

RGC Ref. No.: UGC/FDS23/H02/16 <hr/> (please insert ref. above)
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**RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL  
COMPETITIVE RESEARCH FUNDING SCHEMES FOR  
THE LOCAL SELF-FINANCING DEGREE SECTOR**

**FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (FDS)**

**Completion Report**

*(for completed projects only)*

<p><b><u>Submission Deadlines:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Auditor's report with unspent balance, if any: within <b>six</b> months of the approved project completion date.</li> <li>2. Completion report: within <b>12</b> months of the approved project completion date.</li> </ol>
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**Part A: The Project and Investigator(s)**

**1. Project Title**

Dismantling the Gender Binary - Developing Competence Enhancement Program in recognizing Intersexuality for Social Worker and Teacher Trainees

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**2. Investigator(s) and Academic Department(s) / Unit(s) Involved**

Research Team	Name / Post	Unit / Department / Institution
Principal Investigator	Dr/ TSUI/ Elaine Yin-ling Lecturer	School of Continuing Education, HKBU
Co-Investigator(s)	Dr/ LIAO/ Lih-mei Consultant Clinical Psychologist	University College London Hospital, United Kingdom
	Prof/ NG/ Petrus Yat-nam Professor and Head	Department of Social Work, HKBU
	Dr/ CHUI/ Cheryl Hiu-kwan Research Assistant Professor	Department of Social Work and Social Administration, HKU

**3. Project Duration**

	Original	Revised	Date of RGC / Institution Approval <i>(must be quoted)</i>
Project Start Date	Jan 1, 2017		
Project Completion Date	Dec 31, 2019	June 30, 2020	August 21, 2019
Duration <i>(in month)</i>	36	42	August 21, 2019
Deadline for Submission of Completion Report		June 30, 2021	August 21, 2019

## **Part B: The Final Report**

### **5. Project Objectives**

#### 5.1 Objectives as per original application

1. To identify the current level of knowledge and attitudes towards intersexuality among registered social workers and teachers in Hong Kong.
2. To develop a sustainable competence enhancement training program in addressing intersexuality for prospective social workers and teachers.
3. To initiate discussion and raise awareness of the needs of intersexuality in the Chinese community.
4. To validate a training framework in competence enhancement and to extend this framework to frontline professionals working with other sexual minorities.

#### 5.2 Revised objectives

Date of approval from the RGC: N/A

Reasons for the change: N/A

### 5.3 Realisation of the objectives

*(Maximum 1 page; please state how and to what extent the project objectives have been achieved; give reasons for under-achievements and outline attempts to overcome problems, if any)*

This 42-month project aimed to develop a competence enhancement training program for prospective social workers and teachers in Hong Kong by achieving four objectives.

**Objective 1:** To identify the current level of knowledge and attitudes towards intersexuality among registered social workers and teachers in Hong Kong.

This objective was achieved by the first stage of the study. The first stage is an background exploratory research was carried out between March and November 2017 to identify the level of knowledge and attitudes toward intersex among social workers and teachers. The finding of this stage provided crucial background information for proceeding to Stage 2.

**Objective 2:** To develop a sustainable competence enhancement training program in addressing intersexuality for prospective social workers and teachers.

This objective was achieved by the second stage of the study. The second stage was an evaluation study on the proposed competence enhancement training program which was carried out between March and November 2018.

**Objective 3:** To initiate discussion and raise awareness of the needs of intersexuality in the Chinese community.

This objective was achieved by the second stage of the study. Another crucial component of the second stage is the international conference that was held in January 27, 2018 in HKBU (<https://etsuiyl.wixsite.com/intersex-symposium>) to address intersex. More than 200 audiences from various background, including physicians, nurses, psychologist, social workers, educators, researchers, legal professionals, activists, journalists and human resources personnel, had attended the conference. A good level of newspaper coverage and radio interviews helped to bring awareness and initiate discussion towards the topic of intersex/DSD.

**Objective 4:** To validate a training framework in competence enhancement and to extend this framework to frontline professionals working with other sexual minorities.

This objective was achieved by the third stage of the study. The third stage was originally scheduled to be running a series of community outreach seminars between March 2019 and November 2019. However, due to the social unrest that started in June 2019, some of the scheduled seminars were postponed. In light of this, an request to extend the study was made and approved in August 2019. Subsequently, the unexpected COVID pandemic has led to the modification of the delivery mode. The remaining two seminars were conducted in the form of Zoom webinar between March and May 2020.

## 5.4 Summary of objectives addressed to date

<b>Objectives</b> <i>(as per 5.1/5.2 above)</i>	<b>Addressed</b> <i>(please tick)</i>	<b>Percentage Achieved</b> <i>(please estimate)</i>
1. To identify the current level of knowledge and attitudes towards intersexuality among registered social workers and teachers in Hong Kong.	√ Stage 1: background research has been completed.	100%
2. To develop a sustainable competence enhancement training program in addressing intersexuality for prospective social workers and teachers.	√ Stage 2: Training workshops: 4 out of 4 training workshops has been completed.	100%
3. To initiate discussion and raise awareness of the needs of intersexuality in the Chinese community.	√ Stage 2: An international conference has been hosted on January 27, 2018 ( <a href="https://etsuiyl.wixsite.com/intersex-symposium">https://etsuiyl.wixsite.com/intersex-symposium</a> ). More than 200 audiences from different professionals (both local, mainland and international) had attended and this has attracted a decent level of media and radio coverage.	100%
4. To validate a training framework in competence enhancement and to extend this framework to frontline professionals working with other sexual minorities.	√ Training workshops: 4 out of 4 training workshops has been completed. Stage 3: Competence enhancement program: 4 out of 4 community outreach seminars has been completed	100%

## 6. Research Outcome

### 6.1 Major findings and research outcome

*(Maximum 1 page; please make reference to Part C where necessary)*

This 42-month project aimed to develop a competence enhancement training program for prospective social workers and teachers and it was conducted through three stages.

For the first stage, an background exploratory research was carried out to identify the level of knowledge and attitudes toward intersex among social workers and teachers. Six focus groups were conducted in HKBU, HKU and EdUHK to examine the level of knowledge and attitudes towards intersex among social worker and teacher trainees. The findings has revealed a high level of awareness and acceptance towards intersex. However, their professional knowledge related to intersex seem to be lagged behind, which potentially diminished their competence in providing counselling and psychological services to the clients with intersex status. This finding helps providing crucial background information for proceeding to Stage 2.

For the second stage, prospective social workers and teachers were invited to take part in the competence enhancement training program. With the adoption of drama education technique, a total of four experiential-oriented competence-training workshops were held between March and November 2018. These workshops have been highly valued by the participants and it has revealed that participants acknowledged their lack of knowledge on the dilemma encountered by the affected individuals and their family members. Participants has also mentioned that public ignorance leads to stigmatization and eventually to the self-concealment of people with intersex. It was suggested that, in order to break this vicious cycle, not only training for frontline professionals is needed, so as public education.

In addition, at the second stage, an international conference was conducted in January 27, 2018 in HKBU (<https://etsuiyl.wixsite.com/intersex-symposium>) to address intersex. Using an interdisciplinary approach, speakers included researcher, clinical psychologist, paediatrist consultant, barrister and an activist who was born with intersex characteristics gave the audiences a comprehensive understanding on the issue of DSD. An survey study had carried out and showed that participation in the symposium enhanced audiences' level of knowledge on intersex, including intersex-related terminology, variations of intersex conditions and their respective physiological characteristics. The results has also indicated that audiences' attitudes towards intersex had improved, especially in the aspect of providing peer support and the importance of autonomy when it comes to the genital surgeries for intersex people.

For the third stage, a series of public education and community outreach workshops was conducted between March 2019 and May 2020. Debriefing sessions after these workshops had revealed that that prior knowledge on intersex was limited. For instance, intersex was often mistaken with transgender and bisexuality. And it was also noted that the acceptance towards intersex raised significantly when general public recognize intersex is a biological/ genetic condition. Moreover, the prevalence of intersex was also under-estimated by the public. This results indicated that more public engagement on the topic of DSD is needed.

## 6.2 Potential for further development of the research and the proposed course of action (Maximum half a page)

With the support of this current grant, an international conference named "Is it a boy or a girl?" The Limit of the Male-Female Binary: Hong Kong First Interdisciplinary Symposium on Intersexuality" was able to hold in 2018. This conference focused on discussing the comprehensive needs of people with DSD. It had attracted audiences from different professions, including physicians, nurses, psychologist, social workers, educators, researchers, legal professionals. In particular there were more than 15 medical professionals from several hospitals in Mainland. Subsequently, PI was the invited speaker for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Training Symposium on DSD organized by Shenzhen Children Hospital in May 2018 and Oct 2019. These has facilitated the first collaboration work with Shenzhen Children Hospital which will be resulted in the next longitudinal study on the psychosocial needs of parents who have given birth to children with DSD.

## 7. Layman's Summary

*(Describe in layman's language the nature, significance and value of the research project, in no more than 200 words)*

Disorder/ difference in sexual development (DSD), also known as intersex, is a general term referring to an individual who is born with a reproductive anatomy that does not fit the typical gender binary system in society. This 42-month 3-stage project aimed to develop a competence training model for frontline professionals with cultural sensitivity. By conducting an exploratory research (stage 1) on the level of knowledge and attitudes of frontline professionals, it reveals there were generally ignorance about the conditions and the psychosocial needs of these individuals. Moreover, by running several training workshops for frontline professionals (stage 2), it indicated that participants found these workshops very useful in terms of increasing their knowledge on the dilemma facing by affected individuals and their family members as well as enhancing their empathy towards affected families. At the same time, an international conference were held which had attracted more than 200 audience from different professions, including physicians, nurses, psychologist, social workers, educators, researchers, legal professionals. Combining both the international conference (stage 2) with the community outreach workshops (stage 3), it has served the ultimate goal of initiating discussion in the Chinese community in acknowledging the needs of this silent and underrepresented population group.

**Part C: Research Output****8. Peer-Reviewed Journal Publication(s) Arising Directly From This Research Project**

*(Please attach a copy of the publication and/or the letter of acceptance if not yet submitted in the previous progress report(s). All listed publications must acknowledge RGC's funding support by quoting the specific grant reference.)*

The Latest Status of Publications				Author(s) (denote the corresponding author with an asterisk*)	Title and Journal / Book (with the volume, pages and other necessary publishing details specified)	Submitted to RGC (indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)	Attached to this Report (Yes or No)	Acknowledged the Support of RGC (Yes or No)	Accessible from the Institutional Repository (Yes or No)
Year of Publication	Year of Acceptance (For paper accepted but not yet published)	Under Review	Under Preparation (optional)						
2021				<b>Tsui, E.Y.L.* &amp; Cheng, J.O.Y.</b>	The Living Experience of Losing Genetic Continuity: Concealment Tendency in Chinese Recipients of Donor-Assisted Conception. <i>Journal of Health Psychology</i> , 26(4), 525-542.		<b>Yes</b> (Attachment 1)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
2018				<b>Tsui, E.Y.L.* &amp; Cheng, J.O.Y.</b>	When Failed Motherhood Threatens Womanhood: Using Donor-Assisted Conception as the Last resort. <i>Asian Women</i> , 34(2), 33-60		<b>Yes</b> (Attachment 2)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
2017				<b>Tsui, E.Y.L.* &amp; Tam, M.C.</b>	Advocacy for Intersexuality in Chinese Community: Preliminary Effectiveness of Applied Drama for Frontline Professionals. <i>Journal of Psychology Research</i> , 7(9), 499-508		<b>Yes</b> (Attachment 3)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
		√		<b>Tsui, E.Y.L.*, Zhe, S. &amp; Leung, H.Y.</b>	Disorders/ Differences of Sex Development: A Nationwide Study of Parental Experiences in China. <i>Social Sciences and Medicine</i>		<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

		√		<b>Tsui, E.Y.L.* &amp; Liao, L.M.</b>	Knowledge and Attitude Change: Outcomes of the Hong Kong First Interdisciplinary Symposium on Intersexuality. Sexuality Research and Social Policy		<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
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**9. Recognized International Conference(s) In Which Paper(s) Related To This Research Project Was / Were Delivered**

*(Please attach a copy of each conference abstract)*

<b>Month / Year / Place</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Conference Name</b>	<b>Submitted to RGC</b> <i>(indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)</i>	<b>Attached to this Report</b> <i>(Yes or No)</i>	<b>Acknowledged the Support of RGC</b> <i>(Yes or No)</i>	<b>Accessible from the Institutional Repository</b> <i>(Yes or No)</i>
10/2019/ Shenzhen	The Psychosocial Evaluation of Parents who have given birth to child(ren) with DSD	Shenzhen Children Hospital: The 4 <sup>th</sup> Training Symposium on DSD		Yes (Attachment 4)	Yes	Yes
07/2019/ Sao Paulo	Enhancing Professional Competence: Evaluation of the First Multidisciplinary Conference in Intersex for Frontline Professionals in Hong Kong	7 <sup>th</sup> International Symposium in DSD		Yes (Attachment 5)	Yes	Yes
08/2018/ San Francisco	Forum Theatre: Education for Frontline Professionals to Combat Intersex Stigma in Hong Kong	The 126th annual American Psychological Association convention		Yes (Attachment 6)	Yes	Yes
05/2018/ Shenzhen	The Psychosocial Challenges Faced by Parents: Lessons from the West	Shenzhen Children Hospital: The 3 <sup>rd</sup> Training Symposium on DSD		Yes (Attachment 7)	Yes	Yes
09/2017/ Jerusalem	The Chinese perspectives of Intersexuality: Examining the level of knowledge and attitudes among Frontline Professionals	European Network for Psychosocial Studies in Intersex/DSD (EuroPSI) Annual Conference		Yes (Attachment 8)	Yes	Yes
07/2017/ London	Intersexuality: Background Research on Assessing Competence among Chinese Frontline Professionals.	5 <sup>th</sup> International Conference on New Direction in the Humanities		Yes (Attachment 9)	Yes	Yes

**10. Whether Research Experience And New Knowledge Has Been Transferred / Has Contributed To Teaching And Learning**

*(Please elaborate)*

Throughout the duration of the project, the PI has been the visiting speaker for various courses for BSocSci in Psychology and BSocSci in Social Work. The up-to-date research finding was shared with students in these courses.

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**11. Student(s) Trained**

*(Please attach a copy of the title page of the thesis)*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Degree Registered for</b>	<b>Date of Registration</b>	<b>Date of Thesis Submission / Graduation</b>
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

## 12. Other Impact

(e.g. award of patents or prizes, collaboration with other research institutions, technology transfer, teaching enhancement, etc.)

### Award of Prizes:

PI was awarded with “Early Career Award” for the presentation named “Enhancing Professional Competence: Evaluation of the First Multidisciplinary Conference in Intersex for Frontline Professionals in Hong Kong” which was presented in 7<sup>th</sup> International Symposium in DSD, Sao Paulo, July 2019.

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### Collaboration:

Because of the international conference held in January 2018 (stage 2) by PI, PI was subsequently invited to speak for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Training Symposium on DSD organized by Shenzhen Children Hospital in May 2018 and Oct 2019 respectively. This facilitates the first collaboration work with Shenzhen Children Hospital which will be resulted in the next project on the longitudinal study on the psychosocial needs of parents who have given birth to children with DSD in China.

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### Collaboration:

PI was invited to be the steering committee for the launching conference of Psychosocial Studies Intersex International (PSII), an international organization gathered researchers, psychologists, and healthcare professionals in promoting psychological well-being in people with variations in sex characteristics.

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### Teaching Enhancement:

One of the core modules taught by PI is focusing on the discussion of Chinese psychology. This is a mandatory module as required by Hong Kong Psychological Society (HKPS). Students who have enrolled to this course have taken this project as a real life case to understand the importance of being cultural sensitive. It is believed to be beneficial for students when they graduated from this psychology undergraduate program.

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## 13. Statistics on Research Outputs

	Peer-reviewed Journal Publications	Conference Papers	Scholarly Books, Monographs and Chapters	Patents Awarded	Other Research Outputs (please specify)	
					Type	No.
<b>No. of outputs arising directly from this research project</b>	3	6	0	0		

**14. Public Access Of Completion Report**

*(Please specify the information, if any, that cannot be provided for public access and give the reasons.)*

<b>Information that Cannot Be Provided for Public Access</b>	<b>Reasons</b>
N/A	N/A