ABSTRACT

One can see that the world has become interdependent, whereby physical borders have been transformed into transparent nets, allowing and leading to the continuous movement of wealth, information and human talents, and so forth across the Globe. The continuous globalization has brought significant changes to the lives of human beings. One of them is the increasing mobility of students to participate in overseas study. Due to the increasing globalization, the message specifically addressed to students seeking higher education opportunities, is that they must be prepared to face challenges in an extremely competitive global marketplace (Durbin, 2006). In addition, the exposure to and the understanding of different cultures and customs have become important criteria for the potential employment opportunities.

The importance of participating in study abroad has been recognized by both undergraduates and post-graduates. But the factors which influence students’ intention to pursue study abroad are debatable. Therefore, the Theory of Planned Behaviour as a ‘theoretical lens’ is used in this study as it allows the determining of the factors influencing students’ intention to participate in overseas study.

The insufficient available information creates challenges for the marketers to develop the campaigns that can really influence the final decision to pursue study abroad programs. This research examines the determinants of the Russian students’ intention to pursue educational programs in Malaysia. A survey is targeted to 351 undergraduates enrolled into linguistic courses at two universities in Vladivostok, Russia. Various factors have to be considered and analysed in the planning and developing of meaningful campaigns that will influence Russian students’ intention to pursue their education in Malaysia.

**Key Words:** Theory of Planned Behaviour, Russian linguistic students, intention, educational programs in Malaysia.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is a result of my effort only. The information used from secondary sources in this research paper was cited and referenced accordingly to the expected requirements.

Name: Shvets Elena

Date: 24 July 2013

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

This introductory chapter gives an overview of the research: its background (Section 1.2), the problem statement (Section 1.3), followed by the primary research objective which supported with sub-objectives (Section 1.4). Emphasis is given on the significance of this study (Section 1.5) as well as its limitations (Section 1.6). The scope of study is briefly introduced (Section 1.7). Key definitions which included in this paper are explained (Section 1.8). This chapter ends with a summary of this chapter (Section 1.9).

1.2 Background

'The World is Flat' (Friedman, 2009). Friedman (2009) argued that three eras of globalization have taken place. The first was Globalization 1.0 (est. 1492 till 1800) when the world started to shrink, as countries started globalizing. Then there was Globalization 2.0 (est. 1800 till 2000) when the world shrunk from size ‘medium’ to size ‘small’. The dynamic of change was not countries but companies, with the creation of multinational companies (MNCs). The third is Globalization 3.0 (est. from 2000 to the present) when the world has shrunk further from size ‘small’ to size ‘tiny’ aligning together with the flattening playing field. It is not built around companies globalizing or countries globalizing anymore, but it is built around a newest era, the ability of individuals and small groups globalizing. Individuals of every color of the rainbow have started to collaborate.

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The continuing globalization has resulted in the significant transformation of human beings’ lives (Friedman, 2009). The growing mobility of students pursuing overseas education is one of such the consequence of globalization (e.g., Sánchez, Fornerino and Zhang, 2006; Goel, de Jong and Schnusenberg, 2010; He and Chen, 2010). The message specifically communicated to undergraduates and post-graduates is clear that they must be able to face and deal with the growing challenges existing in the competitive global business arena (Durbin, 2006).

The foundation for MNCs is now established, making it important to understand the cultural differences within the business environment. The competency in dealing with the cross-cultural differences, is therefore crucial for today’s employment opportunities (Kedia and Daniel, 2003; De Jong, Schnusenberg and Goel, 2010).

UIS revealed the latest figures, indicating that the number of students enrolled in overseas education has increased by 2 million, reaching 3.6 million students within a decade (from 2000 to 2010). Some top educational destinations were highlighted, including the US (19%), UK (11%), Australia (8%), France (7%), Germany (8%), Japan (4%) and so forth (UNESCO, 2012). The importance to pursue the overseas study is understood (e.g., Relyea, Cocchiara and Studdard, 2008; Doyle et al., 2010). However, the underlying factors which drive students’ intention to participate in overseas study are still debatable. This is due to the insufficient number of theories applied (Bello at al., 2009), and the not so comprehensive research frameworks (Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel, 2012).

Unclear determinants, which drive students’ intention towards overseas educational programs, pose challenges to marketers. Marketers are tested to develop effective campaigns which will determine the final decision to join educational programs overseas. This paper seeks to examine the determinants of the Russian students’ intention to pursue educational programs in Malaysia. The targeted sample size is 351 linguistic undergraduates enrolled at the Far
Eastern Federal University (FEFU) and the Vladivostok State University of Economics and Service (VSUES) in Vladivostok, Russia.

1.3 Problem Statement

The main purpose of this paper is to find out the Russian students’ intention in pursuing educational programs in Malaysia. Critical factors which influence the Russian students’ intentions will be introduced and analysed through the application of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) presented by Icek Ajzen.

The recent empirical research conducted by Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel (2012), emphasized the importance in understanding factors that influence the final decision making to participate in overseas study. The TPB theory was used as the ‘theoretical lens’. TPB theory suggests that actual behaviour is determined by intention which is influenced by beliefs, these are behavioural belief, normative belief and control belief, and their corresponding components (Ajzen, 1991).

The overseas educational programs have increased its popularity by attracting the continuously growing number of international applicants; hence, many researches were conducted (e.g., Toncar, Reid and Anderson, 2006; He and Chen, 2010; de Jong, Schnusenberg and Goel, 2010; Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel, 2012). But similar researches have not been carried out on the Russian students towards educational programs in Malaysia. The purpose of this paper is significant. This research supports the 10th Malaysia Plan 2011–2015 as well as the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP). Education is one of the main key areas to support Malaysian economic growth (10th Malaysia Plan, 2010; ETP Annual Report, 2012). Russia is now a potentially huge market; therefore, attracting Russian students to pursue their education in Malaysia is becoming more important. Malaysia can be seen as an alternative educational destination for Russian students; hence internationally recognised
institutions have established their branches in Malaysia (ETP Annual Report, 2012).

There is a real need to examine the underlying factors which drive Russian students’ intentions to pursue educational programs in Malaysia. Consequently, this will be beneficial to both the Russian applicants and the Malaysian economy. On one hand, Russian students will realize the true advantages of joining educational programs in Malaysia, specifically the reasonable financial costs and the rich overall experience. On the other hand, the Malaysian economy will benefit in terms of foreign–exchange earnings from the Russian students and far greater cross investments and the potential business opportunities between the two countries.

Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel (2012) concluded and emphasised that the factor ‘fun’ must be included into the TPB model. They further elaborated that today the majority of international students are motivated by their perception of how much fun they can have while studying abroad. It is natural that, any person travelling abroad for the first time will experience some ‘culture shock’. According to Hall’s definition, culture shock is ‘an anxiety as a consequence of losing familiar symbols and signs of home social intercourse and being substituted with new and strange alternatives’. Furthermore, culture shock can also be a fun (Brown, Edwards and Hartwell, 2010). When fun is associated to joining overseas educational programs, the prominent factors must be considered, that include (1) the culture in the particular country (Langley and Breese, 2005), (2) the language as a second language (L2) for communication with members of a particular society (Shedivy, 2004), and (3) the food of a particular country (Brown, Edwards and Hartwell, 2010).

Malaysia is a multi–ethnic country which comprises of three major ethnic groups, namely the Malays, Chinese and Indians and the other small ethnic groups (Tourism Malaysia, n.d.). These ethnic groups have established the rich and diversified living environment in one country, Malaysia. Therefore, with the diverse culture, values, different languages with English language as a common language among corresponding ethnic groups and variety of cuisines, hence
culture shock exists. It is crystal clear that Russian students will experience a culture shock when they come to study in Malaysia. Russian students will have to and hence be motivated to improve their English language skills in order to communicate with the local people. In addition, English is a second language in Russia. Nevertheless, this sounds like fun and needs to be experienced, and should appeal to the Russian students if properly marketed.

1.4 Research Objectives

The overarching research objective is to examine determinants of Russian students’ intention to pursue educational programs in Malaysia.

The specified objectives are, including:

1. To find out whether the Russian students’ intention to join educational programs in Malaysia are determined by expectations of their future job opportunities;
2. To explore the role of Russian students families’ involvement towards the participation in educational programs in Malaysia;
3. To identify the Russian students’ degree of expectations from the International Offices (IO) with regards to educational programs in Malaysia;
4. To identify the Russian students’ willingness to pay for their educational programs in Malaysia;
5. To find out Russian students’ desire to participate in educational programs in Malaysia;
6. To explore Russian students’ perceptions of affordability of educational programs in Malaysia;
7. To find out how much fun the Russian students expect to have while studying in Malaysia.

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1.5 Significance of the Study

The contribution of this research is significant. The three main spheres are covered, including academia, government and industry.

This research paper will help to identify the most common and important factors which are considered by many applicants and their families before reaching the decision to study overseas. Then the fundamental understanding is established on how these factors influence Russian students’ intentions to pursue educational programs in Malaysia. Since no similar researches have been conducted yet within the same context, specifically Russian students’ intention to pursue educational programs in Malaysia; this research will create awareness and establish the fundamental field for the future studies within the proposed context. In addition, the proposed research framework is a guide for the future researches.

Russia spreads across North Asia and Europe, and is the largest country in the world. The estimated total population is 142.5 million in 2013 (CIA, 2013). Taking into consideration the country’s immense size and its huge population, Russia is seen as a big potential market for Malaysia. In addition, both Russia and Malaysia have had a satisfactory diplomatic relationship for over four decades (Bonar, 2007). This corresponding relationship has created a favorable environment for Malaysia. Genuinely, Russian applicants will contribute to Malaysian economy in terms of foreign exchange earnings. Furthermore, the favorable environment is established and strengthened to further foster and grow the relationship between two counties, which may lead to the often desired cross-investments and other related business opportunities.

The findings from this research paper will contribute to the educational sector in Malaysia. The important factors which influence Russian students’ intention to enroll into educational programs in Malaysia will be revealed. Therefore, marketers will be able to take an advantage of this. Taking into consideration the findings, the necessary strategic and effective marketing campaigns then can be developed and targeted to the Russian students who are interested to study overseas. Furthermore, the fundamental for effective and advantageous
networks can be established between universities in Russia and universities in Malaysia, prioritizing students' exchange programs. This will support the Malaysian ETP, as Malaysia is set to be become a global education hub (ETP Annual Report, 2012).

1.6 Study Limitations

As with many other research papers, this research is subjected to several limitations.

First is the limitation of the sample size of the Russian linguistic students. Therefore, the number of the selected sample size will be insufficient, in contrast to the general Russian students' population. As it was mentioned above, any foreign language is considered as a L2 in Russia. It is important to obtain the information from a sufficiently large sample size. Hence, the findings will be more accurate.

Second is the capability to reach the projected sample size. Genuinely, there are Russian linguistic students who will be unreachable due to some reasons, including (1) differences in their timetables, (2) students' absenteeism when survey is scheduled to be conducted and so forth. Consequently, this challenges for the necessary desired and required number of respondents to be reached.

Third is the limited research area. In the earlier section, it was stated that Russia is the largest country in the world. Therefore, this research is planned to be conducted only in one Russian city located in Far East of Russia, called Vladivostok. Before jumping to any conclusion, it is crystal clear that more studies need to be conducted within the same proposed context in the future. Only then, can any conclusions be drawn in relation to the entire population of the Russian students and their intentions to enroll in educational programs in Malaysia.

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Fourth is the projection of the actual number of students who ended up studying overseas. TPB helps to determine people’s intentions for the behavior to be performed (Armitage and Conner, 2001). This positions a question whether the actual behavior is being performed. Secondly, whether the number of obtained respondents is close enough to the number of respondents who performed the actual behavior. Therefore, this again creates challenges to know the actual outcome.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The geographic focus of this study is Vladivostok located in Far East of Russia.

The sample focus of this research paper is the Russian linguistic students. Russian linguistic students are selected for one main reason, and that is their competence in English or Chinese, and any other foreign languages. Genuinely, the Russian language is the official language in Russia; the other languages are perceived as L2. The individuals decide for themselves whether to learn L2. Therefore, the main focus had to and is given to the Russian linguistic students because of their competence in foreign languages. It is expected that they will naturally be more interested in overseas studies. In fact, some of the participants in this study had already participated in short-term study abroad.

The unit of analysis of this study is Russian undergraduates from linguistic educational programs in two local universities in Vladivostok, FEFU and VSUES. Both FEFU and VSUES are well known and well recognized in Far East of Russia. In addition, strong competition exists between these two universities. On one hand, FEFU have existed in the educational sector for over a century. Throughout the corresponding period of time, FEFU has grown into a strong player. On the other hand, VSUES, since its establishment four decades ago, has transformed itself into a competitive player in the same educational sector. Both FEFU and VSUES have various educational programs, including foreign exchange students program (FEFU, 2013; VSUES, 2011).

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This study is planned to be conducted with the application of the quantitative research approach. The reasons for the quantitative approach to be selected are that first it allows the quantification of views and opinions, attitudes and behaviors of the targeted sample towards the particular matter. Second, it enables the testing of research hypotheses and the determination the type of relationships between variables.

The obtained information from the respondents will be keyed in and then analyzed with relevant tests through SPSS software version 17.0 and SmartPLS software 2.0.

The aim of this research paper is to examine determinants of Russian students' intention to pursue educational programs in Malaysia. The main focus is going to be on Russian linguistic students only.

1.8 Operational Definitions


**Scientific Terms:** Behavioural beliefs – are the individual's personal goals whereby the consequences of the behaviour will lead to the accomplishment of these goals; control beliefs – one's perception based on the level of difficulty to perform the behaviour; geocentric – global citizen; global village – the world as a single community which linked by telecommunications; globalization – is the process whereby businesses or relevant activities operates on the multinational scale; normative beliefs – one's perception of a particular behaviour which is being influenced by the judgment of others.
Explanation of Certain Events: short-term study abroad – usually refers to the period of up to 15 days; students’ mobility – refers to the phenomenon of students changing schools for reasons other than grades.

1.9 Chapter Summary

The introductory chapter began with the introduction to the research area’s background. The emphasis was given on globalization which has brought many significant changes to human lives. This led to the formation of the research problem in this study, specifically focusing on the educational programs abroad generally, and then looking into the more specific and narrow field, which is the Russian students’ intention to pursue educational programs in Malaysia. These resulted in the formation of the primary research objective of this study which was supported with several sub–objectives. In addition the significance of this study was emphasized by focusing on three main sectors, including academia, government and industry. Furthermore, as in any other studies, this study was also subjected to limitations. Next, the brief introduction to the scope of this study was made. Last but not least, the operational definitions of acronyms and scientific terms was included and explained.

The next chapter, chapter two, looks at the literature reviewed.

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CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter begins with today's view on study abroad (Section 2.2), the TPB model (Section 2.3) and the modification of the TPB model (Section 2.4) are introduced and discussed next, which in turn led to the elaboration on the research and hypotheses formation (Section 2.5). This chapter then concludes with its summary (Section 2.6).

2.2 Today's View on Study Abroad

The emergence of the 'global village' has resulted in the continuously increasing number of students participating in the numerous available overseas educational programs. Students have recognized and accepted the true value of obtaining international education in today's global living environment such as the learning the foreign languages, the exploration and adoption of new cultures and business practices and so forth (Clarke III, Flaherty, Wright and McMillen, 2009; de Jong, Schnusenberg and Goel, 2010; Gullekson, Tucker, Coombs Jr. and Wright, 2013). The continuously growing number of MNCs has created many challenges for the applicants' future employment opportunities. Today, the most expected competencies for potential applicants to have are the skills to deal professionally with cross-cultural differences (Kedia and Daniel, 2003). Kedia and Daniel (2003) further elaborated that the main purpose of the international programs must be the preparation of competent human capital. Therefore, students must be taught on how to enrich their knowledge and to develop new skills. Whereas, when they step into the global business...
environment, they are expected to and demanded by MNCs. In addition, significant contributions will be made for these MNCs to prosper in the long-run.

In the research conducted by Toncar, Reid and Anderson (2012), it was stated that universities have tailored educational programs to specifically meet the expectations of exchange students, especially business students. A comparison was done between business and non-business students. It was found that preferences in relation to study abroad were similar by both groups; however, the perceptions were different. Business students were more pragmatic in the way they perceived overseas educational programs as a way to enhance their jobs potential. In addition, they were attracted to working overseas.

Clarke III, Flaherty, Wright and McMillen (2009) emphasized that students, who participated in exchange programs, described their whole experience as a 'life changing'. They have transformed into a 'geoscopic'. These students have developed cross-cultural proficiencies, including (1) global awareness, (2) competence in communication across different cultures, (3) understanding and accepting people's diversity as well as (4) awareness of cultural sensitivity. As a result, students have become more aware of cross-cultural differences as compared to the students at home universities. Gullickson, Tucker, Coombs Jr. and Wright (2013) also drawn similar conclusion in their research.

The developed and obtained competencies from overseas educational programs are crystal clear. Therefore, the participation in overseas educational programs must be seen as the norm and not the exception (Lincoln Commission, 2005 cited at de Jong, Schnusenberg and Goel, 2010). The question what are the factors which drive students' intention to pursue educational programs abroad arises? De Jong, Schnusenberg and Goel (2010) found that students genuinely take into consideration many different factors when the decision has to be made towards the participation in educational programs abroad. In fact, the cost of the program is not the only considered main factor. The other important factors are academic and cultural characteristics, as well as the preferred geographical areas, the preferred seasonal time and the nature of the study program abroad itself. Similarly, He
and Chen (2010) agreed that the seasonal time is one of the considered factors, but they also found that the duration of the educational program abroad is also important. These are just some of the research findings, which were found without application of any ‘theoretical lenses. In order to get a clearer and better understanding of which factors really drive students’ intention to join overseas educational programs, the necessary examination will be done through TPB next.

2.3 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

Ajzen (1991) stated that it is really a difficult and complex in its nature task to explain human behavior. The TPB was extended from the theory of reasoned action. The fundamental of both the theory of reasoned action and TPB is the person’s intention to perform a particular behavior. In addition, the general rule is that the stronger the intention to engage in a behavior, the more likely that the behavior would be performed.

The main concept of TPB is that one’s beliefs and its corresponding elements influence its intention; hence the actual behavior is determined to be performed. Furthermore, three types of beliefs were emphasized, including (1) behavioral beliefs influence individual’s attitude towards the behavior, (2) normative beliefs are part of the underlying elements of subjective norms and (3) control beliefs establish fundamental for perception of behavioral control. These are also called salient beliefs. Salient beliefs are these beliefs which are perceived to be the most common determinants of an individual’s intention and action (Ajzen, 1991). Naturally, people have many beliefs towards any behavior. However, they only attend a small number at any given moment (Miller, 1994). Figure 2.1 illustrates the Ajzen’s TPB model.
Figure 2.1: TPB Model

![Diagram showing the TPB Model with Behavioral beliefs, Normative beliefs, Control beliefs leading to Intention, and Intention leading to Behavior.]


Ajzen (1991) concluded that TPB is an effective framework when working with the complexities of people's behaviour. Furthermore, the theory allows to predict and to understand the particular behaviour in a given context. The three types of beliefs, presented in Figure 2.1, are found to predict behavioural intentions with the desired level of accuracy. Then, these intentions will determine the behaviour.

The TPB model has been used as a ‘theoretical lens’ in several studies (e.g., Presley, Damron-Martinez and Lin Zhang, 2010; Goel, de Jong and Schnusenberg, 2010). However, Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel (2012) had further modified the TPB model.

2.4 Modification of TPB Model

Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel (2012) also conducted their research in relation to students' intentions towards overseas study. The authors' further contribution was to bring mediating variables between beliefs and intentions into the original TPB model. In addition, it was the first study that was empirically supported for the mediation.

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The original TPB model is represented with the direct relationship between beliefs and intentions, as shown in Figure 2.1. In the study done by Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel (2012), three mediating variables were incorporated, including (1) willingness to pay, (2) desire and (3) affordability. The suitability to incorporate the corresponding mediating variables was due to the earlier different conducted studies (e.g., Luzar and Cseé, 1998; Perugini and Bagozzi, 2001; Nabi and Holden, 2008). Figure 2.2 illustrates the modified TPB model.

**Figure 2.2: Modified TPB Model**

- **Behavioral belief:** Future job prospects
- **Normative belief:** Family expectations
- **Control belief:** Administrative support

**Desire**

**Willingness to Pay**

**Intention to Participate**

**Affordability**


Looking at the context of overseas study, Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel (2012) stressed that willingness to pay was never incorporated in previous similar studies. However, the authors found evidence that the willingness to pay was applied as a mediator between beliefs and intentions. In addition, willingness to pay is an important criterion to be considered by the students, especially in the context of overseas study. Furthermore, the authors also stated that the variable ‘desire’ was never come across in the overseas study context literature. And last but not least, both willingness to pay and affordability variables were clearly distinguished. Willingness to pay refers to the person’s willingness to pay for overseas educational programs if the required resources...
are available; while affordability is associated with the person’s available financial resources to enroll in the overseas educational programs.

Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel (2012) concluded and then admitted that there was a missing factor in their research TPB model, the factor ‘fun’. This has established the field for this study to be conducted; hence the factor ‘fun’ is incorporated in the already modified TPB model and will be discussed next.

2.5 Research and Hypotheses Formation

The study conducted by Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel (2012) established the fundamental platform for this research paper. The TPB is applied as a ‘theoretical lens’ for this research. Furthermore, beliefs in the TPB model in relation to overseas study have been defined as follows (1) behavioral beliefs are interrelated to the individual’s personal objectives, and whether the particular behavior will result in the achievement of these objectives; (2) normative beliefs and subjective norms are related to the person’s perception in relation to a certain behavior, as determined predominantly by relatives, lecturers, superiors and so forth; (3) control beliefs are referred to the degree of difficulty to perform the behavior, specifically the helpfulness of the IO in home universities (Ajzen, 1991; Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel, 2012). The main objective of this research paper is to examine the determinants of Russian students’ intentions to participate in educational programs in Malaysia. Furthermore, the earlier proposed research based on the TPB model which is shown in Figure 2.2 is further modified. Factor ‘fun’ is incorporated into the TPB model as another mediating variable. Therefore, the primary dependent variable is represented by the Russian students’ intention to participate in educational programs in Malaysia. In this research context, intention to participate means that Russian students will likely pursue educational programs in Malaysia. The hypotheses formation will be explained next.
2.5.1 Behavioral Beliefs: Future Job Opportunities

In the context of participation in overseas educational programs, behavioral beliefs refer to the students’ beliefs that their participation in overseas educational programs will contribute to the achievement of their desired goals. These goals can be linked to the students’ personal, academic or job related objectives (Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel, 2012). As an example, students may believe that their participation in overseas educational programs will further enhance their future employment and career development potential (Toncar, Reid and Anderson, 2006; Relyea, Cocchiara, and Studdard, 2008). Looking at the continuously increasing number of students joining overseas programs, it can be concluded that the real obtained benefits are recognized in relation to the corresponding educational programs. As a result of this, if Russian students strongly believe that educational programs in Malaysia will enhance and benefit their future job opportunities, their willingness to pay for such programs will increase. Hence, this hypothesized:

**Hypothesis 1 (H1):** Russian students’ behavioral beliefs of their future job opportunities are positively related to their willingness to pay to pursue educational programs in Malaysia.

2.5.2 Normative Beliefs: Family’s Expectations

In the context of overseas educational programs, normative beliefs are characterized by the family involvement (Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel, 2012). Genuinely, family expectations are perceived to have significant influence on decision-making in relation to overseas studies (Presley, Damron-Martinez and Zhang, 2010). However, in the context of overseas educational programs, family expectations are treated as normative beliefs (Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel, 2012). Therefore, the family most probably will inspire and motivate students to pursue educational programs in Malaysia. This is due to the family’s realization of real benefits from overseas educational programs, which they did not have at their time. Consequently, the stronger the realization
of the potential received benefits from educational programs in Malaysia by the families, the probability of willingness to pay will also rise. Therefore, this hypothesized:

**Hypothesis 2 (H₂):** Russian students’ normative beliefs of families’ expectations are positively related to their willingness to pay to pursue educational programs in Malaysia.

### 2.5.3 Control Beliefs: Support by IO in Home Universities

In the context of overseas educational programs, control beliefs are related to the students’ perception that joining overseas educational programs is not that difficult, especially with the ensured help from IO at their home universities. Furthermore, the perceived financial cost to participate in overseas educational programs will decrease because of the provided help from IO staff. The help is in the form of the required and necessary support and the expected information disclosure on the specific educational programs as well as all other related and relevant matters (Goel, de Jong and Schnusenberg, 2010). Therefore, if Russian students believe that the provided support by IO at their home universities exceed their expectations, the Russian students will be more willing to pay for their educational programs in Malaysia. Consequently, this can be hypothesized:

**Hypothesis 3 (H₃):** Russian students’ control beliefs of the expected support by the IO at their home universities are positively related to their willingness to pay to pursue educational programs in Malaysia.

### 2.5.4 Willingness to Pay for Educational Programs in Malaysia

Person’s cognitive factor of willingness to pay is defined as the level to which extent the individual is ready to spend resources on overseas educational
programs, provided that the resources are available (Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel, 2012). Genuinely, if an individual does not have available resources, they might still have high possibilities of willingness to pay due to their perception that overseas educational programs are ‘worth it’. Thus, the perceived benefits outweigh the perceived costs. It is wrong to think that the perceived benefits and the perceived costs are only referred to as financial matters; it is also recognized as time and effort (Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel, 2012). This leads to the conclusion that if Russian students have high willingness to pay to join educational programs in Malaysia, this is because they feel that the perceived benefits outweigh the perceived costs. Hence, the intention to pursue these educational programs is higher. Hence, it is hypothesized:

Hypothesis 4 (H₄): Russian students’ willingness to pay for educational programs in Malaysia will be positively related to their intentions to pursue these educational programs.

2.5.5 Desire

Several studies examined the incorporated ‘desire’ factor in the TPB model (e.g., Perugini and Bagozzi, 2001; Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel, 2012). However, according to Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel (2012) the earlier literature covering the overseas study context had not had the element ‘desire’. Therefore, there is a need to conduct more studies by addressing ‘desire’ in relation to overseas educational programs. Genuinely, affective states comprise of feelings, emotions and drives in relation to the attitude object. Furthermore, Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel (2012) defined a person’s affective state of desire to join as the predisposition towards overseas educational programs. Naturally, individuals can be attracted to overseas educational programs; hence believing that it ‘worth it’. However, they also can be predisposed towards or against going to overseas study. On the one hand, there are students who enjoy participating in overseas educational programs; hence experiencing new
cultures (Langley and Breese, 2005). On the other hand, there are students who have no interest at all in participating in these programs. Therefore, if Russian students have the underlying desire to pursue educational programs in Malaysia, this should be translated into their intention to join these educational programs. Hence, this hypothesized:

**Hypothesis 5 (H₅):** Russian students’ desire to participate in educational programs in Malaysia will be positively related to their intentions to pursue these educational programs.

### 2.5.6 Affordability

There is a visible difference in the tuition fees between educational programs in home country and the overseas educational programs. In fact, the cost of overseas educational programs has been increasing. Therefore, this has stopped some of the students joining overseas studies. Furthermore, economic implications are one of the important determinants and are always being considered when it comes to decision-making towards participation in overseas educational programs. Individuals may have strong perception that overseas educational programs are beneficial, or have a strong desire to join these programs; naturally this should boost the individuals’ intentions. But, insufficient financial feasibility can really affect individuals’ intentions to join overseas educational programs; hence it will be weakened (Nabi and Holden, 2008). Therefore, the hypothesis is that affordability is positively related to the Russian students’ intentions:

**Hypothesis 6 (H₆):** Russian students’ perceptions of affordability to participate in educational programs in Malaysia will be positively related to their intentions to pursue these educational programs.
2.5.7 Fun

Last but not least, Schnusenberg, de Jong and Goel (2012) stated that TPB model should be further modified by bringing in the mediating variable ‘fun’. The authors further elaborated on this, suggesting that one of the main reasons why students participate in overseas education programs is because of their expectation of how much fun they will have while studying overseas. In the previous chapter, ‘fun’ was associated with the culture shock. The majority of the students going to study overseas in spite of the length of the programs will experience a culture shock in the corresponding country most of time. Whereas, culture shock is associated with the uniqueness of the culture in a particular country which leads to the uniqueness of the cuisines there, the foreign language and so forth (Shedivy, 2004; Langley and Breese, 2005; Brown, Edwards and Hartwell, 2010). Therefore, the higher the Russian students' expectations of how much fun they would have in Malaysia while on their education course, the stronger their intention to pursue these educational programs. Consequently, hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 7 (H7): Russian students' expectations of how much fun they can have while studying in Malaysia will be positively related to their intentions to pursue educational programs in Malaysia.

To sum up, the basic fundamental for this research has already been established. However, the context of this research, specifically examining the Russian students' intentions to pursue educational programs in Malaysia, has never been researched yet. Russian students' intention will be determined by their willingness to pay, desire, affordability and fun. In addition, the Russian students' willingness to pay for educational programs in Malaysia will be determined by their expectations of future job opportunities (subjective beliefs), their families' involvement and expectations (normative beliefs) and IO support (control beliefs). The proposed research framework represented in Figure 2.3.
2.6 Chapter Summary

A general view was taken on the today's educational programs abroad. The main competencies were discussed which students obtain while studying overseas. In addition, several factors which drive students' intentions to participate in overseas study were suggested according to several research findings. However, in order to get a clearer picture what factors really drive students' intentions towards the participation in studies abroad, the original and modified TPB models were reviewed. The TPB model as a 'theoretical lens' was applied in this study. This then led to the research and hypotheses formation.

The next chapter, chapter three, will explain the type of research method used in this study.