

Youth Empowerment Through Glocal Experiences

A Data-Driven Examination of the Glocal Hero Program's Impact, Engagement Patterns, and Recommendations for Sustained Development

Introduction

The **Glocal Hero program** is a youth development initiative aimed at cultivating globally aware local leaders. It is structured as a multi-phase experience combining training workshops, community service tasks, and reflective learning. Participants (generally older adolescents and young adults) engage in a series of “missions” both online and in-person – from self-introductions and cultural exchange activities to local community projects and global awareness workshops. The program’s mission is to empower youth as “glocal” heroes who understand local issues while embracing a global perspective, fostering skills like leadership, empathy, and cross-cultural communication. Its objectives include enhancing participants’ social awareness, encouraging civic engagement, and building personal competencies through guided tasks and an international workcamp exposure in later stages.

In this report, we integrate **primary data** from the Glocal Hero program with **secondary research** to derive actionable insights. The primary data encompass participant demographics, engagement metrics (such as “Miles” points earned through task completion), completion rates of various tasks, and qualitative reflections from participants. By analyzing this data, we can discern trends in youth engagement and learning outcomes within the program. Complementing this, we draw on secondary research and established best practices in youth development – citing scholarly studies and successful youth programs – to interpret the findings in a broader context. The purpose of this integration is to ground our insights and recommendations in both the empirical realities of the Glocal Hero program and the theoretical frameworks and proven strategies from the field. This comprehensive approach ensures that the conclusions and recommendations are evidence-based, credible, and aligned with global standards for effective youth engagement.

Theoretical Framework

Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory provides a useful lens to understand youth engagement in Glocal Hero. Bronfenbrenner posits that an individual’s development is influenced by a complex, multi-layered environment. The theory outlines five interconnected system levels – the **microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem**. Applied to Glocal Hero, the microsystem would include the immediate context of the program (peers, mentors, and program staff that participants interact with regularly). Indeed, the program deliberately creates a supportive peer group and mentor relationships, recognizing that these close interactions have the most direct impact on a youth’s growth. The mesosystem (interactions between contexts) can be seen when the program connects with participants’ schools or families – for example, encouraging family

support or linking program projects with school initiatives. The exosystem (indirect external influences) might involve community and organizational support: the program's partnership with community organizations or sponsors provides resources and opportunities that indirectly shape the youth experience. The macrosystem – the broader cultural and societal context – is reflected in Glocal Hero's emphasis on global citizenship and social values. By engaging with global issues and diverse cultures, participants are influenced by, and learn to navigate, the wider cultural norms and international perspectives (e.g. understanding global volunteerism trends or United Nations sustainable development goals). Lastly, the chronosystem (the dimension of time and change) is relevant as the program accompanies youths through a developmental period; changes in participants' personal circumstances or societal events (such as pandemic-related shifts to virtual engagement) over the program's duration can affect how they engage. Bronfenbrenner's model thus underscores that to enhance youth engagement, Glocal Hero must consider influences at multiple levels – from personal mentoring and group dynamics to community environment and cultural context – since a nurturing, multi-layered support system yields better developmental outcomes ([A Comprehensive Guide to the Bronfenbrenner Ecological Model](#)). In practice, this might mean involving parents and educators, creating an inclusive culture, and situating program activities in real community contexts so that youths feel supported on all sides.

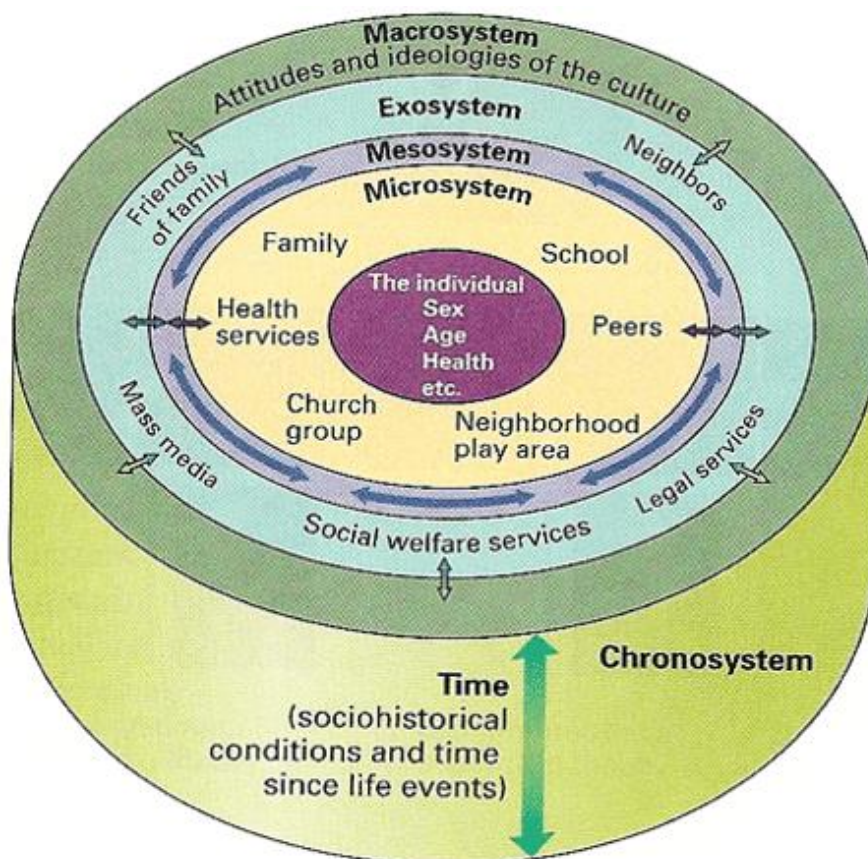


Figure 1: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory Model (Illustration)

In comparison, **other youth engagement and development frameworks** offer additional insights. One prominent approach is the **Positive Youth Development (PYD)** framework, often summarized by Richard Lerner's "Five Cs" – **Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring**, leading to a sixth "C" of Contribution. PYD focuses on nurturing

youths' strengths and assets rather than merely addressing problems. In the context of Glocal Hero, this means designing activities that build participants' skills and self-efficacy (Competence and Confidence), foster positive bonds with peers, mentors, and community (Connection), instill values and responsibility (Character), and develop empathy and compassion (Caring). The ultimate goal is to enable participants to contribute to society. This strengths-based approach aligns with the program's ethos – rather than viewing youth as passive recipients or “problems to fix,” it treats them as resources to be developed. As research by the Forum for Youth Investment notes, effective youth engagement “is not just about ‘fixing’ behavior problems. It’s about building and nurturing ‘all the beliefs, behaviors, knowledge, attributes and skills’ that lead to a healthy and productive adulthood” . Incorporating PYD principles, Glocal Hero provides challenging tasks and leadership opportunities that allow youth to take ownership (e.g. planning a community tour or leading a project team), thereby increasing their sense of responsibility and agency.

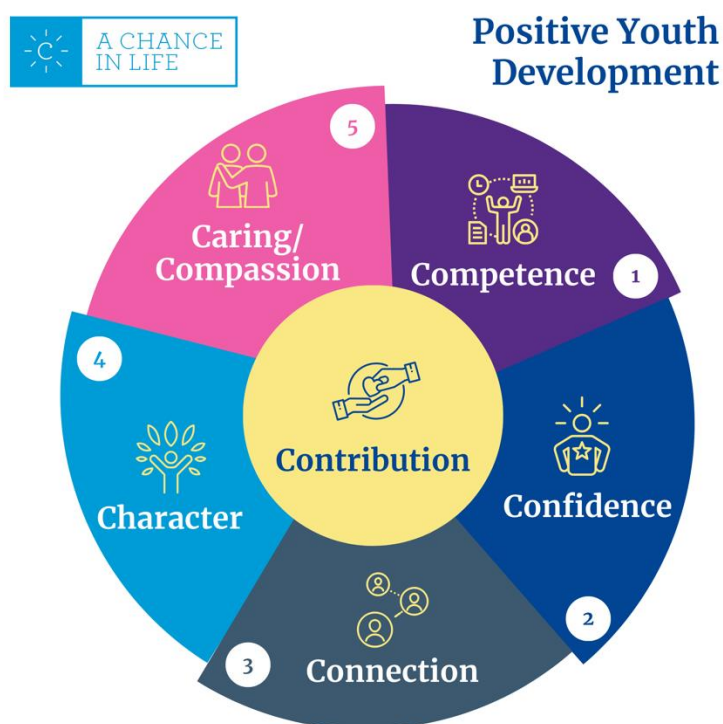


Figure2. Positive Youth Development (PYD) Framework – The Five Cs

By comparing these frameworks, we see that Bronfenbrenner provides a *contextual* roadmap (ensuring support across environment layers), while PYD and youth engagement models provide a *principle-based* roadmap (ensuring we build on youth strengths and give them agency). Together, they inform a holistic strategy for youth development: one that simultaneously enriches the surrounding support system and empowers the individual.

Methodology

This report's findings arise from a mixed-method analysis of **primary program data** and a review of **secondary sources** on youth development best practices. For the primary data, we compiled and analyzed records from the Glocal Hero program spanning multiple cohorts (chiefly 2022 through 2024). These records included participant demographic information, engagement metrics, task completion logs, and participants' reflective responses:

- *Quantitative data* were extracted from program databases. Key metrics included the number of participants enrolled each year, their age and gender distribution, participation rates in each task/mission, and "Miles" points accumulated by each participant. (In the program's gamified point system, participants earn "Miles" for completing tasks – a higher Miles total roughly indicates higher task completion and engagement). We also examined completion rates for mandatory tasks versus optional tasks, the average number of tasks completed per participant, and retention rates (how many participants remained active through all stages of the program). Additionally, outcome indicators like **NPS (Net Promoter Score)** and self-reported skill gains were available from end-of-program surveys. These were analyzed to gauge overall satisfaction and learning outcomes. Descriptive statistical analysis was applied: for example, calculating the mean and range of Miles earned, the proportion of participants who finished all core missions, and the breakdown of task types completed. Wherever insightful, we visualized this data to identify trends such as dropout points or popular types of activities.
- *Qualitative data* came primarily from participants' written reflections and feedback forms. Throughout the program, youths shared short essays or comments on their experiences (for instance, after attending a workshop or completing a community project, they would write about what they learned or found memorable). We performed a thematic analysis on a sample of these reflections. This involved reading through responses to identify common themes and sentiments – such as expressions of personal growth, challenges faced, skills learned, or suggestions for improvement. We noted recurring keywords or topics (for example, many participants mentioned "teamwork," "confidence," or "cultural understanding" in their summaries). These qualitative insights help illuminate the human impact behind the numbers, providing context on **how** the program influenced the youth and what aspects they valued most. Where appropriate, we use representative quotes from participants to illustrate these themes in the Findings section.

For the **secondary research**, we conducted a focused literature review to benchmark Glocal Hero against **global best practices in youth engagement**. This included consulting academic journals, evaluation reports of other youth programs, and guidelines from reputable institutions. We specifically looked at: (a) studies on youth program retention and factors influencing sustained participation; (b) evaluations of successful youth development programs (e.g., 4-H clubs, Duke of Edinburgh Award, and notable local initiatives like Hong Kong's Jockey Club-funded youth projects); and (c) theoretical and policy papers on youth engagement strategies from organizations such as UNESCO and UNICEF. Key sources were chosen for their relevance and credibility – for instance, published evaluation research in Hong Kong on the Project P.A.T.H.S. (a large-scale positive youth development program) provided insights into structured program design and long-term evaluation. Similarly, studies from the Journal of Youth Development and Journal of Extension informed our

understanding of why youths drop out or stay engaged in programs. We also reviewed comparative frameworks to ensure our analysis is grounded in established youth development theory.

By triangulating the **primary data analysis** with **secondary research findings**, we derive a well-rounded perspective. The methodology ensured that quantitative trends could be interpreted with the help of broader research. Likewise, when formulating recommendations, we not only rely on what the data suggests but also on what has proven effective elsewhere. All secondary information is cited from the original sources to maintain credibility. This robust methodological approach increases the reliability of the insights and the practicality of the recommendations, as they are backed by both local evidence from Glocal Hero and the wisdom gleaned from global youth development experiences.

Findings

1. Participation Demographics and Trends:

The Glocal Hero program successfully attracted a diverse youth demographic from 2022 to 2024, primarily targeting individuals aged between 18 to 25 years, with a median age around 22 to 23 years.

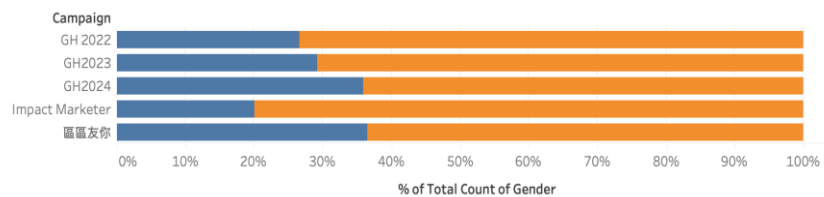


Figure 3: Gender Distribution of Participants

Notably, there was a clear gender imbalance, with female participants consistently outnumbering male participants across all cohorts. This gender skew is visually represented in **Figure 4**, highlighting that approximately 60–70% of participants were female, which aligns with global patterns where female participants tend to enroll more frequently and show higher satisfaction in youth development programs.

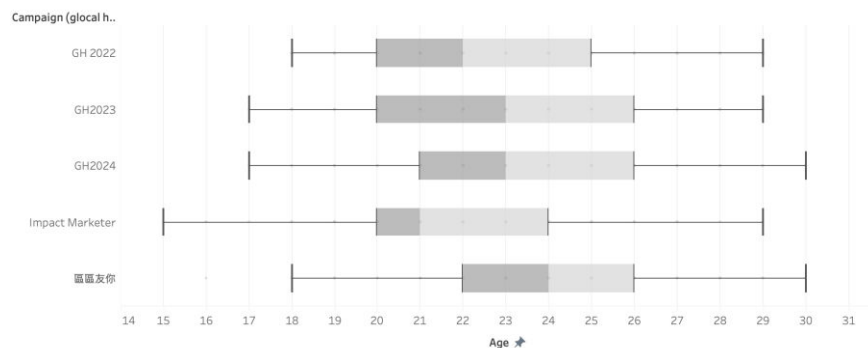


Figure 4: Gender Distribution of Participants

The analysis of participant retention and engagement is nuanced. Unlike typical annual programs, the Glocal Hero program does not expect or require yearly re-enrollment; rather, it provides a multi-phase experiential journey. Participants typically enroll in one complete cycle, moving progressively through different stages.

Glocal Hero Program Participant Advancement visually represents the overall trend of participants progressing through different program stages, categorized as **Total Enrollment, Active Users, Committed in Final Project, and Awardees**. The figure shows a clear trend where only a fraction of the total enrollees remain engaged through all phases.

JCCPG Glocal Leader Academy Research Study Report (24-25)
Youth Empowerment Through Glocal Experiences 2025

- **Glocal Hero 2022** had the highest initial enrollment, yet a significant drop in active users, indicating that early-stage engagement was a key challenge. However, those who remained were highly committed to the final project stage.
- **Glocal Hero 2023** saw a notable dip in enrollment and engagement, likely due to it being a transition year where youth had more alternative options compared to 2022. Additionally, continued reliance on online activities in 2023 may have reduced engagement, as participants expected more in-person experiences.
- **Glocal Hero 2024** saw a recovery in numbers, indicating a potential post-pandemic resurgence of interest in more interactive and physical activities.

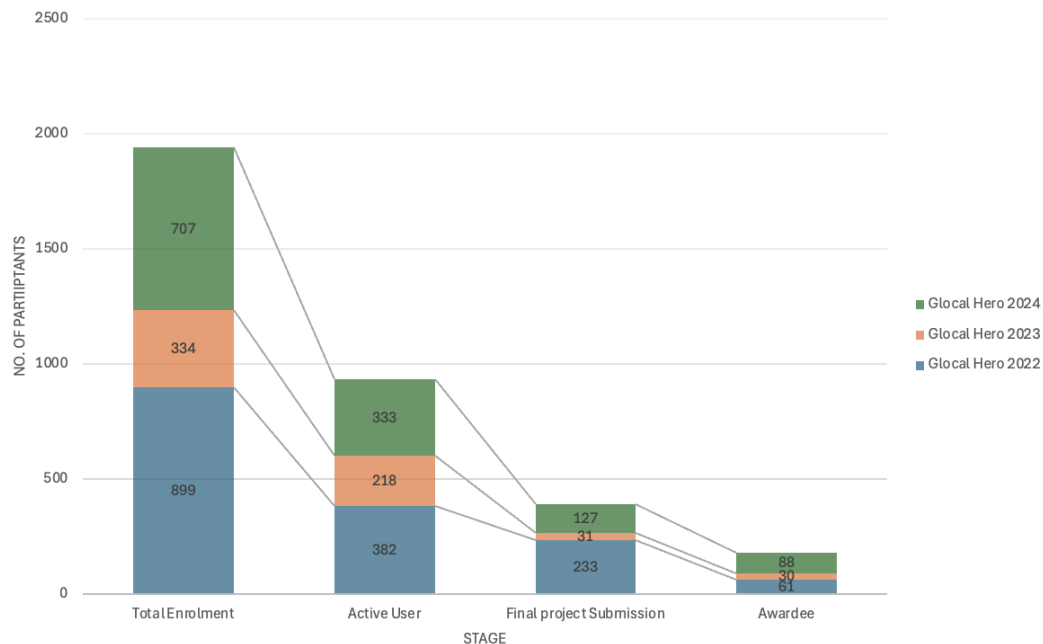


Figure 5: Glocal Hero Program Participant Advancement

Overall, the data suggests that while initial enrollment numbers are high, only a subset of participants complete the final project and reach the awardee stage, reinforcing the importance of strategies that maintain long-term engagement throughout the program cycle.

2. Engagement Metrics and Task Completion:

The **engagement level** of participants can be quantified by the “Miles” point system and task completion records. Overall, engagement was strong among the active core of participants. By the end of the program cycle, a typical active participant accumulated on the order of a few thousand Miles. For example, the median Miles earned in 2022 was around ~2500–3000 points, with top performers reaching over 5000 points (indicating they went well beyond the mandatory tasks).

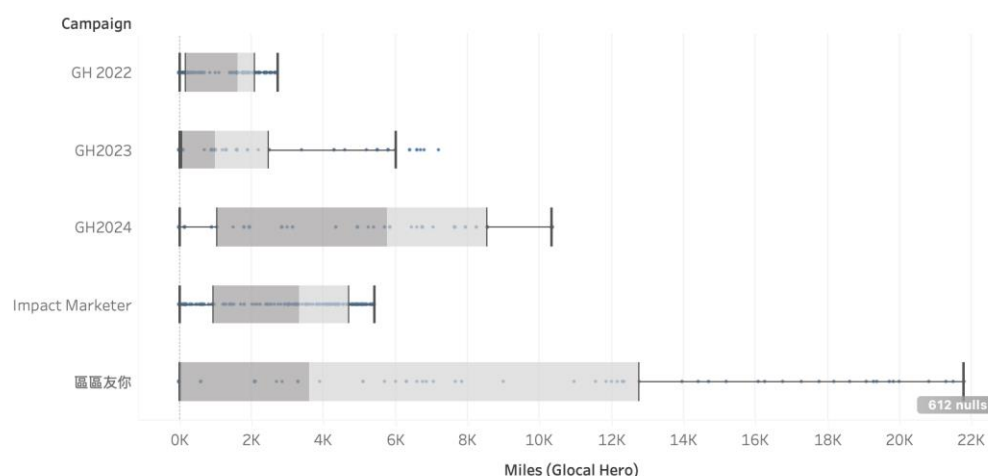


Figure 6: Distribution of Miles Earned by Participants Across Different Glocal Hero Cohorts

These high achievers tended to take on almost every mission available – including optional “pop-up” challenges. On the other hand, those who dropped early had Miles scores under 300 (essentially just from the onboarding tasks). **Task completion rates** for *mandatory tasks* were high: nearly all enrolled youths completed the foundational missions such as the self-introduction post and the key training workshops. For instance, in the 2024 cohort every active member submitted the “Hello World” introduction (earning 150 Miles each) and attended the local project leader training workshop (earning 1800 Miles each). This indicates excellent participation in the core curriculum. However, **optional tasks** saw more varied participation.

The program offered a series of “pop-up tasks” – short, creative challenges often announced on short notice (for example, supporting a cause on social media, or writing a reflection on a guest speaker). Participation in these pop-up tasks ranged widely. Some popular ones engaged more than half the cohort, whereas a few had only a small dozen enthusiastic participants. This suggests that while the most motivated youths dove into everything, others prioritized the bigger events or those tasks they found most interesting. We also noticed task **preference patterns**: tasks that involved social or interactive elements (like attending live events or team-based challenges) had higher uptake compared to solitary tasks like lengthy writing assignments. For example, an online cultural exchange session got far more participants than an optional long-form essay task. This implies that engagement was maximized when tasks were hands-on, communal, or had an element of fun competition.

3. Skill Development and Learning Outcomes:

The program's design intentionally incorporated tasks aligned with the VASK (Values, Attitudes, Skills, and Knowledge) framework developed by The Hong Kong Jockey Club's CLAP@JC initiative. This framework emphasizes a holistic approach to personal and professional development, guiding participants to explore and enhance their unique competencies. Each task within the program was tagged to specific VASK categories, such as Active Learning, Collaboration & Coordination, Curiosity, and Making Positive Impact. The distribution of these skills, as reflected in participants' task submissions, is illustrated in the figure below:

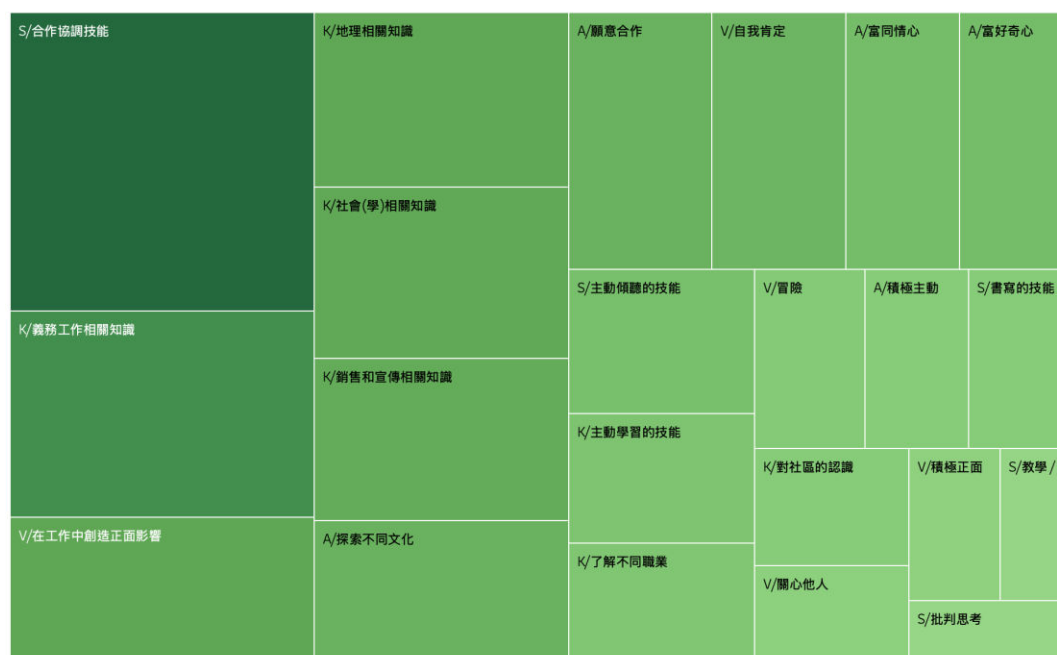


Figure 7: Skill Development Across Task Submissions.

Participants engaged in activities designed to cultivate leadership and project management skills. For instance, during the local community project design mission, they brainstormed and planned local tour events, considering factors like target groups, routes, transportation, and costs. One participant reflected, "I learnt that designing a local tour is not an easy task... we have to consider many factors such as the target group, route, transportation, and cost." This hands-on exercise enhanced their organizational and teamwork abilities.

Teamwork and communication emerged as significant growth areas. Tasks requiring group collaboration, such as team projects, were completed by nearly all participants, indicating active engagement in team-based learning. Through these collaborative efforts, participants developed coordination skills and learned to solve problems collectively.

The program also fostered increased social and cultural awareness. Interactions with international themes and diverse speakers broadened participants' understanding of

global and local issues. For example, after a “Human Library” session, where individuals from various backgrounds shared their stories, one youth wrote that they realized how *“labels or casual remarks can unintentionally hurt others”* and expressed a commitment to be more mindful and learn about minority cultures. Such reflections suggest growth in empathy and perspective-taking.

In terms of personal development, participants frequently mentioned increased self-confidence and a sense of responsibility. Assuming roles like team leader or presenting project ideas pushed them beyond their comfort zones. By the program’s end, many reflected on overcoming shyness and discovering their leadership potential. Quantitatively, this is corroborated by the Net Promoter Score (NPS) and other evaluation ratings. The average NPS, reflecting participants’ willingness to recommend the program, was notably high, with many rating it 9 or 10 out of 10, indicating a very positive experience. Post-program self-assessments also showed significant improvements in areas like community awareness and stakeholder empathy. A substantial number of participants gave top scores for gains in these areas, signaling that they felt the program successfully enhanced their knowledge and skills. While a minority of respondents had lower self-ratings, possibly due to less engagement, the overall trend indicates that active participants perceived substantial personal growth.

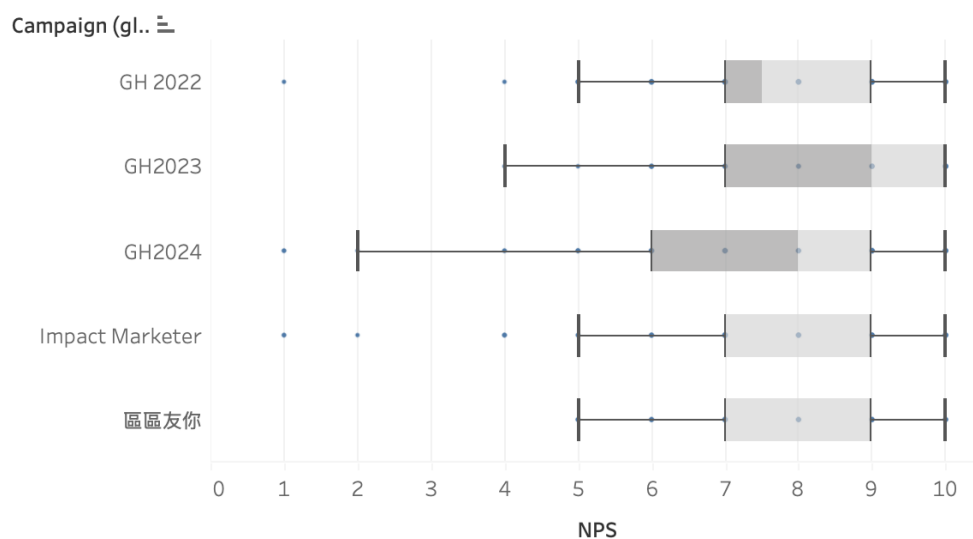


Figure 8: Net Promotor Score (NPS) across Across Different Glocal Hero Cohorts

4. Reflections and Participant Sentiments:

Participant reflections, analyzed through a word cloud provide rich insights into their experiences and sentiments. For consistency and accuracy, reflections initially submitted in Chinese were translated into English using Google Translate before analysis. Dominant themes emerging from this qualitative analysis included "people," "experience," "community," "different," "learn," and "Hong Kong," suggesting a strong appreciation for experiential learning and community engagement.



Figure 9: Word Cloud of Participant Reflections and AHA Moments

Many participants emphasized their learning through active participation rather than traditional educational methods. For example, reflections highlighted experiences such as collaborative brainstorming and project planning. One participant remarked, *"From brainstorming with teammates and planning a project from 0 to something concrete, the feeling was amazing,"* underscoring satisfaction derived from teamwork and creative problem-solving. Exposure to diversity and intercultural experiences also featured prominently. Reflections frequently noted increased open-mindedness from interactions with diverse groups and activities involving international participants. One participant mentioned, *"I also learnt that to be a local guide is not easy as many qualities are needed such as being patient, delicate, and responsive,"* reflecting greater empathy and respect for new roles and perspectives. Participants often expressed feelings of belonging and inspiration, mentioning themes like *"meeting new friends," "broadened my horizons,"* and being *"inspired to do more for the community."* These indicate that the social connections and inspirational elements provided by the program significantly enhanced their experience.

Overall, participant sentiments were overwhelmingly positive, frequently including expressions of gratitude towards organizers, and intentions to apply learned skills in the future. While constructive feedback was minimal, some participants did suggest enhancing interactive session frequency and offering more flexible scheduling to accommodate academic responsibilities.

Discussion

The patterns observed in Glocal Hero's data generally align with global best practices in youth engagement, while also highlighting areas for improvement. The high female participation and success in engaging university-aged youth mirrors trends reported in other programs. For instance, 4-H youth development research in the U.S. has found that girls often report higher satisfaction and stay longer in such programs. This suggests that Glocal Hero is effectively creating an environment where young women feel welcome and empowered. However, it also raises the question of how to boost participation among young men – perhaps by ensuring the themes and methods appeal across genders or by having male alumni share their success stories to attract new male participants.

The **learning outcomes** observed – gains in confidence, leadership, and social awareness – are exactly the kind of impacts targeted by youth development frameworks like the Five Cs. In the PATHS project, a holistic approach was used to foster competencies and values, and it showed positive results when coupled with thorough evaluation. Glocal Hero, being an extracurricular program, achieved similar outcomes albeit on a smaller scale. One advantage of Glocal Hero is its **global-local approach** – giving participants international exposure while they work on local community tasks. This dual exposure is a strength; it situates the youth in Bronfenbrenner's broader ecological context by linking their microsystem (local actions) to the macrosystem (global issues). Such an approach can deepen their understanding of societal issues and increase their adaptability. Few local programs offer this "glocal" blend, so this is a differentiator that aligns well with global citizenship education trends.

When comparing with **youth programs from other institutions**, a few points emerge. The Hong Kong Jockey Club's youth initiatives (like PATHS or other leadership programs it supports) often involve significant mentorship by educators and systematic evaluation. For example, PATHS had a structured curriculum delivered by trained facilitators and included a built-in evaluation by university researchers. Glocal Hero, on the other hand, is more peer-driven and flexible, which can be very engaging but might lack some of the formal support structure. Incorporating a bit more of that structure – for instance, a stronger mentorship model (pairing each participant with a mentor or alumni) – could enhance guidance without losing flexibility. Internationally, programs like the Duke of Edinburgh's Award or **4-H clubs** emphasize incremental progression, adult mentorship, and tangible recognition (badges/awards). Glocal Hero shares the progression element (Stage 1 to 3) and uses points as recognition, but it could borrow the mentorship aspect. Research shows that **mentoring and positive adult-youth relationships** improve retention and satisfaction. If each Glocal Hero participant had a mentor (a dedicated staff or volunteer who checks in on them), those who struggle or become busy might be less likely to silently drop out. This ties back to Bronfenbrenner's mesosystem concept – connecting the youth's different spheres. A mentor could, for example, liaise with a participant's university if needed to arrange service-learning credit, thereby integrating the program into other parts of the youth's life.

The findings on **retention factors** in Glocal Hero (where the biggest drop-off was early on, after initial tasks) align with literature: early engagement and feeling "hooked" is crucial. Many programs combat early dropout by providing an immersive kickoff experience and clear communication of program benefits. Glocal Hero's orientation might be made more robust – ensuring newcomers fully understand the program's purpose and immediately feel part of a community. Perhaps a two-day induction camp or a bonding retreat at the start could

solidify commitment. Additionally, involving **parents or family** at some stage (maybe an opening or closing ceremony where parents see the youth's achievements) could leverage support at home, addressing another known factor in retention. While participants are older and quite independent, family encouragement still helps many youths stick with voluntary commitments.

Participant satisfaction was high according to both NPS scores and reflections. This is a very positive sign and indicates that the program quality is high – which is consistent with best practices that say *program quality and youth voice* are key to success. Participants loved the interactive, purposeful nature of tasks. However, scaling up the program or sustaining it may bring challenges: maintaining small-group intimacy and personalized experiences can be harder with more participants. Other programs have managed growth by training youth alumni to become facilitators for new cohorts, thereby keeping peer-led elements strong. This could be an avenue for Glocal Hero to expand while preserving its youth-engagement ethos – essentially creating a cycle where past participants (now role models) guide new ones, which is known to reinforce the **sense of belonging and leadership** for both parties.

In summary, the discussion highlights that Glocal Hero's approach is largely validated by youth development theory and practice: it provides a nurturing microsystem (peer support, engaging tasks) and connects to larger societal themes, it builds positive assets (skills, confidence) in participants, and it respects youth as active contributors. Areas for enhancement, as gleaned from comparing with other models, include strengthening mentorship, improving early-stage retention tactics, and forging stronger multi-sector partnerships (with schools, families, community groups) to support the youth – essentially, enriching the ecological network around participants so their engagement can deepen further. Each of these points informs the recommendations that follow.

Recommendations

Drawing on the above findings and comparisons, the following strategic recommendations are proposed to enhance youth engagement and development outcomes in the Glocal Hero program:

1. Strengthen Mentorship and Support Structures:

Introduce a more robust mentorship model into the program. For example, pair each participant (or each small team of participants) with a dedicated mentor – this could be an alumnus of Glocal Hero or a trained volunteer/staff member. The mentor would regularly check in with the youth, provide guidance on tasks, and encourage them during challenging periods. This one-on-one support can personalize the experience and help youth overcome obstacles (academic stress, time management issues, etc.) that might otherwise cause them to disengage. Other youth programs have found that when adults or near-peer mentors actively support youths, it boosts retention and satisfaction. Glocal Hero should also provide mentors with basic training in positive youth coaching (for instance, listening skills and goal-setting techniques) so they can effectively nurture participants' growth. Additionally, consider creating small "family" groups within each cohort – stable peer groups that meet periodically for reflection circles led by a mentor. This provides an extra layer of social support and accountability, making participants feel more bonded and less likely to drop out.

2. Diversify and Personalize Engagement Strategies:

To cater to different interests and availabilities, Glocal Hero could further diversify task options and allow more personalized pathways through the program. While the core missions remain required, participants might choose a **thematic track or elective missions** that suit their passions. For example, some youth might opt for an "Environmental Action" track with extra tasks related to sustainability, while others might choose a "Cross-Cultural Exchange" track with tasks involving language exchange or global research. Giving this element of choice can increase motivation, as participants pursue what intrigues them most. At the same time, ensure that all tracks still emphasize the program's key competency goals. Gamification can be amplified by introducing **badges or milestone awards** for completing sets of tasks (e.g., a "Community Champion" badge if you complete all community-service-related missions). This kind of micro-recognition fosters a sense of progress and achievement. Since our findings showed that interactive tasks had higher engagement, the program should continue to prioritize those – but for tasks that are necessarily individual (like writing a reflection), consider creative twists such as turning them into a competition (who can write the most insightful blog post) or sharing them in pairs for peer feedback, to keep a social element.

3. Strengthen Community Partnerships:

Deepening partnerships with external organizations can enrich the program content and sustain participant interest. For instance, collaborate with local NGOs, social enterprises, or cultural institutions to co-create missions. If a local environmental NGO hosts a beach cleanup, Glocal Hero participants could join as one of their tasks, benefiting from the NGO's expertise and seeing real-world impact. Community partners can also provide **guest speakers, project sponsorship, or venues** for activities. In the data, participants highly valued exposure to diverse perspectives

(e.g., the “Human Library” session). The program should regularly bring in community voices – perhaps a monthly talk from a humanitarian worker, or a workshop run by a business with strong corporate social responsibility. These external engagements situate the youths’ efforts in the broader community context, echoing Bronfenbrenner’s idea of linking microsystems with larger systems for better development support. Additionally, by demonstrating to community stakeholders the value the youths are providing (through volunteering or project outputs), Glocal Hero could cultivate long-term partners who might offer resources like funding, internship opportunities for alumni, or preferential access to events. Such partnerships not only enhance the learning experience but also lay ground for the program’s **sustainability** through shared community ownership.

4. **Improve Long-Term Impact Measurement:**

To ensure the program is truly meeting its development objectives and to attract future support, it’s important to measure long-term impact. Glocal Hero should implement a more systematic evaluation process. Building on the current pre/post self-assessments (which already track growth in awareness and skills), the program could add **follow-up surveys** of alumni 6 months to a year after completion. This would gauge whether skills learned (like leadership or empathy) are being applied in their lives, and whether participants remain engaged in community or global causes. Collecting such data can highlight sustained outcomes like continued volunteering, pursuit of further education in related fields, or improved employability skills – valuable indicators for stakeholders. The program might partner with educational institutions to study outcomes. Internally, keep records of how many alumni return as volunteers or mentors for the next cohort – a high return rate would indicate strong loyalty and success in creating a community. Adopting some practices from formal evaluations (like those done in Project P.A.T.H.S.) can lend rigor. This might include using standardized youth development questionnaires or even a control group comparison if feasible. A robust evaluation not only identifies areas to improve in the curriculum but also provides **evidence of impact** that can be shared with funders or partners, strengthening the program’s case for support.

5. **Plan for Scalability and Sustainability:**

As the program grows in ambition, planning for scalability is key. One recommendation is to establish an **Alumni Network** and Leadership Council. Alumni can be some of the best advocates and facilitators for new participants. By formalizing an alumni network, Glocal Hero can keep past participants engaged through periodic events or advanced projects, and in return they can volunteer time as co-facilitators or peer mentors (which reduces staffing burden). This creates a cascading mentorship model: each generation trained helps train the next, a sustainable cycle. If resources allow, scaling might involve replicating the program in different regions (perhaps partnering with an organization in another city to host a “Glocal Hero” chapter, adapting the content locally). To maintain quality during scale-up, create a **program manual and training toolkit** – essentially codifying the successful elements of Glocal Hero (curriculum guides, facilitator tips, risk management protocols for the workcamp, etc.). This documentation ensures consistency and eases the induction of new staff or partners. Lastly, continue iterating on feedback: the youth themselves each year should be encouraged in a final focus group to suggest improvements. Their fresh insights can drive innovations that keep the program dynamic and relevant,

which is vital for sustainability. In essence, treat the program as a learning organization: always capturing lessons learned and refining the model for the future.

By implementing these recommendations, the Glocal Hero program can build on its current success. The focus remains on the youth – providing them with stronger support, more tailored opportunities, and a broader platform – so that their engagement deepens and their development is maximized. The recommendations also future-proof the program by bolstering the community and structural framework around it, ensuring that Glocal Hero can continue to inspire and empower new generations of “glocal” changemakers for years to come.

Conclusion

In conclusion, integrating primary data analysis with secondary research has provided clear insights into youth engagement within the Glocal Hero program, highlighting successes and areas for improvement. Participants reported substantial gains in leadership, teamwork, and social awareness, confirming the program’s positive impact. However, challenges such as early-stage dropout and inconsistent participation in optional tasks were also identified.

Applying theoretical frameworks like Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory and referencing global best practices reinforced the importance of supportive relationships, youth ownership, and structured yet engaging experiences. Recommended enhancements, such as stronger mentorship, immersive onboarding, and diverse tasks, present a strategic approach to boosting retention, deepening learning outcomes, and extending program sustainability.

Overall, by remaining data-driven and informed by proven research, Glocal Hero can continue evolving as a model of youth empowerment, shaping engaged, community-conscious individuals who positively impact local and global communities.

Reference

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.).

1. Bronfenbrenner, U. (2005). *Making human beings human: Bioecological perspectives on human development*. Sage Publications.
2. Guy-Evans, O. (2024, January 17). Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. *Simply Psychology*. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/bronfenbrenner.html>
3. Lerner, R. M., Lerner, J. V., Bowers, E. P., & Geldhof, G. J. (2015). Positive youth development and relational-developmental-systems. In W. F. Overton & P. C. Molenaar (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology and developmental science* (7th ed., Vol. 1, pp. 607–651). Wiley.
4. Paquette, D., & Ryan, J. (2001). Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. National-Louis University. https://www.dropoutprevention.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/paquetteryanwebquest_20091110.pdf
5. UNESCO. (2021a). *Meaningful youth participation: Practical toolkit*. <https://www.unesco.org/sdg4education2030/en/knowledge-hub/meaningful-youth-participation-practical-toolkit>
6. UNESCO. (2021b). *Toolkit for youth engagement in UNESCO designated sites*. <https://unesco.org.uk/resources/toolkit-for-youth-engagement-in-unesco-designated-sites>
7. VolTra. (2022). 賽馬會特義公民行動– 賽馬會特義公民行動. <https://glocalhero.voltra.org/en>
8. Wellbeing Health & Youth. (2019). *Wellbeing Health & Youth Engagement Framework*. <https://www.why.org.au/sites/default/files/2019-11/WHY-Engagement-Framework-COLOUR.pdf>