

National Education in Hong Kong in the New Era

National education has been an important yet controversial subject worldwide. Existing literature on national education mainly focused on Western contexts, while the Hong Kong perspective remains underexplored. Previous studies have traced the development of national education during the colonial period and explored how it became a tricky issue after the handover to China in 1997. However, scant academic attention has been paid to the significant changes to national education in Hong Kong recently which has made it an increasingly important yet complicated and controversial subject. In particular, since 2020, the Chinese and Hong Kong governments have implemented a series of measures to strengthen national education. Ever since these new measures were implemented, national education in Hong Kong has entered a new era. Yet, no research has examined the latest development of national education in this new era. Moreover, no research has investigated ethnic minorities' perspectives on national education in Hong Kong. This is the first systematic academic project aiming to provide a comprehensive, detailed, and updated picture of national education in Hong Kong. Its primary objective is to use thematic analysis to examine government documents, major news media, and government-endorsed school textbooks from 2020 to 2026, identifying the official approach to promoting national education and its limitations, and providing suggestions to improve national education. Its values and originality lie on three levels. On the societal level, given that national education has become a "hot potato" that divides society and many Hongkongers are troubled by it, this timely project offers a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the official approach, so that diverse stakeholders have a basis for re-evaluating the nature and implementation of national education and for rational and critical dialogue. On the policy and curricular level, it offers evidence-based suggestions to foster inclusive and reflective decision-making and curricula development related to national education. On the practical level, it facilitates the teaching of national education by educators in schools and helps both the Chinese and ethnic minority students reflect on how national education relates to them and what they can do to co-construct an inclusive and reflective national education. The project will lead to articles, presentations, seminars, workshops, and a monograph. Given the crucial status of national education in Hong Kong and that it has attracted international attention, these outputs will benefit researchers, policymakers, curriculum designers, textbooks providers, educators, and students, both within and beyond Hong Kong.