Sharing session on Transnational Knowledge Transfer and Dynamic Governance at the 2017 Lien Conference on Good Governance

A sharing session on “Transnational Knowledge Transfer and Dynamic Governance” was held at the 2017 Lien Conference on Good Governance on 28 October 2017 in Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore. The sharing session attracted a large number of academics and practitioners of diverse background and expertise in the field of governance and public policy, including the President of American Society for Public Administration, Honorable Madam Janice Lachance, the President of International Institute of Administrative Sciences, Prof Geert Bouckaert, and many other distinguished scholars from around the world.

Based upon the Tier 2 research project on “Transnational Knowledge Transfer and Dynamic Governance in Comparative Perspective“, granted by the Ministry of Education, Singapore (PI: Prof Liu Hong), the sharing session aimed to introduce the project to a wider range of audience in the field as well as to disseminate some important preliminary findings.

The Co-PI, Dr Ana Cristina Dias Alves, who is an Assistant Professor of the School of Social Sciences, Nanyang Technological University (NTU), chaired the session and delivered a comprehensive presentation about the project. As she introduced, this research project focuses on exploring and examining the ever-growing trend of cross-border transnational transfer of governance knowledge among countries in the Global South, in terms of Government-to-Government collaboration projects and public official training. This trend contributes to fostering a dynamic governance system in developing countries, and furthermore, will to some extent counteract the rising force of anti-globalization in the Global North, especially in Europe and the US in recent years. After an overall introduction of the project, Dr Alves turned to one of the three sub-themes of the project, namely the knowledge transfer between China and Africa, which is also one of her expertise. China has made great efforts in casting soft power in African continent over the decades, meanwhile more and more governments of African countries showed keen interest in the “China Model”
and started to emulate it through either jointly building Special Economic Zones or sending officials to China on study missions.

Internal collaborator Dr Wang Tingyan from Nanyang Centre for Public Administration, NTU, overseas collaborator Mr In Em from the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Cambodia, and project advisor Prof Eric Heikkila from University of Southern California together with Dr Alves formed a discussion group after the introduction presentation. Mr In Em has been widely involved in organizing high-ranking officials of Cambodia to Singapore to take training programmes on Singapore’s experience of good governance. He shared his observation of knowledge transfer from Singapore to Cambodia based on his working experience. Dr Wang presented key findings of the project “Chinese Mayors’ Class in Singapore”, which has been carried out by Prof Liu Hong and Dr Wang in the past three years. Prof Heikkila, who has rich experience of teaching and interacting with Chinese public officials in the US, provided his ideas on how to analyze the knowledge transfer process in a comprehensive manner.

There was a Q &A session after the group discussion and many participants raised questions and comments. For example, Dr Jesse Campbell from Incheon National University, Korea, brought up his concern about
how to measure the effectiveness of transnational knowledge transfer scientifically, and he also gave valuable suggestions about this issue.

The sharing session received much praise from the audience. This kind of academic sharing event will not only promote knowledge exchange and spread cutting-edge research findings, but also help build up a network of academic collaboration between Nanyang Centre for Public Administration and other institutes at home and abroad.