

Shek, D. T. L., Chak, Y., Cheng, N., Chiu, T., Chu, K. M., Ho, W., Lam, W. S., Mok, B., Shek, V., Zoe Xiao, & Yeung, E. (in press). The impact of law-abidance leadership education on university students and teachers. In D. T. L. Shek, X. Li, M. Y. M. Law, & J. Merrick (Eds.), *Hong Kong and China: Initiatives to enhance holistic youth development* (pp. 163 – 180). Nova Science.

Chapter 10

Impact of Law-Abidance Leadership Education on university Students and teachers

Daniel TL Shek, PhD, FHKPS, BBS, SBS, JP¹, Yammy Chak, PhD¹, Ngasum Cheng, MSocSc¹, Tinyan Chiu, MSocSc¹, Kar Man Chu, MSc¹, Wynants Ho, DSW¹, Wai Sum Lam, MSSc¹, Betty Mok, MA¹, Veronica Shek, MA¹, Zoe Xiao, PhD¹ and Edmond Yeung, EdD²

¹*Department of Applied Social Sciences and* ²*Department of Management and Marketing, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, PRChina*

Education on Hong Kong National Security Law (NSL) is important because it is a statutory requirement. To help students understand NSL, we designed a program within a leadership subject with the focus on law abidance leadership. We launched the NSL program since 2021/22 academic year and we have conducted several cross-sectional evaluation studies utilizing quantitative and qualitative evaluation strategies. The findings in these studies are generally positive. After three years' evaluation, we invited teachers (N =10) to reflect on their teaching experience and perceived impact of NSL education on the students and themselves. Results showed that teachers perceived different responses from the students, with most of them positive in nature. Regarding the perceived impact of NSL education, the teachers shared that the program was beneficial to the students and themselves. It is argued that personal and professional development in teachers would contribute to the well-being of the students and teachers.

Correspondence: Professor Daniel TL Shek, PhD, FHKPS, SBS, BBS, JP, Chair Professor of Applied Social Sciences, Li and Fung Professor in Service Leadership Education, Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Associate Vice-President (Undergraduate Programme), The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hunghom, Hong Kong. Email: daniel.shek@polyu.edu.hk.

Introduction

With reference to the Hong Kong National Security Law (NSL), universities have the responsibility to conduct NSL education for students. At a public university in Hong Kong, we have developed the NSL education under the framework of law-abiding leadership. Besides introducing the concept of law abidance and national security, we also help students understand modern Chinese history, including the Century of humiliation and the changes in different political regimes. In addition, we analyzed the need for the NSL and the four major offences associated with NSL.

As young people in Hong Kong may have confusion and resentment about NSL, education on NSL should be properly evaluated. To date, we have conducted several evaluation studies to understand the views of the students and teachers on NSL education. Primarily, we have conducted subjective outcome evaluation studies to understand the views of the students on the NSL education program as well as their readiness to follow NSL. The findings basically showed that students had positive perceptions of the program and they were motivated to observe law abidance (1). Similar findings were reported in another subjective outcome evaluation study

in the early days of program implementation (2). Recently, we have also collected data from a large number of students to understand their perceptions and perceived benefits of the program. Again, the findings consistently showed that the students had favorable perception of NSL programs and they gained benefits in terms of their understanding of NSL (3-4). As quantitative findings can only give a static picture about the reactions of the students to NSL education, we also conducted focus groups to gauge the experiences of the students. The qualitative findings are consistent with the quantitative findings (5). Besides students, we also investigated the views of the teachers on NSL education. Similar to the views of the students, although the teachers initially had negative experiences, they coped well and they perceived NSL education to be beneficial to the students as well as teachers (6-8). In a recent special issue, evaluation studies based on different methodologies also provide a consistent picture on the evaluation picture (9-16).

One additional area that we should focus on is the impact of NSL education on different stakeholders. For the students, inability to follow NSL will result in committing criminal offence(s), which would impair their quality of life. For teachers, if teaching NSL is stressful, this would also impair their quality of life. Finally, if students do not learn well on NSL and resort to violence, this would create quality of life problems for the whole society. Hence, it is important to understand the experience of different stakeholders as well as the impact on the teachers and students in NSL education.

Our study

To understand the views of the teachers on teaching NSL program, teachers were recruited to join this study after we implemented NSL in 2021/22 to 2023/24 academic years. In the study, teachers were invited to write reflections. As a qualitative evaluation strategy, reflection is a flexible tool that can tap the subjective experience of the teachers. In this study, we invited 10 teachers who had taught NSL to share their experience with reference to several questions (17):

1. What did you feel when you knew that you had to teach a lecture on NSL?
2. What were your experiences when you taught this lecture?
3. Did you encounter any difficulties and how did you overcome them?
4. Please cite some memorable or moving experiences in the NSL teaching
5. What were the responses of the students to the NSL lecture?
6. Did the students benefit from the lecture? Please give some examples.
7. Do you feel that you have achieved personal and professional growth in teaching the NSL program?

While the first four questions focus on the teaching experience of the teacher, the last three questions are concerned about student well-being and teacher well-being. Since the findings on the first four questions are reported in a paper in this special issue (17), we focus on the responses of the students and benefits to the students as well as teachers in this paper.

Findings

The findings are basically positive, although some students raised questions and issues that can be regarded as reasonable. Some sharing can be seen below:

- ❖ “The students’ responses of the NSL lecture are quite positive. Student stated that ‘It was a useful lecture that helps me improve my understanding on the security and the concept of NSL.’ Another student claimed that ‘It equipped me with some essential knowledge which is very useful. The atmosphere is great.’ For the comments on the lecturer, student mentioned that ‘It was interesting on how the lecturer provided the information by using diverse methods, including quizzes, video, and PPT.’ Another student stated that ‘Interesting teaching skills which keeps us awake and lecturer continuously interacts with us which helps us engage more in class.’ Moreover, one of the students claimed that ‘The lecture was very engaging and entertaining despite the lecture is 3 hours long. It was easy to understand and stay focus.’ Overall, the students have positive responses of the NSL lecture.”
- ❖ “Overall, the student responses are positive. ... Despite the NSL lecture overlapped with the mid-term period in Week 8, which is a challenging time since students might prioritise study over attending a 3-hour lecture, the average attendance rate remained above 90% across five classes in two semesters.”
- ❖ “I at first expected the discussion on NSL might cause some negative reactions from students, but instead, most of the students were not showing much of negative reactions. The lecture just went like other lectures with other topics. Students’ responses are direct and candid. They showed more interests on the four main offences of NSL but not so much on the history of modern China and its Constitution. Since there was a part for my personal sharing of my close friend’s experience, I could feel the understanding from students by their reactions and feedbacks. So far, the only negative reaction students shown was the time when they found out that there are 60 lecture notes to study and a quiz needs to be completed.”
- ❖ “The students’ responses were positive during the lecture. Students perceived that the interaction with me is high, and they have sufficient participation during the lecture. Students were quite participated in the group discussion on the cases about NSL ... Students’ responses regarding the discussions were positive and active, and they thought that their knowledge on NSL was enhanced. One noteworthy observation is the students discussed seriously and rationally. They were more willing to express their ideas in the class than in 2021 when I first taught the NSL lecture.”
- ❖ “The students were quite engaged and responsive, with no particularly challenging questions asked. To enhance the learning experience, I have deliberately prepared and incorporated some videos, interactive games and activities, which were met with enthusiastic and joyful participation from the students ... Overall, the students’ feedback was quite constructive, indicating a likelihood of them benefiting from the lecture. It is observed that the content of this lecture provided them with adequate resources and new knowledge about the importance of law-abiding behaviors, law-abiding leadership, and national security. The introduction to HKNSL could also enrich their fundamental knowledge.”
- ❖ “Echoing my previous sharing, my students were more willing to share their ideas anonymously through the online platform and respond to my questions. Meanwhile, they would give simpler and shorter verbal responses than other lectures. I sensed they might hesitate, and I was unsure whether it was attributed to my teaching or their perceptions. Some students shared with me after lectures that they knew the NSL ordinance and related cases but preferred not to discuss them publicly.”

- ❖ “The students' reactions were not as negative as I had anticipated. Instead, according to the lesson survey, the general response to my teaching was positive. In particular, students expressed appreciation for the rich content and the platform which allows free discussion on NSL. The students also liked the assistance provided to help them pass the NSL online quiz ... One student said ‘I think it's (the lecture) pretty rich and it will... actually allow us, every one of us, if we want to talk, then we can really talk about it. So I think it's pretty nice’. Another student shared that ‘I think the 20 MCQ is just right. I like this because there is not too much workload. The questions are not too easy. You have to study the notes. I think it also helps consolidate the knowledge.’”
- ❖ “The response of the students to the NSL lecture were quite diverse. At the beginning of my teaching (probably the first-time teaching), there were resistance and reluctance among the students to engage in the class, especially among Hong Kong students in previous years. It seemed that they might not have had a thorough understanding of NSL since the law was new to them. However, as the law became widely accepted, the overall response improved, transiting from quite negative to neutral. I think it is a big change in my three years teaching. Students would try to engage in the group discussion, and raise their hand when asked to select the best option in multiple-choice questions. While there may still be some students with differing opinions, there is a noticeable shift towards acceptance and a willingness to learn about NSL.”

Students' perceived benefits of the lecture

- ❖ “Students can benefit from the lecture. Students mentioned that ‘I have deeper understanding of NSL and know that many countries have similar laws.’ This lecture helped students to ‘clear their misunderstanding towards the law.’ In addition, students mentioned that they ‘knew more about the balance between national security concerns and individual rights and freedoms.’ Another student claimed that ‘from this lesson, I understand the details of NSL as I didn’t fully understand the standard of breaking the NSL. I learnt the standard of breaking the law after this lecture.’ In addition, one of the students mentioned that he ‘understood the definition and the components of NSL, how we are able to become a good citizen, and how we can recognize illegal behavior.’ One of the foreign students stated that ‘It is nice to cover NSL. It would be helpful for me while I am living in HK.’”
- ❖ “There are three benefits our students gained from the NSL lecture. Firstly, it provided a solid foundation for non-local students to understand the offenses and related penalties of NSL, which can alleviate their concerns particularly some of them have been considering staying in Hong Kong for further opportunities (e.g., jobs or postgraduate study). Secondly, by incorporating the information of NSL from other countries (e.g., Singapore), the lecture can clear local students’ misconception that the NSL is unique to Hong Kong. Moreover, the arrangement of mixing local and non-local students in groups can broaden our local students’ understanding in term of the global application of NSL, in which non-local students can share their knowledge of the NSL implemented in their home countries. Thirdly, the implementation of case studies, in which we applied the NSL into real-life scenarios, can facilitate students’ abilities to apply abstract concepts into practical settings. These case studies aimed to not only deepen our students’ comprehension of the NSL, but also cultivated their analytic skills, preparing them for real-world challenges.”

- ❖ “Many students provided positive feedback after the lecture, stating that the lecture had enhanced their understanding about the Hong Kong NSL. While some students mentioned receiving National Security Education in secondary school, the majority claimed that they were unaware of the four offenses and the related penalties under the Hong Kong NSL.”
- ❖ “Some students reported difficulties in distinguishing between the offenses of “subversion” and “secession”, and that the in-class case discussion helped them to gain a better understanding of the differences between the two.”
- ❖ “Some students expressed concerns about potential limitations on their freedom of speech, worrying that making negative comments about the government could potentially violate the laws. Such sharing opened up the opportunity for the class to engage in an in-depth discussion, allowing them to develop their ability to differentiate lawful behaviors from unlawful ones. Some students appreciated the opportunities for discussion and claimed that it helped dispelling the myths and misconceptions related to the NSL.”
- ❖ “Sometimes the class discussion is greatly enriched when students with different nationality are included in the classroom. I often invite international students to share their views on NSL-related cases and share the national security laws implemented in their respective home countries. This approach was particularly beneficial in helping students grasp the concept of national security and its significance. In one of the lectures, a noticeable silence filled the classroom as the lecture started at 08:30 a.m. It was observed that students were initially hesitant to speak up, perhaps cautious about what they share in the lecture. A student from Thailand was invited to talk about the national security law in his country. He introduced the laws that had been implemented in Thailand and further shared his views on why he believed it was an important practice. His sharing broke the ice in the classroom and motivated other students to share their views on the Hong Kong NSL. This exchange of ideas fostered a more open and engaging atmosphere and engaged students in constructive discussion.”
- ❖ “Students benefit from the lecture. First, students received a lot of information about NSL which they have never known. One student approached me after class and said ‘I thought we are forced to accept NSL being implemented in Hong Kong, but now I know that there are reasons.’ It made a difference when students can absorb the information and have a better understanding about NSL, which could be a good way for them to train up their cognitive competence, and to make informed decision.”
- ❖ “The lecture also helped students to clarify some misconceptions and misunderstanding about NSL. Some students were quite worried about NSL limits their freedom, and after the lecture with the explanation of the offences, students acknowledged that our freedom is protected by Basic Law in Hong Kong and this relieved their worries in this area. It is crucial for students to have more awareness about their rights and responsibilities as a Hong Kong Citizen and to strike the balance between individuals rights and national security.”
- ❖ “The lecture gave students an opportunity to discuss this topic publicly. At the beginning of the lecture, students went quiet. As more information were given to students, it is obvious that students were more willing to talk and be more engaged in class. They started to express their thoughts and views. It encouraged students to have effective discussion in class and would facilitate them to gain more insights from the discussion.”

- ❖ “The discussions about the court cases we covered in the lecture provide students a better understanding of national security, at the very least, they were exposed to the basic knowledge of National Security Law and court cases. I think they would become more attentive to similar situations that may arise in the future.”
- ❖ “The students I taught mainly comprised of the Chinese group, Hong Kong and mainland students, and the overseas group from other countries. The class was beneficial from the knowledge about NSL, that ‘NSL is a complicated law and is meant to be respected and closely abided’. In addition to the Chinese group of students, there was a deep reflection from an overseas student. She reflected that ‘including NSL and the brief history of China and Hong Kong as a mandatory lecture was an excellent addition to the study curriculum. It made me more familiar with the place I currently live in and helped me understand some of the HK laws.’
- ❖ “Some students also indicated that the lecture allowed them to review the quality of law-abiding behavior from a fresh perspective. By receiving adequate materials and acquiring new knowledge, students claimed that certain misconceptions towards HKNSL were somehow eliminated. Furthermore, the lecture underscored the importance of national security for them. It is perceived that the students grasped the purpose of the HKNSL is to maintain social order and harmony. They became more acquainted with the content of the HKNSL and understood why we need NSL in Hong Kong. They also understood the rationale behind conducting this lecture.”
- ❖ “The lecture was beneficial for the students, who learned about the NSL, its rationale, and its importance. Below is a quote from a student focus group: ‘I think a good thing is... it teaches us about the place where we come from. I think as a local, we can know how to avoid... This act as a tool so we can quickly know what kind of things... and the trend... and not violate the rules. This is good. People may violate the law without knowing what really happened. Some people don't watch the news. They may not know what has happen.’ Students were guided to view issues from different perspectives and came to understand the significance of mutual respect in discussions and debates.”

Personal and professional growth in teaching the NSL program

Teachers generally shared that teaching NSL program contributed to their personal and professional development. Some teachers mentioned that they had good development as teachers. Some sharing can be seen below.

- ❖ “I do feel that I have achieved personal and professional growth in teaching the NSL program. For professional growth, first, I can understand more about NSL as I need to do more research on this topic in advance so that I can deliver the message to my students. This enhanced my knowledge on NSL. Second, I have spent more time discussing this issue with my friends and the younger generation to understand their thoughts and feelings on NSL. This has broadened my horizon when I listened to different perspectives on NSL. Third, I reflected that I should interact with different people on different topics, but not solely on NSL. Since I am the one who delivers the message to students, the listeners may have different feelings and thoughts. Also, when I add new interactive games with the audience, I need to make sure they feel it is interesting and learn something instead of just having fun in class. Therefore, it could enhance my teaching skills if I could share more with other people whenever I taught different topics.”

- ❖ “Regarding the professional network growth, my role in teaching service-learning, which often collaborates with secondary schools seeking to incorporate National Education into their extracurricular programs, has been enriched ... The experiences I have gained from teaching NSL have equipped me to provide constructive feedback on our service-learning students' session plans (e.g., National Education Booths). This ensures high-quality service delivery, benefiting both our university students and the secondary students in term of their learning experiences.”
- ❖ “Teaching the NSL program has undoubtedly fostered my professional growth. Beyond the acquisition of substantive knowledge about law-abiding leadership and the laws in Hong Kong, this teaching journey had taught me the importance of evidence-based practice in a teacher’s professional development. Every semester, our team would collect quantitative and qualitative feedback from students, encouraging us to objectively evaluate the quality of our teaching ... The feedback enables us to gain a better understanding of the needs and perspectives of our students and adapt our teaching methods accordingly. For instance, in the first semester of teaching the NSL lecture, most students exhibited a neutral attitude, while some expressed concerns and negative emotions about the subject matter. During that period, teachers would spend more time on ice-breaking activities and explain the purpose of the lecture. In the third year, there was a noticeable change in student’s attitude towards National Security Education. For instance, the majority of students demonstrated an open attitude toward the program, leading to increased time spent on case discussion.”
- ❖ “Students were invited to participate in at least four group discussions in a three-hour lecture. The discussion topics included i) the importance of law-abiding behaviors; ii) the concept of national security and its relevance to students’ personal lives; iii) their views on an NSL case and the reason behind the verdicts; and iv) ways to ensure fairness in cases that are tried without a jury. The enhanced competence and continuous reflection fostered my growing confidence, which led to a change in my teaching approach. As a result, students responded positively to the changes, fostering an environment conducive to effective learning and engagement.”
- ❖ “My teaching journey has provided me with numerous opportunities in professional development. These experiences have highlighted the importance of teacher’s ability to learn and deliver new knowledge, being aware of one’s emotional state and bias as a teacher and recognizing the impact they could have on the learning environment, and the value of receiving and responding to students’ feedback. These insights have further strengthened my commitment to strive for professional growth as an educator. By the teaching experience of NSL, I have achieved both personal and professional growth, and I found it would give positive impacts to students as well.”
- ❖ “Teaching National Security Law has indeed contributed to my personal and professional growth. It has deepened my understanding of national security law and its implications, which enhancing my legal knowledge. Given that the law also applied to me as a Hong Kong citizen, it is crucial for me to have a good understanding of it. To ensure our teaching team are all capable to teach this topic correctly and effectively, our teaching team would undergo regular teacher training sessions each semester. These sessions include mock teaching sessions where we receive feedbacks from colleagues. This practice has proved invaluable in refining our teaching materials and ways of expressive ideas in the class.”

- ❖ “After finished teaching my two classes in the 2023/24 semester 2 on NSL, I made a quick review of my teaching within the week. First, I felt more confident in teaching the subject contents due to the better understanding of the history, and the NSL implementation in Hong Kong. Second, I felt that my students were mostly engaging to listen to my stories which are related to the contents, such as the Big Famine, riot in Hong Kong in 1967, hand-over of Hong Kong stories, and the 2019 social unrest. Third, I gained the mission and vision to share with students what I experienced in the history since I am not merely reading out the history and incidents from the lecture notes but also integrated with my personal experience and encounter with my old friends to come up with a fuller picture for my students to learn about NSL. In the year of 2023 and onward, I started to become more sensitive to the modern Chinese history and the history of Hong Kong. After all, I am quite satisfied after teaching NSL in this round.”
- ❖ “For professional growth, I have developed a practice of regular reflection. After each lecture, I would spend some time to reflect and tried to identify the areas that worked well or otherwise. And I would do some adjustment in my teaching the next time. Through the reflection, I could also gain more insights and deeper understanding of my teaching methods and philosophy, which could benefit my professional development.”
- ❖ “In addition, I derived considerable benefit from the mock teaching exercises conducted by our team. These preparatory sessions offered me the opportunity to refine my pedagogical approach, drawing on the critiques and suggestions of my colleagues. As a result, I was able to deliver the lecture in a manner that was both structured and engaging, ensuring that the content was accessible and that students were encouraged to actively participate.”

Besides professional development, teachers also shared that they had personal gains from teaching NSL education, such as enhanced self-understanding, personal strengths and soft skills. Some examples can be seen as follows:

- ❖ “Throughout this journey, I have been able to identify and explore my strengths, as well as address and improve upon my weaknesses in teaching. The process has been influential in advancing my teaching efficiency and has provided me with valuable insights into more effective lesson planning and time management. I felt more confident in conducting NSL education.”
- ❖ “The challenges and difficulties I encountered have served as good catalysts for my own self-examination and growth. Such teaching and learning experiences have prompted me to reflect further on my emotions, psychological struggles, personal preconceptions and values, leading to a greater understanding of my psychological dynamics and aspirations within my teaching career.”
- ❖ “I am glad to have a chance to refine my problem-solving abilities and teaching efficacy. The sense of fulfillment I have derived from this experience is rewarding and has contributed to my ongoing personal and professional growth.”
- ❖ “On a personal level, I reflected that I did not receive any formal and systematic National Education, National Security Education, or the Constitution and Basic Law Education when I was a student. I also did not have a solid knowledge of modern Chinese history as I was a science major in secondary school. My personal experience was based on my short-term working and travel experience in China, a few exchange tours, and a military

training camp I joined in secondary school time. Therefore, before my first teaching, I tried to get familiar with Chinese news and modern Chinese history and have more discussions with Chinese from different backgrounds, such as colleagues, students, and friends. Their sharing helped to equip my knowledge and familiarize me with how they perceive their identity”

- ❖ “My experience teaching NSL was somehow positive and encouraging. This has contributed significantly to my personal and professional development. Engaging in the preparation and delivery of NSL content has not only refreshed and expanded my knowledge but has also enhanced my teaching skills and deepened my expertise in the subject matter. The teaching experiences (no matter whether positive or negative experiences) helped me possess certain techniques in teaching and gave me some sense of reassurance.”
- ❖ “Teaching the NSL program has enhanced my communication skills and broadened my professional network. My communication enhancements included both verbal and non-verbal aspects. For example, I integrated a glossary of legal terms (e.g., reasons for verdict) to clarify the complex law concepts for our students. Also, maintaining a neutral expression in term of non-verbal languages included gestures, tone and facial expression is important for objective case discussions. These refined communication skills are important for me when dealing with student conflicts in their group works, where my role (as an instructor) was to impartially listen to all viewpoints and guide them towards collaborative solutions.”
- ❖ “For personal growth, I learnt that I shouldn’t have any bias in different issues. At first, I still worried that students may be unwilling to learn NSL and maybe critical. However, the results showed that students are willing to share and reflect. This demonstrated that I should avoid having any prejudice on different issues in my life.”

Discussion

The present study attempted to document the subjective experiences of the teachers in teaching National Security Education program on three issues: student responses to NSL education, perceived benefits for students and perceived benefits for teachers. This study has several unique features. First, besides the previous cross-sectional studies based on teachers, this study takes a snapshot after implementation of three years. Second, teachers teaching NSL education were invited to give their responses. As NSL education is a sensitive topic, many teachers did not want to teach it. In fact, some universities in Hong Kong deliver NSL education using online means only to avoid the sensitivity and difficulties involved. Third, to give more flexibility to teachers to share their experiences, we used open-ended questions for the teachers to share their experiences. This approach can help us understand the real-life experiences and subjective perception of the teachers. Fourth, we focused on the perceived benefits for students and teachers which can give us a triangulated picture on the benefits of NSL education to different stakeholders. Using the concept of political well-being, the study gives us some ideas about how NSL education may contribute to the political well-being of the teachers and students.

Regarding responses of the students to NSL education, the findings are basically positive, although there are also challenges encountered. The findings have several implications. First, it is a common assumption that teaching matters on national security are intrinsically stressful and students do not welcome such education. The present findings showed that in fact the students were not very resentful to the program. In particular, students from mainland China and foreign

countries basically support NSL education because there is related education in other parts of the world outside China. The second implication is that with adequate preparation and training, education on national security can be launched smoothly. In fact, in the NSL program described in this paper, the Research Team regularly conducted training and mock teaching for colleagues in every semester to empower them. During the training sessions, teachers were invited to give a mock lecture with challenging sharing and questions raised by other teachers playing the role of students.

Concerning the perceived benefits for students, the findings showed that teachers had positive perception of this issue. Basically, they agreed that the student gained more knowledge about national security and the offences associated with NSL. This point is important because the basic objective of NSL education is to enhance the knowledge of students on NSL knowledge. Obviously, the findings echo other research findings arising from other evaluation studies. Again, this demystifies the common belief that students are resentful to NSL education and they cannot learn much from NSL education. Besides, NSL education provides a platform for students to reflect on the concepts of law abidance and meaning of following the law. Obviously, such gains can help to promote the political well-being of the students. With the implementation of NSL in Hong Kong, the proper attitude of the students should be at least not to step on the red line and have positive views about the legal requirements.

For the perceived benefits for teachers, two observations deserve attention. First, teachers perceived that they had a better understanding of national security and NSL. This is very important because the teachers are empowered to teach NSL education. In fact, from the initial fear and stress to the present conclusion, we witness the professional development of the teachers. As teachers are not prepared to teach such sensitive topics, training and support are indispensable. Second, teachers shared that they had personal growth in the process, such as enhancement in soft skills and reflections. Obviously, such personal development is valuable for teachers as professionals as well as teachers. Again, the study suggests that teaching NSL education could be enjoyable and it contributes to both personal and professional development of the teachers.

In conclusion, in conjunction with the findings presented in another paper (17), the present findings suggest that teaching NSL education is an interesting journey for the teachers. Initially, some teachers had negative experiences while some teachers had a sense of mission and responsibility to teach NSL to students. The diversity in responses suggests wide range of responses in the teachers to the assignment. When the teachers taught the subject, there were diverse student reactions but the overall tone was positive with some challenging and stressful experiences. Teacher also learned how to cope with such responses. Finally, when teachers were invited to comment on the benefits to students and themselves, they are positive in their responses. In summary, from the perspective of the teachers, teaching NSL education is a growth experience for both the students and teachers. Of course, accumulation of evaluation over time would be valuable to appreciate the long term impact of teaching NSL to both students and teachers.

Acknowledgments

The preparation of this paper was financially supported by Li and Fung Endowed Professorship in Service Leadership Education and the Research Matching Fund of the Research Grants Council (ZH4Q and ZECL). The authorship is equally shared by all authors. The co-authors are listed in alphabetical order. This chapter is based on a special journal issue paper in the *International Journal of Child and Adolescent Health* 2024;17(1).

References

1. Shek DTL, Zhu X, Li X, Dou D. Satisfaction with HyFlex teaching and law-abiding leadership education in Hong Kong university students under COVID-19. *Appl Res Qual Life* 2022;17(5):2833–58.
2. Shek DTL, Dou D, Zhu X, Li X. Law abidance leadership education for university students in Hong Kong: Post-lecture evaluation. *Front Psychol* 2022;13:994448.
3. Li X, Shek DTL, Dou D, Zhu X, Wu X. Law abidance leadership education for university students in Hong Kong: Subjective outcome evaluation. *Appl Res Qual Life* 2023;19:683–708.
4. Dou D, Shek DTL, Wu X, Lei LSM, Li KCN. Satisfaction and perceptions of an online national education program on National Security Law amongst university students in Hong Kong. *Int J Child Health Hum Dev*, in press .
5. Shek DTL, Zhu X, Dou D, Li X. National security law education in Hong Kong: Qualitative evaluation based on the perspective of the students. *Int J Environ Res Public Health* 2023;20(1):553.
6. Shek DTL, Chau CC, Mok B, Chai W, Cheng NS, Shek V, et al. Teachers' experience in law-abiding leadership education: Replication across time. *Int J Child Health Hum Dev* 2023;16(1):89–102.
7. Shek DTL, Li X, Dou D, Zhu X. Teachers' experience in law abidance leadership education: A qualitative study. *Int J Child Health Hum Dev* 2022;15(1):73–84.
8. Shek DTL, Chau CC, Mok B, Chak Y, Cheng NS, Shek V, et al. Education on law-abidance leadership: Does face-to-face teaching matter? *Int J Child Health Hum Dev* 2023;16(1):89–102.
9. Shek DTL, Dou D, Zhu X, Li X, Merrick J. Editorial: Hong Kong National Security Law education programs: What do evaluation findings tell us? *Int J Child Health Hum Dev* 2023;16(4).
10. Li X, Shek DTL, Wu X, Chen D. Perceived effectiveness of a National Education Program for undergraduate students in Hong Kong: Subjective outcome evaluation. *Int J Child Health Hum Dev* 2023;16(4).
11. Zhu X, Shek DTL, Wu X, Zhan H. Subjective outcome evaluation of an online program on law-abiding leadership. *Int J Child Health Hum Dev* 2023;16(4).
12. Dou D, Wu X, Zhang S, Shek DTL. Evaluating the impact of a national education program for taught postgraduate students in Hong Kong. *Int J Child Health Hum Dev* 2023;16(4).
13. Dou D, Wu X, Shek DTL, Leung GKP. Evaluating the effectiveness of an online National Education Program for Research Postgraduate Students in Hong Kong: A multidimensional approach. *Int J Child Health Hum Dev* 2023;16(4).
14. Li X, Shek DTL, Wu X, Zhang S. Qualitative evaluation of law abidance leadership education for undergraduate students in Hong Kong: Focus groups. *Int J Child Health Hum Dev* 2023;16(4).
15. Zhu X, Shek DTL, Wu X, Hong J. Online National Security Law (NSL) education in Hong Kong: Qualitative evaluation based on focus groups. *Int J Child Health Hum Dev* 2023;16(4).

16. Dou D, Wu X, Shek DTL. Focus group evaluation of national education in Hong Kong: Postgraduate students' perceptions. *Int J Child Health Hum Dev* 2023;16(4).
17. Shek DTL, Chak YLY, Cheng N.S., Chiu T.Y., Chu K.M., Ho Wynants, Lam WS, Mok B, Shek V, Xiao Zoe Xiao, Yeung Edmond. Teaching law-abidance leadership education for university students in Hong Kong: Stories told by the teachers. *Int J Child Health Hum Dev*. In press.