

**The Neighborhood in Contemporary Hong Kong**  
**- Bowling Alone or Bonding Together?**  
現代香港的鄰里社區：獨力奮鬥或團結互助？

**Dr. YIP Ngai-ming**

Associate Professor

Department of Public and Social Administration

The City University of Hong Kong

**Abstract**

The interest on urban neighborhood has been revitalized in Europe and the US against a backdrop of growing diversity, rising polarization and more pervasive social malaise. Our recent concern on deprived and remote communities (like Tin Shui Wai) also draws our attention to how informal support in the neighborhood can be rendered in supplementing provisions by the formal institutions. This hinges on whether positive localised interaction can be instilled and be translated to overcome the anonymity and loneliness urban dwellers in high rise buildings whose social resources in the wider community are limited. This paper attempts to explore the sense of neighborhood in contemporary Hong Kong using data drawn from a structured survey of 1200 households and semi-structured in-depth interviews in several neighborhoods with diverse background. It will first examine neighborhood as spatial identity then the pattern of neighboring, which will focus on neighborhood as a resource, across people with varying demographic and socio-economic characteristics. Sense of belonging to the neighborhood will be explored and the results will be compared with neighborhood literature from the west as well as findings of two parallel surveys conducted by the author in Taipei and Guangzhou.