2025 International Conference on Societies of Opportunity (ICSO)

How the family and wider community contribute to improvement students' learning outcomes

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Overview

1. Equality of opportunity & social gradient
2. Mobilization of social capital through parental involvement for children's education and social mobility
3. Impact of different types of family involvement on student's cognitive (academic achievements)and non-cognitive outcomes (University aspiration and Hope of adolescents)
4. Effective models of Home School Community collaboration (from Epstein's 6 types to HO's 7 types Model)
5. How to enhance HSC by Communitarian Leadership (evidence from Action Research on HSC)
6. How to mobilize Community Resources to enhance social mobility ((evidence from the BUS model – Business-University-School collaboration)

Re-define Effectiveness of Basic Education from International Perspective

Effective Basic Education

- Quality –

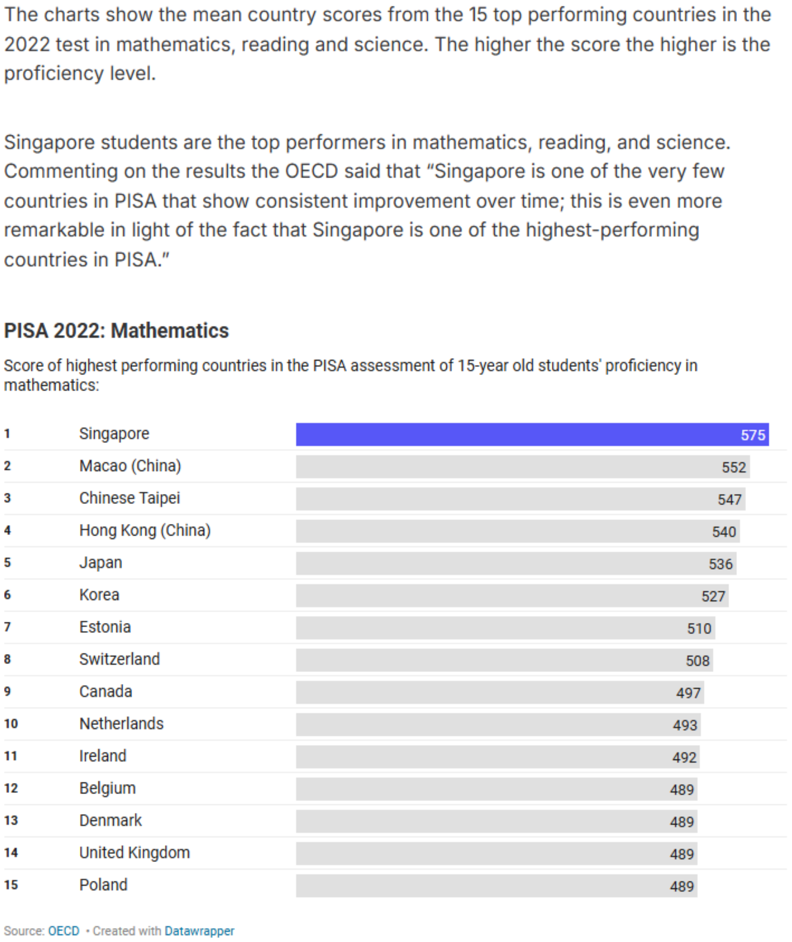
  Mean and rank

- Equality – Gender,

  Ethnic groups &

  Class(ESCS/SES)

- by Social gradient



The charts show the mean country scores from the 15 top performing countries in the 2022 test in mathematics, reading and science. The higher the score the higher is the proficiency level.

Singapore students are the top performers in mathematics, reading, and science. Commenting on the results the OECD said that "Singapore is one of the very few countries in PISA that show consistent improvement over time; this is even more remarkable in light of the fact that Singapore is one of the highest-performing countries in PISA."

PISA 2022: Mathematics

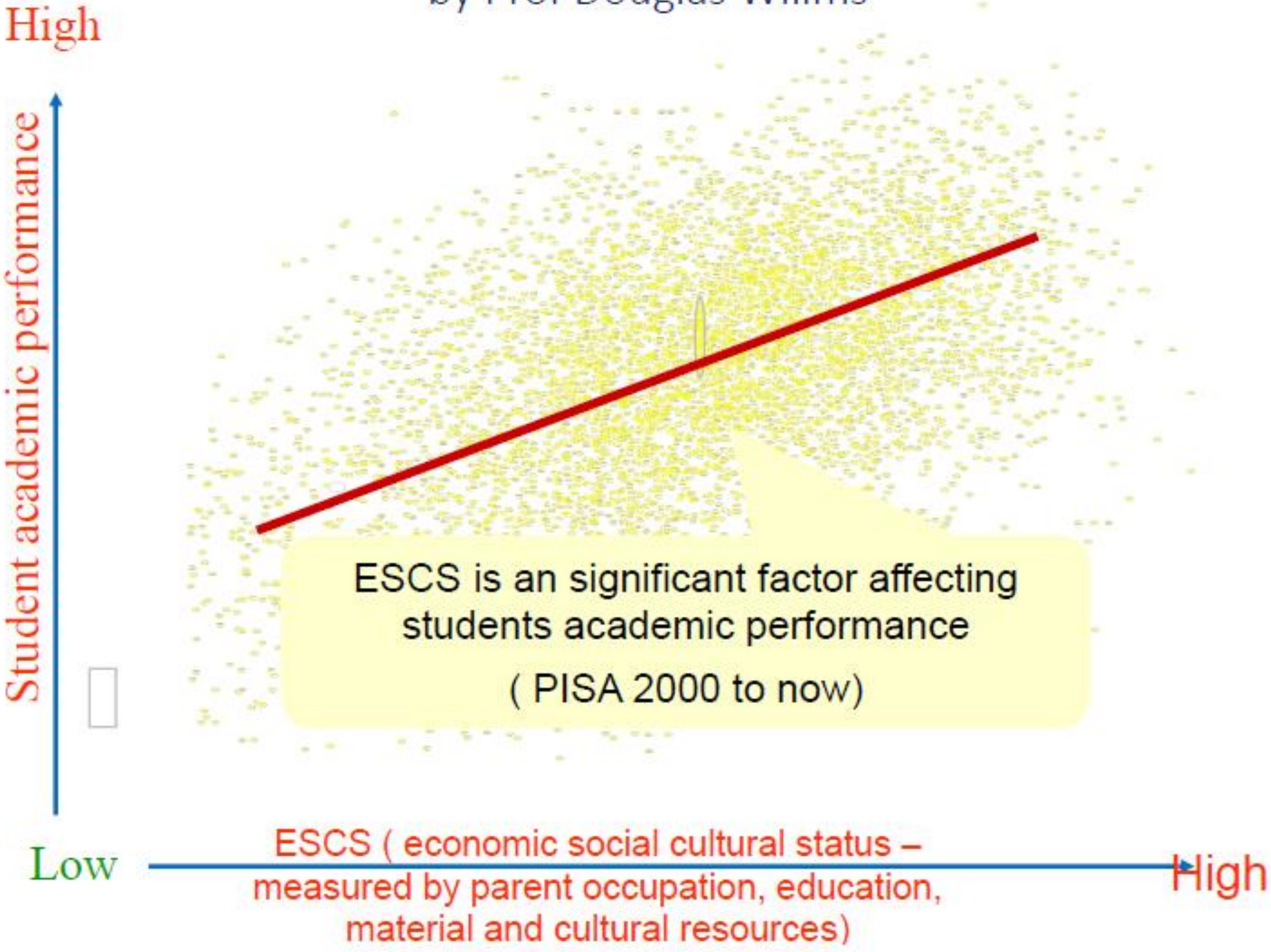
Score of highest performing countries in the PISA assessment of 15-year old students' proficiency in mathematics:

1	Singapore	575
2	Macao (China)	552
3	Chinese Taipei	547
4	Hong Kong (China)	540
5	Japan	536
6	Korea	527
7	Estonia	510
8	Switzerland	508
9	Canada	497
10	Netherlands	493
11	Ireland	492
12	Belgium	489
13	Denmark	489
14	United Kingdom	489
15	Poland	489

Source: OECD • Created with Datawrapper

OECD (2023), PISA 2022 Results (Volume I): The State of Learning and Equity in Education, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/53f23881-en

Concept of Social Gradient
by Prof Douglas Willms

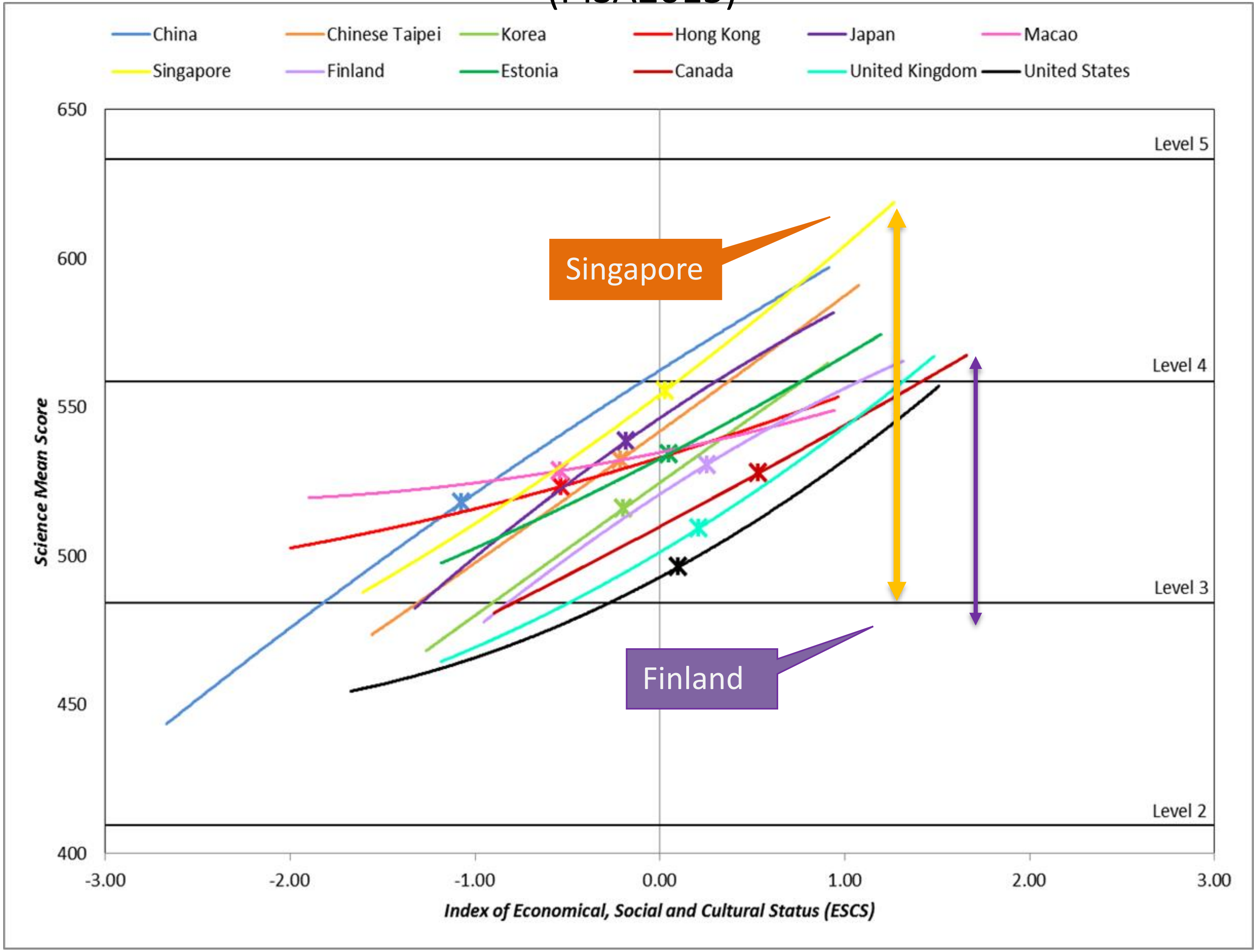


ESCS is an significant factor affecting students academic performance

(PISA 2000 to now)

SOCIAL GRADIENTS IN ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

(PISA2015)



Singapore

Finland

The Social Gradient and Social Reproduction

Family Deficiency Theory

- Higher SES families with more family resources tends to provide more academic support vs Lower SES families, lack of economic, cultural and social capital, face challenges engaging in learning activities.

Social reproduction vs Social mobility from Basic Education

- Different types of parental involvement have different impacts of children's learning outcomes – evidence from national dataset

Ho, S.C. & Willms, J. D. (1996). The effects of parental involvement on eighth grade achievement. Sociology of Education, 69 (2): 126-141

- USA NELS 88 NATIONAL DATASET
- N=1052 secondary schools; n = 25000 students
- **Four Types of Parental Involvement/Social capital**：

Home Discussion: academic and social discussion
Home Supervision: homework supervision and limit TV time
School Communication: school contact family , family contact school
School Participation: Volunteering and PTA

HLM explaining variation in 4 types of Parent Involvement / Social Capital

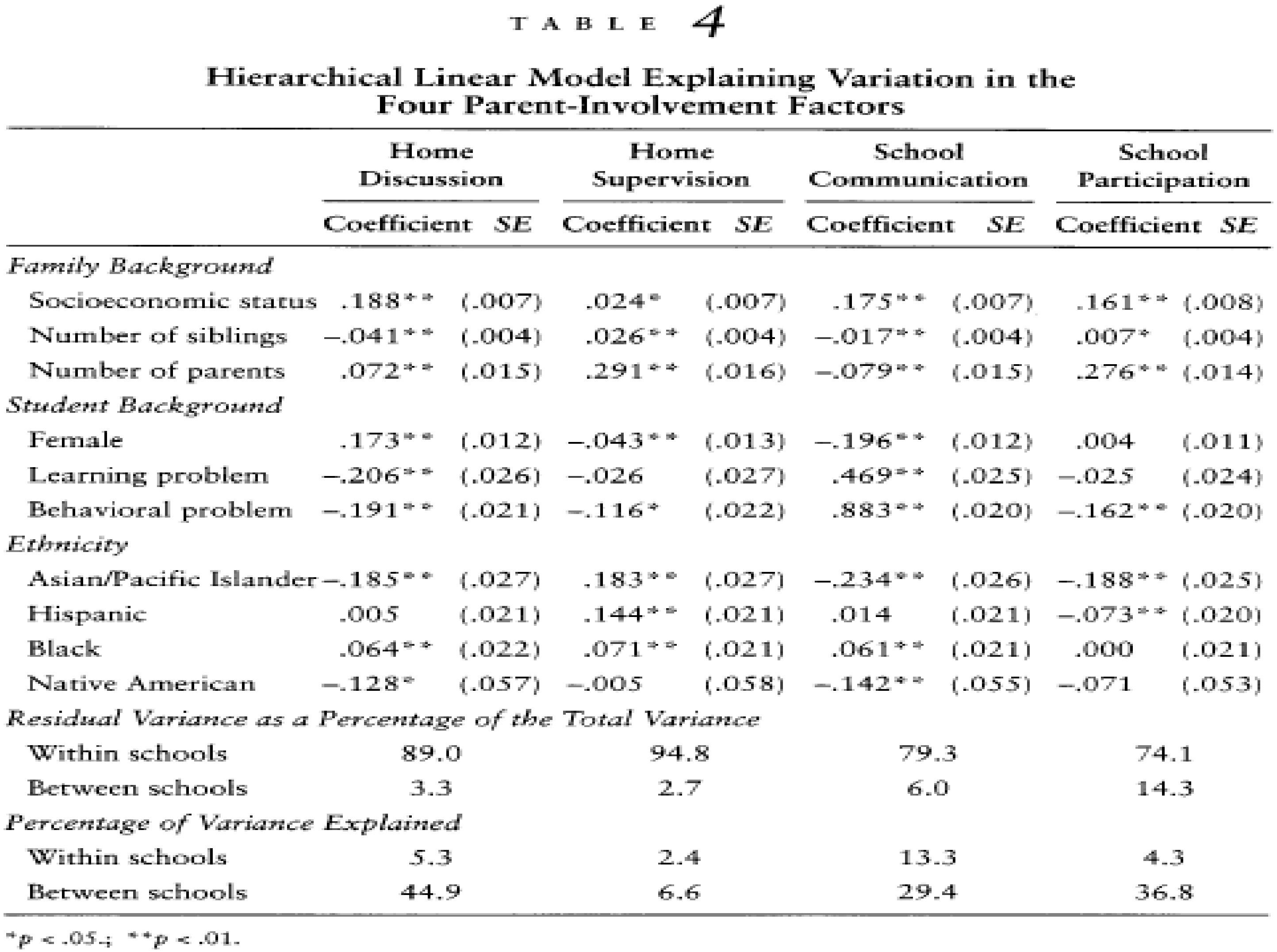


TABLE 4

Hierarchical Linear Model Explaining Variation in the Four Parent-Involvement Factors

	Home Discussion		Home Supervision		School Communication		School Participation	
	Coefficient	*SE*	Coefficient	*SE*	Coefficient	*SE*	Coefficient	*SE*
Family Background								
Socioeconomic status	.188**	(.007)	.024*	(.007)	.175**	(.007)	.161**	(.008)
Number of siblings	–.041**	(.004)	.026**	(.004)	–.017**	(.004)	.007*	(.004)
Number of parents	.072**	(.015)	.291**	(.016)	–.079**	(.015)	.276**	(.014)
Student Background								
Female	.173**	(.012)	–.043**	(.013)	–.196**	(.012)	.004	(.011)
Learning problem	–.206**	(.026)	–.026	(.027)	.469**	(.025)	–.025	(.024)
Behavioral problem	–.191**	(.021)	–.116*	(.022)	.883**	(.020)	–.162**	(.020)
Ethnicity								
Asian/Pacific Islander	–.185**	(.027)	.183**	(.027)	–.234**	(.026)	–.188**	(.025)
Hispanic	.005	(.021)	.144**	(.021)	.014	(.021)	–.073**	(.020)
Black	.064**	(.022)	.071**	(.021)	.061**	(.021)	.000	(.021)
Native American	–.128*	(.057)	–.005	(.058)	–.142**	(.055)	–.071	(.053)
Residual Variance as a Percentage of the Total Variance								
Within schools	89.0		94.8		79.3		74.1	
Between schools	3.3		2.7		6.0		14.3	
Percentage of Variance Explained								
Within schools	5.3		2.4		13.3		4.3	
Between schools	44.9		6.6		29.4		36.8	

*p < .05; **p < .01.

Social disparity

Cultural disparity

Effect of Parental Involvement/Social Capital on student cognitive outcomes (HO & Willms, 1996)

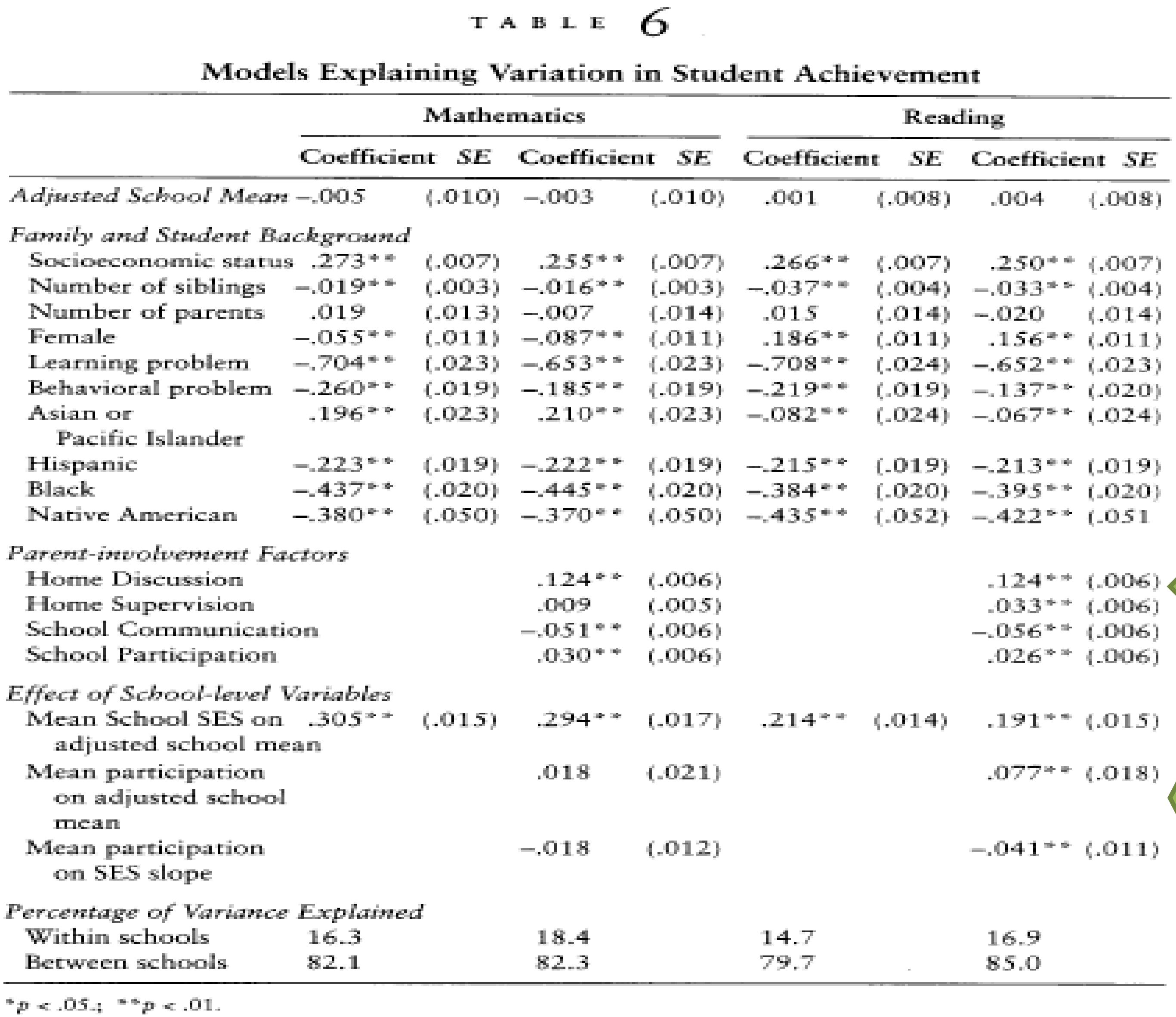


TABLE 6

Models Explaining Variation in Student Achievement

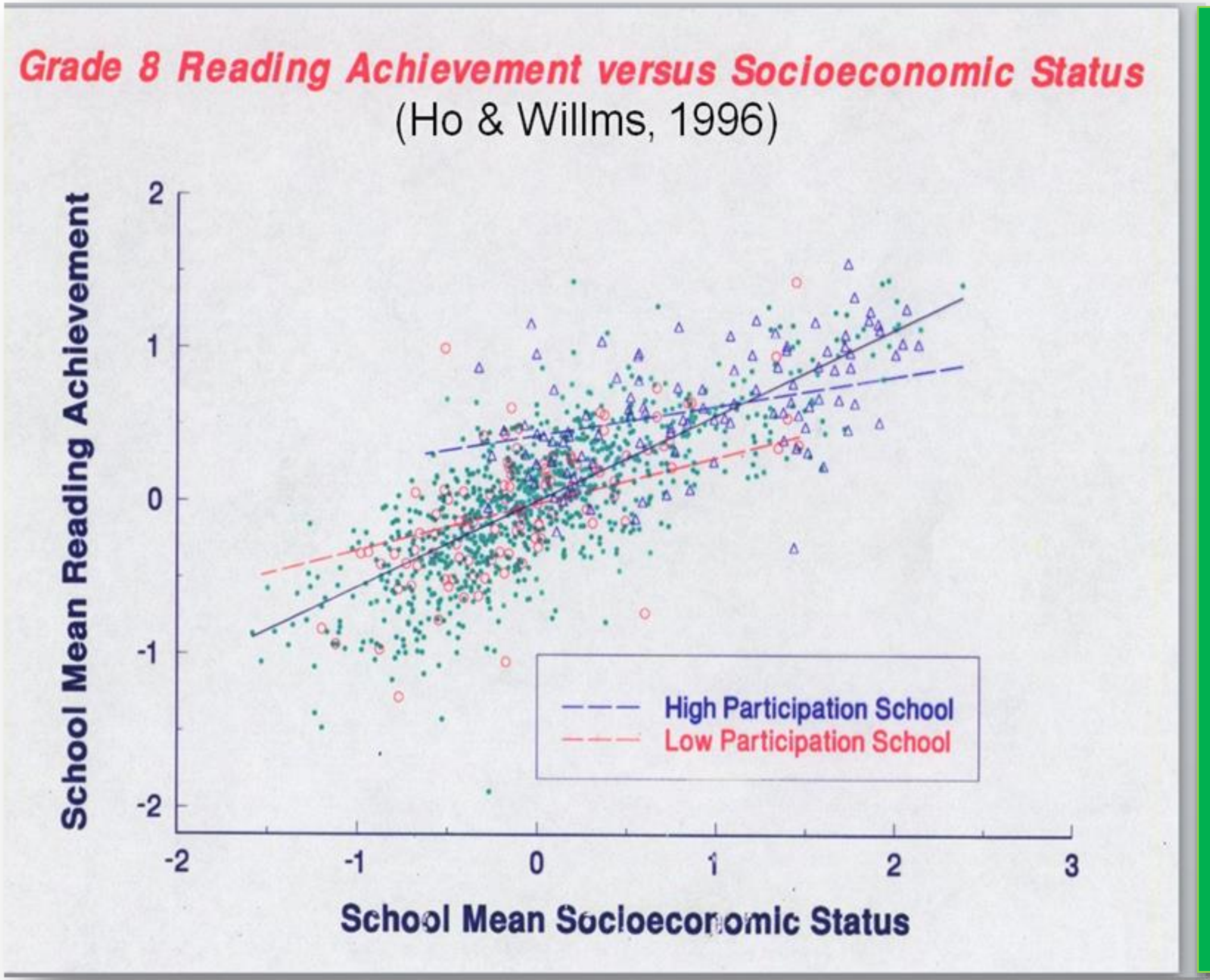
	Mathematics				Reading			
	Coefficient	*SE*	Coefficient	*SE*	Coefficient	*SE*	Coefficient	*SE*
Adjusted School Mean	–.005	(.010)	–.003	(.010)	.001	(.008)	.004	(.008)
Family and Student Background								
Socioeconomic status	.273**	(.007)	.255**	(.007)	.266**	(.007)	.250**	(.007)
Number of siblings	–.019**	(.003)	–.016**	(.003)	–.037**	(.004)	–.033**	(.004)
Number of parents	.019	(.013)	–.007	(.014)	.015	(.014)	–.020	(.014)
Female	–.055**	(.011)	–.087**	(.011)	.186**	(.011)	.156**	(.011)
Learning problem	–.704**	(.023)	–.653**	(.023)	–.708**	(.024)	–.652**	(.023)
Behavioral problem	–.260**	(.019)	–.185**	(.019)	–.219**	(.019)	–.137**	(.020)
Asian or Pacific Islander	.196**	(.023)	.210**	(.023)	–.082**	(.024)	–.067**	(.024)
Hispanic	–.223**	(.019)	–.222**	(.019)	–.215**	(.019)	–.213**	(.019)
Black	–.437**	(.020)	–.445**	(.020)	–.384**	(.020)	–.395**	(.020)
Native American	–.380**	(.050)	–.370**	(.050)	–.435**	(.052)	–.422**	(.051
Parent-involvement Factors								
Home Discussion			.124**	(.006)			.124**	(.006)
Home Supervision			.009	(.005)			.033**	(.006)
School Communication			–.051**	(.006)			–.056**	(.006)
School Participation			.030**	(.006)			.026**	(.006)
Effect of School-level Variables								
Mean School SES on adjusted school mean	.305**	(.015)	.294**	(.017)	.214**	(.014)	.191**	(.015)
Mean participation on adjusted school mean			.018	(.021)			.077**	(.018)
Mean participation on SES slope			–.018	(.012)			–.041**	(.011)
Percentage of Variance Explained								
Within schools	16.3		18.4		14.7		16.9	
Between schools	82.1		82.3		79.7		85.0	

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$.

Home discussion is the strongest predictor

School-based involvement increase both quality and reduce social disparity of academic achievement

Schools with Heart: Creating social capital for all



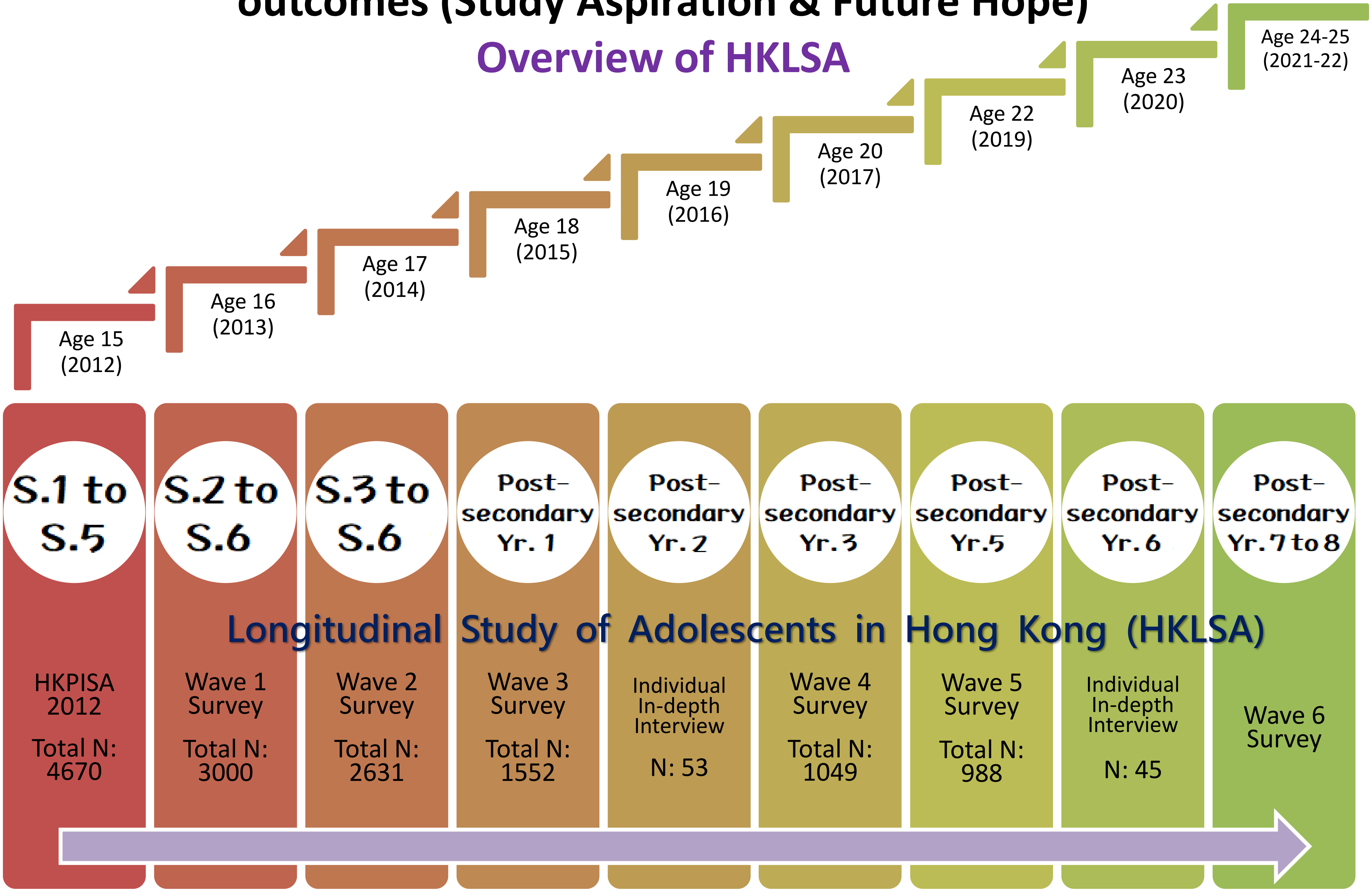
In ***Schools with Heart***, Daniel Brown (1994, 2019) studies school voluntarism through 185 interviews with principals, teachers, and volunteers. He shows that volunteers serve as a bridge between families and public schools, enriching education with personal and community resources

Evidence of Impact of PI on
Learning Outcomes and School climate

- **Home-Based Strategies**: Home supervision vs Home discussion works at the individual level .
- **School-Based Strategies**: School communication vs School participation works at school level and reduce social disparity.
- **Schools can create social capital (network, norms, obligation & expectation)** by mobilizing family and community volunteers regardless of their social background, that could enhance reading climate, learning norms and caring norms of the school.
- **Volunteers connect families and communities to schools**: Voluntarism acts as a bridge between private and public spheres, enhancing trust, communication, and shared responsibility
- **Voluntarism strengthens public education when properly organized**: Schools that intentionally recruit, train, and manage volunteers gain vital social and material support, suggesting that policy should promote structured volunteer programs rather than relying on informal efforts.

Evidence of Family Influence on young adults' non-cognitive outcomes (Study Aspiration & Future Hope)

Overview of HKLSA



Longitudinal Study of Adolescents in Hong Kong (HKLSA)

Age 15 (2012)	Age 16 (2013)	Age 17 (2014)	Age 18 (2015)	Age 19 (2016)	Age 20 (2017)	Age 22 (2019)	Age 23 (2020)	Age 24-25 (2021-22)
S.1 to S.5	S.2 to S.6	S.3 to S.6	Post-secondary Yr. 1	Post-secondary Yr. 2	Post-secondary Yr. 3	Post-secondary Yr. 5	Post-secondary Yr. 6	Post-secondary Yr. 7 to 8
HKPISA 2012	Wave 1 Survey	Wave 2 Survey	Wave 3 Survey	Individual In-depth Interview	Wave 4 Survey	Wave 5 Survey	Individual In-depth Interview	Wave 6 Survey
Total N: 4670	Total N: 3000	Total N: 2631	Total N: 1552	N: 53	Total N: 1049	Total N: 988	N: 45	

Impact on non-cognitive outcomes

Adolescents' University Aspiration
(Wave 3, 2015)

Research in Higher Education
https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-019-09574-8

Structure and Agency in Adolescents' Expectations of Pursuing Post-secondary Education

Chrysa Pui Chi Keung[1] · Esther Sui Chu Ho[2]

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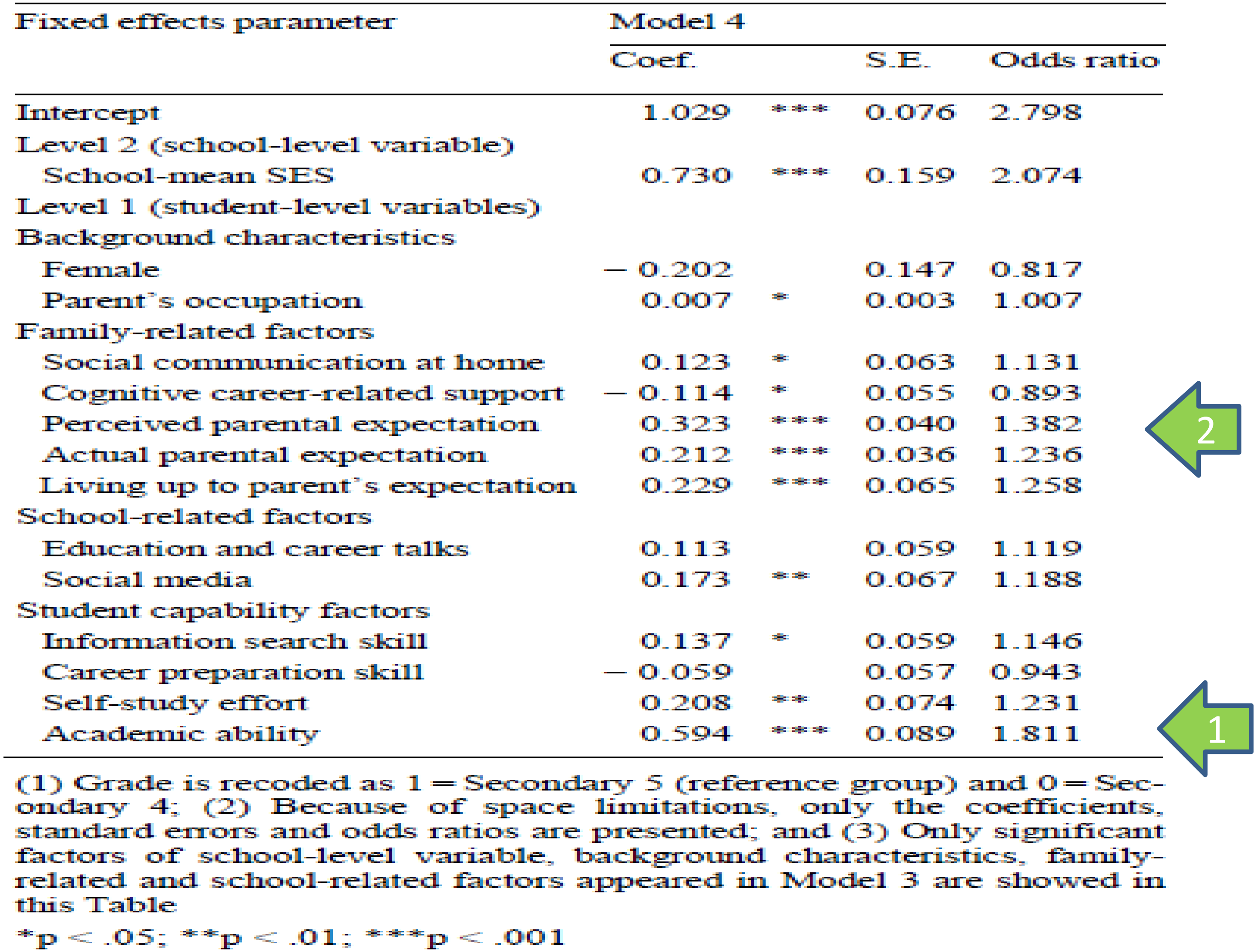
Abstract
Past studies have supported the view that parent background and family socioeconomic status determine the post-secondary educational expectations of adolescents. They build on Pierre Bourdieu's social reproduction theory, but do not fully explain why some adolescents aspire to post-secondary education and some do not. The capability approach adopted by Amartya Sen, uses the concept of agency to address such individual differences and 'capability to aspire' may explain educational transitions. The data for this study is drawn from PISA 2012 and its longitudinal extension study of adolescents in Hong Kong. Results of logistic regression analyses suggest that the reproduction effects through school socioeconomic composition and habitus pertaining to parental expectation are major factors shaping adolescents' expectations of pursuing a bachelor degree. However, agency factors, that is adolescents' own capabilities, after taking into account their differing family socioeconomic backgrounds, can strengthen their aspirations to pursue a bachelor degree. This combined approach and its implications for theory and practice, as well as the limitations of the study, are discussed.

Keywords Social reproduction · Capability approach · Post-secondary transition · Adolescent · Logistic regression

Impact on non-cognitive outcomes

Adolescents’ University Aspiration



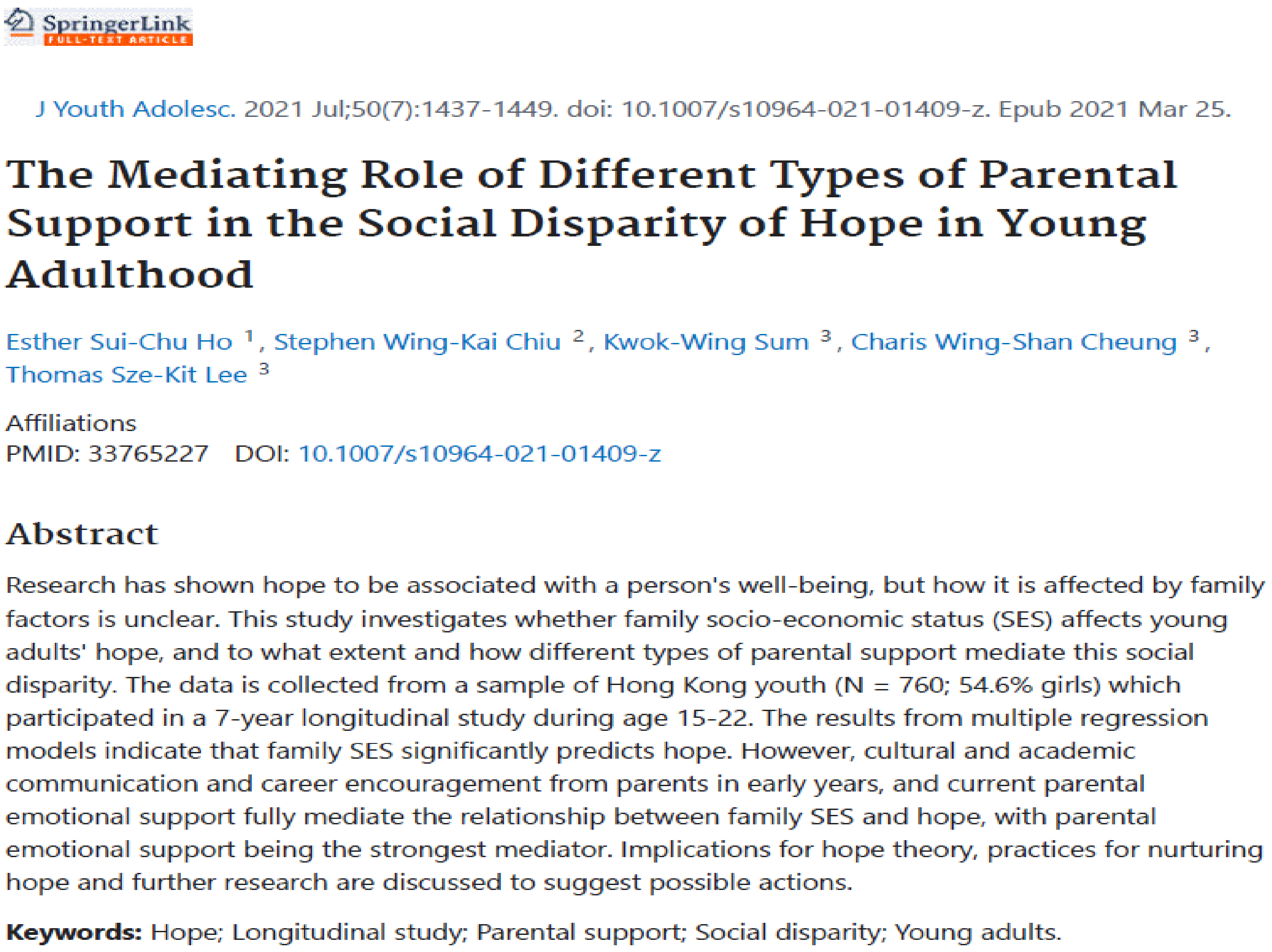
Fixed effects parameter	Model 4			
	Coef.		S.E.	Odds ratio
Intercept	1.029	***	0.076	2.798
Level 2 (school-level variable)				
School-mean SES	0.730	***	0.159	2.074
Level 1 (student-level variables)				
Background characteristics				
Female	− 0.202		0.147	0.817
Parent's occupation	0.007	*	0.003	1.007
Family-related factors				
Social communication at home	0.123	*	0.063	1.131
Cognitive career-related support	− 0.114	*	0.055	0.893
Perceived parental expectation	0.323	***	0.040	1.382
Actual parental expectation	0.212	***	0.036	1.236
Living up to parent's expectation	0.229	***	0.065	1.258
School-related factors				
Education and career talks	0.113		0.059	1.119
Social media	0.173	**	0.067	1.188
Student capability factors				
Information search skill	0.137	*	0.059	1.146
Career preparation skill	− 0.059		0.057	0.943
Self-study effort	0.208	**	0.074	1.231
Academic ability	0.594	***	0.089	1.811

(1) Grade is recoded as 1 = Secondary 5 (reference group) and 0 = Secondary 4; (2) Because of space limitations, only the coefficients, standard errors and odds ratios are presented; and (3) Only significant factors of school-level variable, background characteristics, family-related and school-related factors appeared in Model 3 are showed in this Table

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Impact on Social disparity of Hope

(Longitudinal Data Wave 1,2,3,4 – 2012-2017)



SpringerLink FULL-TEXT ARTICLE

J Youth Adolesc. 2021 Jul;50(7):1437-1449. doi: 10.1007/s10964-021-01409-z. Epub 2021 Mar 25.

The Mediating Role of Different Types of Parental Support in the Social Disparity of Hope in Young Adulthood

Esther Sui-Chu Ho [1], Stephen Wing-Kai Chiu [2], Kwok-Wing Sum [3], Charis Wing-Shan Cheung [3], Thomas Sze-Kit Lee [3]

Affiliations

PMID: 33765227 DOI: 10.1007/s10964-021-01409-z

Abstract

Research has shown hope to be associated with a person's well-being, but how it is affected by family factors is unclear. This study investigates whether family socio-economic status (SES) affects young adults' hope, and to what extent and how different types of parental support mediate this social disparity. The data is collected from a sample of Hong Kong youth (N = 760; 54.6% girls) which participated in a 7-year longitudinal study during age 15-22. The results from multiple regression models indicate that family SES significantly predicts hope. However, cultural and academic communication and career encouragement from parents in early years, and current parental emotional support fully mediate the relationship between family SES and hope, with parental emotional support being the strongest mediator. Implications for hope theory, practices for nurturing hope and further research are discussed to suggest possible actions.

Keywords: Hope; Longitudinal study; Parental support; Social disparity; Young adults.

Impact on Social disparity of Hope

Parent’s role on young adults’ hope

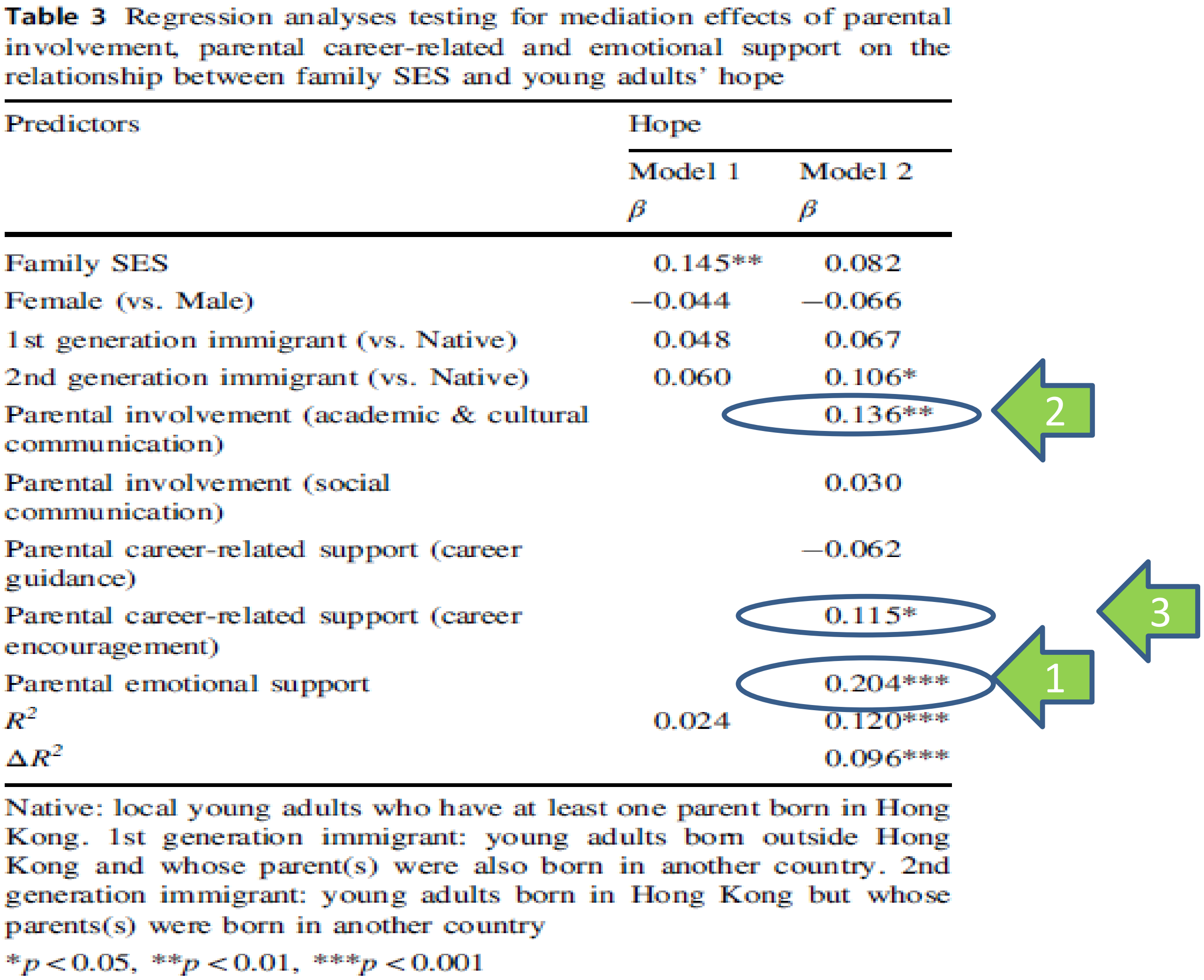


Table 3 Regression analyses testing for mediation effects of parental involvement, parental career-related and emotional support on the relationship between family SES and young adults’ hope

Predictors	Hope	
	Model 1	Model 2
	β	β
Family SES	0.145**	0.082
Female (vs. Male)	−0.044	−0.066
1st generation immigrant (vs. Native)	0.048	0.067
2nd generation immigrant (vs. Native)	0.060	0.106*
Parental involvement (academic & cultural communication)		0.136**
Parental involvement (social communication)		0.030
Parental career-related support (career guidance)		−0.062
Parental career-related support (career encouragement)		0.115*
Parental emotional support		0.204***
R^2	0.024	0.120***
ΔR^2		0.096***

Native: local young adults who have at least one parent born in Hong Kong. 1st generation immigrant: young adults born outside Hong Kong and whose parent(s) were also born in another country. 2nd generation immigrant: young adults born in Hong Kong but whose parents(s) were born in another country

$*p < 0.05$, $**p < 0.01$, $***p < 0.001$

Concluding remarks

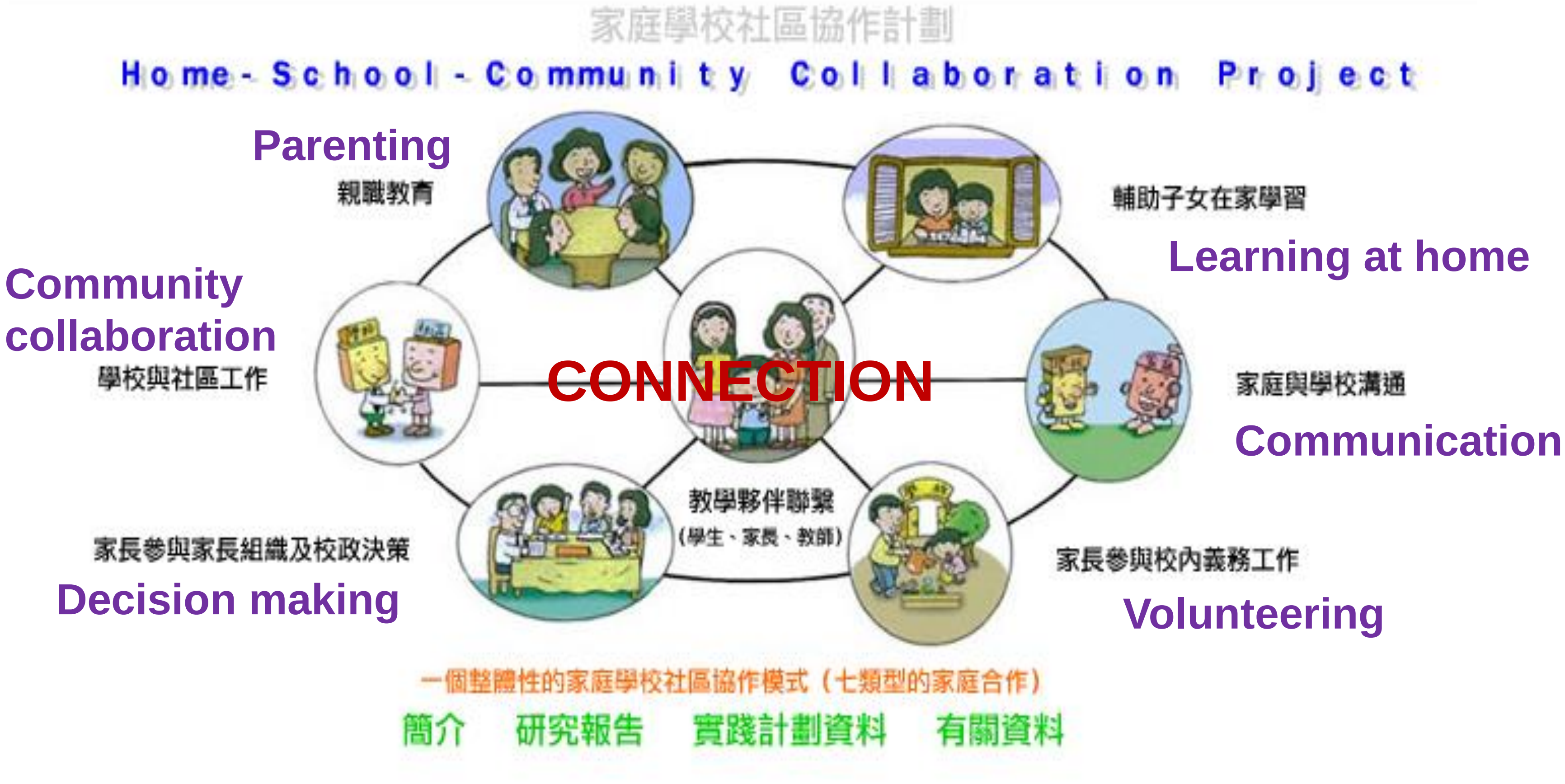
- The results **indicate that school mean SES and family SES significantly** predicts students' University Aspiration and Hope → social disparity of aspiration and hope among young people
- However, family social communication and expectation + students' own capability contribute to students' aspiration for pursuing a University degree even after taking their social background into account.
- Moreover, the relationship between family SES and hope is totally mediated by cultural and academic communication and career encouragement from parents in early years, and current parental emotional support. Parental emotional support is the strongest mediator.

Effective Model in USA
Epstein's Six Types Model

- Parenting
- Communicating
- Volunteering
- Learning at Home
- Decision-Making
- Collaborating with the Community

- Are they relevant to East Asian Contexts?

Effective model of HSC collaboration in East Asian Context


家庭學校社區協作計劃
Home-School-Community Collaboration Project
親職教育
輔助子女在家學習
學校與社區工作
家庭與學校溝通
教學夥伴聯繫
(學生、家長、教師)
家長參與家長組織及校政決策
家長參與校內義務工作
一個整體性的家庭學校社區協作模式（七類型的家庭合作）
簡介
研究報告
實踐計劃資料
有關資料

Parenting

Learning at home

Community collaboration

CONNECTION

Communication

Decision making

Volunteering

https://www.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/~hkcisa/hsc/executive_e.html

Successful HSC Collaboration Models in Asian Context

- Action Research with whole year whole school intervention – HSC project.
- Key Success Factors:

1. Family and Community Involvement Policies – Education Decentralization in HK (mandatory for setting up PTA with election of parent representative in school management board)
2. Parent center with incentives - Parents as insiders with a parent room in school
3. Parent support group – parent networking with the help of school coordinator (social worker training), parent educator (parent education training), and homeroom teacher (teacher training with HSC).
4. Building Trust relationship by positive communication, and shared goals.
5. Principal Leadership*

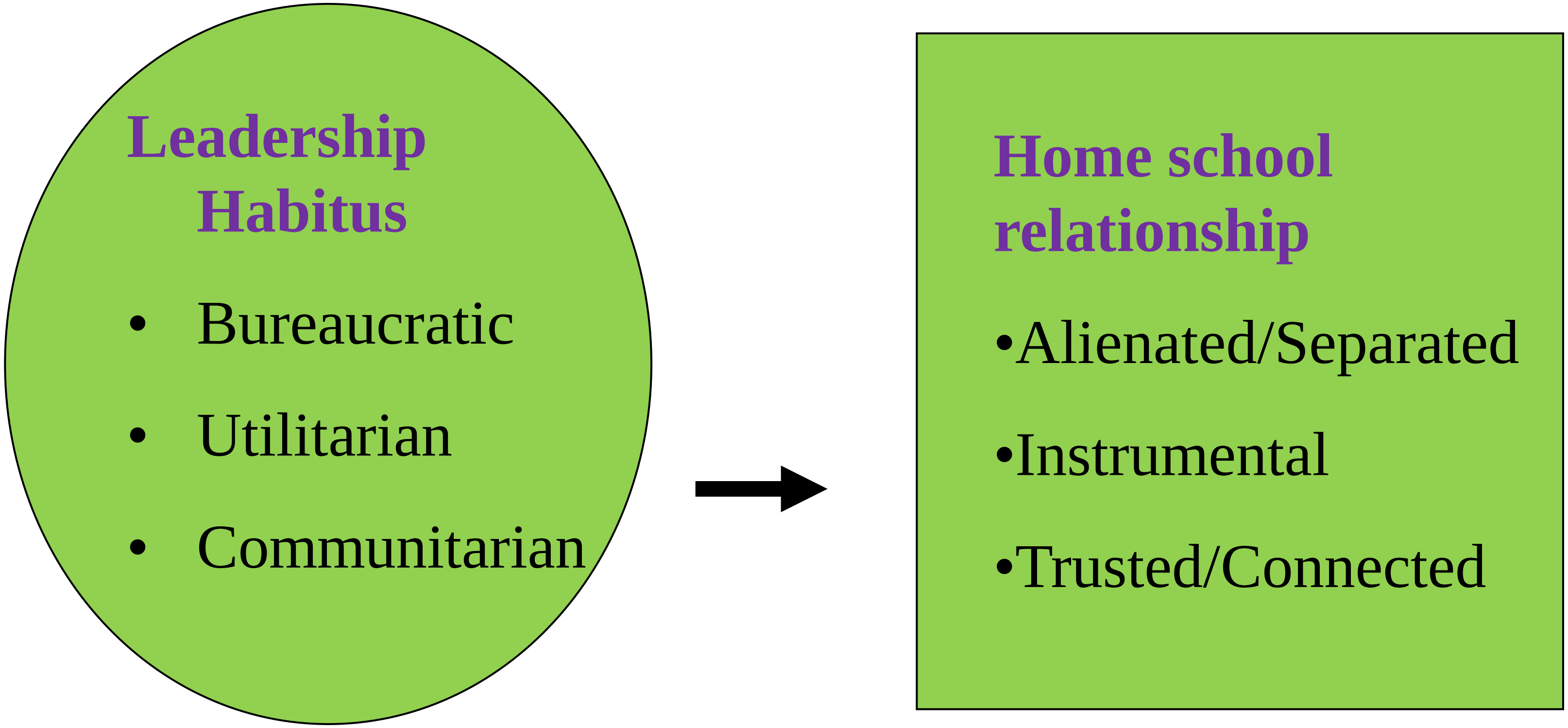
How to enhance HSC by Principal Leadership

- From December 2001 to June 2003, fieldwork was conducted in three Hong Kong primary schools with different socio-economic background and levels of parental participation.
- A total of 68 interviews were conduced with of the 3 principals, 18 teachers involved in PTA, 18 active parent helpers of the three Parent Associations and 29 non parent helpers of the three schools. The research team also attended nine activities organized by the parent associations of the three selected schools.
- This first phase extended for a half year for qualitative data coding, primary analysis and secondary analysis by way of the grounded theory methodology.

- *Reference : Ho, S.C. & Kwong W.M. (2013) Parental involvement on Children's Education: What works in Hong Kong. Springer Briefs in Education: Springer, Singapore*

Major findings:

Principal Leadership make a difference on Home School relationship



Leadership Habitus

- Bureaucratic
- Utilitarian
- Communitarian

Home school relationship

- Alienated/Separated
- Instrumental
- Trusted/Connected

Habitus * Capital * Field = Practices

Habitus	**Bureaucratic (Upper middle class parents)**	**Utilitarian (Middle class parents)**	**Communitarian (Working class parents)**
Ideologies	Students' learning and attainment are the priority of the school, home-school cooperation is of secondary importance	Principals may based on their own school policy to decide on the set up of the PTA	With family and school joining hands for the same goal, the school should be able to provide children holistic education of quality
	Principal should be in the leading position in deciding the area of parental participation	Schools set up PTA in order to comply with government policy and to follow the "trend" of school reform	Parents and teachers are able to interact as partners for children development through HSC
Views on Parents	Volunteers of low education level need much training. They are quite troublesome, and are not mature enough to deal with any administrative task	Parents can only perform supportive tasks because they are inexperienced with educational or administrative matters	What is crucial is parents having the sincerity to volunteer in school, not their education level or expertise
	Parents may easily misunderstand the school policies and spread false message which have undesirable impact on the school	Welcome parents to volunteer in non-teaching duties (e.g. supervising students during lunch). This will alleviate the workload of teachers and help promote the schools' reputation	Committed parents are able to provide effective assistance to school
Relationship with parents	**Alienated**	**Instrumental**	**Trusted**

Concluding remarks

- Principals with different leadership habitus used different strategies to empower some and marginalise other parents
- In this study, principal's leadership habitus, rather than parents' capital appears to be the major determinant of the home-school relationship
- Habitus →mobilizing and demobilizing parents → separated or connected relationship
- It can be argued tentatively that working class parents may be as 'involved' and even 'passionate' about educations as their middle class counterparts which depends very much on the principal's leadership habitus.

Reducing the Social Gradient Through HSC collaboration

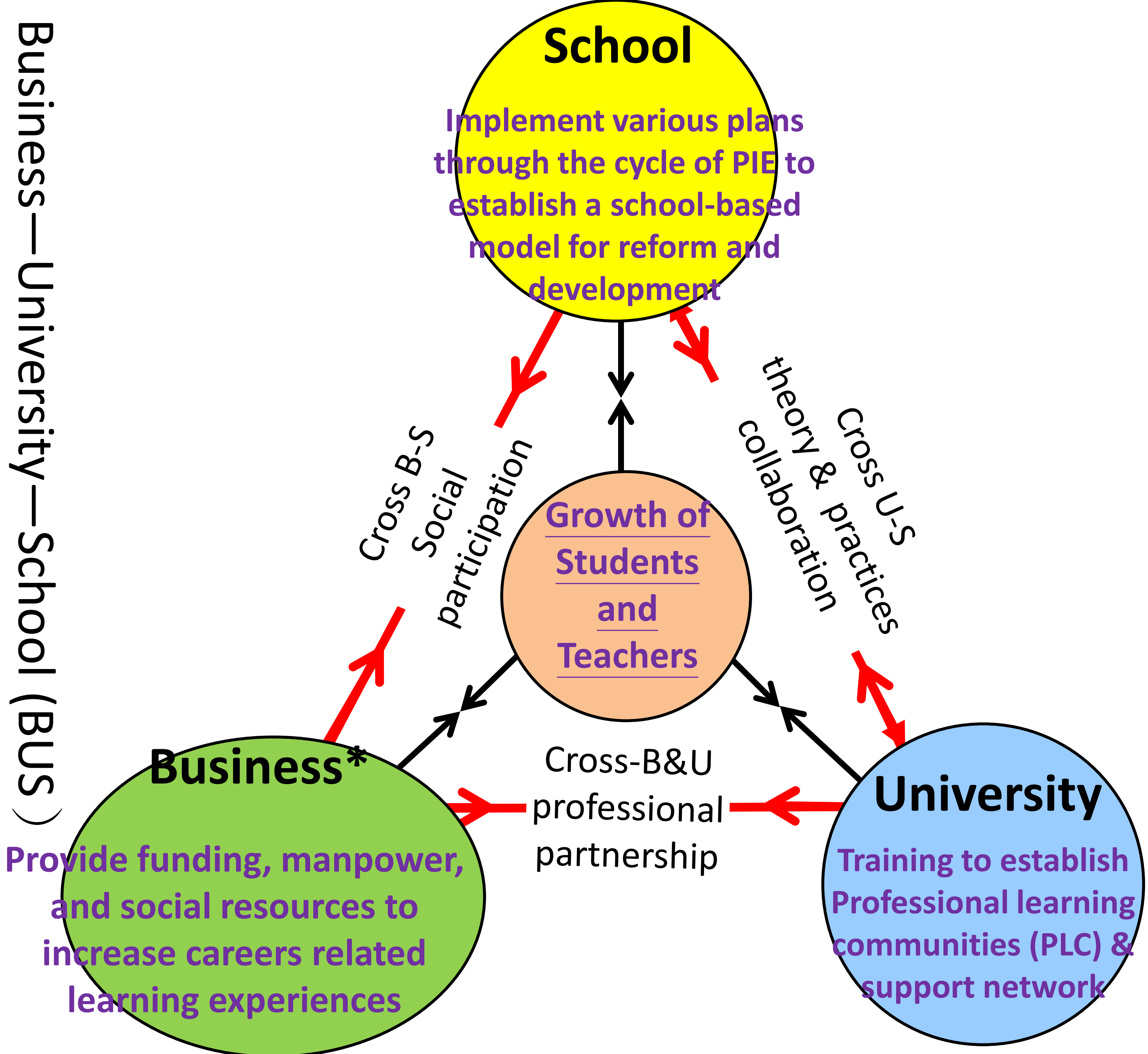
- Strategies to Address Inequities with Responsive practices :

1. Targeted support for immigrant and low-SES families.
2. Nurturing of disadvantaged families – set up parent education program and identify parents expertise as volunteer in school, show welcome and gratitude to parent participants
3. Communitarian Leadership transform different types of capitals for all students

- Challenges to Effective Collaboration in East Asian contexts:

1. Policies that provide sufficient support for parents and community members to be involved (community based and school based PTAs)
2. Language and cultural barriers of disadvantaged parents.
3. Time constraints and lack of resources of teachers and parents.
4. Not sufficient HSC training for principals and teachers
5. Not sufficient parent educators to provide quality parent education
6. Not sufficient community involvement especially Business Sectors

Business—University—School (BUS) collaboration Model



School

Implement various plans through the cycle of PIE to establish a school-based model for reform and development

Growth of Students and Teachers

Business*

Provide funding, manpower, and social resources to increase careers related learning experiences

University

Training to establish Professional learning communities (PLC) & support network

Cross B-S Social participation

Cross U-S theory & practices collaboration

Cross-B&U professional partnership

Family Involvement and School-Business Partnership: Nurturing Students' Hope (HO , Li & Lee, 2018)

- This study aims to investigate the impact of student and family background factors, parental expectation and involvement, and participation in school-business partnership activities, on the development of students' hope.
- Data was collected from a questionnaire survey in 2015 taken part by over 5,500 senior secondary students from 13 schools, who were participants in a school-business partnership program, and was analyzed by multiple regression models.
- Findings suggest the signature positive impact of parental expectation and involvement as well as the Business sector involvement on students' hope (agency + pathway)

Reference: Ho, Li & Lee (2018) ***Family Involvement and School-Business Partnership: Nurturing Students' Hope*** *Education Journal V46N1_73-92*

Implications for Policies

- Strategies to Enhance Policy:

1. **Taking stock** of the current HSC policies and practices
2. Identify the gap between **policy goals and actual practices** accomplished
3. Understand **Zone of acceptance** of educators/teachers: 1. Area of involvement? 2. Degree of involvement 3. Who should be involved to what extent in what areas of schooling?
4. Establish parent-friendly **school policies**.
5. Provide **incentives** for school to promote inclusive engagement opportunity for all parents (at home, in school and in community)
6. Engage **local communities** (e.g. NGOs and Business sectors: Project WeCan – BUS model) to support education and promote mutual involvement.

Implications for Practices

- **For educators and parents:**

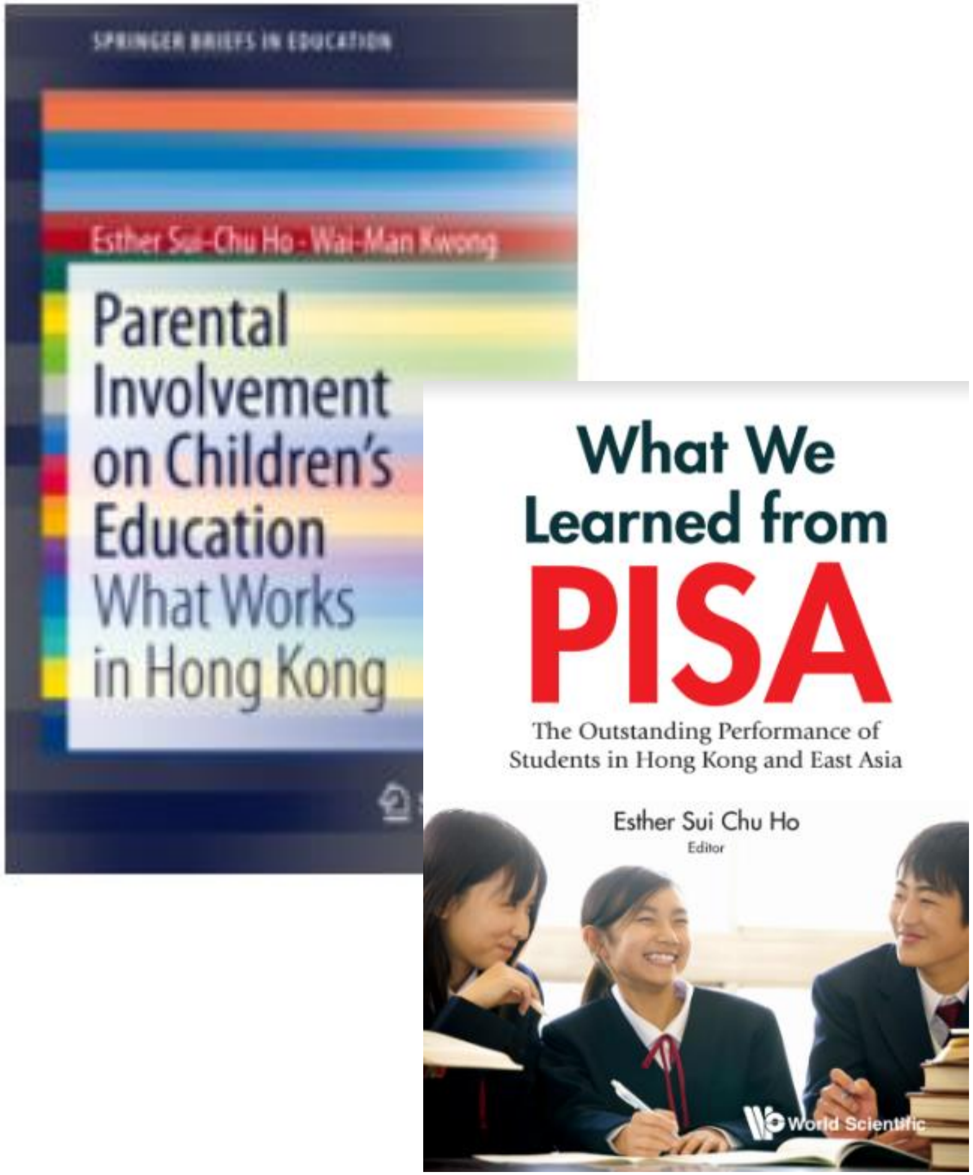
1. **Home-based involvement** is associated with enhanced academic achievement and socio-emotional well-being **at the individual level** through the provision of consistent guidance and encouragement from multiple sources.
2. **School- and community-based involvement** can improve learning environments and cultivate a caring norms **at the school level**, which benefit all students regardless of their social background.
3. To **enhance educational quality and reduce inequality**, it is essential for educators and parents to adopt comprehensive home–school–community collaboration models that emphasize shared responsibility, collective values, and active participation from all stakeholders.

- **For policymakers and school administrators** :

1. **Leadership** style plays a crucial role in shaping home school relationships. School principals who adopt a **communitarian leadership approach** view the school as a close-knit community, fostering informal, enduring, and trusting relationships between home, school and community.
2. Policy is needed to mobilize **community members/ business sectors** to devote their money and expertise for school improvement , particular **for those disadvantage schools and families.**

Major recommended readings

- **Epstein, et al (2018**) School, Family and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action. Chapter 1: pp1-25. California: Corwin Press, Inc., Sage Publications Ltd.
- **Ho, S. C. & Kwong, W. M. (2013*).*** *Parental Involvement on Children's Education: What Works in Hong Kong*. Springer: Springer Briefs in Education.
- **Ho, S. C. (Ed 2017).** *What We Learned from PISA: The Outstanding Performance of Students* ***in Hong Kong and East Asia****.* Worldscientific: Singapore. 424 pp


SPRINGER BRIEFS IN EDUCATION
Esther Sui-Chu Ho · Wai-Man Kwong
Parental Involvement on Children's Education
What Works in Hong Kong
What We Learned from PISA
The Outstanding Performance of Students in Hong Kong and East Asia
Esther Sui Chu Ho
Editor
World Scientific

Recommended Readings

- *Ho, S.C. & Willms, J. D. (1996). The effects of parental involvement on eighth grade achievement. *Sociology of Education*, 69 (2): 126-141
- Ho, S.C. (2010) Family Influences on Science Learning among Hong Kong Adolescents: What we learned from PISA. *International Journal of Science and Mathematics Education*. 8(3):409-428.
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