

Reflection on Experiential learning programme in Vietnam

(15th June – 31st July, 2015)

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This summer, I have joined the internship program jointly held by Project Mingde, the Faculty of Social Sciences and World Vision Vietnam, where 8 students from Civil Engineering together with 8 students from Social Sciences went to Vietnam to build a washroom for a local secondary school. While building the toilet, we also helped the school to repair and upgrade their school facilities, did some volunteer teaching and also carried out needs analysis in local communes.

After seven weeks of training in Vietnam, I have gained a lot from it. It was the first time that I witness the whole process of construction, from a flat land to an actual functional building. This gave me valuable knowledge about the logistic and management in construction site, as well as the role of being a resident engineer, these hands on experience are something that I will never learnt from lectures or laboratory session at university.

Beside the useful engineering knowledge, my communication skill also improved after the trip, I mainly communicate with 3 different kinds of people. Regularly, I report to our supervisor, Dr. Ryan Wong, about the progress of construction work and also share what I have learnt from the training. Meanwhile, I communicate with the local workers with the help of interrupters to understand what is happening in site, what is the future progress of work and what are the problems encountered. Finally, we discussed about the construction work with our peers form faculty of social sciences, since they know very little about constructions, we tried to use the simplest words and theories to explain what is happening in site, this is quite similar to what we do in the future when we need to explain our work to the client or the general public who don't have much knowledge on our field. This was definitely a very valuable chance to train my communication through communicating with different people.

To conclude, I would say that this is an unforgettable and meaningful trip for 16 of us and also the local people in Vietnam I hope that there will be more similar program in the near future and getting better and bigger in scale, to let more students to experience it and spread the happiness together!