

Report on Participation in 2015 Thailand Field Trip

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Thailand field research trip motivated me to think more deeply about people's personalities and psychological feelings which varied by their different cultural background. My research fields are behavioral economics and experimental economics. And my master thesis aims to find out how people behave in cooperation on pollution reduction project and what kinds of incentives are efficient to raise human's contribution in order to reduce pollution. Through this field trip, I found that economic incentives may not be always the most efficient way to increase people's contribution. Also, I learnt a lot about cooperation of ASEAN from international students.

Firstly, local farmers were difficult to be attracted by money incentive on organic farming. I was impressed by Khao Kwan Foundation. Chairperson mentioned that their organic farming method could reduce cost and increase yield of rice. However, this method could not easily be accepted by the local farmers because he mentioned that they were brain-washed by advertisement and couldn't stop using inorganic fertilizer and pesticides. I learnt that money incentive sometimes cannot be applied on some kinds of people. Therefore, when I conduct experiment, I must be aware to control religious, cultural and educational variables, in order to make sure no bias.

Secondly, political factor affect people's decision in Thailand. Monopoly C.P. group dominated food chain in Thailand. The shareholders and management seniors of C.P group are organized by members of military government. Therefore, C.P. group can expand quickly from support of government. For example, C.P group is the sole operator of 7-Eleven convenience stores in Thailand. The first 7-Eleven outlet was opened in 1989 in Bangkok. At the end of 2014, the company had a total of 8,127 stores nationwide. Many small companies are forced out unfairly by C.P group, for example, C.P group promised Siam Banana to sell their products in 7-eleven, however, finally C.P group broke the promise, they copied the recipe and sold the product called Tokyo banana. Therefore, many small companies need to consider political factor before making decision, in order to avoid from unfair political power.

Thirdly, I learnt a lot from other students in international graduate student seminar. We discuss and share ideas about how to pursue sustainable development in East Asia. I was impressed that attitudes and understanding of ASEAN are different between countries in Southeast Asia. According to one presenter in the seminar, Thai supports and promotes ASEAN development concept to the public frequently. Indonesian seems not to pay much attention on ASEAN development. Therefore, it is important for ASEAN countries keep similar progress and promote cooperation concept to their citizens, in order to enhance sustainable development of ASEAN.

Fourthly, I learnt how international organizations (e.g. UNIDO, World Bank) act as coordinator between countries, in order to enhance cooperation between rich countries and poor countries. This visit enhanced me to consider and reflect more about my contribution to society. Therefore, I plan to apply for summer internship in international organization, in order to put my effort on sustainable development in the world. I hope my research ability can contribute to those who need help. This also is responsibility of being a researcher.