

## Same Same or Different?: Comparing Perceived Internationalization, Experiences and Satisfaction of Domestic and International Tertiary Students in Thailand

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### Abstract

There appears to be a lack of literature analyzing and comparing experiences and behavior of foreign and domestic tertiary students in non-traditional destinations. Using quantitative approach, this study examined and compared how international and home students in Thailand perceive the extent of internationalization of their host institution, their sense of belongingness, discriminatory experiences and satisfaction. Findings showed that both groups of students did not perceive differently the academic, social and organizational dimensions of internationalization. However, foreign students felt a stronger sense of belongingness and higher level of satisfaction than their local counterparts. They had a more positive perception of the course contents and the university's physical environment. They indicated less positive perception of the availability of opportunities to socialize, to participate in exchange study, and to use the English language in learning and communication. The differing perceptions and attitudes of domestic and foreign students suggest that the institution may consider to further develop and improve the various aspects of internationalization in order to satisfy their needs and enhance their student experience.

**Keywords:** Internationalization of higher education, Comparison of international and domestic students, Perception of internationalization

## Introduction

In the past ten years, the movement of students to get international education and credentials has been directed not only towards the Anglo-saxophone countries such as the United States, United Kingdom and Australia, but has slowly veered towards Asia. Statistical report states that “inbound students to Asia has increased almost three-fold from 323,487 in 1999 to 928,977 in 2015” (Kuroda et al., 2018, p3). This was a result of intra-regional mobility, with 72% or almost half a million students originating from countries also within the Asian region. Thailand, along with Malaysia and South Korea, is one of the emerging attractions for international students, showing inbound growth more than doubled from 2006 to 2015 (UNESCO Statistical Yearbook, 1988).

As Thailand aspires to become an educational hub, the offering of international programs has been encouraged, resulting to a considerable increase in the number of international programs taught at Thai higher educational institutions (HEIs) (Chang, 2008). However, Wachira (2022) posits that the main market for international programs in Thai universities remains to be Thai students. International education in Thailand has become popular among domestic students who want to improve their language skills and upgrade their profile for better job opportunities (Lertjanyakit, 2019). In 2002-2003, 85% to 98% domestic students accounted for the total number of enrollees in some foreign programs in Thai universities, particularly in the field of business administration (Pad, 2005 in Wachira, 2022).

A comparative study on the domestic and foreign students in Australia found that the learning experiences are largely similar. However, the overseas students were less satisfied with the facilities and resources such as cafeteria, shops, sports and religious facilities, social activities and clubs, among others. International students reported more discriminatory experiences than local counterparts, which had negative direct effect on sense of belongingness and indirect effect on average grades earned and cross-cultural interactions (Glass & Westmont, 2013). These findings had implications for administrators to identify the areas where there are significant differences and address specific areas of concern to ensure quality learning experience for the student body.

It is not too often that both international and home students are researched together and asked the same questions about their experiences of internationalization (Spencer-Aotey & Dauber, 2019), particularly in non-Anglophone settings. Studies on this topic can be useful in better understanding and managing the increasing diversity of student population (Grebennikov & Skaines, 2006). This study attempts to cover this gap in literature by examining how foreign and domestic students perceive the extent of internationalization of their host institution, as well as understand their sense of belongingness, discriminatory experiences and satisfaction. The study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. Do international students perceive internationalization differently than domestic students in terms of:
  - 1.1 academic dimension?
  - 1.2 social dimension?
  - 1.3 organizational dimension?
2. Do international students feel a sense of belongingness differently than domestic students?
3. Do international students experience discrimination differently than domestic students?
4. Do international students feel satisfaction differently than domestic students?

The objectives of the study are six-fold. It compares the local and foreign students' perception in three dimensions: academic, social and organizational. It also compares the sense of belongingness, discriminatory experiences and satisfaction of the two groups of students, respectively.

### **Theory and Hypotheses**

This research is anchored on Tinto's (1998) student integration theory and Oliver's (1996) expectancy-disconfirmation theory. A student's formal academic integration and informal academic engagements can have positive effect on his values, attitudes and perceptions (Tinto, 1998). Academic integration can be normative and structural (Chrysikos et al., 2017). Normative integration occurs when the student identifies with an academic system's attitudes and values structures, while structural integration refers to being embedded with the curriculum structures. Social integration is the student's connection and compatibility with the institution's social system. Integration takes place with interactions and engagements with teachers and academic staff, and involvement in extra-curricular and social activities and student associations (Tinto, 1998). The student forms positive or negative perceptions based on his experiences of integrating with the academic community. International and domestic students may accumulate different experiences during their course of study which could result to differing viewpoints.

Expectation theory posits that satisfaction or dissatisfaction may result from comparison of predetermined expectations with the actual experience (Oliver, 1996). Expectations explains satisfaction, which occurs if the perceived performance meets or exceeds expectations (Zhang et al., 2021). Foreign and home students, coming from various backgrounds and with different prior knowledge will have different expectations of their learning environment, which can shape how they perceive it (De Lange et al., 2018). Studies show that international students come to their host universities with high expectations of their learning environment, and a great need for social and organizational support from their teachers and academic staff (Glass & Westmont, 2013). Domestic students, on the other hand, enroll in international programs with the expectations of achieving an education that improves their English-language skills and prepares them for working in an international setting (Nguyen, 2022). Differing viewpoints and perspectives about internationalization may come from these two groups of students due to their expectations and experiences during the study period.

### **Differences in Perception of Internationalization**

Previous studies have examined the different factors considered by students when thinking about an internationalized university. The Australian Education International (AEI, 2002 as cited in Zimitat, 2005) identified three dimensions of international education: academic, social and organizational dimensions.

Curriculum, teaching and learning comprises the academic dimension, which includes the use of foreign language for instruction and the courses containing substantial amount of intercultural and international contents (Knight, 1994). Internationalization of academic dimension also means faculty has opportunities to introduce international perspectives and approaches in teaching and learning, and interacts and integrates with students from diverse backgrounds within classrooms and courses (Spencer-Aotey & Dauber, 2019). Studies show that domestic students experience low levels of academic integration compared to international students. They also felt it was not important to be academically embedded into the university community which suggests different viewpoints and perceptions among the two groups of students (Spencer-Aotey & Dauber, 2019).

Social dimension reflects the students' non-academic life and the opportunity to socialize with other students (Spencer-Aotey & Dauber, 2019). Social interaction is an important dimension that may positively or negatively affect students' academic acquisition and their ability to integrate into the school context (Kondakci et al., 2008). Studies show that international students may perceive and experience that mixing with other students from diverse backgrounds has great benefits, while domestic students may have less engagement. International students also attributed great importance to social integration compared to domestic students (Spencer-Aotey and Dauber, 2019).

Organizational dimension refers to the institution's service capabilities to cater to international students, including the presence of personnel with cross-cultural competencies and the capacity to speak other languages. This dimension also includes facilities and resources, such as the availability of website in different languages, library with wide selection of international texts and signs that are written in different languages (Fit & Gologan, 2018). Nguyen (2022) posits that in the present modern era, people tend to set high expectations and standards. With much higher tuition fees charged to international students, they may have higher expectations than home students for modern, high-standard, and high-quality learning environment, facilities and support services (Nguyen, 2022).

In line with these propositions, the study suggests the following hypotheses:

- H1: There is a significant difference between the perceived internationalization of domestic and international students in the academic dimension.
- H2: There is a significant difference between the perceived internationalization of domestic and international students in the social dimension.
- H3: There is a significant difference between the perceived internationalization of domestic and international students in the organizational dimension.

### **Differences in Sense of Belonging**

Students' sense of belongingness refers to their connection and strong identification with the campus community. Studies show the correlation between persistence and academic success of college students with their sense of belongingness (Glass & Westmont, 2013). However, having a sense of belonging is considered especially important in the academic success of international students because they handle the same rigorous academic requirements as domestic students but without social support. Compared to domestic students, international students may experience struggle and distress as they negotiate their place within their college community and new cultural environment (Glass & Westmont, 2013). Hence, foreign students may exert extra effort to engage and integrate with their academic community. The research predicts the following hypotheses:

- H4: There is a significant difference in the sense of belonging of domestic and international students.

### **Differences in Discriminatory Experience**

The experience of discrimination is a risk that international students may encounter and can have negative effect on their sense of belonging and academic success (Glass & Westmont, 2013). Perceived discrimination reflects a great social distance between the host and sojourner because of racial discrimination (English & Zhang, 2020). The social dominance theory argues that the dominant ethnic group has ingrained beliefs of superiority in a multiethnic society (Devos & Mohamed, 2014). Hence, foreign students may be seen as a racial minority in the host countries, which increases their vulnerability to be treated unfairly in their host country

by the administration, teachers, or classmates (Yang et al., 2022). Consistent with these findings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: There is a significant difference in the discrimination experience of domestic and international students.

### **Differences in Student Satisfaction**

Student satisfaction is the student's emotional reaction or attitude resulting from his subjective and personal process of evaluation of experiences and perceptions about educational services received during the study period (Weerasinghe et al., 2017). The assessment of these educational experiences, services and facilities provided by the academic institution shapes student satisfaction (Son et al., 2018). Pleasurable emotions may result as the student finds his or her educational environment and experiences positive and desirable. However, frustrations and dissatisfaction may result if the opposite. Measuring satisfaction is important for academic institutions to become more responsive to the needs and expectations of students. Studies show that resources and capabilities such as teaching and learning, technology, library, student services and student orientation may contribute to student satisfaction (Mavondo et al., 2004).

While the presence of international students brings diversity in terms of cultures, values, skills, ideas and new ways of thinking, these differences present challenges at the same time. Studies show that foreign students come to their host university with a higher level of expectations and requirements for inclusivity in learning and teaching in host university (Ramburuth & Tani, 2009). Being away from their homes and adapting to a new culture, they are also most in need of social support. Domestic students, on the other hand, enroll in international programs with the expectations of achieving an education that improves their English-language skills and prepares them for working in an international setting. These expectations can affect their perception of internationalization of the academic institution, and consequently their satisfaction. The study predicts the following hypotheses:

H6: There is a significant difference in the satisfaction of domestic and international students.

## **Methodology**

The research employed quantitative approach using cross-sectional survey study. T-test was used to compare the two cohorts of students in terms of their perception of the institution's internationalization, sense of belongingness, discriminatory experience, and satisfaction. Mean and standard deviation were used in presenting the demographic profile of respondents. The level of acceptable significance was set at  $p < .05$ . Cronbach's alpha assessed the scales' internal consistency and reliability.

The study examined the responses captured through self-reported survey. Despite the attributional biases, scholars still consider self-report data as a useful research method to capture the respondents' feelings, views and attitudes directly and expediently (Carlos & Rodrigues, 2015).

The survey questionnaire was administered online using Google survey platform, which could be accomplished within 15- 20 minutes. To avoid language barriers, the questionnaires were prepared originally in English, and then translated to Chinese and Thai languages with the help of official translators. The survey was conducted directly in classes across all programs and year levels with the support of faculty of the International College. It was administered on voluntary basis where participants were instructed to answer on their own,

truthfully and from their own perspective. They were requested to sign a consent form to indicate their voluntary agreement to participate in the research project. The researcher gave them assurance that the survey would remain anonymous and confidential, allowing them to give honest and unambiguous answers.

### Research Setting and Target Population

For the purpose of this study, the unit of analysis is the individuals, specifically the Thai and non-Thai students of the CMRU International College (CMRU-IC). Chiang Mai Rajabhat University (CMRU), an academic institution of higher learning located in the northern province of Thailand, officially established the International College in 2009 which has provided opportunities for international students to study in the university. CMRU is slowly positioning itself as a preferred alternative for international education in the country's northern region. Five programs are offered in the International College: Aviation Business Management (ABM), Business Chinese (BC), English for International Communication (EIC), International Business Management (IBM), and Thai for Business Communication (TBC).

The research population was the domestic and international student population of Chiang Mai Rajabhat University International College. According to the CMRU-IC Annual Report (2021, p. 32), there was a total of 811 students enrolled in the IC, out of which 180 were foreign students and 631 were local.

The study used total population sampling method, a type of purposive sampling technique, which included all the population of foreign and home students. 748 duly-completed responses were collected, out of which 124 were from foreign students, and 624 from local students. Table 1 shows the number of respondents sorted by nationality and by program.

**Table 1** International student respondents by nationality and by program

Nationality	ABM	BC	EIC	IBM	TBC	Total
American		2	1	1		4
Bhutanese	1		6	2		9
Chinese	2	6	12	7	29	56
Filipino			1	2		3
Indonesia			1			1
Japanese				1		1
Korean			2	1		3
Laotian					1	1
Malaysia			1			1
Myanmar	3	1	23	13		40
Nepalese			1			1
Russian				1		1
Scottish					1	1
Taiwanese				2		2

## Measurement Scales

The study adopted measurement scales that have already been used in a number of previous research studies and have been tested for relevance, reliability and validity. The measurement of perception of internationalization covered three dimensions which reflected the different types of internationalization. Academic dimension (13 items), and organizational dimension (4 items) were measured using the scales validated by Zimitat (2005). Social dimension (6 items), sense of belongingness (4 items), and discriminatory experience (1 item) were adapted from Spencer-Oatey & Dauber (2019). The measurement of student satisfaction (3 items) used the scale validated by Liu & Liu (2004). The scales had a total of 31 items answerable on a five-point Likert scale, corresponding to 1 strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 uncertain, 4 agree and 5 strongly agree.

To ensure validity, ease of use and understanding, the data collection instrument was pretested with 28 respondents. Some modifications and rewording were made to make the questionnaire more understandable and to avoid ambiguity. The pretesting resulted to acceptable Cronbach's alpha of .92 for all variables tested.

## Results

### Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of the two groups of respondents. Majority of domestic (63%) and international (52%) respondents were 20-22 years old. Among the international students, 6% belonged to the older age group of 29-43 years old pertaining to the students who were taking the Thai for Business Communication program as a second degree to enhance their Thai language skills.

For both groups of respondents, the majority were female with international female students 53%, and domestic female students 72%. The various nationalities of foreign students consisted of 45% Chinese nationals, 32% Myanmar, and the remaining 20% were American, Bhutanese, Filipino, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Lao, Malaysian, Nepalese, Russian, Scottish, and Taiwanese.

Among the international respondents, majority were enrolled in the English for International Communication (EIC) program (39%), followed by Thai for Business Communication (25%), and International Business Management (24%). 34% were in fourth year level of studies, 24% in first year, and the rest in the middle years. Among the domestic students, majority were enrolled in the Business Chinese program (39%), followed by EIC (34%). 39% were in second year level of studies, and 34% in third year.

**Table 2** Demographic Characteristics

Item	International student respondents		Domestic student respondents	
	<i>n=124</i>	Percentage	<i>n=624</i>	Percentage
<i>Age</i>				
17 - 19	16	13%	202	32%
20 - 22	65	52%	390	63%
23 - 25	23	19%	30	5%
26 - 28	12	10%	2	0%
29 - 33	3	2%	0	0%
36 - 40	3	2%	0	0%
41 - 43	2	2%	0	0%
<i>Gender</i>				
Male	58	47%	173	28%
Female	66	53%	451	72%
<i>Course</i>				
Aviation Business Management	6	5%	110	18%
Business Chinese	9	7%	243	39%
English for International Communication	48	39%	215	34%
International Business Management	30	24%	56	9%
Thai for Business	31	25%	0	0%
<i>Year Level</i>				
First year	30	24%	110	18%
Second year	25	20%	243	39%
Third year	27	22%	215	34%
Fourth year	42	34%	56	9%

### Mean Difference Between Domestic Students and International Students

The results of t-tests showed that there were no significant differences in the responses of the two groups of students in all the dimensions of perceived internationalization: academic ( $p=.339$ ), organizational ( $p=.084$ ), and social ( $p=.566$ ), thereby rejecting hypotheses 1, 2 and 3.

**Table 3** T-test, means and standard deviation

Variables and factors	International students (n=124)		Domestic students (n=624)		Group comparison		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t	df	p
<b>Academic Dimension</b>							
AD1 The content in my courses is often illustrated with examples from, or applied to a range of cultural and international situations.	3.90	0.582	3.76	0.025	2.252	746	0.03*
AD2 The content of my courses is presented from a range of different cultural and international perspectives.	3.81	0.683	3.77	0.027	.578	746	0.56
AD3 The learning focuses more about international issues than on Thai issues.	3.98	0.888	4.25	0.028	-3.760	746	0.00*
AD4 Assessment tasks in my courses are framed in international scenarios or require me to apply course materials or concepts to different cultural or international situations.	3.77	0.613	3.88	0.028	-1.683	746	0.09
AD5 In my courses, we have been given a good introduction on how to work effectively in cross-cultural groups.	3.77	0.825	3.73	0.030	.601	746	0.55
AD6 Group work in my courses provides a real opportunity to learn about different cultures and gain different perspectives about my area of study.	3.87	0.765	3.80	0.029	1.026	746	0.31
AD7 The teachers in my courses appear to have a deep understanding of how my discipline or profession operates in different cultures and countries around the world.	3.77	0.774	3.87	0.028	-1.424	746	0.16
AD8 In my courses this year I have become aware of how culture, religion and values have influenced, or shaped my area of study.	3.75	0.772	3.55	0.034	2.384	746	0.02*
AD9 I am aware of, or have had, the opportunity to include courses on language studies, country or culture studies or study overseas as part of my degree program.	3.78	0.889	4.22	0.028	-6.107	746	0.00*
AD10 There are teachers from other countries in my programme.	4.09	0.786	4.04	0.039	.574	746	0.57
AD11 Programs or courses are delivered in English.	3.65	1.06	4.01	0.037	-3.819	746	0.00*
AD12 My programme prepares me to work in an international environment.	3.75	0.833	3.64	0.033	1.361	746	0.17
AD13 Academic staff encourage me to contribute relevant examples from my background experience in class discussions.	3.81	0.823	3.70	0.029	1.445	746	0.15

Variables and factors	International students (n=124)		Domestic students (n=624)		Group comparison			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t	df	p	
<b>Organizational Dimension</b>								
OD1	University and college websites are available in different languages.	3.66	1.011	3.85	0.029	-2.449	746	0.02*
OD2	The library has a wide range of international texts.	3.52	0.924	4.07	0.027	-7.738	746	0.00*
OD3	Signs on campus are written in different languages.	3.53	0.906	3.60	0.036	-.797	746	0.43
OD4	Support staff is welcoming and open to international students.	4.06	0.758	4.07	0.028	-.156	746	0.88
OD5	Support staff can speak other languages besides Thai.	4.02	0.704	4.09	0.029	-1.000	746	0.32
OD6	University looks international when you walk around.	3.4	1.043	3.09	0.044	2.947	746	0.00*
<b>Social Dimension</b>								
SD1	There are good opportunities to participate in volunteer activities during my course.	3.56	0.913	3.65	0.032	-1.159	746	0.25
SD2	There are good opportunities to socialize with people in campus from many different cultural backgrounds.	3.8	0.826	3.67	0.034	1.607	746	0.11
SD3	There are international activities and events that help home students and those from other countries to mingle.	3.62	0.959	3.86	0.036	-2.633	746	0.01*
SD4	There are good opportunities on my course to meet people from many different cultural backgrounds.	3.95	0.805	3.93	0.030	.319	746	0.75
SD5	Socialising with students from other cultures/countries is part of my daily campus life.	3.75	0.813	3.83	0.034	-.911	746	0.36
SD6	The social environment on campus enables me to gain an understanding of different cultural and international perspectives of the world.	3.7	0.806	3.66	0.036	.443	746	0.66
<b>Sense of Belonging</b>								
SB1	I have a strong sense of affiliation with my college/university.	3.51	0.86	3.40	0.033	1.366	746	0.17
SB2	I have been encouraged to develop my strengths and talents at my college/university.	3.85	0.823	3.52	0.033	4.190	746	0.00*
SB3	I feel I am a part of a close and supportive community of colleagues and friends.	3.82	0.625	3.81	0.029	.213	746	0.83
SB4	I am both challenged and supported at my college/university.	3.77	0.787	3.50	0.033	3.319	746	0.00*
<b>Discrimination Experience</b>								
DE1	I have felt insulted or threatened based on my cultural/ethnic background at my college/university.	2.46	1.171	3.96	0.044	-13.77	746	0.00*
<b>Student Satisfaction</b>								
SS1	I believe that my studies at University are giving me the necessary content knowledge, skills and perspectives to work effectively in overseas countries.	3.89	0.757	3.78	0.029	1.498	746	0.14
SS2	If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?	3.46	1.007	3.41	0.039	.499	746	0.62
SS3	Overall, how satisfied are you with all aspects of your university/institution experience?	3.76	0.769	3.32	0.038	4.81	746	0.00*

\* &lt; .05

## Discussions

These results confirm previous studies suggesting similarity in the learning and teaching experiences of foreign and local students in Australia (Grebinnikov & Skaines, 2006). Another study in North America suggests that students, despite of origin, did not perceive differently that the campus honors diversity, as well as the engagement and participation in co-curricular activities (Glass & Westmont, 2013). Said study implies that both international and domestic students place importance into being academically and socially embedded into the university community, and have similar perceptions about the organizational support, facilities and services provided by the institution. However, the study of Spencer-Aotey & Dauber (2019) covering six universities in four different countries contradicts the above-mentioned findings. Domestic students had different viewpoints from foreign students about academic and social integration. The contradicting findings could be attributed to the expansive coverage of the latter study where the dissimilar HEI practices between the four countries could have shaped the differing experiences of domestic and local students.

There were significant differences in the responses in three areas: sense of belonging ( $p=.001$ ), discriminatory experience ( $p=.000$ ) and satisfaction ( $p=.001$ ). These findings support Hypotheses 4, 5 and 6. As foreign students consider the sense of belonging especially important in their academic success, they may tend to exert more effort to connect and be part of the college community (Glass & Westmont, 2013). The difference in discriminatory experience suggests that there might have been instances of discrimination among the international students. Glass & Westmont (2013) pointed out that discrimination is a risk that international students may encounter in the course of their study abroad.

Considering the t-test results of individual items, international students were more likely than domestic students to think that the institution is more internationalized in terms of course contents ( $AD1=.025$ , and  $AD8=.017$ ). They were also more likely to perceive that the university's physical environment looks international when you walk around ( $OD6=.003$ ). In terms of sense of belonging, this group of students were more likely to feel that they were receiving support and encouragement to develop their strengths and talents ( $SB2=.000$ , and  $SB4=.001$ ).

However, there were also many areas that foreign students perceived less than the local students. Foreign students were less likely than domestic students to think that their learning focuses more on international issues than Thai issues ( $AD3=.000$ ). They were also less likely to believe that there are opportunities to participate in study overseas as part of their degree program ( $AD9=.0000$ ). They have less positive perception of the use English language in course delivery ( $AD11=.000$ ), and the use of different languages in university and college websites ( $OD1=.015$ ), as well as the availability of a wide range of international texts in the library ( $OD2=.000$ ). Foreign students were less likely to think that there are international activities and events that help home and international students to mingle ( $SD3=.009$ ). These results have similar patterns with the outcomes of existing studies which suggest displeasure of overseas students in some areas of their learning experience and environment Glass & Westmont, 2013; Grebennikov & Skaines, 2006; Spencer-Aotey & Dauber, 2019).

International students were more likely to have felt discriminated against ( $DE1=.000$ ), which is not surprising as reported by previous studies. Nevertheless, despite the discriminatory experience and the low perception of some areas of academic and social dimensions, this study found that foreign students were generally more satisfied with their university experience than

the home students ( $SS3=.000$ ). The study of Glass & Westmont (2013) could somehow explain this phenomena. He used the resilience-based model of acculturation to explain the buffering effect of belongingness in the success and cross-cultural interactions of international students. Despite the challenges faced by international students, they learn to be resilient in adapting to their new academic and social environment, hence they reported higher level of sense of belongingness and satisfaction. They appreciate even minimal cues of social connectedness affecting their achievement motivation, which could be different with local students (Glass & Westmont, 2013). Domestic students do not face the challenges of being away from home and would likely have access to resources that might divert their connection and integration with the university.

### **Conclusion and suggestions**

Domestic and international students did not perceive differently the extent of internationalization of the host institution. Significant differences were found, however, between the two groups in terms of sense of belongingness, discrimination and satisfaction. Foreign students reported to feel a stronger sense of belonging and higher level of satisfaction than their local counterparts. However, they were also most likely to have felt discriminated against.

Measures of the individual items showed that international students had a more positive perception of the course contents and the university's physical environment. However, they indicated less positive perception of the availability of opportunities to participate in exchange study, and having student activities and events to mingle and socialize. They also think less positively about the use of English language in teaching and communication websites. The differing perceptions and attitude of domestic and foreign students suggest that the institution may consider to further develop and improve the various aspects of internationalization in order to satisfy their needs and enhance their student experience.

The study has the following implications on research: first, it contributes to literature on HEI in Asia by examining a cross-section of domestic and international students, and presenting the similarities and differences in the perceptions, sense of belonging, discriminatory experiences and satisfaction of these two groups of students. Second, it empirically shows the risk of discrimination that may be perceived by international students. Third, the differing perceptions and attitude of domestic and foreign students suggests that the institution may consider to further develop and improve the various aspects of internationalization to benefit both foreign and domestic students, hence enhancing their student experience and satisfaction.

### **New knowledge and the effects on society and communities**

Future research studies would benefit from using a larger sample size for international respondents. A mixed approach of quantitative and qualitative methods can be used to better understand the perspectives of the respondents. A regression study that would determine the antecedents of perceived internationalization would help in further understanding what factors cause some people to have more positive perception and higher level of satisfaction. It would also be of interest to examine the motivation of students in selecting their course, acceptance and expectations.

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