

---

**Research Report on the Project**

**Creating a Discrimination-free and Barrier-free Living  
Environment for the “Little People” in Hong Kong**

This project is supported by

Funding Programme of Research Projects on Equal Opportunities 2017/18  
Equal Opportunities Commission

---

Prepared by:

**Dr. Yung YAU**

Department of Public Policy

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

City University of Hong Kong

December 2018



## Executive Summary

1. This research project was funded by the Equal Opportunities Commission under its Funding Programme of Research Projects on Equal Opportunities 2017/18. Ten in-depth interviews and one questionnaire survey were conducted from November 2017 to July 2018 to preliminarily investigate the social and physical challenges facing the little people (or those who are commonly known as “people with dwarfism”) in Hong Kong.
2. The findings of the in-depth interviews showed that (1) little people faced challenges in their daily lives due to their short stature; (2) little people and their family members experienced discrimination in different forms; (3) general public’s understanding of dwarfism and little people was highly inadequate; and (4) designs of many buildings and public facilities did not cater for the needs of little people.
3. Among 523 respondents in the questionnaire survey, 60.3% thought that little people in Hong Kong were discriminated in different extents and 22.6% viewed the degree of discrimination as serious or very serious. Generally, survey respondents showed a moderate level of acceptance towards little people. A majority of them were willing / very willing to work with little people (85.3%), to befriend with little people (82.8%), etc.
4. Yet, 83.6% of our respondents expressed that they had inadequate / very inadequate understanding about little people. Survey results showed that the general public still had some misunderstandings about little people. For example, they thought that “all dwarfism cases are inherited genetically from the parents”, “the difference in height between a child with dwarfism and an average-sized child could be narrowed as they get older” and “poor quality diet and deficit of calcium intake are causes of dwarfism”.
5. The results of multiple regression analyses indicated that gender, age, religious belief, frequency of contact with little people and being a person with disability were significant determinants of a respondent’s level of misunderstanding. Keeping other factors constant, women, being younger, Catholics, Protestant Christians or Buddhists, respondents having frequent contact with little people, or those not having any disability tended to have a significantly lower level of misunderstanding about dwarfism.
6. Moreover, keeping other factors constant, respondents who were female, with higher education level, Catholics, Protestant Christians or Buddhists, having frequent contact with little people, or those not having any disability tended to have a significantly

higher level of acceptance towards little people.

7. Besides, over 40% of the respondents perceived that little people belonged to a special species, looked like children who would never grow up, looked strange in appearance and had an unpleasant look.
8. Recommendations were proposed based on the afore-mentioned findings from in-depth interviews and questionnaire survey, including: (1) deepening the general public's understanding of and connection with little people; (2) stopping the presentation of a negative image of little people; (3) adopting the principle of universal design to promote inclusive buildings; and (4) fostering the general public's understanding of the Disability Discrimination Ordinance.