



香港中華基督教青年會

Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong

機構傳訊及市場拓展科

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## **‘To solve the employment problem, the government should take lead to employ the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong’ urged by Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong**

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Each year, when the results of the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination and Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination are published, the public primarily pays attention to the Chinese students and the top-placed students. However, Hong Kong has many minority secondary students who are just as concerned as the Chinese students about their futures, and who actively plan their paths for academic advancement and employment. A study by the Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong discovered that about 40% of minority secondary students believe that they will encounter discrimination in their future work. The study further predicted that even if these minority students enter universities, they will encounter financial, learning, and social interaction challenges. In addition, more than 40% of these students are not confident that they can deal with the difficulties of racism, gender issues, and taking care of their families during academic advancement and employment.

Between December last year and March of this year, YMCA conducted the “Survey on Ethnic minorities’ Perceived Barriers on Study and Career in Hong Kong”, the purpose of which is to explore how minority students understand their racial identities and their future difficulties in academic advancement and employment. The questionnaire samples were primarily collected through secondary schools and youth service departments. The questionnaires were collected anonymously and filled out by secondary minority students. A total of 389 questionnaires were successfully collected. The main points of this study are as follows:

**Discrimination in the workplace and problems faced in tertiary education:** in terms of employment, 51.2% of the subjects agreed with the statement “People treat me differently because of my ethnic/racial background”, 47.2% agreed that “having a harder time getting hired than people of other ethnic backgrounds”, 37.9% believe that other people “make negative comments about my ethnic/racial background”, and nearly 40% believe that “experience discrimination because of my ethnic/racial background”. As for studying at the level of tertiary education, subjects believe that the problems they will encounter include: 1) Financial problems (40-50%), 2) Insufficient learning ability and lack of self-confidence (40-50%), and 3) Problems with peers and socializing (about 30%).

**Insufficient ability to deal with problems, and lack of confidence:** facing rejection by society, more than 40% of the subjects selected that they have “no confidence at all” or “Little confidence only” in dealing with racial discrimination (racial discrimination: 44.5%, negative views about my race: 47.3%), gender (gender discrimination: 48.8%, negative views about my gender: 49%), and family care (challenges related to searching for daycare services for children: 48.8%, difficulty in arranging days off to take of children when they are ill: 46.9%).

Researcher Thomas Chan stated that the study focused on “perceived barriers” in social psychology as the topic of research, and said that the goal is to understand how minority students view their employment and academic advancement in the future. He pointed out that, in the past, mainstream studies on youth academic advancement and employment primarily focused on Chinese students or superficially did not involve racial concepts; such an approach has neither helped society in understanding the conditions faced by minority students nor helped in the making of plans suitable for employment and academic counseling for them.

### **The government should take lead to employ the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong**

YMCA Coordinating Secretary Mr Lee Man Key pointed out that the results of this study demonstrated that workplace racial discrimination has affected how minority students view the Hong Kong employment scene. He hopes that Hong Kong society can change its Chinese-centred hiring culture, and believes that employers should actively create multicultural work environments. The Association also actively promotes the concept of multiculturalism, in hopes of changing current social conditions to reduce the continuation of discrimination. Additionally, he believes that the government should teach by example and actively hire minorities in public services. This solution would have the following benefits: 1) through specific resource allocation, the government can express its concern about the problem of minority employment, so that the public and employers become cognizant that minorities are suffering from discrimination in the workplace, 2) the opening up of more positions for minority groups would allow minorities to increase chances for employment, and 3) the hiring of minorities means that the government and the public would welcome minorities in using public services, so that minorities who need public services can utilize them.

Other than the problem of workplace discrimination, Mr Lee Man Key said that the government should also pay attention to minority students. It is popular for current career and academic counseling services to match students with internship opportunities. The government can provide internship opportunities to minority secondary students, so that they can grasp workplace demands and culture while in school, enabling them to plan for future occupational and academic advancement plans.

### **YMCA is planning to establish a service centre for the employment and academic counseling of minorities**

YMCA Coordinating Secretary representative Ms. Shiu Yuen Ling stated that the YMCA has always been concerned about the living conditions of minority youths in Hong Kong. In the past they have held the “Entrepreneurial platform project for minorities” and the “Pilot project for learning Chinese as a second language”, hoping to provide diverse learning opportunities so that minority students can plan and develop their own paths for academic advancement and employment. In order to further assist minority students and working minority youths in planning their employment and academic advancement, YMCA is researching the development of a service centre for the employment and academic counseling of minorities. The centre would provide services including Vocational Chinese courses, career planning workshops, entrepreneurial courses, and consultancy services. She hopes that related services can strengthen the employment and academic advancement of minority students. In addition, YMCA has published a book, *Hong Kong Minorities: Our Dream Jobs*, which records information on the dream jobs and industries of the interview subjects. He hopes that this book will allow the public to understand the thinking of minorities in Hong Kong, and that the information on industries can help minority youths plan and determine their future academic advancement and employment.

## **EM student's sharing the experiences on career and education**

Aunsa Nahied, an Ethnic Minority student in Form Six, is looking forward to the release of the JUPAS result. With her satisfactory DSE results, she is deemed qualified for the entry level of local tertiary study programmes and has received a conditional offer from the HKU SPACE. If she has successfully passed Chinese Language in the GCSE, she would study Higher Diploma in Aviation Studies in the institute. Yet she is worried that her chance of getting a finalized offer would be affected because the announcement of GCSE result in mid August is later than the JUPAS one.

Azaz is a Form Six student, who shares his working experiences in Cargo Airport. His boss told him that ethnic minorities cannot be promoted easily in the industry and the delivery job is hard. He hopes to continue to study in tertiary education. But he is worried about the qualification of Chinese Language in GCSE; even he got an A grade in the subject. He thinks universities accept the qualification of Chinese Language in DSE rather than that of GCSE. It would become a disadvantage for his future study in universities.

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