

Proposal for the Voices in Photos: Anti-stigmatization Campaign for Ex-offenders

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1. Objective: To reduce stigma imposed on Hong Kong ex-offenders.

2. Target Group: Students and staffs in CUHK, the general public and ex-offenders.

3. Background: Ex-offenders in Hong Kong belong to concealable minorities, which means they face dilemmas whether disclosing own identities or not (Chui & Cheng, 2013). Stigma is one of the key challenges they face (Chui & Cheng, 2014). Stigma can be differentiated into social stigma and self-stigma. The former refers to the stigma imposed by community on the ex-offenders and the latter refers to ex-offenders' internalization of the stigmatized beliefs against themselves (Link & Phelan, 2001; Mak & Cheung, 2010). Social stigma may result in difficulties in finding employments and obstacles for re-entry to society (Chui & Cheng, 2013). Internalized beliefs may lead to self-confirmation, which may hamper ex-offenders' psychological well-beings and, at worst, may prompt them return to deviant behaviors (Winnick & Bodkin, 2008; Chui & Cheng, 2014). Our project therefore aims to reduce social stigma and self-stigma imposed on ex-offenders, so as to alleviate the difficulties ex-offenders in Hong Kong may face.

4. Project Details

4.1 Preparation: We tackle social stigma and self-stigma imposed on ex-offenders by involving three stakeholder groups, namely the general public, ex-offenders-in-project and ex-offenders-in-general. We are going to invite 3-5 ex-offenders who are currently securely employed to cooperate with us as the ex-offenders-in-project (EOP) through Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention, Hong Kong (SRACP), which is one of the major NGOs in Hong Kong providing rehabilitation services for ex-offenders. We will encourage them to discuss with us and present their own stories through photographs with narratives (for examples of photographs, see Fig. 1 in Appendix 3). The content of stories will be decided by EOP, while we encourage EOP to document their struggles and strengths, and their views on stigma and society's acceptance on

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ex-offenders. Only with their informed consents and our checking on their photos in terms of ethics and photo quality, we will proceed to compile the materials into videos, brochures and photo exhibition. Tentative venues of photo exhibitions are in CUHK or Fotan.

4.2 Expected Outcomes:

General public: The general public, in particular students and staffs in CUHK, will be presented with the stories from EOP's points of views such that they can understand more about the worlds of ex-offenders. Social stigma is expected to be reduced with public's increasing understanding to the labelled group. Outcomes will be evaluated quantitatively by the amount of people viewing videos, taking brochures, visiting photo exhibition and questionnaires, and qualitatively by reviewing comments on online platforms and of the exhibition.

Ex-offenders-in-project (EOP): 3-5 EOP are expected to re-examine and reorganize their personal experiences as well as to express their feelings via photos. Their self-stigma is hoped to be reduced. SRACP agreed to provide assistance in communication with ex-offenders when necessary. Outcomes will be evaluated by questionnaires and individual discussions with the EOP in terms of self-stigma, stigma stress, and perceived benefits of disclosure.

Ex-offenders-in-general (EOG): EOG will be presented the photo stories made from their counterparts. They may gain support by the experiences from their counterparts. It is hoped that they will be encouraged and empowered, and hence their self-stigma will be reduced (Yanos et al., 2015). EOG will be approached via SRACP. Effectiveness will be evaluated by individual discussions with EOG involved and feedbacks from SRACP.

5. Related Principles

Photo-voice: Photo-voice is an innovative technique in helping concealable minorities to reduce their self-stigma via disclosing their own stories using photographs. Many studies support the

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efficacy of using Photo-voice to help concealable minorities reduce their self-stigma and increase their coping with social stigma (Mitchell et al., 2005; Yanos et al., 2015). Photo-voice can also be operated by peer groups like our team (Russinova et al., 2014). Noteworthy, this technique has rarely been applied on ex-offenders in Hong Kong. We believe this project will shed some lights on local anti-stigmatization works for ex-offenders.

Social stigma: Social stigma can be reduced if the community can understand more about the stigmatized group (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014). The efficacy of reducing social stigma by sharing life experiences of the stigmatized group with community members is well supported by studies (Wang et al., 2000; Fleming et al., 2009).

Self-stigma: Self-stigma and its impacts alongside can be alleviated by promoting peer support and encouraging narratives (Yanos et al., 2015). EOP's self-stigma is tackled by encouraging self-disclosure. EOG's self-stigma is coped with by promoting support from their counterparts.

6. Preliminary Preparation: The following are the key units/persons we have/are going to contact (for a detailed timeline and event promotion strategies, see Appendix 2).

Contact of ex-offenders and related support: 1. We will contact the ex-offenders our team already knows; 2. We have achieved preliminary consensus with SRACP for the coordination with ex-offenders and relevant support.

Venue of photo exhibition: 1. Prof. Maria Tam, the chairperson of Committee on Language and Culture of New Asia College, has showed interests in cooperating with us; 2. Other CUHK units will be approached, including ICARE and Student Union; 3. Miss Elia Wong will be approached, who is an artist renting an art workshop in Wah Luen Industrial Centre located in Fotan (for details about the annual art exhibition in Fotan, see Fig. 2 and 3 in Appendix 3).

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Appendix 1: Budget Plan

<u>Expenses</u>	
Preparation	
Travel (HKD\$100/EOP)	HKD\$300 - 500
Incentives for EOP (HKD\$100/EOP)	HKD\$300 - 500
Photo printing fee (depends on sizes)	HKD\$700
Frame	HKD\$300
Office supplies	HKD\$100
Others	HKD\$100
Photo Exhibition	
Rent of Miss Elia Wong's art workshop in Fotan (to be negotiated)	HKD\$0 – 1,500
Brochures, posters, banners	HKD\$400
Decorations	HKD\$400
Office supplies	HKD\$100
Questionnaires	HKD\$100
Others	HKD\$100
Total:	HKD\$2,900 - \$4,800

* Our team is committed to use the cash award offered by Psy-Connection to facilitate the operation of this campaign when necessary.

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Appendix 2: Timeline

Month	Operating activities
Before M	Ø Gained preliminary consensus with Miss Anthea Lee, the Deputy Chief Executive of Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention, Hong Kong (SRACP), for the support in coordinating with ex-offenders, which includes approaching ex-offenders who are interested in sharing photos with us, distributing completed materials with other ex-offenders and other relevant assistance in communicating with ex-offenders when necessary.
M	Ø Funding available
M+1	Ø Start recruiting potential ex-offenders-in-project (EOP) participating in our project via SRACP and existing connections
M+2 - 3	Ø Completed recruitment of EOP Ø Start cooperating with EOP to prepare for the campaign materials (i.e. the stories ex-offenders intended to share, and compilation into photos, videos and brochures)
M+4 - 5	Ø Start coordinating with potential departments/committees/units for the venues and details of photo exhibition (Units to be negotiated for venue: Committee of Language and Culture, New Asia College, CUHK; Miss Elia Wong, Artist renting a workshop in Wah Luen Industrial Centre, Fotan. Units to be negotiated for promotion:

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	Committee of Language and Culture, New Asia College, CUHK; I.CARE, CUHK; CUHK student union.)
M+5	Ø Completed preparation of campaign materials
M+ 6 - 7	Ø Uploaded video introducing our project Ø Start promotion of photo exhibition event
M+ 7	Ø Start photo exhibition in CUHK (1 week) Ø Collect feedbacks and evaluate outcomes
M+8 - 9	Ø Start photo exhibition in Fotan (Depends on the artist's schedule) Ø Collect feedbacks and evaluate outcomes Ø Consider follow-up activities based on evaluations

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Appendix 3: Figures



Fig. 1. An example of photos for exhibition. This is a noodle made by ex-offenders currently employed in Chef's Noodle, a social enterprise under Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention Hong Kong. Retrieved 10 March 2016 from Chef's Noodle.



Fig. 2. Fotanian Open Studios 2015. Retrieved 10 March 2016 from Fotanian.



Fig. 3. Fotanian Open Studios 2016. Retrieved 10 March 2016 from Fotanian.

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