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Home University: KJ SIMSR, Mumbai
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Overview and experiences



Management Studies

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Student Exchange Programme



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INTRODUCTION

This document is a brief report of the activities that took place during my stay in Stuttgart, Germany; Duale Hochschule Baden-Württemberg (DHBW), Stuttgart. By participating in the SEP, I had in mind to immerse myself in a new environment, compare education systems, to network, travel and gain an international outlook. The report first gives a brief about Stuttgart and an overview on the exchange institute, DHBW, Stuttgart. Then, the report glances over the eight courses that I took there – Intercultural Negotiation Training, General Management Simulation, German language, Contemporary Political and Economic Systems of the EU, Employability Skills- German for the Workplace, Intercultural Management: International locations, and International Social Media Marketing and Digital Storytelling. Next, I write on my study experience. Finally I describe non-academic aspects of the SEP, comparing cultures, and write a little about the places I visited.

Getting prepared for the stay

The large part of my preparation for the three-month long stay in Germany included two and a half month of learning the German language. During this time, I completed level A1 and A2 of German language. The thought behind this was it would help me to communicate and interact with the locals in a better way. But, it was later that I realised that it is a necessity to have some knowledge of the language while coming to Germany because all the sign-boards, food ingredients, etc are all in German. This becomes more important when you are in a city like Stuttgart which has lesser number of foreigners, unlike Munich, Berlin, etc. The other part of my preparation included planning for the things that I must do in Germany and what all to take back from the experience.

Stuttgart

Well known as the manufacturing hub and headquarters for Mercedes-Benz and Porsche, Stuttgart is also the capital city of Baden-Württemberg state. It is a beautiful small city with many different aspects.



Stuttgart has a lot of green places and wonderful parks. I spent much time in Killesberg with my friends and it's a perfect place for roller-skating.

The city is well-known for its museums. The best chance to visit multiple museums is on "Lange Nacht Der Museen" when you can visit as many museums from 7pm to 2am on a particular night. I couldn't afford to miss this chance and visited Mercedes-Benz, Porsche and



Bahn museums with friends.

Studies at DHBW, Stuttgart

The institute itself is very different from others since most of the students were sponsored by the companies in which they were working during the time. The students worked for three months and studied for the next three months, and so on. Other interesting thing was that for most of my classes, we were only 6-10 students per class. My classmates came from Denmark, Netherlands, South Korea, Mexico, Russia, and Ukraine among others.

The following were the courses I selected for my studies at DHBW:

1. **Intercultural negotiating training:** Possibly the best way to start the program and interact with fellow classmates. The subject gave immense knowledge on the nuances of different cultures and how to negotiate in such situations. It gave tremendous opportunities to deal with live case studies. We spent hours on actually negotiating in different business scenarios and learnt how actual negotiation process must take place in an intercultural environment.



2. **Intercultural management-International locations:** The subject was taught by two professors from different backgrounds with immense international exposure. The subject mainly focussed on how management processes differs in different parts of the world. The management theories remained unchanged but context were different in different parts of the world. Cases on Mahindra and Mahindra, Chiquita bananas, etc. were solved during the class.
3. **International social media marketing and digital storytelling:** These lectures answered questions such as what is storytelling and why it is so important. Why Homo fictus is a better name for Homo sapiens? It also talked about the importance of storytelling in today's digital market. How multi-billion dollar companies such as Apple Inc. use storytelling to their advantage. The main part was to understand the elements of a good story and the task was to find a good story and analyse it for the final paper. I gained knowledge on steps that are required to develop a successful social media page for a company. I also got the opportunity to visit the Bosch Archive-Stuttgart to see Bosch in the making.



4. **German language:** I had studied German language before coming to Germany, but this subject was quite challenging in a way, because, the entire medium of teaching was only in German. It helped me a lot when it comes to grammar and also fluency in speaking the language.
5. **The contemporary Political and Economic System of the European Union (EU):** Before the beginning of this subject I didn't possess much knowledge about the functioning and role of the EU and how important it is for European countries as well as the entire world. The subject covered many aspects such as the idea behind Eurozone, European Parliament, European Bank, MEPs, etc. The excursion to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France where I had a chance to meet Mr. Rainer (Vice President, EP) and watch a live debate during a parliamentary session was a great experiential learning. The other excursion was to the Frankfurt Stock Exchange which helped me understand the history behind the origin of Stock exchanges and how they evolved over the years.





6. **General management simulation game:** DHBW Rotebühlplatz campus has a great infrastructural support and an entire floor dedicated to management simulation. We were divided into two groups with 4 members each where we had to run an outdoor tent manufacturing company. The simulation was for 3 years. We were provided with huge data for each quarter and had to take decisions accordingly. At the end of each period we were provided with actual sales and profit figures which we then had to analyse and work on our weak areas. I believe, this is as close as one can get to understand the working of an industry while still in classroom.

7. **Employability skills-German for workplace:** The subject aimed at understanding of how German work culture is different from other work cultures across the world. It also covered nuances related to applying for a job in Germany. All the students were required to create their own resume in German language and actual job interview simulation were also done.

Travel

Some days were too hectic with classes from early morning till late in the evening but I do not like to sit at home and do nothing when there isn't too much to do for the next week's class or when there are any public holidays. Thanks to BW Foundation's Stipendium that helped me gain the most of my stay in Europe. I travelled seven countries without compromising my academics during my stay. I started my journey from Prague, **Czech Republic**.



Next on the list were **Switzerland** (Zurich), **Germany** (Munich, Frankfurt and Freiburg), **Austria** (Salzburg), France (Strasbourg), **Poland** (Wroclaw and Krakow), **England** (London, Reading, Bracknell...).



The travel taught me a lot. I met and interacted with people from Nepal, USA, Canada, Australia, England, Brazil, Germany, and other European countries during my travel. This gave me an opportunity to hear opinions on various topics. It was a great experience which helped me break many cultural stereotypes.

The entire process was an exceptional learning experience which was lived from both inside and outside the classroom. This programme helped me gain insight into newer possibilities, career choices and the ability to chase and realise bigger goals.