

Research Assessment Exercise 2020

Impact Case Study

University: City University of Hong Kong |

Unit of Assessment (UoA): 24 - Psychology |

Title of case study: The impact of hope-based research on practitioners, offenders, patients and their carers |

(1) Summary of the impact

In his 15+ years of examining adaptive cognition and resilience, **Ho** has established instruments to measure the cognitive style of hope; these instruments are specific to the Chinese context and have been widely adopted by practitioners in hospitals and NGOs. **Ho** has developed 5 hope storybooks and 2 treatment manuals for hope-based interventions, and was involved in the development of a gender-responsive treatment facility in the largest women's prison in Hong Kong. He has provided training and consultation to over 400 clinicians in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia. |

(2) Underpinning research

Cognitive theory of hope. The theory conceptualises hope as a goal-oriented thinking strategy. It is characterised by one's ability to create alternative pathways to achieve goals and to exercise self-motivation strategies to use those pathways to achieve goals despite obstacles.

Empirical findings. **Ho's** studies have shown that hope is an important factor related to resilience [R1]. A study of oral cavity cancer survivors, on which **Ho** collaborated with dentists in Hong Kong, found that higher levels of hope predicted lower levels of depression symptoms even when differences in optimism were taken into account [R2]. In a recent study funded by the Children's Cancer Foundation (CCF) of Hong Kong, **Ho** reported that hope was related to higher self-perceived positive changes and to lower depression and anxiety levels among survivors of childhood cancers [R3]. **Ho** also collaborated with The Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention on a study that found that hopeful thinking buffered the impact of hopelessness on suicidal ideation [R4]. **Intervention studies.** **Ho**, in collaboration with clinicians in both hospitals and correctional services across Hong Kong, has examined whether psychological training and intervention can enhance hope [R5, R6]. A preliminary pre- and post-intervention study showed a significant increase in hope and a decrease in psychopathology among the participants of a six-session hope-based treatment ($t(1) = -0.281, p < 0.05$) [R5]. In a more recent study, **Ho** supervised a group of clinical psychologists from the Hong Kong Correctional Services Department (CSD) to develop a novel gender-responsive treatment facility for women offenders. Pre- and post-intervention assessments showed an increase in hope and decreases in depression and anxiety symptoms (pre-post total hope score difference: $t(18) = -3.70, p < .01, d = .43$) [R6].

Support from CityU. The above research and its related impacts have been achieved with support from the City University of Hong Kong. Some important examples are listed below.

1. **Ho** received his first internal grant from CityU to study the relation between positive cognition and depression. This enabled **Ho** to develop later studies on the positive cognitive style of hope.
2. The Department of Social and Behavioural Sciences (SS) of CityU has been collaborating with the CSD to organise an annual NGO forum during the past 10 years. **Ho** was invited to deliver a keynote address to introduce his collaboration with CSD to inform NGOs about the importance of hope-based intervention.
3. CityU has granted **Ho** a 6-month sabbatical leave in 2019 to conduct invited research meetings and intervention consultation in mainland China, Taiwan, and Singapore to promote hope-based intervention for cancer patients.' |

(3) References to the research

- R1: Ho, S. M. Y.,** Ho, J. W. C., Bonanno, G. A., Chu, A. T. W., & Chan, E. M. S. (2010). Hopefulness predicts resilience after hereditary colorectal cancer genetic testing: a prospective outcome trajectories study. *BMC Cancer*, *10*, 279. doi: 10.1186/1471-2407-10-279
- R2: Rajandram, R. K., Ho, S. M. Y.,** Samman, N., Chan, N., McGrath, C., & Zwahlen, R. A. (2011). Interaction of hope and optimism with anxiety and depression in a specific group of cancer survivors: a preliminary study. *BMC Research Notes*, *4*, 519. doi: 1756-0500/4/519
- R3: Yuen, A. N. Y., Ho, S. M. Y.,** & Chan, C. K. Y. (2014). The mediating roles of cancer-related rumination in the relationship between dispositional hope and psychological outcomes among childhood cancer survivors. *Psycho-Oncology*, *23*, 412-419. doi:10.1002/pon.3433
- R4: Huen, J. M. Y., Ip, B. Y. T., Ho, S. M. Y.,** & Yip, P. S. F. (2015). Hope and hopelessness: The role of hope in buffering the impact of hopelessness on suicidal ideation. *PLoS One*, *10*(6), e0130073. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0130073
- R5: Ho, S. M. Y.,** Ho, J. W. C., Pau, B. K. Y., Hui, B. P. H., Wong, R. S. M., & Chu, A. T. W. (2012). Hope-based intervention for individuals susceptible to colorectal cancer: A pilot study. *Familial Cancer*, *11*, 545-551. doi:10.1007/s10689-012-9545-3
- R6: Mak, V. W., Ho, S. M. Y.,** Kwong, R. W., & Li, W. L. (2018). A gender-responsive treatment facility in correctional services: The development of psychological gymnasium for women offenders. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, *62*(4), 1062-1079. doi:10.1177/0306624x16667572

(4) Details of the impact

Development of assessment tools for the Chinese population. Ho started his ‘hope research journey’ in the early 2000s by focusing on the development of validated tools to measure hope cognition according to the model developed by C.R. Snyder. Ho developed the Chinese Adult Hope Scale and the Chinese Children Hope Scale, and validated these scales in different populations ([R2] to [R6] above). His Chinese hope scales have been used by occupational therapists and psychiatric nurses in at least four major hospitals in Hong Kong, including the Castle Peak Hospital, Queen Mary Hospital, Tai Po Hospital and Kwai Chung Hospital, with positive feedback from users [C1]. The followings are some of the direct quotes (without language editing) received from the practitioners.

“It was a user friendly self-rating tool and easy understanding for our client who had cognitive deficit. For the healthcare professionals, the tool gave us a clear picture about agency thinking and pathway thinking of our client which help us to understand more about their needs and design further planning for them.” (APN (PSY), Castle Peak Hospital)

“We mainly use it as pre- and post- measure for adult in-patient psychiatric OT service. A pilot study has been done in 2014-2015 and we were glad to find significant improvement in scores of the Hope Scale rated by our clients. Now, it is routinely used as one of the outcome indicators of our adult in-patient program. Thanks.” (Senior Occupational Therapist, Queen Mary Hospital)

“I am still using the hope scale since July, 2015 after your authorisation approved. ... simple, easy to understand, spend short time for completing the hope scale that reflected by patients.” (Advanced Practice Nurse Prescriber, Kwai Chung Hospital)

The scale has also been used by practitioners and researchers in mainland China, Taiwan and Macau [C1].

Development of hope intervention materials. After the development of the assessment tools, Ho began the next step of developing the materials and protocol for hope-based interventions. Ho teamed up with a medical consultant of Queen Mary Hospital to develop a six-session hope-based intervention manual for recipients of hereditary colon cancer screening [R5]. Ho has also worked across disciplines with social workers and clinical psychologists from various organisations to develop hope stories in the form of books and videos for use in interventions and public education. Ho worked with a CCF clinical psychologist to develop a book of hope stories and a hope-based intervention protocol for children with cancer [C2]. 1000 copies of the storybook have been published. Of these, 740 copies were distributed to parents of children with cancer and oncology wards of the 5 major public hospitals in Hong Kong, namely Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, Prince of Wales,

Princess Margaret and Tuen Mun, as well as to other paediatric wards, the Red Cross and other special schools, and registered participants of the symposiums organised by CCF [C2]. Hong Kong has about 180 new cases of paediatric cancer every year and the intervention book has benefited 700 children with cancer since its publication in 2014. **Ho** also helped social workers from the Heep Hong Society, one of the largest non-government organisations in Hong Kong, to develop a Chinese hope storybook for parents of children with special needs. The 4,800 copies of the book that have been published can benefit the 15,000 families served by the Society [C3]. Last but not least, **Ho** served as an advisor to Kwai Chung Hospital, one of the largest psychiatric hospitals in Hong Kong with 920 beds, to develop a hope storybook for psychiatric patients [C3].

New Intervention Model in Correctional Services. In another milestone on **Ho**'s "hope journey", he led a team of clinical psychologists at the Lo Wu Correctional Institute (LWSI) under the Correctional Services Department, to develop a gender-specific treatment facility known as the Psychological Gymnasium for Women Offenders (PSY GYM) with a hope-based intervention as an important component [C4, C5]. The LWSI is the largest women's prison in Hong Kong with a capacity of 14,000. The CSD received the *Gender Mainstreaming Award* from the Women's Commission in 2013 in recognition of its consideration of the unique rehabilitation needs of female offenders in its policies, and the PSY GYM was particularly named in this honour. PSY GYM itself also received two awards – the *Meritorious Award* and a *Special Citation (Responsiveness to Customer Needs)* under the Team Award (Specialised Service) – in the Civil Service Outstanding Service Awards Scheme 2015. Since its inception in 2011, 408 women offenders have participated in the PSY GYM programmes. Feedbacks from clinical psychologists, administrators and participants are very positive [C6]. Some examples (directed quoted without language editing) are show below.

Feedback from clinical psychologists:

- *Showed positive attitude towards treatment.*
- *Applied learnt skills.*
- *Showed better understanding of their positive and negative emotions.*

Feedback from management and frontline staff:

- *PSY GYM participants became more cooperative with others and had a better attitude towards other persons in custody.*
- *More positive thinking and improved emotional stability and emotion handling were noted among PSY GYM participants.*
- *PSY GYM participants' attitude towards staff improved, along with work performance and discipline.*
- *The programme brought positive changes in participants, which could benefit secure custodial facilities in the long run.*

Feedback from participants (women in custody):

- *I can enhance my strengths by developing them. We can do anything together by agreement. We can change our perception of situations and accept others' responses to situations.*
- *I can control how I think and feel. I learnt how to understand my emotions and strengths, and appreciate the life I have. It's very helpful for my future life.*
- *I have found my strengths and now appreciate myself more. I am not as useless as I thought before.*

Ho's research has improved the model of rehabilitation in correctional settings in Hong Kong and Asia. Because of his contribution to correctional services, **Ho** was appointed as a member of the Committee on Community Support for Rehabilitated Offenders of the Correctional Services Department. A testimonial of **Ho**'s contributions from the Senior Clinical Psychologist at CSD is included in Section 5 [C7].

Training and Consultation. As **Ho**'s work has gained recognition in recent years, he has conducted regular training and consultation work in Hong Kong and beyond. Four examples are provided below.

1. **Ho** has been an Honorary Fellow of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention since 2010. Back in 2006, he helped the Centre to develop the award-winning 'Little Prince is Depressed' website (<http://www.depression.edu.hk/>), and in 2013, the 'Professor

Gooley & the Flame of Mind' website (<http://www.gooley.edu.hk/login.php>). Both adopted his hope intervention model and aim to provide psycho-education materials to the public on depression and suicide prevention. These multiple languages websites have reached millions of people around the world. A testimonial from the Director of the Centre is included in section 5 [C8].

2. **Ho** participated in the annual training of healthcare professionals in psycho-oncology in Taiwan through the Koo Foundation Sun Yat-Sen Cancer Center in Taipei from 2014 – 2016. A hope-based intervention was the focus of one of the courses and **Ho** provided supervision to a clinical psychologist from the Cancer Center to apply the hope model to help patients receiving bone marrow transplantation treatment.
3. In 2017, **Ho** was invited to deliver a keynote address and a workshop on hope-based intervention at the 15th International Meeting on Psychosocial Aspects of Hereditary Cancer (IMPAHC). His workshop was attended by 102 participants (including 46 medical doctors, 12 genetic counsellors, 2 nurses and 37 academics and researchers). The organizer has mentioned to **Ho** in an email that workshop had “very good feedback. In fact, there have been suggestions to repeat the workshops here in Malaysia” [C9]
4. **Ho** was invited to deliver hope-based intervention training workshops for Singapore Children’s Cancer Foundation and National Cancer Center Singapore in May and July 2019, respectively. These invitations demonstrate **Ho**’s continuous contributions to hope-based intervention training for children and adults with cancer on a global platform [C10].

(5) Sources to corroborate the impact

- C1.** Extracts from emails giving feedback on using the hope scales and other requests for permission to use the Chinese version of the Hope Scale from practitioners from Hong Kong, mainland China, Taiwan, and Macau, in both university and hospital settings.
- C2.** Email and letter from the Children’s Cancer Foundation to discuss the distribution of the hope storybook published by them with **Ho** as an advisor.
- C3.** An email from Heep Hong Society to inform **Ho** that the Society has published 4800 copies of the story books for distribution to their clients. A letter from Kwai Chung Hospital to invite **Ho** to help the hospital to develop hope stories for intervention.
- C4.** Letters of appointment as Honorary Advisor for the Women Offender Working Group of Psychological Services Section 1 and member of the Committee on Community Support for Rehabilitated Offenders (CCSRO) of the Correctional Services Department.
- C5.** Extract from the CSD website (http://www.csd.gov.hk/psy_gym/InDesign/en/psy/psy.htm) introducing the Psychological Gymnasium for Women Offenders (PSY GYM). Note in particular p. 6 describing the input of **Ho** as an Honorary Advisor and p. 7 listing the awards received by the PSY GYM.
- C6.** Feedback from practitioners, administrators and participants of the PSY GYM.
- C7.** Testimonial from Dr Judy Hui, Senior Clinical Psychologist of the Hong Kong Correctional Services, on **Ho**’s continuous contributions to the development of clinical psychology services for persons in custody in Hong Kong.
- C8.** Testimonial from Prof. Paul Yip, Director of The Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention, University of Hong Kong, on the appointment of and contributions of **Ho** to his centre.
- C9.** Emails from the organiser of the 15th International Meeting on Psychosocial Aspects of Hereditary Cancer demonstrating that most participants were practitioners, and their feedback on **Ho**’s hope-based intervention workshop was very positive.
- C10.** Letter from Singapore Children’s Cancer Foundation and National Cancer Centre Singapore inviting **Ho** to conduct hope-based intervention training for them in 2019. These invitations demonstrate **Ho**’s continuous impact and recognition in hope-based intervention over the past 10+ years.