**Information about data collection**

I attach the following appendices:

* Appendix A – Data Collection Methods
* Appendix B - Sampling
* Appendix C – Information Sheet
* Appendix D – Question Schedules

We used different schedules depending on the interviewee. I attach two Question Schedules:

Question Schedule (A) was used for a former Minister of State

Question Schedule (B) was used for a former UK policy advisor to Hong Kong.

**APPENDIX A**

**Data Collection Methods**

The UK and Hong Kong team carried out a single-case study of England and Hong Kong because the two societies provide a powerful exemplar of the emerging patterns of policy transfer.

1. For the first part of the project, we examined external policy referencing in England historically and currently, and located this within the broader literature on external policy referencing.
2. In the second part of the project, we reviewed the academic literature on external policy referencing with specific reference to England.

We carried out analysis of policy and related documents in England (e.g. key government announcements, speeches, and publications), between 1990 and the present, including authoritative sources and references made within policy documents or by policy makers (e.g. the McKinsey Report 2007, 2010).

1. In the third part of the project, we provided an in-depth understanding of the policy making process.

This was the part where the main empirical data collection took place. We undertook semi-structured, in-depth interviews with key policy makers involved in developing and implementing education reforms in England and Hong Kong.

**APPENDIX B**

**Sampling**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Proposed interviews** | **Actual interviews** |
| (1) Former or current Education Secretary (1) | (None) The then Education Secretary declined to be interviewed |
| (1) Minister of State for Schools (1) | (1) A former Minister of State (and subsequent postholder) |
| (1) Shadow Education Secretary / Secretary of State for Education | (None) The person approached declined to be interviewed |
| (4) Senior civil servants, Department for Education (several) | (3) |
| (2) Members of expert panel on the reform of the National Curriculum (several) | (1) |
|  | (1) former chair of parliamentary education committees relating to education and schools |
|  | (1) the then education policy advisor |
|  | (4) UK academics / advisors on education in England and / or Hong Kong |
|  | (1) Manager of an ethnic community centre |

The left column shows the proposed sample for the interviews.

When it came to the actual sample, a few people we approached declined to be interviewed. There was also an element of snowball sampling where we expanded the interviews to include policy advisors who were involved in education policy making in England and / or Hong Kong who were willing to be interviewed (right column).

**APPENDIX C**

**INFORMATION SHEET**

**Study**: **ESRC-RGC HK Bilateral project on Hong Kong as a source of education policy in England**

**UK interviews**

**Researchers**: We are researchers at the Hong Kong Institute of Education and Institute of Education, University of London. If you have any questions about the research, please contact Christine Han at [C.han@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:C.han@ioe.ac.uk) or Katherine Forestier at [Katherine.forestier@gmail.com](mailto:Katherine.forestier@gmail.com)

**Research team:** *Professor Paul Morris*, Principal Investigator, Institute of Education, University of London; *Professor Bob Adamson*, Principal Investigator, Department of International Education and Lifelong Learning, HKIEd; Hong Kong Institute of Education; *Katherine Forestier*, Co-Investigator, DIELL, HKIEd; *Christine Han*, Research Fellow, Institute of Education, University of London

This interview will be conducted by Katherine Forestier and Christine Han

**Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form before the interview begins.**

**The research**

In recent years, there has been much interest among policy makers around the world in high performing education systems, especially those in East Asia. Our project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) in England and the Research Grants Council Hong Kong. It is looking at the nature of policy borrowing, or referencing, in England since 1990, and specifically at Hong Kong as a source of education policy in England. The latter part of the project investigates how the Hong Kong education system and the achievement of its school pupils are understood in England, and in Hong Kong itself.

As part of the project, we are interviewing policy makers, advisors, educators, and community, parent and employer representatives in Hong Kong and England. As the [post held by interviewer], it would be very helpful to have your views on education system in England, and the way education policy is made, as well the Hong Kong education system – its strengths and weaknesses.

**Process**

If you agree to take part in the research there will be one interview that will last no more than 90 minutes. The interview will be voice recorded.

**Confidentiality / anonymity**

We will ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of all interviewees, unless otherwise agreed in cases where by the nature of your role it is difficult to ensure complete anonymity. This will be discussed and agreed at the start of the interview.

**Option to withdraw**

If you change your mind about participating in the research you have the right to stop and withdraw from the research at any point.

**Potential problems**

We do not foresee any problems arising, but understand that there may be some topics you do not want to discuss. If you have any problems or concerns about the research, please contact us and we will address your concerns accordingly.

**After the interview**

If you are interested, we would be happy to send you publications arising from our research.

Thank you for reading this information sheet.

Christine Han and Katherine Forestier

**APPENDIX D**

**Question Schedule (A)**

**Interview with [former Minister of State]**

**Preamble**

We are interested to explore how the government is making reference to, and learning from, other education systems to inform its education reforms. This is a research programme funded by the ESRC and the RGC in Hong Kong, and has a focus on Hong Kong.

In your former role in government, you were obviously very closely involved in this process. We very much appreciate the insight you can share.

**Policy referencing in general within the DfE**

1. From your experience, do you think there has there been a long tradition in making reference to other systems? Is this something that has had a distinctive and / or increasing focus under the Coalition government? If it is an increasing focus, what do you think the reasons for this might be?

2. How influential are the PISA, TIMSS and PIRLS studies for (a) informing understanding within the department about the state of education in England (b) identifying new policy directions (ask for examples)? What other sources of evidence are influential?

3. Please can you describe how the DfE actually use studies such as PISA? Who (agencies and individuals) are involved? What are the processes? Do ministers get involved in this process? If so, what is their role?

4. What, for government, are the key lessons you learned from these studies? How have they informed policy decisions, and which decisions in particular, for example related to curriculum reform, assessment, teacher education and school management?

5. Which agencies does the DfE work with or make reference to for informing the transfer of “best practices” from overseas to the UK? Eg consultancies, any particular quangos, or work done by academics? Have reports such as McKinsey and Cambridge Assessment been influential? Any others?

6. Which systems overseas were you particularly impressed with and why? What particular features impressed you?

**Hong Kong**

As mentioned, our research has a particular focus on the department’s interest in Hong Kong, which you visited.

1. What was your overall impression of Hong Kong’s education system before and after your visit?

2. You visited several primary and secondary schools, and one international school. How did you think these schools compared with schools you visited in England, in terms of curriculum and teaching and learning culture, and school management?

3. What aspects of the Hong Kong education system were you particularly impressed with and felt could be relevant to England?

4. What were you less impressed with and why?

5. What was your impression of Hong Kong’s education reforms, including its decision to reduce the focus on examinations at senior secondary level, broaden the curriculum, and focus more on learning and other soft skills to balance the previous emphasis on content of knowledge?

6. Were there any particular features from Hong Kong that directly informed reforms in England? Were there any related to

* + curriculum,
  + pedagogy,
  + assessment,
  + school management,
  + professional development/training of teachers,
  + wider learning culture (eg importance of homework and other learning activities outside school)

If so, what were these features?

7. Can you describe in more detail the particular features of the HK maths curriculum that could be of value to England, and which have been incorporated into the new National Curriculum, or which informed decisions about the curriculum?

8. Apart from the visit, what other research did you undertake to inform these policy decisions? What analysis took place of the various policy documents, curriculum and assessment frameworks and materials?

9. What impression did you obtain as to the nature of the problems / issues facing education in Hong Kong? Was any analysis undertaken of the educational problems / issues faced in Hong Kong?

10. How do you see the future? What areas of education require reform, and from where can we identify models of good practice?

**Question Schedule (B)**

**Interview with UK academics / policy advisors for England and Hong Kong**

**Preamble**

We are interested to explore how the UK government is making reference to, and learning from, other education systems to inform its education reforms. This is part of a research programme, funded by the ESRC and the RGC in Hong Kong, and a series of work related to policy borrowing. The latter part of the interview has a particular focus on Hong Kong.

You obviously have great insight into the education reforms in both systems; how each are referencing other systems; and any strengths in the HK system that may be relevant models elsewhere. We very much appreciate the insight you can share.

**Your background, in UK and HK**

We’d like to start by learning about your roles in working the HK government, and if you’ve had any similar role with the UK.

What was your underlying motivation in taking on these roles in HK?

In those roles, which policy decisions and practices were you able to influence? How does this compare with the influence you’ve had in UK?

What have been the outcomes in terms of implementation? Successes? Disappointments?

How do professional relationships between academic experts like yourself and policy-makers, in HK and England, compare and differ?

What have been the outcomes of these relationships in both places?

How do the roles of politics and political ideology compare in each jurisdiction? What are the consequences for education of the different approaches?

Please can you describe HK’s approach to policy borrowing or referencing that you have observed? How has the EDB gone about this? How does it differ from the approach in England?

Are you, and other academic experts, an essential part of the external referencing or borrowing? You have described the expert advice you shared with Hong Kong. What about other international academic consultants? How have they influenced policy? What has been the impact of this contribution?

**Views on HK system as a model**

1. Why do you think HK has been so successful in PISA and what is your understanding of any nuances in its performance?
2. As mentioned, our research has a particular focus on the DfE’s interest in Hong Kong, which several ministers from both the previous and current governments visited in order to learn about the reasons for its high performance in tests such as PISA.

Since their visits, coalition education ministers have repeatedly made reference to the HK system as a model UK can learn from:

* + for its success in ensuring high academic standards for all children (including the most disadvantaged),
  + the rigour of its primary curriculum (particularly maths);
  + the professional training of its teachers;
  + whole class teaching;
  + and the autonomy enjoyed by its schools.

As you are familiar with both systems, we would like to seek your expert view on this assessment, and any features that policy-makers here should be interested in, or not.

1. Do you think that these positive references were accurate enough to inform policy-making?
2. How do they tally, or not, with your own knowledge and impressions of the HK education system? Please elaborate.
3. What do you regard as the particular strengths in the HK education system and reform process?
4. What elements of the HK experience do you see as relevant to the UK?
5. We have talked about the positives in the HK education system. What are the problems and issues facing education in HK?
6. Has sufficient analysis been undertaken of the educational problems/issues faced in HK, particularly by policy-makers and their advisors using HK as a reference? If it is not sufficient, what are your concerns about this?
7. From what you have seen of HK’s reforms, do you think there is any risk that the more “progressive” approaches to education could lower standards?

**Policy referencing in UK and HK as a source of evidence**

1. From your experience, how important do you think external referencing is in education policy making in England and Hong Kong? And how has it changed over time?
2. For England, is this something that has had a different focus under the Coalition government? What do you think are the reasons for this shift? How do you view this shift?
3. How influential have the PISA, TIMSS and PIRLS studies been for (a) informing understanding about the state of education in England and (b) identifying new policy directions? (ask for examples). What other sources of evidence are influential? How has their influence changed over time? Do these tests/studies have a similar influence in HK? Please elaborate. What are your views on the value of this influence?
4. Which systems do you think the UK should be interested in, and why? And which particular features should be of interest?
5. How do you see the future? What areas of education require reform in England and HK, and from where can we identify models of good practice? How should we go about identifying and evaluating that good practice?