

Report on Participation in Overseas Project Management Seminar in Manila, Philippines

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(a) Academic Outcomes

The overseas project management seminar in the Philippines mainly discussed topics relevant to infrastructure project management and involved the participation of representatives from the Philippine government and the academe who were specialized and have experienced working on real life infrastructure projects. Before starting my studies at Kyoto University, I was also working in the Department of Transportation of the Philippine government so I too was quite familiar with infrastructure project management. Through participation in this program I was able to obtain timely information on the new developments in the field and areas that have great potential for further research. The seminar which was held at the headquarters of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) made me realize the specific topic which I would focus my research and master's thesis. It was a great experience and I hope to participate in more overseas programs like this in order to broaden my network and promote cooperation from the international community especially those countries in the Asian region.

(b) Your experiences while overseas

I'm originally from the Philippines so I didn't get any culture shock during the overseas program. However, I enjoyed interacting with fellow participants from other countries and helping them understand Philippine culture. We learned that even though we come from different countries there were several similarities in our culture.

For the most part of the program, we stayed in the capital city Manila where density is almost the same as Tokyo but traffic conditions are way much worse due to lack of infrastructure development such as railways, efficient bus systems, and road safety. On the other hand, we also had the chance to visit the rural area (a province) in the Philippines. I think this is a good thing because the participants were able to experience both the urban and rural life or at least see how the living conditions are different in the city and in the provinces of the Philippines.

(c) The content of the program

The program consisted of several topics and areas relating to infrastructure management. We were able to learn from speakers coming from several government agencies in the Philippines such as the Central Bank, Department of Energy, and Economic Development and Planning.

We were also given a chance to learn from international organizations dealing with project financing for infrastructure projects namely the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Moreover, the academe and researchers in the field from Nagoya University, University of the Philippines, and Kyoto University also shared to us their recent findings and recommendations.

The current traffic conditions in the Philippines is a hot topic right now and many researchers are trying to solve the high congestion problem in the capital city Manila. The program itself is interesting because it does not only try to solve the traffic congestion in Manila, but it also makes use of learnings from past experiences of other countries and possible applications of the solution to the traffic problem in Manila to those of other countries experiencing almost the same circumstances.

(d) The impact of the program on your career plans

The program made me realize that after graduation, I plan to be involved in management of infrastructure projects

on the side of the funding agencies like that of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) or the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). I am very much interested in helping countries especially in Asia to develop their infrastructure in order to alleviate poverty and promote equality in the society. I strongly believe that a country in order to grow and develop its economy should have a strong infrastructure backbone. Infrastructure development is indeed the key to economic development.