

Adapting to Diversity: Policy Pathways for Non-local Students in Hong Kong

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Abstract

Hong Kong, as an international metropolis, attracts a significant number of non-local students, with over 23,000 admitted to its eight major universities in 2024 alone. These students face numerous challenges in adapting to the multicultural environment, including language barriers, social integration issues stemming from cultural differences, academic pressure due to varying education systems, and psychological anxiety related to cultural conflicts and identity. Despite extensive research on the adaptation challenges and coping strategies of non-local students, there is a notable lack of systematic research and comprehensive policy recommendations.

The aims of this study are threefold: First, to identify and refine the multicultural adaptation challenges faced by non-local students through a systematic literature review, providing a foundation for informed policymaking. Second, to utilize Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory to conduct an in-depth analysis of the "hygiene factors" and "motivational factors" in the multicultural adaptation process of non-local students, offering precise policy recommendations for decision-makers. Third, through the lens of Policy Network Theory, to identify the roles and interaction mechanisms of key stakeholders, including the government, educational institutions, and non-governmental organizations. The findings will propose a series of recommendations for educational institutions, government authorities, and other stakeholders, transforming challenges into opportunities for non-local students in Hong Kong.

Keywords: diversity, education, international students, policy networks, social integration