Symposium Examines Causes, Prevention, and Treatment for Osteoporosis

Over 300 representatives from the medical and health sector, the academic sector, and other relevant sectors in the community participated in a symposium organized by the University's Osteoporosis Research Programme on 2nd May. Entitled 'Osteoporosis: from Childhood to Old Age', the event is part of the University's 35th anniversary celebration programme.

The symposium was opened by Prof. Joseph Lee, dean of medicine. Members of the research programme, including Profs. Jack Cheng, Suzanne Ho, Christopher Haines, Edith Lau, Jean Woo, and Leung Ping-chung, presented recent research findings of osteoporosis in Hong Kong. The keynote speaker was Prof. Steve Cummings, professor of internal medicine, epidemiology, and biostatistics at the University of California at San Francisco, and principal investigator of the two largest studies on osteoporosis to date. He described several new genetic and aetiological models for osteoporosis, and concluded that the future of osteoporosis research is in Asia, where there is great potential for conducting epidemiological studies of significance and multi-centre trials.

The term ‘osteoporosis’ was coined by the French in the 1820s to describe a ‘pathological state of the bone’. Osteoporosis has been found in women of the early Bronze Age and in a XIIth Dynasty female skeleton from Lish, Upper Egypt. The condition has become more prominent with industrialization, reaching epidemic proportions in recent decades. Among Hong Kong Chinese, both genetics and lifestyle contribute to osteoporosis. The maintenance of an adequate calcium intake and physical activity from childhood are believed to be very important for building stronger bones. Menopause is a critical phase of life for bone loss; hormonal replacement therapy is often recommended for subjects at high risk of fractures.

Another Milestone in Laparoscopic Surgery

Doctors in the Department of Surgery have just performed the world’s first primary single-stage endorectal pull-through for total colonic aganglionicism on a 12-day-old baby boy.

Total colonic aganglionicism is a congenital condition in which the whole length of the large bowel lacks normal nerve cells and normal bowel movement, thereby resulting in fatal bowel obstruction in the newborn period. Traditionally this condition is managed in three stages: the creation of a stoma near the end of ileum to divert the faeces in the newborn period, with an endoscopic approach.

The use of laparoscopic surgery in young children, particularly small infants, has been limited due to technical difficulties. With the availability of new, miniaturized laparoscopic instruments and the improvement of surgical techniques, the Department of Surgery has achieved many laparoscopic operations in young children over the last few years. In fact most pediatric surgical operations that were performed by the open method can now be safely performed with an endoscopic approach.

Conference on Child and Youth Mental Health: Young Girls Too Obsessed with Body Image

Young Chinese girls in Hong Kong are becoming obsessed with being thinner at an early age.

A study by the Department of Psychology revealed that the majority of preadolescent girls in Hong Kong are not satisfied with their bodies and many have begun to experiment with various forms of weight control behaviour even before they reach puberty.

The study surveyed 1,944 girls aged 9 to 14 on their views of their body and their weight control behaviours. Highlights of the results showed that close to 60 per cent were afraid of becoming fat while half wanted to be thinner and close to 40 per cent felt the need to lose weight. For weight control behaviours, over 20 per cent had experimented with dieting while about 10 per cent watched what they ate carefully and 1 per cent practised fasting. Extreme weight control behaviours, however, were relatively rare. About 0.1 per cent reported self-induced vomiting, 0.1 used diet pills, and 0.07 used laxatives.

The study was one of the 240 presentations by scholars and specialists from 36 countries at the First International Conference on Child and Adolescent Mental Health held at Sino Building on the Chung Chi campus from 2nd to 6th June. Sponsored by the Department of Psychology and Chung Chi College as part of the University’s 35th anniversary celebration programme, the conference was a systematic examination of the latest thinking and practices in service delivery in adolescent and preadolescent mental health. Topics covered at the conference included depression and suicidal behaviour, gender stereotypes and self-concept of Hong Kong youth, and measurements of satisfaction with life and their relations to mental health in Chinese adolescents.
Study Finds Depression a Cause for Elderly Suicide

Hong Kong is ageing rapidly and the population of people aged 65 or above is now 10 per cent. Among the problems associated with the ageing population is elderly suicide, the frequency of which is three times that of western countries. One important contributing factor is depression.

A study conducted by the University’s Department of Psychiatry revealed that half of the elderly people in Hong Kong who commit suicide are suffering from depression. The number of people aged 65 or above suffering from depressive disorders is estimated to be about 20,000 to 30,000. Of the 1,034 elderly people interviewed in the study, seven per cent were diagnosed as suffering from geriatric depression, with two in every three being women. The study also found that those living in homes for the aged are over twice more likely to suffer from depression than those living with family or alone.

Currently only five per cent of elderly people with depressive disorders in Hong Kong are receiving treatment. Symptoms of depression include loss of interest in life, loss of appetite, lethargy, and insomnia.

Mycological Association of Hong Kong Meets on Campus

The second annual meeting of the Mycological Association of Hong Kong (MAHK) was held at the University on 29th May. It included a guest lecture, ‘Mycology and the Australian Eucalypt Forest’, delivered by Dr. Jack Simpson, president of the Australasian Mycological Society. The remainder of the scientific programme consisted of oral and poster presentations covering a wide range of mycological topics including fungal physiology and biochemistry, molecular mycology, fungal ecology and systematics, and applied mycology. The meeting was attended by over 40 mycologists from the University of Hong Kong, City University of Hong Kong, and The Chinese University. Ms. Deng Yu, an M.Phil. student from the University’s Department of Biology, was awarded the association’s annual prize for the best student presentation, and a design by Mr. Jake Tang, also from the Department of Biology, was selected as the official MAHK logo.

MArch Students Model Youngsters’ Dream School

There will be secondary school buildings as tall as skyscrapers in Central and green fields in secondary school campuses in Hong Kong if the wishes of the secondary students interviewed by the University’s Master of Architecture students could be granted.

The secondary students, from three government schools in Sha Tin, Ma On Shan, and Tai Po respectively, were interviewed by 11 Master of Architecture students about their views of what an ideal school campus should be. They were also encouraged to express themselves using drawing materials, modelling clay, exercises, and game-playing. The architecture students then translated these concepts into models after studying school designs in Hong Kong, US, Europe, and Singapore. In the process they received much insightful advice from Prof. Chung Yau-ping of the Faculty of Education, and Prof. Freeman Chan of the Department of Architecture.

The students presented their pieces and shared the views of the school students at the opening ceremony of the exhibition of the models on 29th May. The models were then displayed in Room B5 of Ho Tim Building for a week.

UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Full text of a keynote speech delivered by Prof. Arthur K.C. Li at a forum on higher education held in Beijing on 2nd and 3rd May 1998 to celebrate the centenary of Peking University

Introduction

As we move towards the end of the century, publicly-funded universities everywhere are beset with financial problems. In some countries the financial problems amount to no more than a moderate budget cut but in other countries, they have grown to crisis proportions. In advanced countries like the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada, publicly-funded universities have tackled funding cuts ranging from a few per cent to over 10 per cent per annum on an almost regular basis in the last two decades or so. The financial situation of universities in the developing world and in the former socialist countries in Central and Eastern Europe is more bleak. In Sub-Saharan Africa, for over a decade in the 1980s, the average public expenditure per student declined from US$6,300 to US$1,500 in real terms. In the Middle East and North Africa, it declined from US$5,200 to US$1,900. In Hungary, university recurrent expenditures fell by 21 per cent from 1991 to 1993 (World Bank, 1994).

The stringent financial constraints within which publicly-funded universities will have to operate are likely to continue and may even worsen in the 21st century. To maintain and improve quality with continuously expanding enrolment when real resources are declining will be one of the major challenges many universities must face in the new century.

To meet this challenge in university finance, universities must re-examine their priorities, re-organize their management structure, re-engineer their processes, and diversify their income sources. To better meet the challenge ahead, it is useful to understand the causes of the financial problems of the public universities.

Causes of Financial Problems

During the last three decades, higher education has been the fastest growing sector of the education system in most countries. Between 1965 and 1990, enrolment ratios in higher education in many countries increased rapidly: from 1 to 4 per cent in North Africa, from 2 to 9 per cent in Latin America, and from 8 to 17 per cent in East Asia. In Hong Kong we also witnessed a rapid expansion in higher education. University enrolment ratio surged from 2 to 3 per cent in the 1960s to the current 18 per cent.

There are powerful economic, social, and political forces behind this rapid expansion in higher education in the last several decades. Higher education is recognized as an important investment in human capital which is essential to economic growth. In a world economy that becomes increasingly globalized, governments of countries eager to promote economic growth and increase competitiveness are willing to invest in higher education. Besides economic considerations, social and political groups also champion the cause of higher education expansion following the widening of access to primary and secondary education. Higher education is recognized as an important channel for upward social mobility for the lower and middle classes. Expansion in higher education will provide greater access and more equal educational opportunities to the under-privileged and will therefore reduce social inequality.

When economic, social, and political forces join hands, the arguments for expansion in higher education are powerful. Unfortunately the political support for expansion in higher education enrolment has not translated into a corresponding increase in resources for the universities. While everyone in government and politics is enthusiastic about expanding university enrolment to provide more opportunities for school leavers, there is no political will to cut other social spending to make room for this rapid expansion. In many countries adverse macroeconomic conditions make matters worse. Not only has the financial support for higher education not increased in line with expansion in enrolment, in some countries the support has actually declined. The crux of the matter is that the only way to finance rapid expansion in higher education enrolment without substantially cutting other social spending is to reduce the real expenditure for each student. Unfortunately this is the fiscal reality of many countries and the solution opted for by many governments, despite warnings by university administrators of its harmful consequences on education quality.

Reduction in per student real expenditure is mostly driven by fiscal considerations but in some countries governments disguise their true objectives, shifting the debate on the issue of how funds are raised to only on productivity. In a society where political awareness and participation of the citizens are increasing, the call for greater
accountability on the performance of universities supported by taxpayers' money is hard to refute. In many countries, particularly in the United States and Australia, universities have been asked repeatedly over the years to increase their productivity because real per student real expenditures are progressively cut. In the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), the government, through the University Grants Committee, an agency which allocates funds to universities seeks the same. It has requested the universities to increase their productivity to meet a 3 per cent per annum target in per student real expenditure from 1998 to 2001. In the developing world and some of the former Soviet bloc countries in Central and Eastern Europe, per student real expenditure is cut drastically and arbitrarily without the supporting argument on accountability and productivity, and the universities are left to cope with the reduction.

Looking ahead into the early 21st century, the trend of expansion in higher education will continue. The base of the enrolment ratio in many middle-income and low-income countries is still quite low. There is still room and therefore pressure for it to expand more rapidly than in the last few decades. Therefore, the pressure on reducing per student real expenditure is likely to be even greater. Only universities that are currently funded must be prepared to meet the challenge of maintaining and improving quality with fewer resources per student.

University Responses to Financial Stringency

There are several ways in which universities can deal with the reduction in per student real expenditure. They can extend sharing with students, raising private funds, and diversifying the sources of income. Cost-sharing with students, raising private funds, and diversifying the sources of income are means to manage financial stringency. Cost-sharing with students is done by charging tuition fees in countries where higher education was previously free. In countries where tuition fees have already been charged, it is further raised to increase the cost recovery ratio. Cost-sharing is usually backed up by a student finance scheme of grants and loans to provide aid for needy students.

The general trend towards more cost-sharing, higher tuition fees, and higher cost recovery ratios is evident. Income from tuition fees has become a significant source of funds for universities in many countries. In the United States, for example, it has represented 22 per cent of recurrent expenditure in Vietnam, 36 per cent in China, and 9 per cent in Russia, just to quote a few examples of high cost recovery ratios (World Bank, 1994). In the HKSAR, the cost recovery ratio has increased to 18 per cent over the last several years. Since 1989, university students on the mainland have also begun to bear some of the cost of education. Students in some universities in some countries have been paying higher tuition fees than regular students.

Cost-sharing with Students

A growing number of countries which have previously offered free university education to students in the past have moved in the direction of cost-sharing with students. Cost-sharing with students is done by charging tuition fees in countries where higher education was previously free. In countries where tuition fees have already been charged, it is further raised to increase the cost recovery ratio. Cost-sharing is usually backed up by a student finance scheme of grants and loans to provide aid for needy students.

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New Faculty Dean
Professor S. T. Kwok of the Department of History was recently elected Dean of Arts for three years, succeeding Prof. H. H. Ho.

Joint Research Schemes Invite Applications
Applications are now invited by the British Council and the Research Grants Council for the UK/HK Joint Research Scheme. A sum of £230,000 or HK$3,000,000 is available for allocation in 1999. The amount awarded to each successful project does not normally exceed £6,000 or HK$75,000. Panels of the Research Committee are expected to forward their recommendations to the Research and Technology Administration Office (RTAO) on or before 15th August.

College Head Appointments
In accordance with Statute 9.1 and 9.3 of the University Ordinance, Prof. S. T. Kwok of the Department of History was recently elected Dean of Arts for three years, succeeding Prof. H. H. Ho.

College Head Appointments

Members elected Mr. William Fung Kwok-lun and Mr. Patrick Wang Shui-chung to be members of the Council, each for a term of three years from 20th May 1998.

New Home Purchase Allowance Scale
The University has approved the new Home Purchase Allowance (HPA) scale with retroactive effect from 1st April 1998: Allowance under the new scale has been increased by 6.6 per cent and is only applicable to entrants to the scheme on or after 1st April 1998 and to existing beneficiaries who wish to change to the new scale. Please contact Ms. Kitty Tsang at Ext. 8797 for details.

46,480-52,360 47,335 24,930 22,430 19,940
55,285-61,135 54,255 29,460 26,520 23,570

Regulations and Charges for the Use of Cho Yiu Conference Hall

The seminars will take place on 8th floor, Oriental Centre, 67 Chatham Road South, John Fulton Centre, at least one month in advance. The Administrative Affairs Committee reserves the right to decline a booking or set priorities in the case of booking clashes. For enquiries and application forms, please send Ext. 7863 or fax 2603 6797.

Training Course Leading to Certificate in Manual Handling

The seminars will take place on 8th floor, Oriental Centre, 67 Chatham Road South, John Fulton Centre, at least one month in advance. The Administrative Affairs Committee reserves the right to decline a booking or set priorities in the case of booking clashes. For enquiries and application forms, please send Ext. 7863 or fax 2603 6797.
三不亦堂主人袁鴻樞先生為本港著名書法家，曾師從丁衍庸習西畫，結下深厚情誼，亦師亦友。一九九七年，袁氏將珍藏丁衍庸書畫印譜一百六十多項，慨贈文物館，作爲該館開館十周年祝壽之禮。此外，袁先生也贊助本館舉辦丁衍庸書畫”。

在掛錄及展覽名單上，亦有中港藝術家及藝術家的學生的作品。此展覽將於七月十日至八月九日舉行，期間任何時間都可供參觀。冀能藉此機會，讓觀眾認識中國書院及藝術家的多元創作。

《孙海英藏中国书法作品集》

這本書是一部介紹中國書法的專著。書中收集了現代書法家的佳作，並介紹了書法的起源、發展及現狀。書中還附有大量書法作品的實例，使讀者能夠更好地了解書法的精髓。

《中國書法》

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香港中學制度的效能

教育統籌委員會一九九七年九月公布《基礎教育報告》,提出改善香港基礎教育的建議。報告建議建立一套統一的中學制度,以提供學生一個更公平的學習機會。

根據報告,政府已决定在2003年实行中學教育制度的改革。改革内容包括设立统一的中學入学制度和加强中學的教学质素。

面對新的教育制度,家长和学生感到既期待又担心。家长们希望新的制度能够提升香港教育的水平,而学生们则担心改革会对他们的升学之路产生影响。

为了更好地适应新的教育制度,学校需要进行一些改变。例如,学校需要加强学生的自我管理能力,以及提高学生的批判性思维能力。

总的来说,香港中學制度的改革是一个重要的步骤,它将对香港的基础教育产生深远的影响。
學生主動組合起來，選曲、練習和演出，完全自動自覺，不用她或其他導師操心。

在學期中，這個節目平均每月會舉辦兩三場，大家齊心協力，把有關事務安排得恰到好處。音樂系的師生反應比她預期的好，上座率平均七至八成。除了音樂系的師生外，也吸引了其他系的師生，部分參加音樂會的更會自薦為嘉賓，這是她始料未及的。

她說：「自薦在音樂家和音樂教授中是平常不過的，因為他們都愛交流。若他們到港，我們會積極邀請他們來分享音樂的所思所感。」

此外，音樂系也有一些音樂會由學生擔綱演出，表現不俗，「但一般以接近考試時的水準最高。」吳美樂又笑著說。

學生的能力及背景，組織各自的教育程序。調查結果中，大部分產生負參數的教育過程，都可歸結於錄取了學習能力低的學生。

就以教師的教學行爲而論，假如教師教授的班級大部分為學習能力低的學生時，往往便需花更多時間引發學生的學習動機。這樣，與其說調查結果顯示教師鼓勵學生學習會對學業成績產生負面影響，倒不如說因爲學生大多學習能力低並缺乏學習動機，致使教師需給予更多鼓勵。

結論

研究結果可見，香港的中學受制於所錄取學生的類別，不能自由決定取捨哪些教育過程。也即是說，學生質素對教育過程有決定性影響，而教育過程又很大程度地影響學生的學習成績，因此自然決定了學校的整體成績級別。亦可約略地計算出可錄取學生的水準。可以說，香港的中學是受這個自我鞏固的系統所影響，不斷循環運作。
**Youth Mental Health International Conference**

A youth mental health international conference was held from June 2 to 6 at the University of Hong Kong, sponsored by the Department of Psychology and the College of Confucius. It was one of the university's 35th anniversary celebrations.

Participants from 36 countries and regions submitted over 240 reports, covering topics such as depression and suicide behavior among youth, gender identity, youth self-image, measuring the satisfaction of youth's life, the relationship between life satisfaction and mental health, and youth mental health measuring tools.

Professor Stephen Cheung, from the Department of Psychology, presented his research on the body image and eating behavior of Hong Kong girls. He found that girls aged 9 to 14 years old generally preferred a slender body type, with many already adopting various methods to control their weight before puberty.

A survey of 2,000 girls aged 9 to 14 years old showed that 60% were afraid of being fat, 50% wanted to be thinner, 38% felt they needed to lose weight, and 13% were emotionally troubled by their weight.

In terms of weight control, 10% of girls exercised excessively, 23% tried dieting, 13% rigorously selected their food, and 1% starved themselves.

Professor Cheung noted that girls start focusing on their body image during puberty, which may lead to serious mental and health problems. However, extreme weight control behavior is not common, with only 0.1% of girls using self-induced vomiting or taking diet pills to control their weight, and only 0.07% using laxatives.

**Gastroscopic Surgery New Milestone**

The Department of Surgery recently succeeded in using gastroscopic surgery to treat a newborn baby suffering from Hirschsprung's disease, a worldwide first in such cases, marking a new milestone in pediatric gastroscopic surgery.

Professor Mong Chi, the lead surgeon, said the newborn suffering from congenital absence of the ganglion cells in the large intestine, had difficulty expelling feces. The traditional method was to make an artificial anus, remove the abnormal large intestine, and then close the artificial anus, which took up to a year and a half and left multiple scars.

In the new method, only four small incisions, each less than one centimeter, were made to insert a gastroscope and cutting instrument, the large intestine was removed, and the small intestine was pulled out through the rectum and connected to the anus, all in just three hours.

Professor Mong Chi said the new method would not delay the baby's ability to excrete feces through the anus. This medical breakthrough was presented at the International Gastroscopic Surgery Conference from June 1 to 6.

One hundred and fifty experts from various fields around the world attended the conference, including over 100 packs of pediatric gastroscopic surgery, gastrointestinal surgery, and abdominal surgery.

**Excellence Education Symposium**

The University of Hong Kong's Education College and the Hong Kong Institute of Education jointly hosted the Education Symposium on May 30 at the Ho Tung Building, discussing excellence in education.

Chairman Dr. Andrew Oliphant said the conference was organized in response to the Education Steering Committee's Seventh Report, which proposed seven main topics for discussion, including indicators, guarantees, management, faculty, curriculum, practice, and development, to improve educational quality.

Keynote speaker Mr. Yin Houqi, Director of the Shanghai Education Office, discussed the topic of building Shanghai's first-class primary education in the 21st century, emphasizing the importance of all-round development and cultivation of students in a value-diverse and complex world.

Other speakers included Professor Chong Yee, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong, and Professor Guo Qian, Chairman of the Excellence Education Committee, who discussed the effectiveness of the Excellence Fund, and Professor Law Chiu-chung, from the Higher Education Institute, who spoke on the concepts and practices of primary school teachers' continuing education.

The symposium also involved three roundtable discussions, with participants from various fields, including education, psychology, and social sciences.

**Principal Li Guochang's Speech at Peking University**

Principal Li Guochang spoke at the Peking University Centennial Celebration on May 31, discussing how universities should operate to maintain good education.

The conference was held from May 2 to 3 at the China Hotel, and was attended by over 200 of the world's top university presidents, including Principal Li Guochang of the University of Hong Kong, who was the only Chinese university president invited to give the keynote speech.

Principal Li emphasized that universities should generate and save money to maintain good education. If the government decides to expand higher education without increasing funding, it will bear the consequences. If the government does not expand higher education, it will be required to increase funding.

Principal Li's English keynote speech was published on pages 2 and 3 of the English edition.