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Application of Sociology of Education on Early Childhood Curriculum and Pedagogic Practices in Hong Kong: insight from David Riesman

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Abstract
This paper will present multiple themes that are intermingled with one another, aiming to bring an overview of sociology of education and its application in the Hong Kong situation. One of the themes concerns how sociology of education has intertwined with the socio-political aspect of Hong Kong before and after year 1997 resulting in different educational modes following the change of time. The other theme relates the social aspect of young children in school on the issue of 'loneliness' and 'friendship'. These aspects would then be exemplified and studied through the inspirational writings of David Riesman for identifying the cause of their loneliness under the sociological lens. A corresponding mode of curriculum and pedagogic practices had been identified with the different types of personalities mentioned in Riesman's book for the readers to reflect on.

Keywords: Sociology of Education, Early Childhood Education, David Riesman, Curriculum and Pedagogic practices, Hong Kong.

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Introduction

Human are social beings that require the support and companionship of others throughout their lives. The good life of man would mean he is surrounded by good friends and to enjoy their companionship. This kind of thinking is equally applicable to children of younger age. Children become aware of their social nature early in life. However, it is only until recently, sociology has paid relatively little attention to children and childhood. The socialization process begins under the guidance of teachers in school and family members at home. In Hong Kong, however, it is being observed that the prevalent practice of many pre-schools teachers are practicing "counter-social growth" direction. It is not uncommon for the author of this paper to observe that quite a number of young children in the kindergartens' classroom were found being socially "excluded" by their fellow classmates in group play, even though their teachers have taken note of this situation.

According to the prevalent trend of early childhood education in Hong Kong, the neglect or marginalization of children in sociology is clearly related to traditional views of socialization, which relegate children to a primarily passive role. A popular theme that lends itself to social growth in early childhood education is that of friendship (Gordon & Williams-Browne, 1995). For some children, gaining friendship might be a difficult task in a traditional classroom which requires the individual to hold responsible for his [sic] own learning (Morris & Adamson, 2010). An individual in order to ensure his/her own success in studies, he/she is prepared to sacrifice his/her relationship with their peers. This practice has indicated the pragmatic advancement of one's success in life at the expense of jeopardizing the growth of friendship among peers. These socially 'deprived' young children who have experienced 'loneliness' despite that they are staying in a crowd—in a congested big class (Riesman, 1960). In short, according to the opponents of traditional education, unhealthy competition in school is associated with the traditional mode of teaching and learning, which will inevitably prohibit healthy childhood friendship to flourish and create loneliness among young children.

In this paper, we have attempted firstly to give an account of how Sociology of Education was reflected in the education mode in Hong Kong before and after year 1997. Secondly, we explore how Sociology of Education could be applied in the realm of early childhood education in Hong Kong via the sociological lens of "loneliness" through the insights gained in Riesman, Glazer, and Denney (2001). It is hoped that with an understanding of the different types of personalities identified by David Riesman, a matching curriculum and pedagogic practices parallel to the types of personalities with its socio-philosophical origins could be visualized. Theoretically speaking, educators could apply or avoid adopting curriculum and pedagogies that would align with the specific type of personalities as their choice in practice. To achieve this end, Riesman's masterpiece, "*The Lonely Crowd*" was explored. Before then, the concept of sociology of education and how it is related to the realm of education were discussed.

Concept of Sociology of Education

The sociology of education is the study of educational structures, processes, and practices from a sociological perspective. This means that the theories, methods and the appropriate sociological questions are used to better understand the relationship between educational institutions and society, both at the micro and macro levels (Saha, 2011).

The sociology of education is a core field within the discipline of sociology though it is also considered as part of the discipline of education. Within sociology, the sociology of education overlaps with many other subfields, such as social stratification, race and ethnicity, and religion. Because of the broad range of topics within the sociology of education, there is hardly a subfield in sociology in which it does not have something to contribute (Saha, 2011).

In the United Kingdom, the sociology of education became identified with political arithmetic and thrived in the use of surveys and statistical analyses to learn how education was related to occupational attainment and career mobility (Floud, Halsey, & Martin 1957). Some argued that the

first use of the sociology of education more closely reflected a Durkheimian approach in which education was seen in functional terms in the maintenance of social order (Saha, 2011). To this ends, the maintenance of social order is unavoidably politically and economically linked. Henceforth, to a large extent, the employment of education curriculum and pedagogy before and after the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997 is also an echo to the political and socio-economical agenda of that period.

A review on how Sociology of Education manifested its historical educational mode in Hong Kong before 1997

For nearly 150 years, Hong Kong was governed as a colony of Great Britain. Similar to all British colonies and colonies of other imperial powers in the 18th and 19th centuries, education was deployed as a means to inculcate in the locals the culture of the sovereign masters (Lau, 2012). As a paternalistic colonial ruler, the government had a lofty objective of promoting vernacular education and helping to preserve the Chinese culture. But this had to be done under the premise that in so doing, it would not become a threat to the colonial rule. As a result, education played an important but unpublished role of cultivating and training local talents who would be trusted with sharing the responsibility to govern the colony (Bray & Koo, 2004; Lau, 2012).

Morris & Adamson (2010) elucidates that with regard to the curriculum, the government took little interest until the late 1940s, when the Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang began to use the curriculum of schools to directly promote their political viewpoints. This resulted in the government taking a more active interest in the curriculum and a section in the Education Department was established to produce module syllabuses and textbooks. The attempt to avoid sensitive political and social issues encouraged the development of a curriculum strongly based on traditional academic subjects (Morris & Adamson, 2010). In other words, the curriculum developers had designed curriculum and pedagogy which could match with the prevalent political climate at that time. In practice, educational methods are noted for their stress on following a well-charted, but demanding course of study. Ultimately the individual is responsible for his [sic] own learning, although he is made aware of role models who have followed the same path, he is placed under the strict authority of the teacher, and he is mastering the basics in concert with numerous students throughout his country. The classroom is a potent force for combining performance with conformity (Morris & Adamson, 2010)

During the 1980s, there were some attempts to change the early childhood curriculum to a more progressive direction (Education Department, 1981). The attempted change though was unsuccessful yet was deemed as preparing Hong Kong for the smooth transition to China, as China was adopting the open policy for economic reasons decreed by Deng Xiao-ping in the late 1970's (Lau, 2005; Lau & Ho, 2010).

The situation in Hong Kong after 1997

Following Hong Kong's return to China in 1997, there has been growing interaction and communication between the two societies including academic exchanges. The rapid and progressive changes happening in Mainland China naturally and inevitably have an impact on Hong Kong's educational thinking. It is found that since the handover of Hong Kong in 1997 and up until 2015, policymaking reflects a new set of political concerns. One of the first tasks of the new SAR was to review the education system and to work out a long-term plan.

The reform proposals advocated in 1999 and 2000 stressed the building up of an education system conductive to lifelong learning and all-round development (Education Commission, 2000). Education was to provide the favorable conditions necessary for Hong Kong to become a diverse, democratic, civilized, tolerant, dynamic, and cultured cosmopolitan city (Chan & Chan, 2002). A change of the government's attitude towards education can be seen in the Consultation Document on Reform Proposals *Excel and Growth: Review of the Education System in May 2000,* which then followed by *Learning for Life, Learning through Life,* and the *Learning to learn: the way forward in curriculum development (*Education Commission, 2000). Together with the *Early Childhood*

Curriculum Guide 2006 (Education Bureau, 2006) which is to replace the 1996 version, these documents seek to launch for a change from the traditional didactic teacher-centre curriculum to a progressive child-centred balanced curriculum and is supposed to foster the "whole person" development of young children, which is a socially-based curriculum. As can be seen, the change in educational mode is a respond to match with the changing socio-economical and political climate in time.

Early childhood education was given a status for the first time in education reform, with the role of early childhood education acknowledged as the foundation for lifelong learning. The Education Commission proposed to focus the education reform of early childhood services on five main areas: reforming the monitoring mechanisms; enhancing the quality assurance mechanism; enhancing professional competence; strengthening the interface between early childhood education and primary education; and promoting parent education and participation (Chan & Chan, 2002).

Since the early childhood education reform in 2006, the humanistic ideology of child-centre has been stressed, which is a reiteration and an extension in practice of the 1996 Reform. A review of literature on the child-centre curriculum practice has shown that it focuses on the needs and growth of individual children (Morris & Adamson, 2010).

The notion of child-centre is associated with progressive education whereby firstly, there is the assumption that children are naturally predisposed to learn, grow and develop. Growth and learning occur more readily and easily when their interests and needs are supported and upheld and when they are actively and willingly engaged in the learning process. Secondly, man is by nature a social being, much of his learning occurs through social interaction, imitation and cooperation. The school should therefore be a community for learning and social growth (Barton, 2007).

Correspondingly, of the three types of curriculum design lamented by Morris & Adamson (2010), "sociology of education could be one of the types to be considered by the educators in Hong Kong for designing the curriculum and pedagogy". Sociology of Education, to be precise, is concerned with the studies of a society and its cultures, and the curriculum if geared towards this design will enforce social interaction among young children in the classroom as its prime concern.

Nevertheless, although Hong Kong with its new SAR Government has tried to implement the humanistic-progressive child-centre curriculum and pedagogy in the early childhood education agenda, it has nevertheless not been entirely succeeded its transformational change. It is found that, "a range of methods which are difficult to categorize as wholly progressive or traditional'' was used instead. In the observation of Morris & Adamson (2010, cover page), the phenomenon was owned to the "complexities of Hong Kong as a society—one that has witnessed major political and economic changes over the past 150 years. The dynamics produce an intricate interplay of innovation and conservatism, globalization and localization, liberalism and authoritarianism, devolution and centralization and many other tensions." These inherit dilemmas, social-political and economical complexities have manifested in the curriculum, which is unique and is in different degree of 'hybrid' forms (Lau, 2012).

The form of hybrid curriculum has matched with Riesman's the other-directed type and the autonomous type of personality, an area which we are going to explore in the subsequent paragraphs.

A shared 'Loneliness' phenomenon in the post-modern life of the Hong Kong citizens with the American citizens in Riesman's time

King (2012) in his article lamented that "Loneliness" had been a normal part of the American landscape of dreams and reality for a long time. This is an echo of what Riesman observed in 1954 when he said, "What is feared as failure in American society is, above all, aloneness" (Riesman, 1954, p.38).

It is said that *The Lonely Crowd* had been perfect for the "age of anxiety", the decade or so after the outbreak of the cold war when the benefits of the Second World War effort materialised in individual private prosperity, but were scarcely realised in other hoped-for ways (Guardian news, author unknown, 2002). At the outset, most of the critics suggested that loneliness was seen as the yearning for satisfaction by means of material consumption in the commercialized world for most of the people at that time. Even for Irving Howe, who was Riesman's admirer, was said to read *The Lonely Crowd* as a condemnation of consumerist passivity. In order to combat the suffering of loneliness, people wish to be loved. "The other-directed personality type wants to be loved rather than esteemed; he wants not to gull or impress, let alone oppress, others but, in the current phrase, to relate to them; he seeks less a snobbish status in the eyes of others than assurance of being emotionally in tune with them (Riesman, 1960, cited in King, 2012).

Similar to the American citizens living in the post-industrial time and after the cold war---a time when consumerism flourished, people in Hong Kong were prone to live in a condition of similar circumstances---on which capitalism flourished. This was the case when the sovereignty of Hong Kong returned to the People Republic of China at a time when the latter employed the 'open-door' policy to spur economy. To keep in line with its Motherland's drive for economic advancement through industrialization and commercialization, Hong Kong had maintained its status as one of the commercialized Asian countries in the world. As everything had its pros and cons, the 'goodness' of capitalism and commercialization would have its counter effects. The problem of indulgences in material consumption had inevitably shared by the citizens both in Hong Kong since the 1980's and in the United States in the 1950s.

To go with the problem of indulgences in material consumption which manifest the pursuit of private interest rather than public interest, Riesman did show concerns over the fate of the public world. The following is a review of how Riesman attempted to tackle the issue of loneliness in both the private and public realm of human condition.

Using the three types of personalities to explain the phenomenon
For Riesman as mentioned in the *Lonely Crowd,* every developed society carried a mixture of "inner-directed", "other-directed" and "tradition-directed" individuals.

The characteristics of the "tradition-directed" type of personalities
The regime of the tradition-direction, is no match for the dynamic capitalist world, whose social forms are highly fluid and changeable, and whose mechanisms of social and moral formation must therefore be designed to equip the individual with a dramatically different kind of social character—a portable and internalized equivalent of the pervasive checks and guideposts of traditional society (McClay, 2008).

The characteristics of the "inner-directed' personality type
These men resemble a staid, hard-driving (Victorian) businessman are guided by gyroscope, a navigational device directed entirely by its own internal compass, without recourse to external referents (McClay, 2008).

The characteristics of the "other-directed' personality type
These men (who resemble an overly friendly, glad-handing salesman) are guided by a radar dish, entirely oriented to external referents, which bounces electromagnetic pulses off "others" to ascertain where the man is standing and where he should go next (McClay, 2008).

Both inner-and other-direction stood in sharp contrast to "tradition-direction," the form of social character that had been generated by older, pre-modern, static, highly inscriptive social order. Such unchanging order encountered little difficulty in transmitting the correct patterns of thought and behaviour to their members (McClay, 2008).

In Riesman's understanding, the craving for acceptance has marked the "other-directed' personality. The socio-economical background is said to be responsible for inculcating such type of personality. Riesman and his colleagues observed that, 'Population growth prompted the emphasis of one over the other types, as when the Middle Ages of stable population and little change placed traditionalists at the centre. Population surges and technological explosion, notably in the Renaissance and the 19th century, inspired the "inner-directed" to quest for fame, power, truth and beauty beyond previous definitions' and thus Un-dynamic eras, as Riesman and his colleagues interpreted the present, emphasized the psychological mechanisms of conformity, and the craving for acceptance that marked the "other-directed" personality' (Guardian news, author unknown, 2002).

According to a letter written by Hannah Arendt to David Riesman, Arendt asserted that the situation of mass-men in Europe bore similarity with the situation in America. Arendt wrote, "What struck me in your paper is that people are not (even if they say so) satisfied with respect in their community, that they want more; they want here again the impossible, they want the active approval, amounting to friendship, of exactly everybody. And, of course, make friendship impossible because of this."(King, 2012) In the observation of Riesman and Arendt, the impossibility of friendship and 'loneliness' are the bi-products of living in the modern world where everybody is heavy loaded with material consumption.

The significance of Riesman's attempts to tackle the problem of loneliness
In our understanding, Riesman, other than initiating his famous terminology of 'other-directed man', practically, did nothing more but to provoke the thoughts of the intellectual to exercise their free will so as to stay aloof from the social behaviors, say the consumerism in universities.

A review of literature of David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* suggested that Riesman had not much intention to provide an answer to tackle the issue of loneliness in the modern world, which was unfortunate. What he succeeded indeed was to provoke his readers to think on this issue. I would consider Riesman's approach to his readers in this issue is rather gentle, leaving much room for his readers to act upon. Having said that, a reviewer of Riesman's book like King (2012) did believe that Riesman had indeed prefer the 'other-directed' personality type, thinking that this type of people could gain social acceptance by conforming them to the mass practice in the materialistic world, thereby lessening the degree of their loneliness. King wrote, "Many of the reader of Riesman assumed that Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* has a clear indictment of 'other direction', and thus a condemnation of the alleged conformity of American life and of the loneliness that came from the failure to achieve the approval of others".

The Other-directed personality type in Riesman's *the Lonely Crowd* is passive in action
 Riesman's other-directed type is said to be passive in politics. McClay (2008) wrote that,
"The other-directed type, approached political life with the attitude of a consumer rather than a producer, which meant that he tended to be passive, disengaged, or indifferent…..Indeed, in the age of other-direction, the dominant political force had become not the corporate chieftains and other highly networked elites but the increasingly powerful 'veto groups' whose main purpose in life was negative; preventing unwanted or undesirable things from happening, rather than initiating policy changes that took a more generous or ambitious view of the aims of political society."

If The *Lonely Crowd* is being interpreted in this way, then one might understand that Riesman did accept the passivity to resist change through the effort of an individual. The passive personality type in politics, however, has always longed for personal relations amidst his loneliness. This paradoxical situation captured so compelling in the title "*The Lonely Crowd*", in a crowd yet lonely--a teeming throng whose individual members nevertheless feel themselves to be helplessly alone, empty, devoid of purpose or independent meaning (McClay, 2008).

The paradoxical situation of the Other-directed type

The paradoxical situation of the other-directed type might suggest that this type of personality is perplexed by standing in the middle-of-the road situation, just as the situation mentioned by Brett and McKay (2012) before which shows the blurring of the boundaries among the three types of personalities. The fact that the three types of personalities do not have walls to separate one and the other, they can freely migrate from one type to another type is suffice to validate the mobility as 'action' already. If this argument could be established, then Riesman's other-directed type is the type of men that could effect political change (as change is associated with action which is mobile) than one would suppose he is incapable of.

Although the other-directed type is said by the critics to belong to the politically indifferent type, we do not think that they are introvert at the same time. Our observation might be confirmed by their constant yearning for social acceptance of others in society. This type of people fit well into the commercial world where their effort spent in gaining social acceptance in society becomes their norm of life. There is a need for them to gain social acceptance if they are to survive in this mode of life. On the other hand, this type of personality might feel at ease by conformity, though not in a political sense. They just want to live a comfortable life without political upheaval to disturb their peace of living in the society. No wonder it is generally accepted that merchants are usually politically indifferent. All they want is a safe and friendly environment where business could flourish in a law-abiding society.

However, on the other hand, the Other-directed type has got the potential for revolutionary action. If speaking in the contemporary societal human condition, the call for revolutionary action is made possible through the media devices. The silent nature of these devices might validate what Arendt has meant it for violence in the semiotic term. It is because by location, they are (in mass) freely come and go or doing the mix and match within the different types of personalities.

An example to quote is that through much of his career, Riesman strongly identified with civil libertarian causes, and urged students to take risks in tackling world crises. This incident might suggest that Riesman has a hidden notion of "action" carries in his book. In this point, McClay (2008) stated that, "*The Lonely Crowd* was almost universally misread as paean to inner-direction, and hence a lament upon the decline of the independent American spirit." As could be seen in the sayings just quote from McClay (2008), Riesman was not advocating the Inner-directed type but the Other-directed type instead. We suspect that the implicit intention for Riesman could be to arouse men with different personalities in the mass culture to conform the pursuit of political action. There is no wonder that an unknown author (2002) in the Guardian news once described Riesman as a liberal academic instead of a traditionally minded scholar, who is otherwise a shadow of his father.

The Monster of the Other-directed type and the fourth type of personality—The Autonomous

Riesman predicted that the other-directed type would continue to expand and become the country's dominant mechanism of social character. Perhaps what Riesman had not anticipated was the potential danger of the migration across types of personalities as he argued that societies tend to move from tradition-directed, to inner-directed, to other directed as they develop.

In today's society, other-direction represents the chief mode of conformity and pulls at us in ways that Riesman could not have imagined, especially with the advent of the social media, sites like Facebook, Whatsapps all count. An example written by Brett and McKay (2012) might provide a gist of the situation.

> "In a largely other-directed society, training in etiquette is replaced with training in consumer taste. Other-directed individuals define themselves by their taste in music, food, travel, and so on, and find marginal differences between their own tastes and the tastes of others in order to differentiate themselves from their peers. Socialization among the other-directed centers on 'feeling out with skill and sensitivity the probable tastes of the others and then swapping mutual likes and dislikes to maneuver intimacy.' Did you like that movie? Have you heard of this band? Do you like this restaurant? Have you seen this funny YouTube clip?"

Brett and McKay (2012) pointed out that what Riesman had actually brought out in his book was a type of people instead of individuals. Following on this point, Brett and McKay argued that in all societies, there existed a mixture of types of people. This mixture of type is the fourth personality type mentioned by Riesman at the end of *The Lonely Crowd*. The fourth type of personality: the autonomous (see fig 1), is said to be the ideal type which Riesman strived for. Brett & McKay (2012) wrote,

> "The autonomous has 'clear cut, internalized goals,' but unlike the inner-directed, he chooses those goals for himself; his 'goals, and the drive toward them, are rational and no – authoritarian and not compulsive.' He can cooperate with others like the other-directed, but 'maintains the right of private judgment.' He's involved in his world, but his 'acceptance of social and political authority' is always conditional. Essentially, the autonomous 'are those who on the whole are capable of conforming to the behavioral norms of their society….but are free to choose whether to conform or not.' The autonomous stands outside and above the other types, he understands them, can reflect on them, and then can freely choose when and if to resist them or act in accordance with them. He is able to transcend his culture---by turns overruling it and joining in with it as he himself chooses in order to further his goals. The autonomous man is both idealistic and pragmatic."

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Fig. 1

Traditional-type------→ Inner-directed type>----<---→Other-directed type

The Autonomous

The arrow running from the traditional type indicates the possibility that the traditional type of personality can turn into the inner-directed type of personality following the socio-cultural changes. On the other hand, the Inner-directed type of personalities and the other- directed type of personalities can migrate to each other's position following the socio-cultural changes. The pointing arrows have indicated the flow of direction that the concerned types have undertaken.

The autonomous type of personality is the most mobile and flexible type of personality as the unique features of each type of personality can mix and match with each other and become the autonomous type.

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Riesman was alarmed by the appearance of the anti-war movement and the related student uprisings in the mid-1960s. Joining other noted intellectuals of the cold war years, he insisted that student radicals had gone too far in their criticism of society, threatening the delicate balance of private interests and public policy (Guardian news, author unknown, 2002). The comments made by Riesman could be a critique on his own writing on the unsuitability of having no boundary for each type of personalities but allow flexibility for them to freely mix.

In such a way, we would like to argue that Riesman although seemed to have no intention for the other-directed type, who was said to be passive in politics and to [initiate action for political change], Riesman indeed showed the way how people could transgress their boundaries, without even knowing it, to initiate socio-political changes.

If viewing *The Lonely Crowd* in the above mentioned way, it bears the effects of the practice of the other-directed type have had on society for change. For Riesman, political action would be made possible for an autonomous mixing of the type of personality, which means the breaking of boundaries. "Action" is meant to be part-take by all types of people with different intelligent and of

different walks of life since different types of people are allowed to move freely across boundaries in Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd.*

In our understanding, Riesman's form of transgression is quite dangerous if coupled with the nature of action which is unpredictable and boundlessness. In Canovan's words (2000), the boundlessness of action is one of the most potentially destructive features. When an action is boundless, it has an inherent tendency to break through the limitations –such as laws and traditions. The situation would be intensified if the participants are rascals or even a mixture of them. Henceforth, action if collectively initiated for propelling political agenda would be better made by intellectuals after an exchange of brilliant ideas. It is not surprising why some educators in Hong Kong had tried to associate the incident happened in "the Umbrella Revolution" in the later half of year 2014 with the kind of curriculum and pedagogies used in Hong Kong since its reform.

Neither Riesman nor his readers wish the uprising of liberals in the seemingly peaceful commercialized societies to take place, he should have set firm the boundary for the three types of personalities in his book instead providing/suggesting the transgression of their boundaries.
With an understanding of Riesman's writings on the three types of personalities, the respective matching curriculum and pedagogic modes are formulated below accordingly.

The first corresponding educational mode to Riesman's traditional type of personality
What Morris & Adamson (2010) described below is essentially the features of the traditional curriculum which corresponds to Riesman's mode of education in which the traditional-directed type of people is shaped.

Morris & Adamson (2010) wrote, "to some degree, all school curricula focus on teaching students about the aspects of their own society, including its culture, the nation's history and geography, and its young into the beliefs of a given religion (e.g. Catholicism or Islam) or of a political ideology (e.g. Nazism or Communism). The goal is to shape the views of the young so that they match those of the prevailing orthodoxy".

Orthodoxies, by definition, believe in fixed answers to relevant questions and the task of the schools is to ensure that pupils know those answers. Pupils are not encouraged to consider alternatives. The problem with this viewpoint is that if the curriculum promotes orthodoxy uncritically then this assumes that the status quo does not require change or improvement. The primary aim is to shape the view of children so that they match the prevailing or orthodox views in society. As Eisner (1992) explained, orthodoxies were not essentially about doubts, but about certainties. Indeed, to become orthodox is to become a true believer (Morris & Adamson, 2010).

Perhaps the advocator of liberation theologian and renounced Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1970) might well describe the features of the traditional curriculum and its pedagogy:
   (a) The teacher teaches and the students are taught [this is to assume that the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing. It is the teacher (who) thinks and the students are thought about].
   (b) The teacher talks and the students listen---meekly.
   (c) The teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined.
   (d) The teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply.
   (e) The teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher.

Regarding the curriculum construction, it is the teacher who chooses the program content, and the students (who are not consulted) adapt to it.

This teaching pedagogy could best be represented in the highly structured, academically oriented classes as observed and being criticized in many of the kindergartens most commonly found before the educational reform in Hong Kong before the 1990s.

Aligning the teacher-directed pedagogy with the structured curriculum in a teacher-centred classroom, the teacher might be able to play a strong role in trying to induct a political ideology or to induct the young into the beliefs of a given religion [or politics] (Lau & Ho, 2013).

The second type: The aspiration of the inner-directed type in Riesman's typology and its matching curriculum and pedagogic mode

Riesman, with his background upbringing knew very well that he himself belonged to the inner-directed type of personality in that he was greatly influenced by his father's inner-directed ideal. In that sense, same as his contemporary friends did in the 19th century, Riesman did not think that genuine individualism existed in that era (McClay, 2008). In order to transit from the inner- to other-direction, so as to live fully the ideal of an autonomous person, Riesman rejected the cultural priority given to the work ethic, arguing instead that "play" was the only sphere of modern life "in which there is still room left for the would-be autonomous man to reclaim his individual character from the pervasive demands of his social character." (ibid.)

A review of literature suggests that "play" is a good tool to foster as a mode of curriculum in a democratic classroom since play itself is an action, which also involves experience (Fein, 1986). Since there is no universal consensus on play by its complexity and ambiguity, what is considered play or work really depends on the extent to which the child feels free to follow one's initial ideas or the extent to which this self is subordinated to the authority of the teacher.

Fein (1986) also highlighted the complex nature of play:

"How can something so elusive be studied? Why should an apparently aimless activity be taken seriously? Perhaps the concept of play is too global, too murky, or too encumbered by excess meaning to permit rigorous investigation."

Sutton-Smith (1997) told us the ambiguity nature of play. As far as education in early childhood education is concerned, our understanding on the ambiguity nature of play, by its boundless nature, matches well with Riesman's intention as not to set a wall against his three types of personality, namely the traditional-directed, the inner-directed and the other-directed type. In a similar vein, the paradoxical nature of play might well represent the start off point where "action" has already began its power in the process of transgression in the first three types in Riesman's classification. The full intensity of action, which gives power for action rested in Riesman's identification of the fourth type of autonomous personality. In order to materialize the democratic quest for power through education, the mode of education must be carefully designed. In Dewey's words, "democracies could be achieved through wholly democratic methods" (Gordon & Williams-Browne, 2001)--and henceforth, autonomous free play is the perfect method to foster the spirit of democracy while people are still in their tender young age.
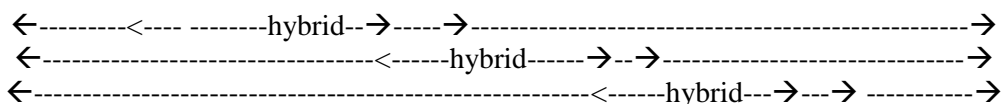
The pre-requisite for facilitating play is to ask the teacher to abandon their authority and their 'teacherly' efforts and to turn to the child as a person---an individual in his/her own right.

The third form of educational mode—the hybrid-autonomous mode

The third form of education mode refers to all the in -between modes lying in the chain of practices between the traditional and democratic mode (see fig 2)

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Fig. 2 Different forms of hybrid mode

Traditional form of education	-Democratic form of education
Solitary study (Student will study alone and without interaction with peers)	Co-operative study
Didactic teaching of subject matters by the authoritative teacher	Co-operative and participatory learning through play
Teacher as authority	Share authority among peers

←---------<---- -------hybrid--→-----→--→
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It is a fact that both the democratic mode and the hybrid mode do promote collaborative learning, though varying in degree for their intensity, they share the consequential 'problem' of showing disrespect and challenge the authority of adults.

Theoretically speaking, the hybrid mode, due to its flexibility and its boundless-mobile nature, is also accountable to causing action for a change. The hybrid mode is identified with Riesman's mixing different types of personalities as long as they are not confined in their respective atypical type of boundaries.

The corresponding mode of education for this hybrid mode is the different combination of the traditional work curriculum and the play curriculum, allowing within which different degree of autonomy to foster action. But will action bring forth goodness to society? The question is still open to debate.

With reference to Riesman's teaching, a corresponding form of education would be an application of Dewey's 'learning by doing' as pedagogic practices in a socially constructed classroom in the hybrid classroom. At times, Vygotsky's social constructivist form of scaffolding technique [1] could be used as supplement to the learning by doing pedagogy.

Pedagogical recommendations for social constructivism [2] (Lau, Chung & Chan, 2011) can be shown by the example below,

1. Learning should take place in authentic and real-world environments.
2. Learning should involve social negotiation and mediation.
3. Content and skills should be made relevant to the learner.
4. Content and skills should be understood within the framework of the learner's prior knowledge.
5. Children should be assessed formatively, serving to inform future learning experiences.
6. Children should be encouraged to become self-regulatory, self-mediated, and self-aware.
7. Teachers serve primarily as guides and facilitators of learning, not instructors.
8. Teachers should provide for and encourage multiple perspectives and representations of content.

Education is based in experience and that educational institutions should therefore honor and build on children's experience (Dewey, 1938). A socially constructed classroom is a kind of classroom which could foster the shared culture of peers and is relevant to Riesman's other-directed type of personality. But will this kind of shared culture prepare the idealistic form of living for men?

Corsaro (2011) suggested a negative response to the question raised. It is said that universal aspect of children's peer culture is children's tendency to challenge adult authority. Schwartzman (1978) argued that children not only experiment with and refine aspects of the adult world in play but also used play as an 'arena for comment and criticism".

On the other hand, from the perspective of child's development and a socially constructed classroom under the interpretation of Sociology of Education, the challenges to adult's authority is deem not a bad thing as some of us might have thought of. To this end, Rizzo (1989) described that, "numerous friendship disputes is commonly found in first-grade young children……such disputes not only helped the children obtain a better understanding of what they could expect from each other as friends but also brought about interpersonal reflection, resulting in the children's development of unique insight into their own actions and roles as friends".

Children responded differently on the topic of friendship as shown in a research conducted in a Hong Kong Religious affiliated Preschool in Hong Kong

In a recent research conducted by Lau and Tai (2014), it was found that even within the topic of "friendship", young children of aged 5 were found expressing the notion differently when they were being situated in the didactic teaching whole class teaching environment or when they could express themselves freely in the pair work communicative environment. It was found that in the didactic -whole class teaching environment, children tended to echo with what the teachers had said of 'friendship' should be like, such as good friend would be treated as if she is another self, who would help each other and forgive each others for their wrongs. On the other hand, when young children were left to express their own idea on friendship in the pair work activity, their idea on friendship would become more pragmatic, say one would hesitate to continue her friendship with a good friend or to continue paying a visit to her friend's home if her friend has removed the 'kitchen toys' which she likes to play on. The child, therefore, in order to secure her friendship with her good friend, would never remove the kitchen toys from her home. The researcher thus realized that young children if not taught by the teacher, would prefer to build their friendship bond on materialistic things. It seems to echo with what Riesman had trying to say in the materialistic world. People would try to avoid loneliness by making friends with people through the material means. However, if friendship is built on material things and not on genuine love, it will fall prey to a relativity situation.

Question to ponder

Just as there are moral relativists who think that there are no universal moral facts, so there are epistemic relativists who think that there are no universal epistemic facts, those facts about what belief is justified by a given item of evidence can vary from community to community (Boghossian, 2007), the living human condition will turn to a chaos. Similarly, when the society is formed by a different combination of autonomous person, it is anticipated that the society will become a chaos due to their different degree of relativism. One might refer to the following quotation for an explanation of the situation.

Lau, Chung and Chan (2011) wrote,
"When knowledge is accepted as being socially constructed, and as knowledge is produced collaboratively by members of a social group, it will turn out that different social groups might have different social needs and interests. (The situation will account for relativism to take place)."

Play in this sense could be the means and ends in an action, though the <u>means and ends in action</u>[3] is said to be intermingled and interchanged. Action is praxis.[4] It is just like the 'autonomous type—the fourth type' which is a mixture of types and its combination is flexible. Henceforth, together with the indefinite boundary among the three types of personalities, the boundless nature of the fourth type is increasingly responsible for causing relativism in the human affairs.

Having said that, we remain optimistic about the condition of human in this era. This is based on our belief that despite that there is inevitably depressing condition in human life, there is the presence of the enigma which will fix things right again.

After all, authors like Brett & McKay (2012) did suggest that the other-direction was not necessarily a bad thing. The point is rather that we need to understand its pull so that instead of

letting it dominate our life, we are able to transcend and rise above it. Only by understanding something, can we free ourselves from it. Then, from this position of freedom and autonomy, we are able to choose when to conform on our terms and when to resist. Education is never neutral, as Karl Marx and Paulo Freire have said so, with an understanding of the implications of the curriculum and pedagogies one might have used, one could have the freedom to adopt a curriculum and its aligned pedagogies that could match with one's upheld ideological ideals. After all, the choice is always rested with the judgements of the practitioners in the modern times (Gasset, 1996).

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Endnote:
1. The meaning of Scaffolding and its techniques
The concept of scaffolding was popularized by Bruner (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976) and is grounded in the developmental theories of Vygotsky (1978), who proposed that adult guidance could help children to develop higher psychological functioning.   Ideally, scaffolding should take place in a convivial, collaborative environment, where children's contributions are accepted as worthy of consideration and where their understanding is frequently assessed.

A scaffold is a support, such as the temporary framework that supports workers during the construction of a building. As it relates to intelligent behaviour, scaffolding refers to the supportive situations adults create to help children extend current skills and knowledge to a higher level of competence (Rogoff, 1990). It is support at the edge of a child's competence. The ultimate role of teachers as facilitators is to allow the children to question and to think for themselves. It is important to hold back from correcting children's statements, however tempting it may be. The key thing about the process of dialogue through questioning is that children are allowed to develop thinking strategies for complex questions.

A teacher who stops by a children's desk to ask questions to determine her progress, and then provides hints, subtle suggestions, and guidance to move the children along, is using instructional scaffolding. Scaffolding means providing support to allow a child to think for him or himself. The more advanced partner, or scaffolder, is supportive without being overly directive. A good scaffolder looks for the point where a child can go it alone, and allows the individual to proceed on his or her own initiative.

The understanding of teachers to employ the 'genuine' questioning skills to scaffold children so as to push for depth of thinking is important. Teacher must ensure herself that instead of applying the untimely direct interruption while the children are at play, she has to facilitate children's learning through play.

As the child grows in competence, there is a gradual withdrawal of support, and the child takes on more responsibility for completing the task. As children differ in their understanding of the nature of things, teacher who scaffolds children in a whole class classroom organization (in a small class teaching environment with children of around 7 to 15) must ensure that every single opinion of different children must be valued. In a **social constructivist** classroom where teacher is scaffolding the whole class simultaneously, she must be attentive to the different opinion given by each children and then to facilitate the inter-change of ideas among the children. The decision derived ultimately and is supported by the majority is then accepted as the norm of practice in the **social constructivist** classroom. In the process, the teacher should not exert her pre-set outcome of learning and by no means fostering it onto the young children. The teacher, as does her young children, could equally express her opinion in the joint process of learning.

2. Theory of social constructivism
Constructivism is a theory of learning that has roots in both philosophy and psychology. Ordinarily, to say that something is constructed is to say that it was not there simply to be found or discovered, but rather that it was built, brought into being by some person's intentional activity at a given point in time. Henceforth, when it is said that something was socially constructed is to add that it was built by a society, by a group of people organized in a particular way, with particular values, interests and needs (Boghossian, 2007). In this way, the essential core of constructivism is that learners actively construct their own knowledge and meaning from their experiences (Fosnot, 1996; Steffe & Gale, 1995).

The principle of Social constructivism maintains the <u>social</u> nature of knowledge, and the belief that knowledge is the result of social interaction and semiotic usage, and thus is a shared, rather than an individual, experience (Prawatt & Floden, 1994).

A typical social construction claim will involve not merely the claim that a particular fact was built by a social group, but that it was constructed in a way that reflects their contingent needs and interests, so that had they not had those needs and interests they might well not have constructed that fact (Boghossian, 2007, p.17-18). Social

construction theory is different from the Kantian radical root construction theory (c.f. in page five). According to Immanuel Kant, the world we experience is constructed by our minds to obey certain fundamental laws, among them the laws of geometry and arithmetic. But Kant did not think we were free to do otherwise. On the contrary, he thought that any conscious mind was constrained to construct a world which obeys these laws (Kant, 1929, cited in Boghossian, 2007, p.59)
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3. Means and ends of action in play

In a strictly utilitarian world (like the case in Riesman's other-directed world and Arendt's dissolution in the realm of labor and work), all ends are bound to be of a short duration and to be transformed into means for some further ends (153-154) [due to its mobile nature]. Although Arendt wrote in *The Human Condition* to refer this means and ends notion under the boundary of labor and work, I would think that the unending means and ends chain could refer to the realm of action or whenever there is a break of boundary among the typology of labor, work and action. This 'unending chain of means and ends" (154) erodes the supposedly firm boundary between labor and work, infusing work with a vicious circularity that mimics the natural circularity of biological life (Arendt, 1958).

4. The meaning of Praxis

Praxis is concerned with a different kind of end, the ethical action. The end or telos of praxis is not an end in the usual sense at all, but some morally worthwhile good that cannot be determined in advance, but must be discovered in particular contexts and situations. Praxis involves acting appropriately to lead a good life, meshing ends and means since the 'discernment of the 'good' that constitutes its ends is inseparable from a discernment of its mode of expression (Carr, 1987, p.169). Arendt's analysis of Nazism and Stalinism leads her to re-conceive Aristotelian praxis as 'action', which is aimed at different purposes and has different characteristics from labour and work (Coulter, 2011, p.198).