



Executive Summary on the Ethnic Minority Parents' Opinions on existing support measures in the Kindergarten Education Scheme

Hong Kong Unison (June, 2019)

Executive Summary

As continuously pointed out by various research, media reporting and the recent Ombudsman Direct Investigation Report, ethnic minorities face discrimination and unfair treatment during kindergarten admissions, and the lack of support especially in Chinese learning in mainstream kindergartens. With the implementation of the Kindergarten Education Scheme in 2017/18, related guidelines and indicators were revised and new measures supporting the teaching and learning of non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students are introduced. This study aims to find out if kindergarten admission and education for NCS children have improved after the relevant support measures are in place.

A total of 232 ethnic minority parents with children either applying or currently studying in kindergartens under the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme were interviewed from February to March 2019, through outreach by our volunteer teams, and with the help of NGOs and a religious group who conducted the surveys. In addition to the quantitative analysis of the data collected through a structured questionnaire, we reviewed the additional comments and responses provided by the respondents to better understand what parents have experienced.

Research Findings

1. Not every schemed kindergarten (KG) provides a Chinese language environment, and de facto racial segregation is found in some KGs.
 - 1.1. 64 (29%) of the interviewed parents reported that most of the children's classmates are ethnic minority, and 81 (36%) of them reported that the main language used in teaching is English. Some parents shared with the interviewer that KGs group all NCS students in one session (AM or PM), despite EDB's advice against arranging NCS students in segregated class/session. **De facto racial segregation persists in local KGs and not all local schools under the Free KG Scheme which adopt the local curriculum provide Chinese language learning environment.**
 - 1.2. Almost all interviewed parents (212, 95.5%) agreed that it is important to know their child's Chinese ability; but about a quarter of the parents (49, 22.1%) do not know about the Chinese level their children learn in school and nearly one fifth (39, 16.8%) of them are not able to find out their child's Chinese ability. **It reveals that parents are facing difficulties in getting involved in the education of their children.**



2. The Chinese foundation of the children built in KGs does not give ethnic minority parents confidence to send their children to a mainstream primary school.
 - 2.1. About one in four (25%) interviewed parents stated that their children are learning *easier* Chinese when compared to Chinese children in the same class. **Many ethnic minority children actually do not have a chance to develop their Chinese ability as their Chinese peers.**
 - 2.2. More than half (59%) of the interviewed parents indicated that they are not confident to put their child in mainstream primary school because they perceived their child's Chinese ability was not enough to enable a smooth transition in a mainstream primary school. **While the EDB assumes that NCS parents sending their children to local KGs can facilitate an easier adaptation to mainstream primary schools, it may not always be the case.**
3. Ethnic minorities are still facing difficulties in kindergarten admission.
 - 3.1. One third (32.8%) of the interviewed parents were not provided with bilingual KG application documents, while almost 10% of the interviewed parents were arranged to Chinese-only interviews. **Language barrier persists in kindergarten admission process for ethnic minority parents.**
 - 3.2. **Discriminatory attitudes of KG frontline staff towards ethnic minority applicants were observed** as reflected in comments like 'our kindergarten is for local Chinese students'; 'we cannot support NCS children'; 'no need to apply here as it will be difficult for your child to learn'; 'you should go to an English school as it would be easier for your kid to fit in'.
4. The current dissemination methods and channels of dispersing information by EDB are ineffective.
 - 4.1. 73% (170) parents were not aware of leaflets published by the EDB nor the Equal Opportunities Commission on KG support for NCS children, and 60% (139) of the parents surveyed did not know about the EDB Placement Service.

Policy Suggestions

1. The **EDB should take a more active role in monitoring** kindergarten admission procedures and start data collection on NCS applications such as number of NCS applications, admissions, and enrolments, including race, age, spoken language at home, interviews granted, and interpretation service at interviews to ensure no child is rejected at admission due to his/ her race.
2. The **EDB Quality Assurance Review** team should especially review if EM students are overly concentrated in KGs, the racial composition, Chinese language learning



environment, and if the level of Chinese taught to NCS children is at par with their Chinese peers. A section on 'Support to NCS students in school' in the current Quality Review Report should be added to report EDB's observations and evaluation regarding the support to NCS students in KGs.

3. With the revised and intensified NCS funding to KGs for NCS students, the **transparency and accountability of the funding** should be improved. The EDB should request kindergartens to upload the plans and evaluation reports of the NCS funding, and data collected related to NCS Chinese language learning on school websites to monitor and track NCS students' progress and to support public accountability.
4. The EDB should clarify in the **Kindergarten Performance Indicators** that although language ability refers to the Chinese development of children with Chinese as mother tongue, children from other language backgrounds should also develop similar Chinese ability.
5. The EDB should improve its **dissemination of information** to ethnic minority parents, and conduct more outreach to explain its support measures to NCS parents.
6. **Cultural competence training** should be arranged to schools for all staff, including not only the management level but also the frontline staff, on how KGs can interact with and teach effectively with people of different cultures and language backgrounds.
7. The EDB should encourage KGs to **involve NCS parents** in the education of their children. Home-school communications should be strengthened to enable parents understand the Chinese level their children learn in schools.



少數族裔家長對「幼稚園教育計劃」的支援措施意見調查

香港融樂會 (2019 年 6 月)

研究撮要

近年各項研究、媒體及最近的申訴專員公署主動調查報告均指出，少數族裔學童於幼稚園入學時面臨歧視及不公平的對待，以及主流幼稚園中對非華語學童的中文學習支援上亦尤見匱乏。隨著 2017/18 年度幼稚園教育計劃 (以往稱為「免費優質幼稚園教育」) 之實施，教育局於幼稚園行政手冊、收生安排指引、教育課程指引、表現指標均作出了修訂，並為幼稚園提供支援非華語學生學習的教學資助。本調查旨在了解相關支援措施落實後，少數族裔兒童於幼稚園入學及在學的學習情況有否得以改善。

香港融樂會於本年 2 月及 3 月透過義工外展，以及於非政府機構及宗教團體之協助下，共訪問了 232 名有子女現正申請或就讀免費優質幼稚園教育計劃幼稚園之少數族裔家長，以探討他們就子女在報讀或就讀幼稚園時的經驗及意見。

研究結果

1. 並非所有本地幼稚園亦提供中文學習的語言環境，部份更有校內實質種族隔離的情況。
 - 1.1. 29% (64 名) 受訪家長指大部分子女的同學皆為少數族裔，及 36% (81 名) 的家長指學校的教學語言主要為英語。即使教育局在行政指引中已有提及應盡量安排非華語學生與華語學生同班，有家長表示子女在報讀時已被告知幼稚園只會把所有非華語學生安排至相同班級或同一上課時段(例如上/下午班)上課。這表示部份本地幼稚園仍存在實質種族隔離。縱使部分本地學校屬於免費幼稚園教育計劃及採用本地課程，但校內並未真正提供合適的中文語言環境。
 - 1.2. 近乎所有受訪家長 (212 名，95.5%) 同意了解其子女的中文程度是重要的；然而 22.1% (49 名) 家長表示並不清楚幼稚園所教授的中文水平是否與華語



學生所學的程度相若；16.8% (39 名) 家長更表示未能知悉子女的中文能力。
這顯示家長在參與子女學習方面有困難。

2. 在幼稚園建立的中文根基不足令少數族裔家長缺乏為子女選擇主流中文小學的信心。
 - 2.1. 四分之一 (58 名 , 25%) 的受訪家長指出 , 與同班華裔學童相比 , 其子女正在學習較容易的中文。這顯示有少數族裔兒童根本沒有機會在本地的免費幼稚園中 , 發展與華裔學童同等水平的中文能力。
 - 2.2. 只有少於一半 (41%) 的受訪家長有信心讓其子女升讀主流中文小學 , 主要因為他們認為子女在幼稚園習得的中文水平仍不足以應付主流小學中以中文教授的學科。雖然教育局假設非華語家長讓子女就讀本地幼稚園能促進非華語學童適應本地主流小學 , 但現實上這只是少數例子。
3. 少數族裔在報讀幼稚園時仍面對困難。
 - 3.1. 三分之一 (32.8%) 之受訪父母未獲提供中英文的幼稚園入學申請文件 , 而同時近 10% 之受訪家長表示校方只安排全中文的入學面試。語言障礙仍然是少數族裔家長於幼稚園入學程序時面對之一大挑戰。
 - 3.2. 幼稚園前線職員對少數族裔申請人存有明顯之偏見 , 當中言論如「我們的幼稚園是為本地華裔學生而設的」 ; 「我們不會支援非華語學生」 ; 「你的子女不懂中文 , 很難在中文幼稚園學習的 , 所以不需要來申請我們的幼稚園了」甚或「英文的幼稚園應該會更適合你孩子的融入」。
4. 教育局目前的資訊傳播方式及信息渠道成效甚低。
 - 4.1. 73% (170 名) 的家長亦未有得悉教育局或平等機會委員會就非華語學生在幼稚園支援措施出版的任何單張 , 60% (139 名) 受訪家長更並未聽聞教育局的幼稚園學位安排服務同時。



政策建議

1. 教育局應在**監管幼稚園**的入學申請程序上採取更積極的態度，收集非華語學童報讀幼稚園時的數據（包括非華語學童的入學申請、收生及註冊數目，學童的種族、在家使用的語言、面試安排等），以檢視合資格的兒童有否因種族而在入學申請階段被拒於門外。
2. 現時的**幼稚園質素評估報告**內應加設「為非華語學童提供的支援成效」一欄，以便教育局向持份者匯報學校在支援非華語學童的監察及評估。教育局的外評隊伍應特別檢視幼稚園的少數族裔學生會否過度集中、學校有否為學生提供合適的中文語言環境、及學校有否為非華語學童與華語學童教授同等的中文水平。
3. 教育局加強對取錄非華語學生的幼稚園資助的同時，亦應改善學校運用撥款的透明度及問責性。教育局應要求幼稚園把有關額外撥款的年度計劃、報告及評估、以及與非華語學童的中文學習有關的數據**上載至學校網頁**，以便持份者監察及追蹤非華語學童的中文學習進度，並提升公眾問責的效能。
4. 教育局應更明確地就表現指標（幼稚園）澄清，雖然「認知發展」範圍表現指標 4.2 語言能力是指「一般在幼稚園接受母語教育的學童在母語方面的語言發展程度」，但對於來自其他語言背景並以第二語言來學習中文的學童，亦不應預設較低的中文能力，及應被教導與華語學童相若的中文水平。
5. 教育局應**加強資訊的傳播及流通**，提供外展服務，主動向少數族裔家長解釋支援非華語學童及家長的服務和措施，令家長能接觸到更多相關資訊。
6. 教育局應為幼稚園的所有職員（除前線職員及教師外，亦應包括管理層及其他員工）安排**文化敏感度訓練**，讓幼稚園能更有效地照顧及與不同種族及語言背景的學童及家長溝通。



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7. 教育局應鼓勵幼稚園加強非華語學童的家長在其子女教育中的參與，並透過**加強家校合作**讓家長了解其子女在幼稚園習得的中文程度。