

Youth in Turbulent Times: What Social Scientists Can Offer?

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**My heartiest Congratulations to Professor Cheung and
the Research Team!**

Strength 1: Groundbreaking

- Groundbreaking research study in the scientific literature
- Groundbreaking research study in different Chinese communities
- PsycINFO: adolescents and identity (21,692) – April 29, 2022
- PsycINFO: adolescents and identity and Chinese (491) – 2.3%

Reflection: Why Chinese studies are important?

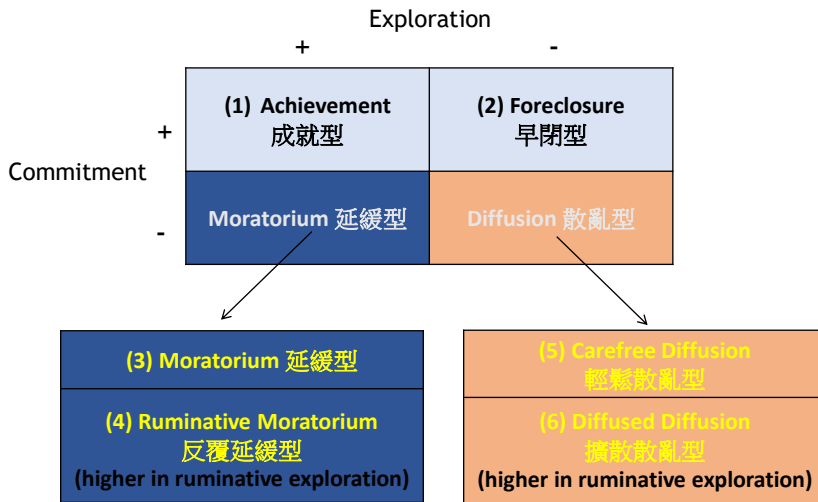
Scientific understanding, generalizability and policy formulation

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Strength 2: Well-articulated conceptual model: Luyckx et al.'s 6 identity statuses

Exploration: Breath ; depth; ruminative

Commitment: Commitment making, identification with commitment



Reflection: Why do we need a Theoretical framework?

- Scientific reasoning
- Bases for testing hypotheses

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Strength 3: Identity statuses based on five identity dimensions: Bases for Empirical Test

Dimension	Achievement 成就型	Foreclosure 早閉型	Moratorium 延緩型	Ruminative Moratorium 反覆延緩型	Carefree Diffusion 輕鬆散亂型	Diffused Diffusion 擴散散亂型
Commitment making 作出承諾	H	H	L/M	L/M	L	L
Identification with Commitment 認同承諾	H	H	L/M	L/M	L	L
Exploration in breadth 廣度探索	H	L	H	H	L/M	L/M
Exploration in depth 深度探索	H	L	M/H	M/H	L/M	L/M
Ruminative exploration 反覆探索	L	L	M/H	H	L/M	H

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Strength 4: Adolescent identity statuses and psychosocial correlates examined

1. Prosocial behavior (law abidance, helping) and civic engagement (voluntary work) – much needed in Hong Kong
2. Deviant Behavior – global concern (e.g., cyber-bullying; respecting the Law; “we” versus “me”)
3. Use of Online Social Media – growing adolescent problem and opportunity; online addiction
4. Career Uncertainty – global concern; graduation = unemployment?

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Strength 5: Longitudinal Research Design

1. Necessity of conducting longitudinal studies – why?
2. Limitations of cross-sectional designs: difficulty in establishing causal-relationships (e.g., more cranes ...> more babies?)
3. Few longitudinal studies in the Chinese context – why? Fast food culture? “Cheap” research?
4. Reflection: Many longitudinal studies in the West. Why? Evidence-based services and policy-making

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Psychosocial Factors Influencing Individual Well-Being in Chinese Adolescents in Hong Kong: a Six-Year Longitudinal Study

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Abstract This pioneer study investigated the longitudinal development of adolescent subjective well-being (SWB) in terms of life satisfaction and hopelessness. The concurrent and longitudinal influence of different socio-demographic characteristics (i.e., age, gender, economic disadvantage, and family intactness), individual qualities

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Shek D.T.L.,



Fig. 1 Prototypical trajectories of life satisfaction across six waves (all samples)

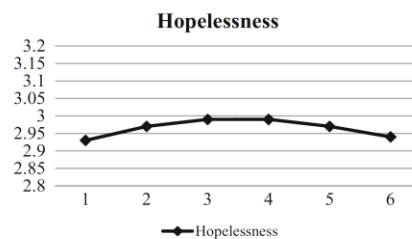


Fig. 2 Prototypical trajectories of hopelessness across six waves (all samples)

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Strength 6: Support for 5 dimensions (Achievement, Moratorium, Searching moratorium, Carefree diffusion, Diffused diffusion, Foreclosure) and six clusters

Reflection: Why “construct validity”? “Cannot be measured ... does not exist”?

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

[M-Plus: STDYX Standardization]

▪ RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error Of Approximation)	
• Estimate	0.060 (<.08, good fit)
• 90 Percent C.I.	0.058 0.063
• Probability RMSEA <= .05	0.000
▪ CFI/TLI	
• CFI	0.918 (>.9, satisfactory fit)
• TLI	0.907 (~.9, satisfactory fit)
▪ SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual)	
• Value	0.064 (<.08, good fit)

Cluster analysis
[SPSS: K-means clustering]

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove 23 cases (multivariate outliers) 1,840 → 1,817 samples
Result	6 clusters
• Measure of Agreement Kappa	.726 (moderately high)
• eta-squared	.5008 (> .5)

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Strength 7: Covering Adolescents and Early Adulthood

1. Erikson: Developmental task of Adolescence? Ego identity versus role confusion – 1950’s and 1960’s
2. Erikson: Developmental task of Early Adulthood: Intimacy versus Isolation – 1950’s and 1960’s
3. **Emerging Adulthood** – prolonged adolescence; moratorium up to 20’s
4. Reflection: Very few studies on Emerging Adulthood in Chinese contexts – why? “problems” disappear in the 20’s? difficulty of collecting data?

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Transition From Adolescence to Emerging Adulthood

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The concept of *emerging adulthood* and *emerging adulthood theory* were first proposed by Jeffrey Arnett in 2000. Emerging adulthood occurs between the ages of approximately 18 and 25. It represents neither late adolescence nor early adulthood, and is distinct from both stages. Emerging adulthood is a unique period in life when individuals have much freedom to explore their choices in various life domains. Yet, it is also a period that requires intense adjustment and readjustment.

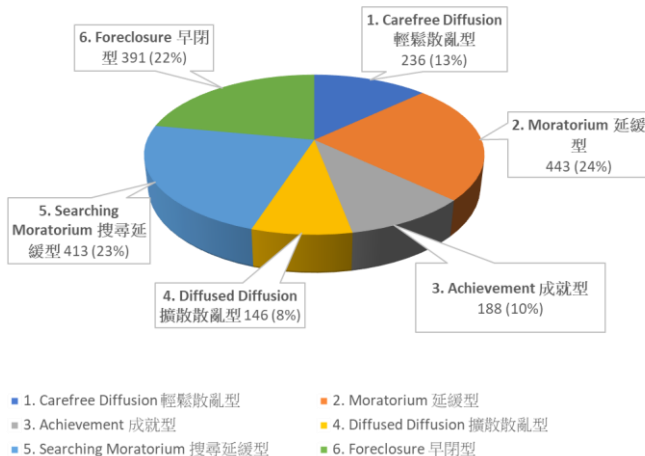
Arnett (2000) proposed five features of emerging adulthood: identity exploration, instability, possibilities, self-focus, and “feeling in-between.” Throughout the identity exploration period, young people attempt to find meaning in work, relationships, and ideologies. According to Arnett, the feature of possibilities represents the optimistic aspect of emerging adulthood, as emerging adults have many choices available to them.

The Encyclopedia of Child and Adolescent Development. Edited by Stephen Hupp and Jeremy D. Jewell. Published 2020 by JohnWiley & Sons, Inc.

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Strength 8: Types of Identity identified Reflection: Foreclosure and Diffusion: Education and Youth Work Implications?

Distribution of DIDS in six clusters (N=1,817)



Carefree Diffusion

- Low on commitment dimensions, exploration in breadth and exploration in depth

Moratorium

- Low on both commitment dimensions
- High on exploration in breadth and exploration in depth

Achievement

- High scores on commitment making, identification with commitment, exploration in breadth, exploration in depth

Diffused Diffusion

- Low on commitment dimensions, exploration in depth and exploration in breadth

Searching Moratorium

- Low on both commitment dimensions
- High on exploration in breadth and exploration in depth
- Intermediate ruminative exploration

Foreclosure

- Low scores on exploration in breadth and exploration in depth
- High scores on commitment making, identification with commitment

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Strength 9: Very Timely Study – Occupy Central in 2014 and Social Event in 2019-2020

1. Riots in 1950's and 1960's – mainly involving uneducated and unemployed
2. Reflection: Occupy Central (2014) and Social Event (2019-2020): Many educated people and students were involved. Why?
3. Many explanations (e.g., external influences ...)
4. Reflection: Identity problem of adolescents – foreclosure (“sudden” awareness of their “mission” in life; “romantic” option for the identity diffused; “deliverer” role in “Revolution”)

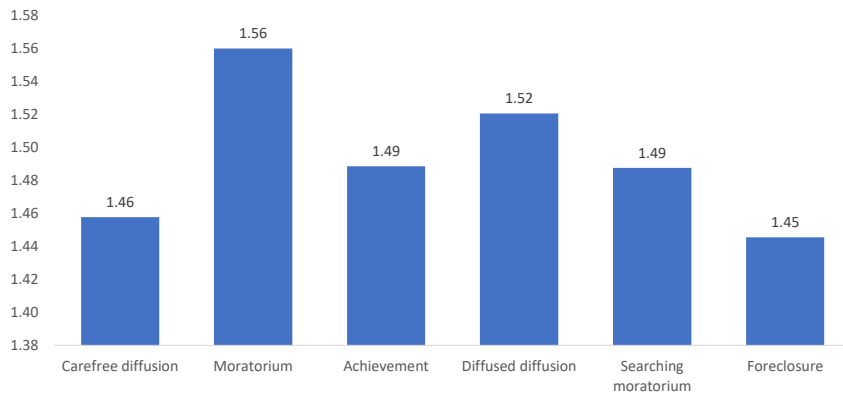
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Strength 10: Adolescent identity statuses and Developmental outcomes

1. Empirical support for the importance of adolescent identity (psychosocial theory of personality; self-theories of adolescent development)
2. Echo Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach: Peter Benson's 40 developmental assets (positive identity)
3. Reflection: Dark side of “identity achieved”? Possibility of change? Chinese view of “identity” achievement?

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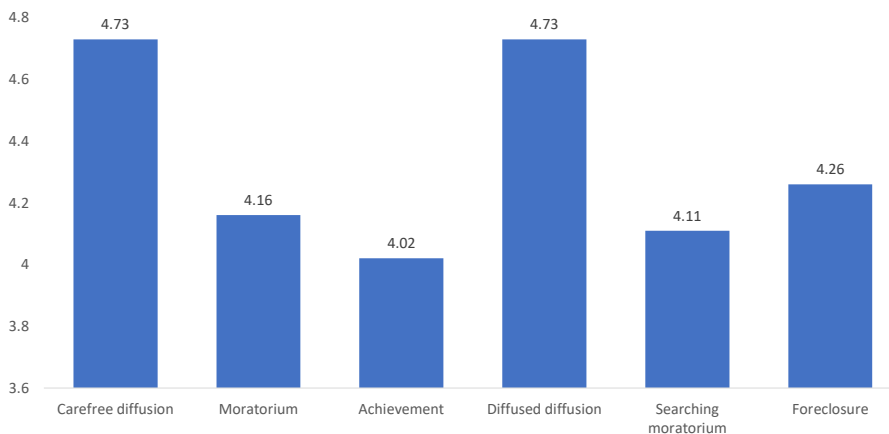
Political Participation (Ranging from 1 to 2)



- Political participation of the six clusters are significantly different ($F=2.42$, $p=.034$).
- Those in the moratorium group and diffused diffusion group have higher levels of political participation, while those in the carefree diffusion group and foreclosure group have lower levels of political participation.

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Average Daily Hours spent on SNS (Ranging from 1 to 24)



- Average daily hours spent on SNS of the six clusters are significantly different ($F=2.43$, $p=.033$).
- Those in the carefree diffusion and diffused diffusion groups have spent a higher average daily hours on SNS, while those in the achievement and searching moratorium groups have spent a lower average daily hours on SNS.

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Strength 11: Identity Status Matters

➤ Achievement cluster (HAVE)

- Highest expectancy of future career
- Experienced highest positive affect and lowest negative affect
- Highest proactivity in school task and career preparation

➤ Diffused diffusion cluster (HAVE NOT)

- Lowest expectancy of future career
- Experienced lowest positive affect and highest negative affect
- Lowest proactivity in school task and career preparation

**Reflection: How to promote “Achievement”? Meaning of “Achievement”?
Multiple Intelligences instead of obsessive focus on academic excellence?**

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Strength 12: Theoretical and Practical Significance

1. Theoretical significance: support for the identity theory
2. Generalizability in a non-Western context – WEIRD research
3. Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Developed participants
4. Chinese view of “identity” and “emerging adulthood”?
5. Practical Significance: Importance of understanding adolescent identity ...> services and policies
6. How can we create “Achievement” identity without prematurely promoting “Foreclosure”?

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Reflection 1: 3 Cs

Distinction between causes, concomitants and consequences of identity statuses

- Prosocial behavior can shape identity
- Prosocial behavior can be part of the identity (willing to help others)
- Prosocial behavior can be a consequence of identity

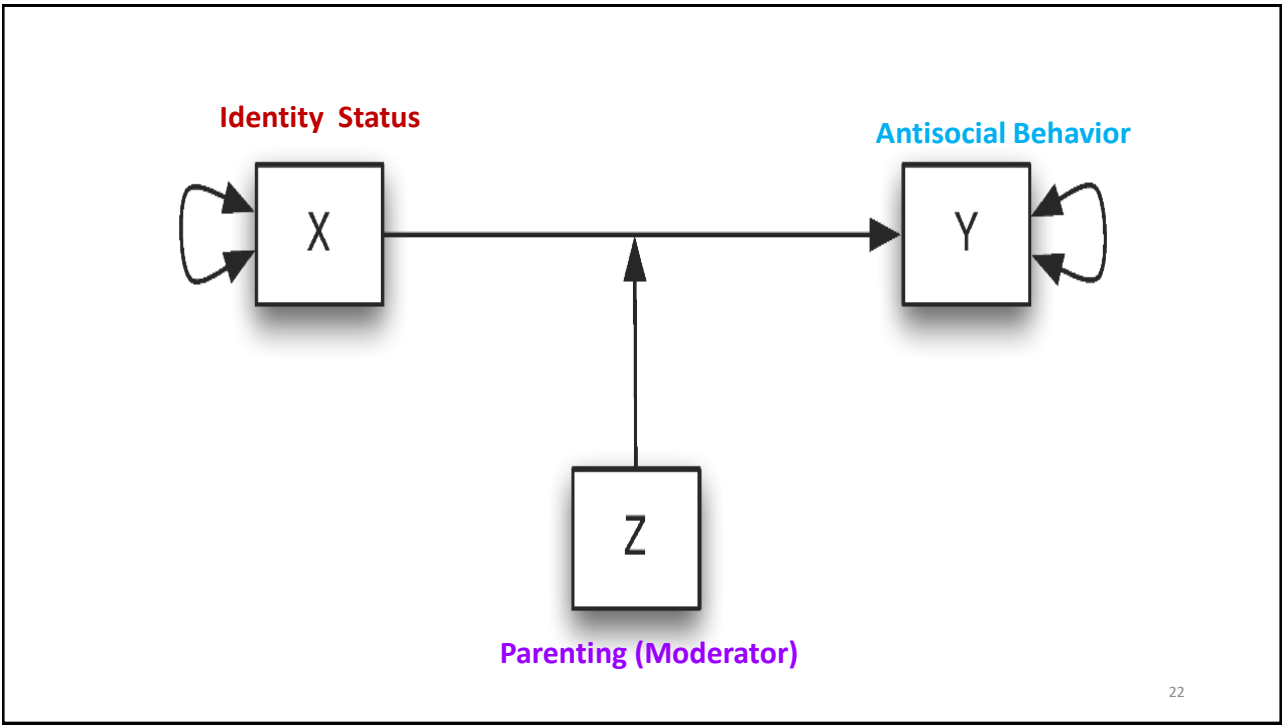
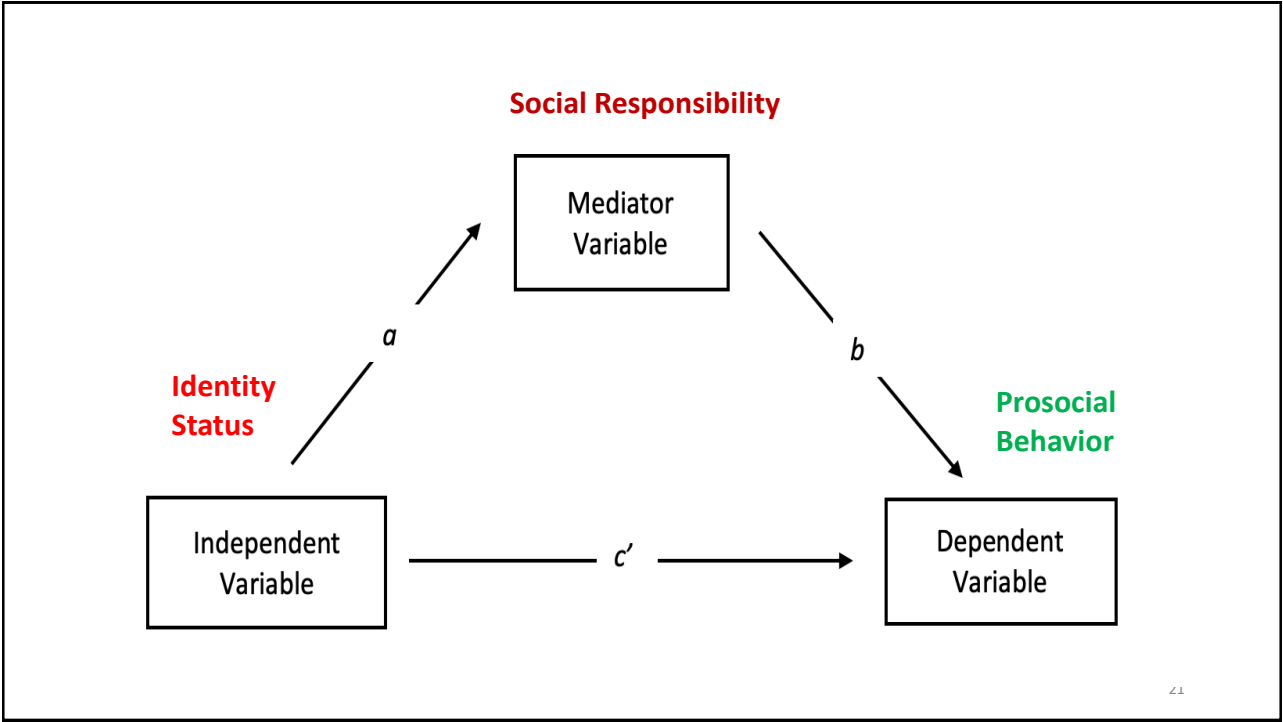
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Reflection 2: 2 Ms

Mediators and moderators of the influence of identity on the developmental outcomes

- Mediators: factors between identity and developmental outcomes
- Identity ...> competence ...> prosocial behavior
- Moderators: factors influence the strength of relationship between identity and developmental outcomes

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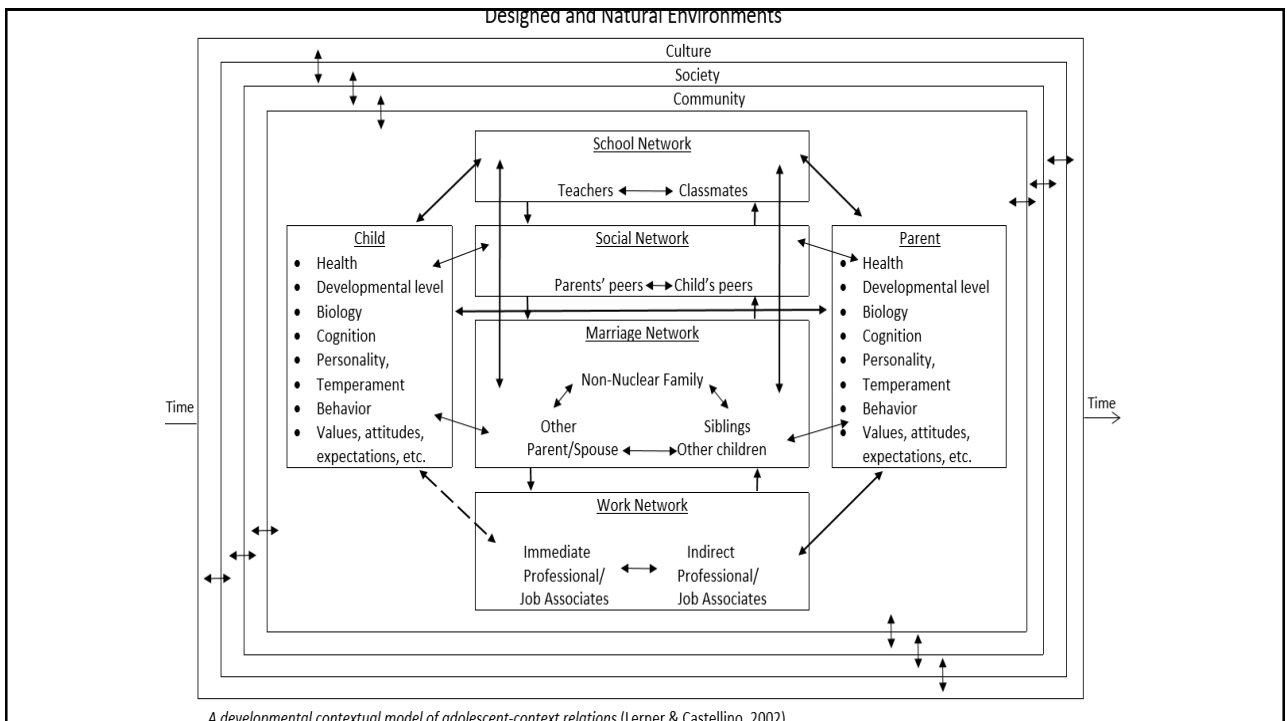


Reflection 3: Antecedents of identity

What shapes the identity statuses of adolescents and emergent adults?

Ecological or systems perspectives

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Reflection 4:

Socio-cultural risk factors for adolescent identity development in Hong Kong

Shek, D. T. L., & Siu, A. M. H. (2019). "UNHAPPY" environment for adolescent development in Hong Kong [Editorial]. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 64*(6, Suppl), S1–S4.

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Risk Factor 1: Unhealthy Values

Protective Chinese cultural values:

- Harmonious family support
- Doctrine of the mean
(do not go to the extremes)
- Acceptance of fate

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Materialism in Hong Kong Adolescents Perceived by Students, Teachers and Parents (Wofoo Studies Series)

Hong Kong Adolescents Regard:	Students' View	Teachers' View	Parents' View
	4+5 n(%)	4+5 n(%)	4+5 n(%)
Earning money is more important than other things	1113 (45.1%)	396 (69.9%)	162 (38.0%)
Possession of money equals to possession of everything	1089 (44.1%)	320 (56.5%)	152 (35.6%)
Having money will earn the respect from other people	1117 (45.3%)	396 (69.9%)	190 (44.8%)
For the sake of earning money, one can give up some basic principles	811 (32.9%)	310 (54.7%)	110 (25.9%)
A person is successful or not depends on whether one has money	1073 (43.5%)	397 (70.0%)	181 (42.3%)

4 + 5 = agreement to the statement

Egocentrism in Hong Kong Adolescents Perceived by Students, Teachers and Parents (Wofoo Studies Series)

Hong Kong Adolescents Regard:	Students' View	Teachers' View	Parents' View
	4+5 n(%)	4+5 n(%)	4+5 n(%)
One's feeling is more important than others' feeling	1355 (54.9%)	509 (89.9%)	285 (66.7%)
One's interest is more important than others' interest	1325 (53.8%)	495 (87.4%)	255 (59.7%)
They can find excuses for their behavior in almost anything	1379 (56.1%)	492 (87.0%)	303 (71.8%)
Most of the time, criticisms from others are nonsensical	1025 (41.7%)	380 (67.2%)	236 (55.7%)
They are true to their feelings, even if this makes other people unhappy	1168 (47.4%)	456 (80.6%)	263 (61.7%)

4+5 = agreement to the statement

Risk Factor 2: Neglect of Holistic Adolescent Development

2P 2S (Health-related fields):

- Physical (health education?)
- Psychological
 - Over-emphasis on academic excellence
- Social (social competence?)
- Spiritual (life meaning?)

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Characteristics of the Ideal Child Perceived by Parents

Domain/characteristic	Number of responses		Number of respondents	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Family-related attributes				
Good parent-child relation	317	30.7	238	56.7
Total	355	34.3	254	60.5
Academic-related attributes				
Good academic outcome	93	9.0	93	22.1
Positive attitude to study	135	13.1	134	31.9
Responsibility in study	29	2.8	29	6.9
High educational attainment	35	3.4	35	8.3
Total	292	28.2	266	63.3
Conduct-related attributes				
Good behavior/character	66	6.4	63	15.0
Total	201	19.4	171	40.7
Other attributes				
Positive relationship	41	4.0	36	8.6
Maturity/autonomy	48	4.6	41	9.8
Positive working attitude	30	2.9	29	6.9
Health/hobbies	25	2.4	25	6.0
Other attributes	42	4.1	39	9.3
Total	186	18.0	140	33.3

Shek, D.T.L. (1999). Hong Kong Chinese parents' perceptions of the ideal child. *Journal of Psychology*, 133, 291-302.

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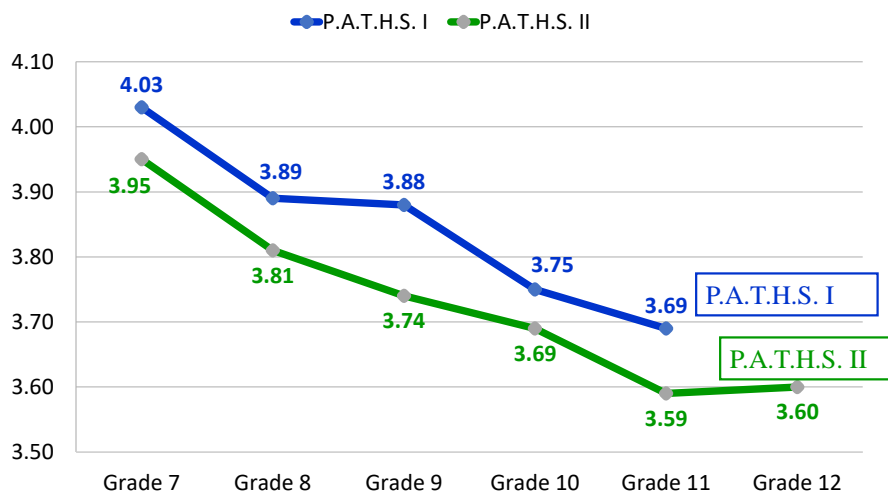
Risk Factor 3:

Hopelessness and Decline in Life Satisfaction

Poor mental health ...>> healthy identity?

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Changes in Life Satisfaction in High School Students
in Hong Kong



Resource: Shek, D. T. L., & Liang, L. Y. (2018). Psychosocial Factors Influencing Individual Well-Being in Chinese Adolescents in Hong Kong: A Six-Year Longitudinal Study. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 13(3), 561-584.

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4. 大學學歷勞工收入下跌

與去年的研究比較，是次研究發現，在最近 20 年間大學學歷工中位數收入稍有下跌，最高收入的 10% 大學學歷勞工收入跌幅更大，而最低收入的 10% 大學學歷勞工收入則有輕微上升。在 2017 年，**整體大學學歷勞工的中位數收入，從 1997 年的 29726 跌至 2017 年的 28790 元⁴，跌幅為 3.1%**。至於收入最高的 10% 大學學歷勞工，收入更是從 1997 年的 85612 跌至 2017 年的 76775 元，跌幅為 10.3%。收入最低的 10% 大學學歷勞工，則稍升 6.4%。

表五. 1987-2017 年整體大學學歷勞工收入變化

	10 百分位數收入	中位數收入	90 百分位數收入
1987 年	\$8670	\$24277	\$72254
1997 年	\$13079	\$29726	\$85612
2007 年	\$12853	\$32133	\$81233
2017 年	\$13915	\$28790	\$76775
1987-2017 年升跌幅度	+60.5%	+18.6%	+6.3%
1997-2017 年升跌幅度	+6.4%	-3.1%	-10.3%

5. 整體勞工收入上升

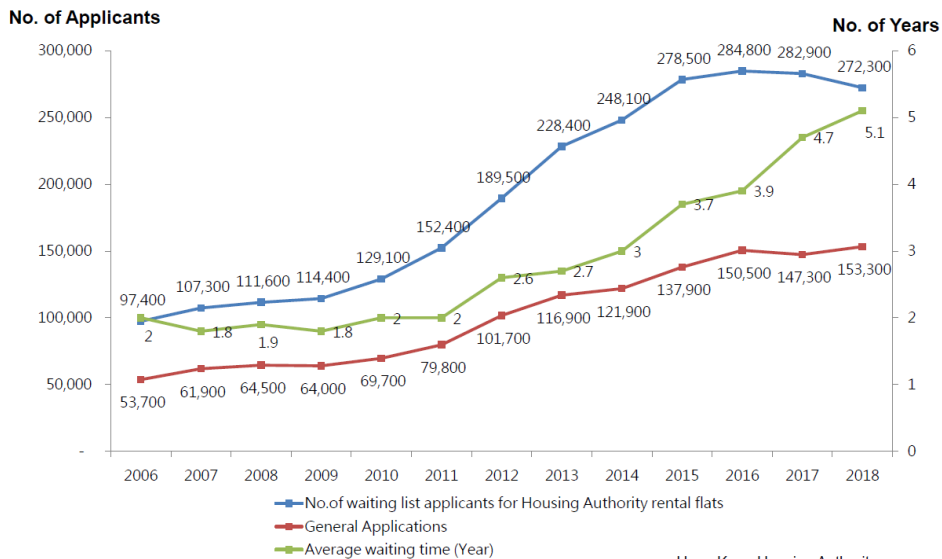
若將同期間的整體勞工收入與大學學歷勞工收入對比，可發現大學學歷勞工新收入上升較快，而同期間非大學學歷勞工收入則有輕微下降。在過去 20 年間，經通脹調整後，不論是收入較低的百分之十、中等、最高的百分之十，香港整體勞工的收入均有輕微上升。例如整體勞工的中位數收入 1997 年的 \$11,890 增至 2017 年的 \$17,274，增幅為 45.3%。

表六. 1987-2017 年整體勞工收入變化

	10 百分位數收入	中位數收入	90 百分位數收入
1987 年	\$5202	\$8670	\$20231
1997 年	\$7134	\$11890	\$35671
2007 年	\$7712	\$14138	\$42416
2017 年	\$9596	\$17274	\$47984

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Supplementary Data – Number of waiting list applicants for housing authority rental flats and average waiting time in year by year (2006 - 3/2018)



Hong Kong Housing Authority
< Survey on Public Rental Housing Applicants >

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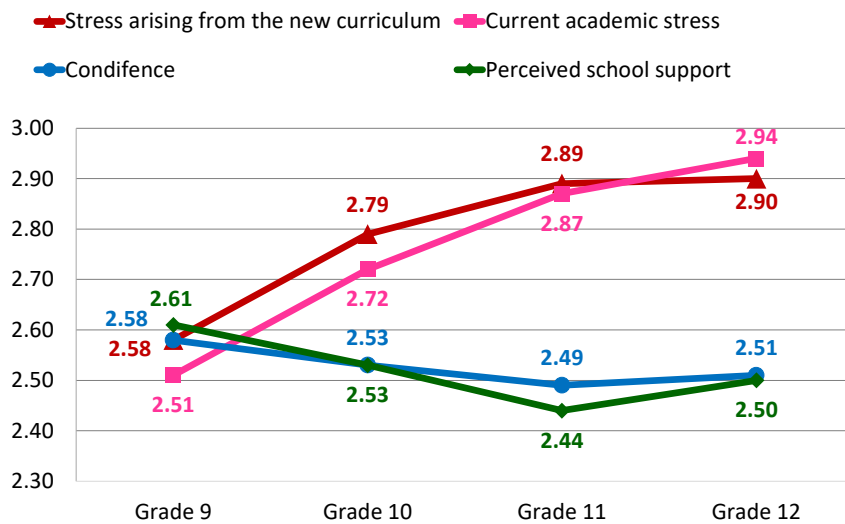
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Risk Factor 4:

Morbid Emphasis on Academic Excellence

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Changes in Perceived Academic Stress, Study Confidence and School Support



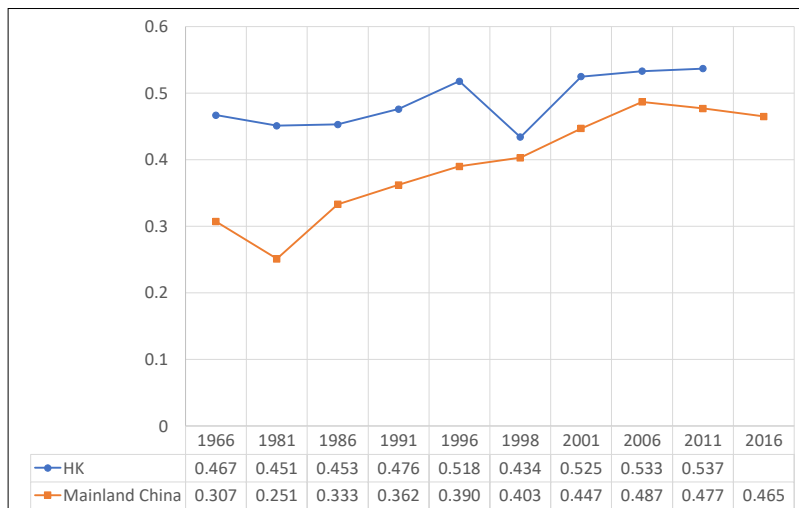
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Risk Factor 5:

Poverty

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GINI coefficients From 1966-2016

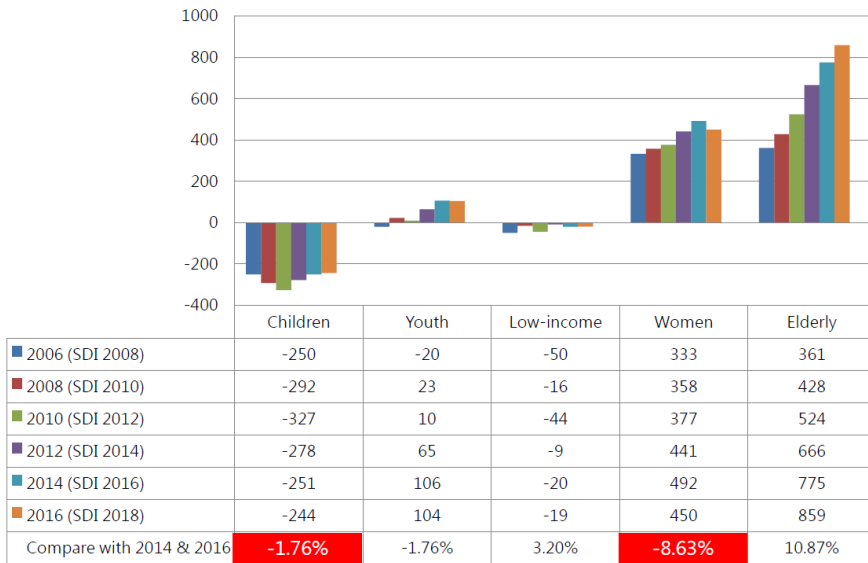


Sources:

Hong Kong: Census and Statistics Department (note: figure for 2016 will be released in 2017)

Mainland China: World Bank (1966-1998) and National Bureau of Statistic (2001-2016)

Trend of Social Development of Population Groups by Year (2006-2016)



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Risk Factor 6:

Parenting Issues

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Win at the Starting Line

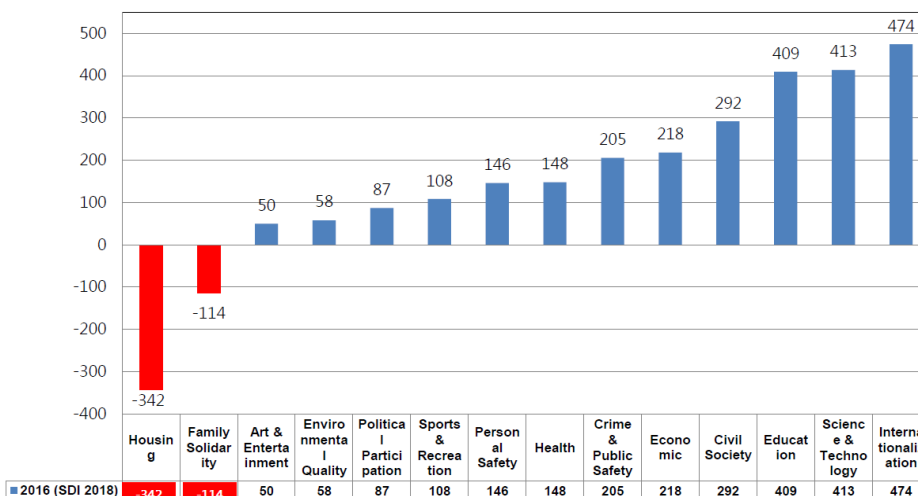
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Risk Factor 7:

**Yawing Families
Families which are off-course**

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Overview of Social Development Sub-indexes (2016)



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Sub-index – Family Solidarity (2006 – 2016)

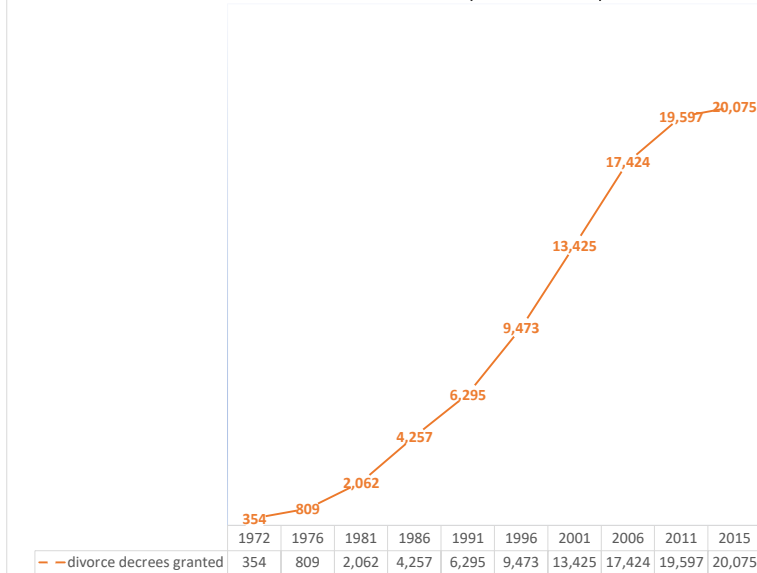
	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016
Marriages per 100,000 persons aged 15+ (+)	849	780	849	953	878	768
Divorces as % of marriages (-)	34.7	37.6	34.6	35.0	35.5	34.4
Reported domestic violence cases per 100,000 households (-)	211.87	319.34	143.56	120.44	94.23	80.2
Trend Scores	-535	-903	-311	-221	-148	-114

Though in a growing trend, index of Family Solidarity remains at negative level of development. It impacts the development of Children and Youth, as revealed by the unfavorable results in the corresponding Population Group Indexes.

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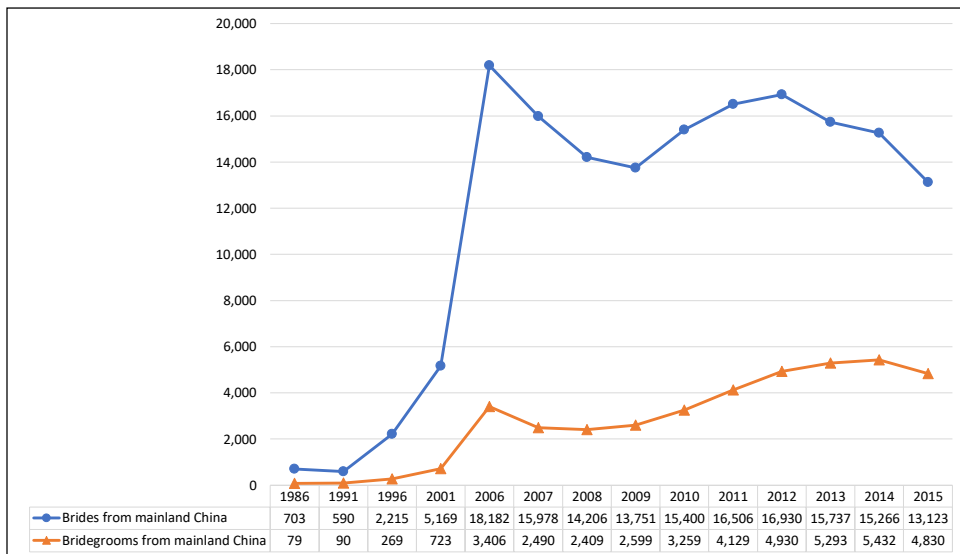
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DIVORCE DECREES GRANTED (1972 - 2015)



Sources:
 - Census and Statistics Department (CSD)
 - Judiciary

Number of cross-border marriages (Registered in Hong Kong)



Source:
 Hong Kong: Census and Statistics Department (1986-2015)
 Note: Figure for 2016 will be released in 2017.

Dimensions of Positive Youth Development: 15 Positive Youth Development Constructs

- Bonding
- Resilience
- Competencies: Social, Emotional, Cognitive, Behavioral and Moral Competencies
- Self-Determination
- Self-Efficacy
- Spirituality
- Belief in the Future
- Clear and Positive Identity
- Prosocial Involvement
- Acquisition of Prosocial Norms
- Recognition for Positive Behavior

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The Influence of Meaning in Life on Adolescents' Hedonic Well-Being and Risk Behaviour: Implications for Social Work

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Abstract

The strength-based approach argues that promoting adolescents' developmental assets would contribute to their well-being. This study investigated meaning in life (MIL) as one of such developmental assets. Based on the annual assessment of 3,328 Hong Kong Chinese adolescents from Grade 7 to Grade 12, we found that MIL at Grade 7 predicted heightened hedonic well-being and reduced risk behaviour at Grade 12; slower decrease in MIL from Grade 7 to Grade 11 predicted heightened hedonic well-being and reduced risk behaviour at Grade 12 with the initial level of outcomes controlled. Findings highlight the importance of MIL as a developmental asset fostering adolescent well-being. Implications of the findings for advancing theory of MIL and social work practice are discussed.

Keywords: Meaning in life, hedonic well-being, risk behaviour, Chinese adolescents, longitudinal study

Accepted: March 2018



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A review of validated youth prevention and positive youth development programs in Asia

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Abstract

In view of the intensification of adolescent developmental issues in different Asian contexts, there is an urgent need for developing prevention and positive youth development programs in different Asian communities. In this paper, adolescent prevention and positive youth development programs in Asia which have been evaluated by studies adopting true experimental or quasi-experimental designs are reviewed. Several observations are highlighted from this review. First, compared with Western societies, the number of validated programs in different Asian communities was extremely low. Second, there were comparatively more programs addressing substance abuse than other mental health problems. Third, compared with evaluated prevention programs, there were very few positive youth development programs. Finally, there were very few rigorously designed evaluative studies of prevention and positive youth development programs over a long period of time.

Keywords: adolescent developmental issues; Asia; Asian communities; positive youth development; prevention; review.

Introduction

A survey of the literature shows that adolescent risk behavior is increasing in Asia. According to the Regional Center

for East Asia and the Pacific at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, heroin and amphetamine-type stimulants abuse were the major problems in Southeast Asia (1). For example, the prevalence of cough medicine abuse (i.e., drugs that can be purchased over the counter) was serious in some Asian countries and cocaine was illegally used for abuse purposes in Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Myanmar. In Malaysia and Myanmar, cough medicines containing cocaine were often used in combination with other drugs (1). In addition to the illicit use of cannabis and alcohol in Nepal, licit cocaine-based medicines had continued to be abused (2). According to a report of Medical Tribune Online (3), the situation in Malaysia was so bad that the Drug Control Authority banned all cocaine-based cough preparations beginning January 1, 2003. Additionally, increased abuse of cough mixture was reported in Japan (4, 5) and India (6, 7). In Taiwan, the Investigation Bureau of the Ministry of Justice reported that tramadol (a painkiller similar to cocaine) has become a substance of choice for drug addicts (8).

With regard to China, problems of illicit drug use have quickly spread and reached epidemic levels in the past 10 years. According to the National Narcotics Control Commission, the number of registered drug users increased from 70,000 in 1990 to 1.16 million at the end of 2005, and the estimated number of actual users was 3.5 million in 2004 (9). Within China, illicit drug use has been most evident in areas of Yunnan, Sichuan, Gansu, and Guangdong Provinces. In a large screening study with more than 50,000 participants aged 15 years or above living in several heavily populated areas, Hao and colleagues reported that the prevalence of lifetime illicit drug use was 1.08% in 1993 and 1.52% in 2000 (10). Heroin appeared to be the most abused drug, with a new trend being the increasing use of newer drugs, including ecstasy and methamphetamine. In Japan, the prevalence of drug abuse is relatively low compared with that in other Asian countries. The National Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare in Japan conducted a survey on drug abuse in 2002 and reported that the population of drug (methamphetamine and cannabis) abuse in junior high school was only 0.65% (11). This could be due to the keen public awareness of drug abuse problems in Japanese society and the government's tough stance on illegal drug use. For example, special laws regarding cannabis, narcotics and psychotropics, opium, tobacco, thinner, and other substances have been strictly enforced. However, a recent report shows that the current climate of drug abuse in Japan is changing for the worse (12). The abuse of methamphetamine is expanding nationwide and rejection of drug use is gradually weakening in the young generation. Apart from methamphetamine, the abuse of ecstasy, heroin, and solvent is increasing at an alarming pace. As such, Japanese researchers

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Reflection 6:

How can we promote adolescent identity development, particularly “achievement”?

PYD programs (e.g. Project P.A.T.H.S.): building blocks of positive youth development

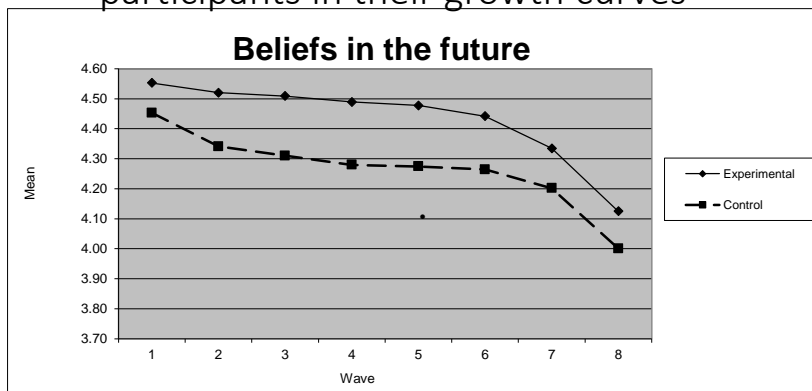


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<http://www.paths.hk>

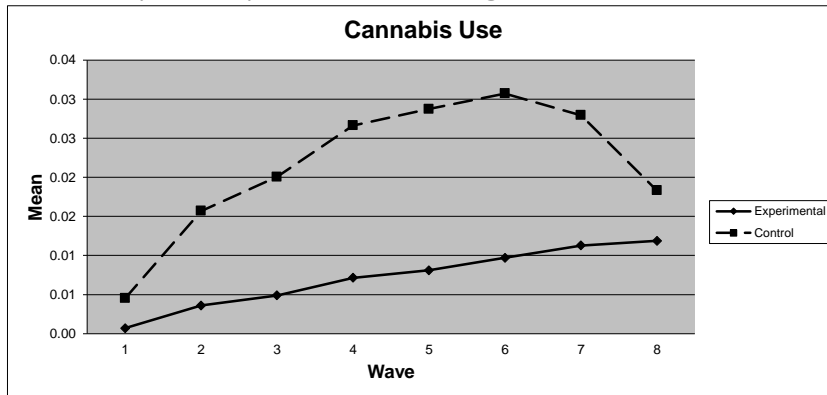
賽馬會青少年培育計劃
 A JOCKEY CLUB YOUTH
 ENHANCEMENT SCHEME

Differences between Experimental^a and Control Group participants in their growth curves



^a Cases perceived the program positively
 Group X Time³ interaction effect ($p < .01$) after controlling the initial age and gender

Differences between Experimental^a and Control Group participants in their growth curves



^a Cases participated in Tier 1 program only

Group X Time interaction effect ($p < .05$) after controlling the initial age and gender

Group X Time² interaction effect ($p < .05$) after controlling the initial age and gender

Reflection 7:

What services and policies can be devised to promote adolescent identity development?

Shek DTL, Siu AMH. Adolescent Mental Health Policy and Services in Hong Kong: Seven Unresolved Problems Waiting for Solutions. *J Adolesc Health*. 2019 Jun;64(6S):S5-S9. doi: 10.1016/j.jadohealth.2019.01.032.

Unresolved Problems

- Lack of coordinated **surveillance studies**
- Absence of rigorous **evaluation studies**
- Cross-sectional studies outnumbering **longitudinal studies**
- Knowledge based primarily on **Western theories and research**
- Inadequate **evidence-based** prevention and positive youth development studies
- **Gross disintegration** of policies, services, theories, and research on youth development

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