

Voices from Participants 2024

Visit to VIT

Visiting period: September 19-30, 2024

(This text was translated using Google Translate.)

What I learned in terms of training and language at the host university

At the Vellore campus, I had the opportunity to visit facilities related to my specialty, mechanical engineering. In the classrooms equipped with practical facilities and machining equipment, I observed local students working on a small airplane project. By talking to the local students, I was able to learn how they learn and what their goals are, and it was a good opportunity to come into contact with different values.

In terms of language, I was reminded of the importance of communication through English. There are many different languages in India, and English is used as a common language, but the local students use English very fluently, and there were many occasions where my English ability was tested through daily conversations. Since this was my first overseas training in English, I was nervous at first, but I gradually gained confidence through interactions such as campus tours, participating in events, and having meals with friends. In addition, while interacting with Indian students in English, I realized that it is not only important to have language, but also important things in communication between different cultures.

Furthermore, through experiences such as interviews and appearing on the campus radio, I realized that it is necessary to have the skills to convey what you want to say to others in an easy-to-understand way. In particular, I felt that I had reaffirmed the importance of advance preparation and organizing key points, and would like to use this knowledge in my future studies.

What I learned about the lifestyle, culture and society of the host country

My stay in India was a valuable experience that allowed me to come into contact with a culture and society that is very different from Japan. First of all, in terms of daily life, I was impressed by the liveliness of the city and the rhythm of people's lives. In particular, the cityscape with its congested traffic and the sound of horns ringing out on a daily basis left a very energetic impression.

In terms of culture, I was surprised at how religion is deeply rooted in every part of society. In India, various religions such as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and Sikhism coexist, and I saw temples and places of worship everywhere. I also witnessed the people I met wherever I visited worshipping with a devout attitude, and realized how deeply religion influences Indian culture and life.

There were also big differences from Japan in food culture, and I had many new experiences. Indian food uses a lot of spices, and the wide variety of tastes and aromas, especially curry and samba, whet my appetite. At first, I was surprised by the strength of the spices, but I

gradually got used to them and began to enjoy Indian food culture. It was also refreshing to see the custom of eating with one's hand and the large number of vegetarians.

Furthermore, the warmth and hospitality of the Indian people was impressive. Many people treated us kindly and welcomed us from a foreign country. In particular, the students and university professors were very supportive, which made my stay there easy and relaxing.

What I learned in terms of training and language at the host university

I participated in a technology festival at both the Chennai and Vellore campuses. There were many presentations that linked AI, robots, and other technologies to environmental issues. In addition, there were advertisements and product packaging around town that appealed to environmental issues, and I felt that the country as a whole is aware of environmental issues. In terms of language, I realized that even though I have poor speaking ability, I can somehow communicate what I want to say. However, it is difficult to listen to conversations with people I meet for the first time or who speak quickly, and if I don't understand what the other person is saying, I can't continue the conversation, so I realized the importance of listening ability in conversation. Also, when speaking English in Japan, I thought that it wasn't that important because even broken English can be understood as long as the content is correct, but when I pronounced "Third" as "Sa-do" and "rules" as "ru-ru," no one understood me at all, so I realized the importance of pronunciation.

What I learned about the lifestyle, culture and society of the host country

In Japan, I wasn't very good with spicy food, so I was half interested and half anxious about the food in India. However, after staying there for 13 days and trying a variety of different meals, I was surprised to find that while there were many spicy dishes, there were also many that were less spicy, and that all of the meals tasted extremely delicious to me. This was the catalyst for me to change my preconceived notion that Japanese food is exceptionally delicious. I thought that the fact that many of the meals are spicy and made with spices, and that the sweets and drinks are often very sweet, may have started as a way to preserve food for longer in a hot country.

What I learned in terms of training and language at the host university

If you have studied English at the compulsory education level and have the desire to communicate in English, you can express your opinions in English to a certain extent (speaking). However, in order to correctly understand the other person's opinion and respond quickly, it was found that it was necessary to study listening for a long period of time in advance. Although my ears had become somewhat accustomed to Indian English in the second half of the trip compared to the first half, I was still far from the level of being able to converse fluently, and I was painfully aware of my lack of prior preparation.

What I learned about the lifestyle, culture and society of the host country

As India is said to be a religious country, there are many different temples throughout the cities, and the fact that you can't enter any of the temples with shoes on and that local residents come in large groups to worship made it clear that Indian people have a different attitude towards gods than Japanese people.

I had vaguely thought that Japanese culture, such as Japanese food and hot springs, would be accepted by people from any country, but there were people who didn't like the miso soup I brought with me, and people who wanted to go to Japan but absolutely did not want to go into a hot spring, which made me realize that I had been overly confident in my country's culture.

