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An analysis of the participation of an online educational discussion forum

- the study of Hong Kong Cyber Campus Forum

(version 30/5/2000)

W.Ki, S.Li, , C.H.Chan, H.C.Lam

Abstract

Information technology is now widely used in the education sector, and online discussion forum has been regarded as a useful tool for education. A large number of online forums have been set up with an unexamined assumption that participants will learn through interacting with others in the forums. This paper reports a case study of the discussion forum of the Hong Kong Cyber Campus (www.hkcampus.net). It is the in one of the largest public educational discussion forums in Hong Kong set up jointly by local higher education institutions, to provide a venue for educators, teachers, students and parents to discuss about educational issues and the use of information technology for teaching and learning. The current study addresses the following issues: (1) What are the major objects of discussion in the forum? (2) How the structure of the forum may affect interactions between the different types of participants? (3) To what extent is online discussion conducive to conceptual learning of the participants? (4) What are the characteristics of the interactions of the participants in online forum? (5) How should the moderator act effectively to facilitate discussion? What kinds of moderator's messages will spark off more discussion? What kinds of messages tend to end the discussion? To address these research questions, we have conducted an analysis of the messages of the forum generated in its first twelve months from Feb.1999 to Feb.2000. Some of the findings are highlighted in this paper, namely: (1) The objects of discussion are mostly about everyday work and life of students and teachers; (2) The structure of the forum does affect the amount of interaction between different types of participants; (3) Online discussion affords gathering opinion, exchanging information and expressing feelings; (4) Online forum appears weak in resolving conflicting views. Participants seldom exhibit a change of their beliefs during the discussion. It also tends to polarize the discussion, lead the participants to extreme points of view. This is especially salient when the participants do not share a common experience of the issue. (5) The kind of moderator's messages that try to round up, make conclusion and provide authoritative information tend to terminate the discussion, while the expression of example/experience with open meaning tend to spark off more discussion.

Introduction

This paper reports a study on the pattern and characteristics of interaction on the public online discussion forum of the Hong Kong Cyber Campus web site. The Cyber Campus project is a project built upon an earlier project called Hong Kong Schoolnet run by the Chinese University of Hong Kong (since 1996) which aims to help schools to get onto the internet with low cost equipment. The Schoolnet project actually came in before the implementation of massive IT in education plan by the government (which is from 1998), and had very good response from schools. In the year 1998, there were tens of secondary schools who had joint the project. On the basis on that achievement, the government in the year 1998 gave a subsidy to expand the project to include the participation of the other higher educational institutions of Hong Kong. The project is renamed Hong Kong Cyber Campus, which aims to link educators, students and parents at all levels altogether in cyber space. The project includes an educational portal site (www.hkcampus.net), and the authors of this paper are responsible for the running of the discussion forum of the site. Other components of the project include a support center which provide IT aids to educators and some other activities include IT camps for students and IT literacy course for educators, etc. All secondary schools and primary schools are invited to join the project

The current study addresses the following issues:

(1) What are the major objects of discussion in the forum?

(2) How the structure of the forum may affect interactions between the different types of participants?

(3) To what extent is online discussion conducive to conceptual learning of the participants?

(4) What are the characteristics of the interactions of the participants in online forum?

(5) How should the moderator act effectively to facilitate discussion? What kinds of moderator's messages will spark off more discussion? What kinds of messages tend to end the discussion?

The first part of the paper will address question (1) and (2) mainly through quantitative analysis of the interactions on the forum, while the second part of the paper will address question (3),(4) and (5) using a more qualitative approach.

Participant structure of the Cyber Campus public forum

As mentioned in the previous section, the Hong Kong Cyber Campus web site is intended to be a portal site for a very wide audience, including all parents, students and teachers in Hong Kong. Hence the discussion forum has a public nature. Just like

most discussion forum on the Internet, all users participated in the Cyber Campus discussion forum is on voluntary basis, and their participation in the discussion forum involve no reward of any kind.

The discussion forum is promoted through posters and leaflets distributed to schools, newspapers and magazines articles, and promotional messages sent to education related newsgroups. Any person can register to be a member of the discussion forum. Immediately after they have made their on-line registration, they can post messages onto the forum. In the registration, they have to provide information about whether they are teachers, students, parents or public users, and the names of their schools in the cases of teachers and students. They have to submit their e-mail addresses, and e-mails are sent subsequently to these addresses for verification. But for practical reasons no validation is done about the part on school affiliation.

For the period from Feb 1999 to Feb 2000 there are altogether 2331 registered members (614 teachers; 1094 students; 54 parents and 569 public) and altogether 2922 messages have been posted by the registered members.

To read the messages does not require registration. At first it is intended that only teacher members can read the teachers' corner, so that teachers can feel more secure to reveal their problems. However, the requirement is subsequently waived because the purpose can not achieved any way since we actually do not validate the actual status of the members. So in other words all messages are readable by any public users.

In reading the messages, only the nicknames of the authors are revealed, and the real names and affiliation of the authors are protected. This anonymity is introduced to provide an non-intimidating environment for people to express more openly and freely about their thinking.

Because of the open and public nature of the forum, it has to be closely monitored and moderated against indecent messages. As stated in the forum rules, any messages containing foul language or other indecent content are deleted as soon as they are discovered and warning messages or suggestion on message amendment will be sent to the writers.

Another job of the moderators is to facilitate discussion. They do it mostly in an implicit manner. The moderators write messages without telling the participants that they are the forum moderators. They just act as ordinary participants and post different view points to stir up discussion.

The structure and restructuring of the Cyber campus forum

When the discussion forum was launched in February 1999, the forum was divided

into a number of discussion areas according to educational levels and user groups. In Oct 1999, the forum was restructured to use content as the major organization principle with supplementary index of levels of education and target groups. In this section of the paper, the authors will reflect about the effects of such change.

The first forum structure (period 1: Feb 1999-Oct 1999)

In designing the first forum structure, it was assumed that most users would like to find a place to communicate with other people of similar background. So the forum was divided into the primary education area, secondary education area, tertiary education area, and within each of these areas there are teachers' corner, students' corner and parents' corner. So each user group has its own specific area. In addition there are the public discussion area, hobbies area and learning area which do not have specific target group in mind. (Figure 1.) A hierarchical navigation is provided for the user to go first to a discussion area and to a corner. Eventually, within a corner, the user sees a list of topics and can click to display linearly all messages on the topic. (Figure 2.) The user can append a response to the discussion or to start a new topic in the corner.

After running for several months, a number of problems were discovered There were complaints and concerns from users saying that it was time consuming to locate new messages. The user had to click many times to enter into one corner and then return and click into others one at a time. Besides being time consuming, The design thus affords quite a localized discussion, does not seem to encourage the interfacing among the different groups of users, which is a major goal of the Cyber Campus project.

The second forum structure (Period II: Oct 1999-Feb 2000)

In view of the above comments a major reconstruction of the forum was carried in Oct 1999. The new forum is built on the Lotus Notes platform. In the new forum, the discussion areas are mainly structured according to content. Supplementary indexing is provided for sorting messages according to target groups (parents, students, teachers, etc) and educational levels (primary, secondary, tertiary etc).

The existing messages (about 1820 messages in 401 threads) were re-categorized according to new structure for inspection before the confirmation of the new structure. The moderators checked the actual content in each new category in terms of it feel and look. They looked fine on the whole, except that in the content area of "life experience sharing", we found that while there were significant contribution from all parties, but the number of messages sent in by students out proportion those by

teachers and parents and make them quite invisible. In order to the contribution of parents and teachers more up-front, subcategories entitled “parents’ voice”, “students’ voice” and “teachers’ voice” were added under the area of “life experience sharing”.

Multiple indexing of content is used in this new forum. When a writer initiate a discussion thread, he can select multiple categories. The discussion thread will be assessable through multiple routes. For example, when the writer posts a message to start a new discussion topic, he or she can categories the discussion to be about a kind of “life experience sharing”, about “student’s voice” and “family life”. The writer can also select the target discussion participants to be “parents” and “students”, and the issue is not restrictive to any particular educational level. Then the same thread will be assessable through a variety of routes:

Life experience sharing→ students’ voice

Life experience sharing → family life

Target people → students

Target people → parents

Educational level → none in particular

The intention of this design is to increase the probability of a particular discussion thread being heard (in comparison to the former structure where the discussion is only visible within a node in the hierarchy) and to encourage a wider participation into the discussion.

When a user reads a message, the following will also be displayed:

(a) A list of the whole thread, so that the user can click into another message in the thread

(b) the categories to which the thread belong. By clicking the name of a category, the user will be led to other discussion threads under that same category.

After the final modification and usability testing of the new forum structure (Figure 3) and it associated interface (Figure 4), the new forum structure was launched for use in Oct 1999. Figure 7 provides information about the message growth before and after the change in the structure of the forum. It seems to indicate that the migration is smooth and the amount of participation continued to grow.

Analysis of the Participation Pattern over the Two Periods

In the following section, the writers will report the behavior of participation in the period Feb1999 to late Oct 1999 (Period I) , and the period from late Oct 1999 to Feb 2000 (Period II), reflect about the issues concerned and propose directions for future development

Period I Participation Pattern

From 29.1.99 to 19.10.99, which were 264 days in total (with 188 weekdays and 76 weekends), 2081 users registered (44 as parents, 551 as public, 915 as students and 571 as teachers). Within the period, 1820 messages were posted, of which 494 were by moderators. These messages are under 401 thread, each thread with an average length of about 4.5 messages.

In other words, there are about 7 new messages coming in everyday, and the average length of 4.5 messages per thread also indicated that there is quite a reasonable amount of responses among users.

Table 1 shows the spread of the messaging activities across different areas of the forum. The figures indicate that the "Public discussion area" and the "Secondary school area" are the most active in terms of number of participants, volume of messages and interactivity (indicated by the number of messages in a thread).

Table 2 and Table 3 give further break-downs about the participation in the two areas. The figures indicate that the most active discussions are in the follow three specific areas:

(a) Free topic discussions in the Public forum, which are mostly about general educational issues

(b) Discussions about IT coordination in the Public forum, which are mostly about practical issues of the work of IT coordinating teachers in schools

(c) Student discussions in the Secondary Education forum, which are mostly sharing among students about their social and study life

Table 1. Number of messages and writers in different part of the forum in period I：

	Public	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Interest	Learning
Number of writers	216	13	267	23	91	71
Number of threads	158	6	96	14	81	36
Number of messages	761(259)	14(6)	679(97)	37(1)	219(97)	105(10)
Average number of message per thread	4.8	2.3	7.1	2.6	2.7	2.9
Maximum number of messages in a thread	55	9	37	7	16	10

Note: numbers enclosed in brackets indicate the number of messages sent in by the moderators.

Table 2. Distribution of messages in the sub categories of Public Forum：

Free topic 208 (100)	Education 130 (59)	Medium of instruction 41 (10)	Technology 105 (25)	Service enquiries 10 (2)
I.T. Coordinator 164 (7)	I.T. in Education 30 (12)	Entertainment 13 (4)	Advertisment 7 (1)	Testing 53 (0)

Table 3. Distribution of messages in the sub categories of Secondary Forum：

Students 556 (64)	Activities 19 (4)	Teachers 63 (20)	Teaching 37 (8)	Parents 1 (1)	Further Studies 4 (1)

We also did an analysis about the amount of messages posted by teachers and students in the various areas. Table 4 shows the distribution. On the whole it seems that the distribution patterns of the two groups of users are quite different.

Table 4. Number of messages posted by teachers and students in the various discussion areas in period I

	Public	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Interest	Learning
Number of messages by teachers	169	3	79	0	6	8
Number of messages by students	102	2	192	13	10	5

Period II Participation Pattern

From 20.10.99 to 24.02.00, which were 127 days in total (with 91 weekdays and 36 weekends), there were 2331 registered users (54 as parents, 569 as public, 1094 as students and 614 as teachers). Within the period, 1102 messages were posted, of which 208 were by moderators. These messages are under 314 threads, each thread with an average length of about 3.5 messages.

In other words, there are about 8.6 new messages coming in everyday, and the average length of 3.5 messages per thread also indicates that there is quite a reasonable amount of responses among users.

Table 5 shows the spread of the messaging activities across different areas of the forum. The figures indicate that the “life experience sharing” and “Leisure” appears to be the most active areas. Table 6 and Table 7 give further break-downs about the participation in the two areas. The figures indicate that within each of the two areas, there seems to be a wide spread of content among the sub categories.

We also did analysis about the amount of messages that teachers and students post in the different areas. Table 8 shows the distribution. On the whole we can see that the difference between the distribution pattern between the two groups is less pronounced in this new forum structure.

Table 5. Number of messages and writers in different part of the forum in period II：

	Moderator	Life experience Sharing	I.T. Education	Teaching and learning	Leisure	Activities information
Number of writers	28	163	56	64	105	6
Number of threads	20	167	35	50	75	9
Number of messages	51(9)	607(127)	126(22)	146(33)	295(59)	11(5)
Average number of message per thread	2.6	3.6	3.6	2.9	3.9	1.2
Maximum number of messages in a thread	9	15	24	20	25	3

Note: numbers enclosed in brackets indicate the number of messages sent in by the moderators.

Table 6. Distribution of messages in the sub categories of *life experience sharing Forum*：

School Life 241 (43)	Academic Career advancement 84 (28)	Counseling on-line 25(1)	Family Life 15 (2)
Student’s voice 362 (47)	Social Issue 155 (48)	Parent’s voice 44 (21)	Teacher’s voice 145 (44)

Table 7. Distribution of messages in the sub categories of Leisure Forum：

Arts & performance 60 (25)	Interest groups 58 (12)	Hobbies 170 (28)	Sports 64 (17)	Classified 27 (3)

Table 8. Distribution of teachers' and students' messages across the different discussion areas in period II：

	Moderator	Life experience Sharing	I.T. Education	Teaching and learning	Leisure	Activities information
Number of messages posted by teachers	7	170	38	38	24	5
Number of messages posted by students	17	261	42	62	197	1

We also did an analysis about how users categorize the discussion in terms of educational levels and target audience. Pie charts in Figure 5 and 6 seem to show a reasonable variety, indicating the meaningful usage of this indexing function by the users.

Reflection about the restructuring

The restructuring and migration was quite smoothly done and the volume of discussion grows continuously in a steady manner as indicated in Figure 7.

By restructuring the forum the variety of content in the forum stands more up front. As a matter of facts every day there are on average about 250 readers from different IP address logging into the system to read the messages. From the readers' point of view, the new feature is likely to be an advantage.

Changing the structure alone does not seem to be able to bring about much change in the content of the discussion. It is after all the interest of the users and the perceived nature of the forum (the purpose of the forum and its participant structure) that dictate the content of the discussion. However, we think that in the new structure there is more opportunity for the two groups of users to hear each other's ideas and interact. Because, in the old structure teachers' and students' participation diverged to quite different locations in the discussion forum, but in the new structure, their participation tend to converge to quite similar patterns.

One down side of the new structure voiced by some users is that, as the new structure incorporate cross posting of a discussion thread, a same thread may appear again and again when the user moves to different discussion areas. This can sometimes be a nuisance. Reflection about this makes we think about a way to further enhance the new structure: Actually we can offer a new way of access different from the traditional hierarchical mode of access. In the traditional mode, the user first go to an

area and then to its subcategories, and then to the messages. It would be much better if the user can start with selecting a number of areas and corners at one go, and the forum server would list all message threads that falls under the categories without unnecessary repetition. Also we can provide a function so the user can input key words to narrow down of their view. Furthermore, these selection criteria can be stored as personal profile and reused every time the user logs in.

One basic issue we think we have to explore further is the tension between group identity and inter-group interfacing. There are people who prefer the forum to be partitioned into smaller focus groups, so that they can meet a group of people with similar background. And they feel more secure and comfortable to interact in this way. However, it is the aim of the Cyber campus project to encourage interfacing among different user groups. The first structure and the second structure handle the balance in two somewhat different ways, but it is still difficult to tell which is better. Further study about individual users' perception about the change will have to be carried out.

Some general observations about the nature of the discussion

Over the period of study, quite a large number of teachers and students participate into the discussion. It is reasonable to believe that they must see some benefit from this kind of discussion. In these following section we shall look at some of the longer thread in the forum and try to highlight what is happening in those interactions.

Information exchange

There are threads in the forum where information exchange seems to be the major function. In some cases, it happens because of the existence of some expert informants on the network. Appendix 1 is an example. "A" is a computing professor in the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Director of the CyberCampus project. He is well known to be knowledgeable about networking technology. So in the IT coordinator corner people submit questions to seek his advice. It is quite obvious that people would find this very useful as the forum serves as an additional powerful way of getting expert advice. However, in such kind of threads where there is a clearly identified authority figure, other people could seem to be more submissive and there is usually less divergent or contrasting viewpoints.

There are other cases when people seek for advice with no particular authority figure in mind. When the questions are of general concern and about which many people have first hand experience, then the threads of responses can actually be quite long. One example is the thread "how one can reduce the negative impact on children when their parents separate" (Appendix 2). It starts with a question seeking for advice. Then

there are 14 responses besides those put in by the moderators. The large number of responses indicates that the topic of discussion must be of great interest to the participants. They all give very rich suggestions on how to handle the matter. From the richness of the suggestions, I guess most of them may be talking from the author's first hand experience. It is quite obvious that such response could mean a huge support to the person that raise the question.

Discussion vs information exchange

However, in the second example just named in the previous paragraph, one striking feature we notice is that in these 14 messages, there is not even one incidence where one comments on others' suggestions. People tend to post their own view as information, without relating to or commenting about others'. So on the whole the thread does not sound like a discussion.

One possible reason may be that this is a sentimental topic. People like to sound sympathetic and supportive. So they don't like to comment or criticize others' suggestion.

Another reason may be that too much information can crowd out the space for discussion. In many of the messages, the writer writes a large number of suggestions in point form. As a result, it is in fact not too easy for a reader to make any overall comment.

Also we notice that none of the message actually reveals the author's own personal story to support the advice put forward. I guess, it may also be related to the nature of the topic, people don't want to make it too sentimental, and limit the communication to the level of information exchange.

The discourse generated is hence like a "cumulative talk", forming a rich pool information. It may not be too fair to call it just information, as it also rich in ideas. There is obviously a collective wisdom in this accumulation. However there are few explicit interactions among the points presented by the different participants, and we do not see the deepening of understanding about the issue as the body of messages grows.

First person stories and beliefs

Although in the last case, the exchange tends to state at the information level, there are many cases where there is very lively discussion. We notice that in such cases the nature of the discussion is quite interesting. Most discussion are done through the sharing of first person stories and beliefs.

Take the thread on "why hair gelling is not allowed in schools" (appendix 3) as an

example. First of all, the topic is of an interesting nature. It is problematic, but not too serious. It provides a room for people to express different feelings and tell different stories.

The ‘first-person-ness’ is easy to understand. Most people are just responding immediately as they see the existing message. It is rare that people would leave the computer, go to find some other information before they come back to make a response on the computer. So what one types in would most likely be his/her first hand experience that they can tell right away. (So topics like “Can Disney Land project benefit Hong Kong’s economy?” are difficult to spark off much responses.)

From the messages listed in Appendix 3, we see that it is quite rare that the writer write in a detached matter. There are seldom the “on one hand and on the other hand”. Usually, they make their points by describing stories they have come across. Instead of trying to argue on the general level for a truth or false, they are more like personal manifestos, and the writers justify their beliefs on concrete local terms. The justification may be a personal story, and the feeling as experienced from the writer’s life position. The writer just sounds out the feeling and perspective from his position.

When people exchange stories, the stories do not directly agreeing or opposing each other. They are rather like a kind of variation along a theme. Different stories add a slightly different angle, like an overtone, or color to the theme. And basically most participants are from similar life position and share some common basic assumption. (If some participants do come in from a position at odd to the majority, then their messages tend to be ignored.) The messages make sense to the group easily because of their similar background, and the communication tend be quite fluent (in terms of the continuity and variation of meanings that flows across messages.)

Similarity in background, and at the same time, difference in perception makes the discussion particularly interesting. For example, among the students who are similar, in terms of being oppressed by school rules, some think they should fight for personal rights, others take a more cunning view on the system and suggest clever ways to get around it, and some take a humorous view by highlighting funny phenomena among students which shows that the rules actually fail at heart.

As the people are from the same background, their interactions would tend to be like ‘cumulative talk’ and opinions easily go very much one-sided. However, it is interesting to note that it seems the people also have a natural tendency to look for variations. So after extreme feelings or positions are aired, there often come messages that hint some possible new openings that swing the pendulum back a little bit.

It is not only students who demonstrate this mode of discussion. There are also long threads of interesting discussion among teachers with similar characteristics. One

example is the thread with the title “IT coordinator or IT superman” (Appendix 4). A teacher asks whether he should apply for the post of an IT coordinator, and whether it is a tough and unachievable task. It sparks off the discussion and generates a very long thread with 20 responses. In reading the thread, we find that most of the participants have the shared background as IT coordinating teachers in schools. Just like the students, they express in a first person way. They tell stories of their own, and express personal beliefs often in a affirmative way. Usually they use “is”, “will” (like what is known for sure). Phrase like “if”, “would”, “because”, “therefore”, “on one hand” or “the other hand” seldom appear. Sometimes, they write “I think” to indicate it is the writer’s belief.

We feel that, same as in the last example, their intentions are also more on posting their personal view from their own position, to seek for resonance in feeling from others in similar positions, and let or people know their perspectives, rather the rational construction of a common theory or description of the matter. It is a loose structure in terms of its logic, but this loose structure appears to provide a space that interesting variations can come together like a montage painting.

Do individuals exhibit conceptual change?

The web forum allows people to express opinions in an open way, so there are often rich variation in perspectives among the messages in a thread on the same topic. However, according to our observation, it is quite unusual to see a writer changing his or her stand in a discussion.

One possible reasons of this may be that the web forum is a public place, so people do not want to loose face by changing their stand publicly. So if one becomes convinced by the opposing views of others, he/she may choose to become silent. Actually, the conclusion of a discussion is rarely marked by the acknowledgement of consensus from different participants. The more usual way is that the discussion just ends in silence after a particular message.

The thread “Is Hong Kong a lovely city?” (appendix 5) is a typical example when people debate over a question. The participants defend their own positions and argue against their oppositions. “C”, one of the participants, just disappears in the end when he/she becomes the minority voice. There are occasional cases in other threads where we do see writers acknowledging the legitimacy of alternative views in the end, but they typically do it without giving up their own positions.

So is there some sort of learning resulting from such discussions? We think the answer depends on what nature and level of learning are we talking about. If we are talking about whether there is learning in the collective sense, then we can probably

say yes. The discussion generates a discourse. By reading it, one can be made more aware of the diversity of viewpoints, and sometimes the variation can be quite stimulating. If we are talking about whether a participant can learn to accept the existence of legitimate views opposite to his/her, then we would probably say yes. But if we are talking about learning as individuals changing their belief, then we say we do not see it happening often. (May be we need to do interview to confirm).

Polarizing effect

In most long discussion, the participants share some common ground. But, there are also other long threads where participants seem to hold very divergent views.

We shall take the thread of title “IT education” as an example (appendix 6) . It is sparked off by a teacher showing doubts about whether students would be able to benefit themselves with IT, with regard to their lack of initiatives to analyze information, in contrast to their keenness in using ICQ. It generates 35 responses mostly from teachers.

Some messages express pessimistic views on the IT initiatives and grievance of teachers, while others say teachers must catch up with the world development and that IT is good for students only if teachers use it with good understanding. This spotlighting on the responsibility of teachers makes the discussion a bit sensitive and some degree of antagonism can be felt in the argument.

Then some proceed to name other dimension of education that are put off focus, while the other side propose to extend the IT initiative to the scope of overall educational renewal including the power structure, learning theories etc. People argue whether IT is a must in the improvement of the education. The difference between the two camps widened.

Finally the discussion focuses back to the teachers: how much IT should one expect on teachers, and whether such expectation are reasonable or not. The feeling of opposition continued.

The discussion goes on and the two camps can see clearly that they are not going to move each other. Eventually, one on each side makes a statement, then the whole discussion ends. So here we seem to see people polarizing to quite extreme views through the discussion. In the course of debate, the focus move around like a kind of wrestling. It is not easy to make the underlying issue really explicit, or to generate a new opening that both sides can see as enlightening.

Facilitating/ moderating forum discussions

To summarize, it seems that the forum is effective in sharing and cumulating useful

first hand information /experience about matters of genuine concern to the participants. It is also effective in generate interesting variations and new openings through the sharing of personal stories and beliefs when the participants already have some basic experience or assumption in common. But it does not seem to be an effective platform for resolving conflicting viewpoints. These observations may be particular to the nature of this forum, and not generalizable to other forums that are designed for specific groups of people for specific purposes.

These characteristics of the forum do corroborate with the lessons we learn as being the moderators of the forum. (In this forum, the moderators just submit messages like other participants without explicitly acknowledging themselves as moderators.) There are cases where the moderator's messages are successful in generating more discussion and others where the moderator's messages seem to work in the opposite. It seems to us that when we post a message which tries to summarize the major ideas or difference among the previous messages, and post some further questions based on that summary, people tend not to respond. Similar effect is noted when we try to relate/summarize the discussion to some external viewpoint/theory, for example in one case the psychoanalysis theory of Freud. On the other hand, the posting of an example / story along a slightly varied thinking track without clearly stated interpretation can be useful in generating more responses.

To conclude, in order to facilitate the discussion effectively, the moderators must understand the particular strengths and limitations of the medium.

Figure 1: The first forum structure

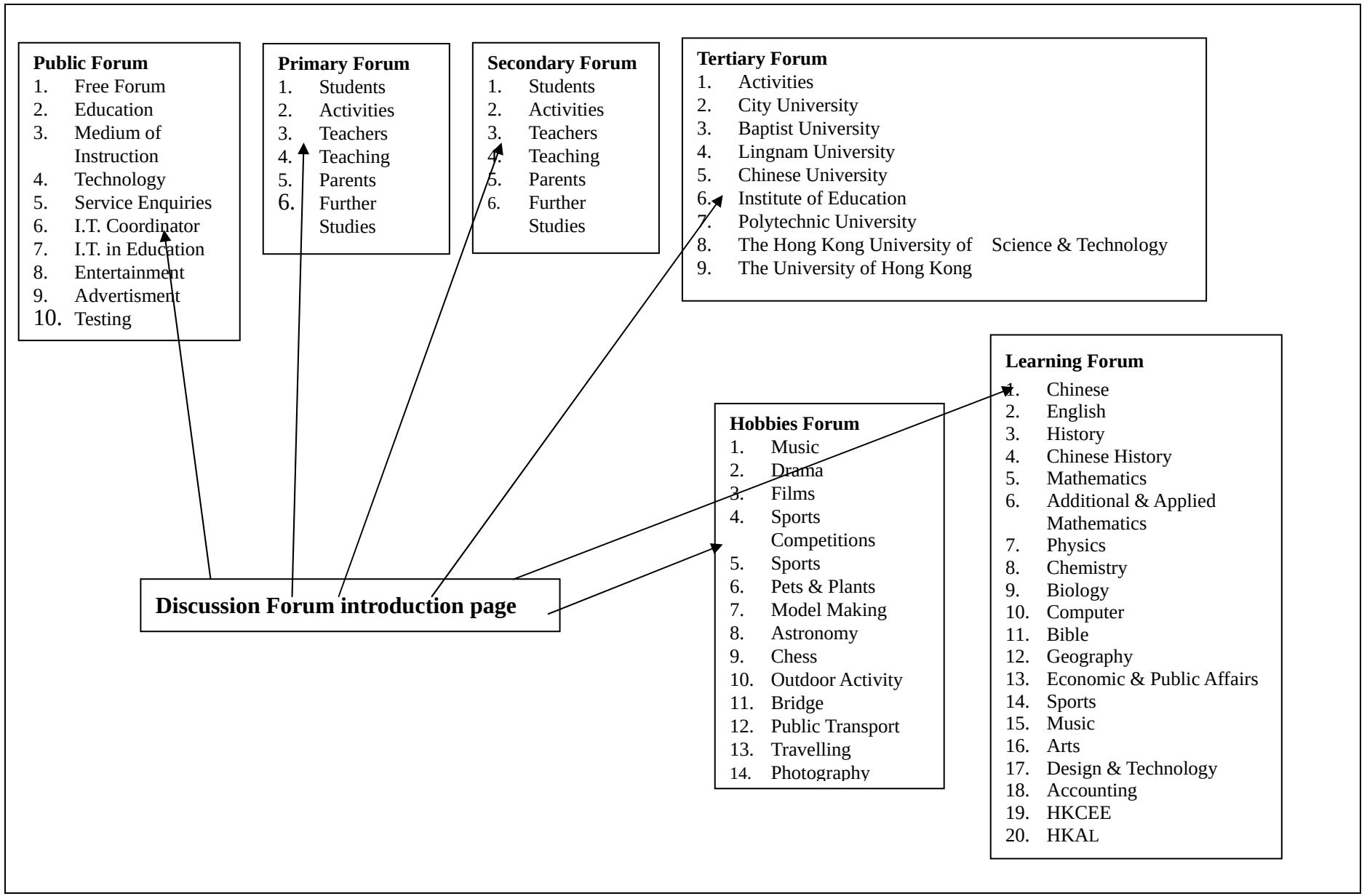
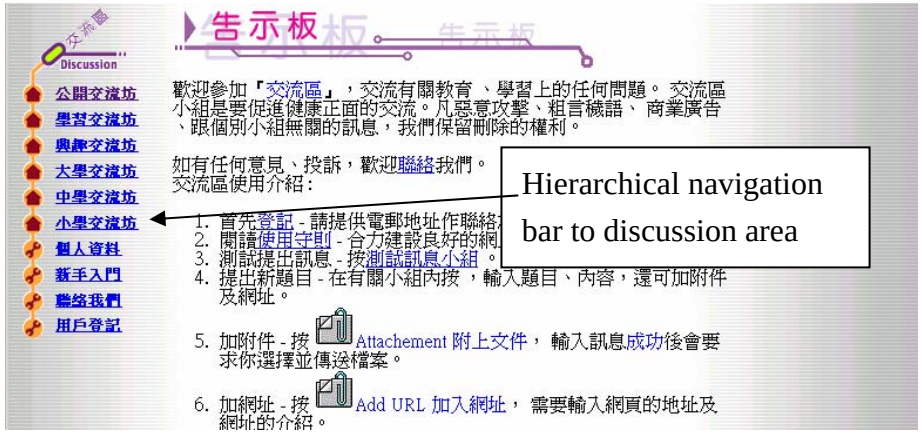
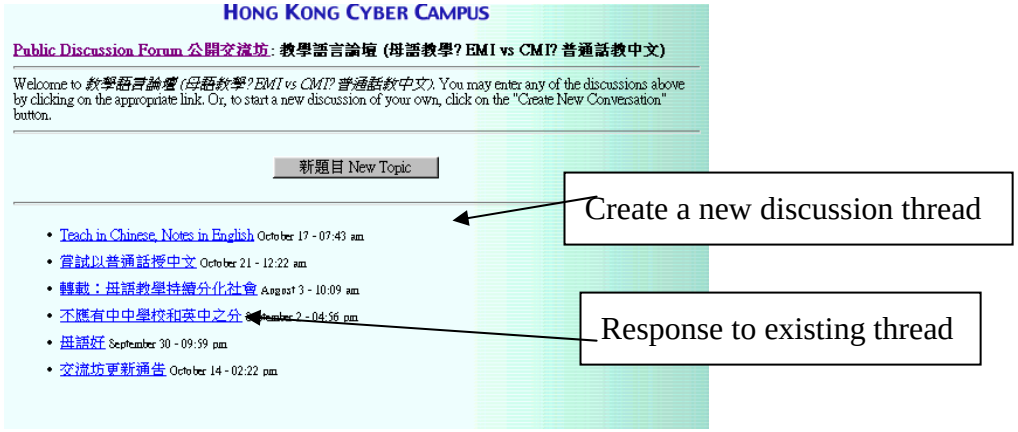


Figure 2: Interface of the old forum



2A: Introduction Page of the discussion forum

2B: Navigation page to different corner



2C: Navigation page to response or create new thread

Figure 3: The second forum structure

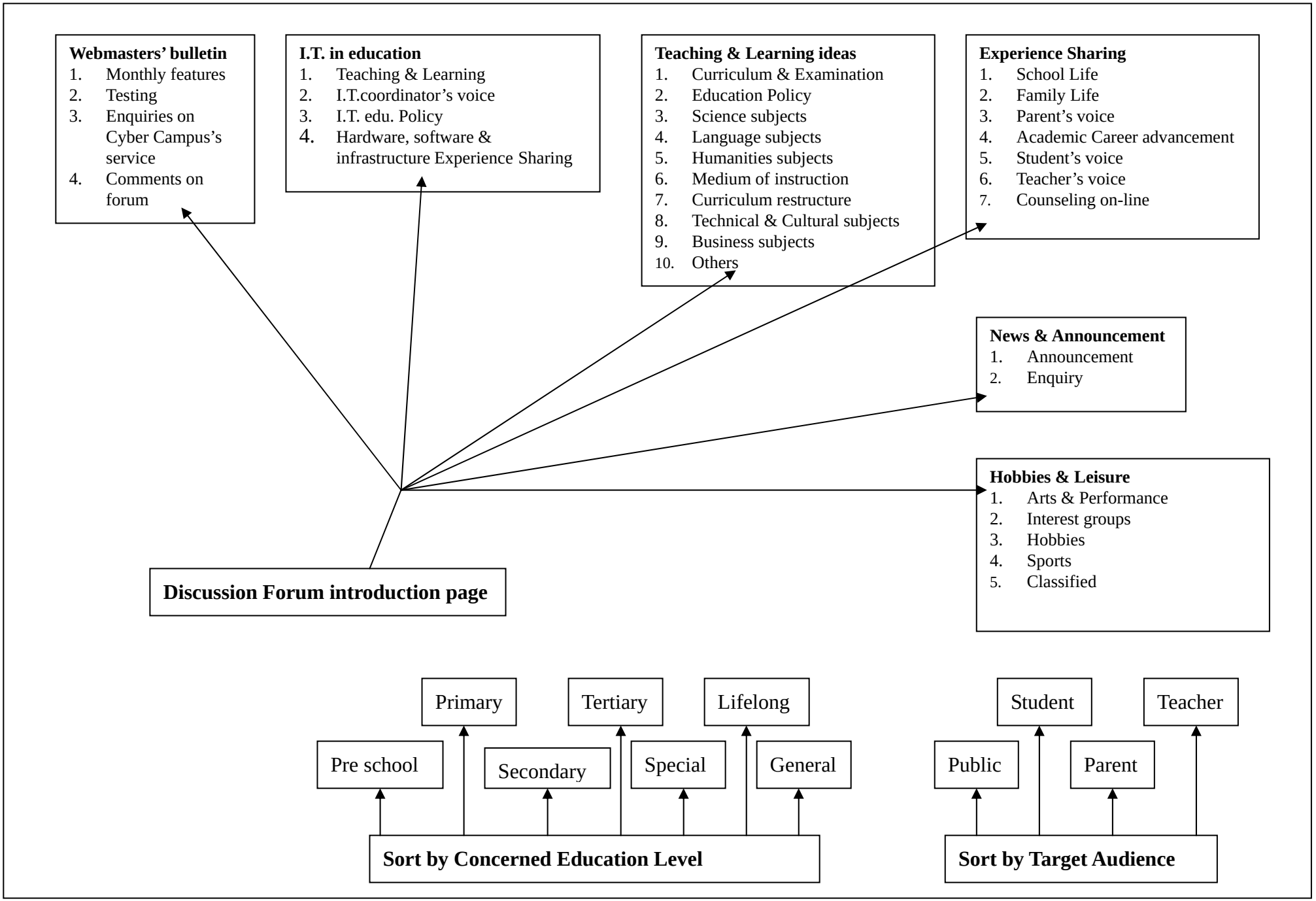


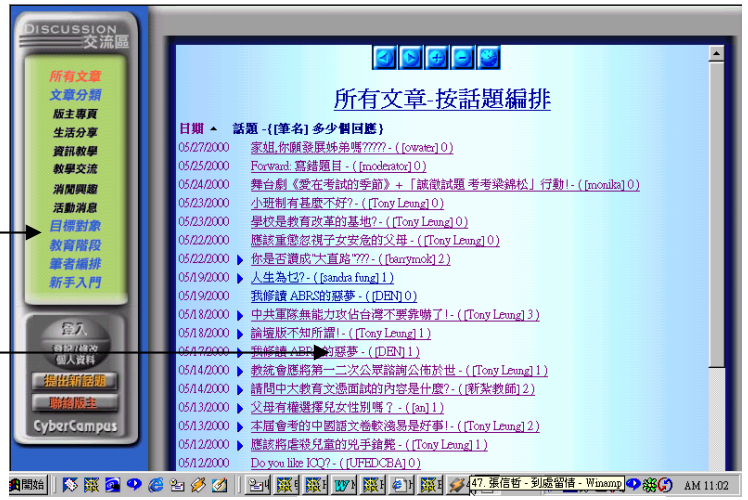
Figure 4: Interface of the new forum

Click to enter the main page of forum

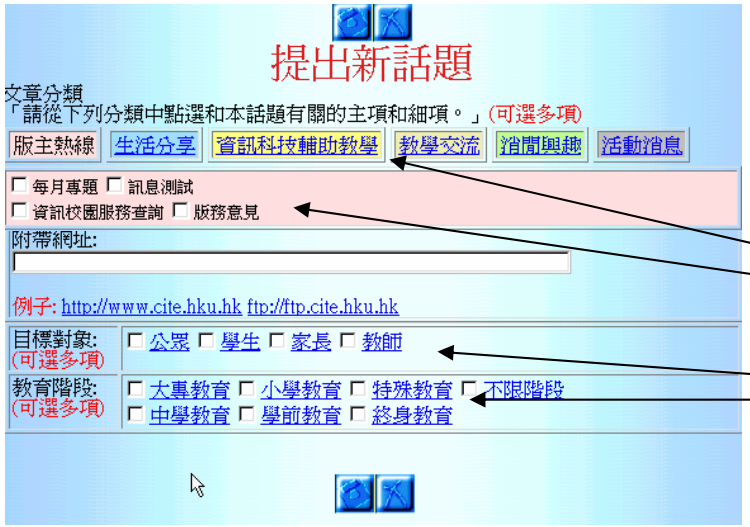
4A: Introduction Page of the forum

Click to sort threads according to different criteria or categories

Click to response existing thread



4B: Main Page of forum



Click to select categories and sub-categories

Click to select targets audience and concerned education

4C: Message composing page

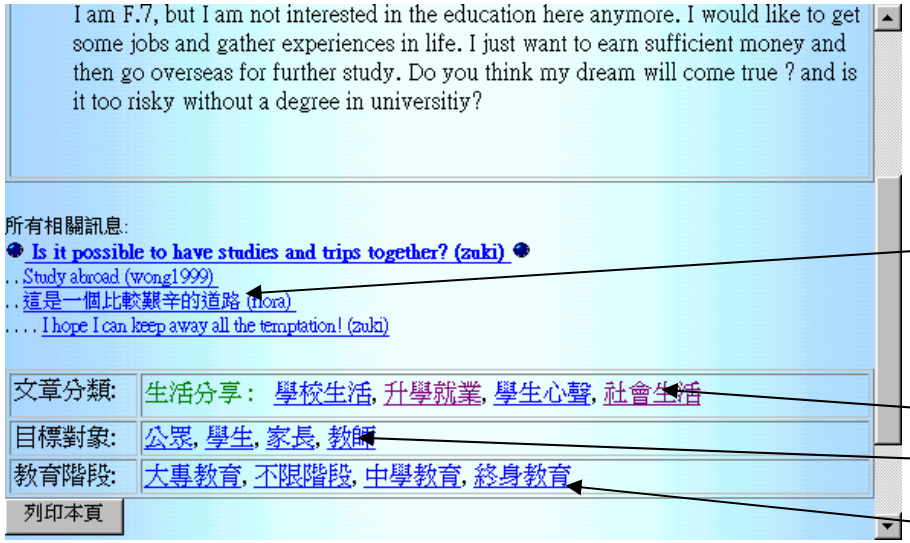
Click to view threads in different subcategories

4D: Category Page

Click to view document under this subcategory

Click to view or response this thread

4E: Subcategory Page



Click to view or response other message in this thread

Click to view threads under the same subcategory, target the same group audience, or concern the same level of education

4F: Message display page

Figure 5: Distribution of messages' target audience in new forum

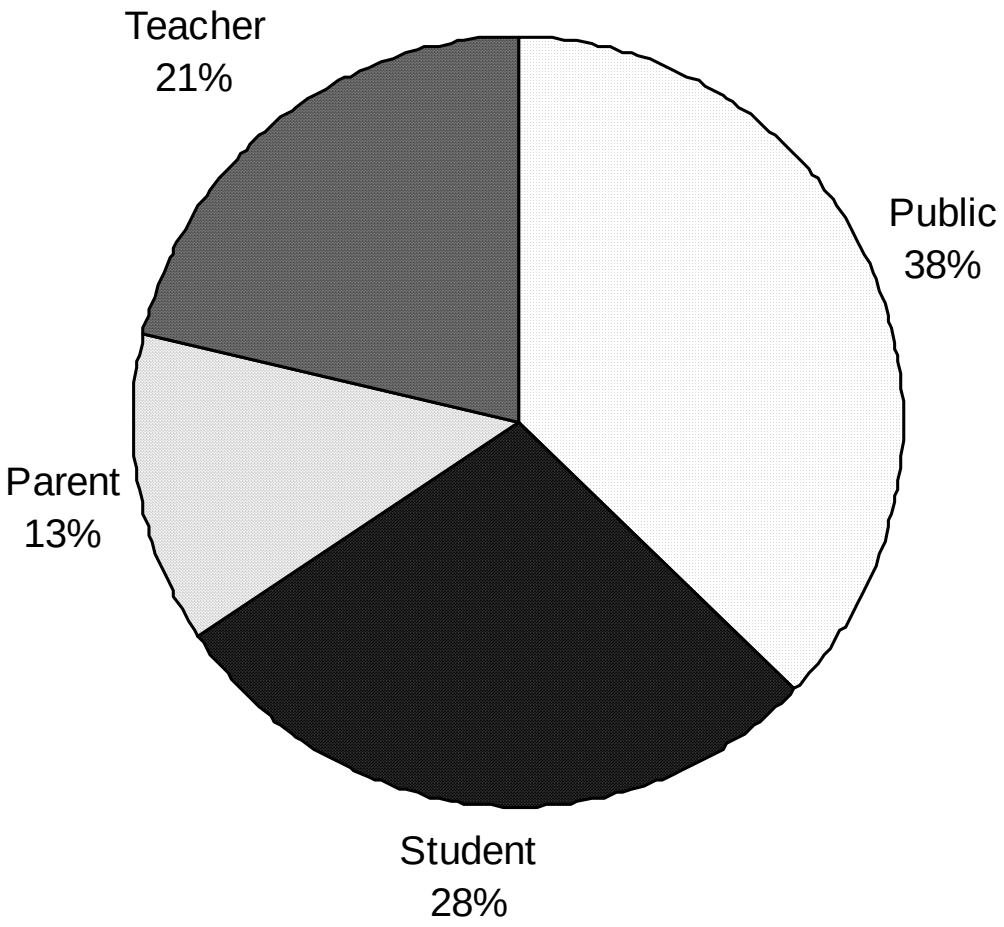


Figure 6: Distribution of messages' concerned education level in new forum

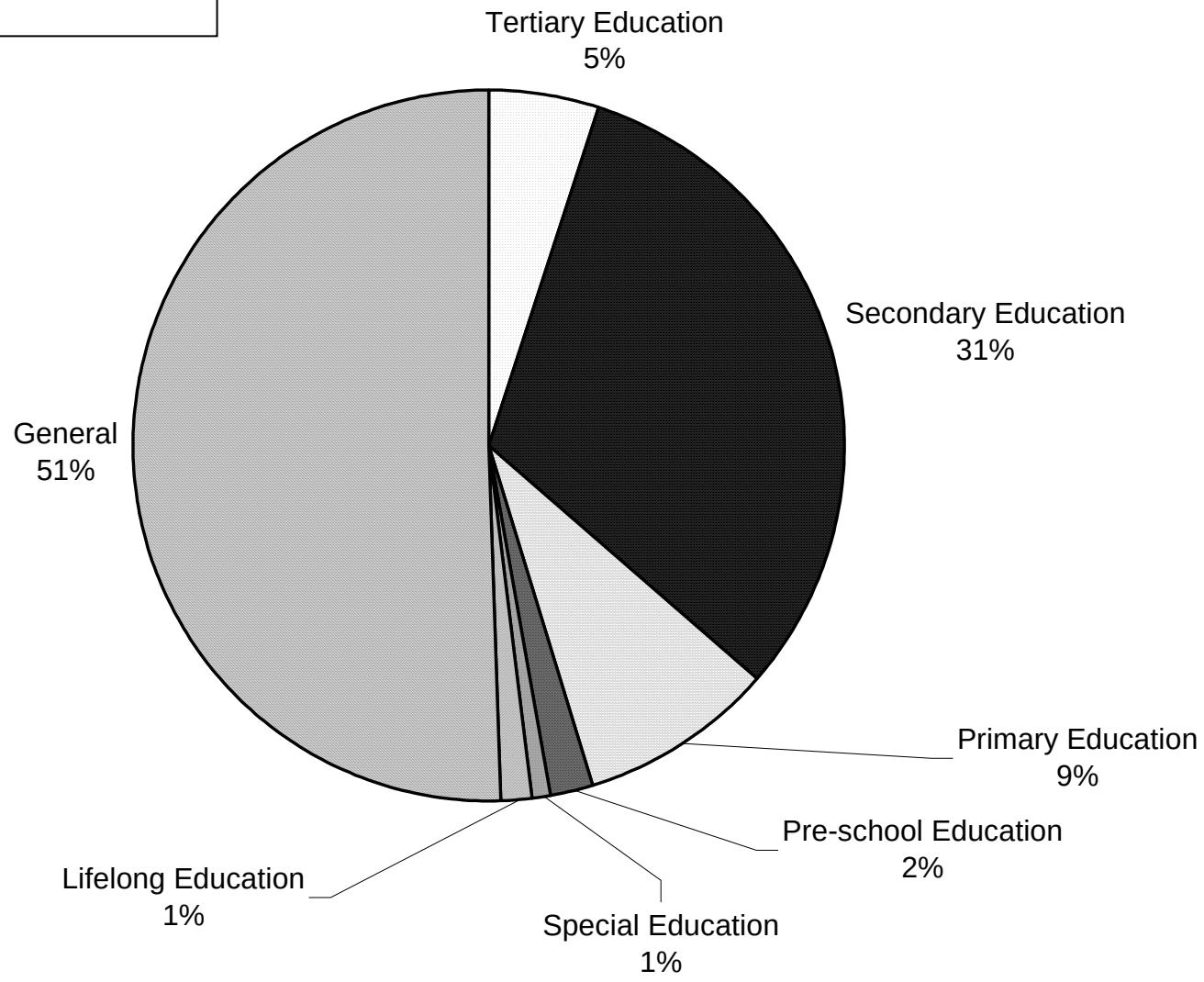
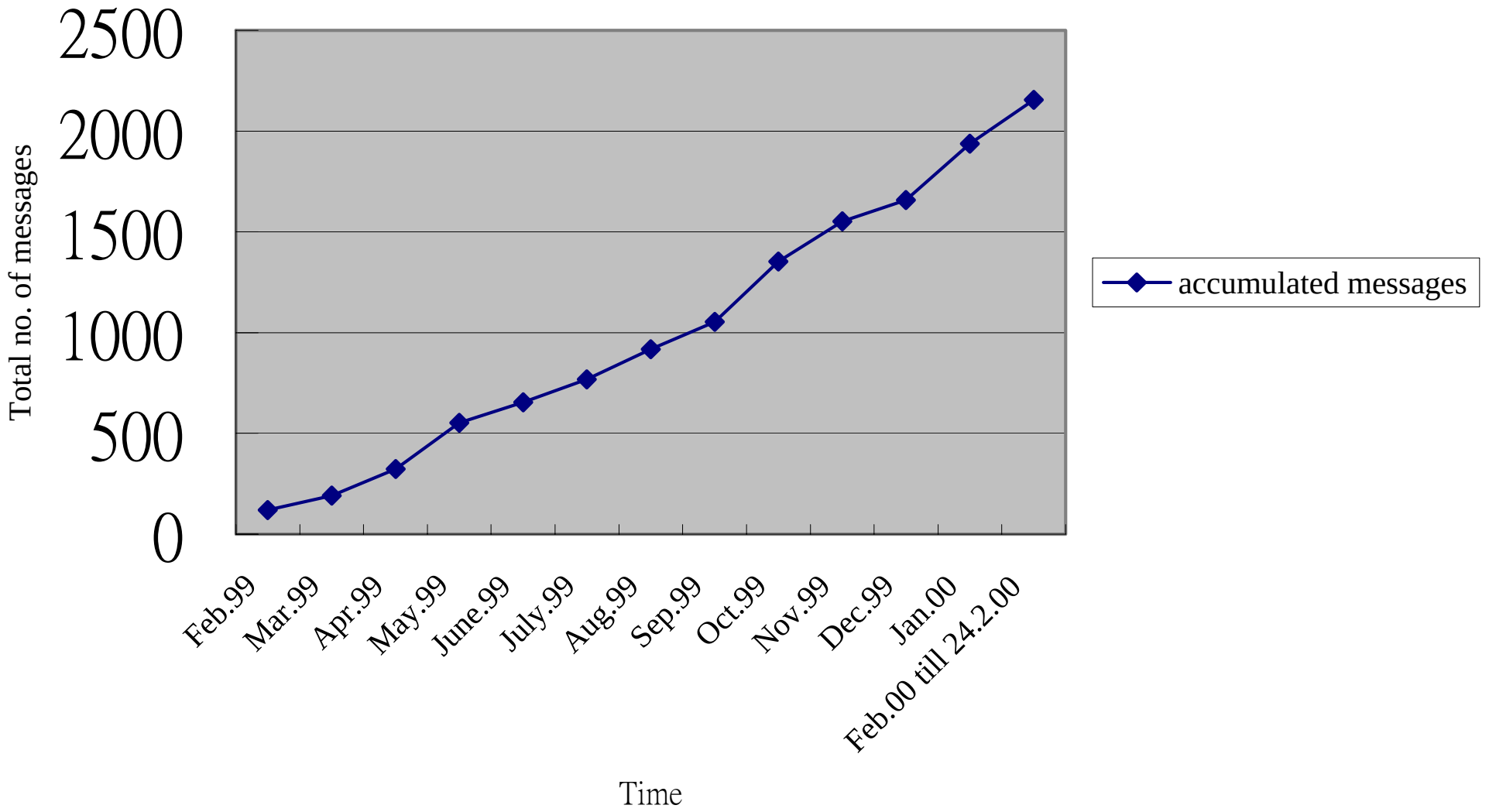


Figure 7:Accumulated messages of the discussion forum



Appendix 1

Public Discussion Forum 公開交流坊: 資訊科技教育主任園地 (IT Co-ordinators): 如何設計學校的網絡 (How to design the network of the school)

By “A” on Monday, July 19, 1999 - 10:55 am:
I have written a draft for your comment.
Please see if it is useful.
“A”
http://www.school.net.hk/~pcwong/documents/network19990717.doc

By “B” on Tuesday, July 20, 1999 - 12:41 am:
“A”教授:
你的建議看過了，給了我不少的啓示，謝謝!
我校得到近 70 萬元的撥款，但要做到你建議的"基本設備",是不夠用的，莫說要預留 20-40%日後運用了．何況電腦要配有基本的軟件，學生才能有較多學習的機會，我既不想買了沒用的東西，亦不想買回來的東西讓老師們有"到喉唔到肺"的感覺．這正正是我等行外人頭痛的地方.
無論如何，我嘗試就我校的需要草擬計劃及財政預算，可以電郵到校園求取你們的專業意見嗎?
(Professor “A”:
Read your proposal.? Gave me much insight.? Thank you!
My school has been awarded about 700 thousands recently. But achieving the "basic facility" in your proposal is not enough. Let alone reserving 20-40% for use later. The computers also need to be equipped with basic software so that the students can have relatively more learning opportunities. I don't want to buy something useless, neither do making the teachers feel being in the middle of satisfaction. This is actually where the layman like me feel headache.
No matter how, I will try according to the need of my school to draft a plan and a financial budget. Can I email to the Cyber Campus to seek your professional advices?)

By “A” on Tuesday, July 20, 1999 - 02:21 pm:
當然可以．我正跟一間小學做一個樣本.
希望很快讓大家參考
(Of couse, I am working on a sample for a primary school.
Hope everyone can use it shortly as a reference.)

By “A” on Saturday, July 24, 1999 - 03:13 pm:
Indeed, it is really difficult and budget-tight for building school networks for primary schools. I have written another article for your comment.
“A”
http://www.school.net.hk/~pcwong/documents/primary19990724.doc

By “B” on Saturday, July 24, 1999 - 10:34 pm:

“A”教授:
我相當同意"巧婦難爲無米炊"啊!
只是,學校需要在五年內利用撥款去建立網絡及購買合乎教署最低要求的電腦器,但這次之後難再有這樣一筆巨款去添置需要"稍後才買"的器材及網絡設備了.
學校要視實際的需要來購買器材與服務,這要有一全盤計劃:學校最後要達到那麼的 IT 教與學環境? 今天先買些甚麼,先用多少? 若用完整筆津貼尚未達標,留下日後才買的項目, 錢要從哪兒來? 我們仍可以利用每年的津貼來買伺服器或鋪設網絡嗎? 如何在理想與現實中找一個中庸點, 正是學校要面對的一大難題.
公司來學校"視察",目的是做生意, 他們問的是學校想怎樣, 他們照辦, 多希望他們能像教授般直接指出學校某些構思是無必要! 我們能指望他們爲學校提供一個最能切合學校需要的最佳方案嗎?
拿著這筆公帑, 我是一步一驚心的....
(Professor “A”:
I really agree, "Nothing can be done without money!"
But, the school need to use the grant within 5 years to set up network and buy computer satisfying the minimal requirements of the Education Department. But after this, it will be difficult to have such a large amount of money again to supplement the "buy it later" equipment and network facility.
Schools have to base on the actual need to buy equipment and service. This need an overall plan: What kind of IT teaching and learning environment the school have to achieve eventually? What buy first today? Use how much first? If using up the whole allowance but not yet achieved the goal, the remaining items to be bought later, where does the money come from? Can we still use the yearly allowance to buy server and network facility? How to identify the balancing point between the ideal and the reality? These are the big problems facing the schools.
Company come to schools to "have a look". The purpose is to do business. What they ask is what kind of thing the schools want, they will do it accordingly. Truly hope they can directly point out those ideas of school which are unnecessary as professor did! Can we rely on them to provide the plan that meets the need of the school the most?
In charging for this amount of public money, I am really frightened for every step we take....)

By “A” on Sunday, July 25, 1999 - 01:03 pm:
暫時不要用 leased line, 用 Cyber Campus 上網, 可申請多兩個戶口 , 節省錢買軟件.
自己培訓學校教師, 節省錢.
暫時不要買 Server, 稍後才買
(No need to use leased line for the time being. Use Cyber Campus to go online. Can apply more accounts.
Saving the money to buy software.
Train up the teachers in the school yourself, to save money.
No need to buy Server now, buy it later.)

By “B” on Monday, July 26, 1999 - 12:46 am:
Leased line 那麼貴, 相信要待老師們有較大的資源共享需要才申請了.
不論何時買伺服器, 學校仍要預算買它所需的款項的. 享受過教署藉 SAMS 而給學校的 LAN, 深感伺服器對老師們在網絡上工作的重要. 一個沒有伺服器的 LAN, 能發揮的作用仍有多少?

(Leased line is so expensive that, I believe, we have to wait until the teachers have relatively higher need of sharing the resources before the application.
No matter when to buy a server, schools still have to reserve the item of buying it. Having enjoyed the LAN of the school given by the Education Department through SAMS, I deeply felt the importance of a server to the works of the teachers. A Lan without a server can provide how limited functions?)

By “C” on Thursday, July 29, 1999 - 03:31 pm:
如果用 1.5m 超級網上行又如何呢? 只有晚上十時至早上十時才要付二元一小時, 月費三百左右.
(How about using 1.5m Super IMS to go online? Only within 10 o'clock at night till 10 o'clock in the morning, you have to pay 2 dollars per hour. The monthy fee is around 300.)

By “D” on Friday, July 30, 1999 - 12:59 pm:
Super IMS can be used in resident ONLY
And so it is not really possible.

By “E” on Friday, July 30, 1999 - 04:48 pm:
即使可在學校使用，要用「超級網上行」或者「有線寬頻」也要光纖線舖設到學校才能夠用，現時光纖的覆蓋面仍然很有限。
(Even though can be used in school, using both Super IMS or I-Cable have to use optical fibre cable connected to the school. Now the fibre coverage is still very limited.)

By “F” on Sunday, October 10, 1999 - 06:54 pm:
Dear “A”,
If our school choose the four UTP as a backbone instead of the fibre cable, can we upgrade to gigabit later? Please give more information about how to connect 4 UTP between switches.
I would like to have your kind advice about the setup of server. There will be 41 PC in computer lab, 41 PC in ITLC room, 21x3 PC in three computer rooms and about 30 PC in other room in our school. There will be 5-6 servers in our school:
IT main server,
VOD server,
virtual CD server,
proxy server,
computer lab server,
web server.
What will be better to control the data flow -- a server farm room eqiuped all servers or seperate server which is sited in each room to serve the workstations (21-41 nos) in the room.

By “G” on Saturday, October 16, 1999 - 02:09 pm:
一間只有上下午共 24 班的小學應該有幾多個 server?
(A primary school with A.M. and P.M. sessions of a total of only 24 classes should have how many server?)

By “H” on Wednesday, October 20, 1999 - 12:25 am:

I think 2-3 are suitable.

1st is NT Primary Domain Controller (PDC) for network login with file and print function.

2nd is NT Backup Domain Controller (BDC) with proxy and web function.

3rd is VOD or CD Server if necessary.

Please give more information about how to connect 4 UTP between switches.

I would like to have your kind advice about the setup of server. There will be 41 PC in computer lab, 41 PC in ITLC room, 21x3 PC in three computer rooms and about 30 PC in other room in our school. There will be 5-6 servers in our school:

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computer lab server,

web server.

What will be better to control the data flow -- a server farm room eqiuped all servers or seperate server which is sited in each room to serve the workstations (21-41 nos) in the room.

Appendix 2

Secondary Discussion Forum 中學交流坊: 學生心聲 (Students):
如何減少父母離婚對子女的負面影響? (How one can reduce the negative impact on children when their parents separate?)

By “A” on Wednesday, April 28, 1999 - 02:02 pm:
如何做孩子的永遠家長?
(How to be your kids' permanent parents?)

By “B” on Thursday, April 29, 1999 - 10:20 am:
從接觸學生的經驗中得知，破碎家庭的孩子總是或多或少被事件所影響，就算他們表面沒有甚麼，內心的傷害總是免不了。但似乎父母離異時越和平及諒解的話則對孩子的壞影響越細，反過來說，父母反目成仇、互相數臭，弄得極不愉快的話，孩子會變得孤僻和與人交往時失去信心。
(In my experience in contacting students, child from broken family are influence by the incident more or less, even though they look normal apparantely, however a hurt in feeling is inevitable. It seems that if a couple broke up peacefully and consently, their kids will got less bad influence. In contrary, if a couple broke up furiously and criticize each other, which make the atmosphere worse, their kids will become lonely and with less confidence to other people.)

By “C” on Wednesday, May 5, 1999 - 05:09 pm:
父母離婚,對子女難免會造成影響,尤其對於年幼的子女,更加會對其心理造成較大的傷害,因爲年幼的小孩需要父母雙方面的愛護和照顧,才能健康地成長。但如果離婚是無可避免的話,父母可以做的就是盡量減少對子女的影響,以下是本人的建議：
1)不要將離婚的事隱瞞子女,應耐心向他們解釋原因,盡量令他們理解你們離婚是逼不得已的。
2)表明離婚後仍然疼愛、照顧他們,大家亦可以定時見面,清除子女彷徨無助的憂慮。
3)離婚後,不要太快再婚,因這樣會使子女認爲你背叛了父親/母親,這樣會對他們的心理造成傷害。
4)讓子女有自己的立場,給他們選擇跟從父親或母親,不要強迫他們。
(Once a couple divorce, their kids must got their influence, especially for those young age kids, the incident will create great harm to them psychologically. This is because young kids depends on the love and care of parents to grow up in a healthy way. However, if dicorce is inevitable, what parents can do is to minimize the influence of the incidents to children. Following is my personal suggestions:
1) Dont' try to hide the incident from your kids, try to explain to them patiently, and make them realize that divorce is needed.
2) Point out that they are still concerned and loved by parents even parents are divorced, and they can gathering periodically, this will ease the fear of helpless of kids.
3) Once divorced, don't get into another marriage too soon, since this will make kids think that you are a betrayal in the incident, and this will lead to psychological harm to them.
4) Let the kids had their opinion on the incident, and let them choose if they would like to live with dad or mom, don' t force them to act as you like.)

By “D” on Thursday, May 6, 1999 - 04:34 pm:

其實有兒女的家庭要離婚的話，當中的考慮的確不足爲外人道。畢竟兩個人勉強在一起的話十分痛苦，分開的話有可能成爲兩個幸福家庭，但是孩子所面對的衝擊也是很大的。

(There will be a lot of consideration for those couples with kids to decide to divorce. it is very harmful to a couple if they don't like each other but had to live together, but if they separate they can create two happy family, although this will create great shock to kids.)

By “E” on Thursday, May 6, 1999 - 04:41 pm:

如今這個現代社會,『婚姻』的觀念在大家的心目中已有改變,夫婦們所追求的不再是長廂廝守,白頭到老。他們遇有不合的地方,就會輕易鬧離婚。因此,近年來的離婚率不斷在增加,這些離婚的夫婦大多有子女,其實他們亦會因著父母離婚而受到影響,而當中大多是負面的影響。

如要減少父母離婚對子女的影響：

1)要以開明的態度告訴給孩子知道他們要離婚,避免他們產生猜忌,以爲自己是令到父母離婚的原因,藉此得到子女的瞭解及支持。

2)不要以暴力來解決離婚問題,避免給子女產生陰影,因而憎恨某一方或成長後學習其父母解決凡婚姻問題的方法。

3)父母們離婚後應主動與其子女保持溝通,讓他們明白到父母仍是疼錫他們。

4)父母們不應在其子女前訴說另一方的不是,以免破壞他們對父母的印象,因此而對其父親或母親產生仇恨。

5)父母們應妥善安排子女們日後的生活,令到他們有一個健康的成長。

6)不要讓子女們成爲倆夫婦之間的磨心。

(In nowadays, the concept of marriagehad changed in peoples mind, what couples pursuit are not longtime marriageand lifelong couple. Once they got conflict, they will decide to divorce easily. Therefore, the rate of divorce rise in recent years, and most of these divorced couples got kids, and they will be influence by the divorce of their parents, while most of these influence are negative.

How to reduce the advers effect to kids once you are going to divoce:

(1) Try to tell your kids that parents are going to divorce, this will ease their speculation, or else they will think that themselves are the reason of divorce, by telling them can got the understanding and support from kids.

(2)Don't try to solve the problem of divorce with violence, in order to avoid leaving a phobia to kids, and they will hate dad/mom or learn from this bad sample and try to solve marriage problem by violence once they are grow up.

(3) Try to remain contact actively with kids once divorced, let them know that they are still under concern even though parents are divorced.

(4) parents should not blame each other to the kids, in order to prevent them from destroying the image of parents, and even hate parents.

(5) Parents should make good arrangement about the living of kids, and let them grow up in a healthy way.

(6) Dont' make kids become the axis of conflict.)

By “F” on Friday, May 7, 1999 - 03:53 pm:

畢竟這些守則是知易行難，兩夫婦之間有問題而導致最終要離婚，則很難保持如此理性。反而現今的

學校或者服務青少年的機構亦應考慮多提供一些有關面對逆境或者不如意事的訓練，那麼萬一他們遇到類似的問題時也不至於太徬徨無助。
(Unfortunately, this rules are well known but hard to practice, a couple got some problem which lead to divorce, it is very difficult for them to remain calm and reasoning. However, schools and voluntary organization which provide service to child and youth should think about provide some training to kids to face difficulties, so they would be more prepared once this happen.)

By Why on Friday, May 7, 1999 - 05:09 pm:
1. 父母不應以離婚爲恥，不要羞於向人表示自己已離婚。這樣孩子便不會爲自己出身於 單親家庭而耿耿於懷。
2. 多關心自己的子女，以填補單親家庭欠缺的家庭溫暖。
3. 父母不應禁制孩子與自己的前夫/妻見面。不要將自己對前夫/妻的仇恨帶給下一代。
4. 坦白對待孩子，別對孩子作出過多隱瞞，否則孩子只會感到疑惑、不知所惜。
((1) Parents should not feel shame about their divorce, they should told their family members frankly. Therefore, kids won't feel uncomfortable for they are grow up in a single parent family.
(2) Put more concern on your kids, in order to compensate the drawbacks of single parent family.
(3) Parents should not prohibit their kids from meeting with ex-wife/ex-husband, don't inherite the unhappiness to kids.
(4) Talk with kids frankly and don't try to hide any thing, or else kids will feel suspiscious and helpless.)

By “G” on Saturday, May 8, 1999 - 12:53 pm:
—離婚後父母應盡量多抽時間跟子女見面,保持聯絡,增加溝通機會,讓子女擁有『較爲健全』的家庭,不會因爲父母的離異而好像失去了父親或母親其中一方。
—輔導子女。例如教導子女當他們聽到別人講到有關『家庭樂』等話題時,不要因此而不開心或害怕面對。因爲父母離婚雖不是很光采的事,但別人也並沒有甚麼地方值得嘲笑他們,所以子女不用害怕面對這問題。
—父母因要離婚而可能引致自己心情不佳或低落。因此,絕不要因自己的情緒而影響到子女。例如,離婚後夫婦間某一方會失去經濟支柱,兼且又要照顧孩子,有時候或會感歎,或爲日後的生活而擔憂、徬徨。可是這樣會使子女以爲父/母在暗示自己將會成爲他/她的一個負累、包袱。
(----Parents should arrange more gathering with kids once they are divorced, try to keep in touch and communicate, this will let kids to grow up in a "relatively healthy" family, and won't lost dad or mom when they are divorced.
----Parents should counselling kids, such as tell their kids don't feel sad or avoidance when they heard other talking about something like "family life". Since divorce is nothing to shame with, and others should not tease them with this issue, so kids don't have to feel avoidance on this issue.
----Parents may feel sad or depress once they are divorced. Therefore, parents should not let their emotions influence kids. For example, once parent divorced, one of them may lost the financial support, and he/she had to look after kids, sometime he/she may feel sad or worry about the future. But thi will make kids think that dad/mom is implying that kids will become his/her burden.)

By “H” on Saturday, May 8, 1999 - 11:23 pm:

不想對子女成造負面影響, 父母在離婚前應作慎重考慮呢~~
(If parents are not willing to create negative influence on kids, they should think twice before divorce.)

By “I” on Sunday, May 9, 1999 - 10:13 pm:
1. 向孩子解釋離婚的原因，讓他明白分手是覺得彼此的生活習慣、觀念、態度無法協調 而引起的。
2. 強調仳離與他的頑皮、愛哭、愛搶現具毫無關係，用以減緩孩子的罪惡感，並以嚴 肅的口吻告訴孩子，離婚已無法挽回。
3. 讓孩子知道，他將受夫妻中的某一方監護，不過他仍可時常與另一方保持聯絡，甚或 和他一起出外。
4. 孩子有任何情緒反應，如悲傷、哭泣、憤怒，都應該鼓勵他表露出來，絕對不要壓抑 ，如此才有利於孩子的心理發展。
(1. Explain to kids about the reasons of divorce, let them understand that the divorce is induce by the different in lifestyle, beliefs, and attitude.
2. Emphasize the divorce didn't relate to the behaviour of kids, therefore, kids won't feel guity about this, and tell kids that divorce is inevitable with a serious attitude.
3. Let the kids know that one of their parents will be their supervisor, but kids can still meet with the other parents freuently.
4. If kids got emotional reaction like sorrow, cry or furious, parents should encourage them to express, and kid should not suppress this feeling, since this is good for the psychological development of kids.)

By “J” on Sunday, May 9, 1999 - 11:40 pm:
本人認爲有以下數點....
1)父母應該抱開明既態度,不要令子女有不必要的恐懼!
2)給子女解釋離婚的原因,陳述離婚後對雙方的好處,令子女容易接受.不會以父母離婚爲恥.
3)父母應避免在子女面前,談論離婚的細節,和不應在子女面前吵架與動粗.
4)經濟情況許可的話,可將子女送往外國留學,減少離婚對子女的正面影響.另一方面子女可遠離戰場,自學獨立.
5)父母應該多加關懷,以保償單親家庭的不足.
6)父母應以爲和平,理智解決問題,以免對子女做成影響!
7)圍護子女與父母的關係,不應將責任咎任何一方!
(I got the following suggestions:
1. Parents should adopt a open attitude, and don't make your kid fear.
2. Explain the reasons of divorce to kids, point out the advantages of divorce, this will make kids accept the situation and won't feel shame with their parent's divorce.
3. Parents should not discuss the details of divorce before kids, and should not argue before them.
4. In case of affordable, kids can be sent to study aboard, this will minimize the adverse effect on kids, and put them away from the battlefield, make them independence.
5. Parents should show more concern, in order to compensate the drawbacks of single parent family.
6. Parent should adopt a peaceful and reasonable attitude in order to deal with problems, this will minimize the influence on kids.
7. Maintain the relationship between kids and parent, don't blame the other side for responsibility.)

By “K” on Sunday, May 9, 1999 - 11:43 pm:

父母的離異對子女言而言絕對是一個沉重的打擊，若然父母要離婚，切勿在子女面前大吵大鬧，更不應強迫子女作出選擇要跟父親或母親。父母應以子女的權益爲重，作出最適當的安排。另外，父母要以和平的方式向子女解釋父母的離異根本與其無關，更不是子女的錯。同時，要向子女表示即使父母離婚亦會依然愛護、關心他們。另外，夫婦即使離異亦不應該在子女面前刻意中傷對方以此報復，更加不可阻止對方探望子女。可以的話，父母能一起抽出時間陪伴子女使其覺得父母仍然愛他們。若然父母的離異導致子女的情緒出現問題，而父母又無法解決的話，則需要求外在的幫助，例如：社工、心理醫生等。

(Parent's divorce is a serious hamper to kids. If parent had to divorce at last, they should avoid arguing before kids, and should not force kids to make decision about live with whom. Parents should consider the rights of kids, and make the best arrangement for them. Besides, parentsshould explain the situation to kids peacefully and point out that kids got no responsibilities or fault in their divorce. In addition, parents should point out to kids that they are stiull beloved and concerned even though parents are divorced. Besides, the one who got the right to live with kids should not prohitbit the kids to meet with other parent or blame the other parent for the divorce. Parents should arrange more time to stay with kids since this will make them feel that they are still beloved. If parent's divorce create emotional problem on kids, which can't be solve by parents alone, they should seek help from social workers or psychologist, etc.

By “L” on Monday, May 10, 1999 - 12:16 am:

要減少父母離婚對子女的負面影響，很似乎父母的處理態度。以下是我的建議：

1. 父母雙方不可以將離婚的事歸咎於子女的身上，離婚後不可以將自己怨恨對方的情緒發洩在子女的身上，這可能令子女認爲父母離婚是他們的錯，以致內咎、憂慮。
2. 離婚已成事實，父母應坦白告訴子女，不要隱瞞，告訴子女離婚的原因，還要表明儘管父母要離婚，雙方仍然十分愛他們的，平時也會常常見面的。
3. 若父母離婚的原因是因爲第三者，受害的一方切勿將自己的怨恨漑輸給子女，這會令到子女十分憎恨父/母，以致關係破裂，更不應不讓子女與父/母見面。
4. 要以和平的方法去解決離婚的問題，切勿用暴力。
5. 就算離婚，父/母也應給子女讓任何一方見面，令子女得到完整的愛。
6. 父母要坦白告訴子女，離婚不是不光彩的事，在別人面前無需隱瞞。
7. 做父母的，雖然雙方離異，更加應多些關心子女，以補償自己不能給一個完整的家給子女。
8. 若果父/母仍對離婚一事耿耿於懷，應找一些家庭輔導員，尋求方法，以解開心結。
9. 告訴子女，父/母離婚只因大家難以再相處，再者大家是在和平的情況下決定離婚，不是每對伴侶都會離婚的，還有一些很恩愛的例子，所以子女長大後，無需對伴侶失去信心或者產生恐懼。
10. 父母應理智地讓子女自己選擇跟從哪一方，不要強迫他們，成爲兩者的磨心，這一定會影響他們身心的發展。要顧全大局，要處處爲子女著想，不要爭一時之氣。

(In order to minimize the adverse effect of divorce, parent's attitude is very important, the following is my suggestions:

1. Parents should not blame kids for divorce, and they should not express their discontent on kids, this will make kids think that parent's divorce is kids responsibility, and this will make kids feel guity and anxious.
2. Once divorce becomes true, parents should tell their kids frankly with no hide out, and explain the reasons

of divorce to them. And parents should also point out htat kids are still beloved even though parents are divorced, and they can meet frequently.
3. If the reason of divorce is due to affairs, the one who suffered should not make their kids to hate the other parent, and they should not prohitbit the other parent from meeting with kids.
4. Try to solve the problem peacefully, with no violence.
5. Even though parents are divorced, kids should have the opportunity to meet each parents, and this will enable them to enjoy the love from both dad and mom.
6. Parents should talk to kids frankly about their divorce, since divorce is not a shame, and should not be hide out from the others.
7. Parents should concern more about their kids even though they are divorced, this can compensate the lost of a healthy family life.
8. If parents are feeling uncomfortable about the divorce, they should seek the advice of social worker.
9. Parents should tell their kids that parents are divorce in a peaceful way, and they are divorced because they can't live together anymore, and this is not the general situation of marriage, many couples live happily, and kids should not fear or lost confidence on marriage once they are grow up.
10. Parents should take kid's feeling into account and let them choose if they would like to live with dad or mom. Parents should not force them to make decision or make them become the axis of conflict.)

By “M” on Tuesday, May 11, 1999 - 08:01 pm:
本人有以下建議 ：
1. 父母應坦誠地將離婚原因告訴給子女聽，這樣子女便不會因以爲自已是父母離婚的「 導火線」而不安。
2. 父母應妥善安排子女日後的生活，否則會令子女擔憂將來的日子。
3. 父母應多與子女溝通和見面，由於父母離婚會令子女的情緒波動，父母應多在旁開解 他們，並讓他們知道縱使父母離婚，父母仍然愛他們。
4. 父母不應說對方的不是，因爲這只會破壞對方在子女心目中的形象，令子女憎恨對方，父母可能認爲這樣做會得到子女的芳心，但他們卻想不到若子女活在愁恨中會令子女 成長得不快樂和不健全。
5. 若子女的年紀較小，與他們居住的父/母宜再婚，因爲子女在健全的家庭下才能健全地 成長 ； 若子女的年紀較大(已懂事和懂得照顧自己)，父母最好不要再婚，因爲他們會較 難接受新爸爸或新媽媽。
(I got the following suggestions:
1. Parents should tell their kids about the reasons of divorce, therefore, kids won't think that they are the fireline of their parent's divorce.
2. Parents should arrange their kids living in a proper way, or else kids will worry about their living in the future.
3. Parents should meet and communicate with their parents frequently, since parent divorce will make kids emotionally unstable, so parents should counsel them and let them know that even parent divorced, they are still beloved.
4. Parents should not blame each other, since this will destory the image make kids hate the other parent. Parents may think that this will gain support from kids, but they don't know that this will make kids live in furious and grow up in a unhappy and unhealthy environment.
5. If kids are still infant, the parent who live with them should think about marriage, by this kids can be grow

up in a healthy family, but if kid are already grow up (they know the situation and know how to take care of themselves), parents should not marriage, since kids are difficult to accept the new parent.)

By “B” on Wednesday, May 12, 1999 - 12:29 pm:
綜合來說，夫婦間離婚後仍然能夠成爲朋友的話，我想對孩子而言一定是比較好的。只是有多少夫婦離婚後仍能成爲朋友那就很難說。
(Generally speaking, I think it would be better if a couple still make friends even though they are divorced. However, it is hard to imagine how many couples can still be friend once they are divorced.)

By “N” on Wednesday, May 12, 1999 - 06:53 pm:
離婚意味著一個家庭的決裂,不論是甚麼境況,這對家庭中每一成員均有很大影響,各有失落之處。尤其是子女面對這個現實時,多感到無奈及難以接受。我認爲人們有以下方法減少父母離婚對子女的負面影響：
1)由於子女長於一個不完整的家,他們沒有安全感,自我價值觀也較微。故此我們可以多關心他們,讓他們不要以爲父母離婚後,可能某一方不再照顧他們,不理他們的需要,要他們明白父母雖離異但仍是疼錫他們的。
2)父母應向子女清楚地解釋離婚之因由,不要作任何隱瞞或誇大的描繪,使子女明白父母的處理是正確的,日後當他們面對婚姻問題,便不會動不動就以離婚解決,甚至對婚姻失去信心。
3)當發現身邊的朋友、同學、親戚的父母離婚,不要以奇異眼光看他們,認爲這些是家醜。我們應該幫助他們重新面對生活,積極地走日後的路。
(Divorce means a broke up of a family, and this will create great impact to every family members, and they will feel lost. Especially when kids face this situation, most of them feel unacceptable or helpless. I think that people can adopt the following measure to minimize the adverse effect:
1. Since kids will be grow up in a incomplete family, they are lack of safety feeling, and the self valuation is lower. So parents should concern them more, and let them know that they are still concerned even though parents a re divorced, and their needs are observed.
2. Parents should talk about the reasons of divorce clearly and frankly, with no hide out or exagerate.This will make kids know that what is proper in dealing with marriage problem, and when they face similar problem in the future, they won't try to solve the problem by divorce solely or lost their confidence on marriage.
3. Once discover that friends, schoolmates or relative's parents divorced, don't view them with a special viewpoint, and think this is a shame. We should help them to face their life, and face the road afterwards actively.)

By “O” on Friday, May 14, 1999 - 05:58 pm:
父母分離,雖使他們的子女失去了其中一個親人的照顧,但只要父或母盡力地作出補救方法,這並不妨礙他們的成長：
—父或母須向子女詳細解釋他們分開的原因,並點明如果父母在很不愉快的情況下相處,是會容易產生家庭糾紛。這樣,子女明白到父母分開的原因,便明白到父母之苦衷。
—得到了撫養權的一方,應不要阻止自己的兒女與另一方見面,使仔他們得到正常及適量的溝通和接觸。也不應叫兒女不認另一方作爸爸或媽媽,這是很難使他們接受,更引起他們的反感。
—教他們如何去回答別人問及有關自己家庭狀況的問題,叫兒女不須迴避這類問題,也不用說謊,直接向

人表達清楚,這使子女知道父母離婚不是一件羞恥的事,不用隱瞞,這對他們的自尊感有所幫助。
(A couple divorced will make their kids to lost one of their parent's concern, however, if dad or mom can try their best to remedial, the divorce won't become obstacle of their gorw up:
Dad or mom had to explain the reasons of divorce in depth, and point out that if their parents still live together, this will easily induce other conflicts. By this, kids will understand parents reasons of divorce.
The one who got the right to live with kids should not prohitbit the kids to meet with other parent, this will make them enjoy the normal and suitable communication and contact. In addition, they should not prohitbit their kids to regard the other parent as dad or mom, since this is very difficult to imply and make them feel odd.
Guide kids to talk about their family situation once they are being asked, and tell them not to avoid this kind of questions or hide about this, and expres about the situation frankly. This will make kids don't think that their parent's divorce is a shame, no need to hide out, and is helpful to their self respect.

By “P” on Friday, May 14, 1999 - 11:24 pm:
對於如何減少父母離婚對子女的負面影響，本人有以下意見：
1.父母應讓子女自由選擇跟從父或母，而得到撫養權的一方不應阻止另一方探望子女，讓子女得到完整的愛。
2.父母應親自向子女交代清楚離婚的原因。
3.父母離婚後應多些關心子女。
4.父母不應在子女面前說對方的不是，破壞子女心中的父或母的形象。
5.父母不應將責任歸咎於子女，把不滿的情緒發洩在子女身上，令子女認爲自已是父母離婚的罪魁禍首。
(I got some opinion in how to reduce the adverse effect to kids about divorce:
1. Parents should let their kids to choose whether they would like to live with dad or mom, and the one who got the right to live with kids should not prohitbit the other to meet kids periodically, this will let kids to enjoy the love from both parents.
2. Parents should talk to kids and explain the reasons of divorce.
3. Parents should concern about kids even though they are divorced.
4. Parents should not blame each others before kids, and destroy the image of dad or mom.
5. Parents should not put the responsibility of divorce on kids, or express their discontent on kids, this will make kids think that they are the reason of their parent's divorce.)

By “Q” on Friday, May 21, 1999 - 06:10 pm:
父母應：
避免在子女面前吵架。
在離婚後定期與子女一起參與活動。
要留意子女的心情變化。
表明繼續愛護子女，聆聽子女的心聲。
向子女表達他們的內心感受，使子女明白他們的感受。
(Parents should:
avoid quarelling before kids.

meet with kids periodically once they are divorced.
Keep an eye on the emotional change of kids.
Point out to kids that they are still concerned, and listen to kids voice.
parents should express their feeling to kids, and let them know your feeling.)

Appendix 3

Secondary Discussion Forum 中學交流坊:
學生心聲 (Students): 點解"GEL"或濕頭是違反校規?? (Why using hair gel or wetting the hairs is violating the school regulations?)

By “A” on Monday, May 10, 1999 - 08:15 pm:
我校不是什麼名校,只是一間普通學校.但點解我返學的時候,領袖生就會向我方向走過來, 他們說"你的頭髮不合校規,你要去記名一次!(他指我"GEL"頭),我就話"我只不過返學前洗了頭,而不是"GEL"頭!!!由於我住的地方比較近我的學校,所以我的頭髮乾不透!因爲我校不准"GEL"頭,所以 話我返校規.我校的訓導主任話"GEL"頭係一個行動,但濕頭亦都係一個行動!但我同他捉字蝨的話,我就可以話我現在是洗頭,不是濕頭或"GEL"頭!!!!在此請問大家洗頭算不算是故意濕頭(洗頭爲求乾淨)???吾該各位幫我解答這些問題?!
(My school is not any elite school, is only an average school. But why, when I got to school, did prefects always come to me, they said, "your hairs don't comply with the school regulations. We have to record your name one time! (He is referring to my hair gel.) I then replied, "I've just washed my hairs before going to school. But never put any hair gel on my hairs!!! As where I live is relatively close to my school, my hairs have not yet dried up! Since my school does not allow using hair gel, they said I have violated the school regulations. My school's discipline master said that putting gel onto the hairs is an action. But wetting the hairs is also an action! But if I played on the words with him, I would be able to say that I had now washed the hairs, but not wetted the hairs, or either putting any gel on the hairs!!! Now I want to ask the people here, is washing the hairs regarded as intentionally wetting the hairs (washing hairs is for neatness)? Please, everyone helps me to answer these questions !)

By “B” on Tuesday, May 11, 1999 - 11:51 pm:
My school also have this unreasonable '校規' (school regulations).Which school are u in?

By “C” on Wednesday, May 12, 1999 - 11:21 am:
我是老師，想和大家分享一下對這類校規的想法。
首先不論學校是不是名校，但是「國有國法，家有家規」，既然學校的校規是不可以"GEL"頭，那學生就不應該"GEL"頭，這是無可置疑的。
但是在”A”的情況又有點不同，如果是洗頭而頭髮未乾，那就應該不屬於犯校規。而且洗濕了頭和"GEL"頭應該是不同的狀態，可以簡單分辨，按理應該可以辯解，但是如果訓導老師不接受，那你只好改改洗頭的習慣。我很同情你的遭遇，但也無辦法。
我想再談談那些儀容方面的校規，其中有不少是有點僵化和形式化的，和時代已經脫節。例如指定紮頭髮繩的顏色、襪的長度、西褲有褶無褶、恤衫的用料、眼鏡的顏色款式等等，這些是否都有點細眉細眼呢？當然我不是說短裙、染髮等也接受，但是某些過時的實在可以放寬。
(I am a teacher, want to share with people here my thinking about this kind of school regulations.
First of all, no matter the school is an elite school or not, "a country has her own constitution, a family has its own rules." Now that the school regulation does not allow using hair gel, then the students should not use hair gel. This is undeniable.

But the situation of “A” is a bit different. If only washing the hairs, and the hairs have not dried up, it should not be considered as a violation of the school regulations. Also, wetting the hairs by washing and using hair gel should have different states. Can easily distinguish. By reason, should be able to differentiate and explain. But if the discipline master doesn't accept it, then you can only change your habit of washing the hairs. I feel sympathy with what you have encountered, but have no way to help.
Back again, I want to talk about those school regulations related to outward appearance. Not few of them is a bit inflexible and become a formality, is behind the times. For example, restricting the color of the ribbon for tying the hairs, the length of the socks, whether there is pleat in pants, the materials for the shirt, the color and style of the glasses, etc. Are these a bit picking the minor things? Of course I am not saying accepting short skirt, dyed hairs and others. But those outdated ones should be relaxed.)

By “D” on Wednesday, May 12, 1999 - 04:54 pm:
如果問我 GEL 頭點解唔得，我都唔知有乜唔妥.
刷洗整齊好應該呀，但 GEL 到亮亮，濕立立 就過份 o 左 o 的.....
如果訓導老師唔接受，唔應該咁快妥協，因爲你唔錯.
走去搞校長傾，唔係就社工幫口.
(If you ask me why using hair gel is not allowed, I don't either know what's wrong.
Being clean and tidy is all agreeable. But being shiny and wet with hair gel will be too much....
If the discipline master does not accept, should not give up so early because you are not wrong.
Go and talk to the school principal, or else ask social workers for help.)

By “E” on Wednesday, May 12, 1999 - 07:34 pm:
爲什麼學校會認爲 Gel 頭違反校規?這個問題真令人費解,因爲我校 Gel 頭是不會違反校規的,而且本校老師亦鼓勵學生 Gel 頭,以保持儀容整潔,當然身爲學生的我們亦不應過份使用 Gel!
(Why do schools consider using hair gel violating the regulations ? This question really makes me obscure. Because using hair gel in my school will not violate the school regulation. The teachers in the school also encourage students to use hair gel, to keep the appearance clean and tidy. Of course, being a student, we ought not to over-use hair gel!)

By “B” on Wednesday, May 12, 1999 - 11:58 pm:
我校的 prefect 和訓導老師都很囂張,不接受學生任何的解釋。
更糟的是,如果學生題出理由來解釋,他們會說那是借口,罰得更重!
(The prefects and discipline master in my are all very arrogant. Don't accept any explanation of the students. Even worse is, if the students bring forth reasons to explain, they will say that those are excuse. More serious will be punishment.)

By “F” on Friday, May 14, 1999 - 10:08 pm:
我都覺得點解連濕頭都會唔畀
或洗頭但頭髮未乾都要畀人捉呀!
我真希望 miss 或 sir 睇開"d"啦
(I do think that why wetting the hairs is not allowed.

Or washing the hairs but not yet dried up, will be caught!
I hope the teachers don't look at the matter so seriously.)

By “G” on Tuesday, June 1, 1999 - 10:20 pm:
If your school don't let u to "gel hair" , I think
u better don't make your hair become wet law... u know , many discipline teachers don't know how to "communicate" with students and some of them are quite .... !

By “H” on Friday, June 4, 1999 - 09:37 pm:
I do agree with you!!
I think the rule of Hong Kong school must change.
I think that will make student feel more free if the school in Hong Kong could look like Amercian.
No uniform ....
Right?

By “I” on Wednesday, June 16, 1999 - 12:13 am:
我都好同情你的遭遇。我學校的校規也是很嚴的，但是在執行方面，我想算是完善的。雖然訓導主任很嚴肅，但是十分講理，所以，同學也得尊敬她！
既然你學校要記你名，爲甚麼你不和家長商量，好讓他們爲你回公道！！
(I do feel sympathy with what you have encountered. The school regulations of my school are also very strict. But in terms of implementation, I think it's good in every way. Though the discipline master is very serious, but is willing to listen to reason. So the students do show respect for her!
Even though your school has to record your name, why don't you talk and discuss with the parents, to let them get back what you deserve!!)

By “G” on Saturday, June 19, 1999 - 11:27 am:
Agree with you ! Our discipline teachers are right , they have power to scold students who don't respect the school rules . If you respect your school rules , I think there are no problem to "communicate" with them gaa ... Sometimes they are quite friendly arr ...

By “J” on Thursday, June 24, 1999 - 12:52 pm:
這是我想給”A”一些意見：
我校的校規也很嚴格，校方不準學生 GEL 頭，濕頭(洗頭也不行，見即記名。既然學校有這規矩，學生卻在上學前洗頭回校被記名，那不是自投羅網、自討苦吃嗎?以前我也有上學前洗頭的習慣，但礙於這校規的關係，我就前一日洗頭或洗完後把頭髮吹乾，也不就是相安無事嗎?我覺得改一下小習摜總會比要求改校規容易得多，何不改改自己的習慣?而且我相信非一定要上學前洗頭才算是乾淨的。
就像”C”老師所說的「國有國法 家有家規」校方定的校規自有自己的原則，校規的訂定是爲保障整團的利益，試想想校方又有害自己學生的理由嗎?
我以爲現今仍能保持樸素就只有學校這地方了，若能在年青求學時渡過一個質樸純潔的校園生活，那將是步入社會後的美妙校園回憶!
(This is my suggestion that I want to give “A”:

The school regulations of my school is also very strict.? The school doesn't allow the students to use hair gel and to wet the hairs either (neither do washing the hairs). Once found, will record the name. Now that the school has this regulation, but the student still washed the hairs before getting back to school, and was recorded his name. Then isn't it getting yourself into the troubles and causing trouble to oneself? Before, I do have the habit of washing the hairs before getting to school. But because of this regulation, I will wash the hairs the day before, and completely dry up the hairs after washing. Isn't it in perfect harmony ? I think, changing a small habit will be much easier than requiring the school to change the regulations. Why not change the personal habit? Also, I believe, it is not necessarily that only washing the hairs before going to school will be considered neat. As what teacher “C” said, "a country has her own constitution, a family has its own rules." The school regulations laid down by the school should have her own principles. The setting up of the school regulations is to protect the benefits of the whole community. Think about, is there any reason that the school will do harm to her own students

I believe, the only place that can still remain being simple is the school. If young people, during their studies, can have a simple and pure school life, it will be a wonderful memory of the school before getting into the society!)

By “K” on Saturday, August 14, 1999 - 05:53 pm:

我校不是甚麼名校,我對于"gel"頭呢,好多時,洗濕頭可能是爲求那種"濕濕地"的感覺.所以我學校的洗手間,一到 Recess,那些同學們,不理"三七二十一",先把水頭上淋,結果,弄得整個洗手間都是水.

我從不覺得"gel"頭有甚麼漂亮的.一走出街上,"黑道中人"都跟你招手囉!

(My school is not any elite school. My view on using hair gel is, most of the time, washing the hairs is because of the feeling of being wet. So in the washrooms of my school, once it is the recess time, the many students, ignoring everything, water the hairs first. As a result, the whole washroom will be flooded with water.

I have never thought that hair gel will give you good-looking. Once go down to the street, all "the people from the triad society" will say hello to you!)

By “L” on Tuesday, October 19, 1999 - 09:40 pm:

in fact,我覺得" gel "頭只要" gel "得唔過份,只是用來固定形狀(合理的)的話就不是可以了嗎?

(in fact, I think, using hair gel, as long as it is not too much, and only for fixing the shape (reasonable), will be fine, isn't it?)

Appendix 4

Public Discussion Forum 公開交流坊: 自由論壇 (Forum):
資訊科技統籌員 or 資訊科技 superman (IT coordinator or IT superman)

By “A” on Saturday, May 22, 1999 - 06:39 pm:
I am really interested in applying the post of 資訊科技統籌員(IT coordinator) , But it seems the school want to employ the " IT superman ". They set the job description too broad, they expect 資訊科技統籌員(IT coordinator) to be the expert in every area of IT including hardware, software, networking, teaching method with IT and programing with all kind of language.
I think 資訊科技統籌員(IT coordinator) is only the core member of IT team in school, he/she provides ideas and co-ordination for the teacher or staff.
In order not to frustrate the 資訊科技統籌員(IT coordinator) and upset the schools, clear and realistic expectation is a must.

By “B” on Monday, May 24, 1999 - 11:14 am:
如果你有這個想法的話，我想你應該考慮清楚才報這些職位。
據我了解我校和其他很多學校的情況，他們是希望請一個人回來就能夠解決全部和資訊科技有關的問題。故此他們一般期望請回來的那個人從砌機、裝機、舖設網絡、寫學校網頁、寫教學軟件、寫資訊科技計劃書，甚至動員和訓練同事應用資訊科技輔助教學(這個最難！)，另外還要教書，在學校裏無其他技術支援的。
而且這些位還是兩年合約制的，你還是考慮一下吧！
(If you think about it this way, I think you should think twice before applying.
As far as I know about my school and many other schools, they are expecting someone who, once employed, can resolve all the questions related to information technology. So, they would expect the employed person to be able to set up machines, install machines, set up network, write school web page, write software for teaching, write up IT proposal, and even mobilize and train other colleagues to use and apply IT in assisting their teaching (this is the most difficult thing!). Other than this, the one should also be able to teach as a teacher. There is no more technical support in school.
Further, this person is employed on a two-year contract basis. You'd better think about it carefully!)

By “C” on Monday, May 24, 1999 - 04:08 pm:
I think most people have the misconception that an IT co-ordinator alone can bring a complete change to school. If we do not realise the need to clarify the role of the IT co-ordinator and provide enough support to them, it's not hard to imagine the failure it will turn-up.
Imagine the day that IT co-ordinator has in a school.....
7:00 arrive school to boot up the system and get the system ready before the clerical staff and teaching staff return.
8:00 Train and assist the clerks to use the software to do their administration work
9:00 Discuss with the Principal about designing the School homepage
9:30 contact the Computer and software supplier

discussing the purchase and maintenance of the computers and software for the whole school
9:45 Some teachers complain that the speed of the computer network is too slow. check the configuration, system and connection of the network
10:00 Librarian seeks help for providing the students some knowledge about search engine in the library lessons. Demonstrate the use of search engine, world wide web and how to assess the information.
10:30 Some teachers have problems with the LAN
Check the cable and connection. While figuring out the problems, a lot of teachers start to make their complaints. They find IT bring them inconvenience instead of efficiency (and miracles)
11:00 Plan to set up some training programmes for the teachers, unfortunately, Math Dept drops in the lab and requests for designing a user-friendly 'class-based' software for the coming term. (It is the third time asking for modification)
12:00 Set up the apparatus, computers and software for the Multi-media English Programme during lunch break.
12:30 Multi-media English Programme provided for the F.1 students who stay at school for lunch.
1:00-1:05 five-minute lunch
1:05-1:30 Receive a call from Parent-teacher Association Chairman asking for a basic IT training course for the parents.
2:00-2:30 Set up data base system for the school administration.
3:00 Attend the meeting with the Academic Department, discussing how to integrate computer technologies to whole school curriculum and administration (eg. improving the data base at school)
During the break in the meeting, go back to the lab to check if the students or teachers need advice or help in the lab. At the same time, train the peer-tutors to offer help in the lab.
4:00 Attend Chinese Language penal meeting, exploring the possibilities of incorporating IT into Chinese Subjects.
4:30 Hard-ware failure, return to the lab.
4:45 Discipline Master asks for help because some data of the students is missing due to inappropriate operation. Need to restore the data on the merits, demerits as well as the penalty of the students
5:00 Return to computer lab to provide assistance to the students who stay after school doing the project related to IT
5:00-5:30 The principal asks for the progress of the webpage and the integration of IT into teaching.
5:30-6:00 Wait till the last teacher leaves the school. Back up the system and off the power.
6:00-7:00 Dine on the bus
7:00-9:00 Designing the workshop for the school teachers on Saturday
9:00-10:00 Designing the webpage
10:00-11:00 Checking the email, sending reply and support to the teachers and students who need advice on IT.
11:00-12:00 Looking for new educational software from the internet.
12:00 Thank God for no serious problems in network
(otherwise have to station at school overnight)

By “D” on Tuesday, May 25, 1999 - 12:10 pm:

This is very very interesting, and insightful,
:-)
Perhaps you should add "attending seminars, training courses" organised by universities, vendors, etc.
My personal view is we get what we pay. 2xxxx should get a mature person who is knowledgeable about hardware and software. But his work is sure "coordinating", not technican, page designer, system developer, and so on. In this sense, he should leverage students to help him, leverage outside resources for training and problem fixing, and leverage software for network management and maintenance.
Also, form one core IT team of teachers is very important. And form another larger team based on different subjects can help. An IT coordinator cannot find and make use of all the resources all by himself/herself.

Cheers.
“D”

By “B” on Wednesday, May 26, 1999 - 04:09 pm:
可惜，有這種全面性想法的學校和個人都不太多，大家都是希望請個人回來就甚麼問題也解決，所以應聘的人最好有心理準備。
(But, there are not many schools or people as thoughtful as this. Everyone wants to hire someone who can resolve all the problems. So, the applicants should have psychological preparation.)

By “A” on Thursday, May 27, 1999 - 09:19 am:
From the posted IT education proposals of some schools, It is not difficult to see that schools have almost no knowledge in Technology eductaion and Information Technology.
It is very difficult to expect to get any support from school or any staff.
I think the IT coordinator should be employed and organized by Department, and each coordinator is assigned to each school. Eductaion Department provide the support to each coordinator. So the coordinator can return back to the center regularly for supervision and sharing the experience and idea with other coordinators.
But now, the failure of the Technology coordinator seems to be inevitable.
Good Luck! every technology coordinator

By “E” on Sunday, May 30, 1999 - 01:08 am:
I think the existing Computer Panel Chairman is a suitable canditate of
I.T. coordinator rather than a new teacher. Because he know the situation
of the school and also he is an SGM (I think) and have enough power to
implement the school I.T. plan. The new teacher (with 2 year contract can
release his teaching duties).

By “A” on Sunday, May 30, 1999 - 10:05 am:
SGM or Computer Panel Chairman doesn't imply their knwoledge in IT or technology education is much better than others. It is just the indicator of their experience and contribution.
Also, the IT field is really dynamic area. The theory or idea that you learn this year, it may be outdated next year. It is very difficult to find IT coordinator who is the real expert in the field of IT and Technology

education, and he is willing to accept the low pay job(for the real expert)

By “F” on Wednesday, June 2, 1999 - 10:29 am:
其實教育界和電腦應用這兩方面的經驗和興趣都很重要，如果對電腦認識不足固然不行，但是對教育界的文化及課堂環境無認識的話也難了解同工的需要。固此這些資訊科技統籌員的要求其實很高，真正適合的人選很有限，再者發展及在校內推動資訊科技輔助教學也是需要一段長時間，用兩年合約制聘請很難要求該人選有長遠發展的眼光和很大的動力。
(Actually the interests in both education and computer application are important. Those without enough knowledge of computer will of course be ineligible. But those not familiar with the education culture or classroom enviornment will not be able to understand the need of other teachers, either. So the requirement of an IT coordinator is in fact really demanding. Those who really satisfy it are rare. Furthermore, developing and promoting IT assisted teaching in school do take a long period of time. Using a two-year contract term will be hard to require the applicants to have long term foresight and high motivation.)

By “G” on Thursday, June 3, 1999 - 10:26 am:
我同意教學經驗是這個工作的重要一環，唯有自己親身落手落腳郊去上過堂，才知道老師在堂上究竟需要甚麼、課室的環境又有甚麼限制，否則一個電腦人閉門造車的話，出來的產品也很難在實際課室裏應用。
(I agree that teaching experience is an important element for this job. Only with first-person practical experience in the classroom will make you understand what a teacher really need in the classroom, and what the limitation in the classroom environment will be. Otherwise, those computer people working behind closed doors will not be able to produce something applicable to actual classroom.)

By “B” on Wednesday, June 9, 1999 - 03:55 pm:
教育署或者各大專院校可以考慮爲資訊科技統籌員們提供一些支援，例如定期的聚會、講座、網上的支援組等等，我相信有這些服務存在的話對資訊科技統籌員的工作會有不少的幫助，亦有助於在學校推動資訊科技輔助教學。
(The Education Department, or other tertiary institutes may consider providing support to the IT coordinators. For example, organize regular meetings, seminars, web-based support and others. I believe this kind of services will be much helpful to the IT coordinators with their jobs, and helpful to the schools in promoting IT assised teaching.)

By “H” on Thursday, June 10, 1999 - 12:08 pm:
定期的聚會爲這些資訊科技統籌員而言應該是好事，互相支援、交流、吐苦水等等，教署又可藉機發布消息，一舉數得。
(Regular meeting is good to these IT coordinators. Supporting each other, exchanging ideas, sharing feeling etc. The Education Department can also take the chance to make announcement. Kill two birds with one stone.)

By “H” on Tuesday, June 22, 1999 - 10:56 am:
請問有無人可以介紹一下招募的情況呢？例如多人申請嗎？多數是教育界出身還是電腦界出身？又有

無應徵、面試過的人可以說說感受呢？
(Could anyone introduce about the recruitment status? Such as, how many people apply? Most of the applicants with educational background or computer background? Is there any applicants, with or without experience in the interview, can talk about your feeling?)

By “I” on Wednesday, June 23, 1999 - 03:11 pm:
轉載”J”張貼在資訊科技教育交流坊的 message, 他分享了面試 IT coordinator 職位的感受：
(Reposting the message of “J” in the I.T. in Education forum, sharing his feeling with the interviews for the post of IT coordinator:)
「Hi all, i am a guy looking for the IT coordinator post of the secondary schools. I interviewd for more than 10 schools.Some is primary school, some is secondary schools. During the interview, i sometimes will try to ask them what's their planning for the IT development, most of the answer that i got are "computerized the library", "set up the multimedia room". Then no more.
Then I will try to ask him what's the person they looking for, some will give me an answer " looking for a guy to troubleshoot the hardware".
I wonder why they need to ask a guy costing 22k per month to repair the machine only. In the current market, it is not difficult to find a computer company to provide hardware maintenance in a low cost. This answer reflects that they do not know how to use the resources in an effective way. And they also not mind the resource is not used effectively since it is just a gift from ED.
I just have a feeling that from the eyes of the school, what IT in education means a computer room with a projector projecting powerpoint image on screen, and student able to surf over the web.
I am not a professional in education and i am not a proefssional in researching IT in education.But, after surfing over the web for weeks, i can sure that IT in edcuation is not as simple as computer hardware, software, internet or teacher training. IT in education should have a boarder meaning.
As the moment, as most of the school head still not has a clear concept in what's IT in education, and moreover, schools do not has an objective on their IT development. How can we take a positive attitude towards the IT development in schools? 」

By “G” on Saturday, June 26, 1999 - 10:23 am:
這麼說來，可以說大部分學校都未準備好在校內有系統地使用資訊科技輔助教學，似乎在計劃、心態和認知等各方面皆有欠缺。應聘擔任資訊科技統籌員的人一定要很有主見和適應能力才能應付這樣的環境。
(This sounds like, the majority of the schools are not yet well prepared to systematically use IT in assisting teaching in school. Likely to have insufficient preparation in the planning, attitude and cognitive aspects. An applicant for the post of IT coordinators must have his own opinion and adaptability to cope with this situation.)

By “K” on Wednesday, July 21, 1999 - 01:42 am:
本人是電腦科老師,同時也是資訊科技統籌員,起初做來也有點吃力.但現在適應了.在這短短一年,本人由中四至大學所學的知識一一用了出來.其實只要有信心和耐力.一定會成功.不如分享小小經驗
技術性工作

設計網絡，認識 Windows N.T , TCP/IP, Account Managment,
設計性工作
網頁製作，教材製作
管理工作
聯絡電腦工作，向校長及老師介紹 I.T.　制定校本資訊科技教育等等．
做了一年．結論有三個．
負責老師一定對電腦有濃厚興趣，二）對電腦知識非常強
三）人緣要非常好和對商界要有認識．最後和重重要是對自己有信心．
不知大家有何意見
(I am a Computer subject teacher, and also an IT coordinator. At the very beginning, the job was a bit demanding. But once adapted to it, within this short period of one year, I have already used what I have learned from Form four to the university level. Actually if you are confident and patient, you will definitely succeed. Let share some of my experience.
Technical works: network design, understanding Windows N.T., TCP/IP, Account Management
Design works: Web page production, teaching materials production
Administrative works: coordinating computer work, introducing IT to the principal and other teachers, planning school based IT education, etc.)

By “L” on Friday, July 23, 1999 - 11:52 am:
總之擔任資訊科技統籌員的瑣碎工作不少，而且吃力得來又甚難討好。
(Anyway, the duties of an IT coordinator include many nitty-gritty stuff.　Demanding but not rewarding.)

By “M” on Thursday, August 12, 1999 - 04:27 pm:
Such job description is not for ordinary teacher. We need another comp.professional in school to do that!

By “F” on Friday, August 13, 1999 - 12:10 pm:
I agree that these duties should be handle by computer major and/or computing expertise. Ask a teacher to handle will definitely result in over burden, and I think that computer staff will now more recent development of tis field. A teacher should not sacrifice the chance of doing better academic work from doing computer work.

By “N” on Thursday, September 2, 1999 - 02:51 pm:
A candidate with both experience in computing and teaching is most suitable, they can discover the needs of teacher and also the limits of technology side.

By “A” on Thursday, September 30, 1999 - 10:32 pm:
I am really interested in knowing whether “J” can get the job in IT coordinator.
Besides, it seems the most school doesn't know what subject / area is covered in Bachelor of Sciences (major in computer science), so the school expect the coordinator can do everything including some technican job.

Appendix 5

Secondary Discussion Forum 中學交流坊:
學生心聲 (Students): Is Hong Kong a Lovely city? 香港是一個可愛的都市嗎?

By “A” on Monday, October 11, 1999 - 09:35 am:
我認爲香港是一個可愛的都市. 因香港本身便是一個集合世界文化的城市. 試問又有那一個城市能香港一樣呢?
(I believe Hong Kong is a lovely city because Hong Kong itself is a melting pot of different cultures. Which city would be as good as her?)

By “B” on Tuesday, October 12, 1999 - 03:27 pm:
I think Hong Kong is a lovely city because I can do many things freely in this city.

By “C” on Wednesday, October 13, 1999 - 09:30 pm:
The answer is "NO". Because the environment in Hong Kong is heavily polluted.

By “D” on Thursday, October 14, 1999 - 04:34 pm:
Yes, after you have travelled some other place in this world. Then, you discover that Hong Kong is a very lovely city. And of course, the environment in Hong Kong is heavily polluted. Yes, that is truth, besides this one thing. There are more than one thing that can cover this.

By “C” on Thursday, October 14, 1999 - 04:45 pm:
How lovely Hong Kong is? Hong Konger just concern how to earn more money. Their attitude is turn bad.

By “D” on Friday, October 15, 1999 - 07:31 am:
To “C”, If you had travelled to some other like United States. You will know how lovely Hong Kong is. At night after 6 or 7, can you image that there is no one on the street, even there are just only a few light poles. And I start thinking that " are you a Hong Kong Citizen?"It's because you are saying a lot of bad things about Hong Kong.

By “C” on Friday, October 15, 1999 - 01:40 pm:
Don't you know there are many country better than Hong Kong? Actually, HK is qutie good except the people and the bad environment.

By “D” on Friday, October 15, 1999 - 03:01 pm:
You are saying the people are bad. Is that mean you are a bad person too? And you really don't like HK?

By “E” on Friday, October 15, 1999 - 04:47 pm:
You will love HK if you are studying in the other country.

By “D” on Saturday, October 16, 1999 - 07:08 am:

Yes, “E”. I agree with you.

Appendix 6

Secondary Discussion Forum 中學交流坊:
老師心聲 (Teachers): 資訊科技教育 (IT Education)

By “A” on Saturday, March 27, 1999 - 01:28 am:
各位老師:
2000 年是教育改革的年代。母語教育推出不久，資訊科技教育隨之而來，改革是好的，但太多工作一起來，老師可以做的又有幾多，本人在大學時念的是電腦科，面對資訊科技教育也感到一點壓力，老實說，要界定什麼是資訊科技教育已經十分難，要落實去做五年策略就更加難，
如果我理解沒有錯，資訊科技教育最終目的不過是提升學生運用和處理資訊能力，但其實現在社會每天出現的資訊多的是，每人也吸收自己喜歡的信息，現在教局希望學生利用電腦科技去學習知識，理念是好的，但其實落實一點
也不容易，理由有二，
當學生上了網，最吸引他們的東西莫過於 ICQ，有多少學生真的用搜找器尋找資料，
一個中學生，年紀中位數的也不過１４至１５歲，我會懷疑他們是否有能分析資料的真確性，
基於上述兩點，希望大家在推行資訊科技教育之餘，用小小時間去研究一下資訊科技教育的成效，
以上只是本人一點小小的意見，但無論如何，我是支持香港推行資訊科技教育，因爲至少香港教育界的形象改善了，學生使用電腦的能力也提高了，

“A”老師
(Dear teachers,
Year 2000 is the era of educational reform. Not long after the introduction of using Chinese as the medium of instruction, the IT education policy came out shortly. Reform is good but too much work together at the same time, how much can a teacher do? I learned Computer at the university. Still feeling pressure when facing the IT Education policy. Frankly, it is very difficult to define what is IT education. Implementing the five-year policy is even more difficult.
If my understanding is right, the ultimate goal of IT education is to enhance the students' ability in using and processing information. But actually nowadays, there is so much information coming out every day. Everyone picks up the information he likes. Now the Education Department wants the students to use computer technology to learn knowledge. The idea is good but actually the implementation is not easy. There are two reasons:
When students surf on the web, the most attractive thing to them is no more than ICQ. How many students will really use the search engine to find information.
A secondary school student, with the medium age not more than 14 to 15, I would doubt whether they have the ability to analyze the authenticity of the information.
Based on the above two points, I hope all of you, at the time of promoting and practicing IT education, can take a little time to research about the effectiveness of IT education.
The above is just my poor opinion. But anyway, I support Hong Kong in carrying out IT education. It is because at least the image of Hong Kong education has improved, and the students' ability in using computer

has been uplifted.
Teacher “A”)

By “B” on Saturday, March 27, 1999 - 12:39 pm:
或者老師們都應該裝備自己，對電腦加多點了解，ICQ 也不一定是不好的東西，但不論老師認不認同，也應該認識多點，否則如何輔導學生呢？
不能否定推動資訊科技教育的路很不好走，但是「千里之行，始於足下」，或許從簡單淺顯的接觸，起碼自己知多一點點也可方便和學生溝通。
(Or teachers should themselves be well equipped, understanding more about the computer. ICQ is not necessarily a bad thing. But no matter whether teachers agree it or not, we should know more about it. Otherwise, how can we guide the students?
It is undeniable that the road of carrying out IT education is not an easy way. But, "a thousand mile journey starts with here." Maybe, from simple and superficial understanding, at least we know a bit more, which can facilitate us in communicating with the students.)

By “C” on Tuesday, April 13, 1999 - 10:03 pm:
I have taught for over 20 years. I have great difficulty in learning and using IT in the lessons. It is rather time-consuming. I notice that most teachers in my school are too busy to prepare and use IT in their teaching. It is not practical at this moment when the IT facilities are inadequate for every teacher and every classroom. More resources (both hardware, software and manpower)should be provided before IT education can be promoted. From Clement

By “D” on Wednesday, April 14, 1999 - 12:11 am:
IT 是現代香港發展的路向，當然是好的! 只是，我們有沒有空間去發展教學上的 IT 呢?而且，IT 只是教學上其中一種工具而已，別神化了它! 有時，我想，若有空間的話，多關心學生、與學生傾談.....仍是我個人的首選 ，只是，我們沒有空間吧!!
(IT is today the direction of Hong Kong development.? Of couse, this is good! But the point is, whether we have the time for developing IT in the teaching aspect? Also, IT is merely one kind of tools in teaching. Don't mystify it! Sometime, I think, if more time is available, concerning more about the students, and taking more time to talk to the students will still be my first choice. But we don't have the time!)

By “E” on Wednesday, April 14, 1999 - 03:34 pm:
十分同意這個說法。
總之一切都應該是「在合理工作量內盡量爲學生好」爲前提，如果只是爲了用 IT 而 IT，忽略了其他部分，那是本末倒置的。所以我認爲若果老師的教學技巧高明的話，不需要堅持一定要用 IT 教學，那只是其中一個門徑，並非全部。
(Totally agree with your opinion.
By and large, everything should take "within reasonable workload, doing for the best of the students" as the premise. If using IT is for using IT, neglecting other aspects, it will be putting the cart before the horse. So I believe if teachers are skillful in teaching, they don't need to insist on using IT for teaching. It is only one way, but not all.)

By “A” on Thursday, April 15, 1999 - 10:47 pm:

本人身爲資訊科技教學負責人，對政府的目標也摸不清。

如果要提高學生應用電腦能力，應該增加電腦堂的數目和提高電腦科老師的知識水平。如果想利用資訊科技去提升學生學習動機，那麼政府必須提供有水準教學軟件。老師並非軟件工程師，大多沒有能力或跟本沒有需要去製作軟件。如果要提升學生思考能力或處理信息能力，我相信老師們便要多寫寫文章(在網上)，當然能引起他們興趣的那種。從而令他們在網上學懂如果分析別人的思想及表達自己的意見及尊重別人和接受別人的批評，

如果政府想達到以上各點，那麼老師便沒有好日子過。不過有一點是好的，經過資訊科技教學的洗禮，老師是各行各業中最能幹和最優秀的人才，

(Being the one responsible for IT Teaching, I myself can't even figure out the government's objective.

If we want to enhance the students' ability in the application of computer, we should increase the number of Computer lessons and uplift the knowledge level of the Computer subject teachers. If we want to make use of IT to enhance the students' learning motivation, the government must provide quality teaching software. Teachers are not software engineers. Most of them do not have the ability, or even have the need, to produce software. If we want to uplift the student's ability in thinking or ability in processing information, I believe teachers should write more essays (on the web), of course those that can interest them. In this way, they can learn on the web how to analyze other people's thinking, and express their own ideas, and show respect to others, and accept the criticism of the others.

If the government want to achieve the above items, teachers will have hard days. But, one thing is good, after the severe test of IT education, teachers will be, among all walks of life, the most competent and the most outstanding people.)

By “B” on Saturday, April 17, 1999 - 11:45 am:

似乎政府的目標是利用資訊科技來提高教與學的質素，而非單純提高學生應用電腦的能力，否則也不須要如此大投資。其實不少老師都在製作教學軟件或教學網頁等，希望同工們能夠多交流、多分享和多研究，本地化的教學軟件和網頁定能百花齊放。

(Sound like the government's objective is to make use of IT to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. But not solely enhance the students' ability in the application of computer. Otherwise, they don't have to make such a big investment. Actually many teachers, in producing teaching software or teaching web-page or others, hope to have more chances to exchange ideas, to share and to conduct research. Localized teaching software and web page will definitely be blooming with much variety.)

By “C” on Monday, April 19, 1999 - 01:35 pm:

I am studying M.Ed. in IT ED., I like to give my opinion on the issue, IT is a MUST for any teacher, not someone said that I do not know computer so it's not my business. Secondly, IT is NEW in Hong Kong education circle, so please be patient, and soon things will be better for us all. The important thing is that are students learn better in IT? In 1957, at Syracuse University, a professor teaching a basic technology course said,"One day, we will have an instructionsl technology that will permit the display of information in any medium, on any subject, in any order, at any time." People chuckled. Would anyone rather tell me how are they use IT for effective teaching?

By “C” on Thursday, April 22, 1999 - 08:28 am:

Since none response to the question I posted before, I like to add: IT is good for students only if the teacher uses it with solid understanding of educational theories, such as cognitive learning, constructivist learning, active learning etc., I still worrying the effectiveness of IT in Ed. in Hong Kong,for example, we can see that teachers and students seldom use the free services like this disussion area, email services to enrich their learning experience. And the money are wasted. I hope that
more publicity is called for, don't you agree?

By “D” on Friday, April 23, 1999 - 02:54 pm:

畢竟任何新事物要流行或者讓人們習用也需要一段時間，事實上這次 I.T.潮也只是剛剛起步，大家也就不要要求太高，隨時間的增長，不論老師或學生都會更適應資訊輔助教學的運作。
(After all, having any new things to become popular, or letting other people to get used to, takes a certain period of time. Actually this IT trend is only the beginning. We shouldn't demand too much. As time goes by, no matter teachers or students would adapt to the operation of IT assisted teaching.)

By “E” on Saturday, April 24, 1999 - 12:17 am:

在這 IT 的世代中，實在沒有甚麼可能去否定 IT 的需要。本人也很贊成及常用 IT，只是，在中學仍沒有空間及措施去容納那些電腦，仍有浮動班，沒有球場.....，教師仍是一對 42，一日六堂(大部份)，在沒有時間及空間去處理學生的問題，備課，改簿一籮籮，加上那些班務，行政，我們那有能力去發展 IT 吧!若可以的話，是否減輕了對學生的工作呢!
(In this IT century, there is in fact no reason to deny the need of IT. I myself do agree, and frequently use IT. But secondary schools still do not have the space and facility to accommodate those computers. Still there is floating classes. No playground. Teachers are still 1 to 42. 6 lessons a day (most of them). When there is no time and space to handle the students' problems, prepare lessons, grade lots of classworks, plus those class duties and administration, how can we have the energy to develop IT! If possible, does it reduce the works for the students?)

By “C” on Saturday, April 24, 1999 - 02:11 pm:

OK, if the teachers have more free time, the schools have more space, will they use the computer?
I wonder, because they don't want to change. Back to the basic, lots of the teachers are computer illiterates, they don't know how to send and recieve even an email in 1999. This is not a joke.
ED should think about this before they utter any high plan on IT! Like Singapore, teachers are more updated on this digital age. By the way, I hope more and more people will join in this forum, I can not use the Chinese Input as Eng. So I use Eng. hope all of you don't mind.

By “E” on Sunday, April 25, 1999 - 11:13 pm:

我只想強調一點，沒有時間和空間給老師，就算有興趣如我，想發展也不能!當然，有些老師有時間和空間也不會學,我也很贊成這一點。我有些同事最初也不懂用 computer，現在學來做測驗考試卷，所以，若工作有需要的話，學電腦未必是一個很大的問題，正如我會用中文輸入法一般，是工作的需要而已。而現在若要去學其他東西，我只怕吃不消吧！那我便無可避免地少一點備課，減少學生的家課，減少

與學生的接觸・・・・但，這是否有點荒謬？
教育制度，其實真有很多地方需要改善，加一個 IT，對現在的制度可有甚麼改善？加多些工作，卻沒有減輕其他的工作，工作只是愈加愈多，而教學的工作卻要放輕，犧牲了的，就是學生，最後，學生不能愉快地學習，教師又不能愉快地教學，教育署又不滿意，家長又不滿意・・・
我不是危言聳聽，這只是我作了多年教師的一點感受。
(I only want to emphasize one point. When there is no time and space for the teachers, even someone as much interested as I am, the development will not be possible. Of couse, there are teachers who have the time and space but not going to learn. I do really agree with this point. Some of my colleagues, at first, did not know how to use computer. Now they learn it for sitting test and examination papers. So if the job needs it, learning computer will not neccessarily be a real big problem. Just like, I can use Chinese input method, which is because of the need of the job.
Now if I have to learn other things, I worry that it will be too much for me! As such, I will inevitably do a bit less preparation for the lessons, cutting down the students' homeworks, having less time to talk to the students.... But, is it a bit ridiculous?
The educational system actually have many things that need to improve. Can the addition of IT bring what kind of improvement to the system? Increasing more work, with no reduction on other duties. There will only be more and more works. But duties on teaching will have to slow down. Who are sacrificed will be the students. Lastly, the students cannot enjoy learning. The teachers cannot enjoy teaching. The Education Department are not satisfied. The parents are not satisfied either....
I don't intend to scare people. This is just some feeling coming out of my many years of being a teacher.)

By “A” on Monday, April 26, 1999 - 02:51 am:
各老師
其實資訊科技教學是沒有什麼太不了的事. 只不過多了一個方法教學而已.
老實說, 本人對於香港推行資訊科技教學抱積極但懷疑的態度.
政府用了那麼多錢,但如果受益的只不過是一小部分的學生.何不將金錢劃分不同用法. 按學校不同需要去應用這批錢可能經濟效益更大.
不過說到底, 也離不開兩個字"公平". 其實公平也不一定是好事. 中學會考成立. 目的是公平地選一些優秀的學生繼續升學, 結果制做了 20 年來成千上萬的考試機器.其他成了犧牲品.
香港真的需要一批懂得搞高科技的年青人. 但我們不是要所有學生走同一條路.
多元化.多嘗試,才是香港的出路

“A”老師.
(Dear teachers,
Actually, IT teaching is no big deal. Only one more method for teaching.
Frankly, I hold a positive-but-skeptical attitude towards the carrying out of IT teaching in Hong Kong.
The government has used so much money. But if those who are benefited are only a small portion of the students. Why not dividing the money for different uses? According to the different needs of schools to use this lump sum of money. This may have a larger effect in economics terms.
But anyhow, it cannot deviate from the word "fairness". Actually fairness may not definitely be a good thing. The purpose of setting up the HKCEE is to select a group of competent students to pursue their studies.

Eventually it ends up with the production of thousands of "examination machines" in this 20 years. The others have become sacrifice.
Hong Kong really need a batch of young people who know about doing high technology. But we don't want every student to make the same way.
Multiplicity, more trials should be the way out of Hong Kong.
Teacher “A”)

By “F” on Monday, April 26, 1999 - 10:38 am:
這樣說的話似乎混淆了資訊科技教學和資訊科技輔助教學兩者的角色和功能。如果說培養「懂得搞高科技的年青人」，就似乎是資訊科技教學(I.T. Education)的意思，接近教電腦的情況，但如今的目標是資訊科技輔助教學(I.T. in Education)，透過資訊科技的聲光效果來豐富教學內容，令學生更享受學習的過程。前者的話受惠的可能只是少數學生，但後者則應該是所有學生皆有得益的。
(This sounds like having confused the role and function of IT teaching with that of IT assisted teaching. Saying cultivating "young people who know about doing high technology" seems to mean I.T. Education, closer to the situation of teaching computer. But the current objective is I.T. in Education. Using the sound and graphics effects of IT to enrich the teaching contents. Making the students enjoy more on the learning process. For the former one, those who are benefited may only be a small number of students. But, the latter one should bring benefits to all of the students.)

By “A” on Tuesday, April 27, 1999 - 12:57 am:
“F” 先生,
希望你看清楚我表達的意思才作批評.我的本意是"香港真的需要一批懂得搞高科技的年青人. 但我們不是要所有學生走同一條路" 我本是提醒同工在推行資訊科技教育的同時, 不要忽略一些在其他方面有優秀表現的學生, 就正如以往在精英教育底下,很多非學術的精英成了犧牲品.
本人對電腦教學其實有一點認識. 我們不會低估資訊教學的成效, 但如果說"透過資訊科技的聲光效果來豐富教學內容"爲資訊教學的目標. 我會有所保留.
我深信經過刻苦訓練得來的知識才是永恆不變, 而所爲愉快學習是比較表面,試問世上那有不勞而獲的事情.
用電腦及資訊去教與學一點也不易. 教師要準備的東西又多, 學生在電腦上學到的也不過是非常表面的概念. 到最後也非回到書本不可.
電腦真的打動我一刻也不過是 internet 的普及. 真真正正使電腦教學變得互動. (正如現在大家可以寫寫信談談天) 但要學生懂得欣賞internet的好處 和真真正正學懂如何在internet 增進自已的知識, 又談何容易.
最後, 本人再次說一次我是 100% 支持資訊科技教育.但希望大家在推行同時, 多想想成效和間間自已"學生真正需要什麼".

“A”老師
(Mr. “F”,
Hope you clearly look into the meanings that I have expressed, before criticizing. My original wording is "Hong Kong really need a batch of young people who know about doing high technology. But we don't want every student to make the same way." I originally meant to remind other teachers, at the same time carrying

out IT education, not to overlook some students with competence in other areas. It's like, under the elite education, many non-academic high achievers have become sacrifice.
I actually have some understanding about IT teaching. We would not under-estimate the resulting effects of IT teaching. But if we say, "using the sound and graphics effects of IT to enrich the teaching contents", to be the objective of IT teaching, I would have reservation.
I deeply believe that only knowledge gained after a tough training will be for good. And, most enjoyable learning is relatively superficial. How come there is something gained without effort?
Using computer and IT for teaching and learning is never easy. The teachers have to prepare a lot of things. What the students learn on the computer is only very superficial concept. At the end, not falling back to the books will not be possible.
The moment that computers really have impact on me, is only the popularity of the Internet. Really make computer teaching become interactive. (Just like now we can write messages to have a chat.) But to have the students be able to appreciate the merits of the Internet, and really learn to enhance one's knowledge with the Internet. It is easier said than done.
Lastly, I once again said that I 100% support IT education. But hope that we, at the time of carrying out it, think more about the resulting effects, and ask yourselves, "What do students really need?"
Teacher “A”)

By “F” on Tuesday, April 27, 1999 - 02:14 pm:
“A”老師：
請你千萬不要誤解，我絕對無批評你的意思，亦無懷疑你支持資訊科技教育的誠意，令你誤會了，很抱歉。我只是想指出政府雖常言資訊教育，但他們的理念和定義既不清晰，又無向老師交代，以致老師們也有點無所適從。我同意資訊科技輔助教學只是眾多教學法之一，但我認爲「透過資訊科技的聲光效果來豐富教學內容」是可以令全部學生受惠的(當然這未必是資訊科技輔助教學的終極目標)，並不是全部學生都要做學者，用聲光效果令學生牢記一些簡單概念，他也是終生受用的。用了資訊科技也不等於不用書本，兩者並無競爭關係。
我也同意用電腦及資訊去教與學一點也不易，但也不至太難，我相信教方面習慣了就好，累積一定教材等就會信手拈來，至於學方面，不少大學的本科、研究院課程也用上了互聯網作媒介，這在校外課程或遙距大學尤其常見，故也不可認爲在電腦上學習一定不夠深入，端視其應用而已，再者學生們的能力也不應低估。
以上僅爲小弟的淺見，請各位同工不吝指正。
(Teacher “A”,
Please don't misunderstand me. I absolutely don't mean to critize your ideas. Or either doubt about your sincerity in supporting IT education. Really sorry to cause you misunderstand. I only want to point out that though the government has talked a lot about IT education, not only their beliefs and definitions are unclear but also they have never explain the beliefs to the teachers. Leading to confusion of the teachers. I agree that IT assisted teaching is only one of the many teaching methods. But I believe, "using the sound and graphics effects of IT to enrich the teaching contents", can bring benefits to all students. (Of couse, this is not necessarily the ultimate goal of IT assisted teaching.)

By “G” on Thursday, April 29, 1999 - 01:27 am:

I agree with “F” that IT is just one of teaching techniques or I should say,though IT is a MUST as “C” mentioned, we cannot always stick to it. Just imagine how "interesting" the lessons will be if the students are kept in a room facing the computer or the screen & projector for 8 periods a day! We all knowing that the pace of learning for everybody varies, so as that of our colleagues. Why are we always urging them to learn as fast as we are ? Is it a MUST for us to start using IT on the same day I wonder. I think a better way will be to start with those who feel more comfortable in integrating IT in their curriculum and let them(us) share the experiences with others and show them the advantages.
I think the ED and the management of some schools is going in another way round. They tend to equalize quality education with IT in education. The schools which do not have ITLC or MMLC are regarded as having "bad" quality.
Those teachers who do not apply IT in teaching in the moment is regarded as teachers of "bad" quality! Is IT = Quality ???
Though I'm pro-IT, I just think sometimes we really have to spend lots of time which is previously allocated to our students and family on IT. Neither this can improve our quality, nor this can enhance our relationship with anybody around us (maybe this can only improve my relationship with my computer & notebook ;p.)
Lastly, I should say I am convinced that a school which is full of concern, harmony and love, rather than one full of advanced technology and high-tech teachers, is deserved to be called a 'Quality School'. (Sorry for being so long-winded ;)

By “H” on Thursday, April 29, 1999 - 03:45 pm:
資訊科技走得前的不代表優質教育，但是一般的公眾人士、傳媒等都比較短視，反過來學校就被這些人的觀念牽著走，爲迎合他們而在這方面下功夫。幸好這並不是全部學校的情況，絕大部分學校在 I.T. 方面下功夫完全是爲了學生的好處，見報、出名等只是副作用而已。”A”老師說的"學生真正需要什麼" 如果真的常常在教育官員和教育工作者心頭的話就好啦，我真希望同工們都能練成一身高科技神功，又能關顧學生的需要，在高科技設備的校園中提供一個和諧和愛心的學習環境給學生的話，那就真是太好了！
(IT is at the frontier, but don't mean quality education. But most general public, mass media and others, are relatively short-sighted. Reversingly, schools are led by the beliefs of these people, to fulfill them by putting more efforts. Fortunately, this is not the case of all schools. The efforts of the majority of schools on IT are completely for the benefits of the students. Appearance in newspapers, attracting publicity and others are only side-products. Teacher “A” asked, "What do students really need?" If the question really frequently appear in the minds of the educational officiers and educators, it will too good. I really hope the teachers can be equipped with various high technology skills, and can also care for the need of the students. Inside the high technology equppied campus, providing a learning environment to the students with harmony and love will be great!)

By “C” on Friday, April 30, 1999 - 02:06 pm:
Hello I am back, the discussion is very interesting here. I think that I.T. means improvement in education IF:
1. Change the power structure TEACHER vs pupils
2. Change the learning theory
behaviorism vs constructivism

3. Change the responsibility of learning, TEACHERS as knowledge providers to pupils as active learner
4. Bear in mind I.T. is not only computers
(alas, PowerPointers!), but to me is technology and learning, learning aided with technology , a good example I read from an Ed. Tech. Mag. is a science project by using a flash light as investigatorial matter. Really, learning should relate to reality as we are so concern that our pupils are non-active and can not handle daily life in an educated fashion. Do you agree?

By “I” on Friday, April 30, 1999 - 04:55 pm:
我認爲不論有無資訊科技輔助教學的浪潮，教師的角色也是在不斷演變的。我最有同感的是教師從知識傳授者轉變爲指引學生尋找知識者。我相信資訊科技及互聯網等在這方面會提供很大的貢獻，畢竟一個學科內的資料如此多，老師無可能再單向傳遞，反而作爲導航者輔助學生在數碼時代搜尋資料，更有意思。
(I think, whether there is the IT assisted teaching trend or not, the role of teachers is changing everyday. I was most impressed by the change of the teachers from knowledge transmitter to students' facilitator in searching knowledge. I believe, IT, Internet and others will make much contribution in this aspect. After all, the knowledge within a subject is so volumnous that teachers can never use one-way transmission. As contrast to this, being facilitator in assisting the students to search information in the digital age is more meaningful.)

By “J” on Saturday, May 1, 1999 - 10:53 am:
Whether gov't or schools -
too much talk on paper,
too little/slow to have practical work done.
Gov't has big IT plan, but inefficient implementation.
Some schools are reluctant to change,
Some teachers are indifferent to changes,
Some teachers just talk - without really trying IT;
Hardware is the skeleton, software is the soul.
Graphics/fancy stuff are secondary, text/content is king.
A number of web sites for education is set up, yet thin content -
yes, they are new, but how many of us are willing to contribute,
or just keep their own stuff private.
Only by doing with our hands can we learn the strength of IT edu.,
as well as the shortcomings to overcome.

By “C” on Sunday, May 2, 1999 - 07:57 am:
How can we promote I.T.? My view is to first make the teaching "professionals" aware that the society and culture of Hong Kong is changing to a digital culture, that is to say that the digital and computer technology is affecting the educational institutions, teachers are no longer afford to say something like " I don't use the computers! But I AM a GOOD teacher!" If the doctor do not use the new technology in today's hospitals, the bus driver do not operate the new technological vehicles, they do not have the jobs. Why the teachers do not know how to use even a simple e-mail system, can be appointed to be an I.T. coordinator position in the

school? And this is a fact in my school! HAHAHA! ED should make sure the qualifications of all I.T. coordinator in the school are well-trained and be able to really apply the tech. to education. My understanding the computer teachers are not necessary the best choice in this position, the reason is obvious, but someone that like to use the internet, capable to train staffs and students to use the internet, a good communicator, and understand what is I.T. in Ed. means are more suitable than the "scientist".
>>> Will anyone like to add on this issue:" Which are the qualifications of an ideal IT coordinator?"

By “D” on Monday, May 3, 1999 - 05:03 pm:
不會用電郵小事而已，我還見過不會開機、不會用開始鍵正常步驟關機的 IT coordinator，以及跟足步驟都 set 不到個人電腦上網戶口的電腦科老師。老實說，叫學生教他們還差不多。
(Not able to use email is a minor thing.? I have met IT coordinator who don't know how to turn on the machine, use the "Start" key as the usual procedure to shut down the machine. Computer subject teacher who was provided with stepwise instruction, but cannot connect the computer to the online account. Frankly, asking the students to teach these teachers is instead better.)

By “K” on Wednesday, May 5, 1999 - 04:59 pm:
！那就真的叫人有點驚訝。
(This is really a bit surprising.)

By “L” on Friday, May 14, 1999 - 12:22 am:
To be a good IT co-ordinator, the most important attribute is that he knows how IT can promote learning, instead of simply being a computer expert. What views do we have on using IT in teaching? To make more PowerPoint files? To access internet? Is it the way we want? What view of learning do you espouse? How can IT be good for students' learning?

By “M” on Friday, May 21, 1999 - 09:46 pm:
無論是甚麼方法，最終目標都應該是提高教學質素。
(No matter what method, the ultimate goal should be uplifting the quality of teaching.)

By “B” on Monday, May 24, 1999 - 01:55 pm:
當然，並不是要求所有 IT coordinator 都要對電腦非常熟識，但是最起碼都要求他會有一定認識吧？否則如何教學生和 向老師提供協助呢？
(Of course, we don't require all IT coordinators to be very familiar with computer. But at least require them to have a certain understanding. Otherwise, how can they teach the students and provide support to the teachers?)

By “N” on Monday, May 31, 1999 - 04:18 pm:
I think teachers should put more effort to improve
their knowledge on computers , So we won't "afraid" to practice IT Education !

By “B” on Thursday, June 3, 1999 - 03:39 pm:

同工們已經非常努力的在學習和嘗試的了，最近去了幾間學校的資訊科技開放日，不論作品的內容和應用技術方面都不乏精彩作品，這種轉化始終都要點時間。
(The teachers have already been working very hard to learn and try it. Have recently been to the IT Open Day of several schools. No matter the contents of the products or the application of the technique has no lacking of wonderful products. This kind of change in any way takes a bit of time.)

By “O” on Friday, June 4, 1999 - 02:30 am:
IT 不是什麼神話,若要令學生有得著,最重要的是全心的去認識每一學生的需要
(IT is not any fairy tale. To have the students really learn something, the most important thing is to understand the need of every single student with one's whole heart.)

By “H” on Thursday, June 10, 1999 - 02:47 pm:
始終最重要都是學生能夠從教學中得益，現時資訊科技當時得令，大家自然都相信資訊科技可以令課更有趣，學習更深刻，那當然應該將資訊科技大爲推廣。但也不需要全面推崇資訊科技而貶抑其他教學法。
(All in all, the most important thing is that the students can get benefits from the teaching. Now IT is fad today. Naturally people believe that IT can make the lessons more interesting, and make learning much deeper. Then of course we should widely promote IT. But still we don't need to highly value IT in all ways, which in turn downgrading other teaching methods.)

By “P” on Monday, July 5, 1999 - 10:33 pm:
I also want to IT myself but it's very very difficult in my school. We can only use 2 of the computers. We are not allowed to touch the other computers. We do not know the password and if we touch them, the clerks will scold us saying that we SHOULD NOT touch those pcs. Some teachers carry their own pc to school because they just don't want to argue with anybody. Moreover, the printer is always out of order. One time, I spent nearly an hour to print out 2 sheets - no one takes care of the printer even though there's no ink! pcs are holy items on the altar! Interesting, isn't it?

By “Q” on Sunday, August 29, 1999 - 11:13 pm:
我認爲利用資訊科技教學是有一定的好處，不過，教師卻不能一成不變，以爲資訊科技是萬能.
在我而言，利用資訊科訊教學是可能輔助教學，以中史科爲例，利用 power point 取代掛地圖，的確較爲便利及清晰，但教師本身的言語. 工作紙的運用，黑板的設計或製作其他教具等，其實是不可被取替的.
這是我個人的意見.
(I think, the use of IT teaching should has a certain advantage. However, teachers cannot be hard and fast, regarding IT as universal.
To me, the use of IT teaching can assist teaching. Take Chinese History as an example. Using PowerPoint to replace hanging a map is really more convenient and clearer. But the words of the teachers themselves, the use of worksheets, the design of blackboard or the design of other teaching aids etc, are in fact irreplaceable. This is my personal opinion.)

By “R” on Sunday, September 26, 1999 - 03:14 am:

I truely support of “C”'s idea that I.T. is not only computers. Apart from computer, there are many electronic technolgy equipments and commuicating skill in I.T. In my experence, too many people think that I.T. is equal to computing. The I.T. is closely related to computer but not only computers.

In my view I.T. is a new technology of transmitting information. It just like the new technology of telephone and TV in 40' and 50'. I saw all teachers welcome the technology of ETV in classrooms in 70' because the programmes (softwares) was well prepared by Ed. Dept. although some of the teachers did not know how to control the VCR (batacam system). Other than the ETV programme can present a more lively image of teaching content, one of the main reason of teachers' supporting is the ETV programme can help the teacher to talk littler and teacher can take a break for 20 minutes.

In this digital age, nobody would say I.T. is useless in education, but some teachers may think that I.T. is not a need in their teaching job.

It's not difficult to understand that someone may afraid of computer because it is new to them and they cannot master the computer well.

I think the aims of the I.T. education policy is correct because it is the trend of future. The way to this aim is not a easy and short path.

A good support to teachers from Ed. Dept. is the key to achieve this great educational aims. In my view, the first job is help teachers to master the basic I.T. skills and show teachers the possibilities and advantages in assisting of teaching and learning.

As I.T. is not the only means of teaching aids, when teachers find more suitable softwares and I.T. can release their workload as well as help their students to learn easier, they will ask for using I.T. more than the aims of 25% in their lessons.

By “C” on Wednesday, October 6, 1999 - 06:36 am:

Hi, everybody, I am back, yesterday I went to the 5th HK Web Symposium in PolyU, and learned quite a lot about IT, Mr.Ma Siu-leung made a few excellent points there, to do with the curriculum issue, he said three areas: "Demonstration, Internalization and assessment". Hey, that is refreshing!!!!some guys giving examples and experience sharings of how to use the IT in real class-room situation. He is a practical man, he said that IT should or ought to give a lot of comfort to teachers, a good product, may I echo him, is good if it is easy to use, and save you time (and not too costly) The failing situation in a lot of schools is for one, not training the right person to do the coordination of IT. Not the science teachers or the computer teachers automatically be the best choice of IT facilitator, if the teacher really get her hands dirty in the business of using the IT with curriculum or teaching WITH computer, that is a perfect example of good model of a IT educator. Right now, we should have a forum or better, really, I suggest some face to face sharing of real classroom testimonies among teachers and principals in your schools. And the high tech needs a human face too. Anyone like to tell me if there's anything that e-education is happening and the teachers are smiling when some big shots tell 'em to go out and do IT? (I am a secondary school teacher in art and design and taking M.Ed in IT)

Come back here if you like to hear what I learn today in the Web Symposium. 5/10/99 6:40 am

By “S” on Monday, October 11, 1999 - 09:42 am:

各位同工好，無論有沒有資訊科技教育的浪潮，每個人都要不斷裝備自己,所謂'活到老,學到老',

終身學習,自強不息, 大家認爲如何呢?

(Hi, All Teachers.

No matter there is the wave of IT education or not, everyone has to continuously equip themselves, as the saying, "It is never too old to learn."

Life-long learning and making constant efforts to improve oneself. What do you think?)