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Generating Evidence to Support the Elimination of Child Labour, Forced Labour, and Human Trafficking

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# Towards a Normative Change Framework in Child Labour: Legitimacy, Social Norm and Procedural Norm

Alhassan Abdullah\*

PhD Candidate

Team: **Prof. Lucy P. Jordan, Ines Huynh and Prof Clifton R. Emery**

RAs: Felix Mensah, Sampson Agyapong & Valentina Eshun

# Agenda

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**Social norms and child labour**

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**Institutionalization of social norms**

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**Procedural norm and justification**

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**Study context: child labour in fishing and cocoa**

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**Methods: Practice research and vignette narrative**

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**Findings**

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**Practice and Policy Implications**

# Introduction and Background

- Over **48 million** of the 246 million estimated children (aged 5 to 17 years) that are involved in child labour are found in sub-Saharan Africa (ILO, 2018).
- More than **70%** of the child labour cases in sub-Saharan Africa occur within the Agricultural sector (ILO, 2018).
- Social and cultural norms are key causes of child labour (Bandara et al., 2015; Dammert et al., 2018; de Buhr & Gordon, 2018; Zelizer, 2005) in addition to the economic forces.
- Social norms regulate the actions of people within the social order (Gould, 2018).
- It characterizes the shared expectations among people.
- Where social norms are institutionalized people conform to them out of a sense of duty (Weber, 1925/1986: 31).

# Introduction cont:

- It is an unimaginable task to change deep rooted social norms (Andrighetto & Vriens, 2022; Paluck, 2009; Zhang et al., 2010).
- Significant improvement in research that aims at changing social norms about tobacco use (Zhang et al., 2010) and vaccine usage (Andrighetto & Vriens, 2022).
- Focus
- This study seeks to contribute to the research agenda on social norm change by presenting an analytic framework supported by empirical data on how to change social norms in child labour.

# Social Norms and Child Labour: Evidence from Systematic Review

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- A systematic review of literature on social norms in child labour Abdullah et al., (2022) catalogued: (1) **informal apprenticeship** norm, (2) **gender** norms, (3) norms regulating the **asset value of children**, (4) norms on **sustenance and succession** and (5) the vertical value of **obedience**, among the key social norms
- The normative expectation to inherit and maintain the legacy and identity of the family informed child labour practices within the cocoa and fishing areas (Abdullah et al., 2022; Johansen, 2006)
- Evident in these normative orientations are justifications for why one should engage his/her child in child labour.

# Institutionalization of Social Norms

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- Institutionalization of social norms require that known and deliberate violations be sanctioned (Durkheim, 1982; Gould, 2018; Parsons, 1968)
- Sanctions also enforces the boundary of the norm and elicit commitment to the norm (*cf.* Durkheim, 1982; Gould, 2005, 2018).
- Failure to sanction those violate legitimate social norms will set lose the boundary of the norm (Durkheim, 1982).
- Social norms are enforced by sanctions; physical punishment and internal psychological sanction
- First type of sanctions is internal to the individual in the form of guilt and shame (Durkheim, 1982).
- Parents who fail to involve their children in child labour activities are stigmatized (Bequele & Boyden, 1988).
- Lopez-Calva (2002) found a strong relationship between social stigma and child labour.

# Procedural Norm and Justification

- Analytically, discussions of social norms subsume procedural norms
- Actions legitimate traditionally if consistent with social norms; actions are procedurally legitimate and justified if it's a positive outcome of a rational calculation (Gould, 1993) or normatively justified as right or wrong (Durkheim, 1982).

## Case 1

The elders indicate that the process for the appointment of leaders for the community will be determined by the ordinary community members, where each *man* will have two votes and each woman will have a vote.

## Case 2:

if the elders decide that appointment of leaders of the community will be decided by votes of the community members, where each one is entitled to one vote regardless of gender.

- ❖ Women in the community will object this decision on the basis that the procedure is illegitimate
- ❖ It violates institutionalized egalitarian values
- ❖ Despite illegitimate constitutive procedure, legitimate decision or outcome could be reached
  
- ❖ Procedure will be considered legitimate specification of the egalitarian values.
- ❖ outcome can be illegitimate if there more men in the community

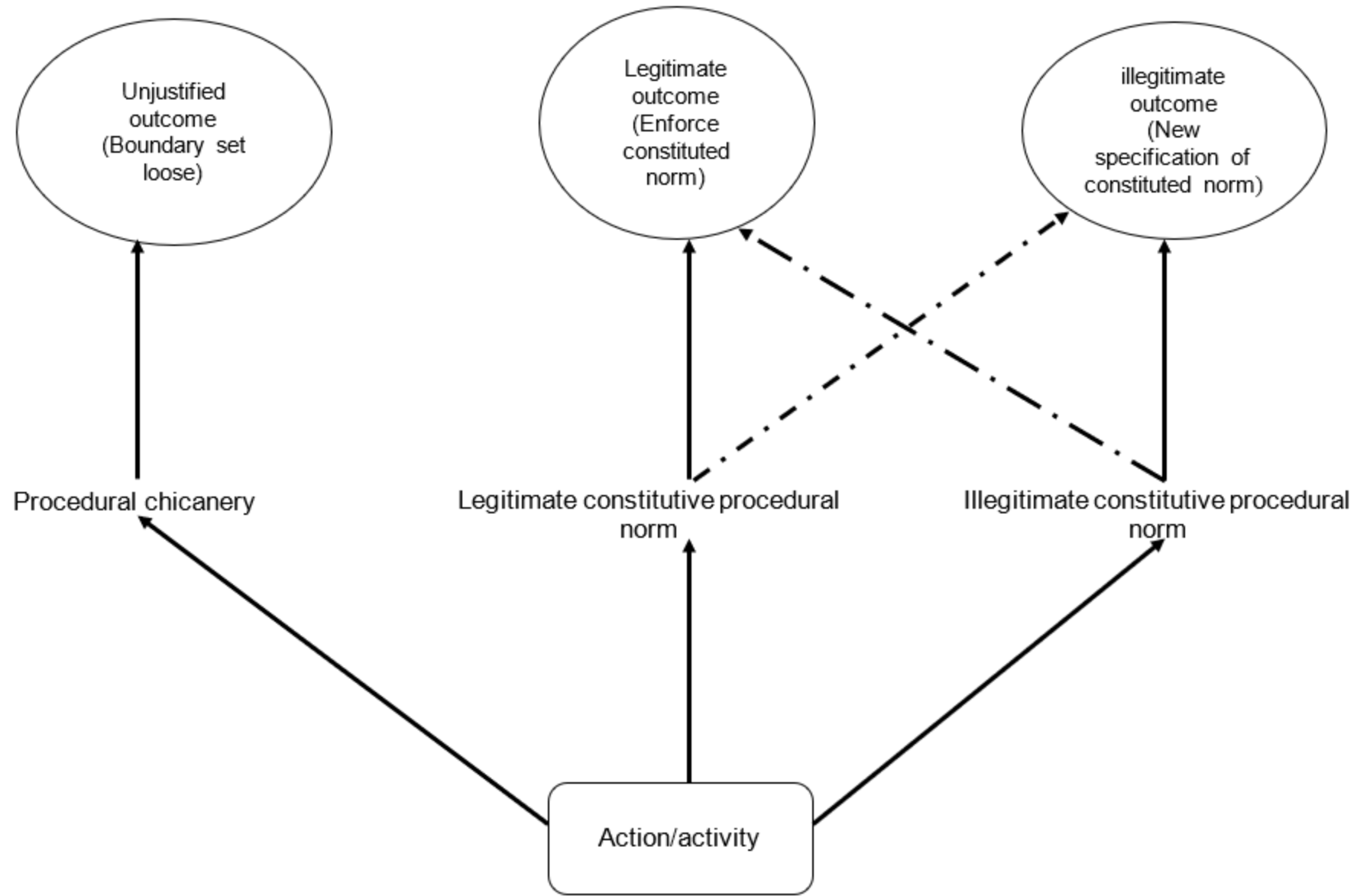


Figure 1: Normative change framework



## Procedural Norm and Justification Cont:

- *Norm of inheritance* can be justified as a legitimate normative expectation that is expected of parents.
- The procedural activity, herein child labour, cannot be justified both within the social and legal order.

### ***Key Research Questions***

- What social norms underpin child labour activities in Ghana?
- What constitutive procedural norms are used to justify the constituted norms in child labour?
- How are situational sanctions relevant in enforcing norms in child labour?

**Abdullah, A.**, Inès, H, Emery, CR & Jordan, LP. (2022). "Social Norms and Family Child Labor: A Systematic Literature Review. [\*International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health\*](#). 19(7) 40-82.  
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19074082>

# Methods: Practice Research and Narrative Vignette

## Practice Research

Initial Engagement  
(8 community Stakeholders)

Developed Screening Tool

Vignette Cases

*'Engaging my children in fishing is simply a traditional system of schooling which doesn't violate the rights of my children. It will ensure that they have the necessary training to become hard workers'*

*"For me, I believe it will make more sense to engage children in my farming for them to acquire some skills that will help them in their future lives. Why should I enroll my children in school if they're going to be unemployed after finishing?"*

## Narrative Interviews

Pilot: 6  
stakeholders  
Main: 40  
parents and 10  
stakeholders

### Eligibility

1. Stayed in the community for at least 24 months
2. Have at least one child (between 5-15 years)
3. Full-time farmer or fishermen/women

# Findings: Sample of Participants

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- ❖ Age between 35 to 80 years
- ❖ 80% of the participants have had a minimum of 10 years experience in their occupations
- ❖ At least each participants have stayed in their respective communities for more than 11 years
- ❖ 78% men and 22% women
- ❖ 40% no formal education, 45% basic school level, and 15% have completed at least senior high school

# Findings

- **Norm on Inheriting family business**

*"Fishing in this community is like a family inheritance. Every fisherman is expected to train at least one family member to take over the business when he is not around. That is how we were all trained. Back in the days when I started fishing, it was considered one of the best jobs in this community. We used to earn a lot of money."* (Community Stakeholder 3, Fishing Community 2)

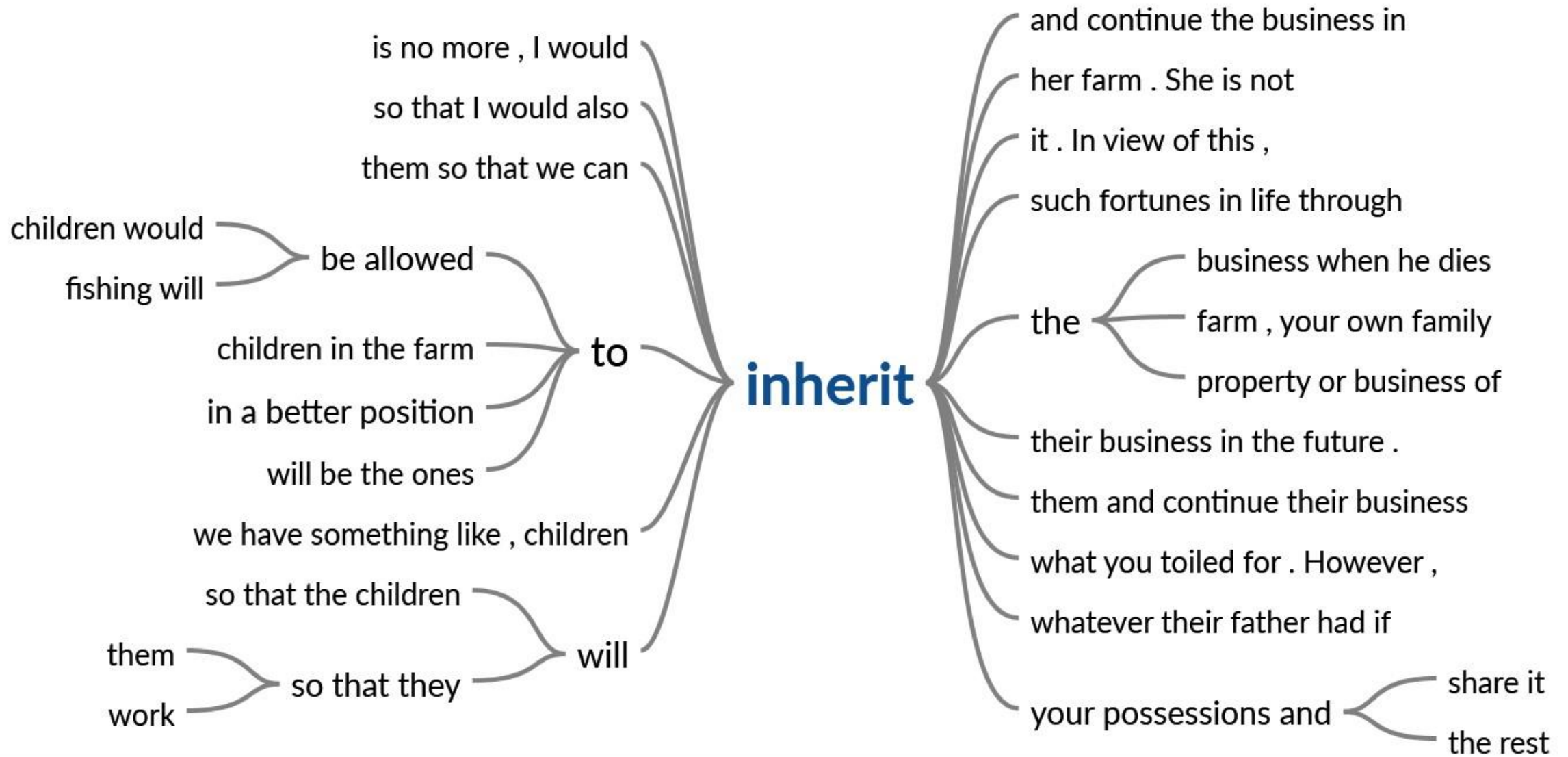
## *Maintain family boundaries*

*"Today, most of us share boundary with people who are not our relatives. In view of this, it is important that you take your child with you to the farm so that they know the boundaries to your farmland. In the olden days, our parents used to do that and it helped us to identify their lands. If this is done, no one can cheat you of your inheritance."* (Parent 1, Cocoa Community, No CL)

## *Family Legacy and Symbol of Identity*

*"I have taken my children to the sea before. My first born went to the sea at a very young age (like 9 years), so did two of his brothers. I also took two of my nephews to the sea too. I taught them very well. I treated them more special than even my children. Because if I don't help them to learn it well, our reputation as good fishermen will be lost and no one will be there to inherit. If you come to this community everyone knows us as the best fishermen who harvest more fishes in the year. We have maintained that for over decades, so we have to make sure it continues. And that our children will also learn and continue with the good name."* (Parent 16, Fishing Community, Yes CL)

## Text Search Query - Results Preview



# Findings cont:

## Standards on Hard work

Parents want their children to become hardworking. However, there are some children who would not work with the numerous training you give them. There are some children who need to be forced before they go to the farm. Children of this character would never take up the work of a farmer. They have portrayed right from the early stages that they are not interested.

## Norms on informal apprenticeship

- ❖ Alternative skills
- ❖ Easy to for children as a child
- ❖ Increase the sources of family income

# Findings Cont: Sanction mechanisms

## • Informal Authorities

If you do not have a family member who is a fisherman, your parents have to consult a chief fisherman to consider you in his business. Once they accept you, every work needed to be done in the boat will be left for you to do. By doing this, you will be learning how to mend nets, how to paddle or control the boat among other things.

## Psychological rewards

When community members see my children accompanying me to the farm, they mostly say that I have groomed my children very well. They commend the children that they are very helpful and hardworking.

## Insult and Retaliation

It is expected that, people around should react to such issues however, the behaviour of some parents deter most people from doing that. They might insult you and call you names if you dare questions why a parent is taking their child to the farm. Some even say that, those who speak against sending children to the farm want to influence their children badly. If it wasn't for the behaviour of some parents, I would have taken it upon myself to advice such parents not to take their children to the farm when it is a school going day

# Applying the normative change framework

## Constituted social norm

1. Inheritance
2. Hard work
3. Informal Apprenticeship

## Procedural norm and justification

- Maintain legacy and identity of family
- Family farmland and boundaries
- Reputation
- Social security for old age
  
- Obligatory for success
- Commitment to succeed
  
- Skills and training
- Contribute to family income



# Targets for Programme Intervention

- Promote commercialization of cocoa and fishing
- Promote TVE in child labour hubs
- Two prong educational approach:
  - 1) Curriculum education and
  - 2) Complex community wide education

# Conclusion

- This research has unraveled the constituted social norms that support child labour practices in the Agric sector (Fishing and Cocoa) in Ghana.
- It has highlighted the informal sanction mechanism that enforce the norms
- We have provided normative change framework that identifies procedural norms as the basis for intervention programmes.
- The normative change model provide a pathway to change deep rooted social norms.

- THANKS YOU

[aalhassa@connect.hku.hk](mailto:aalhassa@connect.hku.hk);  
[jordanlp@hku.hk](mailto:jordanlp@hku.hk); [ihuynh@hku.hk](mailto:ihuynh@hku.hk)

