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Newspoll 'best' for Malcolm Turnbull!

While Morgan Poll and Age/ Nielsen show Hockey preferred Liberal Leader

Over the last few days there have been three polls released that have told us who Australians would like to see as the Leader of the Liberal Party.

Perhaps surprisingly, the three polls all produced three distinctly different results. However, a closer look at the polls reveals that the different questions asked - the different ways the questions have been asked - are why they obtained different results.

First released on Friday October 9, 2009 was a telephone Morgan Poll conducted on the nights of October 7/8, 2009 showing Shadow Treasurer Joe Hockey ahead of Opposition Leader Malcolm Turnbull as preferred Liberal Leader – amongst both all electors, and also Liberal party supporters for the first time.

THE RESULTS

1. Morgan Poll (October 7/8, 2009 – telephone):

Morgan Poll asked: “If you were a Liberal or National Party voter and helping to choose the Coalition Leader for the next Federal Election, **who would you prefer?** Malcolm Turnbull, Joe Hockey, Tony Abbott, Julie Bishop, Andrew Robb or Christopher Pyne?” (NAMES WERE RANDOMLY ROTATED for each respondent) (<http://www.roymorgan.com/news/polls/2009/4422>)

	<u>Australia</u>		<u>Analysis by Federal Voting Intention</u>					
	<u>October 7/8, 2009</u>		<u>ALP</u>	<u>Lib</u>	<u>Nat#</u>	<u>The Greens#</u>	<u>Family First#</u>	<u>Ind/ Other#</u>
	%		%	%	%	%	%	%
Hockey	30		32	35	41	15	22	22
Turnbull	21		18	21	29	30	0	29
Abbott	17		16	22	13	15	17	13
Bishop	9		10	5	4	21	13	13
Robb	4		5	3	0	2	13	5
Pyne	2		2	1	0	2	19	0
Someone else	1		0	1	0	2	0	0
Can't say	16		17	12	13	13	16	18
Total	100		100	100	100	100	100	100

MORGAN POLL – PRIMARY VOTE

October 7/8, 2009 (Phone)

ALP 46.5 L-NP 37 (4.5) Greens 10.5 Family First# 1 Ind./Others 5

MORGAN POLL – TWO PARTY PREFERRED

October 7/8, 2009 (Phone)

ALP 58 L-NP 42

This telephone Morgan Poll was conducted on the nights of October 7/8, 2009, with an Australia-wide cross-section of 549 electors. Of all electors surveyed, 4.5%, down 2.5% since August 5/6, 2009 did not name a party.

2. Age/ Nielsen Poll (October 8-10, 2009 – telephone):

Age/Nielsen asked: “Who is your preferred Liberal Leader? Malcolm Turnbull, Joe Hockey or Tony Abbott?”

<u>Australia</u>	
<u>October 8-10, 2009</u>	
Hockey	33
Turnbull	31
Abbott	21
Don't know/ Uncommitted	<u>15</u>
Total	<u>100</u>

<u>AGE/ NIELSEN POLL – PRIMARY VOTE</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>L-NP</u>	<u>Greens</u>	<u>Family First#</u>	<u>Ind./Others</u>
October 8-10, 2009 (Phone)	46	37	10	1	6

<u>AGE/ NIELSEN POLL – TWO-PARTY PREFERRED</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>L-NP</u>
October 8-10, 2009 (Phone)	57	43

This telephone Age/ Nielsen Poll was conducted on the nights of October 8-10, 2009, with 1,400 electors.

3. Newspoll (October 9-11, 2009 – telephone):

Newspoll asked: “Which one of the following do you think would be the **best candidate** to lead the Liberal Party? Malcolm Turnbull, Joe Hockey or Tony Abbott?”

<u>Australia</u>		<u>Analysis by Federal Voting Intention (Two-Party Preferred)</u>	
<u>October 9-11, 2009</u>		<u>ALP</u>	<u>L-NP</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Hockey	24	30	22
Turnbull	32	24	48
Abbott	16	17	15
Uncommitted	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>15</u>
Total	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

“If you had to choose between Malcolm Turnbull and Joe Hockey, which do you think would be the **best candidate** to lead the Liberal Party?”

<u>Australia</u>		<u>Analysis by Federal Voting Intention (Two-Party Preferred)</u>	
<u>October 9-11, 2009</u>		<u>ALP</u>	<u>L-NP</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Hockey	31	36	29
Turnbull	39	33	55
Uncommitted	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>16</u>
Total	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

<u>NEWSPOLL</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>L-NP</u>	<u>Greens</u>	<u>Ind./Others</u>
October 9-11, 2009 (Phone)	47	36	10	7

<u>NEWSPOLL</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>L-NP</u>
October 9-11, 2009 (Phone)	58	42

This telephone Newspoll was conducted on the nights of October 9-11, 2009, with 1,153 electors.

It is clear the three polls asked quite different questions

While each poll was conducted at slightly different times it is unlikely the timing of the poll would be the reason for the different results. Voting intention was also measured by each poll, **all obtained similar results.**

The Morgan Poll showed: ALP – 46.5% ahead of L-NP – 37%. The Age/Nielsen Poll showed: ALP – 46% cf. L-NP – 37% and Newspoll, ALP – 47% cf. L-NP – 36%.

Also, the ‘Two-Party’ preferred results were similar. The Morgan Poll result: ALP (58%) cf. L-NP (42%) – exactly the same as Newspoll, and only slightly different to the Age/ Nielsen Poll which show: ALP (57%) cf. L-NP (43%). (The latest Face-to-Face Morgan Poll gave a ‘Two-Party’ preferred result was ALP (59.5%) cf. L-NP (40.5%) – as usual showing stronger support for the ALP because Face-to-Face polls include non-telephone owners of whom significantly more vote ALP than L-NP.)

The difference is due to the preferred Liberal Leader question asked

Electors surveyed by the Morgan Poll and asked their preferred Liberal Leader were given the choice of Malcolm Turnbull, Joe Hockey, Tony Abbott, Julie Bishop, Andrew Robb or Christopher Pyne.

For Newspoll and the Age/ Nielsen Poll electors surveyed were both offered only three alternatives (Malcolm Turnbull, Joe Hockey and Tony Abbott).

This is an important difference as Morgan Poll electors who nominated one of Julie Bishop, Andrew Robb or Christopher Pyne (these three together ‘polled’ 15%) would, if asked, have named one of Turnbull, Hockey or Abbott as their preferred Liberal leader.

Another important difference is the specific question wording. Both the Morgan Poll and the Age/ Nielsen Poll asked electors who they would **prefer** as Liberal Leader. **Both polls showed electors prefer Hockey to Turnbull as the Liberal Party Leader.**

However, Newspoll asked electors who they thought would be the **‘best’** candidate to lead the Liberal Party. This Newspoll question is **obviously different** and raises the further issue of how to define what **‘best’** means. Does **‘best’** mean, **‘best’** for Australia? Or **‘best’** for the Liberal Party? Or **‘best’** for an elector’s needs?

Only the elector surveyed can know which **‘best’** they were thinking of when nominating a preferred candidate – making it impossible to compare the Newspoll result directly with the Morgan Poll or Age/ Nielsen Poll results.

Simply put, Newspoll asked a different question which was **‘best’** for Malcolm Turnbull! It is clear however that until all candidates are known, that all alternatives are canvassed – **the Morgan Poll question.**

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