Knowledge Transfer Awards Scheme 2014/15

Educational Experiences, Self Identity and Spirituality: A study on the Well-being among students from Diverse Cultures in Hong Kong

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The Research Study

The Research Team
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Prof. Sam Leung (Co-Investigator – Thei, Hong Kong)
Prof. Moosung Lee (Co-Investigator – University of Canberra, Australia)

Funding Support
General Research Fund, Research Grants Council, Hong Kong
Duration: 1 January 2013 – 31 March 2015

GRF Ref. 844812
Studies on the well-being of immigrants reveal that culture (Schimmack et al., 2002); group identification (Bonini, 2009); religious affiliation and national identity (Amit, 2010) are mediating factors of well-being.

Understanding the identity issues of immigrants and minority groups is imperative to apprehend their well-being. Fisher (2008) argues that the basic question regarding self identity is who are you? It is a simple question of being human and has fundamental impact on the quality of life.

Spirituality is about that which lies at the heart of a person being human. The role of spiritual aspect in promoting mental well-being has been increasingly recognized (Kuhn, 1988; Mental Health Foundation, 2006). Self identity, spirituality and well-being are interconnected (Fisher, 1999).
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

• Critically examine the **self-appraised well-being** of the three student groups and mainstream HK students
• Contributing factors to the well-being of these student groups through **educational experiences, self-identity and spirituality**
• Evaluate and compare the **interrelationships** in educational experiences, ethnic identity and spirituality of student groups with mainstream HK students
• Analyze the **responsiveness of the provision** of connected support services to the well-being of these student groups
• **Theory-building** to promote the well-being of immigrant and minority student groups in HK and share our findings with the international educational community
Purposeful stratified sampling method was utilized

The two instruments administered were:
  – The Multidimensional Students’ Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) (Huebner, 2001)
  – The Spiritual Health and Life-Orientation Measure (SHALOM) (Fisher 1999)

Sample – 15428 students (aged 12 – 19) from 28 secondary schools
(I) Academic/Scholarly Impacts

(1) Deepen the **understanding** of spiritual health and life satisfaction of students from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds

(2) Laying the **foundation** to nurture and support the well-being of students from diverse cultural backgrounds

(3) Provide **evidence** to inform school personnel and policy makers of the roles of educational experiences, self-identity and spirituality in the well-being of these student groups.

Findings are relevant for:

(i) deepening the partnerships between project schools and the Institute

(ii) developing a context-specific interdisciplinary preventive and support system for various student groups in each project school;

(iii) encouraging educators and policy makers to develop a culturally informed framework to mobilize resources, promote public health and nurture potential talents; and

(iv) generating new insights for follow-up research exercises.
(I) Academic/Scholarly Impacts

(4) Complement *quantitative studies* on adolescents’ well-being through *qualitative data* and generate new research ideas for further studies.

(5) Deepen the *understanding* on the well-being of adolescents with diverse cultural backgrounds in Asian societies through:
   
   (i) the use of adapted *MSLSS* and *SHALOM instruments*;
   
   (ii) applying the two instruments within a Hong Kong context shed new insights into the uniqueness of perceived well-being among these student groups;
   
   (iii) how well-being and spirituality are shaped in the social and cultural context of Hong Kong.

Knowledge transfer impact – The validated Chinese version of MSLSS instrument was borrowed by local researchers for their subsequent use.
(I) Academic/Scholarly Impacts - Publications

Journal Articles generated from the project-related activities:


Book chapters


• 袁月梅(2014).少數族裔中文教育「中文作為第二語言」的政策配合」王惠芬、葉皓羚編。『無酵餅』-『中文作為第二語言』教與學初探。香港：香港融樂會。

Articles under review


(I) Academic/Scholarly Impacts – Conferences / Seminars/ Professional Development Training

(a) Translating expert knowledge into real world practical advice
(b) Various channels to share our findings with international and local policy makers, researchers, teachers and general public to facilitate further investigation (International conferences, seminars etc.)
(II) Practical Knowledge Transferred Impacts – Media / Community-wide Advocacy

- Preliminary findings disseminated via a press conference (10 June 2014), attracting more than 10 local newspapers and radio media to report findings
- Live interview conducted by Radio 5 on the well-being of South Asian youth in HK, inspired by the results of the study
- Interview broadcast on Aljazeera on understanding Ethnic Minorities in HK
Practical student support programme offered by the HKIEd: 12 school-based feedback sessions conducted with frontline teachers & principals of the project schools together with a dissemination seminar held on 6 March, 2014.

Dissemination via digitalized e-TV talk and RTHK programmes.

A special host for two RTHK education programmes on CBS and CIS.
(II) Practical Knowledge Transferred Impacts: Media / Broader Picture

No time to waste

Embrace youth
(II) Practical Knowledge Transferred Impacts:
Dialogues with the target student groups

- Sharing with Student Leaders (LEAPS) on July 30 on the needs of CBS
- Dialogues with secondary students of diverse cultural backgrounds broadcast by RTHK Online e-TV (10 Oct at Delia Broadway) in promoting intercultural sensitivity and integration
- Invited to give a public talk by the HK Outstanding Students’ Association for Project Resonance (28 July 2014) on Integrating Ethnic Minorities into Host Society in HK at the Kowloon Exhibition Center (≈100 university and secondary students attended)
To maximize the findings for knowledge transfer, a Student Empowerment Grant (20,000HKD) was applied from SAO to equip HKIEd undergraduates to be sensitive and relevant to the needs of CIS and CBS. 120 secondary students participated in the scheme with very positive feedback.

The 3-hour university experience for participating students included team building, a tour of the MMW library, Education Museum and a personal sharing by 2 HKIEd students from mainland China.

Offered professional holistic pastoral care to participants assisted by social workers from Mission to New Arrivals Ltd.
(II) PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER IMPACTS
CO-CURRICULAR COURSE – INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES PROVISION

Informed by the findings, I engaged HKIEd students in promoting the well-being of the SA, CIS & CBS students via a wide range of community services e.g. learning Chinese, identity building and talent cultivation.
Collaborated with SAO, CO and Library & NGO colleagues. The project “A taste of university life, empowering the CIS and CBS” was welcomed by the participating secondary schools’ students and teachers.
The main findings have been transferred into public knowledge via:

- UGC Public Lecture in the Central Library (December 5, 2015)
- Press Release & local newspapers (June 10, 2014)
- Research Dissemination Seminar (March 22, 2015)
- HKIEd thematic seminar – for 200 serving teachers participating in the Basic Level, Professional Development Programme seminars
- Other seminars: e.g. three recently invited seminars for Oxfam Hong Kong (January 5, 2015); HKU Graduates Association Education Foundation (January 17, 2015)
- Teacher professional development of Semple Secondary School (January 28, 2015)
- Five International conferences and several journal articles & chapters.

(III) Professional Knowledge Transferred Impacts: Public knowledge
(III) Professional Knowledge Transferred Impacts: Supporting Postgraduate Studies

- Received more than 20 individuals studying Masters of Arts in Journalism from Hong Kong University, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the Baptist University and Hang Seng Management College for an interview in relation to their own MA projects on current issues facing CBS and SA students.

- Served as both internal and external grant reviewer for more than 10 proposals.

- Served as external examiner of an EdD thesis on SA students from University of Nottingham.
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<th>Dates</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>May 2015 – Dec 2015</td>
<td><strong>Subjective Well-being of Chinese Mainland Students Studying at Higher Education in Hong Kong</strong>&lt;br&gt;Grant Type: Departmental Research Grant&lt;br&gt;Funding Organization: Department One-line Budget&lt;br&gt;Approved Amount: 49,560 HKD</td>
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<td>Dec 2013 – Jun 2014</td>
<td><strong>Sharpening students' intercultural sensitivity and intercultural communication skills: An experiential learning initiative</strong>&lt;br&gt;Grant Type: HKIEd-SA0, Specific Student Empowerment Scheme&lt;br&gt;Funding Organization: The Hong Kong Institute of Education&lt;br&gt;Approved Amount: 19,720 HKD</td>
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School & Civic Engagement of South Asian and Chinese immigrant youth in Hong Kong

Celeste Yuen

Celeste Y.M. Yuen is Associate Professor and Associate Head in the Department of Education Policy and Leadership, the Hong Kong Institute of Education and lectures in effective educational leadership, diversity, special education and intercultural sensitivity. Celeste’s research areas include citizenship, subjective well-being, spiritual health and student engagement and has been actively engaged in researching Chinese immigrant and South Asian minority education and policy in Hong Kong. Her research findings have generated numerous publications and have attracted much media attention and contributed to public policy debate.

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH INTEREST GROUP (HERIG)
SEMINAR SERIES

THURSDAY 17TH DECEMBER 2015
12.00 - 1.30PM IN FACULTY MEETING ROOM 352, WILBERFORCE

THANK YOU
Visiting Scholar at the University of Hull
Gave a seminar and conducted interviews with 10 PhD students from Mainland China
(Dec 2015)
Innovation and Creativity

- Connected with general public – gave a UGC Public Lecture in the Central Library
- Research findings are connected with student support services and provision at both school-based and institute-based levels
- Communicate findings with educational policy makers (Curriculum Development Institute), Colleagues and students
- Mobilize university resources; team up with SAO to offer tailored made services for the target student groups by connecting with HKIEd students
- Generating scholarly outputs in publications and inter-HEIs collaboration
- Stimulating follow-up GRF and QEF project applications
- Raised both media and school attention to the spiritual well-being of young HK people
- Communicate findings with educational policy makers (Curriculum Development Institute), Colleagues and students
Continuity of the study: further advance the scholarships and practical knowledge for local and international audiences

Translation of our findings into e-TV online programme for public consumption

Development of student empowerment projects for HKIEd students increases their awareness and professionalism in serving the diverse student communities

Dataset: of 15,000+ will be open for other interested researchers

The validated Chinese instruments are available for researchers upon written request

The CoC/CSL course development enhances the practical knowledge of the findings

Usability and Accessibility

Both local and international publications of the findings are open for public consumptions

Wide dissemination of the findings, especially sharing the individual school-based reports with the relevant participating schools ensure a greater consumption
• Education for all is a global and noble mission, but it cannot be taken for granted. Concerns over enabling access of all students from diverse cultural backgrounds in Hong Kong have frequently caught the media attention.

• Our findings confirm international studies that both the well-being and the school and societal engagement of young Hong Kong people are segmented and differentiated across different cultural groups.
  
  • South Asian students scored higher levels of life satisfaction, spiritual well-being and engagement with school and society than their mainstream and Chinese immigrant counterparts.
  
  • Chinese immigrant students scored the lowest in most areas and their life satisfaction is particularly low.
  
  • Girls scored a higher subjective well-being than boys.

• The media interest highlights the impact of this GRF project.

• The project provides evidence-based policy recommendations for NGOs and for the government.

• This project findings and publications call for more specific attention to support different student groups. Our work signifies a step to deepen the public understanding and awareness of promoting an equitable society for all with differentiated measures. We are compassionate to carry on the work.