

Cultural and Arts Education Policies in Hong Kong:

Two Wings of the Same Bird?

by

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Abstract

Hong Kong has publicly declared its intention, via its cultural policy, of becoming an international cultural metropolis. This has been matched, on the part of its educational reforms, by a commitment aimed at ensuring that students are fully prepared to meet the multifarious work and life challenges of the future. Forming a potential bridge between the two sectors is arts education, formally recognised as fostering the necessary skills of appreciation, creativity and expression and of enriching the cultural literacy of individuals and society, thereby providing the soil, nutrition and impetus for cultural development. This study adopted the analogy of cultural policy and arts education policy as the two wings of the same bird which, when working in unison, have the power to yield rewards at both a sectoral and at a stakeholder level through the occurrence of mutually-beneficial synergies, in order to investigate the degree to which this was presently taking place. Via an ecological research perspective characterised by a focus on the layers of interconnectedness and interrelatedness among the various stakeholders within and across Hong Kong's cultural and arts education sectors, the methodology drew on the salient features of both the "ecological worldview" and the "interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary" types to more fully understand perceptions as they related to the policies' fundamental elements of "conceptualisation", "communication" and "operationalisation". As a means of answering the three research questions guiding the study, the data gathering and analysis stage was concerned with the collection of the relevant policy documentation, an online cultural and arts education policy questionnaire, and a series of semi-structured, in-depth interviews. The findings revealed that while evidence exists of a variety of intra- and inter-sectoral partnerships, this is not being matched by a strategic vision at a policymaking level that clearly demonstrates how such collaborations might lead to a fully developed, manageable and sustainable ecology.

Keywords: cultural policy, arts education policy, synergies, ecological research, sustainability

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List of Abbreviations

AAT	Academic Aptitude Test
AES	Arts Experience Scheme for Senior Secondary Students
AFTEC	The Absolutely Fabulous Theatre Connection
AL	Advanced Level
ARI	Art Research Integration
ASL	Advanced Supplementary Level
CCA	Department of Cultural and Creative Arts
CCI	Cultural and Creative Industries
CDC	Curriculum Development Committee
CDI	Curriculum Development Institute
CEG	Capacity Enhancement Grant
CFPA	Council for the Performing Arts
CHC	Culture and Heritage Commission
ckv	culturele en kunstzinnige vorming (Cultural and Artistic Education)
CMI	Chinese as the Medium of Instruction
EC	Education Commission
EDB	Education Bureau
EMB	Education and Manpower Bureau
EMI	English as the Medium of Instruction
ESF	English Schools Foundation
FCP	Fonds voor Cultuurparticipatie (Cultural Participation Fund)
GRIN	Genetics, Robotics, Information technology and Nanotechnology
HAB	Home Affairs Bureau

HKADC	Hong Kong Arts Development Council
HKALE	Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination
HKAPA	Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts
HKCDC	Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council
HKCEE	Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination
HKDSE	Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education
HKIED	The Hong Kong Institute of Education
HKSAR	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
IB	International Baccalaureate
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
IT	Information Technology
KLA	Key Learning Area
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LCSD	Leisure and Cultural Services Department
OCW	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
OKW	Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences
OLE	Other Learning Experiences
PRD	Pearl River Delta
QEF	Quality Education Fund
SAAS	School Arts Animateur Scheme
SCDS	School Culture Day Scheme
TDR	Transdisciplinary Research
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States

WKCD	West Kowloon Cultural District
WKCDA	West Kowloon Cultural District Authority

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Chapter One: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Hong Kong has publicly declared, via its cultural policy, its intention of becoming an international cultural metropolis (Home Affairs Bureau, 2008). Attempting to balance the benefits that different cultures can bring to bear on society on the one hand with the recognisance that investment in the cultural and creative industries is a necessary undertaking in order to meet the city's economic requirements on the other, the ultimate aspiration is to achieve "world city" status (Kong, Gibson, Khoo, & Semple, 2006). As perhaps the most cogent crystallisation of this vision, the integrated arts and culture hub constituted by the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) is expected to provide Hong Kong with entry, initially, to the Pearl River Delta (PRD); beyond that, China and the rest of the globe are the anticipated prizes.

At the same time, in order that the workforce is fully prepared to meet the challenges of the future, sweeping reforms have resulted in the wholesale redrawing of the educational map. Now in their third, post-2011 long-term phase, the size and scale of these revisions is unrivalled (Cheng, 2000; Mok, & Chan, 2002; Mok, 2003b; Poon & Wong, 2004). Success of the entire venture has been pinned on the simultaneous promotion of multicultural education, global thinking and life-long learning; at the same time, on the assumption that students will find study more rewarding without the hurdles represented by public examinations (Poon & Wong, 2008), the main policy documents have, as their desired aim, the elevation of the principles of equality and equity.

Within this context, and targeted as having a key role to play in effecting a successful transformation, arts education has been singled out for its ability to bring about quality

education within the formal curriculum (Hong Kong Arts Development Council, 1999), and of nurturing the desired, “generic skill” of creativity. Similarly, the provision of opportunities, leading to greater participation in culture and the arts, is one of the stated objectives of Hong Kong’s cultural policy (Home Affairs Bureau, 2008).

1.2 Hong Kong’s cultural policy context

As a former British colony and evolving metropolitan city that houses seven million people, Hong Kong is characterised by the cosmopolitan nature of its society, its dynamic and entrepreneurial economy, and the effectiveness and efficiency of its business dealings. At the same time, a “juxtaposition of contradictions” collectively serve to contribute to its artistic and cultural vibrancy, in which Chinese traditions and heritage and a Western colonial history coexist with contemporary cultural expressions (Leong, 2013).

Hong Kong’s future is situated firmly in an ever-developing region that also encompasses Macau and Guangdong. This tripartite Pearl River Delta (PRD) region has been targeted by the central government as a test-case for vigorous economic development, cooperation and interaction, with investment being expected to yield dividends – via a combination of global competitiveness and prosperity through partnerships – by as soon as 2020. It is against this backdrop that Hong Kong’s cultural development, from the oft-cited cliché of the city as a “desert” or “wilderness” to the more recent attention given to its arts and unique cultural heritage, needs to be viewed. From as far back as 1998, the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) have been recognised as an important growth area as the city aims to shed its image as one economically dependent upon the four industrial pillars of trading and logistics, financial services, producer and professional services, and tourism. With an annual allocation of US\$350 million for the arts and culture, along with an extra US\$62 million over five years

from 2010/11 for support, training and promotion, the arts and cultural scene has thrived. Adding and contributing to the mix are Hong Kong's geographical benefits (especially its proximity to mainland China), its respect for freedom of speech and artistic expression, the fusion of Western and Chinese influences, and its business-friendly policies. Traditional and local cultures are also valued, combining to form Hong Kong's Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). These include religious rituals, cultural festivals and examples of unique artistic identity, of which Cantonese Opera is perhaps the most significant.

1.2.1 Hong Kong's cultural policy

Arts and cultural matters within Hong Kong come under the auspices of the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB), which in turn oversees the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC). A network of 20 advisory committees provides support across a number of different areas, including Arts Development and ICH. The LCSD organises artistic and cultural activities and manages a number of cultural facilities, including performance venues and museums. It also serves as Hong Kong's main cultural programme presenter, supporting smaller groups through venue rental subsidies and providing them with performance opportunities. For its part, the HKADC is a statutory body established to plan, promote and support the broad development of the arts, its main roles including grant allocation, advocacy, promotion and development, and programme planning. It also works to foster a thriving arts environment and enhance the quality of life among the public, facilitate community-wide participation in the arts and arts education, encourage arts criticism, and raise the standard of arts administration.

Hong Kong's cultural policy (Figure 1.1) is essentially the re-statement of a set of proposals made originally by an advisory body, the Culture and Heritage Commission (CHC), via a

Figure 1.1 Hong Kong's Cultural Policy

Vision

Hong Kong becomes an international cultural metropolis with a distinct identity grounded in Chinese traditions and enriched by different cultures, where life is celebrated through cultural pursuit, and creativity is a constant driver of progress in the community.

Objectives

- To provide opportunities for wide participation in culture and arts
- To provide opportunities for those with potentials to develop their artistic talents
- To create an environment conducive to the diversified and balanced development of culture and the arts
- To support the preservation and promotion of our traditional cultures while encouraging artistic creation and innovation
- To develop Hong Kong into a prominent hub of cultural exchanges

Basic Principles

People-oriented: To encourage citizens to fulfill their needs for cultural pursuit and to realize their potential in the arts.

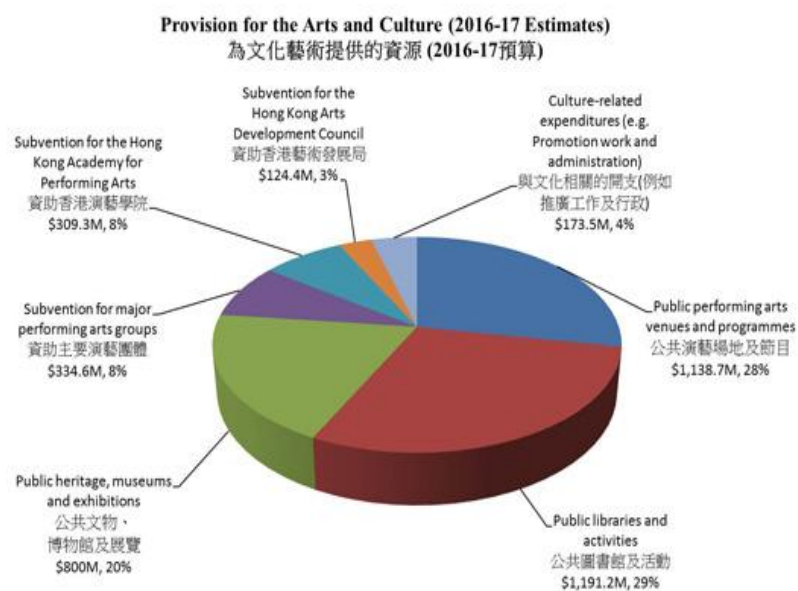
Diversity: To foster the vibrancy and diversity of our culture.

Freedom of expression: To maintain our artistic freedom and enhance the protection of intellectual property.

Holistic approach: To involve all sectors of the society in order to create an environment conducive to the vibrant development of culture and the arts. All government departments should work together to promote cultural development.

Partnership: To establish partnership among the Government, the business community and the cultural sector.

(http://www.hab.gov.hk/en/policy_responsibilities/arts_culture_recreation_and_sport/arts.htm)



Government Funding Support to Culture and the Arts



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Policy Recommendation Report in 2003. The central message – which the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (hereafter, HKSAR) endorsed – is the need to promote long-term cultural development, which should be “people-oriented”, “diverse” and “holistic”, and based on “freedom of expression” and “partnerships”. Importantly, its brevity – the publicly presented policy (http://www.hab.gov.hk/en/policy_responsibilities/arts_culture_recreation_and_sport/arts.htm) runs to less than 20 lines and is divided into an overarching ‘Vision’ of a creatively-driven utopia where identity and cultural pursuit are intertwined, supported by a series of five participation-encouraging and environmentally-favourable ‘Objectives’ and underpinned by the same number of ‘Basic Principles’ listed above – is intended to be based on democratic foundations, with the notion of *description* taking firm precedence over that of *prescription*.

1.3 Hong Kong’s arts education policy context

For its part, Hong Kong’s arts education (and its associated policy) is set within the wider context of the profound changes in education that the region has undergone since the 1997 handover (Ball, 1999; Hughes, 1999; Mok, 2003a). A reform of the entire system was carried out by the Education Commission of the HKSAR in 1999, resulting in a wholesale redrawing of the education map. Nothing, from the academic structure to the curriculum, from assessment methods to the medium of instruction, was left untouched. Now in the long-term phase, the two main policy documents concerned with the delivery of the new Hong Kong curriculum are *Learning for Life, Learning through Life – Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong* (Education Commission of Hong Kong, 2000) and *Learning to Learn – The Way Forward in Curriculum Development* (Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council, 2001). A fundamental element of Hong Kong’s educational reforms is the notion of whole person development. As a means of supporting and promoting such a transition, while simultaneously bringing about quality education within the formal

curriculum and nurturing in students the “generic skill” of creativity, the arts have been targeted by policymakers as having a hugely important role to play. Specifically, it is via the process of integrative learning, defined as an approach ‘that leads students to acquire a holistic understanding and deeper insights into what is being studied’ (Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council, 2002b: 61), that arts education is to be delivered.

1.3.1 Hong Kong’s arts education policy

Two bodies closely connected with Hong Kong’s Education Bureau (EDB) are involved, in different ways, with curriculum development. The Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council (HKCDC) is a free-standing advisory body given the responsibility of providing the Government of the HKSAR with recommendations on all matters relating to curriculum development for the local school system from kindergarten to sixth form. Within the EDB itself, the Curriculum Development Institute (CDI) is an individual discipline-specific body responsible for curriculum development and teacher training, along with learning and teaching materials at kindergarten, primary and secondary levels in Hong Kong. In addition to its arts and cultural mandate, the HKADC is tasked with taking a lead role in the promotion of arts education. To this end, its functions include developing and improving education in the arts with a view to raising the quality of life of the whole community, encouraging interest, understanding, knowledge and skill in the arts at all levels within the formal education system, and striving for the creation of an environment conducive to ensuring that those with the ability and desire to pursue a career in the arts have the opportunity to do so and receive tuition (HKADC, 1996). The LCSD is also responsible for providing quality performing arts services commensurate with Hong Kong’s development as a world-class city and events capital. As part of its overall mission to develop the arts and cultivate creativity, it is tasked with ‘providing more arts education programmes for schools and the community to foster creativity, and to raise, in particular, young people’s cultural

literacy’ (Committee on Performing Arts Recommendation Report (I), 2006: 8).

With arts education formally identified as one of five essential areas by the Education Commission in the overall aims of education, the official ‘Position’ of Hong Kong’s arts education policy is set out as follows:

‘To enable every person to attain all-round development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics according to his/her own attributes so that he/she is capable of life-long learning, critical and exploratory thinking, innovating and adapting to change.’

<http://www.edb.gov.hk/mobile/en/curriculum-development/kla/arts-edu/index.html>

As the entitlement of every student, and with the intention of enabling them ‘to broaden and diversify their arts learning experiences through different channels’ (HKCDC, 2002b: 52), the four aims of the arts curriculum are therefore: to develop creativity and critical thinking, nurture aesthetic sensitivity, and build up cultural awareness and effective communication; develop skills, knowledge and positive values and attitudes in the arts; gain delight, enjoyment and satisfaction through participating in arts-making activities, and; pursue a life-long interest in the arts (Figure 1.2).



Figure 1.2 Hong Kong's Arts Education Policy

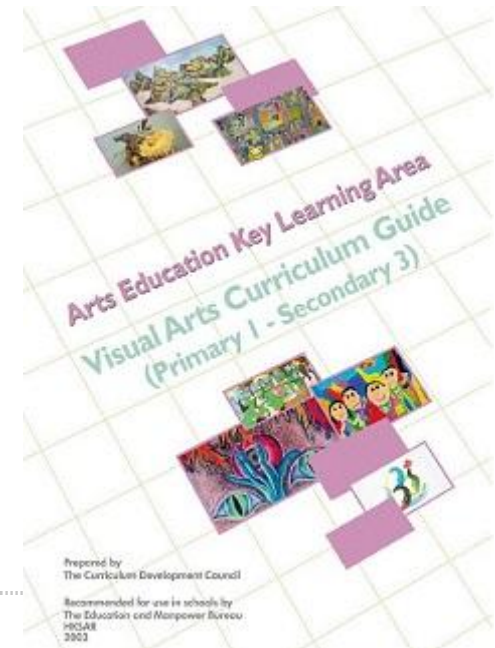
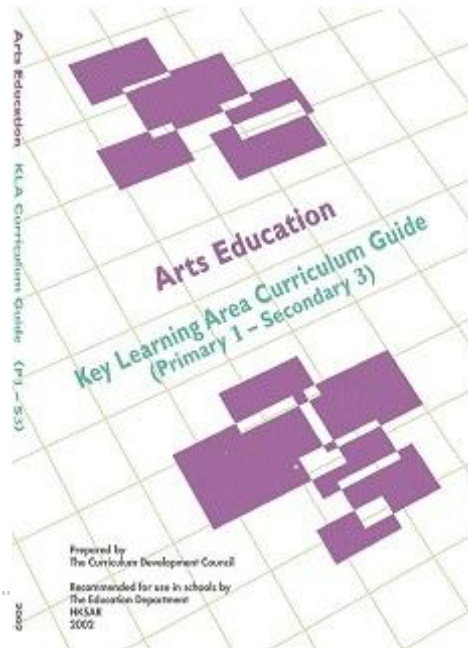
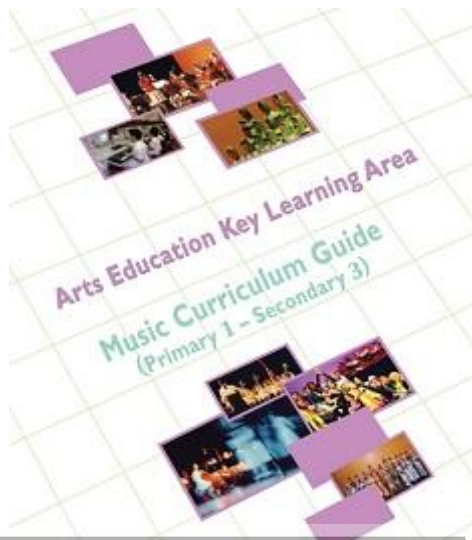
Position

Schools need to develop a balanced school curriculum so as to provide an all-round education for their students. Arts education is one of the five essential areas in the overall aim of education set out by the Education Commission: "To enable every person to attain an all-round development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics according to his/her own attributes so that he/she is capable of life-long learning, critical and exploratory thinking, innovating and adapting to change.

Overall Aims of Arts Curriculum

- To develop creativity and critical thinking, nurture aesthetic sensitivity, and build up cultural awareness and effective communication.
- To develop skills, knowledge and positive values and attitudes in the arts.
- To gain delight, enjoyment and satisfaction through participating in arts-making activities.
- To pursue a life-long interest in the arts.

(<http://www.edb.gov.hk/mobile/en/curriculum-development/kla/arts-edu/index.html>)



The overarching policy document is the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (HKCDC, 2002b), which is supported by discipline-specific guides in the form of the *Music Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (HKCDC, 2003a) and the *Visual Arts Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (HKCDC, 2003b). While elaborating on the aims of teaching interdisciplinary arts, both guides only suggest possibilities for implementing such an arts curriculum, as opposed to stating a mandatory integration policy. Importantly, responsibility for curriculum implementation falls on school administrators and teachers, who are expected to work out the details for their individual schools. In this sense, Hong Kong’s arts education policy is, like its cultural counterpart, very much a descriptive document.

1.4 Ambiguities and tensions at a sectoral level

The presentational brevity constituted by Hong Kong’s cultural policy is counter-balanced by its global aspirations: commitment on the part of the Government through funding, support and investment across the arts spectrum is anticipated to yield huge dividends as the city assumes the mantle of “international cultural hub”. At the same time, Hong Kong’s backyard, particularly in terms of the recognisance and protection of its local cultural heritage, has not been ignored either: a number of projects that give the different arts communities new opportunities to engage with their audiences, primarily by opening up and developing new spaces, are taking shape. Considered collectively, then, Hong Kong’s future as a cultural beacon for the Asia-Pacific region would appear to be firmly assured. On the other side of the table, the skills that are seen as being required to thrive in our globalised, technologically informed world, such as communication, evaluation and adaptability, can best be fostered by arts education, the most potent weapon in the armoury of cultural education. Crucially, arts education enriches people’s lives and contributes to their holistic development, which in turn

encourages the appreciation of and participation in the arts. In short, based on the notion that education ‘sustains and nourishes culture’ (CHC, 2003: 14), the aims of arts education reform and the vision of cultural development are seen as mutually reinforcing.

1.4.1 The arts and cultural sector

Perhaps as a result of its philosophy of greater democratisation, Hong Kong’s cultural policy is intentionally open-ended. The stated emphasis is thus on upholding the freedom to create, together with the provision of an environment which supports cultural and artistic development. With the Government of the HKSAR’s stated refusal to impose an official definition on culture and the arts, along with the deliberate avoidance of indicating how either artistic creation or creativity should be operationalised (2006: 5), contradictions have emerged between the official stance and opinions among the media, the wider arts and cultural community, and civil society (Kwong, 2011; Simpson, 2012). There is a perception among the public at large that no real consensus exists as to what cultural policy means (for example, it has been alternately described as referring to the development and preservation of arts and cultural heritage and an area of public policy-making that governs activities related to the arts and culture), or indeed if Hong Kong has a policy on culture (Ho, 2012). Either way, the general feeling is that the Government affords culture a low priority, citing as evidence the finality of its position within the name of the department supposedly set up to champion its cause (Kwong, 2011). Moreover, not only does it take a back seat to the traditional driver of finance, but its management is such that it is just one of several miscellaneous policy areas, along with sports, civic affairs, youth development, building management and community relations, that are lumped together within the HAB. Such perceptions are only strengthened when one examines further the precise remit of the HKADC and the LCSD. In the case of the former, the fact that the HKADC is not connected

in any way with the education infrastructure means that it is unable to get involved with the policymaking process (HKADC, 1999). This, allied to its budgetary restrictions, means that the number of projects it can finance is severely limited; instead, its influence has to be exercised primarily via its five identified roles of “advocator”, “initiator”, “facilitator”, “network builder” and “reinforcer” (HKADC, 1999: 15-16).

1.4.1.1 Identity, values and sustainability

Many of the existing cultural ambiguities and tensions can be categorised under the headings of identity, values and sustainability. Rather than becoming culturally more closely affiliated with mainland China as a result of a diminution in the gap between social and economic development, as the CHC predicted, almost the opposite has happened: nearly 20 years into the handover, Hong Kong faces an identity crisis ‘centred on ... its core cultural values, particularly its outlook on freedom and the rule of law’ (Leong, 2013: 35). Fears of political interference and mainland “colonization” (England, 2012) have stoked the fires of mistrust and led to ever-increasing numbers identifying themselves as “Hongkongers” (as opposed to “Chinese”). The official view has always been that Hong Kong people’s cultural identity ‘should start from local culture, be grounded in Chinese cultural traditions, and possess a global vision’ (CHC, 2003: 12). If, as has been claimed, Hong Kong’s cultural policy should uphold the city’s core values (Ho, 2012), these must also be crystallised as part of the overall identity process.

As the third strand, sustainability is the development of a cultural ecology that eschews the “quick-fix” mentality of an every-increasing roster of programmes and facilities, or else resorts to an over-simplification of crucial elements within the infrastructure, such as strategies for inclusion, diversity and co-creation, in favour of a long-term vision built on the

principles of engaging, nurturing and empowering communities through meaningful and impactful activities and initiatives (Leong, 2013). Perhaps the most noticeable omission of Hong Kong's cultural policy lies in setting out precisely how the vision of an international cultural metropolis is to be maintained.

1.4.2 The arts education sector

While whole-person development, life-long learning and the acquisition of “generic skills” collectively lie at the heart of Hong Kong's education reforms, there likewise presently exist a number of anomalies that serve to complicate the situation. Although both education / learning “in” and “through” the arts share the philosophy of an integrated curriculum (Vars, 1991), research to date in the areas of curriculum and arts integration is frequently at odds in terms of (best) procedures and outcomes for students. For example, it has been noted that arts teachers typically practice a variety of integrative styles depending on their level of expertise (Bresler, 1995). More recently, studies in Hong Kong have revealed opposition on the part of both principals and teachers based on perceptions that it fails to support public examinations or improves the quality of schools' intakes (Morris & Chan, 1997), a general lack of understanding as to what is involved (Yeung & Lam, 2007), and worries over reduced academic standards (Vickers, Kan, & Morris, 2003). Moreover, like its cultural policy counterpart, Hong Kong's advocacy of an integrated curriculum (HKCDC, 2002b; 2003a; 2003b) as part of its arts education policy is couched in largely generic terms. While creative approaches to teaching and learning may well be encouraged by the policy documents, it is nevertheless left very much up to individual schools which strategies they choose to employ.

1.4.3 Partnerships

Hong Kong's cultural and (arts) education policies have the potential to simultaneously allow

the city to realise its cultural aspirations and equip students with the skills they need to meet the challenges of the knowledge economy. However, while both sectors have recognised the vital role that partnerships have to play in bringing this about, there are a number of weaknesses inherent in the existing bureaucratic structures that are serving to pit the arts and culture on the one side against arts education on the other. The result is an artificial “silo-ing” of rationales and skills that is preventing mutually beneficial synergies from developing across and between the two sectors.

An absence of genuine leadership and a clear strategic vision, the ongoing struggle for a coherent identity, and the need to create a sustainable environment on the cultural side, is thus being balanced by a reluctance to engage with the integrated / interdisciplinary curriculum on the arts education side, and offset in both cases by a lack of genuinely meaningful intra- and inter-sectoral partnerships. As a result the thesis being posited was that the two “wings” of Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policy “bird” are disconnected from one another at both a philosophical and a practical level. Not only is this fundamentally at odds with the espousal of a collaborative approach being made at an official level, but the present lack of co-operation is stymieing the effective enactment of policies, in turn preventing critical issues such as cultural participation, consumption and accessibility to cultural education from being properly addressed. The study was therefore interested in gaining a deeper understanding of the present situation, in the process seeking to identify those mismatches, misconnections / disconnections, gaps and contradictions that were preventing mutually beneficial synergies from occurring. To that end, it was concerned with understanding Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies through the three notions of “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation”. Here, “conceptualisation” referred to the particular philosophies and rationales that stand behind and underpin the two documents, while “communication” was

the assorted means and methods by which the policies were passed on and received by the various stakeholders; “operationalisation” was the nature of their subsequent delivery and implementation by the relevant practitioners. Collectively, these coalesced to help discover the extent to which, some 16 years since the introduction of the education reforms and approximately eight years into the adoption by the Government of the HKSAR of the blueprint set out initially by the CHC, Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies had permeated and were impacting upon the perceptions and practices of its various stakeholders.

1.5 Research questions

Based on the above, the study attempted to answer three research questions:

1. What are the philosophies and rationales that underpin Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies? Is there evidence of any justification and legitimisation being put forward with regard to the policies’ formation and the recommendations being made?
2. What are the perceptions among the stakeholders across both sectors in terms of the “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements of Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies?
3. Is there evidence of the potential for a synergistic relationship to develop between the two sectors? If not, where are the mismatches, misconnections / disconnections, gaps and contradictions presently occurring?

1.6 Purpose of the study

Cultural policy and arts education policy, when working in partnership, have the potential to

result in mutually beneficial synergies that can lead to their more effective enactment, thereby allowing critical issues (such as cultural participation and consumption, and accessibility to cultural education), to be addressed. In the case of the Netherlands, for example, not only is the creation and implementation of culture and arts education the responsibility of a single department, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), but the general goal of the compulsory upper secondary subject ‘culturele en kunstzinnige vorming’ (ckv) is cultural participation. Aside from streamlining the policy process, the effective dissemination of such education is enhanced by giving secondary schools greater autonomy in shaping their curriculum, while from a student point of view experience gained from taking part in cultural activities, knowledge accrued from visits to cultural institutions, and exposure to various artistic disciplines better equips them to make reasoned and informed choices (Council of Europe/ERICarts, 2016). In Hong Kong, by way of contrast, culture comes under the purview of the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) and the responsibility for arts education falls to the Education Bureau (EDB); in addition, little is known about the perceptions among those directly involved with the “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements of the respective policies. With the ultimate aim of identifying how positive interaction between the two sectors might best be accomplished, in the process revealing where the mismatches, misconnections / disconnections, gaps and contradictions currently exist, the study brought together a range of stakeholders across both sectors.

1.7 Significance of the study

In the wake of its far-reaching education reforms, along with the ambitious remit of its cultural policy, a number of panels, committees and working groups have been set up, each tasked with investigating and reporting on a specific aspect as it pertains to Hong Kong’s arts education and cultural sectors. For example, against the background of Hong Kong’s

aspiration to be a creative metropolis in the region, the study *Quality People, Quality Life* (Bamford, Chan & Leong, 2011), conducted by the HAB in collaboration with the consultancy firm InnoFoco, set out ‘to analyse the adequacy and effectiveness of the existing provision of public arts education in Hong Kong from early childhood to adulthood within and outside schools’ (2011: 3). Similarly, the EDB and the HAB collaborated to brief members of the Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs and Panel on Education ‘on the promotion of arts and cultural education (arts education) in Hong Kong and on measures to strengthen coordination and create synergy among different stakeholders’ (2011: 1). However, to date, there has not been a study that specifically sets out to investigate the relationship between the policies in terms of their “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” and how this is playing out among the various stakeholders. The significance of the study therefore resided primarily in the fact that it had the potential to gather together a broad demographic from across the cultural and arts education spectrum and provide them with a forum that would allow their collective voices to be aired. By bringing the different protagonists around the table in this way, the hope was that a clearer idea of their individual and collective perceptions and opinions regarding Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies would emerge, and that a comprehensive snapshot, which could simultaneously serve to highlight the divisions that are presently occurring, as well as offering a starting point for future research, might be generated.

Finally, while acknowledging that ‘the contribution of research is always mediated through broader social and political processes with all their attendant limitations’ (Levin, 2004: 1), by similarly taking into account what sorts of knowledge can, and should, inform policy (Bridges & Watts, 2008), it was anticipated that this study could serve, in part, to redress that balance through the asking of “troublemaking” research questions (Freedman, 2007).

1.8 Structure of the thesis

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter introduces the background to the study, along with outlining Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies within their respective contexts and the main reasons why sectoral alignment is failing to gain traction; the research questions, purpose and significance of the study are also presented. The second chapter presents a literature review of the concepts of, and discourses as they relate to, the central notions of "culture", "cultural policy", "the arts" / "arts education" and "arts education policy". The ambiguities and tensions, as they currently affect Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies, and the ways in which they are conspiring to prevent sectoral alignment, are also investigated with a view to making the case for an ecological research approach. The methodology to be carried out within the research approach proposed, including its relation to the study's conceptual, theoretical and methodological frameworks, is the subject of the third chapter. The fourth chapter presents the results, along with the analysis. The fifth and final chapter contains the discussion and conclusions. Interpretations of the key findings, and the implications and limitations of the study, together with some possible future directions and recommendations, are also explored.

Chapter Two:

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In surveying the related literature, this chapter takes as its central focus the concepts with which the study is fundamentally concerned, i.e. “culture”, “cultural policy”, “the arts” and “arts education policy”. In so doing, it takes full account of the fact that not only are these complicated notions in themselves, but also that they are set within the wider context of policymaking, itself a complex and multi-layered process involving the creation of documents which are, by turns, received, interpreted and acted upon by a variety of different stakeholders. Given the interrelated and interconnected nature of the relationship that potentially exists between Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education sectors, it is with the ultimate intention of making the case for an ecological research approach to investigating the issues being identified that the chapter begins by exploring the discourses – including the struggles involved in achieving adequate definitions – surrounding “culture” and “the arts” / “arts education” before bringing them together (at least ideologically) through the vehicle of their respective policy spheres. Turning towards how their inherent concerns with issues such as assumptions, values and benefits (on the cultural side) and engagement, empowerment and meaning-making (on the arts education side) can influence their realisation at a practical level, Hong Kong’s own cultural and arts education policies are spotlighted, together with the roles of those organisational bodies mandated as having responsibility for their execution and / or promotion. Despite a conceptual meeting of minds in the way the documents have been envisaged in terms of simultaneously fulfilling their own objectives *and* meeting the identified sectoral needs, the chapter clarifies those ambiguities and tensions that are currently preventing this from happening. The chapter concludes with the promotion of a

combination of specific features encapsulated in the “ecological worldview” and the “interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research” types within the overarching methodology of ecological research as the approach best suited to addressing the identified issues while enabling the perspectives of the various actors involved to be adequately accommodated.

2.2 Setting the context

We live in a time of cultural transformation (Campbell, 2002). Brought about in part through the process of globalisation and frequently realised via ‘the tension between global / local identities’ (Ho & Law, 2009: 441), the challenge – for governments, at least – is to pre-empt future societal demands while ensuring that the appropriate systems are in place to meet them. At the same time, the world’s advanced economies are engaged in effecting a transition from a traditional emphasis on a high growth, heavily industrialised, workforce-dependent model to one that is more globally integrated, production-eclectic and entrepreneurial in nature. It is against this backdrop that Hong Kong, via its cultural policy, has publicly declared its intention of becoming an international cultural metropolis (HAB, 2008), a goal set within an ultimate aspiration to achieve “world city” status (Kong, Gibson, Khoo, & Semple, 2006). Sweeping educational reforms, their success pinned on the triple-pronged promotion of multiculturalism, global thinking and life-long learning as a combined means of elevating the principles of equality and equity over that of elitism, have targeted arts education as having a key role to play in effecting a successful transformation, citing in the process its ability to bring about quality education within the formal curriculum (HKADC, 1999). A cultural policy, which succeeds in uniting all the major issues of society through the articulation of ‘a clear, pluralistic vision ... that recognizes the integral connection between culture, art, and the rest of our lives’ (Atlas, 2001: 65), thus places equal – as well as equally different – demands on the shoulders of policymakers.

2.3 “Culture” and the cultural discourse

2.3.1 Definitions and interpretations of “culture”

Culture is a word fraught with complications, both at a definitional and at a conceptual level (Gray, 2009). In keeping with its original derivation from the Latin *colere*, meaning “to till”, there exists the notion of cultivation: just as a field can be tilled, or *cultivated*, so too can one’s sensibilities – whether intellectual or aesthetic – be similarly refined. Culture as a means of becoming more civilised (or *cultured*), then, is one definition. Another lies in the “anthropological” sense of the word, wherein reference is made to the customs, attitudes, behaviours and outlooks of a particular group or society; in short, the “ways of life” that are collectively embodied. A further interpretation focuses on culture as the works produced by intellectual and artistic activity to form a kind of recorded experience. These three separations, initially formulated by Raymond Williams (1958, 1961) as ‘the study of relations in a whole way of life’, have traditionally represented a starting point for more in-depth discussion. While some authors have extended the definition to incorporate more than one of the above uses – Throsby, for example, considers it to be the shared beliefs, values and practices of societal groups and a set of activities, and the products of those activities, which are concerned with ‘the intellectual, moral and artistic aspects of human life’ (2001: 4) – Williams himself revised his tripartite structure in favour of a binary division focusing on the differences between idealist and materialist conceptions (1981), a re-envisioning he described as ‘signifying practice’. Either way, it was this essentially holistic, communicational definition of culture that was taken up and extended, via a more identity-centric route, by authors such as Hall (1997) and Hall and du Gay (1996). Others, particularly Bennett (1992a and 1992b), took a different tack entirely, rejecting the static ‘whole way of life’ definition in favour of something more transformative, in the process injecting the notion of policy /

managerial ‘usefulness’ into the argument.

2.3.2 Gramscian hegemony vs. Foucauldian governmentality

The “way of life” vs. “transformation” demarcation strikes at the heart of the cultural discourse, inasmuch as a focal concern of cultural studies is the interrelation of culture and power (McGuigan, 2004). The idea that this particular field of study should align itself more closely with the world of politics, in the process becoming ‘useful’ to policymakers and administrators, set up a seismic shift from the Gramscian model of hegemony – summarised by McGuigan as the ‘struggle at the levels of everyday life and state power’ (2004: 8) – to a Foucauldian model of governmentality, ‘which is focused not so much upon changing macro-power relations but on adjusting micro-power relations’ (p. 8). Essentially, the notion of cultural hegemony, which has its derivations in the writings of Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), is a constantly-evolving balancing act of force and consent between those definitions of reality held by the dominant classes (who seek to contain and incorporate all thought and behaviour within the terms and limits set by themselves in accordance with their interests) and the ones held by the subordinate classes in such a way that a ‘consensus’ is achieved, whereby the dominated parties accept such an arrangement, or view of reality, as ‘common sense’. The concept of governmentality, derived from Michel Foucault (1926-1984), on the other hand, ‘refers very generally to the administrative apparatus of modernity, the emergence of the modern state and its powers of social regulation’ (2004: 15), a precept that has the potential to extend the wielding of power far beyond a notion of “culture” restricted to practices predominantly about signification. Theoretically, the notion of hegemony (including positive conceptions of the relationship between culture and politics) within the arena of cultural studies, along with Gramsci’s concept of the ‘organic intellectual’ and the adoption of the ‘way of life’ definition of culture already mentioned, came to epitomise what was dubbed

by certain scholars the ‘Gramscian tradition’. As part of this personification, the setting up of comparisons with Foucault – most notably by Bennett (1992a; 1992b) – heightened tensions by challenging Gramsci’s conceptions of power (on the basis that it arose from a unified, centralised ruling class) and hegemony (since it was only concerned with culture and ideology and relied on regular exposure to bourgeois values for its successful dissemination).

2.3.3 Contemporary notions of “culture”

Later commentators, such as Eagleton (2000) and Garnham (2000a; 2000b), in revisiting the historical discourses centered around culture, objected to Williams’ formulations on semiotic grounds (in the case of Eagleton) and on the potential redundancy of signification in the event that each kind of practice was given equal symbolic (cultural) weight (in that of Garnham). For them the problem essentially boiled down to the fact that “culture” was being made to stand in for issues that were not, in essence, “cultural” at all. While undoubtedly sympathetic to Williams’ ‘realized signifying system’ (1981: 207) approach to culture, not least because some systems are not predominantly concerned with signification and symbolic exchange or dialogue, voices such as that of McGuigan (2004) have expressed frustration that due to its sheer omnipresence the term has essentially become meaningless. In this sense (or non-sense) of the word, *everything* can be seen as culture. McGuigan takes particular issue with the contention that we live in “the culture society” (McRobbie, 1999), expressing puzzlement as to what is really meant by the term before hazarding a guess that it might have come about as a means of expressing the dichotomy between the growth of cultural work on the one hand ‘and the policy problems arising due to a shift from state subsidy to market survival in the cultural field’ (2004: 10) on the other. Regardless, hugely wide-ranging terms such as “body culture”, “consumer culture”, “work culture”, “management culture”, “dependency culture”, “black culture” and “Western culture” are provided as illustrative examples of the extent to

which, to cite McGuigan's main concern, "'the cultural' [stands] in for 'the social'" (p. 5).

2.3.4 "Culture" within and across disciplines

Current discourses on the notion of what constitutes "culture" have come to be framed against a constantly shifting backdrop of neo-liberal globalisation, economic conditions and information and communication technologies. As we have seen, among cultural commentators and analysts it was Williams who first established the holistic perspective of culture, initially defining it as 'the study of relations in a whole way of life' (1961). While this gave way over time to a more tightly focused view of culture as 'signifying practice' (1981), in either eventuality it was this kind of holism that came to be viewed by later commentators as the problem. Flows of meaning and interaction became the new premise. Thus, the notion of "culture" as a unitary whole limited to one space was challenged by those proposing differentiating and intersecting "cultures" in any space (Couldry, 2000).

A fundamental problem is that "culture" can either be defined so broadly that it is almost all-inclusive or so narrowly that it becomes too restrictive. Reasoning that because of its contested nature any definitions to be found in the literature are likely to be many and varied, and conjecturing furthermore that no empirical methods for determining the adequacy of those definitions will be forthcoming, Gray (2010) instead takes a discipline-based approach, searching for common ground in terms of the general emphasis being given to certain meanings as opposed to others and then investigating how such preferences reveal themselves in terms of what is considered worthy of study when these disciplines subsequently tackle "cultural" issues. For example, in the case of cultural studies, he notes a kind of intertwining that develops from both Williams (1961) on the one hand and 'various structuralist and post-structuralist concerns with semiotic signifying practices' (p. 219) on the other,

definitions that themselves owe much to Williams' own, later (1981) reductive conceptualisation of culture. In the Williams formulation, "culture" assumes the distinct characteristics mentioned before, i.e. as a kind of value-based ideal, as recorded experience, or as a way of living; the alternative views tend to explore the notion of semiotic variance, with culture typically viewed as being concerned with 'the production and circulation of symbolic meanings' (McGuigan, 1996: 1).

A tendency to eschew generalisations in favour of specifics is a feature of political science. Within this discipline, "culture", via its referral to the societal context in which politics takes place, e.g., Huntington, 1996, exists as a kind of short-hand for "civilisation"; as a *sub-set* (consisting of evaluations, knowledge and feelings about political activity and institutions) of societal contexts that pays homage, albeit with a modern take, to the older notion of "civic culture", e.g., Crothers & Lockhart, 2000; Lane & Ersson, 2002); or to *sets* of rule-governed behaviours – whether formal or informal – which recall the idea of "administrative culture", e.g., Knill, 1998; Gray, 2002. Gray (2010) pinpoints the division between "the sociology of culture" and "cultural sociology" as indicative of notional differences regarding what the "cultural" represents within the sociological studies discipline: it can variously stand for a set of meanings, symbols and structures (Alexander, 2006), as specific goods and / or activities-related courses of action within, say, 'the arts, cultural industries and media sectors' (Bennett, 2007: 32), or it can be used as a kind of interchangeable term with social life. This, of course, harks back to McGuigan's (2004) lament. Finally, there is an ever-increasing tendency to marry economics with notions of "culture", typically through reference to the arts as the subject of enquiry (Heilbrun & Gray, 1993; Towse, 1997a, 1997b, 2003; Cowen, 1998). While concessions have been made within this discipline to culture as being beyond the economic remit by virtue of the fact that it is about 'shared norms of behaviour and values'

(Towse, 1997a: xiii), cultural *goods* – as a set of activities and the resulting products that are concerned with ‘the intellectual, moral and artistic aspects of human life’ (Throsby, 2001: 4) – don’t escape the analytical net. In fact, Throsby makes a point of dissecting both, using the economic scalpel as his tool of choice.

Despite the many differences, a clearer picture gradually emerges of the extent to which the various disciplines share a common view of “culture”. Gray succinctly describes this as ‘a form of social glue that provides a common framework of understandings for the members of society to organise and interact around’ (2010: 221). As the same author readily acknowledges, however, the Williams (1961)-derived, anthropologically-leaning view of culture has, to some degree, been superseded by a more pluralistic view of the concept that emphasises ‘symbolic communication’ and which correspondingly encompasses ‘a wide range of signifying practices’ (p. 221).

2.4 Cultural policy

2.4.1 Understanding the idea of “cultural policy”

The fact that “culture” is an essentially contested concept without a unifying core definition has important ramifications when considering its use as an entity for policy purposes, not least because culture is increasingly seen by governments as a tool to be employed across a wide spectrum of developmental practices, including such diverse preoccupations as urban regeneration, social inclusion and health care / treatment (Gray, 2009). The previously-discussed “explosion in usage” of the concept to cover a variety of essentially distinct areas is mirrored in the almost bewildering array of forms that cultural policy can take: the same author identifies community cultural development, cultural diversity, cultural sustainability, cultural heritage, the cultural and creative industries, planning for the

intercultural city, cultural planning *per se* and support for national languages. The point he is at pains to stress is that great care must be taken to specify exactly which definition of “culture” is being employed, along with the particular agency involved.

2.4.2 Cultural policy sector issues

Many of the problems that have arisen from the attempt to develop and utilise “culture” as an effective policy device spring from issues about how best the policy sector should be managed within the political system. These, in turn, relate to confusions about what cultural policy is intended to achieve.

The typical approach adopted by governments towards “culture” is cited by Gray (2009) as one of the major issues. Despite an acknowledgement that it is worthy of concern, culture is often dealt with as indirectly as possible, preferably with either little or no direct action. Characterisations of state involvement ‘tend to differentiate between those which seek to work through funding via intermediate institutions ... or through tax incentive schemes, and those which more positively take responsibility for forms of cultural production and management’ (2009: 580). Gray notes that the more interventionist forms of state involvement constitute a distinct minority, opining that the advantage from a government’s point of view in adopting a more *laissez faire* attitude lies principally in the fact that the benefits accrued by laying down general policies can be enjoyed, while simultaneously avoiding problems of direct accountability or responsibility made on their behalf by intermediate organisations.

However, the often-associated preference by some national governments for making cultural policy a discretionary, as opposed to statutory, function at the regional and local levels not

only has the potential to lead to a series of un-coordinated or even contradictory policies, but also runs the risk of increasing the possibility for failure in establishing any form of overall policy commitment and implementation. Whether occurring in statutory or discretionary contexts, the somewhat ad-hoc attachment of cultural policies to other policy sectors, brought about by a state concentrating its efforts on particular areas of activity at the expense of others, can lead to what Gray (2007) dubs the ‘instrumentalisation of culture’. This he identifies as being symptomatic of a lack of political support for the cultural policy sector within individual political systems. Indeed, despite the rhetoric that frequently accompanies the importance of cultural policy (both instrumentally and to a nation as a whole), further political commitment to the sector is often relatively weak, its reputation for ‘embellishment and detail’ serving to cement its name in the minds of many as an example of ‘low politics’ (Bulpitt, 1983: 29, 3).

While the reasons for the lack of political significance attached to the policy sector may be many and varied – ranging from the ‘ideological’, i.e. that culture is better suited to market mechanisms on the one hand, to the ‘censorial’, i.e. relating to concerns to do with accusation of state censorship of cultural production or else notions of state ‘approved’ art on the other – the lack in practical terms of human and financial resources devoted to it makes it vulnerable to pressures from other, more important, or credible sectors. The reduction in concern for the specifically cultural can thus give way to other policy content.

2.4.3 Cultural policy and the “arts”

Within the realm of political discourse, and despite pretty much every attempt to broaden its remit, “culture” is typically – and closely – associated with the “arts” (Mulcahy, 2006a) or “arts policy” (McGuigan, 2004). Not only are its objects ‘the aesthetic, the affective, taste and

symbolic value’ (2004: 34): from a practical viewpoint, too, cultural policy involves government strategies and activities that promote ‘the production, dissemination, marketing, and consumption of the arts’ (Rentschler, 2002: 17). It has even been described as the sum of a government’s activities ‘with respect to the arts’ (Schuster, 2003: 1). This is not to say, however, that the terms are synonymous. While acknowledging that the relationship between the two is a ‘key preoccupation’ of the study of cultural policy, Ahearne (2009) conceives of “cultures” as being taken to signify ‘embodied systems of values and attitudes’ and the “arts” as denoting ‘the domain of consciously crafted symbolic works’ (p. 142). The same goes for the terms “cultural policy” and “arts policy”. While both ‘typically involve[d] public support for museums, the visual arts (painting, sculpture, and pottery), the performing arts (symphonic, chamber and choral music; jazz, modern dance, opera and musical theater, and “serious” theater), historic preservation, and humanities programs (such as creative writing and poetry)’ (2006a: 321), a cultural policy goes further, both through its championing of tangible ‘spaces’ – typically in the form of institutions such as libraries, museums and parks – as well as a specific location’s intangible ‘assets’; in other words, those elements that collectively comprise its unique cultural heritage. A list of Hong Kong’s intangible cultural heritage, for example, would be sure to include its many festivals (among these the Ching Ming Festival, the Tuen Ng (Dragon Boat) Festival and the Cheung Chau Bun Festival constituting notable highlights), along with Cantonese Opera and ‘Cantopop’ (Leong, 2013).

Education, together with the education community, is another important element involved in the broader conception that cultural policy (as opposed to arts policy) brings to the table. Education and culture are natural bedfellows, and those countries that enjoy well-established and recognised cultural traditions are often anxious to ensure that these are catered for by the curriculum. In so doing, mutual benefits that can occur from such a sectoral alliance

(Cummings & Katz, 1987) are generated, specifically the creation of a wider constituency that supports the arts and culture, along with the increased possibility of future participation through greater exposure to cultural activities (leading in turn to greater support for a public cultural policy). Hong Kong's cultural policy, for example, is based on the notion that culture is both sustained and nourished by education; to that end, students should be culturally educated, with appreciation, creativity and expression the outward manifestations of individual cultural literacy (Culture and Heritage Commission, 2003). With arts education perceived as the crucial link that both contributes to holistic development and encourages appreciation of and participation in the arts, a diverse curriculum, quality support and partnership and community involvement are all viewed as mutually reinforcing elements that can contribute to the success of the venture.

Many locations (including Hong Kong, from the mid-1990s onwards) also support the cultural and creative industries. Within the context of globalisation, cultural policies must contend with the transformation of the content and systems through which cultural activities, goods, and services are produced, reproduced, distributed and preserved (Dewey, 2008). According to Hesmondhalgh and Pratt (2005), it was the marketisation of the media and communications sectors which gave rise to the notion that national and local economies could be regenerated through the cultural industries; this led to the growing acceptance of the 'commoditisation' of culture, bolstered by the argument that creative industries policies be portrayed as democratising and anti-elitist (as opposed to arts policy, which was aimed at subsidising cultural production that could not meet its costs through the market). A strong link thus developed between the rise of cultural policy under the sign of the cultural and creative industries and industrial and cultural changes. While a number of tensions surround both the role and breadth of the cultural industries (including a fully coherent definition),

Hesmondhalgh and Pratt's preference 'is to see the boundaries between such symbolic, cultural production and other "non-cultural" kinds of production as porous, provisional and relative, and to think about these boundaries in terms of the relationship between the utilitarian functions and non-utilitarian (artistic / aesthetic / entertainment) functions of symbolic goods' (2005: 6).

2.4.4 Characteristics of cultural policy

As will have been gleaned from the various contributing elements outlined above, arriving at a convenient, catch-all overview of cultural policy is no easy task, not least because it is a sector of immense ecological complexity, involving 'a large, heterogeneous set of individuals and organizations engaged in the creation, production, presentation, distribution, and preservations of and education about aesthetic heritage, and entertainment activities, products and artifacts' (Wyszomirski, 2002: 187). In an attempt to clarify matters somewhat, Mulcahy (2006a) draws on a US study to identify four characteristics of cultural policy that he contests are generally applicable globally: namely, that there are many more agencies involved than is commonly realised; that there is a lack of a conceptual "whole" resulting from these agencies and their activities; that those actions and decisions which are taken are not necessarily the result of expressed policy intention, and; that direct financial support is only one of a wide variety of interventions that result in cultural policy.

2.4.5 Justifications for and emphases informing cultural policy

Acknowledging that the complexity inherent in the concept of cultural policy is, in no small measure, a result of the various justifications used to promote particular programmes, Mulcahy goes on to identify four historical antecedents which, he asserts, are collectively important in terms of recognising the different emphases typically informing contemporary

cultural policy. Labelling these ‘Culture as Glorification’, ‘Democratization of Culture’, ‘Cultural Democracy’ and ‘Cultural Utilitarianism’, these have respectively witnessed cultural patronage as the indulgent preserve of a small body of wealthy, ‘enlightened’ individuals for the purposes of symbolising power and prestige, the encouragement to actively partake of cultural excellence regardless of class and education or the vagaries of habitation, the provision of a more populist approach to both the definition of and participation in cultural opportunities, and the justification of cultural policy on the basis that it yields positive results. These have operated both separately, and, in some cases, co-existed in combination with each other; what unifies them is the issue of access to the arts, a point that McGuigan (2004) expounds upon within the framework of the complex and diffuse issue of cultural citizenship, and which takes in notions of identity, entitlement and social subjects.

2.4.6 “Assumptions” and “values”

The absence of an agreed-upon definition, in conjunction with the complicated ecological dimension, has led instead to a greater focus on the “values” that culture, through the vehicle of cultural policy, can promote. Such values are, of course, themselves predicated upon certain assumptions. While the emphasis may vary, depending upon the specific jurisdiction, Hesmondhalgh and Pratt (2005) identify two main assumptions that are remarkably resilient in cultural policy making and debate, and which, as a result, underpin the majority of such documents. These are that culture is a pure public good, which should be available to all, and the idealist-humanist notion that exposure to culture has a “civilising effect”. Within Mulcahy’s ‘Democratization of Culture’ strand, for example, “high culture” is not the preserve of a favoured few: there should be across-the-board access to significant aesthetic works, together with their attendant benefits, the objective being ‘the aesthetic enlightenment, enhanced dignity and educational development of the general citizenry’ (2006a: 324). With

dissemination the key concept and equal opportunity the main aim (Dueland, 2003), costs are deliberately kept low, equality of aesthetic opportunity is promoted, and public and work spaces are utilised as performance venues. However, the fact that those programmes which follow this policy formulation are vertical, or top-down, in nature, is open (on the basis that some aesthetic expressions, at least those determined by a knowledgeable few individuals interested in acquiring cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984), are inherently superior) to charges of cultural elitism. In opposition to the underlying, unspoken view that the cultural needs of a society are all alike, the objective of the ‘Cultural Democracy’ model ‘is to provide for a more participatory (or populist) approach in the definition and provision of cultural opportunities’ (2006a: 324). The transition to this new, bottom-up approach has two crucial ramifications: the responsibility from a governmental perspective is seen as one of allowing citizens to be culturally active on their own terms by providing them with equal opportunities; simultaneously, the notion of “cultural activities” is deliberately interpreted so as to encompass widely diverse pursuits. Both, in turn, serve the (often politically expedient) purpose of legitimising the principle of state subsidy on the grounds that culture is a fully participatory process. Decentralisation thus allows monoculturalism to give way to pluralism.

2.4.7 Values vs. benefits

In the oft-ensuing “elitist” versus “populist” debate, in which ‘the two key tensions for national cultural policy [are] between the goals of excellence versus access, and between government roles as facilitator versus architect’ (Craik, McAllister, & Davis, 2003: 29), the dialogue roughly translates into the contrasting view between major cultural organisations, creative artists in the more traditionally defined fields of the fine arts and the intellectual cognoscenti on the one hand, which collectively maintain that ‘art and culture must reach a certain degree of sophistication, richness, and excellence in order for human nature to

flourish’ (Dworkin, 1985: 221) as opposed to that of a broader swathe of the population which ‘advocates defining culture broadly ... [that] emphasizes a less traditional and more pluralist notion of artistic merit and ...[that] posits very limited boundaries between amateur and professional arts activities’ (Mulcahy, 2006a: 325). In their place, and as a synthesis of the two, the same author (1991, 1995a, 1995b, 2006a) proposes what he calls the “latitudinarian approach” to public culture – this would be both aesthetically inclusive and broadly accessible, thereby remaining faithful to artistic excellence without the possibility of exclusion based on arbitrary issues such as geography, status and education.

It is in his fourth historical antecedent, that of ‘Cultural Utilitarianism’, in which cultural policy is justified not simply on the grounds of being good-in-itself but rather because it yields other good results, that the notion of benefits is articulated. This is contextualised by the demands of a democratic system which requires that public policies – particularly those perceived as being aesthetic in nature – demonstrate a return to the taxpayer. The idea that the arts and culture should be supported because they represent ‘essential elements to a life that is worth living’ (Cummings & Katz, 1987: 351) is frequently neither viewed as intuitively obvious nor construed as politically imperative; instead, the case has often been argued from the point of view of the ancillary benefits that can accrue. These are typically framed through the lens of the “economic impact of the arts”, the quantitative justification for arts organisations demonstrating that ‘every expenditure on arts activities produces a multiplier that ripples through the local economy with increased spending’ (2006a: 326). Among the (most obvious) shortcomings of this approach is the relativising language that economics and markets imposes, which in turn fails to articulate the role a cultural policy can play ‘in preserving, transmitting, and expanding a community’s cultural heritage’ (p. 327). Tellingly, one of the fundamental points that McGuigan (2004) makes is that the rationalisation of

cultural policy based around notions of “culture” has been, to all intents and purposes, superseded by one that is almost exclusively economic. In other words, ‘cultural practices are deemed worthy of public support because they are of *economic* value’ (p. 1).

2.4.8 Cultural policy in action

Cultural policy has been described as ‘adjectival policy’ (Colebatch, 2003: 86), as a sub-set of policy in general, which is often called ‘public policy’ (McGuigan, 2004: 5), and as the nexus where policies (strategic courses of action) and cultures (embodied systems of values and attitudes) collide and intersect (Ahearne, 2009). Within the arena of public policy, it pertains to political choice processes and governmental institutions involved in problem identification, agenda formation, and policy formation, adoption, implementation and evaluation actions made in the arts and culture sector (Dewey, 2008).

If we accept Dye’s view of public policy as ‘whatever governments choose to do or not to do’ (2005: 1), then the particular *forms* such strategic courses of action take will naturally depend upon the nature of the problem or matter of concern identified (Anderson, 1975). The crucial issue is the fact that any such activities will have a direct impact on citizens’ lives (Peters, 1996). In this regard, Mulcahy (2006b) makes an important point when he suggests that rather than accept what governments label as ‘cultural policy’, the focus should instead be on ‘the actions that a state ... take(s) that affect the cultural life of its citizens’ (p. 267), since this shifts attention towards a range of activities – including education policies – that may not normally be considered by governments themselves as being part of their cultural policies. Looked at this way, government actions (or inactions) *themselves constitute value choices*: these choices are policies, and the policies are politically determined. At the same time, public officials’ decisions are implemented through the production of goods and services

which produce discernible societal outcomes. Where public culture as a policy differs fundamentally from these two criteria resides in the atypical nature of many funded programmes, along with the difficulties inherent in assessing their societal impact (Bennett, 2004).

2.4.9 Cultural policy practices

Just as he did in his exploration of the notion of “culture”, Gray (2010) adopts a discipline-based approach, this time to look at the emphasis different subject areas place on “cultural policy” practice, together with the inferences that can be drawn regarding how such objects are chosen, studied, analysed and understood. Within cultural studies, he notes a demarcation of focus along fairly strict Gramscian and Foucauldian lines, with an emphasis on ideology and hegemony or the notion of governmentality respectively. Cultural policies are thus secured either when ‘the dominant culture uses education, philosophy, religion, aesthetics and art to make its dominance appear normal and natural to the heterogeneous groups that constitute society’ (Miller & Yudice, 2002: 9), an extreme variation perhaps occurring where “populist” agendas are concerned, and ‘bottom-up forms of cultural creation become identified with a radical form of resistance to dominant hegemonic forces within society’ (Hall & Jefferson, 1976; McGuigan, 1992 quoted on p. 222), or else when the reliance on ‘the creation of compliant, managed individuals’ (2010: 222) is viewed as the mark of a successful outcome. However, he also identifies a third approach that concentrates on techniques derived from literary studies and which is more concerned with “reading” the available texts (e.g., McGuigan & Gilmore, 2002). In this conceptualisation, “culture” is treated as recorded experience, with those “texts” that are generated for analysis viewed through the deliberately politicised lens of the Gramsci / Foucault distinction. Analytically, the dominant arenas within the cultural studies approach concern themselves with ‘the

meanings that are attached to particular forms of behaviour and expression by the participants within them’ on the Gramscian side and ‘the imputation of meaning to behaviours and expressions undertaken by others’ (2010: 222) on the Foucauldian. Either way, germane to a proper understanding of the “true” meanings behind what policies and their practices exist for is the ability of the analyst to exert a form of literary criticism upon them, in the process revealing their hidden depths; the skilled analyst thus “reads” cultural policy as ‘a series of “texts” that are subject to ... interpretations ... rather than a set of concrete organisational practices to be analysed’ (p. 222).

While similarly recognising the content and significance of “texts”, political science adopts an altogether different investigative approach, an emphasis on clearly recognisable forms coming more sharply to the fore. Cultural policy can, through the political science lens, be viewed at one level simply as the range of activities governments do, or do not, undertake to support in the arena of “culture”, in the process revealing the ruling body’s underlying values and / or ideologies. In this cultural-policy-is-whatever-governments-say-it-is analytical model, the focus of study can simply concern itself with a wide range of country-specific actions, organisations and choices (Gray, 1996). Gray notes an underdeveloped quality to sociological approaches to cultural policy issues *per se*, with attention to policy issues typically sacrificed in favour of ‘the semiological analysis of individual and group meaning formation and usage (Alexander, 2006), or the development of work within the sociology of the arts (Alexander, 2003)’ (p. 223); by way of mitigation, however, he acknowledges that “cultural” matters, such as the analysis of audiences and leisure habits and an interest in Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital (1993 [1984]), are the focus of much work within the field, an element which in itself carries policy implications. Nevertheless, despite a noted predisposition towards the “arts” (as opposed to a larger conception of “culture”), he finds more cause for optimism

when discussing the economics literature, since the general approach commonly adopted ‘is through the analysis of the application of particular economic tools – which are utilised as part of general governmental economic policy ... to the case of various specific issues of cultural production’ (pp. 223-224). Two themes – both unique to this particular field – emerge as a result: firstly, it is possible to say that an interest in the *content* of cultural policies is giving way to more focus on the *creation* of concrete economic policies that governments utilise for cultural purposes, or within the cultural arena; this, in turn, highlights the second theme, which concerns itself with state involvement in the creation and management of economic policies for the arts and cultural matters, in the process touching upon not only the appropriacy of such engagement but also heightening concerns about the kinds of value-system that can be used to justify state action or inaction.

Across the disciplines, then, certain similarities emerge as to how “cultural policy” is understood, even if no consensus currently exists regarding whether what governments actually do under the umbrella of the term is limited to what they define as “cultural policies” or if it extends to the explicitly “cultural” content of *any* government-produced policies (Mulcahy, 2006b; Ahearne, 2009). A secondary view of cultural policy among individuals, groups and civil society in general is a developing area of interest and concern, not least because ‘it serves to widen the scope of cultural policy analysis beyond the relatively narrow confines of state action and/or inaction’ (2010: 224).

2.5 A cultural policy for Hong Kong

2.5.1 Setting the scene

Hong Kong has traditionally suffered from a lack of long-term policy on cultural matters. Attributable to a non-committal, colonial attitude from the government on the one hand and

the absence of significant pressure on the part of the community on the other, it is only comparatively recently that Hong Kong's "local" population (those with roots in the city, as opposed to transient first generation immigrants) has been given a voice on cultural issues. However, while active participation in public policy can serve to both lay the foundations for, as well as reinforce, self-determination among a young community, 'Cultural issues, as visionary, pro-active and long term ... have never been the priority on the agenda for Hong Kong's policy makers.' (Zuni Icosahedron, 1994: 2) Although the 1970s and 1980s were periods of economic growth, the increase in prosperity being reflected in the rapid development of Hong Kong's "cultural hardware" (a number of major venues, including town halls and civic centres, were built during the latter decade), it is equally true to say that these were effectively prompted by social demands and the concerted efforts of the arts community. The turning point came in 1993 when issues being discussed by the cultural community – including freedom of expression, cultural diversity, social pluralism and democratic culture – found a more receptive audience among local politicians, government officials and the general public. Since then, initially through an expressed interest in the 1990s in the economic potential of the creative industries, the reunification of Hong Kong with Mainland China and the establishment of the Government of the HKSAR in 1997 'has signified a new era in Hong Kong's political, economic and cultural development' (Culture and Heritage Commission, 2003: 5) to the point that the city signified its intention to become 'an international cultural metropolis' (pp. 45-52). Hong Kong's future is now firmly situated within the rapidly growing Pearl River Delta (PRD) region; to that end, its arts and cultural scene 'has thrived because of the increased governmental support for the arts and culture as well as the city's unique characteristics [including] its proximity to a rapidly growing Asia [and] its respect for freedom of speech and artistic expression' (Leong, 2013: 28).

2.5.2 In search of a cultural identity

The phasing out of the colonial system was the catalyst in the quest for a cultural identity for the region. What essentially started the ball rolling was a series of public consultation exercises on cultural sector representation in 1991, culminating in the release by the Government's Recreation and Culture Branch of an *Arts Policy Review Report* in 1993.

2.5.2.1 Publication of the *Arts Policy Review Report*

Conceived in the light of rapid and significant developments in the cultural scene over the course of the previous decade, and inspired by the recognition that Hong Kong had become one of the most dynamic and flourishing cultural centres in Asia, the Consultation Paper entitled *Arts Policy Review Report* aimed to address the emergence of those factors and issues it identified as having a possible impact on the future development of the arts, together with mapping out appropriate strategies. Among its 'Arts Policy for the 1990s: Statement of Aims' (Chapter 7) was the formation of an Arts Council. In consultation with the Council for Performing Arts (CFPA), it was recommended that the Government should consider reorganising the CFPA into a non-statutory Arts Council, the main role of which would be to advise the Government on the development of the performing, visual and literary arts. At the same time, bearing in mind 'the significant contributions of the two Municipal Councils in arts development, they should be represented on the future Arts Council to provide the necessary link' (pp. 35-36).

Feelings and views pertaining to the *Arts Policy Review Report* were followed, in June of that year, by an Arts Educators Opinion Survey on arts policy and arts education carried out by Zuni Icosahedron's Hong Kong Cultural Policy Study Group among 1,583 primary and secondary school teachers, as well as instructors and tertiary institutions. The results

indicated that not only was there a strong feeling that the arts received insufficient emphasis or facilities at a school level, but that there did not exist an effective policy in promoting arts education on the part of the Education Department. Further focus group discussions suggested that the Government had little understanding of, and communication with, the local arts and cultural community, the proposed solution being that a Provisional Arts Council should not only conduct a critical review of the entire cultural administrative structure and operations under the existing system, but that potential policymakers should take a broader view before setting long-term and forward-looking cultural policies for Hong Kong. At the same time, it was strongly felt that people within the community should be served through public media and education programmes.

Identifying as a major flaw of the *Arts Policy Review Report* that ‘it has not been able to envisage the arts policy in Hong Kong as part of the cultural policy of Hong Kong, and henceforth to tackle issues of arts development – including freedom of artistic expression, funding for artistic exploration and cultural imagination, and the process of decentralisation in cultural (including educational) administration – as major tasks in the democratisation of this community’ (pp. 29-30), a ‘Vision for an Arts Policy of Hong Kong in the 1990’s’ was instead articulated by the Study Group. However, the Government promptly declared that it had no plans to develop a comprehensive cultural policy, claiming that its inability to do so was due to the municipal councils controlling most of the resources and venues for culture and the arts.

2.5.2.2 Establishment of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)

Despite the recommendation of the *Arts Policy Review Report* that the Government consider

reorganising the CFPA into a non-statutory Arts Council, the result came instead in the form of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, an independent statutory body formed in 1995 with the specific mandate of advocating, promoting and supporting all-round development of the arts. Vested with executive powers and serviced by its own directly recruited staff (although its council members were to be made up of representatives from different sub-sectors of the arts), it was to receive both public and private funding. The other recommendation, that in recognition of their previous contributions the Municipal Councils should have a chair at the table of the (intended, future) Arts Council, was resolved in 1999 when the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), under the purview of the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB), was formed to replace two municipal services departments: the Urban Services Department and the Regional Services Department. Between them these two bodies were also tasked with supplying regular updates to the Legislative Council's Panel on Home Affairs to gain their support for major policy proposals or amendments.

Roles of the HKADC and LCSD

The HKADC and the LCSD are tasked by the Government of the HKSAR with helping to create an environment conducive to artistic expression and creation. In addition to the performing and visual arts, the HKADC's remit also includes the literary, as well as film and media, arts, its major roles covering grant allocation, policy and programme planning. Simply put, 'It ... works to foster a thriving arts environment and enhancing the quality of life of the public, facilitate community-wide participation in the arts and arts education, encourage arts criticism and raise the standard of arts administration.' (Leong, 2013: 30) For its part, the LCSD organises artistic and cultural activities, manages a number of facilities (including 14 performance venues and 16 museums) and functions as the main programme presenter, particularly by assisting smaller groups with venue rental subsidies and providing them with

performance opportunities. An important point to note is that neither body is able to get involved with the policymaking process. To take the HKADC as a specific example, its influence has to be exercised primarily via its five identified roles of “advocator”, “initiator”, “facilitator”, “network builder” and “reinforcer” (HKADC, 1999). Furthermore, because of budgetary restrictions, the number of projects dedicated to arts education that it *can* finance is limited.

2.5.2.3 Creation of the Culture and Heritage Commission

Set up in April 2000 and comprising 17 members, all of which were appointed by the Chief Executive, the Culture and Heritage Commission (CHC) was created in order to advise the Government of the HKSAR on cultural policy and funding priorities, its stated key responsibility being ‘to formulate a set of principles and strategies to promote the long-term development of culture in Hong Kong’ (CHC, 2003: 2). A series of six strategies – “people-oriented”, “pluralism”, “freedom of expression and protection of intellectual property”, “holistic approach”, “partnership” and “community-driven” – were put forward as part of a first Consultation Paper, which was published in March 2001. Entitled “Gathering of Talents for Continual Innovation”, it formed the basis for the incorporation of subsequent relevant public opinions, which in turn led to the publication of a second Consultation Paper, “Diversity with Identity, Evolution through Innovation”, in November 2002. Policy recommendations, based on the aforementioned six strategies and covering education in culture and the arts, cultural facilities, resource deployment, institutional frameworks and other subjects (including heritage conservation, cultural exchange, the creative industries and the West Kowloon Cultural District), were put forward in this paper; revised again in the light of public opinion, the resulting *Policy Recommendation Report* (2003) was written and submitted to the Government, who duly endorsed the document.

Importantly, in detailing the background to the *Policy Recommendation Report*, the Commission explained how it had arrived at a definition of “culture” that was felt to be suitable for its purposes, purposely rejecting UNESCO’s common beliefs, values, customs, language, behavior, rituals and objects of a social group as being too broad, and those cultural and arts activities such as literature, dance, music, drama and visual arts as too limited, ‘bearing in mind the strategies of “people-oriented”, “pluralism”, and “holistic approach” that we advocate’ (2003: 2). Instead, in noting its origins in everyday life and the impact of social and economic change on its evolution, the Commission proposed adopting a broader perspective when considering Hong Kong’s overall cultural development and position, and a narrower one in matters relating to resource deployment. At the same time, with regard to social development, the Commission took into account the Chinese “Wen Hua (文化)”; based on its meanings of knowledge cultivation, character and aesthetics, this was felt to most successfully mirror the Latin origins of the word “culture”.

Attention has previously been drawn to the fact that much of the impetus for cultural development within Hong Kong during the 1970s and 1980s came as a result of lobbying on the part of the arts community. Leong (2014) notes, however, that while the Hong Kong public has undoubtedly enjoyed more direct access to a range of cultural and arts activities organised by agencies in the form of the HKADC and LCSD, traditionally they have had next to nothing to do with any decision-making processes. The tale of Hong Kong’s cultural development post-1997, viewed within the wider search for a cultural identity, is consequently that of an increasing vocal presence at a civic level. The changing dynamics brought about by the shift from committee engagement to public consultation are ones that were effectively kick-started by, and are duly encapsulated within, the history of the West

Kowloon Cultural District Project.

2.5.2.4 Development of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD)

The storied journey of the WKCD actually dates back to 1998, when plans for an iconic integrated arts and culture precinct were revealed in the Chief Executive's Policy Address "From Adversity to Opportunity". A consultancy report the following year, reiteration of the importance of the arts and culture at the Policy Address, and an abortive attempt to link the idea with a make-over for Victoria Harbour, all followed, at which point the newly-formed CHC took up the cause. Within the pages of the *Policy Recommendation Report* were laid out, in broad terms, areas of focus whereby Hong Kong could achieve its aspiration of becoming an international cultural metropolis. The most cogent crystallisation of this vision came in the Commission's support of the West Kowloon Reclamation Development, by now a finalised decision on the part of the Government to develop a 40-hectare strip of land into an integrated arts, cultural and entertainment district. The ambition of the project itself was more than matched by the loftiness of the rhetoric: just as Hong Kong had acted as a harbour – both physically and metaphorically – to the trading ethos which had served to sustain the city, 'so too can the West Kowloon cultural district be a port of cultural and intellectual exchange as well as a haven for the city's traditions, memories, inspirations and aspirations.' Situated at the heart of Hong Kong's 21st century urban culture, it should 'aim to enliven the city's cultural life and animate the people's participation ... [so as to] reflect the ideals of equality ... in its physical, emotional and intellectual accessibility for both local and visitors to the city.' Above all, 'It should be a place that grows with time, is able to meet the challenges and needs as a cosmopolitan city in the new century, encourages exchange and cultural development in the long run, and places emphasis on values beyond the purely commercial and utilitarian.' (2003: 51) Considered by both the Commission and many

beyond with presenting an unprecedented opportunity to develop culture and the arts in Hong Kong, the organisation of the WKCD nevertheless demonstrated in the intervening years the elitist traits that had habitually plagued Hong Kong's decision-making processes in the past: from the outset, starting with the setting-up of the WKCD Steering Committee in September 2002 to guide the project, the case was made that the best development option was to have the private sector fund the entire project in return for the right to operate the WKCD for 50 years. Amidst ensuing charges of high-handedness (the CHC was dissolved soon after it submitted its third and final report (on 1 April 2003)) and feelings of agitation that they were being denied direct participation in the decision-making process, an issue compounded by the fact that there was still no sign of a cultural policy five years after the WKCD was announced, the public hit back through a series of initiatives culminating in a proposal entitled "Redefining West Kowloon", submitted by the People's Panel on West Kowloon on 30 June 2005. Enunciated concerns included 'the government's lack of cultural vision and capability in achieving their objectives to build Hong Kong into a regional cultural hub, the lack of legal structure to oversee the WKCD – cited as the main cause for criticisms regarding the government-private sector relationship, and doubts about the developer's capacity to achieve the project targets within such a tight time frame.' (2014: 9) It was only when the Consultative Committee on the Core Arts and Cultural Facilities of the West Kowloon Cultural District, and its three advisory groups, delivered their recommendations in June 2007 that timely measures be adopted which could enhance the development of cultural software and humanware in Hong Kong that things finally began to change. Since strong public support was found for early implementation of the WKCD project, the Government accepted the Consultative Committee's recommendations to set up a statutory body, and the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA) started work in late 2008. The current situation is that the HAB coordinates the development of the WKCD, the independent

management of which is carried out by the WKCDA.

2.5.2.5 Formation of the Committee on Performing Arts

Established in November 2004 and tasked with advising the Secretary for Home Affairs by following up on the CHC's policy recommendations as they related to the performing arts (another, similar, Committee on Museums and Libraries was set up at the same time), the Committee on Performing Arts was subdivided into three committees dedicated to funding policy, programme policy and venue policy. A year later, in November 2005, following a number of formal and informal meetings involving different arts groups and various LCSD representatives, the Committee issued a Consultation Paper that put forward changes relating to funding mechanism, programme presentation and venue provision; the following year, a Recommendation Report, revised in the light of views expressed by the public, was published. Likening the Government's policy position on arts development to the creation of an environment 'which is conducive to the freedom of artistic expression ... and a wider public participation in cultural activities', a position that was 'in line with the core values of Hong Kong as a free, diversified and open society' (2006: 5), and reiterating the six aforementioned principles / strategies that the CHC had put forward as a means of promoting long-term cultural development within the pages of its *Policy Recommendation Report*, special attention was drawn to the issues of Hong Kong's cultural position, along with the Government's role and the Committee's position in relation to the policy framework currently in place. While acknowledging that the performing arts scene in Hong Kong had developed in terms of both quantity and quality, in order to enable culture and the arts to assume greater significance in people's everyday lives, ways needed to be identified that could 'build up a wider audience base ... solicit greater community support and ... secure increased corporate sponsorship.' (p. 11) The proposed philosophy of a reorganisation of those resources presently being offered

by the Government, via the LCSD and the HKADC, in the form of venue operation, funding support, e.g., grants, to performing arts groups, organising / presenting programmes and projects, performing arts education and related staff costs, led to several key recommendations. Among these were to put the four performing arts groups funded by the LCSD and the six three-year grantees funded by the HKADC under one roof, i.e. funded by one single body, and to establish a partnership between the LCSD venues (as venue operators) and performing arts groups (as programme providers); this Venue Partnership Scheme would incorporate all 13 performing art venues currently under the aegis of the LCSD.

2.5.2.6 Highlights post- 2006

The last 10 years has perhaps best been characterised by the establishment of a number of advisory and statutory bodies. For example, the Advisory Committee on Arts Development was created in 2008 with the remit of advising the Secretary for Home Affairs on matters relating to arts development, including:

- (a) issues in relation to the use of the arts portion of the HAB's Arts and Sport Development Fund and the operation of the Arts Capacity Development Funding Scheme with matching grants elements, as well as the assessment of applications received;
- (b) funding policies and strategies, including the review of the funding mechanism for the major performing arts groups;
- (c) issues in relation to the strategies for supporting the development of visual arts;
- (d) the promotion of cultural exchange and assessment of applications received under the Arts Development Fund to enhance the profile of the arts and culture of Hong Kong of Hong Kong in the Mainland and overseas, and;

- (e) strengthening of the cultural software, including arts programme development, audience building, arts education and manpower training, and other issues pertaining to the promotion of arts and culture in Hong Kong.

(http://www.hab.gov.hk/en/related_departments_organizations/asb45.htm)

In a similar vein, the Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs and Panel on Education was convened in May 2011 with the remit of briefing members on the promotion of arts and cultural education (arts education) in Hong Kong and on measures to strengthen coordination and create synergy among different stakeholders. The resulting paper outlined the measures being taken, together with details of the relevant resources being allocated, towards building a solid foundation in schools (as a means of developing students' aesthetic sensitivity, abilities and interests in the arts), providing professional training (at tertiary and vocational institutions), and grooming the gifted (through special and tailor-made programmes and activities). This was supported by details of the various arts education activities being organised outside schools in order to encourage students' and the public participation in cultural activities. Included within the work of the LCSD at a community building and audience level was the work of the Music Office. In addition to providing young people with instrumental and ensemble training classes and affordable music appreciation programmes, it 'offers orchestral training, touring exchange and outreach programmes to promote general music education among the public' (2011: 13-14); this is supplemented with initiatives such as the arrangement of concerts, an annual music camp and annual contests for youth orchestras and bands.

Most recently, prompted by the *Committee on Performing Arts Recommendation Report (I)* (2006) and influenced by the forthcoming development of the WKCD in terms of

expectations surrounding performance breadth and quality, the *Research Study on a New Funding Mechanism for Performing Arts Groups in Hong Kong* (2012) sited the funding situation of nine major performing arts organisations against the backdrop of Hong Kong's cultural policy developments to date. The Research Study sited Hong Kong's funding mechanism of its performing arts organisations against nine other international jurisdictions for the purposes of comparison, concluding in the process that a healthy performing arts sector is one that displays the characteristics of "Ecology", i.e. it has a balance of diverse and strong organisations of different scales, is supported by good communication and interaction, and actively engages with its various stakeholders; "Artistic", i.e. it displays artistic vibrancy at different levels, balances a respect for cultural heritage with the nurturing of new artforms / interdisciplinary work, and applauds experimentation; "Market", i.e. it develops a shared understanding of the demands of the sector by those engaged in it, encourages audience loyalty, and values market awareness while reacting to the needs of its consumers; "Finance and Funding", i.e. it enjoys the support of different communities, and demonstrates financial health and sustainability by employing mixed funding and revenue streams, and; "Management, People and Resources", i.e. it addresses artistic and management issues, manifests rigorous planning, and produces strong leaders recognised within both the sector and among the community at large.

2.5.3 Hong Kong's cultural policy

Hong Kong's existing cultural policy (http://www.hab.gov.hk/en/policy_responsibilities/arts_culture_recreation_and_sport/arts.htm)

is essentially a restatement, in condensed form, of the main messages emanating from the CHC's *Policy Recommendation Report*. A main 'Vision' – whereby Hong Kong, whose identity is both grounded in Chinese traditions and enriched by different cultures, becomes an

international cultural metropolis while life is celebrated through the pursuit of culture and creativity is the engine propelling everything forward – is duly supported by the pillars of “people-oriented”, “diversity”, “freedom of expression”, “holistic approach” and “partnership”, which together constitute the policy’s five ‘Basic Principles’. Forming the bridge between the ‘Basic Principles’ and the ‘Vision’ itself are five ‘Objectives’ in the form of the provision of opportunities for wide participation in culture and the arts, the provision of opportunities for those with potential to develop their artistic talents, support for the preservation and promotion of Hong Kong’s traditional cultures while encouraging artistic creation and innovation and the development of Hong Kong into a prominent hub of cultural exchanges. The practical demonstration of Hong Kong’s cultural policy has traditionally been through recurrent government funding, particularly to its ‘Big 9’ performing arts groups (the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, the Hong Kong Sinfonietta, the Hong Kong Dance Company, the Hong Kong Ballet, the City Contemporary Dance Company, the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre, the Chung Ying Theatre Company and Zuni Icosahedron). However, the CHC, in presenting its *Policy Recommendation Report*, was at pains to make the case for education in both culture and the arts. Not only does education sustain and nourish culture; education in culture and the arts ‘provides the ground, nutrition, and impetus for cultural development.’ (2003: 14) Even more specifically, ‘Arts education encourages the appreciation of, and participation in the arts, thus enriching people’s lives and contributing to their holistic development.’ (p. 14) Targeting the Education Commission’s proposals in the education reforms of 2000, while simultaneously drawing attention to the lack of value attached to arts education highlighted by the Curriculum Development Council in the same year, the *Policy Recommendation Report* stated that ‘The aims of education reform dovetail with our vision of cultural development ... We have come to the view that a policy for culture and arts education should focus on the development of a coherent,

continuous and diversified curriculum, the provision of quality support, and the promotion of partnership and community involvement.’ (2003: 15)

2.6 Discourses around “(the) arts”

2.6.1 “The arts”: what do we mean?

As with “culture”, “(the) arts” is a complicated term both to define and to conceptualise. Understood by the *Collins English Dictionary* to constitute ‘imaginative, creative and nonscientific branches of knowledge considered collectively, especially as studied academically’, certain authors, e.g., Richardson (1999) have instead taken a much broader view, treating them as anything made by people. This notion of the concept has its roots in antiquity, where all human activity was called art (or *scientia ars*); this was subdivided into two main groups, the useful arts and the performing arts, the former being related to areas where man could affect the quality of daily life, e.g., medicine or cooking, and the latter to the art of poetry and imagination – the forerunners of today’s *arts*.

At the heart of the modern issue is the fact that “the arts” encompasses a host of disciplines, a situation that has resulted in the deployment of specific phraseologies (“fine arts”, “liberal arts”, “performing arts”, “visual arts”, “decorative arts”, “applied arts”, and so on) to collectively describe the various forms contained therein. The debate has consequently centered on whether “the arts” is an applicable term when talking about such wildly diverse manifestations as portraiture, orchestra, ballet and Greek tragedy, while simultaneously conceding that such conceptual lumping together, which has the tendency to imbue such terms with an assumed unity based on notions of heritage, citizenry and creativity (Bamford, 2006), is a characteristic feature of both political and educational discourses. There is more general agreement that the arts – in whatever format they are presented, and wherever in the

world they take place – are an intrinsic element of how individuals operate, and that through them many of humanity’s most vital concerns are represented. In particular, they consistently function as remarkable meaning makers (Cornett, 1998; 2003), regardless of the specific cultural context. Whether considered separately or collectively, ‘Literature, art, drama, dance, and music ... uniquely engage our senses and sensibilities, making us active participants in ways of knowing impossible through other domains.’ (2003: 5)

2.7 “The arts” at an educational level

2.7.1 Articulating the importance of the arts

Cultural transformation, brought about partly by the forces of globalisation, makes ever-greater demands on governments as they attempt to anticipate future scenarios and ensure that the educational structures are in place to meet the identified challenges. At the same time, as the shift from a traditional emphasis on a high-growth, heavily industrialised, workforce-dependent model to one that is more globally integrated, production-eclectic and entrepreneurial in nature is effected, there is a growing recognisance that such preparations should be balanced against human well-being in ways that are moral, ethical and sustainable (UNESCO, 2005). This dichotomy is set within a framework of government policy debates dominated by a paradigm increasingly characterised by a rejection of the notion of subsidisation on either “public good” grounds or social welfare principles in favour of a greater reliance on the economic value represented by the area under discussion (Caust, 2003). Typically envisioned as occurring educationally through the tripartite thrust of multiculturalism, global thinking and life-long learning, and societally via an innate capacity for individual and global reflection, investigation, insight and understanding, the arts are increasingly being seen by many jurisdictions as having a crucial role to play in helping to resolve many of the current issues.

There is an across-the-board acceptance that the arts are a critical component of a holistic approach to human development: through a combination of their ability to synthesise ideas and relate phenomena to one another, they not only facilitate in the unified construction of meaning but their ability to fully and comprehensively involve participants is a fundamental element of community-building, leading to the establishment of shared connections and experiences; at yet another level they contribute directly to positive self-perceptions and identity, as well as increased empathy with others (Bamford, 2006). The claim has thus been made that an integration of the arts into daily life should permeate every sector of society, from children and youth to lifelong learners, so that an “arts for all” environment is the result (Bamford, Chan, & Leong, 2011). General acknowledgement also exists that the arts are educationally important: that they bring both balance (Chan, 1999) and quality (HKADC, 1999; Bamford, 2006) to the table, and that through them students learn to think, react and feel in ways that are profoundly different from other subject areas (McPherson, 2005). An “arts-rich” programme of education is therefore considered to be any plan, curriculum, practice or model of teaching and learning ‘that involves the arts in a significant and substantial way and has a direct impact on the education of children’ (2006: 22).

2.7.2 Towards a definition of “arts education”

The expression “arts education” is typically used either within the framework of a specific discipline or a variety of related disciplines in which one receives instruction, or else as the pedagogy used to initiate such education. But what exactly do we mean by the term? Although arts education is talked about as a given fact, it is at heart quite an abstract concept. As Liebau (2013) says, ‘You can’t practice “arts”, you can’t learn “arts” and you can’t teach “arts”. The only possibility is practicing, learning and teaching special subjects: music, or

dance, or visual arts, or theatre or whatever.’ (p. 66) In its place, arts education has come to be “defined” in terms of the unique benefits it is believed to bestow upon the end user. In this regard, largely as a result of the sophistication of its articulation, Elliot Eisner’s ‘10 Lessons the Arts Teach’ (2002) has resonated equally well with arts educators and the average man in the street. In short, the claim is made that the arts ‘provide lessons about making judgments, finding solutions and answers, celebrating multiple perspectives, engaging with complex forms of problem solving, understanding that words and numbers do not define the limits of cognition, attending to subtleties, thinking through materials and images, learning what can be said with images that words cannot, discovering through experience, and understanding that what adults believe is important’ (Carroll, 2011: 10). More recently, Pink (2005), the ‘Framework for 21st Century Learning’ (Partnership for the 21st Century, 2007) and Kagan’s ‘6 Reasons the Arts Matter’ (2009) have each, in their own way, served to consolidate the unique set of competencies that the arts deliver (not least interdisciplinary themes and particular skills that are essential for life-long learning) and provide arts educators with some ammunition as they attempt to stand firm against the prevailing standards-based high-stakes testing movement in schools, together with their preoccupation with products and assessments. In the case of the ‘Framework for 21st Century Learning’, the arts are seen as fostering:

- Learning and innovation skills, characterised by creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and communication and collaboration, and;
- Life and career skills, including flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, and leadership and responsibility

while for Kagan the arts matter because they: 1) Boost self-confidence among children who are behind in mastery of reading and arithmetic; 2) Help children develop a sense of personal agency; 3) Develop motor skills, procedural knowledge, and – most importantly – schematic knowledge; 4) Provide an opportunity to persuade children that investing effort to create an object of beauty is an ideal worthy of celebration, and that others can share in the enjoyment of a beautiful object; 5) Allow a number of children to work as a cooperative unit in an effort to foster an appreciation of an appropriate balance between concern with self and concern for others, and; 6) Provide opportunities for all children to experience and express feelings and conflicts that are not yet fully conscious and cannot be expressed coherently in words.

To a large extent, then, arts education is being defined through certain *themes* that it is adding to the discourse: purposeful engagement with art, empowerment through inquiry, and aesthetic meaning-making. At the same time, making sense of what arts education “means” also requires looking at its deliverables. Bamford (2006) contends that an adequate provision of arts education should include a wide range of arts experiences and include at least art (fine arts, craft and design), drama, music, dance and a range of culturally specific art forms. In addition, the contents of arts education should be defined by referral to local practices, and contemporary and previous heritage. In striving to define arts education, at its heart is the notion that ‘an arts-rich model ... is endowed with provisions that serve to develop cultural heritage for young people and enable them to create their own artistic language and to contribute to their own global development (emotional and cognitive)’ (pp. 17-18).

2.7.3 Contextualising arts education

The arts are intimately tied up with society, functioning as constructions of its collective beliefs while simultaneously being influenced by its formulating principles (Emery, 1999).

Context is thus fundamental to an understanding of arts education (Bamford, 2006). However, context is itself both a complex social, political and economic milieu wherein theory and practice are enacted (Freedman & Hernández, 1998) and a dynamic, constantly shifting web of contradicting realities that coexist, collide and interface (Keifer-Boyd, 1996), within which interpretation and meaning regularly change. Although context can be read at many levels, for our purposes three influences – cultural, social / historical and political – will suffice.

2.7.3.1 The cultural influence

An awareness of cultural heritage is considered to be an essential aspect of understanding human experience and the establishing of a cultural identity. Just as there is an intrinsic belief that arts education assists the development of cultural awareness, so too is there a recognition of art as a force for civilising humanity. The cultural aim of arts education thus reflects the significance of the arts as a legacy of historical civilisation and national heritage. Allied to this philosophy is the view that democratisation of culture can be achieved through arts education. As a way of assisting in ensuring social equity, all children within a democratic arts curriculum receive cultural education, especially in relation to developing an appreciation of the arts. Within this arts-as-a-proactive-social-force context, “arts as a cultural agent” is identified by Bamford (2006) as one of seven major trends in arts education which have impacted upon practices as they are typically experienced around the world. In this model, the teacher operates in the guise of “mediator of culture”, bringing to children ‘socially derived perspectives of cultural refinement and discernment’ (p. 36). Perhaps originating from Dewey’s (1934) view of them as the expression of the relationship between material, process and ideal, with the artwork or performance existing as the embodied realisation of the interaction between people and their environment, the role of the arts in social action and social reconstruction, together with the role of culture in society, is thus accentuated.

Recognising the enormously wide range of practices that exist worldwide, Bamford's definition is based on the *impact* that arts education can have in terms of encouraging students' critical thinking, problem solving, and reflection: 'At the heart ... [i]s the notion that [it] is endowed with provisions that ... enable them to create their own artistic language and to contribute to their global development (emotional and cognitive).' (2006: 17-18)

2.7.3.2 The social / historical influence

Nor has our concept of what constitutes arts education remained static; instead, there are a number of historical factors that have influenced its context and nature. From an epistemological standpoint, concepts of knowledge, learning and teaching all have their origins in philosophy, different distinctions (or paradigms) related to changing views of knowledge over the centuries resulting in the emergence of different art traditions. Sæbø (1998, 2013) identifies three of these, which she labels *art as handicraft*, *art as a personal expression* and *art as experience*: these correspond to an emphasis on the mimetic craft, the expressive, and the transformative experience respectively.

The aim of the first (and oldest) of these was to imitate and portray nature as honestly as possible, based on an acquisition of knowledge gained through scientific studies. The role of the individual as an independent, artistic being (along with a separate concept of "the arts") only emerged in the mid-1700s; spurred by developments in the natural sciences, this gave way in the 1800s to a more clinical, detached 'observe, measure and record' approach, whereby interest and importance were focused on the final product and result. Either way, Sæbø views this "pure" tradition as being most clearly realised today in art production situations where the aim is to reproduce a given model, and where "success" is measured in those terms. The expressive tradition, on the other hand, has its origins in the notion of the

beauty encapsulated within art itself, as opposed to its relationship to something else. This reaction to the overtly naturalistic approach to knowledge found its outlet in the “spiritual science” of Aesthetics, wherein the role of emotions as part of the cognitive process assumed greater importance. This was the germ that led to the 19th century Romantic tradition of artistic expression. Today, arts education within this tradition takes children’s physical and exploratory movements and expressive activities and uses them as the basis for a carefully planned and executed programme of study. A desire to free art from its strict adherence to either naturalism or romanticism essentially marked the advent of modernism, conceptualised via the transformative experience. Deriving equally from critical philosophy and constructivism, human creativity is ‘a result of the dialectic between nature/sense/theory (the objective) and spirit/feeling/practice (the subjective)’ (p. 43), with art a transformative and transforming experience. Specifically, it is through “the creative playfulness” (Sæbø, 2011) that connections between the subjective and the objective are made and experience becomes, in Dewey’s (1934) words, ‘the result, the sign and the reward of that interaction or organism and environment which ... is a *transformation* of interaction into *participation* and *communication*’ (p. 22).

Today, all three traditions co-exist, or – in the best case scenario – are integrated as part of a more holistic understanding of arts and what art is about in society and education. Specifically, it is the interaction between the learner and the arts that occupies a central position in modern pedagogy, and which has come to be formulated within the overarching concept known as aesthetic learning processes (Austring & Sørensen, 2006; Best, 1998; Hohr, 2002; Hohr & Pedersen, 1996; Sæbø, 1998). At the same time, interactions based on the interpersonal relationships between learners, teachers and the artwork within the social context of arts practices are vital in ensuring that the quality of the aesthetic learning

processes are maintained.

2.7.3.3 The political influence

Arts education can perhaps be said to be most strongly influenced by the political context in which it operates (Wimmer, 2013). To put it more bluntly, talking about arts education is meaningless ‘without adding who provides arts education, and for whom, and in which political ... circumstances it is provided’ (p. 38). In attempting to understand why well-intentioned arguments in support of arts education all too frequently founder on the rocks of political pragmatism, a clearer understanding of both the theory and practice of policymaking *per se* is required. According to Trowler (2003), policymaking is often thought about in terms of being either rational or incremental in nature. The rational model is based on the idea that policymakers, having considered a number of alternative ways to solve an identified problem, choose the best option (Etzioni, 1967). The incrementalist model, on the other hand, views policymakers as “muddling through” (Lindblom, 1959), their efforts appearing uncoordinated or even contradictory as a reaction to changing social circumstances. However, as Ball (1994) elaborates, ‘Policy is both text and action, words and deeds, it is what is enacted as well as what is intended ... Policies are crude and simple. Practice is sophisticated, contingent, complex and unstable.’ (p. 10) In other words, the policymaking process – following Rein’s (1983) three identified steps of *problem (or issue) setting*, *the mobilisation of the fine structure of government (or other agency) action* and *the achievement of settlements in the face of dilemmas and trade-offs among values* – involves complexities in relation to the interpretation, negotiation and refinement of proposals. At the same time, the notion of ideologies (defined here as ‘a framework of values, ideas and beliefs about the way society is and should be organised ... [which] acts as a guide and a justification for behaviour’ (Hartley, 1983: 26-7)), whether pertaining to those that drive policymakers or to the

individuals tasked with putting policy into practice, also need to be considered. In relation to education, two sets of ideological forces – political and educational – are at work. The former may be an amalgam of neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism; the latter might be concerned with traditionalism, progressivism and social reconstructionism. Either way, policy, of whatever stripe, needs to be conceived of as something that is constantly changing; that is in equal measure text and discourse; that is almost always a compromise in terms of its encoding and decoding processes; that is reinterpreted as it is put into effect, and; whose conditioning and implementation are ideologically and culturally influenced.

2.8 The practice(s) of arts education

2.8.1 Curricular advocacy for the arts

Seismic shifts in the education landscape – engineered by a combination of internal and external forces, driven by increasing demands for accountability and fueled by various political, economic, cultural, technological and social agendas – have led to arts educators ‘grappling with an ongoing advocacy challenge to demonstrate how arts education relates to the development and support of broad and changing educational goals and outcomes’ (Sabol, 2013: 34). What this means in practical terms is that justification of the arts as subjects in their own right is not enough; instead, convincing evidence has to be provided that the outcomes can also support learning in other disciplines within the curriculum. Such evidence has come to be presented in the form of integrated teaching. According to Overland (2013), despite the fact it is only in the last two decades that any substantial empirical data have surfaced correlating instruction in the integrated arts with actual improvements in learning, preliminary findings point to benefits in a number of areas including improvements on standardised test scores, increased long-term retention, literacy readiness and overall attitude towards the subject matter.

2.8.2 Integrated arts teaching

The notion of what constitutes arts education has come to be viewed through the lens of what is known alternatively as integrated, interdisciplinary, blended or collaborative teaching. Theoretically, this approach is rooted in both the educational philosophy of progressivism (Dewey, 1934) and that of constructivism (Von Glaserfeld, 1995) and has two differing priorities: either knowledge and skills, or an individual's construction of meaning. However, it is also true to say that no consensus currently exists on what exactly is meant by “integrated arts” instruction. Overland (2013) cites the US Department of Education, which presents a broad conceptual statement in a 2010 position paper that it is ‘the practice of teaching across classroom subjects in tandem with the arts ... creating relationships between different arts disciplines and other classroom skills and subjects’ (p. 32). While useful as a starting point, clearly this leaves plenty of room for additional interpretation. Considerable differences have also been observed between teachers’ philosophies and their practices, with some music, science and language teachers credited with collaborating on unified goals, while in other cases individual teachers are left to wrestle single-handedly with infusing music instruction across multiple subject areas. The waters become even murkier ‘when programs using *arts integration* teaching (where a single objective is presented across multiple disciplines) are equated with *arts inclusion* teaching (where the arts are offered as equals with other disciplines, but their respective objectives remain uncoordinated)’ (pp. 32-33). The general rule appears to be that each approach should act as a supplement, not a substitute, for the other.

Regarding the legitimisation of integrated arts education, attempts to create a coherent model have been problematic, as exemplified by the Bresler (1995) and Wiggins (2001) dichotomy:

do the arts serve as a subservient knowledge base that supports non-art subject knowledge, or do they present students with unique learning experiences that are parallel and equal to those gained in non-arts learning? Cornett (2003) provides eight reasons for integrating the arts, citing Gardner's (1993) assertions that they 'develop the brain and give students the chance to "be smart in different ways"' (p. 9), that they 'develop cooperation, perseverance, self-regulation, discipline and the value for hard work – important skills for personal life and success in the workplace' (p. 10) and that they 'focus on alternative forms of assessment and evaluation' (p. 11); for her part, Overland (2013) notes that use of the integrated method 'combines ideas, terminology, or examples from multiple, unrelated subjects in ways that encourage a deeper understanding of the material – more than could be accomplished by presenting them separately' (p. 32).

2.8.3 Education / Learning “in” and “through” the arts

Centred around an ongoing discussion that views it as being geared towards the Deweyan (1934) notion of 'the continuity of esthetic experience with normal processes of living' (p. 10), arts education is typically framed through the lens of the respective merits and attendant benefits of the two processes of "Education / Learning in the Arts" (Arts Education) and "Education / Learning through the Arts" (Arts-in-Education) (UNESCO, 2005). In considering the wide variations that clearly exist in relation to the practices of integrated arts teaching, it is important that clear distinctions are drawn between these two approaches, together with an understanding of what their respective merits and attendant benefits are believed to be. Bamford (2006) describes education / learning “in” the arts as 'the sustained and systematic learning in the skills, ways of thinking and presentation of each of the art forms' (p. 12). Other authors have made the point that it aims not only to 'increase the expertise and knowledge of an art form through its practice or performance' (Overland, 2013:

33), but also to stimulate students' critical awareness and sensitiveness; as such, it is typically characterised by a conscious attempt on the part of the teacher to develop students' aesthetic abilities through guided experience tied to curricular goals (Lindström, 2012). Representing the flipside of the same coin, learning “through” the arts draws upon and builds on Gardner’s (1999) concept of the six “multiple intelligences” (bodily kinesthetic, musical, spatial, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalistic) possessed by all students in such a way as to represent the fullest integration of teaching (Cornett, 2003). The aim is to use ‘an art form to illustrate or enrich non-artistic content’ (2013: 33), the implication being that art should be seen as a vehicle for learning other subject content and adopted as a means for teaching more general educational outcomes. To that end, other subjects should be infused, especially social or cultural issues.

In terms of their respective impacts, that of education / learning “in” the arts lies in terms of improving attitudes to school and learning, enhancing cultural identity and increasing the sense of personal satisfaction and well-being. Although the acquisition of technical skills and the development of aesthetic appreciation are both catered for in education / learning “through” the arts, this approach goes beyond simply ‘teaching the arts or bringing arts subjects into curricula (arts education)’ (UNESCO, 2005: 1-2) by arming students with knowledge and skills that can be employed across the curriculum and help them develop seven “studio habits of mind” (Hetland *et al.*, 2007), including persisting, making connections and envisioning. Moreover, by advancing a holistic approach that encourages more reflective and self-analytical student behaviour, education / learning “through” the arts ‘enhances overall academic attainment, reduces school disaffection and promotes positive cognitive transfer’ (Bamford, 2006: 12).

2.9 Hong Kong's arts education policy

2.9.1 Educational reform in Hong Kong

Hong Kong's arts education policy has to be viewed within the wider context of the profound changes in education that the region has undergone since the 1997 handover (Ball, 1999; Hughes, 1999; Mok, 2003a). Hong Kong essentially redrew its education map with a reform of the entire system undertaken by the Education Commission of the HKSAR in 1999, the size and scale of which was unrivalled (Cheng, 2000; Mok & Chan, 2002; Mok, 2003b; Poon & Wong, 2004) inasmuch as nothing – from the academic structure to the curriculum, from assessment methods to the medium of instruction – was left untouched. Now in the long-term phase, the two main policy documents concerned with the delivery of the new Hong Kong curriculum (and within whose pages the changes, along with the reasons for them, are duly outlined) are *Learning for Life, Learning through Life – Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong* (Education Commission of Hong Kong, 2000) and *Learning to Learn – The Way Forward in Curriculum Development* (Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council, 2001).

2.9.1.1 Equality, equity and elitism

In common with similar initiatives carried out in other countries around the world, education reform in Hong Kong has been attempted largely with a view to promoting equality (defined here as ‘an equal opportunity to access education as well as an equal ability to benefit from educational provision’ (Poon & Wong, 2008: 37)) and equity (a process that ‘involves value judgments and differing understandings of what is normal and inevitable’ (Farrell, 1999: 158)), not only in this domain but also within the wider social and economic sphere. At the same time, elitism (‘the ideological commitment to the rule of a powerful group ... equated very often with the most talented groups simply because they are raised in a particular setting’

(2008: 38)) – despite the fact that it can be said to have played a crucial role in breeding Hong Kong’s business, academic and political leaders and so helped to maintain the city’s competitive edge – has been perceived as part of the existing problem and something to be rectified. Founded on the principle that ‘students will enjoy studying more without having to clear too many hurdles in the shape of public examinations’ (2008: 39), the “through-road” model and the related policies that have helped to implement such education (Education and Manpower Bureau, 2005) are at the heart of the reforms. At the same time, in order ‘to reduce examination pressure and create more room for students to develop their potential and engage in more meaningful activities’ (2008: 39), the Academic Aptitude Test (AAT), previously the biggest stumbling block in Hong Kong’s education system, was removed in December 2000 and the two previous public examinations (the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) and the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE)) merged into one in the form of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE), in 2012.

2.9.2 The history of Hong Kong’s secondary school music and visual arts curricula

The mission of arts education reform was heralded by the HKADC as that of “Creativity for All”, along with the assertion that arts education was ‘the key to meet the challenges of the 21st century’ and ‘the way to achieve quality education’ (1999: 2). Recognising the necessity for Hong Kong to cultivate an atmosphere in which citizens’ creativity could take flight, it thereby became ‘the first official document to state explicitly that arts education should provide students with learning models based on self-exploration that could foster their independent thinking, critical power and creative thinking, and enhance their interest in learning’ (Leong, 2010: 76). As such, Hong Kong’s arts education policy stresses the importance of the integrated approach to arts learning, primarily as a way of enabling students to acquire a better understanding and deeper insight across the various arts

disciplines and other subject areas. At the same time, the importance of life-wide learning is recognised and the use of different channels encouraged as a means of enabling students to broaden and diversify their arts learning experiences (Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council, 2001).

However, whereas the phasing out of the colonial system was the catalyst for a new regional identity culminating – in theory, at least – with Hong Kong’s cultural policy, its present-day music and visual arts curricula are the result of lengthy and convoluted historical backgrounds that are as much to do with the unique political situation created by the region’s colonial legacy as they are about the specific disciplines themselves.

2.9.2.1 Music education

It has been argued that the scope and content of Hong Kong’s secondary school music curriculum is, in large measure, a result of the political interplay between the governments of the UK, China and Hong Kong (Ho, 2000). As a reflection of the traditional categories of Imperial Chinese society, the focus of music education was initially on morally educating people as a means of maintaining social and political stability: specifically, the promotion of “refined music” (*yayue*) was seen as helping to cultivate the benefits of virtuous living. This was reinforced at a personal level through ritual, the interaction between the two being seen as forming the basis of individual self-control and, thus, desirable behaviour.

With the influence of European civilisation in the 19th century, Western art music became increasingly incorporated into everyday Chinese life, to the extent that it was seen as a way of accelerating the development of culture. The process of adoption and assimilation, while still maintaining China’s traditional ideological and social foundations, continued with the steady

introduction of music education institutions. However, it was the ceding of Hong Kong Island and adjacent small islands to Great Britain under the terms of the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842 which was to have the biggest impact in terms of political and cultural influence on the future direction of music education. Although music was not at that time part of the school curriculum, the “cultural invasion” of Christian missionaries from Protestant and Roman Catholic associations witnessed an influx of musical activity – principally in the form of singing and piano instruction – to the extent that by 1952 plans were formally underway for primary and secondary music education. In the same year, an amendment to the Education Ordinance banning politics from school saw the curtailment of Chinese music as an influence, leading to Hong Kong’s music education remaining a “colonial product”. The subsequent emphasis by colonially-educated Hong Kong music teachers on traditional Western art music in the 1960s and 1970s became the core musical knowledge taught in schools, and European-style singing and listening activities established themselves as the accepted modes of instruction.

The socio-political transformation that eventually led to Hong Kong’s return to China on 1st July 1997 was accompanied by the introduction of Chinese music into the Western-music-based curriculum in the early 1980s. This attempt to strike a balance between the influences of the two cultures continued throughout the 1990s, most notably with the promotion of civic education through music, was an attempt to develop students’ moral sensibilities and cultivate their national heritage. However, while the requirement for equality for Chinese music was mirrored in its inclusion within the general syllabuses for both the HKCEE and the HKALE (Fung, 1997), in practice teachers expressed concerns over its implementation, citing insufficient preparation and lack of support and other resources (Cham, 1998). Interestingly, even a concerted effort to emphasise Hong Kong’s cultural identity

through the formal music curriculum, spelled out in the document *School Education in Hong Kong: A Statement of Aims*, failed to fully realise the stated aim of helping students ‘develop a secure identity grounded in Hong Kong’s specific cultural context’ (Education and Manpower Branch, 1993: 22).

2.9.2.2 Visual arts education

In some respects, Hong Kong’s music and visual arts education share similar histories. According to Chan (1999), it was China’s contact with Western (European) art in 1579 via Jesuit missionaries which was to pave the way for its initial acceptance, an influence that was eventually to reach Canton, Macao and Hong Kong in the 18th century. However, it was not until the 1910s that art as an educational idea took hold within the Republic of China; largely brought about by political changes, the emphasis on art based around its utilitarian merits switched instead to a focus on it as a tool that could help bring about a more moral life based on its inherent aesthetic qualities. Aesthetic education was duly proposed as one of the five aims of education by China’s newly-appointed education minister, Tsai Yuan-pei (Fan & Yi, 1984; Kao, 1972), an idea that was to have a significant ideological influence on Hong Kong’s contemporary education system. Indeed, ‘The belief of Hong Kong people that a complete education should include moral, intellectual, physical, social, and aesthetic elements, and the idea that art is a language which reaches across borders originated primarily from Tsai’s educational ideas.’ (1999: 16)

Hong Kong’s independence from the mainland in terms of the development of its art education accelerated with the influx of immigrants post- 1949. As a result, art within the formal education system, defined here as both ‘hierarchically structured, [and] chronologically graded ... running from primary school through the university’ (Coombs *et*

al., 1973: 11) and that which is ‘responsible for teaching basic symbol systems, for fostering abstract thinking, and for conserving the culture’ (Reed & Loughran, 1984: 3), evolved gradually in response to changes in the social, economic, and political environment. Starting in 1951, art education was included among the other disciplines within the HKCEE, and by the 1960s had been instituted across the educational spectrum, from primary to university levels: indeed, an art curriculum for secondary schools was proposed by the Education Department at the beginning of that decade. However, it was not until the 1970s that major breakthroughs within formal art education started to occur. Four inspectors in charge of “art” were appointed in 1971, followed the next year by the establishment of the Curriculum Development Committee (CDC); with syllabuses for different subjects, including those in art, now in preparation the changes continued in the 1980s with subsidised programmes for Secondary 4 and 5 art classes, while funding for the procurement of art facilities was started in 1981. 1982 saw new syllabuses in “Art and Design” being introduced by the CDC for Secondary 1 to 5 students, a situation that was to see the number of art inspectors rise to fourteen by 1989. The attention of the general public with regard to art education was captured in the same year with the opening of Ti-I College, the first secondary school in Hong Kong which aimed to specifically nurture students with potential in the visual arts. Other important landmarks were Advanced Supplementary Level (ASL) and Advanced Level (AL) “Art and Design” syllabuses, prepared by the CDC in 1991 and 1992 respectively.

2.9.3 Roles of the HKCDC, CDI, HKADC and LCSD

Two bodies closely connected with Hong Kong’s Education Bureau (EDB) are involved, in different ways, with curriculum development. First established in 1972, then renamed as such in 1988 before being reconstituted in January 1992 as a result of fundamental changes to the way it was developed and delivered, the Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council

(HKCDC) is a free-standing advisory body given the responsibility of providing the Government of the HKSAR with recommendations on all matters relating to curriculum development for the local school system from kindergarten to sixth form. Boasting a wide membership that includes ‘heads of schools, practising teachers, parents, employers, academics from tertiary institutions, professionals from related fields or related bodies and representatives from the Hong Kong Examinations Authority, as well as officers from the Education Department’ (HKCDC, 2002b: 1), it has operated since September 1999 on a two-tier model that aims to mirror the development of a quality curriculum that is simultaneously attuned to the needs of both students and the community via the separation of its Standing and Key Learning Area (KLA) / Functional Committees. Within the EDB itself, the Curriculum Development Institute (CDI) is an individual discipline-specific body responsible for curriculum development and teacher training, along with learning and teaching materials at kindergarten, primary and secondary levels in Hong Kong.

Formed in 1995 as an independent statutory body with a specific mandate to advocate, promote and support an all-round development of the arts, the HKADC is likewise tasked with taking a lead role in the promotion of arts education. As such, its functions, as set out in the HKADC Ordinance, include developing and improving education in the arts with a view to improving the quality of life of the whole community; encouraging interest, understanding, knowledge and skill in the arts at all levels within the formal education system, and; striving for the creation of an environment conducive to ensuring that those with the ability and desire to pursue a career in the arts have the opportunity to do so and receive tuition (HKADC, 1996). At the same time the goal of the HKADC Arts Education Policy is ‘To encourage and promote the improvement of Arts Education at all levels of the formal education system and in the community’, while one of its four broad objectives remains ‘to foster greater

recognition and acceptance by the formal education system of the arts as a necessary component of a complete education’ (p. 1). In short, in accepting the challenges that come as part and parcel of taking a lead role in arts education promotion, the HKADC ‘recognises the arts as an integral part of everyday life and human communication and Arts Education as a lifelong appreciation of the creative process’ (p. 2). Created from the ashes of two municipal services departments in the form of the Urban Services Department and the Regional Services Department in 1999, the LCSD is responsible for providing quality performing arts services commensurate with Hong Kong’s development as a world-class city and events capital. This is delivered through providing performing arts facilities, presenting cultural programmes and administering funding to major performing arts groups. One of the five areas as part of its overall mission is to develop the arts and cultivate creativity. To this end it is tasked with ‘providing more arts education programmes for schools and the community to foster creativity, and to raise, in particular, young people’s cultural literacy’ (Committee on Performing Arts Recommendation Report (I), 2006: 8).

2.9.4 The place of arts education within the Hong Kong curriculum

A fundamental element of Hong Kong’s educational reforms is the notion of whole person development (Education Commission of Hong Kong, 2000; HKCDC, 2001). As a means of supporting and promoting such a transition, while simultaneously bringing about quality education within the formal curriculum (HKADC, 1999), the arts have been targeted by policymakers as having a hugely important role to play. The official ‘Position’ of Hong Kong’s arts education policy is thus stated as follows:

‘To enable every person to attain all-round development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics according to his / her own attributes so that he / she is

capable of life-long learning, critical and exploratory thinking, innovating and adapting to change.’

(<http://www.edb.gov.hk/mobile/en/curriculum-development/kla/arts-edu/index.html>)

2.9.4.1 Key learning areas

Consisting of Visual Art, Music, Drama and Dance, arts education (as the entitlement of every student) is now one of eight Key Learning Areas (KLAs). In common with other KLAs it is to be taught using new curricula. The four aims of the arts curriculum are:

- to develop creativity and critical thinking, nurture aesthetic sensitivity, and build up cultural awareness and effective communication;
- develop skills, knowledge and positive values and attitudes in the arts;
- gain delight, enjoyment and satisfaction through participating in arts-making activities, and;
- pursue a life-long interest in the arts

while the overall intention is ‘to enable students to broaden and diversify their arts learning experiences through different channels’ (HKCDC, 2002b: 52).

2.9.4.2 Arts education policy documents

The overarching policy document – the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (HKCDC, 2002b) – is supported by discipline-specific guides in the form of the *Music Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (HKCDC, 2003a) and the *Visual Arts Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (HKCDC, 2003b): while both elaborate on the aims of teaching interdisciplinary arts, interestingly the *Music Guide*

‘maintains the subject integrity ... by linking it with other art subjects using related concepts ... The *Visual Arts Guide* links ... with other art subjects through a common theme or topic of content’ (Wong, 2012: 101). According to the same author, the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide* states not only that ‘students’ learning of one art form can be enhanced through applying artistic concepts and skills developed in another art form to it’, but also that ‘students’ conceptual development in an art form can enhance and support the understanding of others’ (2002b: 54, 62). Given these stated aims, Hong Kong’s philosophy of arts education would appear to accord with Wiggins’ (2001) view that the arts can provide students with unique learning experiences that are “parallel and equal” to those gained in non-arts learning. When it comes to the aims of teaching interdisciplinary arts, those for Music and the Visual Arts stress maintaining the subject integrity of music by linking it with other art subjects using related concepts (HKCDC, 2003b: 62) and linking it with other art subjects through a common theme or topic of content (HKCDC, 2003a: 38) respectively. The content of both guides reflects Wiggins’ conceptual connection theories (2001) and Bresler’s (1995) coequal, cognitive integration style. However, both guides only suggest possibilities for implementing an interdisciplinary arts curriculum, rather than stating a mandatory integration policy. Responsibility for the implementation of the curriculum falls on individual school administrators and teachers, who are left to work out their individual school-based integrated arts curricula. In this sense, Hong Kong’s arts education policy is very much a descriptive, as opposed to prescriptive, policy.

2.9.5 Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies: a meeting of minds?

Both Hong Kong’s cultural policy and its arts education policy are formulated along similar kinds of lines, inasmuch as the aims of education reform are seen as aligning with the CHC’s vision of cultural development (HKCDC, 2003a; 2003b) and “arts education” has been

defined as arts and cultural education (Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs and Panel on Education, 2011). These are themselves based on a cultural policy that is ‘committed to upholding the freedom of cultural and artistic creation and expression, as well as providing an environment that keenly supports the development of culture and the arts’ (Committee on Performing Arts Recommendation Report (I), 2006: 5) and an arts education policy that advocates and promotes the arts because they are seen as ‘developing students’ creativity, nurturing their aesthetic sensitivity and life-long interest in the arts, so as to facilitate their whole-person development and enhance their cultural literacy’ (2011: 1-2).

Assisted in these endeavours by dedicated bodies with specific mandates to simultaneously strive to build upon and develop the existing arts curricula, while forging closer artistic and cultural links with schools and the community through various initiatives and activities, the stage would appear to be well and truly set to allow Hong Kong to create both a fertile “soil” to enable a cultural environment to flourish via its cultural policy *and* help to develop well-rounded students by providing them with sufficient workplace and life skills through its arts education policy, thereby realising its lofty ambition of becoming an international cultural metropolis (CHC, 2003), itself a prelude to the ultimate achievement of “world city” status (Kong, Gibson, Khoo, & Semple, 2006).

2.10 What kind of bird is this?

‘Cultural policy and educational policy have been likened to the two wings of the same bird, which needs both in order to fly.’

(Leong, 2011)

Almost 20 years following its return to China on 1st July 1997, Hong Kong finds itself on the

threshold of an exciting new era: as part of an ultimate desire to achieve “world city” status (Kong, Gibson, Khoo, & Semple, 2006), it has publicly declared its intention – via its cultural policy – of becoming an international cultural metropolis. The document’s overarching vision, which specifically highlights the city’s unique identity, forged via its Chinese traditions, notably also espouses the enrichment that different cultures can bring to the table; indeed, the pursuance of culture is framed as a celebration of life itself. Driving all this forward, and thereby representing the measure of what constitutes progress within the wider community, is creativity. Complementing these grand cultural aspirations is Hong Kong’s radical overhaul of its education system, encapsulated in its tripartite promotion of multicultural education, the fostering of a global mindset and an encouragement of a life-long learning philosophy, all aimed at giving students a greater individual stake in their educational development. The catalyst that is both ‘the key to meet the challenges of the 21st century’ and ‘the means to achieve quality education’ (HKADC, 1999: 2) is arts education, not least because of its perceived ability to nurture in students of all levels the “generic skill” of creativity, defined as ‘the ability to generate original ideas and solve problems appropriate to the contexts’ (HKCDC, 2001: 24).

“Arts education”, then, through its official definition as arts and cultural education (Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs and Panel on Education, 2011), does not simply link but irrevocably *unites* the two sectors. Counterbalancing the weighty responsibility placed on the shoulders of those specifically-mandated government-related bodies to establish closer links with one another with the knowledge that, if successfully executed, the more effective delivery of policies to address critical cultural issues might be better assured, the philosophical centrepiece to this study is formed by Leong’s (2011) compelling analogy of cultural and (arts) educational policy as the two wings of a bird which, when operating in

unison, not only allow it to fly but also have the potential to yield rewards at both a sectoral and a stakeholder level. In attempting to get to the heart of these matters, the study is essentially an investigation into the particular philosophies, rationales and justifications that stand behind and underpin the two policies, the means and methods by which they are being passed on and received by the various stakeholders, and the nature and form of their subsequent delivery and implementation by the relevant practitioners. To what extent, then, have the policymakers' "conceptualisation" and "communication" of their respective documents, together with the "operationalisation" on the part of the practitioners involved, resulted in the achievement of synergies, in turn leading to the creation of mutual benefits? In other words, 19 years into the handover, 16 years after the education reforms, and 13 years since the CHC's recommendations formed the basis of Hong Kong's cultural policy, where are we in terms of the two wings of the cultural / educational bird?

2.11 Taking flight vs. winging it: sectoral ambiguities and tensions

'(Yet) it is a common experience that cultural and educational policies rarely work together to achieve the synergies that can potentially create mutual benefits for the two sectors ...'

(Leong, 2011)

Despite a theoretical meeting of minds between the cultural and the (arts) education sectors, a number of ambiguities and tensions at a practical level are presently conspiring to derail long-term development. Within the cultural sector, these issues can be neatly categorised under the three headings of leadership, identity and sustainability (Leong, 2013), while on the arts education side the integrated curriculum is the umbrella under which many of the concerns can be conveniently grouped. Intra- and inter-sectorally, the broad notion constituted by partnerships represents the area where the most work remains to be done.

2.11.1 The cultural sector

2.11.1.1 Leadership

While the oft-repeated epithet of Hong Kong as a cultural “desert” may no longer be tenable, a host of civil dissatisfactions with the Government of the HKSAR – among them the widening wealth gap, rising costs of living and deficiencies within the political system itself (Sing, 2012) – have seen perceptions as they relate to indices based on “quality of life” and the “performance of government” (Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, 2012) suffer marked declines within recent years. Given the inherent constraints brought about by a government that is not democratically elected (instead its leader, in the form of a Chief Executive, is approved by Beijing), it is important that the leadership proves its capability through connecting with different segments of society and demonstrating its grasp of what is required through a sense of purpose and direction for the Hong Kong people.

Hong Kong’s cultural “vision”: hands-off or offhand?

As it moves forward into the new millennium, Hong Kong aims to position itself as the city most capable of bridging China and the world, in the process opening up new opportunities on the cultural front. Guided by its ultimate aspiration to become an international cultural metropolis, the Government of the HKSAR has consequently made it its mission to create an environment which is conducive to the freedom of artistic expression and creation, primarily through the development of culture and the arts, and via the encouragement of wider participation in cultural activities. In so doing, it has consciously fashioned a policy which eschews *prescription* in favour of *description*, refuses to impose an official definition on what constitute “culture” and “the arts”, and avoids dictating either how artistic creation should be interpreted or the contents of creativity mandated. In short, its position is that of a

‘facilitator ... guided by the four principles of respect for freedom of creation and expression, provision of opportunities for participation, encouragement of diversified and balanced development, and the provision of a supportive environment and conditions’ (Leong, 2014: 10).

Views among the wider public and the media have, however, tended to downplay the Government’s efforts when it comes to culture and cultural policy. Indeed, the typical viewpoint is that a low priority is afforded to culture: not only does it take a back seat to the traditional driver in Hong Kong that is finance, but the finality of its placement within the title of one of the two offices tasked with its advocacy and promotion, the LCSD, has not gone unnoticed (Kwong, 2011). Similarly, there is a feeling that no real consensus exists as to what cultural policy means, or indeed if Hong Kong has a policy on culture, since it is alternately described as referring to the development and preservation of its arts and cultural heritage or as an area of public policy-making that governs activities related to the arts and culture (Ho, 2012). Part of the problem undoubtedly lies in the perception of the way it is handled within the Government. For years, culture has been just one of the miscellaneous policy areas grouped under the HAB, along with sports, civic affairs, youth development, building management and community relations. Compounding the sense of frustration is the fact that a much-anticipated Cultural Bureau, which would – in theory, at least – succeed in demonstrating the government’s commitment to raising the profile of culture has, for various reasons, failed to materialise. In addition, important decisions such as funding are handled by senior civil servants (Administrative Officers), who are deployed to different departments during their career and are therefore “bureaucrats” (as opposed to “specialists”) in the specific areas that they are required to oversee. Moreover, because they are typically reassigned after three years, a lack of consistency and responsibility for decision-making is

often the result (Kwong, 2011).

2.11.1.2 Identity

Formed initially within the context of an elite-ruled, market-driven environment where multiple cultures co-existed but rarely intermingled, and where the common denominator of success was money, the collective struggle in the search for a cultural identity nearly 20 years after the 1997 handover is providing a host of challenges for a generation of Hongkongers who have never known colonial rule and whose complex relationship with their Chinese heritage is still in the process of being forged (Leong, 2013). With progressively fewer individuals regarding themselves as Chinese citizens (preferring instead the epithets “Hong Kong citizens” or “Chinese Hong Kong citizens” (Simpson, 2012)), the resulting “de-sinofication”, together with the attendant issue of how Hong Kong – in the absence of a cohesive multicultural policy – tackles cultural diversity, respect and integration, is leading more people to seek expression or confirmation of their identity through the vehicle of the arts and culture (Clarke, 2002).

Hong Kong’s core cultural “values”: speaking with one voice?

There is a view (Ho, 2012) that a cultural policy should promote specific values, since the term “culture” is bound up with the ways that people conduct their lives, specifically the acquisition of “mental goods” such as self-esteem, a sense of dignity, feelings of achievement and security, freedom from anxiety, and so on. In this context, core values stand at the root of culture; consequently, any cultural policy that does not respect a society’s core values (whichever those that are identified) is doomed to fail.

Core values are inextricably linked, and must be crystallised, as part of the overall identity

process. Whilst not perhaps in the midst of an identity crisis *per se*, Hong Kong's cultural identity is most assuredly in a state of ambiguity: 'Chinese without being only Chinese ... [accepting] western civilisation without identifying with the west ... [having the ability to] observe universal values without losing our own cultural identity' (Margaret Ng, quoted in England, 2012), it has also been described as 'questioning, engaged in critical thinking and creative' (Danny Yung, quoted in England, 2012). At the same time, there is a certain intangible strand to the concept, expressed through a kind of "collective community" that rallies around issues such as shared heritage as a kind of socio-cultural resource at once both connected to, and distinct from, mainland China (Henderson, 2008). In a very real sense, Hong Kong's cultural policy is the *sine qua non* of cultural identity: the CHC deliberately chose "Diversity with Identity" as the title of its second Consultation Paper in November 2002 in order to reflect what it considered to be Hong Kong's cultural position, while simultaneously acknowledging that 'many Hong Kong people do not show a strong affiliation with their ethnic cultural identity' (2003: 10). As a result, the official view is that Hong Kong people's cultural identity 'should start from local culture, be grounded in Chinese cultural traditions, and possess a global vision' (p. 12). As things have turned out, however, the concerns were well-founded. Rather than becoming culturally more closely affiliated with mainland China as a result of a diminution in the gap between social and economic development, as the CHC predicted, almost the opposite has happened: nearly 20 years into the handover, Hong Kong's tensions are 'centred on the sustainability of its core cultural values, particularly its outlook on freedom and the rule of law' (Leong, 2013: 35) in the face of constantly shifting political and societal tensions. In pinpointing how best to remedy what he considers to be the main weakness with Hong Kong's existing cultural policy, the same author states: 'Such a policy would need to clarify the cultural identity of a society that is established by the collective efforts of people who come from different social, economic and

religious backgrounds.’ (p. 35)

2.11.1.3 Sustainability

The creation of a sustainable cultural milieu requires, amongst other things, a commitment to audience building, the education of audiences and practitioners, the nurturing of a quality workforce, the establishment of suitable venue policies, and the conducting of in-depth research studies. Such community engagement through cultural activities ‘help[s] people make sense of their environment, express their aspirations and celebrate their uniqueness’, while the process of place making, ‘the co-creation of distinctive and liveable environments’ (Leong, 2013: 36), means that local cultures are developed and valued. A key element to ensuring the sustainable development of local cultures is arts education; however, it is important that sustainability within this context is not simply equated with “arts marketing” or that arts education is reduced to “outreach” without fully considering how best to raise the cultural literacy of the wider community.

Hong Kong’s cultural “environment”: taking the long-term view?

Historically, Hong Kong’s low priority given to cultural development – attributable in equal measure to a non-committal attitude on the part of the colonial government on the one hand and the traditional absence of significant pressure from the general population on the other – has, even since its emergence in the 1970s and 1980s, and despite concerted efforts on the part of the arts community, tended to be long on hardware and short on software. As a result, an increase in the number of performance venues has not until relatively recently started to have been matched with the recognition that audiences for such locations need to be created, nurtured and maintained, that measures should be in place to assess the impact that such programmes are having at a practical level, and that an audience’s cultural engagement can

and should extend to the communities of which they are a part: in short, that venues are themselves simply one constituent element in a potentially thriving cultural environment.

Sustainability is thus the development of a cultural ecosystem that eschews the “quick-fix” mentality of an ever-increasing roster of programmes and facilities, or else resorts to an over-simplification of crucial elements within the infrastructure (such as strategies for inclusion, diversity and co-creation), in favour of a long-term vision built on the principles of engagement, nurture and the empowerment of communities through meaningful and impactful activities. Unfortunately, careful consideration into matters such as accessibility, affordability, equity, cultural rights and citizenship is all too often characterised by the adoption of populist values, the failure to fully explore opportunities for the creative integration of popular and high culture with indigenous cultures, and the neglect of life-long learning (Leong, 2013). Just as expanding participation in cultural activities and fostering community well-being is fundamental to Hong Kong’s future growth and prosperity, local cultures cannot be developed and sustained over the long term without community partnerships and cooperation. This is particularly true if policies, plans and strategies are to be appropriately designed, well accepted and effectively implemented. The most noticeable omission of Hong Kong’s current cultural policy lies in setting out precisely how the vision of an international cultural metropolis is to be realised and maintained.

2.11.2 The (arts) education sector

2.11.2.1 The integrated curriculum

Whole-person development – as a way of coping with the challenges of the 21st century – has seen the school curriculum in Hong Kong since 2000 aim to help students ‘to learn through cultivating positive values, attitudes and a commitment to life-long learning; and through

developing generic skills to acquire, construct and communicate knowledge' (HKCDC, 2001: v). Three interconnected components, made up of eight Key Learning Areas, nine Generic Skills, and Values and Attitudes, make up the curriculum framework, with schools being 'encouraged to use the school-based curriculum, and teachers ... requested to tailor-make their own teaching materials' (Poon & Wong, 2008: 37). While a complicated concept in itself to define, the notion of what constitutes arts education has come to be viewed through the lens of what is alternatively labelled integrative, integrated, interdisciplinary, blended or collaborative teaching. Within the Hong Kong context, integrative learning in the arts 'is a learning approach that leads students to acquire a better understanding and deeper insight across the arts and other KLAs ... life-wide learning and integrative learning in the arts should be encouraged so as to enable students to broaden and diversify their arts learning experiences through different channels' (2001: 58).

Diss-integration: rebellion in Hong Kong's ranks?

Integrative / Integrated learning and teaching – whether in the arts or otherwise – is an approach that has its roots in a combination of Dewey's progressive philosophy of education (1934) and that of constructivism (Von Glaserfeld, 1995), and whose priority can either be that of knowledge and skills or else of an individual's construction of meaning. Generally accepted as the practice and process of teaching across subjects in association with the arts in order to create relationships between both the other subjects and the different arts disciplines (US Department of Education, cited in Overland, 2013), there are nevertheless sometimes considerable differences in terms of philosophy and practice, with some teachers (from different disciplines) actively collaborating on unified goals while others single-handedly attempt to infuse one instruction across multiple subject areas. Contributing to the mix are the twin approaches of education / learning "in" and "through" the arts, both of which, despite

their shared philosophy of the integrated curriculum (Vars, 1991), vary fundamentally in terms of their underlying conceptions, along with the perceived merits and benefits.

It is also the case that, despite the general consensus that each approach should act as a supplement, not a substitute, for the other, curriculum and arts integration research to date is frequently at odds in terms of best procedures and outcomes for students: Bresler (1995), for example, has noted that teachers typically practice a variety of integrative styles – what she labels “pseudo-artistic”, “social”, “co-equal” or “balanced”, and “affective” – depending on their level of expertise. The *Arts Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* states not only that ‘students’ learning of one art form can be enhanced through applying artistic concepts and skills developed in another art form to it’, but also that ‘students’ conceptual development in an art form can enhance and support the understanding of others’ (HKCDC, 2002b: 54, 62). Given these aims, arts education within Hong Kong’s education reform plan would appear to accord with Wiggins’ (2001) view that the arts can provide students with unique learning experiences that are “parallel and equal” to those gained in non-arts learning. When it comes to the aims of teaching interdisciplinary arts, those for Music and the Visual Arts stress maintaining the subject integrity of music by linking it with other art subjects using related concepts (HKCDC, 2003a: 62) or through a common theme or topic of content (HKCDC, 2003b: 38) respectively. Consequently, while it can be said that the content of both guides reflect Wiggins’ conceptual connection theories (2001) and Bresler’s (1995) “co-equal”, cognitive integration style, the fact that the implementation of an interdisciplinary arts curriculum is built on the suggestion of possibilities, not stated as part of a mandatory integration policy, means that it is left up to individual schools and teachers which strategies they wish to employ.

Prefacing her findings with the observation that because the integrated arts curriculum is not a mandatory policy, ‘both the teaching profession and schools administrators are not widely interested in such initiatives’ (2012: 104), Wong outlines six reasons why the integrated curriculum is presently struggling to gain traction in Hong Kong: 1) The dichotomy between a focus on knowledge and skills and a focus on an individual’s construction of knowledge is resolved in a linear process; 2) There remains a perception in Hong Kong that arts integration means a loss of professional status for subject teachers; 3) Subject specialists are unaccustomed to the demands of professional co-teaching; 4) Hong Kong’s professional educators have little experience conceptualising cross-discipline teaching and learning; 5) The existing education system is simply overwhelmed by the demands of Hong Kong’s system wide education reform, and; 6) Because there is no mandatory requirement for schools to implement integrated arts curricula, the vagaries of individual school management have produced a plethora of integrations that elude a common definition. Other studies have revealed opposition on the part of both principals and teachers on the basis that it fails to support public examinations or improves the quality of schools’ intakes (Morris & Chan, 1997), a general lack of understanding as to what is involved (Yeung & Lam, 2007), and worries over reduced academic standards (Vickers, Kan, & Morris, 2003). Clearly, then, the development of integrated arts curricula needs administrative support, with policymakers setting the necessary requirements. There also needs to be a schoolwide sharing system put in place to disseminate positive learning outcomes. Second, development of integrated arts curricula needs the support of policymakers. When it becomes clear that integration success in a few schools positively impacts enrollment, and when a considerable number of successful exemplars emerge, other schools may wish to follow suit. In addition, mandating that a certain percentage of the 135 Other Learning Experiences (OLE) hours to be devoted to integrated arts curricula could also stimulate schools to offer these curricula. However, unless

a mandatory policy is in place, Hong Kong schools will not be willing to take the first steps.

2.11.3 The cultural and (arts) education sectors

2.11.3.1 Partnerships

‘A more synergistic co-operation ... would enable more effective enactment of policies to address critical issues such as cultural participation and consumption, and accessibility to cultural education.’

(Leong, 2011)

Cultural policy and (arts) education policy, when working effectively together, have the potential to simultaneously equip students with the skills they need to meet the challenges of the knowledge economy *and* allow a location to realise its cultural aspirations. An important premise of the present study is that synergies between the cultural and arts education sectors can lead to the more effective enactment of policies, in turn enabling critical issues such as cultural participation, consumption and accessibility to be addressed. The streamlining of cultural and arts education policy as it pertains to the Netherlands, within the framework of the concept of ‘joined-up government’ (Hood, 2000), is hereby offered by way of supporting this claim.

‘Joined-up government’: old wine in New (Labour) bottles

The idea that many of a government’s goals can only be achieved through coordination of various kinds is not a new one. Likewise, that the antithesis of effective coordination is “departmentalism”: exemplified by ‘tunnel vision, mutual export of problems and preoccupation with defending institutional turf in what were commonly termed “vertical silos” ... [it] ... has long been identified as a bureaucratic failing’ (see Albrow, 1970, 88;

Hood 1976, 17–20; Peters 1998, 295–6)’ (Hood, 2005: 22). ‘Joined-up government’, then, the more modern term coined to describe the old administrative doctrine of “coordination” – whereby all the parts of the executive government should be interconnected and complementary to one another such that a single face, which operates as a single unit on multiple yet interrelated problems, is presented to the populace – was, in essence, simply a neologism applied to a different scenario (in this case, Tony Blair’s New Labour-era UK government of 1997). In equal measure borrowing from their (Conservative) predecessors while simultaneously putting a fresh “spin” on the whole concept, the four main means and mechanisms by which New Labour reconstituted / refashioned ‘joined-up government’ to suit its own ends are identified by Hood as: “authority” (defined as ‘the establishment of an identifiable coordinator with power to command or modify the inputs or activities of different units’), “architecture” (to denote ways of linking up government activities that are literally part of the building or otherwise “hard wired” into equipment in ways that cannot readily be circumvented), “social bonds and group interaction” (the idea that government can be effectively joined-up through socially integrated groups or networks) and “markets, incentives, and intermediaries” (an idea advanced as an alternative to those approaches that stress hierarchical mechanisms for coordination, and relying heavily on the principle of entrepreneurship) (pp. 28-34).

Partnerships between the arts and culture in the Netherlands

At least four underlying goals have been identified in ‘joined-up government’. The first is concerned with increasing the effectiveness of different policies through eliminating contradictions and tensions, while the second aims to make better use, by getting rid of duplication and contradictions between programmes, of resources. A third goal seeks to improve the flow of good ideas and co-operation between different stakeholders in a

particular policy sector, in the process providing “synergy” or more intelligent ways of working. The purpose of the fourth goal is to provide those citizens who use them with a more integrated or “seamless” set of services (The World Bank, 2006).

Potentially the most important implication for Hood of ‘joining-up’ is that it can be achieved ‘without having to pay any price for coordinated activity in reduced local autonomy, confused lines of accountability, and weakening of the specialization and expertise that is conventionally associated with the much-deprecated “silo” principle of functional departmental organization’ (2005: 23). While not perhaps consciously adopting the principles of New Labour’s version of ‘joined-up government’, there are nevertheless echoes in the approach adopted by the Dutch during roughly the same era, particularly as it pertains to the arts and culture. A partnership between the two has long existed in the Netherlands. In large part, this is associated with the interlinked issues of subsidisation and funding as it pertains to artistic “quality” and the creation of a sustainable cultural infrastructure. At the same time, this has been matched by an increasing recognition of the benefits and relevance of culture to society as a whole, supported by the necessity of nurturing a more entrepreneurial mindset among cultural organisations through encouraging them to look to their markets, i.e. audiences. Although a department for arts and culture, together with a minister and / or state secretary responsible for the cultural portfolio, has existed since as far back as 1918 (represented by the formation of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences (OKW)), it was only when the Ministry of Welfare, Public Health and Culture became the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) in 1994 that there gradually developed a formalised shift in emphasis within cultural policy. Crucially, the recognition of arts education as an essential element of cultural policy came during the period around 2006 when the Minister of Culture, Ronald Plasterk of the Social Democrats, switched the focus from the *social* value of

arts and culture to their *intrinsic* value. As a result, cultural participation became one of the core themes of the 2009-2012 cultural policy and the general goal of ‘culturele en kunstzinnige vorming’ (ckv).

Culturele en kunstzinnige vorming (Cultural and artistic education)

‘Culturele en kunstzinnige vorming’ (ckv) is a compulsory subject in upper secondary education (14-18), the aim being that students should learn to make reasoned and informed choices about arts and cultural activities that are meaningful or of interest to them. Essentially, this involves participation in cultural activities in order to experience culture. Ckv students take part in diverse activities such as visiting exhibitions, attending concerts, watching plays or films, and reading books or poems. The cultural activities have to meet generally accepted standards of quality; students keep a record of their cultural activities – including the results of practical work – in a course portfolio. As part of the incentive to partake in cultural activities, ckv students receive a ‘Cultuurkaart’ (Culture Card) which allows them to receive discounts on entrance fees to theatres, cinemas, museums, etc. At the end of the process, a school examination, which is part presentation and part speech, takes place along with a written report based on the student portfolio. Students provide background information in their presentations on the choices made and reflect on their experiences and findings (ComACE, 2016).

In terms of assessing how the notion of joined-up government, as applied in this instance to culture and the arts, can lead to the more effective enactment of policy, the fact that in the Netherlands both are the responsibility of a single department is clearly a critical first step. In addition to this streamlining of the policy process, the effective dissemination of arts and cultural education is enhanced by giving secondary schools greater autonomy in shaping their

curriculum, while from a student point of view experience gained from a combination of taking part in a wide variety of cultural activities, knowledge accrued from visits to cultural institutions, and exposure to artistic disciplines better equips them to make reasoned and informed choices (Council of Europe/ERICarts, 2016). This is set within a wider framework of a variety of programmes and incentives, all concerned with the encouragement of cultural participation. As such, the national government is responsible for the national infrastructure, the provincial government for provincial support, and the municipal or local government for implementation. Moreover, the Cultural Participation Fund (Fonds voor Cultuurparticipatie) [FCP], which began operating on 1st January 2009, acts as a control instrument for the national government, directing and coordinating provincial and local policy, thereby ensuring greater coherence. Subsidies are granted to the provincial and municipal authorities to develop policy programmes for cultural participation, which they then match with their own financial resources. In terms of the development of partnerships, the Culture and School (Cultuur en School) programme, which ran until January 2013, focused on collaborations between schools and cultural institutions, encouraging local cultural institutions and centres for the arts to help organise intramural activities. Approximately 70% of secondary schools collaborate with individual artists and centres for the arts. Looking forward, on 1st January 2013 a new four-year period of cultural policy commenced, with the Cultural Participation Fund merging with a fund for the performing arts and cultural education. Foresight studies have predicted that changing social conditions will mean that policy will need to adapt to different forms of arts participation, while still preserving the essential aspects of creativity, diversity, quality and accessibility (Van den Broek, 2010).

Inter- and intra-sectoral collaborations: matches made in heaven or marriages of convenience?

In the sense that the aims of the education reforms in Hong Kong and its vision of cultural development should be mutually reinforcing, both sectors have recognised the vital role that partnerships have to play in bringing this about. The CHC's *Policy Recommendation Report*, in sowing the seeds of a policy for culture *and* arts education, suggests as its main foci 'the development of a coherent, continuous and diversified curriculum, the provision of quality support, and the promotion of partnership and community involvement' (2003: 15), together with proposing family-centered inducements that can tie in with school-based extra-curricular arts activities and supplemented by closer collaboration between government departments and cultural institutions. For its part, one of the three long-term goals of the Education Department (EDB) in formulating Hong Kong's (arts) education policy is 'to work continuously in partnership with schools and other concerned parties to develop school-based arts curricula' (2002b: 17). Central to this study is Leong's (2011) compelling analogy of cultural and (arts) educational policy as the two wings of a single bird which, when operating in unison, not only allow it to fly but also have the potential to yield rewards both at a sectoral and at a stakeholder level. However, the same author has also pointed out that in practice such policies rarely work successfully in tandem, meaning that the potential for synergies to occur – together with the attendant cross-sectoral mutual benefits, specifically the more effective enactment of policies that, in turn, enables critical issues such as cultural participation and access to cultural education to be addressed – is all too frequently missed.

Partnerships, of course, can work on a number of different levels and involve various stakeholders accordingly. At the inter-sectoral level, these have involved collaborations between the EDB and different government bureaux / departments and non-government

organisations such as the HAB, the LCSD and the HKADC as a means of providing students with diversified arts learning opportunities in different contexts, e.g., the School Culture Day Scheme, the Arts Experience Scheme for Senior Secondary Students and the Arts Ambassadors-in-School Scheme. However, these are in the nature of schemes that are offered to schools in general (as opposed to partnerships developed and nurtured with specific institutions over a number of years), and without the benefit of an in-built mechanism to fully monitor and evaluate their long-term efficacy, impact and sustainability.

Intra-sectorally, on the cultural side it is very much the case that the HAB functions primarily in its designated policymaking / administrative role (with assistance in the form of advice and expertise provided by representatives from a number of different cultural and arts education-related bodies), leaving the day-to-day operationalisation and delivery to the relevant offices within the LCSD through their own designated initiatives. From the HKADC's perspective, the partnership is primarily in the form of an annual subvention (typically in the region of about HK\$120 million), part of which is then made available for the purposes of funding small and medium-sized arts groups. Since the HKADC has its own programmes (typically in the nature of arts administrator training and internships), it is the case that many of the HAB's policy objectives are disseminated via these two "executive" arms.

For a variety of reasons, then, it is presently the case that although there are a number of intra-sectoral partnerships taking place, these are essentially being carried out at an administrative, e.g., Departmental or Council committee meeting, level. Thus, while knowledge is being shared in terms of an increasing degree of familiarity with the types of programmes that are being initiated, the extent to which this is being generated by a shared

vision (together with agreed-upon outcomes and impacts) is open to conjecture. At the heart of the issue, of course, is the fact that Hong Kong has a cultural policy under the auspices of a Home Affairs Bureau and an arts education policy overseen by an Education Bureau. While some separation of policy creation and delivery might make sense from a practical, “distribution of labour” perspective, the danger in what is essentially an artificially “silo-ing” of rationales and skills lies in conspiring to pit the arts and culture on the one side against arts education on the other. This is a situation that is fundamentally at odds with the collaborative approach – based on the recognition that arts education, as mentioned earlier, does not simply link but crucially *unites* the two sectors – being espoused.

2.12 Barriers to sectoral alignment

As a result of a number of sectoral ambiguities and tensions – predominantly an absence of genuine leadership and a clear strategic vision with regard to Hong Kong’s future, the ongoing struggle for a coherent identity, and the need to create a sustainable environment on the cultural side, balanced by a reluctance to engage with the integrated / interdisciplinary curriculum on the arts education side, and offset in both cases by a lack of genuinely meaningful intra- and inter-sectoral partnerships, the thesis being posited was that the two “wings” of Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policy “bird” are disconnected from one another at both a philosophical and a practical level. Not only is this fundamentally at odds with the espousal of a collaborative approach being made at an official level, but the present lack of co-operation is stymieing the effective enactment of policies, in turn preventing critical issues such as cultural participation, consumption and accessibility to cultural education from being properly addressed. The study was therefore interested in gaining a deeper understanding of the present situation, in the process seeking to identify those mismatches, misconnections / disconnections, gaps and contradictions that were preventing

mutually beneficial synergies from occurring. To that end, it was conceived with a view to discovering the extent to which, some 16 years since the introduction of the education reforms and approximately 13 years into the adoption by the Government of the HKSAR of the blueprint set out initially by the CHC, Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies had permeated and were impacting upon the perceptions and practices of its various stakeholders.

2.13 Adopting an ecological perspective

Four powerful drivers shape the world in which we live: the inherent complexity of nature and society; the desire to explore problems and questions not confined to a single discipline; the need to solve societal problems, and; the power of new technologies (US National Academy of Sciences, 2004). The recognition that traditional, linear forms of knowledge production are no longer tenable in terms of providing viable solutions to complex, ever-increasingly interlinked, social problems (Klein, 2008) has led, over time, to an approach that views issues from a more ecological perspective. Traditionally, this has resulted in close alliances being made with advances in science; indeed, in our technologically-innovative age, the view has been expressed that progress in the one depends on progress in the other. As part of this comes the expectation 'that the drivers and impacts of modern science and technology are understood in a wider ... environmental context' (Cronin, 2008: 2).

2.13.1 Different kinds of ecologies

The terms "ecologies" or "eco-systems" have traditionally been used to refer to dynamic interactions between plants, animals and micro-organisms and their environment, working together as a functional unit ... as living systems containing a diversity of factors that are

partially self-organising, adaptive and fragile’ (Hodgson & Spours, 2009: 9). In keeping with these biological roots, strong links have typically been forged with science on the basis that in a world ‘characterised by rapid change, uncertainty and increasing connectedness, there is a growing need for science to contribute to the solution of persistent, complex problems’ (Hadorn *et al.*, 2008: vii). However, ecological perspectives have also been applied to other areas, including – but not limited to – processes of business innovation and skill development, learning relationships, education policy development and governance processes of evolution, resilience, sustainability and change. Bronfenbrenner (1979) used the notion of “ecology” to propose that human development was influenced by factors operating at different “systems levels” – micro, meso, exo and macro – within a broad ecological structure. Each level exerts reciprocal influences on the others, linking the learner to the wider society via the interactive levels of human relations and organisations within an increasingly complex formation of state and civil society, in the process identifying the individual’s role. Folke and his colleagues (2005) examined the role of knowledge, feedback, co-ownership and adaptive management in the development of resilient natural ecosystems, while Nardi & O’Day (1999) developed the term “information ecologies” to describe ‘a system of people, practices, values, and technologies in a particular local environment’ (p. 49). Other information and educational ecologies (e.g., Siemens, 2003) are associated with scales of communication. Considered individually or collectively, ecologies are not associated with any particular theoretical tradition or discipline and can have different economic and political emphases. Likewise, much of the literature focuses on human relations, networking, communication and adaptive governance in the public realm. Moreover, ecologies do not suggest a particular quality of relationship. What they *do* share, for the most part, is an attempt to develop holistic and multi-level thinking in order to address what Newman (2001) refers to as complex problems in an era of mass technology, globalisation and new public management. At the same time, a

deeper cultural dimension draws on environmental metaphors to capture ‘a cultural tide of concern, as people ... are more prepared to see human, power and governance relations in more environmental terms, with the accent on fragility, sustainability and care’ (2009: 11-12).

2.14 The four main types of ecological research

Whether undertaken by natural and social scientists or educators, the interface where the drivers, along with the potential for discovering solutions to the specific problems with which they are concerned, come together lies in the overarching framework labelled ‘Ecological Research’. Ecological research has two main concerns: the environment in relation to humans (together with issues such as sustainability) and the belief that the phenomenon of interest needs to be understood in context, i.e. in relation to the other actors, events, practices, and policies where it occurs. Philosophically, ecological research is inherently critical of the dominant Western materialistic ethos, its critical perspective deriving from concerns for the well-being of future generations, a stance of “stewardship” and the relationship of humans with all living things (Peterat, 2008).

The past few decades have seen considerable interest being expressed in ecological research, with the same author identifying four basic types. The first, the ‘Ecological Worldview’ approach, is global in its scope and seeks to emphasise the interrelatedness of all forms of life; the second, the ‘Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Research’ type, is interested in the interrelationship between natural ecological systems and society and is particularly concerned with sustainability; the third, ‘The Search for Philosophical Understanding’ approach, critiques the former types, seeking instead a more defensible conceptualisation of ecology on which to ground research learning, practices and policies; the fourth, the ‘Understanding Human Knowing, Learning and Action’ approach, focuses on the search for an ecological

“theory of knowing” by drawing on particular settings such as education, health, economics and psychology. For the purposes of this study, the first and the second are the types that need to be explored in more detail.

2.14.1 The “ecological worldview” type

Research from an ecological perspective, or “worldview”, ‘is nonreductionist, refusing to separate the focus of inquiry from its context, and is concerned with the way in which the object is embedded in and reciprocally related with natural and social environments’ (Peterat, 2008: 237). This type of ecological research aims to capture the complexity of the phenomenon in question, together with the emergent nature of knowledge. There is an underlying belief that an ecosystem is a natural and sustainable community of plants, animals or other organisms based on certain principles which can be understood by humans as a means of revitalising their own social and cultural communities. Such principles are both descriptive and normative and include interdependence (defined as ‘the mutual reliance of all living things on each other’, realised through ‘nonlinear networks of feedback and cycles’, and marked by ‘cooperation, partnership, and co-evolution – processes of change and learning’), flexibility (the process that ‘enables a system to adapt to change and maintain itself’) and diversity (through which feature ‘a system enables resilience through a complex network that adapts to change more easily’) (pp. 237-238).

2.14.2 The “interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research” type

Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Research ‘seeks to understand the interrelationship between natural ecological systems and society with a view to creating solutions to current sustainability problems’ (p. 238). As the interlinkages between society and its environment become more apparent, so the notion of integration across multiple social perspectives and

fields of knowledge becomes more important. An interdisciplinary research approach moves beyond the notion of an ‘ethnocentrism of disciplines’ (Campbell, 1969) operating in parallel to refer to a range of approaches ‘from the simple communication of ideas to mutual integration of organising concepts, methodology and epistemology’ (Klein, 2007: 37) and involves the synthesis of knowledge in such a way that connections are made across disciplinary boundaries, while at the same time being driven by the ultimate aim of seeking coherence between the knowledges produced by different disciplines (Petts *et al.*, 2008). Transdisciplinary Research (TDR) “redraws the (interdisciplinary) map” even further, leading to the ‘evolution of disciplines, hybridisation and outcomes that are greater than the sum of the parts’ (Cronin, 2008: 597). With solutions to sustainability problems as its goal, integration across disciplines is extended to include a set of approaches that can generate new comprehensive knowledge and an overarching synthesis (Klein, 2007). Equally importantly, TDR focuses on real world problems via a collaboration between academic and non-academic stakeholders; it is therefore ‘driven by problem solving and integrates perspectives from public agencies, the private sector and civil society in the research process’ (Swiss Academy of Sciences, 2008). Typically, it is applied to complex problems where there is a range of actors and interests involved. It explores whether there is a shared vision of the issue of concern, in the process discovering if there is a common language and considering the potential for collaborative learning (Jager, J. in Hadorn *et al.*, 2008). Pluralistic in methods and focus, it can be driven by a mix of goals including scientific curiosity, societal values and practical needs.

Within these two research approaches, a focus on interdependence, flexibility and diversity within the “ecological worldview” type and an adoption of the themes of governance and communication as important elements the “interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research”

type were seen as being of particular relevance to this study.

2.14.2.1 Interdisciplinarity, transdisciplinarity, the arts and innovation

Arts education within the Hong Kong context has firmly adopted the concept of integrative learning, envisioning this as an approach that enables students to gain deeper insights into the different arts as well as across KLAs. At the same time, integrative learning should be incorporated into an ethos of life-wide learning that uses different channels to broaden and diversify arts learning experiences (HKCDC, 2001). Reinforcing this, the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (HKCDC, 2002b) has stressed that not only artistic concepts and skills, but also conceptual development, acquired in one art form can enhance and support learning in another. Collectively, these aims are in accordance with the view that learning experiences in the arts are “parallel and equal” with those gained through non-arts learning experiences (Wiggins, 2001).

Within the context of the present chapter, this philosophy is seen as having particular relevance to the inter- and transdisciplinary debate, not least as it pertains to the practical aspects of “milieu generation”. Specifically, a link can be drawn between the arts and innovation, in the process showing how the constituent parts of a system can create greater energy through the synergies. Two different arts-based methodologies – the first leading to a new understanding of art-based learning across the curriculum and the second taking as its area of concern the performing arts within the commercial arena – are considered as having important implications within the framework of the study as a whole, and, as such, are herewith briefly detailed. Each illustrates how interdisciplinarity / transdisciplinarity can combine to lead to new forms of knowledge production.

Transdisciplinarity and art integration

Just as the term “integration” implies the fusion of disciplines (Taylor *et al.*, 2006), so such characterisations as multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinarity (Ulbricht, 2005) within art integration carry their own implicit hierarchies (Klein, 2000; Leavy, 2011). As such, ‘multidisciplinary is associative; it indicates collaboration or correlation without integrating disciplines. Interdisciplinarity is defined as connective, implying deeper connections and correlations with carrying levels of integration of disciplinary concepts, theories, methods, and findings in which disciplines remain discrete. In other words, connections are made without fusion. Transdisciplinarity ... connotes a practice or domain that rises above disciplines and dissolves their boundaries to create a new social and cognitive space.’ (Marshall, 2014: 106). Within an art integration context transdisciplinarity has the potential not only to integrate across disciplines but also include a set of practical approaches that can generate new, comprehensive knowledge and an overarching synthesis (Klein, 2007) such that the constituent parts create their own (and greater) energy / synergy through combination. Here, component disciplines reside as separate yet connected and permeable entities. Disciplines, viewed through the conceptual lens of art integration, represent student learning and understanding. The focus for art integrators, then, is on how that knowledge is acquired and how deeply it is understood; the conceptual framework is thus that both integrated learning and arts-based learning promote understanding. Art integration uses the metaphor of the construction of a web (Klein, 2000), whereby artists and specialists in other disciplines or fields are the disciplinary thread “spinners”, art educators are the thread “weavers” and learners (also “weavers”) create their own fabric of understanding.

Marshall draws on Eisner’s (1991) characterisation of knowledge in art integration as multiple literacies to explain how transdisciplinarity allows learners to understand content,

methods, and lenses of academic disciplines, in the process acquiring a new *perspective* on that information. Transdisciplinarity also establishes undisciplined or interstitial spaces on the borders between disciplines (Klein, 2000; Moran, 2002), spaces where new practices emerge. One such practice is contemporary integrative art that crosses boundaries ‘to explore concepts and topics associated with non-arts fields while employing methods, tropes, and formats of those fields to construct aesthetic experiences’. (2014: 108) Located between art and education, art integration is another interstitial practice that generates innovative arts-based pedagogies to counteract commonplace teaching and learning strategies such as memorisation, reading, drilling, expository writing, and testing – which promotes acquisition of information. Instead, art integration ‘promotes understanding and uses strategies such as translating abstract concepts from academic disciplines into visual form or creating something new using academic information or ideas’. (p. 109) Art Research Integration (ARI) is essentially a classroom application of Arts-Based Research, a form of art-infused and concept-based art integration that spotlights art as a method of inquiry while explicitly fostering metacognition. In addition, it engages multiple academic disciplines over time through sustained independent arts-based inquiry.

Essentially, the process works through the identification of an idea or concept to research, or a research question to pursue. Ideas that are associated with the concept or question are mined and mapped, after which information and imagery linked to the concept or question is gathered and sifted so that a collection of images, ideas and information forms. The resulting research trail crosses disciplinary boundaries by examining how the concept plays out in such diverse areas as the natural sciences, the humanities, language arts, mathematics, and social studies. As more material is accumulated, new connections can be made, along with doubling back to the original concept in order to make further connections and syntheses. At any step

in the process, research methods from outside art, such as interviewing informants, practicing critical analysis, accruing evidence, categorising information and artefacts, undertaking statistical analysis, and experimenting with physical phenomena or viewer reactions can be employed. Coupled with interpretive strategies such as projection (imagining, speculating, and envisioning), metaphor (making oblique associations), and elaboration (expanding or extending), the results are both imaginative and personal. In ARI, the artist-researcher keeps a research workbook that functions as a repository of images, information, reflections, ideas, and plans. Throughout, the emphasis is on the art process as a catalyst for integrated learning across the curriculum. Exemplifying transdisciplinarity through integration and cohesion, its open opposition to strict disciplinary thinking, its embracing of subjective inquiry and fostering of deep understanding through personal engagement, and its use of the research workbook as an interstitial practice that represents an alternative to conventional ways of doing things in the art classroom, ARI takes the constituent parts (in the form of various disciplines) and combines them – via the process of knowledge interpretation – in such a way as to create a stronger, more unified whole.

Transdisciplinary convergence in the performing arts

At the other end of the scale, and by way of highlighting the dichotomy of the concept as it pertains to the academic and industrial worlds, the link between transdisciplinarity and knowledge production can be viewed as a by-product of the post-modern transformation of society in the late 20th century. This Mode-2 society (Nowotny, Scott & Gibbons, 2001), as it is known, regards the economic imperative as the significant driver and is marked by people other than scientists who collaborate on socially generated problems in the public arena. The post-modern milieu ‘pervades the social, political and economic institutions of Mode-2 society so that knowledge becomes transgressive and the significant driving force of

capitalism.’ (Graham, 2011: 28) Boundaries are very much in evidence within the ARI model, even as it simultaneously traverses them; within the Mode-2 version, the transdisciplinary convergence of knowledge witnesses them essentially disintegrate as interdisciplinarity (a “touching point” between disciplines within the Mode-1 type) gives way to knowledge which is socially robust or context-sensitive (Nowotny, 1999). Social networks become the mediators of knowledge within this new world order such that transdisciplinarity involves ‘a cooperative effort towards the integration of knowledge from across disciplines in order to innovate solutions to real-world problems for potential economic advantage, the solution being beyond any single contributory discipline and which cannot be reduced to the component disciplinary contributions’ (Gibbons *et al.*, 1994; Nowotny *et al.*, 2001). Graham investigates this transdisciplinary convergence to examine how the harnessing of GRIN (Genetics, Robotics, Information technology and Nanotechnology) technologies can provide evidence of transdisciplinarity operating in a commercial setting through applications within the performing arts. Researchers such as Klein and Parncutt (2010) refer to the performing arts as representing disciplinary clusters, while Vojak *et al.* (2010) describe innovation in the commercial setting as the product of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary teams, in the process proposing that technological innovation ‘is predominantly the outcome of interdisciplinary / transdisciplinary knowledge production which is spread by innovative individuals and companies across industries for economic advantage’ (2011: 30). Graham juxtaposes these with the Nowotny *et al.* (2001) thesis, which contends that industry seeks technological innovation in order to profit as well as meet the expectations of the market for consumer benefits in the form of the application of new knowledge, in order to explain how technology is slowly being converged with the performing arts as a process of serial innovations delivering transdisciplinary hybrid and new stand-alone approaches. The on-screen digital manipulation of dancers, digital innovations, the tonal manipulation of

singers, miniaturised amplification devices, synthesised orchestras, and illusions of hyper-reality are all cited as examples that demonstrate the emerging enhancement of human performance and the rise of what he calls “the transhuman artist”. Within this context, transdisciplinary knowledge production provides innovative solutions to complex problems while simultaneously serving the purpose of expanding the arts economy.

2.15 An ecological research approach to address Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education sector issues

There is a need for ecological research when knowledge about a societally relevant problem is uncertain, when the concrete nature of problems is disputed, and when there is a great deal at stake for those concerned by, and involved in dealing with, the problems. Within this context, ecological perspectives point to areas of action, in particular the development of new forms of collaboration. In the process they may offer a new “language” to conceptualise change and stasis in a variety of environments, context and spaces of activity, which exist in linked scales or levels, ranging from the global to the local, from the micro to the macro.

Governance, in the form of policymaking, involves the voices, interests and needs of many different and varied stakeholders, in turn creating the necessity for dialogue and communication. Gugu & Dal Molin (2015) have drawn attention to the cross-sectional nature of cultural policy, and the proliferation of actor diversity, along with the different kinds of partnerships, which can result. Given that cultural policy is increasingly confronted with an enlarging scope ‘that weaves together ... formal and informal activities’ (Pratt, 2012: 318), diverse networks of societal actors are now involved in cultural policy definition, funding, and implementation (Alasuutari, 2013; Andres & Chapain, 2013; Dente & Coletti, 2011; Gadwa Nicodemus, 2013; Pratt, 2012). While the literature has tended to focus on the

expected mutual benefits that can accrue (Matthews, 2014; Sinclair, 2008) especially in terms of achieving broader social and economic goals, moves towards a more collaborative form of governance have the potential to bring about problems as well as solutions. As diversity increases, complexity grows in proportion with the different needs, expectations, and individual goals (Huxham, 2000). Increased actor diversity may also result in less trust or more time required to build trust (Donahue, 2004; Sørensen, 2005). Diversity has been deemed particularly problematic in the cultural sphere, which remains ‘balkanized into competing commercial, non-profit, and community segments’ (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010: 385) as the goals and motivations of each sector differ and the stakes, for their leaders, come into direct competition with one another.

In terms of the current issues relating to Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education sectors as they have previously been identified, a research approach that could combine sound ecological worldview principles with enactment through an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary methodology that takes into account the themes of governance and communication, was ultimately considered to be well-placed to enable ‘actors in the lifeworld [to] jointly work on identifying and understanding the nature of the problem, framing the issues involved, establishing future preferences, and designing action’ (Cronin, 2008: 10).

2.16 Conclusion

Drawing on Leong’s (2011) “bird” analogy, in which Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policy are likened to the two wings that are required to work together in order to bring about flight, in the process leading to the achievement of mutually-beneficial sectoral synergies, this chapter has reviewed the related literature, in the process identifying the major ambiguities and tensions that are presently conspiring to prevent this from occurring. In

attempting to identify an approach that can go some way towards addressing these issues, in the process revealing where the mismatches, misconnections / disconnections, gaps or contradictions currently exist, the chapter has concluded with an overview of the principles encapsulated within the framework of ecological research, particularly as they refer to the “ecological worldview” and the “interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research” approaches. With reference to the above, the methodology, as it relates to the study’s proposed ecological perspective research model, is the subject of the following chapter.

Chapter Three: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 The nature and purpose of the study

This research study was set against the backdrop of a public declaration on the part of Hong Kong that it intends to become an international cultural metropolis. This vision – enshrined in its cultural policy – is based on the life-affirming pursuit of culture, the recognisance of a Chinese-rooted-but-externally-enriched identity, and the elevation of creativity as a driver of community progress. Balancing this are the changes that have been initiated by sweeping education reforms. These are aimed at ensuring, via the three-pronged thrust of multiculturalism, globalism and life-long learning, that the workforce of the future is fully prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Demonstrating the potential to form a bridge, and thereby unite, the two sectors is arts education. Acknowledged at a governmental level as possessing the ability to effect quality education within the formal curriculum (HKCDC, 1999), and of fostering the necessary skills of appreciation, creativity and expression, the anticipation is that it can enrich the cultural literacy of individuals and society, as well as provide the soil, nutrition and impetus for cultural development (CHC, 2003). Such sectoral alignment through arts education is viewed by the HAB as being dependent for its successful realisation on ‘the promotion of partnerships and community involvement’ (2003: 15), supplementation coming in the form of closer collaboration on the part of government departments and cultural institutions, and the need on the part of the EDB ‘to work continuously in partnership with schools and other concerned parties’ (HKCDC, 2002b: 17).

3.2 Conceptual, theoretical and methodological frameworks

At its heart, the study was concerned with understanding the phenomenon of Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies through the notions of “conceptualisation”,

“communication” and “operationalisation”. “Conceptualisation” referred to the particular philosophies and rationales that stood behind and underpinned the two documents, “communication” was the assorted means and methods by which the policies were passed on and received by the various stakeholders, and “operationalisation” was the nature of the policies’ subsequent delivery and implementation by the relevant practitioners.

The study’s conceptual framework was encapsulated in its “inquiry” paradigm, consisting of the ontological, axiological and epistemological premises. These were concerned with the nature of reality expressed through basic beliefs, the core values that guide an individual, and the different ways of knowing, respectively, and collectively constituted the basic “set” of philosophies underpinning the research. At the same time, the study was made up of a theoretical and a methodological framework, the former linked to the axiological premise and the latter to the epistemological premise. The theoretical framework’s “theoretical position” paradigm took as its three premises the background of the researcher, the particular theory being chosen, and the literature selected to support that approach. The methodological framework was concerned with the three premises of means (resources), methods (tools) and matters (areas of focus). This “methodological parameters” paradigm ensured not only that the sampling procedure, the choice(s) of data collection and the presentation of that information were consistent within themselves, but also that collectively the three frameworks were interlinked.

The three frameworks, together with their constituent paradigms, are herewith detailed.

3.2.1 Conceptual framework

3.2.1.1 Inquiry paradigm

Following Guba (1990, p. 17, quoted in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), a paradigm is defined as a ‘basic set of beliefs that guide action’. Three premises – ontology, axiology and epistemology – were concerned with the study’s philosophical dimensions, coming together as the “inquiry” paradigm. Collectively, they constituted the conceptual framework.

Ontology

An individual’s basic beliefs can never be established in terms of their ultimate truthfulness because they are human constructions; instead, they define the worldview of the researcher-as-interpreter. As a premise, or concept, within this worldview, ontology raises basic questions about the nature of reality and the nature of human beings in the world.

Since this was a study about cultural and arts education policies and how they are conceptualised, communicated and operationalised by policymakers and practitioners, the paradigm that contained its ontological, axiological and epistemological premises was constructivist-interpretive in nature. As such, it assumed a relativist-meaning ontology that was dependent upon such factors as context, culture and values. These in turn were based on realities forged as part of the interactive, cooperative and participatory nature of the relationship that exists between the different subjects and the researcher. To put it another way, at one level cultural and arts education policy are both concerned with the positive values – collaboration, problem-solving, integration and inclusivity – that form the bedrock of community. At the same time, values, along with elements such as context and culture, are notions that are relative to the unique perspective of the individual concerned, depending upon his / her own particular situation. The study drew on roots that are grounded in the

values inherent in the arts and the cultures from which they spring to incorporate elements of an interactive, cooperative and participatory relationship between the subject and the researcher, in the process considering the subjective-objective reality co-created by the mind and the wider world. In practical terms, the kind of information or knowledge that was gained, e.g., in terms of what constitutes “policy”, along with how it is communicated and ultimately disseminated, was created by the perceptions of the various protagonists, shaped by the context in which they found themselves operating, and informed by their respective sets of values.

Axiology

With the ultimate aim of making the case for undertaking the study, axiology can be viewed as a set of basic beliefs or (core) values about which the researcher adopts a position; in turn, these feed into the inquiry process, informing the choice of problem, the choice of paradigm to guide the problem, the choice of theoretical framework, the choice of major data-gathering and data-analysis methods, and the choice of format(s) for presenting the findings.

In keeping with the spirit of ecological research in which it was grounded, the study was interested in discovering evidence of an interdependent, cooperative approach, e.g., through the development of partnerships, between the various stakeholders within and across Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education sectors in ways that could lead to mutually beneficial synergies while at the same time demonstrating the potential for sustainability. The particular values guiding this study were, first and foremost, those that the researcher recognised as being inherent in the arts, i.e. their innate potential for embodying the finest qualities of the human spirit and the transformative effect that can result from engagement with them. The adoption of an ecological research approach allowed for the choice of problem, in the form of

a fundamental disconnect between the two policies, a situation which was simultaneously at odds with the collaborative approach being espoused and resulting in a lack of cooperation that is stymieing the effective enactment of policies, to be investigated by bringing the different stakeholders together and allowing them to share their perspectives. Similarly, in keeping with the ecological approach, the humanitarian values that underpinned the study were interested in the degree to which impact could be generated and sustained at a practical level – in this case, through serving as a resource that could be drawn upon by future researchers.

Epistemology

As “ways of knowing”, the three dominant late-20th century epistemologies of objectivism, subjectivism and constructionism (Crotty, 1998) provide alternative positions for outlining the philosophical basis, nature and limits of human knowledge. Objectivists ‘hold that meaning, and therefore meaningful reality, exists as such, apart from the operation of any consciousness’ (p. 8). Meaning is thus inherent in the object being examined and the properties of that object can be measured and quantified. Meaning within a subjective epistemology ‘does not come out of an interplay between subject and object, but is imposed on the object by the subject’ (p. 9), while the cornerstone of constructionism is that ‘reality is socially constructed’ (Mertens, 1998: 11); truth, or meaning does not, *a priori*, exist but instead comes into existence through an interconnectedness of objectivity and subjectivity.

Given the nature of the problem that was identified, the epistemological paradigm guiding this study was constructivist-interpretive in nature. Within an ecological research framework, the interconnectedness of objectivity and subjectivity between the researcher and the respondent that gives rise to meaning was demonstrated in concrete terms when it came to the

“conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements of policymaking: perceptions regarding what is “real”, “useful” and “meaningful”, particularly among those charged with the delivery and implementation of policy, took on new and important roles since they could shape action (or inaction). In turn, such perceptions were shaped and influenced by the context in which the protagonists found themselves operating. As a crucial element of both ecological research and of this epistemology, meaningful understanding can only take place when the item of interest is framed in relation to other actors, events and practices. As such, the contextual sub-text created by subjective experiences such as motives and reasons also became a crucial element in the co-creation of reality.

3.2.2 Theoretical framework

3.2.2.1 Theoretical position

Serving both to set the context and to clearly identify and justify which particular approach (as generated from a review of the literature) would inform the subsequent methodology, the study’s theoretical framework consisted of its ‘Theoretical Position’ paradigm. This was broken down into the three premises of ‘Background’, ‘Theory’ and ‘Literature’.

Background

Greater awareness of one’s subjective philosophical stance serves both to acknowledge and clarify any conceptual problems and limitations of the study and justify which theoretical framework is being used to shape the research. In considering how one’s own background experiences inform the study, the reflexive practitioner-as-researcher is forced to recognise, acknowledge and reconcile the particular values and assumptions being brought to the table.

The current research built on a previous study (Whitbread & Leong, 2011) in which the focus

was on the extent to which students were motivated to choose Music as an elective subject at secondary level in Hong Kong schools, in the process appropriating McPherson *et al.*'s (2005) modification of Wigfield and Eccles' (2000) later conception of the expectancy-value theory of Eccles, Wigfield and Schiefele (1998) in order to gain a snapshot of the situation as it existed at that time. Here, the investigation was on the interplay between Hong Kong's cultural and arts education sectors and the extent to which the respective parties were motivated to align the two policy "wings" within the framework of bringing about more dynamic synergies, the desired result being the accrual of mutual benefits and the more effective targeting of important cultural and educational issues. In so doing, the philosophical "values" inherent in the researcher's self-identification as a morally guided entity, whose recognition of the arts is predominantly in their potential as a positive humanising force, was similarly shaped by the acknowledgement that respect for the past and the honouring of traditions must be reconciled with the necessity for change and adaptability as part of the process of moving forward. The specific cultural context in which the researcher operated (a foreigner of British descent who had lived in Hong Kong for 13 years) also brought to the study a unique element inasmuch as a lack of Cantonese simultaneously had the potential to impair communication while allowing for the adoption of a more impartial stance. At the same time, there existed an affinity with the operational side of things, inasmuch as Hong Kong's educational system is modeled on the British version and its current cultural situation is, in large part, a legacy of its colonial past. The researcher thus "hovered" between two worlds.

Theory

In relation to the philosophical basis in which research takes place, the theoretical framework forms the link with the practical components of the investigation being undertaken.

Informing this study was a philosophy grounded in Constructionism / Interpretivism that relied on an interactive, cooperative, participatory research relationship. The goal of the research study lay in trying to understand meanings that were relative to the participants, and dependent specifically on the elements of context, culture and values. The thesis being posited (namely, that the two “wings” of Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education sectors, as encapsulated within their respective policies, are, at present, fundamentally at odds with one another) was considered a crucial one to resolve insofar as for Hong Kong to successfully achieve its aspiration of becoming an international cultural metropolis the two sectors need firstly to understand that they are working towards the same goal; only then can they start to work strategically and effectively together and develop (sustainable) partnerships that can result in mutually beneficial synergies, leading to the more effective enactment of policies. In the absence of one specific theory that could wholly unite the two arenas of cultural and arts education policy, together with the complex nature of the relationship generated by the interplay among the different stakeholders within and across both sectors, an ecological perspective research model was instead proposed. This not only catered for a cross-sectoral approach, but also allowed for rich data-mining to expose the depth and breadth of the various perceptions of participants’ realities so that they could become better known and more clearly understood.

Literature

The choice of supporting literature serves to validate the researcher’s position and justify the theoretical framework and specific theories being adopted.

Recognisance that the world is constantly being shaped in new and dynamic ways and that

the traditional, linear forms of knowledge production are ill-equipped to find solutions to problems that are increasingly socially connected, the interface between science and technology as the drivers of progress within a framework based on an understanding of the environment has come together in the form of ecological research. As part of its concern with solutions based on mutual benefits within the two-way relationship, sustainability is an important feature of ecological research, as is the fact that the phenomenon of interest needs to be understood in the context, i.e. in relation to other actors, events, practices, and policies within the local and global settings, where it occurs. Over the course of the past few decades, increasing interest in ecological research has been expressed by educators, among others, especially through the use of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches, to understand human learning and societal change.

Set against the theoretical perspective being adopted of a constructivist / interpretivist approach, the study drew on Peterat's (2008) identification of the "ecological worldview" and "interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary" types. It singled out the former's nonreductionist stance, combined with an adoption of the fundamental principle of interdependence – marked by cooperation and partnership – that characterises natural ecosystems, to examine the extent to which Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies were embedded within and reciprocally related with the social environment formed by the cultural and arts education sectors. The latter's preoccupation with the importance of sustainability was used as a backdrop to investigate the themes of governance (through a focus on possible discrepancies arising between Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies and actual practices) and communication (of the policies) through the participation of different individual stakeholders and stakeholder groups. Within the context of this study, such a combination of research types was considered to be well-suited to allowing practitioners across the cultural and arts

education spectrum to contribute their perspectives, thereby enabling the research to more clearly identify and gain a deeper understanding of the type and nature of the issues involved.

3.2.3 Methodological framework

3.2.3.1 Methodological parameters

As a qualitative research study realised through an action methodology, the study's "plan of campaign" within the proposed ecological perspective research model was constituted by its 'Methodological Parameters' paradigm. 'Matters', 'Methods' and 'Means' were the three premises contained therein.

Matters

Matters are of fundamental concern since they dictate the methods (tools) to be employed, as well as directing the researcher towards which means (resources) need to be targeted in order to gather the data required.

As previously mentioned, the underlying framework of the study was the "conceptualisation", "communication" and "operationalisation" of Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies. To that end, it was concerned with the particular philosophies and rationales that stood behind and underpinned the two policies, the ways in and by which the policies were passed on to and received by the various stakeholders, and the nature of their subsequent delivery and implementation. The twin areas of focus from the methodological standpoint – realised in practice through the preparation and participation in an online questionnaire and the subsequent invitation to take part in-depth, semi-structured interviews – were to find out in more detail what participants' perceptions of the two policies were and to discover the extent to which the policies were impacting on them, particularly in terms of how this related

to the existence or development of cross-sectoral partnerships.

Methods

A critical element in undertaking a study is to identify the methodologies and methods to be utilised in the research project and then to justify their choice. Methodologies relate to ‘the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods, and linking the choice and use of methods to the desired outcomes’ (Crotty, 1998: 3). Methods, on the other hand, convey ‘the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data related to some research question’ (p. 3). The method therefore has to be compatible with what one is trying to find out.

The specific methods chosen for the present study were, firstly, the selection and collection of a representative cross-section of cultural and arts education documents in order to discover the policies’ underlying philosophies and rationales. Secondly, the creation and subsequent dissemination of an online cultural and arts education policy questionnaire aimed to gauge perceptions and opinions regarding the “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements of the policies among representatives from across the Hong Kong cultural and arts education spectrum. Finally, as a means of gaining further insights into respondents’ particular perspectives and opinions, in the process discovering where the mismatches, misconnections / disconnections, gaps or contradictions between the two sectors were presently occurring, a series of semi-structured, in-depth interviews, was undertaken. Within the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm, the particular “techniques” or “procedures” employed as they related to the three research questions guiding the study reflected the interrelatedness and interconnectedness that constitutes ecological research by being both quantitative and qualitative in nature. As such, the initial analysis of the appropriate cultural

and arts education policy-related documents helped to shape the formation of the (online) questionnaire, the findings from which were then explored in greater detail during the semi-structured, in-depth interviews involving stakeholders within and across the two sectors.

Means

Once the methodologies and methods have been more clearly identified and justified, the final step is to consider which means (or resources) will most effectively enable the researcher to gather the relevant data being sought. A criteria for selection must be developed that can serve to clarify which participants are being targeted, including the specific reason(s) for their inclusion.

Since the study was concerned with Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies, this clearly both involved and impacted upon a wide variety of stakeholders, from practitioners, e.g., schools and cultural / arts organisations, at one end of the spectrum, to policymakers and similar, related bodies operating at a governmental or ministerial level, at the other. At the same time, the admittance of such a wide demographic meant that the degree of familiarity with the policies in question was likely to vary widely; for this reason, the process of data gathering at both the quantitative and qualitative levels, i.e. through the online questionnaire and the subsequent, semi-structured, in-depth interviews, did not assume any detailed knowledge, instead taking as its focus participants' perceptions of the policies in question, along with their opinions regarding the place of "culture" and "the arts" within a wider, societal context.

3.3 An ecological perspective research methodology

Overcoming perceptions of an institutionalised "closed shop" system that suffers from a lack

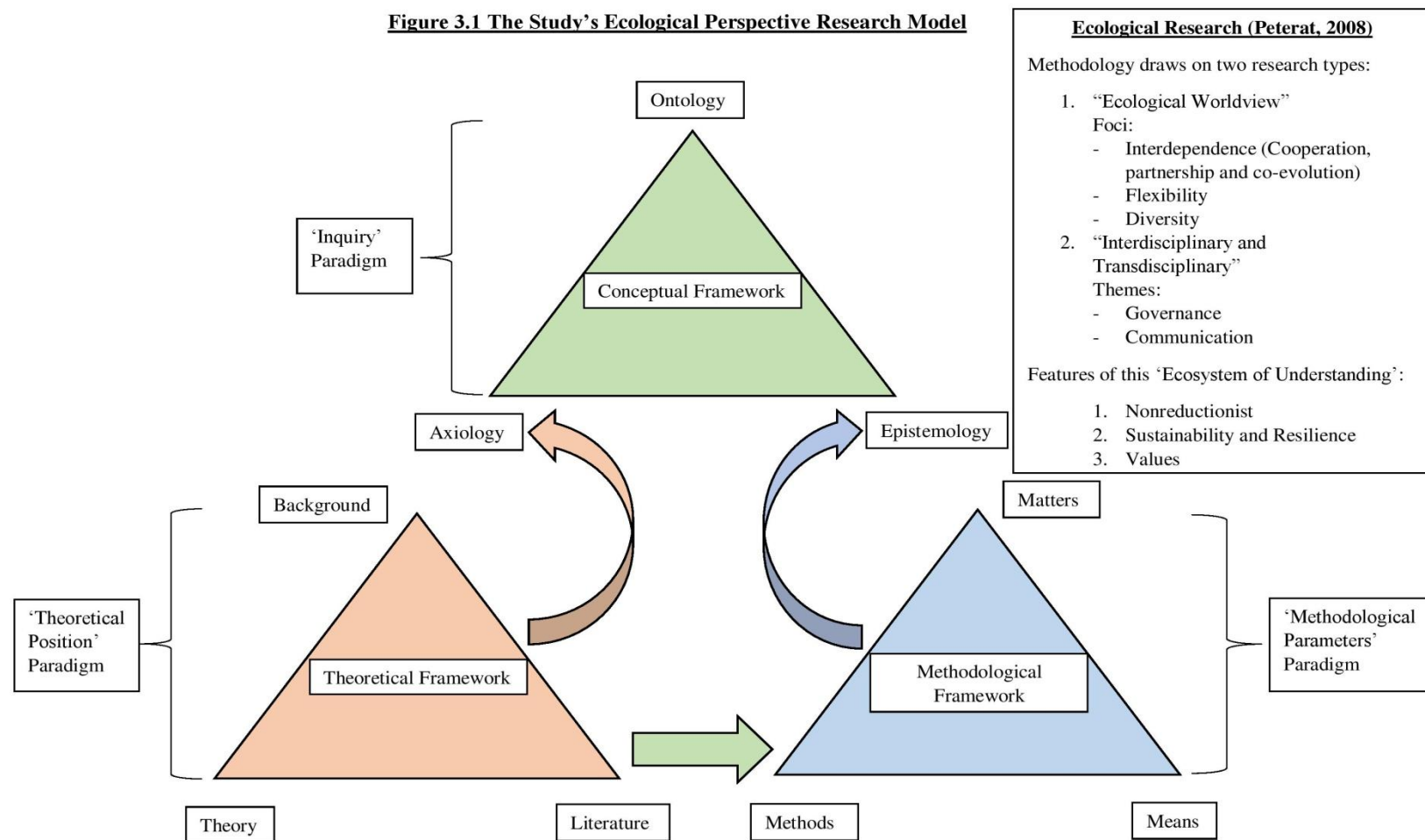
of political legitimacy, exacerbated by a reluctance to fully engage with issues at a civic level, creating and promoting policies that move beyond paying lip-service to culture and arts education by taking full account of the differences (as well as the similarities) of both, and surmounting the barriers, brought about as a result of sectoral isolationism, that can serve to prevent meaningful, effective and sustainable cooperation from taking place, are all examples of issues that are fundamental to, and can be investigated via, a methodology that takes as its basis an ecological research approach. In keeping with the principles which govern such ecosystems within the natural world, each of the layers that serve to connect the various Hong Kong cultural and arts education stakeholders are similarly interdependent and nonlinear.

The particular methodological framework of ecological research employed by this study borrowed features from both the “ecological worldview” and “interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research” types to investigate the reason(s) for the divisions between Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies by bringing together a number of different stakeholders from across the two sectors. Through its refusal to separate the focus of inquiry from its context, it recognised in the former the principle of ‘the mutual reliance of all living things on each other’, together with the fact that such interdependencies ‘are marked by cooperation, partnership, and co-evolution – processes of change and learning’ (Peterat, 2008: 237-8) to examine the extent to which Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies were embedded within and reciprocally related with the social environment formed by the cultural and arts education sectors. In the case of the latter, the themes of governance (as a means of focusing on potential discrepancies between the two policies and their respective practices) and communication (of the policies) were set against a backdrop that highlighted the importance of sustainability.

At the same time, an additional focus was on the specific values that underpinned and were being promoted through Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies and their correlation to the core values that exist within, and serve to define, the society in question. In this interconnected and interdependent ecology, marked ideally by cooperation, partnership and co-evolution, context assumed a crucial role in understanding participants' perceptions of the fundamental differences and distinctions between the two sectors, in particular the nature of the relationship between (the responsibilities of) policymakers and (the views of) civil / civic society. How the policies had been initially conceptualised, and were then communicated and subsequently operationalised, were dependent for their "success" – defined here by the extent to which relationships between the two sectors could be developed, together with the accrual of mutual benefits that might allow synergies to occur, leading in turn to the more effective enactment of policies to answer issues of critical cultural concern – on a complex process that took into account all of the principles outlined above.

Figure 3.1 provides a visual representation of the study's ecological perspective research model.

Figure 3.1 The Study's Ecological Perspective Research Model



PROBLEM IDENTIFIED: THERE IS A FUNDAMENTAL DISCONNECT BETWEEN THE TWO "WINGS" OF HONG KONG'S CULTURAL AND ARTS EDUCATION POLICIES.

QUESTION GUIDING THE STUDY: IS THERE POTENTIAL FOR A SYNERGISTIC RELATIONSHIP TO DEVELOP BETWEEN THE TWO SECTORS?



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3.4 Detailing the methodology

The study adopted an ecological perspective research methodology based on a constructivist / interpretivist paradigm. Ecological research was characterised in terms of its interdependence, interrelatedness and interconnectedness; as such, it employed an action methodology that was both quantitative and qualitative in nature.

Analysis of the policy documents

The initial collection and analysis of the appropriate policy-related documents was intended to reveal the underpinning philosophies and rationales, along with considering any justification and / or legitimisation being put forward with regard to their formation or the recommendations being made within their pages. A total of seven documents (two from the cultural sector and five from the arts education sector) were chosen, the principle supporting legislation being considered in addition to the official policies themselves. Interpretation of the data was constructed with the help of specific analytical frameworks while simultaneously keeping in mind the governance and communication themes outlined above.

Creation of an online arts education policy questionnaire

The formation of the (online) questionnaire aimed to gauge the perceptions and opinions of Hong Kong's cultural and art education policies across a wide cross-section of cultural and arts education sector representatives. Based on an initial division into 11 categories ranging from undergraduate and postgraduate Music / Visual Arts students at one end to policymakers at the other, an approximate total of 715 e-mail invitations was sent out to contact persons garnered from a variety of sources. This yielded 229 completed questionnaires.

Organisation of the semi-structured, in-depth interviews

Within the constructivist paradigm, findings from the questionnaire were explored in greater detail and served to contribute to enriching interpretations of the subsequent semi-structured, in-depth interviews. These targeted a total of 23 selected questionnaire participants and allowed them to expound, either individually or in pairs, on the “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements of the policies, in the process co-creating meanings with the researcher as part of a subjectivist-transactional epistemology that contextualised experiences in relation to other actors, events and practices. From the “interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research” perspective, discrepancies as they related to policy and practice were elaborated upon. A fundamental objective throughout was to discover where, if at all, the potential for mutually beneficial synergies resided at a sectoral level. As part of this, the study aimed to pinpoint where the mismatches, misconnections / disconnections, gaps or contradictions that could, if left unchecked, conspire to prevent this from happening, were presently occurring.

3.4.1 Policy document analysis

In the first instance, the main policy documents related to Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies were collected and analysed. Policy is a multilayered concept that can manifest itself in a multitude of guises and be understood through a variety of lenses, including those of (cultural) infra-structure, e.g., the related hierarchy of main public institutions, patterns of resource allocation, and the mode of governance / support, e.g., direct provision on the part of a government or support via grants. Nevertheless, the decision was taken to ostensibly concentrate on the “written text” of Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies. This rejection of the broader perspective in favour of a narrower focus was taken, in part, for practical reasons (any or all of the above might comfortably be

accommodated in its own, separate thesis); just as importantly, however, the analysis was interested in using the policy documents as starting points *to explore the crucial link between the printed and the spoken word*. How had these policies initially come into being? What did the choice of language reveal about the different ways these policies had been envisioned? To what extent was the researcher's interpretation of the respective texts as they appeared on the pages being borne out by the perspectives and opinions of those tasked with their delivery and implementation?

To aid in this, selection was not simply limited to the official documents themselves, but also included the associated / supporting publications of the principle Commissions, Councils, etc. involved in both the initial advisory and creation, along with the subsequent dissemination and implementation, stages, connected with the legislation in question.

3.4.1.1 Cultural policy (-related) documents

In the case of Hong Kong's cultural policy (-related) documents, the following were selected:

1. Policy Recommendation Report (Culture and Heritage Commission, 2003)

Drawn up by the CHC, a high-level advisory body 'responsible for advising the Hong Kong government on the policies as well as the funding priorities on culture and the arts' (2003: 2), this report sets out about 100 recommendations as well as specific implementation strategies. The premise of the former is that Hong Kong's unique cultural identity is rooted in the Chinese cultural tradition, while simultaneously being identified by its embracing of cultural diversity. The spirit of the latter is that it is informed by the principles of both "people-oriented" and "community-driven" approaches; set against the Commission's ultimate vision of Hong Kong as an international cultural metropolis, the "people-oriented"

approach reflects the emphasis being given to holistic development (to be realised through education in culture and the arts for youth), while the “community-driven” approach is more indicative of the government’s deliberately less dominant role in the realm of cultural development, preferring instead to make suggestions on the roles and modes of governance of cultural facilities and institutions together with the deployment of specific resources within an institutional framework. Taken collectively, the *Policy Recommendation Report* presents an optimistic vision of Hong Kong’s cultural scene, despite the caveat that its reality ‘depends on the community’s solidarity and endeavour in support of cultural development’ (‘Letter to the Chief Executive’ – Preface to the Report).

2. ‘Cultural Policy’ (Home Affairs Bureau The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2008)

Hong Kong’s cultural policy comes under the purview of the HAB and is located at http://www.hab.gov.hk/en/policy_responsibilities/arts_culture_recreation_and_sport/arts.htm; split into an overarching ‘Vision’, it is supported by five ‘Objectives’ and the same number of ‘Basic Principles’. Underscoring its commitment to the creation of a fertile “soil” enabling a cultural environment to flourish, the amount of (financial) support given by the government to culture and the arts in terms of both recurrent and capital funding is detailed, estimated in the case of the former at HK\$4 billion (excluding the Arts and Sports Development Fund (Arts Portion) and the Cantonese Opera Development Fund) for the 2016-17 financial year and deployed mainly in the areas of provision of venue support for arts activities, funding support to arts groups, and arts education and promotion; in the case of the latter, details of the 16 performance venues and the 14 public museums are given, together with a summary of the HK\$21.6 billion granted as an upfront endowment to the integrated arts and cultural hub boasting world-class facilities that is the much-vaunted West Kowloon Cultural District

(WKCD).

3.4.1.2 Arts education policy (-related) documents

Attention was then turned towards representative choices among Hong Kong's arts education policy (-related) documents, as follows:

1. *Hong Kong Arts Development Council Arts Education Policy* (Hong Kong Arts Development Council, 1996)

Having reiterated that support for the HKADC's policy on Arts Education comes from the HKADC Ordinance, this document outlines the policy objectives for arts education under the headings of 'Formal Education', 'Professional Training' and 'Parallel Education', as well as renewing the Council's pledge to take a lead role in the promotion of Arts Education and promising to seek advice from other, related agencies as a prelude to creating and implementing initiatives, ideally through partnerships. Recognised as one of the most important arts policy documents developed for Hong Kong up to that point, and intended to serve as a blueprint for arts development for the period 1996/7 until 2000/1, arts education is firmly placed within the context of the HKADC's *5-year Strategic Plan* and dealt with under the broad goals of 'Access', 'Excellence', 'Resources' and 'Advocacy'. Looking forward, the report recognises the support given to the Policy by the Education Department and identifies some of the Committees and Working Groups so far established.

2. *A Creative Hong Kong 2000: The Millenium Challenge through Arts Education* (Hong Kong Arts Development Council, 1999)

With the end of the 20th century rapidly approaching, and in order that Hong Kong maintains its competitiveness through the development of a flexible, imaginative, communicative and

adaptable workforce, the major challenge identified by the HKADC is that of ‘Creativity for All’. To that end, the arts and arts education are recognised as the means to achieve quality education, since they help ‘students explore the techniques and expressive power of particular art forms and their cultural significance’, as well as allowing teachers to explore ‘social issues and cultural history, personal or group emotions, human relationship as well as rational identity and global awareness’ (1999: 2). In addition to making the case for arts education, the major barriers (including those of policies, systems, values, venues and career prospects) to be overcome, as well as the opportunities (such as the opportunity to review the academic system, the chance to improve the quality of teachers and the reconstruction of the art curriculum in junior secondary education) to be gained by developing arts education are all outlined, together with defining the mission, roles, objectives and future action plans of the Council.

3. *Arts Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (The Curriculum Development Council, 2002b)

One of eight Key Learning Area (KLA) Curriculum Guides developed by the HKCDC to support the *Basic Education Curriculum Guide – Building on Strengths (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (2002a), the aim is to help realise the recommendations made in the document *Learning to Learn – The Way Forward in Curriculum Development* (2001), as well as those outlined in the Education Commission (EC)’s *Learning for Life, Learning through Life – Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong* (2000). In common with the other guides, the KLA’s aims are specified within the curriculum framework, together with their learning targets and objectives. In addition to suggestions regarding curriculum planning, learning and teaching strategies, assessment and resources, exemplars of effective learning, teaching and assessment practices are also provided. Schools are expected to adopt the *Arts*

Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide's recommendations in order to achieve the learning goals of the curriculum (HKCDC, 2001) and aims of education (EC, 2000), while taking into consideration their own contexts, needs and strengths. Wherever possible, cross-referencing is made to the *Basic Education Curriculum Guide – Building on Strengths (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (2002a) and the related subject guides in order to ensure 'that there is a coherent understanding of the whole-school curriculum planning and the planning of student learning at KLA and subject levels' (2002b: 2).

4a. *Arts Education Key Learning Area Music Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)*
(The Curriculum Development Council, 2003a)

4b. *Arts Education Key Learning Area Visual Arts Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (The Curriculum Development Council, 2003b)

These subject curriculum guides are designed to support the information laid out in the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (2002b), providing a curriculum framework, learning and teaching objectives and other Music / Visual Arts references in alignment with the aims of Arts Education. However, the rationales of the two curriculums vary in some important regards. The ubiquity of music in our everyday lives is seen – through the channel of music education – to contribute significantly to the development of aesthetic sensibility, and towards intellectual and moral pursuits; it nurtures students' creative minds, a sense of national identity, their flexibility and openness and respect for others. As a means of communication and (cultural) expression that allows all individuals not only to exercise their imagination and articulate emotions that transcend language, but also enables them to develop various abilities and generic skills and cultivate values and attitudes, music is regarded as an intelligence that should be made available to all through the occupation of a central place within the school curriculum. The visual arts

curriculum starts from the premise that the intelligence and abilities required for their participation are not innate, and instead have to be taught through systematic and thematic study ‘in order to be able to understand and manipulate aesthetic expressions, coding systems and visual structures presented by visual languages and visual forms’ (2003b: 2). Through the use of visual images to both convey their feelings and thoughts and appreciate and judge the significance and values of both artistic pursuits and artifacts, students establish global and diversified views towards the world and a variety of cultures. In short, a human-oriented curriculum framework means that students’ whole-person learning and meta-cognitive development is the central concern.

3.4.1.3 Framework and rationale for analysis

Having selected the relevant policy-related documents, the next step was to decide on the most appropriate method of analysis. In the case of Hong Kong’s cultural policy, the aim was to find out the intention that lay behind it. Given the inclusive nature of the policy’s ‘Vision’, ‘Objectives’ and ‘Basic Principles’, matched by its descriptive ethos, the decision was taken to use the analysis as an opportunity to test-run Mulcahy’s (2006a) ‘Cultural Democracy’ model. This model’s emphasis on a “bottom-up” approach that eschews definitions in favour of the provision of an environment that encourages greater participation led, in turn, to the adoption of a predominantly cultural studies discipline approach as the primary analytical lens, a choice based on the two key assumptions that “culture” is a contested concept and that the idea of “cultural policy” can be understood in different ways (Gray, 2010). Gray’s (2007) framework based on his commodification and instrumentality thesis further served to gain a clearer idea of the *kind* of document the policy is, while with a view to providing an image of the underlying values and / or ideologies being supported by the Government of the HKSAR, the political science lens incorporated Mulcahy’s (2006b) actions-that-affect-citizens

definition of cultural policy, a strategy reinforced by Ahearne's (2009) "explicit" / "nominal" and "implicit" / "effective" distinctions.

With regard to Hong Kong's arts education policy, the intention was to discover how implementation was being envisioned on the part of the Government of the HKSAR. To this end, the "policy cycle" approach of Ball and his colleagues (Bowe, Ball & Gold, 1992; Ball, 1993), based on the three main contexts of influence, policy text production and practice and incorporating the attendant "struggles" of each, was appropriated. Acknowledging the educational context of a philosophy of holistic learning within the wider framework of the integrated / interdisciplinary curriculum, while simultaneously recognising the open-ended nature of Hong Kong's education reforms (inasmuch as schools are encouraged to adopt which strategies they deem to be most suitable, and the threat of punitive sanctions is consciously avoided), Chan's (2012) definition of what constitutes "soft" policy framed the analysis through the lens of Ahonen's (2001) "regulative", "redistributive" and "allocative" methods of policymaking.

In both instances, the analysis also concerned itself with the specific criteria, in the form of the kinds of justification or legitimisation, being put forward by the policymakers for the adoption of a particular approach or the proposal of certain recommendations within the pages of the documentation concerned.

3.4.2 Cultural and arts education policy questionnaire

In order to gauge general perceptions of the two policies in question among the various stakeholders, in the process factoring in opinions regarding the wider roles of culture and the arts in education and society, the decision was made to formulate a cultural and arts education

policy questionnaire. Within the framework of the overall study, the intention was that, through the subsequent analysis, the emergence of “points of interest” could be investigated in more depth during the subsequent, semi-structured interviews. Despite the somewhat niche nature of the study, the number of individuals involved, in whatever capacity, with (both) arts education and / or culture is substantial; since the hope was that, through the questionnaire, a comprehensive snapshot of the current situation might emerge, the challenge was therefore to create a survey that was in equal measure demographically diverse, academically rigorous and experientially inclusive.

3.4.2.1 Developing the questionnaire

It was decided that the most effective way to target a wide demographic of stakeholders would be via a bilingual questionnaire which could be created, delivered and completed entirely online. This was deemed to have two main advantages: firstly, it could be accessed via a variety of platforms, including mobile devices, and; secondly, it was not time-dependent, meaning that participants could choose when they wished to complete it. At the same time, since it could be easily accessed via a link, itself disseminated through electronic communication, the need for hard copies to be printed or face-to-face meetings to be conducted was negated.

Since the study was fundamentally concerned with the relationship that currently exists between the cultural and arts education sectors within the framework of the “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements, rather than design a questionnaire for each of the policies in question the decision was taken instead to cover both Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies in the one instrument. The focus throughout was not on testing potential respondents’ knowledge; rather, the attempt was made,

through the questions, to discover where participants “stood” in terms of their perceptions of the two policies.

3.4.2.2 Guiding principles for the questionnaire

In order to further shape and refine the questionnaire, a series of overarching principles were drawn up. The first of these was aimed at discovering the orientation, or “scope”, of each policy. Depending on how wide or how narrow these were deemed to be, so the particular areas of focus that the questionnaire was attempting to address (as a means of “unpacking” the policy in question) could then be more easily identified. From an early stage, the hope was that it might be possible to create one questionnaire that could cover both policies and both audiences. In order to achieve this, the second principle concerned itself with deciding who the policies were intended to reach, together with considering whether these stakeholders were the same or different for each policy. Thinking beyond the more immediate “conceptualisation” and “communication” stages of the two policies, the third principle considered how each policy was intended to pan out via its recipients (the “operationalisation” stage), leading to the notion of whether it would be feasible – through the questionnaire – to “track the stream”.

Scoping the orientation (Unpacking the policies)

Drawing on the concrete findings from the policy document analysis, while adopting the position of a policy reader aiming to get to the heart of each document through a combination of an interpretation of the underlying rationale and “reading between the lines”, the foci with which Hong Kong’s cultural policy is concerned were considered to be as follows:

- Encouraging broad participation

- Targeting creativity as the driver
- Building on internal and external collaborations / partnerships

with an overall orientation of:

- Creating a fertile “soil” through the elements listed above to enable a cultural environment to flourish.

For its part, Hong Kong’s arts education policy foci were identified as follows:

- Contributing to holistic / whole-person development
- Nurturing balanced (i.e. less narrowly specialised) individuals
- Cultivating positive values and attitudes, including creativity

with an overall orientation of:

- Preparing well-rounded individuals who are equipped with the necessary skills to take their place in the workplace of the future.

Targeting the sample (Identifying the stakeholders)

As part of assembling a representative cross-section of individuals connected with Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies, while simultaneously allowing data to be mined at different levels, especially during the follow-up, in-depth interview stage, a number of different stakeholders across the cultural and arts education spectrum were identified. These

were roughly broken down into three subgroups, inclusion being dependent upon calculated levels of familiarity with the respective policies, combined with their overall amount of working experience. Thus, “junior level” participants were defined as those individuals with less than eight years’ experience: this translated into practical terms to Music and Visual Arts students at the undergraduate and postgraduate level, along with recent graduates currently engaged within the arts and cultural sector in a variety of different capacities, but also included those at a government or ministerial level who, as a result of the practice of transferring administrative staff to different departments on a circa three-year basis, might only have been in their current position for a short time only. “Mid-level” participants were defined as those individuals with eight-10 years’ worth of experience: typically, this was considered to equate to those within lower-mid managerial, or seasoned general practitioner, positions within a cultural / arts organisation context, along with Music and Visual Arts teachers who had perhaps achieved Head of Department status and those individuals occupying lecturer or senior lecturer positions within a tertiary-level institution. Finally, “senior level” participants were defined as those with more than 10 years’ experience in either or both sectors: again, typically, but not necessarily exclusively, this translated to those at an upper managerial or directorial position within a tertiary education or cultural / arts organisation setting, together with secondary school principals, and chairpersons or policy advisors represented at a government committee level.

Given the potentially enormous number of participants across the whole cultural and arts education spectrum within Hong Kong, a series of shortlists were drawn up of the individuals and bodies representing each of the three targeted subgroups detailed above. With a total of roughly 400 secondary schools – whether classified as ‘Government’, ‘Aided’, ‘Direct Subsidy Scheme’ or ‘Private’, and where Music and Visual Arts are taught – to choose from,

largely for reasons of linguistic familiarity attention was focused on those schools with English as the Medium of Instruction (EMI). From a policy-related point of view, representatives from each of the major bodies, i.e. HAB, HKADC, LCSD and the Curriculum Development Office of the EDB, were targeted in order to be as representative as possible. Based on these criteria, 11 categories of participants were identified:

- Students currently studying Music / Visual Arts at the undergraduate level;
- Students currently studying the same subjects at the postgraduate, i.e. Master's and Doctorate, level;
- Music teachers, (department) panel heads, etc. within the Hong Kong EMI secondary school system;
- Visual Arts teachers, (department) panel heads, etc. within the Hong Kong EMI secondary school system;
- Principals of Hong Kong EMI secondary schools;
- Music (senior) lecturers, etc. within tertiary level education;
- Visual Arts (senior) lecturers, etc. within tertiary level education;
- Department heads, faculty heads, programme leaders, etc. within tertiary level education;
- (Vice) presidents, (executive) directors, chief executive officers, (senior) programme (and development) managers / officers, etc. who work in the arts education sector, e.g., arts association, company, organisation;
- (Principal) assistant secretaries, council members, chairpersons, chief and senior managers, and (senior) curriculum development officers, etc. who work in the cultural sector, e.g., government bureau, council, department, and;

- ‘Other’, e.g., administration and support staff within an arts education / cultural setting.

Realising the policy objectives (Tracking the stream)

Given that this was a qualitative research study realised through an action methodology, an important consideration in designing the questionnaire lay in attempting to discover the extent to which the policies were impacting upon participants in terms of their “follow through”, indicated via their declared engagement and interaction. By adopting an indirect approach, i.e. making the questions perception-based in order to shift the focus away from knowledge of the policies *per se* to their place within the wider, societal context, this allowed the questionnaire to reimagine the role(s) and audience(s) of culture, cultural activities, the arts and arts activities in general within the general framework of “operationalisation”. A fundamental element of the overall ecology of the study was the notion of partnerships as a means of forging closer sectoral ties that could lead to mutually beneficial synergies. At the same time, through the specific identification of Hong Kong’s cultural policy as an attempt to create a fertile “soil” within which a cultural environment might flourish, and its arts education policy as the determination to help develop well-rounded students and provide them with sufficient workplace and life skills, built into the questionnaire was the provision of suggestions as to how the respective policies could realise their fundamental objectives. The concept of “tracking the stream” therefore aimed to gauge the extent to which respondents’ perceptions of the importance of the various factors that needed to be considered within the development of cross-sectoral partnerships, together with the main challenges facing the development of Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies, were in line with the researcher’s own interpretation of the documents’ objectives.

3.4.2.3 Linking the questionnaire to the theoretical and analytical frameworks

With the aim of achieving greater internal cohesion, of fundamental importance was to ensure that the information being sought had a solid theoretical basis supported by the literature. To that end, the study's overarching alignment with the combined "ecological worldview" and "interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research" approaches was reflected in questions that considered the purpose of a cultural policy through an identification of the importance of partnerships with different communities, factors that need to be considered when developing a partnership between the two sectors by drawing attention to ensuring that projects were sustainable, and the main challenges facing the development of Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies in terms of closer coordination regarding the objectives of the two sectors. The frameworks being chosen for the analysis of the policy documents were also reflected in the questionnaire. For example, respondents were asked to offer their opinions regarding the importance of clearly defining "culture" in order to create a cultural policy (Gray, 2010), the accessibility of culture to everyone within the framework of the main message that a cultural policy should communicate (Mulcahy, 2006a) and the arts as providing students with a broad range of skills as the main message that an arts education policy should communicate (Bowe, Ball & Gold, 1992; Ball, 1993).

3.4.2.4 The cultural and arts education policy questionnaire items

A total of 21 items made up the cultural and arts education policy questionnaire. Supported by the literature, the questions were a mixture of different types. With the exception of the first two introductory "ice-breakers", the questions were designed to link to and reinforce the literature, as well as tie in with the methodological and theoretical frameworks being used.

3.4.2.4.1 Breakdown of respondents

The 21 item numbered questionnaire deliberately aimed to target a very wide demographic across the cultural and arts education sectors. In order to find out how they identified themselves, participants were asked initially to indicate in which capacity they were responding. Based on the previously-identified eleven categorisations, they were asked to check the most appropriate answer.

3.4.2.4.2 Awareness of Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies

A pre-requisite in terms of the creation of the online cultural and arts education policy questionnaire was that, because of the projected ages and levels of experience represented, the degree to which participants were familiar with the policies in question could not be assumed in advance. As part of the introduction to the questionnaire proper, participants were asked to indicate their level of awareness of Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies. Selection of the answer that best applied was to be made from the following options: 'I'm not aware that Hong Kong has either policy.', 'I'm aware that Hong Kong has both policies.', 'I'm aware that Hong Kong has a cultural policy, but not an arts education policy.', 'I'm aware that Hong Kong has an arts education policy, but not a cultural policy.' and 'Other (please comment)'.

3.4.2.4.3 The purpose of a cultural policy

The policy document analysis had previously attempted to ascertain what Hong Kong's cultural policy and its associated practices exists *for*. The same question was also asked of the questionnaire respondents. To assist them in their decision they were given five options: 'Promote creativity in its various forms.', 'Strengthen core values, e.g., freedom of expression.', 'Clarify identities, e.g., those of "Hongkongers".', 'Develop partnerships with

different communities.’ and ‘Culturally educate people.’, which they were asked to rank in order of importance from the least (1) to the most important (5).

3.4.2.4.4 The purpose of an arts education policy

This question again referenced the theoretical frameworks for policy document analysis. This time it was concerned with encapsulating an arts education policy’s contents and anticipating the desired outcomes. To that end, the five options were: ‘Improve understanding and knowledge of the arts.’, ‘Nurture creative individuals.’, ‘Contribute to whole-person development.’, ‘Build audiences for the future.’, and ‘Encourage positive learning values and attitudes.’ As before, participants were asked to rank these in order of importance from the least (1) to the most important (5).

3.4.2.4.5 The importance of clearly defining “culture” in order to create a cultural policy

Given the deeply contested nature of the concept, and the two definitions being adopted by the HAB (along with taking a third perspective into account when the topic was the impact of culture on social development), participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they felt it was important to define “culture” in order to create a cultural policy. The five options consisted of: ‘Strongly disagree’, ‘Disagree’, ‘Neither agree nor disagree’, ‘Agree’ and ‘Strongly agree’.

3.4.2.4.6 The importance of clearly defining “the arts” in order to create an arts education policy

Similar issues concern “the arts”, brought about not least through its deployment as a catch-all phrase to refer to different, albeit related, disciplines, as a constituent element within

a specific phraseology, or else as a means of lumping together fundamentally diverse manifestations. Participants were asked how important they felt it was to define “the arts” in order to create an arts education policy based on the same five options.

3.4.2.4.7 The importance of the element of enjoyment in cultural activities

Enshrined within the ‘Vision’ of Hong Kong’s cultural policy is the notion of a city where life is celebrated through cultural pursuit. In an attempt to further probe perceptions within the framework of the fundamental role, function or purpose of a cultural policy, participants were asked to consider the status of enjoyment as a factor within the context of cultural activities. As such, they were asked to choose the most appropriate answer from the five choices of ‘Irrelevant’, ‘Of little importance’, ‘Somewhat important’, ‘Important, but not core’ and ‘Core’.

3.4.2.4.8 The importance of the achievement of excellence in artistic activities

Hong Kong’s frequently-cited “utilitarian” extra-curricular pursuit of musical success, often as a means to achieving non-musical ends or outcomes, is typically equated with the accumulation of a set of musical qualifications. Against an arts education curriculum that encourages participation regardless of ability, participants were asked how important they considered the achievement of excellence in artistic activities to be by selecting one of the same five choices as above.

3.4.2.4.9 The audience for an arts education policy

Hong Kong’s arts education curriculum exists within the framework of an integrative learning approach and a stated commitment on the part of the EDB to an inclusive, “arts for all” environment that can both develop students’ creativity and contribute to their whole-person

development. This question was interested in ascertaining who respondents thought an arts education policy was meant for. To that end, they were asked to mark one of the nine given points on a continuum with ‘Only students who are highly talented in the arts.’ at one end and ‘All students, regardless of their artistic ability.’ at the other.

3.4.2.4.10 The audience for a cultural policy

One of Hong Kong’s stated ‘Objectives’ within its cultural policy is the provision of opportunities for wide participation in culture and the arts. Likewise, one of its ‘Basic Principles’ is “people-oriented”, whereby citizens are encouraged to fulfill their needs for cultural pursuit and realize their potential in the arts. Respondents were asked their perceptions regarding who constituted the document’s intended recipients, the nine-point continuum this time being marked ‘Only people who greatly enjoy doing cultural activities.’ at one end and ‘Everyone, regardless of how they feel about cultural activities.’ at the other.

3.4.2.4.11 Encountering information about Hong Kong’s cultural policy

This question was interested in discovering those channels through which respondents had found out about Hong Kong’s cultural policy. Allowing them the option of checking more than one box as applicable, the options were ‘The Home Affairs Bureau website.’, ‘Official policy documents.’, ‘The media, e.g., TV.’, ‘Organised events, e.g., conferences.’ and ‘Other (please specify)’.

3.4.2.4.12 The priority given to culture and cultural policy at an official level

Policy can be communicated in ways that are both spoken and unspoken, in the process revealing how much priority it is afforded by those responsible for its creation and dissemination. In order to gauge the degree of importance participants believed was being

attached to cultural policy by those at an official or policymaker level, they were asked to choose the most appropriate answer from the following options: ‘No priority at all’, ‘A low priority’, ‘A moderate level of priority’, ‘A high priority’ and ‘The highest priority’.

3.4.2.4.13 The main message that an arts education policy should communicate

The official position being taken on the part of the Education Commission is that arts education is one of the five essential areas in the overall aim of education, as well as advocating for it on the basis that it is the means to achieving quality education. In thinking about the main message they felt an arts education policy should communicate, respondents were asked to select an answer from the following options: ‘The arts are an effective means to build creativity.’, ‘The arts can contribute to whole-person development.’, ‘The arts can provide students with a broad range of skills.’, ‘The arts can improve students’ academic prospects.’ and ‘The arts are for enjoyment.’

3.4.2.4.14 The main message that a cultural policy should communicate

Similarly, Hong Kong’s stated ‘Vision’ is that of becoming an international cultural metropolis built on a Chinese-rooted-but-culturally-enriched identity, augmented through a life-affirming pursuit of culture. This time, the questionnaire was interested in finding out what respondents’ perceptions were regarding the main message to be communicated by a cultural policy. The options were: ‘Culture should be accessible to everyone.’, ‘Creativity drives cultural progress.’, ‘Cultural and arts partnerships can increase community involvement.’, ‘Different kinds of culture should be embraced and integrated.’ and ‘Culture should be considered across and within every level of society.’

3.4.2.4.15 Including cultural policy as part of preparing teachers of arts education

As a means of exploring different avenues whereby a closer alignment between the two sectors might be forthcoming, respondents were asked whether they thought an introduction to cultural policy should be included as part of arts educators' training. As with previous questions of this type, they were asked to indicate their level of agreement from five options in the form of 'Strongly disagree', 'Disagree', 'Neither agree nor disagree', 'Agree' and 'Strongly agree'.

3.4.2.4.16 The importance attached to cultural practices producing “cultural people”

Hong Kong's cultural policy actively encourages cultural participation. There is also a stated emphasis on being “culturally educated” and developing “cultural literacy” by linking education in culture and the arts. This question aimed to gauge participants' perceptions regarding the link between “practices” and “products” within this particular context. To that end, the choices from which they were asked to select the most appropriate answer were: 'Irrelevant', 'Of little importance', 'Somewhat important', 'Important, but not essential' and 'Essential'.

3.4.2.4.17 The importance attached to arts educational practices producing “artistic people”

There is perhaps an ingrained notion in Hong Kong that artistic activities are strictly for “artists”, and that practices within the realm of arts education, while tangentially involved with development in the domain of aesthetics, are essentially concerned with the fostering and nurturing of those individuals with arts career-related aspirations. Gauging participants' perceptions within the context of an intentionally more inclusive arts education curriculum, this question asked respondents to choose the most appropriate answer based on the same five

options.

3.4.2.4.18 The factors that need to be considered when developing a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors

Attention has repeatedly been drawn to the importance – both at an arts education and cultural policy level, as well as within the overall framework of the present study – of partnerships at a cross-sectoral level. In the case of the former, one of the long-term goals of the EDB in formulating the arts education policy was the nurturing of partnerships with schools and other parties to develop school-based arts curricula, while among the main foci from the point of view of the CHC's *Policy Recommendation Report* was the promotion of partnership and community involvement. From this study's perspective, such collaborations have the potential to result in the occurrence of synergies, together with the accrual of mutual benefits. By way of offering their opinions, respondents were asked to rank five factors from the least (1) to the most important (5). These were: 'Considering fully the notion of co-creation.', 'Ensuring that projects are sustainable.', 'Strengthening cultural literacy and social cohesion.', 'Addressing issues of identity and values.', and 'Emphasising the importance of diversity and inclusivity.'

3.4.2.4.19 The extent to which Hong Kong's cultural policy has helped create a fertile "soil" to enable a cultural environment to flourish

In the process of "unpacking" and interpreting Hong Kong's cultural policy, an appropriate encapsulation of the policy (as expressed through an overall orientation) was deemed to be the creation of a fertile "soil" that might enable a cultural environment to flourish. The extent to which the respondents, based on this interpretation, thought that this had been accomplished was the subject of this question. In common with previous examples, they were

asked to indicate their level of agreement from the five options consisting of ‘Strongly disagree’, ‘Disagree’, ‘Neither agree nor disagree’, ‘Agree’ and ‘Strongly agree’.

3.4.2.4.20 The extent to which Hong Kong’s arts education policy has helped develop well-rounded students and provided them with sufficient workplace and life skills

The three foci identified during the subsequent “unpacking” of Hong Kong’s arts education policy were encapsulated with an overall orientation as the preparation of well-rounded individuals imbued with the necessary workplace and life skills. The extent to which the respondents, based on this interpretation, agreed that this had been accomplished by the arts education policy was undertaken with the aid of the five same options.

3.4.2.4.21 The main challenges facing the development of Hong Kong’s arts education and cultural policies

Hong Kong’s arts education and cultural policies can both be considered “works in progress”. Without the benefit of timelines for their ultimate completion, there may yet be some way to go before they can be said to have fully accomplished their respective vision, objectives and aims. This question asked respondents to check the choice(s) they felt best applied when looking ahead to the future. These were: ‘Closer coordination regarding the objectives of the two sectors.’, ‘The outline of a clear cultural vision for Hong Kong.’, ‘Greater participation in cultural activities.’, ‘Promotion of the arts at every level.’, ‘Fostering of community arts education.’ and ‘Other (please specify)’.

3.4.2.5 Data-gathering procedure

Once the cultural and arts education policy questionnaire had been created and uploaded to the online platform, individuals were invited to participate via an introductory e-mail. In

addition to supplying a preamble (in the form of the researcher's reason for initiating the correspondence), this gave a brief background to the research study as a whole, along with providing a specific link to enable the prospective participant to access, complete and submit the questionnaire. Where specific individuals within a wider community were being targeted, e.g., secondary school Music and / or Visual Arts teachers, an initial application was made to the Principal of the institution in question, together with the request that they pass the details on to the (named) individuals. In all cases, it was stressed that participation in the study was on a purely voluntary basis, to be entered into entirely at the discretion of the recipient.

3.4.2.6 Data analysis

The online cultural and arts education policy questionnaire was designed to gain a clearer picture of perceptions across both sectors as they related to the two policies. It was hoped that the resulting 'interpretive' perspective could not only help maximise the power of the data by considering what it *meant* rather than relaying what it *said*; the problem of relying on smaller samples sizes (brought about by varying numbers of responses within certain categories) to make generalisations across the findings could also be avoided, while the potential for mining potentially rich data (as a means of maintaining the integrity of the different question types) stood a better chance of being assured. In keeping with the way the questionnaire had initially been developed, analysis was roughly correlated with the three elements of "conceptualisation", "communication" and "operationalisation". However, this structural breakdown was not provided as part of the questionnaire itself. Taken collectively, the aim was to provide an introduction, particularly through the identification of "points of interest", to generate issues that could then be explored in greater detail during the semi-structured, in-depth interviews.

Once all the online responses had been collected via the online platform and imported into the statistical package SPSS 21, data analysis was carried out. To aid in the process, the original 11 categories of participants were reorganised into six. It was considered important to determine the kinds of perceptions that were common to certain categories, and the extent to which such perceptions persisted or varied across the survey items.

3.4.3 Semi-structured, in-depth interviews

Having carried out the relevant policy document analysis, followed by the analysis of perceptions among a broad demographic of respondents across the cultural and arts education spectrum through the vehicle of an online cultural and arts education policy questionnaire, the third and final step was to select specific individuals drawn from the second stage and invite them (in a similar manner as had been done for the questionnaire) to participate in a face-to-face interview. This was anticipated to last in the region of 45 minutes, based around a list of questions sent to the participant in advance.

3.4.3.1 Selection of interviewees

Eligibility of participants was based not simply on whether they fulfilled the criteria of representing the nominated categories, but also took into consideration their respective years of experience, along with the insights it was felt they were likely to be able to contribute. Based on those English-medium secondary school principals and / or individual Music and Visual Arts teachers who had directly responded to the original invitation to take part in the online questionnaire, follow-up e-mails were sent requesting their participation in the interviews. Selection of potential interviewees at a government or ministerial level was typically based on listings of departmental personnel located at the appropriate websites, and actioned via e-mail correspondence or phone calls. In those cases where it was not possible to

recruit first choice interviewees, a substitute candidate with similar duties and responsibilities was made available to the researcher.

3.4.3.2 Interview foci

Depending on their particular role, the general foci of the conversation (also as outlined in the preparatory correspondence) was anticipated to vary accordingly, as follows:

- For postgraduate students at the Doctorate level (together with one student who had recently graduated from a Master’s programme), how “culture” and “the arts” were being defined, perceptions regarding what the main messages of a cultural and arts education policy were or should be and the degree to which these were being effectively communicated, and the extent to which Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies were impacting at a broader, professional level, particularly for those individuals who were already working in one of the two sectors or preparing to do so.
- For principals and Music / Visual Arts teachers at the secondary level, how “the arts” were being defined, perceptions regarding what the main messages of an arts education policy were or should be and the degree to which these were being effectively communicated, along with the extent to which Hong Kong’s arts education policy was impacting on practices at a school level;
- For lecturers and department heads within tertiary education, how “culture” and “the arts” were being defined (and what this meant in terms of the way the policies were created), the extent to which the respective policies were impacting on practitioners, and the merits of different factors when considering the development of a partnership between the cultural and arts education sectors;

- For cultural / arts organisation representatives, how “culture” and “the arts” were being defined (and what this meant in terms of the way the policies were created), how the two sectors thought the respective policies’ messages could be most effectively communicated, and the merits of different factors when considering the development of a partnership between the cultural and arts education sectors;
- For those at a government bureau level, how “culture” and “the arts” were being defined (and what this meant in terms of the way Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies had been created), how the two sectors thought their respective policies’ messages could be most effectively communicated, and the merits of different factors when considering the development of sectoral partnerships.

3.4.3.3 Operational procedure

All 21 interviews were conducted in Hong Kong. Specific times and dates for the interviewees were agreed upon beforehand at the convenience of the participant, and in all but the first three cases a list of the proposed questions was sent at least three days in advance of the meeting. The questions were split up into the three “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements, both with a view to making the text look less intimidating on the page but also for the purposes of enabling the interviewer to more easily group the kinds of questions being asked. It was also a useful tool for explaining to interviewees how these concepts related to the study as a whole. This list was printed off and brought by the interviewer to the interview.

Before proceeding, the researcher informed the interviewee(s) that the whole conversation would be recorded for the purposes of transcription and data analysis. Rather than follow a step-by-step walk-through of the questions in order, cues were taken from the responses

given by the interviewee, aiming all the time for a natural, informal style that would relax the respondent and ensure as far as possible a free-flowing dialogue. As part of this, background and supplementary information as it pertained to the study as a whole, or by way of clarifying specific theoretical aspects underpinning the questions, were freely supplied as necessary. The interviews varied in length, the shortest lasting 42 minutes and the longest one hour and 47 minutes.

As part of adapting the overall focus of the interviews to suit the particular participant, the questions within the three areas of “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” were tailored in an attempt to elicit as much useful information as possible, especially as they related to the previously-identified “points of interest”. Essentially, the kinds of questions put to cultural / arts organisation representatives within the “conceptualisation” arena were concerned with their thoughts about the rationalisation, or philosophy, behind the policy under discussion. Typical ground covered their opinions on what it might mean to be “culturally educated”, whether or not they considered Hong Kong’s cultural and / or arts education policies to demonstrate a clearly defined understanding of “the arts” and / or “culture” (and if it was deemed important that this was the case), and the relationship of Hong Kong’s cultural policy to issues such as values and identity. Principals and Visual Arts or Music teachers were requested to comment on the place the arts occupied within the context of their particular school and its curriculum, along with their thoughts on the relationship between the arts and culture. Participants at a policymaking level were invited to expound on Hong Kong’s arts education / cultural policy as a policy for the arts, or culture (or both), and the main purpose of the policy for which they had direct responsibility. Those occupying different roles within tertiary education – as well as students at the postgraduate level – were also asked about their thoughts on the relationship between the arts

and culture, along with those on the purpose of a cultural and an arts education policy.

For the “communication” section, the questions to all the major categories of participants were essentially concerned with the degree to which individual interviewees felt that Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies were being effectively transmitted, alongside the main messages with which each policy should concern itself. Given its stated importance within a curricular context, arts education policy representatives were encouraged to offer an opinion as to how an integrated approach was being promoted, while secondary school principals and teachers within the two disciplines, as well as tertiary education level representatives, considered the degree to which Hong Kong’s arts education policy directly impacted on the approaches of their institution, as well as on their personal and professional practices.

The “operationalisation” aspect was really concerned with discovering what impact the two policies were having at a practical level, particularly as it pertained to the extent to which there was evidence of both inter- and cross-sectoral alliances between certain stakeholders, together with what such partnerships were revealing about issues such as increasing community involvement, sustainability of both projects and audiences, and the achievement of greater coordination and the creation of stronger synergies. Participants across the cultural and arts education spectrum were invited to give reasons – as applicable – why they thought Hong Kong’s respective policies had yet to achieve their identified fundamental objectives of helping to create a fertile “soil” to enable a cultural environment to flourish, and helping to develop well-rounded and future-equipped students. Depending on the responses to the previous question, identification of the main challenges facing both policies was then asked of the interviewees.

3.4.3.4 Semi-structured, in-depth interview analysis

Given the large amount of data generated, it was decided that a selective approach would be required in order to make the analysis as meaningful as possible. Rather than detail every word spoken by the participants, the transcriptions instead concentrated on highlighting salient quotes from the questions being put to them. As part of the process of reducing complexity (while still retaining validity) the choice of information to be presented was aligned as closely as possible with the frameworks from the policy document analysis. The combination of these two approaches gave rise to seven themes, in the process providing a framework within which the previously-identified “points of interest” generated from the analysis of the cultural and arts education policy questionnaire could support and enrich the resulting “voices” and “stories” of the participants. It was hoped that this revealing of the different narrative “layers” could ultimately serve to identify the mismatches, misconceptions / disconnections, gaps and contradictions presently occurring between the two sectors, thereby answering the third research question.

3.5 Conclusion

Having detailed the methodology utilised by this study within the parameters of an ecological research design framework, together with outlining how the information gathered via each of the three data-gathering stages were to be accomplished, the results are analysed in the following chapter.

Chapter Four: RESULTS

4.1 Data-gathering and analysis

The data-gathering and analysis was divided into three distinct, yet interrelated, stages. Each aimed to answer one of the study's three research questions and had its own set of tools and procedures.

Policy document analysis: selection, justification and legitimisation

In the first instance, seven documents, both official and supporting, were chosen as they related to the two policies in question. The subsequent interpretive analysis, based around a literature-generated analytical framework in each case, was intended to understand how the policies had been envisioned in terms of their main principles, rationales and philosophies, in the process answering the first research question. As part of this, the underlying values informing the documents, along with any justification or legitimisation being provided by the policymakers to support the particular recommendations and strategies being advocated, were also considered.

Online cultural and arts education policy questionnaire: creation, dissemination and collection

The second stage consisted of the creation and dissemination of, followed by the data-gathering from, an online cultural and arts education policy questionnaire. Targeting a broad demographic across Hong Kong's cultural and arts education spectrum, from under- and postgraduate students to policymakers, it aimed to gain a clearer picture of the perceptions and opinions of participants, in the process revealing where they currently "stood" in relation to Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies. Three guiding principles

(“unpacking”, “targeting” and “tracking”) reflected the study’s “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements, while from an analytical perspective the identification of three “points of interest” generated issues for further investigation via semi-structured, in-depth interviews.

Semi-structured, in-depth interviews: invitation, participation and elaboration

The questions being raised via the policy document analysis, supplemented by the main “points of interest” emerging from the questionnaire analysis, were explored in greater detail during the third and final, semi-structured, in-depth interview stage. Individuals who had accepted the initial invitation to participate in the online questionnaire were targeted, with a set of sample questions being sent out ahead of the meeting. Depending on the amount of experience, degree of expertise and familiarity being brought to the table as they pertained to the respective policies, the foci and tailoring of the interviews varied, all the while aiming for a relaxed, informal style that could allow the interviewee to fully elaborate on the questions being asked. Based on the interview analysis, it was hoped that any mismatches, misconnections / disconnections, gaps and contradictions that were serving to prevent synergies between the two sectors from developing could be more easily identified.

4.2 Hong Kong’s policy-related documents

The first stage focused on Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policy-related documents.

4.2.1 Background to the policy document analysis

Hong Kong has publicly declared its intention of becoming an international cultural metropolis. Falling under the remit of the HAB, its cultural policy (http://www.hab.gov.hk/en/policy_responsibilities/arts_culture_recreation_and_sport/arts.htm)

is the rephrasing and repackaging of a series of recommendations and strategies originally made in the *Policy Recommendation Report* (CHC, 2003). Comprising an overarching ‘Vision’, which is supported by five ‘Objectives’ and the same number of ‘Basic Principles’, it lays out in very brief terms how such a dream might become a reality. On the other side of the table sits Hong Kong’s arts education policy, a document conceived within the wider framework of far-reaching reforms initiated by the Education Bureau (EDB) in 2000. Entrusted with ensuring that arts education fulfills the EDB’s expectations, the HKCDC has the task, through its various publications, of assisting teachers to rise and meet the multifarious challenges involved.

While fully acknowledging the inherent complexity within the concept, both for reasons of practicality and focus the decision was taken to use the analysis as a means of investigating the links between the printed and the spoken word by concentrating on the “written texts”, as opposed to the broader “applications”, of the two policies concerned. By regarding such documents as starting points for further exploration, questions such as how the policies had come about, what the choice of language revealed about the ways they had been envisioned, and the degree to which the researcher’s interpretation might be either confirmed or denied by the various stakeholders via the semi-structured, in-depth interviews, became fundamental considerations.

4.2.2 Selection of the policy-related documents

Selection was not simply limited to the policies themselves, but also included the main associated and supporting publications. On the cultural policy side, in addition to the official cultural policy, the *Policy Recommendation Report* (CHC, 2003) was chosen. From the arts education side, selected documents were the *Hong Kong Arts Development Council Arts*

Education Policy (HKADC, 1996), *A Creative Hong Kong 2000: The Millenium Challenge through Arts Education* (HKADC, 1999), and the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (HKCDC, 2002b), together with its supporting publications in the form of the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Music Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (HKCDC, 2003a) and the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Visual Arts Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (HKCDC, 2003b).

4.2.3 Purpose of the policy document analysis

The purpose of the policy document analysis, then, was to gain a deeper understanding of how Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies had been envisaged, with the intention of answering the first research question:

- What are the philosophies and rationales that underpin Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies? Is there evidence of any justification and legitimisation being put forward with regard to the policies' conception and the recommendations being made?

4.2.4 Analysis of Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies

In order to answer the first part of the research question, analysis of the selected policy documents was undertaken with the aid of specific frameworks. Given the brevity of the documents (particularly on the cultural policy side), rather than seek definitive answers the intention of the analysis was instead to adopt a more interpretive approach, the hope being that those questions which were raised could be confirmed during the semi-structured, in-depth interview stage.

4.2.4.1 Analytical frameworks

4.2.4.1.1 Hong Kong's cultural policy

At its heart, Hong Kong's cultural policy is a statement of intent: a desire to position the city within the public consciousness as an international cultural metropolis. This is encapsulated in an overarching 'Vision' of Hong Kong as a city that draws on its Chinese heritage to provide citizens with an environment where life is celebrated through cultural pursuit and where creativity is the engine that drives progress. Opportunities for wide participation in culture and the arts, where potential is developed and innovation encouraged, are among the 'Objectives', while the 'Basic Principles' uphold – among others – the fundamental tenets of diversity, freedom of expression, and a holistic approach.

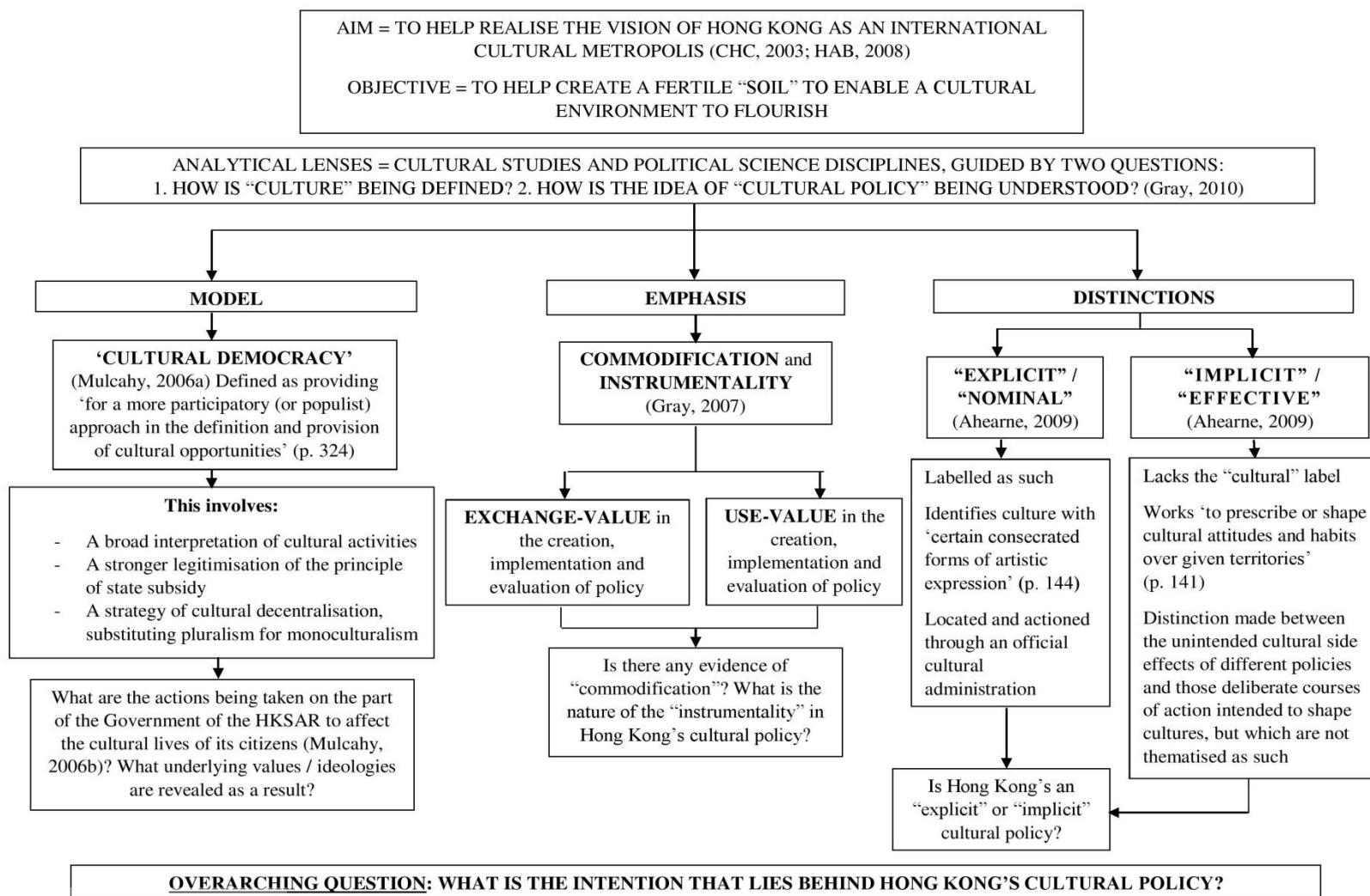
Guided by how “culture” is being defined and the idea of “cultural policy” understood (Gray, 2010), the analysis investigated the policy's outwardly democratic view of the provision of, and the encouragement to participate in, cultural opportunities to test-run Mulcahy's (2006a) 'Cultural Democracy' model. Expanded upon with observations again made by Mulcahy (2006b), it was supported by the “explicit” / “nominal” and “implicit” / “effective” distinctions identified by Ahearne (2009), while underpinning the analysis was the adoption of a framework based on the commodification and instrumentality thesis initially put forward by Gray (2007). This views public policy as a kind of “commodity”, enabled by governments through the creation of certain ideological conditions, the result of which is to allow them to be utilised on the basis of their perceived secondary effects. Such “exchange-value” (as opposed to “use-value”), achieved through what the author labels an “instrumental framework”, has seen cultural policy recognised for its influence beyond arts and culture. What this means from a policy analysis point of view is that the intention that lies behind the policy becomes a central feature of how it is to be understood. Given the study's

predominantly qualitative viewpoint within an “ecological worldview” / “interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary” methodology, particularly as it relates to sustainability, the cultural studies discipline was adopted as the primary analytical lens in order to “read between the lines” and attempt to interpret, ascertain and deduce what the policy and its associated practices exist *for*. To this end, the policy documents were firstly studied to see which definition of “culture” was being adopted, together with evidence of an understanding of what constituted “cultural policy”.

As a means of providing further insight into the commodification / instrumentalisation dichotomy, while also serving to reveal the underlying values and / or ideologies that the Government of the HKSAR supports, the analysis also adopted the political science disciplinary lens to incorporate Mulcahy’s (2006b) definition of cultural policy as ‘the actions that a state ... take(s) that affect the cultural life of its citizens’ (p. 267) to consider evidence provided in the form of concrete examples. Reinforcing this was Ahearne’s (2009) distinction between two definitions of cultural policy. As such, ‘*explicit* or *nominal* cultural policy [is] any cultural policy that a government labels as such ... *implicit* or *effective* cultural policy [is] any political strategy that looks to work on the culture of the territory over which it presides’ (p. 143). Taken together the deployment of these two terms ‘can ... help us notably to measure a modern government’s explicit cultural policy (what it proclaims that it is doing for culture through its official cultural administration) against its implicit cultural policy (the effective impact on the nation’s culture of its action as a whole, including education...)’ (p. 144). In accordance with Ahearne’s conjecture that cultural transmission is a complex political operation that cannot take place without some kind of effective policy *for* culture, the combination of methodologies within the analytical framework outlined was felt not only to serve the purpose of more clearly identifying Hong Kong’s cultural policy in terms of the

kind of document it is, but also looked ahead to the “communication” and “operationalisation” elements as they played out in the cultural and arts education policy questionnaire and semi-structured, in-depth interviews, respectively.

Figure 4.1 outlines the framework used to analyse Hong Kong’s cultural policy.

Figure 4.1 Cultural Policy Analytical Framework

Aligning the cultural policy analytical framework with the methods employed

The point was previously made within the ‘Methods’ premise of the ‘Methodological Parameters’ paradigm in Chapter 3 that the techniques or procedures being used to gather and analyse the data have to be compatible with the desired outcomes (Crotty, 1998). In keeping with the study’s constructivist / interpretivist theoretical approach within an ecological research methodology, the analysis of the cultural policy-related documents – on the basis that what is *not* said is as important, if not more so, than what *is* – adopted an approach that attempted to “read between the lines”. In so doing, the hope was that it might be possible ‘to identify hidden depths to policy that ... superficial readings ... may not be able to comprehend.’ Viewed through this, cultural studies, lens, ““cultural policy” becomes a series of “texts” that are subject to the interpretations of the individual analyst rather than a set of organisational practices to be analysed’ (Gray, 2010: 222). As such, with the aim of answering the overarching question of discovering the intention that lay behind Hong Kong’s cultural policy, while adhering to the three ‘Model’, ‘Emphasis’ and ‘Distinctions’ headings shown in Figure 4.1, the analysis of the appropriate policy-related documents served two methodological purposes: firstly, it helped shape the formation of the (online) questionnaire, and; secondly, it raised issues and questions that could subsequently be confirmed with participants via the semi-structured, in-depth interviews.

4.2.4.1.2 Hong Kong’s arts education policy

By contrast, Hong Kong’s arts education policy needs to be viewed from the perspective of a collective response on the part of teaching and learning to the challenges posed by the changing global landscape. As a means of cementing its ‘Position’ as one of five essential areas, the development of creativity and critical thinking (along with the nurturing of aesthetic sensitivity and the building of cultural awareness and effective communication), the

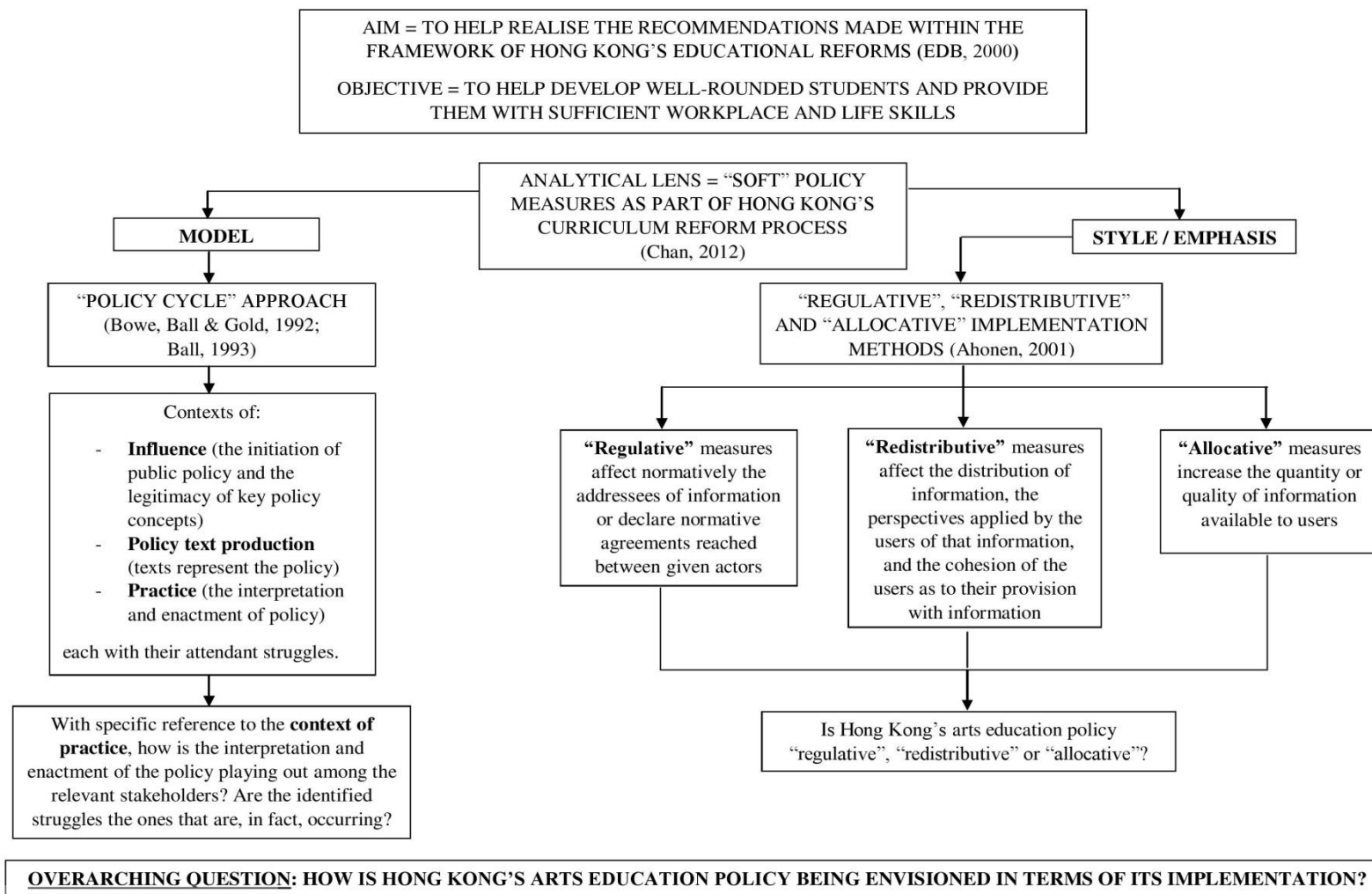
development of skills, knowledge and positive values, participation in arts-making activities as a means of gaining delight, enjoyment and satisfaction, and the pursuance of a life-long interest in the arts form the ‘Overall Aims of the Arts Curriculum’. Given that Hong Kong’s arts education policy represents a deliberate shift away from a prescriptive, authoritarian style in favour of a more descriptive, autonomous approach, the analytical framework adopted the “policy cycle” approach by appropriating the model formulated by Ball and his colleagues (Bowe, Ball & Gold, 1992; Ball, 1993). This framework, which views policy as multi-dimensional and cross-sectional, offers elements ‘for analysing the trajectory of the policy from its first steps to the analysis ... of practice (schools and classrooms)’ (Mainardes, 2007: 6) and is based on the three main contexts of influence, policy text production, and practice, each of which involve their own set(s) of struggles. The initiation of public policy and the legitimacy of key policy concepts both take place in the context of influence, attendant struggles coming in the form of policy construction by different agencies. Texts represent the policy in the context of policy text production, the struggles here involving inconsistencies and contradictions. Policy is interpreted and enacted in the context of practice, potentially in ways that may represent a significant transformation from how the policy was originally intended.

The “policy cycle” approach was supported and personalised, particularly in the context of practice element, by drawing on Ahonen’s (2001) study of the “open coordination” style of European policy-making and transplanting it within the context of the “soft” policy measures employed as part of Hong Kong’s curriculum reform process (Chan, 2012). Against the backdrop of Hong Kong’s transition to a ‘learning to learn’ ethos, the major new trend of the use of “soft” policy implementation ‘denotes the use of non-binding instruments such as guidelines, informational devices or voluntary agreements, and there are no enforcement or

compliance mechanisms’ (Cini, 2001; Torenvlied & Akkerman, 2004 cited in Chan, 2012: 372). In filling what he perceived to be the gap in the systematic analysis of “soft” policy implementation measures within a governmental context, Ahonen (2001) proposed three different methods of “soft” policymaking, which he termed “regulative”, “redistributive” and “allocative”. Generating effects from “stronger” to “weaker”, the three typologies are characterised as follows: ‘*regulative* soft methods affect normatively the addressees of information or declare normative agreements reached between given actors. *Redistributive* soft methods affect the distribution of information, the perspectives that the users of information may apply and the cohesion of the users as to their provision with information. *Allocative* soft methods increase the quantity or quality of information available to users’ (2001: 5). Within the framework of Hong Kong’s curriculum reform, especially with regard to the levels of support (termed ‘Measures and Resources’) being offered, the combination of methodologies was considered useful for analysing how the Government of the HKSAR, through its appropriate documentation, has envisioned the implementation element of its arts education policy. As with the analysis of the cultural policy documents, this also served to link the “conceptualisation” to the “communication” and “operationalisation” elements, as revealed through the questionnaire and interview stages.

Figure 4.2 outlines the framework used to analyse Hong Kong’s arts education policy.

Figure 4.2 Arts Education Policy Analytical Framework



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Aligning the arts education policy analytical framework with the methods employed

In the case of Hong Kong's arts education policy, the aim of the analysis was to find out how the document was being envisioned in terms of its implementation. Within the framework of the "policy cycle" approach, in addition to the adoption of an analytical style that owed much to the "text reader" philosophy that had guided the cultural policy analysis for the twin contexts of influence and policy text production, a concern with the elements of interpretation and enactment meant that the methods to be employed were essentially encapsulated within the context of practice. As outlined in Figure 4.2, how were the stated aims of the policy playing out among the relevant stakeholders? Moreover, was it the case that the struggles which had been identified through the policy analysis were those that were actually occurring? In short, given that the delivery of policy can differ substantially from how it has been envisioned, how was Hong Kong's arts education policy being "lived" by those charged with its dissemination? These were questions that could only be confirmed through face to face dialogue. Again, then, along with providing a framework to support the construction of the questionnaire, the arts education policy analysis essentially relied for methodological verification on the accounts of its practitioners, not least because – as has also been mentioned – the documents, in keeping with Hong Kong's deliberately descriptive educational ethos, suggest only possibilities for implementation.

4.3 Findings

Findings relating to the underlying philosophies and rationales were based on the main areas identified within the analytical frameworks outlined above. In keeping with the decision to regard the written texts as starting points to investigate the links between the written and spoken word, the analysis as it pertained to both policies was along tentative lines, the aim being to highlight issues and raise questions which could then be confirmed via the

interviews.

4.3.1 Hong Kong's cultural policy

4.3.1.1 How “culture” is being defined

The CHC's *Policy Recommendation Report* freely acknowledges the difficulties in defining “culture”. As part of the chapter outlining the background to the document, it rejects the UNESCO version of the concept as ‘the common beliefs, values, customs, language, behaviour, rituals and objects of a social group’ (p. 2) on the grounds that it is too broad. Conversely, especially in view of its stated advocacy of the strategies of “people-oriented”, “pluralism” and “holistic approach”, it disregards the idea that it is ‘those cultural and arts activities such as dance, music, drama and visual arts’ (p. 2) as being too limited. Instead, the Commission proposes a dual approach: namely, that in considering Hong Kong's overall cultural development and cultural position the broader perspective should be adopted, while the narrower definition should be followed for issues relating to resource deployment. Where culture's impact on social development is concerned, the Chinese expression “Wen Hua (文化)”, meaning the cultivation of knowledge, character and aesthetic sense, is to be taken into account. The *Policy Recommendation Report* also makes the important point that culture evolves in response to both social and economic change (p. 3). This places culture in one of two domains, the first consisting of those economic activities known as cultural industries, e.g., films, television and the mass media, and the second that includes culture and education activities. The distinction being made is that the Government of the HKSAR holds an open, market-driven attitude towards the cultural industries, but is prepared to exercise greater control over culture and education since these rely largely on funding. Overseen by the HAB, Hong Kong's official cultural policy would therefore appear to adopt the broader definition for the purposes of presenting its ‘Vision’, ‘Objectives’ and ‘Basic Principles’, and the

narrower version when detailing the provisions covered under the section entitled ‘Government Funding Support to Culture and the Arts’.

4.3.1.2 How the idea of “cultural policy” is being understood

The idea of how “cultural policy” is being understood was approached by examining how the *Policy Recommendation Report* had arrived at the strategies of “people-oriented”, “diversity”, “freedom of expression”, “holistic approach” and “partnership” (the five ‘Basic Principles’ of the cultural policy¹⁾ and how these related to Chapter 2, which details Hong Kong’s cultural position in terms of its ‘Cultural Identity’, its ‘Cultural Literacy’, and its ‘Cultural Legacy and Development’. According to the *Policy Recommendation Report*, the term “people-oriented” was used to mean that the development of culture could not be separated from the needs of the people and the wider community. “Diversity” reflected the need for a Chinese-grounded cultural environment that was also pluralistic and open, while “freedom of expression” was considered an essential condition for the lively development of culture. “Holistic approach” acknowledged that the development of culture was closely related to such diverse policy areas as education, urban planning, tourism, creative industries and trade and economic development, and “partnership” encouraged community participation alongside the establishment of alliances among the government, the business community and the cultural sector (pp. 5-6). In relation to the commodification / instrumentalisation paradox outlined by Gray (2007), it can be seen that while there are certainly hints of a wider role for culture beyond its sectoral remit, particularly within the strategies of “holistic approach” and “partnership”, along with the potential to lead to beneficial “secondary effects” beyond the cultural sphere, these appear to be no more than vaguely defined at this stage.

¹By the time the official cultural policy came to be formulated by the HAB, the CHC’s original sixth principle of “community-driven”, intended to convey the notion that non-government organisations should take the lead in

cultural development, with the Government of the HKSAR gradually reducing its direct involvement and management in cultural facilities and activities, had been dropped. While not without its supporters, opposition to its initial inclusion was apparently based on the observation that ‘the private sector might not be ready to take “the driving seat”’, meaning that ‘problems such as conflict of interests and mismatch of resources might arise.’ Others cautioned that ‘a completely private sector-led scenario might not be conducive to the development of a pluralistic culture. Moreover, there was concern that the notion of “community-driven” was the government’s pretext to cut subsidies.’ (2003: 7) Whatever the truth of the matter, the exact reasons for its eventual omission appear never to have been fully revealed.

Each of the five strategies and principles are briefly defined on the appropriate page of the HAB website. The intention that lies behind Hong Kong’s cultural policy – at the conceptual, rhetoric-driven stage of the process, at any rate – would therefore appear to be in line with the Mulcahy (2006a) ‘Cultural Democracy’ model. Attention was subsequently turned towards the proposed implementation stage to see if this was being borne out through specific, stated examples.

4.3.1.3 The actions being taken that affect the lives of Hong Kong’s citizens

Based on Gray’s (2010) assertion that a more complex line of analysis is to go beyond what governments label as being “cultural policy” to one where cultural policy is defined as being ‘the actions that a state ... take(s) that affect the cultural life of its citizens’ (Mulcahy, 2006b: 267), Hong Kong’s own version was examined within the appropriated model of ‘Cultural Democracy’ as a means of exploring the specific activities that were listed. The hope was that the underlying values and / or ideologies supported by the Government of the HKSAR would, in the process, be revealed.

The objective of ‘Cultural Democracy’ (Mulcahy, 2006a) is ‘to provide for a more participatory (or populist) approach in the definition and provision of cultural opportunities’

(p. 324), in the process allowing citizens to be culturally active on their own terms. This “bottom-up” approach involves a broad interpretation of what constitutes cultural activities, while simultaneously providing a stronger legitimisation of the principle of state subsidy through an emphasis on culture as a ‘process in which we are all participatory’ (Dueland, 2003: 22). As part of this decentralisation of the concept of “culture”, monoculturalism is substituted by pluralism. The point has already been made that Hong Kong’s cultural policy deliberately eschews a prescriptive approach in favour of one that is decidedly descriptive in tone. Definitions of cultural opportunities and a broad interpretation of cultural activities are thus framed within, and largely replaced by, a generic terminology: directed by a ‘Vision’ ‘where life is celebrated through cultural pursuit’, its ‘Objectives’ include the provision of ‘opportunities for wide participation’ and ‘an environment conducive to the diversified and balanced development of culture and the arts’, while adhering to the ‘Basic Principles’ of ‘foster[ing] the vibrancy and diversity of our cultures’ and ‘involve[ing] all sectors of the society’. The *Policy Recommendation Report* is more specific, drawing attention to the engagement of many cultural institutions with arts education and citing examples in the form of the HKADC’s Arts-in-Education Programme and the LCSD’s School Arts Animateur Scheme (p. 15). Within the framework of ‘Education in Culture and the Arts’ (Chapter 3), specific recommendations are made for strengthening collaborations among the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB), the LCSD, cultural institutions and district organisations, while simultaneously motivating the community to participate in cultural and arts activities. On the cultural hardware side a series of policy recommendations are laid out in the chapter entitled ‘Cultural Facilities’ as to how libraries, museums and cultural and performance venues can revisit their roles, their resource development and partnerships and their management structures with the aim of better serving Hong Kong’s citizens, while in order to fully realise Hong Kong’s cultural vision, actionable observations relating to the areas of

heritage conservation, cultural exchange, the creative industries, and the West Kowloon Reclamation Development are outlined in Chapter 6, ‘An International Cultural Metropolis’. Returning to the cultural policy, the Government of the HKSAR details the actions taken to affect the cultural lives of its citizens through its HK\$4 billion recurrent funding to culture and the arts in 2016/17 (typically through various subventions for the major performing arts groups, arts education and promotion, and resources deployed for the provision of venue support for arts activities) and capital funding in the form of construction and operation of various types of cultural locations, together with the management of 16 performance venues and 14 assorted museums, centres and offices. A brief overview of the HK\$21.6 billion granted to the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority for the purposes of developing the West Kowloon Cultural District, is also offered.

Many of the re-stated goals and assertions made in Chapters 2 and 3 of the *Policy Recommendation Report*, which are dedicated to ‘Hong Kong’s Cultural Position’ and ‘Education in Culture and the Arts’, respectively, hint at important underlying values. Of these, the strengthening of social cohesion, an emphasis on individual (moral) enrichment, and the building of confidence and pride in Hong Kong, to be realised through the three aspects of ‘Cultural Identity’, ‘Cultural Literacy’, and ‘Cultural Legacy and Development’ (Chapter 2), were considered to be fundamental. In the case of ‘Cultural Identity’, differences in living standards and education have previously served to weaken Hongkongers’ affiliation with their ethnic cultural (Chinese) identity. However, the *Policy Recommendation Report* considers that such a situation will be reversed as the gap between social and economic development diminishes, the inference being that a prospective cultural policy should concern itself with enabling such a transition to occur (pp. 10-11). For its part, ‘Cultural Literacy’ is inextricably linked to the wider social environment; as such, a future policy can help reinstate

traditional qualities such as diligence, forbearance and industriousness, as well as recruiting the media to use its influence on society to raise the city's cultural profile (p. 11). With regard to 'Cultural Legacy and Development', it is seen as imperative that Hong Kong maintains and builds upon its status as the bridge between China and the rest of the world; here, policy ought to concern itself with developing Hong Kong's cultural identity, which 'should start from local culture, be grounded in Chinese cultural traditions, and possess a global vision' (CHC, 2003: 12). Another (unstated) fundamental value is the importance placed on education, particularly as a means of helping to bring about cultural literacy and cultural development, along with its ability to contribute towards those individual and interpersonal skills, including the cultivation of creativity, that are becoming increasingly more important in our globalised and technology-dependent world (p. 14). Specifically, cultural education, i.e. education in culture and the arts, is to be strategised through a coherent and continuous curriculum, a diversified and comprehensive curriculum, quality support, partnerships and community involvement, and the role of the mass media (pp. 16-21). Semantics aside, the cultural policy's five 'Basic Principles' of "people-oriented", "diversity", "freedom of expression", "holistic approach" and "partnership" are, in essence, also its values and are here regarded as such.

The *Policy Recommendation Report* states that the Government of the HKSAR should not advocate particular ideologies through any political or administrative means (p. 12), instead advocating a change of role from that of an "administrator" to a "facilitator" (p. 37). However, adopting a "reading between the lines" approach, one interpretation of the basic principles of "people-oriented", "holistic approach" and "partnership" is that they could be redirected towards an embracement by the wider community of the values of social cohesion, individual (moral) enrichment, and confidence and pride in Hong Kong, outlined above.

4.3.1.4 Evidence of an “explicit” / “nominal” or “implicit” / “effective” approach

Is Hong Kong’s cultural policy “explicit” in accordance with Ahearne’s (2009) terminology, in the sense that not only is it labelled as such, but also that it identifies “culture” with ‘certain consecrated forms of artistic expression’ (p. 144) and is located and actioned through an official cultural administration? Or is it “implicit” by virtue of the fact that despite lacking the “cultural” label, it works ‘to prescribe or shape cultural attitudes and habits over given territories’ (p. 141)?

Clearly, while Hong Kong has a “labelled” cultural policy, there is a deliberate avoidance of a fixed definition of what constitutes “culture”. From an administrative point of view, despite talk of an anticipated Cultural Bureau, cultural matters currently fall under the purview of the HAB, a department whose remit includes a number of other policy areas such as sports, civic affairs, youth development, building management and community relations. However, as the same author also points out, “explicit” cultural policies do not necessarily preclude policies that are “implicitly” geared to the prescribing and shaping of cultures; at the same time, a distinction can be made within “implicit” cultural policies between ‘the unintended cultural side effects of various kinds of policy and those deliberate courses of action intended to shape cultures but which are not expressly thematised as such’ (p. 144). From the perspective of attempting to measure one type of policy against the other, the philosophy that lies behind Hong Kong’s cultural policy-related documents would appear to accord with the “explicit” approach inasmuch as the stated emphasis is on the proclamation of the cultural hardware, in the form of the facilities, deployment of resources and institutional frameworks (Chapters 4 and 5 of the *Policy Recommendation Report*), being provided. Nevertheless, evidence of an “implicit” / “effective” approach also exists. While a full investigation is beyond the scope of

the present research study, such unlabeled or unthematized courses of action would include the support of powerful economic generators in the form of ‘Ocean Park’ and ‘Hong Kong Disneyland’, or the recognition and promotion of Hong Kong’s Intangible Cultural Heritage as constituted by, say, the Tuen Ng (Dragon Boat) Festival and Cantonese Opera. None of these are specifically mentioned in the official policy (or policy-related) documentation, but each, in their own way, influences Hong Kong’s cultural transmission and helps shape its cultural landscape.

4.3.2 Hong Kong’s arts education policy

4.3.2.1 The context of influence

Education reform in Hong Kong has witnessed an overhaul of the existing system to make learning more relevant and appropriate to the demands of the 21st century, together with giving students more control over their educational outcomes. As such, arts education has been singled out as having a special place in the overall curriculum, since it is identified as the means to achieving quality education (HKADC, 1999) and of helping students to develop their creativity (HKCDC, 2002b).

The study’s analysis of Hong Kong’s arts education policy used a theoretical framework that adopted the “policy cycle” approach (Bowe, Ball & Gold, 1992; Ball, 1993) based on the three main contexts of influence, policy text production, and practice. Public policy is initiated and the key policy concepts legitimised in the first of these; struggles occur through the discourses that accompany the involvement of different agencies in the policy’s construction. In matters of Hong Kong’s education policy, influence in the form of initiation and legitimisation comes predominantly via the HKCDC, an advisory body giving recommendations to the Government of the HKSAR, and, as such, responsible for producing

the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (2002b), which supports the *Basic Education Curriculum Guide – Building on Strengths (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (2002a) and helps realise the recommendations made in *Learning to Learn – The Way Forward in Curriculum Development* (2001). The same body also produces the supplementary *Arts Education Key Learning Area Music Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (2003a) and the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Visual Arts Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (2003b). The other main actor in the discourse is the HKADC, whose particular goal as stipulated in their *Arts Education Policy* (1996) is ‘To encourage and promote the improvement of Arts Education at all levels of the formal education system and in the community.’ (p. 1)

Struggles by different agencies in the construction of Hong Kong’s arts education policy and its discourses are highlighted in Appendix 3 of *A Creative Hong Kong 2000* (HKADC, 1999), in which summaries of the speakers’ views held over three sessions as part of the ‘Forum on Arts Education Policy’, organised by the Arts Education Committee of the HKADC and held on 30th January, 1999, are presented. Essentially, while all sides acknowledged the value of arts education (similarly agreeing that there were too many factors limiting its development), representatives from arts organisations and (then) members of the teaching profession typically criticised the current state of arts education on the basis that the curriculum lacked support for non-academic subjects, while those from the policymaking side defended their position on the grounds that much of the impetus for change could only come about as a result of greater value being attached by the public to arts education. However, all sides agreed that apportioning blame should be rejected in favour of strengthening mutual cooperation. As a response to the Arts Education Policy Consultation Document, drafted by the Arts Education Committee of the HKADC in October 1998 and discussed with the public

in January 1999, an alternative perspective to the one being formally expressed was put forward in Appendix 4 (pp. 36-39). This argued for a philosophical sea change in the way arts education and arts curriculum development were viewed; this should not only incorporate rethinking the aims of arts education (for example, by encouraging arts educators to distinguish between those features that were exclusive to arts practice within each discipline and those that had more general applications in education or as life skills), but also strive to find a balance between an emphasis on the formal arts curriculum and furnishing students with new experiences and excitements. Only via such a thorough reconceptualisation of the current issues could the foundations of a better understanding for the challenges of the future be successfully laid.

4.3.2.2 The context of policy text production

In the context of policy text production within the “policy cycle” approach, texts represent the policy, the struggles this time involving inconsistencies and contradictions. Hong Kong’s arts education policy texts, in the form of the three aforementioned *Key Learning Area Curriculum Guides*, are based on the *Learning to Learn – The Way Forward in Curriculum Development* consultation documents of the respective KLAs published in November 2000.

Upon its formation in the mid-1990s the HKADC undertook extensive discussions among its Committee members in order to identify those creative disciplines that constituted “the arts”, in the process defining the remit with which “arts education” in Hong Kong should be concerned. They eventually agreed on drama, dance, music, literature, visual arts, crafts and the media, outlined within *A Creative Hong Kong 2000* as those art forms which help students ‘explore the techniques and expressive power ... and their cultural significance’ (1999: 2). However, the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Guide* itself is concerned only

with visual art, music, drama and dance. The inconsistencies and contradictions contained within the HKCDC documents thus appear to largely arise from a failure to resolve the twin educational philosophies of progressivism and constructivism as they underpin the theoretical basis for curriculum integration and its subsequent impact on practical implementation. Consequently, while encouraging an integrative learning in the arts approach, it is not clear whether the curricula have been conceived with the idea of the focus being on the acquisition of knowledge and skills, the construction of meaning, or a combination of the two. This ambiguity can perhaps be said to spring from a fundamental difference in terms of the basic rationales as expressed in the *Key Learning Area Curriculum Guides*' educative purposes: in the case of Music, it is the channeling of something ubiquitous to simultaneously cultivate a more aesthetic mindset, the instillation of certain values, and the articulation of emotions that transcend language (HKCDC, 2003a: pp. 3-4); in the case of the Visual Arts, however, it is the passing on of a set of skills in order that students are able to understand and manipulate aesthetic expressions, coding systems and visual structures (HKCDC, 2003b: p. 2). These contradictions are exposed when the *Key Learning Area Curriculum Guides* outline the aims of teaching interdisciplinary arts while stressing the need to maintain the integrity of each subject: it is suggested that Music is linked with other art subjects *using related concepts*, while *a common theme or topic of content* is recommended for Visual Arts.

4.3.2.3 The context of practice

The context of practice is where policy is interpreted and actioned, potentially in ways that differ from how the policy was originally intended.

In keeping with the student-centered approach being espoused at an official level, both the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Guide* and the two *Key Learning Area Curriculum Guides*

adopt a general framework for learning and teaching practice. The stated emphasis throughout is on finding ways to develop students' generic competencies such as study, collaboration and communication skills while simultaneously connecting knowledge, values and attitudes within the arts and across other KLAs through a variety of rich learning experiences. Principles are outlined as a means of guiding teachers' actions, while with the aim of enabling students to achieve their individual potential, integrative learning in the arts, project learning, life-wide learning and Information Technology (IT) for interactive learning are all outlined as potential avenues for exploration (HKCDC, 2002b: pp. 61-66). A series of Exemplars (pp. 86-124), based on real-life scenarios and focusing on particular programmes, topics, levels, etc., further reinforces the descriptive strategy. As a means of fostering successful integrative learning practices, collaborations between different subject teachers are identified as a crucial factor. It is also recommended that arts and other subject teachers join forces on curriculum planning (p. 62). Within the ethos of life-wide learning, schools are encouraged to 'collaborate with government and non-government organisations and make use of community resources such as concert performances, museums, galleries, architecture and community arts, to provide students with experiences beyond the school walls and further the breadth and depth of their learning' (p. 64). Different sectors of the community can also contribute to life-wide learning opportunities in the arts in ways that mirror curriculum development trends; to that end, the building of networks can facilitate information exchange and the sharing of arts experiences.

While leaving the specifics of arts education practices to the EDB and the HKCDC, the HKADC outlines in its *Arts Education Policy* what it sees as some of the key issues involved with arts education within formal education. In line with the collaborative approach detailed above, these include the conducting of cross-disciplinary activities to facilitate integration

between the different art forms as well as integration between the arts and other subjects; bringing practicing artists and performing companies into the school campus for specific projects and fostering a closer link among teachers, students and artists for the development of arts education, and; soliciting support and cooperation from policy-makers, educational authorities, frontline educators and parents (1996: 3).

In contrast to the contexts of influence and policy text production where the struggles play out in the policy documents, it was anticipated that the semi-structured, in-depth interviews would be the ideal scenario to discover how the context of practice was playing out among the relevant stakeholders. This was particularly the case with reference to the development of generic competencies, along with adherence to the general teaching principles and the nurturing of different kinds of collaborations, collectively set within the general framework of the cross-disciplinary and integrative learning approach being advocated.

4.3.2.4 ‘Soft’ policy through “regulative” implementation measures

The second phase of the arts education policy analysis transplanted Ahonen’s (2001) three identified “soft” policy implementation methods of “regulative”, “redistributive” and “allocative” into Hong Kong’s own curriculum reform process (Chan, 2012). This was again undertaken as a means of analysing how the Government of the HKSAR had envisioned the implementation element of its arts education policy, and was intended to specifically support the context of practice element within the “policy cycle” framework.

“Regulative” implementation measures are defined by Ahonen (2001) as those that affect the recipients of information or which state agreements decided upon by identified parties.

Within the context of Hong Kong’s arts education policy this was interpreted to apply to

those rules and regulations that have been externally determined, through soft law legislation, as a means of ensuring that the aims and objectives of the curriculum reforms are achieved, and that are enshrined within the policy documents themselves as providing a structure within which the reforms are intended to be practically realised. Within the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide*'s 'Strategies for Development', these consist of the short-, medium- and long-term goals for schools and teachers, the curriculum framework, and the specific learning targets and learning objectives. Within the arts education curriculum as a whole, and in order to provide students with sufficient arts learning exposure, about 8-10% of lesson time is recommended in the formal curriculum at junior secondary level. Given the fact that the HKADC does not have any policy making or advisory role in the education structure and that its roles are confined to those of "advocator", "initiator", "facilitator", "network builder" and "reinforcer", there are no implementation measures within either the *Arts Development Policy* or *A Creative Hong Kong 2000* that can be considered as "regulative".

4.3.2.5 'Soft' policy through "redistributive" implementation measures

"Redistributive" implementation measures are those that affect how information is distributed, the perspectives as applied by the users to that information, and the degree to which the users are united with regard to the provision of that information. In order to encourage schools and teachers to take on the reforms, the Government of the HKSAR has employed various resources, including written guidelines, textbooks, exemplars of teaching and learning strategies for various subjects, and resources provided to schools in the form of partnership schemes, self-developed school-based projects funded through the schools' own applications to the Quality Education Fund (QEF) of the EDB, and direct funding allocations known as Capacity Enhancement Grants (CEGs). Within this list, and based on Ahonen's distinctions,

accreditations and incentives given by subsidies to attract schools and teachers to share information were considered as “redistributive” implementation measures; as such, the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide*, within the framework of the implementation of School-based Management in 2000, outlines a variety of government funding options for which relevant institutions can apply. In addition, possible funding is available from other sources, including the Hong Kong Jockey Club Music and Dance Fund, the HKADC, and the QEF. This information is supplemented, with specific examples, within the *Music Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide* and the *Visual Arts Key Learning Area Guide*.

Funding is mentioned, albeit without going into particular detail, as part of the HKADC *Arts Education Policy*’s commitment to allocating adequate resources and support for arts education in schools. More specifics are given in *A Creative Hong Kong 2000*, particularly with reference to the HK\$5 billion worth of funds available to schools through the auspices of the QEF and the aid the HKADC can offer in its role as “facilitator” – in terms of giving expert advice to applicants, as well as the instigation of inter-school coordination – as a means of helping projects secure grants.

4.3.2.6 ‘Soft’ policy through “allocative” implementation measures

The quantity or quality of information available to users is increased via “allocative” soft policy methods. It has been noted (Chan, 2012) that in situations involving large-scale curriculum reforms, as is the case in Hong Kong, the use of a combination of non-binding ‘soft’ policy methods, backed up with a range of support measures offered to schools, makes sense in terms of helping to coordinate the decision-making process at different levels of implementation, and can result in assuring that many of the reforms outlined in the official

documents are acted upon. With reference again to Ahonen's (2001) typology, "allocative" implementation measures were here taken to mean the type, amount and variety of materials being offered to schools that served to link up with the government's intentions. While in practical terms the effectiveness of the degree to which this is carried out will depend on the individual capacity of the school in question, the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide*, in addition to referencing official textbooks in the form of the *Music Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide* and the *Visual Arts Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide*, covers human resources in the form of teachers (both arts- and other discipline-related) and visiting artists, community resources such as galleries, the LCSD and other arts organisations, communities, theatres, libraries, museums, etc., as well as directing practitioners, via weblinks, to additional information and resources compiled by the EDB (pp. 83-85). As before, this information is supplemented with specific examples within each of the two subject *Key Learning Area Curriculum Guides*. The use of Exemplars are considered to be further "allocative" measures that help to contextualise the implementation stage through the use of real-life scenarios.

The HKADC's *Arts Education Policy* notion of Parallel Education promotes, advocates and supports the role of institutions in the form of libraries, galleries, performing arts centres, the media, etc. and their activities as part of its commitment to developing audience appreciation and community participation in cultural life (p. 2), as well as supporting Arts Education within Formal Education in designated areas such as staffing, teacher training, facilities and the provision of teaching aids, teaching materials and teachers' resource centres (p. 3). The HKADC's *A Creative Hong Kong 2000* details the work it can do as an "initiator" to develop new and innovative projects, which can illustrate the value of arts education or serve as models of good practice. As a "facilitator" and "network builder", it can develop local and

overseas platforms to enable arts education practitioners to give expert advice and share their experiences, together with supporting schools through the mobilisation of arts teachers and arts practitioners in such a way that a dialogue, leading to working partnerships, can be established. This, in turn, creates a better environment for the development of arts education (pp. 15-16).

Given the close connection between the three types of “soft” policy methods detailed above and the context of practice as outlined within the “policy cycle” approach, it was again envisaged that a number of the issues raised would be confirmed via the semi-structured, in-depth interviews.

4.4 Evidence of justification / legitimisation

The second part of the policy document analysis concerned itself with investigating any evidence that could serve to justify or legitimise the ways Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies had been conceived or the recommendations made through their respective pages. Examples would include, but not necessarily be limited to, references to recognised theoretical frameworks, citations from policy documents with similar remits, and supporting quotations from authoritative scholars active in the field.

4.4.1 Hong Kong’s cultural policy

The “authority” for the principles and strategies made within the pages of the CHC’s *Policy Recommendation Report* – and therefore the same “weight” that stands behind Hong Kong’s cultural policy – rests almost exclusively on the represented expertise of its 17 Committee members, of whom six were ex-officio members, including the then-Chairmen of four statutory bodies (the Antiquities Advisory Board, the Hong Kong Academy for Performing

Arts, The Hong Kong Arts Centre and the Hong Kong Arts Development Council) and two government officials (the Secretary for Home Affairs and the Director of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department) (p. 2). Justification / Legitimisation for the particular recommendations being made appears in the ‘Background’ chapter in the form of detailing the findings of the two public consultations (and papers) that were carried out; as such, the original six strategies that eventually became the cultural policy’s five ‘Basic Principles’ were reviewed in the light of comments and suggestions made by respondents and re-shaped accordingly. Other channels included 23 plenary meetings, 80 working group meetings, four retreats and four study visits. Organisations involved included the Legislative Council and District Councils, along with some statutory and advisory bodies.

While mention was made in the *Report*’s introductory letter to the (then) Chief Executive of the HKSAR, Tung Chee Hwa, of the experience of other international cultural metropolises, which ‘serves as a caveat against government’s dominant role in cultural development’, no theoretical frameworks in support of the points being put forward are offered, nor are those sources that are acknowledged referenced in any other form than as footnotes. Indeed, those international jurisdictions that are indicated (Shanghai, Singapore, Tokyo, Sydney, Tel Aviv, Lyon, London (South Bank), Manchester and Boston) refer to the comparatively high level of government involvement in terms of ownership and management of cultural and performance venues. In sum, then, while long on suggestions the documents on the cultural policy side would appear to be extremely short on genuine legitimacy.

4.4.2 Hong Kong’s arts education policy

In the case of Hong Kong’s arts education policy, reference in terms of its underlying authority rests with the persons representing the Membership of the Curriculum Development

Council Committee on Arts Education (2002: 134-137). Further details of the make-up of the HKCDC are given in the ‘Preamble’ (pp. 1-2), along with the assertion that the KLA Curriculum Guides are based on the consultation documents of the respective KLAs. Justification / Legitimation for the content of the Guides comes in the form of relevant KLA committees under the purview of the HKCDC, who ‘have taken into consideration the concerns, needs and interests of schools, teachers and students as well as societal expectations expressed during the consultation period’ (p. 1).

The footnotes that appear in the *Arts Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide* refer to one of the appropriate overarching publications in the form of *Learning for Life, Learning through Life – Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong* (EC, 2000) and *Learning to Learn: The Way Forward in Curriculum Development* (HKCDC, 2001). However, these documents exist essentially as a means of ensuring that there is a coherent understanding of the whole-school curriculum and the planning of student learning at KLA and subject levels; otherwise, there only exists a kind of “legitimation-by-proxy” in the form of suitable Exemplars (pp. 86-124). While independent academic “rigour” is theoretically strengthened by a list of References (pp. 125-128), these are not cross-referenced within the body of the text. Similarly, despite its own constituent membership, along with its promise to seek advice from other active agencies, including the Education Department, the Education and Manpower Branch, The Hong Kong Institute of Education and the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts prior to implementing any initiatives, along with the undertaking of various action plans, position papers and forums and the reporting of the salient findings from previous studies, close inspection of the supporting documentation, in the form of the HKADC’s *Arts Education Policy* and *A Creative Hong Kong 2000*, bears out a similar lack of academic frames of reference with regard to the

specific recommendations being made.

4.5 Appraisal of the policies

This section concludes with an overall appraisal of the two policies based on the analysis undertaken, followed by a summary. In keeping with the study's interpretive approach, the assertions made are essentially in the nature of hypotheses, to be tested through the online questionnaire and semi-structured, in-depth interview data.

4.5.1 Hong Kong's cultural policy

The previous chapter's methodological “unpacking” of Hong Kong's cultural policy was deemed, in terms of its three foci, to be the encouragement of broad participation, the targeting of creativity as the driver, and the building on internal and external collaborations and partnerships, with an overall orientation of the creation of a fertile “soil” to enable a cultural environment to flourish. Based on this interpretation, the decision was taken – in connection with various supporting methodologies – to analyse the policy documents by test-running Mulcahy's (2006a) ‘Cultural Democracy’ model. In essence, this provides for a more participatory, or populist, approach in the way that cultural opportunities are interpreted and provided for. It also involves the stronger legitimisation of the state subsidy principle, along with an emphasis on the notion of pluralism realised through a strategy of cultural decentralisation. The hope was that through such a process the underpinning philosophies and rationales would be revealed, thereby more clearly determining the *kind* of document it is. At the same time, and in order to determine the *intention* that lies behind the policy, the cultural studies discipline was adopted as the primary analytical lens, while as a means of gaining further insight into the commodification / instrumentalisation issue, the specific actions that Hong Kong was taking to affect the cultural lives of its citizens were seen as potentially

indicative of its underlying values and ideologies.

The analysis discovered that in keeping with the Mulcahy model the emphasis of Hong Kong's cultural policy is very firmly on the broader social environment for the development of culture. The provision of cultural opportunities, as part of a more participatory approach, is the intended outcome; to this end, the idea of what constitutes cultural activities is studiously avoided. The process of cultural decentralisation is further reinforced through the notion of "pluralism", framed within the policy's 'Vision' as an identity grounded in Chinese traditions but enriched by different cultures. In the same vein, all sectors of society are viewed as equal beneficiaries without preference being given to one audience over another, a point reinforced indirectly by the call, within the 'Basic Principles', for partnerships to be established among the Government, the business community and the cultural sector. While state subsidisation of culture is clearly outlined via the funding support details, this is not (overtly) linked to the "we-are-all-cultural-participants" principle.

At the same time there is a lack of commodifying pressure to accommodate individual conceptions of policy in the sense that the values of Hong Kong's cultural policy documents, as previously detailed, adhere firmly to the principles of strengthening social cohesion, particularly in the appropriation of the notion of cultural literacy as a means of reviving traditional societal virtues. Given the position that Hong Kong's cultural policy currently enjoys within the HAB (a department that also deals with sports, civic affairs, youth development, building management and community relations), one might think that Hong Kong's cultural policymakers would seek to attach themselves to other policy areas, but there is seemingly no evidence of such "instrumentalisation" through the adoption of a secondary, contributory position taking place. Instead, without the imposition of ideological constraints

caused by a combination of endogenous weaknesses on the part of the policy sector and the exogenous shifts in policy expectations arising from the commodification of public policy, Hong Kong's cultural policymakers have been relatively free to choose those strategies and tactics considered most appropriate for the particular context within which they are located. Viewed through this lens, the open-ended, descriptive approach that characterises Hong Kong's cultural policy is duly considered to be a wholly deliberate choice on the part of its creators.

Analysis of the cultural policy-related documents also needed to be considered within the framework of the study's constructivist / interpretive paradigm as a means of incorporating the previously-identified salient features drawn from the "ecological worldview" and "interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary" types. These were identified as interdependence, flexibility and diversity in the case of the former, and governance and communication in the latter. Although a strong link is made between the three main concepts to the extent that 'Education in culture and the arts ... provides the ground, nutrition, and impetus for cultural development' (CHC, 2003: 14), there is no interdependence in the ecological sense whereby the policy documents reveal evidence of being connected at anything other than a superficial level. In short, any analytical possibilities based on an understanding from either an "ecological worldview" or "interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary" perspective were considered to be limited.

4.5.2 Hong Kong's arts education policy

As with Hong Kong's cultural policy, the study's Methodology chapter previously "unpacked" its arts education policy and identified the three foci as contributing to holistic development, nurturing balanced, i.e. less narrowly specialised, individuals, and cultivating positive values

and attitudes, including creativity, within an overall orientation of preparing well-rounded individuals equipped with the necessary skills to take their place in the workplace of the future. With a view to discovering how the implementation element of the policy was anticipated to play out, the analytical framework adopted the “policy cycle” approach (Bowe, Ball & Gold, 1992; Ball, 1993), the context of practice element in particular being supported by the transplantation of Ahonen’s (2001) “soft” policymaking typologies of “regulative”, “redistributive” and “allocative” within the context of Hong Kong’s curriculum reform process and its attendant policy measures (Chan, 2012).

As a means of tracing the trajectory of the policy, the struggles uncovered during the context of influence stage have resulted, on paper at least, in a document that satisfies many of the concerns that were initially raised: the overall position of arts education within the wider curriculum has been elevated, and the promotion of the integrated curriculum as part of an ethos of whole-person development has seen the collective relevance of the arts, particularly in terms of their perceived contributions towards life skills such as cooperation and problem-solving, increase. Things have undoubtedly been assisted through the various contributions made by the HKADC. Attention was previously drawn to the struggles, in the form of inconsistencies and contradictions, appearing within the context of policy text production. These boiled down to an apparent failure, on the part of the rationales as expressed in the *Music and Visual Arts Key Learning Area Curriculum Guides*, to resolve the theoretical tensions arising from the two roots of integrated arts teaching. Without a clear differentiation between the “knowledge and skills” and the “construction of meaning” approaches to the interdisciplinary curriculum, this was seen as having the potential to result in ambiguities at the implementation level when it came to maintaining the integrity of the subject concerned, suggesting a lack of clarity in the policymakers’ own minds. Related to the

absence of a clear allegiance to either a progressive or a constructivist philosophy is the fact that the language of the policy documents ‘only suggest possibilities for implementing an interdisciplinary arts curriculum rather than stating a mandatory integration policy’ (Wong, 2012: 101). In addition, responsibility for the curriculum’s implementation falls on individual school administrators and teachers, many of whom (for the reasons outlined in Chapter Two of the present study) are reluctant to fully engage with the integrated curriculum.

Implementation of the arts education policy is potentially most clearly realised via the context of practice stage. Given that policy may be interpreted and actioned in ways that differ radically from how it is originally intended, any analysis of the documentation can only suggest areas where this might be the case, the necessary confirmation coming via face-to-face discussion. Nevertheless, with identified elements drawn from both Ahonen’s (2001) “redistributive” and “allocative” implementation measures within a “soft” policy context that rejects enforcement or compliance mechanisms in favour of non-binding instruments, there is an emphasis on the development of students’ generic competencies in the form of study, collaboration and communication skills, while at the same time providing them with rich learning experiences in order to allow the connection of knowledge, values and attitudes across KLAs. Within this ethos, adherence to general teaching principles is encouraged, while integrative learning practices in the arts are to be nurtured through collaborations between various stakeholders, from other subject teachers (curriculum planning) to government and non-government organisations and different sectors of the community (life-wide learning). Networks are also seen as fundamental to the facilitation of information exchange and the sharing of arts experiences. Again, subject to confirmation from those practitioners directly concerned, implementation of Hong Kong’s arts education policy would, on the face of it at least, appear to be very much along the lines of a gradual

abandonment of the principle of authoritarianism in favour of increased autonomy.

In the same way that Hong Kong's cultural policy documents were additionally considered within the framework of the study's constructivist / interpretive paradigm in order to incorporate the salient features drawn from both the "ecological worldview" and "interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary" types, a similar approach was applied to the arts education policy-related documents. Although promoting the importance of partnerships and community involvement within the framework of a policy for culture and arts education, the descriptive nature of the arts education policy effectively precludes a rationale presented within a governance context – collaborative or otherwise – or else the communication of a strategy for its delivery. In real terms, arts education occupies a relatively small space within Hong Kong's cultural policy. Within the framework of the arts education policy-related documents, while acknowledging that 'Arts Education is an effective means to help students experience their own culture and understand its values' (HKCDC, 2002b: 48) and providing support in the form of written and internet materials, resources, workshops and courses, analytical possibilities based on an understanding from either an "ecological worldview" or "interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary" perspective were again considered to be limited.

4.5.3 Summary

The adoption of specific analytical frameworks allowed for those philosophies and rationales that underpin Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies to be more clearly revealed. At the same time, evidence of any justification or legitimisation being put forward as it related to the policies' formation and the recommendations being made was considered and assessed. Together, these served to answer the first research question. Given the interconnected and interrelated nature of the study, however, it was important that the

findings from the policy document analysis did not exist in isolation. To that end, and in the spirit of the interpretive nature of the study, it was anticipated that any issues raised or assertions made should be confirmed and tested through the questionnaire and interview data.

With this in mind, the policy document analysis findings ultimately needed to be viewed from the standpoint of the role(s) of policy. Typically, this equates to the relatively crude simplicity of problem setting being matched by the far more complex procedure of practice. For policy to be effective, some kind of road map that gives directions or guidelines towards an anticipated destination should be forthcoming. To put it simply, how is policy anticipated to be interpreted, embodied, enacted and, ultimately, “lived”? With regard to Hong Kong’s arts education policy, within the previously identified “policy cycle” context of practice and the associated ‘soft’ policy implementation measures, the questions raised by the analysis related to the ways those elements such as cross-disciplinary and integrative learning experiences within a collaborative ethos were (anticipated as) being implemented. In the case of the cultural policy, however, taking into consideration its ‘culturally democratic’ ethos within a deliberately descriptive framework, the issues were essentially those to do with the extent to which the values as encapsulated in the ‘Basic Principles’ of “people-oriented”, “diversity”, “freedom of expression”, “holistic approach” and “partnership” were resonating with and impacting upon the various stakeholders across the cultural and arts education sectors, particularly in relation to those values identified based on the analysis of the CHC’s targeting of cultural identity, cultural literacy, and cultural legacy and development. Either way, it was hoped that between them the questionnaire and the interviews would provide the necessary answers.

4.6 Cultural and arts education policy questionnaire

The second stage focused on the cultural and arts education policy questionnaire.

4.6.1 Background to the questionnaire

Hong Kong's arts education and cultural sectors – through their respective policies – aim to raise the profile of the arts as a fundamental element of students' whole-person development while laying the foundations for a cultural environment, which can benefit all citizens, to flourish. At the same time, coordination is to be strengthened and synergy created among the different stakeholders (Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs and Panel on Education, 2011). In order to gauge general perceptions of the policies, in the process also factoring in opinions regarding the wider roles of culture and the arts in education and society, a bilingual cultural and arts education policy questionnaire – to be delivered and completed entirely online – was formulated. This approach was deemed to have two main advantages: firstly, the questionnaire could be accessed via a variety of platforms, including mobile devices, and; secondly, it was not time-dependent, meaning that participants could choose when they wished to complete it. At the same time, since it could be easily accessed via a link, itself disseminated through electronic communication, the need for hard copies to be printed or face-to-face meetings to be conducted was negated.

Approximately 715 invitations were sent out to potential participants within 11 initially-identified categories across the cultural and arts education spectrum. A total of 229 respondents completed the questionnaire over an approximately five-month period from early May to mid-October 2015, giving an overall response rate of 32.02%.

4.6.2 Purpose of the questionnaire

The purpose of the questionnaire was to provide a comprehensive snapshot of the current situation, in the process aiming to answer the second research question:

- What are the perceptions among the stakeholders across both sectors in terms of the “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements of Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies?

4.6.3 Analysis of the cultural and arts education policy questionnaire

The aim of the online cultural and arts education policy questionnaire was essentially to gain a clearer picture of perceptions across both sectors as they related to the two policies. The intention was not to test a hypothesis, nor were the results – despite the wide demographic targeted – intended to be generalisable to the wider population. As such, and consistent with the qualitative nature of the study as a whole, inferential statistics were rejected in favour of descriptive statistics. In keeping with the way the questionnaire had initially been developed, analysis was roughly correlated with the three elements of “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation”. However, this structural breakdown was not provided as part of the questionnaire itself. Nor was the intention to “test” the answers given by the respondents against the contents of the policy documents. Instead, given the constructivist / interpretivist theoretical perspective underpinning the study as a whole, a point reinforced by the wide cross-sectoral demographic being targeted, the approach aimed at maximising the qualitative power of the data by considering it in terms of what it *meant*. Not only was this felt to be more effective than a standard, quantitative approach that simply relayed what the data *said*, but two additional purposes would also be served as a result: the problem of relying on smaller sample sizes (brought about by varying numbers of responses

within certain categories) to make generalisations across the findings could be avoided, and; the potential for mining potentially rich data – while maintaining the integrity of the different question types – stood a better chance of being assured. Taken collectively, the shift of emphasis aimed at providing an introduction, particularly through the identification of “points of interest”, to generate issues that could then be explored in greater detail during the semi-structured, in-depth interviews.

Once all the online responses had been collected via the online platform and imported into the statistical package SPSS 21, data analysis was carried out. To aid in the process, the original 11 categories of participants were reorganised into six groups. These consisted of under- and postgraduate Music and Visual Arts students, Music and Visual Arts secondary school-level teachers and principals, Music and Visual Arts lecturers, department heads, etc. at the tertiary level, cultural / arts organisation representatives, e.g., arts centre, cultural / arts education department representatives, e.g., government bureau, and “Others”. It was considered important to determine the kinds of perceptions that were common to certain categories, and the extent to which such perceptions persisted or varied across the survey items. Where a lack of homogeneity was discovered, suggesting that people within the same category may have understood the concept differently, this was again flagged for qualitative exploration through the interviews.

4.7 Findings

With the exception of the two introductory questions, analysis was carried out on the remaining 19 items as they roughly corresponded to the three main elements of “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation”. Visual summaries of all the questionnaire results are provided in Appendix 1B.

4.7.1 The “conceptualisation” of Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies

“Conceptualisation” referred to the way that Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies had been imagined by the relevant policymakers. The questions making up this element were interested in finding out, among other things, perceptions on the part of the respondents relating to the purposes of the two policies, the importance of clearly defining “culture” and “the arts” in order to create the respective policies, and the policies’ intended audience(s).

A number of the findings reflected the general principles underpinning Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies. For example, the fact that the most important purpose of a cultural policy (Q3) was deemed to be the cultural education of people by every category but one (Music / Visual Arts lecturers and department heads at the tertiary level) was in keeping with the recommendations made by the CHC. Similarly, perceptions that an arts education policy and a cultural policy were strongly felt to be for all students, regardless of their artistic ability and everyone, regardless of their feelings about cultural activities, respectively (Q9; Q10), harmonised with the deliberately more inclusive and less ‘elitist’ ethos of the two policies. However, the data suggested a lack of homogeneous agreement about the arts’ contribution to whole-person development as part of considering the purpose of an arts education policy (Q4). When it came to the importance of defining “culture” and “the arts” in order to create the respective policies (Q5; Q6), Music / Visual Arts students at the undergraduate and postgraduate level (N = 47; N = 49), secondary-level Music / Visual Arts teachers and principals (N = 21; N = 16), cultural / arts organisation representatives (N = 15; N = 16) and cultural / arts education department representatives (N = 9; N = 12) registered the highest levels of agreement.

4.7.2 The “communication” of Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies

“Communication” was concerned with the different ways and means by which the two policies were passed on to and received by the various stakeholders. The different methods chosen for that transmission could also communicate, or *convey*, the status such policies were believed to occupy in the minds of the policymakers. The questions covering this category were therefore interested in finding out respondents’ overall awareness of the policies (including specifying where they had encountered information about Hong Kong’s cultural policy), what the amount of priority given to culture and cultural policy at an official level was perceived to be, and opinions regarding the main message(s) that both policies should communicate.

The data indicated that culture and cultural policy enjoyed a low priority at an official level (Q12; N = 222), a finding that reinforced the literature independently suggesting the same. There was similar homogeneity of agreement suggested by the data in support of the arts’ contributions to whole-person development as the main message an arts education policy should communicate (Q13); this was also the case for the accessibility of culture within the framework of a cultural policy (Q14). However, the data indicated that homogeneous agreement did not exist within the same question for the options that creativity drives cultural progress or that cultural and arts partnerships can increase community involvement, two important elements as part of the ‘Vision’ and ‘Basic Principles’, respectively, of Hong Kong’s cultural policy.

4.7.3 The “operationalisation” of Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies

“Operationalisation” essentially dealt with how policies were delivered and implemented via the relevant practitioners. Given that there is potentially wide variation among the ways that

policies are actioned – with factors as diverse as context, confidence and comprehension all contributing – the questions aimed to discover the different ways the policies were being realised, including what the intended outcomes were perceived to be. As such, they aimed to solicit opinions regarding the importance of enjoyment and excellence in cultural and artistic activities respectively (along with the degree of importance being attached to cultural and artistic practices producing “cultural” and “artistic” people), whether cultural policy should be included as part of preparing teachers of arts education, and the factors that needed to be considered when developing a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors.

The data revealed a general homogeneity of agreement that a correlation existed between the importance of the element of enjoyment in cultural activities (Q7; N = 225) and the importance of the achievement of excellence in artistic activities, inasmuch as they were considered to be ‘important, but not core’ (Q8; N = 224). Consistent with the cultural policy’s ‘Basic Principle’ of “holistic approach”, homogeneity of agreement was also indicated by the data for emphasising the importance of diversity and inclusivity as the particular factor which needed to be considered when developing a partnership between the two sectors (Q18). However, the data revealed less consistent support for the same question as it related either to strengthening cultural literacy and social cohesion or addressing issues of identity and values. Viewed from and considered within the ecological perspective, the data discovered a lack of homogeneous agreement when it came to considering fully the notion of co-creation and ensuring that projects are sustainable. This was also the case when it came to agreeing upon whether the two policies had achieved their (interpreted) fundamental aims (Q19, Q20; N = 224). The fact that the data revealed a lack of unanimity when it came to closer coordination regarding the objectives of the two sectors within the framework of the main challenges facing the development of Hong Kong’s arts and cultural education policies indicated that

closer sectoral alignment was not currently a high priority (Q21).

4.7.4 The emergence of “points of interest”

The analysis of the data revealed the emergence of three “points of interest”. These were highlighted for subsequent discussion in the semi-structured, in-depth interview stage.

4.7.4.1 Considering the purpose of a cultural policy

Question 3 asked participants to consider what they believed to be the purpose of a cultural policy. Five choices – the promotion of creativity in its various forms, the strengthening of core values, e.g., freedom of expression, the clarification of identities, e.g., those of “Hongkongers”, the development of partnerships with different communities, and the cultural education of people – were given. As mentioned previously, the data revealed that homogeneity of agreement was highest for the cultural education of people, although such agreement was lacking in the cases of the strengthening of core values and the clarification of identities. Given the politically-charged environment that currently exists in Hong Kong, together with the fact that the literature had suggested that core values should be respected as part of a cultural policy (Ho, 2012) and that an increasing “de-sinofication” was leading more people to seek expression or confirm their identity through the arts and culture (Clarke, 2002), these were anticipated to rank higher. The almost complete unanimity of agreement afforded to culturally educating people was also intriguing since it could be argued that without the benefit of an official definition of what it means to be culturally educated, the collocation of “cultural” and “education” as an actionable outcome was potentially at odds within the context of the Government of the HKSAR’s typically *laissez faire* and descriptive approach to cultural matters. Given its central place within the cultural policy’s ‘Vision’ as a constant driver of progress in the community and the encouragement of artistic creation and

innovation as one of the five ‘Objectives’, the revelation by the data of a lack of homogeneous agreement as it related to the promotion of creativity in its various forms was surprising. That the same was also true of the development of partnerships with different communities was also noted, not least since “partnership” has been specifically identified as one of the policy’s ‘Basic Principles’. Collectively, these formed the first “point of interest”.

4.7.4.2 Considering the purpose of an arts education policy

Participants were asked what they considered to be the purpose of an arts education policy in Question 4. This time the choices were the improvement of understanding and knowledge of the arts, the nurturing of creative individuals, the contribution to whole-person development, the building of audiences for the future, and the encouragement of positive learning values and attitudes. Here, the data revealed a lack of homogeneity of agreement for any one of the five options. The low degree of importance attached by representatives at a policymaking level to the encouragement of positive learning values and attitudes (N = 8) appeared to directly contradict one of the overall aims of the arts curriculum, which is to help students ‘To develop skills, knowledge and positive values and attitudes in the arts’ (HKCDC, 2002b: 23). Arts education has also been specifically highlighted at an official level as helping to develop students’ creativity (HKADC, 1996; 1999), as well as contributing to whole-person development (HKCDC, 2002b). The expectation was thus that both these factors would rank higher in importance across all the participant categories, especially as the data suggested homogeneity of agreement that contributing to whole-person development was the main message that an arts education policy should communicate. Within the wider framework of an educational ethos that promotes life-long learning (EC, 2000; HKCDC, 2001), together with the fact that any existing or potential partnerships between the cultural and arts education sectors would presumably have some kind of forward-looking, audience-building element

built into the structure of the projects, the fact that the data suggested a lack of homogeneous agreement when it came to building audiences for the future was also considered noteworthy. Taken collectively, these formed the second “point of interest”.

4.7.4.3 Realising Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policy aims

The aims of Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies – to help create a fertile “soil” to enable a cultural environment to flourish, and to help develop well-rounded students and provide them with sufficient workplace and life skills, respectively – were investigated in Questions 19 and 20. However, the data suggested a lack of homogeneous agreement in both cases. Given that the education reforms are now in their post-2011 long-term phase, and have thus had plenty of time to become part of the landscape, the number of participants across all six categories who disagreed that the criteria had been met was noticeable. Similarly, while not as established, given the cultural policy’s stated desire to establish a richly rewarding environmental panacea for participation in culture and the arts, the anticipation was that a more positive response across the categories would have been registered. The revelation by the data, which had previously indicated homogeneity of agreement regarding the low priority given to culture and cultural policy at an official level, was repeated among secondary-level Music / Visual Arts teachers (N = 14), Music / Visual Arts lecturers and department heads at the tertiary level (N = 12) and cultural / arts organisation representatives (N = 10), was not unexpected. However, in view of the fact that it is the HAB (through its executive arms of the LCSD and the HKADC) on the one hand and the EDB and the HKCDC on the other that between them are directly responsible for creating the cultural and arts education policies and in overseeing their promotion and implementation, the suggestion by the data that cultural / arts education department representatives were of a similar opinion (N = 8) was surprising enough in itself. That such a view among policymakers, assuming it to

be a genuine reflection of their perceptions, was aired – given that it could be construed as an admission of failure – was perhaps even more remarkable. The findings were flagged as the third “point of interest” for further discussion as part of the subsequent semi-structured, in-depth interviews.

4.7.4.4 Summary

The analysis of the online questionnaire enabled the perceptions of a wide cross-section across the cultural and arts education spectrum as they related to the “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements of Hong Kong’s policies of the same name to be more accurately gauged, in the process answering the second research question. As a means of tackling those issues raised by the policy document analysis, particularly as they pertained to providing a guide for the documents’ interpretation, embodiment and enactment, together with helping to assess the impact on the stakeholders the cultural policy’s values as enshrined within its five ‘Basic Principles’, a more mixed picture emerged. With regard to the element of “conceptualisation”, the data suggested that priorities differed among policymakers and practitioners when it came to how such documents were conceived, while only a certain number of messages as they pertained to one or both policies appeared to be resonating among the wider population within the “communication” element. Not only was “operationalisation” being viewed more in terms of (increased) participation in cultural and arts activities rather than from a collaborative, long-term viewpoint, but the extent to which each policy was considered to be succeeding in achieving its aims hinted at possibly conflicting opinions.

From the study’s “ecological worldview” and “interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary” perspectives, the data from the findings pointed to a lack of stakeholder interdependence

(together with a corresponding absence of genuine cooperation, partnership and co-evolution), perhaps brought about by an approach to cultural and arts education governance that was struggling to speak with a coherent and consistent “voice”. This had the potential to translate into a series of self-contained “islands”, either at the organisational or initiative / project level, each of which might be self-sufficient in the short term but which could struggle to sustain themselves over a longer timeframe without reinforcement in the form of mutually beneficial, collaborative partnerships. Again, such interpretations were in the nature of hypotheses only, clarification of the policies’ implementation dependent upon confirmation via dialogues with the protagonists themselves.

4.8 Semi-structured, in-depth interviews

The third and final stage focused on the semi-structured, in-depth interviews.

4.8.1 Background to the interviews

How policy is conceptualised, communicated and operationalised is a multi-layered process involving a variety of different stakeholders. At its heart is the issue of context, itself a complex, dynamic milieu of social, political and economic factors wherein theory and practice constantly contradict, coexist and collide (Freedman & Hernández, 1998; Keifer-Boyd, 1996). As Ball (1994) has stated, policy is a combination of text and action, a mixture of enactment and intention; while policies can be crude and simplistic, practice is invariably both sophisticated and unpredictable. Building on the initial findings and issues raised from the analysis of the relevant policy documents, and overlaid and enriched with the results obtained from that of the online cultural and arts education policy questionnaire, the aim of the semi-structured, in-depth interviews was to delve deeper into the perceptions and opinions of a cross-section of respondents across the cultural and arts education spectrum, in

the process developing a clearer picture of the situation as it currently exists.

4.8.2 Purpose of the interviews

The main purpose of the interviews was to more comprehensively investigate the perceptions and opinions of the participants across the cultural and arts education sectors as they pertained to the “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements of Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies. In so doing, it was hoped that the findings could serve to answer the third research question:

- Is there evidence of the potential for a synergistic relationship to develop between the two sectors? If not, where are the mismatches, misconnections / disconnections, gaps and contradictions presently occurring?

4.8.3 Breakdown of interviewees

In all, 21 interviews (involving a combined total of 23 interviewees) were undertaken between August and November 2015. The targeted participants included representatives from each of the 11 initially identified categories listed at the start of the questionnaire; this was felt to be necessary in order to fully capitalise on the range of ages, levels of experiences and degrees of insight that were being brought to the table.

The breakdown of the interviewees was as follows:

Sector ¹	Position	Organisation	Experience level ²
Arts Ed.	Postgraduate (Master’s) student	N/A	Junior
Arts Ed.	Postgraduate (Doctorate)	Self-employed	Junior

	student / Music teacher		
Arts Ed.	Postgraduate (Doctorate)	Hong Kong primary	Junior
	student / Music teacher	school	
Arts Ed.	Music teacher	Hong Kong international	Junior
		secondary school	
Arts Ed.	Music teacher	Hong Kong international	Mid-level
		secondary school	
Arts Ed.	Visual Arts teacher	Hong Kong international	Mid-level
		secondary school	
Arts Ed.	Visual Arts teacher	Hong Kong international	Mid-level
		secondary school	
Arts Ed.	Visual Arts teacher; Music	Hong Kong international	Mid-level
	teacher	secondary school	
Arts Ed.	Principal	Hong Kong international	Senior
		secondary school	
Arts Ed.	Principal	Hong Kong international	Senior
		secondary school	
Cult.	Executive Director	Hong Kong arts	Senior
		organisation	
Cult.	Chief Executive Officer	Hong Kong arts	Senior
		organisation	
Cult.	Chief Executive Officer	Hong Kong arts	Senior
		organisation	
Arts Ed.	Programme Head	Hong Kong tertiary	Mid-level
		institution	
Arts Ed. /	Associate Professor	Hong Kong tertiary	Senior
Cult.		institution	
Cult. /	Co-Programme Leader	Hong Kong tertiary	Senior
Arts Ed.		institution	

Cult. and Arts Ed.	Member; Manager / Arts Administrator	Hong Kong Arts Development Committee; Hong Kong tertiary institution	Senior
Arts Ed.	Development Officer	Curriculum Development Institute	Senior
Cult.	Managers (x2)	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	Mid-level
Cult.	Director	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	Senior
Cult.	Minister	Home Affairs Bureau	Junior

¹ For ease of reference, each of the interviewees is assigned here either an arts education ('Arts Ed.') or cultural ('Cult.') sector distinction. In practice, however, such demarcations were often less clear-cut; hence, arts centre interviewees are categorised in the text / appendices as 'cultural / arts organisation representatives' and government bureau participants as 'cultural / arts education department representatives'.

² 'Junior' = less than eight years' experience; 'Mid-level' = eight-10 years' experience; 'Senior' = more than 10 years' experience

Table 4.1 Information of Interviewees

4.8.4 Administration of the interviews

All 21 interviews were conducted in Hong Kong; in the case of representatives from arts organisations and government departments, these took place at their offices, while those interviews with secondary level principals and Music / Visual Arts teachers were conducted at the school where they were employed. Sessions with Music / Visual Arts programme leaders, etc. at the tertiary level and those with postgraduate students were held at The Hong Kong Institute of Education. One interview was conducted from the researcher's office via 'Skype'. Specific times and dates for the interviewees were agreed beforehand at the convenience of the participant, and in all but three cases (the first three interviews) a list of the proposed

questions was sent at least three days in advance of the meeting. These were split up into the three “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements, both with a view to making the text look less intimidating on the page but also for the purposes of enabling the interviewer to more easily group the kinds of questions being asked. It was also a useful tool for explaining to interviewees how these concepts related to the study as a whole. This list was printed off and brought by the interviewer to the interview.

Before proceeding, the researcher informed the interviewee(s) that the whole conversation would be recorded for the purposes of transcription and data analysis. Rather than follow a step-by-step walk-through of the questions in order, cues were taken from the responses given by the interviewee, aiming all the time for a natural, informal style that would relax the respondent and ensure as far as possible a free-flowing dialogue. As part of this, background and supplementary information as it pertained to the study as a whole, or by way of clarifying specific theoretical aspects underpinning the questions, were freely supplied as necessary. The interviews varied in length, the shortest lasting 42 minutes and the longest one hour and 47 minutes.

4.8.4.1 Tailoring questions to suit the participants

As part of adapting the overall focus of the interviews to suit the particular participant, the questions within the three areas of “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” were tailored in an attempt to elicit as much useful information as possible, especially as they related to the previously-identified “points of interest”. By way of both a scene setter and as a prelude to the interview proper, each interviewee was asked to introduce himself or herself and outline the work that they were engaged with. In addition to settling them, this enabled the researcher to gauge – where it was not necessarily obvious

from their job description – whether they saw themselves as arts or cultural practitioners / educators, or indeed both, thereby allowing a clearer picture to emerge regarding perceived similarities or differences between the two concepts, in turn providing the opportunity to gently direct the conversation more towards one or the other. Essentially, however, the kinds of questions put to cultural / arts organisation representatives within the “conceptualisation” arena were concerned with their thoughts about the rationalisation, or philosophy, behind the policy under discussion. Typical ground covered their opinions on what it might mean to be “culturally educated” (and whether this was different from being “culturally literate”), whether or not they considered Hong Kong’s cultural and / or arts education policies to demonstrate a clearly defined understanding of the respective concepts (and if it was deemed important that this was the case), the relationship of Hong Kong’s cultural policy to issues such as values and identity, the main purpose of both artistic and cultural activities (and what the differences between the two might be), and the audiences that ought to be targeted by the Government of the HKSAR for the policies in question. For secondary-level principals and Visual Arts or Music teachers, the identification of the participant as being an arts / cultural practitioner / educator was replaced with the request for comments on the place the arts occupied within the context of their particular school and its curriculum, along with their thoughts on the relationship between the arts and culture. Participants at a cultural / arts education department level were invited to expound on Hong Kong’s arts education / cultural policy as a policy for the arts, or culture (or both), and the main purpose of the policy for which they had direct responsibility. These were typically framed within the perceived wider aspiration(s) of the policy from a bureau perspective. Those occupying different roles within tertiary education – as well as students at the postgraduate level – were also asked about their thoughts on the relationship between the arts and culture, along with those on the purpose of a cultural and an arts education policy.

For the “communication” section, while the questions to all the major categories of participants were essentially concerned with the degree to which individual interviewees felt that Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies were being effectively transmitted, alongside the main messages with which each policy should concern itself, officials were asked to explain the rationale for gauging the effectiveness of the communication of the particular policy for which they had responsibility, together with providing some justification to support whichever priority level was being claimed for the policy under discussion. Given its stated importance within a curricular context, arts education policy representatives were encouraged to offer an opinion as to how an integrated approach was being promoted, while secondary school principals and teachers within the two disciplines, as well as tertiary education level representatives, considered the degree to which Hong Kong’s arts education policy directly impacted on their institute’s approaches, as well as their personal and professional practices. Music / Visual Arts students at the postgraduate level were also asked if they thought cultural policy should be included as part of preparing teachers of arts education.

Moving on to the “operationalisation” aspect, this section was basically concerned with discovering what impact the two policies were having at a practical level, particularly as it pertained to the extent to which there was evidence of both inter- and cross-sectoral alliances between certain stakeholders, together with what such partnerships were revealing about issues such as increasing community involvement, sustainability of both projects and audiences, and the achievement of greater coordination and the creation of stronger synergies. Participants across the cultural and arts education spectrum were invited to give reasons – as applicable – why they thought Hong Kong’s respective policies had yet to achieve their

identified fundamental objectives of helping to create a fertile “soil” that could enable a cultural environment to develop, and helping to develop well-rounded and future-equipped students. Depending on the responses to the previous question, identification of the main challenges facing both policies was then asked of the interviewees.

4.8.5 Analysis of the semi-structured, in-depth interviews

Given the large amount of data generated by the 21 interviews, it was decided that a selective approach would be required in order to make the analysis as meaningful as possible. To this end, it was agreed that the transcriptions should not aim at detailing every word spoken by the participants but instead concentrate on highlighting salient quotes from the questions being put to them, while as part of the process of reducing complexity and retaining validity the choice of information to be presented would be aligned as closely as possible with the frameworks from the policy document analysis. The combination of these two approaches gave rise to a list of seven themes, in the process providing a framework within which the previously-identified “points of interest” generated from the analysis of the cultural and arts education policy questionnaire could support and enrich the resulting “voices” and “stories” of the participants. It was hoped that this revealing of the different narrative “layers” could ultimately serve to identify the mismatches, misconnections / disconnections, gaps and contradictions that were presently occurring between the two sectors, thereby answering the third research question.

4.9 Findings

Seven identified themes emerged. These were: ‘Understanding what it means to be “culturally educated”’; ‘The importance of clearly defining “culture” in order to create a cultural policy’; ‘The importance of clearly defining “the arts” in order to create an arts

education policy'; 'The degree to which a cultural policy should concern itself with issues such as identity and values'; 'The factors that need to be considered when developing a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors'; 'The extent to which Hong Kong's cultural policy has helped create a fertile "soil" to enable a cultural environment to flourish', and; 'The extent to which Hong Kong's arts education policy has helped develop well-rounded students and provided them with sufficient workplace and life skills'. Each of these had their own set of sub-themes.

4.9.1 Understanding what it means to be "culturally educated"

While not specifically defined, the notion of being "culturally educated" (along with possessing "cultural literacy") is detailed within the pages of the *Policy Recommendation Report* (CHC, 2003). Within that context, education is seen as providing sustenance and nourishment for culture, while education in culture and the arts 'fosters skills of appreciation, creativity and expression ... [It] ... provides the ground, nutrition and impetus for cultural development' (p. 14). Since the proposals put forward in the *Policy Recommendation Report* were subsequently adopted by the Government of the HKSAR and re-constituted as the cultural policy under the HAB, it is fair to say that the concept of cultural education firmly underpins the existing document. Moreover, in asking respondents what they believed the purpose of a cultural policy to be, 'Culturally educate people.' was ranked as the most important element by undergraduate and postgraduate Music / Visual Arts students, Music / Visual Arts teachers and principals at the secondary level, representatives from both the arts education and cultural sectors, and "Others". The cultural education of people was also specifically identified as one of several differing perceptions within the questionnaire findings as it related to the purpose of a cultural policy (one of the three "points of interest"). As one of the seven themes to emerge from the analytical frameworks, what did the

respondents across the two sectors think that being “culturally educated” meant?

4.9.1.1 Different types of cultural awareness

A variety of perceptions emerged. One strand likened being “culturally educated” to having an awareness of the environment in which you found yourself operating. This could reveal itself as a sensitivity to the social norms of a particular culture, such as knowing what might cause offence in certain situations, or it could be the realisation of the difference between cultures as part of a wider currency of societal understanding. At a deeper level, it went beyond notions of physical location or heritage to a sense that culture could be understood from a variety of perspectives and involve a whole host of factors. This cultural-education-as-awareness perspective might or might not be linked to the arts, but a broader frame of reference was a pre-requisite. As one of the secondary school principals described it:

If you're going to interact with people of different cultures, you need to have a cultural framework from which you can discuss different views of shared experiences. So to be truly able to move between cultural settings and to interact with people from other cultures you need to understand the differences between cultures and the nuances, but you also need to have some frames of reference and some repertoire of discursive materials with which you can engage.

Within an arts-related context, the co-programme leader at the tertiary education level suggested that the awareness should be in the form of exposure to the different types of culture – “high” or “mass” – available. This situation necessitated an external mechanism of some kind that could give them equal billing, regardless of perceived commercial viability.

4.9.1.2 Links to everyday practices

A similar strand, particularly among Music / Visual Arts teachers at the secondary school level, interpreted “culturally educated” in terms of its links to everyday practices. Beyond the more pragmatic issues of working in a world school and therefore being concerned with themes of internationalism (particularly as they applied to the commonly-adopted International Baccalaureate (IB) examination structure), for one of the Visual Arts teachers the link manifested itself in nurturing among students a respect for the history of art and its significance. Inevitably, the success of this approach involved ensuring that the art forms retained their relevance, typically through some kind of connection with students’ everyday lives. For another Visual Arts teacher, however, the notion of being “culturally educated” was contrasted with the idea of being “artistically educated”, which was the working process of failure, review and reflection, and modification. To be “culturally educated” within this context conveyed an out-of-date notion of “culture”, an assumption based on traditional artefacts that had little or nothing to do with everyday practices.

Although ultimately dependent upon the intended function, the idea of cultural education to refer to the hierarchical delivery and consolidation of knowledge was a common thread among secondary level Music / Visual Arts teachers and those involved with arts education at the tertiary level. In certain cases, however, the notion of being “culturally educated” emphasised a more facilitatory approach in which the recipient was an equal partner in the process. Evidence emerged of this strategy being adopted within projects initiated at a governmental level, as the senior representative within the LCSD explained:

The way we organise our activities ... we need to understand our clients, our stakeholders,

our partners. They should have their agenda, their purpose of learning, rather than what I'm going to teach you. The meaning-making should be the learner themselves. What we need to do is to facilitate this meaning-making process.

Facilitation of the meaning-making process within the context of allowing the audience to obtain knowledge, learn a skill, or add value required a rethink of the relationship and involved the provision of the appropriate platform. Where a facilitatory style was being embraced within a *school* context, this was typically through learning experiences within the integrated or interdisciplinary curriculum. However, even if cultural education was simply being interpreted as knowing and understanding that there are a number of approaches to understanding culture, in the opinion of another secondary level Visual Arts teacher the essence of making it meaningful lay in applying it to the way one thought and acted in all sorts of different situations.

4.9.1.3 Needs within a wider, societal context

Given the educational reforms' emphasis on whole-person development, the notion of being “culturally educated” was referred to as being a key component of a holistic education. At the same time, it was also considered by some interviewees as an element within a wider, societal / humanistic context, whereby cultural exposure and engagement represented the fulfillment of an individual's needs. A representative from one of the cultural / arts organisations expressed this sentiment in terms that harked back to an earlier, separational definition of “culture” as the refinement – or *cultivation* – of an individual's aesthetic sensibilities:

In the hierarchy of a person's general life, you have the basic needs. When those needs are satisfied, then you want enrichment and you want to build a civilised society. When we talk

about a civilised society, the next step is to be a cultured society as well. So I think it means being well-informed in arts and culture – culture can be your own traditional Chinese culture, the culture of Hong Kong, historical (kind of) context – and of course in terms of the art forms, arts disciplines, fine arts.

More than one interviewee linked the notion of being “culturally educated” to issues of identity and values. In the case of the former, the concept could be at an individual level, or else the city as a whole could discover its collective personality. However, from a political perspective, and by way of a rejection of the prognosis on the part of the CHC that Hong Kong’s cultural affiliation with China would increase as the economic disparity with the mainland decreased (2003, p. 11), another cultural / arts organisation representative had this to say:

We are culturally educated to the extent that we recognise our identity as being firmly part of Hong Kong as a city, but not part of China.

Where the kinds of values connected with being “culturally educated” were touched upon, these were essentially seen as synonymous with a recognition and respect of Hong Kong’s wider societal / community values.

4.9.1.4 The Government of the HKSAR’s various roles

In thinking about what it meant to be “culturally educated”, the Government of the HKSAR’s role in the process was mentioned by several interviewees. There was an undercurrent of the notion of culture being “good” for society and people and of having a “civilising effect”. For example, the managers within the LCSD acknowledged that:

The Government believes arts and cultural activities are good things and that they need to be promoted more. We believe that more citizens should have the benefits of engaging with these activities, so it's our determination to bring more good arts education programmes to them.

Similarly, the associate professor at the tertiary education level asserted that the Government of the HKSAR – as agents of the people – had the responsibility to deliver a cultural policy ‘for the people, for the community ... for the audience, the common public. Not only a small group of elite people.’ This Mulcahy (2006a) ‘Cultural Democracy’ view of “cultural education” could be exercised as a form of “soft power” *à la* Ahonen (2001), or else be employed in more “directed” terms. The same cultural / arts organisation representative who had talked about the concept as a process of becoming more civilised also introduced an element of guided control into the proceedings:

It's steering people from only focusing on their basic needs to higher levels of enrichment, so as to groom a more civilised society where people can live more harmoniously together.

Some interviewees, particularly among the Music / Visual Arts postgraduate students, painted a similar picture, albeit one with a potentially different end view in sight. Perhaps in keeping with Gramscian notions of hegemony, the claim was made that the perception of what constituted “culture” was something that had been suggested by the Government of the HKSAR, although to what ends was not necessarily stipulated. It could be in terms of encouraging the population to connect with their Chinese roots; if that were the case, another representative from one of the cultural / arts organisations opined:

I'm not sure if this kind of Chinese-ness, or Chinese culture, can really be forced upon a person, or being. Culture is something that comes in you while you're living there.

From the point of view of the HAB itself, the emphasis was firmly on the positive benefits that could accrue from being “culturally educated”, even if a strict definition was hard to pinpoint. Indeed, perhaps because of the definitional issues involved, there was a stated deliberate avoidance of either indicating a particular benchmark at the policy level whereby one could be said to have become culturally educated, or (on the basis that such terminologies could confuse rather than clarify) of rigidly classifying those programmes that might conceivably fall into the category of grooming citizens with this end in mind. For those bodies tasked with assisting the Government of the HKSAR by promoting and advocating the arts, the focus was firmly on the cultural education of students and the wider community in terms of increasing their general exposure. Breaking down barriers in order to create a positive idea in people’s minds was seen as a fundamental element of helping to create an “arts for all” environment, as the HKADC member explained:

We want to bring the arts to every layman in society. I think we need to do that, because otherwise it's only small groups of people going to attend the arts. We need to make the arts more general to people, and then they are not scared of it. Make people experience arts at a public level.

Depending on the perspective, then, the Government of the HKSAR’s role when it came to what constituted being “culturally educated” was seen in purely benign, or else slightly sinister, terms.

4.9.1.5 “Culturally educated” vs. “culturally literate”

Included in the *Policy Recommendation Report* and incorporated in the questionnaire within the context of those factors that needed to be considered when developing a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors, the notion of strengthening cultural literacy was further investigated during the interviews. Common to some of the interviewees was the idea that cultural literacy involved the assimilation of a body of knowledge about a topic, e.g., the ability to recognise music from a particular culture, and its relationship to other, related cultural forms as a means of contextualising that knowledge. For one Music student at the postgraduate level and a practitioner in their own right, it was the extent to which the individual could engage with the topic under discussion that made the difference. While a culturally educated person could explain why they liked something, somebody who was “culturally literate” could engage some higher order thinking and provide some evidence in order to justify their preference:

For me, cultural literacy is more theoretical or a little bit higher level. For literacy you need to get a little more in-depth ... at least you not only say why, you give me some history, you give some evidence to support that. Not only emotional – your self-experience.

In the opinion of one of the secondary school principals, it was important to make the distinction that this knowledge was not ‘the E. D. Hirsch cultural literacy kind of thing, where you’re given a multiple choice test and you have to name five Impressionistic artists ... a “Jeopardy” kind of knowledge’. Rather, it was an empathy and an awareness that should be generated. Within the arts education sector, cultural literacy at a community level was related to the sharing of ideas and providing a historical frame of reference. The watchword of awareness was again raised by the cultural / arts organisation representatives, this time to

refer to a realisation that was connected to a kind of cultural spirituality and which allowed people to see the bigger picture beyond the (albeit important) everyday financial concerns of a nine-to-five job and a mortgage. Within this context, the level of cultural literacy was felt to be strongly dependent upon the quality of cultural education that its citizens received.

Synopsis

Overall, the notion of being “culturally educated” was interpreted by the interviewees from a variety of perspectives. At a general awareness level, it equated to a form of cultural empathy, while within an educational context it could encourage participants to become more equal partners in the meaning-making process, thereby influencing the trajectory of their own learning path. As the fulfillment and refinement of an individual’s aesthetic needs, it was a means of making society more cultured; in relation to the notions of ‘identity’ and ‘values’, it could be influenced by the Government in obvious, or more covert, ways. To be “culturally literate” was to demonstrate an ability to offer justification or explanation in support of a specific position.

Despite its obvious points of reference to both ‘Cultural Identity’ and ‘Cultural Literacy’, and the values those elements were seen as encapsulating within the framework of the *Policy Recommendation Report* (CHC, 2003), there was little evidence to suggest that the interviewees were “embodying” the value of the strengthening of social cohesion; the idea of individual (moral) enrichment, however, was more sympathetically received. Interpreted from an “interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary” perspective, cultural education was an area where the notion of governance had the potential to assume a proactive, and positive, role. Supported by effective communication channels, this could serve to reinforce the ‘Vision’, ‘Objectives’ and ‘Basic Principles’ of the policy proper, while simultaneously allaying

people's fears that ulterior ideological motives lay at its heart.

4.9.2 The importance of clearly defining “culture” in order to create a cultural policy

The CHC, within the framework of mapping out Hong Kong's future cultural position, opted for one of two definitions of “culture” depending on whether Hong Kong's overall development and cultural position, or else matters relating to resource deployment, were being considered. A third separation, as it pertained to knowledge, character and aesthetic sense, was to be employed when pondering the impact of culture on social development. Gray (2010), in considering a framework for analysing cultural policy, specifically identified how particular disciplines defined “culture” as one of its three guiding questions. Questionnaire respondents were in agreement that it was important, with Music / Visual Arts undergraduate and postgraduate students and Music / Visual Arts teachers and principals at the secondary level registering the most support.

4.9.2.1 Fluidity of terminologies

In keeping with the literature was the vexed issue of a shared definition of “culture” that could cover all the bases. This was reflected in a general acknowledgement among interviewees of a breadth and depth to the concept that made a one-size-fits-all definitional approach a practical impossibility. It was described in ritualistic terms by the associate professor at the tertiary level as ‘the common way of doing things, which most people accept, within the same community’, and by a representative from one of the cultural / arts organisations as a term that embraced ‘things that are more high art or more mundane things ... even a cluster of shops which are more specialised in lifestyle goods’. It was used by another such representative to denote ‘the greater perspective of heritage, festivals, food’ (as opposed to the more specific and narrower idea of “the arts” as ‘anything that needs

concentration, craft and pursuit’), by a secondary school principal as ‘connecting different art forms’, and by a Music / Visual Arts student at the postgraduate level in purely behavioural terms, whereby ‘if you are with a community or a group of people ... when they group together, it’s called culture’. It was also simply a catch-all term that covered ‘tradition, internet culture, social ... all sorts of different things’ by a Visual Arts teacher at the secondary level.

There was also a noticeable informality when it came to the use of terminologies; “the arts” could either be subsumed within the notion of “culture”, or else the two terms could be appropriated interchangeably. For example, it was not uncommon to hear the phrases “culture and the arts” or “arts and culture” within the parameters of a discussion about cultural policy, bearing out Mulcahy’s (2006a) assertion that when it comes to the realm of political discourse there exists an almost indelible association between the two. Indeed, that point was picked up, albeit slightly tangentially in the sense that it was directly related to the arts but interpreted – interestingly enough – as a cultural anomaly, by the senior LCSD representative:

I’m very concerned about the definition, the concept. Even the arts; until now, I can use “art” and “arts”. It’s culture. I think people have different understandings, definitions.

Despite this awareness, only in two cases was attention drawn to the specific *dangers* of such terminological fluidity. In the first instance, this was by one of the secondary school principals and in the second by the co-programme leader at the tertiary education level, making the point that a failure to spell out exactly what was meant by “culture” and “the arts” had the potential to lead to misunderstandings or mis-readings, respectively.

4.9.2.2 The contexts of cultural policymaking in Hong Kong

Such terminological inconsistencies might spring, in part, from Hong Kong's unique cultural policymaking context. In considering the importance of defining "culture" as a pre-requisite to creating a cultural policy, some of the interviewees across both sectors expanded the scope of the discussion to talk about the particular historical issues faced by the city in this regard. The senior LCSD representative reiterated that the purpose of the founding of Hong Kong as a British colony was essentially the establishment of the city as a business centre; as such, there was no perceived need for – and certainly no vision pertaining to – cultural development. Given also that those facilities which were developed existed essentially for the benefit of Westerners, it was only relatively recently that Hong Kong had had to seriously grapple with cultural matters, including establishing the appropriate platforms for their practical realisation. To that end, one of the key tasks in the wake of the creation of the HKADC in the mid-1990s was to formally define "the arts". As one of the cultural / arts organisation representatives who was closely involved in that particular process recalled:

The art forms that are represented by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council are the performing arts and then other arts as well – the visual arts are represented, the literary arts, crossover art forms. That's a good source of thinking about how Hong Kong defines its arts. When we talk about the arts, those are the arts; when we talk about culture, that's everything else together.

A consideration of Hong Kong's peculiar set of circumstances, along with the extent to which history and historical development was being, or should be, reflected, were both points that interviewees felt needed to be considered where cultural definitions, and cultural policymaking, were concerned. Nevertheless, despite the close associations with the subject

matter, there was an underlying awareness that cultural policymaking came ready-wrapped in a political sensibility. One of the secondary school principals went even further, suggesting that a cultural policy was, by its very nature, *a political decision*, and that therefore *a(ny) definition of culture was a political exercise* (my italics), in so doing recalling the words of the CHC that because they relied on Government funding, activities in the fields of culture and education were potentially more susceptible to the imposition of controls.

4.9.2.3 Suiting the definition to the purpose

A general consensus existed across all the interviewee categories that, whichever one was chosen, establishing a clear definition of “culture” was important when it came to formulating a cultural policy. As one of the Music / Visual Arts postgraduate students succinctly put it:

I think it's important to have a clear definition. For example, if I am a policymaker but I don't have a clear definition, the policy cannot connect to others. It's not an effective policy.

In order to ensure effectiveness, this definitional clarity should be matched by clear expectations on the part of the stakeholders involved, such parameters taking the form of operational timelines or the setting out of specific guidelines. Clarity aside, opinions regarding whether the current policy should adopt a broad or a narrow definition regarding what constituted “culture” (or, indeed, “art” or “the arts” or “the arts and culture”) were more straightforward. Those who worked at a policymaking level were unanimous that the former was the case. As the representative from the HAB said:

I think we are adopting the definition of a broader sense. If we adopt a definition, “This is art, this is not art”, it's a little bit different from what we are doing right now. I think we are more

accommodating in the sense that we would like to encourage more diversified and more innovative development of the arts in Hong Kong. If we need to draw a line on what is arts and culture, then I think it's not conducive to the environmental development. We try to be more encompassing.

This was felt to be very much in line with the recommendations made in the CHC's *Policy Recommendation Report*, as the senior representative from the LCSD pointed out:

I think the Report's definition is very good. When we discuss a big issue, we have to have a broad definition so that we can see things in a wider angle. So in this context, I think we should have a broad definition of culture. But for another context – we are talking about the resources allocation, how to enhance the policy – we have to narrow the scope. Also for education, similar.

The same interviewee also believed that the same approach admirably served the purpose of being flexible enough to adapt to change, e.g., to accommodate a shift from “high art” to “community art”, as future circumstances might demand. However, a contrasting interpretation was offered by the member of the HKADC, who felt that such a deliberately generalised perspective instead betrayed a lack of (definitional) focus; indeed, that in painting a somewhat idealised picture of a “bottom-up” cultural environment, where everything could potentially flourish, a convenient excuse to avoid engaging in the formulation of a coherent strategy was being offered by the Government of the HKSAR.

Synopsis

Close associations between “culture” and “the arts”, along with Hong Kong's unique cultural

development (including its historical background), were both considered by the interviewees to be important contributing factors in assessing the city's current cultural position. Despite the acknowledged complexity of the concept, a clear definition of "culture" was felt to be important as it pertained to the formulation of a cultural policy; primarily, this was necessary in order to convey the expectations of the policymakers, and should be supported by measures such as operational guidelines and timelines.

In terms of the extent to which the policy was resonating with and impacting upon the various stakeholders, the adoption of the CHC's broad definition in order to refer to Hong Kong's overall cultural development was agreed upon by the HAB and LCSD as being the most conducive means of conveying the participative "spirit" of the cultural policy. However, the open-ended nature of this approach was interpreted by practitioners in some quarters as allowing an element of abdication of responsibility to creep into the proceedings. This had repercussions for the theme of communication as part of the "interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary" type within the study's ecological framework inasmuch as the participative element inherent within this aspect relies upon a shared comprehension among its recipients.

4.9.3 The importance of clearly defining "the arts" in order to create an arts education policy

When mention is made of "the arts" within a Hong Kong education context, in theory it is those formal distinctions identified, and represented, by the HKADC that are being referenced. However, while literary and crossover art forms are duly recognised by the HKADC, as well as the fact that there exists a recommendation by the HKCDC (2002b) that other disciplines, in the shape of Drama, Media Arts and Dance, should also be included to broaden students' learning experiences, in practice the current policy documents are confined

to the performing arts (in the shape of Music) and the Visual Arts. In the same way that respondents undertaking the cultural and arts education policy questionnaire had indicated the importance of defining “culture” in order to create a cultural policy, a similar finding was discovered for “the arts”, with Music / Visual Arts lecturers and department heads at the tertiary level in particular registering strong support. Because of the difficulties inherent in grouping together diverse manifestations under one terminological umbrella, or else issues resulting from the creation of a misleading unity based on heritage, citizenry and creativity (Bamford, 2006), the literature has suggested that the arts are instead more likely to be defined in terms of the benefits they are believed to bestow upon their end users.

4.9.3.1 Links between “the arts” and “culture”

While not considered as complex a notion overall as “culture”, there nevertheless existed a range of responses across the interviewee categories in relation to definitions of “the arts”. In addition to the performing and visual arts, it would, in the words of one of the cultural / arts organisation representatives, ‘also include photography, architecture, cooking, gardening, sculpture’, since it is, first and foremost, ‘a mode and a way of communication’. What, then, is the relationship between “the arts” and “culture”? For the programme head at the tertiary education level, the same cultural / arts organisation representative and a development officer from the CDI, “the arts” were an integral and inseparable element, or cornerstone, of “culture”; co-related and co-dependent, ‘art can influence the culture, and the culture of course will influence some of the art’, according to the member of the HKADC. For one of the secondary level principals, the connection depended upon which of the two was the main focus:

I think yes, they’re connected, but they’re not perhaps as directly correlated here because

every culture has its own view of the arts, so you and I and other people might use them to mean something different. So, yes and no. Yes, at the high level I guess they're engaged, but it depends if you use the lens on culture, the understanding of the culture might include the arts but it wouldn't be the primary focus; if your lens is on the arts, then its contribution to culture is the generic version of culture, rather than the cultural specificity in Hong Kong.

Another distinction, revolving around one of the postgraduate Music / Visual Arts students' perception that 'art is a physical thing and culture is something you can observe based on environmental factors', was taken one step further by a secondary level Music teacher who suggested that a connection between the two was not necessarily a given:

Artistic doesn't have to be cultural. Cultural is very centered towards people and the environment. Something which is artistic doesn't have to be related to the culture at all.

In keeping with the literature, a complex relationship clearly existed between the two concepts in the minds of some of the interviewees. Though an acknowledgement existed that "the arts" could be subsumed within "culture", opinions also suggested that the exact nature of the balance was dependent upon the particular context.

4.9.3.2 Understanding the significance of "the arts"

When it came to "the arts", there was general agreement among interviewees that it was important to have a clear definition in order to create an arts education policy. However, some of them felt quite strongly that it should *not* be defined. For the Visual Arts associate professor at the tertiary level, this was because what constitutes "the arts" is itself not a static concept:

An education policy should be forward-looking and it should understand what art is, but not defining it, because in different times of history art can be defined in different ways. It changes because of different culture and different times.

Instead, it was more important to clearly understand the *significance* of the different art forms – by which was meant a recognition of their inherent characteristics – and, on the basis that these remain essentially unaltered, to use this as a foundation for policy development. In the opinion of the same interviewee, the collective significance of “the arts” lay in the fact that they were both a mode and a method of communication. In the case of the Visual Arts, elements such as colour, shape and form communicated ideas and meaning; for Music, rhythm, harmony and melody fulfilled the same purpose. Interpreted in this way:

An arts education policy is how to conduct the education of visual literacy. The lines, the colours, they are vocabs. So how you arrange the lines and forms and colour and then, well, structure it, then you tell the story – you communicate something in a passage or in a picture.

The notion of “arts education” was specifically discussed within the context of the official policy document with the development officer from the CDI. Interestingly, not only was there a tendency to adhere to the term “arts education”, as opposed to “arts and cultural education”, in Hong Kong schools on the basis that ‘arts is part of culture’ and ‘everything can be culture’, but there was also a deliberate avoidance of attaching labels:

We kind of don't define what arts education in the school curriculum is. I think the reason is that maybe it's too theoretical or philosophical. We tend to be more pragmatic ... more

flexible for them.

Instead, the meaning was to be inferred by the kinds of activities that schools were encouraged to adopt. As a result, the emphasis was firmly on developing ‘diverse arts experiences’.

4.9.3.3 “The arts” as responses to, and reflections of, change

In addition to issues arising from shifting notions as to what constitutes “the arts”, the underlying dichotomy of the essentially static nature of definitions being applied to the arts – which are themselves responses to, and reflections of, an ever-changing world – was a point made by several interviewees. However, in the case of one secondary school Visual Arts teacher, a potential solution lay not in rejecting the idea of defining “the arts” outright but instead allowing for a kind of definitional flexibility that was constantly responsive to the different ways in which creativity could be expressed, or else built upon the principles of creativity, which were felt, by their nature, to be “uncontrollable”. Another secondary level Visual Arts teacher made the same arts-as-response-to-the-world point, but reached a different conclusion regarding the importance of defining them:

In art making practice, it’s always a response to the world around you, the world that you live in now. That’s the interesting thing. It has to be clearly defined, because you go to the museum and it’s still all the old stuff. You do need to define what it is and what your vision is for it ... collaborative, innovative, current, old, new, past.

Other supporters of the idea of defining “the arts” from a policy creation standpoint did so on the grounds that it could help to ensure a consistency and appropriacy within the cultural

context, that it should be included as part of informing Hong Kong's wider vision for arts education, and because "the arts" are related to aesthetic feelings and values, the last being areas in which Hongkongers were felt to be particularly wanting.

4.9.3.4 Different benefits for different end users

When considering the importance of defining "the arts" in terms of the perceived benefits they bestowed upon the end user, interviewees at the secondary school level approached the topic from the anticipated student perspective, typically acknowledging the arts' contributions to holistic development. Those Music / Visual Arts teachers who were active within an interdisciplinary curriculum context tended to see their role not only in terms of enabling students to make links between the different subjects but also of bringing different areas, e.g., Art and Design Technology, together in such a way that the focus was on the application and transferability of common skills, such as creativity, to life outside the classroom. In this way, "the arts" were being used 'as a way of connecting all sorts of learning'. This translated to a (cultural) ecology that was built from the inside out, starting with students' own experiences and then placing those within a local landscape before being broadened to encompass other cultures and perspectives. The development of "social skills" via "the arts" was viewed by a secondary-level Music teacher as being equally valuable, serving as ideal preparation for the wider ecology of the outside world:

I often say to my students, "Regardless of whether you like Music or not, you're working in a group, you're learning life skills; things that you will use." So, being able to work with other people, being able to listen, thinking outside the box, taking a leadership role ...

For this preparation to achieve any kind of impact, the key laying in embedding such a

philosophy into the fabric of the entire school. One of the Visual Arts teachers and one of the principals referenced particular policies or schemes that their respective institutions had initiated: in the case of the Visual Arts teacher, the social element that the school had chosen focused on “leadership”; to that end, the itemised attributes which had been identified as contributory factors were prominently displayed around the campus. Not only were the choices – among them “solving problems creatively” and “facing challenges with determination” – viewed as specific qualities that were amply demonstrated by “the arts” (thereby serving to raise the profile of the individual disciplines), but the fact that it was carried out at a whole-school level was helping to ensure that their influence could permeate the overall, educational ethos.

Other recipients were also referenced. A clear definition from the policymaking point of view could serve to more effectively validate “the arts”, e.g., as potential career choices in the eyes of parents, as one of the secondary school principals believed:

I think it's very helpful to have that ... when this is better defined by the government ... so at least the parents are seeing that it's recognised at that level and that there is a policy and if need be we can tie those things together for parents who are particularly reluctant.

Different sets of stakeholders could benefit in different ways. In the case of the wider arts education and cultural communities, a clear(er) definition within the context of an arts education policy might serve to more effectively identify areas for potential collaborations via the clarification of different areas of expertise, as a Visual Arts teacher at the secondary school level expounded:

I guess working today in 2015 that needs to be broader, if anything, with the way art can engage with communities in performance-based works. I wonder if an arts policy from a government is aware of those type of things going on, and whether there needs to be a kind of more updated feel for how art can engage in ways that are not just strictly kind of educational. What's the end result, the experience of it, the engagement? Bringing the communities together. Looking at engaging with history and communities and culture.

Benefits as visualised within this scenario were anticipated as being a mixture of tangible and intangible experiences in which the ecological, i.e. the interrelated, interactive and integrated elements of “the arts”, could transcend the current stricter, educational-type boundaries. Essentially this centered around accessibility issues; as part of expanding audiences for “the arts”, seeking out and gaining the support and buy-in of different places and spaces were seen as necessities, while as a means of maintaining existing audiences this would involve looking at different ways of delivering the arts to identified and targeted communities.

Synopsis

Links between “the arts” and “culture” were further explored as part of establishing the extent to which a clear definition of the arts was necessary in the formulation of such a policy. In contrast with the rather more abstract concept that is “culture”, concrete examples were in greater supply, although this was counterbalanced by a definitional open-endedness (or rejection) that instead took deliberate account of the arts’ responsive nature or else stressed their significance by drawing attention to the arts’ immutable constituent elements. Supporting the literature, the perceived practical benefits were typically framed within the integrated / interdisciplinary curriculum as a means of preparing students for life beyond the classroom. This had the added potential advantage of raising their “value profile” for

stakeholders such as parents.

Whether embedded within the integrated curriculum or employed as a means of nurturing social skills, in keeping with the proposed implementation of the arts education policy through the document analysis an emphasis was being placed on the development of students' generic competencies such as collaboration and communication skills as a means of providing them with rich learning experiences, while also allowing them to connect knowledge across different learning areas. From the “ecological worldview” perspective, the principles of interdependence, flexibility and diversity (through co-operation, partnership and co-evolution) were all being encouraged through the specific examples cited on the part of the interviewees.

4.9.4 The degree to which a cultural policy should concern itself with issues such as identity and values

To what extent should a cultural policy concern itself with issues such as identity and values? Attention has previously been drawn, via Leong's (2013) “identity” categorisation, to the ambiguities and tensions currently existing within the cultural sector. While the official view has always been that Hong Kong people's identity ‘should start from local culture, be grounded in Chinese cultural traditions, and possess a global vision’ (CHC, 2003: 12), the practical reality is that the ongoing search for a cultural identity nearly twenty years into the handover has led to an increasing “de-sinofication” as more individuals label themselves “Hong Kong citizens” or “Chinese Hong Kong citizens” (Simpson, 2012). Inextricably linked to this is the fact that while they should also be crystallised as part of the overall identity process, the place of “core” cultural values, such as an outlook on freedom and the rule of law, lies at the heart of many of Hong Kong's uncertainties.

The analytical framework selected for the cultural policy-related documents was chosen, in part, in order to gain a clearer understanding of the values and underlying ideologies being supported by the Government of the HKSAR. As such, Hong Kong's cultural policy was essentially identified as being an "explicit" policy in accordance with Ahearne's (2009) terminologies, the values revealed (via the three stated elements of 'Cultural Identity', 'Cultural Literacy', and 'Cultural Legacy and Development' (CHC, 2003)) being the strengthening of social cohesion, an emphasis on (moral) enrichment, and the building of confidence and pride in Hong Kong. Nevertheless, despite support from the literature, opinions among the questionnaire respondents were generally weighted towards 'not important' when considering the strengthening of core values as part of the purpose of a cultural policy. Likewise, addressing issues of identity and values was ranked 'least important' in the context of factors that needed to be considered when developing a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors by all but one of the six categories.

4.9.4.1 Identity

4.9.4.1.1 Recognising Hong Kong's dual identity

Of the two elements, the issue of identity engendered the most diverse responses across the 11 categories. A number of interviewees reflected on the unique, dual nature of Hong Kong's identity, with its innate "Chinese-ness" wedded to a Western sensibility. As the tertiary-level Visual Arts associate professor summarised:

We have the strong link with China, so the Chinese culture is important, and also Hong Kong is cosmopolitan. We are influenced and inspired by, and have absorbed, a bit of Western culture, but we are brought up in a Chinese culture.

This was seen as being something that had been capitalised upon by the cultural policy, in the sense that ‘Chinese culture as the root mixed with western influences’, as the co-programme leader at the tertiary level expressed it, was how identity was being defined at an official level. This was a point agreed with in part by the representative from the HAB, who mentioned that in adopting the CHC’s *Policy Recommendation Report* as a starting point for their policies and different programmes, ‘We also highlight our unique cultural identity, which is grounded in the Chinese traditions.’

4.9.4.1.2 Clarifying identities as a means of resolving societal tensions

At the same time, there was an acknowledged potential sensitivity with issues of identity. Handled effectively, a cultural policy could have a positive role to play in this regard. According to one of the Music / Visual Arts postgraduate students:

Cultural policy is related to self-identity, because Hong Kong people are always seeking their own identities. They don’t know where their origins are.

However, other respondents expressed concern that a cultural policy should not overstep the mark. When asked the extent to which Hong Kong’s cultural policy impacted upon the average man in the street, one of the cultural / arts organisation representatives had this to say:

If the Government says the policy for culture is to develop the Chinese identity, then I’m sure even the man on the street will have something to say about that. When it touches on trying to define Hong Kong identity and Chinese identity, it’s a bone of contention for everyone.

As part of the process, it was important in the opinion of the same speaker that the historical context should not be airbrushed:

That identity ... part of it is historical – historical meaning that I think they think the Government is trying to discredit the hundred years of British rule in Hong Kong – but that is an integral part of how Hong Kong came to be the Hong Kong now. That political / historical background is also culture. When we talk about looking for a Hong Kong identity, that’s a part that cannot be ignored.

Acknowledging their importance, then, interviewees’ opinions suggested that the notions of culture and identity were closely linked. Nevertheless, any handling of identity within the framework of a cultural policy could not afford to be selective. Instead, recognition had to be given to all the contributing elements.

4.9.4.1.3 Voices within different communities

The idea of voices within different communities serving as a metaphor for identity was another strand that emerged. Students within a secondary school context was one such “community” of voices. One of the secondary school level principals reflected on the 2014 ‘Occupy Central’ events in terms of how this had served as a catalyst for students to engage, through art, with the identity issue in ways that they might previously have been reluctant to demonstrate:

What comes up regularly is the Hong Kong identity. You see a lot of tension in there and a lot of discovery. What they (the students) look to in their local environments to define their

culture.

Likewise, the wider community in general provided a rich source of voices that could collectively tell the story of Hong Kong's cultural identity, as the tertiary-level programme head explained:

If you want to establish a kind of policy, it's a very good way to connect the story from the public, from the specific community ... you're collecting different voices in the community. It's good to listen to all the different stories and let the people have a chance to empower themselves.

This “bottom-up” approach required the Government of the HKSAR to support a ‘Cultural Democracy’ (Mulcahy, 2006a) kind of model. However, for this to work, a proactive, hands-on style was necessary:

If the government really wants to talk about the Hong Kong culture, they have to go back to the story, the individual story. They have to talk about this history. Everyone has their own interpretation about their culture, about the history, about their living style, so if the government just thinks that by getting some people to establish a kind of committee they can initiate a policy without any conversation or connection with those people ... I don't think it will work this way.

The senior LCSD representative, in linking the issue of identity to the notion of “culturally educating” people, was pessimistic about the Government of the HKSAR's ability to develop a coherent strategic vision that could really address this issue:

There's no agenda how to use culture to educate people, so they have no agenda about the social function. I think it was not until 1997 and the return of Hong Kong that we started this kind of thing, but it's very fluid. There's no action plan. What kind of values? What kind of identity?

One solution to this problem that the speaker was working on was the tailoring of particular museum exhibitions to increase the relevance and appeal to the perspectives of Hong Kong audiences, along with projects in conjunction with representatives from other institutions. In this way, Hong Kong's cultural policy was being “re-conceptualised” in order to demonstrate a focus on Hong Kong's “unique” identities.

4.9.4.2 Values

4.9.4.2.1 Shared identities, shared values

Values are inextricably linked to the issue of identity. Indeed, in keeping with the literature, the concepts were regarded across the interview categories as essentially synonymous. As the co-programme leader at the tertiary level summarised:

One of the things it (a cultural policy) would spell out would be the identity of that city or country. When you think of identity, you can't escape from the values attached to that social group.

Likewise, one of the cultural / arts organisation representatives mentioned that, ‘When we talk about shared identity, we all talk about shared values as well.’

4.9.4.2.2 Which values? Who decides?

To which shared values are these interviewees referring? On the basis that a cultural policy should promote specific values, since the word “culture” is bound up with the ways that people conduct their lives, strengthening core values (whichever those that are identified by a society) was identified within the questionnaire as one of the purposes of such legislation. Broadening the scope of the discussion to think about how the idea of “cultural policy” might be interpreted in different international jurisdictions, depending on the particular ideology in place, the same tertiary-level co-programme leader went on to say:

If we are in a democratic country, we would think a cultural policy would not limit freedom of speech and freedom of expression. The value that the cultural policy should protect is the freedom of expression, the freedom of choices.

However, for the same cultural / arts organisation representative who had talked about the correlation between identity and values, there were two quite different value forces at work. In keeping with the observations made by Hesmondhalgh and Pratt (2005), on the one hand were the arts and culture being used as tools for economic drive, such as the development of the creative industries, the value coming in the form of the financial impact being generated. However, this was gradually seen as being replaced by a move towards ‘a cultural (and education) enrichment kind of value for ourselves’, whereby a more harmonious society was the intended result. This suggested that the purpose of a cultural policy lay not so much in strengthening core values *per se* but in emphasising the “civilising effect” that culture could have on society. This point was reinforced by the tertiary-level Visual Arts associate professor:

A cultural policy by the government has the responsibility to see whether to continue that culture. They enhance the culture, they develop the culture and foster some important culture which they think is of good value and which leads to the good development of good citizens.

Observations on the part of the interviewees suggested that there was a duty of responsibility on the part of the Government of the HKSAR to clarify which values were being promoted and protected by its cultural policy.

4.9.4.2.3 Principles as values

The tertiary-education level co-programme leader was of the opinion that there were a number of values implied within Hong Kong's cultural policy; that the five 'Basic Principles' were, in fact, values in all but name. To what extent was this a view shared by the policymakers themselves? From the perspective of the HAB, the 'Vision', 'Objectives' and 'Basic Principles' were indeed seen as encapsulating Hong Kong's cultural "ideology":

We are very open – so we also have a lot of diversity, new inputs coming in – and we celebrate creativity. This is our vision. We are actually working towards this direction. But how do we go about doing it? So we also have in our cultural policy, in our policy papers to the Legislative Council, on our website, we also state clearly that to achieve this vision we observe some basic principles, like the “people-oriented”, we respect artistic freedom ...

A report is submitted to the Legislative Council each year that sums up the major cultural work undertaken by the HAB during the current term. As part of this, all the measures are required to match the different objectives and the principles laid down for the policy. Crucially, the employment of such an approach (exemplified by the deliberate avoidance of

explicit cultural support in favour of providing opportunities to participate) was seen as being directed towards recognising, in the words of the same speaker, ‘the “value” of culture’ and ‘the “value” of engaging in arts’, as opposed to being focused on strengthening a set of *core* values.

Synopsis

Perhaps realising its potentially charged nature, the overall picture that emerged via the interviews with regard to the issue of identity from the policymaking perspective was that, in keeping with the cultural policy as a whole, a hands-off approach was being adopted. There were no statements, explicit or otherwise, that were serving to draw attention to any elements that might be construed as contentious. Similarly, no attempt was being made to define either Hong Kong or Chinese identity; nor was cultural identity being linked with self-identity. Instead, the (positive) focus was on Hong Kong’s uniqueness. For their part, values were not defined or itemised, but were clearly being interpreted as synonymous with, and duly communicated as, the *benefits* that could accrue from cultural participation. From the stakeholders’ point of view, the picture was somewhat different. While the interviews revealed that the issue of identity was of possible concern, depending upon how the Government of the HKSAR wished to pursue it, this didn’t appear to be directly correlated with the upholding of core values such as freedom of speech so much as those that affected the overall quality of life and the general spiritual wellbeing of society. Consequently, it was not so much the case that a cultural policy should not concern itself with issues such as identity and values *per se*; rather, care needed to be exercised to identify which ones were the most appropriate.

In much the same way that governance through effective communication channels was

interpreted, via the voices of the interviewees, as having the potential to set out the policymakers' stall with regard to clarifying the notion of being "culturally educated", so a similar case could be made here for the purposes of assuaging societal concerns. In this instance, reference to the notion of 'Cultural Identity', as laid out in the CHC's *Policy Recommendation Report* (2003: 10-11), would serve as the focus. Likewise, clarification, this time pertaining to the *kinds* of values being advocated within a framework of the overall purpose of Hong Kong's cultural policy, is interpreted as being another area where the notions of governance and communication, within an "interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary" perspective, could come together for the benefit of the various stakeholders involved.

4.9.5 The factors that need to be considered when developing a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors

The notion of partnerships, both intra- and cross-sectoral, is an important element within the framework of Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies. With the intention of laying the groundwork for a policy for culture *and* arts education, the CHC's *Policy Recommendation Report* stipulated the importance of 'the promotion of partnership and community involvement' (2003: 15), to be assisted through closer collaboration between government departments and cultural institutions, while the establishment of partnerships among the Government of the HKSAR, the business community and the cultural sector is one of the official cultural policy's 'Basic Principles'. Similarly, in formulating Hong Kong's arts education policy, one of the three long-term goals of the Education Department was 'to work continuously in partnership with schools and other concerned parties to develop school-based arts curricula' (2002: 17).

However, a mixed picture emerged on the part of the questionnaire respondents in terms of

the perceived importance of different factors in bringing the two sectors closer together. Notions of co-creation and addressing issues of identity and values fared poorly across nearly all six categories. While strengthening cultural literacy and social cohesion received more across-the-board support, ensuring that projects were sustainable was generally considered unimportant, except by Music / Visual Arts teachers and principals at the secondary level. Positive unanimity was only reserved for emphasising the importance of diversity and inclusivity. It was hoped that the interviews could reveal some insights into this apparent mismatch between the aspirations of policymakers and the opinions of practitioners.

4.9.5.1 Why align?

The present study is predicated on the basis that closer alignment between the cultural and arts education sectors, through the vehicle of their respective policies, has the potential to enable synergies to occur. This is a process that can, in turn, lead to the creation of mutual benefits and result in the more effective enactment of policies to address important cultural issues. Those interviewees who agreed with this premise typically did so because of the perceived close connections between “culture” and cultural policy and “the arts” / “arts education” and arts education policy. However, an alignment was seen as making sense first and foremost at a departmental level in order to avoid unnecessary competition, as one of the secondary school principals explained:

If you want to get synergy ... you put all these people under one roof. 'Cos right now, if you're three different departments you're probably competing ... and that doesn't make any sense. You should ideally be working together as best you can as an organisation, at that level.

Several interviewees pointed out that any partnerships between the two sectors should not exist purely for their own sake but instead with a specific purpose in mind, in the process finding ways of keeping the results of such collaborations current and valuable. The Visual Arts associate professor at the tertiary level expanded on this observation to differentiate between partnerships for the purposes of implementation and those for the development of ideas. Given its creative basis, the latter was felt to be a more personal matter and therefore less suitable for collaboration. At a sectoral level, while stressing again the activity-dependent nature of the exercise, the same interviewee felt that such a “marriage” ran the risk of appearing forced:

It's not necessary for the arts sector to really articulate, have a collaboration, with the cultural sector. I won't say in general that it is important. If we marry these things together, it's no good. Everything has to be done with an aim.

In keeping with the questionnaire results, the notion of alignment was one that failed to meet with universal support among the interviewees, suggesting that despite the Government of the HKSAR's advocacy on paper the benefits had yet to be relayed effectively to the stakeholders across both sectors. One reason for the reluctance on the part of the participants was because of the perception that since every organisation has its own agenda, together with their own considerations and constraints, compatibility with other bodies was likely to be a problem. This particular point was made by the senior LCSD representative, who also reiterated that the Government should be proactive in facilitating the kinds of discussions that could engage people from different sectors.

4.9.5.2 Different organisations, different strategies

Partnerships with a purpose, then. But to what eventual end? Policy is, to again paraphrase Ball (1994), a combination of text and action, a mixture of enactment and intent. It is also almost always a compromise in terms of its encoding and decoding processes, whose conditioning and implementation are ideologically and culturally influenced. Given these pre-conditions, how are Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies being interpreted, embodied, acted upon and "lived" by the various stakeholders within the collaborative ethos? Equally importantly, as part of this process of embodiment through implementation, to what extent is there evidence of an ecology being developed and demonstrated?

Representatives from different arts and cultural bodies were at pains to detail their specific organisation's role(s), along with the particular strategies employed, as they related to the development of partnerships. For the Audience Building Office within the LCSD, this equated to the creation and implementation of different programmes, schemes and activities at the school and community level. Among the former are the 'School Performing Arts in Practice Scheme' (initiated in 1996), the 'School Culture Day Scheme' (2000) and the 'Arts Experience Scheme for Senior Secondary Students' (2008/09); the latter includes the 'Community Cultural Ambassador Scheme' (1999). While distinct from one another in that the focus of the former is on arts education outside the school curriculum and the latter arts promotion among the wider general public, their two target areas are seen as interrelated in the sense that the starting point for both is the nurturing of future cultural participants.

For the school programmes, this is achieved through interactive elements such as workshops, training and stage performances. While this means that theoretically their audience is the same as that of the EDB, their underlying missions are different. In the case of the Audience

Building Office, the emphasis is on cultivating a market for the arts, while the EDB is required to fulfill an educational mandate. Nevertheless, collaboration between the two frequently occurs, as the LCSD managers explained:

Actually, we regard them (the EDB) as our advisers to these schemes, so whenever we implement a project we will take their advice because they know more about the ecology of the secondary and primary school scene, and they know more clearly the relationship between headmasters, teachers, students and parents. They know more about the practice of the school scenario.

By way of an example, although co-curation of the school programmes is shared with the artists concerned, neither the artists nor the Audience Building Office are curriculum experts. The assistance of the EDB is therefore sought in order to ensure that the content fits the existing curriculum and is attractive for students and teachers. Teachers or officers from the EDB are also seconded in at a later stage to assist with the curation.

As the strategic body funded by the Government of the HKSAR, the HKADC's main role is to take care of the small- and medium-scale arts companies in Hong Kong, as well as nurture individual and prospective artists, via the subvention of one-, two-, three-year and (multi-) project grants, respectively. With the remit of advocating for an arts-rich environment, together with the bargaining power to offer suggestions to policymakers as a result of their close links with the arts industries, they essentially form a bridge between the Government and the arts field. Similar to the LCSD, the HKADC has formed its own series of partnerships with the EDB, as their member explained:

The EDB has a joint project with the ADC called 'Arts Buddies'. They sponsor money and then they get the students from high school and then some students from university; they make them buddies – the senior student takes on the younger student – and then they go to study art together. That programme will find an artist to organise a programme, like visiting the museums and giving them the workshop about some visual arts, and then at the end they have to do some work together. This is the concept of the project and that is initiated by the EDB in collaboration with the ADC.

Relationships are also being formed, albeit indirectly, with institutions that specialise in producing high-calibre performing artists. Many of the theatre companies that have been established by alumni of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA), for example, are funded by the HKADC. This collaboration has extended to how potential candidates are being nurtured, as the tertiary-level programme head outlined:

We organise applied learning courses to cater for those students who are interested in learning more about the performing arts, and we also do some outreach programmes for them so that they have opportunities to get in touch with different art forms.

In a similar way to the LCSD, this is part of a broader ecology that seeks to engage with the community by cultivating a future audience for the performing arts. Additional depth is achieved by using the arts as the vehicle to bring people together and engage in a dialogue. This is, however, an ongoing process:

It's not the end. At the end, those people have to learn to know what art is; what drama is, or dance. How to appreciate that. We cannot nurture those people how to appreciate art in one

or two programmes.

From the HAB's perspective, the development of advisory-style partnerships at the practical level serves an important purpose. As its operational arms, initiatives run by the LCSD and HKADC are seen as helping the HAB deliver its policy objectives; to this end, the three bodies work very closely together, a philosophy supplemented with inter-departmental meetings. Further cross-pollination as part of this ecology also occurs via representatives sitting on each other's committees. Within the HAB, for example, both LCSD and HKADC representatives have seats on the Advisory Committee on Arts Development. Nor is the EDB's association with these organisations limited to practical activities. In a similar manner to that detailed above, nominated representatives provide input within the specific institutional framework. As a result, an EDB representative sits on the HKADC as well as attending the subcommittee meetings on arts education as part of the HAB's Advisory Committee on Arts Development.

For its part, the EDB – through its operational arm of the CDI – reiterated the collaborative status it enjoyed with the HAB at the schematic level, particularly as it pertained to the provision of advice. According to the development officer, this often took the form of discussions or feedback on project proposals submitted by the LCSD prior to their official launch, as well as specialist support offered to the HKADC at the committee member level:

At the working level, the Hong Kong Arts Development Council's members (and that's a representative from the EDB and a representative from the HAB as well) are another mechanism that can ensure they can provide the arts education to the public or to the school in that context.

Practical examples of partnerships were cited in the form of the LCSD's 'School Culture Day Scheme' and the EDB-organised 'A Journey on Learning the Arts for Senior Secondary Students', with the LCSD operating in a supporting role.

4.9.5.3 The issue of sustainability

Sustainability is a term whose meaning can vary according to the context in which it is employed. Within the framework of the development of partnerships between the two sectors, it is a commitment to audience building, the education of audiences and practitioners, the nurturing of a quality workforce, the establishment of suitable venue policies, and the conducting of in-depth research policies. This is carried out in such a way that a cultural ecosystem – one that rejects the “quantity over quality” mentality in favour of a long-term vision built on the principles of engagement and the empowerment of communities through meaningful and impactful activities – is developed (Leong, 2013). Across the arts and cultural spectrum, the notion of sustainability among interviewees was seen in equal measure as important and a challenge. One of the Visual Arts teachers at the secondary level perhaps spoke for many when she said:

If we're not designing structures that are sustainable, then obviously it's pointless. Whatever happens has to have the potential to grow differently as time goes on, and to adapt its form to the needs of the people.

This importance invariably stems from a perceived value. Once that value, for whatever reason, is lost, the structure will disappear. From a cultural perspective, value is sustained by transmission from one generation to another, in part through the medium of education. This,

in essence, is the challenge at the policy level. As the representative from the HAB outlined:

What the government is trying to do is to continue to invest in the sustainable development of the arts scene, supporting arts groups and enabling our arts groups to reach a higher artistic standard so that we can, in turn, show our students, parents, our young people that there are, in fact, a lot of opportunities here. So it's worth investing in an artistic career if they have good potential, and they have the aspirations.

Funding is obviously one way to help ensure sustainability. Nevertheless, this comes with its own set of complications, as the same speaker explained:

In Hong Kong I think we are quite lucky in that in the past we have been increasing funding for culture and the arts. We managed to do so because our government is very supportive of the arts, but in the long run ... in the performing arts, if you look at the major performing arts groups and the medium-sized arts groups, they rely heavily on government funding; and even if they don't receive a recurrent subvention, they have to rely a lot on government grants. In a way, those are public funds supporting the operation.

Subvention for the HKADC is in the region of HK\$120 million a year. Part of the effect of that funding is the subsequent support given by the HKADC to small- and medium-sized arts groups, along with running their own programmes, e.g., training arts administrators and operating internships. At the same time, one of the strategies being adopted by the HAB is to take a more long-term view by encouraging cultural / arts organisations to diversify and increase the nature of their funding sources through the development of new partnerships among the private and commercial sectors. The resulting donations and sponsorships are then

matched by Government funding. Sustainability is addressed by considering what the new areas of expertise needed in the future are likely to be:

We are giving a lot of scholarships right now, through the ADC, to people to pursue studies in cultural management and different arts-related areas. The information shows that middle management, with experience in venue management and arts marketing, will be the most in demand. We really hope that in the future we have our own pool of talents. This is also one of the challenges.

From the viewpoint of the Audience Building Office within the LCSD, the notion of sustainability is inbuilt into their school- and community-based programmes so that the emphasis is ‘not only one single experience of going to a theatre or concert hall’. Nevertheless, one of the secondary level Visual Arts teachers stressed the importance of distinguishing sustainability from repetition. Consequently, while different projects will inevitably have different aims, more and more it is the case that simple appreciation is giving way to interaction in a bid to encourage the audience to engage in different ways. Sustainability and impact thus become intimately connected, the effective measurement of such projects or events through the successful articulation of the expectations and outcomes of an audience, while also taking into account the aims and objectives from the organisational side of the equation so that meaning-making is achieved at both levels, being the litmus test.

While it might be the case that individual arts projects could be treated on a case by case basis, sustainability was generally acknowledged to be the life-blood which served to ensure that a cultural ecology had any chance of developing and thriving in the long term. Nevertheless, relatively few cultural / arts organisations appeared to have taken genuine steps

to ensure that sustainability was actively built into their operational structures. Critical of the perception that beyond the ‘Big 9’:

There is no formula to help arts groups – to really help them stand on their own feet, instead of asking them “How are you going to stand on your feet?”

one of the representatives interviewed detailed the particular strategy they had identified as being key: the nurturing of future audiences. Their specific reason for focusing on this area, however, was somewhat different from that of other bodies, as was their support mechanism. There was a feeling that Hong Kong lacked an artistic culture which went beyond immediate market demand; in the spirit of viewing the arts as agents for social growth and social change, the sustainability angle lay in genuinely “challenging” audiences over time so that they became more discerning as a result:

It’s about the quality of our future audiences. And by growing a discriminatory audience you are actually trying to upgrade the quality of Hong Kong in general. So there should be a knock-on effect.

At the same time, this was underpinned and strengthened by a wider philosophy within the organisation based around the transformative power of the arts. One of their flagship projects has adopted a teaching and learning structure framed by an inter-generational philosophy whereby two levels of trainers (in the form of youth leaders within the organisation and a set of adult volunteers) are given free instruction by the organisation’s teaching artists before working with a group of pre-selected students. In keeping with the ecological principles underpinning the project, a symbiotic relationship enables the younger practitioner / educator

to learn directly from the older one. This is supplemented by the work done by the Project Director, who, in the course of leading the programme, also facilitates the training workshops. As a result, external audience sustainability is being matched internally by sustainability at the teaching and learning level.

4.9.5.4 Barriers to collaboration

As noted above, the interviews revealed differing views on the need for the development of partnerships between the two sectors. In detailing what they saw their particular roles to be, interviewees from the organisational bodies represented itemised some of the challenges involved in making such collaborations a reality, in the process considering the notion of sustainability. Some potential barriers also emerged during the conversations. Underpinning any chances of success and a basic requisite to any form of partnership is, of course, the communication of shared aims and objectives among the parties involved. As one of the postgraduate Music / Visual Arts students remarked:

There is no policy you can keep forever. You need to make some changes, maybe because of the environment, so if these two policymakers do not communicate well or do not have a good partnership, it's difficult to sustain it.

However, there was a feeling that a form of lip service was being paid to the notion of collaboration. The HKADC member had this to say of the way things were being coordinated within and across bureaus at the policymaking level:

Maybe they have regular meetings; whether they really work together, I don't know. As a layman I don't feel that they are really working together. As a policy of the government, they put

art in the curriculum and the LCSD is really trying to push that to a level to allow the school to access art more easily. The EDB and the LCSD, they are both government departments, but the LCSD is always in touch with the artists; it is easy for them to find the artists, and they have a lot of programmes. That's why it may be easier for them to fit some arts programme to the needs of the schools. That's why they are doing things this way, instead of doing programmes together.

A similar opinion at the cross-sectoral level was expressed somewhat more forcefully by one of the cultural / arts organisation representative in relation to the general mandate to carry out “arts education”:

If they (the HAB) have it and we have it, I mean why are we not collaborating? How can we use the least amount of government money and do the most? You don't do your thing and I do mine – why don't we do it together? And that must be the easiest, simplest formula for being energy-efficient. Collaboration is one hard thing, because everybody wants to be boss.

This inconsistent approach to collaboration also extended to the kinds of schools that were being approached by the LCSD for the purposes of promoting their programmes and activities. There was a definite feeling among secondary level Music / Visual Arts teachers that international institutions were viewed as a distinct entity with their own, separate ecology:

We don't have that much contact with, for example, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. I don't know whether they consider us to be beyond needing, to be reached out to. I mean, they may see us as being a private school ...

Not only were the materials that were received in Chinese, but the claim was also made that a lot of the proposed projects were not viable in terms of connecting with the students. There was thus little or no element of crossover, resulting in a distinct lack of involvement in such activities. As the same speaker went on:

Where we've got contacts, they're contacts we've sought out ourselves. We do our own thing.

The prevailing sense that it was only local schools that tapped into this resource was independently corroborated by the previous cultural / arts organisation representative:

We reached out to schools at one point in time, and the ESF schools, they said the LCSD or the EDB just keep them out of their activities because the Chinese schools would receive a letter and the English ones don't ... We asked the Government on their behalf and they said, "I think they're self-sufficient. They've got qualified music teachers or drama teachers in their schools, so they don't need our help."

At the end of the day, policies are a series of guidelines only: they require practitioners for their implementation. With specific reference to that of the arts education policy, the opinion was expressed that it was not enough that the policy reached all schools in Hong Kong – there had to be greater commitment on the part of the Government of the HKSAR to ensuring that the schools did as much as they could for the students in order to fully realise the possibilities for partnerships to occur. Nevertheless, collaboration is a two-way street. One of the secondary level Visual Arts teachers acknowledged that while there should be an expectation on the part of the international schools that they engage with the policy more than

was presently the case, this needed to be matched by a desire on the part of the policymakers to draw on that knowledge.

Synopsis

The picture that emerged as it related to the development of a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors was more complex than for previous themes. While broadly supported, the idea of sectoral alignment among interviewees came with its own set of provisos, predominant among which was that it should be undertaken with a specific endgame in mind. At a general level, while evidence existed of a number of collaborations taking place, the extent to which there was alignment at a fundamental, “mission” level was less clear, suggesting that any synergies that might arise were tangential to, as opposed to driving, the relationship. When it came to sustainability, interviewees’ responses suggested this was being undertaken in a somewhat fragmented fashion, not always underpinned by a solid, ecologically-driven rationale. From the policymaking perspective, although there was a recognition that sustainability via funding needed to be guided by pragmatism, it was ambiguous whether the arts were being advocated by the HAB because of their inherent values or for “investment” purposes. Among the barriers conspiring to prevent more collaborations from taking place was the issue of “ecological isolationism” being experienced by international schools.

In terms of offering an interpretation as to how the policies themselves are being “embodied” in relation to the guidelines being laid out for their proposed implementation, from the arts education policy side the variety of different stakeholders being partnered clearly includes schools and government bodies. Given that details were less forthcoming when it came to the extent to which these were considered to be genuinely integrative or part of a wider network

that could facilitate the exchange of information and the sharing of arts experiences, however, the extent to which the values encapsulated within the ‘Basic Principle’ of “partnership” within the cultural policy are being correlated to those revealed through the analysis of the elements of ‘Cultural Identity’, ‘Cultural Literacy’ and ‘Cultural Legacy and Development’ can only be conjectured. Interdependence through co-operation and partnership, however, were the more obviously visible outcomes based on an analysis from the “ecological worldview” type; from the “interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary” perspective, (collaborative) governance was again interpreted as the main area where the Government of the HKSAR could be proactive by facilitating the kinds of discussions leading to an engagement of people from different sectors.

4.9.6 The extent to which Hong Kong’s cultural policy has helped create a fertile “soil” to enable a cultural environment to flourish

At the heart of Hong Kong’s cultural policy is a vision of the city as an international cultural metropolis. In order to achieve two of its five stated ‘Objectives’ of providing ‘opportunities for wide participation in culture and the arts’ and the creation of ‘an environment conducive to the diversified and balanced development of culture and arts’, it is founded upon – among others – the ‘Basic Principles’ of “people-oriented”, whereby citizens are simultaneously encouraged to fulfill their cultural needs and realise their artistic potential, and the “holistic approach” of encouraging inter-departmental collaboration at the government level in such a way that all sectors of society are involved in establishing a joint cultural and artistic ecology. Consequently, in “unpacking” the policy as part of the preparations for the online questionnaire, the researcher interpreted the document to be essentially concerned with the creation of a fertile “soil” for Hong Kong in which a cultural environment could flourish. Responses via the questionnaire to the degree this was deemed to have been achieved thus far,

however, were muted, with general disagreement being recorded across the six categories. Given its critical importance as part of the overall contribution to Hong Kong's cultural aspirations, the interviews were concerned with attempting to ascertain some of the reasons for these negative perceptions.

4.9.6.1 A cultural policy for Hong Kong ... or not

One of the issues over which interviewees expressed strong opinions was about whether or not Hong Kong has a cultural policy. One of the cultural / arts organisation representatives was in no doubt: 'Hong Kong does *not* have a cultural policy; it has a cultural statement.' The co-programme leader at the tertiary education level was equally dismissive: 'Is there a cultural policy for Hong Kong? The cultural policy amounts to two PowerPoint slides.'

Germane to such a discussion, of course, is what ought to constitute a document of this nature. According to the same representative from the cultural / arts organisation:

A cultural policy would comprise a vision. It would comprise staged, or phased-in, implementation – is it three years, five years, 10 years, 20 years? Whatever it is, it would comprise specific goals as per the period that one is discussing, or wanting to implement. Therefore, I do not think that Hong Kong has a cultural policy, full stop. There's too much coming under the umbrella of cultural policy to say that we have one.

While conceding that a cultural policy might exist (at least in theory), the co-programme leader was critical of its perceived lack of focus or depth:

I guess we do have the basic principles of a cultural policy, though we do not have ... a really

good policy should include strategies, but we are not down to the strategy level. So what we have is not actionable. What the LCSD does, what the ADC does, how the government money is spent now has not much relevance with the cultural policy. It's just historical practice. The cultural policy has very little to say about education. It's not down to the level of rationalising and prioritising different objectives.

As custodians and executors of the policy, respectively, from the HAB and the LCSD's point of view it was important to understand where the cultural policy was coming from and what it was trying to achieve. This essentially boiled down to the establishment of a kind of platform, rather than a set of ground rules, for the long-term cultivation of a cultural landscape to take shape. As such, there was a deliberate avoidance of the adoption of "quantitative" milestones from the HAB's perspective:

I think it's not like a population policy. In a population policy, you have very clear milestones, very quantifiable milestones. But I think for the arts and culture, we keep reviewing our measures, we keep reviewing our policies and see how far we can achieve our ultimate objective by looking at the actual developments here in Hong Kong.

The basic point that the cultural policy was publicly driven was similarly acknowledged by the LCSD's Audience Building Office, reinforcement for a less rigid approach coming as a result of the constantly shifting ecology constituted by the various stakeholders:

Basically, what we do should be mainly for the public, because the ecology is very complicated. Not only students are involved – government arts administrators and arts groups are, also – so when we do all these programmes, apart from the students and teachers,

we also need to think about the artists. So our starting point may be for students, but when we are doing our work it's always evolving. So in the end maybe every stakeholder is involved.

Fundamental differences of opinion, not only in terms of deciding whether or not Hong Kong had a cultural policy, but also as they related to determining its purpose (the first “point of interest” that was raised during the questionnaire analysis), were interpreted as lying at the heart of interviewees’ perceptions as they considered the extent to which it had achieved its aim. The realisation that policy was a multifaceted entity, with the potential to impact upon different contexts in different ways, served to bring more sharply into focus the various ecological concerns.

4.9.6.2 Credit where credit’s due

Setting ecological complications aside temporarily, respondents were in general agreement that in the period since the 1997 handover of Hong Kong back to China, the cultural climate had undergone a marked sea change. As such, the HAB’s assertion that ‘it is increasingly more common for people in Hong Kong to be engaged in what we call arts and cultural activities, even though they may not take place in the concert hall or inside the theatre’ was met with broad support across both sectors. Echoing other sentiments, particularly among secondary level Music / Visual Arts teachers and principals, that the quantity, visibility and overall *presence* of the arts and culture in Hong Kong, along with access to, and engagement with, different cultural activities, had multiplied, one of the Music teachers commented, ‘Since 2002, the wealth and range of opportunities has certainly increased. It’s really thriving now.’ The extent to which the Government of the HKSAR, through the HAB, could take the credit was less clear-cut. As the same teacher also commented:

If that cultural policy is in any way responsible for the range and the wealth of the arts that are coming into Hong Kong at the moment, then it's clearly doing a really good job.

The tertiary education-level Visual Arts associate professor was more comfortable directly acknowledging the Government's role:

As a Hong Kong citizen, I can see that there is slightly more attention being paid to and more resources made available by the Government for promoting, and then preserving, and making people aware of this culture, especially Chinese culture. Because of the establishment of the ADC, that means the Government is willing to invest a sum of money to sponsor those meaningful activities which can promote the culture. So that is improved compared to, like, twenty years ago.

While recognising that people today were more aware of culture and the arts, one of the cultural / arts organisation representatives saw the Government's role in the process in terms of a bigger, fiscally-related policy strategy:

I will say that the Government has put in the resources through the LCSD, which runs many arts programmes, through the Arts Development Council, which supports many of the independent arts organisations and arts activities, and the Education Bureau for the QEF. The money for all those things came from the Government. Through the way the Government has spent the money, that's a policy direction. It's created the situation we are in now, whereby, compared with ten or twenty years ago, there's a lot more arts activities. So the Government has really done a great job, but maybe in an indirect way.

In terms of establishing the extent to which the creation of a fertile “soil” was a result of the way the cultural policy was being communicated, the same cultural / arts organisation representative maintained that recipients were not responding to a prescriptive policy that required them to agree or disagree and then act accordingly. Instead, the provision of money to support the development of the arts and cultural sector was subsequently actioned based on the individual organisations’ own definitions and interpretations of what they wanted to do culturally and artistically. As a result, the Government of the HKSAR’s policy for arts and culture was built on supporting the hardware through the provision of financial assistance.

4.9.6.3 Engagement at a deeper, human level

From a secondary school level Visual Arts teacher’s point of view, the main problem with adopting a more *laissez faire* attitude, while keeping things deliberately open-ended at the policymaking level, was that the intended message was not clear:

Is this a cultural policy through which we will access our culture and our heritage, or is this “Let’s create new culture through arts education?”

Indeed, the extent to which the cultural policy had succeeded in achieving its fundamental aim was mainly contested by interviewees on the grounds of a lack of genuine connectivity. For some, despite more widespread participation in cultural and arts activities, reinforcement of any real cultural depth at the human level was still absent. This meant that the policy was failing to properly resonate with the wider community as a whole, according to one of the postgraduate Music / Visual Arts students:

The main problem is that the cultural policy is not really connected with the people. The

policymakers, they actually did something, but the general people don't think so.

This failure at a fundamental, conceptual level was revealing itself in other ways. Comments by the postgraduate Music practitioner suggested the lack of a long-term, sustainable ecology underpinning the rationale of the policy in favour of a “quick-fix” mentality:

When it comes to the performing arts, they always think of money rather than people. Rather than the performance quality, the programme quality. They want to make this place fertile, but in the wrong way. In the Government's mind, the more people study, the more people learn music – that's a fertile picture for the Hong Kong performing arts field. But they don't think, “Can we keep going? Can we enrich the field of arts?” They think of the performing arts as knowledge rather than of the performing arts as growth.

How, then, was this issue being tackled? The realisation that ensuring the cultural policy achieved its remit was not a quick fix was a point acknowledged by the LCSD's Audience Building Office managers. For them, human engagement at a fundamental level started with assessing the impact their programmes were having on the participants. However, whether it involved their community- or their school-based initiatives, the problem was essentially the same:

It's very difficult to measure the effectiveness because we don't really know the audience ... they come and go and we cannot trace them again. We just know generally, this programme is 90% “satisfactory”; this programme is 50% “satisfactory”, something like that.

The fact that this situation was deemed to apply ‘to all cultural programmes in Hong Kong’

by the same interviewees was perhaps indicative of the magnitude of the task facing those responsible for bringing about a reversal in the policy's fortunes in the eyes of many of the stakeholders.

Synopsis

Overall, Hong Kong's cultural policy was not yet considered to have fully succeeded in helping create a fertile "soil" to enable a cultural environment to flourish. The fact that this judgement among the interviewees was based on a combination of mixed expectations (centered around perceptions on the part of particular stakeholders concerning the contents of the document, along with the parameters of its remit), different interpretations (dependent upon what the Government of the HKSAR's role was perceived to be in terms of preparing the cultural "groundwork" and in transmitting its intentions) and flawed prioritisations (by virtue of a misplaced emphasis on encouraging participative *quantity* over the nurturing of human *quality*) was interpreted to be a microcosm of the "conceptualisation", "communication" and (to a lesser extent) "operationalisation" elements underpinning the whole study.

The degree to which the cultural policy was resonating with and impacting upon the stakeholders via embodiment of the values encapsulated within the 'Basic Principles' in relation to those identified as part of the CHC's *Policy Recommendation Report* (2003) was most closely linked to that of 'Cultural Legacy and Development' in order to realise the principle of "holistic approach". As before, (collaborative) governance through the close coordination of different departments and the effective relaying of how the fertile "soil" was envisaged as taking place at a practical level was felt to be in keeping with the "interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary" perspective of the ecological approach.

4.9.7 The extent to which Hong Kong's arts education policy has helped develop well-rounded students and provided them with sufficient workplace and life skills

Hong Kong's cultural policy is complemented by its arts education cousin, a document that sits within a framework of wide-ranging reforms based on the tripartite promotion of multicultural education, the fostering of a global mindset and the encouragement of lifelong learning. It is also upon the arts education policy's shoulders that rests the responsibility of nurturing in students the "generic skill" of creativity, since the disciplines encapsulated within its remit have collectively been deemed to be both 'the key to meet the challenges of the 21st century' and 'the means to achieve quality education' (HKADC, 1999: 2). In similarly reading between the lines as a means of "unpacking" the policy prior to formulating the online questionnaire, the document was interpreted to be engaged with the balanced, i.e. less narrowly-specialised, development of students through the provision of workplace and life skills, so that they might be suitably prepared to face the multifarious challenges of the future. Respondents across all categories but one were of the opinion that this had not yet been achieved. Given that the official aim of the arts education policy, as stated by the EDB, is the attainment by *every* student, according to his or her individual attributes, of all-round development in the areas of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics, the interviews presented an ideal opportunity to discover what might be preventing this from happening.

4.9.7.1 Raising the profile of the arts

As with the cultural policy, there was a feeling that the general profile of the arts, through the vehicle of arts education, had been raised over the course of the past 20 years. This applied to arts education within a classroom context, according to a Music / Visual Arts postgraduate

student:

The curriculum is good; it's really all-round. No matter whether it's visual arts or music, we have different kinds of experiences. Sometimes we also have our own space to create.

It was also applicable, in the opinion of the Visual Arts associate professor at the tertiary education level, at a wider, community level:

A lot has improved in the general atmosphere. Many of these projects, they are being funded, like the QEF funding and by the ADC funding. General art education is being supported by different parties and the effort put in. And there are more opportunities for individuals or small arts organisations to get funded to launch or do some arts activities.

The Government of the HKSAR's official recognition of the importance, if not necessarily the *value*, of arts education, was mirrored in the higher status that the arts enjoyed within the curriculum at a secondary level as a whole, and of how this was – in theory, at least – in line with the world beyond the classroom, according to one of the secondary level principals:

Employers are regularly telling us, either directly or indirectly through the media, that they need workers who can be creative, who can work collaboratively, but also independently, and I don't know there's a better place to do that than art classes. What art classes do is gives them space to reflect, and gives them space to express. So, is it a workplace skill? Absolutely. It's also those secondary things that happen. You become a risk taker; you step out of an area of comfort and try something new. How you present yourself, the confidence, all those kinds of skills, it can all be played out in the arts.

Based on the opinions of the interviewees, the interpretation based on this element of the data was not only that the profile of “the arts” been raised at a policymaking level, but also that those claims being made for them were permeating the thinking of authority figures, e.g., principals at the secondary level. In turn, arts education was being recognised for its ability to go beyond strictly discipline-based boundaries and appreciated for its potential within an integrated, interdisciplinary curriculum context.

4.9.7.2 Establishing the focus of the policy

The recognisance of a general increase in the kinds of opportunities that were being made available within and across both communities, along with an acknowledgement of the arts’ innate qualities, were attributed to a progressively more enlightened view on the part of the Government of the HKSAR. However, the observation was also made by the other secondary level principal that there was an important conversation which still needed to take place about how an arts education policy could realistically have a significant impact in terms of changing deeply-held cultural beliefs, particularly about the purpose(s) of learning:

There’s a very strong discussion, isn’t there, in this city about the lack of creativity. I think it’s magnified (in Hong Kong). I think there’s an acute awareness that there’s a lack of entrepreneurial ability at the young adult level, but I think there’s only a very half-hearted effort to connect that to any long-term change, (because) people are wedded to the belt-and-braces security curriculum, which is tried and tested. The will to change that belief that education needs to be basically instruction, which is absolutely clearly still embedded in the local system ... a fairly high-level arts policy is going to make not a beginning of a dent on that way of thinking, so unless somebody’s going to be brave enough to set up local

schools with a very different curriculum structure and pedagogical structure, then you're just not going to have it. If you don't create a love of all those things that we would call the arts in the primary school, you can't suddenly create it as a creative force in secondary school or a higher level. So I think it's lip service to the problem. If they really want to change the problem, they need to do a lot more, but it's a cultural change, it's not a curriculum change. Culture needs to drive the pedagogical approaches and they'll suck in the curriculum.

One of the repercussions of this failure to properly engage with the issue at a fundamental level was a misdirection of focus based on a lack of understanding of the arts' real values; this was cited as one of the reasons why some people might feel as though the policy had yet to achieve its objectives, as one of the cultural / arts organisation representatives explained:

It's made it into something which people can value not really for the holistic reasons but for very practical reasons. The policy should address that not only making arts work economically is important. The value of the arts as an applied thing for economic growth and the value of arts for art's sake, for the enrichment of life, I'm not sure the policy now is addressing those two things – or is aware of those two things – and the kind of conflict that those two things are creating.

One of the “practical reasons” which had the potential to result in such conflict, in addition to an emphasis on the arts' economic benefits, could be the perception that the arts were solely about the pursuit of excellence; this fixation on one definition of “success”, particularly in an individual's formative years, not only meant that ‘failure is not yet a positive’, in the words of one secondary level Visual Arts teacher, but was also fundamentally at odds with the expressed rationale of exposing students – as part of their workplace preparation – to a

variety of areas within which they could function and apply themselves. Indeed, more than one interviewee commented on the mismatches that were occurring between what the policy was promoting and what students were learning. Partly this was due to the perception that the policy itself was not dynamic and supportive enough of the arts inside the classroom, but equally it was, in the view of the same speaker who had commented about the cultural policy, a problem that centered on a lack of vision about the nature of what ought to be constituted by a genuine, and genuinely *workable*, arts education policy:

The education reform in Hong Kong has pointed some new directions in terms of new priorities, and policy-wise there is a prescribed minimum number of hours. But it's very school based, good and bad. I think what we need is very clear, not just with arts education but with all other art forms: an arts sector plan for the development of the arts. What are our priorities? What are our strategies? Based on the strategies, what should be our tasks in the first year? In the second year? How to measure? And so on. The whole set of things. What we lack in Hong Kong, in spite of all the resources, is a sector plan.

Perhaps conscious of the fact that such issues existed, while simultaneously acknowledging its role in serving as the bridge between the arts field and the Government of the HKSAR, the member of the HKADC outlined the importance of providing data in ways that could act as a kind of bargaining chip to bring about the necessary changes.

Synopsis

Certain parallels were drawn between the interviews as they pertained to assessing the extent to which the two policies had met their respective, identified aims and how these related to the “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements of the

ecologically-grounded and interdisciplinary nature of the study as a whole. Common to both was the element of expectation. As with perceptions of the cultural policy, Hong Kong's arts education policy (within the wider context of "arts education") was felt to be lacking in terms of a coherent, cohesive sectoral plan that laid out the priorities, strategies and tasks, together with how, when and by which means they were to be realised. The second lay in fully conceptualising and communicating what the values of "the arts" and "arts education" were believed to be. In the minds of a number of the interviewees, the value of the arts as the aspirational, life-affirming embodiment of the human spirit was being relegated in favour of an interpretation that saw their value expressed in more utilitarian, economic terms. Rather than challenging firmly-entrenched cultural beliefs about the importance of learning, and of the place of arts education within that pedagogical hierarchy, the current policy was serving merely to reinforce them.

On the positive side, the interviews revealed that the implementation of the arts education policy was matching those points laid out in the policy documents in the form of the development of students' generic competencies, the provision of rich learning experiences and the nurturing of integrative leaning practices. In the same vein, within the "ecological worldview" perspective, the principles of interdependence, flexibility and diversity were present to varying degrees.

4.9.8 Summary

Interviews with representatives from each of the previously identified cultural and arts education categories were followed by analysis based around seven themes, themselves generated from a combination of salient quotes and alignment with the policy document analytical frameworks. The resulting narrative "layers" revealed where potential might exist

for a synergistic relationship to develop between the two sectors, along with indicating the presence of a number of mismatches, misconnections / disconnections, gaps and contradictions, thereby allowing the third research question to be answered.

At the same time, they allowed those issues raised and assertions made based on the policy document and questionnaire analysis to be more fully addressed or confirmed. In the case of the former, these were concerned with the delivery of a road map that could indicate how both policies were being envisaged in terms of their implementation. Specifically, with regard to Hong Kong's arts education policy, within the previously identified "policy cycle" context of practice and the associated 'soft' policy implementation measures, these related to the ways elements such as cross-disciplinary and integrative learning experiences within a collaborative ethos were playing out. As the interviews revealed, the extent to which the policies directly impacted upon and influenced the day-to-day practices of the participants was limited, especially among secondary-level Music / Visual Arts teachers, a passing familiarity regarding their existence, aims and objectives often being demonstrated. This lack of awareness raised its own set of questions about what it means to talk about the interpretation and embodiment of policy.

In the case of the latter, analysis of the questionnaire from both the "ecological worldview" and "interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary" perspectives had indicated an absence of interdependence among the stakeholders, possibly originating from a form of governance that was struggling to communicate its policy aims and objectives effectively. The fear was that this had the potential within different contexts to lead to a kind of "ecological isolationism" in which sustainability might be compromised. However, while communication of the policies was certainly an issue, many of the organisations concerned appeared to have

established their own mechanisms for dealing with the specific set of contextual circumstances in which they found themselves operating. Thus, while sustainability was undoubtedly a challenge, it was not proving – to date, at least – to be insurmountable.

Issues and assertions aside, reinforcement of a number of perceptions as they were initially expressed via the online cultural and arts education policy questionnaire found their outlet via the semi-structured, in-depth interviews. Across the seven themes, a series of mismatches, disconnects and contradictions emerged, particularly as they related to how the key concepts were being defined, ways in which issues such as identity and values were being addressed, and approaches that could lead to closer alignment within and across the two sectors through partnerships.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings from the three separate, yet equally interconnected and interrelated, stages constituted by the policy document analysis, the cultural and arts education policy questionnaire, and the semi-structured, in-depth interviews. Each of these existed in accordance with its own set of procedures while collectively being in keeping with the overall ecologically-grounded methodology underpinning the study. In the process, the three research questions guiding the study were addressed. In the case of the first research question, Hong Kong has a democratically-principled cultural policy which is long on ambition if somewhat short on legitimacy; its holistically-driven arts education policy is deliberately open-ended as a means of complying with the “soft” policy framework within which it sits. With regard to the second research question, perceptions as they related to the “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements of the two policies demonstrated varying degrees of agreement, comprehension and engagement among the

various practitioners. The third research question revealed limited evidence in relation to the presence of, or the potential for, intra- and inter-sectoral synergies. A number of important issues at a fundamental level were found to be currently conspiring to prevent further developments from taking place.

Some possible interpretations and implications generated by the key findings, together with an acknowledgement of the limitations of the research study and some proposed future directions for similar studies of this nature, are presented in the following, final chapter.

Chapter Five: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The backdrop to this study was the HAB's public declaration that Hong Kong intends to become an international cultural metropolis, a goal set within an ultimate aspiration to achieve "world city" status; this has been matched on the part of the EDB by an espousal of arts education within the context of a fundamental commitment to ensuring that students are fully prepared to meet the various work and life challenges of the future. Adopting Leong's (2011) analogy of cultural policy and arts education policy as the two wings of the same bird which, when working in unison, have the power – through the development of synergies – to yield rewards at both a sectoral and at a stakeholder level, it investigated the degree to which this was presently taking place. In the process it tested the hypothesis being posited that despite a theoretical meeting of minds, a number of sectoral ambiguities and tensions meant that the wings were disconnected from each other at both a philosophical and a practical level.

Within the framework of an ecological research perspective characterised by a focus on the layers of interconnectedness and interrelatedness among the various stakeholders within and across Hong Kong's cultural and arts education sectors, the methodology employed encompassed salient features of both the "ecological worldview" and the "interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary" types (Peterat, 2008). In order to more fully understand the differences and distinctions between the two sectors as they related to the policies' fundamental elements of "conceptualisation", "communication" and "operationalisation", in the process answering the three research questions guiding the study, the data gathering and analysis element was concerned with the three stages of the collection of the relevant policy documentation, the creation and dissemination of an online cultural and arts education policy questionnaire, and

the conducting of a series of semi-structured, in-depth interviews.

5.2 Interpreting the key findings

With the ultimate intention of discovering where the mismatches, misconnections / disconnections, gaps and contradictions are presently occurring, thereby conspiring to prevent the achievement of mutually beneficial synergies, the study drew on the perceptions and opinions of a wide cross-section of participants across the arts education and cultural sectors.

Five key findings emerged within the “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements.

5.2.1 Keeping it 50 shades of grey: a lack of coherence and clarity

The first key finding to emerge from the study, within the framework of the extent to which Hong Kong’s cultural policy has achieved its aim of helping to create a fertile “soil” to enable a cultural environment to flourish, was the mismatch between the ‘Vision’ on the part of the Government of the HKSAR’s cultural policy of Hong Kong as an international cultural metropolis and the perception on the part of a number of stakeholders that the document lacked a coherent rationale which could effectively demonstrate how such a transformation might be genuinely realised. Without the benefit of a staged breakdown of its implementation, a timeframe for its realisation (complete with the requisite goals for the period under discussion), or else the inclusion of strategies and the prioritisation of different objectives, a policy of this nature was not considered to be fully actionable. Indeed, it was on the basis of the *absence* of such critical factors that the claim was made on the arts education side that Hong Kong does *not* have a cultural policy. At the same time, Hong Kong’s arts education was singled out for its failure to come up with a sectoral plan for the development of the arts

in ways that itemised the priorities, strategies and tasks on a yearly basis, along with detailing how these should be measured.

Compounding the issue was the fact that although the HAB was clear in its own mind that it was adopting the CHC's (2003) broad perspective of "culture" in order to encourage a more diversified and innovative development of the arts (thereby adhering to one of the fundamental tenets of the Mulcahy (2006a) 'Cultural Democracy' model), from the interviewees' point of view this ran the risk of leaving things too open-ended. In addition to being of the opinion that whichever one was chosen, a clear definition of "culture" was important when it came to the formulation of that particular policy, it was equally important to effectively relay that message so that the relevant stakeholders were clear about their roles and responsibilities. While a clear definition of "the arts" from a policy creation point of view was not seen as being quite as important, there was nevertheless a related, and correspondingly pointed, acknowledgement from the CDI of an avoidance of a definitional preference of "arts education" in favour of suggested activities.

Ultimately, then, it was the perceived combination among interviewees that policymakers were either unwilling or unable to indicate how their visions were to be properly realised, exacerbated by a reluctance to define their policies' constituent elements – on the basis that to do so (in the case of the cultural policy in particular) would be, in the words of one of the cultural / arts organisation representatives, to risk opening a Pandora's box – which was ultimately resulting in unsatisfying directions and results.

5.2.2 Missing links: a failure to capitalise on connections

The second key finding related to the issues of identity and values and how these were being

addressed within the overall context of Hong Kong's cultural policy, together with the issue of sustainability as one of the factors that needed to be considered when developing a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors. Adopting Leong's (2013) initial identification of the first and third elements as crucial points to resolve within the city's constantly shifting and increasingly fractious cultural sector, the study raised the profile of the second from a sub-set of identity to an area of equal importance in its own right, in the process revealing a gap in the sense that both policies were essentially seen as focusing on practical, utilitarian benefits at the expense of getting to grips with the fundamental values that lie at their heart. In so doing, they ran the risk of failing to capitalise on the sorts of connections that could lead to the development of genuine synergies.

Hong Kong's cultural identity, to quote the official view, 'should start from local culture, be grounded in Chinese cultural traditions, and possess a global vision' (2003: 12). Analysis of the policy documents revealed the underlying values to be the strengthening of social cohesion, an emphasis on individual (moral) enrichment, and the building of confidence and pride in Hong Kong, finding their realisation through the three aspects of 'Cultural Identity', 'Cultural Literacy', and 'Cultural Legacy and Development'. On the arts education policy side, the values are explicitly stated as being those of reflection (upon students' own lives, communities, societies and cultures) in relation to the arts, understanding (how the arts relate to the political and economic environment of society and how they interact with one another), and respect and appreciation (in terms of demonstrating an open-mindedness towards different art expressions) (2002b: 45). There is consequently no real connection being made cross-sectorally between identity within a cultural context and values within an arts education context, despite the fact that among the interviewees the two concepts were essentially seen as existing hand in hand. This has meant that the *kinds* of values that Hong Kong's cultural

and arts education policies are seen as promoting are either still at a somewhat superficial level, e.g., in terms of increased participation, or else fundamentally misdirected. There was a feeling among interviewees, particularly among the secondary level principals, that arts education was not yet challenging – or being allowed to challenge – the fundamental purpose of learning in Hong Kong, which was still very much reliant upon the tried-and-tested instructional model, suggesting that a pedagogical change could only come about as a result of a cultural re-think. Equally seriously, from the arts organisation representatives' point of view, was the claim that making the arts valuable for practical reasons, e.g., economic benefits, as opposed to their life-enriching qualities, directly contradicted the holistic ethos of the policy itself.

Sustainability, as the third strand, is the long-term commitment to the development of a cultural ecosystem that rejects the “quantity over quality” mentality in favour of the meaningful and impactful engagement, nurturing and empowerment of communities (Leong, 2013). Framed within the context of the study as those factors that needed to be considered when developing a partnership between the two sectors, one of the main gaps that emerged was the view of the HAB that sustainability equated to the support – typically via different funding methods – of different arts groups with a view to reaching higher artistic standards, in the process convincing stakeholders such as parents and other students of the merits of investing in a career in the arts. While this was balanced to some degree by the philosophy and rationale underpinning the initiatives being operated by the LCSD's Audience Building Office, other barriers to potential collaboration were noted in the form of the ineffective communication of shared aims and objectives, the lack of connectivity between local and international schools, and the want of a genuine commitment on behalf of all parties to actively draw on one another's expertise. Overall, then, the collective emphasis on strictly

utilitarian interpretations of identity, values and sustainability within the arts and cultural policy framework was felt to represent a potentially conflict-laden scenario.

5.2.3 Getting the message across: a disconnect with the audience

The extent to which transmission of the cultural and arts education policies was failing to connect with the respective audience(s), whoever that was identified as being, emerged as the third key finding. Several questions within the cultural and arts education policy questionnaire concerned themselves with the element of “communication”, defined as the different ways and means the two policies were being passed on to and received by the various stakeholders, while engagement at a fundamental level was considered during the interviews when discussing the extent to which the two policies had achieved their respective aims. Based on the questionnaire findings, while contribution by the arts to whole-person development and the accessibility of culture to everyone were considered to be the main messages that an arts education policy and a cultural policy should deliver, respectively, culture and cultural policy were deemed to enjoy a low priority at an official level and the numbers were low across all categories in relation to encountering information about Hong Kong’s cultural policy via the HAB website. Equally importantly, prior to this, as one of the two introductory questions, respondents were asked to indicate their policy awareness level. While most respondents across the 11 categories were familiar with the fact that Hong Kong had both a cultural and an arts education policy, a relatively high number claimed not to know that Hong Kong had either; roughly equal numbers were aware that Hong Kong had a cultural policy but not an arts education policy, and vice versa.

This general inconsistency was mirrored in the opinions of interviewees, even among practitioners within the particular sector concerned. In particular, Music / Visual Arts teachers

at the secondary level made the point, when queried, that they had little or no knowledge of either policy (while surprising at first glance, the reason cited for the unfamiliarity with the arts education policy was its lack of influence on the curriculum that the international schools typically created within the International Baccalaureate (IB) framework). Asking respondents if they believed Hong Kong's cultural policy was resonating with the average man in the street met with a similarly negative response across the board.

Although it is certainly true to say that the general profile of “culture” and “the arts”, in terms of the level of engagement with arts and cultural activities, has been raised over the past 20 years, this is, at present, not being connected to what is intended or carried out at a policy level. As part of the same key finding, the claim is also made here that the initiation of high-profile cultural projects, such as the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD), are similarly viewed as separate and distinct projects unrelated to a cohesive cultural vision for Hong Kong. Similarly, perceptions of the policies' inability to achieve their fundamental aims of creating a fertile “soil” to enable a cultural environment to flourish and the development of well-rounded students, together with their provision of sufficient workplace and life skills, are also, in part, tied to communicative inadequacies.

5.2.4 Embodying the policy: contradictions between awareness and practice

Given the potential gap that exists between the “crude” nature of policy creation and the “sophisticated” manner in which it is delivered, built into the framework of the study was an investigation into the extent Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies were being interpreted, enacted, and generally “lived”; in short, the degree to which they were embodied by the various stakeholders. In the case of the arts education policy, following its initial interpretation via the relevant document analysis, the context of practice stage within the

adopted “policy cycle approach” (Bowe, Ball & Gold, 1992; Ball, 1993) and the associated “soft” policy implementation measures (Ahonen, 2001) were anticipated – through the semi-structured, in-depth interviews – to demonstrate the extent to which the document in question was directly impacting upon and influencing the day-to-day practices of the participants. In particular, it was hoped that elements such as cross-disciplinary and integrative learning experiences within a collaborative ethos would be highlighted.

As the interviews subsequently revealed, and as mentioned in the previous key finding, however, familiarity with the policy was often extremely limited, especially among secondary-level Music / Visual Arts teachers. In large part a result of the fact that, at an institutional level at least, Hong Kong international schools remain free to follow their own curriculum (in almost every case, the IB framework) without outside interference from the EDB, the aims and objectives – even, in exceptional cases, the existence – were, at best, acknowledged with only a passing familiarity. However, it was also the case that in terms of the practices themselves, there was an emphasis on the development of students’ generic competencies (particularly in the form of collaboration and communication skills), the provision of rich learning experiences (leading to the connection of knowledge) and the nurturing of integrative learning practices (supported by a variety of internal collaborations), all of which were specifically targeted as desirable policy outcomes. The fourth key finding, within the element of “operationalisation”, was thus the extent to which a policy could be said to be embodied when the participants themselves were essentially unaware of its existence. Specifically, if a gap existed between what people thought about a policy and what they were doing at a practical level, what did this have to say about the *relevance* of the legislation under consideration?

In theory, such a question can best be answered through an examination of everyday enactment. Given, however, that an acknowledged limitation of this study is its lack of case study support, based on the evidence that *does* exist the data suggested that an arts education policy was likely to reflect what were generally considered to be “good” teaching practices at any given time. In the light of an educational shift towards whole-person learning within an approach that encourages making connections across different disciplines, combined with a recognition of the arts as possessing many of the qualities required of the 21st century learner, the fact that such complementarity existed in the face of apparent contradictions was perhaps not entirely unexpected.

5.2.5 Living in a box: silos as the enemies of synergies

Attention has already been drawn within the part of the study dealing with sectoral ambiguities and tensions to the fact that Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies come under the remit of separate government bureaus, a situation which is not only resulting in an effective “silo-ing” of rationales and skills but which is also fundamentally at odds with the collaborative approach – based on the recognition that arts education should unite the two sectors – being espoused. Similar separations are also present at a departmental level. The LCSD, for example, is split into two arms: the Leisure Services and the Cultural Services. Within the Cultural Services limb, there are three main branches, Performing Arts, Heritage and Museums and Libraries and Development, all of which – to varying degrees – are responsible for audience development.

The fifth and final key finding was thus the contradiction occurring between the separations being adopted and the resulting limitation of potential synergies. As part of the discussion about developing a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors, while aware of the

apparent illogicality in having similar policy areas under different departmental or bureau roofs, the HAB representative viewed the issue from the practical “distribution of labour” perspective, the argument being that it did not make sense for one single entity to be doing all the work and that therefore the most logical solution was to find the most suitable agent(s) to deliver and implement the policy area, in the process working closely in order to ensure that maximum efficiency and minimum duplication were achieved. Rejection of the notion of any future merger between the HAB and the EDB was also laid to rest by the senior representative from the LCSD on the basis that each body had its own considerations and constraints, but with a similar reassurance being offered that synergies could still arise from continuing close collaboration regarding programmes and resources, during which shared aims and objectives would be aired. Instead, an integrated, holistic approach, particularly to cultural facilities and affairs, was seen as extending in the future under the Government umbrella beyond the immediate confines of the LCSD / HAB, the HKADC and the EDB to perhaps incorporate the HKAPA and the West Kowloon Cultural District / East Kowloon Cultural Centre (due in 2020) / South Kowloon Cultural Area (ongoing). In the meantime, according to the same interviewee, synergies were being encouraged inter-departmentally within the LCSD as the first stage of an action agenda that could subsequently be expanded outwards. In addition, focus groups were being set up to engage the stakeholders and the different communities to discuss expectations, and, on the part of the Heritage and Museums branch, to draw up corporate and business plans (related to the cultural policy) among each of the fourteen museums, leading to an action plan, Key Performance Indicator (KPI) reviews and impact assessment studies.

While all of this is undoubtedly encouraging news, what is (still) missing from the present discussion is why synergies are so fundamentally important. Among interviewees, the

notion – where it was directly addressed – tended to equate them with the sharing of areas of expertise or as a means of avoiding unnecessary competition, instead of how mutual benefits between different stakeholders could be cultivated. From an arts education perspective, their lack of presence to date was put down to the fact that most arts organisations had not spent enough time planning and assessing their arts education and audience development projects, along with giving scant regard to the impact of such initiatives on students. However, what is perhaps needed goes even deeper, back even to a questioning of the notion that there should be separate arts education and cultural policies. As one of the cultural / arts organisation representatives expressed it:

I wouldn't equate arts education policy with cultural policy. Arts education policy is part of cultural policy. An arts education policy would be of service to advocating for, consolidating, developing a cultural policy, but that doesn't mean it's a handmaiden to cultural policy. Arts education policy, its implementation or the research work, should inform cultural policy, so it's not arts education being subsumed under it as a secondary construct.

Viewed in this light, the current “silo-ing” makes even less sense.

5.3 Limitations of the study

This was an ambitious study in more ways than one. Not only were the fundamental concepts with which it was concerned broad and multifaceted, but it targeted a very wide demographic. While this succeeded in allowing a variety of voices to be heard, three main limitations nevertheless emerged.

5.3.1 Absence of representation among local, CMI schools

Only international schools at the secondary level that used English as the Medium of Instruction (EMI) were contacted and included in both the online cultural and arts education policy questionnaire and the semi-structured, in-depth interview stages of the study. The decision to focus on this particular segment of the Hong Kong educational landscape was taken as much for linguistic (the researcher is not a Cantonese speaker) as it was for practical reasons, but the inclusion of those schools that employ Chinese as the Medium of Instruction (CMI) may have resulted in a somewhat different picture as it emerged in terms of the development (and perceived success) of those partnerships being fostered, especially through specific school programmes and initiatives operated by the Audience Building Office of the LCSD.

5.3.2 Lack of depth in terms of “lived” experiences

Evidence emerged, especially during the interviews with secondary level Music / Visual Arts teachers, of an ecological approach being generated within their institutions via the development of the integrated curriculum. While lacking consistency across the schools concerned at present (a result of such factors as the extent to which it was being implemented, the degree to which it was formally recognised, and the length of time it had been in operation), more examples of collaborations based around this – in addition to the focus being, to all intents and purposes, on the development of inter-sectoral partnerships – would have provided valuable data of genuine, “lived” experiences taking place. As it stands, while information is present, inasmuch as participants were asked – and offered – their perceptions about the strategies they employed, data that actually *demonstrated* the ecology of either Hong Kong’s cultural or arts education policies, particularly in terms of their interpretation, embodiment and enactment, is lacking. Details of such practices would necessarily be

extended to include interviews with colleagues from the relevant departments.

5.3.3 Omission of case-study support for existing voices

From a methodological standpoint, a shortcoming of interviews as a means of data collection is their potential for anecdote: what is said, based on an individual's beliefs, views or desires, may not translate in terms of real life, contextualised actions. This is particularly the case where the delivery of policy is concerned, since interpretation can often vary substantially from what was originally intended. The inclusion of one or more case studies would have provided the study with additional layers, as well as serving to further authenticate the experiences of those voices already being represented. Consequently, although triangulation of the data is present in the form of the policy document analysis, the cultural and arts education policy questionnaire and the semi-structured, in-depth interviews, the fact that no case studies were undertaken is considered to be an important limitation.

5.4 Future directions

In attempting to capture a meaningful snapshot of the situation as it currently exists, together with its particular focus on highlighting the mismatches, misconnections / disconnections, gaps and contradictions among and between the two sectors that are presently occurring, an essential element of the study's remit was to bring together the different players, in the form of the various stakeholders, and allow them to verbalise their perceptions and opinions regarding Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies.

The research study, through the key findings, has revealed evidence of a growing realisation that a commonality of interests exists between the cultural and arts education sectors, together with a partial awareness of the kinds of relationships that have the potential – if properly

cultivated – to give rise to synergies based on the premise of shared understandings and expectations, underpinned by the necessity of the development of a sustainable ecology.

Some possible future directions are therefore identified as follows.

5.4.1 Investigating LCSD, HKADC, EDB and other, similar, initiatives

An obvious line of enquiry going forward would be to more fully investigate some of the initiatives being undertaken by the LCSD, the HKADC and the EDB. Transposing the “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” elements as they currently relate to cultural and arts education policy to those local projects being identified would serve to bring the various stakeholders together to contemplate ways in which the anticipated aims and objectives might best be formulated to achieve synergies that were not only mutually beneficial, but which could also be sustained.

As part of this the issue of impact would need to be carefully considered, including thinking about how best it might be measured. Studies such as *Quality People, Quality Life* (Bamford, Chan & Leong, 2011), conducted by the HAB in collaboration with the consultancy firm InnoFoco, and the *Study of Arts Education Schemes Organised by the Audience Building Office of Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)* (Lau *et al.*, 2012), conducted by the LCSD and The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd), have previously set out to ‘analyse the adequacy and effectiveness of the existing provision of public arts education in Hong Kong from early childhood to adulthood within and outside schools’ (p. 21) in the first instance and ‘i) evaluate audience satisfaction in the programmes [School Culture Day Scheme (SCDS), Arts Experience Scheme for Senior Secondary Students (AES), School Arts Animator Scheme (SAAS), and Let’s Enjoy Cantonese Opera in Bamboo Theatre] in which

they have participated; ii) assess the schemes' effects on students, teachers and participating schools; and iii) formulate criteria for assessment and evaluation of effectiveness of the schemes in future' (p. 11) in the second. In both cases, the use of an ecologically-influenced methodology involving document analysis, surveys, interviews, focus groups and field observations is very much in keeping with the present approach, their findings similarly predicated upon quantitative data and qualitative inputs and insights. An additional indication that they would serve as suitable reference points lies in the fact that many of their own recommendations – specifically, that a clearer mission for arts education needs to be forthcoming, that there should be a more concerted effort to promulgate arts values, that an enhanced coordination mechanism needs to be set up at the policymaking level, that the HKADC can take the lead in augmenting audience development work by the different arts organisations, and that more work is required in the areas of sustained promotion, impact assessment and resources – are supported through the current research study findings. A similar course of action, as hinted at in the section targeting the study's limitations, would be to carry out detailed investigations into those projects with successful track records run by Hong Kong cultural / arts organisations or local institutions at the tertiary level and schools, perhaps in the form of case studies. Suggested examples would be the 'Sm-ART Youth Project' of The Absolutely Fabulous Theatre Connection (AFTEC), with its sustainable ecological model, or the Cantonese Opera project run by the Department of Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA) at The Education University of Hong Kong (formerly The Hong Kong Institute of Education).

5.4.2 Assimilating emerging cultural “clusters”

The study intentionally targeted a broad cross-section of respondents across the cultural and arts education spectrum, both through the online questionnaire and via the subsequent

interviews. As a result, a wide variety of “voices”, from undergraduate and postgraduate students to those at the policymaking level, were represented. Nevertheless, despite its high-profile status as the flagship project within the context of Hong Kong’s aspirations for international cultural metropolis status, the decision was taken not to include the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD). While considered defensible on the grounds of its fundamentally different nature as an integrated arts and cultural hub boasting world-class facilities that was set up by the Government of the HKSAR as a strategic investment to meet the city’s long-term infrastructure and developmental needs, its inclusion as part of an investigation into emerging cultural “clusters” (in this particular case that could also take into account the aforementioned East Kowloon Cultural Centre and the South Kowloon Cultural Area) would help contextualise Hong Kong’s cultural policy as it is anticipated to play out on the regional and global stage, in the process gaining a clearer idea of how sustainability – in order to ensure long-term survival – is being factored into the overall ecology.

5.4.3 Conducting a UNESCO-approved mapping exercise

In the spirit of expanding the idea outwards, primarily as a means of siting Hong Kong within the ecological context of other locations, e.g., the Asia-Pacific region, a mapping exercise could be undertaken. Adopting a framework similar to the UNESCO-ratified *Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education* (2010), with its globally-recognised goals, strategies and action items, would not only help to more clearly understand the relationship as it pertains to arts education and related policies and initiatives within other jurisdictions, but would also help reinforce the case for the arts as a means of positively renewing education systems, as well as recognising their contribution to resolving today’s social and cultural challenges. In so doing, it could give weight and authority to voices from across the arts and cultural spectrum, enabling them to be more effectively synchronised and heard at the higher,

policymaking level.

5.5 Conclusion(s) and recommendations

In addition to being firmly grounded in the data, the findings arising from the study served to support the original hypothesis being posited that, primarily as a result of sectoral tensions and ambiguities, the two “wings” of Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies were disconnected from one another at both a philosophical and a practical level. For example, analysis of the policy-related documents revealed that despite being constructed along similar lines, inasmuch as the aims of arts education were in keeping with the CHC’s vision of cultural development, both had been essentially conceived – and could be interpreted and implemented – as separate, stand-alone entities. Likewise, reinforcement for those areas that were identified on the cultural side as being the issues surrounding notions of identity and sustainability, and, common to both sectors, the lack of genuinely meaningful partnerships that could result in positive synergies, found their outlet within the context of the five key findings detailed above.

Taking the broader, impact-potential view, through the medium of both the online questionnaire and the follow-up interviews, the study was able to successfully solicit stakeholders’ views and perceptions about Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies. By giving the various protagonists a forum to make such opinions known, a clearer idea has been gained in terms of what the problems and divisions are and why they are occurring. The study’s significance – and therefore its potential contribution to the field – lies in the fact that it is the first of its type to actively seek out, gather and collate cultural and arts education opinions across such a wide demographic within Hong Kong, thereby enabling it to serve as a resource whose findings can be treated as a “base” to be drawn upon and followed up as

necessary in the course of subsequent research.

In light of the above, recommendations need to strike a realistic balance between accepting what the current situation *is* and how one might wish it *to be*. Nevertheless, some suggested practical first steps arising directly from the study's findings are as follows:

- The relevant bureaus of the Government of the HKSAR should be encouraged to more publicly communicate what the outcomes of the cultural and the arts education policy are intended to be, and how these are seen as complementing the documents' fundamental aims and objectives. If nothing else, this would help to clarify expectations on both sides as to what the policies are setting out to achieve;
- From the cultural policy side, ways should be considered by which the main messages can be more effectively relayed so that the overall profile is raised and the man in the street has a clearer conception of how the various cultural and arts activities, programmes and initiatives fit into the overall 'Vision', 'Objectives' and 'Basic Principles' for Hong Kong;
- From the arts education policy side, and within the general remit of encouraging and nurturing collaborative partnerships, greater efforts to forge closer links with international schools should be made. In the first instance, this would necessitate conducting information-gathering exercises to discover specific needs, followed by the careful matching with existing programmes and initiatives, as appropriate. Any and all materials prepared and distributed as part of the process should be bilingual.

5.5.1 Closing remarks

As a result of the study's findings, a clearer idea of where the different stakeholders across

the cultural and arts spectrum “stand” in relation to Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies has been gained. Some important, and pertinent, issues have emerged, including the role that context plays in shaping individuals’ spheres of influence and the degree to which values revealed through an analysis of policy documents are an accurate reflection of “core” values at a wider, societal level. Some recommendations that can go some way towards addressing the concerns raised by the key findings have likewise been proposed.

Despite these signs of progress, however, there is clearly still a long way to go before Hong Kong can realistically claim to have realised its vision of a city ‘where life is celebrated through cultural pursuit’ (HAB, 2008), or where arts education can truly be said to have achieved its aim of being ‘the means to achieve quality education’ (HKADC, 1999: 3). While there is an *awareness* of a number of the issues being raised through the study, genuine *evidence* of any real change is, at best, currently somewhat scattered. Likewise, while the elements of “conceptualisation”, “communication” and “operationalisation” can all be said to be individually present to varying degrees, there is a distinct lack of interrelatedness, interdependence and interconnectedness. As a result, there is no real sense of a thriving, collective ecology, based either on the principles of cooperation, partnership and co-evolution, or else supported by a solid core of sustainability at its heart, being created. Similarly, despite a theoretical alignment of education reform and cultural development that defines “arts education” as arts and cultural education (Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs and Panel on Education, 2011), a coherent and workable vision has yet to be formulated.

If the desire truly exists to shape Hong Kong into an international cultural metropolis, and if arts education is indeed to be the unifying bridge, in the first instance the two sectors need to realise that they are working towards the same goal; only then can they plan, strategise and

act accordingly. This, in turn, requires an acknowledgement at a fundamental level that it is people who reside at the heart of policies. This is especially the case when one is dealing with culture, the arts and education, concepts in and through which the whole range of human emotions, experiences and endeavours are collectively embodied. Not until the implications of such a re-imagining have been fully absorbed and processed, a direct, unambiguous message clearly articulated, and the anticipated means of delivery, together with the intended outcomes and resulting enhancements, understood and agreed upon by the actors concerned, can the two wings beat as one and the cultural and arts education policy “bird” finally take to the skies.

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Appendix 1A: Cultural and Arts Education Policy Questionnaire

1. In what capacity are you answering this questionnaire? Check the most appropriate answer. 您是以一個什麼身份去參與這個問卷調查？請在最適當的格上打勾(✓)。

- ☐ I'm an undergraduate Music / Visual Arts student. 我是音樂/視覺藝術的大學本科生。
- ☐ I'm a postgraduate Music / Visual Arts student. 我是音樂/視覺藝術的研究生。
- ☐ I'm a Music teacher / (department) panel head (secondary level education). 我是音樂老師/（部門）主任（中學）。
- ☐ I'm a Visual Arts teacher / (department) panel head (secondary level education). 我是視覺藝術教師/（部門）主任（中學）。
- ☐ I'm a Principal (secondary level education). 我是校長（中學）。
- ☐ I'm a Music lecturer (tertiary level education). 我是音樂講師（大專院校）。
- ☐ I'm a Visual Arts lecturer (tertiary level education). 我是視覺藝術講師（大專院校）。
- ☐ I'm a Department Head / Faculty Head / Programme Leader (tertiary level education). 我是系主任/學院主管/課程負責人（大專院校）。
- ☐ I work in the arts education sector, e.g., arts association / company / organisation. 我從事藝術教育的工作，如藝術協會/公司/組織。
- ☐ I work in the cultural sector, e.g., government bureau / council / department. 我從事文化的工作，如政府機構/議會/部門。
- ☐ Other (please specify) 其他（請註明）

2. Are you aware of Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies? Select the answer that best applies. 您知道香港有文化及藝術教育政策嗎？請選擇最適當的選項。

3. What is the purpose of a cultural policy? Rank the following from the least important (1) to the most important (5). 文化政策的目的又是什麼？請把以下選項以最不重要（1）至最重要（5）排序。

PLEASE READ INSTRUCTIONS FIRST:

1. Decide which of the five statements you think is the 'least important' (1).
2. When you click on the window to the left, a list of numbers (1-5) will appear.
3. Select '1'. The statement you have chosen will then move to the top of the list.
4. Decide which of the remaining four statements you think is the next highest in importance (2). Select '2' from the window on the left. That statement will then move to the second place in the list.
5. Repeat this procedure for choices 3, 4 and 5. Your final list will have the least important statement ('1') at the top of the list and the most important statement ('5') at the bottom.

在開始做問卷前，請閱讀以下提示：做第三，四和十八題時請注意：

- 1、數字 1 代表你認為做不重要的一點。請在你認為最不重要的選項前選 1。
- 2、當你點擊選項前的方框時，數字 1 至 5 會出現。
- 3、如果你為某選項選擇數字 1，該選項將會被自動排到改題所有選項的第一位。
- 4、同理，在你認為第二不重要的選項前選擇 2，該選項就會被自動排到第二位。
- 5、同理依次為其他選項排序，完成之後，該題的所有選項應當以其重要性從低到高排列。最不重要的（1）在最上方，最重要的（5）在最下方。

Promote creativity in its various forms. 以不同形式培養創意。

Strengthen core values, e.g., freedom of expression. 加強核心價值觀，如言論自由。

Clarify identities, e.g., those of "Hongkongers". 明確個人身份，如“香港人”。

Develop partnerships with different communities. 與不同的社區建立夥伴關係。

Culturally educate people. 以文化教育人民。

4. What is the purpose of an arts education policy? Rank the following from the least important (1) to the most important (5). 藝術教育政策的目的是什麼？請把以下選項以最不重要（1）至最重要（5）排序。

PLEASE READ INSTRUCTIONS FIRST:

1. Decide which of the five statements you think is the 'least important' (1).
2. When you click on the window to the left, a list of numbers (1-5) will appear.
3. Select '1'. The statement you have chosen will then move to the top of the list.
4. Decide which of the remaining four statements you think is the next highest in importance (2). Select '2' from the window on the left. That statement will then move to the second place in the list.
5. Repeat this procedure for choices 3, 4 and 5. Your final list will have the least important statement ('1') at the top of the list and the most important statement ('5') at the bottom.

在開始做問卷前，請閱讀以下提示：做第三，四和十八題時請注意：

- 1、數字 1 代表你認為做不重要的一點。請在你認為最不重要的選項前選 1。
- 2、當你點擊選項前的方框時，數字 1 至 5 會出現。
- 3、如果你為某選項選擇數字 1，該選項將會被自動排到改題所有選項的第一位。
- 4、同理，在你認為第二不重要的選項前選擇 2，該選項就會被自動排到第二位。
- 5、同理依次為其他選項排序，完成之後，該題的所有選項應當以其重要性從低到高排列。最不重要的（1）在最上方，最重要的（5）在最下方。

Improve understanding and knowledge of the arts. 提高對藝術的理解和認識。

Nurture creative individuals. 培養個人的創意。

Contribute to whole-person development. 促進全人發展。

Build audiences for the future. 培養未來的觀眾。

Encourage positive learning values and attitudes. 鼓勵正面的學習價值觀和態度。

5. It's important to clearly define "culture" in order to create a cultural policy. Indicate your level of agreement. 在制定文化政策中，為“文化”明確定義是重要的一步。請表明您的同意程度。

- ☐ Strongly disagree 非常不同意
- ☐ Disagree 不同意
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree 既不同意也不反對
- ☐ Agree 同意
- ☐ Strongly agree 非常同意

6. "The arts" should be clearly defined in order to create an arts education policy. Indicate your level of agreement. 同樣地，在制定藝術教育的政策中，“藝術”應明確定義。請表明您的同意程度。

- ☐ Strongly disagree 非常不同意
- ☐ Disagree 不同意
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree 既不同意也不反對
- ☐ Agree 同意
- ☐ Strongly agree 非常同意

7. How important is the element of enjoyment in cultural activities? Choose the most appropriate answer. 文化活動的樂趣與享受對您有多重要？請選擇最適當的選項。

Irrelevant 與活動無關 Of little importance 不重要 Somewhat important 重要 Important, but not core 很重要，但並不是活動的核心 Core 活動的核心

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

8 How important is the achievement of excellence in artistic activities? Choose the most appropriate answer. 透過藝術活動去展示個人所長、卓越表現對您有多重要？請選擇最適當的選項。

Irrelevant 與活動無關 Of little importance 不重要 Somewhat important 重要 Important, but not core 很重要，但並不是活動的核心 Core 活動的核心

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

9. Who is an arts education policy meant for? Mark one of the 9 points on the continuum. 藝術教育政策是為了誰而制定？請在以下 9 點中標記示意。

Only students who are highly talented in the arts. 只有在藝術方面才華橫溢的學生。

All students, regardless of their artistic ability. 所有學生，不論在藝術方面水平高低與否。

10. Who is a cultural policy meant for? Mark one of the 9 points on the continuum. 文化政策是為了誰而制定？請在以下 9 點中標記示意。

Only people who greatly enjoy doing cultural activities. 只有非常享受及喜歡參與文化活動的人。

Everyone, regardless of how they feel about cultural activities. 所有人，不論他們享受及喜歡參與文化活動與否。

11. Where have you encountered information about Hong Kong's cultural policy? Check the boxes that apply. 您從哪些途徑接收到香港文化政策的資訊？請在適當的格上打勾(✓)（可選多於一項）。

- ☐ The Home Affairs Bureau website. 民政事務局網站。
- ☐ Official policy documents. 官方政策文件。
- ☐ The media, e.g., TV. 傳播媒體，如電視。
- ☐ Organised events, e.g., conferences. 有組織的活動，如會議。
- ☐ Other (please specify) 其他（請註明）

12. How much priority is given to culture and cultural policy at an official level? Choose the most appropriate answer. 您認為香港在官方層面上有沒有優先為文化和文化政策作考慮？請選擇最適當的選項。

No priority at all 沒有優先考慮 A low priority 較低的優先考慮 A moderate level of priority 中等的優先考慮 A high priority 較高的優先考慮 The highest priority 最高的優先考慮

13. What is the main message that an arts education policy should communicate? Select the answer that best applies. 一個藝術教育政策應帶出什麼主要的訊息？請選擇適當的選項。

14. What is the main message that a cultural policy should communicate? Select the answer that best applies. 一個文化政策應帶出什麼主要的訊息？請選擇適當的選項。

15. Cultural policy should be included as part of preparing teachers of arts education. Indicate your level of agreement. 在教育未來藝術教師的課程中，文化政策應包括在內。請表明您的同意程度。

- ☐ Strongly disagree 非常不同意
- ☐ Disagree 不同意
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree 既不同意也不反對
- ☐ Agree 同意
- ☐ Strongly agree 非常同意

16. How important is it that cultural practices produce "cultural people"? Choose the most appropriate answer. 文化習俗對培養“有文化修養的人”有多重要？請選擇最適當的選項。

Irrelevant 兩者並無關係 Of little importance 不重要 Somewhat important 重要 Important, but not essential 很重要，但並不是必需的 Essential 必需的

17. How important is it that arts educational practices produce "artistic people"? Choose the most appropriate answer. 藝術教育的實踐對培養“有藝術修養的人”有多重要？請選擇最適當的選項。

Irrelevant 兩者並無關
係 Of little importance 不
大重要 Somewhat important 重
要 Important, but not
essential 很重要，但並
不是必需的 Essential 必需的

18. A number of factors need to be considered when developing a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors. Rank the following from the least important (1) to the most important (5). 若要發展藝術和文化之間的夥伴關係時，有不少因素是需要考慮的。請把以下選項以最不重要（1）至最重要（5）排序。

PLEASE READ INSTRUCTIONS FIRST:

1. Decide which of the five statements you think is the ‘least important’ (1).
2. When you click on the window to the left, a list of numbers (1-5) will appear.
3. Select ‘1’. The statement you have chosen will then move to the top of the list.
4. Decide which of the remaining four statements you think is the next highest in importance (2). Select ‘2’ from the window on the left. That statement will then move to the second place in the list.
5. Repeat this procedure for choices 3, 4 and 5. Your final list will have the least important statement (‘1’) at the top of the list and the most important statement (‘5’) at the bottom.

在開始做問卷前，請閱讀以下提示：做第三，四和十八題時請注意：

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- 2、當你點擊選項前的方框時，數字 1 至 5 會出現。
- 3、如果你為某選項選擇數字 1，該選項將會被自動排到改題所有選項的第一位。
- 4、同理，在你認為第二不重要的選項前選擇 2，該選項就會被自動排到第二位。
- 5、同理依次為其他選項排序，完成之後，該題的所有選項應當以其重要性從低到高排列。最不重要的（1）在最上方，最重要的（5）在最下方。

<input type="text"/>	Considering fully the notion of co-creation. 充分考慮共同創造的概念。
<input type="text"/>	Ensuring that projects are sustainable. 確保項目的可持續性。
<input type="text"/>	Strengthening cultural literacy and social cohesion. 加強文化素質和社會凝聚力。
<input type="text"/>	Addressing issues of identity and values. 解決身份和價值觀的問題。
<input type="text"/>	Emphasising the importance of diversity and inclusivity. 強調多樣性和包容性的重要性。

19. Hong Kong's cultural policy has helped create a fertile "soil" to enable a cultural environment to flourish. Indicate your level of agreement. 香港的文化政策已幫助創造了肥沃的“土壤”，使文化環境得以蓬勃發展。請表明您的同意程度。

- ☐ Strongly disagree 非常不同意
- ☐ Disagree 不同意
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree 既不同意也不反對
- ☐ Agree 同意
- ☐ Strongly agree 非常同意

20. Hong Kong's arts education policy has helped develop well-rounded students and provide them with sufficient workplace and life skills. Indicate your level of agreement. 香港的藝術教育政策已幫助發展出全面的學生，並為他們提供足夠的工作機會及生活技能。請表明您的同意程度。

- ☐ Strongly disagree 非常不同意
- ☐ Disagree 不同意
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree 既不同意也不反對
- ☐ Agree 同意
- ☐ Strongly agree 非常同意

21. What are the main challenges facing the development of Hong Kong's arts and cultural education policies? Check the boxes that apply. 香港文化和藝術教育政策的發展主要面對著什麼的挑戰？請在適當的格上打勾(√)（可選多於一項）。

- ☐ Closer coordination regarding the objectives of the two sectors. 更密切協調文化和藝術教育的目標。
- ☐ The outline of a clear cultural vision for Hong Kong. 清晰的香港文化展望草案。
- ☐ Greater participation in cultural activities. 增加對文化活動方面的參與。
- ☐ Promotion of the arts at every level. 在各個層面推廣藝術。
- ☐ Fostering of community arts education. 促進社區藝術教育。
- ☐ Other (please specify) 其他（請註明）

--

Options for Questions 2, 13 and 14:

2. Are you aware of Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies? Select the answer that best applies.

I'm not aware that Hong Kong has either policy.

I'm aware that Hong Kong has both policies.

I'm aware that Hong Kong has a cultural policy, but not an arts education policy.

I'm aware that Hong Kong has an arts education policy, but not a cultural policy.

Other (please comment)

13. What is the main message that an arts education policy should communicate? Select the answer that best applies.

The arts are an effective means to build creativity.

The arts can contribute to whole-person development.

The arts can provide students with a broad range of skills.

The arts can improve students' academic prospects.

The arts are for enjoyment.

14. What is the main message that a cultural policy should communicate? Select the answer that best applies.

Culture should be accessible to everyone.

Creativity drives cultural progress.

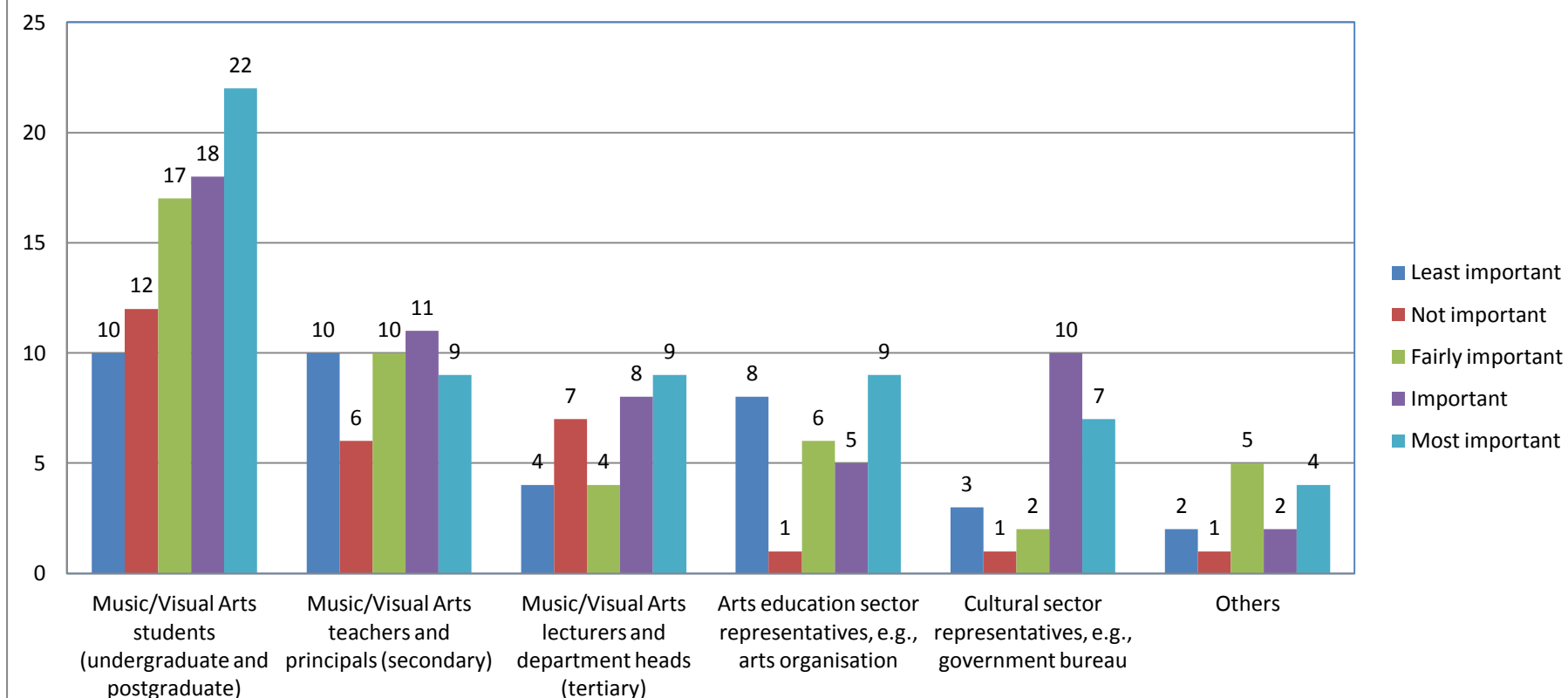
Cultural and arts partnerships can increase community involvement.

Different kinds of culture should be embraced and integrated.

Culture should be considered across and within every level of society.

Appendix 1B: Cultural and Arts Education Policy Questionnaire Results

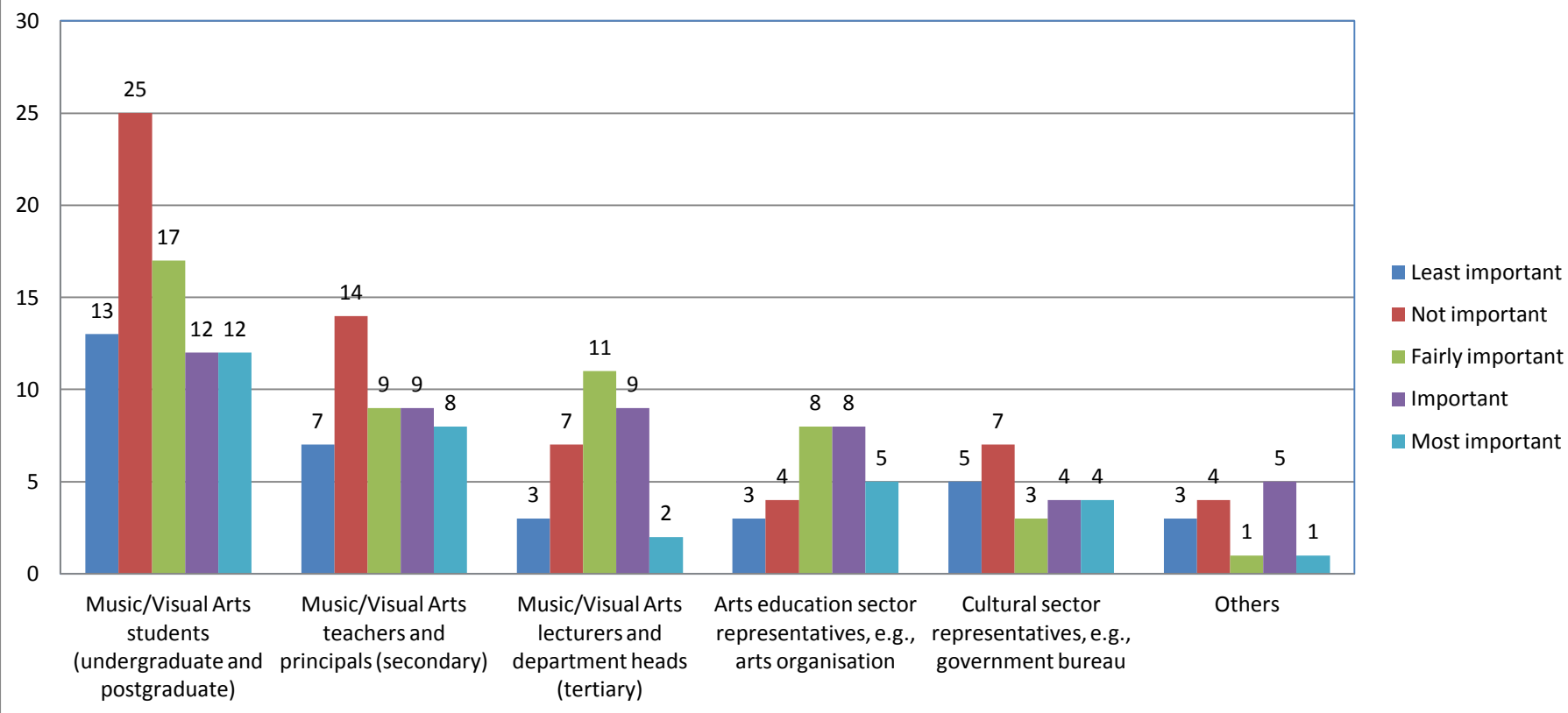
3.1 What is the purpose of a cultural policy? Promote creativity in its various forms. (N=223)



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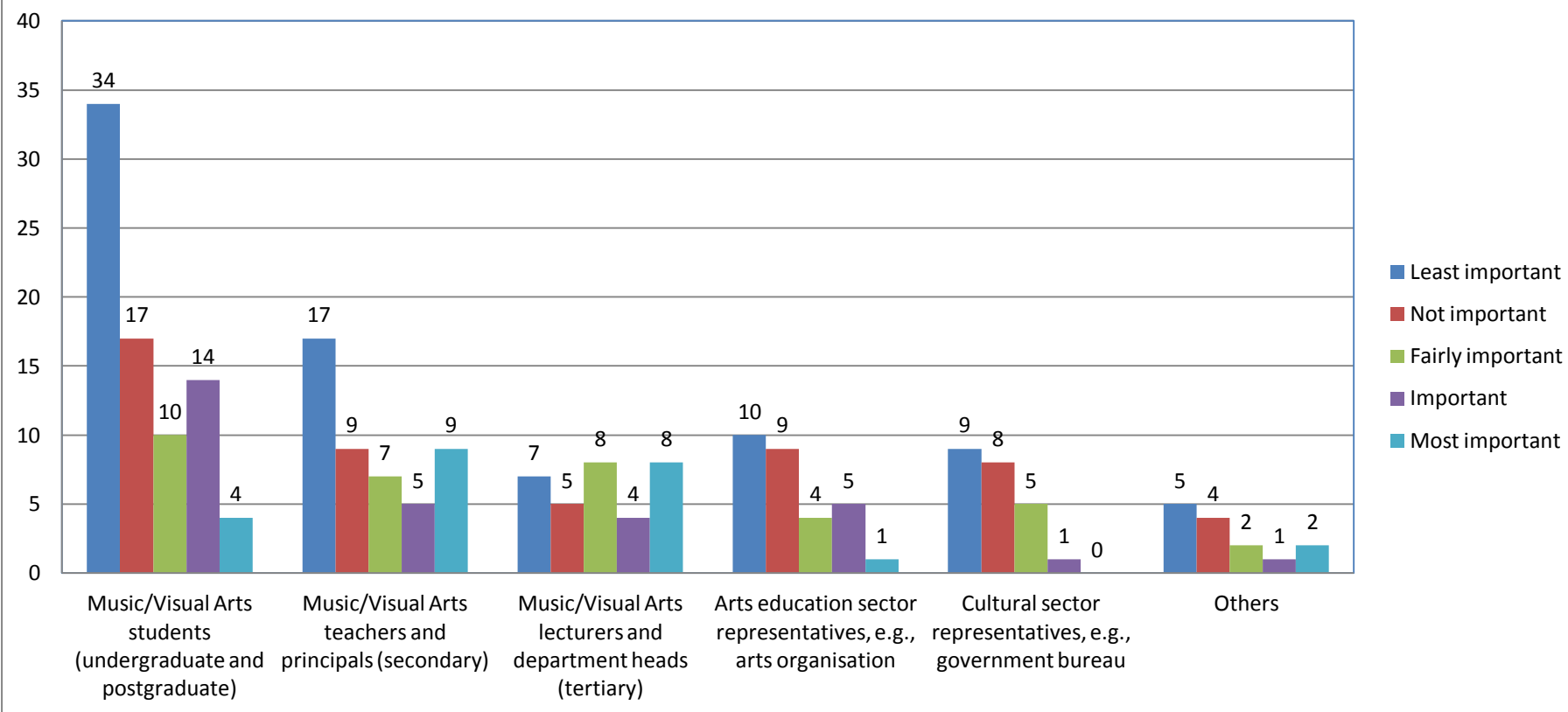
3.2 What is the purpose of a cultural policy? Strengthen core values, e.g., freedom of expression. (N=223)



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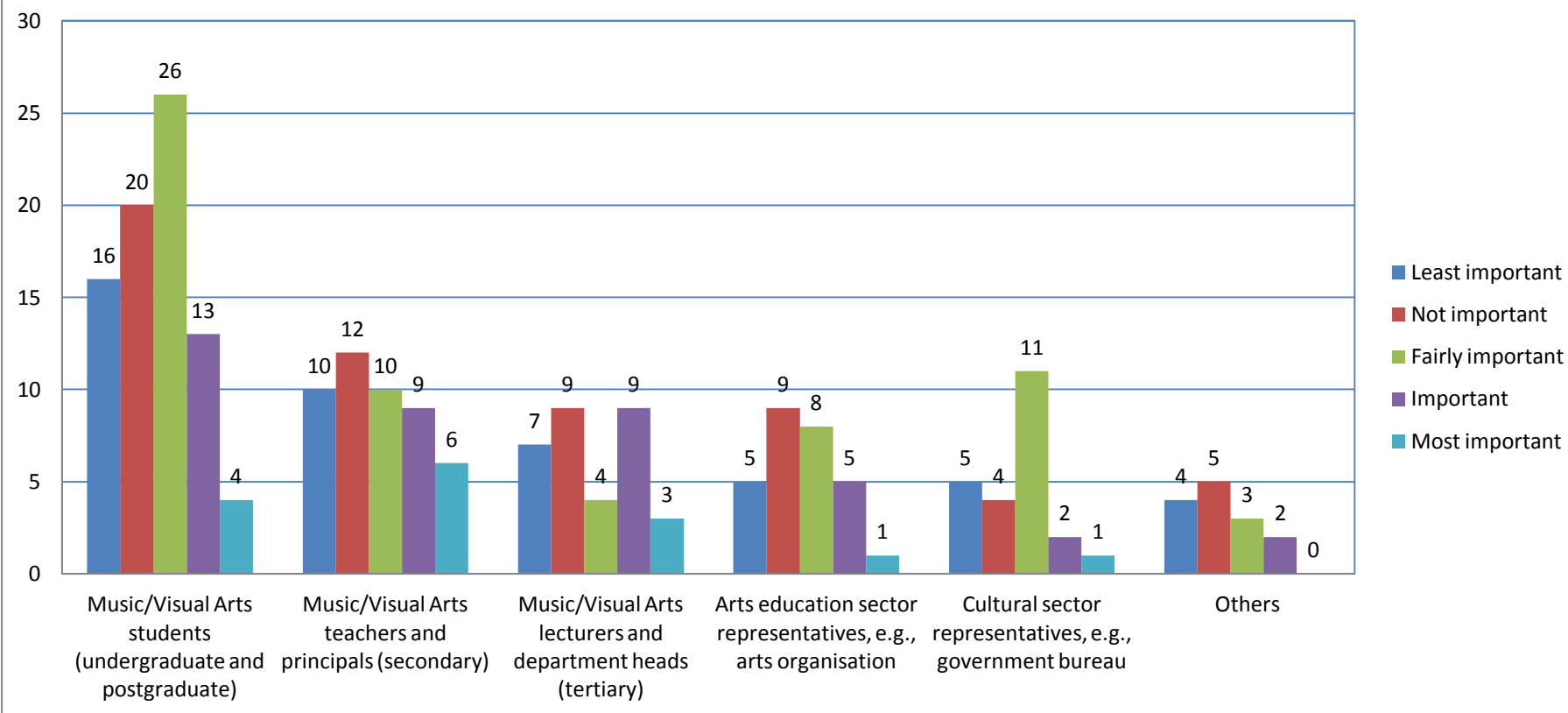
3.3 What is the purpose of a cultural policy? Clarify identities, e.g., those of "Hongkongers". (N=224)



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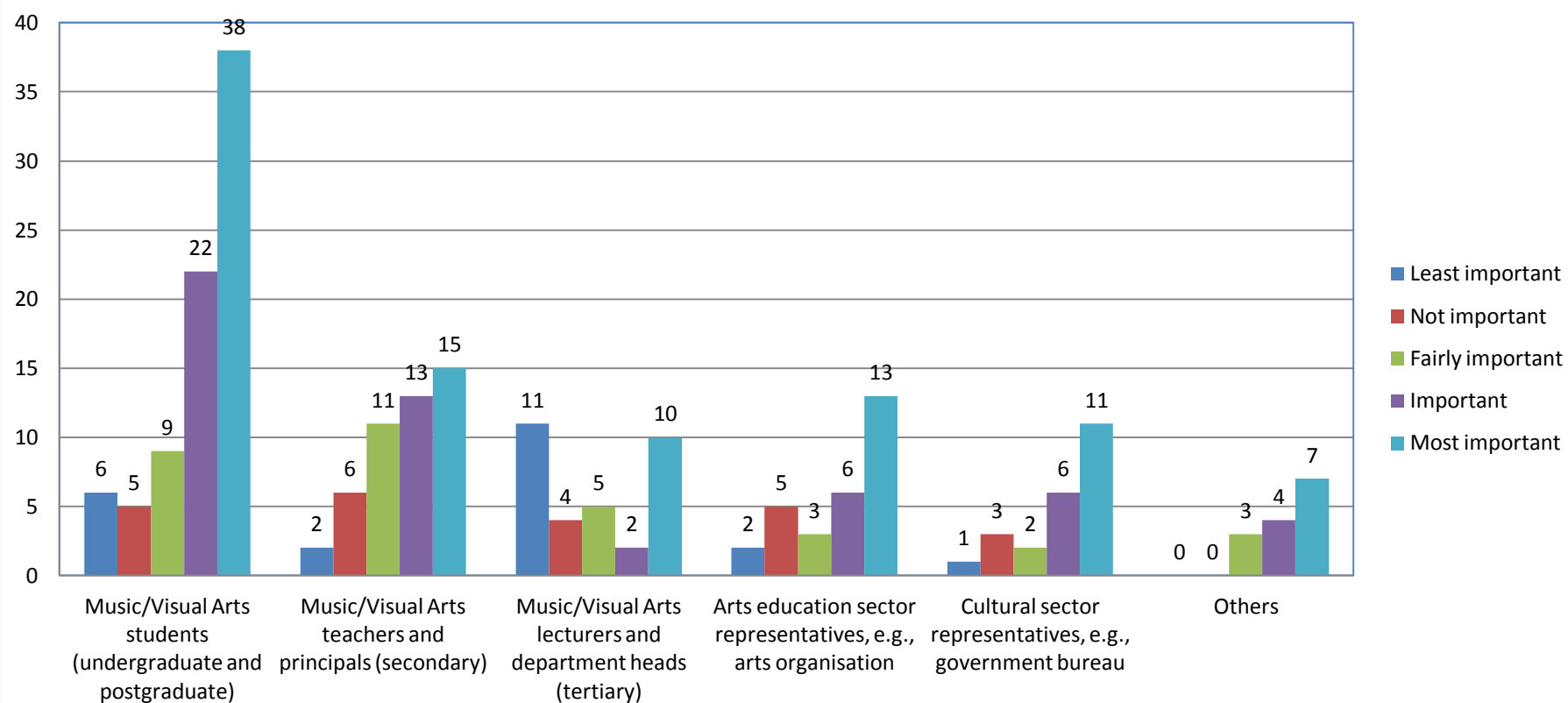
3.4 What is the purpose of a cultural policy? Develop partnerships with different communities. (N=223)



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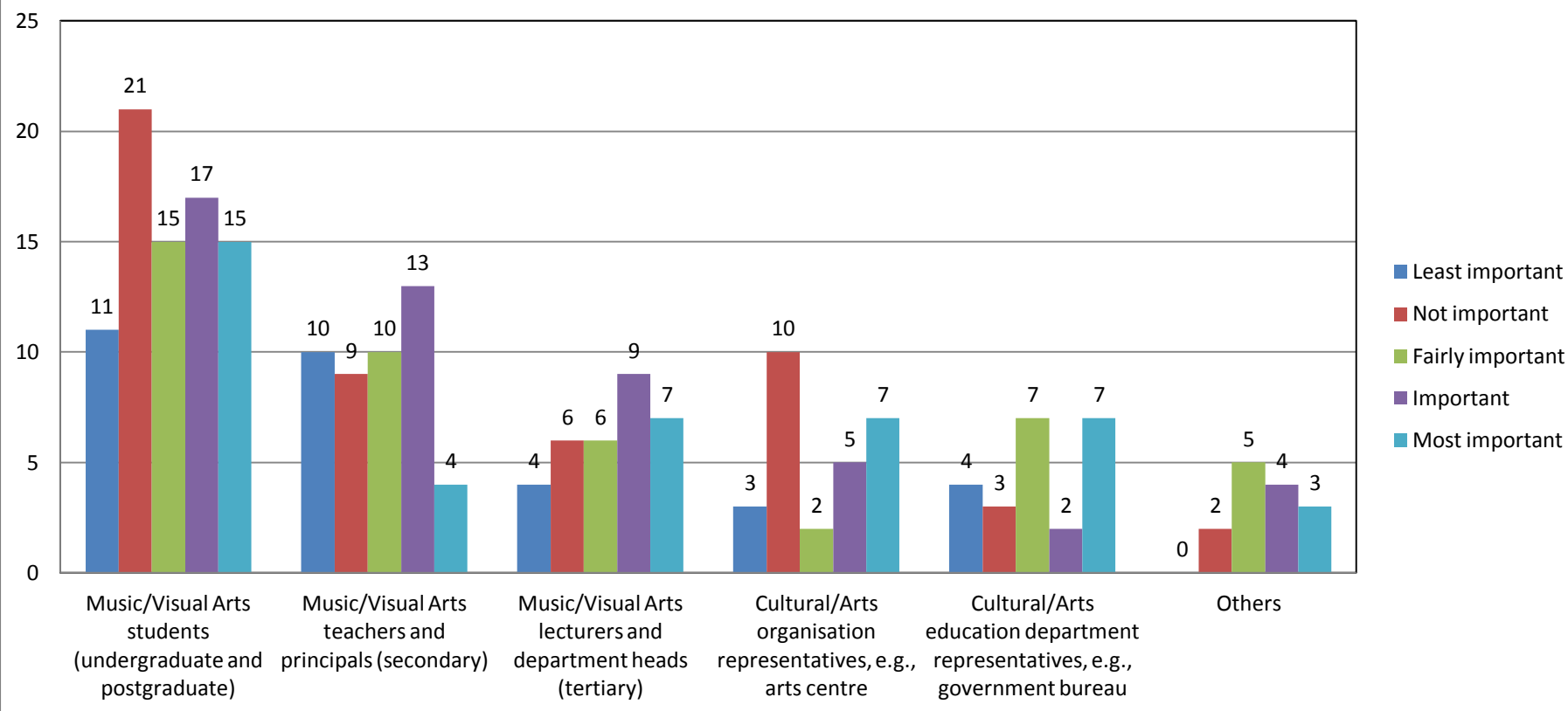
3.5 What is the purpose of a cultural policy? Culturally educate people. (N=225)



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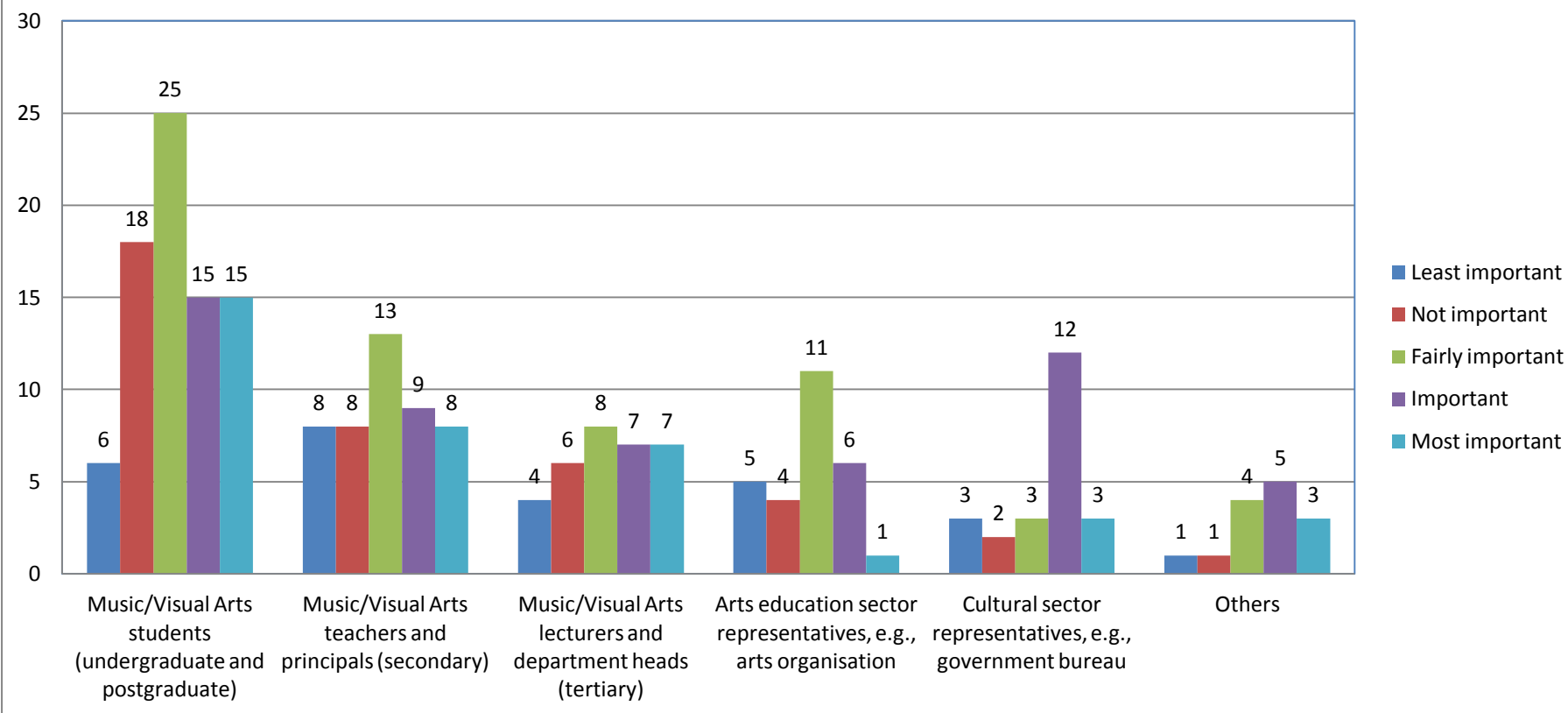
4.1 What is the purpose of an arts education policy? Improve understanding and knowledge of the arts. (N=221)



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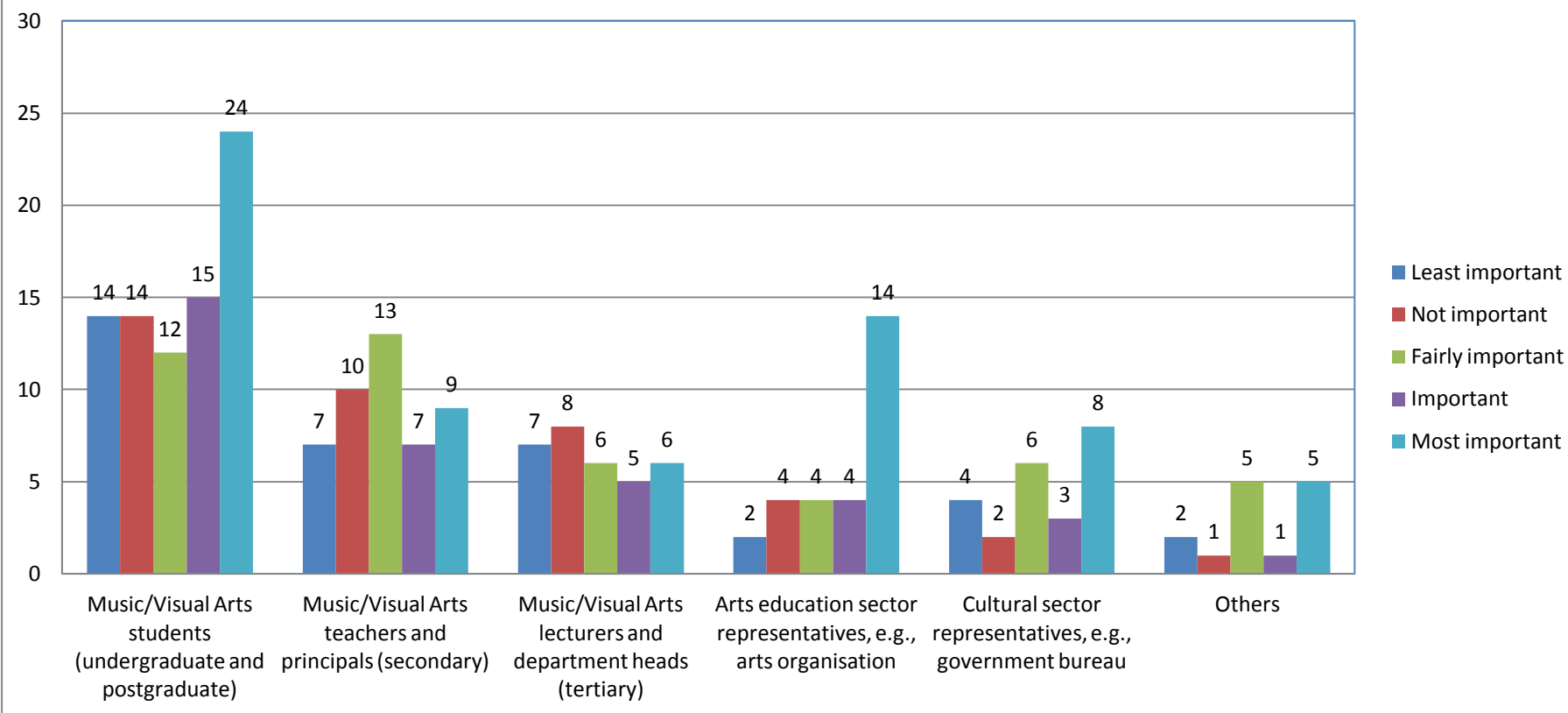
4.2 What is the purpose of an arts education policy? Nurture creative individuals. (N=221)



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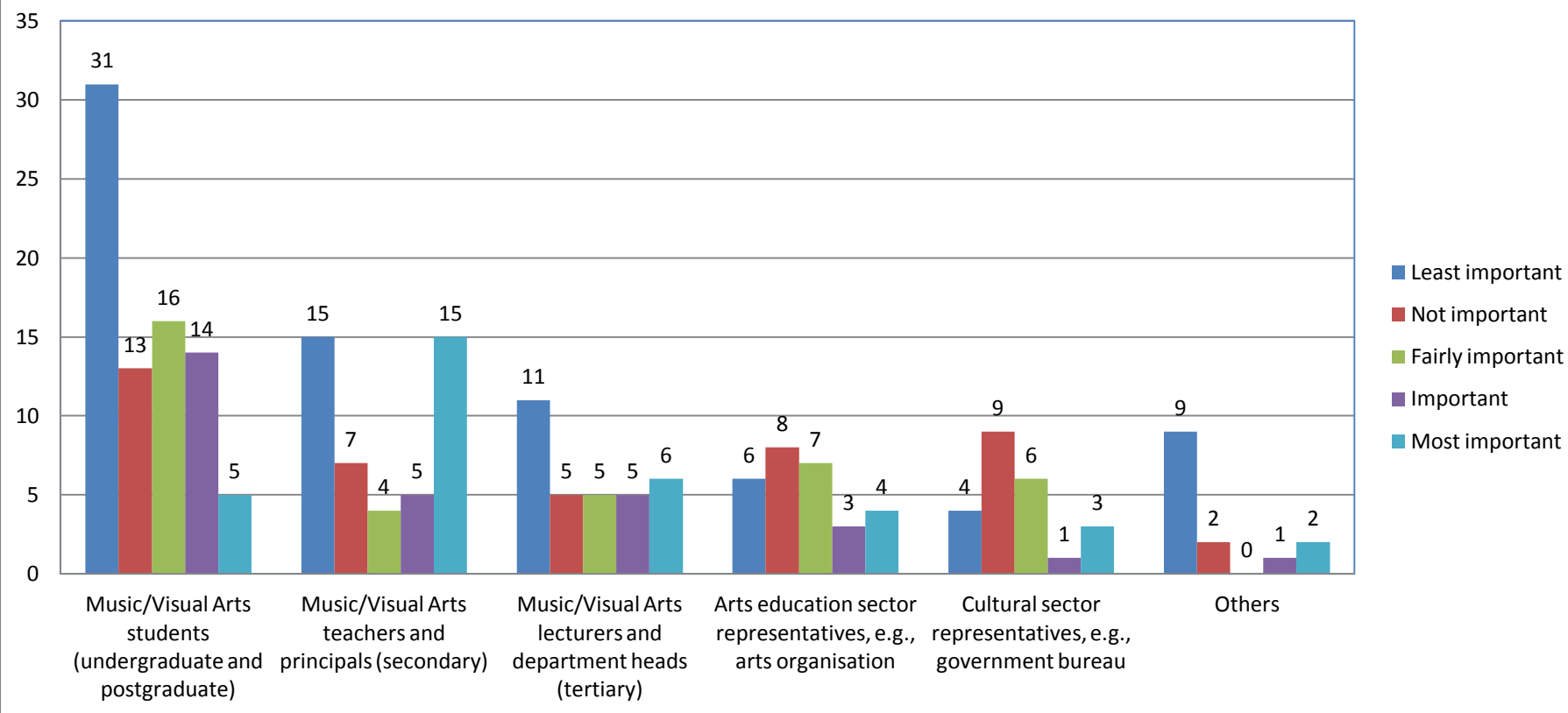
4.3 What is the purpose of an arts education policy? Contribute to whole-person development. (N=222)



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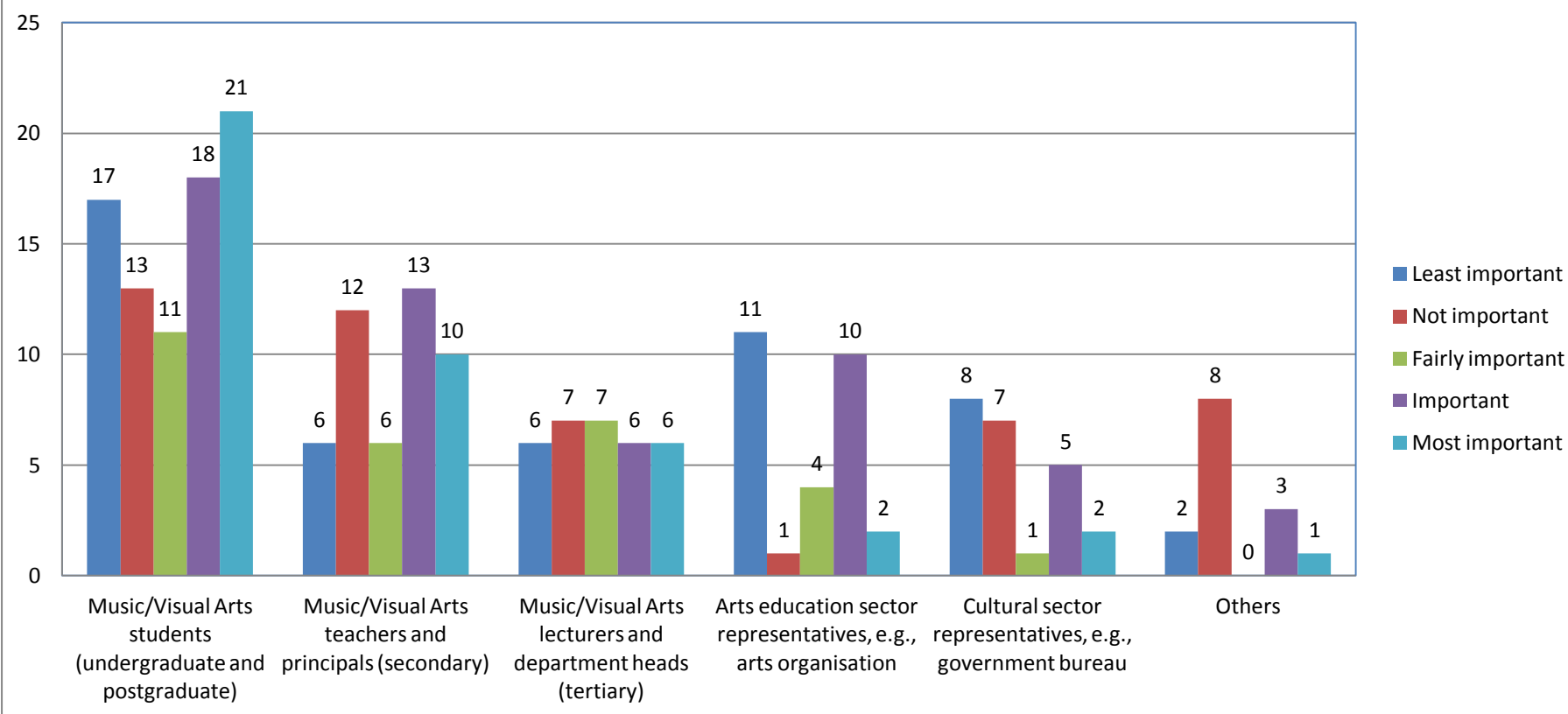
4.4 What is the purpose of an arts education policy? Build audiences for the future. (N=222)



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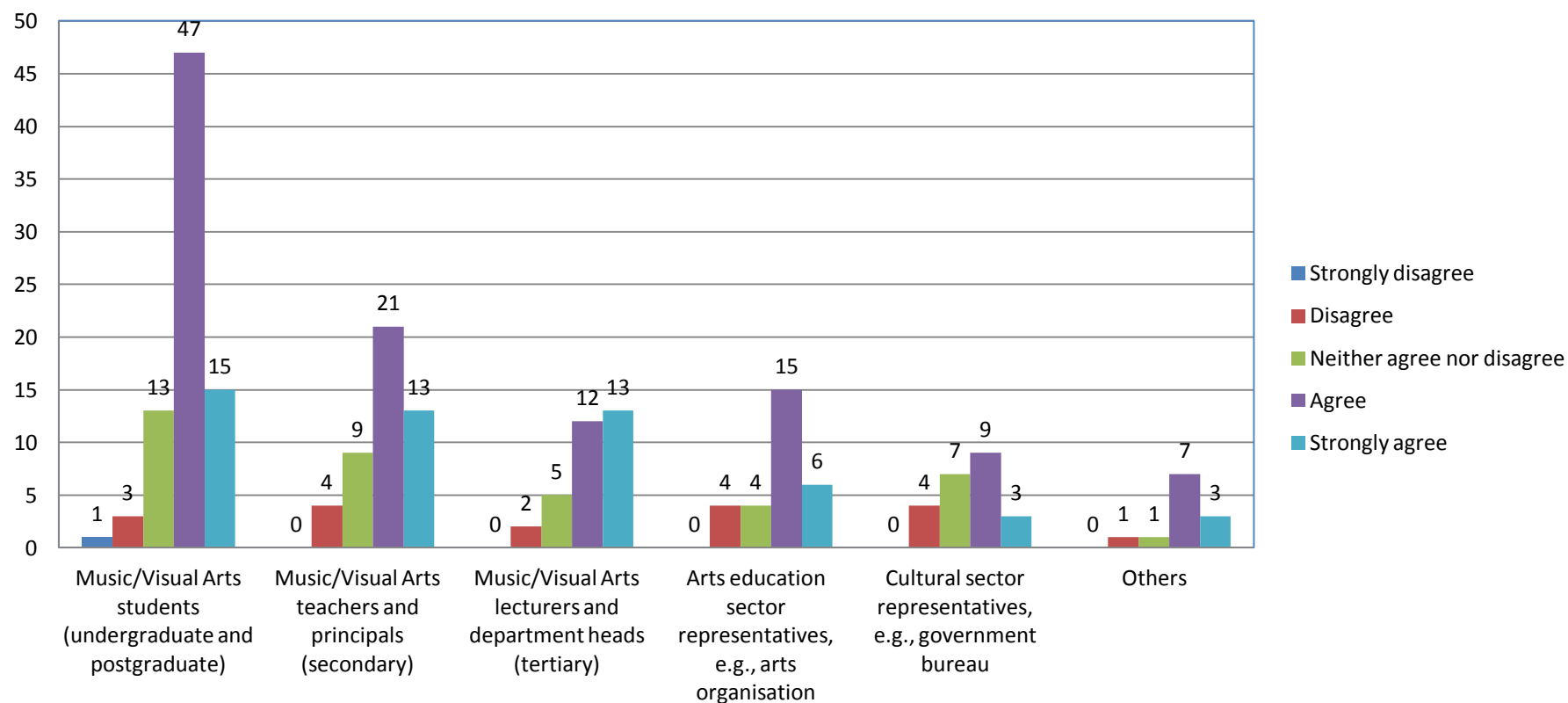
4.5 What is the purpose of an arts education policy? Encourage positive learning values and attitudes. (N=224)



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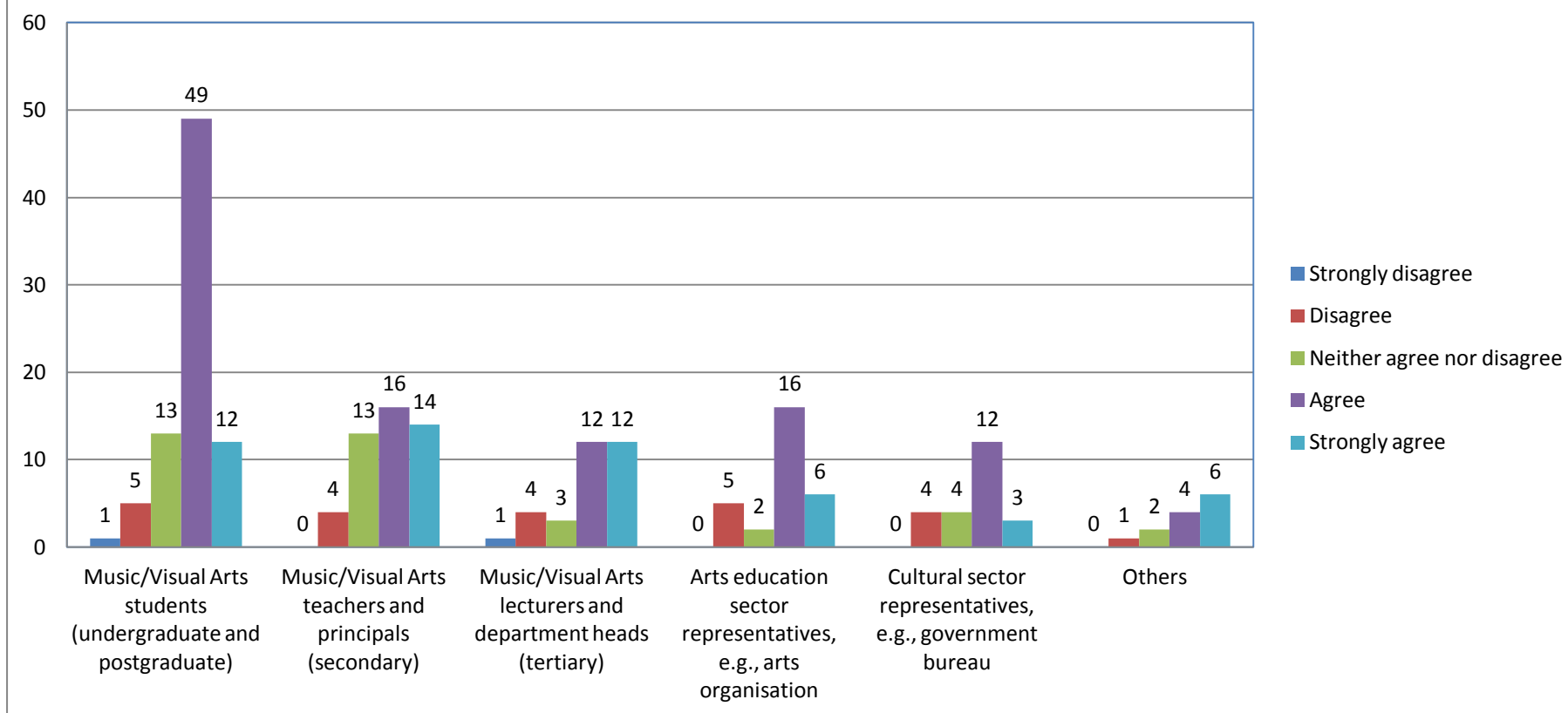
5. It's important to clearly define "culture" in order to create a cultural policy. Indicate your level of agreement. (N=222)



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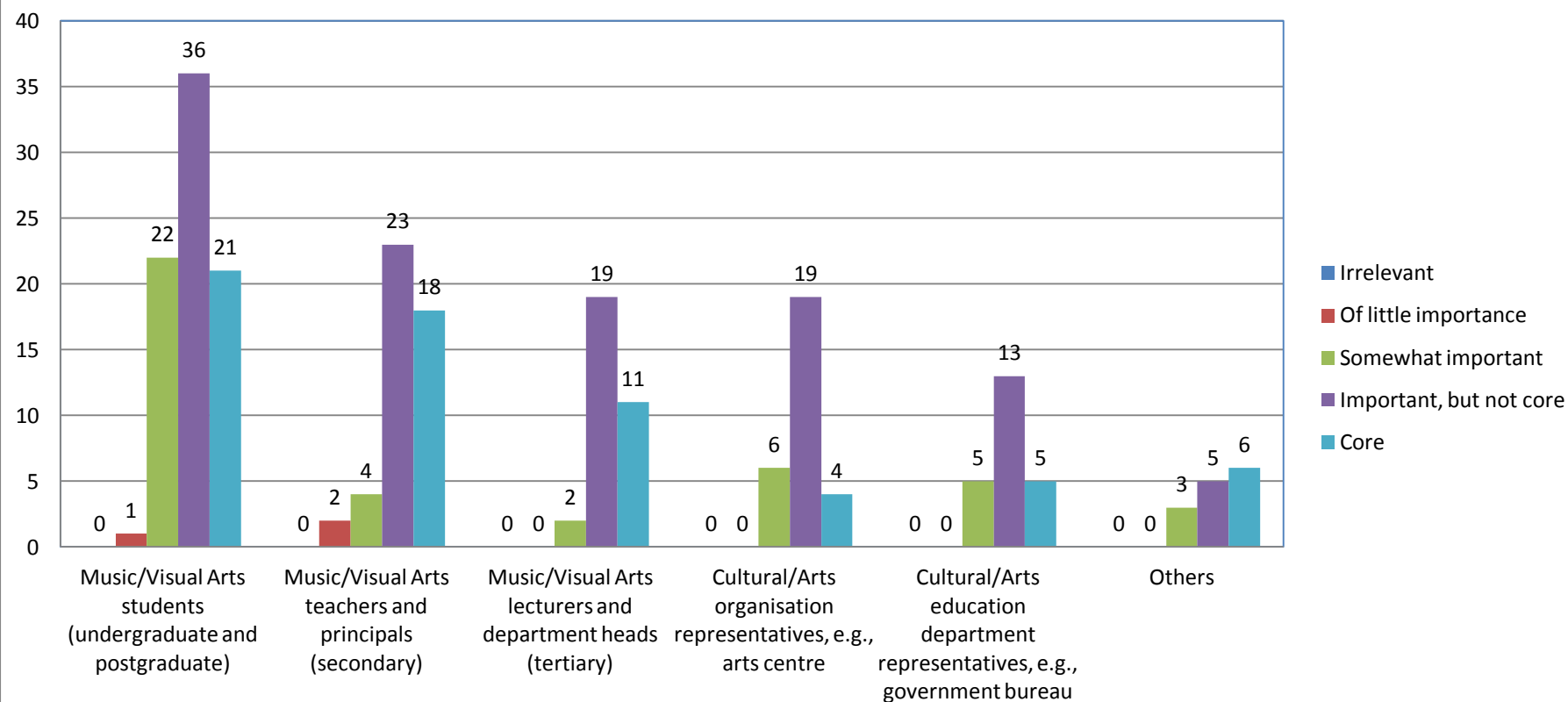
6. "The arts" should be clearly defined in order to create an arts education policy. Indicate your level of agreement. (N=224)



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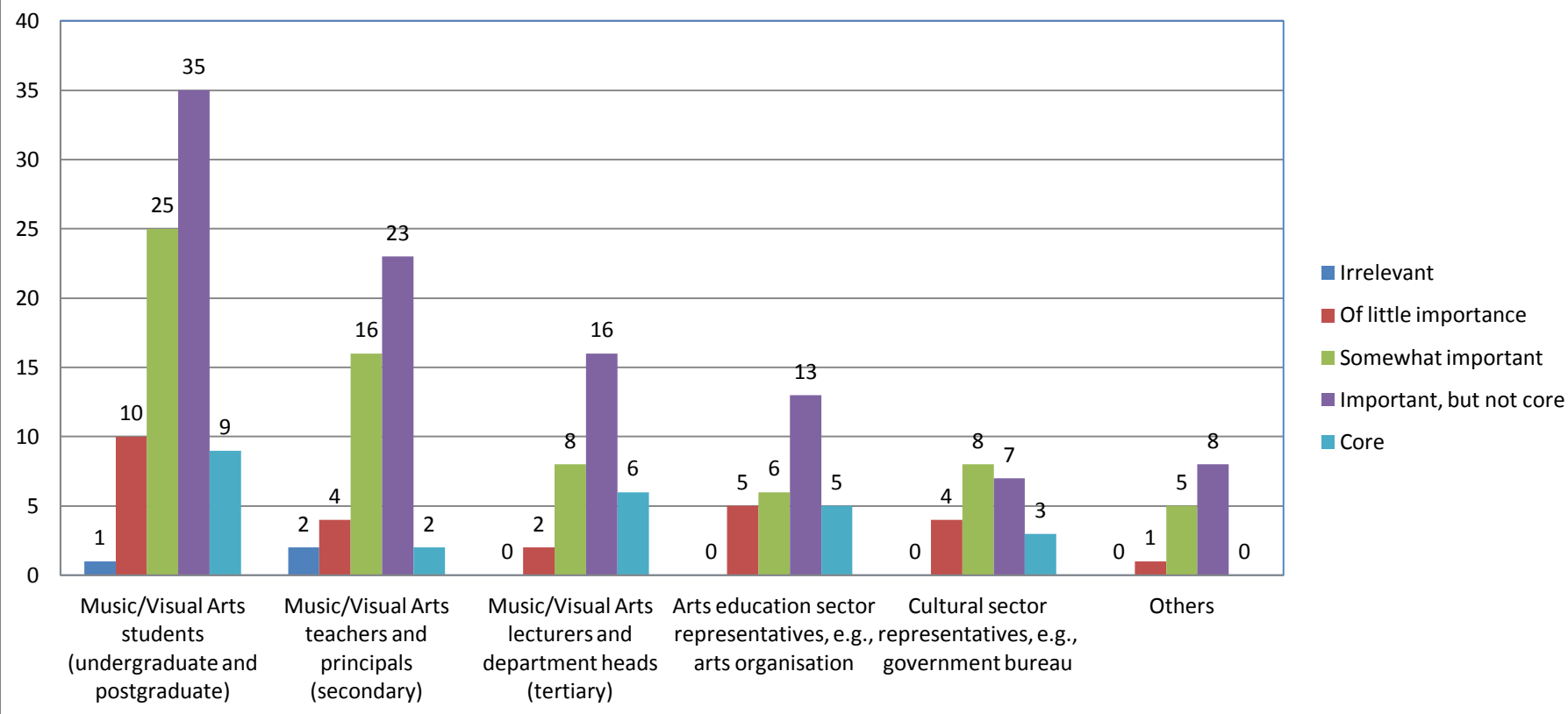
7. How important is the element of enjoyment in cultural activities? Choose the most appropriate answer. (N=225)



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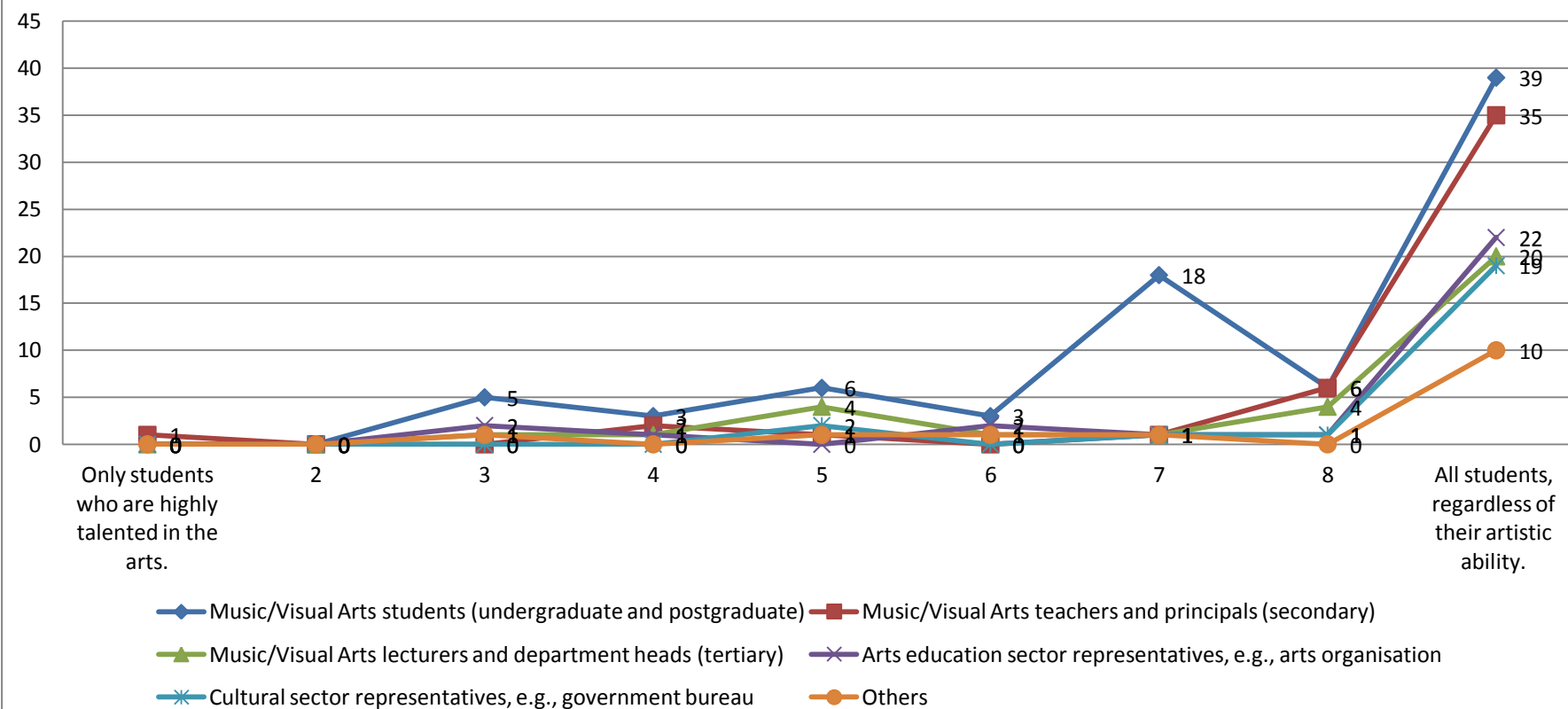
8. How important is the achievement of excellence in artistic activities? Choose the most appropriate answer. (N=224)



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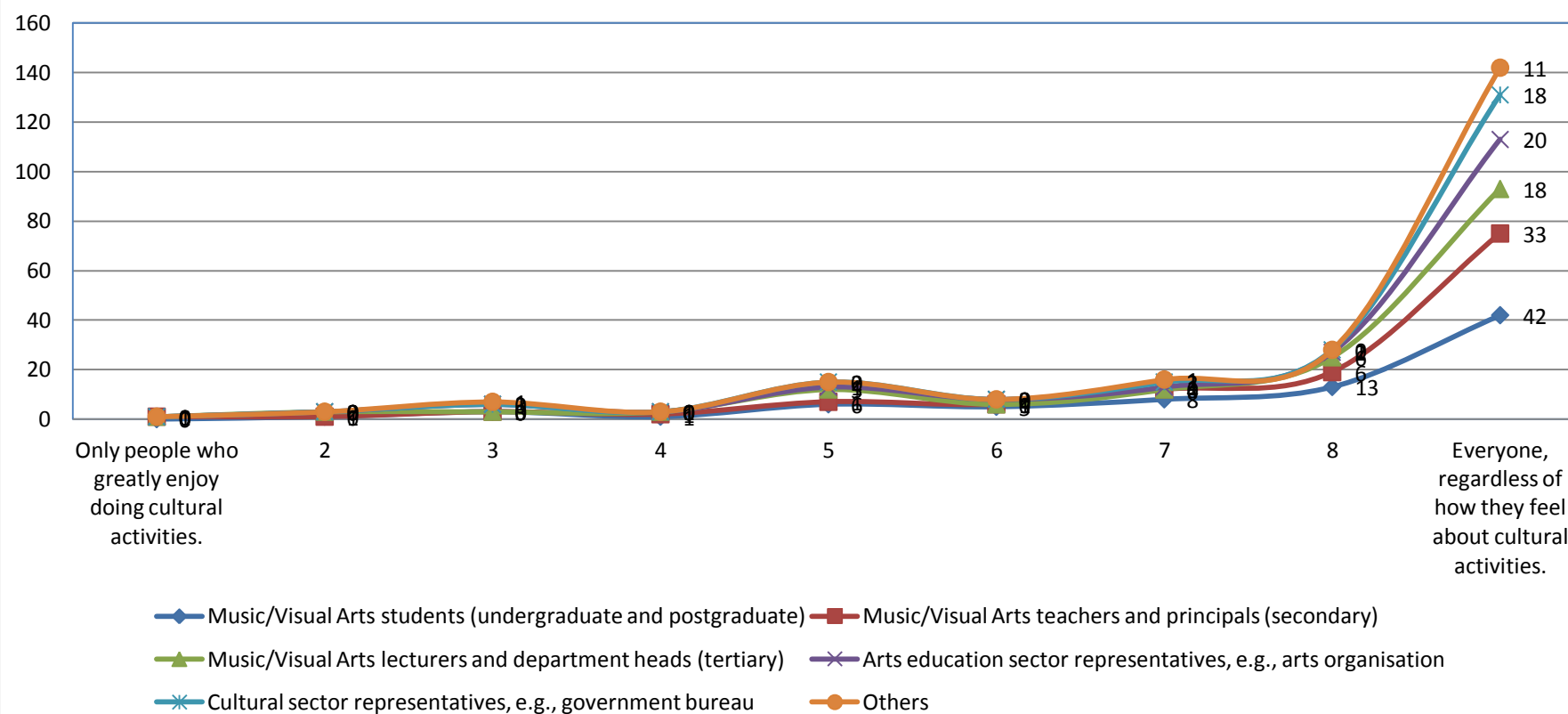
9. Who is an arts education policy meant for? Mark one of the 9 points on the continuum. (N=224)



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10. Who is a cultural policy meant for? Mark one of the 9 points on the continuum. (N=223)

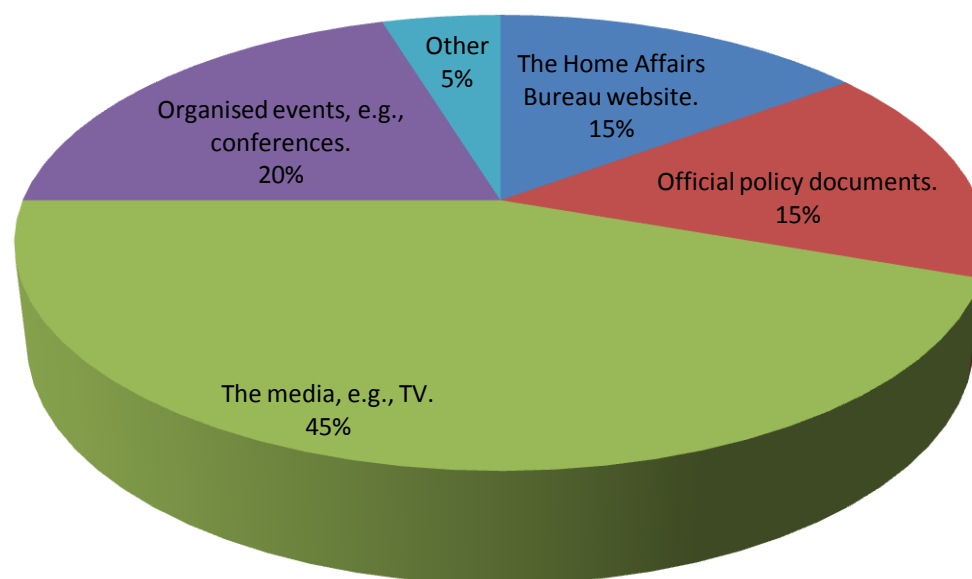


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11. Where have you encountered information about Hong Kong's cultural policy?

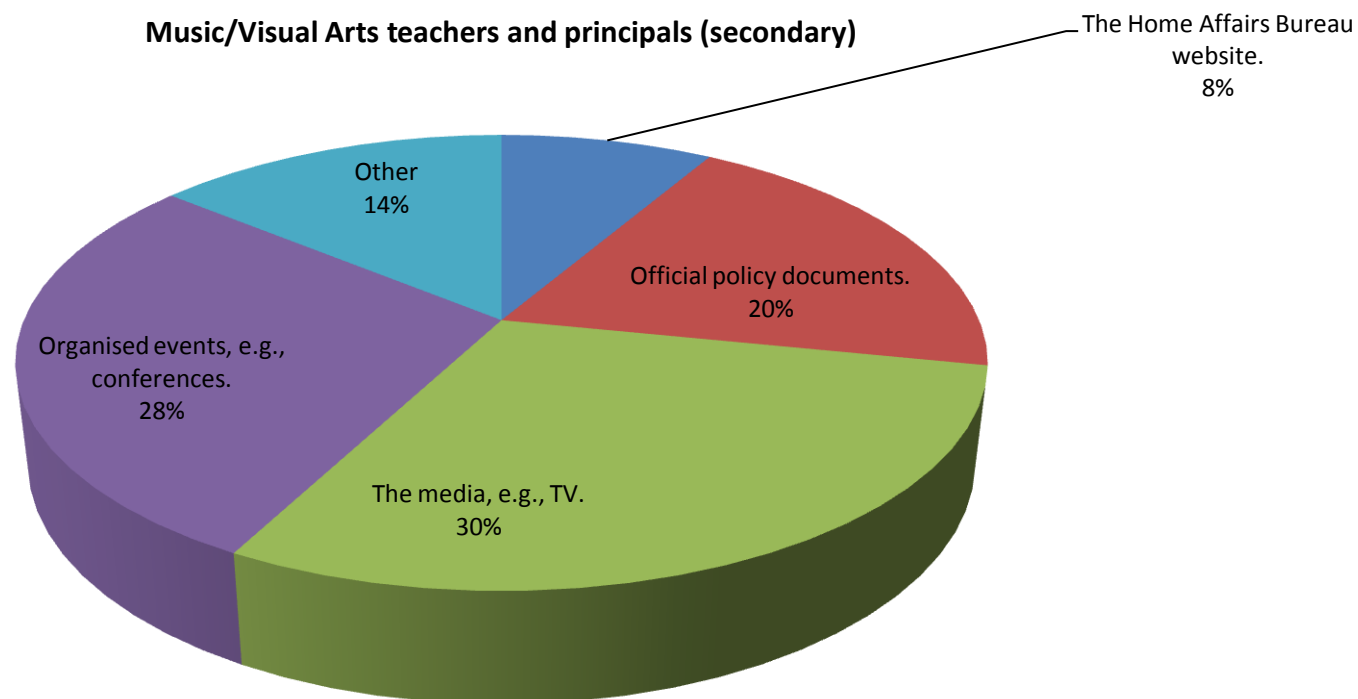
Music/Visual Arts students (undergraduate and postgraduate)



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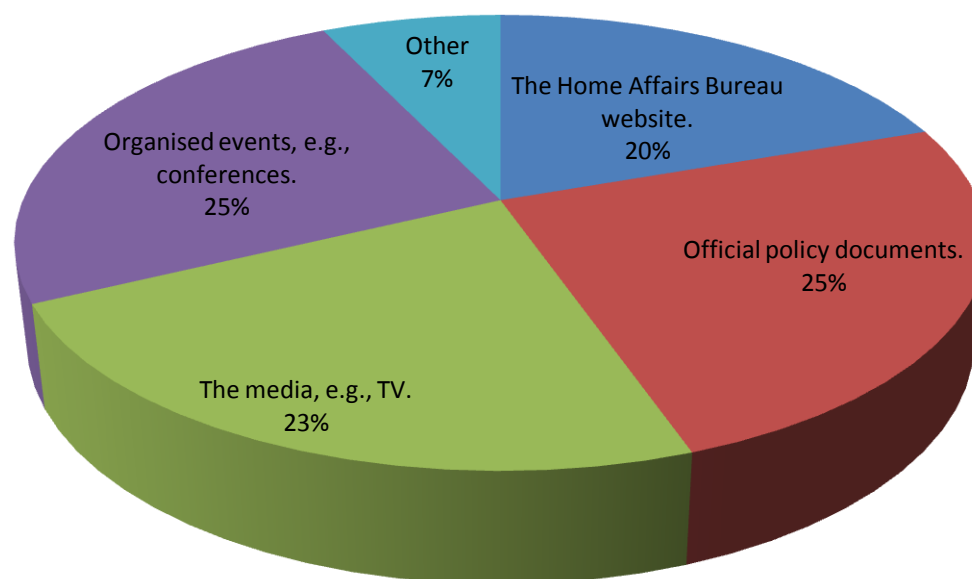
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11. Where have you encountered information about Hong Kong's cultural policy?



11. Where have you encountered information about Hong Kong's cultural policy?

Music/Visual Arts lecturers and department heads (tertiary)

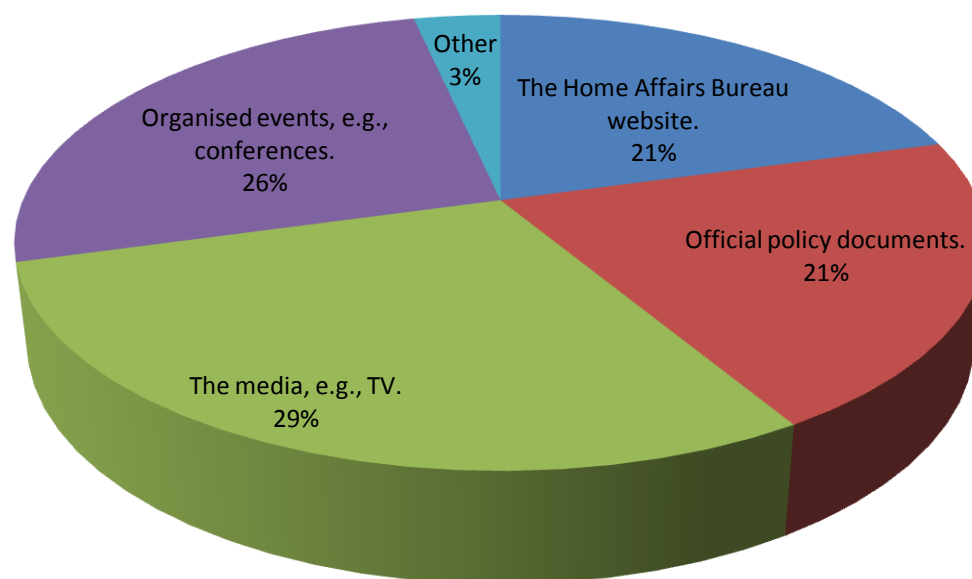


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11. Where have you encountered information about Hong Kong's cultural policy?

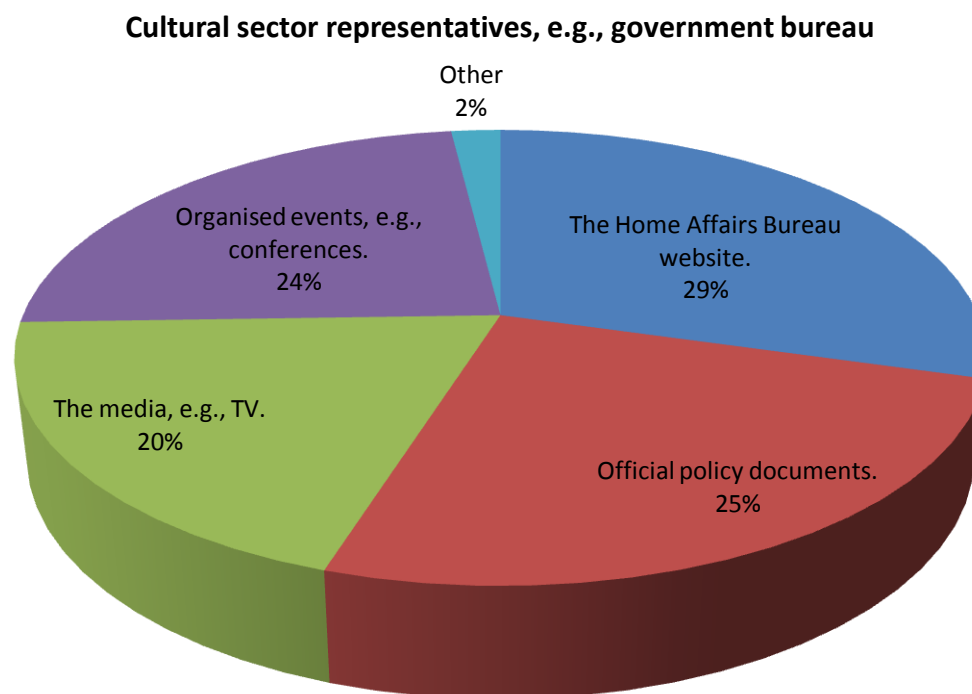
Arts education sector representatives, e.g., arts organisation



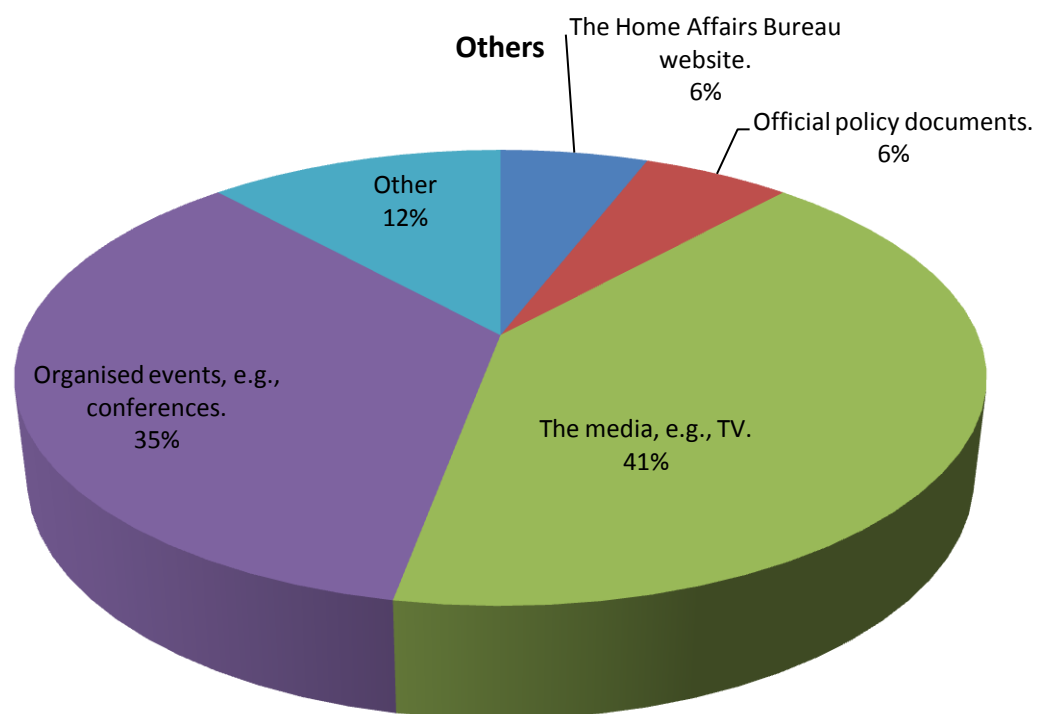
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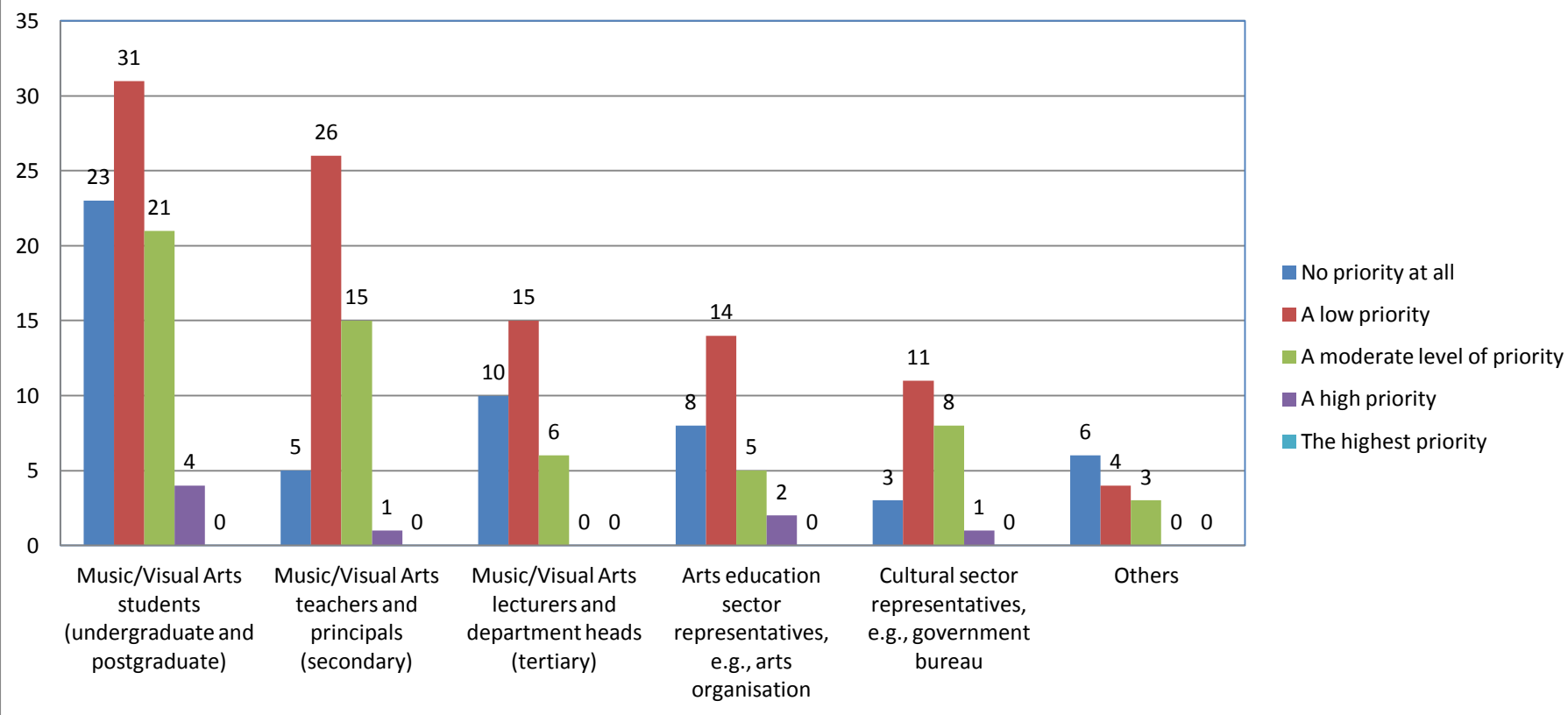
11. Where have you encountered information about Hong Kong's cultural policy?



11. Where have you encountered information about Hong Kong's cultural policy?



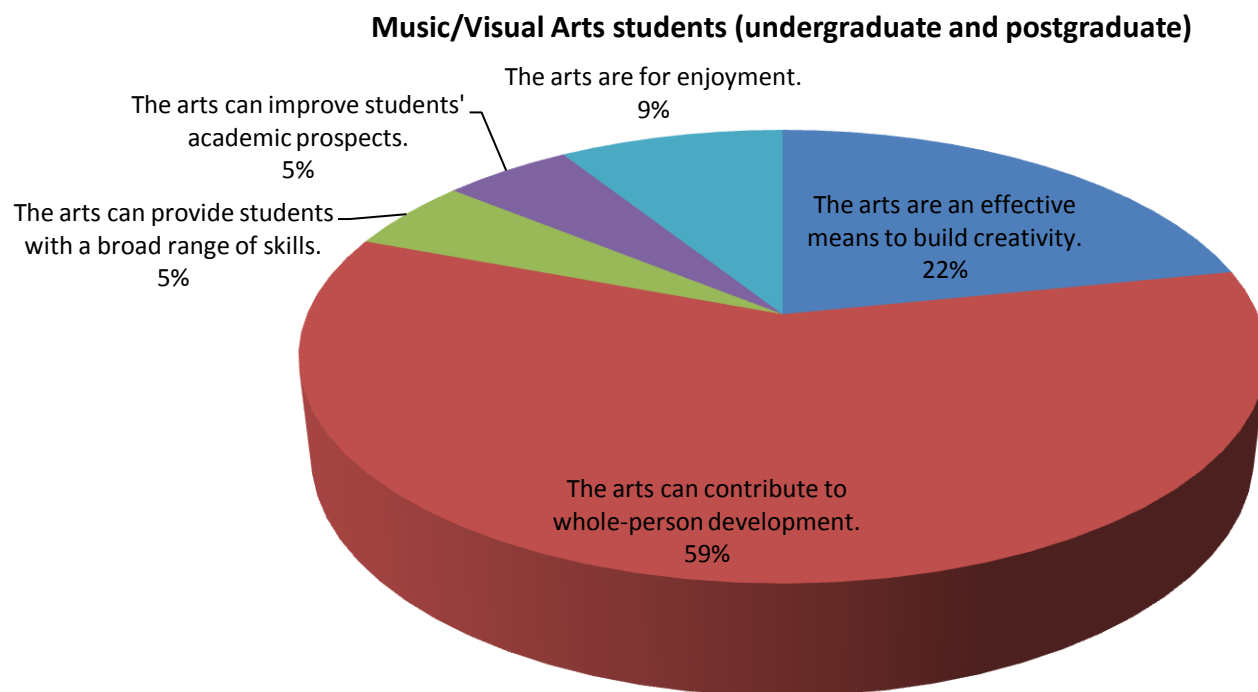
12. How much priority is given to culture and cultural policy at an official level? Choose the most appropriate answer. (N=222)



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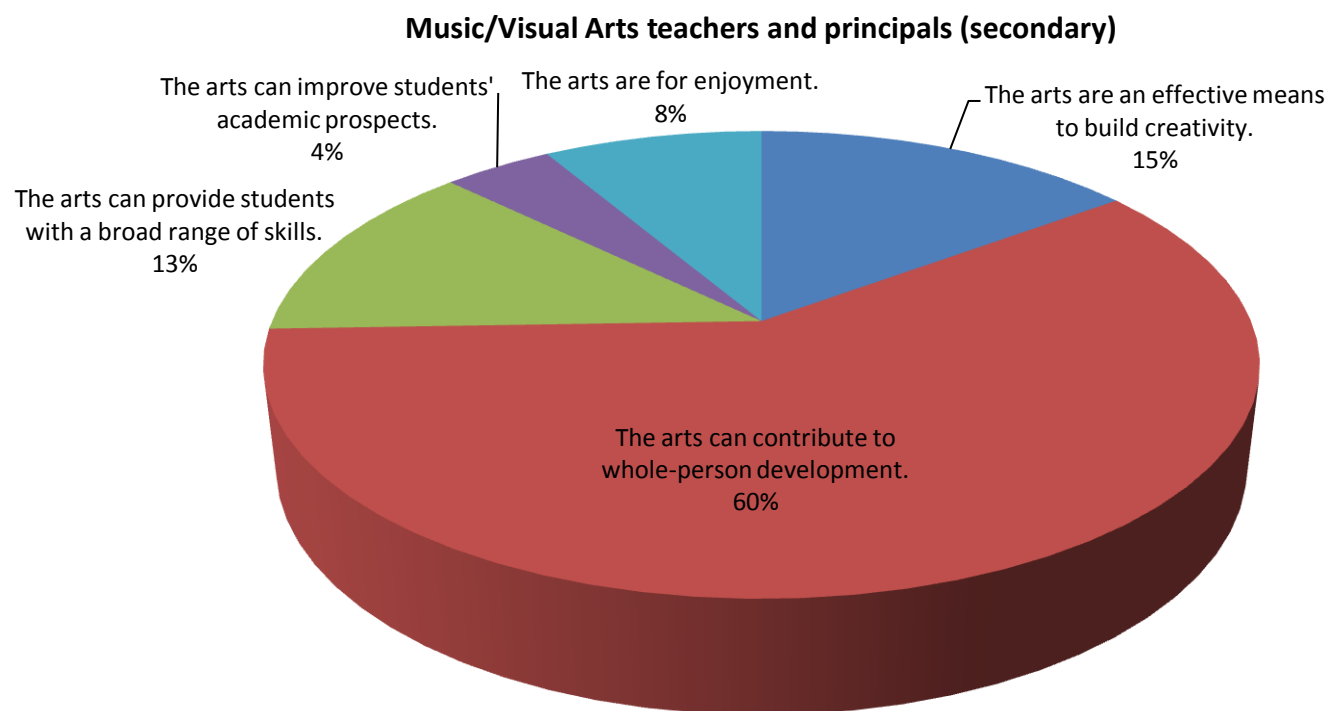
13. What is the main message that an arts education policy should communicate? (N=223)



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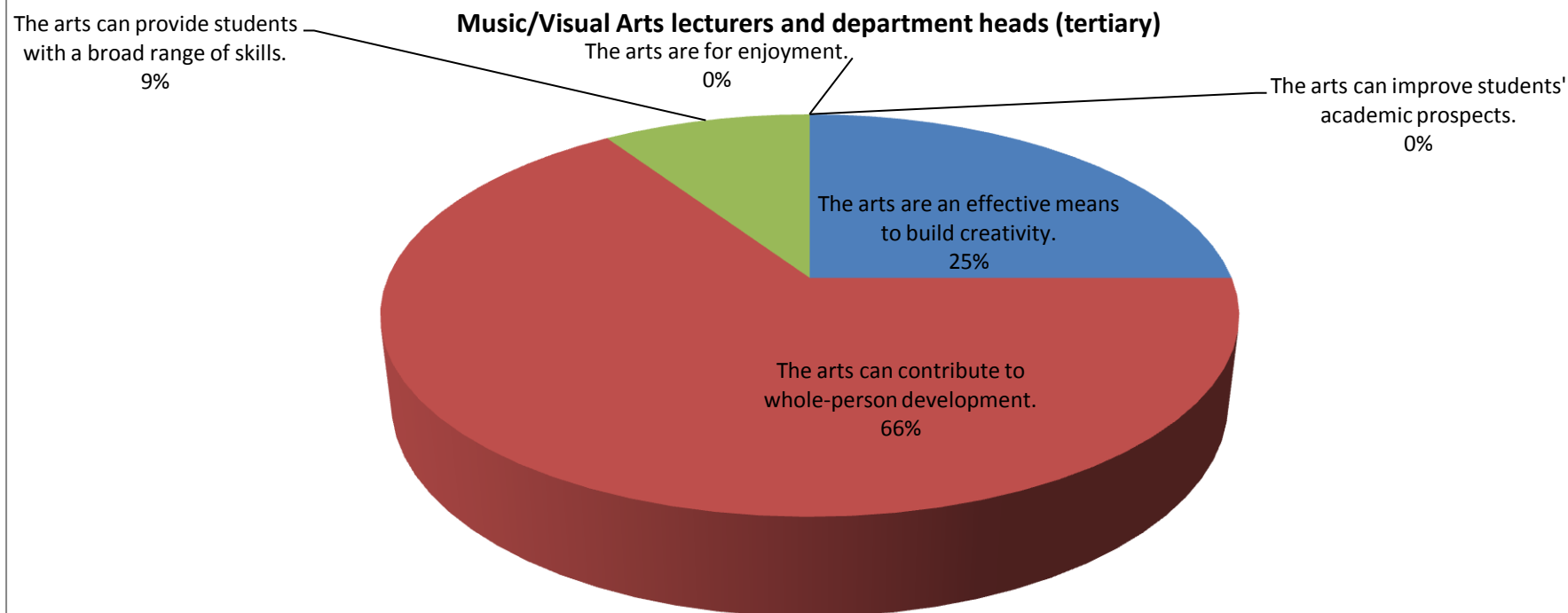
13. What is the main message that an arts education policy should communicate? (N=223)



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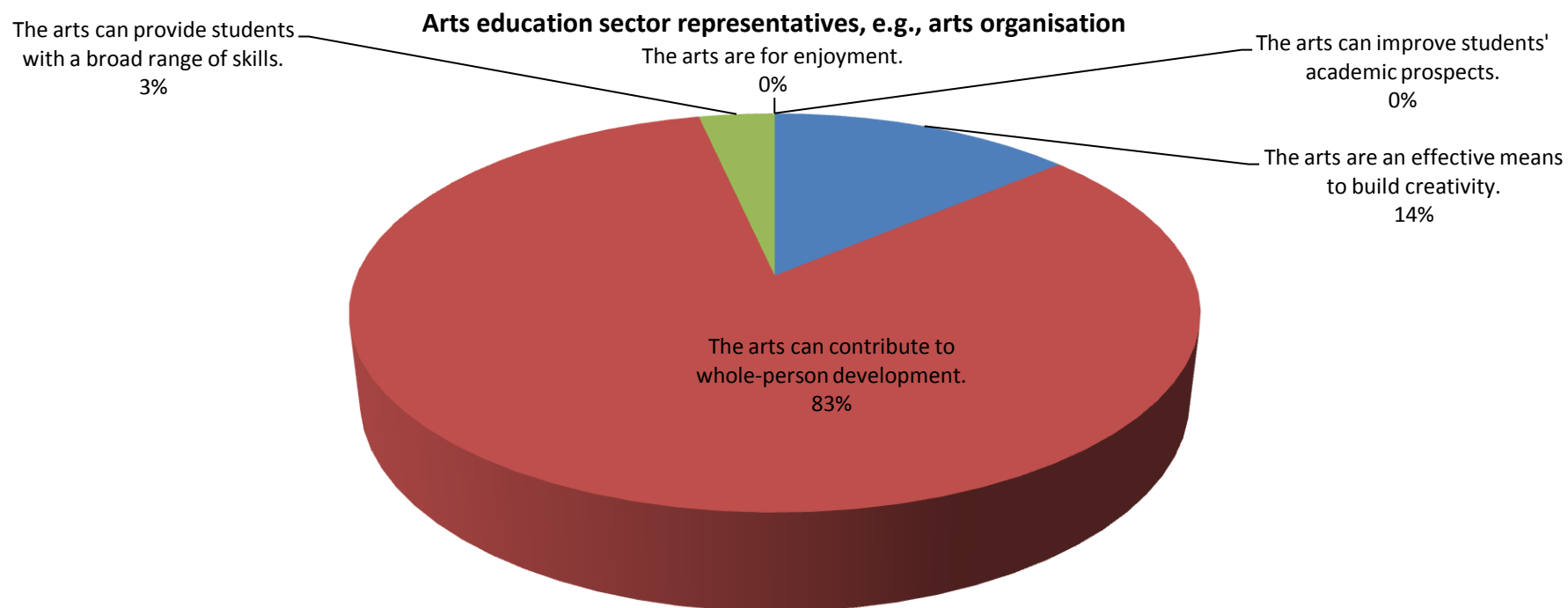
13. What is the main message that an arts education policy should communicate? (N=223)



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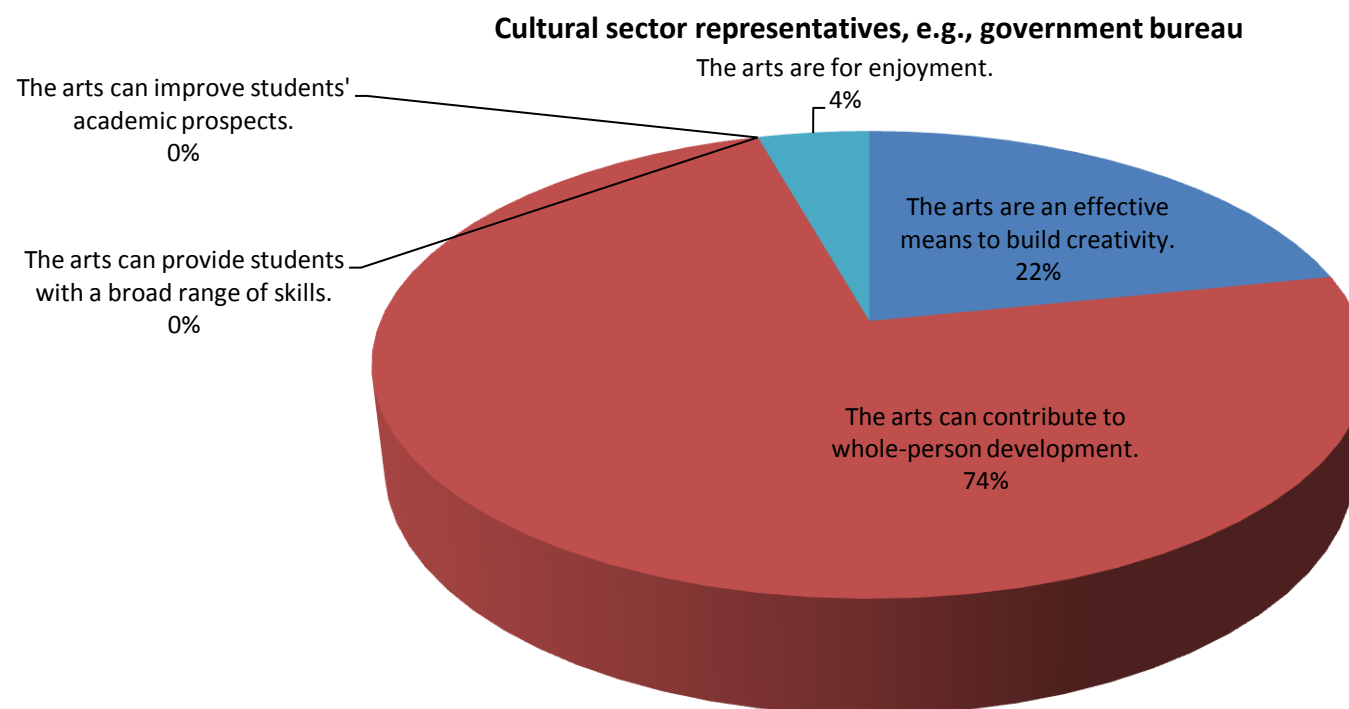
13. What is the main message that an arts education policy should communicate? (N=223)



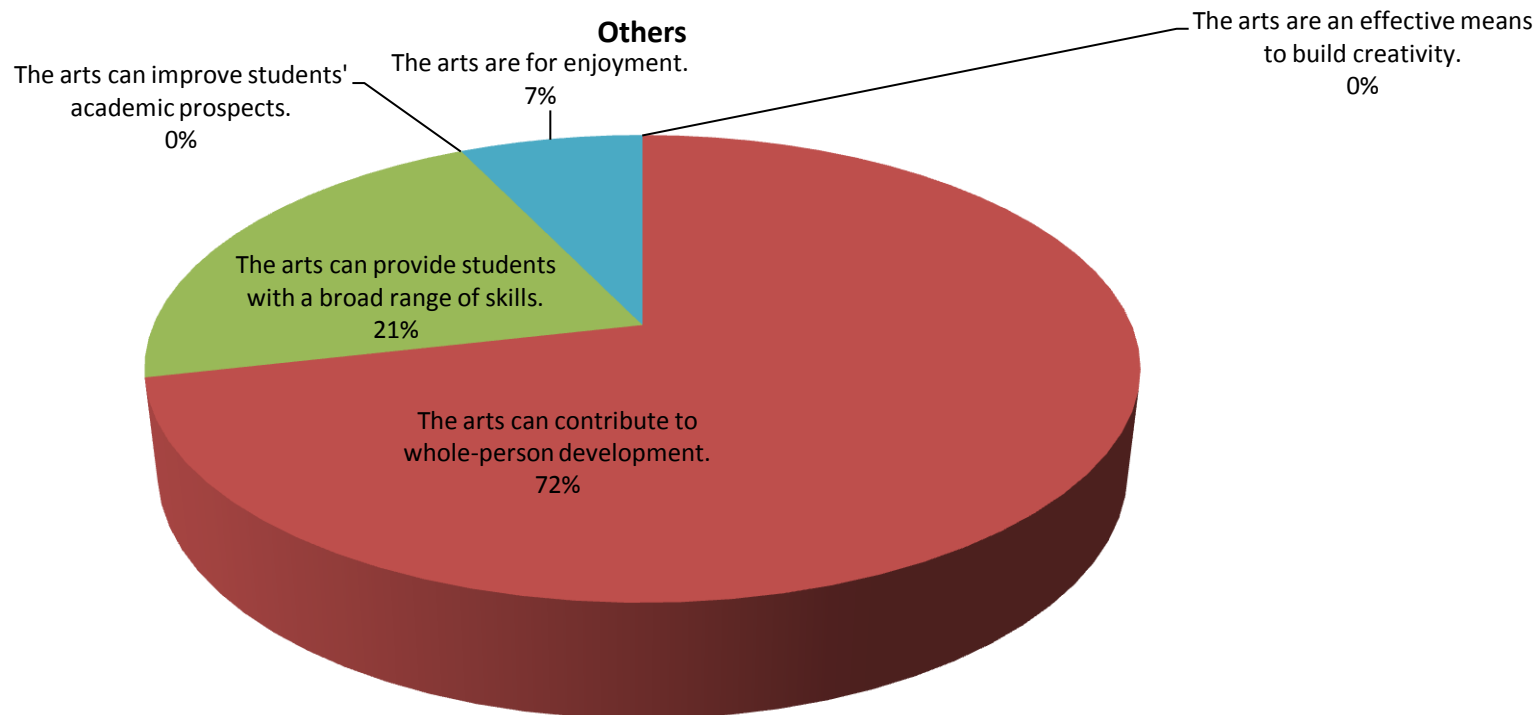
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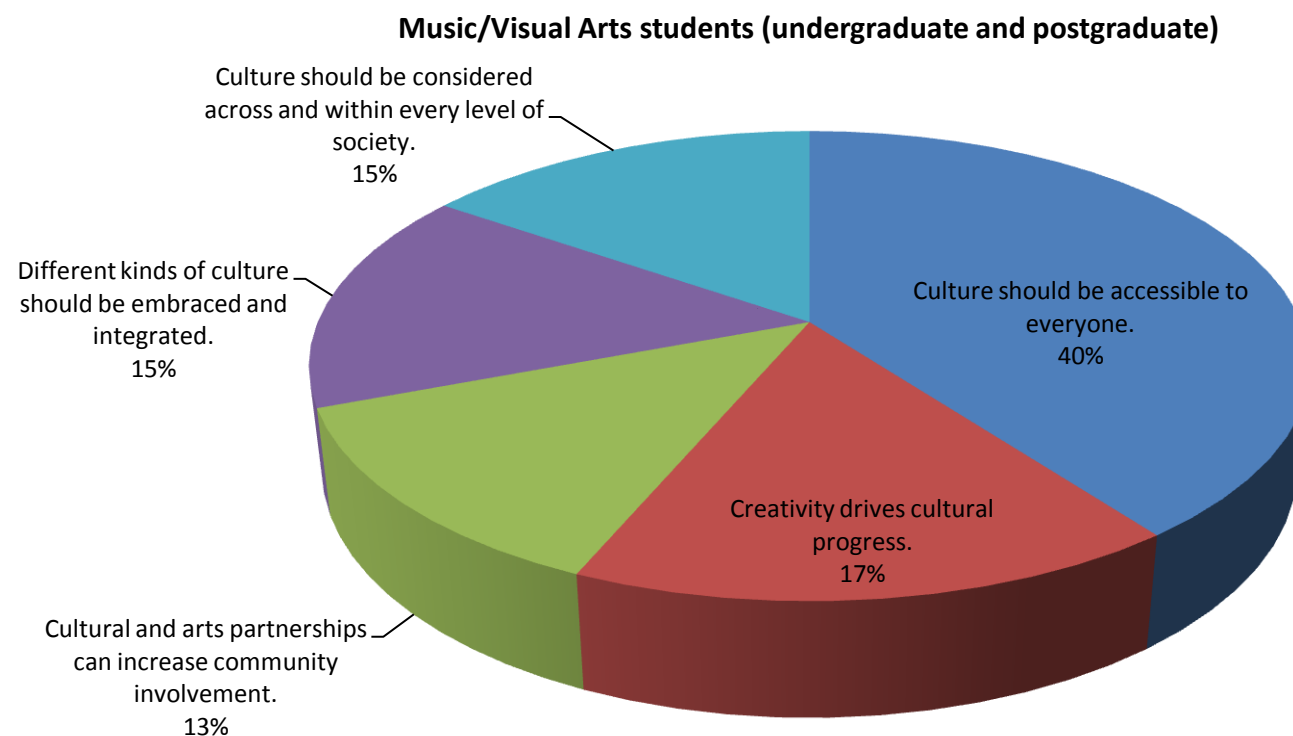
13. What is the main message that an arts education policy should communicate? (N=223)



13. What is the main message that an arts education policy should communicate? (N=223)



14. What is the main message that a cultural policy should communicate? (N=221)



14. What is the main message that a cultural policy should communicate? (N=221)

Music/Visual Arts teachers and principals (secondary)

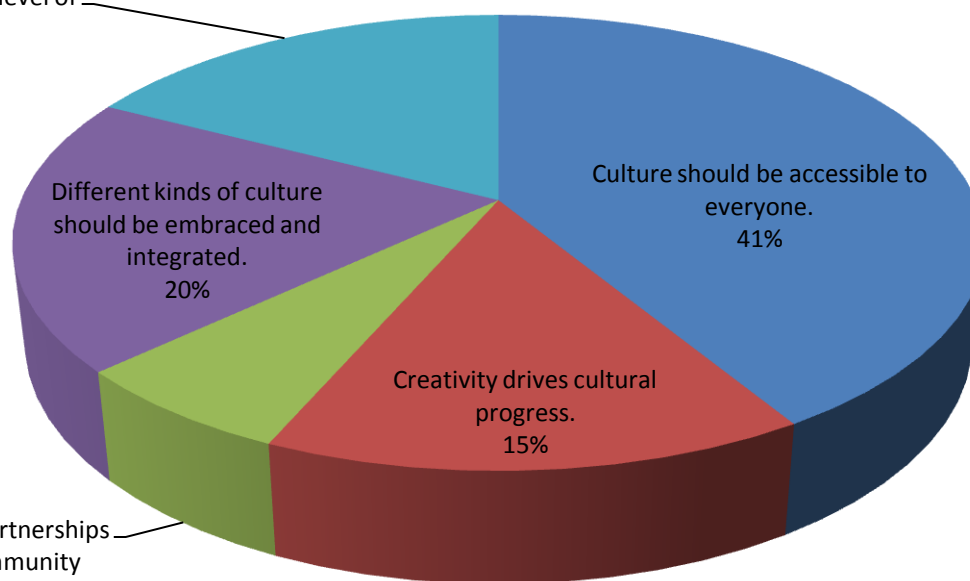
Culture should be considered
across and within every level of
society.
17%

Different kinds of culture
should be embraced and
integrated.
20%

Culture should be accessible to
everyone.
41%

Creativity drives cultural
progress.
15%

Cultural and arts partnerships
can increase community
involvement.
7%

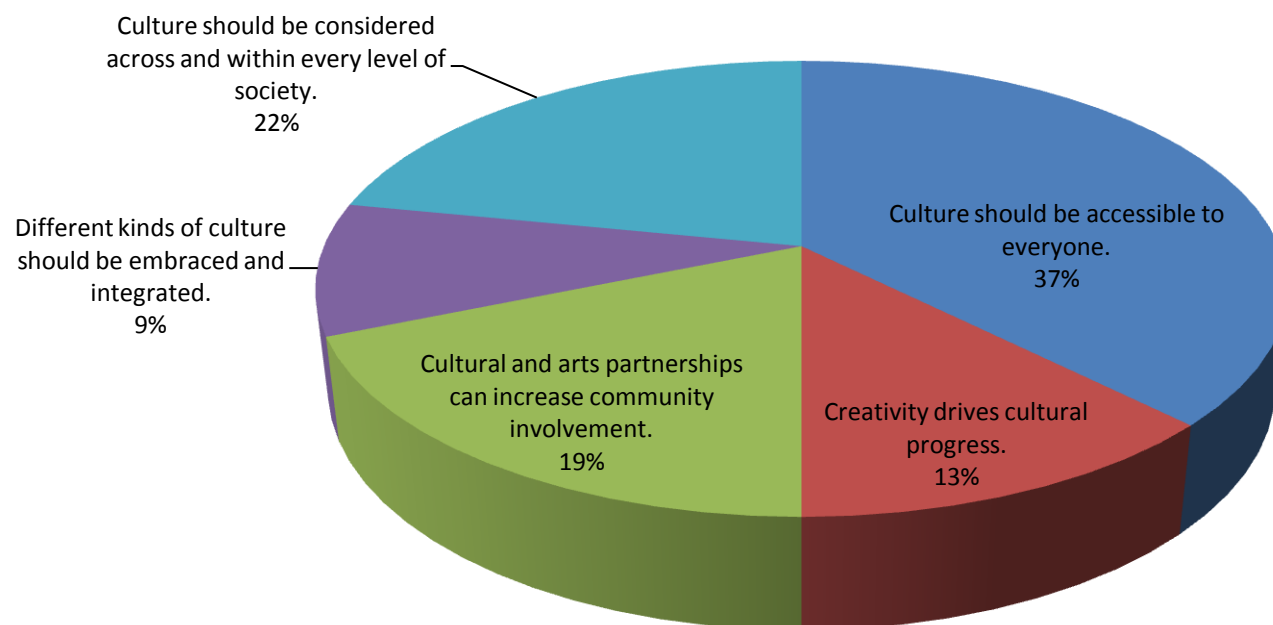


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14. What is the main message that a cultural policy should communicate? (N=221)

Music/Visual Arts lecturers and department heads (tertiary)



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14. What is the main message that a cultural policy should communicate? (N=221)

Arts education sector representatives, e.g., arts organisation

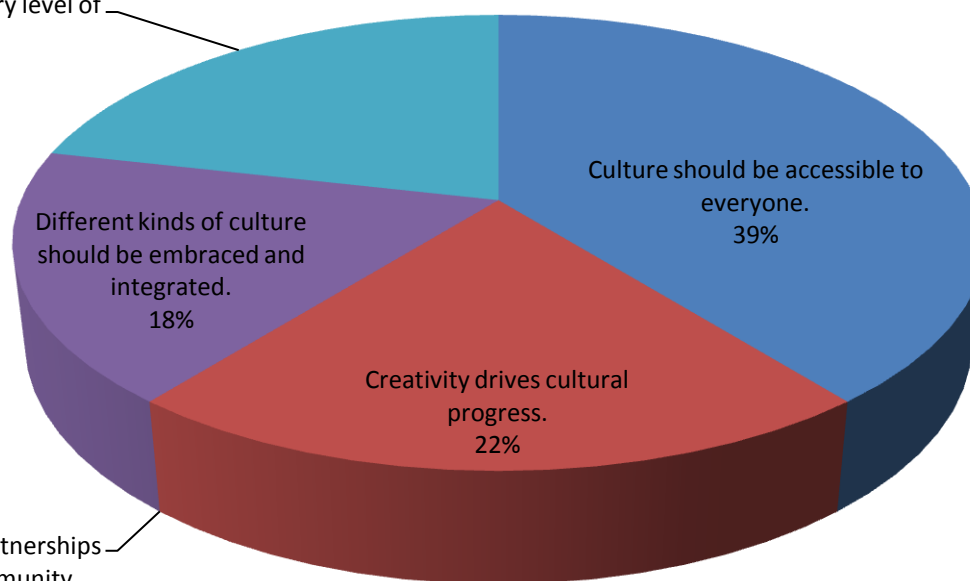
Culture should be considered
across and within every level of
society.
21%

Different kinds of culture
should be embraced and
integrated.
18%

Creativity drives cultural
progress.
22%

Culture should be accessible to
everyone.
39%

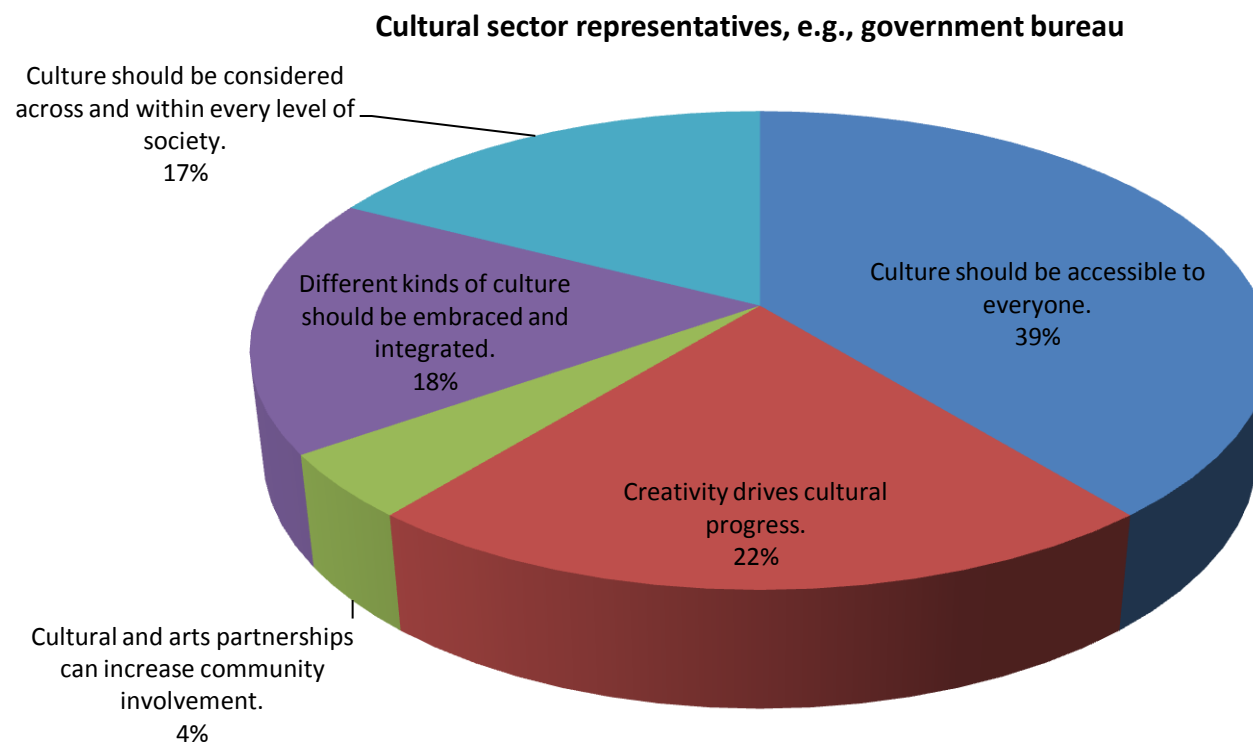
Cultural and arts partnerships
can increase community
involvement.
0%



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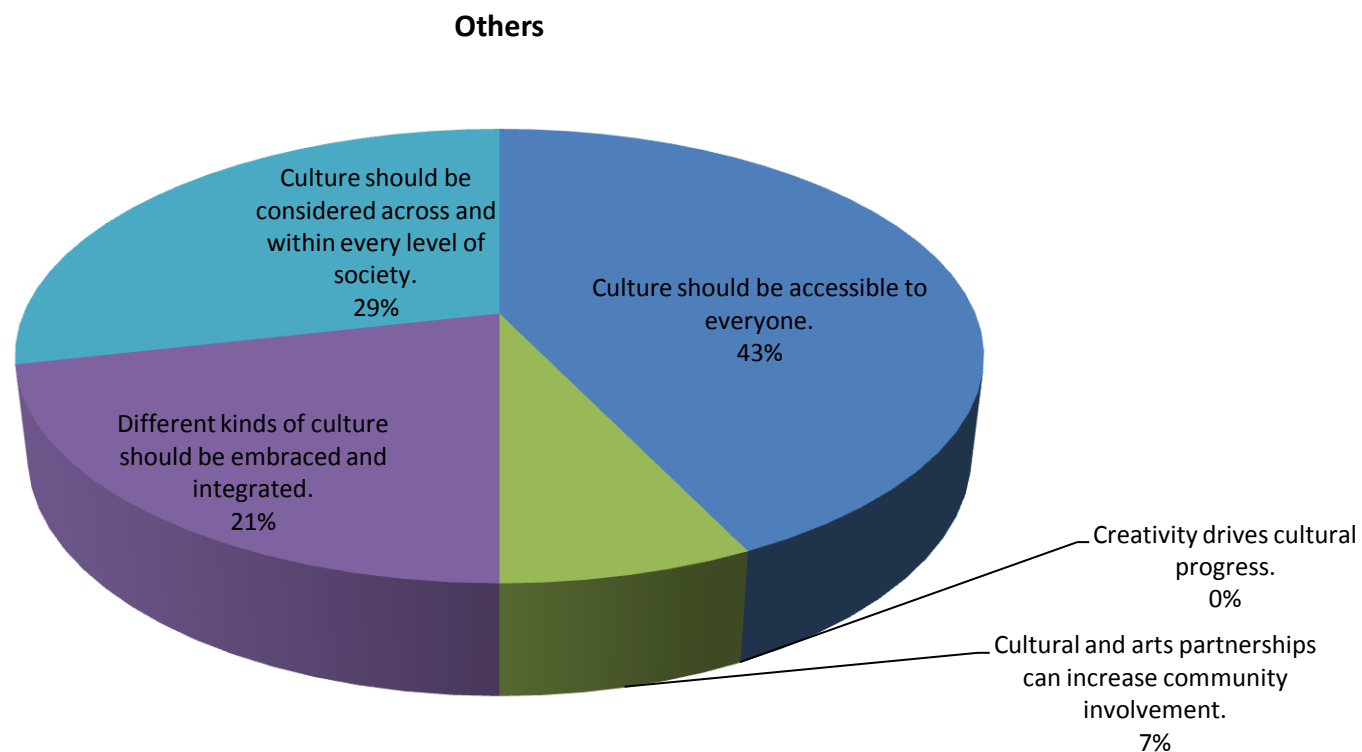
14. What is the main message that a cultural policy should communicate? (N=221)



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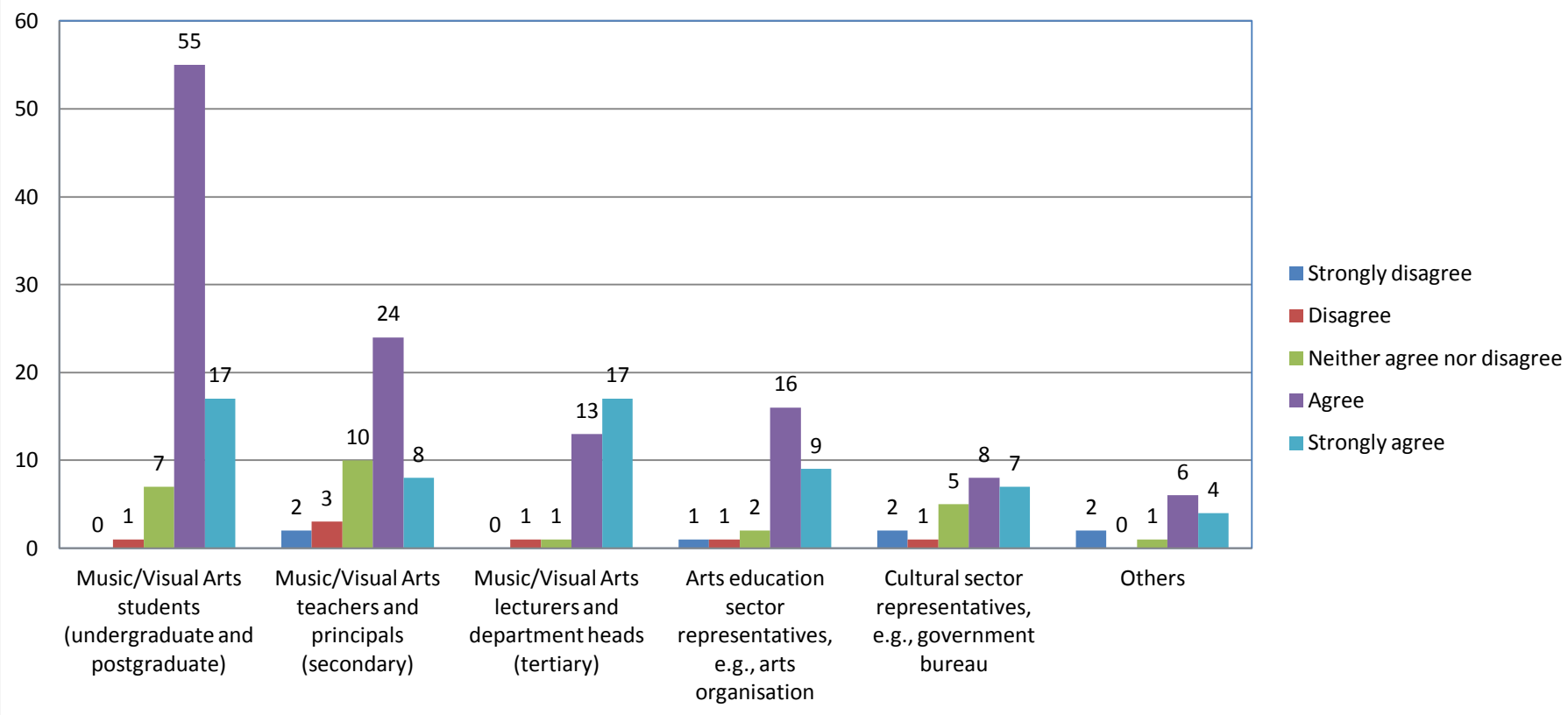
14. What is the main message that a cultural policy should communicate? (N=221)



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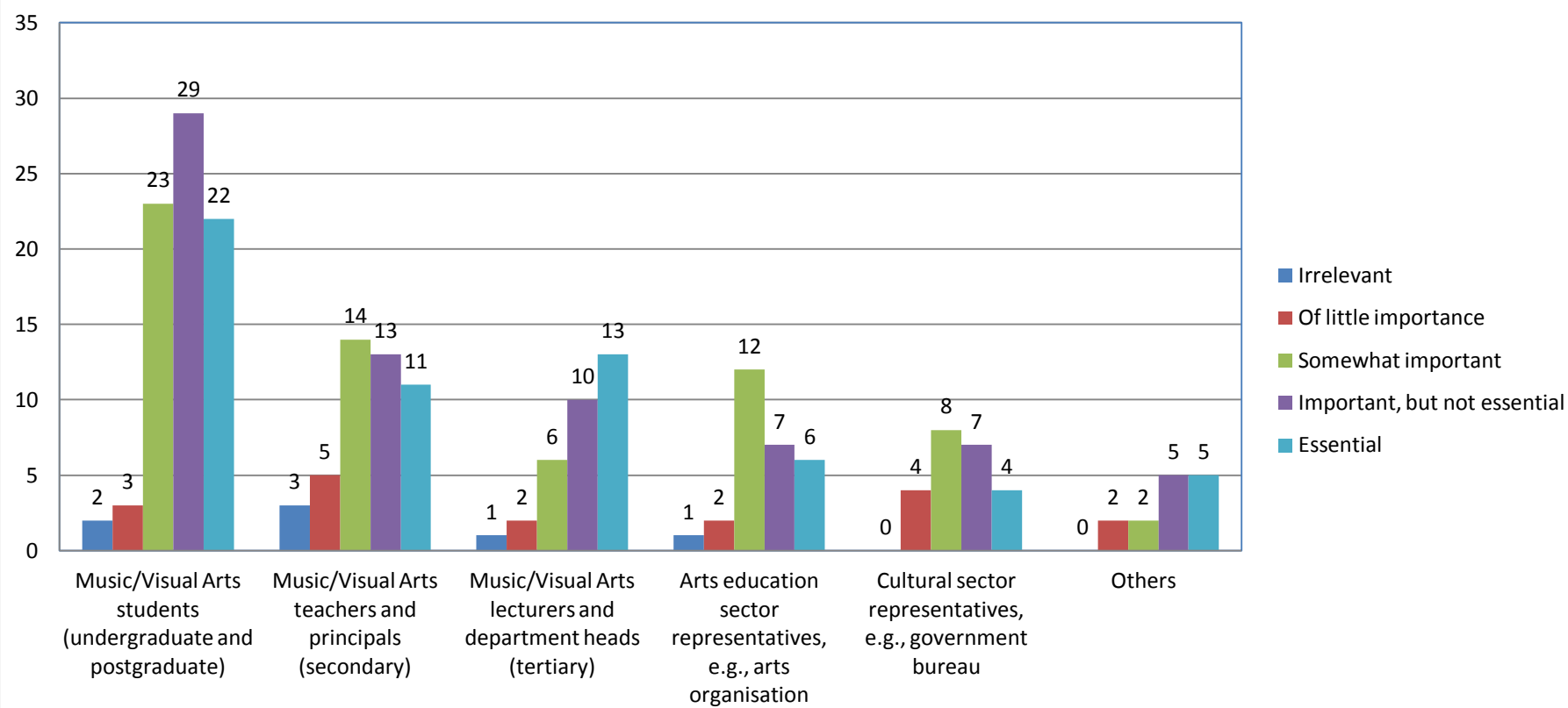
15. Cultural policy should be included as part of preparing teachers of arts education. Indicate your level of agreement. (N=224)



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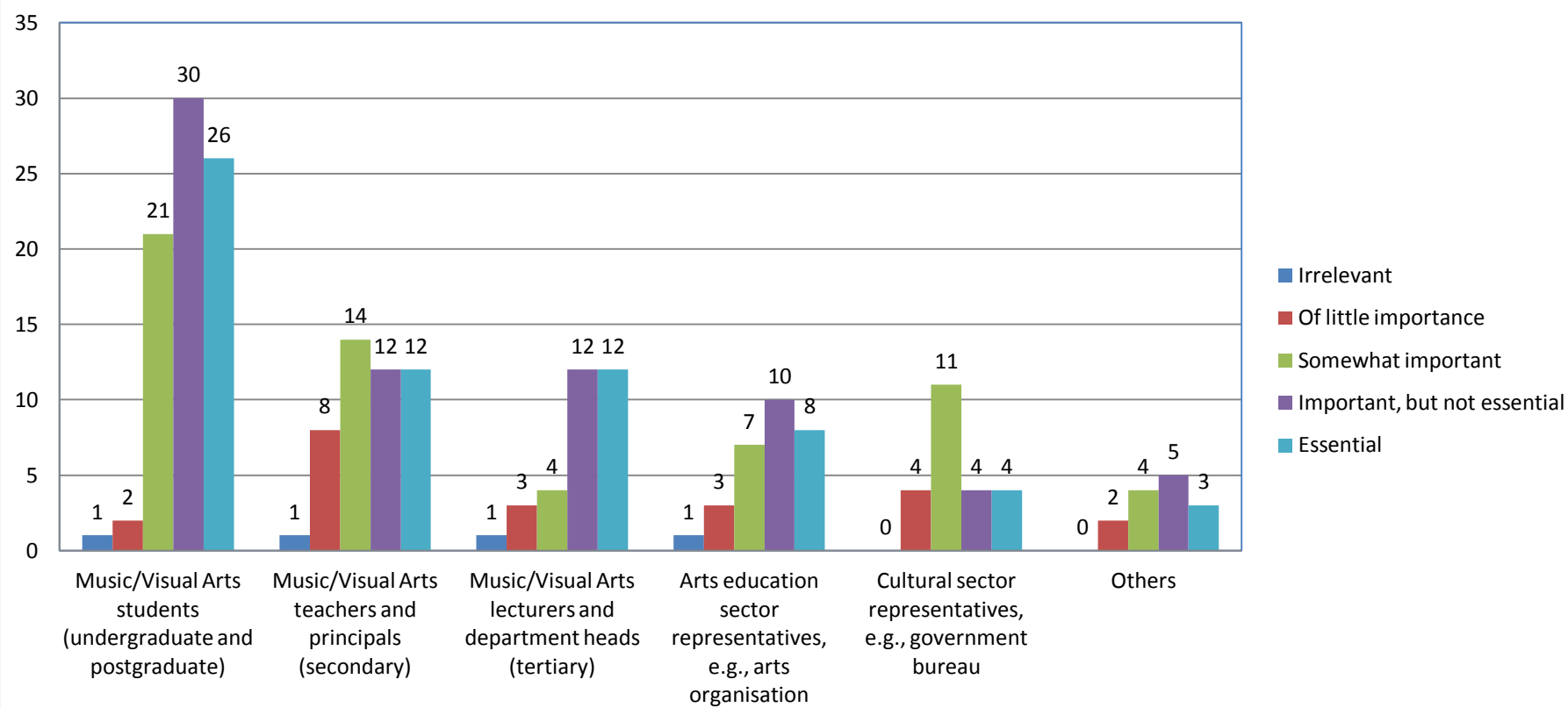
16. How important is it that cultural practices produce "cultural people"? Choose the most appropriate answer. (N=222)



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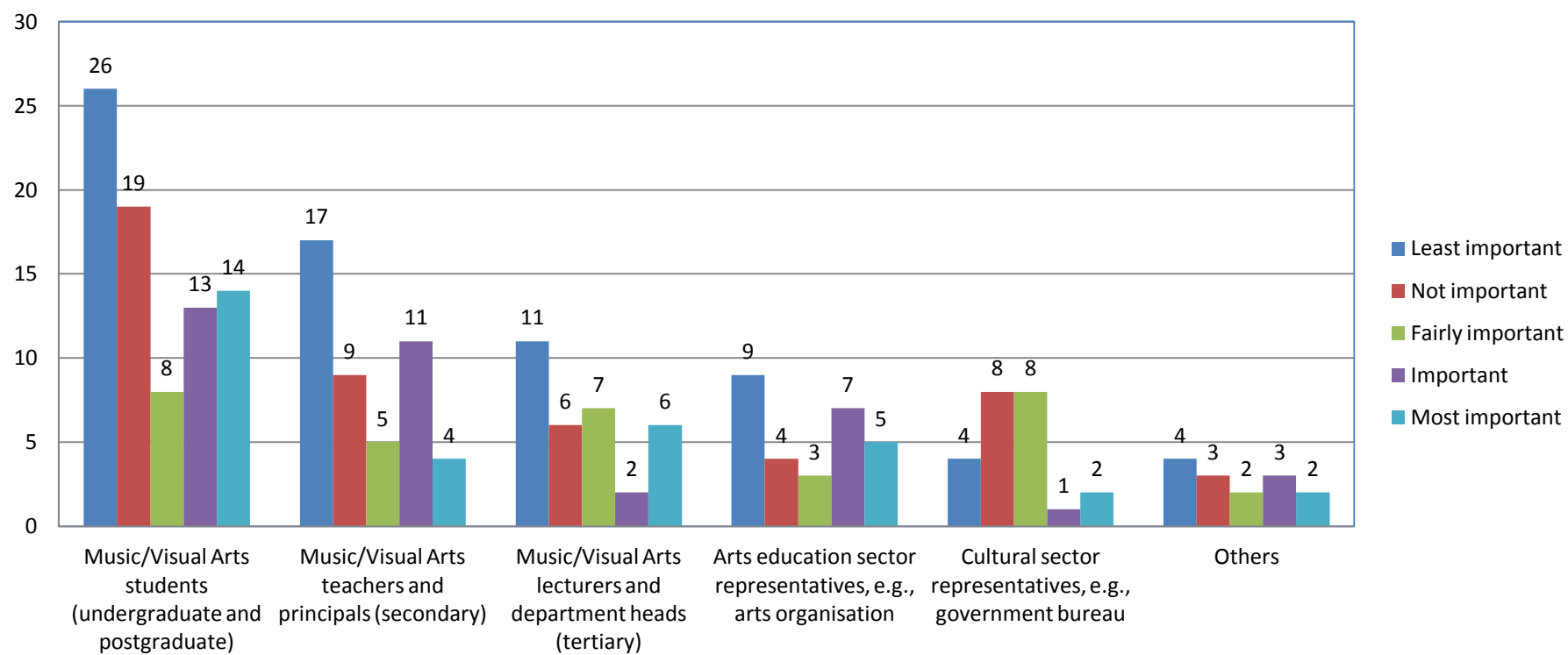
17. How important is it that arts educational practices produce "artistic people"? Choose the most appropriate answer. (N=225)



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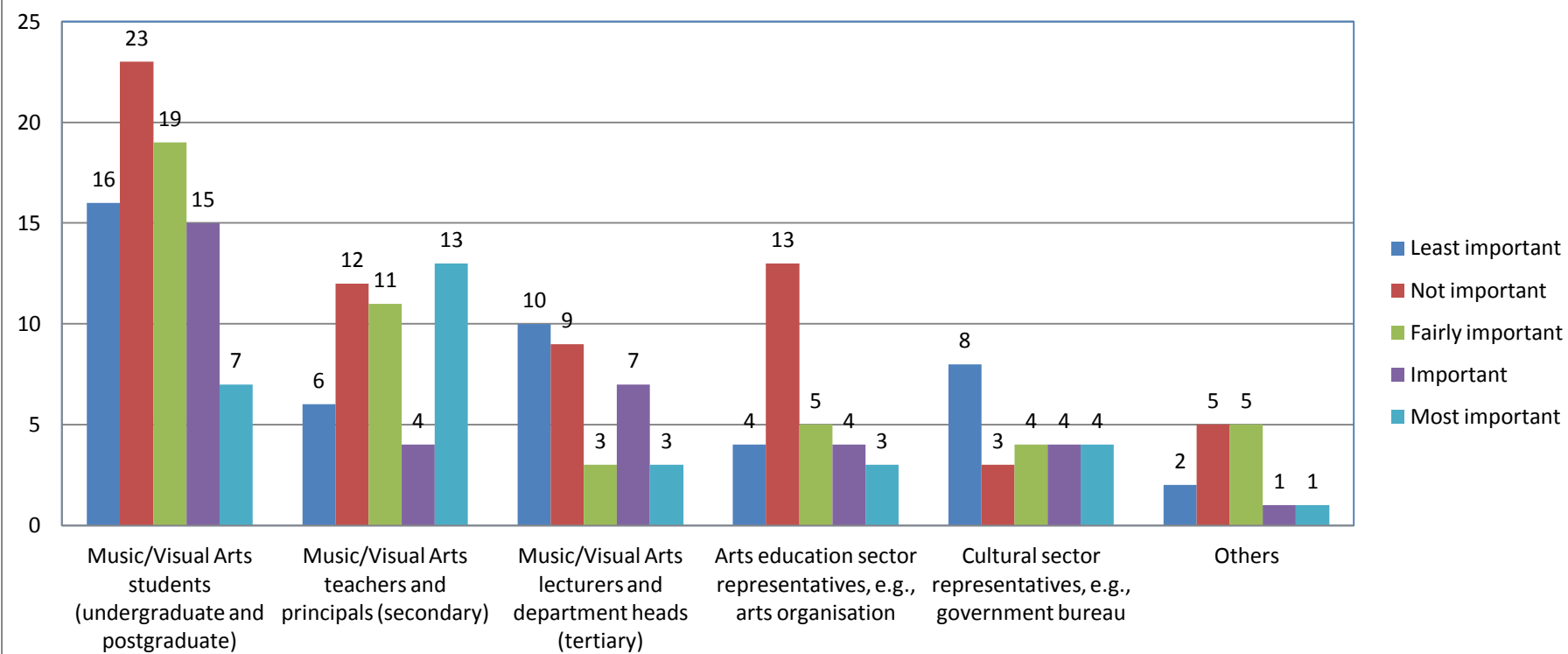
18.1 Which factors need to be considered when developing a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors? Considering fully the notion of co-creation. (N=223)



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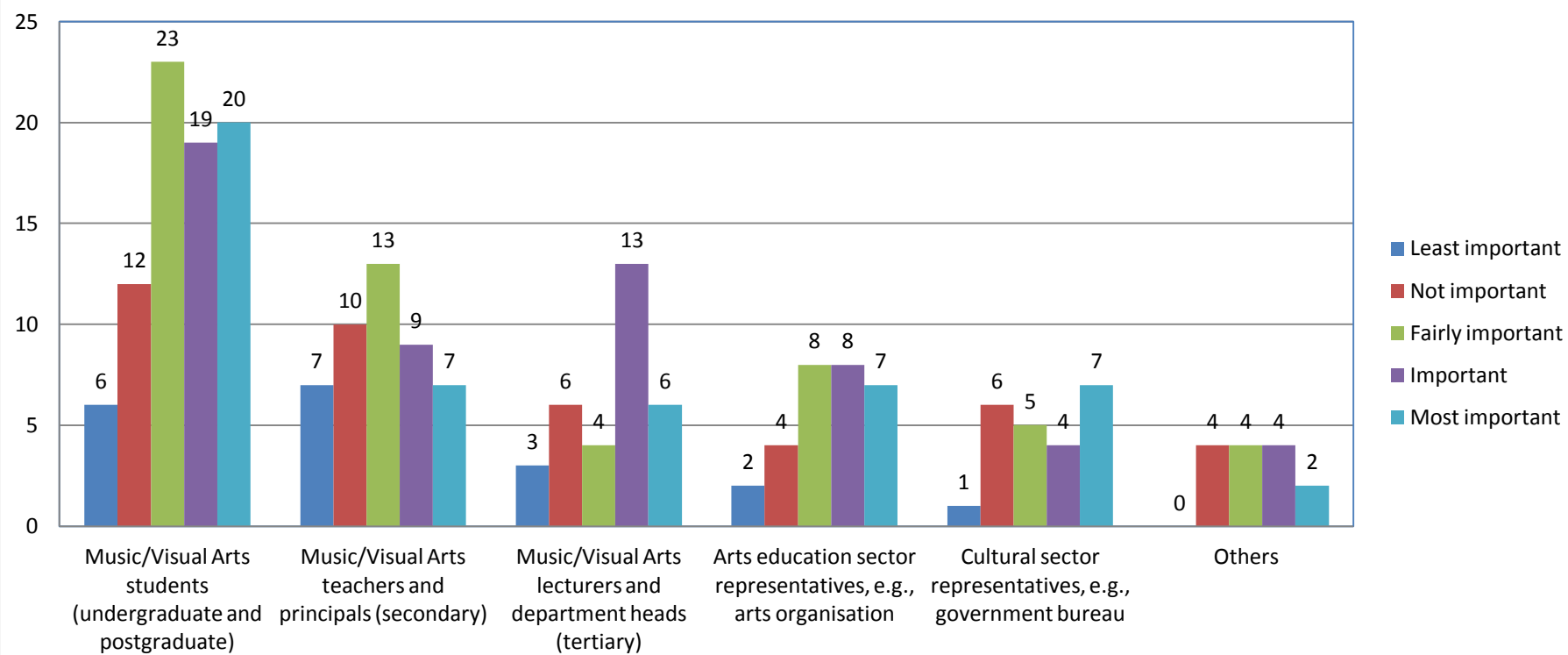
18.2 Which factors need to be considered when developing a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors? Ensuring that projects are sustainable. (N=223)



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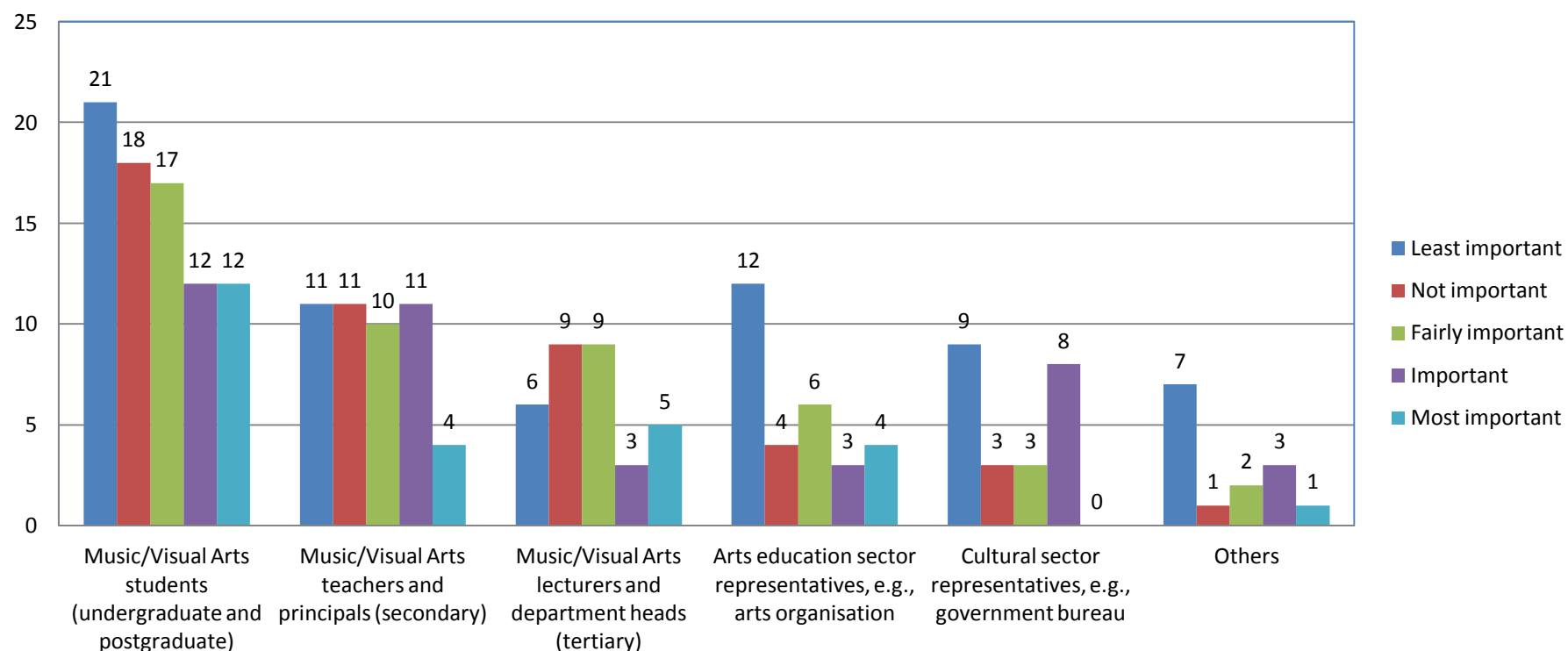
18.3 Which factors need to be considered when developing a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors? Strengthening cultural literacy and social cohesion. (N=224)



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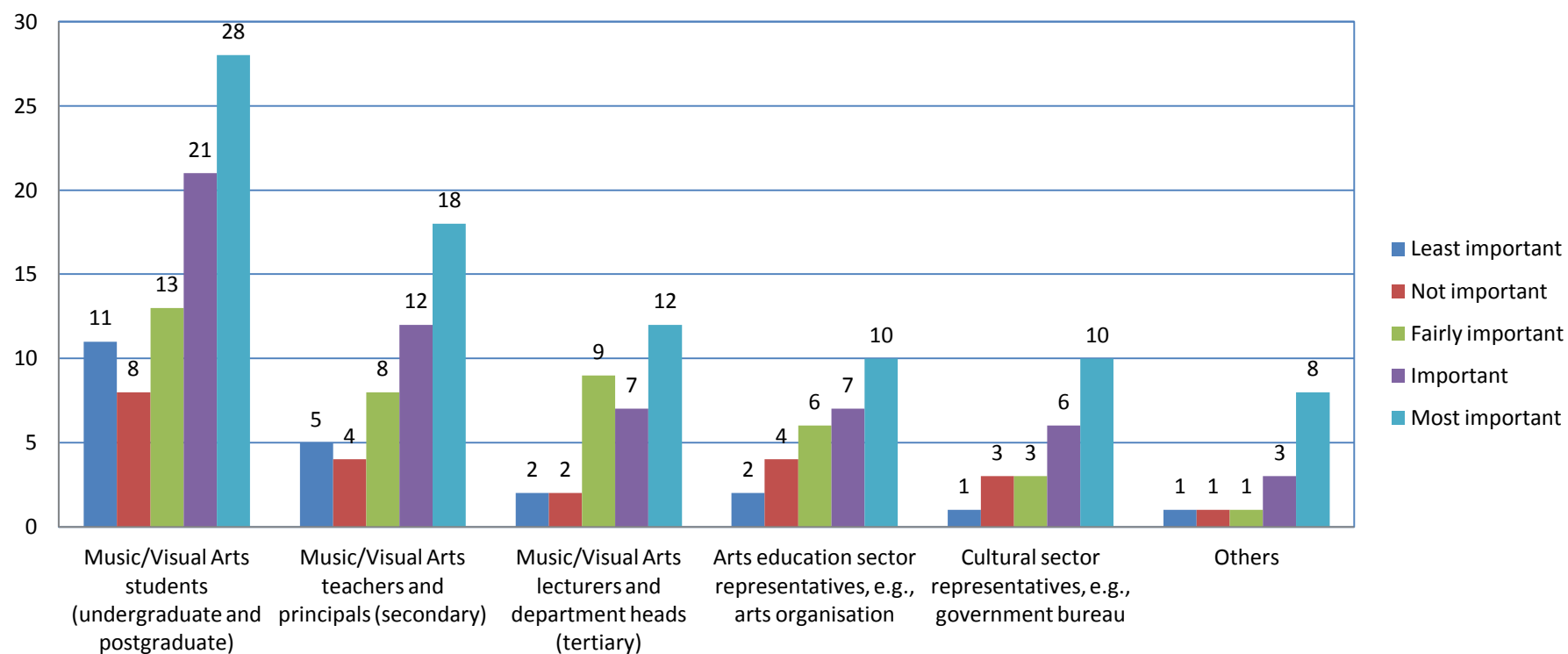
18.4 Which factors need to be considered when developing a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors? Addressing issues of identity and values. (N=225)



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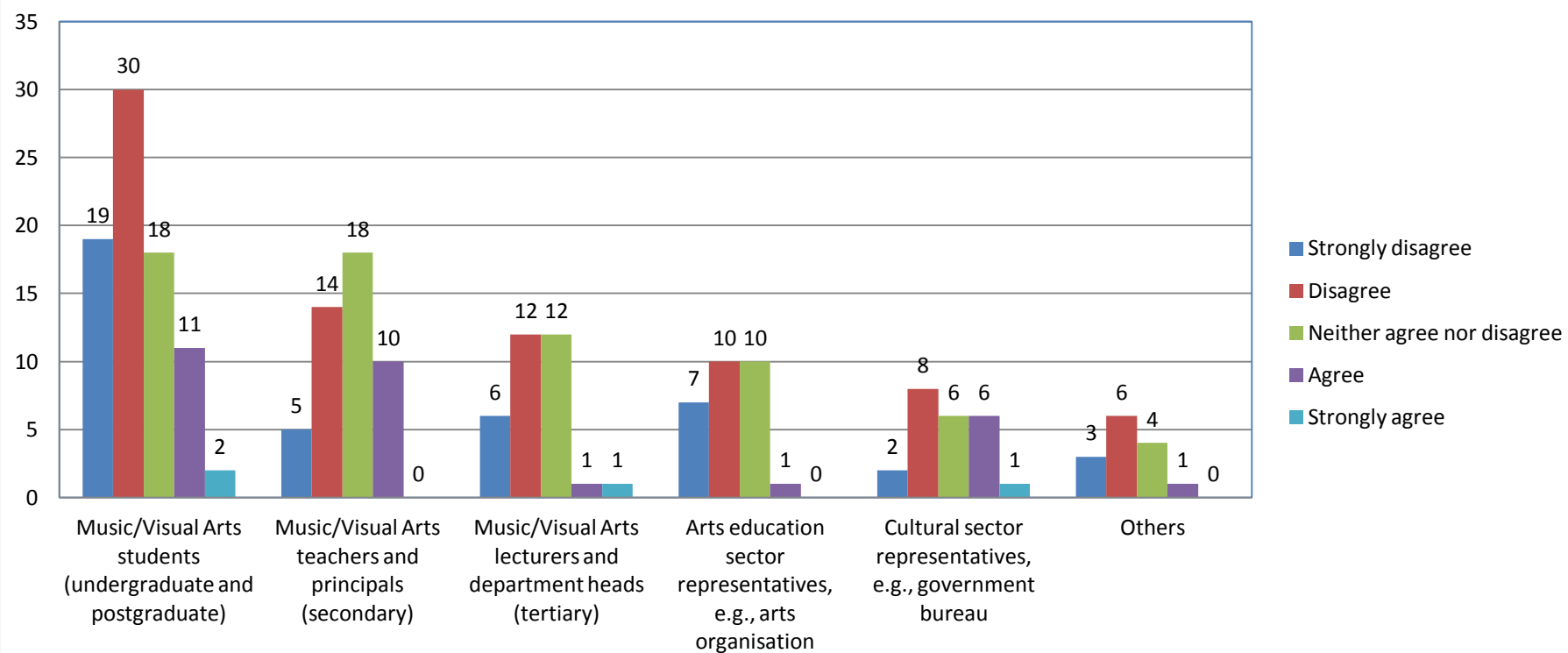
18.5 Which factors need to be considered when developing a partnership between the arts and cultural sectors? Emphasising the importance of diversity and inclusivity. (N=226)



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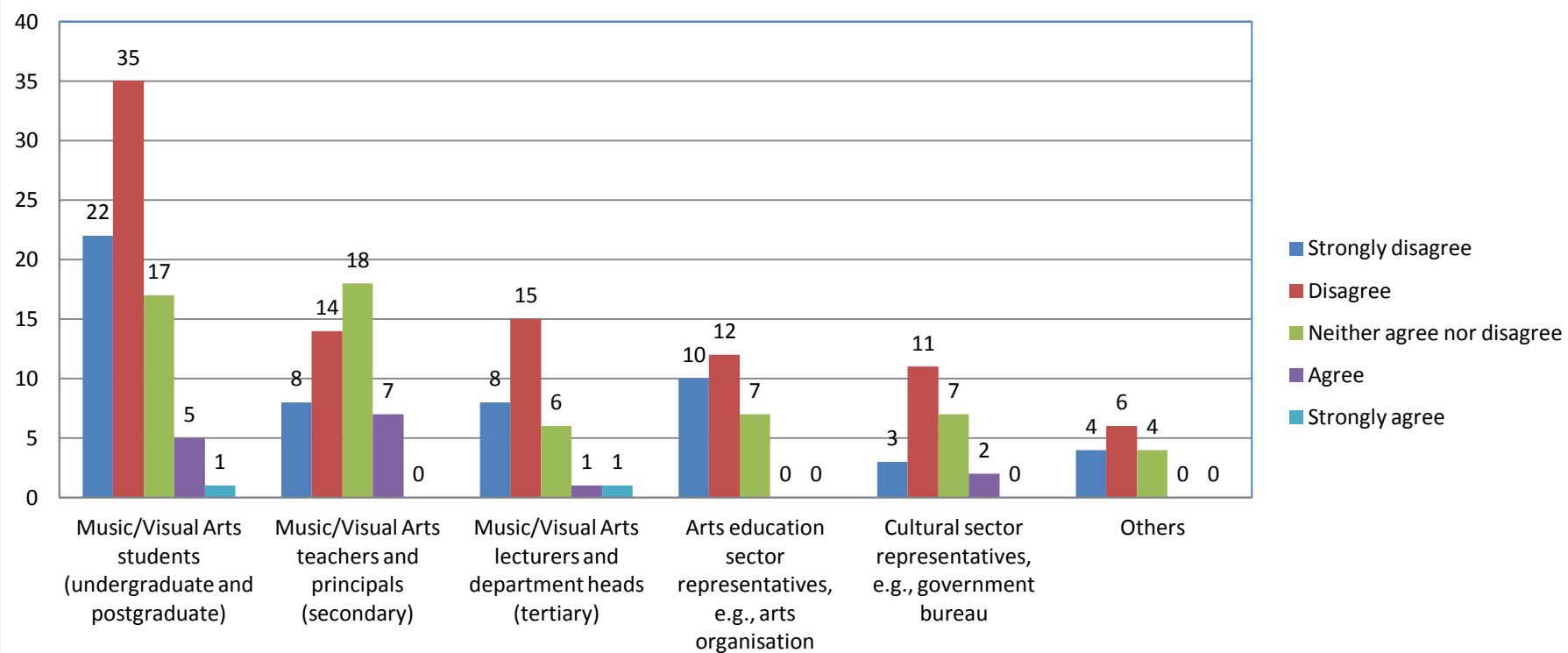
19. Hong Kong's cultural policy has helped create a fertile "soil" to enable a cultural environment to flourish. Indicate your level of agreement. (N=224)



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20. Hong Kong's arts education policy has helped develop well-rounded students and provided them with sufficient workplace and life skills.
Indicate your level of agreement. (N=224)

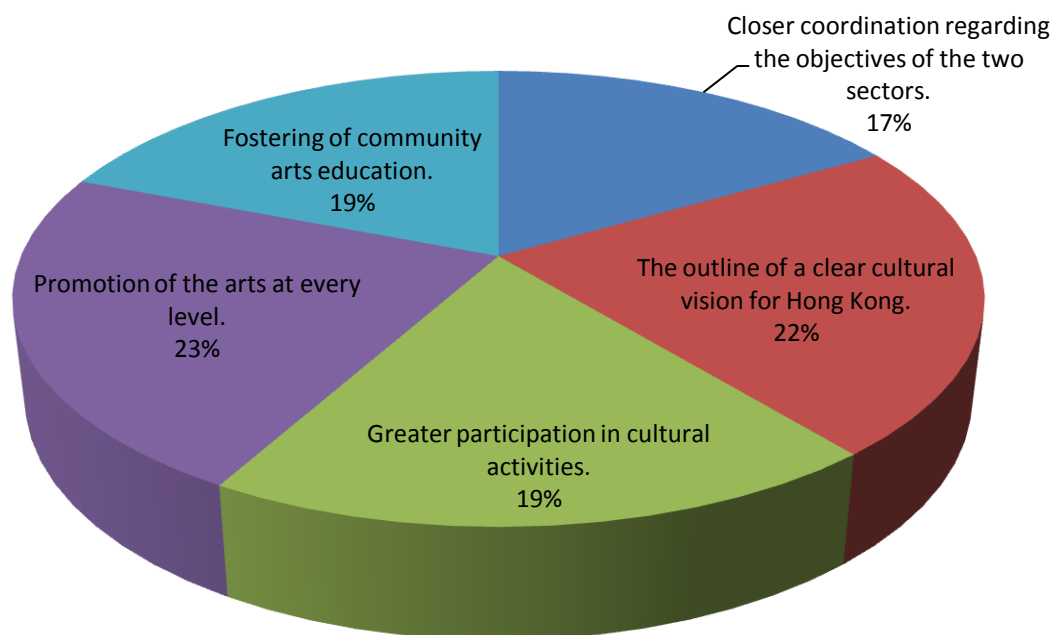


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21. What are the main challenges facing the development of Hong Kong's arts and cultural education policies?

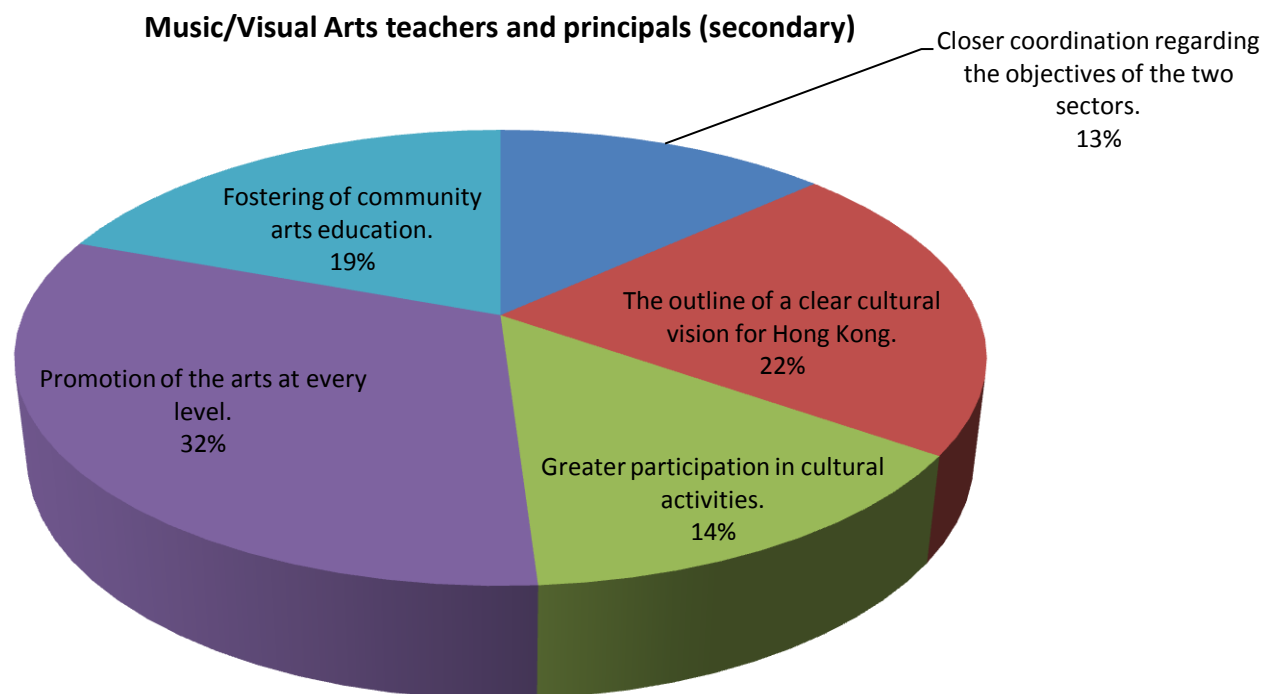
Music/Visual Arts students (undergraduate and postgraduate)



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21. What are the main challenges facing the development of Hong Kong's arts and cultural education policies?

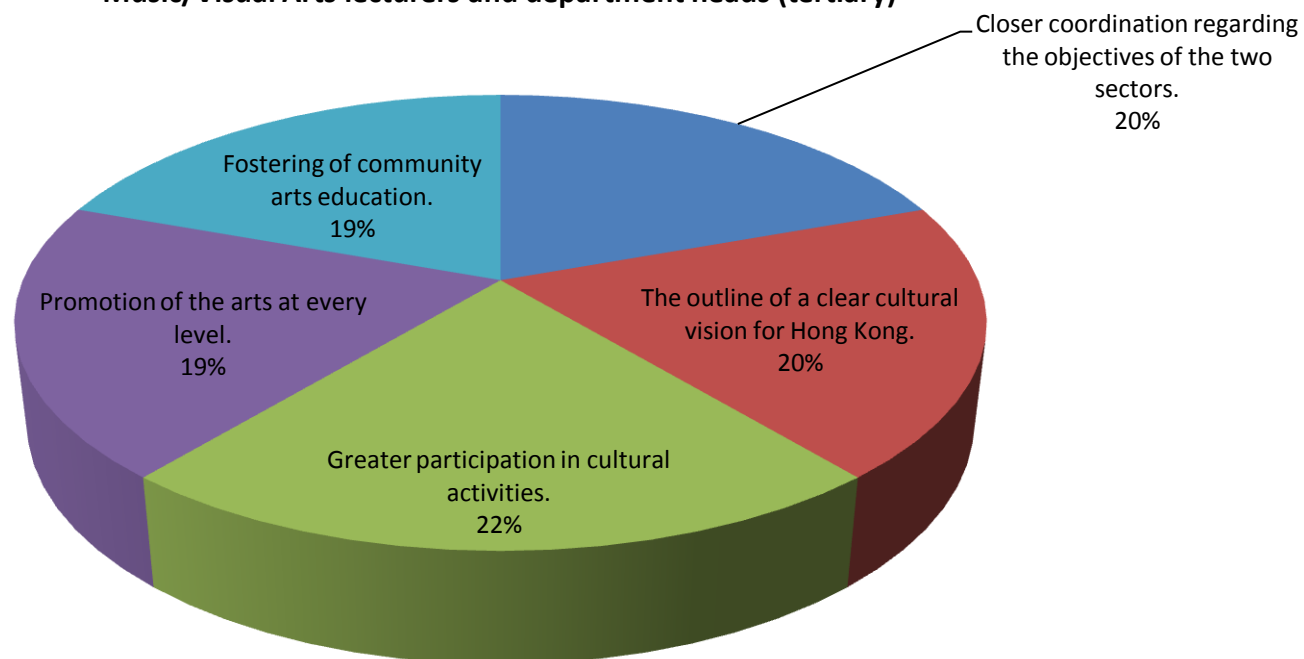


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21. What are the main challenges facing the development of Hong Kong's arts and cultural education policies?

Music/Visual Arts lecturers and department heads (tertiary)

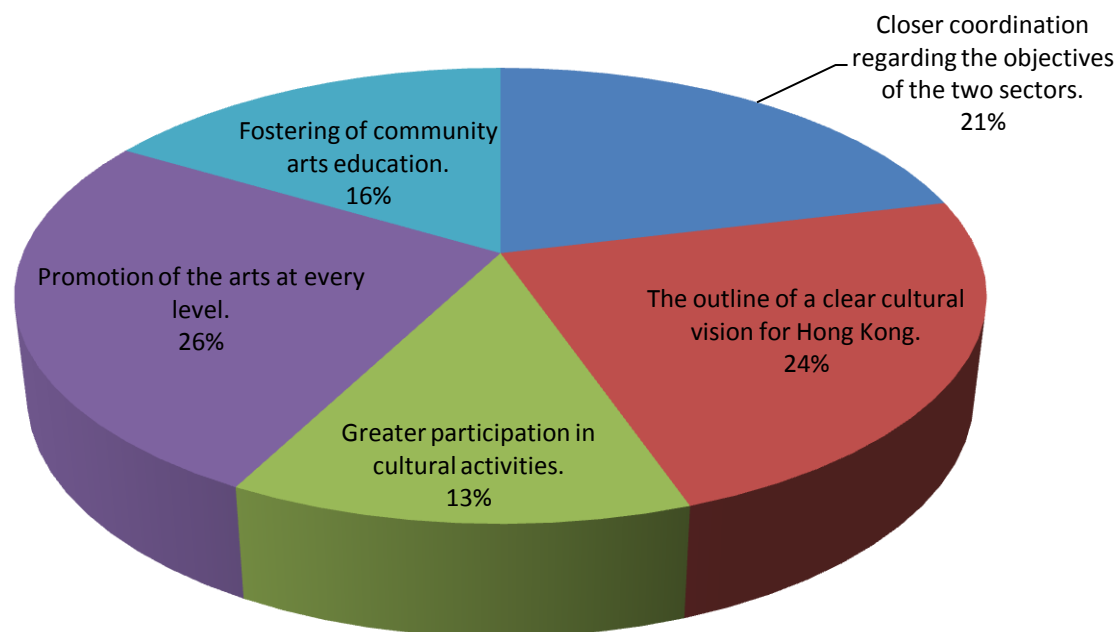


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21. What are the main challenges facing the development of Hong Kong's arts and cultural education policies?

Arts education sector representatives, e.g., arts organisation

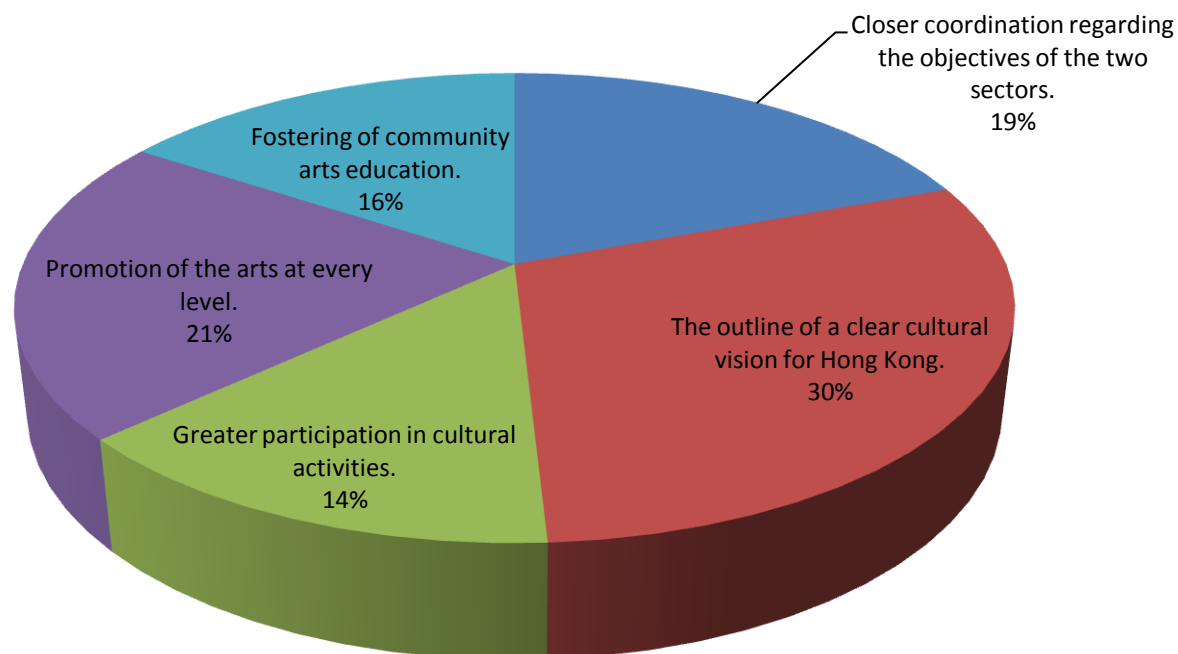


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21. What are the main challenges facing the development of Hong Kong's arts and cultural education policies?

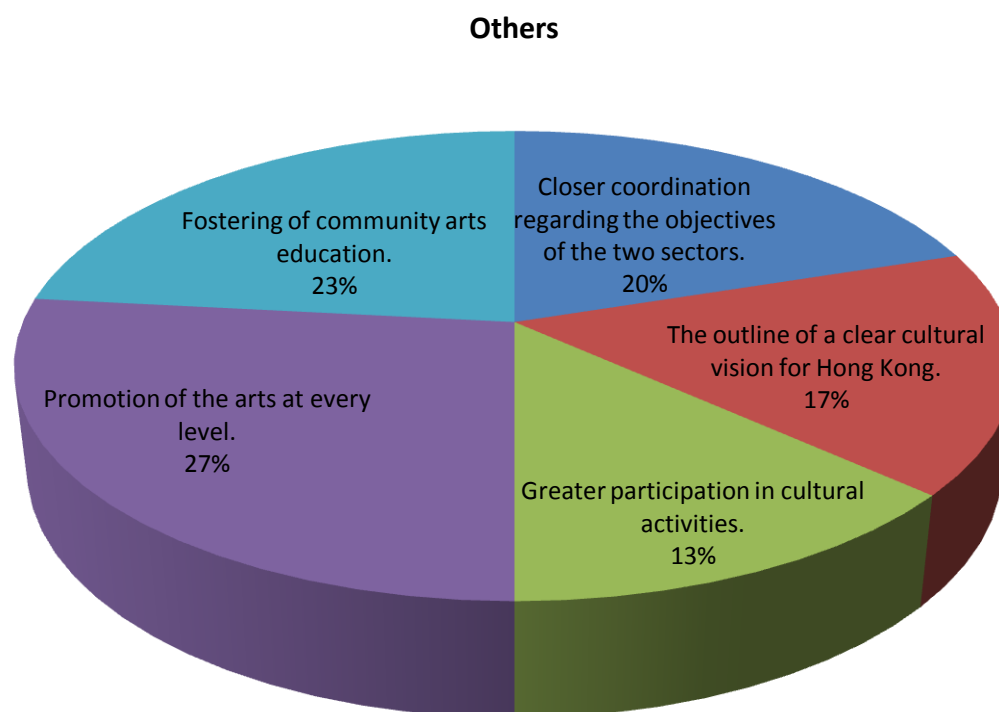
Cultural sector representatives, e.g., government bureau



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21. What are the main challenges facing the development of Hong Kong's arts and cultural education policies?



Appendix 2A: Interview Questions for Music / Visual Arts Postgraduate Students

Conceptualisation:

1. What is the relationship between the arts and culture?
2. Should an arts education policy clearly define “the arts”? Should a cultural policy clearly define “culture”? Why / Why not?
3. What is the main purpose of a cultural policy? What about an arts education policy?
4. To what extent do you agree that artistic practices should produce “artistic people” and that cultural activities should produce “cultural people”?
5. Hong Kong’s cultural policy has stressed the importance of being “culturally educated”. What do you think this means?
6. Which audience should the Government target for a cultural policy, and who should the Government target for an arts education policy?

Communication:

7. What are the main messages that an arts education policy and a cultural policy should communicate?
8. How effectively are Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies being communicated? What justification would you give for making that claim?
9. Should cultural policy be included as part of preparing teachers of arts education?
10. What impact do Hong Kong’s arts education and cultural policies have on you in your professional capacity?

Operationalisation:

11. To what extent do you feel it is important that a partnership is developed between the arts and cultural sectors?
12. How can greater coordination between stakeholders at an intra- and a cross-sectoral level be achieved?
13. Please comment on the issue of sustainability for projects between the arts education and cultural sectors.
14. If applicable, what are the main reasons why Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies have yet to achieve their fundamental objectives of helping to create a fertile “soil” to enable a cultural environment to flourish and helping develop well-rounded and future-equipped students, respectively?
15. What do you see as the main challenge(s) facing Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education development?

Appendix 2B: Interview Questions for Secondary Level Music / Visual Arts Teachers, Principals

Conceptualisation:

1. Please comment on the place the arts occupy within the context of your school and its curriculum.
2. What is the relationship between the arts and culture?
3. Should an arts education policy clearly define “the arts”? Why / Why not?
4. What do you see as being the main purpose of artistic activities? If applicable, how is this reflected (or not) in Hong Kong’s arts education policy?
5. Hong Kong’s cultural policy has stressed the importance of being culturally educated. What do you think it means to be “culturally educated”? Is it important that children are “culturally educated”? Why / Why not?
6. To what extent do you agree that artistic practices should produce “artistic people” and that cultural activities should produce “cultural people”?
7. Which audience should the Government target for a cultural policy, and who should the Government target for an arts education policy?

Communication:

8. What is the main message that an arts education policy should communicate?
9. To what extent does Hong Kong’s arts education policy directly impact on the way the arts are approached / taught within your school?
10. How effectively are Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies being communicated? What justification would you give for making that claim?

Operationalisation:

11. Can you give examples of any projects initiated by the HKADC / LCSD, and supported by the EDB, that the school has been involved with, e.g., the Arts Ambassadors-in-School Scheme / the School Culture Day Scheme / the Arts Experience Scheme for Senior Secondary Students.
12. To what extent do you feel it is important that a partnership is developed between the arts and cultural sectors?
13. Please comment on the issue of sustainability for projects between the arts education and cultural sectors.
14. If applicable, what are the main reasons why Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies have yet to achieve their fundamental objectives of helping to create a fertile “soil” to enable a cultural environment to flourish and helping develop well-rounded and future-equipped students, respectively?
15. What do you see as the main challenge(s) facing Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education development?

**Appendix 2C: Interview Questions for Tertiary Level Music / Visual Arts Lecturers,
Programme Leaders**

Conceptualisation:

1. What is the relationship between the arts and culture?
2. Should an arts education policy clearly define “the arts”? Should a cultural policy clearly define “culture”? Why / Why not?
3. What is the main purpose of a cultural policy? What about an arts education policy? To what extent do you agree that artistic practices should produce “artistic people” and that cultural activities should produce “cultural people”?
4. Hong Kong’s cultural policy has stressed the importance of being “culturally educated”. What do you think this means? How is this different from being “culturally literate”?
5. Which audience should the Government target for a cultural policy, and who should the Government target for an arts education policy?
6. To what extent should Hong Kong’s cultural policy concern itself with issues such as identity and values?

Communication:

7. What are the main messages that an arts education policy and a cultural policy should communicate?
8. How effectively are Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies being communicated? What justification would you give for making that claim?
9. Should cultural policy be included as part of preparing teachers of arts education?
10. What impact do Hong Kong’s arts education and cultural policies have on you in your professional capacity?

Operationalisation:

11. To what extent do you feel it is important that a partnership is developed between the arts and cultural sectors?
12. How can greater coordination between stakeholders at an intra- and a cross-sectoral level be achieved?
13. Please comment on the issue of sustainability for projects between the arts education and cultural sectors.
14. If applicable, what are the main reasons why Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education policies have yet to achieve their fundamental objectives of helping to create a fertile “soil” to enable a cultural environment to flourish and helping develop well-rounded and future-equipped students, respectively?
15. What do you see as the main challenge(s) facing Hong Kong’s cultural and arts education development?

Appendix 2D: Interview Questions for Cultural / Arts Organisation Representatives

Conceptualisation:

1. In which capacity did you answer the questionnaire? Do you see yourself as an arts practitioner / educator, or as a cultural practitioner / educator? Or both?
2. Hong Kong's cultural policy has stressed the importance of being "culturally educated". What do you think this means?
3. Do Hong Kong's arts education and cultural policies demonstrate a clearly defined understanding of "the arts" and "culture", respectively? Should they? Why?
4. Please comment on Hong Kong's cultural policy and its relationship with issues such as Hong Kong's values and identity.
5. What is the main purpose of artistic activities? Do you think artistic activities are different from cultural activities? In what ways are they different?
6. Which audience should the Government target for a cultural policy and who should the Government target for an arts education policy?

Communication:

7. How effectively is Hong Kong's cultural policy being communicated?
8. What is the main message that an arts education policy should communicate?
9. What impact do Hong Kong's arts education and cultural policies have on you in your professional capacity?

Operationalisation:

10. Where do you, both as an individual and as the face of an arts organisation, "stand" in relation to Hong Kong's arts education and cultural policies?
11. What priority level is given to the arts / arts education and culture / cultural policy at an official level? What justification would you give for making that claim?
12. Please comment on the importance of strengthening coordination and creating synergies among stakeholders at both an intra- and a cross-sectoral level.
13. To what extent is sustainability in the context of partnerships / projects between the arts education and cultural sectors an issue?
14. If applicable, what are the main reasons why Hong Kong's cultural and arts education policies have yet to achieve their fundamental objectives of helping to create a fertile "soil" to enable a cultural environment to flourish and helping develop well-rounded and future-equipped students, respectively?
15. What is / are the main challenge facing Hong Kong's arts education and cultural policies?

Appendix 2E: Interview Questions for Cultural / Arts Education Department Representatives

Conceptualisation:

1. What is the relationship between Hong Kong's cultural policy and Hong Kong's ultimate vision of itself as an international cultural metropolis?
2. How is "culture" being defined within the context of the cultural policy? Is it important that "culture" and "the arts" / "arts education" are clearly defined by their respective policymakers when creating such policies? If so, why?
3. What does it mean to be "culturally educated"? How does this differ from being "culturally literate"?
4. To what extent does Hong Kong's cultural policy see its practices as creating "cultural people"?
5. What is the relationship between culture and arts education in Hong Kong's cultural policy? Where is arts education in Hong Kong's cultural policy?
6. Are cultural activities different from artistic activities? If so, how are they different?
7. Please comment on Hong Kong's cultural policy and issues such as Hong Kong's values and identity.

Communication:

8. What is the main message that Hong Kong's cultural policy is communicating?
9. Who is the intended audience for the policy?
10. How does the Home Affairs Bureau gauge whether or not its cultural policy is being effectively communicated?

Operationalisation:

11. What is the role of the Home Affairs Bureau in relation to the remit of and the initiatives provided by organisations such as the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and the Hong Kong Arts Development Council?
12. Please comment on the importance of strengthening coordination and creating synergies among different stakeholders at both an intra- and a cross-sectoral level.
13. Hong Kong's cultural policy stresses the importance of the development of partnerships. Please comment on how cultural and arts partnerships can increase community involvement. To what extent is sustainability an issue?
14. If applicable, what are the main reasons why Hong Kong's cultural policy has yet to achieve its fundamental objective of helping to create a fertile "soil" to enable a cultural environment to flourish?
15. What is / are the main challenge(s) facing Hong Kong's cultural policy?