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Impact of Short-term Study in Mainland China Programme on Hong Kong Local University Students' Intercultural Competence, Perception and Attitude about Mainland China, and National Identity

短期中國內地學習項目對香港本地大學生跨文化能力、對中國內地的看法與態度，及國民身份的影響

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## Final Report

Submitted by

Department of Applied Social Sciences  
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University  
(Principle Investigator: Dr. YU Lu)

## **Table of Contents**

Acknowledgement and Preface	3
Executive Summary	4
Chapter 1 Introduction	20
Chapter 2 Research Methodology	35
Chapter 3 Findings of the Quantitative Study	53
Chapter 4 Findings from the Individual Interviews with Student Participants	98
Chapter 5 Findings from the Individual Interviews with Teachers	114
Chapter 6 Policy Implication and Recommendations	121
Chapter 7 Additional Study	132
Chapter 8 Details of the Public Dissemination Held	140
Chapter 9 Conclusion	141
References	150
Appendix 1 Pre-test Questionnaire	156
Appendix 2 Post-test Questionnaire	160
Appendix 3 Interview Protocol for Student Participants	164
Appendix 4 Interview Protocol for Teachers	169
Appendix 5 Questionnaire of Additional Study	172

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Part 1: Abstract of the Research**

#### Introduction

The rapid development of mainland China with the “Greater Bay Area” initiative will create tremendous employment and business opportunities for the younger generation in Hong Kong. Government policy strongly emphasises the importance of exchange programmes in mainland China in promoting young people’s understanding of the country and developing their intercultural competence.

Short-term study programmes in mainland China are one of the major routes to university students gaining such experiences. Although they have been widely promoted by the government and academic institutions, their impact and effectiveness, particularly in terms of university students’ development, has not yet been systematically examined. It is also unclear what factors may facilitate or hinder participants’ learning from short-term study-in-China programmes.

#### Objectives

The objectives of the present research were as follows:

- 1) To investigate the impact of short-term study abroad in China programmes on the development of Hong Kong local university students in their a) intercultural competence, b) perception and attitude toward mainland China, and c) national identity
- 2) To examine the moderating effects of factors at student level, including students’ demographic characteristics, prior experiences in mainland China, and their attitudes and expectations about the programme, on the impact of short-term study in China programmes in the above three areas
- 3) To examine the moderating effects of factors at program level, including programme mode, duration, structure of learning activities, number of cultural interactions, frequency of guided student reflection, and programme staff characteristics on the impact of short-term study in China programmes in the above three areas
- 4) To understand students’ experiences in the short-term study in China programmes and how different individual and program factors may contribute to one’s development, with a particular focus on identifying facilitators and barriers to students’ effective learning gains based on qualitative research methods
- 5) To make policy recommendations on how to promote and improve short-term study in

China programmes to maximize their impact on Hong Kong young people's development of intercultural competence, understanding about China, and national identity.

### Research Methodology

The present research adopted a mixed-method, single-group, pre- and post-test design. The quantitative phase employed a stratified cluster sampling method in which 380 Hong Kong local university students were recruited from 21 short-term study-in-China programmes offered in the second semester and summer of the 2018/19 academic year. These included five summer term programmes (STP), nine cultural tour programmes (CTP) and seven service learning programmes (SLP). Students were invited to complete a pre- and post-test questionnaire before and after they completed their trips. The questionnaire was composed of scales and items that measured students' intercultural effectiveness and communication awareness, perceptions of mainland China, attitudes towards the people of mainland China, national identity, and their identification and recognition of the Chinese nation. Students' personal characteristics, including their expectations, motivations to attend the programme, past experiences of similar programmes, and demographic data were measured at the pre-test stage. Their perceptions of the programme, staff, and peers were measured post-test. Descriptive statistics, paired-samples t-tests, and multiple regression analyses were performed to address the research questions.

In the qualitative phase of the research, individual interviews were conducted with 42 student participants and 16 programme staff based on interview protocols developed by the research team. The purpose was to develop an in-depth understanding of students' and teachers' experiences of the programme and perceptions of its impact, as well as their views on the facilitators of, and barriers to, effective learning at both student- and programme-level. The interviews were conducted by members of the research team. All were audio-recorded and fully transcribed for the purposes of thematic analysis.

### Research Findings

#### A. Quantitative Findings

##### (a) Impact of short-term study-in-China programmes

- Students who participated in the programmes reported higher levels of intercultural competence, in terms of both effectiveness and communication awareness, following completion. All three types of study-in-China programmes (i.e., STP, CTP, and SLP)

had a significant positive impact on students' development of such intercultural competence.

- Participants also reported more positive perceptions of mainland China, and more positive attitudes towards its people, after completing the programmes. In terms of different programme modes, both the STP and SLP had a significant and positive impact on such perceptions and attitudes, while the effect of the CTP was non-significant. There were no significant changes in the students' perceptions of their social distance from people from mainland China before and after any of the programmes.
- Students showed more identification as Chinese citizens, and attributed greater importance to being a member of the Chinese race, after completing the programmes. Their perceptions of the strengths of all four identities studied (Hong Kong citizen, Chinese citizen, citizen of the People's Republic of China [PRC], and a member of the Chinese race) increased as a result of their participation.
- Students reported higher levels of identification and recognition of the Chinese nation after their completion of the short-term study-in-China programmes.
- With regard to programme mode, the STP resulted in a significant increase in participants' identification with, and the perceived importance of, their identity as a Chinese citizen. The SLP also resulted in a significant enhancement of students' identity as both a Chinese citizen and as a member of the Chinese race; of their perceptions of the strengths of all four identities; and their perceptions of the importance of being a Hong Kong and a Chinese citizen. In terms of the CTP, no significant differences in these factors were observed before and after students' participation.

(b) Influence of student-level factors

- Demographic characteristics, including gender, year of study, and family economic status (indicated by parents' highest education level) were not significantly associated with the increase in intercultural competence resulting from students' short-term study-in-China experience.

- Students who had participated in short-term study-in-China programmes, and those who had higher expectations of their impact on the development of intercultural competence, showed greater improvements in their intercultural communication awareness after participation than did those without prior experience of such programmes and those with lower expectations, respectively. Students' self-perceived academic performance was negatively associated with improvements in intercultural effectiveness and communication awareness.
- Post-completion, students from families with higher parental education level showed more positive changes in their perceptions of mainland China, as well as smaller increases in both their self-identification as Hong Kong citizens, and their perceptions of the strength and importance of this identity, than did students from families with lower education levels.
- Compared to students who had previously participated in short-term study-in-China programmes, students without such experience showed greater positive change in their identity as "a citizen of the PRC", and in their perceptions of the strength and importance of this identity, after completion of this programme.

(c) Influence of programme-level factors

- The implementation mode of short-term study-in-China programmes (i.e., STP, CTP, or SLP) was not predictive of students' learning in terms of intercultural competence or in perceptions and attitudes toward mainland China and national identity.
- Having supportive and motivational teammates significantly predicted improvements in students' intercultural effectiveness, but was negatively associated with post-completion enhancements in the strength of identity as both a citizen of the PRC and a member of the Chinese race.
- High programme quality significantly predicted improvements in intercultural communication awareness, general perceptions of mainland China, and identification and recognition of the Chinese nation. Students benefited the most from programmes



with clear objectives, good design, carefully arranged activities, smooth implementation, and efficient information delivery.

- High perceived teacher quality significantly predicted positive changes in students' attitudes toward the people of mainland China. The involvement of teaching staff who were well prepared and passionate about the programme contributed to improvements in students' attitudes toward mainland China.

## B. Qualitative Findings

- In general, the qualitative findings based on interviews with both students and teachers corroborated the results of the questionnaire survey; they suggested that all three types of short-term study-in-China programmes had had a positive impact on participants' intercultural competence, their perceptions of China, and their attitudes toward the people of mainland China.
- Students perceived the programmes as having had a persuasive influence on their intercultural competence through providing them with substantial exposure to Chinese culture, as well as opportunities to interact directly with people from other cultural backgrounds. Students reported improved language proficiency, particularly in Putonghua; higher levels of cross-cultural awareness; and increased capacity to develop interpersonal relationships across cultures. Many students said that they now felt more confident and comfortable when communicating with people from different cultural backgrounds. Some students had become more open-minded and respectful of diverse cultures. Their experiences had also enabled them to bridge the cultures of Hong Kong and mainland China; that is, to engage in cultural mediation.
- Students had enjoyed their communication with local people in mainland China. Some had had in-depth interactions with local university students. These interactions, along with students' own observations of Chinese society, not only deepened their understanding of contemporary China in terms of its economic and social development, but changed some of their prior negative perceptions of the nation and its people. Many students described the Chinese people they had encountered on the trip as warm-hearted, tolerant, expressive, and knowledgeable. They appreciated the hospitality, erudition,

and open-mindedness of the university students in mainland China, which contrasted with their expectations of these students before taking part in the programmes.

- Students perceived themselves as having enhanced their social competence and interpersonal skills, and expanded their social networks, as a result of the opportunities the programmes afforded them to interact with people from different backgrounds. Some students also said they had experienced academic development in their professional disciplines.
- The most obvious changes in students, as observed by programme coordinators/teachers, were in their perceptions and attitudes about mainland China and Chinese people. After witnessing the rapid economic growth and prosperous social development of the Mainland, students formed more positive and comprehensive views about China, in contrast to their previous beliefs and perceptions. Teachers also observed that the study-in-China experiences had broadened students' horizons and enabled them to become more receptive and adaptable to Chinese culture. Some students had even started to consider developing a career in mainland China after graduation. Teachers believed that these attitudinal and perceptual transformations could further enhance students' motivation to learn more about China and interact with its people, which could promote subsequent cultural and commercial exchange.
- At the individual student level, strong internal motivation, positive and proactive attitudes toward the programme, and openness were all identified as critical factors contributing to effective learning from the programmes. Students who were highly self-motivated and passionate about the programme, as well as those with a higher level of openness to new experiences, were more likely to demonstrate significant gains in their learning. On the other hand, students with low motivation to learn and more passive attitudes derived limited benefit from the programme and the trip overall.
- At the programme level, peers were found to play an important role in either facilitating or impeding each other's effective learning. Highly motivational peers who cared about other students and actively participated in programme activities contributed to a positive and supportive interpersonal atmosphere, which had a big impact on other

students' learning. On the contrary, if peers lacked initiative and motivation to learn, had a half-hearted attitude and displayed little team spirit, or got involved in interpersonal conflicts, a vicious circle would form that had a negative effect on individual students' learning, especially in non-credit bearing programmes.

- Programme staff/subject teachers' dedication, responsiveness, familiarity with the local context, and knowledge of Chinese culture and society were all identified as facilitators of high impact. Students who had had caring and supportive teachers found it easier to adapt to the new environment; their learning was more effective as a result. Meanwhile, some students reported that they had had insufficient communication or interaction with the programme teachers or had not been kept informed by staff of changes to the arrangements, which had reduced their morale and motivation to learn.
- Students regarded the provision of high-quality programmes with clear objectives, carefully-designed activities incorporating various cultural components, and appropriate scheduling as the most important factor in effective learning. Such programmes maximized students' learning opportunities during their short-term study. From the teachers' perspectives, guided reflective activities throughout the programmes helped students to consolidate their experiences effectively and use them to generate new insights. Frequent and in-depth interaction with local Chinese people, including other university students, enriched students' understanding of different aspects of mainland China. Barriers to the achievement of learning outcomes at the programme level included sudden changes to scheduled activities, lack of opportunities to interact with local people, overly tight programme scheduling, and lack of consideration of students' opinions in programme design. making some activities inappropriate or unappealing.

## **Part 2: Layman Summary on Policy Implication and Recommendations**

### **1. Promote short-term study-in-China programmes for university students in Hong Kong**

- Allocate extra resources to support existing short-term study-in-China programmes to increase the number of people who can benefit. The HKSAR Government should increase funding support for the “Mainland Experience Scheme”. The Central Government should consider offering more stability for the 10,000 people scheme and widening its scope;
- Set up a specific fund to encourage and support professionals to develop and implement high-quality study-in-China programmes in higher education institutions in Hong Kong. The University Grants Committee (UGC) should initiate special Teaching Development Grant Projects to support related initiatives;
- Strengthen and expand collaboration with educational and cultural organizations and universities in mainland China to explore new and effective modes for study-in-China programmes, such as short-term exchanges, winter term programmes, and so on. For credit-bearing subjects, a more efficient and workable system of credit recognition should be explored;
- Integrate study-in-China/overseas programmes into graduation requirements.

### **2. Promote short-term study-in-China experiences**

- Promote the integration of short-term study-in-China experience into other learning experience in secondary schools;
- Strengthen the service learning element in the undergraduate curriculum.

### **3. Promote best practices and information exchange among universities through a common platform**

- Identify and introduce high-quality programmes as examples of best practice;
- Establish a database and clearinghouse for programme documentation.

#### **4. Empower students to play an active role**

- Enhance students' motivation through orientation workshops;
- Introduce a student leader scheme to utilise positive peer influence;
- Conduct team-building activities to enhance team cohesion.

#### **5. Build up the capacity of university staff as leaders of short-term study-in-China programmes**

- Develop systematic training for present and potential programme leaders;
- Evaluate existing training projects and provide opportunities for peer learning.

#### **6. Promote the impact of study-in-China programmes to the public**

- Build up positive public perceptions of study-in-China programme experience through publicity materials;
- Create opportunities for study-in-China programme participants to disseminate their experiences and feelings to the public.

#### **7. Enhance public education on Chinese society and culture**

- Provide service/voluntary opportunities in mainland China to the public;
- Utilize the positive influence of the media to promote Chinese culture;
- Foster stronger collaboration between Hong Kong and China.

#### **8. Fund research projects to evaluate and document the long-term impact of study-in-China programme experiences**

- Support long-term or more comprehensive projects in this field;
- Support Hong Kong-mainland China collaborative projects;
- Set up exclusive research grants for study-in-China programmes;
- Organize symposia regularly to attract all researchers and educators in relevant fields, including international scholars, for exchanges of knowledge and ideas.

## 行政摘要

### 第一部分：研究摘要

#### 簡介

高速發展的內地經濟配合“一帶一路”及“大灣區”的區域合作策略為本港青年創造大量就業和創業機會。本港政府在政策制定方面大力支持各類中國內地學習項目，以幫助本港青年瞭解國家，提升他們的跨文化能力。短期中國內地學習項目是大學生吸收上述交流經驗的主要途徑。然而，儘管政府積極推行，項目的實際成效及其影響因素並未得到基於代表性樣本所進行的系統性評估。此外，未有科學研究探討促進或影響學生項目學習成效的因素。

#### 研究目的

本研究的目標如下：

- (一) 探討短期中國內地學習項目對本港大學生在三方面發展的作用：1) 跨文化能力、2) 對國家的態度與看法、3) 國民身份認同；
- (二) 檢驗在學生個人層面，可能對短期中國內地學習項目成效產生影響的因素，包括學生的基本人口學特徵、過往與內地相關的經驗以及他們對項目的期望與態度；
- (三) 檢驗在項目的層面，可能對短期中國內地學習項目成效產生影響的因素，包括項目形式、持續時間、學生活動的安排、文化交流頻度，反思活動安排，以及項目負責導師（簡稱“導師”）的特徵；
- (四) 透過質性研究方法了解學生於項目當中的經歷，並深入探討促進或阻礙學生從項目中獲益的個人或項目因素；
- (五) 為日後項目在推廣及改善方面提供政策上的意見，深化項目對本港青年於跨文化能力發展、對國家的認識及國民身份認同方面的成效。

## 研究方法

本研究採用了混合研究方法，包括單一組別前後測的定量研究設計以及基於訪談的定性研究。定量部分，採用分層抽樣法從本港大學選取了 380 位來自 21 個不同短期內地學習項目的本地大學生參與研究，包括 5 個中國內地暑期課程項目、9 個中國內地文化交流項目以及 7 個中國內地服務學習項目，全部項目均於2018/19 學年的下學期或暑假舉行。參與者於項目開始前及完成後分別填寫一份問卷，問及他們的跨文化能力、跨文化溝通察覺、對中國內地和人民的看法、國民身份、以及他們對國家的認同。此外，前測部分還收集了學生參與項目的期望與動機、過往參與類似項目的經驗以及其他個人基本資料，而後測部分則問及學生對項目、導師以及朋輩的看法。數據分析方法主要採用了描述統計、成對樣本  $t$  檢定以及層次迴歸分析。

定性部分，研究人員根據擬定的訪談大綱分別為 42 位學生參與者以及 16 位導師進行個人訪問。該定性部分旨在深入了解學生及導師的經驗和項目的影響，以及在個人和項目層面上促進或阻礙學習成效的因素。訪談由研究團隊的研究員進行，所有訪問錄音均轉錄成文字，以用作主題分析之用。

## 定量研究結果

### A. 定量部分數據

#### (a)項目的影響

- 學生的跨文化能力及跨文化溝通意識於完成項目後有顯著提高。三類項目，包括暑期課程、文化交流團以及服務學習項目對學生在跨文化能力方面的發展均有正面影響。
- 學生完成項目後，對中國內地及內地人的態度和看法變得更為積極和正面。具體而言，暑期課程及服務學習項目對學生的影響顯著，而文化交流項目對學生這一方面的發展沒有顯著的作用。
- 學生完成項目後，更認同自己是中國公民，以及身為中華民族一員的重要性。學生對於四種不同身份的認同強度，包括香港人、中國公民、中華人民共和國的國民以及中華民族一員，於完成項目後有顯著提升。

- 學生完成項目後，他們對中國國家的認同和認可有顯著提升。
- 針對不同類型的項目而言，暑期課程項目顯著提升了學生對中國公民身份的認同及重要性；參與服務學習項目的學生，在對中國公民及中華民族身份的認同、四種不同身份的強度，以及對香港人及中國公民身份的重要性均有所提升。參與文化交流項目的學生在身份認同方面沒有顯著改變。

#### (b) 學生層面的影響因素

- 參與者的個人特徵，包括性別、年級以及家庭的經濟狀況（以父母最高學歷表示），不影響他們在項目中跨文化能力及跨文化溝通意識的提升。
- 過往曾參與類似中國內地交流項目，以及對項目能幫助個人跨文化能力提升方面有較高期望的學生，完成項目後有更顯著的跨文化溝通意識的增長。學生對自己學業表現的評價與跨文化能力及跨文化溝通意識的提高呈負向相關。
- 父母擁有較高學歷程度的學生在完成項目後，對中國內地的態度變得更為積極和正面，但在對於香港人身份的認同、強度及重要性方面的改變反而較小。
- 相比起曾參與中國內地交流項目的學生，過往未曾參與中國內地交流項目的學生，透過是次項目後，對於自己是“中華人民共和國公民”這一身份的認同、強度以及重要性方面，有更為顯著的提高。

#### (c) 項目層面的影響因素

- 項目類型（包括暑期課程、文化交流團以及服務研習）對學生於跨文化能力、對國家的看法及國民身份認同的學習成果影響不顯著。
- 在項目中擁有具鼓勵性及高學習動機的朋輩，能正面提升學生於跨文化能力的學習成效，然而，這項因素與學生對於中華人民共和國公民的身份認同，以及中華民族一員的身份強度方面的提升呈負向關係。



- 項目的素質（如清晰的目標、良好的項目設計、合理安排的活動，項目的順利執行，和有效的資訊傳遞）能進一步提升學生在跨文化溝通意識，對中國內地的看法，以及對中國的認同方面的進步。
- 導師的素質，包括他們對項目的充分準備及熱誠，有助於學生在項目中獲得更多對中國內地的正面看法。

### 定性研究結果

- 總體來說，從參與者及導師取得的定性研究數據進一步印證了定量研究的結果，說明三類短期中國內地學習項目對學生的跨文化能力、他們對中國內地的看法和對內地人民的態度方面均有顯著的正面影響。
- 學生認為項目過程中他們能直接體驗中國內地的文化，並與當地不同背景的人有交流的機會，這有助他們在社交能力方面的提高，除此之外，學生認為自己的語言能力，尤其是普通話、跨文化敏感度和交流意識都有顯著提升。大多學生都認為參與項目後，他們與不同文化背景的人溝通時更加自如，也更有自信。部分學生認為自己的思想變得更開放，並更能尊重文化的多樣性，這讓他們能在中港交流中更好的發揮橋樑作用。
- 學生喜歡與內地人民的交流。部分學生與當地學生有深入的交流，這些交流與觀察不僅加深了他們對現今中國經濟和社會發展的了解，更改變了他們過往對內地人的負面觀感。許多學生形容項目中認識的內地人民十分熱心、包容、富有學識。學生欣賞內地大學生的好客、博學、和開放的思想，這些觀感與他們參加項目前的看法大為不同。
- 學生認為在項目中與不同背景的人交往有助他們提升社交能力、人際網絡及人際交往的技巧。部分學生表示參與項目的經歷讓他們在自己的專業方面也有所提升。
- 導師觀察到學生參與項目後最大的改變在於他們對中國內地及民眾的態度及看法。當學生目睹和親身體驗到中國內地的高速經濟增長和社會發展後，形成了對中國內地更為正面和全面的看法，這與他們參加項目前的觀點非常不同。導師認為項目令學生擴闊了視野，並更加接納和適應中國文化。部分學生更考慮畢業後於內地發展事業。導師認為學生這些心態上的改變能進一步提升他們認

識中國內地和與內地民眾交流的動機，這將進一步促進香港與中國內地日後文化和商業上的交流。

- 學生層面方面，學生自身的動機、對項目的態度以及開放程度是影響他們在項目中獲益的主要因素。擁有高學習動機、對項目充滿熱誠以及高開放程度的學生傾向會獲得較多的學習成果。另一方面，擁有較低學習動機、對項目持負面態度的學生傾向會獲得較少的學習成果。
- 項目層面方面，朋輩因素均能促進或阻礙項目學習成果。高學習動機、關懷其他組員以及積極參與活動的朋輩能營造正面和具鼓勵性的氣氛，促進學生的項目學習成果。另一方面，朋輩的低學習動機、被動態度、團隊氣氛消極，以及人際關係上的衝突能形成負面循環，阻礙項目學習成果，這一點在不計學分的項目中尤其明顯。
- 第二，導師的投入、積極回應、對當地熟悉程度，以及對中國文化及社會的認識和了解，能促進項目學習成果。熱心和具鼓勵性的導師可以幫助學生更好地適應新環境，從而提升項目學習成果。然而，部分學生認為，團隊成員與導師之間的交流不足，以及未能及時了解項目活動的安排和相關信息，負面地影響了他們的團隊氣氛和學習動機。
- 第三，學生認為高素質的項目，例如具有清晰的目標、良好的活動安排（如包含多元文化元素）及行程安排是重要的促進項目成效因素，提高他們在短期項目中的學習成果。從導師的觀點來看，項目中的引導性反思活動能幫助學生鞏固及整理學習經驗、並從中產生新的認識與感悟。此外，與中國內地民眾（包括大學生）的深入交流可以深化學生對中國各層面的認識。另一方面，與當地人交流機會的不足、行程突然的更變、過於緊湊的活動安排，以及在項目設計中缺乏與學生的及時溝通被認為是阻礙項目成效的因素。

## 第二部分：研究項目對政策影響和政策建議的摘要

根據研究結果，我們在此提供以下政策建議供政府參考。

### (a) 在本港大學進一步推行短期內地交流項目

- 分配額外資源推行短期內地交流項目，使更多學生從中獲益。特區政府應考慮增加撥款以進一步支持「專上學生內地體驗計劃」，中央政府亦應考慮繼續優化並恆常化「萬人計劃」的實施。
- 成立專項基金以鼓勵專家為本港大專院校設計，實施高素質的短期內地交流項目。教資會可基於現有的「教學發展資助項目」設立相關的專項基金。
- 擴大並深化與內地教育、文化等部門，以及高校之間的合作，共同探索新穎的內地交流項目模式。
- 將參與內地或海外交流項目納入本港獲得學士學位的畢業要求。

### (b) 為學生提供更多短期內地交流的機會

- 將短期內地交流項目作為額外教學活動納入中學課程
- 進一步強化學士課程中的服務學習元素

### (c) 加強推廣高質素的示範項目，建立資源共享平台

- 將高質素的短期內地交流項目作為實踐典範進行推廣
- 建立數據庫及資源交換中心以記錄，分享相關資料

### (d) 增強學生參加項目的積極性

- 開展工作坊及其他項目前期活動，以提升學生學習動機
- 引入學生領袖計劃，通過經驗分享或項目參與發揮積極的同伴影響
- 為不同背景的學生提供團隊建立活動以增強團隊的凝聚力

### (e) 提升大學教職員帶領內地交流項目的專業能力

- 為項目負責導師及感興趣的教職員提供系統性的培訓
- 對現有的教職員培訓項目進行評估，並提供更多同儕學習的機會

(f) 向公眾推廣短期內地交流項目的成效

- 通過派發宣傳資料建立公眾對內地交流項目的正面印象
- 為項目參加學生提供向公眾分享經驗心得的機會

(g) 深化有關中國社會及文化的公眾教育

- 為香港市民提供更多內地義工及服務活動的機會
- 充分利用媒體的積極影響來推廣中國文化
- 促進香港與內地居民的合作交流

(h) 為評估項目長期成效的研究計劃提供撥款

- 支持開展相關方向的長期或全面性研究
- 支持香港及內地學者的合作研究項目
- 建立關於短期內地交流的專項研究基金
- 定期安排座談會，吸引來自不同國家的學者進行分享及交流

## Chapter 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

#### Short-Term Study Abroad Programmes

The mega-trend of globalization and the ever-increasing interdependence among countries have had a massive impact on higher education worldwide. Educational policies and missions of universities have been reformed to better equip graduates with diverse skills in order to face the great challenges of a global economy (Shin & Harman, 2009). Many higher educational institutions consider enabling students to develop intercultural competence and global citizenship as an essential component of “world-class” education (Bourn, 2008). One of the consequences of this is the proliferation of short-term study abroad programmes in different universities worldwide in recent years (Miller & Gonzalez, 2016).

A short-term study abroad programme can be defined as a “one-to-eight-week programme (or within one term), usually faculty directed and sponsored by a home institution” (Spencer & Tuma, 2002, p. xiv). Common forms of short-term study abroad programmes include summer semester abroad, international service learning, international internships, international volunteering, and student exchange programmes (Sachau, Brasher, & Fee, 2010). According to IIE Open Doors data (2015), in the 2014/15 academic year, 63.1% of the study abroad experiences of college students in the United States were short-term in nature. In Hong Kong, the number of outgoing exchange students in programmes funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC) grew from 3,546 in 2010/11 to 6,320 in 2015/16, amounting to a 78% increase in five years (UGC, 2017). Several reasons can explain the rising popularity of short-term international experiences. First, short-term study abroad programmes provide opportunities for students who cannot afford the time and money required for long-term overseas study (Chiang, 2014). Second, for students enrolled in structured academic programmes, such as nursing and engineering, a short-term study abroad programme would mean they would not fall behind in their domestic programmes (Donnelly-Smith, 2009). Third, it is much easier for short-term programmes to have clear learning goals and involve ongoing participative reflection (Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005).

As Asia’s most cosmopolitan city, with 92.2% of its GDP coming from the service sector, there is a high demand in Hong Kong for inter-culturally competent individuals who can effectively

interact with and/or provide services to people of diverse cultural backgrounds. With this in mind, the Hong Kong government and tertiary institutions are frequently thinking up new ways to provide overseas experiences throughout the student population in order to cultivate an international mindset and related skills in young people. Consistent with the recent global phenomenon, there is a trend towards offering more short-term study abroad programmes in higher educational institutions. Apart from supporting a growing number of students to have outgoing exchange experiences, the UGC (2017) has suggested that Hong Kong students should participate in more diverse short-term overseas programmes, “such as service abroad, extended internships, and study trips”, especially during their post-secondary education. As a result, a large amount of resources has been invested to actively promote such initiatives in higher educational institutions. To take The University of Hong Kong (HKU) as an example, in the 2017/18 academic year, out of 480 study abroad programmes coordinated at the university level (i.e., by the International Affairs Office and the China Affairs Office), 294 (61.25%) were short term.

### **Short-Term Study-in-China Programmes: A Special Type of Study Abroad Programme in Hong Kong**

Among all the short-term study abroad programmes currently offered by Hong Kong higher educational institutions, programmes involving study in mainland China are the most common. Although Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China, because of its history and the current “one country, two systems” policy, the political, economic, and social-cultural environments in Hong Kong are different from those in mainland China (Chiu & Lui, 2009). Since reunification, the HKSAR Government has been strategically strengthening its ties with the Mainland and promoting extensive cooperation and communication among cross-border talent (HKSAR Government, 2017). The rapid economic development and rising prosperity of China also present Hong Kong young people with enormous opportunities for further personal and career development. To capitalize on these opportunities, Hong Kong young people need to enhance their understanding about the nation and equip themselves with relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities. Short-term programmes involving study in mainland China are an important way of achieving this goal. Through participating in such programmes, Hong Kong university students are able to gain knowledge and first-hand experience of mainland China, which can help them further realize their potential in the nation and seize opportunities for their future development.

In fact, all eight UGC-funded universities have offered various short-term programmes involving study in mainland China (study-in-China programmes) to their students (e.g., cultural trips, language programmes, service learning, and internships). Three universities have positioned enhancing learning opportunities in mainland China as part of their strategic plans (i.e., HKU, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University [PolyU], and City University of Hong Kong). For instance, HKU plans “to provide all students with at least one mainland China and one overseas learning opportunity by 2022”, in order to promote students’ “global citizenship and competitiveness” (HKU, 2016). Meanwhile, Hong Kong students have also shown increased interest in studying in mainland China. In a recent government survey (CUHK, 2016), more than half of Hong Kong young people had quite positive views about different types of China opportunities, such as internships (70.8%), exchange tours (67.8%), and employment (56.9%), and were willing to participate in mainland internship programmes (55.8%). Statistics from the Examinations and Assessment Authority show that 6% of graduate secondary students applied to study at mainland universities, compared to only 1% a decade ago (Lai, 2016). Cheng (2014) found that Hong Kong university students preferred choosing mainland China as their study abroad destination because of 1) the low traveling cost compared to other countries, 2) their interest in the cultural values of China, and 3) the need to improve their proficiency at Mandarin.

Given the significant growth in Hong Kong university students’ participation in short-term study-in-China programmes, one key question that must be addressed is what benefits the participants can gain from such experiences. A number of empirical studies have been carried out in recent years to understand the impact of short-term overseas experiences on students’ development (Dwyer & Peters, 2004; Donnelly-Smith, 2009; Ferguson, 2013). It was found that students who participated in short-term study abroad programmes demonstrated learning gains in four major areas: (1) language learning (Chiang, 2014; Martinsen, 2007), (2) disciplinary/professional knowledge (Richardson, Imig, & Ndoeye, 2013; Redden, 2009), (3) personal growth (Mapp, 2012; Rahikainen & Hakkarainen, 2013), and (4) intercultural competence (Davies, Lewis, Anderson, & Bernstein, 2015; Ferguson, 2013; Lumkes, Hallett, & Vallade, 2012; Marx & Moss, 2011; Stromberger, 2010). A recent review (Campbell, 2016) found that most participants showed significant improvements in at least one of the four areas as a result of their short-term study abroad experience. Among the four areas, intercultural competence, which was the primary intended education outcome of almost all study abroad

programmes, was the most frequently reported learning outcome (Campbell, 2016; Paige et al., 2009). Overall, the evidence shows that short-term study abroad programmes provide multiple social and learning benefits for participants, especially in the area of intercultural competence.

As a specific type of short-term study abroad programme, do study-in-China programmes have a similar impact on their participants? To answer this question, scientific evidence of the outcomes and quality of such programmes is needed. Nonetheless, empirical findings that show the impact of study-in-China programmes on Hong Kong university students' development are scant (Chang, 2012; Jackson, 2008; Lumkers et al., 2012; Yang, 2012; Yang, Webster, & Prosser, 2011). A review of existing studies conducted in Hong Kong revealed several research gaps (Chang, 2012; Jackson, 2008; Lumkes et al., 2012; Yang, 2012). First, the majority of studies adopted the case study method, usually focusing on specific programmes in a particular foreign country (e.g., Jackson, 2008). Therefore, findings across studies are often not comparable. Second, among the different modes of short-term study-in-China programmes, service learning has been a major focus of research (e.g., Yu, Shek, & Xing, 2018; Chak et al., 2016), while the impacts of other types, such as Chinese cultural tours, have rarely been investigated. Third, the adopted research methods were primarily qualitative approaches (focus groups, interviews, reflective journals, etc.) supplemented by quantitative data collected from a small number of participants (e.g., Lai, 2010). Thus, the generalizability of the findings is limited. Therefore, it is unclear whether, and if so to what extent, the currently offered short-term study-in-China programmes can have a meaningful impact on Hong Kong university students' development, and whether different types of programmes can equally serve the purpose. There is a clear need for more concrete evidence based on representative samples of university students in Hong Kong to gauge the worth of short-term study-in-China programmes.

Meanwhile, despite the great efforts made by the governments of both mainland China and the HKSAR to promote relations between the people of the two regions, several recent phenomena observed among Hong Kong young people are rather worrying. First, researchers have found that Hong Kong young people generally hold negative attitudes towards the Mainland, perceive a considerable dissimilarity between themselves and mainland Chinese, and consider that it is better to be a Hong Konger than a Mainlander (Wong, 2015). A report by UGC (2010) found that "Hong Kong students' knowledge about mainland China is surprisingly low". Second, both international and mainland students complain that Hong Kong students are "generally reluctant



to speak any language other than Cantonese”, and show “little interest in including non-local students in their activities” (UGC, 2010, p. 70). These stereotyped perceptions and closed attitudes reflect a low level of intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2009) among Hong Kong university students, which is also holding them back in their own development. Third, a noticeable proportion of young people in Hong Kong have been found to lack a sense of national identity (CPU report, 2016, p. i). In a recent survey, 36% of Hong Kong Secondary 5 students did not identify themselves as Chinese citizens, a trend that researchers have labelled a national identity crisis (Hong Kong Policy Research Institute, 2016) that is unfavourable to national integration and social cohesion. In response to the above phenomena, researchers have advocated that post-secondary institutions should offer more mainland programmes to Hong Kong young people, provide more financial sponsorship for academic exchange programmes, and motivate more young people to learn from direct experiences in China (Central Policy Unit, 2016). The promotion of short-term study-in-China programmes in higher educational institutions represents such efforts. However, little is known about the effectiveness of these programmes in promoting students’ development in intercultural competence, understanding about China, and national identity.

Moreover, without data collected from a representative sample, a systematic analysis of factors that may influence the impact of study-in-China programme is not possible. Scholars have pointed out that “study abroad experience alone cannot guarantee the participants’ learning gains from the programme” (Pitman, Broomhall, McEwan, & Majocha, 2010) and there are multiple factors at individual and programme levels that contribute to the impact of a programme. The identification of barriers to, and facilitators of, the successful implementation of short-term study-in-China programmes would provide important insights for both programme designers and implementers into how to enhance the impact of such programmes in the future. It will also be useful for policymakers and the senior management of universities to determine how to support these programmes in order to attract more students and better benefit them. Despite the importance of this issue, we know little about it. In particular, would the factors that contribute to a successful study abroad programme in general have similar effects on study-in-China programmes? Is there any unique variable that specifically influences Hong Kong students’ learning gains from study-in-China programmes? What factors may hinder or facilitate Hong Kong students’ national identity development as a result of their study-in-China experiences? All these important questions remain unanswered.

## **The Present Research**

Against the above background, the present research has two major aims: 1) to investigate the impact of short-term study-in-China programmes on Hong Kong local university students' development in terms of a) intercultural competence, b) perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China, and c) national identity; 2) to examine the effects of both individual and programme factors on the impact of study-in-China programmes. Several major theoretical models that guide the proposed research are reviewed below.

## **Short-Term Study-in-China Programmes in Hong Kong**

In the present research, a short-term study-in-China programme is defined as 1) a one-to-eight-week faculty-directed programme that takes place in mainland China, and 2) a one-to-eight-week study tour in mainland China embedded in one regular credit-bearing course offered by a home institution with the entire duration of the course being within or more than one semester. This is because for a few credit-bearing courses (such as service learning subjects), while the study-in-China tour is within eight weeks, the whole subject lasts for one or two semesters (usually one semester plus several sessions in a second semester) due to administrative constraints. This type of programme will also be considered as the target programme in our research because the embedded study-in-China experience is short term. Stratified cluster sampling will be used to select participating programmes. A preliminary review of short-term study-in-China programmes currently offered in the eight public universities in Hong Kong revealed that there are three main modes: 1) the summer term programme, 2) the Chinese cultural tour programme, and 3) the service learning programme. The characteristics of each mode are described below.

The first mode, the summer term programme (STP), takes place between June and August every year, and usually spans from one to five weeks. An STP offers students opportunities to participate in summer programmes organized by some of the top mainland universities as partners of Hong Kong universities. The major aim of an STP is to promote cultural exchange and mutual learning between Hong Kong and mainland university students. Participants can gain knowledge of particular topics, understanding of the nation, and direct experience of the campus life and culture of the mainland universities. Example programmes include the Zhejiang University C9 Summer School (HKU, 2018), the Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Summer School – Mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong (PolyU, 2018), and the Peking University Summer Programme (HKUST, 2018). Students from different universities in Hong Kong are eligible to apply for STPs.

The second mode, the Chinese cultural tour programme (CTP), introduces students to cultural and historical aspects in different areas in mainland China through a one-to-two-week trip. Students usually travel to several cities and visit sites along the way. Such programmes aim to enable students to gain distinctive cultural experiences and more understanding of both general and specific cultural issues related to the programmes, such as the A Tale of Three Cities – Cultural Exploration Programme offered by PolyU (2018), and the Belt and Road, Past and Present Programme available at HKU (2018). A CTP is typically organized by individual institutions and involves a relatively small number of participants (usually 10 to 20 students) per programme.

The third mode, the service learning programme (SLP), is a form of experiential learning that integrates academic study with community service and reflection (American Association of Higher Education, 2003), and which has gained increasing popularity among Hong Kong universities because of its positive impact on students' development in multiple areas (Xing & Ma, 2010; Yu, Shek, & Xing, 2017). An SLP in mainland China usually involves a two-to-six-week service trip in which students provide volunteer work to the local community. These programmes aim to enrich students' learning, to develop students' civic responsibility and their interests in service, people and culture of the host country, to help students gain personal development, and to strengthen the local communities. SLPs are often considered to be more challenging and resource-intensive than other types of short-term study abroad programmes, but also more rewarding (Clark, 2000). Examples of STPs include the Project M.A.I.L. offered by Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU; 2018), the Growing Resilience in Children in Post-Disaster Contexts offered by PolyU (2018), and the Service Learning Programme (Mainland) offered by Chung Chi College of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK; 2018). Currently, a cross-institutional project that focuses on capacity building for service learning in Hong Kong higher educational institutions is underway, with four participating universities: PolyU, Hong Kong Baptist University (BU), Lingnan University (LU), and The Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK). These universities have been regularly offering service learning programmes to undergraduate students during the past few years.

In the present research, all the above three modes of short-term study-in-China programmes will be investigated.

### **Intercultural Competence**

Intercultural competence can be defined as “the ability to communicate effectively in cross-cultural situations and to relate appropriately in a variety of cultural contexts” (Bennett & Bennett, 2004). It has two essential components: intercultural sensitivity and intercultural adaptability (Kim, 1991; Ting-Toomey, 1999; William, 2005). Intercultural sensitivity has been defined as a person’s attitude, willingness, and motivation to understand and accommodate intercultural encounters (Chen & Starosta, 2000) or “affective response to intercultural difference” (Straffon, 2003, p. 488). According to the development model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS), intercultural sensitivity develops along a continuum (Bennett, 1993). As an individual’s experience of cultural difference becomes more complex and sophisticated, his/her understanding and behaviours regarding cultural differences and similarities become more complex and mature, evolving from a highly ethnocentric mindset to a highly intercultural/ethno-relative mind-set (Cushner, McClelland, & Safford, 2012; Hammer, 2011). In the present study, we will focus on university students’ intercultural sensitivity, especially their understanding and behaviours regarding intercultural communication. Specifically, we aim to investigate how university students’ intercultural communication awareness may change through their study-in-China experience.

The second component, intercultural effectiveness, refers to the skills that enable one to behave flexibly and appropriately in intercultural interactions in order to attain one’s communication goals (Kim, 1991), or to the behavioural aspect of intercultural communication competence. In the present research, intercultural effectiveness will be examined in terms of the five categories of skills that are directly associated with interculturally effective behaviours in Portalla and Chen’s (2010) model, namely 1) message skills, which refers to competence in using the language of a culture different from one’s own that enables an individual to perform verbal and non-verbal behaviours to communicate in the other culture; 2) interaction relaxation, which refers to the ease which an individual feels or his/her overall comfort level during the interaction; 3) interactant respect, which refers to the level of value the individual places on his/her culturally different interactant during the interaction; 4) identity management, which refers to the ability of an individual to maintain the unique identity of his/her culturally different

interactant while also maintaining his/her own separate identity during the interaction; 5) behavioural flexibility, which refers to the ability to observe an interaction, appropriately choose one's behaviours, and adapt to the specific situational context during the interaction; and 6) interaction management, which refers to the individual's ability to express ideas and answer questions during the interaction. A number of researchers have reported that these essential skills can be developed through study abroad experiences (Fantini, 2000; Mapp, 2012; William, 2005) by "observing, listening, and asking those who are from different backgrounds to teach, to share, to enter into dialogue together about relevant needs and issues" (Deardorff, 2009; p. xiii). In this study, we will compare students' performances in these six skill areas before and after their study-in-China experience.

### **Perceptions and Attitudes towards Mainland China**

Many studies have examined the impact of study abroad programmes on participants' attitudes towards the host country (Chen, 2007; Dias, Zhu, & Samaratunge, 2017; Lumkes, Hallett, & Vallade, 2012; Stangor et al., 1996), and intergroup contact theory (ICT; Allport, 1954) has often been adopted to understand the attitudinal changes. According to ICT, stereotypes are born out of social isolation and can be broken by personal contact. Therefore, interpersonal contact is considered one of the most effective ways to reduce prejudice between different group members. Based on this model, we assume that more direct contact with local people during a study-in-China trip would be associated with Hong Kong university students' more positive attitudes towards mainland China and reduced stereotypical perceptions. These changed attitudes are also essential for the students to further acquire knowledge and skills needed for their intercultural communication (Deardorff, 2004). For example, with more respect, openness, and curiosity, students would be more willing to learn about the culture, custom, and history of mainland China.

### **National Identity**

In the present research, national identity is defined in a broad sense as including 1) one's identity and sense of belonging to the People's Republic of China (PRC), and 2) one's feeling and recognition of being a member of the PRC. From a social identity perspective (Tajfel, 1979), national identity derives from both one's membership in a country and also the value and emotional significance attached to that membership. A national membership is more likely to

be internalized as part of one's self-concept when the individual can obtain a sense of positive self-worth from this identity. Students' direct learning experience in China, along with an expanded understanding of the nation, may help them overcome their prior stereotyped evaluation and even create a sense of pride in their national membership. This would contribute to their national identity development. Some studies have found that overseas experiences can change participants' self-identity and ethnic identity by affecting the way they think and feel about their own culture, nationality, and place in society (Naddaf, 2016). Overseas experience also often inspires critical self-reflection, which can provide opportunities for the development of a new identity (Deardorff, 2004). We expect that after participating in a study-in-China programme, students would develop a stronger sense of national identity.

### **Factors Affecting the Impact of Short-Term Study Abroad Programmes**

In the present research, we also sought to understand what factors may influence the impact of study-in-China programmes and the process of how these factors help or hinder students with regard to reaping significant benefits from the programme. Previous studies have identified multiple factors that are critical to the success of study abroad programmes. At the individual level, several characteristics of students affect the impact of studying abroad on their development. First, gender, year of study, and foreign language capacity were found to be associated with students' learning outcomes (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004; Rivers, 1998; Stronkhorst, 2005). Second, personality factors such as openness, extraversion, altruism, empathy, and introspectiveness moderate the effect of study abroad programmes on participants (Hullett & Witte, 2001; Kinginger & Farerell, 2004; Stronkhorst, 2005). Third, prior cross-cultural experience and competence, particularly those related to the host culture, affect students' learning outcomes (Martinsen, 2011). Fourth, students' personal preparation (academically and psychologically), motives for studying abroad (e.g., cultural experience, fulfilling academic requirements), beliefs about the benefits of the programme, and the personal effort they invest into the learning process are consistently found to be predictors of favourable learning outcomes (Rahikainen & Hakkarainen, 2013).

At the programme level, factors relating to programme design, pre-departure preparation, institutional support, and post-trip consolidation all contribute to the success of the programme. With regard to programme design, duration, clearly defined programme objectives, types of student housing, structured learning activities, provision for cultural interactions, and guided

reflection on cultural experiences are the key factors associated with positive programme impact (Meyer-Lee & Warfield, 2006; Vande Berg et al., 2004). Some researchers have found that a duration of at least six weeks is needed for a programme to have significant effects on participants (Dwyer, 2004), while mixed findings have also been reported (Gothard et al., 2012). With regard to pre-departure preparation, Bretag et al. (2016) highlighted the importance of adequate introduction and preparation provided by programme staff before the trip. Staff members' experience and preparation are also key factors as they can enable staff members to provide students with appropriate preparation prior to the tour and support during the tour, which can then contribute to a positive student experience. In particular, guided reflective learning on the experience abroad has a strong influence on students' learning gains (Gothard et al., 2012).

In the present research, we examined the effects of several key factors identified in previous studies on the impact of study-in-China programmes for Hong Kong university students. Specifically, at the individual level, we considered students' demographic characteristics, prior exposure to the culture of mainland China, overall academic performance, and motives and expectations with regard to the programme. At the programme level, we focused on programme mode, provision of cultural interactions, frequency of guided reflective activities, and students' perceived programme implementation quality. The characteristics of programme staff and peers were also taken into account. It is our hope that the examination of these factors would shed light on how to improve the currently implemented study-in-China programmes and maximize the impacts of these programmes on students.

## **1.2 Policy Relevance**

The increasingly close ties between Hong Kong and mainland China are creating tremendous opportunities for Hong Kong. Our younger generation, in particular, must be prepared for these new opportunities. While the importance of introducing more study-in-China programmes has been stressed by Hong Kong's youth development and education policymakers, scientific evidence regarding the impact of this type of programme on local university students' development is lacking. The present research is important for the reasons outlined below.

First, this research can provide important empirical evidence that government officers and university senior management in Hong Kong can consider in order to understand the value and significance of short-term study-in-China programmes. If the findings can demonstrate that study-in-China programmes bring about desirable results for participants, then the government will be able to make a compelling argument to further develop, promote, and support similar initiatives that offer direct learning experiences on the Mainland. New policies can also be developed to promote Hong Kong young people's participation in these programmes. The findings can also inform government discussions on resource allocation for different modes of study-in-China programmes. Those programmes that have the greatest impact on participants' national identity development could be further promoted as a policy tool to help young people increase their level of identification with the nation.

Second, the research can help the general population of Hong Kong understand the benefits of study-in-China experiences for young people. This could promote general public awareness of the importance and value of study-in-China programmes, and in turn enhance public interest in, and support for, such programmes. The findings can also inform institutions' decision making with regard to the long-term planning of such programmes, as well as their budgeting processes, fund-raising initiatives (e.g., study-in-China scholarships, external funding for specific programmes), and advocacy work to generate further resources.

Third, this research can help to identify ways in which study-in-China programmes can be improved at different levels in order to further increase their positive impact on student development. Such information would be valuable for both programme revamping and policymaking in order to maximize the utility of programmes with the given time and resources.



Recommendations can be made regarding what key elements must be incorporated for students to experience meaningful learning gains. Public policy that can further engage and support specific groups of students in these programmes can be developed based on the identified individual factors. We hope that improvements in the design of short-term study-in-China programmes, together with corresponding policy support, will ensure that more university students are attracted to, and benefit from, these programmes.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

- 1) To investigate the impact of short-term study abroad in China programmes on the development of Hong Kong local university students in their a) intercultural competence, b) perception and attitude toward mainland China, and c) national identity
- 2) To examine the moderating effects of factors at student level, including students' demographic characteristics, prior experiences in mainland China, and their attitudes and expectations about the programme, on the impact of short-term study in China programmes in the above three areas
- 3) To examine the moderating effects of factors at programme level, including programme mode, duration, structure of learning activities, number of cultural interactions, frequency of guided student reflection, and programme staff characteristics on the impact of short-term study in China programmes in the above three areas
- 4) To understand students' experiences in the short-term study in China programmes and how different individual and programme factors may contribute to one's development, with a particular focus on identifying facilitators and barriers to students' effective learning gains based on qualitative research methods
- 5) To make policy recommendations on how to promote and improve short-term study in China programmes to maximize their impact on Hong Kong young people's development of intercultural competence, understanding about China, and national identity.

## 1.4 Summary

The rapid development of mainland China with the recent “Belt and Road” and “Greater Bay Area” initiatives is creating tremendous opportunities for the younger generation of Hong Kong. The importance of exchange programmes in mainland China for promoting young people’s understanding of the country and developing their intercultural competence has been emphasized extensively in government policymaking.

Short-term study in mainland China has been one major way that university students can gain such exchange experience. Despite being vigorously promoted by the government and institutions, the impact and effectiveness of these programmes on participants’ development have not been systematically examined using representative samples of participants. It is also unclear what factors may facilitate or hinder participants’ learning in short-term study-in-China programmes according to scientific studies.

The present research aimed 1) to investigate the impact of short-term study-in-China programmes on Hong Kong university students’ development in three areas: a) intercultural competence, b) perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China, and c) national identity; and 2) to examine the moderating effects of a list of key factors at both the individual and programme levels on programme outcomes.

The findings of the present research have significant theoretical and practical implications for policies regarding Hong Kong’s education and youth development. With regard to theory, they can provide important evidence concerning the impact of short-term study-in-China programmes on students’ development and lives, and contribute to our understanding of the underlying processes. The findings regarding the facilitators of, and barriers to, students’ effective learning can also contribute to generic theory of short-term overseas study. With regard to practice, the findings can provide important information for policymakers, programme designers, and implementers about how to further promote and improve the existing short-term study-in-China programmes. The findings can also shed light on how to develop other mainland and overseas exchange programmes.

## **Chapter 2. Research Methodology**

### **2.1 Research Design**

The project adopted a longitudinal mixed-method design that involved a quantitative survey with student participants (pre- and post-test) and a qualitative study (individual interviews) for both student participants and leaders/teachers of the programmes.

Quantitative methods were used to examine students' intercultural competence, perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China, and national identity, before and after participating in short-term study-in-China programmes. Participants completed both pre-test and post-test questionnaires, and the scores were compared. The possible effects of students' personal characteristics and programme factors on students' learning gains were also examined.

Qualitative approaches were adopted to explore the implementation of different programmes in depth, and the process of how study-in-China experiences, associated with various individual and programme factors, may lead to participants' development. First, individual interviews were conducted with student participants after the completion of the programme to understand their direct experiences on the programme, their perceptions of the programme impact on their development, and factors that may help or hinder their effective learning. Second, programme leaders or subject teachers were invited to share their views and perceptions in individual interviews about the programme, and their personal experiences, observations, and perceived facilitators and barriers to effective programme implementation.

### **2.2 Changes Made to the Original Research Plan**

As stated in our previous "Request for changing the scope of research in a PPR project" dated 26 September, 2019, we encountered several problems with programme and participant recruitment, which were likely related to the series of social events happened in Hong Kong starting from March, 2019. First, some cultural tour programmes were cancelled or conducted in small scale in 2018/19 academic year. Originally, 12 cultural tour programmes were selected, but two programmes were cancelled this summer due to low student enrolment. Although the coordinators of 10 cultural tour programmes agreed to invite students to participate in our project, only a few students from 8 programmes completed the survey, despite multiple rounds of invitation letters being sent out.

Second, the actual number of Hong Kong local student participants was smaller than the estimated number of student participants based on available programme information online, especially for cultural tours and summer schools. While the programmes were open to students studying in universities in Hong Kong, more than half of the students were originally from the Mainland or other areas in Great China (e.g., Taiwan, Macau, etc.). These students were not the target population of the present research project and thus excluded from the sample. This resulted in the reduced sample size of the present project.

Third, the response rate was lower than the estimated rate based on literature review and our previous experiences. For example, for cultural tour programme, the average response rate was 12.5%. When we approached staff of different programmes again in June, 2019, some of them showed concerns and hesitation about inviting students to participate in this project by themselves.

Despite our considerable effort to solve these problems (e.g., increase the incentive value, on site promotion, send email and messages through social media, recruit student helpers to assist data collection), the response rate remained low. Some upcoming cultural tours and short-term study in mainland China programmes scheduled after summer were also cancelled or postponed.

In the original proposal, it was proposed that 800 participants from 20 programmes (8 service learning, 4 summer schools, and 8 cultural tours) would be recruited. By the end of September, 2019, we collected pre-test data from 443 students and post-test data from 414 students in 21 programmes ( $N = 380$  matched cases), including 7 service-learning subjects, 5 summer schools, and 9 cultural tours. Given the tense atmosphere of the society at that time, and the expected social influence on students' national identity, attitude and perceptions about mainland China, it was considered difficult and inappropriate to further recruit participants from new short-term study in mainland China programme. Based on our data analytic plan and literature, a sample size of approximately 350 students is required for consideration of power analysis ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $\beta = 0.10$ ). Therefore, the sample of 376 matched cases is sufficient to address the proposed research questions.

Taken these factors into account, the PICO review committee approved our proposed changes on the research scope as below.

First, it was approved that we can focus on data collected from the 376 local undergraduate students who participated in study in mainland China programmes in 2018/19 academic year, rather than recruiting new students from new programmes. Although the sample size is smaller than the originally proposed sample ( $N = 800$ ), the research questions can be adequately addressed based on the current sample.

Second, it was approved that we would change the originally proposed focus group interview with students from the study-in-China programmes, to individual interview with students so that each student's views can be explored with details. This helped us to gain more in-depth understanding about students' learning experiences and the impact of short-term study in mainland China programmes.

Third, apart from the proposed research activity, we conducted an online survey to investigate undergraduate students' attitudes towards joining programs to be implemented in mainland China, in order to obtain extra information for researchers and policy makers to learn how university students perceive the potential opportunities to study and experience in mainland China in the midst of the current social change in Hong Kong.

In addition, it was originally proposed that a pre- and post-test non-equivalent control group design would be adopted, which would involve both a study-in-China group and a control group consisting of students who study on campus at about the same period of time, in order to determine whether students' changes are due to the study-in-China experience rather than to the natural maturation or personal growth that occur during typical university study. However, due to difficulties encountered in data collection, we were only able to recruit 53 students from a summer subject at one university. This control group sample was small and was considered biased because the three teachers who taught the subject were all originally from mainland China, which constitutes a confounding factor (i.e., students' direct contact and interaction with the teachers may potentially affect their intercultural competence as well as their perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China). Therefore, we do not think it is appropriate to compare the performance of this group of students (as a control group) with the experimental group. Instead, we focus on students' changes after participating in the short-term study-in-China programmes by comparing the pre- and post-test data collected from programme participants.

### **2.3 Sampling and Participating Programmes**

A purposeful sampling method was used to recruit programmes with different implementation modes that were offered in the 2018/19 academic year. First, for STPs, which were usually organized by top universities in mainland China and open to students from different universities in Hong Kong, four programmes were randomly selected from all available programmes in the summer term of the 2018/19 academic year. Through the professional connections of the research team members, five STP programmes were successfully recruited.

Second, for CTPs, which were jointly organized by universities in Hong Kong and mainland China, we first selected four UGC-funded universities. In each university, two CTPs were recruited based on nomination by staff in the related offices. A total of nine CTPs were successfully recruited. Lastly, SLPs were sampled from four universities participating in a cross-institutional project on capacity building for service learning: PolyU, BU, LU, and EdUHK. It was originally planned that from each university, two SLPs with service learning tours in mainland China would be selected as the participating programmes. However, for practical reasons, LU and EdUHK did not offer SLPs with direct services in mainland China in the 2018/19 academic year, and we were only able to recruit one SLP from BU and six SLPs from PolyU.

In summary, a total of 21 short-term study-in-China programmes offered in the 2018/19 academic year were recruited including five STPs, nine CTPs, and seven SLPs.

## **2.4 The Quantitative Study**

### **2.4.1 Participants and Procedure**

The participants of the quantitative study were local undergraduate students in Hong Kong (i.e., holding a Hong Kong Permanent ID Card) who had successfully enrolled in the 21 selected programmes. With the help of the programme leaders and subject teachers, invitation letters were sent out to all local students participating in the programmes. The students who agreed to participate in the study were first asked to sign a written consent form. After obtaining their consent, the students were asked to complete a pre-test questionnaire at the beginning of the programme (i.e., before the study-in-China tour) and a post-test questionnaire on the last session of the programme (i.e., after they completed the learning tour in mainland China). The two questionnaire surveys were both conducted in classroom settings administered by either our research assistant or trained student helpers who also joined the programme but did not participate in the survey. It took approximately 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

A total of 380 students from the 21 programmes completed both the pre-test and post-test survey, including 133 males, 241 females, and 6 students who did not indicate their gender. The majority of students were in Year 1 (31.3%), Year 2 (28.6%), and Year 3 (25.5%), while the eight students who indicated that they were in their fifth and sixth year of study were from nursing and Chinese medicine programmes, respectively. In terms of programme type, more than half of the students were from SLPs, while STPs were the next most attended type and CTPs the least attended. The relatively small number of student participants from CTPs was mainly due to the limited quota of such programmes compared to SLPs. More than 60% of the participants had never lived in mainland China, while over 16% of them had been living in mainland China for more than five years. Basic characteristics of the participants are further summarized in Table 1.



**Table 1** Demographic characteristics of the student participants ( $N = 380$ )

<b>Categorical variables</b>	<b><i>N</i></b>	<b>%</b>
Gender		
Male	133	35.6%
Female	241	54.4%
Year of study		
1	118	31.3%
2	108	28.6%
3	96	25.5%
4	42	11.1%
5	5	1.3%
6	8	2.1%
Programme type		
STP	112	29.5%
CTP	41	10.8%
SLP	227	59.7%
Years of living in mainland China		
Never	224	60.1%
Less than one year	39	10.5%
1-5 years	50	13.4%
More than 5 years	60	16.1%
<b>Continuous variables</b>	<b><i>M</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>
Age	20.30	1.87

#### 2.4.2 Measures

A composite questionnaire was used to assess the students' personal characteristics, intercultural competence, perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China, and national identity. The questionnaire comprised items from existing scales and a number of demographic questions that addressed the students' previous experiences in participating in short-term/long-term mainland China/overseas programmes, living experiences in mainland China, perceived academic performance, expectations of the study-in-China programmes (before the programmes), frequency of guided reflection, and interactions with non-local students (after

the programmes). Cronbach's alphas for the total scales and subscales based on the present sample are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2** Reliability summary for total scales and subscales

Scales	Number of items	Internal consistency	
		<i>N</i>	Cronbach's $\alpha$
<b>IES (pre-test)</b>			
Interaction relaxation	5	379	.77
Behavioural flexibility	4	379	.49
Interaction management	2	380	.61
Message skills	3	380	.62
Identity maintenance	3	380	.46
Interactant respect	3	379	.68
Overall	20	378	.81
<b>IES (post-test)</b>			
Interaction relaxation	5	379	.76
Behavioural flexibility	4	377	.58
Interaction management	2	380	.65
Message skills	3	379	.72
Identity maintenance	3	377	.41
Interactant respect	3	375	.74
Overall	20	368	.81
ICA (pre-test)	11	371	.82
ICA (post-test)	11	372	.80
<b>Perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China</b>			
General perceptions (pre-test)	6	372	.80
General perceptions (post-test)	6	376	.81
Other-group orientation (pre-test)	6	375	.64
Other-group orientation (post-test)	6	374	.64
Perceived social distance (pre-test)	5	379	.87
Perceived social distance (post-test)	5	375	.88
Identification and recognition of China (pre-test)	6	378	.82
Identification and recognition of China (post-test)	6	376	.84
<b>Programme level</b>			
Programme characteristics	6	377	.93
Teacher characteristics	2	377	.87

### Intercultural Competence

#### *The Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES; Portalla & Chen, 2010)*

The 20-item IES was adopted to assess the participants' intercultural effectiveness, serving as a major indicator of intercultural competence. The IES consists of six subscales designed to measure interculturally effective behaviours in six categories: behavioural flexibility (BF; four items), interaction relaxation (IRELAX; five items), interactant respect (IRES; three items),

message skills (MS; three items), identity maintenance (IDM; three items), and interaction management (ITM; two items; Chen, 2005; Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). In the present study, the students' scores on the six subscales of BF, IRELAX, IRESP, MS, IDM, and ITM, and the overall IES scale were all calculated and used as indicators of the students' intercultural competence. The IES has been widely adopted by researchers in studies that have assessed intercultural competence development particularly in the context of study abroad evaluations.

#### *The Intercultural Communication Awareness Scale (ICAS; Olson & Kroeger, 2001)*

The 11-item ICAS measures skills needed for effective interaction with people of another culture, including empathy, cross-cultural awareness (i.e., the ability to understand how people of another culture feel), intercultural relations (i.e., the competence to develop interpersonal relationships with people from another culture), and cultural mediation (i.e., the ability to serve as a bridge between cultures; Olson & Kroeger, 2001). The scale has been widely used in studies that have assessed intercultural competence development particularly in the context of study abroad evaluations (Bloom & Miranda, 2015). Cronbach's alphas of the ICAS based on the present sample were .86 (Wave 1) and .84 (Wave 2), indicating good internal consistency.

#### Perceptions and Attitudes towards Mainland China

##### *General Perceptions of Mainland China Scale (GPS)*

The students' general perceptions of mainland China were measured in terms of six major aspects: 1) economic development, 2) political development, 3) social development, 4) Chinese culture, 5) people's quality of life, and 6) the relations between mainland China and Hong Kong. The students were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with the six statements (GPS) listed below developed by the research team on a four-point rating scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, and 4 = strongly agree). The average score of the six items was used as the indicator of the students' perceptions of mainland China. Higher scores represented a more positive perception held by the students.

- The economy of mainland China will maintain its rapid development.
- I am optimistic about the political development of mainland China.
- I am optimistic about the social development of mainland China.
- The quality of life in mainland China is good.

- I would like Hong Kong to strengthen its ties with mainland China.
- I value the long history and cultural heritage of mainland China.

*Other-Group Orientation Scale (OGOS; Phinney, 1992)*

The OGS was designed to measure an individual's orientation towards other cultural groups in general. In the present study, items of the OGS (listed below) were adapted to measure the students' attitudes towards people from mainland China. In the adapted items, people from mainland China were referred to as the target group. The students responded to the six items on a four-point rating scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). A higher score on the OGOS reflected a more positive attitude towards people from mainland China.

- I like meeting and getting to know people from mainland China.
- I sometimes feel it would be better if Hong Kong people and people from mainland China do not try to mix together.
- I often spend time with people from mainland China.
- I do not try to become friends with people from mainland China.
- I am involved in activities with people from mainland China.
- I enjoy being around people from mainland China.

*Social Distance Scale (Wu, 2016)*

Five items of the social distance scale excerpted from the Hong Kong Panel Study of Social Dynamics questionnaire (HKPSSD-Wave 3; Wu, 2016) were adopted to further measure the students' perceived social distance from people from mainland China. The respondents were asked to indicate their acceptance of different degrees of contact with people from mainland China (e.g., "work together", "live in the same community", and "invite him/her to visit your family") on a four-point rating scale. A higher score suggested a lower degree of social distance and a more positive attitude towards people from mainland China. The six items are listed below.

- I am willing to work together with people from mainland China.
- I am willing to live in the same community with people from mainland China.

- I am willing to live next door to people from mainland China.
- I am willing to invite people from mainland China to my home.
- I am willing to see my child(ren)/relative(s) in a romantic relationship with people from mainland China.

### National Identity

First, four items adapted from existing questionnaires were used to assess the students' national identity. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they would agree with statements that they are 1) a Hong Kong citizen, 2) a Chinese citizen, 3) a citizen of the PRC, and 4) a member of the Chinese race, on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 4 = neutral, 7 = strongly agree).

Second, four items from the People's Ethnic Identity Questionnaire (Public Opinion Programme, HKU, 2017) were used to assess the students' self-perceived strength from, and importance in, being 1) a Hong Kong citizen, 2) a Chinese citizen, 3) a citizen of the PRC, and 4) a member of the Chinese race, on a scale of 0-10 with 10 indicating extremely strong (for strength) and extremely important (for importance), and 0 indicating extremely weak (for strength) and not important at all (for importance). These items have been used to measure the identity of Hong Kong people in previous studies and have helped to accumulate a large amount of comparable quantitative data.

Third, six items selected from the Student National Identity Survey (Hong Kong Policy Research Institute, 2016) were used to further understand the participants' identification with China. The students rated the following items on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 3 = uncertain, 5 = strongly agree).

- I am willing to contribute to the People's Republic of China.
- I have a responsibility to build a brighter future for the People's Republic of China.
- I am concerned about the domestic issues and current news of the People's Republic of China.
- I have good knowledge of the People's Republic of China.
- My life has been greatly influenced by Chinese culture and philosophy.
- I appreciate Chinese culture and traditional arts.

### Factors at the Student Level

A series of items was constructed by the research team to measure factors at the student level that may affect students' learning gains from short-term study-in-China programmes. These included students' demographic characteristics, prior experience in mainland China, previous experience participating in other study abroad programmes, self-perceived academic performance, and their attitudes towards, and expectations of, the programme.

First, student demographic information including age, year of study, gender, and parents' highest education level were collected. Second, the students' prior experience in mainland China was measured by asking them to report the number of years that they had lived in mainland China (from never to five years and longer). Additionally, four items were used to collect information on the students' previous experience participating in different types of study abroad programmes. The students were asked to report the number of times that they had participated in 1) short-term study in a mainland China programme, 2) a short-term overseas programme (not in mainland China), 3) a long-term learning programme in mainland China, and 4) a long-term overseas learning programme (not in mainland China) by selecting a number ranging from 0 to 10 or more. Third, self-perceived academic performance was measured by an item that asked the students to indicate their level of satisfaction with their present academic performance on a five-point rating scale (1 = very unsatisfied, 3 = neutral, and 5 = very satisfied). Fourth, the students' expectations of, and attitudes towards, the programmes were measured by a total of six items on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The first item measured the students' expectations of the impact of the programme on their intercultural competence development. The other five items (listed below) assessed different motivations that the students had for participating in a short-term study-in-China programme.

- I believe this programme will help improve my intercultural competence.
- I take this programme because I am very interested in knowing more about mainland China.
- I take this programme because my parents asked me to do so.
- I take this programme because my friend(s) recommended me to do so.
- I take this programme because the tuition fee was waived.

### Factors at the Programme Level

Factors at the programme level, including number of cultural interactions, frequency of guided student reflection, and programme staff characteristics, were measured using items developed by the research team, as described below.

First, two items asked the students to report 1) the frequency that they were guided to engage in reflective activities by programme teachers/tutors/coordinators, and 2) the frequency of their interactions with non-local students, on a five-point rating scale (1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, and 5 = always).

Second, nine items adapted from a subjective outcome evaluation form previously used in SLPs were used to measure the students' perceptions of programme quality, staff characteristics, and peer characteristics. The students were asked to rate their perceptions of the programme, the staff, and their peers on a five-point Likert scale. The form has shown good reliability and validity in previous studies (Office of Service Learning, 2014). The students' perceived quality of the programme, staff, and peers were calculated based on the related items and used as predictors of the students' learning gains. Specifically, the following items were used to measure the students' perceptions of programme quality:

- The objectives of the programme are clear.
- The design of the programme is good.
- Different programme components were carefully arranged.
- Inquiries about the programme were handled efficiently.
- The implementation of the programme was smooth.
- I have been well informed of activity arrangements during the programme.

Items measuring the students' perceptions of teacher quality include the following:

- The programme teachers/tutors/coordinators prepared me appropriately for the programme.
- I could feel the enthusiasm and passion from my teachers/tutors/coordinators.

Moreover, one item measured the students' perceptions of peer quality:

- My teammates in the programme were generally motivated and supportive.

Items measuring factors at the programme level were administered at the post-test phase only (i.e., when the students had completed their study on the programmes).

### **2.4.3 Data Analysis**

First, descriptive statistics of the participants' performance in the three major domains—intercultural competence, perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China, and national identity—were calculated and reported.

Second, to address the first objective of the current project—to investigate the impact of short-term study-in-China programmes on the development of Hong Kong local university students in terms of their intercultural competence, perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China, and national identity—paired-samples t-tests were conducted to compare the students' scores at the pre-test (before the programmes) and post-test (after the programmes) phases for indicators of the three major areas above.

Third, a series of multiple hierarchical regression analyses was performed to address the second objective—the effects of factors at the student level on the impact of short-term study-in-China programmes in terms of intercultural competence, perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China, and national identity. Specifically, the differences in the students' scores between the pre-test and post-test phases for the above three areas were calculated and served as the dependent variables. The independent variables were 1) the students' demographic characteristics including gender, year of study, and previous experience living in mainland China (entered at Block 1); and 2) other individual factors including perceived academic performance, prior experience joining short-term and long-term study abroad and study-in-China programmes, and their expectations of the programme (entered at Block 2).



Fourth, another series of multiple regression analyses was conducted to address the third objective regarding the effects of factors at the programme level on the impact of short-term study-in-China programmes on the students' development. The dependent variables were again the differences in the students' score in the three major areas. The independent variables—namely, programme mode (i.e., STP, CTP, SLP), frequency of guided reflective activities in the programme, number of cultural interactions, perceived programme implementation quality, teaching staff quality, and peer characteristics—were inputted to Block 1.

## **2.5 The Qualitative Study**

### **2.5.1 Participants and Procedure**

Qualitative approaches were adopted to further explore how the implementation of different programmes, the processes of study-in-China experiences, and various individual and programme factors may contribute to the participants' development in intercultural competence, perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China, and national identity.

First, in order to understand the students' direct experiences, their perceptions of the programme's impact on their development, and factors that could bolster or hamper their effective learning, in-depth individual interviews were conducted with the student participants immediately after the completion of the programmes. Second, subject teachers or programme coordinators were invited to share their viewpoints and perceptions of the programme, their personal experiences of leading that particular or similar programmes, details about the programme design and implementation, the changes they observed in the students, perceived facilitators of, and barriers to, effective programme implementation, and areas that demand improvement.

#### Student Participants

All the study participants ( $N = 380$ ) in the quantitative phase of the present project were invited to participate in an in-depth interview once they had completed the post-test questionnaire. Other methods used to recruit interview participants included 1) follow-up emails, 2) phone calls and/or WhatsApp messages by student assistants, and 3) subject teachers' personal contacts. A total of 42 students were successfully recruited and participated in the individual interviews after giving their written consent. The interviewees (21 male students and 21 female students with their year of study ranging from Year 2 to Year 4) came from six out of the eight UGC-funded universities in Hong Kong and participated in 17 study-in-China programmes, including five STPs, eight CTPs, and four SLPs. These programmes were held in different cities of mainland China in 2019. Basic information about the interviewees' participating programmes is listed in Table 3.

Before the interviews started, the interviewees were invited to fill in an online form to indicate basic information (e.g., year of study, the participating study-in-China programme, and the

affiliated university), and preferred interview dates and venues. All the interviews were conducted in Chinese at the interviewees' home universities (except one, which was conducted online as the interviewee was not in Hong Kong) by two trained research assistants, and the whole session was audio-recorded after securing the consent of the participants.

**Table 3** Basic information about the interviewees' study-in-China programmes ( $N = 42$ )

Programme code	Place	Duration	No. of interviewees	Programme code	Place	Duration	No. of interviewees
CTP01	Guangdong	10 days	1	STP03	Shanghai	4 weeks	2
CTP02	Yunnan	2 weeks	3	STP04	Shaanxi	2 weeks	2
CTP03	Beijing	2 weeks	3	STP05	Shanghai	4 weeks	4
CTP04	Liaoning	2 weeks	2	STP06	Zhejiang	2 weeks	1
CTP05	Chongqing	2 weeks	1	SLP04	Sichuan	10 days	4
CTP08	Heilongjiang	10 days	2	SLP05	Zhejiang	10 days	4
CTP09	Gansu	2 weeks	1	SLP07	Shaanxi	2 weeks	4
CTP10	Gansu	2 weeks	2	SLP08	Yunnan	10 days	1
STP02	Beijing	3-4 weeks	5				

All interview sessions were conducted according to the student individual interview protocol developed by the research team (see Appendix 3). The students' views about their learning experiences and gains from the short-term study-in-China programmes were elicited using five major categories of questions: 1) the students' perceptions of their study-in-China experience in this programme; (2) perceived programme impact (with particular respect to intercultural competence, perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China, and national identity); (3) the most useful aspects of the programme; (4) areas needing improvements and suggestions; and (5) overall evaluation of the programme implementation, the staff, and the programme's effectiveness.

## Teacher Participants

Individual interviews were also conducted with 16 subject teachers/programme coordinators who had led 15 short-term study-in-China programmes in the 2018/19 academic year, including three STPs, five CTPs, and seven SLPs. Basic information about the 15 programmes is summarized in Table 4. After obtaining consent from the teacher participants, individual interviews were arranged in accordance with the teachers' proposed time slots. The majority of the interviews were conducted at the teachers' home universities ( $N = 11$ ) while five interviews were conducted online as the teachers were not in Hong Kong. The interviews were conducted in Chinese by two trained research assistants based on the teacher interview protocol developed by the research team (see Appendix 4), and the whole session, lasting from one hour to one-and-a-half hours, was audio-recorded after securing the participants' consent.

The teachers' views and experiences concerning their leading the programmes were elicited using four major categories of questions: 1) the teachers' prior experience of leading this programme or other study abroad programmes, 2) the teachers' observations of the changes in the students during the programme, 3) the teachers' perceptions of the most useful aspects of the programme, and 4) the teachers' perceptions of areas needing improvement.

**Table 4** Information about the programmes the teachers participated in ( $N = 16$ )

Programme code	Place	Duration	No. of interviewees	Programme code	Place	Duration	No. of interviewees
CTP01	Guangdong	10 days	2	SLP02	Guangdong	7 days	1
CTP02	Yunnan	2 weeks	1	SLP04	Sichuan	10 days	1
CTP04	Liaoning	2 weeks	1	SLP05	Zhejiang	10 days	1
CTP09	Gansu	2 weeks	1	SLP06	Yunnan	10 days	1
CTP10	Gansu	2 weeks	1	SLP07	Shaanxi	2 weeks	1
STP03	Shanghai	4 weeks	1	SLP08	Yunnan	10 days	1
STP04	Shaanxi	2 weeks	1				
STP06	Zhejiang	2 weeks	1				
SLP01	Shaanxi	7 days	1				

### **2.5.2 Data Analysis**

A total of 42 student interview audio recordings and 16 teacher interview audio recordings were transcribed into full texts for thematic analysis. An experienced researcher coded and categorized the transcripts into different themes that emerged from the data.

## Chapter 3. Findings of the Quantitative Study

### 3.1 The Impact of Short-Term Study-in-China Programmes on the Students' Development: Paired Samples T-Tests

Quantitative results regarding the impact of short-term study-in-China programmes on the students' development are reported in different sections below in terms of the three major outcome areas: 1) intercultural competence, 2) perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China, and 3) national identity. In each section, paired samples t-tests were first conducted on the whole group of students, that is, the participants in all three modes of programmes, and then on the three groups of students, that is, the STP participants, the CTP participants, and the SLP participants, respectively. As it was hypothesized that the students' performances in the above areas would be promoted after participating in the programmes—that is, the post-test scores were hypothesized to be higher than the pre-test scores—one-tailed hypothesis tests with a significance level of .10 were carried out.

#### 3.1.1 Intercultural Competence

##### 3.1.1.1 The study-in-China programmes as a whole

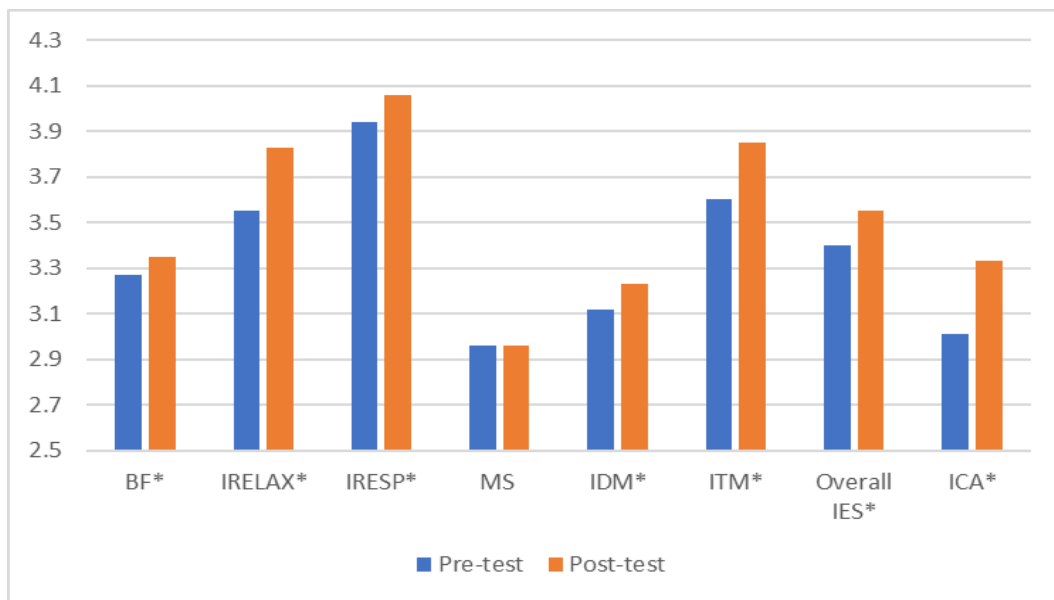
For the whole sample, the results of paired samples t-tests that compared the participants' scores on the intercultural effectiveness scale and the intercultural communication awareness scale before and after the programme are summarized in Table 5 and Figure 1. It was found that the students' post-test scores on BF ( $t = -2.21$ ;  $p = .03$ ), IRELAX ( $t = -9.40$ ;  $p = .00$ ), IRESP ( $t = -4.36$ ;  $p = .00$ ), IDM ( $t = -3.00$ ;  $p = .00$ ), ITM ( $t = -7.31$ ;  $p = .00$ ), overall IES ( $t = -6.96$ ;  $p = .00$ ), and ICA ( $t = -10.17$ ;  $p = .00$ ) were all significantly higher than their pre-test scores, suggesting that the students' intercultural effectiveness and intercultural communication were improved after participating in the short-term study-in-China programmes.

Specifically, the higher scores at post-test on the five IES subscales suggested that after participating in the short-term study-in-China programmes, the students behaved more appropriately, felt more comfortable when conversing, showed more respect to their culturally different counterparts while maintaining both their own identity, and engaged more effectively in exchanges of ideas during the interaction.

**Table 5** Paired samples t-tests on all the participants' intercultural competence scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 380$ )

Scales	Range	Pre-test		Post-test		T-tests		Result of comparison
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	
IES								
BF	1-5	3.27	0.56	3.35	0.64	-2.21	.03	Post > Pre
IRELAX	1-5	3.55	0.51	3.83	0.45	-9.40	.00	Post > Pre
IRESP	1-5	3.94	0.50	4.06	0.49	-4.36	.00	Post > Pre
MS	1-5	2.96	0.69	2.96	0.78	-0.30	.98	
IDM	1-5	3.12	0.55	3.23	0.61	-3.00	.00	Post > Pre
ITM	1-5	3.60	0.55	3.85	0.52	-7.31	.00	Post > Pre
Overall IES	1-5	3.40	0.38	3.55	0.39	-6.96	.00	Post > Pre
ICA	1-5	3.01	0.56	3.33	0.56	-10.17	.00	Post > Pre

*Note.* BF = behavioural flexibility; IRELAX = interaction relaxation; IRESP = interactant respect; MS = message skills; IDM = identity maintenance; ITM = interaction management; IES = intercultural effectiveness scale; ICA = intercultural communication awareness.



*Note.* \* significant difference between the two means.

**Figure 1** Means of all the participants' intercultural competence scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 380$ )

### 3.1.1.2 Summer term programmes

With specific reference to STPs, paired samples t-tests showed that the participants scored higher at post-test than at pre-test on overall IES ( $t = -4.09; p = .00$ ) and ICA ( $t = -5.38; p = .00$ ), as well as on three IES subscales, namely interaction relaxation ( $t = -6.23; p = .00$ ), interaction management ( $t = -4.55; p = .00$ ), and identity maintenance ( $t = -1.99; p = .05$ ). This finding suggests that the students who participated in STPs showed improvements in their overall intercultural effectiveness and intercultural communication awareness (Table 6 and Figure 2).

### 3.1.1.3 Cultural tour programmes

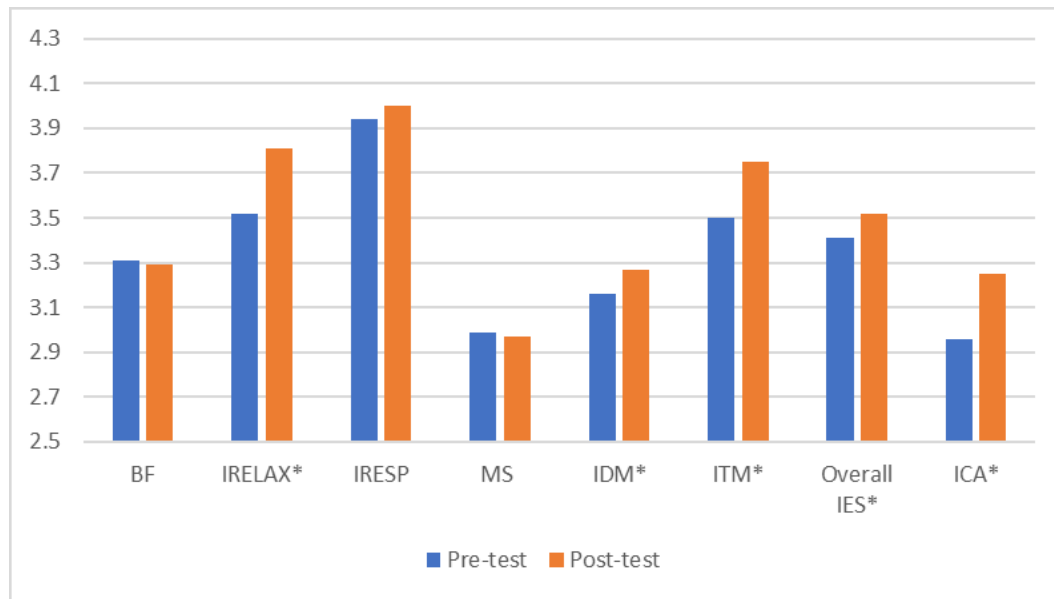
The results of paired samples t-tests focusing on the CTP participants (Table 7, Figure 3) revealed that the students also had higher scores on overall IES ( $t = -1.78; p = .08$ ) and ICA ( $t = -2.32; p = .03$ ) at post-test than at pre-test, indicating an increased level of intercultural effectiveness and sensitivity. The students also scored higher on two IES subscales, namely interaction relaxation ( $t = -1.96; p = .06$ ) and interaction management ( $t = -2.30; p = .03$ ), at post-test than at pre-test.

**Table 6** Paired samples t-tests on the STP participants' intercultural competence scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 112$ )

Scales	Range	Pre-test		Post-test		T-tests		Result of comparison
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>	
IES								
BF	1-5	3.31	0.55	3.29	0.62	0.31	.76	
IRELAX	1-5	3.52	0.50	3.81	0.41	-6.23	.00	Post > Pre
IRESP	1-5	3.94	0.50	4.00	0.44	-1.24	.22	
MS	1-5	2.99	0.66	2.97	0.72	0.28	.78	
IDM	1-5	3.16	0.51	3.27	0.56	-1.99	.05	Post > Pre
ITM	1-5	3.50	0.53	3.75	0.51	-4.55	.00	Post > Pre
Overall IES	1-5	3.41	0.35	3.52	0.35	-4.09	.00	Post > Pre
ICA	1-5	2.96	0.57	3.25	0.53	-5.38	.00	Post > Pre

*Note.* BF = behavioural flexibility; IRELAX = interaction relaxation; IRESP = interactant respect; MS = message skills; IDM = identity maintenance; ITM = interaction management; IES = intercultural effectiveness scale; ICA = intercultural communication awareness.





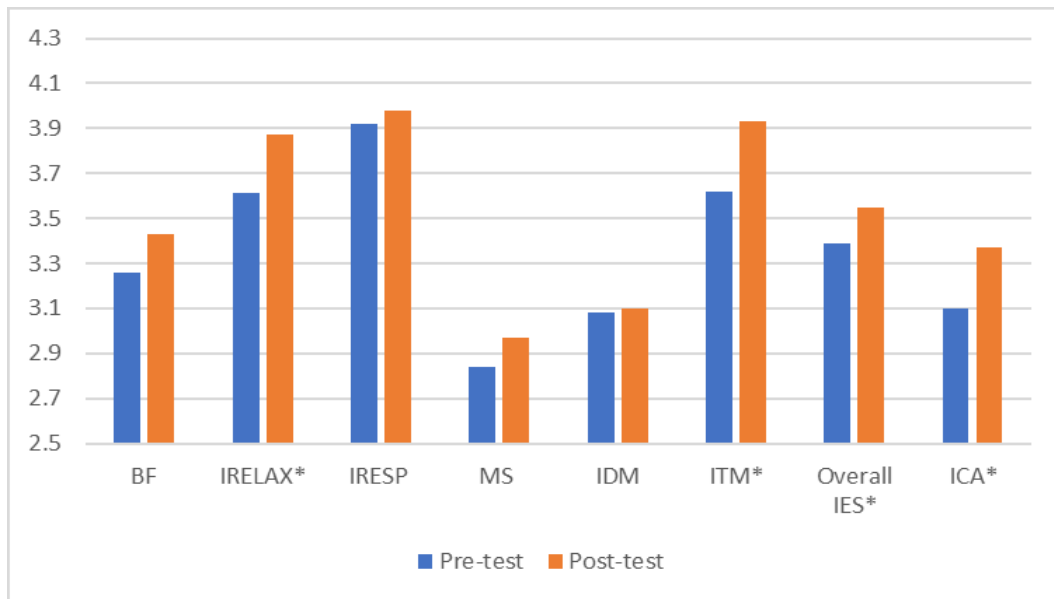
Note. \* significant difference between the two means.

**Figure 2** Means of the STP participants' intercultural competence scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 112$ )

**Table 7** Paired samples t-tests on the CTP participants' intercultural competence scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 41$ )

Scales	Range	Pre-test		Post-test		T-tests		Result of comparison	
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>		
IES									
BF	1-5	3.26	0.57	3.43	0.69	-1.36	.18		
IRELAX	1-5	3.61	0.63	3.87	0.51	-1.96	<b>.06</b>	Post > Pre	
IRESP	1-5	3.92	0.55	3.98	0.61	-0.61	.55		
MS	1-5	2.84	0.74	2.97	0.82	-0.83	.41		
IDM	1-5	3.08	0.62	3.10	0.64	-0.12	.91		
ITM	1-5	3.62	0.73	3.93	0.58	-2.30	<b>.03</b>	Post > Pre	
Overall IES	1-5	3.39	0.42	3.55	0.38	-1.78	<b>.08</b>	Post > Pre	
ICA	1-5	3.10	0.59	3.37	0.53	-2.32	<b>.03</b>	Post > Pre	

Note. BF = behavioural flexibility; IRELAX = interaction relaxation; IRESP = interactant respect; MS = message skills; IDM = identity maintenance; ITM = interaction management; IES = intercultural effectiveness scale; ICA = intercultural communication awareness.



Note. \* significant difference between the two means.

**Figure 3** Means of the CTP participants' intercultural competence scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 41$ )

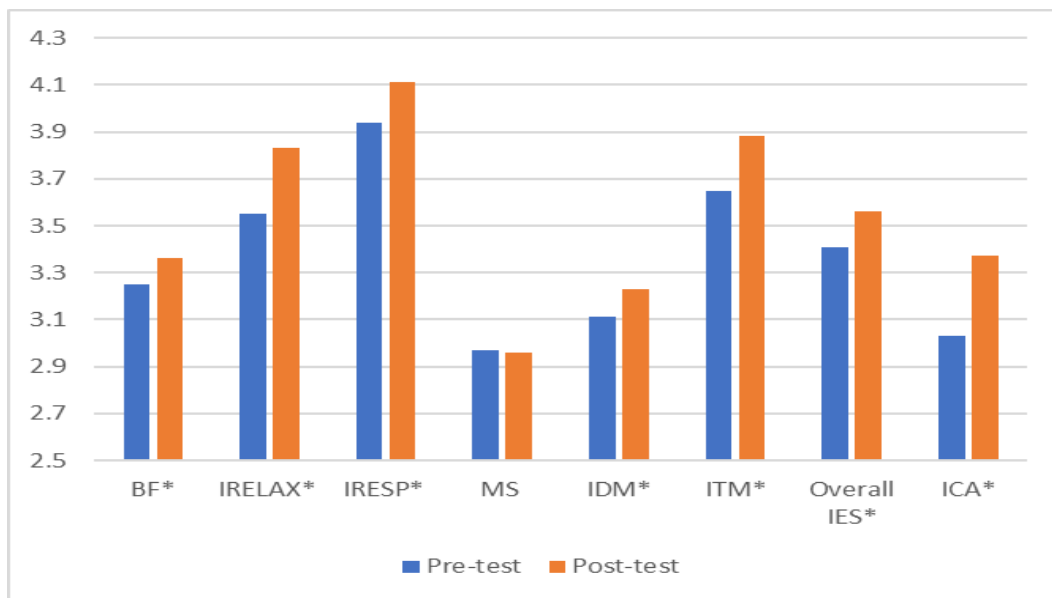
#### 3.1.1.4 Service learning programmes

Similar to the results for the whole sample, paired samples t-tests on the SLP participants' pre- and post-test scores on the intercultural competence scales revealed that, except for message skills, the participants performed better after participating in the programmes than before on all the indicators of intercultural competence (BF:  $t = -2.25$ ;  $p = .03$ ; IRELAX:  $t = -7.41$ ;  $p = .00$ ; IRESP:  $t = -4.42$ ;  $p = .00$ ; IDM:  $t = -2.60$ ;  $p = .01$ ; ITM:  $t = -5.38$ ;  $p = .00$ ; overall IES:  $t = -5.66$ ;  $p = .00$ ; ICA:  $t = -8.50$ ;  $p = .00$ ). These findings suggest that the SLP participants showed significant improvements in intercultural effectiveness and intercultural sensitivity after attending the programmes (Table 8, Figure 4).

**Table 8** Paired samples t-tests on the SLP participants' intercultural competence scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 227$ )

Scales	Range	Pre-test		Post-test		T-tests		Result of comparison
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	
<b>IES</b>								
BF	1-5	3.25	0.57	3.36	0.64	-2.25	.03	Post > Pre
IRELAX	1-5	3.55	0.50	3.83	0.46	-7.41	.00	Post > Pre
IRESP	1-5	3.94	0.50	4.11	0.48	-4.42	.00	Post > Pre
MS	1-5	2.97	0.69	2.96	0.81	0.20	.84	
IDM	1-5	3.11	0.56	3.23	0.62	-2.60	.01	Post > Pre
ITM	1-5	3.65	0.52	3.88	0.51	-5.38	.00	Post > Pre
Overall IES	1-5	3.41	0.39	3.56	0.40	-5.66	.00	Post > Pre
<b>ICA</b>	1-5	3.03	0.56	3.37	0.57	-8.50	.00	Post > Pre

*Note.* BF = behavioural flexibility; IRELAX = interaction relaxation; IRESP = interactant respect; MS = message skills; IDM = identity maintenance; ITM = interaction management; IES = intercultural effectiveness scale; ICA = intercultural communication awareness.



*Note.* \* significant difference between the two means.

**Figure 4** Means of the SLP participants' intercultural competence scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 227$ )

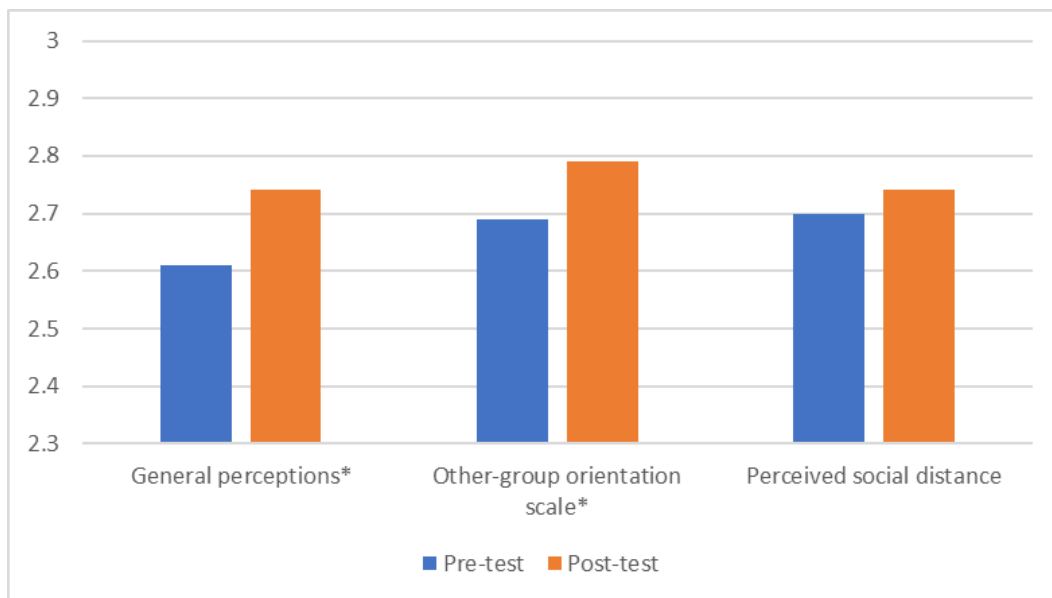
### 3.1.2 Perceptions and Attitudes towards Mainland China

#### 3.1.2.1 The study-in-China programmes as a whole

For the whole sample, paired samples t-tests (Table 9, Figure 5) showed that the participants had significantly higher scores on their general perceptions of mainland China ( $t = -5.53$ ;  $p = .00$ ) and attitudes towards people from mainland China ( $t = -3.79$ ;  $p = .00$ ) at post-test than at pre-test. There were no significant changes in the students' perceived social distance from people from mainland China before and after they participated in the short-term study-in-China programmes.

**Table 9** Paired samples t-tests on all the participants' scores for perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China at pre- and post-test ( $N = 380$ )

Scales	Range	Pre-test		Post-test		T-tests		Result of comparison
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	
General perceptions	1-4	2.61	0.50	2.74	0.51	-5.53	.00	Post > Pre
Other-group orientation scale	1-4	2.69	0.49	2.79	0.52	-3.79	.00	Post > Pre
Perceived social distance	1-4	2.70	0.53	2.74	0.55	-1.50	.14	



*Note.* \* significant difference between the two means.

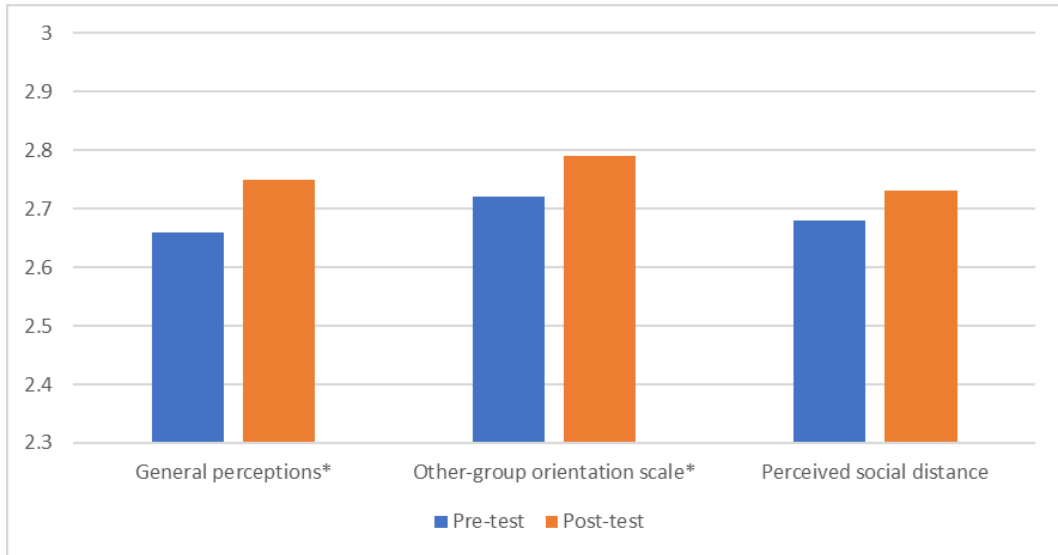
**Figure 5** Means of all the participants' scores for perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China at pre- and post-test ( $N = 380$ )

### 3.1.2.2 Different modes of programmes

Further examination of participants' changes in different programmes revealed that the students who participated in STPs and SLPs both scored higher at post-test than at pre-test for their perceptions of mainland China (STP:  $t = -2.91$ ;  $p = .00$ ; SLP:  $t = -4.96$ ;  $p = .00$ ) and their attitudes towards its people (STP:  $t = -2.06$ ;  $p = .04$ ; SLP:  $t = -3.36$ ;  $p = .00$ ), while the scores of students who participated in CTPs did not show significant changes in the three indicators at post-test (Table 10, Figures 6-8). For all three groups, no significant pre- or post-test differences in perceived social distance were identified.

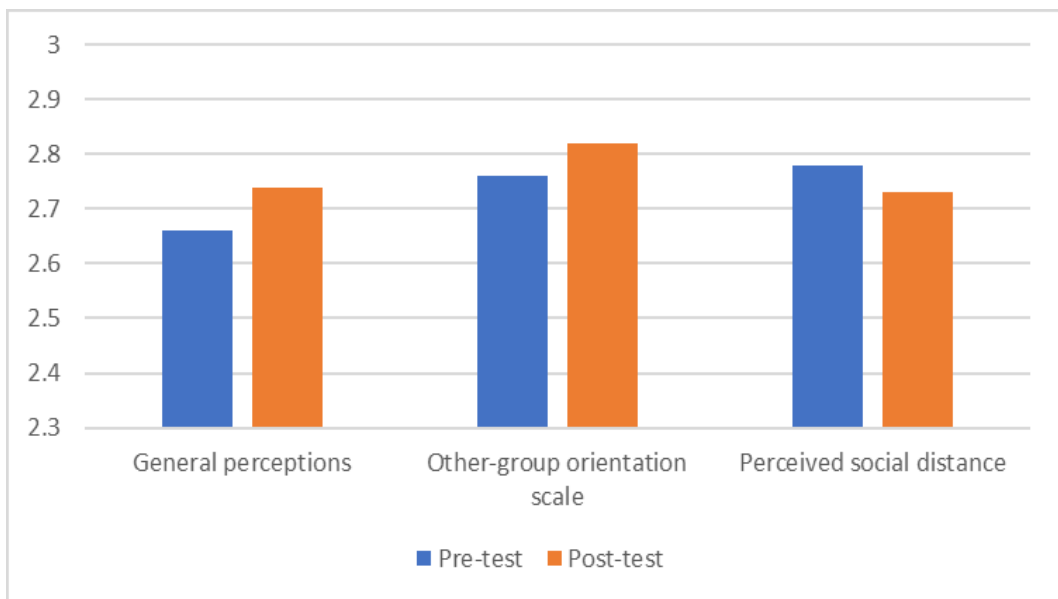
**Table 10** Paired samples t-tests on the participants' scores for perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China by programme type at pre- and post-test

Scales	Range	Pre-test		Post-test		T-tests		Result of comparison
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	
<b>Summer Term Programme</b>								
<i>(N = 112)</i>								
General perceptions	1-4	2.66	0.41	2.75	0.43	-2.91	.00	Post > Pre
Other-group orientation scale	1-4	2.72	0.40	2.79	0.45	-2.06	.04	Post > Pre
Perceived social distance	1-4	2.68	0.50	2.73	0.58	-1.19	.24	
<b>Cultural Tour Programme</b>								
<i>(N = 41)</i>								
General perceptions	1-4	2.66	0.61	2.74	0.56	-0.86	.40	
Other-group orientation scale	1-4	2.76	0.63	2.82	0.57	-0.60	.55	
Perceived social distance	1-4	2.78	0.68	2.73	0.58	0.43	.67	
<b>Service Learning Programme</b>								
<i>(N = 227)</i>								
General perceptions	1-4	2.57	0.51	2.72	0.53	-4.96	.00	Post > Pre
Other-group orientation scale	1-4	2.67	0.49	2.78	0.55	-3.36	.00	Post > Pre
Perceived social distance	1-4	2.70	0.52	2.75	0.53	-1.49	.14	

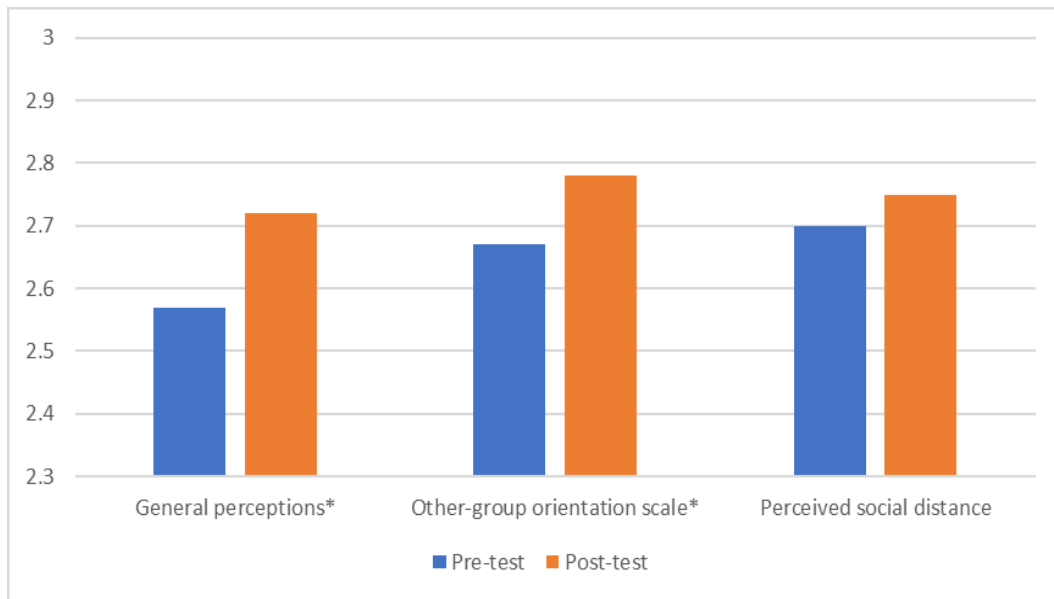


*Note.* \* significant difference between the two means.

**Figure 6** Means of the STP participants' scores for perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China at pre- and post-test ( $N = 112$ )



**Figure 7** Means of the CTP participants' scores for perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China at pre- and post-test ( $N = 41$ )



Note. \* significant difference between the two means.

**Figure 8** Means of the SLP participants' scores for perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China at pre- and post-test ( $N = 227$ )

### 3.1.3 National Identity

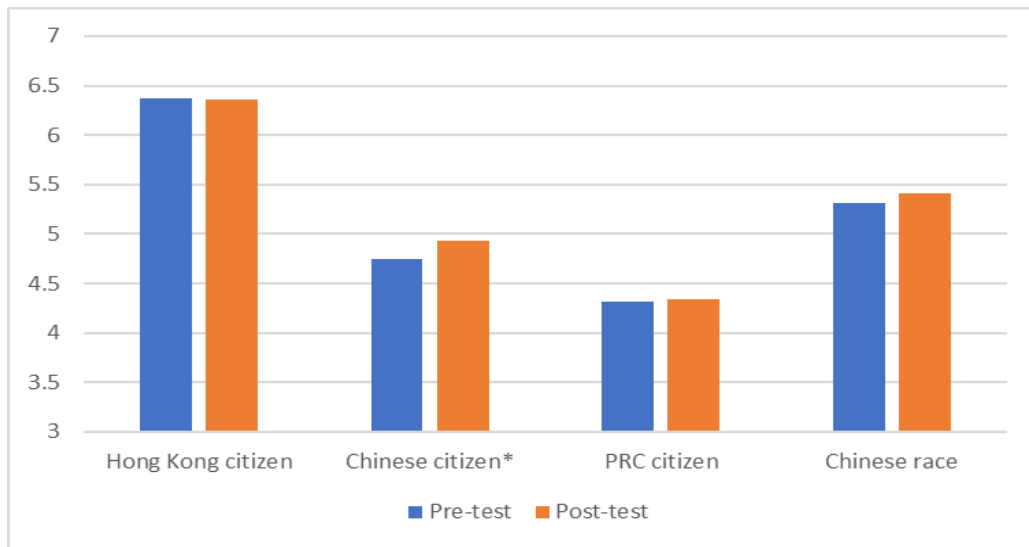
#### 3.1.3.1 The study-in-China programmes as a whole

Paired samples t-tests on the whole sample showed that the participants scored higher for their identity as a Chinese citizen ( $t = -2.79$ ;  $p = .00$ ) after participating in the programmes, while for other identities, there were no significant differences. In terms of the strength of different identities, the participants' identities as a Hong Kong citizen ( $t = -1.74$ ;  $p = .08$ ), a Chinese citizen ( $t = -4.14$ ;  $p = .00$ ), a citizen of the PRC ( $t = -1.87$ ;  $p = .06$ ), and a member of the Chinese race ( $t = -2.17$ ;  $p = .03$ ) all became stronger after the programmes. The students' perceived importance of their identity as a Chinese citizen ( $t = -2.39$ ;  $p = .02$ ) and as a member of the Chinese race ( $t = -2.20$ ;  $p = .03$ ) was also strengthened after participating in the programmes. Moreover, the students showed higher scores on their identification and recognition of China at post-test than at pre-test ( $t = -1.87$ ;  $p = .06$ ; Table 11, Figures 9-12).

**Table 11** Paired samples t-tests on all the participants' national identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 380$ )

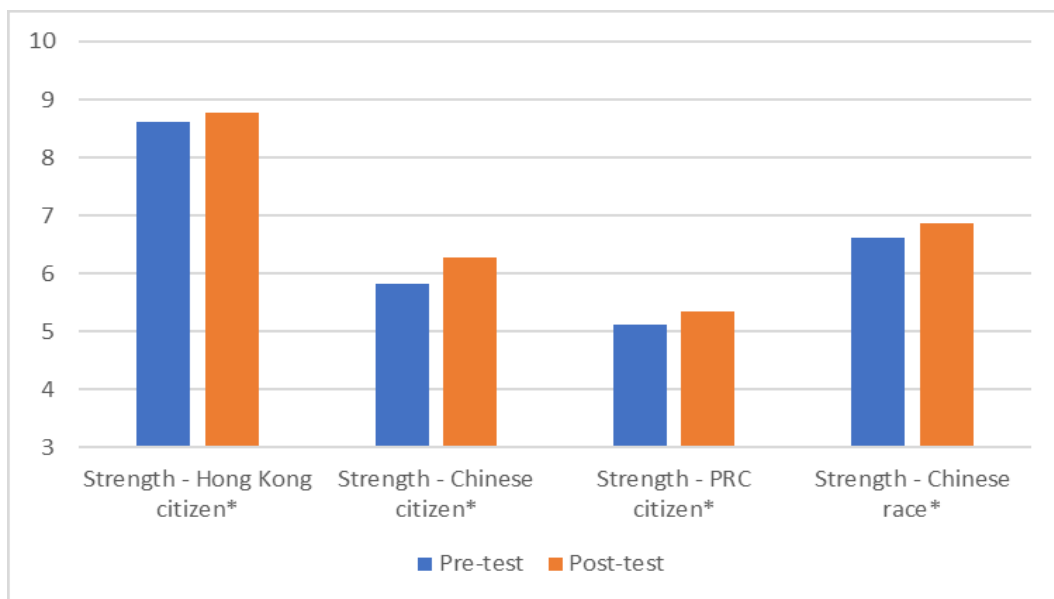
Scales	Range	Pre-test		Post-test		T-tests		Result of comparison
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>	
<b>Ethnic identity</b>								
I am a Hong Kong citizen.	1-7	6.37	0.95	6.36	0.96	0.11	.91	
I am a Chinese citizen.	1-7	4.74	1.58	4.93	1.56	-2.79	<b>.00</b>	Post > Pre
I am a citizen of the PRC.	1-7	4.32	1.69	4.34	1.71	-0.26	.80	
I am a member of the Chinese race.	1-7	5.31	1.34	5.41	1.34	-1.48	.14	
<b>Strength of identity</b>								
A Hong Kong citizen	0-10	8.62	1.80	8.77	1.65	-1.74	<b>.08</b>	Post > Pre
A Chinese citizen	0-10	5.83	2.60	6.28	2.53	-4.14	<b>.00</b>	Post > Pre
A citizen of the PRC	0-10	5.11	2.74	5.34	2.81	-1.87	<b>.06</b>	Post > Pre
A member of the Chinese race	0-10	6.61	2.43	6.86	2.41	-2.17	<b>.03</b>	Post > Pre
<b>Importance of identity</b>								
A Hong Kong citizen	0-10	8.79	1.77	8.89	1.60	-1.24	.22	
A Chinese citizen	0-10	5.98	2.69	6.26	2.69	-2.39	<b>.02</b>	Post > Pre
A citizen of the PRC	0-10	5.21	2.87	5.36	2.89	-1.27	.21	
A member of the Chinese race	0-10	6.51	2.44	6.75	2.44	-2.20	<b>.03</b>	Post > Pre
Identification and recognition of China	1-5	3.45	0.63	3.51	0.66	-1.87	<b>.06</b>	Post > Pre





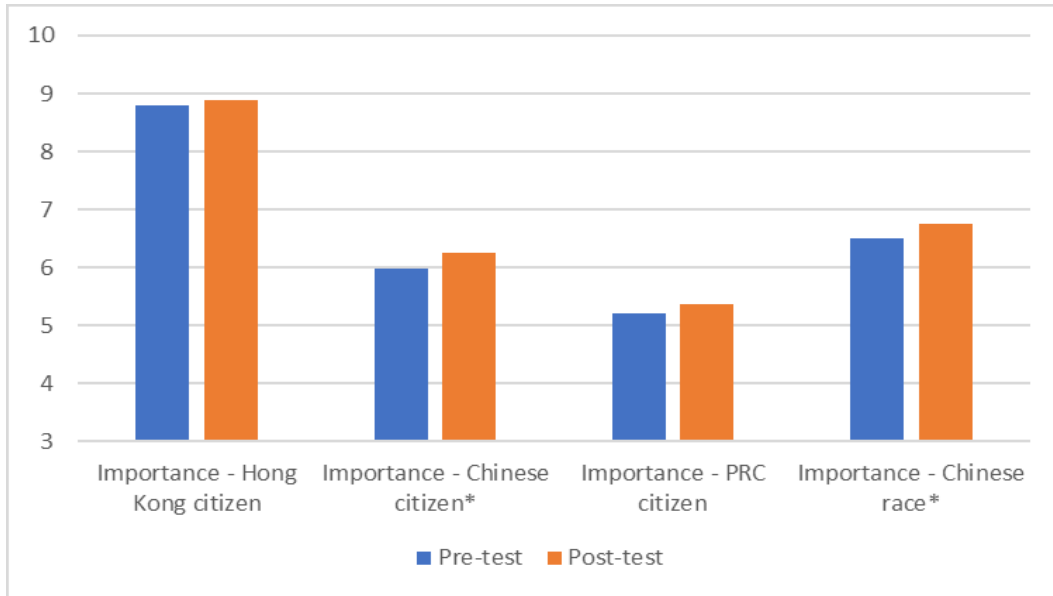
*Note.* \* significant difference between the two means.

**Figure 9** Means of all the participants' national identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 380$ )



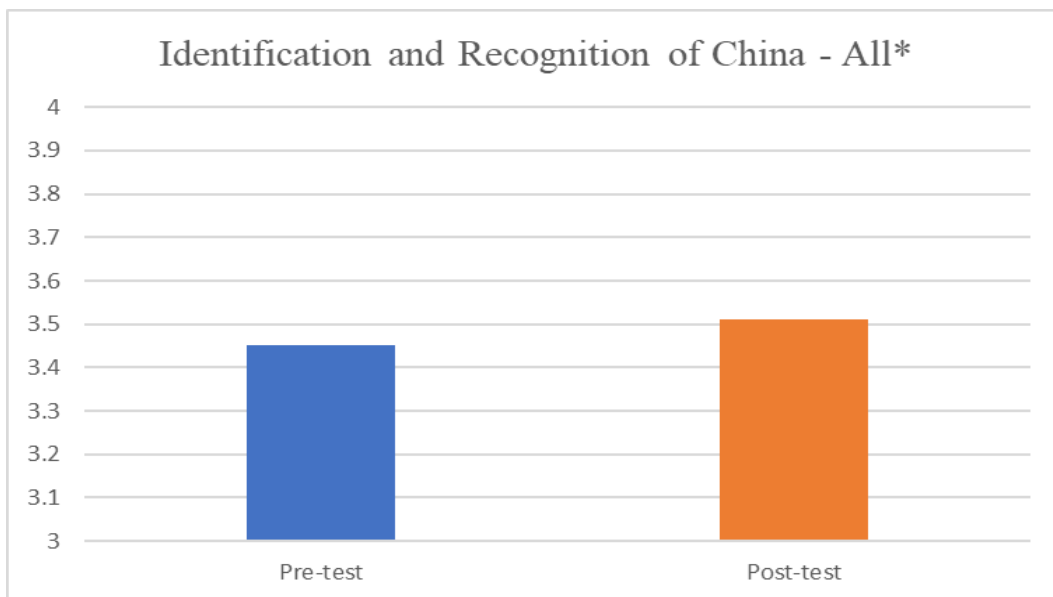
*Note.* \* significant difference between the two means.

**Figure 10** Means of all the participants' strength of identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 380$ )



*Note.* \* significant difference between the two means.

**Figure 11** Means of all the participants' importance of identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 380$ )



*Note.* \* significant difference between the two means.

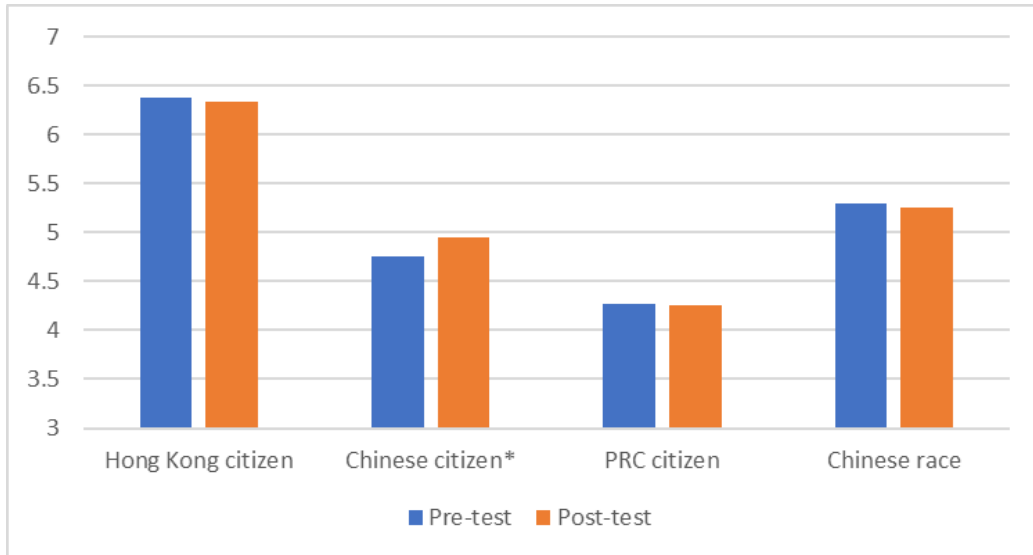
**Figure 12** Means of all the participants' identification and recognition of China scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 380$ )

### 3.1.3.2 Summer term programmes

For the sample of STP participants, paired-samples t-tests showed that the students' scores for their identity as a Chinese citizen ( $t = -1.66, p = .10$ ) and the perceived strength of their identity as a Chinese citizen ( $t = -2.49, p = .01$ ) were both strengthened after participating in the programmes. No significant pre- and post-test differences were identified for other indicators (Table 12, Figures 13-16).

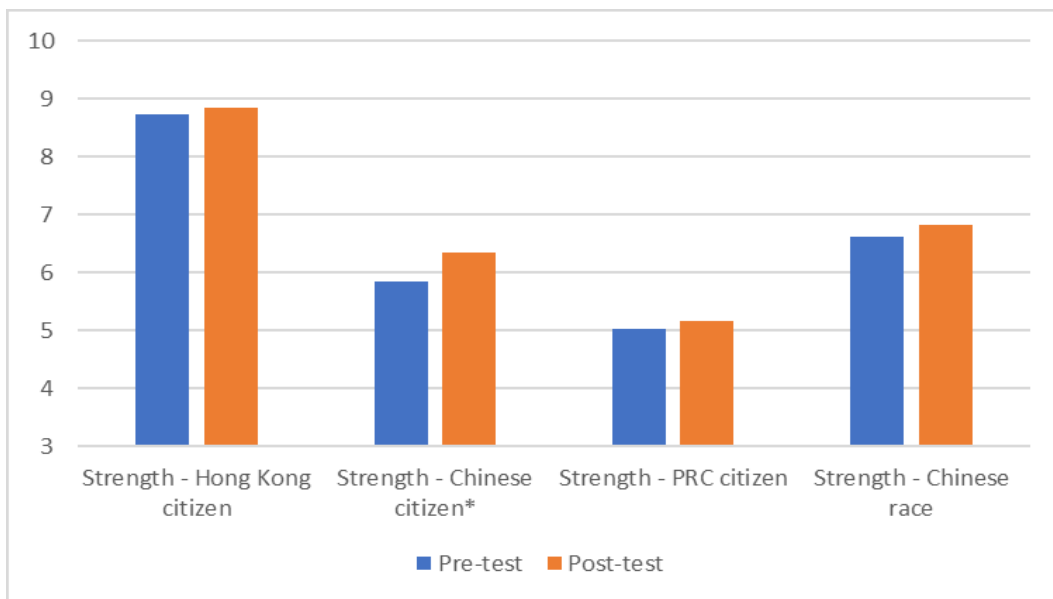
**Table 12** Paired samples t-tests on the STP participants' national identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 112$ )

Scales	Range	Pre-test		Post-test		T-tests		Result of comparison
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	
<b>Ethnic identity</b>								
I am a Hong Kong citizen.	1-7	6.38	0.99	6.34	0.96	0.69	.50	
I am a Chinese citizen.	1-7	4.75	1.47	4.95	1.43	-1.66	.10	Post > Pre
I am a citizen of the PRC.	1-7	4.27	1.62	4.26	1.70	0.08	.94	
I am a member of the Chinese race.	1-7	5.29	1.39	5.26	1.32	0.30	.76	
<b>Strength of identity</b>								
A Hong Kong citizen	0-10	8.74	1.83	8.84	1.77	-0.94	.35	
A Chinese citizen	0-10	5.85	2.51	6.35	2.30	-2.49	.01	Post > Pre
A citizen of the PRC	0-10	5.02	2.65	5.17	2.81	-0.77	.44	
A member of the Chinese race	0-10	6.61	2.35	6.83	2.25	-1.09	.28	
<b>Importance of identity</b>								
A Hong Kong citizen	0-10	8.88	1.78	8.87	1.74	0.09	.93	
A Chinese citizen	0-10	5.79	2.74	6.09	2.57	-1.40	.16	
A citizen of the PRC	0-10	4.96	2.86	5.18	2.81	-1.09	.28	
A member of the Chinese race	0-10	6.36	2.33	6.66	2.30	-1.46	.15	
Identification and recognition of China	1-5	3.45	0.58	3.46	0.59	-0.25	.80	



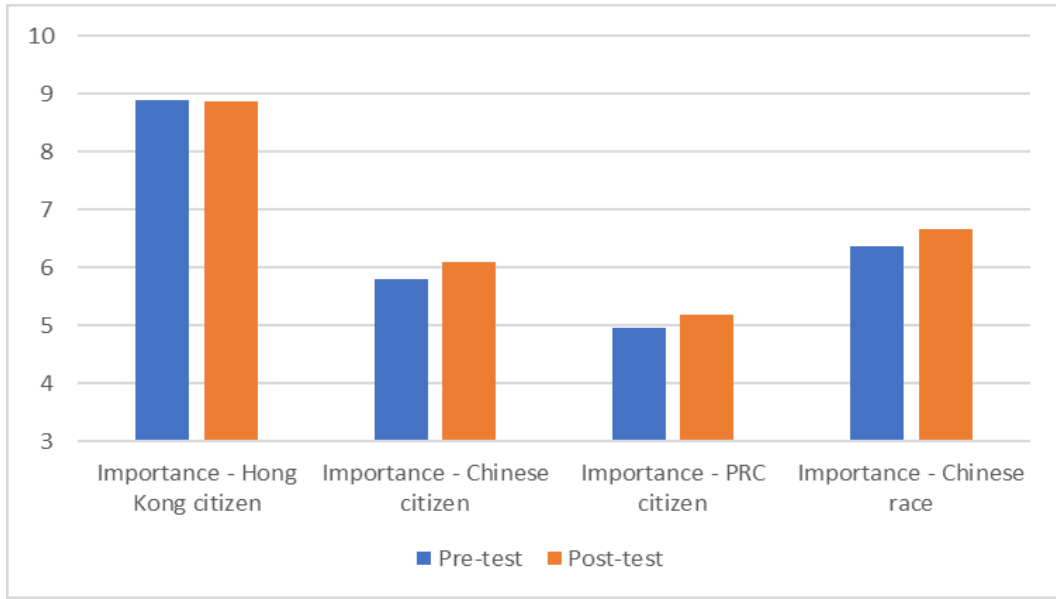
*Note.* \* significant difference between the two means.

**Figure 13** Means of the STP participants' national identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 112$ )

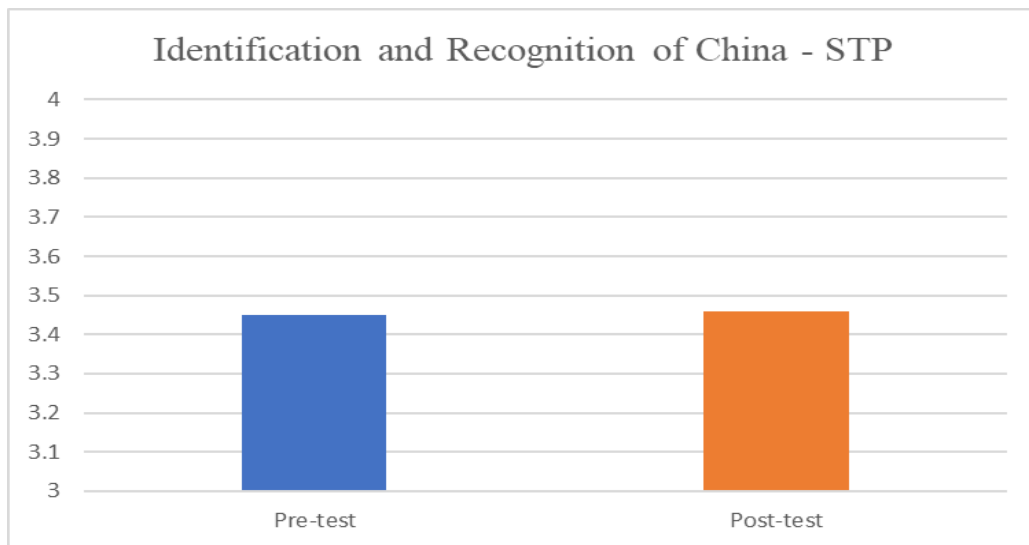


*Note.* \* significant difference between the two means.

**Figure 14** Means of the STP participants' strength of identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 112$ )



**Figure 15** Means of the STP participants' importance of identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 112$ )



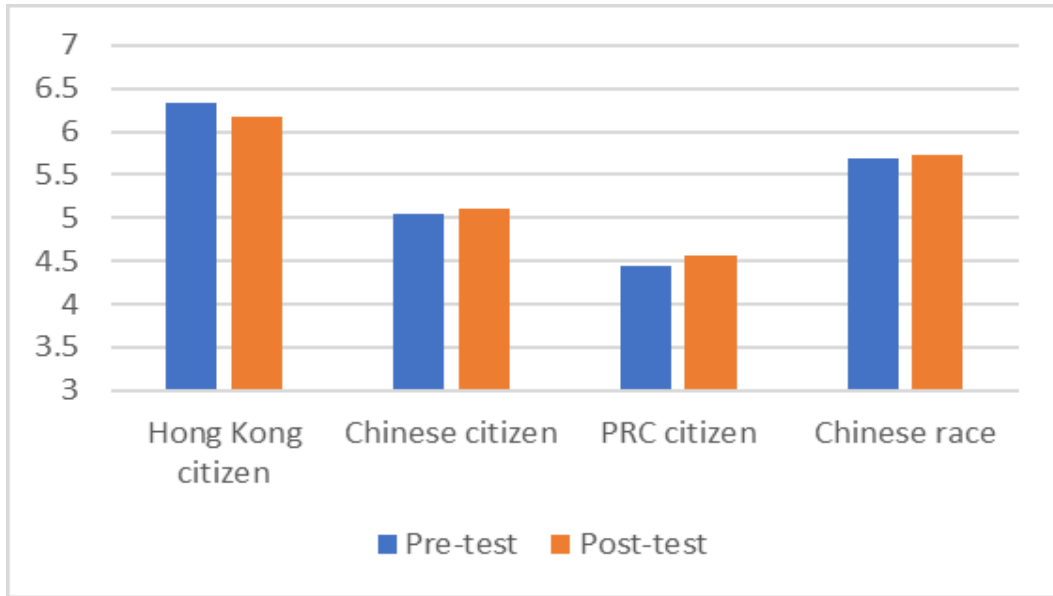
**Figure 16** Means of the STP participants' identification and recognition of China scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 112$ )

### 3.1.3.3 Cultural tour programmes

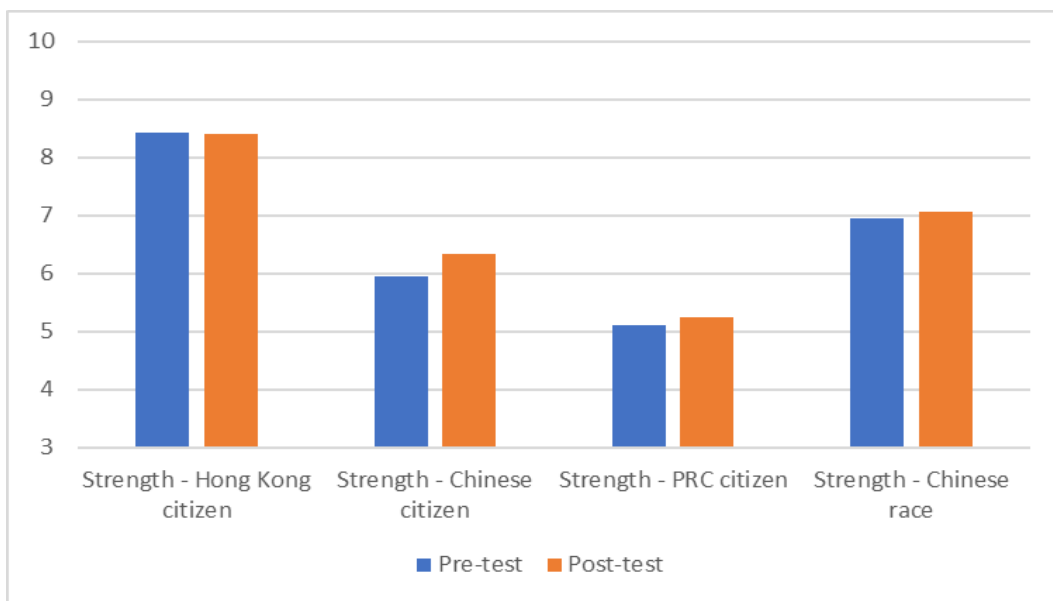
As shown in Table 13 and Figures 17-20, no significant difference in the CTP participants' national identity was found before and after they participated in the programmes.

**Table 13** Paired samples t-tests on the CTP participants' national identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 41$ )

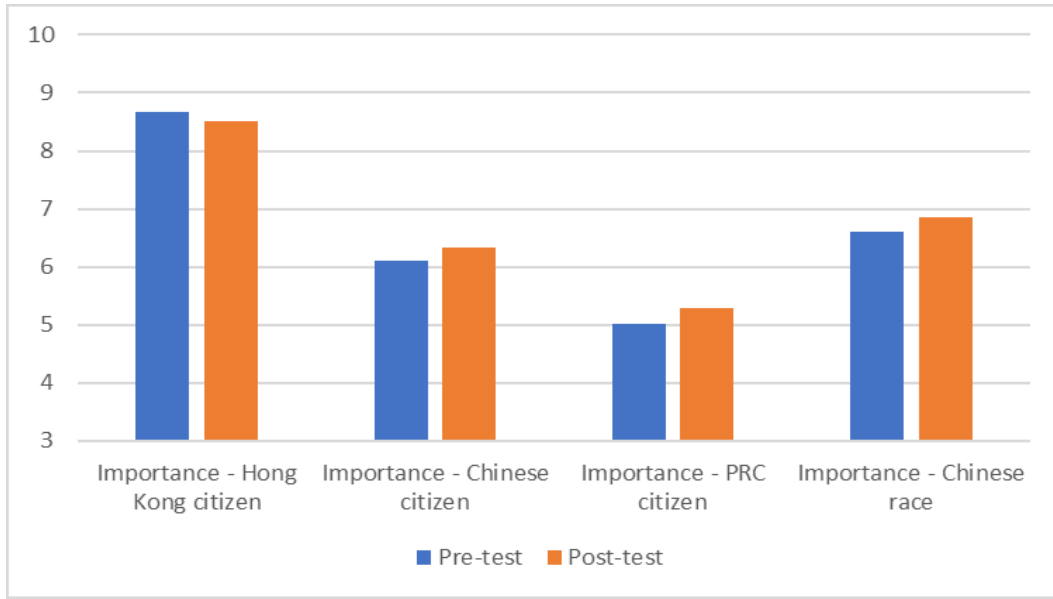
Scales	Range	Pre-test		Post-test		T-tests	
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
<b>Ethnic identity</b>							
I am a Hong Kong citizen.	1-7	6.34	0.85	6.17	1.40	0.71	.48
I am a Chinese citizen.	1-7	5.05	1.53	5.10	1.76	-0.19	.85
I am a citizen of the PRC.	1-7	4.44	1.95	4.56	2.00	-0.41	.68
I am a member of the Chinese race.	1-7	5.68	1.25	5.73	1.27	-0.26	.80
<b>Strength of identity</b>							
A Hong Kong citizen	0-10	8.42	1.58	8.41	1.79	0.00	1.00
A Chinese citizen	0-10	5.95	2.82	6.34	2.88	-0.96	.35
A citizen of the PRC	0-10	5.12	3.08	5.24	3.27	-0.23	.82
A member of the Chinese race	0-10	6.95	2.49	7.07	2.26	-0.35	.73
<b>Importance of identity</b>							
A Hong Kong citizen	0-10	8.66	1.92	8.51	1.65	0.44	.66
A Chinese citizen	0-10	6.10	2.74	6.34	3.02	-0.58	.57
A citizen of the PRC	0-10	5.02	3.19	5.29	3.20	-0.55	.59
A member of the Chinese race	0-10	6.61	2.76	6.85	2.21	-0.65	.52
Identification and recognition of China	1-5	3.49	0.75	3.65	0.61	-1.43	.16



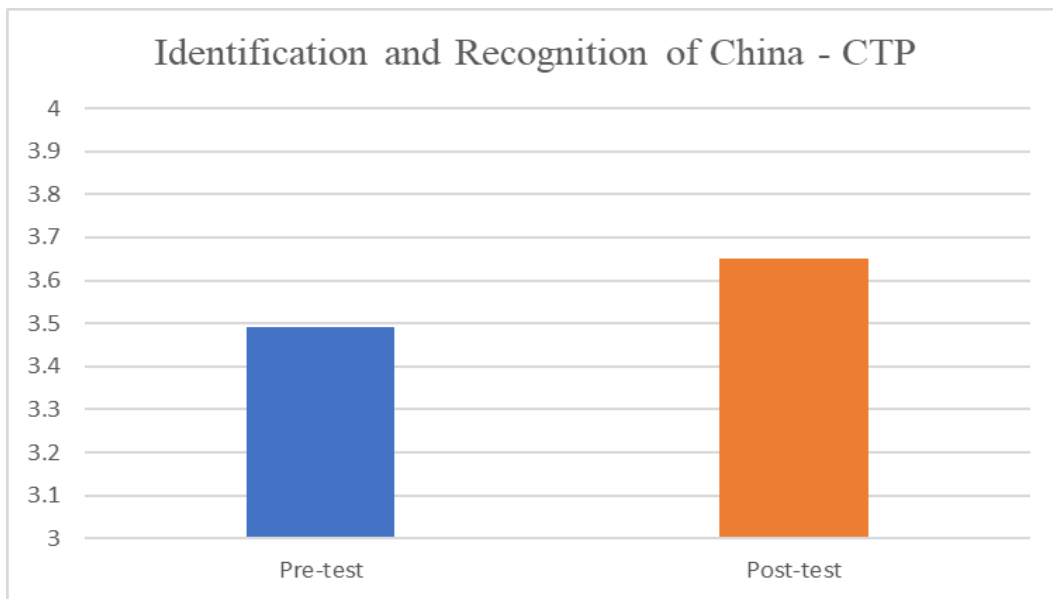
**Figure 17** Means of the CTP participants' national identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 41$ )



**Figure 18** Means of the CTP participants' strength of identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 41$ )



**Figure 19** Means of the CTP participants' importance of identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 41$ )



**Figure 20** Means of the CTP participants' identification and recognition of China scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 41$ )

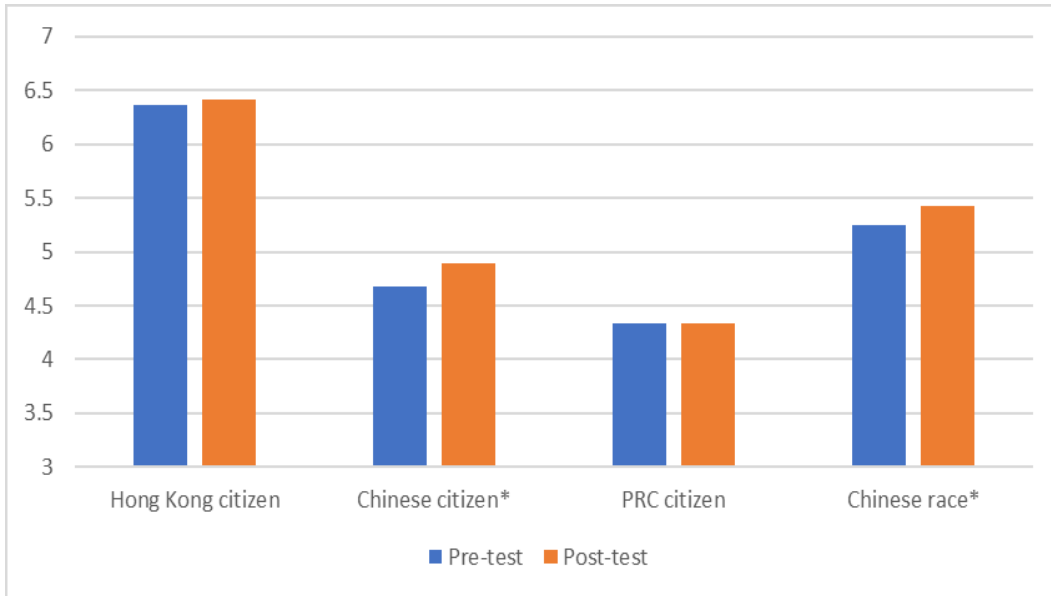


### 3.1.3.4 Service learning programmes

The results of paired samples t-tests on the STP participants' scores (Table 14, Figures 21-24) revealed several significant findings. First, the students scored higher for their identity as a Chinese citizen ( $t = -2.43, p = .02$ ) and as a member of the Chinese race ( $t = -1.98, p = .05$ ) at post-test than at pre-test. Second, regarding the strength of their different identities, the students' scores on all four identities, namely a Hong Kong citizen ( $t = -1.71; p = .09$ ), a Chinese citizen ( $t = -3.26; p = .00$ ), a citizen of the PRC ( $t = -1.86; p = .06$ ), and a member of the Chinese race ( $t = -1.87; p = .06$ ), were all significantly higher at post-test than at pre-test. Third, regarding perceived importance of one's identity, the students scored higher for their identity as both a Hong Kong citizen ( $t = -1.79; p = .07$ ) and a Chinese citizen ( $t = -1.88; p = .06$ ).

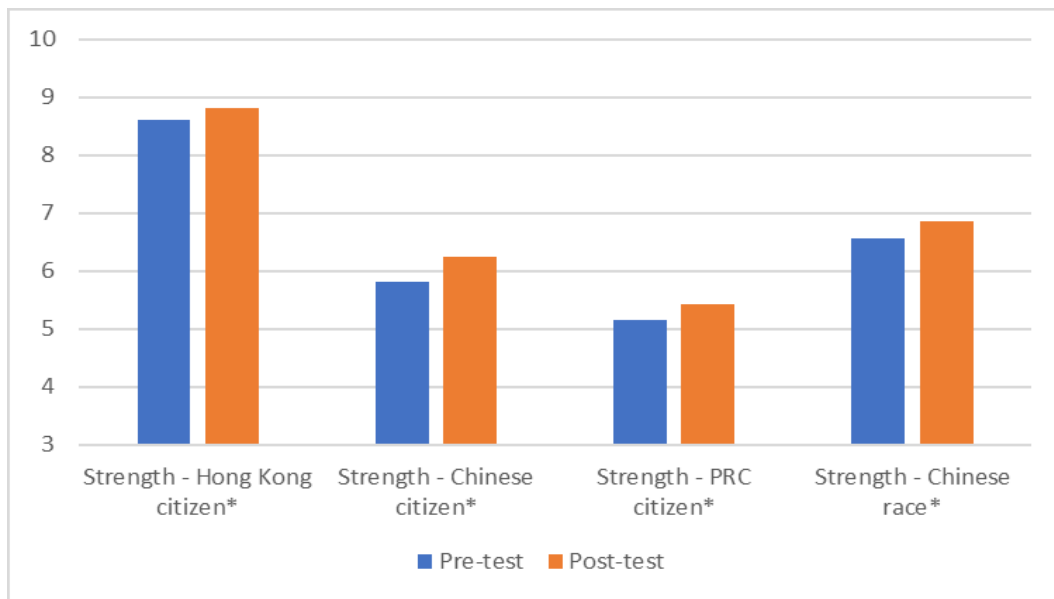
**Table 14** Paired samples t-tests on the SLP participants' national identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 227$ )

Scales	Range	Pre-test		Post-test		T-tests		Result of comparison
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	
<b>Ethnic identity</b>								
I am a Hong Kong citizen.	1-7	6.36	0.95	6.41	0.86	-0.73	.47	
I am a Chinese citizen.	1-7	4.68	1.63	4.89	1.59	-2.43	.02	Post > Pre
I am a citizen of the PRC.	1-7	4.33	1.68	4.34	1.67	-0.15	.89	
I am a member of the Chinese race.	1-7	5.25	1.32	5.42	1.36	-1.98	.05	Post > Pre
<b>Strength of identity</b>								
A Hong Kong citizen	0-10	8.60	1.83	8.80	1.56	-1.71	.09	Post > Pre
A Chinese citizen	0-10	5.80	2.61	6.23	2.58	-3.26	.00	Post > Pre
A citizen of the PRC	0-10	5.15	2.73	5.43	2.74	-1.86	.06	Post > Pre
A member of the Chinese race	0-10	6.55	2.47	6.85	2.51	-1.87	.06	Post > Pre
<b>Importance of identity</b>								
A Hong Kong citizen	0-10	8.76	1.75	8.96	1.50	-1.79	.07	Post > Pre
A Chinese citizen	0-10	6.06	2.66	6.33	2.69	-1.88	.06	Post > Pre
A citizen of the PRC	0-10	5.36	2.81	5.46	2.87	-0.64	.52	
A member of the Chinese race	0-10	6.57	2.45	6.78	2.55	-1.53	.13	
Identification and recognition of China	1-5	3.45	0.63	3.51	0.69	-1.49	.14	



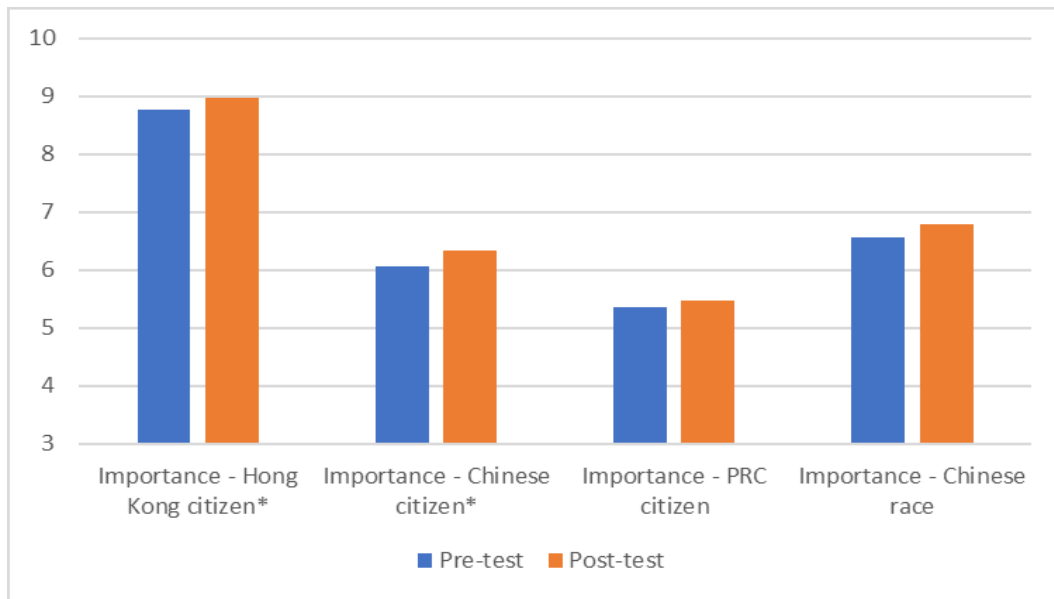
*Note.* \* significant difference between the two means.

**Figure 21** Means of the SLP participants' national identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 227$ )



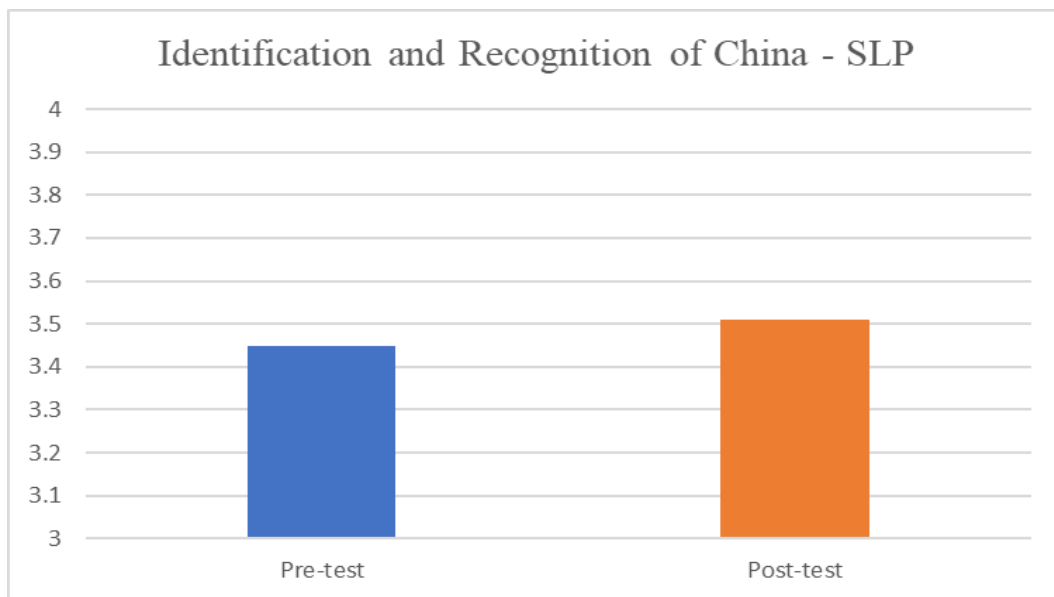
*Note.* \* significant difference between the two means.

**Figure 22** Means of the SLP participants' strength of identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 227$ )



Note. \* significant difference between the two means.

**Figure 23** Means of the SLP participants' importance of identity scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 227$ )



**Figure 24** Means of the SLP participants' identification and recognition of China scores at pre- and post-test ( $N = 227$ )

### **3.2 The Effects of Factors at the Student Level on the Impact of Short-Term Study-in-China Programmes on the Hong Kong Students' Development**

Quantitative findings regarding the effects of factors at the student level on the impact of short-term study-in-China programmes are reported in different sections below in terms of the three major outcome areas: 1) intercultural competence, 2) perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China, and 3) national identity. A series of regression analyses was conducted for the whole sample with the students' changes after the programme in different outcome indicators serving as the dependent variables. As we did not hypothesize specific directions of the relationships between the predictors and the outcomes, two-tailed hypothesis tests with a significance level of .05 were conducted.

Descriptive statistics of key variables involved in the regression model are reported first. The demographic characteristics of the participants were reported earlier in the methodology chapter. Other factors at the student level examined in the present study include previous short-term study-in-China experience (STSCE), previous short-term study overseas experience (STSOE), previous long-term study-in-China experience (LTSCE), previous long-term study overseas experience (LTSOE), and previous experience living in mainland China (LEC). Moreover, the students were asked to report their self-perceived academic performance in their current university studies (PAP), their expectations of the programme's ability to improve their intercultural competence (EXPICD), and their motivations to attend the programme in terms of 1) knowing more about China (MOVKNOW), 2) traveling (MOVTRA), 3) parents' suggestion (MOVPAR), 4) friends' recommendations (MOVFRD), and 5) waived tuition fee (MOVFEE).

As can be seen in Table 15, the majority of the students (65.0%) reported that they had participated in other short-term study-in-China programmes before, 41.4% of the participants had attended short-term study overseas programmes in the past, while only 11.9% and 14.8% of the participants reported prior experience of long-term study-in-China and study overseas programmes, respectively. In addition, while 60.1% of the participants reported that they had never lived in mainland China, 16.1% reported that they had lived in mainland China for more than five years. The means and standard deviations of other predictors are also summarized in Table 15. Regarding the students' motivations for attending short-term study-in-China

programmes, “knowing more about China” and “traveling” were most likely to be endorsed by the students, while “parents’ suggestion” and “waived tuition fee” were least endorsed.

**Table 15** Descriptive statistics of factors at the student level ( $N = 380$ )

<b>Predictors at the student level</b>			
<b>Categorical variables</b>		<b><i>N</i></b>	<b>%</b>
STSCE			
Yes		247	65.0%
No		133	35.0%
STSOE			
Yes		157	41.4%
No		222	58.6%
LTSCE			
Yes		45	11.9%
No		334	88.1%
LTSOE			
Yes		56	14.8%
No		322	85.2%
LEC			
Never		224	60.1%
Within 1 year		39	10.5%
1 – 5 years		50	13.4%
More than 5 years		60	16.1%
<b>Continuous variables</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b><i>M</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>
PAP	1-5	3.29	0.76
EXPICD	1-5	3.79	0.58
MOVKNOW	1-5	3.49	0.86
MOVTRA	1-5	3.78	0.82
MOVPAR	1-5	2.15	1.14
MOVFRD	1-5	3.10	1.16
MOVFEE	1-5	3.08	1.10

*Note.* STSCE = previous short-term study-in-China experience; STSOE = previous short-term study overseas experience; LTSCE = previous long-term study-in-China experience; LTSOE = previous long-term study overseas experience; LEC = previous experience living in mainland China; PAP = perceived academic performance; EXPICD = expectations of the programme’s ability to improve intercultural competence; MOVKNOW = motivation of knowing more about China; MOVTRA = motivation of traveling; MOVPAR = motivation of parents’ suggestion; MOVFRD = motivation of friends’ recommendations; MOVFEE = motivation of waived tuition fee.

Table 16 further summarizes the descriptive statistics of the students’ changes after the programmes in the outcome indicators. The students’ changes were calculated by using their post-test score minus their pre-test score. Except for the students’ endorsement of their identity

as a Hong Kong citizen, all the indicators were positive, which suggests an increase in these variables at post-test compared to pre-test.

**Table 16** Descriptive statistics of the dependent variables and student-level predictors ( $N = 380$ )

<b>Dependent variables (change in scores)</b>	<b><i>M</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>
Intercultural effectiveness	0.14	0.41
Intercultural communication awareness	0.32	0.62
Perceptions of mainland China	0.13	0.44
Other-group orientation	0.09	0.47
Perceived social distance	0.04	0.52
Identity as a Hong Kong citizen	-0.01	0.95
Identity as a Chinese citizen	0.20	1.36
Identity as a citizen of the PRC	0.02	1.41
Identity as a member of the Chinese race	0.10	1.29
Identification and recognition of China	0.06	0.59
Strength of identity as a Hong Kong citizen	0.15	1.68
Strength of identity as a Chinese citizen	0.45	2.08
Strength of identity as a citizen of the PRC	0.23	2.36
Strength of identity as a member of the Chinese race	0.25	2.26
Importance of identity as a Hong Kong citizen	0.10	1.58
Importance of identity as a Chinese citizen	0.28	2.26
Importance of identity as a citizen of the PRC	0.15	2.28
Importance of identity as a member of the Chinese race	0.24	2.13

### **3.2.1 Intercultural Competence**

The first two regression models tested the predictive effects of individual factors on the students' changes in their intercultural competence in terms of intercultural effectiveness (indicated by the participants' scores on the whole IES scale) and intercultural communication awareness (indicated by the participants' scores on the ICA scale). As can be seen in Table 17, the students' perceived academic performance was negatively associated with changes in their intercultural effectiveness ( $\beta = -.16, p < .01$ ), while the motivation "parents' suggestion" was positively associated with the students' intercultural effectiveness improvement in the programme ( $\beta = .14, p < .05$ ). For intercultural communication awareness, having previous short-term study-in-China experience ( $\beta = .11, p < .05$ ) and students' expectations of the programme's effect on intercultural competence development ( $\beta = .13, p < .05$ ) were positively predictive of the students' changes. Again, perceived academic performance ( $\beta = -.20, p < .001$ ) was negatively associated with the students' learning gains in intercultural communication awareness from the programmes. Students who reported a high level of perceived academic performance tended to have less intercultural competence development than did those who reported a low level of perceived academic performance.

### **3.2.2 Perceptions and Attitudes towards Mainland China**

Three regression models were tested to examine individual factors regarding the students' changes in 1) general perceptions of mainland China, 2) attitudes towards people from mainland China, and 3) perceived social distance from people from mainland China. Table 18 summarizes the results of the regression analyses. Parents' highest education level was found to be positively associated with the students' changes in their general perceptions of mainland China ( $\beta = .11, p < .05$ ). Students from families with a high education level tended to benefit more from participating in the short-term study-in-China programmes in terms of their changed perceptions of mainland China.

**Table 17** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for student-level variables predicting the students' changes in intercultural effectiveness and intercultural communication awareness ( $N = 380$ )

	Intercultural effectiveness						Intercultural communication awareness					
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
Block 1												
Gender <sup>a</sup>	-0.08	0.05	-.09	-0.07	0.05	-.08	-0.01	0.07	-.01	0.08	0.07	.06
YOS	0.02	0.02	.07	0.04	0.02	.11	-0.02	0.03	-.04	-0.00	0.03	-.01
PED	-0.04	0.03	-.09	-0.04	0.03	-.08	-0.04	0.04	-.06	-0.03	0.04	-.05
Block 2												
STSCE				0.03	0.05	.03				0.15	0.07	.11*
STSOE				0.01	0.05	.01				-0.08	0.07	-.06
LTSCE				-0.16	0.09	-.13				-0.04	0.13	-.02
LTSOE				-0.04	0.08	-.04				-0.14	0.12	-.08
LEC				-0.00	0.02	-.01				-0.04	0.03	-.08
PAP				-0.09	0.03	-.16**				-0.17	0.05	-.20***
EXPICD				0.04	0.04	.05				0.15	0.07	.13*
MOVKNOW				-0.06	0.03	-.12				-0.08	0.05	-.11
MOVTRA				0.04	0.03	.09				0.02	0.05	.03
MOVPAR				0.05	0.02	.14*				-0.03	0.04	-.05
MOVFRD				-0.04	0.02	-.11				-0.01	0.03	-.01
MOVFEE				0.01	0.02	.04				-0.02	0.03	-.04
$R^2$			.02			.09			.00			.10
$F$ for change in $R^2$			2.25			2.02*			0.51			2.91***

Note. <sup>a</sup> Gender: 0 = female; 1 = male. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

YOS = year of study; PED = parents' highest education level; STSCE = previous short-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); STSOE = previous short-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSCE = previous long-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSOE = previous long-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LEC = previous experience living in mainland China; PAP = perceived academic performance; EXPICD = expectations of the programme's ability to improve intercultural competence; MOVKNOW = motivation of knowing more about China; MOVTRA = motivation of traveling; MOVPAR = motivation of parents' suggestion; MOVFRD = motivation of friends' recommendations; MOVFEE = motivation of waived tuition fee.



**Table 18** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for student-level variables predicting the students' changes in perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China and Chinese people ( $N = 380$ )

	General perceptions of mainland China						Other-group orientation						Perceived social distance					
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 1			Model 2			Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
Block 1																		
Gender <sup>a</sup>	0.02	0.05	.03	0.05	0.05	.05	0.03	0.06	.03	0.03	0.06	.03	0.04	0.06	.03	0.06	0.06	.05
YOS	-0.01	0.02	-.04	0.00	0.02	.00	-0.01	0.02	-.01	0.00	0.02	.00	-0.05	0.03	-.10	-0.04	0.03	-.08
PED	0.06	0.03	.11*	0.06	0.03	.12*	0.04	0.03	.07	0.04	0.03	.07	0.05	0.03	.07	0.05	0.03	.08
Block 2																		
STSCE				0.05	0.05	.05				-0.04	0.06	-.04				-0.05	0.07	-.04
STSOE				-0.06	0.05	-.07				0.04	0.06	.04				-0.08	0.07	-.08
LTSCE				-0.13	0.10	-.09				-0.07	0.10	-.05				0.13	0.12	.08
LTSOE				-0.02	0.09	-.02				-0.03	0.09	-.02				-0.14	0.11	-.09
LEC				-0.01	0.02	-.03				0.00	0.02	.01				-0.01	0.03	-.03
PAP				-0.05	0.03	-.09				-0.01	0.04	-.02				-0.01	0.04	-.01
EXPICD				0.07	0.05	.09				0.04	0.05	.05				0.03	0.06	.03
MOVKNOW				-0.05	0.03	-.09				-0.07	0.04	-.12				-0.04	0.04	-.07
MOVTRA				0.05	0.03	.10				0.02	0.04	.04				0.00	0.04	.00
MOVPAR				0.03	0.03	.07				0.04	0.03	.09				-0.01	0.03	-.02
MOVFRD				-0.01	0.02	-.04				-0.02	0.03	-.04				-0.00	0.03	-.00
MOVFEE				-0.02	0.03	-.04				-0.03	0.03	-.08				0.01	0.03	.02
$R^2$			.01			.06			.01			.03			.02			.04
$F$ for change in $R^2$			1.61			1.23			0.62			0.61			1.91			0.68

Note. <sup>a</sup> Gender: 0 = female; 1 = male. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

YOS = year of study; PED = parents' highest education level; STSCE = previous short-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); STSOE = previous short-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSCE = previous long-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSOE = previous long-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LEC = previous experience living in mainland China; PAP = perceived academic performance; EXPICD = expectations of the programme's ability to improve intercultural competence; MOVKNOW = motivation of knowing more about China; MOVTRA = motivation of traveling; MOVPAR = motivation of parents' suggestion; MOVFRD = motivation of friends' recommendations; MOVFEE = motivation of waived tuition fee.

### 3.2.3 National Identity

A total of 13 regression models were examined to test the predictive effects of individual factors on the students' changes in 1) the levels of their self-identification with a Hong Kong citizen, a Chinese citizen, a citizen of the PRC, and a member of the Chinese race; 2) the perceived strength of their identity as a Hong Kong citizen, a Chinese citizen, a citizen of the PRC, and a member of the Chinese race; 3) the perceived importance of the above four identities; and 4) the level of their identification and recognition of China.

The results of the first four models (Tables 19a and 19b) showed that parents' education level was negatively associated with the students' changes in their self-identification with a Hong Kong citizen ( $\beta = -.13, p < .05$ ). In other words, students from families with a high education level tended to have less of an increase in their self-identification as a Hong Kong citizen after participating in the programmes, as compared to students from families with a low level of education. The students' previous experience of participating in short-term study-in-China programmes was also negatively related to changes in their identification with a citizen of the PRC ( $\beta = -.14, p < .05$ ). Simply put, students who had never participated in any short-term study-in-China programmes in the past seemed to experience more positive changes in their identity as a citizen of the PRC after the programme, as compared to students with prior short-term study-in-China experience.

With reference to the students' perceived strength of different identities, the results (Tables 20a and 20b) showed that parents' education level was negatively associated with the students' changes in their perceived strength of identity as a Hong Kong citizen ( $\beta = -.17, p < .01$ ), while year of study ( $\beta = -.13, p < .05$ ) and the motivation to attend the programme because of friends' recommendations ( $\beta = -.14, p < .05$ ) were negatively associated with the students' changes in their perceived strength of identity as a Chinese citizen. Students from families with a high education level had less enhancement in the strength of being a Hong Kong citizen after the programmes, as compared to those from families with a relatively low education level. Senior-year students and students who took the programme because of their friends' recommendations seemed to have less of an increase in their perceived strength of being a Chinese citizen. Moreover, prior short-term study-in-China experience was negatively associated with the students' changes in their perceived strength of identity as a citizen of the PRC ( $\beta = -.12, p < .05$ ), suggesting that students who had never participated in such programmes in the past

tended to experience more of an increase in their perceived strength of being a PRC citizen after the programme.

Another set of four models examined the predictive effects of student-level factors on the students' changes in their perceived importance of the four identities. As shown in Tables 21a and 21b, parents' education level was negatively predictive of the students' changes in their perceived importance of being a Hong Kong citizen ( $\beta = -.19, p < .001$ ), while prior study-in-China experience was negatively associated with the students' changes in perceived importance of being a citizen of the PRC ( $\beta = -.13, p < .05$ ).

The last model examined the effects of student-level factors on the students' changes in their identification and recognition of China. No significant predictive effects were identified (Table 22).

**Table 19a** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for student-level variables predicting the students' changes in self-identification with a Hong Kong citizen, a Chinese citizen, and their identification and recognition of China ( $N = 380$ )

	Identity as a Hong Kong citizen						Identity as a Chinese citizen						Identification and recognition of China					
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 1			Model 2			Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$
Block 1																		
Gender <sup>a</sup>	-0.01	0.11	-.01	-0.02	0.12	-.01	0.07	0.16	.02	0.07	0.17	.02	0.07	0.06	.05	0.05	0.07	.04
YOS	0.02	0.05	.02	0.01	0.05	.01	-0.05	0.07	-.04	-0.02	0.07	-.02	0.02	0.03	.03	0.02	0.03	.04
PED	-0.14	0.06	<b>-.13*</b>	-0.14	0.06	<b>-.13*</b>	0.03	0.09	.02	0.02	0.09	.01	-0.05	0.03	-.07	-0.05	0.04	-.07
Block 2																		
STSCE				-0.06	0.12	-.03				-0.24	0.17	-.09				-0.04	0.07	-.03
STSOE				0.03	0.12	.02				-0.07	0.17	-.03				-0.06	0.07	-.05
LTSCE				.031	0.21	.11				0.21	0.30	.05				-0.03	0.12	-.02
LTSOE				-0.19	0.19	-.07				-0.31	0.27	-.08				0.08	0.11	.05
LEC				-0.01	0.05	-.01				0.02	0.07	.02				0.01	0.03	.02
PAP				0.00	0.07	.00				0.07	0.11	.04				0.05	0.04	.06
EXPICD				-0.02	0.11	-.01				-0.26	0.15	-.11				-0.06	0.06	-.06
MOVKNO				-0.01	0.07	-.01				0.01	0.10	.01				0.03	0.04	.05
W																		
MOVTRA				-0.04	0.07	-.04				-0.00	0.10	-.00				-0.02	0.04	-.03
MOVPAR				0.05	0.06	.06				0.00	0.08	.00				-0.02	0.03	-.04
MOVFRD				-0.03	0.05	-.03				-0.13	0.07	-.11				0.01	0.03	.02
MOVFEE				-0.01	0.05	-.02				0.01	0.08	.01				-0.03	0.03	-.05
$R^2$			.02			.03			.00			.04			.01			.03
$F$ for change in $R^2$			2.04			0.38			0.26			1.16			1.28			0.53

Note. <sup>a</sup> Gender: 0 = female; 1 = male. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

YOS = year of study; PED = parents' highest education level; STSCE = previous short-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); STSOE = previous short-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSCE = previous long-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSOE = previous long-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LEC = previous experience living in mainland China; PAP = perceived academic performance; EXPICD = expectations of the programme's ability to improve intercultural competence; MOVKNOW = motivation of knowing more about China; MOVTRA = motivation of traveling; MOVPAR = motivation of parents' suggestion; MOVFRD = motivation of friends' recommendations; MOVFEE = motivation of waived tuition fee.

**Table 19b** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for student-level variables predicting the students' changes in self-identification with a citizen of the PRC and a member of the Chinese race ( $N = 380$ )

	Identity as a citizen of the PRC						Identity as a member of the Chinese race					
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
Block 1												
Gender <sup>a</sup>	0.05	0.16	.02	0.11	0.17	.04	0.07	0.15	.03	0.07	0.16	.03
YOS	-0.08	0.07	-.06	-0.09	0.07	-.07	-0.04	0.06	-.04	-0.03	0.07	-.03
PED	-0.06	0.09	-.04	-0.06	0.09	-.03	-0.02	0.08	-.01	-0.03	0.08	.02
Block 2												
STSCE				-0.01	0.17	-.00				-0.14	0.16	-.05
STSOE				-0.39	0.17	-.14*				-0.00	0.16	-.001
LTSCE				0.34	0.31	.08				-0.02	0.26	-.01
LTSOE				0.11	0.28	.03				-0.05	0.26	-.01
LEC				-0.02	0.07	-.01				-0.02	0.06	-.02
PAP				0.08	0.11	.04				0.05	0.10	.03
EXPICD				0.10	0.16	.04				-0.16	0.14	-.07
MOVKNOW				0.07	0.11	.04				0.13	0.10	.09
MOVTRA				-0.14	0.11	-.08				-0.14	0.10	-.09
MOVPAR				-0.09	0.09	-.07				-0.04	0.08	-.03
MOVFRD				-0.09	0.07	-.07				-0.01	0.07	-.01
MOVFEE				-0.03	0.08	-.02				0.04	0.07	.04
$R^2$			.01			.04			.00			.02
$F$ for change in $R^2$			0.57			1.11			0.22			0.49

Note. <sup>a</sup> Gender: 0 = female; 1 = male. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

YOS = year of study; PED = parents' highest education level; STSCE = previous short-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); STSOE = previous short-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSCE = previous long-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSOE = previous long-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LEC = previous experience living in mainland China; PAP = perceived academic performance; EXPICD = expectations of the programme's ability to improve intercultural competence; MOVKNOW = motivation of knowing more about China; MOVTRA = motivation of traveling; MOVPAR = motivation of parents' suggestion; MOVFRD = motivation of friends' recommendations; MOVFEE = motivation of waived tuition fee.

**Table 20a** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for student-level variables predicting the students' changes in perceived strength of identity as a Hong Kong citizen and a Chinese citizen ( $N = 380$ )

	Strength of identity as a Hong Kong citizen						Strength of identity as a Chinese citizen					
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
Block 1												
Gender <sup>a</sup>	0.24	0.19	.07	0.25	0.20	.07	0.23	0.24	.05	0.27	0.25	.06
YOS	-0.01	0.08	-.04	0.01	0.08	.01	-0.24	0.10	<b>-.13*</b>	-0.19	0.10	-.11
PED	-0.33	0.10	<b>-.17**</b>	-0.32	0.11	<b>-.17**</b>	-0.12	0.13	-.05	-0.12	0.13	-.05
Block 2												
STSCE				0.22	0.20	.06				0.17	0.25	.04
STSOE				-0.15	0.21	-.05				-0.12	0.26	-.03
LTSCE				-0.35	0.36	-.07				-0.65	0.45	-.10
LTSOE				-0.29	0.33	-.06				-0.17	0.41	-.03
LEC				0.05	0.08	.03				-0.12	0.10	-.07
PAP				-0.06	0.13	-.03				0.06	0.16	.02
EXPICD				-0.12	0.18	-.04				-0.28	0.23	-.07
MOVKNOW				-0.12	0.13	-.06				-0.04	0.16	-.01
MOVTRA				0.03	0.13	.02				-0.09	0.16	-.04
MOVPAR				0.13	0.10	.09				0.07	0.12	.04
MOVFRD				-0.15	0.09	-.10				-0.26	0.11	<b>-.14*</b>
MOVFEE				-0.04	0.09	-.03				0.09	0.12	.05
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>			.03			.07			.02			.07
<i>F</i> for change in <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>			<b>3.95*</b>			1.03			2.26			1.51

Note. <sup>a</sup> Gender: 0 = female; 1 = male. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

YOS = year of study; PED = parents' highest education level; STSCE = previous short-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); STSOE = previous short-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSCE = previous long-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSOE = previous long-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LEC = previous experience living in mainland China; PAP = perceived academic performance; EXPICD = expectations of the programme's ability to improve intercultural competence; MOVKNOW = motivation of knowing more about China; MOVTRA = motivation of traveling; MOVPAR = motivation of parents' suggestion; MOVFRD = motivation of friends' recommendations; MOVFEE = motivation of waived tuition fee.

**Table 20b** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for student-level variables predicting the students' changes in perceived strength of identity as a citizen of the PRC and a member of the Chinese race ( $N = 380$ )

	Strength of identity as a citizen of the PRC						Strength of identity as a member of the Chinese race					
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
Block 1												
Gender <sup>a</sup>	0.07	0.27	.01	0.05	0.28	.01	0.10	0.26	.02	0.05	0.27	.01
YOS	-0.21	0.11	-.10	-0.18	0.12	-.09	-0.11	0.11	-.06	-0.11	0.11	-.06
PED	-0.00	0.15	-.00	-0.00	0.15	-.01	-0.00	0.14	-.00	0.03	0.14	.01
Block 2												
STSCE				0.26	0.29	.05				0.32	0.27	.07
STSOE				-0.58	0.29	-.12*				-0.35	0.28	-.08
LTSCE				-0.81	0.51	-.11				-0.65	0.48	-.09
LTSOE				0.35	0.47	.05				0.29	0.44	.05
LEC				-0.00	0.12	-.00				0.03	0.11	.02
PAP				0.33	0.18	.10				-0.04	0.17	-.01
EXPICD				-0.23	0.26	-.05				-0.02	0.25	-.01
MOVKNOW				0.16	0.18	.06				-0.09	0.17	-.04
MOVTRA				-0.11	0.18	-.04				-0.31	0.17	-.12
MOVPAR				-0.02	0.14	-.01				-0.08	0.14	.04
MOVFRD				-0.10	0.12	-.05				-0.06	0.12	-.03
MOVFEE				-0.01	0.13	-.00				0.13	0.13	.07
$R^2$			.01			.05			.00			.03
<i>F</i> for change in $R^2$			1.15			1.16			0.36			0.82

Note. <sup>a</sup> Gender: 0 = female; 1 = male. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

YOS = year of study; PED = parents' highest education level; STSCE = previous short-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); STSOE = previous short-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSCE = previous long-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSOE = previous long-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LEC = previous experience living in mainland China; PAP = perceived academic performance; EXPICD = expectations of the programme's ability to improve intercultural competence; MOVKNOW = motivation of knowing more about China; MOVTRA = motivation of traveling; MOVPAR = motivation of parents' suggestion; MOVFRD = motivation of friends' recommendations; MOVFEE = motivation of waived tuition fee.

**Table 21a** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for student-level variables predicting the students' changes in perceived importance of identity as a Hong Kong citizen and a Chinese citizen ( $N = 380$ )

	Importance of identity as a Hong Kong citizen						Importance of identity as a Chinese citizen					
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
Block 1												
Gender <sup>a</sup>	0.10	0.18	.03	0.04	0.19	.01	-0.01	0.26	-.00	-0.07	0.26	-.02
YOS	0.01	0.07	.00	-0.02	0.08	-.01	-0.08	0.11	-.04	-0.07	0.11	-.04
PED	-0.35	0.10	<b>-0.19***</b>	-0.33	0.10	<b>-0.18***</b>	-0.01	0.14	-.00	0.01	0.14	.00
Block 2												
STSCE				0.21	0.19	.06				-0.08	0.27	-.02
STSOE				-0.01	0.19	-.00				-0.49	0.27	-.11
LTSCE				-0.28	0.34	-.06				-0.45	0.48	-.06
LTSOE				-0.09	0.31	-.02				0.40	0.43	.07
LEC				0.10	0.08	.07				0.06	0.11	.03
PAP				-0.00	0.12	-.00				0.27	0.17	.09
EXPICD				-0.07	0.17	-.03				-0.34	0.24	-.09
MOVKNOW				-0.05	0.12	-.03				0.20	0.17	.08
MOVTRA				-0.13	0.12	-.07				-0.32	0.17	-.12
MOVPAR				0.13	0.09	.09				-0.06	0.13	-.03
MOVFRD				-0.10	0.08	-.07				-0.17	0.12	-.09
MOVFEE				-0.08	0.09	-.06				0.13	0.13	.07
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>			.04			.07			.00			.05
<i>F</i> for change in <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>			<b>4.44**</b>			0.85			0.22			1.45

Note. <sup>a</sup> Gender: 0 = female; 1 = male. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

YOS = year of study; PED = parents' highest education level; STSCE = previous short-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); STSOE = previous short-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSCE = previous long-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSOE = previous long-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LEC = previous experience living in mainland China; PAP = perceived academic performance; EXPICD = expectations of the programme's ability to improve intercultural competence; MOVKNOW = motivation of knowing more about China; MOVTRA = motivation of traveling; MOVPAR = motivation of parents' suggestion; MOVFRD = motivation of friends' recommendations; MOVFEE = motivation of waived tuition fee.



**Table 21b** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for student-level variables predicting the students' changes in perceived importance of identity as a citizen of the PRC and a member of the Chinese race ( $N = 380$ )

	Importance of identity as a citizen of the PRC						Importance of identity as a member of the Chinese race					
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
Block 1												
Gender <sup>a</sup>	-0.15	0.26	-.03	-0.14	0.27	-.03	0.06	0.25	.01	0.01	0.26	.00
YOS	-0.09	0.11	-.05	-0.08	0.11	-.04	-0.07	0.10	-.04	-0.09	0.11	-.05
PED	0.09	0.14	.03	0.09	0.14	.03	0.09	0.13	.04	0.07	0.14	.03
Block 2												
STSCE				-0.02	0.28	-.00				0.15	0.27	.03
STSOE				-0.58	0.28	-.13*				-0.08	0.27	-.02
LTSCE				-0.14	0.49	-.02				-0.17	0.47	-.03
LTSOE				0.17	0.45	.03				0.11	0.43	.02
LEC				0.03	0.11	.02				0.08	0.11	.04
PAP				0.29	0.17	.09				0.30	0.17	.10
EXPICD				-0.22	0.25	-.05				-0.34	0.24	-.09
MOVKNOW				0.25	0.17	.10				0.15	0.16	.06
MOVTRA				-0.30	0.17	-.11				-0.12	0.17	-.05
MOVPAR				-0.18	0.14	-.09				-0.06	0.13	-.03
MOVFRD				-0.10	0.12	-.05				-0.13	0.11	-.07
MOVFEE				0.08	0.13	.04				-0.01	0.12	-.01
$R^2$			.01			.05			.00			.03
$F$ for change in $R^2$			0.55			1.27			0.30			0.80

Note. <sup>a</sup> Gender: 0 = female; 1 = male. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

YOS = year of study; PED = parents' highest education level; STSCE = previous short-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); STSOE = previous short-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSCE = previous long-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSOE = previous long-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LEC = previous experience living in mainland China; PAP = perceived academic performance; EXPICD = expectations of the programme's ability to improve intercultural competence; MOVKNOW = motivation of knowing more about China; MOVTRA = motivation of traveling; MOVPAR = motivation of parents' suggestion; MOVFRD = motivation of friends' recommendations; MOVFEE = motivation of waived tuition fee.

**Table 22** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for student-level variables predicting the students' changes in their identification and recognition of China ( $N = 380$ )

	Identification and recognition of China					
	Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
Block 1						
Gender <sup>a</sup>	0.07	0.06	.05	0.05	0.07	.04
YOS	0.02	0.03	.03	0.02	0.03	.04
PED	-0.05	0.03	-.07	-0.05	0.04	-.07
Block 2						
STSCE				-0.04	0.07	-.03
STSOE				-0.06	0.07	-.05
LTSCE				-0.03	0.12	-.02
LTSOE				0.08	0.11	.05
LEC				0.01	0.03	.02
PAP				0.05	0.04	.06
EXPICD				-0.06	0.06	-.06
MOVKNOW				0.03	0.04	.05
MOVTRA				-0.02	0.04	-.03
MOVPAR				-0.02	0.03	-.04
MOVFRD				0.01	0.03	.02
MOVFEE				-0.03	0.03	-.05
$R^2$			.01			.03
<i>F</i> for change in $R^2$			1.28			0.53

Note. <sup>a</sup> Gender: 0 = female; 1 = male. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

YOS = year of study; PED = parents' highest education level; STSCE = previous short-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); STSOE = previous short-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSCE = previous long-term study-in-China experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LTSOE = previous long-term study overseas experience (0 = no; 1 = yes); LEC = previous experience living in mainland China; PAP = perceived academic performance; EXPICD = expectations of the programme's ability to improve intercultural competence; MOVKNOW = motivation of knowing more about China; MOVTRA = motivation of traveling; MOVPAR = motivation of parents' suggestion; MOVFRD = motivation of friends' recommendations; MOVFEE = motivation of waived tuition fee.

### 3.3 The Effects of Factors at the Programme Level on the Impact of Short-Term Study-in-China Programmes on the Hong Kong Students' Development

Quantitative findings on the effects of factors at the programme level on the impact of short-term study-in-China programmes are reported in different sections below in terms of the three major outcome areas: 1) intercultural competence, 2) perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China, and 3) national identity. A series of regression analyses was conducted for the whole sample with different outcome indicators serving as the dependent variables.

Descriptive statistics of factors at the programme level as predictors in the regression model are summarized in Table 23. In addition to programme mode (STP, CTP, and SLP), these factors include the students' perceived programme quality (PROQ), teacher quality (TQ), peer quality (PEERQ), frequency of guided reflective activities in the programme (REFL), and frequency of interactions with non-local students in the programme (ITR). The dependent variables continue to be the students' changes in the outcome indicators after participating in the programmes, for which the descriptive statistics have been reported in Table 16 of Section 3.3.

**Table 23** Descriptive statistics of programme-level predictors ( $N = 380$ )

Predictors at the programme level	Range	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
PROQ	1.17-7	5.54	0.90
TQ	1-7	5.69	1.00
PQ	1-7	5.77	1.13
REFL	1-5	3.62	1.13
ITR	1-5	3.79	1.02

*Note.* PROQ = programme quality; TQ = teacher quality; PQ = peer quality; REFL = frequency of guided reflective activities in the programme; ITR = frequency of interactions with non-local students in the programme.

#### 3.3.1 Intercultural Competence

The first two regression models tested the predictive effects of programme factors on the students' changes in intercultural competence (Table 24). The results showed that peer quality was positively associated with the students' improvement in intercultural effectiveness ( $\beta = .17$ ,

$p < .05$ ) and programme quality was positively associated with the students' improvement in intercultural communication awareness ( $\beta = .28, p < .01$ ). When the students have supportive and motivated teammates, they tend to experience more development in their intercultural effectiveness. More importantly, although different study-in-China programme modes did not predict the students' changes in intercultural competence, the students had greater improvement in intercultural communication awareness from programmes that were perceived as better designed and implemented.

**Table 24** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for programme-level variables predicting the students' changes in intercultural effectiveness and intercultural communication awareness ( $N = 380$ )

	Intercultural effectiveness			Intercultural communication awareness		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
STP	0.04	0.07	.04	-0.07	0.10	-.05
CTP	0.10	0.08	.07	-0.05	0.13	-.03
SLP	0.00	0.07	.00	-0.07	0.10	-.06
PROQ	0.06	0.04	.15	0.19	0.06	.28**
TQ	-0.01	0.04	-.02	0.00	0.05	.01
PEERQ	0.06	0.02	.17*	-0.04	0.04	-.07
REFL	-0.00	0.00	-.01	0.00	0.00	-.06
ITR	0.00	0.00	.03	-0.00	0.00	-.08
$R^2$						
	.07			.07		
<i>F</i> for change in $R^2$	3.79***			4.07***		

Note. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

STP = summer term programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); CTP = cultural tour programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); SLP = service learning programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); PROQ = programme quality; TQ = teacher quality; PEERQ = peer quality; REFL = frequency of reflective activities; ITR = frequency of interactions with non-local students.

### 3.3.2 Perceptions and Attitudes towards Mainland China

Regression analyses on the students' changes in their perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China revealed several important findings (Table 25). First, programme quality significantly predicted the students' positive changes in their perceptions of mainland China ( $\beta = .34, p < .001$ ). Second, the teacher qualities of preparedness and passion were associated with a high level of positive attitudes towards people from mainland China ( $\beta = .20, p < .05$ ). Third, an unexpected finding was that participating in SLPs appeared to be associated with fewer changes in the students' attitudes towards people from mainland China ( $\beta = -.18, p < .05$ ).

**Table 25** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for programme-level variables predicting the students' changes in perceptions and attitudes towards mainland China and Chinese people ( $N = 380$ )

	General perceptions of mainland China			Other-group orientation			Perceived social distance		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
STP	-0.07	0.08	-.07	-0.16	0.09	-.14	-0.06	0.09	-.05
CTP	-0.08	0.10	-.05	-0.15	0.10	-.09	-0.15	0.11	-.08
SLP	-0.01	0.08	-.01	-0.17	0.08	-.18*	-0.07	0.09	-.07
PROQ	0.17	0.05	.34***	0.02	0.05	.03	0.03	0.05	.06
TQ	-0.07	0.04	-.16	0.10	0.04	.20*	0.05	0.05	.09
PEERQ	-0.05	0.03	-.12	-0.04	0.03	-.08	-0.03	0.03	-.07
REFL	0.00	0.00	-.03	0.00	0.00	.02	0.00	0.00	.03
ITR	0.00	0.00	.02	0.00	0.00	-.04	-0.00	0.00	-.01
$R^2$			.04			.04			.02
<i>F</i> for change in $R^2$			2.20*			2.15*			0.88

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

STP = summer term programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); CTP = cultural tour programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); SLP = service learning programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); PROQ = programme quality; TQ = teacher quality; PEERQ = peer quality; REFL = frequency of reflective activities; ITR = frequency of interactions with non-local students.

### 3.3.3 National Identity

A series of regression analyses was conducted to examine the effects of programme-level factors on the students' changes in different indicators of national identity (Tables 26 and 27). Regarding the students' changes in their identification with the four types of identity (Table 26a), the results showed that peer quality (i.e., whether teammates are generally supportive and motivational) was negatively predictive of the changes in identification with being a PRC citizen ( $\beta = -.18$ ,  $p < .01$ ), while participating in STPs was negatively associated with the students' changes in their identification with being a member of the Chinese race ( $\beta = -.17$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Students with supportive and motivational peers seemed to experience fewer changes in terms of their identification with being a PRC citizen after the programmes. Students who participated in STPs appeared to have fewer changes in their identification with being a member of the Chinese race than did CTP and SLP participants.

Regarding the students' changes in their perceived strength of different identities (Table 26b), peer quality was negatively associated with perceived identity as a member of the Chinese race ( $\beta = -.17$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Regarding the students' changes in their perceived importance of different identities (Table 26c), no significant predictive effects were identified among all the predictors.

The results summarized in Table 27 show that programme quality positively predicted the students' changes in their identification and recognition of China ( $\beta = .23, p < .05$ ). In other words, students who participated in programmes with clear objectives, a good design, carefully arranged programme components, and well-informed activities tended to experience more development in their feelings of connection with, and recognition of, China than did participants in less well-designed and implemented programmes.

**Table 26a** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for programme-level variables predicting the students' changes in their identification with different identities ( $N = 380$ )

	Identity as a Hong Kong citizen			Identity as a Chinese citizen			Identity as a citizen of the PRC			Identity as a member of the Chinese race		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
STP	0.18	0.16	.09	-0.02	0.25	-.01	-0.30	0.25	-.09	-0.52	0.23	<b>-.17*</b>
CTP	0.10	0.20	.03	-0.13	0.30	-.03	-0.12	0.31	-.02	-0.37	0.28	-.08
SLP	0.14	0.16	.07	-0.11	0.24	-.04	-0.24	0.24	-.08	-0.37	0.22	-.14
PROQ	0.04	0.10	.03	0.24	0.14	.15	0.03	0.15	.02	0.05	0.13	.03
TQ	0.08	0.09	.09	0.00	0.13	.00	0.25	0.13	.17	0.20	0.12	.15
PEERQ	0.07	0.06	.09	-0.02	0.09	-.01	-0.23	0.09	<b>-.18**</b>	-0.11	0.08	-.09
REFL	0.00	0.00	.04	0.00	0.00	.02	0.00	0.00	.02	0.00	0.00	.02
ITR	0.00	0.00	.02	-0.00	0.00	-.03	-0.00	.00	-.04	-0.00	0.00	-.08
$R^2$			.04			.02			.03			.04
<i>F</i> for change in $R^2$			<b>2.22*</b>			1.16			1.53			1.94

Note. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

STP = summer term programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); CTP = cultural tour programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); SLP = service learning programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); PROQ = programme quality; TQ = teacher quality; PEERQ = peer quality; REFL = frequency of reflective activities; ITR = frequency of interactions with non-local students.

**Table 26b** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for programme-level variables predicting the students' changes in their perceived strength of different identities ( $N = 380$ )

	Strength of identity as a Hong Kong citizen			Strength of identity as a Chinese citizen			Strength of identity as a citizen of the PRC			Strength of identity as a member of the Chinese race		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i> <i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i> <i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i> <i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i> <i>B</i>	$\beta$
STP	-0.10	0.30	-.03	0.38	0.41	.07	0.43	0.44	.08	0.18	0.42	.03
CTP	-0.18	0.36	-.03	0.32	0.50	.04	0.43	0.53	.05	0.15	0.51	.02
SLP	-0.13	0.28	-.04	0.10	0.40	.02	0.56	0.42	.12	0.28	0.41	.06
PROQ	0.10	0.17	.06	0.30	0.24	.12	0.05	0.25	.02	0.23	0.24	.09
TQ	-0.05	0.15	-.03	-0.05	0.22	-.02	0.19	0.23	.08	0.23	0.22	.10
PEERQ	0.11	0.10	.07	0.09	0.15	.04	-0.16	0.15	-.08	-0.35	0.15	-.17*
REFL	0.00	0.00	.02	0.00	0.00	-.01	0.00	0.00	-.01	0.00	0.00	-.01
ITR	-0.00	0.00	-.00	0.00	0.00	.05	0.00	0.00	.03	0.00	0.00	.01
$R^2$			.01			.02			.01			.02
<i>F</i> for change in $R^2$			0.47			0.99			0.53			1.06

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

STP = summer term programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); CTP = cultural tour programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); SLP = service learning programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); PROQ = programme quality; TQ = teacher quality; PEERQ = peer quality; REFL = frequency of reflective activities; ITR = frequency of interactions with non-local students.



**Table 26c** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for programme-level variables predicting the students' changes in perceived importance of identity as a Hong Kong citizen and a Chinese citizen ( $N = 380$ )

	Importance of identity as a Hong Kong citizen			Importance of identity as a Chinese citizen			Importance of identity as a citizen of the PRC			Importance of identity as a member of the Chinese race		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
STP	0.21	0.27	.06	0.21	0.42	.04	0.38	0.42	.07	0.04	0.40	.01
CTP	0.10	0.33	.02	0.21	0.51	.23	0.49	0.51	.06	0.03	0.48	.00
SLP	0.26	0.26	.08	-0.06	0.40	-.01	0.27	0.40	.06	-0.17	0.38	-.04
PROQ	0.22	0.16	.13	-0.11	0.24	-.04	0.16	0.24	.06	-0.03	0.23	-.01
TQ	-0.09	0.14	-.06	0.23	0.22	.10	0.11	0.22	.05	0.20	0.21	.09
PEERQ	0.10	0.10	.07	0.15	0.15	.07	-0.18	0.14	-.09	-0.02	0.14	-.01
REFL	0.00	0.00	.05	0.00	0.00	.04	0.00	0.00	.02	0.00	0.00	.02
ITR	0.00	0.00	.01	-0.00	0.00	-.02	-0.00	0.00	-.01	-0.00	0.00	-.03
$R^2$			.03			.02			.01			.01
<i>F</i> for change in $R^2$			1.47			0.77			0.52			0.37

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

STP = summer term programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); CTP = cultural tour programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); SLP = service learning programme (0 = not participated; 1 = participated); PROQ = programme quality; TQ = teacher quality; PEERQ = peer quality; REFL = frequency of reflective activities; ITR = frequency of interactions with non-local students.

**Table 27** Results of hierarchical regression analysis for programme-level variables predicting the students' changes in their identification and recognition of China ( $N = 380$ )

	Identification and recognition of China		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
STP	-0.08	0.10	-.06
CTP	0.09	0.13	.05
SLP	-0.10	0.10	-.08
PROQ	0.15	0.06	.23*
TQ	0.00	0.05	.00
PEERQ	-0.01	0.04	-.02
REFL	0.00	0.00	.07
ITR	0.00	0.00	.01
$R^2$			.05
$F$ for change in $R^2$			2.82**

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

## Chapter 4. Findings from the Individual Interviews with Student Participants

### 4.1 Impact of the Programmes on Student Participants

#### 4.1.1 Learning Outcomes in Intercultural Competence

##### Improved language proficiency

One notable learning outcome reported by students was improved language proficiency. Students said that their ability to speak Mandarin had greatly improved and they could now convey their ideas in Mandarin more effectively. In other words, students' messaging skills had been enhanced by the programmes. SLP students also reported that they felt more relaxed and comfortable when communicating with others in Mandarin. This suggests an improvement in interaction relaxation, which is an important component of intercultural competence. The following narratives illustrate these improvements:

- *“Previously in Hong Kong, I rarely had opportunities to speak Putonghua, but now I can communicate in Putonghua more fluently and understand better...”* (Student 10 in STP02)
- *“I think my Putonghua has improved a lot, and I also learnt some Internet jargon often used in China’s social media”.* (Student 07 in STP04)
- *“I found that communicating with Mainland people became quite simple... I can freely express my opinion without feeling embarrassed”.* (Student 22 in SLP04)

##### Development of social competence and interpersonal relationships

Students also reported that they had developed good interpersonal relationships with people from different backgrounds. In making friends with culturally different peers, students strengthened their social competence and acted as a bridge between different cultures (known as cultural mediation). Some students described maintaining these friendships and communication even after the programme had ended. These learning outcomes are demonstrated in the narratives below:

- *“The greatest gain was that I met different friends from Hong Kong, Chinese mainland, and overseas. Even now we still keep in touch with each other, and we hang out for meals when we are in Hong Kong”.* (Student 32 in STP02)

- *“Students in the host university in mainland China were very hospitable. We had a lot of conversations and we experienced many things together, such as participating in group activities, playing games, and even ordering takeaways in the hotel. I really treasured our friendship”. (Student 20 in CTP07)*

Students also reported that they had become more able to collaborate with people of different cultures and had learned more ways to resolve conflict. These are related to skills in intercultural interaction management. Specifically, one student shared that her listening skills had been improved by the teamwork element:

- *“I never worked well in a team in the past, but in this programme, we handled the tasks together with the mindset of helping each other. Even though we had disagreements sometimes, we listened to each other and found out solutions. I learned that things could go better if I could listen to others’ opinions and tried not to be too stubborn”. (Student 19 in SLP07)*

#### Enhanced interaction with people from diverse backgrounds

Students described having had various opportunities to interact with people from diverse backgrounds through the programmes. In this process, students became more behaviourally flexible and were better able to distinguish appropriate behaviours and adapt to specific situations. One student observed that local people tended to express their opinions in a more straightforward way than Hong Kong people, and he had quickly adapted to this style in his interactions with them. Another student expressed his appreciation of cultural diversity through observing the cultural differences between people in Hong Kong and Taiwan. Students had in-depth communication with local university students in mainland China which enabled each to learn more about the other’s culture. The following narratives demonstrate this improvement:

- *“People in mainland China were quite straightforward when expressing their ideas, and I wasn’t very used to it at the beginning. But quickly, I adapted my own way of speaking to follow their style in our communication...and we got along well with each other”. (Student 28 in CTP03)*
- *“I learned how to communicate with people from diverse backgrounds. I think*

*that people from different places have various personalities. For instance, as compared with Hong Kong people like me, people from Taiwan were more patient and seemed to be happier. I could feel their optimism when we were interacting, and I think we should learn from them”.* (Student 33 in CTP10)

- *“The greatest learning gain was that I learned so much more about mainland China. I had in-depth conversations with students from Yunnan University, during which we shared our life stories and discussed the situation in Hong Kong and in China. The students there also helped me to know more about rural areas in mainland China”.* (Student 05 in CTP02)
- *“We loved to explore the city by ourselves, to visit the local stores and to talk to local people. I think this is another important aspect of cross-cultural communication. We once met an elderly couple who spoke in their dialect, which we could not understand at all. Although we could not fully understand each other, we kept on trying and using body language, and they finally knew what we meant. This was a very interesting experience”.* (Student 08 in STP04)

#### Academic development

Some students perceived the programmes as beneficial to their academic development. One student majoring in social work reflected that his direct observation of the local community and the knowledge gained from interaction with local people had deepened his understanding of the reasons behind different social service practices in mainland China and Hong Kong. This contributed to his professional competence. Another social work student taking part in a SLP also developed a better understanding of the differences in how children in Hong Kong and mainland China behave, after an immersive teaching experience in a Mainland school. Their reflections are as follows:

- *“It’s commonly regarded that the system and culture in Hong Kong are very different from those in mainland China. As a student majoring in social work, the programme provided me with a good opportunity to know about rural areas in mainland China. After I had visited the community, and talked with local people, I understood the unique way of social work practice in Chinese rural areas, which*

*is totally different from what we do in Hong Kong ... For example, social services could be easily conducted at community level in rural areas of the Mainland because there were strong connections among villagers. However, in Hong Kong, social services are mainly provided at group or individual levels because social ties are not that strong. Overall, I learned a lot from the practices of local NGOs".* (Student 04 in CTP02)

- *"For me as a social work student, the greatest learning gain was the experience of getting along with local children in mainland China. Our profession requires us to learn how to communicate effectively with clients at different ages. Previously, I only had interactions with Hong Kong children through private tutoring. Through the teaching practice in this programme, I discovered that the behaviours and development of children in mainland and Hong Kong children were very different in some respects, and I shall consider these characteristics when I interact with them".* (Student 17 in SLP05)

#### *A deeper understanding of Chinese people*

Many students shared that their observations of the cultural differences in the lifestyles of people from the Mainland had made them reflect on their own culture and lifestyle. They were also more able to view things from a culturally different perspective and to be more tolerant of such differences; that is, they displayed an increased level of cultural empathy. These learning outcomes are illustrated in the following narratives:

- *"Unlike the rapid pace of life in Hong Kong, the lifestyle in Xi'an was more relaxed. People looked happy and satisfied, even the middle-aged working class. They seemed to have little stress .... The atmosphere there was more relaxing and pleasant than in Hong Kong. This is the way of living I have been longing for".* (Student 07 in STP04)
- *"I observed that in mainland China, people often stand quite close to each other when queueing in lines, which is considered inappropriate in Hong Kong. But later on, I realised that they did so because they didn't want to provide space for other people to jump the queue".* (Student 13 in STP05)

- *“I liked to chat with the coach driver during the programme and I was able to find out more about the life stories of people in mainland China through our conversations. I enjoy listening to these stories and found them not only interesting but inspiring”.* (Student 20 in SLP04)

#### **4.1.2 Changed Attitudes and Perceptions about Mainland China and Chinese People**

##### Rapid economic and social development

The rapid development of the economy and e-commerce in mainland China, as observed by the students, had a significant impact on their views about the nation. This was also one of the most frequent observations made in the student interviews. Students identified gaps between their preconceptions of China and real Chinese society. The following narratives illustrate these shifts:

- *“Before the STP, I had heard of the popularity of Alipay and WeChat Pay in mainland China, but I was concerned about whether such practices would cause inconvenience to me. But when I arrived there, I found that mobile payment was very easy to use ... I also learned to order take-away food on my mobile phone. I did find the technological development in mainland China more advanced than that of Hong Kong, which was out of my expectations”.* (Student 08 in STP04)
- *“I found that general prices in mainland China were almost the same as that of Hong Kong, and they were much higher than I had expected”.* (Student 10 in STP02)
- *“The society is more harmonious and civilized than I had perceived in the past...One thing that impressed me was that there were female-only subway cars, which we don't have in Hong Kong”.* (Student 25 in CTP01)

### Warm-hearted, kind, and tolerant Chinese people

Through the programmes, students also changed their perceptions of the people of mainland China. They came to view them as warm-hearted, tolerant, and kind. Students spoke of the help they had received from the Chinese people they had encountered during the trip. Local people and children had always been willing to trust and help them, even though they did not know each other. This also made the students reflect on Hong Kong society and its cultural differences, as shown in these examples:

- *“When we were visiting the Summer Palace in Beijing, a warm-hearted uncle came to us and said he was very familiar with the surroundings. He then showed us around and gave us suggestions on places worth visiting. It was a pleasant experience and I appreciated his help”. (Student 09 in STP02)*
- *“Although we were strangers to the local villagers, they completely believed in us, without suspecting our motives to teach their children. This deeply impressed me and led me to reflect on our society, where we hardly trust others and tend to have concerns when being treated very well by others. I thus highly treasured the trust I received from the local people. I would say that people in Hong Kong would consider it dangerous if a stranger wanted to visit their homes, but in that village, all the parents accepted us to conduct home visits. I wish there could be more such kind of trust in our lives”. (Student 42 in SLP08)*
- *“I think children in mainland China were very passionate. They were very interested in knowing about us and learning to speak Cantonese. Although they knew that our visit to the summer camp only lasted for a few days, they still participated actively in our classes and took notes carefully. I really appreciated their learning attitude”. (Student 16 in SLP05)*

### Open-minded and knowledgeable university students in mainland China

Hong Kong undergraduate students’ attitudes toward their compatriots in mainland China also changed for the better as a result of their frequent communication. Hong Kong students no longer subscribed to the common stereotype of Mainland students as distant, rigid, and conservative. Instead, they came to view them as very friendly, open-minded,



and knowledgeable. The following narratives demonstrate these attitudinal changes through experiences on the programmes:

- *“I changed my views about university students in mainland China. Their university was international and the students I met were very hospitable and easy-going. Originally, I thought they would only make friends with their own people, but they were actually very open-minded and tolerant. I also learned a lot from them during our group discussions. My groupmates from mainland China majored in international relations, but they also had good knowledge in other disciplines such as economics and philosophy. I found many of them were versatile and I could learn from them”.* (Student 12 in STP02)
- *“Before joining this programme, I thought the students in the Mainland and Hong Kong were totally different in terms of culture and ideology. However, through the interactions with students in Yunnan University, I found that we actually shared many things in common. They were very open to diversity and willing to share”.* (Student 05 in CTP02)
- *“The local university students we interacted with were very passionate and open-minded; we didn’t feel that there was a gap between us”.* (Student 25 in CTP01)

## **4.2 Facilitators of, and Barriers to, Effective Learning at the Individual Level**

### **4.2.1 Facilitators**

#### *Strong internal motivation and proactive attitudes toward the programme*

Students saw their own inner motivation and passion to explore a new culture as facilitating their learning from the programmes. They showed a strong interest in the programmes and were curious about the culture of the Chinese society they were going to visit. They also took the initiative to explore places not included in the programme schedule, such as those recommended by local students, and reported receiving unique learning benefits from such experiences. Two STP students shared as follows:

- *“I think I am very curious about Chinese culture. I wanted to explore different places in Xi’an. Instead of looking at the photos online, I wanted to visit there and*

*see/feel what they were like. Whenever local students recommended a place to me, I was very interested in going there. I think this attitude helped me gain a more in-depth understanding of the features of Xi'an". (Student 07 in STP04)*

- *"I had high expectations about the programme, and I love visiting new places and experiencing new cultures. I spent time to explore locations other than famous tourist attractions to experience the authenticity of the city. During the programme, we went to a variety of local stores and chatted with the owners. I consider it a special way of experiencing culture". (Student 08 in STP04)*

#### *High level of openness to diversity and willingness to communicate*

Students with a high level of openness and a strong willingness to communicate with local people reported themselves as having benefited substantially from the programmes. They described being interested in hearing local people's life stories and perceived these stories as influential in their own lives. Students also reported having gained a deeper understanding of the local context and people as a result of having proactively interacted with teachers and students at the local Chinese university. In addition, some highlighted the importance of avoiding negative preconceptions when observing cultural differences. The following narratives illustrate their opinions:

- *"I am always willing to talk and open myself up to others. I try not to be affected by stereotypes. This greatly facilitated my understanding of mainland China during the programme. I wouldn't have gained such in-depth knowledge if I viewed the differences between Hong Kong and mainland from a negative and biased viewpoint". (Student 16 in SLP05)*
- *"I love to interact with different people and listen to their life stories. In this programme, I was deeply impressed by the experience of surviving an earthquake and recovering from the trauma shared by local people. It has had a positive impact on me". (Student 06 in CTP02)*
- *"I love to learn different things and I want to have more cultural exchange experiences in my university life. Therefore, I proactively talked to the local*

*students and teacher, through which I learned a lot more about their cultures and lives”. (Student 20 in SLP04)*

#### **4.2.2 Barriers**

##### *Passive attitudes toward classroom learning*

Some students mentioned that passive attitudes toward classroom learning and a lack of motivation to participate in organised activities had affected the effectiveness of their learning. Several STP students reported that they had not been fully engaged, partly because the programme was not credit-bearing:

- *“I couldn’t pay attention during lectures. We were not taking a credit-bearing subject. I think sometimes I missed what the teachers were lecturing...” (Student 08 in STP04)*
- *“I don’t like to sit there and listen to the lectures, particularly the theoretically based ones. Some students from mainland China and from Taiwan were more serious than us because they can earn credit from the programme”. (Student 07 in STP04)*

##### *Low motivation to interact with people from a different culture*

Similarly, some students described themselves as having low motivation to take part in arranged activities and intercultural interactions, which presented a barrier to their learning. They would rather hang around with people of the same background than interact with students from other cultural backgrounds, as illustrated by these examples:

- *“We didn’t proactively seek opportunities to interact with Mainland students. We spoke Cantonese whenever possible and only used Putonghua when necessary”. (Student 03 in CTP03)*
- *“I was silent in class, just like a very typical student in Hong Kong. I did not like to answer questions and preferred to listen. I felt more comfortable when my groupmates were all students from Hong Kong”. (Student 16 in CTP05)*

### 4.3 Facilitators of, and Barriers to, Effective Learning at Programme Level

#### 4.3.1 Peer-Level Facilitators

##### Supportive peer relationships

Supportive peer relationships were regarded as an important facilitator of students' learning. Having peers who cared about each other and were willing to help had had a positive impact on the whole group's learning, as reflected in the following narratives:

- *“My group consisted of six members and we supported each other. One member was fluent in Putonghua, so he assisted the programme leader in coordinating the arrangement. This facilitated our learning in the local university”.* (Student 18 in SLP05)
- *“One member of my group was very good at time management and helped us set deadlines for each project. We were then able to finish the project efficiently and smoothly”.* (Student 08 in STP04)
- *“I learned a lot from my group because we each had different personal traits and strengths. For example, some members were very considerate and cared about others' feelings. Other members were realistic and would work in an efficient way”.* (Student 19 in SLP07)

##### Highly motivated students as role models

Students also regarded their highly motivated peers, who were passionate and actively participated in the programme activities, as role models promoting others' learning:

- *“We had some very active members in the programme. They were passionate and always wanted to experience new things. Their positive energy also affected us in a good way. Together we integrated into the local culture well”.* (Student 10 in STP02)
- *“There was a student from Macao in my group who was very proactive in participating in activities. He also performed in our evening show, which was very brave. I learned this positive attitude from him”.* (Student 29 in CTP07)

### 4.3.2 Peer-Level Barriers

#### Peers' lack of motivation and negative learning atmosphere

On the other hand, being in a peer group with low motivation to learn was seen as creating a negative learning atmosphere that would hinder the effectiveness of individual students' learning. For instance, some students mentioned having been disturbed by groupmates who watched videos and played games during lectures. Some students had gradually lost their motivation to practice Mandarin under the influence of their peers' passive attitudes:

- *“To be honest, the Hong Kong students in my group did not behave well. When we were having lectures in the classroom, they were watching video clips and playing computer games. This was quite annoying and affected my own learning”.* (Student 07 in STP04)
- *“Initially, I wanted to grab the opportunity to practice my Putonghua because I was going to take the Putonghua proficiency test. However, my groupmates thought that traveling in Beijing was more important than the test, as we would pass it anyway. They also persuaded me to spend more time playing. My intention to practice Putonghua was therefore greatly weakened”.* (Student 24 in CTP06)

#### Low team spirit and interpersonal conflict

As well as this, some students reported that ineffective group leaders and interpersonal conflicts among team members had also reduced their motivation to work together and to learn. If the group was unable to resolve conflicts or disagreements among peers, the whole team's working alliance and morale was undermined:

- *“One of our group members served as the group leader to communicate with our teacher, but he often neglected our feedback and suggestions. We could do nothing about it because he was the person in charge”.* (Student 17 in SLP05)
- *“There were some conflicts during our discussion process and some quarrels among team members, which were not handled well. Sometimes we just stopped our discussions and our group leader also kept silent. These conflicts negatively influenced the whole team's spirit and our group work”.* (Student 21 in SLP04)

### 4.3.3 Staff-Level Facilitators

#### Teachers' passion and dedication

Teachers' passion for, and dedication to, the programmes were perceived by students as a strong facilitator of their learning. They described how dedicated teachers had created different opportunities for them to experience the local culture and take part in more frequent intercultural communication. As the narratives below illustrate, the students greatly valued the companionship and timely feedback provided by the teachers:

- *“The teacher often had meals with us and used the time to chat with us. He found a student from Xi’an Jiaotong University to serve as our tourist guide showing us around the campus. We were then able to visit different libraries, canteens, and student halls, to experience the real life of university students in mainland China. We also had many in-depth communications with local university students on such informal occasions, which enabled us to know more about each other”.* (Student 08 in STP04)
- *“I think the teacher was very dedicated. She shared a lot of her past experiences in the city and in leading the programme. Her passion also motivated me to explore this city”.* (Student 19 in SLP 07)

#### Teachers' familiarity with the local context and knowledge of Chinese culture

As reflected in the narratives below, CTP students mentioned that the programme staff were very familiar with local society and had offered them many useful tips, which helped them to experience the local culture in more depth:

- *“We had a teacher who was a local to Yunnan and he was very familiar with the local community. He recommended us a few places with unique cultural characteristics. Besides, he gave us many tips on traveling in the local area and on safety issues”.* (Student 06 in CTP02)
- *“The teachers led us to different visiting spots and provided us with useful information on local food and transportation”.* (Student 27 in CTP05)

### Teachers' responsiveness and care

Many students said that their teachers' responsiveness and willingness to help was one of the most important facilitators of their learning. Students had benefited the most when fully informed of the programme arrangements by the teacher and when their questions were answered in a timely manner. They also appreciated it when teachers cared about their lives and made the effort to provide continuous and constructive feedback on their performance throughout the programme. This last point is highlighted by some of the SLP students as follows:

- *“When I was providing service in the local primary school, my teacher sat in my class to observe. She gave me very comprehensive feedback on how to improve. These timely suggestions were useful and I could immediately adopt them in my next class. I appreciate my teacher's help”.* (Student 01 in SLP05)
- *“The teacher in my programme was very caring and always willing to help me. I knew that I could seek help from her whenever I encountered difficulties in my study or in my life”.* (Student 35 in SLP04)
- *“I frequently came to my teachers to ask questions and the teachers were always available. This helped a lot in my learning. In Hong Kong, I used to write emails to my professors when I have questions, which was not so efficient”.* (Student 10 in STP02)

#### **4.3.4 Staff-Level Barriers**

##### Insufficient interaction with programme leaders

A few students reported that their lack of interaction with the programme staff or teachers (particularly those from the partner universities in mainland China) was a barrier to their learning. As the following narratives illustrate, some programme leaders had only performed the minimum amount of work, in terms of making the daily arrangements, and showed little intention to communicate with students:

- *“I didn't talk to the local teacher very often. Usually he just informed us of the schedules in our group chat. We felt that he was distant and unapproachable.”*

*There was one time that a pre-scheduled visit was cancelled but we didn't know at all. The local teacher changed the activity without notifying us in advance which was a frustrating experience". (Student 09 in STP02)*

- *"The teacher in the local university just took us to different visiting spots but rarely interacted with us. The atmosphere was not so good. It would have been helpful if he could have shared with us more about the local culture or history behind the visiting spots". (Student 25 in CTP01)*

#### **4.3.5 Programme Design-Level Facilitators**

##### *Appropriate schedules and well-organized cultural activities*

Students reported that they had enjoyed programmes with clear objectives, appropriate scheduling, and carefully designed activities. In particular, many of them felt that they had got the most out of programmes where the schedules had been appropriately arranged and the activities offered them different types of cultural exposure. For example, the following STP students reported that the programmes had offered them a good balance of experiential activities and free time to explore the city, which had enabled them to maximise their learning opportunities:

- *"This programme lasted for two weeks and I think the length is just right. We also had enough time to visit different new places and try local cuisines". (Student 08 in STP04)*
- *"I think the arrangement was quite good. I not only attended classes but also joined sessions about introducing Beijing University, took campus tours, visited the museum, and experienced a local citizen's life". (Student 10 in STP02)*

##### *Incorporating interactive and practical elements*

SLP students also said they had been provided with a variety of learning activities; the service component in particular had given them the time and opportunity to interact with local people, as well as applying classroom knowledge to real-life practice:

- *"I appreciated the amount of opportunities we were given to interact with local*



students. We attended lectures and ate meals together afterwards. We also took a small trip to the museum. This design enabled us to have some in-depth communication”. (Student 01 in SLP05)

- “One thing I liked about the programme design was the integration of knowledge and practice. In my home university, I did not know how to apply the knowledge into real-life situations. But in this programme, I was able to use what I had just learned to teach the children, which was an effective learning process”. (Student 16 in SLP05)

#### **4.3.6 Programme Design-Level Barriers**

##### Inadequate opportunities to interact with local students

Some students felt that they had not been given enough chance to interact with local students, which hampered their learning about intercultural competence. The examples below illustrate how these students’ expectations of being able to get to know and socialise with local students had not been met:

- “More opportunities should be given for us to interact with students in mainland China, not just with the programme leaders/coordinators”. (Student 11 in STP02)
- “We had few chances to get along with local students in leisure time. Some students from mainland China left after class. There were not enough time and opportunities for us to know more about each other. Future programmes may consider an increase in such opportunities”. (Student 12 in STP02)

##### Unexpected changes to scheduled activities

Some unexpected changes to the programme arrangements were also reported by some students. These had negatively affected their morale and motivation, as these comments demonstrate:

- “We went to a tourist spot as part of the scheduled activities, and when we got there it was already closed. We were very unhappy because nobody informed us of this arrangement”. (Student 33 in CTP10)

- *“Although the schedule was full, the implementation process was not ideal. The first day was a mess and in the second day we ran out of time. Sometimes the instructions were not clear enough and resulted in chaos”.* (Student 02 in CTP03)

## Chapter 5. Findings from the Individual Interviews with Teachers

### 5.1 Observations about the Impact on Students

#### 5.1.1 Changed Attitudes and Perceptions about Mainland China and Chinese People

##### Positive changes in students' perceptions mainland China

Most teachers said that they had observed positive changes in students' attitudes and perceptions about mainland China after participating in the programmes. First and foremost, their preconceptions of mainland China as a poor and underdeveloped society had changed completely as a result of having personally witnessed and experienced its economic development and technological innovation. A number of the Hong Kong students had never visited the Mainland before. After participating in the programmes, these students had broadened their horizons and changed their stereotyped views, as the following comments illustrate:

- *“During our visit to Liaoning Technology Museum, the students shared with me they were surprised to find that the Mainland had such rapid technological development as Hong Kong”. (Teacher 04 in CTP04)*
- *“Before the trip, many students held the opinion that mainland China remains very poor and underdeveloped. During our trip, the students came to realise that nowadays Chinese society is prosperous and harmonious. For these students who had rarely visited the Mainland, this programme indeed broadened their horizons”. (Teacher 12 in SLP04)*
- *“China has undergone a remarkable economic development process, in both western and eastern areas, and I believe the students from Hong Kong and Macau could feel this”. (Teacher 06 in CTP10)*

As well as this, some teachers mentioned that after visiting these flourishing Chinese cities, students had expressed an interest in internship and career opportunities in mainland China. As one teacher observed, the students now perceived cities in mainland China, especially mega cities like Shanghai, as having a variety of opportunities:

- *“Many students, especially business students, have said to me that they are likely*

*to visit Shanghai again or they would choose other cities in the Mainland because of the variety of opportunities. I think this is one of their positive changes”.*  
(Teacher 12 in SLP04)

#### Increased interest in learning about Chinese culture and visiting the Mainland

Teachers also observed students’ increased interest in learning more about the Mainland and Chinese culture. They reported that students’ immersion in local life during the programmes had motivated them to learn more about Chinese culture. Many students had told them that they would visit mainland China again in the near future. They had also formed more positive attitudes toward local people and showed appreciation and respect for their unique cultural values:

- *“The more the students understand the Mainland, the more interested they became in learning about the Chinese. Through this programme, my students formed a favourable impression of the people of northeast China, and greatly appreciated their attitudes and values. They also had the opportunity to experience a completely different way of life”.* (Teacher 04 in CTP04)
- *“Some students in my class had rarely visited mainland China before. After the trip to Hangzhou, they were fascinated by the beautiful city and the convenience of Alipay. Many of them said that they plan to visit the Mainland more often in the future. As far as I know, three students enrolled in another study-in-China programme after our trip”.* (Teacher 13 in SLP05)

### **5.1.2 Enhanced Intercultural Competence**

#### Improved language proficiency

Another notable change in the students observed by their teachers was improved language skills, which enabled them to interact with local people more easily. Some teachers explicitly pointed out that the students had found themselves more capable of speaking and thinking in Mandarin after completing the programmes:

- *“Some of my students said ‘Oh, I can now use Mandarin to speak and to think’. Commonly, native Hong Kong students would first think in Cantonese and then*

*translate to Mandarin. But after 10 days, the students were able to organise their language in Mandarin instead of just translating”. (Teacher 12 in SLP04)*

### Improved cultural adaptability

As well as improving their language skills, teachers also saw their students becoming more adaptable to the new environment. Although some were initially shy, they gradually took the initiative to interact with local students and make friends. One SLP teacher described how that her students had been able to build close relationships with elderly people in the community:

- *“Being in a new environment with strangers was a bit stressful for the Hong Kong students at the beginning, but during the trip I witnessed changes in their openness. From only chatting among themselves at first, to talking with university students of mainland China, to interacting with local people. They became more and more culturally adaptable”. (Teacher 08 in STP04)*
- *“I think the students have changed a lot. For example, they didn’t dare to talk to the elderly at the beginning, but later on, they had very good interaction every day and established close relationships with the villagers. On the last day we hugged the villagers to say goodbye, and many of the elderly cried when they saw us leave”. (Teacher 10 in SLP01)*

Some teachers also observed students making an effort to adapt to the eating habits of local people:

- *“The students could not get used to the food in Lanzhou, because local people love to eat lamb and spicy food, especially those living in the areas we visited. However, the students did try their best to adapt to it”. (Teacher 5 in CTP09)*

### Increased respect for cultural diversity

The CTP teachers also reported their students’ respect for cultural diversity had grown after experiencing the inclusion of various ethnic groups in mainland China. In one CTP that had taken place in Lanzhou, students had the chance to experience the harmonious co-existence of cultures from diverse ethnic groups, such as the Tibetans, the Hui, and the Han Chinese. These

teachers believed that learning in such a multicultural and culturally diverse environment had had a positive impact on students, as illustrated in this narrative:

- *“From a cultural perspective, a unique feature of Northeast China is the inclusion of ethnic groups, such as the Tibetan, Hui, and Han Chinese. This cultural inclusion and diversity thus motivated our students to be more open-minded and respectful about different cultures”.* (Teacher 06 in CTP10)

## **5.2 Facilitators of Effective Programme Implementation**

### Guided reflection

Teachers generally considered guided reflective activities to be a critical facilitator of students’ learning. They took the view that students’ critical reflection on their experiences served as an essential component of transformative learning. Such reflection had helped the students to reassess and analyse their views, feelings, and behaviours, leading to new insights being gained from their experiences. Some teachers commented on the reflective activities held in their programmes as follows:

- *“I often invited my students to reflect on the reasons why they participated in this programme instead of just spending the holiday in Hong Kong. I would remind them that traveling was only one of the aspects and what’s more important for them was to experience and to observe. When we experienced the cultural differences between Hong Kong and Xi’an, I would lead them to discuss what the reasons behind this might be? Geographical, historical, or other issues? Students found these activities thought provoking”.* (Teacher 08 in STP04)
- *“In fact, our reflection activities were very intensive. We had a reflection session every evening after dinner with different topics. At first the students could only think of a few points, but gradually they were able to think more critically and see a broader picture”.* (Teacher 11 in SLP02)

### Opportunities for cultural interaction and exposure

Most of the teachers recognised the importance of diverse cultural interaction and exposure. They believed that integrating into the local community had provided valuable opportunities

for the students to gain in-depth insights into the Mainland. For example, they commented that STP students had gained experiences of real life in Mainland universities through joining local student societies. In one of the CTPs, students had also participated in teaching at local primary schools, which enabled them to learn more about the education system, teaching and learning modes, and child development in the context of mainland China. These practices are illustrated in the following narratives:

- *“Apart from lectures, students joined student societies and interest clubs together with local students in the host university in mainland China. Students gained new insights from these real-life experiences as a university student in the Mainland”*. (Teacher 07 in STP03)
- *“We provided opportunities for students to participate in the teaching processes of local primary schools, in order to help them better understand educational development in mainland China. We also organized cultural exchange activities, where the children taught the Hong Kong students to sing. I believe these cultural interaction benefit our students and became unforgettable memories for the local children and our students”*. (Teacher 06 in CTP10)

#### *Incorporating cultural features*

Some teachers suggested that the integration of certain cultural features in their programmes had engaged the students more effectively. For example, a series of workshops had been run on one of the CTPs focusing on specific topics related to local culture, which had greatly increased their interest in the programme. Another CTP had offered students opportunities to work on some cultural products with local residents. These arrangement encouraged participation and motivation to learn among the students:

- *“One unique feature of our programme was the targeted activity design based on the characteristics of cultural sites. For example, we didn’t just show them around, but also provided opportunities for them to interact and conduct group activities with local residents”*. (Teacher 05 in CTP09)

- *“Our cultural activities included designing papercuts of the Dunhuang Cave paintings and role playing with our tour guide, through which the students gained a lot of fun and rich cultural experiences”.* (Teacher 06 in CTP10)

### **5.3 Barriers to Effective Programme Implementation**

#### *Tight and overwhelming programme schedule*

Teachers pointed out that in some programmes the schedule was too tight, which had reduced the effectiveness of implementation. One STP teacher commented that due to the collaborative nature of the programme, the schedule had been arranged by both of the participating universities. This resulted in a busy and exhausting programme, with students having to complete quite a number of tasks. Another teacher from a SLP expressed similar views, suggesting that the teaching workload for students should be reduced so that they could have more time to explore the village with the children. The following comments illustrate these concerns:

- *“The schedule was too tight. Both the collaborative university and our university arranged the series of activities. All the activities were meaningful, but the schedule was overly tight. I think students should be given more free time”.* (Teacher 08 in STP04)
- *“I think we need to alleviate the teaching workload of students. They were fully occupied with teaching every day and had no time to explore the local village. I would suggest having a half-day’s free time each day so that they could walk around with the children. This would be a good way of mutual learning as well.* (Teacher 16 in SLP08)

#### *Insufficient communication with students*

Some teachers perceived a lack of communication with students as another obstacle. For example, the tasks and activities were more appealing to some students than others. Those less interested did not participate fully, which affected their learning outcomes. Some teachers reflected that they should have discussed the students’ views and suggestions more, in order to meet their needs more effectively:



- *“I should have better understood their needs and expectations. I found that some students enjoyed the activities while others found them boring. Students’ different voices should have been heard”.* (Teacher 05 in CTP09)
- *“I think I need to communicate with students more often in future programmes, especially in the aspect of promoting their interactions. I will put forward this initiative next year”.* (Teacher 05 in CTP09)

## Chapter 6. Policy Implication and Recommendations

### 6.1 Promote Short-Term Study-in-China Programmes for University Students in Hong Kong

*The findings suggest that short-term study-in-China programmes have significant impacts on students' intercultural competence. Students who had participated in short-term study-in-China programmes displayed higher levels of intercultural effectiveness and intercultural communication awareness. All three types of study-in-China programme, summer term programmes (STP), cultural tour programmes (CTP), and service learning programmes (SLP), showed significant impact on students' development of intercultural competence.*

The increasingly globalized world has raised awareness in higher education institutions that university students must be equipped with intercultural competence so that they can function well as both global professionals and responsible citizens when they enter society. The present findings show that short-term study-in-China programmes can successfully promote local Hong Kong university students' development of intercultural competence as a critical element of global readiness. Short-term study-in-mainland China programmes are more cost-effective and flexible than long-term study abroad programmes, and more people can benefit from them. As such, we propose vigorous promotion of additional opportunities for university students in Hong Kong to join short-term study-in-China programmes. Specifically, the government could take the following measures.

- **Allocate extra resources to support existing programmes**

Effective resource allocation is of vital importance to ensure programme quality. We suggest that extra resources should be allocated to existing short-term study-in-China programmes. Resources could be used to recruit staff and to conduct programme reviews and revamping for the purpose of improving programme quality. Different levels of subsidy could also be provided to participants with financial difficulties so that more students can benefit from the programmes. For instance, the HKSAR government could increase its funding support for the Mainland Experience Scheme, while the central government should consider improving the stability and widening the scope of the 10,000 people scheme.

- **Set up a specific fund to encourage the development of such programmes**

A specific fund could be set up to encourage and support professionals to develop and

implement high-quality study-in-China programmes in higher education institutions in Hong Kong. The University Grants Committee should launch special Teaching Development Grant Projects to support related initiatives. The Home Affairs Bureau and Youth Development Commission have been providing annual funding for local NGOs to organize youth exchange tours to the Mainland since 2015. Similar scheme could be set up exclusively for short-term study-in-China programmes for students in Hong Kong higher education institutions.

- **Integrate study-in-China/overseas programmes into graduation requirements**

University higher management could consider making short-term study abroad experience, including study in mainland China, a compulsory graduation requirement for undergraduate students, to better equip them with intercultural competence before they enter society. Similar strategies have been adopted in several local universities. For example, at The University of Hong Kong, students of the Faculty of Social Sciences are required to complete a credit-bearing social innovation (SI) internship and global citizenship (GC) activities including a variety of overseas internships, exchange programmes, and summer programmes, before they graduate. Similarly, students at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) must fulfil a graduation requirement of service learning. Such practices with a focus on short-term study abroad experiences could be further promoted in other UGC-funded universities.

- **Enhance collaboration with mainland China to explore new initiatives**

In addition, it is necessary to strengthen and expand collaboration with educational and cultural organizations and universities in mainland China. Universities in Hong Kong should take additional initiatives to connect with more reputable universities in mainland China and to explore new modes of study-in-China programme, such as short-term exchanges and winter term programmes with updated programme designs. Cross-institutional academic programmes with short-term student visit schemes could also be promoted by increasing the number of visiting students. Currently active programmes with credit-bearing subjects should explore more efficient and workable systems of credit recognition for students on both sides.

## 6.2 Promote Short-Term Study-in-China Experiences

*Students who had participated in short-term study-in China programmes showed more positive perceptions of mainland China and more positive attitudes towards the people of mainland China. In terms of different programme modes, both STPs and SLPs had significant and positive impacts on students' perceptions of mainland China and attitudes towards its people, while the impact of CTPs on students' development in this area was non-significant.*

- **Promote the integration of short-term study-in-China experiences into other learning experience in secondary schools**

Recent reports have shown that Hong Kong secondary school students have generally unfavourable perceptions of the Mainland and negative attitudes towards its people. Our findings support that short-term study-in-China experiences based on service learning and STPs have positively changed local Hong Kong youth's perceptions and attitudes regarding the Mainland and Chinese people. Therefore, it is suggested that such experiences could be further integrated into other learning experiences in secondary school settings to enhance adolescents' understanding of the country. Liberal Studies is one of the core subjects of the secondary education curriculum in Hong Kong, and "modern China," one of the modules covered, aims to enhance students' in-depth understanding and critical thinking regarding contemporary China's economic, social, and political development. To better help secondary school students develop these skills and form a comprehensive picture of modern China, study-in-China experiences could be incorporated into the Liberal Studies curriculum. Students' direct interaction with people from mainland China and exposure to mainland Chinese culture would enable them to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the country as well as to overcome prejudice.

- **Strengthen the service learning element in the undergraduate curriculum**

Higher education institutions could optimize existing short-term study-in-China programmes by allocating more resources to summer term and service learning programmes, as these two types of programme have demonstrated stronger impacts on students. Specifically, service learning elements have been emphasized in the undergraduate curriculum in several local universities and have shown significant impact on students' development of interpersonal competence, citizenship, and social responsibility (PolyU, 2018; HKU, 2018). The present findings further indicate that service learning is an effective educational experience for university students that should be strengthened in the

undergraduate curriculum framework. This can be done, for example, by establishing service learning as an academic credit-bearing subject, or making the completion of service-learning activities a required component of undergraduate education.

### **6.3 Promote Best Practices and Information Exchange among Universities through a Common Platform**

*High programme quality significantly predicted positive changes in students' intercultural communication awareness, general perceptions of mainland China, and identification with and recognition of the nation. Students benefit most from programmes with clear objectives, good design, carefully arranged activities, smooth implementation, and efficient information delivery.*

Programme quality, including clear objectives, good design, carefully arranged components, smooth implementation, and efficient information delivery, plays a fundamental role in determining students' overall experience and learning outcomes. According to our research findings, high programme quality is significantly associated with students' effective learning outcomes in terms of intercultural communication awareness, general perceptions of mainland China, and identification with and recognition of the nation. Since the implementation of short-term study-in-China programmes is different in each university, it would be worthwhile to establish a commonly shared platform to promote best practices and information exchange among universities.

- **Identify and introduce high-quality programmes as examples of best practice**

High-quality programmes could be identified and introduced as examples of best practice, and to serve as guides and benchmarks for other programmes. Relevant information of best practice with other resources could be shared by various means, via online sessions, workshops, and reports, through a common platform for Hong Kong universities and partner universities from the Mainland. This would allow valuable experiences of successful implementation and new insights gained from one programme to be effectively shared with organizers and professionals of other programmes, enhancing learning and overall quality.

- **Establish a database and clearinghouse for programme documentation**

It would also be beneficial to establish a database that contains comprehensive information about available study-in-China programmes so that students from any university can

compare and choose programmes that interest them. The HKSAR government can provide funding for universities to set up a clearinghouse to document validated and effective programmes to better inform future policymakers.

#### **6.4 Empower Students to Play an Active Role**

*Students who had participated in short-term study-in-China programmes and those who had higher expectations of the programmes' effectiveness on their intercultural competence development showed more significant improvement in intercultural communication awareness than did those without prior experiences of participating in such programmes and those with lower expectations of intercultural competence development.*

*Highly motivated peers in the programmes who cared about other students and actively participated in programme activities contributed to an atmosphere of positive and supportive interaction, which could greatly impact other students' learning. In contrast, peers' lack of initiative and motivation to learn, half-hearted attitude, lack of team spirit, and interpersonal conflicts formed a vicious circle that negatively affected students' learning gains from the programmes, especially for those who participated in non-credit-bearing programmes.*

Students' inner motivation to learn and peer influence play a significant role in shaping their learning outcomes. The present findings suggest that those who had higher expectations of enhancing their intercultural competence and partnered with supportive peers benefited more from the programmes. These findings imply that effective learning outcomes can be facilitated by increasing students' motivation and expectations of the programmes and by promoting positive peer influence. One possible strategy is to engage students who have joined such programs to work as mentors for students joining the programs for the first time.

- **Enhance students' motivation through orientation workshops**

Orientation workshops and other pre-trip activities can be provided to students, with an emphasis on introducing intercultural competence and other learning objectives. Through these workshops, students would gain a better understanding of the concept and importance of intercultural competence in today's globalized world. Effective approaches to developing intercultural competence could also be introduced. Such preparation would enhance students' motivation to develop themselves in the programmes and their awareness of applying the knowledge and methods learned when reflecting on their experiences and observations.

- **Introduce a student leader scheme to utilize positive peer influence**

To exert positive peer influence, student leader schemes can be introduced to study-in-China programmes: outstanding participants of previous programmes can be invited to share their experiences during the orientation workshops or join the programmes as mentors. For example, PolyU launched a service-learning scholarship scheme in 2013 to encourage students' continued engagement in community service and to nurture student leaders who support the development of service learning at the university. Students with excellent performance in service learning subjects are selected for scholarships annually. These student leaders demonstrate very positive impacts on newly enrolled students in the programmes. Similar schemes can be applied in short-term study-in-China programmes. Apart from institution-level support, universities can also consider establishing scholarships to recognize students with exceptional performance in study-in-China programmes.

- **Conduct team-building activities to enhance team cohesion**

Low team spirit and interpersonal conflicts have been reported as barriers to students' learning gains from the programmes. It is therefore suggested that team-building activities can be conducted before and throughout programmes to bolster team spirit and strengthen supportive relationships among team members. For example, team goal setting has been identified as an effective means of enhancing team cohesiveness (Senécal et al., 2008). Goal-setting activities can be incorporated into programmes by multifarious brainstorming games, discussing various approaches to achieve goals, and reflecting on and evaluating team progress. It is expected that through these activities, students can be more united and motivated to achieve shared learning outcomes.

## **6.5 Build Up the Capacity of University Staff as Leaders of Short-Term Study-in-China Programmes**

*High student-perceived teacher quality significantly predicted positive change in students' attitudes towards the people of mainland China. Having teaching staff who are well-prepared and passionate about the programme contributes to students' learning gains in terms of their attitudes towards mainland China. Program staff/subject teachers' dedication, responsiveness, familiarity with the local context, and knowledge about Chinese culture and society were identified as facilitators of the programme impact.*

Teacher quality is closely associated with students' positive programme experience and effective learning outcomes. Teachers' dedication to the programme will significantly motivate students to learn and participate. As shown by the present findings, well-prepared and passionate teaching staff significantly contributed to positive change in students' attitudes towards mainland China and its people. In order to promote teachers' capacity building, it is essential to provide them with adequate training regarding the core elements of these programmes.

- **Develop systematic training for present and potential programme leaders**

Systematic training programmes for current and potential programme leaders should be developed to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead study-in-China programmes, for example, basic concepts and theories of intercultural competence, skills in teaching global citizenship, the pedagogy of reflective teaching, and knowledge of modern Chinese society. A good example of such a teacher development programme is the project entitled "Cross-institutional Capacity Building for Service-Learning in Hong Kong Higher Education Institutions" initiated by PolyU with three other UGC-funded universities as collaborators. This project aims to empower teachers, providing them with tools and techniques to offer service learning classes and to foster cross-institutional collaboration on service learning projects. Similar initiatives targeting the empowerment of study-in-China programme leaders could be promoted. Both online and face-to-face training programs could be considered.

- **Evaluate existing training projects and provide opportunities for peer learning**

At the same time, universities can also make efforts to thoroughly evaluate the effectiveness of their existing training projects to build the capacity of teaching staff leading study-in-China programmes. In addition, regular cross-institutional seminars/symposia can be organized for teaching staff to share their experiences and promote peer learning.

## **6.6 Promote the Impact of Study-in-China Programmes to the Public**

*Students showed stronger Chinese citizen identity and reported placing greater importance on being a member of the Chinese race after completing the programmes. The perceived importance of all four types of identity (Hong Kong citizen, Chinese citizen, citizen of the PRC, and member of the Chinese race) were also strengthened.*



One of the factors hindering the promotion and popularity of study-in-China programmes is the general public's inadequate understanding of them. Some may be concerned that such activities will weaken students' identity as a Hong Kong citizen. As evidenced by the present research findings, while students reported stronger identification as a Chinese citizen after completing the programmes, their perceived identity as a Hong Kong citizen was also strengthened. This means that short-term study-in-China programmes will not result in a weakening of Hong Kong identity. It is of vital importance that these findings be disseminated to the public in order to reduce misunderstandings and concerns about participating in short-term study-in-China programmes.

- **Build up positive public perceptions of study-in-China programme experience through publicity materials**

A press conference can reach a wide range of audiences in the community. The dissemination of research findings via a press conference can arouse interest in study-in-China programmes among researchers, journalists, educators, and other interested parties. A press conference can not only help to build up positive perception of study-in-China programmes through the dissemination of findings, but also provide an opportunity for research teams to address misconceptions about such programmes among the general public.

Publicity materials such as leaflets and storybooks about study-in-China programmes and their positive impacts on student development can also be designed and distributed to the public by other means, such as through education fairs, programme orientation sessions, and university open days, to build up positive perception. Stories with high publicity value can be submitted to local television, newspapers, and social media to further enhance the impact and public awareness of these programmes.

- **Create opportunities for study-in-China programme participants to disseminate their experiences and feelings to the public**

Measures and opportunities can be developed to encourage participants on study-in-China programmes to share their experiences and thoughts about Mainland China with the public, verbally or in writing, in a variety of settings, such as primary/middle school sharing events, public forum communication, television interviews, newspaper/magazine columns, online

forum/social media posting. Universities can also invite students who have participated in study-in-China programmes to share their personal stories through official university Facebook pages, Instagram accounts, or YouTube channels. The use of online media is extremely prevalent now. The cost is low and it can easily reach large numbers of students. Online promotion of success stories from a first-person perspective can enhance the credibility of study-in-China programmes.

Information that comes from Hong Kong natives with first-hand experience of mainland China is more likely to be accepted by the public, to be perceived as providing a true and trustworthy picture of mainland China. Such sharing will also attract more people to join similar programmes in future.

### **6.7 Enhance Public Education on Chinese Society and Culture**

*Students showed more positive perceptions of mainland China and more positive attitudes towards its people after they had completed short-term study-in China programmes.*

*Students enjoyed their contact with local people in mainland China. Some had in-depth interactions with local university students. These interactions, along with students' own observations of Chinese society, not only deepened their understanding of contemporary China in terms of its economic and social development, but also changed some of their negative preconceptions about the nation and its people. Many students described the Chinese people they encountered on the trip as warm-hearted, tolerant, and knowledgeable. They appreciated the hospitality, erudition, and open-mindedness of their Chinese peers, which they had not expected before participating in these programmes.*

Interacting directly with Chinese people helps to mitigate prejudices and stereotypes. As reflected in our findings, students showed more positive perceptions and attitudes regarding mainland China and its people after participating in the programmes, which allowed them to interact directly with local people and observe mainland society. Specifically, students reported that they had abandoned some of their prejudices about mainland China, which were largely influenced by one-sided media stories.

Reports have shown that the public in Hong Kong tends to hold certain negative views of mainland China and Chinese people, especially influenced by escalating political tensions exacerbated by radical social media. Therefore, it is suggested that media exposure to Chinese

society and culture can be extended beyond the student population to reach the general public.

- **Provide service/voluntary opportunities in mainland China to the public**

Opportunities can be provided for Hong Kong citizens to join social service or volunteer programmes in mainland China so that they can gain direct exposure to mainland society and culture and interact with local people. Collaborations with NGOs and other social organizations can be strengthened through funding and material support in order to promote such tailor-made programmes for Hong Kong citizens.

- **Utilize the positive influence of the media to promote Chinese culture**

The government can also make good use of the positive influence of the media to give the general public a more comprehensive understanding of mainland China through cultural documentaries, promotional videos, and interviews with Hong Kong citizens who have experience of living or studying in mainland China. These can be made public via regular TV programmes, magazines, social medial channels, etc. to be more accessible to the general public.

- **Foster stronger collaboration between Hong Kong and China**

Universities should encourage stronger collaboration and knowledge exchange between Hong Kong citizens and local people in mainland China at all levels. Teachers can ensure the formation of students in a group project involving both Hong Kong and mainland students if possible. Such arrangements should aim to provide opportunities for Hong Kong locals to interact with Chinese people and foster the exchange of ideas and knowledge.

## **6.8 Fund Research Projects to Evaluate and Document the Long-Term Impact of Study-in-China Programme Experiences**

- **Support long-term or more comprehensive projects in this field**

The current research is the first study to investigate the impacts of short-term study-in-China programmes on university students' development. To gain a deeper understanding of programme outcomes, more holistic research is needed to further investigate 1) the long-term impacts of such programmes; 2) the effects of different types of programme; 3) the impacts on students at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels; and 4) the difference between short-term and long-term programmes. Sufficient funding is needed to encourage relevant studies. It is

also necessary to develop a database to accumulate relevant evaluation findings to further inform government policymakers.

- **Support Hong Kong-mainland China collaborative projects**

It is also important to support collaborative projects involving both Hong Kong researchers and their mainland Chinese partners to investigate and evaluate the design of study-in-China programmes. The contents, forms, and arrangements of different programmes can be optimized based on findings and data generated from these projects to enhance the quality and efficacy of study-in-China programmes. These findings are also relevant to other communication and exchanges between Hong Kong and mainland China and the corresponding policymaking.

- **Set up designated research grants for study-in-China programmes**

The government can consider setting up a designated research grant for studying the impact of study-in-China programmes. A designated research grant can help advance the quantity and quality of research in the area. The funding can also be used to monitor the quality of existing and future research related to study-in-China programmes. Effective quality control can help maintain the quality of research and ensure that it achieves research outcomes.

- **Organize symposia regularly to attract all researchers and educators in relevant fields, including international scholars, for exchanges of knowledge and ideas**

Universities can collaborate in organizing symposia in this area, which can attract scholars and educators from all over the world. Apart from providing insight and fostering knowledge exchange in the area, a symposium is a co-learning process and a good opportunity to disseminate research findings. Universities or research teams can consider inviting international scholars in the field of exchange programmes to participate in research and the programmes and act as observers throughout the research process. The neutral role of an observer can help enhance the credibility of the research.

## **Chapter 7. Additional Study**

Hong Kong society has experienced a series of social events triggered by the protests against the extradition bill in June 2019, which exacerbated tensions between Hong Kong and mainland China and intensified negative attitudes among Hong Kong youth towards the Mainland. To understand how university students perceive the potential opportunities to study in mainland China in the midst of the current social change in Hong Kong, an additional study was conducted to further investigate local university students' expectations of and attitudes towards short-term study-in-China programmes (including service learning, summer schools, and cultural tours) and their intention to participate in such programmes in the future. The present report provides a summary of the findings based on the data we collected between March and May 2020.

### **7.1 Methods**

#### **7.1.1 Participants**

All undergraduate students enrolled in a General Education subject in the second semester of the 2019/20 academic year at a UGC-funded university in Hong Kong were invited to participate in an online survey. Participation was voluntary, and students provided their consent online before proceeding to complete the questionnaire. A total of 805 local Hong Kong students completed the survey.

#### **7.1.2 Instruments**

The questionnaire consisted of items asking for students' basic demographic information and 14 items assessing their attitudes, motivation, and behavioural intention regarding participation in short-term study-in-China programmes.

First, six items were used to measure students' attitudes and expectations regarding short-term study-in-China programmes. Respondents were asked to indicate their opinions on six items on a six-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = slightly agree, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree):

- Short-term study in mainland China will help improve my intercultural competence.
- Short-term study in mainland China will give me a competitive advantage in the job market.

- Short-term study-in-China programmes are attractive to me.
- I am interested in joining a service learning subject/programme to provide short-term service in mainland China.
- I am interested in joining a summer school in mainland China.
- I am interested in joining a short cultural tour in mainland China.

Second, students' motivation to participate in short-term study-in-China programmes was measured with five items, rated on the same six-point Likert scale:

- I would take a short-term study-in-China programme because I am interested in knowing more about mainland China.
- I would take a short-term study-in-China programme as it would be a good opportunity to travel.
- I would take a short-term study-in-China programme if my parents asked me to do so.
- I would take a short-term study-in-China programme if my friend(s) recommended doing so.
- I would take a short-term study-in-China programme if the tuition fees were waived.

Third, three items were adopted to assess students' behavioural intention to participate in the three types of short-term study-in-China programme in the coming university years:

- Would you participate in a service learning subject/programme to provide short-term service in mainland China in the coming university years?
- Would you participate in a summer school in mainland China in the coming university years?
- Would you participate in a short cultural tour in mainland China in the coming university years?

Students responded to each item on a six-point scale (1 = absolutely not, 2 = very unlikely, 3 = unlikely, 4 = likely, 5 = very likely, and 6 = absolutely).

## 7.2 Results

The demographic information of the local Hong Kong university students who completed the online survey is summarized in Table 28. Among the 805 respondents, 444 (55.4%) were female and 44.6% ( $N = 357$ ) were male. Their mean age was 18.7 years old ( $SD = 1.05$ ), and the majority were first-year undergraduates (98.9%,  $N = 795$ ). More than half of the participants reported that their parents had received a secondary education (mother = 58.1%, father = 52.7%).

**Table 28** Demographic characteristics of participants ( $N = 805$ )

Characteristics	<i>N</i>	%
Age Mean ( <i>S.D.</i> )	18.7 (1.05)	
Gender		
Male	357	44.6
Female	444	55.4
Academic year		
Year 1	<b>795</b>	<b>98.9</b>
Year 2	6	0.7
Year 3	1	0.1
Year 4	1	0.1
Year 5	1	0.1
Maternal education level		
Primary education	89	11.1
Secondary education	<b>467</b>	<b>58.1</b>
College or Polytechnic	111	13.8
University or above	137	17.0
Paternal education level		
Primary education	88	10.9
Secondary education	<b>424</b>	<b>52.7</b>
College or Polytechnic	93	11.6
University or above	200	24.8

Table 29 summarizes the descriptive results of students' perceptions of and attitudes towards the programmes. Nearly half (49.5%) agreed that short-term study in mainland China would improve their intercultural competence. Similarly, 48.9% agreed that short-term programmes would give them a competitive advantage in the job market. However, the idea of short-term study in mainland China was attractive to only 28.4% of the students.

Regarding students' interest in joining the three different types of programme, 42.1% of the respondents were interested in SLPs while 57.9% were not. The results were similar for CTPs, with 40.4% positive responses and 59.6% negative. The summer school programme was perceived as the least attractive type, with less than a third of students (26.4%) showing interest in participation. Overall, the students showed moderate interest in joining short-term study programmes in mainland China. Service learning was the most appealing programme type, followed by cultural tours and summer schools.

Table 30 summarizes students' motivation to join short-term study programmes in mainland China: 43.2% of the participants responded that they would like to take a short-term study-in-China programme if the tuition fees were waived; 39.7% would take a programme as it offered a good opportunity to travel. More than a quarter of the students (27.5%) showed that they would join such programmes because they are interested in knowing more about the Mainland. Similarly, 25.5% would take study in mainland China because of their friends' recommendation. Only 15.6% would join such programmes because of their parents' opinion.

Table 31 reports students' behavioural intention to participate in short-term study-in-China programmes in the coming university year. Generally, students' intention to join these programmes were not very strong: 31.3% of the questionnaire respondents indicated that they intended to participate in SLPs in mainland China; 29.7% intended to join short cultural tours; and 20.7% reported they would attend a summer school in mainland China. Overall, the students who reported no intention of studying in mainland China outnumbered those who intended to do so. In terms of different programme modes, the students were most likely to participate in SLPs and least likely to take summer school programmes, consistent with their attitudes towards the three types of programme as shown in Table 29.

To sum up, the findings above illustrate that local university students' attitudes towards short-term study in mainland China were not favourable and their intention to join such programmes



in the coming university year was weak. SLPs were more attractive to the student respondents. The provision of tuition fee waivers, opportunities for students to travel, and previous students' recommendation, are likely to motivate students to join programmes.

### **7.3 Policy Recommendations**

- Our findings suggest that local Hong Kong undergraduates tend to hold unfavourable views of short-term study-in-China programmes. As revealed in our main study, regardless of students' original attitudes and expectations, these programmes had a positive impact on their development, especially in the areas of intercultural competence and perceptions and attitudes regarding mainland China. Therefore, we advocate that short-term study-in-China programmes be further promoted in higher education institutions with more active support from the government.
- Financial concerns are a major factor in whether students participate in study-in-China programmes, as suggested by our finding that nearly a quarter of Hong Kong students would take a short-term study-in-China programme if the tuition fees were waived. The government may therefore consider allocating more funding to support local students' participation.
- About a third of the students agreed that participating in study-in-China programmes would give them a competitive advantage in the job market. If such programmes directly benefited students in terms of their career development, it is likely that more students would be interested. Therefore, we suggest that study-in-China programmes incorporate career-oriented components, such as information sessions about the job market in mainland China, visits to well-known companies and meetings with Chinese entrepreneurs, and short-term practicum experience, to increase students' competitiveness in the job market.
- Considering the potential negative impacts of social movements on students' attitudes and perceptions regarding mainland China, it is vitally important to gain a more in-depth understanding of students' concerns about short-term study-in-China programmes. The HKSAR government should therefore encourage and support academic research in relevant topics.

**Table 29** Students' attitudes towards and expectations of short-term study-in-China programmes (*N* = 805)

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Negative Response	Positive Response
	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)
1. Short-term study in mainland China will help improve my intercultural competence.	163 (20.4)	120 (15.0)	121 (15.1)	268 (33.5)	118 (14.8)	10 (1.3)	404 (50.5)	396 (49.5)
2. Short-term study in mainland China will give me a competitive advantage in the job market.	140 (17.6)	134 (16.9)	132 (16.6)	264 (33.2)	111 (14.0)	14 (1.8)	406 (51.1)	389 (48.9)
3. Short-term study in mainland China is attractive to me.	261 (32.7)	162 (20.3)	149 (18.6)	149 (18.6)	65 (8.1)	13 (1.6)	572 (71.6)	227 (28.4)
4. I am interested in joining a service learning subject/programme to provide short-term service in mainland China.	196 (24.6)	135 (16.9)	131 (16.4)	222 (27.8)	97 (12.2)	17 (2.1)	462 (57.9)	336 (42.1)
5. I am interested in attending a summer school in mainland China.	266 (33.3)	169 (21.2)	153 (19.1)	146 (18.3)	52 (6.5)	13 (1.6)	588 (73.6)	211 (26.4)
6. I am interested in joining a short cultural tour in mainland China.	227 (28.4)	129 (16.1)	121 (15.1)	221 (27.6)	75 (9.4)	27 (3.4)	477 (59.6)	323 (40.4)

**Table 30** Students' motivation to join short-term study-in-China programmes (*N* = 805)

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Negative Response	Positive Response
	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)
1. I would take a short-term study-in-China programme because I am interested in knowing more about mainland China.	256 (32.0)	172 (21.5)	151 (18.9)	146 (18.3)	64 (8.0)	10 (1.3)	579 (72.5)	220 (27.5)
2. I would take a short-term study-in-China programme as it would be a good opportunity to travel.	233 (29.2)	136 (17.0)	113 (14.1)	196 (24.5)	103 (12.9)	18 (2.3)	482 (60.3)	317 (39.7)
3. I would take a short-term study-in-China programme if my parents asked me to do so.	322 (40.3)	220 (27.5)	133 (16.6)	97 (12.1)	23 (2.9)	5 (0.6)	675 (84.4)	125 (15.6)
4. I would take a short-term study-in-China programme if my friend(s) recommended doing so.	290 (36.3)	173 (21.7)	132 (16.5)	161 (20.2)	36 (4.5)	7 (0.9)	595 (74.5)	204 (25.5)
5. I would take a short-term study-in-China programme if the tuition fees were waived.	194 (24.3)	129 (16.2)	130 (16.3)	188 (23.6)	116 (14.6)	40 (5.0)	453 (56.8)	344 (43.2)

**Table 31** Students' behavioural intention to take a short-term study-in-China programme in the coming university year ( $N = 805$ )

Items	Absolutely No	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Likely	Very Likely	Absolutely Yes	Negative Response	Positive Response
	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)	<i>N</i> (%)
1. Would you participate in a service learning subject/programme to provide short-term service in mainland China in the coming university year?	190 (23.8)	147 (18.4)	212 (26.6)	211 (26.5)	27 (3.4)	10 (1.3)	549 (68.9)	248 (31.1)
2. Would you participate in a summer school in mainland China in the coming university year?	<b>239</b> <b>(29.9)</b>	169 (21.2)	225 (28.2)	137 (17.2)	19 (2.4)	9 (1.1)	633 (79.3)	165 (20.7)
3. Would you participate in a short cultural tour in mainland China in the coming university year?	200 (25.1)	158 (19.8)	203 (25.4)	200 (25.1)	25 (3.1)	12 (1.5)	561 (70.3)	237 (29.7)

## **Chapter 8. Details of the Public Dissemination Held**

1. The preliminary findings of the research was first presented in the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Service-Learning held between January 10 and 12, 2019 in Hong Kong to the conference participants, with the presentation title of “Service-Learning as a Vehicle to Promote Student Social Responsibility: A Qualitative Study.
2. A paper abstract based on the quantitative findings of the research was submitted to and accepted by The 32nd International Congress of Psychology originally scheduled on July 19 to 24, 2020 in Prague, the Czech Republic. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference has been rescheduled to 18-23 July, 2021. We plan to report our findings in the conference.
3. Part of our quantitative findings was presented in the International Conference on Discovery and Innovation in Social Work and Fieldwork Education held on June 19, 2020, in Hong Kong. The title of the presentation is “Impact of Short-Term Study-in-China Program on the Development of Hong Kong Local Undergraduates”.
4. We have prepared individual project report of seven service learning programmes to share with the programme teachers and leaders about the findings directly generated from their own programme.
5. We plan to hold a press conference about the findings of the research project. Press release will also be published on the University’s website. Once we confirm the details of the press conference, we will contact PICO.
6. We are going to publish academic papers based on the research findings. So far, we have drafted two manuscripts based on quantitative and qualitative findings, respectively. The papers will be submitted to Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education and Journal of Youth Studies.

## Chapter 9. Conclusion

Short-term study in mainland China experiences has been one major form for Hong Kong university students to gain exchange experience in mainland China, to understand the country, and to develop their intercultural competence. Notwithstanding, there is a paucity of study which systematically examines the learning outcomes of these study-in-China programmes. The present research investigated the impact and effectiveness of these programmes on the participants' development and examined factors that facilitated or hindered participants' learning in short-term study-in-China programmes based on a pre- and post-test mixed method design. Quantitative data were collected from 380 local university students who participated in short-term study-in-China programmes in 2018/19 academic year including 5 summer term programmes (STP), 9 cultural tour programmes (CTP) and 7 service-learning programmes (SLP). Students completed a pre-trip and post-trip questionnaires. For the qualitative part, individual interviews were conducted with 42 student participants and 16 programme staff. In this section, we will summarize the major findings in relation to the five objectives of the present public policy research.

**Objective 1: To investigate the impact of short-term study abroad in China programmes on the development of Hong Kong local university students in their a) intercultural competence, b) perception and attitude toward mainland China, and c) national identity**

- Students who participated in short-term study-in-China programmes reported higher level of intercultural competence in terms of both intercultural effectiveness and intercultural communication awareness after their completion of the programmes than before. All three types of study-in-China programmes, including summer term programme (STP), cultural tour programme (CTP), and service learning programme (SLP) had significant impact on students' development in intercultural competence.
- Participants of short-term study-in China programmes showed more positive perceptions about mainland China and more positive attitudes toward people of mainland China after they completed the programmes than before. In terms of different programme modes, both summer term programme (STP) and service learning programme (SLP) had significant and positive impact on students' perceptions about mainland China and attitudes toward people of mainland China, while the impact of

cultural tour programme (CTP) on students' development in this area was non-significant.

- There were no significant changes in students' perceived social distance with people of mainland China before and after taking the short-term stud-in-China programmes.
- Students showed more identification with the identity of a Chinese citizen and reported higher level of importance of this identity and the identity as a member of the Chinese race after completing the short-term study-in-China programmes. Their perceived strengths of all four types of identities (as a Hong Kong citizen, a Chinese citizen, a citizen of PRC, and a member of Chinese race) were all increased after completing the programmes.
- Students reported higher levels of identification and recognition of the nation after their completion of the short-term study-in-China programmes.
- With regard to programmes with different modes, summer term programmes significantly increased participants' identification with and perceived importance of the identity as a Chinese citizen; service learning programmes had significant impact on students' identity as both a Chinese citizen and as a member of Chinese race, on students' perceived strengths of all four types of identities, and on students' perceived importance of the identity as both a Hong Kong citizen and a Chinese citizen. For cultural tour programmes, no significant differences were observed before and after students' participated in the programmes, in terms of students' identification with, perceived strengths, and importance of the four types of identities.

**Objective 2: To examine the moderating effects of factors at student level, including students' demographic characteristics, prior experiences in mainland China, and their attitudes and expectations about the programme, on the impact of short-term study in China programmes in the above three areas**

- Students' demographic characteristics including gender, year of study, and family economic status (indicated by parental highest educational level) were not significantly associated with their learning gains in intercultural competence from short-term study-in-China experiences.
- Students who had participated in short-term study-in-China programmes and those who had higher expectation about the programme on their intercultural competence development showed more improvement in their intercultural communication awareness after participated in the programmes, than did those without prior experiences in participating in short-term study-in-China programmes and those with lower expectation on intercultural competence development. Students' self-perceived academic performance was negatively associated with their learning gains in intercultural effectiveness and intercultural communication awareness.
- Students from families with higher parental educational level showed more positive changes in their perceptions about mainland China, less elevations in their self-identification as a Hong Kong citizen, and in their perceived strength and importance of this identity after completing the short-term study-in-China programmes, than did students from families with relatively lower educational level.
- As compared to students with prior short-term study-in-China experiences Students who had never participated in any short-term study-in-China programmes in the past showed more positive changes in their identity as "a citizen of PRC", and in their perceived strength and importance of this identity after their completion of this programme.



**Objective 3: To examine the moderating effects of factors at program level, including programme mode, duration, structure of learning activities, number of cultural interactions, frequency of guided student reflection, and programme staff characteristics on the impact of short-term study in China programmes in the above three areas**

- The implementation mode of short-term study-in-China programmes (i.e., summer term programme, cultural tour programme, and service learning programme) was not predictive of students' learning gains from the programmes in intercultural competence, perception and attitude toward mainland China and national identity.
- Having supportive and motivational teammates significantly predicted students' positive changes in intercultural effectiveness, while was negatively associated with students' elevated identity as a citizen of PRC and enhanced strength of identity as a member of Chinese race after completing the programmes.
- High programme quality significantly predicted students' positive changes in intercultural communication awareness, general perceptions about mainland China, and students' identification and recognition of the nation. Students benefit the most from programmes with clear objectives, good design, carefully-arranged activities, smooth implementation, and efficient information delivery.
- High teacher quality significantly predicted students' positive changes in their attitudes toward people of mainland China. Having teaching staff who are well-prepared and passionate about the programme contributes to students' learning gains in their attitudes toward mainland China.

**Objective 4: To understand students' experiences in the short-term study in China programmes and how different individual and program factors may contribute to one's development, with a particular focus on identifying facilitators and barriers to students' effective learning gains based on qualitative research methods**

- Personal development: Students perceived that they had enhanced their social competence and interpersonal skills, and expanded their social networks from the various opportunities of interacting with people from different backgrounds offered by the programmes. Some students experienced personal development associated with their academic disciplines.
- Intercultural competence: The majority of students expressed that their language competence, Putonghua in particular, had been significantly improved. They felt more confident and comfortable when communicating with people from a different cultural background. Some students described themselves as being more open-minded and respectful to diverse cultures.
- Perception and attitude toward mainland China: Students shared that they enjoyed the direct and in-depth interaction with local people in mainland China, which deepened their understanding of the nation and its people. Based on these understanding, students gained more positive perceptions about mainland China in terms of its economic, social and political development, and formed new attitudes toward people of mainland China. Many students described Chinese people as warm-hearted, tolerant, expressive, and knowledgeable, which are different from what they had believed before they participated in the programmes.
- The most obvious changes in students observed by programme coordinators/teachers are students' changed perception and attitude toward mainland China and Chinese people. After witnessing the rapid economic growth and prosperous social development in mainland China, students formed more positive and comprehensive view about China which are in contrast to their past beliefs and perceptions about the nation. Teachers also observed that the study-in-China experiences broadened students' horizon and enabled students to be more receptive and adaptable to Chinese culture. Some students started to consider developing their career in Mainland China upon

graduation. Teachers believed that these attitudinal and perceptual transformations could further enhance students' motivation to learn more about China and to interact with Chinese people, which could promote subsequent cultural and commercial exchanges between Hong Kong and Chinese people.

- At individual level, students' strong internal motivation, positive and proactive attitudes toward the programme, and their openness were identified as critical factors contributing to their learning gains from the programmes. Students who were highly self-motivated and passionate about the programme, as well as those with higher level of openness to new experiences were more likely to have significant learning gains from the programmes. On the other hand, students with low motivation to learn and passive attitudes had limited benefits from the programmes and the trip.
- At program level, peers were found to play an important role in either facilitating or impeding students' effective learning in the programmes. Highly motivational peers in the programmes who cared about other students and actively participated in programme activities contributed to a positive and supportive interaction atmosphere which greatly impact on other students' learning. On the contrary, peers' lack of initiatives and learning motivation, half-hearted attitude, low team spirit, and interpersonal conflicts formed a vicious circle that negatively affect individual students' learning gains from the programmes, especially non-credit bearing programmes.
- Program staff/subject teachers' dedication, responsiveness, familiarity with the local context, and knowledge about Chinese culture and society were identified as facilitators of the programme impact. Students with caring and supportive teachers were more adaptable to the new environment and have more effective learning. Meanwhile, some students expressed that they had insufficient communication/interaction with the programme teachers and were not well informed by the programme staff of the changed programme arrangement, which had discouraged their morale and learning motivation.
- Students perceived high quality programmes with clear objectives, carefully-designed activities incorporating various cultural components, and appropriate schedule as the most important factor that facilitated their learning gains. Such programmes maximized

students' learning opportunities within their short-term study. From teachers' perspective, guided reflective activities throughout the programmes effectively help students to consolidate what they had experienced and generate new insights from the experiences. Frequent and in-depth interaction with local Chinese people including university students enriched students' understanding about different aspects of mainland China. Barriers to students' learning gains at programme level include sudden changes in the pre-scheduled activities, lack of interaction opportunities with local people, overly-tight programme schedule, and lack of students' opinions in program design which made some activities inappropriate or unappealing.

**Objective 5: To make policy recommendations on how to promote and improve short-term study in China programmes to maximize their impact on Hong Kong young people's development of intercultural competence, understanding about China, and national identity.**

Based on the findings, the following policy recommendations were proposed.

- Promote short-term study-in-China programmes for university students in Hong Kong
  - Allocate extra resources to support existing short-term study-in-China programmes to increase the number of beneficiaries;
  - Set up a specific fund to encourage the development of such programmes;
  - Integrate study-in-China/overseas programmes into graduation requirements;
  - Enhance collaboration with mainland China to explore new initiatives.
  
- Promote short-term study-in-China experiences
  - Promote the integration of short-term study-in-China experience into other learning experience in secondary schools;
  - Strengthen the service learning element in the undergraduate curriculum.
  
- Promote best practices and information exchange among universities through a common platform
  - Identify and introduce high quality programmes as examples of best practice;
  - Establish a database and clearinghouse for programme documentation.
  
- Empower students to play an active role
  - Enhance students' motivation through orientation workshops;
  - Introduce a student leader scheme to utilize positive peer influence;
  - Conduct team-building activities to enhance team cohesion.

- Build up the capacity of university staff as leaders of short-term study-in-China programmes
  - Develop systematic training for present and potential programme leaders;
  - Evaluate existing training projects and provide opportunities for peer learning.
  
- Promote the impact of study-in-China programmes to the public
  - Build up positive public perceptions of study-in-China programme experience through publicity materials;
  - Create opportunities for study-in-China programme participants to disseminate their experiences and feelings to the public.
  
- Enhance public education on Chinese society and culture
  - Provide service/voluntary opportunities in mainland China to the public;
  - Utilize the positive influence of media to promote Chinese culture;
  - Foster stronger collaboration between Hong Kong and China.
  
- Fund research projects to evaluate and document the long-term impact of study-in-China programme experiences
  - Support long-term or more comprehensive projects in this field;
  - Support Hong Kong-mainland China collaborative projects;
  - Set up exclusive research grants for study-in-China programmes;
  - Organize symposia regularly to attract all researchers and educators in the relevant fields, including international scholars, for exchanges of knowledge and ideas.

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## Appendix 1 Pre-test Questionnaire

### Part I Basic Information

This part is about your basic information. Please answer the following questions according to the actual situations.

1.1 My student ID is \_\_\_\_\_.

(The student ID will be only used for matching pre-and-post survey responses and collecting Starbucks coupons.)

1.2 Please leave your email address/telephone number for us to contact you to collect the Starbucks coupon. Thanks!

1.3 The short-term study in China program I take is \_\_\_\_\_ (Title) \_\_\_\_\_ (Code, if any).

1.4 I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old. (Please input a whole number.)

1.5 My gender is \_\_\_\_\_.

A. Female      B. Male

1.6 My parents' HIGHEST education levels are \_\_\_\_\_.

	Father	Mother
Primary school or below	①	①
Secondary school	②	②
College or Polytechnic (non-degree courses)	③	③
University or above (bachelor or above)	④	④

1.7 I am a student from \_\_\_\_\_.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| A. The University of Hong Kong<br>B. The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology<br>C. The Chinese University of Hong Kong<br>D. City University of Hong Kong<br>E. The Hong Kong Polytechnic University<br>F. Hong Kong Baptist University | G. The Education University of Hong Kong<br>H. Lingnan University<br>I. Another University in Hong Kong<br>J. A university in Macau<br>K. A university in Taiwan<br>L. Other universities |
|--|---|

1.8 I am currently a Year \_\_\_\_\_ undergraduate student.

- |      |      |                                 |
|------|------|---------------------------------|
| A. 1 | B. 2 | C. 3                            |
| D. 4 | E. 5 | F. I am a postgraduate student. |

1.9 I am studying in the faculty/school of \_\_\_\_\_. (Please write down your faculty/school at your home university.)

1.10 I am \_\_\_\_\_ with my own present academic performance.

- A. Very unsatisfied      B. Unsatisfied      C. Neutral      D. Satisfied      E. Very satisfied

1.11 I have taken part in the following programs for \_\_\_\_\_ times.

	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩ or more
Short-term study in mainland China program (e.g., summer school, service learning, cultural tour in mainland China for 1-8 weeks)	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩ or more
Short-term overseas programs (overseas learning experience NOT in mainland China for 1-8 weeks)	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩ or more
Long-term learning programs in mainland China (longer than 8 weeks)	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩ or more
Long-term overseas learning programs (NOT in mainland China) (longer than 8 weeks)	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩ or more

1.12 I have lived in mainland China for \_\_\_\_\_ years.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| A. 0 (Never)   | E. 3~4 (Longer than three years and up to four years) |
| B. <=1 (Up to one year)                              | F. 4~5 (Longer than four years and up to five years)  |
| C. 1~2 (Longer than one year and up to two years)    | G. >=5 (Five years and longer)                        |
| D. 2~3 (Longer than two years and up to three years) |   |

Please indicate your expectations and attitudes toward the program:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.13 I believe this program would help improve my intercultural competence.	①	②	③	④	⑤
1.14 I take this program because I was very interested in knowing more about the mainland China.	①	②	③	④	⑤
1.15 I take this program as a good opportunity for travelling.	①	②	③	④	⑤
1.16 I take this program because my parents ask me to do so.	①	②	③	④	⑤
1.17 I take this program because my friend(s) recommend(s) me to do so.	①	②	③	④	⑤
1.18 I take this program because the tuition fee was waived.	①	②	③	④	⑤

## Part II Intercultural Competence

Please read each statement carefully and tick the answer that best describes you.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
2.1 I find it easy to talk with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.2 I am afraid to express myself when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.3 I find it easy to get along with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.4 I don't behave myself when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.5 I am able to express my ideas clearly when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.6 I have problems with grammar when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.7 I am able to answer questions effectively when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.8 I find it difficult to feel my culturally different counterparts (文化相異的同輩) are similar to me.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.9 I use appropriate eye contact when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.10 I have difficulty distinguishing (分辨) between informative (資料式) and persuasive (說服式) messages when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.11 I always know how to initiate (展開) a conversation when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.12 I often miss some parts of what is going on (錯過部分內容) when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.13 I feel relaxed when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.14 I often act like a very different person when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.15 I always show respect for my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.16 I always feel a sense of distance with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.17 I find I have a lot in common with my culturally different counterparts during our conversation.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.18 I find the best way to act is to be myself when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.19 I find it easy to identify with (認同) my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.20 I always show respect for the opinions of my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.	①	②	③	④	⑤

Please indicate the extent to which the following statements describe you well.

	Does NOT Describe Me Well	Describes Me Slightly Well	Describes Me Well	Describes Me Quite Well	Describes Me Extremely Well
2.21 I feel uncomfortable when I am with people who are speaking a language I do not know.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.22 I try to learn about (瞭解/得知) people from other cultures so that we can work and socialize together.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.23 I incorporate the attractive aspects of other cultures into my own way of doing things.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.24 I have learned how to produce work with people from other places in the globe.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.25 I feel self-confident and comfortable socializing with people from other cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.26 I have lived abroad and experienced intense interaction with a variety of people from other cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.27 I have long-term friendships with several people from other cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.28 I am currently engaged in professional work with at least three people in other countries.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.29 I have the ability to deal flexibly with and adjust to new people, places, and situations.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.30 I have the ability to psychologically put myself into another person's shoes.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.31 I can act as a cultural mediator and serve as a bridge between people of different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤

### Part III Perceptions About China Mainland

Please read each statement carefully and tick the answer that best describes you.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
3.1 The economy of mainland China will maintain its rapid development.	①	②	③	④
3.2 I'm optimistic about the political development of mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.3 I'm optimistic about the social development of mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.4 The quality of life in mainland China is good.	①	②	③	④
3.5 I prefer that Hong Kong strengthens its ties with mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.6 I value the long history and cultural heritage of mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.7 I like meeting and getting to know people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.8 I sometimes feel it would be better if Hong Kong people and people from mainland China do not try to mix together.	①	②	③	④
3.9 I often spend time with people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.10 I don't try to become friends with people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.11 I am involved in activities with people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.12 I enjoy being around people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.13 I am willing to work together with people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.14 I am willing to live in the same community with people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.15 I am willing to live next door to people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.16 I am willing to invite people from mainland China to my home.	①	②	③	④
3.17 I am willing to see my child(ren)/relative(s) in a romantic relationship with people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④

#### Part IV Group Identity

Please indicate your (dis)agree with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
4.1 I am a Hong Kong citizen.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
4.2 I am a Chinese citizen.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
4.3 I am a citizen of the People's Republic of China (PRC).	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
4.4 I am a member of Chinese race.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦

Please rate the strength and importance of your following identity:

The strength of my identity as ...	Extremely Weak					Half-Half					Extremely Strong
4.7 a Hong Kong citizen.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	
4.8 a Chinese citizen.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	
4.9 a citizen of PRC.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	
4.10 a member of the Chinese race.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	
The importance of my identity as ...	Not Important at All					Half-Half					Extremely Important
4.13 a Hong Kong citizen.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	
4.14 a Chinese citizen.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	
4.15 a citizen of PRC.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	
4.16 a member of the Chinese race.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements, 1 = Strongly Disagree, 3 = Uncertain, 5 = Strongly Agree.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
4.20 I am willing to contribute to the People's Republic of China.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4.21 I have the responsibility to build a brighter future for the People's Republic of China.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4.22 I am concerned about the domestic issues and current news of the People's Republic of China.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4.23 I have a good knowledge of the People's Republic of China.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4.24 My life has been greatly influenced by Chinese culture and philosophy.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4.25 I appreciate Chinese culture and traditional arts.	①	②	③	④	⑤

**Here is the end of the survey. We really appreciate your participation!**



## Appendix 2 Post-test Questionnaire

### Part I Basic Information

This part is about your basic information. Please answer the following questions according to the actual situations.

- 1.1 My student ID is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(The student ID will be only used for matching pre-and-post survey responses and collecting Starbucks coupons.)
- 1.2 Please leave your email address/telephone number for us to contact you to collect the Starbucks coupon. Thanks!
- 1.3 The short-term study in China program I take is \_\_\_\_\_ (Title) \_\_\_\_\_ (Code, if any).
- 1.4 I was \_\_\_\_\_ guided to engage in reflective activities by programme teachers/tutors/coordinators.  
A. Never                  B. Rarely                  C. Sometimes                  D. Often                  E. Always
- 1.5 During the programme, the frequency of my interaction with non-local students were \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. Never                  B. Rarely                  C. Sometimes                  D. Often                  E. Always
- 1.6 There were interactions between me and \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. university students from mainland China                  D. mainland Chinese citizens (except for programme teachers/tutors/coordinators/students)  
B. university students from Taiwan/Macau  
C. university students from other countries                  E. none of the above

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.7 Overall speaking, I have positive evaluation of the programme.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
1.8 On the whole, I like this programme.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
1.9 The objectives of the programme are clear.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
1.10 The design of the programme is good.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
1.11 Different programme components were carefully arranged.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
1.12 The programme teachers/tutors/coordinators prepared me appropriately for the programme.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
1.13 I could feel the enthusiasm and passion from my teachers/tutors/coordinators.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
1.14 My team-mates in the program were generally motivated and supportive.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
1.15 Inquiries about the programme were handled efficiently.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
1.16 The implementation of the program was smooth.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
1.17 I had been well informed of activity arrangements during the programme.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦

### Part II Intercultural Competence

Please read each statement carefully and tick the answer that best describes you.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
2.1 I find it easy to talk with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.2 I am afraid to express myself when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.3 I find it easy to get along with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.4 I don't behave myself when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.5 I am able to express my ideas clearly when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.6 I have problems with grammar when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.7 I am able to answer questions effectively when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.8 I find it difficult to feel my culturally different counterparts (文化相異的同輩) are similar to me.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.9 I use appropriate eye contact when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.10 I have difficulty distinguishing (分辨) between informative (資料式) and persuasive (說服式) messages when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.11 I always know how to initiate (展開) a conversation when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤

2.12 I often miss some parts of what is going on (錯過部分內容) when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.13 I feel relaxed when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.14 I often act like a very different person when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.15 I always show respect for my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.16 I always feel a sense of distance with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.17 I find I have a lot in common with my culturally different counterparts during our conversation.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.18 I find the best way to act is to be myself when interacting with people from different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.19 I find it easy to identify with (認同) my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.20 I always show respect for the opinions of my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.	①	②	③	④	⑤

Please indicate the extent to which the following statements describe you well.

	Does NOT Describe Me Well	Describes Me Slightly Well	Describes Me Well	Describes Me Quite Well	Describes Me Extremely Well
2.21 I feel uncomfortable when I am with people who are speaking a language I do not know.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.22 I try to learn about (瞭解/得知) people from other cultures so that we can work and socialize together.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.23 I incorporate the attractive aspects of other cultures into my own way of doing things.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.24 I have learned how to produce work with people from other places in the globe.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.25 I feel self-confident and comfortable socializing with people from other cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.26 I have lived abroad and experienced intense interaction with a variety of people from other cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.27 I have long-term friendships with several people from other cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.28 I am currently engaged in professional work with at least three people in other countries.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.29 I have the ability to deal flexibly with and adjust to new people, places, and situations.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.30 I have the ability to psychologically put myself into another person's shoes.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.31 I can act as a cultural mediator and serve as a bridge between people of different cultures.	①	②	③	④	⑤

### Part III Perceptions About China Mainland

Please read each statement carefully and tick the answer that best describes you.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
3.1 The economy of mainland China will maintain its rapid development.	①	②	③	④
3.2 I'm optimistic about the political development of mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.3 I'm optimistic about the social development of mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.4 The quality of life in mainland China is good.	①	②	③	④
3.5 I prefer that Hong Kong strengthens its ties with mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.6 I value the long history and cultural heritage of mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.7 I like meeting and getting to know people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.8 I sometimes feel it would be better if Hong Kong people and people from mainland China do not try to mix together.	①	②	③	④
3.9 I often spend time with people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.10 I don't try to become friends with people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.11 I am involved in activities with people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.12 I enjoy being around people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.13 I am willing to work together with people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.14 I am willing to live in the same community with people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.15 I am willing to live next door to people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④
3.16 I am willing to invite people from mainland China to my home.	①	②	③	④
3.17 I am willing to see my child(ren)/relative(s) in a romantic relationship with people from mainland China.	①	②	③	④

### Part IV Group Identity

Please indicate your (dis)agree with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
4.1 I am a Hong Kong citizen.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
4.2 I am a Chinese citizen.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
4.3 I am a citizen of the People's Republic of China (PRC).	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
4.4 I am a member of Chinese race.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦

Please rate the strength and importance of your following identity:

The strength of my identity as ...	Extremely Weak					Half-Half					Extremely Strong
4.7 a Hong Kong citizen.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	
4.8 a Chinese citizen.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	
4.9 a citizen of PRC.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	
4.10 a member of the Chinese race.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	
The importance of my identity as ...	Not Important at All					Half-Half					Extremely Important
4.13 a Hong Kong citizen.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	
4.14 a Chinese citizen.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	
4.15 a citizen of PRC.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	
4.16 a member of the Chinese race.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements, 1 = Strongly Disagree, 3 = Uncertain, 5 = Strongly Agree.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
4.20 I am willing to contribute to the People's Republic of China.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4.21 I have the responsibility to build a brighter future for the People's Republic of China.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4.22 I am concerned about the domestic issues and current news of the People's Republic of China.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4.23 I have a good knowledge of the People's Republic of China.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4.24 My life has been greatly influenced by Chinese culture and philosophy.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4.25 I appreciate Chinese culture and traditional arts.	①	②	③	④	⑤

**Part V Comments and Suggestions**

5.1 What aspects of the programme were most useful to your learning?

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5.2 What were the major barriers, challenges or problems that you faced?

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5.3 What changes or improvements might be needed to help you learn better?

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**Here is the end of the survey. We really appreciate your participation!**

### Appendix 3 Interview Protocol for Student Participants 短期內地學習項目學生訪談提綱

謝謝你們來參加焦點小組訪談。訪談旨在更多地瞭解你們今年暑假在內地的學習體驗。為了更詳盡分析訪談的內容，我們會進行錄音。如果同學不介意，請大家先在研究同意書上簽名。這項研究僅僅為了學術目的。大家的隱私將會得到嚴格保密。Thank you for joining this focus group interview. The interview aims to know more about your learning experience in mainland China in the summer. To analyse the content thoroughly, our interview will be recorded. If you don't mind, please sign the consent form first. The research project is only for academic purpose. Your confidentiality will be kept strictly.

你們這次參與的項目是叫做( )，主要的內地學習活動是在( ) (地點)進行？  
Confirm the title of the programme.

#### 1. 背景 Background

**Q1.** 讓我們先一起回顧一下你們今年暑假在內地參加的短期學習項目，好嗎？（提示：項目地點是？大約有多少天待在內地？同一個項目裡面有內地/臺灣/外國學生嗎？）  
First, shall we review the programme you completed in mainland China this summer? (Prompt: Where was it? How many days did your programme last? Were there mainland Chinese/ Taiwanese/international students?)

**Q2.** 你之前有參加過內地的學習項目嗎？Do you have any previous experience of participating in study in mainland China programme?

(1) 如果有的話，可以分享一下你之前的經驗嗎？（提示：你是什麼時候參加的那個項目？它是一個短期（1-8周）還是長期（8周以上）項目呢？當時那個項目是在哪個城市？）  
If yes, would you like to share your previous experience? (Prompt: When did you take that programme? Was it a short-term (1-8 weeks) or long term (longer than 8 weeks) programme? Where was that programme held?)

(2) 如果沒有的話，為什麼這一次會想要參加內地學習項目？If not, why would you like to participate in study in mainland China programme this time?

**Q3.** 你之前有參加過其它國家的學習項目嗎？Have you had previous experience of studying in other countries?

(1) 如果有的話，可以分享一下之前的經驗嗎？If yes, would you like to share your previous experience?

(2) 如果沒有的話，為什麼你這次會選擇到內地而不是其它國家或地方去學習呢？If not, why did you choose to study in mainland China instead other countries?

**Q4.** 在參加這個項目之前，對於到內地學習一小段時間，你有什麼看法或者感受？（提示：當受訪者不知怎樣回答時，訪談者可以追問，例如 你會覺得很興奮或是很緊張嗎？你對於要去內地感到擔憂嗎？你去內地學習是因為它是一個必修項目一定要完成嗎？）  
How did you feel/perceive about short-term study-in-mainland China programs prior to participation? (Prompt: Only when the participants have no clue to respond,

interviewers could follow up with guided questions, e.g., Did you feel very excited/nervous? Were you worried about going to mainland China? Did you go to study in mainland China because it was a compulsory requirement to fulfil?)

**Q5.** 參加完這個項目，你對這種短期內地學習課程的看法有變化嗎？Has your feeling and perception toward short-term study in mainland China programmes changed after the programme?

(1) 如果有的話，有哪些改變？介不介意舉一些例子？If yes, what are the changes? Would you mind sharing some examples?

(2) 如果沒有的話，你覺得為什麼沒有呢？If not, why not?

**Q6.** 當你報名參加這個項目時，你對它有什麼期望嗎？What expectations did you have when you decided to participate in the programme?

**Q7.** 參加完這個項目，你的期望有得到滿足嗎？Have the expectations been met after the programme?

(1) 如果期望得到滿足，是哪一些期望得到了滿足？可以分享一些例子嗎？If yes, which expectations have been met? Would you like to share some examples?

(2) 如果期望沒有得到滿足，哪一些事情令你感到遺憾？If not, which unmet expectations made you feel regretful?

## **2. 影響 Impacts**

現在我們聊一聊短期內地學習項目對你們的影響。Now we are going to discuss the impacts of the short-term study in mainland China programme.

**Q1.** 總的來說，你從這個項目中收穫了什麼？Generally speaking, what lessons did you learn from this programme?

**Q2.** 你覺得你的跨文化溝通能力有一定變化嗎？可以舉例說明一下嗎？（跨文化溝通能力是指：在不同文化，或多種文化並存的環境中，有效溝通，建立關係的能力）Do you think there is any change on your intercultural competence? Could you share a few examples? (Intercultural competence refers to the ability to initiate effective communication and establish relationships in intercultural settings)

**Q3.** 你覺得這個項目對提高你的跨文化敏感度有幫助嗎？(跨文化敏感度指的是對不文化的包容和理解能力。跨文化敏感度高的人會認識到自己和他人文化的不同，但沒有好壞, 高低之分。) Do you think the programme helped you improve your intercultural sensitivity? (Prompt: Intercultural sensitivity refers to the ability to accept and understand other cultures. People with high intercultural sensitivity tend to realize differences between cultures of others and their own, and do not judge these cultures on the basis of right/wrong, superior/inferior)

(1) 如果有幫助的話，是哪些方面呢？能否舉一些例子？If yes, what are the impacts?  
Would you mind sharing some examples?

(2) 如果沒有的話，你覺得為什麼沒有呢？If not, why not?

**Q4.** 在參加這個項目後，對你們提高跨文化適應性有幫助嗎？（提示：跨文化適應是指那些讓我們在跨文化互動中行為靈活，得體的技能。或者說在與不同文化背景人交往時，行為舉止恰當，得體。）Has your intercultural adaptability improved after the programme? (Prompt : Intercultural adaptability refers to the skills that enable one to behave flexibly and appropriately in intercultural interaction.)

(1) 如果有的話，是怎樣的幫助呢？介不介意分享一些例子？If yes, what are the impacts?  
Would you mind sharing some examples?

(2) 如果沒有的話，你覺得為什麼沒有呢？If not, why not?

**Q5.** 這個項目有沒有在跨文化能力的其它方面對你產生影響？比如說對自己的文化，和其他不同文化的看法？融入新文化，或者與不同文化的人有效交流的能力？(提示: 跨文能力指適應不同文化以及和不同文化的人進行有效交流的能力) Does the programme have an impact on other aspects of your intercultural competence? For example, the perception about your own culture and other different culture. (Prompt : Intercultural competence refers to the ability to fit into a different culture and effectively communicate with people from that culture.)

**Q6.** 參加完這個項目，你覺得你對內地的看法有所改變嗎？Have your perceptions about mainland China changed after the programme?

(1) 如果有的話，在哪些方面有改變？（提示：例如內地的經濟/社會/政治發展，人民生活條件，內地的教育/科技/文化）If yes, in which aspects, have your perceptions changed?  
(Prompt: e.g., economic/social/political development in mainland China, living conditions of mainland Chinese, education/technology/culture in mainland China)

(2) 如果沒有改變的話，你覺得為什麼沒有呢？If not, could you explain?

**Q7.** 參加完這個項目後，你對內地的態度有沒有發生改變？Have your attitudes toward mainland China changed after the programme?

(1) 如果有的話，可以舉一些例子嗎？If yes, would you like to share some examples?

(2) 如果沒有的話，你覺得為什麼沒有影響呢？If not, why not?

### 3. 促進因素和阻礙因素 **Facilitators and Barriers**

現在我們來聊一聊哪些因素促進或阻礙了你們在這個項目中的學習。Now we are going to talk about factors that facilitated or impeded your learning in the programme.

#### 3.1 學生個人因素 **Student factors**

**Q1.** 你覺得有哪些個人因素，促進你從這個項目中獲益？介不介意分享一些例？What personal characteristics helped you gain the most from the programme? Would you mind sharing some examples?

**Q2.** 你覺得有哪些個人因素，影響了你在這個項目的學習？阻礙了你從這個項目中獲得最大的收穫？介不介意分享一些例子？What personal characteristics prevented you from gaining the most from the programme? Would you mind sharing some examples?

#### 3.2 同伴特徵 **Peers' characteristics**

**Q3.** 你的同學/同伴是否促進了你在項目中的學習？介不介意分享一些例子？Did your classmates/peers facilitate your learning during the programme? Would you mind sharing some examples?

**Q4.** 你的同學/同伴是否阻礙了你在項目中的學習？介不介意分享一些例子？Did your classmates/peers impede your learning during the programme? Would you mind sharing some examples?

#### 3.3 項目設計 **Programme design**

**Q5.** 你覺得這個項目的設計有哪些好的方面，幫助你從這次的學習體驗中獲益？可舉個例子？Which aspects of the programme design do you think helped you gain the most from the programme? Would you mind sharing some examples?

**Q6.** 你覺得這個項目的設計上，有哪些方面阻礙了你的學習？（提示：例如，項目限長短，學習活動的安排）Which aspects of the programme design do you think impeded your learning? (Prompt: e.g., duration, learning activity arrangements)

#### 3.4 項目實施 **Programme implementation**

**Q7.** 你覺得項目實施的哪些方面幫助你從這次的學習體驗中獲益？介不介意舉個例子Which aspects of the programme implementation do you think helped you gain the most from the programme? Would you mind sharing some examples?

**Q8.** 你覺得項目實施的哪些方面阻礙了你的學習？介不介意舉個例子？（提示：例如文化旅行項目的旅遊指導，暑期學校項目中的課程註冊，服務學習項目中的提供直接服務，各個項目中的協調等。）Which aspects of the programme implementation do you think impeded your learning? (Prompt: e.g., tour guidance for cultural tour programs, course registration for summer school programs, direct service providing in service learning programme, coordination in all programs.)



### 3.5 項目教職員 Programme staff

**Q9.** 你覺得這個項目在舉辦學校的教職員（領隊，老師）有幫助到你從這個項目中到收穫嗎？Do you think staff from the host university helped you gain the most from the programme?

- (1) 如果有的話，他們在哪些方面幫到了你呢？可以分享一些例子嗎？If yes, in which aspects did they help you? Please share some examples.
- (2) 如果沒有的話，你覺得他們哪些方面做的不足呢？If no, what aspects do you think they could have done better?

**Q10.** 你覺得自己學校的教職員有幫助到你從這個項目中獲得最大收穫嗎？Do you think staff from the home university helped you gain the most from the programme?

- (1) 如果有的話，他們在哪些方面幫到了你呢？可以分享一些例子嗎？If yes, in which aspects did they help you? Please share some examples.
- (2) 如果沒有的話，你覺得他們哪些方面做的不足呢？If no, what aspects do you think they could have done better?

### 3.6 評估和建議 Evaluation & suggestion

**Q11.** 總體來說，你喜歡這個項目嗎？Generally speaking, do you like the programme?

- (1) 如果喜歡得話，你最喜歡這個項目的哪一個方面？請分享給你留下印象最深的一件事情，好嗎？If yes, which aspect(s) of the programme do you like the most? Please share one thing that left you the deepest impression.
- (2) 如果不喜歡的話，項目的哪一個方面你最不喜歡？請分享給你留下最不好印象的一件事情，好嗎？If not, which aspect(s) of the programme do you dislike the most? Please share one thing that left you the worst impression of the programme.

**Q12.** 對今後改進完善這個項目，你有什麼建議嗎？（提示：項目設計，項目實施，課安排,例如工作坊，簡介會，作業，反思活動等，教師支援，同伴支援等方面）What would you like to suggest for the programme's improvement? (Prompt: programme design, programme implementation, for example, curriculum arrangement workshops, briefings, assignments, reflective activities, etc., teachers' support, peers' support)

**Q13.** 你們有其它想要分享的嗎？What else would you like to share?

這次焦點訪談就結束了。再次感謝你們參與本次訪談。你們的分享非常有幫助。多謝！

**It is the end of the focus group interview. Thanks again for your participation. Your sharing is very helpful. Thank you!**

Follow-up issues:

1. Sign up for coupon
2. Ask if the students are willing to participate in in-depth individual interviews

## Appendix 4 Interview Protocol for Teachers

與老師寒暄並感謝老師願意參加這次訪談以及他/她為帶領短期學習課程做出的努力。  
Warm-up and thanks for the teacher's willingness to participate in the project, and his/her efforts in leading the short-term study programme

介紹本次訪談的目的以及結構: 本次訪談總共有5部分，將會被問到的問題涵蓋之前帶領短期學習課程的經驗，帶領本次中國內地項目的經驗，學生參加課程後的變化以及對今後類似課程的建議。

Introduce the purposes and the structure of the interview: there are in total five parts of the interview, covering topics of 1) the program design and implementation, 2) your experience in leading this and other similar program, 3) your observations about students' changes, 4) perceptions about the effectiveness of the program.

您這次帶領的項目是叫做( )?

Confirm the title of the program.

### 1. 教師之前帶領此專案的經驗以及其動機和態度 The teacher's prior experiences of leading this program and his or her motives and attitudes

**Q1.** 這是您第幾次帶學生參加這個項目? 最早是什麼時候?

How many times have you led this program? When did you lead this program for the first time?

**Q2.** 當初是為什麼會選擇帶領這個項目? (個人, 學校安排...) 有沒有別的原因?

Why did you lead this program for the first time? (personal reasons, assigned tasks...). Any other reasons?

**Q3.** 剛開始對帶領/教授這個項目的態度和感受是怎樣的? 比如剛得知要去教授這個科目, 帶學生去內地學習, 心情如何? 現在是怎樣? 有變化嗎?

What did you feel and what was your attitude when you led this program for the first time? You may talk about, for example, what you thought and felt when you knew you would lead some students to Mainland China. What do you think and feel now? Is there any difference?

### 2. 專案設計與執行的細節 Details about the program design and implementation.

**Q1.** 能否請您介紹一下這個專案的具體情況, 比如從設計安排, 到學生的招募, 具體實施, 每日的安排, 持續時間, 與內地機構的合作情況是怎樣的?

Could you introduce this program? You may cover its design, student recruitment, implementation, schedule, duration and cooperation with mainland institutions.

**Q2.** 有組織的學習活動, 主要有哪些, 多少次?

What kinds of organized learning activities did you have? How many times did such activities take place?

**Q3.** 學生的反思活動, 是怎樣進行的?

How did students reflect on their experiences in the Mainland?

**Q4.** 學生是否需要交功課，或者做書面，口頭的報告？具體情況怎樣？  
Did students need to submit homework, report or do presentation? Please share details.

**Q5.** 有沒有其他方法來衡量學生的學習效果？  
Was there any other method to evaluate the outcomes of student learning?

### **3. 觀察到的學生的變化 Observed changes in students**

**Q1.** 學生在參加完這個項目後，您觀察到的他們最大的變化是什麼？  
可以舉一些例子嗎？  
After completion of the program, did you observe some changes to the students? Any example?

**Q2.** 在對中國內地的認識和態度方面，有沒有什麼改變？可以舉例說明嗎？比如學生對大陸是否更加感興趣，是否有意向去內地發展。  
Was there any change on students' perceptions and attitudes towards Mainland China? Any example? You may talk about, for example, students' interest in Mainland China and their attitudes towards working in Mainland in the future.

**Q3.** 學生的跨文化(即香港-內地)交際能力有沒有什麼變化呢？可以舉例說明嗎？  
Was there any change to students' ability to interact with people from different cultures (i.e. Mainland people)? Any example?

**Q4.** 學生們是否認識到香港的文化和大陸文化之間的差異？他們對這種差異的反應是什麼？在參加本次專案過程中，他們的反應是否發生了變化？能否舉出一些例子？  
Did the students perceive cultural differences between HK and Mainland? What were their reactions to the differences? Did their reactions change over the course of the program? Could you share a few examples?

**Q5.** 學生與內地的聯繫方面有沒有增強？比如他們有沒有交到內地的朋友？  
Was students' bond with the Mainland strengthened? For example, did they make friends with Mainland people?

### **4. 項目最有幫助的方面及需要改善的方面 Perceived most useful aspects of the program and areas need improvement**

**Q1.** 您覺得這個項目對學生最有幫助的是哪些方面？能否至少舉出三個方面的例子？  
What aspects of this program did you think help students the most? Could you give at least 3 examples.

**Q2.** 您覺得這個專案有哪些方面需要進一步改善？有哪些因素影響到學生從這個項目中獲益？（比如，學生個人的因素，項目的因素，老師的因素，等等）  
What suggestions would you make to improve the program? What factors influenced students' gaining from this program? (e.g. personal factors, program factors, teacher factors etc.)

**5. 帶領海外及內地項目的經驗 Prior experiences in leading overseas programs including study-in-china program.**

**Q1.** 您曾經帶領過其他海外項目嗎？包括內地項目？

Did you lead overseas-study programs, including Mainland programs, before?

**Q2.** 多少次？具體是去哪些地方，多長時間，能否大概介紹一下。

How many times have you led these programs? Where did you go and how long did it last? Could you introduce these programs?

**Q3.** 如果有，這些經驗與這次的經驗有什麼不同嗎？這些經驗對您成功帶領這次的項目有麼作用？

If you did lead programs before, was there any difference between the recent program and previous ones? Is there any effect of your previous experiences with the programs on the recent one?

**Q4.** 您有什麼想最後說的或者評論的嗎？比如，帶領這個項目對您來說有什麼收穫？

Lastly, is there anything you want to say or comment on? For example, lessons you learned from this program.

## Appendix 5 Questionnaire of Additional Study

### Part I Basic Information

This part is about your basic information. Please answer the following questions according to the actual situations.

1.1 I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old. (Please input a whole number.)

1.2 My gender is \_\_\_\_\_.

① Female    ② Male

1.3 My parents' HIGHEST education levels are \_\_\_\_\_.

	Father	Mother
Primary school or below	①	①
Secondary school	②	②
College or Polytechnic (non-degree courses)	③	③
University or above (bachelor or above)	④	④

1.4 I am currently a Year \_\_\_\_\_ undergraduate student.

① 1                      ② 2                      ③ 3                      ④ 4                      ⑤ 5

### Part II Attitude toward Short-Term Study in Mainland China Program

Please indicate your expectations and attitudes toward short-term study in mainland China program (i.e., summer school, service learning, and cultural tour in mainland China for 1-8 weeks).

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
2.1 Short-term study in mainland China will help improve my intercultural competence.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
2.2 Short-term study in mainland China will give me a competitive advantage in the job market.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
2.3 Short-term study in mainland China programs are attractive to me.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
2.4 I would take a short-term study in China program because I am interested in knowing more about mainland China.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
2.5 I would take a short-term study in China program as a good opportunity of travelling.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
2.6 I would take a short-term study in China program because my parents ask me to do so.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
2.7 I would take a short-term study in China program because my friend(s) recommend(s) me to do so.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
2.8 I would take a short-term study in China program if the tuition fee will be waived.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
2.9 I am interested in joining a service learning subject/program to provide short-term service in mainland China.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
2.10 I am interested in joining a summer school in mainland China.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
2.11 I am interested in joining a short-term cultural tour in mainland China.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

### Part III Please blacken the answer that best represents your behavioural intention in the coming university years.

	Possibility					
	Absolutely No	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Likely	Very Likely	Absolutely yes
3.1 From now on, would you participate in a service learning subject/program to provide short-term service in mainland China in the coming university years?	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
3.2 From now on, would you participate in a summer school in mainland China in the coming university years?	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
3.3 From now on, would you participate in a short-term cultural tour in mainland China in the coming university years?	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥