**“3-minute Concept” Animated Video Clips Series:**

**Stereotype, Prejudice and Discrimination**

**Subtitles**

3-minute Concept

**Stereotype, Prejudice and Discrimination**

Life and Society (Secondary 1-3)

Personal, Social and Humanities Education Section

Curriculum Development Institute

Education Bureau, HKSAR Government

Colleagues are chatting about the musical instruments their children are playing.

One of them asks Mr Chan what musical instruments his children are playing. Mr Chan replies that one of them is drummer of a heavy metal band while the other is learning to play *guzheng*.

Mr Chan then shows his colleagues pictures of his children performing on stage. They are surprised to find that Mr Chan’s daughter is the heavy metal drummer and his son is the one playing *guzheng*.

This example shows that many people have stereotypical views about people or things. Our impressions about people or things come mainly from our past experiences and the information we receive in daily lives.

For example, in the media, we usually see tough guys in black leather jackets and sunglasses playing drums in heavy metal bands; and Chinese women with long hair and wearing *qipao* playing *guzheng*.

However, our experiences and the information we received are limited in scope, which will restrict our understanding of people or things. The association between musical instruments and genders is just one example of “stereotypes”.

Moreover, stereotypes can develop into prejudices. For example, proficiency in playing heavy metal music is not related to gender. In fact, the person given the title “China’s paramount *guzheng* player” is a man called Wang Zhongshan. Also, as early as the 1970s, there were already records released by an all-female heavy metal band which got on pop music charts.

Thus, if we only base on one’s gender to judge his or her musical skills or suitability for playing a certain musical instrument, to attach a label of “good” or “bad”, “superior” or “inferior”, or “suitable” or “awkward”, it is already a type of prejudice.

Further, if a prejudice is followed by unfair actions, it may result in “discrimination”.

For example, a man and a woman, both having comparable musical skills, apply to be the principal *guzheng* player in a Chinese orchestra. However, the orchestra director thinks that *guzheng* should be played by women, so he rejects the male applicant merely because of this very reason. To the male applicant, this unfair treatment because of a person’s gender is “discrimination”.

Discrimination refers to “any adverse distinction that deprives a person of reasonable treatment

made on the basis of race, family status, disability, sex or religion.”

From these examples, it is evident that prejudices and discrimination are definitely undesirable.

First, they are not in line with the principle of fairness. Second, no one wants to live in a society filled with stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination because they themselves may become the next victims.

Stereotype, prejudice and discrimination are linked together. Individuals who hold stereotypical views will gradually form prejudiced beliefs. When we act on our prejudiced beliefs, our actions may result in discrimination.

In short,

Stereotype refers to established ideas about people or things;

Prejudice refers to making judgment based on established ideas about people or things; and

Discrimination refers to putting our judgment that are based on established ideas about people or things into action.

We must therefore stay alert to stereotypes to reduce any subsequent prejudices or discrimination.

Much research has found that stereotypes can be reduced through education or interaction with people from different backgrounds. Indeed, when people of diverse backgrounds live together

and work together to tackle crises, such as saving lives, they can beat stereotypes and prejudices.

Reflection Question

Apart from gender stereotypes, what other examples of stereotypes can you think of?