School Civic Education Since 1980s: A Brief Review of the Literature in Hong Kong

Yan-wing Leung
Timothy Wai-wa Yuen

Department of Education Policy and Leadership
The Hong Kong Institute of Education

This paper is a review of academic literature on research in civic education of Hong Kong covering period 1980s to 2000s. It reports only peer-reviewed journal articles, research-based books, and chapters in edited refereed volumes by academics who were engaged full-time when the work was published. It covers 73 refereed journal articles, 2 authored books and 31 chapters in edited refereed books: a total of 106 publications. The following areas of concern were included: (1) concepts of citizenship; (2) concepts and policies of civic education; (3) curriculum, textbooks and implementation of civic education; (4) themes of civic education, including political education, national education, global education, and human rights education; and (5) the influence of Asian values. Given its limitation, this

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Yan-wing Leung, Department of Education Policy and Leadership, The Hong Kong Institute of Education, 10 Lo Ping Road, Tai Po, N.T. Hong Kong. E-mail: ywleung@ied.edu.hk

review has revealed some under-developed and under-researched areas and themes which deserve attention and research and has suggested some concrete agenda for research in the future.

Key words: Hong Kong civic education, review of civic education, development of civic education

Introduction

Civic education in schools in Hong Kong has been marked by two distinct features. First, though it is in principle an important part of education that students should receive, often it is not seriously implemented in schools. Second, it remains a contested matter the actual configuration of which depends heavily on social and political developments.

The year 1980 was taken as a starting point for this literature review because, before that, Hong Kong's civic education was largely played down due to the legitimacy concerns of the government and the need to depoliticize the curriculum to avoid instability. The initiation of talks between Britain and China over the future of Hong Kong at the start of 1980s led to both a rise in concern for civic education, and also an increase in research and reports about paucity of civic education and the way to move forward.

The signing of the Sino-British agreement on the return of sovereignty, the development of representative government since mid-1980s and the release of the civic education guidelines in 1985 and 1996, all helped to stimulate the discussion and study of civic education. The return of sovereignty in 1997 changed the landscape of civic education substantially. The multiple and potentially competing aims of civic education such as democracy, patriotism, national identity, human rights and global citizenship have drawn increasing attention, amidst concerns that there has been an attempt to depoliticize the curriculum.

It should be noted that the building up of research interest in civic education since the 1980s has led to the emergence of a local circle of academics researching and writing on different aspects of civic education from various perspectives. These academics comprise both Western and local scholars working in local universities on a long term basis, as well as scholars in the West who have collaborated with such Hong Kong scholars. A number of things seem to interest these academics most: changes relating

to the return of sovereignty in 1997, controversial policies in matters of civic education, emerging concerns in matters of civic education, international studies of civic education in which Hong Kong participated, and the way to improve the implementation of civic education in schools. This article reports and discusses the development of the literature on research, policy and practice of civic education in Hong Kong. In this paper, civic education is taken to be the equivalent of citizenship education and is used interchangeably. It should be noted that civic education for schools in the context of this article is widely construed as education for students studying at different levels, ranging from kindergarten to university. It is hoped that readers of this article will come to understand the general areas of concern and the specific themes of the local academics on the one hand, and learn about the contributions and gaps in the literature regarding citizenship in Hong Kong on the other.

Methodology

Publications Reviewed

Setting parameters for the present review is not only important but difficult given that the period under review is long. To make the task manageable, we have delimited our review. Only works done by academics who were engaged full-time when the work was published are reviewed. We report only peer-reviewed journal articles, research-based books, and chapters in edited refereed volumes. We have not included research and literature contributions by foreign academics who have tried to analyze the case from outside Hong Kong. Unpublished papers, conference papers, proceedings, unpublished theses, dissertations, Internet or non-academic publications such as magazines and newspapers are also not included.

Peer-reviewed Journals

In order to identify the appropriate peer-reviewed journals, we used the EBSCOhost Research Database, which includes the following databases: Academic Search Alumni Edition; Academic Search Premier; EconLit; Education Research Complete; ERIC; Family & Society Studies Worldwide; Funk & Wagnalls New World Encyclopedia; Gender Studies Database; Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts; MAS Ultra – School

Edition; MEDLINE; Primary Search; Professional Development Collection; EJS E-Journals; and Teacher Reference Center. Items catalogued since 1983 were searched. A search using key words "civic education", "national education", "global education", "citizenship education", "global citizenship education", "cosmopolitan education", "political education", "citizenship", "nationalistic education", and "human rights education" was performed. Chinese peer-reviewed journals were also searched by using the e-database HKInChiP, which contains numerous locally published journals in Chinese. The keywords used above were adopted in Chinese and applied here. In addition to the e-journals, we also hand searched peer-reviewed journals available on the library shelves in the Hong Kong Institute of Education, in accordance with their catalogues. Journal articles, in Chinese and English, were also traced through local scholars attached to the Centre for Citizenship Education, a centre based at the Hong Kong Institute of Education for the study of citizenship education.

Research-based Books

Both authored and edited books were identified by searching the library in the Hong Kong Institute of Education, which has the biggest library in education of all the universities in Hong Kong. We used the same key words as had been used in the search for peer-refereed journals. We then hand searched those books to identify those we judged to be research-based. We excluded teaching guides and teaching kits, which were deemed not to have great relevance to our research purpose.

Chapters in Edited Refereed Volumes

We were aware that useful works on the research themes may have been published as chapters in edited collections whose primary themes were different from ours. Since there is no established electronic route for identifying these chapters as they are neither searchable through library catalogues nor e-databases, we resorted to hand searching through our personal collections, as well as collections available in the library of the Hong Kong Institute of Education. In order to help us locate pertinent literature, we examined the bibliography from past research reviews which fell within the scope. Literature reviews in the materials studied were also assessed and added to the search when they were deemed relevant. Our searches gave us a database of around 139 publications on which we based

this review and analysis: this comprised 99 refereed journal articles, 2 authored books and 38 chapters in edited refereed books.

Areas of Concern

In undertaking this review, a number of common areas of concern were identified for reporting, collation and discussion. They comprise: (1) concepts of citizenship; (2) concepts and policies of civic education; (3) curriculum, textbooks and implementation of civic education; (4) themes of civic education, including political education, [1] national education, global education, and human rights education; and (5) the influence of Asian values. These themes were chosen because they are considered the foci of civic education (Leung, Chai, & Ng, 2000; Leung & Ng, 2004) and important megatrends of civic education (Kennedy, 2005). Whilst the areas of concern and the themes may have been drawn up arbitrarily and the research effort and literature may transcend a singular area or theme, it is hoped that our classification can help readers to gain focus and understand where local researchers have been engaged. Under the areas of concern and themes we have chosen, we limited the search to 73 refereed journal articles, 2 authored books and 31 chapters in edited refereed books, a total of 106 publications.

Concepts of Citizenship

The change of sovereignty of Hong Kong from the United Kingdom back to the People's Republic of China (PRC) on 1 July, 1997 is a typical example of decolonization. However, Lee and Bray (1993) argued that unlike many examples of decolonization, the decolonization of Hong Kong was unique. It lacked strong anti-colonial nationalism, and would be accompanied by only limited democratization, resulting from the tension between the local demand for democratization and the retarding forces of the central PRC's government who were suspicious that the democratization of Hong Kong was being influenced by the British colonial rule. Moreover, as Hong Kong was about to become incorporated into China, a nation which champions patriotism, instead of independence, it was assumed that the request for nationalism and national identity would increase rapidly. The less than half-hearted democratization, together with the upheaval of nationalism and patriotism, set the context in which citizenship and civic education

developed. Accompanying the change of sovereignty of Hong Kong, there were significant changes in the understanding of citizenship. This attracted numerous studies to investigate the changes and the implication for education. However we will limit the following discussion mainly to literature linking schooling, in particular civic education, to citizenship. Some articles from other areas are included to help set the historical context.

Using political participation as the hallmark of citizenship, Lo (2001) divided the development of Hong Kong citizenship before the return of sovereignty to the PRC into two stages, namely "pre-1982" and "1982 to 1 July, 1997". In the "pre-1982" stage, which he labeled apolitical, the citizens just wanted to hold a passport, enjoy some civil liberties and live a peaceful life. The year 1982 he considered a trigger point as the onset of Sino-British negotiation initiated the political participation of Hong Kong citizens. After the signing of the Joint Declaration in 1984, Hong Kong citizens gradually assumed the qualities of both a "rights regarding" and "monitoring" citizenship as more opportunities of participation were allowed. Lo expressed optimism about the development of citizenship after 1997 arguing that the change in citizenship is irreversible. Similar to Lo (2001), Ghai (2001) argued that under colonial rule, regardless of the granting of substantial civil and social rights, a positive, empowering and active mode of citizenship was denied to Hong Kong citizens. However, unlike Lo (2001), Ghai (2001) was less optimistic about what would happen after 1997 and argued that although the Hong Kong Basic Law appeared to have provided a framework for the protection of autonomy, human rights and civil society, it has laid down a political structure with a restricted franchise, a weak check and balance of power, which can nullify the promise, implying that an active and participatory citizenship is still out of reach. Their views are somewhat echoed by Lee (2005) who argued that under the colonial regime, Hong Kong people held a weak version of depoliticized citizenship, a hybrid one dominated by a cultural citizenship and a feeling of belonging to China, yet holding official citizen identity outside China. Fairbrother (2005) argued that in order to depoliticize Hong Kong society, the colonial government restricted certain political rights, such as universal franchise, and granted most civil and social rights to Hong Kong citizens. He claimed that, even after the return of sovereignty to the PRC, Hong Kong basically remains a society with relatively strong civil and social rights while political rights remain feeble. Recognizing that Deng Xiaoping laid down the conditions for granting Hong Kong self-rule: "to love China and to love Hong Kong", Degolyer (2001) argued that we

should not expect an old-fashioned citizenship from Hong Kong. Its variant and unpatriotic citizenship should not be considered as a relic of the colonial past but a harbinger of a globalized, cosmopolitan future. In sum, there is a tension between Hong Kong citizens and the PRC's expectations about the development of Hong Kong citizenship after the return of sovereignty. This could be due to a lack of trust by the PRC government of Hong Kong citizens after such a long period of British colonial rule.

But, this aside, what are the constructs of students' citizenship and how do they develop their concepts of citizenship? Construction of the concepts of citizenship is a complicated process, difficult to predict but always sophisticated and eclectic. Students, embedded in institutional and cultural contexts, actively evaluate and negotiate with the socializing agents in forming their personal constructs of citizenship (Kennedy, 2007; Kennedy, Hahn, & Lee, 2008; Leung, 2006; Leung & Liu 2008). Research has revealed that students can counteract the hegemonic socializing process in national education to form their own construct of citizenship (Fairbrother, 2003a, 2003b, 2008). Both quantitative and qualitative studies indicate that the constructs of citizenship, as a product of political socialization, are eclectic in nature. In their comparative study of International Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) data from Hong Kong, Australia and the United States, Kennedy, Hahn, and Lee (2008) suggested that students' concepts of citizenship contain both thin and thick characteristics, depending on the specific aspect of citizenship involved. Students pay more attention to voting and respecting leaders than being active in political discussion or joining political parties. The paper also claims that students are more inclined towards social engagement than political engagement. The paper concludes that students are thin in Conventional Citizenship but thicker in Social Movement Citizenship. Similarly using IEA Hong Kong data, Lee (2003a) argued that though Hong Kong students are concerned with citizenship issues and politics, are knowledgeable, and also concerned about society, they do not favor confrontational politics. He suggested that this is partly due to Chinese culture and partly due to the perpetuated depolicitization beyond 1997. The eclectic nature of citizenship is also supported by the case studies by Leung (2006) and Leung and Liu (2008). Their study of some socially/politically active students revealed that the students hold a mix of "personally responsible citizen", "participatory citizen" and "justice-oriented citizen" — terms proposed by Westheimer & Kahne (2004) — demonstrating a combination of conservative and radical behavior, such as protesting in opposition to unreasonable laws. In

constructing an understanding of citizenship for students, school is one of the important socializing agents. Using the concept of "here and now citizenship", Leung and Yuen (2009) report a case study of a Hong Kong secondary school that promotes participatory citizenship in their students through empowering them in decision making in school matters.

Lee (1999a) has reported a comparative survey of teachers' concepts of citizenship in Guangzhou, Hangzhou and Hong Kong showing that all three cities maintain significant Chinese characters in their emphasis on traditions and values, the social dimension of citizenship, family responsibilities and respect to parents and teachers. These findings echo the finding that cultural rather than political factors exert a stronger influence on the development of Hong Kong citizenship. From a theoretical perspective, based on a comparison between the attitudes of social studies teachers of Hong Kong and Guangzhou toward environmental and citizenship issues, Grossman (2004) argued that in order to face the globalizing era, a comprehensive model, such as a multi-dimensional one, is needed for the study of citizenship. Similarly, Law and Ng (2009) proposed to use a multidimensional model of citizenship education composed of personal, social, spatial, and temporal dimensions for interpreting citizenship and citizenship education in response to globalization.

The above discussion has revealed the complexity of studying the formation of citizenship in an individual. The process involves complicated interactions and negotiations between the individual as an actor and the institutional and cultural contexts. It has also revealed the eclectic and fluid nature of the construct of citizenship which demands more sophisticated multidimensional models and the use of multiple research methods for in-depth exploration in future research. From a policy perspective, there could be a clash of expectations between the central government and Hong Kong citizens. In facing a globalizing era and the gradual process of democratization guaranteed by the Basic Law, how Hong Kong citizens could participate in the search for an appropriate construct of citizenship so that the "one country, two systems" can be maintained and enriched, is a complicated issue whose vitality and implications for civic education is a matter of serious concern for both practice and research.

Policies and Concept of Civic Education

It is well argued that the status of civic education is a barometer for the political development of a society. There have been such drastic changes in the political scenario of Hong Kong since 1980 that the policy of civic

education also changes rapidly. Being an open and cosmopolitan society, the discourses on civic education are much contested in parallel with the clashes of discourse regarding the concept of citizenship.

From a policy perspective, school civic education in Hong Kong is usually divided into three to four stages by scholars. The characteristics of these different stages include depoliticization, anationalism, re-depoliticization and patriotism with Chinese culture overtones (Leung & Ng, 2004; Morris & Morris, 1999; Tsang, 1998). All these scholars agree that the dominant discourse in the current scenario is national education. In comparing the two official guidelines on civic education, Leung, Chai, and Ng (2000) argue that the *Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools* (Curriculum Development Council, 1985) aim at moralizing citizens to be obedient and docile, while the *Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools* (Curriculum Development Council, 1996) aim at preparing critical thinking, participating, multi-dimensional citizens and instilling national identity, and patriotism. They note that there are five foci, namely, human rights education, education for democracy, rule of law, national education and global education in the new guidelines. But these revised guidelines with political content were replaced by the document *Learning to Learn: Life-Long Learning and Whole-Person Development* (Curriculum Development Council, 2001), where the political content was much reduced, and content related to cultural national education was incorporated (Leung & Ng, 2004). Leung (2008a) further noted that with the introduction of the mandatory core subject Liberal Studies in 2009, Hong Kong civic education will enter into a new phase to be named "2009 onwards: Civic Education through Liberal Studies". Tse (2006a) claimed that with the delayed democratization, continuous depoliticization of civic education and the grand homorganic state project of national education, official civic education in the post colonial system is cultivating students to become patriotic nationals and competitive global people rather than competent citizens. Morris and Morris (1999) postulated that the role of civic education is to model citizens who value duties and the obligations of the individual to society, with sets of moral behaviors associated with traditional Chinese values. Moreover, Morris, Kan, and Morris (2000) pointed out that though the Hong Kong Special Administration Region (HKSAR) government wanted to cultivate a new civic identity by national education, it avoids introducing radical educational reform for the sake of maintaining stability and continuity. Hence, the goals are to be achieved by a gradual cultivation through school civic education.

However, regardless of how hard the HKSAR government has tried to define civic education as national education, as Hong Kong is a free and multi-valued society, the government cannot impose a standard ideology (Tse, 2007a, 2007b). As a consequence, debates regarding the directions and priorities of civic education have always been very strong. Alternative discourses come from academics and civil society. Long before the return of sovereignty, Tsang (1985) argued that civic educators should debate in depth the direction of development of civic education, instead of leaving it in the hands of the government. Tsang (1994) suggested that civic education should include: (1) national education based on the concept of a civic nation, (2) a balanced teaching of civic rights and responsibilities, and (3) a dialectic relationship between citizenship's autonomy and state's rules and regulations. Chan (1996) argued that in order to cultivate a participatory citizenship, school civic education has to empower students to care and participate in influencing policies. Ng, Leung, and Chai (2000) argued that human rights education, education for democracy, rule of law, and global education should receive equal attention to national education. Fok (1997, 2006) suggested that civic education should aim at preparing the political culture for good governance and democratic citizenship, which in turn encourages active and effective participation in civic life. Moreover, Tse (2006a) noted that after the mass rally on 1 July, 2003, a new citizenship movement from the civil society has opened up the possibility of alternative civic education for the cultivation of empowered and participatory citizenry. Fairbrother (2006a) elaborated that the phenomenon observed reflects a continuity in civic education policy despite the change of sovereignty. He argued that it is a compromise policy resulting from the interactions among traditional Chinese moral education, a British ambivalence toward political education, and a reaction against mainland Chinese communist political education, with the fear of indoctrination underneath. However, it seems that the compromise has recently been tilted more towards traditional moral education and the danger of indoctrination is becoming less and less attended to. Similarly, Tsang (1998) concluded that the debates resulted from a triangle of tension between the patronage of the colonial regime, the domestication strategies of the PRC as well as the local "pro-China groups", and lastly the local demands from the teachers and the civil society for empowerment and emancipation. Moreover, based on a study of the election of the Legislative Council in 1995 and 1998, Tsang (2006) found that the "guideline cohort" of youth, referring to those youths who were educated after the release of the *Guidelines* (Curriculum Development Council, 1985),

was more politically efficacious than their older counterparts and proposed that local educators should put aside the contests caused by the triangle of tension and develop civic education after contemplating the views and attitudes of the youth. In responding to the uncertain future resulting from rapid globalization, Kennedy (2005) proposed a comprehensive framework to conceptualize civic education. He suggested the new civic education should address (1) the geo-political realities that highlight the uncertainty of the global environment; (2) a deficit in civic knowledge of the youth so as to equip them with understanding of civic institutes and processes; (3) the civic megatrends, such as, an emergent multiculturalism, further democratization of the political system, a vexed issue of identity; and (4) civic realities relating to youth cultures, which might be represented by wave parties, drugs abuse, etc. But as time went on, academics' advice was put aside and the domestication strategies of the PRC as well as the local "pro-China groups" blossomed rapidly and launched a grand project on national education. Hence, the hot contest between civic education and national education went on and on and will be discussed in detail later.

The debates about civic education also occurred in other political arenas. Fairbrother (2006b) surveyed the substantive arguments favouring or opposing the retention of government controls over politics in schools in the 1990 and 1997 legislative debates. The discourse reaffirmed the power of the government to control political education in the name of safety, order, morals and security. There was also a clash of discourse between the view on the one hand that students are developing citizens, and on the other that they are immature, in need of protection. At the same time, teachers were portrayed as potentially threatening, constituted as incapable, needing guidance and self-discipline, and hence this reaffirmed the power of the government over teachers' professional autonomy. Fairbrother (2005) examined the discussions of citizenship education among various educational policymakers. Drawing on Foucault's conceptions of power as discipline and government, the paper recommended that the values of responsibility, rights, democracy, and national identity in the discourse should be viewed from a relational perspective instead of in a dichotomized manner. It also emphasized citizenship education's inherently political nature regardless of the extent of its political content in the curriculum. In a nutshell, at the policy level, the government is trying to control the politics of civic education by depolicizing and nationalizing the content and controlling the political socializing actors.

Regardless of the debates at the policy level, how do some of the stakeholders understand civic education? In the IEA study, Lee's (1999b; 2004a) general impression was that civic education receives only half-hearted support, especially the teaching of political issues. The report also noted that national identity issues are sensitive and people tend to accept a national identity of Chinese but prefer a foreign passport. In a study of values in civic education, Lee (2001) concluded that Hong Kong respondents placed high significance on the development of personal qualities, with the expectation of extending that awareness from the personal to social, national and global levels. This is consistent with Confucian idioms, which will be discussed in detail later.

Curriculum, Textbooks and Implementation of Civic Education

Morris and Sweeting (1991) noted that the politicization of the curriculum became possible after 1982 and development accelerated with the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984. Morris (1997) explained that citizenship education in Hong Kong has been affected by the society's social and political development. This belief is shared by Tse (2004). Chan (1996) suggested that if citizenship education is to make any breakthrough, there must be an attempt to move away from a culture that only regards students as obedient subjects. There has to be a genuine willingness of the authority to open up communication and promote participation. Civic responsibility can be promoted through the raising of political and social awareness and the respect of people's rights. Morris and Morris (2000) examined the civic education guidelines issued in 1985 and 1996 and opined that the former was shaped largely by the motive to achieve a trouble-free handover while the latter by the need to reconcile the dichotomy caused by rising demand for democracy and the need to cultivate patriotism upon the return of sovereignty. Morris and Morris (2002) further described civic education as oxymoronic, shaped by the symbolic function to effect changes in education and the changing political culture of Hong Kong.

Studies of the early development of civic education however need to be read together with literature and studies conducted later. Morris (1997) for example pointed out that there is little evidence that the culture could support democratic citizenship. Moreover, the inclination towards the Asian values makes civic education very morally oriented. Tse (1997b) likewise commented that Social Studies curriculum and textbooks cannot promote

democratic and national education as they only deal with factual social and economic matters and cultural identity. Ho and Ho (2004) looked at the value-oriented items in the textbooks for studying Chinese, and found 75 percent are moral education related and only 25 percent are civic education related. Tse (2000) reported from a review of junior secondary Economic and Public Affairs syllabus and textbooks that they are characterized by a rather partial, passive, and parochial concept of citizenship. Status quo and trust of the government are emphasized. Tse (2006b) further examined the junior secondary school curriculum of Hong Kong and Macau and concluded that in both places, citizenship education has become a mixture of moral, political, and life skills education.

An infusion approach was suggested as a means of implementing the *Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools* (Curriculum Development Council, 1985). According to that, all subjects would need to play a civic education mission, like conveying certain civic values. Ho (1999) reported that the use of music to convey a civic value like patriotism is not well received by music teachers. Non-musical concepts are considered by those teachers as minimally relevant. Ho (2002) explained that the promotion of Chinese music and the singing of the national anthem are signs of nationalism in music education. Yet, it is doubtful whether teachers are willing and able to go beyond the aesthetic goal in music education. The need for rapprochement between academic freedom and value education was highlighted in Ho (2006). Lo (2005) pointed out from a study of the Social Studies curriculum that contours of Hong Kong's citizenship are not rigidly defined by any particular political, cultural and territorial definition, and should be more inclusive and multi-dimensional for the city to be both a Chinese city and a world metropolis.

The use of extra-curricular activities as a vehicle to teach civic education was also mentioned in the civic education guidelines of 1985. Though Tang & Morris (1989) reported that the guidelines actually were poorly implemented, many schools in Hong Kong are still taking extra-curricular activities as an important element of their civic education. Leung (2003a) reported how a community service, as an extra-curricular activity, was transformed to a social advocacy campaign for social justice in a Hong Kong secondary school and the impacts on the personal, interpersonal, and active citizenship development of the students involved. Tse (1997a) however argued that the use of extra-curricular activities is not well developed. If it is to be successful, better teacher training and democratization of schools are needed. Lai and Wu (2004) on the other

hand explained that schools are weak in making use of student councils to promote active and participatory citizenship. It was suggested learning from student councils should be coupled with other meaningful classroom learning like project learning and reflection learning.

Meanwhile, individual schools have carried out experiments in the direction of turning the whole school into a democratic school which promotes students' participation and empowerment. Leung and Yuen (2009) described the experience of an innovative school that has turned itself into a crucible of participatory citizenship. By working with the formal, informal and hidden curriculum, the school promotes students' social concern, participation, and the learning of a democratic spirit. Instead of regarding students as citizens-to-be, the school enlists the students through empowerment in important decision making, including the making of school rules, and the designing of the school uniform, etc. It was found that the attempt has been well received by the students, and has resulted in enhanced civic awareness and participation. This mode of cultivating democratic citizenship is similar to the idea of "education in democracy and human rights" (Dobozy, 2007).

The difficulties of nurturing active citizens through citizenship education are enormous and have been well reported in the literature. Generally speaking, regardless of the debates in policies, aims and objectives, schools tended to implement whatever they chose to do and usually the issue of practice was poorly addressed (Morris & Morris, 2001; Tang & Morris, 1989). Though some schools are trying to carry out experiments in the direction of turning the whole school into a democratic school, S. W. Leung (1995) argued that given all the constraints in school, such as autocratic power structure, lack of training of the teachers, and limited resources, it is nearly impossible for schools to develop a civic education for active and participatory citizenship, particularly in the political sense. Ng and Leung (2004) explained that in general teachers are positive towards civic education but there is a need for increased support from head teachers. The other difficulties that need to be overcome include that of insufficient teacher training and the inadequacies of the infusion approach under which civic education has no independent identity. Lee and Leung (2001) explained that institutional constraints exist, particularly in grammar schools, in terms of resource distribution, formal curricula, informal curricula and gate keeping of controversial issues. Chan (2006) argued that in the name of improving quality through competition and enhancing choices, the recent education reform encourages a form of new

citizenry which is far from empowering and inclusive. Instead it tends to obscure and reinforce social and gender differences and inequalities.

In addressing some of the difficulties, there have been suggestions in the literature that civic education can have a more effective impact upon reforms of pedagogies and enhanced support. Fok (2002), for example, pointed out that schools actually are willing to implement civic education and most schools have got their civic education committees. More diverse and enlightening pedagogies are also being tried. Leung (2006) recommended that issue-based learning and experiential learning can help training for democratic citizenship. Moreover, he identified the characteristics of effective civics teachers, including open mindedness, being very knowledgeable, willingness to care and to participate in societal issues, willingness to care for students, and courage and he recommended that teacher education for civic education should focus on these attributes. Leung and Yuen's (2009) "crucible for democracy" for the cultivation of democratic citizenship was discussed above and will not be discussed further here.

The question of how the authority is involved in setting the citizenship agenda and influencing the civic education curriculum is an interesting one. Fairbrother (2003a) explained that both the Hong Kong colonial government and the government of the PRC did try to influence citizenship education in Hong Kong and the Mainland respectively. Matters such as national identity and patriotism were directed in such a way as to serve the political needs of the HKSAR government. Ho (2007) pointed out that both the British colonial government and the PRC government can be taken as important in determining the curriculum of Hong Kong, the former for the pre-1997 period and the latter for the post-1997 period. Politically correct content has been allowed to be taught and this also explains the scaling back of certain politically sensitive contents in the curriculum and the self censorship in textbooks. Vickers and Kan (2005) argued that the HKSAR government is trying to re-socialize Hong Kong people as uncritical patriots. The orthodox Beijing version is upheld, for example, in the teaching of Chinese history.

Theme 1: Political Education

For many scholars, civic education is so intertwined with political education that there is actually little difference between the two concepts (Frazer, 1999; Tse, 2004). McCowan (2006) admitted: "It is hard to make a

watertight distinction between 'political' and 'citizenship' education"
(p. 58). The political education reported here refers mainly to the teaching
of politics in the formal sense. Its focus thus will be on formal government,
learning how the system of government works, and the development of
skills and attitudes supportive of the running of a representative government.

Morris and Sweeting (1991) examined the issue from a historical
perspective and pointed out that the formal curriculum was controlled in the
colonial days and that since 1982 the curriculum moved away from being
depoliticized to being politicized against the emerging reality that the
sovereignty of Hong Kong would be returned to China. Lee and Bray
(1993) explained that though Hong Kong's change in political status in
1997 differed from most other countries undergoing a decolonization
process, there was increasing pressure for democratization and hence
change in the formal curriculum to promote democratization and
representative government. The setting up of a subject Government and
Public Affairs was mentioned as a move to promote political education.

M. Leung and Cheung (1998) explained how political education turned
from being a taboo in the colonial days to being promoted when the return
of sovereignty was nearing. This was meant to equip students with
knowledge to facilitate the development of representative government.
General Studies was cited as the subject that could serve as the vehicle to
implement political education. We should not however jump to the
conclusion that political education has already been in place to support the
development of democracy and representative reforms locally. Tse (2006a)
pointed out that a truly democratic citizenship education is not possible
without a corresponding change in the social milieu and the non-democratic
politics of Hong Kong. It was also pointed out that locally the civic
education focus seems to be more on nurturing global competitiveness and
national integration rather than on enhancing democracy and social
transformation.

Yuen (2007) reported that the teaching of politics in post-1997 Hong
Kong has been affected by a social ethos marked by conservatism and a
nationalist sentiment. Yuen (2009) further explained that teachers of politics,
in order to cater for students' learning style and the perceived importance of
public examinations, often faced the pressure to resort to a didactic mode of
delivery that can generate good public examination results. Yuen and
Byram (2007) reported from their study of Government and Public Affairs
teachers that the teaching of the political subject in schools might not
contribute much to the building up of the national identity and patriotism in

the emotional sense though these are vigorously promoted by the post-1997 government. Teachers see the teaching of politics largely as an intellectual exercise and they tend to understand politics and democracy from a more Western perspective. Yuen and Leung (2010) discussed the complications of teaching politics against their experience of teaching political literacy in the Hong Kong Institute of Education. Matters such as discussion of controversial issues, neutrality of teachers and the merits of team teaching were studied. The study helped to address some of the concerns about teaching politics to students. It also discussed teachers' roles and pedagogical matters in relation to effective teaching of politics in a democratic and open atmosphere.

In summary, the sincerity and effectiveness of the teaching of content related to politics for democratic citizenship in a context marked by conservatism and a nationalist sentiment is really in doubt, despite its so-called depoliticisation.

Theme 2: National Education

As discussed, the decolonization of Hong Kong was accompanied by a rising agenda in nationalism, and a weak version of democratization, as the PRC was suspicious of the democratization of Hong Kong. Consequently, the tension between rising nationalism and thin democratization caused hot debates in the society. In the field of civic education, it was reflected as debates between proponents of the education for national identity and those who requested human rights education and democratic education (Lee & Bray, 1993, 1996; Leung & Ng, 2004). As Hong Kong was approaching 1997, mixed with anti-colonial sentiment, the urge for national education became stronger and stronger, especially from the "pro-China groups". However, there were also dissenting voices arguing that national education could be irrational and easily be reduced to political indoctrination (Lee & Sweeting, 2001; Leung, Chai, & Ng, 2000). The fear of indoctrination was substantiated by the study by Leung (2004), which reported that teachers with understanding of national education inclined towards totalitarian nationalism, which is common in the PRC, tended to adopt teaching strategies which would suppress critical reflection of their students. This kind of national education, usually accompanying intense commitment to particular beliefs and practice probably would be intolerant of other beliefs and lead to indoctrination (Bottery, 2003).

Following the resumption of Chinese sovereignty in 1997, although the national identity of Hong Kong people is rising (Lam, Lau, Chiu, & Hong, 2007; Lee, 2003b), it is still considered to be insufficient. In addressing the concern, the HKSAR government put more emphasis on national education in terms of policy and resources. In much of his work, Morris (Morris, 1997; Morris, Kan, & Morris, 2000; Morris & Morris, 1999, 2000) has argued that, permeating into the values in recent civic education guidelines, social science and related subject curricula, there has been a strong shift towards patriotism, national pride, and a stronger emphasis on Chinese cultural and traditional values. He also argues that the civic identity to be constructed by the government is basically a concept of self identity based on Chinese culture and moral agenda with a Confucius inclination, emphasizing homogeneity, harmony, responsibilities and social cohesion. He named the third phase of civic education as "1997 onwards: Chinese values and moral education" (Morris & Morris, 1999). Tse (2007a, 2007b) argued that both the state and some pro-China NGOs have been very active in promoting national education in recent years, building up an official hegemony. Changes in official curriculum documents to include more patriotic elements, introduction of patriotic rituals and extra-curricular activities to schools are initiated and supported by the government. In aligning with the government, the pro-China NGOs argued strongly for fostering commonalities and unity with China in the alienated Hong Kong people as the ultimate aim of civic education. They advocate national education in both schools and communities with resources backed up by the central and local government. According to Tse (2007b), the general public and young people are becoming less resistant to national education. Leung and Ng (2004) named the third phase of civic education as "1997 onwards: Re-depoliticization of civic education and official confirmation of nationalistic education", and argued that the national education so promoted rested basically on cultural nationalism and avoided discussing the political aspect of China. They debated that this less than comprehensive understanding of China is insufficient for the cultivation of national identity.

In response to the pressing official hegemony of national education regarding the cultivation of patriotic conformists, Tse (2007a) noted that there is an anti-hegemony movement in the civil society, putting forward an alternative version of a "good citizen" as a critical thinking, multiple dimensional citizen. Moreover, Tse (2007b) noted a phenomenon, which he described as ironic, in which even the oppositional forces, such as democrats, have to subordinate themselves to the discourse of nationalism.

It seems that Tse's (2007b) view implies that democracy and human rights are in opposition to nationalism. However, some may have reservations about this and argue that nationalism and democracy may not necessarily be mutually exclusive (Lee & Sweeting, 2001; Nodia, 1994). For example, Lee (1997) argued that the *Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools* (Curriculum Development Council, 1996) recommended the cultivation of civic virtues such as human values and dignity in addition to national identity, which he commented, could tame exclusive and arrogant nationalism. From their study of a group of Government and Public Affairs secondary school teachers in Hong Kong, Yuen and Byram (2007) reported that they held a rational and critical view of national identity and patriotism which differed from those upheld in the Mainland. They insist that politics should be taught in a rational way, which may not be useful and may even be counterproductive for the cultivation of national identity. All these views imply that there could be different ways of constructing nationalism and national identity, which could either be at odds or in harmony with democracy and human rights. In addressing this dilemma, Tsang (1995) suggested that in order to build a civic nation for China, we should go beyond "hereditary nationalism" to "achieved nationalism". He argued that, unlike "hereditary nationalism", which is based on inherited status and is backward looking, "achieved nationalism", which is based on effort and achievement and is forward looking, should be the core of national education. Alternatively, Leung (2003b, 2007, 2008b) and Leung and Print (2002), revealed that Hong Kong secondary school civic teachers tend to hold an eclectic understanding of national education composed of education for cosmopolitan, civic and cultural nationalism. Leung (2008b) recommended that such an eclectic understanding of national education coupled with a mix of pedagogies composed of a critical thinking approach, an issue-based approach, a civic participatory approach and an affective approach, could be considered as the foundation for the development of a liberal and inclusive national education. In addition, Leung (2003c) discussed the use of an affective approach in national education and warned of its potential misuse of some extreme forms of affective approach such as "positive" and "negative" approaches, which could lead to indoctrination and blind patriotism. In a nutshell, instead of dichotomizing nationalism and democracy as well as human rights, efforts have been made to reconcile their differences for the betterment of the nation

Permeation into subjects is a common strategy for national education, especially history and music. Vickers and Kan (2003, 2005) argued that the

HKSAR government is engaged in a long term project to re-socialize Hong Kong people as uncritical patriots, done through a politically correct Chinese History syllabus. They also point out that there are conflicts between History teachers who are more inclined towards critical thinking in history teaching, and Chinese History teachers who are more inclined towards using the subject for patriotic education. For music, Ho (1999, 2002) and Law and Ho (2004) addressed the issue in depth and that has been discussed in a previous part of the paper.

In facing this grand project, what role could students play? Studying university students in Hong Kong and the PRC, Fairbrother (2003a, 2003b, 2008) inquired into the effects of critical thinking, as a form of resistance, on students' patriotism and nationalism. Findings demonstrated that some students in both groups could be skeptical, open to multiple perspectives, and tended to think critically, ultimately forming national attitudes that were neither blindly positive nor negative. They could be labeled as "critical patriots". After all, as discussed, political socializing involves a negotiation and interactive process between the actors and the socializing agents, although the hegemonic project always has the dominant power. Last of all, there is also tension between national education and global education which will be discussed in the next section.

In summary, because of the inclusive/exclusive nature of national identity, national education could be a blessing or a curse to the community. However, it seems that the HKSAR government is putting forward a project on national education which may not be in line with the call to enhance critical thinking as mentioned in the reforms of education. Hence, the counter discourse proposed by civil society and academics which recommends the construction of liberal, rational and inclusive national identity and patriotism should be valued as an alternative to the official project for the maintenance of the vitality of Hong Kong under the policy of "one country, two systems". Further research is much needed in this very controversial and sensitive area.

Theme 3: Global Education

How should civic education respond to the rapid globalization we have seen in recent years? Is focusing on national education sufficient to address the pressing issues? Our searching for literature related to global or global citizenship education indicated that the research in this area in Hong Kong is under-developed.

Kennedy (2003) recommended that citizenship education preparing citizens for the globalized era marked by uncertainty, insecurity and a clash of values must be seen as tentative and one in which continuous deliberation is needed. The author suggested focusing on (1) civil society and civic institutes; (2) an authentic learning context; and (3) ethics, values and morality, in the deliberating process. With reference to these criteria, the state project on national education, which is imposed as a finished project, is an issue of serious concern, as it has not addressed most of those criteria. Law (2004) revealed that, because both Hong Kong and Taiwan are facing issues related to domestic democratic development and the changing relationship with the PRC, civic education in both places focuses on local and national issues rather than on global issues. Po, Lo, and Merryfield (2007) also found that though recently the concern for global issues and relevant skills has been raised, universal values such as human rights and social justice are neglected. The paper attributed the negligence to the tension between national education and global education. Similarly, Tse (2006a) claimed that the official civic education in the post colonial system is cultivating students to become patriotic nationals and competitive global people rather than competent global citizens.

Some studies also revealed that there is a big gap between the implemented curriculum and the intended curriculum (Grossman & Yuen, 2006; Lee & Leung, 2006; Po, Lo, & Merryfield, 2006). These studies identified many factors for successful implementation, such as the missions of schools, sufficient resource support, knowledge and competence in teaching global education of the teachers, intercultural sensitivies of teachers, parents' concern about global issues. Lee and Gu's (2004) comparative study of Shanghai and Hong Kong revealed that Hong Kong students are more concerned about local issues than global issues. Teachers in both places are interested in and agree with the importance of global education but both are more concerned about knowledge and attend less to values. In addition, Hong Kong teachers are more dissatisfied with the implementation of global education. Grossman and Yuen (2006) reported that the majority of their sampled teachers saw the world from an ethnocentric perspective, implying a barrier for intercultural understanding and suggested that exposure to culturally diverse situations can help teachers move from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism.

However, the apparent lack of attention to global education as compared to national education at the policy level was challenged by Lee (2008a). He argued that while national education has intentionally and

visibly introduced into the curriculum framework, such elements as learning tasks, values, syllabus content, extracurricular activities, as well as rituals, globalization is taken as a unavoidable background against which educational reform is based. It permeates all education reform documents and sets the scene for reform with emphasis on cultivation of generic skills and universal global values such as democracy, freedom and human rights.

In summary, the tension between national and global education in facing the rapidly globalizing era is a pressing issue of concern. Whether the implicit and permeated treatment of global education as pointed out by Lee (2008a) is sufficient to address the aims of global education is an issue worthy of further research. Moreover, the gap between the intended and the implemented curriculum in schools is so big that Hong Kong, as a cosmopolitan and open city under the globalizing forces, will need to seriously address it.

Theme 4: Human Rights Education

Compared to global education, human rights education is even more poorly attended to. Regardless of the fact that human rights education (HRE) is a rising agenda in civic education internationally, and has been included as one of the foci in civic education in the *Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools* in 1996 (Leung, Chai, & Ng, 2000), HRE has never received serious attention from civic educators in Hong Kong (Fok, 2001; Leung, 2008b). Just a handful of relevant refereed articles were identified.

Fairbrother (2005) pointed out that there were debates on HRE in schools at the Legislative Council meetings from 1987 to 2003. Some councilors complained of a lack of HRE, and asked for a strengthening of HRE enshrined in international treaties and conventions. But there was also a voice, mainly from the conservative camp, arguing that HRE was not a pressing issue after 1997. Tse (2007a) argued that, counter to the official hegemony of promoting national education by the HKSAR government, some NGOs had proposed different agendas, emphasizing HRE according to international treaties and conventions and education for democracy. They saw it as addressing the demands resulting from the concept of multiple citizenship and as a launch for an alternative discourse.

Fok (2001) argued that although HRE is insufficiently addressed by teachers, some of the recommendations on HRE by the Council of Europe in 1985 have been incorporated into the aims of the educational reform initiated by the Education and Manpower Bureau. The aims have embodied

the spirit of HRE, and laid down the foundation for developing HRE. However, Leung (2008a) argued that though HRE is considered an aspect of civic education, it has actually always been poorly taken care of. With the beginning of the fourth phase of civic education: "Civic Education through Liberal Studies", Leung (2008b) analysed the curricular document of the new mandatory subject, Liberal Studies to be implemented in senior secondary schools (15- to18-year-olds) in 2009. He concluded that if teachers are well trained in HRE, which is uncommon, Liberal Studies can be used as a vehicle for HRE. However, as the subject does not intend to cultivate "action oriented" citizens, the HRE infused is a form of "action-poor HRE". Comparing the two articles, Leung (2008b) placed a more stringent standard on HRE, demanding the incorporation of international covenants and conventions (Osler, 2008; Tibbitts, 2002), which were not mentioned in the paper by Fok (2001). Therefore Leung's (2008b) conclusion was more pessimistic than Fok's (2001).

Hong Kong is a cosmopolitan society, which has to implement fourteen international conventions on human rights. It is also a special administrative region of the People's Republic of China (PRC), which has just issued the National Human Rights Action Plan of China (2009–2010), in which there is a chapter on human rights education describing action plans for human rights education in various levels of schoolings, public sector and the civil servants. In view of these, the neglect in the development and research in HRE in Hong Kong is far from satisfactory.

The Influences of Asian Values

In the discussion reported above, both Fairbrother (2006a) and Tsang (1998) have elaborated that the policy of civic education in Hong Kong has been a compromise resulting from different forces. However, it can be discerned that Asian values seem to be particularly influential, making Hong Kong civic education moral and apolitical. What is unique about the Asian factor in civic education is a very complicated issue, given the complexity of Asian communities in terms of nations, ethnicities, cultures, religions, political systems, economics, size, population, and historical development, etc. Although there is no single agreed version of Asian values, Kennedy (2004) identified at least three different strands of debate, "the Singapore School", "the Mahathir Model" and "the China Post-Tiananmen-Confucianism-Nationalist Model". Here we shall discuss briefly the

influences of Asian values, in particular the third model (called the Confucian model [2] thereafter) on Hong Kong civic education.

Kennedy and Fairbrother (2004) raised the issue of whether the Eastern versus Western dichotomy is valid and asked us to reflect on whether, despite distinct features, they share commonalities and are compatible. For example, there is a debate on whether there is a dichotomy between West-individual and East-collective or a continuum between both. However, it should be noted that the morality inclined Eastern civic education has a Western counterpart called Character Education, while the collective oriented Eastern culture also has a counterpart called Communitarian Tradition in the Western culture, which stresses communal values, identities and common good. This seems to support the view that there may be overlap between Eastern and Western cultures instead of dichotomy. Lee (2003a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d) argued that Asian civic education, in particular the Confucian tradition, has three intermingled distinct features: emphasis on harmony, spirituality and the development of individuality and the self. Unlike its Western counterpart, the Asian concept of citizenship inclines toward the person and the relationship rather than rights and responsibilities. The feature of harmony is reflected in human relationship, both private and public, as well as relationship with the nature. Spirituality refers to the personal quality and the intrinsic value of an individual. The development of individuality and the self refers to the development of individual characters and the quality of the inner self, through self cultivation, by linking the person with the divine and the deepening of self awareness. Given these distinct features, Lee concluded that civic education in Asia tends to be apolitical and is expressed in terms of moral education, rather than human rights and the democratic system. However, Fairbrother (2005) pointed out that, regardless of the seemingly apolitical nature of Asian civic education, the construction process of Asian civic education is in fact political, as all knowledge selection processes are political

In revisiting the issue of Asian values, Lee (2008b) raised important questions asking "what kind of culture should be upheld, and whether the young generation should be socialized into the traditional culture or develop competency in critical cultural acculturation?"(p. 230). These questions are particularly important in Hong Kong because as it is developing towards a democratic political system with universal franchise for both the Chief Executive and Legislative Council as guaranteed in the Basic Law, a participatory democratic political citizenship and democratic political culture is essential. Whether an apolitical civic education resulting from the

strong influence of Asian values is adequate in equipping Hong Kong youth to face the political future is really doubtful. This idea is echoed by Kennedy. Though he agreed that Asian citizenship is characterized more by moral virtues and personal values than by civic and public values, he commented that a depoliticized civic and moral education is not good for Hong Kong in facing the complex and challenging future with uncertainties (Kennedy, 2005). In addition, Kennedy (2005) further debated that moral education in the Confucian tradition does not necessarily focus solely on personal and inward looking matters. Instead, starting from the self, a good individual will expect and work towards becoming a moral leader and ultimately towards building up a moral society. In other words, there could be a political implication in a Confucian tradition civic education. After all, culture is not static, but rather a living web of values, customs and beliefs, capable of self regeneration. These ideas challenge the thinking that Hong Kong civic education should remain apolitical and moral because of our Confucian tradition. Future study and research should be devoted to addressing this important and pressing issue.

The Way Forward: Development and Research

Due to the limitations of available resources, this literature review has limitations both in the "methodology of the study", and the choice of "areas of concern" and "themes of civic education". It is not meant to be an exhaustive review but can provide an extensive initial coverage. Methodologically, some important literature sources were not covered. Examples of such include conference papers, unpublished dissertations, theses, reports, non-refereed publications, and publications on the Internet. In the hand search of books and book chapters, we confined ourselves only to the library of the Hong Kong Institute of Education. Though the HKIEd library probably has the largest collection of education documents, it is unavoidable that some relevant sources may have been missed. Concerning the choice of "areas of concern", and "themes of civic education", some relevant items were not chosen, such as, teacher education in civic education, civic education in tertiary institutes, multicultural education, law related education, civic education for social justice, and civic education and minority groups (including gender and citizens with special needs). However, regardless of the limitations, this review has revealed some under-developed and under-researched areas and themes deserving future

attention and research. For the omitted themes and areas of concern, it is suggested that a similar review should be conducted as soon as possible for setting future research agenda. Since some suggestions for future research have been raised in the foregoing discussion, we shall not repeat the discussion here. Instead, we shall focus on a few broad areas worthy of future research and development.

In debating Western and Asian values, Kennedy (2004) gave an important and insightful reminder: "One thing is clear: If common values cannot be agreed upon, there is little hope for a common humanity and therefore little hope for a future that will advance rather than retard human development" (p. 22). As a cosmopolitan city where Eastern cultures and Western cultures meet, Hong Kong is in a strategic position to address the serious concern raised by Kennedy by facilitating research on dialogues between universality and particularities in the search for parameters that value common humanity as well as local cultural traditions. This idea is in alignment with Appiah (2006)'s argument that he sees that there is no conflict between local particularities and universal morality. This will have implications not only for education in general, but also for civic education in particular. Pertinent questions demanding vigorous research also comprise: "Is a Confucian oriented civic education, which is constructed as apolitical, inward-looking with emphasis on harmony and relationship, a comprehensive understanding of the Confucian views of politics?" and "Could and how could civic education of political orientation be constructed from different understanding of Confucian ideas?"

In the discussion of civic megatrends in the framing of civic education for Hong Kong, Kennedy (2005) mentioned several important megatrends: the democratic evolution, human rights and environmental issues, the emergent multiculturalism, as well as the vexed issue of global, national and local identities. Sharing similar concern, most of the identified megatrends have been covered in the above discussion. Moreover, most of them have been identified as important areas of concern internationally and have been included in various educations for democratic citizenship initiatives in different parts of the world (Naval, Print, & Veldhuis, 2002; Osler & Starkey, 2006). As discussed above, because of the long standing apolitical orientation and strong moral overtones of Hong Kong's civic education, the captioned megatrends might not have been addressed adequately. Recently, this apparent separation of political and moral aspects of civic education has been challenged seriously (Haste & Hogan, 2006; Oser & Veugelers, 2008; Westheimer, 2008). Much more effort in research is needed to bridge these

two aspects for the development of a more comprehensive understanding of civic education, which could address both moral and political elements in civic life. The enhanced dialogues between the moral and political elements would shed light to the research in the neglected but important megatrends.

In particular, the megatrend of democratic development calls for urgent demands for political education. As Hong Kong has been promised self-rule with a directly elected government, whether there is sufficient political education in the school curriculum to nurture both future political leaders and informed electorate should be addressed with urgency. The fact that Liberal Studies is going to displace subjects with political education elements like Government and Public Affairs and Economic and Public Affairs at senior secondary level has underlined such urgency. This should be probed together with the question of whether teachers have been sufficiently trained for implementing political education.

The above discussion has also revealed that the agenda of the SAR government and the agenda of the civil society concerning such matters as national education, human rights education, and democratic education could well be different and such difference is anticipated to continue. Research that casts light on such differing agendas is much needed, particularly if the roles and functions of civil society, and the relationship between civil society and schools can be illuminated.

From a curricular and implementation perspective, starting from 2009 the mandatory subject Liberal Studies has become a vehicle for the cultivation of participatory citizens and should be responsible for addressing the captioned neglected important megatrends. Whether the vehicle is able to achieve the goals successfully and how it can be done, in terms of curriculum, textbooks, teachers' qualities, pedagogies and assessments, render many significant issues for study and research. In addition, there are two observed internationally rising agendas related to implementation which are severely neglected in Hong Kong. First, while international civic education initiatives are adopting more action oriented pedagogies for transforming social injustice (Banks, 2008; Dilworth, 2008; Magendzo, 2005; Nazzari, McAdams, & Roy, 2005), civic education in Hong Kong, in particular HRE, is described as "action poor" (Leung, 2008a). Second, the rising notion of "students as here and now citizen" which implies democratic school governance and students' participation in school decision making, is also neglected in Hong Kong (Leung & Yuen, 2009; Osler & Starkey, 2005). Much more effort for development and research in these areas is needed.

From the perspective of learning, the construction of citizenship, the process of political socialization and counter-socialization by students are issues worthy of further research. In terms of the age group of students, very few studies, if any, were identified for university and kindergarten students.

Lastly, it should be noted that a variety of methods, including both qualitative and quantitative methods, have been used in studying civic education. Secondary data analysis using large scale comparative data is also blossoming. But similar to the findings of some international studies, we found that the use of longitudinal studies, which is particularly important in the study of effectiveness of teaching and learning, is relatively rare (Arthur, Davies, & Hahn, 2008). More longitudinal studies are needed in future research so that sustainability of the effects of civic education can be investigated for the improvement of practice of civic education so that civic education will not remain in the domain of lip-service. As Hong Kong is a place where China meets the West, it may be useful to see more comparative case studies that can compare and contrast the practice of civic education in Hong Kong's schools with those going on in the West, and in the Mainland.

Notes

1. In the literature quoted, political education is named as education for democracy and is taken as one of the foci of civic education.
2. It should be noted that there are different versions of Confucian systems of thoughts. However this is not our focus of discussion in this paper.

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