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Arousing Awareness on Acculturation Strategies that Boost Career Development of Nonlocal Chinese Students

The research project led by Dr. Raysen Cheung on “Career development, migration intention and perceived employability: A mix-methods study of non-local Chinese students in Hong Kong” found that acculturation strategies of nonlocal students are significantly related to career development and employability.⁸ Some intervention strategies were created as a result of his research findings:

- Student affairs offices and career services need to pay more attention to the effects of acculturation on the career development of students.
- To foster acculturation, establish a one-stop unit to coordinate career services for nonlocal university students.
- Organise interventions like career exploration courses (Cheung & Jin, 2016) and work internships (Cheung, 2007) for nonlocal students.
- Universities need to reach out in support of students who feel marginalized or who have marginalized themselves.
- Counselors and career practitioners need to acquire cultural competence and to gain practical knowledge of the specific cultures that the nonlocal Chinese students are from.

These findings and suggestions have helped raise awareness about the importance of acculturation strategies among government officials, career development professionals, practitioners and students in Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and China.

- Officials in the Education Bureau have expressed positive responses to the research findings. These findings were subsequently disseminated by the Education Bureau to relevant teams for their reference.

- Research outputs have been disseminated to different universities and non-local Chinese student associations in Hong Kong. Students, administrators, and career practitioners were informed of the importance of acculturation strategies to career development.
- The findings of the project also reached the Chinese Students and Scholars Association, a nonlocal Chinese student association in Hong Kong, to be disseminated to their members in different local universities. Follow-up professional exchanges via phone and emails between them and the research team reflected their increased awareness on the issue.
- Project findings were also delivered to over 40 university administrators, career counsellors and researchers from Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and Mainland China in the Cross Straits Four Places Career Counselling Forum held in Macau on 22 September 2017.
- At the invitation of the Career Development Center of Tsinghua University in Mainland China, a co-author of this project gave a presentation on the research results on 14 May 2018 to over 100 participants, including practitioners and researchers. The attendees discussed the research findings in relation to the cultural adaption problems faced by nonlocal and international students in Mainland China.

Publication:

Cheung, R., Jin, Q., & Cheung, C. K. (2018). Perceived employability of nonlocal Chinese university students in Hong Kong: The impact of acculturative and vocational variables. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 26(1), 137-153.

⁸ Project Co-investigators include Dr. Cheung Chau Kin Jacky and Dr. Kwong Wai Man of City University of Hong Kong, and co-author Dr. Jin Qiuping from Renmin University of China.