



**Interview by Jemma Purdey with Danny Ardianto, Melbourne, 15 May 2014**

**MA, IT, Monash University, 2000 cohort**



[00:00:14]	Born in Surabaya, moved to Jakarta around 1999 to study at the state college of accountancy (STAN Sekolah Tinggi Akuntansi Negara), then worked for the Ministry of Finance. In 2008 went to Melbourne to do a Masters at Monash. Has an older sister living near Surabaya. Mother was a public servant in a hospital and father worked in the private sector. Neither parent went to university but Danny and his sister both did. Started learning English in junior high school and continued at the accountancy college.	Childhood; Family background; Educational background
[00:05:36]	Chose accounting because it seemed a good way to get a job and because his parents wanted him to. Had also been accepted into an informatics course in Surabaya but wanted to travel so went to Jakarta. Most STAN graduates were employed by the Ministry of Finance after finishing a diploma but the top ten percent were allowed to continue studying for	Undergraduate education; early career



	another two years to get a bachelor. Danny did this and entered the workplace at a higher level than his friends.	
[00:08:42]	Had the opportunity to work in the private sector for nine months after graduating before going to the ministry, worked for Ernst and Young Associates in Jakarta on a business process improvement project for Telkom. This shaped his future interests. Would have like to stay at Ernest Young and his supervisor said they would arrange that and pay the Ministry for his studies but Danny had read of imminent reform at the ministry and thought he would have a better chance of getting an overseas scholarship as a government employee.	Early career; Scholarship application
[00:13:45]	Dream of studying abroad started at STAN, many lecturers were former international scholarship alumni. Heard two opinions about working at the ministry: it was good for professional development and standing, and it was good for getting rich (illegally). Danny was motivated by the former, especially since reform was imminent and the department he was to work in was to be a pilot for the reform.	Motivation to study overseas; Scholarship application
[00:18:46]	As soon as he started working Danny started applying to go overseas but had to wait for two years before the ministry would approve it. Applied in 2007, the taxation section of the ministry had connections with AusAID by then, and was successful. The ministry had 60 000 employees and 32	Scholarship application

	000 of them worked in taxation, about 30 or 40 applied for scholarships.	
[00:24:12]	Explored applying for scholarships in the US, the UK and Japan as well as Australia but the Australian one came up first. After applying, it was nearly a year before Danny heard he had been accepted and then another year before departure. Because was so motivated to go overseas, had researched the application process thoroughly, studied English and practised every day so was well prepared. AusAID representatives came to the ministry and made presentations about the scholarships and how to apply. Studying overseas increased workers' status.	Scholarship application; English language preparation
[00:28:17]	Application involved internal selection based on an essay about what you wanted to do, the relevance of it to the applicant's background and how it would benefit the ministry. Danny worked as a tax auditor and from talking to previous applicants discovered most applicants wanted to do master's in economics, finance or accounting so he tried to think of another angle. He had an interest in information systems and found there were master's courses in Australia that accepted graduates from other disciplines. This knowledge was very useful to the ministry and no one else had studied it formally so Danny's application was	Scholarship application

	successful.	
[00:32:08]	Arrived Australia in December 2008. Before going did a full-time eight-week course in academic English, taught by Australians. Continued getting a salary from the ministry while doing the course. Was a good course but also did a similar course when arrived at Monash. Got information about Australia from Wikipedia and YouTube. There was a cross-cultural course along with the language course where he saw <i>Ten Canoes</i> , learned what to expect from living in Australia and slang words like 'arvo' and 'barbie'. It was fun, whereas the language course was more pressure with the IELTS at the end.	Pre-departure preparation; Arrival
[00:36:45]	There was an info day during the eight weeks when representatives of Australian universities did special sessions for AusAID students. The length of the language course depended on the IELTS results of the applicants. Probably almost two hundred people did the language course. Had thought of going to RMIT but learned that Monash University was ranked higher so put Monash as first choice. Wanted to go to Melbourne, knew some people who had studied there.	Pre-departure preparation; Selecting course and university
[00:41:12]	Was an early adopter of Facebook and social media in 2007 but the rest of Indonesia was not until a year or two later so mostly got information about Melbourne	Prior awareness of Australia; Arrival; Indonesian community in Melbourne

	<p>and its universities by word of mouth from colleagues. The English language course at Monash was one month long and included tours to places of interest in Melbourne. Temporary accommodation was arranged by the university but most students found somewhere to live through other Indonesian students. The PPIA may have been helpful but it was concerned mostly with undergraduate students whose needs were different.</p>	
[00:45:25]	<p>There weren't any postgraduate communities, except maybe the Monash Indonesian Islamic Society but that didn't include non-Muslims. Now there is a mailing list, Indomail, for students at all universities. Promotes events, activities and tours. Sometimes they organise 'olympic games'', with 30 to 40 people, Monash students against the rest playing soccer, volleyball, badminton.</p>	<p>Living in Australia; Indonesian community in Melbourne; Leisure activities</p>
[00:50:13]	<p>Met Indonesians and other international students but not so many Australians, partly because of the different culture. It feels more lonely doing a PhD, no classes like when doing the MA. In Australia much socialising is around drinking and Danny didn't feel comfortable with this. Had barbecues and shared Indonesian food with international students but not with Australian students.</p>	<p>Living in Australia; Friendships</p>
[00:55:40]	<p>Loneliness also comes from a feeling of familiarity and less</p>	<p>Living in Australia; Family;</p>

	<p>motivation to get involved in activities. Lives in a share house with another Indonesian student. Also spends more time working as a tutor and in disability support. Was single and still a ministry employee, getting a wage while doing the master's whereas now is married and on leave without pay from the ministry so needs to work. Wife is in Indonesia and comes for holidays.</p>	<p>other work experiences</p>
[01:00:50]	<p>Wife is a STAN graduate and works as a public servant. Imagined that after studying overseas would be promoted and able to contribute more to the ministry, is disappointed that this didn't happen. There are too many graduates, only four levels and not many senior positions.</p>	<p>Returning to Indonesia; post-scholarship career</p>
[01:03:56]	<p>Lack of transparency with promotions. Of the ten people who studied in Australia at the same time, seven were promoted quite quickly after returning to Indonesia, for no apparent reason, and the other three were not. Wanted to apply for another scholarship but the Ministry and AusAID both required two years of work first.</p>	<p>Post-scholarship career</p>
[01:07:27]	<p>Monash University had offered a partial scholarship when Danny finished his MA. If he applied within two years of graduating he wouldn't have to sit another IELTS test. Left Australia in December 2010, started work in January 2011, and was admitted into the PhD, with a full scholarship, in December</p>	<p>Returning to Australia</p>

	2012. Ministry required him to work for another month before they would accept his application, so in order to take up the scholarship he had to leave his job.	
[01:11:49]	May have to go back to the Ministry after the PhD because, before leaving to do the MA, signed a new contract for five years. No children. Had some existential angst and doubts about doing the PhD since it may not advance his career.	Post-scholarship career; Family
[01:15:19]	His dream job would be a consultancy job or teaching, maybe overseas. Is investigating how social media is used in the community to build resilience and will do data collection in Indonesia next month. Wife may come to Australia too if she can do some study here.	Post-scholarship career
[01:20:28]	END	