ABSTRACT

Globalization has increased the interconnectivity in all aspect of life worldwide. The role of local state and local politics are questioned due to the increasing influences of variety of global forces. Social policies have been passed from place to place through different networks and actors. Policy transfer is one of the concepts used to study this complicated social reality by scholars from different disciplines.

Existing researches of policy transfer tend to focus on state actors and international organizations. However, some scholars call for attention to local forces including action of the non-state actors that influence the policy transfer process in the bottom level. It is argued that researches should problematize actions that different actors adopted to compete for alternative policy meaning. Moreover, existing researches tend to focus on successful cases of policy transfer. There is lack of comparison of factors that facilitate or constraint non-state actors to transfer foreign policy ideas. The aim of this thesis is to contribute to the discussion of policy transfer by the exploration on the various actions of non-state from the local NGOs, to transfer foreign policy ideas to compete for alternative policy meaning.

In Hong Kong, committing to policy advocacy is a convention of the field of community social workers. Introduction of foreign policy ideas is one of the ways that social workers adopted to challenge existing policy. However, the neoliberal restructuring of welfare services had limited capacity for policy advocacy. This contradictory situation is met by community social workers who are involved in the policy process of urban regeneration. Community social workers have been traditionally assigned by the government to serve neighborhood affected by urban regeneration. It is found that they do not only advocate for policy changes, but also strengthen the policy ideas promoted by the government. Comparison of different actions of them can demonstrate factors that influence whether the non-state actors of local NGOs to transfer foreign policy ideas to compete for alternative policy meaning.

This research is designed as a qualitative research. With the use of the Agency, Structure, Institution, and Discourse Approach, semi-structured interviews with 21 community social workers and key informants sampled by theory-guided sampling, secondary data analysis of 678 official documents, and participant
observation to a major advocacy coalition were conducted. Data were coded and analyzed by using the qualitative data analysis software program-MAXQDA. Through initial coding, focused coding and theoretical coding, 27 and 7 codes and 6 themes were generated.

This research suggests that action by non-state actors of local NGOs is a way of policy transfer. Comparison of the various actions between them can illustrate the dynamic of complicated meaning making process of policy transfer. It demonstrates different kinds of institutions may have different impact to the actors. They may facilitate the actors to compete for alternative policy meaning by the transfer of policy ideas, or constraint them to follow the dominant policy ideas.
# Table of Contents

DECLARATION ...................................................................................................................... i  
ABSTRACT ............................................................................................................................ ii  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ................................................................................................... iv  
Table of Contents ..................................................................................................................... v  
List of Tables ....................................................................................................................... viii  
List of Figures ......................................................................................................................... ix  
Abbreviations .......................................................................................................................... x  
Chapter 1 Introduction ............................................................................................................. 1  
Transfer of policy ideas in times of increasing interconnectivity ............................................ 1  
Policy advocacy by community social workers and transfer of policy ideas on urban regeneration in Hong Kong ................................................................................................. 3  
Thesis outline ........................................................................................................................... 7  
Chapter 2 Policy Transfer ...................................................................................................... 13  
Introduction ........................................................................................................................... 13  
Definition of policy transfer and related debates ................................................................... 14  
Actor and network approach ................................................................................................. 18  
Idea and process approach ..................................................................................................... 30  
ASID approach ...................................................................................................................... 40  
Conclusion ............................................................................................................................. 42  
Chapter 3 Urban regeneration ............................................................................................... 44  
Introduction ........................................................................................................................... 44  
Urban regeneration: Definition and scope ............................................................................. 44  
Policy ideas of urban regeneration and sustainable regeneration in United Kingdom and United States ..................................................................................................................... 54  
Conclusion ............................................................................................................................. 75  
Chapter 4 Urban regeneration policies in Hong Kong .......................................................... 77  
Introduction ........................................................................................................................... 77  
Urban regeneration policy in Hong Kong ............................................................................. 78  
Development of local urban regeneration policy .................................................................. 83  
Discussion on urban regeneration policies in Hong Kong .................................................. 111  
Community social workers and their role in urban regeneration ........................................ 113  
Conclusion ............................................................................................................................. 118  
Chapter 5 Methodology ....................................................................................................... 120  
Introduction ........................................................................................................................... 120  
Research objective and research questions ........................................................................... 120  
Research design ................................................................................................................... 124  
Conclusion ............................................................................................................................. 139
Appendix G List of secondary data ................................................................. 329
Bibliography ........................................................................................................ 350
CURRICULUM VIATE ............................................................................................ 394