

LEVEL 7 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION

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1. TITLE

Does Hong Kong still remain a viable destination for long-term employment to the foreign professional expatriate and, if not, what can be done?

Note 1: The term "long-term employment" denotes any continuous engagement lasting a minimum of 3 years or more, ensuring that Hong Kong can effectively attract and retain the global workforce for an extended duration rather than just for short-term work assignments.

Note 2: The designation "foreign professional expatriate" pertains to any non-Chinese white-collar professional. Chinese individuals are excluded from this study to thoroughly investigate whether Hong Kong still upholds its title as "Asia's world city" (Brand Hong Kong, 2001) for the global workforce, given the rapidly evolving work environment heavily influenced by China and thus necessitating proficient expertise in the Chinese language.

In the midst of the ongoing transformation occurring in Hong Kong, the pivotal research query emerges: "To what extent does Hong Kong continue to function as a viable center for enduring employment opportunities for expatriate professionals of non-Chinese descent, and what strategies could be implemented in response?" This inquiry carries significant weight, especially given the changing economic and political landscapes shaped by the deep-seated connections between Hong Kong and China.

2. INTRODUCTION

Background to the Research

The central research question of this inquiry prompts profound contemplation while maintaining a coherent focus: Against the backdrop of recent social and political transformations, can Hong Kong continue to uphold its global allure for elite foreign professionals to work and stay here? This paradigm shift underscores the growing importance of firsthand experience in navigating Greater China and proficiency in Mandarin to sustain relevance across various levels and professions.

Current empirical investigations into Hong Kong's status as an international employment hub are scarce, hence the justification for this research endeavor. While prevailing "Push and Pull" theoretical frameworks applied to neighboring nations such as Singapore may offer some valuable insights, there exists a glaring gap in direct pertinent research that could prove immensely beneficial for the business realm. Furthermore, this gap could serve as foundational knowledge for governmental entities and academic institutions in shaping forthcoming immigration policies.

Research Aims and Objectives

In the context of contemporary global interconnections, particularly between Hong Kong and China, along with other relevant PESTLE factors (Oxford College of Marketing, 2023), Hong Kong is currently experiencing a state of transition. Consequently, the government is compelled to maintain vigilance and proactively protect its competitive position, economic stability, and pool of skilled professionals.

Through establishing a foundation for local think tanks to expand upon in their continuous research pursuits aimed at safeguarding and potentially bolstering Hong Kong's global visibility, actionable recommendations will undoubtedly emerge for governmental and public institutions.

Contributions

The primary objective of my research is to comprehensively address the core research inquiry (i.e., Does Hong Kong continue to serve as a viable hub for long-term employment for foreign professional expatriates, and if not, what strategies can be implemented?), encompassing both theoretical and practical facets. Despite extensive discussions on Hong Kong's prevailing talent-related challenges, there exists a significant scarcity of thorough academic analyses that accurately portray the city's present and prospective capacity to attract top-tier global talents.

This study aims to guide the government towards planning for, and embracing, a more **knowledge-centric economy**. Moreover, it is hopefully poised to make helpful theoretical contributions to the realms of business and management studies concerning the future development of human capital in Hong Kong. To uphold its global competitiveness and position, Hong Kong must adeptly and proactively strategize to sustain its overall status in today's fiercely competitive international arena.

Formerly recognized as the gateway to China for numerous multinational corporations, Hong Kong is witnessing a paradigm shift as most business entities now choose to engage directly with the mainland. Consequently, Hong Kong must reinvent itself now to potentially emerge as a global leader in burgeoning fields like **Green Financing** amongst others over the long run. Success in this proactive endeavor would serve as a pivotal focal point for both the government and the local business community when endeavoring to attract and cultivate local talents.

This research is expected to establish groundwork for further academic scholars to critically evaluate the city's existing and future competitive landscape through the lens of pertinent academic concepts or theories. By leveraging firsthand research on critical Push and Pull factors impacting foreign talents, the objective is to establish a sustainable knowledge-based economy (within emerging industries like Green Financing) for sustainable future growth. Subsequently, collaboration between the government, reputable think tanks, and academics can facilitate the cascading of a growing and resilient global HR strategy for the collective benefit, notwithstanding

the diverse challenges impeding Hong Kong's economic progress. Hopefully, if successful, this new vision for Hong Kong should prove to be a compelling pull factor for Hong Kong, aiding in attracting premier talents globally, irrespective of nationality.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The question **"Does Hong Kong still remain a viable destination for long-term employment for non-Chinese professional expatriates, and if not, what can be done?"** is multifaceted. Although the primary focus of the research question centers around "long-term employment," historically, expatriates arrived in Hong Kong for a multitude of reasons. Numerous expatriates initially migrated to Hong Kong leveraging off flexible immigration regulations (e.g., exemption from work visas for British nationals pre-1997), often with the intention of fulfilling short-term work obligations. However, they gradually became positively entangled with the lifestyle, convenience, safety, advantageous tax structures, and burgeoning expatriate network in the region.

While securing sustainable employment was a pivotal consideration, a confluence of such enticing elements significantly influenced the decision of a majority of foreign professionals to prolong their stay in Hong Kong. Subsequently, after residing in the territory for a duration exceeding seven years, many of these expatriates automatically qualified for Permanent Resident status (a further 'pull factor', further solidifying their ties to Hong Kong).

By deconstructing this research query through the theoretical framework of the "Push and Pull" strategy (Lee, 1966), the government stands to acquire valuable insights aimed at fostering diverse knowledge-based economies, potentially incentivizing non-Chinese expatriates to engage in long-term employment opportunities in Hong Kong.

Beyond the talent domain, all pertinent stakeholders, encompassing the business sector, local governance, and academic researchers, need to unite and engage in collective brainstorming. This collaborative effort involves sharing insights and crafting enduring solutions together to bolster the city's economic advancement.

Moreover, it is anticipated that forthcoming business policies will likely be shaped by China and its economic dynamics, which serve as Hong Kong's primary competitive advantage over others as the 'gateway into China'. How can all involved parties

capitalize on this focal point to engender enduring benefits for all stakeholders in the long run?

Economic strategies emphasizing closer integration with the Mainland at the expense of international business ventures may impact employment opportunities for foreign professionals, particularly in terms of language requirements. Numerous professional roles now prioritize the Greater China region, limiting their scope to regional or global outreach (with some of these positions relocating to destinations like Singapore).

Coupled with China's recent economic struggles which are well documented (Deloitte China, 2024), the lasting negative impacts on Hong Kong's economy are expected to persist for an extended period, potentially impeding the city's capacity to allure foreign talent. In light of these circumstances, what measures can Hong Kong undertake to sustain its competitiveness and prevent the potential loss of high-caliber talents considering relocation to other regions offering seemingly more promising economic prospects?

After examining the diverse philosophical assumptions outlined by Saunders, Thornhill, and Lewis (2015), my research endeavors to embrace the Subjectivism and Constructivism methodologies. This approach aims to unveil a spectrum of perspectives and multiple realities, with the anticipation of offering a comprehensive outlook conducive to theory generation for the purpose of this study and beyond.

3.1 Overview of the Relevant Field of Studies and Existing Literature

Scholarly investigations into the push and pull factors influencing migration, also known as "migration motivation," toward major international economies such as the United States, neighboring Singapore, and even Hong Kong, have been documented (Simpson, 2017). However, these studies exhibit limitations concerning their applicability to the contemporary landscape of Hong Kong. Consequently, a discernible research gap persists, which I aim to address through my study, delving into the professional experiences of foreigners in present-day Hong Kong.

Simpson (2017) has delineated the reasons prompting individuals to migrate between countries, encompassing both economic and non-economic considerations. While this framework offers valuable insights at both the individual and governmental levels, numerous other factors underpin the decision-making process behind a permanent relocation. Anita Chan (2022) has scrutinized the recent emigration trends from Hong Kong where the evolving situation suggests a potential decline in its' ability to foster an inclusive environment that embraces individuals with varied values and cultures. This notion is concerning as it delves into profound influences that could affect an individual's sense of purpose and belonging.

3.2 Critical Analysis and Examination of the Key Concepts and Theoretical Groundings

The "Push and Pull" theory presents a fundamental and expansive outlook on the evolving elements that influence the behavioral inclinations of foreign (occasionally regional) talents, guiding the assessment of their tendency to either remain in their current location or seek fresh opportunities abroad. Consequently, these theories can function as a practical instrument for the business sector and as a crucial theoretical foundation for governmental entities and academic institutions in crafting future immigration policies.

The Push and Pull Theory

Previous research has delved extensively into this domain due to its substantial impact on national migration regulations. For instance, over many years, longstanding governmental approaches have been directed towards attracting international talents with ambitious aspirations to the United States through esteemed educational institutions (Editor, 2024) and retaining them after completing their studies. Usually, professionals are drawn to Western countries seeking enhanced opportunities and a higher quality of life for both themselves and their families.

Over recent years, the Singaporean government has taken similar proactive measures by providing extensive financial scholarships to exceptional students from Hong Kong and neighboring regions to incentivize them to pursue higher education at local universities, fostering their subsequent contribution to the domestic economy. In a parallel initiative, Hong Kong has adopted almost identical strategies, exemplified by the presence of at least five locally government-funded universities consistently ranked among the top 100 in the QS rankings (Top Universities, 2024). These academic institutions provide partial or full scholarships to outstanding local students to counteract talent emigration. Additionally, they present comparable opportunities to prospective international students demonstrating exceptional capabilities, assisting their assimilation into the local workforce and potentially enabling them to obtain permanent residency in Hong Kong via initiatives like the Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates (IANG) student visa program where they only need to stay for 3 more years post university to qualify for it.

This selective talent-centric approach has been extensively examined in the past, highlighting the prevalent practice of granting citizenship to individuals possessing exceptional skills and extraordinary talent, while concurrently imposing increasingly stringent admission and stay requirements on other categories of standard immigration applicants (Shachar and Hirschl, 2013), despite criticisms of unfairness. Although such biases are evident in Hong Kong as well, the city's immigration laws generally garner positive reception, offering permanent residency to foreign talents (excluding domestic helpers) who have spent seven continuous years studying or working in the city while contributing to its economic growth. Moreover, Hong Kong maintains an open, equitable, and transparent tax system that bases income taxes solely on individual circumstances (such as marital status, dependents), potentially serving as an additional attraction for overseas talents who perceive a sense of inclusivity and fairness in comparison to other countries like Singapore, where disparities between locals and foreigners are stark and the transparency regarding permanent residency eligibility is notably low.

Upon closer examination, the influx of non-Chinese professional expatriates into Hong Kong is shaped by a myriad of factors:

1. **Geopolitical Transformations:** Shifts in global relationships and policies, particularly between China and Western nations like the United States, have redefined the dynamics of the workforce. The on-going 'Tariff War' between both superpowers is a primary example of this where Hong Kong is unfortunately caught within despite its separate economy and inherent laws (South China Morning Post, 2025).
2. **Hong Kong's Autonomy:** The global apprehensions surrounding Hong Kong's autonomy surround loss of confidence in independent rule of law there. Consequently, there have been alterations in the foreign policies of Western nations towards the city that have resulted in changes in trade partnerships, visa rules, and advisories that can impact the choices of businesses and expatriates. Consequently, numerous international corporations have started to separate (or 'ring-fence') their operations in Greater China from their regional and global activities.
3. **Economic Policy Adjustments:** Strategies emphasizing economic integration with the Mainland over alternative international business methods are currently reshaping the entire commercial landscape, presenting challenges to the employment prospects of foreign expatriate professionals.
4. **Local Talent Cultivation:** There is an increased emphasis on nurturing and utilizing in-grown talent, which has subsequently influenced the need for foreign professionals. Government initiatives to deliver inclusive education at all levels and promote continuous professional development are designed to empower locals with the necessary competencies for upcoming demands. Furthermore, the implementation of new advantageous work visa programs is drawing skilled individuals from neighboring China given their proximity and language skills amongst others.

5. **Global Mobility Patterns:** Developments in worldwide movement and the fierce rivalry for global talent on both regional and international scales have exerted a profound impact on Hong Kong's strategic alignment. Particularly noteworthy is Singapore's rapid reaction in the aftermath of the pandemic, which has led to a surge of expatriates—both by choice and necessity—migrating to the city-state, with a notable proportion originating from Hong Kong. Even the UAE (in particular, Dubai) has started to gain traction as a talent hub given its burgeoning economy and welcoming immigration and tax laws.

An additional influential factor potentially instigating departures is the implementation of the National Security Law in 2020, aimed at quelling the escalating social turbulence throughout Hong Kong at that time. This abrupt enactment significantly eroded Hong Kong's autonomy from the Mainland, especially in terms of transparent business practices and regulatory frameworks. This development prompted numerous multinational corporations, even up to the present time, to transfer their regional headquarters from Hong Kong to alternative Asian centers, with Singapore being a prominent choice. Moreover, the recent enactment of the Basic Law Article 23 legislation in March of this year further underscored the emphasis on "safeguarding national security ordinance."

Consequently, many expatriates found themselves compelled to leave Hong Kong, either due to redundancy or to retain their professional roles within their companies, especially those temporarily displaced by stringent COVID quarantine measures who opted not to return to the city amidst the prevailing challenging circumstances. Nonetheless, this strategic shift does not necessarily signify a complete withdrawal from the Greater China region but rather a recalibration of business approaches, with local Chinese personnel (particularly those proficient in the language) increasingly catering to local clientele within multinational corporations.

While the aforementioned factors are predominantly perceived as negative (PUSH), the Hong Kong government has endeavored to introduce certain positive aspects (PULL) through the implementation of an adaptive government immigration policy via

the inception of "The Top Talent Pass Scheme" (hereafter referred to as "TTPS"). The objective of this initiative is to draw in highly skilled individuals with substantial professional experience and strong educational backgrounds from diverse regions worldwide, encompassing high-earning professionals and graduates from prestigious international universities.

Candidates applying via the TTPS scheme do not need to hold a job offer within the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) when submitting their application. Upon fulfilling the regular immigration criteria, approved individuals are given a 24-month stay without further stipulations (Immigration Department, 2024) - a duration that has since been extended to 36 months.

According to the recent Policy Address by Chief Executive John Lee, 160,000 successful applicants have relocated to Hong Kong with their families out of a total of 380,000 applicants (although specifics regarding their nationalities or countries of origin were not disclosed) - Ho, 2024. However, the predominance of mainland Chinese nationals, accounting for about 95% of the current TTPS visa holders, raises diversity concerns despite the government claiming at least a quarter of the 280,000 approved applications as of January 2025 held foreign passports (Chan, 2025).

The government has endeavored to attract international talents by implementing various talent schemes to draw individuals not only from the mainland but also from Southeast Asia and Europe, as stated by Secretary for Labour and Welfare Chris Sun Yuk-han, emphasizing their strong linguistic proficiency in English, Mandarin, and Cantonese. Nonetheless, Hong Kong is facilitating an easier entry for Mainland Chinese talents to work in the city for extended periods, intensifying the competition among both local and foreign professionals already residing in Hong Kong. Wang Ling, deputy head of the entry-exit administrative department at the National Immigration Administration, highlighted that Beijing, Shanghai, and the Greater Bay Area are key regions with a significant pool of skilled professionals, with the policies facilitating the free movement of talent and innovative technologies. This year, the eligibility of Mainland universities for the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS) has been extended.

Although the TTPS appears promising in revitalizing Hong Kong's economy post-COVID, foreign professionals are hesitant to return until they secure employment. Job seekers have encountered persistent challenges, including the preference for Cantonese (and increasingly Mandarin) proficiency by employers and the city's high cost of living, as emphasized by the South China Morning Post (2024). These linguistic and housing barriers may even act as "push factors" for current foreign residents in the city in the event of job loss or career transitions.

Incorporating a "push and pull" research methodology can substantially aid in exploring my Research Question covering the sustainability of Hong Kong as a permanent employment hub for expatriate professionals and the potential strategies that could be enacted. This approach can effectively unveil the underlying motivations guiding overseas expatriates in their decision-making processes regarding relocation to or departure from Hong Kong. Given the ongoing nature of this phenomenon, continuous secondary research combined with ongoing primary research must be conducted throughout the study to maintain relevance for the future.

Moreover, the pragmatic outcomes of my research may inspire forthcoming studies centered on immigration policies, acting as a vital benchmark for various stakeholders such as the business sector, governmental entities, and academic institutions. This will encourage collaborative efforts to refine strategies collectively for enhanced efficiency and effectiveness, ultimately benefiting the city and its economy. Nonetheless, ongoing monitoring and evaluation are essential given Hong Kong's dynamic global positioning where external factors like PESTLE elements consistently influence the environment; particularly the enduring geopolitical tensions between the United States and China given Trump's current tariff war. Consequently, by primarily examining the push and pull dynamics underlying the discourse on Hong Kong's long-term appeal to foreign professional expatriates, the study aims to transcend these external forces to the greatest extent possible.

3.3 **Research Gaps in the Field**

The existing body of literature relevant to the Research Question at hand is noticeably deficient, thus necessitating the undertaking of this research endeavor. There is a scarcity of literature dedicated to the unique circumstances of Hong Kong and its current talent deficits, which were initially triggered by the social upheaval in 2019 and further intensified by the strict quarantine protocols enforced from 2020 onwards as a response to the pandemic. As a result, this research will predominantly focus on the pivotal "push and pull" elements that impact expatriate white-collar professionals on an international scale.

While there are relevant studies delving into the push and pull factors of migration, commonly referred to as "migration motivation," to prominent international destinations such as the United States, neighboring Singapore, and even Hong Kong, which I can draw upon (Simpson, 2017), their applicability within the current Hong Kong context is constrained. As a result, a Research Gap exists that necessitates exploration into the professional journeys of expatriates in contemporary Hong Kong, including those who have recently moved away permanently. Considering the significant interest and potential implications for all those concerned individually and collectively, the overarching research objective of this study is further justified.

Progress made in this developing field will undoubtedly establish a foundation for forthcoming research initiatives, including those undertaken by the business community, local government "think tanks," and academic researchers, to enhance and refine strategic planning for the future. Each of these entities is united by the mutual objective of safeguarding Hong Kong's global business prominence while fostering cultural inclusivity. Therefore, it is crucial for all three entities to engage in close collaboration going forward to secure enduring and favorable outcomes over the coming years.

Two visionary goals for the primary stakeholders (namely the business sector, local government as well as the academic bodies) to pursue include:

- 1) Recognizing notable voids in prospective growth areas and critical skill inadequacies in order to efficiently pinpoint sectors that would derive maximum advantage from international professionals (by assigning work visas to address these deficiencies). The government can further address these skill scarcities by promoting ongoing education among the current workforce while cultivating future competencies through primary and secondary education, including STEAM programs, to foster sustained advancement.
- 2) Developing an inclusive framework that leverages pertinent Push and Pull factors to effectively guide Hong Kong's path as a leading global industry hub, with particular attention to the city's transition to a knowledge-driven economy. This is enabled by nurturing sustainable development in swiftly growing sectors (such as Green Financing and Cryptocurrency) through the recruitment of premier global talents in these specialized domains. Furthermore, this strategic focal point has the potential to attract significant foreign investments via governmental backing, such as tax incentives, thereby reinforcing the city's stature as a distinguished global center whilst simultaneously bolstering the local economy.

Furthermore, there is compelling evidence indicating that certain countries are setting themselves apart by 're-imagining' their economies, as demonstrated in regions like the Middle East, illustrated by cities such as Dubai and Riyadh (Ewers et al., 2021). These nations have evolved into "Knowledge-Based" economies by emphasizing key growth drivers such as Technology and Innovation, Environmental sustainability, Social and Governance initiatives, Green Financing, and more. Through the provision of highly advantageous conditions that attract foreign investments and the cultivation of specialized ecosystems known for excellence and

international acclaim, they have effectively drawn foreign investments and exceptional talents to establish a presence in their regions.

This strategic methodology could similarly be adapted to Hong Kong; however, it will require detailed planning and cooperation among all key stakeholders (businesses, government, education) involved in the long term. In the contemporary knowledge-driven environment, individuals with essential technical (and 'soft') competencies are arguably the most crucial resource for driving any local economy towards enduring prosperity and should be drawn in through sustainable supporting ecosystems that adapt continuously. By re-establishing itself as a prominent participant at the global business level, Hong Kong ought to maintain its position as a competitive international economy and overcome any existing political ambiguities both in the present and the future.

4. METHODOLOGY

- Research Design

For the research methodology, I conducted a preliminary survey via Google Forms (sample questionnaire in Appendix) where I had close to 100 respondents (98 to be precise) albeit I could only gather a true sample size of just 38 respondents given most chose not to answer all questions. Complementary qualitative data using government and census data taken from 2020 to 2025 was also incorporated into my overall analysis. Through a holistic analysis of both data sets, a thorough comprehension was achieved regarding the ongoing viability of Hong Kong as a long-term employment destination for non-Chinese professional expatriates.

The overall aim was to uncover underlying themes, commonalities and relationships between independent variables (e.g. sex, age and profession) and dependent variables across various push and pull factors. The survey questionnaire included two content areas to explore the Push and Pull theories via two leading questions (numbers 5 and 6) followed by specific questions using 7-point Likert- type scales (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) to further explore each theory.

- Challenges and/of limitations of the research

Limitations employed in the Proposed Research: The 25 questions (including one not numbered correctly - how long have or did you stay in Hong Kong for?) used in this preliminary survey were not pre-tested before and neither was the overall format of the questionnaire. In hindsight, this would have greatly helped via a pilot study given my overall survey completion rate was just under 40%.

There were also fundamental flaws with my question structure which attributed to this low sample size of only 38 complete respondents where the majority of the questions to be completed only needed to be answered if the respondent had selected 'Yes' in one of the two main leading questions (i.e. Question 5 or 6). This format led to unnecessary confusion where many who had initially started the survey were unsure which sections required completion based on their initial responses.

Ultimately, my research framework concentrated solely on the individual level, acknowledging the myriad personal considerations that may impact one's own choice to relocate or remain in a city. Therefore, expanding the scope of research to encompass viewpoints from corporations and governmental entities at a broader level is essential for enhanced accuracy and utility.

This comprehensive approach is expected to yield deeper insights into the genuine sentiments of corporations regarding their future engagements within Hong Kong's economy. Additionally, it will complement the local government's comprehension of the city's actual circumstances, thereby facilitating the development and, hopefully swift, implementation of more effective strategies aimed at shaping a more conducive business environment.

5. RESULTS

Descriptive Analytics

A total of 98 respondents attempted the survey albeit only around 40% (38) actually completed it (Table 1). From this sample size of 38 respondents, just over 84% were males whilst around 87% of them were over the age of 41 years old. This is an extremely skewed population so it will be very difficult to generalize any observable trends or patterns with the rest of the population.

Whilst the types of professions were varied as was the overall length of tenure in Hong Kong (over 97%), ethnically Indian respondents dominated the survey as they represented circa 47% (representing around 18 of the 38 surveyed in total). This too represents another concern regarding overall generalization with the rest of the foreign professional expatriate community. Refer to Appendix 2 (Jamovi) for further details.

Table 1: Survey Respondent Characteristics (n = 38)

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	32	84.2
Female	6	15.8
Age		
20-30	1	2.6
31-40	4	10.5
41-50	17	44.7
Above 50	16	42.1
Tenure in Hong Kong		
Above 5 years	37	97.4
2-3 years	1	2.6

Scale Characteristics: Pertaining to the rest of the survey, Q7 to Q24 represented two distinct concepts (i.e. Push versus Pull factors) and, hence, their results were observed and analysed separately. This approach led to two distinct groups of respondents (those intending to leave and those who have already left) answering to different sets of questions or concepts. For this section, we used 7-point Likert- type scales (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) where a total of 9 questions were used to test each construct.

After grouping the questions into Push versus Pull factors, we can evaluate the following:

- Factors 1 to 3 are related to “push factors” (refer to Table 2)
- Factors 4 to 6 are related to “pull factors” (refer to Table 3).

Table 2: Push Factors (Factors 1-3)

Construct and item	Mean	SD	Cronbach α	p*
Factor 1 (Questions 7-9) - Male	3.05	1.34	0.420	0.827
Factor 1 (Questions 7-9) - Female	2.83	0.236	0.420	0.827
Factor 2 (Questions 13-15) - Male	3.58	1.32	0.569	0.793
Factor 2 (Questions 13-15) - Female	3.83	1.179	0.569	0.793
Factor 3 (Questions 19-21) - Male	2.89	1.48	0.747	0.622
Factor 3 (Questions 19-21) - Female	2.33	1.886	0.747	0.622

* Derived from Independent Samples T-Test (see Appendix - Jamovi Part 2)

Table 3: Pull Factors (Factors 4-6)

Construct and item	Mean	SD	Cronbach α	p*
Factor 4 (Questions 10-12) - Male	4.23	2.49	0.878	0.676
Factor 4 (Questions 10-12) - Female	4.89	1.26	0.878	0.676
Factor 5 (Questions 16-18) - Male	3.55	2.30	0.942	0.650
Factor 5 (Questions 16-18) - Female	2.92	2.38	0.942	0.650
Factor 6 (Questions 22-24) - Male	3.73	2.51	0.955	0.645
Factor 6 (Questions 22-24) - Female	4.42	2.50	0.955	0.645

* Derived from Independent Samples T-Test (see Appendix - Jamovi Part 2)

Reliability Testing

Per above Reliability Scores where the Cronbach Alpha for Table 2 was between 0.420 - 0.747, this indicates a very wide range of overall reliability. Whilst scores of above 0.60 could be deemed acceptable given the very small sample size (38 respondents), the overall reliability for the Push factors does seem low; hence the respective data will unlikely be a valid measure of the construct in question.

However, it was a different observation for Table 3 where the Cronbach Alpha values across Factors 4 to 6 ranged from 0.878 to 0.955 which is generally considered a very good level of reliability (i.e. over 0.8). As such, for these 3 constructs behind the respective pull factors questioned, I do believe they were likely measuring the same phenomenon consistently.

Note - We eliminated items (i.e. incomplete questionnaires) that did not meet the minimum threshold for scale reliability.

Mean and Standard Deviation

For the Mean and Standard Deviation scale scores for each construct, there were no meaningful differences between Males and Females across both tables. However, once again, there was some observed variance between the Push (Table 1) and Pull factors (Table 2). The average mean Push factor score was 3.085 and SD was 1.24 whilst, for Pull factors, it was 3.957 and 2.24 respectively. This highlights that, on average, there were more outliers overall when it came to responses regarding pull factors despite the average mean for all respondents across factors 4 to 6 being closer to neutral (score of 4 out of 7).

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis: One's gender has no direct impact on whether one is motivated by either push (to leave Hong Kong) or pull factors (by the destination country).

Whilst the majority of the respondents who completed the survey were male (circa 84%), this study nevertheless gave me an opportunity to test and confirm that the gender of the foreign expat professional should **not** have any impact on how much he or she is 'pushed to or pulled away' from Hong Kong. We used Independent Samples T-Tests to test this relationship.

Per the above results for all 6 constructs (across both Push and Pull factors) where all the correlation coefficients ranged anywhere between 0.6 to 0.8, which is well above the ideal target of 0.05 (or lower), one can infer that there is no correlation between these 2 variables (i.e. one's gender and their likeliness to be impacted by either push or pull factors). This is because the survey results across all 6 factors are not statistically significant; hence the assumed hypothesis is indeed correct to confirm no direct impact between the independent variable of gender and dependent variable of push or pull factor.

6. DISCUSSIONS

- Meaning of the Results and possible implications for relevant stakeholders

Given the eventual small sample size of just 38 respondents (which were also heavily skewed by both age - over 41 years - and ethnicity - Indian) along with the confusing questionnaire design, there was only limited useful reference data which could be represented for the rest of the foreign and professional expat population. So, in the future, I must carry out a preliminary survey to test both the questions as well as the overall survey format, and make adjustments accordingly as needed. With this approach, I should hopefully get a much better completion rate than just 40%.

Irrespective, at least based on the initial responses for those who did respond, there was a visible variance across the Likert Scale for a majority of the questions, meaning that there is the likelihood that some meaningful data can likely be sourced via the right research instruments and more relevant survey structure in the future.

In addition, it was very pleasant to see how many were open to and very efficient in responding; some even commenting that it was a very interesting topic which they would like to find out more upon. I have made note of these particular respondents as there may be follow-up research required (for example, detailed interviews via qualitative methodologies) where hopefully they will be willing to share further information at the time.

- Evaluate the differences or similarities with other studies plus suggestions for future research

Comparing to other similar studies, one in particular comes to mind which is Lee' Theory for Push and Pull factors. "Everett Lee has conceptualized the factors associated with the decision to migrate and the process of migration into the following four categories: (1) Factors associated with the area of origin; (2) Factors

associated with the area of destination; (3) Intervening obstacles; and (4) Personal factors.” (Lee, 1966). Within this conceptual framework, Lee proposed several hypotheses for the four types of factors associated with migration, incorporating the push and pull factors at both places of origin and destination, similar to my attempted model.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to determine which plus and which minus factors at both origin and destination are quantitatively the most important to an individual (or even group of similar individuals). Moreover, the presence of intervening obstacles make it even more challenging to identify which specific factors have major influence and which ones are minor factors. For this reason, Lee’s theory has offered limited practical guidance for policy and decision-making in developing nations.

However, with further tailored and customized research surrounding a country and/or individual demographic, there can still be very useful reference data that can be inferred to and used by governments, local corporations and their educators for the benefit of their economics and societies. Whilst past history and more recent data of what similar nations and countries are experience that we can use as guidance, there must be on-going research within specific pre-set parameters to collect primary data and test data models again which can help guide current and future immigration policies.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- Summarise the findings in relation to the Research Problem

Incorporating some macroeconomic trends (including the unemployment rate for Hong Kong since 2023 which has hovered around 3% as per the Census and Statistics Department (it was around 3.5% in 2022 during the height of COVID-19), we can safely infer that unemployment will remain stable bar any unforeseen socio- or political event. As such, the census data from the government will not likely make a big impact on the background of my research in question given its overall stability. However, what may be useful is to investigate continuous immigration and emigration flows coming in and out of Hong Kong to determine how truly 'international' we are as a city in terms of our spread of existing nationalities by population

So, taking into account my earlier findings, unfortunately there are limited deductions we can make at this time to answer our primary research question or problem (**Does Hong Kong still remain a viable destination for long-term employment to the foreign professional expatriate and, if not, what can be done?**). Whilst we can only infer that there is definitely room for further investigation, we are not sure how profound the situation is despite the high interest from the participants of the initial survey.

I will also need to be much more specific as to what I am looking to measure and be very clear on what the exact hypotheses are (multiple preferred) that I am looking to test? The survey carried out was fairly generic and superficial in nature, and not helped by a very confusing format for the average respondent. Whilst some initial trends were noted, the overall research design and depth of questions for the survey will need to be much more specific to enable in-depth quantitative analysis from which we can make some further meaningful observations.

- **Propose the overall significance of the Research and assess its Limitations**

Besides, this study's overall significance for the future cannot and should not be discounted given the future ramifications this may have on Hong Kong's international image, especially if it wants to continue to remain to be seen as "Asia's World City" (Brand Hong Kong, 2001).

It's particular usefulness can be it acting as a catalyst for useful stakeholders like the Government, local corporations as well as education bodies to work together and conduct comprehensive studies to truly evaluate the current plight and what can be done to improvise (if not, even stem) any forthcoming foreign emigrants from the city. Also are there areas where we can focus on to be global leaders in new upcoming business trends (such as Green Financing and/or Cryptocurrency-related Blockchain Technology) by which means we are able to attract the best talents from across the world?

As previously touched upon, the limitations of this study are evident in that, whilst push and pull factors pertaining to immigration and emigration have long existed, they are by nature fairly generic where personal circumstances play a very big role to determine if and when one actually permanently leaves one country for another. Nevertheless, based on in-depth and longitudinal surveys, there can be very useful and comprehensive research that can be conducted for the benefit of all so long as we always keep in mind what our future talents need in order to prosper and stay in Hong Kong to be part of its growing success.

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9. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Sample Questionnaire

Google Forms Link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1flUaRDtrdXGFIMYntsgCxP6R-xcebK74eyLY1fJjxZo/prefill>

Does Hong Kong still remain a viable destination for long-term employment to the foreign professional expatriate and, if not, what can be done?

Note 1: "Long-term employment" is defined as any continuous tenure of at least 3 years or longer in order to determine if Hong Kong can still truly attract the global workforce for a sustained period of time versus just a short- to medium-term work assignment.

Note 2: "Foreign professional expatriate" will be generically applied to any white-collar professional who is not of Chinese descent. Without meaning to sound prejudiced or have a stereotype, I want to exclude the Chinese community for this study to truly investigate if Hong Kong still maintains its "Asia's world city" title to the global workforce given the rapidly changing working environment on the ground being very China-driven and hence requiring strong expertise in the Chinese language

Amidst the ongoing evolution that Hong Kong is currently undergoing, the central research question, "Does Hong Kong still serve as a sustainable hub for long-term employment for non-Chinese expatriate professionals, and if not, what measures can be taken?" holds immense importance, particularly in light of the shifting economic and political dynamics influenced by the strong ties between Hong Kong and China. The information collected via this survey will help me gather some level of consensus of what the professional expatriate community are thinking with regards to Hong Kong's viability for their long-term employment now and in the future.

The survey contains a series of statements related to various areas of importance around this subject matter and we request you to indicate your answer (multiple choice) or level of agreement with each statement using a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means that you "Completely Disagree" and 7 means that you "Completely Agree".

1. What is your gender? *

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to disclose

2. What is your age? *

- ☐ 20-30 years
- ☐ 31-40 years
- ☐ 41-50 years
- ☐ Above 50 years
- ☐ Prefer not to disclose

3. What is your ethnicity? *

Your answer

How long have you stayed (did you stay) in Hong Kong for? *

- ☐ Below 1 year
 - ☐ 1-2 years
 - ☐ 2-3 years
 - ☐ 3-5 years
 - ☐ Above 5 years
-

4. What is (was) your profession when you were in Hong Kong? *

Your answer _____

5. If you still live in Hong Kong, do you have any intention of going to live or work in another country in the next three years? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Relevant

6. If you used to live in Hong Kong, did you leave 2021 onwards? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Relevant

7. If you answered "Yes" to Question 5, is it due to likely Unemployment?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Completely Disagree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Completely Agree

8. If you answered "Yes" to Question 5, is it due to likely Lower Salaries?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Completely Disagree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Completely Agree

9. If you answered "Yes" to Question 5, is it due to likely Lack of Basic Education?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

10. If you answered "Yes" to Question 6, is it due to Job Opportunities

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

11. If you answered "Yes" to Question 6, is it due to Higher Salaries

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

12. If you answered "Yes" to Question 6, is it due to Better Education & Personal Development Opportunities?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

13. If you answered "Yes" to Question 5, is it due to likely Ethnic Discrimination?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

14. If you answered "Yes" to Question 5, is it due to likely Social Insecurity?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

15. If you answered "Yes" to Question 5, is it due to likely Poor Medical Care?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

16. If you answered "Yes" to Question 6, is it due to Freedom from Ethnic Discrimination?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

17. If you answered "Yes" to Question 6, is it due to more Social Security?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

18. If you answered "Yes" to Question 6, is it due to Better Medical Care?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

19. If you answered "Yes" to Question 5, is it due to likely Political Conflicts?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

20. If you answered "Yes" to Question 5, is it due to Corruption?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

21. If you answered "Yes" to Question 5, is it due to potential Human Rights Issues?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

22. If you answered "Yes" to Question 6, is it due to Better Personal Safety & Security?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

23. If you answered "Yes" to Question 6, is it due to More Political Stability?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

24. If you answered "Yes" to Question 6, is it due to Higher Level of Democracy?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Completely Agree

Appendix 2:

Jamovi (Part 1)

Note - There were a total of only **38 respondents that fully** completed the questionnaire out of total of 98 who attempted it.

Descriptives

	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Tenure in HK	Profession
N	38	38	38	38	38
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean					
Median					
Standard deviation					
Minimum					
Maximum					

Frequencies

Frequencies of Gender

Gender	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Male	32	84.2 %	84.2 %
Female	6	15.8 %	100.0 %

Frequencies of Age

Age	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
41-50 years	17	44.7 %	44.7 %
31-40 years	4	10.5 %	55.3 %
Above 50 years	16	42.1 %	97.4 %
20-30 years	1	2.6 %	100.0 %

Frequencies of Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Chinese	4	10.5 %	10.5 %
Hindu	1	2.6 %	13.2 %
Indian	16	42.1 %	55.3 %
British	3	7.9 %	63.2 %
India	1	2.6 %	65.8 %
Caucasian	3	7.9 %	73.7 %
Asian	1	2.6 %	76.3 %
Filipino	1	2.6 %	78.9 %
Australian	1	2.6 %	81.6 %
White	1	2.6 %	84.2 %
British - White	1	2.6 %	86.8 %
Northern Europe	1	2.6 %	89.5 %
Black	1	2.6 %	92.1 %
Half Chinese Half British	1	2.6 %	94.7 %
European mixed.	1	2.6 %	97.4 %
Indian (born in HK)	1	2.6 %	100.0 %

Frequencies of Tenure in HK

Tenure in HK	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Above 5 years	37	97.4 %	97.4 %
2-3 years	1	2.6 %	100.0 %

Frequencies of Profession

Profession	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
IT	2	5.3 %	5.3 %
IT professional	1	2.6 %	7.9 %
HR	3	7.9 %	15.8 %
Business owner	1	2.6 %	18.4 %
Banker	1	2.6 %	21.1 %
Entrepreneur	1	2.6 %	23.7 %
Human Resources	1	2.6 %	26.3 %
Consultant	1	2.6 %	28.9 %
Businessman	1	2.6 %	31.6 %
Finance	3	7.9 %	39.5 %
Teacher	1	2.6 %	42.1 %
Recruitment	1	2.6 %	44.7 %
Sales	2	5.3 %	50.0 %
Banking	1	2.6 %	52.6 %
Head of operations	1	2.6 %	55.3 %
Director of Technology	1	2.6 %	57.9 %
Reporter	1	2.6 %	60.5 %
Chief Technology Officer	1	2.6 %	63.2 %
Regional Sales Director	1	2.6 %	65.8 %
Hotels	1	2.6 %	68.4 %
HR Executive	1	2.6 %	71.1 %
Recruiter	1	2.6 %	73.7 %
Chief Enterprise Architect - Telecommunications	1	2.6 %	76.3 %
Service delivery	1	2.6 %	78.9 %
Recruitment Consultant	1	2.6 %	81.6 %
Hospitality	1	2.6 %	84.2 %
Financial planner	1	2.6 %	86.8 %
Wine Importer and University Lecturer	1	2.6 %	89.5 %
HR professional	1	2.6 %	92.1 %
Project Manager	1	2.6 %	94.7 %
Professional / Engineer	1	2.6 %	97.4 %
HR Consulting	1	2.6 %	100.0 %

Jamovi (Part 2)

Leading Question (5) - Push Factors

Reliability Analysis (Factor 1: Questions 7-9)

Scale Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's α	
scale	0.420

[3]

Reliability Analysis (Factor 2: Questions 13-15)

Scale Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's α	
scale	0.569

[3]

Reliability Analysis (Factor 3: Questions 19-21)

Scale Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's α	
scale	0.747

[3]

Independent Samples T-Test

Independent Samples T-Test

							95% Confidence Interval	
		Statistic	df	p	Mean difference	SE difference	Lower	Upper
Factor 1	Student's t	0.221	21.0	0.827	0.214	0.968	−1.80	2.23
Factor 2	Student's t	−0.265	22.0	0.793	−0.258	0.972	−2.27	1.76
Factor 3	Student's t	0.501	21.0	0.622	0.556	1.109	−1.75	2.86

Note. $H_a: \mu_{\text{Male}} \neq \mu_{\text{Female}}$

Group Descriptives

	Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
Factor 1	Male	21	3.05	3.00	1.34	0.292
	Female	2	2.83	2.83	0.236	0.167
Factor 2	Male	22	3.58	3.50	1.32	0.282
	Female	2	3.83	3.83	1.179	0.833
Factor 3	Male	21	2.89	3.00	1.48	0.322
	Female	2	2.33	2.33	1.886	1.333

Leading Question (6) - Pull Factors

Reliability Analysis (Factor 4: Questions 10-12)

Scale Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's α	
scale	0.878

[3]

Reliability Analysis (Factor 5: Questions 16-18)

Scale Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's α	
scale	0.942

[3]

Reliability Analysis (Factor 6: Questions 22-24)

Scale Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's α	
scale	0.955

[3]

Independent Samples T-Test

Independent Samples T-Test

							95% Confidence Interval	
		Statistic	df	p	Mean difference	SE difference	Lower	Upper
Factor 4	Student's t	−0.429	11.0	0.676	−0.656	1.53	−4.02	2.71
Factor 5	Student's t	0.465	13.0	0.650	0.629	1.35	−2.29	3.55
Factor 6	Student's t	−0.471	13.0	0.645	−0.689	1.46	−3.85	2.47

Note. $H_0: \mu_{\text{Male}} = \mu_{\text{Female}}$

Group Descriptives

		N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
Factor 4	Male	10	4.23	5.33	2.49	0.789
	Female	3	4.89	4.33	1.26	0.729
Factor 5	Male	11	3.55	3.67	2.30	0.692
	Female	4	2.92	2.17	2.38	1.189
Factor 6	Male	11	3.73	3.67	2.51	0.756
	Female	4	4.42	4.83	2.50	1.250