

A Letter of Complaint

Dear Sir/Madam,


I am writing since I recently had a one-night stay at your hotel, the Seaside Hotel, after coming across your advertisement on your website and on Instagram. Unfortunately, my stay there fell far below my expectations as my experience was worlds apart from what was being advertised.

The most disappointing part was that my room, which was promoted as a room with balcony and ocean view, was just a regular room looking over the artificial pool in the atrium of the hotel. Not only could I not enjoy the picturesque ocean view, I could not even open the balcony door as it was locked. When I asked for a room rearrangement from the staff, they simply shrugged it off, saying the hotel was fully booked. I then asked for a partial refund as the room I was assigned cost \$600 less than the one I booked. However, I was greeted with a side eye from one of your staff, who refused the refund and even mocked me for being a cheap customer. This is far beyond acceptable.

Another extremely unpleasant experience was the condition of the room. According to the hotel's website, guests are not supposed to smoke in the room. In spite of the regulation, a potent smell of cigarette smoke rushed into my face when I opened the bathroom door. Due to my chronic respiratory disease, I am extremely sensitive to such scents and ended up having a really hard time in the room, especially inside the small, poorly ventilated bathroom.

Finally, when I wanted to calm myself down by enjoying a scrumptious meal from room service, I was only let down again. As advertised, the room service menu includes local delicacies ranging from egg tarts, egg waffles to claypot rice and foreign cuisines such as apple crumble and quiche. I ordered a claypot rice, a steak, and a few egg tarts. The steak was fine but the claypot rice and egg tarts were horrendous nightmares. The rice was supposedly freshly made with high quality ingredients such as carrots and Cantonese preserved sausages, but when I had a taste of it, the carrots were mushy and the sausages had probably gone bad as they had a sour and mouldy taste. The egg tarts had a burnt bottom, giving a terribly bitter aftertaste. These dishes bore no resemblance to actual local foods, and were extremely off-putting.





These sum up my recent experience at your hotel. It is hoped that you could pay more attention to the training of your staff, arrangements of catering services, and be more effective with your regulations in order to provide a more welcoming and enjoyable stay for future customers. Given my stay was indeed unpleasant, I am demanding a partial refund to compensate for the difference between the advertisement and my experience. It is hoped that my complaints and demands will be handled swiftly.

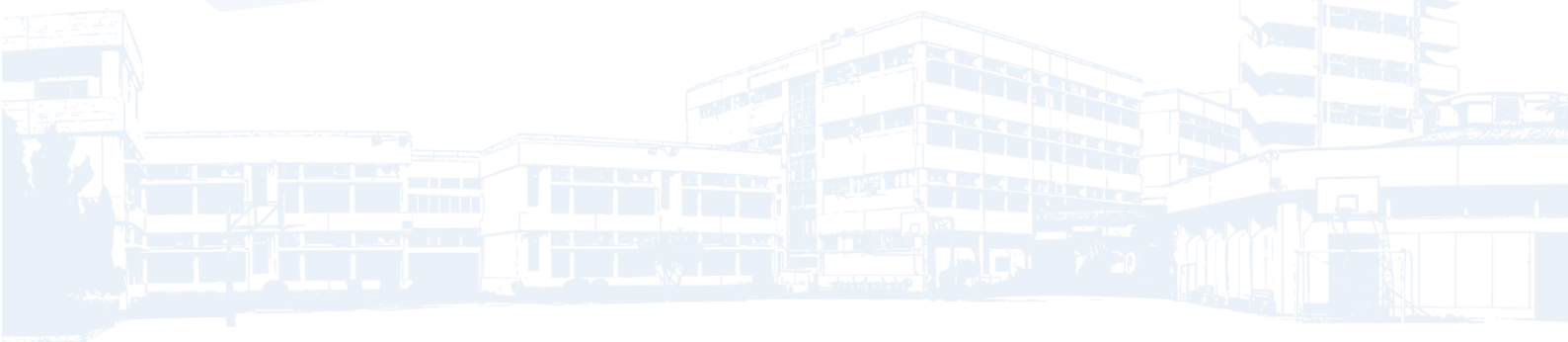
Yours faithfully,
Chris Wong

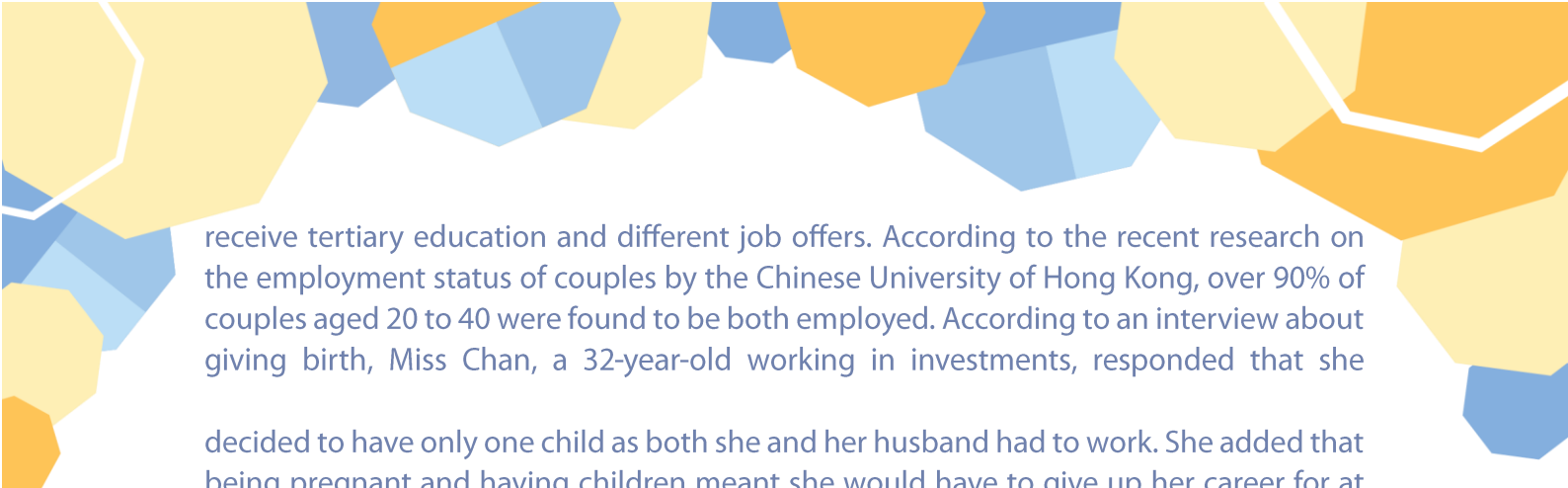
Less Is Better Than More

Throughout this century, our city Hong Kong has changed drastically. Things like density, population, GDP, living quality and education levels have increased significantly. However, there is one thing that has decreased with the advancement of our city. That is the number of offsprings per couple. Compared to five children per woman a century ago, couples nowadays are having less than one child. Why is that so? This question can be answered in two aspects, namely social and economical. The social factors will be analysed first, followed by economical considerations.

First of all, the main way of making a living has evolved from working in the fields to working in offices. When Hong Kong was still a humble fishing village where people relied on fishing and farming to make ends meet, it was no surprise that people wanted to have more kids. To them, the more kids they had meant the more helpers they had and higher productivity. Subsequently, they could earn more money quickly. Parents would tell their kids to help with fishing, harvesting crops or simply stay home and take care of their siblings so that they could focus on their work. In contrast, now that most people are working 9-to-5 jobs in offices, there are no such needs for having more kids. Imagine if you finally arrived home after an exhausting day at the office and were welcomed by five young children nagging for food or throwing tantrums - how would you feel? If you had to clean up the mess they made and take care of their needs, you would probably pass out. This is exactly why having fewer kids is more desirable and the reason why many couples are opting for one child only or even a childless life.

Another social factor is related to the busy working lifestyle in Hong Kong. Back in the day, very few people graduated high school, let alone university. This was particularly true for females as they were expected to become housewives and take care of the family after marriage. With the development of our society, the importance of education has been realized by the general public. Females and males now have equal opportunities to





receive tertiary education and different job offers. According to the recent research on the employment status of couples by the Chinese University of Hong Kong, over 90% of couples aged 20 to 40 were found to be both employed. According to an interview about giving birth, Miss Chan, a 32-year-old working in investments, responded that she

decided to have only one child as both she and her husband had to work. She added that being pregnant and having children meant she would have to give up her career for at least a year due to maternity leave, time needed for recovery, and her responsibility to take care of the infant. When asked whether she would consider having another child in the future, she replied with a firm nod (indicating no). From this research and interview, it is clearly illustrated that with advancing education levels and a burgeoning economy, having fewer offspring allows couples to spend more time working and achieving career milestones.

In terms of economic considerations, the main benefit of having fewer children is a lighter financial burden. As shown in a local saying, "Raising a kid requires at least a million dollars." Raising a child in a metropolis like Hong Kong does cost an arm and a leg. Not only do parents have to spend a fortune on pre-natal and post-natal checkups, but they also have to fulfil other

needs of their babies. They have to send their kids to different extracurricular activities and interest classes to promote their development. Bear in mind that in addition to these expenses, parents also have to pay for insurance, various taxes, and mortgage. All these add up to a shocking amount of money, which is a long-term financial burden parents have to bear. In other words, having fewer kids directly translates to a lighter burden. Hence, young couples are convinced that having fewer kids is much more desirable.

Finally, housing issues in Hong Kong can also answer the question. Unless you are super fortunate or rich, most likely you cannot afford a place spacious enough to house several kids. A small, packed home is definitely not a desirable place for children to grow up in. Therefore, having many offspring in such a place is worse than torture for both parents and kids - it is straight-up abuse for the kids.

The transition of Hong Kong from a humble fishing village to the burgeoning global financial hub it is today has changed our way of living. This change is a double-edged sword. It has improved our quality of life and provided us with more opportunities in career and education. Despite the upsides, problems like heavier financial burdens and housing crisis have arisen. Undoubtedly, it is exactly this transition, this change, this shift that has converted Hong Kong into a place where having fewer children is desirable, that has encouraged and led couples to have fewer kids.

