

## **Experiencing Parenting-Friendly Campus in Taiwan**

People living in developing countries have been talking about the strategies on how should science bring greater influence to boost the economy, provides the basis of data for policies/response during the critical conditions (i.e. disease pandemic), and eventually helps the government to actualize the welfare nationwide. The topic has been buzzing eternally as countries racing for excellence in science and technology, with no exception in Indonesia, the country where I have spent my basic education and college period.

As a person who also earned a master's degree in Taiwan, I am able to point out one of the strengths of Taiwan education system that countries should look into. In this article, I am not going to discuss the fact that Taiwan listed in the top five of the most prolific country in the Asiatic region for the production of the scientific articles (1996-2019) (Scimago Institutions Ranking) that most of the prospective foreign students check over, but I would rather share my experience of having a parenting-friendly campus in National Chung Hsing University (NCHU), which was later become one of the reasons behind my decision to continue the Ph.D. program at the same university.

Being a father of one (7-year old) while pursuing academic greatness in an entomology laboratory will never be an easy task. Evenly dividing the time and attention for academic works and family is become the main issue. Even once I was hoping I would have more than 24-hour in a day to balance the needs of a family, lab works, and myself. That happened during my early months in NCHU, when I was not realized that NCHU campus provides dozen of recreational elements for family.

Yes, it is real, NCHU campus can be a good place to spend time with the kids. Let's start with the main attraction of a big pond decorated with flora and fauna, which never fail to confiscate kids' attention. Not entertained enough with nature? The campus has several alternatives to flex out kids' bodies by doing sports in the arena, such as swimming pool, running track stadium, basketball courts, volleyball courts, tennis courts, skating rink, rock climbing court, and a practicing archery area. If kids need to recharge their energy, the cafeteria is ready for the hungry belly. However, my favorite activity is still having a light meal and playing physical games with kids in open grassland. Having all of these recreational elements on campus allows me to

synchronize laboratory works and parenting time during the weekend, as I am working with insects, which needs uninterrupted care. My weekend plan usually follows this sequence: morning walk to and around campus - spend 1-2 hours in the laboratory with wife helps our kid to do fine motoric activities like drawing, coloring, or legoing - having brunch or lunch in the cafeteria. Not to mention, all of these facilities are open to the public, which strengthens the weekend vibe that can help me to reduce the pressure from the academic works.

Furthermore, there was a moment when I really think that the parenting-friendly university is not only about the recreational value and stuff, but also about all the kindness from people surround that can help you to make childcare easier. That happened when a professor allowed me to bring my child to the lab-meeting session, which was also accepted by the lab mates. Experiencing this kind of condition is a huge mental booster for the parent / s who try to balance high-quality education and family matters.

I believe this parenting-friendly culture in university is great for the development of science too. It helps academia to create an ecosystem of science, which starts with the pupils recognizing what is happening in the academic institution. Growing up with science beside them would generate a sense of logic, critical thinking, and fairness, which always become the backbone of a scientific works. This idea is coherent with programs created by most of the colleges in NCHU for letting the school children to have some science classes during the summer break or just visit campus buildings for study tour.