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Running title: Education on law-abiding leadership

Teachers' experience in law-abiding leadership education: Replication across time

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Abstract: To help students understand the concept of national security and the Hong Kong National Security Law (NSL), we have developed a curriculum based on the framework of law-abiding leadership, with three hours of lecture and seven hours of study. In a previous study based on the evaluation data collected from teachers in Semester 1 of 2022/23 academic year, we found that teachers generally had positive perceptions of the curriculum and the lecture, as well as benefits to students. They also perceived that the teaching helped them in terms of personal as well as professional development. To replicate the findings, we invited the teachers providing NSL education in Semester 2 of 2021/22 academic year to respond to a questionnaire with open-ended questions. Results showed that teachers had positive views of NSL education, including teaching experience, student experience, and benefits to students. The teachers also felt that the teaching promoted their personal as well as professional development. The findings suggest that teachers have positive experiences about NSL education based on law-abiding leadership for university students, although there are some challenges to be resolved.

Keywords: Qualitative study, teacher evaluation, Hong Kong National Security Law, law-abiding leadership, replication

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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. The basic reasoning is that to be an effective leader, a person must obey the laws, such as following organizational requirements and regulations. Besides, as a citizen, a leader should also be a law-abiding leader. As the NSL is new to Hong Kong, students may have skepticism and doubts about NSL education. Similarly, asking teachers to teach NSL education is also an anxiety-provoking

task for them. Hence, to understand the impact of NSL education on the students, there is a need to understand the feedback of the different stakeholders, including the teachers.

As far as the feedback of the students is concerned, we collected post-lecture evaluation data in Semester 1 of 2021/22 academic year. Findings are generally positive – the lecture content, teaching process, classroom atmosphere, and teachers were perceived positively by students. Students also expressed that they acquired knowledge on NSL, and they would try their best to serve as socially responsible leaders (1). Similar findings were obtained for the teaching in Semester 2 of 2021/22 academic year. Again, students indicated that they would strive to be law-abiding citizens (2). Besides the feedback of the students, we also collected qualitative data from some teachers teaching NSL in Semester 2 of 2021/22. The findings triangulated those based on the students. Teachers perceived that the students' responses were positive (although "quiet" because of the sensitive nature of the topic) and that NSL education was beneficial to the students. However, teachers also shared their challenges and difficulties in teaching NSL education (3).

For the evaluation findings based on students, there is a convergence of findings across Semester 1 and Semester 2. Hence, it is important to ask whether teachers' feedback in Semester 1 could be replicated in Semester 2. Despite the importance of replication, there are criticisms that replications in social science research are grossly inadequate (4-7). Hence, the purpose of this study was to examine the views of the teachers of NSL education via a qualitative methodology in Semester 2 of 2021/22 academic year.

Methods

In Semester 2 of 2021/22 academic year, eight teachers taught law-abiding leadership. After the semester, we invited them to complete an open-ended questionnaire with the following questions:

1. If you taught the law abidance lecture in Semester 1 of 2021-22 academic year, what reflections did you have after teaching the lecture? If you taught the law abidance lecture in Semester 2 of 2021-22 academic year for the first time, what did you feel when you knew that you had to teach a lecture on NSL?
2. How did you prepare for this lecture?
3. What were the responses of the students to this lecture?
4. What were your experiences when you teach this lecture? Any positive and negative experiences?
5. What were the major challenges when you teach this lecture?
6. Did the students benefit from the lecture?
7. How would you comment on your development and well-being as a teacher in teaching NSL education?
8. What reflections do you have after teaching the law abidance leadership lecture(s)?

Eventually, all teachers (100%) joined the study in an anonymous manner.

Results

Generally speaking, colleagues had positive experience about teaching NSL in Semester 2 of 2021/22 academic year because of the previous teaching experience helped them psychologically prepared for the new teaching and gave them a sense of reassurance. Some narratives are as follows:

- *“I am happy to teach as I found some positive students’ responses in Semester 1. It is because students think they learned more about the topic and enjoyed sharing their views in class.”*
- *“I was more mentally and psychologically prepared for teaching the lecture in Semester 2. I was nervous in teaching the lecture in Semester 1... after teaching the lecture in the 1st semester, I understood more about students’ reactions to the lecture which assured me that the lecture is acceptable to many students and my confidence in teaching this lecture has been greatly improved.”*
- *“... the experience is rewarding, but also challenging. Rewarding in the sense that the teaching and learning experiences were generally smooth, effective, and useful to students. I can refresh my understanding of NSL in my teaching. Challenging in the sense that as some more court cases were going on, I need to digest some more details of the court cases before teaching.”*
- *“I felt a lot more confident during the second time teaching the law abidance lecture. As I was more familiar with the lecture content and the Hong Kong national security law, I was pretty sure I could handle students’ questions.”*

The participants also remarked that based on the teaching experience and reflection, the design and quality of the lecture could be continuously reviewed and improved. The participants also highlighted the importance of mock teaching. As remarked by a participant, *“constant mock teaching is important. Mock teaching in Semester 2 helped me a lot. Particularly we conducted mock teaching in a physical classroom which was different from the mock teaching conducted online in the first semester. With comments from different colleagues, I have understood more about my problems and shortcomings in teaching this lecture, which helped me to further improve my teaching.”*

Another participant shared her anxiety in teaching this lecture in the first semester because of the limited teaching experience and worries surrounding NSL education. However, the colleague was positive about the teaching because she was *“fully aware that the introduction of the National Security Law is essential for safeguarding the security and stability of Hong Kong, and I needed to prepare for this lecture actively instead of immersing myself in worthless anxiety”*. She also saw this as an opportunity for development: *“It’s a new challenge and an excellent opportunity for me to drill my teaching skills. In the second semester, I was much more ready for this topic. Without any hesitation, I got the preparation work started right after the beginning of the second semester. I did not suffer from insomnia and any disturbing physical symptoms this time. Instead, I was more excited than anxious as it was an honor for me.”*

One participant wrote *“I do not have much feeling”* but had concerns about whether students gained the knowledge and could successfully complete the quiz. Another participant had worry about teaching the subject because the students might not have positive views about NSL. Another colleague remarked that she was *“still stressed and puzzled, and I am still struggling with national security education”*.

Another teacher showed ambivalence in teaching NSL education as follows: *“To be honest, I was still struggling with how to teach the NSL lecture better without too much anxious feeling. It is a big challenge for me as I worried that our lecture content would provoke students’ emotions and they would be very critical of my lectures. I agreed that NSL education is necessary for eliminating some misunderstandings among the public and enhancing students’ awareness of national security and national security law. I could get familiar with the lecture content through*

numerous practices and mock teaching, but it is still hard to control my students' reactions and what they write in the lecture evaluation or on social media."

Preparation for the lecture on NSL

An integration of the sharing of the colleagues showed that they used different strategies to prepare for the lecture:

- Full understanding of the content by carefully studying the PowerPoint slides
- Search for more knowledge about the slides by locating additional information on the Internet
- Writing notes for each PPT slide to familiarize oneself with the content and linkages between different knowledge points.
- Discussion with colleagues and exchange of ideas to consolidate understanding
- Asking friends of different political stands ("yellow" versus "blue") to understand the different views involved
- Editing the slides to make them more attractive and user-friendly
- Addition of personal reflections to facilitate and engage students to reflect
- Revision of the slides and presentation style after mock teaching
- Review the slides again and mentally rehearse the teaching before the teaching day
- Arrive at the lecture room early to have preparation
- Use different platforms to engage the students, such as google document for group discussion

To illustrate these strategies, we presented the sharing of two teachers.

Teacher 1: *"To prepare myself, I reviewed all the PowerPoint slides a few times and tried to strengthen the linkages between different parts of the contents. This could help students understand the rationale behind the implementation of NSL in Hong Kong easily.*

At the beginning of the lecture, I set up Padlet and invited each student to share their views on some social issues. This was a warm-up activity for students at the beginning of the class. I shared some students' work with the class afterwards. Students were able to read some of the others' work and learn from each other. In addition, I prepared more interactive games and activities for students to enjoy so that they could learn through activities. I used Kahoot as a class game to invite all students to answer some of the questions after I have introduced the 4 major crimes. After the lecture, I received an email from a student who mentioned that their group loves this game a lot and it could help them concentrate more on the teaching contents.

Furthermore, I discussed some myths with them and tried to let them understand the importance of believing in facts instead of myths. This semester, I included some group discussions so that students could discuss the myths with their groupmates first and they could have an opportunity to share their thoughts in class. Thus, I believe it would be helpful for students to understand the contents."

Teacher 2: *"To begin with, getting some basic understanding of NSL from the official website would be helpful. There were six chapters and sixty-six articles. How could we cover this topic in a three-hour lecture in an interactive way? Without hesitation, I decided to comprehend and memorize the chapters and contents intensively. To my surprise, although there were some political and legal terms, learning the items was not too difficult. As NSL is written for the public*

of Hong Kong, our objective is to help students understand the contents. Since NSL Education is also introduced in primary and secondary schools, teachers with proper training can teach NSL Education. To my great joy, I finally memorized the contents covered in this law, which helped me a lot in real-time teaching. Although I was a little bit nervous in class, I could confidently deliver the contents.

I also searched for information from all kinds of discussion forums and news regarding this topic ... Different websites have various interpretations of the cases and the debates surrounding the cases were intense. As NSL is new to Hong Kong, we need more cases to illustrate the application of NSL to real life. Therefore, it was good to understand this topic from various perspectives. And I also developed more understanding of the youngsters' perception of this topic. It was true that most of them felt worried about the so-called "brain-washing" education, and some of them remained neutral, and some of them might support the Law. Nevertheless, as we acknowledge their concern, we need to help the students understand the Law better and strive to promote a sense of law abidance amongst students.

Moreover, I also asked for suggestions from my colleagues. As Professor S would attend our lecture every time and give us feedback regarding each class, I had the chance to know my performance and avoid some mistakes in the following classes. Moreover, as a junior teacher, I would approach the senior teachers for suggestions, and we were also involved in some hot discussions."

Responses of the students to NSL education

The teachers observed that the students showed positive responses to the lecture. Some narratives are as follows:

- "many students had active participation in the class; they shared their responses to different questions raised by me and in different online activities."
- "The students' responses to the lecture are quite positive. On average, they rated 4.9 out of 6 when we asked them 'Do they have a positive evaluation of the lecture?' in a course evaluation form. In addition, some students reflected that 'It is a meaningful lesson for me to have a deeper knowledge of the political system of Hong Kong.' Another student claimed that 'Originally, law-abiding leadership should be a topic which is difficult to understand but the design of the lesson facilitates my understanding of this topic, and it also makes the lesson more interesting.' From the data, it gauged those students have positive responses to this lecture.
- "The atmosphere of the three lectures was peaceful and smooth. In the first hour, the lecture focused on law-abiding leadership, and most of the students were involved in the discussion. At the beginning of the second part, the students were interested in different dimensions of national security, and they shared their viewpoints actively. I did not get any radical responses or sharing from the students. To warm up the atmosphere, I decided to invite some active students to share their ideas first. I noticed that some of them had a good understanding of history, and they were interested in current affairs as well. The sharing from students also motivated me to keep on teaching with confidence. I think it would be better to take a normal approach to teach this lecture."
- "The students freely expressed their views during the lecture. In the first discussion, all students agreed that the law is important, and everyone should follow the law. They also believed that practicing law abidance leadership is a crucial way to gain trust from others.

In addition, when discussing the case of Tong Ying Kit, many students revealed that they had a different interpretation of the slogan “Liberate Hong Kong, Revolution of Our Times ...”

- *“I did not receive any radical responses or sharing from the students during the lecture. Most of them were expected to have this lecture and did not show very strong emotion in the class. From my observation, students were generally active in answering my questions raised, particularly those students who attended the lecture online. Those non-local students, for instance, students from mainland China were more active in responding to my questions, and those foreign students were more likely to share their personal views regarding NSL in Hong Kong and compared ours with their countries.”*
- *“Similar to semester 1, the responses of the students were positive in general. Both online classes went smoothly and the overall atmosphere was constructive. No challenging questions were received and students are cooperative and responsive.”*

Because of the sensitive nature of NSL education, some teachers remarked that the students might feel uneasy sharing their ideas:

- *“The responses in the 1st part about law-abiding leadership were good, even though a few students were relatively tired ... However, when the 2nd part about NSL began, the students were relatively passive even though some were still willing to respond and share. The students provided fewer comments in the chat box and fewer responses in polling and other activities. After the lecture (on the same day and after a few months), I met some students and asked for their feedback. Some claimed they were tired due to the early lecture and submission deadline of other assignments. In addition, a few students claimed they felt uneasy talking about the ordinance and cases as the lecture was recorded. On the other hand, other students claimed they preferred listening when the content was related to legal ordinances and cases.”*
- *“In general, the classes consisted of Hong Kong local, mainland, and overseas students ... As the atmosphere is positive, I invited some local Hong Kong students to share their views. I observed that local Hong Kong students agreed that national security is important, but they tended to accept the NSL passively since they thought that the general public have no say in the NSL.”*
- *“It is undoubted that some students in the lectures were relatively silent and passive compared to the previous lectures. Most of them did not want to respond to the online chatroom nor were involved in group discussion. I thought they might have hesitation to talk about their opinions in class as our lectures were recorded.”*

Nevertheless, it seems patience, respect and acceptance would promote student engagement:

- *“The lectures ran more smoothly than I expected. However, some of the students were relatively silent and most of them were not involved in group discussion in the beginning. They had hesitation to talk about their opinions. Since we were delivering the lecture online, I chose to wait patiently after I asked the questions and encouraged them to answer the questions either by typing words in the chat box or turning on the mic. For some simple questions, I would invite some students randomly to share their views. But I did not urge them too much, and I respected their answers. For example, some students questioned the*

cases regarding the crimes. Since some cases were not settled, the discussion of these cases would be controversial. I also acknowledged that we need more firm cases as examples in the future, and I would follow the development of the cases. Specifically, the discussion regarding different aspects of national security was good as I used some personal sharing and examples to illustrate the differences. Some students said that they like this part as it was relevant to our daily life, which was very encouraging to me.”

Teaching experience

Most teachers reflected that they had positive teaching experiences:

- *“My positive experience comes from students’ generally active participation in the lecture. ... The students were active in sharing their own views in the chat box of the online classroom and their answers demonstrated their serious and careful thinking about the issue and their understanding of the importance of abiding by the law. Also, when I asked the students to discuss in their own small group whether the Slogan of DAB (Democratic Alliance for the Betterment of Hong Kong): “Reform Hong Kong” should be counted as violating the NSL based on the definition of the four crimes, different groups shared their discussion results actively in the chat box. There was generally no negative experience.”*
- *“In conclusion, my experience teaching the topic of NSL was positive, and I benefited greatly from the preparation, teaching, and reflection. It motivated me to be well-prepared for every lecture. After several days of sleepless nights and anxious teaching weeks, I gathered more strengths and confidence after teaching this topic.”*
- *“I will rate my teaching experience 7 out of 10 (0 refers to bad, 10 refers to good) in this lecture. It is good that most of my students (over 95% of students) attended the lecture, and around 60-70% of them were willing to participate in the in-class activities. From my in-class observation, their presentation performance, and quiz results, they understood the key concepts of law-abiding leadership and the core components of NSL and modern Chinese history. Moreover, when I met some of the students after the lectures, they provided positive feedback verbally that they learned something in the lecture. The only negative experience is there were fewer responses from my students.”*
- *“Overall, my experiences in teaching this lecture were positive. The students actively participated in the discussions and genuinely shared their views, which provided more room for discussion.”*
- *“When I talked to them in group discussions, some of them stated that they misunderstand some of the concepts and believed in some myths. However, during class, I explained the concepts and facts clearly. At the end of the lesson, from their responses in the course evaluation, they wrote that they have a deeper understanding of the topic. This is a positive experience for me as it showed that students need to understand what NSL is and why we need to have NSL for protecting our society. As students do not have enough education about NSL, it is necessary to educate students not to believe in myths.”*
- *“The general teaching was smooth, and I could elaborate the ideas and concepts of NSL clearly with examples and guided questions in between. I thought I have a good understanding of the lecture content and the materials. Comparatively, I have more confidence in teaching the NSL lecture in the second semester as I prepared a lot for it.”*
- *“In general, the experience is quite positive. Students were willing to participate and finished the class activities together without too many negative emotions shown. Students*

told me that they liked polling, games, quiz, and Kahoot exercises to test students' understanding of NSL which made the lecture more interesting. I personally thought that they understood the importance of law-abiding leadership, obeying the law, and NSL in Hong Kong well."

- *"Both classes went smoothly and the overall atmosphere were quite positive. No challenging questions were received and students are cooperative and responsive. I have prepared some interactive games and activities and students have keen participation. The students mainly considered that the activities conducted helped them in understanding and enjoying the lecture. Students' responses could be regarded as constructive and cooperative."*

However, some teachers remarked that the students were not active to contribute to the class.

- *"some students were not ready or open-minded in accepting the teaching content. They already have some bias towards the topic and the teaching contents. In the course evaluation form, some rated 2 out of 6 when we asked them "Do they have positive evaluation of the lecture?" During group discussion, I invited some to share their view about NSL. Although they were quite active and claimed that they understand more about the topic, it is still difficult for them to accept what we teach in a short period of time as some of them got biased towards the topic. It is a bit difficult to change students' perception in a 3-hours lecture."*

Challenges encountered

One major challenge faced by teachers was how to make the teaching more interactive and engaging. This challenge existed because the legal knowledge may be boring to the students.

- *I kept asking for their feedback verbally and through chat box, meanwhile asking them to share their feeling through emojis in the chat box and gave them instant encouragement. I invited them to share their ideas and viewpoints and asked them to share their opinions by drawing or typing in the message (some students felt uneasy sharing verbally).*
- *Most students remained silent, and few were involved in the discussion. Moreover, since it was a traditional three-hour lecture, the students might feel bored and tired quickly. More case discussion and interactive games might be helpful to warm up the atmosphere.*

Besides, it was a challenge to teach the section on the "myths and realities" section which contains several critical questions and issues surrounding the NSL which made the students reluctant to express their views on these questions. Difficulty to locate relevant materials for some disciplines was also highlighted:

- *"The major challenges when teaching this lecture are the unexpected reaction of my students and those challenging questions asked by them during the lecture. I am afraid that I could not answer their questions well or provide professional responses."*
- *"I guess the major challenge would be the instant response to students' critical arguments ...I think that another major challenge was that students tended to be avoiding during discussions. They knew that the lesson was in recording, they thought that showing stands other than the stand of Hong Kong government/ PRC would put them at risk in various aspects, such as future study, career, etc."*

- *“It is quite challenging to find some relevant materials related to their discipline. For some industries, they have some code of ethics/conduct which is quite easy for students to understand why they need to obey the law. However, in other faculties, such as Social Policy, it is difficult to find evidence to show how it is directly related to their professionalism. We can only provide a general case to demonstrate the importance of obeying the law.”*

Some teachers also mentioned that time constraints and the time of the lecture were challenges faced in their teaching:

- *“The first challenge was reminding my students to attend the lecture on time. It was a 3-hour lecture from 08:30 (while most of the lectures were 2 hours and started at 09:30). I reminded my students about the starting time in the previous lecture, sent them mass emails 2-day in advance, and sent WhatsApp messages (asking them to remind their groupmates) to the coordinators one day before the lecture and 1-hour before the lecture.”*
- *“The content of this lecture is very rich, but the time is limited. We had to make sure the time was appropriately allocated.”*

Benefits for the students

All teachers held the view that the lecture was beneficial to the students. Some narratives are as follows:

- *“I believe that students would benefit from this lecture. First, no matter whether the students agree 100% with the content of the lecture, the content of the lecture would promote them to think about the importance of abiding by the law and the importance of law to society as well as the importance of being law-abiding citizens as university students. Also, the lecture would provide more comprehensive and objective information about the NSL which may challenge their previous concepts or understanding. In addition, based on the post-lecture evaluation of this lecture, most of the students provided positive ratings to the design, teaching, and benefits of this lecture.”*
- *“Based on lecture evaluation written by the students, we spotted those students learned a lot from the lecture. In general, students reflected that they have a more complete understanding of NSL by discussing some case studies in class. Also, they learned 4 types of crimes, the importance of obeying NSL, and how NSL can protect citizens. They also mentioned that this lecture could help them clarify some myths and misconceptions about the law. Some of the students reflected that ‘Although this lecture is not interesting for me, it is important for us as we need to be cautious about our behaviors and whether we would fall into crime.’ Thus, I believed this lesson is beneficial for students to enrich their knowledge towards NSL.”*
- *“Definitely, some students showed their appreciation for the content of this lecture and claimed that they had learned a lot from it. The polling result related to Hong Kong NSL also reflected that those students had a good understanding of the NSL.”*
- *“From their sharing and class participation, I thought most students benefited from this lecture, as they were eager to learn and share their understanding of this topic. Moreover, I was glad to see that some students also expressed their feelings in the post-class evaluation questionnaire, which was generally positive about this lecture.”*

- *“Most of the students liked this lecture, and the positive comments motivated me as well: I gained a deeper understanding of national security; I know the importance of law-abiding behaviors and law-abiding leadership; We need to follow the law, and the penalties are serious; National security is vital to a nation as well as every citizen; the importance of having critical thinking in a time of uncertainty”*
- *“I thought that students can have a clearer understanding of modern Chinese history and the invasion from the Western countries in the 19th Century. Besides, although students may not be able to reveal what they really think about NSL, the subject can provide a platform to create dialogues for students with different political stands. As the university is a place for students to acquire knowledge, this is good to have such a platform in an academic way to discuss NSL.”*
- *“I think students might have a better understanding of NSL and eliminate some of its misconceptions after the lecture. Many of them responded that they knew the reasons for having this lecture, our intention as an educator, as well as the importance of obeying the law. I read their comments in the post-lecture evaluation, and most of them expressed positive views on the content we designed and the class activities.”*
- *“By receiving useful materials and acquiring new knowledge, students claimed that some misconceptions towards NSL were somehow eliminated. In addition, this lecture let them know the importance of national security and some students admitted that they are willing to shoulder up their civil responsibilities after attending the lecture.”*

Benefits for the teachers

The teachers generally shared that the teaching of NSL was beneficial to them:

- *“Teaching NSL has a lot of benefits to my development and well-being as a teacher.”*
- *“I understood more about the rationale of law, the history of modern China, and the background of NSL in Hong Kong. This has broadened my horizon and enhanced my own law-abiding quality. I think a broadened horizon and citizenship particularly law-abiding quality is very important for being a teacher as a teacher should be the role model for his/her students. Good teacher both teaches students solid knowledge and inspires students by their characters, thoughts, and behaviors.”*
- *“...the teaching of this lecture also benefited my well-being as a good citizen. As a citizen in Hong Kong and in China, we share responsibility for the peace and welfare of the whole country. This teaching increased my citizenship awareness and social responsibility.”*
- *“As a teacher, I must maintain a proactive attitude toward self-learning. Before teaching NSL, I must be familiar with the contents in the slides and the latest updates and news about NSL. I need to be well-connected with the “new knowledge” and the “hot topics” of my students, which help equip me to teach and improve students’ learning.”*
- *“Besides, I need to be open-minded and show my acceptance to my students. They may have different ideas and perceptions of NSL and relative issues. So, on top of showing them NSL-related content or information, I should be ready to respond to their questions, opinions, and emotional responses. Since the 1st lecture, I created an atmosphere open for rational discussion (discussing the issue, not attacking any individual) and academic (multi-perspectives with evidence) discussion. And I always remind myself to smile and stay confident in any unexpected situation as my negative emotions or panic will deteriorate the teacher-student relationship.”*

- *“It enhanced my time management and lesson planning skills. In addition, it provided an excellent opportunity for me to gain a better understanding of my students’ thoughts and values. It’s unlikely that we would touch on this topic in our daily conversation.”*
- *“I would say that my resilience has been promoted in teaching NSL education. I believe I have overcome the challenges and properly managed some psychological hurdles (e.g, uncertainty, instability).”*

A teacher mentioned that there were several benefits of the lecture with reference to the different roles of a teacher: *“As a junior teacher, it always helps to prepare well for every lecture, no matter the topic. Preparing for a class involves intensive research and an in-depth understanding of every topic. With thorough knowledge and preparation, I could answer the concerns and questions raised by the students. Moreover, since our topics were interrelated, being able to explore the linkage between each topic gave me a sense of achievement. As a team member, I benefited a lot from the teamwork. All the colleagues in this team worked together to tackle this task, and the valuable resources that we shared helped us grow as a strong team. I was proud to be a team member here. Since Tomorrow's Leaders and Service Leadership courses emphasized teamwork greatly, it would be a great experience I could share with my students in the future. I also developed a deeper understanding of national security and the responsibility of being a Hong Kong citizen. In addition, modern Chinese history provides me with the context for understanding the history of Hong Kong and the need for protecting national security. Moreover, as a citizen, we should follow the laws of society.”*

Reflections after teaching the law abidance leadership lecture(s)

Several themes could be extracted from the sharing of the participants. Primarily, teachers saw themselves as shouldering great responsibility in educating the students on NSL:

- *“law-abiding citizenship and leadership are very important for young people who will be the future of the society of Hong Kong ... As educators, we are responsible for delivering and transmitting important values to the students.”*
- *“National security education is essential for building a sense of social responsibility and national identity among the students. The introduction of this topic motivated the students to know how to protect their fundamental rights and understand their obligations as citizens.”*
- *“Education is the key to nurturing the students to be law-abiding citizens and leaders.”*
- *“We could train up the students' ability to respect different opinions in this lecture.”*
- *“This lecture brings me the insight that “national security education” is different from “national security”. The focus of this lecture is on “education” and therefore the pedagogical design should be interactive enough to allow students to share their views.”*

Some teachers reflected that they witnessed personal and professional development of themselves and their students, including gaining more knowledge and positive changes in their attitudes:

- *“Teachers need to respect different viewpoints and value critical thinking.”*
- *“All in all, I benefited a lot from this lecture, and I was proud that I had the opportunity to teach this topic.”*

- *“I have become more aware of my anxiety and its impact on my teaching. Hence, I learned not to let this affect my teaching performance. My time management skill also improved ... the teaching content has broadened my horizon. I learned a lot from this lecture too.”*
- *“The experience was quite good and unexpected. I reflected on myself and found that I was worrying too much about their reaction to the lecture of NSL. Most of them were quite open-minded and willing to give themselves a chance to know something new. I think our lecture was giving a clear message to the students that we were not taking any political stands or views but just wanted to provide a platform for them to understand NSL and its consequences.”*

From the sharing of a teacher, we can further understand their perceived personal and professional development: *“After teaching, I reflected that it is not as difficult as expected. Compared with Semester 1, I was more open-minded in discussing the slides/myths with students. However, I still got some hesitations when discussing some of the sensitive slides with students as I worried that they disagreed with some of the facts publicly. It may arouse other students’ emotions when one student shared their negative feelings during class. After the lecture, I found that students had positive responses to the topic (same as Semester 1), and they are welcomed receiving more information about the four major crimes. From students’ responses, I reflected that I was the one who believed in some myths which made me hesitate in teaching some of the slides. In real situations, students are more contented to understand more about Hong Kong. Thus, it is a great opportunity for me, as a teacher, to learn and reflect on my students. From this teaching experience, first, I learned not to be panic or nervous as it may not be the reality of what I expected. Second, I reflected that my own perception of the issues which could also become my obstacles or hesitations in teaching. I learned to be more open-minded on various issues to enhance my teaching quality in long run.”*

The participants also appreciated the importance of preparation (particularly the benefits of mock teaching) and evaluation:

- *“I benefited greatly from our team's mock teaching training sessions. For one thing, I learned a lot of skills from my colleagues. For another, after my mock teaching session, I received many feedback and suggestions from my colleagues ... The professor encouraged us to familiarize ourselves with the official teaching materials and customize our teaching kits. Before the mock teaching, like in other lectures, although we have official teaching materials, I designed my kits of PPT. I spent nearly two days polishing the slides and making them handy for me. I added some pictures and streamlined the number of words in the PPT slides. Too many words may distract the students' attention, and the students would quickly feel bored. Being aware of copyright issues was important as well. I checked the slides' pictures to ensure they were not copyrighted, and I bought some photos from some websites. Therefore, I could deliver the contents in an interactive and personalized way.”*
- *“I spent another two days practicing the contents before mock teaching. More importantly, Professor S provided a list of Q&A regarding this topic, and I decided to familiarize myself with the questions. After the preparation process, I gathered more confidence in real-time teaching. To prevent speaking too fast, I constantly reminded myself that I need to control my pace in face-to-face teaching. Instead of making this lecture my presentation, I need to*

be aware of student interactions. Therefore, mock teaching was constructive. I like this arrangement!”

- *“During the mock teaching ... the listeners acted as students and asked all kinds of questions. This arrangement was interesting and exciting. The listeners paid full attention to others' teaching and asked challenging questions. More importantly, as I practiced so many times before, I also gained much more confidence in real-time teaching.”*
- *“Good preparation in terms of uncertainty, challenging questions, and conditions is important. Mock teachings and rehearsals would help to promote confidence which would eventually “improve the team morale and our performance.”*
- *“I need to have a deep understanding of the NSL and its related issues; otherwise, I could not convince the students and my clarification would be weak.”*
- *“Teachers should follow current affairs closely to develop a thorough understanding of each topic. For instance, the cases regarding NSL were inadequate, and some cases were still under trial. We need more cases to illustrate the crimes and penalties, and the teachers must carefully deliver this part. More importantly, I would pay close attention to the development of different cases so that we could present some vivid examples regarding this topic.”*
- *“After teaching this “new” topic, we can use the collected data to review our performance and areas of improvement. At the same time, the data supports our positive outputs and outcomes, which gain the trust of the team and the external parties”.*

Discussion

Based on the qualitative responses of the teachers, this study attempted to understand the subjective experiences of seven teachers who taught the law-abiding leadership program in Semester 2 of 2021/22 academic year. We had several observations based on the data collected. First, the teachers generally had positive experience about their teaching experience in Semester 1 and they had positive views of the teaching to be conducted in Semester 2. Second, through different ways, the teachers are physically and psychologically prepared for the teaching. Third, teachers generally had positive teaching experiences, except that they experienced “quiet” and “passive” responses in some of the students, probably because of the sensitive nature of the topic. Fourth, the teachers perceived that the students had positive responses, although some students were “passive” and “quiet” probably because of the sensitive nature of the topic. Fifth, they generally perceived that the students benefitted from law-abiding education. Sixth, the teachers experienced personal as well as professional growth in the process. Finally, teachers had positive reflections about the teaching experience. These findings are novel as there are very few studies on National Security Law education in Hong Kong. The findings also reinforce the findings reported by Shek et al. (3) regarding the teaching experience in Semester 1 of 2020/21 academic year.

The present findings triangulated the findings based on the students. Based on the data collected in Semester 1 of 2021/22 academic year, Shek et al. (1) showed that students had positive views of the lecture content and process, teachers, and benefits of law-abiding leadership. Most importantly, students agreed that they gained knowledge about national security, and they were ready to obey the law and serve as socially responsible leaders. These observations emerged from Semester 2 of 2021/22 academic year: students agreed that the teaching materials, classroom atmosphere, teaching process, and instructors were good. They also perceived many benefits of receiving law-abiding leadership education, including the promotion of critical thinking, and understanding of the concept of national security, and the Hong Kong National Security Law.

Besides, students agreed that they would strive to practice socially responsible leadership (2). In short, an integration of these studies suggests that it is possible to conduct law-abidance leadership with positive responses from the teachers and students. Consistent with other studies (8,9), the findings also suggest that online teaching is a promising approach to implement law-abiding leadership education.

Based on our experience of implementing law-abiding leadership for one year, we can induce several factors that would contribute to positive learning outcomes that can be summarized in “7 Ps”. The first factor is “preparation”. From the sharing of the teachers, physical and psychological preparation can help teachers to conduct law-abiding education in a smooth manner. Hence, teachers should do much “groundwork” before teaching this lecture. Second, it is clear that “practice makes perfect”. Teachers generally acknowledged the value of mock teaching which could help them understand their limitations and areas for improvement. Third, the finding suggests that “preconceptions” about NSL and related education should be reflected upon. Some students shared that their original misconceptions may be wrong, and the teachers should scrutinize them. Hence, it would be helpful for teachers to reflect on their beliefs about national security and the Hong Kong NSL. As such, adequate training should be provided to the teachers. Fourth, we should focus on “professional and personal development” in teachers and such changes should be regarded as outcomes to be considered. In essence, although the teaching may be anxious and stress-inducing, we should support teachers to have personal and professional development in teaching law-abiding leadership education. Fifth, like teachers, we should focus on the “perceptions of students” regarding their views on the program, teacher, benefits, and law abidance leadership. Sixth, “positive interaction” is important in class, including respect, acceptance, building up trust, and open exchange of views. In particular, as the lecture is recorded (for those who miss the class), students may have reluctance in expressing their views. Hence, whether it is possible not to record the lecture should be considered. Finally, post-lecture evaluation through different strategies is important to understand the impact of law-abiding leadership education. Obviously, more research studies with reference to these factors should be further carried out. Besides, consistent with previous studies highlighting the importance of training (10-12), the present findings suggest that adequate training for teachers teaching NSL education is important.

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