



Press Release – For Immediate Release

To: Assignment Editor/Editor of Education and Local News Sections

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HSUHK research highlights complex attitudes towards gender diversity content in children’s books among Hong Kong Chinese readers

A new study by scholars at The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (HSUHK) reveals that while many Chinese readers in Hong Kong regularly engage with digital children’s books, a strong majority of those surveyed would not actively seek children’s eBooks featuring gender diversity and inclusive content for themselves or their children.

Conducted by Dr Anna Tso, Head and Associate Professor in the Department of English, and Dr Beatrice Ma, Senior Lecturer in the Department of English, the study examines attitudes towards gender inclusivity and diversity in children's eBooks. The paper, *Does Pride Matter for Kids? A Study of Chinese Readers’ Attitude towards Gender Inclusive eBooks for Children* will be published in the forthcoming Springer volume *The Vistas of Inclusive Innovations in Educational Communications and Technology: Opportunities and Challenges* in September 2026.

Drawing on survey data from 68 undergraduate and postgraduate students aged 14-48 and focus-group interviews with six participants, the research explores how cultural values, educational experiences, and social perspectives influence responses to LGBTQ+ themes in children’s literature. The findings show that over 77% of respondents regularly read digital children’s books. Approximately 60% expressed neutrality regarding familiarity with LGBTQ+ pride content in children’s literature, while the rest indicated unfamiliarity. Over 80% stated they would not actively seek out such eBooks, with around 10% showing interest.

On the importance of LGBTQ+ pride content for fostering diversity and equity in children’s literature, a large majority (88%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, with 6% agreeing and 6% remaining neutral. In the focus-group interviews, five out of six participants expressed negative or cautious views, citing concerns about age-appropriateness, cultural clashes with traditional Chinese norms, and the need to shield children from such content until adulthood. Participants also highlighted cultural barriers, including calls for greater sensibility in libraries and schools, while one participant advocated for guided exposure to promote empathy and broader social awareness.

The research highlights the complexity of attitudes towards gender-inclusive literature within Hong Kong's unique cultural environment, where Western influences intersect with traditional values. Dr Tso noted that perceptions of gender-inclusive narratives are shaped by a combination of cultural values, social experiences, and educational backgrounds, underscoring the importance of understanding these perspectives when fostering discussions about diversity, equity, and inclusion in educational settings.



The study also identified opportunities for children's literature to encourage empathy and dialogue, with 6% of respondents recognising the potential of inclusive narratives to introduce young readers to different life experiences and perspectives. As children's literature continues to evolve, the research suggests that accessible digital formats can serve as platforms for exploring contemporary issues and supporting inclusive learning in culturally responsive ways.

The research contributes to growing international scholarship on inclusive education, digital learning, and children's literature. Positioned within broader discussions of inclusive educational technologies and accessible learning environments, its findings may inform future curriculum development, literacy initiatives, publishing practices, and educational policy discussions concerning gender representation and cultural sensitivity in contexts where traditional and contemporary values coexist.

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Photo:



Photo caption: Dr Anna Tso highlights that views on gender-inclusive narratives are shaped by cultural, social and educational factors.

Photo Download: [Link](#)



香港恒生大學
THE HANG SENG UNIVERSITY
OF HONG KONG

About The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong

The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (HSUHK) is a non-profit private liberal-arts-oriented university with six Schools (Business, Communication, Decision Sciences, Humanities and Social Science, Translation and Foreign Languages, and Transdisciplinary Studies), and over 7,000 full-time undergraduate and postgraduate students. With its unique “Liberal + Professional” education model, HSUHK nurtures young talent with critical thinking, innovative minds, caring attitudes, moral values and social responsibility.

Aspiring to be a leading private university in the region, HSUHK prioritises stellar undergraduate education, top-quality faculty members, award-winning green campus facilities, innovative degree programmes, a unique residential college system that combines living and learning, interactive small-class teaching, close student-teacher relationships, impactful research, and excellent student development and support services.

HSUHK has earned various international recognitions. In the AppliedHE’s ALL ASIA Private University Ranking 2026, it secured 7th place in China. HSUHK ranked 24th in Social Sciences and Humanities and 23rd in both Business and Management and Economics and Finance among China’s top universities in the Research.com Top Universities and Top Scientists Rankings 2026. The MSc in Global Supply Chain Management programme achieved 84th place globally in the QS International Trade Rankings 2025. Additionally, HSUHK’s School of Business obtained AACSB International accreditation in 2023, a mark of excellence held by only 6% of the world’s leading business schools. HSUHK was also ranked among the top 200 worldwide on “Quality Education” and “Decent Work and Economic Growth” in the Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings 2021.