

Exploring Cultural Diversity in Chinese Classrooms

Can Assessment Environments Cater for the Needs of Ethnic Minority Students in Hong Kong?

Project Summary:

How Can Assessment Environments be Developed to Support Ethnic Minority Students in Hong Kong's Schools?¹

Designated School



Introduction

Ethnic minority students form a small majority in Hong Kong schools accounting for around 2% of the total school population. Yet the presence of such students in some schools is very noticeable. This is because schools have either been designated by EDB as support centres for ethnic minority students or they have made deliberate policy decisions to enroll students from ethnic minority groups. In either case, the presence of ethnic minority students poses challenges for teachers for and for daily classroom practice.

The purpose of this project, therefore, is to investigate the learning culture of Hong Kong classrooms catering for ethnic minority students and to identify any barriers to learning faced by ethnic minority students. The focus will be on classroom assessment and whether it is conducted in ways that

support or hinder the learning of ethnic minority students.

Issues

In the Hong Kong context it is natural that a great deal of research has focused on the way Chinese students learn. It is generally accepted that Chinese cultural influence both the learning behavior of students and the expectations of teachers. A key issue for this project, therefore, is whether traditional cultural norms also support the learning of ethnic minority students or whether those norms need to be modified in multicultural classrooms.



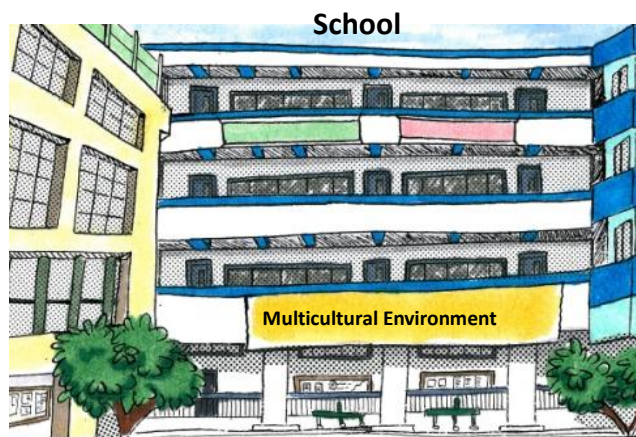
Specific questions

1. What role does policy play in creating an environment to support ethnic diversity in Hong Kong schools?
2. How do teachers create a classroom assessment environment to meet the needs of ethnic minority students?
3. How do ethnic minority students experience classroom assessment environments and how do these influence their efficacy for learning?
4. How is learning best facilitated for ethnic minority students in Hong Kong classrooms?

Expected outcomes

Working together with schools, the project will:

1. Identify approaches to policy at both system and school levels that support ethnic minority students;
2. Evaluate the ways classrooms can be developed to support the learning of ethnic minority students;
3. Develop a better understanding of how assessment influences ethnic minority students' attitudes to learning; and
4. Use integrated research findings to develop better learning environments for ethnic minority students.



Our aim is to improve learning for ethnic minority students and support schools in this important task.

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