

Campus Racial and Ethnic Climate in Hong Kong Higher Education: The Case of Ethnic Minority and Mainland Chinese Students

Studies indicate that ethnic minority and Mainland Chinese students in Hong Kong (HK) universities experience racism, ethnicism and discrimination. Research elsewhere suggests a significant association between these experiences and students' well-being. Similar studies, however, are not available in HK despite students' experiences. Thus, little is known about the way university campuses support these students regarding their policies, curricula, and the day-to-day experiences of these students with their peers, teachers, and other staff. This study seeks to address this issue by investigating students' experiences of their campus environment and its impact on their wellbeing. Using the concept of campus racial and ethnic climate (CREC), the proposed study will explore how ethnic minority and Mainland Chinese students in HK universities experience CREC, specifically how they perceive CREC, the factors that influence their perceptions, how their wellbeing is affected, what institutional policies and practices support or hinder the development of positive CREC and what policies and practices have potentials to support the development of anti-racist and anti-ethnicist education. The study will draw on critical race theory (CRT) and symbolic interactionism to explore various overt and subtle forms of racism and ethnicism including systemic and institutional as well as stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, microaggressions and unconscious bias against ethnic minority and Mainland Chinese students. The study will adopt a phenomenological qualitative approach to document the experiences of a group of minority students studying at two public universities in HK. In-depth interviews will be conducted with 40 ethnic minority students of South Asian and South-East Asian heritages, and 40 Mainland Chinese students, totalling 80. Additionally, all documents and webpages related to policies, practices, programmes and support services concerning CREC as well as equity, diversity and inclusion, and some selected relevant curriculum materials of the two universities will be analyzed. Moreover, in-depth interviews with four academic and teaching staff and four administrative staff will be carried out. The project will benefit both minority and majority students, their families, policy makers, university leaders, and academic, teaching and administrative staff. To enhance the impact of the project, stories of participants' racial and ethnic encounters (anonymously) will be made publicly available on the project website. This will help create pathways towards anti-racist and anti-ethnicist campus and education and will form the basis of similar future initiatives across the government funded universities. The development of anti-racist and anti-ethnicist campus climate represents the longer-term impact of this project.