

JASID Conference and Travel in Okinawa

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The lectures that we attended in the conference that was held last November 23 to 25 helped us gain some insights on the different areas of education, as well as development. Since it was an international conference, I was expecting the English lectures to be presented using the same language.

While the topics presented in the conference seemed to be interesting, it could have been more academically-productive for the international students and participants if a bilingual interpreter was provided. This might have roused a very constructive and intellectual discussion between the foreign and Japanese audience. Although majority of the lectures were in Japanese language, I was still able to appreciate the entire conference since there were few that were delivered in English.

On the other hand, my travel to Okinawa, along with other JDS Fellows and Mr. Hasegawa, was a very memorable experience. This activity showed me the other side of Japan, most especially its culture - which is quite opposite from that of the culture of the people in the Central island.

I enjoyed strolling and touring around Naha City and visiting some famous tourist spots, which include natural and historical sites. Having gone to these places, I was amazed by how the Okinawans were able to maintain a balance between economic development and environmental preservation and protection.

Likewise, dining in restaurants that serve Okinawa specialties was another worthwhile experience as we were able to eat fresh seafoods. I also greatly appreciated the tropical climate on this side of Japan, which made me feel like I am in my homeland, the Philippines.

The conference and the tour in Okinawa became important experience that imparted fruitful lessons to me. The conference, as an academic endeavor, conveyed supplemental information on the status of education and development both here and in other countries. The tour, on the other hand, provided a significant exposure on the other side of Japan.