

The Challenges of Internationalization of Higher Education in Taiwan:  
Reflections on the International Students' Experience

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study is to investigate international students' perspectives on the challenges of internationalization of higher education in Taiwan - reasons for attending schools, perceived barriers to the learning environment, and support provided by the communities. Structured interviews were conducted with 24 international students from various universities in Taiwan. Qualitative data (i.e. filed notes and interview transcripts) were collected from in-depth interviews. Thematic analysis was adopted for data analysis. Four main themes emerged from the analyses of the interview transcripts: (1) political and security concerns, (2) economic enhancement and concerns, (3) academic quality assurance, and (4) cultural and social understanding. The findings indicate that cultural differences, teaching pedagogies, improper curriculum design, insufficient information and communication between the school and the students, and language barrier among learners strongly impact student engagement and collaboration. The findings suggest several implications and opportunities to improve the content and context of the international program in order to enable more effective learning outcomes in this era of mandatory educational reform.

Keyword : Globalization, Internationalization, International Education, Higher Education.