



Examining global mainland Chinese academics in Hong Kong SAR: a document analysis of features, opportunities and challenges

Xinrui Li & Eric Friginal

To cite this article: Xinrui Li & Eric Friginal (11 Mar 2026): Examining global mainland Chinese academics in Hong Kong SAR: a document analysis of features, opportunities and challenges, Globalisation, Societies and Education, DOI: [10.1080/14767724.2026.2642668](https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2026.2642668)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2026.2642668>



© 2026 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 11 Mar 2026.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 935



View related articles [↗](#)





View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Citing articles: 1 View citing articles [↗](#)

Examining global mainland Chinese academics in Hong Kong SAR: a document analysis of features, opportunities and challenges

Xinrui Li  and Eric Friginal 

Department of English and Communication, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong SAR, The People's Republic of China

ABSTRACT

Hong Kong SAR, a global education hub, lures numerous scholars for career development. Data show that 69.3% of its academics are non-local, and they hold half of the leadership roles in major universities, which is rare in any other place. Mainland Chinese scholars are the predominant non-local group, and their number has even surpassed that of locals recently. Guided by career capital theory, this paper formulates an analytical framework with seven indicators to investigate the features, opportunities and challenges of mainland Chinese scholars in Hong Kong SAR. Then, the documentary analysis approach was used to collect the headcounts of all academic staff by categories, 979 academics with leadership roles, and the academic trajectory of 363 mainland Chinese. Findings indicate that mainland Chinese scholars own extensive global networks and career capital and are increasingly representative in STEM and business fields. They are more well-included than other non-locals, but still face challenges. Meanwhile, some benefited from local policies that support locally nurtured talents. This paper not only draws an overall picture of mainland Chinese scholars from a career capital aspect to fill in gaps in academic mobility and career development literature, but also offers practical insights for institutional talent management and maximising scholars' resources.

ARTICLE HISTORY



Received 19 August 2025
Accepted 5 March 2026

KEYWORDS

Academic mobility; academic professionals; career capital; Hong Kong higher education; mainland Chinese scholars

Introduction

Internationalisation initiatives have emerged as one of the important backbones in the realm of higher education (Mittelman et al. 2022). Whereas, when mentioning the internationalisation of the academic community, much attention has been given to international students rather than international academic faculty or staff (Baas 2019; Mihut, de Gayardon, and Rudt 2017). Nevertheless, a transition of focus on international academics has been found in recent years (Varea, Gonçalves, and Luguetti 2025), and particular emphasis has been attached to international scholars' acculturation experience (Brotherhood and Patterson 2024). Similar to other types of migrants, academics' acculturation is needed and waiting to be scrutinised from acculturation conditions, orientations and outcomes (Arends-Tóth and van de Vijver 2006) to deepen our understanding.

CONTACT Xinrui Li  xinruilx.li@connect.polyu.hk  Department of English and Communication, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, HHB306, 3/F, PolyU Hung Hom Bay Campus, 8 Hung Lok Road, Hung Hom, Kowloon, Hong Kong, The People's Republic of China

© 2026 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

International academics or migrant academics refer to scholars in higher education who hold a nationality different from the host country and have relocated for research, teaching and/or administration roles in a university (Selmer, Trembath, and Lauring 2017). They provide the local educational system with sufficient manpower, enhance the diversity within institutions, foster global cooperation and magnify the international impact of institutions and the national competitiveness (Cantwell and Taylor 2013; Chen and Chen 2024; Munene 2014). It is no wonder that the worldwide recruitment of international academics has seen a remarkable increase over the past few decades (Bilecen and Van Mol 2017; de Wit and Altbach 2021), and such a mobility of academics is expected to expand continuously (Mihut, de Gayardon, and Rudt 2017). The expanding scale of international academics and their indispensable roles in global higher education require a sufficient understanding.

The development history of higher education led most global academics into Western countries in the past, and this resulted in the main research focus on international academics in North America and Europe (Gress 2022). With the intensification of the global mobility of academics and the advance of research competency in other regions, universities in East Asia are growing rapidly, and an increasing number of studies have started taking notice of more places like Japan, South Korea and China (Gress 2022). Hong Kong SAR is one representative case in East Asia where its higher education has been booming in the past few decades. Though the scale of its higher education system is quite small compared with other places, its influence on the world stage should not be underestimated. It owns world-class prestigious higher education institutions with strong competitiveness and a high level of internationalisation (Chen 2021), and 69.3% of academics in Hong Kong SAR are considered non-local in the 2023/24 academic year.

Literature on academic scholars in Hong Kong SAR focuses primarily on their well-being (e.g. Zhang and Horta 2023; Zhang, Fu, and Li 2020), performance (e.g. Horta, Jung, and Santos 2018; Li and Li 2022), leadership (e.g. Aiston, Fo, and Law 2020; Ruan 2021) and others. Insufficient attention has been directed to non-local academics' experiences except the investigation on the realities and strategies they employed (Chen 2021), case study of the internationalisation of academic staff in the University of Hong Kong (Postiglione and Xie 2017), brain circulation and universities' long-term success (Postiglione 2013) and challenges and opportunities for academics in the changing academic profession (Postiglione and Jung 2017a). In addition, like research on academic communities in other places, literature on higher education in Hong Kong SAR focuses more on students' acculturation (e.g. Wu, Watson, and Baker 2024; Yu, Mak, and Bodycott 2021) rather than scholars. Knowledge regarding the integration and growth of highly educated migrants in Hong Kong SAR, like academics, is still lacking.

In the wave of global mobility of academics, Chinese group constitutes a substantial group. For example, China is the leading source of international academic professionals in the US (20.8% in the 2023/24 academic year) (Institute of International Education n.d.). Similarly, Chinese academics account for the largest group (45%) of the international faculty in Japan (Huang 2018). Meanwhile, China has been attracting and appealing to scholars across the world, such as from the EU and US (Cao et al. 2020), in recent years (Xie et al. 2023; Xie, Zhang, and Lai 2014), along with its ever-increasing investment (Cao et al. 2020) and capacity in R&D (Xu et al. 2022), especially in science and technology disciplines (National Science Foundation 2023; Xie, Zhang, and Lai 2014). This is no exception in Hong Kong SAR, where mainland Chinese and Hong Kong locals comprise the largest academic group. Given the huge proportion of Chinese in global academia, it is meaningful and necessary to investigate their mobility experiences (e.g. flow of capital, career development).

What needs clarification is that though Hong Kong SAR is part of China, this research categorises this broadly defined Chinese group into (1) Hong Kong local and (2) mainland Chinese out of the following considerations. Firstly, Hong Kong used to be a British colony in 1841 during the First Opium War and was handed over to the People's Republic of China in 1997 officially, according to the Sino-British Joint Declaration. Now, Hong Kong SAR is a special administrative region under the 'one country, two systems' policy of China, which allows it to maintain its own economic and

administrative systems. Given the historical reasons, census statistics (Census and Statistics Department 2025) tend to classify Chinese into different groups. Secondly, the complicated history, favoured policy and convenient geographical location make Hong Kong SAR a multicultural region that is an ideal destination for global migration, where 2.85 million (38.1%) of its residents are considered non-local (IOM 2024). Among which, mainland Chinese comprise the largest group of migrants (Chan et al. 2022; Fong and Guo 2018). This also applies to academia in Hong Kong SAR, where mainland Chinese constitute the largest group (38.3%) among all academic scholars. Thus, migration study tends to classify them into two groups as well (Lai and Li 2021; Yu and Zhang 2016). Moreover, mainland Chinese are different from Hong Kong locals in terms of many socio-cultural aspects (e.g. Fong 2017; Siu-lun Chow, Fu, and Ng 2020) even when they share the same nationality and cultural roots (Hobova 2016; Wong 1986). They are treated as non-locals, similar to other migrants, and face numerous challenges to integrate into the Hong Kong SAR (Gan and Tong 2023). Following the traditions of classification and considering these factors, this research divides mainland Chinese as one group of non-local residents (or migrants) in the Hong Kong SAR.

When the mobility of global academics is unsurprising, and internationalisation becomes a key indicator to evaluate universities, we need to dig out the information behind it to expand our understanding. Therefore, in this paper, we focus on mainland Chinese academics in Hong Kong SAR and aim to interpret their mobility experience from the acculturation perspective to understand the career development of these migrant academics. In the following section, we overview the mobility experiences of these mainland Chinese scholars and their career capital in academia, followed by our analytical framework aligned with a document analysis approach (Bowen 2009). Finally, we provide a discussion of observations and outcomes, followed by our concluding remarks.

The mobility of scholars: motivations, opportunities and obstacles

Under the wave of globalisation, a career is no longer defined as a static, linear, predictable process; instead, it is dynamic and changeable, and this feature is even more significant for knowledge workers (Lamb and Sutherland 2010). The mobility of academics is driven by economic factors (e.g. higher salaries, sufficient funding), career considerations (e.g. research freedom, promotion opportunities, satisfying job duties), institutional characteristics (e.g. enough facilities, solid reputation, plentiful resources), global environment (e.g. stable political environment, diverse/similar culture), etc. (Mihut, de Gayardon, and Rudt 2017). In recent years, the global higher education system has been caught in a 'turbulent' status that causes uncertainty and accelerates the movement of academics worldwide. For example, US President Trump's actions on universities that freeze or cancel funding support (Garisto, Tollefson, and Witze 2025), the financial crisis of universities and cut of job positions of academics in the UK (Clarke and Doughty 2025; Editorial 2024), confusion in universities in Australia caused by government policies and external factors (Universities Australia 2024), dramatic drops of international students in global universities (e.g. in US, UK, Australia) (Faguy 2025; Gilbert and Hattenstone 2025; Iqbal 2011) and many others. Under this situation, many academics are considering or have to leave and hunt for new job positions worldwide (Witze 2025). On the contrary, Hong Kong SAR is emerging as an ideal destination that lures international scholars (Fung 2025) because of its high-level academic freedom, market-based worldwide competitive salary system, performance-based resource allocation regulation, intensive international engagement, high autonomy of institutions, sufficient funding and support, (Chen 2021; Postiglione and Jung 2017a; Postiglione and Xie 2017), which contrast to universities under numerous crises in other places.

The history of higher education in Hong Kong SAR can be traced back over a century to the establishment of the University of Hong Kong (founded in 1911). In the following years, more institutions were set up gradually along with the prosperity of Hong Kong and to meet the talent needs (Chao and Postiglione 2017a). In the past few decades, sufficient funding support and the rise of

managerialism in the Hong Kong SAR have deeply influenced its higher educational system. Institutions have strong autonomy in deciding academic professionals' income because they adopt market-based and performance-based standards, combined with a discretionary cash allowance, which drives Hong Kong SAR to an internationally competitive place with high salaries for worldwide scholars (Chao and Postiglione 2017a). Besides, the adoption of a US-style academic career pathway, performance-based resource allocation and numerous funding application channels empowers scholars with abundant support for professional development (Chao and Postiglione 2017b). Moreover, Hong Kong SAR has been devoted to developing itself as an international education hub for more than two decades (GovHK 2024a; UGC 2002) and is promoting the 'Study in Hong Kong' brand recently (GovHK 2025c) for self-development and in response to the changing global education landscape (Education Bureau 2025). It is believed that more and more global academic professionals and non-local students will join in the future.

Even though the higher education industry in Hong Kong SAR is facing challenges from the increasing turnover rate (Mingpao, 2024). On the one hand, the breakout of the 2019 Hong Kong Protests (or social movement) and the implementation of the national security law caused uncertainty in society, and such social and political factors drove a group of local people to emigrate from Hong Kong SAR (Koon and Kinzelbach 2025), including academic scholars (Tsui and Yu 2023). For scholars, the primary concern in the new era centres on 'academic freedom'. First, many are uncertain whether they might unintentionally violate the law, as they perceive it to be vague, sweeping and arbitrary (Power, Lam, and Cheung 2020). Second, they face difficulties accessing public opinion data and worry that their research findings could conflict with China's core values (Chan 2023; Power, Lam, and Cheung 2020). Scholars in the social sciences are reported to be particularly affected (Chan 2023; Yiu 2024). On the other hand, the strict coping policies regarding the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. ban on gatherings regulation, mask-wearing requirement, compulsory quarantine policy) (GovHK n.d.) and the uncertainty caused by it result in the leaving of researchers, both local and non-local groups (Jung, Horta, and Postiglione 2021). The number of movements of academic staff continued to rise from 2017/18 to 2022/23 academic year, and has shown a slight decline in 2023/24 (UGC 2025b).

Hong Kong SAR is maintaining an increasingly deepening relationship with the Chinese Mainland, especially after launching the national security law, which brings opportunities but also raises concerns about the 'mainlandisation' trend (e.g. Kong 2024). In the overall national development strategy, Hong Kong SAR is positioned at and actively engaged in the 'super-connector' and 'super value-adder' roles that bridge the Chinese Mainland and the world (GovHK 2025a, 2025b). In the higher education field, Hong Kong SAR considers engagement with the Chinese Mainland to be of equal importance with internationalisation for promoting itself as an international hub for higher education (UGC 2025a). Under this strategic positioning, both before and after the implementation of the National Security Law, the Hong Kong SAR has consistently emphasised that 'academic freedom is an important social value' and 'the cornerstone' of its higher education system (GovHK 2016, 2018, 2023, 2024b). This position is also recognised and supported by scholars, who perceive that the Hong Kong SAR enjoys greater academic freedom than many other places. They note that international collaborations continue as usual, their institutions strive to maintain a safe environment and they are able to discuss the implications of the law publicly in seminars, among other examples (Chan 2023; Power, Lam, and Cheung 2020). Besides creating many collaboration channels with the Chinese Mainland, an increasing number of mainland Chinese overseas academics are joining the Hong Kong SAR (Postiglione and Jung 2017b; Witze 2025). Most notably, since 2019, three Chinese-raised scholars have been selected as presidents (also known as vice-chancellors) in universities in Hong Kong, which had never happened before, except for the second president of CUHK from 1978 to 1987 (CUHK History Gallery n.d.).

As noted above, the 'mainlandisation' of Hong Kong SAR is another concern that has been debated in recent years. Hong Kong SAR has experienced 'civic localism' and 'anti-mainland localism' (see So and Ip 2019), worries about the control of the central government and

'mainlandisation', and the 2019 social movement (Chan, Nachman, and Mok 2020; Ma 2015). Now, Hong Kong SAR moves into the new area after the implementation of the national security law by seeking a balance between maintaining its global status and responding to national development (Chiu and Lui 2009), which deeply reshapes its higher education field. Hong Kong education shifted from resisting mainland-related ideology to integrating the Chinese national identity and national security education in its educational system in an acceptable approach (Vickers and Morris 2022). Evidence from universities finds that when engaging in the national strategy, academics in Hong Kong SAR have sufficient autonomy in participating in national projects, which is a bottom-up action that is out of their personal interests and willingness (Lo, Lee, and Abdrasheva 2022). Such maintenance of autonomy in higher education institutions' daily activities dispels worries about overmainlandisation to some extent. However, in this context, some researchers remain concerned that Hong Kong SAR's significant role in global academia may gradually weaken (Power, Lam, and Cheung 2020). For example, social scientists argue that the departure of scholars known for critical thinking could diminish the vitality of research in Hong Kong SAR, while junior academics may shift towards more apolitical topics to avoid potential risks (Chan 2023). Though the higher education industry in Hong Kong SAR has been facing numerous challenges, and academic staff are reporting high workloads with more than 50 h per week (Postiglione and Tang 2008) and higher stress (Horta et al. 2019), it has always been competitive in luring global academic professionals.

However, scholars' global relocation is filled with pros and cons. From a positive aspect, global mobility of academics is a win-win situation. Floating scholars facilitate the circulation of knowledge by introducing new knowledge that is lacking in the new place to achieve a complementary effect, and they tend to be more productive than local academics because academic collaboration and knowledge transfer are accomplished through mobility (Mihut, de Gayardon, and Rudt 2017; Wang et al. 2019). What's more, such mobility also accelerates the flow of capital. Non-local scholars' networks with prior host countries and home countries are accumulated and transferred to their social capital in the new places, and those with international experience are likely to facilitate international collaborations through their global networks (Wang et al. 2019). Academics' global network is formulated along with their mobility, individuals, employers, institutions, sending and accepting places, and the global academic community are all benefiting from the flow of knowledge workers (Fontes, Videira, and Calapez 2013). Mobility poses challenges to scholars in the meantime because it requires adaptation to a new academic community (e.g. values, culture, rules) and formulation of new local networks (e.g. with local scholars, industries, government) to 'survive' (Ryazanova and McNamara 2019). Though some capital flows with scholars, it cannot fulfil all the needs in a new environment. Lack of necessary capital or suffering from reconstructing one's capital system that fits the demands of new institutions hinders international academics' integration and career growth, and may further result in the turnover of academics (Pudelko and Tenzer 2019).

Whereas, it remains unclear whether the drawbacks of mobility in academia also apply to mainland Chinese scholars, a special non-local group, in Hong Kong SAR, or not. The location of Hong Kong SAR makes it convenient for mainland Chinese scholars to use mainland-based resources to support academic work (Postiglione and Jung 2017b) and then they will be advantaged in setting up their support system for career development. Besides, based on the findings from Varma et al. (2012), Chinese tend to help colleagues with the same cultural background in the workplace. As the largest scholarly group in Hong Kong SAR, we have reasons to assume that mainland Chinese scholars tend to help each other and share resources. From these points, it seems that they are advantaged in career growth over other non-local scholars in the Hong Kong SAR. However, white privilege existed in the job market in Hong Kong SAR (Lai and Li 2021), and discrimination against highly educated mainland Chinese also occurs in society (Gan and Tong 2023). These put mainland Chinese scholars at a disadvantage. Further exploration is needed to examine what capital mainland Chinese academics own before migrating to Hong Kong and how their academic careers are affected by it.

Career capital in academia

To further understand non-local academics' current status in Hong Kong academia, this paper takes their previous accomplishments, standings, experiences, etc., as the core of the analysis. This is in line with the capital theory, a classical theory in economics and sociology disciplines that concerns how forms of capital impact economic and social behaviour (Jorgenson 1963; Usher 1965). It emphasises the value creation and accumulation during career development and explains how migrants' individualised capital (e.g. human, social capital) interacts with institutional features and strategies and determines their career development as well as personal achievement (Defillippi and Arthur 1994). Holding sufficient capital is indispensable to career development and success, especially for academics in their boundaryless career (Aytekin et al. 2016; Sherif, Nan, and Brice 2020). In the process of movement, global scholars are gaining capital and losing simultaneously. On the one hand, career capital is associated with previous experiences that can be carried into new institutions. Scholars with overseas learning and working experience are likely to bring human, social and cultural capital that are rare but essential for career development in the new place (Li 2023). Mainland Chinese scholars in Hong Kong SAR also benefit from the geographical proximity to the Chinese Mainland for accessing resources and partners, and this benefit is amplified when Hong Kong SAR is getting closer to Chinese Mainland and playing a significant role in the Greater Bay Area (Lo, Lee, and Abdrasheva 2022). However, academics are at risk of losing established social capital after relocation. The case in Singapore shows that the increasing of local collaboration is at the expense of a decline of pre-existed global collaboration, and the latter one fades out gradually (Wang et al. 2019).

Though an increasing amount of literature has been paying attention to the career capital of migrants, the focus on international academic professionals is still rather limited (Järnlström, Brandt, and Rajala 2020; Singh 2024). What can be treated as capital for them, how to measure their capital and how such capital influences their career development are relatively rare currently. But literature on international academics focuses more on their motivations, teaching activities and general acculturation, instead of the career capital aspect (Singh 2024). The turnover rate of academic staff in Hong Kong SAR, which has reached its highest in 2024 (Yiu 2024), reflects the increasing mobility of scholars and requires a timely understanding of scholars' movement experiences.

Career capital contains three interconnected and mutually influenced career competencies. However, how to measure the three career competencies poses challenges to us because existing literature on academic professionals from the career capital perspective focuses more on their individualised experience rather than on measuring specific aspects. In response to this gap and considering the huge number of mainland Chinese scholars in Hong Kong SAR, this research extracted seven key objective components so as to understand non-local scholars' individualised factors that may influence their acculturation in work.

The first one is 'knowing-why'. It is related to 'career motivation, personal meaning and identification' (Defillippi and Arthur 1994, 308) that provides direction and motivation for one's career. In academia, 'knowing-why' is to understand the culture of the academic community, being motivated to migrate to it, aligning oneself with it and adjusting to its values and expectations (Sherif, Nan, and Brice 2020; Singh 2024). It is the intrinsic motivation, and it negotiates with one's ongoing identity construction in academia (Cappellen and Janssens 2008; Clarke, Hyde, and Drennan 2013). This research takes 'managerial position' and 'job duty at managerial position' as two key indicators to measure 'knowing-why' out of the following considerations. Firstly, 'knowing-why' relates to 'professional identification, centre of decision-making, career progression and search for challenge' (Cappellen and Janssens 2008, 514). Internalising 'knowing-why' empowers academic professionals' leadership qualities and entrepreneurship, which further accelerates the knowledge evolution in their fields (Sherif, Nan, and Brice 2020). For researchers, taking managerial positions reflects one part of it. Secondly, neoliberalism leads to the prevalence of managerialism in universities, where scholars are taking both academic and administrative roles (Deem 2006). It is a burden

for some individuals as most of them are not trained professionally or are positioned in a place they are not good at (e.g. using a rotation system to assign managerial duties), which deprives their research time and energy (Deem 2006; Hong and Horta 2025). However, it is a mutually chosen process and reflects one's academic identity because academics have strong autonomy to pursue their own pathway in the boundaryless career if they are unsatisfied with their current status (Aytekin et al. 2016; Sherif, Nan, and Brice 2020). Lastly, the document analysis nature of this research limits the measurement of 'knowing-why' into explicit and measurable indicators, so 'managerial position' and 'job duty at managerial position' are considered proper due to practical reasons.

The second one is 'knowing-how'. It reflects individuals' competencies in job-related or required knowledge, skills and abilities (Defillippi and Arthur 1994). For scholars, it refers to utilising knowledge and expertise in research and teaching phases (Sherif, Nan, and Brice 2020; Singh 2024). This is the accumulated capital that is valued by academia and reflects one's acknowledged contribution to their research field (Sherif, Nan, and Brice 2020). The direct reflection of 'knowing-how' competency is individuals' accomplishments (e.g. academic positions, grants, awards, publications, citations, etc.) within their fields. This research takes out two key indicators to measure this aspect. One is 'academic position' because promotion of academic positions covers and requires comprehensive aspects of one's academic achievements. The other is 'citation recognition' because it reflects the overall quality of individuals' publications, which is more objective than only focusing on the numbers (Ioannidis 2025).

The third one is 'knowing-whom'. It emphasises the network aspect of career, and involves intra-firm, inter-firm, professional and social relations (Defillippi and Arthur 1994). This requires academics to have knowledge of building instrumental social networks and relying on these social connections to generate positive influences on teaching and research (Sherif, Nan, and Brice 2020; Singh 2024). Research shows that the pre-existing human, cultural and social capital and how they join the new institutions (as former graduates or newcomers, as freshmen or established scholars, etc.) deeply influence academics' careers as these influence with whom they are interacting (Hong and Horta 2025; Li 2023). Therefore, this research takes 'educational background', 'work experience' and 'entry time' as three key indicators to measure 'knowing-whom' competency.

In brief, this research aims to interpret the mobility of global academics from a career capital perspective by addressing the following two research questions: (a) What are the features of the career capital that mainland Chinese academics in Hong Kong SAR possess? (b) What challenges do mainland Chinese academics in Hong Kong SAR face during career development?

Measuring scholars' career capital: a document analysis approach

To better address the research aims and in response to the research questions, the documentary research method is adopted. Following Prior (2003), a document is broadly defined as 'physical or virtual artefacts designed by creators, for users, to function within a particular setting' (Dalglish, Khalid, and McMahon 2020, 1425). Document analysis is a systematic process of reviewing and evaluating sorts of documents (Bowen 2009). It is utilised to categorise, examine, interpret and assess the limitations of physical sources in both private and public domains (primarily written documents) (Payne and Payne 2004). Document analysis involves various types of documents, which can be categorised into public, private and personal documents (Mogalakwe 2009), or official, implementation, legal, working documents, scholarly work, media and communication and other (Dalglish, Khalid, and McMahon 2020). This research, specifically, involves official documents (e.g. statistical records), working documents (e.g. committee reports) and media and communications (e.g. universities' webpages, scholars' LinkedIn social media, universities promotional materials) as major document sources, which have been successfully used to capture academics career experience (Jöns and Deakin-Smith 2024; Wang et al. 2019) and items (e.g. past experience) in this documents are proven to associate with academics' career (Chen 2021; Jöns and Deakin-Smith 2024; Zweig, Siqin, and Huiyao 2020).

As one type of analytical method, document analysis can be accomplished through both a quantitative and qualitative approach, with different emphasis on the usage of data (Bowen 2009; Morgan 2021). This research employs its qualitative aspect to elicit the hidden meaning of documents to understand mainland Chinese academics' career experience in Hong Kong SAR and develop empirical knowledge in the mobility of academics in the higher education field (Bowen 2009). Document analysis is considered proper for the research aim due to the following considerations. It eases accessibility to inaccessible subjects, provides longitudinal information and contains a larger sample size (Bowen 2009), which is proper to cover a large number of academics' career experiences and career capital that cannot be observed directly in the Hong Kong SAR. What's more, the documents themselves are not affected by the research process and are unobtrusive and non-reactive (Bowen 2009). This firmly guarantees the objectivity and the neutral position of all the data collected to interpret academic career experience.

Aligning with the four criteria (authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning) to maintain the quality of documentary data collection (Scott 1990), and learning from the detailed step-by-step document analysis design (e.g. Dalglish, Khalid, and McMahon 2020; Xu et al. 2024), this research employs six steps that fits the research aim to collect, code and analyse the data. Detailed steps will be explained in the method part. The next section explains this in detail.

Career capital is highly individualised and formulated through diverse channels and during various stages (Lamb and Sutherland 2010), so it poses challenges in effectively measuring the career capital of international academics. Existing works look at a small group of academics' career capital experiences to provide us with an in-depth understanding of career capital in academia (Sherif, Nan, and Brice 2020; Singh 2024). However, interpreting academics' career capital experiences from a broader view, such as focusing on the features of a large group of international academics in specific areas, remains insufficient. This is exactly what the documentary approach can do.

Considering the measurability of career capital and in response to the 'knowing-why, knowing-how, knowing-whom' competencies of career capital theory (Defillippi and Arthur 1994), this paper selects seven objective indicators to demonstrate the career capital experience of mainland Chinese scholars in higher education institutions in Hong Kong SAR. Firstly, academics are categorised into five groups by research disciplines, then in 'knowing-why' aspect, 'managerial position' reflects academics' leadership qualities and enthusiasm in academia, 'job duty at managerial position' reflects how academics are engaging in the decision-making process; in 'knowing-how' aspect, 'academic position' mirrors academics' recognised contributions within in their domains, 'citation recognition' reflects the peer recognition of one's work; in 'knowing-who' aspect, 'educational background' and 'work experience' reflect academics' established networks, 'entry time' mirrors individuals connections with current institutions. These indicators are aligned with views from Lamb and Sutherland (2010) that leadership ability, past experience and qualifications are key components for career capital and success. Therefore, the above-mentioned seven objective indicators formulate the key components of the analytical framework in this research. The next section will provide more information on measuring these via a documentary approach.

Step-by-step method

The visualisation of step-by-step methods

Before illustrating each step, [Figure 1](#) visualises the six steps for easier understanding.

Step 1: Building the database

We first gathered relevant numerical data on the general information of academic staff in eight major universities in the Hong Kong SAR. Following the guidance on information access of the UGC, we emailed the UGC Secretariat by indicating the purpose of the research and the needed

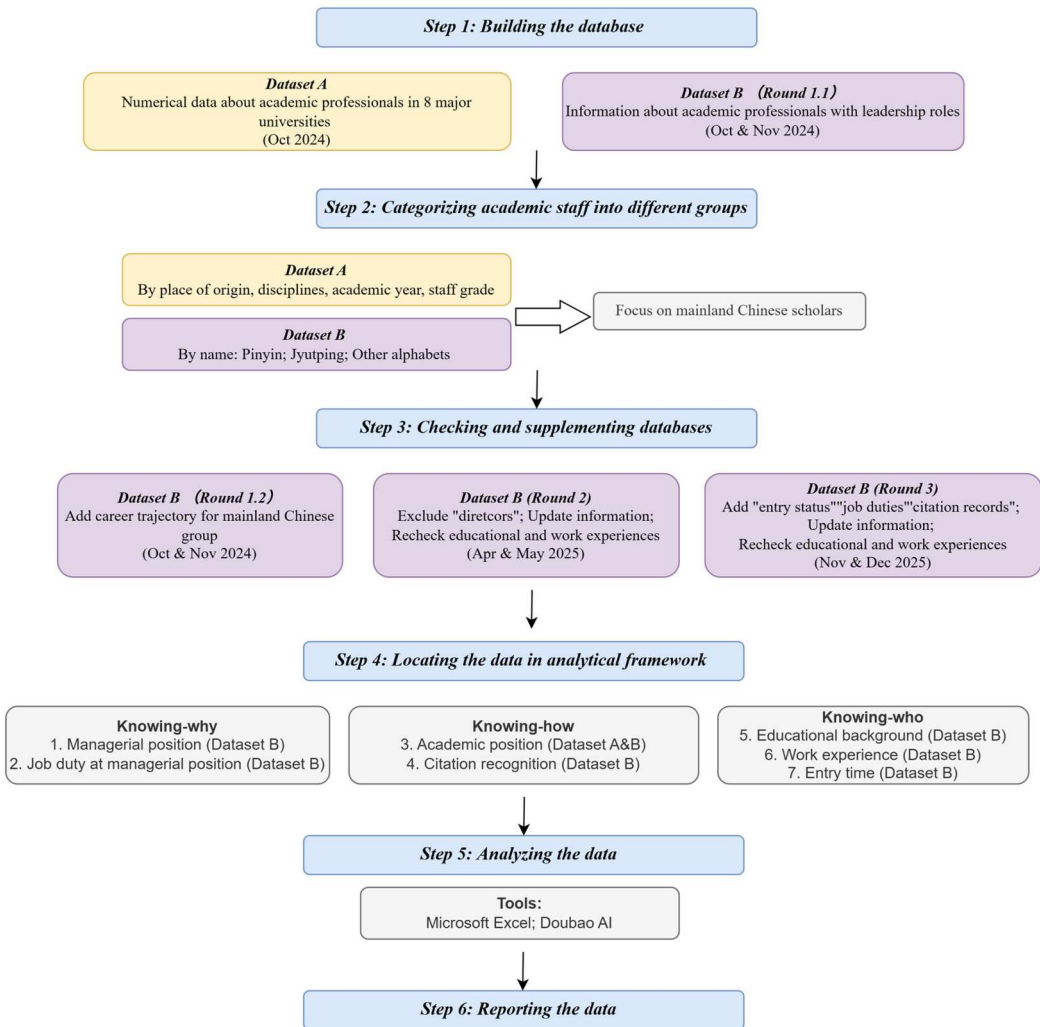


Figure 1. Six-step method.

information on 17 October 2024. Then, a PDF file with 13 columns and 437 rows was provided on 28 October 2024, and this constitutes *Dataset A*. They generously provided the academic staff number (by headcount) in eight public universities in the past five academic years, from 2019/20 to 2023/24, by specific categories: the department cost centre (the discipline that staff belong to), staff grade and place of origin. Only academic staff's salaries that were fully funded by general funds are calculated, and those with short-term contracts of no more than 1 year are excluded. The 2019/20 academic year is the earliest data that can be provided from UGC with detailed sub-categories that meet the needs of this research. Even though *Dataset A* only covers five academic years, the time is closely associated with key social factors that influence academia and mobility of academics (e.g. 2019 Hong Kong Protests, COVID-19 pandemic, etc.) (Jung, Horta, and Postiglione 2021; Koon and Kinzelbach 2025; Tsui and Yu 2023).

Then we narrowed down to academic staff in these universities who hold managerial positions at the university level (e.g. president), faculty level (e.g. dean) and departmental level (e.g. head, director). From October to November 2024, we went through the eight institutions' official websites and manually listed the information in an Excel file. These are the names of the academic staff,

affiliation, leadership role and academic position. A total of 1824 pieces of information were collected and formulates *Dataset B (Round 1.1)*. Information collected in this step is objective and unchangeable regardless of our research focus (Bowen 2009).

Step 2: Categorising academic staff into different groups

Firstly, we rearranged the *Dataset A* and categorised academic staff into five groups by place of origin as indicated by UGC, namely local, Chinese Mainland, other places of Asia and the rest of the world, and unknown. This provides us with an overall picture of the distribution of academic staff in the Hong Kong SAR and directs the focus of this study. Secondly, based on *Dataset A*, we divided academics by disciplines, academic year and staff grade. This presents the diachronic distribution features of academics in the Hong Kong SAR across research fields. Thirdly, we further classified academics in *Dataset B (Round 1.1)* into three groups by recognising the spelling system of their names. Those names in *pinyin* (Chinese Phonetic Alphabet) were recognised as mainland Chinese academic staff (Chen 2021), those in *Jyutping* (Cantonese Phonetic Alphabet) were regarded as local academic staff and other alphabets are categorised as staff of other places. Grouping academics from three angles all led to the focus of this paper: mainland Chinese academics, the largest academic group in the Hong Kong SAR.

Step 3: Checking and supplementing databases

Dataset B is further expanded by adding academic professionals' career trajectories in academia to reflect their mobility and the flow of capital. We added the educational background, work experience and official homepage links of mainland Chinese scholars with leadership roles. All the links we referred to, as long as any information was obtained, were documented as well. During the data collection process, information displayed on institutions' official websites was prioritised (e.g. organisational structure, management team, university scholars' database like HKU Scholars Hub or CityUHK Scholars, scholars' official homepages created by the university). Academics' personal website or group/lab website, LinkedIn homepage, information in ORCID and Google Scholar were treated as supplementary sources when information on official websites was insufficient (Jöns and Deakin-Smith 2024). Apart from these, some academics' public CVs are attached to official/personal homepages or available in Google search engines, which are convenient to check academic trajectory. Only a small amount of information was gathered through institutional news that covered introductions of someone when the above sources were insufficient. In very rare cases, we supplemented the missing information by ourselves if we accidentally attended the scholars' talks and they introduced their background at that time. Different data sources were mutually verified to achieve triangulation in the collecting process (Thurmond 2001).

Considering the high mobility in academia, the potential missed errors in manual collection, and the emerging needs when interpreting the data, further collection of *Dataset B (Rounds 2 and 3)* was performed in April and May 2025, and Nov and Dec 2025, respectively, to guarantee reliability. In *Dataset B (Round 2)*, we excluded the 'director' managerial positions to avoid the ambiguous definitions of research centres. Because we found that the 'director' can refer to either the director of departmental research centres or the director of research lab/group leads by researchers. It reminds blurred on the authority and recognition of this role compared with managerial positions at the department, faculty and university level because some researchers name themselves as 'director' of their lab.

In *Dataset B (Round 3)* collection, we added three categories of information: (a) the status of all academics with managerial roles when they were joining the current institutions, namely the time and academic position, (b) the job duties of all academics in managerial roles, such as research, teaching, outreach and many other duties and (c) the citation recognition of all mainland Chinese academics, namely if they are listed in Clarivate Highly Cited Researchers 2025 (<https://clarivate>).

[com/highly-cited-researchers/](https://highly-cited-researchers/)) or Stanford University Top 2% scientist (<https://elsevier.digitalcommonsdata.com/datasets/btchxktzyw/8>).

In both Round 2 and Round 3, we went through the homepages of eight institutions again to check and update information. After finalising the list of academic professionals with managerial positions, we further inspected and verified information on mainland Chinese academics again. Finally, after several rounds of collection on Dataset B, 979 pieces of information regarding academic staff with managerial roles were listed, including 363 mainland Chinese, 461 local academics and 155 other academic staff. However, though we have tried our best to search for the information through various channels, some academics' personal information (e.g. education background, work experience, entry status) is unpublic available. To ensure transparency, the missing percentage of each category is presented accordingly when reporting the results in finding section.

Step 4: Locating the data in the analytical framework

Following the analytical framework formulated earlier in the 'career capital in academia' section, the data were scrutinised again and coded from 'knowing-why, knowing-how, knowing-whom' aspects by seven indicators. Table 1 presents how to locate collected data in the framework.

Step 5: Analysing the data

Raw data involved in this research includes headcount, scholars' names, institutions, faculties, departments, academic positions, managerial positions, job duties, entry time, entry academic position, citation recognition record, duration of work experience, links and notes. To address the career capital experiences of academic staff under the analytical framework, this paper primarily presents descriptive data. Embedded calculation functions in Microsoft Excel and the Doubao AI tool (<https://www.doubao.com/chat/>) were employed for data analysis. Doubao is an AI tool developed by ByteDance that enables data processing and analysis by uploading files directly. In this paper, Doubao is used when calculating the durations of work experiences. We first uploaded the Excel file to Doubao (only work experiences part for privacy consideration) and asked it to extract and transfer the durations into 'year, month' format (e.g. 2015.3–2020.9). Then, Doubao was invited to transfer the periods into months and calculate the average months of each category, followed by random manual checking. Doubao is required to provide its translation or calculation rules for each section; only when these rules are agreed upon by us will it move to the next steps.

Step 6: Reporting the data

The next session will present the analysed data by career competencies in detail.

Findings

Overall features of academics in the Hong Kong SAR

By 2025, there were 22 degree awarding institutions in the Hong Kong SAR, and eight of them (see Table 2) are funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC) (Education Bureau n.d.), 'the non statutory body which advises the Government of the SAR on the funding and strategic development of higher education in Hong Kong'(UGC n.d.). These eight universities form an essential part of higher education in the Hong Kong SAR, as recognised by the most current QS ranking listed in Table 2. Moreover, these eight universities are maintaining close collaboration worldwide, taking publication as an example. Web of Science searching results on publication indicate that over the past 10 years (2016–2025), China (including mainland and Hong Kong) has always been the

Table 1. Locating the datasets into career competencies.

Career competencies	Indicators	Sources	Components	Functions
<i>Knowing-why</i>	Managerial position	<i>Dataset B: all</i>	University level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President • Vice/Associate/Assistant Vice President Faculty level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dean • Associate/Assistant Dean Departmental level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head • Deputy/Associate/Assistant Head 	Power structures within institutions.
	Job duty at managerial position	<i>Dataset B: all</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All • Research & Innovation • Teaching & Learning • Outreach & External Affairs • Administration & Strategic development 	Engagement in the decision-making process.
<i>Knowing-how</i>	Academic position	<i>Dataset A: all</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior • Junior 	Recognition of scholars' professional achievements.
		<i>Dataset B: all</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair/Full Professor • Associate Professor • Assistant Professor • Principal Lecturer • Senior Lecturer • Lecturer/ instructor 	
	Citation recognition	<i>Dataset B: mainland Chinese</i>	Listed in Clarivate Highly Cited Researchers 2025 or Stanford University Top 2% scientist <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	Peer recognition in specific discipline.
<i>Knowing-who</i>	Educational background	<i>Dataset B: mainland Chinese</i>	Doctoral/Highest degree <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awarding Institution • Country/Territory • Region (Americas, Asia, Europe, Oceania) 	Networks in academia.
	Work experience	<i>Dataset B: mainland Chinese</i>	Name of institutions and durations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chinese Mainland • Hong Kong SAR • Overseas 	Networks and flow of capital in academia.
	Entry time	<i>Dataset B: all</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year of entry current institution • Academic position when entering current institution 	Connections with current institution.

Source: By authors.

key and dominant research collaborator for these eight major universities, followed by the US. Australia used to be the third one, followed by the UK between 2016 and 2018, but the status was exchanged between 2018 and 2025. Canada maintained its fourth position between 2016 and 2021, then was surpassed by Singapore from 2022.

Table 2. Eight UGC-funded Universities in the Hong Kong SAR.

University name	QS Ranking 2026	Official website URL
The University of Hong Kong (HKU)	11	https://www.hku.hk/
The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK)	32	https://www.cuhk.edu.hk/english/
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST)	44	https://hkust.edu.hk/
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU)	54	https://www.polyu.edu.hk/en/
City University of Hong Kong (CityU)	63	https://www.cityu.edu.hk/
Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU)	244	https://www.hkbu.edu.hk/en.html
The Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK)	530	https://www.eduhk.hk/en/
Lingnan University (LU)	701–710	https://www.ln.edu.hk/

Source: <https://www.topuniversities.com/world-university-rankings>.

In Hong Kong SAR, two-fifths (38.1%) of residents are migrants (IOM 2024), and the percentage is even higher in academia, where non-local academics hold 69.3% positions as of last year. A comprehensive picture of the formulation in eight major universities over the past 5 years is shown in Figure 2. It indicates that the number of local academic professionals has decreased steadily, while an increasing number of mainland Chinese academics are joining, and the proportion has been even higher than that of local staff since 2022/23. There was a steady trend of academics from other places, and no significant change has been witnessed in the past 5 years. In terms of the distribution of academics in specific institutions in 2023/24, mainland Chinese scholars contributed almost half of the headcount in HKUST (49.7%) and LU (47.2%), a quarter of scholars in HKBU (25.6%) are mainland Chinese, and the percentage of the remaining five institutions falls in between.

The overall distribution of academic professionals in the Hong Kong SAR varies across disciplines, as shown in Table 3. In 2023/24, mainland Chinese take up around half of academic positions in Business & Management (52.3%), Engineering & Technology (47.0%) and Sciences (46.4%). The diachronic data from *Dataset A* also indicate that Business & Management was occupied by mainland Chinese scholars for a long time, and it is expanding steadily. Whereas data in the Engineering & Technology discipline exhibits a dramatic increase in mainland Chinese and a decrease in other scholars. The number of mainland Chinese surpassed local scholars in 2020/21, after the social movement in the Hong Kong SAR and during the COVID-19 pandemic. A similar tendency can be found in the Science field. Besides, local academics account for half of the scholars in Medicine, Dentistry & Health (49.9%). However, the layout of academic professionals in Education, Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences is comparatively balanced but with a slight advantage of other scholars (39.9%) and local staff (32.2%).

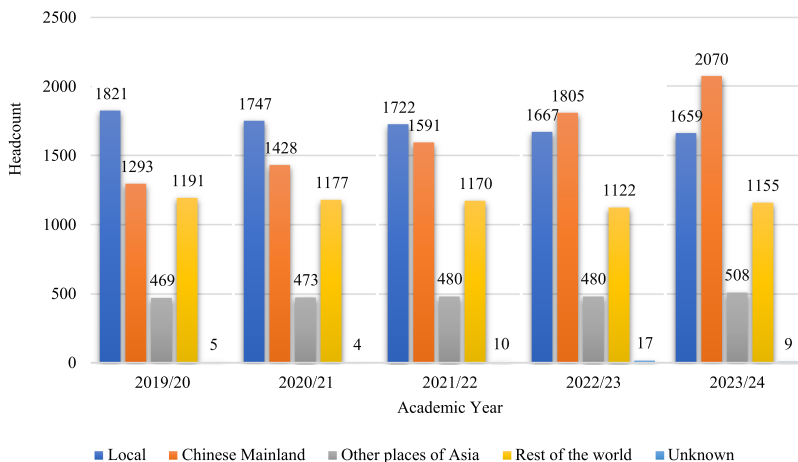


Figure 2. Number of academic staff in the past five academic years. Source: Prepared by authors based on *Dataset A*.

Table 3. Latest distribution of all academics across disciplines (by place of origin).

Disciplines	Mainland Chinese	Hong Kong Local	Others	Total
Medicine, Dentistry & Health	188 (24.4%)	385 (49.9%)	198 (25.7%)	771 (100%)
Sciences	512 (46.4%)	327 (29.6)	265 (24.0%)	1104 (100%)
Engineering & Technology	490 (47.0%)	272 (26.1%)	280 (26.9%)	1042 (100%)
Business & Management	401 (52.3%)	119 (15.5%)	246 (32.1%)	766 (100%)
Social Sciences; Arts & Humanities; Education	479 (27.9%)	554 (32.2%)	685 (39.9%)	1718 (100%)

Source: Prepared by authors based on *Dataset A*.

Note: Bold represent the highest percentage of each row.

Career capital of mainland Chinese academics: knowing-why

- *Managerial position*

Leadership role not only reflects the recognition of scholars in management and coordination ability in the academic community, but also mirrors one's own enthusiasm in academia. Academic professionals who internalised 'knowing-why' in their careers are likely to be equipped with leadership features, which are key to career capital (Sherif, Nan, and Brice 2020).

The power structure of the eight case universities is a typical pyramid-shaped structure (see column 3 in Table 4) where 7.5% of academics are in the top decision-making positions (university level), 39.4% of scholars are in the middle (faculty level) and 53.1% of them are at the bottom (department level). Though mainland Chinese scholars formed the largest academic group in the Hong Kong SAR in terms of number, the data clearly shows that Hong Kong locals occupied nearly half of the managerial positions (47.1%), one-third of managerial positions (37.1%) are shared by mainland Chinese and the rest (15.8%) belongs to other scholars. More information about the distribution of power structure among mainland Chinese, Hong Kong local and other scholars is shown in Table 4. It also indicates that mainland Chinese are less representative at leadership roles at both the university and faculty levels, compared with locals, but are relatively more powerful than other non-local academics at three levels.

Table 4. The Distribution of managerial positions.

Leadership role		Headcount and distribution			
		Overall	Mainland Chinese	Hong Kong Local	Others
University level	President	8 (0.8%)	3 (37.5%)	4 (50.0%)	1 (12.5%)
	Vice/Associate/Assistant vice President	65 (6.6%)	23 (35.4%)	39 (60%)	3 (4.6%)
Faculty level	Dean	60 (6.1%)	25 (41.7%)	23 (38.3%)	12 (20.0%)
	Associate/Assistant Dean	326 (33.3%)	96 (29.4%)	179 (54.9%)	51 (15.6%)
Department level	Head	258 (26.4%)	119 (46.1%)	87 (33.7%)	52 (20.2%)
	Deputy/Associate/Assistant Head	262 (26.8%)	97 (37.0%)	129 (49.2%)	36 (13.7%)
Total	–	979 (100%)	363 (37.1%)	461 (47.1%)	155 (15.8%)

Source: Prepared by authors based on *Dataset B*.

Note: Italics represent the overall results, it aims to distinguish this column from other subthemes (Mainland Chinese, Hong Kong Local, Others). Bold from row 3 to 8 represent the highest percentages. Bold in row 9 represent the total percentage of each subtheme.

Moreover, Table 5 reveals that none of the power structures are displayed equally across all specific disciplines. Mainland Chinese are represented in Business & Management (57.9%) and Engineering & Technology (52.4%), with an overwhelming number of leadership positions. In the Sciences discipline, the percentage of mainland Chinese (47.5%) is slightly higher than that of locals (44.9%). In the Medicine, Dentistry & Health area, mainland Chinese (18.1%) and other non-local scholars (13.8%) have a similar distribution, and the rest (68.1%) is taken by local academic professionals. Similarly, in Arts & Humanities, Education and Social Sciences fields, mainland Chinese (27.6%) and other non-local academics (26.3%) share the same percentage, and the rest (46.1%) are occupied by locals. But generally speaking, mainland Chinese are better represented than other non-local scholars across all disciplines.

- *Job duty at managerial position*

The above tables indicate noteworthy differences in the distribution of managerial and administrative positions between local, mainland Chinese and other academics. To further reveal academics' involvement in the decision-making process when taking the leadership role, Table 6 categorises the specific duties that academics are taking. Among 979 academics in *Dataset B*, the

Table 5. Distribution of academics with managerial positions (by discipline).

Disciplines	Level	Place of origin			Sub-sum	Total
		Mainland Chinese	Hong Kong Local	Others		
Medicine, Dentistry & Health	University	2	5	1	8	19.5%
	Faculty	15	73	10	98	
	Department	17	50	15	82	
	Sub-sum	34 (18.1%)	128 (68.1%)	26 (13.8%)	188 (100%)	
Sciences	University	5	6	2	13	12.2%
	Faculty	14	22	3	39	
	Department	37	25	4	66	
	Sub-sum	56 (47.5%)	53 (45.0%)	9 (7.6%)	118 (100%)	
Engineering & Technology	University	9	10	0	19	23.3%
	Faculty	29	28	7	57	
	Department	80	45	17	125	
	Sub-sum	118 (52.4%)	83 (36.9%)	24 (10.7%)	225 (100%)	
Business & Management	University	2	1	0	3	11.8%
	Faculty	20	26	6	52	
	Department	44	10	5	59	
	Sub-sum	66 (57.9%)	37 (32.5%)	11 (9.6%)	114 (100%)	
Social Sciences; Arts & Humanities; Education	University	7	8	0	15	33.1%
	Faculty	39	53	37	129	
	Department	42	86	47	175	
	Sub-sum	88 (27.6%)	147 (46.1%)	84 (26.3%)	319 (100%)	
Sub-sum	University	25 (43.1%)	30 (51.7%)	3 (5.2%)	58 (100%)	6%
	Faculty	117 (30.6%)	202 (52.9%)	63 (16.5%)	382 (100%)	39.6%
	Department	220 (42.0%)	216 (41.2%)	88 (16.8%)	524 (100%)	54.4%
Total		362 (37.6%)	448 (46.5%)	154 (16.0%)	964 (100%)	100%

Source: Prepared by authors based on *Dataset B*.

Note: The total number 964 is less than 979 in *Dataset B* because 15 staff in managerial positions are not affiliated with specific research disciplines. The subsum results and items with the highest number in sub-sum categories are in bold. The total results are also in bold.

job duty at managerial positions of 459 academics are not stated publicly in the university's official homepages, so this research assumes they are engaging in the decision-making process comprehensively. Among the remaining 520 academics, Hong Kong locals are actively involved in Administration & Strategic development (73.8%) and Teaching & Learning (62.0%) duties, while mainland Chinese take over half of the Research & Innovation roles at leadership positions. Both mainland Chinese (39.6%) and Hong Kong locals (43.6%) participate in Outreach & External affairs with a similar percentage. But the voice from the 'other' academics group is weaker, especially in the Administration & Strategic development affairs (5.6%), compared with those of the mainland Chinese group (20.6%) and the Hong Kong local group (73.8%). Though data from Table 6 show that the managerialism in universities in Hong Kong is stepping into a new area where job duties are categorised in detail for specific groups, it raises concerns about the engagement opportunities of non-local scholars in the decision-making system.

Table 6. Distribution of academics' job duties at managerial positions (by place or origin).

Job Duties	Overall	Headcount and distribution		
		Mainland Chinese	Hong Kong Local	Others
All	469	–	–	–
Research & Innovation	139	70 (50.4%)	50 (36.0%)	19 (13.7%)
Teaching & Learning	216	52 (24.1%)	134 (62.0%)	30 (13.9%)
Outreach & External Affairs	96	38 (39.6%)	42 (43.6%)	16 (16.7%)
Administration & Strategic development	126	26 (20.6%)	93 (73.8%)	7 (5.6%)

Source: Prepared by authors based on *Dataset B*.

Note: The sum of Research & Innovation, Teaching & Learning, Outreach & External affairs and Administration & Strategic development is higher than 520 because some academics take multiple duties. The highest percentage of each row is in bold.

Career capital of mainland Chinese academics: knowing-how

- *Academic position*

An academic position is the recognition of scholars in their professional fields. According to *Dataset A*, the overall distribution of academic positions in the Hong Kong SAR varies across places of origin and disciplines. Generally, the number of senior mainland Chinese academic staff has increased from 428 in 2019/20 (20.9%) to 659 (26.7%) in 2023/24, which can be attributed to the promotion of juniors in the Hong Kong SAR who were recognised in professional areas, or the joining of experienced global mainland Chinese scholars. Meanwhile, the junior mainland Chinese expanded from 865 (31.7%) to 1411 (48.1%) in the past five academic years. It denotes that the Hong Kong SAR is gradually becoming one of the ideal destinations for mainland Chinese for career growth. Specifically, as shown in Table 7, at the junior level position, mainland Chinese academic staff take nearly half (48.1%) of it, followed by other academics (27.8%) and local staff (24.1%). Junior mainland Chinese scholars are significant in Engineering & Technology (65.9%), Sciences (59.6%) and Business & Management (58.2%). In terms of senior academic positions, Hong Kong local takes 38.5% of the positions, others (34.8%) and mainland Chinese (26.7%) share the rest. Hong Kong local senior staff dominate Medicine, Dentistry & Health (53.8%), Sciences (38.8%) and Engineering & Technology (38.4%) disciplines, and Business & Management and Social Sciences & Arts & Humanities & Education are led by mainland Chinese senior staff (44.7%) and other senior staff (42.2%), respectively.

However, it becomes interesting when comparing the distribution of all scholars in five disciplines (Table 7) with those in managerial positions (Table 5). As shown in Table 8, mainland

Table 7. Latest distribution of all academics across disciplines (by staff grade).

Disciplines	Staff grade	Place of origin			Sub-sum	Total
		Mainland Chinese	Hong Kong Local	Others		
Medicine, Dentistry & Health	Senior	53	186 (53.8%)	107	346	14.3%
	Junior	135	199 (46.8%)	91	425	
	Sub-sum	188 (24.4%)	385 (49.9%)	198 (25.7%)	771	
Sciences	Senior	180	212 (38.8%)	155	547	20.4%
	Junior	332 (59.6%)	115	110	557	
	Sub-sum	512 (46.4%)	327 (29.6%)	265 (24.0%)	1104 (100%)	
Engineering & Technology	Senior	133	192 (38.4%)	175	500	19.3%
	Junior	357 (65.9%)	80	105	542	
	Sub-sum	490 (47.0%)	272 (26.1%)	280 (26.9%)	1042 (100%)	
Business & Management	Senior	148 (44.7%)	76	107	331	14.2%
	Junior	253 (58.2%)	43	139	435	
	Sub-sum	401 (52.3%)	119 (15.5%)	246 (32.1%)	766 (100%)	
Social Sciences; Arts & Humanities; Education	Senior	145	285	314 (42.2%)	744	31.8%
	Junior	334	269	371 (38.1%)	974	
	Sub-sum	479 (27.9%)	554 (32.2%)	685 (39.9%)	1718 (100%)	
Sub-sum	Senior	659 (26.7%)	951 (38.5%)	858 (34.8%)	2468 (100%)	45.7%
	Junior	1411 (48.1%)	706 (24.1%)	816 (27.8%)	2933 (100%)	54.3%
Total		2070 (38.3%)	1657 (30.7%)	1674 (31.0%)	5401 (100%)	100%

Source: Prepared by authors based on *Dataset A*.

Note: The total headcount 5401 is different from the headcount in [Table 1](#), 23/24 group, because UGC uses the nearest whole number when providing headcount by specific categories. The highest percentage of each senior/junior category; sub-sum related terms are in bold for quicker identification; total results are in bold as a quick summary.

Table 8. Comparison of all academics and academics in managerial positions (by percentage).

Disciplines	<i>All academic staff</i>			Sum	Staff at managerial position			Sum
	<i>Mainland Chinese</i>	<i>Hong Kong local</i>	<i>Others</i>		Mainland Chinese	Hong Kong local	Others	
Medicine, Dentistry & Health	24.4%	49.9%	25.7%	100%	18.1%	68.1%	13.8%	100%
Sciences	46.4%	29.6%	24.0%	100%	47.5%	44.9%	7.6%	100%
Engineering & Technology	47.0%	26.1%	26.9%	100%	52.4%	36.9%	10.7%	100%
Business & Management	52.3%	15.5%	32.1%	100%	57.9%	32.5%	9.6%	100%
Social Sciences; Arts & Humanities; Education	27.9%	32.2%	39.9%	100%	27.6%	46.1%	26.3%	100%

Source: Prepared by authors based on *Dataset A* and *Dataset B*.

Note: The highest percentage of each category is in bold. The "All academic staff" part is in italics to distinguish it from the "Staff at managerial position" part.

Chinese staff are represented in Business & Management, Engineering & Technology and Sciences disciplines, no matter across all staff or only in leadership roles. This situation also applies to Hong Kong locals at Medicine, Dentistry & Health area. However, other academics take the largest group in Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities and Education field, but this does not reflect when compared with academics who hold managerial roles, which is dominated by locals. Moreover, the percentage of Hong Kong locals shows a significant increase when comparing the overall (column 3 in [Table 8](#)) and segmented (column 7 in [Table 8](#)) data, which implies that Hong Kong locals are actively involved in the decision-making process, though their total population is not high. This situation is the converse of the 'others' academic group.

Table 9. Distribution of the academic position of staff at managerial positions (by place or origin).

	Mainland Chinese		Hong Kong local		Others	
Chair/Full Professor	273	75.2%	267	57.9%	94	60.6%
Associate Professor	76	20.9%	131	28.4%	46	29.7%
Assistant Professor	10	2.8%	17	3.7%	6	3.9%
Research Assistant Professor	0	0	0	0	0	0
Principal Lecturer	1	0.3%	7	1.5%	4	2.6%
Senior Lecturer	1	0.3%	18	3.9%	4	2.6%
Lecturer/Instructor	1	0.3%	3	0.7%	0	0
N/A	1	0.3%	18	3.9%	1	0.6%
Sum	363	100%	461	100%	155	100%
<i>Overall</i>	<i>37.1%</i>		<i>47.1%</i>		<i>15.8%</i>	

Source: Prepared by authors based on *Dataset B*.

Note: The highest percentage of each category is in bold. The overall results are in italics as a summary.

For staff who hold leadership roles, [Table 9](#) further compares their academic positions. Regarding mainland Chinese, 75.2% of them are chair/full professors, 20.9% are associate professors, 2.8% are assistant professors, followed by principal lecturer (0.3%), senior lecturer (0.3%) and lecturer/instructor (0.3%). One staff member does not have an academic position. While for local scholars, the percentages of chair/full professors, associate professors and assistant professors are 57.9, 28.4 and 3.7%, respectively, as well as 1.5% principal lecturers, 3.9% senior lecturers and 0.7% lectures/instructors. But 18 of the local staff do not have academic positions. For other non-local staff, the percentage of their academic positions is as follows: 60.6% chair/full professors, 29.7% associate professors and 3.9% assistant professors, 2.6% principal lecturers and 2.6% senior lecturers. One staff member does not have an academic position. Research assistant professors are not involved in leadership roles across the three groups.

Generally, for the mainland Chinese group, chair/full professors are involved more in managerial positions, and the involvement of associate/assistant professors is lower than both Hong Kong local and other academics. Notably, the number of Hong Kong local staff at teaching academic positions (types of lecturers) is much higher than both mainland Chinese and others. It might be because lecturer positions are designed for teaching and learning in the Hong Kong context, and Hong Kong locals do take more teaching & learning duties as shown in [Table 5](#).

- *Citation recognition*

To further examine mainland Chinese academics' accomplishments and recognition in their disciplines, data for citation records are used as a reflection. Instead of merely focusing on the number of publications or citations, which lacks standard criteria for comparison across disciplines, this research takes 'citation recognition' as an indicator. By comparing the names of mainland Chinese academics in managerial roles with the Clarivate Highly Cited Researchers 2025 (145 academics in the Hong Kong SAR are listed, by headcount) and the latest Stanford University Top 2% scientist (1908 academics in the Hong Kong SAR are listed, by headcount), this research finds that 147 mainland Chinese scholars with managerial positions are recognised. In other words, among all scholars in the Hong Kong SAR who are recognised in the above lists, nearly one-tenth of them are mainland Chinese scholars in managerial roles. This demonstrates their accomplishment and career capital both in research and in management.

Career capital of mainland Chinese academics: knowing-whom

- *Educational background*

Considering that collecting the educational background (doctoral/highest degree) of all academics in the Hong Kong SAR is impossible, only those 363 mainland Chinese with leadership roles were

extracted for explanation. The degrees they received involve four regions: the Americas (43.5%) is the major source, followed by Asia (38%), Europe (13.2%) and Oceania (3.9%). The United States (38.9%), Hong Kong SAR (21.2%), Chinese Mainland (11.6%), the United Kingdom (6.9%) and Canada (5.5%) are the top five popular countries/territories. Interestingly, the top four institutions are dominated by the Hong Kong SAR: HKU (24), HKUST (19), CUHK (15) and POLYU (9). University of California, Berkeley (7), Peking University (7), Northwestern University (7), CITYU (7) and Chinese Academy of Sciences (7) tied for fifth place. Unfortunately, this research fails to find the five scholars' educational information.

- *Work experience*

Among 363 mainland Chinese, 58.1% of them have overseas work experience, 22.6% have worked in the Hong Kong SAR (except current institution) and 16.8% have work experience in the Chinese Mainland. Ten mainland Chinese scholars have worked in the Chinese Mainland, the Hong Kong SAR and other places. Among 363 academics, 27% have not worked in other institutions, and 32.8% only have one work record in other places, which verifies the assertion that too many movements of scholars restrict the promotion (Ryazanova and McNamara 2019). But this paper fails to find 39 scholars' working experience after trying our best to search all the sources.

In terms of overseas working experience, 211 of them have worked outside the Chinese Mainland and the Hong Kong SAR, with 342 records. Among these, a total of 169 academics' work experience with clear starting and ending times suggests an average of 8.55 years of overseas experience. But the detailed information of the remaining 42 scholars (19.9%) is missing. Then, 82 of them have worked in the Hong Kong SAR, with 99 records, and 67 scholars' work experience can be traced in detail. But detailed information on the remaining 15 scholars (18.3%) are unpublic available. An average of 6.91 years of working experience in the Hong Kong SAR is suggested. However, only 61 scholars indicate working records in the Chinese Mainland with 70 periods in total. The detailed information on 46 of them suggests an average of 7.68 years' experience, which is slightly longer than that of those who worked in Hong Kong. The remaining 15 academics' detailed information is missing.

- *Entry time*

When and how one entered the current institution reflects one's connection with it. Except for five scholars whose educational background is missing, *Dataset B* suggests that 17 mainland Chinese scholars are closely bound with their current universities, the place where they received their highest degree. To further explore scholars' connections with their current institutions, this research collects all 979 academic staff's entry status: year of joining and academic position when joining. A total of 834 pieces of information is collected, and the remaining 145 (14.8%) staff information is unavailable. Data suggest that the earliest year of entry can be traced back to 1984, when an overseas scholar who is now taking the assistant dean of faculty position in social sciences disciplines. There are still 17 academic staff who joined the current institutions in 2025. The overall average working time in their current universities is 13.10 years. Specifically, the averages for mainland Chinese, Hong Kong locals and others are 12.04, 15.14 and 10.04 years, respectively.

For the academic position when joining, *Table 10* shows that assistant professor takes the first place (28.5%) when they join, followed by chair/full professor positions and associate professor positions, and the rest is shared by research assistant professors and types of lecturer positions. This trend applies to the mainland Chinese group. Whereas the lecturer position, instead of associate professor, takes the third place in the Hong Kong local group. It might relate to the transformation of the higher education system in the Hong Kong SAR. For other academics, assistant professor and chair/full professor positions share similar space.

Table 10. The academic position of academic staff (at managerial positions) when joining the current institution.

	Overall	Mainland Chinese	Hong Kong local	Others
Chair/Full Professor	191 (19.5%)	91 (25.1%)	62 (13.4%)	38 (24.5%)
Associate Professor	100 (10.2%)	38 (10.5%)	39 (8.5%)	23 (14.8%)
Assistant Professor	279 (28.5%)	127 (35.0%)	113 (24.5%)	39 (25.2%)
Research Assistant Professor	24	8	11	5
Principal Lecturer	2	0	1	1
Senior Lecturer	8	1	6	1
Lecturer/Instructor	58	6	46 (10.0%)	6
N/A	317 (32.4%)	92	183	42
Sum	979 (100%)	363	461	155

Source: Prepared by authors based on *Dataset B*.

Note: The overall and sum parts are in italics as a summary. The highest percentage of each category is in bold.

Discussion

Mainland Chinese, Hong Kong local or other scholars: who is privileged?

Several studies revealed that non-local academics have been excluded from decision-making, leadership and managerial activities because of their migrant status in host places (Chen 2022; Gress and Shin 2020; Welch and Huang 2021). For example, the studies in East Asian countries like Korea and Japan found that non-local academics are recruited and treated as ‘tokens’ because of their international profile (Chen 2022; Hong and Horta 2025; Song and Kim 2024). However, these conditions do not apply to the Hong Kong SAR context, where it is renowned for its openness and inclusiveness and possesses a supportive immediate context where access to and interaction with the community is easier (Chen 2021). Our findings support the fact that non-local academics (both mainland Chinese and others) are valued here, and they even occupy more than half of the managerial roles in institutions, which is rare in the worldwide educational system. The inclusion of non-local scholars is evident for the mainland Chinese group, especially in Science, Engineering & Technology, and Business & Management disciplines. These explain why non-local scholars are well-integrated into the Hong Kong academic community (Postiglione and Jung 2017b), and some even expressed that they feel non-foreign in the Hong Kong SAR regardless of work or life (Chen 2021). This also proves why the Hong Kong SAR can keep attracting plenty of global academic professionals, with 69.3% academics being non-local in the 23/24 academic year.

Nonetheless, it is difficult to say that the system in higher educational institutions in the Hong Kong SAR is flawless. Though Chen’s case study in the Hong Kong SAR (2021) addressed that international academics (referred to as the ‘other’ group in this research) did not perceive obvious disparate treatment in promotion and appointment of managerial positions, this paper finds that invisible discrimination exists. When comparing the distribution of all academics and academics who hold leadership positions, it indicates that mainland Chinese are well represented in managerial positions across disciplines, while this is not applicable to other non-local academics. It seems Hong Kong locals ‘grab’ more managerial positions from them, especially in the Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities and Education field. Looking at the responsibilities assignment for managerial positions, they fail to lead any type of duties and are in danger of being marginalised, especially when engaging in administration and strategic development affairs. On the contrary, mainland Chinese guide the research and innovation direction and have similar power of speech in outreach and external affairs with Hong Kong locals, which shows an obvious contrast with other non-local academics. From these aspects, international academics are at a relatively disadvantaged position compared with mainland Chinese, another non-local group. This fails to support the viewpoint that white privilege exists in Hong Kong SAR’s job market when they are considered a minority (Lai and Li 2021).

However, the status of mainland Chinese also raises concerns. 75.2% of them are chair/full professors at managerial positions, while the percentage of Hong Kong locals (57.9%) and others

(60.6%) is lower. Based on this distribution, this research infers that when considering the appointment decisions, mainland Chinese might experience a higher requirement for academic achievement, compared with others. Besides, when considering academics at managerial positions and their length of stay in current institutions, it indicates that the average time of mainland Chinese is longer than that of other non-locals. A possible inference is that it takes longer for mainland Chinese to be promoted to leadership positions, but other non-local academics are slightly privileged from this point of view. In this light, sharing the same cultural roots with locals does not offer convenience to mainland Chinese. It echoes the findings from Gan and Tong (2023) that highly educated migrants or migrants who share the same roots with the receiving places cannot escape from discrimination.

Achieving leadership roles is one reflection of the internalisation of knowing-why in career capital. Appointment is one positive feedback in career growth; universities in the Hong Kong SAR need to be alert to their unaware, inconsistent rules when appointing academics to leadership roles. This is essential when referring to non-local academics because negative feedback or unfair rules will affect academics' attitude and impede the knowledge circulation. In academia, academics do not commit to their institutions but to themselves (Baruch and Hall 2004). Unequal treatment tends to increase the already increasing turnover rate, the highest level at 7.6% since 1997 (Mingpao, 2024), in academia in the Hong Kong SAR. Besides, the number of junior academic staff was 3227 in 2013/14 (Chao and Postiglione 2017a) and only 2933 in 2023/24, which might have indicated the hesitation of young scholars to join the Hong Kong SAR.

'Nurture a core of local faculty' or invest in all global scholars

According to the UGC statement (2004), the Hong Kong SAR needs to transfer home-grown graduates into competitive local human capital and nurture a group of academic staff who are familiar with the local context and can devote themselves to local universities and the community. This has already been reflected in the consideration of managerial positions in universities: 55% of academics in managerial positions are Hong Kong locals or mainland Chinese who are trained in Hong Kong. More specifically, *Dataset B* shows that HKU, HKUST, CUHK and PolyU formed the top four institutions where mainland Chinese scholars with managerial roles received their doctoral degrees. Obviously, the local nurtured academics established firm local networks. This emphasises the essential role of 'knowing-who' competency in one's career. However, it may cause another problem. Though four-fifths of mainland Chinese in *Dataset B* are non-locally nurtured graduates and an expanding number of mainland Chinese who obtained their degrees overseas are recruited to the Hong Kong SAR (Postiglione and Xie 2017), they are always disadvantaged in executing leadership roles compared with mainland Chinese who are educated here. The Hong Kong changing academic profession data also demonstrated that two-thirds of scholars expressed that they are less-engaged in decision-making (Postiglione and Tang 2008). Treasuring locally cultivated talents is unblameable, but it may pose dangers for the Hong Kong SAR because higher educational institutions here rely heavily on internationalisation (Postiglione and Jung 2017b; UGC 2010), as well as scholars in the Hong Kong SAR depend heavily on overseas collaborations (Postiglione and Tang 2008).

Unlike other places with limited internationalisation initiatives, the Hong Kong SAR has a major advantage in global networks in terms of research collaboration, composition of academics and their academic trajectories (Chapman, Cummings, and Postiglione 2010). Taking information from *Dataset B* as an example, mainland Chinese scholars' education and work experiences involve 213 institutions in the QS World University Rankings 2025. The diverse background of scholars in the Hong Kong SAR implies abundant resources for its academia. This is not only the career capital of scholars but also a treasure for Hong Kong society. Then, how to facilitate the flow of capital and maximise it becomes essential. Overemphasis on the value of locally nurtured scholars slows down the effective use of all academic professionals' career capital. Besides, promotion yields additional resources for academics (Ryazanova and McNamara 2019), but those non-local educated academics

are trapped in getting the power of speech, which further slackens the mobility of resources within their domains.

The current power structure in universities in Hong Kong lacks diversity, especially in the distribution of job duties. The ideal situation is to infuse leadership teams with academics from diverse backgrounds and bridge the three groups of academics to ease the flow of capital. Then, academics, especially juniors, can grow up quicker in the Hong Kong SAR by benefiting from the exceptional advantages that are lacking in any other place. We firmly believe that smooth circulation of capital and cross-boundary collaborations will energise the Hong Kong SAR again, both the academic community and public society, and contribute to the global knowledge system in the forefront fields. Hong Kong SAR's market-based and performance-based salary system and resource allocation system are compelling examples that can be transplanted to the managerial and leadership role appointment.

Appointing based on professions and putting the right people in the right place is the next step to make the best use of all academics in the Hong Kong SAR and facilitate the circulation of academics' capital to benefit stakeholders. Situated in a changing and dynamic environment, the Hong Kong SAR faces several challenges and opportunities. Hong Kong is maintaining an increasingly close relationship with the Chinese Mainland, especially after the implementation of the national security law. Being positioned as a 'bridge' role in national development, China shares with Hong Kong academia numerous opportunities (e.g. funding, collaborations), which further energise the research and innovation capability. Meanwhile, as Chinese scholars are rising in scientific research, an increasing number of them are joining Hong Kong academia recently and starting to be involved in the decision-making process. Their training experience brings social capital in mainland China and overseas, and the close physical proximity of Hong Kong and mainland China allows them easier contact with the mainland. Whereas, this causes worries on mainlandisation in Hong Kong academia, considering the Hong Kong SAR is renowned for and relies heavily on internationalisation. In the meantime, global higher education is facing unprecedented plight recently with the lack of funding and job positions, political intervention in academia, decreasing of non-local students and many others. A lot of researchers must hunt job globally under these circumstances, and the Hong Kong SAR is one option. Their joining can help Hong Kong academia maintain internationalisation and increase diversity, but as mentioned earlier, they might be disadvantaged compared with mainland Chinese, another major non-local scholar group in the Hong Kong SAR. Concerns about academic freedom arising from the National Security Law may, however, influence some international scholars' decisions. This paper argues that Hong Kong SAR's attractiveness has not significantly changed in recent years, as staff headcount data for the 'Others' group (non-local and non-mainland Chinese) across the eight major universities do not show a dramatic decline.

To further attract international scholars, the Hong Kong SAR could work to address misunderstandings surrounding academic freedom. First, no scholar has been sentenced for violating the National Security Law to date. Second, concerns about academic freedom tend to be non-specific, described as 'something that is on the radar' (Power, Lam, and Cheung 2020). Third, scholars who actively advocate for academic freedom continue to work safely in the Hong Kong SAR (e.g. Prof. Carsten A. Holz). To address these challenges and capture opportunities, a balance between mainlandisation and internationalisation is essential, as well as fully making use of local nurtured academics' strengths (e.g. access to local resources, social networks).

Conclusion

In conclusion, guided by career capital theory, we collected comprehensive information on mainland Chinese scholars in the Hong Kong SAR and analysed their career capital experience from 'knowing-why, knowing-how, knowing-whom' career competencies through seven objective indicators, namely managerial position, job duty at managerial position, academic position, citation recognition, educational background, work experience and entry time. We found that as a global

hub of talent, the Hong Kong SAR owns an overwhelming number of non-local academics (69.3%), and they form half of the leadership team among eight major universities. The number of mainland Chinese academics has even surpassed local academics since 2022/23, and they are strong in Business and STEM fields. However, it takes greater effort to be promoted than other non-local academics. But other non-local scholars in managerial positions are experiencing invisible discrimination as well. Except for the place of origins, the Hong Kong SAR values locally educated talents regardless of their origins and is likely to nurture them into managerial positions.

Focusing on the growth of mainland Chinese academics in the Hong Kong SAR allows a further understanding of their acculturation and challenges the existing system in universities. The expanding diversity of academics in the Hong Kong SAR presents challenges to how to balance promotional decisions and resource allocations across groups of academics, how to maximise the capital brought by all academics to empower academia and how to balance mainlandisation and internationalisation. By drawing an overall picture of academics in the Hong Kong SAR and mainland Chinese academics, we sincerely hope this will facilitate the transformation in the higher education system for a better future of the worldwide knowledge system. Furthermore, a growing number of Hong Kong local residents, including but not limited to young and well-educated professionals, are emigrating to other countries (e.g. the UK and Canada) in recent years, which affects its labour market and global competitiveness (Chan et al. 2022; Chong et al. 2024). This paper hopes to provide global academics with an opportunity to know more about academia here and be prepared to join soon. This will not only alleviate the shortage of talent but also echo the talent attraction schemes raised by the Hong Kong SAR government.

For all that, drawbacks exist in this research, and further investigations are needed. Firstly, this paper only focuses on mainland Chinese academics in the Hong Kong SAR and ignores the features of other scholars, which limits the sufficient comparison across groups. We suggest future work to address more groups in detail and complement this part. Secondly, only seven objective indicators were collected to measure the career capital experience to reflect academics' acculturation, which is not comprehensive enough. We suggest adding more factors and combining them with different approaches. For example, case studies on specific academics to provide an in-depth interpretation of their career capital experience and growth in academia; bibliometric analysis to reveal the research collaboration patterns (Wang et al. 2019). Thirdly, the overall numerical data of the academic staff in eight major universities only covers five academic years, which can be further expanded for longer records so as to reveal the longitudinal trends of academia in Hong Kong. We encourage researchers to communicate with UGC and both public and private universities in Hong Kong to collect more data. Last but not least, this paper limits its focus only to the Hong Kong SAR, and we would like to advocate research on more places in this topic because the mobility of academics is global, and more attention is necessary, especially in a dynamic environment.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Data availability statement

Dataset A can be obtained from the University Grants Committee. *Dataset B* is available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

ORCID

Xinrui Li  <http://orcid.org/0009-0001-3321-6540>

Eric Friginal  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-5956-3674>

References

- Aiston, S. J., C. K. Fo, and W. W. Law. 2020. "Interrogating Strategies and Policies to Advance Women in Academic Leadership: The Case of Hong Kong." *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* 42 (3): 347–364. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2020.1753393>.
- Arends-Tóth, J., and F. J. R. van de Vijver. 2006. "Assessment of Psychological Acculturation." In *The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology*, edited by David L. Sam and John W. Berry, 142–160. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Aytekin, I., O. Erdil, N. Erdogmus, and A. E. Akgun. 2016. "Academics' Career Capital and Career Satisfaction: The Mediation Effect of Research Productivity." *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice* 16 (6): 1921–1945. <https://doi.org/10.12738/estp.2016.6.0412>.
- Baas, M. 2019. "The Education-Migration Industry: International Students, Migration Policy and the Question of Skills." *International Migration* 57 (3): 222–234. <https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.12540>.
- Baruch, Y., and D. T. Hall. 2004. "The Academic Career: A Model for Future Careers in Other Sectors?" *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 64 (2): 241–262. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2002.11.002>.
- Bilecen, B., and C. Van Mol. 2017. "Introduction: International Academic Mobility and Inequalities." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43 (8): 1241–1255. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1300225>.
- Bowen, G. A. 2009. "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method." *Qualitative Research Journal* 9 (2): 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>.
- Brotherhood, T., and A. S. Patterson. 2024. "International Faculty: Exploring the Relationship between On-campus Support and Off-campus Integration." *Higher Education* 88 (2): 467–486. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-023-01124-7>.
- Cantwell, B., and B. J. Taylor. 2013. "Internationalization of the Postdoctorate in the United States: Analyzing the Demand for International Postdoc Labor." *Higher Education* 66 (2): 551–567. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-013-9621-0>.
- Cao, C., J. Baas, C. S. Wagner, and K. Jonkers. 2020. "Returning Scientists and the Emergence of China's Science System." *Science and Public Policy* 47 (2): 172–183. <https://doi.org/10.1093/scipol/scz056>.
- Cappellen, T., and M. Janssens. 2008. "Global Managers' Career Competencies." *Career Development International* 13 (6): 514–537. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13620430810901679>.
- Census and Statistics Department. 2025. "Hong Kong Annual Digest of Statistics." <https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/sc/scode160.html#section4>.
- Chan, A. K. W., L. T. O. Cheung, E. K.-m. Chong, M. Y. K. Lee, and M. Y. H. Wong. 2022. "Hong Kong's New Wave of Migration: Socio-Political Factors of Individuals' Intention to Emigrate." *Comparative Migration Studies* 10 (1): 49–49. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-022-00323-y>.
- Chan, H.-h. 2023. "Unlock the Editor's Digest for Free." *Financial Times*. <https://www.ft.com/content/1b9de404-d8c3-4cf9-bdec-cc4349140e11?segmentID=6BF9295A-189D-71C6-18FB-D469F27D3523>.
- Chan, N. K. M., L. Nachman, and C. W. J. Mok. 2020. "Trends: A Red Flag for Participation: The Influence of Chinese Mainlandization on Political Behavior in Hong Kong." *Political Research Quarterly* 74 (1): 3–17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912920957413>.
- Chao, R. Y. J., and G. A. Postiglione. 2017a. "Academic Promotion and the Changing Academic Profession in Hong Kong." In *The Changing Academic Profession in Hong Kong*, edited by G. A. Postiglione and J. Jung, 15–35. Cham: Springer.
- Chao, R. Y. J., and G. A. Postiglione. 2017b. "Academic Promotion of Higher Education Teaching Personnel in Hong Kong." In *Recalibrating Careers in Academia: Professional Advancement Policies and Practices in Asia-Pacific*, edited by L. Wang and W. Teter, 73–104. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- Chapman, D. W., W. K. Cummings, and G. A. Postiglione. 2010. *Crossing Borders in East Asian Higher Education*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Chen, L. 2022. "Key Issues Impeding the Integration of International Faculty at Japanese Universities." *Asia Pacific Education Review* 23 (3): 475–488. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-022-09764-7>.
- Chen, L., and L. Chen. 2024. "To Stay or to Leave: The Turnover Intentions of International Academics at Japanese Universities." *Journal of Studies in International Education* 28 (3): 376–397. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10283153231164842>.
- Chen, S. 2021. "Nonforeign Foreign Academics in Hong Kong: Realities and Strategies." In *International Faculty in Asia: In Comparative Global Perspective*, edited by F. Huang and A. R. Welch, 33–44. Singapore: Springer.
- Chiu, S., and T.-L. Lui. 2009. *Hong Kong: Becoming a Chinese Global City*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Chong, E. K., A. K. W. Chan, M. Y. H. Wong, M. Y. K. Lee, and L. T. O. Cheung. 2024. "Who Intended to Leave? Patterns and Impacts of Hong Kong's Recent Wave of Migration." *Population, Space and Place* 30 (6): 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.2781>.
- Clarke, H., and E. Doughty. 2025. "Thousands More University Jobs Cut as Financial Crisis Deepens." <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cp3ve5jgkvo>.

- Clarke, M., A. Hyde, and J. Drennan. 2013. "Professional Identity in Higher Education." In *The Academic Profession in Europe: New Tasks and New Challenges*, edited by B. M. Kehm and U. Teichler, 7–21. Dordrecht: Springer.
- CUHK History Gallery. n.d. "Milestones through the Decades." <https://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ugallery/en/zone-a.html?area=leaders>.
- DalGLISH, S. L., H. Khalid, and S. A. McMahon. 2020. "Document Analysis in Health Policy Research: The READ Approach." *Health Policy and Planning* 35 (10): 1424–1431. <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapol/czaa064>.
- Deem, R. 2006. "Changing Research Perspectives on the Management of Higher Education: Can Research Permeate the Activities of Manager-Academics?" *Higher Education Quarterly* 60 (3): 203–228. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2273.2006.00322.x>.
- Defillippi, R. J., and M. B. Arthur. 1994. "The Boundaryless Career: A Competency-Based Perspective." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 15 (4): 307–324. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030150403>.
- de Wit, H., and P. G. Altbach. 2021. "Internationalization in Higher Education: Global Trends and Recommendations for Its Future." *Policy Reviews in Higher Education* 5 (1): 28–46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322969.2020.1820898>.
- Editorial. 2024. "Universities Are Not Just Businesses, but an Investment in Future Generations." *Nature* 633: 739. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-024-03109-7>.
- Education Bureau. 2025. "Homepage." Study in Hong Kong. <https://www.studyinhongkong.edu.hk/en/>.
- Education Bureau. n.d. "Institutions." <https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/postsecondary/local-higher-edu/institutions/index.html>.
- Faguy, A. 2025. "New International Student Enrolment Drops 17% at US Universities." <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy8v336lyz4o>.
- Fong, B. C. H. 2017. "One Country, Two Nationalisms: Center-Periphery Relations between Mainland China and Hong Kong, 1997–2016." *Modern China* 43 (5): 523–556. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0097700417691470>.
- Fong, E., and H. Guo. 2018. "Immigrant Integration and Their Negative Sentiments toward Recent Immigrants: The Case of Hong Kong." *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 27 (2): 166–189. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0117196818772326>.
- Fontes, M., P. Videira, and T. Calapez. 2013. "The Impact of Long-Term Scientific Mobility on the Creation of Persistent Knowledge Networks." *Mobilities* 8 (3): 440–465. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2012.655976>.
- Fung, M. 2025. "HK Universities See Success in Drive to Attract More Top Talent from Abroad." *The Straits Times*. <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east-asia/hk-universities-see-success-in-drive-to-attract-more-top-talent-from-abroad>.
- Gan, Y., and Y. Tong. 2023. "Discrimination and Mental Health of Highly Educated Immigrants in Hong Kong: The Buffering Role of Group Concentration." *Cities* 137:104326. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2023.104326>.
- Garisto, D., J. Tollefson, and A. Witze. 2025. "How Trump's Attack on Universities Is Putting Research in Peril." *Nature*. <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-025-01289-4>.
- Gilbert, S., and A. Hattenstone. 2025. "Is the UK Becoming Less Attractive for Students?" <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cvgwwgl2nleo>.
- GovHK. 2016. "Gov't Responds to US Report." https://www.news.gov.hk/en/categories/admin/html/2016/04/20160414_125656.shtml.
- GovHK. 2018. "EDB Responds to Report on Academic Freedom in Hong Kong by Foreign Organisation." <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201801/23/P2018012300879.htm?fontSize=1>.
- GovHK. 2023. "HKSAR Government Delegation Addresses Concerns on Hong Kong's Human Rights Situation Raised at Meetings of UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights." <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202302/16/P2023021600748.htm?fontSize=1>.
- GovHK. 2024a. "The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address." <https://www.policyaddress.gov.hk/2024/en/policy.html>.
- GovHK. 2024b. "Hong Kong Enjoys a High Degree of Academic Freedom – HKSAR Government Rejects the Baseless Smears by the So-called Human Rights Watch and Hong Kong Democracy Council." <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202409/25/P2024092500747.htm>.
- GovHK. 2025a. "Chief Executive thanks Mainland and Foreign Investors for Setting up Businesses in Hong Kong (with photos)." <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202406/20/P2024062000508.htm?fontSize=2>.
- GovHK. 2025b. "The Chief Executive's 2025 Policy Address." <https://www.policyaddress.gov.hk/2025/en/p77.html>.
- GovHK. 2025c. "LCQ2: Developing Hong Kong into International Education Hub." <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202506/11/P2025061100670.htm?fontSize=2>.
- GovHK. n.d. "Together, We Fight the Virus!" <https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html>.
- Gress, D. R. 2022. "Interstices: Workplace Satisfaction, Inclusion, and the Cultural Adjustment of Expatriate Academics at South Korean Universities Nationwide." *Research in Comparative and International Education* 17 (4): 583–601. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17454999221107960>.
- Gress, D. R., and J. Shin. 2020. "Diversity, Work Environment, and Governance Participation: A Study of Expatriate Faculty Perceptions at a Korean University." *Journal of Institutional Research South East Asia* 18 (1): 1–20.

- Hobova, Y. 2016. "Chinese in Hong Kong: Cultural and Linguistic Background of Two Identities." *International Communication of Chinese Culture* 3 (2): 325–337. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40636-016-0049-y>.
- Hong, Y., and H. Horta. 2025. *Transnational Academic Mobility to Japan: Capital, Habitus, Agency and Social Network Embeddedness (1st 2025 ed.)*. Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Horta, H., J. Jung, and J. M. Santos. 2018. "Effects of Mobilities on the Research Output and Its Multidisciplinarity of Academics in Hong Kong and Macau: An Exploratory Study." *Higher Education Quarterly* 72 (3): 250–265. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hequ.12161>.
- Horta, H., J. Jung, L.-f. Zhang, and G. A. Postiglione. 2019. "Academics' Job-Related Stress and Institutional Commitment in Hong Kong Universities." *Tertiary Education and Management* 25 (4): 327–348. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11233-019-09039-8>.
- Huang, F. 2018. "International Faculty at Japanese Universities: Their Demographic Characteristics and Work Roles." *Asia Pacific Education Review* 19 (2): 263–272. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-018-9536-7>.
- Institute of International Education. n.d. "Leading Places of Origin." Open Doors. <https://opendoorsdata.org/data/international-scholars/leading-places-of-origin/>.
- Ioannidis, J. P. A. 2025. "August 2025 Data-Update for 'Updated Science-Wide Author Databases of Standardized Citation Indicators.'" V. 8. <https://doi.org/10.17632/btchxktzyw.8>.
- IOM. 2024. "World Migration Report 2024." International Organization for Migration (IOM).
- Iqbal, M. 2011. "Why Are Fewer International Students Choosing to Study in Australia?" <https://www.qs.com/insights/why-are-fewer-international-students-choosing-to-study-in-australia>.
- Järnlström, M., T. Brandt, and A. Rajala. 2020. "The Relationship between Career Capital and Career Success among Finnish Knowledge Workers." *Baltic Journal of Management* 15 (5): 687–706. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BJM-10-2019-0357>.
- Jöns, H., and H. Deakin-Smith. 2024. "Mid-career Outcomes of Doctoral Graduates from German Universities Explained through Triadic Thought." *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 23 (3): 633–656. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2024.2406915>.
- Jorgenson, D. W. 1963. "Capital Theory and Investment Behavior." *The American Economic Review* 53 (2): 247–259.
- Jung, J., H. Horta, and G. A. Postiglione. 2021. "Living in Uncertainty: The COVID-19 Pandemic and Higher Education in Hong Kong." *Studies in Higher Education* 46 (1): 107–120. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2020.1859685>.
- Kong, H. 2024. "University of Hong Kong Admits 50% more Students from Outside City This Year." SCMP. https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/education/article/3281921/university-hong-kong-admits-50-more-students-outside-city-year?module=perpetual_scroll_0&pgtype=article.
- Koon, B., and K. Kinzelbach. 2025. "Transnational Academic Spaces and Epistemic Networks: Hong Kong Emigrants' Experiences with Extraterritorial Authoritarian Practices." *Globalizations* 22: 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2025.2583302>.
- Lai, Y., and A. Li. 2021. "Migrant Workers in a Global City: The Case of Contemporary Hong Kong." *Asian Education and Development Studies* 10 (1): 17–26. <https://doi.org/10.1108/AEDS-02-2019-0028>.
- Lamb, M., and M. Sutherland. 2010. "The Components of Career Capital for Knowledge Workers in the Global Economy." *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 21 (3): 295–312. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190903546839>.
- Li, D., and Y. Li. 2022. "Preparing for RAE 2020 in Hong Kong: Academics' Research, Writing and Publishing Trajectories in a Neoliberal Governance Landscape." *Studies in Higher Education* 47 (7): 1410–1422. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2021.1901272>.
- Li, Y. 2023. *Does Overseas Experience Matter?: The Academic Career Development of Returnee Faculty in Chinese Research Universities*. Abingdon: Routledge. <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=f0eb1cd7-59d0-36cb-a208-112d0124e8b5>.
- Lo, W. Y. W., J. T. Lee, and D. Abdrasheva. 2022. "Global Pedigree and National Imperative: Hong Kong Universities' Response to China's Grand Strategies." *Higher Education* 84 (1): 141–157. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-021-00758-9>.
- Ma, N. 2015. "The Rise of 'Anti-China' 2015. Sentiments in Hong Kong and the 2012 Legislative Council Elections." *China Review* 15 (1): 39–66.
- Mihut, G., A. de Gayardon, and Y. Rudt. 2017. "The Long-Term Mobility of International Faculty: A Literature Review." In *International Faculty in Higher Education: Comparative Perspectives on Recruitment, Integration, and Impact*, edited by M. Yudkevich, P. G. Altbach, and L. E. Rumbley, 15–31. New York: Routledge.
- Mingpao. 2024. 八大上學年7.6%教員離職 回歸後新高 教大離職率達13%升幅最大. Mingpao. <https://jump.mingpao.com/career-news/daily-news/%E5%85%AB%E5%A4%A7%E4%B8%8A%E5%AD%B8%E5%B9%B47-6%E6%95%99%E5%93%A1%E9%9B%A2%E8%81%B7-%E5%9B%9E%E6%AD%B8%E5%BE%8C%E6%96%B0%E9%AB%98-%E6%95%99%E5%A4%A7%E9%9B%A2%E8%81%B7%E7%8E%87%E9%81%9413%E5%8D%87/>.
- Mittelmeier, J., S. Lomer, S. Al Furqani, and D. Huang. 2022. *Internationalisation and Students' Outcomes or Experiences: A Review of the Literature 2011–2021*. York: Advance HE.

- Mogalakwe, M. 2009. "The Documentary Research Method – Using Documentary Sources in Social Research." *Eastern Africa Social Science Research Review* 25 (1): 43–58. <https://doi.org/10.1353/eas.0.0006>.
- Morgan, H. 2021. "Conducting a Qualitative Document Analysis." *The Qualitative Report* 27 (1): 64–77. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2022.5044>.
- Munene, I. I. 2014. "Outsiders Within: Isolation of International Faculty in an American University." *Research in Post-compulsory Education* 19 (4): 450–467. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13596748.2014.955637>.
- National Science Foundation. 2023. *Publications Output: U.S. Trends and International Comparisons*. <https://nces.nsf.gov/pubs/nsb202333>.
- Payne, G., and J. Payne. 2004. *Key Concepts in Social Research*. London: Sage.
- Postiglione, G. A. 2013. "Anchoring Globalization in Hong Kong's Research Universities: Network Agents, Institutional Arrangements, and Brain Circulation." *Studies in Higher Education* 38 (3): 345–366. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2013.773605>.
- Postiglione, G. A., and J. Jung. 2017a. *The Changing Academic Profession in Hong Kong*. Cham: Springer.
- Postiglione, G. A., and J. Jung. 2017b. "The Changing Academic Profession in Hong Kong: Challenges and Future." In *The Changing Academic Profession in Hong Kong*, edited by G. A. Postiglione and J. Jung, 3–14. Cham: Springer.
- Postiglione, G. A., and H. H. H. Tang. 2008. "A Preliminary Review of the Hong Kong CAP Data." chrome-extension://efaidnbmnribpajpcgclefindmkaj/<https://hub.hku.hk/bitstream/10722/63475/1/Content.pdf?accept=1>.
- Postiglione, G. A., and A. Xie. 2017. "International Faculty in Two Top-Tier Chinese Universities: One Country, Two Types of Internationals." In *International Faculty in Higher Education: Comparative Perspectives on Recruitment, Integration, and Impact*, edited by M. Yudkevich, P. G. Altbach, and L. E. Rumbley, 76–100. New York: Routledge.
- Power, J., J. Lam, and E. Cheung. 2020. "National Security Law: For Hong Kong Scholars, a Fear of the Unknown." *South China Morning Post*. https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3096370/national-security-law-hong-kong-scholars-fear-unknown?module=perpetual_scroll_0&pgtype=article.
- Prior, L. 2003. *Using Documents in Social Research*. London: Sage.
- Pudelko, M., and H. Tenzer. 2019. "Boundaryless Careers or Career Boundaries? The Impact of Language Barriers on Academic Careers in International Business Schools." *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 18 (2): 213–240. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2017.0236>.
- Ruan, N. 2021. "Accumulating Academic Freedom for Intellectual Leadership: Women Professors' Experiences in Hong Kong." *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 53 (11): 1097–1107. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2020.1773797>.
- Ryazanova, O., and P. McNamara. 2019. "Choices and Consequences: Impact of Mobility on Research-Career Capital and Promotion in Business Schools." *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 18 (2): 186–212. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2017.0389>.
- Scott, J. 1990. *A Matter of Record: Documentary Sources in Social Research*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Selmer, J., J.-L. Trembath, and J. Luring. 2017. "Expatriate Academics: An Era of Higher Education Internationalization." In *Research Handbook of Expatriates*, edited by Y. McNulty and J. Selmer, 335–349. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Sherif, K., N. Nan, and J. Brice. 2020. "Career Success in Academia." *Career Development International* 25 (6): 597–616. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-09-2019-0232>.
- Singh, J. K. N. 2024. "Migrant Academics' Career Capital Experiences in Australian Universities: A Qualitative Study." *Higher Education* 88 (3): 957–974. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-023-01152-3>.
- Siu-lun Chow, A. L., King-wa Fu, and Y.-L. Ng. 2020. "Development of the Hong Kong Identity Scale: Differentiation between Hong Kong 'Locals' and Mainland Chinese in Cultural and Civic Domains." *Journal of Contemporary China* 29 (124): 568–584. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2019.1677365>.
- So, A. Y., and P. L. Ip. 2019. "Civic Localism, Anti-mainland Localism, and Independence." *Asian Education and Development Studies* 9 (2): 255–267. <https://doi.org/10.1108/AEDS-02-2018-0043>.
- Song, I., and Y. Kim. 2024. "Working as a 'Token': Different Perspectives on the Role of International Faculty in Korean Universities." *ECNU Review of Education* 7 (4): 926–944. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20965311241240482>.
- Thurmond, V. A. 2001. "The Point of Triangulation." *Journal of Nursing Scholarship* 33 (3): 253–258. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1547-5069.2001.00253.x>.
- Tsui, F., and S. Yu. 2023. "Activism in the Face of Repression: UK Universities as Allies for Hong Kong Activist Students and Academic." UNESCO Chair in the Protection of Human Rights Defenders Working Paper Series 2: 1–21.
- UGC. 2002. "Higher Education Review." University Grants Committee. https://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/ugc/about/press_speech_Other/press/2002/her2603e.html.
- UGC. 2004. "Hong Kong Higher Education: To Make a Difference, to Move with the Times." https://www.ugc.edu.hk/doc/eng/ugc/publication/report/policy_document_e.pdf.
- UGC. 2010. "Aspirations for the Higher Education System in Hong Kong: Report of the University Grants Committee." <https://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/ugc/about/publications/report/her2010/her2010.html>.
- UGC. 2025a. "Internationalisation and Engagement with Chinese Mainland." University Grants Committee. https://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/ugc/activity/internationalisation_with_mainland.html.

- UGC. 2025b. "Movement of Academic Staff." University Grants Committee. <https://cdcf.ugc.edu.hk/stat/index.html#/topic/staff>.
- UGC. n.d. "Mission Statement of the University Grants Committee." University Grants Committee.
- Universities Australia. 2024. "Critical Challenges in Australia's University Sector: Securing a Sustainable Future." https://universitiesaustralia.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/UA091-Critical-challenges-in-australias-university-sector_v2.pdf.
- Usher, D. 1965. "Traditional Capital Theory." *The Review of Economic Studies* 32 (2): 169–186. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2296061>.
- Varea, V., L. L. Goncalves, and C. N. Luguetti. 2025. "Hermanas in Dialogue: Amplifying Female South American Voices in Australian Health and Physical Education Teacher Education." *Sport, Education and Society* 30 (9): 1138–1149. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2024.2429542>.
- Varma, A., S. Pichler, P. Budhwar, and S. Kupferer. 2012. "Expatriate-Local Interactions: An Investigation in China." *Journal of Managerial Psychology* 27 (7): 753–768. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683941211259557>.
- Vickers, E., and P. Morris. 2022. "Accelerating Hong Kong's Reeducation: 'Mainlandisation', Securitisation and the 2020 National Security Law." *Comparative Education* 58 (2): 187–205. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050068.2022.2046878>.
- Wang, J., R. Hooi, A. X. Li, and M. H. Chou. 2019. "Collaboration Patterns of Mobile Academics: The Impact of International Mobility." *Science and Public Policy* 46 (3): 450–462. <https://doi.org/10.1093/scipol/scy073>.
- Welch, A. R., and F. Huang. 2021. "International Faculty in Higher Education – Here to Stay?" In *International Faculty in Asia: In Comparative Global Perspective*, edited by F. Huang and A. R. Welch, 225–233. Singapore: Springer Singapore.
- Witze, A. 2025. "75% of US Scientists Who Answered Nature Poll Consider Leaving." *Nature*. <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-025-00938-y>.
- Wong, S.-I. 1986. "Modernization and Chinese Culture in Hong Kong." *The China Quarterly* 106 (106): 306–325. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741000038595>.
- Wu, X. I., B. M. Watson, and S. C. Baker. 2024. "The Role of Language Use and Communication in Mainland Chinese Students' Cross-Cultural Adaptation to Hong Kong: A Qualitative Investigative Study." *Language and Intercultural Communication* 24 (1): 20–34. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2023.2250748>.
- Xie, Y., X. Lin, J. Li, Q. He, and J. Huang. 2023. "Caught in the Crossfire: Fears of Chinese–American Scientists." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 120 (27): e2216248120. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2216248120>.
- Xie, Y., C. Zhang, and Q. Lai. 2014. "China's Rise as a Major Contributor to Science and Technology." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 111 (26): 9437–9442. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1407709111>.
- Xu, S. B., T. Liu, H. Nejadghanbar, and G. Hu. 2024. "Retraction Handling by Potential Predatory Journals." *Accountability in Research* 33 (1): 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08989621.2024.2434245>.
- Xu, X., A. Braun Štrelcová, G. Marini, F. Huang, and Y. Cai. 2022. "International Academics in Mainland China: What Do We Know and What Do We Need to Know?" *European Journal of Higher Education* 12 (S1): 416–433. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21568235.2022.2074865>.
- Yiu, W. 2024. "Academic Staff Departures at Hong Kong Public Universities Hit Highest Since 1997 Handover, with 380 Leaving Jobs." *South China Morning Post*. <https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/education/article/3251032/hong-kong-public-universities-record-new-high-academic-staff-departures-380-leaving-jobs>.
- Yu, B., A. S. Mak, and P. Bodycott. 2021. "Psychological and Academic Adaptation of Mainland Chinese Students in Hong Kong Universities." *Studies in Higher Education* 46 (8): 1552–1564. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1693991>.
- Yu, B., and K. Zhang. 2016. "'It's More Foreign than a Foreign Country': Adaptation and Experience of Mainland Chinese Students in Hong Kong." *Tertiary Education and Management* 22 (4): 300–315. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13583883.2016.1226944>.
- Zhang, L.-f., M. Fu, and D. T. Li. 2020. "Hong Kong Academics' Perceived Work Environment and Job Dissatisfaction: The Mediating Role of Academic Self-Efficacy." *Journal of Educational Psychology* 112 (7): 1431–1443. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000437>.
- Zhang, L.-f., and H. Horta. 2023. "Research Agendas and Job Dissatisfaction among Hong Kong Academics." *Higher Education* 85 (1): 103–122. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-022-00824-w>.
- Zweig, D., K. Siqin, and W. Huiyao. 2020. "'The Best Are Yet to Come': State Programs, Domestic Resistance and Reverse Migration of High-Level Talent to China." *Journal of Contemporary China* 29 (125): 776–791. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2019.1705003>.