

The copyright © of this thesis belongs to its rightful author and/or other copyright owner. Copies can be accessed and downloaded for non-commercial or learning purposes without any charge and permission. The thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted as a whole without the permission from its rightful owner. No alteration or changes in format is allowed without permission from its rightful owner.



**THE FACTORS INFLUENCING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS'
INTENTION TO WORK IN MALAYSIA**

YE XIN



MASTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA

FEBRUARY 2026

**THE FACTORS INFLUENCING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS'
INTENTION TO WORK IN MALAYSIA**

By

YE XIN



UUM
Universiti Utara Malaysia

**THESIS SUBMITTED TO
OTHMAN YEOP ABDULLAH GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA,
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE
MASTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**



**Pusat Pengajian Pengurusan
Perniagaan**

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Universiti Utara Malaysia

PERAKUAN KERJA KERTAS PENYELIDIKAN
(*Certification of Research Paper*)

Saya, mengaku bertandatangan, memperakukan bahawa
(*I, the undersigned, certified that*)

YE XIN (834112)

Calon untuk Ijazah Sarjana
(*Candidate for the degree of*)

MASTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

telah mengemukakan kertas penyelidikan yang bertajuk
(*has presented his/her research paper of the following title*)

THE FACTORS INFLUENCING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' INTENTION TO WORK IN MALAYSIA

Seperti yang tercatat di muka surat tajuk dan kulit kertas penyelidikan
(*as it appears on the title page and front cover of the research paper*)

Bahawa kertas penyelidikan tersebut boleh diterima dari segi bentuk serta kandungan dan meliputi
bidang ilmu dengan memuaskan.

(*that the research paper acceptable in the form and content and that a satisfactory knowledge of
the field is covered by the research paper*).

Nama Penyelia : **ASSOC. PROF. DR. MOHD FAIZAL BIN MOHD ISA**

Pertama
(*Name of
Supervisor*)

Tandatangan :
(*Signature*)

Tarikh : **14 JANUARY 2026**
(*Date*)

PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this project paper in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a postgraduate degree from Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), I hereby grant permission to the Library of Universiti Utara Malaysia to make this project paper freely available for reference and use for academic and research purposes.

I further agree that permission for copying this project paper, in whole or in part, for scholarly purposes may be granted by my supervisor, or in their absence, by the Dean of the Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business, Universiti Utara Malaysia.

It is understood that any copying, publication, or use of this project paper or any part thereof for commercial or financial gain is not permitted without my prior written consent. It is also understood that due acknowledgement shall be given to the author and to Universiti Utara Malaysia for any scholarly use of any material contained in this project paper.

Requests for permission to copy or to make other use of materials in this project paper, in whole or in part, should be addressed to:

Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business

Universiti Utara Malaysia

06010 UUM Sintok

Kedah Darul Aman

Malaysia

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and that it has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for the award of any degree or qualification at this or any other institution.

All sources of information used in the preparation of this thesis have been properly acknowledged and cited in accordance with academic conventions.

I confirm that this thesis does not contain any material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text.



ABSTRACT

Malaysia has positioned itself as a regional education hub and continues to attract a growing number of international students from diverse national backgrounds. Beyond academic pursuits, many international students consider post study employment as an important component of their overseas education experience. However, international students' intention to work in Malaysia after graduation remains inconsistent and is influenced by multiple factors. Therefore, the main aim of this study is to identify the influence of three factors (economic opportunity, social influence, and perceived employability) toward international students' intention to work in Malaysia. A quantitative research design was employed, and data were collected through a structured online questionnaire administered to international students enrolled in Malaysian higher education institutions. The data were analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 27, with techniques including descriptive statistics, reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha), Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regression to test the hypothesized relationships among the constructs. The findings show that economic opportunity, social influence, and perceived employability have positive relationship with international students' intention to work in Malaysia. The results of the study provide actionable insights for strengthening Malaysia's talent retention strategies and improving its appeal as a destination for global talent. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) explaining these determinants factors are crucial and impact to policymakers, universities, and employers seeking to enhance international graduate retention.

Keywords: Intention to work, Economic opportunity, Social influence, Perceived employability, Theory of Planned Behavior

ABSTRAK

Malaysia telah meletakkan dirinya sebagai hab pendidikan serantau dan terus menarik semakin ramai pelajar antarabangsa dari pelbagai latar belakang negara. Selain daripada tujuan akademik, ramai pelajar antarabangsa menganggap pekerjaan selepas pengajian sebagai komponen penting dalam pengalaman pendidikan luar negara mereka. Walau bagaimanapun, niat pelajar antarabangsa untuk bekerja di Malaysia selepas tamat pengajian masih tidak konsisten dan dipengaruhi oleh pelbagai faktor. Oleh itu, tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengenal pasti pengaruh tiga faktor (peluang ekonomi, pengaruh sosial dan persepsi kebolehpasaran) terhadap niat pelajar antarabangsa untuk bekerja di Malaysia. Reka bentuk penyelidikan kuantitatif telah digunakan dan data telah dikumpulkan melalui soal selidik dalam talian berstruktur yang dikemukakan kepada pelajar antarabangsa yang mendaftar di institusi pengajian tinggi Malaysia. Data dianalisis menggunakan Statistik SPSS IBM versi 27, dengan teknik statistik deskriptif, analisis kebolehpercayaan (Cronbach alfa value), korelasi Pearson dan regresi linear berganda untuk menguji hubungan hipotesis antara konstruk. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa peluang ekonomi, pengaruh sosial dan persepsi kebolehpasaran mempunyai hubungan positif dengan niat pelajar antarabangsa untuk bekerja di Malaysia. Keputusan kajian memberikan pandangan yang boleh diambil tindakan untuk memperkukuh strategi pengekalan bakat Malaysia dan meningkatkan daya tarikannya sebagai destinasi untuk bakat global. Teori Tingkah Laku Terancang (TPB) yang menjelaskan faktor-faktor penentu ini adalah penting dan memberi impak kepada pembuat dasar, universiti dan majikan yang ingin meningkatkan pengekalan graduan antarabangsa.

Kata kunci: Niat untuk bekerja, Peluang ekonomi, Pengaruh sosial, Kebolehpasaran yang dijangka, Teori Tingkah Laku Terancang.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor for their invaluable guidance, constructive feedback, and continuous support throughout the completion of this research. Their academic expertise and encouragement have been instrumental in shaping this study.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to University Utara Malaysia for providing a supportive academic environment and the necessary resources to conduct this research. Special thanks are extended to the international students who generously participated in the survey and shared their experiences and perspectives, without whom this study would not have been possible.

I am deeply grateful to my family and friends for their unwavering encouragement, patience, and emotional support throughout my postgraduate journey. Their understanding and motivation have been a constant source of strength.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who contributed directly or indirectly to the successful completion of this thesis.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PERMISSION TO USE.....	I
DECLARATION.....	II
ABSTRACT.....	III
ABSTRAK.....	IV
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	V
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	VI
LIST OF TABLES.....	XI
LIST OF FIGURES.....	XII
LIST OF ABBREVIATION.....	XIII
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Overview of International Students in Malaysia.....	4
1.3 Problem Statement.....	7
1.4 Research Questions.....	11
1.5 Research Objectives.....	11
1.6 Scope of Study.....	12
1.7 Significance of the Study.....	16
1.8 Operational Definition.....	17
1.9 Organization of Chapters.....	21
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Introduction.....	24
2.2 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB).....	24

2.3 Overview of International Students’ Intention to Work in Host Countries.....	28
2.3.1 Past Studies on International Students’ Intention to Work in Host Countries.....	30
2.4 Concept of Economic Opportunity.....	33
2.5 Concept of Social Influence.....	35
2.6 Concept of Perceived Employability.....	37
2.7 Hypotheses Development.....	40
2.7.1 Relationship between Economic Opportunity and Intention to Work in Malaysia.	41
2.7.2 Relationship between Social Influence and Intention to Work in Malaysia.....	42
2.7.3 Relationship between Perceived Employability and Intention to Work in Malaysia.....	44
2.8 Theoretical Framework.....	46
2.9 Chapter Summary.....	47
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Introduction.....	49
3.2 Research Design.....	49
3.3 Population.....	50
3.4 Sample Size.....	52
3.5 Sampling Technique.....	54
3.6 Questionnaire Design.....	55
3.7 Pre-Test.....	57
3.8 Pilot Test.....	57
3.9 Measurement of the Study.....	59
3.9.1 Economic Opportunity (Attitude).....	63
3.9.2 Social Influence (Subjective Norm).....	63

3.9.3 Perceived Employability (Perceived Behavioral Control).....	64
3.9.4 Intention to Work in Malaysia (Behavioral Intention).....	65
3.10 Data Collection.....	65
3.11 Data Analysis Techniques.....	68
3.11.1 Data Screening and Preparation.....	69
3.11.2 Descriptive Analysis.....	70
3.11.2.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents.....	70
3.11.2.2 Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables.....	71
3.11.3 Inferential Analysis.....	72
3.11.3.1 Tests of Normality.....	72
3.11.3.2 Reliability Analysis.....	73
3.11.3.3 Correlation Analysis.....	73
3.11.3.4 Multiple Regression Analysis.....	74
3.12 Chapter Summary.....	75

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction.....	77
4.2 Response Rate.....	77
4.3 Descriptive Analysis	78
4.3.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents.....	79
4.3.1.1 Gender.....	80
4.3.1.2 Age.....	81
4.3.1.3 Nationality.....	82
4.3.1.4 Level of Study.....	83

4.3. 1.5 University Name.....	85
4.3. 1.6 Duration of Study in Malaysia.....	87
4.3. 1.7 Field of Study.....	88
4.3.2 Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables.....	91
4.4 Inferential Analysis.....	93
4.4. 1 Tests of Normality.....	94
4.4.2 Reliability Analysis.....	96
4.4.3 Correlation Analysis.....	98
4.4.4 Multiple Regression Analysis.....	100
4.5 Hypothesis Testing.....	104
4.5.1 H1: Economic Opportunity has a positive and significant influence on international students' intention to work in Malaysia.....	105
4.5.2 H2: Social Influence has a positive and significant influence on international students' intention to work in Malaysia.....	106
4.5.3 H3: Perceived Employability has a positive and significant influence on international students' intention to work in Malaysia.....	106
4.6 Chapter Summary.....	106
 CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
5.1 Introduction.....	109
5.2 Overview of the Study.....	109
5.3 Discussion of Findings.....	111
5.3.1 Economic Opportunity as an Attitudinal Determinant.....	112
5.3.2 Social Influence as a Normative Determinant.....	114
5.3.3 Perceived Employability as a Control Determinant.....	115

5.4 Implications of the Study.....	116
5.4.1 Theoretical Implications.....	117
5.4.2 Practical Implications.....	118
5.4.3 Implications for International Students.....	120
5.5 Suggestions for Future Research.....	121
5.6 Conclusion of the Study.....	123
REFERENCES.....	125
APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE.....	133
APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE VALIDATE.....	140
APPENDIX C: SPSS STATISTICS.....	144



LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 Integration of Study Variables with TPB Constructs.....	27
Table 3.1 Summary of Original and Adapted Variables.....	60
Table 3.2 Data Collection Procedure.....	67
Table 4. 1 Distribution of Respondents by Gender	80
Table 4.2 Distribution of Respondents by Age.....	81
Table 4.3 Distribution of Respondents by Nationality.....	82
Table 4.4 Distribution of Respondents by Level of Study.....	83
Table 4.5 Distribution of Respondents by University Name.....	85
Table 4.6 Distribution of Respondents by Duration of Study in Malaysia.....	87
Table 4.7 Distribution of Respondents by Field of Study.....	88
Table 4.8 Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables	91
Table 4.9 Tests of Normality for Study Variables.....	94
Table 4. 10 Reliability Statistics of Study Variables.....	96
Table 4.11 Pearson Correlation Matrix of Study Variables	98
Table 4. 12 Summary of the Regression Model.....	100
Table 4. 13 ANOVA for the Regression Model.....	102
Table 4. 14 Coefficients of the Regression Model.....	103
Table 4. 15 Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results.....	105

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Theoretical Framework.....	46
Figure 4.1 Normal Q–Q Plot of Mean_ITW.....	96



LIST OF ABBREVIATION

ABBREVIATION	FULL TERM
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structures
APA	American Psychological Association
CMB	Common Method Bias
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DV	Dependent Variable
EO	Economic Opportunity
EMGS	Education Malaysia Global Services
IBM	International Business Machines
ICEF	International Consultants for Education and Fairs
IV	Independent Variable
IW	Intention to Work in Malaysia
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation
PE	Perceived Employability
PBC	Perceived Behavioral Control
PLS-SEM	Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
Q-Q	Quantile-Quantile

ABBREVIATION	FULL TERM
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SI	Social Influence
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TPB	Theory of Planned Behavior



CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The demand for global talent has intensified Malaysia's need to retain skilled graduates. Malaysia currently hosts about 131,000 international students, representing a potential talent reservoir for national human capital development (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2024). As international student mobility has increased over time, international students increasingly consider not only academic advancement but also longer term career opportunities in the host country (Hernández-Torrano et al., 2024; Calonge et al., 2023). Given Malaysia's broader transition toward a knowledge driven economy, international graduates may constitute a valuable pool of prospective talent (Ahmed, 2006). To reflect labor market realities, evidence also indicates employability skills gaps among Malaysian graduates, underscoring the policy relevance of skilled talent retention (Ling et al., 2020).

Beyond their contribution to higher education revenue, international students are increasingly framed by host countries as a pre-integrated pipeline of future skilled labor, particularly in contexts shaped by demographic ageing and persistent talent shortages (She & Wotherspoon, 2013; OECD, 2022). In line with this shift, OECD evidence indicates that many advanced and emerging economies have progressively reoriented international education and migration related policies toward retaining international graduates as part of long term human capital development (OECD,

2022).

However, not all students intend to remain in Malaysia after completing their studies. Their decisions are shaped by multiple economic, social, and personal factors that influence how they evaluate the possibility of working in the country. Understanding these determinants is crucial for policymakers, universities, and employers seeking to strengthen Malaysia's international graduate retention efforts.

From an internationalization perspective, Malaysia's aspiration to position itself as a regional education hub aligns with broader global strategies that seek to expand cross border education flows and facilitate international knowledge exchange (Knight, 2015). Nevertheless, the sustainability and effectiveness of such internationalization strategies increasingly hinge on whether international students perceive clear and attainable post study employment pathways in the host country, rather than education being viewed as a purely temporary mobility experience (Hawthorne, 2018; Tran et al., 2023).

International student mobility has grown substantially over the last decade as countries compete to attract global talent, enhance innovation capacity, and strengthen their human capital development. Malaysia has strategically positioned itself as an emerging education hub, supported by favorable tuition fees, diverse cultural

environments, and internationally recognized academic programs. As a result, public and private universities collectively host a large and diverse international student population (MOHE, 2024). These students form a significant reservoir of potential talent that could contribute to Malaysia's economic growth, especially in sectors requiring advanced digital, technical, and professional skills. International graduates are increasingly relevant to high growth and knowledge intensive sectors such as manufacturing, information and communication technology (ICT), engineering, digital services, and multinational corporate services. These sectors tend to demand globally oriented skills, advanced technical competencies, and cross cultural capabilities, which international graduates are well positioned to provide (OECD, 2022; Hawthorne, 2018). By contrast, countries like Singapore and Australia have long been established as leading education hubs, emphasizing pathways to permanent residency as a key attraction for international students. Malaysia's unique position in offering cost effective, high quality education without an immediate residency pathway presents an opportunity to fill a niche in the global education market.

Despite these advantages, international graduates' intention to work in Malaysia remains inconsistent. Existing studies indicate that post study employment decisions are shaped by a range of economic and structural factors, including expected salary levels, opportunities for career advancement, cost of living, and perceptions of the openness of the Malaysian labor market toward foreign workers (Hawthorne, 2018).

Although Malaysia has maintained relatively stable national unemployment rates, evidence suggests the presence of sector specific talent shortages, particularly in high skilled and knowledge intensive industries where demand for specialized skills exceeds the supply of qualified local graduates (OECD, 2022). While multinational corporations such as Intel, Huawei, ZTE, and BASF continue to expand their operations in Malaysia, structural constraints, including restrictive employment visa procedures, limited post study work pathways, and employers' preference for local applicants, continue to undermine international graduates' confidence in securing long term employment in the host country ((Moo & Da Wan, 2023)).



1.2 Overview of International Students in Malaysia

Malaysia has become an increasingly attractive destination for international students, particularly those from Asia, due to its strategic geographic location, relatively affordable cost of education and living, and diverse multicultural environment. In recent years, the international student population in Malaysia has shown steady growth. It is estimated that Malaysia hosts approximately 170,000 international students as of 2025, reflecting a significant increase compared with previous years and aligning with the national target to attract 250,000 international students by 2025 (MOHE, 2023; EMGS, 2024).

Among the international student population in Malaysia, the largest source countries

are predominantly from Asia, with China constituting the most significant share. According to official statistics from the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, a total of 56,198 students from China were enrolled in Malaysian higher education institutions in 2024, accounting for 41.0% of the total international student population. This was followed by Indonesia (11,455 students, 8.3%), Bangladesh (8,821 students, 6.4%), and India (5,392 students, 3.9%). Collectively, students from East and South Asian countries represent a substantial proportion of international enrolments in Malaysia. This distribution highlights Malaysia's strong appeal as a regional education hub, particularly within Asia, and reflects the country's continued prominence in attracting international students from neighboring and emerging economies.



The mobility of international students to Malaysia is shaped by a combination of push and pull factors. From the host country perspective, Malaysia's comparatively affordable tuition fees and living costs, relative to traditional Western destinations such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia, function as important pull factors influencing students' destination choices (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Beine et al., 2014). In addition, the growing presence of foreign branch campuses and transnational higher education providers enables students to obtain internationally recognized degrees while studying locally, thereby strengthening Malaysia's attractiveness and competitiveness in the global higher education market (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012).

Institutional promotion and recruitment initiatives also play an important role in shaping international student mobility patterns. In Malaysia, Education Malaysia Global Services (EMGS), the agency mandated to manage and coordinate international student enrolment, undertakes a range of promotional and outreach activities to support the country's international education objectives. These initiatives include participation in international education exhibitions and targeted engagement activities in key source markets. For example, EMGS has been involved in regional platforms such as the China ASEAN Expo and has organized education related forums in major sending cities, including Chennai, India, with the aim of enhancing visibility and strengthening student inflows from priority countries (EMGS, 2024).

Beyond economic and institutional considerations, cultural proximity and geographic accessibility also contribute to Malaysia's attractiveness as a study destination.

Malaysia's multicultural social context, the widespread use of English as a medium of instruction, and its close geographic proximity to other Asian countries provide a relatively familiar environment for students from countries such as China, Bangladesh, and India. Compared with more distant Western destinations, these characteristics may ease social adjustment and reduce perceived cultural distance, thereby lowering barriers associated with cross border study and supporting sustained international student mobility to Malaysia (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Bodycott, 2009).

Overall, international student mobility to Malaysia reflects broader global trends in which middle income countries are increasingly positioned as competitive destinations for higher education due to strategic policies, regional influence, and cost advantages. Malaysia's expanding international student population provides important contextual grounding for examining subsequent stages of international students' experiences, particularly their post study intentions and employment aspirations within the Malaysian context.

1.3 Problem Statement

In recent years, Malaysia has experienced a steady increase in the number of international students, reflecting the country's strategic ambition to position itself as a regional education hub and an attractive destination for global talent. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia's Labor Force Survey, the national unemployment rate continued its downward trend, recording approximately 3.2% in 2024 and 3.1% in early 2025, indicating a relatively tight labor market and historically low levels of joblessness among the domestic workforce (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2025). Despite this stable macro economic indicator, structural gaps persist in the demand for specialized, high skilled labor, particularly in sectors requiring advanced technical skills, international language capability, and global industry experience.

Although Malaysia continues to attract a growing number of international students,

their intention to work in Malaysia after graduation remains uncertain (Hawthorne, 2018). Many international graduates remain hesitant to pursue employment locally due to concerns related to visa processes, hiring practices, and the perceived competitiveness of foreign applicants. These individual level uncertainties contribute to a persistent gap between Malaysia's demand for skilled international talent and the actual retention of international graduates in the national workforce.

While Malaysia has made notable progress in attracting international students, their intention to remain in the country for employment after graduation continues to be constrained by several structural and socio cultural challenges. One prominent barrier relates to difficulties in social and workplace integration. Malaysian organizational environments are embedded in local cultural norms, language practices, and informal professional expectations that may be unfamiliar to international graduates. Limited proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia, uncertainty regarding local workplace etiquette, and restricted access to informal professional networks can undermine international students' confidence in navigating recruitment processes and competing with local graduates. These challenges often contribute to feelings of social distance and a weaker sense of belonging in the host country labor market, which in turn discourages long term employment intentions among international graduates (Calonge et al., 2023; Tran et al., 2023).

Similar challenges have been observed in other host countries, where restrictive post study work policies and unclear migration pathways have weakened international graduates' confidence in securing employment, even in contexts characterized by strong labor market demand (Hawthorne, 2018). These institutional constraints further complicate international students' evaluation of the feasibility of pursuing careers in host countries.

Beyond socio cultural considerations, international students' career decision making is also shaped by practical uncertainties associated with post study employment conditions. Despite Malaysia's relatively low unemployment rate and continued industrial development, international graduates often face limited clarity regarding work visa eligibility, employers' willingness to sponsor foreign employees, and prospects for long term career progression. Uncertainty surrounding immigration regulations, perceptions of employer preference for local candidates, and the absence of clearly defined post study work pathways can undermine international students' confidence in securing stable employment after graduation. As a result, many international students reassess the viability of remaining in Malaysia and increasingly consider returning to their home countries or seeking employment opportunities in alternative destinations (Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024).

Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this study examines how

economic opportunity, social influence, and perceived employability shape international students' intention to work in Malaysia. Within this framework, attitude is operationalized as perceptions of economic opportunity, subjective norm as social influence, and perceived behavioral control as perceived employability. This conceptual alignment provides the theoretical basis for subsequent analysis and discussion.

Although previous research has examined economic and policy related factors influencing graduates' employment decisions, such studies have largely focused on macro level structural conditions and offer limited insight into how international students psychologically evaluate their prospects of working in Malaysia. Empirical applications of behavioral theories, particularly the Theory of Planned Behavior, remain limited within the Malaysian context, despite the theory's extensive validation in explaining career intentions internationally. Moreover, existing Malaysian studies frequently examine economic opportunity, social influence, and employability related factors independently, resulting in fragmented insights that fail to capture how these determinants interact to shape employment intention.

Accordingly, a clear research gap exists in the lack of theory driven and integrated empirical studies applying the Theory of Planned Behavior to examine international students' intention to work in Malaysia. Addressing this gap is essential not only for

advancing theoretical understanding of international students' decision making processes, but also for informing institutional and policy strategies aimed at enhancing international graduate retention and supporting Malaysia's long term talent development objectives.

1.4 Research Questions

This research proposal addresses three key questions:

1. Does economic opportunity have a significant influence on international students' intention to work in Malaysia?
2. Does social influence have a significant influence on international students' intention to work in Malaysia?
3. Does perceived employability have a significant influence on international students' intention to work in Malaysia?

1.5 Research Objectives

- I. To examine the relationship between economic opportunity and international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

II. To examine the relationship between social influence and international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

III. To examine the relationship between perceived employability and international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

1.6 Scope of Study

This study is limited to international students currently enrolled in Malaysian higher education institutions. The target population includes international students from diverse national backgrounds and across all academic levels, namely undergraduate (Bachelor), postgraduate (Master), and doctoral (PhD) programs. By including students from all three levels of study, the research aims to capture a comprehensive representation of international students' educational experiences and employment related perceptions at different stages of academic progression.

The scope of this study focuses on international students enrolled in both public and private universities in Malaysia. These institutions are selected as the research context because they collectively host a substantial proportion of international student enrolments and represent the main segments of Malaysia's higher education system. Public universities operate within relatively standardized academic and administrative structures, while private universities offer more market oriented programmes and

maintain closer links with industry and multinational employers. Examining international students across both institutional types allows for a more comprehensive understanding of post study employment intentions within the Malaysian higher education landscape.

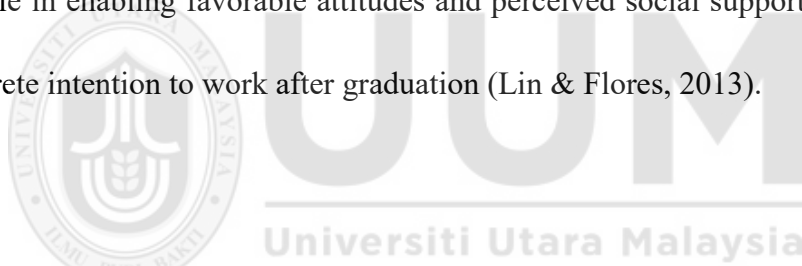
By including both public and private universities, this study captures a broader range of institutional experiences while still maintaining contextual relevance. Although differences may exist in governance structures and program orientation, international students across these institutions are subject to similar national immigration policies and labor market conditions. This approach reduces potential bias associated with focusing on a single type of institution and enhances the generalizability of the findings. Such an institutional scope is consistent with prior studies emphasizing the role of higher education context in shaping international students' career aspirations and labor market integration (Tomlinson & Nghia, 2024).

The scope of this study is further defined by its theoretical grounding in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which provides a well established framework for explaining individuals' intention driven decision making processes. Guided by TPB, the present study focuses on three key determinants of international students' intention to work in Malaysia: economic opportunity, social influence, and perceived employability.

These three variables were deliberately selected as they capture the most immediate and salient individual level considerations that international students typically weigh when evaluating post study employment decisions in a host country context. Specifically, economic opportunity reflects students' attitudinal evaluation of working in Malaysia, encompassing perceptions of salary competitiveness, career advancement prospects, and expected economic returns. For international students, such evaluations are particularly consequential, given the substantial financial investment and opportunity costs associated with overseas education. As a result, anticipated economic outcomes often play a central role in shaping post graduation employment intentions and mobility decisions (Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024).

Social influence is incorporated to capture the normative pressures that shape international students' employment intentions. Compared with domestic students, international students' career decisions are often influenced not only by individual preferences but also by expectations and advice from family members, peers, and other significant others located in both their home and host countries. These social actors may either encourage or discourage staying in Malaysia based on perceived social status, cultural norms, family obligations, or long term life planning considerations. Such perceived expectations constitute an important source of social pressure and play a meaningful role in the formation of international students' post study employment intentions (Istad et al., 2021).

Perceived employability represents the control component of the Theory of Planned Behavior and refers to international students' self assessment of their capacity to obtain suitable employment within the Malaysian labor market. This construct is particularly salient for international students, who commonly encounter additional uncertainties related to language proficiency, recognition of academic qualifications, familiarity with local recruitment practices, and understanding of employment related regulations. These factors shape students' perceptions of how feasible it is to secure employment in the host country. Consequently, perceived employability reflects students' confidence in navigating the Malaysian employment environment and plays a crucial role in enabling favorable attitudes and perceived social support to translate into a concrete intention to work after graduation (Lin & Flores, 2013).



By focusing on these three determinants, the present study maintains theoretical coherence while capturing the core psychological mechanisms underlying international students' employment intentions. Although factors such as immigration policy, macroeconomic conditions, and institutional level practices may also shape international graduates' career outcomes, these influences operate primarily at the structural or contextual level. In contrast, this study deliberately concentrates on individual level cognitive and evaluative processes, which remain relatively underexplored in the Malaysian context. Such a focused approach enables a clearer examination of how international students internally assess perceived opportunities, social expectations, and personal capability when forming intentions to work in

Malaysia, in line with theory driven research grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024).

1.7 Significance of the Study

Although Malaysia's overall unemployment rate remains relatively moderate, unemployment figures do not fully reflect skill mismatches and sectoral labor shortages, particularly in industries requiring advanced technical, digital, and professional competencies. This study makes several important contributions. From a theoretical standpoint, it extends the application of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to the context of international graduate employment in Malaysia. While previous studies focused predominantly on macro level migration factors, this research incorporates attitudes (economic opportunity), subjective norms (social influence), and perceived behavioral control (perceived employability) to provide a behaviorally grounded explanation of employment intentions.

From a practical perspective, the findings can inform universities and career development centers in designing targeted interventions, such as employability training, language support, industrial exposure, and internship opportunities, to enhance international students' readiness for the Malaysian labor market. For instance, universities may implement specialized workshops focused on industry skills that align with market demands, enabling students to acquire competencies directly

relevant to their fields. Policymakers may utilize these findings to revise work visa regulations, thereby facilitating international graduates' employment in Malaysia. Furthermore, partnerships between universities and leading Malaysian industries could increase students' industrial exposure and provide real world experience through internship programs. Insights into students' perceptions of economic opportunity and social support can guide institutions in refining academic and career services to better align with students' needs and aspirations.

At the policy level, the results can support national efforts related to talent retention, graduate employment, and post study work visa reform. Agencies such as MOHE and Talent Corp may use the insights to refine policies that encourage international graduates to remain in Malaysia, particularly in high demand sectors.

For international students themselves, the study provides clearer insights into the factors that shape employment decisions, enabling them to make informed career choices aligned with Malaysia's labor market expectations.

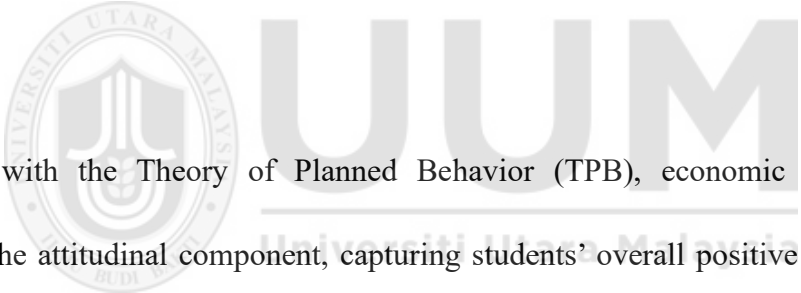
1.8 Operational Definition

Operational definitions are provided to clarify how the key constructs in this study are conceptualized and measured, based on established theoretical frameworks and prior

empirical studies in the field of career intention and employability research (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016; Hair et al., 2021).

Economic Opportunity (Attitude)

In this study, economic opportunity is operationally defined as international students' perceptions of the economic attractiveness of working in Malaysia. This construct reflects students' evaluations of salary competitiveness, career advancement prospects, job availability, and overall economic benefits associated with employment in the host country.



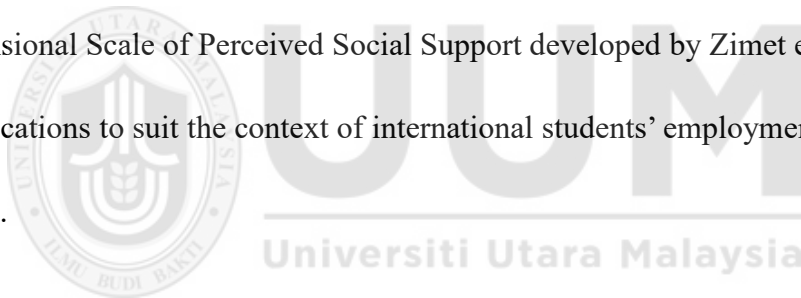
Consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), economic opportunity represents the attitudinal component, capturing students' overall positive or negative evaluation of pursuing employment in Malaysia. The measurement items for this construct were adapted from prior studies on intention to stay and career related economic perceptions, particularly Kumar and Govindarajo (2014), as well as related employability and migration studies. The adapted items reflect key economic dimensions such as income potential, professional development opportunities, and employment prospects within the Malaysian context.

Social Influence (Subjective Norm)

In this study, social influence is operationally defined as international students'

perceived social pressure, support, and encouragement from significant referent groups regarding their decision to work in Malaysia after graduation. These referent groups include family members, friends, peers, and other important individuals whose opinions may influence students' career decisions.

Within the framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), social influence corresponds to the subjective norm, reflecting the extent to which perceived expectations and support from significant others shape students' employment intentions. The measurement items for this construct were adapted from the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support developed by Zimet et al. (1988), with modifications to suit the context of international students' employment intentions in Malaysia.



Perceived Employability (Perceived Behavioral Control)

In this study, perceived employability is operationally defined as international students' perceived capability and confidence in securing employment in the Malaysian labor market. This construct reflects students' self assessments of their qualifications, language proficiency, understanding of the local job market, adaptability to the Malaysian working environment, and perceived control over employment related procedures such as work permit or post study visa applications.

Consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), perceived employability represents the perceived behavioral control component, indicating the extent to which students believe they possess the resources, skills, and control necessary to obtain employment in Malaysia. The measurement items for this construct were adapted from studies on international student mobility and employability perceptions, particularly Mazzarol and Soutar (2002), with contextual modifications to reflect the Malaysian employment environment.

Intention to Work in Malaysia (Behavioral Intention)

In this study, intention to work in Malaysia is operationally defined as the extent to which international students are willing and plan to seek employment and pursue career opportunities in Malaysia after completing their studies. This construct reflects students' deliberate intentions, commitment, and readiness to engage in employment related behaviors, including job application, willingness to remain in Malaysia, and long term career planning.

In line with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), intention to work in Malaysia represents behavioral intention, which is regarded as the most immediate antecedent of actual employment behavior. The measurement items for this construct were adapted from previous studies on career intention and post study employment decisions, particularly Yusoff et al. (2024), with modifications to suit the context of

international students in Malaysia.

International Students

For the purpose of this study, international students are defined as individuals who originate from countries outside Malaysia and are enrolled in Malaysian higher education institutions at the undergraduate, postgraduate, or doctoral level.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), proposed by Ajzen (1991), posits that behavioral intention is influenced by three key determinants: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. In this study, TPB serves as the guiding theoretical framework linking economic opportunity, social influence, and perceived employability to international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

1.9 Organization of Chapters

This thesis is structured into five chapters, each addressing a distinct component of the research process. The organization systematically guides readers from the study's background through to the conclusion and recommendations.

Chapter 1 presents the overall foundation of the research. It includes the study background, the problem statement, the research objectives, the research questions, the scope of the study, the study's significance, and the organization of the chapters. This chapter establishes the research context and explains the theoretical basis for investigating the influence of economic opportunity, social influence, and perceived employability on international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

Chapter 2 provides an in depth review of relevant literature and theoretical foundations. It discusses the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as the guiding framework and synthesizes prior studies related to the three independent variables: economic opportunity, social influence, and perceived employability. The chapter further develops the study's conceptual framework and hypotheses, grounded in existing empirical findings.

Chapter 3 outlines the methodology used to conduct the study. It describes the research design, target population, sampling procedures, instrument development, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques. This chapter explains the use of a quantitative approach and the administration of a structured questionnaire to examine relationships among variables. Ethical considerations related to data collection are also addressed.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the data collected from respondents. It includes descriptive statistics, reliability analyses, correlation analyses, and multiple regression analyses conducted using SPSS. The findings provide empirical evidence on the relationships between economic opportunity, social influence, perceived employability, and international students' intention to work in Malaysia. Each research question is answered through statistical results and interpretation.

Chapter 5 discusses the research findings in relation to existing literature and the Theory of Planned Behavior. It concludes the study by summarizing key insights and highlighting their theoretical, practical, and policy implications. The chapter also provides recommendations for universities, policymakers, and future researchers. The study's limitations are acknowledged, and suggestions for further research are offered.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature related to international students' intention to work in Malaysia. In line with the study objectives, the chapter begins by examining the concept of intention to work, with particular emphasis on international students in host country contexts and Malaysia. It then reviews prior empirical studies related to the key determinants influencing intention to work, namely economic opportunity, social influence, and perceived employability. Subsequently, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is introduced as the underlying theoretical framework that integrates these determinants. Based on the reviewed literature and theoretical grounding, hypotheses are developed, and the chapter concludes with the presentation of the study's theoretical framework.

2.2 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), originally proposed by Ajzen (1991), is a well established psychological framework for explaining and predicting intention driven behavior. The theory posits that actual behavior is primarily preceded by behavioral intention, which reflects an individual's readiness to perform a given action. In turn, behavioral intention is jointly shaped by three core determinants: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. Over

the past three decades, TPB has been extensively applied and empirically validated across a wide range of behavioral domains, including career decision making, employment intention, and migration related behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Sheeran & Webb, 2016).

Within the TPB framework, attitude toward the behavior refers to an individual's overall positive or negative evaluation of performing a particular behavior, which is formed through beliefs about expected outcomes and their perceived desirability. Subjective norm reflects the perceived social pressure exerted by significant referents such as family members, peers, or important others regarding whether the behavior should or should not be performed. Perceived behavioral control represents individuals' perceptions of their ability to perform the behavior, taking into account available skills, resources, and perceived constraints. Together, these three components provide a comprehensive explanation of how personal evaluations, social expectations, and perceived capability interact to shape behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010).

In the context of international students' post study employment decisions, TPB is particularly relevant because such decisions are not determined solely by structural or policy conditions, but also by students' subjective evaluations of labor market opportunities, their social environments, and their confidence in navigating host

country employment systems. Empirical research consistently demonstrates that international students' intention to remain and work in a host country is influenced by their assessment of employment prospects, the expectations and approval of significant others, and their perceived ability to secure suitable employment after graduation (Istad et al., 2021; Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024; Tran et al., 2023). TPB therefore provides a suitable theoretical lens for capturing the psychological processes underlying international students' employment related intentions.

Guided by TPB, the present study operationalizes the theory's three core components through context specific variables relevant to international students in Malaysia. Attitude toward the behavior is represented by economic opportunity, reflecting students' evaluations of salary competitiveness, job availability, and career advancement prospects in the Malaysian labor market. Subjective norm is operationalized as social influence, capturing perceived expectations and encouragement from family members, peers, and significant others regarding working in Malaysia. Perceived behavioral control is conceptualized as perceived employability, which reflects students' confidence in their skills, language proficiency, and ability to obtain employment within the host country labor market.

By aligning the TPB constructs with these contextually grounded variables, the study establishes a clear and theoretically coherent foundation for examining international

students' intention to work in Malaysia. This approach not only preserves the theoretical integrity of TPB, but also enables the model to be empirically tested within a specific national and institutional context. Consequently, TPB serves not only as a conceptual framework, but also as an analytical guide informing the development of the research model and subsequent hypothesis testing.

Table 2.1
Integration of Study Variables with TPB Constructs

TPB Component	Study Variable	Explanation of Relationship
Attitude toward the behavior	Economic Opportunity (Salary & Career Prospect)	Positive attitudes toward working in Malaysia are shaped by perceptions of high salary, fair compensation, and career growth opportunities.
Subjective Norm	Social Influence (Family & Peer Support)	Supportive family members and peers increase perceived social approval for working in Malaysia, strengthening students' intention to stay.
Perceived Behavioral	Perceived Employability (Skills, Language, and	Students who feel confident in their employability and ability to

Control	Policy Awareness)	adapt perceive higher control over their career outcomes, which enhances their employment intention.
---------	-------------------	--

2.3 Overview of International Students' Intention to Work in Host Countries

International students' intention to work in their host countries has attracted growing scholarly attention in recent years, largely due to intensified global competition for skilled talent and national strategies aimed at retaining high potential graduates. Studying abroad is increasingly viewed not only as an academic pursuit, but also as a pathway to international exposure, professional network development, and enhanced long term career prospects. As a result, many international students consider remaining in the host country after graduation, particularly when employment environments are perceived as supportive, inclusive, and professionally rewarding (Tomlinson & Nghia, 2024; Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024).

Host country employment intention is shaped by a combination of students' academic experiences, perceived institutional support, and opportunities for engagement with local industries. Participation in internships, industrial training, career fairs, and work integrated learning initiatives has been shown to strengthen international students' sense of connection to the host country labor market and increase their confidence in pursuing local employment opportunities (Tran et al., 2023; Istad et al., 2021). Such

experiences facilitate early exposure to workplace norms and employer expectations, thereby enhancing students' perceived readiness for post study employment.

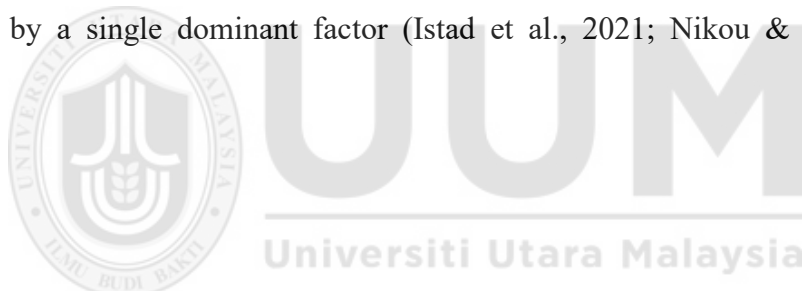
Despite these opportunities, international graduates often encounter structural and contextual challenges when attempting to enter host country labor markets. Common barriers include restrictive visa and work permit regulations, employer preferences for domestic candidates, and difficulties related to language proficiency and cultural adjustment. These constraints can limit access to suitable employment and create uncertainty regarding long term career prospects in the host country (Calonge et al., 2023). Nevertheless, many international students continue to pursue host country employment due to strong global career aspirations, perceived economic advantages, and opportunities for professional advancement and upward mobility.

Recent research further emphasizes the importance of employability related resources in shaping international students' intention to remain in the host country. Attributes such as language proficiency, professional competencies, adaptability, and the development of a clear career identity play a critical role in determining students' confidence in navigating host country labor markets (Tran et al., 2023). These findings highlight the multidimensional nature of international students' employment intentions, which are influenced by an interplay of contextual conditions and individual psychological resources rather than by economic factors alone.

2.3.1 Past Studies on International Students' Intention to Work in Host

Countries

A substantial body of international research has examined the factors influencing international students' intention to seek employment in their host countries after graduation. Existing empirical studies generally suggest that international students' employment intentions are shaped by a combination of economic evaluations, social and cultural influences, and individual perceptions of employability. However, findings across national and institutional contexts remain inconsistent, indicating that post study employment intention is highly context dependent rather than universally determined by a single dominant factor (Istad et al., 2021; Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024).



From an economic perspective, numerous studies identify economic opportunity as a central determinant of international students' intention to remain in the host country. Research conducted in Australia, Canada, and other major host destinations demonstrates that perceptions of competitive salaries, favorable employment conditions, and long term career advancement opportunities significantly increase international graduates' willingness to enter local labor markets (Tomlinson, 2017; Calonge et al., 2023). Similarly, studies conducted in East Asian contexts, including China and Singapore, report that strong industry demand and perceived economic stability positively influence students' post study employment plans (Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024). Nevertheless, other empirical findings suggest that favorable

economic conditions alone may be insufficient to retain international graduates when structural barriers such as restrictive work visa policies or limited career progression opportunities persist (Tran et al., 2023).

Beyond economic considerations, social and cultural influences have been widely recognized as important drivers of international students' employment intentions. Studies grounded in collectivist cultural contexts consistently show that family expectations, peer influence, and perceived social approval play a significant role in shaping students' career decisions, often exerting an influence comparable to or stronger than economic motivations (Lam et al., 2003; Nunes & Arthur, 2013). Empirical evidence from host countries such as the United Kingdom and New Zealand further indicates that international students' decisions to work locally are shaped by encouragement or discouragement from family members in their home countries, as well as by the quality of their social integration experiences within the host society (Riaño et al., 2021; Tran et al., 2023). However, the strength of social influence appears to vary across cultural backgrounds, with students from more individualistic societies demonstrating relatively greater autonomy in career decision making.

In addition, perceived employability has emerged as a critical individual level factor influencing international students' intention to work in host countries. Empirical

studies consistently demonstrate that international students who perceive themselves as possessing relevant professional skills, sufficient language proficiency, and familiarity with host country recruitment practices are more likely to express strong employment intentions (Lin & Flores, 2013; Tomlinson & Nghia, 2024). Evidence from European and Australian contexts further suggests that perceived employability plays a mediating role between structural opportunities and employment intention, highlighting the importance of students' self confidence and perceived behavioral control in navigating host country labor markets (Tran et al., 2023).

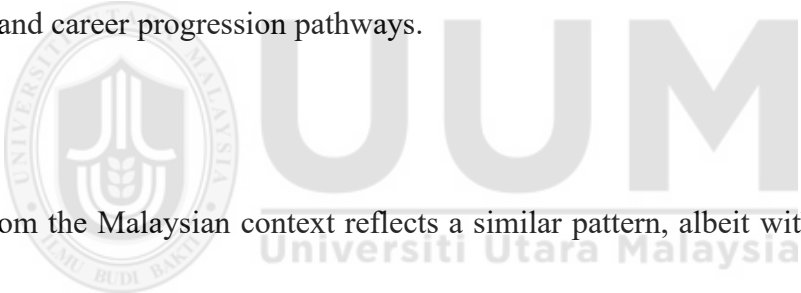
Despite these valuable contributions, prior studies frequently examine economic, social, and employability related factors in isolation, resulting in fragmented explanations of international students' post study employment intentions. Moreover, while extensive empirical evidence has been generated in Western host countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, and Canada, theory driven studies that integrate these determinants within a unified analytical framework remain limited in the Malaysian context. This gap underscores the need for a theoretically grounded approach, such as the Theory of Planned Behavior, to systematically explain how economic evaluations, social pressures, and perceived control jointly shape international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

2.4 Concept of Economic Opportunity

Economic opportunity refers to international students' perceptions of the economic benefits and career related outcomes associated with working in a host country. In the context of international graduate employment, this concept commonly encompasses evaluations of salary competitiveness, job availability, career advancement prospects, and the balance between income and living costs. Within the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), such evaluations constitute the attitudinal component of intention formation, whereby individuals develop favorable or unfavorable attitudes toward a behavior based on anticipated outcomes and their perceived desirability (Ajzen, 1991; Sheeran & Webb, 2016).

A substantial body of empirical research identifies economic opportunity as a key determinant of international students' post study employment intentions. Studies conducted in major host countries such as Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom consistently show that perceptions of competitive remuneration, stable employment conditions, and long term career development opportunities significantly increase international graduates' willingness to remain in the host country labor market (Tomlinson, 2017; Calonge et al., 2023). From an investment perspective, overseas education is often viewed by international students as a significant financial and personal commitment, making expected economic returns after graduation a critical consideration in career decision making (Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024).

Comparative evidence from Asian host country contexts further supports the importance of economic opportunity in shaping employment intentions. Research examining international students in East and Southeast Asia indicates that strong industry demand, favorable wage expectations, and perceived alignment between qualifications and labor market needs positively influence students' intention to seek host country employment after graduation (Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024; Tran et al., 2023). However, these studies also suggest that the effect of economic opportunity is contingent upon broader structural and institutional conditions, including employment regulations and career progression pathways.



Evidence from the Malaysian context reflects a similar pattern, albeit with additional complexities. While Malaysia's expanding technology driven industries, manufacturing sector, and service economy supported by multinational corporations have increased demand for skilled labor, international graduates continue to express concerns regarding wage differentials between local and foreign workers, limited promotion opportunities, and uncertainty surrounding long term employment security. Such structural constraints may weaken otherwise favorable economic evaluations and reduce the attractiveness of remaining in the Malaysian labor market (Tran et al., 2023; Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024).

From a behavioral perspective, TPB posits that when individuals believe a behavior is likely to lead to desirable and rewarding outcomes, they are more inclined to develop a strong intention to perform that behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In the present study, economic opportunity is therefore conceptualized as international students' attitudinal evaluation of working in Malaysia, reflecting their assessment of whether employment in the country offers sufficient economic rewards, career progression, and long term professional value. A more positive perception of economic opportunity is expected to strengthen international students' intention to work in Malaysia after graduation.

2.5 Concept of Social Influence

Social influence refers to the perceived expectations, encouragement, or pressure from significant others such as family members, peers, mentors, and wider social networks regarding an individual's behavioral decision. Within the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this construct corresponds to subjective norm, which reflects the extent to which individuals believe that important referents approve or disapprove of a particular behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Subjective norm captures the social dimension of intention formation, emphasizing how perceived social expectations shape individuals' willingness to engage in a given behavior.

The strength of social influence on career related decision making is closely shaped

by cultural context. In collectivist societies, individuals tend to place greater importance on family expectations, social approval, and relational obligations when making long term career choices. Empirical research consistently demonstrates that individuals from collectivist cultural backgrounds are more likely to consider the opinions of significant others when evaluating career opportunities, compared with those from more individualistic societies (Lam et al., 2003; Nunes & Arthur, 2013). As a result, social influence is expected to exert a particularly strong effect on international students originating from collectivist cultures.

In the context of international students' post study employment intentions, social influence plays a salient role due to the transnational and socially embedded nature of career decision making. Unlike domestic students, international students often negotiate expectations from both home country and host country social environments. Studies focusing on international students indicate that family members' opinions, peer discussions, and perceived social approval significantly shape students' evaluations of whether working in the host country is socially desirable and acceptable (Arthur & Nunes, 2014; Istad et al., 2021). Family members may assess overseas employment in terms of social status, long term security, and cultural alignment, thereby influencing students' confidence in pursuing host country careers.

Empirical evidence further suggests that supportive social environments within the

host country can strengthen international students' intention to seek local employment. Positive interactions with peers, exposure to successful alumni, and guidance from academic staff or mentors can provide reassurance, information, and role models that reinforce perceived social approval for remaining in the host country labor market (Nunes & Arthur, 2013; Tran et al., 2023). Conversely, weak social integration, limited peer support, or negative comparisons with peers employed in alternative destinations may reduce students' perceived social endorsement and weaken their intention to remain after graduation.

Within the TPB framework, subjective norm is expected to strengthen behavioral intention when individuals perceive that important others support or expect the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Accordingly, social influence in the present study is conceptualized as the perceived normative pressure experienced by international students regarding their decision to work in Malaysia. When international students perceive strong encouragement or approval from family members, peers, and significant social referents, they are more likely to develop a positive intention to seek employment in Malaysia after graduation.

2.6 Concept of Perceived Employability

Perceived employability refers to individuals' self assessment of their ability to obtain and sustain employment, based on their perceived skills, qualifications, adaptability,

and understanding of labor market conditions. Within the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), perceived employability closely aligns with perceived behavioral control, which reflects individuals' perceptions of their capacity to perform a behavior given available resources and perceived constraints (Ajzen, 1991). In this sense, perceived employability captures the extent to which individuals feel capable of translating intentions into actual employment outcomes.

For international students, perceived employability is a multidimensional construct shaped by both personal competencies and contextual factors. Contemporary employability research emphasizes that employability extends beyond formal academic credentials to include transferable skills, communication competence, adaptability, and career related self efficacy (Jackson & Wilton, 2017; Tomlinson & Nghia, 2024). In host country contexts, international students' perceived employability is further influenced by language proficiency, familiarity with local workplace norms, access to professional networks, and awareness of host country employment regulations and visa requirements (Tran et al., 2023).

A growing body of empirical evidence demonstrates that perceived employability is a strong predictor of international students' intention to work in host countries after graduation. Studies consistently show that international students who perceive themselves as competitive in the host country labor market are more confident in

pursuing local employment opportunities and more likely to express intentions to remain after completing their studies (Lin & Flores, 2013; Istad et al., 2021). Conversely, uncertainty regarding work permit eligibility, limited local work experience, or perceived reluctance among employers to hire foreign graduates can reduce students' sense of control and weaken their intention to remain in the host country (Calonge et al., 2023; Tran et al., 2023).

According to TPB, perceived behavioral control not only exerts a direct influence on behavioral intention, but also strengthens the extent to which attitudes and subjective norms are translated into intention (Ajzen, 1991). From this perspective, perceived employability functions as an enabling mechanism that allows international students to convert favorable economic evaluations and perceived social support into concrete employment intentions. When students feel confident in their employability, they are more likely to act upon positive attitudes and normative encouragement.

Prior research further suggests that perceived employability operates as a psychological mechanism linking individual perceptions and contextual conditions to career related intentions. Rather than reflecting objective labor market outcomes alone, employability represents a subjective appraisal shaped by self confidence, labor market awareness, and anticipated opportunities (Jackson & Wilton, 2017). For international students, this perception based nature of employability is particularly

salient due to additional uncertainties associated with language barriers, cultural adaptation, and immigration regulations. Accordingly, in the present study, perceived employability is conceptualized as international students' perceived ability to secure employment in Malaysia, considering their skills, adaptability, language proficiency, and awareness of host country labor market requirements. Higher levels of perceived employability are therefore expected to strengthen international students' intention to work in Malaysia after graduation.

2.7 Hypotheses Development

The theoretical foundation of this study is based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Ajzen (1991), which postulates that behavioral intention is influenced by three main determinants: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. In this research, these constructs are represented by economic opportunity, social influence, and perceived employability, respectively. The following subsections elaborate on the relationships among these variables and international students' intention to work in Malaysia, which inform the formulation of the study's hypotheses.

Although the present study is primarily grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior, its emphasis on perceived capability and social support is also theoretically aligned with Social Cognitive Career Theory. Social Cognitive Career Theory highlights the

central role of self efficacy beliefs and contextual supports in shaping individuals' career related choices and intentions. From this perspective, international students' confidence in their employability and perceived encouragement from significant others can be understood as key psychological and contextual mechanisms influencing employment intention, thereby complementing the TPB based framework adopted in this study (Lent et al., 1994).

2.7.1 Relationship between Economic Opportunity and Intention to Work in Malaysia

Economic opportunity reflects international students' evaluations of the desirability of working in Malaysia, particularly with regard to salary competitiveness, employment availability, career advancement prospects, and overall economic returns relative to living costs. Within the Theory of Planned Behavior, attitude toward a behavior represents a key antecedent of intention, as individuals are more inclined to form intentions when they perceive a behavior as leading to favorable and rewarding outcomes (Ajzen, 1991). From this perspective, when international students perceive Malaysia as offering attractive economic prospects and viable opportunities for professional growth, they are more likely to develop a positive attitudinal orientation toward post study employment in the country (Istad et al., 2021; Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024).

For international students, post study employment decisions are closely linked to economic considerations, particularly given the substantial financial and personal investment associated with overseas education. Empirical studies have shown that favorable perceptions of salary competitiveness, employment availability, and long term career progression significantly strengthen international students' intention to seek employment in the host country, including Malaysia (Istad et al., 2021; Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024). In contrast, concerns related to job insecurity, limited career advancement, or insufficient economic returns tend to undermine students' motivation to remain in the host country after graduation (Calonge et al., 2023).

Overall, economic opportunity functions as an important attitudinal determinant within the TPB framework. When Malaysia's labor market is perceived as economically rewarding and professionally sustainable, international students are more likely to express a strong intention to work in the country.


Hypothesis 1 (H1):

Economic opportunity has a positive and significant influence on international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

2.7.2 Relationship between Social Influence and Intention to Work in Malaysia

Social influence corresponds to the subjective norm component of the Theory of

Planned Behavior and refers to individuals' perceptions of expectations and social pressure from significant others such as family members, peers, and mentors regarding a particular behavioral choice (Ajzen, 1991). In collectivist cultural settings, career related decisions are often shaped by a heightened sensitivity to social approval and the opinions of important reference groups (Lam et al., 2003; Nunes & Arthur, 2013). For international students, employment intentions are therefore influenced not only by personal preferences, but also by perceived expectations originating from both home country and host country social networks, which jointly shape their evaluation of whether remaining in the host country is socially appropriate and desirable (Istad et al., 2021).



Empirical research indicates that encouragement and approval from family members and peers play a significant role in strengthening international students' intention to seek employment in the host country. Such social endorsement provides emotional reassurance and normative support, which can increase students' confidence in remaining after graduation (Istad et al., 2021). In addition, supportive academic environments including constructive interactions with lecturers, career advisors, and alumni networks further reinforce perceived social approval by offering guidance, information, and visible role models for successful labor market integration. These forms of institutional and relational support have been shown to facilitate international students' transition from study to work and to positively influence their post study employment intentions (Tran et al., 2023).

Taken together, these findings indicate that social influence operates as a key normative determinant within the TPB framework. When international students perceive strong social support or approval for working in Malaysia, they are more likely to develop a firm intention to remain and seek local employment.

Hypothesis 2 (H2):

Social influence has a positive and significant influence on international students' intention to work in Malaysia.



2.7.3 Relationship between Perceived Employability and Intention to Work in Malaysia

Perceived employability aligns with the perceived behavioral control component of the Theory of Planned Behavior and reflects international students' confidence in their capacity to secure employment within the host country labor market. This confidence is shaped by students' self assessments of their competencies, language proficiency, adaptability, and familiarity with local recruitment practices and labor market conditions (Ajzen, 1991). When individuals perceive a higher degree of control over prospective career outcomes, they are more likely to convert favorable attitudes and perceived social support into a concrete intention to engage in the behavior. Accordingly, perceived employability functions as a key enabling mechanism that

facilitates the translation of positive evaluations and normative encouragement into international students' intention to work in Malaysia (Lin & Flores, 2013).

For international students, perceived employability is shaped by both personal and contextual factors, including job relevant skills, familiarity with local workplace norms, and awareness of host country employment regulations. Empirical research indicates that international students who perceive themselves as possessing strong professional competencies and adequate knowledge of labor market requirements are more likely to plan for post study employment in the host country (Tran et al., 2023).

Conversely, challenges such as limited language proficiency, unfamiliarity with recruitment practices, or uncertainty surrounding work visa conditions tend to diminish students' perceived behavioral control and weaken their intention to remain after graduation (Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024).

Overall, perceived employability serves as a critical control determinant within the TPB framework. When international students feel confident in their ability to secure employment in Malaysia, they are more likely to form a strong intention to work in the country.

Hypothesis 3 (H3):

Perceived employability has a positive and significant influence on international

students' intention to work in Malaysia.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

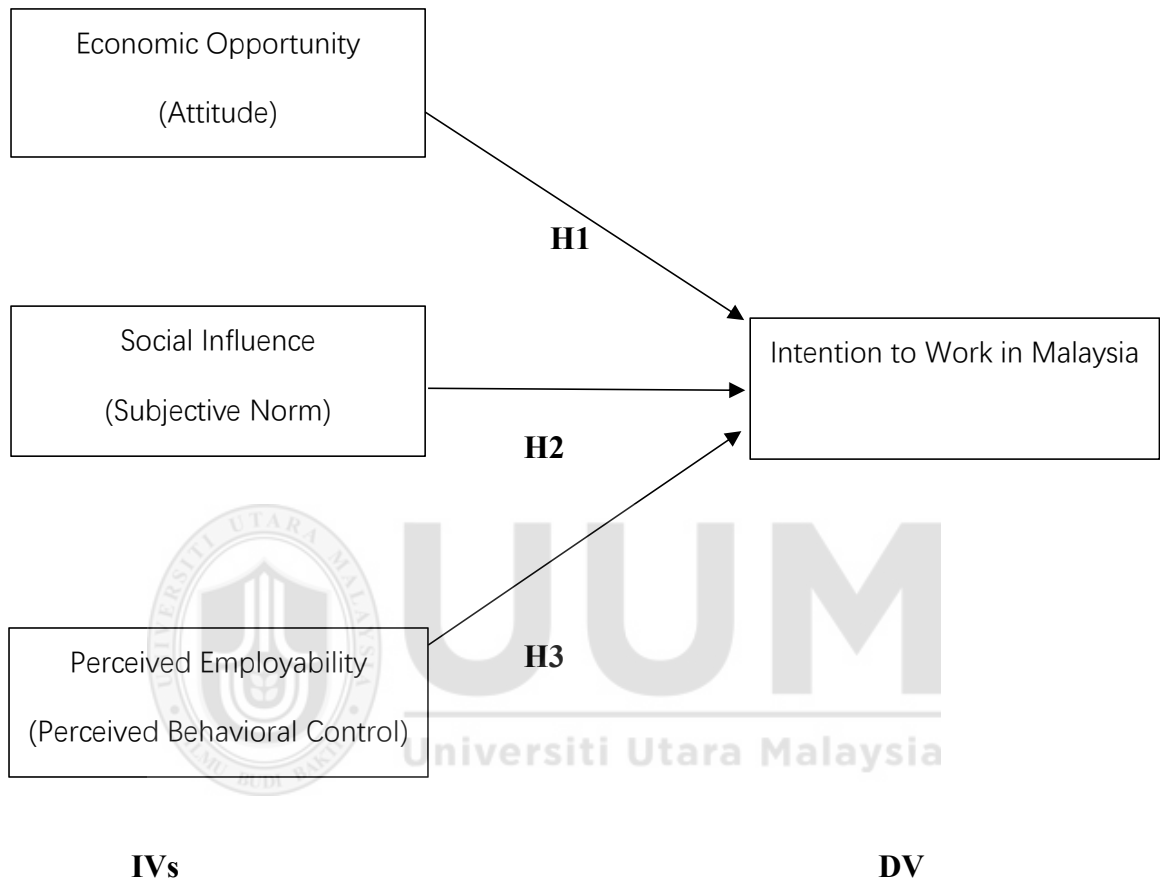


Figure 2.1

Theoretical Framework

Figure 2.1 presents the theoretical framework of the study, developed based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The framework proposes that international students' intention to work in Malaysia is directly influenced by three determinants: economic opportunity, social influence, and perceived employability. Economic opportunity represents the attitudinal component of TPB, reflecting students' evaluations of the economic and career related benefits of working in

Malaysia. Social influence corresponds to the subjective norm component, capturing perceived expectations and encouragement from significant others. Perceived employability reflects perceived behavioral control, indicating students' confidence in their ability to secure employment in the Malaysian labor market. Together, these three constructs are hypothesized to exert a direct and positive influence on international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

2.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed the literature and theoretical foundations related to international students' intention to work in Malaysia. It first examined previous studies on international students' post study employment intentions in host countries, highlighting the increasing importance of retaining international graduates in the context of global competition for skilled talent. The discussion then introduced the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as the main theoretical framework guiding this study, given its relevance in explaining intention based decision making.

Based on TPB, three key determinants of international students' intention to work in Malaysia were identified and discussed, namely economic opportunity, social influence, and perceived employability. Economic opportunity was conceptualized as the attitudinal component of TPB, focusing on students' evaluations of salary levels,

job availability, and career development prospects. Social influence was discussed as the subjective norm component, emphasizing the role of family members, peers, and significant others in shaping employment related decisions. Perceived employability was examined as the perceived behavioral control component, reflecting students' confidence in their skills, adaptability, and ability to enter the Malaysian labor market.

The review of empirical studies indicated that these three factors have been shown to influence international students' employment intentions in both Malaysian and international contexts. Drawing on this body of literature, the chapter developed hypotheses to examine the relationships between economic opportunity, social influence, perceived employability, and international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

Finally, this chapter presented a theoretical framework grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior to illustrate the proposed relationships among the study variables. By integrating attitudinal, normative, and control related factors into a single framework, the chapter provided a clear conceptual foundation for the empirical analysis. The framework established in this chapter serves as the basis for the research methodology and data analysis discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the methodological approach adopted to examine the factors influencing international students' intention to work in Malaysia. Rather than focusing solely on statistical procedures, this chapter clarifies the rationale behind the research design, sampling decisions, instrument development, and analytical techniques used in the study. By grounding the methodology in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the chapter ensures that the research procedures are theoretically coherent and methodologically sound. The chapter concludes by outlining the data analysis techniques employed to address the research objectives.



3.2 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative research design with a cross sectional survey. The choice of a quantitative design is guided by the research objectives, which aim to examine relationships among clearly defined variables rather than to explore subjective meanings or narratives. Quantitative methods enable systematic measurement and statistical testing, making them particularly suitable for theory driven research, such as studies based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

A cross sectional design was considered appropriate because the study focuses on international students' employment intentions at a specific point in time, rather than tracking changes over an extended period. Similar designs have been widely used in prior research examining intention related outcomes among university students; for instance, Kisubi (2021) adopted a quantitative cross sectional survey to investigate students' self employment intentions, demonstrating the suitability of cross sectional designs for analyzing relationships among attitudes, perceptions, and behavioral intentions in higher education contexts. Although longitudinal designs can provide deeper insights into behavioral change over time, they were beyond the scope of the present study due to time and access constraints.



3.3 Population

The population of this study comprises international students currently enrolled in Malaysian higher education institutions at the undergraduate, master's, and doctoral levels who are approaching the completion of their studies or are in a position to consider post study employment opportunities in Malaysia. This population includes students who are actively studying, participating in internships or industrial training, and those preparing to transition into the labor market upon graduation.

Malaysia has consolidated its position as a regional education hub in Southeast Asia,

attracting a large and diverse population of international students through comparatively affordable tuition fees, widespread English medium instruction, and a multicultural learning environment. According to official enrolment statistics reported by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), Malaysia (2024), as presented in , the total number of international students enrolled in Malaysian higher education institutions reached 137,201 in 2024.

The data indicate that students from China constitute the largest international student group, with 56,198 enrolments, accounting for approximately 41.0% of the total international student population (MOHE, 2024). This is followed by students from Indonesia (11,455; 8.35%), Bangladesh (8,821; 6.43%), India (5,392; 3.93%) and Pakistan (5,015; 3.66%), while the remaining 25.4% comprise students from other countries. These patterns underscore both the scale and the geographical concentration of Malaysia's international student intake, highlighting its strong appeal to students from East and South Asia (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2024).

In addition to academic enrolment, a proportion of international students are permitted to engage in part time employment, industrial training, or internship placements in accordance with Malaysian immigration regulations and institutional policies. Such exposure allows students to gain familiarity with the local labor market and organizational environment, which may influence their perceptions of employability

and their intentions regarding post study employment (Duong et al. 2021). Consequently, international students who are currently enrolled and career ready constitute an appropriate population for examining intention to work in Malaysia. This population definition is consistent with the objectives of the study and the Theory of Planned Behavior, as it focuses on individuals who are able to evaluate employment opportunities and form behavioral intentions.

3.4 Sample Size

The sample size for this study was determined based on established methodological guidelines and the analytical requirements of quantitative research. Given the large and heterogeneous population of international students in Malaysia, an adequate sample size is required to ensure sufficient statistical power for multivariate analyses.

In quantitative research, particularly studies employing correlation and multiple regression techniques, methodological guidelines suggest that a sample size of approximately 200 respondents or more is appropriate for producing reliable and stable estimates (Green, 1991). Accordingly, the sample size adopted in this study meets widely accepted recommendations for multivariate statistical analysis in social science research.

Previous methodological research has emphasized the importance of adequate sample

size in behavioral and social science studies to ensure sufficient statistical power. For instance, Cohen (1992) highlights that moderate to large sample sizes are generally required to detect meaningful effects in multivariate analyses. In the context of multiple regression analysis, Green (1991) proposes a widely cited rule of thumb for minimum sample size estimation, expressed as $50 + 8m$, where m represents the number of independent variables.

As the present study includes three independent variables, the minimum required sample size based on this guideline is 74 respondents. The final sample of 216 respondents therefore exceeds these recommended minimum thresholds, providing sufficient statistical power and supporting the robustness of the hypothesis testing.

Furthermore, the selected sample size was considered appropriate in relation to the use of purposive sampling and the application of inclusion criteria. By ensuring that respondents met specific eligibility requirements relevant to the research objectives, the study balanced statistical adequacy with data relevance. Overall, the sample size of 216 respondents is deemed sufficient to support reliable statistical analysis and meaningful interpretation of the relationships among the study variables.

3.5 Sampling Technique

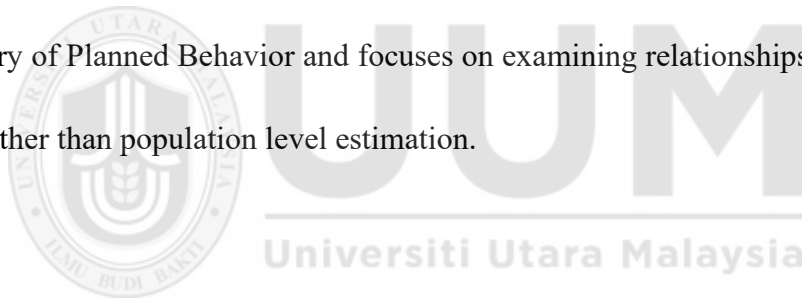
This study employed a convenience sampling technique to select respondents who were readily accessible and met the objectives of the research. Convenience sampling was considered appropriate due to the dispersed nature of the international student population across Malaysian higher education institutions and the absence of a comprehensive sampling frame that would allow for probability based sampling.

The study focused on international students who were currently studying in Malaysia and had sufficient exposure to the Malaysian academic and social environment to form informed post study employment intentions. To enhance the relevance and quality of the data collected, several inclusion criteria were applied. First, respondents were required to be international students enrolled in Malaysian higher education institutions at the undergraduate, master's, or doctoral level. Second, respondents must have completed at least one year of study in Malaysia. These criteria ensured that participants possessed adequate experience with the local education system, social context, and preliminary awareness of employment opportunities and labor market conditions in Malaysia.

Convenience sampling is widely adopted in social science research, particularly in studies involving student populations, where access to a complete sampling frame is limited and participants are recruited based on availability and willingness to

participate (Etikan et al., 2016). This study collected data through an online questionnaire distributed through university networks and online platforms commonly used by international students, thus effectively reaching the right respondents.

Overall, the use of convenience sampling provided a practical and methodologically appropriate approach for reaching international students who were capable of providing meaningful insights into their employment intentions after graduation. While this sampling technique may limit the generalizability of the findings, it is considered suitable for theory driven studies such as this research, which is grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior and focuses on examining relationships among key variables rather than population level estimation.



3.6 Questionnaire Design

This study employed a structured questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire was designed based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which posits that behavioral intention is influenced by attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. Accordingly, the questionnaire was developed to capture four main constructs: Economic Opportunity (Attitude), Social Influence (Subjective Norm), Perceived Employability (Perceived Behavioral Control), and Intention to Work in Malaysia (Behavioral Intention).

The questionnaire consisted of four sections. The first section measured respondents' perceptions of Economic Opportunity, focusing on salary competitiveness, professional experience, career advancement and development, cost of living, and job availability in Malaysia. The second section assessed Social Influence, capturing perceived support and encouragement from family members, friends, peers, and other significant individuals, as well as the influence of success stories of graduates working in Malaysia. The third section measured Perceived Employability, which reflects respondents' perceived ability to secure employment in Malaysia, including confidence in qualifications, English language proficiency, understanding of the job market, adaptability to the working environment, and knowledge of employment related procedures such as work permits or post study work visas. The final section measured Intention to Work in Malaysia, focusing on respondents' intention to seek employment, apply for jobs, remain in Malaysia if suitable opportunities arise, recommend Malaysia as a place to work, and pursue long term career development in the country.

All questionnaire items were adapted from established and validated instruments in prior studies and were contextualized to the Malaysian employment setting. A five point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), was used to measure respondents' level of agreement with each statement. The use of a Likert scale is appropriate for capturing perceptions and attitudes and is widely applied in studies examining employment intention and career related decision making.

3.7 Pre-Test

Prior to the main data collection, a pre-test was conducted to evaluate the clarity, relevance, and overall suitability of the questionnaire. Pre-testing is an important step in questionnaire development, as it helps identify potential problems in item wording, structure, and respondent interpretation before large scale data collection (Reynolds, Diamantopoulos, & Schlegelmilch, 1993). In this study, the pre-test involved a small group of academic colleagues and international students who shared similar characteristics with the target population. Their feedback was used to assess whether the questionnaire items were clearly understood and interpreted in a consistent manner, particularly given the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds of international students. As noted by Collins (2003), pre-testing helps ensure that respondents interpret survey questions in the way intended by the researcher. Based on the feedback received, minor revisions were made to improve wording clarity and contextual relevance, while the overall structure and constructs of the questionnaire remained unchanged, as the items were adapted from established and validated instruments. This process enhanced the clarity and usability of the questionnaire prior to full scale data collection (Forza, 2002).

3.8 Pilot Test

After the pre-test stage, a pilot test was conducted prior to the main data collection to ensure that the questionnaire functioned effectively and produced reliable data. While

the pre-test focused mainly on wording clarity and content relevance, the pilot test aimed to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales and to identify any practical issues that might arise during actual survey administration. Pilot testing is widely recognized as an important step in questionnaire based research, as it allows researchers to refine instruments and evaluate their performance before large scale data collection (van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001).

The pilot study involved a small group of international students who shared similar characteristics with the target population of the main study. All participants met the same inclusion criteria applied in the full survey, including being enrolled in Malaysian higher education institutions and having completed at least one year of study in Malaysia. The questionnaire was administered using the same online platform and structure intended for the main data collection, enabling the researcher to assess the practicality and flow of the survey under conditions similar to those of the actual study.

Data from the pilot test were analyzed using SPSS to examine the internal consistency reliability of the measurement scales. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for all four constructs: Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, Perceived Employability, and Intention to Work in Malaysia. The results indicated that all constructs achieved acceptable levels of internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha

values exceeding the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70. This threshold is widely regarded as indicating satisfactory reliability for research instruments in social and behavioral sciences (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Based on the pilot test results, no questionnaire items were removed, as all measurement scales demonstrated acceptable reliability and conceptual alignment with their respective constructs. Only minor adjustments were made to improve the clarity of instructions and the overall flow of the questionnaire. The structure of the instrument, the wording of the items, and the response scale remained unchanged. Overall, the pilot test confirmed that the questionnaire was reliable and suitable for use in the main study, providing confidence that the data collected would be appropriate for subsequent statistical analysis.

3.9 Measurement of the Study

This study measured four key constructs derived from the Theory of Planned Behavior: Economic Opportunity (Attitude), Social Influence (Subjective Norm), Perceived Employability (Perceived Behavioral Control), and Intention to Work in Malaysia (Behavioral Intention). A summary of the variables and corresponding questionnaire items is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Summary of Original and Adapted Variables

Variables	Measurement		source
	Original	Adapted	
Economic Opportunity (Attitude) 6 items	1. I feel I am getting better pay in comparison with other organizations.	1. Working in Malaysia provides me with a competitive salary.	Kumar M, D., & Govindarajo, N. S. (2014). Instrument development “intention to stay instrument”(ISI). <i>Asian Social Science</i> , 10(12), 1-21.
	2. I feel that this organization is making provision of better career oriented positions.	2. Working in Malaysia provides me with professional experience.	
	3. I feel that the career promotion is based on merit and performance.	3. Malaysia offers attractive career advancement opportunities.	
	4. I feel that my career options are well taken care by the organization.	4. Working in Malaysia can help me gain career development.	
	5. I feel that the perks, allowances and other fringe benefits are up to our expectations.	5. Malaysia’s cost of living is reasonable compared to the income level.	
	6. I feel that this organization is making provision of better career	6. Malaysia has sufficient job opportunities.	

Variables	Measurement		source
	Original	Adapted	
	path.		
Social Influence (Subjective Norm) 5 items	7. My family is willing to help me make decisions.	7. My family supports my decision to work in Malaysia.	Zimet, G. D., Dahlem, N. W., Zimet, S. G., & Farley, G. K. (1988). The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support. <i>Journal of Personality Assessment</i> , 52(1), 30–41.
	8. My friends really try to help me.	8. My friends encourage me to work in Malaysia.	
	9. I can count on my friends when things go wrong.	9. I often discuss job opportunities in Malaysia with my peers.	
	10. I have friends with whom I can share my joys and sorrows.	10. The success stories of graduates working in Malaysia motivate me.	
	11. I have a special person who is a real source of comfort to me.	11. People important to me think I should work in Malaysia after completing my studies.	
Perceived Employability (Perceived Behavioral Control) 5 items	12. Was willing to recognise my previous qualifications.	12. I am confident that my qualifications meet Malaysian employers' requirements.	Mazzarol, T., & Soutar, G. N. (2002). Push–pull factors influencing international student destination choice. <i>International Journal of Educational Management</i> , 16(2), 82–90.
	13. Offers qualifications that will be recognised by	13. I am proficient in English used in the Malaysian	

Variables	Measurement		source
	Original	Adapted	
	employers.	workplace.	
	14. Has a strong alumni through which I learnt about it.	14. I have a good understanding of Malaysia's job market.	
	15. Has a large number of international students enrolled.	15. I can adapt to the Malaysian working environment.	
	16. Was well known to me.	16. I know how to apply for work permits or post study work visas in Malaysia.	
Intention to Work in Malaysia (Behavioral Intention) 5 items	17. I intend to work in the hospitality industry after graduation.	17. I intend to seek employment in Malaysia after completing my studies.	Yusoff, N. M., Abidin, U. F. U. Z., Mohamad, S. F., Abdullah, W. A. W., Alias, R., & Sudono, A. (2024). Determinant of Career Intention in Malaysia Hospitality Industry for Hearing Disabled Youth. <i>Environment-Behaviour Proceedings Journal</i> , 9(28), 279-285.
	18. I will certainly join the hospitality industry in the future.	18. I plan to apply for a job in Malaysia soon after graduation.	
	19. I find job in the hospitality industry interesting.	19. I would recommend Malaysia as a place to work to other international students.	
	20. I plan to work in the hospitality industry after	20. I am likely to stay in Malaysia if offered a	

Variables	Measurement		source
	Original	Adapted	
	graduation.	suitable job.	
	21. I intend to enter career that related to hospitality industry.	21. I have a strong desire to develop my career in Malaysia.	

3.9.1 Economic Opportunity (Attitude)

Economic Opportunity represents respondents' attitudes toward the economic and career related benefits associated with working in Malaysia. This construct was measured using six items adapted from Kumar and Govindarajo (2014). The items assess respondents' perceptions of key economic considerations, including salary competitiveness, opportunities for gaining professional experience, career advancement and development prospects, cost of living relative to income, and the availability of suitable job opportunities in the host country. Higher scores on this scale indicate more positive attitudes toward the economic opportunities linked to employment in Malaysia.

3.9.2 Social Influence (Subjective Norm)

Social Influence reflects respondents' perceived social support, encouragement, and normative pressure from significant others regarding their decision to work in Malaysia after completing their studies. This construct was measured using five items

adapted from Zimet et al. (1988).

The items assess perceived support and encouragement from family members, friends, and other important individuals, as well as the extent to which respondents feel socially motivated and influenced in making post study employment decisions. Higher scores on this scale indicate stronger perceived social influence to work in Malaysia.

3.9.3 Perceived Employability (Perceived Behavioral Control)

Perceived Employability represents respondents' perceived capability and sense of control over securing employment in Malaysia, based on their evaluation of individual resources and host country conditions. This construct was measured using five items adapted from Mazzarol and Soutar (2002), which emphasizes the role of perceived opportunities, personal capabilities, and contextual factors in shaping international students' post study decisions.

The items assess respondents' confidence in meeting Malaysian employers' requirements, English language proficiency for workplace communication, understanding of the Malaysian job market, adaptability to the local working environment, and awareness of employment related procedures such as work permits

or post study work visas. Higher scores indicate stronger perceived employability and a greater sense of perceived behavioral control over employment outcomes in Malaysia.

3.9.4 Intention to Work in Malaysia (Behavioral Intention)

Intention to Work in Malaysia represents respondents' willingness and planned effort to seek employment in Malaysia after completing their studies. This construct was measured using five items adapted from Yusoff et al. (2024), who examined determinants of career intention within the Malaysian employment context.

The items assess respondents' intention to seek employment, plans to apply for jobs, likelihood of remaining in Malaysia if offered suitable employment, willingness to recommend Malaysia as a place to work, and desire to pursue long term career development in Malaysia. Higher scores on this scale indicate a stronger intention to work in Malaysia.

3.10 Data Collection

Data collection for this study was conducted using a structured online questionnaire administered through Google Forms. Prior to the commencement of data collection, ethical approval was obtained from University Utara Malaysia to ensure that the

research procedures complied with institutional and ethical research standards.

The target respondents were international students currently enrolled in Malaysian higher education institutions. To ensure that participants met the inclusion criteria, a screening question was included at the beginning of the questionnaire to confirm respondents' international student status and current study enrollment in Malaysia. Only respondents who fulfilled these criteria were allowed to proceed with the survey.

The survey link was distributed over four weeks through multiple channels, including WeChat and social media networks commonly used by international students in Malaysia. This multi channel distribution strategy aimed to increase engagement and response rates among different student groups.

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. Respondents were informed of the study's purpose at the beginning of the questionnaire, and assurances were provided regarding anonymity and confidentiality. No personally identifiable information was collected, and respondents were free to withdraw from the survey at any point without penalty.

Upon completion of the data collection period, all responses were reviewed and

screened for completeness and consistency. Incomplete or invalid responses were excluded from further analysis. The final dataset was then exported to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for subsequent data screening and statistical analyses.

Table 3.2
Data Collection Procedure

Step	Stage	Description
1	Ethical Approval	Prior to data collection, ethical approval was obtained from University Utara Malaysia (UUM) to ensure that the research complied with ethical standards involving human participants.
2	Questionnaire Preparation	A structured questionnaire was developed based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). The instrument consisted of two sections: demographic information and measurement items for Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, Perceived Employability, and Intention to Work in Malaysia.
3	Screening of Respondents	A screening question was placed at the beginning of the questionnaire to ensure that only international students currently enrolled in Malaysian higher education institutions and who had completed at least one year of

		study could participate.
4	Survey Distribution	The online questionnaire was distributed via Google Forms over a four week period using international student networks and social media platforms commonly used by international students in Malaysia, such as WeChat and WhatsApp groups.
5	Data Collection Period	Participation was voluntary, and anonymity was assured. Respondents were informed of the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. No personally identifiable information was collected.
6	Data Screening and Export	After the data collection period ended, responses were screened for completeness and validity. Incomplete or invalid responses were removed, and the final dataset was exported to SPSS for further statistical analysis.

3.11 Data Analysis Techniques

This study employed a series of quantitative data analysis techniques to address the research objectives and test the proposed hypotheses. All statistical analyses were conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS was selected due to its reliability, user friendly interface, and widespread application in

social science and behavioral research involving survey data (Pallant, 2020).

The data analysis process consisted of three main stages: data screening and preparation, descriptive analysis, and inferential analysis. Each stage was conducted systematically to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and validity of the research findings.

3.11.1 Data Screening and Preparation

Prior to conducting statistical analyses, the collected data were screened and prepared to ensure suitability for subsequent analyses. Data screening involved examining the dataset for missing values, outliers, and inconsistencies. Responses that were incomplete or failed to meet the inclusion criteria were removed from the dataset.

The distribution of the study variables was also assessed to evaluate whether the assumptions required for parametric analyses were reasonably satisfied. Skewness and kurtosis values were examined to assess the normality of the data, and extreme outliers were inspected to reduce the risk of distorted parameter estimates. Such data screening procedures are consistent with recommended practices in quantitative research and regression based analyses (West, Finch, & Curran, 1995).

Following data screening, the final dataset was deemed appropriate for descriptive

and inferential statistical analyses.

The potential impact of common method bias associated with self reported survey data was mitigated through procedural design choices, including ensuring respondent anonymity and careful construction of questionnaire items to minimize ambiguity. Such procedural remedies are recognized as effective strategies for reducing method bias in self report research and improving the validity of findings from cross sectional survey studies (Yao & Xu, 2024).

3.11.2 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis was conducted to summarize the background characteristics of the respondents and to provide an overall overview of the main study variables.

Descriptive statistics help to present the general patterns of the data and establish a foundational understanding before conducting inferential analyses.

3.11.2.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The demographic profile of the respondents was analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. The demographic variables included gender, age, nationality, level of study, university affiliation, duration of study in Malaysia, field of study, and prior work experience in Malaysia. These variables provide important contextual

information about the sample composition and support the interpretation of the research findings.

Frequency and percentage distributions were used because these measures are appropriate for categorical data and allow for clear comparison across demographic groups.

3.11.2.2 Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Descriptive statistics were also calculated for the main study variables, namely Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, Perceived Employability, and Intention to Work in Malaysia. For each variable, the mean and standard deviation were computed to describe the central tendency and variability of respondents' perceptions.

The use of mean and standard deviation is appropriate for Likert scale data that approximate interval level measurement and is widely accepted in behavioral and social science research (Norman, 2010). These descriptive statistics provide an initial indication of respondents' overall attitudes and perceptions toward the study constructs.

3.11.3 Inferential Analysis

Inferential analysis was conducted to examine relationships among variables and to test the proposed research hypotheses. This stage of analysis goes beyond descriptive statistics and allows conclusions to be drawn regarding the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The selection and interpretation of inferential statistical procedures were guided by established methodological recommendations for regression based analysis in behavioral and social science research (Cohen et al., 2003).

3.11.3.1 Tests of Normality

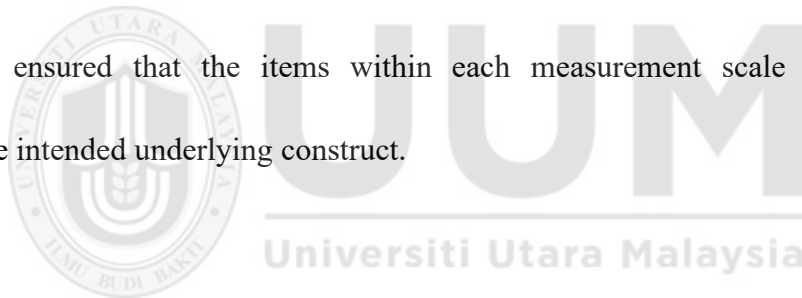
Tests of normality were conducted to assess whether the distribution of the study variables approximated a normal distribution. Both the Kolmogorov Smirnov test and the Shapiro Wilk test were employed, as these tests are commonly used to evaluate normality in samples of this size.

Although strict normality is not always required for regression analysis, particularly when sample sizes are sufficiently large, assessing data normality remains an important step in evaluating whether the assumptions underlying parametric analyses are reasonably satisfied (Schmidt & Finan, 2018). The results of the normality assessment were therefore used to inform the appropriateness of subsequent parametric analyses.

3.11.3.2 Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales used in the study. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated for each construct, including Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, Perceived Employability, and Intention to Work in Malaysia.

A Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.70 or higher was adopted as the threshold for acceptable internal consistency reliability, consistent with commonly applied methodological standards in social science research (McNeish, 2018). This reliability assessment ensured that the items within each measurement scale consistently captured the intended underlying construct.



3.11.3.3 Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation analysis was employed to examine the strength and direction of the relationships among the independent variables and the dependent variable. This analysis provided preliminary insights into whether Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, and Perceived Employability were significantly associated with Intention to Work in Malaysia.

Correlation analysis is appropriate for examining relationships among continuous

variables and serves as a useful preliminary step prior to regression analysis, as it helps identify overall relational patterns and potential multicollinearity concerns among the variables (O'Brien, 2007).

3.11.3.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the research hypotheses and to examine the predictive effects of Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, and Perceived Employability on international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

This technique enables the simultaneous examination of multiple independent variables and assesses their relative contributions to explaining variance in the dependent variable while controlling for the effects of other predictors. Multiple regression analysis is therefore widely applied in Theory of Planned Behavior-based research to test intention models and evaluate the predictive strength of key determinants (Sheeran & Webb, 2016).

The results of the regression analysis were used to determine whether each independent variable had a statistically significant effect on Intention to Work in Malaysia, thereby addressing the research objectives and hypotheses of the study.

3.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the research methodology adopted to examine the factors influencing international students' intention to work in Malaysia. The methodological approach was designed to ensure alignment with the research objectives and the theoretical foundation of the Theory of Planned Behavior.

The chapter first described the research design and sampling procedures, including the target population, sample size determination, and sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was employed as the primary data collection instrument, with measurement items adapted from established empirical studies and refined to suit the Malaysian context. The measurement of all variables was clearly linked to the components of the Theory of Planned Behavior to ensure conceptual consistency.

Subsequently, the procedures for data collection were explained, detailing the administration of the online survey, ethical considerations, and response screening processes. This was followed by a comprehensive explanation of the data analysis techniques, including data screening and preparation, descriptive analysis, and inferential analysis. Statistical methods such as tests of normality, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis were selected to ensure robust hypothesis testing and valid interpretation of results.

Overall, this chapter established a systematic and rigorous methodological framework for the study. The analytical procedures described in this chapter provide a solid foundation for the presentation and discussion of empirical findings in the subsequent chapter.



CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the empirical findings of the study on the factors influencing international students' intention to work in Malaysia. Among the most striking results, Social Influence emerged as the most substantial factor, indicating the critical role of family and peer encouragement in these decisions. The analyses are based on 216 valid responses collected from international students enrolled in Malaysian universities. The chapter is organized into several sections. It begins with the response rate, followed by the respondents' demographic profile. Next, the descriptive statistics of the main study variables Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, Perceived Employability, and Intention to Work in Malaysia are reported. Reliability analysis is then conducted to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales. Subsequently, Pearson correlation analysis is used to examine the relationships among the variables, followed by multiple regression analysis to test the hypothesized model. The chapter concludes with a summary of the hypothesis testing results.

4.2 Response Rate

The digital questionnaire was disseminated to international students currently enrolled in Malaysian higher education institutions, including both public and private universities. Participation was limited to students who had completed at least one year

of study in Malaysia, ensuring that respondents had sufficient academic and social exposure to the Malaysian environment to provide informed responses.

A total of 236 questionnaire responses were initially collected. Following the data screening process, 20 responses were excluded due to incomplete answers, inconsistent response patterns, or failure to meet the study's inclusion criteria. As a result, 216 completed and usable questionnaires were retained and included in the final data analysis.

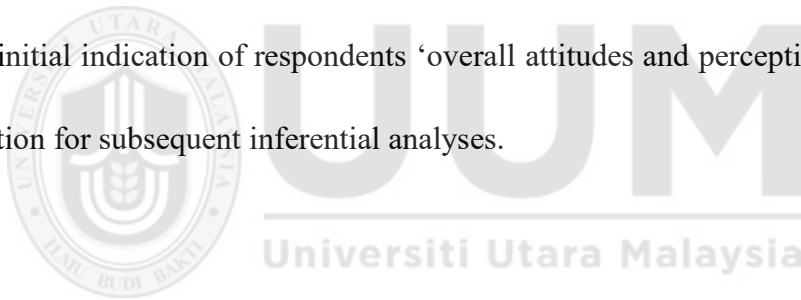
The final sample size of 216 respondents exceeds the minimum sample size recommended for quantitative studies employing multiple regression analysis with three independent variables (Green, 1991). Therefore, the number of valid responses was considered adequate and sufficient to support reliable statistical analysis and hypothesis testing in this study.

4.3 Descriptive Analysis

This section presents the descriptive analysis of the data collected from the respondents. Descriptive statistics were used to provide an overall understanding of the respondents' background characteristics and their general perceptions of the study variables. The demographic profile includes information related to gender, age,

nationality, level of study, university affiliation, duration of study in Malaysia, field of study, and prior work experience in Malaysia. These characteristics provide critical contextual insights into the sample composition and help establish the representativeness of the respondents for this study.

In addition, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the main study variables: Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, Perceived Employability, and Intention to Work in Malaysia. Measures such as mean and standard deviation were used to describe the central tendency and variability of the responses. The descriptive results provide an initial indication of respondents' overall attitudes and perceptions, serving as a foundation for subsequent inferential analyses.



4.3.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Section A of the questionnaire consists of (8) items designed to collect background information about the respondents. This section covers demographic details, including gender, age, nationality, level of study, university name, duration of study in Malaysia, field of study, and whether you have any related work experience in Malaysia.

4.3.1.1 Gender

Table 4.1

Distribution of Respondents by Gender (N=216)

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	111	51.4
Female	105	48.6
Total	216	100.0

Table 4.1 presents the gender distribution of the respondents. The results indicate a relatively balanced participation between male and female international students. Out of the 216 respondents, 111 respondents (51.4%) identified as male, while 105 respondents (48.6%) identified as female. This near equal representation suggests that both genders are comparably represented in the study, reducing the likelihood of gender related bias in the findings. The balanced distribution also reflects a diverse and inclusive sample, which strengthens the generalizability of the study's conclusions regarding international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

Overall, the balanced gender distribution suggests that the perspectives captured in this study are not dominated by a single gender group. This balance enhances the representativeness of the sample and supports a more comprehensive examination of international students' intention to work in Malaysia without gender related bias.

4.3.1.2 Age

Table 4.2

Distribution of Respondents by Age (N=216)

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 23	39	18.1
23–26	86	39.8
27–30	69	31.9
Above 30	22	10.2
Total	216	100.0

Table 4.2 presents the age distribution of the respondents. The results indicate that the majority of international students were concentrated in the younger age groups. Specifically, respondents aged 23–26 years constituted the largest proportion of the sample, with 86 respondents (39.8%), followed by those aged 27–30 years, comprising 69 respondents (31.9%).

In addition, 39 respondents (18.1%) were aged below 23 years, while a smaller proportion of the sample, 22 respondents (10.2%), were aged above 30 years. Overall, the age distribution suggests that most respondents were within the typical age range of undergraduate and postgraduate students enrolled in Malaysian higher education institutions. Therefore, the age profile of the sample is considered appropriate for addressing the objectives of the present study.

4.3.1.3 Nationality

Table 4.3

Distribution of Respondents by Nationality (N=216)

Nationality	Frequency	Percentage (%)
China	76	35.2
Bangladesh	60	27.8
Pakistan	41	19.0
Indonesia	26	12.0
Others	13	6.0
Total	216	100.0

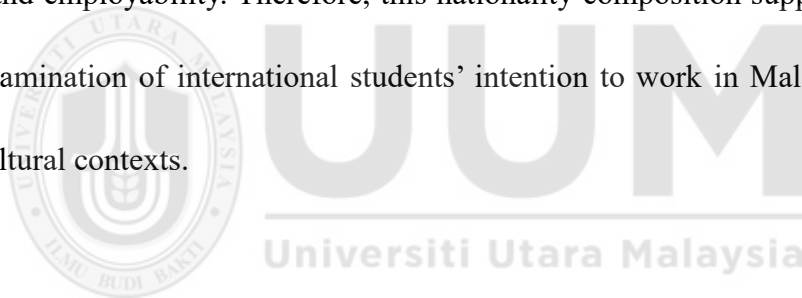
Table 4.3 presents the distribution of respondents based on nationality. The results indicate that the most significant proportion of participants was from China, comprising 76 respondents (35.2%). This reflects China's significant presence among international students in Malaysia, particularly at public and private universities with strong internationalization initiatives.

The second largest group consisted of respondents from Bangladesh, with 60 (27.8%), followed by 41 (19.0%) from Pakistan. These findings align with Malaysia's position as a popular study destination for students from South Asian countries, thanks to its

affordable tuition, English speaking environment, and diverse academic offerings.

Indonesian respondents accounted for 26 (12.0%), making them one of the more moderately represented groups. Meanwhile, 13 respondents (6.0%) were from various other countries, indicating additional diversity within the sample.

The diversity of nationalities represented in the sample provides valuable cross cultural perspectives on employment intention. Students from different national backgrounds may hold varying expectations regarding economic opportunity, social influence, and employability. Therefore, this nationality composition supports a more nuanced examination of international students' intention to work in Malaysia across different cultural contexts.



4.3.1.4 Level of Study

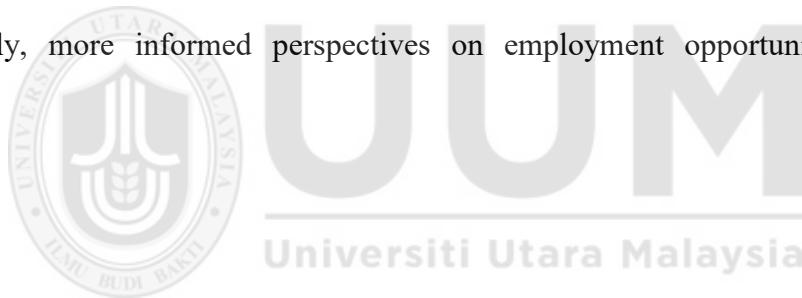
Table 4.4

Distribution of Respondents by Level of Study (N=216)

Level of Study	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Undergraduate	47	21.8
Master's	113	52.3
Doctoral	56	25.9
Total	216	100.0

Table 4.4 presents the distribution of respondents by level of study. The results indicate that the largest proportion of participants were enrolled in Master's programs, comprising 113 respondents (52.3%). This finding is consistent with Malaysia's strong appeal to international postgraduate students, particularly in business, management, engineering, and social science fields.

The second largest group was doctoral students, accounting for 56 respondents (25.9%). This suggests that a substantial portion of the sample comprises research focused students who may have greater academic exposure in Malaysia and, consequently, more informed perspectives on employment opportunities in the country.



Meanwhile, 47 respondents (21.8%) were Undergraduate students, forming the smallest category within this demographic variable. Although smaller in number, this group contributes important insights from students who may be at earlier stages of academic and career planning.

Overall, the distribution shows that postgraduate students make up the majority of the sample. This composition is advantageous for the study as Master's and Doctoral students are more likely to consider post study employment opportunities, making

their responses particularly relevant to examining international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

4.3.1.5 University Name

Table 4.5

Distribution of Respondents by University Name (N=216)

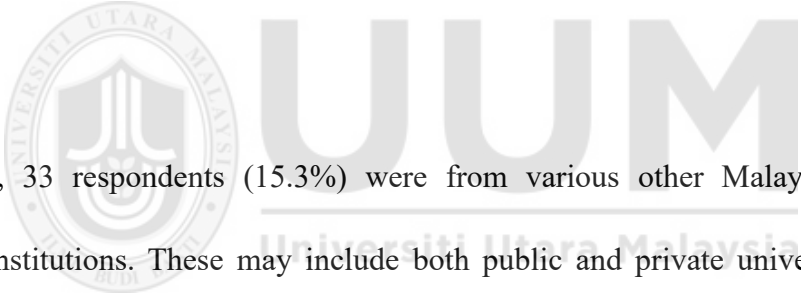
University Name	Frequency	Percentage (%)
UUM	48	22.2
UKM	73	33.8
UTM	30	13.9
Taylor's University	32	14.8
Others	33	15.3
Total	216	100.0

Table 4.5 presents the distribution of respondents by university affiliation. The most significant proportion of respondents was from University Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), with 73 students (33.8%). This indicates strong participation from UKM's international student community and reflects the university's substantial enrolment of postgraduate and research oriented students from abroad.

The second highest number of respondents came from University Utara Malaysia

(UUM), comprising 48 respondents (22.2%). As one of Malaysia's public universities with a significant international student population, UUM's representation is consistent with its active involvement in international academic engagement.

Respondents from Taylor's University, a well recognized private university known for its high proportion of international students, accounted for 32 respondents (14.8%). Meanwhile, 30 respondents (13.9%) were enrolled at University Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), indicating meaningful participation from this prominent research intensive institution.



In addition, 33 respondents (15.3%) were from various other Malaysian higher education institutions. These may include both public and private universities with diverse academic offerings, which contribute to broader representation within the sample.

The inclusion of respondents from multiple public and private universities enhances the institutional diversity of the sample. Different universities may offer varying levels of career support, industry exposure, and employability development, which can influence students' perceptions of working in Malaysia. As such, this institutional spread contributes to the robustness and generalizability of the study's findings.

4.3.1.6 Duration of Study in Malaysia

Table 4.6

Distribution of Respondents by Duration of Study in Malaysia (N=216)

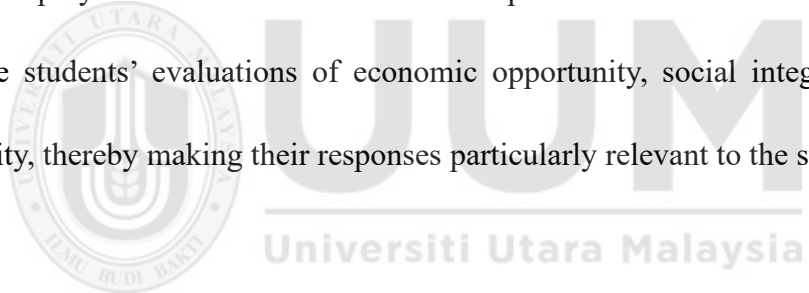
Duration of Study	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1–2 years	29	13.4
3–4 years	85	39.4
More than 4 years	102	47.2
Total	216	100.0

Table 4.6 presents the duration of study of the respondents during their time in Malaysia. The results indicate that the largest proportion of respondents had been studying in Malaysia for more than four years, representing 102 respondents (47.2%). This suggests that nearly half of the sample comprises long term international students who have spent a substantial period in the country and are therefore likely to have a more profound familiarity with Malaysia’s living environment, culture, and employment landscape.

The second largest group consisted of respondents who had been in Malaysia for three to four years, accounting for 85 respondents (39.4%). This duration aligns with typical undergraduate or postgraduate program lengths, indicating that a significant portion of participants are either in the later stages of their academic studies or completing extended degree programs.

A smaller group of 29 respondents (13.4%) reported studying in Malaysia for one to two years, which likely includes new international students or those enrolled in shorter duration programs. These respondents may have comparatively less exposure to local employment opportunities or work related policies.

The duration of study distribution suggests that most respondents have spent sufficient time in Malaysia to develop informed perceptions of the local academic, social, and employment environment. Extended exposure to the host country is likely to influence students' evaluations of economic opportunity, social integration, and employability, thereby making their responses particularly relevant to the study.



4.3.1.7 Field of Study

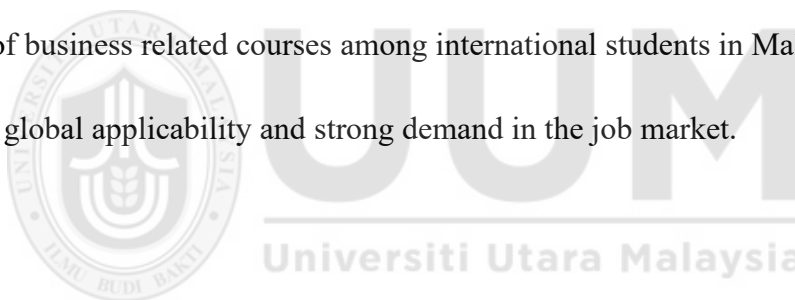
Table 4.7

Distribution of Respondents by Field of Study (N=216)

Field of Study	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Business and Management	62	28.7
Accounting	22	10.2
Engineering	45	20.8
Health and Medicine	20	9.3

Arts and Creative Industries	6	2.8
Sciences	9	4.2
Computer and IT	52	24.1
Total	216	100.0

Table 4.7 presents the distribution of respondents across various academic fields. The results show that the largest proportion of respondents were enrolled in Business and Management programs, accounting for 62 respondents (28.7%). This reflects the popularity of business related courses among international students in Malaysia, likely due to their global applicability and strong demand in the job market.



The second largest group consisted of respondents from Computer and IT fields, comprising 52 respondents (24.1%). This demonstrates Malaysia's growing reputation as a regional hub for digital technology and computing education. Students in this category may also be more inclined to explore employment opportunities in Malaysia's expanding technology sector.

Respondents from Engineering programs accounted for 45 (20.8%), highlighting the sustained relevance of engineering disciplines in Malaysia's higher education landscape. Engineering remains one of the key academic areas attracting international

students due to the country's strong engineering faculties and recognized accreditation standards.

A smaller proportion of respondents pursued studies in Accounting, with 22 respondents (10.2%), suggesting steady interest in professional fields aligned with finance and corporate services. Meanwhile, 20 respondents (9.3%) were enrolled in Health and Medicine, indicating a moderate representation from health related disciplines.

The remaining groups Sciences (9 respondents; 4.2%) and Arts and Creative Industries (6 respondents; 2.8%) represent specialized areas with smaller enrolments. Although smaller in size, these groups contribute to the sample's overall academic diversity.

The variation in academic disciplines reflects the heterogeneous nature of international students' career pathways. Different fields of study are associated with distinct labor market conditions and employment prospects in Malaysia. This disciplinary diversity allows the study to capture a broader range of employment intentions and enhances the comprehensiveness of the analysis.

4.3.2 Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

This section presents descriptive statistics for the four primary constructs in the study: Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, Perceived Employability, and Intention to Work in Malaysia. Each construct was measured using multiple items on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 5 = *Strongly Agree*. For analysis, composite scores were computed as the mean of the corresponding items for each construct.

Table 4.8
Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables (N = 216)

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Economic Opportunity	3.774	0.869
Social Influence	3.916	0.836
Perceived Employability	3.646	1.117
Intention to Work in Malaysia	3.866	0.939

Table 4.8 presents the descriptive statistics for the four main constructs examined in this study, namely Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, Perceived Employability, and Intention to Work in Malaysia. The mean scores for all constructs are above the midpoint value of 3.0 on a five point Likert scale, indicating that respondents generally hold positive perceptions across all study variables.

Among the four constructs, Social Influence recorded the highest mean score ($M = 3.916$, $SD = 0.836$), suggesting that encouragement and expectations from family members, peers, and significant others play a prominent role in shaping international students' intention to work in Malaysia. The relatively low standard deviation further indicates a moderate level of agreement among respondents regarding the influence of social factors.

Intention to Work in Malaysia also showed a relatively high mean value ($M = 3.866$, $SD = 0.939$), reflecting a generally favorable inclination among respondents toward seeking employment in Malaysia after graduation. This finding suggests that a considerable proportion of international students are open to or actively considering post study employment in the host country.

Economic Opportunity recorded a mean score of 3.774 ($SD = 0.869$), indicating moderately positive perceptions of Malaysia's employment conditions, including salary competitiveness, job availability, and career advancement prospects. The standard deviation suggests some variation in respondents' evaluations, possibly reflecting differences in academic background, industry expectations, or prior exposure to the Malaysian labor market.

Perceived Employability reported the lowest mean among the constructs ($M = 3.646$,

SD = 1.117), although the score remains above the scale midpoint. The relatively higher standard deviation indicates greater variability in respondents' confidence regarding their employability, which may be influenced by factors such as language proficiency, work experience, or familiarity with employment regulations. This variation highlights the importance of perceived employability as a critical factor influencing international students' employment intention.

Overall, the descriptive statistics suggest that international students hold generally positive attitudes toward working in Malaysia, while also revealing differences in the strength and consistency of perceptions across the study variables. These findings provide an initial understanding of respondents' perceptions and serve as a foundation for subsequent inferential analyses.

4.4 Inferential Analysis

Inferential analysis was conducted to examine relationships between the independent and dependent variables and to test the proposed research hypotheses. Before hypothesis testing, tests of normality were conducted to ensure the data met the assumptions of parametric analysis. Reliability analysis was then carried out to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales used in the study.

Inferential analysis was conducted to examine relationships between the independent and dependent variables and to test the proposed research hypotheses. Inferential analysis involves using statistical methods to infer population characteristics from sample data. This process helps determine if observed patterns in the sample can be generalized to a larger group. Before hypothesis testing, tests of normality were conducted to ensure the data met the assumptions of parametric analysis. Reliability analysis was then carried out to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales used in the study.

4.4.1 Tests of Normality

Table 4.9

Tests of Normality for Study Variables (N = 216)

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis
Economic Opportunity (EO)	-0.967	0.720
Social Influence (SI)	-1.110	1.037
Perceived Employability (PE)	-0.941	-0.025
Intention to Work in Malaysia (IW)	-1.054	0.506

Note: Skewness and kurtosis values within ± 2 indicate acceptable normality. (Schmidt & Finan, 2018)

Before conducting inferential statistical analyses, tests of normality were performed to assess whether the data met the assumptions required for parametric testing. Given the

relatively large sample size ($N = 216$), normality was primarily evaluated using skewness and kurtosis statistics, as these indicators provide a more appropriate assessment of distributional shape in large samples.

As presented in Table 4.10, the skewness values for all study variables ranged from -1.110 to -0.941 , while kurtosis values ranged from -0.025 to 1.037 . All skewness and kurtosis values fell within the acceptable range of ± 2 , indicating no substantial deviation from normality. According to commonly accepted guidelines, skewness and kurtosis values within this range suggest that the assumption of approximate normality is reasonably satisfied for parametric analysis (Schmidt & Finan, 2018). This suggests that the distributions of Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, Perceived Employability, and Intention to Work in Malaysia were approximately normal.

Based on these results, the assumption of normality was considered to be sufficiently satisfied. Consequently, parametric statistical techniques, including Pearson's correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis, were deemed appropriate for subsequent inferential analyses.

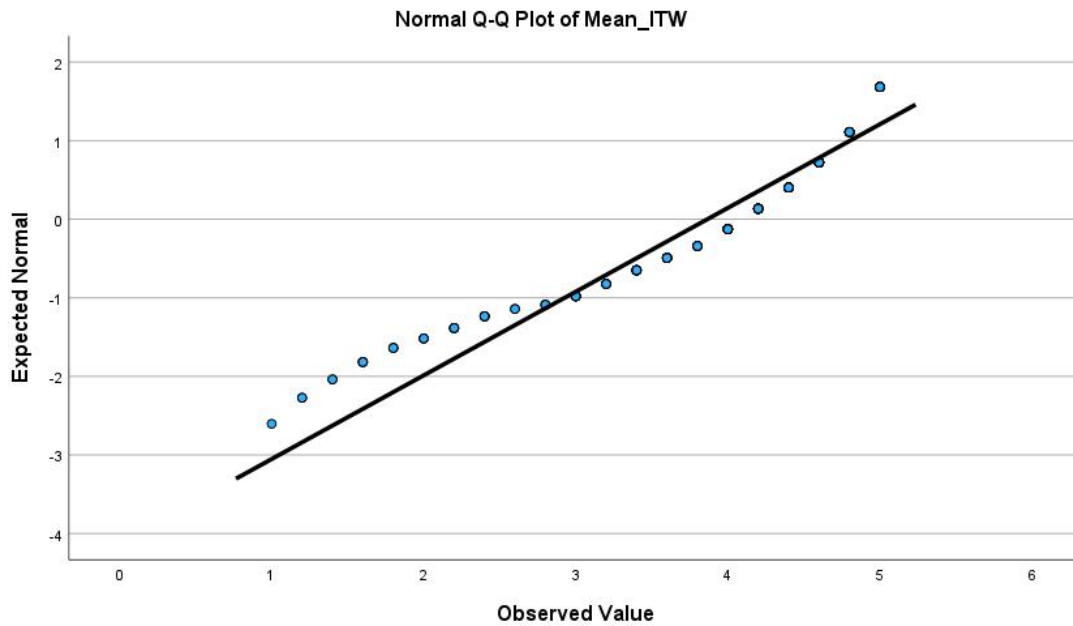


Figure 4.1
Normal Q–Q Plot of Mean_ITW

In addition to the numerical tests of normality, a visual inspection using a Normal Q–Q plot was conducted. As shown in Figure 4.1, the data points generally follow the diagonal line, indicating that the distribution of Intention to Work in Malaysia is approximately normal.

4.4.2 Reliability Analysis

Table 4.10

Reliability Statistics of Study Variables (N=216)

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Economic Opportunity	6	0.889
Social Influence	5	0.850
Perceived Employability	5	0.907

Intention to Work in Malaysia	5	0.895
Overall Scale	21	0.935

Table 4.10 presents the reliability statistics for the study variables. The internal consistency of each construct was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The results indicate that all constructs demonstrate satisfactory to excellent reliability, as all Cronbach's Alpha values exceed the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70.

Specifically, the Economic Opportunity scale, comprising six items, recorded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.889, indicating strong internal consistency among the items measuring students' evaluations of economic and career related factors. The Social Influence construct, measured by five items, achieved a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.850, suggesting good reliability in capturing perceived social pressure and encouragement from significant others.

Perceived Employability, also measured using five items, reported a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.907, reflecting excellent internal consistency and indicating that the items reliably measure respondents' confidence in their employability and job related competencies. Similarly, the Intention to Work in Malaysia construct recorded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.895, demonstrating a high level of reliability in assessing

students' post study employment intentions.

In addition to the individual constructs, an overall reliability analysis was conducted for all 21 measurement items combined. The overall scale achieved a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.935, indicating excellent internal consistency of the measurement instrument as a whole. This result confirms that the questionnaire items are consistently measuring the underlying constructs of the study and supports the suitability of the instrument for subsequent inferential analyses.

4.4.3 Correlation Analysis

Table 4.11

Pearson Correlation Matrix of Study Variables (N=216)

Variable	EO	SI	PE	IW
EO	1.000			
SI	0.521**	1.000		
PE	0.505**	0.541**	1.000	
IW	0.534**	0.550**	0.521**	1.000

Note:

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

N = 216

IVs: Economic Opportunity (EO), Social Influence (SI), Perceived Employability (PE)

DV: Intention to Work in Malaysia (IW)

Table 4.11 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients among the four key study variables: Economic Opportunity (EO), Social Influence (SI), Perceived Employability (PE), and Intention to Work in Malaysia (IW). All correlations are positive and statistically meaningful, suggesting that improvements in any of the independent variables are associated with higher levels of intention to work in Malaysia.

Economic Opportunity shows a moderate positive correlation with Intention to Work in Malaysia ($r = 0.534$). This indicates that respondents who perceived better salary prospects, job availability, and economic stability in Malaysia were more likely to report stronger intentions to seek employment in the country.

Social Influence is also moderately correlated with Intention to Work in Malaysia ($r = 0.550$), representing the strongest relationship among the constructs. This suggests that encouragement or support from family, friends, and social networks may play an influential role in shaping students' decisions about working in Malaysia after graduation.

Perceived Employability demonstrates a moderate positive association with Intention

to Work in Malaysia ($r = 0.521$). This implies that respondents who feel confident in their skills, qualifications, and ability to secure employment are more likely to express intentions to work in Malaysia.

The independent variables (EO, SI, and PE) are also positively correlated with one another, with coefficients ranging from 0.505 to 0.541, indicating that students who perceive stronger economic opportunities also tend to report higher social support and stronger confidence in their employability.

Overall, the correlation results indicate that all three independent variables Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, and Perceived Employability are positively associated with international students' intention to work in Malaysia. These meaningful correlations provide a strong foundation for further testing through multiple regression analysis presented in the following section.

4.4.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 4.12

Summary of the Regression Model (N=216)

Correlation Coefficient (R)	Coefficient of Determination (R Square)	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
0.648 ^a	0.420	0.412	0.71974

Note:

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Economic Opportunity (EO), Social Influence (SI), Perceived Employability (PE)
- b. DV: Intention to Work in Malaysia

Table 4.12 presents the summary statistics for the multiple regression model examining the influence of Economic Opportunity (EO), Social Influence (SI), and Perceived Employability (PE) on the Intention to Work in Malaysia.

The results show that the correlation coefficient (R) is 0.648, indicating a moderately strong positive relationship between the set of independent variables and the dependent variable. This suggests that the predictors collectively have a meaningful association with international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

The coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.420, indicating that Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, and Perceived Employability explain 42.0% of the variance in Intention to Work in Malaysia. This level of explained variance is consistent with prior TPB studies, which have often reported an explained variance ranging from 35% to 45% in similar contexts. After adjusting for the number of predictors, the Adjusted R Square is 0.412, showing that the model remains robust even when correcting for sample size and the number of independent variables.

The Standard Error of the Estimate is 0.71974, indicating the average distance between the observed values and the regression line. A lower standard error indicates a better model fit and, in this context, suggests an acceptable level of predictive accuracy.

In summary, the regression model demonstrates a good explanatory power, with the three predictors jointly accounting for over 40% of the variance in the intention to work in Malaysia. This indicates that students' perceptions of economic prospects, social support, and perceived employability play a meaningful role in shaping their post study employment intentions.

Table 4.13

ANOVA for the Regression Model (N=216)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	79.684	3	26.561	51.273	< .001 ^b
Residual	109.823	212	0.518		
Total	189.506	215			

Note:

a. DV: Intention to Work in Malaysia

b. Predictors: (Constant), Economic Opportunity (EO), Social Influence (SI), Perceived Employability (PE)

Table 4.14

Coefficients of the Regression Model (N=216)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.809	0.259		3.118	0.002
Mean_SI	0.320	0.074	0.284	4.300	< .001
Mean_EO	0.291	0.070	0.269	4.181	< .001
Mean_PE	0.194	0.055	0.231	3.528	< .001

a. Dependent Variable: Intention to Work in Malaysia

The results of the ANOVA in Table 4.13 indicate that the overall regression model is statistically significant ($F = 51.273$, $p < .001$), demonstrating that Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, and Perceived Employability collectively explain a meaningful proportion of the variance in international students' intention to work in Malaysia. This confirms that the model is appropriate and that the predictors, taken together, offer substantial explanatory power.

Further examination of the regression coefficients in Table 4.14 shows that all three independent variables contribute significantly to predicting the intention to work in Malaysia. Social Influence emerges as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.284$, $p < .001$), suggesting that encouragement and support from family and peers play a central role

in shaping students' employment intentions. Economic Opportunity also shows a strong positive effect ($\beta = 0.269$, $p < .001$), indicating that perceptions of job availability, income prospects, and economic stability are important motivators. Perceived Employability ($\beta = 0.231$, $p < .001$) likewise demonstrates a significant influence, reflecting that students who feel confident in their skills and qualifications are more inclined to consider working in Malaysia.

Overall, the findings highlight that intention to work in Malaysia is shaped by a combination of external factors (economic conditions and social support) and internal factors (self perceived employability). The significance of all predictors strengthens the conclusion that Malaysia's job prospects, social environment, and students' readiness for employment jointly influence their post study work intentions.

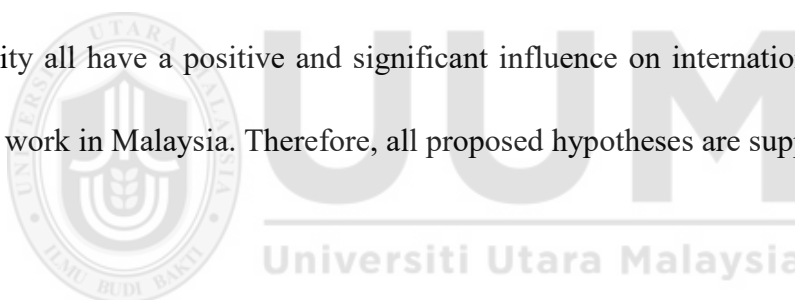
4.5 Hypothesis Testing

Based on the results of the multiple regression analysis, hypothesis testing was conducted to examine the relationships between the independent variables and international students' intention to work in Malaysia. The decision to accept or reject each hypothesis was made based on the significance level ($p < 0.05$).

Table 4.15
Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	Result
H1	Economic Opportunity → Intention to Work in Malaysia	Accepted
H2	Social Influence → Intention to Work in Malaysia	Accepted
H3	Perceived Employability → Intention to Work in Malaysia	Accepted

The findings indicate that Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, and Perceived Employability all have a positive and significant influence on international students' intention to work in Malaysia. Therefore, all proposed hypotheses are supported.



4.5.1 H1: Economic Opportunity has a positive and significant influence on international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

The findings show that Economic Opportunity exerts a significant positive effect on intention to work in Malaysia, with a standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.269$), a t-value of 4.181, and a p-value $< .001$. This suggests that students who perceive better job prospects, competitive salaries, and favorable economic conditions are more likely to consider working in Malaysia. As the relationship is both positive and statistically significant, H1 is accepted.

4.5.2 H2: Social Influence has a positive and significant influence on international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

Social Influence demonstrates the most substantial effect among the predictors, as indicated by the standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.284$), a t-value of 4.300, and a p-value $< .001$. This finding implies that encouragement, approval, or support from family, friends, and important social networks plays a substantial role in shaping students' employment intentions. Given its significant positive effect, H2 is accepted.

4.5.3 H3: Perceived Employability has a positive and significant influence on international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

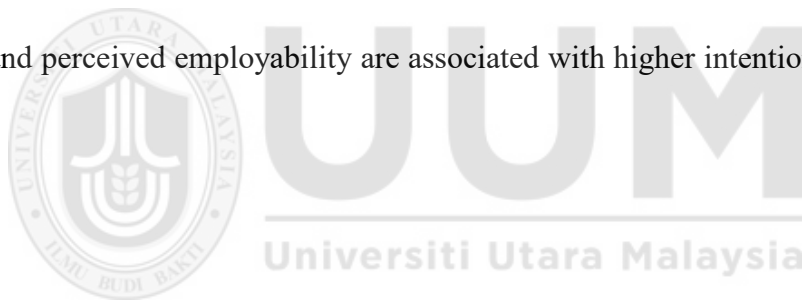
Perceived Employability is also a significant predictor, with a standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.231$), a t-value of 3.528, and a p-value $< .001$. This indicates that students who feel confident in their skills, qualifications, and readiness for the job market are more inclined to pursue career opportunities in Malaysia. Since the effect is positive and statistically significant, H3 is accepted.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter presents the findings of the data analysis examining the factors influencing international students' intention to work in Malaysia. The analysis began with a description of the response rate, followed by a detailed presentation of the

respondents' demographic profile. Descriptive statistics were then used to summarize the main study variables, indicating generally positive perceptions toward economic opportunity, social influence, perceived employability, and intention to work in Malaysia.

Reliability analysis confirmed that all measurement scales demonstrated high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding the acceptable threshold. Pearson correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships among all study variables, suggesting that improvements in economic opportunity, social influence, and perceived employability are associated with higher intention to work in Malaysia.



Multiple regression analysis further demonstrated that the overall model was statistically significant, explaining 42% of the variance in intention to work in Malaysia. All three predictors Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, and Perceived Employability were found to significantly and positively influence the dependent variable. Social Influence emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by Economic Opportunity and Perceived Employability.

Finally, hypothesis testing confirmed that all three proposed hypotheses were supported. These findings collectively highlight the importance of both external

factors (economic conditions and social encouragement) and internal factors (self perceived employability) in shaping international students' post-study employment decisions in Malaysia.



CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and interprets the empirical findings of the study by explaining why the observed relationships exist and how they relate to the research objectives and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). Building on the results presented in Chapter 4, the discussion links the findings to TPB and situates them within the broader literature on international students' post study employment intentions. Rather than merely summarizing results, this chapter emphasizes theoretical interpretation, contextual explanation within the Malaysian setting, and the practical meaning of the findings. The chapter further outlines the theoretical and practical implications of the study, acknowledges its limitations, and provides recommendations for future research, before concluding with an overall reflection on the study's contribution.

5.2 Overview of the Study

This study sought to enhance understanding of the factors shaping international students' intention to work in Malaysia by examining post study employment decision making within the host country context. Focusing on Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, and Perceived Employability, the findings offer insight into how international students evaluate their employment prospects and form career intentions after graduation.

The results suggest that international students' intention to work in Malaysia is not shaped by a single dominant factor, but rather by the interaction of economic considerations, social expectations, and perceived personal capability. This pattern indicates that employment intention among international students reflects a broader decision making process in which individual evaluations are embedded within social and contextual influences.

The prominence of Social Influence highlights the importance of relational and social considerations in international students' career decisions. Expectations and encouragement from family members, peers, and significant others appear to play a particularly influential role, suggesting that employment intentions are often socially situated rather than purely individualistic. Within the Malaysian context, where collective values and social networks are salient, such influences may carry greater weight in shaping post study employment intentions.

Economic Opportunity also appears to be a meaningful consideration in students' intention formation. Perceptions of career prospects, income potential, and cost benefit evaluations contribute to how attractive Malaysia is perceived as an employment destination. This finding suggests that international students engage in rational assessments of expected outcomes when considering whether to remain in the host country after graduation.

In addition, Perceived Employability contributes to students' confidence in pursuing employment in Malaysia. Students who believe they possess relevant skills and are capable of meeting labor market requirements are more inclined to consider working in the host country. This indicates that intention formation is partly influenced by students' self assessment of readiness and competence within the local employment environment.

Taken together, these findings point to a multifaceted process of intention formation, in which social influence, economic evaluation, and perceived capability jointly shape international students' post study employment decisions. Rather than operating independently, these factors interact to influence how international students interpret opportunities and constraints within the Malaysian labor market.

5.3 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study can be meaningfully interpreted through the Theory of Planned Behavior, which posits that behavioral intention is shaped by individuals' attitudes, perceived social pressures, and perceived behavioral control. In the context of international students' post study employment decisions, the results indicate that intention to work in Malaysia is influenced by a combination of economic evaluations, social expectations, and employability related confidence.

While all three components of the Theory of Planned Behavior were found to contribute to intention formation, the relative strength of these influences differs within the Malaysian context. In particular, the prominence of Social Influence suggests that international students' employment intentions are strongly embedded within social and relational considerations, rather than being driven solely by individual economic evaluations or self assessed capabilities. This pattern highlights the importance of interpreting intention formation as a socially situated process, especially among internationally mobile students.

The following subsections discuss each determinant in detail by linking the empirical findings to the corresponding components of the Theory of Planned Behavior and relevant literature.

5.3.1 Economic Opportunity as an Attitudinal Determinant

The findings of this study indicate that economic opportunity is an important factor influencing international students' intention to work in Malaysia. Students who viewed the local employment environment more positively in terms of economic and career related prospects were more likely to consider remaining in the host country after graduation. This suggests that evaluations of expected economic outcomes form a meaningful basis for international students' post study employment intentions.

This pattern is consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior, which posits that individuals are more likely to form behavioral intentions when they hold favorable attitudes toward the expected outcomes of a given behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Empirical research has similarly demonstrated that international graduates' decisions to remain in the host country are strongly influenced by their evaluations of salary prospects, career advancement opportunities, and overall employment conditions (Istad et al., 2021). Comparable findings have been reported across different national contexts, suggesting that international students' post study employment intentions are closely tied to their assessment of anticipated economic returns following graduation (Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024).

One possible reason for this relationship is that international students tend to approach post study employment as a practical evaluation of future benefits and costs. In this study, economic opportunity reflects students' perceptions of income prospects, career development possibilities, and the overall balance between expected rewards and living or employment related constraints. Given the financial investment involved in studying abroad, students are likely to favor employment destinations that offer reasonable economic stability and opportunities for early career growth. When Malaysia is perceived as providing attainable job opportunities and a manageable cost income balance, international students are more inclined to develop positive attitudes toward entering the local labor market.

5.3.2 Social Influence as a Normative Determinant

The findings of this study indicate that social influence is a significant determinant of international students' intention to work in Malaysia. Respondents who perceived stronger encouragement, expectations, or approval from important social referents such as family members, friends, and peers were more likely to express an intention to pursue employment in the host country after graduation. This suggests that international students' post study employment decisions are not formed solely on the basis of individual evaluation, but are shaped within broader social contexts.

One possible explanation for this finding lies in the relational nature of international students' decision making processes. For many respondents, decisions regarding post study employment are discussed within family and peer networks, where advice, encouragement, or concern can influence how career options are perceived and evaluated. In the Malaysian context, where interpersonal relationships and collective values are commonly emphasized, social feedback from significant others may carry additional weight in shaping students' employment intentions. As a result, international students may consider not only personal career preferences, but also whether their employment choices are viewed as appropriate or desirable by those who matter most to them.

This pattern of findings is consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior, in which subjective norm refers to individuals' perceptions of social expectations and the influence exerted by significant others on intention formation (Ajzen, 1991). The result also aligns with previous empirical studies highlighting the importance of social influence in international students' career related decisions, particularly in contexts where family expectations, social approval, and relational ties remain salient (Istad et al., 2021). Taken together, these findings reinforce the view that international students' employment intentions are socially embedded and shaped through shared expectations, rather than formed in isolation.

5.3.3 Perceived Employability as a Control Determinant

The findings of this study demonstrate that perceived employability plays an important role in shaping international students' intention to work in Malaysia. Respondents who reported higher confidence in their ability to navigate the local labor market, meet employer expectations, and manage employment related challenges were more likely to indicate an intention to seek employment in the host country after graduation. This suggests that international students' employment intentions are influenced by how attainable they perceive post study employment in Malaysia to be.

In the context of international students, perceived employability reflects more than objective qualifications alone. Students who believe they possess relevant skills,

professional competencies, and an understanding of the Malaysian labor market are better positioned to view employment opportunities as achievable. This sense of capability may reduce uncertainty related to job search processes, work visa requirements, and perceived competition with local graduates, thereby strengthening students' confidence in their ability to secure employment after graduation.

These findings are consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior, which identifies perceived behavioral control as a key determinant of behavioral intention, particularly in situations characterized by uncertainty or external constraints (Ajzen, 1991). The results are also supported by prior empirical research indicating that international students' employment intentions are influenced by their confidence in job relevant skills, adaptability, and perceived ability to navigate institutional and labor market barriers in the host country (Lin & Flores, 2013). Rather than reflecting objective employability alone, perceived employability captures students' subjective sense of preparedness and control, which plays a crucial role in translating employment intentions into planned career actions.

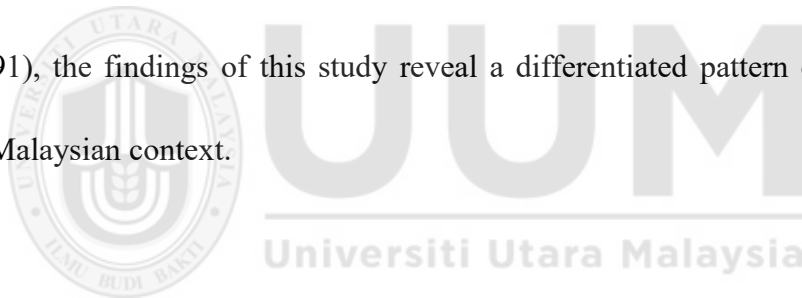
5.4 Implications of the Study

This section discusses the implications of the study by translating the findings into theoretical, practical, and individual level insights. Building directly on the discussion

of findings in Section 5.4, the implications highlight how the study contributes to theory development, informs key stakeholders, and supports international students' career decision making.

5.4.1 Theoretical Implications

From a theoretical perspective, this study extends the Theory of Planned Behavior by demonstrating that its core components do not exert equal influence in the context of international students' employment intentions. While TPB conceptualizes attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control as joint predictors of intention (Ajzen, 1991), the findings of this study reveal a differentiated pattern of influence within the Malaysian context.



Most notably, the prominence of Social Influence in this study refines the application of the Theory of Planned Behavior by underscoring the heightened salience of subjective norms in collectivist and migration sensitive contexts. Previous research has long suggested that normative pressures tend to exert stronger influence in collectivist societies, where family expectations, social approval, and relational obligations play a central role in shaping individual decision making processes (Nunes & Arthur, 2013). By empirically demonstrating this pattern among international students in Malaysia, the present study extends TPB by highlighting its contextual sensitivity, suggesting that the relative strength of its core components may

vary across socio cultural and mobility related settings rather than operating as uniformly balanced predictors across contexts (Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024).

In addition, this study extends TPB by applying the framework to international students as a transitional and structurally constrained population. Unlike domestic job seekers, international students often form employment intentions under conditions of visa uncertainty, labor market unfamiliarity, and cross border social expectations (Tomlinson, 2017). By illustrating how TPB operates under these conditions, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of intention formation in international and cross cultural career contexts.

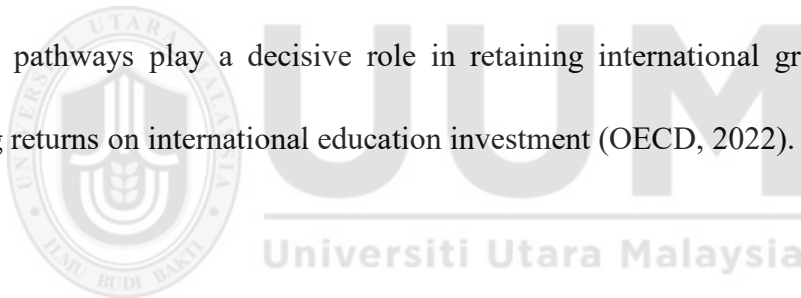
Overall, the findings suggest that TPB should be interpreted as a flexible framework whose explanatory power varies across cultural, social, and institutional settings. This theoretical refinement enhances the relevance of TPB for future research on international graduate employability and career decision making.

5.4.2 Practical Implications

The findings of this study offer important practical implications for universities, policymakers, and employers involved in supporting international graduates' transition into the labor market.

For universities and career development units, the strong influence of Social Influence indicates that employability initiatives should extend beyond individual skill development. Previous studies emphasize the role of social capital, peer networks, and mentoring in shaping graduate career outcomes (Tomlinson & Nghia, 2024). Universities may therefore enhance international students' employment intentions by strengthening alumni engagement, peer mentoring, and industry networking opportunities alongside traditional career guidance services.

At the policy level, international evidence suggests that clear and accessible post study work pathways play a decisive role in retaining international graduates and maximizing returns on international education investment (OECD, 2022).



For policymakers, the findings highlight the importance of transparent and supportive post study employment pathways. Clear communication regarding work visa policies, employment regulations, and graduate retention initiatives can reduce uncertainty and strengthen international students' confidence in pursuing employment in the host country (OECD, 2022). Aligning international education strategies with labor market and talent retention policies may further enhance Malaysia's attractiveness as an education and employment destination.

For employers, recognizing international graduates as a valuable source of skilled

talent may foster more inclusive and strategic recruitment practices. Prior research indicates that inclusive hiring approaches, structured onboarding processes, and ongoing organizational support can enhance international graduates' perceived employability and facilitate their adjustment to the host country workplace (Tran et al., 2023). Such practices not only strengthen graduates' confidence in their employability, but also contribute to higher levels of organizational commitment and long term retention. Consequently, employer level support mechanisms may play an important role in encouraging international graduates to remain and contribute productively to the Malaysian labor market.

5.4.3 Implications for International Students

At the individual level, the findings highlight the importance of proactive career planning among international students. Developing employability related skills, gaining local work experience, and improving awareness of host country labor market requirements have been identified as key factors influencing international graduates' employment outcomes (Tomlinson, 2017).

In addition, recognizing the role of social expectations in shaping career intentions can assist international students in making more informed post study employment decisions. Active engagement with peer networks, mentors, and institutional career support services has been shown to help international students navigate both the social

and structural challenges associated with transitioning from study to work in a host country context (Tran et al., 2023). By proactively seeking guidance and managing these social influences, international students may enhance their confidence, perceived employability, and capacity to pursue employment opportunities in the host country.

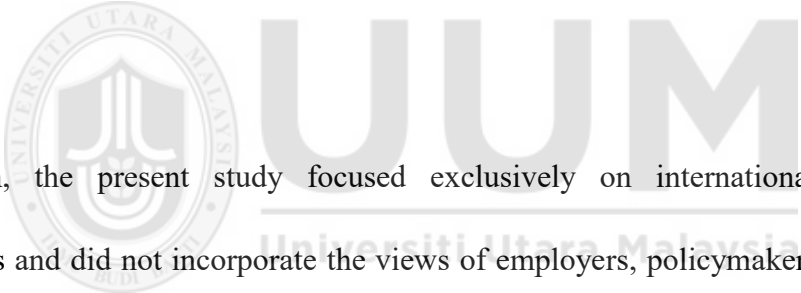
5.5 Suggestions for Future Research

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings, while also offering directions for future research. First, the study adopted a cross sectional research design, capturing international students' employment intentions at a single point in time. As employment intentions may evolve as students approach graduation or gain exposure to the labor market, future studies are encouraged to adopt longitudinal designs to examine changes in intention over time and their relationship with actual employment outcomes.

Second, the study relied on self reported data collected from a sample of 216 international students. Although the sample size was adequate for statistical analysis, it remains relatively modest and may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research may address this limitation by employing larger and more diverse samples, encompassing international students from a wider range of nationalities, academic

disciplines, and institutional contexts.

Third, the geographical scope of the study was confined to international students enrolled in higher education institutions in Kuala Lumpur. As labor market conditions, institutional support structures, and employment opportunities may vary across regions, future studies are encouraged to include international students from other parts of Malaysia, such as Penang and Sabah. Comparative regional analyses may provide deeper insight into how local economic and institutional contexts influence international students' employment intentions.



In addition, the present study focused exclusively on international students' perspectives and did not incorporate the views of employers, policymakers, or higher education administrators. As a result, demand side and institutional factors influencing international graduates' employment opportunities were not captured. Future research could adopt a multi stakeholder approach by incorporating employer interviews, policy analysis, or institutional data to provide a more comprehensive understanding of post study employment pathways.

Finally, this study examined employment intention rather than actual employment outcomes. While intention is widely recognized as a strong predictor of behavior, structural constraints such as visa regulations, labor market conditions, and employer

preferences may influence whether intentions are realized. Future research may therefore benefit from examining actual employment outcomes or adopting mixed method approaches to explore the gap between intention and post graduation employment experiences in greater depth.

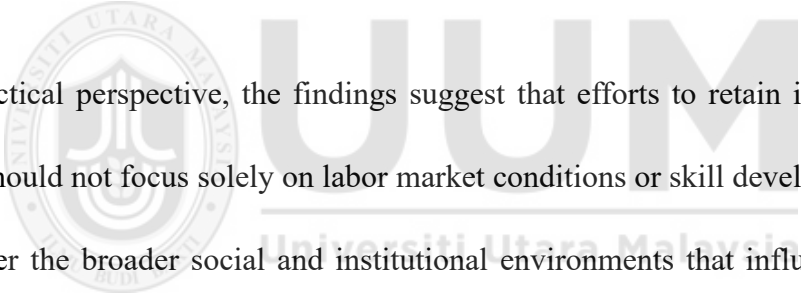
5.6 Conclusion of the Study

This study examined the factors influencing international students' intention to work in Malaysia using the Theory of Planned Behavior as the guiding framework. By focusing on Economic Opportunity, Social Influence, and Perceived Employability, the study provides empirical evidence on how attitudinal, normative, and control related factors jointly shape international students' post study employment intentions in the Malaysian context.

The findings demonstrate that all three determinants have significant and positive effects on international students' intention to work in Malaysia, with Social Influence emerging as the most influential factor. This highlights the central role of social expectations, family encouragement, and peer influence in international students' career decision making, particularly within a collectivist and migration sensitive environment. Economic Opportunity and Perceived Employability further contribute to intention formation by shaping students' evaluations of career prospects and their

confidence in navigating the host country labor market.

Overall, the study provides meaningful insights into how economic perceptions, social expectations, and employability confidence interact to influence international students' employment intentions after graduation. By applying the Theory of Planned Behavior in this context, the study reinforces the relevance of the framework while demonstrating its contextual sensitivity when applied to internationally mobile student populations.



From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that efforts to retain international graduates should not focus solely on labor market conditions or skill development, but also consider the broader social and institutional environments that influence career intentions. By addressing these factors, universities, policymakers, and employers may strengthen Malaysia's capacity to attract and retain international talent, thereby enhancing its position as a competitive and sustainable education hub.

Overall, by integrating economic, social, and employability related factors within the Theory of Planned Behavior, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of international students' post study employment intentions and highlights the contextual role of social influence in shaping career decision making in Malaysia.

References

- Ahmed, E. M. (2006). ICT and human capital role in achieving a knowledge-based economy: Applications on Malaysia's manufacturing. *Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy*, 11(4), 446–462. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S0219649206001372>
- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179–211. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978\(91\)90020-t](https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-t)
- Arthur, N., & Nunes, S. (2014). Should I stay or should I go home? Career guidance with international students. In *Handbook of career development: International perspectives* (pp. 587–606). Springer.
- Beine, M., Noël, R., & Ragot, L. (2014). Determinants of the international mobility of students. *Economics of Education Review*, 41, 40–54. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2014.03.003>
- Bodycott, P. (2009). Choosing a higher education study abroad destination: What mainland Chinese parents and students rate as important. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 8(3), 349–373. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240909345818>
- Calonge, D. S., Shah, M. A., Aguerrebere, P. M., Abdulla, N., Connor, M., Badr, M., & Blakemore, E. (2023). Should I stay or should I go? International students' challenges and opportunities to secure employment in their host country after graduation: A scoping review using PRISMA. *Journal of Applied Learning*

and Teaching, 6(2), 187–201. <https://doi.org/10.37074/jalt.2023.6.2.20>

Collins, D. (2003). Pretesting survey instruments: An overview of cognitive methods.

Quality of Life Research, 12(3), 229–238.

<https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1023254226592>

Cohen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112(1), 155–159.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.112.1.155>

Cohen, J., Cohen, P., West, S. G., & Aiken, L. S. (2003). *Applied multiple regression/correlation analysis for the behavioral sciences* (3rd ed.). Lawrence

Erlbaum Associates. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203774441>

Duong, N. T., Pham, T. D., Ngo, Q. T., & Pham, V. K. (2021). Welcome to work in Taiwan! Investigation of international students' employment opportunities.

Образование и наука, 23(5), 99–115.

Department of Statistics Malaysia. (2025). *Labour Force Survey 2024–Q1 2025*.

Department of Statistics Malaysia.

<https://www.dosm.gov.my/portal-main/release-content/labour-force-survey-20>

[24-Q1-2025](https://www.dosm.gov.my/portal-main/release-content/labour-force-survey-2024-Q1-2025)

Education Malaysia Global Services. (2024). *International student statistics and trends in Malaysia*. EMGS.

Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and*

Applied Statistics, 5(1), 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>

Forza, C. (2002). Survey research in operations management: A process-based perspective. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 22(2), 152–194. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01443570210414310>

Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (2010). *Predicting and changing behavior: The reasoned action approach*. Psychology Press. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203838020>

Green, S. B. (1991). How many subjects does it take to do a regression analysis? *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, 26(3), 499–510. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327906mbr2603_7

Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2021). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Hawthorne, L. (2018). Attracting and retaining international students as skilled migrants. In *International migration and the future of populations* (pp. 107–128). Springer.

Hernández-Torrano, D., Hajar, A., & Yessenbekova, K. (2024). Mapping research on international student mobilities in higher education. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 128, 102482. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2024.102482>

Istad, F., Varpahovskis, E., Miezan, E., & Ayhan, K. J. (2021). Global Korea Scholarship students' intention to stay in the host country. *Politics & Policy*,

49(6), 1323–1342. <https://doi.org/10.1111/polp.12436>

Knight, J. (2015). International universities: Misunderstandings and emerging models?

In *The forefront of international higher education* (pp. 1–15). Springer.

Kumar M, D., & Govindarajo, N. S. (2014). Instrument development “intention to stay instrument”(ISI). *Asian Social Science*, 10(12), 1-21.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ass.v10n12p149>

Kisubi, M. K. (2021). Entrepreneurship education and self-employment intentions: A cross-sectional and explanatory study among undergraduate business and engineering students in Turkey. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 7(1), 1938348.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2021.1938348>

Lam, T., Baum, T., & Pine, R. (2003). Subjective norms: Effects on job satisfaction. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 30(1), 160–177.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383\(02\)00047-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(02)00047-6)

Lent, R. W., Brown, S. D., & Hackett, G. (1994). Toward a unifying social cognitive theory of career development. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 45(1), 79–122.

<https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.1994.1027>

Ling, S. M., Abas, H., & Ismail, A. (2020). Measuring the gap in employability skills among Malaysian graduates. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 10(3), 142–157.

<https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v10-i3/7045>

Lin, Y. J., & Flores, L. Y. (2013). Job search self-efficacy of East Asian international graduate students. *Journal of Career Development, 40*(3), 186–202.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845311418655>

Mazzarol, T., & Soutar, G. N. (2002). Push–pull factors influencing international student destination choice. *International Journal of Educational Management, 16*(2), 82–90.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540210418403>

McNeish, D. (2018). Thanks coefficient alpha, we'll take it from here. *Psychological Methods, 23*(3), 412–433.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/met0000144>

Moo, K. H., & Da Wan, C. (2023). Graduate employability in Malaysia: Unpacking the concept, policy and practices. *IIUM Journal of Educational Studies, 11*(2),

3–25. <https://doi.org/10.31436/ijes.v11i2.471>

Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. (2023). *Malaysia international education strategic plan 2021–2025*. MOHE.

Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. (2024, March 25). *ASEAN (Malaysia)-China Higher Education Forum and HSK Study in China: Education & Career Expo*

2024 (Speech text by the Deputy Minister of Higher Education).

Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. (2024). *Higher education statistics 2024*.

MOHE.

Nikou, S., & Luukkonen, M. (2024). The push–pull factor model and retention of international students. *Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning,*

14(1), 76–94. <https://doi.org/10.1108/HESWBL-04-2023-0084>

Nunes, S., & Arthur, N. (2013). International students' workforce integration experiences. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 50(1), 34–45.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1920.2013.00023.x>

Norman, G. (2010). Likert scales, levels of measurement and the “laws” of statistics.

Advances in Health Sciences Education, 15(5), 625–632.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10459-010-9222-y>

O'Brien, R. M. (2007). A caution regarding rules of thumb for variance inflation factors. *Quality & Quantity*, 41(5), 673–690.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-006-9018-6>

OECD. (2022). *Education at a glance 2022: OECD indicators*. OECD Publishing.

<https://doi.org/10.1787/3197152b-en>

OECD. (2022). *International migration outlook 2022*. OECD Publishing.

<https://doi.org/10.1787/30fe16d2-en>

Pallant, J. (2020). *SPSS survival manual: A step by step guide to data analysis using*

IBM SPSS (7th ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003117452>

Reynolds, N. L., Diamantopoulos, A., & Schlegelmilch, B. B. (1993). Pretesting in questionnaire design: A review of the literature and suggestions for further research. *Journal of the Market Research Society*, 35(2),

171–182. <https://doi.org/10.1177/147078539303500202>

Schmidt, A. F., & Finan, C. (2018). Linear regression and the normality assumption.

Frontiers in Psychology, 9, 2104. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02104>

She, Q., & Wotherspoon, T. (2013). International student mobility and highly skilled migration: A comparative study of Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. *SpringerPlus*, 2(1), 132. <https://doi.org/10.1186/2193-1801-2-132>

Sheeran, P., & Webb, T. L. (2016). The intention–behavior gap. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 10(9), 503–518.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12265>

Tomlinson, M., & Holmes, L. (Eds.). (2017). *Graduate employability in context: Theory, research and debate*. Palgrave Macmillan.

<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1057/978-1-137-57168-7>

Tavakol, M., & Dennick, R. (2011). Making sense of Cronbach's alpha. *International Journal of Medical Education*, 2,

53–55. <https://doi.org/10.5116/ijme.4dfb.8dfd>

Tomlinson, M., & Nghia, T. L. H. (2024). International students and post-study employment transitions. *Studies in Higher Education*, 49(1),

98–113. <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1057/978-1-137-57168-7>

van Teijlingen, E., & Hundley, V. (2001). The importance of pilot studies. *Social Research Update*, 35, 1–4.

Wilkins, S., & Huisman, J. (2012). The international branch campus as transnational

strategy in higher education. *Higher Education*, 64(5), 627–645.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-012-9516-5>

West, S. G., Finch, J. F., & Curran, P. J. (1995). Structural equation models with nonnormal variables: Problems and remedies. *Psychological Methods*, 1(1), 16–29. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1082-989X.1.1.16>

Yao, M., & Xu, Y. (2024). Method bias mechanisms and procedural remedies. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 53(1), 235–278.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/00491241211043141>

Yusoff, N. M., Abidin, U. F. U. Z., Mohamad, S. F., Abdullah, W. A. W., Alias, R., & Sudono, A. (2024). Determinants of career intention in Malaysia's hospitality industry among hearing-disabled youth. *Environment–Behaviour Proceedings Journal*, 9(28), 279–285. <https://doi.org/10.21834/e-bpj.v9i28.5858>

Zimet, G. D., Dahlem, N. W., Zimet, S. G., & Farley, G. K. (1988). The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 52(1), 30–41. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa5201_2

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

Factors Influencing International Students' Intention to Work in Malaysia

Dear Participant

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this academic survey entitled "Factors Influencing International Students' Intention to Work in Malaysia."

This research aims to understand the key factors that influence international students' intentions to pursue employment opportunities in Malaysia after completing their studies. The questionnaire consists of two main sections:

- **Section A:** Demographic information
- **Section B:** Factors influencing the intention to work in Malaysia

Your participation is **voluntary**, and all information provided will be **kept strictly confidential and used solely for academic purposes**. There are **no right or wrong answers** – please respond honestly based on your personal views and experiences. Completing the questionnaire will take approximately **5–10 minutes**.

We sincerely appreciate your cooperation and valuable input for this study.

* 表示必填

Section A: Demographic Information

Please tick (✓) or fill in the appropriate response.

1. 1. Gender: *

请仅选择一个答案。

Male

Female

2. 2. Age: *

请仅选择一个答案。

Below 23

23-26

27-30

Above 30

3. 3. Nationality: *

请仅选择一个答案。

China

Bangladesh

Indonesia

Pakistan

其他:

4. 4. Level of Study: *

请仅选择一个答案。

Undergraduate

Master's

Doctoral



5. 5. University Name: *

请仅选择一个答案。

- Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)
- Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)
- Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM)
- Taylor's University
- 其他: _____

6. 6. Duration of Study in Malaysia: *

请仅选择一个答案。

- 1-2 years
- 3-4 years
- More than 4 years

7. 7. Field of Study: *

Section B: Factors Influencing Intention to Work in Malaysia

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement using the scale below:

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree



8. **Part 1: Economic Opportunity (Attitude)**

请在每行中仅选择一个答案。

	1	2	3	4	5
8. Working in Malaysia provides me with a competitive salary.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Working in Malaysia provides me with professional experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Malaysia offers attractive career advancement opportunities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Working in Malaysia can help me gain career development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Malaysia's cost of living is reasonable compared to the income level.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Malaysia has sufficient job opportunities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. **Part 2: Social Influence (Subjective Norm)**

请在每行中仅选择一个答案。

	1	2	3	4	5
14. My family supports my decision to work in Malaysia.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. My friends encourage me to work in Malaysia.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. I often discuss job opportunities in Malaysia with my peers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. The success stories of graduates working in Malaysia motivate me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. People important to me think I should work in Malaysia after completing my studies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. **Part 3: Perceived Employability (Perceived Behavioral Control)**

请在每行中仅选择一个答案。

	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am confident that my qualifications meet Malaysian employers' requirements.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. I am proficient in English used in the Malaysian workplace.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. I have a good understanding of Malaysia's job market .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. I can adapt to the Malaysian working environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. I know how to apply for work permits or post-study work visas in Malaysia.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. **Part 4: Intention to Work in Malaysia (Behavioral Intention)**

请在每行中仅选择一个答案。

	1	2	3	4	5
24. I intend to seek employment in Malaysia after completing my studies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. I plan to apply for a job in Malaysia soon after graduation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. I would recommend Malaysia as a place to work to other international students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. I am likely to stay in Malaysia if offered a suitable job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. I have a strong desire to develop my career in Malaysia.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE VALIDATE

TITLE:

THE FACTORS INFLUENCING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' INTENTION TO WORK IN MALAYSIA

Research Objectives

- I. To examine the relationship between economic opportunity and international students' intention to work in Malaysia.
- II. To examine the relationship between social influence and international students' intention to work in Malaysia.
- III. To examine the relationship between perceived employability and international students' intention to work in Malaysia.

Measurement of the Study

Summary of Original and Adapted Variables

Variables	Measurement		source
	Original	Adapted	
Economic Opportunity (Attitude) 6 items	1. I feel I am getting better pay in comparison with other organizations.	1. Working in Malaysia provides me with a competitive salary.	Kumar M, D., & Govindarajo, N. S. (2014). Instrument development "intention to stay instrument" (ISI). <i>Asian Social Science</i> , 10(12), 1-21.
	2. I feel that this organization is making provision of better career oriented positions.	2. Working in Malaysia provides me with professional experience.	
	3. I feel that the career promotion is based on merit and performance.	3. Malaysia offers attractive career advancement opportunities.	
	4. I feel that my career options	4. Working in Malaysia can	

	are well taken care by the organization.	help me gain career development.	
	5. I feel that the perks, allowances and other fringe benefits are up to our expectations	5. Malaysia's cost of living is reasonable compared to the income level.	
	6. I feel that this organization is making provision of better career path.	6. Malaysia has sufficient job opportunities.	
Social Influence (Subjective Norm) 5 items	7. My family is willing to help me make decisions.	7. My family supports my decision to work in Malaysia.	Zimet, G. D., Dahlem, N. W., Zimet, S. G., & Farley, G. K. (1988). The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support. <i>Journal of Personality Assessment</i> , 52(1), 30–41.
	8. My friends really try to help me.	8. My friends encourage me to work in Malaysia.	
	9. I can count on my friends when things go wrong.	9. I often discuss job opportunities in Malaysia with my peers.	
	10. I have friends with whom I can share my joys and sorrows.	10. The success stories of graduates working in Malaysia motivate me.	
	11. I have a special person who is a real source of comfort to me.	11. People important to me think I should work in Malaysia after completing my studies.	
Perceived Employability	12. Was willing to recognise my previous	12. I am confident that my qualifications	Mazzarol, T., & Soutar, G. N. (2002). Push-pull factors

(Perceived Behavioral Control) 5 items	qualifications	meet Malaysian employers' requirements.	influencing international student destination choice. International Journal of Educational Management, 16(2), 82–90.
	13. Offers qualifications that will be recognised by employers	13. I am proficient in English used in the Malaysian workplace.	
	14. Has a strong alumni through which I learnt about it	14. I have a good understanding of Malaysia's job market.	
	15. Has a large number of international students enrolled	15. I can adapt to the Malaysian working environment.	
	16. Was well known to me	16. I know how to apply for work permits or post-study work visas in Malaysia.	
Intention to Work in Malaysia Behavioral Intention 5 items	17. I intend to work in the hospitality industry after graduation.	17. I intend to seek employment in Malaysia after completing my studies.	Yusoff, N. M., Abidin, U. F. U. Z., Mohamad, S. F., Abdullah, W. A. W., Alias, R., & Sudono, A. (2024). Determinant of Career Intention in Malaysia Hospitality Industry for Hearing Disabled Youth. <i>Environment-Behaviour Proceedings Journal</i> , 9(28), 279-285.
	18. I will certainly join the hospitality industry in the future.	18. I plan to apply for a job in Malaysia soon after graduation.	
	19. I find job in the hospitality industry interesting.	19. I would recommend Malaysia as a place to work to other international students.	
	20. I plan to work in the hospitality	20. I am likely to stay in Malaysia if offered a	

	industry after graduation.	suitable job.	
	21. I intend to enter career that related to hospitality industry.	21. I have a strong desire to develop my career in Malaysia.	

[Handwritten signature]



I have reviewed the questionnaire items and confirm that the instrument is appropriate and valid for the purpose of this study. The questionnaire may be used for data collection.

	industry after graduation.	suitable job.	
	21. I intend to enter career that related to hospitality industry.	21. I have a strong desire to develop my career in Malaysia.	

I have checked and hereby agree that the adapted measurements are somewhat similar to the original.

[Handwritten signature]

24/01/2026

*(Shaharuddin Tahir)
PhD (Strathclyde)
Former Sr. Lecturer & Assoc. Prof.
SHEM-UUM.*

APPENDIX C: SPSS STATISTICS

FREQUENCY TABLE

1. Gender:

		频率	百分比	有效百分比	累积百分比
有效	M	111	51.4	51.4	51.4
	F	105	48.6	48.6	100.0
	总计	216	100.0	100.0	

2. Age:

		频率	百分比	有效百分比	累积百分比
有效	Below 23	39	18.1	18.1	18.1
	23 - 26	86	39.8	39.8	57.9
	27 - 30	69	31.9	31.9	89.8
	Above 30	22	10.2	10.2	100.0
	总计	216	100.0	100.0	

3. Nationality:

		频率	百分比	有效百分比	累积百分比
有效	China	76	35.2	35.2	35.2
	Bangladesh	60	27.8	27.8	63.0
	Indonesia	26	12.0	12.0	75.0
	Pakistan	41	19.0	19.0	94.0
	Others	13	6.0	6.0	100.0
	总计	216	100.0	100.0	

4. Level of Study:

		频率	百分比	有效百分比	累积百分比
有效	Undergraduate	47	21.8	21.8	21.8
	Master's	113	52.3	52.3	74.1
	Doctoral	56	25.9	25.9	100.0
	总计	216	100.0	100.0	

5.University Name:

		频率	百分比	有效百分比	累积百分比
有效	UUM	48	22.2	22.2	22.2
	UKM	73	33.8	33.8	56.0
	UTM	30	13.9	13.9	69.9
	Taylor's Universiti	32	14.8	14.8	84.7
	Others	33	15.3	15.3	100.0
	总计	216	100.0	100.0	

6.Duration of Study in Malaysia:

		频率	百分比	有效百分比	累积百分比
有效	1-2 Years	29	13.4	13.4	13.4
	3-4 Years	85	39.4	39.4	52.8
	More than 4 years	102	47.2	47.2	100.0
	总计	216	100.0	100.0	

7.Field of Study:

		频率	百分比	有效百分比	累积百分比
有效	Business and Managements	62	28.7	28.7	28.7
	Accounting	22	10.2	10.2	38.9
	Engenering	45	20.8	20.8	59.7
	Health and Medicine	20	9.3	9.3	69.0
	Arts and Creative Industries	6	2.8	2.8	71.8
	Sciences	9	4.2	4.2	75.9
	Computer and IT	52	24.1	24.1	100.0
	总计	216	100.0	100.0	

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptives

	Statistic	Std. Error
Mean_EO Mean	3.7739	.05913
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	
	Upper Bound	
5% Trimmed Mean	3.8308	
Median	4.0000	
Variance	.755	
Std. Deviation	.86904	
Minimum	1.00	
Maximum	5.00	
Range	4.00	
Interquartile Range	1.00	
Skewness	-.967	.166
Kurtosis	.720	.330

Descriptives

	Statistic	Std. Error
Mean_SI Mean	3.9157	.05687
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	
	Upper Bound	
5% Trimmed Mean	3.9805	
Median	4.2000	
Variance	.699	
Std. Deviation	.83579	
Minimum	1.00	
Maximum	5.00	
Range	4.00	
Interquartile Range	.95	
Skewness	-1.110	.166
Kurtosis	1.037	.330

Descriptives

	Statistic	Std. Error
Mean_PE Mean	3.6463	.07603
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.4964
	Upper Bound	3.7961
5% Trimmed Mean	3.7152	
Median	4.0000	
Variance	1.248	
Std. Deviation	1.11734	
Minimum	1.00	
Maximum	5.00	
Range	4.00	
Interquartile Range	1.40	
Skewness	-.941	.166
Kurtosis	-.025	.330

Descriptives

	Statistic	Std. Error
Mean_ITW Mean	3.8657	.06388
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.7398
	Upper Bound	3.9917
5% Trimmed Mean	3.9360	
Median	4.1000	
Variance	.881	
Std. Deviation	.93884	
Minimum	1.00	
Maximum	5.00	
Range	4.00	
Interquartile Range	1.20	
Skewness	-1.054	.166
Kurtosis	.506	.330

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS (CRONBACH'S ALPHA)

EO

可靠性统计

克隆巴赫 Alpha	项数
.889	6

SI

可靠性统计

克隆巴赫 Alpha	项数
.850	5

PE

可靠性统计

克隆巴赫 Alpha	项数
.907	5

IW



UUM
Universiti Utara Malaysia

可靠性统计

克隆巴赫 Alpha	项数
.895	5

Reliability

[DataSet1] C:\Users\User\Desktop\Untitled3.sav

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	216	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
Total		216	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.935	21

CORRELATION ANALYSIS

相关性

		Mean_EO	Mean_SI	Mean_PE	Mean_ITW
Mean_EO	皮尔逊相关性	1	.521**	.505**	.534**
	显著性 (双尾)		<.001	<.001	<.001
	个案数	216	216	216	216
Mean_SI	皮尔逊相关性	.521**	1	.541**	.550**
	显著性 (双尾)	<.001		<.001	<.001
	个案数	216	216	216	216
Mean_PE	皮尔逊相关性	.505**	.541**	1	.521**
	显著性 (双尾)	<.001	<.001		<.001
	个案数	216	216	216	216
Mean_ITW	皮尔逊相关性	.534**	.550**	.521**	1
	显著性 (双尾)	<.001	<.001	<.001	
	个案数	216	216	216	216

** . 在 0.01 级别 (双尾) , 相关性显著。



MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

模型摘要

模型	R	R 方	调整后 R 方	标准估算的错误
1	.648 ^a	.420	.412	.71974

a. 预测变量: (常量), Mean_PE, Mean_EO, Mean_SI

ANOVA^a

模型		平方和	自由度	均方	F	显著性
1	回归	79.684	3	26.561	51.273	<.001 ^b
	残差	109.823	212	.518		
	总计	189.506	215			

a. 因变量: Mean_ITW

b. 预测变量: (常量), Mean_PE, Mean_EO, Mean_SI

系数^a

模型		未标准化系数		标准化系数	t	显著性
		B	标准错误	Beta		
1	(常量)	.809	.259		3.118	.002
	Mean_EO	.291	.070	.269	4.181	<.001
	Mean_SI	.320	.074	.284	4.300	<.001
	Mean_PE	.194	.055	.231	3.528	<.001

a. 因变量：Mean_ITW

