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To: Editors of Local/Education News Desk

**Lingnan University survey reveals that
Happiness Index for Hong Kong people remains unchanged and
satisfaction with public policy and living environment goes up**

According to the results of the **Hong Kong Happiness Index Survey** conducted by **Lingnan University's Centre for Public Policy Studies**, the **Happiness Index for Hong Kong people in 2014 stands at 70.5 (on a scale of 0 to 100), which is the same as last year**. The survey outcome is an unexpected one taking into account the current social and political controversies in Hong Kong.

Respondents' degree of satisfaction with quality of public policy rose to 4.34 (on a scale of 0 to 10) from last year's 4.14. Satisfaction with living environment rose to 5.95 from last year's 5.75, while that with public healthcare increased to 6.49 from last year's 6.15. In contrast, their degree of satisfaction with the media fell to 4.76 from last year's 5.10.

As for respondents categorised by household income, the Happiness Index of people with a monthly household income between \$10,000 and \$20,000 experienced a significant drop of 6.6% from last year to 63.7. This is not only the lowest happiness level among all household income categories but also the lowest level recorded since 2008. Surprisingly, the Happiness Index of people from lower household income categories went up on the contrary. This suggests that pressures faced by middle to low income families continued to grow in recent years. The Happiness Index of retired persons surged significantly to 7.62 from last year's 7.17.

Long working hours and work stress undermine happiness

People with long working hours, in particular those who work for over 60 hours a week, have a lower average Happiness Index level of 6.67, which is noticeably lower than the average Happiness Index of 7.05 for all Hong Kong people. Work pressure, long working hours and financial burdens are still the main contributing factors of Hong Kong people's unhappiness. The good news is that this year only 33.4% of the respondents have to work over 50 hours a week, showing a drop from last year's proportion of over 40%. Families with low income levels but less financial burdens are happier than those with high income levels but heavy financial burdens.

Similar to past surveys, female are generally happier than male respondents, and older people also have higher Happiness Index levels. Housewives and retired persons are happier than full time working respondents and students. The Happiness Index of the unemployed showed a significant increase by 0.36 to 6.31 this year, but they remained the least happy group.

Insight shows increasing weight and is the most crucial factor affecting happiness

Since 2008, the annual scheme has surveyed on the factors of Love, Insight, Fortitude and Engagement (LIFE) which are related to the mental quality of respondents. The score on Love this year fell slightly to 8.17 from last year's 8.5; the score on Insight rose slightly by 0.07 to 7.22; the score on Fortitude decreased by 0.06 to 7.62; and the score on Engagement only showed a marginal increase. The four psychological factors reflect respondents' "mental capital". This year's survey results showed that the weight of Insight as a factor affecting happiness increased, and it is also the most crucial factor, followed by Engagement or purposive living.

Families with monthly household incomes of \$40,000 or above the happiest

This year's survey results indicated that the Happiness Index of families with a monthly household income below \$10,000 surged noticeably compared to last year. The Happiness Index of families with a monthly household income between \$10,000 and \$20,000 experienced the sharpest decline, while those with a monthly household income higher than \$20,000 did not show significant changes. Families with a monthly household income of \$40,000 or above are the happiest, but their Happiness Index do not show significant difference from those with a monthly household income of \$20,000 to \$30,000.

Please go to http://www.ln.edu.hk/news/20141204/Happiness_Index_2014 to download the photos and full report of the "Hong Kong Happiness Index Survey 2014".

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Appendix

Table 1: Happiness Index, Life Satisfaction and Worthy Life Indexes by Gender, 2014

Table 2: LIFE scores by age groups, 2009 to 2014

Table 3: Happiness Index by monthly household income, 2009 to 2014

About the Hong Kong Happiness Index Survey

Designed and conducted annually by the Centre for Public Policy Studies of Lingnan University since 2005, the Hong Kong Happiness Index Survey tracked and measured the level of happiness of Hong Kong residents on a scale of 0 to 100. Since 2008, the Survey also includes questions on Love, Insight, Fortitude and Engagement, which are the key elements of "mental capital" essential to happiness.

The Hong Kong Happiness Index Survey in 2014 marks the tenth consecutive year the survey has been conducted. Telephone interviews with a total of 922 respondents aged above 21 selected by random sampling were conducted from 6 to 11 October 2014, with a response rate of 28.6%. The survey was sponsored by the Shih Wing Ching Foundation and executed with the assistance of the Public Governance Programme of Lingnan University. The Centre for Public Policy Studies would like to express its gratitude for their support.

About the Centre for Public Policy Studies of Lingnan University

The Centre for Public Policy Studies of Lingnan University was established in 1994. Apart from self-initiated studies, the Centre offers support for public policy research among Lingnan's researchers and conducts commissioned studies on various aspects of public policy.

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Appendix

Table 1: Happiness Index, Life Satisfaction and Worthy Life Indexes by Gender, 2014

	Age	Happiness				Life satisfaction				Worthy life			
		21-29	30-49	50 or above	Total*	21-29	30-49	50 or above	Total*	21-29	30-49	50 or above	Total*
Male	2013	6.84	6.63	7.03	6.81	6.25	6.30	6.42	6.33	7.17	6.93	7.21	7.07
	2014	6.71	6.71	7.25	6.95	6.32	5.98	6.47	6.30	7.13	7.17	7.51	7.32
	N	68	115	191	374	68	116	192	376	68	114	184	366
Female	2013	7.03	7.28	7.23	7.14	6.66	6.64	6.70	6.60	7.82	7.54	7.48	7.50
	2014	6.87	7.13	7.20	7.12	6.83	6.36	6.63	6.57	7.55	7.69	7.39	7.52
	N	60	166	305	531	59	165	306	530	60	165	295	520
Total	2013	6.93	7.03	7.15	7.05	6.45	6.51	6.59	6.52	7.48	7.31	7.38	7.37
	2014	6.78	6.96	7.22	7.05	6.56	6.21	6.57	6.46	7.33	7.48	7.44	7.43
	N	128	281	496	905	127	281	498	906	128	279	479	886

Table 2: LIFE scores by age groups, 2009 to 2014

Age group	Year	Love					Insight					Fortitude					Engagement				
		<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>
21-29	Average score	7.61	7.64	7.82	7.82	7.77	6.54	6.9	6.48	6.54	6.72	6.55	7.13	6.97	7.15	7.18	6.58	7.35	6.87	6.81	6.58
	N	143	144	157	130	128	143	144	156	128	125	143	144	156	130	128	143	143	155	130	128
30-59	Average score	8.51	7.64	8.18	8.61	8.20	7.62	7.38	6.98	7.17	7.19	7.42	7.32	7.47	7.75	7.64	6.9	7.3	7.41	7.38	7.46
	N	517	472	534	521	507	516	471	526	495	481	515	479	519	515	507	510	469	535	518	507
60 or above	Average score	8.52	7.71	8.11	8.61	8.32	7.93	7.5	7.31	7.45	7.54	7.51	7.3	7.73	7.81	7.77	6.27	6.66	7.21	7.39	7.48
	N	149	156	207	269	265	155	153	191	237	241	149	168	189	262	266	144	130	193	261	256
Total	Average score	8.35	7.65	8.1	8.5	8.17	7.49	7.31	6.96	7.15	7.22	7.28	7.28	7.44	7.68	7.62	6.73	7.2	7.27	7.3	7.33
	N	809	772	898	920	900	814	768	873	860	847	807	791	864	907	901	797	742	883	909	891

Table 3: Happiness Index by monthly household income, 2009 to 2014

Year / Monthly household income	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2014 change in percentage
No income	71.3	67.2	71.2	70.2	66.72	70.4	5.49%
\$1 - \$9,999	63.85	66.21	73.1	68.4	65.31	70.2	7.49%
\$10,000-\$19,999	70.42	69.57	71	68	68.24	63.7	-6.60%
\$20,000-\$29,999	71.89	70.58	73.2	70.8	71.56	72.2	0.85%
\$30,000-\$39,999	70.13	70.6	74.1	66.9	70.14	69.4	-1.06%
\$40,000 or above	72.82	73.29	72.4	73.8	73.3	72.7	-0.83%