

Research Assessment Exercise 2020
Impact Case Study

University: The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Unit of Assessment (UoA): 22 Business

Title of case study: Improving the Prospects of Young People in Hong Kong, Macau and China through Career Guidance and Education

(1) Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)

Scientific research of this project tested the impact of various variables such as emotional intelligence and career interests on career outcomes using the assessment instruments developed for Chinese people. Hong Kong and Macau Government and investors in China set up facilities to help young citizens (mostly aged 19-24). From October 2013 to Sept 2019, thousands of clients have used and benefited from the instruments in making their decisions related to further studies and career. This illustrates the Reach of impact. For Depth of impact, we have evidence from cases of the instruments and related feedback has deeply affected their future study and career plan.

(2) Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)

During the period of 2000 to 2017 (see the selected publications listed in Section 3), Professor Chi-Sum Wong and his research team (mainly two of his former doctoral students at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Professor Kelly Peng of Hong Kong Shue Yan University and Professor Yina Mao of Nanjing University) have conducted academic research that leads to this project. Research conducted shows several important concepts including career interests, career maturity, personality, and emotional intelligence are related to job and career outcomes such as satisfaction and performance. These relationships hold for Chinese respondents. In order to conduct these studies, various assessment instruments that are suitable for Chinese respondents are developed and validated. Findings of the research show that the instruments developed can be applied to provide guidance for Chinese respondents in their career choice and development.

This line of research have resulted in good publications in various international and Chinese journals (SSCI or CSSCI). In short, these academic research findings show that for Chinese respondents, career interests (e.g., Law, Wong & Leong, 2001; Wong & Wong, 2006), career maturity (e.g., Liu, Peng, Mao & Wong, 2017), personality (e.g., Law, Wong & Song, 2004) and emotional intelligence (e.g., Wong & Law, 2002; Wong, Wong & Law, 2007) are related to job outcomes, and the strength of relationships depends on job nature. Through these research, the research team have developed scientifically rigorous psychological instruments on career interests, career maturity, emotional intelligence, and personality that are suitable for Chinese respondents. Reports on this line of research have been accepted by reputable academic journals.

Due to our research findings reported in academic journals, some Labour Officers of the Hong Kong Government became aware of our findings and measurement scales. When the Hong Kong Government planned to set up Two career counselling centers specifically for young citizens (aged 15 to 24) in 2007, they asked for permission from Professor Chi-Sum Wong to include these instruments in an assessment kit. They also asked Professor Wong to train the Labour Officers and social workers who would be responsible in providing counselling and guidance services to use the assessment instruments.

After visiting the career counselling centers in Hong Kong, some Macau officials also adopt the scales and invite Professor Chi-Sum Wong to train their officers. After the training, the

assessment instruments are also adopted in the counselling centers for their young citizens.

Finally, some investors in China Mainland learnt about the research findings of this project in 2015. They asked for the permission from Professor Chi-Sum Wong for using the assessment scales to establish a company to provide consulting services in human resource practices. In exchange of the permission, they promise Professor Wong that once the online platform is developed, undergraduate students in China Mainland can use the assessment instruments without charges. In 2017, an independent company (Dephi Company) with initial investment of 10 million RMB is set up and the online system has been in use. Thousands of undergraduate students have already used the scales and receive reports from the online system of the company.

(3) References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- i. Law, K.S., Wong, C.S., & Leong, F. (2001). The cultural validity of Holland's model and its implications for human resource management: the case of Hong Kong. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 12(3): p.484-496.
- ii. Law, K.S., Wong, C.S., & Song, L.J. (2004). The Construct and Criterion Validity of Emotional Intelligence and Its Potential Utility for Management Studies. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89(3): 483-496.
- iii. Liu, Y., Peng, K.Z., Mao, Y., & Wong, C.S. (2017). Different forms of relationships between vocational interests and career maturity in Chinese context. *Journal of Career Development*, 44(5), 425-439.
- iv. Wong, C.S., & Law, K.S. (2002). The effects of leader and follower emotional intelligence on performance and attitude: An exploratory study. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 13, 243-274.
- v. Wong, C.S., & Wong, P.M. (2006). Validation of Wong's Career Interest Assessment Questionnaire and Holland's Revised Hexagonal Model of Occupational Interests in Four Chinese Societies. *Journal of Career Development*, 32(4): 378-393.
- vi. Wong, C.S., Wong, P.M., & Law, K.S. (2007). Evidence of the practical utility of Wong's emotional intelligence scale in Hong Kong and mainland China. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 24(1), 43-60.

(4) Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

I. Impact Originated from Research Reports.

In Exhibit 5.1, the Labor Officer of the Hong Kong Government initially contacted Professor Wong mentioned that "From my reading of your published papers ... we want to use your scales." In Exhibit 5.2, the General Manager of Delphi Company acknowledges, "After the two founders read your research papers..., Delphi company was established in 2017."

II. Reach of the Impact

First, the Hong Kong Government set up a permanent unit (Youth Employment Start; Y.E.S.) to provide free career counselling and guidance services to young people. The two centers

have eight labor officers, ten social workers, ten supporting staff and many part-time young helpers. Exhibit 5.3 shows the front page of the website of Y.E.S., stating, “Professor WONG Chi-sum of the Chinese University of Hong Kong has developed a comprehensive career assessment kit for Y.E.S.”

Young people (aged 15-29) can register as members of Y.E.S. and they must complete our assessment instruments before receiving other services. Numbers of registered members of Y.E.S during the assessment period (2013-2019) are 74,850 (2013), 74,288 (2014), 73,394 (2015), 72,661 (2016), and 72,878 (2017) (Hong Kong Yearbook, 2008 to 2018). Although the figures for 2018 and 2019 are not available yet, they should be similar to previous years as the figures are quite stable.

The targeted clients of Y.E.S. are young citizens with difficulties in their employment. While it is difficult to have an exact number of potential clients, it is possible to have a reasonable estimate. For example, in 2016, there are 347,130 aged 15-24 in the labour force (Hong Kong 2016 Population By-Census) and the unemployment rate of this group is about 25%. Thus, the number of major targets for Y.E.S. should be about 86,780. The registered members at that year is 72,661. It means the majority of the target clients are reached.

Second, the Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme (YPTP) adopt our instruments since 2010. For the assessment period (i.e., 2013 to 2019), about 100 counsellors are refreshed or newly trained every year. The YPTP provides pre-employment training for those who are less academic-oriented. Number of young people enrolled in YPTP program are: 8,095(2013), 7,753(2014), 6,741(2015), 6,165(2016), and 5,720(2017) (Labour Department Annual Reports 2013 to 2018). Although the numbers for 2018 and 2019 are not available, they should be about 5,000. About 70% of the counsellors actually used our instruments. Thus, our assessment instruments are able to reach and help 70% of the YPTP participants. Exhibit 5.4 is a feedback survey for a recent refresher session in 2019.

Third, the Macau government offered Professor Wong and his research team a grant to validate and install similar assessment kit in all job centers and secondary schools. The number of secondary school students in Macau are 32,045(2013), 30,088(2014), 28,745(2015), 27,473(2016), 26,608(2017) and 26,022 (2018). All the final year secondary students (about 1/6 of all secondary students) use the assessment instruments every year to help them plan for their further study or career. Thus, we reached more than 28,000 last year secondary Macau students from 2013 to 2018. Exhibit 5.5 shows the grants provided by the Macau Government and the press releases about the adoption of the assessment instruments.

Fourth, Exhibit 5.2 is the letter from their General Manager of Delphi Company to Professor Wong in September 2019. In the letter, the General Manager states the following. They invested 10 million RMB in 2017 to set up the Company concentrating on providing Human Resource Services to other companies, and free online access to senior high school and undergraduate student in China Mainland. In 2019, the company hires 20 employees. It now serves four large organizations. Thousands of employees and students have already used the assessment instruments.

II. Depth of the Impact

Usefulness to counsellors and clients indicate the depth of the impact. Feedback from counsellors in Exhibit 5.4 shows the majority of them have used the assessment instruments and found the instruments useful to their counselling work. Counsellors of Y.E.S. continue to use the instruments, indicating their usefulness.

Exhibit 5.6 reports typical cases in Y.E.S. during the period of 2013 to 2019. They indicate the helpfulness of the services clients received. For example, the third client reported that he should not believe that he was not a sociable person. He got out of his confusion and was more confident about his career development.

Similarly, Exhibit 5.7 contains information of Y.E.S. cases that the Hong Kong Government has posted in 2017 on the Website of the Civil Servant Bureau of the Hong Kong Government (http://www.csb.gov.hk/print/tc_chi/feature/1612.html). One of the cases reported is that an undergraduate student with major in business (a very prestigious discipline in Hong Kong) changes her major to music after completing the assessment kit and getting advices from the career counsellors. This is a drastic change but she and her family are happy to the change. In Exhibit 5.2, the General Manager of Delphi Company also mentioned cases of impact on their high school and undergraduate students in their plan and choices.

In order to assess the perceived usefulness of the assessment instruments, we conducted a simple survey for clients of Y.E.S. on January 2019. For student clients, 86% agreed or strongly agreed that the assessment instruments are useful to them. For job seeker respondents, 66% agreed or strongly agreed that the instruments and related feedback to them are useful in helping their career choice and decision. Exhibit 5.8 reports some more details of this survey.

(5) Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- Exhibit 5.1 Email from Labour Department
- Exhibit 5.2 Letter from Delphi Company
- Exhibit 5.3 The Website of Y.E.S. (<https://www.e-start.gov.hk/>): Personalised Services for Youth: Career Assessment Kit
- Exhibit 5.4. Feedback from a Training Session for Counsellors on March 8, 2019
- Exhibit 5.5 Macau Government Grants and Press Releases:
Peng, K.Z., Wong, C.S., Wong, P.M., & Iun, S.J. (August to December, 2009) Validation Study for the Self-Assessment Kit of Career Counseling for the Youth of Macau (Funded by the Education and Youth Bureau, Macau Special Administrative Region Government). Amount Funded: Macau Dollars 160,000.
<教局推職業潛能評估工具> 澳門日報 (2011-12-28)
- Exhibit 5.6 Cases of Discussion in Y.E.S. Training between 2013 to 2019
- Exhibit 5.7: *Impact on an Undergraduate Student Changing Major*, Website of the Civil Servant Bureau of the Hong Kong Government (http://www.csb.gov.hk/print/tc_chi/feature/1612.html).
- Exhibit 5.8 Survey on the Y.E.S. Clients in 2019