

Afternoon Parallel Tracks

Social Sciences – “A Time To Rebuild, Reconnect And Re-engage For Tomorrow”

Discussant: Ben Ku, HK PolyU

In the past decade, Asian and international societies have witnessed waves of socio-political turbulence. Societies are increasingly divided and challenged. Taking Hong Kong as an example, the 2019 social unrest coupled with the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic has profoundly challenged the faith and confidence of Hong Kong people. This panel provides a platform for university professors to share their research findings in areas relating to early childhood, youth and families. These are critical instruments for rebuilding, reconnecting, and re-engaging individuals from all walks of life for desired futures in society.

Challenges and strategies of adoptive parents: an invisible family type in Hong Kong - Anita K.W. Chan, EdUHK

Hong Kong has amended its Adoption Ordinance and formalized unrelated closed adoption since 1972. However, adoptive families remain an invisible and understudied group in public and academic discourses. Their ‘invisibility’ probably explains why the Hong Kong government does not see the need to provide post-adoption service (LegCo, 2018), and why policy and survey studies on Hong Kong family changes have not included this family form in their investigation (Chow & Lum, 2008; Department of Social Work and Social Administration, 2018; Policy 21, 2015). This qualitative study aims to address this gap and improve public understanding by bringing in the voices and experiences of Chinese adoptive families. Based on in-depth interviews with 13 adoptive families (in which 10 couples and 3 mothers were interviewed), we have identified some major challenges that adoptive parents experienced, including social stigma, difficulties in parenting SEN children, and disagreements among couples. We will also discuss the ways these parents resolve those challenges and the implications for social services.

Anita is an Associate Professor and Associate Head of Social Sciences at EdUHK. She is an expert in gender and education and has researched various issues in the field. She has been equally passionate about family and migration studies and has conducted research on parenting magazines, motherhood, transnational fatherhood, changing families and intimacies, and cross-border students. She is currently involved in several research projects on topics ranging from adoptive families, global childhoods, transnational families, older women’s subjectivities, and the belongingness of Hong Kong people.

Working out the salvation of privilege in elite schools: A time capsule study of minority students in Asia - Aaron Koh, CUHK

This paper highlights how a small group of minority students worked to take advantage of the privileges available once they were admitted to an elite school. The argument proposed is that, unlike their more privileged peers, minority students who have made it through the gateways of elite schools have to work out a salvation of privilege to level up their chances and aspirations of success. A grounded theory based on ‘working out the salvation of privilege’ is derived to examine the ways in which minority students in elite schools seize individual ways of self-saving their variegated disadvantages. The study tracked three students over a five-year period to explore the development of their aspirations and individual trajectories two

years after they exited their schools. Despite the students' efforts in self-saving, their 'envisioned future' became limited over time. All had to modify their options and expectations because their non-privileged background hindered their aspirations.

Aaron is an interdisciplinary scholar. He is an Associate Professor at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Faculty of Education. He is the co-editor of International Studies in Sociology of Education (Routledge, Francis & Taylor) and book series editor of Cultural Studies and Transdisciplinarity in Education (Springer). His most recent publications include a co-authored book, Class Choreographies: Elite Schools and Globalization (London, Palgrave, 2017) and a co-edited book, Elite Schools: Multiple Geographies of Privilege (London, Routledge, 2016).

The Dark Side of Parenting: When Parents' Self-Worth Depends on Children's Performance - Florrie Ng, CUHK

Research indicates that individuals' self-worth tends to be contingent on their performance in particular domains of their lives, with implications for their psychological functioning. For parents, their lives often revolve around their children. Do parents vary in the extent to which their sense of worth is contingent on their children's performance? What are the implications of parents' child-based worth for their use of controlling practices? How may parents' child-based worth play a role in their daily interactions with children? These questions will be discussed by drawing on research on Chinese and American parents.

After her Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Florrie was a postdoctoral fellow at the Center for Research on Culture, Development, and Education (CRCDE) of New York University and the City University of New York Graduate Center. She is currently an Associate Professor at the Department of Educational Psychology and Associate Director of the CUHK Brain and Mind Institute. Her research interests include parenting, motivation and achievement, culture and socialization, and early childhood development.

Building bridges for Hong Kong and Mainland Chinese students in higher education for desired futures in post-conflict Hong Kong - Celeste Y.M. Yuen, CUHK & Ruth D.H. Zhou, HKSYU

When they are addressed constructively, intergroup conflicts can be instrumental towards strengthening mutuality. This paper draws insights from a customized integrated intervention programme launched to address campus conflicts between Hong Kong local students (HKLS) and Mainland Chinese students (MCS) during the social unrest in 2019-2020 in higher education campuses across the Territory. The programme was developed using two complementary approaches: collaborative narration / human library and expressive arts. A total of eight HKLS and 14 MCS participants across five HEIs were recruited. In the four months' intervention programme, participants reflected on the critical incidents that had impacted their campus and social engagement, and global wellbeing. Their reflective journals demonstrate that acknowledging personal engagement and wellbeing are intertwined and interconnected with others in both time and space. The groups explored their inner strength, resource, and agency for rebuilding, reconnecting, and re-engaging for desired futures.

Celeste earned her doctorate from the UCL-IOE, University of London, and received a B.A. at London Bible College. She is an Associate Professor of CUHK Faculty of Education. Previously, she served as Assoc. head and Assoc. Prof. at Dept of Edu Policy & Leadership, EdUHK. She was a

recipient of the Knowledge Transfer Grant and Top Ten Percent Publication Awards. She is Vice President of HKERA and Assoc. Editor of Multicultural Education Review. Her research focuses on youth engagement, life satisfaction, spiritual wellbeing & interculturalism. She is an ordained minister, a board member of AWANAHK & Mission to New Arrivals.