

MANAGE Internship: Cultivating Experiences for Future Professionals



MANAGE-ing in MANAGE

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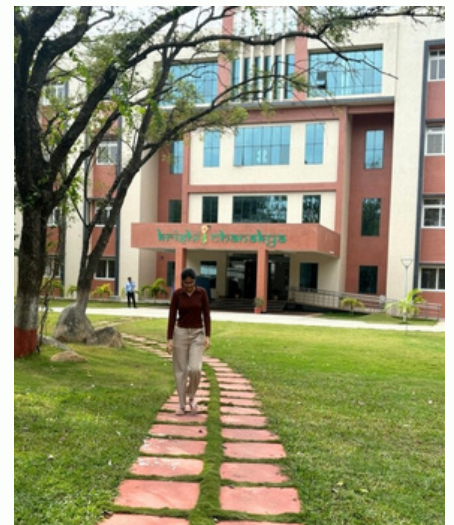
“There are journeys you plan, and then there are journeys that plan you. MANAGE was the latter –it didn’t just change my career direction; it transformed the person I was becoming.”



One fair day, while having my lunch, I got a call, a call from MANAGE for an interview. I was stunned. So many people had applied, including some from my own circle, and here I was, getting the call. It felt surreal. Even after the interview, I didn’t believe I’d make it. I kept thinking, “There are so many intelligent people out there... 10 were selected for the interview... why would they pick me?” But...

when I received the selection letter, I wasn’t just surprised, I was overwhelmed with emotion. That day, I realized something: “Never look down on yourself. You never know when opportunity will knock. Just stay ready, stay eager, keep learning, and be true to yourself.”

Arriving in Hyderabad with a suitcase full of clothes and a heart full of dreams, I stepped into the MANAGE campus not knowing that this place would become a second home. When I first heard about the internship opportunity at MANAGE, Hyderabad, I felt a rush of hope and a little nervousness. I had just completed my post-graduation in Agricultural Extension Education and was still figuring out my next steps. What did I truly want? What direction was I heading in?.



I applied for the ‘MANAGE Internship for Post-Graduate Students of Agricultural Extension 2024-2025’ with a clear motive; “I want to gain real and meaningful research experience from a prestigious institution.” I had no idea that this journey would challenge me, push me, reshape my mindset, and gift me experiences that textbooks could never teach. Before joining, I thought it would be like my M.Sc. thesis; structured, predictable, maybe a bit mechanical. I also thought, “Well, at least I’ll get to chill in Hyderabad!”. But life had something else in store, something deeper, more powerful.

A Tough Start, A Beautiful Transformation

I won't lie, the beginning was tough. Starting at 9 a.m. sharp and working 7–8 hours straight felt like a marathon. At times, I missed my comfort zone. But slowly, I began to understand the value of discipline. We had our own fully air-conditioned vault, undisturbed, focused, where we were trusted to work independently. No micromanaging, just our mentor, Dr. Saravanan Raj, visiting occasionally to check our progress and gently push us beyond our limits. He used to say, *"You are not just interns, you are thinkers, creators, leaders."*



The Work that Changed Me



At MANAGE, we weren't treated like interns doing routine tasks in some corporate cubicle. We were involved, trusted, and challenged. I remember how Dr. Saravanan Raj, Director (Agricultural Extension) would take us on walks through the serene MANAGE campus. Those weren't just strolls, they were classrooms. Life lessons were tucked into nature, and leadership was taught through casual conversations. We attended lectures and programs happening on campus to gain exposure, interact with influential people, and learn how to conduct events. We weren't just confined to research, we co-hosted *Saturday Webinars*, conducted *Evening4Learning* sessions, coordinated with trainees, and even made promotional videos. I surprised myself when I realized, "Wait... I can do this too?".



One standout moment was coordinating a visit for officers and farmers from Odisha with another intern. Initially, I panicked, “I’m just a girl... can I even handle this?” But Dr. Saravanan Raj believed in me. And slowly, I believed in myself too. “That day, I discovered the leader within me, not loud, not aggressive, but calm, prepared, and more confident than ever.”

Working on my topic, *“Seeds of Success: Empowering Youth to Thrive in Agripreneurship”*, I learned how to conduct systematic literature reviews, explore modern trends, use research software, and go beyond traditional methods. I also learned how to interact with people clearly, understand the deeper layers of data, and present ideas effectively. My confidence grew every time I spoke.



Realigning my Dreams

Before this internship, I had no intention of pursuing a PhD. I thought I’d drift into something else. But these three months changed that. The exposure, interactions, and sense of purpose brought me closer to my field, and my future. We were constantly encouraged to connect and interact with experts and professionals, giving me insights into the global landscape. Networking became less scary and more empowering.



Support, Feedback & a Bit of Magic



Working under the incredible mentorship of Dr. Saravanan Raj, Director (Agricultural Extension), MANAGE, was like unlocking a new lens to view the world. Every conversation with him lit a spark.

He didn't just guide us, he empowered us. Whether through insightful questions, spontaneous brainstorming walks, or his deep belief in our potential, he taught me to look beyond the surface and dream beyond the obvious. And then there was Dr. Rahalya, who supported us every step of the way like an elder sister. My extended MANAGE-CAEIRA and MANAGE-CIA family; Srinivas, Saurabh, Josephine, Usha Sree, Priyanka, Karunakar, Siddharth, Anusha, Anamika, Iniya, Sakshi, Anukul, Jason, Arvind, Subodh, Maithri, Jeena, Sonam, each brought something unique to the table. Their support, laughter, advice, and encouragement made this internship feel like home.

The feedback I received was both humbling and motivating. I was appreciated for my energy and involvement. Yes, there were challenges, long hours, mental blocks, and self-doubt. But I overcame them by showing up, embracing discomfort, and reminding myself why I started.



Skills and Knowledge Gained

Lessons I carried home

This internship gave me much more than I expected:

- *Leadership*: I learned how to take initiative and own responsibilities.
- *Innovation*: I explored creative sides of myself I didn't know existed.
- *Confidence*: I broke mental barriers that had held me back
- *Communication*: I engaged with experts, agripreneurs, officers, and scientists, every conversation added value.
- *Purpose*: For the first time, I saw myself pursuing a PhD in Agricultural Extension Education with a clear vision.

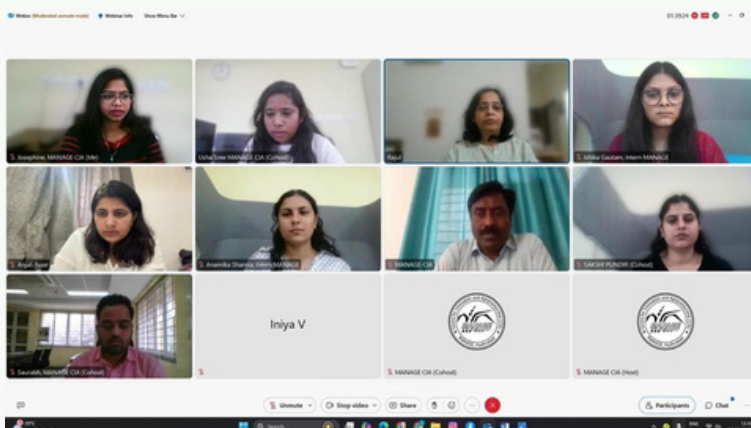
Before MANAGE, I wasn't even sure if I wanted to stay in this field. But this experience made me fall in love with it all over again. I learned how to think like a researcher, and feel like a change-maker.



Takeaways that Stay

- Self-belief is power.
- Discipline is a form of self-respect.
- Your comfort zone is not where magic happens.
- A good mentor can change your life.

If I could point out one thing that felt lacking, it would be time, not in hours or days, but in the sense that every single moment at MANAGE was packed with learning, insight, and memory-making. Just when I'd start diving deeper into something or forge an unforgettable connection, I'd feel the clock ticking faster than ever. I often found myself wishing for just one more week, one more webinar, one more walk-and-talk with mentor.





The internship at MANAGE met and exceeded my expectations. It gave me experiences I couldn't have imagined, lessons I'll carry forever, and a newfound clarity about my future. My only request to MANAGE is this: "Please continue giving young people like me this kind of platform; a space where we're not just taught, but inspired." For students who are eager to learn, explore, and grow, opportunities like this are life-changing. It gave me a voice, a purpose, and direction, and I hope many young minds get to feel the same transformation.

Looking back, I feel like I did something truly meaningful. I miss the MANAGE campus, the walks with mentor, the shared laughter, the food, the night strolls, and our little corner of the research world. Those were the best days of my life. With all my heart, Thank you, MANAGE, Hyderabad, for the memories, the magic, and the meaning. I'll carry this chapter with me wherever life takes me next.

To anyone reading this and doubting their worth, don't. *If I could do this, so can you. I came in as a P.G. scholar. I left as a MANAGE intern. But more than that, I left as Ishika Gautam, someone who had found her purpose.*

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