

City University of Hong Kong
Department of Public Policy

POL6702 MACS Dissertation

Sustainable Development of the Youths in Hong Kong

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Executive Summary

Nowadays most Hong Kong youths need to face the most serious challenges including low economic growth, the shrinking job market, stalled social mobility, and high housing prices. Under the pressure, part of them may felt frustrated at the lack of opportunities as well as unfulfilled ambitions. Meanwhile, the Belt and Road Initiative and the Greater Bay Area have been very hot topics among Hongkongers in relation to development and strategic planning.

Being the most open and international city in the mainland, also enjoying the dual advantages of “one country, two systems”, the city can plays an important role in national development initiatives. Indeed, our youngsters will become the backbone of the city, so this study attempts to offer a systematic review of the youth’s opinion. All findings is obtained from questionnaire survey and semi-structured interviews.

The findings reveal that substantial number of participants support the national development initiatives and request to get some quality work opportunity. They felt optimism about the collaboration and trusting that strengthening the economic cooperation can benefit to both sides of the border. Most youths started to believe that the plan may attract more enterprises to open their sub-office in Hong Kong. They requested to get more detail employment information by government. Moreover, they look forward to providing salary tax breaks for Hongkongers.

Overall, this study recommends some directions for the government and hope the findings may become an effective reference for the policy-maker and stakeholders.

A. Introduction

Currently, Hong Kong's younger generation experienced many issues including low economic growth, the shrinking job market, stalled social mobility, and high housing prices. While most youngsters are better educated, and have grown up with a higher living standard generally than previous generations, they also need to face serious challenges. Some may feel frustrated with unfulfilled ambition and the lack of opportunities.

According to the research paper published by the Legislative Council in 2015, the cumulative real growth in median monthly earnings declined to 14% between 1997 and 2013, consequential to the slowdown of Hong Kong's GDP growth¹ (LegCo Secretariat, 2015). At the same time, the average flat price surged to an uncontrollable level that creates a large barrier for development of the youngster (LegCo Secretariat, 2017).

Being the most open and international city in the mainland, also enjoying the dual advantages of "one country, two systems", the city can play an important role in Belt and Road Initiative and the Greater Bay Area. There is no doubt that our economic development can be stimulated by the above national development initiatives, because those projects have greater opportunities to create more higher-paid and higher-skilled jobs for young people.

However, while the government actively encourages people to participate fully in the Initiative, it is important to have a fuller understanding of the views of the public, and

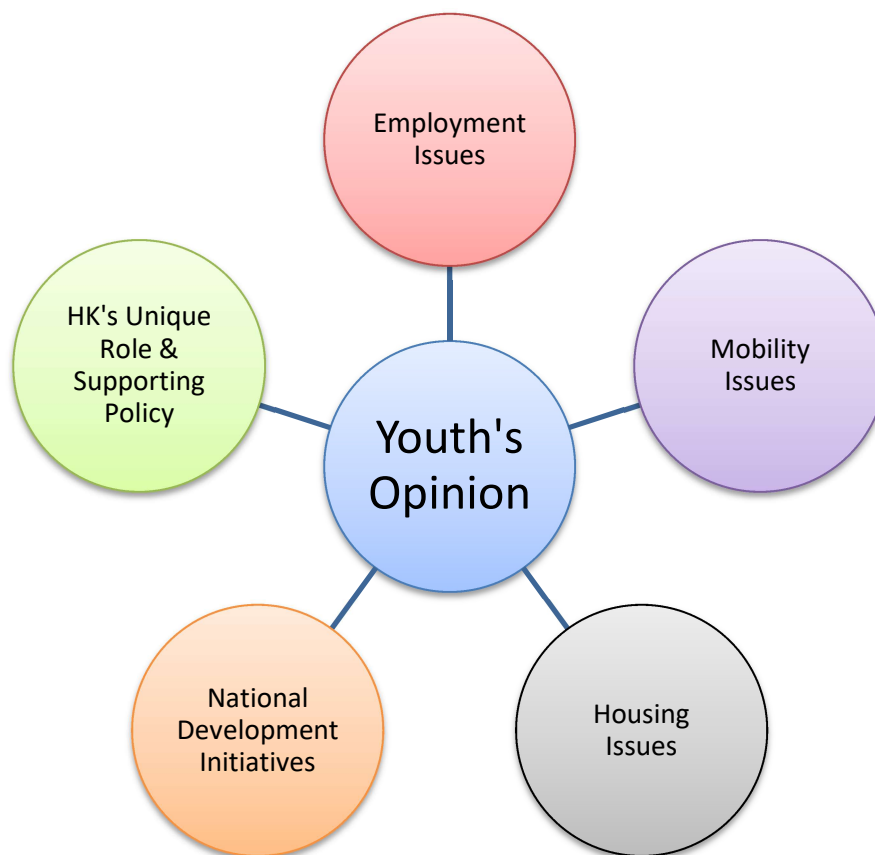
¹ Between 1976 and 1996, HK's cumulative earnings growth had 139% and annual average GDP growth had 6.6%

youngsters in particular, on these national development initiatives, if only in order to be able to design more appropriate policies for developmental needs.

What are Hong Kong youngsters' evaluations of the impact of the national development blueprint? Do they believe the national development initiatives can assist them to solve the issues include low earning, unaffordable housing and lack of social mobility? What supporting policy do they expect from the government? Do they agree Hong Kong has a unique role to play in PRC's development?

This study attempts to offer a systematic review of their opinions. Therefore, all suggestions and wishes expressed by youngsters will be recorded and analyzed during the research process. Overall, the findings may offer a reference to promote the sustainable development in Hong Kong.

Conceptual Framework



B. Literature Review

Introduction

According to the 2017 Policy Address, Government agreed that our young people are the city's future. They possess the greatest potential to drive the development of Hong Kong, so the society should understand more about their feelings and needs in order to provide more support and create opportunities for them to achieve their aspiration. Although Hong Kong still maintains the real GDP growth at 3-4% in 2018 and the unemployment rate stood at the lowest level in more than 20 years (HKTDC, 2018b), it cannot bring a pleasant environment for the young people.

Lau (2017) points out that the current economic structure has placed too much emphasis on the services sector (accounting for more than 90% of GDP), so the existing structure is related to excessively uniform economic industries and severely imbalanced economic development. On the other hand, during the past decades, income inequality has risen sharply, as has the cost of housing which doubled between 1997 and 2016.

The University of Hong Kong conducted a survey of youths in 2011 (aged 15-29), reported that, most of the young people are in general not very engaged with their work, because they have been spending long hours on jobs that they are not particularly interested in. Moreover, they feel frustrated and lost given the disjuncture between educational and income, and that the resultant income instability makes them feel it is difficult to reach a decent standard of living. They are getting more and more upset with the current housing market as well as dissatisfied with their prospects of upward social mobility in society. The findings suggest that increasingly youngsters

are yearning for holistic improvements to society.

1. National development initiatives

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Greater Bay Area (GBA) have been very hot topics among Hongkongers in relation to development and strategic planning in the past few years. Earlier, the Thirteenth Five-Year (2016-2020) Plan has indicated support of Hong Kong to continue to develop as an international financial center, a center for innovation, and an international legal, arbitration and mediation services center (Our Hong Kong Foundation, 2016a). Therefore, the BRI is designed as a significant development strategy of the Chinese government with the intention of promoting economic co-operation among countries along the proposed B&R routes. (HKTDC, 2018a). The GBA will link nine cities in Guangdong province plus Hong Kong and Macau to form an integrated economic and business hub, so it serves as the economic engine of southern China. (Cheung, 2018)

Both the mainland and Hong Kong economies have been undergoing important transitions. The mainland has been reducing its reliance on exports and fixed investment and placing greater focus on domestic demand and innovation to drive economic development. A common perception is that as mainland economy develops, Hong Kong's role has gradually diminished. For example, more conventional trade is now carried out directly through mainland ports² (LegCo Secretariat, 2013). At the same time, new development initiatives, such as BRI and GBA seem to offer new opportunities for HK economy (Lau, 2017).

² The proximity of Shenzhen and Guangzhou's port to the cargo sources in the PRD region, which has attracted cargo owners to use them instead of the Hong Kong port for the benefits of lower operational costs and transportation convenience. Shenzhen handled 17.3 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEU) of containers in the first nine months of 2013, while Hong Kong only handled about 16.4 million TEUs.

While the new plans present exciting opportunities to the government and part of the business circles, many young people do not feel the same way. There appears to be a lack in confidence in and basic understanding of the plans, coupled with a weak sense of belonging towards the mainland authorities who proposed the new plans. Additionally, the government is seen by some not doing quite enough to promote the new plans to the young people (Feng & Liang, 2018).

1.1 Importance for Hong Kong

For many years, Hong Kong is known for being international financial, transportation and trade centres with celebrated professional services. The city can contribute to the transformation and upgrading of industries in Guangdong by its strength. On the one hand, Hong Kong provides support for regional economic development and can build the GBA into a world-class city cluster with international competitiveness. On the other hand, through facilitating the development of industries and can expand the GBA as a leading economic growth engine for the mainland (HKTDC, 2017).

Lau (2017) notes that in order to facilitate more rapid economic growth, it is necessary to promote the free flow of goods and services, people, capital and information as well as the sharing of basic infrastructure facilities within the GBA. Another research conducted by Loh (2018) stresses the need of Hong Kong to consider the GBA and the BRI seriously. He suggested the former provides opportunities to find niches in technology and innovation with Shenzhen (China's "Silicon Valley"), and the latter is a national effort to take its infrastructure building and other capabilities beyond borders. Both can help us sharpen our own skills and

fully use our traditional experience, so we can offer services in collaboration with the mainland and other partners.

1.2 The role of Hong Kong

According to HKTDC (2017), the political and legal systems of GBA still differ greatly, but we could benefit through existing co-operation frameworks between governments of the three places and co-operation platforms such as CEPA, free trade zones, and etc. In terms of population, size and total economy, the GBA is more or less on a par with most of the advanced bay area internationally.

In addition, Lau (2018) finds evidence that our capital markets and professional services would be very useful for state-owned enterprises (SOEs) seeking opportunities under the BRI. Considering the scope, magnitude and complexity of many of the potential projects, the SOEs and mainland enterprises would stand to benefit by setting up an office in this city. Actually, Hong Kong is home to 154 licensed banks, where 132 of them are incorporated outside the city. Therefore, Hong Kong is known for its strength in legal, accounting, project development consultancy, insurance, risk management and dispute resolution services that are internationally famous.

1.3 Gain advantages from “Going out” policy

Our Hong Kong Foundation (2016b) notes that Hong Kong has played a critical role in helping China go global at different stages of its development. Historically, Hong Kong has been a stepping stone for China enterprises going overseas, as well as a conduit for foreign investment entering China. In the past decades, Hong Kong and the Mainland have developed increasingly close economic ties and have practically

formed one economy. The government foresees in the coming years, travelling, studying and working in the GBA will become more convenient for Hongkongers after all infrastructures are completed. It will bring economic opportunities for this city and could provide hope to our next generation (Cheung, 2018).

2. Employment issues in Hong Kong

At present, the city is facing two major problems. First is the fact that economic development has confronted various bottlenecks. Second is the high cost of living. The quality of life of many residents has hence not been able to match Hong Kong's global position (DAB, 2017). Until 2014, Hong Kong has 1,352,300 youth aged 15-29 – 18.4% of the total population, most of them are born in peaceful living environment but are facing high competition than their previous generations (Li, 2014).

Many studies have suggested how the market of China can provide a good prospect for the Hong Kong youths, who are described having a comparative advantage in their more global outlook, better professional training and a higher level of integrity (Chan et al, 2008). Also, DAB (2017) comments that by participating in the development of the GBA, we can break through the economic bottlenecks and provide more diverse and well-paying job positions to our youths. At the same time, it will allow more residents to enjoy a better quality of life, because their income will rise by the new jobs opening in Hong Kong.

2.1 Employment status

HKU (2011) notes a decline of employment of the young generation working in manufacturing, transport, storage, and communication sector since most of the jobs available for them in the markets are in sales, product promotion, and customer service. These jobs require little academic knowledge, but lots of practical skills that normal education does not offer. It creates a job mismatch for workforce with higher educational attainment.

Although the city has achieved full employment, with an employment rate of just above 3 per cent and the Hongkongers looking for work are generally able to find it as well as the economy faces a labour shortage, the unemployment rate of those aged below 25 is far higher, at almost 8 per cent. Indeed, the industry structure is weighted towards finance, property, professional and trade-related service industries (Pau, 2015), young people may not easy to find a job which can satisfy their interest and meet their college major. Under the limited job satisfaction among the young people, quite a number of them are not intrinsically motivated towards.

Additionally, due to the creation of high-end jobs seems to be unable to keep pace in manpower supply. As a result of gradual saturation of higher-end jobs, more degree holders end up at lower-end jobs requiring less professional knowledge. For those highly educated workers taking up lower-end jobs, they inevitably see a larger wage discount. The wide pay differential may in turn cause career disappointment amongst some degree holders in the younger generations³ (LegCo Secretariat, 2016).

³ If degree holders had a managerial or professional occupation, their median monthly earnings would be HK\$38,000 in 2015. The monthly income would be reduced almost by half to HK\$20,000 if they worked as associate professionals. In case these degree holders only work as a clerical or shop sales, their median monthly earnings would be reduced further to just around HK\$11,000-13,000.

2.2 Opportunities in mainland

Much survey has found that most of the young people do not want to work in mainland as many have doubts over the quality of life and rule of law (Siu, 2015). Moreover, before the new residence permit measures⁴, Hongkongers obtain work permits involved a lot of hassles that makes many young people gave up on career opportunities on the mainland (Chinadaily, 2018).

Currently, the road to workplace mobility helped by economic cooperation in the GBA opens up working opportunities for young Hongkongers, where mainland authorities say they hope to attract 650,000 professionals to work in Qianhai, Shenzhen, alone. Some of the enterprises in Hong Kong have been asking for candidates from Hong Kong to move to Shenzhen and other parts of Guangdong (Tomlinson, 2018), because Hong Kong candidates are at an advantage with proficiency in Cantonese, Mandarin and English as well as owned the international view that met a standard of qualification in Asia (Chan et al, 2005).

2.3 Work-life balance

Work-life balance has recently taken the attention of both researchers and executives. (Delecta, 2011) defines as an individual's ability to meet their work and family commitments, as well as other non-work responsibilities and activities. The concept can refer to the relations between work and family functions, also involves other roles

⁴ The Central Government announced the Regulations for Application of Residence Permit for Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan Residents (the Regulations) on 16 August 2018. The Regulations will be implemented on 1 September this year. According to the Regulations, Hong Kong residents living in the Mainland who meet the relevant criteria can apply for residence permits. A residence permit holder is entitled to enjoy, in accordance with the law, three categories of rights, six basic public services and nine facilitation measures in the place where he or she is residing, covering areas relating to daily living including employment, education, medical care, travel, financial services and so on.

in other areas of life. Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw (2003) defines it as satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict.

Yu (2018) notes that many Hongkongers now regard work-life balance as more important than having a higher pay, to pursue more flexible working hours as well as a good career development. Also, if they have found that jobs did not fulfil their dreams, they would leave the jobs very quickly (Yiu, 2018). Moreover, young Hongkongers love to have a break with their parents or friends, and want to maintain a healthy lifestyle (Kwong, 2010; Koo, 2010). Therefore, if the policy-makers only focus on the job opportunities around the BRI and GBA may not arouse the young people interest and curiosity. In contrast, they may believe that the suggestion is only fulfill the political objective as well as damage the traditional of one country, two systems (Su, 2018).

3. Housing issues in Hong Kong

In fact, our young people are facing increasing housing pressure. Although the fourth generations⁵ live in an age of material abundance and economic affluence better than their elders, but they still need to solve much issues that are highly influenced their life (Lui, 2007), particularly the housing is now unaffordable for many people.

According to the statistical data collected by LegCo Secretariat in 2017, amid the rising residential property market, Hong Kong has been ranked for eight consecutive years by an international survey as the least affordable city to buy a home globally. In 2017, an average Hong Kong household needed to save about 19 years of income to

⁵ Lui's first generation is those people born in the 1920s or 1930s, second generation comprises the post-war baby boomers born between 1946 and 1966, third generation belongs to born between 1967 and 1975, and fourth generation was born between 1976 and 2000.

afford an average-priced flat in the territory (LegCo Secretariat, 2017). Indeed, marriage remains young people's top motivation for owning a home, but without strong parental support, it would be extremely difficult to achieve the target, and the issue had led to young people delaying marriage (Li, 2014).

3.1 Family ties

Most of the young Hongkongers preserve close family ties. They preferred to continue to living with their parents not only require to take care of them, but wish to receive financial assistance from their family members (Li, 2014). In fact, owning a house can help young people become more independence and step by step to leaving parental wings, in order to plan their own family. However, family planning and childbearing both depend on their financial status, so this can explain why they are getting more and more frustrated and upset with the current housing market (HKU, 2011).

Yip (2017) argued that the government believes the family is the cornerstone of social harmony and the basic unit for community building, but the expensive housing is one of the real barriers to bigger families, and it can extend to a low-fertility society in this city. But Kwong (2010) commented that part of the new generation had experienced a lonely childhood, due to their parents put all time on the job and got less time with them. They may not want to repeat the past experience to deal with their future, particularly the marriage and fertility matters.

3.2 One-hour living circle

Undoubtedly, Hong Kong faces major challenges in the provision of fine, affordable and habitable housing space (Mok, 2018). Even if there is a consensus on how to create more land, new houses will not become available for years (Chugani, 2018). Some analysts have encouraged the GBA could answer Hong Kong's housing needs and address land shortage. Due to the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL) can reduce significantly the travel time and cost between Hong Kong and mainland cities, so the concept of one-hour living circle of the GBA can be materialized, in order to ensure the efficient flow of people, goods and services (Gaffney, 2018).

In fact, the objective of the plan allows people can live in Guangdong cities while commuting to work in Hong Kong (CUHK, 2018). If government provides a better arrangement related to transport and administration, Hongkongers can have the options of living in the GBA and upgrade their living standard (DAB, 2017). Compared with other city clusters in the mainland, the GBA has the unique advantage of encompassing Hong Kong in its 'One-hour living circle' (HKTDC, 2017).

3.3 Home ownership aspiration

In Hong Kong, housing ownership stands out as a pivotal tool for personal wealth deposit and accumulation. Empirical studies tend to support the hypothesis that housing is considered a symbol of wealth, autonomy, belonging, satisfaction and security, and this attitude is also shared amongst the younger generation (Li, 2014). Most young people thus regard buying a property as a life goal.

Forrest and Yip (2015) discuss the attitudes to housing amongst young people in Hong Kong and find many are pessimistic about the future as they struggle to balance their own wishes and family responsibilities. They may still be conventional in seeing home ownership as a symbol of success, yet would be happy to rely on public rental housing to solve their housing needs. They cannot afford to move out, so they choose to stay with their parents. However, if they had resources, they would like to enjoy the freedom of living independently. The main point is how to actively using the national development initiatives to resolve the immediate concern still as a question in the current status and not completely formed by any parties.

4. Social mobility issues in Hong Kong

Social mobility is a multi-dimensional concept, but it is most often quantitatively measured in terms of changes in earnings, education and occupation. The recent statistics and research studies have revealed limited opportunities for upward earnings, educational and occupational mobility, because Hong Kong has relied heavily on the real estate and finance sectors for the past three decades. There have been calls for Hong Kong to adopt an effective strategy to diversify and restructure its economy, thereby creating more higher-paid and higher-skilled jobs to enhance earnings and occupational mobility (LegCo Secretariat, 2015a).

In the past decades, most youngsters were dissatisfied with their prospects of upward social mobility in Hong Kong society. Young people felt there were more constraints on their social mobility, quality of life, and further education than a few years ago. Some felt that the older generations' delay of retirement was slowing work mobility (HKU, 2011). However, we also need to understand the characteristics and values of the young people, in order to analyze the truth. At the same time, the government said

that the flow of people between Hong Kong and mainland cities under the national development initiatives would bring social benefits beyond economic development and gross domestic product growth (Ng and Shen, 2018).

4.1 Characteristics of new generation

Yeung (2008) mentioned that generation Y⁶ is the major economic force in the world, they might be arrogant, but they are work smart. They are all young, energetic and full of potential. Those people care less about money than job satisfaction, work environment and learning opportunities. If they are not happy with their work, they will leave immediately and look for a new one. Unlike their parents who work hard and saved money for the future, this group of Hongkongers embraces a ‘work hard, play hard’ attitude. Li (2014) also argued that the current consumption culture has further changed the youths' ways of thinking, life attitudes, and value system. Most of them are enjoy non-durable goods and services, such as upgraded electronic products, self-improvement courses and travelling around the world.

Due to their life's paths are severely constrained by their overprotective and supervisory parents, who are determined to prepare them for the competitive world at an early stage. They highly concerned on freedom, especially they went off to college and have chance to choose their real life (Mok, 2010). In order to solve the social mobility problem of young people, we need to understand their needs and wants under the real situation. In a 2015 telephone survey of local young people aged 15-39, most of the respondents were dissatisfied with the social mobility, this attitude is common among (20-24) (HK Ideas Centre, 2015). They refused to receive a hard-sell

⁶ Young people who were born in the 1980s and early 1990s

suggestion, because the government needs to directly explain the GBA and BRI development plans are good for them.

4.2 Post-materialism

Wong and Wan (2009) argued that our young people, who have grown up in an environment of ease and comfort, are more likely to develop a different worldview from those before them. Materialist goals are still valued, but they are no longer the top priority. Younger people are more post-materialist than their seniors and parents.

Moreover, other scholars observed that the transition from materialism to post-materialism seen in many advanced countries of the West is also appearing in Asian societies such as Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China (Wong, Hsiao and Wan, 2009). HKU (2011) also commented that our youngsters thought it was good to place more emphasis on family life and less emphasis on money and material possessions. They feel there are more constraints on their social mobility, quality of life, and further education than a few years ago.

Kwong (2010) suggested that due to the decrease of social mobility, young people found it difficult to develop an exciting prospect for the further. Existing policies are in lack of innovations and overly bound by unspoken ground rules of the vested interests in society, so the Government has not been responsive to suggestions. However, young people require the creation of more job opportunities in order to gain practical experience.

4.3 Youth values and their challenges

Yip and Chan (2013) pointed out that pay rises amongst youths in recent years have been lower than inflation, let alone to catch up with the soaring property prices. For them, it seems that hard work does not pay off and they can't see light at the end of the tunnel. They lose hope and the drive to improve them. The study urges for more job opportunities to be developed for the youths. In contrast, Koo (2010) said that youngsters may need to change their perceptions include focused on the job nature rather than the salary level, and keep saving rather than travelling regularly or pursue the luxury goods.

LegCo Secretariat (2016) also points out that there is another concern whether income mobility of the young people has slackened compared with their parents or senior in the context of slower economic growth and more crowded pathways at the higher end of the occupation hierarchy⁷. Even for the successful youngsters getting a high-pay job, their salaries are noticeably below their predecessors that means upward mobility is slower than the earlier generations.

⁷ The university graduates born in the mid-1960s could attain median monthly employment earnings of HKD33,500 at constant (2013) market prices at the age of 35-39, after 10-15 years of work. The people born in the mid-1970s could make only HKD26,100 at the age of 35-39. The people born in the mid-1980s, they were aged below 30 got HKD14,770, was the lowest compared with their predecessors.

5. Hong Kong's unique role and supporting policy

As Asia's premier international financial centre, Hong Kong has commanded the confidence of many observer of its strategic in the development of China, especially because it is home of a large group of professionals with expertise in legal, financial and other professional areas which are important to China's success (Lee, 2017; Chan, 2018). With business-friendly institutions including the rule of law and low income tax rates, Hong Kong work as a gate way to mainland becomes also a gateway to/from the mainland. Hong Kong can highly depend on the flow of goods, funds, human resources and information in order to maintain competitiveness at the highest level (Chan et al, 2015).

In fact, the government official is suggested to create more convenience for the Hongkongers that actively encourage them to develop at GBA. However, our youths appear to have little or no understanding of the GBA project, so it creates a significant difference between two parties in the direction of economic development. Most importantly, officials have a responsibility to assist the society to acquire a clear understanding of the initiative and its significance. There are two suggestions for this task: to raise public awareness on the subject matter, and the government provides a detailed execution plan for our young generation compatible with existing circumstances (The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, 2016).

5.1 Relationship between the youngsters and the national initiatives

The students of Hong Kong Education University mentioned that when discussing the initiatives, they will generally assume that the latter is highly related to political topics. Given that the current school education has placed more emphasis on western culture, most of them have a good understanding on the developed countries but less on developing nation, particularly on the B&R countries (Bahehuicui, 2018).

Tai (2017) argues that the opportunities of BRI has been acknowledged by many corporations and small and medium-sized enterprises, but not yet accepted by youngsters. Youths need to appreciate their comparative advantages in the GBA and their enthusiasm may need to be inspired. We need to explain the potential, efficiency and trend of the GBA very clearly to youngsters. For instance, under the structure of ‘one country, two systems’, Hong Kong can play a major role in the national development initiatives in order to attract more enterprises to invest in Hong Kong.

5.2 Innermost feeling of the youngsters

Tai (2018) reported that national development initiatives was not recognized as opportunities despite there has been a lot of publicity and promotion by government, and the young people are always worried about the impacts of integration on the functioning of 'one country, two systems'. Moreover, the slogan style of promotion may not accept by our youngsters, because those contents are lack of a clear picture that Hong Kong has the advantages especially for our young generation. As a result, some people have viewed the economic integration as a crisis that their resources will be share with the outsiders. Most importantly, when we encourage youngsters to participate fully in the running of the national development initiatives, they also need to accept the national identity. And the current emphasis is very much on professional category, such as infrastructure financing or financial innovation, but those subjects are not closely related with the youngsters (Cheung, 2016)

Lau (2018) suggested that more opportunities targeting the young people should be proposed and clearly explained. Currently, most discussion is highly focused on a macro view, such as total output, employment rate or growth figures, rather than delineating the work types or industries designed for youngsters. Jim (2018) also mentioned that our youngsters had three inadequacies: 1. cognition: a misunderstanding about it is hard to cooperate with the people in mainland, so they refuse to consider the option; 2. opportunity: youngsters are unfamiliar with the regulations of mainland that lead to some unexpected result or difficulties to meet the new opportunities; and 3. support: Hongkongers find it difficult to apply for mortgages in mainland under existing procedures.

Hong Kong government and relevant institution should establish more liaison offices in mainland, and in the countries along the Belt and Road routes, in order to provide updated information and necessary support for the youngsters and other who are working outside of Hong Kong (The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, 2016).

5.3 Challenges and anxieties

In 2016/17, 16,600 Hong Kong young people participated in the youth exchange program (Home Affairs Bureau, 2017). Although those programs are an increasing trend, it also comes into question on its effectiveness. Shue Yan University conducted a telephone survey of youths (aged 15-34), 55.2% respondents were unaware of its contents and most of them were dissatisfied with the supporting policy provided by the government including study, employment and start a business. Youth people feel there are more opportunities in education and employment at Hong Kong than Guangdong (Proactive Think Tank Limited, 2017).

DAB (2017) pointed out that the GBA involves an element of challenges to Hong Kong residents. The five most prominent considerations given by the young people included the following: 1. insufficient freedom of information may decrease their competitiveness; 2. No guarantee of food safety, environment, security, and transport order; 3. did not agreed “guānxi” is a best way to follow and believe it may not fair to everyone; 4. most of the young people were dissatisfied with their prospect in Hong Kong society, they try to select the western countries as their first priority for developing, and 5. they believed the opportunities is best for the graduate who major in science and engineering rather than major in liberal arts and social science.

Summary of the literature review

The above discussion reviews the academic studies, media commentaries and government documents on a number of major issues including housing, employment and social mobility that have a high impact for the young people. Although government, researchers and media commentators all agreed that the new initiatives of BRI and GBA can offer new development opportunities for Hong Kong, especially for the development of youngsters, the reception and understanding of the opportunities amongst the younger population appears to be weak and even antagonistic.

Since all the national development initiatives are at an initial stage of execution, the opportunities they pose for Hong Kong, and young people in particular, depend on the supporting policies designed by government. To date, there have been few systematic studies on the reception of the young people of the national development initiatives. A study to understand better the young generation will enhance our capacity to devise better measures and policies to prepare for the better development of Hong Kong and our people.

C. Methods

This section explains the research methods used in this study. The primary data is obtained from two channels: (Part 1) a questionnaire survey and (Part 2) semi-structured interviews. The secondary data is collected from government reports, published academic papers, as well as from related reports in the media.

Questionnaire survey

In order to get deeper understandings of our youths including their receptions on the various social issues affecting them, the survey covers a sample from universities in Hong Kong. The respondents were excluded if they were not aged 18-30 and non-Hongkonger. Interviewees who expressed an interest to share further their views on the subject were invited to take part in the semi-structured interviews.

A total of 420 respondents between the age of 18 and 30 participated in the survey by questionnaire. Among them, 54.8% are aged 18-21; 28.1% are aged 22-25; and 17.1% 26-30. Demographic information was collected from the participants, as reported in the Findings section below.

Semi-structured interviews

Interviewees were invited to express their views and personal aspirations in an one-hour face-to-face interview. Purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method, was adopted to select participants whose characteristics were required for in-depth analysis after initial assessment of the results of the questionnaire survey. All of the interviewees were interested in the topic and willing to share their opinions in

detail. Twenty individual interviews (males = 18, females = 2) were completed, and the discussions were transcribed in the interviewees' spoken language.

D. Findings: Questionnaire survey

A total of 420 qualified respondents (61.7% males and 38.3% females) participated in the questionnaire survey from July to August 2018 (*Figure 1*), only 4.5% are unqualified (*Figure 2*). They range from 18-30 years of age divided up into three groups (*Figure 3*).

Figure 1: Gender of the questionnaire participants (n=420)

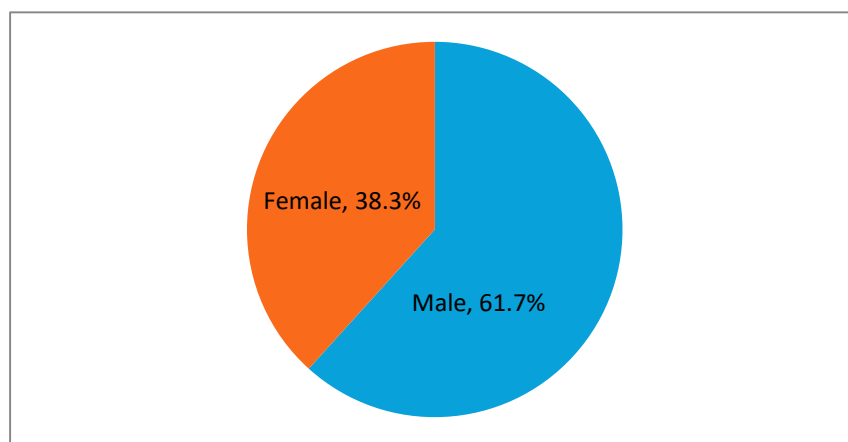


Figure 2: Primary source of the questionnaire participants (n=420)

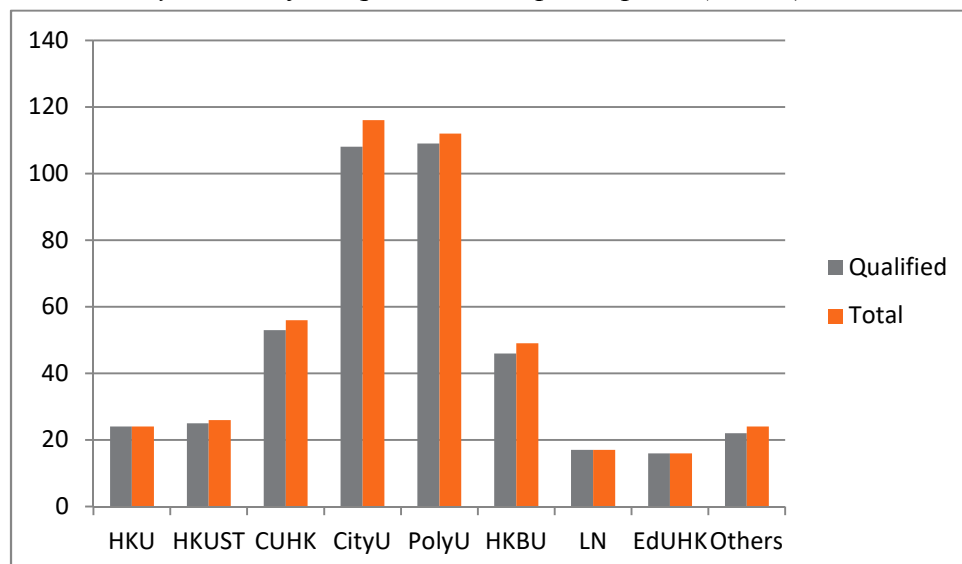
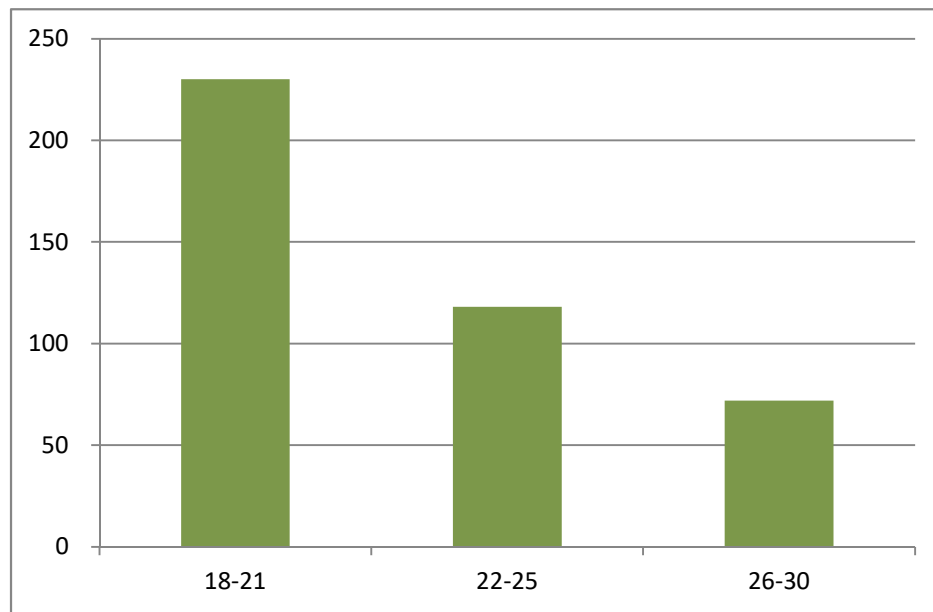


Figure 3: Age of the questionnaire participants (n=420)



Most survey participants are well-educated as a result of using convenience sampling⁸ to collecting data in universities: 12.1% of participants have attained master degree, 64.5% have completed tertiary degree courses, 17.6% are studying for a university degree, and only 5.7% are secondary school students (*Figure 4*). Close to 79.3% of the participants are studying in university. The others 20.7% are full-time employees (*Figure 5*).

⁸ Convenience sampling is a specific type of non-probability sampling method that relies on data collection from population members who are conveniently available to participate in study. Academics find it convenient to study cities in a short time. Many articles in the Public Administration Review and much research in the field are still based on convenience sample (Miller and Whicker, 1999)

Figure 4: The education attainment of the questionnaire participants (n=420)

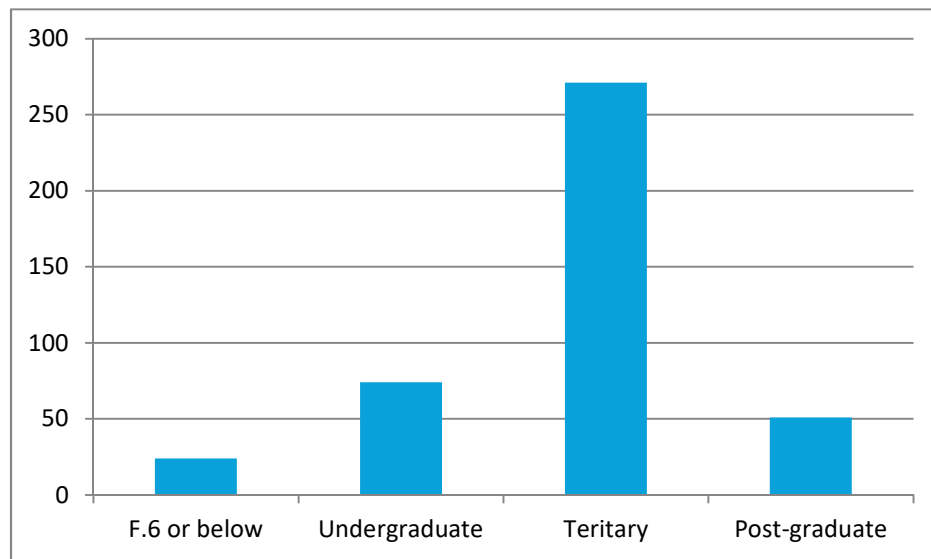
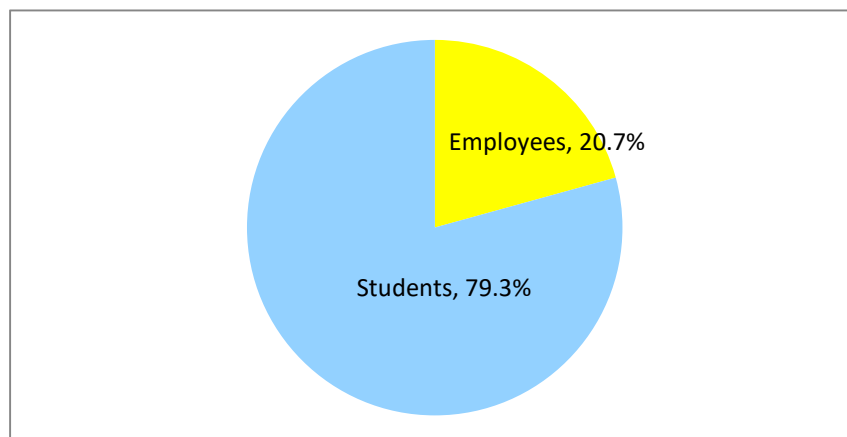


Figure 5: Employment status of the questionnaire participants (n=420)



A majority of participants have previous experience in the mainland of China include live, study or academic exchange, work and travel (77.6%); only 22.4% have not got any chance (Figure 6). A small proportion of participants have no prior knowledge on the two national development initiatives (BRI and GBA) (11%). 89% have been exposed to some information on the initiatives (Figure 7).

Figure 6: Experience in Mainland of the questionnaire participants (n=420)

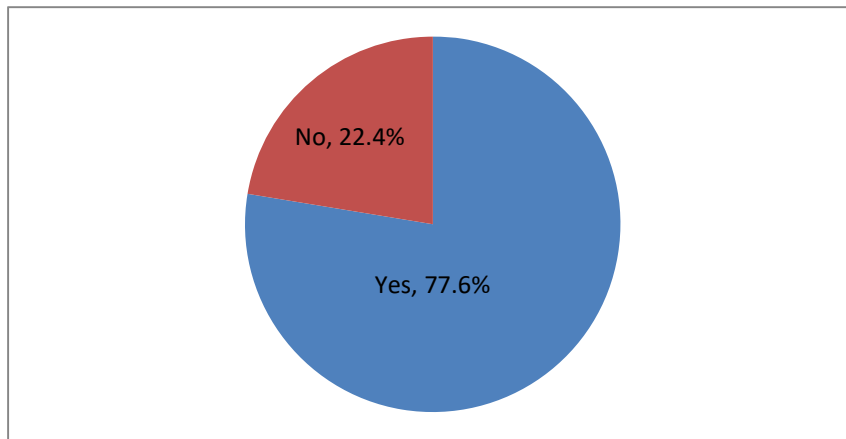
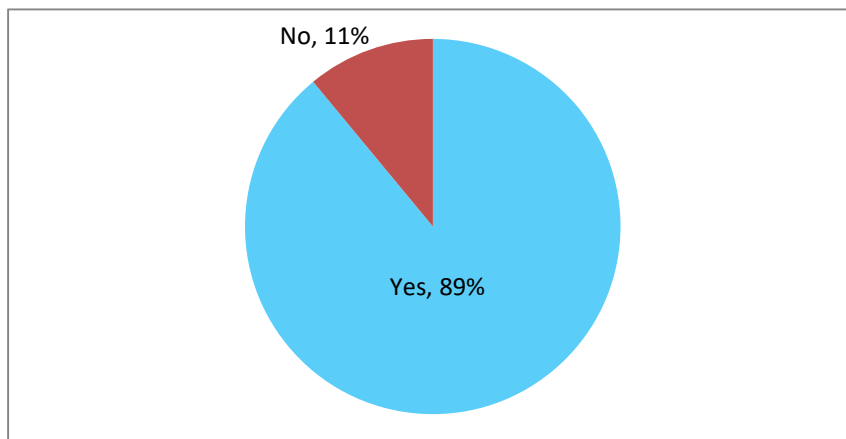
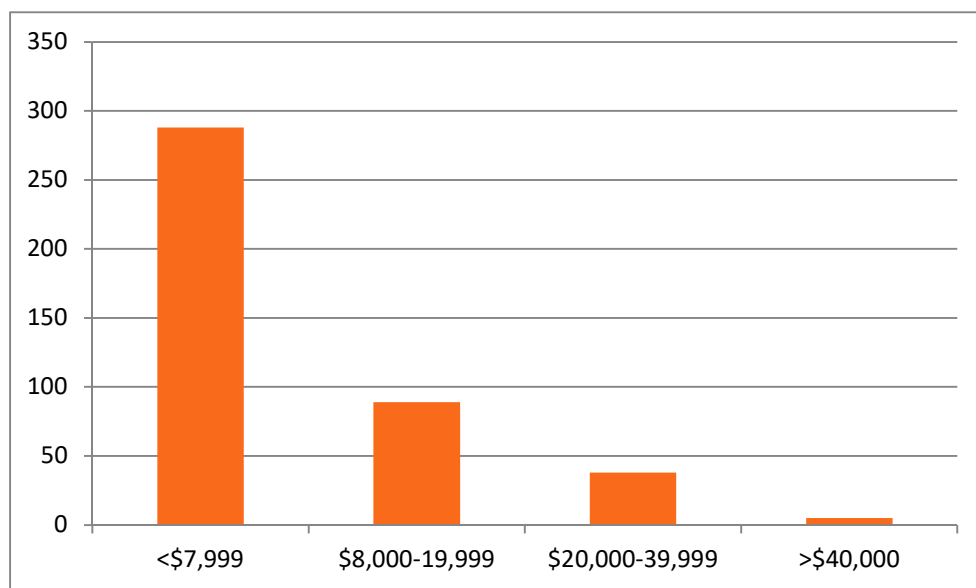


Figure 7: Questionnaire participants who know the national development initiatives (n=420)



Including those without jobs (i.e., unemployed and students), about 68.6% earn below HK\$7,999 a month; 21.2% earn HK\$8,000-19,999; 9% earn between HK\$20,000-39,999; and about 1.2% earn HK\$40,000 or above (*Figure 8*).

Figure 8: Questionnaire survey respondents' income (n=420)

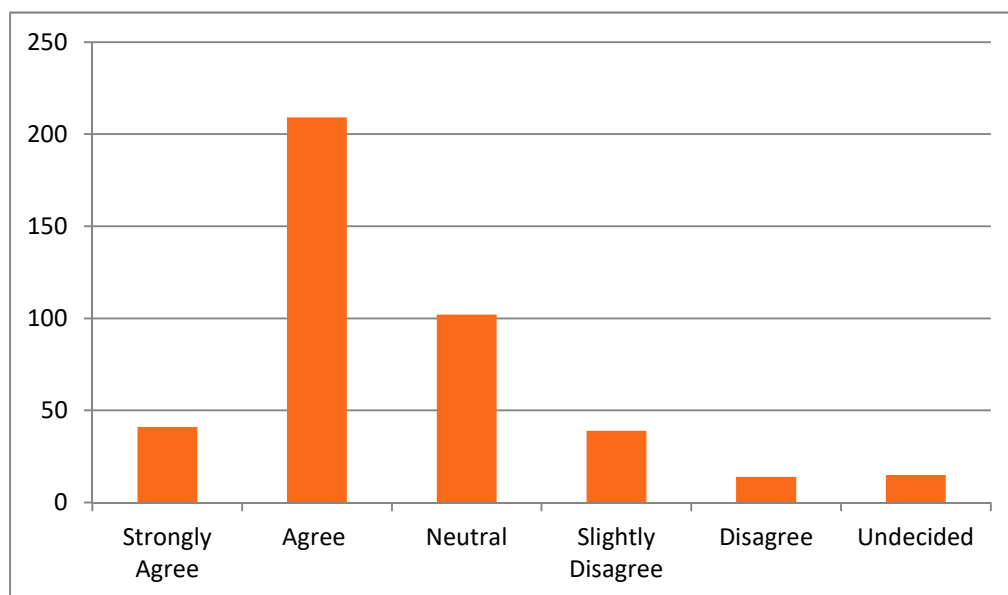


1. The sense of the national development initiatives

1a. Hong Kong can support the development of the Mainland

The survey finds that our youths generally agreed to the strengths of the city. Overall, close to 60% of the participants believed that Hong Kong could help facilitate coordinated economic development in the Mainland by its strengths in financial services, innovative technology, professional services and logistics services; 24.3% neutral; only 12.6% disagreed about the question (*Figure 9*). Obviously, this is a positive attitude towards the cooperation with the Mainland.

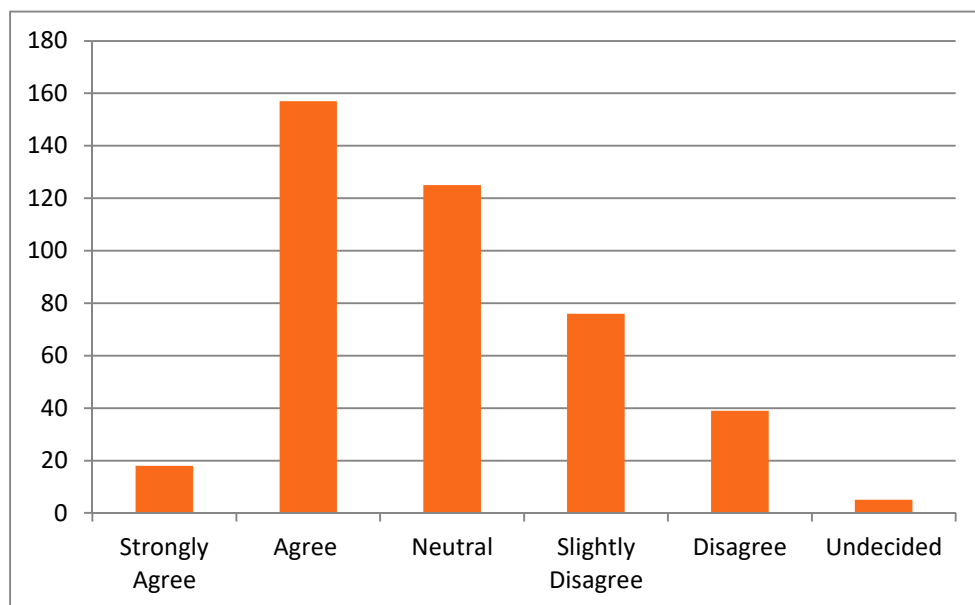
Figure 9: Do you agree that Hong Kong can support the development of the Mainland in the fields of finance, innovation and technology, professional services and logistics? (n=420)



1b. Hong Kong can get win-win collaboration with Mainland

According to the survey results, fewer than 30% are disagreed that Hong Kong can working towards win-win collaboration with the cities of Mainland. Overall, participants felt optimism about the question, more than 40% of the respondents trusting that strengthen the economic cooperation can beneficial to both sides, and about 29.8% felt neutral (*Figure 10*).

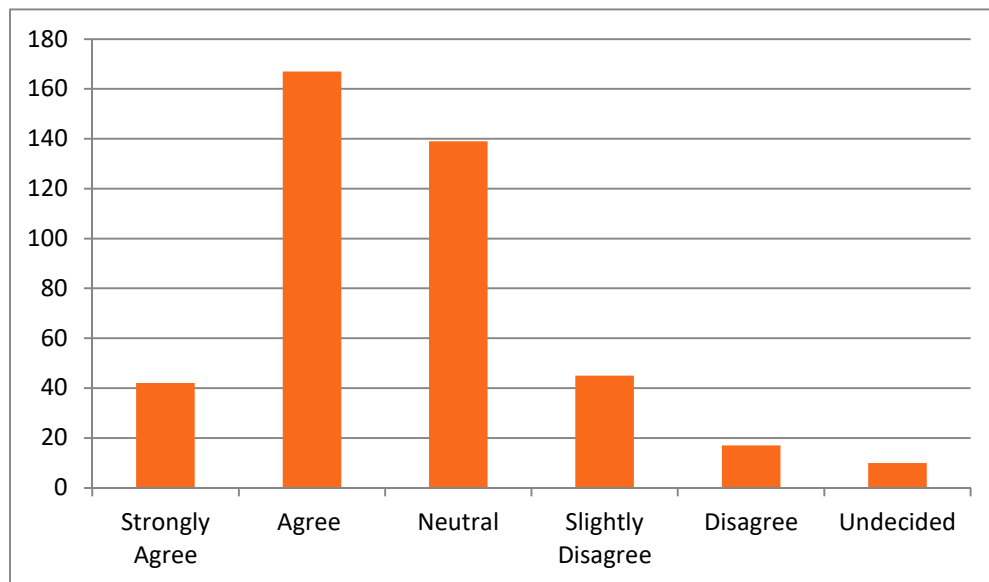
Figure 10: Do you believe that Hong Kong can get win-win collaboration with the mainland cities? (n=420)



1c. Hong Kong can act as a profitable middleman

Respondents seem to have confidence that Hong Kong can be a profitable middleman between China enterprises and foreign investors, because smaller than 15% are disagreed about the question; close to 50% agreed our city has potential to maintain its role as a stepping stone for “Going out” policy, as well as a conduit for foreign investor entering China, and about 33.1% felt neutral (*Figure 11*).

Figure 11: Do you believe that Hong Kong has the potential to assist the Mainland to attract foreign investment and lead China enterprises going overseas?

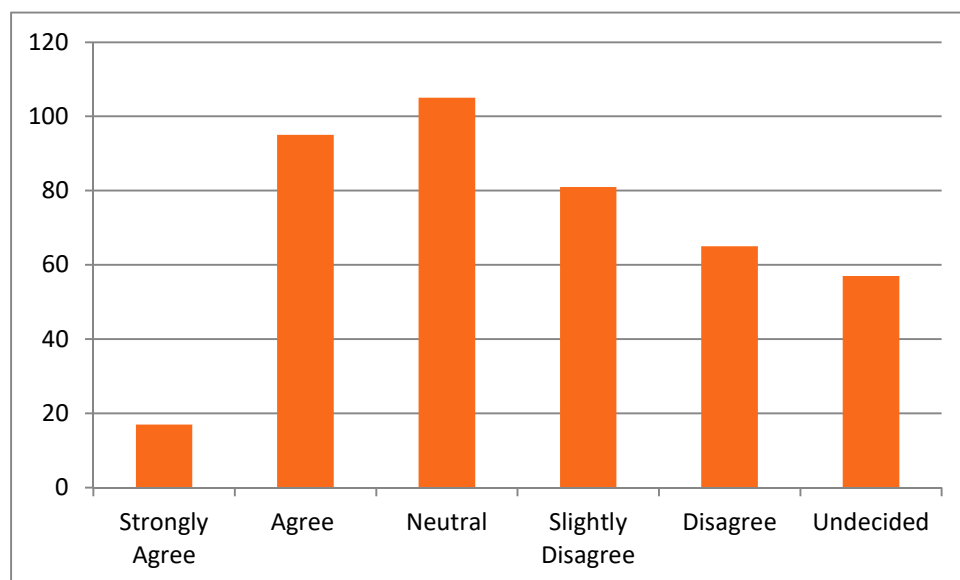


2. The national development initiatives can be a way around the social issues

2a. One-hour living circle will become more convenient for Hongkongers

The Hong Kong government has been promoting the high-speed rail link can provided “one-hour living circle” for the youths. However, the result demonstrated that the participants were not highly agreed the suggestion (*Figure 12*), one respondent reported that the one-way ticket price to Guangzhou will cost around HK\$210, much more expensive than the cross-boundary bus, and one needs to spend up HK\$8,400 in monthly transport. If necessary, Hongkongers may probably prefer to choose the existing route, although the journey will take longer. Interestingly, some of the students did not fully understanding the above suggestion and request to explain in detail.

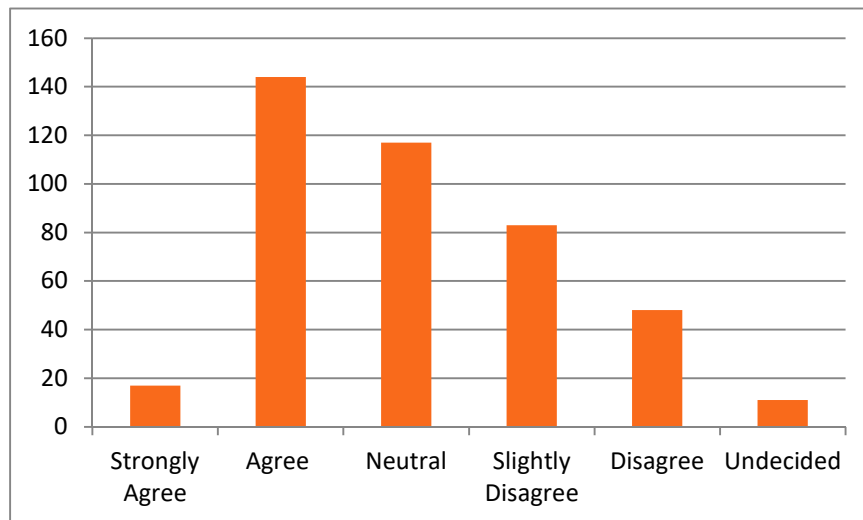
Figure 12: Do you believe that the “one-hour living circle” can help young people to start business, employment, studying or living in the Greater Bay Area? (n=420)



2b. National development initiatives can create job opportunities for Hongkongers

Some of the youths are hopeful about the new opportunities come from national development initiatives; only 31.2% have slightly disagreed and disagreed feeling (Figure 13). More youths started to believe that the national development initiatives may attract more mainland and foreign enterprises to open their sub-office in Hong Kong.

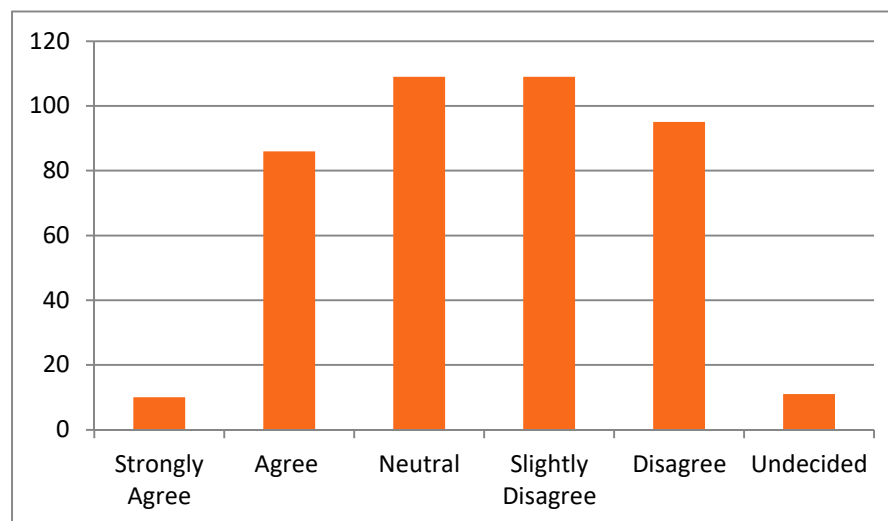
Figure 13: Do you believe that by opening up the business opportunities of countries along the Belt and Road, it will help Hong Kong to create new jobs (including: professional consulting, law, accounting, financial services, logistics, etc.)? (n=420)



2c. Greater Bay Area will help to enhance our quality of life in the future

According to the result, half of the participants (48.6%) may lack of confidence in the Greater Bay Area (*Figure 14*). Although the area is being promoted as good opportunities for the Hong Kong youths, the response reflects their doubt and uncertainty. In fact, due to the above initiative is new of our youths and most of the Hongkongers, so the unfamiliar feeling may let them to mistrust the plan.

Figure 14: Under the new Hong Kong-Guangdong co-operation development model, do you agree it will help to enhance our quality of life in the future? (n=420)

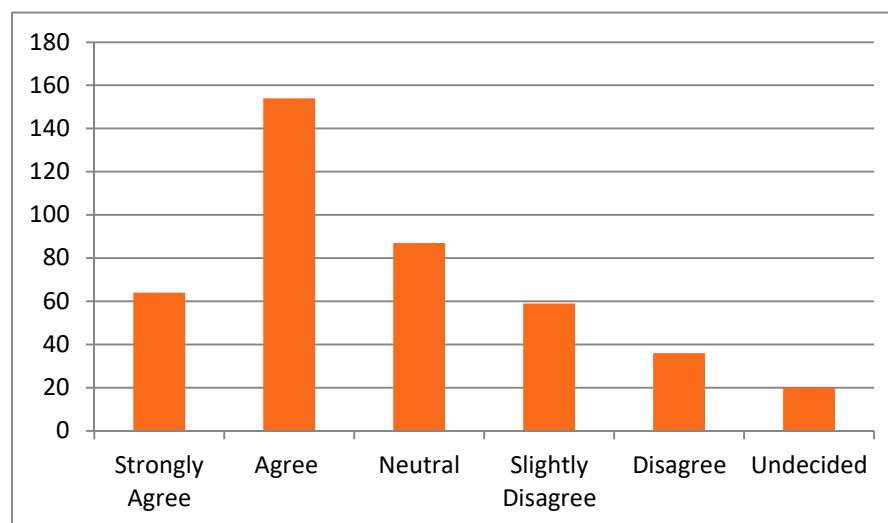


3. The expectation of the supporting policy from government

3a. Optimize the national treatment of Hongkongers in the Mainland

Overall, the participants are generally welcomed any supporting policy provided by government; over the 50% of the participants agreed the statement (*Figure 15*). According to the new regulations, Hong Kong residents living in the Mainland can apply for residence permits to enjoy some benefits, but medical and property issues in the mainland are among the critical factors for Hongkongers looking to move into the Greater Bay Area.

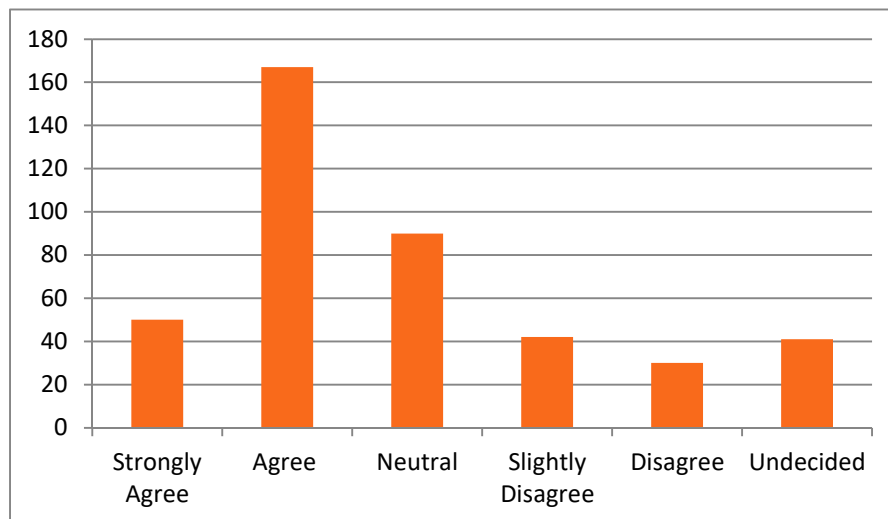
Figure 15: Does the HKSAR Government need to provide supporting policy in order to optimize the national treatment of Hongkongers in the Mainland? (n=420)



3b. Provide tax relief for Hong Kong entrepreneurs in the Greater Bay Area

Most of the respondents are agreed with the suitable tax relief for Hong Kong entrepreneurs in the Greater Bay Area may be necessary (*Figure 16*); only 17.1% disagreed. There is no doubt that the salary tax breaks for Hong Kong businesses moving to the mainland would provide a vital boost for the bay area. There is an incentive for the youths to pursue their dreams in the new platform.

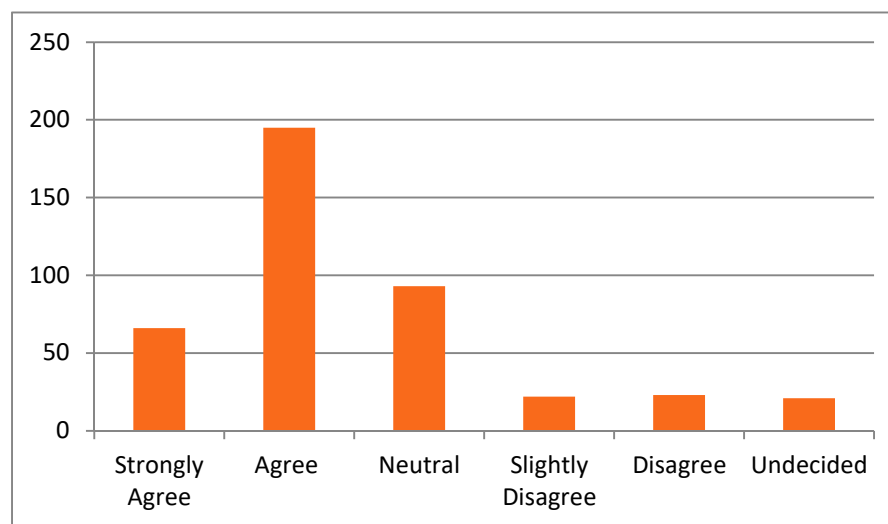
Figure 16: Does the government need to provide tax relief for Hong Kong entrepreneurs in the Greater Bay Area? (n=420)



3c. Raise public awareness of mainland regulation and employment environment

Basically, only 10.7% of respondents felt slightly disagreed or disagreed on this part. However, many of the youths may naturally anxious in the unfamiliar surroundings, so their request is reasonable and need to be follow up by the HKSAR government as soon as possible.

Figure 17: Does the Government need to strengthen the support of Hongkongers in the Mainland (including: to raise public awareness of mainland regulation and employment environment)? (n=420)



4. The view on a unique role of Hong Kong to play in PRC's development

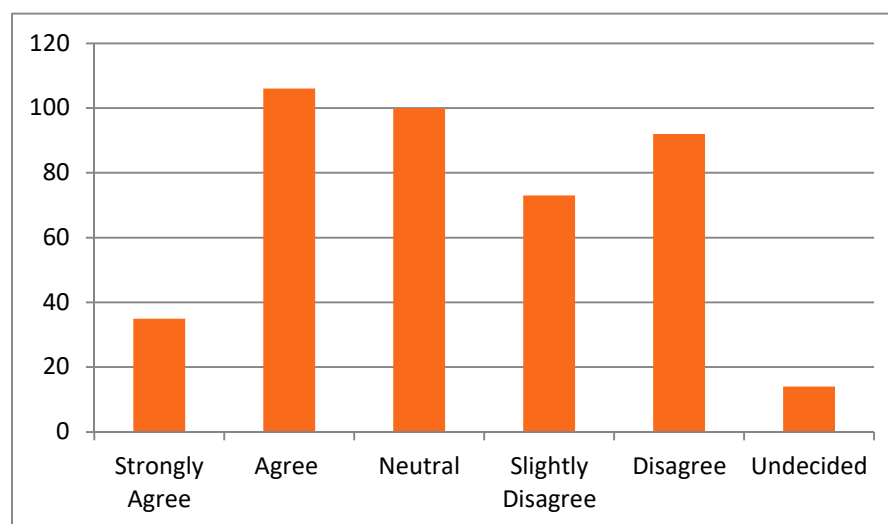
4a. *Hong Kong can assist the Mainland to improve its governance*

In fact, the result displayed a divisive opinion in the group of participants (*Figure 18*).

It is easy to understanding their mindset, but not easy to persuade others to believe.

On the one hand, the cultural difference between two places still exist, because of the extended duration of British colonial rule, the systems of Hong Kong are similar to the Western style. On the other hand, a large group of people can be slow to adapt to change, especially in the Mainland. The GBA remains doubt about how it will materialize, not just economically, but from a cultural, political and legal point of view.

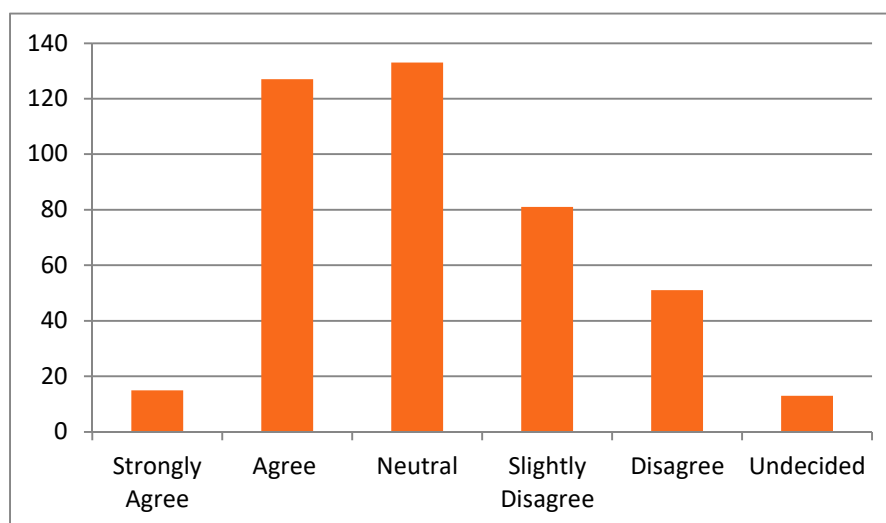
Figure 18: Do you agree that Hong Kong can assist the Mainland to improve its governance with a high quality system (including: conservation, environmental protection, integrity, property rights, etc.)? (n=420)



4b. Hong Kong can form a complementary partnership with Mainland

The result shows that some youths may look forward to forming a complementary partnership between two places; 33.8% are strongly agreed or agreed, and 31.7% are neutral (*Figure 19*). The government had aspiration to build an international innovation and technology hub in the bay area. Currently, Hong Kong has strong R&D capacity and innovative ideas, and Shenzhen has advanced manufacturing capacity. If all the advantages can combine together in the bay area, it should be a very attractive proposition for our youths in the future.

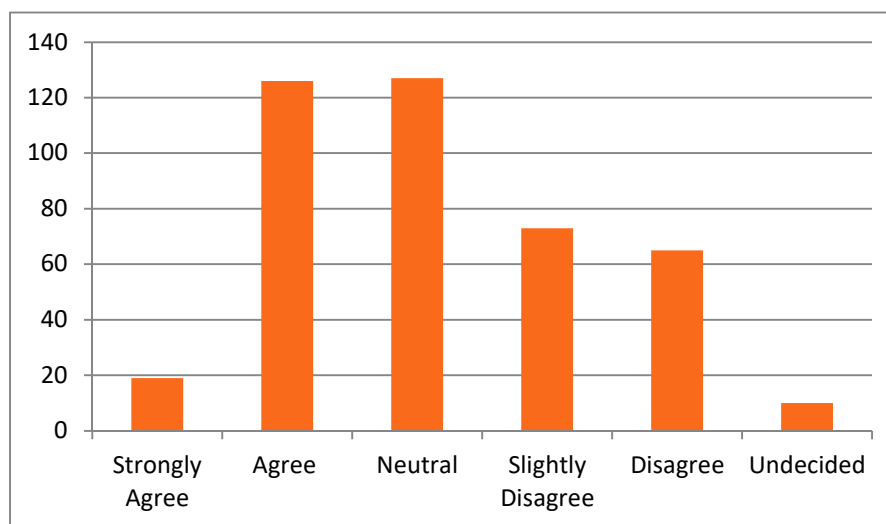
Figure 19: Due to shortage of land, do you agree that Hongkongers can use the domestic resources to achieve their innovative ideas in order to form a complementary partnership? (n=420)



4c. Mutual understanding can be created by cooperation

Over 60% of the respondents hold positive attitudes about this statement; 34.5% are strongly agreed or agreed, and 30.2% are neutral (*Figure 20*). Actually, the GBA has become a buzzword for governments and corporations, and the government actively encourage Hongkongers to live and work and study in the bay area. In contrast, 32.9% slightly disagreed or disagreed, and 2.4% undecided. A similar response was found for the above item “Hong Kong can form a complementary partnership with Mainland”.

Figure 20: Do you agree that mutual understanding can be deepening by cooperation between Hong Kong and Mainland? (n=420)



Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were done after the execution of the survey to garner the opinions from the youths in greater depth and scope beyond that of the questionnaire survey. Youth people are the future of the city, so this part summarizes their views with a view to revealing the thinking of the youths as much as possible in their original form.

1. Demand for quality work opportunities

Many of the interviewees are not satisfied with their current income. They mentioned the general starting salary of a university graduate is only around HKD 14,000, so the low incomes could not afford a reasonable living standard without further assistance from parents. Most respondents said they could not find jobs according to their interest. They expressed a yearning for quality work opportunities to advance their career aspirations, because Hong Kong's economic structure still lacks diversity, and the city are too focused on service sector, such as tourism, finance and retail. Although the current policy address mentioned the government strives to address young people's concerns about career pursuit, still the respondents cannot look forward to the future with optimism.

1a. Help youth people navigate a path to career success

Many participants were dissatisfied with their current job both earnings and job nature. An interviewee, A, said Hong Kong's economy face a serious mismatch of skills in the supply and demand of young people. He believed lower than 70% of fresh university graduates have been employed as a middle-class position, and the others can find jobs that usually require only a secondary school education. Meanwhile, our

city is the most difficult place to find skilled employees. Employers said they could not hire the right person, but young people find it hard to find suitable jobs that fit their interest and expectations. These are serious problems that our government needs to address, in order to help the young people to rebuild their direction of career development.

1b. Young people need the right skills to ensure their future

Another interviewee, B, explained that our education system is not fully meeting the requirements of employers in the city, it existed a huge gap in expectations between most of the employers and young people. Despite government racing to create a smart city and hope to set up a regional technology hub in Hong Kong, the road to a smart city remains difficult. Specifically, the city needs an effective coordinator to accelerate the process by promoting STEM education (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and vocational training, in order to attract companies from around the world to set up their businesses and offices here. Government has a role to play and the policy is the first step in setting the direction and environment, because the young people require a lot of incentives and support to improve their skills.

1c. Reach consensus on new opportunities of Hong Kong

Almost all interviewees believed that B&R and GBA will benefit Hong Kong, especially the latter one. Under the One Country, Two Systems, Hong Kong is necessary to follow the strategic planning and the city has responsibility for ensuring that the projects can operate smoothly.

One interviewee, C, who is a Year 4 PhD student studying at CUHK, said that she had a job offer from Shenzhen and will back to Mainland after graduate. She explains her selection due to our culture is highly correlated with some mainland cities, particularly in Shenzhen. Most importantly, Central government has a strong conviction to engage mainland cities to work closely with Hong Kong and Macau and inject new energy in GBA project. These new development initiatives would create good opportunities for her career development. Also, she has confidence in the adaptation of the new environment during a short period of time.

As for taking advantages of the GBA, she suggested that the government requires reaching a consensus in the city, especially with the young people. Indeed, we push them to do something will get more they resist. However, most people are practical. If the national development initiatives pans out with real opportunities for business and settlement, they will try to choose.

2. Hope for affordable housing in future

There is no doubt that high housing costs are damaging our youths that affects young people's family planning, and their choice of future careers. Much of the interviewees feel frustrated when they think about the high cost of living and unaffordable housing price.

2a. Suggest multiple plans to solve the housing issues

D, 30, who is a contract teacher working in a secondary school, suggested the government should ban land-hoarding developers to bid for future sites until all the land they has been developed, because the developers actually create both the housing shortage and inflated property prices by hoarding land. In addition, Hong Kong can operate the GBA plan in order to address the shortage of housing issues. He believed the government has responsibility to ensure the young people have opportunities to own more affordable and decent flat in Hong Kong or even in GBA cities, it may be a good option to well-using the one-hour living circle.

2b. Provide more affordable homes for young couples

A number of interviewees reckoned the housing unaffordability has led to young people do not intend to having a family and raising a child, although they understand the low birth rate could be a problem for the city, due to they don't want their children need to face much pressure and challenges when growing up. Moreover, some of the respondents are not confident they will lead better lives than their parents, because they believe never being able to buy a flat in the decade. They feel stress and anxiety about an uncertain future in their minds.

An interviewee, E, 26, who is a secretary, said that although more and more Hongkongers tend to get married late as well as not consider to become parents, she still hoped to have children after married. In addition, she believes having kids can complete her life and family, but all plans depend on the living environment could be change or upgrade in the future.

2c. GBA can be an option for opportunities for the young people

F, 25, who is a teaching assistant working in a primary school, and he is prepared to start his new career in GBA. He explained that the housing issues in Hong Kong cannot easy to be decreased in a short period of time. Meanwhile, due to the European countries continuing to experience very weak economic growth, so working at GBA can meet new opportunities. He hopes it could be a right choice for him and becomes an obtainable target for the youth people. He suggests the youths need to focus on the interests of Hong Kong rather than on integration. He has to seek mainland opportunities does not mean he need to give up local identity and characteristics.

Another interviewee, G, 23, who is a Year 3 electronic engineering student, said Hong Kong always ranked as having the least affordable housing in the world that makes him difficult to move out from home. Moreover, the city is now struggling with slower economic growth, especially when compared with other Asian cities. Our city is lagging behind Shanghai and Shenzhen in terms of the e-commerce and information technology, so he considers working in the top-tier cities if opportunity is available. He said those cities are focusing to e-commerce, robotics and artificial intelligence and their entrepreneurs are energetic and dynamic so it will better for him to develop his career than stay in Hong Kong.

3. Young people experience downward mobility in Hong Kong

Undoubtedly, most of the young people believe upgrading their standard of living is harder than their parents. The interviewees with tertiary level education tended to be most pessimistic about their future of upward social mobility, just only 3 respondents believed there were adequate opportunities in the city. Therefore, when government plan to promote GBA, the officials are responsible for explain the national development initiatives is truly achievable within Hong Kong, and list out the benefits can truly bring to the young people.

3a. Encourage young people to strive for proper opportunities

H, 27, is a teaching assistant, said the rates of mobility are often related to economic development, due to Hong Kong experiences the downturn currently, so upgrading is less frequent and mobility slows down is the fact. Moreover, he also felt the Hong Kong youths have become too Hong Kong-centric and unwilling to better understand the outside world. Most of them are a lack of outward-looking perspectives and foresight, because digital transformation will redefining businesses in the world, our city cannot easy to meet the needs of the future economy.

Another interviewee, I, 25, is a designer. He feels Hong Kong is one of the most unequal places in Asia, due to the real estate, communication, transport and even food, are monopolized by business enterprise and cartels. Also, over materialistic will highly influenced the development of the youths, directly or indirectly motivate them to do the selfish behavior. Currently, part of the Hong Kong youths feel the only way to get ahead in life is to accumulate as much wealth as possible, had a wealthy parents, or have chance to marry into a wealthy family. He believed it is not a proper perspective for sustainable development in the city. However, the expansion of

tertiary education will naturally raise youths' expectation about their future careers, wages, and prospects of upward social mobility. Hong Kong needs a suitable platform for them to make a change and find their dreams, not only focus to travel around the world or luxury goods.

3b. Modify the intrinsic value of Hongkongers

J, 24, who is an occupational therapist, reflected that the existing market has limited the scope of developments for the youths, and youth find that they need to select jobs related to professional services in order to gain a stable income and a good career prospects. As a leading financial and banking centre, Hong Kong's economy has placed a lot of emphasis on the services sector, so the city does not have much job vacancies in engineering, technology and the creative industries, except the civil engineering or building services. Therefore, parents tend to encourage their next generation to become bankers, accountants and doctors. As a result, the society values professional grades only at the expense of other disciplines.

3c. Develop the opportunities to fulfill the Mainland consumers' needs

K, 23, is a year 4 bachelor student of international relationship, said his classmates and friends may not intend to work on the mainland, due to they did not know what the GBA plan was all about. Indeed, after the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge and the Express Rail Link all opening, the number of mainland visitors who prefer same-day visits to Hong Kong will keep raising, they will begin to treat this city as one of their consumption point. Most of the businessman will like to see this opportunities, but some Hongkongers may not get the same feeling.

L, 22, is a Year 2 computer science student, said he and his friends prioritize work-life balance over a pay rise, because they knew the life is limited and hope to fulfill their dreams. He wants more flexible working hours, and does not want to work overtime, or seven days a week. Although he believed the GBA will become an up-and-coming economy and can create more middle-ranking or higher-middle-ranking jobs, he still prefer to stay in Hong Kong and share his time with parents and best friends. All cities are seeking to attract talents to make their place innovative as well as welcomed all travelers who have high spending power. Actually, internationalization, rule of law and free flow of information are the strengths in Hong Kong, and foreigner investors are enjoying the tax policy and common law system. In the long run, the high-speed rail link may also help the city promote its home grown brands among mainland visitors.

4. Offer substantive policies and support

The GBA is a development strategy backed by Central government to turn Hong Kong, Macau and other cities into a technology and innovation powerhouse. Most of the interviewees shared that if the government really wants to promote the project, although Hong Kong is adopting small government practice and the free-market approach, it is needed to offer substantive policies and fully support in order to achieve the target.

4a. Establish a comprehensive information network of Mainland

M, 28, is a system programmer. He agreed most of youths are worried about the social mobility issues, but some of them may think there seems to have been too much discussion in recent years about encouraging our youths to find opportunities across the border. However, he can only receive the updated information from the newspaper and broadcast and limited resources available in internet, so it could not make him deeply understanding the opportunities in Mainland, especially in GBA. He suggests the government may be necessary to establish a comprehensive information network of GBA, which can display the career opportunities, subsidy and useful data for the young people, in order to attract great attention on the initiative.

4b. Systematic support can work as incentive and motivation

Much of the interviewees who were asked about the working opportunities in mainland, they were considering it if the salary is attractive and good pay than Hong Kong. Also, they called upon the government to give youths incentives to work on the mainland.

N, 28, is a sales manager, said he suggested building youth living quarters in the GBA to create more opportunities for youths working in there, but the suggestion is not refer as an alternative to properly address housing issues in Hong Kong. It can help the graduates who want to move to the mainland to look for a job, assist them to cope with a new environment. Additionally, Hongkongers spending more than 183 days per year on the mainland must pay the levy, so he believed tax exemptions would be the best way to entice youths to work in the GBA. He considered some of the youths working across the border but they still need to support their families or caring for their elderly in Hong Kong, so the government should provide more tax incentives to

reduce their burden.

On the effectiveness of exchange program, some respondents mentioned that the internships program aims to help youths more deepen understanding about the mainland city, but the short-term exchange trip only give an image that they are just cheap sightseeing tours. By their experience, the assigned routes are usually very tight, and it is difficult for participants to take an interest in the process. Conversely, they promoted to form some employment programme which can support youths between the age of 21 and 25 with one-year work experience opportunities with different employers in the GBA.

The residence permit is for people from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan who have been living, working or studying on the mainland for at least six months. But, one interviewee, O, 30, working as an administration assistant, suggested providing some favorable terms as incentive for people, such as transport fare concession scheme, and create funding scheme for the entrepreneur in GBA. Another one, P also reported that his brother is cooperating with mainland residents to form business, and he successfully to get the living quarters at there. Although the location is not quite near downtown, he still really appreciates and satisfies the supporting. So she suggested Hong Kong government can copy this policy for our youths who interesting to join the initiative.

4c. Promote cooperation model by mature policies

One interviewee, Q mentioned that the government needs a clear-eyed look at its competitive advantages and step by step to removing the obstacles that hinder the development. Hong Kong's problem is lack of mature policies to push the development process, and its economy is still so reliant on finance and real estate. The government officials need to be really understood a good cooperation model is motivated by mature policies, and Hongkongers may not want to look the GBA will become just another property project.

E. Conclusions and recommendations

Nowadays most younger people are perceived to have a strong preference for stability over risk for fear of failure (LegCo Secretariat, 2015b). Our findings reveal that substantial number of participants support the national development initiatives and request to get some quality work opportunity for their career development. They felt optimism about the collaboration and trusting that strengthening the economic cooperation can benefit to both sides of the border.

Most youths started to believe that the plan may attract more mainland and foreign enterprises to open their sub-office in Hong Kong. They hope the GBA cities can provide more affordable and decent flat for them to purchase or for investment, and it will also encourage them to form a family and raising a child. Interestingly, some of participants did not fully understand the “one-hour living circle”, so the unfamiliarity may have underlined the general feeling of mistrust towards the GBA initiative in the first place.

They expected the government to address concerns over the medical and property issues in order to help Hongkongers looking to move into the GBA. They requested to get more detailed employment information from labour department including career opportunities, government support, and related regulations. Moreover, they believed providing salary tax breaks for Hongkongers moving to the bay area would provide a tremendous boost.

They agreed the city is necessary to follow the strategic planning and has responsibility for ensuring that the initiatives can operate smoothly. Undoubtedly, the cultural difference between two places still exists, but time and patience can mitigate the gap, because some participants may look forward to forming a complementary partnership with mainland. Most importantly, mutual understanding can be created by long-run cooperation.

This study recommends some directions from the finding section. These include 1) help youths to explore B&R route; 2) reach consensus in the city; 3) strengthen STEM education and vocational training; 4) enhance the quota for internship programme; 5) launch some feasible allowance, and 6) establish a comprehensive information network.

1. Help Hong Kong youths to explore belt and road route

The most effective way is to encourage young people to develop their interest in the national initiatives from their own perspectives. We believed innovative thinking, courage and international vision are the key elements in the development of the BRI, and young Hongkongers have great potential to explore the belt and road route. Hong Kong youths are very familiar with the culture of European, American and Asian cities, but have little or no understanding of the other side of the world. The government should encourage our youths to communicate with the peers who is living in belt and road countries by academic exchange program, youth forum or travelling.

2. Reach consensus with the young people

The government should consider reaching a consensus in the city, especially with the young Hongkongers. The officials can list the potential benefits which can assist our young generation to resolve the acute issues they face. In fact, there seems to have been much discussion about supporting our young people to find opportunities across the border but few specific measures so far have materialized. If the GBA offers real opportunities for career development, the youths will naturally try them out.

3. Strengthen STEM education and vocational training

In order to create a smart city and build up a successful regional technology hub in Hong Kong smoothly, the promotion of STEM⁹ education and vocational training aims to develop more youngsters to become technical talent as well as enabling them to meet the requirements of employers in Hong Kong and GBA. The STEM education is focus on primary and secondary students only, but vocational training is designed for working adults. Due to the young people require a lot of incentives and support to improve their practical skills, the government needs to address the potential problems related to the existing education system so as to help our youths to rebuild their direction of career development.

⁹ STEM refers to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

4. Enhance the quota for internship programme in mainland

Focus on the youngsters may naturally anxious in the unfamiliar surroundings and step by step to assist them to raise public awareness of mainland regulations and employment environment. The government should consider enhancing the existing quota for our young generation, due to the internship programme in mainland can provide practical experience for the youngsters as well as help them more deepen understanding about the mainland city, particularly important in the GBA. The suggestion could avoid the exchange trip becomes a cheap sightseeing tours and waste the money.

5. Launch a series of feasible allowance for Hongkongers

The result of findings revealed that our young generation expected the government to give incentives to work in the mainland. They suggested building youth living quarters in the GBA to create more motivation for youths working at there. Due to much youths still need to support their families, they believed tax exemption would become the directly way to reduce their burden. Also, the salary tax breaks for Hong Kong business moving to the mainland would provide a vital boost for the bay area. The transport fare concession scheme can be designed in order to attract more Hongkongers to well use the high-speed rail link. The above suggestion can work as an incentive for youths to pursue their dreams in the new platform.

In addition, the government can research some achievable options to operate the GBA plan in order to address the shortage of housing issues, because most of our youngsters are looking forward to own more affordable and decent flat in Hong Kong or even in GBA cities.

6. Establish a comprehensive information network of mainland

The government may be necessary to establish a comprehensive information network of GBA, which can display the career opportunities, subsidy and useful data for the young people, in order to attract great attention on the initiative. Also, Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office can provide one-stop services as well as serve as an information centre for necessary person.

Overall, we need to encourage our youngsters to self-improvement. Under the highly competitive environment, if the young people desire success and happiness, they must persevere in discovering and improving their strengths and to better meet the market needs. Actually, they cannot wait the chance coming or transfer the responsibility to others, because most of the investor needs less criticism and more doers. The national development initiatives are a best way to advancing the job opportunities for professional grade, so as to increase the social mobility for the young people.

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Appendix A – Questionnaire

您好，我係香港城市大學公共行政學系-中國研究碩士課程學生，現正進行一項有關香港年青人對於「一帶一路」和「粵港澳大灣區」發展的意見調查。今次意見調查所得資料純粹用作統計分析，個人資料將絕對保密，研究完成後所有問卷將會銷毀。誠意邀請閣下花約數分鐘完成以下問卷，如對本調查/問卷有任何疑問，歡迎致電 9219 9344 與本人盧德明先生聯絡，謝謝！

1. 你認同香港能在金融、創新科技、專業服務、物流等領域支援內地發展？

十分認同	認同	一般	不太認同	不認同	無意見/不知道
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. 你相信香港能與內地城市合作，協同發展，達致互惠共贏嗎？

非常相信	相信	一般	不太相信	不相信	無意見/不知道
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. 你相信香港有實力協助內地吸引外資，並引領國內企業進軍世界市場？

非常相信	相信	一般	不太相信	不相信	無意見/不知道
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. 你相信粵港澳三地“一小時生活圈”，能協助年青人便利到大灣區創業、營商、就業、學習或生活嗎？

非常相信	相信	一般	不太相信	不相信	無意見/不知道
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. 你相信通過打開「一帶一路」沿線國家的商機，有助於香港增設新職位？
(包括：專業諮詢、法律、會計、金融、運輸物流等等)

非常相信	相信	一般	不太相信	不相信	無意見/不知道
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. 你認同在新粵港合作發展模式下，長遠有助提升市民的生活質素？

十分認同	認同	一般	不太認同	不認同	無意見/不知道
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. 政府是否需要協助優化港人在內地的國民待遇呢？

(包括：給予內地身份證明、放寬置業按揭，免卻內地住址證明等等)

非常需要	需要	一般	不太需要	不需要	無意見/不知道
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. 政府是否需要為大灣區創業者提供稅務減免優惠呢？

非常需要	需要	一般	不太需要	不需要	無意見/不知道
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. 政府是否需要加強港人在內地的配套支援呢？

(包括：增加市民對內地法規和就業環境的認識)

非常需要	需要	一般	不太需要	不需要	無意見/不知道
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. 你認同香港能以優良制度協助內地提升治理水平嗎？

(包括：保育、環保、廉潔，產權等)

十分認同	認同	一般	不太認同	不認同	無意見/不知道
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. 由於香港缺乏土地與廠房配置，你相信香港可以在大灣區，把港人創新意念，以國內資源打造，形成優勢互補的夥伴關係嗎？

非常相信	相信	一般	不太相信	不相信	無意見/不知道
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. 你認同香港能通過與內地共同合作，加深雙方了解嗎？

十分認同	認同	一般	不太認同	不認同	無意見/不知道
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. 背景資料

- 性別：☐男 ☐女 ☐其他
- 職業：☐學生 ☐在職人士
- 香港居民：☐是 ☐否
- 年齡：☐18-21 ☐22-25 ☐26-30 ☐其他
- 教育程度：☐正就讀中學 ☐中學畢業/預科畢業
☐大專/大學畢業 ☐碩士或以上
- 內地經驗：☐曾在內地生活 ☐曾往內地留學/學術交流
☐曾往內地工作 ☐曾往內地旅遊
☐完全沒有
- 個人每月收入：☐\$7,999 或以下 ☐\$8,000-\$19,999
☐\$20,000-\$39,999 ☐\$40,000 或以上
- 你有聽過「一帶一路」和「粵港澳大灣區」發展計劃嗎？
☐有 ☐沒有

多謝你們的分享，相信以上資料能對本人往後的研究提供有力的幫助！
如有興趣討論香港青年發展、「一帶一路」和「粵港澳大灣區」等議題，歡迎留下聯絡資料：

姓名：_____ 電話：_____

電郵：_____

Appendix B – Invitation Letter

各位香港同學：

您好！

我係香港城市大學公共行政學系，中國研究碩士學生 – 盧德明。本人於今年 8 月(4-21)號曾到訪本港八大院校派發問卷，詢問各位對於「一帶一路」和「粵港澳大灣區」發展的意見。現邀請各位與本人作深入面談，我誠心希望通過是次會面獲得：

1. 各位同學對個人發展的期望；
2. 解決本港就業、住屋、社會向上流動的建議；
3. 分享對本港政府現行政策的看法，及
4. 如何以國家發展計劃的空間，謀求香港青年人的發展利益。

面談時間大約 45 分鐘，時間及地點歡迎提供，我渴求了解現今年青人的理想、需要，並以文字反映在我的畢業論文上。懇請各位給我機會一聽你們的心聲。

敬祝
心想事成

城大學生：盧德明
學生編號：51875037
電話：92199344
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Appendix C – Interview Questions

1. 我了解一下你對現今香港就業問題的意見：
 - 你認為現時香港有足夠的空間給年青人發展事業嗎？
 - 據政府統計數字，去年大學生平均起薪\$1.4 萬，你覺得滿意嗎？
 - 如工作上提供出差機會，人工亦會有所增加，你會考慮嗎？
2. 現時香港樓價已升至非一般打工仔所能負擔，我想分享你的看法：
 - 你希望擁有自己的物業嗎？
 - 你有興趣在未來組織家庭嗎？
 - 若短期(10 年之內)本地樓市未能下調，你會選擇在內地置業嗎？
3. 近年，香港輿論經常討論年青人的向上流動機會（即提升社會經濟地位或職業階層），我想分享你的意見：
 - 你滿意現時的向上流動機會嗎？
 - 你對將來事業發展有什麼理想呢？
 - 要成就理想，你會作出什麼準備呢？
4. 對於香港參與國家發展包括「一帶一路」或「粵港澳大灣區」：
 - 你對以上計劃持什麼觀感呢？
 - 你覺得香港能憑以上機遇有所作為嗎？
 - 你相信能年青人能獲益嗎？你覺得香港政府要為年青人提供什麼支援呢？