



## **Survey Findings on the Perceptions of Non-local University Students towards Hong Kong Released by the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies at CUHK**

The Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) conducted an online survey from September 2019 to January 2020 among \*non-local university students, both undergraduates and postgraduates, from the eight University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities. It was found that the respondents perceived the soft power of Hong Kong to be quite strong (Non-Mainland: 6.28 points; Mainland: 6.82 points). Of the non-Mainland respondents, 48.2% felt that their image of Hong Kong had improved since they began studying in Hong Kong, while 50.8% of the Mainland respondents thought that their image of Hong Kong had deteriorated.

### **The major findings are summarised as follows**

The survey measured soft power as an individual's perception of the society in two distinctive evaluative dimensions, namely the affective and normative. The affective dimension of soft power, corresponding to emotional attraction to a society, involves attitudes towards its political system, economy, education and science, and culture. The normative dimension relates to a society's legitimacy. It involves attitudes towards the observation of international norms, and its contribution to the resolution of international problems. At least one question was used to measure the attitude of a student towards each sub-dimension (with a point scale ranging from 0 to 10, 0 = not at all; 10 = extremely well). The soft power index scores of the non-Mainland and Mainland respondents were 6.28 and 6.82 points, respectively (on a point scale ranging from 0 to 10) (Table 1).

Hong Kong's affective dimension index scores for non-Mainland and Mainland respondents were 6.88 and 6.82 points respectively (on a point scale ranging from 0 to 10). Among four sub-dimensions, the "economy" received the highest score (non-Mainland: 7.82 points; Mainland: 7.54 points), followed by "education and science" (non-Mainland: 7.60 points; Mainland: 7.08 points) and "culture" (non-Mainland: 7.06 points; Mainland: 6.71 points). The "political system" received the lowest score (non-Mainland: 5.31 points; Mainland: 6.04 points) (Table 1).

The normative dimension index scores were 5.98 and 6.77 points for non-Mainland and Mainland respondents, respectively. The scores for the sub-dimension of "observation of international norms" were higher than those for the domain of "contribution to the resolution of international problems". The former were 6.93 and 7.29 points for non-Mainland and Mainland respondents, respectively; while the latter were 5.29 and 6.21 points, respectively (Table 1).

Apart from soft power, the attitude of non-local students towards Hong Kong was measured by asking the respondents to rate their overall feeling towards Hong Kong on an 11-point scale (0 = extremely bad; 10 = extremely good). The overall feeling of non-Mainland respondents towards Hong Kong was good, at 7.40 points, compared to a score of 6.30 points for the Mainland

respondents (Table 2).

In addition, the respondents were asked whether there had been any changes in their feelings towards Hong Kong after coming to Hong Kong. The non-Mainland respondents' image of Hong Kong largely improved after they began studying in Hong Kong, with 48.2% of them answering "better than before", 33.2% answering "no change", and 18.7% selecting "poorer than before". The Mainland respondents, however, tended to have a poor image of Hong Kong after studying in Hong Kong, with 50.8% of them answering "poorer than before", 30.4% answering "no change", and 18.8% selecting "better than before" (Table 3).

Non-local university students, both undergraduates and postgraduates, from the eight UGC-funded universities were the target population of this online survey. There were no further sub-selections in the survey. An e-mail containing the survey was sent to the students with the help of the admissions units, relevant units for non-local students, and the faculties of the eight UGC-funded universities. There were a total of 575 respondents to the survey, of whom 193 were non-Mainland students and 382 were students from the Mainland.

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Table 1 Non-local students' evaluation of Hong Kong's soft power

	Non-Mainland Students		Mainland Students	
	Mean	(n)	Mean	(n)
Affective dimension				
Political system	5.31	(152)	6.04	(309)
Economy	7.82	(185)	7.54	(357)
Education and science <sup>1</sup>	7.60	(184)	7.08	(370)
Education level of the population	7.48	(174)	6.79	(342)
Quality of the university	8.14	(186)	7.90	(374)
Level of science and technology	7.21	(175)	6.44	(360)
Culture <sup>2</sup>	7.06	(183)	6.71	(369)
Popular culture	6.62	(176)	6.72	(364)
Cultural heritage	6.74	(178)	6.18	(363)
Tourist attractions	7.71	(187)	7.22	(369)
Affective dimension index <sup>3</sup>	6.88	(149)	6.82	(302)
Normative dimension				
Observation of international norms	6.93	(123)	7.29	(272)
Contribution to the resolution of international problems <sup>4</sup>	5.29	(112)	6.21	(281)
Helping economic development	5.16	(116)	5.70	(284)
Building trust and cooperation	5.76	(127)	6.51	(280)
Resolution of humanitarian crises	4.64	(88)	6.50	(256)
Normative dimension index <sup>5</sup>	5.98	(94)	6.77	(232)
Soft power index <sup>6</sup>	6.28	(86)	6.82	(207)

Question: "How does each of the following statements describe Hong Kong?"

(0 – 10 points: 0 = not at all; 10 = extremely well)

- a) Has a political system that serves the needs of its people
- b) Has an internationally competitive economy
- c) Has a highly educated population
- d) Has high-quality universities
- e) Possesses advanced science and technology
- f) Has an appealing popular culture
- g) Has a rich cultural heritage
- h) Is an attractive destination for international tourism
- i) Respects the sovereignty (the power of a country to control its own government) of other Asian countries
- j) Helps other Asian countries to develop their economies
- k) Builds trust and cooperation among Asian countries
- l) Provides assistance in the event of humanitarian crises (e.g., natural disasters) in Asia.

Note: 1. The score for "education and science" was calculated by taking the average score for the level of education of the population, the quality of the university, and the level of science and technology; 2. the score for "culture" was calculated by taking the average score for popular culture, cultural heritage, and tourist attractions; 3. the score for the affective dimension index was calculated by taking the average score for political system, economy, education and science, and culture; 4. the score for "contribution to the resolution of international problems" was calculated by taking the average score for helping with economic development, building trust and cooperation, and the resolution of humanitarian crises; 5. the score for the normative dimension index was calculated by taking the average score for

the observation of international norms and contribution to the resolution of international problems; and 5. the score for the soft power index was calculated by taking the average score for the affective dimension index and the normative dimension index.

Table 2 Overall feeling towards Hong Kong

Non-Mainland Students		Mainland Students	
Mean	(n)	Mean	(n)
7.40	(193)	6.30	(382)

Question: "Please rate your overall feelings towards Hong Kong".

(0 – 10 points: 0 = extremely bad; 10 = extremely good)

Table 3 Change in Feeling towards Hong Kong (%)

	Poorer than before	No change	Better than before	(n)
Non-Mainland students	18.7	33.2	48.2	(193)
Mainland Students	50.8	30.4	18.8	(382)

Question: "What are your feelings towards Hong Kong after coming to Hong Kong to study? Poorer than before, no change, or better than before?"

## 中大香港亞太研究所民調：

### 非本地大學生對香港印象甚佳

香港中文大學（中大）香港亞太研究所在 2019 年 9 月至 2020 年 1 月期間進行網上問卷調查，訪問在八間大學教育資助委員會（教資會）資助的大學就讀的非本地生（包括本科生和研究生），發現非本地生對香港的整體軟實力評分頗高，非內地和內地受訪者的評分分別為 6.28 和 6.82 分。48.2% 非內地受訪者來港讀書後對香港的印象有所改善。然而，50.8% 內地受訪者來港後對香港的印象較以往差。

研究將軟實力分為情感和規範兩方面。情感性軟實力指一個社會在政治制度、經濟、教育和科學，以及文化等四方面對他人的吸引力。規範性軟實力指一個社會在他人眼中的正當性，包括他人對該社會遵守國際規範及其對解決國際問題的貢獻兩方面的看法。每方面設有至少一條問題（以 0 分為最低分至 10 分為最高分）。非內地和內地受訪者對香港整體軟實力的評分分別為 6.28 和 6.82 分（以 0 分為最低分至 10 分為最高分）。

非內地和內地受訪者對香港情感性軟實力的評分分別是 6.88 和 6.82 分（以 0 分為最低分至 10 分為最高分）。在四方面之中，以「經濟」方面評分最高（非內地：7.82 分；內地：7.54 分），其次是「教育和科學」（非內地：7.60 分；內地：7.08 分）和「文化」（非內地：7.06 分；內地：6.71 分），而「政治制度」的評分最低（非內地：5.31 分；內地：6.04 分）。非內地和內地受訪者的香港規範性軟實力指數是 5.98 和 6.77 分。「遵守國際規範」的評分較「解決國際問題的貢獻」高，非內地和內地受訪者對前者的評分是 6.93 和 7.29 分，而對後者的評分是 5.29 和 6.21 分。

此外，調查亦請受訪者對香港的整體印象作出評分（以 0 分為最低分至 10 分為最高分），非內地受訪者對香港整體印象評分頗高，有 7.40 分；而內地受訪者對香港整體印象評分是 6.30 分。調查同時訪問受訪者來港後對香港整體印象有沒有改變，有 48.2% 非內地受訪者回答「較以前好」，33.2% 表示「沒有改變」及 18.7% 覺得「較以前差」。但是，50.8% 內地受訪者表示來港後對香港印象較以往差，30.4% 表示「沒有改變」及 18.8% 覺得「較以前好」。

是次網上問卷的調查對象是非本地大學生（包括本科生和研究生），沒有經過抽樣，透過八間教資會資助大學負責入學及非本地生的部門及學系，以電郵傳送問卷予其非本地生。最後成功訪問 575 人，當中 193 人非內地學生，382 人是內地生。

中大香港亞太研究所社會與政治發展研究中心  
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這問卷調查結果是來自一項名為「教育軟實力：在香港受教育非本地大學生的香港聯繫及其事業發展計劃」的研究，受政策創新與統籌辦事處的公共政策研究資助計劃資助。