

IMPACT OF EMPLOYER BRANDING ON  
MALAYSIAN GEN Z'S INTENTION TO APPLY  
TO LOCAL SMES

BY

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
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## DECLARATION

We hereby declare that:

- (1) This undergraduate FYP is the end result of our own work and that due acknowledgement has been given in the references to ALL sources of information be they printed, electronic, or personal.
- (2) No portion of this FYP has been submitted in support of any application for any other degree or qualification of this or any other university, or other institutes of learning.
- (3) Equal contribution has been made by each group member in completing the FYP.
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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to:

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For guiding us throughout the way of completion in this research project.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
DeVal	Development Value
EcoVal	Economic Value
OrgR	Organisational Reputation
QR Code	Quick-Response Code
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SocVal	Social Value
UTAR	Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman
UUM	Universiti Utara Malaysia

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## PREFACE

This research project must be completed for us to obtain our Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours) degree. The topic of our research project is “Impact of Employer Branding on Malaysian Gen Z’s Intention to Apply to Local SMEs.” The main reason for conducting this research is that Malaysia faces serious brain drain issues therefore the perception of employer attractiveness in Malaysian is important for us to investigate to help Malaysian SMEs to generate an effective employer branding strategy.

Malaysian SMEs are the main contributors to Malaysia’s GDP and Generation Z is the largest age group in Malaysia. As Malaysian Gen Z has entered or will enter the work field soon, local SMEs will need to hire Generation Z to remain competitive in the future. As such, it is important for local SMEs to design an employer branding strategy that is suitable to apply to Malaysian Generation Z because a suitable employer branding strategy will help local SMEs attract the talent that is best suited to the position. Therefore, this research will provide an overview of the impact of employer branding on Malaysian Gen Z’s intention to apply to local SMEs.

We have identified four independent variables which are economic value, social value, development value, and organisational reputation that will affect the intention of Malaysian Gen Z to apply for local SMEs. This research is useful for the human resources department of local SMEs to understand the impact of employer branding on Malaysian Gen Z to design an appropriate employer branding strategy to attract young talent.

## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose for this research project is to study the impact of employer branding on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs. Employer branding may affect the Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs through the economic value, social value, development value, and organisational reputation of the local SMEs.

The researchers targeted on the final year undergraduate business students from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) and Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). Thus, the questionnaire is distributed through Google form, and the researchers have successfully collected 366 responses. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 29 has been used to analyse and interpret the data collected for pilot study and pilot study. To test the significant relationship between the independent variables (economic value, social value, development value, and organisational reputation), and dependent variable (intention to apply), the researchers have used the Pearson Correlation Analysis, and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis.

In conclusion, it has been found that all the independent variables (economic value, social value, development value, and organisational reputation) have significant and positive relationship with the dependent variable (intention to apply). The summary of major findings, implications of the study, limitations and recommendations of this study have provided in this research.

# **Chapter 1: Research Overview**

## **1.0 Introduction**

Employer branding is an important factor in influencing the Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to the local SMEs. The research background, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, hypotheses, significance of study, chapter layout, and conclusion will be covered in this chapter.

## **1.1 Research Background**

### **1.1.1 Trend of Employer Branding in Malaysia**

Employer branding is a strategy that almost all companies have used to attract and retain talented employees. Employer branding is one of the strategies that could use to enhance the intention to apply for a company (Samoliuk et al., 2022). A well-designed employer branding strategy will help the company to increase potential employees by increasing its reputation. According to Siler (2022), 50% of job applicants will not choose to work with a firm with a poor reputation even though they were given high wages and 75% of job applicants will examine a company's reputation before applying for a job. However, the lack of intention to improve employer branding of Malaysian employer has caused the professionals to seek for better opportunities. According to The Star (2023), the result of survey of LinkedIn has shown that lack of learning and development opportunities was the main factors that caused



Malaysian professionals to seek for better job opportunities, followed by lack of remuneration packages. Unfavourable working conditions, workplace harassment, low pay and lack of training and career advancement opportunities are also the reasons that Malaysian prefer to work in oversea (Lai et al., 2022). As such, it is important for Malaysian SMEs to develop an employer branding strategy to improve the issues of brain drain.

### **1.1.2 Challenges for Employment in Malaysia**

According to Leo (2019), there are approximately 20% of Malaysian fresh graduates remains unemployed 6 months after graduation and 35% of them are graduate from social science, business and law related courses. Most Malaysians prefer to work in a foreign country to pursue better opportunities which caused Malaysia to face serious brain drain issues in recent years. Many young people decide to continue to stay and work aboard after completing their higher education (Dass, 2020). This has caused Malaysia to face a serious talent shortage in every industry. According to Aziz (2023), 1.86 million Malaysian have migrated overseas and 1.13 of them have migrated to Singapore. The migration percentage in Malaysia is 5.6% which is higher than the global migration percentage of 3.6%. According to Dass (2020), lack of opportunities is one of the factors that cause the issue of brain drain. As such, it is important for the Malaysia SMEs to design a good employer branding strategy to retain local job seekers. Besides that, Malaysia labour market was also facing graduate and youth unemployment due to skills gap and created jobs are not enough to fulfil the demand of jobs (Hussin & Loh, 2021).

### **1.1.3 Generation Z**

Generation Z is the largest age group in Malaysia consisting of 29% of the total population had been chosen in this research (Tjiptono et al., 2020). Generation Z is the generation that is highly educated, empowered, and entrepreneurial. Malaysian generation Z was the first generation that has exposed to technology in their early life. They are heavily reliant on technology products and have spent an average of 8 hours daily on the Internet. Generation Z is frequently portrayed as being addicted to technology, antisocial, or “social justice warriors” (Stroud, 2020). Most of Generation Z is a newbie to the job or will enter the workplace in the future and it is important for the employer to understand their opinion. According to Universum (2015), a survey investigating generation Z’s thoughts toward higher education, their prospective job, and their worries about the workforce, etc has shown that 65% of generation Z has an optimistic spirit by thinking anything is possible in the future, 40% of them worry they will not find a career that suits their personality, 15% of them have the idea of foregoing university outright, 47% of them has stated that they may enter the workforce rather than continuing their studies, and 55% of them have the intention to start their own business. By analysing the findings, the researcher has been motivated to study the opinion of Malaysian Generation Z to help the local company to design an employer branding strategy that will help to attract and retain generation Z.

### **1.1.4 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia**

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are the main contributor to the Malaysian economy because they are the largest category of business in Malaysia. According to the latest report released by Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) and Malaysia Statistical Business Register (MSBR), Malaysia SMEs have contributed to a total of 37.4% Malaysia Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in year 2021, and represented 97.4% of total business establishments, as well as offering job opportunities to 7.32 million Malaysian. The motive for studying this sector is that the SME sector will be able to provide a huge amount of job

opportunities for fresh graduates and this sector is currently facing the problem of labour shortage and fierce competition in labour market. The labour shortage issue faced by the SMEs has found to be hampering the profit margin and business recovery of the SMEs (Msmeadmin, 2022; Baharuddin & Rahman, 2022). And, this issue has been identified to be a burden on the Malaysia economy, as it affects the operations and productivity of SMEs (Soo, 2022). The National Recovery Council member, Datuk Michael Kang also highlighted that the labour shortage issue has resulted in downsizing and shut down of many SMEs, and it should be resolved quickly by the government, as it will affect the ringgit value depreciation, foreign investments, and investor confidence (Chan, 2022). As Malaysia SMEs are contributing a large amount to the GDP, it is important for the researcher to examine the impact of employer branding on Malaysian Generation Z to apply for an SME to help the SMEs sector to improve the problem of labour shortage by providing valuable insight in helping them to design their employer branding strategy.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

One of the major issues is that Malaysia SMEs are currently facing the labour shortage issue. It has been reported by the Small and Medium Enterprises Association of Malaysia (Samenta) that there is around 90% of Malaysia SMEs are still looking for candidates to hire, and half of it struggles with the labour shortage issue (SunBiz, 2022). Besides that, the president of China Enterprises Chamber of Commerce in Malaysia (CECCM) has also revealed during the dialogue meeting with Malaysian Youth Council (MYC) that most of the Chinese companies including SMEs are facing the shortage of local young talent. Most of the talent demanded are consisting of those young talents equipped with technology-related skills (SME Magazine, 2019). Poo (2022) also highlighted that the shortage of skilled labour is resulted from the rapid change of technology during the pandemic which affected the business recovery as the pent-up demand has to be met.

Another major issue is that the Malaysian Generation Z consists of 29% of Malaysia overall population, which currently representing the largest age group with a monthly disposable income of USD\$327 million (Tijjtono et al., 2020). Gen Z consisting with a roughly one-third of the workforce, they are expected to exceed and come next after the millennials (Deloitte, 2018). With this high number of Gen Z, it is highly important for the SME companies to take them into account when designing their employer branding strategies, as they are the one who determine the future of a company and country (Islamiaty et al., 2022). To design the suitable employer branding approaches, it requires the organisation to analyse and understand the Gen Z and establish the employer branding dimensions that are compatible with their characteristics. It is because Gen Z are different with the previous generations, they are born in the era of technology where they live with it every day, and also being recognised as the most educated generation (Islamiaty et al., 2022).

The large number of Gen Z is not the only issue that bring the attention of SMEs to their employer branding approaches, but also the contribution of Gen Z as new university graduates to a company performance. Hafeez et al. (2018) highlight that Gen Z often generate new business ideas and approaches which contribute to a company's growth and competitive advantage. McCracken et al. (2015) also add that recruiting fresh graduates will strengthen the efficiency of a company's operation, as Gen Z are aware of the latest technologies and often apply their technology-related skills into their work which increased their productivity. Similarly, Cabellero and Walker (2010) describe the fresh graduates as the enthusiastic learners who help the company to achieve great performance.

There are many research study the impact of employer branding on intention to apply to a company in different countries and different generations but not in the context of Malaysian Gen Z and their intentions towards local SMEs. Lack of previous research in providing information on the impact of employer branding on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs which instilling a need to study how employer branding influence the young talent in applying to local SMEs.

Employer branding has been defined by Berthon et al. (2005) as the benefits a potential employee expected to receive in working for a particular company. It allows a company to gain competitive advantage, as it differentiates the company with its competitors by attracting the best talent that contributes to the company performance (Islamiaty et al., 2022). The president of Media Specialists Association (MSA), Bala Pomaleh also highlighted that employer branding should be emphasised to retain and attract talents, as with the current labour shortage issue facing by the companies (Dhesi, 2022). Neglecting employer branding will only bring negative consequences to the company, such as high employee turnover, fail to attract talents, caught up in lawsuit, and poor reputation (Biro, 2016). Thus, a need for the Malaysia SMEs to attract top talent by designing suitable employer branding strategies has arisen.

A job seeker's intention to apply to a company is found to be rely on a company's corporate image and reputation (Rynes, Bretz & Gerhart, 1991; Cable and Turban, 2003). It is because they often have limited knowledge towards a company during their job application decision-making process and leading them to use corporate image and reputation as a source of information to decide whether or not to apply with the company. The key to a good corporate image and reputation are a company's employer branding strategies (Rana & Kapoor, 2016; Sivertzen et al., 2013). A successful corporate image or reputation will attract the job seeker's attention to know more about the company, which in turn increase their intention to apply (Wei et al., 2015; Gatewood et al., 1993). Wei et al. (2015) also highlight that a stronger corporate image will increase the job seekers' inclination to work with the company. With that, it questions the feasibility of Malaysia SMEs' employer branding strategies in increasing the job seekers' intention to apply with them through its corporate image or reputation. There is a need for the Malaysia SMEs to have knowledge on ways to increase the job seekers' intention to apply as to attract talents.

In conclusion, it is undeniable that Malaysia SMEs have significant impact to the country economy with its role of being the backbone of Malaysia economy. To avoid the negative consequences caused on the economy and nation, any issues facing by Malaysia SMEs should be concerned. For instance, the current biggest issue struggled by many Malaysia

SMEs is the labour shortage, which many companies are highly demanding those talents who possessed technology-related skills, which is the young talents. Gen Z shown to be the largest workforce with potential high contribution to company performance, it is hard to overlook them in attracting the young talent. Furthermore, employer branding is seen to be an important factor in attracting those talents due to its effects on corporate image or reputation which is a source of information for the job seekers. It instils a need for the SMEs to reconsider the effectiveness of their employer branding approaches by assessing the compatibility of their employer branding dimensions with the Gen Z's characteristics. Thus, researchers will study the impact of employer branding on the Malaysia Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

### **1.3.1 General Objective**

This research is intended to investigate the impact of employer branding on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

### **1.3.2 Specific Objective**

- 1) To examine the relationship between economic value and Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

- 2) To examine the relationship between social value and Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.
- 3) To examine the relationship between development value and Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.
- 4) To examine the relationship between organisational reputation and Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

- 1) How does economic value affect Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs?
- 2) How does social value affect Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs?
- 3) How does development value affect Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs?
- 4) How does organisational reputation affect Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs?

## 1.5 Hypotheses of the Study

### **Hypothesis 1:**

$H_0$ : Economic Value has no significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

$H_1$ : Economic value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

### **Hypothesis 2:**

$H_0$ : Social value has no significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

$H_1$ : Social value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

### **Hypothesis 3:**

$H_0$ : Development value has no significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

$H_1$ : Development value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.



#### **Hypothesis 4:**

$H_0$ : Organisational reputation has no significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

$H_1$ : Organisational reputation has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study has more focused on the perception of Malaysian generation Z toward economic value, social value and development value rather than interest value or application value provided by SMEs. This study has also considered the perception of Malaysian generation Z toward organization reputation as one of the independent variables to measure their intention to apply for SMEs. As such, the research findings will determine the factors that will have the greatest impact to the intention of Malaysian Gen Z to apply for a company whether employer branding or organisational reputation. The proposed model will generate the outcome that is most approachable to the opinion of Malaysian generation Z, and this will help SMEs to generate the strategy that is most suitable to apply on the local current labour market.

The purpose of conducting this research paper is to examine the impact of employer branding on the Malaysia Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs by observing the economic value, social value, development value, and organisational reputation. This study is useful for the local SMEs because the company will be able better to design its employer branding to attract young talent by adjusting its economics value, social value, development value provided to

the employee and by considering its organisational reputation. The local SMEs will be able to improve its recruitment process to better attract young blood for the organization by referring to the result of the study. The result generated from this study will reflect the opinion of Malaysian generation Z about their future career and this will help the local company in Malaysia to have an idea to adjust its compensation practices, organisational culture, etc to meet the expectation of young applicant at the same time benefit themselves by solving the problem of labour shortage. It is significant for the local SMEs to attract young talents in order to gain competitive advantages among its competitors.

## **1.7 Chapter Layout**

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The research background of this study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, hypotheses, significance of the study, chapter layout, and conclusion will provide in this chapter.

### **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter focuses on the underlying theory, literature review, related theoretical framework, proposed conceptual framework, and the development of hypothesis.

### **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

This chapter will provide the research design, data collection methods, sampling design, research instrument, scale of measurement, data processing, and data analysis.

## **Chapter 4: Research Results**

The discussion of the result which generated by SSPS through interpreting collected data will be conducted in this chapter.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusion and Discussion**

This chapter will provide the summary of all findings and results, as well as implications of study, study limitations, and recommendations for future research.

### **1.8 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter has explained the structure of the study which are research background, problem statements, independent variable, dependent variables, hypotheses, and the importance of conducting the study about impact of employer branding on Malaysian Generation Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### 2.0 Introduction

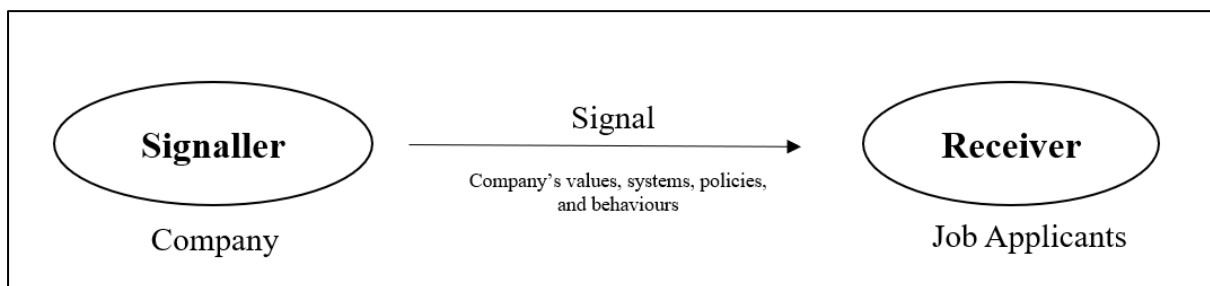
Chapter 2 provides literature review about the dependent variable (intention to apply) and independent variables (economic value, social value, development value, and organisational reputation). Theoretical model and hypotheses development will provide in this chapter too.

### 2.1 Underlying Theory

#### 2.1.1 Signalling Theory

Figure 1

*Model of Signalling Theory*



Sources: Wilden, R., Gudergan, S., & Lings, I. (2010). Employer branding: Strategic implications for staff recruitment. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 26(1–2), 56–73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02672570903577091>

Signalling theory implies that an image which can be a company will signal information to the person about the potential benefits can be gained by being a part of the company (Alshathry et al., 2016; Spence, 1973). It is often linked to employer branding, as it investigates how an information will affect the job seekers' perceptions towards an organisation (Wallace et al., 2014). Wilden et al. (2010) added that a firm's values will be signalled to the applicants through its employer brand, which greatly reduce the information costs to attract candidates if the signals are well-communicated. It illustrates how a company's characteristics can reveal potential signals, or information through its recruitment activities to attract the job seekers to apply with them (Rynes, 1991; Spence, 1973). Ehrhart and Ziegert (2005) also highlight that this theory has the ability in measuring multiple factors that can be used to attract the applicants.

It indicates that most of the applicants tend to rely on the information from different sources to decide the potential of the company to be an employer due to the information asymmetry which the applicants do not have knowledge about the working environment or culture in the company (Breaugh, 2018; Connely et al., 2011; Turban, 2001). Thus, it has provided that all the information they obtained from the company's characteristics or behaviour or recruitment activities will be used as signals for their job application decision-making process (Uggersley et al., 2012; Wallace et al., 2014; Collins & Stevens, 2002; Turban & Cable, 2003; Rynes, 1991; Turban et al., 1998). Wallace et al. (2014) even highlighted that the more attractive the signals provided through its characteristics, the higher the number of candidates and job acceptance rate.

According to Taj (2016), it consists of three elements, such as signallers, signals, and receivers. Signallers are the insiders who usually refer to the company or management, while receiver are the outsiders who refers to the job seekers. Signals are the informational cues deliver from signallers to receivers to achieve certain objectives. By applying this theory into this research, company as a signaller will provide signals about its company's characteristics such as economic value, social value, development value, and organisational reputation to the job seekers who act as the receivers. Thus, the signals provided are identified as the employer

branding strategies of a firm, and the ability of a company in utilising its signals provided to the job seekers will determine their intention to apply.

## **2.2 Review of the Literature**

### **2.2.1 Dependent Variables –Intention to Apply**

Intention to apply refers to the opinion or thoughts of the job seekers towards a company that determine their action whether to apply or not with the company (Highhouse et al., 2003). Barber (1998) also defined it as the process of applicant's interest in joining a company which it starts with obtaining information about the company, and proceed with studying the job vacancies, then ends with applying to the targeted company. Thus, it can be seen that intention to apply is the post stage of applicants before deciding to apply to a company.

During the early stages of obtaining information from the company, the applicants will seek for the ability, values, and knowledge communicated by the company (Barber, 1998). Thus, if the applicants have established positive perceptions about the company during the process of obtaining information from the company, the applicants will be interested to apply and join the company.

It has also been identified by Barber and Roehling (1993) as a strong indicator to measure the applicants' behaviour in the stages of company or recruitment attractiveness, and also identified by Gomes and Neves (2011) as important factor in understanding the applicants' job choices. It has the ability to significantly predict the applicants' decision in applying to a company for the job (Gomes and Neves, 2011). Schreurs et al. (2009) also added that there are three determinants to measure the intention. Firstly, it is the attitude towards the

behaviour, indicating the negative or positive evaluation towards performance of the behaviour. Secondly, it is the subjective norm, referring to the perception of social pressure towards performance of the behaviour. Thirdly, it is the perceived behaviour control, indicating the perception of control towards the behaviour's performance.

### **2.2.2 Employer Branding**

Employer branding is commonly used by employers to differentiate themselves from their competitors in attracting talented employees. Edwards (2009) defined employer branding as the human resources management strategy containing branding policies that are used to attract talent and ensure the employee is committed to the company's culture and strategy. Besides that, Kucherov & Zavyalova (2011) defined employer branding as "qualitative features of the employing company, which are attractive to a target audience". Backhaus & Tikoo (2004) has also stated that the process of the employers to build a unique and recognizable identity is called employer branding. The employers that able to differentiate themselves from their competitors through the characteristic of their firm will better attract talent. Employer branding is a strategy that enhances the image of an organisation with the goal of making employee feel it as a more favourable place to be employed (Maheshwari et al., 2017). Backhaus (2016) has identified two types of employer branding which are external and internal employer branding. Internal employer branding can be defined as the identity of an organization while external employer branding refers to the employer's image of an organization.

Employer branding can be also considered as the exchange of value between employer and employee. Amber & Barrow (1996) define employer branding as the concept of "the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company". Wallace et al. (2014) has also defined employer branding as the ability of an employer in meeting employee's expectation and needs. Tanwar & Prasad

(2017) defined employer branding as a strategy to attract potential job applicants and improve employee retention by providing tangible and intangible benefit.

The emerging of employer branding has emerged employer attractiveness as the employers needs employer branding strategies to increase their attractiveness (Silva, 2022). According to Santiago (2018), the job applicant will perceive more employer branding value when there is strong employer branding attractiveness. Employer who are able to create a favourable impression among the existing employees will be more competitive in employee attraction and retention (Khabir, 2014). Berthon et al. (2005) has developed an employer attractiveness model (EmpAt) consist of five dimensions which are interest value, social value, economic value, development value and application to measure employer brand.

### **2.2.3 Independent Variables 1 – Economic Value**

Economic value can be defined as the extent to which an individual is attracted to a company that offers an above average pay, an attractive remuneration package, employment security, and job promotion opportunities (Biswas & Suar, 2013). It is the value which an individual perceived from an employment benefit either monetary or non-monetary (Schlager et al., 2011). The adequate number of leave, attractive retirement welfare, etc are also the economics that can be perceived for an individual. Amber & Barrow (1996) had also stated that financial and material benefit is consist of the package of economic value. Economic value is also an essential value for employer branding (Shrivastava & Shukla, 2021). Sufficient economic value provided to the employee will strengthen the employer attractiveness and will be able to increase the talent pool of the organization. Focusing of increasing economic value will increase the effectiveness of employer branding strategy. According to Figurska & Matusuka (2013), competitive remuneration packages is one of the factors will lead employer branding strategy success. The competitive remuneration package will also affect the employee retention of an organization. According to Kashyap (2017), economic value is also referred to highly competitive pay and recognition for employee to



build positive attitude to remains in organizations. Ha et al. (2021) have applied social exchange theory to explained economic value. They stated that the employee will receive the economic benefit that based on the contribution of the employee to the organization from the employer.

#### **2.2.4 Independent Variables 2 – Social Value**

Most of the employees are willing to work with an employer that are providing a pleasant working environment and encouraging friendly and cooperative relationships between colleagues. This is because a positive working environment will reduce the stress of the employee and will be able to improve their productivity (Saidi et al., 2019). Social value refers to the extent to which an individual is attracted by a company that is providing a pleasant and happy working environment, supportive relationships within a team, and good relationships between colleagues (Berthon et al., 2005). According to Raj (2020), social value is primarily identified by the social support provided by an organization and the interpersonal interactions that exist at the workplace. Ha et al. (2021) have taken Emerson's social exchange theory as an example to explain social value within an organization. The social exchange happened when social values such as a pleasant and happy working environment, supportive relationships etc provided by an employer and high employee engagement provided by the employee (Ha et al.,2021). They also stated that social value is an important element on sustaining the relationship between employee and employer because employee retention will increase when the employee can fit with the culture of organization. According to Schlager et al. (2011), some investigation has found that social value has a significant impact towards employee identification when employee satisfaction is the moderator.

### **2.2.5 Independent Variables 3 – Development Value**

Development value can be define as the extent to which an individual will be attracted by an employer that provides employee recognition, confidence, career growth opportunities, and career-enhancing experiences (Berthon et al., 2005). “Good training opportunities”, an “empowering environment” and a “good mentoring culture” are the variables of development value (Schlager, Bodderas et al., 2011). They have also stated that development value is the value provided by an organization which related to career management practices that prioritise employees' growth. According to Sarabdeen et al. (2023), training programs and chances for professional advancement for employees are included in the development value. Hadi & Ahmed (2018) has stated that by enhancing staff abilities, the company can maximize its potential while also increasing employee loyalty and retention. Sawarista et al. (2017) have also stated that opportunities to gain experiences and professional knowledge from various projects, international assignments, and from workers and clients from different countries are important in developing positive employer brand perceptions. Ha et al. (2021) have also applied social exchange theory in explaining development theory. They have stated that the employees will be motivated to perform their best on their job duties if the employer has provided value such as growth opportunities, recognition, etc to the employees. Development value will also affect employee satisfaction thus leading to an effect on employer attractiveness (Khabir, 2014). Besides that, a lot of studies have found that there is a strong relationship exist within organisational commitment and development value (Schlager et al., 2011). Ahmad & Daud (2015) has stated that development value has a significant impact on the employee’s turnover intention.

## 2.2.6 Independent Variables 4 – Organisational Reputation

Organisational reputation is the representation and collection of a company's past, present, and future actions which constituted the company's overall characteristics when comparing with its competitors (Iswandi & Angela, 2010; Fombrun, 1996). Mantri (2019) refers it to as the degree of trust holds by its stakeholders.

According to Bromley (2001), it also refers to the perception and opinion of a person in stakeholder group towards a company image. It implies the ability of a company in meeting the expectations of its stakeholders through its company performance (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990). Rahyuda et al. (2014) highlighted that it is the stakeholders' perception towards the performance, trust, and communication activities of the company, as well as the emotional feelings developed towards the company. Hence, it has been identified as the intangible and valuable asset of a company to achieve competitive advantage (Bennet & Rentschler, 2006; Gaultire-Gaillard & Louisot, 2006).

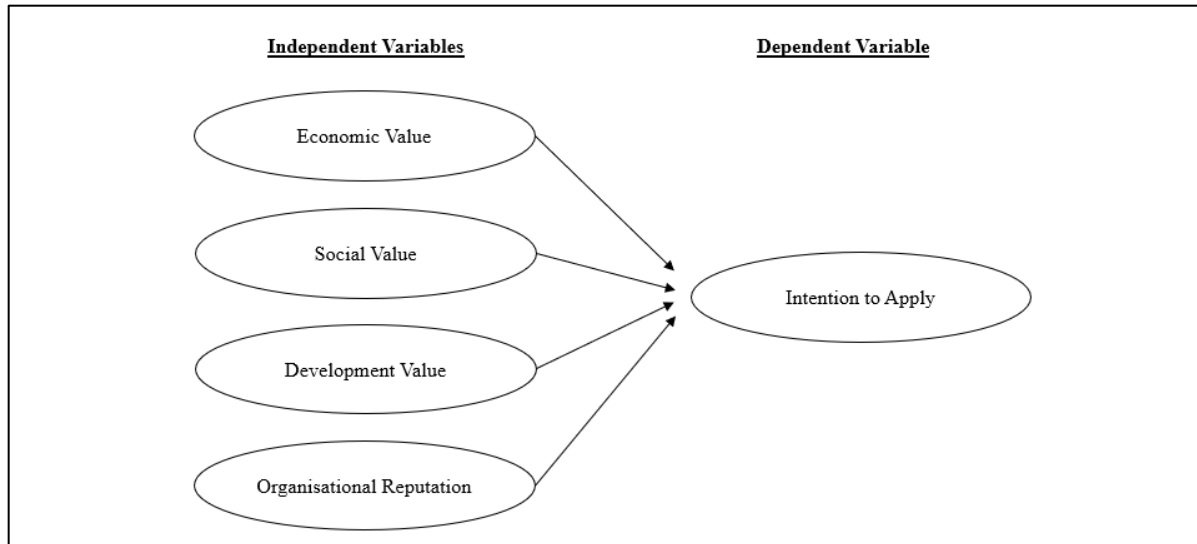
It is undeniable that building reputation is never easy, and should be emphasised. For instance, Weiwei (2007) adds that organisational reputation has the potential to affect a company's financial performance, credibility, and effectiveness in approaching its stakeholders.

Meanwhile, Barnett et al. (2006) has categorised and defined organisational reputation into three types, which are intangible assets, stakeholders' moral evaluation, and stakeholders' image reputation towards the company. Furthermore, Lange et al. (2011) also describe and categorise it into three components, such as being known in terms of public's brand awareness, being known for something, and generalised favourability in terms of the public's positive perceptions.

## 2.3 Proposed Conceptual Framework

Figure 2

*Conceptual Framework Model*



*Source:* Developed for the research

A conceptual framework as presented in Figure 2 has developed for this study. It consists of the independent variables (economic value, social value, development value, and organisational reputation) that have impact on the dependent variable (Malaysia Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs).

The independent variables of economic, social, and development value are adopted from the Berthon's employer attractiveness (EmpAt) scale (Berthon et al., 2005). However, the other two dimensions of Berthon's EmpAt scale which are interest and application value have been excluded in this study, as some researchers argued and identified that interest and application value are not important dimensions in the employer branding model (Reis & Braga, 2016; Jiang & Iles, 2011; Tanwar & Kumar, 2019). For instance, the research done by Reis and Braga (2016) has showed that the interest and application value are less significant to the younger generations indicating that interest and application value are not suitable to be used for this study as younger generation (Gen Z) is involved. Meanwhile, organisational

reputation is introduced into the independent variables, as many researchers have identified it to be having association with a candidate's intention to apply.

## **2.4 Hypothesis Development**

### **2.4.1 The Relationship between Economic Value and Intention to Apply**

Monetary and non-monetary benefits such as above-average salaries and competitive compensation packages was playing an important role in affecting the intention of job seekers to apply for a company. The high economic value provided to the employee will increase the intention of the job seekers to apply for a company. This is because most job applicant will select the company that offer them the compensation packages based on their working experience (Amara et al., 2023). The company that with good reputation for encouraging workplace diversity, work-family policies, and remuneration will affect the job pursuit intention of student and remuneration tend to have the strongest relationship with job pursuit intention among the three aspects of human resources policies (Hoang et al., 2020). This is because companies that with a good reputation for these three aspects of human resources policies are more likely to support employees and boost productivity. According to Agrawal & Swaroop (2008), salary and compensation packages have a significant impact on the intention of job applicants to apply for a company. Susilo & Widhiantio (2022) has also stated that remuneration attractiveness will affect the job application intention of an individual. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between economic value and the intention of Malaysian Generation Z to apply to a local SME.

Hypothesis 1: Economic value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

## **2.4.2 The Relationship between Social Value and Intention to Apply**

Most job applicant will prefer to work in a company that provides a comfortable and fun working environment for its employee. According to Odukah (2016), employees will prefer to work in a company that provides a safe and clean working environment. They also prefer to work in a company that has a short distance from their home and a working environment with contemporary facilities and the proper tools and machinery. Sokro (2012) has also stated that the working environment is the most important factor that will help an organization attract potential employees, followed by demanding job duties, competence growth, and job flexibility. The employee is also willing to work in a working environment with friendly relationships with colleagues instead of high salaries (Kashyap, 2017). Social value is the value that job applicants be concerned about. According to Biswa (2013), social value is the most important value in the process of the creation of employer branding. Khabir (2014) has also stated that social value is the most important value in determining employer attractiveness. Social value is the best element to test the employer's attractiveness over the attraction of potential job applicant (Ergun & Tatar, 2016). Therefore, there is a significant relationship between social value and the intention of Malaysian Generation Z to apply for a local SME.

Hypothesis 2: Social value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

### **2.4.3 The Relationship between Development Value and Intention to Apply**

According to Ambler and Barrow (1996), a future employee will be attracted by a company that offers recognition, self-esteem, confidence, development opportunities and opportunities to gain professional experiences which is the cooperation value that emerges from the improvement of functional benefits. Job seekers who wish to work in a company that provides these values will do their best in their job duties after they have been recruited by the company (Ha et al., 2021). It is important for the employer or management to recognize the achievement of an employee to help the employee to achieve self-esteem and increase confidence thus leading to employee attraction and reducing turnover intention. According to Ahmad and Daud (2015), the recognition of actions of individuals or teams from the employer or management in the organization is significant for the organization to achieve goals and objectives. Ergun & Tatar (2016) have stated that development value, working conditions, reputation, and economic value are the most important element on assess employer attractiveness. This is because the employees typically care about their own growth, and they view companies who invest in their ongoing career development as being good employers (Sarabdeen et al, 2023). According to Santiago (2018), all the values from the EmpAt model have a positive relationship with the intention of millennials to apply for an organization except economic value. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between development value and the intention of Malaysian Generation Z to apply a local SME.

Hypothesis 3: Development value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

#### **2.4.4 The Relationship between Organisational Reputation and Intention to Apply**

Several studies documented that a company's ability in recruiting talent is depends on its organisational reputation, which their study also showed that the more positive the organisational reputation, the more attractive it is to the applicants (Gatewood et al., 1993; Rynes et al., 1991; Belt & Paolillo, 1982; Cable & Turban, 2003). Furthermore, there are also evidences showing that organisational reputation does attract potential and talented employees (Turban et al., 1998; Sivertzen et al., 2013; Chapman et al., 2005). Hence, it is undeniable that organisational reputation is one of the factors affecting the applicants' intention to apply (Vasavada-oza & Bhattacharjee, 2016; Edwards, 2010; Turban & Cable, 2003; Gomes & Neves, 2010).

Other research studies also found that the job seekers' intention to apply are related and enhanced by a company's positive reputation (Collins & Stevens, 2002; Behrend et al., 2009). Thus, organisational reputation has the potential to affect positively or negatively the applicants' intention to apply to a company (Kumari et al., 2020; Sivertzen et al., 2013; Lievens & Highhouse, 2003; Turban & Greening, 1997). The impact of organisational reputation on applicants' intention to apply has been affirmed (Sivertzen et al., 2013; Clardy, 2005; Collins & Han, 2004; Collins & Stevens, 2002; Gatewood et al., 1993). Based on the results documented from the previous studies, a hypothesis has been developed:

Hypothesis 4: Organisational reputation has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.



## **2.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed and discussed the literature for the dependent variable, and independent variables, while conceptual framework and hypotheses development for this research have also been developed.

## **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

### **3.0 Introduction**

Research methodology implies the process to solve the research problems (Kothari, 2004). This chapter covers research design, data collection methods, sampling design, research instruments, construct measurement, data processing, and data analysis.

### **3.1 Research Design**

Research design is the framework of approaches and procedures to examine the study's research problem (Bouchrika, 2023). It consists of deductive reasoning (quantitative research), and inductive reasoning (qualitative research); however, deductive reasoning has been chosen for this study. Deductive reasoning requires less time in collecting data, and avoiding bias in the data due to its randomised process, as compared to inductive reasoning (Gaille, 2019). It intends to test the existing theories by deductively looking for evidence to support or refute the hypothesis (Soiferman, 2010).

Causal research design has adopted to examine the cause-and-effect relationship between the independent variables (economic value, social value, development value, and organisational reputation), and dependent variable (intention to apply). This study also used the cross-sectional study design, as this study collected all the data at once to answer the research questions (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

## **3.2 Data Collection Methods**

Data collection implies process of obtaining information to answer the research questions, test hypotheses, and examine the results, which categorised into primary and secondary data (Kabir, 2016).

### **3.2.1 Primary Data**

Primary data refers to the method of originally collecting data for the first time, which has been selected for this study's questionnaire (Kothari, 2004). Therefore, the researchers will use Google forms to upload the questions and collect data from the respondent. Its features offer a timesaving, increased efficiency, and convenient way for the researchers to collect data in a shorter time, and to easily reach out the targeted respondents. To distribute the questionnaire, the researchers have shared the links and QR code of the Google forms to targeted respondents via online and physical.

## **3.3 Sampling Design**

Sampling design refers to the method of choosing sampling units from the targeted population (Kothari, 2004).

### 3.3.1 Target Population

The total of elements about the information needed is known as the target population (Kothari, 2004). The targeted population selected for this study is final year undergraduate student from business programmes of UTAR and UUM. Dao et al. (2021) highlighted that academic major will affect a student's perceptions and attitudes due to the knowledge they are equipped with, which leads to difference in perceptions among students with other disciplines, and thus researchers will only select students from business programmes. According to the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) Programme Standards for Business Studies (second edition 2021), the business faculty programmes of UTAR and UUM involved are such as Table 1 below. Meanwhile, the total number of UTAR and UUM students studying from the list of programmes stated are around 2234 students, and 3086 students respectively (UTAR, 2020; UUM, 2021). Thus, this study's targeted population would be 5320 students.

Table 1

*List of Business Programmes from UTAR*

---

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)
Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours)
Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours) Banking and Finance
Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours) Healthcare Management
Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours) in Logistics and Supply Chain Management
Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours) Retail Management
Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours) Risk Management
Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours) Entrepreneurship
Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours) Tourism Destination Marketing
Bachelor of Marketing (Honours)
Bachelor of International Business (Honours)

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*Source: Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman. (n.d.). Programmes offered by Faculty of Business and Finance. [https://fbf.utar.edu.my/Undergraduate\\_Programmes.php](https://fbf.utar.edu.my/Undergraduate_Programmes.php)*

Table 2

*List of Business Programmes from UUM*

Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)
Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours)
Bachelor of Human Resource Management (Honours)
Bachelor of Marketing (Honours)
Bachelor of Entrepreneurship (Honours)

*Source: Universiti Utara Malaysia.* (n.d.). Programmes offered by School of Business Management. <http://hea.uum.edu.my/index.php/undergraduate-international>

### **3.3.2 Sampling Frame and Sampling Location**

Sampling frame contains the list of items or sampling units from which the sample is drawn, while sampling location refers to the place of conducting research (Kothari, 2004). Hence, the sampling frame of this study will be UTAR, and UUM. These selected universities have identified as the year 2023 top Malaysia universities by the Times Higher Education World University Rankings (2023), which UTAR is ranked in fifth place, and UUM is in second place. In addition, they also have granted the self-accreditation status provided by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) as a badge of honour for having strong internal quality assurance system (Malaysian Qualifications Agency, 2023). Meanwhile, the sampling locations cover all the branch campuses of the selected universities, such as Kampar, Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, and Kedah.

### **3.3.3 Sampling Element**

Sampling element is the analysis or case chosen from the population measured. The targeted sampling elements of this study are consisting of those final year undergraduate business students from UTAR, and UUM with working or industrial training experiences. Furthermore, the questionnaire has distributed to the targeted respondents through the Google forms.

### **3.3.4 Sampling Technique**

This study has adopted the quota sampling which is a type of purposive sampling under the non-probability sampling technique, as the findings cannot be generalised to the population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). It is used when there is a fixed quota assigned to the subgroup by depending on the total number of each subgroup in the population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Thus, the researchers assigned the quota based on the total number of students from business faculty for each university. For instance, UTAR's total number of business students occupying 42% of total students from both universities is assigned with 42% of the sampling size, followed by UUM with 58% of total students is assigned with 58% of sampling size.

### **3.3.5 Sampling Size**

Sampling size refers to number of respondents chosen from the population, and the sample size of this study is referring to the sample size table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). By referring to the Figure 3, our targeted population of 5320 is in between the population size of 5000 and 6000. Therefore, a sample size of 361 from population size of 6000 will be used, as targeted population has exceeded the population size of 5000.

Figure 3

### Sample Size for a Given Population Size

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3300	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie, R.V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30, 607-610.

## 3.4 Research Instrument

### 3.4.1 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire comprises of three sections, which are Section A, Section B, and Section C. Section A consists of seven questions related to the respondents’ demographic profile by adopting the nominal and ordinal scale. Section B and Section C consists of questions related to the respondents’ opinion towards the impact of employer branding on their intention to apply to local SMEs, which both sections used the five-point Likert scale of interval scale.

### 3.4.2 Pilot Studies

In this study, 30 questionnaires have been distributed to the final year business students in UTAR and UUM through Google Form, as to ensure the results obtained are accurate and efficient. The researchers later generated the data through SPSS software (Version 29) after finished collecting the data. The rule of Thumb of Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha has adopted to examine the reliability and feasibility of the questionnaire distributed, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

*The Rule of Thumb of Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha*

<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Reliability value</b>
Less than 0.6	Poor
0.6 to less than 0.7	Questionable
0.7 to less than 0.8	Acceptable
0.8 to less than 0.9	Good
0.9 or more	Excellent

*Source:* Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2016). *Research Methods For Business: A Skill Building Approach* (7th Edition).



Table 4

*Summary of Reliability Test Result (Pilot Study)*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Strength of Reliability</b>
<b>Dependent Variable:</b>			
Intention to Apply	0.812	7	Good
<b>Dependent Variables:</b>			
Economic Value	0.832	5	Good
Social Value	0.857	5	Good
Development Value	0.836	5	Good
Organisational Reputation	0.816	5	Good

*Source:* Developed for the research

The reliability of the 30 sets of questionnaires has been determined via the reliability test generated by using SPSS Software. The Cronbach's alpha value of the dependent variable (Intention to Apply) and four independent variables (Economic Value, Social Value, Development Value, and Organisational Reputation) is 0.812, 0.832, 0.857, 0.836, and 0.816 respectively. The dependent variable and four independent variables have a good reliability level in the reliability test as Cronbach's alpha value of all the variables is within the range between 0.8 to 0.9.

## 3.5 Construct Measurement

### 3.5.1 Nominal Scale

There are five questions in Section A have adopted the nominal scale, which are question 1 (Gender), question 2 (Ethnic Group), question 4 (University), question 5 (working experience), and question 6 (working in SME), as shown as below:

1. Gender:

Male  Female

2. Ethnic Group:

Chinese

Indian

Malay

Others: \_\_\_\_\_

4. University:

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)

Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)

5. Have you had industrial training (internship) or relevant working experience:

Yes  No

6. Have you been working in an SME during your internship:

Yes  No

### 3.5.2 Ordinal Scale

A question in Section A has adopted ordinal scale which is question 3 (Family Monthly Income), as shown as below:

3. Family Monthly Income:

- Less than RM2000
- RM2001– RM3000
- RM3001 – RM4000
- RM4001 – RM5000
- RM5001 – RM6000
- RM6001 – RM7000
- RM7001 – RM8000
- RM8001 – RM9000
- RM9001 – RM10000
- RM10001 – RM11000
- Above RM11001

### 3.5.3 Interval Scale

Section B and Section C of the questionnaire have widely adopted the Likert scale by setting a five-point scale for each question. One of the examples for it has shown as below:

**1= Strongly Disagree**

**2= Disagree**

**3= Neutral**

**4= Agree**

**5= Strongly Agree**

No.	Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I will choose the employer of SMEs as my first choice.	1	2	3	4	5

### 3.5.4 Origin of Measure of Construct

This study has adopted the operational definition of the key construct.

Table 5

*Operational Definition of the Key Construct*

Variables	Items	Construct Measurement	Sources
Intention to Apply	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will choose the employer of SMEs as my first choice.</li> <li>• If SMEs were at a career fair, I will visit their booths.</li> <li>• If SMEs were at my campus, I will talk to their representatives.</li> <li>• I will accept the job offer from SMEs.</li> <li>• I will accept the job interview for SMEs.</li> <li>• I will have the motivation to perform my best for SMEs.</li> <li>• I will suggest SMEs to my friend or family who is looking for a job opportunity.</li> </ul>	Adopted from Santiago (2018)

Economic Value	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I believe SMEs provide great opportunities for promotion.</li> <li>• I believe SMEs provide opportunities to gain inter-departmental practical experiences.</li> <li>• I believe SMEs have favourable and good working conditions.</li> <li>• I believe SMEs provide competitive salaries above the market rate.</li> <li>• I believe SMEs provide attractive and competitive compensation packages [e.g. paid vacation leave, Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP), and health insurance]</li> </ul>	Adopted from Berthon et al. (2005)
Social Value	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I believe SMEs provide a safe working environment.</li> <li>• I believe SMEs provide an enjoyable and lively working environment.</li> <li>• I believe I will have a friendly relationship with my superiors.</li> <li>• I believe I will have a friendly relationship with my co-workers.</li> <li>• I believe my colleagues are supportive and cooperative.</li> </ul>	Adopted from Berthon et al. (2005)

Development Value	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I believe SMEs will appreciate my performance.</li> <li>• I will be able to gain career advancement experience if I worked in the SMEs.</li> <li>• I will feel good about myself working in the SMEs.</li> <li>• I will feel more confident about working in the SMEs.</li> <li>• I will be able to gain professional experience if I worked in the SMEs.</li> </ul>	Adopted from Berthon et al. (2005)
Organisational Reputation	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will be more attracted by a reputable SME for my career development.</li> <li>• I will be more attracted by a reputable SME that serves as my ideal workplace.</li> <li>• I will be more attracted by an SME I have trust in.</li> <li>• I will be more attracted by an SME which I have heard a lot of compliments and positive things.</li> <li>• I will be more attracted by an SME that I feel positive to.</li> </ul>	Adopted from Raj and Jan (2022); Nilsen and Olafsen (2013)

*Source:* Developed for the research

### 3.6 Data Processing

Data processing refers to the conversion of data collected from the questionnaire responses into the valuable and meaningful information.

### **3.6.1 Data Checking**

To carry out data checking, a pre-test has been conducted before the conduct of pilot test, as to ensure the smooth run and error free of the questionnaire during the questionnaire distribution process.

### **3.6.2 Data Editing**

To carry out data editing, the researchers reviewed and corrected all the inconsistent, illogical, or illegal data, as well as omissions in the information from the responses obtained. Any blank responses, or inconsistent data will also be checked and updated. Thus, this will ensure the data keyed in by researchers is accurate (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

### **3.6.3 Data Coding**

Data coding requires the researchers to assign a number to the responses collected from the questionnaire participants, in order to be entered into a database (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).



Table 6

*Coding of Question in Section A*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Code</b>
1. Gender	Male	1
	Female	2
2. Ethnic Group	Chinese	1
	Indian	2
	Malay	3
	Others	4
3. Family Monthly Income	Less than RM2000	1
	RM2001– RM3000	2
	RM3001– RM4000	3
	RM4001– RM5000	4
	RM5001– RM6000	5
	RM6001– RM7000	6
	RM7001– RM8000	7
	RM8001– RM9000	8
	RM9001– RM10000	9
	RM10001– RM11000	10
	Above RM11001	11

4. University	Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)	1
	Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)	2
5. Have you had industrial training (internship) or relevant working experience?	Yes	1
	No	2
6. Have you been working in an SME during your internship?	Yes	1
	No	2

*Source:* Developed for the research

The data coding for section B and C of questionnaire are as below:

Strongly Disagree: 1

Disagree: 2

Neutral: 3

Agree: 4

Strongly Agree: 5

### **3.6.4 Data Transcribing**

In this process, the researchers will transcribe the data collected from the responses of questionnaire into the SPSS software (Version 29), as to perform the statistical analysis.

### **3.6.5 Data Cleaning**

To conduct data cleaning, the researchers have used the SPSS software (Version 29) to check for the data consistency, and to identify any errors in the data chosen for analysis, such as incomplete, incorrect, inconsistent, and duplicated data (IBM, 2021).

## **3.7 Data Analysis**

Data analysis refers to the process of collecting, editing, and analysing data using different statistical methods and techniques (Calzon, 2023). Thus, the researchers conducted data analysis with the help of SPSS software (Version 29).

### **3.7.1 Descriptive Analysis**

Descriptive analysis is the process of interpreting and changing the raw data into valuable insights in a meaningful way (Calzon, 2023). It allows the researchers to have organised data to continue any investigations to the data collected by using various descriptive analysis tools to interpret and compare data, such as bar chart, and table.

### **3.7.2 Scale Measurement**

Reliability testing is highly needed to test the consistency and stability of the data collected from the participants' responses (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). It implies how well and consistent the items or methods measuring something more than once. Thus, Cronbach's alpha is adopted as reliability coefficient to determine how consistent and well the items in questionnaire are positively correlated to one another (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The Cronbach's alpha ranges are shown in Table 3.

### **3.7.3 Inferential Analysis**

Inferential analysis allows the researchers to be able to draw conclusions of the population from a sample (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

### **3.7.3.1 Pearson Correlation Coefficient Analysis**

Pearson Correlation Coefficient analysis is conducted to determine the significance, strength, and direction of the linear relationship between the variables (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Thus, the hypotheses that have tested under it are such as:

$H_1$ : Economic value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

$H_2$ : Social value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

$H_3$ : Development value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

$H_4$ : Organisational reputation has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

### **3.7.3.2 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis**

Multiple linear regression analysis is adopted, as this study is using more than one independent variable to explain the variance in a single dependent variable (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Thus, the hypothesis that have tested under it are such as:

$H_5$ : The independent variables (economic value, social value, development value, and organisational reputation) have the significant impact on the dependent variable (intention to apply).

### **3.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter, researchers explained all the conducted research design, data collection methods, sampling design, research instruments, construct measurement, data processing, and data analysis for this study. The further research and findings generated from the questionnaire will be discussed in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 4: Data Analysis**

### **4.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, 366 sets of questionnaires from students from UTAR and University Utara Malaysia have been collected and analysed by using SPSS software in this chapter. This chapter consists of three types of analysis which are descriptive analysis, scale measurement, and inferential analysis. The result from the descriptive analysis has been shown by using a table and pie chart. Besides that, a reliability test has also been conducted for scale measurement to analyse the reliability of the questionnaire. Lastly, the Pearson Correlations Coefficient and Multiple Linear Regression have been conducted to determine the strength of the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable.

### **4.1 Descriptive Analysis**

To interpret and simplify the data collected for the respondents' demographic profile, tables, and graphics such as pie charts and bar charts will be used in this section.

## 4.1.1 Respondent Demographic Profile

### 4.1.1.1 Gender

Table 7

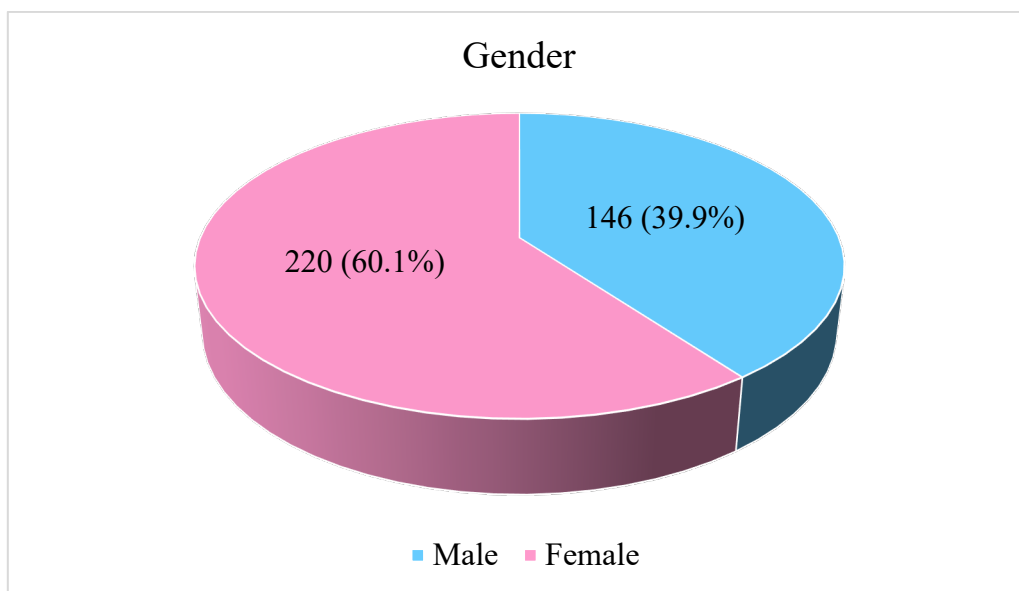
*Respondent's Gender*

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Cumulative Frequency</b>	<b>Cumulative Percentage (%)</b>
Male	146	39.9	146	39.9
Female	220	60.1	366	100.0

*Source:* Developed for the research

Figure 4

*Statistics of Respondent's Gender*



*Source:* Developed for the research

There is a total of 60.1% (220) of female respondents, while the male respondents consist of 39.9% (146), as shown in Table 7 and Figure 4.



#### 4.1.1.1 Ethnic Group

Table 8

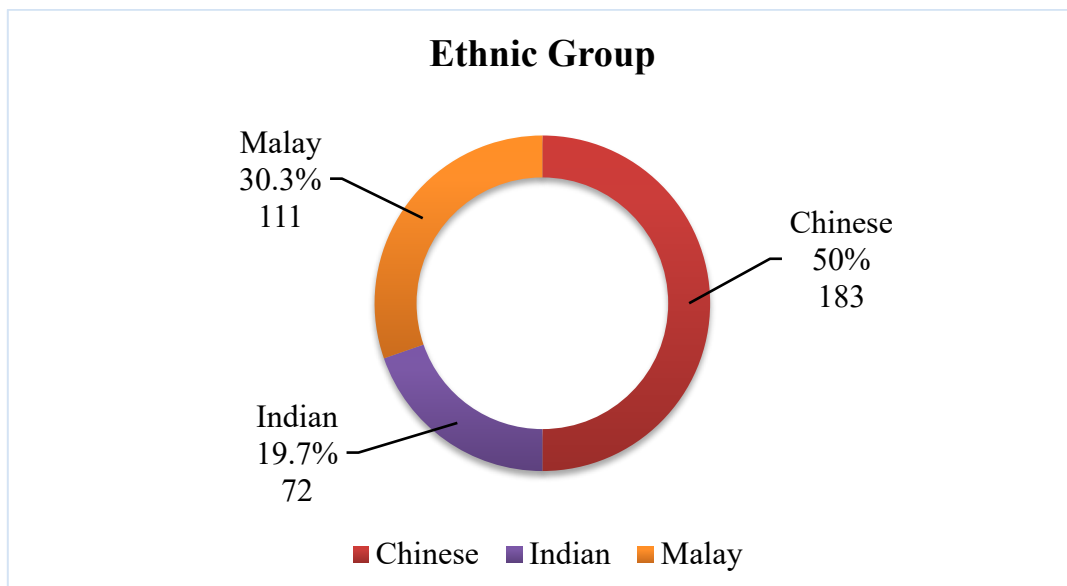
*Respondent's Ethnic Group*

Ethnic	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative	Cumulative
			Frequency	Percentage (%)
Chinese	183	50.0	183	50.0
Indian	72	19.7	255	69.7
Malay	111	30.3	366	100.0

*Source:* Developed for the research

Figure 5

*Statistics of Respondent's Ethnic Group*



*Source:* Developed for the research

Based on Table 8 and Figure 5, there is a total of 50% (183) of Chinese respondents, 30.3% (111) of Malay, and 19.7% (72) of Indian.

#### 4.1.1.2 Family Monthly Income

Table 9

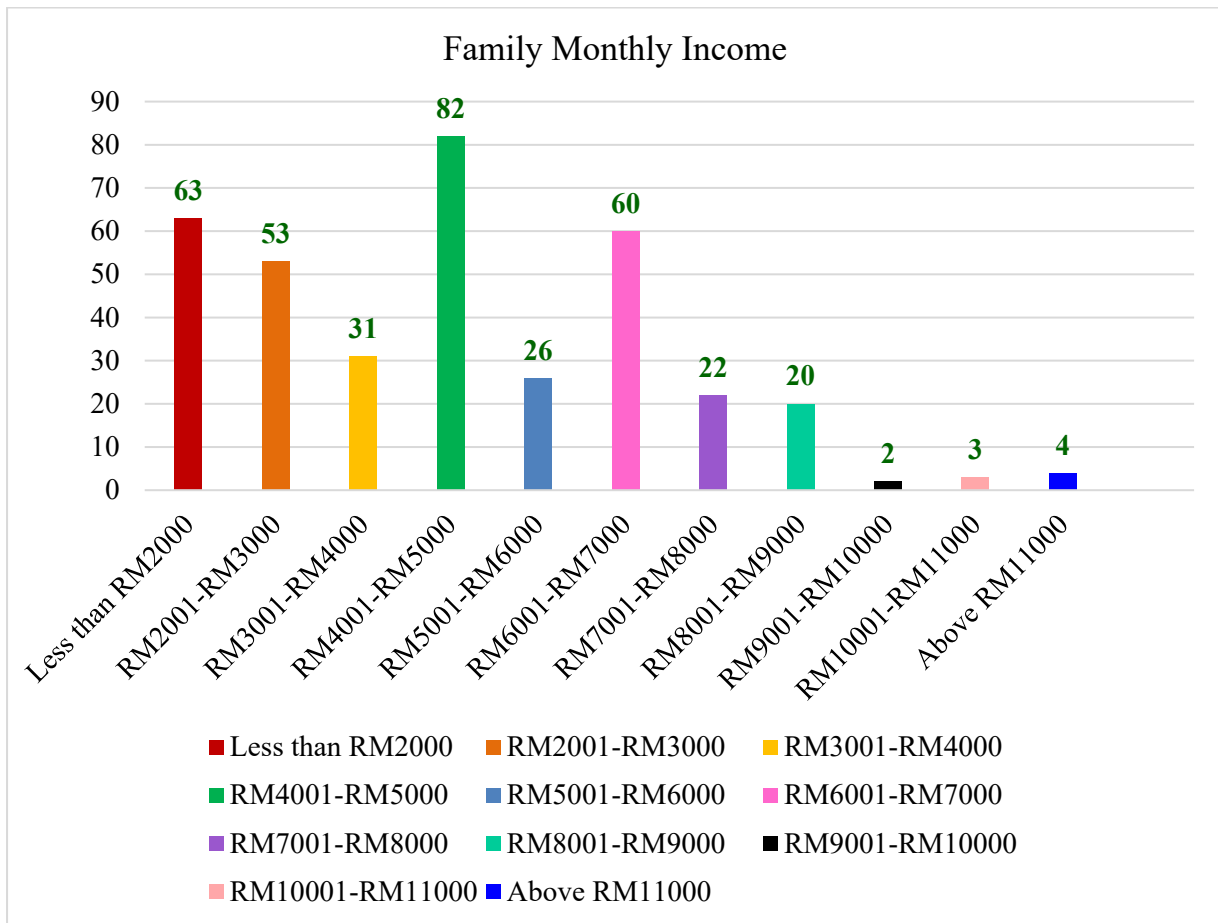
*Respondent's Family Monthly Income*

<b>Family Monthly Income</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Cumulative Frequency</b>	<b>Cumulative Percentage (%)</b>
Less than RM2000	63	17.2	63	17.2
RM2001 - RM3000	53	14.5	116	31.7
RM3001 - RM4000	31	8.5	147	40.2
RM4001 - RM5000	82	22.4	229	62.6
RM5001 - RM6000	26	7.1	255	69.7
RM6001 - RM7000	60	16.4	315	86.1
RM7001 - RM8000	22	6.0	337	92.1
RM8001 - RM9000	20	5.5	357	97.5
RM9001 - RM10000	2	0.5	359	98.1
RM10001 - RM11000	3	0.8	362	98.9
Above RM11000	4	1.1	366	100.0

*Source:* Developed for the research

Figure 6

*Statistics of Respondent's Family Monthly Income*



Source: Developed for the research

Table 9 and Figure 6 show that there is a total of 17.2% (63) of respondents have less than RM2000 family monthly income, 14.5% (53) of respondents' family monthly income is ranged between RM2001 to RM3000, and 8.5% (31) of respondents are RM3001 to RM4000. Meanwhile, for family monthly income ranged between RM4001 to RM5000 has the most respondents consisting of 22.4% (82). 7.1% (26) of respondents have a family monthly income ranged from RM5001 to RM6000, 16.4 (60) of respondents are RM6001 to RM7000, 6.0% (22) of respondents are RM7001 to RM8000, and 5.5% (20) of respondents are RM8001 to RM9000. For the higher family monthly income range, there is less respondents having it, such as 0.5% (2) of respondents are RM9001 to RM10000, 0.8% (3) of respondents are RM10001 to RM11000, while the remaining 1.1% (4) respondents are having above RM11000 of family monthly income.

### 4.1.1.3 University

Table 10

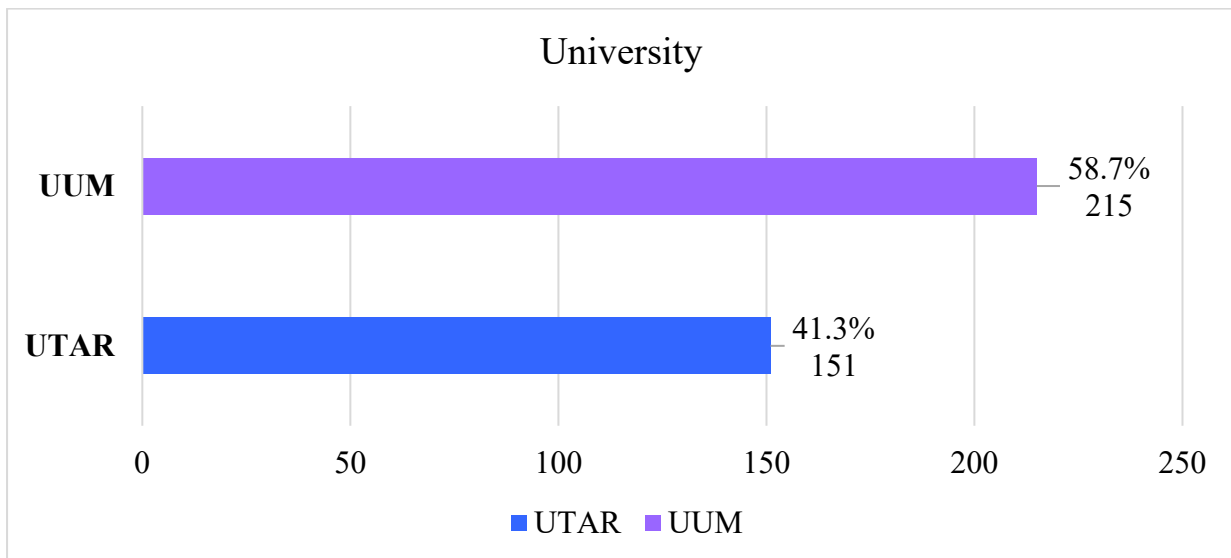
*Respondent's University*

University	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)	151	41.3	151	41.3
Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)	215	58.7	366	100.0

*Source:* Developed for the research

Figure 7

*Statistics of Respondent's University*



*Source:* Developed for the research

41.3% (151) of the respondents are from UTAR, while the remaining 58.7% (215) of respondents are from UUM, as shown in Table 10 and Figure 7.

#### 4.1.1.4 Industrial Training or Working Experience

Table 11

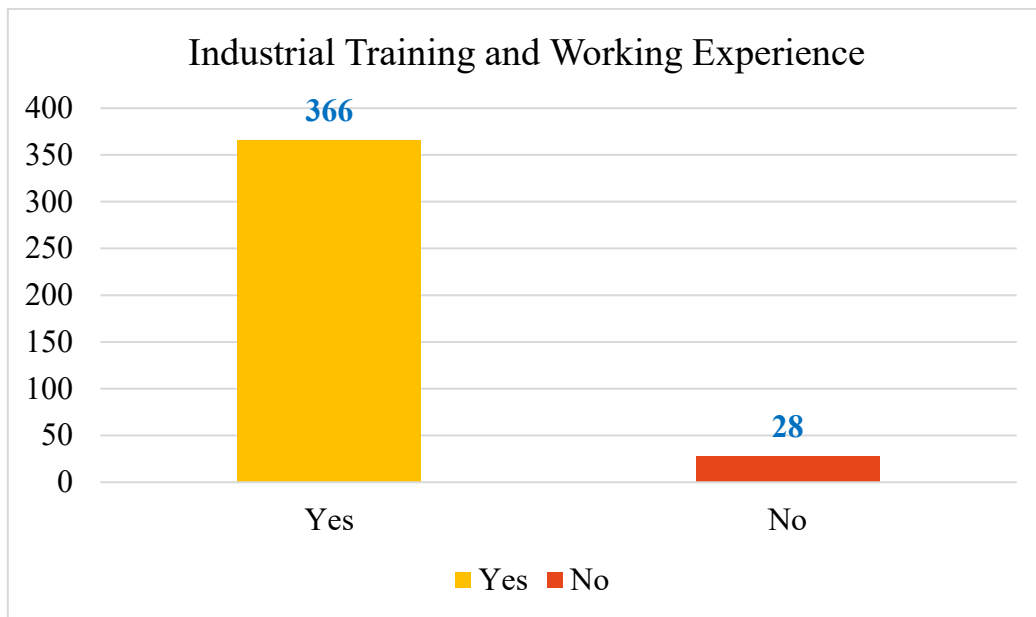
*Respondent's Industrial Training and Working Experience*

<b>Industrial Training or Working Experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Cumulative Frequency</b>	<b>Cumulative Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	366	100	366	100
No	28	0	0	0

*Source:* Developed for the research

Figure 8

*Statistics of Respondent's Industrial Training and Working Experience*



*Source:* Developed for the research

A total of 394 responses were collected, which consist of 366 respondents who have industrial training or working experience, and other 28 respondents do not have any following experience, as shown in Table 11 and Figure 8. Thus, the 28 respondents are excluded in this study due to not fulfilling the targeted respondent requirements, as this question served as the purpose for filtering the ineligible respondents.

#### 4.1.1.5 Working in SME during Internship

Table 12

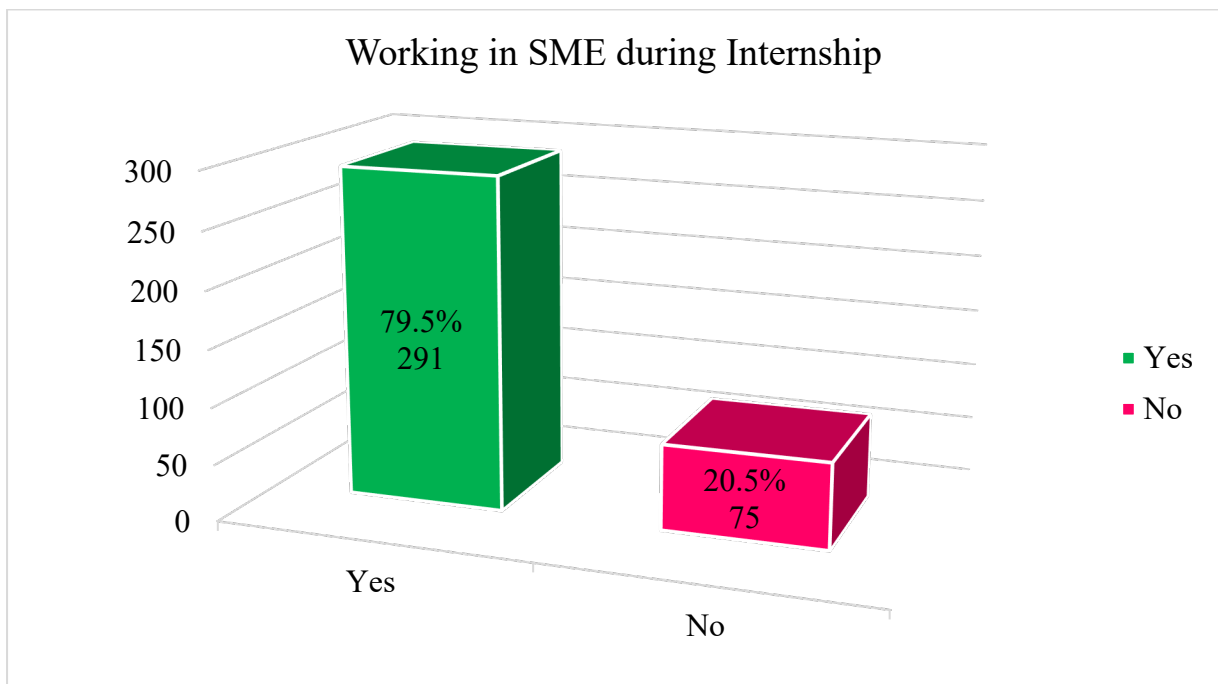
*Respondent's Working in SME during Internship*

<b>Working in SME during Internship</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Cumulative Frequency</b>	<b>Cumulative Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	291	79.5	291	79.5
No	75	20.5	366	100.0

*Source:* Developed for the research

Figure 9

*Statistics of Respondent's Working in SME during Internship*



*Source:* Developed for the research

Based on the Table 12 and Figure 9, 79.5% (291) of the respondents have worked in SMEs during their internship, while the remaining 20.5% (75) of the respondents did not work in SMEs.

## 4.1.2 Central Tendencies Measurement of Constructs

### 4.1.2.1 Economic Value

Table 13

*Central Tendency Measurement for Economic Value*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Mean Ranking</b>	<b>Standard Deviation Ranking</b>
EV1	I believe SMEs provide great opportunities for promotion.	4.37	0.846	5	1
EV2	I believe SMEs provide opportunities to gain inter-departmental practical experiences.	4.07	0.693	2	5
EV3	I believe SMEs have favourable and good working conditions.	4.14	0.761	4	2
EV4	I believe SMEs provide competitive salaries above the market rate.	4.03	0.758	1	3
EV5	I believe SMEs provide attractive and competitive compensation packages [e.g. paid vacation leave, Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP), and health insurance]	4.07	0.741	3	4

*Source:* Developed for the research

Table 13 illustrates that EV1 has the highest mean value of 4.37, which denotes that most respondents agreed with it, and followed by EV3 (4.14), EV2 (4.07), EV5 (4.07), and EV4 (4.03).

EV1 also obtained the highest standard deviation value of 0.846, followed by EV3 (0.761), EV4 (0.758), EV5 (0.741), and EV2 has the lowest value of 0.693.

#### 4.1.2.2 Social Value

Table 14

*Central Tendency Measurement for Social Value*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Mean Ranking</b>	<b>Standard Deviation Ranking</b>
SV1	I believe SMEs provide a safe working environment.	4.15	0.779	4	1
SV2	I believe SMEs provide an enjoyable and lively working environment.	4.24	0.752	2	3
SV3	I believe I will have a friendly relationship with my superiors.	4.24	0.757	3	2
SV4	I believe I will have a friendly relationship with my co-workers.	4.11	0.692	1	5
SV5	I believe my colleagues are supportive and cooperative.	4.26	0.744	5	4

*Source:* Developed for the research



Table 14 shows that the SV5 has the highest mean value of 4.26, indicating that it obtained the agreement by most respondents. Meanwhile, SV1 has the second highest mean value with 4.15 and followed by SV3 (4.24), SV2 (4.24), SV4 (4.11).

In terms of standard deviation, SV1 owns the highest value with 0.779, followed by SV3 (0.757), SV2 (0.752), SV5 (0.744), while SV4 owns the lowest standard deviation value with 0.692.

#### 4.1.2.3 Development Value

Table 15

##### *Central Tendency Measurement for Development Value*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Mean Ranking</b>	<b>Standard Deviation Ranking</b>
DV1	I believe SMEs will appreciate my performance.	3.95	0.608	1	4
DV2	I will be able to gain career advancement experience if I worked in the SMEs.	4.15	0.659	4	3
DV3	I will feel good about myself working in the SMEs.	4.03	0.577	2	5
DV4	I will feel more confident about working in the SMEs.	4.08	0.740	3	2
DV5	I will be able to gain professional experience if I worked in the SMEs.	4.39	0.822	5	1

*Source:* Developed for the research

Table 15 displays that DV5 obtained the highest mean with a value of 4.39, which denotes that most respondents agreed with this statement. And, it followed by DV2 (4.15), DV4 (4.08), DV3 (4.03), DV1 (3.95).

For standard deviation, DV5 also obtained the highest value of 0.822, while DV4 has the second highest with a value of 0.740, followed by DV2 (0.659), DV1 (0.608), and DV3 obtained the lowest standard deviation value of 0.577.

#### 4.1.2.4 Organisational Reputation

Table 16

*Central Tendency Measurement for Organisational Reputation*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Mean Ranking</b>	<b>Standard Deviation Ranking</b>
OR1	I will be more attracted by a reputable SME for my career development.	4.18	0.723	1	4
OR2	I will be more attracted by a reputable SME that serves as my ideal workplace.	4.48	0.796	4	1
OR3	I will be more attracted by an SME I have trust in.	4.52	0.772	5	3
OR4	I will be more attracted by an SME which I have heard a lot of compliments and positive things.	4.45	0.774	3	2
OR5	I will be more attracted by an SME that I feel positive to.	4.36	0.704	2	5

*Source:* Developed for the research

Table 16 presents that OR3 obtained the agreement from most respondents due to its highest mean value of 4.52. It is followed by OR2 (4.48), OR4 (0.45), OR5 (4.36), and OR1 which has the lowest value of 4.18.

The highest standard deviation value is 0.796 which is obtained by OR2, and followed by OR4 (0.774), OR3 (0.772), OR1 (0.723), and OR5 which has the lowest value of 0.704.

## 4.2 Scale Measurements

### 4.2.1 Reliability Test

Table 17

*Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha Value</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Reliability Level</b>
<b>Dependent Variable:</b>			
Intention to Apply	0.928	7	Excellent
<b>Dependent Variables:</b>			
Economic Value	0.871	5	Good
Social Value	0.903	5	Excellent
Development Value	0.890	5	Good
Organizational Reputation	0.920	5	Excellent

*Source:* Developed for the research

The reliability of the 366 sets of questionnaires has been determined via the reliability test generated by using SPSS Software. Based on Table 17, three out of five variables have

obtained a Cronbach’s Alpha value of more than 0.9 which means that these variables have an excellent reliability level in the reliability test. The first variable with more than 0.9 Cronbach’s Alpha value is the variable “Intention to Apply” obtaining 0.928 which is also the highest Cronbach’s Alpha Value in the reliability test, followed by “OrgR” (0.920), and “SocVal” (0.903). Cronbach’s Alpha values of “DeVal” (0.890) and “EcoVal” (0.871) are within the range between 0.8 to 0.9 which means that these two independent variables have good reliability levels in the reliability test.

### 4.3 Inferential Analysis

#### 4.3.1 Pearson Correlation Analysis

##### 4.3.1.1 Economic Value with Intention to Apply (Hypothesis 1)

$H_0$ : Economic Value has no significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z’s intention to apply to local SMEs.

$H_1$ : Economic value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z’s intention to apply to local SMEs.

Table 18

*Correlation between Economic Value with Intention to Apply*

		<b>Intention to Apply</b>
<b>Economic Value</b>	Pearson Correlation	.807**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	366

*Source:* Generated from SPSS software (Version 29)

Based on the results obtained from Table 18, the correlation coefficient of EcoVal is in positive value denoting that there is a positive relationship between EcoVal and intention to apply. Thus, the EcoVal has a positive value of 0.807 correlation with intention to apply. The higher the EcoVal, the higher the intention to apply. Furthermore, it also falls into the coefficient range of  $\pm 0.71$  to  $\pm 0.90$ , which indicates that the relationship between EcoVal and intention to apply is moderate. By having a p-value (0.000) that is less than the alpha value (0.05), it proved that the relationship is significant too.

#### 4.3.1.2 Social Value with Intention to Apply (Hypothesis 2)

$H_0$ : Social value has no significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

$H_1$ : Social value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

Table 19

*Correlation between Social Value with Intention to Apply*

Social Value		Intention to Apply
	Pearson Correlation	.817**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	366

*Source:* Generated from SPSS software (Version 29)

Table 19 shows that the correlation coefficient of SocVal has a positive value, which indicates the positive relationship between SocVal and intention to apply. SocVal has a positive value of 0.817 coefficient with the intention to apply. It falls under the coefficient range of  $\pm 0.71$  to  $\pm 0.90$ , which indicates a strong strength of correlation coefficient. Therefore, the higher the SocVal, the higher the intention to apply. There is a high and significant relationship between the SocVal and intention to apply due to the p-value (0.000) is less than the alpha value (0.05).

### 4.3.1.3 Development Value with Intention to Apply (Hypothesis 3)

$H_0$ : Development value has no significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

$H_1$ : Development value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

Table 20

*Correlation between Development Value with Intention to Apply*

		<b>Intention to Apply</b>
<b>Development Value</b>	Pearson Correlation	.774**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	366

*Source:* Generated from SPSS software (Version 29)

Table 20 displays that the correlation coefficient of DeVal has a positive value of 0.774 coefficient with the intention to apply. This denotes that there is a positive and strong relationship between the DeVal and intention to apply, as it falls under the coefficient range of  $\pm 0.71$  to  $\pm 0.90$ . The relationship between DeVal and intention to apply is also significant, as having a p-value (0.000) that is less than the alpha value (0.05). Thus, the higher the DeVal, the higher the intention to apply.

#### 4.3.1.4 Organisational Reputation with Intention to Apply (Hypothesis 4)

$H_0$ : Organisational reputation has no significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

$H_1$ : Organisational reputation has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

Table 21

*Correlation between Organisational Reputation with Intention to Apply*

		<b>Intention to Apply</b>
<b>Organisational Reputation</b>	Pearson Correlation	.763**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	366

*Source:* Generated from SPSS software (Version 29)

Table 21 illustrates that the OrgR variable owns a positive value of 0.763 correlation coefficient with the intention to apply, which indicates that the positive and strong relationship between OrgR with an intention to apply, as it is in between the coefficient range of  $\pm 0.71$  to  $\pm 0.90$ . Thus, the higher the OrgR, the higher the intention to apply. It has a significant relationship due to its p-value (0.000) is less than the alpha value (0.05).



### 4.3.2 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

$H_0$ : The four independent variables (Economic Value, Social Value, Development Value, Organisational Reputation) do not significantly explain the variance of intention to apply to an SME.

$H_1$ : The four independent variables (Economic Value, Social Value, Development Value, Organisational Reputation) significantly explain the variance of intention to apply to an SME.

Table 22

*R-Square Value's Model Summary*

<b>Model Summary</b>				
<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R-Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
1	0.880	0.774	0.771	0.30589

*Source:* Generated from SPSS software (Version 29)

Table 22 has shown that the R-value which is the correlation coefficient value of this study is 0.880 which means that there are positive and strong correlations between the dependent variable and four independent variables. Besides that, the R square value of 0.774 represents that the research has a strong correlation coefficient and the four independent variables are able to justify 77.4% of the variation of the dependent variable. However, the remaining R square value of 0.226 has shown there is still remain 22.6% unexplained in this research which means that other variables that are crucial in justifying Generation Z's intention to apply to an SME have not been taken into account in this research.

Table 23

*Analysis of Variance*

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significant
1	Regression	115.395	4	28.849	308.325	< .001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	33.777	361	0.094	-	-
	Total	149.172	365	-	-	-

Source: Generated from SPSS software (Version 29)

Based on the Table 23, the p-value also known as a significant level of less than 0.001 generated from the ANOVA test has shown that four independent variables are important in explaining the variance in Generation Z's intention to apply to an

SME. The p-value of less than 0.001 is lower than the alpha value of 0.05 and this represents the F-Statistic is significant. In conclusion, the alternative hypothesis will be accepted, and the null hypothesis will be rejected in this research.

Table 24

*The Estimate of Parameter*

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	Significant
		B	Standard Deviation	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.092	0.121		0.756	0.450
	Economic Value	0.410	0.045	0.397	9.145	0.000
	Social Value	0.391	0.047	0.387	8.286	0.000
	Development Value	0.046	0.058	0.041	0.798	0.426
	Organisational Reputation	0.135	0.046	0.138	2.920	0.004

Source: Generated from SPSS software (Version 29)

Based on the result shown in Table 24, the p-value of EcoVal, SocVal, DeVal, and OrgR is 0.000, 0.000, 0.426, and 0.004, respectively which is lower than the alpha value (0.05) in this study. The result represents that the relationship between four independent variables and dependent variable is significant. Therefore, all the alternative hypotheses will be accepted in this study.

### **Regression Equation**

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4$$

Y = Intention to Apply

X1 = EcoVal

X2 = SocVal

X3 = DeVal

X4 = OrgR

a= the intercept

b = the slope (coefficient of  $X_n$ )

### **Multiple Regression Equation:**

$$\text{Intention to Apply} = 0.092 + 0.410 (\text{EcoVal}) + 0.391(\text{SocVal}) + 0.046 (\text{DeVal}) + 0.135(\text{OrgR})$$

### **Highest Contribution**

The EcoVal has gained the highest beta value (0.397) in this research compared to other independent variables and this represents that EcoVal contributes the most to the variation of Generation's Z intention to apply to an SME. The EcoVal has also the strongest unique contribution in explaining the variation of the intention of Generation Z to apply to an SME after controlling all other predictor variables in the model.

### **Second Highest Contribution**

The beta value of SocVal is 0.387 which is the second highest beta value compared to other independent variables. This represents the second most significant to the variation of Generation Z's intention to apply to an SME is SocVal. The second-highest' beta value from SocVal also represents that SocVal makes the second-strongest unique contribution in explaining the variation of Generation Z's intention to apply to an SME after controlling all other predictor variables in the model.

### **Third Highest Contribution**

The 0.138 is the third-highest alpha value compared to other independent variables gained by OrgR in this research has shown that OrgR has made the third-highest contribution to the variation of the intention of Generation Z to apply to an SME. This represents that OrgR has the third-strongest unique contribution in explaining the variation of the dependent variable after controlling all other predictor variables in the model.

### **Lowest Contribution**

The DeVal contributes the lowest to the variation of Generation Z's intention to apply to an SME because the beta value of DeVal is 0.041 which is the lowest compared to other independent variables. The lowest beta value in this research represents that DeVal has the weakest unique contribution in explaining the variation of generation Z's intention to apply to an SME.

## **4.4 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the respondent demographic profile has been shown by using table and pie charts, and mean and central tendency measurement has also been conducted for descriptive analysis. Besides that, the questionnaire has gained a good and excellent reliability level for the scale measurement. The results from Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Linear Regression have also shown that there is a significant relationship exist between dependent variable and independent variables. Discussion, implication, and recommendation for the result will be discuss in next chapter.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion, and Implications**

### **5.0 Introduction**

In this final chapter, a summary of statistical analysis in terms of descriptive and inferential analysis will be provided, as well as discussion of the major findings of this research. Theoretical and managerial implications will be included, and also with the limitations and recommendations of this research.

### **5.1 Summary of Statistical Analysis**

A summary of the result of descriptive analysis, reliability test, Pearson Correlation Coefficient, and Multiple Linear Regression generated in the previous chapter will be provided and discussed in this chapter.

### 5.1.1 Summary of Descriptive Analysis

Table 25

*Summary of Descriptive Analysis*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Cumulative Frequency</b>	<b>Cumulative Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	146	39.9	146	39.9
Female	220	60.1	366	100.0
<b>Ethnic Group</b>				
Chinese	183	50.0	183	50.0
Indian	72	19.7	255	69.7
Malay	111	30.3	366	100.0
<b>Family Monthly Income</b>				
Less than RM2000	63	17.2	63	17.2
RM2001 - RM3000	53	14.5	116	31.7
RM3001 - RM4000	31	8.5	147	40.2
RM4001 - RM5000	82	22.4	229	62.6
RM5001 - RM6000	26	7.1	255	69.7
RM6001 - RM7000	60	16.4	315	86.1
RM7001 - RM8000	22	6.0	337	92.1
RM8001 - RM9000	20	5.5	357	97.5
RM9001 - RM10000	2	0.5	359	98.1
RM10001 - RM11000	3	0.8	362	98.9
Above RM11000	4	1.1	366	100.0
<b>University</b>				
Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)	151	41.3	151	41.3
Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)	215	58.7	366	100.0
<b>Working in SME during Internship</b>				
Yes	291	79.5	291	79.5
No	75	20.5	366	100.0

Source: Developed for the research

Table 25 presents the demographic profile of a total of 366 respondents for this study. The total number of female respondents is higher than male respondents, representing 60.1% in this study. Half of the respondents are Chinese followed by Malay (30.3%) and Indian (19.7%). There are 82 respondents have a family income between RM4001 to RM5000, representing 22.4% in this study. Besides that, 58.7% of our respondents were collected from UUM and 79.5% of the total respondents have worked in a SME during their internship.

## **5.1.2 Summary of Inferential Analysis**

### **5.1.2.1 Reliability Test**

Table 17 represents the result of the reliability test, and the result has shown that Cronbach's Alpha value for the dependent variable and two independent variables (SocVal and OrgR) is higher than 0.9 while for another two independent variables (EcoVal and DeVal) is higher than 0.8. This has shown that all the variables have good and excellent reliability for the questions asked in the questionnaire in this study. "Intention to Apply" gained the highest Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.928 followed by "OrgR" (0.920), "SocVal" (0.903), "DeVal" (0.890) and "EcoVal" (0.871).

### **5.1.2.2 Pearson Correlation Coefficient Analysis**

Table 18, 19, 20, and 21 represent the result of the Pearson Correlation Coefficient and the result has shown that EcoVal, SocVal, DeVal and OrgR (dependent variables) has a significant relationship with intention to apply (dependent variable) as the p-value of all independent variables is less than 0.05 which is the alpha value of this study.



Besides that, SocVal has gained 0.817 which is the highest Pearson Correlation value in the Pearson Correlation Coefficient followed by EcoVal, DeVal, and OrgR with Pearson Correlation values of 0.817, 0.774, and 0.763 respectively. The positive value of Pearson Correlation of all independent variables has shown that there is a positive relationship between all the independent variables and the dependent variable. Furthermore, the relationship between all independent variables and the dependent variable is strong as the Pearson Correlation value of all independent variables falls under the coefficient range of  $\pm 0.71$  to  $\pm 0.90$ .

### **5.1.2.3 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis**

Tables 22, 23, and 24 have shown the result of multiple linear regression in this study. The R-square value of 0.774 in Table 26 represents that the EcoVal, SocVal, DeVal, and OrgR (independent variables) are able to explain 77.4% of the variation of the intention of Generation Z to apply to an SME (dependent variable) while the remaining 22.6% of variation will be explained by other potential variables. Besides that, the R-value of 0.88 represents that there are positive strong correlations between the dependent variable and independent variables. Besides that, the significant value of less than 0.00 in Table 27 has shown that the F-statistic is significant because the significant value is less than 0.05 which is the alpha value of this study. Furthermore, the EcoVal has the strongest unique contribution in explaining the variation of Generation Z's intention to apply to an SME, followed by SocVal, DeVal and OrgR.

## 5.2 Discussion of Major Findings

Table 26 shows the status of the hypothesis. All the independent variables have a positive and significant relationship with dependant variable. This is because the R-value is positive and p-value is less than 0.05 which is the alpha value of this study. Therefore, alternative hypothesis is supported while null hypothesis will be rejected in this study.

Table 26

*Summary of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Linear Regression for the Independent Variables and Intention to Apply*

	Hypothesis	Results	Outcomes
H1	Economic value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.	R-value = 0.807 p-value = <0.000 (p-value = 0.000)	Supported
H2	Social value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.	R-value = 0.817 p-value = <0.000 (p-value = 0.000)	Supported
H3	Development value has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.	R-value =0.774 p-value = <0.000 (p-value = 0.426)	Supported
H4	Organisational reputation has a significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.	R-value =0.763 p-value = <0.000 (p-value = 0.004)	Supported
H5	The independent variables (economic value, social value, development value, and organisational reputation) have the significant impact on the dependent variable (intention to apply).	R-value =0.880 p-value = <0.000 (p-value = <0.001)	Supported

*Source:* Developed for the research

### **5.2.1 Hypothesis 1: Economic Value with Intention to Apply**

The finding reveals that EcoVal has a positive and significant impact on the intention to apply, which is consistent with the past studies conducted by Hoang et al. (2020) and Agrawa and Swaroop (2008). Besides that, Amara et, al. (2023) and Susilo and Widhiantio (2022) have concluded that the remuneration packages will affect the intention of job applicant to apply for a company. By referring to the results obtained, the question EV4 has obtained the highest mean, representing that most respondents as an applicant of Malaysia Gen Z prefer to work in SMEs which provide competitive salaries, as compared to others. Besides, the finding also aligned with the underlying theory, which is the signalling theory implying that the more attractive the company's signals (EcoVal) provided through its characteristics, the higher the intention to apply. Thus, the research objective and question has achieved and answered, as it has been found that there is a positive and significant relationship between EcoVal and Malaysia Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

### **5.2.2 Hypothesis 2: Social Value with Intention to Apply**

The finding reveals that SocVal has a positive and significant impact on the intention to apply, which is consistent with the past studies conducted by Ergun and Tatar (2016), and Khabir (2014). Besides, Sokro (2012), Kashyap (2017), and Odukah (2016) have provided that most applicants are more attracted to the working environment and relationships with colleague over the high salaries, and thus the higher the SocVal through the working environment and relationships, the higher the intention to apply. By referring to the results obtained, question SV5 has obtained the highest mean, indicating that most respondents as an applicant of Malaysia Gen Z prefer supportive and cooperative colleagues to work with, as compared to others. Besides, the finding also aligned with the underlying theory, which is the signalling theory implying that the more attractive the company's signals (SocVal) provided through its characteristics, the higher the intention to apply. Thus, the research objective and question has achieved and answered, as it has been found that there is a positive and significant relationship between SocVal and Malaysia Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

### **5.2.3 Hypothesis 3: Development Value with Intention to Apply**

The finding reveals that EcoVal has a positive and significant impact on the intention to apply, which is consistent with the past studies conducted by Ergun and Tatar (2016) and Santiago (2018). Besides that, Amber and Barrow (1996) have concluded that the DeVals such as recognition, self-esteem, confidence, etc will attract job applicant to apply for a company. Ha et, al. (2021) and Sarabdeen et, al. (2023) has concluded that job applicant prefers to work in a company that provides them with DeVals as an employee always cares about their own growth. The recognition for the outcome generated by the employee is necessary to achieve organisational goals and objectives (Ahma & Daud. 2015). By referring to the results obtained, question DV1 has obtained the highest mean, representing that most respondents as an applicant of Malaysia Gen Z prefer to work in SMEs which will appreciate their performance, as compared to others. Besides, the finding also aligned with the underlying theory, which is the signalling theory implying that the more attractive the company's signals (EcoVal) provided through its characteristics, the higher the intention to apply. Thus, the research objective and question has achieved and answered, as it has been found that there is a positive and significant relationship between EcoVal and Malaysia Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

### **5.2.4 Hypothesis 4: Organisational Reputation with Intention to Apply**

The finding reveals that OrgR has a significant and positive impact on the intention to apply, which is consistent with the past studies conducted by Vasavada-oza and Bhattacharjee (2016), Edwards (2010), Turban and Cable (2003), as well as Gomes and Neves (2010). There are also authors who documented that OrgR has the ability to attract talents (Turban et al., 1998; Sivertzen et al., 2013; Chapman et al., 2005). Therefore, some of the past studies concluded that the better the OrgR, the more attractive it is to the applicants (Gatewood et al., 1993; Rynes et al., 1991; Belt & Paolillo, 1982; Cable & Turban, 2003). It is undeniable that a good OrgR will enhance the intention to apply (Collins & Stevens, 2002; Behrend et al.,

2009; Kumari et al., 2020; Lievens & Highhouse, 2003; Turban & Greening, 1997). Furthermore, the question OR4 has obtained the highest mean by referring to the findings obtained, indicating that most respondents as an applicant of Malaysia Gen Z are most likely will apply for the SMEs with OrgR of high trustworthiness. Furthermore, the finding also aligned with the underlying theory, which is the signalling theory indicating that the more attractive the company's characteristics (OrgR), the higher the intention to apply and the job acceptance rate. Thus, the research objective and question has achieved and answered, as it has been found that there is a positive relationship between OrgR and Malaysia Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

## **5.3 Implications of the Study**

### **5.3.1 Theoretical Implications**

Signalling theory is the theory that is applied to explain the relationship between independent variables (EcoVal, SocVal, DeVal, and OrgR) and dependent variable (Intention to Apply). Based on the findings from the inferential analysis, signalling theory is related to this study as the intention of the receiver to apply to the signaller is 77.4% explained by the signal delivered from the signaller to the receiver. This represents that the more information about the SMEs (independent variables) has been perceived by Generation Z, the higher the intention of Generation Z to apply to an SME (dependent variable).

Besides that, the developed new conceptual framework will generate better justification for the variation of the intention of Generation Z to apply to an SME. The exclusion of the independent variables that are less significant (interest and application value) from Berthon's employer attractiveness and consider new independent variable (OrgR) which is

more significant has strengthened the significance of the model. The significance of the appropriate model can be explained by using signalling theory. The appropriate conceptual framework which consists of significant dependant and independent variables enabled the signaller to deliver the appropriate signal to the receiver to achieve the objective. The adjusted Berthon's employer attractiveness scale will provide different insights for the researcher to access employer branding.

### **5.3.2 Managerial Implications**

Based on the findings from the inferential analysis, the EcoVal, SocVal, DeVal and OrgR will significantly affect the intention of Malaysian Generation Z to apply to an SME. The human resources department of the SMEs should be trying to form strategies that will help in delivering the company information to the Malaysian Generation Z.

The EcoVal has the highest contribution to the dependent variable compared to other independent variables. The SMEs should focus more on increasing its EcoVal provided to the job applicant to attract Malaysian Generation Z to apply to SMEs. The SMEs should try to increase benefits such as competitive salary, allowance, leave passage, etc to attract job applicants. SMEs can also promise to offer a safe and favourable working environment as well as the opportunity for a job promotion to the job applicant. The EcoVal provided should be attractive enough to boost SMEs to become the first choice for Malaysian Generation Z and stimulate them to apply to SMEs.

Besides that, SMEs should also focus on increasing the SocVal provided to the job applicants because the SocVal has the second highest contribution to the variation of dependent variables among four independent variables. SMEs should focus on building a friendly organisational culture to build a pleasant working environment where colleagues are supportive and cooperative as well as have friendly relationships with each other. The

SMEs could also reduce the hierarchy of the organisational structure to cultivate friendly relationships between superiors and subordinates.

Furthermore, the DeVal should be increased when the EcoVal and SocVal has attracted the attention of job applicants. This is because DeVal makes the third highest contribution to the variation of dependent variables. SMEs should always appreciate employees' contributions by publicizing the contribution made on the company's website and social media, cash incentives etc. SMEs can also provide career growth opportunities by offering training programs, leadership development programs, continuing education courses, etc to their employees. Employee engagement can also be offered to the employee to increase the DeVal provided.

Lastly, SMEs should also focus on protecting their OrgR even though OrgR has only the lowest contribution to the variation of the dependent variable. This is because Malaysian Generation Z prefers to apply to a company that has a good OrgR. As such, SMEs can show the achievement or the reward on the banner during the career fair in order to arouse worship among Malaysian Generation Z. SMEs should treat employees fairly and appreciate the performance of employees to maximize employee satisfaction. The employee will not leave a bad review on the job-securing platform once they have been satisfied and the OrgR will be protected.

## 5.4 Limitations of the Study

Firstly, the scope of research is small to observe the impact of employer branding on Malaysia Gen Z's intention to apply, as the data collected are only targeted to the final year business students of UTAR, and UUM. The sampling element is unable to represent and capture the responses of all Gen Z in Malaysia.

Secondly, this research focuses on studying the impact of employer branding on Malaysia Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs, instead of other generations in the workforce, such as Gen X, and Gen Y. Therefore, this research will not be able to provide a reference for future researchers on the impact of employer branding on other generations' intention to apply to local SMEs.

Thirdly, the researchers did not study the impact of employer branding on Malaysia Gen's intention to apply to other types of enterprise, such as large enterprises, and multinational enterprises (MNE), but solely focused on local SMEs. The reason for choosing local SMEs is due to SMEs occupy almost all the total business establishment in Malaysia, as compared to other enterprises.

Fourthly, there are other relevant factors or potential independent variables that are not being studied and measured in this research. For instance, this research has excluded the interest and application value in Berthon's EmpAt scale due to there are studies showing that it may appear to be less significant on younger generations. Besides, there are also many studies measuring the impact of employer branding with other factors and frameworks that this study did not adopt due to this study focuses on using Berthon's EmpAt scale.

Lastly, a cross-sectional approach is adopted for the research design, instead of the longitudinal approach. It indicates that this research may not be relevant to be used as reference in the future, as this approach is unable to capture the research findings in long-term. The research findings may change in the future due to global trends, uncertainties, and external factors such as political factors.



## 5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

Firstly, future researchers may increase the scope of research by collecting data from science, engineering, social science, and information technology students coming from different universities. Thus, the sampling element consists of more respondents may be able to capture the responses of all Malaysian Gen Z, and avoiding the occurrence of survey bias.

Secondly, it is also suggested for future researchers to determine and study the impact of employer branding on different generations' intention to apply to local SMEs, as the current workforce also consisting of other generations. By studying and including other generations for future research, it may serve as a reference for the companies to determine the right types of employer branding strategies for different generations.

Thirdly, future researchers may expand the research or focus on studying the impact of employer branding on the Malaysia Gen Z's intention to apply to large enterprises, and multinational enterprises (MNE). It will allow the enterprises to have a reference and guidance for their employer branding strategies.

Fourthly, there are other potential independent variables that future researchers may look into for future research. Researchers may expand the framework proposed, or propose a new framework to study the impact of employer branding on the intention to apply by adding independent variables such as interest and application value of the Berthon's EmpAt scale, use of social media, online employer reviews, and others (Nilsen & Olafsen, 2013; Pernkopf et al., 2021)

Lastly, longitudinal, and qualitative approaches may be adopted for future research, as to measure and observe the study in long-term effect with qualitative data. By adopting these approaches, the future research will be able to capture the comprehensive findings along with changes in candidates' preference and response over time.

## 5.6 Conclusion

The independent variables (EcoVal, SocVal, DeVal, and OrgR) of this research study have evidently proven its significant impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs. Thus, the local SMEs may assess their employer branding aspects in terms of EcoVal, SocVal, DeVal, and OrgR, as to attract talents by increasing the Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply.

The research objective of this study has been achieved, as the impact of employer branding on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs has been found and determined. Therefore, this research study may provide a reference for local SMEs to emphasise on their employer branding. Researchers have also presented several recommendations for future researchers to improve the studies, which the future researchers may look into other relevant independent variables, and approaches to be adopted.

By referring to the findings, the SocVal has the highest impact on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs as compared to other independent variables, indicating that local SMEs should increase their emphasis on the SocVal in their employer branding strategies through their working environment and employee relations to increase the Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply. It is crucial for local SMEs to emphasise on its employer branding, as it solves the talent shortage issue (Kapoor, 2010).

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## Appendix

### Appendix 1: Questionnaire



UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND FINANCE (FBF)

BACHELOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (HONS)

#### **Impact of Employer Branding on Malaysian Gen Z's Intention to Apply to Local SMEs**

Dear Respondents,

We are final year students from Faculty of Business and Finance in Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman who are currently pursuing Business Administration. We are conducting a research study on "**Impact of Employer Branding on Malaysian Gen Z's Intention to Apply to Local SMEs**". The purpose of this survey is to observe the impact of employer branding on Malaysian Gen Z's intention to apply to local SMEs.

This questionnaire consists of **THREE (3)** sections. **Section A** is about your demographic profile, **Section B** is about your intention to apply to local SMEs, and **Section C** is about your perception towards the factors of employer branding on intention to apply to local SMEs. Thus, we would like to request you to take your 5 to 10 minutes to answer **ALL** questions in this form. We believe that your participation in this study will provide a huge contribution to our study. Your participation is highly appreciated. Thank you very much for your support.

Your response will be kept strictly **PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL** and be used only for **ACADEMIC PURPOSE**.

Your data privacy is important to us. Personal data collected will be protected in accordance to Personal Data Protection Act 2010.

For any enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact us at [yatkwai5360@lutar.my](mailto:yatkwai5360@lutar.my) or [oliviayen08@lutar.my](mailto:oliviayen08@lutar.my)

Please be informed that in accordance with Personal Data Protection Act 2010 (PDPA) which came into force on 15 November 2013, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) is hereby bound to make notice and required consent in relation to collection, recording, storage, usage and retention of personal information.

Acknowledgement of Notice:

( ) I have been notified by you and I hereby understood, consented and agreed per UTAR notice.

## Section A: Demographic Profile

Please tick (✓) the appropriate answer.

1. Gender:

Male  Female

2. Ethnic Group:

Chinese

Indian

Malay

Others: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Family Monthly Income:

Less than RM2000

RM2001– RM3000

RM3001 – RM4000

RM4001 – RM5000

RM5001 – RM6000

RM6001 – RM7000

RM7001 – RM8000

RM8001 – RM9000

RM9001 – RM10000

RM10001 – RM11000

Above RM11001

4. University:

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)

Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)

5. Have you had industrial training (internship) or relevant working experience:

Yes  No

6. Have you been working in an SME during your internship:

Yes  No

## Section B: Intention to Apply to Local SMEs

The following set of statements is related to the general information of intention to apply to local SME companies. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by circling one number per line on the 5-point Likert scale response framework in which {(1) = strongly disagree; (2) = disagree; (3) = neutral, (4) = agree; and (5) = strongly agree.}

**1= Strongly Disagree**

**2= Disagree**

**3= Neutral**

**4= Agree**

**5= Strongly Agree**

No.	Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I will choose the employer of SMEs as my first choice.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	If SMEs were at a career fair, I will visit their booths.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	If SMEs were at my campus, I will talk to their representatives.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I will accept the job offer from SMEs.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I will accept the job interview for SMEs.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I will have the motivation to perform my best for SMEs.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I will suggest SMEs to my friend or family who is looking for a job opportunity.	1	2	3	4	5

## Section C: Employer Branding

The following set of statements is related to employer branding. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement based on your consideration in choosing potential employers by circling one number per line on the 5-point Likert scale response framework in which {(1) = strongly disagree; (2) = disagree; (3) = neutral, (4) = agree; and (5) = strongly agree.}

**1= Strongly Disagree**

**2= Disagree**

**3= Neutral**

**4= Agree**

**5= Strongly Agree**

### Part 1: Economic Value

Economic value refers to the extent to which a future employee is attracted to a company that offers above-average salary along with benefits, job security, and job promotion opportunities.

No.	Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I believe SMEs provide great opportunities for promotion.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I believe SMEs provide opportunities to gain inter-departmental practical experiences.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I believe SMEs have favourable and good working conditions.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I believe SMEs provide competitive salaries above the market rate.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I believe SMEs provide attractive and competitive compensation packages [e.g. paid vacation leave, Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP), and health insurance]	1	2	3	4	5



## Part 2: Social Value

Social value refers to the extent to which a future employee will be attracted by a company that provides a good working environment and friendly relationships with co-workers.

No.	Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I believe SMEs provide a safe working environment.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I believe SMEs provide an enjoyable and lively working environment.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I believe I will have a friendly relationship with my superiors.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I believe I will have a friendly relationship with my co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I believe my colleagues are supportive and cooperative.	1	2	3	4	5

## Part 3: Development Value

Development value refers to the extent to which a future employee will be attracted by a company that provides recognition, self-esteem, and trust in addition to an experience that advances their career.

No.	Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I believe SMEs will appreciate my performance.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I will be able to gain career advancement experience if I worked in the SMEs.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I will feel good about myself working in the SMEs.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I will feel more confident about working in the SMEs.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I will be able to gain professional experience	1	2	3	4	5

	if I worked in the SMEs.					
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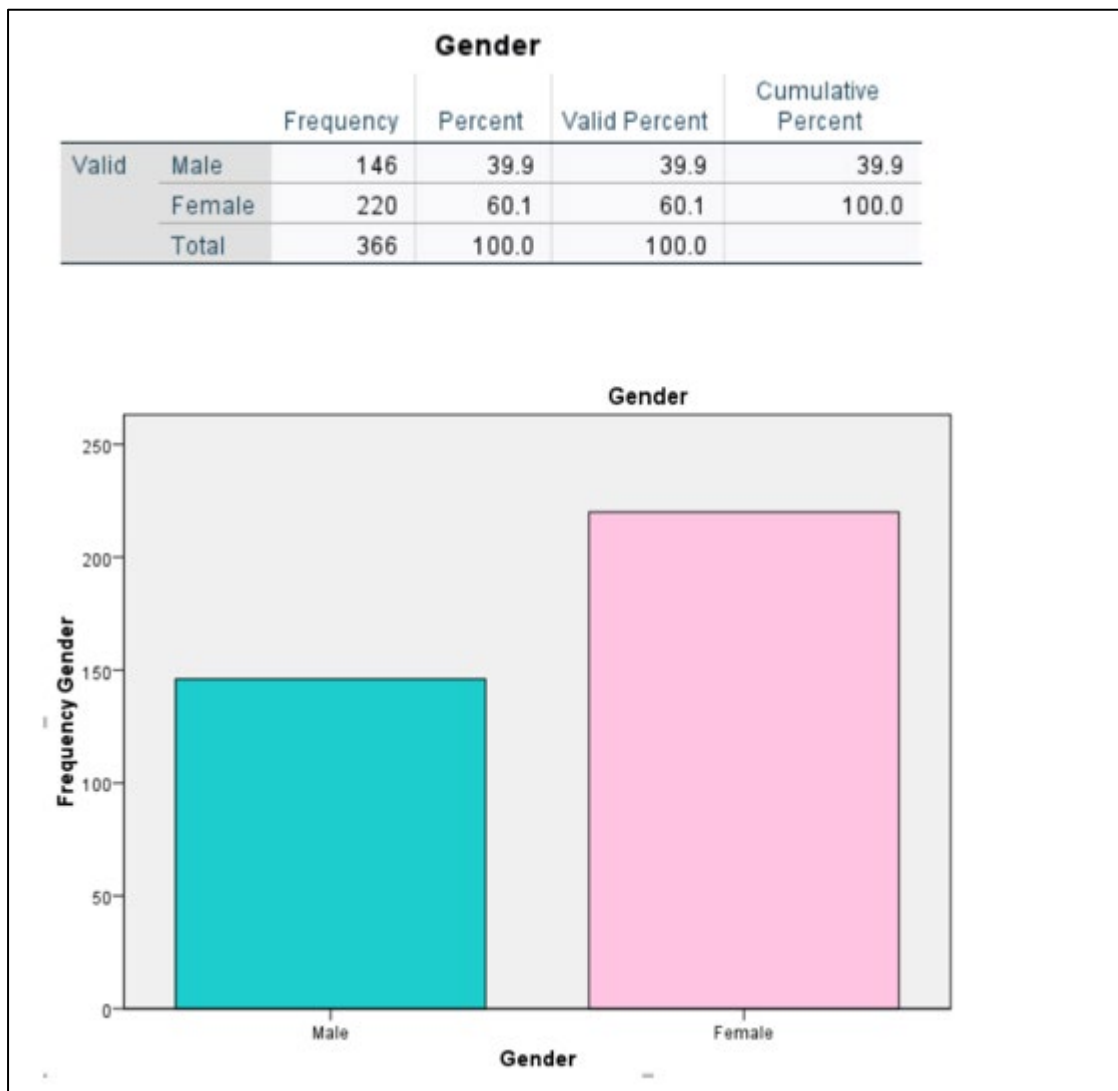
#### Part 4: Organisation Reputation

Organisation reputation refers to the extent to of a future employee will be attracted by the image or reputation of a company.

No.	Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I will be more attracted by a reputable SME for my career development.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I will be more attracted by a reputable SME that serves as my ideal workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I will be more attracted by an SME I have trust in.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I will be more attracted by an SME which I have heard a lot of compliments and positive things.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I will be more attracted by an SME that I feel positive to.	1	2	3	4	5

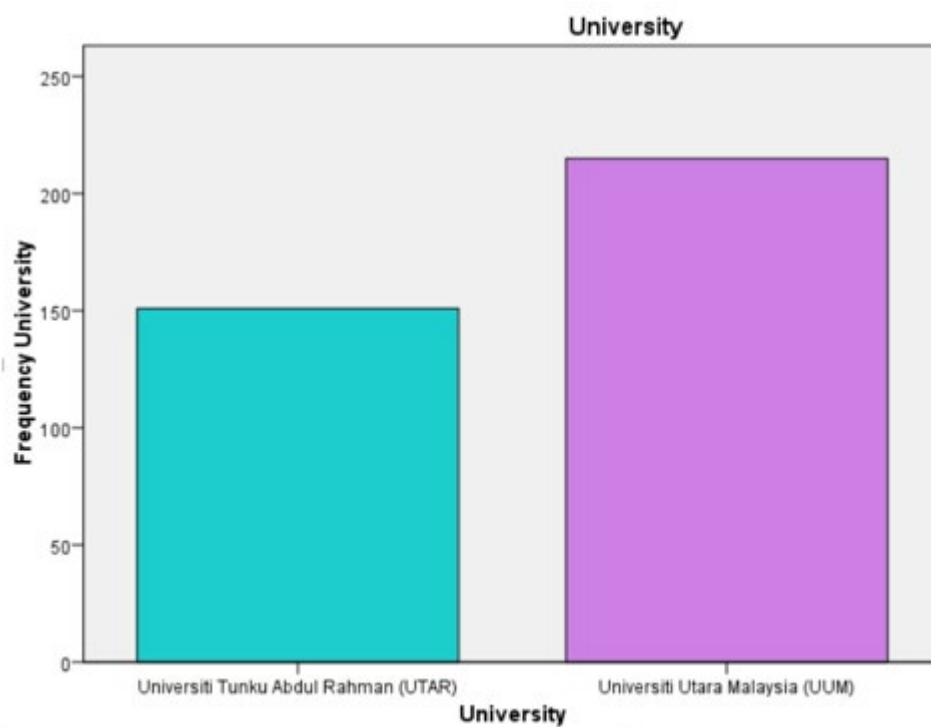
## Appendix 2: Descriptive Analysis

### Demographic Profile: Gender



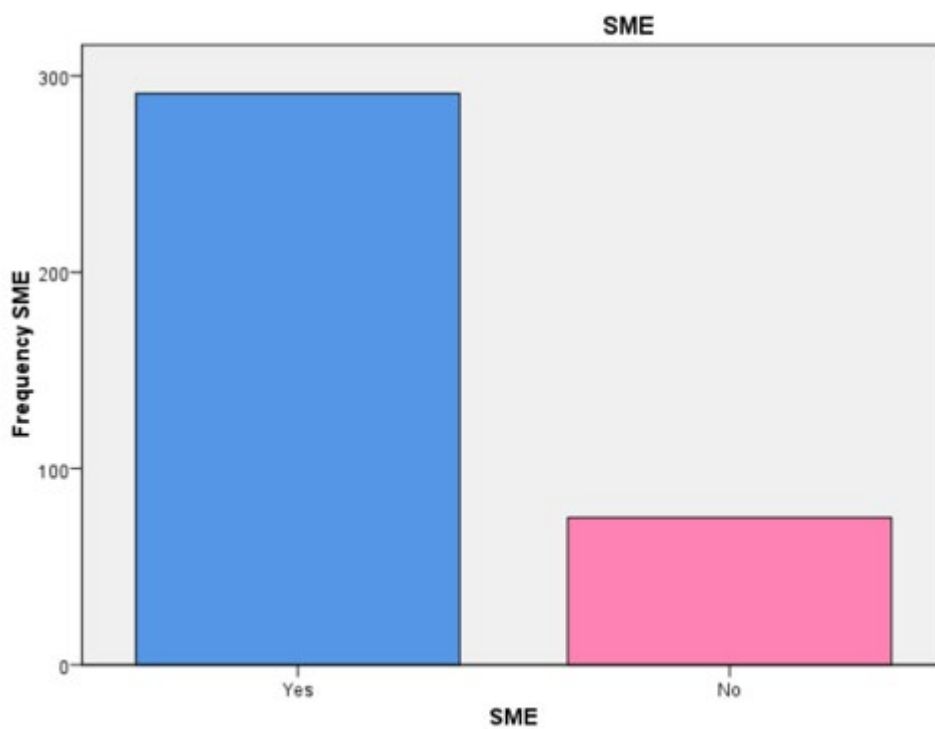
## Demographic Profile: University

		University			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)	151	41.3	41.3	41.3
	Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)	215	58.7	58.7	100.0
	Total	366	100.0	100.0	



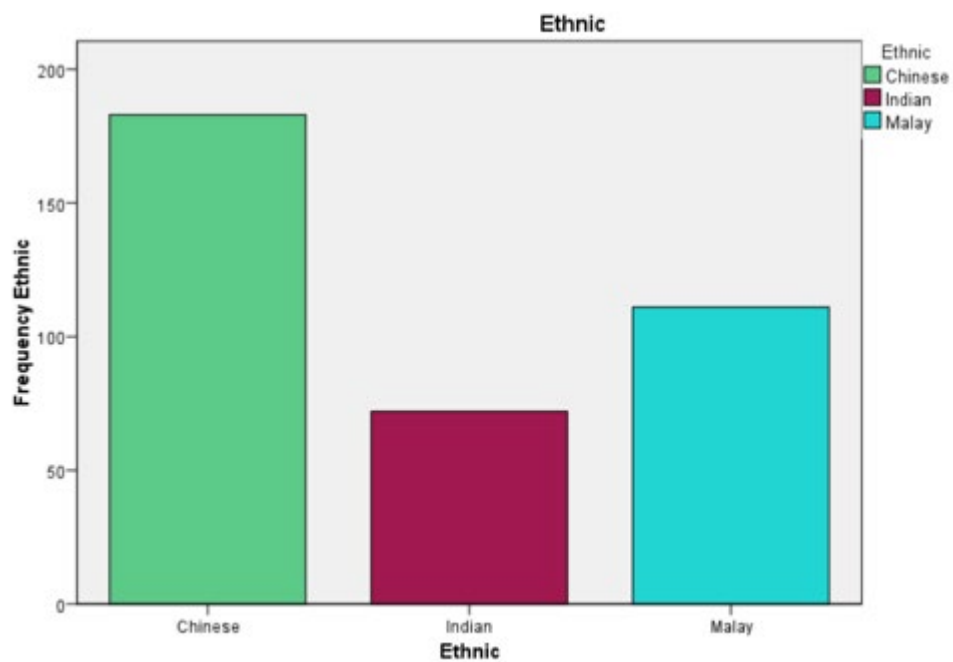
## Demographic Profile: Work in SME

		<b>SME</b>			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	291	79.5	79.5	79.5
	No	75	20.5	20.5	100.0
Total		366	100.0	100.0	



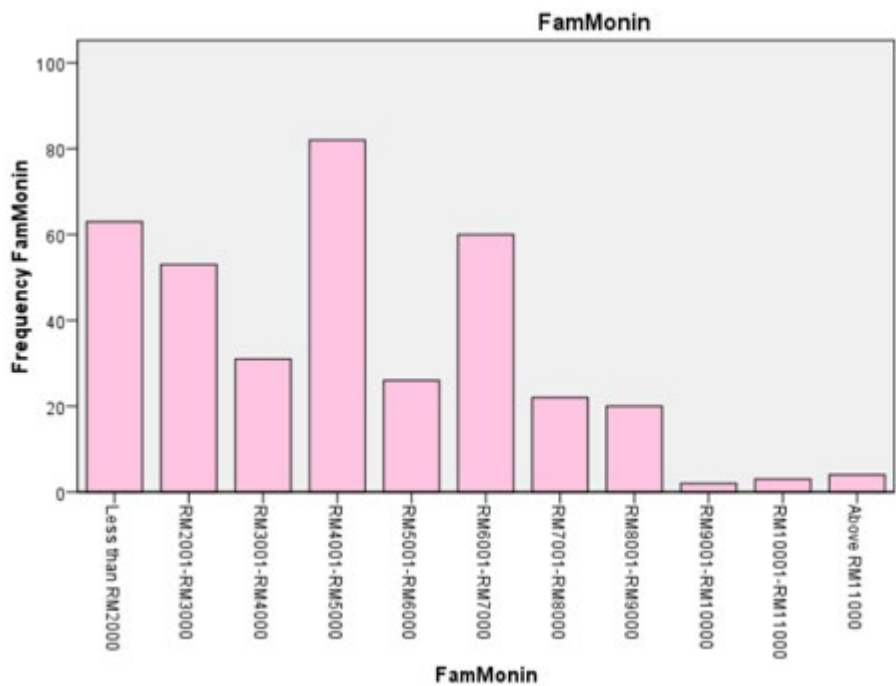
## Demographic Profile: Ethnic

		Ethnic			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Chinese	183	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Indian	72	19.7	19.7	69.7
	Malay	111	30.3	30.3	100.0
	Total	366	100.0	100.0	



Demographic Profile: Family Monthly Income

FamMonin					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than RM2000	63	17.2	17.2	17.2
	RM2001-RM3000	53	14.5	14.5	31.7
	RM3001-RM4000	31	8.5	8.5	40.2
	RM4001-RM5000	82	22.4	22.4	62.6
	RM5001-RM6000	26	7.1	7.1	69.7
	RM6001-RM7000	60	16.4	16.4	86.1
	RM7001-RM8000	22	6.0	6.0	92.1
	RM8001-RM9000	20	5.5	5.5	97.5
	RM9001-RM10000	2	.5	.5	98.1
	RM10001-RM11000	3	.8	.8	98.9
	Above RM11000	4	1.1	1.1	100.0
Total		366	100.0	100.0	



### Appendix 3: Reliability Test for Pilot Study

Dependent Variable: Intention to Apply

#### Reliability

Scale: INTENTION TO APPLY

#### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

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

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.812	.833	7

#### Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	4.119	3.767	4.333	.567	1.150	.047	7



Independent Variable: Economic Value

**Reliability**

**Scale: ECONOMIC**

**Case Processing Summary**

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

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

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.832	.834	5

**Summary Item Statistics**

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	4.120	3.933	4.333	.400	1.102	.025	5

Independent Variable: Social Value

**Reliability**

**Scale: SOCIAL**

**Case Processing Summary**

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

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

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.857	.862	5

**Summary Item Statistics**

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	4.007	3.733	4.200	.467	1.125	.040	5

Independent Variable: Development Value

**Reliability**

**Scale: DEVELOPMENT**

**Case Processing Summary**

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

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

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.836	.850	5

**Summary Item Statistics**

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	4.253	4.200	4.300	.100	1.024	.003	5

Independent Variable: Organisational Reputation

<b>Reliability</b>			
<b>Scale: ORGANISATIONAL REPUTATION</b>			
<b>Case Processing Summary</b>			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

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

<b>Reliability Statistics</b>		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.816	.829	5

<b>Summary Item Statistics</b>							
	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	4.233	4.100	4.367	.267	1.065	.013	5

## Appendix 4: Reliability Test for Actual Study

Dependent Variable: Intention to Apply

### Reliability

Scale: INTENTION TO APPLY

#### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	366	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	366	100.0

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

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.928	.928	7

#### Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	4.212	4.003	4.363	.361	1.090	.017	7

Independent Variable: Economic Value

**Reliability**

**Scale: ECONOMIC**

**Case Processing Summary**

		N	%
Cases	Valid	366	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	366	100.0

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

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.871	.872	5

**Summary Item Statistics**

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	4.134	4.027	4.369	.342	1.085	.019	5

Independent Variable: Social Value

<b>Reliability</b>							
<b>Scale: SOCIAL</b>							
<b>Case Processing Summary</b>							
		N	%				
Cases	Valid	366	100.0				
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0				
	Total	366	100.0				
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.							
<b>Reliability Statistics</b>							
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items					
.903	.903	5					
<b>Summary Item Statistics</b>							
	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	4.199	4.107	4.257	.150	1.037	.004	5

Independent Variable: Development Value

**Reliability**

**Scale: DEVELOPMENT**

**Case Processing Summary**

		N	%
Cases	Valid	366	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	366	100.0

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

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.890	.895	5

**Summary Item Statistics**

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	4.117	3.945	4.388	.443	1.112	.028	5



Independent Variable: Organisational Reputation

**Reliability**

**Scale: ORGANISATIONAL REPUTATION**

**Case Processing Summary**

		N	%
Cases	Valid	366	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	366	100.0

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

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.941	.941	10

**Summary Item Statistics**

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	4.257	3.945	4.516	.571	1.145	.042	10

## Appendix 5: Pearson Correlation Coefficient Analysis

		<b>Correlations</b>				
		IntentionAVG	EcoAVG	SocAVG	DevAVG	RepAVG
IntentionAVG	Pearson Correlation	1	.807**	.817**	.774**	.763**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	366	366	366	366	366
EcoAVG	Pearson Correlation	.807**	1	.722**	.801**	.709**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	366	366	366	366	366
SocAVG	Pearson Correlation	.817**	.722**	1	.785**	.803**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001	<.001
	N	366	366	366	366	366
DevAVG	Pearson Correlation	.774**	.801**	.785**	1	.799**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001		<.001
	N	366	366	366	366	366
RepAVG	Pearson Correlation	.763**	.709**	.803**	.799**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	
	N	366	366	366	366	366

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

## Appendix 6: Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

### Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.880 <sup>a</sup>	.774	.771	.30589

a. Predictors: (Constant), RepAVG, EcoAVG, SocAVG, DevAVG

b. Dependent Variable: IntentionAVG

### ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	115.395	4	28.849	308.325	<.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	33.777	361	.094		
	Total	149.172	365			

a. Dependent Variable: IntentionAVG

b. Predictors: (Constant), RepAVG, EcoAVG, SocAVG, DevAVG

### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.092	.121		.756	.450
	EcoAVG	.410	.045	.397	9.145	<.001
	SocAVG	.391	.047	.387	8.286	<.001
	DevAVG	.046	.058	.041	.798	.426
	RepAVG	.135	.046	.138	2.920	.004

a. Dependent Variable: IntentionAVG