I am expected to graduate from the Joint Ph.D. program in Operations Management at [University Name 1] and [University Name 2] in [Year]. I would like to apply for the Ph.D. program at Johnson upon completion of the current study due to my research interest, career plan and family reasons. The experience at Johnson will broaden both of my research methodologies and topics, strengthen my competitiveness in the global job market and prepare me well for my future academic career. My motivation was further enhanced by family reasons. My fiancé currently works in the industry in the U.S. Staying close to my family encourages me to focus on the U.S. job market and apply for the Ph.D. program without hesitation.[My Background]

My research interest concentrates on examining the impact of operational strategies and external events on firms’ stock market performance with the event study method. The investigation into investor valuation also developed my interest in the “people issue” in Operations Management. Therefore, in addition to the empirical event studies, I am motivated to learn other research methods including modeling and experiments to explore the topics in Behavioral Operations Management. [Research Interest Overview]

The Joint Program has provided me with a high quality level of research training during the past three and a half years. I achieved top grades in all the research methodology seminars courses I took. For example, the seminar of event study method taught by Professor Vinod Singhal from Georgia Tech and the seminar of behavior modeling method taught by Professor Sha Yang from University of Southern California exposed me to various research topics and methods. My programming skills advanced during research and went beyond the fundamentals. I have been conducting event studies with R programming and taught myself crawling data from websites in Python more efficiently. [My Expertise]

One of my recent studies, which is a joint work with my advisors, explores the transmission effect of global supply chain risks using the event study method. Although it is well understood that a natural disaster will negatively impact disaster-stricken firms, much less is known about whether the disaster will also affect their industry peers located in other countries. While those industry peers might benefit due to the competitive advantage (competitive effect), it is also possible that those firms might suffer losses due to their linkages to the disaster-stricken firms (contagion effect). Based on a natural experiment of 2016 Kumamoto earthquakes, our study reveals mixing effects of a natural disaster across national borders. We confirm the negative contagion effect via interfirm supply chain linkages and explain the positive competitive effect from the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) perspective. [My Current Research Project 1]

Another study which is still in progress is about technology investment. It is bold to conclude that there are “taken-for-granted” economic benefits in chasing the hottest technology, as the investment could be due to legitimacy concerns rather than pursuit of profits, and technology diffusion could make the first-mover advantage difficult to sustain. Therefore, it would be interesting to examine the dynamic effects of the implementation of technology fashion on firm-level outcomes such as reputation, operating performance and shareholder value. [My Current Research Project 2]

I am also interested in exploring topics in Behavioral Operations Management other than event studies. For example, in China, Alibaba launched a nationwide online platform gathering garment factories and small clothing e-retailers. It is both interesting and innovative to model the choice behavior between these supply chain partners and help them match fragmented production capacity and flexible needs more effectively. [My Potential Research Project in the Future]

My previous graduate studies have prepared me for the journey of academic research not only intellectually, but also emotionally. My Ph.D. journey has been a mixture of joy, self-doubt, and gratitude. When I was attending this year’s POMS annual conference, I was impressed by those cutting-edge studies conducted with innovative research methods such as a study investigating the racial discrimination issue in the sharing-economy using field experiments. Academic research can be very challenging as well. I remember when I was stuck for weeks figuring out the theoretical implications of analysis results and started to question my capability, my advisor, [Advisor Name], wrote me long emails with inspiring papers and encouraged me to push myself to explore more possibilities. These pure scholars and devoted teachers have guided and inspired me to explore further. [Motivation and Research Independence]

I am interested in the Ph.D. program in OTIM at Johnson because I am impressed by the research done by the world-class scholars there. Professor Vishal Gaur is a famous scholar in retail operations. Some of his studies link operations and financial performance. I have been interested in operations/finance interface studies and I hope to benefit from his great insights. Professor William Schmidt conducted several interesting studies in supply chain disruptions. In particular, I am interested in low-frequency high-impact events and I hope to explore further on this topic with my research experience in global supply chain risks. Also, Professor Andrew Davis is an expert in laboratory experiments. Behavior operations management is the area I wish to explore in future and I hope to learn more about experimental methods. [Why This School?]

I hope that the admissions committee finds my background and strengths commensurate with the requirements of your program. I would be delighted to study with you and look forward to taking an active role in contributing valuably to your program. [A Polite Ending]