

# A Study on Education and Career Pathways of Ethnic Minority Youth in Hong Kong

## Research Findings and Recommendations

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Commissioned by



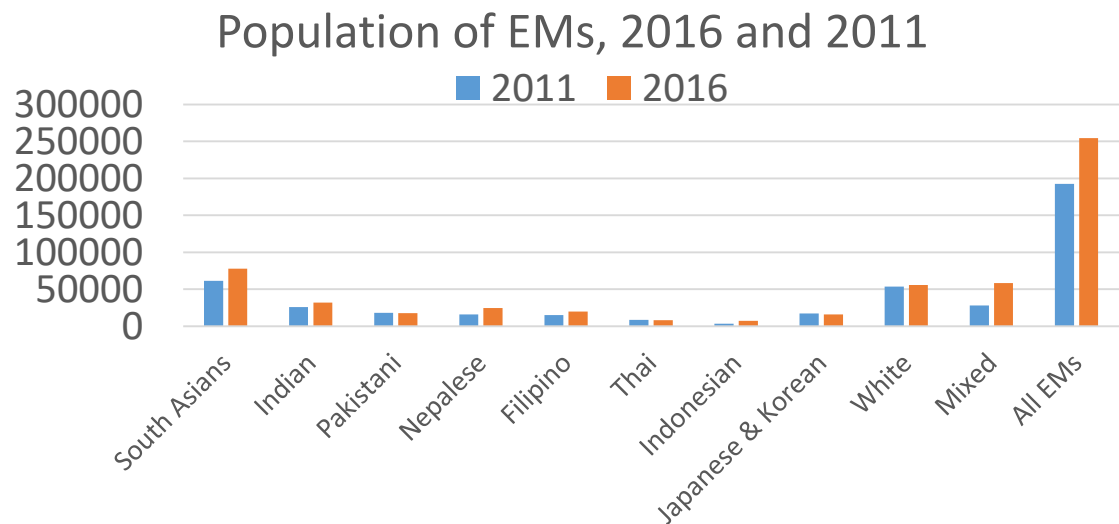
平等機會委員會  
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Conducted by



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### Statistical trend analysis of ethnic minorities (EM) in Hong Kong\*



- Filipinos, Indians, Pakistanis and Nepalese constitute the largest proportion of EM population in Hong Kong
- These four groups are in disadvantaged education and income situations

School attendance rate (%) of persons aged between 19 and 24		
Ethnicity	2011	2016
Indian	41.0	40.1
Pakistani	22.7	36.2
Nepalese	14.2	13.8
Filipino	22.5	29.5
Whole population	44.4	46.6

Median monthly income (HK\$) from main employment of employed persons		
Ethnicity	2011	2016
Indian	22500	22000
Pakistani	10000	12800
Nepalese	10000	12600
Filipino	10000	12200
Whole population	12000	15500

\*All data excludes foreign domestic helpers.

### Research design

- Aim of study:** To explore factors related to the educational and occupational attainment of EM youth in Hong Kong.
- Participants:** EM youth (Filipinos, Indians, Pakistanis and Nepalese) and their ethnic Chinese (EC) counterparts, EM parents, teachers, social workers, counselors and employers from different industries and company sizes.
- Methodology:** A mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods

Method	Participant and sample size
S4-6 Student survey	EM students: 483 EC students: 426
Individual interviews & focus groups	S.4-6 EM students: 16 Post-secondary EM students: 20 Working /unemployed EM youth: 17 EM parents, teachers and social workers: 15
Phone survey & individual interviews of employers	Phone survey: 406 employers Interviews: 10 employers

# Student survey

## 1. EM students have higher aspiration & self-efficacies than EC students

	EM	EC
Education aspiration (Scores: 12-60)*	50.94	48.63
Career and education decision self-efficacy# <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overall (Scores: 13-52)*</li></ul>	37.07	36.16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Future study (Scores: 5-20)*</li></ul>	14.26	13.68
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Future career (Scores: 5-20)*</li></ul>	14.69	14.14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Future planning (Scores: 3-12)</li></ul>	8.43	8.25
Generalised self-efficacy# (Scores: 10-40)*	29.49	25.81

Lack of aspiration might not be able to explain poor transition outcomes of EM students

#Self-efficacy refers to one's belief in one's ability to attain certain goals and performance.

## 2. Support are available to EM students

Resources	EM	EC
Family social capital (FSC)*	14.16	12.09
Peer support*	7.64	6.70

Compared to EC students, EM students talk about post-secondary planning with **teachers and friends** more.

EM students have **higher FSC** measured by parents' discussing and helping school matters, issues about future career plans, and contacting with schools.

EM students have **more peer support** regarding doing well in school and plan for post-secondary education.

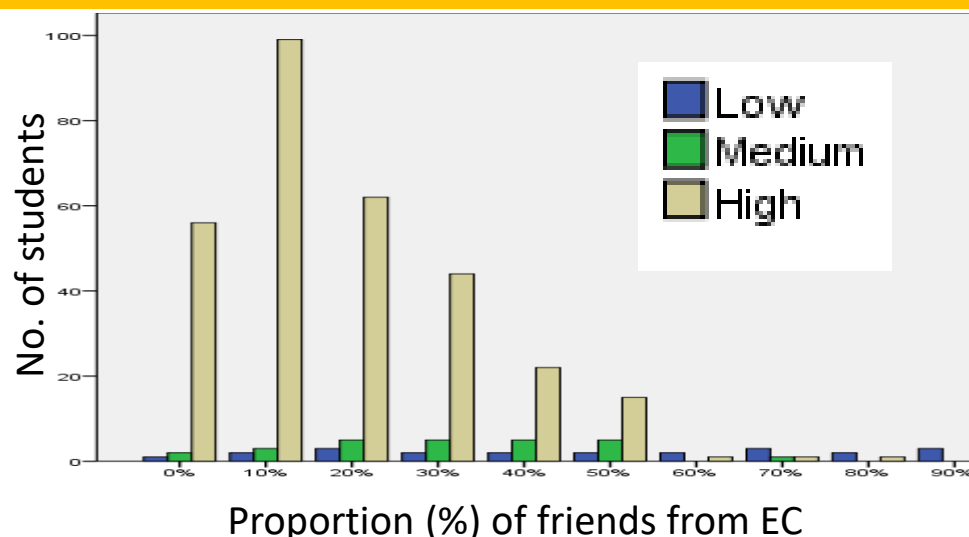
## 3. EM students from low concentration schools have more EC friends and higher perceived host receptivity (PHR)

EM concentrations in schools	PHR (Scores: 6-42)
Low vs. high	30 vs. 27*
Medium vs. high	29 vs. 27*

Low concentration: 0-10% EM students in school

Medium concentration: 11-50% EM students in school

High concentration: 51-100% EM students in school



### Implications:

School & peer support and PHR are important for EM students' aspiration & self-efficacies.

Thus, it is necessary to enhance host receptivity by fostering an inclusive environment.

\* Statistically significant difference is found.

# Individual and focus group interviews with EM youth at different stages, EM parents, teachers and social workers

*In Hong Kong, even if you do good, you won't rank up, there are Hong Kong people so you have **no chance**, no matter how well you do.*

EM youth

***I didn't know about Hong Kong education.** I search the internet for information, trying to understand what is a diploma or foundation degree.*

EM parent

*I had Grade A, but I still don't know how to write a sentence in Chinese! For many positions, they're not willing to hire EMs, **afraid EMs don't know Chinese**.*

EM youth

*The **media is portraying EM as negative**, so when you are labelling a community, they're separated from the majority.*

Social worker

*I had no idea, **nobody guided me**. If I had pursued social sciences, maybe that was the correct route for me to be a social worker. But I had no one to ask, and my parents were not educated.*

EM youth

## Factors affecting EM pathways

- Accuracy and sufficiency of information
- Availability of and accessibility to social resources
- Personal capacity and initiative
- Financial situation
- Chinese language proficiency
- Cultural stereotype

## Employer study

### 1. Phone survey

Employers generally agree that:

- **Racial discrimination is prevalent** in labour market.
- EMs are **not hired because of their race and ethnicity**.
- EMs' **Chinese reading and writing proficiency is low**.
- Small and medium enterprises (with less than 50 employees): it is **understandable not to employ locally educated EMs** in Hong Kong.

Suggestions for promotion of racial diversity and inclusion:

- Most employers prefer more **promotion** by government and EOC and more **public consultation**.

## 2. Individual interviews: Employers' considerations

### Obstacles to EM employment

#### Chinese literacy

*If you cannot read and write Chinese, it is difficult to make a website in Chinese.*

#### Public image

*My clients will believe that I underpay them (EM staff) or that I hire illegal labourers.*

#### Segregated job search channels

*This is an open recruitment in English only ... I got applications from Canada...but there is no local EM applicant.*

#### Negative experience with EMs

*They (EMs) make application (for job interview) but do not show up...There is no advance notice of absence or unavailability. No. Just disappear.*

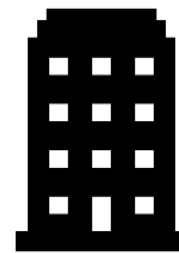
### Advantages of EMs

#### Organisational goals

*We cannot develop the service in this area (social service for EMs) without them (EM staff).*

#### Manpower shortage

*I cannot find workers. Why don't I take action early (hire EM staff)?*



### Policy recommendations

#### Improving Chinese Language proficiency among EMs

- Tailor-made Chinese language curriculum
- Pedagogical support for teachers
- Quality Chinese language courses for working EMs

#### Multicultural environment

- More exchange activities
- Using alternative terms such as “people from multicultural background” in addition to “EM” to give a sense of inclusion

#### Expanding employment possibilities & opportunities

- Multilingual job-matching platform
- Internship programmes
- Financial incentive schemes

#### Strengthening support network

- Enhancing EM parents' access to information
- Cultural competency training for teachers and social workers
- Sharing platform for EM students and their senior counterparts
- Increasing number of EM staff to provide information and support