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CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

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A study on the implementation of  
a positive youth development program  
(Project P.A.T.H.S.) for Secondary One  
ethnic minority students living in Hong Kong

香港少數族裔中一學童參與

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## Abstracts

Project P.A.T.H.S. is a curricular-based program that attempts to promote positive youth development in Hong Kong. It is a universal program providing for junior secondary school students in the participating schools. With more than 30 evaluation studies carried by the Project P.A.T.H.S. research team, none has evaluated its impact on ethnic minority students living in Hong Kong. Counting for about 5% of the total population, non-Chinese are living in a rather disadvantaged position. An effective implementation of positive youth development program during their adolescence stage would surely help promote them a better life in Hong Kong. The aims of this study is to: 1) understand the expectations that S1 ethnic minority Hong Kong students have for a youth development program, 2) explore the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. as perceived by ethnic minority students, and 3) explore critical factors for successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes of Project P.A.T.H.S. It is a process evaluation study. Qualitative methods are adopted in which data was obtained through class observations (in three schools) and in-depth interviews (for twenty-two students) in 2007-2008 school year. Discussion is made on: 1) Ethnic minority students' expectation for youth development program, 2) effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. as perceived by ethnic minority students (in terms of **5C**: **C**onnection, **C**ompetence, **C**onfidence, **C**ontribution and **C**haracter), and 3) **P**eople, **P**rogram, and **P**rocess as critical factors for effective program implementation. The limitations and recommendations of this study, together with suggestions for future research are pinpointed at the end of this paper.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

Recently in Hong Kong, a positive youth development program – P.A.T.H.S. to Adulthood: A Jockey Club Youth Enhancement Scheme – has been developed for junior secondary-school students (Shek, Ma & Merrick, 2007; Shek & Ma, 2007a). The acronym P.A.T.H.S. stands for **P**ositive **A**dolescent **T**raining through **H**olistic **S**ocial Programs. P.A.T.H.S. is for all secondary one (S1) to secondary three (S3) students in the participating schools. After 52 schools participated in the Experimental Implementation Phase (EIP) in the 2005-2006 school year, the Full Implementation Phase (FIP) was launched in 2006-2007, with 207 schools participating. The number of participating schools was gradually increased to 231 in 2009-2010.

While the research team of Project P.A.T.H.S. has conducted around 30 evaluation studies in order to explore the effectiveness of the project, none has evaluated its impact on Hong Kong's Ethnic minority students. Among the 207 secondary schools that participated in the FIP in 2006-2007, five were designated schools for non-Chinese students. As there were more than 3,400 non-Chinese students (mostly Nepalese, Pakistani and Indian) studying in primary and secondary public schools in 2006 – 2007 (HKSAR Government Information Centre, 2006), their voices should not be omitted.

Statistics from the Census and Statistics Department (2006) show that more than 300,000 non-Chinese, about 5% of the total population, live in Hong Kong. However,

those coming from South Asian and Southeast Asian countries are in a rather disadvantaged position. For instance, they have high unemployment rates, language barriers, integration problems and hardships in building social networks (Working Group of Social Integration Project for Ethnic Minority People in Hong Kong & Unison Hong Kong, 2003; Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service Yau Tsim District Outreaching Social Work Team, 2000). In light of these difficulties, it is crucial to cultivate positive development in South Asian and Southeast Asian students' adolescent years to enhance their core competences, resilience and whole personal development and help them cope with their disadvantages.

In their commentary on the schooling of ethnic minority children, Wong and Rowley (2001) recommended that researchers balance both positive and negative aspects. Much of the literature adopts a pathological view and a deficit model to study the situation of ethnic minorities, but it is equally important to understand their strengths, protective factors and positive aspects. Nearly all studies about ethnic minority residents living in Hong Kong use deficit language, focusing on the problems and troubles they encounter. On the other hand, even with these cultural-specific needs, ethnic minority youth also have normative developmental needs, i.e., those significant to all adolescents. Understanding the positive aspects and expectations of development for ethnic minority youth living in Hong Kong can give us a more accurate and comprehensive view of the situation.

As a social worker who has worked with ethnic minority residents of Hong Kong for more than 7 years, I have a strong interest in getting a deeper understanding of their well-being. As most previous local studies have focused on problems and difficulties

encountered in daily life, I would like to explore these youths' actual expectations of their development. Also, after working with the research team of Project P.A.T.H.S. for the past few years, I am eager to explore how this multi-million-dollar project benefits ethnic minority students, especially when it is the first systematic, evidence-based youth development program that has an English program manual. It is assumed that P.A.T.H.S. should somehow benefit these students; nevertheless, to have a systematic and deeper exploration, it is best to conduct a process-evaluation study so that their learning process can be studied in greater detail.

With this background situation in mind, two research questions were formulated to guide this study: 1) What are ethnic minority students' expectations of their personal development? 2) How can we provide effective positive development programs for ethnic minority students living in Hong Kong?

To answer these questions, this process-evaluation study has three research aims: 1) understanding the expectations that S1 ethnic minority Hong Kong students have for a youth development program, 2) exploring the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. as perceived by ethnic minority students, and 3) exploring critical factors for successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes of Project P.A.T.H.S. Qualitative methods are used in this study to examine the complex phenomena of the project (especially during the process of the program) and to explore *how* and *why* the program has been a success or failure for these students.

This paper has seven chapters. The first chapter introduces the background of the study and the researcher's interest in conducting this study. The second chapter,

reviews literature related to research questions and aims, including the concept of positive youth development, its current development in Hong Kong and the emergence of Project P.A.T.H.S., literature related to ethnic minority residents living in Hong Kong, and methods of program evaluation in social work research. The third chapter presents the conceptual framework of this study. The fourth chapter introduces the methodology of this study, including its research design, participants, sampling, data collection methods, and data analysis. The fifth chapter organizes findings derived from data analysis into nine categories, which are closely related to the research aims of this study. The sixth chapter discusses the findings of this study and compares these with the literature review to explore whether the findings of this study confirm, refute and/or extend those of others. Lastly, the seventh chapter presents the summary of this paper, draws conclusions, outlines this study's limitations and implications, and makes suggestions for future research.

This study can contribute to the development of knowledge, especially about the well-being of ethnic minority students living in Hong Kong, as there is a lack of previous research on their positive development. Second, findings from this study could help frontline teachers and social workers deliver quality services and enhance cultural sensitivity. Third, this study could provide feedback to the research team of Project P.A.T.H.S. to improve this multi-million-dollar project. Last, this study can serve as a reference for policy-makers, who can then include expectations of ethnic minority youth.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

This chapter has four parts: 1) concepts of positive youth development, including literature from South Asian countries; 2) the current development of positive youth development programs in Hong Kong as well as the background of Project P.A.T.H.S.; 3) literature related to ethnic minority residents living in Hong Kong, to improve the study's cultural competence (Rubin & Babbie, 2005); 4) methods of program evaluation in social work research and the need to use qualitative methods in this study. These four elements provide background for our attempt to answer the research aims and questions.

#### **2.1 Positive youth development**

When discussing positive youth development, the term 'youth development' should first be covered. The field has two major approaches, as summarized by Benson (1997) – the '*deficit-based approach*' and the '*positive youth development approach*'.

##### **2.1.1 Youth development**

As listed by Berzonsky (2000), five types of theories dominated adolescent psychology during the twentieth century: biological, cultural, psychoanalytic, psychosocial and cognitive. These views emphasize different aspects of adolescent development, including sexuality, cultural experiences, psychosocial influences, cognition, identity, etc. Though no single theory can fully describe adolescent development across different cultures, these theories provide a basic understanding of the topic.

In this study, psychosocial development is the focus. In his classic study, Erikson (1968) described eight stages of human development, each characterized by a normative conflict that must be negotiated. In the fifth stage (*adolescence*), youths are in a stage of identity formation, with a conflict of *identity* and *diffusion*. Adolescents attempt to integrate their experiences in order to construct a stable personal identity. As cited by Berzonsky (2000), Marcia formulated four identity statuses of psychosocial personality development during adolescence: 1) *Identity achievers*, those who are actively involved in identity searching and have committed themselves to a set of goals and values; 2) *Identity moratoriums*, those who are currently searching for self-identity but who have not formed/committed to a stable personal identity; 3) *Identity foreclosurers*, those who have committed goals and values from significant others, such as parents, but who have not extensively engaged in self-exploration; 4) *Identity diffusers*, those who are neither in the self-exploration process nor committed to any goals and values. Successfully mastering this stage gives adolescents a strong sense of self and a feeling of independence/control, resulting in positive qualities like personality, optimism and bonding with healthy adults. On the contrary, those who cannot resolve the conflict in this stage remain insecure and confused about themselves and the future. They may also indulge in self-destructive activities.

Other than psychosocial theory, cultural theory is another view considered in this study. As summarized by Berzonsky (2000), adolescent behaviour varies greatly from culture to culture – the way adolescents act and the problems they encounter are related to the cultures and environments in which they live. For instance, as cited by Berzonsky, Benedict suggested that adolescence in American and Western countries



is stressful and tumultuous, while in other cultures, adolescence is less problematic or stressful. She proposed that in those non-stressful cultures, socialization and development are rather gradual and continuous. For example, a girl living in a village would probably take on a role similar to that of her mother. Therefore, when one transits from childhood to adulthood, she is well-prepared and thus experiences little turmoil and difficulty. This study considers cultural and family backgrounds of ethnic minority students to understand whether living in Hong Kong makes any difference.

To sum up, “youth development” means changing and growing in the adolescent stage. Those who successfully master the developmental task of this stage have positive results; those who do not, have negative results.

### **2.1.2 Deficit-based approach of youth development**

Before moving on to the *positive youth development approach*, we will start with the *deficit-based approach* of youth development, as it is more familiar for teachers and social workers. Negative (or problematic) development of youth is first discussed, followed by views from the deficit-based approach towards such negative development.

As mentioned, adolescents who cannot master the developmental task will probably engage in self-destructive activities. Benson (1997, p.56) listed several types of high-risk behaviour (alcohol and tobacco use, drugs abused, sexual intercourse, antisocial behaviour, violence, school problems, etc.) for sixth-to-twelfth-grade students in Albuquerque and Minneapolis when assessing students’ development. Similarly in Hong Kong, problems of adolescents include crime and delinquency, mental-health

issues, unhealthy lifestyles, unemployment, 'non-engagement' and difficult family relationships (Shek, 2007a), not to mention the worrying trend of increasing youth drug use in the past decade (Narcotics Division, 2009).

On the other hand, since the current study focuses on ethnic minority students, youth development studies from South Asian and Southeast Asian countries should also be covered. Dassi and Khan (2000) identified three types of deviant behaviour in their study of children and adolescents in the slum areas of Delhi, India. They include anti-social behaviour (abusive language, fights with siblings, talking back, coming home late), pre-delinquent behaviour (group fights, teasing passers-by, tobacco use, school truancy, home absence), and delinquent behaviour (gambling, stealing, drug use, alcohol use and pick-pocketing). Comparing to Western cultures, more emphasis was placed on the family, such as abusive language towards parents, fights with siblings, coming home late and being absent from home. Interestingly, Dassi and Khan concluded in their report that parents living in slum areas react strongly to anti-social and pre-delinquent behaviours, notably those occurring at home, yet they are relatively more tolerant of delinquent behaviour. The researchers suggested that the socio-economic background of these parents (low education, low income, unsettled job situation) contributed to these tendencies. Thus, it is suggested that literature on ethnic minority residents of Hong Kong can enhance the reliability of this study.

In order to 'correct' and 'cure' such adolescent misbehaviour, attention has traditionally generally been given to problems and difficulties encountered. Contrary to the positive youth development approach, 'deficit' and 'pathological' language is used when adolescents are viewed with the deficit-based approach (Benson, 1997).

Program development under such an approach then focuses on youth problems and troubles, with the goal likely to elimination or control of such risks. The target participants under this perspective would be vulnerable youth.

On the other hand, Moore, Lippman and Brown (2004) have argued that typical U.S. indicators of child well-being focus on negative aspects, i.e., behaviours that adults wish to prevent; however, this outlook lacks a vision of what people actually want for the next generation, i.e., the positive indicators that should be measured. As a result, they suggested measuring multiple domains of youth development, including educational achievement, cognitive attainment, health, social and emotional development as well as self-sufficiency. This is closer to what Benson (1997) suggested as the positive youth development approach.

### **2.1.3 Positive youth development approach**

Instead of ‘correcting’ and ‘curing’ the young people identified by the *deficit-based approach*, Benson (1997) says the *positive youth development approach* aims at understanding youth and educating them in productive activities to enhance their protective factors as well as developmental assets. According to Damon (2004), while recognizing that children may be affected by various adversities and developmental challenges, the positive youth development approach begins with “a vision of a fully able child eager to explore the world, gain competence, and acquire the capacity to contribute importantly to the world” (p.15).

In India, the Youth Policy was proposed in 1992 after the International Youth Year (1985) to develop the potential of youth as well as help meet their needs (Hans,

1996). However, as Hans commented, the policy's main features contained some misconceptions and ambiguities. For instance, he commented that one of the main features of Youth Policy, enabling "youth to become productive, self confident and committed for national development," gives the impression that, without assistance, youth cannot be productive in national development. Moreover, the policy's statement that adolescents "are seen as having many problems" is typical of the deficit-based approach. Hans called for a more positive approach in which positive qualities of youth were considered, including dynamism, willingness to sacrifice, courage, pioneering spirit, etc. This is actually what Benson (1997) regarded as the positive youth development approach.

In Hong Kong, Shek (2007b) has recently summarized several theories and concepts in a positive youth development approach that conceptualizes the framework of Project P.A.T.H.S.: 1) literature related to risk and protective factors, 2) adolescent developmental assets, 3) deficit- and asset-based models, 4) models of positive youth-development programs, and 5) ecological models. He proposed that adolescents could be viewed as full of strength and protective factors from different levels and different angles. For instance, protective factors can be found at the *Personal level* (e.g., optimism, problem-solving skills, conflict resolution skills, emotional competence), *Peer level* (e.g., friends with healthy lifestyles, better interpersonal relationships), *School level* (e.g., bonding with teachers, supportive school atmospheres), *Family level* (e.g., bonding with family members, constructive communication with parents, support from parents, stable family economic condition) and *Societal level* (e.g., positive societal atmosphere, having good public role models). All of the above contribute to adolescents' positive development (Choi, Au,

Tang, Shum, Tang, Choi et al., 2003).

This study explores the youth development of ethnic minority students in Hong Kong. When studying their development, one might ask these questions: Is there any related study from the ethnic minority point of view? What do they expect of their development? What will they regard as 'positive' in their development? A review of Hong Kong literature showed that not only does nearly all research focus on these students' deficits and disadvantages, it lacks a view of positive development, i.e., what they actually want for their development. This study attempts to fill this gap and make contributions in this area.

## **2.2. Positive youth development programs in Hong Kong**

### **2.2.1 Background**

Traditionally, Hong Kong is a place in which parents and schools place great emphasis on students' academic results. Nevertheless, youth development is much more than academic performance – students are also concerned with friendship, physical appearance, interpersonal relationships, psychological well-being and maladjusted behaviour (Hui, 2001). Meng (1996) once mentioned that Hong Kong students are weak in various abilities, such as thinking morally and handling moral problems. Moreover, it has been suggested that Hong Kong adolescents lack resilience (Choi, Au, Tang, Shum, Tang, Choi et al., 2003).

To cope with this situation, the **Understanding the Adolescent Project (U.A.P.)** was implemented in secondary (1999) and primary schools (2004) to cultivate positive development among children and youth in our rapidly changing society. The U.A.P.

aims at cultivating resilience by improving students' **COB**: **C**ompetence, **O**ptimism and **B**elongingness (Education Bureau, 2008a; Lau, 2003). The project provided intensive group training and activities for students whom an assessment identified as having greater developmental needs. In his evaluation study of the U.A.P., Lau (2003) concluded that the project was somewhat successful and that the **C**ompetence component seemed to be more successful than **O**ptimism and **B**elongingness, probably because of the emphasis on skill building. However, the program used a screening procedure to sort out students with greater psychosocial needs, imposing a labelling effect. This is one feature of the *deficit-based* approach of youth development as summarized by Benson (1997), targeting participants who are vulnerable. Moreover, as it was not a universal program, the U.A.P. did not provide any development program for those who were not identified as having needs.

On the other hand, Liberal Studies has just become a core subject in the new 3-year senior secondary (NSS) system (Education Bureau, 2008b). There are six modules in Liberal Studies – 1) Personal Development and Interpersonal Relationships; 2) Hong Kong Today; 3) Modern China; 4) Globalization; 5) Public Health; and 6) Energy Technology and the Environment. This shows increasing attention on whole-person development in Hong Kong, providing opportunities for students to explore issues relevant to human conditions as well as to think from different perspectives (Lee, 2008).

Project P.A.T.H.S. has emerged into this situation as a youth development program for junior secondary students. Since the P.A.T.H.S. content covers the core areas of (or even goes beyond) Model 1: Personal Development and Interpersonal

Relationship in Liberal Studies under the NSS (Lee, 2008), the project has been well-received. It serves as a bridge to move students from junior secondary education to senior secondary education, as knowledge obtained from the project will better equip them for studying Liberal Studies under the NSS. It also contributes to whole person development education in junior secondary school.

### **2.2.2 P.A.T.H.S. to Adulthood: A Jockey Club Youth Enhancement Scheme**

The vision of Project P.A.T.H.S. is to promote holistic development among adolescents in Hong Kong. Funded by the Jockey Club Charities Trust, five universities in Hong Kong formed a research team to develop this universal positive youth development project. Although most secondary schools in Hong Kong offer whole person development lessons for junior students (moral education, civic education or life education), validated and evidence-based programs are rare (Ma & Sun, 2007). Project P.A.T.H.S. was developed to fill this gap and to promote holistic development.

In response to the education environment in Hong Kong (Lee, 2008), Project P.A.T.H.S. has several unique features (Ma & Sun, 2007). Firstly, the S1-S3 curriculum is evidence-based with a strong theoretical foundation (see next section). Secondly, there are both universal (Tier 1) and selective (Tier 2) programs. Thirdly, teachers and social workers received intensive training to fully understand the ideology, objectives and practical issues of the project. Lastly, strategies based on triangulation have been used in order to evaluate the project's effectiveness (Shek, 2009). Longitudinal evaluation has also been conducted so as to understand the effect of P.A.T.H.S. on students in the long run.

Tier 1 of P.A.T.H.S. is a universal program for all S1 to S3 students of the participating schools. It is a curricular-based approach consisting of lesson-based preventive programs. Participating schools have several flexibilities (Lee, 2008). Firstly, they can select the Full Program (20 hours) or the Core Program (10 hours). Among the 214 schools joining Project P.A.T.H.S. (S1) in 2007-2008, 110 adopted the Core Program while the other 104 used the Full Program. Secondly, each school has the freedom to decide who teaches the program (e.g., a teacher, a social worker or both). Thirdly, each school has the flexibility to integrate the program into a formal curriculum (e.g., Moral Education, Liberal Studies or Civil Education) or implement it outside formal school time (e.g., after school or during teachers' periods or post-examination periods). Nevertheless, it is noted that programs integrated into formal curricula with longer durations of implementation tend to be more effective (Shek & Sun, 2008a).

On the other hand, the Tier 2 Program is specially arranged (i.e., a selective prevention initiative) for students with greater psychological needs in different domains; 20 or 40 percent of all students will join, depending on whether the schools have selected the Full Program or the Core Program in Tier 1 respectively. Each school has the flexibility to design its own Tier 2 Program according to the unique needs of its students. However, this is not the main focus of this study, so we will not discuss it in depth.

The focus of this study is Tier 1. It is noted that the three schools participating in this study selected the Full Program and integrated the program into their formal curricula.



### **2.2.3 Theoretical framework of Project P.A.T.H.S.**

As mentioned before, several theories and concepts have been considered when designing Project P.A.T.H.S. (Shek, 2007b):

- 1) Risk factors, protective factors and resilience: Adolescents experiencing adversity do not necessarily end up as failures, provided protective factors have more impact on the adolescents than do risk factors. According to Reed-Victor and Stronge (2002), protective factors are both individual and environmental. Individual factors include extraversion (seeking others for help and making friends easily), sociability (being helpful and dependable), conscientiousness (persisting in difficult tasks and being goal-oriented), emotional stability (having confidence and a positive self-image) and openness to experience (learning eagerly and having problem-solving skills). Environmental factors include support (having caring relationships with positive adults and peers), structure (enjoying clear, consistent and high expectations from the community) and opportunity (having chances to develop talents and personal interests). Cultivating adolescents' protective factors is the primary concern under this concept.
- 2) Adolescent developmental assets: The goal of youth development programs is to develop adolescent developmental assets, which as Benson (1997) proposed can be divided into external assets and internal assets. External assets include family support, positive family communication, youth appreciated by the community as resources, positive peer influence and adult role models. Internal assets include achievement motivation, school engagement, positive values (e.g., caring, integrity and honesty), positive self-esteem, and resistance skills. Under this concept, the goal of youth development programs is to promote such

developmental assets in adolescents' lives. Some researchers (Eccles & Gootman, 2002) have suggested that adolescents have tasks to achieve in their current developmental stage, tasks which are closely related to cultivation of the above assets.

- 3) Deficit- and asset-based models: The deficit-based model (discussed in chapter 2.1.2 in great detail) focuses on the reduction of deficits and risks of a specific population. On the other hand, the asset-based model focuses on the promotion of developmental assets, which is closely related to the concept of developmental assets discussed above.
- 4) Models of positive youth development programs: As argued by Pittman et al. (2003), prevention alone is not enough for youth development; also, problem-free youth are not necessarily fully-prepared youth. As extended by Shek (2007b), “problem-free” can mean staying in school, avoiding unhealthy behaviour and managing emotions, yet this is certainly not enough for youth development. Instead, “fully-prepared” means having assets like high academic motivation, positive attitudes towards work and supportive relationships with peers. In order to help youth be fully prepared, positive youth development programs operate through several channels – programs, organizations, systems and the community. The desired outcomes in the adolescent stage include competence, confidence, character, connection and contribution (Pittman, Irby, Tolman, Yohalem & Ferber, 2003).
- 5) Ecological model: This model is commonly used in prevention science and in the positive youth development approach. Individuals are assumed to be influenced by different personal and environmental factors, with reference to different systems. According to Shek (2007b), the general view of the ecological model is

that changes in both individuals and their environment are vital in order to change individual behavior. Among adolescents' different systems and ecological contexts, school is an important environment place for change. Therefore, a school-based positive youth development program is proposed.

With reference to the aforementioned theories and concepts, the development constructs as well as intended learning outcomes of the Project P.A.T.H.S. are then decided and structuralized.

#### Development Constructs

After reviewing 77 North American programs on positive youth development, Catalano et al. (2004) suggested that 25 programs were regarded as successful and that 15 positive development constructs could be identified in these programs. Project P.A.T.H.S. adopts all these constructs in the Tier 1 curriculum (Shek & Ma, 2007b):

- 1) **Promotion of Bonding:** Development of program participants' belongingness and relationships with significant others, including family members, teachers, desirable peers, healthy adults, etc.
- 2) **Promotion of Social Competence:** Development of program participants' interpersonal skills as well as the building of a clear national and racial identity.
- 3) **Promotion of Emotional Competence:** Development of program participants' abilities to recognize and express their own feelings, and to use emotional self-management strategies.
- 4) **Promotion of Cognitive Competence:** Teaching students different thinking styles, including critical thinking, creative thinking and rational thinking.

- 5) **Promotion of Behavioural Competence:** Promoting verbal and non-verbal communication skills for participants, as well as promoting effective behavioural choices.
- 6) **Promotion of Moral Competence:** Cultivating a sense of right and wrong and enhancing participants' moral judgement.
- 7) **Development of Self-Efficacy:** Helping participants develop positive self-efficacy expectancies and changing their self-defeating cognitions.
- 8) **Fostering Pro-social Norms:** Promoting the understanding of pro-social norms as well as encouraging participants towards pro-social engagement.
- 9) **Cultivation of Resilience:** Enhancing participants' capacity to adapt to and learn from changing and stressful events.
- 10) **Cultivation of Self-Determination:** Promoting a sense of autonomy, independent thinking and self-advocacy.
- 11) **Promotion of Spirituality:** Helping participants appreciate the value of life and explore the meaning of life.
- 12) **Development of a Clear and Positive Identity:** Promotion of a healthy and positive self-identity.
- 13) **Promotion of Beliefs in the Future:** Promotion of optimism and development of goals and hopes for the future.
- 14) **Providing Opportunity for Pro-social Involvement:** Providing chances for participants to get involved in pro-social activities and make contributions to society.
- 15) **Providing Recognition for Positive Behaviour:** Develop systems and an atmosphere for rewarding and recognizing participants' positive behaviour to reinforce pro-social behaviour.

### Constructs in the Core Program

In the Tier 1 Program, 40 30-minute curriculum units were developed from the first 14 constructs for each year, a total of 120 units from S1 to S3. The fifteenth construct – Providing Recognition for Positive Behaviour – since it reinforces engagement in prosocial behaviour, is integrated into all S1, S2 and S3 units (Cheng, Siu & Leung, 2007). For example, instructors should openly praise those students who successfully complete activities; positive rewards should be given to those performing well. On the other hand, the first 8 constructs (i.e. Bonding, Social Competence, Emotional Competence, Cognitive Competence, Behavioural Competence, Moral Competence, Self Efficacy and Pro-social Norms) are included in the Core Program as these constructs were most frequently identified in successful positive youth development programs (Catalano et al., 2004).

### Intended learning outcomes of the project

Concerning the effectiveness of program implementation, the Project P.A.T.H.S. research team has adopted these 15 positive youth development constructs as basic outcome-evaluation measurements (Shek & Siu, 2007). Therefore, when evaluating the project – e.g., objective outcome evaluation (Shek, 2006), subjective outcome evaluation (Shek & Ma, 2007c; Shek, Siu & Lee, 2007) and qualitative evaluation (Shek, Lee, Siu & Lam, 2006; Shek, Sun, Lam, Lung & Lo, 2008) – evidence of students' positive change in the 15 constructs is regarded as successful implementation.

In addition to the 15 constructs, Shek and Siu (2007) regard “7C” as terminal indicators, which include:

- 6) **Confidence:** Self-worth (positive self and social identity) and mastery of the future (awareness of progress in life and a future-driven orientation).
- 7) **Character:** Responsibility, autonomy and spirituality in connecting with family, groups and communities.
- 8) **Connection:** Membership in and belongingness to a community or in certain relationships, as well as the sense of security derived from interpersonal relationships.
- 9) **Competence:** Knowledge and skills in social, emotional, cognitive, behavioural and moral domains, which can be applied and practised in daily activities.
- 10) **Caring:** Pro-social involvement and pro-social norms.
- 11) **Compassion:** Sympathy and love for others.
- 12) **Contribution:** Participation in and having influence through various kinds of activities.

In this study, the concept of **7C** is applied in the conceptual framework, which will be examined further in chapter 3.

#### **2.2.4 Previous evaluation studies of Project P.A.T.H.S.**

The Project P.A.T.H.S. research team adopted various study methods to explore the effectiveness of the project under the principle of triangulation (Rubin & Babbie, 2005; Shek, 2008).

##### Previous studies

Types of evaluation study have included: 1) *Objective outcome evaluation* (Shek,

2006, 2010; Shek, Siu, Lee, Cheung & Chung, 2008), in which pre- and post-test data utilizing the Chinese Positive Youth Development Scale (CPYDS) were obtained from students from participating schools so as to analyse program effectiveness; 2) *Subjective outcome evaluation* (Ma & Shek, 2010; Shek & Ma, 2007c; Shek, Siu & Lee, 2007; Shek, Sun & Chan, 2008; Tsang, Hui, Shek & Law, 2010), in which subjective outcome evaluation forms were completed by students and program implementers from participating schools in order to assess their views as well as perceived program effectiveness; 3) *Qualitative evaluation* (Shek, Lee, Siu & Lam, 2006; Shek & Ng, 2009a), in which students were randomly selected to participate in focus groups, and were asked to both name three metaphors that could describe the program and share the perceived beneficial effect(s) of the program in different psychosocial domains; 4) *Process evaluation*, in which four (Shek, Lee & Sun, 2008) and fourteen schools (Shek, Ma, Sun & Lung, 2008) were randomly selected to carry out a systematic observation of curriculum units, and each of the schools were observed once by observers arranged by the research team; 5) *Interim evaluation* (Shek & Sun, 2006), where program implementers were interviewed in person or by telephone in the middle of the school year to explore the perceived benefits of the program, the positive and negative features of the program and any difficulties encountered during the implementation of the program; and 6) *Case study method* (Shek & Ma, 2008; Shek & Sun, 2008a), in which focus-group interviews were conducted with the stakeholders of participating schools, including the school contact person and instructors, so as to examine factors affecting the quality of program implementation. Five factors were eventually identified, called **5P** – **P**rogram, **P**eople, **P**rocess, **P**olicy and **P**lace. These serve as a major part of the conceptual framework of this study and are discussed further in sections 2.4.2 and

### 3.2.

The aforementioned evaluation studies consistently showed positive outcomes from both students' and implementers' point of views. For instance, when evaluating the effectiveness of the Tier 1 Program based on the first 2 years of program implementation, Shek (2009) said that students participating in Tier 1 at experimental schools had significantly higher positive youth development levels than those in control schools. Shek used indicators derived from the Chinese Positive Youth Development Scale (the scale contains 15 subscales, covering 15 constructs of Project P.A.T.H.S.). Experimental groups had higher scores in the domains of Resilience, Social Competence, Emotional Competence, Cognitive Competence, Behavioural Competence, Moral Competence, Self-Determination, Self-Efficacy, Beliefs in the Future, and Clear and Positive Identity. Moreover, students from experimental schools showed a lower level of delinquency, with better school adjustment, than those in control schools.

Findings from Shek, Siu and Lee (2007) also suggest that most implementers of Project P.A.T.H.S. have positive perceptions towards the program. For instance, most of them gave positive ratings for objectives of teaching units (90.7%), design of program activities (81.4%) and active involvement of the students (83.4%). The study also suggested that most implementers evaluated their performance positively and perceived the program as beneficial to adolescent development. Finally, most implementers indicated that they would recommend the program to students with similar needs (84.3%) and would like to teach similar courses in the future (85%).



Furthermore, process evaluation conducted by the Project P.A.T.H.S. research team showed that the level of program adherence was generally high. For the fourteen S1 classes randomly selected to be observed once in the 2006-2007 school year (Shek, Ma, Sun & Lung, 2008), the average program adherence was 86.3%. In another study observing four S2 classes in the 2006-2007 school year (Shek, Lee & Sun, 2008), the average program adherence was 83.6%. On top of that, these studies provided evidence that participating schools had high-quality implementation. For instance, observers found high levels of student interest, student participation, degree of achievement of objectives as well as instructors' classroom control and use of interactive delivery methods. This provided evidence that program quality is positively associated with program adherence in Project P.A.T.H.S.

These are all encouraging, yet the methodology and findings of the above studies are lacking in the following areas:

First, though data obtained from program participants consistently showed positive results, none of the above studies specifically evaluated the effectiveness of P.A.T.H.S. towards ethnic minority students. With these students' unique psychosocial developmental needs, cultural backgrounds, expectations of youth programs and growing experiences, how do they perceive the program's effectiveness? A study on ethnic minority students is needed to enhance our knowledge in this area.

Second, data from program participants were mainly obtained through quantitative methods (including subjective and objective outcome evaluation), with a few focus

groups used to obtain qualitative data, yet no study obtained data through in-depth interviews. Such interviews allow interviewers to make clarifications and elaborations, which is especially important when interviewing people from different cultural backgrounds (Rubin & Babbie, 2005). Therefore, in this study, qualitative methods (including in-depth interviews and class observations) are used.

Third, though the Project P.A.T.H.S. research team has conducted some process evaluation studies (Shek, Lee & Sun, 2008; Shek, Ma, Sun & Lung, 2008), in which classes in randomly selected schools were observed, the observers visited each school just once because of limited resources. But students probably perform 'better' in front of outsiders because of social desirability, especially during the first observation (Rubin & Babbie, 2005), which might have hindered the reliability and validity of these studies. Moreover, students' performance and changes throughout the whole school year cannot be observed from only one observation. Therefore, participating schools in this study were observed throughout the whole school year to examine whether students' performance is improved or not. Finally, in the case study presented by Shek and Sun (2008a, 2008b), **5P** (**P**rogram, **P**eople, **P**rocess, **P**olicy and **P**lace) were suggested as the influential factors in program effectiveness, yet these concepts were actually derived from interviews conducted with school contact persons and program implementers. Students' views of **5P** were not gathered. In this study, ethnic minority students' views of **5P**, especially **P**rogram, **P**eople and **P**rocess, are examined.

Having discussed Project P.A.T.H.S., it is time to move on to the literature on ethnic minorities, especially South Asian and Southeast Asian adolescents, living in Hong Kong. Understanding more about their socio-economic background(s) as well as

their psychosocial developmental needs will enhance cultural competence and improve the collection, interpretation and analysis of data obtained in this study.

### **2.3 Ethnic minorities**

According to Rubin and Babbie (2005, p.497), “Cultural competence means being aware of and appropriately responding to the ways in which cultural factors and cultural differences should influence what we investigate, how we investigate, and how we interpret our findings”. A culturally insensitive study may lead to problems in recruitment and retention of participants as well as irrelevant findings of research, affecting the reliability of the study.

To study ethnic minority adolescents living in Hong Kong, it is important to understand their traditions, values, family systems, socio-economic issues, historical experiences and attitudes towards society. In this part, we will review the literature concerning ethnic minority (especially for the South Asian and Southeast Asian residents living in Hong Kong as they encounter more difficulties).

#### **2.3.1 Ethnic minorities in Hong Kong**

Totalling more than 300,000, and counting for about 5% of the total population (Census and Statistics Department, 2006), ethnic minorities are living in a rather disadvantaged position, and some even regard them as an ‘invisible groups’ (Frost, 2004; Singpao, 2009/1/17). Ethnic minorities (sometimes also termed as ‘non-Chinese’) in Hong Kong are people from South Asia as well as Great Britain, Japan, Korea, the United States, Canada, among others. However, those who come from South Asia and Southeast Asia, with darker skin and different cultural backgrounds

compared to Westerners, suffer more deprivation and difficulties in this cosmopolitan city. In this study, the category 'ethnic minority' mainly includes residents from South Asia and Southeast Asian, e.g., Indians, Pakistanis, Nepalese, Thais, Filipinos, Sri Lankans and Indonesians.

Ethnic minority residents have a history in Hong Kong dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Pluss, 2005; Lock & Detaramani, 2006). Long before the handover to China in 1997, ethnic minority migrated to Hong Kong mainly to earn money, working as merchants, traders, police officers, Gurkhas and musicians (Oxfam, 2003). As a bilingual city, Hong Kong was desirable for ethnic minority residents. However, since 1997, the Chinese language has become more prominent, and since they tend to lack Chinese skills and are then constrained to certain types of occupation (such as construction), the living situation of ethnic minority has become more disadvantaged. Some may even turn to crime or be recruited as fearless frontline fighters for the Triad gangs (Frost, 2004).

Thanks to more exposure in recent years (South China Morning Post, 2001/6/11; Mingpao, 2001/8/10), ethnic minorities' living conditions have become more visible to the community and to policy makers. Recent studies showed that ethnic minorities living in Hong Kong face high unemployment rates, language barriers (Working Group of Social Integration Project for Ethnic Minority People in Hong Kong & Unison Hong Kong, 2003), housing problems, difficulties in accessing social resources and building friendships and racial discrimination (Ku, Chan, Chan & Lee, 2003). Nevertheless, as most of these studies were conducted by NGOs and/or co-organized with local universities, adopting a rather action-oriented research design,

the focus was often on ethnic minorities' disadvantaged living conditions. Although this does help us understand more about their daily needs and difficulties, it lacks a view of their virtues, protective factors and developmental assets.

On the other hand, more social services have been provided for ethnic minorities in recent years. As stated in the government website, four service support centres for ethnic minorities were funded by the government – Hong Kong Christian Service, International Social Service, Christian Action and Yuen Long Town Hall. Services provided include translation, language classes, interest classes for youth, and employment counselling (Race Relations Unit, 2010). The effectiveness of these services has to be studied for long-term improvements; nevertheless, it should be noted that ethnic minorities' well-being has been a more visible topic for the community in recent years.

### **2.3.2 Challenges**

Ethnic minority adolescents living in Hong Kong face various challenges, which can be categorized into two areas: 1) challenges for all adolescents, no matter which ethnicity they are, and 2) challenges especially for ethnic minorities.

As stated by Wong and Rowley (2001), “(in) prior research, ethnic minority children were often compared to White Children. This type of framework encourages the view that Whites are the normative model, which can lead to erroneous conclusions that those who are different from the standard bearers (i.e., Whites) are deficient in some way” (p.59). Ethnic minorities are no different in terms of normative developmental processes (Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus & Harpalani, 2001). Focusing

solely on negative adaptive processes ignores the resilience and protective factors that one possesses in the developmental process. Thus, it is essential for researchers to jointly examine normative and culture-specific needs in studies concerning ethnic minorities.

### **2.3.2.1 Developmental needs of all adolescents**

#### *Bonding*

Several theories and models support the importance of bonding in human development (Lee, 2007a) – the Attachment theory, the Social Control theory, the Social Development model and the Ecological perspective. Ainsworth (1991) wrote that “attachment behavior is held to characterize human beings from the cradle to the grave”. This clearly indicates the importance of intimate relationships with the people around us. Research shows that young people having secure attachments to significant others, such as parents, siblings, schoolmates, peers and teachers results in higher self-esteem and confidence, and better skills in problem solving and interpersonal communication (Howes & Aikins, 2002). Therefore, Lee (2007a) suggested that bonding is an important protective factor for an individual, and a major resilient element when facing adversity.

In the adolescent stage, teachers and peers are the principal agents in forming personality, while parents remain lifelong role models (Slaughter-Defoe & Rubin, 2001). In addition, the Social Development model suggests that adolescents learn either pro-social or antisocial behaviour during the socialization process (Catalano & Hawkins, 1996). Thus, in the developmental process, bonding with peers and adults living a healthy lifestyle is an essential task, without which adolescents may learn

and acquire negative behaviour, like smoking and substance abuse, as Kobus (2003) said in accordance with the Social Learning Theory. In this study, ethnic minority students' networks, including relationships with family, peers, neighbours and teachers, are examined in order to explore their influence on adolescent development.

#### *Resiliency in a changing society*

In his book advocating the positive youth development approach, Benson (1997) postulated that the term 'resilience' indicates a shift of view from the pathological to the strength perspective. Adolescents are viewed as full of potential and strength, people in whom internal and external protective factors can be identified. Lee (2007b, p.139) said that "resilience can be defined in terms of an individual's capacity, the process it goes through and the result". While 'capacity' means the strength possessed by an individual to adapt to stressful and changing situations, 'process' refers to the reintegration process of an individual under adversity with the support of protective factors. Lastly, 'result' means positive and beneficial outcomes resulting from successfully overcoming stressful situations.

In their book about cultivating resilience for adolescents, Choi et al. (2003) said that Hong Kong adolescents are facing a rapid changing political environment, with an unstable employment situation and separation within the family. It is not uncommon to hear about problems like high suicide rates, juvenile delinquency, mental health problems and unhealthy lifestyles among adolescents in Hong Kong (Shek, 2007a). Therefore, the report called for cultivating resilience among adolescents in Hong Kong. Ethnic minorities have not escaped these trends – in the study of Ku, Chan and Karamjit (2005), nearly one-third of the South Asian respondents said that drug

abuse is a problem in their schools. Moreover, South Asian and Southeast Asian adolescents living in Hong Kong have many difficulties such as education problems and hardships building social networks (Loper, 2004; Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service Yau Tsim District Outreaching social Work Team, 2000). Therefore, cultivating resilience among ethnic minority youth could help them build the capacity to go through such stressful situations. In this study, protective factors of ethnic minority students are identified in order to view them in the strength perspective.

As a result, cultivating resilience, no matter among a majority or minority population, is a substantial task for educators and social workers. That is one of the reasons why positive youth development projects have become popular in recent years.

### **2.3.2.2 Particular challenges for ethnic minority adolescents living in Hong Kong**

#### ***Ethnic identity***

As discussed before, adolescents are in a stage of identity formation in which identity crises are experienced (Erikson, 1968). In particular, an additional challenge for ethnic minorities is ethnic identity development. Phinney (1989) refers to *ethnic identity* as the attitudes and beliefs that an individual holds toward an ethnic group. Influenced by the developmental model of ego identity (Erikson, 1968), Phinney (1989) proposed an ethnic identity model, with four identity statuses identified. They are 1) Achieved identity; 2) Moratorium; 3) Foreclosure; and 4) Diffusion. Similar to ego identity development, ethnic identity development is defined by the extent to which one explores his ethnic identity, as well as the level of commitment to and



acceptance of ethnic-group membership in daily life.

Nakkula and Toshalis (2006) said that ethnic identity development has strong implications for psychological well-being. For instance, in their attempt to examine whether achieved identity is positively associated with levels of psychological well-being, Seaton, Sellers and Scottham (2006) identified findings from their study that supported this assumption. They conducted a two-year longitudinal study in which data was collected from 224 African American adolescents. Results showed that adolescents identified with achieved identity scored higher in psychological well-being and lower in depressive symptoms.

On the other hand, on the question of whether having strong identification with the majority or minority group (or even both or neither) is healthier, Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus and Harpalani (2001) suggested that it depends on residential context and value system. For example, while re-examining the “Acting White” assumption, which had suggested that African-American youth would perform better academically in the United States if they adopted a Eurocentric cultural values system, Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus and Harpalani (2001) found that high self-esteem and achievement goals are in fact associated with high Afrocentricity. They suggested that further studies be done in order to understand the influence of culture and context on these youths. As there has been no similar study on ethnic minority adolescents living in Hong Kong, further studies should be conducted in this area.

#### *Cultural and Religious Differences*

While living in Hong Kong, it is inevitable that ethnic minorities will experience

cultural and religious differences. Whether it is a positive or negative experience depends on how the majority interacts with the minority, or vice versa. In their qualitative study of ethnic minorities' education situation, Ku, Chan and Karamjit (2005) reported the experience of an Indian girl:

*“One of my, the discipline teacher right, she, she doesn't care about my culture, anything she just thinks this is a kind of accessory yah, which looks beautiful or something, that's what she thought and then she made me cut it once.” (p.74)*

Obviously, it was a negative experience. Nevertheless, can there be positive interaction between the majority and the minority? How can we promote positive cultural and religious exchanges? The well-known Contact Hypothesis (Allport, 1979) proposes that the better you get to know people who are not members of your own group, the more you will like them. However, certain pre-requisites are required in order to achieve positive outcomes: 1) equal status for both groups; 2) common goals for both groups when working on a problem or task; 3) inter-group cooperation in which tasks must be structured so that everyone in both groups can make contributions; and 4) support of authorities, laws or customs that both groups acknowledge.

In this study, since one of the participating classes is a combined class, in which students include both Chinese and ethnic minorities, the researcher used the Contact Hypothesis to explore whether the lessons were a positive or negative experience.

### Education

Previous local studies showed that South Asian adolescents have limited education choices and opportunities in Hong Kong (Ku, Chan & Karamjit, 2005; Loper, 2004). Only 15 designated primary and secondary schools have a higher proportion of non-Chinese students studying there (Mingpao, 2006/12/14). Though ethnic minority students can of course attend other mainstream schools, the school culture and Chinese-language curriculum may not suit their developmental and academic needs. Also, mainstream schools may not have additional support and resources to help them, especially for Chinese-language training, as the 15 designated schools do (Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union and Unison Hong Kong for Ethnic Equality, 2007). As a result, some ethnic minority students may opt to miss years of schooling while waiting for places at schools which suit their needs (Loper, 2004). This inevitably has a negative impact on their development.

Nevertheless, after research on education difficulties faced by South Asian adolescents (Ku, Chan & Karamjit, 2005; Loper, 2004), some of the related education policies were changed. For instance, instead of being directly referred to designated schools, they can now choose to go to mainstream schools to receive education (Heung, 2006). A recent evidence-based report on South Asian development and adaptation in mainstream primary schools shows that such arrangements can enhance their interests and competence in Chinese, English and Mathematics (Hau, 2008). Although some areas still need to be improved (e.g., extra remedial help is needed in Chinese and Mathematics), there are undeniably positive results. However, Hau's report lacks an understanding of the psychosocial development of South Asian primary students studying in mainstream schools. It also

does not include South Asian students' expectations of their development, which is one of the major aims of this study.

On the other hand, before 2008, non-Chinese Secondary 7 students were required to use their Chinese result in the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE) to apply for university in Hong Kong. This was a significant disadvantage because, even though ethnic minority students' Chinese-language curriculum was much easier than that of local Chinese students, they still had to sit the same version of the examination to get credit in the Chinese-language subject area. However, through the advocacy of different parties (Mingpao, 2008/2/26), ethnic minority students now have other ways, such as the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), General Certificate of Education (GCE) and International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), to obtain a Chinese-language score that will make them eligible to attend university in Hong Kong. It helps enhance their chances and provides hope for a brighter future.

To sum up, education plays a major role in the development of ethnic minority youth, not only fostering their academic development, but also helping them to integrate into the local community, provided they have chances to understand the local culture and language as well as to meet Chinese friends (Loper, 2004). In this study, the researcher explores whether Project P.A.T.H.S., which has been integrated into the formal curriculum at the three schools participating in this study, fosters positive youth development among ethnic minority students. Also, for the combined (i.e., Chinese *and* ethnic minority) class, the current study explores whether P.A.T.H.S. helps ethnic minority students integrate into the local community, such as having

more chances to practice Chinese and to understand local customs.

*Language barriers and limited social networks with Chinese*

Previous studies showed that ethnic minority youth seldom communicate with local Chinese (Ku, Chan & Karamjit, 2005; Loper, 2004). The reasons for this are probably language barriers and the school environment, where most schoolmates are also non-Chinese. While there are language barriers and limited social networks with Chinese, difficulties remain in accessing social resources, such as services from social welfare agencies (Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service Yau Tsim District Outreaching social Work Team, 2000), which in turn affects their integration into the local community.

In Hong Kong, with the sponsorship of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, three NGOs (Caritas – Hong Kong, International Social Service Hong Kong Branch and Christian Action) provide Cantonese courses for ethnic minorities (Race Relations Unit, 2010). This type of course has several advantages: participants can get 50 hours of training for just \$100; the NGOs offer three different levels of difficulty; and courses are offered day and night, weekdays and weekends. However, these courses also have limitations. For instance, the NGO centres providing the courses are mainly located in the Island and Kowloon districts, so ethnic minorities living in the New Territories may not be able to attend or get the relevant information. More important, even 50 hours of training cannot resolve the problem of ethnic minorities' limited social networks with Chinese people. Having fewer chances to practice Cantonese, they will soon forget what they have learned during the lessons.

In this study, the researcher explores whether ethnic minority students have any networks with Chinese in either their residential or school environments. The effect of P.A.T.H.S. on integration into the local community as well as on learning Chinese language is also examined.

### Family relationships

As mentioned, parents are a lifelong role model even though teachers and peers become the principal agents in forming personality during adolescence (Slaughter-Defoe & Rubin, 2001). Lee (2007a) said that family relationships during adolescence have important implications for an individual's autonomy, personality, individual pathology and problem behaviour. Also, adolescents who view their parents as warm, accepting and not authoritarian feel better about themselves and have more opportunities to practice social skills. Therefore, family relationships are important for adolescence development. In particular, ethnic minority S1 students have to face various changing situations (e.g., transition from primary school to secondary school, new friends and classmates, or even a new country, if they have recently arrived in Hong Kong), and family relationships as a protective factor help the adapt to this changing environment (Choi, Au, Tang, Shum, Tang, Choi et al., 2003).

On the other hand, although the study by Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service Yau Tsim Mong Integrated Centre for Youth Development (2002) showed that South Asian youth have close family relationships and are likely to seek advice from their parents when making decisions, another study by the same organization revealed poor parent-child communication overall (Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service Yau Tsim District Outreaching social Work Team, 2000). The main reason given was

not lack of desire or willingness, but lack of time. As most South Asians in Hong Kong, especially men, do manual labour (such as construction or security), they have long working hours (Working Group of Social Integration Project for Ethnic Minority People in Hong Kong & Unison Hong Kong, 2003) and may not have enough time to communicate with their children.

Moreover, a study by Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union and Unison Hong Kong for Ethnic Equality (2007) showed that since South Asian parents do not understand Chinese well, it is hard for them to communicate with their children's schools (e.g., they may not understand notices and homework). This limitation decreases the helpfulness of resources received from the school, such as social activities as well as other kinds of support. This, in turn, would affect the development of South Asian youth. Therefore, this study examines the influence of family relationships on the development of ethnic minority adolescents.

### **2.3.3 History and implications of ethnic minority studies in Hong Kong**

In their article on the schooling of ethnic minorities, Meece and Kurtz-Costes (2001) reviewed studies of ethnic minorities in the United States to track their implications and contributions over the years. For instance, early studies in the 1960s focused on home environment and socialization patterns of minority families. Afterwards, certain intervention programs emerged to improve such home environments. Later researchers shifted to look at the quantity and quality of learning opportunities for ethnic minorities after the effective schools movement of the 1970s. More recently, research has focused on the difficulties experienced by minority youth in their school environments. Meece and Kurtz-Costes's study provides insight for this study, in

which local studies are reviewed in order to ascertain a pattern (if any) in studies on Hong Kong's ethnic minorities over the years.

While some studies about the history and culture of South Asian and Southeast Asian in Hong Kong were conducted in the 1990s (refer to Pluss, 2005; Lock & Detaramani, 2006), it was not until the past decade that more research has been conducted on the disadvantages, such as employment and education difficulties, of ethnic minorities. These local studies have made an important contribution to the well-being of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong.

For instance, as mentioned, the education policy for non-Chinese students was changed after research in this area. Moreover, having identified the communication and integration problems encountered by ethnic minority residents, the Hong Kong government has eventually sponsored more support centres for ethnic minorities (Race Relations Unit, 2010). Though there is still much to be done to improve ethnic minorities' well-being, the community is at least now aware of the disadvantaged position of ethnic minorities. We should recognize the contributions of previous studies. However, as suggested earlier in this article, Wong and Rowley (2001) remind us that most previous studies have focused on the negative side, with a pathological view and deficit models. The same emphasis needs to be placed on identifying the strengths, protective factors and positive aspects of ethnic minorities.

Wong and Rowley (2001) have further urged a comprehensive picture of ethnic minorities' schooling experience in the United States, putting attention on multiple aspects of development. Studies should move beyond grades and test scores to other



indicators such as self-esteem, goal orientation and problem-solving strategies, resulting in a holistic perspective of ethnic-minority students' schooling experiences.

In Hong Kong, previous studies have focused mostly on education difficulties and disadvantages experienced by ethnic minority adolescents. Even an attempt to track development and adaptation in mainstream schools (Hau, 2008) was academic-focused. No local study has explored what aspects of development draw the eagerness of ethnic minority adolescents. The need to understand their psychosocial well-being is evident. This will fill the research gap and help provide an understanding of ethnic minority youth in order to provide youth development programs with the means to cultivate positive and holistic development over the long run.

On the other hand, personal qualities such as optimism and core competences like emotional, behavioural and cognitive competence, resiliency as well as bonding with people living a healthy lifestyle, all can contribute to a positive life for both Chinese and ethnic minority youth. In this situation, Project P.A.T.H.S. as a positive youth development project can be quite constructive for ethnic minorities' development, especially when it is the first universal preventive program in Hong Kong that has an English curriculum and provides programs for non-Chinese students studying in designated schools.

Taking this invaluable opportunity, the field should move beyond the pathological view and the deficit model. By studying the learning experiences of ethnic minority students in Project P.A.T.H.S., we can understand a) the critical factors fostering

positive development and b) their expectations of their development. It is time to move forward and find a vision of what we actually want for Hong Kong's next generation (Moore, Lippman & Brown, 2004), even minorities.

#### **2.4 Program evaluation**

According to Royse, Thyer, Padgett and Logan (2006), program evaluations are practical studies, in which the primary concern is not to build theories but to provide information that can be used to improve social programs. This is one of the major contributions of this study. When a program (e.g., Project P.A.T.H.S.) is implemented, practitioners want to know whether program participants are being helped, are satisfied with it and have seen any real differences because of the program. Rubin and Rubin (2005) have a similar view: "The purpose of evaluation research and action research is to discover if programs and policies are working, for whom they are working and what could be improved" (p.9). These are the motivations when researchers launch program evaluations.

Program evaluation can be divided into different parts – needs assessment, formative evaluation, process evaluation and outcome evaluation (Royse, Thyer, Padgett & Logan, 2006). In this study, the major focus was on process evaluation, understanding whether the program provided (i.e., Project P.A.T.H.S.) matches ethnic minority students' expectations of their development. Moreover, through process evaluation, the complex phenomena of program implementation can be examined, and the necessary improvements for program implementation can be identified.

### **2.4.1 The need for qualitative process evaluation**

We evaluate the program because we want to improve it. Royse, Thyer, Padgett and Logan (2006) proposed various objectives for process evaluation: 1) to know what was learned during implementation, 2) to determine whether any failure was due to a poor program or poor intervention, and 3) to inform others about what to expect when launching a similar program.

On the other hand, Patton (2002) described process evaluation this way: “The journey, not the destination, is what matters” (p.159). This means that, in some situations, the process is more important than the outcome(s), especially for programs which depend highly on implementation. As Project P.A.T.H.S. is remarkable for its experiential-learning design, process evaluation can allow us to understand more about its complex phenomena. For instance, Scheirer (1994) suggested that process evaluation can examine the fidelity of program implementation, which can be further promoted by feedback collected during implementation. Also, process evaluation can help identify key factors that contribute to success or failure. An evaluation study of a school-based substance abuse prevention curriculum in three U.S. school districts (Sobeck, Abbey & Agius, 2006) gleaned several reasons for failure: selection of an inappropriate program, unreadiness of the school, program infidelity and underemphasis on evaluation planning.

Moreover, as Patton (2002) states, the qualitative method is highly appropriate for studying this process because: 1) it gives detailed descriptions of how people interact each other; 2) the experience varies greatly for different people, whose experiences

need to be explored in their own words; 3) the process is dynamic so it can hardly be summarized on a single rating scale; and 4) participants' perceptions are a key process consideration. Royse, Thyer, Padgett and Logan (2006) suggested numerous qualitative methods to collect information for process evaluation: in-depth interviews, focus groups, program documentation analyses and observations.

Concerning Project P.A.T.H.S., four process evaluations have been carried in which class observation was used as the data-collection method (Shek, Lee & Sun, 2008; Shek, Ma, Lui & Lung, 2006; Shek, Ma, Sun & Lung, 2008; Shek & Ng, 2009b). As mentioned in section 2.2.4, the level of program adherence was generally high. Several areas had high ratings, such as student interest, instructors' familiarity with the students and use of interactive delivery methods. However, as stressed before, results from these studies cannot be generalized to ethnic minority adolescents as their voices were not represented; also, since observers visited each school just once, socially desirable behaviour can be expected from students, and instructors might be more motivated to teach well when being observed (Shek, Ma, Sun & Lung, 2008).

In this study, continuous on-site observations throughout the whole school year and in-depth interviews for program participants have been used to explore individual expectations of the program and the interactions of students and teachers during lessons.

#### **2.4.2 Factors influencing the quality of program implementation**

Various studies have attempted to identify factors influencing the quality of program implementation.

For instance, while studying the implementation of the Life Skills Training Program in United States, Hahn, Noland, Rayens and Christie (2002) found that, although the process fidelity was relatively high, teachers were less likely to use the innovative teaching methods actually suggested by the program. Moreover, teachers tended to focus on cognitive portions, omitting the skills-training segment. The authors suggested that training for teachers is especially important. Similarly, while examining the same program, Fagan and Mihalic (2003) found that common barriers of program success were: teachers not using active learning methods, areas of overlap with other existing programs, and teachers not wanting to take time away from 'core' academic subjects. Nevertheless, they also suggested some factors to enhance implementation success – active support from key participants, attractive program features and integration of the program into the school schedule.

Gallant and Maticka-Tyndale (2004) reviewed 11 school-based HIV prevention program for youth in Africa. Factors positively associated with successful implementation were longer duration of program implementation and greater diversity of activities. Also, HIV programs targeting younger/primary-school children were more successful in influencing sexual behaviour compared with those targeting older/secondary school children, corresponding to the developmental needs of African youth.

In Hawaii, Sy and Glanz (2008) conducted a process evaluation to examine factors influencing teachers' implementation of a school-based smoking-prevention program (Project SPLASH). They discovered that several attributes affected implementation, including whether teachers had received training and whether they had previous

experience or familiarity with the content. Also, high perceived curriculum complexity was associated with less complete implementation. That is why Waxman (2001) suggested that teachers' needs should be considered when the program is developed – otherwise, teachers will *adapt* it rather than *adopt* it.

While in Hong Kong, Shek and Ma (2008) proposed **5P** (**P**rogram, **P**eople, **P**rocess, **P**olicy and **P**lace) as the factors influencing the quality of program implementation in their comprehensive review of seven case studies based on Project P.A.T.H.S. These actually include most elements and factors affecting program implementation as described above. In their case studies, Shek and Sun (2008a, 2008b), as well as Lee (2008), suggest that **5P** do contribute to effective implementation of Project P.A.T.H.S. Consistent with this line of research, we adopt **5P** as the influencing factors to be evaluated in this study of the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. towards ethnic minority students.

Considering the research objectives of this study and to make it more focusing, special emphasis has been put on **P**rogram, **P**eople and **P**rocess as they have higher relevancy to ethnic minority students in this study. Although **P**olicy and **P**lace do contribute to program effectiveness (Lee, 2008), students hardly have any impact on these areas. Nevertheless, S1 ethnic minority students' view on **P**olicy and **P**lace would not be totally neglected in this study, especially when these factors would affect their expectations and perceived effectiveness of the youth development program. In this part, further descriptions of **P**rogram, **P**eople and **P**rocess are listed below:

### Program

A curriculum regarded as a good **program** should have the following attributes: well-designed; evidence-based; focused on knowledge, competences and general skills; employing diverse and attractive activities; and avoiding areas of overlap with other school programs in order to prevent boredom (Shek & Sun, 2008a). Also, it should fit the developmental needs of the target population (Sobeck, Abbey & Agius, 2006).

Not only is program design an important element – program fidelity is also crucial to a successful program (Waxman, 2001). Although complete program fidelity seems impossible, owing to external factors (such as time limits and differences in school support and teachers' background), teachers should try to implement the program fully according to its design, especially those parts which are evidence-based and have strong theoretical foundations. In their study, Sobeck, Abbey and Agius (2006) found that teachers tended to use non-interactive rather than interactive methods, which eventually negated the effectiveness of the program. Thus, program fidelity concerns not only content but also teaching methods.

In this study, attention is paid to program fidelity during the process of implementation as well as to the appropriateness of the curriculum for ethnic minority students in Hong Kong.

### People

The factor 'People' includes every person, directly or indirectly, involved in program implementation at a school. Having the full support of all parties (including

principals, coordinators and teachers) was one of the most significant factors in program implementation (Fagan & Mihalic, 2003).

As the most important agent in program delivery, teachers (or instructors) in Project P.A.T.H.S. have to be competent in different areas. Nevertheless, before discussing the positive attributes of teachers, an interesting process evaluation conducted by Forrest, Strange and Oakley (2002) can give us insight into what students expect from teachers.

In their study, Forrest, Strange and Oakley compared a peer-delivered Sex Education Program with teacher-provided materials. More positive feedback was received from students taught by peers. Students saw peer tutors (generally senior students from the same school) as more humorous, empathetic, having more in common with students, enjoying themselves and tending to use more active-learning teaching methods. Also, students said that teacher-led programs were patronizing, with teachers tending to express moralistic views and not respect students' needs. Teachers were also less likely to tackle sensitive subjects. Students did say that the major advantage of a teacher-delivered program was better class control. Although the nature of the program (sex education) likely affected students' expectations of their teachers, some of the factors are universal, especially the attitudes and characteristics of program instructors, also suggested by Sy and Glanz (2008).

Similarly, Shek and Sun (2008a) found in a case study that the following attributes related to instructors were essential: student-centred, responsible, passionate about implementing the program, having prior experience in running similar programs, and



having trust and good cooperation among instructors.

On the other hand, as each participating school in Project P.A.T.H.S. has the freedom to determine who teaches the program, some schools choose teachers while some choose social workers. Some even adopt co-teaching methods, in which a teacher cooperates with a social worker, or more than one teacher/social worker teaches together. It is worth exploring how different patterns of co-teaching influence the quality of program implementation from ethnic minority students' point of view.

Furthermore, students are another key component of **People** (Shek & Sun, 2008a). If students are less motivated and less involved, program quality is diminished, and vice versa. Also, students are expected to be active learners in experiential learning. Nevertheless, students' motivation is largely affected by curriculum design as well as their own background. Therefore, this study's qualitative method helps explore students' personalities, needs, socio-economic backgrounds and expectations of a youth-development program. It is especially important when they are ethnic minorities, whose cultures and values might be different from those of mainstream society.

### Process

**Process** is the third important factor to be explored in this study, covering varied teaching techniques, such as encouraging students to speak, recognizing positive behaviour, sharing personal experiences and being serious. Also, it is more favourable for instructors to give feedback on students' assignments, to allow sufficient time for student discussion, and to create a positive classroom atmosphere

(Shek & Sun, 2008a).

The process of program implementation is also important. Waxman (2001) found that the utilization of cooperative groups in the classroom improves relationships between mainstream and non-mainstreamed students (in that study, among black, white and Hispanic students). Eccles and Gootman (2002) also suggested that supportive relationships in the learning environment are positively associated with positive youth development. As mentioned before, the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1979) proposes that people from different groups will like each other if they get to know each other better. In this study, interactions between Chinese and ethnic minority students are studied to understand whether social integration in the school context is being promoted.

To sum up, **Program, People, Process, Policy and Place** are found to be influential in effective program implementation (Lee, 2008; Shek & Sun, 2008a, 2008b), yet case studies carried out by the Project P.A.T.H.S. research team have only covered views from school contact persons and program implementers, totally omitting students' views on these factors. Therefore, this process evaluation study explores how these factors affect program effectiveness, especially in terms of **Program, People and Process** from S1 ethnic minority students' point of view.

#### **2.4.3 Process evaluation on ethnic minorities S1 students participating in Project P.A.T.H.S.**

As suggested in chapter 2.2.4, previous studies conducted by the Project P.A.T.H.S. research team had certain limitations. For instance, none evaluated the effectiveness

of Project P.A.T.H.S. towards ethnic minority students. Also all studies using class observation to collect data observed the class just once. Moreover, critical factors (i.e., **5P**) influencing the effectiveness of program implementation, which had been derived from case studies, were discussed only by program implementers, with students' views on such factors omitted. Therefore, the need to conduct a qualitative process evaluation study on ethnic minority students is evident.

While conducting this study, the 12 principles suggested by Shek, Tang and Han (2005) in their review of the qualitative evaluation studies in social work literature have taken into consideration as much as possible. The 12 principles are *Principle 1*: explicit statement of the philosophical base of the study, *Principle 2*: justification for the number and nature of the participants of the study, *Principle 3*: detailed description of the data-collection procedures, *Principle 4*: discussion of the biases and preoccupations of the researchers, *Principle 5*: description of the steps taken to guard against biases, or arguments that biases should and/or could not be eliminated, *Principle 6*: inclusion of measures of reliability, *Principle 7*: inclusion of measures of triangulation in terms of researchers and data types, *Principle 8*: inclusion of peer-checking and member-checking procedures, *Principle 9*: consciousness of the importance and development of audit trails, *Principle 10*: consideration of alternative explanations for the observed findings, *Principle 11*: inclusion of explanations for negative evidence, and *Principle 12*: a clear statement of the limitations of the study.

Furthermore, in order to maintain the credibility of the study (Royse, Thyer, Padgett & Logan, 2006) and comprehensively explore students' changes, data were collected in various methods, consistent with the principle of triangulation (Principle 7). First,

class observations were conducted in three S1 classes in three schools around once a month. Second, in-depth interviews with 22 students from the three classes were conducted twice, once in the middle of the school year and once soon after final examinations. Thus, being able to take the background of ethnic minority students into consideration, the present study is more able to answer the research questions.

To sum up, in this chapter, literature related to the following areas has been reviewed:

1) concepts of positive youth development as well as related literature from India; 2) the current development of positive youth development programs in Hong Kong and the emergence of Project P.A.T.H.S.; 3) the situation of ethnic minority residents living in Hong Kong, especially for issues related to youth; and 4) ways of making program evaluation and factors to be examined during process evaluation in this study. All of the above contribute to background understanding in the current study. This study is worthwhile, as it helps understand the expectations of ethnic minority students on youth development programs, explores the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. as perceived by ethnic minority students, and examines critical factors for effective program implementation among these students. These have all omitted in previous literature.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Conceptual Framework**

The aims of this study are: 1) understanding the expectations that S1 ethnic minority Hong Kong students have for a youth development program, 2) exploring the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. as perceived by ethnic minority students, and 3) exploring critical factors for successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes of Project P.A.T.H.S. To achieve these aims, relevant concepts have to be identified in order to design a process evaluation that properly addresses them.

In this chapter, measurement of program effectiveness as perceived by program participants, as well as factors influencing program implementation derived from the literature, are highlighted. In addition, the relationships among these factors are identified in order to form a conceptual framework in this study.

#### **3.1 Measurement of program effectiveness as perceived by program participants**

In this study, measurement of program effectiveness as perceived by program participants was mainly based on the developmental constructs as implemented in Project P.A.T.H.S. As shown in section 2.2.3, Project P.A.T.H.S. adopted the 15 positive youth development constructs which were commonly identified in successful programs in Northern America (Catalano et al., 2004): 1) Bonding, 2) Social Competence, 3) Emotional Competence, 4) Cognitive Competence, 5) Behavioural Competence, 6) Moral Competence, 7) Self-Efficacy, 8) Pro-social Norms, 9) Resilience, 10) Self-Determination, 11) Spirituality, 12) Clear and Positive

Identity, 13) Beliefs in the Future, 14) Pro-social Involvement, and 15) Recognition of Positive Behaviour. Shek and Siu (2007) further grouped them into “**7C**” as terminal indicators of students’ growth: **C**onfidence, **C**haracter, **C**onnection, **C**ompetence, **C**aring, **C**ompassion and **C**ontribution.

**C**onfidence mainly refers to Self-Determination, Self-Efficacy, Resilience and Beliefs in the Future. If students perceived positive changes in these areas, their **C**onfidence is said to be enhanced. **C**haracter mainly refers to Clear and Positive Identity and Spirituality. **C**onnection means having positive relationships with healthy adults and positive peers, and the major construct involved is Promotion of Bonding. **C**ompetence comprises Social Competence, Emotional Competence, Cognitive Competence, Behavioural Competence and Moral Competence. **C**ontribution mainly refers to contributions made to society, which requires pro-social attitudes and lifestyles. Thus, the constructs of Pro-social Norms and Pro-social Involvement have higher correlation with this measurement. Lastly, **C**aring and **C**ompassion of course mean caring for others and being more compassionate towards them. However, it seems to repeat and overlap with **C**onnection, **C**ompetence and **C**ontribution. Thus, these two measurements are rather secondary and have been re-grouped into **C**onnection, **C**ompetence and **C**ontribution for this study.

On the other hand, though these **5C** (**C**onfidence, **C**haracter, **C**onnection, **C**ompetence and **C**ontribution) are found only in Western literature, they are considered universal in adolescent development. For instance, as discussed in chapter 2, people in India (Dassi and Khan, 2000) place a high value on family relationships

(i.e., **C**onnection). Also, though Hans (1996) commented that the terms used in the features of Youth Policy in India are rather deficit-based, the ideology behind the policy promotes **C**onfidence, **C**ompetence and **C**ontribution of youth. Therefore, the perceived changes and improvements in these **5C** of S1 ethnic minority students are regarded as intended learning outcomes to be measured in order to explore the program effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. This is also a good chance to examine whether these **5C**, derived from Western literature, can be appropriately applied to S1 ethnic minority students living in Hong Kong.

### **3.2 Factors influencing the quality of program implementation**

As discussed in chapter 2.4.2, factors influencing the quality of program implementation include **P**rogram, **P**eople, **P**rocess, **P**olicy and **P**lace, i.e., **5P**. Nevertheless, as students have little impact on **P**olicy and **P**lace, the present study focuses on the process of program implementation, exploring *why* and *how* the project does or does not have positive effect(s) on ethnic minority students. As described in the literature review, **P**rogram, **P**eople and **P**rocess have higher relevancy to this study.

#### *Program*

In this study, **P**rogram refers to 1) the Project P.A.T.H.S. curriculum design, 2) expectations of ethnic minority students towards a youth development program, 3) the program's relevancy to ethnic minority S1 students, and 4) overall program fidelity. The third and four aspects – relevancy and overall program fidelity – perhaps require some explanation.

To examine relevancy, this study considers specific developmental challenges for ethnic minority students, such as cultural and religious differences with the local community (see literature review), and explores whether Project P.A.T.H.S. could help provide ways to deal with such challenges. If the ethnic minority students said this matched their expectations towards a youth development program, it is said to have higher relevancy towards ethnic minority students.

Overall program fidelity includes both content and program fidelity. Content fidelity refers to the objectives, messages and activities designed. If instructors follow closely in this area, higher content fidelity is said to be identified. Program fidelity refers to the teaching method(s) suggested by the program manual. If an activity is originally designed as a group discussion but turns out to be personal reflection, program fidelity will have a lower rating. This study explores whether overall program fidelity correlates to ethnic minority students' satisfaction with the program, and vice versa. The reasons for this are explored during in-depth interviews.

### People

People involve every stakeholder, including students, teachers, social workers, principals and parents. Nevertheless, it is those directly involved in the process of program implementation who have higher relevancy in this study. Thus, special attention is paid to students and instructors (both teachers and social workers).

Lessons learned from previous evaluation study of Project P.A.T.H.S. (e.g., Shek & Sun, 2008a) will be taken into consideration. Factors affecting ethnic minority students include their learning motivation, expectations of youth development, level



of active participation, personality, socio-economic backgrounds, family and cultural backgrounds and personal networks. On the other hand, factors for instructors include their knowledge, attitude and skills in implementing Project P.A.T.H.S. The presence of co-teaching in participating schools is also examined to understand its influence on ethnic minority students.

### Process

**Process** refers to 1) techniques instructors use to motivate ethnic minority S1 students, 2) utilization of different teaching strategies among instructors, and 3) supportive relationships among instructors and ethnic minority students. Teaching techniques refers to methods used by instructors as well as the learning atmosphere created by instructors during program implementation. Under teaching strategies, ethnic minority students' attitudes towards different teaching methods, such as cooperative activities and group discussions, are also examined. Lastly, the study explores whether supportive relationships among ethnic minority students contribute to a more effective youth development program. As one of the participating classes in this study is a combined class, with both Chinese and ethnic minority students, their relationships and interactions during program implementation are examined as well.

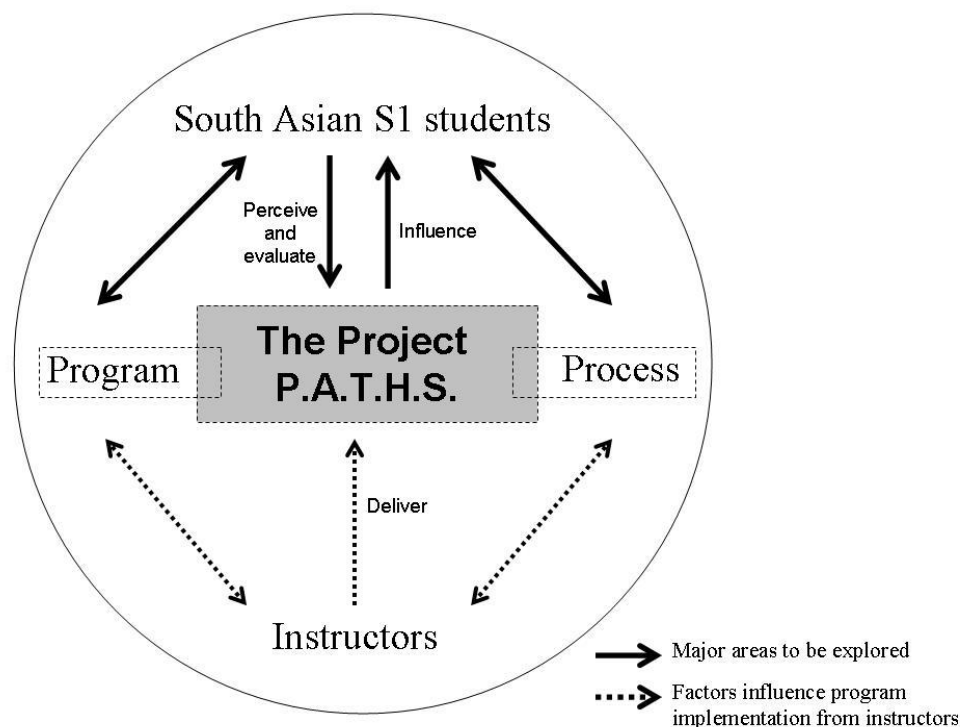
Lastly, though **P**olicy and **P**lace are not the main focus in this study, their importance in shaping human behaviour (and thus program effectiveness) will not be neglected.

### **3.3 Conceptual framework**

Having discussed measurements of program effectiveness as well as factors influencing program implementation, we move on to the following diagram of the

study's conceptual framework:

Diagram 1. Conceptual framework in this study



According to Communication theory (Nelson, 1980), people exchange information and influence each other. During communication, “people process information by perceiving and evaluating it. Sometimes they reject new information and behave as before. Sometimes they accept action implications of new information and change their behaviour” (pp. 1-2). Since communication is an interactive process, one’s behaviour and reactions influence how others react and deliver new messages. Moreover, the content and context of communication affect how one perceives and evaluates information received. This study explores how S1 ethnic minority students perceive and evaluate Project P.A.T.H.S.

In Diagram 1, the upper part indicates the major areas (represented by black arrows)

to be explored in this study. While placing at the centre of this diagram, Project P.A.T.H.S. plays a centre role in which how ethnic minority students perceive and selectively receive the delivered program is explored in great details through class observation and in-depth interview. The dotted lines represent factors influencing instructors' program implementation. Though not a major area for this study, instructors' delivery of the project is affected by the program and process of the project, which in turn affects how ethnic minority students perceive and evaluate the program and process. Thus, while exploring ethnic minority students' perception towards Project P.A.T.H.S. as a whole, their perception towards Program, Process and People (i.e., instructors) would be examined one by one thoroughly. Lastly, the perceived changes in **5C** of ethnic minority students' would be explored so as to assess the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S.

This research contributes to: 1) the academic field, building knowledge about program effectiveness for ethnic minority adolescents; 2) the social welfare field, helping understand the expectations of ethnic minority students towards youth development, 3) the education field, looking at effective implementation of whole-person development programs for ethnic minority adolescents.

## Chapter 4

### Methodology

#### 4.1 Introduction

Conducting a program evaluation, Fitzpatrick, Sanders and Worthen (2004) suggested that there are five general approaches: 1) objectives-oriented, 2) management-oriented, 3) consumer-oriented, 4) expertise-oriented, and 5) participant-oriented. As this study aims to explore *how* and *why* the program is beneficial to ethnic minority adolescents, it is best to be participant-oriented. Fitzpatrick, Sanders and Worthen further suggested that many participant-oriented research projects adopt qualitative and naturalistic methods to obtain participants' first-hand experiences.

On the other hand, as stated earlier in the literature review, it is important to be culturally competent in all phases of the research process (Rubin & Babbie, 2005), especially when the research participants are ethnic minorities, otherwise, uneven recruitment of participants and unreliable findings can be expected. Some of Rubin and Babbie's suggestions have been applied and implemented in the current study: obtaining endorsements from community leaders, using culturally sensitive approaches regarding confidentiality, employing local community members as research assistants, choosing a sensitive and accessible setting, using culturally competent and bilingual interviewers, understanding cultural factors influencing participation, utilizing special sampling techniques, making frequent contacts and adding personal touches. In this chapter, cultural competence is stressed throughout so that the findings of this study will be more reliable, i.e., more able to answer the

research questions.

The methodology of this study includes design, participants involved, sampling method, data-collection method and data-analysis method. However, some technical difficulties were anticipated. Firstly, as ethnic minority students come from different countries with different cultural backgrounds, participants might have different perceptions of the same word. Thus, much clarification must be made during data collection in order to enhance reliability. The qualitative method is thus preferred, as it helps ensure the interviewer understands what interviewees really mean. Secondly, as students' language abilities vary greatly – English, their South Asian and Southeast Asian mother tongues, Cantonese, or some combination. Using the qualitative method in this study allows free expression in their preferred language, maximizing the opinions that can be obtained.

#### **4.2 Research design**

This study is a process evaluation study; instead of testing hypotheses, it aims to 1) understanding the expectations that S1 ethnic minority Hong Kong students have for a youth development program, 2) exploring the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. as perceived by ethnic minority students, and 3) exploring critical factors for successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes of Project P.A.T.H.S. among these students. The unit of analysis is individual ethnic minority student studying in designated schools. Naturally, if students perceived Project P.A.T.H.S. as effective on their development, the researcher explored *why* and *how* it had been effective, and vice versa.

The qualitative method was adopted in this study to examine the complex phenomena of program implementation. In qualitative study, three basic forms of data collection are frequently suggested for: 1) on-site observation, 2) in-depth interviews, and 3) use of other documents and existing resources (Royse, Thyer, Padgett & Logan, 2006). In this study, a combination of on-site observation and in-depth interviews was adopted, with the assistance of some other information, such as minutes of teacher meetings. This ensured a wide variety of sources for students' voices.

Using the qualitative approach has the following strengths (Rubin & Babbie, 2005), which are especially crucial in this study: 1) It enables deeper understanding for studying subtle nuances in attitudes and behaviours and for examining processes over time. This depth and detail also gives better validity; 2) It is a powerful technique for gaining insight, especially in our aim of exploring ethnic minority students' expectation and perceptions of the program; 3) It allows flexibility during problem formulation and data collection; for instance, a researcher can modify interview guidelines after observing a class so that more relevant questions can be asked, hence enhancing the reliability of the study.

Yet Rubin and Babbie (2005) also suggest some weaknesses of the qualitative method: it seldom yields precise statistical statements about a large population; it is in-depth but subjective; its generalizability is low; and it is more appropriate as a source of insight than as proof or truth. To tackle these weaknesses, Rubin and Babbie suggest: 1) prolonged engagement, 2) triangulation, 3) peer debriefing, 4) negative case analysis, 5) member checking, and 6) auditing. Below is an explanation

of how this study has addressed certain avoidable weaknesses of the method.

First, results derived from on-site observation and in-depth interviews might be subjective and personal. To tackle this limitation, data obtained from on-site observation are triangulated with in-depth interviews so that findings can be compared. Also, prolonged engagement in class observation allows the researcher to get a more comprehensive view of program effectiveness.

Secondly, only ethnic minority students in the five designated schools were included in this study, so the results may not apply to those in mainstream schools. Nevertheless, the in-depth interviews inquired about interviewees' lives in primary school. As some students did study in mainstream primary schools, they might have had different life experiences which would give us some insights about differences between designated schools and mainstream schools.

### **4.3 Participants**

During the 2007-2008 school year, 214 schools joined Project P.A.T.H.S., of which five were designated schools for non-Chinese. Three are Direct Subsidy Scheme schools, one a Government school and one an Aided school. All of them are co-educational and have both Chinese and English classes. Owing to resource and time constraints, only three were included in this study. Nevertheless, in order to maximize variations and make comparison among different types of participants, school types, location and year of joining Project P.A.T.H.S. were considered in the choice.

Finally, three schools were selected and invited during August 2007 to join this study (please refer to Appendix 1 for details of participating schools). Through telephone calls and invitation letters (Appendices 2 and 3), school principals and contact persons were informed that class observations and in-depth interviews would be carried out for certain classes and students.

School A is an Aided school located in Hong Kong East, hence students living on Hong Kong Island and the eastern parts of Kowloon are most likely to study there. Also, it is a Muslim school that addresses the cultural needs of Muslim students. For instance, the school has a prayer room, and verses from the Qu'ran can be seen everywhere. Moreover, School A was the first designated school for non-Chinese to join Project P.A.T.H.S. – this occurred in the 2005-2006 school year, i.e., the Experimental Implementation Phase of the project.

School B is a Government school located in western Kowloon, School C is a Direct Subsidy Scheme school located in central Kowloon. Ethnic minority students in these schools usually come from every district in Hong Kong, in part because there are no designated secondary schools in the New Territories or on Lantau Island. Neither school claims a religious background, and both joined Project P.A.T.H.S. in the 2006-2007 school year, i.e., the first year of the Full Implementation Phase.

In addition, all three participating schools selected the Full Program (i.e., 20 hours) in Tier 1, and all of them have double lessons, with 70 minutes for every session. While School A and School C integrated Tier 1 Program into their Life Education curricula, School B simply named it the ‘P.A.T.H.S. lesson.’



These various dispersed school types, locations and details of Project P.A.T.H.S. implementation should help generalize the results over a larger population of ethnic minority students.

#### **4.4 Sampling**

Program evaluation often involves making comparisons among various participants (Royse, Thyer, Padgett & Logan, 2006), so it is necessary to maximize variation of sampling. The sampling methods for observation and interviews are stated in this part.

##### **4.4.1 Class observation**

As it was hard for the participating schools to arrange class observations exactly as the researcher requested, owing to administrative difficulties, convenience sampling was adopted when selecting the observed classes. At the beginning of the 2007-2008 school year, school contact persons of the three participating schools, all social workers, helped select one class in each school and arranged observations, with the consent of instructors involved.

Originally, the three observed classes were comprised of all ethnic minority students, with South Asian and Southeast Asian totalling more than 95% of the classes. However, after observing one time at School B, the school contact person found it difficult to continue due to some administrative difficulties, so a new class was arranged. This new class was a combined class, i.e., majority South Asian and Southeast Asian with a few Chinese. This was found to be a better arrangement, as it

provided a different view of program implementation compared to Schools A and C. This allowed exploration of whether a pure non-Chinese class is different from a combined class when participating in a youth development program.

#### **4.4.2 In-depth interviews**

In order to compare students and maximize opportunities to discover variation among concepts (Strauss, 1987), theoretical sampling was adopted when selecting students to be interviewed. Students varied by country of origin, gender, age, length of residence in Hong Kong, district of residence and language ability.

In this study, a total of 22 students (5 Pakistani, 5 Filipinos, 4 Nepalese, 4 Indians, 1 Thai, 1 Sudanese, 1 local Chinese and 1 Chinese who had just come back to Hong Kong after living in Canada) were selected from the 3 observed classes to be interviewed once or twice. (For more details on interviewees, refer to Appendix 4). 2 Chinese students were included from School B in order to explore local students' perceptions of ethnic minority students and interactions between the two types of students. There were 11 boys and 11 girls, ages 12 to 17. Students' housing situation, which somewhat reflects socio-economic background, varied from public housing to private housing to village housing, in locations scattered over Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, the New Territories and Lantau Island.

Rubin and Babbie (2005) suggest that culturally competent researchers will also consider immigration experiences and acculturation as factors influencing findings and result. Therefore, ethnic minority students having different immigration experiences were included in this study. Their length of residence in Hong Kong

varied from 1 month to 17 years. Some of them (N=14) had been born in Hong Kong, while others (N=8) were immigrants. The majority of them were poor in Cantonese speaking, with a few fluent or nearly so.

#### **4.5 Data collection**

In this study, data was obtained from class observation and in-depth interviews, with support from other documents such as field notes from teachers' meetings and training sessions. The following detailed description of data collection procedure was suggested by Shek, Tang and Han (2005) as Principle 3 of conducting qualitative research.

##### **4.5.1 Class observation**

Starting from October 2007, systematic observations were conducted once a month (except months with more public holidays and/or school examinations) in the three participating schools. Before observation, the researcher also attended training sessions and school meetings in Schools B and C to understand their administrative affairs, teaching strategies and teachers' attitudes towards Project P.A.T.H.S.

For School C, a teacher who had attended instructor training offered by Project P.A.T.H.S. demonstrated Unit BO1.1 of S1 curriculum to around 20 fellow teachers. After the demonstration, the project's objectives were introduced so that every teacher involved would have a deeper understanding of the project. In addition, instructor meetings were held once a month at School B to determine work allocation among teachers and social workers, as well as to determine the general flow of each lesson. At School A, although no meetings or training or sessions were arranged,

personal contacts with the school contact person were made frequently so as to understand the administrative process of the school and the needs and concerns of instructors involved.

During the 2007-2008 school year, 21 double sessions (i.e., a total of 42 35-minute lessons) were observed, in which classes from School A, B and C were observed 6, 7 and 8 times respectively (Appendix 1). During the 21 double sessions, 18 out of 40 units of the Full Program in S1 Curriculum were observed (five units were observed twice and one unit was observed three times). Constructs observed were Bonding, Social Competence, Emotional Competence, Cognitive Competence, Behavioural Competence, Moral Competence, Self-Efficacy, Pro-social Norms, Resilience, Spirituality, Clear and Positive Identity, Beliefs in the Future and the Conclusion session. The two constructs that could not be observed were Self-Determination and Pro-social Involvement. The detailed aims, learning targets and overall program fidelity (include both program and content fidelity) of the observed units can be found in Appendix 5.

It is notable that School C had also integrated the Tier 2 Program into Life Education lesson. During observation, three Tier 2 sessions, held in a park beside the school and at a camp site in Shatin, were observed. Although Tier 2 is not the major focus of the current study, these sessions can serve as extra reference points to examine the effects on students' interaction and interpersonal relationships so as to explore whether these out-of-classroom activities could help foster better relationships among ethnic minority students.

In class observation, the focus was placed on how Project P.A.T.H.S. was implemented, in order to explore critical factors for successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes of the project (i.e., one of the research aims in this study). As mentioned in chapter 3, special attention was paid to: 1) **Program**, including the curriculum design of Project P.A.T.H.S., ethnic minority students' expectations of a youth development program, its relevancy to them, as well as overall program fidelity, including both program and content fidelity (Hahn, Noland, Rayens & Christie, 2002); 2) **People**, including all instructor and student factors, as listed in chapter 3, as well as co-teaching methods; And 3) **Process**, including techniques used by instructors to motivate ethnic minority S1 students, utilization of different teaching strategies, and supportive relationship among instructors and ethnic minority students (as well as relationships with Chinese students in the combined class at School B).

Royse, Thyer, Padgett and Logan (2006) also suggested that physical setting can powerfully influence human behaviour. Therefore, floor plans were drawn during class observation, especially for group discussions or other group activities, to catch the anticipated increase in verbal and non-verbal communication among students. Moreover, particular attention was paid during class observation to students who had been selected for in-depth interviews, so that the learning experiences of these students could be triangulated with the experiences expressed during interviews. Guidelines for class observation can be found in Appendix 6.

In the interests of cultural competence, as suggested by Rubin and Babbie (2005), having frequent contacts (during class observation) helps build relationships between

the researcher and interviewees. This should have a positive effect on the recruitment and retention of interviewees, especially when students are from a different country to the researcher. Moreover, class observation can also enhance cultural competence, as it helps researcher formulate questions for the in-depth interview.

#### **4.5.2 In-depth interviews**

At the beginning of September 2007, consent letters (Appendix 7) were given to all students' parents from all observed classes. The purpose was to seek consent for in-home interviews to obtain a more thorough picture of students' learning in the program. The consent letter was worded as simply as possible to reduce the possibility of misunderstanding leading to refusal.

From Schools A, B and C, 4, 9 and 17 letters, respectively, drew 'agree' replies. The smaller number of positive replies from School A may be because of the background of the students in the observed class – more than half were girls, with a high probability that they were also Muslim. It would not be appropriate for the (male) interviewer to have personal contact with a Muslim girl. Nevertheless, a culturally competent researcher would try to employ community members as helpers (Rubin & Babbie, 2005). In order to obtain female voices from School A, the researcher asked a teaching assistant (a Pakistani woman) from that School to help arrange interviews during lunch hour in the school's prayer room. Thanks to the Pakistani teaching assistant, who agreed to be present during interviews, 4 more female students were successfully recruited. Eventually, a total of 6 students from School A were interviewed.

Finally, 22 students were selected, of whom 14 were interviewed twice (for more details, refer to Appendix 4). 6 of them were interviewed in the middle of school year but could not be contacted after the final examinations in July. One of the 6 students had migrated to the UK, and the others had gone back to their countries of origin for summer vacation. On the other hand, among the 22 students, 2 students, whose families had not initially agreed to home interviews, were invited to attend an interview at the end of school year, in the post-examination period, since they had actively participated in Project P.A.T.H.S. throughout the whole year. This was an attempt to answer the third research aim, i.e., exploring critical factors for successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes of Project P.A.T.H.S. These two interviews were conducted during school time (one during lunch hour and one during a lesson).

The first interviews were conducted from October 2007 to March 2008, and the second interviews were conducted soon after the final examination. The focus of the in-depth interviews was to understand and explore *why* ethnic minority students perceive the program as beneficial (or not) to their development, i.e., the second aim of this study. As suggested by Royse, Thyer, Padgett and Logan (2006), the essential goal of qualitative interviewing is to allow interviewees to express themselves freely in their own words. Thus, semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were used in order to invite students to share as much as possible. Moreover, as Rubin and Babbie (2005) suggested, when people are interviewed by ‘outsiders’, they may tend to give socially desirable answers that hinder interviewers from seeing reality. Thus, items seeking negative incidents and comments were included (see Appendix 8) to avoid this as much as possible.

Referencing guidelines from the qualitative evaluation of Project P.A.T.H.S. (Shek, Lee, Siu & Lam, 2006) and the literature review of this study, the interviews aimed to explore: 1) background of the students, 2) comments about and expectations of youth-development programs, 3) comments on the process, 4) comments about and expectations of the people involved, and 5) comments on self-participation. Moreover, as special attention was paid to the interviewees during class observation, the interviewer asked about specific incidents to triangulate among different data sources.

On the other hand, students were assured of anonymity both in consent letters for parents and at the beginning of every interview. Confidentiality was also ensured with regard to comments about program, process and people involved. Students were encouraged to express themselves freely, in which not only positive comments, but also negative comments were welcomed. All interviews were conducted in English, Cantonese or a combination, depending on students' language ability/preference.

In addition, all interviews were audio-recorded with students' consent (one student who disagreed in the first interview did finally agree during the second interview). Verbatim transcripts were typed in order to analyse the data.

#### **4.6 Data analysis**

With detailed observation reports and verbatim transcripts of in-depth interviews, data was then analysed, in which findings were discovered from the data rather than testing hypotheses. Moreover, findings obtained from different data sources were triangulated to determine study results.



Using the general coding techniques suggested by Rubin and Rubin (2005), as well as by Strauss (1987), data were analysed in a few steps. First, line-by-line coding was done at the beginning of data analysis, in which meaningful words or phrases were coded. Second, the coded words and phrases were generated into concepts and themes derived from literature review, which were later categorized further. Some categories were established through interview guidelines, and others were identified through data provided by interviewees. The categories included: students' background, family relationship, overall program fidelity, students' expectations of youth development programs, topics or activities that most impressed students, characteristics of instructors, students' comments towards co-teaching methods, group experiences, and perceived changes in students after program implementation. All these categories were designed to answer the study's research questions and aims. Third, concepts and phrases were compared across interviews and correlations among categories were then suggested. Finally, the researcher discussed whether the program had a positive impact on ethnic minority students living in Hong Kong.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Findings**

In this chapter, findings are organized into nine categories that emerged through data analysis, as the data were collected through class observation and in-depth interviews. The categories are: 1) Students' backgrounds for in-depth interviews; 2) Family and social networking; 3) Overall program fidelity of participating classes; 4) Highlights of class observation; 5) Ethnic minority students' expectations of youth development programs; 6) Impressive activities in Project P.A.T.H.S.; 7) Instructors' characteristics as perceived by ethnic minority students; 8) Positive and negative group experiences; and 9) Positive changes after program implementation.

All these findings are organized in order to have a deeper understanding of the research aims of this study, which include: 1) understanding the expectations that S1 ethnic minority Hong Kong students have for a youth development program, 2) exploring the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. as perceived by ethnic minority students, and 3) exploring critical factors for successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes of Project P.A.T.H.S. among these students. The relevancy of each category towards the three research questions is pinpointed in each part.

#### **5.1 Students' backgrounds for in-depth interviews**

As suggested in previous chapters, **People** factor is one of the critical factors affecting the quality of program implementation. The backgrounds of students participating in in-depth interviews are presented here to give readers a clearer understanding of the **People** involved in this study. Data include students' gender and

country of origin, age, length of residence in Hong Kong, place of birth, housing situation, and Chinese-language proficiency.

### 5.1.1 Gender and country of origin

The 22 S1 students interviewed were equally distributed by gender. They mainly came from Pakistan (22.8%), the Philippines (22.8%), Nepal (18.2%) and India (18.2%).

Table 1: Gender and country of origin for students joining in-depth interviews

Country of Origin	Male	Female	Percentage
Philippines	3	2	22.8%
Nepal	4	0	18.2%
India	3	1	18.2%
Thailand	0	1	4.5%
Sudan	0	1	4.5%
(Chinese)	2	0	9%
<b>Sub-total:</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>22</b>		<b>100%</b>

### 5.1.2 Age

As shown in Table 2, the vast majority of interviewees were age 13, with the average age 13.27. The two students aged 17 or above had been sent back to their country of origin for a period of time for educational purposes, so they had missed some school years in Hong Kong.

Table 2: Age of students

Age	No. of students	Percentage
12 or below	2	9%
13	18	82%
17 or above	2	9%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100%</b>

(Average: 13.27)

### 5.1.3 Length of residence in Hong Kong

At the time of the study, most of the interviewees had lived in Hong Kong for 12 to 16 years (N=10), with an average of 9.27 years.

Table 3: Length of residence in Hong Kong

Years living in Hong Kong	No. of students	Percentage
1 year or below	3	13.6%
2 to 6 years	3	13.6%
7 to 11 years	5	22.8%
12 to 16 years	10	45%
17 years or above	1	4.5%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100%</b>

(Average: 9.27)

### 5.1.4 Place of birth

14 interviewees were born in Hong Kong and 8 in their countries of origin.

Table 4: Place of birth

Place of birth	No. of students	Percentage
Hong Kong	14	63.6%
Nepal	3	13.6%
Sudan	1	4.5%
India	1	4.5%
Thailand	1	4.5%
Pakistan	1	4.5%
Philippines	1	4.5%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 5.1.5 Housing situation

Most of the interviewees lived in private rental housing (50%), or public housing (41%); two (9%) lived in villages in Yuen Long and on Lantau Island.

Table 5: Housing situation

Type of housing	No. of students	Percentage
Public housing	9	41%
Private rental housing	11	50%
Village	2	9%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 5.1.6 Chinese-language proficiency

Since all interviewees were studying in EMI (English Medium of Instruction) schools, they were all proficient in English, at least for speaking and listening. The interviewer assessed their Chinese ability during interviews and divided them into four levels:

Table 6: Students' Chinese-language proficiency (by country of origin)

Chinese Language	Pakistan	Philippines	Nepal	India	Thailand	Sudan	Chinese	Percentage
None	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4.5%
Poor	3	4	2	2	0	1	0	59%
Good	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	13.6%
Excellent	1	0	1	1	1	0	2	27.2%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

Most interviewees had poor to no Chinese proficiency. Although 27.2% had excellent Chinese level, two of these were actually Chinese. Excluding these Chinese students, less than one-third of the interviewees possessed good or excellent Chinese-language proficiency.

## 5.2 Family and social networking

Family and social networks serve as crucial protective factors (i.e., bonding) in personal development, and they shed more light on the interviewees' backgrounds.

### 5.2.1 Family networks

Most interviewees have very close and intimate relationships with their family members. For instance, class observation at school B included an activity named "My Last Choice" (Unit SP1.1), in which students were required to rank what they preferred to do if they had only 24 hours left to live. Among seven discussion groups, six gave "spending time with family" first priority, with the remaining group ranking it second.

On the other hand, Student P said:

*"It's some questions about the future like what we want to be and...how*

*will you do it...and I said without the help of my parents, then I wouldn't be here...and I wouldn't have my future in a good way."*

*(Student P, Filipino girl, School B)*

The discussion was originally related to goal-setting. Although it was quite an individual topic, still the interviewee related her development to her parents. Since bonding is an important protective factor for adolescents (Lee, 2007a), some narratives are included below to illustrate the importance of family relationships for these interviewees.

#### *Relationships with Parents*

During interviews, all students (N=22) said that they had good relationships with their parents. Their parents helped them academically and served as mediators for them to get in touch with the local community.

Student J, an Indian boy born in Hong Kong, shared how his parents affect his daily life:

*Interviewer: "Do you like the Chinese food?"*

*Student J: "Yes, very much, like Siu Mai...you know the hawkers... We just buy noodles, or fish balls, me and my family, we went to the restaurant here, we went eat...you know...dumpling meat, Siu Mai, in Mei Foo...And you know Chinese restaurant have...like tea, Chinese tea...My father drink Chinese tea...My mother also drink Chinese tea"*

*Interviewer: "And you?"*

*Student J: "Yes I do, sometimes...because my mother, many Chinese good"*

*friends, so that we have nothing to do in the restaurant, like you know, example, someone drinks the tea, we do like on the table right (knocking on the table, which means respectfully in Chinese culture)”*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

His parents served as knowledge contributors as well as mediators for building networks with Chinese people.

This close relationship is somewhat reciprocal. For instance, while conducting an interview with a Pakistani boy (Student B) outside the building where he lived, he kept glancing at his watch and mobile phone, saying, *“because if there is phone at home, what they will think it ohh...they just left the home like this, mostly they will get afraid.”* In this situation, Student B was concerned that his father would worry about him and would be afraid he could not contact his son.

### *Relationships with siblings*

In this study, all interviewees (N=22) had siblings, quite a few with more than 2 brothers or sisters living together. Similar to their relationships with parents, all interviewees described close and harmonious relationships with siblings.

While interviewing Student G, an Indian girl born in Hong Kong, she said the happiest times of her life in Hong Kong are with

*“My sister! She is the funniest people! When we got angry, she’ll make a funny face and make us all laugh! I have two sisters. We often talk and share in our room!”*



*(Student G, Indian girl, School C)*

In another case, Student J once showed a magazine during the interview, sharing about the poster in it:

*“He (his younger brother) made the poster and it’s put on the newspaper, it’s very great to put on the newspaper.”*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

He felt proud for his brother, saying with a smile that *“it’s my watch...it’s the watch that my brother draw”*. His younger brother had drawn a superman character with a watch exactly the same as Student J’s. It somewhat expressed that Student J’s brother has a good impression on him.

#### *Relationship with relatives*

During the interview, it was discovered that most ethnic minority students also have very close relationships with other relatives such as uncles, cousins and grandparents. For instance, Student I, an Indian girl living in private rental house at Tsim Sha Tsui, pointed at the front door during the interview and said: *“We all together everyday, that’s my Auntie’s home.”*

Most interviewees have at least one relative living in the same district, especially for those living in private rental houses and village houses (see also next part). This serves as an important supporting network in daily life. For instance, while asking Student I where she would seek help when she encountered homework problems, she replied: *“You know one of my cousins, she know Chinese very well.”* In this case, her

cousin helped her with Chinese homework; in some other cases, their relatives helped take care of them and would wander around together in their leisure time.

*Warm but non-demanding parenting for Filipino students*

Although all interviewees spoke of harmonious relationships with parents, two Filipino students described their parents as “*very soft*” and “*just encouraging and nothing else*”, seeming to have a warm but non-demanding attitude.

In the first case, Student M shared his views on why his sister was becoming self-centred:

*“Yes, and then she, she gets angry if she doesn’t get what she want... because is very... soft to her... if she is cute and everything, and then she pretends to be... nice..... Because...in Philippines...she...some of them can’t get what they want, because many people do many things, they are busy...sometimes they don’t have time to...serve her. Because she is studying here... and her parents don’t want to send her because my mum, because she said, may be something will happen there and she will get thin in Philippines.”*

*(Student M, Filipino boy, School B)*

From Student M’s point of view, his parents (especially his mother) did not expect much of his sister, and so she became quite selfish.

In the second case, Student P shared her parents’ reaction after finding out that she only got concession pass:

*Student P: “They just said ‘see, because of you...that’s why that’s why,*

*you have to not always be absent and work hard' they said...if I don't go to school, don't listen and if I fail, then they will give me a private tutor."*

*Interviewer: "They said in an angry way or encouraging way?"*

*Student P: "Encouraging way. They said that if they get angry to the children, the children will...you know...make it worse. Because they will be tempted to do stuff work..."*

*Interviewer: "But for you, do you think encouraging way is useful? Or..."*

*Student P: "Useless! Because it's just encouraging and nothing else."*

*Interviewer: "So what you expect? Which way is more useful? Except encouragement...what else? What next?"*

*Student P: "Um...actually if they said they will give me a tutor, then it's better to give me a tutor NOW. So...in stead of waiting for me...to fail...that's why I thought it is no meaning but I have to listen to them."*

*(Student P, Filipino girl, School B)*

For Student P, although her parents were encouraging, there were differences between her expectations and the actual help received. She had hoped to receive immediate actual help and direct guidance. Nevertheless, she said she had a "happy family", meaning that she was still satisfied with her family relationships.

To sum up, 'family' not only serves as a protective factor for these interviewees, but it also provides chances for them to apply what they have learned in Project P.A.T.H.S. More related findings will be covered in section 5.9.

### **5.2.2 Social networks**

Students appeared to have different types of social networks according to their housing situation. This can be distinguished into private rental housing (including village housing) and public housing.

#### *Social networks in private rental housing*

In this study, 11 and 2 interviewees lived in private rental houses and village houses respectively (refer to table 5). As mentioned, most interviewees had more than one relative living in the same district. This was mainly because of ethnic minority people's tendency to locate in the same district in order to have more social support.

Moreover, it appeared that ethnic minorities had closer networks with people from the same country if they were living in private rental houses or village houses. For instance, it was observed that Student P, a Filipino girl living in a village house at Pui O, had a very close network with Filipinos living in the same village. While conducting interviews in the evening at a store outside the village where she lived, almost ten Filipinos were sitting beside her, drinking and chatting together, wondering why a stranger/outsider was talking to their friend (i.e., Student P).

On the other hand, among the 13 interviewees living in private rental houses and village houses, none of them mentioned that they have any contact with the Chinese neighbour. Although they still had some casual contact with Chinese in the community, their relationships tended not to be long-lasting. One common place where most interviewees met Chinese was nearby public parks. For instance, Student J revealed:

*“You know when I go parks, I meet some Chinese people...like Kowloon Park, and my friend and I feel bored, and we talked to Chinese people, and we play hide and seek.”*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

Asked how often they would play together, Student J said *“Now we have test, now we have to study everything”*, implying that their contact lost easily. Having similar experience, Student L shared:

*“We (Chinese and Student L) don't play much because I don't know them very well. I don't know who are they...but I just play with them...just communicate...”*

*(Student L, Nepalese boy, School C)*

Thus, though he did have chances to meet Chinese people, the network was not stable and long-lasting.

#### *Social networks in public housing*

Interviewees living in public housing appeared more likely (than those living in private rental housing or village houses) to have closer networks with local Chinese. Of the 9 interviewees living in public housing, three shared that they had close networks with their Chinese neighbours or with Chinese living in the same building. For instance, when Student D was asked where she could seek help when she encountered difficulties in Chinese homework, she replied:

*“In my house, upstairs, there is a Chinese lady, she comes to my home, and then I speak with her in Chinese, she speaks with me in Chinese, she*

*live in...near my house for 5 years. She just comes to home, and she asks me whether you have any Chinese homework, give it to me and whether you have any problems I got...you can help me...beside homework...she teaches me how to learn the difficult words in Chinese.”*

*(Student D, Pakistani girl, School A)*

Student K shared similar experiences:

*“Our flat is 504, the other one is 503, they are very kind Chinese...whenever like ah...when I was small...I didn't know...I remember I was in P4, 9 years old, I didn't know how's the Chinese word, and then the girl told me. Even nowadays, last month, the girl came to my home because our...because her mother was not at home...like we were very friendly, friendly like if...they need help, we help them. If we need help, they help us.”*

*(Student K, Pakistani girl, School A)*

These close and intimate networks were not experienced by those interviewees living in private rental housing or village houses. Nevertheless, it is noted that the three interviewees who shared that they had close networks with Chinese people were all Pakistani (two of whom spoke very good Chinese, while the other was only competent in Chinese at a basic level). Interviewees from other countries (e.g., the Philippines and Nepal) who could not speak fluent Chinese did not share anything about this during interviews. Therefore, there was a tendency that living in public housing provided more chances for ethnic minorities to build closer networks with local Chinese, provided they were able to communicate in Chinese.

### 5.3 Overall program fidelity of participating classes

Tier 1 Program of Project P.A.T.H.S. involves an evidence-based curriculum in which various teaching constructs, unit aims, objectives, teaching methods as well as program activities are suggested in a program manual. While exploring its effectiveness as perceived by ethnic minority students, it is important to evaluate program fidelity of different observed schools, so that the correlation between program fidelity and program effectiveness as perceived by students can be explored. Findings from this part help explore how program fidelity, which has been identified in previous chapters as a critical factor, affects the success of the intended learning outcomes of Project P.A.T.H.S.

As discussed in chapter 3.2, overall fidelity of program implementation consists of program fidelity and content fidelity. In this study, overall program fidelity means the average of program and content fidelity. While program fidelity mainly refers to teaching method and activities suggested in the manual, content fidelity refers to objectives and messages carried. Though details of program, content and overall fidelity of program implementation can be found in appendix 5, a summary is listed below:

Table 7: Fidelity of program implementation

School	Observed Tier 1 units	Average program fidelity	Average content fidelity	Average overall fidelity
School A	11	81.4%	85%	83%
School B	9	58.9%	66.7%	62.8%
School C	6	92.5%	85%	88.8%
<b>Total Average:</b>		<b>77.6%</b>	<b>78.9%</b>	<b>78.2%</b>

The average overall fidelity of units observed in all three schools was 78.2%, a bit lower than in previous studies conducted by research team of Project P.A.T.H.S. (Shek, Lee & Sun, 2008; Shek, Ma, Sun & Lung, 2008), yet this still can be regarded as a high level of overall program fidelity. School C had the highest average overall fidelity (88.8%), as its program and content fidelity constantly remained at a high level. Two instructors, both class teachers, were constantly involved in School C. They closely followed the program manual, including objectives, teaching methods and activities suggested.

School A's program and content fidelity also remained at a high level. Instructors involved were one social worker and one teacher (when either one was absent, a female Pakistani teaching assistant would help in the classroom). When lessons were hosted by the social worker, both program and content fidelity remained at a very high level. On the other hand, when lessons were hosted by the teacher, content fidelity remained high, but program fidelity dropped gradually. It was because the teacher preferred to use direct teaching methods (e.g., sharing by teacher, message delivery) rather than interactive teaching methods (e.g., group discussion, group game, class sharing), as suggested in the program manual.

Compared to School A and School C, School B had the lowest program and content fidelity (58.9% and 66.7% respectively). Two instructors, one social worker and one teacher, were involved at School B. In general, each session (i.e., a double lesson) had the first lesson held by the social worker, with games and activities related to the unit topic. The second lesson was then held by the teacher, when the message of the unit was delivered and more group discussion time was allowed. As shown in table 8



below, the accumulative average overall fidelity was only 40% for the first 5 observed units, with the second, third and fifth units rating 25%, 20% and 5% respectively.

Table 8: Program fidelity of School B

Unit	Observation date	Overall fidelity	Accumulative average overall fidelity
BC1.1	15/11/2007	50%	50%
SE1.4	13/12/2007	25%	37.5%
PN1.1	21/01/2008	20%	31.7%
PN1.2		100%	48.8%
RE1.2	18/02/2008	5%	40%
SP1.1	17/03/2008	100%	50%
SP1.2		65%	52%
ID1.3	24/04/2008	100%	58.1%
Conclusion	30/05/2008	100%	62.8%

Units with lower overall fidelity (i.e., Unit SE1.4, PN1.1 and RE1.2) were carried by the social worker. Nevertheless, instructors started to implement the program differently after March 2008 (the reason for this is uncertain), with instructors trying to follow the program manual more closely. Both social worker and teacher used more group discussion rather than playing games and activities, and the final average overall fidelity increased to 62.8%.

#### **5.4 Highlights of Class observation**

It was a long journey, observing classes at three schools during one school year. During observation, some unique features, similarities and differences of the schools were identified. Findings presented in this part explore critical factors for

successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes of Project P.A.T.H.S among ethnic minority students, in particular factors occurring during the **Process** of program implementation. Moreover, the findings provide hints for exploring the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. as perceived by ethnic minority students.

#### **5.4.1 Characteristics of School A**

##### *Instructor factors*

Two instructors participated in the Tier 1 program of Project P.A.T.H.S. at School A, one a social worker from an NGO and one a school teacher (when either one was absent, a Pakistani teaching assistant would join the class). Both of them were female, and neither was the class teacher.

The co-teaching pattern of instructors was rather lesson-based, in which one taught the first lesson with the other teaching the second. Very often, the social worker would be in charge of the first lesson.

Instructors, especially the social worker, were very encouraging and helpful and enjoyed giving chances to every student. Very often when there were group presentations, after 7 out of the 8 groups presented their views, the social worker would ask the last group, “*Do you want to try?*” Students always seemed willing to try after the social worker’s encouragement, which demonstrates how instructors, as one of the **People** in program implementation, help facilitate the **Process** of the program.

The social worker valued lesson ‘process’ very much. For instance, when she noticed

a group working hard during group discussion, she would add marks for serious participation, showing that she recognized positive behaviour. On the other hand, the teacher was more task-oriented and her tone was rather directive. For instance, once the teacher asked students to write down their dreams, she said in a commanding tone: *“Write down what you want to be and write 10 steps to help to become it! I don’t want silly answer! Be practical!”* In addition, the teacher put more effort into classroom management. Once after students finished discussing, the teacher asked them to return to their original seats at once; however, as the groups had not presented yet, they were separated, which made it hard to organize presentations.

On the other hand, both instructors were willing to disclose their own stories in order to arouse students’ interest. Once, the teacher said:

*“I am Chinese, you are Pakistani, when I go to your home, I will not eat pork and drink wine, it is to respect your culture. When you go to my house, you have to greet elder, buy fruits...don’t cross chopstick, just eat the food in front of you, use chopstick instead of hands.”*

This was shared during Unit PN1.1, “Rules Rule: Everyone Has to Get a Clue”, in which the topic was about norms in society. Instructors of School A always let students know about real situations in Hong Kong society. While teaching Unit SD1.3, “The Dream Train”, about goal setting, the teacher said:

*“For example, someone wants to be cricket player, it is very fine! But is it you just hang out, practice, play good games, is it enough? What about learn Chinese? If one day, a Chinese team comes to hire you, you even don’t know the contract!”*

### Student factors

As mentioned before, nearly all the girls in the observed class in School A wore scarves, showing their Muslim faith. The effect of this can be observed during the process of the program. For group-based activities, instructors always allowed students to group themselves, and they would always group by gender. It is quite unique among the three participating schools – School B and School C tended to have mixed groups even though the instructors also allowed them group themselves.

On the other hand, during the concluding session for Tier 1 program of Project P.A.T.H.S., students were asked to share about the topics that impressed them most. The topics taught near the end of the school year, such Pro-social Involvement and Self-Determination, were not mentioned by students; instead, daily life topics such as ‘friendship’, ‘apologizing’, ‘cyber love’ and ‘wasting food in daily life’ were frequently mentioned. Although it is impossible to conclude that students had forgotten the topics they did not mention, it was a fact that students were better at recalling the topics which were more relevant to daily life.

### Students value their cultural and religious backgrounds

As the religious background of School A was Islamic, many Muslim students studied in the observed class, which had 14 boys and 14 girls. In general, 13 girls wore scarves, and all students highly valued their own culture and religion. For instance, in an activity called ‘Voting for the best rule in class’ (Unit ID1.1 “If I Were the Boss”), the majority voted for “respect others’ religion”, a rule was actually initiated by a girls’ group. While the instructor asked whether it was difficult to actualize these rules, the girls replied, with a little frustration: “*Difficult to make others understand.*”

'Others' in this context referred to 'other students in the class', all of whom were non-Chinese, though some were non-Muslim. Even for ethnic minorities, students coming from different countries of origin actually have unique cultures.

While teaching Unit SP1.1 "My Favourite", instructors asked students to rank the most important thing in their life, from a list of ten choices. A number of students selected '10. Others: \_\_\_\_\_', and wrote 'Pray to God'. Asked why they would choose this option, a Pakistani student (Student B during the in-depth interviews) replied: *"Pray to God, because very important, God will help."*

Moreover, as explained by Student K, wearing a scarf in their culture means:

*"That means you hide yourself like, you don't show off you have a good figure or like that, you are simple and means that you have a very good hide and...don't think that you are very good, and just like closer to others. In our country they think that if you wear a long scarf, they think you are very good, you have a good...ah values, like right, you mother taught you very good things"*

*(Student K, Pakistani girl, School A)*

In general, students from all three schools valued their culture and religion but it was at School A, with a larger Muslim population, where students expressed the most concern about this aspect.

### **5.4.2 Characteristics of School B**

#### *Instructor factors*

Two instructors were involved in School B, one the class teacher of the observed class and the other one a social worker from an NGO. Both were female. Very often, the social worker organized games and activities in the first lesson, and the teachers gave messages and led discussions in the second lesson.

Both of the instructors were encouraging and supportive, with a style that was rather free and light on discipline. If the class was out-of-control, teacher would raise up a 'red file', symbolizing 'quiet', and the students would become a little bit quieter, since they learned this behaviour in other lessons taught by that teacher.

On the other hand, one major weakness for the social worker was the level of English. Ethnic minority students sometimes misunderstood what she said, and they became annoyed and puzzled, probably because of the social worker's pronunciation.

#### *Frequent games*

School B was unique in its program design, which used many games.

During the first few observations, the social worker spent a long time playing games. For instance, during the first observation, students played a game for 30 minutes at the beginning of the lesson; in the second and third observation, games took 50 and 30 minutes respectively. These games actually had a short-term effect, with students feeling excited at the beginning but getting less excited and more passive as time passed. After 15 to 20 minutes, students had little incentive to participate in the

games. This demonstrates how **Program design** affects **Process**. Moreover, instructors seldom explained and/or debriefed after games; very often, lessons jumped to something else, and the class teacher eventually delivered another unit in the second lesson.

#### *Interaction between Chinese and ethnic minority students*

There were 16 boys and 22 girls in the class, and unlike School A, gender was not the major factor at School B in forming discussion groups. Very often, instructors would ask students to group by themselves, and each group always included both boys and girls. Since the class had both Chinese and non-Chinese (mainly South and Southeast Asians), students often grouped themselves by ethnicity, in which Chinese students preferred to group with Chinese, ethnic minorities with ethnic minorities.

The class had about 10 non-multi-ethnic Chinese students (since some Chinese were multi-ethnic, it was hard to completely separate the Chinese from the non-Chinese), and whenever the instructors allowed students to form groups by themselves, Chinese students would form a pure Chinese group. However, there were two exceptions, a boy and a girl. The boy, Student Q in the in-depth interviews, had lived in Canada for 13 years, so he could speak fluent English; the Chinese girl could also speak fluent English and often performed as a discussion-group leader in a ‘South Asian group’. Thus, ethnicity might not be as critical a factor in grouping as language.

Moreover, although it was a combined class, Chinese students seldom had any exchange with ethnic minority students. For instance, in a session about Chinese

culture and norms (Unit PN1.2 “When in Rome, Do as the Romans Do”), the Chinese students simply did not contribute much about Chinese culture during group presentations. Some said that it was a language problem, i.e., related to their lack of fluency in English. Thus, ‘language’ is actually a very important factor for cultural exchange in a combined class.

#### Hardware of the classroom

As mentioned in previous chapters, although ‘Place’ is not the major factor for analysis in this study, its effect on program effectiveness should not be ignored. School B had very big classrooms, about 1.5 times bigger than those in School A and twice as big as those in School C. Instructors seemed to have difficulty controlling the class in such a big room.

Moreover, there were no computers or overhead projectors in the classroom. Over seven observations, instructors never used any audio-visual materials provided by Project P.A.T.H.S., such as soundtracks, flash games, videos or and PowerPoint slides. This demonstrates how **Place** affects the **Process** of a youth-development program.

### **5.4.3 Characteristics of School C**

#### Instructor factors

Two instructors, one male and one female, were involved in School C. Both of them were class teachers of the observed class. They were very friendly, kind and supportive. Also, they were characterized by their willingness to share their own stories. For instance, while initiating the topic “desirable friends” (Unit BO1.3



“Looking for Friends at the Crossroads”), the male instructor said:

*“When I was in form 1, it was a very different life from primary school. I had to adapt and made a lot of new friends. At that moment, I chose one friend who was fashionable. When I saw him dressing jeans, I wanted one too, so I saved money, it cost about \$300... later, we made a lot of trouble to the school. Some friends took cigarette, and they offered me...that was my turning point! I understand what true friend was. They just took advantage on me, and they said a lot demerit on me...In form 3, I made a change in friendship and academic...”*

After the instructor purposefully shared his own story, a Nepalese student (Student L in the in-depth interviews) responded, *“My story was similar in Primary school. My friends just make use of me. I quit and made new good friends later.”* Hence instructors’ genuine sharing, especially about somewhat negative experiences, did provide a good model, encouraging students to engage in self-reflection. And it demonstrates how **People**, i.e., the instructor, affect program effectiveness during the **Process** of program implementation.

Instructors were also very willing to allow students chances to improve. For instance, once the students were asked to prepare a role play in accordance with the story scripts provided in Unit MC1.2, “On the Same Bus”. At first, students did not discuss the topic seriously, and when time was up, instructors asked the first group to perform. However, they could not act according to the story and the whole class was totally puzzled. Instead of scolding the students, instructors asked them in an encouraging tone whether they would like five more minutes for further preparation.

Afterwards, the students changed their attitudes and prepared much more seriously than before. This shows how instructors' attitudes affect students' learning motivation.

### *Student factors*

At School C, it was observed that ethnic minority students actually liked listening to classmates' sharing. Very often after group discussions, more than 15 minutes were spent on group presentations as students presented one after the other, yet the whole class kept listening patiently.

For division into groups, instructors always assigned the groupings (usually into groups of four with nearby classmates), hence the groups nearly always included both boys and girls. Nevertheless, there were no obvious communication problems among students, and students from different countries of origins, as well as different genders, enjoyed discussing together.

On the other hand, ethnic minority students at School C had quite different cultural backgrounds from local Chinese. For instance, the instructor shared the story 'Return of the Wolves' (Unit CC1.1 "The Brain: Human Software"), but none of the students had ever heard the story. Since this is a well-known story for both Western and local children, perhaps the ethnic minority students simply had acquired different sorts of knowledge while growing up.

### *Integration of Tier 2 program*

School C was the only participating school in this study to integrate Tier 2 into Tier 1

during the lesson time. Although evaluating the effectiveness of Tier 2 is not a major aim of this study, its effect on enhancing students' interaction should not be ignored, especially when it was integrated into Tier 1 program with all the students participating together. At the beginning of the school year, a day camp (a Tier 2 program) was organized for each class during school time in order to improve students' relationships and bonding among instructors and students. In the second term, four more Tier 2 sessions were organized at the public park adjacent to school during lessons for each class. Training was provided by an NGO, with the program was mainly about team building, communication and personal growth. As observed, students enjoyed this program very much, and some reflected during interviews that these experiential activities helped them build better relationships with their classmates (this will be further presented later in this paper).

In conclusion, although the three observed classes had unique characteristics, there were actually some common features: instructors were all very kind, friendly and supportive; students were actively involved in group discussions (even though, at School B, the lessons were dominated by games in the first half of school year); and, the relationships among instructors and students were very good. These similarities and differences will be discussed again in Chapter 6 to answer the three research questions in more detail.

### **5.5 Ethnic minority students' expectations of youth development programs**

To understand ethnic minority students' expectations of youth development programs, interviewees were asked to reveal their impressions of Project P.A.T.H.S. as well as their expectations of youth development programs.

In this part, students' impressions towards Project P.A.T.H.S. are first presented, their expectations of youth development programs is followed.

### **5.5.1 Students' impressions of Project P.A.T.H.S.**

During in-depth interviews, interviewees were asked about their impressions of Project P.A.T.H.S. Phrases like 'interesting', 'useful', and 'excited' were frequently used. Nevertheless, two descriptions were commonly heard: 1) New, and 2) Unique.

#### New

Students expect something new in their learning experience. While conducting in-depth interviews, many students (N=10) regarded Project P.A.T.H.S. as 'new'. For instance, according to Student L:

*“Exactly I feel quite proud...and like to have...ar...Life Education... because the Life Education like won't have... like in our former school, like in home country, and like before like in primary school... this a private school...and like they do not have this lesson before.”*

*(Student L, Nepalese boy, School C)*

From his point of view, this was a new program because it was not available at schools in his home country or at his primary school in Hong Kong. Student L was an enthusiastic student who shared much about his learning and the perceived effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S., as presented later in this chapter. He said he was 'proud to have Life Education', implying how much he appreciated this new program.

'New', in some cases, referred to the topic and content of the program. Student P, a

Filipino girl from School B, commented that *“in primary we don't have activities like that, but P.A.T.H.S. is fun, I think it's fun.”* Similarly, Student K from School A expressed that emotional control was a new topic for her:

*“It is very good, because we can learn many things that we don't know before also...we are kind, but we sometimes when we get angry, we tell if it mustn't like...it's all your fault.”*

*(Student K, Pakistani girl, School A)*

Moreover, Project P.A.T.H.S. also offered new teaching methods and learning experiences. Student J revealed:

*“Very interesting...It's...like...ar...they talk about many...ar...many new stuffs...many...ar...it's the teachers very fun...very...talk to us like...Play games...and we go Lai Chi Kok park, ar...we just play games, and we have activity like...number games.”*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

For Student J, such new learning experiences not only sparked his interest in S1, but also increased his learning motivation for the coming year. When asked about his expectations of Project P.A.T.H.S. in S2 and S3, Student J replied:

*“I'm not sure...but if there is something that we don't know...like...something new!”*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

### Uniqueness

In addition to 'new', 4 students commented that Project P.A.T.H.S. was a 'unique'

program, especially if they had come from other countries. For instance, Student L said:

*“I think it’s quite...ar...unique session in the school, because in other countries, they don’t have like this kind of session... So I think it’s very unique.”*

*(Student L, Nepalese boy, School C)*

‘Co-teaching’ was also a unique feature. Student D, a Pakistani girl said:

*“I think atmosphere was really good, sometimes the class is noisy sometimes the class is very...attendable...and...attention...pay attention at class because two teachers are teaching in the class...so I think the atmosphere was really...well...only P.A.T.H.S. lesson have got two teachers...”*

Explaining her appreciation of co-teaching, she said:

*“One teacher is speaking and one teacher is writing...or one teacher is reading and other teacher is listening...and if the other teacher is reading, if she gets wrong, then the other teacher can tell her your mistake is this and that, and then you must correct it. So they can help each other and they can help us.”*

*(Student D, Pakistani girl, School A)*

Co-teaching was unique as perceived by Student D, it smoothed out the lesson and helped students learn to be cooperative by observing how their teachers cooperated. From her point of view, the arrangement of co-teaching method did help the **P**rocess

of program implementation.

It appears that ethnic minority students expect something new and unique in their learning experience. More concrete expectations of the program follow.

### **5.5.2 Students' expectations of youth development programs**

During interviews, interviewees shared about their expectations towards youth development programs, which include expectations of program curriculum, learning method and learning atmosphere. This is fruitful information to answer our first research question.

#### **5.5.2.1 Program curriculum**

##### *Facing Challenge*

*“Better to be outside to face challenges, we have to discuss about our challenges, how to face it to make it win or lose”* was Student T’s comment about the Tier 2 program, which was integrated into Tier 1 program at School C. It somehow represented how interviewees long for a positive youth development program. As adolescents are searching for identity, they like to explore the world and face challenges. Student T pinpointed the crucial element of ‘facing challenge’.

This idea of facing challenges was quite universal – it also represented students’ expectations of other lessons. For instance, Student M, a Filipino boy from School B, felt disappointed towards his Chinese lesson since it was just about *“pronunciation and reading a story stuff, but it is just for primary.”* The lack of challenge explains why he had low learning motivation. A student studying at the same school, Student

P, similarly revealed that it was “*very basic Chinese like fruit and the colours, but the Chinese in primary is harder than the one now.*”

Teaching what the students have already understood makes them feel useless, as they do not experience any challenges. Thus, correlating to the above concepts of ‘new’ and ‘unique’ students expect more stimulation during their adolescent development.

### Topics related to life

Only one student managed to express concretely the topic or area he hoped to learn in the coming years; this was Student L, the enthusiastic student mentioned before.

*“I hope every teacher can have this kind of session for the... like... for... students... about the personal growth yes sir, it can also benefit your life. If you only have talents... that’s like...you don’t know what is, how to do group work...also like how can we solve problem...you can get mental problem... So, that’s the problem that you are talented, but you don’t know anything about life...the life education, what it means, it’s about your life, like...if you knowledge about your life, then the life education is...the education for your life...”*

*(Student L, Nepalese boy, School C)*

Student L is a Nepalese boy with strong future-orientation, which probably guided him think more about the future and prompted him to have more concrete expectations of a youth-development program in the coming year. On the other hand, Project P.A.T.H.S. was named ‘Life Education lesson’ in Student L’s school, and of course the name or label of the lesson does actually direct what students expect of it.



### 5.5.2.2 Teaching and learning method

What do students expect of the teaching and learning method of a youth development program? Concerning Project P.A.T.H.S., different teaching methods are suggested, such as personal reflection, group discussion and class sharing. Interviewees were asked their preferences and expectations for a youth development program's teaching and learning methods. Findings in this part contribute much to the understanding of how **Process** affects program implementation, as perceived by ethnic minority students.

#### Interactive method

Most of the interviewees preferred an interactive method. For instance, Student G *“preferred to discuss some episodes and play games because it is too boring to do worksheets. (English translation)”* An Indian girl studying in School C, said that they *“have to do worksheet in other lessons already...and have to hand-in homework for other lessons, so in every lesson (they) have to pick up pens, but for this lesson (Life Education), it's kind of special.”*

Similarly, Student T commented on the two instructors:

*“Mr. Lee sometimes he just talk talk talk. No one listen...they just like... sometimes they fall asleep in the class when he is doing...so... doesn't make us PowerPoint and something...but Ms. Sharon she is the one...she shows us PowerPoint... Ms. Sharon she gives us PowerPoint, she gives us instruction what to do...she gives us group discussion and then everything.”*

*(Student T, Filipino girl, School C)*

Although Student T did not realize that there was division of labour between the two instructors, she could express her opinion, that the one who used interactive methods was preferable.

Having shared about his favourite learning method, Student M said:

*“Playing games... er...may be just about physical and mentally things... yea...when...because when sometimes we nervous, we just sit down and listen to the teacher, when we play, all of us...ah...move and play...and then also learn at the same time!”*

*(Student M, Filipino boy, School B)*

As described in chapter 5.4, instructors in School B preferred to implement the program by using more games and activities, and Student M did enjoy this.

### Momentum

Besides its interactive nature, students commented on the momentum of program, i.e., the length of an activity, or the rhythm of different learning activities.

For instance, Student B expressed that he loved have story-telling; however, activities sometimes changed too frequently within a lesson:

*“Um...well, the story too short...Yes...the one which in on the PowerPoint...it is very short...so, there is not much fun... because 2 minutes... and not 2 minutes...only half minutes... So fast...”*

*(Student B, Pakistani boy, School A)*

He actually demanded a longer story and deeper understanding of it. As for a session-long discussion on a certain story (e.g., Unit BO1.3, “Looking for Friends at the Crossroad”), Student J said that he had learned a lot:

*“You know...hearing the story...or...we even given the story paper, but we like mostly like a story...once upon a time...something...so we enjoy that...and even we learn something not to smoke. I remember that one man, he is a good man, and those bad men, so the good man told us to come and play, and the bad mates, you know gangster, he said come with me, let’s go and talk on the street, then we have a choice, we should choose the good or the bad...so, most go to the good side and then we are correct...”*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

Nevertheless, some pre-requisites are needed for a longer activity, as seen below.

#### Debriefing for games and activities

When a game or activity is implemented for a longer period, students demand thorough debriefing and explanation. Otherwise, they tend to think that it is just a game without any meaning. To prove this, Student M, who had stated a preference for interactive games, said:

*“Er...sometimes the teachers need to explain more, because sometimes you can’t understand why we’re doing it... one when Ms. Chan was absent, Ms. Wu...then she wants us to make paper planes and do thing...but I didn’t know really how...or why... We are kind of weird because we didn’t understand what she taught and then...”*

*(Student M, Filipino boy, School B)*

In fact, at School B, Ms. Wu was responsible for games and activities, while Ms. Chan was the one who gave debriefing and explanation. Thus, when Ms. Chan was absent, Student M noticed the strange lack of debriefing and message delivery, hence students did not learn much from the games.

### **5.5.2.3 Learning atmosphere**

Learning atmosphere is important in the **Process** of program implementation. Besides having fun and doing interactive activities, many students (N=7) said they expected a youth development program to include well-controlled classes. For instance, Student L, a very diligent student from School C, said:

*“The Life Education, I enjoy most of the parts. But...sometimes my friends, they make up of noise I don't enjoy the life education... Sir...it's very hard...to understand the message from the teachers because like...I can see like...the students in our class like...how they react to the situation when they are made...like Caca like she shout...she shout a lot...like...the situation like...she even shouts...at teachers...”*

*(Student L, Nepalese boy, School C)*

Similarly, a classmate of Student L, Student A, said:

*“They are good but sometimes they used to be naughty in class. And sometimes I used to be naughty with us... they talk in lesson sometimes... and they play sometimes...”*

*(Student A, Nepalese boy, School C)*

The learning atmosphere is influential: if students start to be inattentive and distracted, it affects other students' behaviour. Perhaps the learning atmosphere described by Student V, a Filipino boy from School B, best described how students felt when they experienced an uncontrolled class:

*“The first time I was shocked...because ‘ha?!’ I don’t know... Shocked by the conduct, the content and the name, because I don’t know that one.”*

*(Student V, Filipino boy, School B)*

As there were more games and activities at School B, if the class was not controlled well, students would have a negative impression of the lesson.

In this part, findings about students' impressions of Project P.A.T.H.S., as well as their expectations of a youth development program, have been presented. Findings in this part explore factors affecting the quality of program implementation as perceived by ethnic minority students, with further discussion to come in Chapter 6.

## **5.6 Impressive activities in Project P.A.T.H.S.**

Here, the program content most impressive for ethnic minority students, including 'topics' and 'activities', are reviewed. Findings from this part are relevant to all three research questions of the study.

### **5.6.1 Most impressive topics**

The following topics were frequently named by interviewees as impressive: Bonding (N=7), Emotional Competence (N=12), Behavioural Competence (N=4), Moral

Competence (N=6) and Self-efficacy (N=9).

### Bonding

During interviews, quite a few interviewees (N=7) specifically indicated that the unit of Bonding impressed them most, which is not surprising, since this is a major concern of adolescents. For instance, it impressed Student L because he “*want(s) to make good friends*”. Similarly, the topic about undesirable friends greatly helped Student V:

*“The smoking things, the friendship...you need to choose them wisely...but me...I can do that...but that friends...just smoke...was my friend before... now I just knew that they smoke...so...I can't do...like... 'I am not your friends anymore' so I try to change what they can...”*

*(Student V, Nepalese boy, School B)*

It seems that friends' smoking is quite common among Nepalese students, and topics about friendship simply helped Student V shape his understanding of what characteristics ‘desirable’ friends should have.

### Emotional Competence

As a practical issue closely related to daily life, ‘Emotion’ was the topic most mentioned by students (N=12) during interviews – hence this topic was effective for ethnic minority students. For instance, Student J said that it had helped him learn to express his emotions accurately:

*“Emotions...so...we...because some of them are quite hard works... like... for our emotion... we are like... you know that there are some*

*emotion that we don't know...for example, we know unhappy, we know upset, but some of them are like.....when I am look at that, you know...we need to learn what is this emotion means, it can be handy sometimes, useful in our life.”*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

On the other hand, Student C, a shy and quiet Nepalese boy, remembered the topic of emotion even though it had been taught at the beginning of the school year:

*“Because ar...it just likes...it helping to us all the times...so we can still remember...emotion like...if we got too angry...that doesn't mean you have to do something bad, like shout at others...you can just...cool it down...so that...other one hurt...you won't hurt others...”*

*(Student C, Nepalese boy, School A)*

Similar experiences existed in the life of Student E, a local-born Pakistani girl. When asked how practical the emotional topic was, she replied:

*“It's like...sometimes we feel upset...because we got poor result of the examination...then we feel unhappy...afraid that we will be scolded by our parents...so we have to learn how to control our emotion...the teachers taught us to drink more water...prepare better for the examination...if we really feel sad, we can share with our friends...or we can write it down into our diaries...” (English translation)*

*(Student E, Pakistani girl, School A)*

All these quotes demonstrate the practicality of this topic from the ethnic minority

students' point of view.

### Behavioural competence

This topic, taught in the S1 curriculum, contained more soft skills, including 'friendly criticism' and 'apology'. Students (N=4) found it practical and useful for their daily life. For instance, Student B commented that discussing motives of criticism did help improve his interpersonal relationships:

*"Yes...the criticism...that means...oh you are...you are...bad motives... you should try to stop in...have a good manner...Like...er...no, before I didn't know...what is criticism..."*

*(Student B, Pakistani boy, School A)*

Asked whether his relationships with classmates had improved, he replied, "Yes! They are not angry with me", and he would even make apology for his bad motives like "'Oh, very sorry, apologize, I not so...' that means when I did something wrong, I will apologize."

### Moral Competence

Moral Competence was another topic mentioned quite often (N=6). Student U said that he had learned to be polite and respectful:

*"Once our teacher shared with us...like...while queuing up for bus, we shouldn't play around...like...pushing around...also, when we get on the bus, don't use correction pen to draw on the seats and walls...we liked...pushing around...also...I used to occupy both seats even though I needed just one..." (English translation)*



*(Student U, Nepalese boy, School C)*

The program thus helped enhance his sense of right and wrong.

*Self-efficacy*

After Emotional Competence, Self-efficacy was the construct mentioned second-most by interviewees (N=9). ‘Goal-setting’, which was covered in one of the four curriculum units of Self-efficacy in the S1 curriculum of Project P.A.T.H.S., was the topic that interested students most. Student E, a Pakistani girl from School A, said:

*“Um...like the teacher will give...they will ask us to think about our dreams, and our goals, what we want to do, and they’ll also ask us to think about our future job...I put many dreams.....If I want to do business, I have to learn more about Math...If lawyer, more about law, and if want to be a doctor, then more about science.”*

*(Student E, Pakistani girl, School A)*

For Student M, goal-setting lesson helped him prepare for his future:

*“Yes...prepare and then...kind like...go...straight to our goal...and not to other things.....I wrote two (on worksheet) one is...get more activities, I mean join more clubs in school...and one is get higher marks in Chinese...”*

*(Student M, Filipino boy, School B)*

The active response to this topic might show that ethnic minority students are eager to explore their identity and possible future occupations. For example, some

interviewees (e.g., Student B and Student U, from School A and School C respectively) clearly remembered the meaning of the abbreviation “SMART” (as taught in Unit SE1.4, “Doing It a SMART Way”), even though it had been taught more than six months before.

### **5.6.2 Most impressive activities**

Other than ‘topics’, ‘activities’ was another factor influencing ethnic minority students’ impressions of Project P.A.T.H.S. It is especially relevant to explore how **Process**, as a critical factor, influences program implementation from students’ point of view. Activities that impressed them included scenario discussion, experiential learning, games promoting successful experiences, interactive activities and sharing of songs.

#### Scenario discussion

Very often when interviewees remembered topics or content, they did not mention the concept/construct name; instead, they tended to mention scenarios, episodes or stories from classes.

For instance, the story of cyber love (Unit CC1.2, “Cyber Love?”) helped Student J change his attitude towards online dating, which he had never thought about before:

*“Cyber love, and then...one man and one girl you know...they dating and then....the man told the girl to meet her, but at home...she thought that, ohh, my friend, so good. But then the man, when they eat at home. He wanted to rape the girl, so, even we know that we should not do any dating or something...we should first know each other, we can’t just to*

*fake dating or something...so that's more handy, if we do that, we may be raped or sacrificed our life if someone did like that."*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

'Cyber love' was not the only story mentioned by students; other stories like 'A trip to walled village' (Unit PN1.2, "When in Rome, Do as the Romans Do"), 'Who should board first?' (Unit MC1.1, "Who Should Board First?") and 'Looking for friends at the crossroads' (Unit BO1.3, "Looking for Friends at the Crossroads") were frequently mentioned as well. The common factor of these scenarios is that, each served as the major discussion item for its teaching unit, i.e., the topic/message of units having a major story line were easier for ethnic minority students to remember.

Moreover, episodes presented on PowerPoint Slides also helped students remember the topic:

*"If we...use the whiteboard, then it might take us sometimes to write it down in the board and it's like.....then, it will be overrun then it gonna be very bad...so I think it's better using the PowerPoint..."*

Exploring the topic he remembered from PowerPoint Slides, Student C said:

*"Ar...it is the lion, selfish...that...'I am the king of the jungle'...and we...I like that one sir...Lion...selfish...it should be about solving conflict"*

*(Student C, Nepal, School A)*

Audio-visual equipment thus helped students recall episodes better and enhanced their knowledge of the topics covered.

### Experiential learning

Students said that activities with more participation (such as role plays, group games and mutual exchange activities) helped teach the topic better.

For instance, Unit MC1.2, “On the Same Bus”, had an activity requiring students to participate through role playing. Student I, a rather quiet and passive Indian girl, still remembered well what she learned from this activity:

*“One like ar...When the old man...standing in the bus stand, and that’s stretching like that...pushing... the friends of them...and a lot of things that...we learn from the good things, wrong bad things. Yes, yes. So like about last teacher, there is drama, make you learn a lot of things...”*

*(Student I, Indian girl, School C)*

### Games promoting successful experiences

Not only was role playing impressive, activities providing successful experiences also helped students internalized the topic learned. Asked about the activity that impressed her most, Student P mentioned the activity in Unit SE1.4, “Do It the SMART Way”:

*“Group work, like we have to keep the feather up in the air, like that, everyone discusses everything, and then mostly we shout at each other in P.A.T.H.S. lesson if we have to communicate...Like we have to decide who will keep the feather up and who will blow with the person.”*

*(Student P, Filipino girl, School B)*

During the lesson, students were asked to keep a feather up in air for more than 10 seconds, and Student P's group successfully accomplished the task. This successful experience generated good feeling and fixed the topic in the students' memories.

*Interactive activities*

Moreover, activities allowing students to express themselves and share feelings with classmates also made an impact. During School C's concluding session of the S1 Tier 1 program, students were asked to write something and present it as a gift to their classmates in order to show appreciation. Student I regarded this as a meaningful activity:

*"In Life education...the last time, was given everyone, the teachers give us everyone paper to write...what do you, have things to tell each other...so, if you give paper to someone, right...and then we have like, just a party, they give us a lot..."*

*(Student I, Indian girl, School C)*

The activity was meaningful because *"write things for others, I think it's very good...I give four of my friends."* Student I happily shared about also receiving some papers from her friends. This reciprocal activity not only provided chances for students to support each other, but also let students experience the positive feeling of reciprocal encouragement.

### Sharing of songs

Making use of audio-visual equipment provided more clues for the enhancement of students' learning. For instance, as observed during class observation at School C, instructors used the song 'You've got a friend' while teaching Unit BO1.3, 'Looking for Friends at the Crossroads', in order to illustrate the importance of having desirable friends. Student L remembered clearly the lyrics of the song:

*"It told you that one...like... 'when you are alone, I will be there like this' ...ar...some kind of like...ar...they give us some kind of advice from the song...so like... 'when you are over there some like...alone...I am always be there to help you' ...so like...I think it's some kind of connection because us and the song."*

*(Student L, Nepalese boy, School C)*

This shows the effectiveness of utilizing audio-visual materials during lessons from Student L's point of view.

Findings in this section contribute to our understanding of ethnic minorities' expectations of a youth development program and their perceptions of the program's effectiveness. It also helps understand how they think about **P**rocess and **P**rogram as critical factors of effective program implementation. Further discussion based on findings from this part will be presented in next chapter.

### **5.7 Instructors' characteristics as perceived by ethnic minority students**

Since instructors are one of the most important stakeholders in Project P.A.T.H.S., it is not surprising that interviewees had many things to say about them. To explore

students' perception towards instructors, four questions were asked during interviews:

1) What do you think about the instructors generally? 2) What do you think about the interaction between instructors and students? 3) What is a 'good' instructor in your mind? Why? 4) Anything about the instructors that is not good from your point of view?

As interviewees were likely to give more positive comments towards the instructors because of social desirability, questions asking for negative comments were also included in an attempt to obtain more comprehensive data. Also, confidentiality was ensured to encourage interviewees to express themselves freely.

This part presents some positive and negative characteristics of instructors as expressed by interviewees, with further discussion to follow in the next chapter. Moreover, interviewees' comments about the co-teaching method are presented, since this is a unique component of Project P.A.T.H.S. Findings from this part are highly relevant to the first and third research questions of this study, i.e., understanding the expectations that S1 ethnic minority Hong Kong students have for a youth development program, especially their expectations of instructors; and exploring critical factors, especially instructors as an important facet of **People**, for successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes of Project P.A.T.H.S. among ethnic minority students.

### **5.7.1 General positive characteristics**

During interviews, all students (N=22) expressed their gratitude and appreciation towards their instructors. Some universal comments are extracted below.

### Kindness

‘Kind’ was the phrase most used by interviewees (N=10). Said Student R:

*“They are very kind, helpful and good teachers”*

*(Student R, Pakistani girl, School C)*

Student R was a very passive girl, as observed during class observation. Also, mostly she just replied ‘yes’ and ‘no’ during interviews. However, when asked for her impressions of her instructors, she gave three adjectives: ‘kind’, ‘helpful’ and ‘good’, which reflected her sincere appreciation.

This ‘Kindness’ of instructors was echoed by Student L:

*“Sir...wah, I cannot explain you like...they are very good teachers to be talked about! Although they are new to this school, but they are like...they understand our feelings, so when people...people are very like they are in like...no mood to talk, the teachers think that they have problem or something, so like...so I think they can understand our feeling actually...they concern, although they are very busy.”*

*(Student L, Nepalese boy, School C)*

From Student L’s point of view, instructors showed their kindness by being concerned about students’ needs and feelings.

### Clear presentation

For instructors, clear presentation skill is important:

*“If we don’t know anything, they will like...try to like...make it simple for*



*us... um...I remember once we were playing the game, and then the words were very difficult, and then we raised our hand and tell the teacher that it is very difficult for us to understand the words, and then she makes it simple, she said that these words got simple meanings that we learned it for many years...and then, when she tried to make it simple, we understand the words fast, and we can learn fast also.”*

*(Student E, Pakistani girl, School A)*

From Student E's point of view, clear presentation includes the ability to make clarification, explanation and elaboration of the teaching topics.

### Encouragement

On the other hand, as presented in chapter 5.4, instructors at the participating schools were encouraging, and their encouragement eventually motivated students to participate actively. For instance, Student B and Student C said:

*“They are very good...they...are very good teachers, they encourage us to do well...like, if we are doing some works, they say “oh, good!, but have some more ideas.” Before...first...er...first time when our group...was not do...we just sit down, and Ms. Chow come “What are you doing?” “Nothing” “Come on, do your work!” like this”*

*(Student B, Pakistani boy, School A)*

*“Ha...because ar...the teacher can...teachers...class teachers will explain it and we can share with our group...so we can talk each other...our thing...I think their style is...encouraging....if you do anything*

*wrong, they say that, don't do this, do...better."*

*(Student C, Nepalese boy, School A)*

From the interviewees' point of view, instructors speaking encouragingly were better than those using punitive methods. This actually reflects what students expect of instructors in a youth-development program. No matter which country they are from, adolescents expect to receive encouragement.

#### Written comments on worksheets

Interviewees said that not only verbal encouragement, but also written comments such as feedback on worksheets also enhanced students' learning motivation. In his narratives, Student M shared:

*"Yes, they always give us comment (on the worksheet) like...try better next time... good work...and then "can you tell me more", like that... when... they give us bad comments, and then...we're us...friends, we compare comments what the teachers tell us."*

*(Student M, Filipino boy, School B)*

Students always expect to receive comments, whether positive or negative. For instance, Student B expressed his disappointment after failing to receive any written comments from instructors:

*"We want them to...check the papers...if wrong...they should mark it wrong... and if it's all correct, they should give us tick or...and they should like...if...every time they got...a...can... stickers...they should give one smart card.....If I work hard to do, and then, it is all correct...why*

*shouldn't...why you don't...why you should don't check it..."*

*(Student B, Pakistani boy, School A)*

Thus, receiving comments or reflection from instructors is one of the characteristics that led interviewees to regard instructors as positive.

### Sense of humour

On the other hand, an instructor's sense of humour was another special quality that interviewees regarded as favourable. For instance, Student D said:

*"The teachers are quite friendly in the lesson...they enjoy with us having the lesson... in lesson...like we talk non-sense things she changed it in a joke, so she tell us it's a joke and then...she make us laugh...but...when we have another one teacher...she teaches us three lessons, computer, music and life education...when she teachers other lesson, she is very strict in that lesson...(Interviewer: but for life education, she is very funny?) And very enjoyable in life education...but other lessons..."*

*(Student D, Pakistani girls, School A)*

Instructors not only had a sense of humour but also enjoyed the lessons. Students could actually sense that instructors enjoyed teaching, which eventually affected their attitudes towards the lesson. It demonstrates how **P**eople involved in a youth development program interact and affect each other during the **P**rocess of program implementation.

### 5.7.2 Specific positive characteristics

To expand on these general positive characteristics of instructors, as perceived by ethnic minority students, some highlighted comments are presented below. These are pinpointed because interviewees could clearly explain how these characteristics impacted them. These characteristics contribute to our understanding of what ethnic minority students expect from instructors in a youth development program. This also helps us understand how instructors, one facet of **People** in program implementation, affect the learning **Process** in Project P.A.T.H.S.

#### Self disclosure and role model

First, interviewees from School C frequently shared that instructors enjoyed sharing their own stories, which in return helped students understand what positive development should be and how it should happen. This was previously described in chapter 5.4 when presenting the characteristics of School C as observed in class observation, and it is further echoed by interviewees' sharing. For instance, Student G said:

*“Whatever topic...including emotion, personality, relationship, Mr. Lee would share his own stories, sometimes we think if Mr. Lee could achieve that ... why can't we achieve as well? It encouraged us to listen more patiently... for once Mr. Lee shared that...when he was young...his Mathematics was poor...having low marks in examination...but then he improved gradually...gradually... finally he got high marks... so... we think if Mr. Lee could do it, why can't we? Then we just try!” (English translation)*

*(Student G, Indian girl, School C)*

From Student G's point of view, genuine sharing from her instructor encouraged her to engage in self-reflection, especially if the sharing was about a 'somewhat' negative experience. It shows how instructors, part of the **People** aspect, make a difference to the **Process** of program implementation.

Moreover, even when students did not remember content clearly, they clearly remembered the feelings expressed by instructors during self-disclosure. Student J "*think(s) Ms. Sharon is much better because she tell us feelings even*", and when asked whether he remembered what Ms. Sharon taught:

*"Um...I don't remember but Ms. Sharon tells us her feeling even. So that's why I like Ms. Sharon more... Yes, and you know...make us learn... like... she did a mistake, we should not do the mistake again..."*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

Adolescents need to have bonding with healthy adults, and surely instructors of the youth development program fit that description. Therefore, it might be more favourable to include more self-disclosure or sharing from instructors in the program content of youth development programs, so that instructors could build genuine relationships with the students, and so that students could learn directly from instructors' past experiences as well.

*Respond to students' concerns actively and appropriately*

Second, interviewees appreciated instructors' active responses to students' concerns. Student P said that her instructors used Tier 1 of Project P.A.T.H.S. to suggest ways to resolve a conflict with a friend:

*“Six of us were fighting with Nancy, and then we asked our teachers about how to deal with friendship. And teachers said you can’t just keep on back-stepping people but you have to talk to them about your problems then they might improve... Ms. Wu and Ms. Chan, because we told them... they were...the topic for the lesson, we asked them to give us one topic, so we can understand more... and then they give the topic.”*

Exploring the reasons for consulting instructors of Project P.A.T.H.S. instead of other teachers, Student P said:

*“Some teachers are too...they’re too bringing up the subject...like they say bring Nancy to me and I’ll talk to her, so we got scared...what if they talk to Nancy and Nancy is being mad...like she get mad usually...and she fights with people...That’s why we ask the one that can keep it as secret.”*

*(Student P, Filipino girl, School B)*

Most teachers responded to students’ concerns, and some even responded actively; however, Student P indicated an important point: instructors must respond appropriately with confidentiality, especially if the concern is related to interpersonal relationships, as bonding with peers is one of the major concerns for adolescents. Student P perceived that the instructors reacted to her concerns appropriately. Certain characteristics of instructors might contribute to this, e.g., having experience in solving interpersonal conflicts, having knowledge about conflict resolution, and evaluating the situation from students’ point of view.

Non-judgemental attitude

Third, interviewees appreciated instructors for not stereotyping. Being fair and not stereotyping does not mean never punishing; however, instructors would not label students for their misbehaviour in the past. Perhaps a dialogue between Student P and the interviewer best describes the situation:

*Interviewer: “How do you think about her? She always punishes, do you scare her or do you still like her?”*

*Student P: “I like her, she’s really fun...not like the other teachers that only punish and everything...but for her, if she punishes, she will forget about the next day. So we don’t really...”*

*Interviewer: “Ar...that means some other teachers when they punished, they may make a label on the student, this student is a naughty one...”*

*Student P: “Yes, they will talk to the teachers and pass it around, this student is bad, but for her, if it’s punishment, then it’s punishment.”*

*(Student P, Filipino girl, School B)*

“They may make a label on the student” indicated that students saw this attitude as unfavourable. Students expected to have an instructor with non-judgemental attitudes, as Student M shared:

*“She is really kind, she gives me a lot of chances especially when I was in trouble. And then she always gives good advices and help to my problem.”*

*(Student M, Nepalese boy, School B)*

What does ‘kind’ mean? Student M regarded this as “giv[ing] him a lot of chances”;

and it is what Student M expects of instructors in a youth development program.

### **5.7.3 Negative characteristics as commented by students**

As interviewees were encouraged to give negative comments towards the instructors, some of them (N=8) did give criticism, including: language problems, gender preferences, poor class control and lack of debriefing. These barriers did affect the Process of program implementation, hence affecting the success in achieving the intended learning outcomes of Project P.A.T.H.S.

#### Language problems

First of all, language appeared to be the most important problem for interviewees studying in School B, where 4 out of 6 interviewees expressed the same concern, e.g. Student P's comment, "*It's really hard to understand her English*". She also said:

*"We always ask her question again and again...because we don't understand...what she means...When it was...may be our first or second P.A.T.H.S. lesson, it was really remember that we even didn't listen to her...because you know we ask each other...what is she saying..."*

*(Student P, Filipino girl, School B)*

Interestingly, Student N, a local Chinese, had a different view:

*"Ms. Wu...she speaks slowly...it is understandable, she always uses some simple words...unlike those foreign people using many difficult words which are too difficult to understand..." (English translation)*

*(Student N, local Chinese, School B)*



From the Chinese student's point of view, the instructor's English was easy to understand. Pronunciation seems to have been the crux of the problem for ethnic minority students.

Another problem related to language was activity design. Since the participating class in School B was a combined class, it included both Chinese and ethnic minority students. Student P once mentioned that an activity was unfair as it required a certain level of Chinese language proficiency, which demonstrates how Program affects Process during program implementation:

*“The...unfairness of what the teacher give us, like the Chinese words...it's really unfair...that's why, I don't really like that part...Yes, it's okay to give us Chinese words but um...if she knows the majority in class are not Chinese...then...you know...she brings it up more...”*

*(Student P, Filipino student, School B)*

Obviously, language is an important factor, especially when the target participants are ethnic minorities. If the activity designed is not welcome for ethnic minority students because of language barriers, they would probably have negative impressions of the program. Moreover, as indicated above, an instructor's pronunciation affects how ethnic minority students receive and evaluate the program.

#### Gender preferences

In addition to the importance of a non-judgemental attitude, gender preferences were a problem with some instructors. Student B, from School A, complained loudly that:

*“Ms. Chui is...is always on girls' side...Yea...she...always punished the*

*boys... she always on the girl side, when we going on the music lesson, she will say 'okay, girl go first' and then after that I say, 'okay, girl can go first' ...always girl first (loudly)...Very bad, very weird..."*

*(Student B, Pakistani boy, School A)*

Interestingly, not only the 'victim' (i.e., boys) commented about it, but the 'victors' (i.e., girls) had the same feeling:

*"She is very kind to the girls but not to the boys...course boys disturb her a lot but the girls are very kind to her...so she loves the girls I think more than the boys. So, I'm not afraid of her..."*

*(Student D, Pakistani girl, School A)*

This shows that students expect to be treated equally no matter their gender. Instructors need to respect students' differences, including gender, ethnicity and individual characteristics such as personality.

### Class control

In regard to activities and games during Tier 1 Program of Project P.A.T.H.S., some negative comments concerning class control were received. Firstly, Student G expected to have a well-controlled class:

*"I explained to Miss that because the class is too loud, I have to scream and speak loudly...I do the same at home, when the TV is too loud, I will scream out...In the class, Mr. Lee will hit the table and ask us to keep quiet...however, whether he is angry or not, he will still laugh...so we finally laugh together...he doesn't know how to angry seriously...as he is*

*too kind...the class became very noisy...” (English translation)*

*(Student G, Indian girl, School C)*

On the other hand, Student U said that, though instructors in School C were not experts on youth development topics, they controlled the class better than the social worker in his primary-school days:

*“For Mr. Lee, they might not be as familiar as the social worker...however, I found it better now than the primary school...because in the past...every time when there was whole person lesson, the whole class just got mad...”*

*(Student U, Nepalese boy, School C)*

Therefore, students did expect to have a decent learning environment, which demonstrates that how **People**, in this case instructors’ teaching skills, affect the **Process** of program implementation.

#### Debriefing of activities

Finally, some interviewees from School B expected more debriefing after playing games so that they could understand the message:

*Student M: “Er...sometimes the teachers need to explain more... because sometimes you can’t understand why we’re doing it.”*

*Interviewer: “So, can you think up of any activity you think it’s not useful? Just playing but don’t know what’s going on...”*

*Student M: “Wait wait, yes this one when Ms. Chan was absent, Ms. Wu...then she wants us to make paper planes and do thing...but I didn’t*

*know really how...or why...”*

*Interviewer: “So how long this game take?”*

*Student M: “Two lessons...We are kind of weird because we didn’t understand what she taught and then...”*

*(Student M, Nepalese boy, School B)*

As described in chapter 5.4.2, the social worker in School B was responsible for games and activities while the teacher was responsible for message delivery. Student M pointed out that when the latter was absent, whole lesson became solely activity-based. However, students expected more debriefing so that the message could better be understood. Therefore, the way that instructors, i.e., **People**, deliver the program eventually affects how ethnic minority students perceive and evaluate the program.

#### **5.7.4 Co-teaching**

One of the unique features for Project P.A.T.H.S. is its encouragement of co-teaching during program implementation. In this study, all participating schools used co-teaching. Though its influence was not intended to be explored in great detail, as reflected by the omission of related questions in interview guidelines (Appendix 8), four interviewees did appreciate such an arrangement and concretely saw the benefit of such an arrangement. Findings from this part contribute to an understanding of how **People** affect the effectiveness of program implementation.

##### *Cooperation of the instructors*

First, interviewees said that co-teaching allowed instructors to cooperate with and complement each other. For instance, Student M from School B said, “*Ms. Chan*

*handles the discipline and Ms. Wu guides...handles all the activities...but if one is absent, the thing is not so good.*” From his point of view, both of the instructors were indispensable.

On the other hand, Student C said that an attentive instructor should punish “*if we do something wrong*”. Asked whether the teacher or social worker was responsible for disciplinary action, Student C said:

*“Ms. Chui (i.e., the teacher)...most of them (afraid of her)...and...Ms. Chow (i.e., the social worker) is...okay good...yea... but most of the boys in our class is not afraid...they just think that ‘oh, she is good, she is nice, she know many things’, but they don’t stop talking to each other...”*

*(Student C, Nepalese boy, School A)*

Student K, a classmate of Student C, regarded co-teaching as an important factor for successful program implementation because “*one teacher can control the class and the other teacher (a social worker actually) can teach.*”

In the cases above, instructors of different schools divided the work and, from the interviewees’ point of view, enhanced program effectiveness.

#### *Role models of mutual help*

Secondly, the instructors actually served as role models for students to observe how mutual help should actually happen. Student D once said:

*“I think atmosphere was really good, sometimes the class is noisy sometimes the class is very...attendable...and...attention...pay attention*

*at class because two teachers are teaching in the class...so I think the atmosphere was really...well.”*

Student D regarded “*two teachers are teaching in the class*” as a crucial factor of having a good learning atmosphere. Thus, the combination of **People** involved does affect the **Process** of program implementation. The reason is:

*“Yes...because one teaching is speaking and one teacher is writing...or one teacher is reading and other teacher is listening...and if the other teacher is reading, if she gets wrong, then the other teacher can tell her your mistake is this and that, and then you must correct it. So they can help each other and they can help us.”*

*(Student D, Pakistani girl, School A)*

Student D observed that instructors were ‘helping each other’ instead of ‘teaching together’; such an observation would eventually help her build knowledge concerning mutual help and might encourage her to apply such knowledge in her daily life.

To sum up, the positive characteristics of instructors show what the interviewees expect of instructors in a youth development program. Conversely, what they regarded as negative are the characteristics that should be avoided. Findings from this part help answer the first research question, i.e., understanding what ethnic minority students expect from youth development programs. Also, findings from this part show how **People**, i.e., instructors, affect **Process** and **Program**, in which these are all critical factors for successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes of

Project P.A.T.H.S. among ethnic minority students.

### **5.8 Positive and negative group experiences**

Another unique feature of Project P.A.T.H.S. is its adoption of experiential and interactive learning. Several interactive teaching methods are suggested, including class sharing, class games, group discussions, group sharing and group games. This part emphasises students' grouping experiences, the major part of students' interaction during program implementation. Findings in this part help answer all three research questions. First, grouping experiences shared by interviewees help understand what they expect from learning activities, especially group activities, in a youth development program. Secondly, it helps explore the perceived effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. from ethnic minority students' point of view, as much of their learning happened in group activities. Thirdly, it helps explore how grouping, i.e., a **Process factor**, makes a difference in program effectiveness.

This part examines interviewees' learning experiences, both positive and negative, in group activities. Different students' grouping preferences are explored. Finally, as the participating class in School B included both Chinese and ethnic minority students, these cross-cultural interactions are examined.

#### **5.8.1 Positive grouping experience**

During interviews, 14 interviewees shared positive grouping experiences, the majority of which were related to interpersonal relationships.

Better relationships with classmates

Describing his learning experiences during Tier 2 program which was integrated into Tier 1 program of Project P.A.T.H.S. in School C, Student J indicated that “*we go out and we play games. We help each other. And then...someone need helps, and help them...we need to be friends.*” Asking whether the relationships were was enhanced solely by Project P.A.T.H.S., Student J said:

*“Other lessons! Like my friends say things to me, we talk...before the game, we wasn’t sitting together, I was sitting with another guy, but then when the game started, the Life Education, and then I changed my seat and I meet him. We play each other and...talk...discuss.”*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

Student U shared a similar experience:

*“Some of the classmates...before we were not familiar with them...but now we’ve become quite good friends...yes...because we are in the same group...so we are getting familiar with each other.” (English translation)*

*(Student U, Nepalese boy, School C)*

On the other hand, being able to promote interpersonal relationship during the process of group activities, intended learning outcome of certain activity is actually promoting interpersonal relationship. For instance, Student I shared that they were asked to write cards to others during the lesson to show appreciation:

*“Because...er.....because...write things for others...I think it’s very good...I give four of my friends”*

*(Student I, Indian girl, School C)*



Student I was a very quiet girl as observed in class, nevertheless, such an activity gave her a chance to express her gratitude towards others. This story, and the others, show that ethnic minority students perceived the grouping activities in Project P.A.T.H.S. as effective in helping build close relationships with classmates.

### Mutual help

Group activities, such as group discussions, also provided a platform for students to learn about mutual help:

*“Sometimes we forget about...the teacher asked us and then...one might know and one doesn't know...so...we just get the help from each other...sometimes when we don't know...because sometimes...our group, there are smart people, and then who knows many things...so...we turn in them and then for help...and then they teach us and then we do.”*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

He said that students need to be cooperative in order to accomplish the task, and that it felt good to help each other. Therefore, group mates, a facet of **P**eople in the program, do help the **P**rocess of the program, and such learning experiences cannot be replaced by activities like individual worksheets and personal reflection.

### Development of strengths and potential

Outside academics, students of course possess other strengths and potential. Student E said that group discussions provided chances for her to speak in a non-threatening environment:

*“I'm very talkative...they think only...because I talk a lot...and then they*

*say 'you got so much knowledge, and you can speak a lot, why can't you be a speaker?' and then I say... 'wah...you are so mean to me...you call me a speaker...you call me like that'...and then they say 'okay, okay', they were just joking when they say of me...that's...and then I feel better about it, I think it's positive."*

*(Student E, Pakistani girl, School A)*

As the usual one to present after group discussions, Student U shared a similar experience:

*"It was not elected (for presentation), they forced me to do so...actually I was always the one to present in primary school...when I was in primary school, I would like to raise hand and answer for teachers' questions."*

*(Student U, Nepalese boy, School C)*

As Student U got used to presenting, group activities provided chances for him to utilize this ability, which might not be possible in other lessons. This can be regarded as a point of perceived effectiveness. Moreover, having a supportive and cooperative learning environment motivates students to participate actively.

#### Skills learned in group

Group activities not only allowed students to learn mutual help and support, they also helped students learn soft skills such as turn-taking during discussions. Student D, a talkative girl, said:

*"In a grouping skill, if there are 4 to 5 people in a group, like...if one already answer, you have to give the chance to others, not only you*

*answer the all questions, so that you have a skill...like...in the future, when you are in business, going to give a deal, like you have to say in a group of people...one people is answering then you must keep quiet, and let other to have a chance to give opinion to the dealers.”*

*(Student D, Pakistani girl, School A)*

Surprisingly, Student D could also apply her learning to a future working environment, another point of perceived effectiveness.

### **5.8.2 Negative grouping experience**

Some interviewees (N=9) also revealed negative grouping experiences, most related to uneven distribution of work.

#### *Uneven work distribution*

Normally, students were divided into groups of four or five during group activities. Although group discussions provided chances for students to communicate and interact, some students might rely on others, causing the workload to become uneven.

Student I, an Indian girl who liked to be the secretary of group, complained that:

*“Sometimes when we have group discussion, like sometimes, only one person can do everything...not others, they just play or do something... only one person doing...sometimes everyone er...are not cooperated that... You know in my group...I have...Abida, me...Maleek, Ased, four of them...so only me, I will write every way.”*

*(Student I, Indian girl, School C)*

Student L, a talkative Nepalese boy who showed keen interest in learning, no matter the topic, complained that:

*“But...I am the one who answer the question...because they don't bother to answer the question...because they are too lazy...if you... like... argue with them...we cannot...because we rush our time.”*

*(Student L, Nepalese boy, School C)*

The fact is that group activities promote shared responsibility, which in return may lead to uneven distribution of work. Some interviewees expected an enjoyable (i.e., cooperative and mutually beneficial) grouping experience, yet the uneven distribution of work disappointed them.

### **5.8.3 Grouping preferences**

Generally, two methods were adopted for division of groups: 1) assigned by instructors, or 2) arranged by students themselves. Though interviewees showed different preferences in this area, they mentioned the same idea, i.e., learning more from the program.

Interviewees who preferred to be assigned by instructors indicated that it could help them know more classmates. Student C, a Nepalese boy who had just arrived in Hong Kong before the start of S1, said:

*“If we gonna choose by ourselves, that means we just gonna hang up with our friends that...we can't go...with different friends...the one who is little...so, I think if Miss gonna arrange you, then she gonna arrange the most...half of them interaction and half of them little interaction...then we*

*learn from each other.”*

*(Student C, Nepalese boy, School A)*

He expected to meet more classmates and to learn more from different classmates, which might be correlated with his background of having recently immigrated to Hong Kong. This demonstrates how the background of **People** involved affects their expectations of the **Process** of the program.

On the other hand, some interviewees expected to group with friends to promote better communication during group discussions. Student U, a Nepalese boy who actively participated in class, thought that *“if the group was decided by the teacher...it is better to have members who are more cooperative. (English translation)”* Asked for his criteria of choosing group mates if students were asked to group by themselves, Student U said:

*“I will select the friends I am more familiar with...as we know each other more, I’ll know who will be more cooperative.” (English translation)*

*(Student U, Nepalese boy, School C)*

Whilst Student B regarded grouping by teacher as ‘boring’, he wanted to group with friends to have fun:

*“Sometimes grouped by Ms. Chow...it is very...boring... it is all mixed and I want to sit with own friends...it’s...fun!”*

*(Student B, Pakistani boy, School A)*

Nevertheless, it is certainly that grouping with friends can enhance students’

motivation for discussion, a fact which instructors can take into consideration during the **P**rocess of program implementation.

Instructors have to be aware that certain student dynamics might have a negative influence on learning motivation. For instance, Student B said that if the group was assigned by instructors, it would have “*so many differences!*”, because they “*cannot talk to each other...some of them are not (his) friends!*” He explained:

*“Those who tease me are not my friends...bully me...he calls me...name... nickname!”*

*(Student B, Pakistani boy, School A)*

Student B did not want to group with ‘those who tease him’. If instructors notice such tendencies, they can establish a more harmonious learning atmosphere in the classroom.

#### **5.8.4 Grouping experiences among Chinese and ethnic minority students**

In this study, the participating class at School B was a combined class (i.e., having both ethnic minority and Chinese students). Grouping experiences in this setting can illustrate whether P.A.T.H.S. helps promote social integration. Opinions from ethnic minorities and Chinese showed that both groups regarded language and communication as major concerns when deciding whom to group or communicate with. Findings from this part a) provide insight into what ethnic minority students expect of grouping experiences with Chinese students and b) examine the interactions among ethnic minority and Chinese students during the **P**rocess, which might affect how they receive and evaluate the program.

Language as a primary concern for ethnic minority

As observed during class observation (presented in Chapter 5.4.2), ethnic minority students regarded ‘language’ (not ‘ethnicity’) as the primary concern of grouping criteria. This is supported by the following quotes.

Student P, a Filipina, showed her grouping preference by saying, “*Filipinos group by (them)selves.*” However, asked whether they would use Tagalog, she said that, “*sometimes English*”. This was because Nancy, a Russian girl, sometimes joined her group, and “*she doesn’t know, doesn’t understand Tagalog.*” Thus, ‘ethnicity’ was not her primary concern. This is further supported by the fact that Christine, a Chinese girl fluent in English, was frequently grouped with Student P. Student P said:

*“Because in the morning, Christine go with us...since she always sit in the same train as we take, that’s why every morning she hangs out with us so then in the afternoon...she just goes around”*

*(Student P, Filipino girl, School B)*

More chances for Student P and Christine to meet helped them build a better relationship, and it also provided platform for them to get used to communicating in English, which eventually enhanced their flexibility for grouping preferences in Project P.A.T.H.S.

Similarly, Student M shared that he was willing to group with Chinese classmates; nevertheless, the prerequisite was, again, the ability to communicate in English:

*“We can choose who we want. We fix it the days and then we all group in one. Ah my friends and some Chinese... I also have a Chinese friend.*

*(Interviewer: How's his English level?) Good, some of them are Canadian (i.e., Student Q), some of them from other countries."*

*(Student M, Filipino boy, School B)*

Therefore, it is suggested that ethnic minority students expect to have effective communication with Chinese in a youth development program. It is not a matter of ethnicity but of language.

On the other hand, Student M did share some negative experiences related to the language barrier: *"in primary, some teachers from other schools and the students from another school come to my class and have activities, when we talk to them, they can't speak English."* Also, he commented on his experiences of grouping with Chinese classmates:

*"Sometimes... I feel confused because they talked in Chinese...yes...and then I just wait them and they just tell me what to do... sometimes... yes... because they can speak Chinese and then they can...and I can't"*

*(Student M, Filipino boy, School B)*

He expected to communicate with the Chinese, yet it turned out to be frustrating, again due to language.

To sum up, the major concern for ethnic minorities' grouping preferences was 'language', not 'ethnicity'. This demonstrates how language ability of People involved affects the Process of program implementation, which in turn might affect program effectiveness in a combined class.



*Language is also the main concern for Chinese*

From the Chinese students' point of view, effective communication was also the major concern in grouping. Of the two Chinese students, Student N could only speak fair English while Student Q was excellent. This gave them quite different experiences when grouping with ethnic minorities.

During interview, Student N expressed that he had experienced communication difficulties, even misunderstandings, with his ethnic minority classmates:

*“I felt like...I had no choice when I had to group with them...I had no choice but to speak English...If I spoke in Chinese, they could not understand and they would get angry...They would say ‘speak in English speak in English’...as they mainly used English...they didn’t understand what we were saying...and they even said that we were cursing.” (English translation)*

*(Student N, Chinese boy, School B)*

This indicates that ineffective communication leads to misunderstandings, which affect students' relationships in the classroom.

On the contrary, Student Q did not experience any communication problems. Asked whether he preferred to spend time with Chinese or ethnic minority classmates, he simply said, *“I don’t mind hanging out with any of them – I also played with both Chinese and non-Chinese students when I was in Canada.” (English translation)* During class observation, Student Q was observed taking turns grouping with Chinese and ethnic minority. Asked whether he knew what his ethnic minority

classmates thought of him, he replied:

*“Um...I don’t know...when I came to this school at the beginning of school year, they thought that I was quite special...as I could speak fluent English as well as Chinese...and then I started to get familiar with the non-Chinese students...like Danny...he asked me why my English is better than other Chinese...and then I told him about my background... after they knew about it, we started to hang out together...” (English translation)*

*(Student Q, Chinese boy, School B)*

In the combined class at School B, ethnicity was not the primary concern for students’ grouping and interaction; instead, it was language. To better facilitate students’ interaction, one of the major concerns of **Process** in this study, instructors could group students according to their language ability.

### **5.9 Positive changes after program implementation**

Do ethnic minority students perceive Project P.A.T.H.S. as effective? To address this issue, two questions were asked: 1) Do you see any changes after the program? Why? 2) Have you applied the things you learned from Project P.A.T.H.S. in daily life?

This part categorizes students’ changes into different levels, as suggested in the literature review, i.e., that adolescents could be viewed as full of strength and protective factors from different levels and different angles. Findings presented in this part are highly relevant to the second research question of this study, i.e., the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. as perceived by ethnic minority students. There is

also evidence here to answer the third research question, i.e., critical factors for successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes of Project P.A.T.H.S. among ethnic minority students.

### **5.9.1 Individual level**

At the individual level, interviewees perceived the following changes:

#### *Emotional management*

Interviewees most frequently (N=7) mentioned changes in emotional management. For instance, Student E shared that the project helped her understand more ways to manage her emotions. Asked whether she had applied this in her daily life, she said:

*"I remember once...I failed in examination...although I did revise...I still failed, so I felt upset...I told my Mum, although she said that it's fine, I still found myself very useless, but then, I tried to write the feelings down and come out to share with my friends...my best friend."* (English translation)

*(Student E, Pakistani girl, School A)*

Therefore, knowledge captured in the youth development program together, with the actual incident in daily life, provided an opportunity for her to apply what she has learned. Another student, K, said:

*"Yea, some I have changes, I like...before, I said...um...I was too...like angry, I don't know how to calm down...and then I understand, I should understand them I should give them a chance, I should be polite, I should be calm for that...because I get too angry so that will hurt them, so I think that I should be very calm or I shouldn't do...fast things that hurt them..."*

*(Student K, Pakistani girl, School A)*

In her case, knowledge obtained during the program enhanced her awareness of the importance of emotional control, which eventually helped change her relationships with friends as well.

*Decrease in improper behaviour*

One Filipino girl, Student P, indicated two things that had improved over the school year, school attendance and friendliness towards others. First, she described an activity in which students were asked to write down a goal of improving something in a week's time. She wrote "no absent" and she did it. This was because:

*"My friends...they always inspired me...they always said if you not absent, if you one week completed, then I will give you free McDonald meal... Cause my favourite is McDonald, so, that' why always go to school before!"*

*(Student P, Filipino girl, School B)*

With the support of her friends, she achieved the goal, which demonstrates how important peer relationships are for ethnic minority students in promoting actual changes in daily life.

Second, she described an activity in which students were asked to write down something about themselves in order to enhance self-understanding. Student P said:

*"We exchange our papers, to know which one's bad which one's good, which one has to improve...before I wasn't really friendly, I was really shy*

*and quiet, and if anyone says hi to me that I don't know, I won't answer back. And my friends said you have to be like this and that, you have to be this good, because if you're not good you will not have any friends. Yes, now I am really open to people even I don't know them. Like the first time I met her here, I just started talking to her and like that, and we became closed friend."*

*(Student P, Filipino girl, School B)*

Her growing experience showed that support and encouragement received from peers are critical factors for effective implementation of youth development programs among ethnic minorities.

#### *Improvement in problem-solving skills*

Student G mentioned that instructors suggested ways of problem-solving that she could apply in daily life:

*"If someone said that you are too dark, I don't like that...I will think 'Why everyone saying that we are too dark?' And then I would get angry...and once the Life Education lesson taught us that, if we encounter such problem, first of all we could tell our teacher...um...no, no, firstly, tell the classmates 'not to say anything like this anymore', and then we could tell the teachers and they would truly help"* (English translation)

*(Student G, Indian girl, School C)*

Thus, the program helped students learn different ways of solving daily-life problem, e.g., racial discrimination in this case. Judging from the S1 English program manual

of Project P.A.T.H.S., none of the units specify ways to deal with racial discrimination. Therefore, it is likely that the instructors adapted the content in accordance with students needs'. This demonstrates the importance of instructors' cultural sensitivity.

### Empathy

At School C, since the Tier 2 program was integrated into Tier 1 program, students had more experiential activities during lesson time. Student J shared that he learned to be empathetic after playing a game that required students to be blindfolded:

*“How blind people...you know...suffered for the life...like the girl...it's very hard...example the hardest thing was the number inside the playground, we have to went down, and then that the leader behind us, she cannot...you know, just go left and right, she said it is right, but the number is left, she telling is front, but the number is behind us.....I just met one blind people, I saw a man, I saw a child, the child was in MTR, he has a teacher something, teaching everything, and then I saw one man opening his watch and checking the time. And he wear glasses. You know MTR has the steps walking for blind people and the sound...”*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

This demonstrates how experiential learning activities help students learn and reflect. Student J tried to associate his learning during the game with his daily life experiences, and he found that he could understand more about how blind people feel.

### 5.9.2 Interpersonal level

Students shared that the program shaped their attitudes about how to be friends with others.

#### Respect for others

One common idea from interviewees was that they had learned to respect others. For instance, Student G learned to “*get along with others*”, because in the past, she “*often named others’ nickname*”, but she now realized that people “*didn’t feel happy*” (*English translation*). The extended learning is thinking from others’ point of view. As Student J said:

*“Mr. Lee told us, because in our class, very noisy, and when someone is telling something, like some stories, and we haven’t cooperating, we were talking to friends, so Mr. Lee told us if we were speaking and someone did that, how would you feel, we should like...cooperate and patient and listen, and...we should be, like don’t think about ourselves...so that’s why now...Sanjit (his group mate), he talks many times and before I don’t listen, but now I feel that I will listen to him...”*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

Student J learned, during the process of group discussion and presentation, that it is important to respect others. This shows that activity design, i.e., **Program**, helps students learn during the **Process** of program implementation.

#### Proper way to apologize

The program also shaped students’ attitudes about the importance of apologizing

after doing something wrong. Student J felt he had learned something in this area:

*“There is another story that one of the boy...two boys...one of the boy say that, can I borrow your mobile phone, he borrow and he lost it, so then he say that, ohh, I buy another mobile phone, but...you can't just say that...I will...buy another mobile phone...so that something you learn that...you can't just be...uncareful that we lost someone properties, and even the person who borrowed the phone, can't just give to someone his friend...for we have learn even that...”*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

The story from Unit BC1.2 “How to Say?” brought Student J to another level of making apologies. Instead of apologizing solely in words, he learned to offer compensation if he did something wrong.

#### *Proper way to criticize others*

As presented in chapter 5.6, Student B once shared that the program helped him understand ways of giving friendly criticism. Asking whether he perceived any actual changes, he said:

*“(Before) I said ‘Ohh, you shouldn't, you should not do like this, very bad boy!’ like this! Then I change...I didn't feel angry, and I say in a very encouraging way, a very good way.”*

*(Student B, Pakistani boy, School A)*

Student B changed to criticizing others out of good motives, i.e., what the program regarded as ‘positive criticism’.



Staying away from undesirable friends

P.A.T.H.S. not only includes topics about building relationship with friends, it also teaches students how to stay away from undesirable friends. Student U demonstrated how he applied this in daily life:

*“Whether I have applied...um...within this year...not really...No! there was one...I have a friend...before I didn't know that he smoked...but later when I realized that...I started to stay away from him...but he didn't know that I realized he has a smoking habit...” (English translation)*

*(Student U, Nepalese boy, School C)*

As suggested in chapter 5.6.1, staying away from undesirable friends seems to be practical for Nepalese students, as many of them (three out of five Nepalese interviewees) expressed that their friends smoke quite often. Therefore, topics related to staying away from undesirable friends actually met the expectation of these Nepalese students.

Cooperation

One of the most common changes shared by interviewees (N=8) was cooperation. For instance, Student U once shared *“about cooperation, in the past (he) was really not cooperative, (he) played all the time, if (he) didn't feel interested in the activity, (he) would stop cooperating” (English translation)*. Nevertheless, after the program, he *“started to improve”*. This demonstrates how experiential activities provide opportunities for students to learn cooperation.

There were also many games during Project P.A.T.H.S. at School B. Asked whether

they remembered any messages they learned from the games, none of the interviewees were able to answer concretely. Nevertheless, many of them learned to be cooperative. For instance, Student P and Student V said:

*“I forgot...I don’t remember all...um...it’s like we have to have group work...and then we have to this not by ourselves, or don’t be too selfish, like that...”*

*(Student P, Filipino girl, School B)*

*“The only one I really remember was the cooperation, coordination, and then...it’s like...do the cares for your friends...”*

*(Student V, Filipino boy, School B)*

### **5.9.3 Family level**

On the family level, many interviewees (N=8) mentioned that they perceived behavioural changes at home. As described in chapter 5.2, most ethnic minority students do have close relationships with their families, which provide chances for them to apply what they have learned in a youth development program.

#### *Being polite to family members*

Interviewees shared that they learned to have proper attitudes towards family members. Student G learned to ask for permission before taking things from family members:

*“If we want to borrow or take anything from others, I should not just take it myself; instead, I have to ask for others’ permission...I started asking my family members whether I could take something...politely...and*

*respectfully. I didn't notice the importance of this before.” (English translation)*

*(Student G, Indian, School C)*

Knowledge about the importance of politeness shaped Student G's attitudes towards family members and influenced her behaviour as well.

#### Expression of emotion towards parents

Interviewees also reflected that they learned to express emotion properly towards their parents:

*“I remember one topic that we should not...you know be angry with your parents...there were one topic there. And then before when I think my parents is wrong, I feel so angry, but I learn and then they give us everything what we need, so even we should not be angry with them...be like a child, we are not so big to talk to parents in rude manner, so I learn to talk to my parents in real manner.”*

*(Student J, Indian boy, School C)*

Student C had a similar but different experience, learning to express emotions properly to his sister:

*“If we got too angry...that doesn't mean you have to do something bad, like shout at others...you can just...cool it down...so that...other one hurt...you won't hurt others...It's like...if...my sister don't obey me...all the time...so it's like... I remember fast...I have to think that lesson...so I can cool it down cool it down...”*

*(Student C, Nepalese boy, School A)*

This shows that family is a platform for students to apply what they have learned during Project P.A.T.H.S.

### Helping out

Another change for Student C was that he learned to make a contribution at home:

*“It can...just help like...we can help mothers fathers...so they can be...like...if they are sick, if we help...when they are sick, we help, that means they can rest a while...so that...they can get better faster...now she is a little bit happier than before.”*

*(Student C, Nepalese boy, School A)*

Changes at home were a spiral process, in which the positive changes of Student C led his mother to be happier as well.

### Sharing with siblings

Another student, D, reflected that she learned to share with siblings in her daily life:

*“Before I was very rude to my brothers and sisters, and I don’t...won’t give them to have a chance to play computer...but in P.A.T.H.S. lesson, I learn how to communicate...and be good to my brothers and sisters...and how to share things with them.”*

*(Student D, Pakistani girl, School A)*

Such changes surely enhanced her relationships with her siblings at home, a point of

perceived effectiveness for the program.

#### **5.9.4 Societal level**

With so many changes at the individual, interpersonal and family levels, interviewees seldom shared changes relating to the societal level. There was one exception in School C. Student U expressed personal changes could actually extend to the societal level:

*“Mr. Lee told us not to play around when queuing up for bus...that means not pushing around, something like that. And if we are travelling on the bus...don’t draw on the chair...also, I would occupy two seats for my own in the past by putting my bag on it. However, after the lesson, I seldom do this, although I still occupy two seats sometimes, when someone wants to sit, I will really give the seat to him.” (English translation)*

*(Student U, Nepalese boy, School C)*

In Unit MC1.2 “On the Same Bus”, students were taught through role playing to have proper behaviour in the community. This helped enhance Student U’s awareness of acting according to social norms, which eventually changed his behaviour in public.

Though data obtained from class observation and in-depth interviews was much more than that quoted in this chapter, the findings which are highly relevant to the research questions of this study have been summarized above. These findings are going to be discussed in the next chapter.

## Chapter 6

### Discussion

The previous chapter's findings will now be discussed (in accordance with the literature review) to explore whether they confirm, refute or extend the findings of other studies. Before moving on to the discussion, however, some verification strategies have to be highlighted to establish the reliability and validity of this study (especially since the researcher of this study was previously a member of the Project P.A.T.H.S. research team).

According to Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson and Spiers (2002), some qualitative researchers have argued that the terms 'reliability' and 'validity' are more appropriate to quantitative studies. Still, in order to ensure the 'trustworthiness' (the term these researchers prefer) of a qualitative study, some sort of evaluation must be conducted after the completion of the study. Morse et al. (2002) do admit that reliability and validity are still appropriate terms for pursuing rigour in qualitative research. Also, they suggest that, though "strategies of trustworthiness may be useful in attempting to *evaluate* rigor, they do not in themselves *ensure* rigor." (p.9) Therefore, they call for implementing various verification strategies during the *process* of the qualitative study to check reliability and validity. Rubin and Babbie (2005) have also proposed some methods of enhancing reliability and validity. These suggestions were considered during the implementation of this study so that the findings and discussion would remain valid and reliable.

First, triangulation, i.e., the use of several data sources as well as data-collection

methods, helps see whether the data is credible and reliable. For instance, if opinions expressed by different interviewees or data obtained from different methods agree with (or at least do not contradict) each other, these are said to be more reliable.

Secondly, to ensure internal consistency, the literature suggests that qualitative researchers collect data sufficiently in various times, places and contexts to examine whether they are consistent. In this study, since class observation, in-depth interviews and students contact were made over a prolonged period of time (i.e., one school year), biases from the researcher as well as socially desirable behaviours from students were minimized. Also, as all data were recorded systematically (audio versions, with full typed transcripts, for in-depth interviews and full reports for class observation), the researcher could extensively use participants' statements to support the findings in this study, leading to higher-quality discussion in this chapter.

Thirdly, Morse et al. (2002) suggested that sampling must be appropriate, i.e., including participants who have knowledge of the research topic. Since this study aims to study Project P.A.T.H.S. from ethnic minority students' point of view, ethnic minority students, from various backgrounds and schools, have naturally been included. Also, during in-depth interviews, questions asking for negative comments were included so that the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. would not be over-estimated, and at the same time, the data could remain as neutral and objective as possible.

Lastly, the directness, depth and detail of data obtained from in-depth interviews and class observation in the current study already laid the groundwork for better

reliability and validity, as does the comparison of these findings with the literature review.

The following discussion will parallel the three research aims: 1) expectations that S1 ethnic minority students have for a youth development program, 2) effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. as perceived by ethnic minority students, and 3) critical factors for effective program implementation of Project P.A.T.H.S. among ethnic minority students.

### **6.1 Expectations of ethnic minority youth**

Before discussing how ethnic minority students perceive and selectively receive Project P.A.T.H.S., it is important to understand their expectations of a youth development program, as this would affect their perceptions of the project.

As mentioned in chapter 2.1, none of the Hong Kong existing research has focused on how ethnic minority adolescents perceive youth development and what they expect of a youth development program. Instead, most studies have adopted a pathological view and deficit model, lacking a view of what these students actually want in their development. Therefore, as recommended by Wong and Rowley (2001), researchers should balance both positive and negative aspects when studying the situation of ethnic minorities.

In the previous chapter, findings derived from in-depth interviews and class observation did provide insights about what S1 ethnic minority students expect in their development; more specifically, the findings are closely related to what they



expect from a youth development program in Hong Kong.

Two of the categories presented in the previous chapters are closely related to the discussion here: the fifth category, ethnic minority students' expectations of a youth development program; and the sixth category, impressive activities in Project P.A.T.H.S. This discussion is also related to the examination of **Program**, **People** and **Process** of program implementation in this paper; thus, ethnic minority students' expectations of youth development programs are discussed in the following sequence: 1) expectations of **Program**, 2) expectations of **People**, and 3) expectations of **Process**.

### **6.1.1 Expectations of Program**

A critical factor in the effectiveness of program implementation, **Program** is defined as curriculum design, relevancy to ethnic minority students and overall program fidelity during implementation.

#### *Preferred topics for a youth development program*

While many interviewees reflected that they appreciated Project P.A.T.H.S. because of its newness and uniqueness, some topics in the program (see also previous chapter) were especially impressive for them: Bonding (N=7), Emotional Competence (N=12), Behavioural Competence (N=4), Moral Competence (N=6) and Self-efficacy (N=9). As revealed during in-depth interviews, what concerned these students most was not academic-related material; instead, topics enhancing competence and interpersonal relationships were most inspiring. This somewhat reflects that these are the preferred topics to be included in a youth development program, and it matches what Damon

(2004) suggested for a positive youth development approach: “a vision of a fully able child eager to explore the world, gain competence, and acquire the capacity to contribute importantly to the world”(p.15). Moreover, as bonding with friends is crucial for adolescents, it is not surprising that topics related to interpersonal relationships would interest these students. This confirms Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus and Harpalani (2001) suggested that ethnic minorities are no different in terms of normative developmental processes.

### Cultural and religious adaptation

Nevertheless, people with different backgrounds and characteristics often have different expectations of the same issue. This study identified that gender has a role to play in cultural and religious adaptation, in which ethnic minority girls showed more concern on this area.

For instance, during class observation in School A (refer to chapter 5.4.1), some girls shared with frustration that “*it is difficult to make others understand*” the importance of “*respecting others’ religious*”. Also, Student G, an Indian girl studying at School C, once mentioned that the program helped improve problem-solving skills when “*someone said that (she is) too dark*” (refer to chapter 5.9.1). This confirmed previous local studies, which found that minority females come across relatively more cultural differences when living in Hong Kong (Ku, Chan, Chan & Lee, 2003; Ku, Chan & Karamjit, 2005). One possible reason is outward appearance, especially for those with Muslim backgrounds. They often wear scarves on the street, and local Chinese might be curious about these less well-known practices, which made these ethnic minority girls feel disrespected. As Nakkula and Toshalis (2006) said, ethnic

identity development has strong implications for psychological well-being (e.g., fewer depression symptoms); therefore, it is suggested that more topics related to cultural and religious adaptation for minority females can be included in youth development programs to better match their psychosocial developmental needs and expectations.

#### Topics on parent-child relationship for Filipinos

In last chapter, another difference identified was the parenting style of Filipinos. Previous studies (Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service Yau Tsim District Outreaching Social Work Team, 2000; Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service Yau Tsim Mong Integrated Centre for Youth Development, 2002) showed that South Asian youth are prone to seeking advice from parents; however, they have poor communication as their parents are too busy with work. Findings in this study confirmed that ethnic minority adolescents have good relationships with their parents, but two Filipino interviewees said their parents are warm but non-demanding, leading to expectations of actual help not being fulfilled by parents. Of course, further studies would help form a more comprehensive picture in this area, yet this shows that people from different countries of origin do have different parenting styles, even though they are all given the same label: ethnic minority. And ethnic minority students from different countries of origin might demand different program content about parent-child relationships.

#### Type of housing

Lastly, it was discovered that ethnic minority students' varied housing situations did have an effect on social networking. As suggested in the literature review, ethnic

minority youth seldom communicate with local Chinese (Ku, Chan & Karamjit, 2005; Loper, 2004). Reasons for this are language barriers as well as school environment, i.e., most of their classmates are also ethnic minority. Nevertheless, as presented in chapter 5.2.2, ethnic minority students living in public housing tended to have closer and more regular contact with local Chinese (mostly their neighbours), which eventually helped them be more fluent in Chinese and more aware of Chinese culture. On the other hand, students living in private and village housing tended to have more intimate contact with people from the same country (mostly their relatives).

Though these differences might not be directly related to ethnic minority students' expectations of a youth development program, their effects on psychosocial development should not be ignored. Those having closer networks with local Chinese would have expectations towards their own development (and towards a development program) different from those of students having closer contact with people from their own countries. Acculturation experiences do shape human behaviour (Rubin & Babbie, 2005). For instance, those having fewer networks with local Chinese might be more curious about Chinese culture, thus such topics should be included in a youth development program. On the other hand, those having more networks with local Chinese might experience more cultural shock and would need more topics related to ethnic identity. More studies should be conducted on this topic to explore the effect of social networks on ethnic minority students' development in Hong Kong.

### **6.1.2 Expectations of People**

In a youth development program, 'People' includes every person directly or

indirectly involved in program implementation. During in-depth interviews, interviewees were specifically asked to describe a 'good' instructor. (Also, they were asked for any criticisms of their instructors, in order to enhance the reliability and validity of the data obtained.) Findings derived from these questions can shape our understanding of what ethnic minority students expect from instructors in a youth development program.

### *Expectations of instructors*

As the main person implementing a youth development program, instructors should (in the ethnic minority students' point of view) possess certain characteristics. As presented in chapter 5.7, interviewees showed appreciation for the instructors in Project P.A.T.H.S. for: kindness, clear presentation skills, encouraging attitudes, writing comments on worksheets, sense of humour, willing to engage in self-disclosure, responding to students' concerns actively and appropriately, and having non-judgemental attitudes. Interviewees also shared some negative characteristics, including language weaknesses, gender preferences, lack of class control, and lack of debriefing after program activities. Most of these expectations are universal and are in line with previous studies (Forrest, Strange & Oakley, 2002; Shek & Sun, 2008a; Sy & Glanz, 2008). The most pressing concern revealed by interviewees was instructors' struggles with English. One possible reason for this is that all instructors involved in this study were local Chinese and therefore tended to have different English pronunciation to that of the ethnic minority students.

### **6.1.3 Expectations of Process**

This part covers ethnic minority students' expectations of the **Process** of a youth

development program in three areas: 1) expectations of teaching strategies, 2) shared responsibility in group activities, and 3) influence of immigration experiences on grouping preferences.

#### *Expectations of teaching strategies*

Interviewees said that scenario discussions, experiential learning, interactive activities, sharing of songs and games promoting successful experiences impressed them. This indicates that one-way communication and direct teaching methods are less welcome than active involvement from students and exchanging of ideas and values among students and instructors. Also, most ethnic minority students were observed participating actively in Project P.A.T.H.S. Therefore, an interactive teaching approach in a youth development program is more appropriate for ethnic minority students' expectations and learning needs.

#### *Shared responsibility in group activities*

On the other hand, during the many group activities in Project P.A.T.H.S. (a point which will be further discussed in later sections), ethnic minority students did expect to have even work distribution. Interviewees' sharing (e.g., from Student I and Student L), indicated their negative feelings about uneven distribution of work caused by some group mates simply relying on others.

#### *Influence of immigration experiences on grouping preferences*

Rubin and Babbie (2005) suggest that immigration and acculturation experiences do shape human behaviour. This study showed in particular that immigration experiences affect students' grouping preferences in a youth development program.

Having immigrated to Hong Kong right before the S1 school year, Student C revealed that he preferred the instructors to assign groups, as he wanted to meet new friends and learn from different people. Such new immigrants might need help from teachers to build social networks, and a positive youth development program with many interactive activities (e.g., Project P.A.T.H.S.) would be an ideal platform for this.

The expectations of S1 ethnic minority students for a youth development program are actually quite universal, e.g., including topics such as competence and interpersonal relationships in the program curriculum, having kind and encouraging program instructors, doing interactive activities, and distributing work equally in groups. Nevertheless, some background factors (culture and religion, parenting styles from different countries of origin, immigration experiences and housing situation) did affect what they expected from a youth development program. These backgrounds must be taken into consideration when designing a youth development program for ethnic minority adolescents in Hong Kong.

## **6.2 Effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. as perceived by ethnic minority students**

Judging from the data at hand, obtained over one school year, Project P.A.T.H.S. can be regarded as effective. Interviewees spoke of positive changes after program implementation, and the researcher saw similar phenomena during class observation. Three categories presented in the previous chapter are closely related to the discussion here: a) highlights of class observation, b) positive and negative grouping experiences, and c) positive changes after program implementation.

Considering the positive changes perceived by ethnic minority students, some are

similar to previous studies conducted by the research team of Project P.A.T.H.S., while some are different. In his study about the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. based on the first 2 years of program implementation, Shek (2009) summarized that students in experimental schools had higher scores in the domains of Resilience, Self-Determination, Self-Efficacy, Beliefs in the Future, Clear and Positive Identity, Social Competence, Emotional Competence, Cognitive Competence, Behavioural Competence and Moral Competence. As stated in the conceptual framework, **5C** (Connection, Competence, Confidence, Contribution and Character) are the terminal measurement of students' growth for this study, and their relevancy to the 15 development constructs of Project P.A.T.H.S. can be found in chapter 3. Shek's study showed that students studying in mainstream schools generally had more improvement in Confidence, Competence and Character.

Interviewees in the present study said they were most impressed and stimulated students by topics including Bonding, Social Competence, Emotional Competence, Cognitive Competence, Behavioural Competence, Moral Competence, Self-Efficacy and Pro-social Norms. Using the **5C** model, it can be said that ethnic minority students perceived more positive changes in Competence. However, they put less emphasis on Confidence and seldom mentioned Character. Instead, from ethnic minority students' point of view, the program has more positive impact on Connection.

Positive changes as perceived by ethnic minority students in Connection and Competence will now be discussed and highlighted, followed by discussion of students' improvement in Confidence and Contribution. Finally, Character is examined to



explore why there was little perceived effectiveness in this domain.

### **6.2.1 Improvements in Connection**

In this study, Connection means positive relationships with healthy adults and positive peers; the major developmental construct from Project P.A.T.H.S. is the Promotion of Bonding.

#### *Family relationships*

As presented in chapter 5.9, interviewees revealed that the program helped them improve their relationships with family members; for instance, they learned to control their emotions when communicating with parents and siblings; they learned to share with their brothers and sisters; and they learned to be polite to their family members and to make more contributions at home. One reason for such findings is certainly their intimate family relationships, which was true for interviewees no matter their gender, school, or country of origin. Also, all of their households had more than one sibling, presenting students with more chances to spend time with family members and apply what they had learned in Project P.A.T.H.S. This is why most of the perceived changes for ethnic minority students were rather skill-based and practical, such as controlling emotions, sharing with siblings and being polite at home.

#### *Peer relationships*

In peer relationships, ethnic minority students learned to have empathy and respect for others, as well as apologizing and criticizing in a proper/positive way. Also, the interactive activities of Project P.A.T.H.S. helped students build positive and intimate

relationships with their classmates. As presented in chapter 5.8, students said the group activities paved the way for better relationships with their classmates and taught them about mutual help mutually. Some even expressed that their relationship was not only enhanced in Project P.A.T.H.S., but also occurred in “*other lessons*”. “*Before the game, (they weren't) sitting together*”, “*but when the game started, the Life Education, and then (he) changed (his) seat*”, they “*play each other and...talk...discuss.*” (Student J).

While three of the five Nepalese interviewees had friends who smoked quite often, Student U and Student V said that Project P.A.T.H.S. helped them understand the importance of staying away from such undesirable friends. According to Kobus (2003), adolescents may acquire negative behaviour, like smoking and substance abuse, if they have friends living unhealthy lifestyles (i.e., the Social Learning Theory). It is not surprising that these Nepalese students would find the program useful, since one of the program, BO1.3 “Looking for Friends at the Crossroads”, gave concrete suggestions on how to stay away from friends who smoke. This is one example of students perceiving the program as more effective when the content matches their expectations and the incidents occurring in their daily lives.

### **6.2.2 Improvements in Competence**

Competence is a major part of cultivating resilience for adolescents (Choi, Au, Tang, Shum, Tang, Choi et al., 2003), which is especially true for ethnic minority youth, who face many challenges and difficulties in Hong Kong. In this study, the terminal indicator Competence summarizes the following five developmental constructs: Social Competence, Emotional Competence, Cognitive Competence, Behavioural

### Competence and Moral Competence.

As discussed in previous chapters, the topics that impressed interviewees most included Emotional Competence, Behavioural Competence and Moral Competence. At the individual level, they had increased empathy as well as improved emotional management, behaviour control, and problem-solving skills; at the interpersonal level, they learned to apologize and criticise in proper ways; at the family level, they learned to express emotions properly at home; at the societal level, they learned to act properly in public, such as giving up seats to others. All of the above aligned with protective factors contributing to positive youth development, as suggested by local authors (Choi, Au, Tang, Shum, Tang, Choi et al., 2003).

Before interviewees came across such a ‘new’ and ‘unique’ youth program, they might have used common sense or traditional ways to solve daily problems. This program provided them a chance to acquire Competence in formal ways and to learn from instructors’ self-disclosed experiences.

### **6.2.3 Improvements in Confidence and Contribution**

Although ethnic minority students perceived more positive impacts on Connection and Competence, interviewees did express improvements in other areas.

Confidence mainly refers to the following development constructs: Self-Determination, Self-Efficacy, Resilience and Beliefs in the Future. In this study, students said they mainly benefited from the construct of Self-efficacy. One part of self-efficacy, goal-setting, was frequently mentioned by interviewees (N=9) as an

impressive and practical topic. It helped them think about the future and learn to make ‘SMART’ goals (i.e., Unit SE1.4, “Doing it a SMART Way”). For interviewees with a strong future orientation, like Student L, this topic was especially beneficial. This again matches the suggestion made by Damon (2004) about a positive youth development approach – these ethnic minority students are “eager to explore the world”. Moreover, as adolescents are in a stage of identity formation (Erickson, 1968), topical goal-setting prompts them to search for their goals and values, thus negotiating their normative conflict, i.e., identity formation, more smoothly. Since this is not a longitudinal study, the effect on ethnic minority students could not be verified over the long term; still, it is a fact that nearly half the interviewees liked the inclusion of goal-setting in Project P.A.T.H.S.

For **Contribution**, the development constructs of Pro-social Norms and Pro-social Involvement have higher relevancy. Although interviewees seemed not to make any contributions at the macro level (e.g., to the local community), some did at home. Also, actively participating in group discussions during Project P.A.T.H.S. is another type of contribution. Moreover, as presented in chapter 5.9, Student U learned pro-social behaviour, such as not occupying two seats while travelling on the bus. All these could actually be regarded as enhancement in **Contribution**.

#### **6.2.4 Impact on Character uncertain**

As suggested by Shek, Tang and Han (2005), qualitative researchers should include explanations for negative evidence (*Principle 11*). Concerning **Character**, which mainly refers to the constructs of Spirituality and Clear and Positive Identity, interviewees seldom gave feedback during in-depth interviews. There are two

possible reasons for this. First, the S1 curriculum lacks material on religious practices and ethnic identity. As discussed in previous part, this is a major expectation for ethnic minority students of a youth development program, especially for girls, who experience more cultural and religious differences in the local community. Second, the major objective of the construct of Spirituality is to help program participants appreciate the value of life and explore the meaning of life (Shek & Ma, 2007b). But since most ethnic minority students have religious backgrounds (e.g., Pakistani interviewees are all Muslim; Indian and Nepalese interviewees are all Muslim or Hindu; Filipino interviewees are mostly Catholic), they have already had plenty of opportunities to explore the meaning of life.

Although it cannot be concluded that ethnic minority students perceived no effectiveness in **Character**, as students were not asked for their comments over every topic sequentially, it is a fact that they did not recall any topics in this domain, and so its effectiveness towards ethnic minority students remains uncertain. It is suggested that further studies explore possible reasons – such as cultural differences, distribution of units throughout the year, or students' backgrounds – for this low response in the **Character** domain.

With significant impact on **Connection** and **Competence**, and some improvement in **Confidence** and **Contribution**, Project P.A.T.H.S. was effective from ethnic minority students' point of view. It is noticeable, however, that although all participating schools in this study selected the Full Program (i.e., all 15 development constructs), the constructs of the Core Program (including **Bonding**, **Social Competence**, **Emotional Competence**, **Cognitive Competence**, **Behavioural Competence**, **Moral**

Competence, Self-Efficacy, Pro-social Norms) that impressed interviewees more.

### **6.3 Critical factors for effective implementation of Project P.A.T.H.S.**

The previous section showed that ethnic minority students regarded Project P.A.T.H.S as effective. To further explore critical factors influencing the effectiveness of program implementation, we will now follow the conceptual framework to examine the influence of **P**eople, **P**rogram and **P**rocess. Since this is the first study to explore the topic from ethnic minority students' point of view, these **3P** will be discussed one by one in great detail. The influences of **P**olicy and **P**lace identified in this study will be briefly discussed as well.

#### **6.3.1 People**

The stakeholders at issue here include ethnic minority students, their peers and family members, and program instructors.

##### *Backgrounds of ethnic minority students*

In order to enhance cultural sensitivity, the influences on ethnic minority students themselves are first discussed so that the findings can better be interpreted with cultural competence (Rubin & Babbie, 2005).

Earlier in this chapter, S1 ethnic minority students' expectations of youth development programs in terms of **P**rogram, **P**rocess and **P**eople were discussed thoroughly. All these expectations affect how ethnic minority students perceive Project P.A.T.H.S. For instance, ethnic minority students expect topics about competence and interpersonal relationships, and Project P.A.T.H.S. fulfils their

expectations – 14 of its 40 Tier 1 curriculum units are in these areas.

On the other hand, as S1 ethnic minority students expect more interactive activities in a youth development program, it is not surprising that they would report much learning from the group activities in Project P.A.T.H.S. Moreover, it is suggested that students' learning motivation is always a key factor in an effective youth program (Shek & Sun, 2008a). As observed, most ethnic minority students showed a strong interest in the learning process, and they actively participated in group discussions, role plays, games, etc. This active learning style of ethnic minority students matches the interactive teaching method suggested by Project P.A.T.H.S. In light of this, program instructors could adopt the youth development program to be even more interactive.

#### *Peer support critical for behavioural change*

As discussed, interviewees reported positive changes in different areas; one of the critical reasons identified was connections with classmates and friends. Student P was a typical example. She pointed to positive changes in school attendance and politeness towards others, and she credited this success to support from her classmates. With the encouragement (or an actual reward, like her favourite fast food) received from her friends, she changed. This confirmed the findings of Eccles and Gootman (2002) that supportive relationships in the learning environment are positively associated with the promotion of positive youth development. Moreover the Social Learning Theory suggests that people influence one another, which is especially important in adolescence (Kobus, 2003). Ethnic minority students' intimate relationships with friends and classmates promote mutual help, as students

monitor each other to change positively. However, these intimate relationships might have negative effects. For instance, smoking seems to be a common concern in the Nepalese peer group: three out of five Nepalese interviewees said that ‘say no’ skills were practical and useful for them in daily life.

To fully utilize the intimate relationships among ethnic minority students, program instructors could encourage students work together in a youth development program. For instance, more mutual help elements, such as peer-support and mutual-monitoring groups, can be included in a youth development program as these are critical for ethnic minority students.

#### *Importance of Family*

Although family members are not directly involved in the implementation of Project P.A.T.H.S., their importance in promoting positive youth development for ethnic minority students must be highlighted.

Noller, Feeney and Peterson (2001) suggest that adolescents, who previously wanted the full support of their parents, are in the process of changing their ‘attachment object’ from parents to peers or teachers. Nevertheless, this study discovered that S1 ethnic minority students remained in very close, intimate relationship with parents and siblings. It even serves as a major protective factor – students said that parents serve as knowledge contributors as well as mediators for building networks with their own people and with local Chinese.

On the other hand, since most interviewees have big families (often with parents and



more than two siblings living together) as well as having close relationships with relatives, there are plenty of chances for ethnic minority students to apply what they had learned in Project P.A.T.H.S. This is the reason that many perceived changes actually occurred at home (e.g., learning to control emotions with parents, sharing with siblings, being polite to family members and making contributions at home). Thus, ethnic minority students living in Hong Kong need more scenarios about family in a youth development program, especially since scenario discussions are favoured by ethnic minority students, according to in-depth interviews.

#### *Instructors' Characteristics*

As suggested in the literature review, adolescents cherish instructors in youth program who have the following attitudes and characteristics: humorous, empathetic, having things in common with students, enjoying the act of teaching, using more active learning teaching methods, and controlling the class well (Forrest, Strange & Oakley, 2002; Sy & Glanz, 2008). Findings in this study confirmed those studies. Moreover, from ethnic minority students' point of view, instructors' attitudes and skills are more important than the knowledge they possess.

As presented in last chapter, interviewees said instructors in Project P.A.T.H.S. were kind and encouraging and had clear presentation skills and a sense of humour. Moreover, some special characteristics owned by instructors were highlighted, including non-judgemental attitudes, active and appropriate responses to students' concerns, and a willingness to engage in self-disclosure. These are similar to what Shek and Sun (2008a) suggested as favourable characteristics from a student's point of view. Self-disclosure is especially important (Goldstein & Benassi, 1994) –

instructors' genuine sharing on 'somewhat' negative growing experiences did encourage ethnic minority students to engage in more self-reflection. On the other hand, interviewees indicated that they liked to receive written comments on worksheets from instructors. As adolescence is a stage of identity formation (Erikson, 1968), comments from others help students understand more about themselves, which is beneficial for finding an identity and making commitments to goals and values.

To enhance the reliability and cultural competence of this study, interviewees were also encouraged to express negative comments about instructors (Rubin & Babbie, 2005). Negative characteristics of program instructors in Project P.A.T.H.S. included: having gender preferences, not controlling the class well, doing inadequate debriefing after games and activities, as well as not being fluent in English. For instance, Student B, a Pakistani boy, said he felt "*very bad and very weird*" to be a 'victim' of gender inequality; Student U also said "*the whole class got mad*" when the instructors had poor class control. Moreover, these inadequate debriefing and English-language skills made students feel they "*didn't understand what she taught*" and "*don't understand what she mean*". All these characteristics had negative impacts on program effectiveness as perceived by ethnic minority students.

In correlating the positive and negative comments, it is clear, again, that instructors' knowledge (e.g., knowledge of the developmental constructs of Project P.A.T.H.S.) is not the major concern for ethnic minority students. Instead, proper attitudes and good teaching skills are more prominent. Therefore, in any instructor-training sessions prior to the implementation of a youth development program for ethnic minority

students, more emphasis should be put on attitude and teaching skills.

Previous studies have suggested that program instructors' training (or lack of it) does influence the effectiveness of program implementation (Sy & Glanz, 2008; Waxman, 2001). In this study, of the 6 instructors involved, only two (one from School A and one from School B) had joined the training provided by the Project P.A.T.H.S. research team (Appendix 1). Nevertheless, no major differences in program effectiveness seemed to be connected to the differing amounts of training received by instructors. One possible reason might be the expectations of ethnic minority students. As described, they treasure instructors' attitudes and skills, and in this study, all instructors involved were teachers or social workers who had particular experience with ethnic minority living in Hong Kong. Therefore, these instructors would naturally have better cultural sensitivity, and would understand more clearly what the ethnic minority students expected. This helped instructors implement the program in accordance with students' needs and expectations. Another reason is that participating schools had adopted the concept of 'train the trainer', in which intra-school teachers' training as well as teachers' meetings were provided and held by school coordinators who had joined the training provided by Project P.A.T.H.S. Therefore, with this support from school coordinators, a significant factor in program effectiveness (Fagan & Mihalic, 2003), helped the instructors have more understanding of the project.

To sum up, concerning **P**eople as a critical factor, a youth development program is not just a matter between the students and teachers; instead, the student's whole system makes contribution. This is why Shek (2007b) considered ecological models

important when he formulated the conceptual framework of Project P.A.T.H.S.

### **6.3.2 Program**

Program is another factor in program effectiveness from ethnic minority students' point of view. In this part, the influences of curriculum design as well as overall program fidelity are discussed.

#### *A new and unique program with diverse activities*

As suggested by Shek and Sun (2008a), the attributes of a good program include a curriculum with diverse and attractive activities that does not overlap existing school programs. In this study, nearly half of the interviewees (N=10) said that Project P.A.T.H.S. is new and unique for them in terms of topic, content, teaching method and learning experiences. For instance, Student L said he had never come across such a program in his primary school or in his home country. Thus, Project P.A.T.H.S. avoids overlaps not only with existing school programs, but also with previous learning experiences.

On the other hand, Sobeck, Abbey and Agius (2006) suggested that a good program should fit the developmental needs of the target population. In this study, though the psycho-social developmental needs of ethnic minority youth are not addressed in great details, some of their characteristics and expectations can be identified. For instance, ethnic minority students expected to face challenges; therefore, a new program would give them a sense of achievement since they are able to acquire new knowledge.

Moreover, the diverse activities in P.A.T.H.S. also contribute to ethnic minority students' positive perceptions of the program. The activities that most impressed ethnic minority students included scenario discussions, experiential and interactive activities, games and sharing of songs. Also, instructors' self-disclosure helped students engage in more self-reflection. These diverse activities motivated different students with various expectations and learning needs. Furthermore, since most topics in the Project P.A.T.H.S. curriculum are closely related to daily life, many students said they could apply their learning at home and in peer groups.

#### *Effectiveness of Core Program units*

In the curriculum design of Project P.A.T.H.S. (Shek & Ma, 2007b), Bonding, Social Competence, Emotional Competence, Cognitive Competence, Behavioural Competence, Moral Competence, Self Efficacy and Pro-social Norms are included in the Core Program, as these constructs have been frequently identified in successful positive youth development programs in North America (Catalano et al., 2004). The remaining constructs are implemented if schools adopt the Full Program.

The three participating schools in this study all adopted the Full Program. Exploring the impressive and beneficial constructs during in-depth interviews, ethnic minority students mentioned Bonding, Social Competence, Emotional Competence, Cognitive Competence, Behavioural Competence, Moral Competence, Self-Efficacy and Pro-social Norms most often. Interestingly, these are all from the Core Program. This is not to say that the other developmental constructs in the Full Program were ineffective, as students were not specifically asked about the effectiveness of each construct. Nevertheless, these constructs in Core Program did impress them more.

One possible reason is the suggestion of Catalano et al. (2004) – that these constructs have higher correlations with successful youth development programs. Nevertheless, for a more concrete and comprehensive explanation, more studies in this area should be carried in the future. Also, quantitative studies could measure the perceived changes of ethnic minority students in these 15 constructs, just like the studies carried out by Project P.A.T.H.S. which utilized the Chinese Positive Youth Development Scale (CPYDS) during data collection (Shek, 2006; Shek, Siu, Lee, Cheung & Chung, 2008). Perhaps a Positive Youth Development Scale for South and Southeast Asian can be developed in the future.

*Overall program Fidelity is important*

Program fidelity is crucial for a successful program (Waxman, 2001), and the findings of the current study through triangulation confirmed this.

Among the three participating schools in this study, School B had the lowest average overall program fidelity as observed (83%, 62.8% and 88.8% for School A, School B and School C respectively). Attending an instructors' meeting at School B in the beginning of 2007-2008, instructors agreed to design a more activity-based lesson plan, as they perceived the ethnic minority students at their schools as 'more active'. Indeed, during some program sessions in School B (which has two lessons), a single game covered more than one lesson. However, it was interviewees from School B (e.g., Student M and Student V) who complained that they had too many games, inadequate debriefing of activities and poor class control. These negative comments were never been obtained from School A and C, which tended to have higher overall program fidelity. Nevertheless, students from School B did share some positive

learning experiences; for instance, interviewees from School B learned to stay away from undesirable friends (Student V), set their goals (Student M) and became more polite towards others (Student P). Interestingly, these learning outcomes match the design of the program manual. Therefore, it is suggested that overall program fidelity is crucial for successful implementation of a youth development program from ethnic minority students' point of view, especially when the program has a strong theoretical background and is evidence-based.

On the other hand, during class observations at School A and School B, lessons tended to have lower overall program fidelity when they were implemented by teachers instead of social workers. Previous foreign studies have also found that teachers tend to use their own direct teaching methods (Fagan & Mihalic, 2003; Hahn, Noland, Rayens & Christie, 2002; Sobeck, Abbey & Agius, 2006). Teachers from School A and B did tend to use more direct methods instead of the interactive recommendations of the program. However, this did not happen in School C, where both instructors involved were teachers – whether the activities were direct or interactive, these teachers tended to follow the curriculum. Perhaps further studies can identify the reasons for such differences.

Amendment of program content in accordance with students' backgrounds and expectations is surely appropriate, especially for ethnic minority adolescents, whose cultural and religious backgrounds are different from the mainstream society. However, when the program content and teaching method were changed too much, ethnic minority students did not attain the intended outcome. Therefore, while considering students' expectations and characteristics, instructors should follow the

objectives, messages, activities and teaching methods suggested in the program manual.

To sum up, discussion made in this part demonstrates how important the Program is as perceived by ethnic minority students, especially for curriculum designed and overall program fidelity. In addition, it appeared that overall program fidelity is an important factor from the ethnic minority students' point of view.

### **6.3.3 Process**

Process is the third factor influencing program effectiveness, as described in the conceptual framework of this study. This section discusses ethnic minority students' views on this factor.

#### *Interactive but not too 'active'*

In foreign studies, students have stated their preference for active learning methods, calling them more student-centred (Forrest, Strange & Oakley, 2002; Sy & Glanz, 2008). As discussed before, ethnic minority students do prefer interactive learning methods with diverse activities. Nevertheless, is there any pre-requisite for such an interactive program to be effective way in ethnic minority students' point of view?

Triangulated findings from class observation and in-depth interviews, students feel that 'interactive' should be limited to appropriate duration of activities, proper type of activities as well as appropriate debriefing after the activities. As discussed above, interviewees from School B complained that games and activities in Project P.A.T.H.S. ran too long, with inadequate debriefing. Though instructors intended to



match ethnic minority students' characteristics, as they perceived the students to be 'active', the games turned out to be too much. Moreover, though ethnic minority students preferred interactive teaching methods, they still demanded a well-controlled classroom, otherwise the learning atmosphere during Project P.A.T.H.S. would simply seem like a "*free lesson*" as described by Student V.

In their foreword to the program manual of Project P.A.T.H.S, Shek and Ma (2007b, p.8) list seven myths concerning the development of Chinese adolescents: adolescents grow automatically (Myth 1); adolescents are always troublesome (Myth 2); students in 'famous' schools have fewer developmental problems (Myth 3); 'problem-free' equals healthy development (Myth 4); resources should be concentrated on 'solving' adolescent problems, and preventive measures are relatively less important (Myth 5); different adolescent development problems require different prevention and intervention programs (Myth 6); and the government is responsible for promoting healthy adolescent development and dealing with adolescent developmental problems (Myth 7). Shek and Ma also proposed the realities that can replace these seven myths. Perhaps one more myth can be suggested in addition to the previous seven: "*South Asian students are very active, so just implement the program with games and activities*". This study's findings show that the reality should be: "*They have high learning motivation and are willing to participate, so more interactive teaching methods with adequate debriefing are advised*".

#### *Influence of students' characteristics on grouping experiences*

Group discussions appeared to be the most common activity in the participating

schools. As presented in section 5.8, ethnic minority interviewees had many positive grouping experiences: better relationships with classmates, mutual help, development of strengths and potential, and the use of practical discussion skills. On the other hand, one major negative grouping experience shared by interviewees was the uneven distribution of work among group members.

Interviewees' personal characteristics might have been a factor affecting grouping experience. Responsible and self-initiated interviewees (as observed during class observation) like Student I and Student L complained that they had to take the whole responsibility in their groups. They had to lead the discussion, be the 'secretary' and give the presentation. They found this too heavy. Nevertheless, these two interviewees did report much learning from group activities. Thus, suggested that instructors should pay special attention to the distribution of work among group members. Perhaps instructors could assign different roles for students each time to help students learn to share the responsibility.

On the other hand, some ethnic minority students preferred having groups assigned by instructors, while some wanted to group themselves. Nevertheless, both of them lay one reason, i.e., to learn more during group discussion. This can be further explained by ethnic minority students' high learning motivation and initiative as described in previous parts. However, instructors should keep notice student dynamics, especially if there are any negative relationships inside the groups (e.g., the sharing of Student B, as presented in section 5.8.3).

*Language is critical among students from different cultural backgrounds*

Group activities provided chances for students to communicate and interact. As suggested by Waxman (2001), cooperative grouping in the classroom improves relationships between mainstream and non-mainstreamed students. Moreover, the Contact Hypothesis (Allport, 1979) proposes that the better one gets to know members of another group, the more one will like them. In this study, since the observed class in School B was a combined class, it is worthwhile exploring whether group activities helped improve relationships between ethnic minority and Chinese students.

In School B, instructors often allowed students to group themselves, and ethnic minority students always preferred to group with ethnic minorities, Chinese with Chinese. However, two exceptions were Christine and Student Q (refer to chapter 5.4 and 5.8). They were willing, or even actively trying, to group with ethnic minority classmates. During in-depth interviews, a common characteristic was identified: both felt comfortable and were capable of communicating in English.

A similar situation occurred in School A, where students were also allowed to group themselves. Students from the same country of origin who were able to speak similar languages preferred to group with each other, e.g., Pakistanis were more willing to group with Indians and other Pakistanis (as Hindi is similar to Urdu), but Nepalese students simply grouped together. Students said that they preferred to use their own language during group discussions to express themselves freely. Therefore, instead of common ethnicity, being able to communicate in English or having a common language appeared to be the major concern when students decided their groups.

Therefore, language is a critical factor in any youth development program for ethnic minority youth – this is not purely for individual learning but also for fostering student interaction, or even social integration in a combined class.

As proposed in the Contact Hypothesis (Allport, 1979), certain pre-requisites are required in order to achieve positive outcomes when members of two groups join together, including 1) equal status for both groups; 2) common goals for both groups; 3) inter-group cooperation with everyone contributing; and 4) the support of authorities, law or customs that both groups acknowledge. During the implementation of Project P.A.T.H.S., all pre-requisites seemed to be satisfied during group activities. In the context of this study (i.e., S1 students participating in Project P.A.T.H.S. in the classroom during school time), it was observed that students had equal status (all named ‘students’, thus having equal rights and responsibilities in the classroom); they had common goals (i.e., completing common tasks assigned by instructors); they were all cooperating and contributing through making suggestions and helping solve the tasks; and they all received support and guidance from authority (i.e., instructors) as well as from acknowledged rules or customs in the classrooms (i.e., regulation and norms during lesson time). Nevertheless, according to the findings of this study, one more pre-requisite needs to be satisfied to promote better relationship between Chinese and ethnic minority adolescents living in Hong Kong: ‘being able to communicate and interact freely in a common language’.

Therefore, program instructors cannot simply put students from different countries of origin together in one class and claim they have achieved social integration. In schools having both Chinese and ethnic minority students, instructors should provide more language support so that students will be able to communicate and interact

freely both inside and outside the classroom.

In conclusion, from the ethnic minority students' point of view, it is more favourable to have interactive activities with adequate debriefing, group activities with equal work distribution as well as common language in communication and interaction in the **Process** of a youth development program.

#### **6.3.4 Other factors: Place and Policy**

Last, although **Place** and **Policy** are not major factors to be explored in this study, their importance from ethnic minority students' point of view should be briefly discussed.

Concerning the influence of **Place**, one of the major points to note is the availability of audio-visual equipment. As described in chapter 5.3, School A and School C had higher levels of overall program fidelity – they implemented most of the activities suggested in the program manual, including scenario discussions, radio dramas and computer animations. However, School B had no built-in computer system (e.g., computer and projector) in the classroom by the 2007-2008 school year. Although instructors could ask teaching assistants to prepare such equipment before the lesson, this was rather troublesome. This might be one reason School B had lower overall program fidelity, which in turn triggered more negative comments about the activity-based lessons.

On the other hand, considering the influence of **Policy**, two factors can be identified. First, co-teaching was favourable from ethnic minority students' point of view. While

one instructor was giving messages, the other could walk around to see whether individual assistance was necessary. Moreover, since there were many group activities for Project P.A.T.H.S., having two instructors allowed students to receive more guidance during group discussions. More important, students expressed that instructors served as role models of cooperation.

Second, school policy with cultural sensitivity provides comfortable learning environment for ethnic minority students. For instance, all of the three participating schools allow students to maintain their cultural and religious dressing during lesson, it was especially true for the allowance of girls to wear scarf at schools. When students feel being respected, they would feel more comfortable and thus have higher motivation to participate in school program.

This chapter has discussed 1) expectations of S1 ethnic minority youth for a youth development program, 2) the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. as perceived by ethnic minority students, and 3) critical factors for effective program implementation of Project P.A.T.H.S. among ethnic minority students. Though more studies have to be conducted in order to explore the development of ethnic minority youth living in Hong Kong, the findings from the current study do provide a deeper understanding of their development.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Summary and Conclusion**

This paper ends with a summary of the study, its limitations and implications, and suggestions for future research.

#### **7.1 Summary**

As stated at the outset, the aims of this study are: 1) understanding the expectations that S1 ethnic minority students in Hong Kong have for a youth development program, 2) exploring the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. as perceived by ethnic minority students, and 3) exploring critical factors for successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes of Project P.A.T.H.S among these students.

To explore answers to these questions, the qualitative method was adopted to explore the process of program implementation. This helps explore *why* and *how* Project P.A.T.H.S. is effective from ethnic minority students' point of view. Data were obtained through class observation and in-depth interviews in three designated schools over one school year. Detailed reports were typed and documented with the field notes collected during class observation. In-depth interviews were recorded electronically and fully transcribed. The reports and transcripts were then analysed through line-by-line coding.

During the course of data analysis, themes and categories began to emerge and were further discussed in accordance with the literature review. The following is a summary of the discussions, in order of the research aims.

The first research aim in this study is to understand the expectations that S1 ethnic minority students have for a youth development program. They expected to have more topics related to interpersonal relationship and personal competency, and more interactive teaching methods. They also expected to have shared responsibility in group activities. On the other hand, gender, country of origin, housing situation and immigration experiences affected students' expectation of a youth development program in terms of **Program** and **Process**. In addition, as ethnic minority girls experience more cultural and religious differences in Hong Kong, they expect a youth development program to have more topics related to cultural and religious practices.

The second research aim is to explore the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. as perceived by ethnic minority students. Triangulating findings from class observations and in-depth interviews in three participating schools, it was identified that students perceived positive changes in many areas. Using **5C** as the terminal indicator, ethnic minority students saw improvement in **Connection**, **Competence**, **Confidence** and **Contribution**. Moreover, their greater changes in **Connection** and **Competence** were demonstrated by students' higher frequency of mentioning those areas. For **Connection**, intimate relationships with family and friends provided more chances for ethnic minority students to apply what they had learned in Project P.A.T.H.S. Also, as there are 10 curriculum units on **Competence** in the S1 curriculum, it is not surprised that it was frequently mentioned by the interviewees. However, not every domain obviously promotes positive changes. The results of this study showed uncertain effects in **Character**. This might be due to the inadequate coverage of ethnic identity in the program design, as well as the religious backgrounds for ethnic



minority students. Nevertheless, the implementation of Project P.A.T.H.S. can be regarded as effective from ethnic minority students' point of view.

The third research aim is to explore critical factors for successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes of Project P.A.T.H.S among ethnic minority students. The results of this study indicated that three factors, i.e., **People**, **Program** and **Process** play an important role in the effectiveness of implementation of Project P.A.T.H.S. Concerning **People**, it appeared that students' backgrounds, peer support received, family relationships and certain characteristics of instructors all contribute to more successful program implementation. Therefore, the whole system of ethnic minority students should be considered. In addition, family relationships appeared to be very prominent in achieving the learning outcomes, as they provided a platform for students to apply what they had learned in the program. Also, concerning instructors, students pointed to the attitudes and skills owned by instructors as more crucial than knowledge possessed. On the other hand, considering **Program**, it was suggested that a new and unique program with diverse activities was more preferred. Also, overall program fidelity was identified as positively associated with program effectiveness; therefore, instructors should follow the program manual as far as possible, while still considering the unique needs and expectations of ethnic minority students. On the other hand, the results of this study showed that units from the Core Program were more impressive and effective from ethnic minority students' point of view, though the reason for this remains uncertain. Regarding **Process**, though ethnic minority students expected a more interactive program, it was discovered that they still demanded class control as well as adequate program debriefing. Therefore, though activities are preferable, adequate debriefing and a reasonable duration are

essential. Furthermore, during the process of program implementation, language was the most prominent factor in building relationships among students from different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, more language training should be provided for ethnic minority students to provide a common medium of communication. Lastly, though **Place** and **Policy** were not major factors in this study, it was discovered that they still affected program implementation. For **Place**, the major factor was the availability of audio-visual equipment. For **Policy**, having a school policy with cultural sensitivity, as well as co-teaching arrangements, both contributed to a more successful program as perceived by ethnic minority students.

To sum up, though the implementation of Project P.A.T.H.S. can be regarded as successful and effective, there is still room for improvement. If the expectations of ethnic minority students for a youth development program, as well as critical factors affecting program implementation are considered, this will further help these students' positive youth development.

### **7.2.1 Study limitations**

Despite the above encouraging findings, several limitations have to be clearly stated so as to fulfil Principle 12 of Shek, Tang and Han (2005) for conducting qualitative research.

First, though the implementation of Project P.A.T.H.S. can be regarded as effective from the ethnic minority students' point of view, it should be noted that changes were mainly assessed by personal perception. Without objective measurement (e.g., quantitative pre- and post-testing), it is doubtful whether the results are objective and

neutral enough. Nevertheless, prolonged engagement with the participating schools allowed the researcher to triangulate findings from in-depth interviews with class observations. Therefore, the effect of subjectivity was minimized. On the other hand, during earlier stages of this study, the researcher obtained data on the program effectiveness (pre- and post-test) among S1 students of the three participating schools from the research team of Project P.A.T.H.S. However, these data could not be applied in this study, as they combined the results from both Chinese and ethnic minority classes in the participating schools. Therefore, they do not reflect exactly how ethnic minority students perceived the program objectively. Nevertheless, during in-depth interviews, the following two questions were asked: 1) Do you see any changes *after* the program? Why? 2) Have you applied the things *you learned from Project P.A.T.H.S.* in daily life? This ensured that changes expressed by interviewees were recognized as results from the implementation of Project P.A.T.H.S. For instance, Student G shared, “*The Life Education lesson taught us that, if we encounter such problems (racial discrimination) ... firstly, tell the classmates ‘not to say anything like this anymore’, and then we could tell the teachers and they would truly help*”. Moreover, as described by Patton (2002), the ‘journey’ in process evaluation is more important than the ‘destination’; hence, it is more important to understand *why* and *how* the program is effective from the ethnic minority students’ point of view rather than examining students’ changes thoroughly in this study.

Second is the sampling method. The study was conducted in three out of five designated schools for non-Chinese, but some ethnic minority students actually study in mainstream schools. This study could not explore the expectations of these students or the effectiveness of Project P.A.T.H.S. from their point of view. Also,

ethnic minority adolescents might encounter more difficulties (e.g., racial discrimination and social exclusion) as they grow and participate more in the community. Still, the question is whether the program can help foster knowledge, attitude and skills to cope with these difficulties. Therefore, the results of this study can be generalized only to S1 ethnic minority students studying in designated schools. Moreover, topics which are more ‘controversial’ (i.e., those that contrast most strongly with local cultural and social norms) are not covered in S1 curriculum. For instance, topics like romantic relationships and religious practices are part of the S2 and S3 curricula instead. As a result, program effectiveness for these aspects could not be explored since only S1 students were included in this study.

Thirdly, although the researcher proposed various ways to ensure the reliability and validity of this study, only two data sources were mainly triangulated (there were field notes and minutes of teachers meeting and training, yet data obtained were not that rich compared to class observation and in-depth interview). Also, owing to limited resources, no member checking was included. Moreover, the reports and transcripts of class observations as well as in-depth interviews were only coded and categorized by one researcher. These might limit the claims of reliability and validity of this study. Nevertheless, to protect the investigator’s position, data were collected in three schools for a prolonged period of time, which helps ensure the internal consistency of data obtained. Also, findings were compared with local and foreign literature, which helps verify the results of this study. Last but not least, data were obtained from S1 ethnic minority students participating in Project P.A.T.H.S., all of whom are of course experts on their own living and learning environment; therefore, extensively quoting their statements enhances reliability and validity.

Fourth is cultural competence. As a Chinese male, the researcher found it difficult to interview girls with Muslim backgrounds individually, due to religious and cultural practices. It was especially true at School A, which had more female students with Muslim backgrounds. Nevertheless, since the coordinator at School A helped arrange some interviews at school in the presence of a female Pakistani teaching assistant, the effect of this limitation was likely minimized. On the other hand, there was still room for improvement in the researcher's cultural sensitivity. When the researcher interviewed Student H, an Indian girl studying in School C, the student simply shared briefly in response to every question and the data obtained seemed unreliable. However, it was discovered later that the day of the interview with Student H was actually the day before India's New Year celebration. As a result, she had to hurry home to prepare for the celebration. Future research should pay more attention to cultural practices (such as festival dates of festival, living styles and interview preferences) to enhance reliability.

Fifthly, language is another limitation. Unsurprisingly, most ethnic minority students are excellent at communicating in their mother tongue, e.g., Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi or Tagalog. During group discussions, some of them opted to use their own language to communicate, and it was hard for the researcher to understand what they were discussing. Therefore, some of their learning and feelings towards the program might not have been obtained during class observation. On the other hand, during in-depth interviews, Cantonese and English were used for communication. Therefore, some of the interviewees' real feelings might have been obscured. Nevertheless, as their schools use English during lessons, their English ability should be acceptable. Also, the qualitative method allowed the researcher to make clarification during interviews;

thus, this constraint is said to have been minimized.

Lastly, each ethnicity has its unique culture and characteristics. For instance, Pakistanis and Filipinos differ in socio-economic backgrounds, parenting styles, family relationships, social networks and experiences in Hong Kong. Nevertheless, this study did not explore their individual expectations towards youth development program. More studies could understand these differences in the future.

### **7.2.2 Practical implications and recommendations**

Even with the aforementioned limitations, this study has many contributions and recommendations that can be made based on the findings. The study helps understand what S1 ethnic minority students expect of a youth development program in terms of program design, people involved and process of program implementation. This also helps understand critical factors for successfully implementing a youth program among them. Findings from this study show that their expectations are actually quite universal (e.g., promoting competence and interpersonal relationships); nevertheless, some of their comments as explored in this study can help improve Project P.A.T.H.S. for S1 ethnic minority students. Here are some practical implications and recommendations:

- a) First, Muslim female students are quite concerned about cultural and religious adaptation. It is suggested that some of the development constructs (e.g., Behavioural Competence, Clear and Positive Identity, Resilience) could include more topics like problem solving, positive identity and optimism which are related to cultural and religious adaptation. Scenario discussions about racial discrimination and inequality can also be included, with instructors guiding

students to handle the situations properly. Moreover, some relevant topics in the Tier 2 program could be specially designed for Muslim female students in the designated schools. This would help cultivate S1 ethnic minority students' resilience (especially for Muslim females) when they encounter such challenges.

- b) Second, since parental support is a crucial protective factor for adolescents, topics specifically related to parent-child relationships for ethnic minority students can be included, especially when most of the S1 ethnic minority students have intimate relationship with their family members. For instance, the curriculum could include units teaching ethnic minority students to express their needs and views towards parents in accordance with different types of parenting. Such a topic would further foster bonding with parents. Moreover, most of the ethnic minority students have big families, and they also have intimate relationships with their family members. It was identified that most of their changes actually occurred at home. Therefore, when promoting positive youth development, 'family' is a good scenario for discussion during program implementation. Also, instructors could encourage students to practice what they have learned at home to make improvements daily. Similarly, as peer encouragement plays a central role in behavioural changes for S1 ethnic minority youth, practitioners could encourage students to apply what they have learned with their friends. Teachers and social workers could also help establish formal networks among classmates to encourage and monitor each other's in growth.
- c) Third, the most important factor for S1 ethnic minority students in building social networks with local Chinese was 'language', not 'ethnicity', during program implementation. Since P.A.T.H.S. is a positive youth development program which is integrated into the formal curriculum of designated schools, instructors

could encourage ethnic minority students to actively learn and practise Chinese in school and in their daily lives. For a combined class with both Chinese and non-Chinese, instructors could also encourage Chinese students to use both English and Chinese to talk to ethnic minority classmates to foster two-way communication. Instructors could also explain that ‘language’ is one of the most important pre-requisites for building networks; if they pursue a future in Hong Kong, learning Chinese would be a major task in the developmental stage. To foster positive attitudes towards learning Chinese as well as practising it in daily life, some recommendations for the program design of Project P.A.T.H.S. can be made: to share ways and attitudes to build friendships with Chinese, in the construct of Bonding; to illustrate Chinese as medium of communication and a pre-requisite of making contributions to the community, in the construct of Social Competence and Pro-social Involvement; to stress the importance of learning Chinese if they want to integrate with the local community, in the construct of Beliefs in the Future.

- d) Fourth, this study helps front-line teachers and social workers understand critical factors for quality service delivery. In this study, instructors’ characteristics cherished by ethnic minority students were explored in great details, and attitude and skills are more important from ethnic minorities’ point of view. This could serve as a reference for those who would like to provide services to ethnic minorities. Moreover, practical issues like learning atmosphere and preferred learning method were also covered in this study. Ethnic minority students preferred an interactive learning atmosphere with adequate debriefing, and they would enjoy facing challenges and difficulties. This could be a reference for future practitioners.



e) Last, this study does offer a contribution for policy-makers. As instructors' attitude and skills, rather than knowledge, were crucial factors in being a 'good' instructor from ethnic minority students' point of view, policy-makers in the education sector could provide more training concerning cultural sensitivity, attitude and skills for teachers and social workers so that more practitioners could help promote social integration in the future. Furthermore, this study shows that a combined class, with both Chinese and ethnic minority students, is beneficial to cultural exchange only when they are willing and able to communicate in a common language. Thus, the government should put more resources on language training, whether training in English for Chinese students in the designated schools, or training in Chinese for ethnic minority students in mainstream schools. This would help promote social integration in the long run.

### **7.2.3 Suggestions for future research**

Since this is a process-evaluation study, there is surely much room for improvement.

First, this study only covered the learning experiences of S1 ethnic minority students, and further research should be carried out through S2 and S3 so that a more comprehensive picture of expectations, development as well as the program effectiveness can be explored.

Second, as discussed in this study, constructs in the Character domain (Clear and Positive Identity, and Spirituality) seem to have had no effect from ethnic minority students' point of view. Further studies can be conducted in this area.

Further research should also be conducted in accordance with students' ethnicities, so that similarities and differences among ethnic minority students from different countries of origin could be taken into consideration.

Moreover, the influences of different types of social network were not studied in great detail in the current study. For instance, it is unclear whether living in public housing with more Chinese neighbourhood networks would have more positive influence than living in private housing with closer family networks. Surely it would benefit much for the policy makers in social welfare as well as housing sectors if there is concrete evidence in this area. Therefore, more comprehensive research is suggested.

In conclusion, this study gives us clues about cultivating positive youth development for ethnic minority students living in Hong Kong. At the conclusion of this study, it has to be highlighted again that the ethnic minority students involved in this study showed great interest in exploring the world; they were eager to learn something new and ready to receive many more challenges. Adolescents are full of potential, and this study proved that it is worth helping ethnic minorities grow healthily and holistically. It is hoped that professionals from different sectors can work together to promote racial harmony as well as cultivate a brighter future for ethnic minority youth living in Hong Kong.

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**Appendix 1** Basic information of the observed classes

<b>I. Basic information of the participating schools</b>			
<i>School name</i>	School A	School B	School C
<i>Type of School</i>	Aided	Government	Direct Subsidy Scheme
<i>School District</i>	Hong Kong East	Yau, Tsim & Mong Kok	Sham Shui Po
<i>Total no. of teachers</i>	50	55	53
<i>Religion</i>	Muslim	Not applicable	Not applicable
<i>Total no. of students</i>	720	787	923
<i>Year joined P.A.T.H.S.</i>	Experimental Implementation Phase in 05/06	Full Implementation Phase in 06/07	Full Implementation Phase in 06/07
<i>Classes in Secondary One</i>	4	5	5
<b>II. Basic information of Tier 1 Program from the observed classes</b>			
<i>No. of students in the class</i>	28 (Co-ed)	38 (Co-ed)	35 (Co-ed)
<i>Ethnicity combination in the class</i>	All non-Chinese	Mostly non-Chinese, with a few Chinese	All non-Chinese
<i>Program</i>	Full Program	Full Program	Full Program
<i>Mode of implementation</i>	20 1-hour sessions, 2 units per session	20 1-hour sessions, 2 units per session	20 1-hour sessions, 1 to 2 units per session
<i>Program arrangement</i>	Life Education lesson	P.A.T.H.S. lesson	Life Education lesson
<i>Medium of instruction</i>	English	English	English
<i>Times of class observation</i>	6 times x 2 lessons = 12 lessons	7 times x 2 lessons = 14 lessons	8 times x 2 lessons = 16 lessons
<i>Duration of each session</i>	35 minutes x 2 lessons = 1 hour 10 minutes	35 minutes x 2 lessons = 1 hour 10 minutes	35 minutes x 2 lessons = 1 hour 10 minutes
<b>III. Information of the instructors from the observed classes</b>			
<i>No. of instructors</i>	2	2	2
<i>Combination of instructors</i>	2 Female 1 teacher and 1 social worker	2 Female 1 teacher and 1 social worker	1 Male and 1 Female 2 class teachers
<i>No. of instructor joined P.A.T.H.S. training</i>	1	1	0

**Appendix 2** Invitation letter to school

4 July 2007

Dear XXX,

*Re: A Study on the Positive Development of South Asian adolescent in Hong Kong*

Having served as one of the research assistants in the curriculum development team of the project P.A.T.H.S. for more than two years, I have developed a keen interest in understanding and promoting positive development of adolescents in Hong Kong. Since the project was implemented in 05/06 (experimental stage), and fully implemented in 2006/07, we have witnessed very positive results for the students, for examples, improvements in interpersonal relationships and self-esteem, establishment of positive-identities.

With a strong background of working with South Asian people as a social worker after I graduated at the City University of Hong Kong, I determine to dedicate myself to promoting the development of this group of adolescents. On top of my regular involvement in the various tasks in the project, I consider one of my future contributions will be in the academic aspect to study on the positive development of South Asian adolescents in Hong Kong. That is why I registered as a research student studying the Master degree in Philosophy at City University of Hong Kong under the supervision of Dr. Lee Tak Yan, one of the Co-principal Investigators of the project.

I am especially interested in exploring how and why the project can help South Asian adolescents in their positive development, social adaptation and cultural integration. In view of the adversities they come across while growing up in Hong Kong (e.g. language barrier, identity crisis and social exclusion), it is hoped that the study can find out the key factors that help them adapt to the life in Hong Kong, integrate in the local community as well as cultivate resilience through participating in the project.

From my past experience as a social worker working with South Asian people and being a Co-Walker for the project recently, I notice that people in your school including you, the principal, teachers and social workers are very helpful and concerned for the South Asian students. That is why I would like to ask for your kind consent for me to conduct an independent study through participant observations and qualitative interviewing with some of the Secondary 1 South Asian students in the coming school year. By way of participating in a few P.A.T.H.S. lessons with the consent from you and the teachers throughout the

academic year 2007/08, and interviewing ten selected S1 students with parental consent, the study will enhance our understanding of the development of the South Asian adolescents.

I would be grateful to answer your questions and discuss further with you at your earliest convenience should you have any query. My contact numbers are 2788 xxxx or 9081 xxxx.

Thank you for your kind attention. Looking forward to receiving your favourable reply.

Yours sincerely,

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Mr. Wun King Fung, Keith  
Research student  
Department of Applied Social Studies  
City University of Hong Kong

### Appendix 3 Notes for school coordinator

*Re: A Study on the Positive Development of South Asian adolescent in Hong Kong*

- Target:** Secondary 1 South Asian students
- Study areas:** Find out the key factors that:
- a. Help them adapt to the life in Hong Kong,
  - b. Integrate in the local community, and
  - c. Cultivate resilience through participating in P.A.T.H.S.
- Data collection:**
- a. Participant observations
    - Participating in S1 P.A.T.H.S. lessons around once a month, in one constant class, with the consent from the teachers (*Will check the time with social worker and send you the schedule later on*)
    - The major purpose is to observe the process of the class, but **NOT** the performance of teachers
  - b. Qualitative interviewing
    - Interviewing 10 selected S1 South Asian students with parental consent (*the consent form is prepared and needed teacher help to distribute and collect in S1 classes, the researcher will then select 10 students from the returned forms and pass the name list to school*)
    - The 10 students will be interviewed three times each (Researcher could contact the students and parents by his own after getting the parental consent)
- Researcher:** Mr. Wun King Fung, Keith (Tel: 2788 xxxx / 9081 xxxx)  
 Research student  
 Department of Applied Social Studies  
 City University of Hong Kong
- Supervisor:** Dr. Lee Tak Yan  
 Associate Professor

**Appendix 4** Information of students joining in-depth interviews

<i>Student name</i>	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F
<i>Country of origin</i>	Nepal	Pakistan	Nepal	Pakistan	Pakistan	Sudan
<i>Gender</i>	M	M	M	F	F	F
<i>Age(during 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview)</i>	13	13	13	13	13	12
<i>School</i>	School C	School A	School A	School A	School A	School A
<i>Born in H.K.</i>	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
<i>Years living in H.K.</i>	7	13	1	13	13	7
<i>Home district</i>	Yuen Long	To Kwa Wan	Western District	Kam Tin	Tseung Kwan O	Causeway Bay
<i>Housing type</i>	Village housing	Public housing	Private rental housing	Public housing	Public housing	Private rental housing
<i>Cantonese</i>	Poor	Poor	Totally not understand	Good	Excellent	Poor
<i>Date of 1<sup>st</sup> Interview</i>	Oct 07	Oct 07	Nov 07	Nov 07	Nov 07	Nov 07
<i>Place of 1<sup>st</sup> Interview</i>	His home	Park outside his home	His home	At school	At school	At school
<i>Date of 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview</i>	/	July 08	July 07	Jul 08	Jul 08	Jul 08
<i>Place of 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview</i>	Migrated to UK	Park outside his home	Restaurant nearby	At school	At school	At school

(Continue)

<i>Student name</i>	Student G	Student H	Student I	Student J	Student K	Student L
<i>Country of origin</i>	India	India	India	India	Pakistan	Nepal
<i>Gender</i>	F	F	F	M	F	M
<i>Age(during 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview)</i>	12	13	13	13	17	13
<i>School</i>	School C	School C	School C	School C	School A	School C
<i>Born in H.K.</i>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
<i>Years living in H.K.</i>	12	13	5	13	17	4
<i>Home district</i>	Yau Tong	Choi Hung	Tsim Sha Tsui	Jordan	Tseung Kwan O	Tai Wo Hau
<i>Housing type</i>	Public housing	Public housing	Private rental housing	Private rental housing	Public housing	Public housing
<i>Cantonese</i>	Excellent	Good	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
<i>Date of 1<sup>st</sup> Interview</i>	Nov 07	Nov 07	Nov 07	Nov 07	Nov 07	Dec 07
<i>Place of 1<sup>st</sup> Interview</i>	Her home	Outside school	Her home	His home	At school	His home
<i>Date of 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview</i>	Jul 08	/	Jul 08	Jul 08	Jul 08	Jul 08
<i>Place of 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview</i>	Her home	Unable to contact	Her home	His home	At school	His home

(Continue)



<i>Student name</i>	Student M	Student N	Student O	Student P	Student Q	Student R
<i>Country of origin</i>	Philippine	Local Chinese	Thailand	Philippine	Chinese (lived in Canada before)	Pakistan
<i>Gender</i>	M	M	F	F	M	F
<i>Age(during 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview)</i>	13	13	13	13	13	13
<i>School</i>	School B	School B	School C	School B	School B	School C
<i>Born in H.K.</i>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
<i>Years living in H.K.</i>	10	13	5	13	1	7
<i>Home district</i>	Mong Kok	Tseung Kwan O	Yuen Long	Pui O	Kwai Chung	Tong Chung
<i>Housing type</i>	Private rental housing	Public housing	Public housing	Village housing	Private rental housing	Public housing
<i>Cantonese</i>	Poor	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Poor
<i>Date of 1<sup>st</sup> Interview</i>	Dec 07	Dec 07	Dec 07	Feb 08	Feb 08	Feb 08
<i>Place of 1<sup>st</sup> Interview</i>	His home	His home	Her home	Her home	His home	Her home
<i>Date of 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview</i>	Jul 08	/	Aug 08	Jul 08	/	/
<i>Place of 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview</i>	His home	Unable to contact	Her home	A store beside her home	Unable to contact	Unable to contact

(Continue)

<i>Student name</i>	Student S	Student T	Student U	Student V
<i>Country of origin</i>	Philippine	Philippine	Nepal	Philippine
<i>Gender</i>	M	F	M	M
<i>Age(during 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview)</i>	13	17	13	13
<i>School</i>	School B	School C	School C	School B
<i>Born in H.K.</i>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Years living in H.K.</i>	1	13	13	10
<i>Home district</i>	Sham Shui Po	Tong Chung	Wan Chai	Wan Chai
<i>Housing type</i>	Private rental housing	Public housing	Private rental housing	Private rental housing
<i>Cantonese</i>	Poor	Poor	Excellent	Poor
<i>Date of 1<sup>st</sup> Interview</i>	March 08	March 08	/	/
<i>Place of 1<sup>st</sup> Interview</i>	His home	At school	/	/
<i>Date of 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview</i>	/	Jul 08	Jul 08	Jul 08
<i>Place of 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview</i>	Unable to contact	At school	At school	At school

## Appendix 5 Summary of class observation

School	Date	No. of instructor	Unit observed	Unit aim:	Learning Targets	Fidelity		
						Program	Content	Overall
A	04/10/2007	2	<b>SE1.3 A Big Hand for ME!</b>	To enhance self-efficacy by helping students understand the feelings and intentions behind parents' discouraging words	1. To understand parental expectations and strengthen parent-child relationships 2. To enhance self-efficacy through self-affirmation	90%	50%	70%
			<b>SE1.4 Doing it a SMART Way</b>	To experience feelings of self-efficacy through goal attainment	1. To set feasible goals 2. To understand that it is necessary to adjust goals to one's abilities	75%	50%	62.5%
A	08/11/2007	2	<b>PN1.1 Rules Rule: Everyone Has to Get a Clue</b>	To guide students to define social norms, to distinguish behavioral rules in daily life (in the family and at school), and to understand the moral rules in interpersonal relationships	1. To enhance students' understanding of social norms, the importance of complying with rules and the reasons for observing social norms 2. To enhance students' recognition that, as well as obeying the law, they have to pay attention to and follow certain behavioral rules in their daily lives	50%	90%	70%
			<b>PN1.2 When in Rome, Do as the Romans Do</b>	To teach students to define what prosocial norms are, to identify customs and traditional practices of different societies, and to understand the dos and don'ts of interpersonal relationships	To enhance students' understanding of the consequences of infringing local customs in a foreign society	50%	95%	72.5%
A	10/01/2008	2	<b>ID1.1 If I Were the Boss</b>	To understand the importance of norms in the classroom and the family, and to develop a sense of security and bonding towards school and the family; and to encourage students to respect and comply with rules in different social settings	1. To understand the process of, and to anticipate obstacles in the process of, setting up rules 2. To understand the importance of complying with rules	100%	100%	100%
			<b>ID1.2 Know Yourself, Know Others</b>	To enhance students' understanding of themselves, their family and the people around them, and encourage students to realize that their character can be shaped by the people around them	1. To understand one's character 2. To understand that people who are important and close to you can influence the development of your character	100%	100%	100%
A	21/02/2008	2	<b>SP1.1 My Favourite?</b>	To facilitate students to think about their life priorities	To reflect on materialistic values and to weaken them	100%	100%	100%
			<b>SP1.2 Under the Same Roof</b>	To develop a passionate attitude toward nature	1. To reflect on our relationship with nature 2. To appreciate the beauty of nature	80%	100%	90%
A	27/03	1	<b>SD1.3 The Dream Train</b>	To enhance students' competence in	To master skills in goal setting and goal	50%	50%	50%

	/2008			self-determination by setting optimal and feasible goals	adjustment			
			<b>MC1.1 Who Should Board First?</b>	To enable students to understand the meaning of fairness and encourage them to maintain fairness in daily life	1. To understand the importance of co-operation in maintaining fairness 2. To understand the moral issues in maintaining fairness in our society	100%	100%	100%
A	17/04 /2008	2	<b>Conclusion Session</b> (Double lesson)	To let students reflect on the main points of the curriculum, evaluate their performance and see whether they have grown	/	100%	100%	100%
B	15/11/ 2007	2	<b>BC1.1 Good for Me?</b> (Double lesson)	To help students identify two different types of criticism, and encourage them to use constructive criticism	1. To differentiate constructive criticism from destructive criticism 2. To understand the drawbacks of using destructive criticism 3. To learn skills for making constructive criticism	20%	80%	50%
B	13/12 /2007	2	<b>SE1.4 Doing It the SMART way</b> (Double lesson)	To experience feelings of self-efficacy through goal attainment	1. To set feasible goals 2. To understand that it is necessary to adjust goals to one's abilities	20%	30%	25%
B	21/01 /2008	2	<b>PN1.1 Rules Rule: Everyone Has to Get a Clue</b>	To guide students to define social norms, to distinguish behavioral rules in daily life (in family and at school), and to understand the moral rules in interpersonal relationships	1. To enhance students' understanding of social norms, the importance of complying with rules and the reasons for observing social norms 2. To enhance students' recognition that, as well as obeying the law, they have to pay attention to and follow certain behavioral rules in their daily lives	20%	20%	20%
			<b>PN1.2 When in Rome, Do as the Romans Do</b>	To teach students to define what prosocial norms are, to identify customs and traditional practices of different societies, and to understand the dos and don'ts of interpersonal relationships	To enhance students' understanding of the consequences of infringing local customs in a foreign society	100%	100%	100%
B	18/02 /2008	1	<b>RE1.2 The Missing Wallet</b> (Double lesson)	To analyze problems from multiple perspectives and look for different solutions to strengthening their resilience	1. To practice the skill of "seeing into the core of the matter through creative thinking" 2. To explore different problem solving strategies	0%	10%	5%
B	17/03 /2008	2	<b>SP1.1 My Favourite?</b>	To facilitate students to think about their life priorities	To reflect on materialistic values and to weaken them	100%	100%	100%

			<b>SP1.2 Under the Same Roof</b>	To develop a passionate attitude toward nature	1. To reflect on our relationship with nature 2. To appreciate the beauty of nature	70%	60%	65%
B	24/04/2008	2	<b>ID1.3 Proud of Myself</b> (Double lesson)	To help students recognize their qualities and admire themselves	1. To help students discover their qualities 2. To help students grasp how to discover their qualities by various methods and from different points of view	100%	100%	100%
B	30/05/2008	2	<b>Conclusion Session</b>	To let students reflect on the main points of the curriculum, evaluate their performance and see whether they have grown	/	100%	100%	100%
C	03/10/2007	4	<b>Tier 2 day camp integrated into formal lesson</b>	/	/	/	/	/
C	28/11/2007	2	<b>BO1.3 Looking for Friends at the Crossroads</b> (Double lesson)	1. To show students how to recognize desirable friends from undesirable ones and encourage them to choose the right friends and establish a healthy relationship 2. To show students the required skills to resist temptation	1. To identify the determinants for desirable and undesirable friends 2. To practice refusal principles and skills	100%	100%	100%
C	12/12/2007	2	<b>SC1.1 China and Me A</b>	To get students acquainted with China and enable them to develop a national identity	1. To familiarize students with the National Anthem of the People's Republic of China 2. To develop a positive Chinese identity	80%	80%	80%
			<b>SC1.2 Brighten Up Hong Kong A</b>	To get students acquainted with Hong Kong and enable them to develop a positive Hong Kong identity	1. To familiarize students with the Regional Flag of the HKSAR and National Flag of the People's Republic of China 2. To develop a positive Hong Kong identity	80%	50%	65%
C	30/01/2008	2	<b>CC1.1 The Brain: Human Software</b>	To help students differentiate rational, creative and critical thinking, and to understand the importance of self-reflection	1. To think rationally, creatively and critically 2. To identify the basic concepts and the importance of self-reflection	95%	100%	97.5%
C	27/02/2008	4	<b>Tier 2 activity integrated into formal lesson</b>	/	/	/	/	/
C	19/03/2008	5	<b>Tier 2 activity integrated into formal lesson</b>	/	/	/	/	/

C	30/04 /2008	2	<b>MC1.2 On the Same Bus</b> (Double lesson)	To help students understand the importance social conscience, and encourage them to behave themselves and be considerate in public places	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To distinguish between proper and improper behaviors</li> <li>2. To understand the importance of being self-disciplined and considerate in public places</li> </ol>	100%	80%	90%
C	28/05 /2008	1	<b>SE1.4 Doing it the SMART way</b> (Double lesson)	To experience feelings of self-efficacy through goal attainment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To set feasible goals</li> <li>2. To understand that it is necessary to adjust goals</li> </ol>	100%	100%	100%

## Appendix 6 Guidelines for class observation

Unit(s) observed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Duration of lesson: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of student: \_\_\_\_ (Male) \_\_\_\_ (Female)

### A. Program:

Is the unit designed appropriately for S1 students? Why?

Is the unit designed appropriately for S1 non-Chinese students? Why?

Is the unit interesting / boring to the students? Why?

Are the methods interesting / boring to the students?

Are the teaching materials and method interested / bored the students? Why?

How well are the program and content fidelity in general?

### B. Process

How interactive is the teaching method?

How do students respond to different teaching method?

How is the learning atmosphere?

Are there any norms and rules in the class?

### C. People

*Instructors' factors:*

Do/does the instructor(s) demonstrate an enthusiastic and positive attitude towards students? How is it?

How is the instructor(s)'s personal characteristic?

How well do the instructor(s) know about the topic?

What personal characteristics do / does the instructor(s) demonstrate?

How is the cooperation of instructors (if it is co-teaching)?

Can instructor(s) control the class well?

*Students' factors:*

How do students respond to different teaching methods?

How do students respond to the topic?

How do students interact among themselves during lesson?

How do students interact with instructors?

### Others:

Floor plan (if necessary):

(Program fidelity: \_\_\_\_ / 100% + Content fidelity: \_\_\_\_ / 100%) / 2

= Overall fidelity: \_\_\_\_ / 100%

**Appendix 7** Consent letter to parents

3 September 2007

Dear Sir / Madam,

*A Study on the Positive Development of South Asian adolescents in Hong Kong*

A youth enhancement project called P.A.T.H.S. was carried out in 2005/06 in many secondary schools (including XXX School) in Hong Kong and many positive results among the students were found, for examples, improvements in peer relationships, communication skills, and self-esteem. The project was planned and carried out by scholars from five local universities, including City University of Hong Kong.

In order to know how and why the project can help South Asian adolescents in their positive development, social adaptation and cultural integration, a study will be conducted to find out the key factors that help your child grow positively through participating in this project.

As XXX School will join this project in the coming school year and your child will benefit from it, you are cordially invited to participate in this meaningful project by giving your kind consent to be interviewed together with your child in the coming school year by the researcher, Mr. Keith K.F. Wun who is under the supervision of Dr. T.Y Lee, Associate Professor, Department of Applied social Studies, City University of Hong Kong. Your consent and participation will certainly increase our understanding of the growth of the South Asian adolescents in Hong Kong.

Once received your consent, your child and you may have a chance to be jointly interviewed for three times in the coming school year.

Please kindly return the reply slip to the teacher before 21 September 2007. Should you have any query, you can contact Mr. Keith Wun at 2788 xxxx.

Best wishes,

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Mr. Wun King Fung, Keith  
Researcher

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Dr. Lee Tak Yan  
Associate Professor

(Continue)



**Reply Slip**  
**Parent's Consent to take part in the Study**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent's full name) agree / disagree  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (Student's full name) to take part in the  
 study (**A Study on the Positive Development of South Asian adolescent in Hong Kong**).  
 And I understand that if my son / daughter takes part in the study:

- S/he may have a chance to be selected for conducting at least 3 formal interviews with my presence and with some short interviews in the school in the coming school year.
- The interviews will be audio-recorded and kept confidential.
- The interviews will be transcribed and analyzed for research purpose, with the interviewees' identity being kept anonymous at all times.
- We have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, say during an interview, whenever I myself and / or my son / daughter find the experience discomforting. And I myself and / or my son / daughter have the right to require the researcher to remove part or all of the interview data after studying the texts transcribed from the interviews.
- The interview date, time and place will be scheduled at my convenience.

Parent's full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship with student: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's full name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Class no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Country of origin: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 8 Guidelines for in-depth interview

### 1. Background information

- Where do you come from?
- Are you born in Hong Kong? How long do you live here?
- How is your language proficiency (in English, Chinese and your own language)?
- Where did you study in primary school? How was the school life there?
- How many family members do you have? What do they do?
- Do you have any Chinese friends? If you have, how do you know them?

### 2. Comments on youth development program

- What is your general impression of the program?
- Which topic of the program you remember most? Why?
- Which topic do you like most? Why?
- Which areas of the program are not good? Why?
- What do you expect for a youth development program?

### 3. Comments on the process

- Any unforgettable experience during the process? Why?
- Which teaching method do you like most? Why?
- How is the learning atmosphere during the lessons? Is it good or bad?
- Why did you have such response (*during class observation*) during the lesson?

### 4. Comments on the people involved

- What do you think about the instructors generally?
- What do you think about the interaction between instructors and students?
- What is a 'good' instructor in your mind? Why?
- Anything about the instructors that is not good from your point of view?
- How do you think about the students' interaction generally?
- (For School B) How is your interaction with Chinese students in the class?
- Do you enjoy during group discussion? Why?

### 5. Comments on self participation

- How do you think about your participation during the program?
- Do you see any changes after the program? Why?
- Have you applied the things you learned from Project P.A.T.H.S. in daily life?

### Others:

Can you use one descriptor to conclude your overall impression of the program?