Older Chinese Nationals in the United Kingdom: Strategies for maintaining employability

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Objectives

How are older Chinese migrants responding to pressure (governmental, financial and social) to delay retirement?

• Little research on impact of Active Ageing on older migrants
• Some evidence stratified older workforce (see Hokacker et al 2013; Lain 2011; Flynn 2010)
• Fewer resources for older migrants (Warnes et al 2004)
• Reliance on family and community (Yu 2000)
• Concentrated in SME’s
• Cultural perspectives on age and work (Chiu et al 2001)
Public policies implications

- Equalities Act 2010: Consolidating regulations prohibiting age, gender, ethnicity, race discrimination (with abolition of mandatory retirement)
- Rising State Pension Ages
- Single Pension/NEST
- Carrot and stick to deal with incapacity
- Public sector procurement rules favouring cross-community projects
- Limited public support for older OR/AND migrant unemployed (see Kirkpatrick 2012)
Methodology

• Cooperative Inquiry
  – “Research conducted with people...to make sense of their world and work in practice” (Heron and Reason 1992)
  – “Relationship building event” (Gustavsen 1992)
• Co-investigation
  – Process of action and reflection
• Eight interviews with Wai Yin professionals plus two external stakeholder organisations
• Four innovation groups over a six-week period (1 Wai Yin rep; 2 volunteers; 1 married couple; 1 local business person)

Funding gratefully received from ESRC and RGC
http://www.esrc.ac.uk/my-esrc/grants/RES-000-22-4406/read
Age and work in the Chinese community*

- Many falling into self-employment (especially catering)
- Employment, finance, and care tied to the family (from which the older person is often isolated) and community
- Lack of access to formal qualifications and practical skills (especially English language skills)

* First generation
Older Chinese responses

- Physical and mental demands of self employment
- Retirement tied to children’s flight from the nest
- Worries about retirement and care when elderly
- Social isolation a big concern (especially for men)
- Working longer equates to losing face but voluntary work valued
- Support for idea of care exchange
Community level response

• Very few pathways into employment for older migrants
• Focus on pension rights and financial awareness
• Providing for elderly
• Building links with other minority communities
• NVQ training in eldercare
Emerging findings

- Work, care and social inclusivity
- Nexus of disadvantage in terms of age, nationality and self-employment
- Cultural importance of respected work
- Tapping into and resourcing community organisations
谢谢你们的时间。有没有问题？

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