

What is diversity?

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Hello, everyone. My name is Marin Sato. I'm one of the students learning in the Advanced Engineering Course of Sendai Kosen. As I begin my speech, I'd like to ask you, "What is diversity to you?" Let me share my answer with you.

There are a lot of international students in the dormitory where I have been living. Through my association with them, I have realized how exciting diversity is! Nowadays, Japan is getting internationalized so rapidly.

In the dormitory of Natori Campus, which is named *Syuka Ryo*, we see many international students of various nationalities such as Mongolian, Indonesian, Chinese, Malaysian, and Thai. The students from all these countries with different physical appearances and backgrounds are now studying in the same school campus.

I found this wonderful as we, from other countries, are working hard collaborating for our future together. Furthermore, staying in the dormitory makes me understand more about the diversity from the inside..... about our cultures.

Let me give you a couple of examples of what I have experienced.

First, a simple example is the difference in dietary style. Almost all of the international students cook their meals instead of eating at the dormitory cafeteria. One of my friends, a Muslim, can't eat pork nor drink alcohol, including foods that contain alcohol due to religious reasons. Therefore, she has to cook by herself. Another friend of mine from Mongolia can't adapt herself to Japanese dietary culture. In Mongolia, they have meat instead of rice as the main dish.

Now, I'd like to share with you a story that really surprised me. One of my Malaysian friends washes meat before cooking! In Japan, most meat is already made clean and sanitized. However, she told me that they usually rewash the meat after purchasing and before cooking in Malaysia. This is another interesting difference between different cultures.

Now, let me show you another interesting experience of mine. One day, I was talking with some international students and the topic of blood types came up. In Japan, it is often

Marin Sato - 1
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said that we can tell our personality by blood type. Some of us believe that a person's personality differs depending on their specific blood type. For example, those who belong to type A, as me, are responsible, and type O is optimistic. They got surprised to hear that and said it was unbelievable! This is an example of national characters that we Japanese do believe, blood type affects our personality.

I have another experience which made me recognize the difference of national characters more. That is, how to appeal to others.

When we took physical education tests in Kosen, we needed to test our physical strength by measuring how many times we could finish a 50-meter run. During the trial, most Japanese students said, "No, I run slow. Definitely, you run much faster than me!" However, when they ran, things didn't happen as they had said. When I heard this story, I thought that being humble is a typical Japanese character, which some of my foreign friends rarely show.

These are some of the experiences that define diversity to me.

Through my dormitory life, I have learned that diversity makes each of us shine respectively. I've decided to try new challenges in my own way, and that is why I'm here today!

As internationalization progresses, diversity becomes the new normal. It is becoming more and more important to respect each other's differences. Now I know when we respect each other, we will see the new sides of each other. It must be a great pleasure. Don't you think so?

Thank you.