ABSTRACTS

Nicole W.T. Cheung, “Effects of Adolescent Career Orientation, Career-related Parent Support, and Social Strain on High School Students’ Transitioning to Post-secondary Education or Work: Results from a Two-Wave Longitudinal Study in Hong Kong”

This study focuses on why some high school students encounter difficulties during the transition to post-secondary education and are left with meager labor market opportunities in the increasingly precarious, bumpy transition from youth to adulthood. To answer this question, we go beyond the typical predictors of family socioeconomic background and academic performance to examine how adolescents’ career orientation, career-related parent support, social strain in adolescents’ life during high school years serve as antecedents to their post-school paths to tertiary education, work, or unemployment. Data were based on a two-wave longitudinal survey of the eleventh grade students (high school seniors) in Hong Kong. The panel sample of 918 students completed a baseline survey at the eleventh grade in spring 2013 and a follow-up survey from October 2014 to August 2015 after they graduated from high school. Multinominal logistic analyses found that career-related parent support and generic teacher support during high school years were most predictive of high school graduates’ enrollment in sub-degree or degree programmes, whereas high school adolescents with stronger intrinsic work-related motivation (a variable of career orientation) were significantly less likely to be unemployed after graduation. A further comparison between sub-degree and degree programme enrollees showed that career-related parent support consistently boosted subsequent interest of high school graduates in both sub-degree and degree studies. Vocational exploration and commitment (another variable of career orientation) forged in high school years more strongly led to subsequent interest in sub-degree studies, but social strain experienced during high school years more strongly attenuated interest of high school graduates in their degree studies.

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Kong Siu Hang, “Impact of parents’ cultural capital and social capital on secondary school students’ participation in music activities in Beijing, China”
Due to increased recognition on the importance of parental influence, the impact of parental cultural capital on students’ music activities has been studied in both Western and non-Western societies. Some research has shown that students regard parental support as a central influential factor in their music learning. Specifically, an advantaged parental support can influence an individual’s access to musical resources. However, little attention is on students’ perception on parental influence in the Chinese context. Framed by Bourdieu’s theory of “cultural capital” and Coleman’s “social capital”, this research study focuses on how students in Beijing perceive the influence of parental support and parental cultural capital on their music listening. Three research questions are addressed for investigation: (1) How does the parental cultural capital affect the students’ preferred musical styles in listening? (2) To what extent does parental cultural capital affect the social capital offered on students’ music listening from the parents? (3) How do the students perceive the influence of parental support on their music listening? To examine these issues, a survey questionnaire was formulated and distributed to 8 Beijing secondary schools in Summer 2015. About 2,000 students attending Grades 7-9 were involved. The findings may provide specific and nuanced insights into the impact of parental support on students’ music learning in the Beijing context. Moreover, this study may form a foundation on the mechanism through how cultural capital and social capital are transferred from parents to children and serves as a starting ground for a further investigation on the mechanism through exploring how cultural capital enhances music learning by participating in music activities, and it might contribute to unveil part of the underlying linkages between family background and music education.

Lai Yuen Shan, “Abortion among Unmarried Female Migrant Workers in China: Modes of Parental Influence”

Despite the absence of official data, extensive evidence indicates a rising trend of premarital abortion in China during the past three decades. Premarital abortion is often perceived as the eventual consequence of increasing sexual freedom and of the lack of sexual and reproductive health knowledge of young women. However, these factors can hardly account for their choice of abortion, which is often influenced by interpersonal power dynamics and the preexisting socio-cultural and economic structure where individuals are situated. This paper argues that parental influence is one of the factors that influence the abortion decision of unmarried female migrants in China. It attempts to reveal and examine the role played by parents and parent-daughter interactions during the process of abortion decision-making. Based on ethnographic observations and in-depth interviews with 30 (n=30) women who have experienced at least one premarital abortion in a city in Shandong, China, this paper
illustrates the considerations behind parents’ direct and indirect involvements in daughters’ abortion decisions, as well as their negotiations. As reflected by the data, parental involvements are mediated by parents’ expectations on their daughter’s future husband, marriage and family life, which are often shaped by the living ideals constituted under the current socio-economic structure and embedded with their own cultural and moral beliefs in marriage, reproduction and family. Three modes of parental influences are classified, reflecting various degrees of parental control and daughter’s autonomy exercised in the course of abortion decision-making, as well as the changing parent-daughter relationship dynamics in contemporary China.