

An Investigation of Adult Education and Lifelong Learning in Hong Kong: A Systematic Literature Review

Siu Pui Yee

(Lingnan University, Hong Kong)

Abstract: The United Nations adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a global agenda to promote sustainable peace and prosperity, including inclusive and equitable quality education. The “Global Report on Adult Learning and Education” from UNESCO also highlighted research evidence that demonstrated the importance of adults and their learning, emphasizing promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development articulates a much broader vision of the role of education in societal development (Heribert & Sylvia, 2016). Education for sustainable development aims to address the growing environmental challenges facing the planet. Education should include the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that empower learners to contribute to societal development (Leicht, 2018). However, the learning needs of youth and adults were somewhat neglected in the global education agenda in the past decade. Adult education in Hong Kong started to be discussed in 1970s, and there was no well-defined and generally accepted concept on adult education (Wong, 1975). It is important to expand the existing education programmes and enhance the quality of education for all (Legislative Council, 2010). The contemporary society should emphasize the inclusion of adults into the future agenda to enhance the education policy to contribute to a sustainable society. This research covers a literature review focusing on adult education development and institutions’ practices for achieving lifelong learning in general and in Hong Kong specifically. The findings would generate insights for future study on adult education and sustainable development, local policy developments, which would be beneficial for education policymakers and practitioners in contemporary policy creation in adult education for the Hong Kong context.

Key words: adult education, lifelong learning, Hong Kong

1. Introduction

In the evolving educational landscape, the concept of lifelong learning has gained increasing attention in the global context, particularly in alignment with the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Central to this agenda is Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which endeavors to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” (United Nations, 2015). Lifelong learning is understood as a comprehensive and holistic vision of education that encompasses formal, non-formal and informal learning throughout an individual’s life, and that empowers learners to acquire the knowledge, skills,

Siu Pui Yee, Doctor, Lingnan University, Hong Kong; research areas/interests: education, ageing studies, gerontechnology, policy studies. E-mail: chloesiu@Ln.edu.hk.

values and attitudes to contribute to sustainable development meaningfully (UNESCO, 2016). The concept of adult learning emphasizes the need for increased support for developing skills and strengthening lifelong learning. According to the UNESCO, adult education targets adult individuals (a person who already reached the age when he/she is responsible for their actions) who aim to enhance technical and/or professional qualifications, develop skills, and competencies, and enrich the knowledge. It also recognizes the importance for societal development, which is for sustainable development, aims to address the growing contemporary environmental challenges and for fostering a broader understanding of education's role in societal development (Leicht et al., 2018).

Despite the global acknowledgment of lifelong learning and adult education, there are still gaps and challenges in the implementation and provision of these concepts across various contexts. The International Council of Adult Education (2020) highlights that adult education is often neglected or marginalized in the policy agenda, and that education continues to be interpreted narrowly as focusing only on formal education and the early stages of human development. The society should call for a more inclusive and equitable approach to lifelong learning and education that addresses the diverse and changing needs of adult learners and that contributes to all aspects of individual, social and community development, and to deal with the numerous challenges in the society.

This paper focuses on the Hong Kong context, reviewing the model of adult education in Hong Kong and examine the elements that should be included when providing lifelong learning opportunities for adult learners. Through a systematic literature review of 35 articles focusing on the development of adult education and the practices of institutions in achieving lifelong learning in Hong Kong. This study would discuss the implications for policy and practice in adult education and make recommendations for future research.

2. Background: Lifelong Education in Hong Kong

Hong Kong's education system is structured into six years of primary education, six years of secondary education, and four years of tertiary education. The education system has undergone several reforms since the 1990s, which aimed to provide a more diversified and flexible curriculum for students and to align with the international standards. The concept of lifelong learning in Hong Kong can be traced back to the Education Commission (EC)'s Consultation Documents in 1999, which proposed a framework for education reform that would facilitate the development of a life-wide and society-wide learning and mobilization. These documents proposed an education reform framework to foster a society-wide culture of learning and mobilization, which highlighted that "Learning is no longer confined to school subjects or limited to classrooms, and the prerogative of those aged 6 to 22" and that "lifelong learning is the key to Hong Kong's success" (Education Commission, 1999, p. 4). The report also made specific reference to the ideas of maximum flexibility, openness and diversity continuing education for learners (Figure 1). The report also underscored the importance of maximum flexibility, openness, and diversity in continuing education for learners, and highlighted various opportunities and pathways for adult learners to pursue further studies or training.

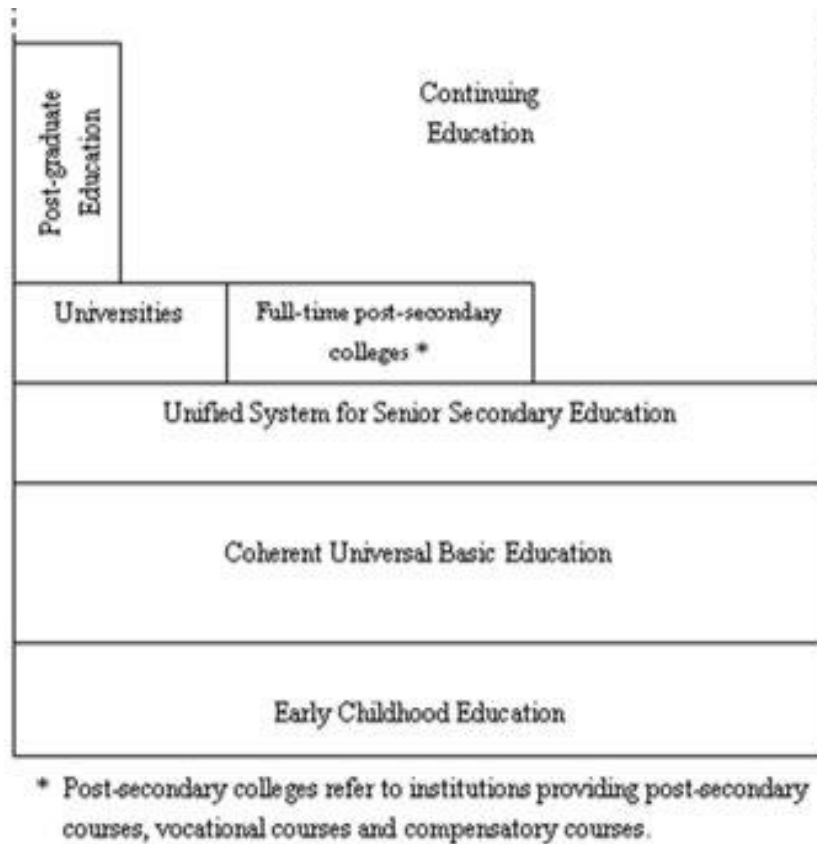


Figure 1 Lifelong Learning Academic Structure (Education Commission, 1999)

The development of adult education in Hong Kong has been significantly shaped by its political, social, and economic milieu, particularly in the first five years of the sovereignty transition. As Kennedy and Sweeting (2003) pointed out, the government’s endeavor to craft an inclusive educational framework that could “encompass the whole community, rather than an elite” (p. 189). Amidst the societal challenges and economic uncertainties of that era, the government aimed to improve the quality and recognition of education, as well as enhance learner employability and technological adeptness to meet Hong Kong’s evolving needs.

The Education Commission’s (EC) 1999 documents expanded on this vision, outlining four pivotal goals for lifelong learning: to foster a culture of learning in the community; to provide multiple pathways for learning; to ensure the quality and recognition of learning; and to promote the effective use of information technology in learning. The EC urged the need to introduce fundamental reforms to Hong Kong’s education system, which should be given the offer flexible learning opportunities for Hong Kong’s success (Education Commission, 1999). Since then, adult education’s growth in Hong Kong has been influenced by various dynamics, including economic and social shifts, the demand for a skilled workforce, higher education expansion, the emergence of new modes of learning, and the policy initiatives and support from both government and private sectors. The government also stated that it is important to expand the existing education programmes and enhance the quality of education for all (Legislative Council, 2010), so as to fit the objective of emphasizing adult inclusion in future educational agendas for a sustainable society.

The “Global Report on Adult Learning and Education” from UNESCO in 2019 also highlighted research evidence that demonstrated the importance of adults and their learning, emphasizing promoting lifelong learning

opportunities for all. In Hong Kong, various higher education institutions have tailored adult education programmes to benefit adult learners in multiple ways. The types of adult education programme can be categorized based on target groups, delivery modes, study areas, and learning objectives. The rich variety of programmes also offer numerous benefits from both personal and societal perspectives.

- Elder Learner Programs/Later Life Learning (LLL): Targeting older adults, typically those aged 60 and above, these programs cater to learners seeking personal enrichment, social interaction, health promotion, or civic engagement. Institutions like Lingnan University have pioneered lifelong learning initiatives aimed at providing a quality education platform for elder learners (Lingnan University, 2016).
- Vocational Training: These part-time courses address the diverse educational needs of working adults and align with Hong Kong's development needs (HKSAR, 2021). Programs under this category are designed for career development, job advancement, or skills enhancement, with notable examples including the Vocational Training Council and the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants.
- Continuing and Professional Studies: Various institutions offer programmes that support learners—ranging from young adults to the elderly—in advancing their learning, career developments and personal development goals (CUHK, 2022). The School of Continuing and Professional Studies at The Chinese University of Hong Kong stands out as a prime example.

By conducting a systematic literature review, this study provides a comprehensive overview of the different types of adult and lifelong education programmes in Hong Kong. The subsequent sections of this article will delve into the existing literature's context, discussing the benefits and policy implications of adult education in Hong Kong.

3. Methodology

This study employs a systematic literature review in 2022 to explore the development and current landscape of the lifelong learning and adult education development in Hong Kong. A systematic literature review is a method of identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing the existing literature on a specific topic or question, using explicit and transparent procedures and criteria (Moher et al., 2009). It provides an overview of the current state of knowledge, as well as identifying the gaps and limitations of the existing literature. The four phases of PRISMA are a widely used and internationally recognized guideline for conducting and reporting systematic reviews and meta-analyses (Moher et al., 2009). The stages include identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion, as depicted in Figure 2. Articles sources were from google scholar, for the identification, keywords include “Adult learning”, “Hong Kong”, “Adult Education”, “Lifelong learning”, “HKSAR”, “Continuing Education”, “Hong Kong”. In each phase, the study specifies the criteria and procedures for selecting the relevant literature for the review, such as the cases not clearly specify to Hong Kong, conference processing, dissertations, book chapters are being excluded. This study reviews over 80 pieces of literatures and have analyzed the final 35 articles that help understanding the intricacies of adult education and lifelong learning within the Hong Kong context.

Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA)

Figure 1. PRISMA of literature on focusing on adult education development and institutions' practices for achieving lifelong learning in Hong Kong

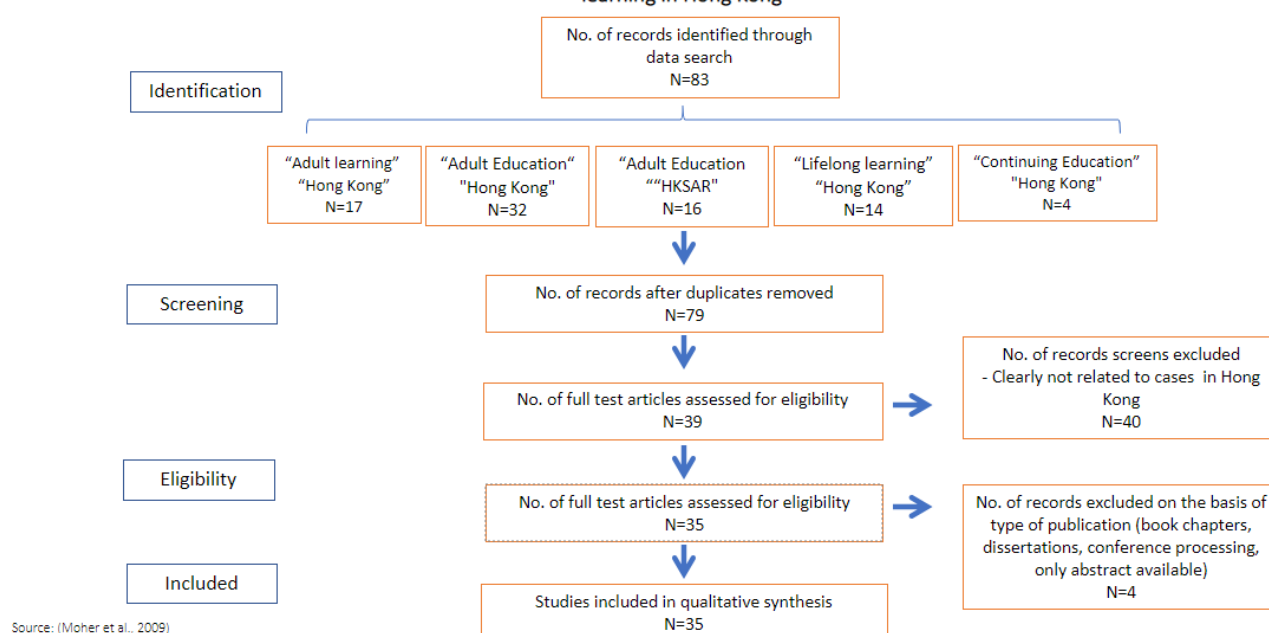


Figure 2 PRISMA of Literature on Focusing on Adult Education Development and Institutions' Practices for Achieving Lifelong Learning in Hong Kong.

The review the model of adult education in Hong Kong and examine the elements that should be included when providing lifelong learning opportunities for adult learners. It adopts a systematic literature review methodology and analyzes 35 articles that focus on adult education development and institutions' practices for achieving lifelong learning in Hong Kong. Each of the literature is being labeled with code (L1, L2, L3, etc.) to examine the content fit to the following research questions: (1) What are the types of adult education in Hong Kong?, (2) What are the benefits of adult education?, and (3) What implications can therefore be drawn for policy in adult education?. The review also revealed various types and benefits of adult education, both from personal and societal perspectives.

4. Findings

4.1 Types of Adult Education in Hong Kong

Focusing on the adult education development in Hong Kong on the literature, various types of adult education targeting different age-groups in Hong Kong are being listed on different articles, there are selected text lists 17 pieces of literature listed various types of adult education targeting different age-groups in Hong Kong. These types include elder learning programmes or later life learning (LLL), vocational, job, or workplace learning, language courses, distance learning, community development training, online learning, e-learning, or ICT training, skills-set trainings in undergraduate programmes, other programmes that target mature students such as full time and part time programmes or part-time higher diploma in universities, and self-learning. The results showed that Hong Kong does have variety of learning opportunities for life-long and adult learning, not only from the

skills-set based training but also from the life-course perspective, so as to equip learners with skills and spread across different population needs.

4.2 Benefits of Adult Education

This paper explores the multifaceted benefits of adult education, drawing upon a systematic review of 35 scholarly articles. It categorizes the benefits into two broad dimensions: personal and societal. Personal benefits encompass improvements in well-being, network expansion, competency development, self-fulfillment, and enhanced competitiveness or professional growth. Societal benefits include fostering social cohesion and inclusion, reducing inequalities, adapting to societal changes, human capital development, encouraging active aging, and promoting internationalization.

4.3 Personal Benefits

4.3.1 Development of Competencies

A core personal advantage of adult education is the enhancement of individual competencies. Twelve articles specifically note the development of skills imperative for lifelong learning, including communication, critical thinking, self-reliance, coping strategies, and the broadening of personal and professional horizons. For instance:

Code	Content
L21	“Development of skills required for life-long learning (especially with regard to communication and critical thinking).”
L4	“Maintain the quality of life by enhancing their self-reliance, self-sufficiency, and coping strategies to deal with challenges related to health and social relationships.”
L15	“Broadening students’ horizons personally and professionally.”

4.3.2 Enhancing Competitiveness and Professional Development

Another significant benefit is the increase in competitiveness and professional development, as highlighted by 11 articles. Adult education is depicted as a catalyst for career advancement and adaptability in a rapidly changing job market:

Code	Content
L13	“Changing job requirements or career changes often force adults to pursue additional education to survive or advance in the job market...for work improvement.”
L15	“Wider access to learning and professional retraining been as demanding.”
L25	“Due to the shift of the economic situations and increased competitiveness of the society, people need to be well trained in their competence and need to have certain qualifications to secure their job...”

4.3.2 Improvement in Well-being

Another personal benefit of adult learning is improving well-being. The link between adult learning and improved well-being is supported by 8 articles, illustrating how education promotes quality of life and psychological health:

Code	Content
L30	“The patterns of study established a positive association with quality of life.”
L24	“Engage older adults in active life so that their physical, cognitive, and functional abilities can be better preserved....Older adults’ psychological well-being might be enhanced by developing new interests, and by strengthening their social network.”
L5	“Promotes Well-being: learning plays a vital role in maintaining cognitive functioning and capability even in old age. Older adults who are stimulated mentally experience less decline in memory and intellectual ability”

4.3.3 Self-fulfillment

Adult education also fosters self-fulfillment, as reported by 8 articles. This encompasses a sense of achievement, self-confidence, and self-directedness. Training develops a sense of achievement, self-confidence, learners' interest and self-efficacy beliefs are catered to, endorsing mastery goals over performance goals.

Code	Content
L30	"Develop a sense of achievement after training, a feeling that boosts their self-confidence and makes them feel better about themselves."
L8	"Their interest and self-efficacy beliefs in learning. The adult learner endorsed the use of mastery goals over performance goal (enjoyment in completing course assignments but not their graded performance)."
L11	"Self-fulfillment: Self-direction in learning and desiring to move. ... Students displayed a reasonable high level of ambition towards self-directedness in their study."

The benefits of adult education are profound and multifaceted, bridging personal growth and advancement. Different articles have highlighted how adult learning not only cultivates individual competencies and well-being but also contributes to broader social objectives.

4.4 Societal Benefits

4.4.1 Adapting to Societal Changes

Adult education extends its advantages beyond individual growth, contributing significantly to societal development. This encompasses adapting to societal changes, promoting social inclusion, developing human capital, and fostering active ageing. Each of these societal benefits, supported by evidence from literatures, and underscored the transformative impact of adult learning on society at large. Firstly, adult learning plays a crucial role in navigating the evolving demands of society, particularly in the realms of information technology, economic development, and professional competencies. For instance:

Code	Content
L24	"Worth noting that computer courses are the most favourable course among these soon-to-be older adults. This trend may be due to the profound effect of information technology advancement and because this new cohort of older adults is pressured to learn to live in such an information technology world."
L19	"Economic progress then becomes dependent upon progressing towards a knowledge-based society, which requires a workforce with the types of capabilities needed for lifelong learning."
L25	"During the economic downturn, academic qualifications became a critical competitive tool... The need for a qualification embedded with multi-disciplinary skill drives the industry workforce towards the need for continuing education."

4.4.2 Promoting Social Inclusion

Promote social inclusion is being identified as one of the social benefits among the seven reviewed articles. Adult education also serves as a vehicle for social inclusion, offering opportunities for a diverse range of learners, including adults, seniors, and grassroots communities, to integrate and contribute meaningfully to society. This is evidenced by:

Code	Content
L2	"(Young) Learners are given with second-chance education opportunities to avoid long-term social and security problems."
L31	"Enhance the capacity of elders to be active and contributing members of society."
L14	"The adult urge to learn is indomitable, particularly in Hong Kong and adult education enjoys a close proximity to people at the grassroots."

4.4.3 Developing Human Capital

The development of human capital is another societal benefit attributed to adult education, as indicated by six articles. These findings stated that:

Code	Content
L16	“Ensure an adequate supply of trained manpower for sustained development of Hong Kong's industry, commerce, and services...Importance of developing an adaptive inventory of human capital.”
L25	“The need for a qualification embedded with multi-disciplinary skill drives the industry workforce towards the need for continuing education.”
L22	“(To) meet a significant level of ...retraining needs. New demands and the perceived need for an ever-increasingly well-qualified workforce.”

4.4.4 Promoting Active Ageing

Adult education contributes to the promotion of active ageing, as observed in four articles. Active ageing is a concept endorsed by the World Health Organization. This aspect of adult learning is particularly beneficial in enhancing the well-being and quality of life of older adults. The ideas of continued education can be the way of enhancing older adults' self-efficacy, also the knowledge toward the healthy ageing with the process of learning within a Chinese societal context-

Code	Content
L6	“Bring societal benefit: Continued learning important for active ageing.”
L8	“Their interest and self-efficacy beliefs in learning. The adult learner endorsed the use of mastery goals over performance goal (enjoyment in completing course assignments but not their graded performance).”
L30	“Education contributes lifelong benefits for healthy ageing, the process of learning cultivates positive mental health states and self-concept.”

Adult education offers significant societal benefits, including adapting to changing societal needs, fostering social inclusion, developing human capital, and promoting active ageing. These contributions highlight the integral role of lifelong learning in fostering a resilient, inclusive, and promote the sustainability of society development.

5. Discussions

This literature review elucidates the multifaceted implications of adult education, it helps to discuss the implications for policy, practice, and future research. Adult education empowers individuals to facilitate personal development across various life stages and contributes to the aim of enhancing human well-being, which fits the contexts of increased longevity and a changing world. It helps learners to navigate an increasingly competitive workplace, competitive workplace, acquire different skills and knowledge for their development in different stages. Furthermore, it plays a critical role in promoting active and healthy ageing, improving older adults' self-efficacy and self-concept, and advancing social inclusion within higher education.

From a societal viewpoint, the findings align with the lifelong learning objectives outlined in the Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) and UNESCO's vision. Different literature also stated that life-long promoting economic development and employment, as some of the training and adult learning and education focus on the skill-set development (Lim, 2010). However, less evidence is presented on the impact of adult education on employment outcomes, highlighting an area ripe for future investigation. Lifelong education's contribution to human well-being and its potential to address active and healthy ageing, along with promoting

social inclusion, warrants the development of effective strategies across higher education.

6. Recommendations

Further champion lifelong education, recommendations to the higher education administrators and policymakers are essential and based on the findings of the articles and the concepts of lifelong learning are proposed: Promotion of diversification and flexibility are important, higher education in Hong Kong has moved into an age of life-long learning, which in part, it is important to advocate for a diversified and flexible education system, which tailored to the needs of lifelong learners (Zhang & Au Yeung, 2003). Secondly, a model of cross-sectoral collaboration should be established to allow a greater pooling of public and private training resources, thereby enhancing the quality and accessibility of adult education. Thirdly, learner-centered approaches should be supported to confirm the many benefits of learning, and further foster the benefits of learning for older adults, such as self-efficacy and self-concept. Fourthly is about promotion of technology integration. Information technology should be utilized to produce online programmes that accommodate the diverse preferences and circumstances of adult learners, which can also enhance the flexibility and accessibility of the learners without boundary limitations. Fifthly, undertake policy research focused on adult education is essential to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4, ensuring quality education and fostering greater social inclusion for older adults.

7. Limitations of This Study

This study's scope was limited by various factors, including the absence of considerations for age, gender, income, and educational backgrounds. Additionally, this study focuses on peer-reviewed articles in Hong Kong context, which does not represent all types of adult learning interventions worldwide. These limitations suggest avenues for more inclusive and comprehensive future research.

References:

- Bo W. V. and Fu M. (2018). "How is learning motivation shaped under different contexts: An ethnographic study in the changes of adult learner's motivational beliefs and behaviors within a foreign language course", *Frontiers in Psychology*, No. 9, doi: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01603>.
- Boshier R. (1997). "Futuristic metropolis or second-rate port?", *Comparative Education*, Vol. 33, No. 2, pp. 265–275, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050069728569>.
- Boulton-Lewis (2010). "Education and learning for the elderly: Why, how, what", *Educational Gerontology*, Vol. 36, No. 3, pp. 213–228, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03601270903182877>.
- Brown G. and Wang Z. (2013). "Illustrating assessment: how Hong Kong university students conceive of the purposes of assessment", *Studies in Higher Education (Dorchester-on-Thames)*, Vol. 38, No. 7, pp. 1037–1057, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2011.616955>.
- Chou K., Chi I. and Leung A. (2003). "Interest in formal learning among soon-to-be-aged adults in Hong Kong", *Educational Gerontology*, Vol. 29, No. 9, pp. 723–737, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/716100368>.
- Cribbin J. (2009). "European languages and culture in Hong Kong: Trade or education?", *European Journal of Education*, Vol. 44, No. 1, pp. 53–64, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1465-3435.2008.01370.x>.
- Dewald B. W. A. (2000). "Turning part-time students' feedback into video programs", *Education & Training (London)*, Vol. 42, No. 1, pp. 33–39, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1108/EUM0000000005319>.
- Donoghue S. L. (2006). "Institutional potential for online learning: A Hong Kong case study", *Educational Technology & Society*, Vol. 9, No. 4, pp. 78–94.

- Estes R. J. (2002). "Toward a social development index for Hong Kong: The process of community engagement", *Social Indicators Research*, Vol. 58, No. 1/3, pp. 313–347.
- Gegenfurtner Schmidt-Hertha B. and Lewis P. (2020). "Digital technologies in training and adult education", *International Journal of Training and Development*, Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 1–4, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijtd.12172>.
- Gov HK. (2021). "Study options for adult learners", available online at: <https://www.gov.hk/en/residents/education/continuingeducation/training/options/adult.htm>.
- Ha T. S. (2008). "How IT workers learn in the workplace", *Studies in Continuing Education*, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 129–143, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01580370802097728>.
- International Council of Adult Education (2020). "Adult learning and education (ALE) — Because the future cannot wait", available online at: <https://en.unesco.org/futuresofeducation/sites/default/files/2020-10/ICAE%20-%20Futures%20of%20ALE%20FINAL.pdf>.
- Jane M. (2012). "As a student, I do think that the learning effectiveness of electronic portfolios depends, to quite a large extent, on the attitude of students!", *Electronic Journal of E-Learning*, Vol. 10, No. 4, p. 407.
- Kember D., Leung D. and Ma R. (2007). "Characterizing learning environments capable of nurturing generic capabilities in higher education", *Research in Higher Education*, Vol. 48, No. 5, pp. 609–632, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-006-9037-0>.
- Kennedy P. and Sweeting A. (2003). "The education commission and continuing education in Hong Kong: Policy rhetoric and the prospects for reform", *Studies in Continuing Education*, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 185–210, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0158037032000131529>.
- Kennedy and Sweeting A. (2003). "The education commission and continuing education in Hong Kong: Policy rhetoric and the prospects for reform", *Studies in Continuing Education*, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 185–210, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0158037032000131529>.
- Law M., Hills P. and Hau B. (2017). "Engaging employees in sustainable development — A case study of environmental education and awareness training in Hong Kong", *Business Strategy and the Environment*, Vol. 26, No. 1, pp. 84–97, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.1903>.
- Law N., Lee Y. and Chow A. (2002). "Practice characteristics that lead to 21st century learning outcomes", *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 415–426, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.0266-4909.2002.00253.doc.x>.
- Leung D. and Liu B. (2011). "Lifelong education, quality of life and self-efficacy of Chinese older adults", *Educational Gerontology*, Vol. 37, No. 11, pp. 967–981, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03601277.2010.492732>.
- Leung C. I. and Chiang V. (2008). "Chinese retirees' learning interests: A qualitative analysis", *Educational Gerontology*, Vol. 34, No. 12, pp. 1105–1121, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03601270802349361>.
- Leong A. (2004). "Whither Asian labour education?", *Convergence (Toronto)*, Vol. 37, No. 1, pp. 39–44.
- Li N., Lee K. and Kember D. (2000). "Towards self-direction in study methods: The ways in which new students learn to study part-time", *Distance Education*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 6–28, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0158791000210102>.
- Lim D. (2010). "Provision of second-chance education: the Hong Kong experience", *Education & Training (London)*, Vol. 52, No. 4, pp. 304–320, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1108/00400911011050972>.
- Lingnan University (2016). "Merger of the Community College at Lingnan University and Lingnan Institute of further education to support future strategic and sustainable development", available online at: <https://www.ln.edu.hk/news/20161116/merger-CCLU-LIFE>.
- Moher D., Liberati A., Tetzlaff J. and Altman D. G. (2009). "Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: The PRISMA statement", *PLoS Medicine*, Vol. 6, No. 7, p. e1000097, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000097>.
- Mok K. H. and Yu K. M. (2011). "The quest for regional education hub status and transnational higher education: Challenges for managing human capital in Asia", *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, Vol. 31, No. 3, pp. 229–248, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2011.594241>.
- Ng C. (2015). "Learners' goal profiles and their learning patterns over an academic year", *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, Vol. 16, No. 3, doi: <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v16i3.1951>.
- Ng S. H. (1987). "Training problems and challenges in a newly industrializing economy: The case of Hong Kong", *International Labour Review*, Vol. 126, No. 4, p. 467.
- Riches G. (1969). "A framework for community development in Hong Kong", *Community Development Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 83–87, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/4.2.83>.
- School of Continuing and Professional Studies. (2022). "Vision, mission & strategies", The Chinese University of Hong Kong, available online at: <https://www.scs.cuhk.edu.hk/en/about-cuscs/vision-mission-strategies>.

- Sherritt C. (1999). "Hong Kong and Taiwan: Two case studies in open and distance learning", *Asian Affairs: An American Review* (New York), Vol. 26, No. 1, pp. 37–42, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00927679909598818>.
- Tam M. (2018). "Evaluation of third age learning in Hong Kong: Why and how?", *Educational Gerontology*, Vol. 44, No. 11, pp. 724–731, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03601277.2018.1555208>.
- Tam M. (2011). "Active ageing, active learning: Policy and provision in Hong Kong", *Studies in Continuing Education*, Vol. 33, No. 3, pp. 289–299, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0158037X.2010.515573>.
- Tam M. (2012). "Elder learning in Hong Kong: Policies, programmes, provisions, and issues", *Educational Gerontology*, Vol. 38, No. 2, pp. 107–113, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03601277.2010.515899>.
- Tam M. (2013). "A model of active ageing through elder learning: The elder academy network in Hong Kong", *Educational Gerontology*, Vol. 39, No. 4, pp. 250–258, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03601277.2013.750931>.
- Tam M. (2013). "Perceptions of successful ageing and implications for late-life learning", *Studies in Continuing Education*, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 281–298, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0158037X.2012.746228>.
- Tuckett A. (2017). "Lifelong learning helps people, governments and business: Why don't we do more of it?,". *World Economic Forum*, available online at: https://edmspl1 ilo.org/edmspl1/groups/skills/documents/skpcontent/cdff/mjew/~edisp/edmspl1_210424.pdf.
- UNESCO (2011). "Adult education", available online at: <http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/adult-education>.
- UNESCO (2016). "Background paper prepared for the 2016 Global Education Monitoring Report Education for people and planet: Creating sustainable futures for all — Conceptions and realities of lifelong learning", UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, available online at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000245626>.
- UNESCO (2016). "Conceptions and realities of lifelong learning", available online at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000245626>.
- UNESCO (2019). "Global report on adult learning and education", available online at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000372274>.
- United Nation (2015). "The 17 goals", available online at: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.
- Wong D. and Kwok S. (1997). "Difficulties and patterns of social support of mature college students in Hong Kong: Implications for student guidance and counselling services", *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp. 377–387, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03069889700760311>.
- Waters J. and Leung M. (2014). "These are not the best students: continuing education, renationalization and Hong Kong's young adult educational non-elite", *Children's Geographies*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 56–69, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2013.850851>.
- Wong E. (2005). "Operationalization of strategic change in continuing education", *International Journal of Educational Management*, Vol. 19, No. 5, pp. 383–395, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540510607725>.
- Zhang W. and Au Yeung L. (2003). "Online measurement of academic programme preferences for distance learners in Hong Kong", *Distance Education*, Vol. 24, No. 2, pp. 213–226, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0158791032000127482>.