

Digital Age and Sustainable Development in Higher Education

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It is a speech given by Pechdau Tohmeena from Thailand's Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation (hereinafter referred to as "ministry"), and delivered at the distinguished University of Xiamen. This speech will focus on the theme of "Digital Age and Sustainable Development in Higher Education" particularly emphasizing international exchange and cooperation due to time constraints.

In discussing the Thai perspective on international exchange and cooperation, it is undeniable that universities globally strive to enhance academic collaboration through student and scholar exchanges, curriculum development, joint research projects, seminars, and conferences. Thailand is a good destination for conferences in Asia, known for its capabilities of meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions (MICE). The strategic location and excellent facilities make Thailand an ideal platform for academic exchanges and knowledge dissemination.

In terms of educational cooperation, Thailand is diligently working with numerous higher education institutions worldwide to promote the future of education. This commitment has become increasingly relevant for international university rankings. For instance, Krirk University in Thailand, through its extensive international academic collaborations, has improved its ranking to the 130th in Asia and the 4th in Thailand.

Exchange programs are key in mobilizing students, teachers, and experts from diverse perspectives, thereby enhancing our understanding of different cultures. Imagine the insights gained by students who study in both Thailand and China, obtaining not just a

degree but also a deep appreciation of the needs of both countries, potentially bridging them through education and business.

Recently, on November 16, 2023, the office of ministry welcomed a delegation from Zhejiang Province's higher education sector to coordinate exchanges in digital economy and digital technology. Thailand can learn much from Zhejiang's advancements, particularly in digital technology and artificial intelligence (AI). This collaboration will expand academic cooperation, student and staff exchanges, and research initiatives, a significant step as we approach the 50th anniversary of Thailand–China diplomatic relations in 2025.

Additionally, the ministry plays a crucial role in supporting the development of Chinese language curriculum in universities. Learning Chinese is essential, not only as a means to communicate with over 1.4 billion people but also as a vital link connecting Thai and Chinese cultures. Therefore, the ministry fully supports the integration of Chinese language studies into our university curriculums for future academic cooperation between Thailand and China.

In conclusion, it is firmly held that, through the sustained endeavors of both governments, an incremented engagement of students, scholars, and researchers in bilateral academic exchanges will be fostered. This commitment is poised to significantly contribute to the advancement and sustainable development of higher education between Thailand and China.

Conflict of Interest The author declares that she has no conflict of interest.

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