

**Learning to Live Together:  
A Multi-level Analysis of UNESCO's Comprehensive  
Sexuality Education and LGBT Inclusiveness in Hong Kong**

by

YIN XIAOLIN

A Research Paper submitted to  
the Education University of Hong Kong for  
the degree of Master of Arts in  
Global Histories of Education

May 2024

# DECLARATION

This work has not been submitted previously for examination to any tertiary institution.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*My last salutation is to those who know that I am not perfect but still love me.*

—Rabindranath Tagore

The end of this thesis marks the termination of my Master's journey, which has been hectic and ephemeral, but fantastic. The past ten months seem like a fragile dream, so fleeting that it always made me feel unreal. In the month of May, as if understanding the sentimentality of separation, Hong Kong was drizzling all day. However, all good things must come to an end. Each experience I gained this year is a growth, inadvertently converging into the width of my life. At this moment, I offer my sincere gratitude.

At the very first, I dedicate my highest appreciation to my thesis supervisor, Professor Euan Douglas AULD, for your constant encouragement and guidance. Being the student you mentor was the greatest blessing I had since I arrived at EDUHK. During countless days and nights of self-doubt, it was your support that made me more determined to move towards my goals. I deeply understand that my capability of expertise might be far from your requirements, but you always with full patience, leading me from hand to hand in my research project, which granted me great motivation. I once remember when I was feeling depressed in the library, your praise outside the window always sparked my ambition. Please accept my sincere appreciation for your kindness and support.

Then, I would like to express my gratitude to my program leader, Professor Klaus DITTRICH, who allowed me to be a student of MAGHE. I probably would not catch on to my research interest if you had not appreciated me. Here, I also acknowledge the other teachers who have taught me during my master's degree. Your kind assistance has allowed me to step closer to the temple of academia.

I also want to thank my family and my friends who keep supporting me. There's one more group of people who deserve special thanks, including Constance, VV, Elliana and Alejandro. Appreciate your personal sharing on this topic, which greatly inspired me.

Lastly, I'd like to talk to the groups I studied in this thesis, "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars." My original intention for this research was to contribute to a better education in my humble strength, even though I know I am not nearly enough.

"Reach high, for stars lie hidden in you. Dream deep, for every dream precedes the goal." Hopefully, one day in the future, I shall reach the higher temple of academia and become someone who has the capacity to make the world and education better.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>1. Introduction</b> .....   | 1  |
| <b>1.1 Background and Rationale</b> .....  | 1  |
| <b>1.2 Research Objectives and Questions</b> .....   | 4  |
| 1.2.1 Research Objectives .....  | 4  |
| 1.2.2 Research Questions .....   | 4  |
| <b>1.3 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework</b> .....  | 4  |
| 1.3.1 Global Discourses in Education .....   | 5  |
| 1.3.2 Global governance and global education policies .....                                      | 6  |
| <b>1.4 Methodology</b> .....   | 8  |
| <b>2. How did the LGBT community come into the global spotlight?</b> .....                       | 10 |
| <b>2.1 How did the attention of the LGBT community rise?</b> .....                               | 10 |
| <b>2.2 Rising Concern for LGBT and the International LGBT Rights Movement</b><br>.....           | 11 |
| 2.2.1 Early Nineteenth Century-WWII: Pioneers spark the movements .....                          | 12 |
| 2.2.2 WWII-1965: Battle of the Coalitions: the rise and union of LGBT<br>organisations .....     | 14 |
| 2.2.3 1965-1993: From non-official organisations to official organisations ..                    | 17 |
| 2.2.4 After 1993: International organisations provide LGBT rights as a global<br>discourse ..... | 20 |
| <b>3. Comprehensive Sexuality Education: the way UNESCO promotes the tolerance</b>               |    |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>of the LGBT community</b> .....                                       | 23 |
| <b>3.1 What is comprehensive sexuality education (CSE)?</b> .....        | 23 |
| <b>3.2 The history of comprehensive sexuality education</b> .....        | 24 |
| <b>3.3 Promotion of CSE by UNESCO</b> .....                              | 26 |
| <b>3.4 Relationship between SDGs and CSE</b> .....                       | 29 |
| <b>3.5 Controversy over CSE: implementation or abandonment?</b> .....    | 30 |
| <b>4. Adaptation and Enaction of CSE in Hong Kong</b> .....              | 32 |
| <b>4.1 Background of sexuality education in Hong Kong</b> .....          | 32 |
| <b>4.2 The sexuality education guideline in Hong Kong</b> .....          | 34 |
| <b>4.3 The situation of sexuality education in Hong Kong today</b> ..... | 36 |
| <b>4.4 The Future of Hong Kong Sexuality Education</b> .....             | 40 |
| <b>5. Conclusion</b> .....   | 41 |
| <b>Bibliography</b> .....  | 45 |
| <b>APPENDICES 1</b> .....  | 54 |
| <b>APPENDICES 2</b> .....  | 59 |

# LIST OF TABLES

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Table 1: Match of Key Concepts in ITGSE and Subjects in Hong Kong Primary and<br>Secondary School..... | 34 |
|--|----|

## LIST OF FIGURES

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Figure 1: Trends in frequency of ‘LGBT’ and ‘LGBTQ’ usage in English books          | 10 |
| Figure 2: Trends in frequency of ‘LGBT’ and ‘LGBTQ’ usage in French books           | 11 |
| Figure 3: Trends in frequency of ‘LGBT’ and ‘LGBTQ’ usage in German books<br>.....  | 11 |
| Figure 4: Trends in frequency of ‘LGBT’ and ‘LGBTQ’ usage in Spanish books<br>..... | 11 |
| Figure 5: Trends in frequency of ‘LGBT’ and ‘LGBTQ’ usage in Russian books<br>..... | 11 |



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| AIDS/HIV | Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome                               |
| COC      | Culture and Recreational Centre                                  |
| CSE      | Comprehensive Sexuality Education                                |
| ED       | Education Department   |
| EDB      | Education Bureau   |
| EOC      | Equal Opportunities Commission                                   |
| EU       | European Union   |
| GEP      | Global Education Policy  |
| GLF      | Gay Liberation Front   |
| ICSE     | International Committee for Sexual Equality                      |
| IGA      | International Gay Association                                    |
| ILGA     | International Lesbian and Gay Association                        |
| ITGSE    | International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education          |
| LGBT     | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender                              |
| LGBTI    | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex                    |
| NGO      | Non-governmental Organization                                    |
| SDG      | Sustainable Development Goals                                    |
| SIECUS   | Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States |
| SOGIE    | Sexual orientation, Gender identity, and Gender expression       |
| UN       | United Nations   |

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNFPA  | United Nations Population Fund                                   |
| UNICEF | The United Nations Children's Fund                               |

## ABSTRACT

In recent years, there have been numerous global agendas on the LGBT community, receiving more and more attention from governments. Nevertheless, gender-based bullying and violence in schools have not decreased, as well as school environments remain unsafe and non-inclusive for the LGBTQ community. This thesis aims to enhance understanding of LGBT inclusivity and CSE and its adaptation and enactment in Hong Kong. It provides an in-depth analysis of CSE and answers three main research questions: (1) How did LGBT rights rise to become a global discourse? (2) How was CSE promoted from the UNESCO agenda to global education policy? (3) How has CSE been transferred to sexuality education policy in Hong Kong? To address these questions, first, it traces the historical development of LGBT movements, which evolved from the start of individual pioneers to the establishment of LGBT organisations and large-scale transnational LGBT rights movements, and its rise to become a global education discourse. Next, it explores LGBT inclusiveness which has been packaged as “gender equality”, “non-discrimination”, “human rights” etc, and promoted within CSE by agenda support, technical support for monitoring and social media push as a global education policy. Finally, it analyses CSE which has been adapted and enacted through weakening gender diversity, integrating concepts into different subjects, not creating separate subjects, etc. in Hong Kong, providing reflections on its impact and implications for policy.

**Keywords:** UNESCO, global education policy, Comprehensive Sexuality Education,  
LGBT inclusiveness

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background and Rationale

Gender-based discrimination and school bullying usually happen in educational institutions, especially among LGBT groups. There are plenty of cases to evidence that LGBT students are facing serious exclusion and bullying in schools. A student from a Hong Kong religious school was afraid of the non-acceptance of same-sex orientation, he could only hide his emotions even if being bullied and humiliated, considering himself a “sinner” and felt depressed and suicidal without the bravery to tell his teacher or school social worker. He said, “The school cannot see me, and even if they do see me, they can only see me who ‘must repent’, but they cannot hear my true heart!”<sup>1</sup> A survey in Hong Kong shows that most of the violence experienced by the LGBT community was non-physical, with 60.3% of the 614 respondents stating that they had experienced non-physical forms of violence, 9.4% experiencing both non-physical and physical violence, and 0.9% experiencing only physical violence.<sup>2</sup>

The growing school discrimination and bullying in the LGBT community are becoming a global issue. Such incidents of violence in schools not only happen in Hong Kong, but also happen in the US, UK and some other countries. Some students even lost their lives as a result. The *2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey* by America shows that

---

<sup>1</sup> KWOK Kan, “Tongzhi Xuesheng zisha: Tingbudao Kanbudao Zhenshi De Wo 同志學生自殺：聽不到看不到真實的我 [Gay Student Suicide: Can’t Hear or See the Real Me],” GDOTTV, updated on July 19, 2022, <https://gdottv.com/main/archives/28628>.

<sup>2</sup> Rebecca L. Stotzer, “Sexual Orientation-Based Violence in Hong Kong,” *Asian-Pacific Law and Policy Journal* 14 (2012): 84.

“more U.S. high school students who self-identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual report having been bullied on school property (23%) and cyberbullied (27%) in the past year than their straight peers (7% and 13%, respectively).”<sup>3</sup> The UNESCO’s document *Safe, seen and included: report on school-based sexuality education* published in 2023 mentions that “The majority of the 21,000 LGBTI+ youth surveyed from 108 countries say their needs are not addressed by education and school policies”.<sup>4</sup>

To solve these serious gender-based school discrimination, victimisation, as well as unfair treatment, international organisations are putting a lot of education policies to balance this condition. UNESCO responded to this issue in the early years. In 2009, the first version of *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach for schools, teachers and health educators* was published by UNESCO, offering a clear guidance of CSE, but little about LGBT, sexual orientation and gender-based violence. The International Consultation on Homophobic Bullying in Educational Institutions was organized by UNESCO in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 6-9 December 2011.<sup>5</sup> As the LGBT community has grown through campaigning and lobbying, LGBT rights have become a global discourse that is difficult to ignore. The 2018 *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach* added a multitude of references to inclusivity to the original guidance, which has given the LGBT community a new emphasis in the education sector.

---

<sup>3</sup> *2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey*, (New York: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021), [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/YRBS\\_Data-Summary-Trends\\_Report2023\\_508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/YRBS_Data-Summary-Trends_Report2023_508.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> *Safe, Seen and Included: report on School-Based Sexuality Education*, (Paris: UNESCO, 2023), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000387610>.

<sup>5</sup> *Out in the open: education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity expression*, (Paris: UNESCO, 2016), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000244652>.

But what is unavoidable is that the inclusion of the LGBT community has made CSE even more debatable. While Europe and the US have made a big effort to enforce CSE in schools, there are still many countries in Africa and Asia that don't apply CSE, and a large number of countries are highly discriminatory against the LGBT community. In Hong Kong, CSE exists in the curriculum framework, but many hardships have occurred during implementation, as sexuality is not as openly discussed or expressed here. Some religious families are opposed to sexuality education in schools, and some teachers always avoid sensitive topics such as LGBT and sexual orientation, even some schools take away the relevant lessons. "A study found that 13.8% of the responded schools did not teach sexuality education in classrooms at all, and only 2.0% of schools taught sexuality education as an independent subject in the 2018/19 school year."<sup>6</sup> The implementation of sexuality education is becoming a dilemma in Hong Kong and even the world.

Most studies on CSE in Hong Kong have been led by government departments, focusing on areas of analysing the implementation of CSE school curriculum and teaching. Research on gender-based school bullying along with LGBT discrimination and violence is basically unrelated to the aspect of sexuality education policy. Given that the inclusiveness of the LGBT community in Hong Kong has become a big issue nowadays, this study will explain the reasons for the existing problems from the sexuality education policy perspective.

---

<sup>6</sup> *A Study on Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Secondary School of Hong Kong*, (Hong Kong: EOC, 2022), 4, <https://www.eoc.org.hk/compass/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/SexEduReport-Executive-Summary-EN.pdf>.

## **1.2 Research Objectives and Questions**

### **1.2.1 Research Objectives**

To address the above gaps and enhance understanding of CSE in Hong Kong, the thesis has three main objectives:

1. Investigate the origins and growth of movements advocating LGBT rights, and its rise to become a global education discourse.
2. Explore how LGBT rights are advanced through CSE, and how it has been adapted and promoted by UNESCO as a global education policy.
3. Analyse how CSE has been adapted and enacted to promote LGBT rights and inclusivity in Hong Kong, and evaluate its impact.

### **1.2.2 Research Questions**

Based on the objectives above, this study will answer the following three questions:

1. How did LGBT rights rise to become a global discourse?
2. How have LGBT rights and inclusivity been articulated and promoted through comprehensive sexuality education?
3. How has CSE been adapted and enacted to promote LGBT rights and inclusivity in Hong Kong?

Each of these questions will be resolved sequentially in the theoretical and conceptual framework.

## **1.3 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

In this section, the three questions above will be answered. Firstly, I will explain the role of global discourse in education and its impact on education based on discourse



analysis. Then, I will explore how international organisations, as one of the subjects of global governance, propose and promote the development of global education policy and also explain the transition from global education policy to local policy.

### 1.3.1 Global Discourses in Education

Initially, discourse analysis was used in linguistic research, however, scholars such as Foucault have developed discourse analysis, which can be used in various fields of analysis today, including culture, society, human rights, education, globalisation etc. The subjects of discourse include not only nations and international organisations, but also the leaders of nations, the public, the media and so on.<sup>7</sup> Global discourses are so closely linked to globalisation beyond national and linguistic boundaries.<sup>8</sup> Globalisation contributes to the development of transnational movements and debates as well as the establishment of international organisations. Transnational movements and debates make it easier to focus on a particular concept globally, forming different discourse systems. The emergence of international organisations, on the other hand, is a strong support for the promotion of an international focus, due to the increasing authority of international organisations in the past few decades.<sup>9</sup>

Global discourses deeply influence education and how we think about and study pedagogy. It promotes education issues as a global concern and draws the attention of international organisations, thus broadening the scope of the discussion on education,

---

<sup>7</sup> Chen Rudong, "On Building a Global Discourse System: An Approach of Global Rhetoric in Cultural Conflict and Amalgamation," *Journal of Zhejiang University* 1, no. 3 (2015): 84-94.

<sup>8</sup> John Flowerdew, "Globalization Discourse: A View from the East," *Discourse & Society* 13, no. 2 (2002): 209-25.

<sup>9</sup> Tobias Lenz, "The Rising Authority of International Organisations," German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA), 2017.

which is driven by the authority of international organisations. For example, human rights are one of the most powerful parts of the global discourses, providing an opportunity to advance transnational social justice movements,<sup>10</sup> in which the pursuit of equality in the field of education is a major theme of those movements.

In this research, the LGBT community has caught the attention of the world through campaigning, lobbying, etc., which has triggered intense international debates and become a kind of global discourse. However, before this, there was a gap in the academia to study LGBT pedagogy from the perspective of global discourse.

### **1.3.2 Global governance and global education policies**

“At the global level, governance has been viewed primarily as intergovernmental relationships, but it must now be understood as also involving nongovernmental organizations, citizens’ movements, multinational corporations, and the global capital market. Interacting with these are the global mass media of dramatically enlarged influence.”<sup>11</sup> Global governance involves heterogeneous private and public actors at multiple levels or scales of action: local, national, international, and transnational.<sup>12</sup> Within the global governance model, non-state actors can acquire political authority and presence in some policy areas, including education, which suggests that the global governance of education represents a redefinition of the relationship between education

---

<sup>10</sup> Lena Khor, *Human Rights Discourse in a Global Network: Books Beyond Borders*, (Farnham: Routledge, 2013).

<sup>11</sup> Commission on Global Governance, *Our global neighborhood: report of the Commission on Global Governance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

<sup>12</sup> Karen Mundy, “Global Governance, Educational Change,” *Comparative Education* 43, no. 3 (2007): 339–57.

and the state.<sup>13</sup>

International organisations play an important role in global governance in the education field. International organisations are legally binding, which are established by treaties between States, having an ongoing operational structure.<sup>14</sup> Their founders often allowed them to set agendas, promote implementation and make decisions in the presence of national sovereignty,<sup>15</sup> they are considered to be powerful actors who possess “a sphere of autonomy and a resource they can use to shape the behaviour of others in both direct and indirect ways”.<sup>16</sup> After the 1990s, education has been seen as a domain that was boosted into the global arena of policy-making in the context of international initiatives. In particular, the major international organisations active in education like OECD, UNESCO, and World Bank set and influence agendas for education purposes and goals in significant ways.<sup>17</sup> Then international organisations rely on the legitimacy of the rational-legal authority that they represent, and their control over information/data and technical expertise<sup>18</sup> to promote the agendas and global education policies (GEP) in countries all over the world.

While the promotion of GEPs by international organisations is generally of global

---

<sup>13</sup> Antoni Verger, Mario Novelli and Hulya Kosar Altinyelken, “Global Education Policy and International Development: An Introductory Framework,” In *Global education policy and international development: new agendas, issues and policies* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012): 11.

<sup>14</sup> Kerstin Martens, Dennis Niemann, and Alexandra Kaasch, “International Organizations in Global Social Governance,” *Global Dynamics of Social Policy* (Cham: Springer Nature, 2021): 3-21.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Michael N. Barnett, and Martha Finnemore, “The Power of Liberal International Organizations,” In *Power in Global Governance*, ed. Michael N. Barnett and Raymond Duvall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005): 161-84.

<sup>17</sup> Kerstin Martens, Dennis Niemann, and Alexandra Kaasch, “International Organizations in Global Social Governance”, 3-21.

<sup>18</sup> Antoni Verger, Mario Novelli and Hulya Kosar Altinyelken, “Global Education Policy and International Development: An Introductory Framework,” 19.

concern, not all countries and regions adopt it. Even when GEPs are adopted in different regions, they are usually implemented in different ways. “Borrowed policy ideas are modified, indigenized or resisted as they are implemented in the recipient countries”,<sup>19</sup> because they have been embraced, imposed, reproduced, mediated or interrupted by national contexts, political and cultural histories, local education belief systems and by local policy networks/communities,<sup>20</sup> for example, Child-Centred Pedagogy (CCP) was used differently in Uganda and Turkey because regional differences lead to different interpretations of teaching and learning, as well as the fact that classroom contexts and student acceptance need to be taken into account.<sup>21</sup>

UNESCO is a very influential international organisation in the field of education and a member of global governance. In this thesis, I will analyse the controversies that have emerged from its GEP — comprehensive sexuality education. This GEP is not currently implemented in all regions of the world and even if a region adopts UNESCO’s policy, it is not a ‘replica’ but a policy that is already in transition.<sup>22</sup> This study uses Hong Kong as an example to examine how CSE has been transformed since it arrived in Hong Kong and what is the current status of implementation.

#### **1.4 Methodology**

This study uses interpretivism as a guide and qualitative research as a methodology,

---

<sup>19</sup> Antoni Verger, Mario Novelli and Hulya Kosar Altinyelken, “Global Education Policy and International Development: An Introductory Framework,” 27.

<sup>20</sup> Sonia Exley, Annette Braun, and Stephen Ball, “Global Education Policy: Networks and Flows,” *Critical Studies in Education* 52, no. 3 (2011): 213–18.

<sup>21</sup> Antoni Verger, Mario Novelli and Hulya Kosar Altinyelken, “Global Education Policy and International Development: An Introductory Framework,” 27-8.

<sup>22</sup> Antoni Verger, Mario Novelli and Hulya Kosar Altinyelken, “Global Education Policy and International Development: An Introductory Framework,” 27.

analysing historical academic articles on the LGBT movements in the way of discourse analysis. By means of analysing the power relationships between the organisers of LGBT movements and other social groups, including governments, social media, the public etc., in different periods, I resolved the change of discourse of power in the games between the LGBT community and different social subjects.

The method of document analysis and case study are used in the second and third parts of the project. By comparing the document of SIECUS *Guidelines for Comprehensive Sexuality Education* and the first version of UNESCO's *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach for schools, teachers and health educators* in 2009 as well as 2018 *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach*, the second part of the project was found the differences on details in sexual orientation, thus, the trends of sexual orientation and LGBT community in UNESCO's documents are examined. The third part also does a comparison on Hong Kong sexuality education guidelines in different periods and analyses the meanings between Hong Kong's guidelines and UNESCO's ITGSE, aiming to match the key concepts in the two documents. Choosing the cases of the “#CSEandMe” program held by UNESCO on Twitter, I summarized the views on the benefits of CSE, which was used as evidence to justify the importance of CSE in the second part. Chapter three will use the cases of The Education University of Hong Kong program, the CUHK program and the North District Secondary School Gender Studies Club to demonstrate the efforts of different education institutions on the inclusion of the LGBT community.

## 2. How did the LGBT community come into the global spotlight?

In this section, the Google Ngram Viewer data shows trends in scholarly attention to “LGBT” and “LGBTQ”, examining the sudden and rapid rise of the terms around 1990. Led by research question one: how LGBT rights rose to become a global discourse, I will analyse from the perspective of LGBT history how the LGBT community developed from individual struggles to the formation of non-governmental organisations, to transnational movements, and ultimately obtained status in international organisations, then the rights of LGBT became a global discourse.

### 2.1 How did the attention of the LGBT community rise?

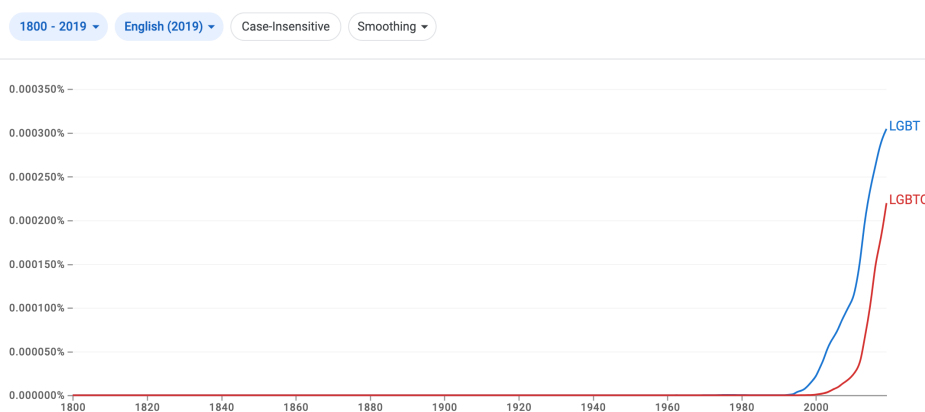


Figure 1: Trends in frequency of ‘LGBT’ and ‘LGBTQ’ usage in English books

This trend graph, sourced from Google Ngram Viewer, is a representation of the trend in the frequency of use of the keywords ‘LGBT’ and ‘LGBTQ’ in a large number of printed English books from 1800 to 2019. According to the graph, ‘LGBT’ and ‘LGBTQ’ were barely found in books before the 1980s. However, starting around the 1990s, there was a sudden and sharp uprising in the trend of ‘LGBT’ being spotlighted in books, and research attention on ‘LGBTQ’ jumped up in a dramatic rush at the beginning of the 21st century.

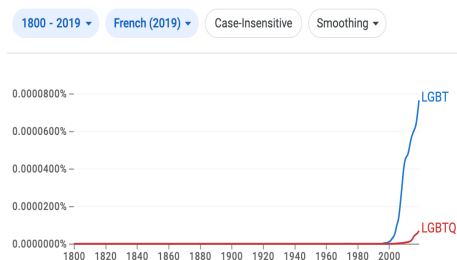


Figure 2: Trends in frequency of 'LGBT' and 'LGBTQ' usage in French books



Figure 3: Trends in frequency of 'LGBT' and 'LGBTQ' usage in German books

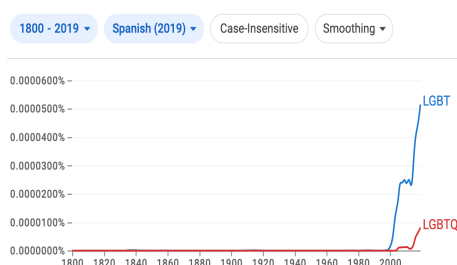


Figure 4: Trends in frequency of 'LGBT' and 'LGBTQ' usage in Spanish books



Figure 5: Trends in frequency of 'LGBT' and 'LGBTQ' usage in Russian books

In comparison to English books, the rate at 'LGBT' appeared in French, German, Spanish and Russian books soared fast around the start of the 21st century, a little later than in English books, but not by that much.

## 2.2 Rising Concern for LGBT and the International LGBT Rights Movement

The global attention on the LGBT community's sudden rise in different countries that occurred one after the other is inextricably linked to the LGBT community's campaign for their rights. This section will talk about the history of the LGBT rights movement, from independent pioneers to LGBT organisations and international LGBT connections, the LGBT community finally got status in international organisations and the rights of LGBT became a global discourse.

### 2.2.1 Early Nineteenth Century-WWII: Pioneers spark the movements

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the growth of Judaism, Christianity and Islam authority led to a dramatic change in attitudes towards homosexuality around the world. From religious perspectives, homosexual behaviour was considered evil, punished and even executed, so homosexuality was criminalised as sodomy<sup>23</sup> and the offenders were treated with torture or even punished with outright death. In the mid-nineteenth century, the Second Industrial Revolution resurrected the worker family, with men earning a living outside and women doing the laundry and sewing at home. The capitalist bourgeoisie, as the ruling class, joined in the fight against homosexuality “to consolidate the family as the main unit for the reproduction of labour, from day to day, and one generation to the next.”<sup>24</sup> Despite the abolition of the death penalty for homosexuality in various countries after the French Revolution, homosexuality was still not approved by all social sectors.

The LGBT rights international movement could not have begun without the efforts of pioneers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>25</sup> Walt Whitman put the “manly love of comrades” into poetry and made it public in 1860. This action caught the attention of same-sex men internationally. James Wilper pointed out that Prime-Stevenson deems Whitman “one of the prophets and priests of homosexuality”<sup>26</sup> and Laura A. Belmonte believed that

---

<sup>23</sup> Laura A. Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020), 9.

<sup>24</sup> Peter Morgan, “Class divisions in the gay community,” *International Socialism*, updated on April 4, 2007, <https://isj.org.uk/class-divisions-in-the-gay-community/>.

<sup>25</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 40.

<sup>26</sup> James Wilper, “Sexology, Homosexual History, and Walt Whitman: The ‘Uranian’ Identity in Imre: A Memorandum,” *Critical Survey (Oxford, England)* 22, no. 3 (2010): 52–68.



Whitman was an international hero to same-sex.<sup>27</sup> Whitman's growing reputation created an opportunity for sodomy law modifications, which made *The Offenses against the Person Act* lighten the punishment of sodomy to 10 years in prison in 1961,<sup>28</sup> but that didn't satisfy the gay community because it still attacked their rights.

Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, who created the term "the third sex" as well as "Urningin" and "Dioningin" to express different sexual orientations in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, issued a strong critique of sodomy laws a year later. The public speech he gave on defending the rights of same-sex on August 29, 1867, at the Congress of German Jurists in Munich, marked the beginning of the gay rights movement in Germany. He worked to defend the rights of the same-sex community legally and hoped to turn around medical misperceptions of homosexuality. Unfortunately, he did not ultimately succeed in his struggle for political and legal gains, but the theories he authored profoundly influenced the study of sexology.<sup>29</sup> With the inspiration of Ulrichs, a German-Hungarian human rights advocate Karl-Maria Benkert coined the terms "homosexual" and "heterosexual".

After Ulrichs, a new leader called Magnus Hirschfeld emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. He also played a key role in the history of the LGBT rights international movement. Following Ulrichs, he founded the Scientific Humanitarian Committee (SHC), the first advocacy organization for gay and transgender rights in the world,<sup>30</sup> aiming to abolish *Paragraph 175* which criminalized sexual relations between men.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 18.

<sup>28</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 19-20.

<sup>29</sup> Patrick Singy, "Sexual Identity at the Limits of German Liberalism: Law and Science in the Work of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1825–1895)," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 30, no. 3 (2021): 390-410.

<sup>30</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 35.

<sup>31</sup> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Paragraph 175 and the Nazi Campaign Against

He argued that homosexuality was a natural biological occurrence and same-sex attraction was innate.<sup>32</sup> In 1919, he opened the Institut für Sexualwissenschaft (Institute for Sexual Science or ISS) in his villa in Berlin, where he collected a large number of sexual research materials and books and performed the first modern sex reformation operation all around the world in 1930,<sup>33</sup> and under his impact, more and more European surgeons began to experiment with sex reassignment surgery. He also worried about the rights of the lesbian community and included non-binary genders in the homosexual movement, which was considered avant-garde at that time. Prompted by the pioneers, homosexual theory spread around the world, and the movement to legalise homosexuality gradually expanded from European countries to the United States in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **2.2.2 WWII-1965: Battle of the Coalitions: the rise and union of LGBT organisations**

Magnus Hirschfeld's efforts against *Paragraph 175* failed, the Nazi government's persecution of the homosexual community, as well as the social, cultural and policy exclusion after World War II united the queer community worldwide to fight together and founded the LGBT transnational organizations, which social media as the main medium of communication for these campaigns, laid a solid foundation for them to be recognized in law and politics, expanding their influence on the international stage.

---

Homosexuality," Holocaust Encyclopedia, accessed on May 4, 2024, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/paragraph-175-and-the-nazi-campaign-against-homosexuality>.

<sup>32</sup> "The Scientific-Humanitarian Committee," The Legacy Project, accessed on April 9, 2024, <https://legacyprojectchicago.org/milestone/scientific-humanitarian-committee>.

<sup>33</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 50.

Several governments, including the United States, Germany and the Soviet Union, tightened their repression of homosexuality. According to some statistics, more than 100,000 men were arrested for indecent assault in Germany between 1949 and 1969, of whom 59,000 were convicted.<sup>34</sup>

Faced with such pressures, the Dutch chapter of the Scientific Humanitarian Committee combined with the editors of *Levensrecht* to establish the Cultuurgene Ontspannings Centrum (Cultural and Recreational Centre, COC), which made the Dutch become the first country to rebuild the gay rights movement in Western Europe. Subsequently, Danish gays and lesbians formed the organization Förbundet af 1948 (the League of 1948).<sup>35</sup>

In Sweden, despite the easing of legal restrictions on homosexuality, the majority of the public still considered homosexuality immoral, and Reverend Karl-Erik Kejne openly advocated an anti-homosexual movement. In response to this, several members of Förbundet af 1948 in Sweden founded “the Swedish section of Förbundet af 1948” in 1950, which sought to achieve their aspirations by making suggestions to the government at first. For example, they tried to lower the legal age for allowing same-sex behaviour in 1951. Then in 1952, this organization became independent and named the “Riksförbundet för sexuellt likaberättigande-RFSL” (the National Organization for Sexual Equality),<sup>36</sup> and suggested the Swedish representative of the UN to be concerned about the human rights of the gay community and recommended that same-

---

<sup>34</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 74.

<sup>35</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 77-8.

<sup>36</sup> “RSFL History,” RSFL, updated on February 9, 2009, <https://www.rfsl.se/en/about-us/organisation/history/>.

sex marriages should be legally permitted in 1953. However, it didn't become legal until 1955 when they launched the magazine *Följeslagaren*, which in the 1960s often featured and commented on social issues and provided an avenue for members to get to know each other.

In the 1950s, the U.S. government, under the pretence of anti-communism during the Cold War, fired government officials perceived to have homosexual preferences on a large scale. This operation was known as the Lavender Scare and it even involved non-government officials who were similarly treated unfairly in gender. To achieve the goal of homosexual equality, Harry Hay, Rudi Gernreich, Bob Hull, Charles Rowland, and Dale Jennings gathered and founded the Mattachine Society, which defined homosexuals as a distinct minority and aimed at calling for a greater awareness of gay solidarity to participate in political and social movements.<sup>37</sup> In 1953, the magazine *One*, which was the first successful US magazine targeting gay audiences<sup>38</sup> was founded.

As the Cold War brought political attitudes towards homosexuality to a low pitch, the LGBT community in a number of European countries began to build transnational connections, and in 1951 the COC organised the first International Congress for Sexuality Equality in Amsterdam, which participants came from Denmark, Sweden, Norway, West Germany, England, France, Italy and other Western European countries.<sup>39</sup> Based on Article 2 “Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex,

---

<sup>37</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 82-3.

<sup>38</sup> Nicholas C. Edsall, *Toward Stonewall: Homosexuality and Society in the Modern Western World* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003), 268–75.

<sup>39</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 90.

language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”<sup>40</sup> of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, they telegraphed to the United Nations to request that “steps towards granting [the] status of human, social, and legal equality to homosexual minorities throughout the world.”<sup>41</sup> They also established the International Committee for Sexual Equality (ICSE) to contact other gay and lesbian organisations working for civil rights. Over the next ten years, ICSE continued to associate with other gay organisations in Europe and the United States, including Le Verseau, the Mattachine Society, the magazine *ONE* and others, and even lesbian organisation US-based Daughters of Bilitis (DOB) also joined in.<sup>42</sup>

### **2.2.3 1965-1993: From non-official organisations to official organisations**

As LGBT organisations began to expand transnationally, the legal conservatism of governments provoked the LGBT community to revolt. Despite New York Mattachine and the Daughters of Bilitis split under the influence of radicalism in 1965, protests took the world by storm in the late 1960s.<sup>43</sup> In 1968, the Committee of Revolutionary Pederastic Action founded by students at the University of Paris,<sup>44</sup> whose initiative posters were destroyed by student committee members aroused a combination of feminist and homosexual resistance.

Then in America, police burst into a gay club located in Greenwich Village in New

---

<sup>40</sup> *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, (Paris: UN, 1948),

<https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/03/udhr.pdf>.

<sup>41</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 90.

<sup>42</sup> Leila J. Rupp, “The European Origins of Transnational Organizing: The International Committee for Sexual Equality.” in *LGBT Activism and the Making of Europe* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2014), 29–49.

<sup>43</sup> “Mattachine Society & Daughters of Bilitis Offices,” NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project, accessed on May 6, 2024, <https://www.nyclgbtsites.org/site/mattachine-society-daughters-of-bilitis-offices/>.

<sup>44</sup> Cole Stangler, “Out of the Closet, Into the Streets,” *DISSENT*, updated on May 8, 2018, [https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online\\_articles/may-1968-lgbt-rights-france/](https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/may-1968-lgbt-rights-france/).

York City in June 1969, and roughly treated the patrons, aggravating the conflict between the gay community and the police, which was called the Stonewall Riots. Hundreds of people took part in the movement of demonstrations over the next five days, which are considered by many to be the prime catalyst for the gay liberation movement and the modern fight for LGBT rights in the United States.<sup>45</sup> The uprising marked a major shift in the tone and visibility of LGBT advocacy.<sup>46</sup> A year later, to celebrate the Stonewall Riots, thousands of homosexuals, bisexual and transgenders participated in a Gay Pride march. After the Stonewall Riots, half of the states in America repealed their sodomy laws and allowed LGBT persons to run for public office.

Then on 9 July, Mattachine New York held a “homosexual liberation” meeting which attracted several participants to join in. On July 24, the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) was founded, fusing students and anti-war activism with LGBT radicalism.<sup>47</sup> In the early 1970s, the GLF already had more than a dozen chapters in the United States and other countries, which spread the LGBT liberation movement to the world. GLF appealed to gays and lesbians to fight for themselves, express their same-sex affection openly, and organised dance parties inviting both gay and straight people.

Liberación Homosexual de México (FLH) was founded in 1971 to challenge oppressive government harassment of gay men. Nuestro Mondo (Our World) in Argentina was founded in the 1960s, but more and more participants joined to become a union known as Liberación Homosexual de Argentina (FLH). They commented on

---

<sup>45</sup> “Stonewall riots”, Wikipedia, accessed April 18, 2024, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonewall\\_riots](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonewall_riots).

<sup>46</sup> Martin Duberman, *Stonewall* (New York: Dutton, 1993); David Carter, *Stonewall: The Riots That Sparked the Gay Revolution* (New York: St. Martin’s, 2004).

<sup>47</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 121.

politics and published the magazine *Somos* to inform about homosexuality. However, the organisation was dissolved in 1976 due to government resistance and police repression.<sup>48</sup>

The more aggressive LGBT movement has created an opportunity for the LGBT community to further expand its international discourse. In 1970, the Homophile Youth Movement of the United States wrote a letter to the UN Secretary-General U Thant, declaring that “the civil and legal rights of homosexuals should be insured under the legislation of every country and the world homophile movement should be assisted in its fight for pride, dignity, identity, and social and legal justice.”<sup>49</sup>

Meanwhile, many LGBT nongovernmental organisations were setting up and meeting on issues of human rights and equality. In 1975, the United Nations organised the World Conference on Women in Mexico. At the same time and in the same city, more than 6,000 nongovernmental representatives attended the International Women’s Year Tribune, it was an unofficial, parallel meeting to discuss feminism and homosexism. In August 1978, the International Gay Association (IGA) was founded, which was the first nongovernmental organization devoted to global LGBT equality around the world, dedicated to fighting for international political action for LGBT rights. To compensate for the lack of lesbian participants, the IGA established the Women’s Secretariat in 1980 and renamed the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) in 1986.<sup>50</sup> At the start of the 1980s, the emergence of AIDS dealt a temporary blow to

---

<sup>48</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 124-5.

<sup>49</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 126.

<sup>50</sup> “The history of ILGA: 1978/202,” ILGA, updated on August 7, 2012, <https://ilga.org/news/ilga-history/>.

the victories of the homosexual movement. Several governments and societies believed in the rejection of homosexuality as a means of preventing AIDS, which directly fuelled LGBT communities' revolts. Nevertheless, the ILGA endeavoured to persuade the World Health Organization to remove homosexuality from the *International Classification of Diseases* (ICD).<sup>51</sup> Meanwhile, ILGA continued to cooperate with Amnesty International (AI) to campaign for the human rights of the LGBT community, and eventually, in 1991, AI included the rights of the LGBT community as part of its international human rights work.<sup>52</sup> In 1993, thanks to ILGA's sustainable efforts, it became the first gay and lesbian nongovernmental organisation to be granted official status at the UN, where it could formally propose agenda items, submit suggestions and send observers to meetings.

#### **2.2.4 After 1993: International organisations provide LGBT rights as a global discourse**

The constant lobbying and campaigning for human rights by the gay community has led some governments to begin legalising same-sex behaviour. In addition, ILGA got consultative status in the United Nations, international governmental organisations began to pay attention to the human rights of the LGBT community. In 1994, the UNHRC rejected sodomy laws as a measure to prevent AIDS and recognised gay and lesbian rights for the first time in *Toonen v Australia*, the same year, the European Parliament (EP) appealed to EU member states to equalise rights for gays and lesbians. The discourse of ILGA in the United Nations gradually became more powerful and it

---

<sup>51</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 148.

<sup>52</sup> Belmonte, *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*, 145-.



also gained consultative status in the Council of Europe in 1998. Pushing by international organisations and the ILGA, the Netherlands became the first country to legalise same-sex marriage in 2001, and other countries followed soon. In 2006, *the Yogyakarta Principles* made recommendations on aggression and violence against the LGBT community. The US holds LGBT human rights in the forefront, and in 2010 the U.S. government helped the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) obtain consultative status in the United Nations Economic and Social Council. In November 2011, the UN Commissioner of Human Rights published a report about the discrimination and violence of the LGBT community.

In response to the appeal from the UN, UNESCO held the International Consultation on Homophobic Bullying in Educational Institutions in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 6-9 December 2011 and then published *Education sector responses to homophobic bullying* in 2012, providing practical measures to address homophobia in education for educational institutions,<sup>53</sup> where the term “LGBT” and “LGBTI” first occurred. Then three years later, UNESCO promoted the 2030 Agenda and sustainable development goals, devoted to building a quality education. In 2016, the publication of *Out in the open: education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression: summary report*<sup>54</sup> reflected on the 2030 Agenda in terms of gender education. In 2018, *International technical guidance on sexuality education:*

---

<sup>53</sup> *Education sector responses to homophobic bullying* (Paris: UNESCO, 2012), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000216493>.

<sup>54</sup> *Out in the open: education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression: summary report* (Paris: UNESCO, 2016), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000244652>.

*an evidence-informed approach* included the LGBT into Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met.<sup>55</sup>

On the one hand, the LGBT community has gained more and more attention through campaigning, lobbying, etc. On the other hand, many LGBT NGOs have gained a status of participation in policy-making in international organisations, becoming a strong and powerful global discourse. In recent years, many international organisations, such as UNESCO, UNICEF and the UN, have also been paying great attention to the issues of discrimination and violence against the LGBT community. As professor Naomi Moland said, “It’s become a global conversation.”<sup>56</sup> However, while the LGBT community has gained a place in international organisations and the rights of LGBT have become a global discourse, their status is still unstable. In 2023, Uganda posted *The Anti-Homosexuality Bill* and the death penalty for aggravated homosexuality. Polish President Andrzej Duda, who won a narrow victory in the 2020 election, believed “sexual and gender minorities a ‘rainbow plague’.” Hungary passed the ‘don’t say gay’ law banning the discussion of LGBT issues in schools and on children’s TV.<sup>57</sup> It is the world’s floundering attitudes towards the LGBT community that create the instability of the LGBT global discourse.

---

<sup>55</sup> *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach* (Paris: UNESCO, 2018), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260770>.

<sup>56</sup> Emily Priborkin, “The Legacy of the Stonewall Riots,” American University, updated on June 18, 2019, <https://www.american.edu/sis/news/20190618-the-legacy-of-the-stonewall-riots.cfm>.

<sup>57</sup> Ari Shaw, “The global assault on LGBT rights undermines democracy,” Chatham House, updated on June 2, 2023, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/the-world-today/2023-06/global-assault-LGBT-rights-undermines-democracy>.

### **3. Comprehensive Sexuality Education: the way UNESCO promotes the tolerance of the LGBT community**

In this section, I will answer research question two: how have LGBT rights and inclusivity been articulated and promoted through comprehensive sexuality education? Starting by tracing the history of CSE, I will examine the differences between the three versions of the CSE policy, and analyse the different ways in which UNESCO has promoted CSE as a global education policy. With the launching of the SDG by the UN, I will analyse how CSE has been connected to the SDG. Even though CSE has been implemented in many countries and become a GEP, it is still highly controversial. Therefore, would CSE continue to be promoted globally or be abandoned?

#### **3.1 What is comprehensive sexuality education (CSE)?**

The World Health Organization defines comprehensive sexuality education as “CSE gives young people accurate, age-appropriate information about sexuality and their sexual and reproductive health, which is critical for their health and survival.”<sup>58</sup> On *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach* by UNESCO in 2018, CSE is described as “a curriculum-based process of teaching and learning about the cognitive, emotional, physical, and social aspects of sexuality.”<sup>59</sup> There are different names for CSE in different countries, including ‘life skills’, ‘family life’, or ‘HIV’ education, even sometimes called ‘holistic sexuality education’. It not only focuses on tackling physical sex education issues, including but

---

<sup>58</sup> “Comprehensive sexuality education,” WHO, updated on May 18, 2023, <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/comprehensive-sexuality-education>.

<sup>59</sup> *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach*, 16-7.

not limited to “sexual and reproductive anatomy and physiology”, “puberty and menstruation”, “reproduction, contraception, pregnancy, and childbirth” and “STIs, including HIV and AIDS”, but also concentrate on psychological, social, and emotional issues relating to these topics, like “human rights”, “a healthy and respectful family life and interpersonal relationships”, “personal and shared values”, “cultural and social norms”, “gender equality”, “non-discrimination”, “sexual behaviour”, “gender-based and other violence”, “consent and bodily integrity”, and “sexual abuse and harmful practices such as child, early, and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation/cutting”.<sup>60</sup>

### **3.2 The history of comprehensive sexuality education**

According to Dr Judith Reisman, author of *Sexual Sabotage*, and Dr. Miriam Grossman, author of *You’re Teaching My Child What?*, the beginning of comprehensive sexuality education was relevant to a sexologist Dr. Alfred Kinsey, who considered that children have sexual behaviours since birth. Although there were numerous controversies about his research, today’s comprehensive sexuality education programs, which teach that children of all ages have the right to sexual knowledge and sexual pleasure, are established based on his theories.

After that, the International Planned Parenthood Federation and SIECUS promoted the idea of encouraging children and adults to explore their sexuality without limitations through comprehensive sexuality education programs, using their

---

<sup>60</sup> “Comprehensive Sexuality Education Implementation Toolkit,” UNESCO, accessed on April 19, 2024, <https://csetoolkit.unesco.org/toolkit/getting-started/what-comprehensive-sexuality-education>.

consultative status in the UN.<sup>61</sup> SIECUS first published *Guidelines for Comprehensive Sexuality Education* in the United States in 1991, which is adopted by many countries now.<sup>62</sup> The third edition of guidelines, which was published in 2004, explains what should be learnt at each level from K1-K12 in detail and a clear description of the relationship between LGBTI persons. LGBT was included in comprehensive sexuality education originally.

SIECUS then collaborated with UNESCO to launch the International Guidelines on Sexuality Education, Dr. Nanette Eckert from SIECUS was one of the main actors of the guidance. The first version of *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach for schools, teachers and health educators* published by UNESCO in 2009, aimed to solve the issues of the transition from children or young people to adulthood, human sexuality and relationships, as well as HIV avoidance, but this report showed that *2008 Review of the impact of sexuality education* was deeply flawed in its examination of same-sex relationships. “None examined programmes for gay or lesbian or other young people engaging in same-sex sexual behaviour.”<sup>63</sup> This version of guidance is very poorly presented on same-sex relationships. It only briefly mentions that homosexuality is shamed and discriminated against, leading to problems with family relationships in the family. The part of

---

<sup>61</sup> “The History & Agenda Behind CSE,” Stop CSE, accessed on April 19, 2024, <https://www.comprehensivesexualityeducation.org/history-of-cse/>.

<sup>62</sup> *Guidelines for comprehensive sexuality education: kindergarten through 12th grade* (New York: SIECUS, 2004), [https://healtheeducationresources.unesco.org/sites/default/files/resources/bie\\_guidelines\\_siecus.pdf](https://healtheeducationresources.unesco.org/sites/default/files/resources/bie_guidelines_siecus.pdf).

<sup>63</sup> *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach for schools, teachers and health educators* (Paris: UNESCO, 2009), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000183281>.

solutions only mentions making students feel safe to address the issues of stigma and discrimination of the LGBT community.

Ten years later, in 2018, UNESCO renewed the *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach*. Before the publication of this guidance, the UN promoted the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality<sup>64</sup> and so on. The 2018 sexuality education guidance is under the instruction of SDGs which aim to “achieve a just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world”, meaning that “the needs of the most vulnerable are met and where no one is left behind.”<sup>65</sup> LGBT community is one of the key research targets in this report, showing that the reason LGBT students easily face violence and mental health problems in school is that “insufficient research exists on LGBTI young people’s sexual and reproductive lives and needs, leading to CSE programmes often omit relevant content for LGBTI populations.”<sup>66</sup> Within the educational goals section, this guidance adds the LGBT community to the concept of multiple identities, focusing on the respect for gender identity, and sexual orientation, while also emphasising that learners should be brave enough to challenge their own and others’ gender biases.<sup>67</sup>

### 3.3 Promotion of CSE by UNESCO

International technical guidance on sexuality education was just the first step for UNESCO to launch the CSE on global scale, which was introduced at the level of the

---

<sup>64</sup> “The 17 Goals,” UN, accessed on April 19, 2024, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

<sup>65</sup> *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach*, forward.

<sup>66</sup> *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach*, 25.

<sup>67</sup> *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach*, 48-50.

school-based curriculum. Meanwhile, UNESCO is also moving forward with CSE implementation at other levels in parallel.

On World AIDS Day in 2018, UNESCO launched a global campaign “Comprehensive sexuality education: A foundation for life and love” with a photography exhibition and event.<sup>68</sup> The theme of the event was “Know your status”, which aimed to help young people live healthier lives, know their AIDS status, and enrich the knowledge and skills they need to grow up healthily, so that they can be better prepared to face sexual and reproductive health issues.

Social media is a useful way to promote CSE as a global education policy. UNESCO has launched the Foundation for Life and Love campaign (#CSEandMe) on Twitter, aiming to “highlight the benefits of good quality CSE for all young people.”<sup>69</sup> As a part of the campaign, UNESCO interviewed families and individuals from countries around the world to find out what CSE mean to them. About health, Dr. Jiraporn Arunakul, an adolescent medicine specialist in Thailand said, “Comprehensive sexuality education in the family is going to make your family healthier. It’s talking to your kids about how to be safe and how to take care of themselves.”<sup>70</sup> About the relationships, Emma Collis and her mother believed, “There are positive aspects of it like intimacy, forming a strong relationship with your partner, and love.”<sup>71</sup> In terms of

---

<sup>68</sup> “UNESCO launches its global comprehensive sexuality education campaign,” UNESCO, updated on April 20, 2023, <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-launches-its-global-comprehensive-sexuality-education-campaign>.

<sup>69</sup> UNESCO, “UNESCO launches its global comprehensive sexuality education campaign”.

<sup>70</sup> UNESCO (@UNESCO), “What does comprehensive #sexualityeducation mean for this family from #Thailand?,” Twitter, September 25, 2018, <https://twitter.com/UNESCO/status/1044467812419465217/photo/4>.

<sup>71</sup> UNESCO (@UNESCO), “Comprehensive #SexualityEducation (CSE) is more than biology – it is about relationships, emotions, gender and rights,” Twitter, December 22, 2018, <https://twitter.com/UNESCO/status/1076170478123970560/photo/1>.

gender-based violence, Cindy Sirinya Bishop said, “There are so many myths and misconceptions when it comes to sexual and gender-based violence, and I really wanted to bring this issue that is so often kept in the dark into the public sphere, because the more we talk, perhaps more ways we can find solutions together.”<sup>72</sup> Just as the promotional video says, CSE means family, responsibility, respect, health, and so on for young people. Choosing to promote CSE with social media made the benefits of CSE visible to a wider audience and better publicised.

In addition to large campaigns, UNESCO provided an online toolkit “the Comprehensive Sexuality Education Implementation Toolkit”<sup>73</sup> to facilitate the implementation of CSE in national, governmental and school level, as well as a “Sexuality Education Review and Assessment Tool (SERAT)”<sup>74</sup> for countries to monitor the delivery of CSE. To strengthen cooperation with civil society, UNESCO and UNFPA organised the Global Partnership Forum on Comprehensive Sexuality Education.<sup>75</sup> To guarantee a balanced development of the CSE programme in the different regions, UNESCO also set up a special project “Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future” for Sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>76</sup>

---

<sup>72</sup> Cindy Sirinya Bishop (@cindysirinya), “Truly an honour to be on panel discussion at the launch of the International Technical Guideline on Comprehensive Sexuality Education by @UNESCOAsiaPac. Hoping that will be the start of a more proactive effort to ensure a safer, more respectful society for all,” Twitter, June 28, 2019, <https://twitter.com/cindysirinya/status/1144428249147068417/photo/1>.

<sup>73</sup> “Comprehensive Sexuality Education Implementation Toolkit,” UNESCO, accessed on April 20, 2024, <https://csetoolkit.unesco.org/>.

<sup>74</sup> “Sexuality Education Review and Assessment Tool (SERAT),” UNESCO, accessed on April 20, 2024, <https://healtheducationresources.unesco.org/library/documents/sexuality-education-review-and-assessment-tool-serat>.

<sup>75</sup> “A snapshot on the Global Partnership Forum on Comprehensive sexuality education,” UNESCO, updated on May 15, 2023, <https://www.unesco.org/en/health-education/cse/global-partnership-forum>.

<sup>76</sup> “Our rights, Our lives, Our future,” UNESCO, updated on March 11, 2024, <https://www.unesco.org/en/health-education/o3-programme>.



### 3.4 Relationship between SDGs and CSE

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDGs was published in September 2015, aiming to combat poverty and inequality, tackle climate change and ensure that no one is left behind.<sup>77</sup> “In this context, CSE should not be considered a niche issue but a critical solution for change, which lies at the interconnection of many of the Sustainable Development Goals that are part of Agenda 2030.”<sup>78</sup> IPPF mentioned in *Sexuality Education and Sustainable Development*.

The LGBT community was not initially included in SDGs. The launch of the SDGs is strongly associated with the framework for the Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015) which were criticised for failing to adequately address gender equality, human rights and equity issues. Aiming to “leave no one behind”, SDGs fill some gaps in this area. However, in fact, although the SDGs are more well-developed in terms of gender equality than the Millennium Development Goals, they still neglected the rights of the LGBT community originally. “...sexual rights remain poorly represented: That topic has been excluded from the adopted SDG targets, making it difficult to introduce at the indicator level,”<sup>79</sup> said Galati.

The inclusion of CSE in SDGs was benefit to achieving the goals and provided a great motivation to realise the goal of “*leave no one behind*”. Comprehensive sexuality

---

<sup>77</sup> *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, (New York: UN, 2015), <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n15/291/89/pdf/n1529189.pdf?token=5wMbr70jAqb9VLs3DU&fe=true>.

<sup>78</sup> *Sexuality Education and Sustainable Development*, (Bombay: IPPF, 2016), <https://europe.ippf.org/sites/europe/files/2016-12/Sexuality%20Education%20and%20Sustainable%20Development.pdf>.

<sup>79</sup> Alanna J. Galati, “Onward to 2030: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in the Context of the Sustainable Development Goals,” *Guttmacher Policy Review: GPR* 18, no. 4 (2015): 82.

education mainly corresponds to SDG 3 Good Health and Well-being, SDG 4 Quality Education and SDG 5 Gender Equality. Looking at the course targets for 2018 Guidance, key concept 5 Skills for health and well-being clearly explains how to make decisions on own sexuality; key concept 6 The human body and development as well as key concept 7 Sexuality and sexual behaviour requires adolescents to have a deeper understanding of their bodies; the key concept 8 Sexual and reproductive health mentions about the pregnancy and HIV, helping the youths to protect themselves from diseases. The CSE's key concepts 1-4 include relationships, culture, rights, social norms and violence, requesting children to learn to respect, understand, and tolerate others so that we can better fulfil SDG 4 and SDG 5 in the education field. In particular, LGBT members who have always been treated as a marginalised group, are additionally emphasised in CSE, so the involvement of CSE in the SDGs is a further supplement of the audience.

### **3.5 Controversy over CSE: implementation or abandonment?**

Although international organisations such as UNESCO and the UN are very optimistic about the implementation and development of CSE under the framework of the SDGs, it is undeniable that there are some controversies about CSE among some individuals, countries and organisations, especially the “sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE)”. Anti-CSE campaigners claimed that “CSE attacks the innocence of children, sexualizing them, and encourages them to become ‘homosexual’.”<sup>80</sup> In America, some people also believed that “the new state and local

---

<sup>80</sup> Haley McEwen, “Globalizing ‘Abstinence-Only’: The U.S. Christian Right Campaign Against

standards were promoting ‘sexualizing children’ and ‘transgenderism’.”<sup>81</sup> There is an website named “Stop CSE” declaring that CSE is promoting harmful ideas to children for example, “CSE encourages acceptance and exploration of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.”<sup>82</sup>

CSE is not only being challenged on the aspect of gender identity, but also problematic in other terms. Some critics of CSE proposed that some vendors of “sexual health” products also provide CSE materials and even collaborate with schools in teaching, which may lead to the indoctrination of children with harmful concepts, such as the encouragement of abortion, in order to gain profit.<sup>83</sup> Anti-CSE campaigners also considered that “CSE was a threat to ‘parental rights’, and their rights to determine what their children learn in school”<sup>84</sup>, “CSE teaches children to masturbate”, even “CSE promotes high-risk sexual behaviours (including anal and oral sex) and teaches they are safe”<sup>85</sup>, etc. The Foundation for African Cultural Heritage believed that “While there is a need to teach ‘proper sex education to our children, comprehensive sex education is the radicalized version of it’.”<sup>86</sup>

---

Comprehensive Sexuality Education,” in *The U. S. Christian Right and Pro-Family Politics in 21st Century Africa*, ed. Haley McEwen (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing AG, 2024), 105–29.

<sup>81</sup> Joan Walsh, “The Backlash Against Sex Ed,” *The Nation*, updated on June 14, 2022, <https://www.thenation.com/article/society/comprehensive-sex-ed-florida-backlash/>.

<sup>82</sup> “How does CSE harm children,” Stop CSE, accessed on April 19, 2024, <https://www.comprehensivesexualityeducation.org/>.

<sup>83</sup> Rebecca Oas, “Why Comprehensive Sexuality Education is Not the Answer,” C-Fam, updated on January 30, 2023, <https://c-fam.org/definitions/why-comprehensive-sexuality-education-is-not-the-answer/>.

<sup>84</sup> McEwen, “Globalizing ‘Abstinence-Only’: The U.S. Christian Right Campaign Against Comprehensive Sexuality Education,” 105-129.

<sup>85</sup> Stop CSE, “How does CSE harm children”.

<sup>86</sup> *Protocol to the African Charter on human and people’s rights on the rights of women in Africa*, (Maputo: African Union, 2003), [https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/37077-treaty-charter\\_on\\_rights\\_of\\_women\\_in\\_africa.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/37077-treaty-charter_on_rights_of_women_in_africa.pdf).

In recent years, even though many governments have begun to follow CSE programmes, there has been a growing public opposition to this. Furthermore, international pressure against the LGBT community makes the implementation of the CSE programme even more controversial. Whether CSE continue to be promoted globally or not?

#### **4. Adaptation and Enaction of CSE in Hong Kong**

This section will describe the changes sexuality education policy in Hong Kong since 1971 and extend to the current guideline in use, examining how Hong Kong has developed its sexuality education guideline under the guidance of UNESCO's ITGSE. Admittedly, Hong Kong has followed the CSE curriculum to a certain degree, but there are still differences between them. Therefore, this section is led by research question three: How has CSE been transferred to sexuality education policy in Hong Kong? Approaching the question, I will compare how policies differ and estimate what kind of problems may exist. With the current policy on sexuality education, what are the overall situation and problems of sexuality education in Hong Kong? Finally, what is the development of sexuality education in Hong Kong in the future will be assumed and predicted.

##### **4.1 Background of sexuality education in Hong Kong**

Sexuality education in Hong Kong dates back to 1971 when the former Education Department (ED) proposed that sex education topics should be included in standard subjects and a teaching list on the contents of the subjects should be submitted. Then in 1986, the ED issued the *Guidelines on Sex Education for Secondary Schools* ("The 1986

*Guidelines*”), which provided detailed instructions on topics, resources and reference materials for sexuality education. In 1997, the ED promulgated the *Guidelines on Sex Education in Schools* (“*The 1997 Guidelines*”). In this edition of the Guidelines, the subject of sexuality education is no longer only limited to physical knowledge related to reproduction, but also covers the psychological aspects of human development, interpersonal relationships, marriage and family, and social and cultural relationships with sex.<sup>87</sup> It is also worth pointing out that this Guideline already contains a section on sexual orientation. However, according to the Education Bureau, *The 1997 Guidelines* did not make compulsory teaching requirements but only as a reference when teaching.

Since then, Hong Kong authorities incorporated sexuality education into the learning content of the Moral and Civic Education curriculum as well as the curriculum of major subjects in primary and secondary schools. In 2008, the framework for the Moral and Civic Education programme was revised to include sexuality education in all sections of the curriculum. In this version of the revised curriculum framework, sexual orientation is described more explicitly, even directly labelling “homosexuality” and “bisexuality”, and it is more comprehensive than *The 1997 Guidelines*, clearly stating that “To recognise that different people have different sexual orientations in an open and caring way.”<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>87</sup> *Sexuality education*, (Hong Kong: LEGCO, 2018), 4-5, <https://www.legco.gov.hk/research-publications/chinese/1718in03-sexuality-education-20180109-c.pdf>.

<sup>88</sup> LEGCO, *Sexuality education*, 5-19.

## 4.2 The sexuality education guideline in Hong Kong

Hong Kong has continued to adopt the newly revised *Moral and Civic Education Framework (2008)*, and the key learning elements and topics required for sexuality education have also been included in the guidelines of different subjects. The UNESCO *International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education* serves as the main foundation for the guidelines on sexuality education in Hong Kong. The Education Bureau (EDB) considers that the current guidelines on sexuality education and the related curriculum framework, which cover a wide range of topics about sex, are broadly in line with their contents.<sup>89</sup>

**Table 1: Match of Key Concepts in ITGSE and Subjects in Hong Kong Primary and Secondary School**

| Subjects         | Key concepts in ITGSE   |
|------------------|---|
| General Studies  | 4.2 Consent, Privacy and Bodily Integrity<br>6.3 Puberty<br>6.4 Body Image<br>7.2 Sexual Behaviour and Sexual Response  |
| Life and Society | 1.1 Families<br>1.2 Friendship, Love and Romantic Relationships<br>1.3 Tolerance, Inclusion and Respect<br>3.2 Gender Equality, Stereotypes and Bias<br>5.3 Communication, Refusal and Negotiation Skills<br>5.4 Media Literacy and Sexuality |
| Science          | 6.1 Sexual and Reproductive Anatomy and Physiology<br>6.2 Reproduction<br>7.1 Sex, Sexuality and the Sexual Life Cycle  |
| Home Economics   | 1.1 Families  |
| Liberal Studies  | 2.1 Values and Sexuality<br>4.3 Safe use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)<br>5.4 Media Literacy and Sexuality   |

<sup>89</sup> LEGCO, *Sexuality education*, 15.

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Biology                           | 1.4 Long-term Commitments and Parenting<br>6.1 Sexual and Reproductive Anatomy and Physiology<br>6.2 Reproduction<br>6.3 Puberty<br>6.4 Body Image<br>7.1 Sex, Sexuality and the Sexual Life Cycle<br>8.2 HIV and AIDS Stigma, Care, Treatment and Support<br>8.3 Understanding, Recognizing and Reducing the Risk of STIs, including HIV |
| Ethics and religious Studies      | 2.3 Culture, Society and Sexuality  |
| Technology and living             | 1.1 Families  |
| Health management and social care | 1.1 Families<br>2.2 Human Rights and Sexuality<br>2.3 Culture, Society and Sexuality<br>3.1 The Social Construction of Gender and Gender Norms<br>4.1 Violence<br>5.3 Communication, Refusal and Negotiation Skills<br>5.5 Finding Help and Support   |

The table above refers to the 2017 primary and secondary subjects' curriculum guide of the Hong Kong Education Bureau, which is still in use today, comparing the key concepts in ITGSE with subjects in Hong Kong primary and secondary schools. It shows that all the concepts in *International technical guidance on sexuality education: An evidence-informed approach* (2018) can be matched by different subjects, which means that Hong Kong is one of the followers of CSE.

However, it was noted that the concepts covered in the courses were not balanced, with some concepts appearing more often than others, while others could be covered in only one course, such as sexual orientation, violence, respect, tolerance and human rights. These concepts, which are comparatively weak in the curriculum, will probably create certain obstacles to the development of sexuality education in Hong Kong.

This condition remains in the *Values Education Curriculum Framework (2021)*

newly updated by the EDB. This latest version of the values education framework includes a small number of concepts on “respect”, “tolerance” and “diversity”. However, these concepts which are highly relevant to the LGBT community are not comprehensive enough. Compared to terms such as “family” and “protecting ourselves”, in contrast, there are far fewer concepts of LGBT inclusivity.<sup>90</sup> “There remains a lack of direct engagement with important issues around diversity and inclusion, especially for those students who identify as LGBT,”<sup>91</sup> South China Morning Post remarked.

On the other hand, sexuality education in Hong Kong is not an independent course but is fragmented into various subjects, which is contrary to the suggestion of ITGSE. ITGSE recommends that CSE curriculum should be taught as a standalone course in schools, which would make sexuality education more systematic, whereas dispersing its concepts across different courses would make the subject lack coherence.

#### **4.3 The situation of sexuality education in Hong Kong today**

*The Youth Sexuality Study 2016* found that, on average, S3 to S6 students scored 8 for 8 questions on pregnancy, sexual diseases and HIV, which was lower than the average score of 9 in 2011. The scores of S1 to S2 students in 2011 were already unsatisfactory, with an average score of only 6, but falling to 5 in 2016. This situation made the Hong Kong authorities realise that the implementation of CSE is an urgent

---

<sup>90</sup> *Values Education Curriculum Framework (2021)*, (Hong Kong: Education Bureau, 2021), 21-33, [https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/tc/curriculum-development/4-key-tasks/moral-civic/VE\\_CF\\_20211129\\_r.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/tc/curriculum-development/4-key-tasks/moral-civic/VE_CF_20211129_r.pdf).

<sup>91</sup> “Hong Kong’s education system must do more to foster LGBT inclusivity in schools,” SCMP, updated on November 26, 2022, <https://www.scmp.com/comment/letters/article/3200948/hong-kongs-education-system-must-do-more-foster-LGBT-inclusivity-schools>.



matter.<sup>92</sup>

In the 2018 report on sexuality education, it is stated that the problem with sexuality education in Hong Kong lies in the fact that sexuality education is in the position of a secondary subject, resulting in it not being able to have enough time to explore the issue of values. The authorities' inadequate training of teachers in sexuality education, coupled with some schools' avoidance of sensitive parts of the sexuality education curriculum, has led to a significant impairment of the effectiveness of sexuality education. Many school-age students did not receive appropriate sexuality education.<sup>93</sup>

The gap in sexuality education in Hong Kong has led to a bleak situation for the LGBT community, which is one of the targets of CSE's inclusiveness. In a report from the Boys' and Girls' Club Association, it was noted that out of 492 students who were interviewed, 42% suffered from verbal assaults, 40% received social ostracism, and 14% suffered from physical or sexual harassment. Also, with 52% feeling lonely and helpless, 37% feeling anxious, and 14% even contemplating suicide, the situation for the LGBT community on campus is not optimistic. A 17-year-old Hong Kong student commented that anything to do with non-heterosexuality was unacceptable in the Christian school, so he had to pretend to be heterosexual so as to avoid teachers judging him. He said, "I still felt isolated and alienated. The pervasive boredom and loneliness of school life made me lose my interest in school."<sup>94</sup> A S5 student Perry also said, "The teachers,

---

<sup>92</sup> LEGCO, *Sexuality education*, 2.

<sup>93</sup> LEGCO, *Sexuality education*, 15.

<sup>94</sup> Diana K. Kwok, "School Experience of Chinese Sexual Minority Students in Hong Kong," *Journal of LGBT Youth* 13, no. 4 (2016): 378–96.

even those who teach sexual health, talk about it from moral perspective, so as not to violate Christian and Chinese family values.....”<sup>95</sup>

The factors contributing to the present dilemma of sexuality education in Hong Kong are more complicated than those in other regions. As part of the East Asian cultural circle, Hong Kong is deeply influenced by Confucian family values, but at the same time, Hong Kong was a British colony for several years, where many Hong Kong people also follow Christianity. Under such a bicultural-religious background, LGBT students are opposed by their parents who are deeply affected by traditional Confucianism at home, discriminated against by their classmates and teachers with a Christian background at school, making it even more difficult for them to establish a foothold on campus.

The escalating bullying and violence in schools has led the Hong Kong government to place slightly emphasis more on sexuality education and the LGBT community. In 2020, the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) published the results of a survey on sexuality education in primary and secondary schools, which found that 90% of schools spent fewer than 20 hours on sexuality education, but *The 1997 Guidelines* had required that pupils in secondary schools should spend at least 30 hours on it. “If there’s a guideline specifying at least how many hours should be allocated for sex ed, I think schools [would] have more incentive to do that and squeeze time for teaching sex ed,” said James Chan, senior policy, research and training officer at EOC.<sup>96</sup>

---

<sup>95</sup> Kwok, “School Experience of Chinese Sexual Minority Students in Hong Kong,” 378–96.

<sup>96</sup> Almond Li, “Hong Kong urged to improve sex education in secondary schools,” HKFP, updated on November 23, 2022, <https://hongkongfp.com/2022/11/23/hong-kong-urged-to-improve-sexuality-education-in-secondary-schools/>.

The EOC suggests that the Education Bureau can provide a standardised framework or guidelines<sup>97</sup> to schools so that they can make clear teaching and learning plans. The EOC also recommends that schools can recruit external groups to deliver lessons and that the government can offer funding subsidies.

The focus of the Hong Kong government department on CSE and the LGBT community has driven programme research on sexuality education and the development of LGBT students in Hong Kong. The Education University of Hong Kong conducted project “Toward a sexuality and gender affirming campus: Effectiveness, challenges, and opportunities of implementing inclusive school policies and practices for sexual and gender minority students”<sup>98</sup> during 2020-2021, analysing how to nurture an atmosphere of LGBT affirming school culture on campus to protect LGBT students from victimization. The Transgender Resource Center of CUHK also conducted a series of studies on the mental health of the LGBT community, investigating psychological differences between LGBT people and cisgender people<sup>99</sup>.

Social groups also provide LGBT students with a safe space to discuss sexuality and LGBT issues in Hong Kong. The North District Secondary School Gender Studies Club, aiming to address the topic of the lack of sexuality knowledge in the secondary school curriculum, is headed by students and focuses on promoting discussion of

---

<sup>97</sup> Li, “Hong Kong urged to improve sex education in secondary schools.”

<sup>98</sup> “Toward a sexuality and gender affirming campus: Effectiveness, challenges, and opportunities of implementing inclusive school policies and practices for sexual and gender minority students,” EDUHK, accessed on April 20, 2024, <https://www.eduhk.hk/en/major-projects/toward-a-sexuality-and-gender-affirming-campus-effectiveness-challenges-and-opportunities-of-implementing-inclusive-school-policies-and-practices-for-sexual-and-gender-minority-students>.

<sup>99</sup> “The Future of Legal Gender,” Transgender Resource Center, updated on July 21, 2022, <https://www.tgr.org.hk/index.php/en/database/research-report>.

sexuality, gender equality and LGBT issues on social media, with more than 1,500 followers on Instagram. Sunset, the only male member of the group, said that he initially did not understand the rainbow flag or LGBT, but after joining the club, he has learned more about the subject and has become more open-minded, able to discuss these types of issues with his friends without fear.<sup>100</sup>

#### **4.4 The Future of Hong Kong Sexuality Education**

Compared to Europe and the United States, Hong Kong started research on CSE and LGBT issues later and has been less open in sexuality education. However, in recent years, Hong Kong society has become much more concerned about issues of sexuality education and the LGBT community, and many organisations, including the Government, have begun to participate in sexuality education activities. Europe and the United States have rich experience in these issues, which can serve as a reference for the promotion of sexuality education in Hong Kong.

At present, the biggest hindrance to the full implementation of sexuality education in Hong Kong is the cultural and religious dimension. The solution given by England is that they allow parents to choose not to accept the relevant sexuality education for their children, and they have a certain degree of flexibility with respect to schools with a religious background. Regarding the inadequacy of teaching time for sexuality education in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan have made it obligatory for schools to have a certain amount of time for it. In terms of the LGBT community, Taiwan has

---

<sup>100</sup> Kelly Fung, “Student-led ‘gender studies club’ gives teens in Hong Kong’s North district a safe space to discuss sex, LGBT issues,” SCMP Young Post, updated on June 19, 2023, <https://www.scmp.com/yp/discover/news/hong-kong/article/3224341/student-led-gender-studies-club-gives-teens-hong-kongs-north-district-safe-space-discuss-sex-LGBT>.

included same-sex affections in the *Gender Equality Education Act*, while Hong Kong's legal definition of the LGBT community remains ambiguous, so focusing on this issue at the root of the law is the key to promoting gender equality and gender identity<sup>101</sup>.

All in all, there is still a long journey for the promotion of sexuality education in Hong Kong, and the Hong Kong government should place it in a long-term position for education development in the future. Jacinta Yu, development officer for the Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centres, stressed that "the city's youth needed more guidance in navigating issues of gender and sexuality".<sup>102</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

In recent years, there is much striking evidence that the LGBT community has been discriminated against and bullied as a marginalised group in school life. This phenomenon is not even confined to a few regions, as a row of countries, including the United Kingdom and the United States where sexuality education is well developed, are still facing such problems. Hong Kong is facing the same predicament. In this research, we will start with the transition of global education policy, examining the transformation of CSE after it entered Hong Kong and the challenges arising from policy transformation. What follows is that I will retrace the entire chain of this research and answer three research questions.

Chapter two corresponds to research question one: how LGBT rights rise to become a global discourse, aiming to achieve the first research objective. This chapter

---

<sup>101</sup> LEGCO, *Sexuality education*, 19-21.

<sup>102</sup> Kelly Fung, "Student-led 'gender studies club' gives teens in Hong Kong's North district a safe space to discuss sex, LGBT issues."

focuses on the history of LGBT rights movements, analysing the increasing discourse on LGBT rights. Government, law, religion, class, and other social factors against the LGBT community have provoked them to revolt. Individual homosexual pioneers then began to arise, endeavouring to change others' opinions for the gay community through sexological research, debating against sodomy laws, and judging to see the perception of homosexuality as a mental illness. Their efforts were unsuccessful, but the theories they promoted provided strong theoretical support for the subsequent homosexual movements. The oppression of homosexuality became more and more severe in the post-war era, the gay community found that individual efforts were not enough to counter the government's discourse, so they united, from national organisations to transnational NGOs, and from national movements to joint international movements. LGBT rights formed a powerful current that shook the social discourse on gender identity while impacting the traditional concepts of sexuality. The organisation they formed has gained recognition from international organisations such as the UN and UNESCO. The support and promotion of international organisations helped the rights of LGBT become a global discourse.

Chapter Three addresses research question two: how CSE has been adapted and enacted to promote LGBT rights and inclusivity in Hong Kong. With the growing concerns about LGBT rights issues, UNESCO launched CSE to ensure their rights in education. To tackle gender-based violence and bullying issues on campus, UNESCO revised the ITGSE in 2018 to incorporate more inclusive content in the CSE concerning gender identity and the LGBT community. To promote CSE as a global education policy,

UNESCO has provided great convenience to the government and schools on CSE, for example, by providing ITGSE course guidelines on school curriculum and offering a Toolkit to facilitate the government and schools to refer to it during implementation; supplied the government with the “Sexuality Education Review and Assessment Tool” to assist the government’s monitoring of the implementation of CSE in schools. Also, it focuses on the power of social media by launching the “#CSEandMe” programme on Twitter, inviting internet users around the world to discuss CSE and express their opinions on CSE. However, there are still plenty of debates surrounding CSE, especially concerning the LGBT community. Some parents and scholars combined forces to oppose the continuation of CSE within schools. This results in CSE remaining uncertain as to whether it will stay or be abolished globally.

Chapter Four answers research question three: how CSE has been transferred to sexuality education policy in Hong Kong, determining the transition of CSE as a local policy in Hong Kong. Through comparison, Hong Kong’s guidance for sexuality education can cover all the key concepts of ITGSE (2018) in UNESCO, but without a specific course for sexuality education and the frequency of mentioning each concept is uneven. Meanwhile, without a mandatory requirement for the length of sexuality education in schools, many schools pay no attention to it, in parallel, some teachers disagree with some concepts such as LGBT, choosing not to mention them. All these deficiencies have set the stage for the problem of discrimination and school bullying against the LGBT community in Hong Kong. To fill the gaps in policy transfer and solve the problem of LGBT discrimination in school, the government have cooperated

with universities and other research institutes to investigate the current situation in Hong Kong and propose solutions, while social organizations have been discussing the problems of the LGBT community through social media so that more students can understand and tolerate the LGBT community.

Just like the students in the club said, “Over the last few decades, significant progress has been made in normalising [being] LGBT. Many people have paved the way for us.”<sup>103</sup> “As secondary school students, we are taking a step forward by forming this club ... This is evidence that Hong Kong is improving.”<sup>104</sup> said by Snow. Despite the many efforts made by the Hong Kong government, clubs and other social actors to address the issue of inclusiveness of the LGBT community, the sexuality education policy is still inadequate on this topic. Hence there is still a long journey for the development of the sexuality education policy in Hong Kong to be achieved.

---

<sup>103</sup> Kelly Fung, “Student-led ‘gender studies club’ gives teens in Hong Kong’s North district a safe space to discuss sex, LGBT issues.”

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*



## Bibliography

- African Union. Protocol to the African Charter on human and people's rights on the rights of women in Africa. Maputo: African Union, 2003.
- [https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/37077-treaty-charter\\_on\\_rights\\_of\\_women\\_in\\_africa.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/37077-treaty-charter_on_rights_of_women_in_africa.pdf).
- BARNETT, Michael N. and Martha Finnemore. "The Power of Liberal International Organizations." In *Power in Global Governance*, edited by Michael N. Barnett and Raymond Duvall, 161-84. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- BELMONTE, Laura A. *The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020.
- BOONE, Joseph Allen. *The Homoerotics of Orientalism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014.
- CARTER, David. *Stonewall: The Riots That Sparked the Gay Revolution*. New York: St. Martin's, 2004.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey. New York: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021.
- [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/YRBS\\_Data-Summary-Trends\\_Report2023\\_508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/YRBS_Data-Summary-Trends_Report2023_508.pdf).
- CHEN, Rudong. "On Building a Global Discourse System: An Approach of Global Rhetoric in Cultural Conflict and Amalgamation." *Journal of Zhejiang University* 1, no. 3 (2015): 84-94.
- Commission on Global Governance. *Our global neighborhood: report of the*

- Commission on Global Governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- DUBERMAN, Martin. *Stonewall*. New York: Dutton, 1993.
- EDSALL, Nicholas C. *Toward Stonewall: Homosexuality and Society in the Modern Western World*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003.
- EDB. *Values Education Curriculum Framework (2021)*. Hong Kong: Education Bureau, 2021. [https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/tc/curriculum-development/4-key-tasks/moral-civic/VE\\_CF\\_20211129\\_r.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/tc/curriculum-development/4-key-tasks/moral-civic/VE_CF_20211129_r.pdf).
- EDUHK. “Toward a sexuality and gender affirming campus: Effectiveness, challenges, and opportunities of implementing inclusive school policies and practices for sexual and gender minority students.” Accessed April 20, 2024, <https://www.eduhk.hk/en/major-projects/toward-a-sexuality-and-gender-affirming-campus-effectiveness-challenges-and-opportunities-of-implementing-inclusive-school-policies-and-practices-for-sexual-and-gender-minority-students>.
- EOC. *A Study on Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Secondary School of Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: EOC, 2022. <https://www.eoc.org.hk/compass/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/SexEduReport-Executive-Summary-EN.pdf>.
- EXLEY, Sonia, Annette Braun, and Stephen Ball. “Global Education Policy: Networks and Flows.” *Critical Studies in Education* 52, no. 3 (2011): 213–18.
- FLOWERDEW, John. “Globalization Discourse: A View from the East.” *Discourse & Society* 13, no. 2 (2002): 209–25.
- FUNG, Kelly. “Student-led ‘gender studies club’ gives teens in Hong Kong’s North district a safe space to discuss sex, LGBT issues,” SCMP Young Post. Last

modified June 19, 2023, <https://www.scmp.com/yp/discover/news/hong-kong/article/3224341/student-led-gender-studies-club-gives-teens-hong-kongs-north-district-safe-space-discuss-sex-LGBT>.

GALATI, Alanna J. “Onward to 2030: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in the Context of the Sustainable Development Goals.” *Guttmacher Policy Review: GPR* 18, no. 4 (2015).

ILGA. “The history of ILGA: 1978/2020.” Last modified August 7, 2012. <https://ilga.org/news/ilga-history/>.

IPPF. *Sexuality Education and Sustainable Development*. Bombay: IPPF, 2016. <https://europe.ippf.org/sites/europe/files/2016-12/Sexuality%20Education%20and%20Sustainable%20Development.pdf>.

KHOR, Lena. *Human Rights Discourse in a Global Network: Books Beyond Borders*. Farnham: Routledge, 2013.

KWOK, Kan Diana. “School Experience of Chinese Sexual Minority Students in Hong Kong.” *Journal of LGBT Youth* 13, no. 4 (2016): 378–96.

KWOK, Kan Diana. “同志學生自殺：聽不到看不到真實的我 Tongzhi Xuesheng zisha: Tingbudao Kanbudao Zhenshi De Wo [Gay Student Suicide: Can’t Hear or See the Real Me].” GDOTTV. Last modified July 19, 2022. <https://gdottv.com/main/archives/28628>.

LEGCO. *Sexuality education*. Hong Kong: LEGCO, 2018. <https://www.legco.gov.hk/research-publications/chinese/1718in03-sexuality-education-20180109-c.pdf>.

- LENZ, Tobias. "The Rising Authority of International Organisations." German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA), 2017.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep21170>.
- LI, Almond. "Hong Kong urged to improve sex education in secondary schools." HKFP. Last modified November 23, 2022.  
<https://hongkongfp.com/2022/11/23/hong-kong-urged-to-improve-sexuality-education-in-secondary-schools/>.
- MARTENS, Kerstin, Dennis Niemann, and Alexandra Kaasch, "International Organizations in Global Social Governance." *Global Dynamics of Social Policy*. Cham: Springer Nature, 2021.
- MCEWEN, Haley. "Globalizing 'Abstinence-Only': The U.S. Christian Right Campaign Against Comprehensive Sexuality Education." in *The U. S. Christian Right and Pro-Family Politics in 21st Century Africa*, edited by Haley McEwen, 105–29. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing AG, 2024.
- MORGAN, Peter. "Class divisions in the gay community." *International Socialism*. Last modified April 4, 2007. <https://isj.org.uk/class-divisions-in-the-gay-community/>.
- MUNDY, Karen. "Global Governance, Educational Change." *Comparative Education* 43, no. 3 (2007): 339–57.
- NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project. "Mattachine Society & Daughters of Bilitis Offices." Accessed May 6, 2024. <https://www.nyclgbtsites.org/site/mattachine-society-daughters-of-bilitis-offices/>.

- OAS, Rebecca. "Why Comprehensive Sexuality Education is Not the Answer." C-Fam. Last modified January 30, 2023. <https://c-fam.org/definitions/why-comprehensive-sexuality-education-is-not-the-answer/>.
- PRIBORKIN, Emily. "The Legacy of the Stonewall Riots." American University. Last modified June 18, 2019. <https://www.american.edu/sis/news/20190618-the-legacy-of-the-stonewall-riots.cfm>.
- RSFL. "RSFL History." Last modified February 9, 2009. <https://www.rfsl.se/en/about-us/organisation/history/>.
- RUPP, Leila J. "The European Origins of Transnational Organizing: The International Committee for Sexual Equality." In *LGBT Activism and the Making of Europe?*, 29–49. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2018.
- SCMP. "Hong Kong's education system must do more to foster LGBT inclusivity in schools," Last modified November 26, 2022, <https://www.scmp.com/comment/letters/article/3200948/hong-kongs-education-system-must-do-more-foster-LGBT-inclusivity-schools>.
- SIECUS. *Guidelines for comprehensive sexuality education: kindergarten through 12th grade*. New York: SIECUS, 2004. [https://healtheducationresources.unesco.org/sites/default/files/resources/bie\\_guidelines\\_siecus.pdf](https://healtheducationresources.unesco.org/sites/default/files/resources/bie_guidelines_siecus.pdf).
- SINGY, Patrick. "Sexual Identity at the Limits of German Liberalism: Law and Science in the Work of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1825–1895)." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 30, no. 3 (2021): 390-410.

SHAW, Ari. "The global assault on LGBT rights undermines democracy." Chatham House. Last modified June 2, 2023.

<https://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/the-world-today/2023-06/global-assault-LGBT-rights-undermines-democracy>.

STANGLER, Cole. "Out of the Closet, Into the Streets." DISSENT. Last modified May 8, 2018. [https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online\\_articles/may-1968-lgbt-rights-france/](https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/may-1968-lgbt-rights-france/).

Stop CSE. "The History & Agenda Behind CSE." Accessed April 19, 2024.

<https://www.comprehensivesexualityeducation.org/history-of-cse/>.

Stop CSE, "How does CSE harm children." Accessed April 19, 2024.

<https://www.comprehensivesexualityeducation.org/>.

STOTZER, Rebecca L. "Sexual Orientation-Based Violence in Hong Kong." *Asian-Pacific Law and Policy Journal* 14, no. 2 (2013): 84-107.

<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/151520569.pdf>.

The Legacy Project. "The Scientific-Humanitarian Committee." Accessed April 9, 2024. <https://legacyprojectchicago.org/milestone/scientific-humanitarian-committee>.

Transgender Resource Center. "The Future of Legal Gender." Last modified July 21, 2022. <https://www.tgr.org.hk/index.php/en/database/research-report>.

UN. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Paris: UN, 1948.

<https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/03/udhr.pdf>.

UN. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. New

York: UN, 2015.

<https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n15/291/89/pdf/n1529189.pdf?token=5wMbr70jAqb9VLs3DU&fe=true>.

UN. “The 17 Goals.” Accessed April 19, 2024. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

UNESCO, *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach for schools, teachers and health educators*. Paris: UNESCO, 2009. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000183281>.

UNESCO. *Education sector responses to homophobic bullying*. Paris: UNESCO, 2012. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000216493>.

UNESCO. *Out in the open: education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity expression*. Paris: UNESCO, 2016. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000244652>.

UNESCO. *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach*. Paris: UNESCO, 2018. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260770>.

UNESCO. *Safe, Seen and Included: report on School-Based Sexuality Education*. Paris: UNESCO, 2023. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000387610>.

UNESCO. “UNESCO launches its global comprehensive sexuality education campaign.” Last modified April 20, 2023. <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-launches-its-global-comprehensive-sexuality-education-campaign>.

UNESCO. “A snapshot on the Global Partnership Forum on Comprehensive sexuality

education.” Last modified May 15, 2023. <https://www.unesco.org/en/health-education/cse/global-partnership-forum>.

UNESCO. “Our rights, Our lives, Our future.” Last modified March 11, 2024.

<https://www.unesco.org/en/health-education/o3-programme>.

UNESCO. “Comprehensive Sexuality Education Implementation Toolkit.” UNESCO.

Accessed April 19, 2024. <https://csetoolkit.unesco.org/toolkit/getting-started/what-comprehensive-sexuality-education>.

UNESCO. “Comprehensive Sexuality Education Implementation Toolkit.” Accessed

April 20, 2024. <https://csetoolkit.unesco.org/>.

UNESCO. “Sexuality Education Review and Assessment Tool (SERAT).” Accessed

April 20, 2024.

<https://healtheducationresources.unesco.org/library/documents/sexuality-education-review-and-assessment-tool-serat>.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. “Paragraph 175 and the Nazi Campaign

Against Homosexuality.” Holocaust Encyclopedia. Accessed May 4, 2024.

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/paragraph-175-and-the-nazi-campaign-against-homosexuality>.

VERGER, Antoni, Mario Novelli and Hulya Kosar Altinyelken, “Global Education

Policy and International Development: An Introductory Framework.” In *Global education policy and international development: new agendas, issues and*

*policies*, edited by Antoni Verger, Mario Novelli and Hulya Kosar Altinyelken, 3-

32. London: Bloomsbury, 2012.



WALSH, Joan. "The Backlash Against Sex Ed." *The Nation*. Last modified June 14, 2022. <https://www.thenation.com/article/society/comprehensive-sex-ed-florida-backlash/>.

WILPER, James. "Sexology, Homosexual History, and Walt Whitman: The 'Uranian' Identity in Imre: A Memorandum." *Critical Survey (Oxford, England)* 22, no. 3 (2010): 52–68.

WHO. "Comprehensive sexuality education." WHO. Last modified May 18, 2023. <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/comprehensive-sexuality-education>.

## APPENDICES 1

### Key learning elements/topics related to sexuality education covered under the curriculum guide of relevant subjects

| Primary school level |                              |  |
|----------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Subject              | Learning stages              | Key learning elements/topics   |
| General Studies      | Primary One to Primary Three | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Knowledge and understanding               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) different stages of human growth and development;</li> <li>(b) changes that occur when one grows;</li> <li>(c) similarities and differences between boys and girls;</li> <li>(d) ways of protecting the body, including the private parts of the body; and</li> <li>(e) decision-making in simple dilemma situations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Skills               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) managing oneself in daily life situations, and to exercise self-discipline in managing personal hygiene, safety and emotions in daily life situations; and</li> <li>(b) discerning relevant information from available sources and choosing appropriate information to meet a specific purpose.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Values and attitudes               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) accepting changes that occur as one grows and individual differences in growth and development.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
|                      | Primary Four to Primary Six  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Knowledge and understanding               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) physical, psychological and social changes during puberty;</li> <li>(b) differences between individuals in growth and development during puberty;</li> <li>(c) gender roles and relationships;</li> <li>(d) sexual feelings and reactions, and ways to deal with them;</li> <li>(e) a healthy lifestyle (e.g. regular pattern of work and rest, do not indulge in web surfing, and healthy diet);</li> <li>(f) saying “NO” to gambling, drug abuse, substance abuse, smoking, drinking and sexual requests;</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Knowledge and understanding (cont’d)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(g) dealing with stress and frustration (e.g.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  |  | <p>peer pressure, harassment and study);</p> <p>(h) enhancing relationships and assertiveness skills;</p> <p>(i) minimizing risks in daily life situations (e.g. safety, health and relationships); and</p> <p>(j) impact of the information era on individuals and the community (e.g. media, digital divide and cyberbullying).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) being able to manage personal health as well as physical and emotional changes at puberty;</li> <li>(b) analysing relevant information and make informed decisions on personal health;</li> <li>(c) practising a healthy lifestyle;</li> <li>(d) mastering the skills of rejecting temptation;</li> <li>(e) identifying situations where expectations differ according to gender and understanding how these expectations may influence one's choices and options; and</li> <li>(f) rejecting indecent and inaccurate information conveyed through the communication network and social media.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Values and attitudes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) accepting that individuals are different in their growth and development during puberty;</li> <li>(b) valuing one's own body;</li> <li>(c) accepting sexual feelings and reactions, and showing positive attitudes in dealing with them; and</li> <li>(d) rejecting unhealthy behaviours.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
|--|--|---|

**Junior secondary school level (Secondary One to Secondary Three)**

| Subjects         | Key learning elements/topics  |
|------------------|---|
| Life and Society | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Self-understanding, self-esteem and self-confidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the many faces of “Self”: perceived self, real self and ideal self.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Building friendships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) establishing and nurturing friendship with members of the same sex and the opposite sex.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Managing cyber-friendship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) ways to deal with and develop cyber-friendship.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Enhancing family life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) role(s) of family members; and</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>(b) responsibilities of an individual towards family.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learning to love <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) similarities and differences between love and friendship;</li> <li>(b) elements, goals, principles and proper attitudes towards love;</li> <li>(c) ways to nurture and maintain a relationship; and</li> <li>(d) reasons, managing ways and appropriate attitude for ending a relationship.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Handling issues of sexual abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) media pornography and its impact on adolescents;</li> <li>(b) ways to deal with pornographic information;</li> <li>(c) sexual harassment in daily life;</li> <li>(d) ways to prevent and handle sexual harassment; and</li> <li>(e) protecting oneself from the traps of cyber-pornography.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Attitudes towards sex and sexuality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) different notions and attitudes towards love, sex and marriage;</li> <li>(b) aims and principles of setting limits of intimacy; and</li> <li>(c) ways for adolescents to manage sexual fantasy and desires.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Teenage pregnancy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) accidental pregnancy: bearing the consequences.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Gender equality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) meaning and importance of gender equality;</li> <li>(b) major principles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;</li> <li>(c) major phenomena and causes of gender inequality in the international arena;</li> <li>(d) functions of international organizations in promoting gender equality and their limitations; and</li> <li>(e) efforts and contributions to promote gender equality by global citizens.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| Science                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Human reproduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) sexual maturity and secondary sexual characteristics;</li> <li>(b) reproductive systems;</li> <li>(c) sex cells;</li> <li>(d) fertilization and implantation;</li> <li>(e) pregnancy and parenting; and</li> <li>(f) family planning and birth control.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |
| Home Economics/<br>Technology and Living | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Family living <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) different types of family;</li> <li>(b) roles and responsibilities of family members; and</li> <li>(c) ways to maintain harmonious relationships in the family.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |
| Liberal Studies                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Personal development and interpersonal relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) understanding oneself – exploring issues such as factors</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
|                              | <p>influencing the self-esteem of adolescents and how self-esteem is related to their behaviours and aspirations, and influence of the messages and values from the media on the adolescents; and</p> <p>(b) interpersonal relationships – exploring issues such as how adolescents’ identities are developed and roles embedded within different relationships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Public health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) understanding of public health – exploring issues such as how people’s understanding of health is affected by economic, social and other factors.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |
| Biology                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Inheritance in humans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) sex determination.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Reproduction in humans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) general plan of the male and female reproductive systems;</li> <li>(b) structure of sperm and ovum;</li> <li>(c) menstrual cycle;</li> <li>(d) fertilization;</li> <li>(e) development of embryo and foetus;</li> <li>(f) birth process;</li> <li>(g) parental care; and</li> <li>(h) birth control.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Infectious diseases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) causes;</li> <li>(b) ways of transmission; and</li> <li>(c) treatment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Prevention of diseases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) healthy lifestyle.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| Ethics and Religious Studies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Life and death <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) right to raise a family;</li> <li>(b) birth control; and</li> <li>(c) abortion.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Sex, companionship and family <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) heterosexual and homosexual relationships;</li> <li>(b) single life;</li> <li>(c) premarital and extramarital sex;</li> <li>(d) marriage and divorce;</li> <li>(e) pornography;</li> <li>(f) prostitution; and</li> <li>(g) family.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Media ethics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) code of ethics and professionalism; and</li> <li>(b) media ethics issues.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |
| Technology and               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Family dimension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) what a family is;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Living                            | <p>(b) value of families and role in society;<br/> (c) milestones of family life;<br/> (d) family structures; and<br/> (e) factors affecting family ties and lifestyle in Hong Kong in the past four decades.</p>  |
| Health Management and Social Care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Personal development, social care and health across the lifespan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) definition of health and its social, psychological and cultural perspectives;</li> <li>(b) factors influencing personal development such as family, peer groups and community influence;</li> <li>(c) transitions and changes in the course of the lifespan; and</li> <li>(d) factors affecting personal and social well-being, e.g. technological advancement and its impact on health and health care.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Health and social care in the local and global contexts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) structural issues related to health, social care and personal and social well-being e.g. family problems, and inequalities and resources deprivation and its relation with social class and gender;</li> <li>(b) contemporary issues of vulnerability e.g. AIDS, and discrimination based on gender or against patients; and</li> <li>(c) recent increases in vulnerability and exposure due to lifestyle changes, globalization and family changes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Responding to the needs in the areas of health and social care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) personal role in health maintenance and ill-health prevention.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Promotion and maintenance of health and social care in the community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) personal hygiene practices and prevention of communicable diseases;</li> <li>(b) attitude towards sex and substance abuse for the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases or addiction;</li> <li>(c) health and safety at school e.g. protection against sexual harassment or bullying;</li> <li>(d) healthy relationships including family relationships and intimate relationships;</li> <li>(e) concern for and interest in families, peers, groups, the community and vulnerable groups; and</li> <li>(f) commitment in family, community and groups.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

Sources: 教育局 (2012) and Education Bureau (2017).

## APPENDICES 2

### Suggested Learning Expectations Related to Sexuality Education in Values Education

| <b>Key Stage 1 (Primary 1 to 3)</b>  |  |
|--|--|
| Suggestions  | Positive Values & Attitudes                                  |
| Recognise your strengths and weaknesses, accept your uniqueness and cherish life   | Acceptance / Observation / Positivity / Charity              |
| Be polite to others, know how to protect their own body, refuse to be offended by others and ask for assistance  | Respect for others / Protection of self / Perseverance       |
| <b>Key Stage 2 (Primary 4 to 6)</b>  |  |
| To face the physical and psychological changes of adolescence and the difficulties, temptations and challenges of life with a calm, optimistic and persevering attitude.                       | Discipline / Prudence / Perseverance / Optimism / Commitment |
| Respect their own bodies and the bodies of others, and be careful about what they say and do not use “sex” or pornography as a subject of gossip or ridicule; and learn to protect themselves. | Prudence / Respect for others / Discipline                   |
| Treat people with respect and openness, and do not judge and compare abilities based on gender.  | Respect for others / Empathy / Acceptance                    |
| Recognise and reject indecent or pornographic material in the media (TV, magazines and the Internet).  | Rationality / Discipline / Prudence                          |
| <b>Key Stage 3 (Secondary 1 to 3)</b>  |  |
| Know how to protect yourself against aggressive language and behaviour.  | Perseverance / Prudence / Human Dignity                      |
| Understand the risks and what to look out for on the Internet or other media and social platforms  | Rationality / Prudence / Self-discipline                     |
| Respect for the privacy of different people, tolerance and acceptance of sexuality-related lifestyles within the context of law, ethics, morality and social acceptance                        | Openness / Respect for others / Diversity                    |
| <b>Key Stage 4 (Secondary 4 to 6)</b>  |  |
| To hold that life is precious, to respect  | Respect / Discipline / Caring                                |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| one's own body, to refuse money and other temptations, and not to use it as a means of exchange for material goods.  |   |
| Respect for the family values and the system of marriage   | Respect for others / Care / Responsibility        |
| Handle life events related to relationships (e.g., dating, falling in love, breaking up) in a respectful, rational, and responsible manner   | Respect for others / Rationality / Responsibility |
| Understand issues related to sex, family and marriage (e.g. respect for marriage, prevention of STDs and AIDS, pregnancy and contraception) in a rational and responsible manner, and know how to refuse others' sexual advances | Rationality / Responsibility / Discipline         |

Sources: Education Bureau (2021)