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TSUKUBA'S WAY OF LIFE, JAPAN

Travelling within Japan is easy and comfortable - one only need to type in the locations you wish to visit into <http://www.jorudan.co.jp/english/norikae/> choose any of the routes offered and you will arrive at your destination safely.



What could be a better way to adapt to a new environment? Coming to a new country, Japan, I was blessed with a multi-racial group course-mate who makes the learning of Japanese language within the five intensive months, fun! With tremendous effort and hardwork and Nihongo Sensei polishing us to their upmost limits, we were able to communicate in simple Nihongo within 3 months, a must if we were to live here for the next few years.

Sitting the entrance examinations to get into the Master's program was the most body & mind wrenching stage in Japan's study life. Be mentally prepared that one only has 3 to 4 months for both written and interview examinations preparation. Thanks to the great supervision and guidance from my supervisor, I managed to join the next final stage, the Master program, the following year. Depending on the University, the Master's is normally a 2 years program consisting of both lectures and research. One of the most interesting parts of the course was doing one of our compulsory research presentations in Yamanaka Ko, near Mt Fuji, a well kept tradition.

The unexpected experience of lesson study observations was an eye opener for me, a Brunei secondary school mathematics teacher. It changed my perception of how mathematics could be taught through self exploration, argumentation and discussion between teacher and students. Observing lessons ranging from elementary, secondary to high schools, in various parts of Japan; Saitama, Tokyo, Tsukuba, and Kanazawa, provided valuable educational professional development.

Another unexpected experience was being able to work with CRICED Japanese colleagues who were previously JICA working volunteers coming back from overseas mainly South American countries, always sharing their living and working experiences abroad. Volunteering jobs in CRICED; translating secondary school mathematics textbook to English, editing of mathematics puzzle book & making subtitles for lesson study videos, exposed me not only to the students' way of life but Japanese working lifestyle too. Not forgetting to mention, through CRICED, I was given the best opportunity to meet teachers and professors from different parts of the world who are training to share knowledge on education, in particular mathematics.