### MY CONTRIBUTION TO MY HOME COUNTRY AS AN ITS ALUMNI

## Introduction

Before 2016, I had a dream. The dream was to be able to meaningfully contribute and positively affect my world round me at any given opportunity. I was constantly searching for conduits through which I would be able to actualize my dream. I used to spend hours online, reading newspapers, engaging friends and reading magazines all in a bid to look for scholarships to acquire more useful and contemporary knowledge and skills to make my dream a fruition. Nothing gives me joy than to make myself relevant in any society I find myself.

## **Background**

January 2016, I was chatting on social media, WhatsApp to be specific with a friend of mine who told me about a scholarship that was awarded to him to pursue a Master's Degree in Industrial Engineering in Indonesia, Southeast Asia. The news caught my attention and I took a deep breathe in readiness to ask him a bunch of relevant questions regarding the scholarship. Among the questions were: How can I access the website? When is the next intake? What is the package of the scholarship? "I will send you the link, next intake is in September but the process will begin in February, 2016 and the package in terms of knowledge to be gained and experience is extremely rich", he replied.

With his response, I was thrilled and without wasting time I began surfing the website of the Kemitraan Negara Berkembang (KNB), Indonesia Government scholarship. This site became my three square meal a day activity. Every morning and evening after my devotion to God will be the first and last activity respectively to do.

In the second week of February, 2016, the online application process was opened. Prior to the opening of the online application process, I had already gotten lots of information from my friend and the website regarding the required documents and eligibility for the awarding of the scholarship. I did the online application and followed the entire process to the letter.

When the final publication of those awarded the scholarship was published on the website, I was one of those selected. What a great joy then. Numerous correspondences were done regarding travelling and accommodation. At the end of the day, I received my e-ticket on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of

September, 2016 and left for Indonesia on the following day. I arrived in Jakarta on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September and finally arrived at the Institut Technologi Sepuluh Nopember (ITS) Surabaya, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September, 2016. The receptions both at the airports and ITS were warm and friendly. I can still remember those broad and welcoming smiles from the volunteers.

# **During the Studies**

As soon as I arrived in ITS, I was straight away introduced to learning Bahasa Indonesia for two semesters as it is one of the requirements to continue benefiting from the scholarship. While learning Bahasa Indonesia, I learnt about the structure of Bahasa Indonesia and the culture of Indonesia. Also I was opportune to learn the cultures and traditions of other international students. I was in class with students from Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Tanzania, Palestine, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Timor-Leste and Ukraine. I learnt about their traditional wearings and culinary. I was also involved in students' participation in implementing projects for the government. (See bibliography).

After I successfully completed the Bahasa Indonesia course, I was officially introduced to my Master's Degree Program at the Industrial Engineering Department in the Faculty of Industrial Technology, ITS Surabaya. My concentration was in Operations and Supply Chain Engineering (OSCE). The course was a four semester program including thesis. Courses/modules studied are evidenced in my Transcript annexed in the bibliography.

After completing my studies in August 2019, I came back to my country as was agreed when accepting the scholarship. When I arrived in my country, I did not want to hoard the knowledge I have gained, but to it relevant to my country and make myself useful to society.

During my undergraduate degree, I and my colleagues struggled a lot to structure our dissertations in an orderly manner. We used to spend more time without getting the desired outcomes. My knowledge on computer was very limited. Even though I was using one, but I was still doing almost everything manually instead of allowing the system to do it automated. My first meaningful contribution was to help final year under graduate students of one of the universities to know how to structure their dissertations and do proper referencing according to the required format by allowing the computer to automatically do things like, numbering of headers, automatic insertion of Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures mirror paging, page breaks and page numberings of divers kinds. Some of the lecturers especially those

pursuing their graduate degrees were also beneficiaries of the training sessions. I learnt all of these while I was doing my studies.

As my concentration was in OSCE, I was contracted by one company called QP (SL) Limited to do their stock control. Fortunately, my thesis was on inventory management. The problem they have was how to make sure that their stores all over the country do not run out of supplies taking into consideration of poor road network, sales turnover, transportation cost and the sizes of the stores. I used a Monte Carlo Simulation to figure out the maximum quantity of products to be sent to each store for stocks not to run out and at the same time for stores not to be overstocked. I used inputs like sales history, pricing structure and the population demand with the assumption that the demand is normally distributed per store location to determine the stock level required to maximize profit and reduce cost for the company. I employed software like solver and LINGO to which stores to be given priority when containers arrive from our over-seas suppliers.

Alongside this contract, I am a full time employee of Transit College Sierra Leone. I was employed as the Registrar, but currently I am the Main Administrator/Human Resource Officer. Outside my administrative responsibilities and duties, I made myself available to lecture students so that I can contribute to the human capital development of my country. I am lecturing modules like, Basic Statistics, Inferential Statistics, Research Methods and Mathematics for Engineers.

Another important thing that I learnt during my studies was social interaction. I attended many social activities with national and international students. These activities paved ways for me to increase my contact network and makes me leave in a global village indeed. Apart from interacting with Indonesian students from different disciplines, I was also privileged to socialize with other students outside Indonesia. This creates a healthy nexus between me and the world around. Moments like these also make you relax from academic stress and breathe fresh air and get inspired for academic work.

I pioneered a marathon competition on April 27<sup>th</sup> 2021 in Transit College to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> year of Independence of my country. It was awesome! Young people were very much happy and motivated about the value of education. Also, the prices awarded to the winners brought smiles on their faces and families. Pictures are affixed at the bibliography.

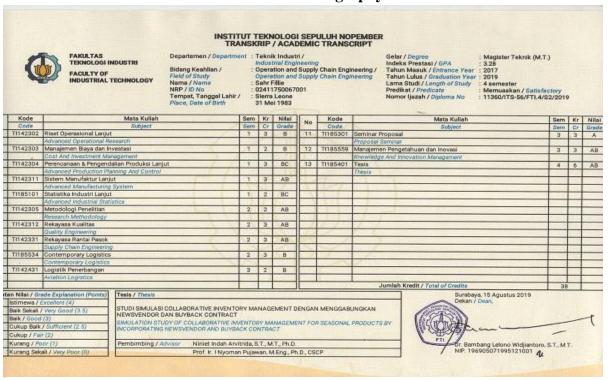
Finally, my studies gave me the opportunity to become an ambassador of Indonesia in my country. Before I travelled for my studies, the perception of many people including myself was that because Indonesia is the highest Muslim populated country in the world, it will be difficult for other faiths to be practiced there. The opportunity given to me through my studies negates that. I belong to another faith and I enjoyed practicing it throughout my study period. In fact since my return I have come across many students who were also having the fears, but with my success story, they are willing to go and study in Indonesia. Some of them that are fortunate to be awarded the scholarship are preparing to go for their studies.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of July, 2021, the ambassador of Indonesia in Dakar along with two other officials visited my country to meet with the past and current awardees of the KNB scholarship and Government officials. I am one of the members of the WhatsApp forum hosting all past and current beneficiaries of the KNB scholarship. Even though some of us were not in the city when the team arrived, but was able to follow all the activities through the WhatsApp forum. This affirms that indeed I am an ambassador of Indonesia in my country.

In conclusion, I want to boldly say that the Government of Indonesia never wasted resources in awarding me the scholarship to capacitate me in order for me to contribute meaningfully to humanity. I have seen and experienced it. I encourage the Indonesia Government not to relent in providing these learning opportunities to international students. It is making a whole lot of difference in the lives of many young people around the world.

Terima Kasih Atas!!!

# **Bibliography**



# PROOF AS A PAST STUDENT OF ITS, INDONESIA



**MY PICTURE** 





ONE OF THE STORES AND PRODUCTS SOLD







**B.O.L OF SUGAR AND EVIDENCE OF OFF-LOADING** 



AMBASSADOR WITH KNB STUDENTS



AMBASSADOR WITH GOVT. OFFICIALS



PARTICIPANTS FOR THE MARATHON



PRICES GIVEN TO THE WINNERS OF THE MARATHON



MYSELF AND STUDENTS FROM TAIWAN AND INDONESIA PRESENTING A FINISHED PROJECT PRODUCT TO THE GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES IN THE BULAK COMMUNITY IN SURABAYA IN 2018