

國立東華大學  
National Dong Hwa University  
姐妹校國際交換交流學生心得報告  
International Inbound Exchange Student Report

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原系所 Home Department	Management International		
交換交流期間 Exchange Period	自 From February 年 year / 2019 月 month 至 To June 年 year / 2019 月 month		

Taiwan is an island country in eastern China. Taiwan has high economic growth and industrialization rates. Taiwan is one of the Four Asian Tigers. High-tech industries make Taiwan able to play a role in the world economy. Taiwan has several well-known technology companies in the world such as Asus, HTC, Acer and Foxconn.

On the occasion for the first time abroad, especially to developed countries, I came to Taiwan in the Student Exchange program to National Dong Hwa University. The reason I chose Taiwan was because I wanted to study outside culture and want to study independently. Before coming to Taiwan, what I imagined of course was fun things that would happen and also things that were feared. The things that are pleasing to him are getting to know many foreign friends from various countries and the thing that is feared is the problem of communicating because of language differences.

When I first set foot in Taiwan, I was already amazed. From the Taipei airport taking a bus to Taipei Main Station (TMS), people lined up in line to take the bus. Even though it was not crowded, only 6 people did not have to line up, all of them could get seats, there were still many empty seats because there was a lot of passengers on the bus. But that's the culture of queuing and discipline that was seen when I first arrived here.

The first time I came here I was amazed by the atmosphere at National Dong Hwa University because the building was sturdy and tall, artistic, modern but unique and filled with Chinese writing. NDHU is a large campus in Taiwan located in Shoufeng district, about 15 minutes away by bus from Hualien city, this campus stands surrounded by mountains and very beautiful lakes. I am very happy to study in Taiwan. My classmates are very kind and friendly. They don't get bored asking me if there are any obstacles in Taiwan. They help a lot. Between classes, we have familiarity activities such as lunch or dinner together or going to buy stationary needs together.

Like most campuses in other places, most universities in Taiwan provide dormitories for their students. Here I live in a dormitory provided by the campus. I chose to live in a dormitory because the dormitory that I lived in was in the campus area, making it easier for me in activities and activities around the campus. Besides that, the biggest advantage of staying in a dormitory is spending efficiency. The form of dormitory in Taiwan varies, there are one room filled with two to five people depending on the policies of each university. In addition to cost efficiency, the benefits of staying in a dormitory are the opportunity to socialize with local students and international students who come from various places in the world, plus facilities such as the internet, washing machines, bathrooms and vending machines that can be found in the hostel.

The facilities here are also very supportive for learning like a complete library. The library on my campus is very large up to 6 floors. Free wifi with very smooth connections, activities for student organizations are very supported and facilitated by the campus. There is no air pollution here because most people use bicycles as a means of transportation. So much convenience that I got at this place. The thing I like about my campus is the artificial lake and the beautiful natural scenery in the campus area. When the weather is sunny and not rained. I can take advantage of my free time to enjoy the scenery around the artificial lake that is in front of the NDHU administrative center building and across from the beautiful Lakeside canteen. The clear and calm lake expanse of water, surrounded by shady trees must be healthy for the eyes that look at it. While enjoying light snacks on the banks of the lake, of course is a pleasure while entertaining the inner self.

Starting a new adventure in different living conditions is indeed not easy even more so if the adventure is located in a country of people who are truly foreign languages and there are only a few familiar faces. At the beginning of my study in Taiwan I was shocked because of cultural differences and from the beginning I did not master Chinese so I had difficulty communicating with the surrounding environment and I also had to learn to increase mastery of foreign languages. Because, before going to Taiwan I only mastered English. Even so, Taiwan seems to make new experiences more enjoyable. The population is friendly and very good, the city and tourist attractions are very easy to navigate and safe, especially the facilities are very modern and sophisticated. Taiwan is a developed country whose environment is very clean and maintained. Easy and convenient access to public transportation for travelers and pedestrians. This is where I feel how comfortable I am. Although there are not many local people who can speak English, very friendly local people will try hard to provide answers or help confused foreigners.

I am very fortunate to taste life in Taiwan for around 5 months through the Student Exchange program. During my college days I took Chinese language classes. This is a very unique experience for me because learning Chinese is very challenging. I have to learn and memorize complicated hanzi characters, especially since Taiwan still uses traditional versions of the letters that have not been simplified, and the tone of voice that must always be right. One of the lessons in Mandarin is basic speaking chinese where many conversations or sentences that we can use everyday such as in class, shopping, apologizing or thanking and asking for help.

The character of the lecturers in delivering lecture material is very good, so that students can understand and understand the contents of the lecture material. When outside the classroom, the lecturers are also very friendly. The things that make me feel at home on campus are the comfortable classroom atmosphere, fast internet facilities, very easy journal access and friendly friends that support learning motivation.

In addition to the above experiences, I have an unforgettable experience that is the first time I have fasted in Taiwan. Being a Muslim minority provides a different experience for my fast. As is known to Muslims in Taiwan very little. During Ramadhan the activities of the population run as usual. Lectures continue. There is no accelerated return schedule as usual in Indonesia. Restaurants and cafes continue to operate throughout the day. Even though I am a minority citizen I have no difficulty in performing worship. This year Ramadan in Taiwan coincides with summer so that the body becomes more sweaty and dehydrated and the atmosphere is quite challenging for me. Duration is slightly longer about 16 hours per day. But that does not prevent him from remaining fast. For the iftar menu, I cook more often, but sometimes I buy ready-to-eat food. In addition, to access worship for Muslims it is not difficult because near the dormitory area there is a mosque / mosque so there is no reason to pass the Friday prayer for Muslim men.

While in Taiwan, I also got very good new friends. They took me around Taiwan to introduce food, culture and also the unique way of life of local people. Taiwan is a paradise for food lovers. I myself really like the local foods that are served in the night market which seems endless. Ranging from bubble tea with brown sugar, choudofu or stinky tofu, cipai, takoyaki, fried octopus to various types of processed noodles, everything is delicious and of course Taiwan is a paradise for ice cream lovers, some restaurants sell as much ice cream as you like at affordable prices.

Although looking for halal food is fairly difficult, many in the city of Taipei restaurants or eating places are halal certified and guarantee halal cuisine. In addition, my friends also introduced me to the conditions of socio-cultural life in Taiwan including the beliefs or religious systems of the local community up to the conditions of indigenous peoples of Taiwan. I was also introduced to an eco-friendly lifestyle which turned out to be quite mainstream among young Taiwanese. In general, I really enjoyed my experience in Taiwan because of the excellent quality of life. Connectivity between regions, even to small towns, is very well supported by cheap and safe modern public transportation modes.

Taipei is also very clean and convenience stores are in almost every corner of the city. In Taiwan, convenience stores provide a variety of services ranging from paying bills, buying credit and internet packages, buying transportation or performance tickets, to printing and photocopying services. On average these shops are open 24 hours, so it is very helpful to give a sense of security when getting lost or other emergency conditions.

The experience that was enough to make me afraid while I was in Taiwan was the frequent occurrence of earthquakes where the epicenter was in the city of Hualien and its surroundings. But it does not rule out the possibility of the epicenter in another city. When I first felt the earthquake I was so panicked that I ran outside the room. But the people around no one panicked and considered it normal. And I finally did not feel fear and panic again when an earthquake occurred. The foundation of buildings in Taiwan is specifically built to deal with earthquakes so there is no need to panic again if an earthquake with a strong frequency occurs.

The thing I did not find in Indonesia was the orderliness of the Taiwanese society. Such as a very good queuing culture, obeying the applicable regulations, or the ease of administering administration related to the country without being complicated. In terms of comfort, what I feel is comfort in transportation. Even though I don't have my own vehicle, I can travel everywhere easily because of supportive and safe public transportation. In addition, the community will not litter. If they don't find a trash can, they will store it in a bag or bag of clothes or pants and throw it away when they find a trash can. Whereas in terms of order, the community prioritizes the interests of other people than themselves. Like on a highway, it is very minimal to hear the sound of a car or motorcycle horn even though they are experiencing congestion. Want to budge with other vehicles that want to turn around.

Finally, I feel very fortunate to have the experience of learning and traveling in Taiwan. Many positive things I can learn from this country. Even though it was only a few months in Taiwan, I benefited a lot not only in the academy but also studying culture in the country.

