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As an individual from Afghanistan, I was inspired to study abroad for several reasons. Firstly, **I wanted to gain a global perspective and broaden my horizons by experiencing** different cultures and educational systems. Secondly, studying abroad offered me the opportunity to access high-quality education and research facilities that might not have been available in my home country. Lastly, I wanted to enhance my personal and professional development by immersing myself in an international academic environment.

When I arrived at ITS and Surabaya, I was pleasantly surprised by the **warm and welcoming atmosphere**. The university staff and fellow students were friendly and helpful, which made it easier for me to adapt to the new environment. Surabaya, being a vibrant city, offered a **unique blend** of modernity and cultural richness. The city's bustling streets, diverse cuisine, and historical landmarks made a positive first impression on me.

During my time at ITS, I encountered several challenges. The most significant one was the **language barrier**. Initially, it was challenging to communicate effectively, both in the academic setting and daily life. However, I overcame this by taking language classes and actively practicing Indonesian with my peers. Additionally, adjusting to a different educational system and teaching methods required some time and effort. I sought assistance from professors and fellow students, utilized support services provided by the university, and developed effective time management and study strategies to **overcome these challenges**.

One of my favorite experiences at ITS has been the **opportunity to collaborate** and work on group projects with fellow international and Indonesian students. These experiences not only helped me develop my teamwork and communication skills but also allowed me to **learn from different perspectives and cultural backgrounds**. It was truly enriching and fostered a sense of community and friendship among us. My advice to future international students considering studying at ITS would be to **embrace the cultural diversity** and make an effort to engage with both local and international students. Building connections and friendships will not only enrich your experience but also provide a support network during your time at the university. Additionally, **make use of the resources and support services** offered by the university to navigate any challenges you may face. Finally, **be open-minded, adaptable, and proactive in seizing opportunities for personal and academic growth**.

As an international student, my journey at ITS has been transformative. It has allowed me to **grow academically, culturally, and personally**. I have learned to adapt to new environments, appreciate diverse perspectives, and overcome challenges. The experience of studying abroad has broadened my understanding of the world and has given me valuable skills that will benefit me in my future endeavors. **I am grateful for the opportunity and the support I have received throughout my time at ITS.**

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