University-based affective education programs for primary and secondary school gifted students in Hong Kong: Impacts on their personal-social development

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Background

- Hong Kong Situation:
  - Knowledge-based curricula and examination-oriented atmosphere
  - Not sufficient support for students’ self-development
    - learning in school with materials or things to do demand so little of their of multiple intelligences, and wide spectrum of capabilities & talents
    - what they learn from school makes little sense to what they know in reality (Tung, 2001)
Background

- Hong Kong Situation:
  - **Support service for gifted students**
    - 1990: Initiated the development and implementation of gifted education in Hong Kong *(Education Commission, 1990)*
    - 2000: put forth a *3-tier implementation framework* for gifted education provision in Hong Kong *(Education Department, 2000)*
    - Most are enrichment and accelerated programs for enhancing intellectual development, but fewer programs for socio-emotional development
    - Such imbalance might have far-reaching effect, especially given that highly able/gifted students exhibit intensive emotions and behaviors
Background

- Characteristics of gifted students
  - perfectionism (Chan & Chan, 2010)
  - may exist difficulties in emotion or interpersonal issues (e.g., Silverman, 1993; Chan, 2003)
  - highly sensual, imaginative, and emotional sensitive
  - high sensitivity to moral thinking and empathy
  - concerned with justice, fairness
  - tend to question authority
Affective Education – Diverse Definition

- emphasize on promoting positive self-concepts (Lang, Best, & Lichtenberg, 1994)

- as “the educational process involving the emotional aspects of student learning, embedded with humanistic values or ‘psychological conditions’ … (Patterson, 1997, p.324)

- emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995)

- cultural and spiritual development (Wicks, Parsons, & Capps, 1993)
Affective Education – Diverse Definition

“… defined as the aspect of the educational process that is concerned with the feelings, values, beliefs, attitudes and emotional well-being of learners…… The ‘affective education’ of students depends on simultaneous attention being granted to the educational process (e.g., relations between students and between students and teachers, classroom and school climate) and to the product (e.g., students’ skills, dispositions and behaviors).

(Puurula, et al., 2001)
University-based affective education programs
by
Program for the Gifted & Talented (PGT)
Who we are?

- Under the Faculty of Education, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- Established since 1995
- Promoting gifted education and talent development in HK
- Specially designed out-of-school programs and services for local gifted and talented students
Our Services

- Direct Services for Gifted and Talented Students
- Research and Resource Development
- Services for Schools, Teachers and Parents
Program for Gifted and Talented (PGT)

Areas of Work

Direct Services for Gifted Students
- Regular Enrichment Courses (Spring, Summer and Winter Programs)
- Leadership Training Programs
- Gifted Peer Mentoring Scheme
- Experience Sharing Series by the Gifted
- Meeting and Sharing with Distinguished Persons
- Overseas Gifted Exchange Programs (e.g., HKSP, NSI)
- Other Learning Opportunities in other units of CUHK
- Others (e.g., include Thematic Talks, Individual Counseling, Service-Learning, etc.)

Research & Resource Development
- Research Studies on Giftedness and Gifted Education
- Development of Gifted Curriculum & Reference Materials
- Local & International Collaboration

Professional Services for Teachers & Parents
- Training Activities for Parents & Teachers
- Support Networks for Parents (include sharing & Discursion Groups)
- Consultation & Counseling Services for Parents
- Professional Support and Consultation for Schools & Teachers
Our Students

• Gifted and talented pool of 4,500 students
• Primary 3 to Secondary 6
• from 562 schools
• Nomination by schools and self-application from parents and students
• Gained admission to PGT after the stringent assessment and selection process
Affection Education by PGT: Principle & Approach

- **PGT’s vision and aims**: helping gifted and talented students develop their potential, facilitate their whole-person development and positive well-being
- Considering gifted students’ special characteristics and needs (in different developmental stages)
- Addressing concerns from students, parents and society
- Adopting *reaction, prevention and enhancement* models
- Implementing through *actively promotion* with specific AE courses/programs, *infusion* in academic subjects and cross-curricular, and an *incidental* consequence of other initiatives/activities/programs
Affection Education by PGT: Implementation

- **Comprehensive** forms and activities operated at different levels

- **Individual Student Level**: student’s self-understanding, emotional regulation, intra-personal and inter-personal skills, career education and life planning

- **Group/Class Level**: students’ group work, nature and quality of interaction within the groups including interaction with teaching assistants and instructors (infusing AE into academic courses)

- **PGT / University Level**: supportive climate, guidance and support services to students, various AE related service learning programs
Affection Education by PGT: Program Evaluation

- Conducting **formative** and **summative** evaluations (both **quantitative** and **qualitative**)

- Data collected
  - by different methods
  - at multiple stages: pre-, during, and post-programs
  - from different sources (students, peers, teaching assistants, instructors, parents)

- Different psychological variables were examined
## Evaluation of AE Courses and Programs

### Method – Data Collection

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<tr>
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<th>Pre-Experience</th>
<th>During the Program &amp; Post-Event</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Method</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Pre-program reflection</td>
<td>• Study journal</td>
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<td>• Questionnaire survey</td>
<td>• Self-reflection and feedback from peers</td>
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<td>• Questionnaire survey</td>
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<td>• Focus group interviews</td>
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<td><strong>Areas covered</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Expectations and concerns</td>
<td>• Changes of attitude, beliefs, and value shift</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Perceptions of D/S and G/T</td>
<td>• Learning &amp; development</td>
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<td>• Service-learning experience</td>
<td>• Goals achieved (personal and organizational)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sources</strong></td>
<td>• Students</td>
<td>• Students</td>
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<td>• Gifted peers (teaching assistant)</td>
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<td>• Instructors / Parents</td>
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Evaluation of AE Courses and Programs

- **Method – Analysis**
  - Descriptive quantitate analysis
  - Thematic content analysis
    - Reflection and study journals
    - Focus group interview: from perspectives of students and parents

- **Coding**
  - Open coding (extensive review of the transcripts with an aim to search general constructs and themes)
  - Selective coding (identified core variables and relationships)
  - Reviewed by different researchers (inter-coder reliability)
Evaluation of AE Courses and Programs

- **Results** - Selected findings from Reflection & Study Journals

  ✓ Attitude change towards to the serving target, gifted peers, and oneself

  - Pre-experience (D/S)
  - Pre-experience (G/T)
  - Post-experience
  - Post-experience
Evaluation of AE Courses and Programs

- **Results** - Selected findings from Reflection & Study Journals

  ✓ **Developing positive relations with others**
    
    ➢ More tolerance and communicate with others

    ➢ Listening to others’ opinions and caring for others’ feeling

    ➢ Enhancing interpersonal skills, and understanding the characteristics of children with DS
Evaluation of AE Courses and Programs

Results - Selected findings from Reflection & Study Journals

✓ Personal growth

- Self-understanding (weaknesses) and seeking improvement on behaviors
Evaluation of AE Courses and Programs

- **Results** - Selected findings from Parent Focus Group Interview

- **Interpersonal Skills**
  - 可能唔係佢都喺，係係適用
  - 既方法同個同學溝通。另一個同學唔同性格呢佢又會呢種方法同佢溝通。

- **Sharing with Others**
  - 唔佢會唔係意同其他分享，譬如一啲食物、文具啦，或者係有啲資源同訊息啦。

- **Self-understanding & Improvement**
  - 小朋友都有認識自己...
  - 唔佢黎到呢到都會覺得有其他小朋友叻過佢，唔佢自己都慢慢同我講
  - 有同我分享下可以點樣去進步啲。

- **Less Emotional**
  - 比如話兩個同學都係好朋
  - 友但係呢兩個人嗌左交，唔佢應該點做呢，唔佢就變左好似比較理性啲去問
  - 我呢個問題，唔講返出黎。

- **Cooperation and Leadership**
  - 而家係反而自覺左既，以前合作係
  - 人地帶佢，而家反而係佢去帶人。

- **Improvement on Interpersonal Relationship**
  - 佢真係同啲朋友好左好多嘅，同啲同學，呅我見到呢個改善左。
Discussion

- Comprehensive forms of affective education programs and activities at different levels are important to gifted and talented students.

- Emphasizing on non-cognitive aspects of students’ development and its interrelation with the cognitive dimension.

- Peer mentoring and service-learning as the effective forms of affective education for the gifted and talented.

- Sharing series by the gifted alumni helped and gave insights for the gifted youth plan their future study and career paths.
Discussion

- **Impacts:** Cognitive and affective components caused attitude and personal changes & development in students’ learning and life
  - Positive psychosocial development, and enhancing psychological well-being (especially on positive relations with others & personal growth)
  - Positive attitudes, motivation, willingness to participate, & values learned can be incorporated into real life
  - Positive impact on cognitive functioning, enhancing and sustaining the process of learning
Reference


Education Department (2000). The development of gifted education in Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Government.


To learn more about our work, please visit websites of:

- Program for the Gifted and Talented 資優計劃 (www.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/pgt)

- Jockey Club “Giftedness Into Flourishing Talents” Project 賽馬會「知優致優」計劃 (www.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/gift)

Thank You!
Q & A
3-tier GE implementation framework in Hong Kong

Level 1: Whole-class (School-based)
- General enrichment
- Specific Domains/Subject enrichment

Level 2: Pull–out (School-based)
- General enrichment
- Specific domains/Subject enrichment and acceleration

Level 3: Off-site Support
- Enrichment and extension learning for Exceptionally Gifted

Note: Level 3 – Out of school gifted programs and support services offered by Universities and Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education.
Individual Student Level

- **AE courses**: “Growing up gifted – getting ready for the challenges”, “Film and life”, “Learning from positive psychology”, etc.

- **Sharing series** by the gifted and distinguished persons

- **Career development and life planning activities**: addressing career development needs of gifted students and help them plan their future study and career paths
Group/Class Level

- **AE Programs:** “Self-development and Leadership Training Camp”, “Be a Gifted Leader”, etc.

- Infused AE into various courses
Affective Education infusion into Regular Enrichment Courses

Languages
(e.g., Latin, English, Chinese including Putonghua…)

Mathematics

Communication skills
(e.g., public speaking, story telling, debate training…)

Visual and performing arts
(e.g., digital arts, drawing and painting, music, talent shows…)

Sciences
General, biological and medical sciences (including Chinese Medicine)

Creativity and thinking skills training

Social sciences
(e.g., philosophy, economics, geography, psychology, journalism and communication…)

Primary 3 to Secondary 6
In various domains
PGT / University Level

- Cultivating a **caring atmosphere** with **counselling services**
- Peer Mentoring Scheme, alumni as PGT teaching assistants, annual gatherings to foster a **supportive network/culture** & a sense of belonging
- **Service-learning**: Social services for gifted students to better understand themselves and those in need, and use their talents and abilities to serve others and society