

RGC Ref. No.: UGC/FDS14/H09/20 <hr/> (please insert ref. above)

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

1. Project Title

Acculturative Stress, Coping Strategies, and Social Support: A Cross-cultural Comparative Study of "Hong Kong Drifters" and "Northward Drifters" in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

2. Investigator(s) and Academic Department(s) / Unit(s) Involved

Research Team	Name / Post	Unit / Department / Institution
Principal Investigator	Dr.SONG Zhaoxun, Associate Professor	School of Communication, The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong
Co-Investigator(s)	Dr. WU Jing, Assistant Professor	School of Communication, The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong
	Dr. YANG Xin, Assistant professor	Department of Marketing, The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong
	Dr. LI Xiaoqin, Assistant Professor	Department of Communication, University of Macau
	Dr. YANG Guang, Associate Professor	School of Media and Communication, Shenzhen University
	Dr. MA Liming, Associate	

	Professor	School of Journalism and Communication, Jinan University
Others		

3. Project Duration

	Original	Revised	Date of RGC / Institution Approval (must be quoted)
Project Start Date	2021.01.01		
Project Completion Date	2022.12.31	2023.06.30	2021.12.01 (HSUHK)
Duration (in month)	24	30	2021.12.01 (HSUHK)
Deadline for Submission of Completion Report	2023.12.31	2024.06.30	2021.12.01 (HSUHK)

- 4.4 Please attach photo(s) of acknowledgement of RGC-funded facilities / equipment.
N/A

Part B: The Final Report

5. Project Objectives

5.1 Objectives as per original application

- 1.To describe and compare the perceptions of “Hong Kong drifters” and “northward drifters” of their acculturative stress and coping strategies.
- 2.To identify and compare their strategies for acculturation (as indicated by their psychological and sociocultural adaptation).
- 3.To examine the general cross-cultural communication patterns of the drifters when dealing with locals.
- 4.To identify the key demographic, cross-cultural contact, and support factors affecting the psychological and sociocultural adaptation of these drifters and strengthen our empirical understanding of this under-studied acculturative group.
- 5.To provide critical data for use by government authorities and institutions in support of these drifters in the GBA and make policy recommendations to establish a more favorable social and cultural environment for them.

5.2 Revised objectives

Date of approval from the RGC: N/A

Reasons for the change:

- 1.
- 2.
3.

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)

By employing a comprehensive research approach that involved surveys, interviews, and a thorough analysis of relevant literature, the project successfully collected extensive data and valuable insights. The project has achieved a 100% completion rate across all five objectives.

The first two objectives focused on describing and comparing the drifters in terms of their acculturative stress, coping strategies, and acculturation strategies. Through the administration of surveys and interviews, the project team gathered substantial data on these aspects. The findings were subsequently published in reputable academic journals, ensuring dissemination within the scholarly community. Furthermore, the research outcomes were shared through news coverage and research-sharing platforms.

The third objective centered around examining the general cross-cultural communication patterns of the drifters when interacting with locals. To accomplish this, the project team conducted a thorough study of co-cultural communication practices among Hong Kong drifters, explored the role of WeChat as a positive technology perspective in facilitating social connections, and investigated the interaction patterns of cross-boundary students during the pandemic. The results of these investigations were published in academic journals, making a contribution to the academic field.

The fourth objective aimed to identify key demographic, cross-cultural contact, and support factors that influence the psychological and sociocultural adaptation of the drifters. Through surveys and interviews, the project team collected pertinent data on these factors. The findings were subsequently published in academic journals, enhancing the theoretical understanding of this understudied acculturative group. Additionally, the research was shared through seminars and featured in the university's research newsletter, ensuring broader dissemination among academic circles.

The final objective focused on providing critical data to government authorities and institutions to support the drifters in the GBA and make policy recommendations for establishing a more favorable social and cultural environment for them. The research findings were published in the university's house organ and an in-depth report in the social science research website, further disseminating the work to a broader academic audience. Future plans involve collaborating with the university's Communication & Public Affairs Office to hold a news release of the findings, aiming to engage the wider community and disseminate the research outcomes.

In conclusion, the project's comprehensive research approach, meticulous data collection, and effective dissemination of findings have yielded valuable insights and critical data. These findings can inform support mechanisms and policy recommendations for these understudied acculturative groups, ultimately contributing to the creation of a more favorable social and cultural environment for them in the Greater Bay Area.

5.4 Summary of objectives addressed to date

Objectives <i>(as per 5.1/5.2 above)</i>	Addressed <i>(please tick)</i>	Percentage Achieved <i>(please estimate)</i>
1. To describe and compare the perceptions of “Hong Kong drifters” and “northward drifters” of their acculturative stress and coping strategies.	✓	100%
2. To identify and compare their strategies for acculturation (as indicated by their psychological and sociocultural adaptation).	✓	100%
3. To examine the general cross-cultural communication patterns of the drifters when dealing with locals.	✓	100%
4. To identify the key demographic, cross-cultural contact, and support factors affecting the psychological and sociocultural adaptation of these drifters and strengthen our empirical understanding of this under-studied acculturative group.	✓	100%
5. To provide critical data for use by government authorities and institutions in support of these drifters in the GBA and make policy recommendations to establish a more favorable social and cultural environment for them.	✓	100%

6. Research Outcome

6.1 Major findings and research outcome

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

This study delves into the process of acculturation among Hong Kong drifters and northward drifters in the Greater Bay Area. Despite sharing the same nationality, both groups encounter difficulties in adjusting to a familiar yet distinct cultural and linguistic environment. The major findings of this research hold both theoretical significance and practical implications.

Acculturative Stress

Hong Kong drifters consistently report higher levels of stress, particularly highlighting changes in their social circles, experiences of discrimination, and language barriers. Integrating into the local community and developing a sense of belonging are also major challenges for them. On the other hand, northward drifters experience lower overall stress, with their primary concern being academic and work-related pressure. Their higher proficiency in Mandarin contributes to their relatively lower stress levels. To address the challenges faced by Hong Kong drifters, local societies should offer intensive Cantonese language courses, organize cross-cultural social events, establish peer mentoring programs, and provide support services to alleviate perceived discrimination and integration difficulties. For northward drifters, it is recommended to enhance academic advising, offer tutoring support, and provide career counseling.

Stress-Coping Strategies

Both groups prioritize integration but differ in their approaches to separation and assimilation. Hong Kong drifters tend to prioritize separation in order to maintain their mainland Chinese identity, while northward drifters are more inclined to assimilate. Marginalization is least common among both groups. Policymakers and community leaders should prioritize initiatives such as language acquisition, cultural orientation, community engagement, mentorship, employment support, housing assistance, and social integration programs to enhance assimilation and integration.

Sociocultural and Psychological Adaptation

Hong Kong drifters experience higher levels of acculturative stress but demonstrate higher sociocultural and psychological adaptability, showcasing resilience and a strong sense of direction. Policymakers can leverage this adaptability by providing resources and support programs. In contrast, northward drifters, despite experiencing lower acculturative stress, encounter challenges in sociocultural and psychological adaptation. Policymakers should offer targeted assistance to address their primary stressor: work and academic pressure.

Stress-Coping-Adaptation Scale (SCAS)

This comprehensive self-report inventory consists of 36 items and is designed to assess acculturative stress, coping strategies, and cross-cultural adaptation among Hong Kong and northward drifters in the GBA.

Integration of Cross-Cultural and Co-Cultural Theories

Drifters represent acculturative and co-cultural groups, possessing an identity within a larger, privileged cultural group. This study integrates acculturation strategies from cross-cultural psychology with co-cultural strategies from co-cultural communication, making a theoretical contribution to the field.

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

The findings of this research lay a strong foundation for further exploration and practical implementation.

Further Research Directions

1. *Longitudinal Studies*: Conducting longitudinal studies would allow us to track the changes in acculturative stress, coping strategies, and adaptation over time.
2. *Comparative Analysis*: Expanding the scope of the research to include other regions within China or different groups of internal migrants would enable us to make comparative analyses.
3. *Impact of Specific Interventions*: Evaluating the effectiveness of targeted interventions, such as language programs, peer mentoring, and cross-cultural events, would provide empirical evidence on the best practices for supporting drifters.
4. *Psychological and Sociocultural Factors*: Delving deeper into the psychological and sociocultural factors that contribute to resilience and successful adaptation would allow us to develop more personalized support strategies.

Proposed Course of Action

1. *Tailored Support Programs*: Develop and implement programs that address the specific needs of Hong Kong drifters and northward drifters, focusing on language acquisition, cultural orientation, counseling, and social integration.
2. *Community Engagement*: Foster cross-cultural events, mentoring programs, and support services to reduce discrimination and promote inclusion, creating connections between drifters and the local community.
3. *Partnerships and Collaborations*: Encourage collaboration among government bodies, educational institutions, NGOs, and local communities to effectively implement and monitor support programs.

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 research project aims to understand the acculturative stress and coping strategies of "Hong Kong drifters" (mainland Chinese in Hong Kong) and "northward drifters" (Hongkongers in mainland China) in the Greater Bay Area.

Findings reveal significant differences in stress levels and coping mechanisms between the two groups. Hong Kong drifters experience higher stress due to changes in social circles, perceived discrimination, and language barriers. Northward drifters face lower overall stress, except when it comes to academic or work-related pressures. Both groups prioritize integration, but Hong Kong drifters emphasize separation while northward drifters lean towards assimilation. Socioculturally, Hong Kong drifters adapt better to local accommodation, regulations, and relationships, while northward drifters excel in language acquisition, social norms, and local activity participation. Psychologically, despite higher stress levels, Hong Kong drifters exhibit greater adaptability, characterized by personal growth, confidence, and a stronger sense of purpose.

These findings highlight the need for tailored interventions and social support to address the specific needs of each group. Language training, community-building, and intercultural understanding initiatives can facilitate successful integration.

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)						
2024				SONG Zhaoxun*, WU Jing, CHAN Oi Yan	Acculturative Stress and Coping Strategies: A Comparative Study of Hong Kong Drifters and Northward Drifters in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area <i>Psychology</i> , 2024, 15, 696-719	N/A	Yes (Annex I)	yes	Yes https://research.hdb.hsu.edu.hk/view/publication/202400031
2024				SONG Zhaoxun	WeChat as Social Connection Enabler for Hong Kong Drifters during the Pandemic: A Positive Technology Perspective. <i>Advances in Journalism and Communication</i> , 12, 231-245.	N/A	Yes (Annex II)	yes	Yes https://research.hdb.hsu.edu.hk/view/publication/202400030
2023				Song, Z.,* Wu, J., Hu, H., Li, X.	Education Transformation for Hong Kong Cross-Boundary Students During the Pandemic	N/A	Yes (Annex III)	yes	Yes https://research.hdb.hsu.edu.hk/view/publication/202300053

					and Beyond: A Planned Behaviour Perspective. <i>Educational Communications and Technology Yearbook</i> . Springer, Singapore.				
	2021			宋昭勳	《约翰·贝瑞跨文化涵化理论与研究框架》入选《跨文化传播精选读本》，中国人民大学出版社出版	Sept 2021	No, submitted in the previous progress report	yes	Yes https://researchdb.hku.edu.hk/view/publication/202100386
			2024	宋昭勳*, 吴静, 曲竹节	《港漂跨文化適應研究》香港城大出版社(待定)	N/A	Yes (Annex IV)	yes	Yes

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)

Month / Year / Place	Title	Conference Name	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)
May 2023, Tokyo Garden Terrace Kioicho Conference Center	<i>Acculturation Strategies and Co-cultural Communication Practices of Hong Kong Drifters</i>	The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies (ACCS2023)	N/A	yes (Annex V)	yes	Yes
June 2023, Tung Wah College, HKSAR, China	<i>WeChat as social connection enabler for Hong Kong drifters during the pandemic: A positive technology perspective</i>	The Positive Technology (PT) International Conference 2023,	N/A	yes (Annex VI)	yes	Yes
June 2022, University of Hong Kong	<i>Education transformation for Hong Kong Cross-boundary Students During the Pandemic and Beyond</i>	HKAECT 2022 International Conference	Sept 2021	No, submitted in the previous progress report	yes	yes

Dec. 2021, Calgary, Canada	<i>One Country, Two Cultures: How Berry's Model of Acculturation is Developed to Study the Stress and Coping Strategies of Mainlanders in Hong Kong</i>	<i>International Conference on Management, Economics & Social Science (online)</i>	Sept 2021	Yes (Annex VII)	yes	yes
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10. Whether Research Experience And New Knowledge Has Been Transferred / Has Contributed To Teaching And Learning
(Please elaborate)

To ensure that our research findings effectively contribute to teaching and learning, we implemented several strategies:

1. *Focus Group Discussions*: We organized multiple rounds of focus group discussions with mainland MA students. These sessions provided a platform for students to share their perspectives on cross-cultural adaptation challenges and strategies. Additionally, they offered social support and acculturation advice, enriching the collective understanding of these issues.

2. *Case Study in Courses*: We integrated the research project as a comprehensive case study of Berry's model of acculturation within our cross-cultural and intercultural communication courses. This approach facilitated in-depth class discussions on acculturative stress and coping strategies, specifically focusing on mainlanders in Hong Kong and Hongkongers in mainland China. As a result, the research findings significantly informed and enhanced the teaching of cross-cultural adaptation and communication.

3. *Publications and Dissemination*: (Annex VIII)

- Research Newsletter: The project was featured in the research-sharing section of the HSUHK Research Newsletter's December 2021 issue.

- University House Organ: Preliminary findings and the potential impacts of the project, titled *Drifters in the GBA: Their Acculturative Stress, Coping Strategies, and Social Support*, were published in the January 2023 issue of the university house organ, *Erudition*.

- In-depth Report: A detailed report about the research team and the findings was published in the *Hong Kong Social Science Research Frontier*, further disseminating our work to a broader academic audience.

Through these methods, our research not only advanced academic knowledge but also directly enhanced the educational experience, providing students with practical insights and real-world applications of theoretical models.

11. Student(s) Trained

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

Name	Degree Registered for	Date of Registration	Date of Thesis Submission / Graduation
N/A			

12. Other Impact

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

The research project has yielded several significant impacts beyond its immediate academic contributions:

1. *Cross-Border Collaboration*: The project facilitated cross-border collaboration between scholars stationed in major Greater Bay Area (GBA) cities, including Hong Kong, Macao, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen. This collaboration paves the way for future research endeavors, such as a longitudinal study on the communication and adaptation processes of these drifters.

2. *Future News Release*: We plan to work with the Communication & Public Affairs Office (CPAO) at our university to hold a news release of the findings to the public in the near future. This initiative aims to disseminate our research outcomes widely and engage the broader community.

3. *Stakeholder Engagement*: Various organizations, including drifter support groups and government authorities, stand to benefit from our research.

13. 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	3	4	2 (including one under preparation)		Type	No.

14. 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