

RGC Ref. No.: UGC/FDS25/H02/15 <p>(please insert ref. above)</p>
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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><u>six</u></b> months of the approved project completion date.</li> <li>2. Completion report: within <b><u>12</u></b> months of the approved project completion date.</li> </ol>
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**Part A: The Project and Investigator(s)**

**1. Project Title**

Transnational migration and reconstructing "home": the African diaspora in Hong Kong

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

Research Team	Name / Post	Unit / Department / Institution
Principal Investigator	Dr. SHUM Chun-tat/ Teaching Fellow	School of General Education and Languages, Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong
Co-Investigator(s)	NA	NA
Others		

**3. Project Duration**

	Original	Revised	Date of RGC / Institution Approval <i>(must be quoted)</i>
Project Start Date	1 January 2016	NA	NA
Project Completion Date	31 December 2017	30 June 2018	10 October 2017

Duration ( <i>in month</i> )	24 months	30 months	10 October 2017
Deadline for Submission of Completion Report	31 December 2018	30 June 2019	10 October 2017

## **Part B: The Final Report**

### **5. Project Objectives**

#### 5.1 Objectives as per original application

1. It intends to provide a detailed analysis of African migration in Hong Kong by examining the aspirations, practices and embodied experience of both regular and irregular migration. The diaspora is often treated as a homogenous group. This research aims to explore the diversifying African diaspora – regular and irregular migrants – in Hong Kong. It intends to uncover the different migratory methods, routes and embodied experiences of cross-border movements;
2. It aims to enhance our understanding of Africans, one of the invisible and stigmatized migrant groups in Hong Kong, by providing ethnographically rich data and analysis of their everyday interactions within the group and with other people both locally and abroad. It demonstrates the social dynamics of the African diaspora, which is an understudied area in migration studies in Hong Kong. It also offers a better understanding of different conceptualizations and meanings of home and settlement among African migrants;
3. It intends to contribute to the academic debate of migration and transnationalism by demonstrating how the African migrants actively build up and utilize various social networks in local and transnational spaces for survival and home-seeking. It makes an important contribution to the literature and teaching on migration, transnationalism and home-making in Hong Kong context and provides a new perspective for understanding African-Hong Kong relations; and
4. It aims to transfer the research experiences and new knowledge and findings into teaching Hong Kong society at the Principal Investigator's institute. It will allow students to acquire the most updated migration issues in Hong Kong and will widen students' global perspective.

#### 5.2 Revised objectives

NA

Date of approval from the RGC:

Reasons for the change:

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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)*

All research objectives in the original applications have been successfully achieved. Throughout the research period, the PI and Research Assistant conducted literature review, interviews, questionnaire survey, participant observations, and data analysis.

Through interviews and questionnaire surveys, we identified the reasons, routes, methods and embodied experience of cross-border movements among African migrants (regular and irregular) in Hong Kong. According to the Hong Kong Immigration Department, there were 4,670 African migrants (both regular and irregular) residing in the city in 2016. They come from various countries in Africa such as Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, Angola, Egypt, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Kenya. This project mainly focused on the Black Africans who are considered to be the most marginalized ethnic minority group in Hong Kong. The Africans all come to Hong Kong for either personal safety or economic reason. They travelled either directly to Hong Kong from Africa or indirectly to Hong Kong via different places such as Doha, Bangkok, China (Guangzhou, Shenzhen) (Objective 1).

The research team also conducted in-depth interviews and participant observation of African migrants in Hong Kong in order to understand about their everyday life difficulties, how they cope with the challenges, and how they conceptualize home and settlement. The ethnographic data was analyzed, presented and discussed in two international conferences (Objective 2).

Conceptual and theoretical discussions relevant to new research findings and policy implications for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong have been made accordingly through international conference presentations and the peer-reviewed journal articles. The PI proposed the concepts of “street-level multiculturalism”, “integrative exchanges”, and “culinary diaspora spaces”, which contributed to the academic debate of migration, integration, identity, diaspora and transnationalism (Objective 3).

The PI also transferred the research experiences and new knowledge and findings of this project to teaching courses related to globalization and development at the Principal Investigator’s University (Objective 4). The PI also invited two Africans to give a talk on African economic development and Sino-African relations in the classes. After the talk, the students were required to complete and submit a short individual assessment task regarding the issue of African migration and development.

### 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. to provide a detailed analysis of African migration in Hong Kong	✓	100%
2. to provide ethnographically rich	✓	100%

data and analysis of their everyday interactions within the group and with other people both locally and abroad		
3. to contribute to the academic debate of migration and transnationalism	✓	100%
4. to transfer the research experiences and new knowledge and findings into teaching Hong Kong society at the Principal Investigator's institute	✓	100%

## 6. Research Outcome

### 6.1 Major findings and research outcome

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

#### 1. African migrant journeys to Hong Kong

The irregular migrants came to Hong Kong to seek personal safety and security because their lives were under threat in their home countries. Most irregular migrants made the decision to escape in a very short time because they felt that their lives were in danger. Sometimes the migrant himself/herself decides to leave, or other times there may be a friend, a colleague, or a pastor that encourages and helps them to leave. These migrants chose Hong Kong because it was very difficult to get visas for the USA or European countries (or they were rejected by them) and Hong Kong was visa-free for migrants from many African countries. Therefore, they could start the migration journey in a very short time. In terms of the migration patterns and routes to Hong Kong, the routes depended on the geographical location of their home countries, the financial circumstances of the individual migrant and the availability of a flight route. Some might first have escaped to a neighboring country in Africa. Then they took a transit flight to Doha or Bangkok and went to Guangzhou, Shenzhen or directly to Hong Kong. In contrast, the journey of regular migrants is less complicated and most of them do not experience much difficulty. This is because most of them are looking for new business and employment opportunities in Hong Kong. They choose Hong Kong voluntarily and if they can renew the visa continuously, they will probably obtain permanent residency. Some of the regular migrants already have experience of living in other countries (including China, Europe, etc.) before settling in Hong Kong. This research argued that the practice of migration is not an empty act, but is highly materialized and emotional undertaking. "Migrant journeys" as a concept reveals migrants' ongoing security-seeking practice (human and/or economic security) that highlights complex migration and integration dynamics through their relationships with host-land and homeland across time. This dynamic then determines their conceptualization of home in the host society (paper 4, Part C).

#### 2. The African diaspora and reconstructing "home"

The Africans studied in this research are a group of first-generation immigrants in Hong Kong. They are the pioneer African diaspora. Their integration process is challenging because of negative stereotypes and discrimination prevail. While attempting to adapt to local life in the context of marginalization, the African diaspora in this project remained emotionally attached to their families and friends in Africa. They organized themselves in different African associations at both continent and country levels to unify the members and provide them with financial and emotional support. By

examining the everyday life practice of Africans, this project proposed the concepts of “integrative exchanges” (paper 2, Part C) and “culinary diaspora space” (paper 3, Part C) to explore how the Africans negotiate an identity and integration by performing African drum music and food cultures in Hong Kong respectively. This project argued that integration is a process requiring willingness to engage and change by the local population and the migrants. To engage both the migrants and the host population, an integrative tool is required. The integrative tool in this project refers to African music and food cultures which can generate a valued outcome that both migrants and the host population appreciate. While the Africans know and respect their own identity in order to let Hong Kong Chinese know and respect the real “them” even when they represent a minority, the Africans are also open to receive information about the Hong Kong Chinese community, learning to respect the local values and practices. This is what the PI called “street-level multiculturalism” which is about how multiculturalism is managed at street-level by the migrants and local population (paper 1, Part C). Regarding their identity, almost all of them identified themselves as “African in Hong Kong”. The Africans in Hong Kong perceive the idea of home as the place where they are living, and at the same time it refers to the place where they originally come from. Regardless of their status (regular or irregular), they all considered both Hong Kong and their country of origin in Africa their “home”. Some of them ranked Africa as their first home and Hong Kong as their second home, whereas others ranked these in the opposite way. Nevertheless, these interpretations among the Africans highlight their cultural struggle and the dichotomous relationships between reality and imagination in the idea of “home”. They are either making a living or seeking protection in Hong Kong (as a reality) but at the same time they are emotionally attached to Africa (as an imagined community) through various channels (paper 3, Part C).

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

In this completed project, the PI argue that African migrants are considered street-level culturalists who use their own traditional music and food culture to establish meaningful cultural contact zones in different areas of Hong Kong where they directly interact with the local population. The establishment of cultural contact zones, to a certain extent, can facilitate the Africans to achieve full integration into the Hong Kong community. The findings from this completed project regarding the practices of diasporic music and food cultures among the African migrants in Hong Kong raised two important follow-up questions for a new proposed research project: under what conditions the migrants are willing and able to use diasporic culture to create cross-cultural contacts, and how diasporic cultures are practiced similarly or differently by different migrant groups to establish, maintain or dissolve social boundaries in the host society.

Hong Kong is an immigrant society. Besides Africans, South Asians (Indian, Nepalese, and Pakistani) are the dominant ethnic minority group in Hong Kong. While a large proportion of the literature on South Asians in Hong Kong has focused on their work and employment, education, language, minority rights, gender politics, and access to health services, few studies have been conducted on their traditional cultural experiences in this “multicultural” society. The findings of this completed project can be further developed by examining the diasporic cultural life (music and food cultures) of South Asians in Hong Kong. By exploring the accounts of two diasporic communities in Hong Kong - South Asian who is a long-settled group, and African who is a relatively “new” community, the PI is planning to write a book monograph on “Minority culture in Hong Kong: diaspora, identity, and multiculturalism”. This proposed monograph will use the experiences of both South Asian and African migrants to examine the minorities’ own sense of subjecthood through expressive cultural practices in the context of multiculturalism. The PI submitted a new RGC Faculty Development Scheme Funding Application for 2019/20 for this proposed research project and is awaiting the announcement of results.

## 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 project examined the transnational migration and home-making practices of African migrants in Hong Kong. Specifically, it explored how the process of migration is initiated and actualized, and how the African migrants address other people in the host society. This research topic is important to Hong Kong society for three reasons. Firstly, whereas a fair amount of the literature about migrants in Hong Kong has focused on South and Southeast Asian migrants, few studies have been conducted on African migrants. Secondly, the existing studies on migrants in Hong Kong are mostly applied research, this project offered an instructive perspective for examining how the African migrants, despite their various national origins, create a new “African community” in the context of marginalization and exclusion as it exists in Hong Kong. Lastly, African migration to Hong Kong represents an important dimension in the flourishing relationship between Africa and Hong Kong. By studying the everyday life interactions and exchanges between Africans and Hong Kong Chinese, this project used a “bottom-up-approach” to examine ground-level African-Hong Kong relations. It also provided the Hong Kong government with policy implications as to how to strengthen its external relations with Africa in social, economic and cultural fields.

**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)						
2018				Terence C.T. Shum*	Street-level multiculturalism : cultural integration and identity politics of African migrants in Hong Kong  <i>Cultural Diversity in China, 3(1): 37-57</i>	2016	No	Yes	Yes
2018 (online)  2019 (in volume)				Terence C.T. Shum*	Conceptualising Integrative Exchanges: Marginalisation, Music and Identity of African Diaspora in Hong Kong  <i>Migration and Development, 8(1):37-54</i>	2017	No	Yes	Yes
		✓		Terence C.T. Shum*	Culinary diaspora space: food, identity and social integration among African diaspora in Hong Kong  <i>Asian and Pacific Migration Journal</i>	No	Yes	Yes (no acknowledgement in the attached manuscript which is now under review. There will be acknowledgement statement if the paper accepted)	No
			✓	Terence C.T. Shum*	Researching migrant journeys: aspirations, ability and embodiment among the	NA	No	NA	NA



					African diaspora in Hong Kong				
					<i>Journal of International Migration and Integration</i>				

**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 (indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)</b>	<b>Attached to this Report (Yes or No)</b>	<b>Acknowledged the Support of RGC (Yes or No)</b>	<b>Accessible from the institutional repository (Yes or No)</b>
26-28 November 2016, Doha, Qatar	Conceptualising integrative exchanges: marginalisation, music and identity of African migrants in Hong Kong	International Conference: Migration in a turbulent world ISA Research Committee on the Sociology of Migration RC31	2016	No	Yes	No
13-14 July 2017 Brussels, Belgium	Exploring the effectiveness of ethnic minority policies: a study of African migrants in Hong Kong	APPAM International Conference Public Policy and Governance Beyond Borders	2017	No	Yes	No

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

*(Please elaborate)*

In the academic year of 2018-19, the PI taught two courses that are related to globalization and development at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The PI successfully transferred research experience and new findings of African migration to teaching a lecture topic regarding African migration, development and its relations with China. The PI also invited two Africans to give a talk on African economic development and Sino-African relations in the classes. After the talk, the students were required to complete and submit a short individual assessment task regarding the issues of African migration and development.

**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>
NA			

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

NA

**13. Public Access Of Completion Report***(Please specify the information, if any, that cannot be provided for public access and give the reasons.)*

<b>Information that Cannot Be Provided for Public Access</b>	<b>Reasons</b>
NA	

**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/FDS25/H02/15

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. SHUM Chun-tat

**Project Title:** Transnational migration and reconstructing “home”: the African diaspora in Hong Kong

**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 (published)  1 (under review)  1 (under preparation)	2	0	0	0