

**THE PLACE OF HOPE IN THE JOURNEY
FROM ACADEMIC FAILURE TO SUCCESS OF
YOUNG ADULTS
FROM LOW FUNCTIONING FAMILIES**

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ABSTRACT

The present study focuses on hope of young adult students who are low achievers in Hong Kong. There are three major focus areas in the study: 1) the role of hope in relation to family functioning and academic achievement, 2) the longitudinal changes of young adults' hope, 3) the meaning of young adults' hope. A Mixed-methods (qualitative and quantitative) approach is used in the study.

The results show that the high-hope students attained significantly higher academic performance than low-hope students. Male students had significantly higher Hope Scale scores than female students, and there was a significant main effect of age on overall family functioning. Significant mean-level increases of the graduates' hope, state hope, and family functioning occurred during the academic year, and there was a significant mean-level decrease of the non-graduates' state hope. Better family functioning was associated with better academic achievement. Better family functioning was also associated with hope. Hope, state hope, and family functioning significantly predicted the academic achievement of young adults. Hope was a significant mediator in the relationship between family functioning and academic achievement both at the beginning and the end of the academic year.

However, state hope was a significant mediator only at the end of the academic year.

Young adults' hope experience involved dealing with adverse conditions, motivation of interest, positive thoughts, and relationship support. The high-hope young adults had a number of internal strengths, which helped them achieve their goals. They maintained high hope through agency thinking and pathway thinking despite of unhealthy family functioning. The role of hope is influential in the journey from academic failure to success for young adults from low functioning families. An integrated model is constructed to illustrate the major findings of the present study.

CERTIFICATION OF DISSERTATION

I certify that the ideas, experimental work, results, analyses, software and conclusions reported in this dissertation are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

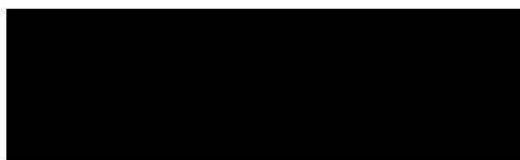


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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

C-FAD	The Chinese version of FAD
C-HS	The Chinese version of Hope Scale
C-SHS	The Chinese version of State Hope Scale
DV	Dependent Variable
FAD	Family Assessment Device
HKDSE	Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination
HREC	Human Research Ethics Committee
HS	Hope Scale
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
IV	Independent Variable
MMFF	The McMaster Model of Family Functioning
OFF	Overall Family Functioning
SHS	State Hope Scale
YJD	Yi Jin Diploma

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

This research was originally inspired by personal observations of the researcher. The researcher has been working in a Hong Kong community college as a lecturer since 2009. He observed that some young adult students preserved a positive view of their lives throughout the academic year, even though they had disadvantaged backgrounds and had experienced previous setbacks in their educational pursuits. Despite little family support and past academic failure, these young adults' academic pursuits might have been sustained by hope. These young adults studied in the program of the Yi Jin Diploma in community colleges in preparation of pursuing further higher education. The Yi Jin Diploma (YJD, former name: Project Yi Jin) which was launched by Hong Kong Government in October 2000 provides an alternative pathway to the secondary school leavers who cannot enter Associate Degree programs, and expands the continuing education opportunities for adult learners.

Over the previous academic years of the Yi Jin program, some students who had been the low achievers in the public examination overcame their learning obstacles,

and successfully progressed to the associate degree programs. The researcher observed that these students had the characteristic of high hope despite low family functioning. The researcher believes that the theory of hope can be enriched by exploring the experiences of these high-hope students. Such findings may be beneficial for college counsellors, pastoral workers and educators who are endeavoring to facilitate the student development.

1.2 Purpose of the Present Study

The purpose of the present study is three-fold: (a) to enhance the theory of hope through relating it to family functioning and academic achievement; (b) to gain a deeper understanding of the hope experience of Hong Kong young adult students; and (c) to offer insights for college counsellors in developing and implementing services, programs and activities, which can promote students' personal and social well-being, career development, and academic achievement. The present study focuses on young adult students in Hong Kong with reference to the place of hope in their academic pursuit.

1.3 Scope of the Study

The present study was conducted in Hong Kong, and the target group was Hong

Kong young adult students studying in community colleges, and engaging full-time in a YJD program which was specially designed for the low achievers in the public examination. The age of eighteen is regarded as the adult age in the study, because the legal adult age in Hong Kong is eighteen. Ethnic Chinese students are the focus of study in the present research. Thus, the sample consists of ethnic Hong Kong Chinese who are at least eighteen years old.

1.4 The Potential Contributions

The present study may add and contribute to knowledge in regard to the theory of hope and the practice of counselling. The contributions can be seen from theoretical and practical perspectives.

From a theoretical point of view, the inquiry in the present study may shed light on the theory of hope with reference to family functioning and academic achievement. In addition, the present research is one of the first efforts in exploring the hope experience of young adults through a qualitative approach, in which the characteristics and the patterns of young adults' hope experience can be revealed. This study not only contributes to the limited amount of research regarding young adults' hope, it also provides information and insights of the issues from a phenomenological perspective. Finally, this study hopes to provide cultural

specificity in the field of research, in which the body of knowledge with reference to Chinese context can be enriched. The findings in the present research can offer insights in building a more comprehensive theory of hope.

From practical point of view, it will be beneficial for counselling practitioners, especially the college counsellors, student affairs professionals and educators, to have information on how young adult students perceive and interpret their hope experiences. By understanding the phenomenon from their perspectives, a more comprehensive view of their hope experience can be obtained and understood. As a result, some specific services, programs and activities for the benefit of young adults can be developed and implemented. It is expected that the results of the present study can facilitate the design of counselling programs for further enhancing students' hope, even though the family functioning of the students remains low. As the students learn how to describe their important goals, in ways which are clear and specific, their personal and social well-being, career development, and academic achievement may be promoted. In addition, a better understanding of the relationships among family functioning, hope, and academic achievement is beneficial for developing and implementing early intervention and preventive mechanisms for some students. It is expected that counselling practitioners can draw on information relating to hope to enhance the educational status of young adults, and add valuable experiences to the

students' lives.

1.5 The Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is organized into six chapters. Following this introductory Chapter One, Chapter Two is a review of the literature which includes the discussions of theories in regard to hope, family functioning, and academic achievement, the knowledge gaps of the previous researches, and the research questions and hypothesis of the present study. Chapter Three focuses on methodology, and discusses the research design and the selection of methodology. Chapter Four focuses on the results, presenting the quantitative findings and the qualitative findings of the present study. Chapter Five discusses the research findings corresponding to the research questions that are centered on the major concerns of the study. Chapter Six discusses the implications for theory, implication for counselling practice, limitations of the study, areas for future investigation, and the major conclusion from the study.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a review of literature concerning the key constructs and theories of the present study will be presented. The importance of academic achievement and its related issues will be presented in Section 2.2. In Section 2.3, theories of hope with a focus on the Cognitive Theory of Hope proposed by Snyder (Snyder et al., 1991, 1991a; Snyder, 1994, 2000, 2002) will be presented and contrasted with the other related constructs. In Section 2.4, theories of family functioning, and the relationships between hope and family functioning will be discussed, with an emphasis on exploring the knowledge gap left by previous studies, and an exploration of the inconsistencies of their correlations found in these studies. In Section 2.5, theories of academic achievement, and the relationship between hope and academic achievement will be presented with an emphasis on identifying the knowledge gap as there seems to be no previous researches in regard to Chinese young adults. In Section 2.6, the relationship between academic achievement and family functioning will be presented to show a need of further research in regard to exploring the psychological strength of hope as a factor in this relationship. Having discussed the above three constructs and their mutual relationships, the knowledge gaps left by previous studies will be

summarized in Section 2.7. The research questions and hypotheses will be presented in Section 2.8. Section 2.9 will present the overall summary of this chapter.

2.2 The Importance of Academic Achievement

Individual differences in academic achievement are linked to differences in individual intelligence and personality (Von Stumm, Hell, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011). Students who possess higher mental ability and are higher in conscientiousness tend to achieve highly in academic settings. These students are classified as “quick learners” based on their high scores in IQ test, and their efforts and achievement motivations demonstrated in their schools. Academic achievement is an important component of students’ school success and healthy development (Calfee & Berliner, 1996; Darling, Cumsille, & Martinez, 2007; Donnellan, 2001; Dweck & Elliott, 1983; Eccles, 1991, 2004; Maehr & Meyer, 1997), and it is linked to students’ immediate psychological development, potential to higher education, and future careers and citizenship (e.g., Donnellan, 2001; Guerin, Gottfried, Oliver, & Thomas, 2003).

In addition, the opportunity of employment and the prospect of career are substantially affected by the standardized academic achievement in knowledge-based economy (Urdan, 2004). For instance, the Hong Kong Government has activated a Qualifications Framework which is a hierarchy of qualifications used as a reference

for training, employment and career promotion (Qualification Framework, 2012). The hierarchical framework contains seven generic levels, which are all related to academic achievements. It is therefore not surprising that parents with different ethnic affiliations and backgrounds generally expect schooling as the primary means through which to help their children achieve success in society (Wigfield et al., 2006).

When students select higher education or careers, their decisions depend on their achievements in school, competence evaluations and aspirations for the future (Eccles, 2004). In the present study, the young adult students who had just finished their high school education selected either an academic track or vocational track. Such decisions were substantially determined by their academic performance.

Researchers have tried to find possible variables which can improve the academic achievement of the students. Previous researches (e.g., Adelabu; 2008; Barlow, 2002; Boldridge, 2009; Bressler & Bressler, 2010; Curry et al., 1997; Frehe, 2007; Jackson et al., 2003; Rand, 2009; Rand, Martin, & Shea, 2011; Robinson & Rose, 2010; Rose, 2007; Snyder, 2002; Snyder, Shorey, & Cheavens, 2002; Williams, 2009) have shown that both high hope and family functioning are positively correlated to students' academic achievement. Nevertheless, some knowledge gaps can still be identified in the previous studies with regards to hope, family functioning and academic achievement, and they will be discussed in this chapter. Before

demonstrating the knowledge gaps of previous studies, it is useful to elaborate on these three concepts: hope, family functioning and academic achievements. These concepts will be reviewed in the following sections.

2.3 The Theories of Hope

The experiences of hope have been explored and discussed in the field of philosophy, theology, literature and psychology. For instance, Jean-Marie Guyau, 19th century French philosopher, writes, “When we hope for something grand, we draw from the beauty of the goal the courage to brave all obstacles. If the chance of reaching it diminishes, the desire grows proportionally...” (Guyau, 2009). Emily Dickinson, 19th century American poet, writes that “Hope is a strange invention, a patent of the heart, in unremitting action, yet never wearing out...”, and “Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul, and sings the tune without the words and never stops at all.” (Dickinson, 2014). Kierkegaard, 19th century Danish theologian, states in his *Works of Love* that, “to hope is to expect the possibility of the good, but the possibility of the good is the eternal” (Kierkegaard, 2011). From psychologists’ point of view, Averill et al. (1990) concur that these hope descriptions raised in various disciplines are empirically supported, and that hope in linguistic forms is depicted as a vital principle of the essence to life, which is a sustaining force for

elevating and supporting an individual so that s/he needs not wander in darkness, nor be “frozen” in dread. It is seen that hope, in different fields, has been regarded as a kind of positive human experience linking to the adverse or uncertain situations, and if hope is present, the adversity or uncertainty can be overcome.

A scientific approach for studying hope did not appear until the 1950s (Lewin, 1951; Menninger, 1959; Mowrer, 1960). During the 1950s to 1960s, most of the hope theories only highlighted the unidimensional positive expectancies of goal attainment (e.g., Bloch, 1959; Erickson, Post, & Paige, 1975; Farber, 1968; Frank, 1968; Pruyser, 1963). It was seen that these positive expectancies of goal attainment were usually related to the hope experience in life situations. Pruyser (1963) stated that “one hopes to be liberated when one is in captivity, to be healed when one is sick, to be blessed when one feels neglected or damned, or to see some light at the end of the tunnel” (p. 121). Marcel (1951) wrote, “Hope is situated within the framework of the trial” (p. 30), in which one could finally attain the goals despite difficulties. Stotland (1969) defined hope as “an expectation greater than zero of achieving a goal” (p.2). He also claimed that goal attainment usually to some extent was important to the individuals. It was clear that in the early development of hope theories, goal attainment was integral to the conceptions of hope.

From the 1970s onwards, health psychology emerged to be an independent

discipline, in which hope and similar psychological constructs could further promote the zeitgeist (Snyder, 2000). A number of hope theories were developed in different disciplines, such as psychology, education, nursing and psychiatry. Dufault and Martocchio (1985) concluded that the hope theories which had been developed in health psychology could be divided into six categories: the behavioral, cognitive, affective, affiliative, temporal, and contextual. However, it may be that these six categories of theories overlap each other, and can be merged into two dimensions: the affective and cognitive dimensions (Lopez, Snyder, & Pedrotti, 2003). These two dimensions of theories will be discussed respectively in the following sections.

2.3.1 The Affective Dimension

Hope has been regarded as an emotion (Averill et al., 1990; Bloch, 1959; Frank, 1968; Marcel, 1951; Mowrer, 1960; Snyder, 2000). Bloch (1959) articulates, “the emotion of hope goes out of itself, makes people broad instead of confining them... The work of this emotion requires people to throw themselves actively into what is becoming, to which they themselves belong” (p. 3), and he contends that hope is a positive emotion of expectation which results in an action in return.

According to Snyder (1994), the emotion of hope can influence the perception of one’s own ability and goal. In the process of pursuing goals, individuals may

experience positive emotions when one of the goals is achieved; likewise, individuals may experience negative emotions while the goal cannot be attained. The emotion of hope is derived from the achievement of the desired goal and the possibility of the desired goal which the individuals perceived. Nevertheless, Snyder (2002) emphasizes that emotion or affect only plays a secondary role in psychological models of hope.

Positive emotions, including hope, are a form of healing (Frank, 1968; Menninger, 1959). Snyder, Irving, and Anderson (1991) claim that, “hope is one important wellspring by which we nourish our psychological and physical health” (p. 300). In therapeutic settings, Menninger (et al., 1963) discovered that high-hope patients who receive only placebo can have better recovery rate than those who are low-hope and receive actual treatment. Also, Miller (1985) asserts that hope influences the healing response, and it can prevent the physical and mental deterioration which come with despair in healing process. It is seen that positive emotions of hope can improve the individuals’ ability to cope with adversity.

Conceptions of hope have been studied through the behavioral approach. Mowrer (1960) contends that hope will occur after desirable outcomes continuously appear, and hope is regarded as a secondary reinforcement in affective form. It is presumed that the emotion of hope is integral to the changes in behavioral performance, and Mowrer (1960) affirms, “these emotions are readily and importantly

conditionable...and they then guide and control performance in a generally sensible, adaptive manner” (p.307). Within the behavioral approach, psychological actions can be driven by motivation. Hope can generate one’s motivation and action, the achievement which comes with the action can reinforce one’s emotion of hope in return (Cutcliffe, 1997; Snyder, 1994), and the positive appraisal resulting from the action can reinforce one’s positive thinking as well (Siliva & Warburton, 2006). Cutcliffe (1997) asserts, “People can then be seen to have a feedback loop involving hope and action. With hope producing action, action having outcomes and outcomes producing more hope” (p. 326). Also, Snyder (1994) states, “Higher-hope people think positively of themselves because they know they have pursued their goals in the past and can do so in the future” (p.47). High-hope individuals focus on possibilities, and the hope motivates them to act for the desired outcome which in return generates more hope.

Within the “feedback loop” of hope and action, high-hope individuals are found to be mentally energetic (e.g., Korner, 1970; Snyder, 1994; Averill et al., 1990; Michael, 2000). Snyder (1994) notes that positive mental affectivity, such as the emotion of hope, can be manifested by “full concentration, engagement and high energy...our minds are interested, excited, strong, enthusiastic, proud, alert, inspired, determined, attentive, and active” (p. 47). When one’s hope is supported, one’s

confidence is strengthened in return. This feeling is described as trustful, optimistic, assured, happy, strong in belief, and uplifted (Dufault & Martocchio, 1985, p. 383). Positive emotions arouse in an individual a sense of control, regenerated spirit, new energies, quality of life, and stage for new growth (Farran, Herth, & Popovich, 1995). Snyder (1994) maintains that hopeful individuals do not dwell on failures, but they are mentally-invested and focused on accomplishing their goals. It can be seen that high-hope individuals can equip themselves with mental energy and ideas for attaining the goals, which strengthens their motivation and lead them to make persistent commitment to their work. With the feed-back loop, the actualization of particular hope arouses positive emotions, which nurtures hopefulness, then encourages the pursuing actions with additional hope.

To sum up, through the lens of the affective dimension, hope can be regarded as an emotion, which may influence individuals' perception of their own abilities and goals. The positive emotion of hope has been recognized as a form of healing in therapeutic settings. Within the behavioral approach, psychological actions and motivations can be driven by hope, and individuals are embedded in a feedback loop of hope and action. Further, high-hope individuals are found to be mentally energetic inside the feedback loop of hope and action for attaining the goals.

2.3.2 The Cognitive Dimension

The cognitive dimension of hope has been developed since the 1970s (e.g., Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; Erikson, 1964; Gallagher, 2009; Gottschalk, 1974; Snyder et al., 1991). This dimension is linked to “the processes by which individuals wish, imagine, wonder, perceive, think, remember, learn, generalize, interpret, and judge in relation to hope” (Dufault & Martocchio, 1985, p. 384). Individuals cope with changing situation through their thoughtful actions (Korner, 1970). The cognitive dimension of hope focuses on how individuals examine and reflect on their resources, methods, and limitations for pursuing the desired object.

Within the developmental psychology approach, the cognitive development of hope in human begins at the stage of infancy. According to Erikson (1963), hope is developed in infancy through an optimal balance of trust and mistrust experiences, and hope is defined as “the enduring belief in the attainability of fervent wishes, in spite of the dark urges and rages which mark the beginning of existence” (1964, p.118). According to Piaget’s theory, those who are in the final stage of cognitive development, at about eleven or twelve years of age, can demonstrate “the ability to reason with abstract, hypothetical, and contrary-to-fact information” (Ormrod, 2004, p. 167). Such ability is regarded as formal operational intelligence which enables children to anticipate consequences and to think in terms of future possibilities, and it

is one of the integral elements of hope (Trommsdorff, 1983).

Hope is linked with a sense of possibility, which involves risk taking. Lynch (1965) comments that hope is about a “sense of the possible” (p. 32), in which individuals’ hope can be enhanced when they are aware that their inward resources are not enough but they are possibly receptive to others’ help. Possibility is integral to the cognitive understanding of individuals’ hope, which includes the predictions of positive and negative outcomes. In addition, Godfrey (1987, p. 221) highlights, “to hope is to risk”. Because the risk of being disappointed should also be regarded as a risk in one’s cognitive thinking, though the feeling of being disappointed is minimal (Korner, 1970). In short, hope involves possibility and risk taking.

With the predictions of negative outcomes, the cognitive dimension of hope can also be explored by the sense of fear appearing in the hoping process. Korner (1970) articulates that a fear of disappointment can be embedded in the hoping process. Breznitz (1986, p. 93) states that, “fear cannot be without hope, nor hope without fear”, and contends that both fear and hope have the common cognitive elements, which are the abilities to project the future, to plan, to use imagery, to elaborate scenarios, and to use verbal capacity for internal storytelling. Therefore, these two cognitive reactions exist side by side. From a comparative viewpoint, Bloch (1986) argues that though fear is an opposite force to hope, fear should always be inferior for

hope to occur. Smedes (2000) contends that individuals can decide against fear and look for hope, and they can make themselves become more hopeful. Bloch (1986) and Smedes (2000) maintain that individuals may determine to be hopeful or fearful by their own cognitive perceptions. Thus, it is seen that the sense of fear appears alongside hopeful thinking, but it is argued that hope can overwhelm fear in cognitive perception..

Hope is linked with thinking of future events, and the nature of this thinking depends on the interpretation of individuals' past and present experiences (Cutcliffe, 1997; Slater, 1987; Snyder, 2000). Jevne (2003) posits that hope is based upon something that happened in the past, and she states, "If hope is to be rekindled there must be opportunities to draw from past good memories (which may be minimal)" (p.10). The fulfilled hope experience in the past can lead individuals to be more hopeful, and to project the future more positively. The high-hope individuals may interpret their future and reality as an open field, in which there is much room for possibilities (Bloch, 1986; Jevne, 2003). Pruyer (1963) points out that the high-hope individuals depict life as an adventure full of potential, and the outcomes have not yet been determined. Thus the high-hope individuals would presume that their future or reality has plenty of resources which have not been explored and utilized (Pruyer, 1963). It is seen that the cognitive understanding of ones' hope is linked with the

interpretation of the reality of their past, present and future.

Hope is regarded as a personal trait which connects to a variety of positive life outcomes. A number of studies indicate that hope is associated with various kinds of life satisfaction and well-being, such as academic achievement, physical health, and psychological adjustment (e.g., Pekrun, 2006; Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry, 2002; Snyder, Rand & Sigmon, 2002). Lopez et al. (2004, p. 390) conceptualize hope as a “relatively stable personality disposition.” The conceptions of hope have been depicted as “Velcro constructs” for its tendency to associate with positive life outcomes in a wide range of life domains (Gallagher, 2009), and have been found to be a strong predictor of life satisfaction in adults (Goleman, 1995; Seligman, 1992; Snyder, 2000). In the psychological literature, most of the hope studies go through the approach of cross-sectional or correlational studies, in which the research participants are assessed by the trait hope scales. These scales are developed with the underlying conceptualization that hope is a relatively stable personal disposition. The Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) is an example.

To sum up, the cognitive development of hope in human begins at the stage of infancy, and becomes mature in late childhood. Hope is linked with a sense of possibility, which involves risk taking. The cognitive dimension of hope can be explored by the sense of fear appearing in the hoping process. Also, hope is linked

with thinking about future events, which depends on the interpretation of individuals' past and present experiences. Hope is regarded as a personal trait which is related to a variety of positive life outcomes.

2.3.3 Snyder's Cognitive Theory of Hope

Over the past two decades, Snyder's Hope Theory (Snyder, et al., 1991; Snyder, 2002; Snyder, Michael, & Cheavens, 1999; Snyder, Rand, & Sigmon, 2002) has received considerable attention, and probably is the most well-established theory of hope.

Snyder's Cognitive Theory of Hope is concerned with goal-related thinking. According to Snyder (et al., 1991), "hope is a cognitive set that is based on a reciprocally-derived sense of successful agency (goal-directed determination) and pathways (planning) to meet goals" (p. 571). Snyder (2000) argues that before the early 1990s the studies of hope have not been empirically tested enough, in which "there was little cross-referencing... no one approach seemed to gain favor, and none of the individual theories were researched consistently over a period of several years" (p.5). With reference to this inadequacy, Snyder and his colleagues (Snyder, et al., 1991) have proposed the Cognitive Theory of Hope.

The Cognitive theory of hope consists of three components: goals, agency and

pathways. Snyder et al. (1997, p.401) assume that human actions are goal directed, and defined hope as “a cognitive set involving the beliefs in one's capabilities to produce workable routes to achieve *goals* (pathways thinking), as well as the self-related beliefs about initiating and sustaining movement toward those *goals* (agency thinking)”. These three components will be discussed in the following sections.

2.3.3.1 Goals

Goal or expectancy of goal attainment is the major component in Snyder's theory. According to Snyder's conceptualization, agency and pathways are goal-directed, and can only be understood in the process of achieving and attaining goals. Snyder (2002, p.250) proposes that goals can “provide the targets of mental action sequences”, and they can also anchor the other two cognitive factors: agency and pathways thinking. In addition, goals can vary with temporal framework (short or long term), specificity (clear goals may facilitate pathways and agency thinking), and domains (e.g., family, friendship, and work, etc) (Snyder, 2002; Snyder, et al., 1991).

2.3.3.2 Agency

Agency is the motivational component referring to a sense of determination in

achieving goals. With high-agency thinking, people tend to have strong motivation and are driven to achieve their goals. Snyder et al. (1998) note that during the process of achieving goals, high-hope individuals will tend to encourage themselves by self-talk, in which some agency related phrases such as “I can do it” and “I am not going to stop” are used. When difficulties and obstacles appear in the process of achieving goals, these people will firmly believe that they eventually can overcome the barriers. It can be seen that such self-belief is crucial to success. Agency thoughts can strengthen the will of individuals while they are facing failure, and can motivate them to pursue alternative pathways to goals.

2.3.3.3 Pathways

The pathways refer to one’s ability to generate methods and plans to achieve one’s goal. Snyder (2002) notes that pathways thinking can be developed by personal experience, which includes the successful experiences, goal attainments, and observing the methods of other successful people. Snyder et al. (1998) also point out that high-hope individuals can adopt some positive internal pathway messages, such as “I’ll find a way to get this done!”, for encouraging themselves to achieve their goals. High-pathways thinking individuals are more able to find another way or method to achieve the particular goal, once the original pathways have not worked.

As a conclusion to Section 2.3.3, the conceptions of agency, pathways, and goal can characterize Snyder's hope theory. By adopting the reciprocal relationships among these three components, Snyder's Cognitive Theory of Hope can comprehend the entire cognitive process of goal-related thinking. This is one of the reasons of adopting Snyder's hope theory in the present study.

2.3.4 Hope and Related Constructs

To further examine the conceptions of hope and to distinguish it from the similar concepts, another three constructs in relation to hope are highlighted in this section. These three constructs are: self-efficacy, optimism, and hopelessness.

2.3.4.1 Self-efficacy

Goal achievement is the common component of self-efficacy and hope. Bandura (1997, p.3) defines self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments". Snyder (1994) defined hope as "the sum of the mental willpower and waypower that you have for your goal" (p.5). In terms of academic goal attainment, self-efficacy is highly predictive of academic achievement (Bandura, 1997; Zimmerman, 2000; Zimmerman et al., 1992), and hope also is positively correlated to the goal achievement in

academic settings as well (Snyder, 2002; Snyder et al., 1991; Snyder et al., 1997). It can be seen that the goal attainment is integral to the conceptions of self-efficacy and hope.

Robinson and Snipe (2009) propose that both hope and self-efficacy are a cognitive set of expectancy beliefs focusing on different aspects of an individual's competence and control. Self-efficacy is a competence belief featuring the statement "I think I can", and it is the perception about one's capability to attain desired outcome (Bandura, 1986; 1997; 1999). Control beliefs are conceptualized as an outcome of competence beliefs within the self-efficacy theory (Robinson & Snipe, 2009). Likewise, hope also contains competence and control beliefs. Hope agency is a competence belief featuring the statement "I will achieve my goals". It should be noted that hope agency focuses on the belief that goals **will be** achieved, whereas self-efficacy focuses on the belief that goals **can be** achieved. Hope pathway is a control belief featuring the statement "I can think of many ways to achieve my goals." Both hope and self-efficacy are concerned with the expectancy beliefs in regard to the concepts of competence and control.

On the one hand, there are some commonalities between hope and self-efficacy, but on the other hand hope is distinctive from self-efficacy within the transcendent and self-perception contexts. Self-efficacy is based on the perception of one's

capabilities, but hope is not necessarily connected to the self and may be dependent on other resources. Rosenberg (1965) explains self-efficacy as an overall assessment of one's self worth, and the notion of transcendence is not considered in one's cognitive process. However, hope is closely connected to faith that is important in maintaining one's sense of hopefulness. Smedes (2000) contends that faith is crucial to hope, and states that "hope is faith" (p.21), which can help one to see the possibilities for their future. Also, O'Hara (2013) asserts that, "another feature of hope is that it is often conceived of as being outside of one's control" (p.5). Those who hope may not have their own resources to attain the goal, and may need to seek external resources, but self-efficacy is regarded as a status of self-sufficiency only.

To sum up, hope and self-efficacy have the common characteristic of focusing on goal attainment, and they involve the expectancy beliefs in regard to competence and control. Self-efficacy is seen as self-sufficiency, but hope may be related to other resources.

2.3.4.2 Optimism

Optimism probably is the construct most related to hope (Carr, 2011). Hope and optimism are found to be positively, significantly, and moderately correlated (Magaletta & Oliver, 1999). Optimism is defined as a generalized expectation of good

outcomes in life (Scheier & Carver, 1985), and it is regarded as a stable predisposition: “believe that good rather than bad things will happen” (p. 219). Both Goleman (1995) and Seligman (1990) view optimism as a characteristic of hopefulness. Optimistic people attribute problems in their lives to temporary, specific, and external causes, rather than the permanent, pervasive, and internal causes (Seligman, 1992).

Although hope and optimism are closely related, some differences can still be found in the literature. According to Bryant and Cvigengros (2004), the expectations about personal attainment of specific goals are more emphasized in the conception of hope; however, the expected quality of future outcomes in general are more emphasized in the conception of optimism. Further, hope is more related to dispositional beliefs about personal capabilities, whereas optimism is more related to the implications for dispositional cognitive appraisals of personal outcomes. Also, Scioli et al. (1997) tried to differentiate hope and optimism with reference to health studies, and discovered that only lower hope scores are correlated with some dimensions of reported health, but lower optimism scores are not correlated with the dimensions.

Moreover, Smedes (2000) proposes that hope has the greater lasting power than optimism. Optimism comes to an end when failure is evident; however, hope can keep a person going after optimism ends (Smedes, 2000). Fromm (1968) contends that the

conception of hope contains an element of “active waiting”, which means to be ready for something not existing yet. “It is neither passive waiting nor is it unrealistic forcing of circumstances that cannot occur. It is like the crouched tiger, which will jump only when the moment for jumping has come.” (p. 9). Hopeful individuals are those who can await actively and patiently. In other words, optimism will tend to end earlier than hope.

There is evidence to show that the absence of optimism does not lead to the presence of pessimism, and vice versa. Those who are not optimistic may expect a negative outcome, but it does not mean that they are pessimistic and will expect a disaster to come. Within the bi-dimensional conceptualization, optimism refers to the expectations of positive outcomes, and pessimism refers to the expectations of negative outcomes. Bryant and Cvengros (2004), and Chang, D’ Zurilla, and Maydeu-Olivares (1994) discovered that optimism and pessimism are partially independent of each other, and indicate that individuals may be simultaneously low on optimism and pessimism. Thus the absence of optimism does not necessarily lead to the presence of pessimism. The relationship of hope and hopelessness are similar to that of optimism and pessimism, which will be discussed in the next section.

In short, hope and optimism are closely related to each other; however, some differences can be found in conceptualizations and in the research literature.

2.3.4.3 Hopelessness

Hopelessness has been defined as a feeling of despair and discouragement (Farran et al., 1995), and it has received considerable attention in the field of clinical psychology (Beck, et al., 1974; Beck, et al., 1985; Beck & Steer, 1989). Lester and Gask (2006) observe that some mental health difficulties may cause the experience of hopelessness within the setting of medical care for chronic conditions. In the research literature, numerous studies focus on examining the relationship between hopelessness and suicide (e.g., Beck et al., 1990; Minkoff, Bergman, Beck, & Beck, 1973; Nekada-Trepka, Bishop, & Blackburn, 1983; Weishaar, 1996).

Hopelessness is defined as a negative perspective of the future or a set of negative expectancies toward the future, and it is part of the characteristic of the depressive thinking style (Beck, 1976; Beck, 1979). Nunn (1996) points out that hope is not merely the absence of despair. Snyder et al. (1991a) find a negative-medium correlation between hope and hopelessness, in which hope is measured by the Hope Trait Scale, and hopelessness is measured by Beck Hopelessness Scale. The findings indicate that some people who do not hope are not hopeless. Low hope therefore does not necessarily involve hopelessness, and vice versa. Accordingly, Nunn (1996) concludes that researchers should not ignore the possibility of the co-existence of positive and negative expectations, and one may have positive expectancy in some

aspects of life but negative expectations in others. Thus, hopelessness is not simply the opposite of hope.

To sum up, the notions of hope and hopelessness seem to contradict each other. However, it should be noted that hopelessness is not simply the opposite of hope from an empirical perspective.

As a summary of Section 2.3, the theories of hope contain the affective dimensions and cognitive dimensions, in which Snyder's hope theory has received considerable attention. Self-efficacy, optimism, and hopelessness are related to hope, but hope is distinctive.

2.4 Hope and Family Functioning

As background to investigating the knowledge gaps in previous literature, theories of family functioning and the relationships between hope and family functioning will be presented in the following sections.

2.4.1 Theories of Family Functioning

The term family functioning has been used to describe a range of interacting family qualities and the healthy relationships within the family setting (Kitzmann, Dalton, & Buscemi, 2008). The current models of family functioning mainly focus on

the healthy relationships among the family members, and aim at identifying the dimensions of family functioning which can maintain the integrity of family or strengthen family resilience (Epstein et al., 1993; Walsh, 1998). The three predominant models of healthy family process which have been frequently used in current family studies are: (1) The Beavers System Model, (2) The Circumplex Model of Marital and Family Systems, and (3) The McMaster Model (e.g., Walsh, 1993; Zeitlin et al., 1995; Beavers & Hampson, 2000; Drumm, Carr, & Fitzgerald, 2000; Lee & Stacks, 2001; Yahav, 2002; Siu, 2002; White & Matawie, 2004; Barney & Max, 2005; Fabbri et al., 2007; Tsibidaki & Tsampanli, 2009; Anderson et al., 2009).

1) In Beavers Systems Model, family competence and family style are the two main dimensions (Beavers, 1982; Beavers, 1988; Beavers & Hampson, 1985; Beavers, Hampson, & Hulgus, 1990). Family competence relates to the structure, available information and adaptive flexibility of the system. The competent families feature a systematic approach to relationships, in which the interchangeability of causes and effects, and the circularity of systems phenomena always exist (Beavers et al., 1990). Family style relates to a stylistic quality of family interaction. Centripetal families regard most relationship satisfactions as coming from inside the family rather than from the outside world (Beavers, 1981). Centrifugal families view the outside world as holding the most promise for relationship satisfaction and the family as holding the

least (Beavers, 1981). The extremes of family style, either profoundly centripetal or centrifugal, relate to poor family functioning. In other words, when a family becomes more competent, excessive centripetal or centrifugal styles will diminish to the range of the mixed level (Beavers et al., 1990).

With reference to the competence and style dimensions, the family's status can be assessed by using the Beavers Interactional Scales. The Beavers Systems Model is based on clinical observation and empirical research (Beavers, 1977, 1981, 1982, 1985, 1989; Beavers and Hampson, 1990, 1993; Hampson and Beavers, 1996a, 1996b), and it can be used in training, research, and clinical purposes (Beavers and Hampson, 1990).

2) The Circumplex Model focuses on three central dimensions of marital and family systems: cohesion, flexibility and communication (Olson, Russell, & Sprenkle, 1989). The major hypothesis of the Circumplex Model is that couples and families with balanced types will generally function more adequately than those at the unbalanced types. Olson (1999) defined family cohesion as the emotional bonding among family members. The balanced types of couples and families on cohesion allow their members to experience being both independent from and connected to their family. Family flexibility is defined as the amount of change in its leadership, role relationships and relationship rules, and the balance of flexibility means

maintaining some level of stability in a system with openness to some extent when it is necessary. Communication is considered as a facilitating dimension to the other two dimensions. According to Olson (1999), the balanced types of families have more positive communication compared to unbalanced systems. The positive communication skills are so important, because it helps couples and family systems facilitate and maintain a balance on the two dimensions.

The Family Satisfaction Scale has been developed based on the dimensions of the Circumplex Model. The three dimensions of the Circumplex Model have repeatedly been regarded as being highly relevant in a variety of family theory models and family therapy approaches (Olson, 1999). The model has been used for treatment planning, diagnostic purposes of assessing family health and dysfunction, and outcome effectiveness of marital and family therapy (Olson, 1993 & 1996).

3) The McMaster Model of Family Functioning (MMFF) is a clinically-oriented model, which conceptualizes the properties of families. The model is evolved from the previous ideas of Epstein and his colleagues developed in 1962 and 1969 (Epstein, Bishop & Baldwin, 1983). “It describes structural and organizational properties of the family group and the patterns of transactions among family members which have been focused to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy families.” (Epstein et al., 1983, p. 172). According to the MMFF, the

family's primary function is to provide a setting for development and maintenance of family members with reference to biological, social, and psychological needs. The families which are unable to deal with the tasks are likely to develop clinically significant problems (Epstein, Bishop, & Levin, 1978; Eysenck & Eysenck, 1978).

The MMFF contains six dimensions of family functioning, which outline the structure, organization, and transactional patterns of the family (Epstein & Bishop, 1981; Epstein et al., 1983; Fristad, 1989; Epstein et al., 1993). The first dimension is Problem Solving which refers to the family's ability to solve problems. The second dimension is Communication which refers to the effectiveness and content of information exchange among family members. The third dimension is Roles which addresses the concern of whether the family has recurrent patterns of behavior to handle family functions. The fourth dimension is Affective Responsiveness which refers to family members' ability to offer the appropriate response to environmental stimuli. The fifth dimension is Affective Involvement which refers to the amount of affection which family members place on each other. The final dimension is Behavioral Control which refers to whether the family has norms or standards to govern individual behavior and responses to emergency situations. This broad perspective encourages a comprehensive and systematic assessment of families, which leads to a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of family.

The MMFF led to the development of the Family Assessment Device (FAD) (Epstein et al., 1983), which translates the six dimensions of family functioning into six scales of the instrument. A seventh scale, i.e., general functioning, is added to measure the family overall functioning. The FAD is used for measuring the family functioning of the young adults in the present study. The strengths of FAD will be reviewed in the chapter on Methodology.

2.4.2 The Relationships between Hope and Family Functioning

Although hope and family functioning are both positively related to academic achievement, the research findings in regard to their correlation are inconsistent. Connelly (2003) found that a low correlation between family functioning and hope appeared in children ($r = -.35$; $p < .05$), and subsequent research also showed a negative correlation between these two variables (Connelly, 2005). Houston (2006) also found that among adolescent girls family functioning was not directly associated with hope. However, Ennis (2006) indicated that adolescent students who expressed greater hope for the future perceived family functioning as healthier. Based on these studies, the findings on the relationship between hope and family functioning are not consistent, which calls for the need of further investigation.

According to numerous studies, academic achievement is positively related to

hope and family functioning respectively, and the characters of hope and family functioning may facilitate the academic (Sections 2.5.2 and 2.6.1). The researcher inclines to hold the view that the relationships between the two factors are positively correlated, and the study will explore this issue in regard to Hong Kong young adults.

2.5 Hope and Academic Achievement

Theories of academic achievement and the relationships between hope and academic achievement will be presented in the following sections.

2.5.1 Theories of Academic Achievement

Academic achievement refers to students' performance in educational settings, as well as their hopes and plans for future educational and occupational careers (Steinberg, 2005). Academic achievement has been measured by three modes: grade point averages (e.g., Attaway & Bry, 2004; Salazar et al., 2000), subject-matter grades (e.g., Maassen & Landsheer, 2000; Marjoribanks & Kwok, 1998), and achievement tests (e.g., Mboya, 1986; Saigh & Khouri, 1983; Stewart & Morris, 1977). Among these three measuring modes, Dornbusch et al. (1987, p.1247) suggests that "grades, unlike scores on intelligence tests and measures based on standardized achievement

tests, provide the most appropriate measure of current school performance”. In comparison with achievement tests, grades are believed to be more sensitive than achievement test scores to student effort. It is suggested that grades should be used in schools, so that a continuous indication of students’ performance can be seen (Fehrman, Keith, & Reimers, 1987). Academic achievement has been closely related to students’ future performance in school and in public examinations.

Identifying the factors which can contribute to students’ academic achievement has been the major research approach for studying academic achievement. Research has demonstrated that psychological factors (such as hope), and environmental factors (such as family functioning), are correlated with students’ academic achievement (e.g., Chao, 2001; De Bruyn, Dekovic, & Meijnen, 2003; De Raad & Schouwenburg, 1996; Kao, 1995; Oliver, Guerin, & Gottfried, 2007; Rudranath, 2013; Salazar, Schludermann, Schludermann, & Huynh, 2000; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts, & Dornbusch, 1994; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992; Snyder, 2002; Snyder et al., 1991; Snyder et al., 1997; Shek, 1998; Wentzel, 1994; Ryan, Solberg, & Brown, 1996; Türküm et al., 2005). The present study will further investigate the role of hope, and the relationships among academic achievement, hope, and family functioning.

2.5.2 The Relationships between Hope and Academic Achievement

Hope has gained increasing attention as an important positive psychological construct. It has become a promising example of how positive psychology may fulfill a role in the field of education, in which the relationship of hope and academic achievement are focused. Anderson (1988) discovered that IQ scores are significantly and positively related to hope. Snyder and colleagues (Snyder, 2002; Snyder et al., 1991; Snyder et al., 1997) examined the relationship between grade point average and hope, and found that students with higher levels of hope perform better academically in terms of grades and graduation rate. Adelabu (2008) demonstrated that hope is vitally connected to different types of professional and personal accomplishments, in which academic achievement is an example. The above findings show that the two variables, hope and academic performance, are positively correlated, and the hope scale scores are the reliable predictions of students' academic performances.

In the previous researches on hope and academic achievement, the samples involved young adults who were mainly college students whose academic levels are at least the associate degree (Barlow, 2002; Boldridge, 2009; Bressler & Bressler, 2010; Curry et al., 1997; Frehe, 2007; Jackson et al., 2003; Rand, 2009; Rand, Martin, & Shea, 2011; Robinson & Rose, 2010; Rose, 2007; Snyder, Shorey, & Cheavens, 2002; Williams, 2009). Consequently, the research findings are confined to the young adults

who can successfully progress to higher education. It should be noted that the low achievers are neglected in the previous researches. For this type of young adults, little is known about the relationship between hope and academic achievement.

The Hong Kong Education Bureau's (2013a) findings indicate that the young adults who have been identified as low achievers in secondary school can also show successful future academic achievement, and can progress to higher education. It is expected that these young adults' hope experience, from academic failure to success, will offer insights for enriching the hope theory in relation to academic achievement. Nevertheless, none of the previous researches has been carried out with reference to the young adults who are low achievers.

Researchers have investigated intensively the relationship of hope and academic achievement. It should be noted that family functioning is also an influential factor affecting academic achievement. Little is known about the influences of the two independent constructs, hope and family functioning, on academic achievement when the two constructs are used as predictors simultaneously. Further, none of the previous researches has been carried out in Chinese contexts. This stimulates the present research to investigate the issues.

2.6 Academic Achievement and Family Functioning

A review of academic achievement and family functioning will be presented in the following section.

2.6.1 The Relationships between Academic Achievement and Family Functioning

The study of familial influences on students' academic achievement has been a well-established research area. Academic achievement depends on a number of familial factors, such as the social, emotional and intellectual development which are fostered within family relationships (Grissmer, Kirby, Berends, & Williamson, 1994). Numerous studies focused on family constructs and their relationships to academic achievement, which included: family socioeconomic status (e.g., Hanushek, 1992; Hill & O'Neill, 1993; White, 1982), parental employment and occupation (e.g., Christenson, Rounds, & Gorney, 1992; Menaghan & Parcel, 1991), family achievement orientation (e.g., Clark, 1983; Hata & Burke, 1998; Lewis & Looney, 1983), and family behaviors and attitudes (Armor, 1992).

A number of studies indicate that there is a positive relationship between family functioning and school achievement. Students who perceive their family functioning as healthy are also found to have better academic achievement (e.g., Shek, 1998;

Wentzel, 1994). This positive relationship appeared consistently in studies which attempted to investigate the relationship between academic success and family influences (Ryan, Solberg, & Brown, 1996; Türküm, Kızıldaş, Biyik, & Yemenici, 2005). With regard to the age of students, research findings indicate that the positive relationship appears from kindergarten age through high school (Hill and Craft, 2003; Taylor et al., 2004; Wentzel, 1994; Wentzel et al., 1990). It might be expected that the positive relationship between family functioning and academic achievement would still exist up to young adulthood. However, a survey of the literature shows that little is known in this regard. Given this knowledge gap, the present research will examine the relationship between family functioning and academic achievement in the young-adult group.

A review of literature shows that the study of the relationship between academic achievement and familial influences has focused on the pathological perspective. A number of studies have tended to address the relationship from the problem-oriented perspective, in which social, psychological or some physical problems are investigated in relation to academic performance and familial influences (e.g., Alborz & Gayle, 2008; Camarena & Sarigiani, 2009; Cunningham et al., 2004; Haber, Clark, & Parenteau, 2009; Kiang et al., 2013; Menagham, Kowaleski-Jones & Mott, 1997; Mersky et al., 2009; Rivara, 1994; Roelofse & Middleton, 1985; Swenson et al., 1998;

Righthand & Welch, 2004; Sun & Li, 2009; Turner, Howell, 2006; Wang, 2012).

Maslow (1954, p. 354) has noted that the science of psychology has been far more successful on the negative than on the positive side, in which human has known more about their shortcomings, and illnesses, but little about their potentialities, virtues, achievable aspirations, or full psychological heights. After nearly 50 years, Seligman (2002) still had the similar criticism that psychologists have focused too much on pathological issues in the past decades. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) suggested that the focus of psychology should shift from only repairing the worst things in life to building positive individual qualities. In fact, research findings also supported that studying human strengths is as important as studying pathology (Lazarus, 2003; Seligman, 2002).

Instead of focusing on pathological issues, the present study will investigate a positive psychological construct, i.e., hope, in relation to family functioning and academic achievement.

2.7 The Knowledge Gaps of the Previous Studies

After reviewing previous researches in regard to hope, family functioning and academic achievement, some knowledge gaps can be identified. First, in regard to relationships among hope, family functioning and academic achievement, little is

known about the influences of the two independent constructs, hope and family functioning, on academic achievement when the two constructs are used simultaneously as predictors. Second, although the feedback loop of hope and action is important in generating the hope of successful individuals, it is seldom addressed with the current theory of hope. Third, the positive relationship between family functioning and academic achievement can be found in children and adolescence; however, to what extent the positive relationship existing in young adults remains unclear, especially in Chinese context. Forth, for exploring psychological strengths, the focus of psychology should shift from pathological investigation to building positive individual qualities. In this regard, a paradigm shift is needed. Fifth, the relationship between hope and family functioning are inconsistent in previous studies; therefore, further investigation is needed. Last, the hope experience of low-achieving young adults who eventually can attain academic achievement are seldom addressed.

2.8 Research Questions and Hypotheses

With reference to the above knowledge gaps, the following research questions and hypotheses are raised in the present study.

Q1. What is the role of hope in relation to family functioning and academic

achievement?

Hypothesis 1: There is a mediating pathway from family functioning through hope to academic achievement in young adults. Within this hypothesis, family functioning is hypothesized to significantly predict the level of academic achievement; also, family functioning is hypothesized to significantly predict the level of hope; and hope is hypothesized to significantly predict the level of academic achievement.

This hypothesis is made in accordance with the relationships found in the literature among hope, family functioning, and academic achievement. Based on the literature review, hope is a multidimensional dynamic life force that influences an individual's belief and ability to cope with stressful and challenging situations (Dufault and Martocchio, 1985; Lynch, 1974). Baron and Kenny (1986, p.1176) stated that "a given variable may be said to function as a mediator to the extent that accounts for the relation between predictor and criterion. Mediators explain how external physical events take on internal psychological significance." With reference to the dynamic nature of hope, in the study, hope is hypothesized to be a mediator to the extent that can account for the relationship between family functioning and the academic achievement.

Q2. Is hope level likely to undergo change when the low-achieving young adults are successful in academic achievement?

Hypothesis 2: Having achieved academic success, young adults' hope level will significantly increase.

Q2.1. If the hope level increases, how do the young adults develop and maintain their hope?

Hypothesis 2.1: Young adults are able to develop and maintain their hopes within the academic year.

Q2.2. What role does academic achievement play in helping young adults develop hope?

Hypothesis 2.2: The participants will report that their academic achievements help them develop hope, and there is a reciprocal relationship between the two variables.

These hypotheses are made with reference to the need of paradigm shift, in which the focus shifts from pathological investigation to building positive individual qualities.

Hope is the focus of the present study.

Q3. What does hope mean for young adults?

Hypothesis 3: The participants are hypothesized to interpret hope in a way

consistent with Snyder's theory of hope which includes goal-directed thinking, pathway thinking, and agency thinking.

Q3.1. What is the place of hope in the journey from academic failure to success of young adults from low functioning families?

Hypothesis 3.1: The role of hope is influential in the journey from academic failure to success of young adults from low functioning families. Hope substantially influences the young adults to attain academic achievement, even though family functioning may still significantly affect academic achievement.

These hypotheses are based on the need for exploring the hope experiences of low-achieving young adults who eventually achieve academically. These experiences are seldom addressed in the previous studies. The findings can enrich Snyder's hope theory which has received considerable attention in the field of positive psychology.

The above research questions will be tested in the Chapter of Results of the present study.

2.9 Summary

This literature review has focused on academic achievement, theories of hope, family functioning, and their mutual relationships. In regard to these three constructs, it seems that some knowledge gaps exist. The present study focuses on the

relationships among the three constructs, and the hope experiences of Chinese young adults who have experienced low family functioning and academic failure.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter contains three sections: a description of the research design, an overview of the methodology of the quantitative study, and an overview of the methodology of the qualitative study. Section 3.2 will present the rationale of the research design, i.e., the mixed methods research, of the present study. Accordingly, the present study is divided into two parts. The quantitative part is Phase One of the present study, and the qualitative part is Phase Two. Section 3.3 presents the methodology of the quantitative part, which includes the introduction of the Hope Scale, the State Hope Scale, the Family Assessment Device, and academic achievement. Section 3.4 presents the methodology of qualitative study, which includes the introduction of Phenomenology, and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Both Section 3.3 and 3.4 include the methods of data analysis, the details of research participants, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and ethical considerations. Section 3.5 is the summary of this chapter.

3.2 Research Design

A mixed methods research design was used in the present study. Mixed methods research integrates the elements of qualitative and quantitative research, in combining the viewpoints, data collection, analysis, and inference techniques of the two approaches (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). Instead of applying either quantitative or qualitative research only, mixed methods research help the researcher explore the breadth and depth of a particular topic. Mixed methods research has a number of strengths (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Bryman, 2006; Kelle, 2006), some of which are especially significant for the present study.

First, in mixed methods research the weakness of one method can be compensated by the strength of another. In the present study the interpretative phenomenology analysis was employed in the qualitative part, which only focused on a small sub-sample of the participants. However, the quantitative data can compensate the sometimes narrow view of qualitative findings, and increase the generalizability.

Second, researchers can achieve a more complete understanding of complex phenomena by using mixed methods research. In the present study not only the phenomenon of hope experience was explored, but its relationships with other constructs, family functioning and academic achievement, were also included for examination. A better understanding of young adults' hope can thus be obtained.

Third, mixed methods research can strengthen the credibility and validity of research by corroborating the qualitative and quantitative results. In the present study the quantitative results involving the relationships among hope, family functioning and academic achievement provide the framework for the qualitative study, and the qualitative results involving the hope experience corroborate the quantitative results in return.

Fourth, the mixed methodology design which had the quantitative/qualitative sequence can facilitate the research process. Such a sequence of research designs can provide assistance in forming the synthesis of observations, and developing the quantifiable schemes, both of which can be used for coding the qualitative data and helping with the meaning-making process (Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Morse & Niehaus, 2009; Creswell & Clark, 2011). Accordingly, the quantitative research was used to determine if the relationships among hope, family functioning, and academic achievement exist, and then provide a frame for the qualitative field work. (Creswell, 2009).

In Phase One, a quantitative approach examined the relationships among the three constructs: hope, family functioning and academic achievement. In Phase Two, the qualitative approach examined the hope experience of young adults. The present study not only sought to examine the relationships among the constructs, but also

sought to obtain a deeper understanding of these relationships by exploring the participants' subjective hope experience.

3.3 Quantitative Study

The methodology of the Phase One is presented in this section, which includes data on Research Participants, Administration of Questionnaires, and the application of measuring instruments (the Hope Scale, the State Hope Scale, Family Assessment Device, and the academic achievement indicator). Ethical considerations are also explained.

3.3.1 Research Participants

The students of Yi Jin Diploma (YJD) were recruited as participants in the present study. The students who enrolled in the YJD program were identified as low achievers in the public examinations, as they were unable to promote to associate degree programs in their study path. According to the Hong Kong Education Bureau (2013a), the YJD is designed in a way that students, by the time they graduate, will have attained a level of knowledge and skills for the purposes of further education or employment. During the academic year of 2012 to 2013, the Education Bureau estimated that 15,000 secondary six school leavers would join the YJD program.

However, this figure was over-estimated. The actual number of students registered in YJD course was only 5,050 (“Yi Jin students drop”, 2013).

The invitations for participating in the present study were sent to the eight local colleges which run the YJD program (See Appendix II). The colleges which first responded to the invitation were included in the study. Based on their classes, the students were randomly recruited from the YJD colleges, and they received a letter of invitation individually (See Appendix III and IV). Informed consent was obtained from the participants (See Appendix V to VIII).

A total of 601 YJD students from two community colleges participated in the study at Time 1 (T1), in the first two school weeks of YJD academic year. Before the data entry, 84 student respondents were removed due to their age being under 18, non-completion of the questionnaire, or unclassified academic results. A total of 517 students who had finished the Secondary Six were successfully tested at Time 1 of the present study. Out of this number, a total of 501 students were successfully followed and retested at Time 2 (T2), the last two school weeks of YJD program (8 months later). The attrition rate was 3.1% as 16 participants of the original sample dropped the program. The sample sizes at Time 1 and Time 2 (Margin of Error = 0.04, Confidence Level = 0.95, and Power = 0.8) were adequate for testing a mediated effect (Fritz & MacKinnon, 2007). The demographic information of the participants is

presented in detail in Section 4.2.1.

3.3.2 Ethical Considerations

Before the data collection, ethics approval was obtained from The University of New England, Human Research Ethics Committee (approval number HE12-149; see Appendix I). Questionnaires were used for the data collection in Phase One of the present study. The researcher was responsible for the questionnaire administration with the help of the class teachers. Before the questionnaires were distributed to participants in their classrooms, the researcher emphasized that the nature of the study was confidential. Data would only be used for research purposes, and only the researchers could access the data. All the participants, before answering the questionnaire, were invited to sign the consent form (see Appendix V and VI), and were informed that the research was investigating the place of hope on the study path of Hong Kong young adults. Participation was voluntary, and no compensation was provided.

3.3.3 The Administration of Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used in Phase One of the present study. The participants were asked to complete a package of questionnaires at Time 1, and were invited to

complete the questionnaires at Time 2 again, i.e., 8 months later. The questionnaire package contained five parts: the consent form, the demography data form, the Hope Scale, the State Hope Scale, and the Family Assessment Device. The information sheet and consent form were prepared to explain the purpose of the study and to protect the privacy of the participants. The demographical data concerned the examination results, ages and gender. The colleges issued the YJD result slips to the YJD students six weeks after the final examinations, and the results were collected in the colleges then. The Hope Scale (Snyder, et al., 1991) and State Hope Scale (Snyder, et al., 1996) measured the participants' level of hope. The Family Assessment Device (Epstein et al., 1983) measured the family functioning of the participants. The researcher was responsible for the questionnaire administration with the help of the class teachers. Participants completed the questionnaire in their classrooms, and the duration for completion was about 20 minutes at both Time 1 and Time 2.

3.3.4 Pilot study

A pilot study was completed in Phase One of the present study for three purposes:

1) to ensure the participants could understand each item of the translated Chinese questionnaires. 2) to assess the students' willingness to participate, and 3) to estimate the administration time. Two YJD classes, containing fifty-two students, were

randomly selected and invited to try out the questionnaires in the college which the researcher worked as a lecturer. The classes could be depicted as the typical students in YJD course, as they finished secondary school, but failed in the public examination and were blocked in their study path.

The following points were learnt from the pilot study:

1. The participants could understand the meaning of the questionnaires by themselves. No student sought for help in regard to the understanding of the translated Chinese scales during the pilot study.
2. The participants were willing to participate in the present study. No students declined to answer the questionnaires, and all the students finished the five parts of the questionnaires.
3. The participants were willing to disclose their personal information. Demographic information included their gender, age, the results of public examinations and their names.
4. The administration time of the questionnaires ranged from seventeen to twenty-two minutes.

The pilot study attested to the quality of the translation of the scales, the participation of students, and the setting of the administering questionnaires. The

pilot study did not contribute to the data of the main study.

3.3.5 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

In Phase One of the present study only the YJD students were recruited. They were at least eighteen years old. All of them were required to have finished their high school, and to have attended the public examination of Hong Kong, i.e., Diploma of Secondary Education Examination. Those participants who took the former public examination of Hong Kong, i.e., Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination, were excluded, as they had finished the public examination at least two years ago, and their study paths were different from that of the target group.¹

3.3.6 Measure

Translated Chinese versions of the Hope Scale (HS), State Hope Scale (SHS), Family Assessment Device (FAD), as well as the YJD results of the participants were used in the present study. They are presented as follows.

¹ The Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination ceased in 2010, and the data collection of the study started in 2012. The young adults who took Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination started the YJD program at least two years after they had failed in the public examination. It was likely that the young adults might have other experiences during the two years, such as, vocational training, full-time job, or working holiday. In contrast, the target group of the study finished the high school and started the YJD full-time program in the consecutive year. These two types of young adults had different learning backgrounds.

3.3.6.1 The Hope Scale

The Hope Scale (See Appendix IX) was used to assess individuals' level of hope. It is a self-reported measure containing 12 items which assessed the trait-like construct of hopefulness (Snyder et al., 1991). Four items measured the respondent's ability of initiating and maintaining actions (the hope agency), four items measured the respondent's belief in his / her own ability to generate plans for achieving the desired goal (the hope pathway), and another four items were the distractors. Respondents were asked to read each item, and to indicate the extent on a 8-point Likert scale by choosing the statement which was describing themselves, the choices were: 1 (definitely false), 2 (mostly false), 3 (somewhat false), 4(slightly false), 5(slightly true), 6(somewhat true), 7(mostly true), 8 (definitely true). A higher score in the scale indicated a higher level of hope.

Babyak, Snyder and Yoshinobu (1993) have assessed the Hope Scale with four samples of college students. They reported that the two-factor model of Hope Scale could reflect the data better than the one-factor model, and their results were consistent across genders. Also, the Hope Scale featured convergent, predictive, discriminant validities and high reliability. Through comparing it with other scales, the convergent validity of the Hope Scale was confirmed (Snyder et al., 1991). The Hope Scale possesses a predicted shared variance with other scales, such as optimism,

positive perceptions of life stimuli, esteem, hopelessness and depression, which are theoretically related to the concept of hope.

In addition, the discriminant validity of the Hope Scale's components was confirmed by factor analysis, which indicated that the theory-based agency and pathway components were distinguishable from each other (Snyder et al., 1991). The test-retest reliabilities across 3-, 8-, and 10-week intervals ranged between 0.73 and 0.85, and the internal consistency was between 0.71 and 0.77 for the agency subscale and 0.63 and 0.80 for the pathway subscale (Snyder et al., 1991). The two subscales were significantly and positively correlated to each other. The Cronbach coefficient alpha ranged from .38 to .57 in various studies (Snyder et al., 1991).

Adaptation of Hope Scale

The Hope Scale was translated into Chinese by a translator and back-translated by another translator. Both translators obtained a bachelor degree majoring in psychology in local Hong Kong university. The Chinese version of the Hope Scale (C-HS) (See Appendix X) was finalized by the translators in a consultation meeting where discrepancies were resolved. The translation of Hope Scale with such rigor was to ensure that the Chinese version could carry the literal and theoretical meaning of the original Hope Scale. The psychometric properties of the translated C-HS are

presented in Section 4.2.2.

3.3.6.2 The State Hope Scale

The State Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1996) was also used in the present study (See Appendix XI). Snyder et al. (2002) contended that the global or trait hope scales, such as the Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991), were only an evaluation of hope in general. Therefore, it was possible to be high in global hope but with low hope in a specific life domain. Given this inconsistency between global hope and specific-domain hope, the Domain-Specific Hope Scale (Simpson, 1999) has been developed to assess individual hope in different life domains, one of which is academic hope.

However, Snyder et al. (2002) still queried whether an individual's global and domain-specific hope levels might be quite high, but he or she would have low hope towards a specific goal. For example, a student might have high global hope and high academic domain-specific hope, but perceived that it was too difficult to generate pathways and agency toward the goal of earning a good result in mathematics course. Therefore, Snyder et al. (2002) stated "The goal-specific level of analysis, then, may be important in understanding perceived deficits in specific goal-pursuits, even when achievement in virtually all other areas is satisfactory" (p. 300). The researcher

observed that the above situations have happened in the YJD program. The results of some YJD students were generally good, but they still failed in one or two subjects, such as Mathematics or English Language.

With reference to the goal-specific level analysis, the specific-domain hope scale, such as the academic scale, might not be the most helpful for understanding the perceived deficits in specific goal-pursuits. As a result, the specific-domain hope scale was not employed in the present study, as the students enrolled in the YJD program were required to pass eight courses in the final examination. Such academic achievement therefore practically contained eight specific goals, rather than a mere specific domain. Besides, if only the Hope scale, a trait hope scale, had been used for assessing hope in the present study, the findings would have reflected only one's ability to achieve goals in general and would not have reflected sufficiently the hope levels of the participants whose goal was to pursue academic achievement in the YJD program.

Because of these considerations, a context-specific version of the Hope Scale was used. Given the importance of the goal-specific level of analysis, Snyder et al. (1996) proposed another approach, by using the State Hope Scale (SHS), to measure one's hope in a particular context. The researcher selected this Context-Specific State Hope Scale to measure individuals' momentary hopeful thinking. The scale was a

brief six-item index for measuring hope in the “here and now” time frame, in which no specific goal was identified.

The Context-Specific State Hope Scale originally included the same questions as the dispositional Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991). The questions were rewritten to reflect events in the lives of people, especially measuring hope toward specific, present goal-related situations. To develop the Context-Specific State Hope Scale, the wordings of the original items of the Hope Scale were changed in order to focus on the present moment. (e.g., the agency item “I energetically pursue my goals” was changed to “At the present time, I am energetically pursuing my goals,” and the pathways item “There are lots of ways around any problem” became “There are lots of ways around any problem that I am facing now”). Snyder et al. (1996) dropped two questions from the Hope Scale, one from agency subscale, and one from pathways subscale, due to the lowest validity score, and unacceptable psychometric standards respectively.

The Context-Specific State Hope Scale consisted of six questions, and used an eight-point Likert self-report format. The six questions included three pathways thinking items and three agency thinking items. The maximum score obtained from the scale was 48 and the minimum is 6. The maximum score obtained from each subscale was 24 and the minimum is 3. Agency thinking items were 2, 4 and 6, and

the pathways thinking subscale items were 1, 3 and 5. The overall Cronbach alpha coefficient of the Context-Specific State Hope Scale was 0.88, and the Cronbach alpha coefficients for subscales ranged from 0.52 to 0.59 (Snyder et.al., 1996).

The Context-Specific State Hope Scale was identified as a suitable scale for measuring YJD students' hope level in the present study. Snyder et al. (2002) suggested that the Context-Specific State Hope Scale could be used suitably in research with pre-post design, in which the focus was on changes in goal-directed thinking, and the scale could also be used as a situational correlate of ongoing goal-related activities, such as academics. These features of Context-Specific State Hope Scale were related to the present study. The pre-post design was adopted for measuring the changes of students' hope level within an academic year, and the situational correlate of ongoing goal-related activity, such as family functioning, could be examined in the present study accordingly.

Adaptation of Context-Specific State Hope Scale

The Context-Specific State Hope Scale was translated into Chinese based on the procedures mentioned above. The Chinese version of Context-Specific State Hope Scale (C-SHS) was established by the translation and back translation teams in consultation meetings where inconsistencies were resolved (See Appendix XII). Such

effort was intended to make the C-SHS carry the literal and theoretical meaning of the original scale. The psychometric properties of the C-SHS are presented in Section 4.2.2.

A modification was made to C-SHS in order to highlight the component of the present moment. The words “here and now” in the original SHS instructions were printed in bold and enlarged to font 14 in C-SHS, which became, “Please take a few moments to focus on yourself and what is going on in your life at this moment. Once you have this “**here and now**” set, go ahead and answer each item.” The notion of “here and now” was particularly important to the participants, as it reminded them that they were currently in a context of pursuing an academic qualification.

To sum up, the Hope Scale and the Context-Specific State Hope Scale² were adopted for measuring the hope levels of the participants in the present study.

3.3.6.3 Family Assessment Device

Based on the McMaster Model of Family Functioning, the Family Assessment Device (FAD) was developed for measuring family problem areas; the FAD contained 53 items in the original version of the FAD. In order to improve the scale, a modified version with 60 items was later constructed (See Appendix XIII) (Epstein et al.,

² The original name of the scale is State Hope Scale (Snyder et al. 1996). The researcher adds the affixes “context-specific” in this section to highlight its nature, and to avoid confusions with other similar hope scales. Hereafter State Hope Scale (SHS) is used within the dissertation.

1983).

As assessed by the FAD, family functioning was divided into six dimensions. They were: Problem Solving, containing six items which referred to the family's ability to solve problems; Communication, containing nine items which referred to the effectiveness and the content of information exchange among family members; Roles, containing eleven items which referred to the concern of whether the family had recurrent patterns of behavior to handle family functions; Affective Responsiveness, containing six items which referred to family members' ability to offer the appropriate response to environmental stimuli; Affective Involvement, containing seven items which referred to the amount of affection which family members placed on each other; and Behavioral Control, containing nine items which referred to whether the family had norms or standards to govern individual behavior and responses to emergency situations. In addition to the above six subscales, a twelve-item General Functioning subscale, which "assesses the overall health/pathology of the family" was included in the FAD (Epstein et al., 1983). All the items in the FAD were scored on a four-point Likert scale. Each item was in a form of statement, the participants responded to each statement by selecting the most appropriate scale to demonstrate their level of agreement or disagreement.

According to Epstein et al. (1978), the FAD has strong inter-correlated

agreement among the sub-scales. General functioning was highly correlated with five sub-scales, and only one sub-scale was moderately correlated. The correlations were as follows: 0.76 (Problem solving), 0.76 (Affective Response), 0.71 (Affective Involvement), 0.75 (Communication), 0.74 (Problem Solving), 0.60 (Roles), and moderately correlated with 0.48 (Behavior Control) (Epstein et al., 1983).

Also, several studies have reported concurrent validity of the FAD as ranging from 0.48 to 0.53 for correlations with related scales, with reliabilities ranging from 0.69 to 0.86 (Kabakoff, Miller, Bishop, Epstein, & Keitner, 1990; Miller, Bishop, Epstein, & Keitner, 1995). Adequate validity and reliability of the FAD in a Chinese population has been reported, and the Cronbach alphas in the previous studies ranged from 0.64 to 0.85 (Chen & Kennedy, 2004; Chen et al., 2003).

Additional evidence shows the FAD to have good validity and test-retest reliability. Miller, et al. (1985) administrated the FAD with another related scale: the Family Unit Inventory (FUI). The results showed that the overall correlations between the FUI and the FAD provided evidence for concurrent validity for the FAD. Also, Byles, et al. (1988) found a test-retest reliability of 0.71 by a one-week interval with the FAD.

In addition, in order to examine the discriminative validity of the FAD, Miller et al. (1985) compared FAD with the clinical ratings which were assessed by the

experienced family therapists. The results indicated that the FAD could correspond to the therapists' ratings of the families in six out of the seven scales. The only exception was the scale of Behavior Control.

While the FAD has traditionally been used to describe families from a clinical perspective, more recently it has been used for nonclinical applications in regard to education (e.g., Cotter, Bacallao, Smokowski & Robertson, 2013; Cunningham, McHolm, Boyle, & Patel, 2004; Hu, Ma, Hu, Deng, & Mei, 2010; Lee, Park & Park, 2001; Lester et al., 2013; Li, Zou, Liu & Zhou, 2014; Mansfield, Dealy, & Keitner, 2013). Fristad (1989) compared clinical rating scales and self-report scales from the McMaster and Circumplex models of family functioning. The sample families were given self-report measures, while clinicians assessed the families using clinical rating scales. It was found that the FAD has superior sensitivity to correctly identify clinical families based on instrument scores. Tutty (1995) also recommended the FAD to the researchers based on its theoretical and practical considerations. The psychometric properties of FAD justified the selection of FAD in the present study.

Adaptation of Family Assessment Device

Although Shek et al. (2002) have translated the FAD into Chinese, the translated scale was not used in the present study and the researcher created another Chinese

version of FAD. The translated version of Shek et al. (2002) was designed for adolescents who were studying in Secondary 1 or 2, and the youngest participant was 12 years old. In contrast, the participants in the present study were young adults who were at least 18 years old. Also, in comparison to the participants of Shek et al. (2002), the participants of the present study were educated in a new educational system, and were the first cohort of graduates who finished the six-year middle schools in a reformed curriculum. The former system was five-year middle school. The researcher agreed with Nida and Taber (2003) that the change of social context could influence the interpretation of a translated document. Given the age difference between the two groups and the change of students' context, another Chinese version of FAD (C-FAD) was developed in the present study.

The FAD was translated into Chinese based on the same procedures as that of the hope scales mentioned in Section 3.3.6.1. The C-FAD was finalized by the translation teams in a consultation meeting where inconsistencies were resolved (See Appendix XIV). Such effort was intended to make the C-FAD carry the literal and comprehensive meaning of the original scale. The psychometric properties of the C-FAD are presented in the Section 4.2.2.

To sum up, FAD has a number of strengths, and it was translated and used in the present study for assessing the family functioning level of the participants.

3.3.6.4 Academic Achievement

In Phase One of the present study, academic achievements were assessed by two examination results: Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE), and the examination result of YJD. HKDSE examination results were collected at the beginning of YJD academic year (T1), and YJD examination results were collected at the end of YJD academic year (T2). Based on the HKDSE, the levels of the best 5 subjects were counted, and the levels were converted to marks for calculation: 5** (7 marks), 5* (6 marks), 5 (5 marks), 4 (4 marks), 3 (3 marks), 2 (2 marks) and 1 (1 mark), and Unclassified (0 mark). The highest score was 35, and the lowest was 0. There were 8 subjects in the YJD examination. All the results of the 8 subjects were counted for the academic achievement, and the grades were converted to the marks for calculation: A (5 marks), B (4 marks), C (3 marks), D (2 marks), F (1 mark), and Incomplete (0 mark). Grade E was not used in YJD's grade system. The highest score was 40, and the lowest was 0. In short, academic achievements were assessed by two examinations, the first one was the result of public examination, and the second one was the result of YJD.

3.3.7 Data Analysis

The relationships among hope, family-functioning and academic achievement were

investigated in Phase One of the present study. The researcher intended to verify the hypothesis that there was a mediating pathway from family functioning through hope to academic achievement. The data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed in accordance with Baron and Kenny's (1986) suggestion for testing mediator effect.

According to Baron and Kenny (1986 p. 1173), "a mediator represented the generative mechanism through which the focal independent variable is able to influence the dependent variable of interest." In Phase One of the present study, it was hypothesized that the dependent variable, academic achievement, was being affected by family functioning, in which the level of hope could also influence the relationship. Accordingly, the level of hope was regarded as a mediator. The research model is shown in Figure 3.1.

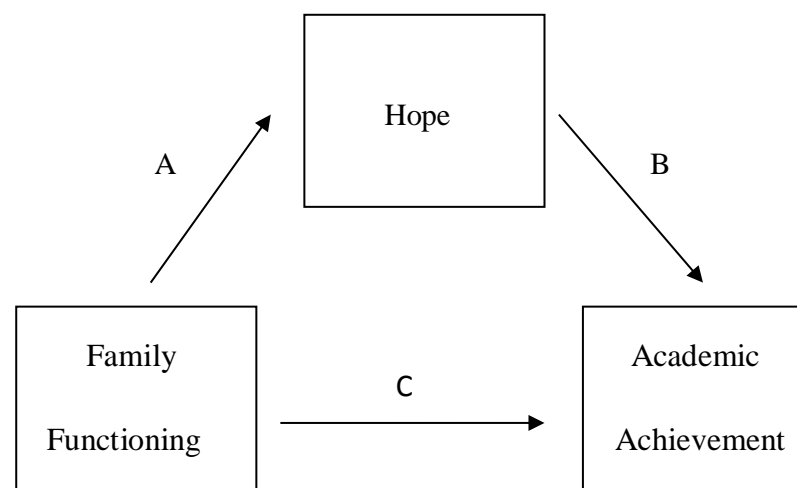


Figure 3.1: Mediating pathway from Family Functioning through Hope to Academic Achievement was expected to appear both in the beginning and at the end of YJD academic year

According to Baron and Kenny (1986), before testing a mediation hypothesis, the researcher was required to fulfil the following assumptions. First, the independent variable must be significantly correlated with both the proposed mediator and the dependent variable. Second, the proposed mediator must be significantly correlated with the dependent variable. In the present study, it was assumed that family functioning must be significantly correlated with hope and academic achievement, and hope must show significant correlation with academic achievement both at T1 and T2. If these requirements were fulfilled, the mediating hypothesis could be verified accordingly.

Mediation effects appeared by a condition that the regression of the dependent variable on the independent variable was reduced when the proposed mediator become activated. In the present study, it was assumed that both at T1 and T2, the regression of academic achievement on family functioning was reduced when the proposed mediator, hope, was added.

Mediation could influence the relationship either partially or totally. In the case of total mediation effect, the mediator was viewed as a pure mediator, the original significant relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable would drop to zero while the relationship between the proposed mediator and the dependent variable was significant. In the case of partial mediation, the original significant relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable

dropped greatly while the relationship between the proposed mediator and the dependent variable remained significant. In the present study, it was assumed that only the partial mediating effect of hope would appear from family functioning to academic achievement.

Although the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable has dropped greatly when the mediator was added, it was possible that the relationship remained significant. Therefore, a Sobel test had to be used for deciding on how significant the proposed mediator was (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Sobel, 1982). In the present study, it was assumed that the relationship between family functioning and academic achievement would drop greatly both at T1 and T2 when hope as a mediator was added, and the Sobel test would be employed for measuring the significance of hope. In addition, with the improved academic achievement, it was assumed that the hope levels of the participants would increase significantly from T1 to T2. The method of t-test was adopted for comparing the hope levels at T1 and T2.

3.3.8 Demographic Instrument

The demographic data was incorporated in the present study. Axinn, Link, & Groves (2009) pointed out that the research quality could be improved by the potential of demographic data. In the present study, the participants were asked to report demographic and personal information including age, gender, name, and

examination results. This information was used for comparing the data collected at different times (Time 1 and Time 2) during the year.

3.4 Qualitative Study

The following sections will explain the research design and methods employed in Phase Two of the present study. They include the rationale for the qualitative study, introduction to phenomenology, introduction to interpretative phenomenological analysis, selection process of research participants, inclusion and exclusion criteria, interviews and data analysis, ethical considerations, as well as validation of findings.

3.4.1 The Rationale for Qualitative Study

The strength of the quantitative part of the present study was that it provided the quantitative information about the relationships among hope, family functioning, and academic achievement of the young adults. However, this approach does not provide full insight about the perceptions and the hope experiences of the participants. Thus, the qualitative study was needed for adding breadth and depth of the understanding regarding connections among the three constructs.

With reference to the characteristics of people, events, or objects, qualitative research focuses on descriptive data that illuminates the social phenomenon under

investigation (Patton, 2002; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Without using the measurement of predetermined variables, the qualitative research can reveal the data in a natural setting by keeping the investigation with minimal interventions. The primary focus of the qualitative study in this phase was to explore the experiences and the perceptions of the young adult students who achieved academic success despite low family functioning. In the present study, a qualitative research method, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, was employed, and it is introduced in the following sections.

3.4.2 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is derived from the philosophy of phenomenology. To explain IPA, there is a need to present some basic concepts of phenomenology, which are presented as follows.

3.4.2.1 A Study of Lived Experiences: Phenomenology

Phenomenology was a philosophy originally developed by Edmund Husserl in the early 20th century (Ashworth, 2003). Husserl, in his *Logical Investigations* published in 1901, contended that in phenomenology nothing should be presupposed, and the phenomenology could provide intuitive evidence for study through the

personal reflections (Moran, 2000; Husserl, 1970). As a mathematician and physicist, Husserl not only argued that the only way to attain understanding of the world was empirical science, but also emphasized that experience was the fundamental basis in the investigating approach. He defined experience as a system of interrelated meanings, i.e., a Gestalt involved in a totality, which was termed “lifeworld” (Moran 2000; Husserl, 1970). The lifeworld was the sum of all phenomena which constituted the world of an individual. Husserl added that those lived experiences could be used to provide a valid and significant understanding of life and life events as individuals exist with their consciousness in the natural world. (Singer, 2005). The eidetic psychology which was the intuitive study of the nature of realities followed Husserl’s tradition of inquiry. Such intuitive study was the understanding of the meaning of things in the world, in which the perceiving processes were not contaminated by the individual’s past experiences and perspectives (Thines, 1977; Fade, 2004). Phenomenology required gaining access to the phenomena directly, and made its meaning as pure as possible from the participants, in which other preconceived ideas, beliefs and judgments from outsiders had to be eliminated.

In addition, the aim of phenomenology was to describe the experience which was lived by individuals (Crotty, 1996). In regard to the ‘description’, it was important that the researchers had to minimize their own viewpoints, knowledge of the topic,

and understanding of current theories to the participants' responses. For that, Husserl suggested that we should 'bracket' or cease from positing the existence of the natural world around us. It was hoped that a qualitative approach could reveal the phenomenon in its purest 'lived form'. Bracketing was a term used by Husserl for "laying aside" the researchers' perceptions or previous knowledge of the particular topic, in which the researchers reflected on their past and current experiences in order to preserve the pure meaning of the participants' personal own experiences. Accordingly, fresh meaning could be attributed to the phenomena (Crotty, 1996), and the researchers could understand and represent the experiences of the participants (Elliott, Fischer, & Rennie, 1999).

In short, phenomenology is the study of perceptions and experiences. The intentions of minimizing the effects of researchers are crucial in the phenomenological study. Researchers have to maintain their reflexive ability in order to achieve better understanding of and make sense of the participants' experiences. Based on these conceptions of phenomenology, Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was developed for the phenomenological enquiry, a description of which follows.

3.4.2.2 Introduction to Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

As described above, phenomenology essentially focuses on understanding the lived experiences of individuals, and how they make sense of their personal experiences. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was employed in the present study to provide a detailed account of young adults' experiences through the phenomenological enquiry. By utilizing IPA, researchers can generate a number of new models or constructs in health studies (e.g., Dahl & Boss, 2005; Rizq & Target, 2009; Scott, 2012). Like other qualitative research methods, IPA adopted various measures for data collection, such as semi-structured interviews, focus groups, participants' diaries and self-reporting tasks. However, Smith and Osborn (2008) indicated that most of the IPA researchers used the semi-structured interview for data collection, and it has been the standard method of doing IPA research. The participants' personal experiences or their own "story" were the integral part of the interviews, therefore the interview questions in IPA were all open-ended and non-directive. Although the principle of minimizing researcher's intervention was kept for promoting the participants' originality, researchers might still raise some questions for gaining further information during the interviews.

The IPA researcher plays a key role in the interpretative process. For making sense of the data collected from the participants' personal worlds, Smith and Osborn

(2008) suggested that researchers might divide the text into some “meaning units”, so that they could identify the meanings of the participants’ experiences. Then the researcher could detect the unities, variations and contradictions among the meaning units of the collected texts. It was expected that these different phenomena not only existed in a particular single participant, but also across different participants in the phenomenological inquiry. Consequently, the main *themes* could stem from the meaning units of the data text. The researcher could analyze the participants’ experience by investigating the revealed themes in detail.

IPA is an approach to qualitative research with an idiographic focus, which involves in-depth study to a small group of individuals. Smith (2004) suggested that the researcher could use a relatively small sample size (10 participants or less) for IPA. Elliott, Fischer and Rennie (1999) contended that in qualitative research “the understanding is represented in a way that achieves coherence and integration while preserving nuances in the data. The understanding fits together to form a data-based story/narrative, map, framework, or underlying structure for the phenomenon or domain.” (pp. 222-223). In this regard, Brocki and Wearden (2006) argued that IPA, with a relatively small sample size, could achieve understanding, in which not only the life world or the lived experience of the particular participants was demonstrated, but also a suitably persuasive story was sufficiently complete with analysis (p. 95).

Smith (2004) highlighted that in the entire analytical process, the quality of the final analysis was influenced by the researcher's analytic skills. IPA researchers interact closely with the collected text, and make sense of the collected texts through the lens of his or her culture, prior experience, and conceptions, although they have been intended to 'bracket' them. It was seen that the role of the IPA researcher is important in the research process. The role of IPA researcher will be further discussed in the following section.

The Role of IPA Researcher

A major presupposition of IPA is the ability of human's self-reflection (Smith, Flowers & Osborn 1997; Chapman & Smith, 2002). The self-reflection of the participants played the fundamental role in the research process. IPA research aimed to explore these reflections, and to understand the participant's reflections, through investigating the individuals' experiences, understandings, perceptions and idiosyncratic views (Reid, Flowers & Larkin, 2005). The researcher was actively involved in interpreting the participants' lived experience which appeared in verbal form during the semi-structured interviews.

Flowers, Hart and Marriott (1999) argued that the IPA was phenomenological due to its nature, and it actually attempted to pursue a subjective understanding, rather

than an objective understanding. It was queried that the participants' verbal accounts received from the interviews might not precisely reflect their inner cognitions, and their replies to interviewing questions did not necessarily mirror their experiences. Potter and Wetherell (1987) indicated that there were other elements involved in the construction of a participant's account, such as memory, distortions, rhetorical goals and stakes, and current context. Given the queries of the participants' accounts, Smith (2004) proposed to researchers that IPA had to go beyond the summary of participants' concerns, and should be critical and speculative, so that their descriptions in social, cultural, and theoretical contexts could be situated. Smith (1996) also contended that once the participants made coherent sense in light of the research questions, the interpretations of participants' accounts could be drawn accordingly. The IPA researchers might also try to interpret the participants' verbal accounts or to raise further questions during the interview for making social comparisons and exploring metaphorical contents and discursive achievements (Smith, 2004). In other words, an IPA researcher was a critical explorer in the research process.

The listening researcher makes sense of the collected texts inevitably through the lens of his or her culture, prior experience, and conceptions (Smith, 2004, p. 45). Willig (2013) also contended that IPA researchers could not really "bracket" such biases, and they were not able to understand the world without them. In this regard,

Smith and Osborn (2008) pointed out that the IPA research process was complicated because the researcher interpreted the participant's interpretation, and such interpretative framework was described as "double hermeneutic". Smith and Osborn (2008) articulated such interpretative framework as "human research [that] involves a double hermeneutic. The participant is trying to make sense of their personal and social world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant (who is) trying to make sense of their personal and social world" (p.40). Therefore, the present study contained not only the participants' experiences, but also the researcher's interpretation of his experience of the participants' interpretations of their experiences. In short, IPA researcher used double hermeneutics in the research process.

Reasons for applying IPA

IPA was selected as the research method of the present study, the justifications are presented as follows.

The aim of IPA was "to explore in detail the processes through which participants make sense of their experiences, by looking at the respondent's account of the processes they have been through..." (Brocki & Weardon, 2006, p88). By conducting the in-depth interviews, the researcher could collect, interpret, construe, and analyze the descriptive data which originated from the participants' lived

experience. IPA could fit with the aim of the present study in making sense of the hope experiences of the young adults with reference to academic achievement and family functioning.

IPA allowed for the experiences over time to be captured (Brocki and Wearden, 2006). The hope experiences in regard to academic achievement and family functioning occurred and extended over one academic year. IPA could provide the “insider perspective” into the participants’ experiences over time, in which their narratives were focused and heard in detail. IPA therefore was a distinctive method of exploring the young adults’ lives and experiences.

Qualitative research has the potential to enrich the existing body of research in psychology (Smith, 1996). “The flexibility of phenomenological research and the adaptability of its methods to ever widening arcs of inquiry is one of its greatest strengths” (Garza, 2007, p.338). IPA has its strength on revealing phenomena which were not explored or discovered in previous studies or might not have been formerly identified by researchers. In addition, IPA allowed the possibility of model building and theory construction (Dahl & Boss, 2005; Rizq & Target, 2009; Scott, 2012). By using IPA in the present study, the researcher could explore and compare the different hope experiences among young adults, resulting in meaningful units and themes, by which a new model of hope studies could be developed.

IPA is a “highly accessible” research method, and it does not require a “theoretical pretext” (Brocki & Weardon, 2006, p100-1). Also, it was shown that IPA has been a reliable and workable methodology used in different areas of psychology (e.g., Smith & Osborn, 2008; Rodham et al., 2009; Dickson et al., 2010; Harper et al., 2011; Cooper et al., 2012; Sampson, 2013). IPA therefore was selected as a research method for the present study.

3.4.3 Research Participants

A total of eight participants were invited for interviews. They were identified through the results obtained from the quantitative part of the present study. Mason (2002) contended that in qualitative research the conventions on sampling were less clear-cut than for statistical sampling in quantitative research. Qualitative researchers usually employed non-probability sampling, which is not intended for statistically representative but rather for in-depth information (Grbich, 1999). The present study used the “purposive sampling” method (Langdridge, 2007, p58; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p48-51), in which a small and homogenous group of participants are selected with reference to the target group of the present study.

The hope experience of the young adults was explored in Phase Two of the present study. The young adults were selected mainly based on three criteria:

- 1) High-hope
- 2) Having attained academic achievement
- 3) Low family functioning

The role of hope was important to this particular group of young adults. As mentioned in the quantitative section of the study, family functioning was positively correlated with academic achievement. Young adults with low family functioning normally achieve poor academic performance (Ryan, Solberg, & Brown, 1996; Türküm et al., 2005). However, the screened participants were the exception to such correlations. They performed well academically despite low family functioning, and they could still preserve a high level of hope. The role of hope was particularly significant to the group. Those high-hope participants who had achieved academically with low family functioning would be the potential interviewees in the present study. The screening criteria will be presented in the following section.

3.4.4 Screening Criteria

A qualitative methodological approach included semi-structured interviews and IPA. For selecting the target participants, all the participants who had answered the questionnaire were screened by the following criteria: high level of hope, low level of family functioning, and having attained significant academic achievement. The details were:

1. For exploring the hope experience, high-hope participants were selected for interviews. Snyder et al., (2002a) set the cut-off scores on the hope scale by using the sequence of the hope levels of the participants, in which the high hope scores ranged from 56 to 63. The same method was adopted in the present study. The high-hope participants were screened for study, because their hope experiences should be the richest comparing to the medium-hope and the low-hope. The high level of hope was one of the screening criteria.

2. For identifying the participants whose family functioning was generally unhealthy, the cut-off value of 2.00 was used in the General Functioning scale of FAD. Miller, Epstein, Bishop and Keitner (1985) set the clinical cut-off score: 2.00 of the General Functioning scale to distinguish healthy from unhealthy family functioning. They affirmed that a mean of more than 2.00 indicated that difficulties appeared in the family functioning. In the present study, the participants with mean scores more than 2.0 were selected for interviews, and those participants whose mean scores less than 2.0 were also interviewed for contrasting purposes. The mean score of 2.0 was one of the screening criteria.

3. The examination results of YJD students were used for identifying the participants who could significantly achieve academically. According to Hong Kong Education Bureau (2013b), the YJD graduates could attain a level of knowledge and

skills, which was comparable to five passes in the HKDSE for the purposes of further education or employment. Before the participants began the YJD, they were unable to obtain five subjects passed in the public examination, i.e., HKDSE, so that they were barred in their study path. However, after they graduated from the YJD, they could promote to the associate degree programs, and continue their career path. In the present study, the participants who could graduate from the YJD program were classified as having achieved academically. A passing grade in the YJD program was one of the screening criteria.

To sum up, the screened participants were those who fulfilled the above three criteria, and they were invited separately for in-depth semi-structured interviews. The details of interviews are explained in the following section.

3.4.5 The Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used in Phase Two of the present study. This section presents the details of the interviews, which include: the structure of the interviews, the questions used in the interviews, and the arrangements of the interviews.

3.4.5.1 The Structure of Interviews

The present study employed a method of semi-structured interview. Mason (2002) stated that interviewing was the common method used in qualitative research, and he held that there was no such thing as an unstructured interview. In phenomenological studies, the focus is on understanding the psychological conception of participants. Semi-structured interviews are particularly useful in obtaining the detailed information of the participants' beliefs, perceptions or accounts of a particular experience (Smith, 1996). Semi-structured interviews are widely used in phenomenological studies due to flexibility, which can facilitate the interviewers' follow-up to the participants' answers for further information. During semi-structured interviews, the researcher prepared a set of open-ended questions which were used as the interview guidelines. For obtaining further information, the researcher's interview questions were allowed to move beyond the interview structure and to ask extra questions which were not in the original structure.

Mason (2002, p.62) suggested a semi-structured interview should contain the following characteristics:

1. A dialogue with interactional exchanges
2. Informality or 'purposive conversations'
3. Thematically centered with biographical or narrative approach
4. Pre-supposed knowledge is situated, and contextual

The researcher referred to these suggestions in constructing interview schedules and conducting interviews, which were shown in the following sections.

3.4.5.2 The Interview Questions

The interviews explored how the participants experienced hope with reference to their psychological well-being before, during, and after the YJD academic year. Within each of these three periods, the researcher explored the participants' hope experience with regard to the relationships among the other two main constructs: family functioning, and academic achievement. Smith and Osborn (2008) suggested a funnel-shape style in questioning the interviewees, which meant that the interviewer started the interview with broad questions first, then narrowed to the specific area in later stages. In the present study the initial questions invited the participants to think broadly about their feelings, perceptions, and interpretations in regard to hope, family and learning. Later questions explored the specific experiences in regard to the other two constructs. There were a total of fifteen questions for the interview (See Appendix XV). The interview questions were designed in English, but the interviews were conducted in Chinese. The questions therefore were translated into Chinese (See Appendix XVI) based on the procedures mentioned in Sections 3.3.6.2 and 3.3.6.3.

3.4.5.3 The Arrangements of Interviews

Based on the criteria set above, the screened participants were invited for individual interviews. All the interviews were conducted within ten months after the participants had finished the YJD program. The researcher interviewed the participants on the campus of a local University during office hours. The location was in the case study room of the university's library. The room was structured with glass walls, where voice was totally separated from the outside so that the privacy of the conversation could be protected. Also, because the room was designed with see-through partitions, others, including librarians, could provide indirect supervisions of the room users. The interviews lasted approximately 30 to 40 minutes. All interviews were audio-recorded by mobile phone with audio-recording function. The researcher also recorded his observations and feedback during and after the interviews.

3.4.6 The Pilot Interview

A pilot interview was conducted in Phase Two of the present study for three purposes: 1) to ensure that the participants understood each item of the translated Chinese questions. 2) to assess the suitability of the facilities used for the interviews, and 3) to estimate the administration time. The researcher was a college lecturer, and

one of his students was invited for the pilot study. The selected YJD student finished secondary school, failed in public examination, and could not promote to the associate degree program. With such typical background, he was selected to take part in the pilot interview. The following points were learnt from the pilot study:

1. The young-adult participant could understand and answer the abstract questions without particular difficulties. Only Question 1 which was a broad question made the participant take a few seconds for giving his answer, and the rest of the questions could all be answered promptly and without hesitation. Question 1 in the final version of the interview question was revised, and some guiding words were added in Question 1 (See Appendix XVII). The progressive nature of the questions facilitated the recalls of participants' memory and events. The design of the questions was regarded as helpful for the interview in the main study.
2. A mobile phone with audio-recording function was used during the pilot interview. In regard to audio recording, the mobile phone caused an unexpected problem: the phone rang during the interview. For avoiding in-coming calls, the sim card had to be removed before the interview started. Also, the recorded voice was blurred due to the improper position and direction of the microphone. For recording clear voices, the mobile phone had to be placed between

interviewer and interviewee with upright position, and a particular phone stand was needed for firming the position. Also, the location of interview, i.e., a case study room, was a suitable place for interviews in the main study.

3. The interview lasted 35 minutes which were within the estimated range of time.

The pilot interview was to attest the equipment and the setting of the interview, and the suitability of the questions. It was not counted as an interview for the main study. The pilot interview improved and ensured the quality of the interviews in the main study.

3.4.7 Ethical Considerations

The University of New England, Human Research Ethics Committee (UNE, HREC), approved all procedures (Approval no. HE12-149; see Appendix 1) undertaken in this research project. Based on the approved procedures, a number of strategies have been utilized to minimize the ethical concerns.

Dahl and Boss (2005) contended that in phenomenological research informed consent and the assessment of potential risk are two broad categories of the ethical concern. In Phase Two of the present study, the participants who had engaged in Phase One of the study were screened, and were invited to attend an individual interview. Before the interview began, the researcher explained the nature of the

research to the interviewee, which included assurance of the confidentiality of the interviews. The participants were free to withdraw from the interview at any time. A signed consent form from the participants was required (See Appendix V). According to the Ethical Approval, all the audio-recordings, the transcripts, and the signed consent forms were kept confidential and were preserved in a secure location.

As mentioned in Section 3.4.5.3, the researcher had the interview with the participants on the campus of a local university in Hong Kong. The room of interview was structured with glass walls, where voice was totally separated from outside so that the privacy of the conversation could be protected. Also, because the room was designed with see-through partitions, other library users might provide indirect supervisions of the room users. In addition, the researcher has engaged in educational work for more than fifteen years, and was experienced in dealing with the unexpected incidents of students.

3.4.8 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

In Phase Two of the study, the participants were YJD graduates who successfully finished the program, and whose hope level was high and family functioning was low. They were selected as respondents because their experience would provide insights into the hope studies in regard to academic achievement and family functioning.

According to the Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria set in Phase One of the present study, the participants were at least eighteen years old. All of them were required to have completed the public examination of Hong Kong, i.e., Diploma of Secondary Education Examination.

3.4.9 Data Analysis

IPA is rigorous in transforming the “naïve descriptions” of lived experiences into a descriptive statement which characterized the essential structure of the experiences in a way of consciousness (Peterson & Jenni, 2003, p. 354). IPA researchers who play a major role in the transforming process are required to keep reflecting on their own experiences and identify their own presuppositions throughout the entire research process. The step-by-step data analysis in Phase Two involved four major steps (Dauhl & Boss, 2005), plus methods for dealing with left and right hermeneutic (Smith & Osborn, 2008), cross-transcript coding (Smith & Osborn, 2008), and usage of computer software, NVivo 10. The procedures are explained as follows.

3.4.9.1 Four Major Steps

Dahl and Boss (2005) suggested the four major steps of doing data analysis in IPA, which was employed in Phase Two of the present study. The first step was that

the coding of data was formed by reading the interview transcripts repeatedly. The researcher read the interview transcripts repeatedly so as to form a general sense of the participants' psychological world.

The second step was the identification of the "meaning units". After coding the data, the researcher could identify some meaning units from the coded transcripts. These units, from a psychological perspective, revealed the essences of how the experiences or phenomena were being understood.

The third step was the synthesis of units. Having obtained the meaning units, the researcher examined the units in order to acquire the psychological insights from the units, in which the simple units were synthesized into larger sets of units. Consequently, some themes might appear in the participant's experience.

The fourth step was the production of the structure of experience. The researcher synthesized the appeared themes into a consistent statement with reference to the other participants' experiences. This structure was produced with different levels or layers, which helped the researcher to explore the in-depth meanings of the participants' experiences (Dahl & Boss, 2005).

3.4.9.2 Left and Right Hermeneutic

Along with the four steps, the researcher also adopted the methods of left/right

hermeneutic in Phase Two of the present study (Smith & Osborn, 2008). The transcript pages were divided into three columns, the transcript contents were placed in the middle columns, and the left- and right- columns were blank, which provided the spaces for the researcher to realize the four major steps of data analysis.

With the first and the second steps, the contents of the left-hermeneutic could be created steadily. The researcher read and re-read the transcripts to obtain their overall meaning. After re-reading the transcripts for a number of times, the re-reading of sections helped the researcher more easily “immerse” himself in the participants’ experiences, and helped him clarify and understand the deeper meanings of the narratives. With the guidelines of Smith and Osborn (2008), the contents of the left-hermeneutic in the present study were generated by a number of processes, which included: summarizing, rephrasing, interpreting, commenting on the language, contrasting between and within the transcripts, and making the assumptions, associations, echoes, and amplifications. It was found that the contents of the left-hermeneutic could facilitate the first and the second steps of data analysis.

Smith and Osborn’s (2008) also offered the guidelines for processing the right-hermeneutic. The researcher adopted the guidelines for generating the themes and forming the constant statements in the third step and fourth step respectively. The right-hermeneutic in the present study framed the concise phrases which could capture

the essence of the left-hermeneutic. The concise phrases were grounded in the meanings of the transcript, and they could make theoretical connection. These concise phrases featured higher level of abstraction or interpretation, and some psychological terms were embedded in them.

With the major steps (Dahl & Boss, 2005) and the guidelines (Smith & Osborn, 2008), the themes and constant statements appeared and resulted in the “structure of experiences”. Accordingly, the “super-ordinate themes” could appear in the following stage, which were the larger sets of themes formed by clustering of similar themes in a transcript (Smith, Jarman, and Osborn, 1999). Once the data analysis of the first participant was completed, the remaining seven transcripts were treated by the same process. The sequence of data analyses depended on the length of the transcript, the longest transcript which was supposed to contain the richest content was treated first, and the shortest was the last.

3.4.9.3 Cross-transcript Coding

Dahl and Boss (2005) and Smith and Osborn (2008) have provided a cross-referencing method for comparison, in which the superordinate list of themes from one participant’s transcript was used to inform the analysis of other transcripts. Once the researcher had completed all the data analyses of the individual transcripts,

the appeared themes among the transcripts could be compared accordingly. In the present study, the transcript of Tom was selected, because his transcript was the richest in content and the longest in length. It was presumed that the more entries a specific theme included, the more important the theme was, unless it was contradicted by other transcript contents. After selecting the first transcript, the researcher linked the themes among the other seven transcripts by the cross-referencing method. The researcher looked for similarities, differences and duplications in each of the themes, then the clusters of units of delineated meaning from each theme were grouped into meta-themes. Accordingly, some meta-themes were identified in this stage.

3.4.9.4 Usage of NVivo

The coding procedures were carried out with the assistance of qualitative research computer software called NVivo, which was designed for coding various types of raw data, such as text, audio, and video. The researcher used the software for conducting extensive coding, re-coding, analysis, and interpretation of the data material. NVivo was employed because it was good at ordering concepts and building theoretical models (Bazeley & Richards, 2000).

All the audio clips recorded in the interviews were transcribed into written words by a professional transcription service. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) observed that

non-proficient typist might cause laborious process due to schedule delays and transcription mistakes. The transcripts containing more than 72,000 words were verbatim reproductions of the audio clips, except some minor words, such as 'ah', 'la', or 'e', were omitted. In order to check the accuracy of the transcription, the researcher listened to each interview clip while reading over the completed transcripts.

As a summary of Section 3.4.9, the data analysis in Phase Two of the present study contained: the four major steps (Dauhl & Boss, 2005), the method of left/right hermeneutic (Smith & Osborn, 2008), the cross-transcript coding (Smith & Osborn, 2008), and the usage of computer software, Nvivo.

3.4.10 Validity of the Findings

Numerous guidelines have been proposed for assessing validity in qualitative studies (e.g., Elliot, et al., 1999; Langdridge, 2007; Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009; Yardley, 2000; 2008). However, the researcher found that these guidelines contained a considerable amount of overlap. Yardley (2000) emphasized the interactive and dynamic role of researcher in the process of data analysis, which could fit the requirements of the present study. Therefore, the principles of Yardley (2000) were selected for assessing the validity in Phase Two of the present study.

Yardley (2000) argued that the purpose of qualitative research was merely to

yield one of many possible interpretations in a phenomenon. Brocki and Wearden (2006) also proposed that the validity of IPA could ensure the credibility of themes created, and it was not to produce a “singular true” account of data collected. Therefore “reliability is not an appropriate criterion for judging the qualitative work and procedures” (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p.279). Yardley’s (2000) four principles were applied in the present study, which were: sensitivity to context, commitment and rigor, transparency and coherence, and impact and importance. These principles were presented as follows.

Yardley’s (2000) first principle was concerned with the sensitivity to context. The researcher was required to acknowledge not only the socio-cultural setting where the research was undertaken, but also the relationship between researcher and participants. In the present study, all the participants and the researcher were ethical Chinese who were living in a same city, therefore cultural difference could be kept in minimal. Also, the interviews of the present research started only after the interviewees had finished their YJD course. The researcher and the participants had not met each other before the interviews. The participants took part in the interview on a voluntary basis, and they were free to express their personal viewpoints in regard to hope, academic achievement, and family functioning. Yardley’s first principle was fulfilled by these arrangements.

Yardley's (2000) second principle referred to commitment and rigor. In the present study all procedures were supervised by two academics, and an ethics approval granted by Human Research Ethics Committee was required before undertaking the research. The present study, from preparing the initial proposal to finalizing the thesis, took four years. The researcher had fifteen years of guidance and counselling experience in education settings, which created a foundation for the present study. The commitment and rigor of the present study fulfilled the second principle.

Yardley's (2000) third principle referred to transparency and coherence. Yardley (2000) argued that "a convincing transparency can be achieved by detailing every aspect of the data collection process and the rules used to code data" (p.222). In this regard, the detailed descriptions of clarity and cogency were needed for undertaking the qualitative research. The present study provided a clear account of rigorousness of the methodology, and how data was collected and analyzed. Details of how code and themes were created are provided in the Chapter of Results. These arrangements were integral to convincing transparency. Coherence describes "the 'fit' between the research question and the philosophical perspective adopted, and the method of investigation and analysis undertaken" (Yardley, 2000, p. 222). Yardley used an example for illustration. She mentioned that if the aim of the research was to explore

and give voice to the personal perspective of people suffering from a particular illness, the method of triangulation by seeking relatives' and health professionals' perspectives would not be appropriate or necessary. She added that a thorough phenomenological analysis of interviews of the sufferers could provide a consistent and completed description. Accordingly, Yardley's coherence was considered in the present study. Only the screened students, without parents and teachers, were interviewed for obtaining the phenomenological analyses which assured consistency and completion. The principles of transparency and coherence are supported in the present study.

Yardley's (2000) fourth principle was impact and importance. As stated in Chapter One, the section of Potential Contribution, the present study hoped to add and contribute to knowledge in regard to the theory of hope and the practice of counselling. From theoretical point of view, the inquiry in the present study could shed light on the theory of hope with reference to family functioning and academic achievement, through which a better understanding of their relationships could be achieved. From practical point of view, it may be beneficial for counselling practitioners, especially college counsellors, student affairs professionals and educators, to explore how the young adults perceive and interpret their hope experiences. By understanding the phenomenon from the young adults' perspectives,

a more comprehensive view of their hope experience can be obtained and understood. Based on this information some specific services, programs and activities for the benefit of young adults might be developed and implemented. These theoretical and practical contributions were expected to be made by the present study. The principles of impact and importance were fulfilled with the potential contribution in the study.

3.5 Summary

A mixed methods research design featuring developmental approach was used in the present study. The mixed methods research contained two phases. A quantitative approach was adopted in Phase One, which examined the mediating pathway from family functioning through hope to academic achievement. A qualitative approach featuring Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was adopted in Phase Two, which examined the hope experience of the Chinese young adults who had experienced low family functioning and academic failure. Accordingly, the present study can achieve a better understanding of the relationships among the constructs and the hope experience.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains two parts. The first part is the quantitative results which address the first and second major concerns of the present study: 1) the role of hope in relation to family functioning and academic achievement, and 2) the longitudinal change of young adults' hope. The second part is the qualitative results which address the third major concern of the study: 3) the meaning of the young adults' hope.

In the first part, the descriptive statistics of the Hope Scale (HS), the State Hope Scale (SHS), and the Family Assessment Device (FAD) will be presented first, and then the effect of demographic factors on hope, state hope, and family functioning measured by HS, SHS, and FAD will be also demonstrated. Secondly, the psychometric properties of HS, SHS, and FAD are presented for evaluating the validity of the variables in the study. Thirdly, the mediating effects of hope in the relationship between family functioning and academic achievement are demonstrated. Fourthly, the roles of hope and state hope in academic achievement are presented. The above findings address the first concern of the study. Finally, the longitudinal changes of hope, state hope, and family functioning in terms of the individual level and mean level over the academic year of Yi Jin Diploma (YJD) program are also demonstrated

in the first part in order to address the second concern of the study.

In the second part, the qualitative results start with the basic demographic information of the participants, and then presents the participants' hope experiences by using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. After the process of coding, reflection, and recoding, fifty-one meaningful units and fifteen themes were identified from the interview transcripts. In the framework of the young adults' hope experience, four super-ordinate themes could be identified, they were: Adverse Conditions, Motivation of Interest, Positive thoughts, and Relationship Support. The super-ordinate themes will be discussed with their sub-themes accordingly. The third concern of the study is addressed by the above qualitative findings.

Finally, a conclusion will be drawn to summarize the findings in the quantitative and qualitative part of the present thesis.

4.2 Quantitative Results

This section aims to address the first major concern of the study: the role of hope in relation to family functioning and academic achievement.

Three scales were translated into Chinese and used to measure hope and family functioning in the present study. The Chinese Hope Scale (C-HS), Chinese State Hope Scale (C-SHS), and Chinese Family Assessment Device (C-FAD) were validated by

using the sample of Chinese young adults in Hong Kong, and the psychometric properties of the scales were examined in this part. For the sake of consistency and continuity, the analyses were based on the data of the respondents who had completed the questionnaires at both Time 1 and Time 2.

4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics

A total of 601 YJD students from two community colleges participated in the study at Time 1 (T1), in the first two school weeks of YJD academic year. Before the data entry, 84 student respondents were removed due to their age being under 18, non-completion of the questionnaire, or unclassified academic results. A total of 517 students who had finished the Secondary Six were successfully tested at Time 1 of the present study. A total of 501 students were successfully followed and retested at Time 2 (T2), the last two school weeks of YJD program (8 months later).

The means and standard deviations of the total score of C-HS, C-SHS, C-FAD at Time 1, by age and gender, are presented in Table 4.1a, 4.1b, and 4.1c, respectively. The mean scores of C-HS, C-SHS, and C-FAD of our sample were 43.91, 33.18, and 2.24, respectively. The mean scores of C-HS and C-SHS were calculated based on the average scores of eight items and six items in C-HS and C-SHS respectively. The mean scores of C-FAD were calculated based on the average scores of sixty items in

C-FAD.

Table 4.1a: Means and standard deviations of Chinese Hope Scale scores by age and gender (N = 501) (Time 1)

Age (years)	Male (M) (n=297)	Female(F) (n=204)	Total (N=501)
23 (n=10) (2M, 8F)	51.00 (0.00)	47.50 (5.88)	48.20 (5.39)
22 (n=37) (24M, 13F)	46.04 (6.68)	46.08 (7.95)	46.05 (7.04)
21 (n=44) (26M, 18F)	47.72 (7.63)	43.11 (9.72)	45.84 (8.67)
20 (n=56) (33M, 23F)	47.00 (6.37)	41.96 (8.84)	44.93 (7.82)
19 (n=110) (70M, 40F)	43.69 (7.71)	40.73 (8.30)	42.61 (9.69)
18 (n=244) (142M, 102F)	44.28 (6.44)	42.21 (8.85)	43.42 (7.59)
Overall	44.93 (7.41)	42.42 (8.59)	43.91 (8.21)

Table 4.1b: Means and standard deviations of Chinese State Hope Scale scores by age and gender (N = 501) (Time 1)

Age (years)	Male (M) (n=297)	Female(F) (n=204)	Total (N=501)
23 (n=10) (2M, 8F)	41.50 (0.71)	33.38 (7.33)	35.00 (7.32)
22 (n=37) (24M, 13F)	35.50 (7.96)	36.31 (7.55)	35.46 (7.74)
21 (n=44) (26M, 18F)	32.92 (6.91)	33.33 (7.00)	33.10 (6.87)
20 (n=56) (33M, 23F)	34.91 (6.89)	34.13 (7.28)	34.59 (6.10)
19 (n=110) (70M, 40F)	33.2 (7.48)	30.58 (9.23)	32.25 (8.63)
18 (n=244) (142M, 102F)	33.25 (6.91)	32.37 (7.85)	32.88 (7.32)
Overall	33.59 (7.13)	32.59 (8.24)	33.18 (7.61)

Table 4.1c: Means and standard deviations of Chinese Family Assessment Device scores by age and gender (N = 501) (Time 1)

Age (years)	Male (M) (n=297)	Female(F) (n=204)	Total (N=501)
23 (n=10) (2M, 8F)	2.05 (0.12)	2.19 (0.60)	2.17 (0.53)
22 (n=37) (24M, 13F)	2.07 (0.31)	2.24 (0.42)	2.13 (0.35)
21 (n=44) (26M, 18F)	2.10 (0.42)	2.11 (0.45)	2.10 (0.43)
20 (n=56) (33M, 23F)	2.20 (0.35)	2.22 (0.37)	2.21 (0.36)
19 (n=110) (70M, 40F)	2.37 (0.44)	2.33 (0.37)	2.35 (0.41)
18 (n=244) (142M, 102F)	2.24 (0.37)	2.27 (0.41)	2.25 (0.39)
Overall	2.24 (0.39)	2.26 (0.41)	2.24 (0.40)

4.2.1.1 Demographic Effects

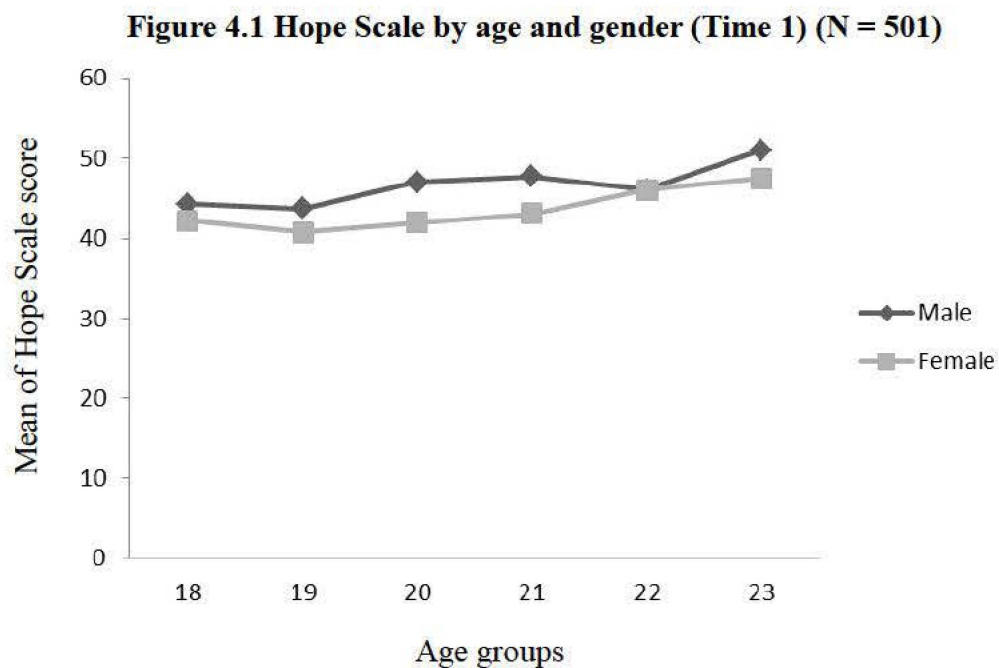
In order to examine the demographic effects in regard to age and gender on hope, state hope, and family functioning, 5 x 2 two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted with the data of C-HS, C-SHS, and C-FAD, which included age (5 levels of age between 18 to 22) and gender (2 levels, men and women) as the independent variables, and Hope, State Hope, and Family Functioning as the dependent variables, respectively. The age group of 23 was excluded in the analyses because the group only contained 10 participants.

Demographic Effects on Hope

The results of 5 x 2 two-way ANOVA, with age (5 levels of age between 18 to 22) and gender (2 levels, men and women) as the independent variables, and with Hope as the dependent variable, revealed that there was significant main effect of age ($F_{(4, 491)} = 5.52, p < 0.05$) and gender ($F_{(1, 491)} = 5.24, p < 0.05$) on Hope, but the interaction effect between age and gender on Hope was not significant ($F_{(4, 491)} = 0.62, p > 0.05$).

A series of post hoc independent sample t-tests were done with the Bonferroni Adjustment alpha level of 0.005 (i.e. 0.05/10). However, the results indicated that no pairwise comparison among the age groups was found to be significantly different

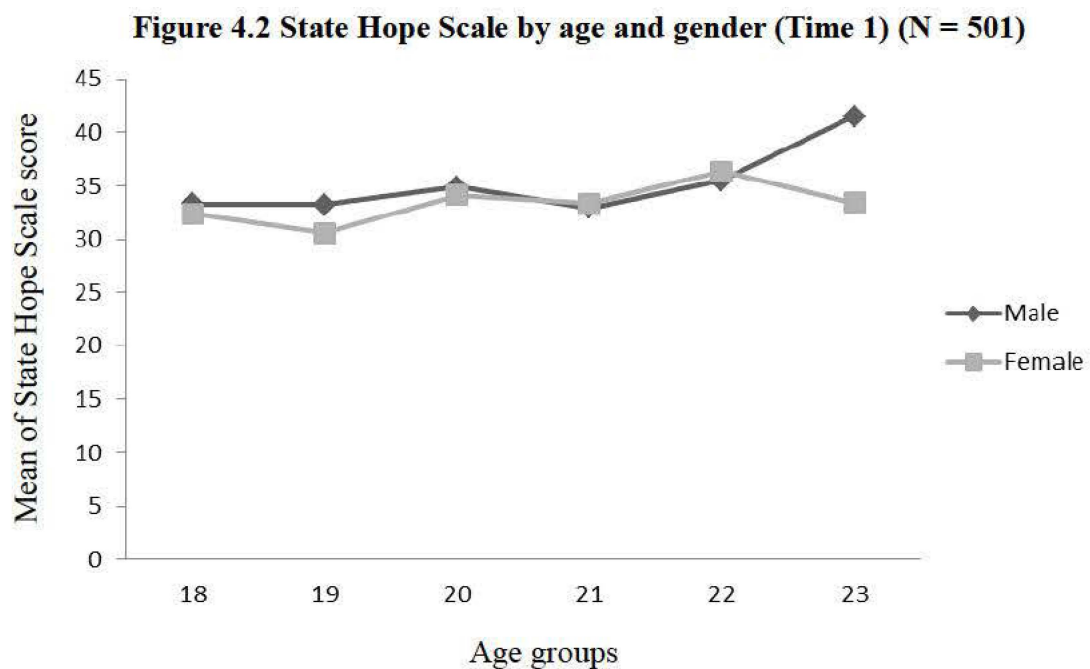
on Hope with a more conservative alpha level. Although no significant difference on hope among age groups was found by using the Bonferroni Adjustment alpha level, the C-HS scores of female appeared to decline gradually from the older to the younger age groups (except for the 18-year-old group, which contained 244 participants). In addition, the post-hoc independent sample t-test also revealed that men had significantly higher HS scores than women ($t_{(499)}=3.40, p<0.001$) and its effect size was lower medium (Cohen's $d = 0.30$). The changes of the means of HS scores by age groups and gender are shown in Figure 4.1.



Demographic Effects on State Hope

The result of 5 x 2 two-way ANOVA with age (5 levels of age between 18 to

22) and gender (2 levels, men and women) as the independent variables, and with State Hope as the dependent variable revealed that there was no significant main effect of age ($F_{(4, 491)} = 2.15, p > 0.05$) and gender ($F_{(1, 491)} = 2.05, p > 0.05$) on State Hope. The interaction effect between age and gender on State Hope was also not significant ($F_{(4, 491)} = 0.75, p > 0.05$). It was found that the C-SHS scores of the age groups differed in the narrow range of 32.25 to 35.46 score. The changes of the means of SHS scores by age groups and gender are shown in Figure 4.2.

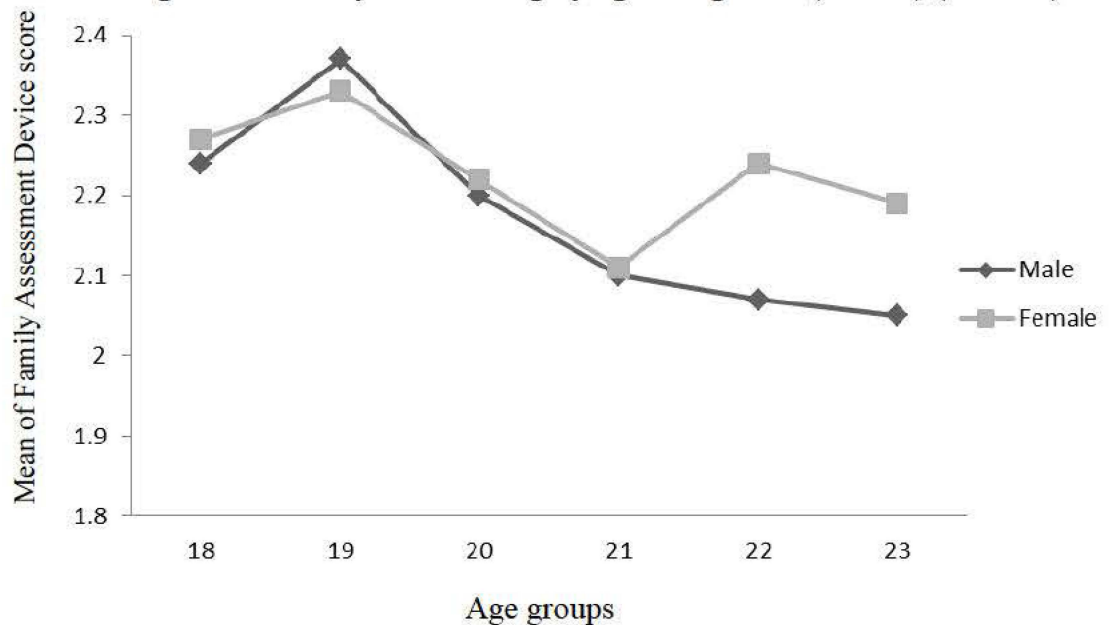


Demographic Effects on Family Functioning

The result of 5 x 2 two-way ANOVA with age (5 levels of age between 18 to

22) and gender (2 levels, men and women) as the independent variables, and with the Overall Family Functioning (OFF) as the dependent variable revealed that there was significant main effect of age ($F_{(4, 491)} = 3.01, p < 0.05$) on OFF, but no significant effect of gender ($F_{(1, 491)} = 0.73, p > 0.05$) was found on OFF. The interaction effect between age and gender on overall family functioning was also insignificant ($F_{(4, 491)} = 0.38, p > 0.05$). With the Bonferroni Adjustment alpha level of 0.005 (i.e. $0.05/10$), post hoc independent sample t-tests indicated that the overall family functioning score for the 19-year-old group was significantly higher than those of the 21-year-old and group 22-year-old group ($t_{(152)} = 3.30, p < 0.005$; $t_{(145)} = 2.94, p < 0.005$, respectively) and the effect sizes were medium (Cohen's $d = 0.54$ and 0.49 respectively). Although no significant difference in family functioning between gender groups was found by alpha level of 0.05, the C-FAD scores of female appeared to be generally higher than those of male (except for the 19-year-old group, which contained 110 participants). The changes of the means of C-FAD scores by age groups and gender are shown in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3 Family Functioning by age and gender (Time 1) (N = 501)



Summary

The following conclusions may be reached. First, no significant difference among age groups on Hope was found, but men had significantly higher HS scores than women. Second, no significant main effects of age and gender were found on State Hope. Third, no significant effect of gender was found on overall family functioning, but there was a significant main effect of age on overall family functioning. The overall family functioning score of the 19-year-old group was significantly higher than that of the 21-year-old and 22-year-old groups.

4.2.2 Psychometric properties of the Chinese Hope Scale, Chinese State Hope Scale, and Chinese Family Assessment Device

The psychometric properties of C-HS, C-SHS, and C-FAD were examined for Internal Consistency, Temporal Stability, Criterion-related Validity, Predictive Validity, and Factorial Structure, which are as follows.

4.2.2.1 Internal Consistency

The internal consistency of the Chinese Hope Scale (C-HS) was found to be good (Cronbach alpha =0.82). This was comparable to Cronbach alphas obtained in the original HS version, for which α ranged from 0.74 to 0.84 (Snyder, et al., 1991), and in other studies, α =0.78 (Berg, & Snyder, 2010), and α =0.83 (Venning, Elliott, Kettle, & Wilson, 2009). The corrected item-total correlations of C-HS in the present study ranged from 0.77 to 0.83.

The internal consistency of C-SHS was found to be good (Cronbach alpha =0.88). This was comparable to the alphas obtained in other studies: α ranged from 0.82 to 0.95 (Snyder, et al., 1996), and α =0.82 (Peterson, Gerhardt, & Rode, 2006). The corrected item-total correlations of C-SHS ranged from 0.84 to 0.87.

The internal consistency of C-FAD was found to be good (Cronbach alpha=0.90). This was comparable to Cronbach alphas obtained in the original FAD version, α

ranged from 0.48 to 0.76 (Epstein et al., 1983), and in the Spanish version of FAD, $\alpha=0.94$ (Barroilhet, et al., 2009). The corrected item-total correlations of C-FAD in the present study ranged from 0.65 to 0.88.

4.2.2.2 Temporal Stability

Because hope in the C-HS is conceptualized as dispositional construct, and no intervention program for improving hope was conducted for the participants between the two data collection times (8-month interval), the participants retaking the C-HS were assumed to have similar scores across time, and the test-retest reliability of C-HS between the interval were expected to be high. The 8-month test-retest reliability coefficient for the C-HS was 0.61 in the study. The results found in other studies are 0.80 (Yalcin & Malkoc, 2013), and 0.77-0.82 (Hellman, Pittman, & Munoz, 2013). It was noteworthy that the interval between T1 and T2 in the present study was the longest among the similar studies.

The State Hope is to assess goal directed thinking in a given moment or situation (Snyder, et al., 1996). No intervention program for improving State Hope was conducted for the participants between the two data collection times (8-month interval). The participants retaking the C-SHS might differ their State Hope levels due to the fact it was measuring state hope rather than trait hope, and the test-retest

reliability of C-SHS between the two times was not necessarily expected to be high. The 8-month test-retest reliability coefficient for the C-SHS was 0.36 in the present study. The coefficients found in another study ranged from 0.48 to 0.93 (Lopez et al., 2000). The possible reasons of relatively low test-retest reliability in C-SHS will be explored in the Discussion chapter.

Family Assessment Device (FAD) is a self-report questionnaire designed to assess specific aspects of the family functioning at a given moment. The participants were asked to decide how well the statements in the device represented their own family currently. No intervention program for improving family functioning was conducted for the participants between the two data-collection times (8-month interval). The participants retaking the C-FAD after eight months might differ in their scores due to the fact it measured the family functioning currently. The eight-month test-retest reliability coefficient in the C-FAD was 0.37. The coefficient found in another study with one-week interval was 0.71 (Byles, et al., 1988). The possible reasons for the relatively low test-retest reliability in the present study will be explored in the Discussion chapter.

4.2.2.3 The Criterion-related Validity

In order to assess the criterion-related validity of the C-HS, C-SHS, and C-FAD,

correlation analyses between the total C-HS with its subscale scores, total C-SHS with its subscale scores, and the overall C-FAD were conducted. Since there was a gender effect on hope, the partial correlation controlled for age is presented separately for the two genders. As shown in Table 4.2, the HS and its subscale scores, and SHS and its subscale scores are all significantly positively correlated with each other. As expected, the C-HS scores, C-SHS scores, and their subscale scores were all significantly correlated with the overall C-FAD. The Criterion-related validities of C-HS, C-SHS, and C-FAD were supported accordingly.

Table 4.2: Partial Correlation of Hope total score and outcome measures controlled for age by genders at Time 1 (n=501, 297 males and 204 females, * $p < .001$)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. HS - Total	---	<i>0.94*</i>	<i>0.93*</i>	<i>0.75*</i>	<i>0.68*</i>	<i>0.78*</i>	<i>-0.53*</i>
2. HS - Agency	0.96*	---	<i>0.75*</i>	<i>0.63*</i>	<i>0.59*</i>	<i>0.62*</i>	<i>-0.59*</i>
3. HS - Pathways	0.96*	0.83*	---	<i>0.80*</i>	<i>0.69*</i>	<i>0.85*</i>	<i>-0.50*</i>
4. SHS - Total	0.85*	0.66*	0.91*	---	<i>0.96*</i>	<i>0.95*</i>	<i>-0.52*</i>
5. SHS - Agency	0.75*	0.61*	0.82*	0.94*	---	<i>0.82*</i>	<i>-0.43*</i>
6. SHS - Pathways	0.79*	0.63*	0.89*	0.93*	0.76*	---	<i>-0.54*</i>
7. OFF	-0.49*	-0.47*	-0.53*	-0.51*	-0.45*	-0.49*	---

Note: Correlations among men and women were presented in upper right area (*Italic*) and lower left area (Times New Roman) respectively. Higher scores on family functioning represented lower family functioning, and lower scores represented higher family functioning. HS=Hope Scale; SHS=State Hope Scale; OFF=Overall Family Functioning

4.2.2.4 Predictive Validity

In order to investigate the roles of hope and family functioning in the development of academic success, the predictive validity of hope and family

functioning on the final academic results of YJD were examined in this section. Three sets of regression analyses were conducted to assess the potential of hope and family functioning in predicting the final academic results of YJD after controlling for the effect of demographic variables and the baseline level of the former public examination, i.e., the Diploma of Secondary Education Examination.

As presented in Table 4.3, C-HS scores at Time 1 significantly predicted YJD result after controlling for the effect of age, gender and the former public examination, $\Delta F_{(1, 496)}=259.63, p<0.01, \Delta R^2=0.321$. Also, C-SHS scores at Time 1 significantly predicted YJD result after controlling for the effect of age, gender and the former public examination, $\Delta F_{(1, 496)}=142.05, p<0.01, \Delta R^2=0.21$. The C-FAD scores (in terms of OFF) at Time 1 significantly predicted YJD academic result after controlling for the effect of age, gender and the former public examination results, $\Delta F_{(1, 496)}=158.12, p<0.01, \Delta R^2=0.23$.

C-HS, C-SHS, and C-FAD demonstrated significant predictive validity in relation to YJD results. These were consistent with findings reported by other researchers in their validation studies (Sun, Ng, & Wang, 2012; Ziv, Ben Haim, & Itamar, 2011; Snyder, et al., 1996; Shek, 2002).

Table 4.3: Hierarchical regression analysis for hope, state hope and family functioning as predictors of the academic results of YJD (N=501)

Criterion Variable	Predictor Variable	β at final step	ΔR^2	Total R^2	ΔF
YJD Result	T1 Age	.07	.02	.02	10.24*
	T1 Gender (male = 0)	.02	.01	.03	3.15
	T1 Public Examination Result	.17	.04	.07	21.69*
	T1 HS	.58	.32	.39	259.62*
YJD Result	T1 Age	.09	.02	.02	10.24*
	T1 Gender (male = 0)	-.01	.07	.03	3.15
	T1 Public Examination Result	.18	.04	.07	21.69*
	T1 SHS	.47	.21	.28	142.04*
YJD Result	T1 Age	.09	.02	.02	10.24*
	T1 Gender (male = 0)	-.06	.01	.03	3.15
	T1 Public Examination Result	.10	.04	.07	21.69*
	T1 Family Functioning (OFF)	-.49	.23	.29	158.12*

All statistics for a given predictor variable were computed at the step that variable entered the equation. T1=Time 1; *p<0.01. Note: HS = Hope Scale; SHS = State Hope Scale; OFF = Overall Family Functioning; Public Examination Result=the examination result of the Diploma of Secondary Education Examination which the YJD students had taken before they started the YJD program

4.2.2.5 Factorial Structure

Three individual confirmatory factor analyses were performed with AMOS (v.22) for testing the factorial structures of the C-HS, C-SHS, and C-FAD respectively. The results are as follows.

Factorial Structure of C-HS

A confirmatory factor analysis was performed for testing the factorial structure of the C-HS. Snyder et al. (1991) and Snyder (1994) proposed that the Hope Scale

had a two-correlated factor structure. The data collected in the present study was tested with the model which depicted hope as comprising two correlated and reciprocal factors: agency and pathway, and each factor had four items which theoretically loaded only on one factor. As a contrast, the analysis employed a one-factor model which hypothesized hope was comprised of only one factor and all eight items theoretically loading on it only. Maximum likelihood estimation was employed to estimate the goodness-of-fit of the independence model, one-factor model and the two-factor models.

The indices applied in the present confirmatory factor analysis involved: the chi-square value, chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio (χ^2/df) (Hu & Bentler, 1998), absolute model fit indices including the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), goodness of fit index (GFI), adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008; Wheaton, 1987), and relative model fit indices including the Normed Fit Index (NFI), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and the Incremental Fit Index (IFI) (Bentler, 1990; Bentler & Bonett, 1980; Bowen, 2012).

Table 4.4 summarizes the model fit statistics of C-HS with the independence model, one-factor model, and two-factor model. The results showed that the two-correlated factor model fits the data significantly better than the one-factor model and the independence model. For the absolute model fit indices, the GFI and AGFI

showed that the two-factor model was good fit to the present data as all the indices were above 0.9. The RMSEA showed that the two-factor model was medium fit to the present data with the value just above 0.08 (Chen et al., 2008; Marsh, Hau, & Wen, 2004). The goodness-of-fit of the two-factor model measured by the Chi-square value and Chi-square to degree of freedom ratio did not reach the good criteria due to the significant p values ($p < 0.01$). However, numerous researchers have argued that the chi-square values heavily depended on the size of samples and thus it was not a good indicator or model fitness when the sample size was large (Hoyle & Mullen, 1995; Crowley & Fan, 1997; Hu & Bentler, 1995; Yuan & Bentler, 1997). For the relative fit indices, the NFI, CFI and IFI demonstrated that the two-factor model provided a good fit to the present data as the indices were all above 0.9.

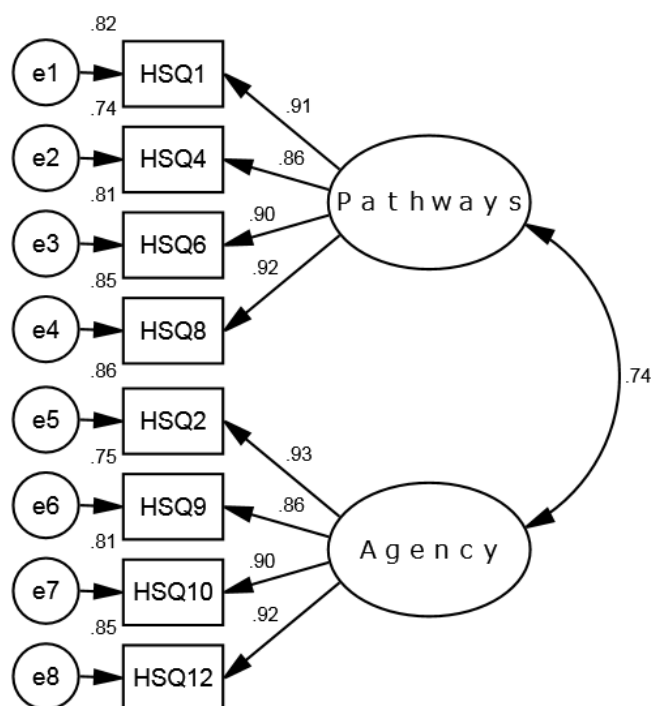
The above findings supported the two-correlated-factor model which was proposed by Snyder (1994) and Snyder et al. (1991) for the Chinese version of the scale. A path diagram of the two-factor model of Hope is shown in Figure 4.4.

Table 4.4: The model fit indices of various measurement models of Chinese Hope Scale (C-HS) (N=501)

Model Specification	df	χ^2	p	χ^2/df	RMSEA	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	IFI
Independence model	8	4248.49	<.01	151.73	.549	.23	.01	.00	.00	.00
One-factor model	20	1009.69	<.01	50.49	.315	.56	.21	.76	.77	.77
Two-factor model	19	92.58	<.01	4.87	.088	.96	.92	.98	.98	.98

Model comparison: The one-factor model vs. the two-factor model: $\Delta \chi^2(1) = 917.11$, $p < 0.01$; the independence model vs. the two-factor model: $\Delta \chi^2(11) = 4155.91$, $p < 0.01$.

Figure 4.4 Path diagram of the two-factor model of Hope in standardized solution



Factorial Structure of C-SHS

A confirmatory factor analysis was performed for testing the factorial structures of the C-SHS. Snyder (1996) proposed that the State Hope Scale was a two-correlated

factor model. The data collected in the present study was tested with the model which depicted state hope as comprising two correlated and reciprocal factors: agency and pathway, and each factor had three items which theoretically load only on one factor. The procedure of testing C-SHS was same to that of C-HS, in which the same model fit indices were utilized.

Table 4.5 summarizes the model fit statistics of C-SHS with the independence model, one-factor model, and two-factor model. The results showed that the two-correlated factor model fits the data significantly better than the one-factor model and the independence model. For the absolute model fit indices, the RMSEA with the value less than 0.08 showed that the two-factor model was good fit to the present data (Chen et al., 2008; Marsh, Hau, & Wen, 2004). The GFI and AGFI also showed that the model was good fit to the present data as both indices were above 0.9. The goodness-of-fit of the two-factor model measured by the Chi-square value and Chi-square to degree of freedom ratio did not reach the good criteria due to the significant p values ($p < 0.01$). However, as mentioned in the last section, it was argued that the chi-square values heavily depended on the size of samples and was not a good indicator or model fitness when the sample size was large (Hoyle & Mullen, 1995; Crowley & Fan, 1997; Hu & Bentler, 1995; Yuan & Bentler, 1997). For the relative fit indices, the NFI, CFI and IFI demonstrated that the two-factor model provided a

good fit to the present data as all the indices were larger than 0.95.

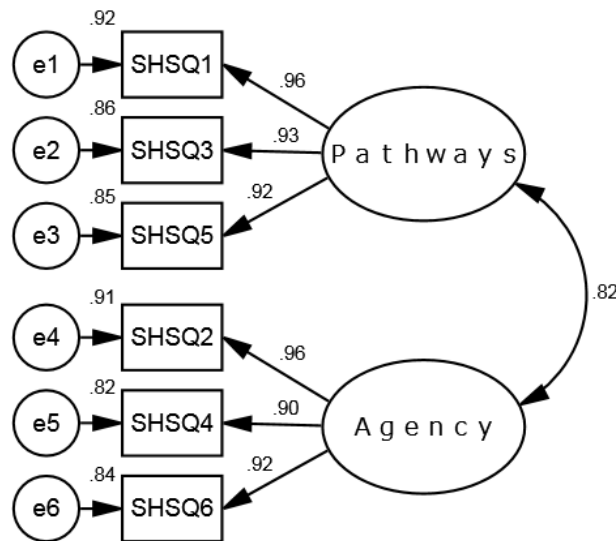
The above findings supported the two-correlated-factor model which was proposed by Snyder et al. (1996) for the Chinese version of the scale. A path diagram of the two-factor model is shown in Figure 4.5.

Table 4.5: The model fit indices of various measurement models of Chinese Hope Scale (C-SHS) (N=501)

Model Specification	df	χ^2	p values	χ^2/df	RMSEA	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	IFI
Independence model	15	3595.12	<.01	239.68	.691	.67	.23	.00	.00	.00
One-factor model	9	597.48	<.01	66.39	.362	.67	.23	.83	.84	.84
Two-factor model	8	28.81	<.01	3.60	.072	.98	.95	.99	.99	.99

Model comparison: The one-factor model vs. the two-factor model: $\Delta \chi^2(1) = 568.67$, $p < 0.01$; the independence model vs. the two-factor model: $\Delta \chi^2(7) = 3566.31$, $p < 0.01$.

Figure 4.5 Path diagram of the two-factor model of State Hope in standardized solution



Factorial Structure of C-FAD

A confirmatory factor analysis was performed for testing the factorial structures of the C-FAD. The Family Assessment Device developed by Epstein et al (1983) was theoretically derived from a seven-dimensional model, which included Problem solving, Communication, Roles, Affective Response, Affective Involvement, Behavioral Control, and General Functioning. However, it was important to note that the seven dimensional model of the original FAD was not developed through factor analysis methods (Epstein et al., 1983; Kabacoff et al., 1990). Other researchers have developed three-factor model of FAD by factor analysis (Barroilhet et al., 2009; Roncone et al., 1998; Speranza et al., 2012; Shek, 2002). However, the latent factors of these models differed from each other, and the items inside the latent factors were also different. Due to the inconsistency of the three-factor models, the present confirmatory factor analysis did not use them as a model for testing the factorial structure of the C-FAD. The present confirmatory factor analysis adopted the two-factor model developed by Ridenour, Daley, & Reich (1999), because such two-factor model was derived from the original theory established by Epstein, Baldwin, and Bishop in 1983, and it was better fit than one factor model with the data. Ridenour, Daley, & Reich (1999) argued that the two-factor model was “based on item content analysis, and the (original) authors’ description of what each subscale

measure” (p. 500).

The present data was tested with the two-factor model which depicted family functioning as mainly comprising two correlated and reciprocal factors: collaboration and commitment (Epstein et al., 1983; Ridenour, Daley, & Reich, 1999). Collaboration factors contained four dimensions: Problem Solving, Communication, Affective Response, and General Functioning. Commitment factors contained five dimensions: Roles, Affective Involvement, Behavioral Control, Affective Response, and General Functioning. Affective Response and General Functioning existed in both factors. Path diagram of the FAD model with two factors is presented in Figure 4.6. The procedure of testing C-FAD was same to that of C-HS and C-SHS, in which the same model fit indices were employed.

Table 4.6 summarizes the model fit statistics of C-FAD with the independence model, one-factor model, and two-factor model. The results showed that the two-factor model fits the data significantly better than the one-factor model and the independence model. For the absolute model fit indices, the GFI and AGFI showed that the two-factor model was good fit to the present data as the indices were 0.98. The RMSEA with the value of 0.1 showed that the model was medium fit to the present data (Chen et al., 2008; Marsh, Hau, & Wen, 2004). The goodness-of-fit of the two-factor model measured by the Chi-square value and Chi-square to degree of

freedom ratio (χ^2/df) did not reach a good criteria. However, as mentioned before, it was argued that the chi-square values heavily depended on the size of samples and was not a good indicator of model fitness when the sample size was large (Hoyle & Mullen, 1995; Crowley & Fan, 1997; Hu & Bentler, 1995; Yuan & Bentler, 1997). For the relative fit indices, the NFI, CFI and IFI demonstrated that the two-factor model provided a good fit to the present data as all the indices were above 0.9.

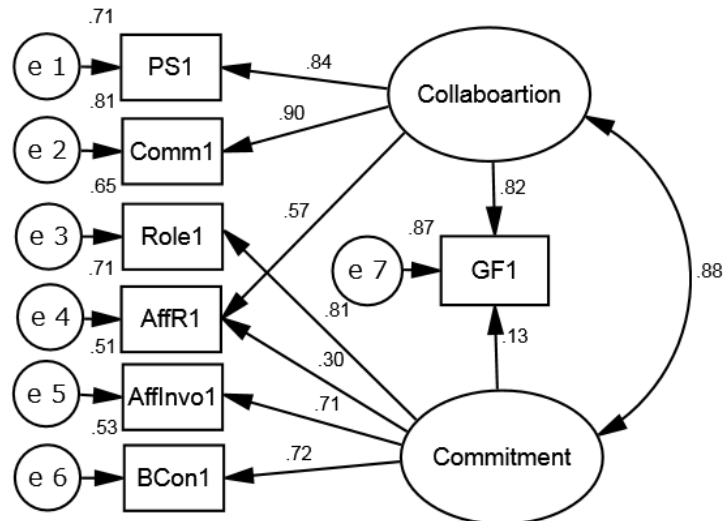
The above results supported the two-correlated-factor model which was proposed by Ridenour, Daley, & Reich (1999) for the Chinese version of the scale. A path diagram of the two-factor model of family functioning is shown in Figure 4.6. It is noteworthy that the two-correlated factor applied in the present data had better fit when placing the dimension of General Functioning (standardized estimates = 0.13) under the factor of Collaboration only, instead of under both latent factors.

Table 4.6 The model fit indices of various measurement models of Chinese Family Assessment Device (C-FAD) (N=501)

Model Specification	df	χ^2	p values	χ^2/df	RMSEA	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	IFI
Independence model	15	1833.69	<.01	122.25	.492	.347	.086	0.00	0.00	0.00
One-factor model	9	86.77	<.01	9.64	.131	.95	.87	.95	.96	.96
Two-factor model	11	66.28	<.01	6.02	.100	.96	.91	.98	.98	.98

Model comparison: The one-factor model vs. the two-factor model: $\Delta \chi^2(2) = 20.49$, $p < .01$; the independence model vs. the two-factor model: $\Delta \chi^2(4) = 1767.41$, $p < .01$.

Figure 4.6 Path diagram of the two-factor model of Family Functioning in standardized solution



To summarize, the findings of the above confirmatory factor analyses supported the factorial structure of C-HS, C-SHS, and C-FAD with the Hope model (Snyder et al., 1991; Snyder, 1994), State Hope model (Snyder, 1996), and FAD model (Epstein, Baldwin, & Bishop, 1983; Ridenour, Daley, & Reich, 1999) respectively.

4.2.2.6 Summary

The internal consistency, criterion-related validity, predictive validity, and factorial structure were supported in the psychometric properties of C-HS, C-SHS, and C-FAD. Also, the temporal stability of C-HS was comparable to that of other similar studies, but the temporal stabilities of C-SHS and C-FAD were found relatively low.

4.2.3 The Mediation Effect of Hope in the Relationship between Family Functioning and Academic Achievement

As mentioned in Section 2.7, the relationships among hope, family functioning, and academic achievement were not very clear. This section focuses on the investigation of the mediating effect of hope in the relationship between family functioning and academic achievement. Three assumptions and four conditions are required to be fulfilled for evaluating the mediation effect. For the purpose of comparison, the mediation effect of HS and SHS were analyzed in Time 1 and Time 2 respectively. The software, SPSS (v.22), was used for the mediation analyses. Also, Sobel tests were carried out with the on-line program developed by Preacher and Leonardelli (2004), which was used for evaluating the significance of the mediations.

4.2.3.1 The Assumptions

Three assumptions were required to be fulfilled before testing the mediation analysis (Baron and Kenny, 1986). First, the independent variable (IV) was assumed to be significantly correlated with the proposed mediator. Second, the independent variable was assumed to be significantly correlated with the dependent variable (DV). Third, the proposed mediator was assumed to be significantly correlated with the dependent variable. In the present study, the family functioning (IV) was assumed to

be significantly correlated with Hope and State Hope (mediator), and YJD result (DV) respectively. Hope and State Hope were assumed to be significantly correlated with YJD result respectively. If these requirements were fulfilled, it was worthwhile to put forward a mediating test.

For fulfilling the above assumptions, a series of correlation tests were conducted among the variables. Hope and State Hope, as the mediator, were measured by HS and SHS respectively. Family functioning contained eight dimensions which were the independent variables: the Overall Family Functioning, Problem Solving, Communication, Roles, Affective responses, Affective involvement, Behavior Control, and General Functioning. The correlations were done separately at T1 and T2.

The Overall Family Functioning (OFF) scale was also used in the present study. The original McMaster Family Assessment Device did not involve the subscale of Overall Family Functioning (Epstein, Baldwin, & Bishop, 1983). The OFF was the mean of all sixty items of FAD, and was designed for measuring general family functioning (Simmons & Lehmann, 2013). The OFF was an alternative way of reviewing the family functioning generally, and the “most credible use of the FAD” besides the subscale of General Functioning in FAD (Ridenour, Daley, & Reich, 1999, p.507).

The correlation tests showed that significant correlations were found among the IVs, Mediators, and DVs both at T1 and T2. Tables 4.7a and 4.7b summarize the correlations among the variables in the present study, and show a total of fifty-one significant correlations, out of fifty-four. These significant correlations provided information regarding which variables would be appropriate for the mediation tests. The three insignificant correlations were the YJD result with the Roles ($r(499)=-0.09$, $p=0.051$), Affective involvement ($r(499)=-0.08$, $p=0.079$), and Behavior Control ($r(499)=-0.07$, $p=0.118$) at T2.

Table 4.7a: Correlations among variables for Hope mediating model at T1

1.HS1	1											
2.SHS1	0.49***	1										
3.YJD	0.38***	0.21***	1									
4.OFF1	-0.50***	-0.33***	-0.33***	1								
5.PS1	-0.50***	-0.36***	-0.29***	0.84***	1							
6.Com1	-0.43***	-0.31***	-0.28***	0.88***	0.75***	1						
7.Role1	-0.40***	-0.22***	-0.24***	0.80***	0.61***	0.62***	1					
8.AffR1	-0.39***	-0.23***	-0.29***	0.86***	0.66***	0.78***	0.63***	1				
9.AffV1	-0.34***	-0.21***	-0.22***	0.72***	0.48***	0.56***	0.58***	0.60***	1			
10.BCon1	-0.37***	-0.26***	-0.26***	0.74***	0.62***	0.56***	0.59***	0.58***	0.50***	1		
11.GF1	-0.46***	-0.32***	-0.29***	0.92***	0.80***	0.83***	0.69***	0.78***	0.62***	0.60***	1	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	

Table 4.7b: Correlations among variables for Hope mediating model at T2

1.HS2	1											
2.SHS2	0.81***	1										
3.YJD	0.32***	0.37***	1									
4.OFF2	-0.3***	-0.33***	-0.16***	1								
5.PS2	-0.37***	-0.38***	-0.17***	0.82***	1							
6.Com2	-0.33***	-0.36***	-0.17***	0.84***	0.80***	1						
7.Role2	-0.2***	-0.23***	-0.09 ^a	0.83***	0.72***	0.73***	1					
8.AffR2	-0.29***	-0.31***	-0.19***	0.84***	0.73***	0.82***	0.70***	1				
9.AffV2	-0.14**	-0.17***	-0.08 ^a	0.79***	0.62***	0.66***	0.75***	0.69***	1			
10.BCon2	-0.17***	-0.15**	-0.07 ^a	0.80***	0.71***	0.69***	0.79***	0.68***	0.73***	1		
11.GF2	-0.36***	-0.42***	-0.22***	0.81***	0.78***	0.83***	0.68***	0.79***	0.62***	0.59***	1	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	

Note. HS=Hope Scale; SHS=State Hope Scale; YJD=Yijin Diploma result; OFF=Overall Family Functioning; PS=Problem Solving; Com=Communication; Role=Roles; AffR=Affective Responses; AffV=Affective Involvement; BCon=Behavior Control; GF=General Functioning; 1 (next to the abbreviations) = T1; 2 (next to the abbreviations) = T2. ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$; ^a $p > 0.05$

4.2.3.2 The Conditions

As mentioned in Section 2.7, little is known about the influences of the two independent constructs, hope and family functioning, on academic achievement when the two constructs are used simultaneously as predictors. This section focuses on investigating the influences, by which the mediation models of the three constructs are established. For establishing mediation models, there are four conditions (Baron and Kenny, 1986). First, the independent variable (IV) should significantly predict the mediator. Second, the IV should significantly predict the dependent variable (DV). Third, the mediator should significantly predict the DV with the presence of the IV. Fourth, the effect of the IV on the DV would decrease or even disappear after the mediator is added to the regression.

Based on these conditions, two sets of regression analyses, Time 1 and Time 2, were conducted separately, and each of which included four regression steps examining (1) whether the independent variables (8 dimensions of FAD) significantly predicted the hypothesized mediators (HS and SHS); (2) whether the mediators (HS and SHS) significantly predicted the dependent variable (YJD result); (3) whether the independent variables significantly predicted the dependent variable; and (4) whether the regression coefficient of the independent variables on the dependent variable would decrease or become non-significant when the effect of mediators (HS and SHS)

was controlled. The research models are shown in Figure 4.7a and 4.7b.

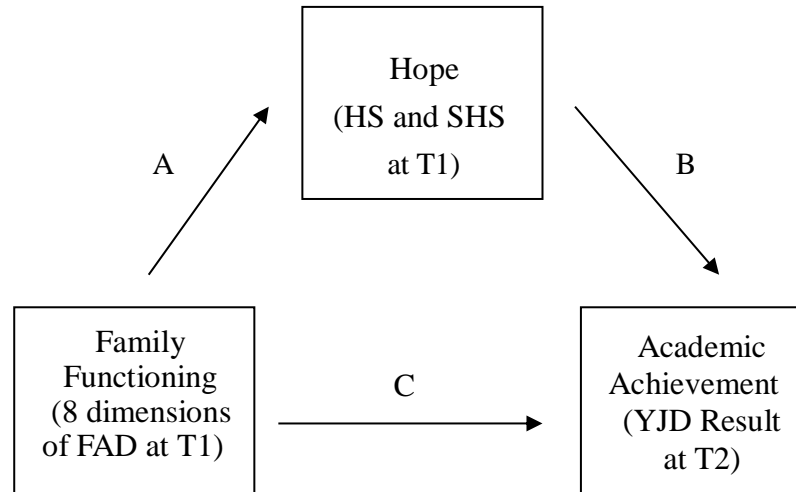


Figure 4.7a: Mediating pathway from Family Functioning through Hope to Academic Achievement at T1.

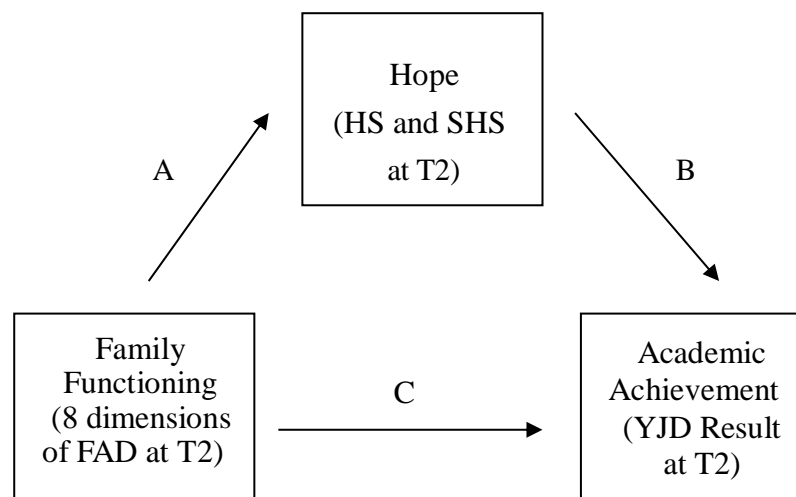


Figure 4.7b: Mediating pathway from Family Functioning through Hope to Academic Achievement at T2.

The First Condition

According to the first condition, the IVs should significantly predict the mediator. The regressions were conducted separately at T1 and T2. Table 4.8a and 4.8b summarize the results which showed that the IVs (all eight dimensions of FAD) significantly predicted the mediators (HS and SHS) at T1 and T2 respectively. The first condition of mediation analyses was fulfilled.

The Second Condition

According to the second condition of mediation analyses, the IV should significantly predict the dependent variable. As presented in Table 4.9a, all dimensions of Family Functioning (IVs) at T1 significantly predicted the YJD result (DV). However, only the Overall Family Functioning, Problem Solving, Communication, Affective responses, and General Functioning at T2 significantly predict the DV (see Table 4.9b). The Roles ($p=0.051$), Affective Involvement ($p=0.079$), and Behavior Control ($p=0.118$) variables did not significantly predict the DV. Thus, these three variables at T2 did not fulfill the second condition.

The Third Condition

According to the third condition of mediation analyses, the mediators (HS and

SHS) should significantly predict the result of YJD. As presented in Table 4.10a and 4.10b, HS and SHS significantly predicted the result of YJD both at Time 1 and Time 2 respectively. The third condition was fulfilled.

The Fourth Condition

According to the fourth condition of mediation, the effect of IVs on the DV has to decrease after the mediators are added to the model. As presented in Table 4.11a and 4.11b, all dimensions of family functioning at T1 dropped after the mediators (HS and SHS) had added to the regressions. Five dimensions of family functioning at T2 (Overall Family Functioning, Problem Solving, Communication, Affective Response, and General Functioning) also decreased after the mediators were added to analyses. Hope and State Hope were the mediators between Family Functioning and YJD result.

Table 4.8a: Predicting Hope Scale and State Hope Scale from the eight dimensions of FAD (T1)

IV	Mediator	B	SE	β	T
OFF1	HS1	-10.33	0.80	-0.50***	-12.99***
	SHS1	-4.83	0.86	-0.24***	-5.62***
PS1	HS1	-8.54	0.66	-5.00***	-12.99***
	SHS1	-4.28	0.71	-0.26***	-6.05***
Com1	HS1	-7.04	0.67	-0.43***	-10.55***
	SHS1	-3.58	0.69	-0.23***	-5.18***
Role1	HS1	-8.39	0.86	-0.40***	-9.79***
	SHS1	-2.58	0.89	-0.13***	-2.88**
AffR1	HS1	-5.62	0.59	-0.39***	-9.47***
	SHS1	-2.54	0.61	-0.18***	-4.17***
AffV1	HS1	-6.53	0.81	-0.34***	-8.05***
	SHS1	-2.86	0.82	-0.15***	-3.48**
BCon1	HS1	-8.90	1.00	-0.37***	-8.91***
	SHS1	-4.15	1.02	-0.18***	-4.07***
GF1	HS1	-7.00	0.61	-0.46***	-11.50***
	SHS1	-3.77	0.64	-0.26***	-5.92***

Table 4.8b: Predicting Hope Scale and State Hope Scale from the eight dimensions of FAD (T2)

IV	Mediator	B	SE	β	t
OFF2	HS2	-4.90	0.69	-0.30***	-7.12***
	SHS2	-5.03	0.65	-0.33***	-7.79***
PS2	HS2	-5.35	0.61	-0.37***	-8.82***
	SHS2	-5.31	0.57	-0.38***	-9.31***
Com2	HS2	-4.58	0.59	-0.33***	-7.82***
	SHS2	-7.03	0.61	-0.46***	-11.61***
Role2	HS2	-3.07	0.66	-0.20***	-4.64***
	SHS2	-3.32	0.62	-0.23***	-5.34***
AffR2	HS2	-3.68	0.54	-0.29***	-6.86***
	SHS2	-3.72	0.50	-0.31***	-7.37***
AffV2	HS2	-1.83	0.56	-0.14**	-3.25**
	SHS2	-2.05	0.53	-0.17***	-3.85***
BCon2	HS2	-2.41	0.64	-0.17***	-3.78***
	SHS2	-2.06	0.61	-0.15**	-3.39**
GF2	HS2	-5.71	0.66	-0.36***	-8.70***
	SHS2	-6.24	0.61	-0.42***	-10.30***

Note. HS=Hope Scale; SHS=State Hope Scale; YJD=Yijin Diploma result; OFF=Overall Family Functioning; PS=Problem Solving; Com=Communication; Role=Roles; AffR=Affective Responses; AffV=Affective Involvement; BCon=Behavior Control; GF=General Functioning; 1 (next to the abbreviations) = T1; 2 (next to the abbreviation) = T2. *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$

Table 4.9a: Predicting YJD result from the eight dimensions of FAD (T1)

IV	DV	B	SE	β	T
OFF1	YJD	-10.82	1.40	-0.33***	-7.75***
PS1	YJD	-8.01	1.17	-0.29***	-6.85***
Com1	YJD	-7.44	1.14	-2.80***	-6.53***
Role1	YJD	-8.23	1.46	-0.25***	-5.65***
AffR1	YJD	-6.81	0.99	-0.29***	-6.89***
AffV1	YJD	-6.82	1.35	-0.22***	-5.51***
BCon1	YJD	-10.21	1.67	-0.26***	-6.13***
GF1	YJD	-7.16	1.05	-0.29***	-6.80***

Table 4.9b: Predicting YJD result from the eight dimensions of FAD (T2)

IV	DV	B	SE	β	T
OFF2	YJD	-4.26	1.17	-0.16***	-3.64***
PS2	YJD	-4.18	1.06	-0.17***	-3.96***
Com2	YJD	-3.79	1.01	-0.17***	-3.76***
Role2	YJD	-2.18	1.11	<u>-0.09^a</u>	<u>-1.97^a</u>
AffR2	YJD	-3.86	0.91	-0.19***	-4.26***
AffV2	YJD	-1.64	0.93	<u>-0.08^a</u>	<u>-1.76^a</u>
BCon2	YJD	-1.66	1.06	<u>-0.07^a</u>	<u>-1.56^a</u>
GF2	YJD	-5.75	1.13	-0.22***	-5.10***

Note. YJD=Yijin Diploma result; OFF=Overall Family Functioning; PS=Problem Solving; Com=Communication; Role=Roles; AffR=Affective Responses; AffV=Affective Involvement; BCon=Behavior Control; GF=General Functioning; 1 (next to the abbreviations)=T1; 2 (next to the abbreviation)=T2. *** $p < 0.001$; ^a $p > 0.05$

Table 4.10a: Predicting YJD result from the Hope (HS and SHS) at T1

Mediator	DV	B	SE	β	T
HS1	YJD	0.61	0.07	0.38***	9.10***
SHS1	YJD	0.37	0.08	0.21***	4.85***

Table 4.10b: Predicting YJD result from the Hope (HS and SHS) at T2

Mediator	DV	B	SE	β	T
HS2	YJD	0.53	0.07	0.32***	7.56***
SHS2	YJD	0.65	0.07	0.37***	8.95***

Note. HS=Hope Scale; SHS=State Hope Scale; YJD=Yijin Diploma result; 1 (next to the abbreviations)=T1; 2 (next to the abbreviation)=T2. *** $p < 0.001$

Table 4.11a: Regression analysis of Family Functioning and Hope for predicting YJD result (T1)

IV	DV	Mediator added	B	SE	β	T
OFF1	YJD	Before	-10.82	1.40	-0.33***	-7.75***
		After (HS1)	-6.10	1.56	-0.18***	-3.90***
		After (SHS1)	-9.53	1.47	-0.29***	-6.47***
PS1	YJD	Before	-8.01	1.17	-0.29***	-6.85***
		After (HS1)	-3.78	1.30	-0.14**	-2.91**
		After (SHS1)	-6.80	1.25	-0.25***	-5.46***
Com1	YJD	Before	-7.44	1.14	-0.28***	-6.53***
		After (HS1)	-3.87	1.20	-0.15***	-3.22***
		After (SHS1)	-6.30	1.19	-0.24***	-5.30***
Role1	YJD	Before	-8.23	1.46	-0.25***	-5.65***
		After (HS1)	-3.75	1.51	-0.11**	-2.48**
		After (SHS1)	-6.98	1.48	-0.21***	-4.73***
AffR1	YJD	Before	-6.81	0.99	-0.29***	-6.89***
		After (HS1)	-4.02	1.03	-0.17***	-3.91***
		After (SHS1)	-5.98	1.01	-0.26***	-5.94***
AffV1	YJD	Before	-6.82	1.35	-0.22***	-5.50***
		After (HS1)	-3.23	1.36	-0.10**	-2.38**
		After (SHS1)	-5.68	1.36	-0.18***	-4.17***
BCon1	YJD	Before	-10.21	1.67	-0.26***	-6.13***
		After (HS1)	-5.58	1.71	-0.14**	-3.27**
		After (SHS1)	-8.63	1.71	-0.22***	-5.06***
GF1	YJD	Before	-7.16	1.05	-0.29***	-6.8***
		After (HS1)	-3.69	1.14	-0.15**	-3.25**
		After (SHS1)	-6.11	1.10	-0.25***	-5.54***

Table 4.11b: Regression analysis of Family Functioning and Hope for predicting YJD result (T2)

IV	DV	Mediator added	B	SE	β	t
OFF2	YJD	Before	-4.26	1.17	-0.16***	-3.64***
		After (HS2)	-1.84	1.18	-0.07***	-1.56***
		After (SHS2)	-1.13	1.17	-0.04***	-0.97***
PS2	YJD	Before	-4.18	1.06	-0.17***	-3.96***
		After (HS2)	-1.58	1.09	-0.07***	-1.45***
		After (SHS2)	-0.89	1.08	-0.04***	-0.83***
Com2	YJD	Before	-3.79	1.01	-0.17***	-3.76***
		After (HS2)	-1.55	1.02	-0.07***	-1.51***
		After (SHS2)	-0.88	1.01	-0.04***	-0.86***
AffR2	YJD	Before	-3.86	0.91	-0.19***	-4.26***
		After (HS2)	-2.10	0.91	-0.10***	-2.30***
		After (SHS2)	-1.61	0.90	-0.08***	-1.79***
GF2	YJD	Before	-5.75	1.13	-0.22***	-5.10***
		After (HS2)	-3.14	1.17	-0.12**	-2.69**
		After (SHS2)	-2.07	1.18	-0.08***	-1.75***

Note. HS=Hope Scale; SHS=State Hope Scale; YJD=Yijin Diploma result; OFF=Overall Family Functioning; PS=Problem Solving; Com=Communication; Role =Roles; AffR=Affective Responses; AffV=Affective Involvement; BCon=Behavior Control; GF=General Functioning; 1 (next to the abbreviations) = T1; 2 (next to the abbreviation) = T2. *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$

4.2.3.3 The Significance of the Mediation

The results indicated Hope and State Hope were mediators between Family Functioning and YJD result. However, when hope was added into the model, the effect of Family Functioning on YJD result remained significant. Baron and Kenny (1986) suggested that such partial mediation is rather common because pure mediator is rare. As a result, the Sobel test was required for testing the significance of the mediating effect.

Sobel (1982) first proposed the Sobel test, and it has been one of the most common statistical tests for measuring the indirect effects (Fritz & Mackinnon, 2007). A total of twenty-six mediating relationships were generated with the required four conditions, the significance of these mediating relationships was examined with Sobel tests (see Table 4.12a and 4.12b).

Mediating Effects at Time 1

In regard to the mediating role of HS1 in the relationships between the eight dimensions of Family Functioning and YJD result at Time 1 (see Table 4.12a), the results showed that HS1 significantly mediated the relationships between all dimensions of Family Functioning and YJD results. The effect sizes were medium, ranging from 0.41 to 0.54. From the perspective of the mediation models with

Table 4.12a: Summary of Sobel test at Time 1

IV	Mediator	DV	a	Sa	b	Sb	Sobel test statistic	Effect size
OFF1	HS1	YJD	-10.33	0.80	0.46	0.08	-5.25***	0.44
PS1	HS1	YJD	-8.54	0.66	0.49	0.08	-5.54***	0.53
Com1	HS1	YJD	-7.04	0.67	0.51	0.07	-5.99***	0.48
Role1	HS1	YJD	-8.39	0.86	0.53	0.07	-5.98***	0.54
AffR1	HS1	YJD	-5.62	0.59	0.50	0.07	-5.71***	0.41
AffV1	HS1	YJD	-6.53	0.81	0.55	0.07	-5.63***	0.53
BCon1	HS1	YJD	-8.90	1.00	0.52	0.07	-5.70***	0.45
GF1	HS1	YJD	-7.00	0.61	0.50	0.07	-6.06***	0.49
OFF1	SHS1	YJD	-4.83	0.86	0.20	0.08	-2.28*	0.10
PS1	SHS1	YJD	-4.28	0.71	0.21	0.08	-2.40*	0.12
Com1	SHS1	YJD	-3.58	0.69	0.24	0.08	-2.60*	0.12
Role1	SHS1	YJD	-2.58	0.89	0.29	0.08	-2.26*	0.10
AffR1	SHS1	YJD	-2.54	0.61	0.26	0.08	-2.56**	0.10
AffV1	SHS1	YJD	-2.86	0.82	0.30	0.08	-2.55**	0.13
BCon1	SHS1	YJD	-4.15	1.02	0.27	0.08	-2.60**	0.11
GF1	SHS1	YJD	-3.77	0.64	0.23	0.08	-2.58**	0.12

Table 4.12b: Summary of Sobel test at Time 2

IV	Mediator	DV	a	Sa	b	Sb	Sobel test statistic	Effect size
OFF2	HS2	YJD	-4.90	0.69	0.49	0.07	-4.99***	0.57
PS2	HS2	YJD	-5.35	0.61	0.49	0.07	-5.47***	0.62
Com2	HS2	YJD	-4.58	0.59	0.49	0.07	-5.20***	0.59
AffR2	HS2	YJD	-3.68	0.54	0.48	0.07	-4.83***	0.46
GF2	HS2	YJD	-5.71	0.66	0.45	0.07	-5.16***	0.45
OFF2	SHS2	YJD	-5.03	0.65	0.62	0.08	-5.48***	0.73
PS2	SHS2	YJD	-5.31	0.57	0.62	0.08	-5.96***	0.79
Com2	SHS2	YJD	-7.03	0.61	0.62	0.08	-6.43***	0.83
AffR2	SHS2	YJD	-3.72	0.50	0.60	0.08	-5.28***	0.58
GF2	SHS2	YJD	-6.24	0.61	0.59	0.08	-5.98***	0.64

Note. HS=Hope Scale; SHS=State Hope Scale; YJD=Yijin Diploma result; OFF=Overall Family Functioning; PS=Problem Solving; Com=Communication; Role =Roles; AffR=Affective Responses; AffV=Affective Involvement; BCon=Behavior Control; GF=General Functioning. 1 (next to the abbreviations) = T1; 2 (next to the abbreviation) = T2. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

p-values under 0.01, HS1 was a major mediator in the relationships at Time 1.

In regard to the mediating role of SHS1 in the relationships between the eight dimension of Family Functioning and YJD result at Time 1 (see Table 4.12a), the results showed that SHS1 significantly mediated the relationships between all dimensions of Family Functioning and YJD results ($p < 0.05$). From the perspective of the mediation models with the *p*-values under 0.01, SHS1 was the major mediator only in the relationships between Affective Response, Affective Involvement, Behavior Control, General Functioning, and YJD result. Although the meditation effects of SHS1 on the relationship between Family Functioning and YJD result were statistically significant, their effect sizes were very small. It showed that the indirect effect of SHS1 could only account for 10% to 13% of the total effect of Family Functioning on YJD result, indicating that this mediation might not be very critical in practice.

Mediating Effects at Time 2

In regard to the mediating role of HS2 in the relationships between the five dimensions of Family Functioning and YJD result at Time 2 (see Table 4.12b), the results showed that HS2 significantly mediated the relationships between the five dimensions of Family Functioning and YJD results. The five dimensions were Overall

Family Functioning, Problem Solving, Communication, Affective Response, and General Functioning. The effect sizes of the indirect effect were medium, ranging from 0.45 to 0.62. From the perspective of the mediation models with p -values under 0.01, HS2 was a major mediator in the five relationships at Time 2.

In regard to the mediating role of SHS2 in the relationships between the five dimensions of Family Functioning and YJD result at Time 2 (see Table 4.12b), the results showed that SHS2 significantly mediated the relationships between the five dimensions of Family Functioning and YJD results. Their effect sizes of indirect effects ranged from medium (0.58) to high (0.83). From the perspective of the mediation models with p -values under 0.01, SHS2 was a major mediator in the five relationships at Time 2.

4.2.3.4 Summary

The findings of Section 4.2.3 support Hypothesis 1 that there is a mediating pathway from family functioning through hope to academic achievement in young adults. HS (both at T1 and T2) and SHS (at T2) were major mediators in the relationships between family functioning and academic result. However, the mediating effects of SHS (at T1) might not be very critical in practice due to its small effect size.

4.2.4 The Relationships among Hope, Academic Results, and Graduation Status

Having confirmed the mediating effects of hopes between family functioning and academic result for the young adults, this section reports the strength of hope (Hope and State Hope) in predicting young adults' academic performance and graduation status.

In this analysis, the YJD students were divided into three groups: low-, medium-, and high-hope (Snyder et al., 2002a), and the final grades of YJD academic result were converted to marks for calculation: A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2, F=1, Incomplete=0 (Grade E was not used in YJD academic report). There were 8 subjects in the YJD program. The best score was $8 \times 5 = 40$, and it was converted to 100 marks. The marks presented in the following sections were based on 100 marks as the full marks. The graduation status involved two levels: pass and failure.

It was noteworthy that the marks in YJD academic results could not fully reflect the graduation status. For example, a student graduated in YJD program with $16/40=40$ marks as he had passed 8 subjects with D grade. But another student who was not able to graduate scored $22/40=55$ marks, as he passed 7 subjects with C grade and failed 1 subject with F grade. As such, high marks did not necessarily mean graduation, and academic result and graduation status were analyzed separately.

4.2.4.1 Hope (T1) with Academic Result

A one-way ANOVA examined the relationship of HS scores at Time 1 and YJD students' academic result. The students were divided into three groups: low-hope (HS scores ranged from 10 to 41), medium-hope (HS scores ranged from 42 to 48), and high-hope (HS scores ranged from 49 to 63) (Snyder et al., 2002a).

The HS at Time 1, as the independent variable (three levels: low, medium, and high), and the final YJD result (marks), as the dependent variable, were found to be significantly different, $F(2, 498) = 68.82, p < 0.01$. The means of YJD results of the low-, medium-, and high-hope groups were 49.73 ($SD = 12.57$), 54.03 ($SD = 10.61$), and 64.57 ($SD = 11.81$), respectively.

Post-hoc comparisons of the three groups indicated that the low-, medium-, and high-hope groups were significantly different from each other at $p < 0.05$ by using Tukey's honestly significant difference test. In addition, the HS scores collected at Time 1 and the final YJD result were significantly positively correlated, $r(499) = 0.38, p < 0.001$. A partial correlation between Hope Scale scores and YJD result remained significant after removing shared public examination variance, $r(498) = 0.37, p < 0.001$.

4.2.4.2 Hope (T1) with Graduation Status

The relationship between HS scores collected at Time 1 and the graduation status of YJD students was examined by using a two-way 2 x 3 contingency table. The students were divided into three groups: low-, medium-, and high-hope (the division was same as Section 4.2.4.1), and there were two levels (pass and failure) in graduation status. The results showed that HS scores and graduation status were significantly related, Pearson $\chi^2(2) = 37.54, p < 0.001$. The graduation rates of low-, medium-, and high-hope YJD students are 53.37%, 66.47%, and 84.97%, respectively.

Post hoc comparisons were conducted on the differences among the proportions for the low-, medium-, high-HS groups (Snyder et al., 2002a). The method of Bonferroni adjustment was used to control for Type I error across the comparisons. As there were three pairwise comparisons, the Bonferroni-adjusted p -value for significance was $0.05/3=0.017$. With the three pairwise comparisons, three follow-up 2x2 chi-square tests were conducted, and resulted in the following p -values: low- vs. medium-hope ($p=0.013$), low- vs. high-hope ($p<0.001$), and medium- vs. high hope ($p<0.001$). The p -values for the three pairwise comparison were all less than 0.017. The graduation status of the high-hope YJD students at Time 1 was significantly different to that of medium-, and low-hope students. Further, the graduation status of

medium-hope students at Time 1 was significantly different to that of low-hope students.

4.2.4.3 State Hope (T1) with Academic Result

A one-way ANOVA examined the relationship between SHS at Time 1 and YJD students' academic result. The students were divided into three groups: low state hope (SHS scores ranged from 7 to 30), medium state hope (SHS scores ranged from 31 to 36), and high state hope (SHS scores ranged from 37 to 48) (Snyder et al., 2002a).

The SHS at Time 1, as the independent variable (three levels: low, medium, and high), and the final YJD result (marks), as the dependent variable, showed a significant difference between groups, $F(2, 498) = 11.00, p < 0.01$. The means of YJD results of low-, medium-, and high- state hope groups were 52.38 ($SD = 13.28$), 55.61 ($SD = 12.24$), and 58.96 ($SD = 13.23$), respectively.

Post-hoc comparisons of the three groups indicated that only the low- and high-state hope groups were significantly different at $p < 0.05$ by using Tukey's honestly significant difference test. In addition, the SHS scores collected at Time 1 and the YJD result were significantly positively correlated, $r(499) = 0.21, p < 0.001$. A partial correlation between SHS scores and YJD result remained significant after removing shared public examination variance, $r(498) = 0.19, p < 0.001$.

4.2.4.4 State Hope (T1) with Graduation Status

The relationship between SHS scores collected at Time 1 and the graduation status of YJD students was examined by using a two-way 2 x 3 contingency table. State hope had three levels: low, medium, and high (the division was same as Section 4.2.4.3), and graduation status had two levels (pass or failure). The results showed that SHS scores and graduation status were significantly related, Pearson $\chi^2(2, N = 501) = 53.96, p < 0.01$. The graduation rates of low-, medium-, high-hope YJD students are 58.79%, 69.14%, and 75.00%, respectively.

Post hoc comparisons were conducted on the differences among the proportions for the low-, medium-, high-SHS groups. The method of Bonferroni adjustment was used to control for Type I error across the comparisons. As there were three comparisons, the Bonferroni-adjusted p -value for significance was $0.05/3$, or 0.017 . With the three pairwise comparisons, three follow-up 2×2 chi-square tests were conducted, and resulted in the following p -values: low- vs. medium- state hope ($p < 0.001$), low- vs. high- state hope ($p < 0.001$), and medium- vs. high- state hope ($p = 0.10$). The p -values for the low- vs. medium- state hope and the low- vs. high- state hope were less than 0.017 . The graduation status of the high- and medium- state hope YJD students were significantly different to that of low-state-hope students at Time 2.

4.2.4.5 Hope (T2) with Academic Result

A one-way ANOVA was used to examine the relationship of HS scores at Time 2 with YJD students' academic result. The students were divided into three groups: low hope (HS scores ranged from 21 to 41), medium hope (HS scores ranged from 42-49), and high hope (HS scores ranged from 50 to 62) (Snyder et al., 2002a).

The HS at Time 2, as the independent variable (three levels: low, medium, and high), and the final YJD result (marks), as the dependent variable, showed a significant difference between groups, $F(2, 498) = 22.88, p < 0.01$. The means of YJD results of low-, medium-, and high-hope groups were 50.41 ($SD = 13.39$), 57.24 ($SD = 12.25$), and 59.53 ($SD = 12.31$), respectively.

Post-hoc comparisons of the three groups indicated that the low- and high- hope groups, and the low- and medium- hope groups were significantly different at $p < 0.05$ by using Tukey's honestly significant difference test. In addition, the HS scores collected at Time 2 and the final YJD result were significantly positively correlated, $r(499) = 0.32, p < 0.001$. A partial correlation between Hope Scale scores and YJD result remained significant after removing shared public examination variance, $r(498) = 0.31, p < 0.001$.

4.2.4.6 Hope (T2) with Graduation Status

The relationship between HS scores collected at Time 2 and the graduation status of YJD students was examined by using a two-way 2 x 3 contingency table. HS had three levels: low, medium, and high (the division was same as Section 4.2.4.5), and graduation status had two levels (pass or failure). The HS scores and graduation status were significantly related, Pearson $\chi^2(2, N = 501) = 48.97, p < 0.001$. The graduation rates of low-, medium-, high-hope YJD students are 47.56%, 73.89%, and 81.29%, respectively.

Post hoc comparisons were conducted on the differences among the proportions for the low-, medium-, high-HS groups. The method of Bonferroni adjustment was used to control for Type I error across the comparisons. As there were three comparisons, the Bonferroni-adjusted p -value for significance was $0.05/3$, or 0.017 . With the three pairwise comparisons, three follow-up 2×2 chi-square tests were conducted, and resulted in the following p -values: low- vs. medium-hope ($p < 0.001$), low- vs. high-hope ($p < 0.001$), and medium- vs. high hope ($p = 0.094$). The p -values of the low- vs. medium-hope and the low- vs. high-hope were less than 0.017 . The graduation status of the high- and medium- hope YJD students were significantly different to that of low-hope students at Time 2.

4.2.4.7 State Hope (T2) with Academic Result

A one-way ANOVA examined the relationship of SHS scores at Time 2 and YJD students' academic result. The students were divided into three groups: low state hope (SHS score ranged from 6 to 29), medium state hope (SHS score ranged from 30 to 37), and high state hope (SHS score ranged from 38 to 48) (Snyder et al., 2002a).

The SHS at Time 2, as the independent variable (three levels: low, medium, and high), and the final YJD result (marks), as the dependent variable, showed the groups to be significantly different, $F(2, 498) = 29.88, p < 0.01$. The means of YJD results of low-, medium-, and high-hope groups were 49.30 ($SD = 12.89$), 57.41 ($SD = 12.10$), and 59.56 ($SD = 12.53$), respectively.

Post-hoc comparisons of the three groups indicated that the low- and high- state hope groups, and the low- and medium- state hope groups were significantly different at $p < 0.05$ by using Tukey's honestly significant difference test. In addition, the SHS scores collected at Time 2 and the YJD result were significantly positively correlated, $r(499) = 0.37, p < 0.001$. A partial correlation between Hope Scale scores and YJD result remained significant after removing shared public examination variance, $r(498) = 0.36, p < 0.001$.

4.2.4.8 State Hope (T2) with Graduation Status

The relationship between SHS scores collected at Time 2 and the graduation status of YJD students was examined by using a two-way 2 x 3 contingency table. State hope had three levels: low, medium, and high (the division is same as Section 4.2.4.7), and graduation status had two levels (pass or failure). The results showed that SHS scores and graduation status were significantly related, Pearson $\chi^2(2, N = 501) = 63.96, p < 0.001$. The graduation rates of low-, medium-, high-hope YJD students are 43.04%, 74.14%, and 81.82%, respectively.

Post hoc comparisons were conducted on the differences among the proportions for the low-, medium-, high-SHS groups. The method of Bonferroni adjustment was used to control for Type I error across the comparisons. As there were three comparisons, the Bonferroni-adjusted p -value for significance was $0.05/3$, or 0.017 . With the three pairwise comparisons, three follow-up 2×2 chi-square tests were conducted, and found the following p -values: low- vs. medium- state hope ($p < 0.001$), low- vs. high- state hope ($p < 0.001$), and medium- vs. high- state hope ($p = 0.11$). The p -values for the low- vs. medium- state hope and the low- vs. high- state hope were less than 0.017 . The graduation status of the high- and medium- state hope YJD students were significantly different to that of low-state-hope students at Time 2.

4.2.4.9 Summary

At Time 1, the academic scores and graduation rates of high-hope students were significantly higher than that of medium-, and low- hope students. However, the academic scores and graduation rate of high-state-hope assessed at T1 was only significantly higher than that of low-state-hope students, and not significantly different to that of medium-state-hope students.

At Time 2, the academic scores and graduation rates of high-hope students were only significantly higher than that of the low-hope students, and not significantly higher than that of the medium-hope students. Likewise, the academic scores and graduation rate of high-state-hope students at T2 were only significantly higher than that the low-state-hope students, and not significantly higher than that of medium-state-hope students.

The findings of Section 4.2.4 partially support Hypothesis 2.2 that the young adults' academic achievement help themselves develop hope during the academic year, as the academic scores and graduation rates of high-hope students are significantly higher than that of medium-, and low- hope students, and the correlations between hope and YJD result are significant after removing shared variance. The Hypothesis 2.2 will be further examined with the qualitative results in Section 4.3.

4.2.5 The Longitudinal Changes of the Variables

This section aims to address the second major concern of the study: The longitudinal changes of young adults' hope.

In order to examine the longitudinal changes of the variables over an academic year, the Reliable Change Index and One-way Repeated Measures ANOVA were used for examining individual-level change and normative (mean-level) change respectively. The longitudinal changes of HS, SHS, and FAD in YJD graduates and non-graduates were examined respectively.

4.2.5.1 The Individual-level Changes

The Reliable Change Index (RCI, Jacobson & Truax, 1991) was adopted for examining the individual-level changes of HS, SHS and FAD within the academic year. According to Jacobson and Truax (1991), the change of individual's score between pre-test and pro-test could be considered as reliable only if the change, either positive or negative, was greater than the value of Reliable Change Index, i.e., $\text{standard error of change} \times 1.96$. If the individuals who had the reliable changes were more than 2.5% of the sample, the detected changes were regarded as a true change. Table 4.13 shows that the individual-level changes in HS and its subscales (ranging from 5.99% to 11.58%), SHS and its subscales (ranging from 13.97% to 17.96%), and

FAD and its subscales (ranging from 6.99% to 21.96%) were confirmed as reliable by the Reliable Change Index. The results showed that the individual students (more than 2.5% of the sample) scored differently in HS, SHS, FAD, and all their subscales within the academic year, which resulted in a true change to the present sample.

4.2.5.2 The Mean-level Changes

The One-way Repeated Measures (ANOVA) was used for examining the normative (mean-level) changes of HS, SHS, and FAD within the YJD academic year. Table 4.13 shows that time had no main effects on two hope levels, HS ($F=3.11, p>0.05$, Partial Eta Squared=0.02), and SHS ($F=0.12, p>0.05$, Partial Eta Squared=0.00), but had a main effect on all dimensions of the FAD. The p values of FAD and its subscales were all less than 0.05.

Table 4.13 The Longitudinal Change of Young Adults' Hope, State Hope, and Family Functioning over an academic year

Variables	Mean		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Repeated Measures			Partial Eta Squared	Reliable Change Index		
	T1	T2			Mean Square	F	Sig		Decreased / Worsened (below -1.96)	Unchanged (between -1.96 and 1.96)	Increased / Improved (above 1.96)
HS	43.91	44.86	78.77	1.00	78.77	3.11	0.08	0.01	5.99%	83.03%	10.98%
HSpath	23.62	24.20	25.64	1.00	25.64	3.21	0.07	0.01	11.58%	81.84%	6.59%
HSagen	20.26	20.64	16.92	1.00	16.91	3.27	0.07	0.01	7.98%	88.02%	3.99%
SHS	33.03	33.54	4.38	1.00	4.38	0.12	0.73	0.00	14.97%	67.07%	17.96%
SHSpath	16.66	16.84	2.46	1.00	2.46	0.27	0.60	0.00	15.97%	70.06%	13.97%
SHSagen	16.50	16.67	1.39	1.00	1.39	0.15	0.70	0.00	14.97%	71.06%	13.97%
OFF	2.25	2.32	1.90	1.00	1.90	15.72	0.00	0.03	15.97%	72.06%	11.98%
PS	2.16	2.22	1.50	1.00	1.50	13.48	0.00	0.03	11.98%	80.04%	7.98%
Com	2.23	2.30	1.61	1.00	1.61	14.08	0.00	0.03	10.98%	81.04%	7.98%
Role	2.27	2.34	1.99	1.00	1.99	16.32	0.00	0.03	16.97%	71.06%	11.98%
AffR	2.35	2.41	1.68	1.00	1.68	13.70	0.00	0.03	8.98%	84.03%	6.99%
AffV	2.27	2.36	2.37	1.00	2.37	16.40	0.00	0.03	14.97%	74.05%	10.98%
BCon	2.37	2.46	2.45	1.00	2.45	17.39	0.00	0.03	21.96%	62.08%	15.97%
GF	2.12	2.17	0.94	1.00	0.94	9.68	0.00	0.02	7.98%	85.03%	6.99%

Note. HS=Hope Scale; HSpath=Hope Scale Pathway thinking; HSagen=Hope Scale Agency thinking; SHS=State Hope Scale; SHSpath=State Hope Scale Pathway thinking; SHSagen=State Hope Scale Agency thinking; OFF=Overall Family Functioning; PS=Problem Solving; Com=Communication; Role =Roles; AffR=Affective Responses; AffV=Affective Involvement; BCon=Behavior Control; GF=General Functioning.

4.2.5.3 The Changes of Graduates and Non-graduates

For investigating if Hope, State Hope, and Family Functioning were likely to undergo change when low-achieving young adults were successful in academic achievement, the participants were divided into two groups based on their graduation status: Pass or Failure, and dependent t-tests were used for examining the mean-level changes of their hopes (HS and SHS) and family functioning (FAD) between Time 1 and Time 2.

The Graduates' Hopes vs Non-graduates' Hopes

Table 4.14a summarizes the mean-level changes of the YJD graduates' Hope, and State Hope within the academic year. For the graduates, the increase of their Hope levels (HS) from Time 1 ($M=45.04$, $SD=8.85$) to Time 2 ($M=46.82$, $SD=7.13$) was significant, $t(337) = -4.55$, $p<0.001$, and the effect size was medium (Cohen's $d = -0.50$). The increase of their State Hope levels (SHS) from Time 1 ($M=33.91$, $SD=7.62$) to Time 2 ($M=35.50$, $SD=6.60$) was also significant, $t(337) = -3.48$, $p<0.01$, and the effect size was lower medium (Cohen's $d = -0.38$).

Table 4.14b summarizes the mean-level changes of the YJD non-graduates' Hope, and State Hope within the academic year. For the non-graduates, the decrease

Table 4.14a The Mean-level Change of YJD Graduates' Hope, State Hope, and Family Functioning over an academic year

Variables	T1		T2		<i>t</i>	df	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
HS	45.04	8.85	46.82	7.13	-4.55***	337	-0.50
HSpath	24.11	4.65	25.13	4.05	-4.75***	337	-0.52
HSagen	20.94	4.75	21.69	3.95	-4.24***	337	-0.46
SHS	33.91	7.62	35.50	6.60	-3.48**	337	-0.38
SHSpath	17.07	3.95	17.88	3.62	-3.52***	337	-0.38
SHSagen	16.84	4.04	17.62	3.59	-3.40***	337	-0.37
OFF	2.14	0.37	2.22	0.49	-3.09**	337	-0.34
PS	2.05	0.44	2.11	0.53	-2.53*	337	-0.27
Com	2.12	0.46	2.19	0.56	-2.84**	337	-0.31
Role	2.19	0.39	2.28	0.54	-3.17**	337	-0.35
AffR	2.22	0.53	2.28	0.62	-2.31*	337	-0.25
AffV	2.19	0.42	2.28	0.58	-2.97**	337	-0.32
BCon	2.29	0.33	2.39	0.56	-3.29**	337	-0.29
GF	1.99	0.49	2.04	0.49	-1.82*	337	-0.19

Table 4.14b The Mean-level Change of YJD Non-graduates' Hope, State Hope, and Family Functioning over an academic year

Variables	T1		T2		<i>t</i>	df	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
HS	41.56	6.08	40.81	8.29	1.36 ^a	162	0.21
HSpath	22.65	3.63	22.32	5.08	1.08 ^a	162	0.17
HSagen	18.91	3.64	18.49	4.23	1.69 ^a	162	0.27
SHS	31.69	7.39	29.47	7.91	3.37**	162	0.53
SHSpath	15.87	4.10	14.73	4.28	3.52**	162	0.55
SHSagen	15.82	3.87	14.74	4.19	3.19**	162	0.50
OFF	2.46	0.36	2.53	0.45	-1.66 ^a	162	-0.26
PS	2.38	0.49	2.44	0.53	-1.66 ^a	162	-0.26
Com	2.46	0.50	2.53	0.55	-1.87 ^a	162	-0.29
Role	2.41	0.35	2.49	0.47	-2.06 ^a	162	-0.32
AffR	2.62	0.56	2.69	0.60	-1.83 ^a	162	-0.29
AffV	2.42	0.40	2.53	0.70	-2.27 ^b	162	-0.36
BCon	2.52	0.33	2.60	0.52	-1.90 ^a	162	-0.30
GF	2.39	0.53	2.44	0.45	-1.28 ^a	162	-0.20

Note. HS=Hope Scale; HSpath=Hope Scale Pathway thinking; HSagen=Hope Scale Agency thinking; SHS=State Hope Scale; SHSpath=State Hope Scale Pathway thinking; SHSagen=State Hope Scale Agency thinking; OFF=Overall Family Functioning; PS=Problem Solving; Com=Communication; Role =Roles; AffR=Affective Responses; AffV=Affective Involvement; BCon=Behavior Control; GF=General Functioning; *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .025$; ^a $p > .025$; ^b $p = 0.024$

of their Hope levels (HS) from Time 1 ($M=41.56$, $SD=6.08$) to Time 2 ($M=40.81$, $SD=8.29$) was not significant, $t(162) = 1.36$, $p=0.18$. In other words, the Hope (HS)

of the young adults who could not graduate was relatively stable. However, the decrease of their State Hope levels (SHS) from Time 1 ($M=31.69$, $SD=7.39$) to Time 2 ($M=29.47$, $SD=7.91$) was significant, $t(162) = 3.37$, $p<0.01$, and the effect size was medium (Cohen's $d = 0.53$).

The Graduates' Family Functioning vs Non-graduates' Family Functioning

Table 4.14a and 4.14b summarizes the mean-level changes of the YJD graduates' and non-graduates' family functioning (the eight dimensions of FAD) within the academic year respectively. For the graduates, the increase of their OFF scores from Time 1 ($M=2.14$, $SD=0.37$) to Time 2 ($M=2.22$, $SD=0.49$) was significant, $t(337) = -3.09$, $p<0.01$, and the effect size was lower medium (Cohen's $d = 0.34$). The scores of the other seven FAD's dimensions were also found significantly increased within the year (see Table 4.14a). For the non-graduates, the increase of their OFF scores from Time 1 ($M=2.46$, $SD=0.36$) to Time 2 ($M=2.53$, $SD=0.45$) was not significant, $t(162) = -1.66$, $p=0.10$. Further, the increases of the other dimensions were also not significant, except the Affective Involvement ($p=0.024$).

Summary

Significant individual-level changes of hope, state hope, and family functioning

were found in the young adults. Significant mean-level change only appeared in family functioning, and not in Hope, and State Hope.

Significant mean-level increases of the YJD graduates' Hope and State Hope were found within the academic year. For the YJD non-graduates, no significant mean-level change on Hope was found, but the significant mean-level decrease appeared in State Hope.

The mean-level increase of the YJD graduates' FAD scores was significant within the academic year. The mean-level increase of the non-graduates' FAD scores was not significant.

The findings of Section 4.2.5.3 support Hypothesis 2 and 2.1 that the hope levels of the young adults (YJD graduates) significantly increase after they achieve academically in YJD courses, and the young adults are able to maintain and develop their hope within the academic year.

4.3 Qualitative Results

This section aims to address the third major concern of the study: The meaning of young adults' hope.

The qualitative results start with the basic demographic information of the

participants, and then present the participants' hope experiences in terms of the themes and super-ordinate themes which were obtained from Interpretative Phenomenological Analyses (IPA) in the present study.

4.3.1 Profile of Participants

A total of eight young adults, 4 men and 4 women, from two colleges attended the interviews, and all their transcripts were used for the analysis. They were selected based on the criterion set in Section 3.4.4. The present study used the “purposive sampling” method, in which a small and homogenous group of participants were selected with reference to the criteria (Langdridge, 2007; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). All young adults were high-hope and graduated from the YJD program. Four of them had low-family-functioning, and four of them had high-family-functioning. The process of data collection lasted eight months, and complied with the Ethnical Approval of the present study. Table 4.15 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the young adults.

Table 4.15: The Demographic Characteristics of the Interviewees

Young Adult*	Gender	Age	HS (T1)	HS (T2)	GF (T1)	GF (T2)	Academic Result	College
Michael	M	20	57	58	2.33	2.32	78/100	A
Jim	M	19	60	62	1.00	1.12	65/100	B
Rocky	M	19	59	60	1.17	1.58	60/100	A
Tom	M	19	58	56	1.50	1.40	60/100	A
Lily	F	21	54	51	2.75	2.75	83/100	A
Molly	F	20	62	54	1.50	1.70	63/100	B
Annie	F	20	52	51	2.75	2.83	83/100	B
Candy	F	22	55	52	2.08	2.35	68/100	A

Note: * Pseudonyms were used for young adults; HS=Hope Scale; GF= General Family Functioning; T1=Time 1; T2=Time 2; Academic Result=Final result of YJD examination. College=Code of the community colleges.

The process of coding and recoding in IPA is time consuming (Fade, 2004). The process of data collection lasted eight months, and the data analysis process took more than one year. Data collection and data analysis were somewhat overlapping processes, and together they took nearly fifteen months to complete. Within the transcripts, themes were identified to reflect the experiences of the young adults through the coding analysis. Similar phenomena were grouped into various sub-categories for reflecting the common types of experiences. Within the identified sub-categories, the major common categories could be generated as a result. Therefore, the coding process began with identifying the meaningful units of the transcripts, then grouping the units into themes, and finally constructing the super-ordinate themes. The procedures fulfilled the requirements that were mentioned in Section 3.4.9 in the

present thesis.

All the eight interviews with the participants (four men and four women) were transcribed word by word in Chinese. Expressions and perceptions which are sometimes difficult to express in English were also coded, counted, and analyzed. Chinese transcripts could be coded in the computer software (NVivo), which facilitated the coding process, and enhanced the accuracy and content analysis in coding. All the verbatim information quoted in the present thesis was translated into English by the researcher for reading convenience. The corresponding original Chinese texts are shown in Appendix XIX for reference. The transcripts consisted of 77 pages and nearly 72,000 words.

4.3.2 The Hope Experiences of Young Adults

Through the process of coding, reflection, and recoding, 53 meaningful units and 15 themes were identified (Appendix XVIII) from the transcripts. Within the nature of the hope experiences of young adults, 4 super-ordinate themes could be identified. They are: Adverse Conditions, Motivation of Interest, Positive Thoughts, and Relationship Support. Table 4.15 shows the outline of the hope experiences of the young adults.

Table 4.15: The Outline of the Hope Experiences of Young Adults

The Hope Experiences of Young Adults
<u>Adverse Conditions</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parents Pressure 2. Financial Difficulties 3. Evasion
<u>Motivation of Interest</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practical Purpose 2. Study Mode
<u>Positive Thoughts</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clear Goal 2. Keep Trying 3. Perseverance 4. Choice 5. Way Out 6. Loss and Gain 7. Better Future
<u>Relationship Support</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Senior Support 2. Peer Support 3. Family Support

4.3.2.1 Adverse Conditions

Some young adults described adverse conditions in their hope experiences.

Among eight participants, four of them who had low family functioning expressed that they were under stress in their hope experiences. They faced two types of stress in their studies, which were parents' pressure and financial difficulty. In addition, evasive thoughts also appeared in the beginning of their hope experiences.

Parents Pressure

One of the pressures appearing in young adults' hope experiences stemmed from their parent(s). The four young adults experiencing low family functioning reported that the pressure from parents existed in their study experiences, and it became a source of conflicts between young adults and their parent(s). The following quotations demonstrated such pressure.

I feel that the expectation of my parents is very high. (Annie, 214)

They (parents) don't consider my situation...They cannot see that there is a hope for me. I am not like a university student in their eyes. They look down on me. They think I am hopeless in studies, and I should stop my studies, and find a job. (Michael, 45-49)

My parents have looked down on me since I was a child. Whatever I did, they looked down on me. Studying is no exception. (Candy, 110)

I don't like to express myself. Therefore I always have conflicts with my mother. My mother does not understand my personality. She thinks I make conflicts with her on purpose. We have many quarrels. (Lily, 236-38)

The parents' pressure did not significantly influence on young adults' perseverance of pursuing higher education, because they could overcome the pressure by their positive thinking, which will be discussed in Section 4.3.2.3.

Financial Difficulties

Another stressor appearing in young adults' hope experiences was financial difficulties. The young adults with low family functioning reported that there were financial difficulties in their families. These young adults came from grass-roots families. They persevered with studies by doing part-time jobs and through the financial aid of the government.

Annie had to take a part-time job after school during the academic year and she wanted to improve the quality of life through education. She expected to earn more money in the future. She expected, *"There is no need for me to be very rich in my future, but at least my income can cover my family's expenditure. We may live together happily. It is the best of our life. (Annie 228-29)*

Lily studied the YJD program by relying on the financial aid of government. She pointed out, *"I failed (the public exam). My family asked me to stop my studies and find a job for living. They thought that I failed because I was lazy... Money is so important in this stage, whether or not you study in university (Lily, 37-40).* She emphasized that, *"We are not rich. The only way (for further studies) is the financial aid of government"* (Lily 92). When Lily was wondering if she could continue her studies, she thought that money was a major concern to herself.

Candy had to take a part-time job after school during the academic year due

to the financial difficulties in her family. She highlighted, *“I have paid the tuition fee (by myself), and I have to attain the school...For studies, I have to save more and more money”* (Candy, 98; 261).

Parents’ expectation could cause the stress among the young adults because the parents expected the young adults’ income to ease the financial difficulties of the households. Michael’s parents told Michael that, *“You failed in public examination. You’d better give up your studies because you are not good at studying”* (Michael 48).

It was found that these high-hope young adults persevered with study despite financial difficulties,

Evasion

The young adults had the experience of evasion in their journey of hope. Some of them used evasion to escape the responsibility of failure, and some regarded full-time study as a way of evading full-time work.

In the beginning of the journey of hope, Annie did not know how to handle the failure of the public examination. She reflected on her experience, *“Honestly speaking, I evaded the failure, and I could not face (the failure), the (bad) feeling remained here”* (Annie, 72-76). Lily had the same experience, and she said, *“I didn’t*

want to face (the failure), and it was exactly an attitude of evasion” (Lily, 55).

Tom’s evasive attitude was different from that of Annie and Lily. Tom always thought that he was a very optimistic person. Therefore, Tom thought he was not hurt by the failure of examination. However, Tom’s best friend told him that his optimistic personality actually was derived from his own evasive personality. Tom said, *“He (his friend) whole-heartedly told me these words, and I felt the sound of ‘Bang’. It was the reality - my optimistic personality was derived from my evasion”* (Tom, 172-75). Tom agreed with his best friend, and he thought that he used his own optimistic personality to hide his evasion.

Both Candy and Michael used full-time study as a way of evasion in the beginning of the hope journey. Candy understood the hardship of work, so she did not want to start full-time work after secondary school. Therefore, she evaded work by maintaining full-time study. She said, *“If I keep on my studying, and I need not work (full time) in society. And, I will not experience the hardship of work. Studying is a kind of evasion”* (Candy, 20-22). The evasive sense of Michael was direct and simple. He recalled, *“I evaded working in society. The reason of studying is because of evading work. Therefore, I kept on study despite the unpleasant situation”* (Michael, 45-46).

Although evasive experience was embedded in the journey of hope, such

experience did not substantially affect the psychological well-being of the young adults, and it faded out during the academic year.

Summary

Although there were adverse conditions (parents pressure, financial difficulties, and evasion) in young adults' hope experience, the adverse conditions did not substantially affect the motivations of the young adults in pursuing higher education.

4.3.2.2 Motivation of Interest

The studies of the young adults was motivated by their interest. During the YJD year, the young adults found that the curriculum of YJD program was different from that of their secondary schools, and this led to greater interest in YJD program. Also, some young adults were interested in study because the higher academic qualification could secure a better career. The interest in studies was derived from practical purpose and study mode, which were presented as follows.

Practical Purpose

Michael was not interested in studies at all in secondary school. He said, “*I studied for the sake of study, such as the knowledge of evaporation, or the*

calculation of energy, etc., I was not interested in these topics. I didn't know what for I studied. Even I knew these theories, so what? Were they useful for me? Therefore, I studied for the sake of study, and I studied merely for obtaining the pass (in examination)" (Michael, 30-34). However, Michael found that YJD was valuable to him. The academic qualification could bring him a better career, and Michael regarded the higher academic qualification as his hope. Therefore, he was interested in YJD program. He said, *"I have the academic qualification, which means I will have hope. If I cannot get it, which means I have not hope... If I finish the YJD, I may have the qualification...and I will have a (good) career"* (Michael, 77-78). In the case of Michael, his interest of studies was derived from practical purpose.

Study Mode

Molly had the motivation to study during the YJD program. She said, *"I like (the program)"* (Molly 21). The mode of study was new to her, which involved group work, individual presentation, discussion, etc. Molly thought that such change instilled hope.

Rocky interpreted his hopeful experience in relation to his study life. Having finished the YJD year, Rocky found that he liked studying more than before, because he began to enjoy the process. *"My study no longer focused on lecture notes, text*

books, and examinations only. I would enjoy them, and enjoyed the campus life as well” (Rocky, 199-202). It was clear that campus life enriched Rocky’s study life, so that he was more interested in his studies. Rocky was motivated by a new study life, and he wanted to keep on studying until he finished a bachelor degree (Rocky, 196).

Lily also enjoyed the process of study, and she said, *“if (the topic) was suitable for me, I listened to it. If the topic was not suitable for me, I would not be very interested in it but I still listened to it. I enjoyed the process of study”* (Lily, 310-11).

The young adults experienced new study life and study mode in YJD program, which strengthened their learning motivation. Candy’s words could be regarded as a summary of other young adults’ experience. *“When you are interested in doing something, you will pay effort...once you managed to complete the first stage, then you will find you can fly higher, and there is a broad road in front of you”* (Candy, 281-83).

Summary

The young adults were interested in study during the YJD year. Interest in study motivated the young adults towards their goal. The young adults could sense the increase of their hopes during the YJD year due to the new study mode in the program.

4.3.2.3 Positive Thoughts

Positive thoughts were embedded in the young adults' hope experiences. The positive thoughts of the young adults involved: Clear Goal, Keep Trying, Perseverance, Choice, Way Out, Loss and Gain, and Better future, which were presented as follows.

Clear Goal

A clear goal was an important component in the young adults' hope experiences. All the young adults defined hope in relation to the notion of goal, although some of them did not directly use the term "goal" in their wordings. It was clear that their descriptions of hope were related to some actions involving aim and motivation. They intended to change their present situation, and to achieve academically. Their descriptions of hope in relation to goal were as follows.

"Hope is... a goal, an event, a bachelor degree, or something interesting. I want to pursue and obtain something. It is a thought...with actions, and (I am) keen on thinking of it...It is the hope" (Annie, 5-8)

"Hope is a kind of desire, and you look at it, you want to realize it. If you don't realize it, and it is just a hope...If you are willing to do something for the hope, some conditions have to be matched, then your hope can be fulfilled" (Lily, 5-9)

“Hope is motivation and a goal. For example, you want to accomplish something, and you hope you can make it. You build your own road. Because of the hope, you will move forward, keep moving forward (on the road), and complete what you want to complete. Hope is built on the individual road” (Jim, 7-11)

“I found I was like a frog living at the bottom of a well, looking up and watching the light in the darkness, and I intended to jump out” (Candy, 4-7).

“When you find difficulties (in doing something), or you cannot proceed anymore, then a turning point appears, you can change your view, and you become interested in what you are doing, you keep moving forward. It can be regarded as hope” (Tom, 6-8)

“It (hope) is a dream or an ideal, I think it is a motivation, and it is fulfilled in my life” (Molly, 9-11)

“Hope is motivation. If you do not have hope, you will sink (to the bottom), and you will not reach the goal. You will find the goal is far from you, and then you will not pursue it. But if it is hopeful to attain the goal, you will be motivated to pursue the goal. There is a goal, and there is hope. Then you are motivated to reach the goal” (Michael, 5-10)

“If I finish the YJD, I know there are a number of programs I may continue my studies. When I know there is a road I may walk up, this is hope to me” (Rocky, 73-75).

Academic achievement was the common goal of the young adults during the year, and was integral to their hope experiences.

Keep Trying

An attitude of “keep trying” was prominent in the young adults’ hope experiences. Despite of the failure in the public examination, the young adults encouraged themselves to keep on trying, and not to give up the opportunity of education.

Molly came from mainland China when she was a child, and she valued the opportunity of education in Hong Kong. Molly understood clearly that she could not be idle, and she had to do something for her own future. She said, “*You have to think about your goal. You have to know your way. I don’t want to give up just because the (academic) failure. Do something! Don’t imagine that, ‘everything will be alright to you at the end of the day!’ ... You have to make arrangement in advance, know your way, and know every step* (Molly, 452-56).

Tom held that “all roads lead to Rome”, and he strongly believed that change was equal to chance (Tom, 429-31). Tom said, “*The most important thing in your heart is: have a try. If you think everything is impossible, not hopeful, or pessimistic, then all your ways are blocked*” (Tom, 434-35). He emphasized that “keep trying”

was indispensable in his success.

Candy was enlightened by the notion of “Is the glass half empty or half full?” (Candy, 238), and she perceived her future positively. She said, “*Maybe I grow up more than before. If I failed in YJD, it doesn’t mean I will fail forever. Then I will try again and again*” (Candy, 226). “*If I could not promote to the associate degree course, I will apply next year. Maybe I have the working experience which will be helpful for my application*” (Candy, 256-59). Candy thought that she would be successful because she could keep trying even with repeated failures.

Lily failed in English in the public examination, and she worried that she would fail in English again. For improving her English standard, she kept attending extra lessons inside and outside the school. “*I kept attending the lessons. My English teacher gave me extra helps. It was alright! I overcome (the hurdle). I was a little bit worried when I was taking the examination. Surprisingly, I got a pass (in English)*” (Lily, 144-47). Finally Lily passed in English at her second attempt.

Jim was asked to give some advice to those young adults who did not initially perform well academically. Jim advised them to keep trying. He emphasized that, “*I will encourage them not to give up themselves, and hold that I can make it. (You have to) know the way, and be with the hope, then you can be successful*” (Jim, 210-11). Jim held that he succeeded, because he was willing to try once more.

The young adults attributed their success to their efforts. “Keep trying” eventually led them to a new chapter in their lives.

Perseverance

Perseverance was found in the young adults’ hope experiences, and their academic success was in part derived from their perseverance in studies. Annie learned perseverance in the YJD program. Annie heard some encouraging stories during the lessons, and she learned that she had been a lucky person because her living condition was much better than that of many people. She no longer decided to give up, and she persevered in study. Annie recalled, “*What I learned from the YJD is perseverance. If you have no perseverance, you won’t have power to move forward. You will be lazy. When I prepared for the public examination, I was lazy, and I didn’t want to study at all. When I got the result (of public examination), I had the feeling of setback. Therefore it (perseverance) is what I learnt, and I think it is the most important*” (Annie, 103-05). Annie repeated the importance of perseverance in the interview when she was asked to give some advice to young adults like her. Annie added, “*If you don’t persevere in your studies, you could not obtain higher academic qualification, and you could not move higher (in social ladder)*” (Annie, 211-12). Annie persevered in studies by reflecting on her previous

failure.

Candy was under pressure from her peers during the YJD year. Candy's peers thought that Candy was not serious in her studies, and she would give up very soon. Candy told herself that, "*I have to make it, even I spent ten hours or more (per day)...even I suffered more hardships than others, ten times, twenty times...*" (Candy, 121-24). Candy persevered with her studies despite discouragements.

Lily found that her mother and elder sister always discourage her regarding studies (Lily, 346). She persevered in the studies because she was able to withdraw from the discouragement. She said, "*If you are serious to them (mother and sister), your heart will be affected by someone (one of them) easily, and you are dead. If someone beats you, you may think you cannot make it. What should you do? Give up?... I heard too much (of the negative comments), I have no feeling. I find I am so special, so I can persevere (in my studies)*" (Lily, 346-50). Lily persevered in her studies by withdrawing herself from the discouragements.

Michael persevered in studies despite financial difficulties. He wanted to gain a sense of achievement in his study, and he thought that study was worth of paying effort. He said, "*I persevered in my studies...provided that I think it is valuable. I will do it, when the value can be seen.*" (Michael, 72-75). Michael persevered in his study because there was outcome value in higher education.

Without the perseverance, the young adults thought that they could not achieve academic success in the YJD program.

Choice

When the young adults faced the academic setback, they were reminded that they had choices. Rocky was given a choice by his mother for planning his own future. Although Rocky failed in the public examination, his mother supported him. He could choose either work or study. He was free to make the decision. But Rocky's mother in fact wanted him to pursue higher education. Finally, Rocky's decided to continue his studies (Rocky, 99-103).

Tom's mother encouraged Tom to keep on with his studies, and Tom's hope partly came from his mother. Tom did not want to let her down, although the expectation of his mother was a pressure motivating Tom to move forward (Tom, 120-23). After Tom received the examination result, he went back home and talked to his mother. His mother spoke to him calmly, "*You may plan for yourself, because there are many programs available to you*" (Tom, 122-23). Tom was reminded that he had choice.

In addition, Tom's teacher also reminded him that he actually had choices, and it was not necessary for him to keep on a particular way of living. Tom's teacher told

him that, *“If you think what you are studying is not suitable for you, you should find something which suits you or you are interested in. Don’t waste your time”* (Tom, 261-62). Tom thought that hope was a change of situation which could bring him opportunity (Tom, 492-94).

Lily was upset after the failure in public examination. She withdrew from her friends, and idled at home. However, she changed herself after one week. She told herself that her life should not be in that way (Lily, 122-25). Lily told herself that *“Alright! You have to keep moving. Back to school!”* (Lily, 123). Lily reminded herself that it was useless for her to escape from the reality, and there were choices in her life. It was the opportunity of education.

The young adults were reminded that choices were available to them, which encouraged them to step forward.

Way Out

The young adults thought that hope involved a “way out” when they faced difficulties. The “way out” was always available to them.

Candy depicted her hope as *“a frog living at the bottom of a well, looking up and seeing the light in the darkness. I intend to jump over the exit”* (Candy, 4-7). *“I am riding on underground train (darkness). I can see the exit, which seems far or*

close. I don't know how far it is, but I have seen exit" (Candy, 289-90). Candy thought that the YJD program was the way out for her. Tom thought that there were many different ways of achieving success. He highlighted that, "*The proverb of 'All roads lead to Rome'...which affected my life very much*" (Tom, 259; 264). Tom strongly believed that there was always a way out in his life. Lily's hope experience was situational. She said, "*When I am at a dead end, hope is the way out*" (Lily, 98-99). Lily's hope was the way out of the adverse situation, and it was always available to her.

The "way out" was a signal indicating solution to the young adults' difficulties. The young adults were hopeful regarding their future even success eluded them. They believed that the "way out" always appeared in their lives.

Loss and Gain

The young adults held that although they lost the chance of promotion due to the failure of public examination, they also gained something from the failure. Rocky, Candy, and Tom thought that loss and gain appeared together.

Rocky was interviewed when he studied in the first year of associate degree course. He admitted that the failure in the public examination was obviously a negative incident. However it could also be regarded as a positive event. "*The*

failure (of examination) could be a positive event. Why? Because of the failure, I took the YJD and associate degree course, both were suitable for me. Therefore, it is positive” (Rocky, 144-45). Likewise, Jim held that bad things could cause good things. *“I failed, so I could obtain something (from YJD program). I gained these (good) things due to my (academic) previous failure”* (Jim, 154-55). Jim and Rocky treasured the successful experience in YJD program, and the experience could balance the bad feeling stemming from the failure.

Candy also had similar positive thoughts. She thought that she had special experience which might not be shared by other students. Candy depicted herself as a naughty girl because she played truant when she was in secondary school. She said, *“Comparing to ordinary students who could make academic success, I had some extra experience... because my success involved something the ordinary students had not experienced”* (Candy, 168-70). Candy thought that failure in examination was not purely a negative event.

Tom thought that there was a link between hope experience and the positive thought of loss and gain. Tom had the feeling of hope when he found there was a new learning mode in YJD program. Tom liked the learning mode very much so that he was keen on studies. Tom concluded this experience with the idea of loss and gain. He said, *“I strongly believe that I gain one thing on one hand, and I lose one*

thing on the other hand. If I had studied hard in secondary school, my personality would have changed a lot. Maybe I were a person who knows nothing but reading books and staying at home” (Tom, 285-87). Tom perceived his experience consisting of loss and gain.

The young adults treated their loss in a positive way, and they attributed their gain to their loss. Loss and gain appeared together in their hope experiences.

Better Future

A belief of better future was found in all young adults’ hope experiences. Although some young adults lived in adverse conditions, they still believed that tomorrow would be better, and their dreams would come true. All the young adults had a very clear goal of pursuing a bachelor degree. They knew that they were approaching the goal. Most of the participants expected that not only they would have a good job but also a happy family in the future.

Rocky did not have the feeling of hope in the beginning of YJD program, until he knew that he had a chance of promoting to a bachelor program. Rocky said, *“I don’t think studying YJD was the major reason of feeling hopeful...However, after I had know if I finished my YJD, I could promote to a degree course through a series of steps. Then my hope appeared to me at the moment” (Rocky, 11-14). A better*

future could bring Rocky the feeling of hope.

When Tom and Molly talked about their future, they indicated that they enjoyed and loved their lives. They believed that many good things would happen in the future. Tom said, *“Life is beautiful. Just prepare well for the future. There are many different things in it”* (Tom, 327-28). Molly had the similar idea, and said, *“A dream come true is a kind of power, which can enrich life.”* (Molly, 9-11). It was found that Tom and Molly were full of energy and eagerly anticipated their future.

Lily and Annie envisioned their future concretely. They thought a successful career and happy family were in the near future. Annie said, *“My goal is to complete the associate degree program, then promote to a bachelor program. To be an accountant in the business field is my ideal...my income can cover my family’s expenditure. We may live together happily. It is the best of my life”* (Annie, 227-28). Lily liked to enjoy life and focused on her family life. Lily said, *“I will take a (long) trip. I will get married and have children. I will plan the way of my life”* (Lily, 416).

Both Lily and Annie expected a happy life in their future.

Candy and Michael also expected that a good future was on the way, but they were not sure how good the future would be. Candy described her hope experience that, *“I am riding on an underground train (darkness). I can see an exit, which seems far or close. I don’t know how far it is, but I have seen exit”* (Candy, 289-90).

Michael knew clearly that education was his hope. He said, *“Once I had the qualification, I have hope. If I cannot get it, I have no hope... After I finish the YJD, I may have the qualification...and I will have my career”* (Michael, 77-78).

The young adults envisioned a future full of dreams which were not far from them.

Summary

Among the above positive thoughts, clear goal, perseverance, keep trying, and better future commonly appeared in the young adults’ hope experiences. Loss and gain, choice, and way out influenced the young adults individually. The young adults tended to focus on the bright side of their lives and expected positive outcomes. Positive thoughts were indispensable to the hope experiences of young adults. They could help the young adults overcome difficulties and achieve goals.

4.3.2.4 Relationship Supports

Relationship supports were prominent in the young adults’ hope experiences. The relationship supports could be divided into three categories: seniors, peers, and family. All young adults of low family functioning experienced the supports of seniors and peers during the YJD academic year. Only the young adults of healthy

family functioning could experience the support of family.

Senior support

Senior support was found in the young adults' hope experiences. The support came from three types of relationships: teacher and student, social worker and client, and friendship. All young adults were supported by at least one type of these relationships.

Rocky's did not know what he should do after the failure in the examination. A social worker gave him some information on study (Rocky, 94-97). Rocky regarded his assistance as a solution for him. Rocky said, "*He (social worker) helps me find the way out*" (Rocky, 97). The social worker not only provided the required information, but also offered counselling services to him. Rocky said, "*He (social worker) taught me something about value that was beyond the contents of text books. Therefore, his teachings enlightened me to know how to go on my way*" (Rocky, 117-18). The social worker supported Rocky, and Rocky learned so much from him.

Annie mentioned her teachers twice when she talked about the experience of being helped in the YJD year (Annie, 59; 83-84). Annie regretted her poor academic result very much. Her teachers comforted her when she sought advice. Annie

recalled, *“I wanted to try again for seeing if I could have breakthrough or improvement. I did it for redeeming my mistakes. He (teacher) gave me encouragement”* (Annie, 61-63). Annie was supported by her teachers.

Michael had financial difficulties in his family. Michael’s family was concerned with the financial cost if Michael continued his study in college. Michael’s parents wanted him to have a full time job so that the family’s income could increase. The request became pressure on Michael in pursuing higher education (Michael, 45-48). Michael at first could see only the dark side of his future, and could not find the way out. His best friend’s father, whom Michael called “Uncle”, gave him some money to pay for the tuition fee. Then, Michael’s hope was rekindled (Michael, 176-77).

Tom regarded his secondary school teacher as an important person to him, and he thought that her encouragement was still influencing him (Tom, 264). Tom was taught that, *“You have to study hard, have to promote to university, and be hopeful to yourself. If you can do that, you will be hopeful, and will have good future”* (Tom, 257-58). Tom added, *“The (important) person is my secondary school teacher”* (Tom, 248). The encouragement of Tom’s teacher was influential to his success in YJD program.

Candy wanted to give up studies in the beginning of the YJD program. Her English teacher found that she was absent in his lessons. Although Candy told her

teacher that she was unable to follow in his lessons, her teacher still encouraged her to go on, and told her, *“You try the second part again. Honestly, you can make it”* (Candy, 134-35). Then Candy attended the lessons again after the encouragement. Finally she could complete the course, and passed in the examination (Candy, 137).

Lily’s teacher practically supported Lily in upgrading her English standard. Lily failed in the English in public examination. She retook and passed the examination the following year. Lily thought that the extra helps of her teacher could account for her success (Lily, 146).

Molly lacked self-confidence in her study. Molly’s teacher encouraged her so that she could overcome the weakness (Molly, 64; 70). Molly was grateful to her teacher that, *“I have to thank my teacher on this issue, because she taught me not to haggle over every ounce, and just follow the instructions”* (Molly, 491). The way of Molly’s life was influenced by her teacher.

The senior supports were embedded in the hope experiences of young adults, and they substantially influenced the young adults’ study.

Peer support

Peer support was found in the hope experience of young adults. The peer support appeared before and during the YJD year, in which the young adults could

experience personal comfort, motivation for study, friendship, and psychological well-being.

In Lily's case, when she was upset regarding her failure in examination failure, her classmates stood by her. Lily recalled the day of receiving the result slip, "*My friends cared so much about me... My classmates and I queued together for applying the YJD program. I went to the interview with them, and I really wanted to cry. A male classmate did support me very much... and he was really nice*" (Lily, 258; 261-66). Lily overcame the difficulties with her good friends.

Candy's effort was motivated by her promise to her best friend. Candy's friends regarded Candy as a person without patience. Candy promised her best friend that she would not give up. Candy recalled, "*She thought that I could not make it (study) and I did it just for fun. So I promised her I had to make it*" (Candy, 121-22). Candy showed the researcher a photo in the interview, in which Candy was wearing a graduation gown, and her best friend stood by her.

Peer support could make the young adults work harder in studying. The young adults helped each other in their homework. Annie recalled, "*I made some friends in YJD program. Some of them had better academic knowledge than me, and they helped me with my homework. We studied together, we worked together, and we were together*" (Annie, 86-88). Rocky had the similar experience, and he pointed out, "*My*

social life became more open. We (he and his classmates) stayed after school for playing badminton, and I would arrange the bookings. We stayed (in campus) for studies and for playing badminton until very late” (Rocky, 206-08). The academic success of the young adults was derived from mutual helps.

Peer support helped the young adults maintain their psychological well-being, and it influenced their study experience during the year. Molly lacked self-confidence in her study. But her new friends helped her improve the situation. She recalled, *“I made some friends in the beginning (of YJD program). We got along with each other, which was pretty good for us. These friends were very helpful. I felt someone was holding my hand, and the feeling of losing direction was gone”* (Molly, 211). Michael enjoyed the campus life because he met some good friends in YJD program. *“I enjoyed my social life in my circle, I could feel happy. Someone cared about me, and focused on me... I met some friends in YJD. They were good, and we shared the burdens together. It is so good”* (Michael, 151-52). Tom treasured the friendship very much, and he thought that friendship was one of the attractions in his study life. Tom thought, *“If I didn’t study in YJD program, I could not know some new friends... I knew different kinds of friends and learned different kinds of things”* (Tom, 293-95). Jim thought that his personality became out-going because he met some new friends during the course. *“I learned so much (in the YJD), which were*

different to those of my secondary school...made some new friends. I was changed a lot. I had been timid before” (Jim, 164-67). The peer support improved the psychological well-being of the young adults.

Peer support helped the young adults overcome the hard feeling of academic failure, and it was prominent in their hope experiences.

Family support

Family support appeared only for those young adults who had healthy family functioning. The four young adults were Jim, Tom, Rocky, and Molly.

After Jim had received the result slip of the public examination, he returned home and cried. He lost his direction for his future. Jim’s father was concerned about him. He cheered up Jim, and told him that he was not alone. Then Jim could see the hope in his future. Jim thought that his future could be changed. Jim felt that he was not alone, nor ignored, in his hard time. Jim recalled, *“My father was calm, and told me to find another way and keep going. Then I began to feel a bit of self-confidence. I will keep moving forward (the feeling of hope) with more efforts. I will keep moving forward”* (Jim, 91-93). Jim’s family support came from his father.

Rocky wondered if he should continue to study after the failure in the public examination. He found that his family fully supported him. When he recalled how his

family supported him, he highlighted that his mother gave him support in planning his future (Rocky, 56-57).

When Molly reflected on the issue of family support, she concluded that she and her family members loved each other. She said, *“I think although my family is not perfect. My family treats me very well”* (Molly, 428-29). And, *“My family members (parents) always support me. They do not object to my decision”* (Molly, 134). Molly was supported by her family relationships.

After Tom had received the examination result, he went back home and talked to his mother. His mother spoke to him calmly, *“You may plan for yourself, because there are many programs available to you”* (Tom, 122-23). Tom’s mother encouraged Tom to keep on his studies, and Tom’s hope partly came from his mother (Tom, 120-23).

The young adults’ parent(s) played a major role in family support, and they were particularly important when the young adults came cross setbacks, and lost their directions of their lives.

Summary

Among the three categories of relationship support, peer support was the most prominent in the young adults’ hope experiences. Also, the young adults’ teachers

played an important role in the support from senior, as they provided practical assistance which could result in prolonged effects on the young adults. Family support only appeared for the young adults with healthy family functioning, and the influences were different for each young adult.

The findings of Section 4.3.2.3 (*Better Future*) support the hypothesis 2.2 that the academic achievements help young adults develop their hope during the year, as they maintain that beliefs in the future (hope) are directly related to the academic achievement. The young adults regarded academic achievements as a method of making their dreams come true. Besides, the findings of Section 4.3.2.3 (*Clear Goal*) support the hypothesis 3 that the participants interpret their hope in a way consistent with Snyder's theory of hope, in which goal-oriented thinking is an integral component in young adults' hope experience. The relationships between Snyder's theory of hope and young adults' hope experience will be further examined in the chapter of Discussions.

The quantitative and qualitative findings (Section 4.2 and 4.3) support the hypothesis 3.1 that the role of hope is important to the young adults' academic achievement, as hope can substantially influence the young adults to attain academic

success. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings will be presented in the chapter of Discussions for showing the place of hope in the journey from academic failure to success of young adults from low functioning families.

4.4 Conclusion

In the quantitative results, the demographic effects can be summarized in the following points. First, no significant difference among age groups on Hope was found, but men had significantly higher HS scores than women. Second, no significant main effects of age and gender were found on State Hope. Third, no significant effect of gender was found on overall family functioning, but there was significant main effect of age on overall family functioning. Also, it was found that the internal consistency, criterion-related validity, predictive validity, and factorial structure were supported and validated in psychometric properties of C-HS, C-SHS, and C-FAD. Only the temporal stabilities of C-SHS and C-FAD were found to be relatively low.

The Hope Scale scores (both at T1 and T2) and State Hope scores (at T2) were the major mediators in the relationships between family functioning and academic results. The mediating effects of State Hope (at T1) might not be very critical in practice due to the small effect size. In general, the YJD students who were high hope

had better academic performance and graduation status than those who were low hope. Individual-level changes appeared in HS, SHS, and FAD. Mean-level changes only appeared in FAD, and not in HS and SHS. The mean-level of YJD graduates' HS and SHS significantly increased during the academic year, and the mean-level of their FAD also significantly increased in the year as well.

In the qualitative results, the hope experiences of young were manifested through four super-ordinate themes: adverse conditions, motivation of interest, positive thoughts, and relationship support. It was found that although the adverse conditions were embedded in the young adults' hope experiences, the adversity did not substantially affect their motivations for pursuing higher education. Interest in study facilitated the academic success of the young adults, and it was an aspect of hope which they could experience in the new learning environment.

Four positive thoughts: Clear Goal, Perseverance, Keep Trying, and Better Future commonly appeared in the young adults' hope experience. Three positive thoughts: Loss and Gain, Choice, and Way Out influenced some young adults. The positive thoughts helped the young adults overcome difficulties and achieve goals. In addition, among the three categories of relationship support, peer support was the most prominent in the young adults' hope experiences. Further, the young adults' teachers played an important role as senior support, as they could provide practical

help to the young adults. Family support only appeared for the young adults who had healthy family functioning, and the influences were different to each young adult.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Introduction

The major objective of the present study is to address research questions that are centered on three major concerns: 1) the role of hope in relation to family functioning and academic achievement, 2) the longitudinal changes of young adults' hope, 3) the meaning of the young adults' hope. This chapter is divided into three parts corresponding to the above three concerns. In each part, quantitative results and quantitative results are cross-referred for providing complementary and explanatory information, which facilitates further discussion of the major research concerns.

5.2 The Role of Hope in Relation to Family Functioning and Academic Achievement

According to the data analysis sequence in the research design, this section starts with the demographic effects of Hope, State Hope, and Family Functioning, and the psychometric properties of the scales. Then the discussion will focus on the relationships among the three constructs and the mediating effects of hope.

5.2.1 Measuring Hope, State Hope, and Family Functioning in Young Adults

The descriptive statistics and psychometric properties of the translated scales (C-HS, C-SHS, and C-FAD) were examined in Section 4.2.1 and 4.2.2. After establishing the reliability and validity of C-HS, C-SHS, and C-FAD, the implications extended from these findings are discussed as follows.

5.2.1.1 Demographic Effects of Hope, State Hope, and Family Functioning

With regard to the effects of demographic factors on the C-HS scores, no significant difference on hope among age groups was found. But a significant gender effect on the C-HS scores was found in the present sample, in which young men were found to have higher HS scores than young women. The result was different to most of the previous researches (e.g., Edwards, et al., 2007; Snyder, et al., 1996; Snyder, Cheavens, & Michael, 1999; Wissing, 2013). It is speculated that females face more significant stresses than males in establishing self-esteem and self-image from puberty onwards (Clay, Vignoles, & Dittmar, 2005). Besides, more women than men are likely to be diagnosed with depression in any given age (Kessler et al., 2003). These may be the possible factors accounting for the finding of lower hope level of young women than that of young men in the sample. Nevertheless, the reasons why there is a gender effect on the C-HS scores remain unclear, which call for further investigation

on gender effect on hope.

In regard to the effects of demographic factors on the C-SHS scores, the gender effect and age effect on State Hope were not significant in the sample. The findings reflect the characteristic of the SHS that State Hope measures here-and-now goal-directed thinking (Snyder et al., 1996). Hope is linked with thinking of future events, and the nature of this thinking is influenced by the individuals' past and present experiences (Cutcliffe, 1997; Slater, 1987; Snyder, 2000). The young adults who studied in YJD program had similar past experience and goal-directed thinking. Before the YJD program, the young adults could not progress to associate degree program due to the failure in the public examination, and became the low academic achievers. The common goal of the YJD students was to complete the YJD program. With reference to the qualitative results of the study, all the interviewees had the goal of pursuing higher education. The here-and-now goal-directed thinking of YJD students was connected to the same pursuit, especially at the beginning of the program, Time 1. They had the similar past experience and common here-and-now goal-directed thinking, which may account for the insignificant gender effect and age effect on State Hope.

With regard to the effects of demographic factors on the overall family functioning scores (OFF), a significant age effect was found in our sample. The OFF

score for the 19-year-old group was significantly higher than that of the 21-year-old group and 22-year-old group.

It is noteworthy that the sample sizes of the 21-year-old group (n=44) and 22-year-old group (n=37) were small in comparison with the 19-year-old group (n=110). There were 81.84% (n=410) of the present sample in the range of 18 to 20 years old, and these students were like the majority of Hong Kong students who were required to face their first public examination in the study path. This challenge might result in stresses on the relationship between parents and children in Chinese families (Dodds, & Lin, 1992; Kim, & Lee, 2013; Sue, & Okazaki, 1990; Tan, & Yates, 2011; Wong et al., 2005). The YJD program is like the public examination, and it may substantially influence the students' future. After the failure in the public examination, the students sustained the stressful relationship again during the YJD year. It is possible that these stressful experiences in family worsen the perceptions of family functioning in the young adults aged between 18 to 20 years.

Besides, there were only 91 students aged between 21 and 23 years in the present sample. It is likely that these students are repeaters in their primary or secondary schools. Although they had repeated for years in previous schoolings and failed in the public examination, they could still keep on full time study in a costly program. It is speculated that these YJD students mainly come from supportive family, and they

have healthier family functioning. Therefore, the OFF scores of the mature students (age 21 or above) are lower than that of the younger age groups (age 20 or below) (see Table 4.1c). Nevertheless, the reasons why there is age effect on the FAD scores are not very clear, which call for further investigation on age effect on young adults' family functioning.

5.2.1.2 Psychometric Properties of C-HS, C-SHS, and C-FAD

The psychometric properties of C-HS, C-SHS, and C-FAD are examined in Section 4.2.2.1, and the results demonstrated that the three scales have good internal reliability, good criterion-validity, and significant predictive validity.

In regard to temporal reliability, C-HS has modest test-retest reliability ($r=.61$) with 8-month interval, which indicated that the hope in C-HS has a relatively stable trait-like character. The test-retest reliability (8-month interval) of C-SHS is low ($r=.36$), which is consistent to the contention that the test-retest reliability of the State Hope should be lower as compared to dispositional Hope (Snyder et al., 1996). Also, the low reliability is consistent to the findings of Section 4.2.5.1, which shows that significant individual-level changes of State Hope appeared in the young adults within the YJD year. The significant individual-level changes of the State Hope indicate that a number of young adults changed their State Hope within the interval. The young

adults' hope is linked to the possibility of future outcome (Lynch, 1965; Snyder et al., 1996). All the young adults started the YJD program at Time 1 as an academic low achiever, but some young adults who had successful experiences in YJD courses increased the State Hope at Time 2. The young adults are those who "experienced successful goal-related outcomes, and did not experience unsuccessful event sequences" (Snyder et al., 1996, p.3). Unlike the young adults with successful experiences during the program, some young adults predicting failure in the program would decrease their State Hope at Time 2. The findings of Section 4.2.5.3 shows that significant mean-level increase of State Hope appeared in the YJD graduates from Time 1 to Time 2, and significant mean-level decrease of State Hope appeared in the YJD non-graduates during the year. The State Hope measures here-and-now goal-directed thinking, which is momentary by nature. These findings might account for the relative low reliability of C-SHS.

The low test-retest reliability ($r=.37$) of C-FAD is consistent to the findings of Section 4.2.5.1, which shows that significant individual-level changes of family functioning appeared in the young adults within the YJD years. As presented in Section 4.2.5.3, significant increase of C-FAD scores only appeared in the YJD graduates (67.47% of the sample, $n=338$) from Time 1 to 2, but the change of C-FAD scores in the YJD non-graduates (32.53% of the sample, $n=163$) was not significant

within the same interval. Only YJD graduates increased the C-FAD scores significantly, which may partly account for the low reliability of C-FAD. The longitudinal changes of FAD scores within the academic year are discussed in Section 5.2.2.1.

In regard to factorial structure, the results of confirmatory factor analysis were consistent to previous researches, and supported the three hypothesized models (2-factor model of Hope, 2-factor model of State Hope, and 2-factor model of Family Assessment Device). In the 2-factor model of Hope and 2-factor model of State Hope, the 2 positively correlated factors (pathways and agency) were identified. And in the 2-factor model of Family Assessment Device, the 2 correlated factors (commitment and collaboration) were identified as well. These results support that the above three models can provide satisfactory fit to the data of the present study, and they also support the contention that these theoretical models originating in Western cultures can be applied in Chinese context. Nevertheless, the present study used the academic low achievers as the research sample, thus there is a need for further research to examine the applicability of the models by using other types of Chinese students. As a result, the validity of the models can be extended to a wider range of population.

5.2.2 The Relationship between Family Functioning and Academic Achievement

As presented in Section 2.6.1, a number of studies indicated that there was a positive relationship between family functioning and school achievement. However, little was known whether the relationship would exist in young adults. The findings of Section 4.2.3.1 and 4.2.3.3 showed that at Time 1 all the dimensions of Family Functioning and YJD result were significantly correlated, and all the dimensions of Family Functioning significantly predicted the YJD result. These findings were consistent to the previous researches (Altschul, 2011; Biyik, & Yemencı, 2005; Chohan, & Khan, 2010; Nuñez, & Kim, 2012; Ryan, Solberg, & Brown, 1996; Shek, 1998; Türküm, Kızıltaş; Wentzel, 1994). Nevertheless, at Time 2, only five dimensions of FAD (the Overall Family Functioning, Problem Solving, Communication, Affective responses, and General Functioning) and YJD result were significantly correlated, and these five dimensions significantly predicted the YJD result.

Given the above findings, the present study supports that there is a significant correlation between family functioning and academic result, and the family functioning significantly predicts academic result of the young adults. However, if there is a small time lag between FAD assessment and final academic assessment, only five dimensions of FAD (the Overall Family Functioning, Problem Solving,

Communication, Affective Responses, and General Functioning) significantly correlate with the academic results. The dimensions which do not correlate significantly with academic result are: Roles, Affective Involvement, and Behaviour Control (see Figure 5.1a and b). The reasons why these three dimensions do not correlate with the YJD result are discussed in the following sections.

Figure 5.1a The Relationship between Family Functioning and Academic Achievement at T1. FAD=Family Assessment Device

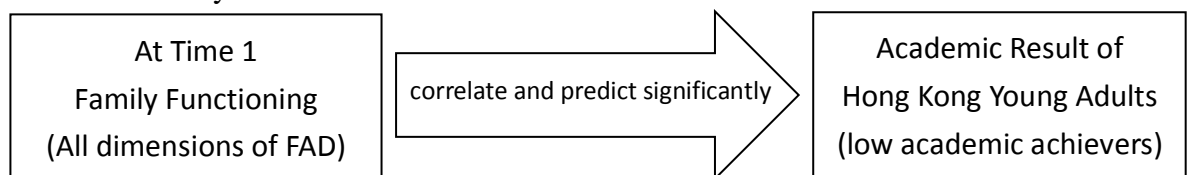
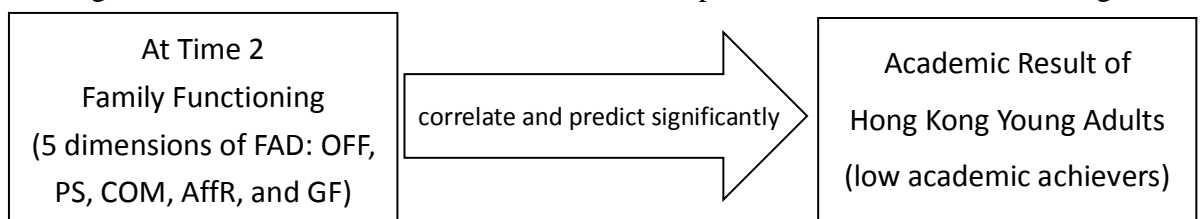


Figure 5.1b The Relationship between Family Functioning and Academic Achievement at T2. FAD=Family Assessment Device; OFF=Overall Family Functioning; PS=Problem Solving; COM=Communication; AffR=Affective Response; GF=General Functioning



5.2.2.1 The Changes of FAD

Roles, Affective involvement, and Behaviour control significantly correlated with the YJD academic result at Time 1 only, which indicated that there were longitudinal changes in the scores of these three dimensions during the year. The hope experience of the YJD graduates may provide insight into the possible reasons of the

changes.

In the qualitative study, the young adults with low family functioning expressed that they were under stress in their hope experiences. They faced two types of stresses in their study, which were parent(s)' pressure (Annie, 214; Michael, 45-49; Candy, 110; Lily, 236-38) and financial difficulty (Annie 228-29; Lily 92; Candy, 98; 261; Michael 48). These stresses existed in their hope experiences, and were not easily handled. The young adults had to deal with the stresses over the academic year.

The three dimensions, Roles, Affective Involvement, and Behavior Control are connected to the stress of the young adults. The Roles involve provision of resources, which "include those tasks and functions associated with providing money, food, clothing, and shelter" (Epstein et al., 1982, p. 147). The dimension of Roles which involves provision of resources directly relates to the financial difficulty of young adults' households. The evaluation of the Roles may worsen at Time 2 when the young adults sustain the prolonged financial difficulty.

The Affective Involvement is "the extent to which the family shows interest in and values the particular activities and interests of individual family members" (Epstein et al., 1982, p. 150). The dimension of Affective Involvement involving the interest and values to the individual family members' activities refers to the parents' interest and values to the young adults' studies. The evaluation of young adults on the

Affective Involvement may worsen at Time 2 if they repeatedly experience unrealistic expectation (Annie, 228-29), misunderstanding (Lily, 92), being looked down on (Candy, 98; 261), and lack of consideration (Michael, 48) from their parent(s) during the year.

Behaviour Control involves rigid behaviour control, in which “standards are narrow and specific for the culture, and there is minimal negotiation or variation across situations” (Epstein et al., 1982, p. 152). Such dimension may refer to rigid parenting. Although the young adults did not directly mention the behaviour control in the interviews, some of them showed that they experienced rigid parenting. A young adult reported that his parent pushed him to continue the studies regardless of his own will, which became a pressure on him (Tom, 89-92). Another young adult recalled that her parent clearly “instructed” her to find a full-time job because of her failure in examination (Lily, 37-40). It is speculated that the evaluation of young adults on Behaviour Control would worsen at Time 2 if the young adults sustained the prolonged rigid parenting over the year.

The above speculations were consistent to the findings of Section 4.2.5.2. The increase of FAD’s scores appeared during the academic year, which indicated that the family functioning of the young adults worsened within the interval. Nevertheless, the reasons why the FAD’s dimensions (especially Roles, Affective Involvement, and

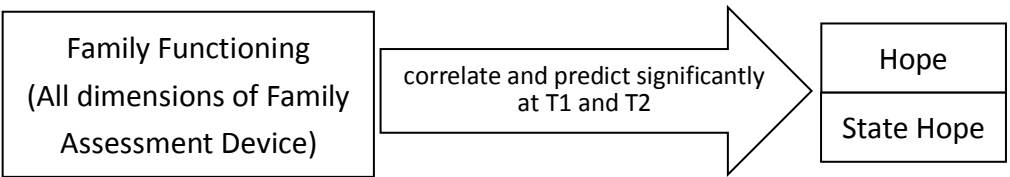
Behaviour Control) changed during the year are not very clear, which call for further investigation.

5.2.3 The Relationship between Family Functioning and Hope

As presented in Section 2.4.2, the previous research findings in regard to the correlation between family functioning and hope were inconsistent, which calls for further investigation. The findings of Section 4.2.3.1 indicated that the eight dimensions of family functioning (FAD) were significantly correlated with hope (HS and SHS) at Time 1 and Time 2 respectively. Also, the findings of Section 4.2.3.2 showed that the eight dimensions of family functioning (FAD) significantly predicted the hope (HS and SHS) at Time 1 and Time 2 respectively. These findings were consistent to the previous researches in regard to hope and family functioning (Connelly, 2003; Connelly, 2005; Ennis, 2006; Heaven, & Ciarrochi, 2008).

Given the above findings, the present study supports that there is a significant positive correlation between family functioning and hope, and family functioning can significantly predict hope score in the Hong Kong young adults (see Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2. The Relationships between Hope and Family functioning in the Hong Kong young adults (T1 and T2).



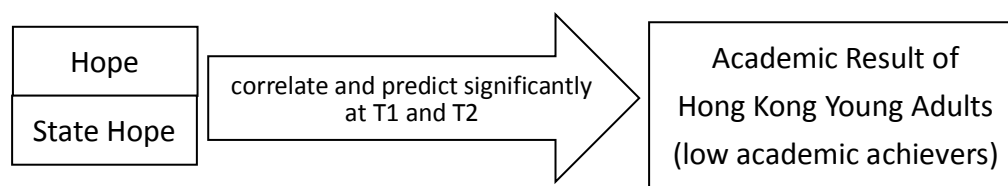
5.2.4 The Relationship between Hope and Academic Achievement

As presented in Section 2.5.2, the academic low achievers were neglected in the previous researches on hope and academic achievement. The present study explored the relationship between hope and academic achievement with the Hong Kong young adults who were identified as the low academic achievers in the public examination.

The findings of Section 4.2.3.1 showed that hope (HS and SHS) was significantly correlated with the academic result both at Time 1 and Time 2. Besides, the findings of Section 4.2.4 showed that high-hope students in YJD program attained significantly higher academic performance than that of medium- and low- hope students. These findings were consistent to Snyder et al. (2002). As presented in Section 4.2.3.4 and 4.2.2.4, both Hope and State Hope could significantly predict the academic results at Time 1 and Time 2, and could explain significant proportions of variance in academic result. These findings were consistent to the previous researches in regard to hope and academic achievement (Adelabu, 2008; Snyder, 2002; Snyder et al., 1991; Snyder et al., 1997).

Given the above findings, the present study supports that hope and academic result are significantly correlated, and the hope can significantly affect academic result among the Hong Kong young adults who are identified as the low academic achievers (see Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3 The Relationships between Hope and Academic Achievement in Hong Kong young adults who are identified as the low academic achievers.



5.2.5 The Mediating Effects of Hope in the Relationship between Family Functioning and Academic Achievement

With respect to the relationships among hope, family functioning and academic achievement, little was known about the influences of the two independent constructs, hope and family functioning, on academic achievement when the two constructs were used simultaneously as predictors. As presented in Section 4.2.3.6, both at Time 1 and 2, Hope (HS) and State Hope (SHS) significantly mediated the relationships between family functioning (FAD) and academic achievement (YJD results). The findings indicate that hope can serve as a useful source for the improvement of academic result of young adults who are identified as low achievers.

However, the effect sizes of the mediation of State Hope at Time 1 were very small, which indicated the mediating effect of State Hope at Time 1 might not be very critical. The mediating effects of State Hope differed between Time 1 and 2, which reflects the characteristic of the SHS. State Hope Scale measures the here-and-now goal-directed thinking focusing on momentary hopeful thoughts (Snyder et. al., 1996). With the momentary characteristic, the State Hope of the young adults at Time 1 was

affected by the interpretation of their past experience, i.e., the failure in public examination (Cutcliffe, 1997; Slater, 1987; Snyder, 2000). Besides, the results of Section 4.3.2.1 indicated that the evading thoughts (Lily, 55; Annie, 72-76; Tom, 172-75; Candy, 20-22; Michael, 45-46) appeared in the beginning of young adults' hope experience (T1), but faded out during the academic year. It was likely that the State Hope (at T1) of the young adults was momentarily affected by these evading thoughts in the beginning of the hope experience. Therefore, the mediating effect of state hope (at T1) was not critical.

In response to the Research Question 1 and Hypothesis 1, there is a significant mediating pathway from family functioning through Hope to academic achievement at Time 1 and Time 2. However, State Hope is a significant mediator in the relationship between family functioning and academic result at Time 2 only. These findings indicate that hope can serve as a useful source for the improvement of academic result of young adults who are identified as low achievers, and the mediating effect of Hope is relatively more stable than that of State Hope during the academic year (see Figure 5.4a and b).

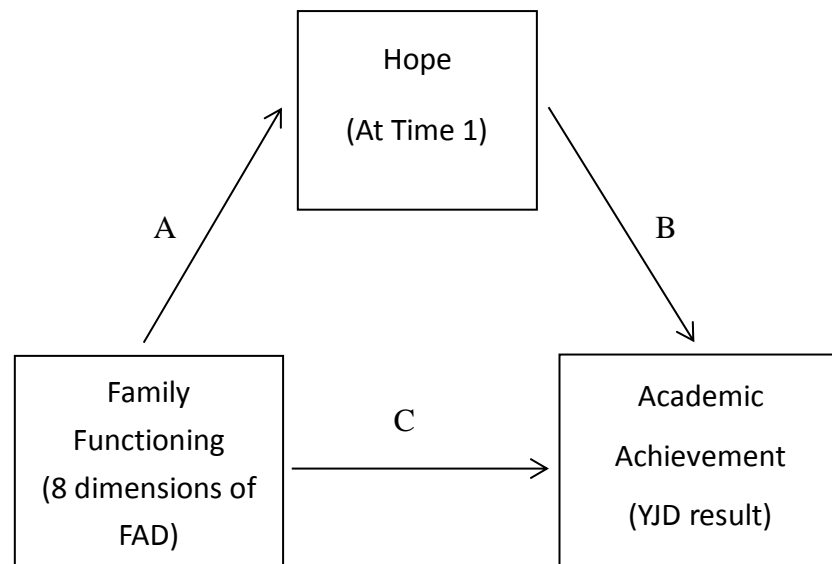


Figure 5.4a. Mediating pathway from Family Functioning through Hope to Academic Achievement at T1

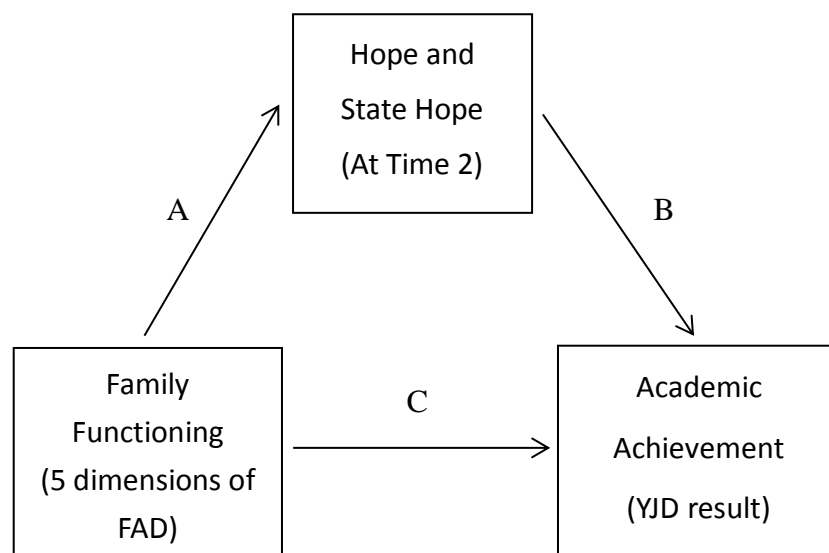


Figure 5.4b. Mediating pathways from Family Functioning through Hope and State Hope to Academic Achievement at T2

5.3 The Longitudinal Changes of Hope

Research Question 2 is to examine whether hope level is likely to undergo change when the low-achieving young adults are successful in academic achievement. The findings of Section 4.2.5.1 showed that there were significant individual-level changes

on Hope and State Hope in the year, which indicated that a number of individuals changed their Hope and State Hope during the year. Given the individual-level changes on Hope and State Hope, the participants were divided into two groups with reference to their graduation status: graduate and non-graduate. The results of Section 4.2.5.3 showed that the graduates significantly increased their Hope and State Hope at Time 2. However, with respect to the non-graduates, Hope was relatively stable during the academic year and State Hope dropped significantly at Time 2. Table 5.1 summarizes the longitudinal changes of Hope and State Hope from T1 to T2.

Table 5.1. The Longitudinal Changes of Hope and State Hope from T1 to T2

Status of Academic Achievement	Types of Hope	Longitudinal Changes
Graduate	Hope	Significantly Increased
	State Hope	Significantly Increased
Non-Graduate	Hope	Not Significantly Decreased
	State Hope	Significantly Decreased

In regard to the graduates, the results are consistent to the previous researches. Hope can generate one's motivation and in return the achievement which comes with the action can reinforce one's emotion of hope (Cutcliffe, 1997; Snyder, 1994), and the positive appraisal resulting from the action can reinforce one's positive thinking as well (Siliva & Warburton, 2006). The YJD graduates were embedded in a "feedback loop" involving hope and action, in which "hope producing action, action having

outcomes and outcomes producing more hope” (Cutcliffe, 1997, p.326). Consequently, the hope of the graduates grew with positive outcomes resulting from the YJD coursework.

In addition, the significant increase on hope was consistent to the qualitative findings of the study. It was found that the YJD graduates’ hope could grow with time. The examples are shown as follows.

Tom did not know the study mode of YJD before and in the beginning of the academic year. The study mode was not examination oriented. Tom thought he benefited from the study mode. Tom recalled that, *“The failure of public examination influenced me very much, but different study mode also influenced me a lot. For example, the study mode of YJD was like that of bachelor degree program. Such study mode recovered my hope. Because I liked this study mode very much, I was keen on study, and I would not give up any chance* (Tom, 267-71). Tom’s hope grew while he was undergoing the new study mode in the YJD year.

Rocky did not find hope in the beginning of the YJD year until he was reminded that the opportunity of higher education was not far from him. Rocky said, *“I don’t think studying YJD was the major reason of feeling hopeful...However, after I had known if I finished my YJD, I could promote to degree course through a series of steps. Then my hope appeared to me at the moment”* (Rocky, 11-14). Thus, Rocky’s hope

grew during the YJD year. Also, Candy described her hope experience that, *“I am riding on an underground train (darkness). I can see the exit, which seems far or close. I don’t know how far it is, but I have seen an exit”* (Candy, 289-90). Candy’s hope was not motionless, and was growing from darkness towards brightness (*exit*).

The above examples show that the young adults’ hope may increase during the year, which was consistent to the quantitative findings in Section 4.2.5.3.

With regard to the significant decrease of non-graduates’ State Hope, it is speculated that negative emotions, such as fear of disappointment, may appear in the hoping process (Korner, 1970). Also, the non-graduates’ State Hope might be affected by thinking of the negative future event, i.e., the failure in YJD program. This future thinking depends on the interpretation of their past and present experiences, which are the former failure in public examination, and the poor outcome of the YJD coursework respectively (Cutcliffe, 1997; Slater, 1987; Snyder, 2000). Therefore, the non-graduates dropped their State Hope significantly during the year.

In response to the Research Question 2 of the study, the low-achieving young adults undergo the increase of Hope and State Hope when they are successful in academic achievement. In contrast, the non-graduates’ Hope is relatively stable, and their State Hope significantly decreases during the year.

5.3.1 The Maintenance of Hope

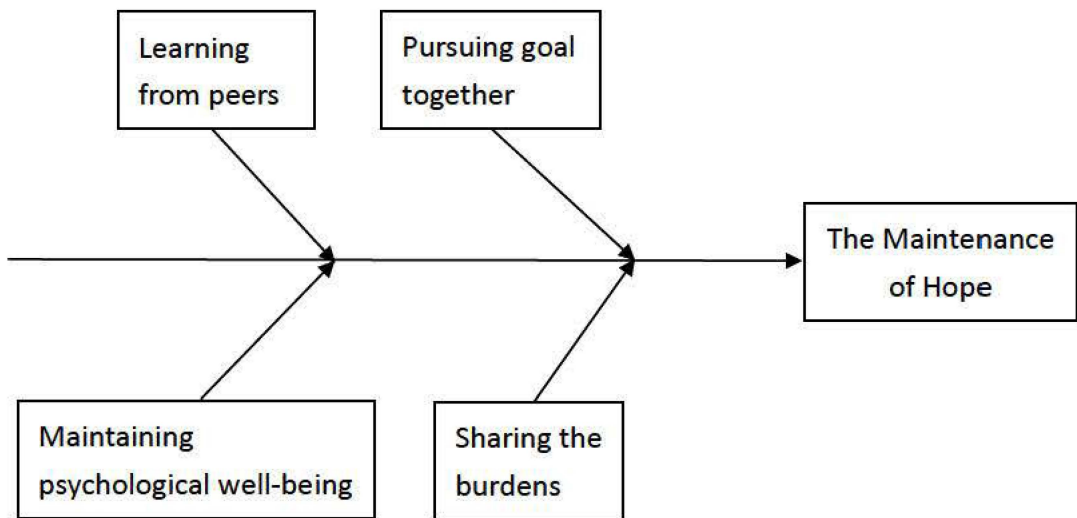
Research Question 2.1 is to examine how young adults develop and maintain their hope, if their hope levels increase. The findings of Section 4.3.2.3 indicated that young adults developed and maintained their hope through the peer support. All the interviewees in the qualitative study recalled that they experienced peer supports. The results were consistent to the previous researches that peer support was found to contribute to students' goal pursuit, psychological well-being and hope (Catalano et al., 2004; Harter, & Whitesell, 1996; Wentzel, 1994; Yilmaz & Türküm, 2008), and students who did not have adequate peer support were more likely to have hopeless feelings (Bonanno, & Hymel, 2010).

The qualitative results of the study showed that peer support helped the young adults focus on their study, and pursue their goal together (Annie, 86-88, Rocky, 206-08). Peer support helped young adults improve their psychological well-being (Molly, 211; Jim, 164-67), and it was a fellowship of mutual care, in which the young adults shared their burdens with each other during the hard time (Michael, 151-52). The young adults might learn from their peers, and supported each other when they faced the learning difficulties (Tom, 295; Annie, 88).

In response to the Research Question 2.1, the young adults are able to develop

and maintain their hope during the program. With the peer support, the young adults focus on their study, share their burdens, learn from their peers, and maintain their psychological well-being, which contribute to the maintenance of their hope (see Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.5. The Maintenance of Hope in Young Adults



5.3.2 The Role of Academic Achievements

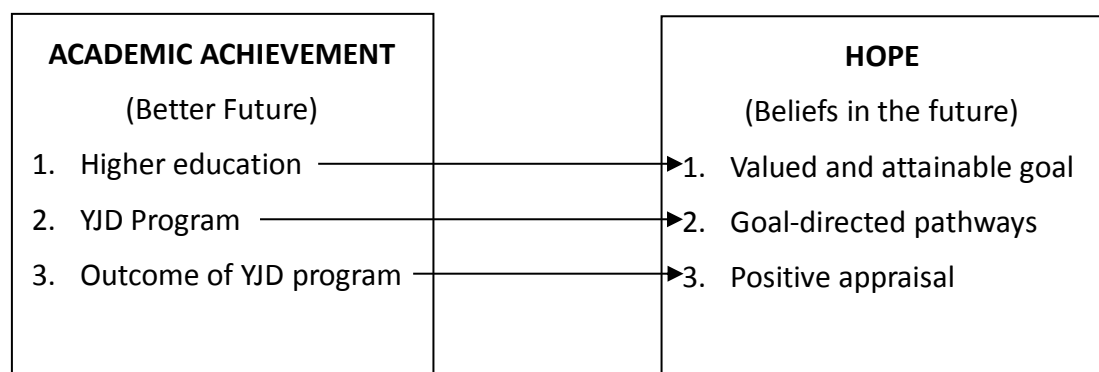
Research Question 2.2 is to investigate the role of academic achievement in helping young adults develop hope. Based on the Hypothesis 2.2, the participants report that their academic achievements help them develop hope, and there is a reciprocal relationship between the two variables. The results of Section 4.2.4 indicated that the academic scores and graduation rates of high-hope students were significantly higher than that of medium-, and low- hope students. For the high-hope young adults, the academic achievement not only referred to the graduation of YJD

program, but also was connected to the “beliefs in the future”. According to Sun, & Shek (2012), hope constitutes “beliefs in the future”, which include “(i) setting up valued and attainable goals, (ii) planning primary and alternative goal-directed pathways, and (iii) having positive appraisal of one’s capabilities and effort, that benefit goal pursuit” (p.3). Most of the interviewees in the study could concretely figure out their “beliefs in the future”, which were closely related to the academic achievement. The young adults regarded academic achievements as a method of making their dreams come true. Future-oriented thoughts were embedded in the young adults’ hope experience (Annie, 227-28; Michael, 77-78; Lily, 416; Rocky, 12-14; Tom, 327-28; Molly, 9-11) .

With regard to the constitution of the beliefs in the future, all the interviewees had a very clear goal of pursuing a bachelor degree, which was their valued and attainable goal. The YJD program was regarded as their alternative goal-directed pathway for promoting to the bachelor degree program, despite the failure in public examination. The positive outcome in YJD program was the positive appraisal of the young adults’ effort which benefited the goal pursuit in return. The beliefs in the future were also found in the young adults’ hope experiences (see Section 4.3.2.3, *Better Future*).

In response to the Research Question 2.2 and Hypothesis 2.2, the academic achievements help the young adults develop their hope which involves attainable goal, alternative goal-directed pathway, and positive appraisal; and hope can also significantly affect academic achievement (see Section 5.2.4). There is a reciprocal relationship between academic achievements and hope. With reference to the role of academic achievements, the young adults hold that academic achievements lead them to a better future, and there are outcome values in the academic achievement. This future-oriented thinking of academic achievements plays an important role in helping the young adults maintain their hopes (see Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6 The Role of Academic Achievement in Young Adults' Hope Experience.



5.4 The Meaning of the Young Adults' Hope

As presented in Section 2.7, the hope experiences of low-achieving young adults who can attain academic achievement are seldom addressed in previous studies. Research Question 3 is to explore the meaning of young adults' hope, and Hypothesis

3 is that the participants define their hope in a way consistent with Snyder's theory of hope. The integrations between the Snyder's theory of hope and the hope experience of young adults are discussed as follows.

5.4.1 Goal-oriented Thoughts

Goal or expectancy of goal attainment is an integral component in Snyder's theory of hope (Snyder, 1991; 2002). According to Snyder's conceptualization, agency and pathways are goal-directed, and can only be understood in the process of achieving and attaining goals. As presented in Section 4.3.2.3, all the young adults defined hope in relation to the notion of goal. The meanings of young adults' hope referred to some actions involving aims and motivations (Annie, 5-8; Jim, 7-11; Michael, 5-10; Rocky, 73-75; Lily, 5-9; Candy, 4-7; Tom, 6-8; Molly, 9-11). In addition, according to Snyder (2002, p.250), the goal-oriented thinking provides "the targets of mental action sequences" and anchors the other two cognitive factors: pathway thoughts and agency thoughts. As presented in Section 4.2.2.3, the young adults' hope was significantly correlated to its pathway thinking and agency thinking respectively. It is seen that the young adults' goal-oriented thinking is consistent to Snyder's (1991; 2002) theory of hope.

5.4.2 Pathway Thoughts

Pathway thoughts referred to routes of reaching the desired goals, and the individual perceptions on how to create these routes. Seeking supports and positive internal messages were found in the young adults' hope experience, and they constitute the young adults' pathways thoughts during the academic year.

5.4.2.1 Seeking Supports

According to Irving, Snyder, & Crowson (1998) and Snyder et al. (1991), high-hope people were effective at generating pathways to goals. The young adults were proactive in seeking relationship supports during the academic year. They regarded the relationships as their resources for solving problems. They approached their peers for seeking helps, such as personal comfort (Lily, 258, 261-66; Candy, 121-22), keeping motivation for study (Annie, 86-88; Rocky, 206-08), learning study skills (Tom, 293-95), and improving psychological well-being (Molly, 211; Michael, 151-52; Jim, 164-67). Also, senior supports appeared in most of the participants. The young adults proactively approached the appropriate seniors for seeking practical helps, such as career guidance (Rocky, 97; Tom, 257-58), personal counselling (Annie, 61-63; Molly, 491; Candy, 137), academic advice (Lily, 146), and financial assistance (Michael, 176-77). When the young adults came across hurdles in their study path,

they were proactive in seeking their peers and seniors for solving the problems. The findings of seeking supports are consistent to Irving, Snyder, and Crowson (1998) and Snyder et al. (1991), reflecting that high-hope young adults are effective at generating pathways to their goals.

5.4.2.2 Positive Internal Messages

According to Snyder et al. (1998), high hope people could create and use some positive internal messages to encourage themselves for goal pursuit. As presented in Section 4.3.2.2, the young adults clearly knew that the study mode and study life facilitated their academic achievements in the YJD program. Positive internal messages were found in the young adults' study experience, such as "I liked the program" (Molly 21), "I enjoyed the campus life" (Rocky, 202), and "I enjoyed the process of study" (Lily, 311). The positive internal messages of the young adults encouraged them to achieve their goals, as the young adults knew that they had a workable route in attaining achievement. The findings of the positive internal messages are consistent to Snyder et al. (1998), reflecting that the high-hope individuals create some routes, such as positive internal pathway messages, for encouraging themselves to achieve their goals.

To sum up, seeking supports and positive internal messages constitute the young

adults' pathways thoughts in their study path.

5.4.3 Agency Thoughts

The agency thoughts referred to a sense of determination in achieving goals. Self-encouragement, perseverance, and sense of goal-directed determination were found in the young adults' hope experience, and they constitute their agency thoughts during the academic year.

5.4.3.1 Self-Encouragement

According to Snyder et al. (1998), individuals who were high in agency thinking could motivate themselves to their goals, and had the requisite motivations to achieve their goals despite difficulties. As presented in Section 4.3.2.3, there were a number of positive thoughts in the young adults' hope experience. These positive thoughts were the internal resources for generating self-encouragement. With the self-encouragement, the young adults always reminded themselves that they could overcome the barriers, even difficulties and obstacles appeared repeatedly in the process of achieving goals. The self-encouragement is derived from the young adults' positive thoughts: keep trying, way out, loss and gain, and better future, which are discussed as follows.

A notion of “keep trying” was prominent in the young adults’ hope experiences (Section 4.3.2.3, *Keep Trying*). With the thinking of “keep trying”, the young adults used some phrases’ to encourage themselves, e.g., “Have a try!” (Tom, 431), “Do something!” (Molly, 454), “I will try again and again” (Candy, 226), “All roads lead to Rome” (Tom, 259), and “It’s alright! I overcome” (Lily, 145). The young adults could encourage themselves to keep on trying, and not to give up the opportunity of education.

Besides, the young adults thought that hope involved a “way out” when they faced difficulties (Section 4.3.2.3, *Way Out*). They believed that the “way out” always appeared in their lives (Tom, 259, 264; Lily, 98-99), and they were hopeful about their future even success was far from clear (Candy, 289-90). The young adults hold that the “way out” is always available to them, so that they can keep moving to the goal.

Moreover, a notion of “loss and gain” appeared in the young adults’ hope experiences (Section 4.3.2.3, *Loss and Gain*). The young adults held that although they had lost the chance of making progress in studies due to the failure in public examination, they also gained something from the failure (Rocky, 144-45; Jim, 154-55; Candy, 168-70; Tom, 285-87). The young adults maintained that they were not the total losers, because they were also the gainers. Such conception becomes an

encouragement which counteracts the setback of the former failure experiences, and motivates them to achieve their goals.

In addition, a belief of better future was found in all young adults' hope experiences (Section 4.3.2.3, *Better Future*). The young adults believed that tomorrow would be better, and their dreams would come true. They had a goal of pursuing a bachelor degree, and held that the academic achievement could lead them a bright future (Annie, 227-28; Candy, 289-90; Lily, 416; Michael, 77-78; Rocky, 11-14; Tom, 327-28; Molly, 9-11;). The outcome value is attached in academic achievement, and it encourages them to achieve the goal.

The above positive thoughts constitute the internal resources of the young adults to generate their self-encouragement, so that the young adults could maintain their goal pursuit during the year. The findings of the self-encouragement are consistent to Snyder et al. (1998), indicating that young adults who are high in agency thinking can motivate themselves, e.g., by self-encouragement, and have the requisite motivations to achieve their goals despite difficulties.

5.4.3.2 Perseverance

Perseverance was found in the young adults' hope experiences, and it contributed to their academic success. Perseverance was very important to these young adults as it

was a kind of motivation (Annie, 103-05). It helped them achieve the goal and overcome the prolonged pressure (Candy, 121-24), discouragement (Lily, 346-50), and financial difficulty (Michael, 72-75). The findings of perseverance are consistent to Snyder et al. (1998), indicating that the young adults who are high-agency thinking tend to have strong motivation and continuously reaffirm their own capacity to use different routes to achieve their goals.

5.4.3.3 Sense of goal-directed Determination

The sense of goal-directed determination was found in the young adults' hope experience. When the young adults faced the academic setback, they were reminded that they had choices, and they had to make the decision for their future (Section 4.3.2.3, *Choice*). It was found that the sense of determination was embedded in the decision (Lily, 123; Annie, 103-05; Rocky, 99-103; Tom, 122-23; Jim, 91-93). The findings of sense of goal-directed determination are consistent to Snyder, Irving, and Anderson (1991), indicating that the young adults who have high-agency thinking tend to have a sense of determination in achieving goals.

To sum up, self-encouragement, perseverance, and sense of determination constitute the young adults' agency thoughts in their study path.

5.4.4 Stressor

Within Snyder's hope theory, a stressor is able to interfere with individuals' goal pursuit. High-hope individuals will produce more strategies for dealing with the stressor, and apply their motivations to those routes. Having experienced successes in working around such stressor, high-hope individuals are propelled forward by their positive emotions (Snyder, 1994, 2000; Snyder, et al., 1991). When confronting stressors, the young adults use their relationship networks and positive internal messages as their supports, and continuously reaffirm their own capacity to use different routes to achieve their goals. They can motivate themselves to attain their goals by the positive outcomes in YJD courses. Although there are stressors in young adults' hope experience, the pressures do not significantly affect young adults' goal pursuit.

In response to Research Question 3 and Hypothesis 3, goal-oriented thought is an integral component of young adults' hope, and the young adults interpret their hope in a way consistent with the Snyder's theory of hope. The goal-oriented thought of young adults anchors the two cognitive factors: pathways thoughts and agency thoughts. Pathways thoughts involve young adults' relationship supports and positive internal messages. Agency thoughts involve young adults' self-encouragement,

perseverance, and sense of determination. Stressor comes from the adverse conditions of young adults. The meaning of young adults' hope is embedded in the framework of Snyder's theory of hope.

5.4.5 The Place of Hope in the Journey from Academic Failure to Success

Research Question 3.1 is to explore the place of young adults' hope in the journey from academic failure to success when their family functioning remains low. The Hypothesis 3.1 is that the role of hope is influential in the journey from academic failure to success of young adults from low functioning families. The major findings in the present study are required to integrate for exploring the place of the young adults' hope. Based on the qualitative and quantitative findings, the role of hope in the relationships between family functioning and academic achievement, the longitudinal changes of hope, and the meaning of young adults' hope were identified. Figure 5.7 is an integration of the major findings of the study, which provides a comprehensive understanding of the place of hope in the journey from academic failure to success of young adults from low functioning families. As discussed in Section 5.4, the young adults interpret their hope in a way consistent with Snyder's theory of hope. The integration (Figure 5.7) contains five components: i) goal thoughts, ii) pathways thoughts, iii) agency thoughts, iv) stressor, and v) their mutual relationships, which are

presented as follows.

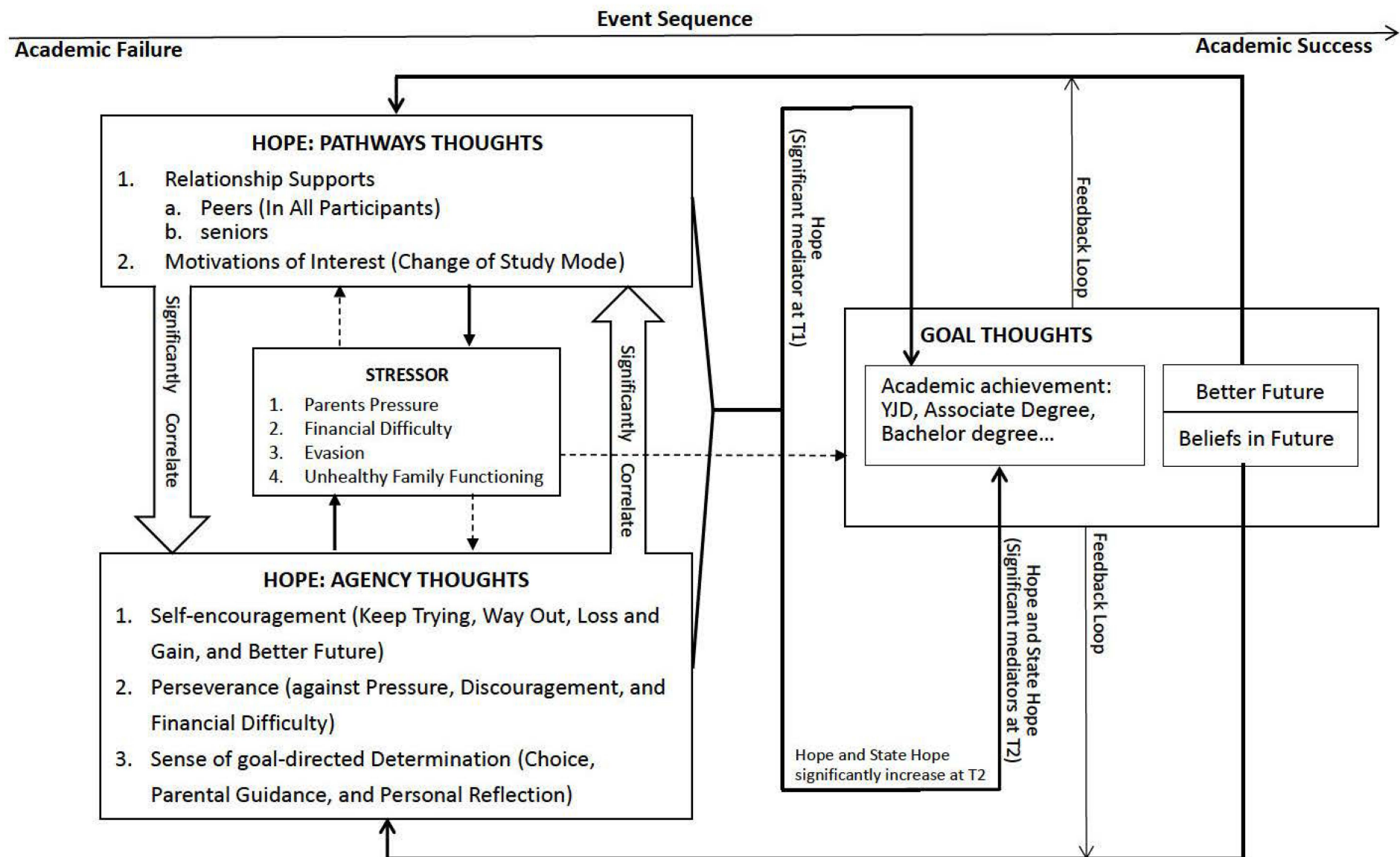


Figure 5.7 The Place of Hope in the Journey from Academic Failure to Success of Young Adults from Low Functioning Families in Hong Kong

First, all the young adults define hope in relation to the notion of goal. Their goal is the academic achievement, which contains two elements: beliefs in the future (Section 5.3.2) and feedback loop (Section 5.3). This future-oriented thinking of academic achievements plays an important role in maintaining young adults' hope, which can anchor the other two cognitive factors: pathway thoughts and agency thoughts.

Second, as discussed in Section 5.4.2, positive internal messages and seeking supports are embedded in the young adults' pathways thoughts which can help young adults overcome the stressors.

Third, as discussed in Section 5.4.3, self-encouragement, perseverance, and sense of goal-directed determination are embedded in the young adults' agency thoughts which can help young adults overcome the stressors.

Fourth, stressors are the adverse conditions of young adults' hope experience, which include parental pressure, financial difficulties, evasion, and unhealthy family functioning. The stressors cannot significantly affect young adults' pathways thoughts, agency thoughts, and goal thoughts.

Fifth, young adults' pathways thoughts and agency thoughts have a mutually supportive relationship (significant correlation). The young adults' Hope and State Hope, including the subscales, significantly increased during the academic year due to

the positive outcomes in YJD courses. Hope is a significant mediator in the relationship between family functioning and academic achievement at T1 and T2. State Hope is significant mediator in the relationship at T2 only. Hope can serve as a useful source for the improvement of academic result of young adults who are identified as low achievers with low family functioning.

In response to Research Question 3.1 and Hypothesis 3.1, a model (Figure 5.8) which integrates the major findings of the present study is constructed for demonstrating the influential role of hope in the journey from academic failure to success of young adults from low family functioning. The main conclusion to be drawn from the findings is that hope can substantially influence the young adults to attain academic achievement, even though family functioning may still significantly affect their academic achievement.

In summary, this chapter discussed the research results based on the research questions and hypotheses. Having provided the possible explanations for the research results, the researcher also drew a conclusion of the study. In the next chapter, conclusions, contributions, implications, limitations, and future research directions will be addressed.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS

The final chapter will address the following questions: Did the present study add any new knowledge to the relevant literature? Are there any implications for young adults in pursuing higher education? What were the research limitations? Is there a need for further research? This chapter comprises five parts: conclusions, contributions, implications, limitations, and future research.

6.1 Conclusion

A number of conclusions may be drawn from the present study.

First, three research instruments were translated, tested and proved to be applicable to Chinese young adults. Psychometric properties of the Hope Scale (HS), State Hope Scale (SHS), and Family Assessment Device (FAD) were acceptable, which indicates that these instruments which originated in Western cultures can be applied in Chinese contexts in future research.

Second, in the sample of the study, men had significantly higher HS scores than women, and there was a significant main effect of age on overall family functioning. The reasons why there are gender and age effects in the young adults are not very clear, which call for further investigations.

Third, the high-hope students had significantly higher academic performance than medium-hope and low-hope students. Additionally, the high-state-hope students showed significantly higher academic performance than low-state-hope students.

Fourth, longitudinal changes appeared in the young adults' Hope, State Hope, and Family Functioning. Significant individual-level changes of HS, SHS, and FAD were found during the year. Also, significant mean-level increases of the YJD graduates' HS, SHS, and FAD were found within the academic year. For the YJD non-graduates, the significant mean-level change only appeared in the SHS.

Fifth, significant positive correlation between family functioning and academic achievement was found in the young adults. Besides, FAD was significantly correlated with young adults' hope (HS and SHS respectively).

Sixth, Hope, State Hope, and Family Functioning significantly predicted the academic achievement of the young adults. Hope was the significant mediator in the relationship between family functioning and academic achievement at the beginning and the end of the academic year. However, State Hope was only a significant mediator at the end of the academic year.

Seventh, the young adults' hope experience involved adverse conditions, motivation of interest, positive thoughts, and relationship supports. The high-hope young adults had a number of internal strengths, which helped them achieve their

goals. They maintained the high hope though agency thinking and pathway thinking during their studies despite unhealthy family functioning. The role of hope was influential in the journey from academic failure to success of young adults from low functioning families. An integrated model based on these results was constructed to consolidate the major findings of the present study.

6.2 Contributions

The present study contributes to knowledge in regard to the theory of hope. The quantitative findings of the present study extend previous research on the relationships among hope, family functioning, and academic achievement. In regard to relationships, little was known about the influences of the two independent constructs, hope and family functioning, on academic achievement when the two constructs were used simultaneously as predictors. The present study reveals that dispositional hope is a significant mediator in the relationship between family functioning and academic achievement, and state hope is a significant mediator only if there is a small time lag between state hope assessment and final academic assessment. Previously, a positive relationship between family functioning and academic achievement was found in children and adolescents; however, to what extent the positive relationship exists in young adults remained unclear, especially in a Chinese

context. The present study reveals that such a positive relationship also appears in Chinese young adults. In addition, the relationships between hope and family functioning were inconsistent in previous studies. The present study reveals that hope is significantly correlated to family functioning in Chinese young adults.

The qualitative findings of the present study reveal that high hope appears to be associated with a number of strengths, such as positive thoughts, positive internal messages, sense of determination, seeking supports, maintenance of motivations, self-encouragement, ability to find an alternative pathway, and notions of a better future. These strengths practically facilitate the academic success of former low achievers. Therefore, it may be beneficial to them to increase the levels of hope with regard to their educational and career aspirations. In this respect, educators and counsellors might attempt to enhance young adults' hope levels.

Contemporary psychologists have embraced a deficit perspective by focusing on pathology and human dysfunctions (Jørgensen & Nafstad, 2004). Maslow (1954, p. 354) noted that the science of psychology has been far more successful on the negative than on the positive side, in that research has focused on human shortcomings and illnesses, but little about their potentialities, virtues, achievable aspirations, or full psychological heights. After nearly 50 years, Seligman (2002) still had the similar criticism that psychologists have focused too much on pathological

issues. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) suggested that the focus of psychology should shift from only repairing the worst things in life to building positive individual qualities. Research findings have supported that studying human strengths is as important as studying pathology (Lazarus, 2003; Linley & Joseph, 2004; Seligman, 2002; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Snyder & Lopez, 2005). The present study has developed the integrated hope model which is based on the quantitative and qualitative data with the young adults who attain academic success, it is expected that the results of the study can enrich the theory of hope with reference to family functioning and academic achievement. The challenges and difficulties experienced by young adults may help researchers gain a deeper understanding of the young adults' hope experience in progressing from academic failure to success. The researcher believes that the integrated hope model constructed in the study provides a more comprehensive picture of how the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and environmental factors interact to foster young adults' hope.

6.3 Implications

The present study reveals that hope is an important factor for young adults in achieving academic achievement. Educators and counsellors ideally should be knowledgeable and skillful in assessing the hope level of young adults, especially

among those students who are low achievers. It is recommended that college educators or counsellors try to help young adults enhance and maintain their hope. Given that there is a standard syllabus in YJD program (Hong Kong Education Bureau, 2014), it is not easy for YJD teachers to integrate the theory of hope into their daily teachings. In this regard, the researcher suggests that college counsellors in this and similar programs may step in and work with young adults to improve and to maintain their hope levels.

Goal-focused interventions could contribute to significant outcomes in schools by utilizing Snyder's theory of hope (McDermott, & Hastings, 2000; Pedrotti, Edwards, & Lopez, 2008). College counsellors might promote some extra courses to students to enhance their hope levels. Related programs or services have been launched as part of campus life in the associate degree program. For example, there are some student development programs or services, such as Psychological Testing, Individual Counselling, and Mentorship in the Hong Kong Baptist University's associate degree program (Hong Kong Baptist University, 2014). The researcher suggests that similar programs and activities for enhancing young adults' hope should be developed and implemented in YJD program and other such programs, and they should be officially included in the programs as a foundation course.

The qualitative results showed that relationship supports enabled young adults to

foster and to maintain their hope. The young adults with low family functioning were found to perceive their peers and seniors as the source of relationship supports. College counsellors should assess the availability of perceived relationship supports in order to design tailor-made programs for the young adults. Peers were prominent in relationship supports. It is important for college counsellors to initiate some peer fellowship in order to promote a supportive culture among students, so that the young adults' hope level can be enhanced and maintained.

Seniors were found to be an additional source of relationship supports. The researcher suggests that mentorship programs which involve professional, teacher, and alumni should be included in YJD program and other such programs. Through such support students can receive advice on their academic choices, time management and study skills, as well as career paths. Through a mentorship programme, they can be empowered to achieve their personal goals.

6.4 Limitations

The present study has several major limitations: i) the use of self-report methods, ii) the generalization of the results, iii) the composition of academic achievement, and iv) collectivism in an Asian context.

First, self-report methods were used in the study for obtaining information about

the participants. The methods included questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The data collected in the three scales (HS, SHS, and FAD) was derived from the young adults' self-reports. Consequently, the young adults' subjective perceptions of hope and family functioning were the basis for constructing the relationships among the variables.

Second, the study focused on Hong Kong young adult students who have been low academic achievers, which may limit the generalization of the results in applying to the general young adult population. Leary and Hoyle (2009) contended that the effect of psychological characteristics on students' school performance might change with situations and contexts. The young adults who are high achievers may differ from the low achievers in the perception of hope and family functioning. Therefore, the generalizability of the present findings may be limited by the characteristics of the present sample.

Third, the academic achievement of YJD students is measured by the final results of eight courses in the program. Other assessments in the program, such as students' conduct, teachers' testimonials, school participation and academic rewards, are not included in students' achievement. A single indicator was used in the study for showing the students' achievements.

Fourth, the hope theory used in the present study originated in Western cultures,

where goal is generally regarded as an expression of personal wishes which can be achieved by individual efforts. However, in Asian cultures individuals are often viewed in a familial or interdependent context, which is known as collectivism. The achievement of goals and motivation in collectivism reflect family honor, the expectation of family members, and past and future generations (Markus & Kitayam, 1991). Thus, in an Asian context the personal-oriented achievement goals are connected to social-oriented achievement motivation. The Asian collectivism is implicitly embedded in the study.

6.5 Future Research

With regard to the effects of demographic factors, a significant gender effect on hope was found in the present sample, in which young men were found to have higher scores than young women. Besides, females' hope level appeared to decline gradually from the older to the younger age groups, and the young adults' FAD scores increased gradually from older to the younger age groups. Future investigations are needed to explore the reasons of the gender effect on young adults' hope, and age effects on hope and family functioning. It is suggested that further research may utilize the qualitative findings of the present study, such as information regarding adverse conditions of the young adults, in its analytical framework.

In regard to the longitudinal changes of the variables in the present study, significant change in family functioning was found in YJD graduates. The family functioning of the graduates worsened during the academic year. In Section 5.4.3.1, the researcher tried to explore the possible reasons of the change. Nevertheless, the reasons of the change are not still very clear, which requires further research.

The eight participants in the qualitative study promoted to the associate degree program, but their academic performances in that program are unknown. The academic standard and course requirements differ greatly between YJD and the associate degree. Future longitudinal research should extend the period of time in assessing the young adults' academic performance, so that researchers may obtain a clearer picture of the protective and risk factors of maintaining young adults' hope.

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Appendix I



Ethics Office
Research Development & Integrity
Research Division
Armidale NSW 2351
Australia
Phone 02 6773 3449
Fax 02 6773 3543
jo-ann.sozou@une.edu.au
www.une.edu.au/research-services

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM TO: Prof Catherine Sun, A/Prof Nicola Schutte & Mr Chiyeung Lam

School of Health

This is to advise you that the Human Research Ethics Committee has approved the following:

PROJECT TITLE: The place of hope in the journey from academic failure to success of young adults from low functioning families in Hong Kong.

APPROVAL No.: HE12-149

COMMENCEMENT DATE: 01 September, 2012

APPROVAL VALID TO: 31 August, 2014

COMMENTS: Nil. Conditions met in full

The Human Research Ethics Committee may grant approval for up to a maximum of three years. For approval periods greater than 12 months, researchers are required to submit an application for renewal at each twelve-month period. All researchers are required to submit a Final Report at the completion of their project. The Progress/Final Report Form is available at the following web address: <http://www.une.edu.au/research-services/researchdevelopmentintegrity/ethics/human-ethics/hrecforms.php>

The NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans requires that researchers must report immediately to the Human Research Ethics Committee anything that might affect ethical acceptance of the protocol. This includes adverse reactions of participants, proposed changes in the protocol, and any other unforeseen events that might affect the continued ethical acceptability of the project.

In Issuing this approval number, it is required that all data and consent forms are stored in a secure location for a minimum period of five years. These documents may be required for compliance audit processes during that time. If the location at which data and documentation are retained is changed within that five year period, the Research Ethics Officer should be advised of the new location.



Jo-Ann Sozou
Secretary/Research Ethics Officer

Appendix II

Letter of Invitation

XX June 2012

XXX College

Ref: Invitation of Participating a Research on Hope in Hong Kong Young Adults

Dear President

My name is Chiyeung Lam. I am a doctoral student at the University of New England. I am conducting a research project for studying the relationships among hope, academic achievement, and family functioning, as well as the hope experience of young adults in Hong Kong. The research project will be conducted from 1 Sept 2012 to 31 July 2013.

Based on the process of random sampling, your college has been selected to participate in the research. Your participation would include allowing the researcher to randomly recruit the Yi Jin Diploma students for replying the questionnaires and attending the interviews. The questionnaires, the interview questions, and the ethical approval from University of New England are attached in this letter.

All the data in the research will be kept confidential. Apart from the researcher, no one can access to the personal data. And, your participation is voluntary, and your college is free to withdraw from the research at any stage, with no liability.

If you have any questions about the research or your students' rights as participants, please contact:

Researcher : Lam Chi Yeung

Mobile : XXXXXXXXXX Email: clam@une.edu

I would appreciate it very much if you could facilitate the above research

Yours truly,

Chiyeung Lam

Appendix III

Letter of Invitation

XX September 2012

XXX College

YJD Students

Ref: Invitation of Participating a Research on Hope in Hong Kong Young Adults

Dear Students

My name is Chiyeung Lam. I am a doctoral student at the University of New England. I am conducting a research project for studying the relationships among hope, academic achievement, and family functioning, as well as the hope experience of young adults in Hong Kong. The research project will be conducted from 1 Sept 2012 to 31 July 2013.

Based on the process of random sampling, your college has been selected to participate in the research. Your participation would include providing the academic information, replying the questionnaires and attending the interviews. The questionnaires, the interview questions, and the ethical approval from University of New England are attached in this letter.

All the data in the research will be kept confidential. Apart from the researcher, no one can access to the personal data. And, your participation is voluntary, and your college is free to withdraw from the research at any stage, with no liability.

If you have any questions about the research or your students' rights as participants, please contact:

Researcher : Lam Chi Yeung, Mobile : [REDACTED] email: clam@une.edu.au

I would appreciate it very much if you could facilitate the above research

Yours truly,
Chiyeung Lam

Chinese version of this letter (See appendix IV)

Appendix IV

參與者邀請信

敬啟者：

本人是澳洲新英蘭大學社會科學院博士研究生藍志揚，現正進行一項關於正向心理學的學術研究，對象為應屆的毅進文憑學生。研究旨在探討正向的心理特質及家庭功能對學業成績的影響。參與此研究的同學需提供一些學業資料、填寫選擇題形式的問卷及有需要時會被邀請面談。

參與純屬自願性質，所收集的資料絕對保密，只作研究分析及跟進用途。是項研究結果將對正向心理學的研究提供非常重要的資料。希望 閣下能對此研究給予支持，並參與其中。

如 閣下對是項研究有任何查詢，請與研究員藍志揚聯絡(電話: [REDACTED]; 電郵: clam20@une.edu.au)。

此致 XXX學院毅進同學

藍志揚謹啟
澳洲新英格蘭大學博士研究生
二〇一二年六月

Appendix V

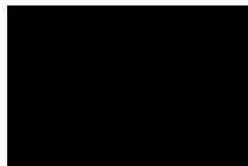
CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

Research Project: The place of hope in the journey from academic failure to success of young adults from low functioning families in Hong Kong

I,,
have read the information contained in the Information Sheet
for Participants and any questions I have asked have been
answered to my satisfaction. Yes/No
I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I may
withdraw at any time. Yes/No
I agree that research data gathered for the study may be
published using a pseudonym. Yes/No
I agree that I may be quoted using a pseudonym. Yes/No
I agree to the interview having my audio recorded and transcribed. Yes/No
I would like to receive a copy of the transcription of the
interview. Yes/No
I am older than 18 years of age. Yes/No

.....
Participant

.....
Date



9 June 2012

.....
Researcher

.....
Date

Chinese version of this Consent Form (See Appendix VI)

Appendix VI

參加者同意書

研究題目:「希望」的位置——由學業失敗到成功 (以低家庭功能的香港青年為研究對象)

本人.....與者信息表中的內容；我曾發問的問題，已滿意地回答。Yes/No

我同意參加是次活動，明白我可以隨時退出。Yes/No

在公佈的研究數據中，我同意使用化名。Yes/No

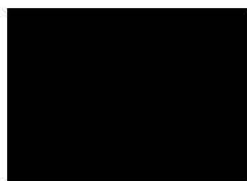
我的資料可能會被引用，我同意使用化名。Yes/No

我同意我的面談內容會被錄音和轉錄。Yes/No

我想收到一份面談轉錄。Yes/No

我已經 18 歲。Yes/No

.....
Participant



.....
Researcher

.....
Date

9 June 2012

.....
Date

Appendix VII



School of Behavioural, Cognitive and
Social Science
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351
Australia

INFORMATION SHEET for PARTICIPANTS

I wish to invite you to participate in my research project, described below.

My name is Chiyeung Lam and I am conducting this research as part of my PhD in the School of Behavioural, Cognitive, and Social Sciences at the University of New England. My supervisors are Prof. Catherine SUN and Prof. Nicola SCHUTTE. Please direct any questions to me at [REDACTED] to my local supervisor, Prof Sun, at [REDACTED] or at Department of Counselling & Psychology, Faculty of Social Science, Hong Kong Shue Yan University, 10 Wai Tsui Crescent, Braemar Hill, North Point, Hong Kong.

Research Project	The place of hope in the journey from academic failure to success of young adults from low functioning families in Hong Kong
Aim of the research	The research aims to explore the relationships among three variables: hope, family functioning and academic achievement, as well as the hope experience of the young adults.
Procedures	You will need to complete several questionnaires with multiple choices in the first week and in the last week of PYJ academic year respectively. The whole process of each time will last for about 15-20 mins.
Confidentiality	Any information or personal details gathered in the course of the study will remain confidential. No individual will be identified by name in any publication of the results. All names will be replaced by pseudonyms; this will ensure that you are not identifiable. And, all information obtained will be used for research purposes only.
Participation is Voluntary	Please understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary and I respect your right to withdraw from the study at any time. You may

	discontinue the participation at any time without consequence and you do not need to provide any explanation if you decide not to participate or withdraw at any time.
Questions	The questionnaires will not be of a sensitive nature: rather they are general, aiming to enable you to enhance my knowledge of the challenges and opportunities for better youth services.
Use of information	I will use information from the questionnaires as part of my doctoral thesis, which I expect to complete in January 2015. Information from the questionnaires may also be used in journal articles and conference presentations before and after this date. At all time, I will safeguard your identity by presenting the information in a way that will not allow you to be identified.
Upsetting issues	It is unlikely that this research will raise any personal or upsetting issues but if it does you may wish to contact your local Community Health Centre (2343 2255).
Storage of information	I will keep the questionnaires in a locked cabinet at the researcher's office at the University of New England's School of Behavioural, Cognitive and Social Sciences. Any electronic data will be kept on a password protected computer in the same School. Only the research team will have access to the data.
Disposal of information	All the data collected in this research will be kept for a minimum of five years after successful submission of my thesis, after which it will be disposed of by deleting relevant computer files, and destroying or shredding hardcopy materials.
Approval	This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of New England (Approval No HE12-149, Valid to 31/8/2014).
Contact details	<p>Feel free to contact me with any questions about this research by email at clam20@une.edu.au or by phone on [REDACTED].</p> <p>You may also contact my supervisors, at tlsun@hksyu.edu or [REDACTED] [REDACTED] or nschutte@une.edu.au or [REDACTED]</p>

Complaints

Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact: Dr. Alex Wan On Li, Assistant Professor & Director of Psychology Programme, Hong Kong Shue Yan University, 10 Wai Tsui Crescent, Braemar Hill Road, North Point, tel. (852)25707110, fax: (852)28068044, Email: woli@hksyu.edu; or, Mrs Jo-Ann Sozou, Research Ethics Officer, Research Development & Integrity, Research Services Directorate, University of New England, Armidale NSW Australia 2351, tel. (61) 02 67733449, fax: (61) 02 67733543, Email: jsozou@une.edu.au

Thank you for considering this request and I look forward to further contact with you.

regards,



Researchers Name: Chiyeung Lam

Chinese version of this information sheet (see Appendix VIII)

Appendix VIII



School of Behavioural, Cognitive and
Social Science
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351
Australia

INFORMATION SHEET for PARTICIPANTS

本人希望邀請你參加一個研究計劃，所述如下。

本人藍志揚，是新英格蘭大學社會科學院的博士研究生，現正進行一項研究，指導老師是 Prof. Catherine SUN 和 Prof. Nicola SCHUTTE. 如有任何查詢，請致電給我：65730075，或本人的在港指導老師孫天倫教授：[REDACTED] 本地聯絡地址：北角寶馬山香港樹仁大學社會科學院心理及輔導學系。

研究題目	「希望」的位置——由學業失敗到成功 (以低家庭功能的香港青年為研究對象)。
研究目的	本研究的目的在於探討希望、家庭功能和學業成績三者之間的關係，以及探討年輕人的希望經驗。
程序	你需要填寫數份問卷，形式主要為多項選擇題。整個程序將需要 15-20 分鐘。
資料保密	在研究過程中，所收集的任何信息或個人信息將嚴格保密。在任何公開的刊物和公佈，沒有任何個人的名字將會被識別。所有的名字將被替換為化名，這將確保你的身份不能被識別。
自願參與	您參與這項研究是自願的，你有權利隨時退出研究。你可以在任何時候終止研究，不需要提供任何解釋，亦不會負上任何責任。
問卷問題	問卷問題將不會是敏感的性質，只是一般性的，旨在透過你對學術界作出貢獻及擴展知識的領域。
資料的使用	問卷內容將會用作本人博士論文的材料，該論文希望能在 2015 年 1 月完成。

令人不快的問題

問卷的資料也可以用在學術期刊和會議。在任何時間，我會維護你的身份，不會讓你的身份被識別。

在正常情況下，這項研究將不會提出任何令個人不快的問題。但如果你有上述情況，你可以致電香港社會福利署輔導熱線尋求協助（2343 2255）。

資料的儲存

我會把問卷儲存在位於大學辦公室的一個上鎖的櫃子內。任何電子數據將被保存在有密碼保護的電腦內。只有該研究小組方能使用該數據。

資料的棄置

本人的論文成功提交後，研究所得來的數據將被保存至少五年。之後，有關的電腦檔案將會被刪去，所有印刷的材料將會被摧毀或切碎處理。

批准

該項目已被新英格蘭大學人類研究倫理委員會批准。批准號碼：HE12-149，有效期至 31/8/2014。

聯絡資料

如對本研究有關的任何問題，請隨時與本人聯繫。

電郵：clam20@une.edu.au 或電話：

你亦可聯絡本人的兩位指導老師：

tlsun@hksyu.edu 或

nschutte@une.edu.au 或

投訴

關於本研究進行的方式，如果您有任何投訴，請聯絡：

Dr. Alex Wan On Li, Assistant Professor & Director of Psychology Programme, Hong Kong Shue Yan University, 10 Wai Tsui Crescent, Braemar Hill Road, North Point, tel. (852)25707110, fax: (852)28068044, email: woli@hksyu.edu. Or,

Mrs Jo-Ann Sozou, Research Ethics Officer, Research Development & Integrity, Research Services Directorate, University of New England,

Armidale NSW Australia 2351, tel. (61) 02 67733449, fax: (61) 02 67733543, email: jsozou@une.edu.au.

感謝您的協助，我期待著進一步與您聯繫。

祝 學業進步



研究員姓名：藍志揚

Appendix IX

The Hope Scale

Directions: Read each item carefully. Using the scale shown below, please select the number that best describes YOU and put that number in the blank provided.

- 1. = Definitely False
- 2. = Mostly False
- 3. = Somewhat False
- 4. = Slightly False
- 5. = Slightly True
- 6. = Somewhat True
- 7. = Mostly True
- 8. = Definitely True

- ___ 1. I can think of many ways to get out of a jam.
- ___ 2. I energetically pursue my goals.
- ___ 3. I feel tired most of the time.
- ___ 4. There are lots of ways around any problem.
- ___ 5. I am easily downed in an argument.
- ___ 6. I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are important to me.
- ___ 7. I worry about my health.
- ___ 8. Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem.
- ___ 9. My past experiences have prepared me well for my future.
- ___ 10. I've been pretty successful in life.
- ___ 11. I usually find myself worrying about something.
- ___ 12. I meet the goals that I set for myself.

The Chinese translated version of this scale (See Appendix X)

Appendix X

The Chinese translated version of Hope Scale

仔細閱讀下面每一個條目，選出最適合你情形的答案，並把相應的數字圈出來。每一個條目只能選一個答案。1＝絕對錯誤；2＝大部分錯誤；3＝某程度錯誤；4＝少許錯誤；5＝少許正確；6＝某程度正確；7＝大部分下正確；8＝絕對正確

	絕 對 錯 誤	大 部 分 錯 誤	某 程 度 錯 誤	少 許 錯 誤	少 許 正 確	某 程 度 正 確	大 部 分 正 確	絕 對 正 確
1. 我能想出許多途徑和方法來擺脫自己的困境。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2. 我精力充沛地追求我的目標。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3. 我常常感到疲倦。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4. 任何問題總會有許多解決的辦法。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5. 在爭論中我容易被擊倒。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
6. 我能夠想出很多辦法來處理我生命中重要的事情。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
7. 我擔心我的健康。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
8. 即使當別人都洩氣時，我知道我能夠找到解決問題的途徑。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9. 我過去的經驗已為我的將來做了充分的準備。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10. 我的生命一直相當成功。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
11. 我經常發現自己擔心某些事。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12. 我完成到為自己所定立的目標。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Appendix XI

The State Hope Scale

Read each item carefully. Using the scale shown below, please select the number that best describes *how you think about yourself right now* and put that number in the blank provided. *Please take a few moments to focus on yourself and what is going on in your life at this moment. Once you have this "here and now" set, go ahead and answer each item according to the following scale:*

- 1 = Definitely False
- 2 = Mostly False
- 3 = Somewhat False
- 4 = Slightly False
- 5 = Slightly True
- 6 = Somewhat True
- 7 = Mostly True
- 8 = Definitely True

- ____ 1. If I should find myself in a jam, I could think of many ways to get out of it.
- ____ 2. At the present time, I am energetically pursuing my goals.
- ____ 3. There are lots of ways around any problem that I am facing now.
- ____ 4. Right now I see myself as being pretty successful.
- ____ 5. I can think of many ways to reach my current goals.
- ____ 6. At this time, I am meeting the goals that I have set for myself.

The Chinese translated version of scale (See Appendix XII)

Appendix XII

The Chinese translated version of State Hope Scale

回應以下問題之前，請你稍用片刻，把思想集中在你自己身上，想一想現時有

甚麼事在你的生命中正在發生和進行中。當你有這種「當下」和「此時此刻」

的思想，就請你小心閱讀以下各題目，找出最能表達你這一刻如何想及有關你自己。

	絕 對 錯 誤	大 部 分 錯 誤	某 程 度 錯 誤	少 許 錯 誤	少 許 正 確	某 程 度 正 確	大 部 分 正 確	絕 對 正 確
1. 如果我發現自己在困境中，我能夠想出許多方法離開該困境。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2. 現時，我精力飽滿地追求我的目標。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3. 現在我所面對的問題有許多出路。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4. 此時此刻，我視自己為幾成功。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5. 我能夠想出許多方法達到我現時的目標。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
6. 在這時間，我正在達致自己所定立的目標。。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Appendix XIII

Family Assessment Device

Instructions

This assessment contains a number of statements about families. Read each statement carefully, and decide how well it describes your own family. You should answer according to how you see your family.

For each statement are four (4) possible responses:

Strongly agree (SA)	Check SA if you feel that the statement describes your family very accurately.
Agree (A)	Check A if you feel that the statement describes your family for the most part.
Disagree (D)	Check D if you feel that the statement does not describe your family for the most part.
Strongly disagree (SD)	Check SD if you feel that the statement does not describe your family at all.

For each statement, there is an answer space below.

Try not to spend too much time thinking about each statement, but respond as quickly and as honestly as you can. If you have difficulty, answer with your first reaction. Please be sure to answer *every* statement and mark all your answers with a letter X in the space provided *below* each statement.

1. Planning family activities is difficult because we misunderstand each other.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

2. We resolve most everyday problems around the house.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

3. When someone is upset the others know why.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

4. When you ask someone to do something, you have to check that they did it.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

5. If someone is in trouble, the others become too involved.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

6. In times of crisis we can turn to each other for support.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

7. We don't know what to do when an emergency comes up.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

8. We sometimes run out of things that we need.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

9. We are reluctant to show our affection for each other.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

10. We make sure members meet their family responsibilities.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

11. We cannot talk to each other about the sadness we feel.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

12. We usually act on our decisions regarding problems.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

13. You only get the interest of others when something is important to them.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

14. You can't tell how a person is feeling from what they are saying.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

15. Family tasks don't get spread around enough.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

16. Individuals are accepted for what they are.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

17. You can easily get away with breaking the rules.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

18. People come right out and say things instead of hinting at them.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

19. Some of us just don't respond emotionally.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

20. We know what to do in an emergency.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

21. We avoid discussing our fears and concerns.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

22. It is difficult to talk to each other about tender feelings.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

23. We have trouble meeting our financial obligations.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

24. After our family tries to solve a problem, we usually discuss whether it worked or not.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

25. We are too self-centred.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

26. We can express feelings to each other.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

27. We have no clear expectations about toilet habits.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

28. We do not show our love for each other.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

29. We talk to people directly rather than through go-betweens.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

30. Each of us has particular duties and responsibilities.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

31. There are lots of bad feelings in the family.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

32. We have rules about hitting people.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

33. We get involved with each other only when something interests us.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

34. There is little time to explore personal interests.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

35. We often don't say what we mean.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

36. We feel accepted for what we are.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

37. We show interest in each other when we can get something out of it personally.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

38. We resolve most emotional upsets that come up.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

39. Tenderness takes second place to other things in our family.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

40. We discuss who are responsible for household jobs.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

41. Making decisions is a problem for our family.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

42. Our family shows interest in each other only when they can get something out of it.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

43. We are frank(direct, straightforward) with each other.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

44. We don't hold to any rules or standards.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

45. If people are asked to do something, they need reminding.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

46. We are able to make decisions about how to solve problems.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

47. If the rules are broken, we don't know what to expect.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

48. Anything goes in our family.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

49. We express tenderness.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

50. We confront problems involving feelings.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

51. We don't get along well together.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

52. We don't talk to each other when we are angry.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

53. We are generally dissatisfied with the family duties assigned to us.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

54. Even though we mean well, we intrude too much into each other's lives.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

55. There are rules in our family about dangerous situations.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

56. We confide in each other.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

57. We cry openly.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

58. We don't have reasonable transport.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

59. When we don't like what someone has done, we tell them.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

60. We try to think of different ways to solve problems.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

The End

Appendix XIV

Family Assessment Device (Chinese Version)

下面各項包含了一些對**家庭的描述**，請仔細閱讀每一項，並根據近兩個月你對你家庭情況的看法回答問題：“1”為“非常不同意”；“2”為“不同意”；“3”為“同意”；“4”為“非常同意”。請在相應的數字上劃圈。

	非常不同意	不同意	同意	非常同意
1. 由於家庭成員彼此誤解，所以難於安排一些家庭活動。	1	2	3	4
2. 我們在家中可以解決大多數日常生活的問題。	1	2	3	4
3. 當家中有人煩惱時，其他人知道他/她的原因。	1	2	3	4
4. 當你要求某位家人去做某件事之後，你必須檢查他/她是否有做。	1	2	3	4
5. 如果某位家人遇到麻煩時，其他家人會過份關注他/她。	1	2	3	4
6. 當發生危機時，我們能相互支援。	1	2	3	4
7. 當有緊急事故發生時，我們變得手足無措。	1	2	3	4
8. 我們時常把家中所需的東西用光。	1	2	3	4
9. 我們不願向對方流露自己的感受。	1	2	3	4
10. 我們肯定各家庭成員都盡上他們的家庭職責。	1	2	3	4
11. 我們不能互相傾訴我們的憂愁。	1	2	3	4
12. 對於(家庭的)問題，我們通常按照我們的決定而行事。	1	2	3	4
13. 只有你的事對他們重要時，你的事他們才感興趣。	1	2	3	4
14. 從他們所說的話，你不能明白他們的個人感受。	1	2	3	4
15. 家庭成員沒有足夠地分擔家務。	1	2	3	4
16. 無論每個人是怎麼樣的，(每個人)都能被別人接受。	1	2	3	4
17. 雖然你破壞規矩，卻很容易逃脫處分。	1	2	3	4
18. 大家說話開心見誠，無需要用暗示的方法。	1	2	3	4
19. 我們有些人在回應別人時缺乏感情。	1	2	3	4
20. 在遇到緊急事件時，我們知道怎麼處理。	1	2	3	4

	非常不同意	不同意	同意	非常同意
21. 我們避免談及我們害怕和關心的事情。	1	2	3	4
22. 要向對方說出彼此親切的感受，我們有困難。	1	2	3	4
23. 我們遇到經濟困難。	1	2	3	4
24. 在我們嘗試解決一個問題之後，我們通常會討論這個問題是否已解決。	1	2	3	4
25. 我們過份自我中心。	1	2	3	4
26. 我們能夠彼此表達出自己的感受。	1	2	3	4
27. 對於起居梳洗習慣，我們沒有明確要求。	1	2	3	4
28. 我們不會彼此表示愛意。	1	2	3	4
29. 我們直接對話，而無需要靠另一人轉述。	1	2	3	4
30. 我們每個人都有特定的工作和職責。	1	2	3	4
31. 在家庭中，有許多差的感覺。	1	2	3	4
32. 我們有懲罰人的家規。	1	2	3	4
33. 只有我們各人對某件事都感興趣，我們才一起參加。	1	2	3	4
34. 我們沒有時間去發掘自己感興趣的事。	1	2	3	4
35. 我們常常不把自己的想法說出來。	1	2	3	4
36. 我們感受到被接納。	1	2	3	4
37. 只有當某事對個人有好處，我們彼此間才感興趣。	1	2	3	4
38. 大多數情緒上的煩惱我們都能解決。	1	2	3	4
39. 在我們家庭中，親切和溫和是次要的。	1	2	3	4
40. 我們會討論誰做家務。	1	2	3	4
41. 在我們家中，要作出決定是困難的。	1	2	3	4
42. 我們的家人只有在對自己有好處時，才彼此關照。	1	2	3	4
43. 我們彼此之間都坦率和直接。	1	2	3	4
44. 我們(對家人)不會持有任何規則和標準。	1	2	3	4
45. 如果家人被要求去做某件事，他們需要提醒(才會做)。	1	2	3	4
46. 對於如何解決問題，我們能夠作出決定。	1	2	3	4
47. 若家規被打破，我們不知道將會有何後果。	1	2	3	4
48. 在我們的家，任何事都可以傾談。	1	2	3	4
49. 我們(互想)表達親切。	1	2	3	4

	非常不同意	不同意	同意	非常同意
50.我們針對一個問題時會考慮別人的感受。	1	2	3	4
51.我們不能和睦相處。	1	2	3	4
52.當我們生氣，就互不講話。	1	2	3	4
53.我們對分配給自己的家務往往都不滿意。	1	2	3	4
54.儘管我們用意良好，但還是太過干涉了彼此的生活。	1	2	3	4
55.我們有應付危急情況的措施。	1	2	3	4
56.我們互相信賴。	1	2	3	4
57.在家人面前我們可以哭出聲來。	1	2	3	4
58.我們的心情不會激動(縱使有合理的原因)。	1	2	3	4
59.當我們不喜歡家庭裏某人的行為時，我們會直接對他/她說出來。	1	2	3	4
60.我們會想盡各種辦法來解決問題。	1	2	3	4

Appendix XV

The Questions of Interview

1. What do you understand by the phrase “hope experience”?
2. Before your failure in public examination, what were your views of your family members and your study?
3. After your failure in public examination, what happened afterwards, please tell me your experiences in detail.
4. In what ways were you affected by the failure and what followed it?
5. Please describe your experiences of seeking helps which followed your failure in public examination.
6. Were there any setbacks to you and how did you handle it/them?
7. What influenced you when you were dealing with these things?
8. Were there any specific things that were important for you?
9. Since your failure, were there any experiences that you would regard as positive?
10. A follow up question. If yes, what made it/them positive?
11. How would you describe the experience of your academic success since the failure in public examination?
12. What changes in your life, or your attitudes to life, have you experienced since you succeeded academically?
13. Nowadays what are your views of family members and your study?
14. What advice would you give others regarding how to deal with academic failure?
15. How do you describe your future?

Appendix XVI

The Questions of Interview (Chinese Version)

1. 你對「希望經驗」這句話有甚麼理解？
2. 在你公開考試失敗之前，你對家人和學習有甚麼看法？
3. 在你公開考試失敗之後，有甚麼事發生？請你詳細告訴我你的經驗。
4. 該次失敗在甚麼方面你受到影響？有甚麼隨之而來？
5. 在你公開考試失敗之後，請你描述你尋找幫助的經驗？
6. 你有沒有遇過任何的挫敗？你如何處理它/它們？
7. 當你處理這些事的時候有甚麼影響你？
8. 有沒有特定的事物對你是重要的？
9. 自從你失敗後，你有沒有一些經驗可以被視為正面？
10. 一個跟進問題。如是者，甚麼令它/它們正面。
11. 自你公開考試失敗後，你怎樣形容你學業成功的經驗？
12. 自從你學業成功之後，你的生命或你對生命的態度你經驗到甚麼改變？
13. 今天你對家人和學習有甚麼看法？
14. 關於處理學業失敗，你有甚麼建議給予其他人？
15. 你如何形容你的未來？

Appendix XVII

The Reviewed Questions of Interview (Chinese Version)

1. 你對「希望經驗」這句話有甚麼理解？(甚麼是希望？你亦可以用物件或一些事情來描述它？)
2. 在你公開考試失敗之前，你對家人和學習有甚麼看法？
3. 在你公開考試失敗之後，有甚麼事發生？請你詳細告訴我你的經驗。
4. 該次失敗在甚麼方面你受到影響？有甚麼隨之而來？
5. 在你公開考試失敗之後，請你描述你尋找幫助的經驗？
6. 你有沒有遇過任何的挫敗？你如何處理它/它們？
7. 當你處理這些事的時候有甚麼影響你？
8. 有沒有特定的事物對你是重要的？
9. 自從你失敗後，你有沒有一些經驗可以被視為正面？
10. 一個跟進問題。如是者，甚麼令它/它們正面。
11. 自你公開考試失敗後，你怎樣形容你學業成功的經驗？
12. 自從你學業成功之後，你的生命或你對生命的態度你經驗到甚麼改變？
13. 今天你對家人和學習有甚麼看法？
14. 關於處理學業失敗，你有甚麼建議給予其他人？
15. 你如何形容你的未來？

Appendix XVIII

IPA Coding of Young Adults' Interview Data

NVivo Version 10.

Licensee: Chinese University of Hong Kong

Project: The place of hope in the journey from academic failure to success of young adults from low functioning families in Hong Kong

Date: 29th Aug, 2014

NODE LISTING: Three levels of nodes.

Super - Ordinate Themes	Themes (Parent node)	Meaningful unit (Child node)
1. Adverse Conditions	5. Parent Pressure	20. Parents' Expectation
		21. Mutual Misunderstanding
		22. Unhappy experience
		23. Poor Communication
	6. Financial Difficulties	24. Part-time job
		25. Financial aids
		26. Parents' expectation
	7. Evasion	27. Failure of examination
		28. Evading full-time work
		29. Pretended optimistic
2. Motivation of Interest	8. Practical purpose	30. Outcome value
	9. Study mode	31. Study interest
3. Positive thoughts	10. Clear goal	32. Bachelor degree
		33. Actualization
		34. An individual road
		35. Jump out
		36. Change
		37. A dream
		38. Pursuit
	11. Keep trying	39. Do something
		40. All roads lead to Rome
		41. Is the glass half empty or half full?
		42. Keep attending the lessons
		43. I can make it

	12. Perseverance	44. Encouraging stories
		45. Not serious before
		46. Withdrawing herself from the discouragements
		47. English is valuable
	13. Choice	48. From mother
		49. From teacher
		50. From self
	14. Way out	51. A light in darkness
		52. Many ways
		53. Adverse situation
	15. Loss and gain	54. Successful experience
		55. Extra experience
		56. New learning mode
	16. Better future	57. Degree course
		58. Beautiful life
		59. Happy family
		62. Unknown but good
4. Relationship support	17. Senior support	61. Teacher
		62. Social Worker
		63. Elder friend
	18. Peer support	64. Classmates of secondary school
		65. A Promise to the Best friend
		66. Classmates of YJD program
		67. Campus life
		68. Social life
	19. Family support	69. During the hard time
		70. Making choice
		71. Be respected
		72. Providing guidance

Appendix XIX
Interview Transcriptions in Chinese Text

CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS

Parent Pressure

“家人可能要求比較高，回想現在我的爸爸媽媽對我的要求很高” (Annie, 214)

“我覺得佢地好唔體諒我囉，一方面我係好逃避踏入社會這個世界既，咁另一方面令我想繼續讀書既原因係因為我唔想出黎做野姐，咁我就唯有焗住讀書，咁屋企人就話：你既然成績都唔得囉，不如索性放棄啦，咁你讀書方面成績都唔好，佢地都見唔到有希望係度，你都成為唔到一個佢地心目中大學生咁樣既學歷呢，我覺得佢地會睇死我，你無希望嫁啦，你讀書都無希望你出黎做野啦” (Michael, 45-49)

“其實係因為我自己由細到大好多野都比人睇死既，我做咩都比人睇死既” (Candy, 110)

“我不熟悉的人會認為是故意告訴我，所以我時常與媽媽發生衝突的問題是我沒有表達，表達得不夠轉彎抹角、不直接，但是我的媽媽又不了解我的為人，還認為我故意與她有衝突，跟着就時常爭吵” (Lily, 236-38)。

Financial Difficulties

“我希望成就不一定要高，但是要做到，而且可以帶給家人即是一個很好的生活，就最好” (Annie 228-29)。

“我嘗試過考試有一次失敗，我的家人便吩咐我出來工作。因為他們都認為我不能夠繼續讀書，不如出來工作，反正妳平日讀書的心態都是，即是有點懶惰的感覺；跟着加上她們認為讀書，讀到大學，出到社會也是做這些工作。現在會是賺錢給我最重要” (Lily, 37-40)

“家人又不是那麼富有，只有學生資助或者借貸” (Lily 92).

“我比左學費，無理由唔返學既姐...我剩咗多好嫁啦而家，我覺得好努力嫁啦” (Candy, 98; 261)

“你既然成績都唔得囉，不如索性放棄啦，咁你讀書方面成績都唔好” (Michael 48)

Evasion

“Annie: 老實說我是逃避。

Researcher: 逃避?

Annie: 因為我不想面對。

Interview: 不想面對?

Annie: 說到一個很大的失敗，那種感覺仍在” (Annie, 72-76).

“那種逃避的心理，即是不願意面對” (Lily, 55)

“他十分語重心長地說了一句說話:「其實好現實。」我都感到「砰!」一聲。其實我的樂觀是源自於我的逃避” (Tom, 172-75)

“我覺得係接受唔到出來社會做野壓力的人先至會讀書姐。即是我永遠覺得我讀書咪唔需要去出黎這個社會做野囉，我咪唔需要去體驗到呢個社會的辛苦囉。讀書係一個逃避來” (Candy, 20-22)

“一方面我係好逃避踏入社會這個世界既，咁另一方面令我想繼續讀書既原因係因為我唔想出黎做野姐” (Michael, 45-46)

Practical purpose

“唉.....係為讀書而讀書，因為我學緊既知識例如煲水煲幾多度，計算什麼能量等等，我覺得我其實唔感興趣，要計這些其實唔知有咩用。雖然我係知道，原來有一樣咁既真理，咁跟住點呢？計完對我有咩幫助呢？所以公會試要考既呢啲技巧，其實我對這些完全無興趣。所以我就為讀書而讀書，為合格而去讀書” (Michael, 30-34)

“我覺得攞到個資格就代表有希望，攞唔到就無啦，所以我覺得攞唔到果個資歷對將來搵工係無希望既，如果入咗毅進攞到資歷，就有啦” (Michael, 77-78)

Study mode

“可能是自己不再局限於閱讀書本，不再局限於考試。可能開始享受了...享受在學校的過程，可能不是喜歡在讀書，但是喜歡在學校” (Rocky, 199-202)

“跟着去，繼續讀上去，反而如果是近年的話，就開始，是……不可以說是興趣，是比以往喜歡讀書” (Rocky, 196)

“是吧!我享受過讀書這個過程。如果適合我的，我就會聆聽。但是如果課題不適

合我，就聆聽吧！但一定不會很有興趣” (Lily, 310-11)

“係啦，咁當你係好有興趣去做嗰樣野既時候，其實你一開始都要捱既...我覺得只要你捱過咗這一步，這一關你捱得過，將來你就會覺得：「呀！平步青雲，康莊大道」” (Candy, 281-83)

Clear goal

“我認為是對某一個目標，某一個事件，可能我對一個學位很有興趣的，很想追尋，想去獲得的，而且有一個想法，去行動。如果有一個事件的想法很強烈，很想得到，那個就是希望” (Annie, 5-8)

“我認為希望應該是妳想要的那一種欲望，但是希望，即是好像真的看着它，應該怎樣說呢？我會認為，實現與否一定需要加入其他的條件，外在因素，即是有時希望，就是希望。如果妳不實踐出來，就永遠都只是一個希望，但是如果妳願意為了這個希望去做一些事情，或者加入了其他的外在因素支持妳做這件事，那麼妳的希望就會真的可以實現出來” (Lily, 5-9)

“我認為希望都是一個推動力和一個目標，即是會建立了一個目標。例如：與你一樣，你的目標是想完成一件事。即是你會希望了它是，你會做得到。那麼你就會建成一條道路。即是好像自己想出一條道路。你就是因為這個希望，你才會向着這條道路前進，繼續向前進、繼續做你想做的事情。我會認為希望是建在個人這條道路” (Jim, 7-11)

“我覺得好似就係我係一隻井底之蛙。然後我看見一個光洞，但願我可以跳出去。即是我發覺我的人生很多時候我都是局限於一個方格，係啦。咁...啊看到別人又跟自己有些不同，咁我又很想自己和別人一樣的時候。啊我就很像一隻井底之蛙，好想跳出個井口咁” (Candy, 4-7)

“當你要做一件事，去到一個可能你覺得……好困難，又或者那件事不能繼續進行之後就會出現一些轉機，可能使你覺得你對某些事情的看法不再相同，使你重新對那件事感興趣，你會繼續進行。我覺得這樣就算是希望” (Tom, 6-8)

“以理解成夢想或者理想...我認為是一種動力，是一種可以充實生活的一樣東西” (Molly, 9-11)

“我覺得希望係一種原動力，因為如果你無希望呢，你就會覺得自己沉喇，你唔會全力游向目標進發。你覺得個目標同你離得太遠的話，你唔會想去追求佢的。如

果你個目標係有希望的話，你會有一種動力推你行向個目標，你覺得個目標見到希望嘛，咁你就會見到一種原動力，令你想向住個目標出發”(Michael, 5-10)

“如果你是剛剛讀完毅進出來，是知道有一系列的課程可以參考。你知道自己將來的道路是需要這樣走。是的!其實當我知道有這條道路可走，都算是一個希望”(Rocky, 73-75).

Keeping trying

“需要想一想你有沒有目標，需要知道自已的道路要怎樣走。我不想、不想因讀不了書，就算吧。去工作吧!這樣說，不想、不想自己「船到橋頭自然直」...不要這樣，要安排好，知道自會走哪條路，走哪一步”(Molly, 452-56)

“因為始終因為我認為如別人所說，人生的每一步都是轉捩點，我認為你的每一步都可能是你的轉捩點”(Tom, 429-31)

“最重要的是你抱有一個嘗試的心，因為你……如果你對每一樣，例如讀過的你認為不可能，沒有希望，很悲觀，你已經在任何方面止步”(Tom, 431-33)

“同埋都真係幾半杯水既”(Candy, 238)

“可能人大咗，經歷多咗，到去到毅進，咁一次唔得，唔代表永遠都唔得既.....咁咪再試多一次，試多兩次，三次.....”(Candy, 226).

“咁都係既，咁都想讀既，舊年唔收我，唔等於今年唔收我，今年唔收唔緊要，我下年繼續，同埋未必一定係咁執著，今年唔收.....咁諗下囉，睇下點樣去改變，或者會唔會話多一年工作經驗俾人地睇到又會收咁樣，係囉”(Candy, 256-59)

“我一直都保持上課，都沒有問題，跟着再加上有老師幫助我補習英文，所以我克服了，雖然我在考英文時都是有點膽怯，但是又出奇地、幸運地讓我合格了”(Lily, 144-47).

“那些這樣，都是會鼓勵他。即是不可以放棄自己，始終需要認為自己是可以的，知道道路和需要希望，就會自己成功”(Jim, 210-11).

Perseverance

“即是從讀毅進課程，到讀完毅進課程，我學習到堅持，因為沒有堅持的話，基本

上沒有堅持，你會沒有動力，有一個很懶的心態。在文憑試的時候，我會有個不想學、懶的心態，又給了我成績，又有一種挫敗的感覺。所以這個是我學習到的東西，而且我認為最重要的事”(Annie, 103-05).

“你不堅持的話，就不會繼續努力向上游，更高……即是更高的學歷，再爬上來”(Annie, 211-12).

“咁我同佢講：「我一定要讀到」。我唔理我要用十個鐘好定係點……因為始終自己無讀咁耐，咁再讀番……的而且確係比別人辛苦既，咁但係我同佢講：「我唔理，就算我再辛苦十倍，二十倍，我都一定要讀到！」”(Candy, 121-24).

“如果妳認真，心理容易受到別人的影響，妳都是必死了!我認為都是視乎個人的情況。即使妳相信自己，但是其他人打擊妳，妳就會認為自己原來真的做不到，怎麼辦？不如放棄。不過都很幸運自己...我不是那些很看重家人的感受的人。雖然她們對我是十分重要，但是因為我已經實在聽得太多，已經看淡了。所以就認為自己都是很特別，所以才繼續推動自己去做到”(Lily, 346-50).

“我唯有堅持自己囉...我覺得果樣野係值得我去做既，而我做完係有價值既，就會去做囉”(Michael, 72-75).

Choice

“Rocky: 除了，其實除了其他人幫助我外，自己也是……因為自己都認同讀書真是將來尋找工作都好一些。那麼我就看着後面的東西，它的意思是尋找一些、尋找一份好工作。從這個方向開始，就放下、放下自己從前的失敗。

Researcher: 那個家人，其實是姊姊?

Rocky: 媽媽”(Rocky, 99-103).

“她就坐下平靜地話，有許多課程你可以揀”(Tom, 122).

“那時候她不是空談。因為她說如果你覺得現在所讀的並不適合，你現在就可以尋找另一個適合自己或感興趣的...不要浪費時間”(Tom, 261-62).

“我覺得有一句說話說得十分現實的，就是：「環境改變是比你想像中更快。」，所以我認為希望就是無論在什麼階段，它都會幫助你去度過你的人生，去支撐你的人生”(Tom, 492-94)

“即是可能給自己消沉了一段時間，沉寂了一段時間，也要面對生活，那麼妳也需要再上學，難道總是躲在家中，收藏自己，不與其他人說話?這是沒有可能

的”(Lily, 122-25)

“那麼妳也需要再上學!” (Lily, 123).

Way out

“其實係我個立場，我覺得好似就係我係一隻井底之蛙。然後我看見一個光洞，但願我可以跳出去。即是我發覺我的人生很多時候我都是局限於一個方格，係啦。咁...啊看到別人又跟自己有些不同，咁我又很想自己和別人一樣的時候。啊我就很像一隻井底之蛙，好想跳出個井口”(Candy, 4-7)

“我覺得自己係坐緊一架地底列車囉，我見到出口但係似遠還近囉，見到出口但你唔知前面仲有幾遠路程囉，但我見到個出口囉”(Candy, 289-90)

“「條條大路通羅馬」...我認為她(的教導)對我的影響很深遠”(Tom, 259; 264)

“都算是一個希望，但是在走投無路的時候那種的希望”(Lily, 98-99).

Loss and gain

“DSE 失敗都是正面的事。為什麼呢?因為那次 DSE 失敗，反而入到來這裡是毅進課程、副學士的模式，反而比較適合我。其實都是正面的”(Rocky, 144-45).

“因為經歷了這些事件，自己才會有一些得着。所以我認為是因為失敗，才會得到這些東西”(Jim, 154-55)

“我多咗一份經驗，就係我去做街童，係啦，這些未必人人經歷到，即係有啲人一帆得順，可能佢地由細到大都一帆風順既，我無需要好似係咁樣，有屋企唔番，周圍流連，咁但係我覺得我咁樣，就比人地多咗一份人地經歷唔到既野囉”(Candy, 168-70)

“因為我又十分相信當你完成了一件事，就會得到一樣東西，又失去了另一樣東西。假設我認為如果我可能在中學階段努力讀書，那麼我可能不會有現在的性格。可能我只會是一個很勤力，躲在家裏溫習”(Tom, 285-87).

Better future

“我不認為入讀了毅進是有一個希望的原因是，因為入讀了毅進課程，我認為是浪

費了自己的時間，不認為自己是讀書，或是為自己的將來做一些打算，但是自己發現讀完毅進之後，我還可以一步一步有機會報讀大學的課程。我認為希望就在那個時候出現了”(Rocky, 11-14).

“人生是好，預備好自己的將來。它的內裏有很多不同的東西”(Tom, 327-28)

“可不可以理解成夢想或者理想?...我認為是一種動力，是一種可以充實生活的一樣東西”(Molly, 9-11)。

“我現在的目標是讀完這個副學士課程，然後升上大學，將來希望從事可能是會計、商業那邊的工作達到自己的這個理想...成就不一定要高，但是要做到，而且可以帶給家人即是一個很好的生活，就最好”(Annie, 227-28).

“可能先去旅行，然後才結婚、生育。跟着就是可能思考一下怎樣生活”(Lily, 416).

“我覺得自己係坐緊一架地底列車囉，我見到出口但係似遠還近囉，見到出口但你唔知前面仲有幾遠路程囉，但我見到個出口囉”(Candy, 289-90)

“我覺得攞到個資格就代表有希望，攞唔到就無啦，所以我覺得攞唔到果個資歷對將來搵工係無希望既，如果入咗毅進攞到資歷，就有啦”(Michael, 77-78).

Senior support

“我想也是有人的支持吧!都是支持。之前就有社工和家人。家人對我說:「雖然你不願意讀書，快些出來工作。」就……那個訊息是想我繼續讀書。因為從小灌輸的觀念，讀書可以做一些比較舒服的工作。社工就尋找了一些課程資料給我，那個人好像幫助我尋找了一條道路”(Rocky, 94-97)

“那個人好像幫助我尋找了一條道路”(Rocky, 97).

“社工教導我的，不是教導我在書本上的知識，而是教導一些價值觀，一些書本以外的知識。所以這些事啟發了我日後如何繼續走我這條道路”(Rocky, 117-18).

“就是在修讀毅進課程的時候，找了一個任教人際傳意的老師”(Annie, 59)

“我有不明白的就可以尋找老師幫助”(Annie, 83-84)

“我讀多一年，看看自己會不會有一個新的突破、新的改進去彌補自己的過失。我得到他的鼓勵”(Annie, 61-63)

“咁屋企人就話：你既然成績都唔得囉，不如索性放棄啦，咁你讀書方面成績都唔好，佢地都見唔到有希望係度” (Michael, 45-48)

“過到自己個心喎，又過到 Uncle 個關， 佢係我死黨既老豆，留位費都係佢幫我交，無佢就死梗，實無希望” (Michael, 176-77)

“我認為她對我的影響很深遠” (Tom, 264)

“因為自從中三的時候，她催促我們努力讀書，怎樣上大學，要抱有希望。跟着說到前途一片光明” (Tom, 257-58)

“這是很重要，將來的影響。人的話，我在中學的時候有一位老師” (Tom, 248)

“你試下英文 2 呀，英文 2 其實你會追到嫁” (Candy, 134-35).

“係喇，咁我又發奮，又再嘗試投入下，咁又真係得既” (Candy, 137).

“幸運地讓我合格了” (Lily, 146).

“信心不足...女老師。她是給予我很多鼓勵” (Molly, 64; 70).

“我認為這一點，這點都需要多謝老師。因為她從前有教做人不要害怕吃虧，要凡事順從” (Molly, 491)

Peer support

“我的朋友都很關心我...是啊!因為我認為自己一定升上去，料不到我升不上去，跟着什麼都沒有做過，跟着哭完後立刻需要尋找學校，跟着我從前的中學同學跟着幫助我排隊，去浸大毅進面試。即是與我一起排隊，一起見面試的老師。面試那時我的感覺是很想哭出來。那時有一位男同學，即是我一邊伏下，一邊哭，跟着他撫摸我的頭。我認為這個人真是一個好男人，很好的人和真是一個很好人，很好的同學，朋友。我認為很感動，那一刻我是很感動” (Lily, 258; 261-66).

“我同佢講話.....因為佢都覺得我唔得，佢都覺得我其實讀書係玩玩下，咁我同佢講：「我一定要讀到」” (Candy, 121-22).

“我認識了一班朋友，是在毅進課程的同學。可能有些同學的成績在某一個方面比較好，他便會幫助我。有時我們會出外一起溫習、做專題報告，我們是一組的” (Annie, 86-88)

“這來自於我的群體生活比以往開放了，因為現在會留下學校一起打羽毛球。我甚至會自己去預約場地，到了晚上也不走，與同學一起溫習完，便一起打羽毛球” (Rocky, 206-08)

“認識了一些新朋友，相處過都認為他們不錯。他們都是、有他們都是很大的，好像有對手拖着，不會有一種迷路的感覺” (Molly, 211)

“我就係裡面既圈子擺到啲社交生活上既開心事，咁我可以在裡面擺到啲開心既感覺呀，有人會關心，關注，留意自己... 係殺進裡面識到一班朋友，係唔錯囉，傾到心事，呻吓，咁已經好足夠” (Michael, 151-52).

“我不會去到殺進，我不會認識到一班不同的朋友...認識不同的朋友，學到不同的東西” (Tom, 293-95)

“是！我認為是令我學會了很多東西，是與中學的時期不同...也認識了其他新的朋友，也改變了自己很多。因為之前我在一個非常內向” (Jim, 164-67).

Family support

“但是我的爸爸反而沒有受到影響，吩咐我繼續尋找一些不同的出路，繼續去走。就開始給予我一個少許信心的感覺，我會繼續往前行，即是我知道自己接著需要出多一點力，繼續向前行” (Jim, 91-93).

“Researcher: 都是很明確的。他們都給予你一種支持你，無論你的決定是怎樣，她也是支持你。

Rocky: 對!都算是吧!” (Rocky, 56-57).

“我認為雖然我的家庭不是很完整，但是我的家人都是對我很好” (Molly, 428-29).

“家人就是多數支持我的，他們沒有說什麼大反對” (Molly, 134).

“即是她主張只要你肯讀書，她就坐下平靜地話，有許多課程你可以揀” (Tom, 122-23).

“但是我都不知怎樣交代。幸好我把它拿回家，我猜想失望的感覺一定會有。她給我的感覺是，我的媽媽給我的感覺是希望你繼續讀書，我不管你的成績如何，我認為是可以的。即是她主張只要你肯讀書，她就坐下平靜地話，有許多課程你可以揀” (Tom, 120-23).

Appendix XX
Interview Transcriptions in English Text

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSIONS

Annie

“Hope is... a goal, an event, a bachelor degree, something interesting, I want to pursue and obtain. It is a thought...with actions, and (I am) keen on thinking of...It is the hope” (Annie, 5-8)

“I wanted to try again for seeing if I could have breakthrough or improvement. I did it for redeeming my mistakes. He (teacher) gave me encouragement” (Annie, 61-63).

“Honestly speaking, I evaded the failure, and I could not face (the failure), the (bad) feeling remained here” (Annie, 72-76).

“I made some friends in YJD program. Some of them had better academic knowledge than me, and they helped me with my homework. We studied together, we worked together, and we were together” (Annie, 86-88).

“What I learned from the YJD is perseverance. If you have no perseverance, you won't have power to move forward. You will be lazy. When I prepared for the public examination, I was lazy, and I didn't want to study at all. When I got the result (of public examination), I had the feeling of setback. Therefore it (perseverance) is what I learnt, and I think it is the most important” (Annie, 103-05).

“If you don't persevere in your study, you could not obtain higher academic qualification, and you could not move higher (in social ladder) (Annie, 211-12).

I feel that the expectation of my parents is very high. (Annie, 214)

“My goal is to complete the associate degree program, then promote to bachelor program. To be an accountant in business field is my ideal...my income can cover my family's expenditure. We may live together happily. It is the best of my life”

(Annie, 227-28).

Candy

There is no need for me to be very rich in my future, but at least my income can cover my family's expenditure. We may live together happily. It is the best of our life.
(Annie 228-29)

Candy

"I found a frog living at the bottom of a well, looking up and seeing the light in the darkness. I intend to jump over the exit" (Candy, 4-7).

"If I keep on my study, and I need not to work (full time) in society. And, I will not experience the hardship of work. Study is a kind of evasion" (Candy, 20-22).

"I have paid the tuition fee (by myself), and I have to attain the school...For study, I have to save and save more money" (Candy, 98; 261).

My parents have looked down on me since I was child. Whatever I did, they looked down on me. Study is no exception. (Candy, 110)

"I have to make it, even I spent ten hours or more (per day)...even I suffered more hardships than others, ten times, twenty times..." (Candy, 121-24).

"She thought that I could not make it (study) and I did it just for fun. So I promised her I had to make it" (Candy, 121-22).

"you try the second part again, honestly, you can make it" (Candy, 134-35)

"Comparing to the ordinary students who could make academic success, I had some extra experience... because my success involved something the ordinary students had not experienced" (Candy, 168-70)

"Maybe I grow up more than before, if I failed in YJD, it doesn't mean I will fail forever. Then I will try again and again" (Candy, 226).

"If I could not promote to associate degree course, I will apply next year. Maybe I

have the working experience which will be helpful for my application” (Candy, 256-59).

“When you are interested in doing something, you will pay effort...once you managed to complete the first stage, then you will find you can fly higher, and there is a broad road in front of you” (Candy, 281-83).

“I am riding on underground train (darkness). I can see the exit, which seems far or close. I don’t know how far it is, but I have seen exit” (Candy, 289-90)

Jim

“Hope is motivation and goal. For example, you want to accomplish something, and you hope you can make it. You build your own road. Because of the hope, you will move forward, keep moving forward (on the road), and complete what you want to complete. Hope is built on the individual road” (Jim, 7-11)

“My father was calm, and told me to find another way and keep going. Then I began to feel a bit of self-confidence, I will keep moving forward (the feeling of hope) with more efforts, I will keep moving forward” (Jim, 91-93).

“I failed so that I could obtain something (from YJD program). I gained these (good) things due to my (academic) failure before” (Jim, 154-55)

“I learned so much (in the YJD), which were different to those of my secondary school...I knew some new friends, I was changed a lot, I had been timid before” (Jim, 164-67).

“I will encourage them not to give up themselves, and hold that I can make it. (You have to) know the way, and need the hope, then you can be successful” (Jim, 210-11).

Lily

“Hope is a kind of desire, and you look at it, you want to actualize with it. If you don’t actualize with it, and it is only a hope...If you are willing to do something for the hope, some conditions have to be matched, then your hope can be fulfilled” (Lily, 5-9)

Lily had the same experience, and she said, *“I didn’t want to face (the failure), and it was exactly an attitude of evasion”* (Lily, 55).

“I failed (the public exam), my family asked me to stop my study and find a job for living. They thought that I failed because I was lazy... Money is so important in this stage, whether or not you study in university (Lily, 37-40).

“We are not rich, the only way (for further study) is the financial aids of government” (Lily 92).

“When I am at a dead end, hope is the way out” (Lily, 98-99).

“I kept attending the lessons, my English teacher gave me extra helps. It was alright! I overcome (the hurdle). I had a little bit worry when I was taking the examination. Surprisingly, I got a pass (in English)” (Lily, 144-47).

“Alright! You have to keep moving. Back to school!” (Lily, 123)

“My friends cared so much about me... My classmates and I queued together for applying the YJD program. I went to the interview with them, and I really wanted to cry. A male classmate did support me very much... and he was really nice” (Lily, 258; 261-66).

“if (the topic) was suitable for me, I listened to it. If the topic was not suitable for me, I would not be very interested in it but I still listened to it. I enjoyed the process of study” (Lily, 310-11).

“If you are serious to them (mother and sister), your heart will be affected by

someone (one of them) easily, and you are dead. If someone beats you, you may think you cannot make it. What should you do? Give up?... I heard too much (of the negative comments), I have no feeling. I find I am so special, so I can persevere (in my study)” (Lily, 346-50)

“I will take a (long) trip, I will get marry and have my children. I will plan the way of my life” (Lily, 416).

Michael

“Hope is motivation. If you do not have hope, you will sink (to the bottom), and you will not reach the goal. You will find the goal is far from you, and then you will not pursue it. But if the goal is hopeful, you will be motivated to pursue the goal. There is goal, and there is hope, then you are motivated to reach the goal” (Michael, 5-10)

“I studied for study, such as the knowledge of evaporation, or the calculation of energy, etc., I was not interested in these topics. I didn’t know what for I studied. Even “I knew these theories, so what? Were they useful for me? Therefore, I study for study, and I study for merely obtaining the pass (in examination)” (Michael, 30-34).

“They (parents) don’t consider my situation...They cannot see that there is a hope for me. I am not like a university student in their eyes, they look down on me, they think I am hopeless in study, and I should stop my study, and find a job.” (Michael, 45-49)

“I evaded working in society, the reason of study is because of evading work. Therefore, I kept on study despite the unpleasant situation” (Michael, 45-46).

“You failed in public examination, you’d better give up your study because you are not good at study” (Michael 48).

“I persevered in my study...provided that I think it is valuable. I will do it, when the value can be seen.” (Michael, 72-75).

“Once I had the qualification, I have hope. If I cannot get it, I have no hope... After I finish the YJD, I may have the qualification...and I will have my career” (Michael, 77-78).

“Michael enjoyed the campus life because he met some good friends in YJD program. “I enjoyed my social life in my circle, I could feel happiness. Someone cared about me, and focused on me... I met some friends in YJD, they were good, and we shared the burdens together. It is so good” (Michael, 151-52).

Molly

“It (hope) is a dream or ideal, I think it is a motivation, is fulfilled in my life” (Molly, 9-11)

“I like (the program)” (Molly 21).

“My family members (parents) always support me. They do not object to my decision” (Molly, 134).

“I made some friends in the beginning (of YJD program). We got along with each other, which was pretty good for us. These friends were very helpful. I felt someone was holding my hand, and the feeling of losing direction was gone” (Molly, 211).

“I think although my family is not very perfect, my family treats me very well” (Molly, 428-29).

“You have to think about your goal, you have to know your way. I don’t want to give up just because the (academic) failure. Do something! Don’t imagine that, ‘everything will be alright to you at the end of the day!’... You have to make arrangement in advance, know your way, and know every step” (Molly, 452-56).

“I have to thank my teacher to this issue, because she taught me not to haggle over

every ounce, and just follow the instructions” (Molly, 491)

Rocky

“I don’t think studying YJD was the major reason of feeling hope...However, after I knew if I finished my YJD, I could promote to degree course through a series of steps. Then my hope appeared at the moment” (Rocky, 11-14).

“If I finish the YJD, I know there are a number of programs I may continue my study. When I know there is a road I may walk up, this is a hope to me” (Rocky, 73-75).

“He (social worker) helps me find the way out” (Rocky, 97).

“Because I think study really helps me find a better job in future. Then I look back, which means I have to find a good job (in future). From this moment, I forgot, and forgot the previous failure” (Rocky, 99-103).

“The failure (of examination) could be a positive event. Why? Because the failure, I took the YJD and associate degree course, both were suitable for me. Therefore, it is positive” (Rocky, 144-45).

“He (social worker) taught me something about value that was beyond the contents of text books. Therefore, his teachings enlightened me to know how I could go on my way” (Rocky, 117-18).

“I no longer focused my study on lecture notes, text books, and examinations only. I would enjoy them, and enjoyed the campus life as well” (Rocky, 199-202).

“My social life became more open. We (he and his classmates) stayed after school for playing badminton, and I would arrange the bookings. We stayed (in campus) for study and for playing badminton until very late” (Rocky, 206-08).

Tom

“When you find difficulties (in doing something), or you cannot proceed anymore, then a turning point appears, you can change your view, and you become interested in what you are doing, you keep moving forward. It can be regarded as hope” (Tom, 6-8)

Because she wants her family members (children) to be educated, studying in college is her responsibility. It is possible that they are proud of it (studying in college), when they meet other relatives. (Tom, 89-92)

“You may plan for yourself, because there are many programs available to you” (Tom, 122-23).

“He (his friend) whole-heartedly told me these words, and I felt the sound of ‘Bang’. It was the reality - my optimistic personality was derived from my evasion” (Tom, 172-75).

“The (important) person is my secondary school teacher” (Tom, 248).

“You have to study hard, have to promote to university, and be hopeful. If you can do that, you will be hopeful, and will have good future” (Tom, 257-58).

“The proverb of ‘All roads lead to Rome’...which affected my life very much” (Tom, 259; 264).

“If you think what you are studying is not suitable for me, you should find something which suits you or you are interested in. Don’t waste your time” (Tom, 261-62).

“The failure of public examination influenced me very much, but different study mode also influenced me a lot. For example, the study mode of YJD was like that of bachelor degree. Such study mode recovered my hope. Because I liked this study mode very much, I was keen on study, and I would not give up any chance (Tom, 267-71)

“I strongly believe that I gain one thing on one hand, and I lose one thing on the other hand. If I had studied hard in secondary school, my personality would have changed a lot. Maybe I were a person who knows nothing but reading books and staying at home only” (Tom, 285-87)

“If I didn’t study in YJD program, I could not know some new friends... I knew different kinds of friends and learned different kinds of things” (Tom, 293-95).

“Life is beautiful. Just prepare well the future. There are many different things in it” (Tom, 327-28).

“The most important thing in your heart is: have a try. If you think everything is impossible, not hopeful, or pessimistic, then all your ways are blocked” (Tom, 434-35).