
Research Report on the Project

**Breaking through the barriers –
Ethnic minority success stories and their implications for
policy intervention in Hong Kong**

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PART 1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Many ethnic minorities (EM), especially those who were born or spent a substantial part of their lives in Hong Kong have treated Hong Kong as home. They are used to the living environment, life-style, and social circle they have built up here. They are familiar with Hong Kong and its ways of life, and it is here they have felt more at home.

The main problems facing ethnic minorities are learning to read and write Chinese for students, and finding employment for adults. Many EM students find learning written Chinese too hard for them and are forced to give it up soon when they have not received adequate help. Limited knowledge of spoken and written Chinese has turned out to be a major factor against them in job seeking and tertiary education, for the Chinese language is now a standard entrance requirement of both employment and further study (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2012).

1.1 Objectives of the study

In general, mainstream media practitioners and local researchers tend to portray and explore the issue of ‘why and how ethnic minorities lose out’. Undoubtedly, this is vital to arouse public attention and to initiate public discussions regarding equality of ethnic minorities. Yet, are there any alternative stories?

Implementation of the Race Discrimination Ordinance has certainly helped the ethnic minorities from being treated unequally on a legal basis. However, underlying factors such as social norms or cultural practices might appear as barriers to hinder ethnic minorities from being included in the community. Through exploring the stories of ethnic minorities who are able to get through these social and cultural barriers, it can shed light on interventions for the betterment of ethnic minorities.

The researcher has focused on the following objectives:

- (1) If the majority lose out while a few succeed, there should be some factors other than ethnicity leading to different outcomes. This research addresses the question of ‘under what circumstances ethnic minorities can succeed’. The researcher wishes to explore the factors behind their successes.
- (2) The research project aims to identify the ways through which ethnic minorities are able to get through the barriers and discriminatory experiences in the areas of education, employment and social networking. In the view of adversities they have faced, some ethnic minorities have brilliant academic achievement, undergo upward mobility and are able to integrate into their social circles. Via listening to the life trajectory of several ethnic minorities who have succeeded in different areas of life in Hong Kong, this research attempts to present an encouraging picture of how ethnic minorities can overcome the barriers and actualize their potentials.

- (3) By finding out the ways ethnic minorities succeed, this research identifies appropriate interventions for ethnic minorities who are in disadvantaged situations, and attempts to formulate policies and measures for their wellbeing.

1.2 Literature review

1.2.1 General profile of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong

In 2011, there were a total of 450,000 ethnic minorities living in Hong Kong. Excluding foreign domestic helpers, the population was close to 200,000. This showed an increase of more than 20% of ethnic minorities in the past ten years (Census and Statistics Department, 2011).

The medium monthly income for the South Asian minorities was lower than its counterpart of HK\$12,000 for the Hong Kong population (Census and Statistics Department, 2011). In fact, ethnic minorities in Hong Kong face difficulties in livelihood, education, employment and social integration, whereby the insufficiency in commanding Chinese in spoken and written forms is identified as the root of all the difficulties encountered (The Hong Kong Council of Social Service, 2014; Hong Kong Unison, 2006 & 2012).

The discriminatory experiences of ethnic minorities have gradually drawn attention from the public and NGOs in the past few decades. There is also an increasing concern on how to enhance social inclusion of ethnic minorities so as to actualize their full potential (The Hong Kong Council of Social Service, 2014).

It was found that measures in the areas of education, employment and community outreach were initiated to improve the wellbeing of ethnic minorities in the Hong Kong society. For example, the Education Bureau has provided the “Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework” including the associated professional support in order to enhance non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students’ learning of Chinese as a second language.

In addition, two Applied Learning Chinese courses that consist of practical elements linked to broad professional and vocational fields are introduced to NCS students at senior secondary school level. It means that EM students can choose to sit for HKDSE’s Chinese Language paper or Applied Learning Chinese paper (Chief Secretary for Administration’s Office and relevant Bureaux, 2014). Other measures such as community outreach, interpretation services provided by Government departments, an equal access to government job vacancies and a waiver of the Chinese Language Proficiency Test for recruitment exercises are also initiated. On the legal level, the Race Discrimination Ordinance became effective in July 2009.

However, it is argued that the integration policy is piecemeal and insufficient, and the Government should adopt perspectives of ethnic minorities in working out practical policies (The Hong Kong Council of Social Service, 2014). It is also criticized that the current policy focuses on the elimination of racial discrimination rather than on social integration (Hue, 2013). Although the Race Discrimination Ordinance is enacted, equal access to information

and services is yet to be achieved (The Hong Kong Council of Social Service, 2014). To this end, the anti-discriminatory approach appears to end up with segregation rather than integration (Hue, 2013).

1.2.2 Research studies on ethnic minorities in Hong Kong

Research studies on ethnic minorities in Hong Kong, particularly those conducted by the NGOs, are policy-oriented and they focus on reviewing social exclusion / acceptance experienced by ethnic minorities (Hong Kong Unison, 2006 & 2012; Erni and Leung, 2014). Ethnic minorities are viewed as ‘uniformly a victimized class waiting, or fighting, to be liberated’ (Erni and Leung, 2014). These studies commonly examine EM issues including demography, employment, migration, globalisation, cultural heritage and human rights, indicating that ethnic minorities have their own distinctive cultures and social communities in Hong Kong.

Education

The general public has paid more attention to the education of ethnic minorities in recent years, with a substantial focus on Chinese as the medium of instruction, its effectiveness and the learning difficulties encountered by EM students (Lisenby, 2009; Tonsing, 2010; Zhang *et al.*, 2011). Recent studies show that a tailor-made Chinese Language curriculum for NCS students, as well as knowledge to seek employment opportunities and available services, has not been provided for most ethnic minorities. Even worse, they are not aware of other educational choices except targeting at mainstream secondary schools and universities (Kwok *et al.*, 2014).

Research findings have also illustrated that EM students are limited in their exploration of information and aspirations in school (Sharma, 2012). There is a large body of literature on the limited resources available for EM students and the relationship between parental aspirations and students’ learning outcomes (Sharma, 2012; Lau, 2015).

Employment

Local research studies are basically confined to discriminatory experiences encountered by ethnic minorities in the Hong Kong labour market (Ku, 2003 & 2006; Caritas Community Centre–Kowloon, 2010). For particular ethnic minority groups, they have faced some unfavourable institutional practices in the recruitment stage (Waddington and Hendriks, 2002). In employment, other dimensions such as interaction and teamwork with colleagues in the workplace are yet to be explored.

1.3 Research methods

Qualitative in-depth interviews with nine South/ Southeast Asians (5 females and 4 males) were conducted between April and September 2014. The interviewees were between 20 and 50 years old, locally born or having migrated from their native countries. They attained a higher level of academic achievement when compared to local Chinese, and most of them picked up white-collar professional or managerial jobs. Furthermore, they could socially integrate into the local community.

All interviewees were recruited through personal networks, referral by local NGOs and snowballing through referral by interviewees. Each interview lasted for about two hours. It took place in either the interviewee's office or a public café. All interviews were conducted in English. **Table 1** summarises a profile of the interviewees.

Table 1: A profile of the interviewees

| Name | Approximate age | Ethnicity | Place of birth | Occupation | Highest education level attained |
|-------|-----------------|------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Mr. A | 30 | Indian | Hong Kong | Computer programmer | BSc |
| Ms. B | 20 | Pakistani | Pakistan | Student | BSocSc |
| Mr. C | 25 | Nepalese | Hong Kong | Student | BBA |
| Ms. D | 40 | Filipino | Hong Kong | University lecturer | PhD |
| Ms. E | 30 | Filipino | Hong Kong | Head of a NGO | BA |
| Ms. F | 30 | Thai | Thailand | Work in public relations | MSc |
| Mr. G | 50 | Indian | Hong Kong | Police officer | BSc |
| Ms. H | 45 | Indonesian | Indonesia | Work in public relations | MA |
| Mr. I | 50 | Pakistani | Pakistan | Work as CEO | BSc |

Notes:

BA – Bachelor of Arts

BBA – Bachelor of Business Administration

BSc – Bachelor of Science

BSocSc – Bachelor of Social Sciences

CEO – Chief Executive Officer

MA – Master of Arts

MSc – Master of Science

NGO – Non-governmental organization

PhD – Doctor of Philosophy

Flow of interview

The researcher started the interviews with general questions in order to develop a rapport with the interviewees, whose views were then solicited on some core issues. All interviews were audio-recorded. Ethical issues including confidentiality of the interviewee's identity were clearly explained before the interview. The audio-records were then transcribed into texts for analysis.

It is noteworthy that this is not a representative sampling. However, this study aims to identify diversified experiences of ethnic minorities who are successful in their professions, and attempts to discover how personal attributes and social network can lead to success.

PART 2 KEY FINDINGS

Attaining university education is one of the very basic criteria for one's success. All interviewees received university education, which provided an entry ticket for a relatively desirable position in the job market. The economic wellbeing of one's family background also counts. For example, Mr. A, a computer programmer said his parents recruited tuition teachers for his younger sister and him when they were doing primary school so that they could catch up with the Chinese Language and schoolwork. He came from a middle class family – his father was a businessman and his mother was a school teacher – which was financially well off to provide children extra resources in education.

To account for success of an EM individual, it was studied from the perspectives of personal level and institutional level. Moreover, their views towards EM identity, learning Chinese Language and the society in general were solicited.

2.1 Core factors for success on the personal level

Some key factors appear to be pivotal in explaining one's success. They include personal attributes and social network.

2.1.1 Personal attributes

Interviewees suggested that the key to success was the possession of some specific personalities. For example, one should be perseverant and focusing on the goal. Ms. D, a university lecturer, described in great details:

“One thing is, if you really, really want to become successful in your career, you'll try to, you know it's just like if you try to be a singer, you'll keep singing and singing. I want to be a teacher. I knew I wanted to be a teacher when I was in Form 4 because I met a wonderful Eng. Lit. teacher ... and I said, 'Oh I want to be that', but because of the policies, the exam systems that became very, very confusing for me and I felt at some points that I was never going to succeed. But I think because of all these, I realized that taking the exam, passing the exam and going to school is very important. I think it's not tangible but I think the secret to success is perseverance. You have to never give up, you have to not really give up even though it looks difficult.”

Ms. E, the head of a NGO, also shared similar perspectives:

“I think, once you have in your mind who you want to be, you know you want to be somebody... you will keep going. One of the reasons why I keep going is, I always see there's hope opening for me. I think I've been through so much frustration and disappointment... that's now what makes me strong.”

Putting a lot of efforts and knowing the capacity of oneself were also the qualities that interviewees mentioned in the path for success. For example, Ms. H, a public relations officer

who was a single mother, a part-time student and a part-time working staff, described how she rationalized the very tough period when she completed her study some years ago.

“It’s just a matter of, um, how much you’re willing to change and how much you want to put your efforts in.”

Ms. H said it was very important to continuously refresh oneself with progression:

“... keep investing in yourself. Because I think that’s really important. You know, our life is actually working in progress. So every two years I know this when I updated my CV. Every two years I will pick up something else like...oh let’s learn something else.”

Knowing one’s goal is important too. For example, Ms. F, a public relations officer said:

“... The question you need to ask yourself is: who do you want to be? If you know who you want to be, then you’ll understand whether the test would fit in terms of getting you to that point, right?... always have a goal, and what do I need to do is to get there. I’ve always had a goal.”

Being strategic in making choices was also a key to success for some interviewees. They mentioned that being ethnic minorities should enable them to identify their constraints and to engage in strategic decision-making. Ms. D, who was born in Hong Kong but could not read and write Chinese, shared the following:

“It all came down to the choices that were put in front of me because I realized that I had so few choices. I had to make a choice within the few choices. So I could not apply for Chinese U. I could not apply for Baptist U Journalism. I could not apply for the Academy for Performing Arts. All because I don’t know how to read and write Chinese. So I have to put my energy into something that I can choose.”

Other related characters include having a non-conformist attitude. For example, Ms. E said she was very open-minded to career options. Being a non-conformist, Ms. E refused to work full-time in food and beverage sector as what other Filipinos did. She was thus unemployed for half a year and eventually became a reporter of a newspaper through the referral of a friend’s friend. She said she kept on writing when she was looking for a full-time job.

2.1.2 Social network

Interviewees suggested that one’s social network helped personal advancement in education and career in different ways. A rather negative way through which social network had helped advancement was that interviewees suffered from great pressure due to family and friends. For example, Ms. B, a university student, had a very tough time studying in a Hong Kong secondary school for Form 3 when she first came from Pakistan at the age of 16. Instead of being the queen in the class as what she did in Pakistan, she failed in her first year because of the language barriers in both English and Chinese. She once wanted to quit the study but did not when she took her parents and peer into consideration:

“Even when I was having a tough time, I was afraid of telling them, because I knew they would believe that I’m not making it (effort) in the studies. You know, I told them I was really good. So, I mean... those sorts of expectations from my family, my mom and dad you know, I would be studying ahead of (what) I would be.”

“And, my friend, as I told you ... I think it’s sort of like have this...sort of competition going on. If she could do it, I could do it also. And there were even more reasons to relate, because we both came here (to the school) on the same day... So if she could do it, I could do it.”

Her parents and friend had become the key drive for her to overcome difficulties in school.

Mr. B, a Nepalese student who came to Hong Kong with his parents 15 years ago when he was ten. His parents were engaged in elementary jobs and had failed to assist him in making any decision in education.

“They are not able to understand what I am going through. I understand that. The best they could say is that, ‘okay, just try your best, and if you don’t like it, then that’s it’. So they are not so worried about what’s my future gonna be.”

But it did not mean that he failed to further his study. He quitted schooling at eighteen when he received very poor results in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE). He was engaged in a full-time job for two years, and spent another three years in an associate degree in accounting before transferring to a University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded degree programme. He said advices from the social worker of a NGO had helped him a lot in making decision in education.

“So I got to know one of the social workers.... After I kept in touch with him, I told him what I was doing now, and then what I wanted to do. So he gave me very nice advice.”

The social worker had helped providing information and advice for him, and guiding him to make better decision in the process of advancement.

In terms of employment, social network help transferring information to job-seekers about job opening. For example, Ms. E got a job offer in the press because of referral from a friend’s friend who was an editor. Ms. H who had sent out her message of job-seeking, got the current professional job of a higher salary via the referral by a friend.

“... When she (Ms. H’s friend) had got this job announcement, she’s actually the one that sent it to me. I actually did not read the newspaper at all.”

“But then the thing is, if you do not show who you are, what you want, people don’t know whether this is something that’s useful for your knowledge... If you are open yourself, things can come in. But if you don’t open yourself, then how do my friends know?”

Some interviewees stressed on the importance of social network due to some negative encounters they had experienced. For example, Ms. E asserted that because of insufficient information available, she was once panic about her limited choices (this partially explained why she started a NGO offering mentorship programmes for the youth). The situation became worse when she and other classmates in school were not encouraged to pursue higher goals.

“I was a lot younger and there were so many things that I did not understand. I was not well-equipped. I was not well informed of the choices and our situations.”

To a certain extent, the lack of information blocks the opportunities or choices for ethnic minorities. Ms. E shared how she thought:

“... There were lots of activities, like involvement, but it lacked engagement. I mean, they were involved in lots of school activities. But to engage, for those students, with the information you’ve given them...I think the government did not invest enough. Even our parents would not ask ... Why does it happen to so many of us?”

“And that (being active in the secondary school) made my expectation go so high. When we reached Form 5, it was sort of like a dead end... so I was like, what? This was it? If we didn’t pass HKCEE, then we could not make it (goal) happen? It was until the edge (turn) of 2003, when we were Form 5, then we all woke up. What? Just a few months away. It’s scary. We expected the education system (path) would continue. And then you heard about what happened to the seniors, like some of them said, oh we didn’t pass HKCEE, we just went to find a job. (It seemed that it was a nightmare to you.) Yes, it was a nightmare to me. But maybe to the others, it was not. You know, the previous generation might not treat that as an issue.”

The lack of relevant information limits the opportunities or choices among EM students. Unfortunately, people surrounding these EM students were ignorant about the unfavorable situation. A lot of ethnic minorities had to return to their homeland to complete university education. This situation had alerted Ms. E who thus established a NGO in 2013 to provide necessary information and advice to EM students for further study and planning a career.

“Our approach is to give advice for students now. But at our time it was like, we were going out and looking for information. But it’s now like, where you want to go, where you want to study after Form 6, or you want to study in the Philippines, we can refer you to some people (who can provide assistance).”

2.2 Empowerment of ethnic minorities on the institutional level

On the institutional level, ethnic minorities can be empowered through social network in some mentorship programmes offered by NGOs or quasi-governmental organizations. For example, Ms. F was a public relations officer in-charge of the quasi-governmental organization, which aimed to:

- inform the disadvantaged EM about what to do to achieve success
- build up positive self-images of EM and combat negative stereotypes
- empower EM youth – encourage them to recognize that they are pioneers for change

Another example was Ms. E. She established a NGO several years ago, that comprised of EM professionals, who would provide supports for EM youngsters. The aims of the NGO included:

- To encourage EM youth to participate in activities in which they will learn important things beyond textbooks in school
- To recognize and accept their identities
- To provide directions for them to pursuit their life goals

2.3 Views towards EM identity

Ms. H suggested that there were three categories of ethnic minorities:

- (a) Those who came to Hong Kong as experts / professionals
- (b) Those who came to Hong Kong as family members of the experts / professionals
- (c) Those who were born in Hong Kong and lived in a deprived condition

The Indian community is much better. Most of the Indian families can send their children abroad, and their children then return Hong Kong and will take over family businesses or work in international companies.

Some interviewees suggested that their upbringing experiences had somehow helped them a lot. It was important to note that these interviewees in general were used to live in a multi-cultural environment since they were born. For example, Ms. D described her life in primary school as follows:

“So, see... I grew up where being different was a norm because there were Portuguese, Indian, Pakistani, Nepalese, Filipino, and of course Chinese children. So growing up in that environment, everybody was different. That was very normal to be different.”

To some interviewees, being a minority might even be a ‘niche’ in personal development. For example, Ms. F obtained the current job simply because she was a non-Chinese, which was a prerequisite to get the job offer. Ms. D also explained clearly how she could get advantages of being a non-Chinese.

“Well, because I can’t write, we don’t write Chinese, I knew that I had to put more effort in the skills that I am good at, which was English. So I put a lot of energy there and I developed the strong interest in reading and writing. So it seems that literature is a very natural choice for me to make ... (And it has become your niche.) Yea, it has become my niche.”

In sum, she thought that she did not have the same opportunities as local Chinese, and therefore she needed to be more focused on her merits.

Despite the fact that ethnic minorities will face certain cultural shock, they somehow have to leave their comfort zone and get around the cultural barriers in the mainstream society. For example, Ms. F suggested that ethnic minorities needed to understand how the majority were thinking.

“And I think, people discriminate people for different reasons. Maybe they (EM) are not exposed, maybe they (other people) do not understand. But I think absolutely there is discrimination in Hong Kong.”

Stereotyping also exists. For example, Ms. E said she and her EM schoolmates were considered as troublemakers during her secondary school years. Local Chinese people in the community also disliked them.

A crisis of EM identity is still common. As Ms. D expressed precisely, some Hong Kong-born Filipinos are confused of their identity. Since they identify themselves as Hong Kong people and are used to living in Hong Kong, they have experienced cultural shock in the Philippines. In light of this identity crisis, she established a NGO for locally born Filipinos in order to provide a support system for the younger generation.

“A support system for the Filipino youth...to help them establish their identity because there is cultural identity problem among themselves.”

2.4 Views towards learning Chinese Language in the Hong Kong education system

Ms. D explained very precisely that ethnic minorities were leading a more difficult life in Hong Kong. It was becoming hard for them to move up the career ladder when compared to her years. She explained her views with reference to the language policy of learning Chinese Language, with narrow alternatives.

“... the opportunities for ethnic minorities are still very minimal because ethnic minorities today are not given the kinds of support for learning Chinese Language... Today, you have to be fluent in written and spoken Chinese in order to be successful.”

Moreover, Ms. D asserted the unfairness of adopting Chinese Language as a criterion for entering local universities:

“...if our tertiary education (universities) in Hong Kong accept overseas students who do not read or write Chinese, how can they not accept our own non-Chinese students?”

She suggested that the Government needs to provide more assistance to ethnic minorities in learning Chinese. It is fine with Chinese as the medium of instruction (CMI) but the non-Chinese-speaking children need to be provided with additional supports for them to advance, rather than being left behind.

“So on the top, it said it’s twelve-year education but within those twelve years, you have to educate the child. If you do not educate the child, it doesn’t fulfill your real policy. You end up producing a bunch of kids who can’t really read and write Chinese ... Yes, it has to start from the Government.”

Furthermore, Ms. B expressed that the use of Cantonese for interview in the university entrance assessment needed to be clearly stated beforehand. She shared her views:

“I think it depends on the courses (programmes) ... the interview would be in English, and it was in English... even there, they didn’t actually mention whether they might use Cantonese and all that, and whether it was a must part. Sometimes it would be better if they let us know whether they use Cantonese or not, I mean to what extent they use Cantonese.”

Ms. B failed twice to complete interview for university entrance, simply because she had been shortly informed before the meeting that she would be interviewed in Cantonese.

“I think in Legal Studies (the subject she wished to be in), Cantonese does not really matter, because the full education is in English. So that’s why they didn’t (speak Cantonese when she attended an interview for university entrance). But in Science (programmes), I mean they checked my GCSE result, they tested my Cantonese speaking ...because they said, ‘you know, lectures are supplemented in Cantonese at times’, so... I couldn’t (handle).”

2.5 Views towards the society in general

To some interviewees, racial discrimination is not too bad in Hong Kong because there are many international corporations which use English as the language for communication.

Ms. D criticized the policy of CMI in schooling and the pre-requisite of Chinese Language as one of the basic requirements for university entrance, which definitely limited their opportunities for tertiary education. It led to the waste of talents who could actualize their potentials.

Are ethnic minorities not given enough opportunities to excel? Ms. H presented some negative views towards the Government. She highlighted that ethnic minorities could not find a job even if they were fully qualified. The public should be educated to have a positive perception of local ethnic minorities that they are Hongkongers who try to contribute to the wellbeing of the society.

PART 3 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Conclusion

Although ethnic minorities and local Chinese live peacefully alongside one another today, there still exists bitter resentment if the Hong Kong government continues to close its eyes to the needs of ethnic minorities. The group of local ethnic minorities who went through their education in English before the 1997 sovereignty handover found their employability worse than that of their fathers. To them, maintaining their living standards is already a challenge; upward social mobility is an unreachable dream. In this regard, this research study attempts to think out of the box, that is, to identify why some ethnic minorities are successful in different areas of life. Based on the findings, effective policies and measures can be formulated so as to redress the obstacles and to promote the advancement of ethnic minorities in the areas of education and employment.

3.2 Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are proposed for stakeholders' consideration:

1. Apart from using English, some departments in universities will use Cantonese for university entrance interviews, even though the programmes that the EM students choose will solely be conducted in English. This will impose unnecessary hurdles for EM students to enter universities because they have limited command of Chinese Language and might be incapable of communication in Cantonese. To redress this issue, clear guidelines on the language adopted for interviews in relation to university entrance assessment should be formulated and implemented.
2. The interviews indicate that EM students have dropped schooling as a result of financial concern. Some EM parents might allow their children to quit senior secondary schooling and encourage them to enter into the labour market for the purpose of supporting the family. To combat their ignorance, these EM parents should be educated (e.g. promotion by the Government or via social workers of NGOs [e.g. HKSKH Lady MacLehose Centre has been providing diversified social services to ethnic minorities living in Hong Kong]) about existing support services provided for EM children so as to meet their educational needs.
3. For EM youth, it is essential for them to be well informed and advised about all possible study pathways and career prospects. For example, an EM student who has completed his associate degree is qualified for a bachelor degree in the local universities. Teachers, counselors and social workers in schools can provide guidance for the EM students in setting up their goals and exploring available opportunities. In addition, mentorship programmes offered by NGOs have substantially helped interviewees by providing useful

information and valuable advice for planning further study or formulating possible career path.

4. Successful role models and their stories are needed for the EM community. Ethnic minorities are not usually represented in the local mass media. Many of them who were born and educated in Hong Kong speak Cantonese like any other Chinese born and educated in local Chinese schools. Yet, they are disproportionately under-represented as public figures. It is only until very recently that we see more EM faces on TV. Increasing the visibility of ethnic minorities and their successful stories in the mass media could help inspire the younger EM generation who dare to dream and strive for success in future.

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APPENDIX - INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

Family and upbringing experiences in Hong Kong

- How long have you been living in Hong Kong?
- Can you tell me about your family?
- When you were small, did you hang out with local Hong Kong peers or your own ethnic group? Can you tell me some of these experiences?

Educational experiences

- Can you tell me about your education background? [Optional: Why did you pursue your university degree in your own country? Was this your first choice?]
- Can you share with us your experience of learning in Hong Kong? How do you find learning Chinese?
- Have you encountered any (other) barrier in studying and socializing in school? If so, how did you manage to get through it?
- From your point of view, is there any room for improvement in the education system for non-Chinese people in Hong Kong?
- Overall, can you tell me about your feeling towards the education of Hong Kong? What is good about it and what is bad about it?
- In what ways do your family / school teachers / friends help you to achieve?

Working experiences

- Can you tell me your work trajectory? (the first job, second job, etc.)
- How did you manage to receive the job offers?
- How do you find, as an ethnic minority, getting a job in the labour market in Hong Kong?
- To what extent would you say being a non-Hongkonger or non-native Chinese is a barrier in getting a job and promotion in Hong Kong?
- How do you find your relationship with your colleagues / clients (ethnic minorities, local Chinese or whites)? Do you hang out with local Hongkongers on a regular basis?
- Have you found any situation in which you find yourself being socially excluded? How did you get through it?
- From your point of view, what can the government do, in addition to the Race Discrimination Ordinance, to help the ethnic minorities achieve a better access in the local labour market?
- Can you share with us your keys to success in Hong Kong?
- How well would you say (your countrymen) are in Hong Kong and how accurate the Hong Kong people perceive them?
- How would you define your identity in Hong Kong?
- How do you find Hong Kong people in general?
- How do you see being a non-Chinese person in Hong Kong? Imagine if you were an ethnically Hongkonger, would there be any difference in your life? In what ways?