

The background of the entire page is a blurred photograph of a group of people in a meeting or collaborative work environment. They are standing and appear to be engaged in a discussion. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

GENERAL EDUCATION OFFICE

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE CASE STUDIES:
INNOVATIONS, CHALLENGES, AND
SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

Nurturing Global-minded Changemakers:
Dr. Connie LI and Dr. Yan KWAN

About the Authors

Connie LI

Assistant Director of General Education at HKBU, champions the integration of marketing and social entrepreneurship education. She spearheaded the curriculum revamp of the Bachelor of Commerce (Hons) in Marketing program, incorporating social entrepreneurship to enhance student learning and career readiness. Her leadership extends to the “Nurturing Global-Minded Changemakers” project, and her excellence in team teaching has been recognized twice with the President’s Award for Outstanding Performance in Team Teaching (2019, 2023). In 2024, she and Dr. Kwan received the Teaching Excellence Award (Honourable Mention) from the Federation for Self-financing Tertiary Education. Dr. Li is a driving force in experiential and service-learning, equipping students with skills for business success and social impact.

Ho Yan KWAN

Lecturer I at the Division of Transdisciplinary Undergraduate Programmes at HKBU, is a passionate advocate for experiential learning. She teaches the course “Global Challenges”, which delves into innovative solutions for complex global issues. She developed and instructed the course “Community Development for Social Entrepreneurship”, preparing students for roles in marketing and social entrepreneurship. Dr. Kwan prioritizes global perspectives and has organized numerous international field trips over the past seven years. Her innovative teaching approach has been recognized with the President's Award for Outstanding Team Teaching in 2023 and the Teaching Excellence Award (Honourable Mention) from the Federation for Self-financing Tertiary Education in 2024.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements 3

Part I Short Cases

Educate, Empower, Innovate: Triple-impact Approach of Nurturing 5 Global-minded Changemakers Program 5
Vanessa WAN, Connie LI, Ho Yan KWAN

Empowering the Elderly at Gingko House and Beyond 11
Connie LI, Ka Lam LAU

Promoting Community Tourism in Hong Kong: Strategies for the Success of Kaifong Tour 14
Connie Li, Hoi Lam LEE

“Inherit the Love, Empower in Sports”: Fostering Inclusion and Empowerment in Hong Kong’s Sports Ecosystem 18
Connie Li

Part II Long Cases

Feeding the Hunger for Dignity 24
Ho Yan KWAN

Beautiful Coffee: Seeding the Beauty of Fair Trade 33
Ho Yan KWAN

Capala’s Journey Toward Inclusive Career Development in Hong Kong 44
Ho Yan KWAN

Acknowledgements

This casebook is one outcome of the Nurturing Global-minded Changemakers (NGC) Program, funded by the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the social enterprises that participated in the NGC program from 2021-2024, especially our teaching case partners: Beautiful Coffee, CAPALA Career Paths Laboratory, D.E.C.T. Production Limited, Gingko House, Happeriod Limited, Inherited Sports Company Limited, Kaifong Tour, Project Dignity Hong Kong, and Snaildy Education Limited. We also deeply appreciate the contributions of our student partners, Lau Ka Lam and Lee Hoi Lam, who co-authored two cases. Special thanks are due to Vanessa Wan, co-author of a teaching case and project manager, for her unwavering support throughout this project.

We hope this casebook will serve as a valuable resource for educators passionate about social entrepreneurship and social innovation. By integrating a transdisciplinary lens, we aim to inspire students to critically analyze, reflect upon, and develop sustainable solutions to business challenges from diverse and innovative perspectives.

We encourage educators to adopt a flipped classroom approach, assigning students to read and research these cases before class, allowing for more engaging and in-depth discussions during class time.

Please note that the cases included in this casebook are not published and are intended solely for in-class discussion purposes.

PART I

SHORT CASES



Educate, Empower, Innovate: Triple-impact Approach of Nurturing Global-minded Changemakers Program

Ms. Vanessa Wan, Dr. Connie Li and Dr. Ho Yan Kwan wrote this case to provide material for class discussion. The authors may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to ensure confidentiality.

Copyright ©2024, Ms. Vanessa Wan, Dr. Connie Li, Dr. Ho Yan Kwan. First version: 2024-07-19.

Overview of the Nurturing Global-minded Changemakers (NGC) Program

In 2021, Hong Kong Baptist University implemented the NGC program, a three-year knowledge-transfer initiative set to be completed in July 2024. The innovative program aimed to cultivate a new generation of socially responsible leaders equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to address pressing social issues. fostered social entrepreneurship and innovation through a dynamic blend of experiential learning, interdisciplinary collaboration, and deep community engagement. Funded by the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund¹, the NGC program aimed to equip students with both theoretical insights and the practical skills needed to apply their knowledge in real-world settings, reflecting commitment to social impact and entrepreneurial solutions.

Students as Partners of Social Enterprises

Central to the NGC program was “Fundamentals of Social Entrepreneurship and Social Impact,” a flagship course designed to unite students from diverse academic backgrounds with the objective of developing scalable solutions for social enterprises in Hong Kong. This immersive course challenged students to collaborate on developing innovative business plans for local social ventures. Culminating in a high-stakes pitch competition, undergraduate and postgraduate students had the unique opportunity to present proposals on behalf of their partner social enterprises, vying for a substantial grant of HKD 150,000.

By combining traditional lectures with six guest lectures across various disciplines such as social entrepreneurship, finance, marketing, and psychology, this transdisciplinary approach aimed to provide students with a well-rounded understanding of the complexities of social ventures and enhance their business plan development skills by integrating diverse perspectives crucial for their final assignment. At the end of the course, students presented their business plans for the Capacity Building Fund during a funding committee meeting, where they competed for the HKD 150,000 grant. The winning team would have the opportunity to implement its project over the course of one year, achieving a tangible impact on the community.

Winner of First Cohort: Happeriod²

Overview of Happeriod

Happeriod, the winner of the first cohort, is an innovative social enterprise based in Hong Kong that specializes in menstrual education and related products. The company's mission is to create a supportive environment where individuals who menstruate can share experiences, challenge societal norms, make informed decisions about menstrual products, and foster body autonomy. *Happeriod* offers a diverse range of eco-friendly menstrual products, engages in product consignment and wholesale, conducts online and offline workshops, and facilitates custom collaborations to enhance menstrual awareness and education within the community.

Grant Utilization: “Master M” Campaign

The Capacity Building Fund grant, awarded to *Happeriod* for the period from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022, enabled the launch of the impactful Master M campaign. This initiative aimed to educate the public about gender equality, promote positive attitudes toward women's menstrual health, and enhance brand awareness. Throughout the campaign, Happeriod organized eight menstrual education workshops for university students and the broader community.

Impact and Outcomes: Strengthening Networks and Visibility

A key highlight of the campaign was the “Be Your Own Master M Workshop³ (大師 M 講經工作坊),” which focused on menstrual hygiene, stigma, and women's body autonomy. These workshops were conducted online and face-to-face in collaboration with local universities in Hong Kong, attracting over 150 participants. Moreover, the “Master M Poster Design Competition” garnered 11 creative entries, which were showcased at the “Master M Poster Competition Exhibition.”

The grant considerably strengthened *Happeriod*'s partnerships with universities in Hong Kong and enhanced its engagement within the education sector. It also expanded the company's network within the LGBTQ+ community through collaborations with organizations such as “Onebookhalf x Gender,” a key advocate for gender equality. By leveraging effective social media strategies on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, Happeriod successfully reached an impressive audience of 75,723 individuals and gained 909 new followers, which resulted in a remarkable increase in the customer base by 545. This initiative not only raised awareness but also empowered individuals to embrace and advocate for their menstrual health and rights.

Winner of Second Cohort: SoGlue⁴ (D.E.C.T. Production⁵)

Overview of D.E.C.T. Production

D.E.C.T. Production, the winner of the second cohort, is a dynamic production house dedicated to providing employment opportunities to teenagers who are “not in education, employment, or training” (雙待青年). By offering production services to social enterprises, *D.E.C.T. Production* aims to create meaningful work experiences in video production, event photography, livestreaming, and educational workshops.

Grant Utilization: Establishment of “SoGlue”

With the support of the Capacity Building Fund grant, *D.E.C.T. Production* established a new social enterprise named *SoGlue*. This initiative aims to facilitate partnerships between social enterprises, corporate clients, government and non-government organizations (NGOs), and various stakeholders, effectively serving as a “glue” to enhance corporate social responsibility initiatives. Throughout the one-year grant period, *SoGlue* utilized the funding to register the organization and develop a series of workshops. From March to May 2023, the enterprise organized engaging workshops to connect social enterprise partners with potential corporate clients. During these sessions, social enterprises had the opportunity to showcase their services and capabilities to potential clients by contributing through catering, production, and event support, as well as facilitating professional expertise, such as expert tutors. Notable events included the following:

- Art and Inclusion: Arabic Calligraphy Cultural Art Workshop⁶
- Experiential Yoga Program for the Elderly
- The Healing Power of Nature
- Empower Women, Create Impact: Scarf Sewing Workshop⁷

Impact and Outcomes: Creation of Shared Values Among Social Enterprises and For-profit Organizations and Academia

The workshops attracted senior management from publicly listed companies in Hong Kong, as well as representatives from sustainable consulting agencies and academic institutions. In the future, *SoGlue* plans to expand its operations and attract additional local social enterprises as partners. The organization’s strategy focuses on sustaining partnerships by introducing its services to corporations through a series of online and in-person events. To enhance public awareness, the *SoGlue* project team intends to refine its advertising strategy and shift its focus from Instagram to LinkedIn to reach a broader corporate audience. This strategic adjustment aims to maximize engagement with potential clients and the network of social enterprises.

Winner of Third Cohort: Snaildy Education⁸

Overview of Snaildy Education

Snaildy Education, the winner of the third cohort, is an innovative education technology social enterprise dedicated to supporting students with special educational needs (SENs). By fostering connections between parents, school teachers, and frontline educators, *Snaildy* aims to create an interconnected SEN service ecosystem known as “Snaildiverse,” promoting meaningful inclusion and community participation.

Grant Utilization: SEN Inclusion Carnival

Snaildy Education was awarded the Capacity Building Fund grant for the period of June 1, 2023 to May 31, 2024. Early in the grant period, the organization revised its initial plans and shifted its focus from a traditional SEN exhibition to the “SnailDay! SEN Inclusion Carnival 2024 (2024新春樂咬共融嘉年華)⁹.”

Impact and Outcomes: Promotion of Culture of Social Inclusion

Held on February 3, 2024, at Ap Lei Chau Wind Tower Park, the carnival aimed to promote the value of meaningful SEN inclusion and foster community engagement. The event featured seven interactive game booths designed to provide participants with firsthand experience and insights into the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities and SEN students. The key themes were as follows:

- SEN sports
- Virtual reality experience
- STEM education
- Nutrition
- Digital arts

Participants earned stickers that could be exchanged for various souvenirs, such as keychains representing nine types of SENs, fai chun, and other stickers. This interactive approach not only educated attendees but also encouraged them to understand and develop empathy toward the SEN community. The event successfully attracted over 500 participants, who actively shared their positive experiences and event photos with friends, family, and their communities on social media, further amplifying the message of inclusion.

Snaildy Education experienced a significant boost in its social media presence, gaining over 100 new followers on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram after the carnival. The event also garnered media attention from two digital outlets, enhancing its visibility and facilitating powerful word-of-mouth promotion

The enterprise will continue to raise awareness and foster sympathy for individuals with SENs by organizing events and workshops in the community. Through such initiatives, *Snaildy* aims to sustain and expand its impact, further integrating SEN individuals into the fabric of society.

The NGC program exemplifies an innovative approach to education that fosters social responsibility and community engagement. Meanwhile, the achievements of the cohort winners—Happeriod, D.E.C.T. Production (*SoGlue*), and Snaildy Education—demonstrate the transformative power of experiential learning, with students acting as partners in addressing social issues.

Discussion Questions

1. How do social enterprises balance their social mission and business goals? Provide examples from the cases where this balance was effectively managed.
2. Compare the three grant-winning projects (*Happeriod*, *SoGlue*, and *Snaildy Education*) in terms of their missions, strategies, and impact, considering how their approaches draw upon different fields of knowledge (e.g., business, social sciences, education, design). How did the integration of multiple perspectives contribute to their success in securing the HKD 150,000 grant?
3. Evaluate the role of cross-sector partnerships (e.g., universities, corporate clients, NGOs, government agencies) in the success of social enterprises.
4. Focusing on *Snaildy Education*, analyze the effectiveness of their current engagement strategies (e.g., the interactive carnival) within its specific cultural context. Then, propose alternative approaches that could be employed in different cultural settings.

Endnotes

- ¹ Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund), <https://www.sie.gov.hk/en/>.
- ² Happeriod, <https://happeriod.com/en?srsltid=AfmBOoooOAEhdXtoSEgV5Y3C-9LAvCAi4pKD8JROOZL-llrpYwrjxTy>.
- ³ Happeriod, “Be Your Own Master M Workshop (大師M講經工作坊),” https://happeriod.com/blogs/master-m/workshop?srsltid=AfmBOoqQKBSDFP4yrIO_YGlQOie1hptdw0S5Zem1jJ-w38TsursrTpnZ
- ⁴ Soglue, <https://www.sogluehk.com/>.
- ⁵ D.E.C.T Production, <https://www.dectpro.com/>.
- ⁶ Soglue, “Art & Inclusion: Arabic Calligraphy Cultural Art Workshop,” <https://www.sogluehk.com/WEDO.html>.
- ⁷ Soglue, “Empower Women, Create Impact: Scarf Sewing Workshop,” <https://www.sogluehk.com/Rhys.html>.
- ⁸ Snaildy Education, <https://www.snaildy.com/>.
- ⁹ Snaildy Education, “SnailDay! SEN Inclusion Carnival 2024 (2024新春樂咬共融嘉年華),” <https://www.snaildy.com/news/%E3%80%902024%E6%96%B0%E6%98%A5%E6%A8%82%E6%97%BC%E5%85%B1%E8%9E%8D%E5%98%89%E5%B9%B4%E8%8F%AF%20%E5%8D%97%E5%8D%80%E5%9C%93%E6%BB%BF%E7%B5%90%E6%9D%9F%E3%80%91>.

Empowering the Elderly at Gingko House and Beyond

Dr. Connie Li and Miss Lau Ka Lam wrote this case to provide material for class discussion. The authors may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to ensure confidentiality.

Copyright ©2023, Dr. Connie Li and Miss Lau Ka Lam.

First version: 2023-09-20.

Company Background

Founded in 2003, Gingko House¹ is a pioneering organization in Hong Kong dedicated to promoting the employment of elderly individuals. As a social enterprise, Gingko House operates various businesses and services, including restaurants, necessity stores, farm products, and food manufacturing. Over the past two decades, Gingko House has employed over 3,000 elderly individuals, focusing on those who need support due to poverty, loneliness, and lack of confidence.

The core mission of Gingko House is to assist elderly individuals who face poverty, loneliness, and other related challenges. They also actively support those in need through several initiatives, such as delivering free meals and soup to impoverished elderly. Gingko House also organizes volunteer activities to foster companionship among the elderly, which can help them combat the effects of loneliness and isolation.

Gingko House's Adaptation to the Pandemic

Gingko House faced significant challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic². With fewer people dining in their restaurants, their profits have decreased, resulting in the suspension of their restaurant operations and forcing them to explore alternative solutions. To find alternative income opportunities, in 2020, Gingko House launched the “Gingko Handmade” program, which provides elderly individuals with opportunities to utilize their unique skills, such as sewing and embroidery, to create handmade products.

The business model of Gingko House is simple and elegant. The “Gingko Handmade” program offers a seamless transition for elderly individuals who were compelled to stop working in restaurants during the pandemic. Gingko House cleverly utilizes the space within their restaurants during non-peak hours, allowing the participants to craft seasonal handicrafts, including Christmas tree decorations and blessing bags. These items are subsequently sold offline and online through a dedicated website called “ElderShop by Gingko House.”³

According to the person-in-charge of the “Gingko Handmade” program, the response to their handicraft products has been positive. However, they are unable to handle mass orders due to the festive-based, seasonal, and handmade nature of their products. Despite the demand and interest that their products have garnered, the limited work hours and productivity of the elderly participants have hindered mass production. Gingko House acknowledges the need to diversify its product offerings to ensure consistent sales and revenue throughout the year. To achieve this goal, Gingko House is determined to identify a signature product that can be sold all year round, independent of festive occasions. This sought-after item should possess broad appeal and market demand, allowing Gingko House to increase its production and attract a larger customer base. By concentrating on a flagship product, Gingko House aims to expand its market presence and generate sustainable income for the elderly participants.

The “Gingko Handmade” program exemplifies how Gingko House leverages the skills and talents of elderly individuals to create income-generating opportunities⁴. By tapping into their abilities, Gingko House enables the elderly to regain financial independence and improve their overall well-being.

Discussion Questions

1. Considering Gingko House’s operational limitations and target audience, propose a flagship product that reflects both cultural relevance and market viability. How might the production process itself be designed to minimize environmental impact and promote sustainable practices?
2. Conduct secondary market research on the suggested product and explain why you believe it would be a suitable fit for the operations of Gingko House.
3. Explore potential cross-sector partnerships (e.g., with local artisans, community organizations, educational institutions, government agencies, and ethical sourcing providers) that Gingko House could leverage to enhance the reach, impact, and sustainability of their “Gingko Handmade” program.
4. Develop a framework for measuring the social impact of the “Gingko Handmade” program, considering both quantitative and qualitative indicators.

Endnotes

¹ Gingko House, <https://www.gingkohouse.hk/>.

² HK01 (2022), “社企休業零收入堅持派飯 推「自動出飯機」保基層有熱食”,
[https://www.hk01.com/article/746826?
utm_source=01articlecopy&utm_medium=referral](https://www.hk01.com/article/746826?utm_source=01articlecopy&utm_medium=referral).

³
⁴ ElderShop By Gingko House, <https://www.eldershop.com.hk/>.

Sing Tao Headline (2021), “7旬清潔工疫情下子女同失業 社企邀製賀年飾物幫補家用”,
<https://www.stheadline.com/article/2092076/7%E6%97%AC%E6%B8%85%E6%BD%94%E5%B7%A5%E7%96%AB%E6%83%85%E4%B8%8B%E5%AD%90%E5%A5%B3%E5%90%8C%E5%A4%B1%E6%A5%AD-%E7%A4%BE%E4%BC%81%E9%82%80%E8%A3%BD%E8%B3%80%E5%B9%B4%E9%A3%BE%E7%89%A9%E5%B9%AB%E8%A3%9C%E5%AE%B6%E7%94%A8>.

Promoting Community Tourism in Hong Kong: Strategies for the Success of Kaifong Tour

Dr. Connie Li and Miss. Lee Hoi Lam wrote this case to provide material for class discussion. The authors may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to ensure confidentiality.

Copyright ©2023, Dr. Connie Li and Miss Lee Hoi Lam.

First version: 2023-09-20.

Company Background

Founded in 2016, Kaifong Tour¹ is a social enterprise with a mission to foster community connection and engagement in Hong Kong through the concept of community tourism. By organizing community tours and educational programs, Kaifong Tour aims to create a people-oriented and sustainable environment for community development.

Kaifong Tour believes that community tourism offers an ideal platform for connecting kaifongs (neighborhoods) and local communities. Their tours not only offer exciting travel experiences and in-depth explorations of the characteristics and culture of each district but also raise social awareness and foster a sense of identity and belonging among the participants.

Through community building and exploration projects, Kaifong Tour creates opportunities for participants to delve deep into the urban landscape and engage with various social topics. Apart from having over 40,000 participants to date, Kaifong Tour has collaborated with more than 100 community partner organizations, including social enterprises, NGOs, educational institutions, local residents' organizations, hospitals, district councils, and government departments.

Kaifong Tour offers over 50 community routes and networks that span all 18 districts of Hong Kong. Participants can explore different streets and alleys to gain a comprehensive understanding of Hong Kong's diverse neighborhoods. This extensive coverage also allows for a holistic exploration of Hong Kong's cultural and social fabric.

Empowering Cultural Ambassadors

The "Re: South – The Heritage and Community Arts Project"² project invited Kaifong Tour to partner with the Warehouse Teenage Club to promote the cultural significance of the Southern District through guided tours. This project recruited

retirees and young people as trainees to become cultural ambassadors of the district. These ambassadors embarked on tours to explore the Aberdeen and Ap Lei Chau areas, which showcase the authentic side of the South District.

The project also aimed to empower these ambassadors by increasing their confidence and sense of belonging to the district. Through the guided tours they led, these ambassadors not only shared their knowledge and insights but also discovered some corners of the district that they had rarely visited in the past. This exploration process allowed them to reflect on their own skills, knowledge, and strengths, thus fostering their personal growth and connections to their community.

Impact and Sustainability

The “Re: South – The Heritage and Community Arts Project” facilitated group discussions among the participants that promoted knowledge exchange and fostered their sense of community. The ambassadors and participants engaged in meaningful dialogue about the heritage and cultural significance of the district by sharing their findings and experiences. The project also developed the tour guiding knowledge and skills of the participants, thus transforming them into trained community guides and leaving a lasting impact on the ambassadors and the community³. One of the Southern District Cultural Ambassadors even joined the Kaifong Tour team as a community guide, regularly leading community-guided tours in Aberdeen. The project’s success showcases the potential for community tourism to empower individuals, promote cultural preservation, and achieve a sustainable community development.

Future Directions

Recognizing the importance of education, Kaifong Tour decided to expand its reach in the educational sector, particularly in primary and secondary schools. By promoting education programs, such as design thinking and junior docent training, Kaifong Tour aims to instill a sense of community engagement and cultural appreciation among students.

During the pandemic, Kaifong Tour faced challenges as local tours and training programs were put on hold. To sustain their business, a group of marketing students at Hong Kong Baptist University explored business solutions for Kaifong Tour, including developing a board game, and establishing a cultural exchange forum.

Solution 1: Developing a Board Game

Recognizing the challenges faced by Kaifong Tour during the pandemic, the aforementioned marketing students proposed developing a board game that incorporates the concept of community and the enterprise's mission. This game offered students a learning tool that allows them to explore different communities regardless of time and place. Through this board game, Kaifong Tour sustained their business while fostering community engagement and cultural appreciation.

Solution 2: Establishing a Culture Exchange Forum

To allow students to interact with people from different cultures, these marketing students proposed an online cultural exchange forum where secondary school students could share their community stories and histories, thus fostering a cross-cultural understanding. The forum's discussions were recorded and uploaded on the social platforms of Kaifong Tour for promotion. This initiative not only enhanced the presentation and communication skills of secondary school students but also promoted the values of Hong Kong's communities despite the postponement of physical tours.

After extensive discussions and a thoughtful deliberation, the marketing students representing Kaifong Tour strategically decided to pitch their idea of developing a board game as a social innovation solution in a business competition. Could this innovative board game concept be the winning idea we have been looking for?

Discussion Questions

1. Analyze the cultural values, social dynamics, and learning preferences of diverse university student populations. How can Kaifong Tour's board game be designed and adapted to resonate with these diverse groups, fostering inclusivity and cross-cultural understanding?
2. What pricing models and promotion channels should Kaifong Tour consider making this board game accessible and appealing to university students?
3. Beyond the board game, propose an alternative strategy for Kaifong Tour to expand its business and reach a wider audience, such as corporate clients. What might that idea be?

Endnotes

- ¹ Kaifong Tour, <https://kaifongtour.com/>.
- ² Urban Renewal Authority, “Re: South – The Heritage and Community Arts Project”, <https://urfund.org.hk/en/project/re-south/>.
- ³ Kaifong Tour, “Re: South – The Heritage and Community Arts Project”, <https://kaifongtour.com/project/the-warehouse-club-in-southern-district/?lang=en>.

“Inherit the Love, Empower in Sports”: Fostering Inclusion and Empowerment in Hong Kong’s Sports Ecosystem

Dr. Connie Li wrote this case solely to provide material for class discussion. The author may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to ensure confidentiality.

Copyright ©2024, Dr. Connie Li.

First version: 2024-07-19.

Finding Vision

Inherited Sports¹, a forward-thinking social enterprise based in Hong Kong, has interwoven the compelling ethos of “Inherit the love, empower through sports” into its core mission. Established in 2023 by a dynamic team composed of two sports coaches and an educator, the enterprise aims to initiate systemic transformation within the sports ecosystem. In the vibrant city of Hong Kong, where ethnic minorities have historically been sidelined in sports², Inherited Sports stands as a counterforce, striving to create a highly inclusive and equitable environment for sports participation and coaching.

Hong Kong’s principal ethnic minorities are shown in the table below.

(2021 Population Census)	
Ethnicity (Self-identification)	Total number
Indonesian	142 065
Filipino	201 291
White	61 582
Indian	42 569
Pakistani	24 385
Nepalese	29 701
Japanese	10 291
Thai	12 972
Other Asian	24 588
Others	70 124

Barriers to Sports Participation among Ethnic Minorities

Historically, ethnic minorities in Hong Kong have faced substantial barriers to full participation in sports and recreational activities. Inherited Sports was founded to dismantle such barriers and promote equal opportunities in sports coaching. The enterprise advocates not only physical health but also the transformation of personal interests into sustainable careers by concentrating on sports such as swimming, shoot boxing, fitness, stick mobility, and new sports.

Innovative Solutions for Empowerment

Inherited Sports has successfully secured grant funding from the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) through the Innovator Farm³ organized by Fullness Social Enterprises Society (FSES). The enterprise is committed to training a new generation of sports coaches from ethnic minority backgrounds through its flagship “Sports Leadership Training Program.” The program not only equips ethnic minorities with essential sports skills but also supports them in obtaining official coaching certification, enabling them to transform their passion into a professional career.

Hong Kong offers a unique market opportunity due to its demand for English-speaking sports coaches. Inherited Sports’ initiative is strategically positioned to meet such a need, which is to supply a consistent stream of qualified coaches to international schools, non-Chinese-speaking residents, and citizens who share the same ethnic background as the coaches.

Sustainable Development Goals⁴ and Business Strategy

The business strategies of Inherited Sports contribute directly to the company’s attainment of the following sustainable development goals (SDGs):

To foster good health and well-being (SDG 3):

Inherited Sports demonstrates its commitment to the well-being of its employees and the broad community by promoting health and wellness through its sports services.

To promote quality education and lifelong learning (SDG 4):

Inherited Sports provides essential skills development training and work experience to ethnic minority youths, supports educational goals, and enhances public relations narratives with impactful empowerment stories.

To support decent work and economic growth (SDG 8):

Inherited Sports contributes actively to the region's economic growth by employing young individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds. This practice can create not only new opportunities but also an inclusive work environment that aligns with the Environmental, Social, and Governance principles of social equity and employment.

To reduce inequality (SDG 10):

The employment of ethnic minority youths in sports services solidifies Inherited Sports' dedication to reducing inequality, which in turn will enhance its social impact and strengthen its corporate social responsibility reputation.

First Women's Swimming Course for Ethnic Minorities

A landmark achievement for Inherited Sports is its introduction of the first women's swimming course for 48 ethnic minorities at the Kowloon Park Swimming Pool. Swimming is a popular activity in Hong Kong, but access to this sport is not straightforward for ethnic minorities, especially women. The act of swimming in public pools can mirror complex societal issues. For instance, some ethnic minority groups hail from cultures in which swimming is not common or accompanied by distinct cultural norms pertaining to swimwear and the mixing of genders in swimming spaces. Certain ethnic minority groups may have modesty requirements for clothing that do not match typical swimwear standards, which can lead to reduced participation in public swimming.

Thus, a comprehensive strategy that covers cultural sensitivity, language barriers, targeted outreach, and programming is necessary to address such issues, as well as policy modifications to ensure the accessibility and inclusivity of pools for all community members. With financial support from the Wofoo Foundation⁵ and logistical resources from the Leisure and Cultural Services Department⁶, the course represents a significant breakthrough by providing ethnic minority women with a safe environment to learn to swim, facilitated by female coaches and lifeguards⁷.

Future Development

With grant funding secured for a year, Inherited Sports must identify strategies to sustain its business with a robust social mission. A prospective step is to develop additional business-to-business courses targeting corporations that share the company's mission and strive to enhance the well-being of their staff through sports activities led by ethnic minorities. For instance, Inherited Sports introduced molkky⁸, an emerging sport, to older adults in wheelchairs and

delivered shoot boxing courses for DBS Bank. Inherited Sports stands as a testament to the potential of sports to be a conduit for social change. It is poised to leave an indelible mark on sports participation and coaching in the community by championing inclusivity and opportunity for all and continuing to break new ground and expand its reach.

Discussion Questions

1. Develop a Social Lean Canvas for Inherited Sports.
2. What are some potential revenue models that Inherited Sports can adopt to maintain its social mission while being financially viable?
3. Analyze how Inherited Sports' strategies can contribute to the attainment of specific Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), considering the interconnectedness of social, economic, cultural, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.
4. Develop a culturally sensitive communication strategy for Inherited Sports to effectively convey its value proposition to diverse potential sponsors and partners, including corporations, foundations, government agencies, and community organizations.

Endnotes

- ¹ Inherited Sports, <https://inheritedsports.com/>.
- ² The Hong Kong Council of Social Service, “Concern on the Health of Minority Ethnic Women and Early Childhood Education,” <https://www.hkcsc.org.hk/concern-on-the-health-of-minority-ethnic-women-and-early-childhood-education/?lang=en>, accessed July 2024.
- ³ Innovator Farm, <https://www.if-program.hk/>.
- ⁴ Sustainable Development Goals, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.
- ⁵ Wofoo Foundation, <http://www.wfl.com.hk/>.
- ⁶ Leisure and Cultural Services Department, The Government of the HKSAR, <https://www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/index.html>.
- ⁷ Sing Tao Daily (2024). 為穆斯林女性辦免費泳班 教日常中文會話 社企多元支援少數族裔 冀港達真正共融, <https://www.singtaousa.com/2024-09-16/%E6%AF%8F%E6%97%A5%E9%9B%9C%E8%AA%8C%EF%BD%9C%E7%82%BA%E7%A9%86%E6%96%AF%E6%9E%97%E5%A5%B3%E6%80%A7%E8%BE%A6%E5%85%8D%E8%B2%BB%E6%B3%B3%E7%8F%AD-%E6%95%99%E6%97%A5%E5%B8%B8%E4%B8%AD%E6%96%87%E6%9C%83/4995098#page>.
- ⁸ The Game Molkky, <https://www.molkky.world/molkky-game>.

PART II

LONG CASES



Feeding the Hunger for Dignity

Dr. Ho Yan Kwan wrote this case to provide material for class discussion. The author may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to ensure confidentiality.

Copyright ©2023, Dr. Ho Yan Kwan.

First version: 2023-08-18.

Challenges for Disability-Inclusive Development in the Asia-Pacific Region

“Ableism,” or the discrimination and prejudice against people with disabilities (PWDs), has remained a pressing concern in the Asia-Pacific region for decades. Despite increased awareness and international efforts¹, this marginalized group of over 700 million individuals in the region continues to encounter significant barriers to their full integration into society².

“[D]isability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”³

PWDs (an estimated 15% of all national populations) often lack equal access to rights, opportunities, and essential social provisions, such as employment, education, social protection, financial resources, and healthcare⁴. The limited access to education is particularly concerning, with approximately one-third of children not attending school being children with disabilities. In the ASEAN region, less than 10% of children with disabilities have access to education⁵. For instance, in Cambodia, the completion rate for lower secondary education among disabled adolescents was merely 4%, while their non-disabled peers achieved a significantly higher rate of 41%⁶.

Moreover, the limited access to vocational training and employment opportunities for PWDs results in a high incidence of poverty, especially among women, youth, and those with hearing impairments. This situation is exacerbated by the stigma associated with disability and a lack of understanding regarding the abilities and aspirations of PWDs. In Hong Kong, for instance, employed PWDs earn relatively lower monthly incomes compared with the general employed population. Based on a 2021 report by the HKSAR Census and Statistics Department, approximately 30% of employed PWDs earned a monthly income of less than HKD 10,000 (USD 1,277)⁷.

Government programs aimed at supporting PWDs are insufficient. Existing programs, such as rehabilitation, vocational training, and transportation, primarily focus on physically disabled people, leaving a gap in comprehensive support for others, particularly those facing mental challenges⁸. Companies also frequently neglect to make necessary workplace adjustments to accommodate disabled employees, indicating a failure to provide equal opportunities during the hiring process. Trained professionals who can effectively work with PWDs are also lacking, especially in the areas of training and development.

To foster social inclusivity, companies should prioritize the hiring of employees with disabilities and create inclusive working environments that cater to their needs. Collaborative efforts between employer services and vocational training programs are necessary to provide effective job training and placement for PWDs. Improving access to employment opportunities and establishing robust social support systems are therefore crucial steps to address these challenges.

Project Dignity and its Innovative Programs

Project Dignity is a Singaporean social enterprise founded by Koh Seng Choon in 2010 with a mission to restore dignity to disadvantaged individuals, particularly those with disabilities and special needs⁹.

“What I see are their abilities, not disabilities.” – Koh Seng Choon

The enterprise operates on a unique business model that leverages vocational training, skill development, gainful employment, and greater inclusion to address the unemployment issue of this marginalized group. Key projects undertaken by Project Dignity are detailed below.

Dignity Learn

Project Dignity positions itself as a provider of vocational training programs and offers a range of cooking courses to equip disadvantaged individuals with culinary skills, including food preparation, cooking techniques, and menu planning. Course participants can gain practical skills that enhance employability and promote financially independent living.

Project Dignity also offers a comprehensive train-and-place program focused on training participants in vocational skills for the food and beverage (F&B) and retail industry, ranging from food preparation, cooking, and customer service to restaurant management and cashiering. Upon completion of the training, Project Dignity assists in placing individuals in suitable employment positions, bridging the gap between their skills and job market demands.

Dignity Kitchen

One of Project Dignity's notable initiatives is Dignity Kitchen, a social enterprise operating a hawker-style food court open to the general public in Singapore. It provides practical experience and employment opportunities for differently abled individuals. Participants gain hands-on involvement in real-life food court settings, applying their vocational skills, interacting with customers, and contributing to the business's success. This experience helps them build essential skills and confidence. In 2021, Project Dignity achieved a revenue exceeding HKD 17 million (equivalent to USD 2.21 million) in Singapore.

Dignity Outreach

As an integral part of Project Dignity's social mission, Dignity Outreach offers team event activities that are customizable to corporate objectives and needs. These activities provide bonding opportunities while immersing participants in the underappreciated side of the community through cooking and rediscovering heritage culture. Project Dignity has collaborated with over 2,000 corporations, government agencies, and educational institutions, fostering community engagement and promoting social awareness⁹.

“Through the Hawker for a Day program, our Management Trainees—some of whom may become leaders of the company—were able to build stronger bonds and even learn how to cook. Seeing the smiles on our friends from AWWA made it a worthwhile experience.” – **Lee Shijie, Group Talent Management, CapitalLand**

Dignity Mama

Initiated in 2012, Dignity Mama empowers caregivers and young adults with special needs to start small businesses. The project collects donated books, sorts them, and offers them at reasonable prices. It promotes entrepreneurial skills development with caregiver support. Dignity Mama has expanded to four stalls located in Singapore hospitals, promoting a culture of giving and reading among Singaporeans.

To date, Project Dignity has trained and empowered 2,900 disabled and disadvantaged individuals, placing 2,500 of them in gainful employment positions¹⁰. The innovative approach and significant social impact of Project Dignity have gained recognition and awards in Singapore over the years. In 2019, Project Dignity expanded its Dignity Kitchen operations to Hong Kong, aiming to create a more equitable and supportive environment in both markets. This expansion highlights the scalability and replicability of their programs, furthering their mission to empower PWDs across various regions.

Empowering PWDs in Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, the number of PWDs has increased steadily. As of 2013, there were 578,600 PWDs, accounting for 8.1% of the total population, a 60% surge from 2007. Unfortunately, PWDs in Hong Kong face higher challenges in the job market, with an unemployment rate of 6.7% among those actively seeking employment in 2013. This rate was almost double the rate of the general working-age population¹¹.

Recognizing this situation, Dignity Kitchen has emerged as a prominent organization committed to empowering PWDs in Hong Kong. It strives to create an environment that fosters equity and support for this marginalized group.

Dignity Kitchen

Located at 618 Shanghai Street in Mong Kok, Dignity Kitchen occupies the second floor of a restored pre-war tenement building. The vibrant food stalls are painted in a classic dark green reminiscent of the street food scene of Hong Kong in the 1950s and 60s. Adding to the unique ambiance, artist Apple Tong, who was born with a congenital hearing impairment, created mural paintings depicting old Hong Kong while nostalgic red lampshades adorn the space.

Dignity Kitchen takes pride in its diverse workforce. It currently employs around 67 individuals, 54 of whom face various forms of physical or intellectual disabilities. This inclusive team encompasses individuals from different age groups and backgrounds, fostering a rich and supportive work environment¹². In 2021, Dignity Kitchen achieved a revenue of over HKD 9 million (equivalent to USD 1.17 million), demonstrating its success in creating meaningful employment opportunities.

“I prefer an office-based role due to my physical challenges, but I have struggled to find a suitable job. Here [at Dignity Kitchen], I receive extensive training in the catering industry and [I] am thrilled that I can work as a clerk in the office or double up as a cashier during busy hours.” –

Alison Fung, Trainee, Dignity Kitchen

Project Dignity leverages its expertise in the hospitality industry to create unique dining experiences at its Dignity Kitchen. By collaborating with hotels, restaurants, and event organizers, Dignity Kitchen can tap into a vast customer base and open doors for expansion. Dignity Kitchen has initiated pilot schemes to expand its impact. For instance, in early February 2022, they partnered with Cordis Hotel to launch a food delivery service staffed by individuals in wheelchairs.

Dignity Avatar

A new initiative aims to create job opportunities for paraplegic individuals who may be homebound. These individuals can serve as ambassadors, introducing various stalls, guiding customers, and assisting with cashier duties.

Hong Kong Food Culture

Food unites people across cultures, and Hong Kong is no exception. Hong Kongers share a deep passion for their street food culture. From spicy fishballs and crunchy egglettes to chewy cheung fun and pungent stinky tofu, these affordable street food delights satisfy hunger pangs without denting wallets. Since the 1950s, the city's comfort food has been characterized as ready-to-eat snacks and drinks sold by street hawkers from mobile food carts. During its peak in 1949, there were an estimated 70,000 or more street hawkers in Hong Kong¹³. This food culture has not only provided livelihoods for many unemployed individuals¹⁴, but it has also created a vibrant culinary scene. As hawker licenses expired, street hawkers transitioned into permanent restaurant spaces, ensuring the continuation of beloved local street food in a more permanent setting.

With 12,000 restaurants and a large number of bars, Hong Kong has long been recognized as a global culinary capital¹⁵ (Exhibit 1). Locals greatly value high-quality F&B offerings and enjoy dining out with friends, families, and business associates. Given the long working hours and limited kitchen space in many homes, eating out has become prevalent in Hong Kong. The convenience, variety, and competitive pricing of dining options cater to the preferences of consumers. The city's significant influx of 56 million visitors annually likewise generates substantial demand for its culinary delights. In Hong Kong, the love for food transcends boundaries, making it a destination where culinary experiences flourish and bring people together.

Exhibit 1. Number of licensed restaurant in Hong Kong

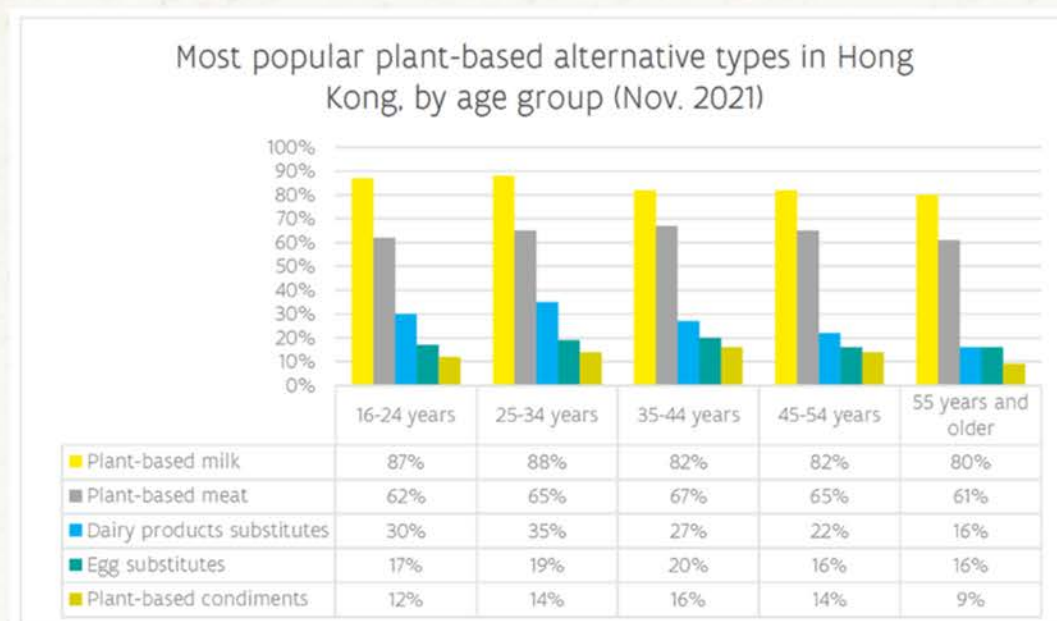


The Rising Trend Toward Healthy Food, Delivery Services, and Social Responsibility in Hong Kong

Healthy Food

Consumer preferences are shifting toward healthier and more conscious food choices, including functional and organic options. The Hong Kong government continues to promote healthy living campaigns, reinforcing consumer awareness about the importance of a nutritious diet. Coupled with increased media exposure, consumer health consciousness is expected to remain strong, driving the demand for healthier food options.

Moreover, a growing number of consumers are adopting a “flexitarian” diet, where they reduce their consumption of meat, dairy, and eggs for health, environmental, and ethical reasons. A 2021 survey revealed that approximately 65% of respondents in Hong Kong have tried plant-based alternatives to animal-based products¹⁶. This has led to a significant 36% growth in the plant-based F&B sector in 2020.

Figure 1. Plant-based Alternatives (Source: Statista)

Delivery Service

The popularity of food delivery services has surged in Hong Kong, driven by smartphone use, user-friendly apps, and the desire for convenience. The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated this trend, with major players like Foodpanda (<https://www.foodpanda.hk>) and Deliveroo (<https://deliveroo.hk>) dominating 97% of the city's food delivery services¹⁵.

Social Responsibility

Consumer inclination to support socially responsible businesses is growing. Enterprises such as Project Dignity can capitalize on this trend by offering high-quality products and services while emphasizing their mission to empower PWDs. This approach can attract socially conscious customers and businesses seeking socially responsible partnerships.

Moreover, a growing number of consumers are adopting a “flexitarian” diet, where they reduce their consumption of meat, dairy, and eggs for health, environmental, and ethical reasons. A 2021 survey revealed that approximately 65% of respondents in Hong Kong have tried plant-based alternatives to animal-based products¹⁶. This has led to a significant 36% growth in the plant-based F&B sector in 2020.

“Hong Kong people have a big heart. Some customers pledged their entire government cash subsidy received in 2020 to work with Dignity Kitchen in packing and distributing meal boxes for the poor and needy. [Additionally] many corporations engage their staff in volunteering work to fulfill CSR responsibilities.” – **Koh Seng Choon, Founder, and Executive Director**

What's Next?

Looking ahead, Project Dignity is embarking on an exciting journey of growth, expanding its business model and operations into new markets across the Asia-Pacific region. Building upon its success and impact in Hong Kong, Project Dignity is determined to establish its presence in diverse markets by forging strategic partnerships. It aims to extend its empowering mission, creating opportunities and fostering dignity for PWDs to flourish. The future holds immense potential as Project Dignity paves the way for greater inclusivity and empowerment throughout the region.

Discussion Questions

1. Evaluate the expansion strategies adopted by Project Dignity in Hong Kong. What are the key economic, cultural, and social factors that contributed to the success of Project Dignity in Hong Kong?
2. In your opinion, what are some potential untapped markets or regions that Project Dignity could consider expanding into in the Asia-Pacific region? Discuss the factors that make these markets attractive for the organization.
3. Discuss the potential benefits and risks associated with expanding a social enterprise to a different country in the Asia-Pacific region.
4. How can Project Dignity ensure the sustainability and scalability of its business model as it grows into new markets? Explore strategies from business, environmental, and social perspectives to support sustainable growth.

Endnotes

- ¹ The Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions, <https://www.asiapacificforum.net/>.
- ² The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (2022), *“A three-decade journey towards inclusion: Assessing the state of disability-inclusive development in Asia and the Pacific..”*
- ³ United Nations, *“Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.”*
- ⁴ Pacific Islands Forum, *“Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2016-2025,”* <https://www.forumsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/PFRPD.pdf>.
- ⁵ UNESCO (2015), *“Global Monitoring Report: Education for All 2000-2015: Achievements and Challenges.”*
- ⁶ UNESCO (2018), *“Education and disability: Analysis of data for Asia-Pacific countries,”* <https://bangkok.unesco.org/content/education-and-disability-analysis-data-asia-pacific-countries>.
- ⁷ Census and Statistics Department (2021), *“Special Topics Report No. 63 - Persons with disabilities and chronic diseases,”* https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/data/stat_report/product/C0000055/att/B11301632021XXXXB0100.pdf.
- ⁸ YP Readers (2022), *“Your Voice: How Hong Kong neglects its disabled community,”* <https://www.scmp.com/yp/discover/your-voice/letters-editors/article/3161694/your-voice-how-hong-kong-neglects-its>.
- ⁹ Project Dignity Pte. Ltd., <https://projectdignity.sg/>.
- ¹⁰ Tara Sobti (Aug 2022), *“Koh Seng Choon’s social enterprise dignity kitchen is providing culinary training for people with disabilities,”* <https://www.tatlerasia.com/dining/tastemakers/koh-seng-choon-dignity-kitchen-interview>
- ¹¹ Equal Opportunities Commission (2021), *“Equality for Diverse Abilities in Hong Kong,”* <https://www.eoc.org.hk/EOC/Upload/DiscriminationLaws/OtherResources/Diverse%20Ability%20Equality-Eng%20%28Aug%202021%29.pdf>.
- ¹² Invest Hong Kong (2022). Hawker Food Haven for Everyone: Dignity Kitchen helps Hong Kong’s disadvantaged make a living by dishing up favorite Singaporean staples. <https://www.investhk.gov.hk/sites/default/files/2022.01-dignitykitchen-en.pdf>.
- ¹³ South China Morning Post, *“Closing time: How Hong Kong’s hawkers face a struggle to survive,”* <http://multimedia.scmp.com/hawkers/>.
- ¹⁴ South China Morning Post (2019), *“The hawkers of Hong Kong and Los Angeles: two cities, two very different stories,”* <https://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/long-reads/article/3001878/hawkers-hong-kong-and-los-angeles-two-cities-two>.
- ¹⁵ Flanders (2022), *“The Food & Beverage Market in Hong Kong,”* https://www.flandersinvestmentandtrade.com/export/sites/trade/files/market_studies/The%20Food%20and%20Beverage%20market%20in%20Hong%20Kong.pdf.
- ¹⁶ Rakuten Insight (2021), *“Food & Nutrition: Share of respondents in Hong Kong who consumed plant-based food alternatives as of November 2021.”*

Beautiful Coffee: Seeding the Beauty of Fair Trade

Dr. Ho Yan Kwan wrote this case solely to provide material for class discussion. The author may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to ensure confidentiality.

Copyright ©2022, Dr. Ho Yan Kwan.

First version: 2023-08-04.

Like millions of agricultural producers globally, Wayne Allum dedicates his days in Australia to cultivating crops such as tomatoes, cabbages, and spring onions. A nearly ideal growing season would typically be cause for celebration among farmers like Allum. However, he frets about his financial future. “It is a hard game sending your stuff to the market and not knowing what you are going to get for it. It is stressful and disheartening,” says Allum. “Prices were terrible compared to what it costs you to grow them, get them picked, grade them, and send them to the markets.” Unfortunately, Allum’s experience is far from unique.

At the 2003 World Trade Organization ministerial in Cancun, Lee Kyung Hae, a farmer and activist, tragically took his own life in protest. “Uncontrolled multinational corporations and a small number of big World Trade Organization (WTO) members are leading the undesirable globalization that is inhumane, environmentally degrading, farmer killing, and undemocratic,” Lee declared before his death. The agricultural workforce has long been among the most marginalized and exploited, treated as a resource to be used for profit. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations¹, nearly 80% of farmworkers worldwide live in poverty, earning less than USD 1.25 per day, and lack access to basic social security and protections.

Multinationals, such as Kraft Foods, Unilever, and Nestle, hold significant market power, allowing them to create a global oligopoly. These corporations often drive up their selling prices while pushing down the buying prices for farm producers, extracting substantial profits from the food economy. Given the power imbalance between these food giants and agricultural producers, small and medium-sized farmers, with limited negotiating leverage, struggle to obtain fair prices and incomes for their crops. Consequently, these farmers receive lower payments in wholesale markets and face difficulties in covering their expenses, frequently resulting in poverty and hardships.

Fair Trade in the World

Engaging in fair trade is a simple yet powerful act that can help lift farmworkers out of poverty and significantly improve the lives of some of the world's most marginalized and exploited populations. The World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) defines fair trade as “a trading partnership based on dialog, transparency, and respect that seeks greater equity in international trade”². Fair trade is a global movement aimed at promoting ethical and sustainable consumption while ensuring that small-scale farm producers can access export markets that offer fair prices for their products. Common fair trade certified products include coffee, tea, cocoa, bananas, wine, and cotton. In 2017, global sales of fair trade certified products reached nearly USD 9.2 billion, with around 1.7 million farmworkers from 1,599 producer organizations (Exhibit 1) across 74 countries participating in fair trade³. Most of these farmworkers are located in low-income and lower-middle-income countries in Africa and the Middle East.

Although the global fair trade market is still relatively small, constituting less than 0.1% of all goods traded internationally, it is gaining momentum in the Asia-Pacific region. An increasing number of advocates, nonprofit organizations, and social enterprises are demonstrating their commitment to the cause. For example, Beautiful Coffee is a fair trade pioneer in South Korea.

Beautiful Coffee: Beautiful Foundation Offshoot

Founded in 2002, Beautiful Coffee (<http://beautifulcoffee.org/>) is one of South Korea's pioneering social enterprises that fully incorporates fair trade principles across its business and supply chains. Driven by a mission to be the passionate 1% community striving to make the world a better place, Beautiful Coffee has been actively involved in the fair trade market by offering fair trade certified products and enhancing public awareness about fair trade through educational initiatives. This enterprise supports small and medium-sized agricultural producers, providing them with opportunities for self-sufficiency and improving their standard of living.

Originally, Beautiful Coffee began as the fair trade bureau of Beautiful Store (<http://www.beautifulstore.org/>), which operates as an extension of Beautiful Foundation. Beautiful Foundation⁴ (<https://beautifulfund.org/>), established in 2000, is a leading citizen-led nonprofit organization in South Korea that champions philanthropy. The foundation values the power of sharing and aims to integrate this ethos into daily life to foster a thriving society. It believes that a just and prosperous society is founded on the passionate contributions and concerns of individuals who help the underprivileged. The foundation's notable “1% Sharing” campaign has successfully raised charitable giving in South Korea by promoting the joy of giving and offering various donation channels embedded in

everyday life, such as contributing 1% of income, birthday donations, and sharing skills and talents.

In 2014, Beautiful Coffee legally separated from its parent organization, Beautiful Store, becoming an independent social enterprise dedicated to cultivating a sustainable world by transforming trading structures and social practices⁵.

Business Domain of Beautiful Coffee

Beautiful Coffee adheres strictly to the fair trade principles established by the WFTO. By maintaining a long-term cooperative structure, Beautiful Coffee ensures that small farm producers receive fair wages and a social premium, guaranteeing their sustainable livelihoods. Committed to its mission of “changing trade to change the world,” Beautiful Coffee is actively involved in fair trade business development and partnerships, as well as offering educational programs aimed at making the world a better place.

Beautiful Coffee operates as a wholesale and retail business, providing a diverse range of fair trade products, including coffee, chocolate, tea, snacks, and sugar, catering to individual consumers and corporate members alike. Furthermore, trade and business development constitute a major part of the company’s operations.

Sale of Fair Trade Products Online and through Beautiful Partners

Beautiful Coffee advocates for ethical consumption and encourages consumers to buy fair trade products. The company first imported fair trade green coffee beans from Nepal in 2006, introducing them as “Gift of Himalaya,” followed by “Mount Blend” and “Gift of Andes.” Beautiful Coffee categorizes its offerings based on their origin: the Himalayas (Asia), the Andes (South America), and Kilimanjaro (Africa). Their coffee product range includes coffee beans, single bag/drip bags, premium instant coffee, and cold brew coffee. They have also expanded their product line to include other fair trade products, such as chocolate, tea, nuts, and sugar, sourced from agricultural partners in Nepal, Peru, Uganda, and Indonesia, all sold at fair prices in line with fair trade standards. From 2006 to 2015, Beautiful Coffee imported around 626 tons of fair trade certified products, trading with 10 countries. The company’s total sales reached around USD 30 million by 2017.

Beautiful Coffee distributes its products through diverse channels, that is, directly through its online mall and indirectly through distributor partners. In addition, the company collaborates with Beautiful Partners, organizations that share its fair trade values and are committed to being long-term fair trade circulation bodies. Currently, Beautiful Coffee has more than 500 Beautiful Partners, including offices, cafés, and retail stores.

By partnering with corporations and offices, Beautiful Coffee also sells and distributes its products directly to corporate employees and conducts lectures on fair trade and fair trade products. Customers can also purchase Beautiful Coffee products at discount and convenience stores, such as HomePlus, 7-Eleven, and FamilyMart. Notably, 7-Eleven was the first convenience store to sell fair trade coffee; in 2009, it committed to donating 1% of its Beautiful Coffee sales to promote fair trade under the “Supporting Fair Trade Agreement⁶.” In 2017, KTH’s K-Shopping partnered with Beautiful Coffee to promote fair trade by selling the company’s “Fair Trade Gift Set” on its K-Shopping TV application and online mall.

Beautiful Coffee Cafés

In 2008, Beautiful Coffee launched its first café in Anguk, Seoul, offering a menu that features organic ingredients and fair trade coffee and tea. The café stands out in South Korea because all its products are fair trade certified, sourced from partners in Nepal, Peru, and Uganda. Here, customers can enjoy their coffee while learning about the principles of fair trade. Beautiful Coffee ensures stringent quality control, providing freshly roasted coffee within 24 hours of roasting. With its commitment to high-quality organic coffee and its unique fair trade nature, Beautiful Coffee has experienced rapid growth. By 2018, the company had expanded its presence in South Korea, operating a total of six directly owned cafés.

Producer Partnership and Education Programs

Beautiful Coffee engages in the fair trade market to sell products, actively support farm producers, and raise national awareness about fair trades.

Producer Partnership Programs. Beautiful Coffee collaborates with producer cooperatives to work closely with farmers, helping them overcome poverty. The company initiated its first producer partnership in 2006 with the Nepalese Coffee Cooperative, introducing Gift of Himalayas, and began importing chocolate from Peruvian partners in 2010. By 2017, Beautiful Coffee had established long-term fair trade partnerships with farmer cooperatives in Nepal, Peru, Uganda, and Indonesia.

These producer partners receive a predetermined minimum price that covers the costs of sustainable production, as well as a social premium aimed at funding community development projects, including education, housing, training, and healthcare programs. For instance, 10% of sales from Gift of Himalayas are allocated to development programs for producers in Nepal. In addition, the company conducts training and development programs to help coffee producers achieve better harvests and acquire skills in wet processing, cupping, and roasting. In 2015, Beautiful Coffee organized funding activities to support and aid its partners affected by the Nepal earthquake.

Fair Trade Education Programs. Beautiful Coffee leads public campaigns and organizes educational programs to promote fair trade awareness. Since 2008, it has participated in the Korea Fair Trade Festival Outdoor Event. In 2011, the company teamed up with six nongovernment fair trade organizations to form the Korea Council of Fair Trade Organizations, hosting exhibits and policy debates to advocate for fair trade among legislators and within educational circles in Seoul. One of its notable educational initiatives launched in 2012 is the “Fair Trade Class,” a global citizenship education program aimed at promoting fair trade among South Korean youth. This program empowers teenagers to organize and lead fair trade events. In 2012–2018, over 31,000 students from 274 schools have participated in the Fair Trade Class and its related activities.

Recent Developments

Going Abroad

Beautiful Coffee is currently concentrating its efforts in Nepal, investing in projects such as cooperative leadership training and quality improvement programs. To enhance market penetration and facilitate information sharing, Beautiful Coffee expanded globally by establishing its first local business base in Nepal in 2014. Beautiful Coffee Nepal⁷ serves as a resource center for coffee subsector development and as a business platform where producer partners can share information with buyers and explore additional sales channels. With the support of the Korea International Cooperation Agency, Beautiful Coffee Nepal has implemented a coffee development program in Sindhupalchok, providing technical and financial support to producers in the country. For example, in 2018, the company organized free barista training for the youth of the Umbrella Foundation and other underprivileged sectors. “I believe that the youth of any country are the biggest asset, so I aim to engage young people to be passionate about coffee and motivate them to return to their villages to improve the coffee growing process,” said Kishan Gurung, the manager of Beautiful Coffee Nepal Café.

Beautiful Coffee Union

In addition to operating its directly managed cafés, Beautiful Coffee established the “Beautiful Coffee Union” to further promote ethical consumption and sustainable livelihoods through coffee. The company collaborates with individuals interested in the fair trade movement to set up co-branded fair trade cafés. Several Beautiful Coffee Union cafés have been opened across South Korea, including Beautiful Coffee Union Kusu Chino (Seoul), Beautiful Coffee Union Best Bean (Jeonju), and Beautiful Coffee Union Book Cafe Breath (Gwangju).

Is Beautiful Coffee Prepared for Future Challenges?

Promising but Highly Competitive Korean Coffee Market

Coffee, in its various forms, is among the most widely consumed beverages in Korea. Having a cup of coffee has become an integral part of Koreans' daily routine, with over 2.5 million 60-kg bags consumed in 2020, translating to roughly one cup per day per person (**Exhibit 2**).

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Korea's coffee market has continued to grow, supported by the ongoing development of coffee culture. Koreans are now one of the largest groups of coffee consumers globally. According to a 2019 report by KB Financial Group's Institute for Management Studies, Korea ranked third worldwide in coffee shop total sales, amounting to USD 4.3 billion, following the United States (USD 26.1 billion) and China (USD 5.1 billion). Coffee bean imports, including green and roasted beans, have increased annually by an average of 5% since 2015. In 2020, the sales value of coffee products in Korea reached approximately KRW 2.72 trillion (about USD 2.08 billion), with packaged liquid coffee being the most sold type and convenience stores serving as the most common purchase channels.

Young urban professionals have played a pivotal role in the coffee industry's success. They are generally keen to explore new ways of enjoying coffee, shifting their preferences from inexpensive instant coffee to premium brewed varieties and other coffee products. "[Coffee] consumers typically have a middle-class background and have been exposed to the lifestyles in Western countries, such as meeting with friends at cafés via social media," said Herbert Yum, a research manager at Euromonitor International. "Once they have adequate financial power, they just start realizing their lifestyle goals, including increasing their coffee consumption."

The outlook for Korea's coffee industry is positive, with an anticipated market value of KRW 9 trillion (USD 7.5 billion) by 2023 (**Exhibit 3**). The surge in coffee consumption has led to a crowded market, with the number of chain and standalone coffee shops increasing from 12,400 in 2011 to 83,300 in 2021⁸. In 2020, Ediya Coffee, a domestic chain, operated 2,399 franchises across the country, followed by A Twosome Place with over 1,000 outlets, and Mega Coffee with 798 outlets⁹. However, coffee giants and newcomers may find the market highly saturated, given the intense competition and rising operational costs due to increased minimum wages.

Starbucks is currently the largest coffee chain in Korea, with sales revenue of around KRW 1.5 trillion (USD 1.14 billion) in 2018. A Twosome Place is second with sales of KRW 274.25 billion (USD 209.36 million). Despite having the most cafes, Ediya Coffee ranks fourth in sales revenue, around KRW 200 billion (USD 152.68 million)¹⁰.

Given these circumstances, Beautiful Coffee encounters significant challenges in the highly competitive Korean coffee market, competing with numerous rivals including global chains such as Starbucks, A Twosome Place, and Ediya Coffee, as well as local coffee shops typically run by individual operators. The fierce competition has forced coffee businesses to innovate and differentiate themselves. The question remains: How can Beautiful Coffee gear up and prepare for the future while continuing to support the fair trade movement?

Government Regulations Governing Caffeine Products

The coffee industry is encountering challenges as the government strengthens regulations aimed at protecting children from the harmful effects of caffeine and promoting sustainable development. In 2013, to prevent children and teenagers from consuming excessive caffeine due to the demanding and competitive education system in Korea, high-caffeine drinks—including energy drinks and coffee products—were banned in schools nationwide. The regulations were tightened further in 2018 when coffee vending machines and kiosks, previously permitted for adult teaching staff, were also banned in schools. Furthermore, starting in November 2015, advertisements for high-caffeine beverages were prohibited in media outlets such as television, radio, and print.

In response to increasing consumer demand for ethical consumption and sustainable development, the South Korean government implemented strict regulations on plastic use in 2018, preventing coffee shops from serving drinks in plastic cups, except for take-out customers. These measures compelled coffee shops and cafés to adopt innovative packaging solutions that align with the sustainability movement.

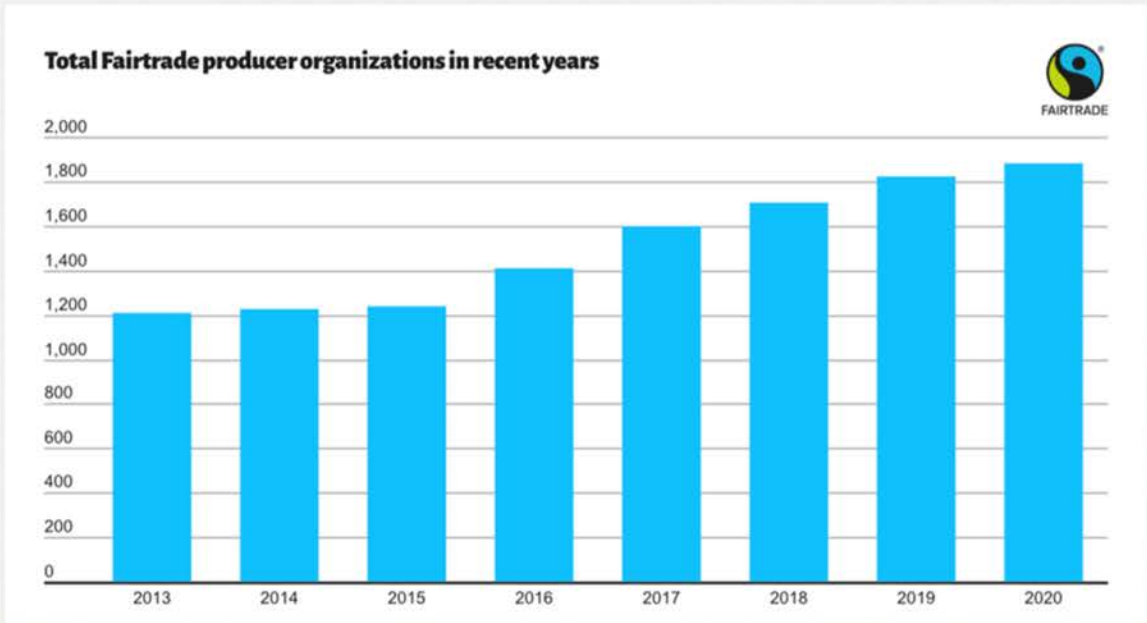
Moreover, the South Korean Ministry of Food and Drug Safety introduced new labeling rules for coffee and tea. Specifically, it mandated that coffee shops and product packaging display a “high caffeine content” warning, accompanied by the cautionary statement, “Children, pregnant women, and those vulnerable to caffeine must be cautious of intake,” for liquid foods and drinks containing 0.15 mg or more of caffeine per mL¹¹. These standards applied to brewed and processed coffee, as well as locally produced and imported products. Merchants, coffee shops, and fast-food restaurants were expected to adhere to these policies and regulations. How should Beautiful Coffee respond to such policies?

Debate on Fair Trade: Is Fair Trade Really Fair?

Fair trade practices have faced criticism for not effectively aiding the poorest farmers, and some arguments have emerged against the system. Producer organizations, especially small farmers, often feel burdened by the costs associated with meeting fair trade standards and obtaining certification. By the end of 2011, producer cooperatives were required to pay EUR 525 for certification and an annual inspection fee. The initial inspection fees for small producer cooperatives ranged from EUR 1,430 to EUR 3,470, depending on their size. Such high administrative expenses can negate the benefits of the fair prices offered to producers for their crops. An executive at Fedecocagua, the largest fair trade cooperative in Guatemala, noted, “After paying for the cooperative’s employees and programs, nothing remained of the fair trade premiums to be passed on to the individual farmers.”

Moreover, the lack of monitoring mechanisms has been criticized. Fair trade does not monitor the profits that companies in the retail sector earn from selling fair trade goods. Corporations importing these goods in wealthy countries can generate significant profits but return very little to the exporting cooperatives. Retailers typically retain around 18% of their profit, whereas producers receive only 2%. What does the future hold for fair and sustainable coffee in the Asia-Pacific region? Could pursuing fair trade and sustainable coffee serve as a differentiation strategy for Beautiful Coffee?

Exhibit 1. Total Fairtrade Producer Organizations in Recent Years



Source: Fairtrade International, <https://www.fairtrade.net/about/producer-networks>, accessed June 2022.

Note: This chart shows the growth in the total number of Fairtrade certified producer organizations (combining small producer organizations and hired labor organizations) over the past few years.

Exhibit 2. Coffee Consumption Per Capita

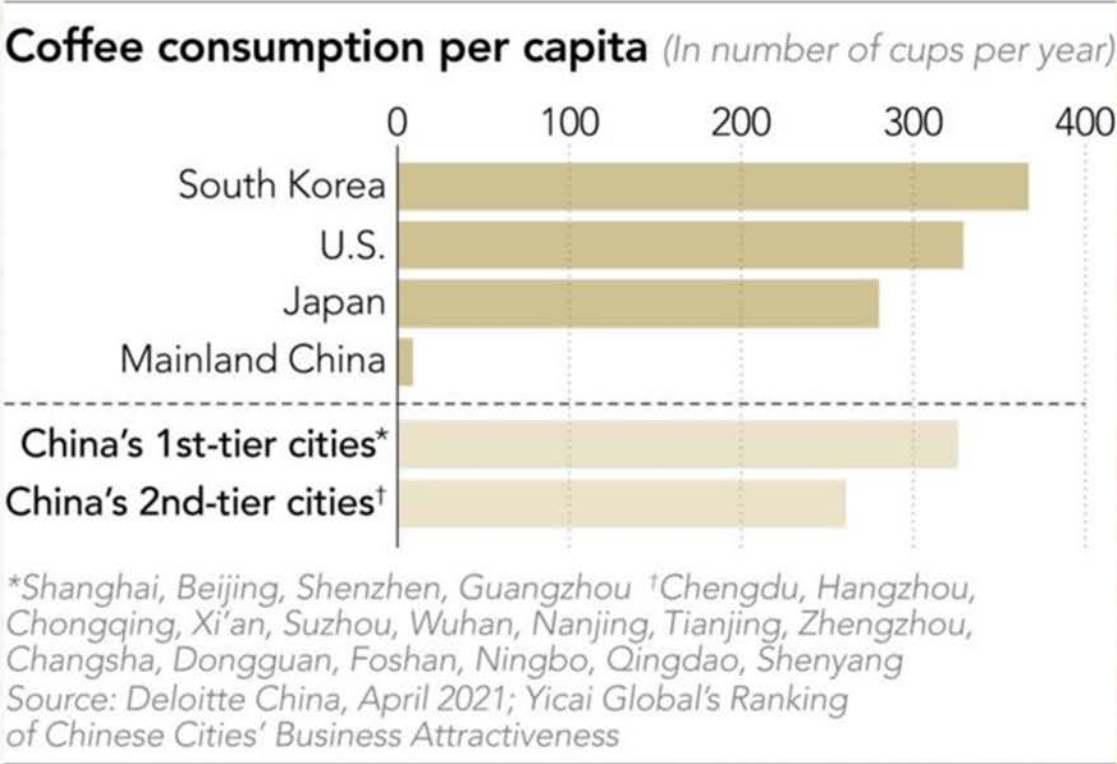
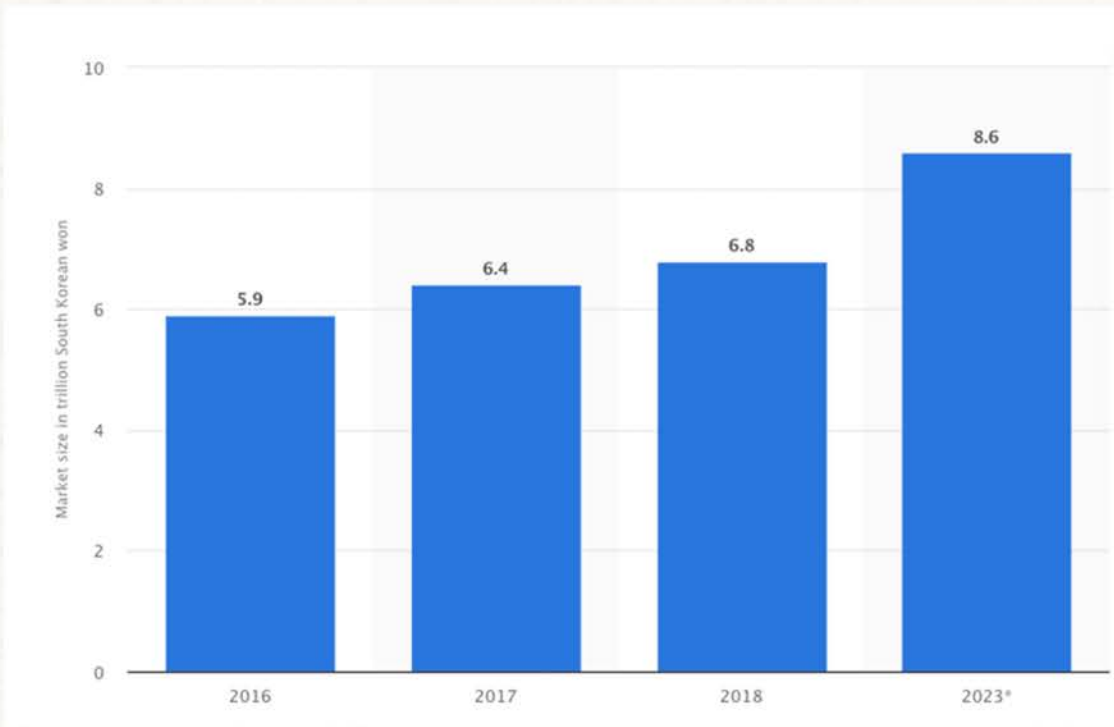


Exhibit 3. Market Size of Coffee Industry in South Korea from 2016 to 2023 (in trillion South Korean won)



Source: Statista, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1040532/south-korea-coffee-industry-market-size/>, accessed June 2022.

Endnotes

- ¹ Tharanga Yakupitiyage, “Food and Agriculture: The Invisible, Hungry Hand,” October 2018, IPS-Inter Press Service News Agency, <http://www.ipsnews.net/2018/10/invisible-hungry-hand/>, accessed July 2022.
- ² “Definition of Fair Trade,” World Fair Trade Organization, <https://wfto.com/who-we-are>, accessed June 2022.
- ³ Fairtrade for businesses, Fairtrade International, <https://www.fairtrade.net/act/fairtrade-for-businesses>, accessed May 2022.
- ⁴ Beautiful Foundation, <https://beautifulfund.org/>.
- ⁵ Beautiful Coffee, <http://www.beautifulcoffee.org>.
- ⁶ Cho, H.J., Kim, K.H., Ryu, S.M., & Moon, C.W. (2012). The Distribution Strategy of a Representative Fair Trade Organization in Korea: The Case of Beautiful Coffee, Journal of Business Case Studies, 8(1), 73-86.
- ⁷ Beautiful Coffee Nepal, <https://www.beautifulcoffee.org.np/>
- ⁸ Yonhap, “South Korea's coffee imports hit new high in 2021,” March 2022, Korea Herald, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20220321000106>, accessed July 2022.
- ⁹ “Coffee market in South Korea - statistics & facts”, January 2022, Statista, <https://www.statista.com/topics/4667/cafe-industry-and-coffee-drinkers-in-south-korea/#dossierKeyfigures>, accessed July 2022.
- ¹⁰ Tae-jun Kang, “South Korea’s Coffee Craze,” November 2019, Diplomat Media Inc., <https://thediplomat.com/2019/11/south-koreas-coffee-craze/>, accessed June 2022.
- ¹¹ Pearly Neo, “High Caffeine Warning: South Korea Enforces Mandatory Warning Labels and Tightens Rules for Coffee and Tea,” September 2020, William Reed Ltd, <https://www.foodnavigator-asia.com/Article/2020/09/29/High-caffeine-warnings-South-Korea-enforces-mandatory-warning-labels-and-tightens-rules-for-coffee-and-tea>, accessed June 2022.

Capala's Journey Toward Inclusive Career Development in Hong Kong

Dr. Ho Yan Kwan wrote this case to provide material for class discussion. The author may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to ensure confidentiality.

Copyright ©2023, Dr. Ho Yan Kwan.

First version: 2023-08-15.

Career Development Challenges for Youth in Hong Kong

The dynamic and competitive nature of the job market, coupled with evolving industry trends and technological advancements, requires individuals to take a proactive approach to career planning and development.

Career development among youth plays a crucial role in shaping their professional growth and future success. In 2021, the unemployment rate for Hong Kong youth aged 15–24 years stood at a high level of 13.1%, which is more than twice larger than the overall unemployment figure of 5.7%¹. Meanwhile, the cumulative income growth for Hong Kong youth between 2011 and 2021 was approximately 60%, which is broadly in line with that for the overall population.

The Hong Kong youth face a multitude of obstacles in navigating their professional journey. First, the mainstream education system in Hong Kong places excessive emphasis on academic achievements, often resulting in school leavers being ill-prepared for employment². According to the 2021 Population Census, 393,058 school leavers aged 15–29 years had attained senior secondary education or its equivalent (from Form 4 to below sub-degree), representing 5.54% of the local population³. The focus on academics can result in a lack of career aspirations and employment goals and a vague understanding of personal abilities and interests. A 2022 report by Hang Seng Bank revealed that only 30% of high school students actively seek career-related information to assist with their future planning⁴. Consequently, a significant disparity exists between the expectations of companies and the preparedness of young employees.

Furthermore, due to the limited capacity of publicly funded universities, only one-third (32%) of secondary school graduates (with an annual average total of 56,200) have the opportunity to enroll in full-time undergraduate degree courses at these universities^{5,6}. Therefore, effective career exploration is an important aspect of youth career development. With numerous career options available, young individuals require guidance and support to understand their interests, values, and talents and align them with suitable career paths. Without proper guidance, they may struggle in identifying and making informed decisions about their future paths.

Second, the Hong Kong youth often lack the necessary job search strategies and interview skills, placing them at a disadvantage in a highly competitive job market. Understanding how to effectively market oneself, tailor resumés and cover letters, and prepare for interviews are all crucial, particularly for young individuals with weak qualifications.

Third, school leavers typically lack work experience, which may prevent them from entering the job market and limit them to part-time or short-term jobs. Many employers in Hong Kong have observed that young employees often lack the skills required for a job. According to McKinsey⁷, Hong Kong is lagging behind its regional peers, such as Singapore and South Korea, in terms of providing the education and training demanded by the market. Therefore, securing internships and gaining practical work experience are crucial for the career development of Hong Kong youth. For instance, internships provide them with opportunities to apply their academic knowledge, develop their professional networks, and acquire industry-specific skills, thereby enhancing their employability.

These challenges should not only be recognized but also actively addressed to empower the youth and help them enhance their career prospects, achieve personal fulfillment, and contribute to the dynamic workforce of the region.

Capala Career Paths Lab and Its Offerings

Capala Career Paths Laboratory, also known as Capala, is a Hong Kong-based social enterprise that strives to address the aforementioned challenges. This enterprise offers human resources consulting and youth training services to address the knowledge and skill demands of the 21st century. Capala offers a range of comprehensive career workshops tailored for unemployed youth, students, and working professionals⁸.

Capala's workshops cover various aspects of career development, including career exploration, CV writing, interview preparation, job search strategies, and internship workshops. These workshops are designed to equip their participants with the necessary skills and knowledge for their career growth and success. What sets Capala apart is its innovative approach, which incorporates card games and exploration tools that offer new alternatives to traditional career personality tests. By combining professional training with experiential activities and games, Capala inspires participants to explore their career interests, set clear workplace objectives, and craft personalized career plans.

Applying the Double Diamond Model in Designing Innovative Offerings

Capala utilizes the Double Diamond model as a framework to facilitate the process of problem solving and innovation. The Double Diamond model is a design thinking approach that helps organizations understand and address complex challenges.

Here is how Capala incorporates the Double Diamond model into their work:

Discovery: During this phase, Capala places emphasis on understanding the needs and aspirations of their target participants, including unemployed youth, students, and working professionals. The enterprise conducts research and engages in conversations to gain insights into the specific challenges and opportunities being faced by their clients.

Definition: Following the discovery phase, Capala identifies key patterns and trends based on the collected information and defines the specific problem areas that need to be addressed. This step allows Capala to clearly define the goals and objectives of their workshops and services.

Development: In this stage, Capala focuses on generating innovative ideas and potential solutions to the defined problems. The enterprise encourages creativity and collaboration among their team members and stakeholders. Through brainstorming sessions and ideation workshops, Capala aims to produce diverse and innovative approaches to career development and training.

Delivery: In this final stage, Capala transforms the selected ideas into practical solutions and interventions. Capala develops and delivers comprehensive career workshops that incorporate innovative card games, exploration tools, and experiential activities. For example, the Career Navigation Tool assists participants in exploring career paths and making informed decisions. This tool combines elements of gamification and self-reflection and guides participants through a step-by-step process to identify their interests, values, and goals and to empower them to shape their career journey.

Creating Social Value Through Empowering Youth and People with Disabilities

Capala is committed to training and empowering unemployed youth and individuals with disabilities into becoming facilitators and mentors in experiential activities to generate social value. To identify potential mentors, Capala reaches out to local communities and support networks, seeking out candidates who show an interest in mentoring. The selected candidates would then undergo a comprehensive training program organized by the enterprise. This training program covers various areas, including mentoring techniques, communication skills, facilitation skills, and an understanding of the activities' goals and objectives. Through this training, mentors acquire the essential knowledge, skills, and tools to effectively guide and engage participants throughout their experiential activities. By leveraging their strengths and newfound capabilities, mentors play a vital role in empowering participants and contributing to the overall success of the activities.

Recent Development of Capala: Addressing Social Inequality

Capala has been actively working toward promoting inclusivity in the realm of career development. One of its notable programs, “Equality Works,” offers workshops designed to cater to participants from diverse segments of society. These workshops aim to deepen the participants’ understanding of different careers, improve their self-confidence, and foster inclusive living.

Recognizing the lack of equal opportunities and support for disadvantaged groups in Hong Kong, Capala has embarked on an initiative to collaborate with three specific groups, namely, ethnic minorities, Special Educational Needs (SEN) youth students, and seniors, to address the social inequality in employment within Hong Kong.

(1) Ethnic Minorities

According to the Census and Statistics Department⁹, the number of ethnic minorities living in Hong Kong in 2021 reached 619,568, accounting for 8.4% of the total population. This figure corresponds to a 37.3% increase from 451,183 in 2011. Among this population, 72.9% were in their prime age range of 25–54 years. However, ethnic minorities often encounter racial discrimination and difficulties in finding employment opportunities¹⁰. A study conducted by the Chinese YMCA Hong Kong revealed that the ethnic minority youth experience discrimination during their job search¹¹. In addition, ethnic minority communities may have limited access to career guidance or training opportunities¹⁰. The majority (71.9%) of the employed ethnic minorities are engaged in elementary work⁹, which reflects the challenges that they face in their job selection, search, and acquisition.

One significant challenge for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong is the language barrier. In 2020, the Equal Opportunities Commission reported that South Asian minority candidates are less likely to be employed due to their race and limited proficiency in Chinese¹². Many job positions require fluency in English and Cantonese, and employers often perceive ethnic minorities as unable to communicate in Cantonese or write in Chinese, thus limiting their employment opportunities.

(2) SEN Youth

Young people with SEN, including those with autism spectrum disorders, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and visual/hearing impairment, often face significant difficulties in securing and maintaining employment. A survey conducted among SEN youth¹³ revealed that they experience disability-based discrimination in educational institutions and in the workplace.

According to data from the Census and Statistics Department in 2021, out of the those persons with disabilities living in Hong Kong, 73,100 (13.7%) held tertiary-education qualifications. However, only 17.6% (86,300) of these people aged 15 years and over were employed¹⁴. A 2015 survey by Heep Hong Society also highlighted this problem, showing that nearly 60% of young people with autism had previous employment experiences yet only 30% were able to retain their current or most recent job for a year or longer¹⁵.

One of the key challenges being faced by SEN youth is their lack of proper support and guidance when navigating the job-seeking process. They require personalized career counseling, mentoring, or vocational training that is tailored to their needs, but the available resources are often insufficient. Learning disabilities and communication difficulties with colleagues and supervisors can further compound these challenges. These difficulties are partly attributable to a lack of awareness and understanding among employers and the general public regarding the capabilities, skills, and potential of SEN youth. The absence of appropriate assessment tools to explore their career interests and the concerns of parents about the employment and integration of their children into the community further contribute to the complexities of this situation.

(3) Elderly

The elderly population in Hong Kong faces unique challenges, particularly concerning their mental health and social isolation. The fifth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic worsened these problems, with approximately 1 in 10 elderly individuals experiencing depressive symptoms¹⁶. Factors contributing to the mental health decline of the elderly include increased mental burden due to the pandemic and isolation resulting from the absence of relatives and friends. Therefore, providing the elderly with career options and opportunities becomes vital to improve their mental well-being. A survey conducted by Jockey Club in 2022 revealed that 54% of the respondents expressed a desire to re-enter the workforce after retirement, and over 60% expressed their strong willingness to remain active and preserve their social connections by rejoining the job market¹⁷.

To address this situation, the Labour Department implemented the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-Aged, which aims to encourage employers to hire individuals aged 60 years or above and provide them with on-the-job training. As an incentive, these employers will receive a monthly training allowance of up to HKD 5,000 per employee for 6–12 months¹⁸.

By addressing such challenges and providing tailored support, Capala strives to create a highly inclusive society where everyone has equal opportunities for career development and fulfillment.

Discussion Questions

1. Conduct a comprehensive analysis of Capala to identify its market opportunities and threats. Explore the external factors such as economic trends, technological advancements, regulatory changes, and cultural shifts that could potentially impact the growth of Capala.
2. Considering the three segment groups, which segment should Capala prioritize in the next three years, and what are the reasons behind this choice? (Evaluate the market potential, competitive landscape, and alignment with Capala's capabilities to determine the most promising segment for the enterprise's focus.)
3. Apply the Double Diamond model to outline Capala's strategic approach for the chosen segment.

Endnotes

- ¹ Census and Statistics Department (2022a), “Table E021: Unemployed Persons by Age and Sex (Table 2.1 in Quarterly Report on General Household Survey),” <https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?scode=200&pcode=D5250025>, accessed August 2023.
- ² The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups (2013), “Youth Study Series: A Study on Employment Difficulties and the Way Out for Young People,” https://yrc.hkfyg.org.hk/wp-content/uploads/sites/56/2021/10/YS48_Eng.pdf, accessed August 2023.
- ³ Census and Statistics Department (2021a), “Table B101: Population (Excluding Foreign Domestic Helpers) by Year, Age and Educational Attainment (Highest Level Completed),” https://www.census2021.gov.hk/tc/main_tables.html, accessed August 2023.
- ⁴ Hang Seng Bank (2022), “Over 80% of HK Senior Secondary Students Have Study and Career Ambitions, Yet Less Than One-Third Feel Adequately Prepared to Pursue Goals Pandemic major influence on young people’s future career preferences,” <https://www.hangseng.com/cms/ccd/eng/PDF/190722e.pdf>.
- ⁵ Education Bureau (2022), “Report on Secondary 6 Students’ Pathway Survey,” https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/about-edb/publications-stat/figures/S6_22.pdf, accessed August 2023.
- ⁶ University Grants Committee (2022), “Key Statistics on UGC-funded Universities,” <https://cdcf.ugc.edu.hk/cdcf/searchStatSiteReport.action>, accessed August 2023.
- ⁷ TodayOnline.com (2018). “Mind the gap: Hong Kong employers say youth don’t have right skills, employees say jobs don’t support growth,” <https://www.todayonline.com/world/mind-gap-hong-kong-employers-say-youth-dont-have-right-skills-employees-say-jobs-dont-support>.
- ⁸ Capala Career Paths Laboratory, <https://capala.com.hk/>.
- ⁹ Census and Statistics Department (2022b), “Thematic Report: Ethnic Minorities,” <https://www.census2021.gov.hk/doc/pub/21c-ethnic-minorities.pdf>.
- ¹⁰ Lingnan University (2018), “Job Seeking Practices of Ethnic Minority Youths in Hong Kong Evaluation of employment support services,” https://dpcwkl.n.hkcccla.org.hk/document/I08_10.pdf.

- ¹¹ Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong (2015), “Press Release: Colour is Still a Hindrance for Job Seekers,” https://www.ymca.org.hk/sites/ymca_main/files/research_report/Press%20Release%20The%20employment%20and%20recruitment%20of%20ethnic%20minorities.pdf.
- ¹² Equal Opportunities Commission (2020), “A Study on Education and Career Pathways of Ethnic Minority Youth in Hong Kong - Research Report,” https://www.eoc.org.hk/EOC/upload/ResearchReport/20200619_em.pdf, accessed August 2023.
- ¹³ Equal Opportunities Commission (2023), “EOC Releases Findings of Study on Effective Strategies to Facilitate School-to-work Transition of Young Persons with Disabilities in Hong Kong,” <https://www.eoc.org.hk/en/PressRelease/Detail/18539>.
- ¹⁴ Census and Statistics Department (2021b), “Social data collected via the General Household Survey: Special Topics Report No. 63 - Persons with disabilities and chronic diseases,” https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/data/stat_report/product/B1130121/att/B11301632021XXXXB0100.pdf.
- ¹⁵ Heep Hong (2016), “All-round “Star project” Helps Autistic youth Embark Their Career,” <https://www.heephong.org/f/publications/17066/Heep-Hong-Express-issue-48-english.pdf>.
- ¹⁶ The University of Hong Kong (2022), “Survey reveals over a third of older adults in Hong Kong suffered from emotional distress in the fifth wave of COVID-19,” <https://www.hku.hk/press/press-releases/detail/25189.html#:~:text=According%20to%20a%20study%2C%20about,depression%20or%20other%20major%20illnesses>, accessed August 2023.
- ¹⁷ Social Impact Fellows (2022), “Jockey Club Bounce Back Intergeneration Programme 2.0,” https://www.sif.com.hk/files/ugd/a36915_656a5e8736d04369b49ea75aa14c8e4d.pdf.
- ¹⁸ Information Services Department (2021), “Hong Kong Yearbook 2021 – Chapter 7 Employment,” <https://www.yearbook.gov.hk/2021/en/>.