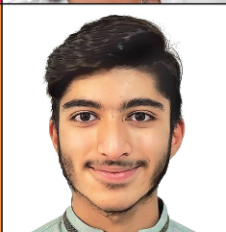


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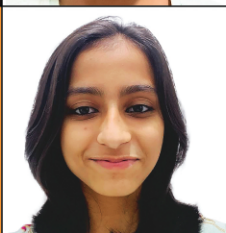
Social Inclusion



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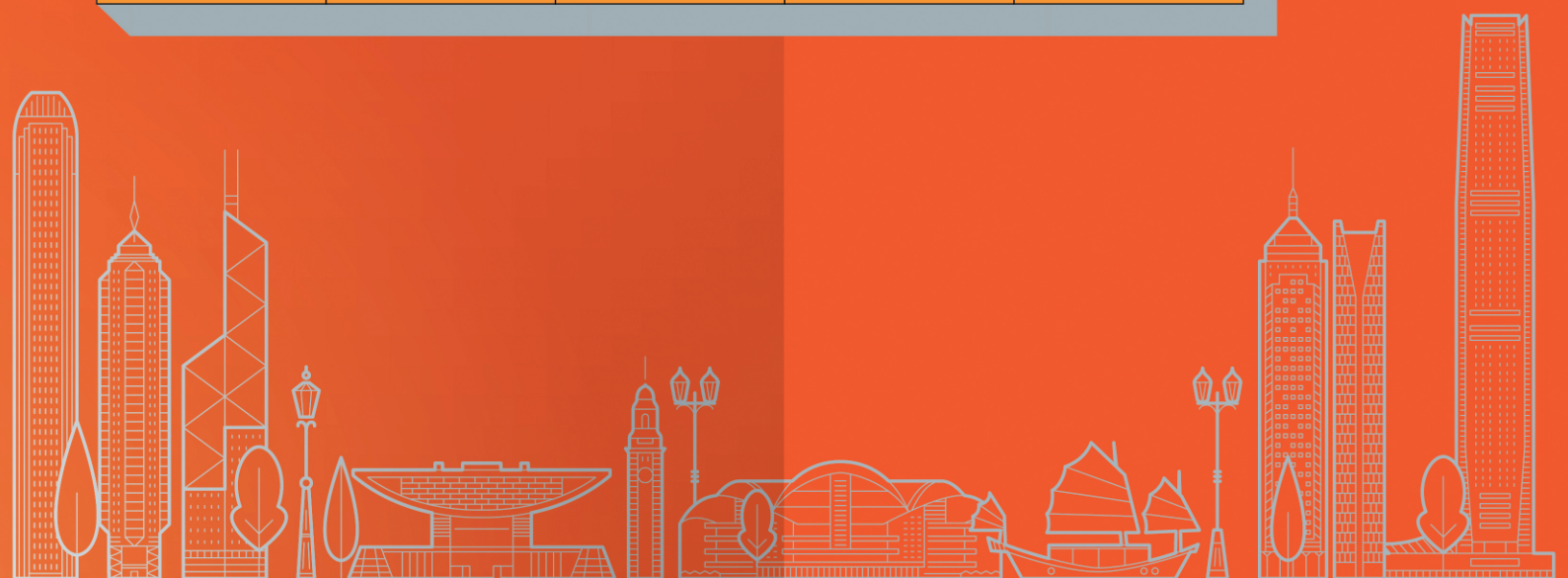
the Identity of



Ethnic Minority



Hong Kong Youth



Research Background and Methodology

1. Hong Kong's social inclusion policy, which aims to ensure equality and respect for everyone in different areas of life, rarely mentions ethnic identity. However, for ethnic minority Hong Kong youth in a race with low socio-economic status (hereafter referred to as disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth), ethnic identity may have an impact on their psychology, growth, and long-term development in Hong Kong, and any mishandling will cost both individuals and society.
2. This research focuses on the ethnic identity of disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth, probes into the obstacles they face and potential impacts, and puts forward policy suggestions. It is significant for disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth to thrive, integrate themselves into mainstream society, serve the community, and contribute to society. An inclusive society also contributes to Hong Kong's prosperity and stability.
3. We have collected questionnaires from 144 secondary school students aged 12 to 17 from disadvantaged ethnic minorities, covering Pakistani, Filipino, Indian, and Nepali. Our multiple-perspective and in-depth research involves 25 interviews with disadvantaged ethnic minority students, parents of disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth, front-line professionals working with ethnic minority HK youth, and representatives of relevant support organisations.
4. In this research, the Ethnic Identity Scale (EIS) is used to identify the four ethnic identity statuses of those answering the questionnaires: diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement. For each status, the youth state can be divided into positive and negative states: youth in the positive state feel good about their ethnic group membership, and vice-versa, depending on their experience of interacting with society. See Table 1 for details.

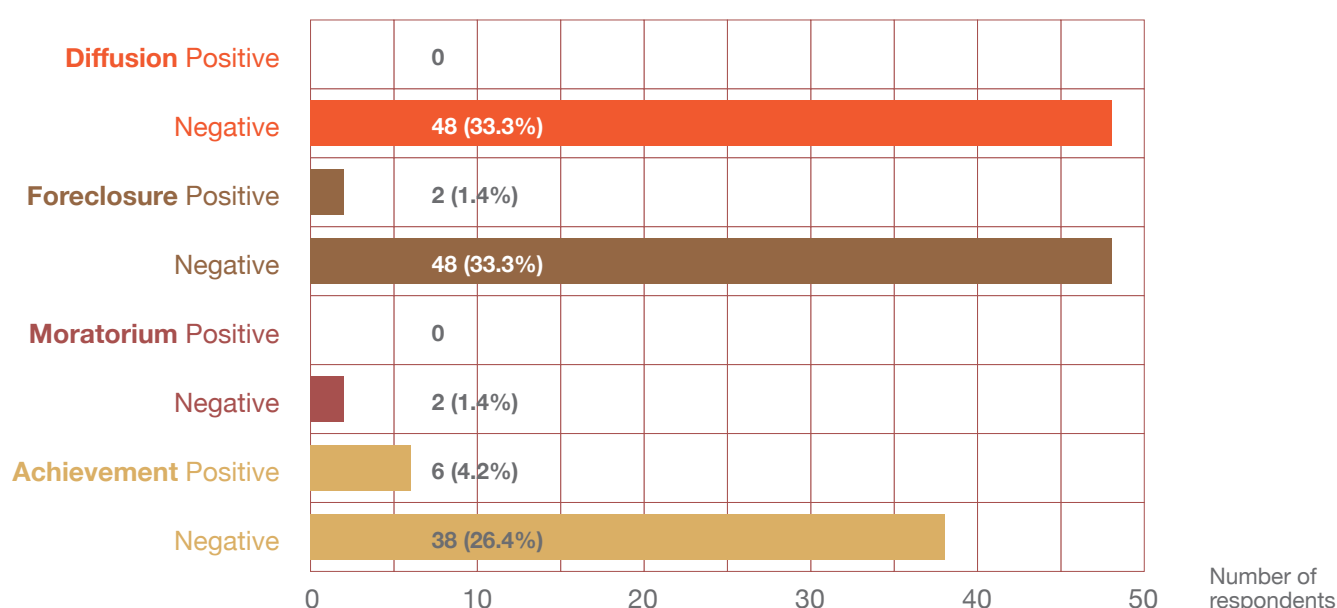
Table 1: Positive and negative states at each of the four statuses of ethnic identity

Status 1	Diffusion	
	Low exploration and low resolution of the racial problems	
	Negative	Positive
	Diffusion negative: They do not explore or rarely explore their ethnic identity. They adopt a passive attitude, lack a clear concept, feel negative, find themselves in a self-isolated and confused state, and are dissatisfied with the status quo	Diffusion positive: They do not explore or rarely explore their ethnic identity. They adopt a passive attitude, lack a clear concept, but feel positive and are satisfied with the status quo, although they are in a self-isolated and confused state
Status 2	Foreclosure	
	Low exploration but high resolution of the racial problems	
	Negative	Positive
	Foreclosure negative: They do not explore or rarely explore their ethnic identity. They adopt a passive attitude, have an understanding of their ethnic identity, feel negative, find themselves in a self-isolated but clear state, and are dissatisfied with the status quo	Foreclosure positive: They do not explore or rarely explore their ethnic identity. They adopt a passive attitude, have an understanding of their ethnic identity, feel positive, find themselves in a self-isolated but clear state, and are satisfied with the status quo
Status 3	Moratorium	
	High exploration but low resolution of the racial problems	
	Negative	Positive
	Moratorium negative: They constantly explore their ethnic identity with an active and initiative attitude. However, they still feel confused and negative, find themselves in a groping state, and are dissatisfied with the status quo	Moratorium positive: They constantly explore their ethnic identity with an active and initiative attitude. However, they still feel confused but positive, find themselves in a groping state, but are satisfied with the status quo
Status 4	Achievement	
	High exploration and high resolution of the racial problems	
	Negative	Positive
	Achievement negative: They have thoroughly explored their ethnic identity with an active and initiative attitude. They have a clear and complete concept, but feel negative, reluctantly accept their ethnic identity, and are dissatisfied with the status quo	Achievement positive: They have thoroughly explored their ethnic identity with an active and initiative attitude. They have a clear and complete concept, feel positive, readily accept their ethnic identity, and are satisfied with the status quo

Research Findings

- Nearly 60% of respondents identified themselves as Hong Kong people/Chinese (28.2% stated “I am Hong Kong people/Chinese” + 29.6% stated “I am (ethnic minority) + Hong Kong/Chinese”). Among the ethnic identity categories, however, 68.0% were diffusion or foreclosure, indicating that a majority of respondents never or rarely explored their personal ethnic identity and felt negative (94.4%). More than 25% of respondents, though having explored (achievement), and identified and accepted their personal ethnic identity, still felt negative (see Figure 1). This may be because they have been instilled with negative ideas by their families or society since childhood, have unpleasant experiences in social interactions, are unable to choose or change their ethnic identity, and therefore have to accept their ethnic identity. As the prejudice and harm caused by interactions with different social and family members build up, self-stigmatisation emerges, along with more negative feelings that undermine self-confidence and value.

Figure 1: Distribution of Ethnic Identity Categories among Ethnic Minority HK Youth (144 respondents in total)



- The ethnic identity statuses of disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth are related to their place of birth and family background. Those born in Hong Kong or whose parents/grandparents were born in Hong Kong are more likely to positively explore and determine their ethnic identity, indicating a certain degree of parental influence. This may be related to whether parents can provide appropriate psychological or practical support.
- According to table 2, achievement negative youth have better mental health. In terms of interpersonal relationships, they tend to have better relationships with same minority and other minority youth, and are more socially active. In terms of campus life, they are more active in discussing their work with students of other races and take leadership roles in the students societies. They tend to discuss career plans with teachers or social workers and take part-time jobs. In terms of academic performance and language competence, achievement negative youth have higher self-evaluation of their overall academic performance than diffusion negative youth, especially in STEM, arts-related, and IT disciplines. They are also more confident in writing and speaking in their native language. It can be seen that even if youth feel negative about their ethnic identity, those in achievement status perform better than those in diffusion/foreclosure statuses. If young people can think creatively and take the initiative to explore and solve problems, they will perform better in different areas. Youth who feel positive about their personal ethnic identity predominately display characteristics consistent with their ethnic identity statuses. No significant differences are found between positive and negative states in items including mental health, consulting classmates on schoolwork, talking to teachers or social workers about career plans, overall academic performance, STEM and arts-related subjects, and writing proficiency in their native language. However, the difference in participation in extracurricular activities is statistically significant between positive and negative states.

Table 2: Relationship between ethnic identity statuses and individual manifestations of each category

- The difference in mean values is statistically significant ($p < .05$) and the effect value is small (Eta-squared: 0.01 - 0.059 / Cliff's delta: 0.147 - 0.329)
- The difference in mean values is statistically significant ($p < .05$) and the effect value is moderate to large (Eta-squared: ≥ 0.060 / Cliff's delta: ≥ 0.330)

	Scale score range (points)	Difference between ethnic identity statuses	Average of the diffusion negative (n=48)	Average of the foreclosure negative (n=48)	Average of the achievement negative (n=38)
Mental and behavioural health					
Mental health	14-70	●	40.2	44.9	46.4
Taking part-time jobs	1-5	●	2.0	2.3	2.9
Interpersonal relationships					
With same minority youth	1-7	●	5.0	5.1	6.1
With other minority youth	1-7	●	4.8	5.0	5.9
Attending social events	1-5	●	2.7	3.4	3.5
Campus life					
Consulting classmates on schoolwork	1-5	●	2.7	3.5	3.5
Discussing schoolwork with students of other races	1-5	●	2.6	3.2	3.4
Discussing career plans with teachers or social workers	1-5	●	2.4	2.7	3.1
Assuming a leadership role in the students' union	1-5	●	2.3	2.7	2.9
Academic performance and language competence					
Overall academic performance	1-5	●	2.9	3.6	3.9
STEM	1-5	●	2.9	3.5	3.5
Arts-related disciplines	1-5	●	3.0	3.1	3.6
IT-related disciplines	1-5	●	2.9	3.0	3.4
Writing competence in native language	1-6	●	3.1	3.4	3.9
Speaking competence in native language	1-6	●	3.2	4.6	4.4

Note: 1) Statistical differences between ethnic identity statuses are tested with the Kruskal-Wallis test, while statistical differences between positive and negative of states are tested with the Mann-Whitney U test; 2) The mental health score of 14-70 is the sum of the 14 questions of the Warwick Edinburgh Positive Mental Health Scale, and the higher the average score, the more frequent it is; 3) The higher the average, the more they indicate "agree/often/good"; 4) Due to the small number of respondents in other ethnic identity statuses, only the diffusion negative, foreclosure negative and achievement negative are analysed in their relation with the items; 5) Both the negative and positive include all respondents in each of the four statuses of ethnic identity.

8. How disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth view the government's social inclusion policies and school policies is also related to their ethnic identity statuses. The achievement negative youth tend to agree that the government can help them learn the native language and culture, enjoy social equality, and improve their sensitivity regarding school and social culture. Regarding school policies, they tend to agree that the school is culturally sensitive, able to help them with physical and mental health, assist their learning of their native language, and improve their understanding of Chinese, native, and other ethnic cultures. The school arranges for them to use the same textbooks as Chinese students to increase their academic performance and encourages interaction between students of different ethnic backgrounds. Of the many items, however, only the item "school helping them to understand other ethnic cultures" is related to the positive and negative states of ethnic identity. All other items show no statistically significant relationships. It follows that effective government and school policies can help disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth explore their ethnic identity in depth, but has little impact on whether they perceive their identity positively or negatively. Youth who proactively explore their ethnic identity may feel that government and school policies are helpful, but they still need more support in order to feel positive about their ethnic identity.
9. Analysis of the results from 25 in-depth interviews: Table 3 lists the ethnic identity issues faced by the disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth interviewed or approached by the respondents in different categories. These issues can lead to no or low exploration into their ethnic identities (diffusion or foreclosure) or extend the exploration period (moratorium), resulting in failure to affirm/clarify their ethnic identity for a long time (failure to reach the achievement stage). Even if the achievement status is reached, the process is difficult, and they still feel negative about their ethnic identity, though they have no choice but to accept.

Table 3: Ethnic identity development among disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth under different categories

Integrating into family and society	
1	<p>Disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth come into conflict with family traditions, which makes them feel ambiguous about their ethnic identity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing local Chinese clothing since childhood makes them incompatible with relatives, which brings much criticism from the family. • Family members hold the view that women need not be highly educated, but the local society advocates higher education. • Family-arranged marriage in their home country conflicts with a Hong Kong-based relationship.
2	<p>Self-isolation of parents of disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth, and youth have a confused familial and societal identity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those whose parents have lived in Hong Kong for more than 20 years have few Chinese friends and do not speak Cantonese at all. • Parents fail to teach them about local culture and do not know how to pass on their own culture to their children. • The cohesiveness of the home country race within the community is so strong that it hinders their integration into the Chinese ethnic group. • Their families never give them Chinese names when they were young, which affects their sense of identity as Hong Kong people in the eyes of themselves or others. • Parents know little about Hong Kong schools, have poor access to information, and mostly enroll their children in non-Chinese dominated schools.
3	<p>The way ethnic Chinese view and treat them makes the disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth feel as if they are “not Chinese”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They find themselves different from the Chinese in some ideas, behaviours, and clothes, but cannot make sense of these cultural differences. • Disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth feel puzzled and frustrated by the strange looks and reactions from ethnic Chinese of the opposite sex. • Being ostracised and even bullied by their ethnic Chinese classmates. • Being mistaken by ethnic Chinese for not knowing Chinese and being spoken ill of face to face. • The media tends to create a negative image of disadvantaged ethnic minorities among the public.
4	<p>Disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth are prone to self-examination and self-exclusion, showing a lack of sense of presence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They shy away from community/school events if it is not stated clearly that they are for ethnic minorities.
5	<p>Have to find a way to blend in with the Chinese community on their own, or they will find it hard to feel at home in Hong Kong:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is easier to enter the Chinese community through football, but integration remains difficult for disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth who are unable to cater to the pleasures of local Chinese. • They feel that Hong Kong is their home because they have friends who have grown up together with them, but not everyone can assimilate into the Chinese community.

Campus study and life

- 6** Low cultural sensitivity and insufficient Chinese education in schools:
- Schools used to separate Chinese from ethnic minorities, a practice that makes them confused and sad.
 - Sometimes religious issues interfere with classes or extracurricular activity attendance, and they are told off by teachers.
 - Chinese is taught to a level that fails to meet their daily needs and forms a barrier to further study.
 - Neither the first nor second language they have learnt is Chinese, and many of them do not know Chinese even after they grow up.
- 7** Being bullied and excluded by Chinese classmates affects their learning progress and confidence in integrating into the Chinese group:
- Being bullied and excluded in school affects the sense of involvement in school, making them afraid to consult classmates when facing academic difficulties.

Financial problems

- 8** High cost of education in Hong Kong or other financial needs affect their integration into campus life:
- High cost of education in Hong Kong once forced them to study in their home country.
 - For religious reasons, a family may have many children, but the parents are poorly informed of schooling information and in financial straits.
 - Due to financial needs and urging by families, they must work early to earn money.

Career development issues

- 9** Traditionally, their job opportunities are sourced by family members, which, combined with poor Chinese proficiency, create a closed career circle:
- They seldom attach high importance to career plans, and seldom accumulate relevant experience for an attractive resume.
 - Most companies have a high proportion of Chinese employees (including civil service), and such positions have high requirements for Chinese proficiency, which can be an obstacle to job hunting. They may not be hired despite efforts to seek a company with a predominantly Chinese workforce.

10. Some of the interviewed youth show characteristics typical of the achievement positive status, such as great affirmation of their ethnic identity, pride in their ethnic identity, feeling fine, accepting Hong Kong as their home, and intending to contribute to Hong Kong society and ethnic minorities. Factors, both inborn and acquired, driving them to explore and feel positive about their ethnic identity are as follows:

- Personality factor: active, bold, and initiative since young
- Family factor: born into a family that teaches them native culture and language, arranges for them to study in mainstream schools, encourages them to join social activities, and accompanies them in doing voluntary work when young
- School factor: have teachers and classmates who care about them and are willing to teach them Chinese in their spare time, or study in a school that encourages them to participate in activities and competitions
- Social factor: in close proximity to where Chinese youth gather, and have the chance to contact them and build lasting relationships with them
- Motivation to learn Chinese: learn Cantonese by watching TV dramas and movies, proactively make Chinese friends, and gradually learn Cantonese via communication

11. The above factors beneficial to development into achievement status are not accessible to all disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth, and the majority of disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth still face problems. Therefore, this research puts forth policy suggestions that can create conditions conducive to establishing their ethnic identity, and reduce the hurdles they face.

Policy Suggestions

12. The objective is to implement policies in neighbourhoods and schools to help disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth progress from status 1 and status 2 of ethnic identity (diffusion and foreclosure) to status 3 (moratorium, who are willing to explore), and from status 3 to status 4 (achievement, who have conducted in-depth exploration, and identified and accepted their ethnic identity), and help status 4 youth develop their strengths and achieve their development goals in society.
13. Policy suggestions fall into three broad categories: contributing to society (suggestions 1 to 3), integrating into mainstream life (suggestions 4 and 5), and promoting ethnic identity (suggestions 6 and 7) (see Table 4).

Table 4: Seven Policy Suggestions

Contributing to society	
Suggestion 1: Launch the Partner Internship Programme	
Existing measure	Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) proactively arrange for employers to provide internships for disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth. NGOs especially target industries less accessible to ethnic minorities, encouraging corporations to provide subsidised internships for minority secondary school students or recent graduates, in a bid to create more personal and professional development opportunities for them, build up their work experience, and provide them with salary and allowances that reduce their family's financial burden. NGOs also arrange for Chinese youth to participate in internships with them in the hope that they can take care of each other. In addition, the Racial Diversity and Inclusion Charter for Employers released by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) increases employment opportunities for minorities and provides internship matching services for signatories to the Charter.
Purpose of suggestion	To support disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth in exploring their ethnic identity and seeking self-understanding in the workplace, and help them recognise and find ways to integrate into the Chinese workplace. Internships help them with career planning and ethnic identity exploration. Internships give employers a better understanding of minority youth, potentially encouraging them to consider employing more people of different races when drawing up future human resources plans.
Policy suggestion	<p>The government should launch the Partner Internship Programme. In terms of internship arrangement, it can follow the practice of some NGOs, where one Chinese youth is paired with one disadvantaged ethnic minority youth. To ensure internship quality, refer to our recommended guidelines on internship preparation.</p> <p>The government should provide more funding and promotion assistance to encourage more organisations to sign up for the Racial Diversity and Inclusion Charter for Employers. The "Racial Diversity Employment Programme" of the Labour Department (LD) and the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau (HYAB) may assist in promotion, actively finding out about the willingness of organisations that have signed the Charter to offer internships, and developing a systematic mechanism for schools or tertiary institutions and NGOs to seek suitable employers that offer internships. The LD/HYAB should provide financial assistance to internship providers (especially SMEs and NGOs), ensuring that the remuneration can meet the needs of disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth and that they enjoy better access to quality internships. The LD/HYAB can also offer additional funding to internship agencies/organisers to provide Chinese language training for minority interns. To encourage more ethnic minority and Chinese students to participate, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) should increase quotas for its "Harmony Scholarships Scheme" to finance some students who do well in their internships. The authorities can consider designing tools to effectively assess internship performance.</p>
Organisation / Personnel	EOC, LD, HYAB, secondary or tertiary institutions, NGOs, and private institutions/employers
Expected outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance the Chinese language proficiency of ethnic minority HK youth in the workplace, improve personal workplace soft skills, and awareness of industry requirements and work culture. 2. Ethnic minority HK youth will better understand their abilities and career orientation, as well as the relationship between their ethnic identity and the workplace. 3. Ethnic minority HK youth can broaden their Chinese social circle and their motivation to stay involved in the community can be increased. 4. More organisations will sign the Charter, offer more internships and even consider hiring interns as full-time staff in the future.

Suggestion 2: Make good use of “Project Gemstone” and “Project Himalaya”

Existing measure	<p>The Civil Service Bureau has launched a government internship programme for non-Chinese students. They are placed in internships with different bureaux and departments for about eight weeks. Some work requires interns to apply their understanding of the non-Chinese language and non-Chinese culture to serve a non-Chinese community. This internship programme, designed for post-secondary students, is certainly effective. As many disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth are not enrolled in post-secondary institutions, they have fewer opportunities to join the ranks of civil servants, though many civil service jobs do not require a higher education degree. In 2013, the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) launched “Project Gemstone” in Yau Tsim Police District and “Project Himalaya” in Yuen Long Police District, providing Chinese language courses and activities for non-Chinese Junior Police Call members. However, taking “Project Gemstone” as a reference, due to a shortage of staff and resources, the project has only referred 30-plus persons to disciplined services, government departments, and even private companies.</p>
Purpose of suggestion	<p>To create chances for disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth to join the civil service or work and serve in other positions, support them in their aspiration to contribute to society, and reinforce their positive feelings about their personal ethnic identity.</p>
Policy suggestion	<p>Provide better professional civil servant training and activities through “Project Gemstone” and “Project Himalaya”, focusing on improving their workplace Chinese proficiency as required by government departments and public institutions, and create more internship opportunities for them. The two Projects can be developed in two directions (choose either):</p> <p>Direction 1 - The government should invest more in “Project Gemstone” and “Project Himalaya” to increase the project scale and enrich the training and internship content. HKPF should extend the enhanced project from the current Yau Tsim Police District and Yuen Long Police District to other police districts, enabling more minority HK youth to know about and sign up for the Project, especially those without a post-secondary degree, while encouraging communication between police districts and youth. The content of the internship can be based on the existing “Police Mentorship Programme”, with adjustments where required. The enhanced project can also provide more internship opportunities by collaborating with other disciplined services, government departments, and the private sector.</p> <p>Direction 2 - Beyond “Project Gemstone” and “Project Himalaya”, the disciplined services and government departments can launch more similar projects following its example, attract more aspirants, and develop training and internship content according to the needs of each department. This will help youth with different aspirations choose and join disciplined services or government departments that fit them, and increase the sense of responsibility and connection relevant services and departments feel towards the participants. Through communication and co-ordination, these programmes can give the youth interdepartmental internship opportunities, or make contact with more private organisations to provide more internships and future job hunting options.</p> <p>In either direction, training and internships should be of a certain quality, and special personnel should be designated for regular follow-up and performance assessment, so that the maximum proportion of participants can join the civil service and achieve the goal of serving the community. If they desire other jobs, their improved Chinese proficiency and professional skills and a better understanding of the Chinese-dominated workplace culture will make it easier for them to find their desired jobs.</p> <p>The programme can be piloted in areas inhabited by a larger population of vulnerable ethnic minorities and then extended to other areas after review. Therefore, the government should develop key performance indicators to identify success factors and areas for improvement for the programme, while continuously optimising and scaling up the programme.</p> <p>Furthermore, career development following the programme is quite essential. Preferably, the disciplined services or government departments will hire them. Nevertheless, they should also have the opportunity to apply for jobs in the private sector, which will require the government to contact employers so programme managers can more easily match them with jobs. The LD’s “Racial Diversity Employment Programme” can collect data on the vocational skills and employment intention of the participants and then provide a platform for them to find desired jobs.</p>
Organisation / Personnel	<p>Civil Service Bureau, LD, HKPF, disciplined services, government departments, and private organisations/ employers</p>
Expected outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More channels for disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth to join the ranks of civil servants. 2. Greater awareness of the Chinese-dominated workplace culture among disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth. 3. Improved workplace Chinese proficiency among disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth.

Suggestion 3: Organise Ethnic Minority Ambassador Group to encourage participation in community affairs within the system

Existing measure	The “Ethnic Minority Ambassador Programme” has been launched in nine districts with a concentration of ethnic minorities, hiring Ethnic Minority Ambassadors to serve ethnic minorities while optimising district centres or service units, and creating more job opportunities for ethnic minorities. Some NGOs also participate in this programme, which helps improve district services and enhance the vocational skills of ethnic minorities. However, most ethnic minority staff only carry out the instructions of the agencies or organisations and serve the community as staff members. Hopefully, their important experience and network may be shared to improve the related government policies.
Purpose of suggestion	To support the involvement of disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth in community affairs, increase their ethnic identity, create more chances for them to contribute to the community, and build an environment for other disadvantaged minorities to explore and participate in the community. In addition, they can promote the development of ethnic minorities in the district and launch more community activities suitable for ethnic minority HK youth.
Policy suggestion	Given that youth joining the “Ethnic Minority Ambassador Programme” are employed by different agencies or organisations, the government can set up an Ethnic Minority Ambassador Group that consists of all ambassadors (previous and present), so they can play a role in participating in the community within the system. Youth Programme Committees in various districts should communicate more with the Ethnic Minority Ambassador Group so they can incorporate minority ideas into the district’s youth activities. These committees can also include promising ethnic minority HK youth as members, allowing them to participate directly in youth development activities in the district. This policy suggestion can be piloted in areas with a larger population of vulnerable ethnic minorities and then extended to other areas after review. Also, some institutions do not employ young people with a bachelor’s degree or above. However, to encourage more youth to participate, such institutions should consider relaxing requirements for diploma, and adjust the number and scope of recruitment, in accordance with their actual needs.
Organisation / Personnel	“Ethnic Minority Ambassador Programme”, District Youth Programme Committees, NGOs, district centres or service units
Expected outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More channels for disadvantaged ethnic minorities to participate in public affairs, and more effective ways to express opinions to the government. 2. More community activities are launched by Ethnic Minority Ambassadors for disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth. 3. Greater engagement of disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth in the community affairs. 4. Increased sense of belonging of disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth to the community and even Hong Kong.

Integrating into mainstream life

Suggestion 4: Implement the “Local Partnership Scheme”

Existing measure	<p>The HAD has launched “District-based Programmes for Racial Harmony” to promote communication and exchanges between settled ethnic minorities in Hong Kong and local Chinese residents. The authorities invite NGOs to organise district-based activities to promote racial integration at the district level. In addition, some NGOs, with the government’s support, organise activities to bring together ethnic minorities and Chinese youth to promote multicultural development in the community. However, most of the passive and self-isolated disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth do not actively participate in these activities. Without proper arrangement and follow-up, the construction of ethnic identity can only achieve a short-term effect, with no long-term impact.</p>
Purpose of suggestion	<p>To encourage disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth to boldly step into Chinese communities and explore their ethnic identity, boost their confidence of integrating into mainstream society, and cultivate their ability to be independent. This programme is a two-way process, in which the relationship between disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth and Chinese youth is interactive, and both sides take the initial steps to understand each other’s race.</p>
Policy suggestion	<p>The government can promote the “Local Partnership Scheme” for Chinese students who are of the same age or older than disadvantaged ethnic minority students to become partners with ethnic minority HK youth (for example, Chinese students in post-secondary institutions can be paired with minority high school students) to help them integrate into mainstream society and broaden their circle of Chinese friends. Chinese partners can accompany and help minority HK youth in different ways to make new Chinese friends and participate in various activities, such as introducing them to their own friends and relatives or engaging in daily pastimes or government/NGO activities together. Another advantage of the programme is that Chinese partners can provide timely assistance to minority HK youth and gradually help them integrate into mainstream life.</p> <p>The HAD can encourage schools (including post-secondary institutions and secondary schools) or NGOs to participate in the programme, allowing them to invite interested ethnic Chinese students to participate voluntarily. Schools or NGOs can identify and encourage ethnic minority HK youth in need to participate in the programme, follow up on their progress, and provide timely support. Each group can have two Chinese partners partnering with two to four minority students. This proportion may make it easier for them to become acquainted with each other. The programme should last about one year, though the actual length can vary. The content and details of the overall programme can be flexibly designed by schools or NGOs. The responsible staff of the school or NGOs should follow up regularly. Expectations for Chinese partners are high, but they are not expected to possess too many professional skills. What matters most is that these partners are patient and caring, and can make friends with ethnic minority HK youth. The programme can start on a pilot basis by recruiting Chinese tertiary students and ethnic minority high school students, before extending to Chinese high school students and ethnic minority middle school students after regular assessment and review. The government and NGOs should provide training for participants. It is advisable for the authorities to invite students from various tertiary institutions with relevant expertise to become mentors that follow up on each group’s progress. If, in the future, the programme extends to include Chinese students in senior high schools and minority students in junior high schools, the authorities may partner it with the “4C Youth Volunteer Leadership Project”, and entrust the Agency for Volunteer Service to conduct training and matching.</p>
Organisation / Personnel	<p>HAD, Agency for Volunteer Service, NGOs, post-secondary institutions and secondary schools, and university departments</p>
Expected outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved daily Chinese proficiency among disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth. 2. More Chinese friends for disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth, improved confidence in dealing with Chinese people, with the ability to participate in various activities in the community alone a long-term aim. 3. Chinese youth and their relatives and friends can try to learn about the thinking, culture, religion, and language of ethnic minority students, increase their tolerance for ethnic minorities, and be more active in meeting ethnic minorities outside the programme (including the passive and self-isolated).

Suggestion 5: Launch the “Minority Family Visitor Programme”

Existing measure	<p>The HAD has commissioned the International Social Service (ISS) Hong Kong Branch to offer services to ethnic minorities. ISS appoints those with similar backgrounds and experience as ambassadors who actively contact ethnic minorities through home visits, introduce government services, and arrange for relevant government departments to follow up when necessary. Entrusted organisations also organise exhibitions and seminars introducing appropriate community services to them. Some NGOs also regularly visit disadvantaged ethnic minority families. During the visit, NGOs will also distribute necessary supplies besides providing emotional support services. However, due to limited resources, these organisations cannot expand their service scope or support services. The current visits, along with referrals and distribution of supplies, are capable of helping ethnic minority families deal with immediate problems, but cannot change the parents’ inherent concepts or liberate them to explore the community, which requires more resources, services, and staff.</p>
Purpose of suggestion	<p>To boost the confidence of disadvantaged ethnic minority parents and enhance their ability to integrate into mainstream society. Ethnic minority parents and their children can seize this chance to know more communities, make more Chinese friends, get more local information, be encouraged to integrate into the community, and proactively use public services or community support services.</p>
Policy suggestion	<p>The government should provide more funding for entrusted organizations and NGOs offering visiting services for ethnic minority families so that such visits may be conducted more systematically. The programme should launch more schemes related to ethnic identity and expand service coverage to benefit more families. Entrusted agencies and NGOs can invite ethnic Chinese and ethnic minorities to serve as family visitors who visit minority families in pairs. By doing so, the visitor whose nationality is the same as the visited family will be more accepted by the family and assist the Chinese visitor when communicating with the family and building relationships. Besides caring for their emotional and daily needs, visitors can accompany ethnic minority families in exploring different communities, using public support services, and participating in community activities. Visitors can also teach the family Chinese and local culture and help them make more Chinese friends. Visitors can also provide educational information so that the parents can choose the most suitable mainstream schools for their children and follow up on their children's study. More resources will be needed to recruit visitors, train them in relevant skills and knowledge, and there must be dedicated personnel to follow up on visits. The visitors should have patience, love, general care skills, and know how to provide the family with needed information. Visitors can make good use of existing government and community resources (governmental leisure and cultural facilities such as public libraries and funding schemes), accompanying families and helping them use the services together, so that they are able to use the public services by themselves in the future. The detailed content and scale of the visit plan are subject to the circumstances of entrusted organisations and NGOs.</p> <p>Regarding this suggestion, it is essential to put more resources and appropriate visitors and volunteers in place. Post-secondary students are potential human resources. Also, support from Chinese parents is required. In that case, schools (especially schools with a high number of ethnic minority students) can encourage parent volunteers to participate in the programme. Depending on the actual situations of ethnic minority families, parent volunteers can be recruited through the Agency for Volunteer Service. NGOs can co-operate with the Befriending and Mentorship Service and Community and Cultural Service under the “Hong Kong Jockey Club Community Project Grant: Volunteer Talent Bank” to recruit more visitors. As for training visitors, NGOs can work with the Agency for Volunteer Service, which has years of experience in training volunteers, and assign special personnel to follow up on the progress of different cases regularly. At the same time, they can take the chance to collect data on the needs, feelings, and habits of ethnic minority families, and accordingly build an extensive database, enabling the government and other agencies to design more attractive community services that can encourage the participation of ethnic minority families.</p>
Organisation / Personnel	<p>HAD, Agency for Volunteer Service, Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, International Social Service Hong Kong Branch, post-secondary institutions, and NGOs</p>
Expected outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the daily Chinese proficiency of disadvantaged ethnic minority parents. 2. Ethnic minority parents can be informed of more local information, slowly integrate themselves into the Chinese community, and encourage their kids to know more about the Chinese community. 3. Improve the use of public support services or community support services among ethnic minority parents. 4. Increase the number of ethnic minority parents enrolling their children in local mainstream schools.

Promoting ethnic identity

Suggestion 6: Build an ethnic history and culture pavilion and database

Existing measure	<p>It is not easy for ethnic minorities or the general public to understand the origin and evolution of ethnic groups in Hong Kong because the current information is too fragmented. Even if disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth want to explore more, they have no ability to discern the credibility of the data or in some cases, find relevant information at all. We can refer to the practice of Singapore, where relevant museums are set up in areas with a large population of ethnic groups. However, it should be noted that it takes work to select sites for museums of different races in Hong Kong. Furthermore, the Development Bureau has issued the “Urban Renewal Strategy”, setting up an urban renewal fund and appointing four NGOs to aid residents affected by redevelopment projects of the Urban Renewal Authority. Under this fund, a programme about nurturing cultural diversity and community legacy is in place to familiarise local residents and the public with the culture of other races, helping spread the ethnic culture of the district to the general public. However, these programmes are time-bound, making it difficult to achieve long-term effects.</p>
Purpose of suggestion	<p>To provide resources for disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth to explore their ethnic identity. On the one hand, ethnic minority HK youth need easy access to data, understand it, and convert it into personal resources. On the other hand, the ethnic identity of ethnic minority HK youth is subject to outside influence. Therefore, the general public can change their attitudes towards disadvantaged minorities by becoming more aware of ethnic minority history and culture.</p>
Policy suggestion	<p>The government should set up special pavilions on the history and culture of ethnic minorities in museums in Hong Kong, establish a database on the history and culture of ethnic minorities, and store data collected from different sources in the database. The database should include the history of first-generation ethnic minorities living in Hong Kong, the development of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong after its return to Chinese rule, and their contributions to Mainland cities and Hong Kong. Data from the database can be viewed at the pavilions or online through the Hong Kong Museum of History’s e-Go. The government, schools, or NGOs can organise workshops and other activities at the pavilions to collect information on ethnic culture. The media can use the database to produce more programmes on ethnic minorities. Although the metaverse currently is not widely used in Hong Kong, it has excellent potential for development, and we can take the chance to promote its local development. By so doing, we can break the geographical boundaries of physical venues (or organise simultaneous performances and activities in both physical and virtual space), enabling people in different places to learn about the development and culture of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong via virtual space, and allowing disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth to interact with people in different places and broaden their perspective on race. The government can discuss the development of relevant hardware and software with local innovative technology companies. The pavilions and related activities should become a permanent fixture, making it an integral part of local history and culture.</p>
Organisation / Personnel	<p>Government departments, four NGOs under the “Urban Renewal Strategy”, museums in Hong Kong, NGOs, schools, the media, and innovative technology companies</p>
Expected outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ethnic minority HK youth can learn about the history and culture of their origin countries, particularly the development of their ancestors after moving to Hong Kong, and have a better understanding of Chinese history and culture. 2. The general public may learn more about different cultures or pursue their interests in this area, thus furthering their study on different topics. 3. All sectors of the community can enhance their cultural sensitivity and ethnic tolerance for different races.

Suggestion 7: The government recognises the identity of ethnic minorities as Hong Kong people	
Background	For many years, the government has referred to non-ethnic Chinese people in Hong Kong as “ethnic minority” and its inclusion policy has also adopted the concept of “ethnic minority”. However, the term implies that those labelled as such are non-mainstream, non-local or non-Hong Kong people. In addition, Hong Kong has not established statutory holidays out of consideration for the religious needs of its ethnic minorities, as compared with statutory holidays in Singapore that reflect the city’s cultural and religious diversity.
Purpose of suggestion	To strengthen positive perceptions about their ethnic identity among disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth. To create a more appropriate social term that describes their ethnic identity, integrates their race-related festivals into the general public, and increases their social recognition as members of Hong Kong.
Policy suggestion	The government can still use the term “ethnic minority”. However, ethnic minorities born in Hong Kong or living in Hong Kong for at least seven years should be referred to as “Hong Kong + Native” (e.g., Hong Kong Pakistani; terms such as Hong Kong people of Pakistani origin are also worth considering). The Census and Statistics Department should attempt to use these new terms for statistical classification during the population census, though the term “ethnic minorities” can still be used if such a change is not feasible. However, other government departments and principal officials should use the new terms to emphasise non-ethnic Chinese citizens’ identity as a local. The use of kinder and friendlier words, such as “Hong Kong Youth”, to address them may influence other organisations and the general public to follow suit and breakdown the dichotomy between Chinese and non-Chinese Hong Kongers, until the usage of race-neutral terms becomes the norm. Noticeably, this is a very sensitive issue and the government must handle it carefully. Furthermore, the government should consider setting holidays linked to the major religions of local ethnic minorities. If it is operationally difficult to designate them a public holiday, the government can subsidise relevant NGOs to organise celebrations on designated days and assist in publicity.
Organisation / Personnel	Government departments (including the Census and Statistics Department) and NGOs
Expected outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduced negative social labels attached to disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth. 2. Increased willingness of the mainstream society to accept disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth. 3. Enhanced motivation of disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth to enter mainstream society.

Conclusions

14. Understandably, Hong Kong's ethnic inclusion policy has focused on measures such as Chinese language learning and employment support. Indeed, for disadvantaged ethnic minorities, their top priority is to learn Chinese and find a good job. However, ethnic identity is of crucial importance for disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth, for it not only exerts an impact on their growth, but affects a wide range of areas such as their mental health, relationships, school life, community participation, career development, and their ability to deal with race-related negative labels and treatment. This, however, is completely ignored by our inclusion policy. Also, despite the support available from society, some passive youth may still choose to stay in closed and narrow racial/family circles. For various reasons, they never take the initiative to seek support and are not convinced of the need to integrate into Chinese society. Even proactive young people may not have enough opportunities and resources to explore their ethnic identity. In some cases, after encountering many obstacles and unpleasant experiences, they may end up feeling confused and negative about their ethnic identity, giving rise to self-humiliation and undermining of self-confidence and value, resulting in their retreat back into cultural ethnic minority groups. This research finds that there are a large number of passive, confused, and negative ethnic minority HK youth, and that their counterparts who have explored (or even determined) their ethnic identity enjoy better mental health, higher academic self-evaluation, greater engagement with people of different races, and more active participation in activities and part-time jobs.
15. Therefore, we suggest that, based on the principle of transforming the way disadvantaged ethnic minorities perceive their identity, efforts should be made to encourage them to explore their ethnic identity, so that those who are confused are able to find answers and those feeling negative about their ethnic identity can have a positive understanding. We hope that through our policy suggestions, the misunderstanding and exclusion experienced by ethnic minority HK youth and their families will be replaced by understanding and tolerance. As the society becomes more accepting towards their culture and differences, we hope that ethnic minority HK youth will also have more opportunities to show their care for the community. In fact, a wide range of supporting services is already available from both the government and NGOs. By providing more resources and expanding the scope and variety of these services, they can become an effective means of helping disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth build affirmative and positive ethnic identities. Chinese and ethnic minorities with an established ethnic identity should strongly assist these youth in taking this exploratory step and reduce barriers to their integration into mainstream society. It is worth mentioning that many disadvantaged ethnic minority HK youth are not only looking for handouts from the government and society, but also hope to do their best to contribute to Hong Kong, their big family. To encourage them to actively explore their ethnic identity, fulfil their ideals, and contribute to social development, the government and Hong Kong as a whole should provide diversified and more effective support according to the characteristics of different ethnic identity stages, so that all ethnic minorities can make this city their home and work together for Hong Kong's next chapter.

About Us



Thought Leadership on Youth Development

Founded in 2015, MWYO is a youth-based independent think-tank, which works closely with different youth stakeholders through means such as reports and articles, community projects, and workshops, under five aspects of youth life: Education, Life Planning, Well-Being, Civic Participation, and the Future of Hong Kong. MWYO seeks to encourage youth development by bringing new perspectives and approaches to the discussions.

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