

# Hong Kong Sociological Association

## 24th Annual Conference

Esther Lee Building (ELB), Chung Chi College

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel A

#### Session A1: Housing Inequality in Contemporary Urban China: Patterns, Mechanisms, and Impacts

*Chair: ZHU, Ling, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 10:00 – 11:20*

*Location: ELB 206*

1. *Has it become easier or harder to be homeowners in urban China? The divergence of two types of homeownership rates since 2008*

ZHU, Ling; TIAN, Runhui

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Urban housing has always been a focal issue in understanding socioeconomic inequality in transitional economies. Since the massive housing privatization, there has been a significant improvement in various aspects of urban housing in China. Official data and research articles report a substantial increase in urban homeownership rates. Accompanying this spectacular achievement, however, are prevailing studies and media reports about the growing difficulty for young people to attain homeownership in urban China. Hence, it is puzzling whether it has become easier or harder for Chinese urban residents to become homeowners, and why. Regarding this puzzle, we propose to differentiate two types of homeownership: (1) the ownership of an urban housing unit (broadly-defined homeownership), and (2) the ownership of the housing unit that one currently lives in (narrowly-defined homeownership). The trends of these two types of homeownership rates diverged since 2008. While the former rose due to the increasing provision from the supply side, the latter declined, suggesting that it has become more challenging for new entrants to the housing market to own their residences. We draw on six waves of the Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS) between 2003 and 2018 for the empirical investigation. The findings substantiate our propositions. They reveal that young people's disadvantage is more salient in living in self-owned housing units than owning a housing unit, and this disadvantage has significantly enlarged after 2008. This study contributes to the emerging literature about housing inequality in transitional economies, particularly the housing disadvantage of young adults. Keywords: Urban housing, homeownership, hierarchical-age-period-cohort analysis, China

2. *Resettlement Housing and Gendered Property Structures: Family  
Strategies in an Urbanizing Village in Shandong*

SUN, Yining; SONG, Jing

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** This study examines how villagers have redistributed resettlement housing properties within families based on interviews in a village that has been absorbed in urban sprawl in Shandong, eastern China. The sample includes rural families that have bigger or smaller family sizes, ranging from families with only sons or daughters to those with mixed genders of children. The findings suggest that the sons' privilege in receiving housing properties is more salient in families with more children and in families with both sons and daughters. Families with smaller numbers of children, or families with only sons or only daughters, are more likely to split housing properties based on other socioeconomic or ideational concerns. As local governments have minimized intervention in family property management at the grassroots level, urbanization has reinforced gender inequalities but also forced rural families to deal with new desires and anxieties when facing an uncertain urban future.

*3. Does Education Equity Policy Reduce School District Housing Price Premium? Evidence from the School Alliance Project in Shanghai*

XIA, Yu, East China Normal University

Coauthor: LI, Yu

**Abstract:** As a major education equity policy currently being promoted in urban China, the School Alliance Project aims to expand the supply of high-quality educational resources and narrow the gap between schools by creating a new layer of organization above the school level (referred to as an education group or big school district) to facilitate inter-school sharing of high-quality educational resources within the alliance. This study employs a difference-in-differences approach to examine the impact of this policy on the housing prices of school districts using education administration data and second-hand home sales records from 2015 to 2021 in Shanghai. This study finds that the Project had a negative effect on the housing prices of high-quality school districts, which became evident after one year of reform and varied over time. Further analysis revealed that the policy intervention effect was concentrated in the second and third tiers of suboptimal schools. The study indicated that the School Alliance Project partially promoted urban compulsory education equity, which provided important implications for the improvement of the school district system and the establishment of other urban education balance policies.

#### 4. *The Impact of Housing on Perceptions of Wealth Inequality in Urban China*

TIAN, Runhui, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

YAN, Fei, Tsinghua University

**Abstract:** As a major source of wealth inequality in urban China, housing inequality has affected many aspects of people's socioeconomic lives and has received research attention. However, few studies have explored its impact on people's subjective attitudes and feelings. This study fills the gap and investigates the impact of housing on people's perception of the wealth gap at both the individual and regional levels. At the individual level, the study employs the theories of housing stratification to categorize individuals according to their housing status and examine whether there is heterogeneity in people's perception of the wealth gap among different housing statuses. At the regional level, the research focuses on each province's housing price and growth rate. Based on the data collected from CFPS 2018, and after analyzing the data through multi-level ordered logistic models, this study discovered that individuals who own a private housing unit with loans are more aware of the wealth gap as compared to those who reside in public housing or own private housing units without loans. This group even has a stronger perception of the wealth gap when compared to renters. At the regional level, the study found that the growth rate of housing prices, rather than the price itself, significantly impacts how people perceive the wealth gap. The faster the housing prices grow, the more individuals sense the wealth gap.

5. *2011-2021: Changes in Housing Inequality in China and Its Influence*  
*Factors*

ZHANG, Yuzheng

Yunnan University

**Abstract:** Since the market-oriented real estate reform in 1998, the wealth of Chinese residents has been largely concentrated in real estate. Therefore, the study of housing inequality will help us better understand the basic economic and social conditions in China. Based on data from seven CGSS surveys in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2018, and 2021, this paper describes the characteristics of long-term changes in the housing inequality of China's urban residents and their influencing factors. The results show that, first, the housing inequality of urban residents in China has gradually increased, but there are some differences between the east, center, and west, showing spatial heterogeneity. Second, although the average housing area and property ownership rate of Chinese urban residents are gradually increasing, the gap in housing wealth is widening, mainly due to different real estate prices across and within regions, and this gap has become larger since COVID-19. Finally, some demographic, social, and economic variables have a significant impact on housing inequality. The central government should actively promote housing reform to gradually eliminate this inequality.



## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel A

#### Session A2: Technology, Crime, and Deviance Activities

*Chair: CHEUNG, W.T. Nicole, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 10:00 – 11:20*

*Location: ELB 207*

1. *Extra-legal Governance through Social Media: The Case of Petty  
Smuggling*

Miss Haiyan Yang

University of Macau

**Abstract:** Using data collected through long-term fieldwork and cyber-ethnography, this research explores how different participants in Macao's petty smuggling utilize social media to prevent potential goods scams in the illegal business. Three mechanisms are identified. First, social media has been used for background checking for different layers of participants. Second, social media enables the real-time monitoring of the smuggling process. Third, social media facilitates new forms of punishment for potential scammers. This research not only provides the latest empirical evidence on how petty smuggling takes place between Macao and Mainland China, but it also enriches our understanding of new forms of extra-legal governance in smuggling.

*2. Pandemic-related Strains and Cyber Delinquency among Young  
Working People in China*

Miss Xinge Jia

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** The unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting disruptions to various systems has caused various kinds of strains on people's daily lives. As one vulnerable group, young people at work, especially those rural-to-urban migrant workers, may face more challenges including financial instability and health problems. However, under the influence of the pandemic, the strains those youth workers have faced and its association with delinquent copings has not been well studied. Despite the disadvantages, their resilience might serve as a protective factor, which can help them alleviate the disruptive consequences of the pandemic. Stimulated by the pandemic-related strains on youth workers and the inequality between urban and migrant adolescents in China, this study concentrates on one of the worst coping strategies, cyber delinquency. Based on General Strain Theory (GST) and the resilience approach in psychology, our study aims to examine the variations between urban and migrant among working young people aged 16 to 19, in pandemic-related strains, negative emotions, cyber delinquency and their associations, and investigated the mitigation effect of different resilience types in these associations. This study included 1192 working young people, with 434 people from Changsha and 758 people from Shenzhen in China. Among them, 447 individuals are urban-native people and 745 individuals have migrated from rural areas. The preliminary results showed that compared with native young people, migrant youth had higher levels of cyber delinquency and experienced more economic strains. Further studies will investigate the moderating effect of resilience in two different groups of young people.

3. *Dynamic Patterns of Normalization of Psychoactive Drug Use in a  
Migration Context*

Dr. WEI YAO

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

**Abstract:** Psychoactive drug use among rural-to-urban young migrants has become a major concern in China. This study aims to understand this phenomenon by adopting the thesis of the normalization of recreational drug use. The data for this study came from qualitative interviews with 38 rural migrant psychoactive drug users undergoing community or compulsory isolation drug rehabilitation in Guangdong province. The results showed that dynamic patterns of normalization of psychoactive drug use occurred among young migrants. Differentiated normalization occurred in their early drug-using careers. The normalization components of high drug accessibility, prevalence, and social accommodation of psychoactive drug use were identified at this stage. However, not only occasional use but also frequent use of psychoactive drugs were integrated into their normal lives and normalized by them. These features evinced the occurrence of differentiated normalization. In their recent drug-using careers, this differentiated normalization turned into denormalization, as evidenced by a decline in access to, use, and social accommodation of psychoactive drug use. This changing trend was mainly due to China's police crackdown on drug offenses, especially the wide application of hair detection technology. These findings challenge the normalization paradigm in the field of drug use research.

#### *4. Urban and Rural Contexts of Gender Inequality and Adolescent Dating*

##### *Violence in China*

Prof. Nicole W.T. Cheung

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Urban and rural settings in China may make a difference to the effect of gender inequality. The influence of traditional gender norms among urban youth in China may be waning. There is evidence suggesting increasing gender-egalitarian attitudes in urban China, with urban parents being increasingly willing to invest in singleton girls, which eliminates opportunities for parents to discriminate against daughters. The patrilineal culture may render rural girls more vulnerable to partner abuse victimization. Nevertheless, some research on college populations in China found that females are less likely to accept dating violence than their male peers, and this finding did not differ between rural and urban settings. It is possible that Chinese rural girls strive to resist and regain power in a patrilineal culture. This study examines how far urbanity versus rurality matters to gender inequality and the victim-perpetrator overlap of dating violence in urban and rural China. Data are drawn from a survey of high school students ( $N = 5,820$ ) from 32 schools in cities and rural counties in Guangdong and Hunan provinces. Rural girls who endorse traditional gender norms are more likely to perpetrate dating violence and to be victimized than their male counterparts who endorse traditional gender norms. This pattern is more appreciable in rural teens than their urban counterparts. These results cast light on the transition from second-wave feminism to third-wave feminism in understanding dating aggression in China.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel A

#### Session A3: Masculinities and Femininities in Chinese Societies

*Chair: KONG, S.K. Travis, The University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 10:00 – 11:20*

*Location: ELB 302*

*1. the institutionalised and alienated masculinities of African men in  
China.*

Miss Yiqiu Huang

The University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** This study takes a qualitative approach to explore how the masculinities of African men, especially those who are in romantic relationships with Chinese women, are influenced by the macro social policy power and how they navigate, negotiate, and cope with the changes, through an intersectional lens. By adopting the term masculinities, the article emphasises the ever-changing nature behind the concept. The adoption of an intersectional perspective highlights the power dynamics by accounting for the complex and interconnected ways in which multiple forms of oppression intersect to create unique experiences of discrimination and privilege. We question the formation and practice of masculinities, and the role national institutions play in shaping the image of migrants: African masculinities in China exist as a particular and unstable state of being, their masculinities are institutionalised and alienated through national policies and social opinions which reappear the unequal racial dynamics, structural oppositions, and powerful ideology of nationalism in a subtle way. It is an invisible violence created by institutional machines and exerted on individuals. Which legalized the hierarchy and forced individuals to live with it and bear with it in everyday life. Nonetheless, men individuals will change the power dynamics and narratives within their family domain and social groups, reshaping and reassuring their own masculine identities. Masculinities, therefore, is not a given fact but is constantly being constructed and changed according to societal factors. Keywords: masculinities, social policy, intersectionality, Sino-African

2. *“Bandits and thugs” VS “Emperors’ minions”*: Negotiating masculinity  
from imported to nationalist resources in contemporary China

Ms. Fuyun Wei

Zhejiang University

**Abstract:** ”With increasing nationalism, debates over niang pao (sissy boys and effeminate men) have once again swept and raged online since 2018, bringing Chinese manhood and nationhood back to the spotlight. Embracing the media coverage, a unified nationalist appeal, existing scholarship regards the recurrent disputes as a state-initiated up-down nationalist project. Through a review of both sides’ online community posts and activities and 33 in-depth interviews, the article examines the shifts and emerging patterns in discursive practices among the actual practitioners of the masculinity debates. In tension with the dominant way of seeing the whole debate, the article argues that nationalism should be interpreted as a macro background and an approachable ideological resource rather than as the overarching cause of the masculinity debates. With that, the article examines how men in the debates define, negotiate, and contest their manhood in imported and nationalist discourses. Keywords: sissyphobia, masculinity politics, nationalism, discursive practices, China”



3. *How are males and females portrayed differently across time? — A glimpse of the changing gender culture through movie posters*

Danyun XIAO, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Guangzhou)

Coauthor: Muzhi ZHOU

**Abstract:** This study explores the changing portrayal of males and females across twenty years, as manifested in movie posters of the top thirty box-office hits from two predominant cinematic markets, the United States and Japan. Drawing upon symbolic interactionism, framing theory, and gender stereotype theory, it analyzed how film posters, as powerful cultural artifacts, represent and perpetuate societal norms and expectations. Integrating visual content analysis and machine learning techniques, it delves into the nuanced disparities in male and female representations within these posters, as well as potential underpinnings of these distinctions. Key visual elements, such as color, layout, attire, and character design, and gender differences including body proportion and facial emotion are scrutinized using human coding and object detection algorithms. The analysis results revealed that females are significantly underrepresented on movie posters. Males are frequently depicted with expressions of anger and limited skin exposure, whereas females often have reduced facial visibility but more pronounced sexual characteristics. It investigated several movie-level indicators and noted that the gender of director, production country of origin and the genre of the movie, can explain the variation in chronological variations in gender portrayals. It also observed a clear contrast in sexual representations between Western and Eastern culture. Specifically, posters from the Japanese market more frequently conceal females' sexual characteristics, reflecting Eastern cultural tendencies. This work advances our understanding of the interplay of gender, visual images and movies in constructing public perceptions on social media and offers important insights into the cultural evolution of gender dynamics.

#### 4. *The Representation of Post-feminism on a Weibo Account, 'Qiaomai':*

##### *A Thematic Analysis*

Miss Yirou Chen

LSE

**Abstract:** China's declining birth and marriage rates signify a shift in contemporary social attitudes towards marriage. Thus, feminist KOLs like "Qiaomai", dedicated to assisting women in resolving relationship dilemmas, are becoming popular. However, her media representation mirrors China's complex and contradictory development of contemporary feminism. Influenced by post-feminism, she emphasizes the role of feminism in women's liberation, encourages women to focus on their feelings and self-empowerment while portraying it as a disconcerting theory and never directly challenge the unequal power dynamics within patriarchal systems. Her implicit malice toward single women suggests that she perceives the gender inequality issues they face may improve with the establishment of a family. All of these contents indicate her limited understanding of feminism, even inclining toward an anti-feminist stance. Yet, she does not entirely embrace Western post-feminism. Instead, she consistently engages with post-feminism cautiously and skeptically. For example, she seldom overemphasizes self-confidence as a solution to gender inequalities. These should be attributed to the promotion of Confucianism, increased censorship, and the commercialization of Weibo's algorithms have shaped her media image in the absence of Western feminist waves. Therefore, my research emphasizes that the critical point is not whether contemporary feminists in China truly internalize the logic of post-feminism but rather that they can only employ personal narratives as a form of resistance against patriarchal dominance. Overall, I unveil the intricate and nuanced interaction between "Qiaomai" and post-feminism, providing profound insights into the interplay among her media platform, China's socio-political landscape, and the complexities of feminist discourse.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel A

**Session A4: Technology and Intimate Lives in Hong Kong, Taipei, and**

**Beijing**

*Chairs: Hsiu-Hua Shen National Tsing-Hua University; Wang Xiying Beijing Normal University*

*Time: 10:00 – 11:20*

*Location: ELB 303*

1. *Love in the Age of social media: Young People's Views of Romance  
and Intimacy in Beijing, Taipei and Hong Kong*

Lynne Y. NAKANO

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Social media platforms have revolutionized the experience of dating and romance for young people around the world, creating new dangers and opportunities. This paper considers young people's views and experiences of intimacy and romance in three Chinese societies keeping in mind that most intimate and romantic experiences are facilitated in some way by social media platforms. Findings presented in this paper are based on focus groups that investigated undergraduate and graduate students' views of intimacy and romance and views of manners and ethics on social media platforms. The focus groups were conducted by research collaborators in Beijing, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Comparing the focus group results, we found that young people experienced parallel difficulties and ambiguities in navigating intimacy, manners and appropriate behaviors in the new spaces provided by social media. That said, in spite of the similar background of these three Chinese societies, we found that participants in the study differed in their views of romance and intimacy. Study participants in Beijing were skeptical of the assertion of links between love and marriage, study participants in Taiwan discussed the importance of the trial and error nature of love and romantic relationships, and participants in Hong Kong believed that sex, love and marriage would come together as a package later in life. The findings suggest that interpretations of intimacy and experiences of romantic relationships in the cyber era, including experiences of cyber dating abuse and sexual harassment, must be considered in cultural context.

*2. Dating and Love in the Digital Age: A Comparative Focus Group Study among University Students in Beijing, Taipei, and Hong Kong*

Wang Xiying

Beijing Normal University

**Abstract:** The fast-changing technology of the Internet and Cell phone make huge impacts on young people's daily lives. Internet, social media, and dating apps have become an important way both for single young people finding dating partners and for them to maintaining romantic relationships. Based on 24 focus group discussions with more than 100 college students in Beijing, Taipei, and Hong Kong, this study examines how college students in these three cities understand and interpret how technology has shaped their doing of intimate relationships. Young people reflect on the issues of speed, efficiency, convenience, privacy, distance, and safety of dating in the digital time. A time and space conceptual framework is used to analyses the gender difference of the meaning-giving process of technology, love and dating. This study shed lights on the cultural landscape of technology, love and dating in three major Chinese metropolitan cities.

3. *Gender, Sexuality, and Cyber Intimacy among University Students in Taipei, Beijing, and Hong Kong*

Hsiu-Hua Shen

National Tsing-Hua University

**Abstract:** Existing studies point out the importance of gender, sexuality, socio-economic-political factors in understanding people's experiences of cyber dating and related violence. Based on 24 focus group interviews with more than 100 college undergraduates and graduates in Hong Kong, Hsinchu, Taiwan, and Beijing, this paper explores how gender, sexuality, and other factors shape young people from these three cities perceive cyber dating and related violence. This paper finds that while deception, distrust, danger, and opportunity are most mentioned associations with cyber intimacy by young people of the study, their perceptions and experiences of those associations are shaped by intersections of their gender and sexual positions. Heterosexual women imagine and feel sexual violation and danger by perceiving and experiencing dating apps as tools for heterosexual men to gain accesses to quick and easy sex. Gay men's associations with cyber dating are also highly sexualized; dating apps have become the most popular tools for gay men's sexual cruising and communicative technology has fundamentally restructured local gay communities. Against myth that heterosexual men might feel rather secure about cyber dating, many heterosexual young men of the study emphasize possible deceptions from online profiles and behaviors. What it is interesting is the relative invisibility of gay women's perceptions and experiences of the relationships between sex and cyber dating. This study brings attention to how cyber dating is a gendered and sexualized space in some Asian contexts and see similarities and differences across locations due to socio-economic and political variations.

4. *Abuse or Myths of Justice and Love? A Sociology of Relation  
Framework to Understand Young People's Understanding of Cyber  
Dating Abuse in Hong Kong, Beijing and Taipei*

Susanne YP Choi; Tangi Yip

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Advances in technology have provided new venues for young people to develop and consolidate romantic relationships, but the venues also create nascent risks including cyber dating abuse (CDA). This is defined as the use of technology to harass, bully, stalk, or intimidate a current or former dating/romantic partner. The emergent literature on CDA is mostly Western based, leaving culturally specific relational contexts unexamined. Most literature (?) is quantitative, e.g. and uses questionnaires with pre-given definitions and categories of CDA to elicit individual responses. While providing useful information on the prevalence of some abusive behaviors, quantitative research has left the fundamental questions of how individuals understand, perceive, and interpret CDA unexamined. Drawing on the sociology of relation, this paper employs a culturally sensitive relational framework and adopts the method of focus groups (26 groups) with university students (118 students) in three Chinese cities. It shows that young people generally have limited knowledge of CAD and they disagree about what constitutes an abusive online/technology-related behavior in a relationship. Study participants conceive of abusive behaviors as a means to obtain justice, a necessary evil to achieve public good, or an expression of love and care. This is because young people situate abusive behaviors within relationship attributes, including its stage and the prospects of forming and developing intimate relationships; culturally specific expectations of obligations and rights in dating and romantic relationships; and the blurred boundaries of public and the private in the virtual world. We discuss the implications of these findings for further CDA research and propose a model of relational empowerment to intervene in and prevent such abuse.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel A

#### Session A5: Social Network and Health Inequalities

*Chair: TEERAWICHICHAINAN; Bussarawan Puk, National University of Singapore*

*Time: 10:00 – 11:20*

*Location: ELB 306*



1. *The Influence of Social Networks on Individual Health: Exploring the Role of Relationship Intimacy and Social Hierarchy in Hong Kong*

Miss Chuchu Zhang

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** How do the people you know impact your own health? Prior studies have demonstrated that social networks can exert both positive and negative effects on an individual's health. On the one hand, associations with individuals occupying privileged positions within the social hierarchy can be seen as a form of social capital, providing material resources, information, and support that can enhance an individual's health. Conversely, social relationships also create reference groups that foster social comparisons, potentially detrimentally affecting an individual's health. Meanwhile, social network members are not uniformly related to individuals. Social relationships with different degrees of intimacy may have different meanings and functions for individuals. This study argues that the influence of social networks on health outcomes is contingent upon the degree of intimacy shared with network members. Using representative data from Hong Kong, where social ties hold significant importance, this study investigates the relationship between individual health, the social status of network members, and the closeness of their relationships systematically. The findings suggest that, concerning self-rated health, a higher reachability of extended kinship networks proves advantageous. However, in terms of mental health, associations with privileged friends and acquaintances exhibit a negative impact on health. This implies that social networks with different levels of intimacy function drastically distinct in shaping health outcomes. By unraveling the diverse meanings and functions of different types of social ties, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between social networks and individual health.

*2. Retirement Transition and Depression in China: A Gendered Life  
Course Perspective*

Mr. JIANG NIANTAO

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** There have been plenty of researches examining the effect of retirement on people's level of depression in the fields of sociology, psychology, and public health. However, the findings from those studies are mixed and sometimes even contradictory to each other. What are the reasons for such a phenomenon? In addition to the general issues such as differences in the study population, measurements of mental health, the omission of gender perspective and temporal dimension are the two major theoretical reasons for the current status of this topic. In this study, using a national representative longitudinal data from CHARLS with suitable measurements, I specifically tested those two issues with fixed-effects regression models on the full sample, male sample and female sample separately. The analysis results show that while the effect of retirement on the level of depression for the full sample is not significant, its impact on male and female are different: a significant negative impact on male retirees' level of depression was presented but not for females. Furthermore, when the temporal dimension was added by breaking down the time period after the retirement into short-, medium-, and long-term, the results indicate that retirement did not significantly impact male retirees' level of depression in the short-term after retirement, but have a significant negative effect in the two to three years after retirement, and yet this effect become insignificant again in the long-term. I discussed the theoretical contribution and practical impact of the study results in the end.

3. *Depressing Expectation: Parental Educational Expectation and  
Adolescents' Mental Health in China*

Mengke Zhao, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Coauthors: Jason Wong; Yuying Tong

**Abstract:** According to a national survey in 2020, around 25 percent of Chinese adolescents reported depressive symptoms and 7.4 percent suffer from severe depression, making it a pressing issue to discuss. High parental expectation has been claimed as one of the major challenges confronting Chinese adolescents' well-being. However, few have empirically studied their relationships. Parental educational expectations show a unique SES pattern and social outcomes that are derived from the distinct Chinese socio-cultural background, which implies its distinguished effects on children's development. Therefore, this paper aims to advance our knowledge of the social determinants of, and inequality in adolescent depression by examining the role of parental expectation. With a two-wave panel dataset, this paper explores the causal relationship between parental educational expectations and adolescents' mental health in China, as well as its heterogeneities and mechanisms. Results show that: (1) The causal relationship between parental expectation and adolescents' depression is positive, i.e., in China, high parental expectation is a risky factor for adolescents' mental health. (2) The negative effect of parental expectation is pronounced among the low SES group, but not statistically significant among the high SES group. (3) Pressure from expectation, study workload, and sleep quality are three potential mediators linking parental expectation and adolescent depression.

#### *4. Exclusion from Market or Redistribution? Mismatch between Housing and Socioeconomic Status among Migrants*

MA, Xiulian, Chinese Academy of Governance

HAN, Junshi, University of Maryland

**Abstract:** Empirical analysis based on CHFS 2017 data found that urban migrants are more advantageous than urban natives in terms of income, family wealth, education level and other aspects, but their housing has always been in a weaker position, resulting in an inversed housing-socioeconomic status mismatch. Further analysis shows that the mismatch is not resulted from market exclusion, as is commonly believed. For the 3.5 m<sup>2</sup> gap in housing area, the Hukou-based redistribution contributed at least a 70 percent shortfall. In-kind support from family contributed another 25 percent of the shortfall. The higher personal income and family wealth of urban migrants, after having offset the impact of high housing prices faced by later movers, even compensated for the shortfall of about 0.33 m<sup>2</sup>. Another 0.45 m<sup>2</sup> shortfall is attributed to other factors unexplained. The results show that although institutional exclusion in the labor market has been eradicated to a large extent, it is still widespread in the area of welfare security provision. **Keywords**Housing stratification; Immigration advantage; Housing exclusion; Redistribution; Inter-generational family transmission

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel A

#### Session A6: Family and Education under Transition in Chinese Societies

*Chair: SIU, Kaxton, Hong Kong Baptist University*

*Time: 10:00 – 11:20*

*Location: ELB 307*

1. *Political Influence and Fertility Intentions: A Survey Experiment  
Study in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore*

Adam Cheung, Hong Kong Baptist University

Coauthors: Zheng Mu, Lake Lui

**Abstract:** The decline in fertility is a pressing issue for most advanced economies. Previous studies on fertility have not paid enough attention to politics, and there is a lack of understanding of how political regimes and attitudes affect fertility decisions. This study investigates the role of people's political influence on the government on their fertility intentions in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore – three advanced economies with different political regimes. We also uncover how such a relationship varies depending on people's political attitudes. This study gathered data from three online surveys with a factorial experiment design in Hong Kong (N=1911), Taiwan (N=1983), and Singapore (N=1995). The results of random-intercept regression analyses show that the impact of political influence varies depending on the context. The results indicate that political influence positively impacts fertility intentions in Hong Kong and Taiwan, where there are active political movements, especially among those who support democratic values. In Singapore, where there is a lack of active political movements, political influence has a lesser impact on fertility intentions. In modern societies with advanced economies and influential political voices from civil society, promoting citizens' involvement in policymaking may be a beneficial strategy to increase fertility rates.

*2. Sociological Reflections on the Role of Vocational/Professional  
Training in Hong Kong's Expanded Higher Education System*

Anita Ko

Hong Kong Baptist University

**Abstract:** Newly available educational opportunities brought by the massification of higher education are expected to be available to all social groups, allowing students from diverse background to improve their occupational outcomes and achieve upward social mobility. Unfortunately, increasing number of stratification and mobility studies show that an expansion of education system does not necessarily narrow the social inequalities in educational and occupational attainment. Youths from higher socio-economic background are found to continuously secure better and more valuable qualifications in an expanded sector of higher education. Rather than examining the mechanisms of social exclusion in the increasingly stratified higher education sector, this paper focuses on the new mobility opportunities brought by the diversified tertiary curricula in the expanded system. Using the accredited nursing programs as a case example, this paper critically investigates the role of professional/vocational programs in the massified higher education sector in Hong Kong. Having less restrictive admission requirements but with high market value, these programs provide young students with a professional credential that leads them to a stable well-paid job in the increasingly competitive and precarious labour market. The investigation seeks to understand what change and how change can come about in an expanded higher education sector.

3. *Leaving the feathered nest? The home-leaving trajectories of young people in China*

Jin Jiang; Chunni Zhang

Hong Kong Baptist University; Peking University

**Abstract:** Most studies of the transition between home and living independently focus on the stay–leave dichotomy. However, young individuals’ transition to independent living has increasingly become a prolonged, reversible, and complex process, and it often coincides with other significant life events. Utilising nationally representative longitudinal data from China, this study applies sequence analysis to identify the various home-leaving trajectories of young people (aged 16 to 22). We also assess the association between these trajectories and the school-to-work transition, the transition to parenthood, and factors related to cultural norms and modern values. The findings reveal that young people’s home-leaving trajectories vary in terms of pace and pathways, leading to various residential arrangements. The challenging life circumstances of many young people trigger the ‘feathered nest’ effect of parental homes and contribute to the dynamics of staying, leaving, and returning to these homes. The results also support traditional cultural norms regarding the high prevalence of young males in intergenerational co-residence, but they do not align with the modernisation perspective. Leaving the parental home entails various trajectories that are interconnected with the school-to-work transition and the transition to parenthood. This study highlights the importance of investigating the interconnectedness of young people’s life course trajectories and intergenerational links.



4. *Family/Work Dynamic and Migration: Returned Migrants and Working Mothers in China's Inland Provinces*

Kaxton Siu

Hong Kong Baptist University

**Abstract:** Over the years, a significant number of migrant workers from rural areas have been employed in coastal regions of China. Many of these workers have established families near their workplaces, yet they often lack access to urban social welfare benefits, particularly in terms of their children's education. Consequently, these families resort to a split-household arrangement, where mothers accompany their children back to their rural hometowns to ensure access to education. This paper draws on a decade of on-site interviews conducted until August 2023 to examine the evolving circumstances, migration patterns, and family dynamics of these migrant families. Specifically, the study focuses on the strategies employed by mothers in migrant families to strike a balance between caregiving responsibilities for their children and engaging in local production within manufacturing factories in rural towns to provide financial support for their families. The central argument put forth in this paper is that the economic participation of female migrant workers and the migration trajectory of their families are intricately linked not only to different stages of the family life cycle but also to job opportunities offered by the local labor market. This is particularly relevant as an increasing number of foreign-owned factories have been established in rural areas due to rising labor costs in coastal China.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel A

#### Session A7: Educational Inequalities in Asia

*Chair: WANG, Jia, Hong Kong Polytechnic University*

*Time: 10:00 – 11:20*

*Location: ELB 403*

*1. Unequal Adolescence: How Do Achievement, Depression, and Their Relationship Differ between Disadvantaged and Advantaged Students?*

Dr. Wensong Shen

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** How do family backgrounds – particularly family socioeconomic status (SES) and residential status (urban/rural) – affect students’ educational achievement and depression? This study investigates three main questions. First, is the gap between disadvantaged and advantaged students (measured by unit-free standard deviations) larger in educational achievement or in depression? Second, is the relationship between educational achievement and depression the same for disadvantaged and advantaged students, in terms of both direction and magnitude? Third, are the effect pathways linking educational achievement to depression through three key mechanisms – pressure from parents’ expectations, teachers’ criticism, and peers’ unfriendliness – the same for disadvantaged and advantaged students? To answer these three questions, I employ structural equation modeling to analyze two waves of data from the China Educational Panel Survey (2013-2014 and 2014-2015). Results show that the inequality in educational achievement is larger than the inequality in depression. While it seems the negative relationship between educational achievement and depression could vary across family background, such evidence is too weak to be statistically significant. Finally, the three effect pathways linking educational achievement to depression – peers’ unfriendliness, teachers’ criticism, and pressure from parents – all hold for advantaged and disadvantaged students. But overall, the effect pathways tend to be stronger among advantaged than among disadvantaged students. Such results illuminate whether there are differences across family contexts in the degree to which the pursuit of educational achievement is linked to subsequent depression and how that link is established.

*2. Imagining the future under neoliberal education reform in Kazakhstan:  
The perspectives of students in two public schools*

Dr. Shynar Baimaganbetova, The Education University of Hong Kong

Coauthors: Dr Kit Wa Anita Chan (EdUHK) and Dr Wai Kwan Gail Yuen (EdUHK)

**Abstract:** The rise of neoliberal governance has reinforced the instrumental approach to education across advanced and emerging states. Within post-Soviet Kazakhstan, youth functions as human capital essential for transitioning from a resource-based to a knowledge-based economy and joining the ranks of developed nations by 2050. To meet this objective, the government initiated a series of far-reaching education reforms. Drawing on interviews and classroom observations involving 30 high school students in two public schools, this paper examines the impact of the recent secondary education reform on students' daily experiences and future perspectives. Instead of delivering relevant knowledge, learner-centered pedagogies, and objective evaluation promising the state a better economic future, the education reform in post-Soviet Kazakhstan led to overloaded curricula, disengaging instruction, and stress-inducing assessment that caused widespread student cheating. While the schools instilled core neoliberal dispositions in students, preparing them to navigate perpetual uncertainty and change, they also acted as sites where the participants questioned the status quo and proposed alternative visions of schooling. Rather than producing a compliant workforce, the Kazakhstani education reform inadvertently cultivated a young generation capable of resisting the dominant neoliberal paradigm. In sum, the paper uncovers the complexities of reform implementation at the periphery of globalization where economic directives of the state conflict with student counter-imaginaries.

*3. Overstretched and thinly spread: on multitasking, time management  
and productivity in Hong Kong higher education*

Dr. Iulia Gheorghiu, Hong Kong Baptist University

**Abstract:** The accelerated pace of academic work has attracted a wealth of scholarship on the increasing and competing demands of labor in higher education, revolving around research, teaching, pastoral care and service responsibilities of both tenured and contingent faculty elsewhere. There is little literature documenting this phenomenon in Hong Kong, where academic positions are globally competitive, relatively scarce, volatile and subject to the whims of the global academic labor market. In this paper, I examine multitasking in academic work and tap into Alfred Schutz's concept of multiple realities, finite provinces of meaning, and paramount reality to make sense of the leaps in tension and attention required from ideal, productive academic workers as they transition between their various tasks. I analyze work in higher education institutions as a finite province of meaning and examine its different tasks as requiring a leap in attention to life, each needing its own headspace and impacting workers' productivity. I rely on in-depth, biographical interviews with thirty real, non-tenured workers in Hong Kong higher education, in teaching and academic positions, both on and off the tenure track, from UGC and non-UGC institutions. The interviews explored broader issues of working conditions, sources of pressure, as well as challenges and rewards of working in Hong Kong higher education. However, in this paper, I center accounts of time management, work-life balance and finding headspace for interviewees' major tasks amid daily intrusions, interruptions and unpredictable requests.

4. *Class-based, Self-investment, Disposability: A Grounded Theory Study  
on the Outcomes of Gaokao Migration in Tianjin*

CHENG, Weiru, Nanyang Technological University

WANG, Yi, Beijing Normal University - Hong Kong Baptist University United International College

**Abstract:** Gaokao Migration has become one of the most severe social phenomena in mainland China, attributed to educational inequality and uneven population distribution. Existing research has primarily focused on the macro-level, addressing the societal structural contradictions and inequalities arising from Gaokao Migrations. However, there is a lack of micro-level research with evidence-based support. This study employs grounded theory to analyze the motivations, processes, and outcomes of Gaokao migrants in Tianjin, one of the mainland's most prominent provinces facing this issue. Through in-depth interviews, this paper conducts three core explanatory categories: class-based, self-investment and disposability. It argues that, unlike existing studies that depict Gaokao Migrants as victims of structural inequality and oppression, they are both stakeholders in their individual subjectivities and contributors to the reproduction of this unequal structure. They do not exhibit a propensity for permanent migration, nor do they plan to integrate into the new local society. Instead, they view Gaokao Migration as a temporary educational investment. After the College Entrance Exam, they return to their home provinces. However, their social and economic capital has been transformed into cultural capital, reproducing new inequalities in educational resources within their home provinces. This study attempts to reveal how the private capital of Gaokao Migrants is creating new educational inequalities inside the social fabric, which can serve as a conduit between the social structural inequality and individual subjectivity.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel A

#### Session A8: Institutions, Environments, and Public Health

*Chair: JIN, Lei, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 10:00 – 11:20*

*Location: ELB 405*

1. *The impact of modernisation on the living arrangements of older adults: An analysis of the Chinese General Social Survey*

Miss Linghan Ge

The University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** As China undergoes modernisation and its population continues to age, the living arrangements of older adults have undergone significant changes, with empty nesting becoming a prominent trend. This paper employs the modernisation theory of family to examine whether the improvement of modernisation will increase the probability of Chinese older adults being empty nesters. Using cross-sectional data from the Chinese General Social Survey and the China Statistical Yearbook spanning from 2012 to 2021, this study utilizes principal component analysis, multi-level logistic regression, stepwise regression, and multi-level mediation effect analysis to examine and explore the impact of modernisation on the living arrangements of older adults and its underlying mechanisms. Modernisation was measured by provincial urbanization ratio, hygienic condition, educational status, and economic situation, and empty nesting was denoted by empty-nesters and non-empty-nesters. The findings demonstrate that modernisation has a substantial impact on the living arrangements of older adults in China, with each unit increase in modernity leading to a 32.58 percent increase in the odds of an older adult being an empty nester. Additionally, the study identifies significant mediating effects of educational attainment and income for older adults, accounting for 4 percent and 30 percent of the overall mediating effect, respectively. Furthermore, family income plays a significant suppressing effect, explaining 32 percent of the overall effect.



2. *Unraveling the Spillover Effect of Institutionalizing Childcare on  
Intergenerational Bonds: Evidence from China*

TIAN, Zerui

University of Oxford

**Abstract:** In China, there has recently been both a promotion of Early Childhood Education and Care at the national level and a rapidly aging population. However, few studies have explored the linkage between elderly care and child care, as well as the impact of preschool expansion on intergenerational dynamics. This study utilizes a difference-in-differences approach to understand the causal impact of the recent preschool expansion policy in China on time transfers between grandparents and parents. By exploiting cross-family variations in policy exposure, this paper finds that delegating child care to preschools decreases the time transfer from parents to grandparents but not the other way around. In subgroup analyses, the decrease only exists for grandmothers but not grandfathers. The results support the family solidarity hypothesis and indicate diminishing intergenerational ties due to the institutionalization of child care.

3. *How Informal Institution Shapes the Chinese Older Adults' Health:  
Evidence and Mechanism*

Mr. Weijian Lao

Southwestern University of Finance and Economics

**Abstract:** Against the backdrop of an aging population, multimorbidity, such as chronic diseases and poor mental health, is more common among older adults and has attracted increasing attention worldwide, especially in low- and middle-income countries. While a growing number of literature has emphasized the roles of family or community, as well as formal institution guarantees, such as social security and nursing home care, on physical and mental health status among the elderly, relatively fewer efforts have been made to explore the role of the informal institution through which could shape the older adults' health outcomes. In this paper, we use a nationally representative Chinese household survey (CFPS) in China to examine informal institution effects, as measured by clan culture, on older adults' health. Our findings show that clan culture significantly and positively affects multiple dimensions of mental health but has no impact on physical health among the Chinese elderly. By exploring the potential mechanisms through which clan culture plays roles, we provide evidence that clan culture could not only widen elderly social networks but also increase the likelihood of participating in social activities, which mainly benefits the mental health of the elderly. Understanding these cultural effects on older adults' health sheds light on the importance of informal social institutions on health and highlights an alternative protective mechanism through which will potentially mitigate the urban-rural health disparities in various mental health dimensions among the elderly in the Chinese context.

4. *Unraveling the Interplay between Built Environments, Daily Physical Activity Patterns and Obesity: A Comparative Study in Urban and Suburban Contexts*

ZOU, Yuxuan

Hong Kong Baptist University

**Abstract:** Recent studies have found that the relationship between built environments on obesity varies across different levels of urbanicity. Physical activity (PA) is thought to be an important explanatory factor in the varied relationship, which remains scarcely explored. Meanwhile, limited research has explored the reverse causation of obesity which considers weight status as a predictor of PA. To fill in the research gaps, this study bridges built environments, daily PA patterns, and people's weight status differentiating urban and suburban contexts, using data from a household survey collected in Shanghai. The duration of four types of PA embedded in residents' daily activities has been examined. The findings indicate that there are significant differences between urban and suburban residents' daily PA patterns, with urban residents having higher levels of PA duration overall. Active transport and leisure PA were identified as protective PAs against obesity for urban residents, while semi-active transport and household PA were identified for suburban residents. Built environments exhibit varied effects on PA across urban and suburban areas. For instance, higher park density is positively associated with longer weekend leisure PA duration in urban areas while this effect is not significant in suburban areas; higher density of public transit stops is found to significantly increase the weekday semi-active transport PA in suburban areas but not in urban areas. Thus, policies aiming to promote healthy weight management and active lifestyles should consider the role of PA patterns, and design locality-specific interventions in urban and suburban areas.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel B

#### **Session B1: Social Stratification in Contemporary China: Evolving Perspectives on Gender, Family and Attitudes**

*Chair: KOO, Anita, Hong Kong Baptist University*

*Time: 11:25-12:45*

*Location: ELB 206*

*1. More or less? Imbalanced sex ratios and returns to education*

Chongjiu Zhang

Beijing Normal University

**Abstract:** Male-skewed sex ratio imbalance (the ratio of males to females in a local population) is well-known for its significant socioeconomic consequences for both individuals and society as a whole. I investigate the variation in the economic returns to education within a population experiencing this imbalance. I employ an extended Mincerian approach, utilizing data from China's 2005 1 percent Population Survey. I provide empirical evidence at both the aggregate and individual levels. I find that people born or residing in high-sex-ratio regions experience lower returns to education compared to those in low-sex-ratio regions. This indicates that educational income gaps are smaller in regions with high sex ratios. I explore the diverse effects of this imbalance based on gender and educational levels. I find that among women in high-sex-ratio populations, those with middle school or high school education suffer the most significant income losses. Women with a bachelor's degree or higher do not experience substantial income declines in such environments – but they represent only a small portion of the population. On the other hand, for men residing in high-sex-ratio regions, the higher their educational level, the greater their income loss. Men with the least education actually have higher incomes in high-sex-ratio environments compared to their counterparts in low-sex-ratio areas. This may be attributed to the increased pressure they face regarding marriage squeeze and the need to improve their income and competitiveness. These findings hold important implications for understanding gender, education, and income inequality under male-skewed sex ratio imbalances.

*2. Family Structure and the Intergenerational Social Closure in  
Transition: How the “Separated-but-not-broken” Families Shape the  
Persistence of Inequality Across Generations in China*

WU, Fei; WANG, Peng

Fudan University

**Abstract:** Research Question: As one of the core axes of social stratification, family structure has been widely confirmed to lead to “diverging destinies for children” (McLanahan and Percheski, 2008; Raymo et al., 2023) and shapes intergenerational social mobility (Boertien and Bernardi, 2022; Biblarz et al., 1997; Biblarz and Raftery, 1993; Bloome, 2014, 2017; Martin, 2012). Research in Western societies have shown that intergenerational inheritance in broken families is lower, mainly because children in these families are more likely to experience downward mobility (Bloome, 2017). China has experienced significant changes in both intergenerational mobility and family structure over the past decades. Scholars have found that intergenerational mobility declined for those born after the 1980s (Xie et al., 2022), attributing this trend to macro-structural factors such as industrialization, urbanization, and educational expansion. Notably, during the same period, due to large-scale rural-urban migration (Liang, 2016), many “separated-but-not-broken” families emerged, profoundly altering the traditional family structure. Does this change in family structure relate to the decline in intergenerational mobility among the recent generation? This paper intends to examine the impact of parent-child separation on the shaping of intergenerational occupational closure and compare the differences in this effect before and after the 1980s generation. Research Design: Using the unique retrospective information of family structure from the CFPS 2010 baseline data, combined with the occupational information of the younger generation from the five follow-up rounds from 2012 to 2020, we formed a unique dataset that simultaneously includes childhood family structure, parental occupational status (origin), and children’s occupational status (destination), spanning multiple generations. After matching and case-wise deletions, our analysis sample is 14,149. To avoid the impact of the remarkable transformation of the occupational structure across generations and cohorts on the measurement of intergenerational occupational closure, we used a new method, LACOP, to analyze intergenerational social closure across family structures. This method transforms the categorized occupations of parents and children into latent ordinal percentile ranks and utilizes Copula to obtain dependence coefficients unaffected by marginal distributions. Main Findings: Our analysis yielded the following main findings: (1) intergenerational social closure is higher in families experiencing parent-child separation compared to intact families; (2) the differences across family structure vary across cohorts: it is wider before the 1980s but shrinks to insignificant after that; (3) the conclusion mentioned above remains consistent when using either occupation or education to measure social status.

*3. Middle class's political attitudes in China from 2012 to 2021: The changing trend, structure and mechanism behind*

Peiwei GU

City University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** As the benchmark of a stable society, middle class's attitudes has huge influence on social stabilization, and the changing modes of their political attitudes largely decide the future trend of socio-political environment. However, the unsettled definition of China's middle class and ambiguous political statement blurred nowadays research in middle class political attitudes. In this research, I mainly focus on the profile, the changing trend and the mechanism behind of Chinese middle class's political attitudes from 2012 to 2021 in China. Based on the representative national-wide data Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS) from 2012 to 2021, this research found that Chinese middle class has yet formatted a solid political profile but living with heterogeneity on different political items. In the perspective of social class, the core middle class has become more liberalism in social structural level, but has become more conservative among individual level and ideology level. It is not surprising to witness that younger cohort was more liberalism than the older cohort over the decade. In the perspective of cohort, the changing trend is more caused by the changes for the same cohort across years rather than the cohort replacement effect. Evidence further showed that the positive effect of middle class on liberalism decreased, and the cohort effect on liberalism become significant from 2012 to 2021. This research revealed that the political profile for Chinese middle class has yet formed a unified value but has grown with continuously changing according to their class position and birth cohort.

4. *Equalizer or Reproducer: How Does Higher Education Shift Meritocratic Beliefs of Students from Different Social Class?*

TANG, Minghao, East China Normal University

Coauthor: LI, Angran

**Abstract:** Studies of social stratification and educational sociology have paid particular attention to the debate whether college is a field of “education-based meritocracy”. Rarely, however, does existing literature attend to the changes in college students’ attitude and perception toward meritocracy beyond these experiences hitherto. We conceptualize two prototypes, the equalizer or reproducer, to predict the changing pattern of students from different family background over college-year. Utilizing a four-year-based panel data on undergraduates in China, this study employs growth curve modeling to reveal how college shifts students’ meritocratic beliefs over time. We find that 1) though postsecondary institutions purport to be meritocratic and propagate relevant ideology, results show that college students’ meritocratic beliefs on average deteriorate across four-year collegiate life. 2) Higher education reconfigures the association between social class and individual attitudes towards meritocracy. Despite the elevated conviction of meritocracy, socially-disadvantaged undergraduates become dramatically skeptical about meritocratic principle for their suffering both academically and psychologically on campus. Upon graduation, inner attachment to meritocracy from lower class turns out to align with affluent counterparts. In conclusion, college seems to play as a “great equalizer” because it narrows and erases the students’ SES gap on meritocratic beliefs, but actually our evidence indicates the “reproducer” role of higher education in quality. These findings contribute to discussions over how higher education might serve the purpose of social reproduction by eliminating the advantage of lower class.



## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel B

#### Session B2: Law and Society

*Chair: SUN, Jin, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 11:25-12:45*

*Location: ELB 207*

1. *Cultural Conflict in Enforcing Globalized Laws: Domestic Violence  
Protection Orders in Two Chinese Courts*

Prof. Xin He

The University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Through examining the implementation of domestic violence protection orders in two lower-level Chinese courts, I argue that cultural conflict over the conception of marriage is part of the answer in the law's varied effectiveness. In a court situated in an urbanized coastal area, the judges subscribe to a conception of marriage defined on international norms. They believe that marriage is the companionship of two equal souls and that it shall be dissolved when one party cannot tolerate the other. They thus lower evidential threshold for issuing protection orders, facilitate the application process, and even offer advice to victims on ending their marriage. In contrast, in a rural court, the judges believe that marriage is enduring, especially when prohibitive bride prices are involved. Many forms of domestic violence are tolerated; applications for protection orders are dissuaded. This article suggests that the decision-making of Chinese judges is culturally embedded. International norms have remarkable capacity to bring about social change, but they are also limited when contested and resisted by patrilineal and patriarchal cultures. It demonstrates that cultural concerns can have direct impacts on judicial behavior and globalized laws' effectiveness.

2. *Channeled Legal Mobilization: Married-Out Women's Resistance  
Against Land Rights Inequality in Rural China*

Prof. Huina Xiao; Peter Chan

Macau University of Science and Technology; City University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** This article studies the opportunities, strategies, processes, and outcome of Married-Out Women (MOW)'s legal mobilization in defending their land rights in rural China. Drawing on in-depth anthropological interviews with MOW and women's rights activists, this article argues that China has gradually channeled MOW claims from extra-judicial institutions to courts. MOW disputes, which used to be primarily administrative cases, are now mainly channeled to the civil divisions of courts. While rural women had access to judicial processes, the courts lengthened MOW's disputes by channeling their claims from the first instance to appellate procedure to retrial proceeding, as well as shopped flexible and ambiguous laws to make contextualized decisions (which in many instances did not favor rural women) when faced with institutional pressure from within and outside of the court. The term "channeled legal mobilization" is coined to describe this process. We found that access to justice did not significantly enhance women's rights protection in this area, nor did it improve gender equality. Instead, MOW suffered from protracted lawsuits and undesirable outcome in most cases. An unfavorable litigation outcome further blocked other extra-judicial avenues for redress, reinforced a gendered culture in the dispute resolution process, and imposed new repression on women. This study provides a new perspective on social control under the Chinese party-state and its impact on legal mobilization in authoritarian regimes.

*3. An Unlikely Duet: Public-Private Interaction in China's  
Environmental Public Interest Litigation*

Prof. Ying Xia; Wang, Yueduan

The University of Hong Kong; Peking University

**Abstract:** Increasing research has been devoted to examining collaborations between public and private actors in environmental regulation under neoliberal democracies. However, this public-private interaction in authoritarian regimes remains understudied. This article seeks to address this gap in the literature through an empirical examination of the interaction between environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and procuratorates in China's environmental public interest litigation. We find emerging complementarity: NGOs focus on new issues and target high-profile defendants to increase the socio-legal impact of their civil litigation, whereas procuratorates increasingly engage in administrative litigation against government agencies. This complementarity is shaped by the different legal opportunities for Chinese NGOs and procuratorates, as well as their respective institutional objectives and capacities. Their divergent regulatory preferences have also fostered synergy between these two actors, allowing them to collaborate on legal experimentation and innovation.

#### *4. Fragmented Vernacularization and LGBT Legal Consciousness in China*

Prof. Jin Sun

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** This article documents the LGBT rights movements in China, which intentionally avoided unified confrontational collective contestation in seeking equality of human rights. Based on 355 LGBT civil lawsuits in Chinese courts, leading LGBT NGOs and key movements since 1988, and 24 in-depth interviews with NGOs, lawyers, and experts, it reveals how Chinese LGBT rights movements witnessed a remarkable vernacularization of legal mobilization, for instance, mobilizing 160,000 LGBT for same-sex marriage rights in 2018-2020. In confronting authoritarian violent repression, different LGBT sub-groups adopt fragmented vernacular strategies in relational legal consciousness to counter the hegemony of authoritarian legality. These strategies include: (1) NGOs translating global norms to LGBT citizenship in compliance with repressive requirements; (2) the gay community undergoing transformation to performative consciousness from deceptive consciousness once under hegemonic patriarchal orders; and (3) the lesbian community transforming from hegemonic to substantive and insurgent constitutional consciousness. Despite repeated failures and frustrations, fragmented vernacularization becomes a pragmatic resort to advance equal rights. These cases reveal the mechanisms of rights movements and legal consciousness in a society, in which vernacular mobilization operates in a vibrant and lawful manner to advance rights and mobilize law and order.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel B

#### Session B3: LGBTQ Lives in Different Contexts

*Chair: SUEN, Yiu Tung, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 11:25-12:45*

*Location: ELB 302*

1. *The Voice of Parents in Coming Out: A Case Study in Hong Kong*

Dr. Travis S.K. Kong

The University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** There is a well-established literature on LGBTQ coming-out-to-the-family stories but such stories are usually told by LGBTQ themselves rather than by their family members. Based on in-depth interviews with gay sons (n = 15) and their parents (n = 20) conducted during the 2021-2022 period, this paper offers one of the first sociological accounts of coming out in Hong Kong that presents the narratives of both gay sons and their parents after the former come out to the latter. Situated in the "doing family" and life course literature, the paper examines the changing dynamics of family relationships across two generations under the socio-historical transformations in Hong Kong society. The findings reveal that heteronormative family life is challenged, although both gay sons and their parents work hard to accomplish a "correct" version of sexual normativity. Sons' disclosure also shifts the burden of the closet to parents, especially mothers, on whom that burden often takes an emotional toll. The paper concludes that coming out is a contested site of negotiation over the meaning of masculinity, parenthood, and homosexuality, as well as a key family practice that changes the moral and emotional economies of families, eventually leading to the formation of new family forms. By bringing the voice of family members into the discussion, the paper positions coming out as a decidedly relational rather than individual act in the Chinese context, making a substantive contribution to both the coming out literature and queer Asian studies.

*2. Navigating an Unfamiliar Terrain: Reflections on Feminist Research  
Methodology in the Study of Filipino Deaf Gay Men*

CELEBRADO, Jan Erron

Lingnan University

**Abstract:** This paper aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on feminist research methodology by providing a comprehensive account of my experiences as a graduate student when I studied the lived realities of Filipino Deaf gay men employed in the private sector. I document and examine how the study was carried out during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and detail the measures I implemented to mitigate the challenges encountered at all stages of the data collection process. Specifically, this paper delves into the practical and ethical issues I faced in (1) recruiting participants, (2) providing reasonable accommodation, (3) establishing rapport, (4) obtaining informed consent, (5) conducting feminist in-depth interviews, (6) practicing duty of care, and (7) implementing measures for data analysis and validation. By explicitly writing my experiences, I seek to offer practical insights to future researchers interested in investigating the lived experiences of Deaf gay men in the Philippines and contribute to the ongoing discussions on feminist research methodology in both pandemic and post-pandemic eras.



*3. Networked Lesbian Communities in Authoritarian China: An Affordance Analysis of Xiaohongshu's Role among Queer Women*

Miss Xinyun Zhang

Renmin University of China

**Abstract:** Set against the backdrop of China's restrictive socio-political environment, this study seeks to comprehend the dynamics through which social media platforms like Xiaohongshu empower or limit the formation and sustenance of lesbian communities. Described as the "Chinese Instagram," Xiaohongshu boasts an expansive user base surpassing 300 million, with females constituting nearly 70 percent. Within this digital milieu, the study critically examines Xiaohongshu's affordances, particularly in articulating queer discourse and building an online community. Drawing on data from digital ethnography complemented by offline interviews, the research identifies four pivotal affordances that shape the platform's utility for its lesbian users: communal connectivity, algorithmic visibility, public interactivity, and emotional resonance. These affordances, while presenting opportunities for visibility and connectivity, are concurrently fraught with challenges stemming from the broader ambit of digital surveillance and state censorship endemic to China's digital space. The intricate dialectic of opportunity and constraint underscores the pressing need to situate and interrogate digital platforms like Xiaohongshu within the complex fabric of China's socio-political context. This study contributes to the evolving discourse on digital platforms' dual role as enablers and inhibitors in the representation and advocacy of queer identities, especially in restrictive political climates.

4. *The Development and Transformation of Marginalized Tongzhi Group  
and Their Tongzhi Spaces: A Field Work in Wuhan, China*

Mr. Hao Zheng

Wuhan University

**Abstract:** Research on male Tongzhi Group in mainland China typically focuses on young urban middle-class individuals, while the experiences of Marginalized Tongzhi Group, representing elderly people and low-income individuals, are less explored. Their practice in shaping Tongzhi spaces is often overlooked. Based on participant observations and formal/informal interviews in Tongzhi spaces like Martyr's Square in Wuhan since March 2021, we have found that Marginalized Tongzhi Group create Marginalized Tongzhi Spaces characterized by populism, localization, and regionalization to confront Homonormativity within the Tongzhi group. Additionally, this paper examines the development and transformation of Marginalized Tongzhi Spaces since the founding of the People's Republic of China, presenting various forms of Tongzhi spaces created by Marginalized Tongzhi Group in different historical contexts, as well as the current Tongzhi space ecosystem with a "Tongzhi community" nature. We find that Marginalized Tongzhi Group exhibit a fundamental attitude of "passive participation in public affairs" and "actively seeking personal welfare" and employ a decentralized, unorganized, and depoliticized approach to shaping Tongzhi spaces. This serves as a complement and reflection on mainstream action strategies in the current Tongzhi movement, such as "visibility politics" and "identity politics." This paper also attempts to categorize various forms of Tongzhi spaces.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel B

#### Session B4: Marriage, Family, and Reproduction

*Chair: LAI, Ruby, Lingnan University*

*Time: 11:25-12:45*

*Location: ELB 303*

1. *Cross-Class Guanxi and Social Reproduction: Case Studies of Middle Class and Migrant Worker Parents Using Guanxi for Their Children's School Admission in China*

RUAN, Ji

Guizhou Minzu University

**Abstract:** Against the background of social stratification in China, cross-class guanxi however has received little attention. This study delves into understanding how a person from a lower class practice guanxi with people in middle class and how this is related to social stratification in China. Based on two case studies of school admission in a Chinese city, this paper finds that people of the same social class are easier to use guanxi to exert influence than cross-class guanxi due to different level of return expectation. When both classes use indirect ties, the middle class use Introduction Type more often while migrant workers usually use Entrusted Type. Introduction Type is a lot more effective than Entrusted Type since the former exert the influence by several people at the same time. Moreover, same-class guanxi can link many middlemen while cross-class guanxi usually can only link one middlemen due to different level of return expectation. Therefore, cross-class guanxi is a lot less effective than same-class guanxi due to the influence of obligation and expectation of return and migrant workers linking social capital is difficult to develop in a renqing society where the rule of return or bao is highly advocated, and the "differential mode of association" proposed by Fei Xiaotong is significant. Social stratification highly influence the use of guanxi, while guanxi facilitates social reproduction, which may make China's social stratification wider. Key words: social stratification, guanxi, tie strength, expectation of return, social exchange

*2. Social Policy and Childbearing Intentions in Northeast China: a  
Factorial Survey*

YANG, Nan; BAO, Suping; KUEHNER, Stefan; ZHANG, Lei  
Liaoning University; Lingnan University; Chengdu University

**Abstract:** Despite recent policy changes, birth rates in northeast China have declined, falling below the replacement level. The ensuing accelerated demographic transition has led to a debate regarding the efficacy of working family support and how it may affect fertility and childrearing decisions. To shed light on this issue, a quasi-experimental survey was conducted in Shenyang - the largest city in northeast China to explore the effects of social policies on childbearing intentions. The findings suggest while policies promoting home ownership, reduced working hours, gender equality, and direct financial aid positively influence childbearing intentions, dual-earner-carer policies like parental leave and childcare show negligible impact. Beyond policy, gender and socio-economic status emerge as critical factors, with males and higher-earning married respondents showing a propensity for larger families. The economic context, especially in the post-COVID-19 era, further complicates this intricate interplay of factors. We conclude that a holistic approach to understanding childbearing intention in the Chinese context is needed and that cultural factors and local context must be carefully considered when adapting Western discourses around familisation risks, defamilisation, and decommmodification. Overall, this study highlights the need for a comprehensive, integrated strategy, marking a pathway for future research and policy innovation aimed at a balanced demographic transition in China, aligning with its unique cultural and economic landscape. **Keywords:** childbearing intention, working family support, family policy, institutional complementarity, factorial survey

3. *The Spatiality of Motherhood: Migrant Mothers Living in Subdivided  
Units in Hong Kong*

Dr. Ruby Lai

Lingnan University

**Abstract:** Home is a fertile site where researchers can investigate the everydayness of intersectional inequalities and the intricate negotiation between structure and human agency, particularly women's subjectivities. This paper examines the intersecting marginalisation of gender, class, migration status, and housing informality, by focusing on the everyday lives of migrant mothers living in subdivided flats in Hong Kong. Data was collected through ethnographic observations and in-depth interviews conducted with tenants of subdivided flats in two middle-to-low-income neighbourhoods. Based on the biographical stories of 47 women and 23 children, the findings illustrate the centrality of space in the construction of motherhood and how female migrants deployed a repertoire of spatial strategies to sustain family lives in deplorable conditions. Through documenting the mothering practices and narratives of the female migrants, the paper delineates the ways in which these mothers replicated and contested the dominant classist and gendered discourse of motherhood configured under a neoliberal and traditional familial culture. The paper throws light on the unrecognized domestic labour of the migrant mothers in everyday life and problematises the stigmatisation and devaluation of migrant motherhood in the context of housing informality, by showing how these migrant mothers negotiated structural constraints with resilience and through individual and collective actions.

4. *More to Give in Marriage? County-Level Sex Ratios and Marriage Payments in Two Marriage Cohorts in China*

Dr. Shichao Du

Fudan University

**Abstract:** Marriage payment is one of the most long-standing and pervasive marital conventions; however, how are marriage payments influenced by the local marriage market structure is less known. Moreover, previous research studies different sources of marriage payments (i.e., grooms, brides, parents) separately. This study, juxtaposing bride prices, dowries, and parental economic support in marriage payments, examines the associations between county-level sex ratios and marriage payments in China. Results show that how marriage payments response to the local sex ratio is gendered and cohort-dependent. In the 1995-2004 marriage cohort, the bride price (as well as parental support in the bride price) increases with the local sex ratio, aligned with the demographic-opportunity perspective. However, the dowry does not change as predicted by the demographic-opportunity perspective. Rather, it changes in parallel with the bride price. In the 2005-2014 marriage cohort, neither the bride price nor the dowry is associated with the local sex ratio. Both the economic function and the cultural function of marriage payments are found, but the relative importance of the functions varies across time.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel B

#### Session B5: Gender, Professional Work, and Occupations Under Socioeconomic Transformations in China

*Chair: NAKANO, Lynne, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 11:25-12:45*

*Location: ELB 306*



1. *Devotion in Growth: Female Scholars' Professional Career and Work Ethic in New China Generation*

Sining Wang

The University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** While there has been extensive discussion on the relationship between women's liberation and Chinese socialism revolution, the focus has primarily been on examining the oral history and literature narratives of working-class and rural women. Unfortunately, the professional lives and gender experience of the intellectual women are notably understudied. However, the remarkable increase of female representation in professional fields, including academia, stands as a significant achievement of women's liberation during the collectivist period. This paper focuses on the Chinese female scholars' professional careers in the "New China" Generation, who were born between the 1930s and the first half of the 1940s. By closely examining their lifelong professional careers, this study explores how these female scholars consistently demonstrated a strong work ethic characterized by unwavering dedication, and how they negotiated the delicate relationship between work and family.

The author conducted life history interviews and analyzed biographical materials of female scholars who have held positions in renowned universities such as Peking University. This study divides the female scholars' professional careers into five stages: the entry into academia, the start-up, the low ebb, the catch-up, and the never-end stages. Interconnecting sociology of professions and sociology of family, the author examines the career trajectories through two intertwined processes: the intersection of objective and subjective careers, as well as the intersection of professional career and family life cycle. The analysis shows that the devotion to the nation and self-independence based on gender consciousness constructed the basic work ethic for female scholars in the collectivist period, and then the work ethic has been enriched when female scholars gradually took academic work per se as their aspirations and interests in their middle and late careers. Besides, the spheres of family and work were integrated into a whole life-world. Whereas family life and work must divide the time scholars had, the family relationship was coordinated emotionally with the work ethic, an achievement that manifested itself in the various stages of those scholars in different ways. The above two aspects of the professional women's careers in the "New China" Generation indicated the complex interweaving between gender development and the institutional structure of the socialist China, inspiring us to explore gender equality and development from new perspectives.

## *2. Gender Inequality in Academia: Career Development and Promotion Timelines in a University in Hong Kong*

Hua Zhong; Jing Song; Xinxue Gao

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** This study aims to examine gender disparities and potential gender inequalities in academia by drawing on life history data of faculty members in one of the Hong Kong universities. Different genders may face different opportunities and obstacles in seeking recognition and promotion regarding their teaching, research, and service, and they often balance their family and career in different ways. The findings will not only shed light on the theoretical understandings on how men and women perform in academia based on their different education and working experiences, but also help policy makers and the public to reflect on how to promote gender equality and encourage diversity and inclusion in academia. The archival life history data are mainly derived from scholars' resume posted on official or personal websites. After coding by important themes emerged from prior theoretical grounds, the study illustrates the timing patterns of job entry and promotion, and then explore the underlying sociodemographic factors that help to shape their academic performance and life aspirations. Our preliminary findings have clearly indicated the persistent existence of the leaky pipeline in this university. That is, the proportion of women at each stage of the academic tenure track continues to decrease. However, such leaky pipeline effects in non-STEM majors are relatively smaller. The results of faculty comparisons further confirm the so-called "survival selectivity", especially in STEM majors. In other words, those female associate professors who successfully substantiated will be promoted to full professors even faster than their male counterparts. We then try to develop a series of interventions that could be implemented by individuals and organizations to attract and assist female scholars at each stage of this pipeline and to increase gender equality in academia in general.

*3. How Does Marketization Translate into Rising Gender Wage Inequality  
in Urban China: The Occupation-related Forces*

Ji CAO; Ling ZHU

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** The pattern of increasing gender earnings inequality during the economic transition is shared by the post-socialist countries in Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and China. Among these countries, China has seen a massive growth in earnings since the 2000s in urban areas. This has resulted in exceptionally high opportunity costs for female workers. Although marketization is recognized as a macro-level driving force, the demographic account of the process of fine-grained gender inequality remains scarce. This study tries to shed light on this issue by analyzing the role of occupation-related factors in shaping inequality. Specifically, it quantifies the changes in the gender earnings gap that come from occupational gender segregation, the within-occupation gender wage gap, and the evolving occupation composition and wage structure. This study analyses the Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS) 2005-2018 and applies a novel decomposition method to achieve the goal. The preliminary results show that the change in gender segregation helped to reduce inequality, contrary to many scholars' hypotheses. Meanwhile, the exacerbating inequality over time is found within occupation; The structural change of occupational composition and occupational return during the economic transition also increased gender inequality in earnings.

4. *Femininity penalties and rewards: Obstacles and opportunities for Chinese female entrepreneurs in gender-segregated industries*

Lulu Li

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** This study aims to answer two questions: What obstacles and opportunities are faced by female entrepreneurs in doing business in the unique social context of China, and how do they negotiate their entrepreneurial careers and gender identities in different gender-segregated markets? This study uses qualitative research methods of participant observation and in-depth interviews with 41 female entrepreneurs in China, and the theoretical lenses of gender role theory and doing gender in entrepreneurship. Findings reveal that when doing business in the unique and complex context of the Chinese society, female entrepreneurs face different obstacles and opportunities in gender-segregated industries. Their experiences vary in industries that are occupied by mainly males and females. Women in the female-dominated industries may be supported by the female-dominated working environment that is coherent with their domestic roles. However, they may also be questioned for the culturally impure meaning implied in some industries, which harms their class-based feminine virtue. On the other hand, women in the male-dominated industries may be challenged and marginalized due to their gender. However, some find ways to turn the disadvantaged feminine characters into favourable conditions and break out from the gender stereotypical constraints in the business. This study contributes to the literature on female entrepreneurship in general, specifically the doing gender practice in gender-segregated markets from the perspective of the rising market economy in China, as well as its interwoven with the long-lasting traditional gender role norms that align with the Confusion ideology.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel B

#### Session B6: Chinese Families in Transition

*Chair: CHAN, Dan, South China University of Technology*

*Time: 11:25-12:45*

*Location: ELB 307*

*1. Gender Segregation in Separating Spheres? Cohort Dynamics of the Asymmetric Progress toward Gender Egalitarianism among Young Adults using a Gender and Life Course Perspective*

Dan Chen

South China University of Technology

**Abstract:** Value shifts toward post-materialism underscore the importance of value consonance between men and women regarding gender role attitudes in contemporary marriage and family behaviors. The temporal trends of gender disparities in gender egalitarianism among young adults in response to macro-level contextual changes warrant close attention. Drawing on six-wave Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS) data from 2010 to 2021, this study adopts cross-classified multilevel models in estimating temporal trends of the gender gap in gender egalitarian attitudes and examining the role of demographic changes in accounting for the cohort dynamics of the gender segregation in gender role attitudes in reform era of China. This study yields several findings. Firstly, young women hold more egalitarian attitudes than men, and the gender difference narrows with age. Secondly, there exists a diverging gender difference in gender role attitudes in the private sphere in recent years while the gender difference in the public sphere does not vary significantly over periods 2010–2021. Thirdly, the gender gap in egalitarian attitudes toward male-breadwinner, marriage and ability becomes more pronounced among younger cohorts born after 1980s. Last but not least, demographic changes associated with one-child policy and college expansion policy drive gender segregation in gender egalitarianism across cohorts.

*2. Impact of Adult Children's Marital Power Distribution on Their Filial Belief: An Empirical Study Based on CGSS 2017*

Jiaxin He

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** There is a consensus in the sociology of family that the importance of gender cannot be ignored in today's family studies, and understanding gender and power in a particular cultural context means understanding family values. Previous studies explaining the influences of marital power distribution on intergenerational support in Chinese society have only considered the economic dimension, with little concern for filial piety, a unique Chinese cultural norm. This study explores the theoretical basis of studying the influences of adult children's marital power distribution on their filial beliefs first. Measures for marital power distribution include income and education differences between husbands and wives and decision-making power. With the Dual Filial Piety Model and CGSS 2017 data, and through regression analyses, conclusions are as follows: (1) Impact of adult children's marital power distribution on their reciprocal filial beliefs is insignificant; (2) Male samples have higher authoritarian filial beliefs than female samples; (3) In offspring families, wives' education level and decision-making power have negative impacts on individuals' authoritarian filial beliefs; (4) Gender consciousness has a positive moderating effect on the influence of decision-making power on individuals' authoritarian filial beliefs.

*3. Subjective Class Identity, Social Mobility Expectations, and Fertility Intentions of Chinese Youths: Do the Associations Vary across Gender*

Binbin Shu

Shenzhen University

**Abstract:** Based on the reference group theory, this study focuses on the influences of subjective class identity and social mobility expectations on the fertility intentions of young people. Using the Chinese General Social Survey data, this paper systematically assesses the impacts of these two factors and how these effects vary by gender. The results show that subjective class identity can better reflect fertility intentions than objective indicators. Additionally, there is a positive correlation between expectations of social mobility and fertility intentions. In terms of gender differences, subjective class identity has significant impacts for both men and women, but there are obvious gender differences regarding the effects of social mobility expectations. Perceptions of upward mobility promote men's willingness to bear children, while such effect is not significant for women. It indicates the higher costs of childbirth for women, especially for those who have higher future mobility expectations. Political implications are discussed.



#### *4. Domestic Gender Equity and Childbearing Outcome in China*

Longxing Zhu; Yuying Tong

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** After a few decades of the one-child policy in China, population aging has become increasingly challenging due to the low fertility rate. To reverse the situation, the Chinese government has abolished the one-child policy gradually and the universal two-child was formally implemented in 2016. However, fertility continues to drop with the relaxation of the one-child policy. Among all the explaining theories, gender equity theory has become one of the most popular theories to explain the continued low trend in fertility, which has seen husband's contribution as an important factor in increasing fertility rate. However, previous studies in this area focused on the actual behavior of housework contributions of couples but ignored the attitudes of doing housework. This paper contributes to the literature by considering the congruences/incongruences of attitudes and behaviors of women in doing housework to examine the relationship between housework sharing and fertility outcome. Our findings show that individuals who hold egalitarian perceptions regarding sharing of housework are less likely to have a second child when the distribution of housework is imbalanced, regardless of whether it is dominated by husbands or wives. This points to the importance of attitudes of women in housework sharing on fertility behaviors when using gender equity theory to explain the low fertility phenomena.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel B

#### Session B7: Evaluations, Exclusions, and Stratification in Education

*Chair: SHEN, Wensong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 11:25-12:45*

*Location: ELB 403*

*1. Asian-White Differences at the Intersection of High School  
Mathematics Course-taking and Academic Self-assessment in  
Mathematics*

Dr. Yuanyuan Liu

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Although Asian Americans are generally viewed as “good students,” Asian Americans themselves are less likely than whites to self-identify as good students. Using data from ELS:2002, I examine patterns and sources of the Asian-white gap in self-assessed math ability among students who reached different strata of the mathematics curriculum in high school. I find that Asian students have comparable average math test scores with white students among those who take advanced math courses but have lower average math test scores among those who take nonadvanced math courses. Conditional on math test scores, Asian students have higher self-assessed math ability than whites among those who take nonadvanced math courses but have lower self-assessed math ability among those who take advanced math courses. Among students who take advanced mathematics courses, Asian students’ lower mathematics self-assessment relative to whites’ is largely driven by the higher level of Asian concentration in the schools in which Asian students are enrolled. In addition, I find substantial intra-Asian ethnic heterogeneity in the size and predictors of the Asian-white difference in mathematics self-assessment. This study uncovers important diversity in Asian students’ academic experience which is largely ignored in empirical research as well as public discourse surrounding Asian Americans.

*2. From "Learn to Return" to "Learn to Leave": A Research on Local Youths' Willingness to Return Home during the Study Process before University*

WANG, Haicheng

Tsinghua University

**Abstract:** Population mobility between urban and rural areas is an important manifestation of regional inequality in China. For a long time, talents who go out from the rural areas are reluctant to return, and the reasons behind this are worth exploring. This paper finds that many students in rural areas show a gradual increase in the willingness to return to their hometown in junior high school and before, and a rapid decline in the willingness in senior high school and after. Taking Dahai Village in Shandong Province as an example, this paper adopts semi-structured interviews and questionnaires to analyze the reasons for the sudden turnaround of the willingness to return to the hometown of local youths from Dahai Village, and, from the perspective of the life history, it finds a significant negative effect of parental return on the willingness to return to the hometown of rural youths. Besides, the different life courses of teachers have significantly different effects on the willingness of local adolescents to return to their hometowns. In addition, this study conducted quantitative modeling based on qualitative analysis to strengthen the validity and explanatory power of the findings. Finally, this paper explores the micro-mechanisms of urban-rural inequality and population mobility, and tries to propose a new perspective to recognize the current urbanization of rural adolescents.

3. *Extra Rewards for Extracurriculars: Teacher Evaluations of Adolescent  
Non-academic Performance and Adulthood Outcomes*

CHIANG, Yi-Lin, New York University Shanghai

Coauthor: Ssu-Chin Peng

**Abstract:** Studies have shown that adolescents' non-academic performance benefits their future educational and occupational outcomes. Yet, this perspective underemphasizes the importance of institutional gatekeeping, in which students' extracurricular talents are awarded different values. Using longitudinal data from Taiwan, this study highlights teachers' role in evaluating and distributing institutional rewards. Rather than relying on students' self-reported extracurricular participation, we measure students' non-academic performance by teachers' assessment of students' talent in athletics, music, and art. The findings show that teachers' assessments of students' non-academic performance carry distinct benefits, both in school and at work. Adolescents perceived by teachers as being talented in music achieve high educational and occupational attainment. Being talented in art is positively associated with high educational (but not occupational) attainment, while athletic talent is not related to individual outcomes. These results suggest that institutional gatekeeping practices in the form of teacher evaluations is a mechanism that contributes to social inequality.

4. *Interdisciplinary Teaching, Interdisciplinary Research, and the Earnings Inequality Across Higher Education Institutions*

HAN, Siqu; LI, Yue

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Interdisciplinarity is highly advocated in higher education today, but there has been no consensus on how to empirically define and measure it, how it varies in teaching and research and across institutions, and its economic returns for students after college graduation. In this study, we reason that the two forms of interdisciplinarity, interdisciplinary teaching and research, may not always align at the same institution, therefore we examine how the two forms of interdisciplinarity vary across institutional contexts and in turn influence students' future incomes. Using a newly developed semantic measurement of interdisciplinarity, we derive two indices of interdisciplinarity from college curricula and research papers correspondingly, making them comparable in terms of their metric and scale. We add them to the analysis of income returns, and find that (1) universities and higher-ranked institutions favor interdisciplinary research over teaching, while liberal arts colleges do the opposite; (2) interdisciplinary teaching has a more pronounced effect on students' future earnings than interdisciplinary research. This unbalanced development of interdisciplinarity between teaching and research can significantly penalize students' earnings if students graduate from an institution with a high level of research interdisciplinarity but does not mirror that in teaching.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel B

#### Session B8: Population, Well-being, and Sustainability

*Chair: LAM, Gigi, Hong Kong Shue Yan University*

*Time: 11:25-12:45*

*Location: ELB 405*

*1. Learning to Closing the Digital Divide - Interplay of Social and Cultural Capital among Older Digital Immigrants in Hong Kong*

Chung-kin TSANG

Hong Kong Shue Yan University

**Abstract:** The issue of the digital divide has been a topic of discussion in Hong Kong and around the world since the early 2000s. Middle-aged and older adults, aged 55 or above, are often considered a disadvantaged group that is more likely to be excluded from technological development compared to younger generations of digital immigrants.

In this conference paper, we present findings from a focus group study of 145 adults aged 55 years or older in Hong Kong. Our aim is to reflect on the negative image associated with this group and discuss the social and cultural conditions that affect their process of learning to use smartphones.

Our study reveals that in a relatively affluent context like Hong Kong, infrastructural constraints are less significant. Instead, social capital and cultural capital play important roles in enabling middle-aged and older adults to learn how to use smartphones. Both informal and formal social networks contribute to the learning process of older adults. Family, peer support, and non-governmental organizations provide them with knowledge about smartphone usage. Each network has a different impact on shaping the older adults' experience of adapting to new technology.

The motivation to socially connect with these networks also drives middle-aged and older adults to adapt to new technology. Furthermore, the emergence of new technology does not represent a complete break from the past. The cultural capital accumulated from previous experiences in media use at work and at home continues to operate and transform when using new technology.



## *2. Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme: Needs Assessment and Evaluation of Outcomes*

Gigi LAM

Hong Kong Shue Yan University

**Abstract:** Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme represents as a form of demand-side subsidy given to the elders to choose a spectrum of medical services in the private medical sector. It was first introduced in 2009 and later regularized in 2014. The current paper aims at conducting a needs assessment with an analytical framework of 4As analysis and evaluating whether the outcome measures of the scheme (i.e., the use of private healthcare services, the use of primary care and the empowerment of the elders in the choice of services) were achieved. By incorporating a time-series data from 2009 to 2022, the needs assessment concluded that the utilization rate of the elders, awareness and satisfaction rate are both high albeit some problems such as the uneven distribution of enrolled service providers across different districts and small voucher amount. The positive sides concluded from the needs assessment, however, failed to turn into the fulfilment of outcome measures. The scheme failed to encourage elders to use primary care and private medical services due to the structural barriers emanating from underdeveloped primary healthcare system and health system fragmentation. Recommendations at short-term, medium-term and long-term are made.

*3. A Gendered Analysis of Family, Work, Social Spheres and Life Satisfaction: The Case of Highly Educated Migrants in Hong Kong*

Mikayla Pui Kwan MAN; Rebecca Yiqing GAN; Eric FONG

Hong Kong Shue Yan University; Fudan University; The University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Migration is expected to bring higher life satisfaction with better social and economic achievement. While studies on life satisfaction treat migrants mainly as a single homogeneous group, knowledge about highly educated migrants is scant in current migration scholarship. Highly educated migrants may not have higher life satisfaction because they may also have higher expectations. To complicate matters further, there may be gender differences in the experiences and life satisfaction of highly educated migrants. This study examines the factors associated with levels of life satisfaction among highly educated migrants from a gender perspective. First, we examine whether the level of life satisfaction differs by gender. Second, we explore various factors associated with the life satisfaction of highly educated migrants and whether these factors differ by gender. We examine these relationships using data from a respondent-driven sampling of 2,884 highly educated Mainland Chinese migrants in Hong Kong. Our results indicate that the life satisfaction of female migrants is related to their social networks, whereas the life satisfaction of male migrants is related to economic security.

4. *Mobilizing healthcare resources through social capital: the case of ethnic minority cancer patients in Hong Kong*

Pui Yan Flora LAU

Hong Kong Shue Yan University

**Abstract:** Social researchers have long been suggesting that social capital could generate positive effects for cancer patients on their health and well-being, and to give a better idea on how to cope with cancer and their post-treatment recovery. Using Woolcock's (1998) framework of social capital – 'social bonds' (i.e. the connections within a community as defined by ethnical or religious identity), 'social links' (i.e. engagement with institutions, agencies and services) and 'social bridges' (i.e. social connections with those of other social groups) as the conceptual framework, this presentation aims to discuss how members of the ethnic minorities cope with fear and anxiety, health illiteracy, language barriers, the exhaustive medical treatment as well as the lack of materialistic resources in their cancer coping process.

Drawing on in-depth interviews with twenty-eight non-Chinese cancer patients and survivors between April and September 2022, this presentation explains that social bonds among patients were predominately emerged through social media and digital device such as Facebook and WhatsApp groups. In terms of social links, although only very few ethnic minority cancer patients managed to get in touch with local NGOs, they could still receive further healthcare support from grassroots ones. As to social bridges, leaders of grassroots NGOs bridge different professions and sectors of the society and pool in the resources for their members. To conclude, this presentation suggests that the competence of utilizing healthcare resources is determined by the types of social capital that ethnic minorities cancer patients and their community leaders possess.

5. *“Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Transmitters? Not My Son”*

– *Shiitake farmers speak about experiences with heritagization and their loss in rural China.*

Veronica Sau Wa MAK

Hong Kong Shue Yan University

**Abstract:** A growing number of traditional agricultural systems around the world have been designated Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS), as they are exemplars of the accumulated wisdom of human communities and their close relationship with the local ecology. Heritage inscription is a strategy used to conserve and increase awareness of this inheritance. For centuries, traditional farmers have developed diverse and locally adapted agricultural systems, managing them with ingenious practices that often result in both community food security and the conservation of agrobiodiversity. This strategy of minimizing risk stabilizes yields, promotes dietary diversity, and maximizes returns using low levels of technology and limited resources. However, in China, most of the younger generation from the agricultural heritage site has no intention to return to the farm, even after their home town has been listed as GIAHS. Drawing on actor-network theory and based on the experience of shiitake farmers in Qingyuan, Zhejiang who specialize in traditional shiitake farming, this study demonstrates how the authorized heritage discourse, dominated by the science-aesthetic expertise, affects the process and impact of heritagization. My study shows that most of the agricultural transmitters have been excluded from the heritage actor-network. On one hand, the heritage inscription process of shiitake farming in Qingyuan has created a new form of identity and economic, culture and moral capital for the scientists, government officers, cultural elite, and shiitake processing and trading merchants. On the other hand, the shiitake agricultural heritage transmitters (farmers) have been structurally and socially discriminated against in the urbanization, industrialization and heritagization process, leading to destabilization of the heritage network and thus putting the heritage sustainability at risk.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel C

#### Session C1: Social Mobility from Diverse Perspectives

*Chair: AU, Anson, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University*

*Time: 15:30 - 16:50*

*Location: ELB 206*

1. *The Story After Mobility: Debates and Critiques on Methods for Estimating Social Mobility Effects*

WANG, Peng, Fudan University

**Abstract:** Social mobility is one of the core research topics in sociology, and its implications have garnered increasing attention. However, accurately measuring the effects of social mobility has been challenging due to issues related to model identification. Over the years, significant advancements have been made in methods for measuring social mobility effects, progressing from Duncan’s Square Additive (SA) model to Hope’s Diamond Additive (DA) model, and subsequently to Sobel’s Diagonal Reference Model (DRM). The DRM, in particular, has been widely utilized and considered the “gold standard” for estimating social mobility effects. Nevertheless, scholars have recently criticized the DRM and proposed alternative methods, such as the Mobility Contrast Model (MCM), for measuring mobility effects. This study critically examines the debates surrounding these methods, systematically comparing them in terms of theoretical assumptions and methodological settings, with a specific focus on the widely employed DRM and the newly introduced MCM. Through model derivation, analyses on simulated and real-world data, this paper highlights the significant misconceptions in the criticism of the Mobility Contrast Model against traditional methods. The primary distinctions between these methods lie in their underlying theoretical assumptions and their capacity to address diverse theoretical concerns, rather than the statistical superiority or inferiority of the techniques themselves. Consequently, the suitability of theoretical assumptions in practical contexts should be taken into consideration when selecting a method. Lastly, this study identifies key considerations in applying these methods and suggests approaches for conducting robustness tests.

*2. Time to Leave? Comparing the Emigration Tendencies in Hong Kong  
After the 1997 Handover and the 2019 Social Movement*

LAM, Ka Wang Kelvin; FONG, Eric

The University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** This study aims to expand the scope of migration research by examining politically driven migration. Drawing from existing literature, we distinguish politically driven migration, which may be driven by a desire to avoid uncertainties in future developments or to express dissatisfaction with the government or its policies, from other forms of migration. We substantiate our argument by exploring the emigration tendencies of Hong Kong residents after the 1997 handover and the 2019 social movement. We illustrate that the intention to emigrate after 1997 was a response aimed at avoiding an unknown political future. The intention to emigrate after 2019 was set against a backdrop of increasing pessimism towards the city's development, subsequent to the government's failure to address public demands and its oppression of dissenters.

3. *Linked Lives: Intergenerational association of occupational mobility  
evidence from China*

ZHANG, Han, The University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** The intergenerational occupational mobility is a widely discussed topic in the study of social mobility. Most studies use snapshot measures of parents' occupational status or income to measure the socioeconomic status of the family, neglecting the linked trajectories over the life course of the next generation. Meanwhile, research on intergenerational occupational mobility primarily focus on the intergenerational association of different employment statuses, with less attention paid to the heterogenous intergenerational association among those with active employment status. In other words, a detailed analysis of parent-child labor force trajectories, distinguishing between different occupational statuses remains unexplored. To address these research gaps, this study will utilize the longitudinal data of parents' and children's working history from Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS), this study plans to employ the sequence analysis and multinomial regression to examine whether parents' occupational trajectories influence their children's occupational status and identify factors that contribute to intergenerational transmission in terms of occupational mobility. It is expected that the intergenerational association is strongest among parents with higher occupational status, while parents with lower occupational status show the weaker links.



#### *4. Exploring Generational Trajectories in the UK: Comparing Divergent and Similar Pathways among Different Generations*

ASCUI, Sebastian, Lingnan University

**Abstract:** The classical sociological literature on social mobility has traditionally viewed mobility as transitions between social classes, changes in occupation, and shifts in income, earnings, and wealth. In addition, scholars have explored how these transitions and positional persistences are influenced by cumulative socioeconomic advantages or disadvantages transmitted across generations, resulting in inherited inequalities. However, some analysts have recently questioned the accuracy of social origins in predicting social destinations, particularly when considering intragenerational social mobility patterns can attenuate intergenerational differences due to life-cycle bias and measurement error. Drawing on theoretical principles from Life Course Theory, such as the linked-life and linked-trajectories principles, by analyzing the Harmonized BHPS-UKHLS dataset this work seeks to understand whether generations diverge or resemble each other regarding social mobility pathways.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel C

**Session C2: Navigating Legal Landscapes: Legitimacy, Mobilization, and**

### **Spillovers**

*Chair: DAVID, Roman, Lingnan University*

*Time: 15:30 - 16:50*

*Location: ELB 207*

1. *What Kind of "Normal"? Whose "Good Deed"? — The Legitimacy Generation of Marriage Trafficking from the Perspective of Local*

LYU, Haoyu; WANG, Zihan; LI, Weidong

Shaanxi Normal University

**Abstract:** This study conducted fieldwork through the locals in T County, Inner Mongolia, to investigate the cognition and its formation mechanism of the marriage trafficking of the villagers from the area where the women were flowed in. The article points out that the local people understand marriage trafficking as a normal event even a good deed under the function of a local legitimacy mechanism, which involves the following 4 aspects: bystander sympathy to purchasers under the conflict between the powerful marriage culture and the actual marriage plight, the commercialization of women caused by the patriarchal and the market system, the rescuer mentality to trafficked women of the bystander influenced by the utilitarian culture and institutional confirmation brought by wedding and marriage certificate. Due to the legal mechanism, the rural society do not punish the purchasers, but encourages the development of it. On this basis, we put forward measures such as paying attention to marriage squeeze at county level and strengthening international cooperation, so as to provide more ideas for solving the problem of bought marriage.

*2. Protection Or Illusion? Examining Sex Victims' Legal Consciousness  
of Police Engagement Through Legal Estrangement*

LIU, Jingwei, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Exploring the legal consciousness of sex victims in China through empirical research is an important area that deserves further investigation. This is particularly timely as legislation against sexual harassment is being introduced, and victim's well-being is gaining more attention. Through the legal estrangement framework, this article explores the changes in victims' legal consciousness as a result of their interactions with law enforcement agencies, specifically the police. Based on 15 in-depth interviews with victims of sexual harassment in China, it found that their attitudes and perspectives underwent a significant shift before and after reporting their experiences to the police. Initially, they believed that the police would provide them with the expected relief and justice. However, their interactions with the police shattered this belief. This transformation of victim's legal consciousness is occurred within the interrelated dimensions of legal estrangement framework: accessibility, legitimacy, trust, and empowerment. The study also highlights how these interactions with the police force shape the victims' identity and contribute to broader social inequality.

*3. The Same Law, a Different Regime, but Better Relations: Changing perception of ethnic minorities in the aftermath of 2021 military coup Myanmar*

DAVID, Roman, Lingnan University

Coauthors: Aung Kaung Myat and Ian Holliday

**Abstract:** Ethnic relations in Myanmar (former Burma) are shaped by its constitution and laws, which define Bamar as a constitutive part of the state, and with notable distances stipulate in a lower place in the hierarchy seven major ethnic minorities (so called “races”), 135 minor ethnic minorities, and legally unrecognized Rohingya population. We know that regime change often exacerbates ethnic conflict. This article examines the curious case of Myanmar, where a 2021 military coup was met, on the surface, with broad-based resistance across a divided society. An important question that therefore arises is whether, below the surface, this unity also took a more positive form of national solidarity. Were deep ethnic cleavages intensified or alleviated by the 2021 coup? This question bears theoretical relevance for the study of ethnic conflict and has social relevance for a nation marked by a long history of civil war and a recent experience of genocide against Rohingya Muslims. The article engages in a systematic examination of 180 social media posts uploaded in Burmese by key opinion leaders both before and after the coup. A qualitative analysis of major positive and negative themes indicates a shift in attitudes. The quantitative analysis shows that ethnic relations, measured by a change in themes, ratings and virality, improved significantly in the immediate aftermath of Myanmar’s 2021 coup. The improvement was apparent for all groups, including Ethnic groups and the Rohingyas.

4. *The Spillover Effect of Anti-Corruption Campaign on the Judiciary:  
Evidence from Sentencing Documents in China*

YOU, Yifan, University of Macau

CAI, Tianji, University of Macau

**Abstract:** As part of China's anti-corruption campaign, the CPC Central Committee decided to establish a supervisory program that covers all officials to intensify the fight against corruption recently. Before the official installment, three provinces—namely Beijing, Zhejiang, and Shanxi, were chosen to launch the piloted program that aims to supervise, investigate and handle cases of corruption. However, the implementation of such initiatives may interfere the foundational principle of "independent discretion" exercised by judges, thereby reshaping the trajectory of China's judicial process. By analyzing 39,410 judgments of embezzlement and bribery crimes from 2013 to 2020 obtained from the China Judgments Online, this study adopts a regression discontinuity design to evaluate the impact of China's anti-corruption policy on the judicial domain. Our analysis found that it resulted in a reduction in the fixed term of imprisonment for embezzlement and bribery crimes within the pilot areas. Moreover, it may introduce the spillover effects, echoing beyond the confines of the pilot into non-pilot areas. By the assess interplay between anti-corruption policy and judicial dynamics, this study offers nuanced insights into the evolving landscape of political systems and the consequential changes engendered by such policies. Besides extending the current literature on evaluating anti-corruption strategies, our study also made methodological contributions that are applicable in a wider context and provided an example of how the scientific community to address the reproducibility crisis.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel C

#### Session C3: Social Capital and Well-being

*Chair: LAI, Gina, Hong Kong Baptist University*

*Time: 15:30 - 16:50*

*Location: ELB 203*

*1. From Parents' Guanxi to Involution Behavior: A Serial Mediation Model*

ZHANG, Kejin, University College London

**Abstract:** Involution (neijuan) refers to the phenomenon of irrational internal competition and excessive effort expenditure to acquire limited resources, leading to reduced marginal benefits of labor. The research elucidates involution's social origins and examines if the transmission of social capital provides career advantages undermining such competitive tendencies. The idea of social capital is captured by the alternative term "guanxi" to represent the intricacies of interpersonal connections in East Asian civilizations. Guanxi theory addresses the mechanism of familiar ties' inter-generational transmission and provides insights into how individuals enhance their prospects for advancement through favor exchange in guanxi practice. Based on guanxi theory, a conceptual model is proposed where parents' professional guanxi positively predicts supervisor-subordinate guanxi (SSG), enabling access to advancement opportunities that subsequently reduce workplace involution. And institution type is hypothesized to moderate the relationship between SSG and advancement. This model is tested based on a survey of 331 employees in China. Results reveal a significant indirect effect of parental guanxi on involution sequentially mediated by SSG and advancement. Parents' guanxi permeated into the organization through inter-generational transmission, laying the foundations for the development of SSG. High-quality SSG enhanced perceived advancement opportunities, which lowered involution behaviors. The research also disproved the moderating effect of institution types, refuting the institutionalist perspective that guanxi practice declines in stable formal institutions within a developed economy. This research advances understanding on guanxi's persistence in modern China and its impacts on workplace behaviors and depicts mechanisms connecting inter-generational guanxi transmission to individual involution tendencies.



2. *Strong Ties or Weak Ties? A Study on the Social Networks of  
Left-Behind Elderly in Chinese population-draining city*

YUAN, Tianhao, University of Sheffield

**Abstract:** Mobility is an important trend in the global demographic transition. Along with labor migration, the elderly are faced with the dilemma of either moving along with their family members or staying behind. Against the backdrop of both modernization and aging, cities experiencing population loss are filled with a large number of left-behind elderly, transitioning these cities into "twilight societies" where elderly care becomes a pressing social issue. This paper focuses on the social networks of the left-behind elderly in a Chinese population-draining city, employing Granovetter's theory of weak ties to categorize and analyze the social relationships of the left-behind elderly. Existing research posits that China is a "strong-tie society", where interpersonal interactions are primarily based on the exchange of "favors". These studies consider children, spouses, and the like as strong ties in the elderly social network, while neighbors and friends are seen as weak ties. Through in-depth interviews and grounded research with 15 left-behind elderly individuals, this paper argues that left-behind elderly in China are investing in their social relationships through a series of strategies, with traditional social networks and family-centric elderly care models gradually fading. Notably, those previously considered as strong ties are weakening, while weak ties are increasingly meeting the new needs of the left-behind elderly, thus giving rise to new forms of social network structures.

### *3. Exploring Diverse Patterns of Social Relationships and Their Impact on Health Outcomes in China*

HU, Yuhan, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Social relationships play a crucial role in shaping health outcomes, and China's unique cultural background may result in distinct patterns of social relationships when compared to other regions. Most existing research on social relationships in China mainly focused on social resources while overlooking the potential stressors within these relationships. This study tends to fill this gap taking into account both social resources and social burdens, using the China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study and utilizing cluster analysis to identify different patterns of social relationships among middle-aged and elderly individuals in China. Additionally, the study reports the factors influencing these patterns and explores their impact on health outcomes. This article provides a comprehensive perspective of social relationships among middle-aged and elderly individuals in China and reveals their association with health. The findings provide valuable insights for policymakers aiming to improve the general health and well-being of diverse population groups with distinct relationship patterns.

*4. The Impact of Structural Factors on the Health of Older Migrating Adults: Testing the buffering effect of social capital and social integration*

CHEN, Anqi, Lingnan University

**Abstract:** While older adult migration in China has received significant attention, the related health research and the pivotal role of social relations have been underexplored. This study, grounded in the theory of the relationship between social capital and health, as well as the social integration theory of migration, examines how social capital and social integration buffer health inequalities among older migrants in China, emphasizing the differing roles of bonding, bridging, and linking social capital.

**Methodology:** Using data from the China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study (CHARLS) 2018 survey, three health outcomes: physical function, cognitive function, and mental health were investigated in 3,137 migrating seniors aged 60 years or older. Multiple linear regression and moderation models were developed to test the direct effects of income, hukou and residence on health, and the moderating effects of social capital and social integration. **Results:** Health inequalities based on structural factors differ across physical function, cognitive function, and mental health. Income and residence positively influence all three health outcomes, while hukou solely relates to cognitive function. Social capital demonstrates category-specific variances in mitigating health disparities. Bonding SC buffered all three health inequalities associated with structural factors. Bridging SC buffered only mental health disparities, while linking SC buffered only physical function inequalities. Social integration only buffered disparities in physical function related to structural factors, but behavioral integration somewhat exacerbated inequalities in physical function between urban and rural areas.

**Keywords:** Health inequalities, old-age migration, social capital, buffering effect

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel C

**Session C4: Gender and Entitlement: Women's Socioeconomic Status in**

**Chinese Societies**

*Chair: SONG, Jing, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 15:30 - 16:50*

*Location: ELB 303*

1. *Entitled yet Unfulfilled: Navigating work flexibility among female platform food delivery workers in Hong Kong and Taiwan*

HAN, Ling, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Platform-mediated work, designed to offer flexibility and autonomy, has provided individuals with the opportunity to control their time. However, there has been limited examination of how gender influences the negotiation of flexibility and control in platform work. During the pandemic, platform-based food delivery became vital, leading more women to turn to this flexible work due to job uncertainty. In Hong Kong, 10 percent of food couriers are female, while in Taiwan, female platform couriers reached 21 percent. This study examines the intersection of gender and other social factors in the platform economy to assess whether platform food delivery truly offers flexibility and freedom for women. Based on the experiences of 34 female delivery workers in Hong Kong and Taiwan, this research reveals that women's negotiation of work flexibility in platform food delivery revolves around two time-management mechanisms: 1) platform-mediated freedom and 2) individual time flexibility. In addition to performing gender at work, this study finds that life stage and social class significantly impact women's negotiation of time and flexibility in platform work. Younger women, viewing platform work as supplementary, leverage individual flexibility for future pursuits. In contrast, older women with limited job options integrate more tightly into platform-mediated time control while seeking freedom. Furthermore, differing transportation options in Hong Kong and Taiwan lead to varying levels of women's flexible management of family responsibilities, further blurring the line between work and life that ultimately leaving the promise of work flexibility unfulfilled. Keywords: platform work, female food couriers, time management, work flexibility, mobility control

*2. Changing Gender Culture within the Patriarchal Framework: Evidence from the Audience Reception of Female Images in Chinese Idol Talent Shows*

WANG, Yilin, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

**Abstract:** The female idol talent shows that originated in Korea have spread to China since 2018. In 2020, three distinct-themed female talent shows premiered, garnering widespread attention and sparking lively debates on social media. The female idols featured in these shows have become an inspiration for many young women, promoting female empowerment and a new femininity. This study employs qualitative methods and adopts a theoretical framework that integrates Hall and Carolyn's ideas to investigate the role of the audience in cultural production and analyze the negotiation of meanings during the audience reception of recent female idol talent shows in China from a feminist perspective. While young audiences appreciate the presentation of diverse female images and nonconventional gender expressions in recent female idol talent shows, they also recognize the attempts to reproduce hegemonic patriarchal values through production strategies such as editing. By actively favoring the positive qualities of women and opposing scenes that reinforce gender stereotypes, viewers adjust their viewing positions and interactive strategies to negotiate with hegemonic ideas. This study finds that the female images and gender values portrayed in talent shows can notably influence audiences' gender values and attitudes toward gender issues. The diversity and fluidity showcased in the shows inspire audiences to be more open-minded and confident about various gender expressions. The strong desire for female empowerment, feminist development, and diverse gender expressions among Chinese youngsters reflects the changing gender culture in China.

*3. Household farmland rental decision and gender well-being gap: A case study from rural China*

Wenjing Han; Xiaoling Zhang; Cuncun Duan,  
Beijing Normal University; The University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Farmland serves as the fundamental means of production for farmers, and involvement in the farmland rental market is intricately connected to the division of labor within households and the well-being of farmers. By applying household production theory and capability approach, this study, based on a sample of surveyed farmers from Dazu District in Chongqing City of China, investigates how household farmland rental activities impact the economic and non-economic well-being of male and female farmers differently. The study reveals that when households engage in farmland rented-out (FTO), it can enhance the economic well-being (income) of female farmers and narrow the gender-based economic well-being gap. Additionally, FTO may diminish the overall gap in non-economic well-being between genders by elevating the satisfaction levels of female farmers with both migrant and home-based work, as well as increasing their participation in political activities. Meanwhile, household engaged in farmland rented-in (FTI) may reduce the non-economic well-being gap between genders. This reduction is achieved by increasing men's inputs into agricultural production while potentially lowering their well-being in terms of physical health, satisfaction with migrant work, and leisure activities. This study offers insights into the gender-differentiated influence mechanism of farmland rental market participation, and has considerable potential to inform policy decisions aimed at reducing gender inequality by facilitating farmers' access to the farmland rental market.

#### *4. Gendered Access to Relocation Housing in Urban Sprawl: Survey*

##### *Results from Ningxia*

SONG, Jing, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

LI, Lulu, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** China's rapid urbanization has led to housing demolition and relocation in many rural communities, and this study examines how relocation housing is distributed within families. The study draws on survey results from 74 extended families (with 314 family members), each being treated as a unit in housing demolition and relocation in the urbanizing villages. These families were sampled from rural communities in the expanding city of Yinchuan, the capital city of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region in Northwestern China. The study pools all the family members in the extended families and examines how the access to relocation housing is shaped by gender and family structures. The results suggest that men in these families tend to have more relocation housing properties (in units or in floor space) than women. Compared with families that have only sons or only daughters, those in families with mixed genders of children tend to receive fewer relocation housing properties in general. Those in families with more sons will obtain more relocation properties on average. The gender gap may be a result of patriarchal traditions within families, but the effects of family structures also suggest how families may fare differently under the changing relocation policies. Under patrilocal traditions, only sons are eligible to gain residential land from rural communities and contribute to the expansion of the family's self-residence. But as the relocation policies shifted toward a mix of quota-based and housing-based measures, daughters in families with only daughters are more likely to receive some relocation housing, but daughters in families with mixed genders of children were less likely to receive relocation housing under their names. The study points to gender inequalities in accessing housing properties as a combined outcome of government policies and family relations.



## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel C

**Session C5: Frontier of Chinese Philanthropy: Community Charity and**

**Digital Philanthropy**

*Chair: CAO, Feilian, Beijing University of Technology*

*Time: 15:30 - 16:50*

*Location: ELB 306*

1. *Community-charity Organization in Contemporary China from the  
Philanthropy Tradition from Song Dynasty*

CAO, Feilian, Beijing University of Technology

**Abstract:** For a long time, the author has been concerned about the urban poverty and urban-rural development imbalance caused by the transformation of China's economic system. In order to alleviate this severe social problem, in addition to the government's policy and institutional construction in social welfare and social security, community-charity organizations aimed at providing social services and charitable assistance have aroused my strong interest. This article starts from the philanthropy tradition of the Song Dynasty, and in the process of reviewing the official relief welfare policies and folk charity since the Song Dynasty explores the practical motivation, logic, and path of contemporary Chinese community-charity organization. It also explores the boundaries of rights, responsibilities, and roles of various entities in the community in public welfare actions. The main conclusion of this article is that community NPOs, one of the most important subjects in community public welfare, can establish positive and effective cooperation and interaction with the government, and become the "incubator" of civic virtues. The author hopes that this study not only provides an analysis of contemporary Chinese community-charity organization from the historical and political sociology perspective, but also hopes that the government can face up to this huge social and psychological demand, promote the formulation of the Civil Association Act, and provide institutional guarantees for the development of such organizations, as well as a platform for dialogue and cooperation at the ideological level. Keywords: Community-charity Organization, Philanthropy Tradition, Folk Charity

*2. Spanning the Boundary between the Local Government and Nonprofit Sector: The emergence of intermediary civic bodies in China*

XIANG, Xunyu, The Chinese university of Hong Kong, Shenzhen

ZHU, Jiangang, Nankai University

**Abstract:** The re-centralized management becomes a challenge for most Chinese Nonprofit Organizations (NSOs), which also narrowed the civic space for Chinese NPOs' operation to a certain extent. However, this study argues that there is still an alternative to NPOs in China. The emergence of intermediary civic bodies sustains Chinese NPOs' survival by mediating the relationship between the Chinese government and NPOs at the local level. Due to their 'in-betweenness' characteristic, the intermediary civic bodies have become an inevitable actor in the Chinese nonprofit sector. Through years of fieldwork, this study further noticed that the Chinese government, at the local level, intentionally designated Nonprofit Support Organizations (NSOs) as the intermediary civic bodies to moderate their interaction with NPOs via two crucial mechanisms: 1). Assist the local government in contracting out social services and overseeing the operation of NPOs; 2). Provide policy feedback to influence the government's policy learning process. The effectiveness of the two procedures is crucial to the long-term viability of government-NPOs relations. Results also noticed that NSOs must be cautious about their relationships with local governments and avoid negative effects on their continued interaction. The local government-NSO-NPO mediation model expands the conceptual discourse on government-NPO relations under the authoritarian regime and contributes to the practice of balancing government and NPOs' interaction in a broader context. Keywords: local government, NPOs, Nonprofit support organizations, government-nonprofit relations, China

*3. How Could Social Assistance Empower Recipients? The Impact of Different Forms of Social Assistance on Recipients' Charitable Giving Based on CFPS*

YANG, Yongjiao, Chongqing University

Coauthor: Yichu Xu

**Abstract:** Empowering recipients is the ultimate goal of social assistance, which is particularly important under the agenda of Shared Prosperity. However, existing studies have stated controversial opinions regarding whether and how could social assistance empower recipients in terms of stimulating their prosocial behaviors. From the theoretical perspective of institutional logics, this study examines how forms of social assistance, namely state assistance, charitable assistance and mixed assistance, impact recipients' philanthropic behaviors drawing on data from the China Family Panel Studies (CFPS). The results of the multi-level regression analyses show that state assistance and charitable assistance strengthen the effect of economic conditions on individual giving, while mixed assistance weakens the effect of self-efficacy and perceived reciprocity on individual giving. The findings indicate that social assistance would fail to motivate recipients' prosocial behaviors due to unbalanced state-society relation. This study has important practical and theoretical implications for optimizing and integrating the logic of different forms of social assistance in order to promote the full development of recipients. Keywords: Institutional logics; Charitable giving; CFPS; Social assistance; Recipient

4. *Pressure, Embedment, and Transformation: An Analysis of the Relationship between Power Structure and Governance Structure from the Perspective of Community Philanthropy*

Tang Hao, China Global Philanthropy Institute and South China Normal University

**Abstract:** The reason why local governance issues are becoming increasingly apparent and the effectiveness is difficult to achieve is directly and continuously related to the basic structure of local governance. The current local governance structure in Chinese society actually has two sets of operational structures, one is a power structure formed with party-government relations as the core, and the other is a governance structure oriented towards solving social problems. Political power is a composite structure formed by the interweaving of party and government relations, three power relations, central government and local government relations, etc. These relations are based on party and government relations, and are Bureaucratic and responsible upwards; Social governance is composed of social issues, specific departments, coordinating departments, executing entities, governance targets, supervisory departments, etc. The governance structure should be flat, decentralized, and self decision-making. The basic pattern of local governance formed by the differences in goals, operational logic, and internal relationships between the two limits the effectiveness of specific governance measures. In order to explore innovative solutions to break through the dual structure of local governance, the author takes community charity in Chengdu, Shanghai, and Shenzhen as the starting point, analyzes their respective success and failure experiences in local governance, and explores the paths, methods, and tools for optimizing local governance under the dual governance pattern, taking the actual operation of the community charity foundation, an external actor in local governance, as a case study. Keywords: local governance, Power structure, governance structure, Community-charity Organization

5. *The Involvement of NGO in Community Building under the Perspective of Social Experiment: Taking the revitalization practice of an old neighborhood community as an example*

ZHU, Jiangang, Nankai University

**Abstract:** In the process of NGO and social work's involvement in community governance and services in China, the "dependency" of social organizations and social work on grassroots governments has become a focus of scholars' attention. This article explores how NGOs can overcome this dependency and participate in community building with relatively complete subjectivity in a sustained and effective manner. Based on the action research in the community building case of Y community in Guangzhou city, this article describes and analyzes the strategies and boundaries of NGO's involvement in the community from the perspective of social experiment. The article aims to point out that there should not be an overly romanticized imagination regarding the involvement of NGOs in community building. The development of subject-oriented social organizations in the community depends mainly on the community public welfare value chain formed by community foundations, hub-type organizations, professional service agencies, and community self-organization, as well as the community public welfare micro-ecology formed by this value chain and the positive interaction between the government and residents. Key Words: NGO, Community building, Social experiment

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel C

#### Session C6: Rethinking Gender, Work, and Family in the 21st Century

*Chair: FAN, Cindy, University of California, Los Angeles*

*Time: 15:30 - 16:50*

*Location: ELB 308*

*1. Chains or Supports? An Exploration of "Mommy Track" Policies and the Entrenchment of Gender Expectations: A Case Study in Guangdong*

HAN, Yu, Sun Yat-Sen University

Coauthor: Yapeng Zhu

**Abstract:** The 'Mommy Track' policies have long been shrouded in controversy, hailed by some as a supportive framework for working mothers and criticized by others as a potential perpetuator of traditional gender roles. This research dives into an exploration of how 'Mommy Track' policies shape and impact societal expectations of women, with a concentrated lens on three specific cities within Guangdong Province: Zhongshan, Foshan, and Dongguan. Specifically in Guangdong, the 'Mommy Track' policy, colloquially recognized as the "Mother Post," is designed to cater to women who are obligated to caregiving roles, especially those with children under the age of 12. Utilizing frameworks from familism and social constructivism, this research aims to elucidate how this policy might unintentionally solidify gender expectations across multiple dimensions. Employing a synthesis of in-depth interviews and focus group, the case studies from the identified cities, findings delineate possible ways in which the policy reinforces gender role stereotypes, underscores the importance of familial roles for women, puts a potential cap on career progression, molds perceptions of male roles, curtails opportunities for female leadership, and augments economic dependency among women. This study endeavors to unravel the intricate impact of 'Mommy Track' policies on societal anticipations regarding women, thereby contributing to the broader dialogue on gender, work, and family within the domain of policy interventions.



2. *Work-family conflict among rural working mothers in Western Ghana:*

*A phenomenological study*

BASIA, Kwaku Abrefa, Lingnan University

**Abstract:** Work-family research implicitly carries an urban bias which often frames and universalizes the experiences of workers across the globe. To date, there is a critical paucity of research on rural experiences of work-family intersections. In line with recent calls to expand the scope of work-family scholarship to incorporate diverse realities and experiences of work-family intersections outside the often-studied Global North, this study addresses this significant research gap and argues that there is the need to shift attention to workers and their families in rural societies, where the organisational, professional and urban-centred focus of work-family research is yet to penetrate. Generally, rural societies in Africa generally have a distinct character vis-à-vis urban areas including the close-knit family relations and longstanding extended family systems, limited formal employment opportunities, predominant agrarian work economy and culturally scripted traditional societies characterised by strict gender role orientations. Based on 15 in-depth interviews with rural working mothers in Western Ghana, this study investigates how rurality informs working mothers experiences of work-family conflicts and how they contextualise their lived experiences of reconciling their work and family duties. Lastly, the study highlights the importance of context in shaping working mothers' lived experiences of work-family intersections as well as culturally sensitive approaches for studying work-family intersections.

3. *The Effects of the Two-Child Policy on Gender Equality in China's  
Labour Market*

ZENG, Dexin, London School of Economics and Political Science

**Abstract:** Understanding the effects of the two-child policy on gender equality has been one of the relevant trends in recent years. A growing body of research suggests that the two-child policy has exacerbated gender inequality and further disadvantaged working women in the labour market. Utilising five waves of data from China Family Panel Studies (CFPS), this paper attempts to explore the correlation between the implementation of the two-child policy and the gender wage gap in urban areas. According to the results of the difference-in-differences (DID) estimation, there is no evidence to reveal that the enforcement of the two-child policy is widening the gender wage gap. This paper further argues that the negative effects of the two-child policy on gender equality in the labour market are not as severe as some previous studies have claimed. Moreover, this paper is critical of the ineffectiveness of family planning policies. With the findings, this paper contributes to the literature by extending new viewpoints on policy effects, providing an innovative grounding for future studies on family planning policies and workplace gender equality.

#### 4. *Rethink Network Capital Through Digital Nomads — Chinese Female Digital Nomads and Practice*

GOU, Xinning, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

**Abstract:** Technology originated new kinds of work and lifestyle, such as digital nomads. Digital nomad refers to people who have location-independent work and can travel around while working online. Influenced by COVID-19, the work model changed dramatically. Some companies consider providing work-from-home choices for employees weekly or even announce to shift to a work-from-home model permanently. As a result, in post COVID-19 era, the work-life style of digital nomads requires more attention. The rise of digital nomadism shows a commodification of network capital. It is a case for scholars to explore whether network capital can be commodified and exchanged for other forms of capital—economic, cultural and symbolic (Mancinelli, 2020). Meanwhile, digital nomads are more "middling" ways (Conradson and Latham, 2005) compared with the ultra-rich "globals" (Elliott and Urry, 2010), who naturally take huge financial advantage from network capital, which requires academia to rethinking network capital, enriching the concept from multiple dimensions and combining with intersectionality. This study chose Chinese female digital nomads, who are considered unmatched with the preconditions to become digital nomads (high standards of living, education, favourable visa regimes of their countries of origin (Mancinelli, 2020); ICT-based occupation (Spinks, 2015)) in past studies. However, they account for most China's digital nomads as research objectives. By informing network capital theory and feminist epistemology of female nomadism, I plan to use netnographic research (Kozinets, 2019)—including online immersive engagement and interviews—and content analysis of interviews, articles, and personal blogs circulated through the Internet to understand their work-life style and rethink network capital.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel C

#### Session C7: Gender Precarity: Institutions, Structure, and Agency

*Chair: ZHAN, Yang, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University*

*Time: 15:30 - 16:50*

*Location: ELB 403*

1. *Job-Hopping Games: Control and Consent of Female IT Workers in  
China's High-Tech Industry*

TU, Lingyan, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

SONG, Jing, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** China's high-tech industry has witnessed rapid growth during economic transition in the past twenty years. The over-marketization of China's high-tech industry has contributed to both flexibility and precarity of the employment relation within the industry. Upon this background, IT workers move rapidly between competing high-tech companies to actively manage their own employability. However, the high velocity of this labor market has also driven IT workers to constantly work with uncertainties. Drawing on 26 in-depth interviews, this study reveals that the job-hopping game is highly gendered, where male workers' job-hopping practice is considered by employers as an endorsement of ambition, competence, and profession, while female workers' job-hopping practice is devalued as unstableness, ineffectiveness, and risk of human resource management. As a result, compared with male's upward tendency, the consequences of female IT workers' job-hopping demonstrate multiple patterns as 'upward, downward, or outward'. Even some of female IT workers strategically pivot from the technical position in a high-tech giant to the managerial position in a relatively small-scaled tech company, they fall into a new dilemma which requires them repeatedly justify their leadership qualification. Therefore, female IT workers' consent to join this highly masculinized job-hopping game also contributes to their double marginalization in this process. The findings shed light on how the job mobility of IT occupation is not a level playing field but features new forms of labor control and new patterns of work ethics under China's market transition.

2. *The Triple Creative Bind of Rural Women: Gender, Acquaintance Network, and Platform Governance on Short-Video Platforms*

LIU, Danchen, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

HAN, Ling, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** This paper examines the mechanisms that shape platform rural women creators' platform entrepreneurial labor and cultural production in the context of Chinese platformed cultural industries. Based on fifteen in-depth interviews with rural women creators on Kuaishou who were living in impoverished areas, we analyze a three-level governance constituted by three types of mechanisms across family, local and platform which we term it as the triple creative bind for female content creators. This includes the traditional gender expectation, acquaintance network pressure, and positive energy platform governance. Contrary to current studies on female platform works, we argue that traditional gender norms in rural China, rather than post-feminism discourse, in synergy with platform and state governance, act to discipline rural women creators' self-representation and cultural production. Beyond digital space, these rural women must continuously negotiate with their family members and make gender compromises, and then hustle in multi-layer spaces to nurture platform creative entrepreneurship. While the practice of the short-video platform provides an alternative feminist life apart from the traditional patriarchal rural culture that these women physically dwell on, the experience of their platform work is not all-empowering. This research contributes to de-colonize some of the studies that overlook women's lived experiences beyond digital platforms to foreground family dynamics and material condition as key features for understanding rural women's platform experiences. Keywords: Platform labor, China, gender, acquaintance network, platform governance

*3. From the Emancipated to the Emancipator: An Integrative Perspective  
on Women Social Entrepreneurs' Emancipation Experiences*

SHANG, Liang Echo, The Education University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Recent studies have increasingly recognized the transformative potential of social entrepreneurship. Not only does it present a nexus between business and societal welfare, but social entrepreneurship also emerges as a vehicle of emancipation, particularly for those who entangled in societal and institutional constraints. However, despite the growing interests, the dynamics and mechanisms underlying this emancipatory phenomenon remain under-explored. This paper aims to bridge this gap by diving deep into the emancipatory experiences of women social entrepreneurs in Hong Kong. Hong Kong offers a unique backdrop for this exploration. Despite its status as a developed economy and its international outlook, Hong Kong is deeply rooted in traditional Chinese culture and Confucianism principles, which have shaped many aspects of women's career development and choices, especially in fields like entrepreneurship that often carry male-dominated stereotypes. Using a qualitative multiple-case study design, this research captures the nuanced experiences of eight women who ventured into social entrepreneurship in Hong Kong. Their stories reveal a three-fold journey: first, identifying societal stereotypes and institutional barriers; next, navigating these perceived constraints by engaging social entrepreneurship; and finally, leveraging their newfound agency to effect meaningful change for the wider community. By examining these experiences, this study enriches the theoretical framework of 'entrepreneurship as emancipation' by recognizing the dual roles of women social entrepreneurs as both recipients of emancipation and as agents facilitating emancipation. The study highlights the ways these women enact transition between these roles by navigating, negotiating, and actively interacting with their environments via social entrepreneurship.

4. *How Do Universities Betray Survivors? Navigating Sexual Harassment  
Jurisdictions in Chinese Higher Education*

HUANG, Jiyang, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

HAN, Ling, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** The Institutional Betrayal Theory has revealed that sexual harassment within higher education institutions (HEIs) characterized by a high degree of member interdependence can lead to notably severe repercussions for the victims. However, little is known about how HEIs betray the victim. Some research on Title IX in the United States context has revealed legal endogeneity processes, while in regions characterized by legal ambiguity, the understanding of organizational processes remains unclear. Our research examines the jurisdiction of Chinese HEIs over sexual harassment from the victim's perspective, especially before it became a legal obligation for Chinese universities in 2022. Through textual analysis of 29 university sexual harassment cases and in-depth interviews with 15 victims of sexual harassment in universities, we investigate how sexual harassment grievances in HEIs are enacted within the ambiguous law and the university's pre-existing institutional systems of meaning, and how it responds to survivors' judgments about current organizational structures, organizational responses, and definitions of grievances. We find that the mobilization of sexual harassment rights is rooted in existing practices. Institutionalized jurisdictional power is rooted in taken-for-granted role expectations for teaching, gender, and students; and manifested through a three-tiered academic, administrative, and political meaning system. As the academic institution was excluded from the management system of Chinese universities, the administrative and the political institutions jointly competed for jurisdictional power. Furthermore, the institutional environment won't vanish quickly with new legislation. Future anti-sexual harassment policies need to recognize that organizational roles and individuals' rights mobilization remain intertwined with the original institutional meaning. Keywords: sexual harassment, institutional betrayal, organization, higher education institutions, China



## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel C

**Session C8: Older Populations: Perspectives across Education, Health, and**

**Support Systems**

*Chair: XU, Duoduo, The University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 15:30 - 16:50*

*Location: ELB 405*

1. *Understanding the Profiles of Older Lifelong Learners to Promote  
Recurring Engagement in Lifelong Learning*

SUNG, Pildoo, Hong Kong Baptist University

**Abstract:** Lifelong learning helps older adults adapt to rapid social change, enriches social inclusion, and promotes health and well-being. Specifically, sustained engagement in lifelong learning enables these benefits to be maximized. Existing studies show that older adults with high human, social, and psychological resources are more likely to engage in lifelong learning. However, less is known about the interplay and intertwinement of these resources in facilitating continued engagement among older learners. The present study thus identifies resource profiles of older lifelong learners and their implications for recurring engagement in lifelong learning. Data were drawn from a longitudinal study of 515 older adults, aged 50 years and above, who enrolled in lifelong learning courses in Singapore in 2017-2018. Latent profile analysis explored (1) the groups of individuals with distinct resource profiles at baseline, comprising varying levels of human (education), social (civic attitudes, civic behaviors, and loneliness), and psychological resources (motivation to learn and control/autonomy/self-realization/pleasure), and (2) whether the resource profiles were associated with recurring engagement in lifelong learning, defined as attended another course within six months from the baseline survey. Empirical analyses identified four resource profiles: (1) educated, resourceful (39 percent of older learners), (2) less educated, less resourceful (26 percent), (3) less educated, resourceful (18 percent), and (4) educated, less resourceful (17 percent). Educated but less resourceful learners were less likely than educated and resourceful learners to engage in learning repeatedly. The findings suggest the need for interventions that help learners enrich their civic and psychological resources, facilitating their recurrent engagement in lifelong learning.

## *2. Paternity Leave-Taking and Resident Fathers' Time with Children in Singapore*

LI, Nanxun, National University of Singapore

Prof. Wei-Jun Jean Yeung, National University of Singapore

**Abstract:** Existing literature in Western societies has demonstrated positive associations between paternity leave-taking and fathers' involvement in direct childcare activities after childbirth. However, little is known about whether and how taking paternity leave affects fathers' time spent with children in a short-to-mid-term period in the Asian context, where the length of paternity leave is shorter, and the patriarchal ideology is more prevalent. This study aims to examine the association between paternity leave-taking and fathers' involvement with preschool children from intact families in Singapore using time diary data. We also identify the heterogenous policy effect based on parents' relative educational level and mothers' share of income in the household. This study uses the baseline data from the Singapore Longitudinal Early Development Study, which consists of 3,895 children aged under 7. Tobit regression models combined with augmented inverse propensity weighted (AIPW) estimators showed that paternity leave-taking significantly increased fathers' direct engagement and accessibility time with children by about 21 minutes on a weekday, 93 minutes on a weekend day, and 5 hours in a week even controlling for mothers' involvement time with children. Specifically, fathers significantly spent more time in children's caregiving, playing, and social activities. The positive policy effect on fathers' involvement is more prominent among families where mothers have a higher education or income level than fathers. The results of this study add to the international literature on paternity leave and fathers' involvement from an Asian perspective and have policy implications for enhancing work-family reconciliation, promoting gender equality, and supporting fathers' participation at home.

*3. A Qualitative Study of Older People Living with HIV in Hong Kong:  
Resilience through Downward Comparison amidst Limited Social Support*

SUEN, Yiu Tung, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Research on older people living with HIV (OPHIV) highlights social support as an important dimension of their resilience and coping resources. This study asks: in face of high perceived risk of HIV status disclosure, how do OPHIV cope when they have little social support from family and friends? Methods: This study broadens the study of OPHIV beyond North America and Europe and presents a case study of Hong Kong. In collaboration with the longest-running non-governmental organization working on HIV/AIDS issues in Hong Kong, 21 interviews with OPHIV were conducted. Results: It was found that a vast majority of them did not disclose their HIV status and many lacked social support from family and friends. The OPHIV in Hong Kong turned instead to coping through downward comparison, drawing on a comparison between their current lives with: (1) how they themselves experienced HIV in their earlier life; (2) how HIV was socially treated in the past; (3) how HIV was medically treated in the past; (4) growing up under harsh economic circumstances when industrialization and rapid economic development took place in Hong Kong; (5) Eastern religions, spiritual support and the associated philosophy of ‘letting go’ and acceptance. Conclusions: This study has found that in face of high perceived risk of HIV status disclosure, where OPHIV have little social support from family and friends, they used the psychological mechanism of downward comparison to maintain positivity. The findings also contextualize the lives of OPHIV against the historical development of Hong Kong.

#### *4. Family Structure and Parental Involvement in China: Examining the Role of Grandparents*

LI, Angran, New York University-Shanghai

PAN, Zhidi, Zhejiang University

**Abstract:** Over the past decades, rising divorce rates, massive migration flows, and shifting population structure have led to a diversified family structure in the transitioning Chinese society. Multigenerational ties become an essential feature of family dynamics in China. Conventional wisdom assumes that grandparents may help strengthen parental involvement. Using nationally representative data from the China Education Panel Survey (CEPS), this study examines the effects of living with grandparents on various forms of parental involvement in middle school. The results show that living with grandparents has no significant impact on parental involvement in the urban schooling context. However, rural grandparents can significantly and positively influence parent-child communication, parenting minoring, and parental expectations. In addition, living with grandparents rarely mitigates the adverse influences of parental absence on parental involvement. The findings have important implications for understanding the variation in parenting practices and educational inequality from a multigenerational perspective.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel D

#### Session D1: Social Mobility and Inequality from Migration Perspectives

*Chair: SAKAMOTO, Arthur, Hong Kong Baptist University*

*Time: 16:55 - 18:15*

*Location: ELB 206*

1. *Negotiating Leisure Constraints in the Pandemic: The Case of Migrant Domestic Workers in Hong Kong*

YONAHA, Yvan Ysmael Tobias

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** How did migrant domestic workers accomplish serious leisure during the pandemic (Stebbins, 1982)? I look at the uneven effects of the disruptions in leisure activities as governments introduced lockdowns and physical distancing measures to curb the spread of the coronavirus. While the restrictions were applied broadly across societies, it is necessary to examine how these played out for ‘temporary’ migrant communities subjected to different conditions of stay in their host countries. I address this question through the experience of One Filipino Migrants – a network of Filipino domestic worker organizations in Hong Kong engaged in advocacy work for migrant workers’ welfare even before the pandemic. In the city, the prescribed living-in arrangements and the absence of spatial separation between home and work life steer these mostly female workers to spend their leisure time outside their domicile. But with the spread of COVID-19, their leisure activities are now met with stringent physical distancing measures. Through interviews and participant observation, I narrate how their pre-pandemic activities were scaled down through government and employer regulation of their use of leisure spaces and mandated time off. But I also show their capacity to negotiate with constraints through behavioral changes while challenging notions that portray them as virus carriers. This paper adds to the discussions on leisure constraints in disaster situations. But it also highlights how leisure agents can come up with negotiation tactics to maintain participation. Stebbins, R. A. (1982). Serious Leisure: A Conceptual Statement. *The Pacific Sociological Review*, 25(2), 251–272.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/1388726>

2. *Urban-rural Disparities in Lone Time Patterns among Older Adults in Migration China: A Sequence Analysis Approach*

LIU, Yongye; ZHOU, Muzhi; ZHOU, Jinni

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Guangzhou)

**Abstract:** China is currently facing challenges of population aging and a declining birth rate, along with the unique household registration system (hukou) that has created significant disparities in urban and rural development. This study aims to analyze older adults' daily time use patterns in urban and rural China, focusing on the variations in time spent alone and with others. Using data from the 2008 China Time Use Survey (CTUS), we first employed sequence analysis to examine the time use patterns of 4,640 older adults aged 60 and above on a weekday and a weekend. Our results revealed significant differences in time use patterns between urban and rural older adults. Specifically, older adults in rural areas spent significantly more time alone than their urban counterparts. Further analysis showed that rural older adults also had significantly less time spent with family members aged 65 and above when compared to urban older adults. In the context of urbanization and population mobility, rural older adults are more likely to become "empty nesters," potentially exacerbating inequalities in social welfare for older adults between urban and rural areas. This study highlights the importance of addressing these disparities to promote social welfare equity among older adults in China. By understanding the time use patterns of older adults in urban and rural settings, policymakers and practitioners can develop targeted interventions to improve the well-being of this vulnerable population.



3. *Predisposing drivers of skilled migration: Re-examining the self-selection hypothesis in Africa*

AGBADI, Pascal

Lingnan University

**Abstract:** Cross-border migration of skilled individuals has socioeconomic significance for both sending and receiving societies globally. Borjas' self-selection theory often explains skilled migration by postulating that variations in economic and political conditions predispose skilled individuals to consider cross-border migration. However, empirical work accurately testing the hypotheses in Borjas' self-selection theory is rare. The only existing study that tested these hypotheses examined how income distribution predisposes skilled Europeans to consider migration, but failed to control for other theoretically relevant predisposing factors such as human development and unfavourable political conditions. In Africa, the current context for this paper, skilled migration to other countries has become the norm, dominating debates on its costs and benefits for the continent. What is lacking in the literature is empirical work that delineates the predisposing drivers of skilled African migration. To address this gap, the current paper re-examines the hypotheses in Borjas' self-selection theory using microdata on adults from 33 African countries. The paper finds that income inequality reverses the positive effect of higher education on migration intention in Africa, even after controlling for the effect of political terror, unequal economic opportunity, and higher human development, confirming the wealth maximization hypothesis by Borjas. The paper also further compares how the self-selection hypothesis works among highly educated individuals' intentions to migrate specifically to Africa, Europe, North America, or other regions, versus those without concrete migration plans. The paper reveals that, Borjas' hypothesis holds for migration intentions from Africa to North America and Europe. The implications of these findings are discussed.

*4. Inequalities of Gender and Forced Migration: The lived experiences of women's physical intimate partner violence in Myanmar*

AYE, Myat Myat Win

Hong Kong Baptist University

**Abstract:** Intimate partner violence (IPV) has been existing as a significant social problem in society. Among various forms of IPV against women, physical violence is the most prevalent one. Even though it cannot be denied that IPV can be found in any geographical location and socioeconomic condition, women living in political and social inequalities context have high vulnerability to the violence. Consequently, IPV knowledge on forced migrants becomes salient. Nonetheless, evidence on the analysis of women's physical IPV experiences is limited. Thus, this study analyzes internally displaced women's physical IPV lived experiences. In-depth interviews were conducted among 17 women with physical IPV experiences from their husband or ex-husbands and are living in internally displaced camps of Myanmar. Data was analyzed with an interpretive phenomenological analysis. Four themes emerged from the analysis: financial constraint and challenging gender norm, reinforcement of traditional gender role, husband's alcohol drinking and romantic jealousy. Women's IPV stories were embedded in conventional gender norms, intersecting with forced migration. The study revealed how uncertain, vulnerable economic and social situations in displaced area triggered strains and exaggerated deep-rooted gender norms that further resulted in the violence. As such, more emphasis should be put not only on financial support and women's empowerment but also on addressing traditional gender norms. Keywords: physical intimate partner violence, internal displacement, gender norms, women survivors

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel D

#### Session D2: Crime, Victimization, and Delinquency Online

*Chair: ZHONG, Hua, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 16:55 - 18:15*

*Location: ELB 207*

## *1. Cybercrime in Asia: A Brief Discussion*

LAU, Laure

Asia Pacific Association of Technology and Society

**Abstract:** This presentation will be passing through and briefly examining some contentious issues in relation to cybercrime that countries in Asia are facing pre global pandemic of Covid 19 and thereafter, by looking at them via 'socio-legal' lens how some of these countries in Asia in tackling this pressing issue of cybercrime, despite of ever evolving in technological advancement. Particularly, some nation blocks in Asia are off the marker and others are fair better, and why this so. On the other hand, some nation blocks within Asia are regarded very much advance in their dealing with cybercrime. So, in this talk, would therefore provide a snapshot of picture on how, where, when and why certain nation blocks in Asia are heading relatively in the right direction and reason why others are not.

2. *An Integrative Analysis of Cyberfraudsters' Motivations: A Comprehensive Examination of Conventional Criminological Theories*

ASIAMA, Aikins Amoako; ZHONG, Hua

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** The study employs an integrative approach, merging rational choice, anomie, social bonds, learning theories, and space transition thesis to comprehensively analyze cyber fraudsters' motivations. Using ordinal logistic regression analysis, the reveals that higher formal costs and stronger social bonds decrease the likelihood of cyberfraudsters' continued involvement in cyber fraud. Conversely, perceptions of financial rewards and reduction of inequality-related strain tend to increase such involvement. The findings also support the notion that the use of neutralization techniques and the perception of de-individualization in the virtual world moderate the relationship between perceived costs and engagement in cyber fraud, while strengthening the impact of perceived benefits. This study enriches the classical rational choice framework by integrating mainstream criminological theories and cyber-specific theories, underscoring the significance of formal and informal deterrents, financial and non-financial incentives, and the characteristics of cyberspace in developing effective strategies against cyber fraud.

*3. Mobility Patterns of Members of Organized Crime Group: A GIS-based cluster analysis using cell phone traces*

Yu, Jinjin and CAI, Tianji

University of Macau

**Abstract:** Large-scale urban sensing data such as mobile phone traces are emerging as an important data source for studying human mobility. With location related information (i.e longitude and latitude), the data represent a unique opportunity to monitor individual mobility flows in a timely manner and with proper spatial aggregation. Modeling such data from time and space provides spatiotemporal pattern of human mobility, which has a close link to individual's behavior mode and social role. Utilizing data collected from members of a fraud group, our study aims to speculate the role of members within the group using their cell phone traces. In particular, we analyzed spatiotemporal pattern of the location data of all 24 users and linked it to their social network characteristics. We found that these 24 users can be divided into three groups, and each group has a fixed trajectory pattern by temporal and spatial characteristics. The results also showed that these three groups have their own trajectory modes, indicating that the members of the three groups are closely related and are more likely to engage in some group activities. Hopefully, the results could be useful for finding trace of criminal behaviors.

4. *A Study on the Self-disclosure of Female Victims of Intimate Partner  
Violence (FVIPV) on Social Media*

GU, Yuxuan; HU, Yuyin

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** This research aims to explore the phenomenon of self-disclosure by female victims of intimate partner violence (FVIPV) on social media platforms, specifically focusing on the case of Zhihu in China. By employing a cyberfeminist lens, the study seeks to understand the motivations, experiences, and implications of FVIPV survivors sharing their stories online. The research will employ qualitative methods, including content analysis, interviews, and participant observations, to gain insights into the role of social media platforms in empowering FVIPV survivors and raising awareness about domestic violence issues in China's digital landscape. The findings of this research will contribute to the existing literature on cyberfeminism, intimate partner violence, and social media activism in China.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel D

#### **Session D3: Civil Society and Control: Dissent, Repression, and Resistance**

*Chair: KU, Agnes, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology*

*Time: 16:55 - 18:15*

*Location: ELB 203*



1. *After the Armored Cars, Tear Gas, and Batons: The Role of Emotions in Protest Disengagement under Violent and Legal Repression in Hong Kong*

HUANG, Sidi; LEE, Jaemin

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** After the abeyance of a series of protests in Hong Kong, how do those engaged citizens perceive the current political opportunity structures and, if any, choose to continue resistance or disengage? Theories of social movements suggest that changes in repression patterns—violent to legal repression (implementation of National Security Law) in Hong Kong’s case—could arguably be the most decisive factor for protest disengagement. In this paper, we develop an argument that the repression-disengagement relationship is more subtle and complex, depending on how the protesters feel emotionally against what they perceive as repression through a variety of agents that force self-censorship in the post-movement period. We conducted in-depth interviews from 26 Hong Kong citizens with diverse backgrounds, asking detailed questions about (i) their observations and perceptions of repressive actions; (ii) descriptions of self-censored actions (daily behaviors, getting along with coworkers, friends, and family, social media use); (iii) decision-making processes of disengagement or continued resistance current activities. We combined qualitative interpretations and quantitative sentiment analysis (BERT model) to analyse the rich text data transformed from our informants’ lived experiences. Our main finding is that emotional responses to their forced self-censorship play out significantly for their eventual decision about disengagement or continued resistance. This study contributes a novel emotion-based understanding of repression and protest disengagement as well as new findings on Hong Kong social movements. (This is joint work with Jaemin Lee, assistant professor in sociology at The Chinese University of Hong Kong)

2. *Bringing the "Collective" Back into Radicalization: The Birth of  
Uncivil Disobedience in the 2019 Hong Kong Protests*

TAI, Sherman

National Centre for Social Research (NatCen International)

**Abstract:** The 2019 Hong Kong Protests represented an unprecedented phenomenon of ‘collective radicalization’, in which (i) radicals emerged, (ii) moderates supported them, and (iii) protestors successfully coordinated their actions with each other; all despite the civil society’s decades-long commitment to ‘peaceful, rational and nonviolent’ disobedience. Using the Protests as a ‘least likely’ case, this study asks: Why and how do social movements radicalize collectively? The existing theoretical approaches, including the socio-psychological, structural-agentic and antagonistic relational models, fell short in explaining the puzzle. Drawing from figurational sociology, this study builds an interactionist relational model that emphasizes the myriad interactions between actors in separate but interlinked positions which at once compose and are conditioned by the relational field. This model can reveal the conducive relations between protestors that supported radicalization, in addition to antagonistic interactions that provoke radicalization. 14 in-depth interviews with radicals, moderates and organizational activists shed light on the relational mechanisms of (i) individual radicalization (emergence of radicals), (ii) mass radicalization (acceptance of radicals), and (iii) coordination (cooperation of protestors). This study makes fresh contributions to political sociology. Theoretically, I have (i) brought the ‘collective’ back into the conceptualization of radicalization, defining it as a process undertaken by the masses too, rather than just the vanguards; (ii) supplemented the significant gap with the lack of interviews of radicals in the extant literature on social movements in authoritarian regimes; and (iii) linked the increasingly limited field of social movement studies with wider currents in sociology, notably figurational sociology, criminology and game theory.

3. *The Function Creep of Surveillance Cameras and the Resistance to It  
in a Chinese Middle School*

XU, Jianhua

University of Macau

**Abstract:** China has rapidly evolved into a surveillance society. While much attention has been paid to describing the leviathan of surveillance cameras in China, empirical evidence on the mechanisms of surveillance creep remains limited. Using data collected through fieldwork and in-depth interviews, this study explores the function creep of surveillance cameras in R School, a middle school in northern China. We find that surveillance cameras were first introduced for security purposes, but they were quickly expanded to discipline students and avoid school responsibilities in management. We further examine the potential resistance to the creep of surveillance cameras, and the implication of the resistance to the school in its formation of a panopticon educational institution.

4. *The State of Exception and Its Consequence of Social Control: The case of university gate access control in China*

SUN, Qixuan

University of Macau

**Abstract:** The state of exception has emerged during the Covid-19 pandemic, in which the social control measures have been intensified. With the alleviation of the state of exception, some newly introduced measures of social control could be abandoned, while others may remain. The controversial access control policy adopted by many Chinese universities is a good example. After the pandemic, many Chinese universities have largely retained the gate access control measures to restrict visitors. Using data collected from participant observation, interviews and content analysis of social media, this study examines how the pandemic has served as a catalyst for Chinese universities to retain the controversial access control policy. We find that the state of exception of the pandemic has served to silence the criticism from both insiders and outsiders for the policy. In addition, after the pandemic, the universities are reluctant to give up the newly gained power of social control. We argue that the Chinese university access control policy has limited the academic freedom of higher education, and reduced the nature of universities as a public good. This study not only provides the latest empirical data on how Chinese universities practice the access control policy, but it also calls for a reflection on the creep of social control caused by “the state of exception” as a catalyst.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel D

**Session D4: Changes and Continuities: Gender, Intimacy and Marriage in**

**Contemporary China**

*Chair: Ji, Yingchun, Shanghai University*

*Time: 16:55 - 18:15*

*Location: ELB 303*

*1. Intimacy in an Era of Uncertainty: Cross-border couples between Hong Kong and Shenzhen during the pandemic*

SHI, Xinyu; SONG, Jing

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Intimate relationship has faced unprecedented challenges under the COVID-19 Pandemic, especially for cross-border couples. This study focuses on heterosexual married couples who had lived separately in Hong Kong and Shenzhen and examines the continuity and change in their intimate relationship in an era of uncertainty. These couples had lived several hours apart in travel time. Under the pandemic, quarantine measures and social restrictions disrupted their commuting patterns and forced them into long-term separation or difficult reunion. In response, these couples have developed adaptive strategies in negotiating their relationship to serve individual and family well-being. Based on 22 in-depth interviews, this study finds how cross-border couples have negotiated their relationship during the pandemic depending on their economic resources, emotional and caregiving needs, and gender ideologies. Some couples decided to pursue their respective careers in the two cities, and some others prioritized the status of being together, which meant that either the husband or the wife would become a dependent or trailing spouse. Their strategies suggest the rising importance of individualistic well-being and self-development, the increasing significance of emotional interdependence, and the persisting gender expectations in a time of uncertainties. The intimate relationship among highly educated young people illustrates mixed characteristics of being fragile and resilient, given the coexisting desires for individualistic happiness and family solidarity, as well as their shifting demands of being close and staying apart.

2. *Reading Danmei Novels in China: Female gaze, male-male romance,  
and Gen Z women's fantasy over intimacy*

LIU, Xi, LIN, Zeyu and JI, Yingchun

Shanghai University and Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University

**Abstract:** With the rising individualization, the Chinese society has witnessed a continued postponing of and declining of marriage formation. It is thus urgent to understand how the rising Generation Z views intimacy and romance in China's New Era. This research focused on readers of Danwei Novel, which is a male-male romance genre originated in Japan and has been popular among Chinese young women, particularly the Gen Z. We intend to explore contemporary intimate relationship imagination in China. We interviewed 18 Chinese women of Generation Z who are Danmei fans concerning their reading experiences and their views about intimacy. We find that their reading experiences have reversed the traditional Male Gaze into a complicated Female Gaze through which women enjoy watching and assessing male roles who are involved in romance. Different from the older generation of female readers, Gen Z women abandoned the traditional despicable female characters who were busters of the male romance, and embrace the modern, independent female roles who are smart, competent and career oriented (Gao Shi Ye), not dragged back by Love Brain (Lian Ai Nao), in contrast to male roles entangled in romance. These women also show a strong preference of the romance type featured by the strong dominance versus strong subordination pair over the traditional strong dominance versus weak subordination pair. The Gen Z women demonstrate a strong desire of egalitarian intimate relationship and aspiration for a modern female image defined by personal development instead of the traditional one defined by men and gendered family roles. Key words: Intimate relationship; Male-male Romance, Youth Culture; Danmei culture; Generation Z

### *3. Young Chinese's Modern Arranged Marriage and Mosaic Familialism in Shanghai*

Yingchun Ji, Yue Liu and Rui Kang

Shanghai University

**Abstract:** During the rapid process of China's socioeconomic modernization, its institutions of marriage and family are undergoing profound transformation. Yet, some recent research has suggested a resurgence of arranged marriage with parents' interfering with adult children's romantic life. This study employed data from semi-structured interviews with recently wedded young people and their parents. We investigated how young adults and their parents were both involved in marriage formation process and negotiated between tradition and modernity. In this joint process of intergenerational cooperated marriage arrangement, young people and their parents are playing different roles as the accommodating decision makers and respectful advisers, respectively. They agreed that a modern marriage based on individual, romantic love was also a union affair between two families which fits the essence of traditional arranged marriage. Different from traditional patriarchal, hierarchical intergenerational relationship, children felt grateful for parents' role in a relatively intimate and egalitarian way. Furthermore, they regarded getting married and considering parents' opinions and preference in their marriage decision to filial piety to their parents. Whereas parents continued to provide financial support for and kept close emotional connections with their adult children. It merits note that in the children-parents duo in the marriage formation process, mothers played a salient and significant role which facilitated the turning of traditional patriarchal, distant intergenerational relationship into a warmhearted, supportive family union. At the same time when the mother's traditional gender role was entrenched, their status in the family was also lifted and becoming more important and salient. **Keywords:** Modern arranged marriage; Mosaic familism; Youth and love; Marriage formation; Gender roles



4. *Women at a Crossroads: Split households and gender relations among urban-urban migrants in China*

Yali He-Schaefer and C. Cindy Fan

University of California, Los Angeles

**Abstract:** The research on split households in China and elsewhere has tended to focus on rural-urban migration. But the phenomenon of split householding, in which members of the family live separately, is also common among urban-urban migrants, despite the relatively little scholarly attention this group has received. Against this backdrop, this paper is concerned with urban-urban migrants in China, with a particular focus on how women in these long-distance relationships negotiate relational power in their split households. This research draws on a combination of 30 in-depth, semi-structured interviews and discourse analysis of public socio-political rhetoric, both historical and contemporary, regarding husbands and wives from split households to shed light on the contemporary relationships between urban, educated Chinese couples and patriarchal values rooted in the Confucian family system. Our findings suggest that the arrangement of split households makes visible the two conflicting ideologies of longstanding Confucian patriarchy on one hand and women's subjectivities and yearning for autonomy on the other. Split householding incidentally serves as an outlet for women to gain a sense of respite from their "wifely duties" and discover new forms of independence. While such newly constructed freedoms are not a consciously engineered result, our findings support the notion that gender relations in China are at a crossroads between entrenched patriarchal ideologies and narrow spaces of alternative gender practices.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel D

#### Session D5: Unpacking Cultural Sociology: From Personal to Public Culture

*Chair: ZHENG, Wenjuan, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology*

*Time: 16:55 - 18:15*

*Location: ELB 306*

1. *How Catholics Make Ethical Evaluations in Post-Reform China:  
Bishop Aloysius Jin Luxian and His Contested Legacy*

MOK, Chit Wai John

Hong Kong Polytechnic University

**Abstract:** Making ethical evaluations (i.e., judgments, justifications, and decisions) in an authoritarian situation often leads to serious challenges. Combining the sociologist Ann Swidler's framework of culture as a "tool kit" and anthropology of ordinary ethics, this paper examines how Catholics in post-reform China navigate a situation that is often characterized by uncertainties and conflicting ethical demands. Based on 47 in-depth interviews with mainland Catholics and Catholics in Hong Kong who had repeatedly visited the Church in China, as well as archival research in the Church's and governmental publications, this paper argues that when facing the need to make ethical evaluations, the teachings of the strongly institutionalized Church, as an alternative public culture, laid the foundation for the interviewees to make ethical evaluations. On top of that, they also deployed and hybridized a wide range of cultural resources to afford their judgments. Despite the state's efforts in socializing its subjects with its ideologies, the interviews show that Catholic practitioners overwhelmingly defend the Church's position in cases of conflict with the state. Meanwhile, the majority are also willing to accept compromises conditionally. The paper will investigate the case of the powerful Bishop of Shanghai, Aloysius Jin Luxian, and his contested legacy to illustrate the arguments. This study challenges simplistic accounts that dichotomize Catholics in China as either uncompromising warriors or the state's puppets. It also complicates the prevailing notion of the Chinese government's effectiveness in socializing its citizens.

## *2. Exploring Cultural and Gendered Self-Presentation in Online Dating through Image Clustering*

KAMELSKI, Tobias

Lingnan University

**Abstract:** Research on user behaviour and motivations in online dating is prevalent across disciplines, but the actual self-presentation of users in practice is frequently overlooked. An in-depth analysis of self-presentation and associated practices in picture-based online dating will provide a key understanding of online dating's self-regulatory potential and the dominant self-presentations that are regulated by it. The main research question of this analysis is how online dating users present themselves through configurations of profile pictures and whether there are cultural and gendered differences. This study focuses on applying unsupervised, machine learning-based image clustering to identify visual clusters of self-presentations in picture-based online dating. In doing so, this study will explicate and describe the visual discursive space of picture-based online dating, as well as the variations across culture, gender, and gender affinity for social interaction. This paper first introduces the study's data format and unique challenges in clustering online dating images and profiles. It then reviews the workflow of the employed machine learning-based image clustering. The major discussed aspects are (1) feature mapping, (2) dimension reduction, (3) vector pooling, and (4) the clustering itself. Subsequently, the findings of the clustering based 13 countries across 5 continents, as well as gender and target audience orientation will be introduced. The results of the illustrated image clustering will allow for an understanding of the culture and gender-specific nuances in self-presentation. These results will also serve as a basis for further qualitative analysis in successive studies.

### *3. Global Trends in Gender Equality Attitudes: A Demographic Perspective*

AKALIYSKI, Plamen, Lingnan University

**Abstract:** Gender equality attitudes are vital for societal development and well-being. While progress has been celebrated, our analysis addresses two crucially neglected factors in previous research: the overrepresentation of Western societies and global demographic shifts favoring non-Western societies. Utilizing data from the World Values Survey and European Values Study spanning 1991 to 2022 across 100+ countries (representing up to 90 percent of the global population), we question whether increased global living standards have translated into improved gender equality attitudes. Our findings reveal a stark divergence in attitudes between Western and non-Western societies. This divergence not only challenges the notion of uniform global progress in gender equality but also highlights a disconcerting trend: the world population as a whole has failed to significantly increase its support for gender equality over the last three decades. We attribute this concerning trend to demographic patterns; countries with low gender equality support exhibit higher fertility rates and younger average ages of childbirth, perpetuating low support for gender equality. Moreover, within countries, women with low gender equality support often have higher fertility rates and younger ages of birth, thus slowing national-level changes. We conclude with implications for policy-makers and call for a closer examination of demographic influences in understanding global gender equality attitudes.

4. *How do Scientific Knowledge and Technical Objects obtain Social Significance? An analysis of the camera language and subtitles of science videos*

DAI, Haoran, Peking University

**Abstract:** The public dissemination of science is intricately linked with its integration into society, a process through which science acquires its social significance. However, recent research has underscored the limited textual depth in popular science communication, particularly when targeting broader audiences. Conversely, in Chinese society, science assumes a pivotal role as a catalyst for societal advancement, serving as a foundational element distinguishing contemporary China from the Maoist era. Does science video content convey the interplay between science and the state, or does it diminish the intricate relationship between science and Chinese politics? This study examines recent science video cases from Xinhua and other Chinese state media, focusing on the use of visual language to depict technical objects such as solar electric panels. The findings reveal that technical knowledge is predominantly conveyed through narration and expert interviews, while technical objects are employed to illustrate the social implications of these narratives. Popular science videos often relegate technical objects to the backdrop, emphasizing their role in underscoring China's impressive achievements. The authenticity of the narrative is not contingent upon an intricate understanding of technical objects but rather hinges on the overall storytelling. These videos offer public viewers a fundamental introduction to technology and its national significance without delving into the historical intricacies of each technical object. They construct a geographical representation of a thriving China through skillful scene transitions and the strategic inclusion of select technological objects across the nation, reinforcing the idea of nationwide prosperity driven by technological advancements.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel D

#### Session D6: Health, Families, and Communities in the Global Pandemic

*Chair: CHIU, Jenny, Lingnan University*

*Time: 16:55 - 18:15*

*Location: ELB 308*

## *1. Mental Health of The Elderly – Pre-Covid19 and Post-Covid19*

HUANG, Wanyun, University College London

Coauthors: Yucheng He, Weizheng Wang, Wanyun Huang, Yuzi Wang

**Abstract:** In recent decades, the world has been experiencing a pronounced demographic transition characterized by an increasing elderly population. This shift, primarily driven by technological and medical advancements, has ushered in a myriad of socio-economic challenges, yet also offers unique opportunities. One of the most pressing concerns in this context is the mental well-being of the elderly. Depression, in particular, has emerged as a predominant issue, affecting a significant portion of this demographic. The year 2020 marked a pivotal moment in global health with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The elderly, already grappling with various health challenges, found themselves at the intersection of heightened vulnerability to the virus and the profound psychological implications of prolonged isolation measures. The pandemic's multifaceted impact on this group's mental health necessitated a deeper exploration. In response to this, the present research employed the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D), with a specific focus on the CESD8 variant, to provide a comprehensive analysis of the trends in elderly depression and the nuanced impacts of the pandemic. The findings were revealing. There was a discernible shift in depression levels among the elderly during the pandemic, with certain factors such as age, gender, and socio-economic conditions playing pivotal roles in influencing these levels. A standout observation was the correlation between a lower quality of life in preceding waves and heightened depression, suggesting a potential causal relationship. Furthermore, the study delved into socio-economic determinants, uncovering that an individual's financial situation was a significant predictor of their depression scores. In light of these findings, the research emphasizes the imperative for targeted interventions. As the world grapples with challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic, there's an urgent need to prioritize and address the mental well-being of the aging population, ensuring they receive the support and resources necessary for a healthy mental state.



*2. Embedded Inequality: Personal network dynamics and mental health  
disparity during COVID-19 in Wuhan*

SU, Zhixiang, University of California, Berkeley

**Abstract:** Individuals draw upon their personal networks for social support during crises, and recent studies have identified inductive typologies of those networks that bear inequalities in life outcomes. These two lines of research are yet to be combined within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. This study examines the relationship between the pandemic-induced social distancing and personal network dynamics, and investigates networks' health consequences across different socioeconomic status (SES) groups. Using both waves of data from the COVID-19 Pandemic and Social Network Panel Study (2020-2021), a representative egocentric network study of the college population in Wuhan, I employ random forests and spectral clustering to identify 7 types of core networks based on 43 network variables (i.e., Family, Friend, Restricted, Family and Community, School and Career, Just Activity, and Homebody). Results demonstrate that individuals increasingly turn to Family and Friend networks and withdraw from School and career and Just Activity as local social distancing policies become stricter. Personal fixed-effect models reveal the heterogeneous mental health impact of such network dynamics after controlling for potential confounders. Changing into Family and Friend networks yields the most favorable mental health outcomes for high-SES groups but less pronounced or even reversed for low-SES groups. Further analysis demonstrates that network differences in the level of depressive symptoms mainly result from the distinctive degree of received and perceived social support embedded in these networks. The current research highlights how the pandemic lays bare unequal resources embedded in personal networks and exacerbates social inequality in health.

3. *Navigating Im/mobilities: Spatio-Temporality of Cross-Border  
Familyhood Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic*

CHIU, Tuen Yi Jenny; Ruby YS LAI

Lingnan University

**Abstract:** Despite the proliferation of cross-border family and migration studies, previous research foregrounded the spatiality of migration experiences, leaving the temporal a subordinate dimension in the examination of migration. Although studies investigating temporal processes of migration emerged in recent years, few studies theorized how the spatial and the temporal shape each other in conditioning migrant im/mobilities and family lives. To fill this lacuna, this article adopts a spatio-temporal lens to examine how Mainland Chinese-Hong Kong cross-border families maintained their familyhood before and during the pandemic. Drawing on in-depth interview and ethnographic data collected from 145 parents and children in cross-border families, we illuminate how spatial and temporal constraints compelled cross-border families to utilize heightened spatial and temporal border crossings (on a daily or weekly basis) as a strategy to maintain familyhood before the pandemic, and how these families made responsive and adaptive arrangements when such spatio-temporal flexibility was disabled due to the various border restrictions implemented on both sides of Mainland China and Hong Kong during the pandemic. We explicate how cross-border families experienced temporal disorientation due to the intense sense of uncertainty and prolonged stagnation, and how that fundamentally structured the trajectories and functioning of the families. Through illustrating how the temporal and the spatial dynamically shape and structure each other, we clarify how spatial and temporal dimensions of mobilities, and their different combinations, lead to voluntary or involuntary im/mobilities in the cross-border family context. Overall, the findings shed light on the relationship between the spatiality and temporality of im/mobilities.

#### 4. *Dirty Dancing: The gendering of Hong Kong's Covid-19 Pandemic*

GROVES, Julian, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

LEE, Wendy, The University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** In what ways can pandemics be gendered? Sociological work on gender and COVID-19 has compared the pandemic's relative impact and disruption to the lives of men and women. Drawing on Susan Sontag's (2009) essay, *Illness as Metaphor*, we offer a deeper understanding of how pandemics are not just episodes of disruption to men's and women's lives, but also episodes in the continuity, construction and policing of masculinities and femininities in the context of aging, wealth, power, disease, and sexuality. Specifically, we describe how women who attended ballroom dance studios during Hong Kong's "fourth wave" COVID-19 outbreak were constructed by mainstream media and on social media platforms as "tai-tais" (wealthy and leisured) who were sexually exploiting and emasculating their poorer male dance instructors (referred to as "gigolos" and "pets"), ultimately blaming the women for spreading the virus. We discuss the implications of this gendering of the pandemic (and other illnesses) for public policy, and for women's recreation more generally.

## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel D

#### Session D7: Work and Employment in China

*Chair: DU, Shichao, Fudan University*

*Time: 16:55 - 18:15*

*Location: ELB 403*

*1. Diploma ratcheting: why China's elite undergraduates escape employment and flock to graduate education?*

FU, Haodong, Zhejiang University

**Abstract:** "In recent years, the decline of high-skill job opportunities and the periodic economic downturn have precipitated an employment crisis among university graduates. In mainland China, elite undergraduates have increasingly opted for graduate degrees over immediate employment, reshaping undergraduate education into an intensely competitive sphere focused on securing graduate program placements. Termed 'Diploma Ratcheting,' this shift is often attributed to diploma inflation and economic challenges, while changes within higher education in driving this trend have been largely overlooked. Through 50 semi-structured interviews with senior-year students contemplating whether to pursue graduate degrees at a prestigious Chinese university, the research reveals how higher education influences students' collective graduation destinations during an employment crisis era. In contemporary mainland China, increased state administrative intervention and diminished market influence in elite Chinese universities constitute the uneven distribution of state, market and academic power in the university field: State-dominated ideology on campus constrains their multiple identity construction, while weakened market and academic influences failed to nurture students' aspirations and employability for the workplace, which limits elite students' choices and causes anxiety about their human capital development. Elite university students, who typically adopt individualistic and meritocratic discourse and prioritize relative competitive advantages, thereby tend to pursue graduate degrees to secure employment competencies and await better job opportunities. Students from different class backgrounds adopt three ways of attaining graduate program positions: Upper-middle-class students' 'alchemical attainment' through studying abroad, middle-class students' 'sponsored attainment' through postgraduate recommendations and lower-class students' 'contest attainment' through postgraduate entrance exams."

2. *"Professionalization" the Informal: The Career Training of Yuesao  
and the Path of Women's Career Choice*

WANG, Liyuan, East China University of Science and Technology

**Abstract:** Recently, with the promotion of national policies, news media and customers' demands, Yuesao has become the choice for most women to re-employment. However, under the favorable environment of the rapid development of Yuesao industry and the introduction of the three-child policy, the government withdrew from the stage of Yuesao vocational training, and there was an imbalance between supply and demand for a time. The existing researches have not highlighted 'Yuesao' from the domestic industry or care work, but also focused on the exploration of the labor-employment relationship from the perspective of emotional labor, ignoring the intermediary role at the meso level. Based on the field observation of Yuesao training institutions in southern, northern and eastern regions and in-depth interviews with the founders as well as Yuesao groups, this study found that Yuesao training industry has formed different genres in the market according to regions, all of which emphasize the "professionalism" of their respective factions, which poses new challenges for Yuesao groups to select suitable courses. The intermediary's creation of the "professional" image of Yuesao emphasizes "not only being able to do it, but also being able to say it", and the importance of emotional intelligence and professionalism; The mutual promotion between customers and intermediaries has enhanced the demand for knowledge of "scientific parenting"; Yuesao internalizes "professionalism", which helps change image cognition, improving professional skills, and labour categories are also facing new transformation. Yuesao constantly breaks through themselves on the road of professionalism, trying to "building a full new life", and expects to realize the career transformation and path of such a successful model as "domestic labours-lecturer-entrepreneurship" within Yuesao industry. Yet how can the spontaneous informal "professionalism" be theorized systematically? The trend of free market will also bring mixed cohabitation phenomena, and the supervision system will become a major difficulty, and how to ensure the social welfare of the Yuesao mobile group, inseparable from the support and governance of future national policies. Keywords: Yuesao; Informal; Professional training; Career transition

3. *Pre-manufacturing Consent: The Recruitment Process and Datafication of ‘Tool Person(s)’ in the Chinese Platform Economy*

WANG, Ziyu, Hong Kong Baptist University

Coauthor: Wenjuan Zheng

**Abstract:** While previous research has predominantly focused on managerial control over workers and the influence of algorithms on workers’ well-being during the production process (referred to as “manufacturing consent”), few studies have empirically investigated how algorithm control has expanded to the recruitment phase. Through an ethnographic study conducted at the HR department of one of the world’s largest international high-tech companies, supplemented by interviews with HR staff and job seekers, this research examines how high-tech companies employ big data, algorithms, extensive interviews, and entrepreneurship discourse to screen, select, and train self-motivated, highly skilled workers. We term this process “pre-manufacturing consent.” The study reveals that big data and algorithms have streamlined numerous aspects of the hiring process, facilitating datafication of salary and personal information, which in turn artificially inflates an employer’s market power, thereby reducing workers’ bargaining power. However, despite these advancements, employers still adhere to costly and time-consuming interviews to further assess workers’ willingness to conform to a demanding “996” work culture (i.e., working from 9 am to 9 pm, six days a week). Consequently, we argue that the recruitment process, bolstered by big data and algorithms have become an alternative means of worker control. It enables certain high-tech companies to swiftly identify and assimilate ideal workers who are predisposed to consent to an abusive working culture beforehand.

4. *Fading: How 90's workers divested from collective study on one steel-producing company in Northeast China*

SHI, Jiacheng, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Previous research on the wave of layoffs during the '90s restructuring of state-owned enterprises in China primarily focused on macroeconomic factors, organisation systems, or studies on 'Northeast Culture,' with limited analysis of the layoffs process. This study takes one steel-producing company in northeast China as a case study to describe the situation after the wave of layoffs of large factory-run collective enterprises in the 1990s. The concept of 'fading' has been put forward to explain how individual workers gradually and hierarchically break away from the factory in the 90s state-owned enterprise restructuring process. Starting from different factory categories and worker job types with summarising the institutional approach of the restructuring of state-owned enterprises in Northeast China from 1995 to 2019, the study describes the gradual deepening of the degree of separation between workers and factories under the background of different situations and policies, as well as the gradual 'fading' of collective enterprises. By portraying the 'fading' process, this study challenges the stereotypical notion that mass unemployment happened explosively during the lay-off wave. Furthermore, the individual case study may offer insights into the mechanisms underlying the occurrence of the 'new wave of unemployment' in the recent year.



## Oral Presentation Panels

### Panel D

#### Session D8: Technology, Social Interaction, and Inclusion

*Chair: HAN, Siqui, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 16:55 - 18:15*

*Location: ELB 405*

*1. Peer Relations, Social Media Use and Mental Health: Testing the social enhancement versus the social compensation hypothesis among Chinese adolescents*

DAI, Shuting, City University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Background: Social media have become increasingly integrated into the daily lives of adolescents. The Social enhancement hypothesis suggests that adolescents with better peer relationships are more inclined to utilize social media, resulting in improved mental health status. Conversely, the social compensation hypothesis proposes that adolescents with poor peer relationships are more likely to turn to social media as a means of compensation, reaping mental health benefits in the process. Objectives: The aim of this study was to test two opposing explanatory hypotheses about the effect of peer relationships and social media use on adolescents' mental health among Chinese adolescents. Methods: The study used data from a survey among 554 Chinese adolescents in Hunan and Sichuan Province. The study assessed peer relationships with social network questionnaire and measured mental health with subjective well-being (MHC-SF) and depressive symptoms (CED-S). The structural equation model was applied. Results: Adolescents with better peer relationships reported better subjective well-being and less depressive symptoms. Further analyses found the mediating role of social media use on adolescents' mental health. The adolescents with better peer relationships are more likely to use social media and it reduced the positive effect of peer relationships on adolescents' mental health. Conclusions: The study partly supported the social enhancement hypothesis; it also sheds evidence on the positive correlation between peer relationships and mental health and indicates the potential risk of social media use to adolescent mental health.

## *2. Promoting Equality in Education through Students' Digital Competence Development*

TAM, Sin Yee, City University of Hong Kong

WU, Keung Fai Joseph, City University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** According to the United Nations' Sustainability Development Goal (SDG) 4, actions that promote inclusive and equitable quality education for all and lifelong learning should be adopted in education target to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure all people enjoy peace and prosperity (United Nations Development Programme, 2023). With the rapid development of technology, today's teaching and learning are undergoing a digital transformation. We proposed the development of students' digital competency might shed light on SDG 4. Baena-Morales et al. (2020) and Burbules et al. (2020) suggested that the development of digital competence in students facilitates inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning by providing individuals with the ability to use technology for flexible and learner-centered learning experiences. Free online resources also help students to learn according to their own needs and equip them with new knowledge and skills thus providing chances for students to move upstream from their economic circumstances. However, developing the digital competency of students is complicated. It involves a set of variety knowledge, skills and attitudes to effectively utilize digital technology. Therefore, the 82-item DIgCompSAT that covers digital competence in five major areas, including information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, safety, and problem-solving, is used to identify students' digital competence. 80 students taking a gateway education course participated in the survey voluntarily. They need to complete a survey on a five-point Likert scale to indicate their knowledge and skill level and their attitudes towards different digital technologies. The data is analysed using descriptive analysis, T-Test, ANOVA, etc. to identify areas for improvement. This study serves as a pilot to explore students' digital competency and the potential areas for improvement. The result will be useful for instructors to understand the digital competency of their students and can be used to support decisions on course content adjustment. We hope that by providing students with the essential digital competency in today's world, students will be able to learn and equip them with better knowledge and skills to combat poverty. Reference Baena-Morales, S., Martinez-Roig, R., and Hernández-Amorós, M. J. (2020). Sustainability and educational technology—A description of the teaching self-concept. *Sustainability*, 12(24), 10309. Burbules, N. C., Fan, G., and Repp, P. (2020). Five trends of education and technology in a sustainable future. *Geography and Sustainability*, 1(2), 93–97. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geosus.2020.05.001> United Nations Development Programme (2023). Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from <https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals>

*3. Common Ground or Battle Ground? Detecting Bipartisanship in User Stance and Topic Dimensions Among U.S. Political Opinion Leaders on Twitter*

LEE, Jaemin, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

DU, Yanrong, Fudan University)

**Abstract:** Political polarization has been of paramount concern in social science research and the public. A burgeoning body of literature focuses on highlighting common ground between partisan groups, testing various priming strategies and exposure conditions to reduce partisan animus mostly in experimental settings. While these studies inform the importance of psychological mechanisms of cross-partisan contact, we are still left unknown about the de facto content of the common-ground dialogues—how do they exist and how can we identify them? This study offers a new methodological framework and provides a comprehensive empirical profile of the (bi)partisan nature in social media. Based on network sampling techniques, we collected 6.8M 1-year long Twitter messages from the accounts of 4,067 U.S. political opinion leaders and influential institutions on Twitter. Using these data, we detect their ideational position as well as latent structural position inferred from the following relationships. We test whether and how the talks of the moderates (followed by both liberal and conservative elected officials) are distinct from others in terms of topics and sentiments. We hypothesize that these ‘social’ moderates are ‘ideationally’ multidimensional, where common ground and battle ground characteristics coexist depending on topics and sentiments. Our expectation is that (i) information-based accounts are more likely than opinion-based ones to be welcomed by both sides of partisans; (ii) political topics have a gradation of exposure to the moderates; (iii) even hot-button topics can be part of common ground when their language provokes positive sentiments on their opinion expression.

#### *4. Digitalization in China: Who's left behind?*

AU, Anson, Hong Kong Polytechnic University

**Abstract:** In an age of digitalization, who still refuses to use digital technology? Drawing on nationally-representative Chinese General Social Survey data, this paper finds that about half of Chinese households do not actively use the Internet or e-payment systems, despite their ubiquity. This paper estimates the effects of socioeconomic resources on these technologies' (non-)use across urban, resident but previously urban, resident but previously rural, and rural hukou household registrations in China. Educational attainment is associated with higher odds of use among rural hukou, but the size of this effect is nearly double compared to urban hukou. Additionally, being female increases the odds of use among urban and resident but previously urban hukou, and lowers the odds of use in rural hukou, but which are attenuated by the mediating effects of education. The results give credence to education as a direct and indirect mechanism for digital skills development, especially for rural households. Individuals proximal to rural living conditions have fewer opportunities to learn about digital technology, resulting in greater dependency on education as a rare source of skills training. Simultaneously, education indirectly creates opportunities for women to learn digital skills by improving chances for higher-status job participation that require information management skills, especially in rural regions where traditional cultural norms constrain opportunities for upward mobility. Ultimately, digital technology non-use is traced not to lack of interest, but to lack of skills development opportunities among the socioeconomically disadvantaged.

## Roundtable Panels

### Session 1: Decoding Economic Sociology from Diverse Perspectives

*Chair: YONAHA, Yvan Ysmael Tobias, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 10:00 – 11:20*

*Location: ELB 305*

1. *Whom to Rent From and Live With: A Dataset on the Fluidity of the Peer-to-Peer Flatshare Market in London*

LI, Zhiyu

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

**Abstract:** Urban and housing studies have predominantly focused on the experiences of applicants seeking living units, while comparatively little attention has been given to the issues concerning the providers. Renting/letting a living unit is a bidirectional process involving both applicants and providers. Residential providers, like applicants, may also face discrimination and encounter inequalities, especially when advertising to look for a flatmate or lodger. We argue that the circumstances faced by residential providers should also be examined in discussions surrounding discrimination and inequality in the rental market. In this study, we present a self-made dataset that offers rich information about residential providers and the fluidity of advertised properties in London. Our dataset is sourced from a leading U.K. flatshare platform with daily updates of over 500 new properties in London. The data collection began in mid-April 2023 and has amassed over 100,000 records within six months. The dataset includes various features such as demographic characteristics of ad posters (e.g., age, gender, occupation, nationality, sexual orientation), property information (e.g., location, price, facilities), preferences for new flatmates/tenants, and textual and visual introductions to the advertised property. Additionally, we generate a feature of fluidity based on the daily on-off status of each property, providing valuable insights into the dynamics of the renting/letting process. Our data holds significant potential for studying discrimination and inequality within the rental market and exploring the dynamics of the sharing economy.

2. *Evaluating the Third Child Policy in China: A Perspective from  
Motherhood in Labor Market*

SHU, Chenlan

Lingnan University

**Abstract:** Under the aging society with a low fertility rate, the Chinese government established the Third Child Policy 2021. However, there has been a lack of policy evaluation since the implementation of the policy, which challenge the provision of follow-up policy guidance. Previous investigation has examined the fertility intention and influencing factors, and provision of childcare services by using quantitative method (i.e. Ning et al., 2022; Li, 2023). By building on existing findings, this research aims to evaluate the Third Child Policy from the aspect of motherhood in labor markets. Specifically, the fertility intention, the correlation between it and employment, and the implementation of the Third Child Policy in organizations will be examined. The study intends to schedule twenty-five semi-structured interviews with employed mothers with two children in China. Based on the six interviews conducted at present, none of the interviewees intend to give birth to another child. But five of the interviewees claimed that employment experience is not the main reason for their fertility decision. Rather, economic burden and energy are the two main indicators. Nevertheless, the employment experience and development vary, depending on the position and characteristics of the organizations, as well as personal career plan. Meanwhile, the rights participants from state-owned enterprises are more likely to be protected, comparing with those in private ones. Referring to current findings, the government should consider specific and additional strategies for reducing economic burden with clear guidelines on governance of policy implementation in private-owned organizations.



*3. Bridges or Barriers? The Impact of Political Connections on the Firm  
Innovation: A Social Network Perspective*

YAO, Jinxin

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Guangzhou)

**Abstract:** Firms are increasingly seeking political connections to gain economic advantage. How do political connections affect firm innovation? This study uses a novel database constructed from the career histories of firm executives and political elites to construct a comprehensive business-political network. Using political transitions during party congresses as an exogenous shock, we apply a continuous difference-in-differences (DID) method to estimate the causal effects of political connections on firm innovation. Compared to existing research, our dataset and empirical strategy allow for more precise causal inference by minimising measurement error and omitted variable bias. We find that political connections have a significant negative effect on firm innovation, and that this negative effect is more pronounced for private firms than for state-owned firms. Our research challenges the current view and policy recommending closer connection between government and business in order to promote technological innovation.

4. *Organizational Socialization, Job Satisfaction, Self-actualization, and Organizational Citizenship: A Study from a Sustainability Perspective*

LIAO, Wangnong

City University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Employees expectedly do more than their in-role duties. Organ (1988) defined such extra-role behavior as organizational citizenship behavior, which refers to the employee's discretionary behavior that can improve the organization's functioning but is neither directly described in job definitions nor explicitly recognized by the formal reward system. Previous research tries to find out what can drive organizational citizenship behavior while paying less attention to what can maintain it. Only considering the occurrence of organizational citizenship behavior is one-sided and short-sighted, because it is easy to only take into account the interests of the organization or the interests of employees. Therefore, this study proposes win-win organizational citizenship, which is the combination of organizational citizenship and self-actualization, as well as the combination of organizational interests and personal interests, specifically exploring how the employee's job satisfaction will affect his or her self-actualization and organizational citizenship and how to raise job satisfaction. The organization and its employees must achieve a win-win situation for sustainable development. This study integrates humanist, exchange, and resource theories to provide more comprehensive theoretical explanations for these research questions.

## Roundtable Panels

### Session 2: Multifaceted Analysis of Educational Inequalities in China

*Chair: ZHAO, Mengke, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 11:25 – 12:45*

*Location: ELB 305*

*1. Not Special, But Equal: The Access to Higher Education for Disabled Students in Mainland China: A Comparative Analysis*

ZHANG, Yiyang

The University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** According to the most recent 2021 data, over eighty-five million people in China qualified as disabled, and only about 1.08 million (1.27 percent) had enrolled or were enrolling in higher education (HE). Due to traditional attitudes towards people with disabilities (PWD) as “better fed than taught” and a lack of government and media attention, the recruitment of disabled students to Chinese universities tends to be slow and limited. Additionally, while many scholars have promoted greater equality of access for students from poorer homes or inland regions, concern for access among individuals with special needs has been overlooked. To clarify and encourage the development of higher education for PWD, this research employed vertical and horizontal comparisons to explore the centralized policies and laws directed at PWD in Mainland China. At the vertical level, major policy shifts and initiatives designed to support students with physical disabilities were analyzed, highlighting the increasing role of self-advocacy in improving the legal system and forming a unique bottom-up mechanism of rights protection. At the horizontal level, the focus lies on achievements and remaining barriers by comparing China’s past and present policymaking with that of the United Kingdom, Russia, and Japan. Through qualitative comparative methods and content analysis, I argue that current laws are symbolic and advisory, leaving an inordinate space for local authorities’ interpretation and implementation. Further attention should target individual needs-centered policies based on grass-roots activism. The Politics of Recognition and Educational Compensation provide a solid theoretical basis for this analysis.

*2. Hidden Struggles: Family Socioeconomic Background on Top University Students' Major Selection in HK and Mainland China*

CAO, Zheming

The University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Sociologists and educationists have long been devoted to studying the role of higher education in mainland China and Hong Kong in promoting social mobility and equity. Recent studies have indicated a decline in the impact of universities on social mobility, mostly focusing primarily on the expansion of higher education and the uneven distribution of resources. However, with the increasing segmentation of higher education and society's demand for talent, the choice of major has become increasingly significant for students' academic and future development. This paper conducts qualitative and quantitative research on the university major selection of top students from the University of Hong Kong, Peking University, and a renowned high school in mainland China. It reveals an overlooked truth that top students from low-income families, who have high expectations from their families, are more likely to possess unrealistic notions about university majors, future employment, and the job market when compared to their middle-class counterparts. Additionally, they receive less support from their families, schools, and society in their major selection process, resulting in a higher likelihood of choosing an unsuitable or less employable major. Consequently, they are more likely to have relatively unsatisfactory academic performance and to be uncompetitive in the job market, which further undermines the role of higher education in facilitating social mobility.

*3. The Credential Society with Chinese Characteristics: A Preliminary  
Analysis*

LI, Pengfei

Shanghai University

**Abstract:** From 1998 when about 1.5 per cent of Chinese youth were able to gain a college degree to 2022 when 4.7 million college graduates fought for being enrolled in graduate schools, China's higher education evolves from an elitist system to a universal system in just 25 years. Though the percentage of Chinese possessing a graduate degree is still lower than that of advanced economies, the rate of college students cramming for the graduate school entrance exam is much higher. A credential society different from Randall Collis's is emerging. It has three key features: a rigidly hierarchical university system based on "merit" rather than on class, a feverish inclination and practice of the college students to get enrolled in a graduate school, and a wide-spread devaluation of the degree for all graduates. The second and third features are largely the corollaries of the first, which is the quintessential manifestation of the Chinese-style credential society, or as we may call it, the credential society with Chinese characteristics.

## Roundtable Panels

### Session 3: Gender Dynamics in Changing China

*Chair: Chair: BARRY, Alicia Madeleine, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 15:30 – 16:50*

*Location: ELB 305*

1. *The Educational Assortative Mating of Chinese Educated Women in Rural and Urban Areas under the Social Transformation*

PENG, Yuhao

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Background: China has transitioned from a centrally planned economy to a market-based economy over the past four decades. As a result, the previous social welfare system dissolved, increasing uncertainty in daily life. This has caused many Chinese citizens to rely on familial and marital social capital for support, increasing the tendency for assortative mating in the marriage market. Marketization has also increased participation in tertiary education, making educational homogamy increasingly crucial in mate selection. However, little research has examined this phenomenon, especially from a feminist perspective. Objective: This study aims to investigate educational assortative mating patterns among educated women in urban and rural areas of China, using a feminist lens to understand how family dynamics shape educational homogamy. Method: The study uses data from the Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS) to test hypotheses about educational assortative mating in urban and rural areas, and additional data sources such as the Chinese Family Panel Survey (CFPS) are used to validate results and conduct robustness checks. Results and Implications: The findings reveal a prevailing pattern of educational homogamy among women in urban and rural areas. However, rural-educated women exhibit greater embeddedness within their families during mate selection than urban women. This study highlights the need for more research into the social forces, especially familial influences, that underpin marriage formation in contemporary China.



## *2. Digital Literacy Education: Bridging the Gender Digital Divide*

ZHANG, Xinyu; HONG, Yifang

Guangxi Normal University

**Abstract:** Digital literacy refers to the collection of skills and abilities that individuals in the digital society should possess for learning, working, and daily life. These skills include digital awareness, computational thinking, digital learning and innovation, and digital social responsibility. Enhancing the digital literacy of citizens is a crucial step in improving individuals' social adaptability and competitiveness, thereby contributing to the sustainable development of our society. However, the emergence of social inequality has given rise to a significant challenge known as the gender digital divide, hindering women's full and effective participation in the digital domain and their comprehensive development. The gender digital divide, which is no longer an invisible issue in today's society, encompasses issues such as unequal access to digital resources, distorted gender identity constructions, and the sense of insecurity that women often experience in digital spaces. These issues require focused attention and solutions. Therefore, this article aims to explore the development of gender-inclusive perspectives in digital literacy education. It seeks to promote gender equality in education by enhancing inclusivity, increasing women's participation, and strengthening digital security. Ultimately, this approach aims to foster the exceptional development of women in the digital era.

3. *A Study of the Heterogeneous Effects of the Tripartite Employment Relationships on Domestic Work Earnings*

REN, Meina, Northwest A F University

Coauthor: Linping Liu

**Abstract:** Regulating the employment relationship to promote the formalization of the domestic industry is the key to solving this problem. However, academics have not yet draw sufficient attention to the mechanism of the tripartite employment relationships affecting earnings. In this paper, we use the TEM and the ESRM to investigate the mechanism of action of the tripartite employment relationship affecting the labor income of domestic workers. The data used in this paper were obtained from questionnaire surveys conducted in four cities by Nanjing University's "Research on Employment Relationships of Domestic Workers in the Internet Era" group, with a total of 1007 valid questionnaires. In terms of the homogeneity effect, the tripartite employment relationship has a significant positive effect on the earnings of domestic workers compared to the dual employment relationship. In terms of the heterogeneity effect. First, the results of TEM show that the effect of the tripartite employment relationship on the earnings of domestic workers can vary depending on the worktype. The tripartite employment relationship has a significant negative effect on the earnings of the maternity matron(yuesao). Second, the results of ESRM show that domestic workers in a tripartite employment relationship have lower human capital earning rate than domestic workers in a dual employment relationship. The findings of this paper have important implications for subsidy policies currently being implemented with the goal of promoting the formalization of the domestic industry.

4. *Hierarchy and Prejudicial Logic: A Comparative Analysis of Regional  
Prejudice in China's Marriage Market*

ZHANG, Yuhang

London School of Economics and Political Science

**Abstract:** In the study of inter-group relationship, in-group preference and out-group prejudice are considered natural phenomena. Individuals seem to inevitably have a preference for the group they belong to and a corresponding exclusive attitude towards out-groups. However, there is a seemingly contradictory phenomenon in China's marriage market, namely "in-group prejudice" and "out-group preference" based on regional groups. Specifically, people from rural and small-city groups have preferences for big-city groups and prejudices against their own groups in mate selection. Starting with the awareness of in-group prejudice and out-group preference in China's marriage market, this article examines the formation of regional prejudice in China's marriage market through economic, cultural, institutional, and other social factors. By comparing it with the anti-immigrant prejudice in Western society, this article attempts to conclude the similarities and differences in the formation of different types of prejudice, and through these comparisons, to explain the phenomenon of in-group prejudice and out-group preference in China's marriage market. Based on these analyses, this article argues that prejudice is rooted in the hierarchical order among social groups, it is not about certain neutral differences but based on the difference of superior and inferior between social groups. Therefore, the binary division of in-group and out-group may neglect the complexity of inter-group attitudes. The in-group prejudice and out-group preference should be understood as the lower-group prejudice and upper-group preference displayed by subordinate social groups resulted by their acceptance of the existing hierarchical order.

## Roundtable Panels

### Session 4: Examining Social Mobility in Different Contexts

*Chair: Chair: TIAN, Runhui, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

*Time: 16:55 – 18:15*

*Location: ELB 305*

1. *Dynamics of Intercity Migration Propensity in China: Evidence from an Age-Period-Cohort Analysis*

LI, Sen

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** This research conducts a systematic age, period, and cohort (APC) analysis to shed light on the dynamics of migration between Chinese cities. Drawing on repeated cross-sectional data from the 2010 population census and the 1 percent population sampling surveys in 2005 and 2015, we employ the Hierarchical APC model to disentangle the APC effects on migration decision-making, viewing it as a two-step process. The results indicate that age and birth cohort significantly affect the decision on whether to move or not. Specifically, with increasing age, people aged 15-65 become less inclined to migrate. Migrants in the cohorts of 1962-1985 exhibit an increasing propensity to leave their city of hukou origin, followed by a reversal trend among those born afterward. However, the average propensity for migration does not significantly vary across the three 5-year periods from 2000 to 2015. Furthermore, age, period, and cohort also play important roles in the decision of where to move, particularly whether to move interprovincially. The inclination for interprovincial migration follows a declining pattern until age 53, with a slight increase thereafter. Both period and cohort effects prove statistically significant. Notably, we investigate the source of contextual period effects and find that foreign-invested enterprise development can promote interprovincial migration. Migrants born in the 1960s-70s tend to migrate across the provincial boundary, while those from post-1980s cohorts are more inclined to intra-provincial migration. The robustness of these findings is validated through two sensitivity analyses. Our findings demonstrate the importance of cohort differentials in understanding Chinese migration dynamics.

*2. Parental Concerted Cultivation and Chinese Children's Academic Performance Amid COVID-19: The Moderating Role of Interparental Conflict*

DING, Xiangying, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Coauthors: Shuai Zhou, Janet T. Y. Leung

**Abstract:** Concerted cultivation refers to a parenting approach in which parents dedicate intense efforts to cultivate their children via deliberate parenting strategies. Using a sample of 2468 children from the 2020 wave of China Family Panel Studies (CFPS), the current study examined the relationship between concerted cultivation (indexed by parental involvement, extracurricular activity, and digital parenting) and children's academic performance, the moderating effect of interparental conflict in such relations, along with the differences between boys and girls. The results showed that parental involvement and extracurricular activity were positively associated with children's academic attainment, while digital parenting was negatively related to academic performance. Stratified analyses unveiled a gendered pattern that parental involvement was only related to boys' higher academic performance, whereas digital parenting was mainly associated with girls' lower academic performance. Moreover, interparental conflict was associated with lower academic performance, especially among boys. Interparental conflict strengthened the positive effects of parental involvement on academic outcomes among girls and weakened the negative effects of digital parenting on children's academic performance among boys. The findings extend the concept of concerted cultivation in a digital era, and disentangled the relationships between concerted cultivation and academic achievement in the Chinese context. Findings also suggest that family practitioners and educators should attend to digital parenting and interparental conflict during the COVID-19 pandemic in family interventions that promote parents' well-being and children's development.

3. *The Social Worker in China's Juvenile Criminal Justice System:  
Opportunities and Challenges*

HE, Chengchen

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** Social work, as a foreign concept in China, has carved a unique path by adapting to the country's existing social care system and evolving into a profession characterized by distinct Chinese features. This profession has undergone further development and obtained official endorsement under the state policies of "comprehensive management" and "balancing leniency and harshness". In recent years, legislative backing has fostered the gradual recognition of social workers' values and roles within the juvenile criminal justice system, showcasing their services' effectiveness in curbing juvenile delinquency and reoffending. Nonetheless, organizations in the field of criminal justice social work grapple with the twin challenges of recruitment and retention. Grounded in a four-month ethnographic study, this research first delves into the emergence and structure of social work within China's juvenile criminal justice system. It subsequently posits that the attrition phenomenon in the field stems from two comparison processes: self-comparison and social comparison. Engaging in self-comparison, criminal justice social workers discern limited opportunities for professional advancement within their organizations. At the same time, social comparison highlights that they receive lower remuneration, social status, and public recognition compared to their counterparts in similar professions. Moreover, in contrast to social workers in other areas, sometimes economic and political autonomy constrains criminal justice social workers' capacity to fulfill welfare objectives, as the authoritarian state exercises considerable discursive power and dominates practical resources. The culmination of these factors results in attrition within the profession.

## Poster Session

*Time: 10:00 – 18:15*

*Location: ELB Exhibition Area*



1. *Cultural Inequalities in Translating and Adapting Popular Music  
Lyrics: Exploring Intercultural Challenges*

XIA, Zehe

Sichuan University

**Abstract:** This study explores the cultural inequalities that arise during the translation and adaptation of popular music lyrics, focusing on the challenges posed by overseas musical composition copyrights. It investigates how the process of rewording and localizing these lyrics can result in deviations in interpreting and understanding cultural content, influenced by cultural values, commercial considerations, and linguistic factors such as syllabic rhymes. These disparities contribute to cultural inequalities within popular music. Through case studies, this study examines the multifaceted factors contributing to cultural inequalities in translating and adapting popular music lyrics. It aims to raise awareness and promote a more inclusive and culturally sensitive approach by identifying key elements that contribute to these disparities. By shedding light on the complexities involved in translating and adapting popular music lyrics across cultures, particularly concerning musical composition copyrights, this research fosters dialogue and enhances awareness of cultural inequalities within popular music. It inspires more inclusive practices that appreciate and respect diverse cultural expressions in the translation and adaptation of popular music lyrics.

2. *Guanxi Embedded in Medical Care: Case Study of Using Guanxi for  
Medical Treatment in a Chinese Hospital*

XIA, Kaifu

Guizhou Minzu University

**Abstract:** The use of guanxi for medical treatment is a popular phenomenon now in China. Although there are large amount of literature on doctor-patient relationship in China, little is known about the operational mechanisms of such phenomena. The paper presented here focuses on individual behaviour of different types of actor(doctors, patients, and intermediaries) in the medical field, and the use of guanxi for medical treatment . Based on interview of 28 patients and 16 medical staff with participant observation and documentation in a Chinese hospital, this study delves into differentiated medical cognition and experience, and identifies six types of guanxi for medical treatment, which contributes to the understanding of guanxi in medical field and doctor-patient relationship in China. Keyword: guanxi, medical treatment, hospital,corruption

3. *Unmarried Women's Independent House Buying: The Housing  
Imagination and Choices of Unmarried Women against the Background  
of Individualization in China*

WANG, Qing

Guizhou Minzu University

**Abstract:** Unmarried women's independent house buying is an 'deviant practice' full of personal meaning, which challenges the traditional residential norms of Chinese women and profoundly affects the process of social individuation. However, this phenomenon has not received sufficient attention from the academic community. Based on 12 interviews in a city in Western China and the perspective of individualization theory, this paper puts unmarried women's 'housing imagination' at the core of the analysis and forms a 'structure-meaning-action' analysis framework, focusing on the reasons for unmarried women to buy houses independently. The research shows that, in the era of individuation, unmarried women are trying to get rid of the situation of "dependent survival" in the traditional society, trying to better integrate into the modern society, in order to pursue their own good life. As a result, housing is endowed with the meaning of independence, private space, risk shield and identity, which jointly promote the housing needs of unmarried women, and then affect their independent house-buying behavior. Key words: unmarried women; Independent home buying; Individuation; Housing imagination; Housing choice

4. *Demographic transition, fertility inequality, and family planning policies*

ZHENG, Jiansong, Macao Polytechnic University

Coauthor: Tao Zhang

**Abstract:** Under the background of demographic transition, family policies may transform fertility inequality. However, there is no empirical evidence to evaluate the role that the universal two-child policy plays in the childbearing of residents with different socioeconomic status. Given that the causality as well as mechanism between fertility and socioeconomic status remain controversial, especially in China, logistics panel models and the event analysis method using China Family Panel Studies across six waves were conducted to investigate the association between socioeconomic status, second childbirths, and universal two-child policy. The results showed that (1) socioeconomic status significantly positively predicted second childbirths. (2) The universal two-child policy significantly increased the fertility rate of individuals with higher levels of socioeconomic status. Social class differences in reproduction became clear, in the context of the second demographic transition and the relaxation of family planning policy. Family-friendly measures for groups with lower degrees of socioeconomic status should be developed and implemented to guarantee their reproductive rights.

Keywords: Second childbirths, fertility inequality, socioeconomic status, social capital, China

5. *The Involution of Ritual Capital: Case Study on the Change of Renqing Banquet in a County of Chaoshan Region in Eastern Guangdong Province*

LU, Yuanyuan; RUAN, Ji

Guizhou Minzu University

**Abstract:** There has been a phenomenon of renqing banquets in many rural areas of China but its change in different era has received little attention. Based on an ethnography in County X in Chaoshan district, Eastern Guangdong Province, this paper finds that renqing banquets was very popular and large in scale from 1990s to early 21st century, but the scale decreased gradually in the 21st century, which is related to the stabilization of social stratification. After 40 years of social stratification in County X, the phenomenon of ‘quick rich’ almost disappears, and the social stratification in villages becomes stable. In such ‘acquaintance societies’, everyone knows the social stratum of everyone else and it is no longer necessary to show off wealth and social capital by holding large scale of renqing banquets, thus increasing such investment of renqing practice can no longer bring more benefits to villagers, forming the involution of renqing. It is argued that the excessive renqing consumption in County X is only a temporary phenomenon appearing in the process of social stratification. When the stratification becomes stable, the phenomenon of competitive renqing consumption will gradually weaken or disappear. In social interaction, when actors continue to increase ritual investment, but fail to bring more benefits such as social, cultural and symbolic capital, this phenomenon is called the “involution of ritual capital” by this study. Whether and how involution of ritual capital occurs in other scenarios deserves further study in the future. Keywords: renqing banquet, social stratification, ritual capital, guanxi, face

*6. A too idealist policy: an analysis of dilemma faced by the double-reduction policy from the perspective of Smith implementation model:*

ZHANG, Hanting

Hong Kong Baptist University

**Abstract:** The objective of this paper is to analyze the implementation dilemmas faced by Double-Reduction policy that aims at reducing academic burden on students in compulsory education. Under Smith's implementation model, this paper assesses the dilemmas faced by double-reduction policy from perspectives of idealized texture, implementing agency, target group, and implementing environment. By conducting qualitative research in a first-tier city in southern China, this paper argues the implementation faces: (1) lack of legislative support and performance mechanisms for incentives and disincentives, (2) misaligned indicator on performances of agency of education and administration against policy requirement, (3) poor and perfunctory response from target group due to contrary demands of teachers and private institutions, (4) obstacles from utilitarian and competitive educational environment.

7. *Welfare Governance: Selective Affinity and Structural Contradictions  
between the Welfare State and Capitalism*

HU, Bingsong

Central South University of China

**Abstract:** The essence of welfare governance lies in the structural absorption of welfare elements by the state governance system, with its fundamental purpose being the maintenance of social stability. Therefore, capitalism cannot coexist with the welfare state, yet it cannot exist without it. The future downward operation of the welfare system may become a norm in the development of capitalism. With the spread of individual knowledge and skills in the 'capital era,' economic rationality may lead to democratic rationality.