

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

Post-Study Abroad Depression or PSAD is a phenomenon often experienced by students who have just returned from student exchange activities abroad. This phenomenon of depression is very common in students who undertake student exchange activities (Savicki, 2013). It is known that students who undertake student exchange activities are more likely to suffer from mental illnesses such as depression, sometimes caused by the difficulty of adapting to the environment and ways of life abroad (Cao, 2021).

The IISMA Program or Indonesia International Student Mobility Awards is a part of the “*Kampus Merdeka*” program that was started in 2021 and was created by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology or *Kemendikbud*. The IISMA Program was created with the aim of providing opportunities for Indonesian students to undertake student exchanges abroad for 1 semester of study, in order to increase Indonesian students’ understanding of domestic and foreign culture & academics (Shabrina, F.A - Unesa.ac.id,2023).

Prior to sending awardees to selected universities, the Ministry of Education and Culture seeks to provide provision for students by holding a series of events called the “IISMA Pre-departure Series” to prepare awardees to be able to maximize their time while undergoing the student exchange program. (Denty, A. kemendikbud.go.id, 2022).

The IISMA Pre-departure series comes in series of online sessions of material distribution, such as tips and tricks to stay motivated while studying abroad, speeches from inspirational individuals that make the country proud, etc.

Nonetheless, according to the data obtained from survey the author has distributed, only 21.6% of the respondents think that the Pre-departure series were

very effective, meanwhile 37.8% think that it's just effective, the other 37,8% think that it's not quite effective and 2.7% think that it's ineffective.

With that being said, the main focus of these series was to prepare awardees for life abroad, yet there is still very minimal attention towards preparing awardees for life after the program has ended. Therefore, the recognition of Post-Study Abroad Depression is still very minimal. In the IISMA Pre-departure series that I personally experienced, awardees were often provided with tips and tricks to avoid depression whilst being abroad, but none provided for after completing the program. There was no "post-departure" program that could help awardees to readjust to life back in Indonesia, in which so many awardees struggle with most of the time. IISMA's effort in providing an extended program for awardees is through creating IISMA Alumni Club or IISMA AC, where awardee alumni can make use of the program as a platform for career development, preparation for postgraduate studies or as a platform to share stories during IISMA, or as a gathering space for alumni.

In an effort to provide a design solution, it would be best to create a graphic visual novel consisting of the experiences of past awardees as well as tips & tricks that would give PSAD more recognition. A graphic visual novel of past experiences is the most effective way to compile all information as it was mentioned by FGD subjects that they would prefer to have a platform that they could relate to in order to receive effective information instead of listening to informative sessions that would be held online or offline. It was also decided due to the fact that a graphic novel would be very easy to access, as it could be distributed through social media links, and the combination of information and pictures or elements would be most effective, according to the results of the questionnaire distributed, 70.3% of respondents believe that they would understand information more through the balanced usage of visual elements & wordings.

Referring to the Illustration Role Theory (Male, 2010) that illustration plays a role of "storyteller" where Illustration is used to convey the flow of a story or narration in order to interest readers towards the visual. It is also stated from Texas

A&M University that visual elements can help with capturing reader's attention as well as help in making the readers understand ideas & information fully.

According to Bambang Tri Rahardian, a comic observer from the Faculty of Fine Arts of *Institut Kesenian Jakarta*, Indonesia has a lot of active online comic viewers, as Indonesia can be considered as a large market for anything that is online. This was yet confirmed by CCC International that Indonesia, Thailand and Taiwan are the biggest online comic consumers. By the year 2021, Naver Webtoon (an online comic application from South Korea) has gathered 12 million average users from these countries, in which Indonesia took up more than half of those numbers. Bambang Tri Rahardian believed that online comics have a rather agile and fast-paced story that interests viewers. Meanwhile, according to Faza Ibnu Ubaydillah, the creator of the famous comic "Si Juki", online comics are favored as an entertainment option due to the fact that it can be easily accessed, free and contains various contents.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

The author determines the problem statement from the background as the need to provide an effective graphic visual novel to help with addressing the awareness of Post Study Abroad Depression formally.

## **1.3 Scope of Problem**

The author determines the target audience based on the background and problem statement with the scope of problem as the following:

### **1) Demographic**

- a. Age : 19-25 years old
- b. Gender : All Genders
- c. Language : Bahasa Indonesia
- d. Ethnic and Religion : All ethnics and religions
- e. Minimum Education : 6<sup>th</sup> semester university student

### **2) Geographic**

- a. Country : Indonesia
- b. Province : *Jabodetabek*, Java

### **3) Psychographic**

- a. Open-Minded and takes mental health Issues seriously.
- b. Tend to be short-attention spanned.
- c. Has the desire to develop themselves.
- d. Isn't afraid of stepping out of their comfort zone.

### **4) Targeting**

IISMA awardees, or students that are planning on attending IISMA.

## **1.4 Goals of Final Project**

Increase the awareness of the Post study abroad depression phenomenon which is as equally important as the awareness of the mental preparation before studying abroad.

## **1.5 Benefits of Final Project**

The author determines the benefit of the final project by defining it into three parts: benefits for the author, for others and for the university.

### **1) Benefit for Author**

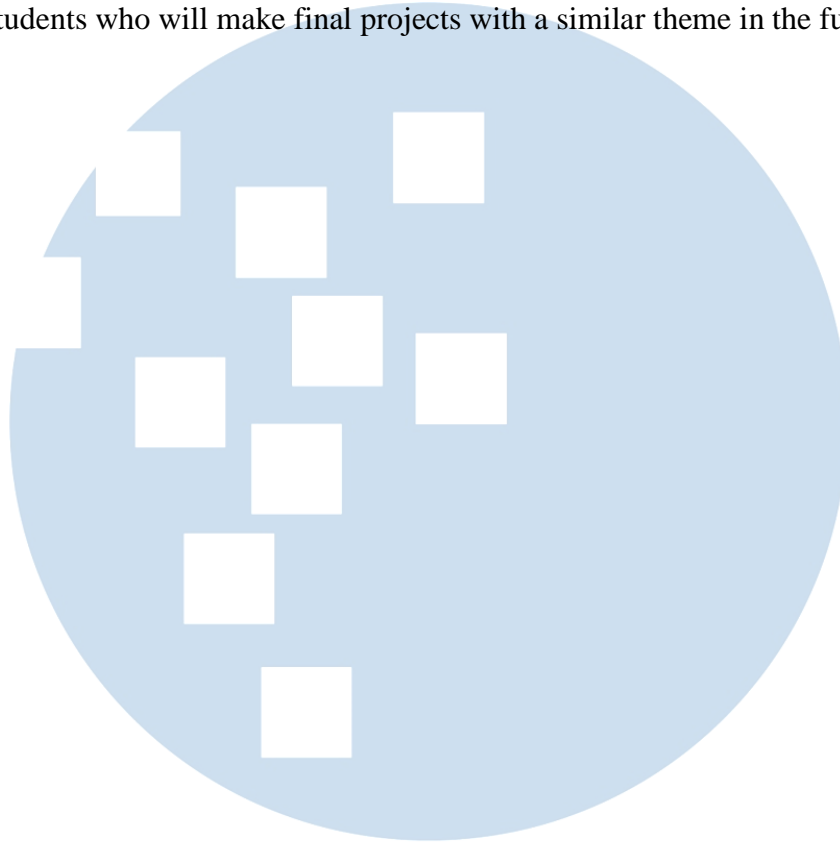
The author wishes to be able to implement the knowledge of design that has been obtained during their study and to add to the author's insight into the Post study abroad depression phenomenon that the author themselves experienced.

### **2) Benefit for Others**

It is hoped that the results of the author's final project can become a useful study to serve as part of the preparation material for the next generation of IISMA awardees in the future.

### **3) Benefit for University**

It is hoped that this final project can be a form of reference for other students who will make final projects with a similar theme in the future.



# UMMN

UNIVERSITAS  
MULTIMEDIA  
NUSANTARA