THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF
SUBVENTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
HONG KONG:
A PUBLIC MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

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Vivien Fong

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation seeks to examine from the perspective of public management whether or not the subvented secondary schools in Hong Kong are subject to a regime of accountability under four fundamental documents binding on them. The School Sponsoring Body Service Agreement, the Education Ordinance, the Education Regulations and the Code of Aid for Secondary Schools are studied and analysed against a taxonomy of seven major types of accountability in public management.

The study indicates that the regime of accountability for subvented secondary schools in Hong Kong is unbalanced, emphasising legal accountability and managerial accountability while slighting public accountability, professional accountability, moral accountability and personal accountability; constrained by political reality, political accountability is only partially provided for. While there are mechanisms for check and control, the criteria for performance assessment are not always sufficiently defined. The absence of rewards in the regime poses obstacles in enforcement, and the sanctions stipulated are not entirely fair and effective.

It is concluded that although there exists a system of accountability for the subvented secondary schools in Hong Kong,
improvements are necessary to make it more balanced, effective and fair.
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