

RGC Ref. No.: UGC/FDS14/H02/14 _____ (please insert ref. above)
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**RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL  
COMPETITIVE RESEARCH FUNDING SCHEMES FOR  
THE LOCAL SELF-FINANCING DEGREE SECTOR**

**FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (FDS)**

**Completion Report**  
*(for completed projects only)*

<p><b><u>Submission Deadlines:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Auditor's report with unspent balance, if any: within <b>six</b> months of the approved project completion date.</li> <li>2. Completion report: within <b>12</b> months of the approved project completion date.</li> </ol>
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**Part A: The Project and Investigator(s)**

**1. Project Title**

Media, Experts and Politics of Knowledge: the Making of 'Tourism Capacity' as Social Risk

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**2. Investigator(s) And Academic Department(s) / Unit(s) Involved**

Research Team	Name / Post	Unit / Department / Institution
Principal Investigator	Chan Chi Kit Assistant Professor	School of Communication, Hang Seng Management College
Co-Investigator(s)	Nil	
Others	Nil	

**3. Project Duration**

	Original	Revised	Date of RGC/ Institution Approval <i>(must be quoted)</i>
Project Start Date	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2014		
Project Completion Date	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2017	30 <sup>th</sup> Sept. 2017	28 <sup>th</sup> October 2016
Duration <i>(in month)</i>	30	36	28 <sup>th</sup> October 2016
Deadline for Submission of Completion Report	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2018	30 <sup>th</sup> Sept. 2018	28 <sup>th</sup> October 2016

**Part B: The Final Report****5. Project Objectives**

## 5.1 Objectives as per original application

1. *Determine the role of the media in constructing tourism capacity as a social risk;*
2. *Determine the role of experts in explaining knowledge pertaining to tourism capacity;*
3. *Explain the politics of knowledge, which transforms the social risk of tourism capacity into more than the simple consideration of 'objective' social facts; and*
4. *Explain how the social risk of tourism capacity warrants a constructivist approach in the understanding of its social formation.*

## 5.2 Revised objectives

Date of approval from the RGC: Nil

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Reasons for the change: Nil

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## 5.3 Realisation of the objectives

*(Maximum 1 page; please state how and to what extent the project objectives have been achieved; give reasons for under-achievements and outline attempts to overcome problems, if any)*

The project objectives are mainly achieved by scholarly dialogue of my academic publication and popular writing. Details are as follows:

Objective 1: Hong Kong media served as the ‘burglar alarms’ alerting the social risks of overcrowded Mainland Chinese tourists and visitors in Hong Kong. In my journal writing titled “‘Burglar Alarms’ and the making of social risks: ‘Tourism Capacity’ and its controversies in Hong Kong”, I explicated the journalistic value of opinionated objectivity --- albeit the professionalism of neutrality, journalists incline to a position in news production amid overwhelming social sentiment --- in the making of social risks of overcrowded Mainland Chinese visitors in Hong Kong. Since there are no scientific standards to validate the ‘optimal’ number of tourists that a city could afford, media representation is hence crucial to the fact-making process of tourism capacity.

Objective 2: the role of expert in explaining knowledge pertaining to tourism capacity is limited. My journal writing mentioned in Objective 1 found that media coverage did not extensively cited expert testimony, nor even operators and practitioners of tourism industry when reporting news about tourism capacity. Journalists counted on governmental sources of both China and Hong Kong to narrate the news stories of tourism capacity. While governmental data are also part of the ‘expert’ knowledge, their credibility was challenged this time, as the public questioned whether both governments stood for ‘Hong Kong people’ or not. As unraveled by other academic writings stemming from this project, the public sentiment of tourism capacity is inextricably tied with the discursive wave of ‘localism’ and the flamboyant distrust to China in recent years, rather than the deliberation of scientific knowledge and data. My elaboration of Objectives 3 and 4 will further explain on this point.

Objective 3: the politics of knowledge which transformed the social risk of tourism capacity into more than the simple consideration of ‘objective’ social facts incurs substantially to the ‘China factor’, namely, the social anxiety among Hong Kong people which originates from an overwhelming China’s influence in the city. In my journal writing titled “Discursive opportunity structures of post-handover Hong Kong localism: The China factor and beyond”, I elucidated how the social anxiety of an authoritative China, radicalization of social movement and the awareness of local community building in post-handover years have paved the way for the rise of Hong Kong localism, an ideology which is highly skeptical to China, and is substantially manifested in public criticism against the ‘overwhelming number’ of Mainland Chinese tourists and visitors in Hong Kong. This rise of Hong Kong localism facilitates the construction of social ‘facts’ of tourism capacity, and other cynical narrations against China’s influence in the city.

Objective 4: the social risks of tourism capacity warrants a constructivist approach which demonstrates the discursive cracks of China’s offensive charm and image building as a responsible stakeholder in recent years. In my academic writing titled “Undoing China’s Charm Offensive: Chinese Tourists in Hong Kong’s News Discourse (2003-2015)”, I illustrated how the arrival of Mainland Chinese visitors to Hong Kong has shifted from an appreciated phenomena to a social controversy throughout the post-handover decades. In brief, the nationalistic appeal of China’s benevolence (sending Mainland Chinese visitors to boost Hong Kong’s economy) and instrumental calculation of cost-and-benefit (revenue brought by the Mainland Chinese visitors to Hong Kong) have eventually been overshadowed by the (constructed) social cost owing to the outnumbered Mainland Chinese in Hong Kong --- crowded public space, overloaded transportation, and the socio-cultural conflicts between locals and Mainland Chinese visitors. China’s charm offensive counts less on civic values but instrumental incentives (such as market opportunity of China market and population) and ethnic nationalism, which is proven to be fragile upon challenges from local civil society. The case of Hong Kong is therefore indicative to further study of China’s charm offensive, and its effectiveness to societies where core values are inconsistent with Chinese ethnic nationalism and go beyond the quest for business opportunity with China.

## 5.4 Summary of objectives addressed to date

<b>Objectives</b> <i>(as per 5.1/5.2 above)</i>	<b>Addressed</b> <i>(please tick)</i>	<b>Percentage Achieved</b> <i>(please estimate)</i>
1. <i>Determine the role of the media in constructing tourism capacity as a social risk</i>	✓	100%
2. <i>Determine the role of experts in explaining knowledge pertaining to tourism capacity</i>	✓	100%
3. <i>Explain the politics of knowledge, which transforms the social risk of tourism capacity into more than the simple consideration of 'objective' social facts</i>	✓	100%
4. <i>Explain how the social risk of tourism capacity warrants a constructivist approach in the understanding of its social formation</i>	✓	100%

## 6. Research Outcome

## 6.1 Major findings and research outcome

*(Maximum 1 page; please make reference to Part C where necessary)*

The major findings and research outcomes are specified as below:

### 1) Content and textual analysis of media coverage of tourism capacity from 2003 to 2015

Summarizing the media coverage of tourism capacity of significant local press from year of 2003, the year when China launched the policy of ‘Individual Visit Scheme’ (IVS), which allows Mainland Chinese visitors visiting Hong Kong on an individual basis instead of joining designated tours. This dataset informs us the shifting media representation portraying the coming of Mainland Chinese visitors to Hong Kong, and captures how the public of Hong Kong becomes gradually hostile and cynical to the purchasing power of those visitors, and their unexpected impact on Hong Kong society. The data is also indicative of the effectiveness of China’s charm offensive in Hong Kong in post-handover year. IVS policy and the purchasing power of Mainland Chinese visitors are framed as the benevolence of China to Hong Kong. Discursive challenges to this nationalistic appeal document how China’s charm offensive is incongruent to Hong Kong’s civil values and core beliefs, which could hardly be totally rationalized by the appeal of Chinese nationalism and the instrumental mindset of riding on the China’s bandwagon of economic growth.

### 2) Interview data with journalists

Totally, this study has solicited interview data from 13 journalists who were deeply involved in the news gathering and programme production with regard to the relating topics of tourism capacity in Hong Kong. Their testimony was recorded, scripted, and organized into valuable data for academic dialogue. They unraveled the journalistic values behind the media coverage: journalists were also moved by the social anxiety of China’s influence in Hong Kong, yet they tried their best to pledge to professionalism and objectivity when did the reportage. They showed varying extents of incorporating the seething social sentiment against Mainland Chinese visitors in their news reporting jobs. Some were strictly neutral and rejected all possibilities which might trigger audience’s emotion against Mainland Chinese and China. Yet, some were relatively opened to the social anxiety of China’s influence, and argued that reflecting public opinion is part of journalistic professionalism. Their sharing is highly valuable to supplement my scholarly argument about the (re)formation of journalistic professionalism in times of white-heated and polarized social sentiment, and the construction of social facts by media representation.

### 3) Survey data about shifting China-Hong Kong relationship

A territory-wide, representative computer-assisted telephone-survey was conducted in June 2016. Totally, the survey successfully interviewed 1003 respondents who spoke Cantonese and aged 18 or above. The sampling error was 3.1%, and the response rate was 44%. The survey solicited respondents’ encounter and impression on Mainland Chinese, perception of Hong Kong’s current social conditions, the rise of China, media usage pattern and basic demographics. It informs us quantitatively the relationship between Hong Kong people’s perception of China, Mainland Chinese, and their living experience in the hometown. In brief, trans-border interaction with Mainland Chinese could trigger a sense of anxiety instead of cultural understanding among Hong Kong people. The survey data is informative and illustrative to the studies of the socio-cultural impact of cross-border population flow between China and Hong Kong, in particular to China’s charm offensive and statist image in Hong Kong.

Findings (1) and (2) are employed in the academic writing listed in Part C. I will make good use of finding (3) in a future academic conference, which will likely generate at least one piece of scholarly writing.

## 6.2 Potential for further development of the research and the proposed course of action (Maximum half a page)

This study paves the way for the following potential further development of research:

1. Shifting journalistic values and social changes: journalistic values and professionalism are contextualized to social conditions but not static given factors. Post-handover Hong Kong is experiencing an ascending China's influence, a more and more vibrant civil society, and the tumultuous discursive contestation over Hong Kong identity. Media representation and journalists' reaction to rising conflicts of trans-border population flow between China and Hong Kong serves as a case study to examine the formation and paradigm shift of journalistic professionalism under polarized and radicalized public opinion and social movement.
2. China's charm offensive in overseas regions: China actively promotes its image as a responsible stakeholder in global affairs. Hong Kong's experience, however, shows that even a Chinese self-administered city demonstrates mixed and ambivalent responses to China's ascending as a world power. This study explicates the limitation of China's nationalistic call and the appeal of China market to the cultivation of China's positive image. It can serve as an anchor to comparative study of China's charm offensive in overseas cities.
3. Tourism and its socio-cultural implication: apart from Hong Kong, there are various tourist cities (such as Venice in Italy) where some locals complained nuisance made by overwhelming number of tourists. This study could be further developed into a comparative study scrutinizing the socio-cultural implication of tourism and its unintended consequences.

## 7. Layman's Summary

*(Describe in layman's language the nature, significance and value of the research project, in no more than 200 words)*

This study examines the social risk of tourism capacity in Hong Kong. It explicates the enduring social anxiety to the overwhelming numbers of Mainland Chinese visitors in the city, related implications to China's ascending influence in Hong Kong and the world, and the wider backdrop of ideological shifts in recent years, in particular the rise of Hong Kong localism. Drawing upon content and textual analyses of media data, interviews with journalists, and a territory-wide empirical survey, this study finds that society anxiety to Mainland Chinese visitors is propelled by local resistance to China's extending influence in the politics, economy, and even socio-cultural living of Hong Kong. Public discourses of tourism capacity go beyond the deliberation of data and knowledge about tourism, but articulate to Hong Kong localism which pictures an authoritarian China and the cross-border population flow from China are imminent threats to the survival of Hong Kong. The study sheds lights on research of China's charm offensive and its effectiveness, shifting journalistic values in times of radicalized and opinionated publics, Hong Kong studies and its relationship with modern China.

**Part C: Research Output****8. Peer-Reviewed Journal Publication(s) Arising Directly From This Research Project**

(Please attach a copy of the publication and/or the letter of acceptance if not yet submitted in the previous progress report(s). All listed publications must acknowledge RGC's funding support by quoting the specific grant reference.)

The Latest Status of Publications				Author(s) (denote the corresponding author with an asterisk*)	Title and Journal / Book (with the volume, pages and other necessary publishing details specified)	Submitted to RGC (indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)	Attached to this Report (Yes or No)	Acknowledged the Support of RGC (Yes or No)	Accessible from the institutional repository (Yes or No)
Year of Publication	Year of Acceptance (For paper accepted but not yet published)	Under Review	Under Preparation (optional)						
2017				Chan C. K.	“Discursive opportunity structures in post-handover Hong Kong localism: The China factor and beyond” / <i>Chinese Journal of Communication</i> , 10(4): 413-432	2018	Yes	Yes	Yes (online subscription)
2017				Chan C. K.	“‘Burglar Alarms’ and the making of social risks: ‘Tourism Capacity’ and its controversies in Hong Kong” / <i>Social Transformations in Chinese Societies</i> 13(1): 20-36	2016	Yes	Yes	Yes (online subscription)
2018				Chan C. K.	“Undoing China’s Charm Offensive: Chinese Tourists in Hong Kong’s News Discourse (2003-2015)” / <i>Hong Kong 20 Years after the Handover: Emerging Social and Institutional Fractures after 1997</i> . London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 287-314.	2016	Yes	Yes	Yes (book and chapter title only)
	2018			Chan. C. K.	“Economic localism in the world’s freest economy: public discourse of concerning Chinese economic influence in Hong Kong under Leung administration” / <i>The C. Y. Leung administration: a critical review</i> . Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press (forthcoming)	2018	Yes	Yes	Yes (book title only)

**9. Recognized International Conference(s) In Which Paper(s) Related To This Research Project Was / Were Delivered**

*(Please attach a copy of each conference abstract)*

<b>Month / Year / Place</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Conference Name</b>	<b>Submitted to RGC</b> <i>(indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)</i>	<b>Attached to this Report</b> <i>(Yes or No)</i>	<b>Acknowledged the Support of RGC</b> <i>(Yes or No)</i>	<b>Accessible from the institutional repository</b> <i>(Yes or No)</i>
Nil						
Nil						
Nil						

**10. Whether Research Experience And New Knowledge Has Been Transferred / Has Contributed To Teaching And Learning**

*(Please elaborate)*

I will use some of the research articles generated from this study as illustration in my research methods classes this upcoming semester. For example, the writing on China's charm offensive and media representation of tourism capacity could demonstrate the application of content analysis, textual analysis, and in-depth research interviews. The writing on Hong Kong localism illuminates the power of news archive research.

**11. Student(s) Trained**

*(Please attach a copy of the title page of the thesis)*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Degree Registered for</b>	<b>Date of Registration</b>	<b>Date of Thesis Submission / Graduation</b>
Nil			
Nil			
Nil			



## 12. Other Impact

*(e.g. award of patents or prizes, collaboration with other research institutions, technology transfer, teaching enhancement, etc.)*

Based on the survey findings, I have written two press commentaries explicating the variance between China's image in media representation and the living experience of Hong Kong people, and how political standpoint affects people's perception of China's image. I hope this study, in addition to scholarly dialogue, could also draw social attention by knowledge transfer. I have acknowledged this study in the newspaper articles. Copies are attached in this report. Details are as follows:

- 陳智傑 (2018)。 「媒體中國」與「生活中國」。香港：明報，2018年3月29日， A31頁。
- 陳智傑 (2018)。 泛民與本土的政治光譜分野。香港：信報，2018年4月3日， A16頁。

## 13. Public Access Of Completion Report

*(Please specify the information, if any, that cannot be provided for public access and give the reasons.)*

Information that Cannot Be Provided for Public Access	Reasons
Nil	Nil

**RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL  
COMPETITIVE RESEARCH FUNDING SCHEMES FOR  
THE LOCAL SELF-FINANCING DEGREE SECTOR**

**FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (FDS)**

**Completion Report - Attachment**

*(for completed projects only)*

**RGC Ref. No.:** UGC/FDS14/H02/14

**Principal Investigator:** CHAN CHI KIT

**Project Title:** Media, Experts and Politics of Knowledge: the Making of 'Tourism Capacity' as Social Risk

**Statistics on Research Outputs**

	Peer-reviewed Journal Publications	Conference Papers	Scholarly Books, Monographs and Chapters	Patents Awarded	Other Research Outputs (Please specify)
No. of outputs arising directly from this research project [or conference]	2	0	2	0	2 (Press commentaries)