



Schooling Boys and Girls: The Development of Single-sex and Co-educational
Schools in Hong Kong

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Abstract

A distinct educational phenomenon is prevalent in Hong Kong. While the global trend towards the adoption of co-education that promotes equal educational opportunities between male and female students has been formally institutionalized in Hong Kong, single-sex secondary schools continue to enjoy public recognition and legitimacy. My research is an attempt to pinpoint the institutional and ideological forces that have given rise to this apparent inconsistency. By analyzing the organization and presentation of gender identity in Hong Kong secondary schools, I offer an interpretive account of the phenomenon in terms of how single-sex schools have transformed themselves from meeting the indigenous demand for gender socialization towards a more universalistic framework of expanding personhood and individual rights. The trend has been one that converges with co-educational schools that aims at gaining legitimacy under the global institutionalization of egalitarianism on the other. While the early establishment of single-sex schools is well captured by the functionalist and conflict perspectives on gender and education, the more recent development constitutes the major focus of neo-institutionalism. On the basis of both a cross-sectional and cross-time analyses of the educational claims in boys', girls' and co-educational schools in Hong Kong, I conclude that the organization and presentation of gender in Hong Kong education has undergone a transition from the indigenous concern with gender role socialization to the modern ideology of egalitarianism.

摘要

香港呈現了一個很特別的教學現象。當香港正循著制度化的世界性的趨勢——奉行雙性教育並確保男女學生享有同等的教育機會的同時，單性中學卻依然在本港享受到高度的認受性。本研究嘗試去分析支持這不一致的教育現象背後的意識形態。從香港的中學在性別主體性的論述的分析中，本研究闡釋本港的單性中學如何由滿足本土的性別社教化的需求轉型到滿足世界性的關懷：人權及個人主體的擴張。這一趨勢亦同時體現在標榜均等主義的雙性學校之上。教育社會學理論的功能主義學派及批判理論解釋到本港早期單性學校的發展；而新制度主義則提供了另一角度去分析近年香港性別教育的現象。根據本文的跨組別及跨時間的男校、女校及男女校的教育理念的比較研究，本人得出了以下的結論：性別角色社教化的關注在香港教育的性別結構及論述中漸漸淡化，取而代之的是現代均等主義的意識形態的擴張。

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Chapter 1 Literature Review, Research Concern and Conceptual Framework

1.1 Introduction

A puzzle arises when we consider the educational practices of Hong Kong from a gender perspective. Since 1978, the mass education system has been institutionalized. It is compulsory for all children, no matter whether male or female, to receive nine years of free education, including six years of primary school and three years of junior secondary school. As an international city, Hong Kong follows the global egalitarian standard in providing all children with an equal right to formal education. Students of both sexes are subjected to the same educational policy in areas like school allocation and public examination. The founding of the Equal Opportunity Council was a benchmark in the further institutionalization of the egalitarian principle in Hong Kong, in particular its education system. In 2001, the Council prosecuted the Hong Kong SAR Government for sexual discrimination in its gender-based secondary school allocation mechanism. The High Court adjudged the mechanism as illegal according to the Sex Discrimination Ordinance, and mandated the government to revise it accordingly (Equal Opportunity Council, 2004). This dramatic incident reveals that the protection of equal educational opportunity has been further institutionalized with the founding of supervisory bodies. Hong Kong education thus seems to be successful in implementing the principle of gender

equality.

This judgment, however, is inconsistent with another educational practice in Hong Kong. Unlike the United States, in Hong Kong there is no rule and regulation on the compulsory provision of co-educational education. Schools could freely decide their single-sex or co-educational status and the corresponding gender criteria of admission. Up to now, 82 single-sex schools are still running and enjoying the same level of public recognition with co-educational schools. By definition, the single-sex schools are oriented to the education of either sex to the exclusion of the other. Under the global trend of co-education, the persistence of single-sex schools in Hong Kong suggests that they may be indeed responding to an indigenous demand on gender socialization. It also suggests that gender differentiation may remain to be a significant aspect in the educational practice of Hong Kong. But this assertion remains unverified as the issue has been neither officially recognized nor subjected to systematic research. The lack of attention on this issue thus prevents us from fully understanding the actual positioning of gender in the educational institution of Hong Kong. It is this puzzle that has aroused my research interest on the general relationship between gender and education in Hong Kong.

1.2 Functionalist and Conflict Perspectives on Gender and Education

To address the puzzle outlined above, two major sociological perspectives on gender and education will be firstly considered. They refer to functionalism and conflict theory, which have been concerned with the place of education in differentiating and maintaining the gender roles in society. In the following these theoretical perspectives will be considered in turn.

1.2.1 Functionalism

In functionalism, society is conceived as an integrated system comprising of interdependent parts, each of which fulfills its specific function and work together with the others for the maintenance of the whole society. As society is modernized, it becomes more highly differentiated. The maintenance of social order presupposes consensus; otherwise it would collapse. With these fundamental premises, social order constitutes the major concern of functionalism. Durkheim (1893/1947) argues that a new form of social control has to be instituted when society becomes more differentiated and evolved from the type of mechanical solidarity to that of organic solidarity. Education is the major agent or mechanism to provide this modern form of social control.

The Functions of Education as a Social Institution

Durkheim was the first sociologist applying functional analysis to the field of education. According to his perspective, moral values are the basic elements of society. Education is conceived as the most important institution that functions to transmit shared values and norms to the upcoming generation. In *Moral Education* (1962), Durkheim sets forth the view that classroom could be taken as a society in miniature. The discipline inside the classroom implicates the values and norms shared in society. In following school rules, students could eventually acquire a sense of self-control. In inculcating the habit of self-control in the students at their early age, education could prepare them to follow social norms adequately when they come to perform the adult roles in society. Durkheim thus concludes that the function of discipline is indeed moral education (Durkheim, 1962). The transmission of moral values through education could generate social consensus and in this way maintain the social order.

Durkheim's conception of education as transmission of moral values has laid down the foundation for the functionalist perspective on modern education. For the functionalists, the major function of education is to socialize students in accordance with the values and norms that prescribe socially acceptable behaviors (Savdonik, 2001). Dreeben (1968) suggests that the classroom setting itself has the

function of socializing independent students. Both the class size and the distance between students and teachers perform the latent function of training the former to complete class tasks by themselves. On the other hand, the strict school rule against cheating has a manifest function of reinstating and sanctioning the moral principle of independence (Dreeben, 1967). In short, the functionalists assert that the educational practices of school fulfill a manifest or latent function in socializing students into socially approved roles.

Talcott Parsons is another major figure in the functionalist tradition of sociology of education. In his celebrating essay "The School Class As a Social System" (1959), Parsons distinguishes two functions of education as a social system. The first function is, again, socialization. Parsons argues that socialization refers to a "development in individuals of the commitments and capacities [that are generally required of adults]" (Parsons, 1959). In school class students are socialized in both their commitment to the shared values of society and competence in fulfilling the adult roles as socially prescribed.

The second function of education is allocation. Individuals are allocated according to the educational level they have achieved, which corresponds to a certain extent to the knowledge and skills they have acquired. Here a normative standard of meritocracy is presupposed. The principle of allocation concerns exclusively with

the achievement of individual students, but not their ascriptive characteristics. The more effort a person has put in school class, the greater opportunity he or she will have in attaining a prestigious social position.

Partly influenced by Parsons' analysis of the allocative function of education, functionalists have come to focus on the technical training of students. The theoretical assumption they share is that the rapid technological advancement in modern society necessitates a more demanding level of knowledge and skills. Accordingly the educational system is strongly oriented to train "skilled technicians and professional experts" (Clark, 1962). Education thus performs the technical function of training qualified workers and professionals for modern society. At the same time its moral function is implied, as the norm of meritocracy and equal opportunity is presupposed in the allocation of technical professionals.

Functional Perspective on Curriculum Planning

According to functionalism, therefore, education performs the significant function of transmitting values and knowledge to the upcoming generation for their future performance of adult roles, in particular that of a technical worker and professional, in a highly differentiated modern society. For this perspective, curriculum, as official plan on school subjects, is organized around social structure and planned in a way that fulfills various social needs and functions. Accordingly

every subject is functional in a specific way. For instance, Chinese Language, English and Mathematics are the three core subjects in Hong Kong education, which are officially defined as constituting the most fundamental and indispensable knowledge base for every individual to conduct his or her life in a modern society. Civic education, on the other hand, is functional for the transmission of modern civic values. This functional conception of curriculum implies that if there is any change on the social expectations towards the role of knowledge in society, curriculum would have to be adjusted or changed in order to meet the arising social needs.

Functional Perspective on Gendered Education

Gender is one of the major structural dimensions in the differentiation of modern society. In every society there are respective gender roles for male and female, which are prescribed by specific values and norms and internalized by individual men and women. According to the functional perspective, education bears the responsibility of socializing students into their respective gender roles. Hence messages of gender socialization are infused into the daily educational practice of the schools.

For the functionalists, single-sex schools would define and promote their distinctive gender identity in an evident and unambiguous fashion. These schools are thus functional in the socialization of students to specific male or female identity,

such that the normative structure of gender roles in the society as a whole could be maintained. This function would become more remarkable if the distinction between male and female roles in a given society is sharp and clear-cut. In traditional Chinese society, for instance, men and women are provided with different education. While men studied the “Four Books Five Classic” (四書五經) for preparing civil examination, women largely learned the traditional Chinese style sewing known as Nu-gong (女紅). Although the distinction between men and women becomes much less profound with modernization, the functionalists hold that education still performs the function of socializing different gender roles and in this way maintains the “gendered order” in society.

Although modern society is still gender-stratified to a certain extent, there is an increasing need for cooperation between the two sexes. In this light the cooperation between boys and girls in the schooling process performs the latent function of preparing them for their future division of labor in society. Together with our discussion above, the co-existence of single-sex and co-educational schools in Hong Kong is explained by the functionalist perspective in terms of their different functions for gender socialization. While single-sex schools are functional in distinguishing gender roles, the co-educational one are functional in integrating them. The two types of schools thus address different societal needs, which are nevertheless

both necessary for the maintenance of social order and harmony. In this sense, the schools' concern towards gendered education should be presented in an explicit form so as to signify their performing functions.

In modern world, it is still taken for granted that women are responsible for domestic works. In accordance with this gender stereotype, it is necessary for school to introduce a corresponding subject into the formal curriculum to transmit the relevant skills and knowledge. In Hong Kong, Home Economics is taught as a gendered subject that equips the female students with knowledge of home making. For the functionalists, the subject clearly performs the function of gender socialization. With the school (and family) training of home making, schoolgirls could be well prepared to fit into the adult women roles.

1.2.2 Conflict Theory

Conflict theory adopts an opposite standpoint to functionalism on the relationship between education and society. While functionalists assume that society is integrated with shared values and consensus, conflict theorists suggest that society is an asymmetric power structure in which the dominating groups manipulate and impose their will upon the subordinate groups (Sadovnik, 2001). According to the conflict perspective, the division of labor in society is not so much a cooperative and

harmonic (as presumed by functionalism) than a conflictual and stratified one. The highest positions of social hierarchy are as a rule occupied by dominant groups with economical, political and/or cultural power. This asymmetric structure of power could be maintained only with a mechanism that reproduces the existing inequalities.

In this vein education is conceived by conflict theory as the major mechanism for the reproduction of social inequalities in modern society. Randall Collins (1978) argues that the rise of credentialism does not imply that education becomes meritocratic. As the dominant class in society has monopolized the access to various resources, children coming from this class could readily inherit these resources and triumph in the game of credential (Collins, 1978). On the other hand, Pierre Bourdieu and Jean C. Passeron (1977) argue that cultural capital is embodied in various school subjects and practices. The common themes in textbooks, such as going to museum or playing piano, indeed refer to the values and lifestyles of the dominant class, such that the dominated class would be undoubtedly disadvantaged in acquiring the knowledge and achieving academic excellence. With the differential accessibility of cultural capital to the dominant and the dominated classes, social inequalities could thus be reproduced.

For the conflict perspective, gender is one of the major stratifying dimensions in modern society. Men are supposed to occupy a higher social status than women.

In the following the conflict theory on gender and education will be examined in detail.

The institutionalization of equal opportunity in education has been initiated throughout the world in the past few decades. Title IX in the United States, for instance, has been established since 1972, which prescribed that male and female should receive the same educational opportunities in the schooling process (Cruz, 2000). In Hong Kong, the Equal Opportunity Council is responsible for combating gender discrimination in various arenas like job market and school. For conflict theory, however, these institutional arrangements do not necessarily signify the realization of gender equality. Although women could now have equal access to education, the content and quality of the education they receive are still different from that of men (Howe, 1984). School education is still strongly gender-oriented, an aspect that is not explicitly presented at the level of educational policy, but rather implicitly embedded in educational system and school lives (蔡寶瓊, 1993). Some feminists argue that the egalitarianism of co-education is merely a myth, and the problem of gender inequality is still unresolved (Howe, 1984).

On the basis of these studies, conflict theory further examines the actual schooling process, in which female students are underprivileged and gender inequality

is reproduced. Three mechanisms of the reproduction of male domination could be generalized from the existing literature.

Gender-Role Stereotyping in Curriculum and Allocation Process

The first reproductive mechanism refers to the gender-role stereotyping in curriculum (蔡寶瓊, 1993; Choi, 1995; Howe, 1984). In this regard Howe (1984) characterizes the curriculum in school teaching as “Men’s Curriculum”. As the primary source of knowledge taught to the students, textbooks are indeed charged with gender role stereotypes. For instance, in the textbooks of the United States, men are often portrayed as the breadwinners and women as the housewives (Howe, 1984). In the history textbooks, the whole American history is depicted as men’s history, whereas the names of female painters, poets and inventors are altogether missed out in the textbooks of history of art and science (Howe, 1984; Saddker, 1994).

Textual analysis of Hong Kong textbooks also yields similar results. Both Luk and Yau’s (1988) analysis of history and social studies textbooks as well as Au’s (1993) analysis of Chinese language, social studies and health education textbooks have found that women are as a rule portrayed in these textbooks as passive and family-oriented, whereas men always monopolize the leadership positions in political and social arenas (see also Choi, 1995). From the perspective of conflict theory,

these findings reveal the patriarchal nature of our society and the marginalization of women role within it. By means of implicit gender socialization, the schoolgirls would be well prepared to fill in the inferior role of women. The existing inequalities between men and women thus remain formidable albeit elusive.

Gender stereotypes could be found, however, not only in textbooks but also in the curriculum. In Hong Kong, vocational subjects like Woodwork and Design and Technology are defined as “masculine” subjects, whereas subjects like Home Economics are identified as “feminine” (Choi, 1995). This “gender differentiation” of subjects is taken for granted by most schools, which accordingly prescribe male and female students to study the “appropriate” subject regardless of their personal interests and orientations (Choi, 1993). For conflict theorists, the gendered curriculum is evidently reproducing the stereotypes of “domestic women” and “vocational men”.

Besides gendered textbooks and curriculum, the educational system also limits the chances of women to study in technical and vocational institutes at the post-secondary level (Choi, 1995). The restrictions on the educational opportunities of women are more manifested at the senior secondary school level. In a study on the general condition of women and education from 1976 to 1992 in Hong Kong, Choi (1995) find that the gender ratios for subjects in the science and art streams were

relatively constant. For every female student there were more than two male students studying science subjects; whereas for every female student there were approximately 0.6 male student studying art subjects (Choi, 1995).

This pattern reveals the widespread and deeply-grained gender stereotypes in our educational system. Men are conventionally supposed to be more logical and objective, such that they are often advised to specialize in the science stream by their teachers and parents. On the other hand, women are supposed to be more expressive, such that they are often discouraged to specialize in science subjects unless they have obtained outstanding results (Choi, 1995). These gender stereotypes are largely taken for granted, such that it seems “natural” for boys to study science and girls to study art. Gender inequalities are then reproduced through these stereotypes. It is presumed that one needs intelligence in studying science subjects, whereas only rote memory is required in studying arts (Choi, 1995). The gender differentiation of the science and arts streams would then lead to the poor self-image and motivation of schoolgirls in study (Choi, 1995).

Besides psychological hazard, the gender stereotypes would also significantly restrict the academic path and career of schoolgirls. According to Luk (1991), while science is “incremental” in nature, arts could be taken as “non-incremental” (quoted in Choi, 1995). In other words the basic knowledge acquired in junior-level science

classes could be readily accumulated to the study of science subjects at the senior secondary level. This is not the case with arts subjects. And the university admission for science subjects, such as medicine, pure science and engineering, merely require their students to have a background of studying science subjects at the senior secondary level. On the other hand, the arts and social science subjects in university as a rule do not have any such requirement, such that secondary students from both science and arts streams are free to enroll them. Luk (1991) thus concludes that it is relatively easy for science stream students to switch to arts subject, but not the other way round (also quoted in Choi, 1995). The exclusion of girls from the science subjects implies that they have relatively fewer chances in pursuing profession-related disciplines, which are often associated with these subjects.

According to the statistics compiled by the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong from 1971 to 1990, the percentage of women undergraduates major in engineering had been less than 10%, and that of those major in science and medicine had been around 30% (Choi, 1995). In the case of the United States, Howe (1984) argues that although both male and female are admitted in university, there is a clear gendered pattern in their choice of majors, such that it is a common practice for male students to study engineering and female students to study education.

Such gender difference in academic path, however, would have a considerable impact over the gender inequalities in job market. With their different credentials, men are as a rule more likely to take up high-status jobs like doctor and engineer, whereas women are generally allocated to “feminine” and low-status jobs such as teachers and clerks. Together with the gender stereotypes conveyed in textbooks and curriculum, the inferior position of women and the gender inequalities in society are reproduced. The gender-role stereotyping in education is thus a continuous and self-reinforcing process, in which the limited opportunities of female students to specialize in the science stream would lead to their restricted opportunities in subsequent choices of major and occupation. The female are generally unconscious of this process, such that the reproduction of gender inequalities in education remains latent and unrecognized (Sadker, 1991).

Gender-Biased Interactions in School

The second major reproductive mechanism refers to the gender-biased interactions in schooling. While girls are receiving the same formal education with boys, they are nevertheless exposed to the gender-biased messages conveyed through the everyday interactions between teachers and students on the one hand, and among students on the other (Sadker, 1994). In elementary school, for instance, it is found that schoolboys as a rule dominate classroom conversations (Sadker, 1994).

Teachers are generally more ready to let the boys asking and answering questions in class and to comment on their answers and works in a more elaborated way. Girls, on the other hand, are encouraged to remain silent. A boy is more likely than a girl to be called out when both of them are raising their hands in answering teachers' questions. In statistical terms, male students are called out eight times more than female students (Sadker, 1994). In a similar vein, Orenstein (1994) indicates that teachers are more willing to employ more time in instructing male students, especially in science and mathematics lessons.

The marginalization of female students in classroom interaction is not lessened at the high school and college levels. In adolescent culture, the self-image of girls is built upon their appearance rather than intelligence (Sadker, 1994). Being popular among male students is much more important than academic achievement for high school girls. Academic competition with boys is deliberately avoided as that will render them unpopular, and accordingly most girls would hide their intelligence and shift their focus from academic success to impression management. Some schoolgirls even admit that they give up raising hands in class to answer teachers' questions in order not to become unpopular among the boys (Sadker, 1994). As prettiness is a major asset in gaining popularity, the girls put most of their time and effort on keeping fit and dressing up instead of studying (Sadker, 1994).

In this vein some conflict theorists argue that the presence of male students in co-educational school generates a higher pressure for schoolgirls to remain passive, such that in the long run their academic and career aspirations would both decline. Even if female students are fortunate enough to overcome all the obstacles in high school and succeed in entering college and university, they would still suffer from an unfair competition with male students. As the teaching in tertiary education is largely male-dominated, women have to put more effort in gaining attention from male professors (Sadker, 1994). Hence it can be concluded that the educational process from elementary school to college as a whole undermines the motivation and prospect of girls in academic achievement.

Conflicts theorists thus contend that the gender-biased messages conveyed in everyday school interactions dampen the self-esteem and aspiration of schoolgirls. The findings of educational researches in Western countries generally support this argument. By comparing the test scores between the students of single-sex and co-educational schools, it is found that female students in single-sex schools generally have a higher academic achievement than their co-educational counterparts. The same result is obtained concerning academic aspiration (Lawire and Brown, 1992; Lee and Bryk, 1986; Riordan, 1990). Riordan (1990) explains the above pattern with reference to the homogeneous gender environment in single-sex schools, which

has greatly played down the stress on female attractiveness and passivity in the dominant adolescent culture. Students, in particular the female one, could then be relatively focused in their academic pursuit (Riordan, 1990). These empirical findings thus constitute the basis of the unfavorable judgment on co-education in conflict theory, for which its apparent egalitarianism is merely a myth. Rather sexism is even more prevalent in the everyday interactions of co-educational school, such that its institutionalization is far from signifying the achievement of gender equality.

Gender-Biased Structure of Educational System

The third mechanism of reproducing gender equalities refers to the gender-biased structure of the educational system. Although its impact may be less immediate and visible than that of gender-role stereotyping and gender-biased interaction, the understanding of this mechanism is significant in exposing the patriarchal nature of our educational and social system (Sadker, 1991). In this regard Choi (1995) indicates that in 1991 most female teachers in Hong Kong were concentrated in the lower ranks of both primary and secondary schools. Despite the tendency of girls' schools to hire more female staff and to allocate them to senior positions, in most schools these positions are as a rule male-dominated (Choi, 1995). The educational system in the United States exhibits a similar patriarchal structure, in

which men constitute the majority of administrators whereas the frontline teaching posts are mostly occupied by women. Even in the same position with their male counterparts, women generally earn less (Howe, 1984; Sadker, 1991). This mode of school organization is significant as it is experienced, somewhat unconsciously, by students in their everyday schooling. The gender discrimination inherent in the educational system thus constitutes a pervasive environment that socializes the students to take gender stereotypes and inequalities for granted. It cannot fail to implant into them the prejudice that it is natural and inevitable for women to occupy a lower position and status than men (Sadker, 1994; Howe, 1984).

Concluding Remarks on Conflict Theory

The three reproductive mechanisms explicated above altogether promote a gender-discriminating ethos in our education, by which female students are exploited of equal educational opportunities. Although modern educational system does have different measures such as sex education to safeguard gender equality, conflict theorists are generally doubtful of their effectiveness. The discourses on gender roles in the curriculum of sex education remain conservative in adhering to the existing stereotypes (Choi, 1995). As the major concern of conflict theorists is the elusive persistence of gender stereotypes in daily educational practices, the equal access to formal education for boys and girls is still conceived as far from the

complete realization of gender equality in modern education.

1.24 Implication of Functional and Conflict Perspective on Gender and Education

To recapitulate, the functionalist perspective conceives of education as functional to the socialization of gender roles in the maintenance of social order, whereas the conflict perspective contends that education is gender-biased in serving to reinforce gender stereotypes and reproduce gender inequalities to the disadvantages of female in both school and society. Although these perspectives bear different assumptions and judgments on the relationship between gender and education, both concur that education is “functional” or “reproductive” in socializing students into respective gender roles. School and curriculum are expected to be gender-structured with respect to the socialization of the various roles, personalities and responsibilities of male and female. Accordingly researchers in both camps, in particular those feminists adopting a conflict perspective, often undertake textual analysis of curriculum and textbooks as well as observation on the schooling process to pinpoint the differential treatment of the two sexes in the education system.

Contrary to both functionalism and conflict theory, the neo-institutionalist perspective suggests that there is a declining significance of gender orientation in the provision of education all over the world. More specifically, it refers to the global

trend towards the de-emphasis of gender identity in curriculum and the adoption of co-educational system. Why then is there a converging global pattern of de-emphasizing gender orientation in education? The answers offered by neo-institutionalism will be discussed in the following.

1.3 Neo-Institutionalism

In analyzing the relationship between gender and education, the differential treatment of boys and girls in actual educational practices is not the major concern of the new institutionalists. Rather it concerns with the extent of influence of modern values and ideologies on the organization and hence, the presentation of gender at the educational level. In the following the neo-institutionalist perspective on the development of mass education in modern society will be firstly introduced. Thereafter the dynamics between gender and education as explicated in neo-institutionalism will be discussed. Finally, the explanation on the institutionalization of gender equality at the global level advanced by the work of new institutionalists will be considered.

1.3.1 New Institutional Perspective on Modern Education

For neo-institutionalism, mass education is “produced by the social

construction of the main institutions of rationalized, universalistic worldview that developed in the modern period” (Boli, Ramirez and Meyer, 1985). In modern society, religion no longer serves as the institutional frame that regulates and orients the lives of individuals. Its place has been taken up by the citizen-based nation, which comes to dominate our lives in modern society (Boli, Ramirez and Meyer, 1985). For the neo-institutionalists, modern society is essentially a rational and purposive project committed to the secular achievement of equality and progress (Boli, Ramirez and Meyer, 1985). A modern ideology is thus articulated, for which the progress of modern society is greatly dependent upon the contribution of every individual. Accordingly, individual becomes the focal point and major element in the modern institutional frame.

In order to accomplish the modern goal of progress, individuals should be made “rational, purposive and empowered to act with autonomy and competence in the new universalistic system” (Boli, Ramirez and Meyer, 1985). In this regard education is the major agent in modern society that serves to inculcate the individuals into the competent members of the citizen-based institutional frame (Boli, Ramirez and Meyer, 1985). Accordingly the skills and values acquired in the educational process must facilitate the individuals to contribute to national success and progress (Boli, Ramirez and Meyer, 1985).

As parts of its emerging rationalistic culture, the notions of human right and equal opportunity come to be institutionalized in modern society. These notions prescribe that individuals should be equally valued in their unique character and contribution to society, regardless of their class, race, and gender backgrounds. For this to be possible, however, every individual should be granted an equal opportunity in receiving education. Accordingly mass education develops all over the world as the institutionalization of equality and human right, such that its significance resides not much on its open quota of school enrollment than its adherence to the ideological principles.

Besides the institutionalization of mass education system, the modern notions of human right and equal opportunity also orient its educational practices. As the training of individuals constitutes the mission of modern education, it is prescribed that the students themselves should be placed at the center in schooling. Every educational practice, including curriculum planning, should be formulated with reference to the needs of individual students. In much the same way as the citizens in a state, the students in a school should have their own choices with regard to the education they receive. All these modern educational principles and practices are highly organized and stylized, and have diffused around the world. They constitute a *world cultural model of education*, for which students should have equal access to

education, with their personal needs and human rights always regarded by the school as the first priority. The traditional role and authority of teacher in controlling and monitoring the behaviors and academic achievements of students has been in a decline.

1.3.2 Empirical Evidences on the Declining Significance of Gender Identity in Modern Mass Education

According to the principles of human right and equal opportunity, the educational practices received by men and women should have no significant differences. The declining significance of gender identity in modern educational practices has been verified by various studies adopting the neo-institutionalist framework. In this regard three cross-national trends have been pinpointed (Ramirez and Cha, 1990). The first trend refers to the admission of women into higher education. The access of female students to higher education has been advocated and institutionalized by governments and non-governmental organizations all over the world (Ramirez, 1997). As a result, the global enrollment ratio of women in higher education has been tremendously increased from 31% in 1972 to 41% in 1982 (Ramirez, 1997). Besides, the proportion of female students in male-dominated disciplines such as sciences and engineering is also increasing. These empirical findings suggest that women are no longer discriminated in the

provision of educational resources. Female students could enjoy virtually the same opportunities as their male counterparts in receiving tertiary education and deciding their fields of study.

The second trend refers to the decline of differential treatments on male-oriented and female-oriented subjects. In a longitudinal and cross-sectional analysis, it is found that boys and girls are no longer studying different subjects. In the past, boys were required to spend more time in studying mathematics and languages, while it was compulsory for girls to study sewing or typing (Ramirez and Cha, 1990; Tyack and Hansot, 1992). In modern education system, by contrast, male and female students are no longer required to pursue different subjects and prepare themselves for the career tracks typical of their respective gender. In other words the gender differentiation of subjects is no longer legitimate.

The third and final trend towards the diminishing significance of gender identity in modern education consists in the founding of co-educational schools at a global scale. From the nineteenth century to the present, there has been a significant increase in the percentage of primary and secondary co-educational schools in most of the Western nations (Ramirez and Cha, 1990; Tyack & Hansot, 1992). In European countries, co-education has also become a common practice despite their previous gender- and class-based educational systems (Ramirez, 1997). In the

United States, the number of single-sex institutions had dropped sharply in the 1960's and 1970's owing to the decline in their enrolment (Streitmatter, 1999). Much in line with this pre-existing trend, Title IX was passed in 1972, which mandated that for the sake of equal opportunity, only public co-educational schools could be established (Streitmatter, 1999). Co-education also gains legitimacy from international organization like UNESCO, which claimed that the co-educational model has been proved to be an effective setup in facilitating the progress of female students (Ramirez, 1997).

Accordingly co-education is institutionalized as a legitimate organizational form of school at the global level (Ramirez and Cha, 1990). The global diffusion of this organizational setup further attenuates the gender differentiation in schooling. Female and male students are not just receiving the same curriculum and enjoying the same educational opportunities; they are also taught by the same teacher, with the same pedagogical method, and under the same place. This educational practice implies that men and women are much the same, and both deserved in receiving the same educational resources. Under the modern notion of gender equality, the traditional function of single-sex school in socializing students into specific gender roles has been largely conceived as invalid and discarded.

1.3.3 Global Model of the Modern State: the Institutionalized Standard of Gender Equality

For the neo-institutionalists, the de-emphasis of gender orientation in the modern educational trends could be explained with reference to the historical evolution of the universalistic worldview of progress and justice. According to Ramirez, nation-states are progressively converging with each other in the pursuit of similar national goals, despite their differences in social condition and the pace of economic development (Ramirez, 1997). These national goals consist in progress and justice: while the former refers largely to economic growth, the latter concerns with the elimination of all possible sorts of inequalities at the societal level (Ramirez, 1997). It is under the banner of achieving justice that gender equality has become institutionalized.

In the past women was one of the marginal groups in society. They did not possess rights in political participation and were mainly confined in the domestic sphere. With the advent of the modern egalitarian standard, however, the status of women has been transformed. At a global level, the role of women has been redefined from mother to independent individual (Ramirez, 1997). Women now enjoy virtually the same rights as men in gaining social resources, and assume the same obligations in contributing to societal progress. A case in point here is the

global extension of suffrage to women (Ramirez & McEneaney, 1997). Besides, the issues of education opportunity and political participation could be always found on the agendas of various international conferences on women.

The modern ideology of gender equality has thus been reinforced in these various social and political trends of national and international development. Equal opportunity and human right has become the common slogan of nation states in gaining legitimacy for their policies at the international level. Under this global trend, nation-states must express their concerns with the achievement of equal gender opportunities in order to justify and legitimize themselves as “modern” and “egalitarian”. Accordingly, various organizations and legislations have been set forth to safeguard and realize the principle of equal opportunity. Organizations like Equal Opportunity Council in Hong Kong and the Title IX in America, which are devoted to equal educational opportunities between the two sexes, are two representative examples.

The institutionalization of gender equality further redefines the meaning of citizenship. The rights and obligations as implied in citizenship are no longer restricted to men but rather extended to women. As the major mechanism in inculcating the upcoming generation into future citizens, education is to uphold the principle of equal opportunities, in particular those between the two sexes (Ramirez,

1997). In other words it should “incorporate everyone, cutting across such lines of differentiation as ethnicity, region, class and gender” (Boil, Ramirez and Meyer, 1985). Or else the whole education system will lose its legitimacy and thereby eventually collapse.

Accordingly, schools are no longer targeting specifically at male and/or female students, but rather *individual* students in the schooling process. Without defining the future role of individual citizen in terms of gender background, the same educational package is provided by the schools to all of their students. In other words both male and female students will follow the same curriculum and instruction, take the same public examination, and undergo the same path to further education. Insofar as they obtain the same credential, it is expected that both male and female students could have the equal opportunities in career choice and promotion. If, on the contrary, schools are oriented to the provision of gender-based education, they would be charged of committing gender discrimination and even violating the law. Accordingly the gender orientation of the educational system is deemphasized or altogether discarded in order to elicit public confidence on its training of future members of the citizen-based institutional frame (Boli, Ramirez and Meyer, 1985). The myths of equal opportunity and meritocracy are thus constructed, which further reinforce the ideological belief in gender equality in modern society.

Although conflict theorists in general and feminists in particular contend that male and female students are treated according to certain gender stereotypes, the new institutionalists argue that they indeed receive the same “institutional socialization” (Tyack and Hansot, 1992). In this process, every individual student will undergo the same set of educational practices regardless of his or her gender background, with his or her right of receiving equal education protected by laws and institutions such as the Equal Opportunity Council. According to neo-institutionalism, these institutional arrangements are functional in maintaining the legitimacy of modern education system. The survival of education organization is not dependent upon their actual educational outcomes, but rather their adherence to institutionalized myths and rituals (Meyer and Rowan, 1977).

Here it is important to note that the major concern of neo-institutionalism is the process through which the notion of gender equality is evolved, organized and institutionalized. The exposure of existing inequalities would not lead to the immediate collapse of the education system, given that the egalitarian principle is still maintained and legitimized as its ideological foundation. As the ideology of “equal education opportunities” is deeply rooted in modern society, any existing inequality could be conceived as some sort of “technical” mistake, which could be remedied by “practical” measures such as altering the teacher-student ratio (Lawire and Brown,

1992; Lee and Bryk, 1986; Riordan, 1990). In this way the ideological foundation of modern egalitarianism would not be shattered by any occurrence of inequalities. Rather its legitimacy could be preserved despite the relentless criticisms of the educational system by the feminists.

1.3.4 Differences between Functionalism, Conflict Theory and Neo-Institutionalism

From the discussion above, we could readily note that functional and conflict theory and neo-institutionalism differ with respect to the dynamics of gender and education. While the formers focus on how gender inequality is reproduced and how gender role is socialized through educational practices, the latter concerns with how the educational system incorporates the modern standards and becomes “de-gendered”. While functional and conflict theory would observe classroom interactions and other school practices in order to clarify the mechanisms reproducing gender stereotypes and processing socialization, neo-institutionalism would adopt historical analysis and cross-national comparison as the methods to pinpoint the trend of changes in the presentation of gender in education. Both of these perspectives will be adopted as the reference frameworks of this study.

1.4 Defining the Hong Kong Case: History of Hong Kong Education from a Gender Perspective

Hong Kong had had a long history of formal education before mass

education was institutionalized in 1978. It is not surprising to note that it was male education that was firstly developed. During the early nineteenth century, the churches had already begun to establish secondary boys' schools. The major objective of the Western missionaries was to preach in a local Chinese society. By training local clergies, it was supposed to facilitate the preaching to the Chinese people in Hong Kong. Boys' schools such as St. Paul College and Ying Wa College were set up under this religious background (Fung, 2001; 劉紹麟, 2001).

The religious mission, however, was somewhat unsuccessful. In traditional Chinese beliefs, the major purpose for men to receive education was to get a respectful job such as civil servant or merchant. Clergy was not a high status in traditional Chinese society. Accordingly, the orientation of the early boys' schools had begun to shift from religious mission to academic training, in particular English teaching. The Central School, as the first boys' secondary school set up by the government in 1862, was explicitly oriented to the training of future professionals with a high level of English proficiency (皇仁書院舊生會, 1987). Since then, boys' schools in Hong Kong have exhibited a strong academic orientation.

For women's education in Hong Kong, the Catholic and Christian churches could be regarded as the pioneer of its development. In the mid-nineteenth century, the Hong Kong government did not have any policy aiming at the promotion of

women's education. The proportion of female students merely made up 6 to 8%, with many of them attending informal schools known as Ssu-Shu (私塾) (方美賢, 1975). Besides having few chances of receiving formal education, the female in Hong Kong was also living in a poor condition. Owing to abject economic circumstances and the low status accorded to female children in traditional Chinese belief, many little girls and babies were abandoned (香港電台, 1997). Some of them were even kidnapped and sold as prostitutes (Chen, 2001).

In order to improve the female living condition in Hong Kong, some of the western missionaries started to set up orphanage to adopt the abandoned girls. At the same time, more girls' schools were established to educate young women and help them to make their own lives. True Light College and Ying Wa Girls' Schools are two examples (Chen, 2001; 梁家麟, 2002). From the school histories of these girls' schools, it could be discerned that they are proud of their past achievement of expanding the educational opportunities for Hong Kong female. These schools did not expect the female students to fulfill the traditional roles of housewife and mother, but rather to pursue their own career upon graduation. This liberal attitude towards women's roles became even more widespread when the University of Hong Kong started to admit female students from 1921. Since then, girls' schools in Hong Kong, including government schools and schools with religious background, had

demonstrated a persistent concern with the training of their students into educated and career women (Chen, 2001). The gender orientation of these early girls' schools was thus evident.

As a British colony, the educational policy in Hong Kong was following the British practice. Before the Japanese occupation, the Education Department required boys and girls above twelve years old to be schooled separately (方美賢, 1975; 阮柔, 1948). As such most secondary schools in Hong Kong were single-sex before 1940. For those schools claiming themselves as "co-educational", boys and girls were separated and studied in different buildings (方美賢, 1975). This practice revealed a conservative and traditional attitude towards gender relationship.

But since 1945, the rule on gender segregation in education was lifted, and co-educational schools then proliferated without pre-conceived plan. Before 1945, the annual reports of Education Department often employed the two sections of "Schools (for girls)" and "Schools (for boys)" in classifying and discussing education issues (Hong Kong Education Department, 1948-1949). Since 1948, they were replaced with a new and single section of "Co-education", in which it was explicitly stated that "Co-education is the rule rather than exception" (Hong Kong Education Department, 1948-1949). 88% of students were then enrolled in co-educational schools, with most of them being private or subsidized (Hong Kong Education

Department, 1948-1949).

The only rationale that has been given to the proliferation of co-educational schools in the official level was the practical concern with the scarcity of school places after the War. The narratives on co-education, which are commonly found in Western countries in such principles as Educational Efficiency or Achievement of Equal Opportunity, were absent in Hong Kong. Here it is important to note that even co-educational schools begun to emerge, it did not imply that single-sex schools were losing their legitimacy. Single-sex and co-educational schools have enjoyed the same status and legitimacy in Hong Kong until the recent years.

From the 1970's onwards, the significance of the gender orientation of education has been progressively declined. By the 1970's, the major educational objective was to achieve mass education (Hong Kong Board of Education, 1974). Accordingly, the educational policy was to increase the available school places, to reform the secondary school allocation mechanism, and to revise the public examination system. From then on, the issue of gender and education has become unrecognized. Except the prosecution of secondary school allocation mechanism in 2000, the public seldom questions the existing educational practices from a gender perspective (Equal Opportunity Council, 2004). Theoretical discourses and empirical researches on the issue are also rare, which indicates a general indifference

towards the relationship between gender and education in Hong Kong.

From this brief historical account of Hong Kong education, it seems that “gender” has never been an important aspect in educational practices. Gender orientation could only be discerned in girls’ schools before the War, and the founding of co-educational schools was not supported by any justification on the basis of a gender perspective. The silence on gender issue is even more evident after the institutionalization of mass education. This historical account, however, is at best a preliminary observation, which cannot yield any definite conclusion on the relationship between gender and education in Hong Kong. A systematic analysis of the issue is thus necessitated, which defines the research interest of this study.

1.5 Research Questions

Since no systematic research has been conducted on the presentation of gender in Hong Kong secondary schools, my approach would be more exploratory than explanatory. Accordingly, I would not presume the validity of any one of the three sociological perspectives we have considered in explaining the evolution and organization of gender-based schooling in Hong Kong. Instead I would proceed primarily with the empirical analysis of my cases, and in the process consider whether each of their given features could be best interpreted in the light of either of the three

perspectives. On the basis of this consideration, the following theoretical questions would be addressed:

Theoretical Question:

1. Is the schooling process in Hong Kong functionally in meeting the local need of gender socialization, as argued by functionalism, or is it reproducing gender inequalities, as contended by conflict theory?
2. Is the schooling process in Hong Kong following the world cultural model of education, which aims at organizing the modern principles of equality, individual autonomy and development, as suggested by neo-institutionalism?

Several empirical questions would be also addressed:

Empirical Questions:

1. Among the single-sex and co-educational schools in Hong Kong, is gender identity formally presented in their definitions of educational objective? If so, then how? Besides gender identity, what may be the other educational claims that are presented?
2. Starting from the emergence of formal education in Hong Kong since the early twentieth century, how have the presentation of gender orientation and other educational claims been evolved at the school level?
3. Is the curriculum in Hong Kong secondary school highly gender-oriented?

1.6 Organization of the Thesis

These theoretical and empirical questions will be discussed in the following order. In Chapter 2, the research methods adopted in this study will be introduced. I will explain the distinction between the two levels of analysis adopted in this study,

as well as my choice of educational claim as the major unit of analysis. Chapter 3, 4 and 5 are empirical chapters, which revolve around the three empirical questions set forth above. In Chapter 3, I will begin by summarizing the findings of my quantitative analysis of the educational claims of single-sex and co-educational schools in Hong Kong in 2003. On the basis of this general picture of the relationship between gender and education, I will proceed in Chapter 4 to discuss the results of my qualitative cross-time analysis of girls' schools, boys' schools and co-educational schools. The purpose of the analysis is to pinpoint the trends of change in the presentation of gender in the three types of secondary schools in Hong Kong. In Chapter 5, I will analyze the presentation of gender in the apparently gender-based subject of Home Economics at both the institutional and organizational levels. Finally, Chapter 6 will be a concluding chapter on the relevance of the three sociological perspectives outlined above to the issue of gender and education.

Chapter 2 Methodology

2.1 Educational Claim as the Unit of Analysis

Educational claims refer to those principles guiding the practices of education in a given society. They are culturally embedded conceptions concerning the proper functions and ultimate goals of education. No single and common set of educational claims could be found as different national educational systems are grounded on their unique historical and social backgrounds, though we may expect certain major themes would be shared among them. “Cognitive Training”, for example, is one of the major educational claims in modern education. As education is commonly understood as an agent of training future professionals, students are expected to acquire the relevant knowledge or skills that are functional in their society. For instance, the proposal of Hong Kong Education Reform in 2000 has stated explicitly that Information Technology should be promoted in order to respond to the evolution of knowledge-based economy. It reveals that Hong Kong education is somewhat skill oriented at the level of its educational claim. On the other hand, some educational claims are culturally oriented: they highly emphasize that students should be cultivated into responsible citizens who could contribute to their own community, society and nation. Where a nation is strongly influenced by religious beliefs, we may expect a strong religious orientation in their educational claim. The

goal of education would then be defined as a kind of spiritual socialization. Since the social, historical and political backgrounds of different nations are never identical, different educational claims are supposed to be found.

As stated in the previous chapter, the research objective of this study is to investigate the presentation and the changes of these presentations of gender orientation in Hong Kong education. It does not focus on the different experiences of male and female students in the actual schooling process, but rather on the positioning of gender in institutional and organizational decision. In other words, this research aims at examining whether educational claims in Hong Kong are gender-oriented in these different forms of educational provision. If it is the case, the goals of education reform or policy would also revolve around the objective of gender socialization in the institutional level. We may expect, for example, that the theme of gender segregation would be highly evident in the curriculum. For single-sex schools, they would exhibit a high tendency toward gender socialization, that is, they would identify themselves in terms of their concerns with female or male socialization. Co-educational schools, despite the fact that their legitimacy are being based on egalitarian ideal, would also define their role as the provision of equal opportunity between the sexes, as in the case of the United States (Tyack and Hansot, 1992). In accordance with this research objective, it is necessary for us to examine

the educational claims at both the organizational and curriculum levels. Here our concern, however, is not to offer some sort of “yes” or “no” answer to the question whether the educational ideology is gender-oriented at each level. Rather we are to inquire the extent of influence of indigenous interest concerning gender socialization relative to the impact brought by the worldwide trend towards gender-neutral educational model.

The ultimate goal of this research, therefore, is to pinpoint the educational claims that have been set forth in Hong Kong education under the interactive effects of indigenous and global cultural dynamics. Accordingly not only gender orientation but also other categories are considered in this research to portray a complete picture of Hong Kong educational claims. The coding scheme and reference framework of the categories of educational claim are constructed and will be introduced in the section of methodological design. To further examine the implemented curriculum, I also advance an analysis of the instructional content of “Home Economics” in schools.

2.2 Levels of Analysis

Schools’ and curriculum levels of analysis are distinguished in this research.

First of all, schools, as the formal educational organization in modern society, are

studied to see how they position gender in defining their objectives and missions. According to organization theory, organizations have to present their missions formally to the public in order to gain legitimacy (Powell and DiMaggio, 1991). Government bureaucracy or business corporation, for example always state their missions in a clear fashion. Their legitimacy could be maintained only if their missions correspond to ideological claims prevailed in their institutional environment (Powell and DiMaggio, 1991). Accordingly, the formally presented missions of school could best reveal their educational claims and their correspondence with the wider institutional environment. The pattern of educational claims at the organizational level of Hong Kong education could thus be articulated.

Educational claims presented by schools as formal educational organization indicate how they adjust themselves to their institutional environment. But they alone could not lead to a conclusive answer concerning whether Hong Kong educational claim is gender-oriented, for the schools may adhere to their own traditions even when they are adapting to the ideological trend in the institutional environment. The picture could be more complete only if the educational claims at the institutional level are also taken into consideration, for they serve as the concrete guidelines for the schools to be isomorphic with the prevailing educational ideology and thereby to gain legitimacy. These claims embody indigenous educational

principles, which are to be recognized and legitimated according to the global standard.

Among various educational policies at the school level, curriculum planning is the most definitive. In modern society knowledge is precisely defined (Meyer, 1977). Since education is supposed to be functional in preparing individual citizens for future contribution to society, the knowledge transmitted in society should be functional and relevant to social progress. If gender socialization is highly regarded in a society, the objectives of school subjects and their curriculum contents should be accordingly highly gender-oriented. Along this line of thought, I would like to propose that official curriculum outlines and syllabus constitute the major reference for studying the construction of educational claims in the institutional level.

2.3 Methodological Design

In this part, the data source, method of data collection as well as sampling method that are adopted at each level of analysis will be introduced.

2.3.1 Analysis at Schools' Level

Dimension of Study

The major objective of this study attempts to analyze whether and how schools incorporate gender factor into their educational claims. In other words we

will examine whether gender is a major factor to which the definition of schools objectives and missions are oriented. Two dimensions of analysis could be further distinguished:

Dimension 1: Cross-sectional Analysis of the Educational Claims of Girls', Boys' and Co-educational Schools in 2003

Dimension 2: Cross-time Analysis of the Trend of Change in Educational Claims of Girls', Boys' and Co-educational Schools

Dimension 1 purports to pinpoint the current educational claims advanced by the secondary schools in Hong Kong. Not only gender orientation but also other categories of educational claims will be examined in order to yield a comprehensive account of the current educational claims of schools, on which we could conclude whether schools in Hong Kong are more constrained by the indigenous concern with gender socialization or the worldwide ideological trend of egalitarianism. Dimension 1 alone, however, could only yield a general picture of the current state of gender presentation in Hong Kong education. It is insufficient for verifying the arguments of conflict theory and neo-institutionalism, for both paradigms refer to a long-term and continuous social process of the adaptation of schools to the institutional and ideological environment. As such it is necessary to embark upon a further historical analysis on the schools to see how their change in educational

ideology has been subjected to the influence of social environment in different periods.

Dimension 2 is set forth for such in-depth cross-time analysis.

In both dimensions, three types of secondary schools, girls', boys' and co-educational, will constitute the research focus. In setting up different gender criteria of admission, these schools are apparently different from each other with regard to their gender orientation. Hence it seems appropriate to classify schools primarily according to the gender dimension. As primary schools in Hong Kong are mostly co-educational, only secondary schools will be examined. Even in the early twentieth century, when the attitude towards gender was somewhat more conservative than nowadays, it was common for primary schools to blend schoolboys and girls together. Such practice had to do with the widespread belief that in providing basic cognitive trainings to children, it is less necessary for primary school to segregate the sexes. But as children are promoted to secondary school, the maturing students will become more aware of gender differences, such that it becomes necessary for schools to socialize them into respective gender roles. Accordingly it is common for secondary schools to treat male and female students differentially. This trend is evident not only in Hong Kong but also in other Western countries (Tyack & Hansot, 1992). By focusing on secondary schools, a more clear-cut orientation towards gender role socialization is expected.

2.3.1.1 Dimension 1

Sampling Method and Data Source

In Dimension 1, the educational claims of girls, boys and co-educational schools in 2003 are compared and analyzed. The purpose is to grasp the missions and objectives of Hong Kong secondary schools, with special reference to the gender dimension. The entire population of 42 boys' schools and 41 girls' schools will constitute our sample¹. Among the 367 co-educational schools in Hong Kong, 50 of them are sampled, in which 11 of them are sampled purposively as these schools could provide sources of their past educational claims, which as we will see are useful in cross-time analysis. The remaining 39 are sampled randomly in each district and the sample size is calculated proportionally. The following table summarizes the above details.

District	Sample Size	Population
Hong Kong Island	5	52
Kowloon East	4	40
Kowloon West	6	55
New Territory East	11	101
New Territory West	13	119

Table 2.1: Sample Size of Co-educational Schools in Different Districts

Mission statements are the most formal and representative form of schools' educational claims. Hence the major data source in this dimension is the formal mission statements of secondary schools, which are collected from *Secondary School Prospectus 2002-2003* (中學概覽 2002-2003) published by the Hong Kong (China) Commission on Home-School Co-operation. The prospectus contains the formal mission statements of all schools in Hong Kong. The mission statements of each school would constitute the unit of analysis in this part of study. These statements are coded into different categories of educational claim in order to single out the most significant factors that orient the provision of education in the secondary schools in Hong Kong. The coding scheme is constructed by reviewing the sub-samples of school missionary statements in Hong Kong, which consists of seven categories of educational claims:

- Gender Orientation
- Religious Orientation
- Modern Education Attributes
- Character and Moral Training
- Culture-Specific Attributes
- Skill-Oriented and Cognitive Training
- Others.

The definitions of these categories, illustrated with examples of topics coded, are given in Table 2.2. (The full coding scheme with sub-categories of educational claims is attached in Appendix I).

Categories of Educational Claims	Description	Examples/ Mentions of Mission Statements
Gender Orientation	Objectives of education are related to gender socialization and promotion of gender equality	Male education; Female education; Equal opportunity between the sexes
Religious Orientation	The goal of education is strongly oriented to the spiritual training of students and their loyalty to respective religious belief	Religious belief of: Christianity; Catholicity; Buddhism; or Other Religions
Modern Education Attributes	The ultimate goal of education is to train students into rational individuals. It is presumed that students are getting most benefits during education process. Multi-dimensional development is stressed in responding to the needs of modern society. In order to gain legitimacy at both societal and global levels, educational policies and practices are highly standardized.	Student-centered Education; All-rounded education; Exploration of Global Culture; Teachers' Professionalism
Character and Moral Training	The conventional training of students' character and virtue is highly emphasized	Responsibility, Self-disciplined; Politeness
Culture-Specific Attributes	The goal of education is to cultivate loyalty to the cultural tradition of the given society. In Hong Kong, it refers to the Chinese tradition, in particular Confucianism. Education is to prepare students for future contribution to family, community and nation. Local and Chinese culture are highly valued.	Confucian educational model which emphasizes moral, intellectual, physical, social and aesthetic education. (德智體群美); Cultivation of local, Chinese culture; Senses of social and national contribution

Skill-Oriented/Cognitive Training	The training of particular skill and knowledge constitutes the major focus of the schooling process.	Information Technology; Science and Mathematics; Art Subjects; Language Proficiency; Technical Training; General Education; Career Development
Others	Educational claims that do not belong to the above classification; or statements that do not involve educational claims at all.	

Table 2.2 The Coding Scheme

Coding Method

The mission statements of a given school typically consist of several sentences. Each sentence constitutes the unit of coding in examining which educational claim(s) is or are reflected. If the statement is written in English, a sentence is defined as a phrase ended with a full stop. If it is written in Chinese, it is defined as a phrase ended with a full stop or a semi-colon. Each educational claim is scored according to its proportion in each sentence. For example, if the mission of female socialization is manifested in a sentence of the statement, the category of Gender Orientation will be scored one mark. If the same sentence reflects two or more educational claims, for example women socialization and all-rounded education at the same time, then both Gender Orientation and Modern Education Attributes will be scored 0.5 marks. In short, the score is calculated by dividing 1, the unit of

coding, by the total number of educational claims in each sentence (1/ number of educational claims reflected in a sentence). The total score of each school should be equal to the number of sentences (N) in its formal mission statement.

After coding all cases, the overall proportion of every educational claim in each category of school will be calculated in percentage. The formula is the summation of the scores of the same educational claim divided by the total number of sentences of missionary statement in the same category of school. For example, among 50 co-educational schools, if the total score of modern educational attributes is 80 and the total number of sentences of statements of all co-educational schools is 200, the proportion of modern educational attributes is would be 40% ($80/200 * 100\%$). By calculating the proportion of all educational claims under each category of schools, the relative emphasis on different educational claims can be measured. As the sole purpose of this study is to examine the prevailing educational claims that serve to legitimize the provision of education by secondary schools in Hong Kong, but not to establish the correlation between variables, only descriptive statistics will be adopted for analysis.

2.3.1.2 Dimension 2

Data Source, Sampling Method and Operationalization

Drawing from the insights of neo-institutionalism, the influence of the gender factor is expected to be declining in modern education as a result of the promotion and diffusion of the modern ideological claim of justice and equal opportunity across all social arenas (Ramirez, 1997). This argument suggests that before the modern notion of equality is getting hold, schools would manifest a greater concern with gender in their provision of education. In order to verify the validity of this argument in the case of Hong Kong, it is necessary to pinpoint the long-term trend of change in emphasis on different educational claims in both single-sex and co-educational schools, spanning from the emergence of formal education in the early twentieth century to its subsequent institutionalization and consolidation in the compulsory education system.

Girls' schools, boys' schools and co-educational schools will be examined with reference to the respective historical context underlying their institutional evolution. The methodological design of this part, however, would be different with the previous one, for most schools in their early formative period did not have a clear mission statement that legitimized their provision of education, such that it is virtually impossible to apply a quantitative coding method. Instead qualitative textual analysis will be employed. Besides formal mission statements, other school documents like school histories, school journals, school songs, and the writings of

teachers and students will constitute the major data sources. The seven categories of educational claims in the previous coding scheme will continue to serve as the reference framework of the textual analysis. Major themes in the educational claims in these school documents will be articulated and discussed.

Since not all schools could provide sufficient information on their past missions and objectives, the schools are sampled purposively to identify those that could offer these information from the late nineteenth century up to the present. Since co-educational schools in Hong Kong were mostly instituted after the Second World War and most of them were previously of the single-sex categories, the focus of this part will be slightly different from that of girls and boys' schools. It will be placed upon the rationales behind the conversion of these single-sex schools to co-educational one. A comparison of the educational claims before and after the conversion will be conducted. The findings in this cross-time analysis could then offer us a further contextual explanation for the results obtained in the analysis of the current situation of Hong Kong educational claims in the previous part. Altogether these analyses could facilitate our understanding on the presentation of gender at the organizational level over time.

2.3.2 Curriculum Analysis of the Institutional Presentation of Home Economics

Subject of Study

In this part the learning discipline, Home Economics will be chosen for our analysis. This subject is conventionally understood as a “girls’ subject”. Nowadays, it is still taken for granted that female is responsible for taking caring of the family and doing most (if not all) of the housework. Home Economics is accordingly conceived as an important subject that is functional for gender socialization. As a result, it is taught in most girls’ schools and exclusively offered to female students in co-educational schools. The evident gender-oriented image of Home Economics accordingly directs our research focus onto the infusion or eradication of gender orientation in its official curriculum. If upon inspection it is revealed that the subject is not as gender-oriented as we would have expected, the neo-institutionalists’ argument on the declining significance of gender orientation in modern education could be supported. For such analysis to be carried out, a comparison between boys’ subject and girls’ subject is in principle necessitated. In Hong Kong, however, there is no such gender-oriented subject as Home Economics for its male counterpart. Even Design and Technology is an alternative subject for male students to choose besides Home Economics in co-educational schools, it is not commonly offered by the boys’ schools in Hong Kong. Since it is conventionally conceived as a vocational subject, grammar schools seldom teach this subject. As

such only Home Economics will be studied.

Data Source, Method of Data Collection and Analysis

In order to discern whether there is any discrepancy between institutional definition and its actual implementation in Home Economics, two levels of analysis are further distinguished in this part of study:

Level 1: Cross-time Analysis of the Definition and Presentation of Home Economics at the Organizational Level

Level 2: Cross-time Analysis of the Definition and Presentation of Home Economics at the School Level

Analysis at Level 1 aims at examining whether Home Economics is presented as highly gender oriented at the organizational level. Curriculum Development Council (CDC) is the most representative organization in governing the curriculum planning in Hong Kong. It is responsible for guiding both the planning of objectives, content and syllabus of each subject as well as its implementation schools. For Home Economics, Curriculum Development Council has three official papers prescribing the syllabus for Secondary One to Three students in 1981, 1994 and 2004 respectively. All three papers become the main data source in this analysis. Another professional organization, the Hong Kong Institute of Education, is also

authoritative in curriculum planning and implementation, such that its definition of the subject will also be considered.

As has been noted textual analysis will be adopted in this part of study. Every definition, objective and syllabus of Home Economics will be carefully examined to see whether and how gender orientation is presented. The seven categories of educational claims employed in the previous organizational study will be adopted as the reference framework in classifying different themes of educational claims.

The second, school level of analysis is to examine whether secondary schools in Hong Kong are actually following the official definition of the subject. 13 schools, including both girls' and co-educational schools, will be under our investigation. These schools are sampled as they could provide sufficient information concerning their own definition and presentation of the subject. School documents concerning Home Economics from the 1950's to 2003, including the "Subject Introduction" in school journals and the comments of teachers and students on the subject, will be studied. Besides the formal curriculum content, the descriptions of Home Economics as an extra-curricular activity will also be examined so as to yield a more comprehensive understanding of the discipline. Textual analysis will be again conducted and the major themes concerning different educational claims will be summarized and discussed.

The textual analysis on the curriculum planning of Home Economics could demonstrate whether and how an apparently feminine subject presents gender orientation at both the institutional and organizational levels. Together with the quantitative analysis on schools' educational claims, a complete picture of the presentation of gender in Hong Kong education could be given. Hence, we can verify whether gender is no longer significant in schooling process, as the institutionalists suggest; or gender-oriented messages are still embedded in educational practices, as the functionalists and conflict theorists contend. Detailed discussion concerning these theoretical debates will be given on the basis of our findings in the following chapters.

¹ There are totally 42 girls' schools in Hong Kong. As one of the girls' schools did not provide any information in the Secondary School Prospectus 2002-2003, the full population becomes 41.

Chapter 3 Cross-sectional Analysis of the Educational Claims of Single-Sex and Coeducational Schools

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate whether gender orientation is the major principle underlying the provision of education in the secondary schools of Hong Kong education. The major findings in the cross-sectional analysis of the educational claims of secondary schools, which are classified as girls', boys' and co-educational according to their gender background, will be discussed.

Table 3.1 and Chart 3.1 summarize the relative proportion of various educational claims in each category of schools¹. (The findings concerning all sub-categories of educational claims are attached in Appendix B).

Educational Claims (%)	Boys' Schools (n: 41)	Girls' Schools (n: 41)	Co-educational Schools (n: 50)
Gender Orientation	0.27	2.01	0.45
Religious Orientation	11.76	17.65	10.58
Modern Education Attributes	35.96	36.31	49.21
Character and Moral Training	25.38	18.99	12.88
Cultural Attributes	15.76	19.84	15.59
Subject-based Teaching	7.44	3.12	7.00
Others	3.26	0	3.87
Total	99.83	97.92	99.58

Table 3.1 Proportion of Educational Claims in the Mission Statements of Single-Sex and Co-educational Schools in 2003.

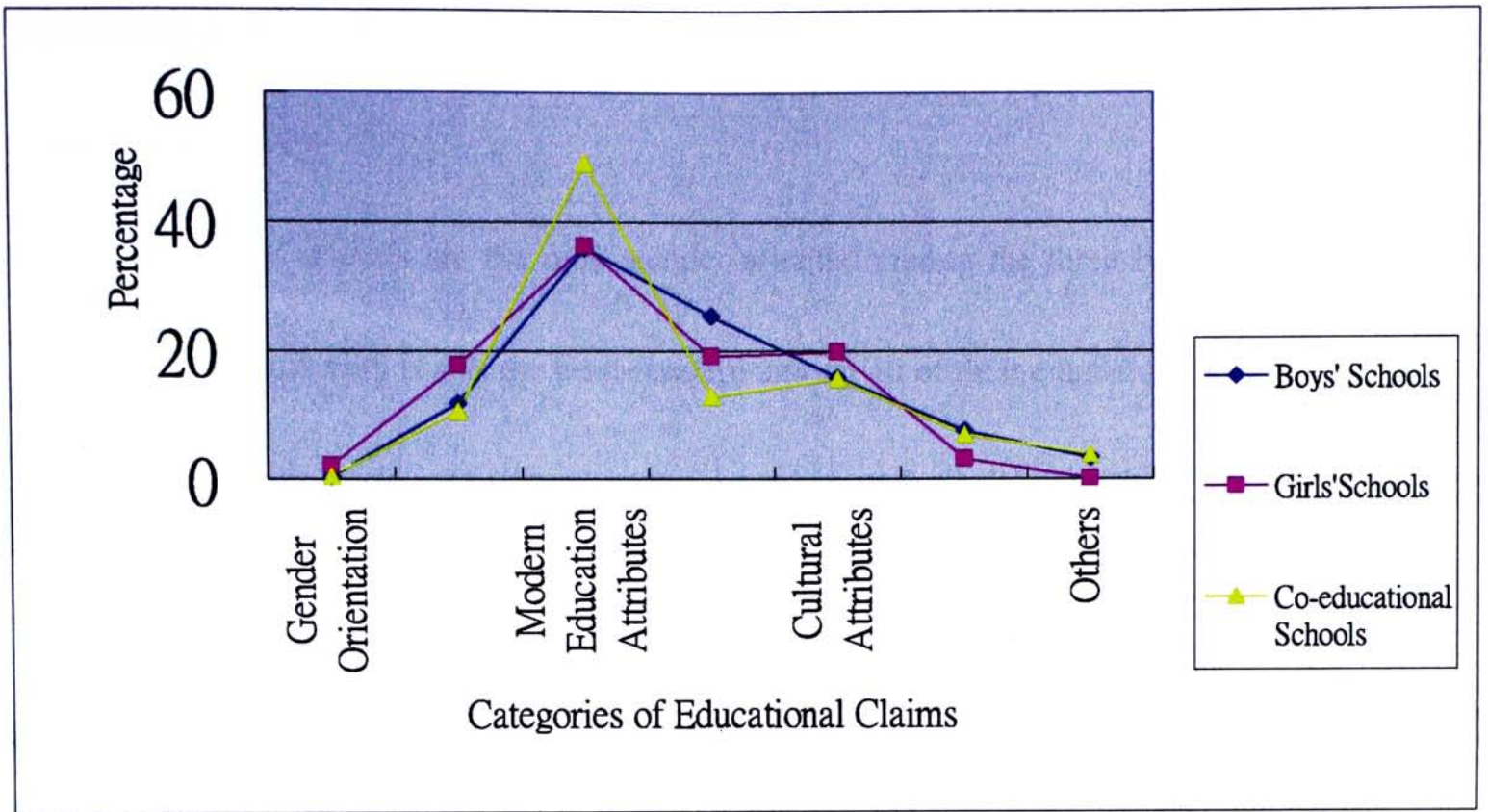


Chart 3.1 Proportion of Educational Claims in the Mission Statements of Single-sex and Co-educational Schools in 2003

Gender Orientation

According to Table 3.1, none of the three types of schools manifest a distinctive emphasis and concern about gender orientation as the schools' major educational objective. It is important to note that even single-sex schools, which apparently emphasize education for particular sex, do not conceive of gender identity as a major focus in their official identification. Only 0.27% of boys' schools and 2.01% of girls' schools invoke gender identity in setting forth their educational claims. On the other hand, the concern with gender equality in education is not prominent in co-educational schools; the theme merely makes up 0.45% of their educational claims. It indicates that co-educational schools in Hong Kong do not conceive of the provision of gender-neutral

education as the means of gaining legitimacy, as those in the Western countries (Sadovnik and Semel, 2002).

Girls' schools are the most gender-oriented among the three types of schools, though gender identity is still the least concern among all of their educational claims². It may have partly to do with their historical background. Girls' schools in Hong Kong generally have a long history. At the time when female education had not yet become popular, these schools had to seize upon their gender identity as a major means of gaining public support. This historical background has yielded to a stronger tendency on the part of girl's schools to thematize their gender identity in the past (though not in the present).

From the ways in which all three types of school present gender identity in their mission statements, however, it could be discerned that gender is no longer a significant factor in orienting their provision of education. The followings are some examples:

Girls' Schools

ST. MARGARET'S GIRLS' COLLEGE, HONG KONG (2003):

The school is following *the tradition of girls' schools of Catholic Church* in cultivating students in becoming responsible citizens. The school's mission is providing Moral, Intellectual, Physical, Social, Aesthetic and Spirit Education to students and hope that they can improve themselves in different perspectives. (Translated Version; italics Added)³

POOI TO MIDDLE SCHOOL (2003)

Our school is *a girls' school* belongs to the Hong Kong Baptist Organization secondary education department, we strongly promote mother-tongue education, in order to let students to learn more about Christianity in a harmonic school's life, understand Chinese culture, acquire the learning skills, cultivate independent thinking ability, build up a good interpersonal relationship, fulfill the citizens' responsibility, and then develop a correct value, make a clear life goal, and develop the spirit of the school motto, "Love, Sincerity, Integrity, Perseverance" (愛誠貞毅). (Translated Version; italics Added)⁴

HONG KONG TRUE LIGHT COLLEGE (2003)

We base on the Christianity spirit of love and scarify in working for *women's education*. Our school promotes Moral, Intellectual, Physical, Social, Aesthetic and Spirit Education, and emphasizes the learning of True Light traditions and spirits of creation, serving the others, scarify and being perfect. Our school motto is "We are the light of the world" (爾乃世之光), students receive balanced education in the schooling process, learn to love, help and co-operate with each other, when they go to the society and work in the future, they can contribute to the world and working for God, it is our ultimate mission among True Light teachers and students. (Translated Version; italics Added)⁵

Boys' Schools

DE LA SALLE SECONDARY SCHOOL, N.T (2003):

Based on the mission of "Teaching All People", we practice the founders' educational goal---providing grass-rooted teenagers an opportunity of education. The school believe that educational goal is cultivating students to "Enjoy Learning, Good at Communication; Brave to Bear Responsibility and Dare to Innovate"; and encourages students to develop fivefold education and becoming *good son, good husband, good father and good citizen*. The committee discipline and guidance will co-operate together to help students to understand themselves. (Translated Version; italics added)⁶

ST STEPHEN'S COLLEGE (2003)

The school is adopting the Christian educational mission, which fully develop the curriculum and extra-curricular activities, in order to achieve the goal of model education. We are adopting English-medium instruction and *co-education* for many years. We believe that students have their respective potential, and fully help them to discover their potential and develop their strength. (Translated Version; italics Added)⁷

From the statements quoted above, we could readily discern that the presentation of the gender identity of the school serves mainly as a sort of background information supplement for the public to know whether they are single-sex or co-education. However, the significance of being a single-sex or co-educational school is not further elaborated. Effort at socializing students into particular gender role is seldom mentioned. Only De La Salle Secondary School, which is the only one boys' school in Hong Kong that impinges upon gender identity in its mission statement, emphasizes the socialization of the role of father and husband (家庭與學校合作事宜委員會, 2002). Even if girls' schools relatively emphasize their gender identity; their ways of presentation do not suggest that they have a strong orientation to provide specifically female education (家庭與學校合作事宜委員會, 2002). Our findings demonstrate that schools in Hong Kong, single-sex or co-educational, do not position gender identity as a significant factor in their mission of educational provision. They also suggest that the categories of single-sex and coeducation only connote for the schools the physical

differences between the sexes, but do not significantly shape their commitment of offering gender-based education.

Modern Education Attributes

“Modern Education Attributes” are the most significant in the missions of all three categories of school. In both boys’ and girls’ schools, over 35% of their claims concern with modern education. Since the sample of co-educational schools includes more newly founded schools, which are expected to be influenced by modern educational notions to a greater extent, a proportion of nearly 50% of their educational claims concern with modern education. Here the category of Modern Education Attributes are built around the notions of individuality, equality and the like, for which individual development should be valued and equal educational opportunities should be offered to every individual. In the ongoing march of modernity, many new claims have evolved. The sub-categories defined here mostly emerged from the discussions among government officials and professional planners. The high proportion of modern educational attributes thus indicates that the secondary schools in Hong Kong are actively responding to these discussions and the emerging modernist discourses.

Starting from 2000, the Hong Kong SAR Government has conducted a comprehensive review of education system and drawn a blueprint for education reform

for the 21st century (Education Commission, 2000). The reform invokes the legitimating belief or ideology that education system should cope with the changing world in general and the coming of knowledge-based society in particular (Education Commission, 2000). The reform proposal clearly states that “Students are the focus of the whole education reform” and its basic premise is “to enable every individual to pursue all-round development through life-long learning” (Education Commission, 2000). In other words, the construction of a student-oriented, individualistic and progressive education model is identified as the normative direction of Hong Kong education in the coming century. This new mission is being institutionalized and beginning to exercise impact upon school missions. Since the new and ideal education model is supposed to be viewed by many national governments as legitimately functional in the changing world, it is espoused by the schools in their designations of direction of development and thereby the maintenance of their survival. The strong emphasis among the three types of school on the sub-categories of *modern education attributes*, which include *student-centered education* and *comprehensive and progressive education model*, implies that the global trend of education reform is shaping and reinforcing the modern vision and organization of Hong Kong schools.

Subject-based Teaching

Curriculum development is another area that is frequently mentioned in the Hong Kong education reform. In this aspect, it is supposed that in order to achieve an all-round development of every student, the curriculum reform must be student-focused and student-centered and aim at developing students' interest in all areas (Education Commission, 2000). Hence, general education and cross-subject learning should be promoted. Some professionals also suggest that general education should be promoted so as to meet the demand of "general professional" instead of "specified professional" in modern society (梁永熾, 2001). As a result, relatively little emphasis is put on *subject-based teaching* among girls' (3.12%), boys' (7.44%) and co-educational (7.00%) schools. Among the subjects, Information Technology and Language Proficiency are most popular. As Hong Kong always positions itself as an international city and a knowledge-based society, these two skills are conceived to be functionally important. They become the dominant knowledge in Hong Kong, a trend that is reflected in the emphasis placed upon them by the schools in enhancing their modern and progressive image.

Cultural Attributes and Religious Orientation

Significant proportions of emphasis are placed on "Religious Orientation" (from 10.58% to 17.65%) and "Cultural Attributes" (from 15.76% to 19.84%) among all

types of schools. Since most of the schools have religious background in Hong Kong, it is inevitable that religious beliefs are upheld in their missions. And since traditional Chinese value and belief is still deeply rooted in Hong Kong, it renders the emphasis on the Confucian concept on education and cultivation of Chinese culture legitimate.

Character and Moral Training

Durkheim suggests that education bears the responsibility to offer moral training to individual students for maintaining harmony and order in society (Durkheim, 1962). This early sociological insight on education is still influencing modern education. From Table 1, we can see that “Character and Moral Training” is the second most recurrent categories of educational claims being mentioned in boys’ schools and third most recurrent in girls and coeducational schools respectively. The difference in gender expectation could explain the varying degrees of emphasis on this notion among the three types of schools. Traditionally, people have a higher expectation on the morality and personality of men. Moreover, boys are believed as more mischievous at younger age such that they deserve a stricter discipline. As a result, boys’ schools show a stronger orientation towards the character training of individual students than the others.

Implication

To conclude, this part of the analysis shows that gender is not identified as the major principle of Hong Kong secondary schools in designating their missions. Although boys' schools and girls' schools apparently have a clear-cut gender identity, they do not exhibit any strong commitment to the socialization of particular gender role, be it male or female, in their school missions. On the other hand the institutional environment, including the broad education policy set forth by the government and informed by the discussions among professionals, seldom manifest any interest on gender issue. This silence implies that gender and education is not identified as an important element in the education missions of Hong Kong schooling.

On the other hand, the study here shows that *modern education attributes* are highly valued by both single-sex and co-educational schools. It could be discerned that schools in Hong Kong are converging towards a modern education model. According to the neo-institutionalists' perspective, the silence over the issue of gender and education is related to the global emergence and diffusion of modern educational claims. Equal access to education is assumed to be a modern attribute and is therefore not confined to a particular sex. If a school orients its provision of education to particular sex, it will certainly lose its legitimacy as a modern organization. Hence even if different gender expectations may be found in the schooling process, what we could detect from the

official representations of school missions is their general orientation towards *individual* students. They have to share the modern belief that education should be made equal to all individuals and organized in such a way despite their class, gender and ethnicity (Boli, Ramirez and Meyer, 1985). In order to examine whether these arguments of neo-institutionalism could be applied to the Hong Kong situation, however, a more thorough cross-time analysis of the educational claims of single-sex and co-educational schools will be presented in the next chapter.

¹ The coding scheme and the rationale of these educational claims are discussed in the methodology chapter.

² Totally four girls' schools have mentioned their gender identities in their school mission. They are Pooi To Middle School; St Margaret's Girls' College, Hong Kong; Hong Kong True Light College and Pui Tak Canossian College respectively.

³ The original version is “本校以天主教教會女校優良傳統培育學生成為對社會有責任感之良好公民。辦學宗旨是培養學生在德、智、體、群、美、靈各方面都能在其原有之基礎上有所增值。”

⁴ The original version is “本校乃香港浸信會聯會中等教育部轄下的一所基督教女子中學，致力推行母語教學，讓學生在和諧的學校生活中認識基督真理，了解中國文化，掌握學習技巧，培養獨立思考能力，建立良好的人際關係，實踐公民責任，從而建立正確的價值觀，確立人生目標，發揮校訓「愛誠貞毅」的精神。”

⁵ The original version is “我們本著基督博愛犧牲的精神從事女子教育的工作。本校注重德、智、體、群、美、靈的均衡教育，重視教導學生真光傳統的創造建設、愛群服務、克己犧牲、力求完善的精神。真光的校訓是「爾乃世之光」，學生在學期間有六育均衡的發展，學習互助互愛，合群服務，將來到社會工作，為世發光，作榮神益人的事工，這是真光師生共同的使命。”

⁶ The original version is “本著「有教無類」和「因材施教」的信念，致力實踐喇沙修士會創辦人的教育理想——為草根階層的青年提供教育機會。校方認同教育目標應是培養學生「樂於學習、善於溝通、勇於承擔、敢於創新」，並鼓勵學生發展五育，成為好兒子、好丈夫、好父親、好公民。訓導及輔導兩組老師緊密合作，協助學生認識自己，培養積極人生觀。”

⁷ The original version is “本校配合基督教辦學方針，一直致力發展完備的課程和多元化的活動，以實踐全人教育。多年來奉行英語授課，男女合校；認信學生各有特質，並盡力協助他們發掘潛能，發展所長

Chapter 4 Cross-time Analysis of the Educational Claims of Single-Sex and Co-educational Schools

The cross-sectional analysis of the current educational claims of Hong Kong secondary schools in the previous chapter suggests that gender factor is not as significant as expected for the schools in legitimating their provision of education. This finding stands at odd with the common belief that single-sex schools must present their gender identity in a distinctive and explicit fashion. The absence of gender orientation in the formal presentation of educational claims implies that single-sex schools in Hong Kong follow the global trend towards the declining significance of gender factor relative to the modern egalitarian standard (Ramirez, 1997). Before proposing further generalization, however, it is necessary to embark upon a historical analysis of the trend of change in educational claims of single-sex schools in Hong Kong. By scrutinizing and comparing their mission statements over time, the changing significance of the gender dimension for single-sex schools could be properly understood.

On the other hand, it is widely recognized that co-educational school, by bringing boys and girls together in formal education, accords better with the principle of equal opportunity (Ramirez and Cha, 1990; Ramirez, 1997). In Hong Kong, co-educational schools have been instituted from the end of the Second World War in 1945 onwards. A majority of the new co-educational schools founded were previously single-sex schools. Accordingly a study of the change in gender presentation accompanying the conversion of

single-sex schools to co-educational one could facilitate a better understanding of the changing significance of gender identity in Hong Kong education amidst the institutionalization of global egalitarian standard.

This chapter thus consists in a cross-time analysis of the educational claims of girls', boys' and co-educational schools in Hong Kong. Three periods will be focused. The first ranges from the late nineteenth century to 1940, when formal education for both boys and girls began to emerge. The second ranges from the end of Second World War in 1945 to the 1960's, when the demand of formal education was progressively increasing. The third period is from the mid-1970s up to the present, the critical period during which Hong Kong education system has evolved towards mass education in accordance with the modern educational trend.

Qualitative textual analysis will be the research method adopted in this part. Sources of various school documents such as school history and journals will be examined to articulate the major educational claims of single-sex and co-educational schools and trace their evolution over the above three periods. The quantitative analysis in the last chapter will not be employed, for in their early formative period most schools did not develop clear mission statements. In this context qualitative textual analysis is more appropriate for pinpointing the implicit gender orientation of secondary schools and their changes over time.

4.1 Cross-time Analysis of the Educational Claims of Girls' Schools

My analysis will begin with the educational claims of six girls' schools¹. These schools are chosen as they could provide articulate descriptions of their educational claims over the three aforementioned periods. Major themes of their shared educational claims in each period will be summarized and discussed in turn.

4.1.1 From the Late Nineteenth Century to the 1940's

Training Independent Women vs. Cultivating Middle Class Lady

Gender concern had been the most significant element in the educational claims of girls' schools during the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century. Education for Chinese women was strongly advocated. Under the banner of female education, two different emphases could be distinguished. The first emphasis concerned with the improvement of the living condition of Chinese women. By the time most of the girls' schools were established by Western missionaries, who conceived of the living condition of Chinese women as poor and adverse. Their eyes were caught by the agonizing fact that most girls in Hong Kong did not have a chance to receive formal education, with some of them abandoned and even sold to be prostitutes (Chen, 2001). In trying to save their lives, the missionaries had put much efforts in raising funds to establish schools and orphanage for students of various backgrounds (香港電台, 1997; Chen, 2001). Through the delivery

of basic education, it was expected that every girl could have a chance to learn and to become more independent in facing up difficulties in their lives. As such the girls' schools at that time were strongly oriented to the training of female students into independent women. This claim was evident, for example, in the mission statement of

Ying Wa Girls' School:

[T]he training the school had given and the kind of spirit the school had instilled in students every day of their school life, did not intend to turn them into rich wives and stylish ladies of leisure but that *they should be independent, capable human beings who cared about the others*" (Chen, 2001:95; Italics added).

Although traditional gender stereotypes were still difficult to be erased, the pioneers of female education convicted that formal education could provide women with an opportunity to develop their personality and realize their potential. Some schools even purported to prepare girls as future housewives and mothers, who did not however succumb to the traditional Confucian belief that female should "obey father before marriage and follow husband after marriage" (在家從父,出嫁從夫). Rather their graduates were expected to become "modern" mothers and housewives, who should be well-educated, independent, and capable of exerting a positive and longstanding influence on their future generations (Chen, 2001; 梁家麟, 2002).

In order to achieve the commitment to socialize students into independent women, a systematic curriculum was adopted by the early girls' schools, for example True Light

and Ying Wa Girls' Schools. Generally, the subjects included Chinese language, Mathematics, Geography and History (Chen, 2001). Some schools may also taught English, whereas Catholic or Christian schools may also further offered Biblical Study. Home Economics was another very popular subject, which should nevertheless not to be understood as the teaching of traditional Chinese practical wisdoms of family care. Rather, as the name of "Home Economics" or "Domestic Science" implies, the subject was conceived as a scientific discipline that bore a modern and Western connotation. In other words, the subject involved a systematic, "scientific management" of family affairs, such that taking care of family is not merely an in-born female skill but rather must be supported by professional knowledge. Accordingly conventional wisdom on cooking techniques and sewing skill, known as "Nu Gong" (女工), were replaced by a professional division of knowledge as "Cookery" and "Needlework". Other topics like family budgeting, child psychology, and family decoration were also taught (梁家麟, 2002). The modern and Western orientation of the subject was therefore to distinguish their graduates from the traditional Chinese stereotypes of women as passive and naïve housewives and inculcate them as independent women.

Besides organizing the curriculum content, the courses in girls' schools were also systematized. Grade system was mostly adopted. Students were divided into different classes based on their ages and levels; and they had to pass an examination before

promoting to next grade. These practices suggest that girls' schools during the early twentieth century had already been adopting a well-organized education model. School policies and practices were becoming highly standardized and well-defined. As these schools aimed at promoting an independent lifestyle to Chinese women, the adoption of Western curriculum and educational model was supposed to be the optimal means of revolutionizing female roles and thereby of enhancing the legitimacy of girls' schools.

The mission of women education was also related to middle class values. It was commonly believed that marriage was the destiny of woman, and education was a mean of boosting up girls' "values" in the marriage market. In other words, the more education a girl received, the better (normally richer) husband she could eventually find (Baker, 1996). Education was thus conceived as some sort of cultural capital, which could exchange for material economic returns. This attitude was altogether different from the expectation on male education: while education furnished a major platform for men to enhance their social status, it was a strategy for women to seize upon a "decent" marriage. Hence in the case of women, the relationship between education and social status was not as direct as men. Under the conservative attitude towards gender roles during the early twentieth century, the education background of women alone could not guarantee any change in the social status of their families. Rather their status could be enhanced only through that of their husbands. In this regard those girls' schools with their students coming from middle class

families focus specifically upon the cultivation of elegant women (Baker, 1996).

Hence it was the conviction of these middle-class girls' schools that women should exhibit good manner and propriety to attract men of good social and economic background (Baker, 1996). "How to be a girl" thus became the major concern in these girls' schools. Heep Yunn School, for example, had clearly expressed this concern in its 1886 mission statement: "[Our school is] aiming to give to children of Chinese Christian parents a sound education based on religious faith and for Chinese virtues of girls—*how to speak, how to work, how to behave and how to dress*" (Heep Yunn School Website, 2003; Italics added). While those girls' schools founded by Western missionaries were generally oriented to the training of independent women, those with their middle-class students were largely aimed at socializing students into ladies.

Besides the provision of academic subjects like English and Mathematics, other "soft", culturally-oriented subjects were also offered. For instance, drawing, music and scriptural knowledge were taught to junior students (Baker, 1996). While schools established by Western missionaries generally saw needlework as a professional and practical knowledge of family care, "Fancy Needlework" was adopted in the middle-class girls' school (Baker, 1996). At a personal level, middle-class female students were highly motivated to prepare themselves for husband hunting in receiving formal teaching of the relevant skills and knowledge of a lady. In St. Stephen's Girls' Schools' history, it was

recorded that schoolgirls usually wore fashionable dresses and ornaments when going to school. The dressing was even more delicate in special occasions like Speech Day, when honorable and prosperous male guests and thereby potential husbands came to gather (Baker, 1996). The school itself also bore a similar attitude: one of the missions of a girls' school stated explicitly that its aim was to socialize educated, Christian wives for those boys studying in St. Stephen's College (Baker, 1996).

The above analysis thus reveals that female education might not necessarily lead to woman emancipation. As traditional gender stereotypes were still deeply rooted in Hong Kong during the early twentieth century, education could be conceived as a strategy for women to accumulate their cultural capital and thereby to find a "good" husband. Under this cultural environment, the inferior position of women in society was reinforced rather than altered.

Convergence of Female Education towards the Training of Well-educated Women

From 1920's onwards, the distinction between the objectives of training independent women and of cultivating middle-class ladies had been blurred. The missions of girls' schools had begun to converge towards the common goal of socializing independent women. It had largely to do with the admission of the first female students in the University of Hong Kong in 1921, which signaled the opening of tertiary education for

female (Baker, 1996). This breakthrough in Hong Kong education history indicates a major change in traditional gender stereotypes. Women were no longer necessarily confined within home, but had the same rights as men in receiving tertiary education. Although some students coming from upper class families still conceived of tertiary education as merely a transitory stage between high school and marriage, girls' schools generally expressed a higher academic concern than before. In 1933, St. Stephen's Girls' School, which was serving the middle class families before, had a new mission stated in the school prospectus: "to build up character under Christian influence by seeking to preserve all that is best in Eastern culture and learning, while offering the very highest types of Western education" (Baker, 1996). From this statement we can discern that the notion of "socializing elegant ladies" was dropped. Even though those subjects conventionally associated with upper class values, such as French, scripture and teaching of musical instruments, were still preserved, it is suggested that schools had a higher tendency to adhere to an academically oriented model of education than before (Baker, 1996).

Those girls' schools previously aimed at training independent women became even more ambitious in achieving this goal. These schools had a clear intention in training students to be independent and capable women rather than "rich wives and stylish ladies" (Chen, 2001). One of the most renowned girls' schools in Hong Kong, Ying Wa Girls' School, had even employed the titles of "The Quiet Forerunner" and "Dedicated

Lives: The Stories of Two Women” to thematize its adherence to and promotion of new social roles for Chinese Women from the 1920’s onwards (Chen, 2001). As a result, girls’ schools since the 1920’s were generally keener on offering systematically organized matriculation classes and teaching “hard”, dominant subjects such as science and mathematics to prepare students for the entrance examination of university (Baker, 1996). Other local examinations such as Oxford Junior or Senior Local Examination were also becoming more popular among girls’ schools (Baker, 1996; Chen, 2001). The credentials issued by tertiary education institution and public examination authority did not only indicate the academic standard achieved by female students. By holding these credentials, women were allowed to work as teachers, nurses and doctors along with their male counterparts. The institutionalization of tertiary education for women thus redefined the identity of girls’ school. University was not merely a haven accommodating young ladies before marriage, but also a formal institution that explored the opportunities for them to pursue their own career in the wider society.

Besides academic and career achievement, some schools even extended the opportunities of social and political participation to female students. A school song of a girls’ school manifests this trend:

My St. Paul. My St. Paul.

It is obvious that we must not waste our time.

The brightness of women needs our contribution.

Working hard in being professional.

My St. Paul. My St. Paul.

Working hard in assisting the authority of men.

Don't give up the ancestors' will.

One can help ten, hundred and thousand;

United and save our country and people.

Do not lose our responsibility.

*Hope that our female followers can draw ahead.*²

(聖保羅男女中學, 1990:12; translated version; italics added)³

From the above lyrics we could readily discern that girls' schools came to expect women to bear social responsibility, to contribute to their society and to protect their country. In pursuing this goal, schools encouraged students to organize various philanthropic associations to help the poor in society. Wah Kwong Club was one of such student associations commonly found among Christian girls' schools. Various social activities were organized, such as the founding of summer school for under-privileged street children (Chen, 2001). During the War, students were even more self-motivated in organizing and participating in anti-Japanese and fund-raising activities (Chen, 2001). These instances suggest that female students at that time were socialized into citizens with heightened social awareness. They did not see themselves as inferior to men; rather they bore equal rights to participate in public affairs and contribute to society. It indicates that girls' schools had built up a liberal environment for socializing independent women. Strenuous effort was put to break down the traditional stereotypes that only men could

participate in social and political affairs.

To recapitulate, girls' schools from the late nineteenth century to 1940 had witnessed the eventual consolidation of a distinctive gender identity. They had a well planned agenda in providing female education. No matter whether the school was oriented to the training of independent women or of elegant ladies, both objectives are common in revolving around female roles. The missions of girls' schools were converging since the 1920's, when tertiary education for women was opened and institutionalized. The concern with cultivating stylish women had given way to the mission of training independent women.

4.1.2 From 1945 to the 1960's

Renewal of Gender Identity: The Emergence of Modern Womanhood

After the Second World War, girls' schools in Hong Kong began to reinvent a more radical presentation of their gender identity. Though their services had been temporarily stopped during the war period, the persistent concern with the personal development and career achievement of female students did not cease to grow. A more progressive slogan of "Modern Womanhood" was now promoted (梁家麟, 2002). True Light Secondary School, for instance, defined its expectation on the upcoming generation of women that they should "discover their potential, bear social responsibility and enjoy

lives” (梁家麟, 2002). They should be well educated and knowledgeable to fulfill the duties of future career as well as to take good care of their families (梁家麟, 2002). A prototypical feminist ideology was also taking hold. Read the following lyrics of the school song of Pooi To Middle School: “*educating new generation of modern women, don’t let them weaker than men*” (香港培道女子私立中學, 1950:3; translated version)⁴. These narratives suggest that the modern notion of gender equality in particular and equal opportunity in general was evolving under the historical context. The social status of men has become the reference point for women to evaluate their own living condition. Accordingly, studying science subjects were no longer the privilege of male students. Girls’ schools had invested more effort in curriculum planning, especially on science subjects and matriculation courses. Under the refined curriculum, female students could have the same chance as their male counterpart to pursue a socially privileged discipline like medicine (Baker, 1996).

On the basis of the school histories of several girls’ schools, it could be discerned that most female students during the period either had a further study or found a job after graduating from high school (梁家麟, 2002). By contrast, fewer students were married immediately after graduation (Chen, 2001). Furthermore, schools did not only expect their students to join the workforce, but could also plan and pursue a good career for themselves (Chen, 2001). A teacher from Ying Wa Girls’ School reported that “*Where*

before the war girls had become teachers, they were now also headmistresses; where they had been nurses, they were now sisters, sister tutors, matrons and doctors.” (Chen, 2001:138). This claim reveals the pride of girls’ schools in preparing future career women. With sufficient academic training, women would eventually have the same opportunity and rights as men in their career development. The fate of traditional women, who desperately stay at home and devote all their time and effort to their husband and children, could thus be altered.

The concern about women’s participation in political and social affairs was becoming even more evident. Students were ever more encouraged by schools to join female organization like Girls’ Guides and YWCA (Belilios Public School, 1948; 梁家麟, 2002). It was believed that by uniting female students and eliciting their contribution to society, the general living condition of women in Hong Kong could be improved (Belilios Public School, 1948; 梁家麟, 2002). These beliefs and practices suggested that the gender orientation of girls’ schools from 1945 onwards had not only been restricted to the self-development of individual student, but rather had been extended to a broader mission of enhancing female status at the societal level. It was convicted that the direct involvement of women in social services could alone fight for the full recognition of women’s citizenship in society. In order to disseminate this important message to fellow female students, a less gender-biased learning environment was built along with the

provision of institutionalized curriculum and extra-curricular activities. For instance, distinguished women were often invited to be the guest speakers in special occasion like Speech's Day (Belilios Public School, 1953; 1963). As a rule their speeches focused on the change in role and status of women all over the world (Belilios Public School, 1963). Students were encouraged to seize upon the trend of female emancipation and to become a respectable professional (Belilios Public School, 1963). The above pattern applied as much to female speakers as to male speakers, who often commented on the changing living condition of women in modern society (Belilios Public School, 1964). Under this atmosphere, the ideal of an empowered woman was internalized in students, who thereby became increasingly aware of their identity as "modern women".

Various student writings printed in the school journals confirmed the changing concerns outlined above. Career achievement constituted the main theme in the student discussions on woman status. It was generally believed that occupational choices of modern women should not be restricted (St. Stephen's Girls' School, 1951-1952:8-9). Men and women were supposed to be equal, such that the latter should have equal rights in choosing any occupation they were interested in, provided that they were equipped with relevant skill and knowledge (St. Stephen's Girls' School, 1951-1952:8-9). Besides, students also developed their own definition of "New Generation of Women". They rejected the belief that being fashionable and trendy was the criterion of modern women;

rather inner attributes such as knowledge, working ability and passion towards lives were more significant (Belilios Public School, 1948:8). A student even suggested that new generation of women should follow the principle of “New Three Follows and Four Moralities” (新三從四德). The “New Three Follows” were following knowledge, career and modern trend, whereas the “Four Moralities” were morality of diligent, frugality, brave and civism (Belilios Public School, 1948:8). From this definition, we could note that the female students in the 1940’s had come to exhibit a renewed, more distinctively modern orientation towards their own gender identity. They no longer believe that their lives were dependent on men. Rather they could rely on their own knowledge and ability in shaping and determining their own lives. The redefined moralities of the new generation of women as *brave* and *diligent* were originally stereotyped expectations on men. A feminist ideology thus emerged, for which women could do anything as men. The patriarchal Confucian ideology had been diminished, if not eliminated, in the narratives of girls’ schools.

From the above description, we may conclude that from 1945 to the 1960’s girls’ schools in Hong Kong had developed an explicit gender identity in their educational claim. They were strongly oriented to the socialization of “Modern Womanhood”, which did not only refer to the self-achievement of female students, as from the late nineteenth century to 1940; but also connote the empowerment and emancipation of women at the societal level.

More organized curriculum and extra-curricular activities, together with a pervasive hidden curriculum of socializing the notion of new generation of women, constituted a modern and progressive gender identity of girls' schools.

4.1.3 From 1970's onwards

Somewhat surprisingly, a silence on the presentation of gender identity among girls' schools could be observed starting from the 1970's onwards. Neither the concern of training independent women nor the mission of female emancipation was being mentioned. For instance, before the War Ying Wa Girls' School had employed the two titles of "The Quiet Forerunner" and "Dedicated Lives: The Stories of Two Women" to highlight its aim at craving out new roles for Chinese women. But this explicit gender orientation has been significantly replaced by the discussion about modern education model in the 1970's (Chen, 2001). In the chapter of "Traditions and Progress", it was claimed that in being a modern girls' school, "holistic education and multi-dimensional developments" of students should be promoted (Chen, 2001). While extra-curricular activities were taken in the past as a platform for expanding opportunities for women in social participation, they were now conceived in terms of the individual development of students (Chen, 2001).

The school histories of other girls' schools, for example St. Stephen's Girls' School and True Light College, also manifested the shift in educational claim from educating new

generation of women to socializing future elites and citizens (Baker, 1996; 梁家麟, 2002).

In Kowloon True Light College, “Round Education” was promoted to train students “physically, socially and artistically” (P.65-66, 九龍真光中學, 1979). According to this objective, “students” should be prepared to adapt themselves and contribute to the changing world (九龍真光中學, 1979). The word “student” is highlighted here as it is a gender-neutral term. The traditional usage of “schoolgirls” in girls’ schools’ descriptions were mostly replaced by this neutral term. It indicates that gender identity has been greatly diluted in schools’ presentation. The gendered framework of “How to be a girl” and “What a modern woman should be” has been replaced by the discussion on the requirement of all-rounded education. This fading out of gender identity in the self-positioning of girls’ schools suggests that Hong Kong education is following the gender-neutral and equalitarian world standard. This trend is similar to that of boy’s schools, which will be further discussed.

4.2 Cross-time Analysis of the Trend of Change in the Educational Claims of Boys’

Schools

In this part the educational claims of twelve boys’ schools will be analyzed. These schools are purposively sampled as they could provide relevant information concerning their gender identity presentation. In the following, major themes concerning their

educational claims, in particular the evolution of their gender orientation from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1940's and from 1945 onwards, will be scrutinized.

4.2.1 From the mid-nineteenth century to the 1940's

The Dismissal of Schools' Gender Identity

A major difference of early boys' schools with their female counterpart in gender presentation was that the former seldom thematized their gender identity in their mission statements and other school documents. From the previous analysis, it may be recalled that the eagerness in improving the lots of Chinese women was one of the major themes in the school histories of girls' school. It indicates that the educational claims of early girls' schools were strongly gender-oriented. By contrast, male identity was seldom thematized in the school histories of boys' schools. While girls' school often employed gendered titles such as "Career Women: A First Generation" to describe how modern women should be educated, most of the boys' schools employed "Academic Achievement" and "Sports Achievement" as benchmarks in describing their past achievements (La Salle College, 2002). And while most girls' school highlighted their concern with inculcating "modern womanhood" explicitly in their mission statements, boys' schools generally highlighted their concerns with knowledge transmission (劉紹麟, 2002; 皇仁書院舊生會, 1987). Socialization of masculinity was never salient according to the school periodicals of the

boys' schools we study, and "men's roles" and "manhood" were never their slogans. Rather there was an explicit emphasis only on the academic results and sport awards of their students. As such the identity of early boys' schools was not built on the notion of male socialization, but rather on their competitive edge and student achievement.

Implicit Gender Expectation

Although boys' schools in Hong Kong did not highlight their gender identity, the major themes that were impinged upon in their school documents could somewhat reveal their implicit gender expectation. One major theme is "strong academic orientation". As I have mentioned above, academic achievement had been a key concern in the self-presentation of boys' schools. Starting from the mid-nineteenth century, the curricula had been planned systematically in accordance with a strong underlying academic orientation. Generally, the subjects included English, Chinese, Mathematics, Geography and Sciences (Featherstone, 1930). Here English was the most legitimated one among these subjects. As Hong Kong was a British colony, proficiency in English was seen as a major requirement for climbing up the ladder of social status. In a male-dominated society, men were expected to find a respectable job for the honor of family, which was often easier for those boys who could master English well. English education thus became a major platform for boys' schools to gain legitimacy. For instance, the Central

School (now it is known as Queen's College), as the first government high school in Hong Kong, aimed at training students of high English standard to fill in important positions in government and business (皇仁書院舊生會, 1987). The relation between academic learning and career preparation is thus a central theme running through the educational claims of boys' schools.

Besides English learning, science subjects were also emphasized. Since the mid-nineteenth century, science subjects like physics, chemistry and astronomy were commonly taught. These subjects were clearly defined and their teaching was systematically planned (Fung, 2001). Compared with girls' schools, where science subjects began to be taught only from the 1920's onwards, boys' schools had a much earlier and drastic development. Such conscious promotion of science subjects was essentially a manifestation of underlying gender expectation. Science was conventionally regarded as a masculine subject. Supposed to be more rational and calm, men were more suitable to study science subjects. This common-sensical belief prevailed at that time no less than nowadays. By encouraging male students to specialize in the so-called "masculine" science subjects, the gender identity of boys' schools was constructed.

Besides academic achievement, physical training was another major theme in the representation of gender expectation in boys' schools. Since the early twentieth century, it had been a common practice for boys' schools to organize sport teams and participate in

inter-school sport competitions (Diocesan Boys' School, 1989; La Salle College, 2002; Fung, 2001). These schools were very proud of their sport achievement. In every single issue of school journals, the results of competitions were listed. Here the nature of sports evidently matched the stereotype of men as strong and competitive. Physical training in boys' schools could thus be considered as a hidden form of gender socialization, which socialized male students to be more masculine.

The emphasis on academic achievement, the provision of science subjects, together with the special attention given to the physical training of male students, constitutes the implicit masculine orientation of boys' schools at that time. Although boys' schools did not identify its gender orientation in an explicit way, the gendered messages in the representation of boys' schools were actually abundant.

4.2.2 From 1945 to 2003

Preservation of Implicit Gender Expectation

After the Second World War most of the boys' schools were reopened. The educational claims of these schools, however, did not change much. Their mission statements were not keen at singling out their concern with gender identity and male socialization. From our available sources, wordings like "boyhood" and "manliness" merely figured in the school songs of a handful of boys' schools. Some lyrics are

extracted here:

“Boys of Courage, boys of daring, full of manliness and will...”
(La Salle College, 2002)

“...For the race goes to the wise and the strong, moulding our manhood, our mind and our bodies...”
(Queen’s College, 1996)

“.... Shall rivet fast the friendships made in youth at boyhood’s home”
(鄧鏡波學校, 1988)

When compared with girls’ schools, the gender orientation presented here is only a mild one. For instance, the school song of St. Paul Girls’ College previously discussed revealed a strong motivation to socialize students into strong and politically aware women (聖保羅男女中學, 1990). In contrast, the gendered messages in the lyrics quoted above were not further elaborated. Once again it implies that socialization of men was not a major concern for boys’ schools.

On the other hand, the concern with academic achievements continued to be emphasized. Most of the coverage in the school journals referred to student achievement in public examinations (Wan Yan College, 1948-1952; Wan Yan College Kowloon, 1955-1960; Diocesan Boys’ School, 1948; Queens’ College, 1945-1960). Since the institutionalization of modern education system in the post-war period, public examination results had become the most authoritative source in maintaining and enhancing the

professional and academic image of boys' schools. Among the subjects taught, science was the discipline boys' schools mostly concerned. Boys' schools usually had an advanced level syllabus for science subjects, such that male students could be well prepared to sit the University entrance examination for the science stream in general and medical school in particular (King's College, 1963). Besides formal curriculum, extra-curricular activities were also organized with the mission of promoting students' interests in science subjects. Various interest clubs such as physics club, chemistry club and electronics club were founded (Ying Wa College, 1968). In contrast to girls' schools, where only science club was organized, the more precise categorization of science subjects in boys' schools corresponded to a greater variety of interest clubs and revealed a higher expectation on the science training of male students.

At the same time, sports teams were even better organized. The results of sport competitions became a core issue in the reportage of school periodicals (Diocesan Boys' School, 1948; Wan Yan College Kowloon, 1955-1960; La Salle College, 1964). The training of athletics and other sport players, as well as the spirit of the sport teams, were described in great detail (La Salle College, 1964). The extraordinary expectations on the physical training and science learning of students further reinforced the masculine and rational images of boys' schools. We may therefore readily conclude that although boys' schools did not carve out a specifically masculine model of education in its formal

presentation of educational claims, gender expectation on male students in being well-educated, rational and physically strong were firmly (if only implicitly) institutionalized in their educational claims.

Character and Moral Training

Alongside the implicit gender expectation, boys' schools had demonstrated a clear orientation towards the character and moral training of male students. Recalling the previous quantitative analysis of the educational claims among three types of schools, the claim to inculcate moral character was distinctively present in boys' schools. It is the second most mentioned category of educational claims, just below the category of *modern educational attributes*. When we further examine the mission statements and school documents, a clear expectation on the conduct of students on the part of the schools could be readily discerned. Here is the example from the mission statement of St. Louis's School:

In the light and guidance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and following the Preventive System stipulated by our Founder, St. John Bosco, we aspire to build a happy, open, trustful and cooperative school atmosphere. *On this basis, we believe that our students can be instilled with a highly self-disciplined and self-motivated quest for truth and knowledge.* Today's students will leave our school as tomorrow's master: *persons of integrity, genuineness, gentleness and simplicity and persons who respect religious beliefs and serve others.*

(St. Louis' School, 1998:26; italics added)

From the above, we may see that there was a clear model of personhood in boys' schools. Although girls' schools also exhibited concerns with training students into model personalities, the latter are always understood in terms of "modern womanhood" (梁家麟, 2002). Such was not the case in boys' schools. Their educational claims did not at any rate imply that the expectations on the personality of student were related to the socialization of modern manhood. Rather, these expectations are gender-neutral and universalistic in nature, such that they could be applied to any individual regardless of his or her gender. The different character expectations on students again suggest that boys' schools did not refer to gender identity in socializing their students.

Although the gender identity of boys' schools was not explicitly presented, their focus on character and moral training could be more fully understood with a gender perspective. The cultivation of moral character has been a persistent concern in Confucianism. But such moral expectation is restricted to men only; it was convicted that women did not possess any potential of becoming a cultivated person. Such male-dominant image is evident in the Confucius saying that "it is difficult to square with women and petty people" (唯女子與小人難養也) (Confucius, 1999). Although Hong Kong was a British colony, the Confucian influence had remained persuasive, such that there had been extraordinary concern with the moral and personal development of male.

Accordingly the building of student character was consciously strived for in the educational claims of boys' schools. The moral expectations on students are thus essentially gendered, such that boys' schools indeed exhibited a great concern over *male* socialization. Hence there was always an elusive linkage between character training and gender identity in the educational claims of boys' schools.

Student-centered and All-rounded Education

Since the 1960's, however, a new educational claim has been advanced in the presentation of school identity of boys' schools. It refers to an all-rounded and student-centered education (Raimondi College, 1969; St. Louis School, 1976; King's College, 1980). Besides academic achievement, students are also expected to acquire various capacities such as creative and critical thinking. The goal of formal curriculum and extracurricular activities has thus been redefined in terms of "personal development" rather than pure technical training. "Quality Education", for instance, has become a common slogan for boys' schools in promoting all-rounded training of their students. (St. Paul's College, 1971; St. Joseph's College, 2003) The same pattern could be found as we recall the findings of the cross-time analysis of girls' schools. Regardless of their gender orientation, single-sex schools converge in the pursuit of the progressive model of all-rounded education. A detailed explanation for this convergence will be offered in the

next section.

To summarize our findings thus far, boys' schools seldom devote their attention to the gender dimension. Explicit concerns with the socialization of male roles is lacking in the various school documents over time. Yet gender expectations are presented in a latent form as strong academic orientation and physical training of male students are emphasized. Starting from the 1960's, schools are actively responding to their institutional environment, for which the model of all-rounded education is elevated to prime importance. It renders the gender identity and expectation of boys' schools even more invisible. The silence over gender issue is thus taken for granted in the boys' schools in Hong Kong.

4.3 Comparison of the Educational Claims of Girls' and Boys' Schools

Different Degree of Gender Expectation

The major difference between the early educational claims of girls' and boys' schools was their representations of gender identity. Girls' schools set forth their concern with women education and thereby the progressive ideology of improving the living condition and extending equal opportunities for the new generation of women. By contrast, boys' schools did not prescribe any specific development of male characteristics for their students or their striving for higher social status. Rather legitimacy was gained through the recurrent emphasis on academic achievement. The silence over gender

identity in the educational claims of boys' schools could be understood with reference to the unequal status between men and women in the early historical period of Hong Kong.

In the early twentieth century, patriarchal ideology was still by and large prevailing. The social status of women was inferior to that of men, with their duties mainly confined to housework. Few believed that women did need to attend school and receive formal education. Under this social background, education for women was a very novel and progressive idea. In overcoming the traditional stereotypes, the pioneers of girls' schools put much effort to convince parents to send their daughters to the schools. Gender identity thus had to be formally presented, the function of which was to facilitate the public to understand better how formal education could be beneficial to the lives of women. Since the early twentieth century, the mission statements of girls' schools had placed much emphasis on the training of future housewives and mothers (Chen, 2001). A clear connection between education and women status was thus articulated to build up social confidence on women education.

After the War, the gender identity presented in girls' schools was becoming more modern and progressive. Modern womanhood was the new banner of the identification of girls' schools in Hong Kong from the 1940's to the 1950's. (梁家麟, 2002). Female students were no longer trained into modern housewives and mothers; rather they were trained into new generations of "career women" (Chen, 2001). It was claimed that

once graduated, female students could have the same chance as men in entering into university and occupying important positions in society (Chen, 2001). The articulation of this feminist ideology was actually a response to the liberalized social conceptions towards men and women role all over the world. Social movements struggling for equal opportunities for women have become a global trend from the 1920's onwards. If girls' schools had continued to focus exclusively on the training of housewives and mothers, their legitimacy would have been lost amidst the changes of their institutional environment. The conversion from traditional to modern perspective toward female role in girls' schools was thus essentially a strategy in gaining legitimacy in a restructuring institutional environment.

By contrast, boys' schools never thematize their gender identities for they have not encountered any serious ideological obstacle in gaining legitimacy for their provision of education. The Confucian belief takes it for granted that men should receive formal education. From the Tang Dynasty onwards, male adolescents had been offered formal education. By taking part in civil examination, men could gain a credential for working in government bureaucracy. With this long-standing cultural belief and practice, the establishments of boys' schools in Hong Kong could never be quite problematic. No one would ever wonder whether boys should receive formal education. The only possible doubt that the public would raise was what and how the schoolboys should be educated.

The major purpose of male education was to prepare them for respectable careers like civil servants, doctors and businessmen. Accordingly boys' schools had to identify themselves as an academic- and career-oriented institution. The recurrent emphasis on English and science education thus amounted to an isomorphic strategy on the part of boys' schools to meet the ideological demand on male education. As formal education and respectable career were already a part of Chinese manhood, a strong academic orientation readily stood for male identity. Explicit socialization of manhood was not even necessary to be mentioned. Since the expectations on male roles had remained stable throughout the post-war period, the identity of boys' schools had continued to be built upon academic achievement.

From the 1960's Onwards: Declining Significance of Gender Factor

Since the 1960's, both girls and boys' schools have adopted a convergent mode of presenting their educational claims. Their different representations of gender identity did not lead to a widening discrepancy in their educational claims. Rather both of them have come to value the achievement of all-rounded education as their overwhelming goal. Such phenomenon can be explained by considering the process of institutionalization of formal education. In 1965, the White Paper published by Education Department stated that "the final aim of any educational policy must always be to provide *every child with the*

best education he or she was capable of absorbing, at a cost that the parent and the community must afford” (Government Secretariat Hong Kong Government, 1981; italics added). This statement implies that men and women should have equal rights to educational resources. Here the evolution of the notion of equal education opportunity could be properly understood by considering the global institutional environment.

According to Ramirez (1997), the national goal of achieving justice is rationalized and standardized all over the world. Under this mission, both men and women are incorporated into modern citizenship. Gender equality is thus promoted, such that men and women can have the same chance to serve as a responsible citizen and contribute to society (Ramirez, 1997). Education, as an indispensable mechanism of cradling future citizens, must incorporate this modern ideological claim into its very agenda (Ramirez, 1997). Schools must follow the egalitarian spirit, without ever upholding any preference on students of particular gender. If a school continued to adhere to a single-sex identity and focus on a gendered model of education, it certainly could not survive in modern society. In this way, “gender” becomes a sensitive issue for schools to handle. As various definitions of gender equality are constructed, an increasing number of hitherto unproblematic educational practices may come to be regarded as violations of equal opportunity (Ramirez, 1997).

Accordingly girls and boys’ schools begin to adopt a similar curriculum in

particular and pattern of educational claims in general. Girls' schools have to render their previous gender orientation milder. On the other hand, as boys' schools have a tradition of underplaying their gender identity in favor of individual achievement, their adaptation towards the modern education model is less abrupt. Under this trend both girls' and boys' schools no longer refer to gender identity, implicitly or explicitly, in the formal presentation of their objectives and missions. The "gender identity" of single-sex schools in Hong Kong is thus reduced to physical difference between the sexes. No specific gender orientation and its socialization are signified.

4.4 The Trend of Change in Educational Claims in the Conversion of Single-sex Schools to Co-educational Schools

According to an authoritative account of Hong Kong education history, co-educational secondary schools were not authorized before the 1930's (方美賢, 1975). Boys and girls were allowed to study together only in primary schools. Students over twelve years old had to enter single-sex schools. This practice was following the British system, in which co-educational secondary schools had not been legitimated by that time (方美賢, 1975). Although there were no official documents outlining the rationales behind this practice, it could be readily understood with reference to the conservative

attitude held by traditional British and Chinese towards gender roles and differences. It was believed that boys and girls should keep a proper distance before marriage. These cultural beliefs, together with formal institutional rules, rendered co-educational schools unpopular in pre-War Hong Kong.

Without any amendment on the sex segregation education policy, however, co-educational schools suddenly emerged after 1948. Before that, the official documents published by the Education Department employed only two sections, "Single-sex Schools for Boys" and "Single-sex Schools for Girls", to categorize the types of school in Hong Kong. From 1948 onwards, a new section of "Co-education" substituted the above two sections. The first statement of this new section asserted that "*In Hong Kong, co-education is the rule rather than the exception*" (Hong Kong Education Department, 1948-49). By the time the number of co-educational schools was 116, with 88% of Hong Kong students receiving co-educational secondary education (Hong Kong Education Department, 1948-1949). Most of them were either subsidized or private schools. Following the presentation of official figures, the rule of co-education was then explained in terms of practical considerations. Since many schools were closed down during the War, co-educational schools, in incorporating both male and female students, were the most efficient way to cope with the increasing demand on school places. Some renowned single-sex schools like St. Stephen College and St. Paul Co-educational College were also

converted to co-educational schools from the late 1940's onwards. The emergence of co-education suggests that the Hong Kong education system was following the worldwide trend. According to neo-institutionalism, co-educational schools could be readily legitimated as their underlying egalitarianism is isomorphic with the ideological myth of gender equality in modern society (Ramirez, 1997). The adoption of co-educational model thus fostered the sense of being modern and egalitarian.

In order to verify the above argument, it is necessary to embark upon a systematic study on the presentation of educational claims of co-educational schools in Hong Kong. First and foremost the rationales of single-sex schools to change to co-educational one will be examined. Thereafter the educational claims of co-educational schools, including both previously single-sex schools and newly established co-educational schools, will be scrutinized. Our purpose is to inquire whether the promotion of gender equity is clearly manifested in their educational claims. We would also attempt to pinpoint the difference of these claims with those of girl's and boy's schools discussed above. Qualitative textual analysis will be applied to various school documents of co-educational schools, including their school history and school periodicals.

4.4.1 Rationales behind the Transition from Single-sex to Co-educational School from the 1940s to 70s

Among the existing 367 co-educational secondary schools in Hong Kong, 9 of

them were single-sex schools before the War. They refer to St. Paul Co-educational College, Clementi Middle School, Pui Ying Secondary School, St. Stephen's College, Lai Chack Middle School, Mun Sang College Sung Lan Middle School, Pui Ching Middle School and Tang Siu Kin Victoria Government Secondary School. The school documents of Pui Ching Middle School and Sung Lan Middle School, however, have never recorded the years when they were changed into co-educational schools. As such these two schools will be excluded from our analysis. Only the remaining seven schools will constitute the data in our ensuing textual analysis of the rationales behind the transition from single-sex to co-educational school in Hong Kong.

Expanding School Places

From the school documents it could be readily discerned that the founding or transition to co-educational school was a practical strategy for schools to expand and thereby to accommodate the rising demand on formal education after the War. This conclusion generally concurs with the official account of the Education Department in 1948. Both St. Paul Co-educational College and Pui Ying Middle School had stated clearly in their school documents that as the number of schools drastically declined after the War, it was necessary for them to change to co-educational schools in order to admit both male and female students (聖保羅男女中學, 1990; 香港培英中學, 1980). Pui Ying Middle school

went so far as to suggest that by admitting female students in addition to the existing male one, they could take care of each other like brothers and sisters (香港培英中學, 1980). It may thus be noted that the transition to co-education was largely an adaptation to environmental constraints, which by the time consisted mainly in a serious lack of schooling. This transition, however, induces a more liberal orientation towards gender differences, for which boys and girls could study together without fear of violating cultural tradition and taboos.

Myths of Co-education: Promoting Equal Opportunity

Co-educational model was taken to be advantageous on several fronts (金文泰中學, 1954; St. Stephen's College, 1979). First and foremost it was believed that students could become more disciplined with the presence of the opposite sexes. By furnishing a more harmonious and collaborative learning environment, the academic standard of the schools could be enhanced (金文泰中學, 1954:14-15). What is more important, however, is the function of co-education to facilitate the adaptation of schools to the changing world. The maintenance of modern social order is contingent upon the contribution of every single individual. Accordingly men and women should no longer be segregated; rather they should co-operate with each other in improving society. Hence the mixing of male and female students in co-educational schools could help inculcate the respect and facilitate the cooperation that are necessitated in an equal, modern society (St. Paul Co-educational

College, 1946; P.75, St. Stephen's College, 1979; P.61, 聖保羅男女中學, 1990).

But although secondary schools in Hong Kong are tending to adopt the equalitarian co-educational model, the rationales behind this practice are not fully articulated, such that the influence of the underlying equalitarianism is only mild. Among the schools we study, only St. Paul Co-educational School had outlined its rationale in the principal's report on the speech day in 1946, the next year of transition to co-education (St. Paul Co-educational College, 1946). In the cases of St. Stephen's College, Pui Ying Middle School and Clementi Secondary School, the rationales behind their transition to co-education could be founded only many years later in the Historical Review section of their school journals (金文泰中學, 1954; St. Stephen's College, 1979; 香港培英中學, 1980). Other schools such as Mun Sang College, Lai Chack Middle School and Tang Shiu Kin Victoria Government Secondary School have never set forth their rationales at all.

Such relative silence over the legitimation of adopting co-education is anomalous in Western countries. In the United States, for instance, there had been abundant discussion on whether single-sex schools should be abandoned in accordance with the equalitarian norm. Insofar as a school has decided to change from single-sex to co-educational, articulated rationales are as a rule set forth. The Wheaton College in America is an example. It provided a sophisticated explication of the contents, the underlying rationales, as well as the expected consequences of new educational claims for convincing the alumni

and parents to accept its proposal of conversion to co-education (Sadovnik & Semel, 2002). By contrast, the absence of instantaneous effort to legitimize the transition to co-education in Hong Kong implies that the mixing or segregation of sexes has never been a crucial issue informing school decision to maintain or alter their gender background. In other words the achievement of gender equality in schooling has not constituted a major concern in Hong Kong education. In order to verify this argument, it is necessary to further examine whether the notion of gender equality has ever been manifested in the educational claims of co-educational schools.

4.4.2 The Educational Claims of Co-educational Schools

In this section the educational claims of four additional co-educational schools, which had been established from the 1940's onwards, together with the seven schools discussed above, will be analyzed. These four schools refer to Hong Wah Middle School (established in 1945), St. Marks' School (in 1949) and Ng Yuk Secondary School (in 1978) and SKH Leung Kwai Yee Secondary School (in 1978).

Explicit Orientation towards Achievement of All-rounded Education

Our analysis reveals that "modern education attributes" have been the major theme of the educational ideology of co-educational schools in Hong Kong. In particular "student-centered education" and "all-rounded education" are two recurrent educational

claims. The significance of academic achievement in student-centered development has been repeatedly stressed. Most of the schools highlighted the academic results of individual students in virtually every single issue of school periodical (金文泰中學, 1952-1961, 1976; 香港培英中學, 1962-1974; St. Paul Co-educational College, 1960, 1980-1990; 麗澤中學, 1979; 民生書院, 1981-1982; 1986; Tang Shiu Kin Victoria Technical School, 1981-1983; 漢華中學, 1986).

This emphasis on academic achievement is largely related to the fact that English grammar school has been the dominant model in Hong Kong. Those schools not falling within this category, like Chinese grammar schools and technical institutes, are inevitably more eager to demonstrate that their students are comparable in both academic standard and future career prospect with those of the English grammar schools (金文泰中學, 1952-1961; Tang Shiu King Victoria Technical School, 1981-1983). This scenario renders the educational ideology in Hong Kong as strongly result-oriented.

Besides academic achievement, other capacities like independent learning and leadership skills are emphasized (St. Stephen's College, 1979; St Marks' School, 1956). Accordingly much effort has been invested in the planning of various extra-curricular activities to inculcate students with a diversity of interests and skills (Pui Ying Secondary School, 1962-1974; 麗澤中學, 1979). The mission of achieving all-rounded training is thus evident.

Emphasis on Confucian Educational Model

The second most recurrent educational claim advanced by co-educational schools was “Confucian Educational Model”, in which Moral, Intellectual, Physical, Social and Aesthetic training (德智體群美) are accorded with equal importance. This claim could be readily discerned in the mission statements or principal reports of several co-educational schools (St. Stephen’s College, 1979; 五育中學, 1988; 聖公會梁季彝中學, 1988). Compared with their single-sex counterpart, co-educational schools seem to exhibit a greater adherence to the Confucian Educational Model. Such difference could be understood with reference to the historical backgrounds of single-sex and co-educational schools. Most of the single-sex schools were found by Western missionaries, such that their educational claims were largely modeled upon Western educational ideology. In contrast, most of the co-educational schools were established by local Chinese after the War; and hence it is not surprising to find that Confucian values permeate their educational claims.

It is important, however, to note that most co-educational schools incorporate both the traditional Confucian model and the progressive model of all-rounded education. A statement like “providing an all-rounded education of moral, intellectual, physical, social and aesthetic training” could be found in virtually all mission statements of these schools. Here the blending of the two models could be understood in terms of their common

adherence to multi-dimensional student development. Relatively speaking, however, the progressive model is more open with regard to the specific areas of training. And since all-rounded education is prescribed by the proposal of education reform and is thereby highly institutionalized in Hong Kong education, it is reasonable to expect a higher tendency on the part of co-educational schools to adhere to the progressive model to a greater extent than to the Confucian one (Hong Kong (China) Education Commission, 2000).

Absence of the Gender Dimension

Somewhat surprisingly, the promotion of gender equity has seldom been mentioned in the educational claims of co-educational schools. It is evidently the case for those co-educational schools with a past single-sex background. Under this category, only St. Paul Co-educational College has explicitly expressed its concern with the emancipation of women. But this hazy concern does not even persist after 1946, when the principal reports stated that the school objective was “to produce men and women who will help to solve the problems that who will be qualified to plan and build the new world” (St. Paul Co-educational College, 1946). All other schools under this category remained silence on the gender issue in their presentations of educational claims.

The co-educational schools newly found after the 1940's did not legitimize their provision of education in terms of the pursuit of gender equality either. From our

previous quantitative analysis, only 0.45% of their educational claims impinge upon the issue of gender equality. Together with the absence of instantaneous effort to legitimize the change from single-sex to co-educational schools, the insignificance of gender equity in educational claims implies that such ideal has never been salient for co-educational schools.

4.4.3 *Discussion*

The development of co-educational school in Hong Kong could be understood as a pathway of “convenient adoption”. At the time when the co-educational model began to be institutionalized around the world, Hong Kong was encountering a shortage of school places. Adoption of co-education was by the time the most convenient and effective method in solving the problem. As co-education has already been legitimated at the international level, schools in Hong Kong could adopt this model without resort to any elaborate defensiveness. Although some schools have indicated, albeit informally, their modern orientations towards the promotion of egalitarian schooling environment, gender concern has never been a major consideration when they attempt to convince local students to study in co-educational schools.

The educational issue mostly discussed among co-educational schools is the academic achievement of students. By contrast, the equalitarianism underlying the

co-educational model is seldom mentioned. Gender equality is thus much less valued than academic achievement in the educational claims of Hong Kong secondary schools. Although the norm of gender equality is by no means altogether non-existent in Hong Kong, it is far less influential than in the case of Western countries. While equal opportunity is much highly treasured in Western educational ideology, in Hong Kong emphasis is placed upon educational outcomes. The Confucian tradition largely dictates that the ultimate and ulterior purpose of education is to get a respectable job. Such “utilitarian” educational principle thus marginalizes the gender factor in the legitimation of co-education. Unless an educational policy is seriously biasing towards either sex with regard to educational opportunities, gender equality seldom draws public attention.

The dispute over the Secondary School Places Allocation Scheme in 2000 is a case in point. Since the old mechanism lowered the relative chance of female students to be admitted to Band One schools, it was subjected to amendment under the mandate of gender anti-discrimination (Education Opportunity Council, 2004). The case had been hotly disputed among the public, for the bone of contention resided in the exclusive concern of Hong Kong parents and students to get a fair chance of admission to Band One School. What is noteworthy here is that the contested issue was not gender equality but rather prospect of academic achievement. According to conventional wisdom, academic achievement is mostly related to the quality of education enjoyed by students. The gender

constraints in the schooling process are seldom taken into consideration. This cultural belief underlies the relative insignificance of equalitarianism of co-educational schooling. Under the unique social and cultural background of Hong Kong, therefore, co-education merely amounts to an alternative mode of accommodating individual students besides single-sex schooling. Gender orientation, to repeat, never figures distinctively in the educational claims of these schools.

4.5 Recapitulation

The preceding cross-time analysis on the educational claims of single-sex and co-educational schools indicates that all categories are converging towards the modern egalitarian trend. After the 1960's, none of them has identified their missions in terms of a distinctive gender dimension. The supposedly gendered categories of "single-sex" and "co-educational" have not manifested in the representation of educational objectives of the schools. It implies that "single-sex" and "co-educational" merely signify two alternative ways of accommodating individual (but not gendered) students. The coexistence of these two types of school does not at any rate indicate that there is a specific gender orientation in Hong Kong schooling.

Among the three types of schools, girls' schools have undergone a more evident change in their educational claim. From the early twentieth century to the 1940's, girls' schools had identified themselves as an advanced educational institution for training

independent women. After the War, the notion of modern womanhood became more prevalent in the presentation of school missions. The explicit gender orientation of girls' schools in the early formative period confirms some basic arguments of functionalism and feminism. While differing in the detailed analysis and judgments concerning gender and education, both paradigms nevertheless share the assumption that schools are functional in socializing students into respective gender roles. In particular girl's school is functional in preparing young girls for the performance of their future woman roles. Accordingly gender identity is well articulated in their mission statements and even school songs and thereby greatly reinforced. And as woman rights have been recognized all over the world since the 1940's, girls' schools exhibit a progressively liberal outlook, as the feminists expect.

It is important to note, however, that such progressive orientation towards female education has not been a consistent educational objective among girls' schools. As has been analyzed, the gender factor has become less significant in all types of schools ever since the 1960's. Girls' schools have converged with the other two types of schools towards the model of all-rounded development of individual students. The original focus on the socialization of modern womanhood has vanished. It is all the more startling for us to witness that girls' schools place less emphasis on their gender identity as society is becoming more and more concerned about woman rights and equal opportunity. This

apparent paradox suggests that Hong Kong education is not pursuing equal opportunity between the sexes, but rather that among all individual students.

On the other hand, both boys' and co-educational schools have exhibited a steady trend of de-emphasizing gender identity in their presentation of educational claims. For boys' schools, their gender identity need not be thematized before the public since it is taken for granted that men should receive formal education. The significance of socializing male role is further diminished as the socially prescribed goal of every educated man is to strive for excellent academic results and thereby respectable job. In any case, being a single-sex school does not necessarily imply a corresponding effort to offer gender socialization. The educational missions of these schools are more dependent on the prevailing educational ideology and cultural beliefs that are mostly widespread in other countries as well.

Finally, it is not surprising to note that co-educational schools in Hong Kong also de-emphasize the gender dimension, as they are set up in accordance with the modern notion of equal opportunity between sexes. The training and schooling of individual students is emphasized instead of gender differentiation. In Western countries, it is common for co-educational schools to thematize its provision of equal educational opportunity to men and women. In Hong Kong there is no such emphasis: co-educational schools seldom identify egalitarianism as a legitimating device. Since

educational outcomes are more highly valued than equality, academic achievement rather than the pursuit of equal conditions is stressed. Such result-oriented educational culture is pervasive in the educational claims of co-educational schools.

The preceding qualitative and historical analysis on the educational claims of all three types of school, together with the quantitative analysis of the educational claims in their mission statements, yields a more complete picture on the presentation of “gender” at the school level in Hong Kong education that we have had before. To recall the results of our quantitative analysis, *gender orientation* is least mentioned in the mission statements of all three types of schools. It is no less true in other documents like school journals and histories. On the other hand, *modern education attributes*, in particular *all-rounded education* and *student-centered education*, are recurrently mentioned in mission statements and other school narratives.

The similar findings in quantitative cross-sectional and qualitative cross-time analyses thus suggest that schools in Hong Kong are more oriented to the modern educational model of universal participation and individual development than gendered education. I have attempted in this chapter and the previous one to answer the first two research questions, which concern with the portrait of the gender dimension at the school level in Hong Kong education. The next chapter will be devoted to a curriculum analysis of the role of gender in knowledge definition.

¹ In Hong Kong, there are total 4 girls' schools belong to the organization of True Light. But since its school history discusses the educational claims of these 4 schools at the same time, 1 school instead of 4 is defined here.

² The original version is “我聖保羅我聖保羅 顧名思義切勿蹉跎 女界昌明要賴
我儕 努力以深造之成才... 我聖保羅我聖保羅 勉 勉 當助男權 勿放勿棄
猛著祖鞭 一能扶百十能扶千 同舟共濟勇力當先 救我國拯我民
勿卸其仔肩 勿卸其仔肩 願我女同志捷足以爲先”

³ St. Paul Girls' College had transited to St. Paul's co-educational College in 1945

⁴ The original version is “作育英才新女性, 不讓奇男”

Chapter 5 Curriculum Analysis: The Gender Presentation of Home Economics in Hong Kong

In the previous chapter we have scrutinized the educational claims of girls', boys' and co-educational schools during different periods in Hong Kong. Our major finding is that gender identity is a not dominant and recurrent claim in all these types of school. With the advent of modern education system, none of them are oriented to a distinctive program of gender socialization and gender equality. Rather they converge towards the pursuit of all-rounded development of individual students, with their gender identity bracketed. It implies that the meaning of gender has been re-organized in Hong Kong education. Gender concern becomes as an obstacle rather than facilitation for schools to gain legitimacy as a modern educational institution. The gender question has to be discarded in order for schools to be isomorphic with the modern educational ideology of universal participation.

The above finding, however, could only shed light upon how schools accommodate their formal presentations of identity to the global trend of educational egalitarianism. What remains unanswered is the reconstruction of gender identity at the curriculum level of Hong Kong education. In this chapter we will therefore proceed to decipher the presentation of gender at the instructional level of curriculum organization.

In modern education, the field of knowledge is clearly defined and codified into systematic curriculum (Meyer, 1977). Each subject bears a well-articulated rationale behind its provision. For example, Mathematics is conceived as important and functional for the training of rational and logical thinking of students, whereas the importance of English resides in its enhancement of their global competitiveness and communication skills (Hong Kong Education Department, 2004). These rationales are as a rule furnished by official authority like Education Department or professional organizations like universities. By examining the definition and syllabus of various school subjects, we could see whether gender factor has been the key rationale and thereby the major locus of student socialization in curriculum planning.

Home Economics is chosen for analysis as it is generally taken as a feminine subject that provides the training necessary for girls to take good care of their families and housework. In other words the subject is supposed to be functional in socializing specifically female role. This conventional image is further reinforced as the subject is commonly taught in both girls' schools and co-educational schools, where female students are encouraged, if not required, to take the course.

The apparent gendered image of Home Economics thus generates problem for our study: given that gender is not a significant theme at the school level, does it nevertheless remain as a persistent concern in the curriculum of Home Economics?

To address this question, the official curriculum guidelines and syllabus of Home Economics, published by the Curriculum Development Council in different years, will be analyzed. The description of the subject by the schools themselves would also be considered to see whether there is any discrepancy between official definition and actual content of school teaching.

While a comparison of Home Economics curriculum with that of a boy-oriented subject is in principle necessary, in Hong Kong there is no such masculine subject comparable with Home Economics in its apparent gender orientation. Design and Technology is often taught in boys' schools and is an alternative subject to Home Economics for male students in co-educational schools. But since the subject is conventionally defined as vocational in nature, it is not common for grammar schools to offer its course. Accordingly only the "girls' subject" of Home Economics will be studied.

5.1 Official Curriculum Guidelines for Home Economics

Whether and how gender concern is presented in the curriculum package of Home Economics at the official level will constitute the focus of this part. The three packages of curriculum guidelines for Secondary One to Three students, published by the Curriculum Development Committee in 1981, 1994 and 2004, will be examined.

These syllabuses are chosen as they could help us to trace the evolution of Home Economics curriculum from the time when mass education arose in the early 1980's and 1990's to the introduction of education reform in 2000. The definitions of the subject by the Hong Kong Institute of Education, which offers professional training to teachers, will also be considered.

5.11 Definition of Home Economics

In the past it has been presumed that family care does not require any specialized knowledge; rather its skills are endowed on woman on birth or acquired by doing housework with mothers. This belief is no longer tenable according to the official definition of Home Economics. While in 1981 and 1994 Home Economics was defined by the Curriculum Development Council as “a part of general education”, in 2004 it is subsumed under the subject category of “Technology Education”. (Curriculum Development Committee, 1981, 1994, 2004). This change in categorization implies that the subject has been granted a “professionalized” and specialized status at the official level.

This assertion could be further supported by the official description of the subject. In 1981, the instruction of Curriculum Development Council stated that for Home Economics, “theory should be kept to a minimum”. In 1994 and 2004 the instruction

has been revised, such that in teaching the subject, there should be an “equal emphasis on both practice and theory” (Curriculum Development Committee, 1981; 1994). In a similar vein, the Hong Kong Institute of Education suggested that the practices in Home Economics should be supported by modern technologies (Hong Kong Institute of Education, 1994-1995:1-2). The emphasis on the support of theoretical and technological knowledge reinforces the professional image of Home Economics constructed in the official categorization. Home care is no longer a natural born talent; rather it necessitates a professional training that is supplemented with systematic knowledge and sophisticated technology.

According to the official definition, Home Economics is not an interest course for junior students. Rather the official guidelines repeatedly stress that the subject is a foundation course for further study at the senior secondary level, which could eventually lead to the sitting of Hone Kong Certificate of Education (Curriculum Development Committee, 1981 & 1994). Here the credential value accorded to Home Economics implies that its objective is not to inculcate their students into housewives. In place of conventional wisdom, the Home Economics students should have systematic and professional knowledge about home caring. More importantly, there is no restriction on the gender of its students and candidates. Once passing the certificate examination, both men and women could be qualified as professional

homemakers. The adoption of a modern, gender-neutral credential system indicates that Home Economics is not defined as a subject oriented to gender role socialization.

Home Economics is thus officially defined as a professional discipline concerning the provision of specialized knowledge rather than conventional wisdom about home making. Gender factor is not the prior concern in this definition: the subject is not oriented to the socialization of future housewives and mothers, but rather to the training of professional homemaker. This preliminary observation debunks the popular conception of Home Economics as a “girls’ subject”. In order to yield a more adequate understanding on how gender identity is presented at the curriculum level, the educational objectives of Home Economics officially prescribed by the Curriculum Development Council in 1981, 1994 and 2004 will be analyzed in the following section.

5.12 Official Educational Objectives of Home Economics

Table 5.1 summarizes the educational objectives of Home Economics as outlined in official syllabus. In 1975, the Curriculum Development Committee¹ drafted some tentative curriculum guidelines for Home Economics, which were then finalized in 1981. Here the 1981 document contains the earliest official definitions of the teaching objective of Home Economics when mass education began to take

hold in Hong Kong. On the other hand, the objectives stated in 1994 are exactly the same as that of 2004, such that they are subsumed under the same category. The major purpose of our analysis is to pinpoint the trend of change in the official objectives of Home Economics, in particular that concerning the presentation of gender. Several themes could be generalized from these objectives.

1981	1994 and 2004
1. To encourage the development of a caring attitude to others by promoting an <i>awareness of the needs of the family and of the community.</i>	1. To develop a caring attitude to others by <i>understanding their changing needs throughout their lives.</i>
2. To help pupils understand the principles underlying the choice, the safe and <i>informed use of materials and equipment.</i>	2. To develop <i>personal and communal values</i> in determining priorities for choices.
3. To develop positive attitudes to health.	3. To foster an <i>aesthetic sense</i> and to stimulate ideas of <i>creativity.</i>
4. To give an appreciation to the effects of <i>different social and cultural influences on home life in Hong Kong.</i>	4. To establish a positive attitude towards <i>consumers' rights and responsibilities and protection for consumers.</i>
5. To develop intellectual and <i>aesthetic attitude</i> towards <i>manipulative and creative skills in relation to food, fabric and home making.</i>	5. To acquire the knowledge and to develop the <i>skills required for organization and management of resources.</i>
6. To develop an awareness of <i>design and colour, shape and line.</i>	6. To have an appreciation of social, cultural, economic and technological influences on family and community living.
7. To assist pupils' understanding of themselves in order to be able to establish satisfactory and stable	

relationships as a means of furthering personal development and social competence.	
8. To foster an awareness of the organization and management of the home necessary for the comfort, safety and changing needs of the family.	

Table 5.1. Official Objectives of Home Economics Education in 1981, 1994 and 2004

Source: Curriculum Development Council, 1981; 1994; 2004

Towards Individualistic Development

In 1981, the objective of Home Economics was designated with primary reference to its function for the family. Out of the eight objectives listed above, four of them (objective nos. 1, 4, 5 and 8) were explicitly family-oriented. While these objectives range widely from moral development (objective no. 1), cultural learning (no. 4), cultivation of aesthetic attitude (no. 5), to fostering the awareness of changing family needs (no. 8), all of them nevertheless bore the same underlying familial orientation. In the closing sentences of these objectives, catchphrases such as “home life”, “awareness of the needs of family” and “home-making” could be found. It suggests that however varied the prescribed objectives were, they converged in the ultimate purpose to equip students with the knowledge necessary for contributing to the *family*. “Home Economics”, as its name implies, performs the *function* of

maintaining a harmonious environment within home by teaching students how to manage family life. Our finding thus concurs with the functionalist perspective.

Yet the familial orientation of Home Economics and thereby its function for the family have been deemphasized since 1994. While aesthetic sense, creativity and cultural learning were still mentioned in the objectives of 1994 and 2004, the underlying purpose was altogether different from that of 1981. When comparing the objectives of the two columns in Table 5.1, it could be discerned that the orientation has been changed from a family-based to an individual-based one. For objective no. 1, the cultivation of caring attitude in 1981 was to satisfy the needs of family and community, whereas in 1994 and 2004 it was to understand the changing needs of other people throughout their lives. This change suggests that individual needs are more highly treasured than family values. Such individualistic ethos could also be detected from objective nos. 2 and 4 in 1994 and 2004, where the significance of various human rights as personal values and consumer choices are highlighted.

The change in orientation of curriculum from a familial and functionalistic to an individualistic and humanistic one echoes the general pattern of ideological development in modern society, for which individual is rendered as the basic unit of society. In accordance with this trend, various personal values and individual rights should be respected and protected against the discrimination of human rights. The

curriculum of school subject, which represents the dominant knowledge claims in modern education system, must accommodate to the changing culture. Accordingly Home Economics must be evolved from a distinctively family-oriented subject to one focusing on individual needs and concerns.

Declining Significance of the Transmission of Technical Skill

In 1981, the official objectives of Home Economics set forth a technical image of the subject. Students were expected to learn the technical use of different materials and equipment. From objective nos. 2, 5 and 6, it could be noted that students were expected to acquire the skills and manipulate the equipments relevant to food, fabric and design. Here a functionalistic orientation could be again discerned. As home making is taken as routine and practical in nature, Home Economics should transmit technical knowledge to students, such that they could well perform various house works such as food preparation and sewing. Such technical orientation further reinforced the family-oriented image of the subject in the early 1980's.

Since 1994, however, Home Economics is no longer defined in terms of purely technical skills of home making. The objective of offering trainings on food preparation and design has disappeared. In its place "organization and management of resources" is substituted, as in objective no. 5 in 1994 and 2004. A sense of

rational control is conveyed with such redefinition of the subject, for which home making becomes a professional discipline striving to meet the standards of modern management.

Such redefinition is not, however, limited to the case of Home Economics, but rather common to many disciplines. Business Administration, for instance, is no longer defined in terms of technical skills like typing and book keeping, but rather identified with the professional management of human resources. Geography is no longer simply defined as the knowledge of natural environment, but rather as a discipline concerning the management of natural resources (The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2004). These examples suggest that the knowledge foundation in modern education is changing. The transmission of technical skill gives way to that of rational and systematized knowledge to be the prime objective of education.

All-rounded Development

Although the objectives in the three periods concerned are different, all of them are oriented to the all-rounded development of individual students. Aesthetic senses, creativity, cultural learning and art appreciation have been equally emphasized over time. The balanced development of management knowledge and character training thus constitutes the ultimate objective of the subject. This orientation towards

all-rounded development corresponds to the development of school objectives from the 1970's onwards, which has been analyzed in the previous chapter. It implies that the modern educational claim of all-rounded education not only shapes the formal definition of school objective at the organizational level, but also informs the planning at the curriculum level.

The Insignificance of Gender Factor

Although the objectives stated in 1981 were strongly oriented to family needs, the training of housewife never constitutes the mission of Home Economics. And in 1994 and 2004, the gender factor has become even more insignificant as the focus has been shifted to the communal and societal level. No possible relationship of the subject to gender socialization has been suggested. Those capacities like creativity and aesthetic sense being emphasized are all gender-neutral, such that both male and female students would have virtually the same potential in acquiring them. It further confirms our finding that Home Economics is not tailored to girls as we would have expected.

From the above analysis we could readily note that the knowledge horizon of

Home Economics is ever broadening over the past twenty years of curriculum development. It has been transformed from a family related subject to a socially relevant discipline. It becomes professionalized in adopting the principle of business management in place of technical skill transmission. Together with the persistent emphasis on all-rounded education and de-emphasis on gender factor, Home Economics is redefined as a modern subject oriented to universal participation and training of future citizens. These findings suggest that the stereotype of Home Economics as a feminine and practical subject held by the general public is invalid when measured against the present development of the subject.

5.2 An Analysis of Curriculum Content of Home Economics

The taught topics in Home Economics as prescribed by the official syllabus published by the Curriculum Development Council will be examined in this section. They represent the most authoritative curriculum outlines of the subject for Hong Kong secondary schools to follow. All textbooks are adopting the same outlines in organizing their curriculum contents. Accordingly the presentation of gender in Home Economics at the instructive level could be studied with reference to this syllabus.

As under compulsory education all lower grade students would have the

same chance of studying Home Economics, only the official syllabus for Secondary One to Three will be discussed here. As the 2004 syllabus has not been published, our analysis would only cover the teaching topics of 1981 and 1994. The following table summarizes the major themes in these teaching topics. (The full version of the syllabuses of Home Economics in 1981 and 1994 are attached in Appendix III).

Themes	I. Home Management	II. Needlework, Dress and Design
Professional and Scientific Discipline	A. The Home <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good Grooming - Healthy Environment - Safety in the Home B. Family Living <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food and Nutrition - The Economics of time, labor, fuel and money - Modern Approach to Laundry Work 	A. Equipment B. Design and Colour C. Embroidery and Allied Crafts D. Processes Used in Construction of Garments/Articles E. Use of Commercial Patterns F. Fibers and Fabrics G. Development of Dress Sense
Standardization of Private Life	A. The Home <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decorating and Furnishing the Home B. Family Living <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budgeting and Marketing - Family Relationship 	
Enhancing Social Awareness	C. Community Living	

Table 5.2. Teaching Topics and Major Themes in the Home Economics Curriculum for Secondary One to Three Students in 1981

Themes	I. Home Management	II. Needlework, Dress and Design
Professional and Scientific Discipline	<p>A. Food, Nutrition and Diet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Functions of food - Relationship of Food and Nutrients - Basic Food Groups - Water - Dietary Fiber - Balanced Diet - Food Commodities - Food Preservation - A Study of Nutrients <p>B. Home and Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Healthy Environment - Safety in the Home - Laundry Work - Good Grooming - Health and Fitness 	<p>A. Design and Development of Dress</p> <p>B. Equipment</p> <p>C. Pattern Construction</p> <p>D. Garment Construction</p> <p>E. Textile</p> <p>F. Fibers and Fabrics</p>
Standardization of Private Life	<p>A. Food, Nutrition and Diet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food Preparation and Cooking Techniques - Simple Meal Planning <p>B. Home and Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal Budgeting - Managing Money - Decorating and Furnishing the Home - Accommodation - Healthy Responsibility 	
Enhancing Social Awareness	<p>B. Home and Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consumer Guidance - Consumer Study - Family and Community Living 	

Table 5.3. Teaching Topics and Major Themes in Home Economics Curriculum for Secondary One to Three Students in 1994

From Tables 5.2 and 5.3 we could readily note that the structures of the syllabuses in 1981 and 1994 are basically the same. Both are divided into the two major sections of “Home Management” and “Needlework, Dress and Design”. The teaching topics under each section are also similar and therefore could be put together for the ensuing analysis. Several major themes could be articulated from these topics.

Professional and Scientific Discipline

The curriculum contents in the syllabus of Home Economics further reinforce the professional image of the subject analyzed before. Under the section of “Home Management”, two sub-sections are divided. The first section refers to “Food, Nutrition and Diet”. Under this category, scientific classifications of food commodities and nutrients are introduced, which are also taught in junior secondary Biology. Under the second section, “Laundry work” is conceived not as a dull and routine housework but rather as a specialized work supported by scientific knowledge like Chemistry. The incorporation of scientific knowledge into the subject in both categories implies that Home Economics is professionalized in a way that it is

supplemented by a dominant and legitimated field of knowledge in modern society.

Such professionalism is reinforced as the teaching topics of the subject are related to the training of future elites. From the descriptions under the category of “Needlework, Dress and Design”, it could be seen that needlework does not merely consist in simple sewing, but rather also involve design knowledge. During the three-year course, students of Home Economics would receive a comprehensive training on fashion design, ranging from the learning of theoretical knowledge of body measurement, equipment and types of fibers to the practice of dress and skirt making (Curriculum Development Council, 1981; 1994). The syllabus is designed in a way to prepare students for further studies in Dress and Design at the levels of Hong Kong Certificate of Education and diploma courses in tertiary institution. Accordingly many technical terms in tailoring and design, such as “fastenings”, “opening” and “seam neatening,” would be introduced in the course. Such professionalized teaching package suggests that needlework does not constitute a source of cultural capital for the girls, as in traditional Chinese belief, but rather a profession with career prospect.

“Choice” is a catchword in the syllabus, as in such phrases like “choice, use and care of basic kitchen equipment”, “choice of food commodities in planning a balanced diet” and “choice of appropriate cooking methods for different foods”

(Curriculum Development Council, 1994). These descriptions suggest that doing housework is not arbitrary but rather necessitates rational planning to make the right choice. As science and rationality are the most treasured values in modern society in general and education in particular, Home Economics would legitimize itself in becoming a scientific discipline.

Standardization of Private Life

One of the defining characteristics of a scientific subject is its subjection to standardized rules and procedures. Physics, for instance, has a set of strict and elaborated procedures for conducting experiment. Any violation against these rules and procedures amounts to an invalidity of experiment findings. The syllabus contents of Home Economics, now being modeled upon scientific discipline, also prescribe its own rules and standardized procedures in doing housework.

Cooking techniques is one of the core teaching topics in Home Economics for all secondary classes. In this regard it is interesting to note the differences between the cooking method it teaches and that of an average housewife. Cooking at home is a somewhat casual practice. It is quite unlikely for ordinary people to follow the recipe strictly; rather they mostly do this according to their past experience and personal preferences. For Home Economics students, however, they are required to

follow strictly the detailed procedures stated in the textbooks or prescribed by their teacher (Curriculum Development Council, 1981; 1994). Their performance would be evaluated with regard to how well they follow the procedures. It implies that student could not prepare food in his or her personal style. Besides professionalism, such practice also implies a standardization of private lifestyle. Familial practices are no longer personal and private, but rather subjected to the regulation of standardized rules in much the same way as to those of business corporations and government bureaucracy.

Enhancing Sense of Social Awareness

Home Economics is not, however, only oriented to family needs, but also incorporates communal and societal concern. The category of “Community Living” has been introduced in all secondary Home Economics class syllabuses in 1981 and 1994. Under this category, students would be taught to understand their roles in school, community and society (Curriculum Development Council, 1994). At a higher secondary level a greater diversity of socially relevant values would be introduced, such as being a responsible and wise consumer (Curriculum Development Council, 1981; 1994). The relationship between social institutions like education and family is also impinged upon in the syllabuses. Hence we may see that even

though the title of “Home Economics” would have implied that the subject is exclusively family-oriented, the teaching content at the instructional level has been infused with a certain level of social awareness. Here the inclusion of the social element could be understood as a strategy of school to meet the normative requirement of modern education that students must be prepared to adapt and contribute to the changing society.

Insignificance of Gender Orientation

There is no teaching topic in both the 1981 and 1994 syllabus specifically related to gender socialization in general and the training of future housewives and mothers in particular. The only gender-oriented description was found in the 1981 document. A phrase of “helping mother” was included under the topic of “Family Relationships” (Curriculum Development Committee, 1981). This statement implies that doing housework is still conceived as a female responsibility. But this phrase has disappeared in the 1994 syllabus. Since then, all words employed in the curriculum content are gender-neutral. Home Economics is not a specifically feminine subject, as we would have expected.

The single most significant conclusion that could be yielded from the above

analysis is that at the official level Home Economics is not presented as a “girls’ subject”. Rather it is presented as gender-neutral and professional in nature. This pattern seems to support the neo-institutionalists’ argument that schools generally tend to play down their gender orientation in order to gain legitimacy in modern society. Before offering any definite conclusion, however, it is necessary to examine whether schools are adopting the guiding principles prescribed by the Curriculum Development Council, in particular its de-emphasis on gender, in planning their curriculum.

5.3 Adoption of Home Economics Curriculum at the School Level

In this section various school documents dating from the 1950’s up to 2003 will be examined to gauge the extent to which they agree with official curriculum, in particular its gender-neutral orientation. These documents include school journals and histories. Besides analyzing the curriculum content as presented in these documents, the school descriptions of Home Economics as an extra-curricular activity will also be studied.

Thirteen schools will be investigated. Five of them are girls’ schools, including St. Stephen’s Girls’ College, Pooi To Middle School. Kowloon True Light Middle School, True Light Middle School, True Light Middle School of Hong Kong and

Maryknoll Convent School. The other eight schools are co-educational, which comprise of St. Paul Co-educational College, Baptist Lui Ming Choi Secondary School, Lai Chack Middle School, Kiansu-Chekiang College, St. Stephen College, TWGHs Mrs Fung Wong Fung Ting College, Pui Ying Secondary School and Pui Ying College.

The descriptions of Home Economics among the girls' schools and those among the co-educational schools are summarized respectively in Tables 5.4 and 5.5.

Several major themes will be articulated from these descriptions.

St. Stephen Girls' School (1951-1952)

Theme: Individual Development and Professionalism

In an article of school journal, a teacher of Domestic Science described that the subject is a *science* facilitating the development of *the sense of co-operation* among students and of their *practical skills* in helping house work.

(St. Stephen Girls' School, 1951-1952)

Pooi To Middle School (1958)

Theme: Gender Orientation

An article of school journal stated that *Home Economics is particularly important in girls' schools. Since men are responsible for work and serve as the financial source of the family, women should assist their husband in assuming the responsibility of family work.* Hence schoolgirls should learn how to take care of their families in the future. The content of the subject should therefore include educating children, taking care of basic family needs, as well as family budgeting.

(培道中學, 1958)

The True Light Middle School of Hong Kong (2000)

Theme: Individual Development

The objective of Home Economics Society was to facilitate *the understanding of food culture and health-related knowledge by the students.*

(香港真光中學, 2000)

Maryknoll Convent School (2000)

Theme: Individual Development

The aims of Cookery Club and Needlework Club were to arouse *the interests of students in cooking and needlework, to train their patience and to develop their talents.*

(Maryknoll Convent School, 2000)

Kowloon True Light Middle School (2001)

Theme: Individual Development

The introductory section of the subject reveals that the official curriculum outlines are adopted. Students are expected to learn the principles and techniques of cooking as well as *the Western and Chinese food culture.*

(九龍真光中學, 2001)

Table 5.4. The Descriptions of Home Economics in Five Girls' Schools

St. Paul Co-educational School (1960)

Themes: Gender Orientation and Professionalism

A student wrote an article to discuss the objective of Home Economics. The traditional belief that “women belong to the kitchen” was rejected. Since Home Economics is a scientific discipline, in studying this subject *women would have a chance to acquire the dominant knowledge and thereby achieve gender equality.*

The teaching topics cover the two major areas of *housecraft and cookery, which are tailored for the preparation of HKCEE.* The comment of a teacher on the subject was also quoted in the article, which suggested that the new generation of women should receive formal education and at the same time know how to do “Nu Gong” (女紅).

(聖保羅中學, 1960)

Baptist Lui Ming Choi Secondary School (1979)

Theme: Individual Development

In an issue of school journal, a teacher stated that Home Economics is closely related to everyday life. It is not a simple subject of cooking and sewing, but rather a sophisticated discipline of family management. It is also an essential subject for the *achievement of “all-rounded education”*

(浸信會呂明才中學, 1979)

Baptist Lui Ming Choi Secondary School (1998)

Theme: Gender Orientation

In following the official curriculum, the subject was divided into three main areas: food and nutrition, family living and needlework, dress and design. *Its overall aim is to enhance the adaptability of female students in social life and to cultivate their creativity.* Besides formal education, *Home Economics Society was founded and was open to both male and female students.*

(浸信會呂明才中學,, 1998)

Lai Chack Middle School (1979)

Theme: Gender Orientation

The aim of Home Economics Society was to improve the *cooking techniques of female students.* It also aimed at cultivating the patience and aesthetic sense of students.

(麗澤中學, 1979)

Lai Chack Middle School (2000)

Theme: Professionalism

The aim of Home Economics Society was to endow the students with skills of cooking, needlework and *family management.* It also aimed at cultivating the sense of co-operation among students even outside the class.

(麗澤中學, 2000)

Kiansu-Chekiang College (1988)

Theme: Gender Orientation

In an article introducing Home Economics, it was stated that the curriculum was specifically designed for Secondary One and Two female students. *As women must do housework in their home and kitchen, it was necessary for them to receive relevant training. The course aimed at cultivating the femininity of students, teaching them the skills of doing artwork in leisure, preparing them to help mother at home, and training them to be a good hostess in the future.* Practical and theoretical knowledge were equally stressed.

(蘇浙公學, 1988)

St. Stephen College (1994)

Theme: Gender Orientation and Professionalism

In the anniversary commemoration issue, Home Economics was defined as a practical subject with its objective being the provision of opportunity for students to learn more about food and nutrition, cooking techniques and knowledge of family care. *Although Home Economics was apparently feminine, male students were encouraged to take the course. Practice and theoretical knowledge were equally*

<p><i>stressed.</i></p> <p>(St. Stephen College, 1994)</p>
<p><i>TWGHs Mrs Fung Wong Fung Ting College (1998)</i></p> <p>Theme: Gender Orientation</p> <p>The subject was <i>exclusively for female students.</i> But <i>the Home Economics Society was also open to male students.</i></p> <p>(東華三院馮黃鳳亭中學, 1998)</p>
<p><i>Pui Ying Secondary School (1999)</i></p> <p>Theme: Gender Orientation</p> <p>In the anniversary commemoration issue, Home Economics was defined as a practical and interesting extra-curricular activity. <i>As a feminine subject, “she” was closely related to the daily life of students.</i> The Home Economics Society was aimed at aiding fellow students to lead a healthy and beautiful life.</p> <p>(培英中學, 1999)</p>
<p>Pui Ying College (1999)</p> <p>Theme: Gender Orientation</p> <p>Besides being an extension of formal education, Home Economics Society furnished <i>a channel for male students to receive Home Economics education.</i></p> <p>(培英中學, 1999)</p>

Table 5.5. The Descriptions of Home Economics in Eight Co-Educational Schools

Adoption of Professional and Scientific Curriculum Package

From Tables 5.4 and 5.5 we could readily note that all schools are following the official definition of Home Economics by Curriculum Development Council. The school documents of several schools have explicitly expressed their adherence to the definition of the subject as a scientific discipline (St. Paul Co-educational College, 1960; St. Stephen's College, 1994). They concur that the subject does not simply concern cooking and sewing techniques; rather it is essentially a discipline of home management (浸信會呂明才中學, 1979).

This general consensus concerning the status of Home Economics began to emerge in the early twentieth century, when True Light Girls' School proposed that Home Economics should not be confused with traditional Chinese "Nu Gong" (女紅); rather it involved a rational and scientific training that helped to socialize students into the role of modern mothers and housewives (梁家麟, 2002). By the time there was still no official definition and syllabus of Home Economics in Hong Kong. Home Economics was originally a Western subject, which had long been institutionalized in Western countries. As most girls' schools at that time were established by foreign missionaries, the Western definition of the subject was completely adopted in Hong Kong. As I have mentioned in the previous chapter, woman education had not been institutionalized and girls' schools were still uncommon in the early twentieth century. The adoption of Home Economics as a Western subject thus highlighted the modern and rational orientation of girls' schools and in this way granted them with legitimacy.

From that period onwards the Western definition of Home Economics as scientific and comprehensive has been adopted by other girls' school like St. Stephen's Girls' School as well as the co-educational schools mentioned above. In responding to the institutional environment, all schools have placed an equal emphasis on theory and practice. Accordingly much efforts and resources have been invested

by the schools in building a special classroom with different equipments for cooking and sewing. It is to ensure that students could finish their class tasks like cooking and crafting independently (蘇浙公學, 1988). This practice is similar to the experimentation in science subjects like physics and chemistry. A scientific orientation is thus implicit here.

Besides in-class teaching other activities are also organized. For instance, St. Stephen's Girls' Schools sent their students to a public clinic during the summer vacation to have a real practice on baby caring (St. Stephen's Girls' School, 1952-1953). These activities reveal that the schools do believe that Home Economics is a practical knowledge worthy of being invested more resources to provide opportunities for students to apply the knowledge they have learnt in class. The subject is not merely an extra-curricular activity or interest; rather it is a professional discipline deserving more attention and teaching effort.

Individual Development

All schools have expressed a strong orientation to the individual development of students. For them, Home Economics is not merely a discipline training students into domestic home maker, but rather consists in a comprehensive training of various capacities and mentalities. For instance, the cultivation of aesthetic sense, sense of

co-operation and patience are frequently mentioned. (浸信會呂明才中學, 1979; 麗澤中學, 2000; Maryknoll Convent School, 2000). In the previous section of “Official Educational Objectives of Home Economics”, we have noted that the official objective of the subject has moved away from family matters towards the individual development of students. The findings here further confirm that schools are accommodating to this trend by placing the growth and personal development of students at the center in actual teaching contents.

Besides being taught as a formal subject, Home Economics has also become an extra-curricular activity in many schools. Through cooking and art making in leisure, students are expected to develop their aesthetic sense and liberal attitudes towards different cultures, in particular food culture (香港真光中學, 2000; 九龍真光中學, 2001). It suggests that doing housework, cooking and sewing are no longer routine and repetitious works; rather they have become middle-class leisure. By studying Home Economics, it is presumed that students could cultivate their personal taste and adopt a more “leisurely” lifestyle (培英中學, 1999). This new definition could further enhance the value of Home Economics in modern Hong Kong society, where personal taste and leisure lifestyle become highly treasured.

Sense of Gender Orientation

Although all schools have adopted Home Economics as a professional and scientific discipline, in legitimating the subject their grounds are essentially gender-based. “Functional” arguments were utilized by Pooi To Middle School and Kiansu-Chekinag College to justify the significance of Home Economics. An article in the school journal of Pooi To Middle School in 1958 claimed that Home Economics is particularly important in girls’ schools, for women have to assume the responsibility of managing home and taking care of family members whereas their husbands are responsible for working outside and support the family financially (培道中學, 1958). On the other hand, Kiansu-Chekiang College set forth a similar justification in 1988: since women must do housework at home and kitchen, it is necessary for them to receive relevant training (蘇浙公學, 1988). Many wordings loaded with gender stereotypes, such as “femininity” (淑女氣質) and “hostess training” (女主人的培訓), were employed to justify the provision of Home Economics (蘇浙公學, 1988:82)². The traditional image of women as housewives thus permeates all these narratives.

Besides the functional argument, a feminist point of view has also been advanced in the descriptions of some school. A student from St. Paul Co-educational School contended that studying Home Economics was not to adhere to the gender stereotype

of women as housewives, but rather to break it and fight for gender equality (聖保羅中學, 1960). As a new generation of women, female students should be well-educated and at the same time well-equipped with the knowledge of family care and management. The recurrent reference by the author to the credential value of the subject, which could eventually lead to the Hong Kong Certificate of Education, also implied that women were supposedly to be trained into professional homemakers rather than conventional housewives (聖保羅中學, 1960). A feminist urge to break down gender stereotypes was evident here.

Hence while these functional and feminist arguments may differ with each other in various aspects, they are nevertheless common in isolating female students as the major target of the provision of Home Economics education. Here it is important to note that two out of the three schools that employed gender-based arguments to legitimate the subject are co-educational. This finding is significant as co-education is supposed to contribute to an egalitarian institutional environment, where male and female students could enjoy the same educational opportunities and resources. In the United States a gender-based justification and practice would have violated the principle of equal opportunities of modern education and even the legislation of Title IX. It implied that that the egalitarian principle of co-education has not been fully institutionalized in Hong Kong.

Although the gender-based justification for Home Economics was firstly proposed at least twenty years ago, the recent description of the subject remains gender-oriented. Pui Ying Secondary School, for instance, employed the pronoun “she” (她) to represent Home Economics (培英中學, 1999:224)³. Other schools like Baptist Lui Ming Choi Secondary School also employed the Chinese female pronoun “their” (她們) to indicate that only female students were taking the course (浸信會呂明才中學, 1998:59)⁴. When feminine descriptions have been employed by schools from 1998 onwards, the gender-neutral image of the subject has already been presented at the official level. It implies that schools do not follow strictly the official definition of the subject as gender-neutral.

Among the co-educational schools studied above, only St. Stephen College allowed male students to study Home Economics. Other co-educational schools merely allowed their male students to join the Home Economics Society as an extra-curricular activity club (東華三院馮黃鳳亭中學, 1998; 培英中學, 1999; 浸信會呂明才中學, 1998). Although this allowance does indicate a loosening hold of traditional gender stereotypes, the exclusion of boys from the formal learning of Home Economics indicates that female students are still supposed to be more suitable candidates of professional homemaker.

All the above gender-oriented descriptions and practices foster a feminine image

of Home Economics at the school level. While the gender-factor is totally absent in the official definition, schools are nevertheless adopting a gendered perspective in presenting and organizing the subject curriculum. The discrepancy between the presentations of Home Economics at the institutional and school levels will be discussed in the following section.

5.4 Recapitulation and Discussion

The preceding analysis of the official educational objectives, teaching topics and school presentation of Home Economics demonstrate that the subject is not, as would have been commonly expected, defined as a gender-oriented subject. Instead of articulating a distinctive gender identity, Home Economics generally focuses on the all-rounded development of individual students. This research finding is similar to that of Ramirez and Cha, which suggested that there is a modern, global trend of de-emphasizing the gender factor in educational policies and practices (Ramirez and Cha, 1990). In the following the perspective of neo-institutionalism will be adopted to account for the presentation of Home Economics as a modern and gender-neutral subject.

According to the modernist ideology, the progress of modern society depends greatly on the contribution of every individual. Accordingly individual becomes the

major component of the new institutional frame. In order to attain the modern goal of progress, individual should be “rational, purposive and empowered to act with autonomy and competence in the new universalistic system” (Boli, Ramirez and Meyer, 1985). Drawing on neo-institutionalists’ theory, society becomes a rational and purposive project that is committed to the achievement of equality and secular progress (Boli, Ramirez and Meyer, 1985). The institutionalization of rationality, however, is not only evident in complex organization and governmental bureaucracy, where standardized rules and norms prevail. The process is also extended to the personal lifestyle of individuals, such that different standards are evolved to govern this supposedly private sphere. One example is the standard of “balanced diet”, which has come to define the amount and types of food that we should intake. Another example is “consumer rights”, which presuppose a consumer to stay alert and rational in shopping. If a person does not follow these standards, he or she will be labeled as irrational.

As an institution, education is functional in “legitimizing theory of knowledge”, or in other words defining certain knowledge as authoritative in society (Meyer, 1977). The standardization of private life thus necessitates the organization and legitimation of a discipline that is functional at educating the coming generation to conduct their lives rationally. The provision of Home Economics is thus legitimated on the basis

of this rationale. Though it is named as “Home Economics”, its knowledge is not merely confined to domestic matters. Rather it is a comprehensive discipline that incorporates virtually every aspect of individual life, ranging from basic needs (such as food preparation and clothing) through familial and student roles to one’s relationship with the broader community and society (Curriculum Development Council, 1980; 1994; 2004).

The precise and systematic classification of its subject matters implies that Home Economics is not merely functional in training technical homemakers, but rather constitutes a response of the education system to the modern ideology of rationalization and standardization of individual lives. In order to distinguish it from routine housework, Home economics is supplemented with authoritative knowledge like science and design as its disciplinary foundation. The conventional wisdom of home caring shared by the previous generations is discarded as irrational. As modern society is highly individualistic, Home Economics is accordingly student-oriented, which places an extraordinary emphasis on the personal exploration of knowledge and its practices by individual students. The goal is to prepare the students to solve every problem they may encounter in real life. Home Economics thus become the knowledge of the management of individual lifestyle in all arenas.

The insignificance of gender factor is thus followed from the fact that Home

Economics places its concern on the rational management of private lives in modern society rather than gender differentiation. While gender inequality may persist in reality, the norm of gender equality is highly institutionalized, for which men and women should have the same status and right in the modern world. Accordingly women should no longer be confined within home. The Equal Opportunity Council in Hong Kong represents the institutionalization of this norm. Its role is to inspect various institutions and organizations in order to ensure that women and men are enjoying the same opportunities in all social arenas such as education and work. In this way, if the objective of a subject is presented explicitly as the training of female students into mothers and housewives, it will be taken as “gender discrimination”. Its legitimacy will then be lost, as this claim is not isomorphic with the modern ideology of egalitarianism. Hence the official definitions of Home Economics never characterize it as a “girl’s subject”; rather all expressions employed in the objectives and syllabus of the subject are gender-neutral.

Besides legitimating knowledge, education also functions to define the “theory of personnel” in modern society (Meyer, 1977). It offers a precise definition and classification of elites by distributing different credentials (Meyer, 1977). Under the modern and gender-neutral image of Home Economics, the kind of personnel created is not naive housewives, but rather professional and rational homemakers. With the

credential in hand, graduates are supposed to become rational actors in the field of home management. Such capacity is not restricted to either sex: insofar as a person is sufficiently rational and competent, he or she could be a professional and successful home-maker. The subject is thus legitimated exclusively by its precise definition of knowledge and classification of personnel, but not its effort to furnish gender role socialization. With the tight coupling of professionalism with the insignificance of gender factor, Home Economics has evolved from an old-fashioned discipline to a modern subject.

Although Home Economics is presented as gender-neutral at the official level, gender orientation does exist in the presentation at the school level. Our previous analysis reveals that most schools in Hong Kong organize and plan the teaching of Home Economics in a gendered way. Only girls are allowed to take the course in co-educational schools; whereas in boys' schools it is offered at all (蘇浙公學, 1988; 東華三院馮黃鳳亭中學, 1998; 培英中學, 1999; 浸信會呂明才中學, 1998). If gender concern of Home Economics is totally absent, the admission of both male and female students should be the rule. But in practice, the course is compulsory for most female students whereas it is not open to male students. Such discrepancy indicates the tension between the modern ideology of equal opportunity and the actual gender expectations in Hong Kong.

In the early twentieth century the differentiation of gender roles was clear-cut, such that school subjects were designed and structured on the basis of gender difference. To recall one of the findings of our previous analysis, by the time Home Economics was planned to train future mothers and housewives, whereas the subjects provided in boys' schools were aimed at training elites for government or business positions (皇仁書院舊生會, 1987). As soon as mass education emerged, however, Hong Kong has evolved into a modern society in which equality and universal participation are valued. The progress of society is supposed to depend on the contribution of every single individual rather than certain social categories like men. Accordingly gender no longer constitutes a rationale for knowledge and thereby a source of legitimacy at the institutional level. Rather its significance must be played down in formal presentation in order to maintain the survival of the school. In this way Home Economics, which has been taken for granted as gender-oriented, must be presented as a rational, professional, and after all gender-neutral subject.

Though Hong Kong has evolved into a modern society, certain traditional stereotypes concerning gender roles still remain. For instance, most people in Hong Kong still believe that women should be responsible for doing housework and taking care of children after marriage. The skills and knowledge taught in Home Economics, such as meal preparation, laundry work and house cleaning are expected

to be borne by housewives. In this sense Home Economics assumes to a certain extent the responsibility of preparing female students for home care in the future. But as gender concern cannot be presented at the institutional level, to take on a gendered way of organizing the subject at the school level while adopting official educational claims thus becomes a viable strategy for schools to maintain its traditional function of gender socialization as well as its modern legitimacy. In requiring female students to study Home Economics, the function of socializing future housewives could be maintained. At the same time, as the syllabus still follows the official definitions, the institutional rules are not broken and hence the discipline remains legitimated.

For neo-institutionalism the discrepancy between institutional norms and organizational practices is known as “decoupling”. It refers to the strategy for organization to maintain both the efficiency of its work routine as well as its legitimacy at the institutional level when there is contradiction between institutionalized rules and actual practice (Meyer and Rowan, 1977). The above finding suggests that “decoupling” occurs for the case of Home Economics in Hong Kong, as the discipline is encountering the dilemma between espousing the modern claims of gender equality and adhering to the traditional belief concerning gender differentiation in society. In order to satisfy both functional need and modern norm,

the organization of the subject in schools is decoupled from the institutional level by utilizing a gendered mode of presentation.

It is important to note that the assertion that “decoupling” occurs in the case of Home Economics is tentative rather than conclusive. Further research is necessitated in order to verify the existence of such phenomenon in the real schooling process. Participant observation in Home Economics classes should be attempted to examine whether teachers are actually transmitting gendered messages to students. The actual ways by which schools promote Home Economics should also be considered to see whether the under-enrolment of male students in these classes is a result of the compulsion and direct interference of schools or the voluntary decision of the students themselves. With a preliminary analysis of the restructuring of gender factor from being a source of legitimation for knowledge to a concealed focus in performing social functions, this study paves the way for utilizing the concept of “decoupling” in further curriculum study of Home Economics.

To recapitulate, the curriculum analysis in this chapter has attempted to answer our third empirical question, concerning whether the curriculum in Hong Kong is gender-oriented. Although Home Economics is expected to be a “girls’ subject”, gender socialization is not emphasized in the official presentation of its objectives.

The traditional stereotypes of female role have not been mentioned either. These findings suggest that Hong Kong education, in being individualistic and egalitarian, tends to implement the universalistic principle of modern education rather than responding to the functional need of gender socialization or the existing gender inequality in society, as functionalists or conflict theorists would have suggested.

¹ The name of the organization, Curriculum Development Committee, was found in the curriculum guidelines published in 1975 and 1981. Starting from 1994, the name of Curriculum Development Council has been used until now.

² The original wordings are 「培養淑女氣質」、「當一個稱職的女主人」。

³ The original version is 「家政組是一個富有趣味而又實用課外活動，“她”與我們的起居飲食有莫大的關係。」

⁴ The original version is 「透過生活常識的介紹幫助同學們建立個人對家庭的責任感，以增強“她們”適應社會的能力。」

Chapter 6 Conclusion

6.1 Summary of Research Results

My major attempt in this study is to probe into the presentation of gender in Hong Kong education from the early twentieth century up to 2003. The following research question has been addressed: is the organization of schooling in Hong Kong more responsive to the indigenous need of gender differentiation or to the global trend towards egalitarianism? In tackling this question, my analysis has been couched at both the schools' and the curriculum levels. At the former level, three types of school, that is boys', girls' and co-educational schools, have been differentiated. At the latter level, the curriculum of a gender-oriented subject, Home Economics, has been scrutinized.

The educational claims implicit in the mission statements and curriculum objectives of different schools have been classified and examined. Here my data source consists in the school mission statements recorded in *Secondary School Prospectus 2002-2003* published by Hong Kong (China) Commission on Home-School Co-operation, the school journals and histories of various schools, as well as the official syllabus of Home Economics published by Curriculum Development Council. By pinpointing the major educational claims manifested at both the school and curriculum level, my research question concerning the relative

significance of gender presentation in Hong Kong education could be tackled.

Both the quantitative and qualitative analyses of educational claims and curriculum objectives reveal that gender orientation has been insignificant in Hong Kong education. For single-sex schools, the socialization of a particular gender role is not, somewhat unexpectedly, the primary concern. Secondary schools in Hong Kong have a general tendency to play down gender factor in their educational claims. Rather “modern education attributes”, such as the promotion of “progressive education model” and “student-centered education”, are emphasized among single-sex and co-educational schools.

Similar findings are obtained in our analysis of the syllabus of Home Economics. With reference to the functionalist assumption that the knowledge transmitted in school is functional for the satisfaction of societal needs, my research proceeds further from the analysis of school mission statement to that of curriculum, which constitutes the core element in the schooling process. In this vein Home Economics is expected to be functional in facilitating the socialization of woman role. This apparently female-oriented subject does not, however, stress the importance of gender at the curriculum level. In much the same pattern as the educational claims in school mission statements, here the notions of all-rounded development of individual students and professionalism were recurrent in the curriculum. For our

research question, the two levels of analysis altogether suggest that Hong Kong education tends to follow the worldwide egalitarian standard instead of the indigenous concern with gendered education.

6.2 Theoretical Implications

Although functionalism and conflict theory differ in their judgments on whether gender differentiation in society is functional or exploitative in nature, both perspectives share the assumption that the social structure of gender roles do exert considerable impact over schooling. All schools, in particular the single-sex one, are expected to play a crucial part in socializing students of different sexes into their respective gender roles. The educational situation in Hong Kong in the early twentieth century, when formal education was beginning to be institutionalized, could be adequately explained in terms of this common framework. As the roles of man and woman were unambiguously defined in terms of the Chinese tradition, there was a strong and prevalent orientation of the schools to offer gendered education.

The educational objectives and curriculum planning of boys' schools during the early twentieth century were highly functional. As men were expected to fill in the higher positions in society, schools were generally oriented to equip male students with the knowledge required in their future works. On the other hand, the

educational model of girls' schools was essentially feminine. As Western missionaries believed that the living condition of Chinese women must be improved, the girls' schools they found were more eager to train and socialize female students into independent women. Such notion became even more prevalent after the War, when girls' schools were mainly oriented to the achievement of "modern womanhood". As feminist movements were becoming more influential all over the world in the mid-twentieth century, girls' schools were necessarily caught within this modern trend towards gender equality in being an institution with clearly defined gender identity.

Co-educational schools in Hong Kong began to emerge in the late 1950's. Ever since the 1960's, both single-sex and co-educational schools have come to pursue a common objective of training *individual* students. Previously existent gender orientation, in particular that of girls' schools, has eventually vanished. At this juncture the neo-institutionalist perspective can offer an adequate explanation to this phenomenon. Hong Kong education, as a modern education system, is organized around modern ideologies, in particular those of justice and equal opportunity (Ramirez, 1997). According to these two institutionalized values, every individual should be granted an equal opportunity to education, such that modern education should not exhibit any bias towards students of particular gender, race or

class background (Boli, Ramirez and Meyer, 1985). In this regard the fading away of gender factor in school objectives and curriculum planning in Hong Kong could be taken as an accommodation to the global egalitarian culture. The institutionalization of a gender-neutral educational system thus implies that Hong Kong has been transformed from a traditional, gender-biased society to a modern, globalizing one. The practice of sex segregation without single-sex schools is just a physical accommodation. The convergence of single-sex and co-educational schools towards this trend furnishes them with legitimation.

As the official representation of school objectives and curriculum directions constitute the major legitimating grounds for Hong Kong education, the major argument of neo-institutionalism with regard to modern education system could be supported even if the schooling process is not examined. At any rate, my research expands the intellectual enquiry in the field of sociology of education by proposing neo-institutionalism as a viable alternative paradigm alongside functionalism and conflict theory in unraveling the relationship between gender and education.

6.3 Limitations

The major limitation of my research is its exclusive focus on the case of Hong Kong in analyzing the presentation of gender identity in education. To verify

the neo-institutionalist argument concerning the global trend of declining significance of gender orientation in education, a comparative study of national education systems should be further attempted to see whether these different nations did converge towards the global cultural model of egalitarianism, as in the case of Hong Kong.

Another limitation of this research resides in the limited sample size of secondary schools in the part of historical and qualitative analysis. Since the period under investigation lasts for nearly a century, not every school could provide sufficient details on their educational claims at different points of time. Owing to the unavailability of data sources, only about ten schools in each type of schools could be sampled. This limitation thus renders my analysis exclusively focused upon those schools with a long history and high reputation.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Research

With reference to the limitation outlined above, a research that could be further conducted consists in a cross-national analysis of the diffusion of the global cultural model of egalitarianism. Concerning the issue of gender and education, the research design adopted in this study could be readily applied to cross-national analysis. School objectives and orientation of curriculum planning could be compared to verify whether gender concern is incorporated differently among different nations.

One of my research findings point out that Hong Kong education is generally oriented to the academic achievement of students. As my research is not purported to inquire about educational effectiveness, the implication of this finding is not further explored. This problem focus could, however, constitute the reference point in the cross-national analysis of Asian countries like Japan, Singapore and Taiwan, where the ethos of academic achievement is strong. Besides investigating the relationship between gender and education, the educational ideology shared by the Asian countries would be an interesting topic. While existing researches on the implicit gender orientation of educational systems mainly refer to the Western nations, a comparative study of Asian educational systems would be the first meaningful step in expanding the knowledge horizon of the sociology of education (Ramirez and Cha, 1990).

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Appendix I Coding Scheme

The following table is the coding scheme adopted when examining the mission statements of secondary schools.

Table I: Coding Scheme

Categories of Educational Claims	Sub-categoriees	Examples/ Mentions of Mission Statements
Gender Orientation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emphasis on schools' own gender identity 2. Achievement of gender equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Men's education; ● Women's education; ● Equal opportunity between sexes
Religious Orientation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Emphasize the religious belief during schooling process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Christianity; ● Catholicity; ● Buddhism; ● Or Other Religions
Modern Education Attributes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student-centered Education 2. Comprehensive and progressive educational model 3. Spiritual model of cultural interdependence 4. Teacher Professionalism 5. Parent-school Partnership 6. Individual development at global level 7. Citizenship development at global level 8. Cultivation of global culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All-rounded education; ● Exploration to Global Culture
Character and Moral Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emphasize the development of individual students' morality, responsibility, character training and social skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Responsibility ● Self-disciplined; ● Politeness
Culture Specific Attributes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emphasis on the Confucian model 2. Individual development at self, family, school, community, societal and national level 3. Citizenship development at 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Confucian educational model which emphasizes moral, intellectual, physical, social and aesthetic education. (德智體群美); ● Cultivation of local, Chinese culture; ● Senses of social and national

	<p>community, societal and national level</p> <p>4. Cultivation of local, Chinese or Western Culture</p>	contribution
Skills Oriented/Cognitive Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information technology 2. Science and mathematical subjects 3. Art subjects 4. Language proficiency 5. Technical subjects 6. Commercial subjects 7. General Education 8. Career Development 	
Others		

Appendix II

The following table records the proportion of every educational claims included in the coding scheme on the schools' missionary statements among secondary schools in Hong Kong.

Table II: The Proportion of Educational Claims on the Schools' Missionary Statements among Single-Sex and Co-educational Schools in Hong Kong 2003 (Sub-categories included)

Educational Claims	Boys' Schools (n: 41)	Girls' Schools (n: 41)	Co-educational Schools (n: 50)
Gender Orientation	0.27	2.01	0.45
- Emphasize schools' own gender identity	0.27	2.01	0
- Pay equal attention to the schooling of both boys and girls	0	0	0.45
Religious Orientation	11.76	17.65	10.58
Modern Education Attributes	35.96	36.31	49.21
- Student-Centered Education	18.8	12.77	19.39
- Comprehensive and progressive education model	11.37	16.61	16.54
- Spiritual model of cultural interdependence	3.26	4.95	3.6
- Teacher Professionalism	0	0	3.57
- Parent-school Partnership	2.17	0	5.65
- Individual development at global level	0.36	1.71	0.18
- Citizenship development at global level	0	0.27	0.13
- Cultivation of global culture	0	0	0.15
Character and Moral Training	25.38	18.99	12.88

Cultural Attributes	15.76	19.84	15.59
- The Confucian model	5.30	3.79	1.62
- Individual development at self, family, school, community, societal and national level	5.70	10.42	11.2
- Citizenship development at community, societal and national level	3.95	4.86	2.77
- Cultivation of local, Chinese or Western Culture	0.81	0.77	0
Subject-based Teaching	7.44	3.12	7.00
- Information Technology	2.08	1.37	1.16
- Science and Mathematics	0.46	0	0.15
- Art Subjects	1.53	0.68	0.45
- Language Proficiency	2.45	1.07	3.57
- Technical Subjects	0.46	0	0.41
- Commercial Subjects	0.46	0	0.11
- General Education	0	0	0.11
-Career Development	0	0	1.04
Others	3.26	0	3.87
Total	99.83	97.92	99.58

Appendix III

The attached pages are the official syllabus of Home Economics printed by Curriculum Development Council in 1981 and 1994 respectively.

HOME ECONOMICS

Home Economics should be an essential part of general education because it provides a vital contribution to the school curriculum with its concern for the personal development of the individual and for family and community living. It is intended that junior secondary pupils should follow a broad and general training in all aspects of the subject. At this level, more emphasis should be placed on practical work, and theory work should be kept to a minimum. Throughout the course pupils should be given opportunities to enquire, to analyse, to explore, to be active, to create and to use their initiative. Home Economics should be a lively subject to teach, full of interest and experiment.

The three-year course, although complete in itself, also provides a base for further study at senior secondary level.

At senior secondary level, pupils may take either Home Economics, and/or Needlework/Dress, OR Dressmaking up to Hong Kong Certificate of Education level.

AIMS OF HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION FOR SECONDARY FORMS

1. To encourage the development of a caring attitude to others by promoting an awareness of the needs of the family and of the community.
2. To help pupils to understand the principles underlying the choice, and the safe and informed use, of materials and equipment.
3. To develop positive attitudes to health.
4. To give an appreciation to the effects of different social and cultural influences on home life in Hong Kong.
5. To develop intellectual and aesthetic attitudes towards manipulative and creative skills in relation to food, fabric and home-making.
6. To develop an awareness of design and colour, shape and line.
7. To assist pupils' understanding of themselves in order to be able to establish satisfactory and stable relationships as a means of furthering personal development and social competence.
8. To foster an awareness of the organization and management of the home necessary for the comfort, safety and changing needs of the family.

SYLLABUS FOR HOME ECONOMICS FORMS I TO III

I. HOME MANAGEMENT

A. THE HOME

- (i) Good grooming
hygiene and personal cleanliness of self and belongings.
- (ii) Healthy environment
importance of clean surroundings;
ventilation and lighting;
disposal of refuse;
daily, weekly and special cleaning of bedroom,
living area, kitchen and bathroom;
choice, care and use of basic equipment and appliances;
choice and use of suitable cleaning agents;
care and cleaning of various types of surfaces commonly used;
control of household pests.
- (iii) Decorating and furnishing the home
simple home decoration;
furniture – choice and arrangement;
flower arrangements;
soft furnishings;
floor coverings – choice and care;
simple household repairs.
- (iv) Safety in the home
planning, equipping and running the home for safety;
kitchen hygiene;
simple first aid.

B. FAMILY LIVING

- (i) Food and nutrition
simple nutrition – function of food,
basic food groups,
balanced diet;
basic cookery processes and principles;
simple meal planning including foods for special occasions;
preparation and correct methods of serving various types of meals for
the family;
use of convenience foods;
storage of food.

- (ii) Modern approach to laundrywork
laundry equipment – choice, care and use;
washing products – types, costs and use;
knowledge of fabrics – treatment of fabrics requiring special care;
the family wash;
simple stain removal;
storing clothes;
home/commercial laundering;
simple mending.
- (iii) Economy of time, labour, fuel and money
planned routine;
time and motion study;
simple kitchen planning;
labour saving devices;
good working habits;
fuel-cost and usage.
- (iv) Budgeting and marketing
family budgets;
shopping and spending;
ways of saving money;
credit and hire purchase;
keeping accounts;
value for money.
- (v) Consumer guidance
weights and measures;
local consumer organizations;
consumer protection;
labels and descriptions.
- (vi) Family relationships
you and the family;
understanding others;
looking after others;
sharing responsibilities.

C. COMMUNITY LIVING

- the place of the young adult in the community;
ways of serving others;
responsibility;
social behaviour;
an awareness of the social and welfare services available to meet family
needs;
the use of leisure – club activities, hobbies.

II. NEEDLEWORK/DRESS

A. Equipment

use, care and maintenance of tools and sewing equipment;
use of commercial aids.

B. Design and Colour

C. Embroidery and Allied Crafts

basic sewing and embroidery stitches;
machine embroidery;
knitting, etc.

D. Processes Used in Construction of Garments/Articles

seams and seam finishes;
controlling fullness;
treatment of raw edges – facings, binding and hems;
fastenings and openings;
collars and cuffs;
sleeves;
waistband;
pockets;
trimmings and decorations.

E. Use of Commercial Patterns

use of simple patterns;
simple adaptation and adjustment;
layout of pattern pieces;
cutting out including cutting special fabrics such as checked, striped,
etc.

F. Fibres and Fabrics

elementary knowledge of natural and man-made fibres;
properties related to wear and handling;
varieties in current use;
study of texture, colour and design.

G. Development of Dress Sense

good grooming;
style, colour and fabric for individual needs;
wardrobe planning and budgeting;
choice of correct dress accessories;
present fashion trends.

H. Household Sewing and Repairs

mending and darning;
cushion covers and curtain making;
household linen.

INTRODUCTION

Home Economics should be an essential part of general education because it provides a vital contribution to the school common core curriculum with its concern for the personal development of an individual, in the family and within the community. It is an integrated field of study and it correlates with other subjects such as science, social studies and art. Home Economics should be a lively subject to teach with interesting coverage of current issues relating to our cultural, social and economic changes. Throughout the course, pupils should be given opportunities to enquire, to analyse, to explore, to experiment, to create and to use their initiatives.

It is intended that junior secondary pupils should follow a broad and general training in all aspects of the subject. At this level, equal emphasis should be placed on theory and practical. The three-year course, although complete in itself, also provides a base for further study at senior secondary level.

By senior secondary level, pupils will normally have already acquired the basic knowledge, concepts and manipulative skills of the subject in Secondary 1 to Secondary 3 common core curriculum. They may select the Food, Home and Family and the Dress and Design syllabuses leading to Hong Kong Certificate of Education.

AIMS OF HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION

1. To develop a caring attitude to others by understanding their changing needs throughout their lives.
2. To develop personal and communal values in determining priorities for choices.
3. To foster an aesthetic sense and to stimulate ideas of creativity.
4. To establish a positive attitude towards consumers' rights and responsibilities and protection for consumers.
5. To acquire the knowledge and to develop the skills required for organization and management of resources.
6. To have an appreciation of social, cultural, economic and technological influences on family and community living.

SYLLABUS FOR HOME ECONOMICS

Secondary 1

Home Management

Topics

- I. Food, Nutrition and Diet
 1. Functions of food
 2. Relationship of food and nutrients
 3. Basic food groups
 4. Water
 5. Dietary fibre
 6. Balanced diet
 7. Food commodities

Explanatory Notes

Body-building foods, energy-giving foods and protective foods.
 Functions and sources.
 Functions and sources.
 Functions and sources.
 The importance of balanced diet.

Nutritive value, types and storage of the following:

- (a) Milk
- (b) Eggs
- (c) Meat
- (d) Fish
- (e) Soya bean products
- (f) Vegetables
- (g) Fruits
- (h) Cereals

Use these food commodities to prepare simple dishes and meals.

8. Food preparation and cooking techniques

Choice, use and care of basic kitchen equipment.

Wise use of time and labour saving kitchen gadgets.

Basic techniques: slicing, shredding, dicing, chopping, mincing, blending and dough making.

Cooking methods:

Moist method: boiling and steaming.

Dry method: grilling, stir frying and shallow frying.

Topics

9. Simple meal planning

Explanatory Notes

Beverages, sweet and savoury snacks, desserts.

Chinese and Western styles: breakfast, one-course meal and simple lunch.

Simple garnishes and decoration.

Correct serving of all dishes and meals.

Good table manners and good eating habits.

II. Home and Family

1. Healthy environment

Importance of cleanliness, good ventilation and lighting.

Daily cleaning of bedroom and bathroom.

Choice, use and care of basic cleaning equipment.

Choice and use of common cleaning agents.

Common causes of accidents.

Prevention of accidents.

Care and cleaning of personal clothing.

Pressing and ironing of clothes.

Basic knowledge of care labels.

Choice and use of washing products, e.g. washing powder, biological washing powder, liquid detergent, bleach, fabric conditioner, starch, etc.

Spending one's pocket money.

Ways of saving money: savings account.

Consumers' rights and responsibilities.

Weights and measures.

Wise shopping for oneself.

Personal hygiene.

Care of personal belongings.

Courtesy and manners.

<i>Topics</i>	<i>Explanatory Notes</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Explanatory Notes</i>
7. Health and fitness	Physical changes in the body during adolescence.	2. Basic block patterns	Drafting of the skirt block.
8. Family and community living	Importance of physical fitness. Types of family: nuclear family, extended family and single parent family. Your roles and duties in the family and school.	3. Pattern specifications	Fitting line, cutting line, balance mark, straight grain, place on fold, centre front (C.F.) and centre back (C.B.) lines, name of pattern pieces, number of pieces to be cut and other relevant specifications, e.g. fastening and fullness arrangement.
		4. Pattern styling	Skirt, e.g. circular, wrap, straight, gather, etc.
		IV. Garment Construction	
<i>Needlework, Dress and Design</i>		1. General Preparation	Preparation of fabric, e.g. pressing, preshrinking. Correct ways of laying out, cutting out and marking.
I. Design and Development of Dress Sense	Primary colour and secondary colour. Colour value. Appreciation of figure form. Simple fabric design, e.g. plain, prints, stripes, etc. Appreciation of forms and shapes. Use of forms and shapes on figure. Choice of one's clothing for different activities.	2. Stitches	Tacking, running, back, over sewing, hemming, blanket and chain. Straight machine-stitch. Plain seam.
1. Colour		3. Seam and seam neatening	Darts, casing and gathers. Narrow and wide hem. Straight and curved hem.
2. Figure drawing		4. Disposal of fullness	Button, tapes, hook and bar, hook and eye. Semi-concealed zip.
3. Fabric		5. Treatment of raw edges	Casing for elastic or drawstring and waistband. Patch Pocket.
4. Design concept		6. Fastenings	Lace. Decorative extras, e.g. appliqué, hand embroidery, etc.
5. Dress sense and wardrobe planning		7. Opening	Classification of fibres: (a) natural—vegetable and animal; (b) man-made—regenerated and synthetic.
II. Equipment		8. Waist finishes	A simple study of vegetable fibres: cotton and linen. Choice and care of cotton and linen fabrics.
1. Sewing equipment	Small equipment: cutting out scissors, pinking shears, tape measure, thimble, pins, needles (betweens, sharps), thread, seam ripper, tracing paper, tracing wheel and pin cushion. Choice, use and care of small equipment. Sewing machine: Types: treadle and electric. Uses: threading and straight stitching. Use and care of sewing machines.	9. Pocket	
		10. Trimming and decoration	
2. Pressing equipment	Sprinkler, dry iron and ironing board.	V. Textile	
III. Pattern Construction		1. Fibres	
1. Body measurements	Accurate measurements of waist, hips, waist to hip and skirt length (waist to knee).	2. Fabric	

Secondary 2

Home Management

Topics

I. Food, Nutrition and Diet

1. A study of nutrients

(i) Protein

Classification: animal protein and plant protein.

Sources and functions.

(ii) Carbohydrates

Classification: sugars, starch and cellulose.

Sources and functions.

(iii) Fats

Classification: animal fats and vegetable fats.

Sources and functions.

2. Balanced diet

Balance intake of nutrients.

3. Food commodities

Nutritive value, types, choice, cost and storage of the following:

(a) Milk products

(b) Eggs

(c) Meat and poultry

(d) Fish

(e) Soya bean products

(f) Vegetables including pulses and nuts

(g) Fruits

(h) Cereals

(i) Fats and oils

(j) Convenience foods

Use these food commodities to prepare simple meals.

4. Food preparation and cooking techniques

Choice, use and care of kitchen appliances: gas cooker, refrigerator and rice cooker.

Wise use of time and labour saving devices, e.g. mixer, liquidizer, microwave oven, rice cooker, etc.

Heat transference: conduction, convection and radiation.

Topics

Explanatory Notes

Techniques: roux method, rubbing-in method, creaming method, whisking method and dough making.

Cooking methods:

Moist method: braising and stewing.

Dry method: baking, roasting and deep frying.

Réchauffé cookery.

Use of raising agents: mechanical and chemical.

Causes, effects and prevention of food spoilage.

Food additives: preservatives, colourings and flavourings.

Chinese and Western styles: two-course meal.

Meals for special occasions, e.g. vegetarian, packed meals, etc.

Use of convenience foods and left-over foods.

Table setting and use of accompaniments.

II. Home and Family

1. Decorating and furnishing the home

Basic furniture in the home.

Choice and care of floor and wall coverings.

Colour scheme in the home.

Daily and special cleaning of bedroom, living room, kitchen and bathroom.

Choice, care and use of basic home appliances.

Disposal of refuse.

Control of household pests.

Simple first aid.

Fire precautions.

Prevention of accidents, e.g. suffocation, drowning, electric shocks, poisoning, etc.

2. Healthy environment

3. Safety in the home

Explanatory Notes

Use of colours and styles in relation to one's personality and different occasions.
Types and choice of accessories.
Review one's clothing and plan according to one's needs.

Topics

5. Dress sense and wardrobe planning

Explanatory Notes

Family wash.
Storing of clothes and household linens.
Care and use of laundry equipment, e.g. washing machine, dryer, iron, etc.

Topics

4. Laundrywork

II. Equipment

1. Sewing equipment

Small equipment: trimming scissors, embroidery scissors, needles (tapestry, Crewels), tailors' chalk, tailors' pencil, metrestick and ruler.

Choice, use and care of small equipment.

Sewing machine:

Type: automatic

Use: zigzag stitching

Basic attachments, e.g. zipper foot, seam guide, etc.

Choice, use and care of sewing machines.

Choice, use and care of pressing equipment.

Dry iron, steam iron and pressing cloth.

2. Pressing equipment

III. Pattern Construction

1. Body measurements

Accurate measurements of bust, nape to waist, chest width, back width, bust point to bust point, neck point to bust point and shoulder to shoulder.

Draft of the bodice block.

Garments, e.g. simple top, vest, night dress, etc.

2. Basic block patterns

3. Pattern styling

IV. Garment Construction

1. General Preparation

Preparation of fabric, e.g. straightening ends, graining.

Correct ways of laying out, cutting out and marking.

Slip-hemming and herringbone.

Zigzag machine-stitch.

2. Stitches

Value for money.
Keeping accounts.
Ways of saving money: fixed deposit.

Labels and descriptions for

- (a) food,
- (b) household products,
- (c) clothings.

Comparing prices and products.

Shopping sense: personal needs.

Developing a pleasant personality.

Preparing for social occasions, e.g. parties, interviews, etc.

Understanding the growth spurt.

Brief study on the patterns of physical development.

Roles of family members.

Understanding and consideration of others.

Proper social habits and manners.

Entertaining and being entertained.

Needlework, Dress and Design

1. Design and Development of Dress Sense

Colour combinations.

Effects of warm and cool colours.

Figure proportion with detail features in standing poses.

Fabric design, e.g. plaids, one-way, border design, etc.

1. Colour

2. Figure drawing

3. Fabric

Elementary knowledge of basic design and structural lines.

Topics

3. Seam and seam neatening
4. Disposal of fullness
5. Treatment of raw edges
6. Fastening
7. Openings
8. Pockets
9. Trimmings and decorations

Explanatory Notes

French seam.
Knife pleats, box pleats and inverted pleats.
Facing: straight and shaped.
Binding on straight and curved edges.
Press fasteners, hook and loop fasteners (Velcro).
Overlapping hem (overlapping placket), faced slit openings.
Patch pocket: shaped and with a flap.
Braids, ric-rac.
Decorative extras, e.g. patchwork, crochet, etc.

V. Textile

1. Fibres
2. Fabric

A simple study of animal fibres: wool and silk.
Basic fabric construction: weaving and knitting.
Choice and care of woollen and silk fabrics.

Secondary 3

Home Management

Topics

I. Food, Nutrition and Diet

1. A study of nutrients
 - (i) Vitamins
 - (ii) Minerals
2. Balanced diet
3. Nutritional disorder
4. Food commodities

Explanatory Notes

Sources and functions of Vitamins A, B complex, C and D.
Sources and functions of iron, calcium, iodine and sodium.
Dietary goals.
Starvation, malnutrition, obesity, dental caries and diabetes, etc.
Retention of food value for different food commodities.

5. Food preparation and cooking techniques
6. Food preservation
7. Meal planning

Choice of food commodities in planning a balanced diet.
Techniques: coatings of food, batter making, melting method, pastry making and dough making.
Choice of appropriate cooking methods for different foods.
Use of raising agent: biological.

Methods: refrigeration, freezing, canning and dehydration.

Chinese and Western styles: three-course meal.

Meals for children, adolescents and elderly.

Meals for celebration, e.g. party, festive, etc.

Meal presentation.

II. Home and Family

1. Accommodation

Types of accommodation in Hong Kong.

Topics	Explanatory Notes
9. Family and community living	<p>Promotion of harmony within the family and the community.</p> <p>Wise use of leisure, e.g. hobbies, club activities, voluntary work, etc.</p> <p>Awareness of the social welfare services available to meet the family needs, e.g. Youth Centre, The Family Planning Association of Hong Kong, Home for the Aged, Day Care Centre, etc.</p>
<i>Needlework, Dress and Design</i>	
I. Design and Development of Dress Sense	<p>Effects of colour on individual figures.</p> <p>Simple design sketch.</p> <p>Textured fabric, e.g. pile fabric, etc.</p> <p>Basic design elements: style features, texture and colour.</p> <p>The importance of balance and harmony in a design.</p> <p>Front and back views of the garment with style features and colour.</p> <p>Different figure types.</p> <p>Effects of fabric texture, colour and style lines in relation to individual figure.</p> <p>The choice of accessories to complement one's outfit.</p> <p>Plan a clothing budget.</p>
1. Colour	
2. Figure drawing	
3. Fabric	
4. Design concept	
5. Design presentation	
6. Dress sense and wardrobe planning	
II. Equipment	
1. Sewing equipment	<p>Small equipment: measuring gauge, bodkin and loop turner.</p> <p>Use and care of small equipment.</p> <p>Use of sewing machine: simple machine embroidery.</p> <p>Attachments, e.g. buttonhole foot, gathering foot, hemmer foot, etc.</p> <p>Common faults and remedies in machining.</p> <p>Sleeve board.</p>
2. Pressing equipment	

Topics	Explanatory Notes
2. Decorating and furnishing the home	<p>Choice and arrangement of furniture in the home.</p> <p>Choice and care of soft furnishings, e.g. curtains, blinds, cushion covers, etc.</p> <p>Decorations for the home, e.g. flower arrangement, ornaments, etc.</p>
3. Healthy environment	<p>Types of ventilation and lighting.</p> <p>Care and cleaning of various types of surfaces, e.g. glass, wood, ceramic, plastic, etc.</p> <p>Awareness of environmental pollution.</p> <p>Kitchen safety.</p> <p>Understanding of safety designs in furniture and equipment.</p> <p>Basic knowledge of fabrics.</p> <p>Care labels.</p> <p>Simple stain removal.</p> <p>Commercial laundry and laundrettes.</p>
4. Safety in the home	<p>Family budgets: income and fixed expenditure.</p> <p>Keeping accounts for the family.</p> <p>Ways of payment: cash, cheque, credit card and hire purchase.</p>
5. Laundrywork	<p>Consumer Council: function and activities.</p> <p>Protection for consumer safety.</p> <p>Shopping sense: types of shops and modes of shopping.</p> <p>Influences on shopping: peer group and advertisement.</p> <p>Health hazards: smoking, drugs and alcohol.</p> <p>Healthy attitude towards sex.</p>
6. Managing money	
7. Consumer studies	
8. Health responsibility	

III. Pattern Construction

1. Body measurements
Accurate measurements of upper arm girth, armhole, wrist girth, sleeve length, crotch depth and side length of shorts.
2. Basic block patterns
Drafting of the bodice, sleeve and shorts blocks.
3. Pattern styling
Garments, e.g. shorts, blouse, simple dress, etc.

IV. Garment Construction

1. General Preparation
Correct ways of laying out, cutting out and marking.
2. Stitches
Tailor's tack and buttonhole stitch.
Simple machine embroidery stitches.
3. Seam and seam neatening
Overlaid seam.
4. Neckline finishes
Flat collar and shaped facing.
5. Disposal of fullness
Tucks: wide.
6. Fastening
Rouleau loop.
7. Openings
Concealed zip and fly-front opening.
8. Waist finishes
Waistband and facing.
9. Sleeves
Shirt sleeves.
10. Pocket
Pocket in a seam.
11. Decorations
Decorative extras, e.g. quilting, etc.

V. Textile

1. Fibres
A simple study of man-made fibres:
Regenerated: viscose rayon
Synthetic: polyester.
2. Fabric
Basic fabric construction: bonding and felting.
Choice and care of man-made fabrics.

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