Research Assessment Exercise 2020
Impact Overview Statement

University: The Education University of Hong Kong

Unit of Assessment (UoA): 24 Psychology

Total number of eligible staff of the university in the UoA: 16

(1) Context

Research in this UoA is undertaken by researchers with recognised expertise in educational and developmental psychology, clinical and health psychology, cognition and neuroscience, and social and cultural psychology. With our research strengths in health/community psychology and education and addressing issues of importance with community relevance, our research in this UoA is structured around **2 major research groups**: **(a) psychosocial health/well-being, (b) language/literacy development**. Staff work across research groups and research centre (Centre for Psychosocial Health, CPH) within and beyond the Faculty of Education and Human Development, allowing them to have dynamic interaction and collaboration across groups and disciplines. Our **main non-academic beneficiaries** are: **(a) healthcare professionals and practitioners**; **(b) patients and caregivers; (c) clinical and healthy populations and their parents; (d) educators and counsellors; (e) schools, community organisations, and social services sector, and (e) the general public**. In 2017, we established the Psychological Assessment and Clinical Research Unit (PACRU) to serve as a platform to engage with social workers, educators, and parents. In collaboration with hospitals, schools, and community organisations, impacts were seen from promoting mental health and well-being, developing assessment / training materials and intervention programmes, advancing clinical practices, to changing school policy, innovating curriculum and pedagogy, and improving assessment.

(2) Approach to impact

We took a proactive approach to maximise the reach of our research to the healthcare and education sectors as well as the community by supporting our staff, individually and on behalf of research groups, to establish and maintain collaborations with non-academic organisations and potential partners, and to disseminate research findings through various means. We sought to create impact by the following three-legged approach:

(a) conducting research of high potential for impact: For instance,

- findings generated by the language/ literacy development group on building blocks of Chinese and English literacy are able to inform school curriculum, teaching approaches and professional development locally and regionally;
- we conducted studies to investigate the discriminatory experiences and unmet needs of social minorities, in order to advocate for the distribution of additional government and community resources to these stigmatized individuals.

(b) partnering with influential stakeholders in the community: Our researchers collaborated with medical and mental health professionals (Lau, Wong W), schools (Lau, Yeung), clinical psychologists of the Hong Kong's Department of Health (DH; Wong S), curriculum officer of the Hong Kong's Education Bureau (EDB; Mok), community organisations (Chan, Tso), and special schools (Chan), to maximize impact by:

- **Engaging with government and non-governmental agencies:** Researchers served in influential roles in non-academic change-focused bodies or organisations to provide advice based on their research expertise, such as Mok provided recommendation to **EDB** on assessment literacy; Lau advised **Food and Health Bureau** on mental health review, and Yeung provided advice to **schools** on curriculum. Researchers also served as **advisor/consultant in: commercial companies** (e.g., Wang Z advised iBrain Baby on early childhood education), **charitable foundation** (Hou advised Chi Heng Foundation on education and psychosocial support programmes), and **professional or community organisations focused on social advocacy** (e.g., Chan advised MINDSET College on providing recovery-oriented training to enhance the well-being of people in recovery and their families; Tso ran intervention programmes to enhance literacy in children with dyslexia for the Social Services Unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong; Ho disseminated findings to 500 organisations to promote happy work culture among employees through his connection with HK.WeCARE of Social Enterprises and the Hong Kong Social Workers' General Union). The close links we built with beneficiaries and stakeholders enabled us to understand their needs and formed partnership with them in new projects to facilitate greater impact (Mok).
- **Providing professional or clinical assessment tools:** Researchers developed or validated tools, such as a dyslexia screening tool for use by clinicians and psychologists (Wong S, collaborated with the clinical psychologists in DH), multiple pain measures adopted by 8 clinics in Hong Kong (Wong W, in collaboration with medical doctor), and the validated Chinese version of the Sleep Condition Indicator for individual clinical case work and mass health surveillance in institutions (Lau, adopted by 3 universities and 2 government departments).

- **Producing training packages:** Staff produced research-informed training manual on second language teaching for teachers and parents (Yeung, 500 teachers and parents), and compiled a sleep health psychoeducational package and sleep health assessment kit for mental health practitioners (Lau, 100 psychologists/counsellors).

(c) Public engagement and education:

- **Coverage by mass media:** Research findings on social issues were disseminated and reported by a wide range of media outlets, including newspapers and magazines, radio and television programmes, and social media platforms (e.g. Facebook and websites), locally and internationally (*CNN, AsiaTimes, German Radio ARD*).
- **Hosting conferences, seminars, talks, and training workshops**: This UoA and researchers organized talks/workshops for over 200 healthcare practitioners (Chan, Hou, Wong W), over 300 officers and family and psychologists of the Hong Kong Police and of the Correctional Services on sleep health (Lau), over 1000 educators (Conference on Positive Psychology and Education, PACRU members, Lin, Yeung), over 500 parents (PACRU members, Lin, Yeung) and over 1000 students (CPH members , PACRU members, Lin, Yeung)..

(3) Strategy and plans

To meet the needs of the wider non-academic community, the research committee and management committee of this UoA developed impact-oriented strategies and support to foster an impact culture, enhance impact activities that build on research excellence of our researchers. **Strategies** included **(a) Implemented and launched initiatives to support impact activities**: (i) We financed visits of 40 international scholars for developing collaboration that promoted research impacts. (ii) We organised 15 skill-training workshops for over 250 educators and parents. We also hosted conference for stakeholders in educational settings (313 participants, most are school teachers and parents) and public talks for the general public. (iii) We appointed 13 specialists as Honorary/Visiting Professors to mentor and advise staff for securing impact-related funds to ensure impact component with dissemination plans are included at the proposal development stage. **(b) Enhanced infrastructure for impact-related activities and raised its profile for public engagement**: We enhanced the 'state of the art' facilities by upgrading our laboratory (e.g. new eye tracking system, cognitive development lab) with funding support from the University and Faculty, and strategic investment of this UoA (amounted to HK$2.085m). With support recently received from the Faculty and this UoA, we will purchase a new Electroencephalography (EEG) and Polysomnography (PSG). Our infrastructure will enhance visibility of our research and facilitated wider public engagement. **(c) Supported research groups with established impact relationships and activities**: We approved funding to support our 2 research groups to develop impact-related activities. They strengthened existing networks to engage non-academic beneficiaries and formed new regional/global networks and partnerships with institutions in China, UK, and Germany. Notable deliverables are evident: Yeung developed a patentable product of literacy play kit for educators and parents (received a Silver medal at the 2019 International Invention Innovation Competition), Wang Z developed a website/app demo to educate parents and teachers on theory of mind's development. Lau developed "sleep health psychoeducational package" and "sleep health assessment kit" for psychologists and counsellors. **Plans:** We will continue to foster a research impact culture and allocate resources to support staff to maximise their research impact at both local and global levels. We will provide seed funding to support impact projects or initiatives with funding requirements set to consider potential societal benefits, engagement of stakeholders, dissemination plans, and ways to track impact evidence and measure impact.

(4) Relationship to case studies

In line with the approach of this UoA, the two selected impact case studies reflect this UoA's commitment to focus on and respond to societal issues, to develop tools for assessment or education, to improve practices, to change policy, and to change people's cognition and attitudes based on our research findings. In particular, one case study focused on early Chinese and English literacy development with researchers achieving impact through building strong links or partnership with schools, developing literacy intervention programmes, providing professional training for teachers, principals and parents, producing new teaching materials (disseminated to over 500 teachers), and leading to direct impact in education (e.g., revision to English curriculum based on research findings). Another study on sleep heath illustrates the researchers' efforts to raise public awareness on the links between sleep and emotions, cognition and daily functioning through collaboration with healthcare professionals, education through different media outlets and talks for educators, parents, and students, training to officers in government bodies (police and correctional services), validated assessment tool (Sleep Condition Indicator, SCI) , training to counsellors in higher education sector and their adoption of SCI for early detection of sleep problems, and resulting in changes in school policy (school start-time) and plan for new initiative (create a sleep centre in police). Both studies are exemplars of our success to work closely with stakeholders at organisational level with aims to translate research intro impact and reach our beneficiaries..