

International Students Learning and Sociocultural Experiences in Ireland

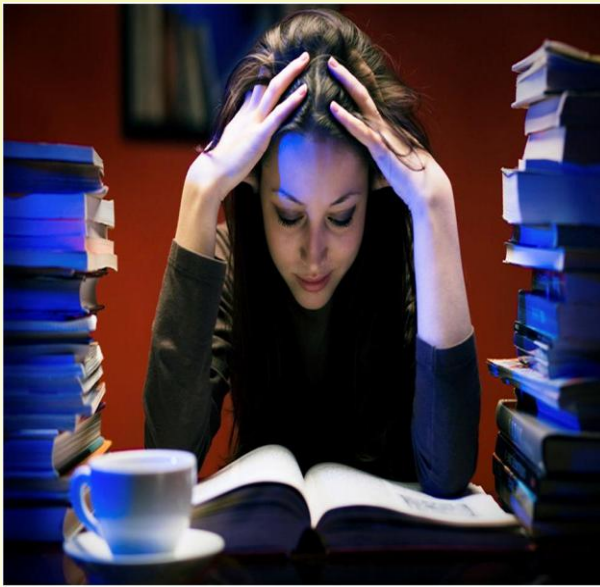
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Abstract

This study examined short-term American and European Union international students' perceptions of their learning and sociocultural experiences in Dublin Business School, Ireland. Dominant themes that were researched include: academic adjustment, linguistic issues, plagiarism, sociocultural adjustment and rating of overall experience.

Introduction

Studying abroad necessitates significant academic, learning style and sociocultural adjustments for international students. Using rich descriptive data, this study aims to highlight positives of international students experiences, areas of difficulties and international students experience improvement suggestions.



Method

Qualitative research method which facilitates subjective, situational, relational and interactional accounts was employed. Case study methodology facilitated detailed multiple perspectives and accounts from the 11 participants which include 6 female and 5 male.

All semi-structured interviews were conducted in Dublin Business School's Meeting Rooms in Dames Street, and were tape recorded. Data collected were ethically collected and handled.

Resulting data was thematically analysed, supported by NVivo 9 qualitative analysis software. Credibility of findings was enhanced through member checking as participants read and confirmed accuracy of transcriptions.

Results

The study revealed that academic adjustment proved more difficult than sociocultural adjustment. Significant sociocultural adjustment indicated by culture learning and social interaction was evident by end of Week 2. Additionally, both native and non-native English speakers variously experienced linguistic difficulties.

Discussion

Rigorous analysis of data mostly supports existing literature. However, this study found that international students difficulty in making Irish friends was largely caused by shortage of Irish students in certain classes, an arena where such friendships mostly begin. This adds to existing literature on possible causes of international students difficulty in forming relations with host culture students.

References

Core references employed in this study include:

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