the occurrence of a united elite opposition. There is one more scenario that (3) states may or may not necessarily respond to the demands of protesters. They would take relevant actions later depending on whether the former or the latter best advances the interests of governments. As a result, states may not be responding to particular demands of protesters if they perceive

it is the best way to advance their interests.

Through the lens provided by McAdam, we can start to have a clear picture of how states respond to street protests by borrowing his ideas to cases of street protests. Generally speaking, street protests that are sufficient enough in terms of strength and are thought to be an opportunity rather than a threat by the means of institutionalised tactics and reform goals tend to be more positively responded by states. Apart from the theoretical discussion on the topic, there are there are some literatures too regarding state responses towards street protests in Hong Kong with a historical context spanning from 1970s to 1990s. Due to the limited numbers of past research, those literatures are worth studying for the purpose of discussion in this research.

Firstly, governmental responses towards street protests were not active and positive at all in 1975 -1986. According to Cheung and Louie, the majority of the social conflicts (around 68%) during the study period did not receive any publicly known responses from the government (1991:43). With reference to those conflicts with known responses which were the minority in the research, six kinds of reactions of could be found, namely (1) ‘responses or intervention from government departments or equivalent administrative bodies’; (2) ‘debate or question in UC (Urban Council) or RC (Regional

Council)', which both were responsible for municipal services in Hong Kong in that time; (3) 'debate or question in the LegCo'; (4) 'public responses from the central administration'; (5) setting up of public enquiry commission or working party and (6) 'responses or intervention from authorities outside Hong Kong' (1991:44). Nevertheless, as the authors continued, only 17.6% of the social conflicts in all fields were regarded as having 'fruitful' outcomes in which social conflicts were partially or whole met and had successfully led to policies or legislative and institutional changes (Cheung & Louie 1991:47). This implies that only a very few cases of social conflicts including street protests were able to bring about social changes to Hong Kong. In other words, efforts of demonstrators and protestors had mainly been either in vain (9.6%) which refers to the non-fruitful reactions from states or unknown (73%) in which no relevant information was found in the newspaper (Cheung & Louie 1991:47).

Regarding explanations of state responses towards social conflicts, Cheung and Louie suggest that 'the nature of conflict plays quite an important role in determining the outcome' (1991:48). They found that utilities conflicts, labour conflicts and urban development conflicts had 'a relatively higher rate of known fruitful outcome' (Cheung & Louie 1991:48). They then briefly summarised that 'if a social conflict generates demands of a more material or practical nature, of more concern to the daily living of

the participants' (Cheung & Louie 1991:48), then it would have higher chance to receive fruitful responses.

The state responses and responsiveness of state responses towards social conflicts remained similar in 1987-1995 in which the state was not either active or positive in producing fruitful reactions to protestors. To begin with the state responses, though 60.4% of the total social conflicts studied were unknown in governmental responses, the remaining data showcases that 'no responses' had been the single most usual reaction from the government with a per cent of 24.1 throughout the years from 1987 to 1995 (Lau & Wan 1997:100). This indicates the low state responses in reacting towards events like street protests.

With reference to the responsiveness of governmental reactions, though outcomes of most social conflicts studied (89.1%) remained unknown due to the research design (Lau & Wan 1997:99), based on the limited available data, the proportion of 'unsuccessful' social conflicts (7.2%) in which 'the claim-making party aims to change the status quo but the outcome is similar to the situation before the conflict erupted' was larger than those 'successful' (1.3%) ones (Lau & Wan 1997:98). This reflects the fact that even when the state responded to social conflicts like street conflicts, their reactions

were not positive enough to bring about changes to the concerned situations of protestors.

Nonetheless, the research questions of this study cannot be answered by the resourcefulness of abovementioned literatures. Since the focus of this research are the state responses and responsiveness of state responses towards street conflicts in 2012, it is impossible for us to simply review the past studies to conclude the answers for the questions. Literatures only deal with patterns of social conflicts from 1970s to 1990s, failing to offer useable lens for current situations of street protests in Hong Kong. Also, researchers do not offer detailed explanations of such patterns for street protests in the previous decades studied as it was not the main concentration of their researches, meaning we are unable to investigate why such happens presently in Hong Kong through obtaining answers from literatures. Under such circumstances, research gaps appear in the field of street protest studies in Hong Kong as issues of the state responses and responsiveness of state responses towards street protests in 2012 as well as the mechanism behind such developments in street protests emerge.

Therefore, in order to supplement the gaps left by literatures and to bridge the linkages between literatures and current development of street protests, this research will be

addressing (1) the state responses and responsiveness of state responses towards street protests in 2012 and (2) the mechanism behind such developments in street protests in the following discussion.

Chapter Three: Research Method

This section describes how the research has been conducted in detail. In order to do so, it comprises (1) Research Questions and Hypothesis; (2) Conceptualisation; (3) Data Collection; (4) Data Recording and finally (5) Data Process.

3.1 Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research aims to describe and explain the state responses towards street protests in 2012. In order to achieve the purpose, the research has developed three research questions:

1. How were the state responses towards street protests in 2012 in general?
2. How was the responsiveness of state responses towards street protests in 2012 in general?
3. What explains the responses pattern of the government from perspectives of Hong Kong's political regime?

In response to these research questions, the paper has established four hypotheses in a view to answering the research questions:

1. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government tended to ignore and did not respond to the demands of demonstrators in general. The state responses could thus be said as low.
2. The responsiveness of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government responses was low.
3. Liberal Authoritarianism leads the Hong Kong government to a low state response and responsiveness of state responses towards most of the street protests.
4. Liberal Authoritarianism causes the Hong Kong government to react responsively and positively towards certain street protests.

It is noteworthy that hypothesis 1 and 2 derive from literatures. As mentioned above, studies of Cheung and Louie (1991), and Lau and Wan (1997) have all displayed the low state responses and responsiveness of state responses towards street protests from 1975 to 1995. Based on these, this paper naturally assumes such patterns of state reactions towards street protests remained in 2012 with formations of hypothesis 1 and 2.

Hypothesis 3 and 4 are based on the new thoughts of this research. In order to explain the phenomenon, the paper attempts to build the correlation between liberal

authoritarianism and state responses towards street protests. It is believed liberal authoritarianism contributes to the understanding of both low state responses and responsiveness of state responses towards most of the protests studied, and positive governmental reactions to certain protests.

3.2 Conceptualisation

In order to have a common understanding towards various terms used in the research, a number of principal concepts would be defined in this section first.

Street Protests – Literally the term means 'organized public demonstration(s) expressing strong objection to an official policy or course of action' (Oxford Dictionaries 2014). In practice, this research incorporates a broad meaning of all kinds of public protests, demonstrations and assemblies on street reported by Ming Pao as long as they expressed 'strong objection to an official policy or course of action' into the operational definition of protests. Therefore, uncommon public actions like 'vehicle protests' in which people driving all sorts of vehicles so as to protest against the government would also be included in the research data. Besides, since the research only concentrates on public protests against the state, demonstrations from civil

servants asking for improvements of working conditions against the government are excluded.

State Reactions towards Street Protests– the reactions of policy-making bodies in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government i.e. Chief Executive and the Executive Council towards street protests and demands of demonstrators. The concept is measured by two determinants: (1) State Responses and (2) Responsiveness of State Responses.

State Responses – the degree of reactions of policy-making bodies in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government to compromise with protesters by satisfying their demands. It is categorised as either replying to or ignoring the protesters in the research. In other words, it can be viewed as that the government either answers or ignores protesters.

In this paper, the subject is determined by rating of state responses. The dual situation of state responses is represented as follows: if governmental reactions are rated as '0', the ignorance of government towards protests exists in street protests; if governmental reactions are rated 'above 0 (1-4)', there are varying actions taken by the state in

responding street protests[2].

Responsiveness of State Responses – the degree of meaningfulness and fruitfulness of governmental reactions of policy-making bodies in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government towards street protests and demands of demonstrators. That said, how useful the governmental reactions are in bringing about changes to the concerned situations and policy areas of the protesters.

Similar to state responses, the concept is measured by the rating of state responses (0-4) too in this paper. Higher the state rating, more meaningful and fruitful the governmental reactions. Generally speaking, regardless of rating 0 which represents 'no response' from the state, rating 1 and 2 are considered as negative responses initiated by the state and rating 3 and 4 are viewed as positive reactions[3].

3.3 Data Collection

In terms of colleting raw data for analysis, this paper adopts a quantitative approach by

[2] Please refer to Section 3.5 'Data Process' in detail.

[3] Please refer to Section 3.5 'Data Process' in detail.

scanning newspaper articles that are related to street protests in 2012 and recording the key information needed for the research.

The whole-year Section A of Ming Pao, which concentrates on Hong Kong political news and commentaries, from 1st January to 31st December in 2012 is chosen as the raw data provider. Due to limited resources, only one newspaper can be scanned. The choice of Ming Pao was based on its credibility. First, with a constantly high ranking in the tracking research of Public Evaluation on Media Credibility conducted by the Chinese University of Hong Kong[4] throughout years, Ming Pao is publicly regarded as amongst the most credible Chinese newspaper in the territory. Also since Ming Pao mainly targets the well-off, middle class and intellectuals (Cheung & Louie 1991:54) who tend to be well-educated, sensitive political issues like street protests would be cautiously and neutrally covered. Thereby, Ming Pao can offer the author objective research data, meaningfully contributing to this social scientific research project. Because of its sole focus on political news and commentaries, only Section A would be included in the scanning process in order to save time resources.

[4] For instance, Ming Pao ranked first in the 2001 survey, second in the 1997, 2006, 2009 and 2010 survey as well as third in 2013 (Centre for Communication and Public Opinion Survey, CUHK 2014).

With regard to the medium of data collection, the scanning process would be done mainly online from late January to mid-February 2014. The online news search engine WiseNews was adopted as the platform of gathering data. It can be accessed directly by City University of Hong Kong's student identity through CityU's library website.

Concerning the collection process, it has several stages. Firstly, keywords in Chinese like '遊行' (Pinyin: Yóuxíng, 'Protests' in English) and '示威' (Pinyin: Shìwēi, 'Demonstrations' in English) would be inserted on WiseNews for generating preliminary search results. As all newspaper articles related to the keywords, whether in title or content, would present as search results, manual scanning was needed for selection of useful articles. The Ming Pao newspaper articles appeared in search results would be scanned by looking through the titles of articles as a result. If they were fit enough for the research, the content of those articles would be opened for further reading and vice versa. Important attributes of street protests, which would be displayed in the following section, were recorded in the process.

3.4 Data Recording

After obtaining suitable news articles, several properties of street protests were

recorded. Altogether, there were majorly seven elements of protests recorded for raw data:

(1) **Core Demands of Demonstrators**, the actual demands of protesters like asking the government to abolish the Housing Authority, for example;

(2) **Date of Reporting and Protest**, the date of news reporting of protests for the former and the actual date of protest for the latter;

(3) **Organiser of Protests**, parties responsible for organising the protests;

(4) **Location of Protests**, where protests took place;

(5) **Number of Participants**, in which all statistical numbers of participants, whether the numbers from mentioned sources, Ming Pao, the police or the organiser of protest, appeared in articles were recorded;

(6) **Nature of Protests**, which are determined by the core demands of protesters and are categorised into Political, Social, Economic and Environmental natures. Demands of protesters involving the government itself or any kinds of political changes are regarded as political natured; protests involving social changes such as improving social welfare or educational system are viewed as social natured; protests involving economic matters like asking for increasing wages of workers are economic natured and protests involving environmental issues like preserving

country parks are natured as 'Environmental'; and

(7) **Governmental Reactions and Date**; replies and date of reaction from policy-making bodies in the government towards protests.

3.5 Data Process

After the data was recorded on rough sheets, Microsoft Excel was used to generate a raw data base which contains all kinds of recorded information of protests. Graphs, tables and charts were produced by Microsoft Excel based on the raw data base in order to describe and explain the data.

Street Responses Rating

Street responses towards street protests were rated afterwards. The rating is given based on how able the government reactions were to match the demands of protestors. Thus a 5-scaled rating system is adapted with a view to generalising governmental attitudes towards answering demands of street protesters:

(1) The lowest **rating 0** represents 'No Responses', in which no actual governmental reactions towards protests are found in newspaper articles. For example, the newspaper does not mention any governmental responses towards particular protests or journalists state clear that the government does not have any responses

towards concerned cases;

(2) **Rating 1** refers to 'Overwhelmingly Negative', in which the government react to protesters with a reluctantly negative attitude that is clearly against protesters. For instance, when protesters ask for a referendum on political development, the government rejects such a demand, which is totally contrary to the wills of people;

(3) **Rating 2** means the 'Slightly Negative' responses from the government. For illustration, the government officially comments on particular protests quite negatively without actual actions;

(4) **Rating 3** indicates the 'Slightly Positive' attitude from the government. For instance, the people propose a reform on electricity supply policy and the government partially adopts the suggestion with some amendments; and

(5) The highest **rating 4** showcases the 'Overwhelmingly Positive' reactions from the government, who is willing to launch meaningful and fruitful reactions towards street protests and demands of demonstrators in introducing changes to the concerned situations and policy areas of the protesters. For example, the protesters asks the government to subsidise fares of public transportation and the government follows such a public opinion.

<u>Adjustment of Numbers of Protest Participants</u>

Numbers of participants in protests need to undergo adjustment after data collection and recording because of inaccuracy. As numerous scholars summarise, statistics are often manipulated to depict a situation that the authors want and thus fail to tell people what the real story looks like (Best 2004; Huff 2010; Best 2012). Therefore, simply adopting the numbers of protest participants obtained in the research is not accurate to tell the whole story, as there are differences in counting method between police and organisers. It is assumed that numbers from police often shrink in order to minimise impacts of protects and figures from oganisers always expand because they intend to exaggerate influence of protests. As a result, such stats must be adjusted in order to be relatively accurate for the purpose of analysis.

In an attempt to maintain objectivity of the research, participant numbers are adjusted in four situations. First, if there is only single participant number in the article without known sources, it is assumed such a number is from newspaper and it will be directly adopted for analysis without adjustment. Second, if there is solely one participant number in the article from police, the number will be arbitrarily multiplied by 1.5 so as to enlarge the shrunken number before adoption. Third, if there is merely one mentioned number in the article from organisers, the number will be divided by 2, again arbitrarily, to reduce the stretched number before analysis. Fourth, if there are numbers mentioned

in the article from both police and organisers, the sum of the two will be divided by 2 for attaining a balanced number for discussion.

Adjustments in participant numbers of protests from both police and organiser sources should be explained more clearly. Since numbers from police would be multiplied by 1.5 and figures from organisers of protests would be divided by 2, this paper regards the underestimation of police is less than the overestimation of organisers. As an integral organ within the establishment, it is believed that the police tends to diminish participant numbers in order to downplay the unpopularity of government expressed through protests. However, because of the fact that 'Integrity and Honesty' and 'Professionalism' are two of the values and principles upheld by the police (HKPF 2014), their manipulations of participant numbers are considered to be small compared to that of organisers, as policemen are still required to maintain certain objectivity and neutrality. On the contrary, it is logical that organisers of protests would expand the participant numbers as much as they could so as to highlight the grievances and dissatisfactions of people. By doing so, organisers attempt to attract more people to protests and then maximise participant numbers with a view to imposing greater pressure on the government. Based on such a rationale, the paper decides to use 1.5 and 2 for adjustment of numbers from police and organisers respectively.

Nevertheless, we should still be aware that the numbers adjusted serve as parameters only. Participant numbers are adjusted so as to diminish differences between various sources aroused by inaccurate statistics and different counting methods. It is expected a more precise research can be written after such an adjustment. The adjusted participant numbers are thus used as parameters for analysis only. All the description and explanation of the data are based on adjusted participant numbers. They, like those unadjusted numbers before, should be not treated as precisely accurate numbers showcasing the real story since there are no 'truly' accurate statistics in the world.

Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis[5]

This chapter would present the findings and analysis based on the data collected in order to answer the research questions of this paper. As a result, this chapter consists of (1) General Characteristics of the Data; (2) State Responses and Responsiveness of state Responses; (3) Attributes of Street Protests and their Relationship with State Responses and (4) Liberal Authoritarianism and State Responses in Hong Kong.

4.1 General Characteristics of the Data

Through reviewing the year-long Ming Pao Section A from 1St January to 31St December of 2012, 55 major street protests were reported. As the government had different responses towards the same event in different times and the newspaper re-reported those events on the following days, the total numbers of events recorded as raw data for analysis were 60. Since there were 7,529 public meetings and processions according to the Hong Kong Police Force (2014) in 2012, those 60 cases only occupied

[5] All the tables and charts adopted in this chapter are the own research of the author. Therefore, in order to avoid repetitive notifications, no specific indications of sources would be stated in this chapter except for adopted works of other scholars.

0.8% of the total numbers of public meetings and processions.

Source of Reported Numbers Participants

The paper adopts various sources to record numbers of participants in street protests. In Table 1 and Chart 1 which showcase the distribution of sources of reported numbers of participants, the single dominant source for the records of participant numbers is newspaper, in which numbers of participants were adopted directly from Ming Pao, accounting for 50% of the total number. 'Both Sources' comes second (31.67%) as 19 recorded events used sources from police and organisers to generate the numbers of participants for analysis. Both 'Number Unmentioned', referring to cases of recorded street protests with no known numbers of participants and 'Police Source', meaning events adapting numbers of participants from police are ranked as the third (8.33%).

Chart 1 Source of Reported Numbers Participants in Street Protests

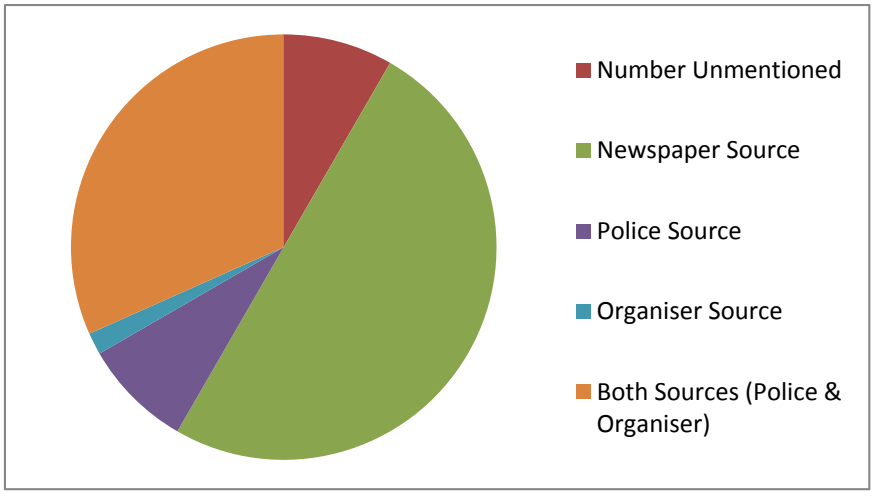


Table 1 Source of Reported Numbers Participants in Street Protests

Source	Number	Percentage
Number Unmentioned	5	8.33%
Newspaper Source	30	50.00%
Police Source	5	8.33%
Organiser Source	1	1.67%
Both Sources (Police & Organiser)	19	31.67%
Total	60	100.00%

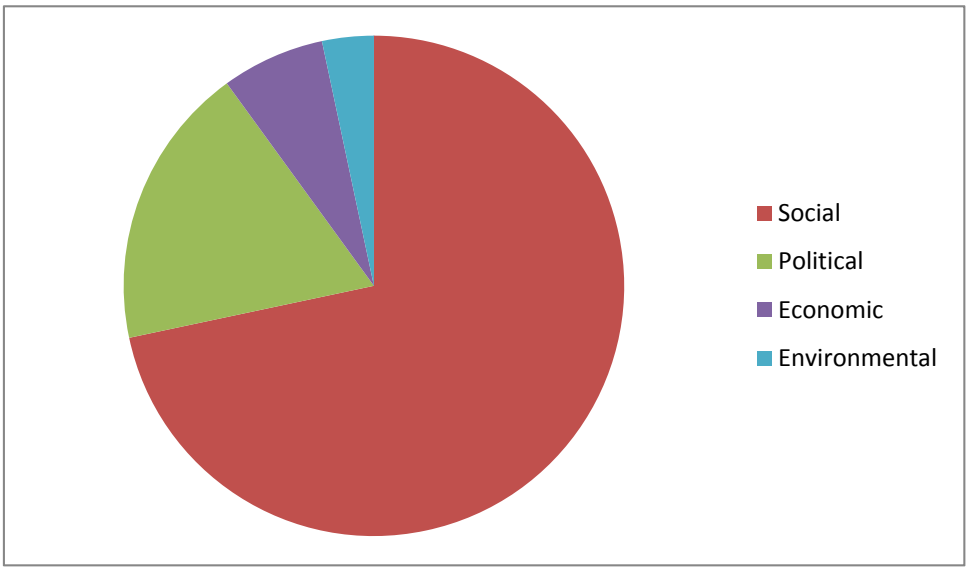
Natures of Protests

With reference to the nature of recorded street protests, social, political, economic and environmental protests all took place in the year of 2012. As seen from Table 2 and Chart 2, the majority of recorded protests (43) occurred because of social demands (71.67%). What follows were political protests, 11 in terms of event numbers and 18.33% in terms of the proportion. However they were already vastly behind the frequent appearance of social protests. There was a minority of street protests too that were driven by economic (4 in number and 6.67% in percentage) and environmental demands (only 2 in number and 3.33% in percentage).

Table 2 Natures of Recorded Street Protests

Nature of Protest	Number	Percentage
Social	43	71.67%
Political	11	18.33%
Economic	4	6.67%
Environmental	2	3.33%
Total	60	100.00%

Chart 2 Natures of Recorded Street Protests



Numbers of Participants in Protests

From the numbers of participants, it can be concluded that the majority of streets

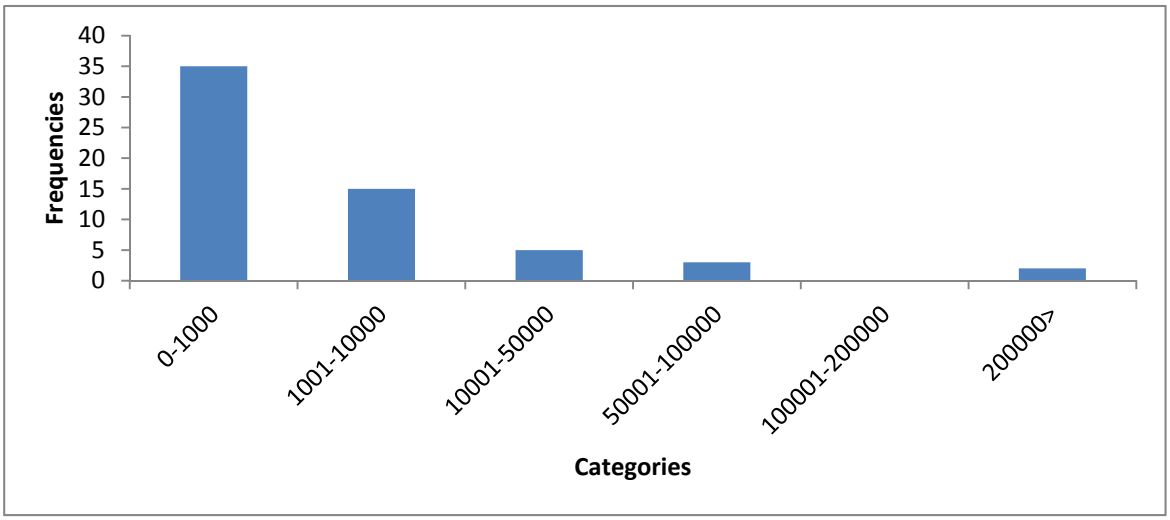
protests studied in this essay were small-scaled. In both Table 3 and Chart 3, we can see that protests which numbered between 0 and 1,000 were the majority. Among them, 35 cases which are more than half (55%) of the protests studied are statistically insignificant in terms of participant numbers. Many of these protests even featured with less than 100 people. Thus it is apparent that though Hong Kong has substantial street protests every year, many of those are unimportant because of small numbers of participants.

Moreover, it is found that frequency of protests is negatively correlated with number of participants. There was a trend that frequency decreases when numbers increases. According to Table 3 and Chart 3, there were 15 protests numbering 1,001 to 10,000 participants (25%). After such, frequency of protests fell drastically in the latter four categories (only 10 cases in total). Nonetheless, we should notice that 10 large protests with more than 10,000 participants appearing in one singular year is still momentous. This showcases the popularity of large protests among populace in the territory.

Table 3 Numbers of Participants in Protests

Categories (Unit: Persons)	Frequencies
0-1000	35
1001-10000	15
10001-50000	5
50001-100000	3
100001-200000	0
200000>	2
Total	60

Chart 3 Numbers of Participants in Protests



4.2 State Responses and its Responsiveness

State Responses

We can summarise that the Hong Kong government was not active in responding to demands of demonstrators in 2012. As observed from Table and Chart 4, '0' is the most frequent rating based on the reactions of government with a number of 29 out of 60. As in Table and Chart 5, rating 0 occupies as the single dominant category in the distribution of state responses rating with 48.33% showcased. Since rating '0' represents no known responses from the government towards specific issues recorded in newspaper, therefore, it can imply that the governmental responses were either insignificant or missing towards demands of demonstrators in most of the mass demonstrations occurred in 2012.

Chart 4 State Responses Rating

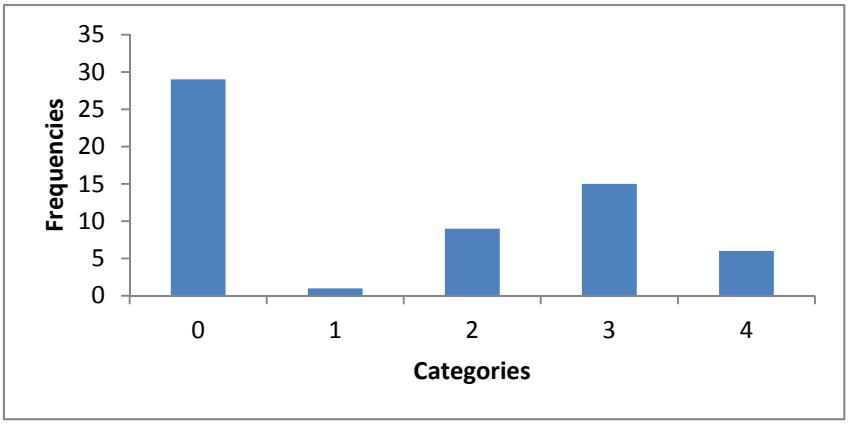


Table 4 State Responses Rating

Categories	Frequencies
0	29
1	1
2	9
3	15
4	6
Total	60

Consequently the finding well corresponds to the existing literatures by Cheung and Louie (1991), and Lau and Wan (1997). As mentioned in Chapter Two, in 1975 – 1986 which is their research period, Cheung and Louie display that the then-colonial regime reporting to London was not active in responding to street protests as most the social conflicts they studied (about 68% with a sample population of 882) ended with no publicly known responses (1991:43). Similarly, in 1987 – 1995, there was a majority (60.4%) of total social conflicts studied (3,361 cases) which were without known responses from the state (Lau & Wan 1997:100). Even after nearly three decades which saw the return of Hong Kong from Britain to China, the Hong Kong government, which is now under control of Beijing, was still inactive in replying to mass demonstrations and protests in 2012, as evidenced above. Little progress has been made with regard to the realm of governmental answers to social demands in spite of the handover.

As a result, hypothesis 1 is supported. That 'the Hong Kong Special Administrative

Region Government tended to ignore and did not respond to the demands of demonstrators in general. The state responses could thus be said as low' is true.

Responsiveness of State Responses

Generally speaking, The Hong Kong government was not positive in replying to the demands of protesters in 2012. Among those responded cases, the state inclines to launch 'Slightly Positive' responses towards various protests. According to the statistics, rating '3', which refers to the moderately positive attitudes of the government towards street protests, counts 15 in absolute number (see Table and Chart 4) or 25% in proportion(see Table and Chart 5). The significance of rating 3 is even more outstanding by the fact that it stands as the solely largest group (48.39%) in Table and Chart 6 if we withdraw all the non-responded cases from the sample.

Thus because of the importance of rating 3, the 'Slightly Positive' responses, other categories of state responses have lesser roles to play. In the statistics, rating 1, 2 and 4 only combine to produce 26.67% in proportional terms (see Table and Chart 5) or 16 in absolute terms (see Table and Chart 4). The numbers mentioned are merely bigger than rating 3 in both responded and non-responded cases. The sum of these 3 categories occupies 51.61% of the total responded cases, which are barely larger than the number

of rating 3 (see Table and Chart 6). Alternatively, 'Overwhelmingly Negative', 'Slightly Negative' and 'Overwhelmingly Positive' responses appeared less frequently as governmental reactions.

Chart 5 Distributions of State Responses Rating

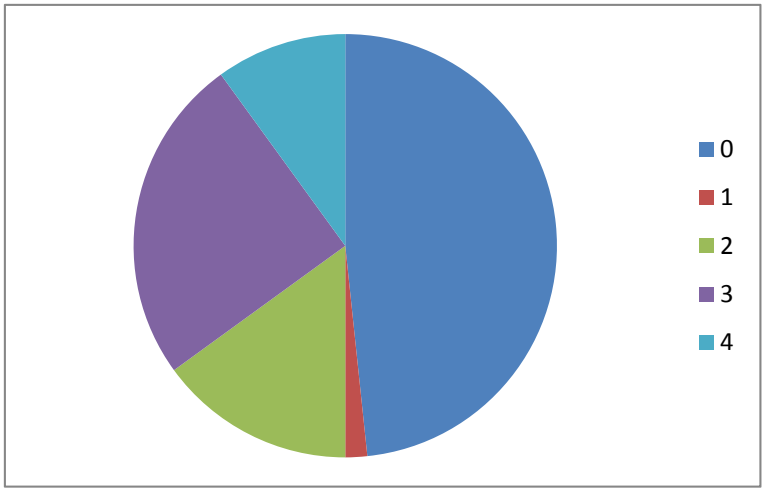


Table 5 Distributions of State Responses Rating

Categories (Rating)	Percentages
0	48.33%
1	1.67%
2	15.00%
3	25.00%
4	10.00%
Total	100.00%

Chart 6 Distributions of State Responses Rating (Excluding Non-responded Cases)

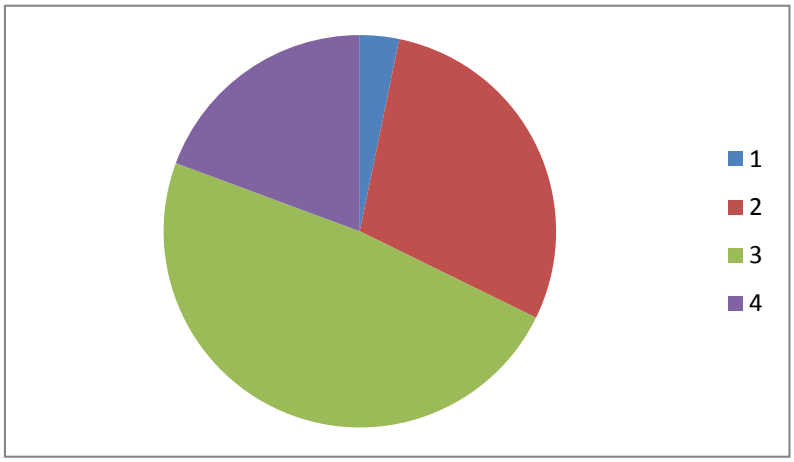


Table 6 Distributions of State Responses Rating (Excluding Non-responded Cases)

Categories (Rating)	Percentages
1	3.23%
2	29.03%
3	48.39%
4	19.35%
Total	100.00%

Nonetheless, we should not overestimate the significance of given responses from the state as most of these governmental responses were carried out chiefly through verbal reactions without much practical effects on concerned areas, even though rating 3 or 'Slightly Positive' responses seems to produce a healthy image of governmental

responses by their domination over other categories amongst responded cases. When the state issued responses towards specific protests, whether positive or negative, the form of responses was usually official comments on events. The government would express their attitude towards protests in the process of making official comments or answering questions from the press. Apart from these, other forms of governmental reactions such as organising discussions on concerned topics with protesters or amendments on policy areas were less found in the research year. Hence, the Hong Kong government is concluded to produce responses towards street protests mainly through verbal reactions with a lack of practical effect when it decides to answer demands of demonstrators.

Therefore, there was only a very limited number of protests to have attained fruitful results. Considering 'rating 4', which is the 'Overwhelmingly Positive' responses from the government as the genuinely game-changing reactions to concerned situations, fruitful cases studied with rating 4 from state responses merely number 6 in absolute means (see Table 7) and 10% in relative means (see Chart 7). That means, only 6 cases or 10% of the total cases could successfully end up with positive changes to concerned situations. It is noteworthy that most of these fruitful cases originated from the Anti-National Education Movement initiated by Scholarism. At the very beginning of the

Anti-National Education Movement, the government was indifferent to those street protests generated by the movement. Nevertheless, with mounting objections from the public, the government finally launched the suspension of the National Education Curriculum, which marked the end of the movement. Hence, apart from those fruitful cases found in the movement, the state was less willing to meaningfully respond to demands of people in other events.

Chart 7 Fruitfulness of State Responses

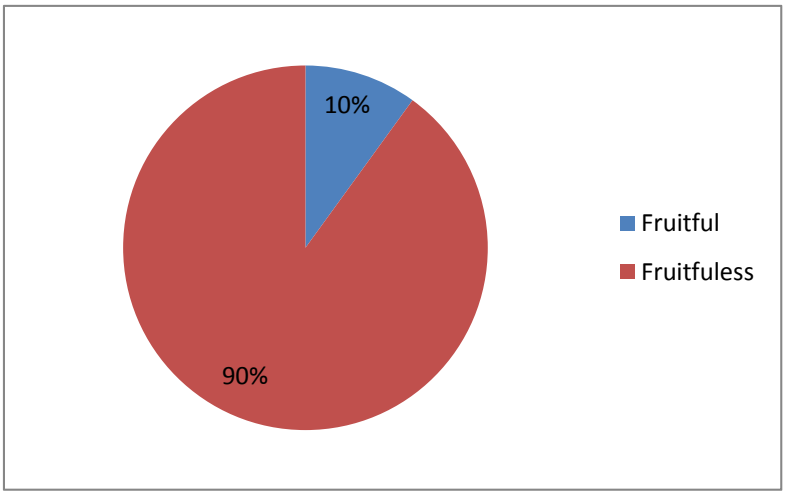


Table 7 Fruitfulness of State Responses

Fruitful (No.)	Fruitlessness (No.)	Total (No.)
6	54	60

Such a finding likewise echoes with literatures. Cheung and Louie suggest that under British rule, the then Hong Kong government was inadequately supportive towards demands of protesters. There were only 17.6% of the totally 882 cases studied with fruitful responses from the state (1991:47). Because of limited available data, Lau and Wan showcase the proportion of 'unsuccessful' social conflicts (7.2%) in which 'the claim-making party aims to change the status quo but the outcome is similar to the situation before the conflict erupted' was larger than those 'successful' (1.3%) ones (1997:98). As the above concludes, after the transition from British rule to Chinese governance, the current Hong Kong government still maintains a negative approach towards street protests, which could bring about little impacts to the society as a whole. As only 10% of the total cases lead the state to introduce fruitful responses in the research period, the lack of positive governmental responses to protests and demonstrations remains even after the handover.

Consequently, hypothesis 2 is supported too. That 'the responsiveness of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government responses was low' is true.

Short Sum Up

So, with both hypothesis 1 and 2 being positively evidenced, what is the meaning

behind this?

Obviously, the governments intended to maintain the status quo of Hong Kong in terms of political, economic, social and environmental development in spite of the prevalent mass protests demanding changes. Faced by mass demonstrations, the government could opt for either answering or ignoring demands of demonstrators. When it decided to ignore those protests, situations of protesters-concerned areas could not be addressed. Even when the state determined to reply to the people, it tended to uphold a position which has a minimum effect on concerned policy areas. That said, every time when the Hong Kong government decided to react, it did not intend to infuriate the mass populace (negative responses represented as rating '1' & '2') on one hand or to fully answer the implement changes on society (overwhelmingly positive responses referred as rating '4' in this research) on the other hand. Thus the government bent to adopt a position between these two by situating itself in rating 3 through verbal reactions for most of the responded protests.

4.3 Attributes of Street Protests and their Relationship with State Responses

After descriptions of the data which suggest the government was neither active nor

positive in responding to street protests in 2012, the following section attempts to investigate such from the perspectives of protest attributes, namely (1) Nature of Protest and (2) Numbers of Participants in Protests.

Nature of Protest and State Responses

Natures of protests are not correlated with state responses of state reactions towards street protests in 2012, insufficiently providing explanation for governmental behaviour with regard to its responses to street protests. That said, natures do not affect how responsive the state was to demonstrators in general. According to the data, rating 0, 'No Responses', is the single dominant category of governmental reactions with an absolute number of 29 (see Table and Chart 4) and a proportion of 48.33% (see Table and Chart 5). Even the statistics is broken down according to different natures of protests, rating 0 still maintains its status as the most frequent responses given by the government in three of the four nature-categorised protests.

Chart 8 State Responses Rating in Social Protests

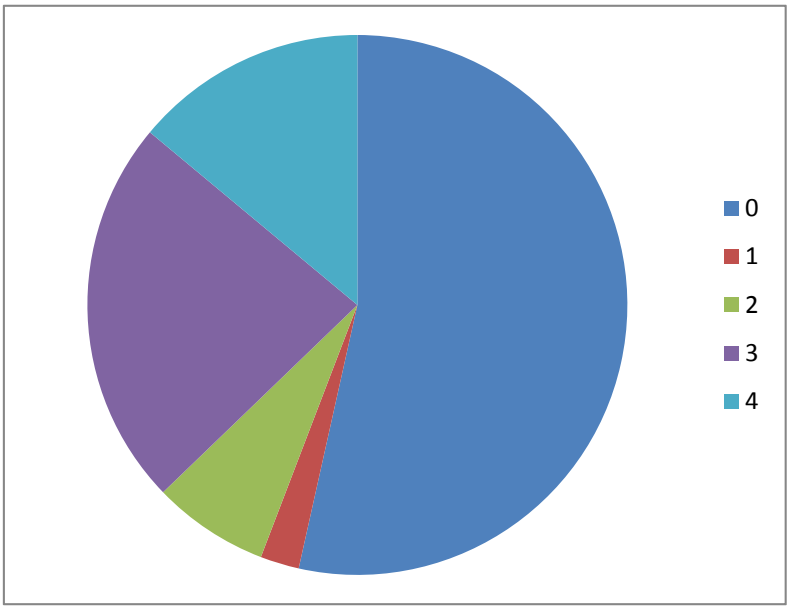


Table 8 State Responses Rating in Social Protests

Rating	Percentage
0	53.49%
1	2.33%
2	6.98%
3	23.26%
4	13.95%
Total	100.00%

Table 9 State Responses Rating in Political Protests

Rating	Percentage
0	36.36%
1	0.00%
2	27.27%
3	36.36%
4	0.00%
Total	100.00%

Chart 9 State Responses Rating in Political Protests

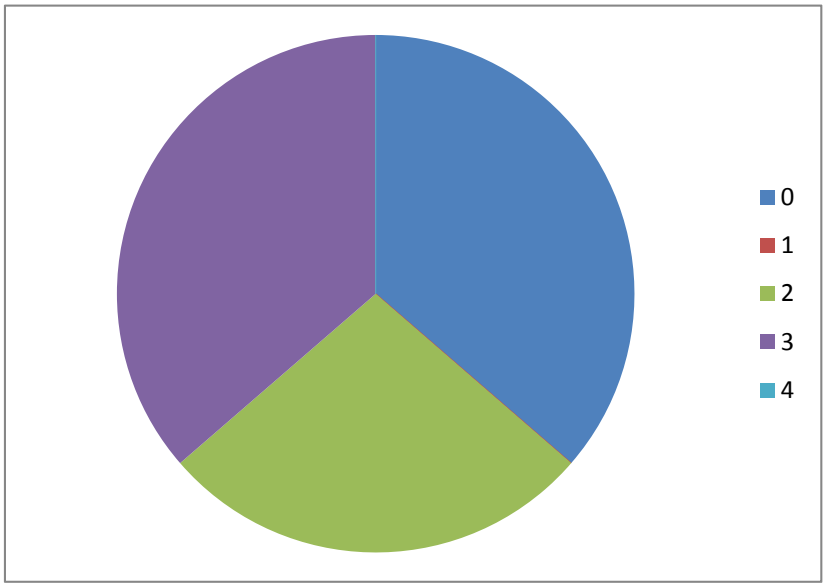
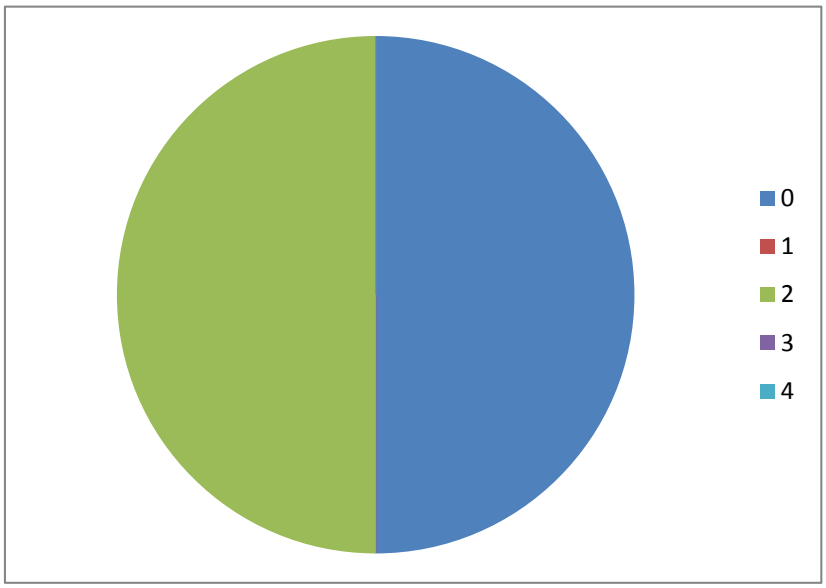


Table 10 State Responses Rating in Environmental Protests

Rating	Percentage
0	50.00%
1	0.00%
2	50.00%
3	0.00%
4	0.00%
Total	100.00%

Chart 10 State Responses Rating in Environmental Protests



In social, political and environmental protests the importance of 'No Responses'

remains. The sum of these three categories accounts for 56 or 93.33% of the total cases studied. Proportions of rating 0 hold high with at least 50 % in both social and environmental protests. In both Table and Chart 8, rating 0 accounts for more than half of the total population, occupying 53.49%. In Table 10, rating 0 shares the proportion evenly with rating 2 (50%), 'Slightly Negative' responses, in environmental demonstrations. Even percentage of rating 0 reduces to 36.36% in political protests, it is still the largest, along with rating 3 ('Slightly Positive' responses), among all as evidenced in Table and Chart 9. In other words, no matter what natured the street protests organised in 2012 were, the state overwhelmingly tended to introduce rating 0, 'No Responses', as the most frequent reactions towards various demands of people.

Chart 11 State Responses Rating in Economic Protests

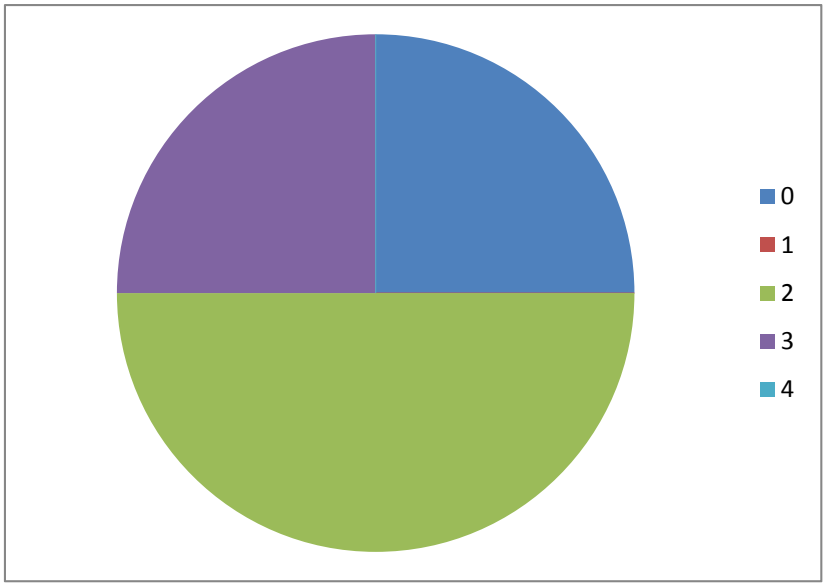


Table 11 State Responses Rating in Economic Protests

Rating	Number
0	25.00%
1	0.00%
2	50.00%
3	25.00%
4	0.00%
Total	100.00%

The only outliner in which rating 0 was not the most significant category amongst all is economic-natured protest. As shown in Chart and Table 11, rating 0 sits second with a percentage of 25% while rating 2, 'Slightly Negative' reactions, stands first with a ratio of 50%. Despite the large proportion of rating 2 in economic realm, considering the amounts of economic protests which are only 4 out of 60, we should by no means overrate the importance of rating 2 in the whole research by simply stating that 'Economic demonstrations lead the government to implement slightly positive responses against protesters'. Hence the quantity of economic cases is too small to affect the finding that the magnificence of rating 0 prevails as a whole.

As a result, because of the popularity of rating 0 or 'No Responses' in different kinds of demonstrations, natures have no correlation with state responses to street protests, failing to qualify as a valid explanation for governmental responses.

Nature of Protest and Responsiveness of State Responses

Likewise, natures are irreverent to the responsiveness of state responses towards street protests, becoming incapable of explaining governmental behaviour. As mentioned before, there were only 10 cases or 10% of the total population with fruitful outcomes in which the government implemented meaningful changes in concerned policy areas. Even the responsiveness of state responses is analysed segmentally based on natures of protests, fruitfulness cases still overwhelmingly dominate across different natured demonstrations.

Table 12 Fruitfulness of State Responses in Political Protests

Fruitful (Percentage)	Fruitlessness (Percentage)	Total (Percentage)
0.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Chart 12 Fruitfulness of State Responses in Political Protests

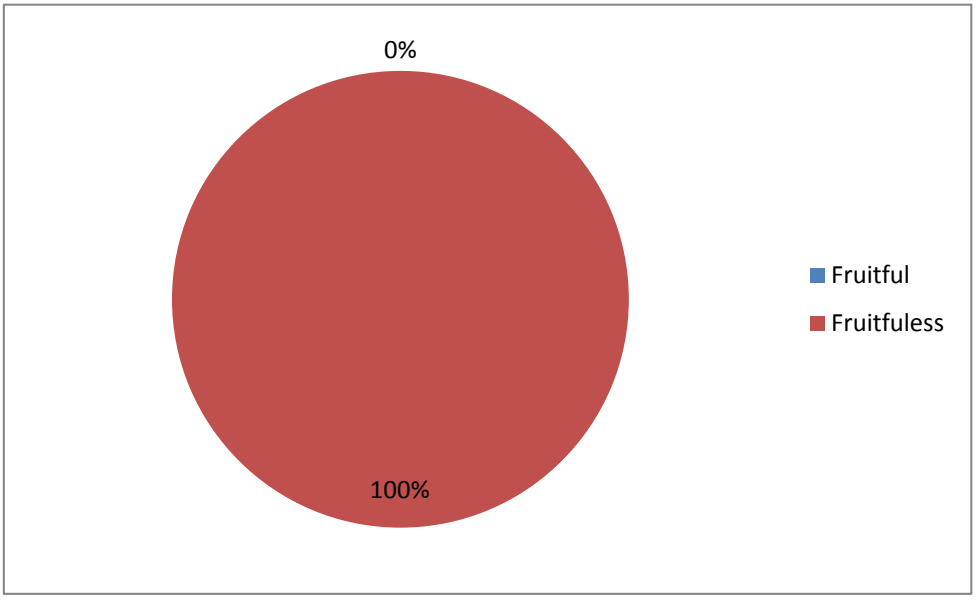


Table 13 Fruitfulness of State Responses in Economic Protests

Fruitful (Percentage)	Fruitlessness (Percentage)	Total (Percentage)
0.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Chart 13 Fruitfulness of State Responses in Economic Protests

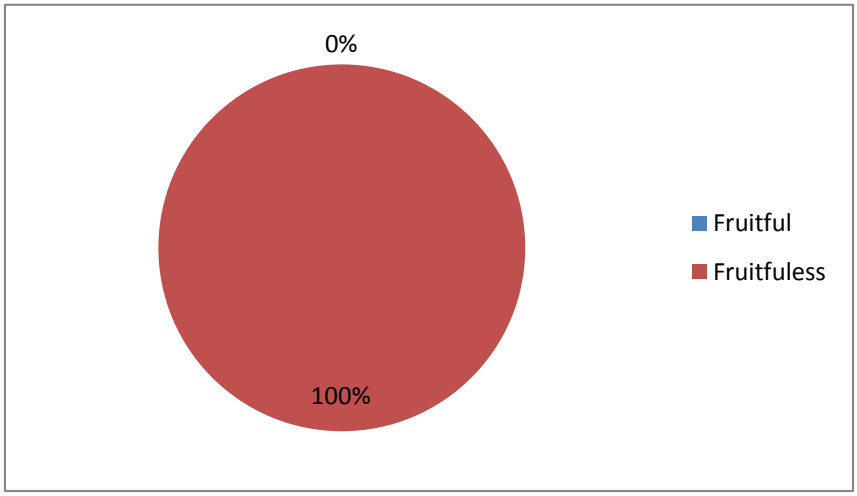
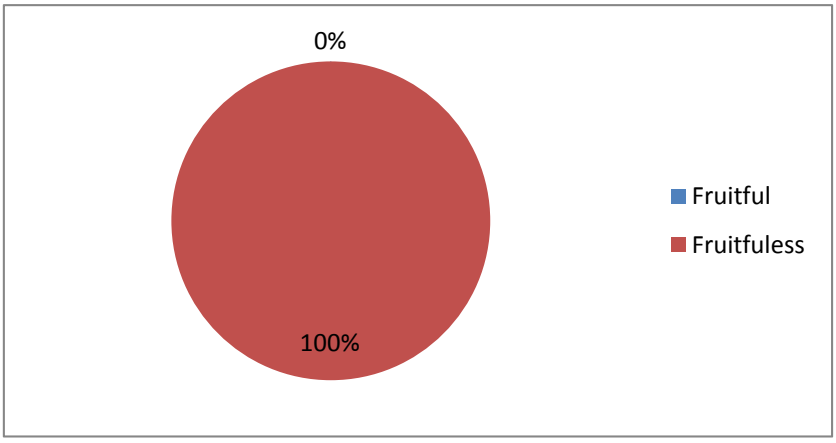


Table 14 Fruitfulness of State Responses in Environmental Protests

Fruitful (Percentage)	Fruitlessness (Percentage)	Total (Percentage)
0.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Chart 14 Fruitfulness of State Responses in Environmental Protests

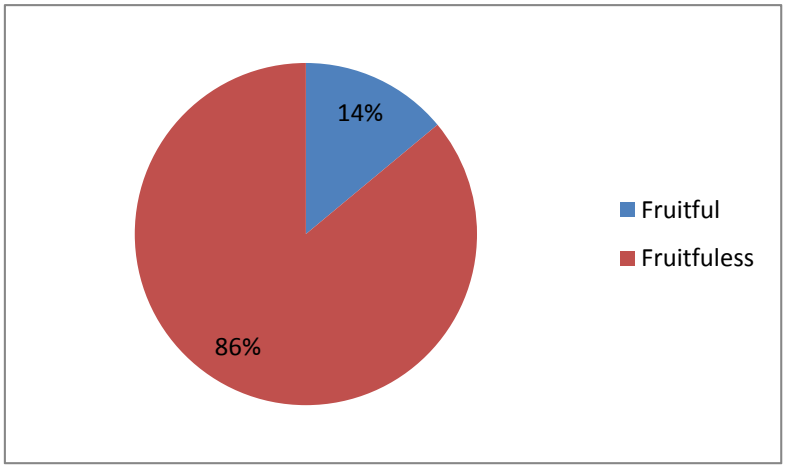


Surprisingly, no single fruitful case was even found in political, economic and environmental protests. According to the stats, state responses of these kinds of protests was simultaneously completely fruitfulness (100%). In other words, 'rating 4' responses was missing in political, economic and environmental protests which account 17 in absolute means or 28.33% in relative means as no meaningful reactions was found in these protests. It showcases that whatever which nature those protests belonged to, the government would still opt for meaningless responses in most of the cases.

Table 15 Fruitfulness of State Responses in Social Protests

Fruitful (Percentage)	Fruitlessness (Percentage)	Total (Percentage)
13.95%	86.05%	100.00%

Chart 15 Fruitfulness of State Responses in Social Protests



Similarly, fruitful state reactions to social protests were in lack despite in a different situation. The fruitless actions in cases of social protests were not that landslide-like as in the cases of political, economic and environmental protests. Shown in Table and Chart 15, there were 13.95% of the total social protests or 6 cases responded fruitfully by the state. That said, protesters of these 6 cases which were part of the large Anti-National Education Movement had successfully brought about meaningful changes to their concerned policy areas, in the issue of National Education Curriculum, for example. Notwithstanding these exceptional cases in which the Hong Kong government did reply with an overwhelmingly positive attitude, the majority of social protests (86.05% or 37/43) ended with unsuccessful attempts to alter governmental directions in concerned areas. Therefore the state seemed to have little inclination to answer demands of social protesters fruitfully.

Unsurprisingly the analysis here surely contradicts the assertion made by Cheung and Louie in their studies (1991). After uncovering the patterns of governmental responses towards social conflicts, the authors propose that 'the nature of conflict plays quite an important role in determining the outcome' as utilities conflicts, labour conflicts and urban development conflicts had 'a relatively higher rate of known fruitful outcome' (Cheung & Louie 1991:48). Nonetheless, the above finding displays that there is no

correlation between protest nature and governmental responses. No matter what natures the protests belong to, be them social, political, economic or environmental, fruitless cases are still the majority. Apparently explanations from protest nature cannot be simply drawn from literature to apply in cases occurred in 2012. Alternative approach must be sought.

Consequently, due to the predominate popularity of fruitlessly governmental responses across all kinds of demonstrations, natures of protests have failed to correlate with the research subject, becoming unsuccessful in explaining state responses of governmental reactions towards street protests.

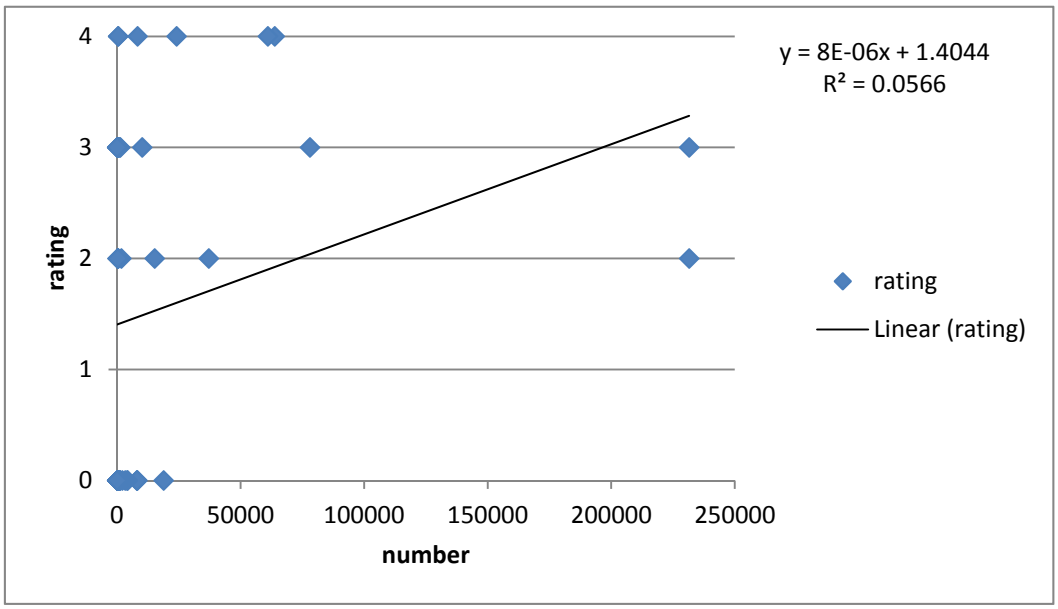
Numbers of Participants in Protests and Responsiveness of State Reactions

Similarly, participant number has no positive relationship with state responses, failing to become an appropriate explanation for the research subject.

Correlation of participant numbers with governmental reactions towards street protests cannot be founded if we take all cases of street protests into account. Considering all cases in the data base, a linear regression is made in an attempt to establish a relationship between governmental reactions towards street protests and participant

numbers.

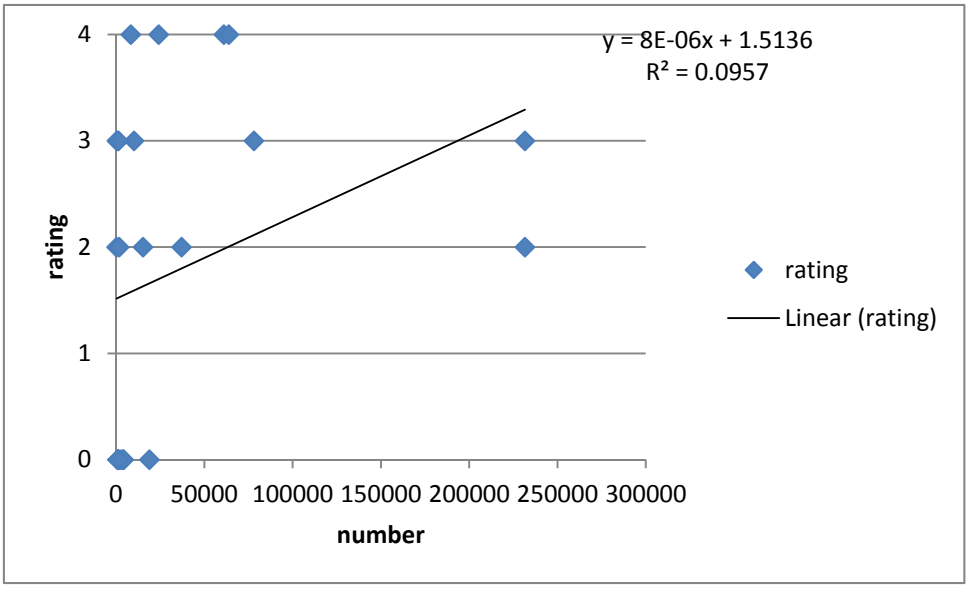
Chart 16 Governmental Responses Tendency given the Number of Participants (All Cases)



However, as Chart 16 displays, when governmental reactions and participant numbers are put together in the linear regression, R-squared, which is the statistical measure of how close the data are to the fitted regression line, is only 0.0566. This indicates that the model explains 5.66% of the variability of the responses data around its linear line. With such a small R-squared statistic, the positive relationship between participant number and governmental reactions is extremely weak, suggesting that 'the increase of participant number leads to more positive governmental reactions (i.e. higher ratings in state responses) towards street protests' may not be true.

Likewise, positive relationship between the two still cannot be established even if we merely consider cases with reliable sources of participant numbers, in which cases with participant numbers from unmentioned and newspaper sources are ruled out in order to enhance validity of the data. Altogether there are 25 reliable cases to generate Chart 17 for analysis.

Chart 17 Governmental Responses Tendency given the Number of Participants (Cases with Reliable Source)



Even with smaller population exacted from the raw data base, the chart still showcases the invalidity of the data. According to Chart 17, R-squared is still 0.0957, indicating that the model explains 9.57% of the variability of the responses data around its linear line. Despite the increased value of R-squared, the linear relationship between participant number and governmental reactions is extremely weak as still, suggesting

that 'the increase of participant number leads to more positive governmental reactions' towards street protests' may not be grounded.

As a result, participant number only has an extremely weak relationship with governmental reactions, thus being incapable of explaining the state responses towards street protests.

4.4 Liberal Authoritarianism and State Responses in Hong Kong

With incapability of explaining the state response mechanism from both nature and numbers of participants of street protests, the essay turns to an alternative approach in which, as this paper argues, the low state responses and state responses of governmental reactions towards street protests are actually a result of Hong Kong's Liberal Authoritarianism.

This paper argues that Hong Kong's liberal authoritarianism is useful in comprehending both the low state responses and responsiveness of state responses on one hand, and responsive and positive reactions towards rare cases on the other hand. In what follows, the model of liberal authoritarianism would be constructed in an attempt to explore the

links of state responses towards street protests in Hong Kong with the features of political regime in Hong Kong.

Low State Responses and Responsiveness of State Responses

It is believed that the elementary characteristic of liberal authoritarianism in which electoral competiveness is absent and a politics/administration dichotomy operating in the territory result in the low state responses and responsiveness of state responses to protests in Hong Kong.

Absence of Electoral Competiveness

First of all, missing representation of the mass public in the government brings on such developments in state responses towards street protests. The word 'representation' refers to 'the means by which a whole population may participate in governing through the device of having a much smaller number of people act on their behalf' (The Columbia Encyclopedia 2013). Due to the lack of electoral competiveness, the government is inadequately representative to accommodate responsive and positive replies to demands of people expressed in protests. Hong Kong's electoral system is far from full competitiveness. For instance, the chief executive is only popularly elected not by the public but by an election committee merely comprising of 1,200 members

mainly from business sector. Thus C.Y. Leung successfully became the city's third chief executive without public consent by securing 689 votes in the small-circled election in 2012. The C.Y. Leung administration then fails to qualify as a representative government of Hong Kongers as a whole.

Rather, the Hong Kong government has long been a representative of business sector. As critics point out, the government has long been a pro-business administration domestically since Hong Kong's establishment (Saporito & Martin 1994; Chan 2011; Lui & Chiu 2012), being the representative of business tycoons only. Recent statistics even showcases that Hong Kong tops the crony-capitalism index in the world (Economist 2014), signifying her highly close state-business relationship. Thus the state acts on behalf of those businessmen and ordinary populace has low capacity of affecting governmental decisions. Since interests of the mass public who are the main actor in street protests are accordingly ignored by the government, a difference between public concerns and governmental actions appears. In such a circumstance, the government is expected to neither answer demands of protesters responsively nor bring about situation-changing polices after demonstrations simply because it is not a representative of the mass public to reflect on their interests and concerns at all. As Ian Scott writes, 'the post-handover government has low policy capacity and has difficulty in

introducing new policies even when there have been clear public demands for them' (2010:231). That said, even expectations of the government are shown in protests, the state usually fails to meet those expectations imposed by the people. Unsurprisingly, since economic demands of the people, which include increments of wages and legislation of maximum working hours, are counter to the interests of businessmen, they would be usually ignored by the state as a result. Thus low state responses and responsiveness of governmental responses towards protests occur naturally as a result.

Take the labour protest on 1st May, 2012 as an example. Organised by several pro-labour parties such as the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions, the protest registered 8,200 participants. In that protest, protesters asked the government to improve treatments of workers like legalising the maximum working time of 44 hours a week. Nonetheless, because of the business-leaning nature of the state, the then Tsang administration, which lasted from 2005 to 2012, decided to stand with businessmen whose interests were conflicting with those of employees. As no reaction was formally reported by the newspaper, it can be viewed that the government reacted with disregard to the event by ignoring the demands of people, scoring 0 in state response rating in this research.

In addition, lack of accountability also gives rise to the low state responses and

responsiveness of state responses towards street protests. '"[A]ccountability" implies the ability to take responsibility for an action or an intention' (World of sociology, Gale 2001). It is beyond doubt that Hong Kong is a liberal authoritarian regime with an apparent lack of accountability to the mass public. According to Ian Scott,

> 'the Hong Kong government is accountable to the government of the People's Republic of China and Principal Officials are accountable to the Chief Executive. But the Chief Executive and Principal Officials are only very weakly accountable to the Legislative Council and the voting public' (2010:49).

In other words, being subject to Beijing, the Central People's Government, not Hong Kongers, is the real boss of the Hong Kong government. People of Hong Kong are in a lower priority in the minds of officials. Such a fact generates a situation in which the state needs not take much responsibility for their replies to demands of the people compared with democratic regimes. Since there is no competitive election in the territory, top officials cannot be removed from their positions by elections as punishment for their unpopular decisions. For illustration, in recent debates over nomination method of candidates for the chief executive election held in 2017, opinions from Beijing and the Hong Kong public is in a divergent state. The state in Hong Kong

adopts a stance that is as same as Beijing's by clearly supporting the idea of rejecting rights of the public to nominate candidates for the 2017 election. This tells us how subordinated the Hong Kong government is to Beijing. Also, the LegCo only has restricted power[6] plus the fact that not all legislators are elected popularly, which makes the LegCo not completely accountable to the public as well, being unsuccessful in causing the state to conduct fruitful responses to demonstrators. Therefore absence of responsibility leads the government to ignore demands of people shown in street protests.

We can have closer look at the point by studying the protest on Li Wangyang's death on 10th June, 2012. Li was a Chinese dissident who died on 6th June 2012. His death aroused many controversies as the Chinese government was believed to be responsible for it though authorities denied such claims. In Hong Kong, a protest demanding the Hong Kong government to press on Beijing for truth behind Li's death took place. In spite of 15,200 participants, the protest failed to produce meaningful outcomes. Since the state is not accountable to the public but to Beijing, it tends to ignore demands of people in most 'normal' cases. This case was so not 'normal' as it sensitively involved

[6] For example, LegCo members are only entitled to the rights to endorse government-initiated bills, but not the rights to introduce bills in practice.

China, whom the state in Hong Kong absolutely obeys to. Thus, the government had no choice but to reject the demands of people which questioned the authorities of Beijing. In the end, the state responded quite negatively to the event, as evidenced by its score of 2 in state response rating.

Nature of Politics/Administration Dichotomy

The politics/administration dichotomy of Hong Kong's liberal authoritarian regime likewise contributes to the low state responses and responsiveness of state responses towards street protests. Broadly speaking, the government is divided into policy-making bureaus, which is referred as 'politics' and policy-implementing departments, known as 'administration'. Civil service in Hong Kong which implements governmental policies operates in hierarchical structures under liberal authoritarianism, creating difficulties in responding to protests. As Ian Scott writes, the governmental 'departments are……organized hierarchically and typically comprise many organizational levels in which there is a stress on monitoring performance' (2012:82). Since there are 'collegial structures' at policy-making bureaus unlike the hierarchical structure in civil service, a 'politics/administration dichotomy' emerges (Scott 2012:82). Because of this, a disconnection between policy-making bodies and policy-implementing organs or even amongst departments to coordinate appears as

'[d]epartments tend to be worlds unto themselves, administering sets of procedures and rules without much reference to other parts of the civil service other than to their bureaus on policy and budgetary issues' (Scott 2012:82). Alternatively, even decisions are made in bureaus, it is possible that they may not be enforced by departments due to the politics/administration dichotomy in Hong Kong's liberal authoritarianism.

With such a nature, the state would take enforceability of protest demands into account from the views of departments in responding to mass demonstrations, reducing the state responses and responsiveness of state reactions towards cases with unrealistic demands. Complexity of public demands affects the extent of inter-department cooperation within the government, determining enforceability of publicly concerned policy-areas shown in protests. If the demands are enforceable, the state would be more likely to react responsively and positively, and vice versa. The logic behind this is that with high enforceability of public-suggested policy changes, it is relatively easy for the state to meet the expectation, in which governmental departments implement related changes on concerned policy areas, and thus launch responsive and positive replies. Therefore, the government tended to ignore cases with unrealistic demands.

In fact, demands of most of the cases in 2012 were unenforceable, failing to produce

fruitful outcomes. Due to the politics/administration dichotomy, enforceability of protest is taken into account by the state in launching responses, such highly achievable protest demands made the government fail to react properly.

Let us take a closer look at the a protest on anchor babies in Hong Kong held on 15th January, 2012 for understanding the point in detail. In that protest, there was more than 1,000 demonstrators demanded the state to stop issuing Hong Kong citizenship to those babies. Nevertheless, since the demand was so complex that it involved both legal and administrative matters. The state had to amend related immigration laws and organise inter-department cooperation between the immigration department, the police force and the justice department, for example, to introduce a complete policy in responses to public demands. Cross-border cooperation was needed too for handling the issue. The then Tsang administration thought it was too difficult to answer to the public responsively and positively due to the complexity of public demands and thus opted for an ignorant attitude towards the event (the government is rated 0 in state responses towards that particular incident).

Hence, with the natures of liberal authoritarianism, which lacks competitive elections and features a politics/administration dichotomy, low state responses and

responsiveness of state responses occur. Hypothesis 3 that 'liberal authoritarianism leads the Hong Kong government to a low state response and responsiveness of state responses towards street protests' is grounded positively

Responsive and Positive Reactions towards Rare Cases

Notwithstanding the low state responses and responsiveness of governmental reactions towards street protests in general, there were some fruitful reactions from the government to certain cases. Liberal authoritarianism is likewise believed to cause such a development. With the 'liberal' nature of Hong Kong's political regime which emphasises on civil liberties, the state tends to respond to certain protests.

The long existence of civil liberties in Hong Kong has created a political culture of responding to particular types of street protests amongst officials in the state. Hong Kong had already been a 'liberal autocracy' during colonial times, in which civil liberties were characterised (Tang 2008:20). Even after the handover, this has undergone little changes as civil liberties remain significant in Hong Kong politics. Because of a decade-long existence of civil liberties since the colonial era, an atmosphere of respecting such rights has appeared in the society. In the minds of officials, even the people only come second in the policy-making priority, they still

respect the rights of the public due to the political culture generated under liberal authoritarianism. When particular types of street protests occur, such a political culture leads officials to introduce positive responses.

In order to be 'particularly typed', street protests must fulfill several conditions which are drawn from the model of McAdam. According to McAdam, protests must become (1) sufficient in strength; and (2) 'an opportunity to other groups' (in the context of this research, it refers to the Hong Kong government) based on the use of institutionalised tactics and principle of reform goals by the demonstrators (1991:56-8) in order to receive positive responses from the state.

Protests with these conditions are easier to receive positive responses than those without. For the first condition, when protests become powerful, they are very difficult for the state to introduce suppressive reactions due to 'the potentially graver repercussions associated with an unsuccessful attempt at repression' (McAdam 1999:56-7). The strength of street protests then generate huge pressures from all walks of society such as media to impose on the state. A critical point for the state emerges as it chooses either suppression or compromise so as to end the incident. For the second one, with a view to becoming an opportunity to the state, protesters should adopt legitimised ways to

demonstrate in order to 'convey an acceptance of the established, or ''proper'', channels of conflict resolution' (McAdam 1999:57). A favourable condition for peaceful negotiations would then be built. On the contrary, noninstitutionalised tactics used by protesters only pose 'a distinct challenge to elite groups' which would merely bring about failures (McAdam 1999:58). Similarly when street protests demand for governmental reforms, an 'existing division among the elite' (McAdam 1999:58) would be generated to diminish the unity of state elites as some within the establishment may agree with protesters to answer their demands. An opportunity for the state to respond would occur as a result. Counter to reform goals, revolutionary-goaled movements could only 'mobilise a united elite opposition' whose interests are at stakes if such movements succeed (McAdam 1999:58). Such protests must be unsuccessful at the end. Unlike other authoritarian regimes such as Burma, who cruelly suppressed the 818 protest in 1988, due to these conditions, the state in Hong Kong would be more likely to react to protests responsively and positively based on the political culture which respects civil liberties, in an attempt to avoid a total collapse of legitimacy by easing public dissatisfactions.

The 1st July March organised in 2003 well supports the illustration. Since the protest was in accordance with the abovementioned conditions, it was then responded

positively by the government given the civil-liberties-emphasised political culture. First, with a record-breaking 500,000 protesters, the adequately strong protest attracted much media and public attention. Because of its highly publicised nature, the protest pushed the government to a critical situation. Also, in general, the protest was organised adopted institutionalised tactics as it was regarded as a 'peaceful rally' (CNN 2003). Thus a favourable atmosphere for negotiations occurred. Third, in that protest, because the people mainly demanded the government to call a halt to the legislation of Article 23 of the Basic Law, which is the notorious national security law, they were viewed as reform-goal-oriented as the society asked the state to make amendments on the legislation. The protest created a division with the within the policy-making body in government as James Tien resigned from the Executive Council to defer the legislation of Article 23 (Peterson 2005:51). In order to end the incident, the then Tung administration, which was in office from 1997 to 2005, decided to compromise with the people by suspending the legislation process, which has not yet resumed until now even after 11 years. Undoubtedly, due to the political culture, the government resolved to ease public anger by positive responses to the demands of certain cases so that a total loss of political legitimacy would be avoided.

Nevertheless, we should notice that governmental responses towards particular protests

are often the last resort of the state. That said, only when the circumstances are urgent enough to affect the political legitimacy, the state would take such actions to end the whole thing. In fact, not many protests could successfully push the government to the critical position. During the research year, there were only a few protects with such a big impact. This explains why there was a mere number of responsive and positive replies to street protests from the government in 2012.

In the research, the case of the 8th September protest on Anti-National Education Curriculum serves the purpose of explanation. As aforementioned, most of the responsive and positive reactions from the government are found in the large Anti-National Education Movement. Firstly, a powerful demonstration took place as more than 63,000 people gathered at the Central Government Offices to ask for a complete suspension of the curriculum which is accused of being 'brain-washing'. Since the protest was part of the continuous movement since August that year, its strength was strong enough to catch plenty of media and public attention. Pressures on the state were too huge that a governmental response was needed to end the massive movement. Secondly, the protest and the whole movement were generally peacefully in a sense that institutionalised ways of demonstrations were adopted. By participant observation of the author, it was known that protests were held in a legal way in the Central

Government Offices. An atmosphere for peaceful negotiations appeared. Thirdly, the protest went with reform goals. Throughout the course, protesters asked the government to delay the introduction of the curriculum and review its content. People hence discussed the issue of implementing the National Education Curriculum everywhere in Hong Kong. Different opinions within the government emerged. Surrounded by these, with the contribution of the civil-liberties-emphasised political culture, the government finally adopted a peaceful means with responsive and positive reactions by withdrawing the entire syllabus in order to avoid the collapse of political legitimacy which is the central of interests of government. Such an action gives the state a credit of rating 4, which is the highest, in state response rating in the research.

As nature of liberal authoritarianism which respects civil liberties contributes to the rarely responsive and positive reactions to the street protests that fit the model of McAdam. Hypothesis 4 is supported that 'liberal authoritarianism causes the Hong Kong government to react responsively and positively towards certain street protests'.

Short Sum Up

Throughout the whole section, stress has been given on the correlation between liberal authoritarianism and state responses from perspectives of both non-responded and

responded cases. With validity of both hypothesis 3 and 4, the model of liberal authoritarianism in relation to state responses towards street protests in Hong Kong has been successfully established, despite at a very preliminary stage.

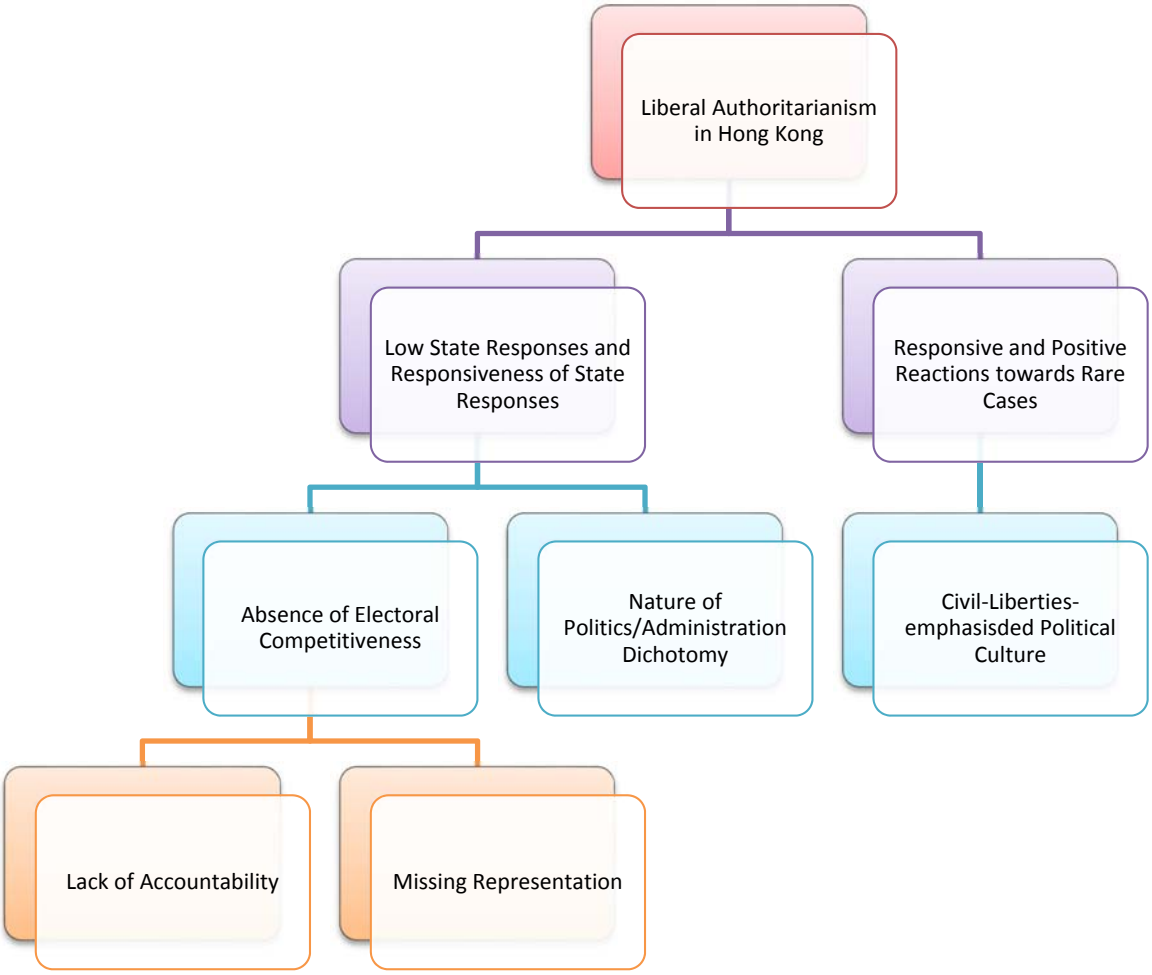
Chapter Five: Conclusion and Discussion

Discussions in previous chapters have highlighted the relationship between several factors and state responses towards street protests. The research has showcased the incapability of attributes of protests, namely natures and participant numbers in explaining the low state responses and responsiveness of state responses towards the most of the street protests appeared in 2012. Therefore the paper turns to an alternative approach, arguing that the political regime type in Hong Kong, liberal authoritarianism, is crucial in understanding the patterns of state responses towards street protests.

Under liberal authoritarianism, the Hong Kong government has adopted a dual approach: the primary one is low state responses and responsiveness of state responses to most protests; and the secondary one is responsive and positive reactions towards certain cases. As Chart 18 concludes, absence of electoral competitiveness in Hong Kong, which leads to a missing representation of the mass public and a lack of accountability to the people in the government, and the nature of a politics/administration dichotomy operating within the political regime, in which enforceability of protest demands are taken into account by the state in responding street

protests and thus leading the government to react properly towards most protests, have combined to result in the low state responses and responsiveness of such reactions towards most of the street protests in the territory. Nevertheless, because of a civil-liberties-emphasised political culture, top officials tend to launch responsive and positive replies to certain street protests which suit the model established by McAdam in order to avoid a total collapse of political legitimacy.

Chart 18 Concept Map of the Liberal Authoritarian Model of State Reactions



To summarise, in spite to the large input of people in street protests, most of their efforts were in vain since there were only a few meaningful outcomes as governmental reactions towards protests. As the research suggests, fruitful responses of the government only arrives in appearance of particular protests. It is thus believed that developing protests based on the assumptions of McAdam should be a consideration for protesters if they are to make game-changing consequences through street protests.

In general, this paper sheds a new light on protest research. Since this essay is the first one trying to describe and explain governmental reactions to protests and demonstrations form the role of political regime with emphasis put on Hong Kong in 2012, it has given a new research direction to academia. Future research can focus on how various political regime types like democracies and totalitarian regimes react to street protests differently in order to build a comparison of state responses between different regimes.

Nonetheless, research limitations of this paper should never be put aside. Due to limited resources, a number of limitations emerge. First, as the paper relies on newspaper articles as the sole raw data provider, protests that did not appear in Ming Pao are thus neglected by the research. There may be different results if we incorporate such into the

research. Furthermore, as this paper only concentrates on reported responses of the government on subsequent days of protests, reactions that were either not on in the press or reported a few days later are naturally ignored. This affects the accuracy of describing state reactions towards street protests. Moreover, the paper can merely use natures and participant numbers of demonstrations as attributes of street protests to analyse the topic. More properties of street protests are needed if we are to enhance the comprehensiveness of explanation from protest attributes. In addition, this essay can only adopt a one-year data of 2012 for analysis and the numbers appeared in the research are actually a bit low for generalisation. This is insufficient for us to conclude patterns of the governmental behaviour towards street protests which require years-long data.

As a result, further research is needed in order to thoroughly understand patterns of governmental reactions towards protests across different political regimes in the world.

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