Survey on the Attitudes of Hong Kong Youth towards Seeking Employment in Mainland China

13 January 2015
Study Objectives

1. To better understand the perception of willingness to seek employment in the Mainland among Hong Kong young people

2. To examine the factors for consideration of seeking employment in the Mainland

3. To provide data for future studies
BFRC commissioned the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies of the Chinese University of Hong Kong to conduct the survey.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date of survey:</strong></td>
<td>28 August 2014 – 27 September 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population:</strong></td>
<td>HK Youth aged 18 to 29 with no experience of working in mainland China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sampling method:</strong></td>
<td>Random sample telephone survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Successful samples:</strong></td>
<td>1,001 samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Successful response rate:</strong></td>
<td>44.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sampling error:</strong></td>
<td>±3.10% at 95% confidence level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weighting figures:</strong></td>
<td>Figures weighted based on the population aged 18 to 29 by sex and age released by the Census and Statistics Department at the mid-year of 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HK youth’s willingness to seek employment in the Mainland

- “Unwilling” : 64.7% (unwilling: 46.3%; very unwilling: 18.4%)
- “Willing” : 33.2% (willing: 30.9%; very willing: 2.3%)

Willingness to seek employment in the Mainland
Any actions to achieve the target of seeking job in the Mainland

- Those who are willing to seek job in the Mainland
  - No action: 85.1%; Having action: 14.9%
- All respondents – No action: 28.3%; Having action: 4.9%
Factors for consideration in seeking employment in the Mainland can be roughly divided into the following dimensions:

**Individual**
- “Personal ability”
- “Family and family members”
- “Social networks”

**Mainland China**
- “Economic prospects of mainland China”
- “Political prospects of mainland China”
- “Quality of life in mainland China”

**Hong Kong**
- “Economic prospects of Hong Kong”
- “Political prospects of Hong Kong”
- “Quality of life in Hong Kong”
Survey Findings (II): Factors for consideration in seeking employment in mainland China (continued)

- First three important factors related to mainland China (quality of life, political and economic prospects)
- When considering whether or not to work in mainland China, factors related to the Mainland are more important than those of Hong Kong
- For personal dimension, personal merit (relying on personal ability or academic qualifications) is more important than social networks (relying on others to help)
According to the results of Chi-square Test, the following aspects showed statistically significant relationships with respondents’ willingness to seek a job in the Mainland:

- evaluation of the future economic development of mainland China (optimistic or unoptimistic)
- evaluation of the future political development of mainland China (optimistic or unoptimistic)
- evaluation of own employment prospects in the Mainland (positive or negative)
- extent of advantage in seeking job in the Mainland when compared with mainlanders of the same age (yes or no)
- family support for the intention to seek employment in the Mainland (support or not support)
- social networks for asking for help in the Mainland (none, only a few, or some / many)
Survey Findings (III): Different factors affecting the willingness to seek employment in mainland China (continued)

Willingness to seek employment in the Mainland and evaluation of different aspects (%)

- **Future economic development of the Mainland**: Optimistic (38.0%) vs. Unoptimistic (21.1%)
- **Future political development of the Mainland**: Optimistic (48.4%) vs. Unoptimistic (30.5%)
- **Own employment prospects in the Mainland**: Positive (56.1%) vs. Negative (21.9%)
- **Advantage in seeking employment**: Some / A great (40.7%) vs. Not much / Not at all (27.8%)
- **Family Support**: Support (53.7%) vs. Not support (13.1%)
- **Social networks asking for help**: Some/Many (46.9%) vs. Only a few (32.1%) vs. None (25.8%)
Survey Findings (IV): Main reasons for willingness to seek employment in mainland China

- **Open-ended question** without default answers so the respondents could freely express their reasons for being willing to work in the Mainland
- **More than one answer** were allowed (i.e. Multiple Responses)
- The reasons can be classified into five categories:

  - **Reasons related to economic aspects of mainland China**: 87.2%
  - **Reasons related to personal aspects**: 17.3%
  - **Reasons related to Hong Kong**: 5.1%
  - **Reasons related to societal aspects of mainland China**: 3.2%
  - **Reasons related to political aspects of mainland China**: 0.8%
Survey Findings (IV): Main reasons for willingness to seek employment in mainland China (continued)

Reasons related to economic aspects of mainland China, for example:

- “Better economic prospects of mainland China / mainland China will be the economic centre in the future” (32.5%)
- “More job opportunities / easier to find suitable jobs in the Mainland” (28.6%)
- “More attractive salary and fringe benefits in the Mainland” (21.0%)

Reasons related to personal aspects, for example:

- “To accumulate work experience in the Mainland / to establish social networks in the Mainland” (9.9%)
Survey Findings (V): Main reasons for unwillingness to seek employment in mainland China

- **Open-ended question** without default answers so the respondents could freely express their reasons for being unwilling to find job in the Mainland
- **More than one answer** were allowed (i.e. Multiple Responses)
- The reasons can be classified into five categories:

  - Reasons related to societal aspects of mainland China: 50.9%
  - Reasons related to political aspects of mainland China: 29.6%
  - Reasons related to personal aspects: 22.1%
  - Reasons related to economic aspects of mainland China: 10.0%
  - Reasons related to Hong Kong: 9.5%
Survey Findings (V): Main reasons for unwillingness to seek employment in mainland China (continued)

Reasons related to societal aspects of mainland China, for example:
- “Not accustomed to living in mainland China” (18.1%)
- “Hold a negative image of society in the Mainland / the quality of life in mainland China is low” (15.1%)

Reasons related to political aspects of mainland China, for example:
- “Lack of confidence in the rule of law in the Mainland” (22.8%)

Reasons related to personal aspects, for example:
- “Do not want to leave family members / objections from family members / looking after family members, etc” (17.2%)
Analysis of the willingness to seek employment in mainland China by socio-demographic variables (Chi-square test)

- Gender, educational attainment, place of birth, and monthly personal income show statistically significant relationships
- Male, higher level of education, born in the Mainland and higher personal monthly income are more willing to work in the Mainland

Survey Findings (VI): Willingness to seek employment in mainland China and socio-demographic variables

### Willingness to seek employment in mainland China and socio-demographic variables (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-degree education</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree education of above</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainland China</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $10,000</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 to $19,999</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 or above</td>
<td>40.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Six aspects were listed and the respondents were required to choose the greatest deficiency if they go to seek job in the Mainland.

Findings show that: “Deficiency in knowledge of the laws and regulations of the Mainland” (36.7%) & “Insufficient knowledge about the employment environment of mainland China” (23.3%).
Survey findings reveal that 64.7% of the respondents are unwilling to seek employment in the Mainland while 33.2% indicate they are willing.

Those who want to seek job in the Mainland but have no any actions account to 28.3% of all respondents and only 4.9% show willingness to seek employment in the Mainland and have actually taken concrete action.

When considering whether or not to work in the Mainland, for most of respondents, “pull factors” (which are Mainland-related) are the primary considerations. The “push factors” (which are Hong Kong-related) are often secondary considerations.
Those who have lower level of education or earn lower income are less willing to work in the Mainland. This shows that other than considering the negative factors of the Mainland, it is possible that those respondents who indicated that they are unwilling to work in the Mainland also perceive themselves to be at a disadvantage in the Mainland labour market.

Those who are willing to work in the Mainland think that they are most deficient in knowledge of the laws, regulations, and work environment of the Mainland.

For those who are willing to work in the Mainland but no any plan to do so, providing them with more chances to experience the work environment in the Mainland (e.g. short-term internship) will be a help.
Thank You!