

“So help me God!”
**Exploring the role of religion in the perception of and response to
employment risk in Hong Kong**

Background

The first direct flight in six decades between Mainland China and Taiwan was launched on December 15, 2008. Direct shipping services and postal services between the Taiwan Strait would follow. These mark not only a new era of dialogue between the two sides of the Strait but also the inevitable change of the role of Hong Kong as a mid-way city for the Chinese under the once opposing regimes. Meanwhile, Hong Kong's role as China's main window to the Globe has also been diminishing ever since the late PRC leader Deng Xiaoping kicked off the nation-wide economic reform. On top of this, Hong Kong has faced tremendous social, economic, and political changes in the last two decades. The restructuring local economy from a labor-intensive to a knowledge-intensive entity; the aging of the working population; the economic turmoil as a result of the outburst of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome among mainly Asian countries in 2003; and the global financial tsunami in 2008; were only a few challenges Hong Kong addressed. A direct consequence of these challenges is the ever deteriorating sense of job security among the local working population.

The city's pessimism is forecasted to continue in 2009. 67% of the 1,013 people polled in Hong Kong by research firms TNS and Gallup International between last October and December believed that 2009 would be worse than 2008 -- almost double the global figure of 35% among the 45,700 the survey interviewed in 46 countries and regions. Worse, only 5% of the Hong Kong sample believes that the city would become more prosperous this year. Only 65% of full-time and part-time employees are confident that their jobs are secure. (Note 1) There are also common forecasts that the city's unemployment rate would climb to as high as 6% in with a GDP growth of -3% in 2009. The gloomy picture was echoed by the bankruptcy and significant lay-off of a number of chained companies in the retail, catering, and financial service sectors in the 4th quarter of 2008. It is obvious that employment risk was, and still is, the first and foremost issue Hong Kong employees has to face.

A few colleagues, including myself, of the Department of Applied Social Sciences of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University formed a project group in late 2008 to

investigate on this issue. Through phone polls and intensive interviews, the research aims at examining the experience, perception and management of employment and poverty risks among various social classes in Hong Kong. While the research is currently underway, the first batch of data would hopefully be available in the 2nd quarter of 2009. This paper thus serves as a prologue to the current research. The quantitative data of this paper is extracted from the 2004 and 2006 Hong Kong Social Indicator Research jointly conducted by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, The University of Hong Kong, and The Chinese University of Hong Kong since 1988. (Note 2) Since questions related to the response of Hong Kong citizen towards employment risk was not included in the Social Indicator survey, this paper could focus only on exploring the role of employees' religious belief in their perception of employment risk in Hong Kong.

Literature Review

The role of religion in human social life has been continuously researched by sociologists, of which Emile Durkheim is perhaps the pioneer. (Durkheim 1912) Durkheim defines religion as “a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and surrounded by prohibitions – beliefs and practices that unite its adherents in a single moral community called a church.” In his view, the distinctive characteristic of religious belief and practices is that they form a shared “socio-linguistic framework” that divides the furniture of the universe into two mutually exclusive categories: the profane and the sacred. Pursuing to generalize this view in explaining the elementary form of all religions, he conducts an anthropological study on Australian tribes. The debate on the dichotomy of naturism and animism, and the analysis on totemic belief and rituals, leads to his ultimate and inspiring conclusion that there exists no “false religions”. Religion serves as the natural glue for social solidarity among ancient tribal members. What the laities really worship is society itself, only that it is disguised in religious form. Religious rituals and rites collectively performed leads to communal effervescence. Meanwhile, these rituals and rites translate the religious belief into rules and modes of conduct that observe the sacred, protect the profane, and offer guidelines for religious participants in making decisions in everyday lives.

Likewise, Max Weber also recognizes religion as a social force that contributes to the normal functioning of the collective. (Weber 1930) Pessimistic about the economic, social and political development of the then Germany, Weber puts his hope in the hands of the middle-class in revolutionizing the society. He appeals to the

disillusioned, hard-working, inner-directed Puritan as an ideal for the German middle class. With Calvinism as an example, Weber honors the cultural world view of these Puritans, which places religious value upon entrepreneurial behaviors. Working hard and making an effort in the accumulation of wealth serves as a means for the pursuit of signs for divine salvation. Through this, Weber presented that the development of the Protestant beliefs nurtures a solid foundation for the growth of capitalism in the West. Religion is thus an important force for social evolution.

Peter Berger depicts the relationship between religious and social development through establishing the “microcosm/ macrocosm” schema. (Berger 1967) He establishes that religion plays a crucial role in the human enterprise of world-building and world-maintenance. By world-building, Berger refers to the social construction of human institutions and relationships. Meanwhile, these institutions and relationships are also maintained and kept intact by the intimate connection between human activities and super-human pursuits. Through legitimization of social life, religion imposes meanings upon positions, acts and institutions, and in turn connects the secular world as the microcosm with the profane world as the macrocosm. By doing this, religion “locates” the human world within a cosmic framework of reference. Almost all components in the social world are therefore bestowed with sacred worth. At the same time, the macrocosm offers guidance and directions to the perceptions and decisions in the microcosm.

Very much influenced by Weber, Robert Bellah also regards religions as a social force of the first order. (Bellah 1985). With particular reference to the social situation of Post-War America, Bellah states that lacking a culture that shapes individuals to aspire to social goals and a shared life, the society would only deteriorate into a war of all against all – a profane, debased human condition. Only by returning to what Bellah labeled the “biblical tradition” could contemporary America find momentum to emancipate itself from greed, money and self-interest, and rejuvenate the high ideals of community, justice, civic virtue, and democracy.

Data analysis

In Hong Kong Social Indicator Research mentioned above, around 70 questions were asked each year. Apart from the 30 core questions on respondent’s personal background, the other questions are special topics adjusted each year with reference to the need of the latest research orientation. The coverage of the questions ranges from employment, freedom, public administration, civic identity, social issues, to personal

values and world views. For the purpose of analysis, some questions related to views on personal employment risk and on unemployment as a social issue have been extracted. The results of these questions are then cross-tabulated with religious background of respondents.

Note that in the analysis tables, Islam as a religious category seldom appears. This is understandable because it is a minor religion in the local context with a size of only 2.6% of the city's total population according to the statistics of the Hong Kong Islam Youth Association (Note 3). Thus, it is obvious that the 2004 and 2006 samples have failed to include views of local Muslims. The Christians (Catholics and Protestants), the Buddhists, and the Taoists (T) are regarded as "established religion" (ER) because they have established institutions with legal status in Hong Kong for decades. On the contrary, "non-established religions" (NER) includes civil religions (folk beliefs and ancestor worship) and other religions (nameless gods, new religions, etc.). Since some of the respondents refused to answer whether or not they have religious beliefs, there exists a gap between the sum of religious and non-religious categories and the sample size of the year concerned.

Perception on unemployment as a personal issue

In 2006, when asked whether one is satisfied with one's own work condition, religious are more satisfied than non-religious on the whole. (Table 1) Percentage of satisfied and extremely satisfied respondents ranges from 40.5% (civil religions) to 60.6% (Taoism). Yet, that of non-religious (NR) was only 46.8%. The same trend is also observed in the 2004 data with a lightly narrower gap between the views of the R and NR. Thus, it is suspected that religion is more influential in 2006 than 2004 in shaping self-perception of satisfaction in work conditions.

Among the religious, ER is getting a higher rating than NER. It could be a result of the fact that ER believers are more likely to participate in regular, organized, and collective religious activities. Thus, it is more likely that they find relief channels for grievances and disappointment through communicating with other believers. Such channels may not be available in NER which focuses more on individual religious activities. The significance of collective actions found here echoes with the communal effervescence revealed in Durkheim's observation among the Australian tribes. Through common totemic worship, tribe members are able to construct a collective identity which allows them to share with each other the joy and difficulties in daily life, values and even world views. By making such cross reference, it is only natural

that ER respondents are more likely to feel satisfied with their work condition. In both years, Christians remains in the satisfy end of the spectrum while the Buddhists stay in the middle.

If we move the focus from work conditions in general to the more specific “sense of job stability and security”, the same conclusion can be made. (Table 2) The percentage gap in satisfied group and dissatisfied group between ER and NER is still significant. Thus, the ER group is still more satisfied than the NER group on their current job.

Except the Taoists, one will find that the percentage distribution pattern of the ER and NR group is more or less similar. These groups have the least percentage near the “dissatisfy” end of the spectrum. Civil religions, nevertheless, are more evenly distributed.

Table 3 shows that the ER group is more aware of the importance of a stable job than the NER group. Together with Table 2, we can casually conclude that ER tends more to retain in their *status quo*. Perhaps this is the reason for NER to spend continuous effort in the pursuit of stable and secure job and they are more sensitive to improvement in job stability than ER (Table 4). Despite this difference, compared to three years ago (with 2004 as reference point), all groups shared the same view on the importance of having a stable job. (Table 5) On the importance of having a promising career, the suspicion that ER is more aware than NER is once again witnessed. (Table 6 and Table 7)

When asked for their perception in the possible change in the future. Religious are found more worried than non-religious that their life will experience hardship in the future and become worse. (Table 8) This is rather contradictory to our general impression that religious belief is strongly associated with the construction of a sense of peacefulness at both the mental and spiritual levels. Among the religious, the civil religious is the most pessimistic group with 78.4% of respondents expressing worries in the future life. Of course, we could also understand the figures in a totally opposite way. The percentage may be interpreted as an indication that the religious are only “aware of” but not “worried about” the possibly worsened future. Which interpretation stands could only be proven by understanding the response of these respondents after realizing the risk. Unfortunately, the necessary data will have to wait for the time being.

From the 2006 data in Table 9, half of the Christians, the Buddhists and the civil religious believe that their general living condition in the coming three years could be maintained at the same level. The three groups used to note a lower percentage in 2004. This indicates a slightly re-vitalization of confidence during the post-SARS period among members of these groups. It is also worthwhile to note that the “other religious” group changed from the least hopeful religious group in 2004 (23.1% choosing “better” and 30.8% choosing “worse”) to the most hopeful religious group in 2006 (63.6% choosing “better” and 9.1% choosing “worse”). For the NR group, the distribution pattern in 2004 and 2006 did not show too much difference.

Having said that, it is still valid to anticipate that religious are more aware of the uncertainty in life. Table 10 notes the result when respondents are asked if they think that life is unpredictable. It is obvious that religious is more aware of the uncertainty in life. Among the religious, NER is more aware than the ER.

Table 11 and Table 12 showed a more general picture of how, in general, all groups regard unemployment as a risk to occur in life. While Table 11 presented that all groups, with or without religion, share almost the same percentage distribution pattern in viewing unemployment as a risk, Table 12 reflected that Buddhists and civil religious perceive the highest likelihood of unemployment to occur to them. 60.3% of Buddhists and 59.7% of civil religious believe that it is likely or very likely that they will be unemployed in the coming few years.

In Table 13, although concrete explanation could not be formulated yet, it is noted that NER is more afraid than ER in losing the current job and non-religious lay in the middle of the spectrum. In addition, NER has a stronger perception on pressure and competition in the workplace than ER (Table 14).

In such case, would one believe that accumulation of work experience is a way to lower the chance of lay-off and salary reduction? Table 15 reveals that while over half of the members from other religious groups believe that work experience is a life-boat, only 37.5% of Christians perceive so. This comparatively pessimistic sentiment is also witnessed in Table 16. The Christians are one of the most worried groups to be actually laid-off or to have one’s salary reduced (54.5% choosing disagreeing that they are not worried). The most worried group is the civil religious (65.0% choosing disagreeing that they are not worried). Surprisingly, the NR group stays in the middle of the spectrum (49.4% choosing disagreeing that they are not worried). It is less worried than the Christians and the civil religious, and is more worried than the other

groups. What religious belief the respondents have might be a more important factor than if they are religious at all in guiding them towards perceiving unemployment risk.

Perception on unemployment as a social issue

Now we turn to respondents' perception of unemployment as a social, rather than personal, issue.

The 2006 figures in Table 17 reflect that NER are more dissatisfied by the unemployment situation in Hong Kong than the ER. Among the ER, non-Christians are more dissatisfied than the Christian. Again, the non-religious respondents stay mainly in the middle in the middle of the spectrum. The 2004 figures reflect the same distribution only that the all the percentages of dissatisfaction is much lowered in 2006. If we once again connect the figures to the post-SARS economic rejuvenation measures put forward by the Hong Kong Government, than we can safely conclude that the effect of these measures gradually emerged after 3 years. In addition, these measures seem to have been more effective in changing the perception of the Christians than that of the non-Christians.

Though successfully soothed by these economic measures, Christians, and Buddhists, still perceive Hong Kong as a place of high unemployment risk. In Table 18, among the religious, the Christians (82.5%) and Buddhists (86.6%) have stronger views on Hong Kong being a society of high unemployment risk. Again, the non-religious respondents stay mainly in the middle in the middle of the spectrum. (82.3%) Having said that, Christians seem to have other social agenda in mind because only 30.3% of them believed that unemployment is an urgent social problem that needs to be resolved as soon as possible (Table 19). This is the lowest among all religious and non-religious groups.

Table 20 and Table 21 could be read together. While all groups, religious and non-religious, share the same view that unemployment as bombarding mostly the lower and the middle class, the religious are more convinced than the non-religious that Hong Kong is a high-risk society in general.

Limitation and Further Exploration

The underlying assumption behind the analysis presented above is that when

respondents claim themselves to be believers, they adhere to the values and code of ethics abiding believers. Obviously, this assumption may find serious challenges, because claimed believers may not necessarily be practicing believers. Arguments may be presented that religious belief is a sole subjective variable which can hardly be proven by any external or objective qualifiers. Even if there is a “proof” of the true or faked religious identity of the respondents concerned, there still exist the issue of “how religious or non-religious” these respondents are. This is directly related to the extent to which their religious beliefs contribute to the perception of risk. This is where a measurement of “religiosity” comes in as a meaningful indicator. Thus, the measurement of religiosity has been added to the current research on unemployment risk by adding the variable of respondents’ frequency in joining religious activities.

There are a number of further research possibilities on this area. Comparison between the core catechisms on “uncertainty” among religions, for example, is one of the possibilities. This could help understand the difference in the perception of risk as mentioned in the analysis above. Certainly, introduction of expertise in religious studies is inevitable.

Another possibility is to control other variables such as age, income level, gender and educational level of the respondents so that a comparison between the significance of these variable and that of religious belief can be done.

Last but not least, it is also meaningful to conduct longitudinal studies so that possible trends could be deduced from data of various years. Such initiative would provide useful clues for articulating trends in risk perception and corresponding social events and happenings. This also offers the opportunity to derive a pattern of change associating social development and risk perception for further theorization pursuit.

-End-

Notes

(1) Yahoo news link : *Hong Kong people most pessimistic about 2009: survey*
http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20090101/lf_afp/lifestyleworldhongkongsociety2009_090101194205

(2) The Hong Kong Social Indicator Research is jointly organized by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, The University of Hong Kong, and The Chinese University of Hong Kong. So far, it was conducted for 9 times respectively in 1988 (N=1662), 1990

(N=1957), 1993 (N=1993), 1995 (N=2280), 1997 (N=2120), 1999 (N=3274), 2001 (N=4127), 2004 (N=3289), and 2006 (N=3443).

(3) According to the Hong Kong Islam Youth Association, the Islam population is about 180,000 in 2006, which is about 2.6% of the city's population of 6.9 million.

Reference

Bellah, R. (1985) et al. *Habits of the heart – individualism and commitment in American life*, Berkeley, reprinted by The University of California Press 2008

Berger, P. (1967) *The sacred canopy – elements of a sociological theory of religion*, New York, Anchor books.

Durkheim, E. (1912) *The elementary form of religious life*, New York, reprinted by Oxford University Press, 2001

Weber, M. (1930) *The protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*, New York, reprinted by Routledge, 1992

Table 1**Q: In general, are you satisfied with your own work condition? 2006 (2004 figures in brackets)**

		level of satisfaction: own work condition				
		1. Extremely dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	2. Average	3. Extremely satisfied/ Satisfied	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	(32) 30	(92) 104	(145) 143	(269) 277
		% within religion	(11.9%)10.8%	(34.3%) 37.5%	(53.9%) 51.6%	(100%) 100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	(27) 28	(64) 61	(71) 76	(162) 165
		% within religion	(16.7%)17.0%	(39.5%) 37.0%	(43.8%) 46.1%	(100%) 100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	(1) 0	(5) 4	(1) 6	(7) 10
		% within religion	(14.3%) 0%	(71.4%) 40.0%	(14.3%) 60.0%	(100%) 100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	(26) 31	(53) 41	(43) 49	(122) 121
		% within religion	(21.3%) 25.6%	(43.4%) 33.9%	(35.2%) 40.5%	(100%) 100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	(0) 1	(2) 1	(1) 3	(3) 5
		% within religion	(0%) 20.0%	(66.7%) 20.0%	(33.3%) 60.0%	(100%) 100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	(176) 196	(528) 528	(582) 636	1360
		% within religion	(13.7%) 14.4%	(41.1%) 38.8%	(45.3%) 46.8%	(100%) 100.0%
Total		Count	(262) 286	(744) 739	(843) 913	(1849) 1938
		% within religion	(14.2%) 14.8%	(40.2%) 38.1%	(45.6) 47.1%	(100%) 100.0%

Table 2**Q: Are you satisfied with the stability and security of your current job? 2004**

		stability and security of current job				
		1. Strongly dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	2. Average	3. Strongly satisfied/ Satisfied	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	13	19	24	56
		% within religion	23.2%	33.9%	42.9%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	8	12	11	31
		% within religion	25.8%	38.7%	35.5%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	1	0	0	1
		% within religion	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	6	6	7	19
		% within religion	31.6%	31.6%	36.8%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	69	85	108	262
		% within religion	26.3%	32.4%	41.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	97	122	150	369
		% within religion	26.3%	33.1%	40.7%	100.0%

Table 3**Q: How important it is to have a stable job? 2004**

		Importance of a stable job				
		1. Very unimportant/ Not important	2. Average	3. Very important/ Important	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	7	11	80	98
		% within religion	7.1%	11.2%	81.6%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	6	5	85	96
		% within religion	6.2%	5.2%	88.5%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	0	0	2	2
		% within religion	.0%	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	9	5	71	85
		% within religion	10.6%	5.9%	83.5%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	1	1	1	3
		% within religion	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	25	45	434	504
		% within religion	5.0%	8.9%	86.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	48	67	673	788
		% within religion	6.1%	8.5%	85.4%	100.0%

Table 4**Q: How is the stability of your current job compared with your last job? 2004**

		stability comparison				
		1. Last job was a lot better/ better	2. same	3. Current job is a lot better/ better	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	10	21	25	56
		% within religion	17.9%	37.5%	44.6%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	8	11	13	32
		% within religion	25.0%	34.4%	40.6%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	1	0	0	1
		% within religion	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	5	4	10	19
		% within religion	26.3%	21.1%	52.6%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	52	79	125	256
		% within religion	20.3%	30.9%	48.8%	100.0%
Total		Count	76	115	173	364
		% within religion	20.9%	31.6%	47.5%	100.0%

Table 5**Q: Compared to 3 years ago, has “having a stable job” become more or less important? 2004**

		Level of importance of a stable when compared with 3 years ago				
		1. Become less important	2. The same	3. Become more important	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	27	34	36	97
		% within religion	27.8%	35.1%	37.1%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	22	38	38	98
		% within religion	22.4%	38.8%	38.8%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	0	1	1	2
		% within religion	.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	25	31	21	77
		% within religion	32.5%	40.3%	27.3%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	1	1	1	3
		% within religion	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	89	207	198	494
		% within religion	18.0%	41.9%	40.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	164	312	295	771
		% within religion	21.3%	40.5%	38.3%	100.0%

Table 6**Q: How important it is to have a promising career? 2004**

		Importance of a promising career				
		1. Very unimportant/ Not important	2. Average	3. Very important/ Important	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	14	23	60	97
		% within religion	14.4%	23.7%	61.9%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	14	15	65	94
		% within religion	14.9%	16.0%	69.1%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	0	2	0	2
		% within religion	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	18	17	45	80
		% within religion	22.5%	21.2%	56.2%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	2	1	0	3
		% within religion	66.7%	33.3%	.0%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	63	100	323	486
		% within religion	13.0%	20.6%	66.5%	100.0%
Total		Count	111	158	493	762
		% within religion	14.6%	20.7%	64.7%	100.0%

Table 7**Q: Compared to 3 years ago, has “having a promising career” become more or less important? 2004**

		Level of importance of a promising career when compared with 3 years				
		1. Become less important	2. The same	3. Become more important	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	29	42	26	97
		% within religion	29.9%	43.3%	26.8%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	22	45	28	95
		% within religion	23.2%	47.4%	29.5%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	0	2	0	2
		% within religion	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	23	30	18	71
		% within religion	32.4%	42.3%	25.4%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	1	2	0	3
		% within religion	33.3%	66.7%	.0%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	78	261	140	479
		% within religion	16.3%	54.5%	29.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	153	382	212	747
		% within religion	20.5%	51.1%	28.4%	100.0%

Table 8**Q: Do you agree that “My future life will become worse”? 2004**

		My future life will become worse				
		1. Strongly disagree/ Disagree	2. Average	3. Strongly agree/ Agree	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	39	17	45	101
		% within religion	38.6%	16.8%	44.6%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	22	9	46	77
		% within religion	28.6%	11.7%	59.7%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	2	0	4	6
		% within religion	33.3%	.0%	66.7%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	18	1	69	88
		% within religion	20.5%	1.1%	78.4%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	1	0	1	2
		% within religion	50.0%	.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	149	93	268	510
		% within religion	29.2%	18.2%	52.5%	100.0%
Total		Count	231	120	433	784
		% within religion	29.5%	15.3%	55.2%	100.0%

Table 9**Q: What is your anticipation on your general living condition in the coming 3 years? 2006 (2004 figures in brackets)**

		general living condition in the coming 3 years				
		1 worse	2 same	3 better	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	(57) 49	(193) 218	(132) 154	(382) 421
		% within religion	(14.9%) 11.6%	(50.5%) 51.8%	(34.6%) 36.6%	(100.0%) 100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	(69) 48	(129) 137	(90) 76	(288) 261
		% within religion	(24.0%) 18.4%	(44.8%) 52.5%	(31.2%) 29.1%	(100.0%) 100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	(3) 3	(3) 4	(7) 7	(13) 14
		% within religion	(23.1) 21.4%	(23.1%) 28.6%	(53.8%) 50.0%	(100.0%) 100.0%
	4.00 Islam	Count	(0) 0	(0) 1	(0) 0	(0) 1
		% within religion	(0%) 0%	(0%) 100.0%	(0%) 0%	(0%) 100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	(83) 71	(122) 159	(82) 63	(287) 293
		% within religion	(28.9%) 24.2%	(42.5%) 54.3%	(28.6%) 21.5%	(100.0%) 100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	(4) 1	(6) 3	(3) 7	(13) 11
		% within religion	(30.8%) 9.1%	(46.2%) 27.3%	(23.1%) 63.6%	(100.0%) 100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	(363) 267	(983) 1056	(549) 669	(1895) 1992
		% within religion	(19.2%) 13.4%	(51.9%) 53.0%	(29.0%) 33.6%	(100.0%) 100.0%
Total		Count	(579) 439	(1436) 1578	(863) 976	(2878) 2993
		% within religion	(20.1%) 14.7%	(49.9%) 52.7%	(30.0%) 32.6%	(100.0%) 100.0%

Table 10**Q: How suitable it is to describe you as “I think life is so unpredictable. What I have now may disappear tomorrow.”? 2004**

		unpredictability of life				
		1. very unsuitable/ unsuitable	2. average	3. suitable/ very suitable	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	9	16	75	100
		% within religion	9.0%	16.0%	75.0%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	9	11	78	98
		% within religion	9.2%	11.2%	79.6%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	1	0	1	2
		% within religion	50.0%	.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	9	6	71	86
		% within religion	10.5%	7.0%	82.6%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	0	1	2	3
		% within religion	.0%	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	55	70	376	501
		% within religion	11.0%	14.0%	75.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	83	104	603	790
		% within religion	10.5%	13.2%	76.3%	100.0%

Table 11**Q: How would you see unemployment as a risk to your life? 2006**

		Unemployment as risk to own life				
		1. No or little risk	2. Average	3. High or some risk	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	19	18	64	101
		% within religion	18.8%	17.8%	63.4%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	13	12	43	68
		% within religion	19.1%	17.6%	63.2%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	0	3	3	6
		% within religion	.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	15	12	46	73
		% within religion	20.5%	16.4%	63.0%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	1	0	1	2
		% within religion	50.0%	.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	79	85	308	472
		% within religion	16.7%	18.0%	65.3%	100.0%
Total		Count	127	130	465	722
		% within religion	17.6%	18.0%	64.4%	100.0%

Table 12**Q: In the coming few years, what is the likelihood for unemployment to occur? 2006**

		The likelihood to occur: Unemployment risk				
		1. No or low likelihood	2. Average	3.High or some likelihood	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	17	30	54	101
		% within religion	16.8%	29.7%	53.5%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	7	18	38	63
		% within religion	11.1%	28.6%	60.3%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	2	2	2	6
		% within religion	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	16	11	40	67
		% within religion	23.9%	16.4%	59.7%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	0	1	1	2
		% within religion	.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	72	155	227	454
		% within religion	15.9%	34.1%	50.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	114	217	362	693
		% within religion	16.5%	31.3%	52.2%	100.0%

Table 13**Q: How suitable it is to describe you as “I am always worried in losing my current job”? 2004**

		I am always worried in losing my current job				
		1. very unsuitable/ unsuitable	2. average	3. suitable/ very suitable	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	30	10	22	62
		% within religion	48.4%	16.1%	35.5%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	21	14	22	57
		% within religion	36.8%	24.6%	38.6%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	0	1	0	1
		% within religion	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	6	3	19	28
		% within religion	21.4%	10.7%	67.9%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	1	0	1	2
		% within religion	50.0%	.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	120	58	138	316
		% within religion	38.0%	18.4%	43.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	178	86	202	466
		% within religion	38.2%	18.5%	43.3%	100.0%

Table 14**Q: How suitable it is to describe you as “I am always under a lot of pressure at work because there are competitors who may beat me down”? 2004**

		Pressure and competition at work				
		1. very unsuitable/ unsuitable	2. average	3. suitable/ very suitable	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	31	14	17	62
		% within religion	50.0%	22.6%	27.4%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	23	11	23	57
		% within religion	40.4%	19.3%	40.4%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	0	0	1	1
		% within religion	.0%	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	13	1	15	29
		% within religion	44.8%	3.4%	51.7%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	1	0	1	2
		% within religion	50.0%	.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	140	55	118	313
		% within religion	44.7%	17.6%	37.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	208	81	175	464
		% within religion	44.8%	17.5%	37.7%	100.0%

Table 15**Q: Do you agree that “accumulation of work experience will not lower the chance of lay-off or salary reduction”? 2004**

		accumulation of work experience will not lower the chance of lay-off or salary reduction				
		1. Strongly disagree/ Disagree	2. Average	3. Strongly agree/ Agree	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	42	18	36	96
		% within religion	43.8%	18.8%	37.5%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	24	5	36	65
		% within religion	36.9%	7.7%	55.4%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	2	0	5	7
		% within religion	28.6%	.0%	71.4%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	28	6	33	67
		% within religion	41.8%	9.0%	49.3%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	1	0	0	1
		% within religion	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	176	54	236	466
		% within religion	37.8%	11.6%	50.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	273	83	346	702
		% within religion	38.9%	11.8%	49.3%	100.0%

Table 16**Q: Do you agree that “I am not worried of risking lay-off or salary reduction in the coming one or two years”? 2004**

		not worried of risking lay-off or salary reduction in the coming one or two years				
		1. Strongly disagree/ Disagree	2. Average	3. Strongly agree/ Agree	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	42	9	26	77
		% within religion	54.5%	11.7%	33.8%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	21	4	21	46
		% within religion	45.7%	8.7%	45.7%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	2	0	2	4
		% within religion	50.0%	.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	26	2	12	40
		% within religion	65.0%	5.0%	30.0%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	1	0	0	1
		% within religion	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	171	48	127	346
		% within religion	49.4%	13.9%	36.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	263	63	188	514
		% within religion	51.2%	12.3%	36.6%	100.0%

Table 17**Q: In general, are you satisfied with the employment situation in Hong Kong? 2006 (2004 figures in brackets)**

		Level of Satisfaction: Employment in HK				
		1. Extremely dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	2. Average	3. Extremely satisfied/ Satisfied	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	(224) 122	(152) 207	(28) 106	(404) 435
		% within religion	(55.4%) 28.0%	(37.6%) 47.6%	(6.9%) 24.4%	(100%) 100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	(206) 116	(98) 110	(17) 57	(321) 283
		% within religion	(64.2%) 41.0%	(30.5%) 38.9%	(5.3%) 20.1%	(100%) 100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	(12) 6	(0) 2	(0) 7	(12) 15
		% within religion	(100%) 40.0%	(0%) 13.3%	(0) 46.7%	(100%) 100.0%
	4.00 Islam	Count	(0) 0	(0) 0	(0) 1	(0) 1
		% within religion	(0%) 0%	(0%) 0%	(0%) 100.0%	(0%) 100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	(215) 140	(74) 109	(29) 62	(318) 311
		% within religion	(67.6%) 45.0%	(23.3%) 35.0%	(9.1%) 19.9%	(100%) 100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	(9) 7	(2) 2	(1) 1	(12) 10
		% within religion	(75.0%) 70.0%	(16.7%) 20.0%	(8.3%) 10.0%	(100%) 100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	(1127) 717	(722) 905	(160) 485	(2009) 2107
		% within religion	(56.1) 34.0%	(35.9%) 43.0%	(8.0%) 23.0%	(100%) 100.0%
Total		Count	(1793) 1108	(1048) 1335	(235) 719	(3076) 3162
		% within religion	(58.3%) 35.0%	(34.1%) 42.2%	(7.6%) 22.7%	(100%) 100.0%

Table 18**Q: How would you see unemployment as a risk to Hong Kong society? 2006**

		unemployment as risk to HK society				
		1. No or little risk	2. Average	3. High or some risk	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	4	14	85	103
		% within religion	3.9%	13.6%	82.5%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	2	7	58	67
		% within religion	3.0%	10.4%	86.6%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	1	1	4	6
		% within religion	16.7%	16.7%	66.7%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	4	11	59	74
		% within religion	5.4%	14.9%	79.7%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	0	0	2	2
		% within religion	.0%	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	19	65	391	475
		% within religion	4.0%	13.7%	82.3%	100.0%
Total		Count	30	98	599	727
		% within religion	4.1%	13.5%	82.4%	100.0%

Table 19**Q. Is unemployment a social problem that requires resolution as soon as possible? 2004**

		Unemployment as a social problem that requires to be resolved as soon as possible			
		0 Non-employment	1. Employment	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	278	121	399
		% within religion	69.7%	30.3%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	176	148	324
		% within religion	54.3%	45.7%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	6	6	12
		% within religion	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	162	141	303
		% within religion	53.5%	46.5%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	5	5	10
		% within religion	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	1134	850	1984
		% within religion	57.2%	42.8%	100.0%
Total		Count	1761	1271	3032
		% within religion	58.1%	41.9%	100.0%

- Christians have the lowest % in seeing unemployment as a social problem in 2004

Table 20**Q: Which of the following social class in Hong Kong will be most bombarded by unemployment? 2006**

		Social class most bombarded by unemployment						
		1 lower class	2 middle class	3 upper class	4 all classes	5 (1+2)	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	57	6	1	37	2	103
		% within religion	55.3%	5.8%	1.0%	35.9%	1.9%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	37	3	0	27	0	67
		% within religion	55.2%	4.5%	.0%	40.3%	.0%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	3	1	0	2	0	6
		% within religion	50.0%	16.7%	.0%	33.3%	.0%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	38	7	0	26	0	71
		% within religion	53.5%	9.9%	.0%	36.6%	.0%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	0	0	0	2	0	2
		% within religion	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	245	40	4	176	5	470
		% within religion	52.1%	8.5%	.9%	37.4%	1.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	380	57	5	270	7	719
		% within religion	52.9%	7.9%	.7%	37.6%	1.0%	100.0%

Table 21**Q: Do you think Hong Kong is a high-risk or low-risk society? 2006**

		Choice of risk			
		1 high-risk	2 low-risk	Total	
religion	1.00 Catholic & Protestant	Count	33	48	81
		% within religion	40.7%	59.3%	100.0%
	2.00 Buddhism	Count	15	26	41
		% within religion	36.6%	63.4%	100.0%
	3.00 Taoism	Count	1	2	3
		% within religion	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
	5.00 Civil Religion	Count	18	25	43
		% within religion	41.9%	58.1%	100.0%
	6.00 Other Religions	Count	0	1	1
		% within religion	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	7.00 No Religion	Count	124	225	349
		% within religion	35.5%	64.5%	100.0%
	Total	Count	191	327	518
		% within religion	36.9%	63.1%	100.0%