

Global Link Singapore 2018 : Abstract for Social Issue Project

Submission Deadline : 04 May, 2018

Study Area *Please mark a circle on your subject

| | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------|--|----------|-----------|
| Culture | History | Religion | Race | Language | Education |
| Diplomacy | Security | War and Peace | Economy | Poverty | |
| Environmental Studies | Sustainable Development | Resources and Energy | Food and Agriculture | | |
| Ethics and Universal Values | Human Right | Labor | Population | | |
| Region and Public Policy | Urban Living Environment | Medical Care | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health and Welfare | | |
| Disaster Prevention and Rehabilitation | Tourism | Others (|) | | |

Category *Please mark a circle on your presentation style

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|---|
| Oral Presentation / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poster Presentation |
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Presenter(s)

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| 【School Name】 Pak Kau College |
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| 【Project Member(s)】 *Names removed to protect the identity of the students |
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Abstract of Presentation

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| 【 Title 】 The Youth Suicide Problem |
| 【 Introduction/Background/Motivation 】 According to the statistics of the WHO (2014), self-harm becomes one of the five causes of death for young people around the world. In Hong Kong, both youth suicide help-seeking cases and death cases have an upward trend (Appendix 1), and youth suicide rate has also increased as a proportion of overall suicide rate. According to Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention, Hong Kong University (2016), the suicide rate of the age group of 15-24 years old was 8.3% (overall suicide rate was 13.6%) in 2006. The suicide rate of the same age group was increased to 8.9%, but the overall suicide rate was decrease to 12.6% in 2016. There is a similar situation in other countries. Therefore, mental health and suicide problem of our adolescents are worth for the world to pay attention for. This study will explore the relationship of regional social and economic conditions, education system and youth suicide problem. |
| 【 Research Purpose/Problem Statement 】 The youth suicide rate in Hong Kong was 10.3% (WHO, 2014) which is serious among the developed countries/regions. Someone believe that it is because the exam-leading education system in Hong Kong. However, even compare with Finland or other European countries where they promote the experiential learning, their youth suicide rate is not low, e.g. 18.8% in Finland. According to WHO (2014), comparing developed countries (high-income countries) and developing countries (low-and-middle countries, LMIC), despite the high-income countries is just 17.9% of global population and LMIC is 81.7%, the high-income countries had 23.9% of global suicide rate which is proportionally higher than that of LMIC (75.5%) in 2012. Refer to Appendix 2, the chart shows the teenage suicide rates across OECD and its partner countries in 1990, 2000 and 2015. In 2015, the highest teenage suicide rates were concentrated in developed countries such as Canada, Estonia, Latvia, Iceland, and New Zealand, with 10 or more suicides per 100 000 teenagers (15-19). By contrast, the developing countries such as South Africa and Brazil with lower suicide rates, with less than 5 suicides per 100 000 teenagers. The data shows that the youth suicide proportion of developed countries are higher than developing countries. The previous studies mainly focused on the factors of medical system, personal factors and social discrimination to analyse the problem of youth suicide. Therefore, the current study is going to focus on the socioeconomic status and education system of the regions to analyse the problem of youth suicide. |
| 【 Study Plan/Approach 】 The current study adopts the method of literature analysis to find out the relationship between youth suicide and the socioeconomic status and education system of the regions. |

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If different countries, esp. in developed regions, aim at boosting the global competitiveness, they have to improve and strengthen in 12 aspects, such as higher education training, macroeconomic environment and labor market efficiency, which are the measurements of a region's competitiveness. How these measurements influence the way of educating to select the elites of the next generation? Which aspects will the education system focus on so as to strengthen a region's competitiveness? Or which aspects will be neglected because those abilities are out of the competitiveness measurement? On the other hand, what aspects are the developing countries often focused on and ignored in their education system? Does it make teenagers have less pressure, so their suicide rates are lower? This study will compare the differences and similarities in education field of Hong Kong and that of other developed and developing regions which are related to youth suicide problem.

【 Results and Discussion 】

Developed countries, such as Finland and South Korea, have the financial ability to provide universal education opportunity for their citizens. Most of the education system of developed countries are using the public examination to judge the ability of students in order to decide if they could go for further study or not. This method can filter out those outstanding students to build up country's capacity, supporting the long-term economic development and providing an environment of fierce competition in society. That's why the abilities which are needed in economic and social development will become one of the factors that the education system may concern about how to differentiate who are outstanding students. Students who cannot satisfy those requirements will become inferior. For example, developed countries will emphasize for providing universal education opportunities, hardware supports and students' ability of languages and technology. However, if students who have talent and skills in other aspects, can they earn recognition under the education system? Using Hong Kong as an example, students who have talents other than study (e.g. Interior design, cookery etc.) can only apply for the Applied Learning (APL) courses. Those related ability can only count for level 3 to 4 at most for the academic results of the public examination. According to the self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 2002), if the teenagers cannot earn recognition for their competence, they will also lack autonomy from education and their own future career and development. Ultimately, their motivation of survival will be difficult to increase, or even it will decrease to make them produce suicide ideation.

On the other hand, not all the people can have the opportunity to receive education in LMIC due to its limited financial ability. Although it still has the system of public examination, it is easier to compete and the pressure is lesser comparing with developed countries'. The politics of LMIC is unrest and their economy is unstable, or even they may face natural disasters like Nepal. According to Maslow (1943), if citizens cannot even satisfy with their basic daily needs, so they will not further pursue satisfaction of their higher level of needs, such as education opportunities, because it is more important for them to stay alive. For example, in Nepal, according to the UNESCO statistics, the completion rate in lower-secondary education only stands at 69.7% in 2016 and only 24.5% at the upper-secondary level in 2014. Most teenagers need to quit school in order to help their families with farming work. They have less pressure to further study or upward mobility comparing with those teenagers in developed regions. It can explain why there is a higher suicide rate or suicide deaths in developed regions than LMIC.

【 Future Study Plan 】

It is urge to emphasize youth suicide problem in developed countries. The result can have a certain reference value for those governments in developed regions to improve their education system and economic structure. Although it is important to strengthen a region's competitiveness, it is equally vital to develop and recognize citizens' competence in multiple aspects, especially our adolescents. If adolescents' self-efficacy is increased, their motivation for survival and upward mobility will also be increased. In long-term, they will contribute their talents and skills to the economic and social development. Governments are not suggested to fulfill the measurement of global competitiveness and sacrifice the multiple development and related talents and skills, such as sports and arts. A balanced development of a country should respect people's life meaning and courage people to exert their potentials. Schools can strengthen life education, economic structure is diverse in different industries including I.T., sport and arts. Therefore, teenagers can improve their resilience and have more opportunities to perform their abilities.

【 References 】

- World Health Organization. (2014). *Preventing suicide: a global imperative*. World Health Organization
- OECD. (2017). *OECD family database: CO4.1: Teenage suicide (15-19 years old)*. Available: https://www.oecd.org/els/family/CO_4_4_Teenage-Suicide.pdf
- Maslow, A.H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review* 50 (4) 370-96

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- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2002). *Handbook of self-determination research*. University Rochester Press

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Appendix (Picture or Chart if any)

Appendix 1

10-19 years old suicide problem in Hong Kong

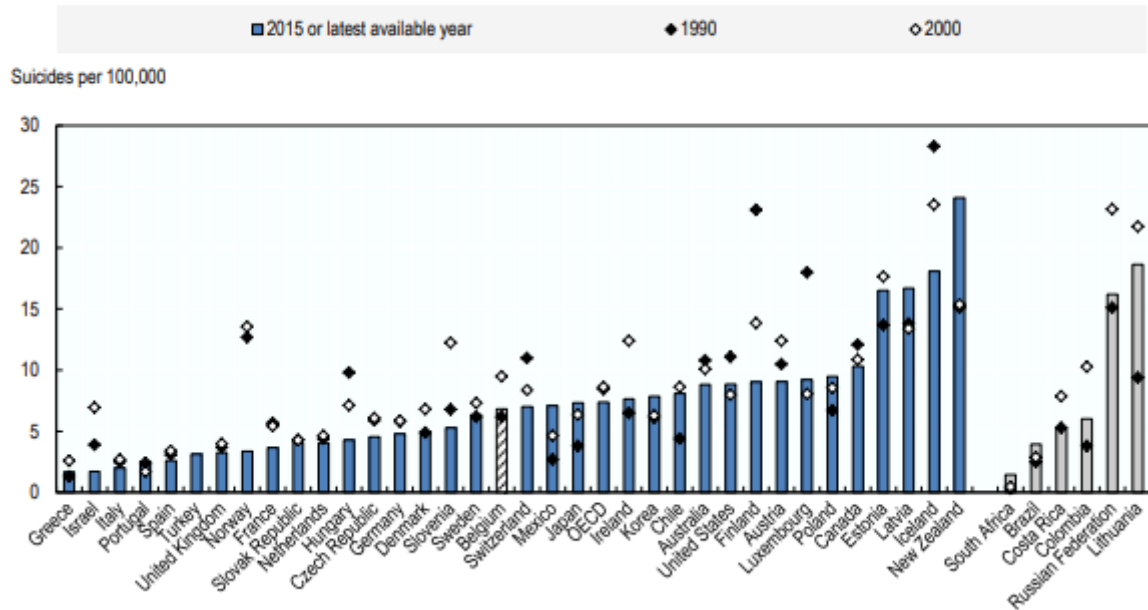
| Year | Seek-Help Number | Suicide Death Number |
|------|------------------|----------------------|
| 2014 | 867 | 102 |
| 2015 | 751 | 84 |
| 2016 | 1,637 | 104 |

Resources: The Samaritan Befrienders Hong Kong and Suicide Crisis Intervention Centre

Appendix 2

Teenage suicides, 1990^a, 2000^b and 2015^c or latest available year

Suicides by people aged 15-19 per 100,000 people aged 15-19



Resources: OECD Family Database