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FACULTY PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES WITH TAIWANESE GRADUATE STUDENTS AT A UNIVERSITY IN THE UNITED STATES: IMPLICATIONS FOR CROSS-CULTURAL TEACHING AND LEARNING (216 pp.)

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The number of international students attending American universities continues to increase, their presence offering both opportunities and challenges to faculty members. Teaching in mixed-culture classrooms presents challenges in revising the curriculum and adjusting teaching strategies as well as convincing local students of the benefits of interacting with students from different cultural backgrounds.

For this study, 15 faculty members whose teaching was particularly helpful to Taiwanese graduate students at a university in the Midwestern United States completed interviews describing their experiences with Taiwanese graduate students, their perceptions of them, and adjustments they made to their teaching strategies to accommodate their needs.

Following analysis of interview data using Strauss and Corbin's three-stage method of coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), several general themes emerged. The participants described their experiences and the adjustments they made for Taiwanese graduate students, ranging from language and communication to cultural considerations.

Findings suggest that some instructional strategies can help Taiwanese graduate students in U. S. university classrooms overcome many of the difficulties they encounter.

The participants may not have examined culture on a deep level, but they were able to note its effects on their students and modify their teaching methods accordingly. Findings also show that participants' cultural awareness is associated with their willingness to adjust their teaching and their perceptions of Taiwanese graduate students. Today's teachers must be prepared to enter increasingly diverse classrooms. The challenge for teachers is to find ways to distribute knowledge and wisdom to their students with intercultural sensitivity and to improve the learning environment for all students.