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There was a girl who thought that studying abroad was the most unreachable dream for her life. A girl who always told her parents to help her through their prayers to get an opportunity to study abroad before her graduation. Yaa, THAT WAS ME. I always searching for an exchange program for the vocational student since 2019. Once I found the program, I couldn't apply for it since it was not included in a scholarship. It is my first determination since I know my family's economy. Finally, I found IISMA for Vocational Students with a scholarship from LPDP in 2022. I broke my own expectation about studying abroad because I had an opportunity to study at the Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia through IISMA. I got IISMA at a precise time since I had to take an internship during my seventh semester. So, I planned to do it amazingly and make a great move.

About a month after the IISMA acceptance announcement, lots of awardees started their preparation to go abroad, especially Australian university awardees. I was feeling agitated at first because there was no information for Malaysian university awardees to start the visa application. Then, the information came that we will depart for Malaysia in October, so we still had much time for a visa and no need to worry. Another condition pressured me since most people thought that living or studying in Malaysia was not much different from Indonesia.

"So, what will you get from Malaysia?"

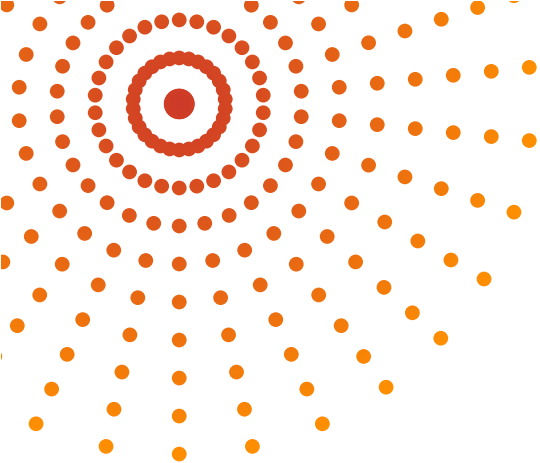
"Melayu is similar to Indonesia. You can't improve your English"

"Malaysian culture is much similar to Indonesia." they said.

Then I said,

"Just let me prove."

and promise to cut off their words. Therefore, I set so many plans to do my best in academics, make connections, explore everything new for me, and find good life lessons for my future.



Finally, I made my flight to Malaysia on October 31st, 2022. And the story began. At UTHM, I was accepted into Environmental Engineering. It was completely new for me as a Water Building Construction student even though these are in the same object to be treated, water. In UTHM, I took four subjects. Those were related to how the water and air have good quality so it is safe for people's health, while I used to study how the water quantity has to be managed so it is safe for people's welfare. The difference in scope is exciting for me. I did my class five days per week with 50% theoretical class and 50% laboratory work. In the theoretical class, I studied the basic knowledge and the calculation of every chapter, did some group projects, and took some examinations. Since I'm used to complex theories and calculations in construction studies, I'm not too hard to understand the material. Lots of local students frequently asked me to teach them about the material. I was happy because I can share my knowledge with them.

While in the laboratory work, I did many water and air pollution experiments that have been studied in the theoretical class. I also needed to write a laboratory report that has to be submitted in a week. The report should be written in English. All of these were done in group work. So, I experimented and discussed with my group to analyze the result and write the report. I was glad that I had responsible group members so we could do the experiment and the report well. It sounded funny when we talked. I frequently speak to them using a mix of Bahasa and English and they reply to me in Melayu. Sometimes we would be joking about our different terms or pronunciations of something between Bahasa and Melayu. It was interesting since we could still understand what we said in these different languages. That was the miracle of language.

During this program, I was placed in two different classes. So, I had many classmates. They are so caring and friendly so I can easily blend with them. They often invited me to lunch together. They also took me to many tourists attraction, such as the beach, waterfall, lake, and other iconic places in Malaysia. They also made a farewell party for me before I back to Indonesia.

Then, I left Malaysia and brought great knowledge, experiences, and memories to continue my dreams in Indonesia. I found a new excitement in engineering that merge water building construction and environmental engineering which may become my next dream to be fought for. I am glad that I can share my experience during IISMA with many students and influence them to make a great move even better than me. I will always convince myself and everyone that, "A big dream should not be hesitated, but it has to be fought for". IISMA was not just a program that took me overseas, but it was my stepping stone to explore the world more. Just wait for my next step!

