RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL
COMPETITIVE RESEARCH FUNDING SCHEMES FOR
THE LOCAL SELF-FINANCING DEGREE SECTOR

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (FDS)

Completion Report
(for completed projects only)

Submission Deadlines: 1. *Auditor's report with unspent balance, if any: within **six** months of the approved project completion date.*
2. *Completion report: within **12** months of the approved project completion date.*

Part A: The Project and Investigator(s)

1. **Project Title**

    The Rise of Youth Activism

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

Research Team	Name / Post	Unit / Department / Institution
Principal Investigator	Dr. NG Vitrierat / Teaching Fellow	School of General Education and Language /Technological and Higher Institute of Hong Kong
Co-Investigator(s)	Dr. CHAN Kin Man / Associate Professor	Sociology Department / The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Others		

3. **Project Duration**

	Original	Revised	Date of RGC / Institution Approval *(must be quoted)*
Project Start Date	01 Jan 2018	1 Sept 2018	17/11/2017 Approved by RGC
Project Completion Date	31/12/2019	31/8/2020	17/11/2017 Approved by RGC
Duration *(in month)*	24 months	24 months	17/11/2017 Approved by RGC

Deadline for Submission of Completion Report	31/12/2020	31/8/2021	17/11/2017 Approved by RGC

Part B: The Final Report

5. Project Objectives

5.1 Objectives as per original application

1. To advance understanding of why the young generation actively participate in Hong Kong politics nowadays.
2. To identify the factors which foster an interest in political engagement in the youth.

3. To identify how active movement participants perceive the society and the meaning of their actions
4. To capture the impact of Internet on the youth's behaviours while participating in public affairs
5. To make an original contribution to academic understanding of youth activism in Hong Kong.

5.2 Revised objectives

Date of approval from the RGC: N.A.

Reasons for the change:

1.

2.

3. ....

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)

All five research objectives have been successfully achieved. Through quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, this study understood the political engagement among tertiary students in Hong Kong, mainly the reasons and factors contributing to their active political and civic participation (Objective 1).

Self-administered questionnaires were distributed from September to December 2018, and a total of 854 surveys were collected. Respondents were recruited from two higher education institutions with different characteristics, with 521 cases from the Chinese

University of Hong Kong and 333 cases from the Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong. Statistical analyses of survey results help shed light on the various factors contributing to an interest in politics among tertiary students (Objective 2). Furthermore, by learning more about youth's online behaviours and habits, the survey results also provide insights into the role played by technology on the political participation of tertiary students, especially regarding the impact of the use of the Internet on political engagement (Objective 4).

In addition, a total of 30 in-depth interviews were conducted from January to April 2019. Analyses of transcripts helped capture how tertiary students in Hong Kong perceive and understand the meaning of various political actions (Objective 3). Questions were also asked to investigate their perceptions of society and the government. To improve representativeness, interviewees with various experience and levels of political participation and diverse political stance were recruited from different tertiary institutions through snowball sampling methods.

The research papers derived from this project have theoretical and methodological implications for future research on youth and politics in Hong Kong, making an original contribution to the academic understanding of youth activism in the case of Hong Kong (Objective 5).

5.4   Summary of objectives addressed to date

Objectives *(as per 5.1/5.2 above)*	Addressed *(please tick)*	Percentage Achieved *(please estimate)*
1. To advance understanding of why the young generation actively participate in Hong Kong politics nowadays	✔	100%
2. To identify the factors which foster an interest in political engagement in the youth	✔	100%
3. To identify how active movement participants perceive the society and the meaning of their actions	✔	100%
4. To capture the impact of Internet on the youth's behaviours while participating in public affairs	✔	100%
5. To make an original contribution to academic understanding of youth activism in Hong Kong.	✔	100%

6.   Research Outcome

   6.1   Major findings and research outcome
   (Maximum 1 page; please make reference to Part C where necessary)

Views of political participation
The quantitative surveys showed that around one-fifth (20.7%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the use of radical means to express political demands. No significant differences have been observed between the students from two tertiary institutions regarding their views towards different political actions.

The Role of Different Factors

Multiple regression analyses were performed to examine the effects of various factors. Male respondents and those with pro-democracy political stance were more likely to support radical means. Respondents coming from families with monthly income higher than $50.000 were less likely to support radical means. However, low self-efficacy was not a statistically significant factor when other factors were controlled.

The Role of Identity

Identity incompatibility played an essential role in the radicalization of youth. In Hong Kong, identity incompatibility refers to the conflicts between identification with the local Hong Kong identity and the Chinese national identity. This study found two types of identity incompatibility among youth with low national identification, manifest incompatibility and ambiguous incompatibility. Those with manifest incompatibility rejected the Chinese identity explicitly, perceiving fundamental and unresolvable conflicts between the two identities. On the other hand, those with ambiguous incompatibility neither rejected nor embraced the Chinese identity explicitly, adopting a more ambiguous and flexible approach towards the Chinese identity.

Regarding the choice of political actions, the two types of identity incompatibility led to different orientations. Those with manifest incompatibility tended to accept and even support radical means, while those with ambiguous incompatibility tended to opt for more moderate and gentle strategies in action.

Three pathways have been proposed to explain the positive relationship between manifest incompatibility and the support for radical means. Firstly, the identity needs pathway suggested that perceived threats to identity needs led to violent defensive reactions. Secondly, the emotional pathway suggested manifest incompatibility generated negative affect, which may contribute to aggressive inclination Examples of negative affect included feelings of indignant, distress, anger, contempt, betrayal and disappointment. Thirdly, the ideological pathway suggested that manifest incompatibility led to the adoption of a new ideology that justified radical means.

Significance

The above findings not only made theoretical and methodological contributions to the political and youth studies but were also highly relevant for understanding the recent anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill (anti-ELAB) protests. The recent anti-ELAB protests have probably led to a rise in manifest incompatibility, as exemplified by the unpleasant intergroup interactions witnessed between Hong Kong and mainland citizens. In addition, it appeared that all three pathways of radicalization had been reinforced in the recent protests.

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

This study was conducted before the anti-ELAB protests, at a time with a different social climate and lower level of political participation. However, in light of recent events and developments, the views and patterns of political participation of tertiary students have likely changed. Therefore, future studies are suggested to replicate this study and continue the systematic study of youth activism in Hong Kong. Making valuable comparisons between the political views and political participation of tertiary students before and after the anti-ELAB protests can help provide more insights into the impacts of anti-ELAB protests on Hong Kong youth. Furthermore, such comparisons may have policy implications for formulating appropriate policies to address the younger generation's concerns and prevent the occurrence of violent political actions in the future.

Besides, future studies are suggested to examine the role of technology and the Internet in social movements among Hong Kong youth. While this study has also investigated the role played by technology, specific social media platforms like Telegram and LIHKG have become much more common among young people since the anti-ELAB protests.

In addition, future studies are suggested to extend the target population to secondary school students. The current study mainly concentrated on tertiary students, as they played an essential role in the past. In Hong Kong, tertiary students have acted as initiators and significant participants in previous social movements. In the recent anti-ELAB protests, young people are still significant participants. According to figures provided by the Security Bureau on 4th December 2019, young people aged under 30 accounted for 81.3% of total arrest cases. Among them, underaged students below 18 made up 15.4% of total arrest cases. Therefore, secondary school students are also essential participants that should not be neglected.

7. Layman's Summary
(Describe <u>in layman's language</u> the nature, significance and value of the research project, in no more than 200 words)

Despite the rise in political engagement among young people since 2007, there have been few systematic studies about youth activism in Hong Kong. This study aimed to study the political participation among tertiary students in Hong Kong by conducting quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews.

This study made theoretical and methodological contributions to political studies and youth studies by investigating the role of different factors in motivating political participation. By shedding light on the reasons for engaging in various political actions and supporting radical means, this project also has policy implications. Recently, there has been widespread youth participation in the anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill (anti-ELAB) protests. Many are particularly concerned about the use of radical means and the rapid escalation in tensions. Conducted around half a year before the anti-ELAB protests, the findings of this study are highly relevant for understanding the recent active political engagement and radicalization. By providing insights into the reasons and perception of political participation among tertiary students, this study may help the government and other public institutions formulate appropriate policies to address the younger generation's concerns.

Part C: Research Output

8.   **Peer-Reviewed Journal Publication(s) Arising <u>Directly</u> 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 correspond-ing 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	2020			Vitrierat NG*	Dual-Identity Incompatibility as a Cause of Radicalisation: Case Study of Hong Kong Issue and Studies Vol 57(1), P.1-34.	No	Yes	Yes	No
		√		Vitrierat NG*	Parental influence on youth's cognitive and behavioural radicalisation in Hong Kong, Journal of Youth Studies	No	Yes	Yes	No

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)

Month / Year / Place	Title	Conference Name	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)*

June / 2019 / Hong Kong	Self-dissatisfaction versus political frustrations - Analysis of radicalism among Hong Kong youth.	The 1st Annual Meeting of the Society for Hong Kong Studies	2019	Yes	Yes	No

10. Whether Research Experience And New Knowledge Has Been Transferred / Has Contributed To Teaching And Learning
(Please elaborate)

NA

11. Student(s) Trained
(Please attach a copy of the title page of the thesis)

Name	Degree Registered for	Date of Registration	Date of Thesis Submission / Graduation
NA	NA	NA	NA

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

NA

13. **Statistics on Research Outputs**

	Peer-reviewed	Conference	Scholarly	Patents	Other Research	
	Journal Publications	**Papers**	**Books, Monographs and Chapters**	**Awarded**	**Outputs (please specify)**	
No. of outputs arising directly from this research project	2 (One is still under view)	1	0	0	Type	No.
					0	

14. **Public Access Of Completion Report**
    (Please specify the information, if any, that cannot be provided for public access and give the reasons.)

Information that Cannot Be Provided for Public Access	Reasons
NA	NA