

The Asia-Pacific Network for Moral Education (APNME)

Reflections by

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Research and Practice in Moral Education: Reflection, Dialogue, Interaction

I'M NOT ALONE

When I submitted my paper abstract to the conference committee I expected that the conference would be a good networking opportunity; specifically a chance to meet a few other professionals in the area and familiarize myself with the issues of moral education in the Asia-Pacific region. My participation met all of these goals and also provided me with the opportunity to discuss moral education concerns, issues and best practices with peers and colleagues.

As a young scholar and doctoral student of Moral Education, sometimes I feel alone, as I do not have enough peers with whom to discuss the topic. There is only a small number of graduate students studying in this field in my faculty. Moreover, I am teaching at an Islamic University, which is a homogeneous environment that offers bounded perspectives on morality. The opportunity for discussion is minimal, so I have had only limited discussions with people from different backgrounds, and therefore a conference like this was a valuable opportunity for me to broaden my perspectives and deepen my understanding of other ideas and practices.

At this conference, I attended discussions spanning a broad spectrum of topics, from the practice of moral education in schools and higher education, to moral philosophies and traditions of the countries of other participants, and the role of religion and secularism in moral education, as well as the moral development of students and many other interesting issues. I made the acquaintance of colleagues from all across the Asia-Pacific region and learned of other research similar to mine. I don't feel alone anymore. I built a network of contacts and I am continuing to discuss research with those who are interested in the same focus of studies as I am (moral education using literature for young children).

I enjoyed a rich cultural experience and had the opportunity to learn about Taiwanese schools and how they integrate moral education into their school curricula and classroom activities when I partook in a school visit arranged by the conference organising committee to the English Village and Sing Chia Elementary School. I also took pleasure in other activities, such as dance, theatre and an aboriginal performance.

Throughout the conference, I was continually impressed by the passion I saw in individuals during the discussions and presentations. All participants came with their own ideas but were also open to other ideas. The discussion was warm and supportive. Great conversations developed between the participants from different cultural backgrounds, all of whom came ready with questions and to support one another. From this experience I gained valuable knowledge about how others think concerning the concepts of morality and the practice of moral education, and I also developed new perspectives on how others think about other people's concepts and practices.

My experience at the 2012 Conference was an amazing opportunity, and I am already looking forward to attending next year's conference.