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Journeys of Female Mainland Chinese Postgraduate Students in English-Medium Higher Education in Hong Kong SAR: A Study of the Women's Changing Identities in New Community of Practice

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JOURNEYS OF FEMALE MAINLAND CHINESE POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS
IN ENGLISH-MEDIUM HIGHER EDUCATION
IN HONG KONG SAR: A STUDY OF THE WOMEN'S CHANGING IDENTITIES
IN NEW COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

Xiaokun Sun
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December 2011

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Title: Journeys of Female Mainland Chinese Postgraduate Students in English-Medium
Higher Education in Hong Kong SAR: A Study of the Women's Changing Identities in
New Community of Practice

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In this study, I explore five female mainland Chinese students' language acquisition experience during their educational journey before and after arriving in Hong Kong SAR. I conducted the research using feminist ethnographic methods, associated with autobiography, journals, and interview data collection. These methods provides data to locate how the participants' social interactions and related graduate academic experiences impact their identity as female mainland Chinese students and what changes occurred as they have progressed through their varieties of Communities of Practice.

The participants communicate how they experienced the process of understanding, struggling, and reshaping their social identities through the language learning activities in Hong Kong SAR. Participants viewed their multiple aspects of identities including: immigrant students, language learners or language teachers, and scholars, which were added to their original identities. The participants mentioned they would not lose their old identity when they mediated in the new community in Hong Kong SAR.