

SAMPLE 3
UG DISS.

Mark Scheme

BUS040X631Y	BUSINESS DISSERTATION	MARK	Excellent 70% +	Good 60-69%	Satisfactory 50-	Weak 40-49%	Very poor - 39%
Student Name and number 11328211							
Title of dissertation Restless Youth							
INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVES (10%) *is the topic clearly stated and defined with a clear purpose? *are the aims and objectives (or research questions) clear, relevant and coherent? *if a hypothesis is identified, is it a proper testable hypothesis? *are the aims and objectives achievable?	COMMENTS Good intro. but summary of findings would be useful	70					
LITERATURE REVIEW (20%) *has a comprehensive range of relevant literature been used? *are the sources up to date and of sufficient academic weight? *does the dissertation give evidence of a critical attitude towards source material? *have the sources been acknowledged and referenced properly? Is the bibliography complete and in the Harvard style?	COMMENTS Good lit review	80					
METHODOLOGY (15%) *is there a clear rationale for methodology? *have the advantages and disadvantages of the chosen methods been discussed? *is the research methodology described fully? Could it be replicated? *are relevant research instruments eg blank and completed questionnaires *are the sampling methods described in detail i.e. *who are the respondents, how many and how selected? *are data analysis methods discussed eg content analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation, tests of significance	COMMENTS In general methodology is fine but the description could've been more detailed where's pilot study?	65					
RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION (25%) *is the analysis appropriate to the data collected? *FOR QUESTIONNAIRES *how clearly presented are the data? Are details of the statistical analyses provided? Does the chosen statistical analysis make the most of the data? *FOR DEPTH INTERVIEWS	COMMENTS Results section is fine but try to present practical implications of them in more details.	70	✓				

<p>*are the interview transcripts included in the appendices? Is there evidence that the data have been systematically analysed? Is there a summary of key points?</p> <p>*are the key themes and issues discussed</p> <p>*are links drawn with both the research objectives and the literature review</p>							
<p>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (10%)</p> <p>*do the conclusions follow on from the findings?</p> <p>*are the conclusions well grounded in the evidence?</p> <p>*are the recommendations plausible given the research findings?</p>	<p>COMMENTS*</p> <p>Good summary of the main findings, 70 ✓</p>						
<p>OVERALL STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION (10%)</p> <p>*is the overall style and presentation in accordance with that specified in the Module Handbook e.g. word count, spacing, section headings, Harvard style of references, font size</p> <p>*is the abstract a concise summary of the main aims, methodology, findings and conclusions?</p> <p>*does the dissertation read as an academic piece of work?</p>	<p>COMMENTS*</p> <p>The work follows the recommended structure, however the language is sometimes too simplistic 60 ✓</p>						
<p>VIVA (10%)</p> <p>Did the student authenticate and substantiate the submitted work?</p> <p>Was the student on top of the material presented?</p>	<p>COMMENTS*</p> <p>Power Point presentation could be better 70</p>						

1st MARKERS MARK:

70

2nd MARKERS MARK:

70

FINAL MARK:

70

[Signature] Umar Ali

Mark Scheme

BUS040X631Y	BUSINESS DISSERTATION	MARK	Excellent 70% +	Good 60-69%	Satisfactory 50-	Weak 40-49%	Very poor - 39%
Student Name and number							
Title of dissertation	"Reckless youth..."						
INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVES (10%) *is the topic clearly stated and defined with a clear purpose? *are the aims and objectives (or research questions) clear, relevant and coherent? *if a hypothesis is identified, is it a proper testable hypothesis? *are the aims and objectives achievable?	COMMENTS - Clear set of objectives - An interesting mix of variables to explore the theme of this study	8	✓				
LITERATURE REVIEW (20%) *has a comprehensive range of relevant literature been used? *are the sources up to date and of sufficient academic weight? *does the dissertation give evidence of a critical attitude towards source material? *have the sources been acknowledged and referenced properly? Is the bibliography complete and in the Harvard style?	COMMENTS - Very thorough literature review - Some of the discussion could be more succinct.	17	✓				
METHODOLOGY (15%) *is there a clear rationale for methodology? *have the advantages and disadvantages of the chosen methods been discussed? *is the research methodology described fully? Could it be replicated? *are relevant research instruments eg blank and completed questionnaires *are the sampling methods described in detail i.e. *who are the respondents, how many and how selected? *are data analysis methods discussed eg content analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation, tests of significance	COMMENTS - Choice of statistical techniques and research method in general is questionable - Survey questionnaire should have been validated with a pilot study.	8		✓			
RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION (25%) *is the analysis appropriate to the data collected? *FOR QUESTIONNAIRES *how clearly presented are the data? Are details of the statistical analyses provided? Does the chosen statistical analysis make the most of the data? *FOR DEPTH INTERVIEWS	COMMENTS - Very interesting and insightful analysis and inferences.	18	✓				

<p>*are the interview transcripts included in the appendices? Is there evidence that the data have been systematically analysed? Is there a summary of key points?</p> <p>*are the key themes and issues discussed</p> <p>*are links drawn with both the research objectives and the literature review</p>							
<p>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (10%)</p> <p>*do the conclusions follow on from the findings?</p> <p>*are the conclusions well grounded in the evidence?</p> <p>*are the recommendations plausible given the research findings?</p>	<p>COMMENTS*</p> <p>- Predictable conclusions</p> <p>-</p>	5			✓		
<p>OVERALL STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION (10%)</p> <p>*is the overall style and presentation in accordance with that specified in the Module Handbook e.g. word count, spacing, section headings, Harvard style of references, font size</p> <p>*is the abstract a concise summary of the main aims, methodology, findings and conclusions?</p> <p>*does the dissertation read as an academic piece of work?</p>	<p>COMMENTS*</p> <p>- Reasonably well laid out</p> <p>- Some of the discussion/writing is convoluted and could be more concise</p>	5			✓		
<p>VIVA (10%)</p> <p>Did the student authenticate and substantiate the submitted work?</p> <p>Was the student on top of the material presented?</p>	<p>COMMENTS*</p> <p>Excellent presentation.</p>	9	✓				

1st MARKERS MARK:

2nd MARKERS MARK:

FINAL MARK:

**RESTLESS YOUTH: INVESTIGATING FACTORS THAT AFFECT
GRADUATES' TRANSITION INTENTIONS INTO EMPLOYMENT AND
POSTGRADUATE STUDY**

Abstract

The purpose of the current study was to address the existing gap in literature on factors that predict graduates' career intentions by examining what personal attributes, socio-economic and socio-demographic factors affect the intention of graduates to enter the labour market or to progress to postgraduate study. Drawing on previous research in the field of graduate employment, entrepreneurship and the progression to postgraduate study, the study examined the importance of 10 factors. Research findings are based up on a survey that was distributed to second and third year Business students at a post 1992 university in London and registry data provided by the examined university. Results demonstrated that while graduates who were aware of employability advice services and whose family members were engaged in entrepreneurial activities were more likely to apply for employment, international students and graduates who thought that they possess 'self-efficacy' characteristics were more likely to remain in education. Therefore, this study concluded that graduates' intentions are influenced by nationality, employability awareness, characteristics relating to self-efficacy such as problem-solving skills and entrepreneurial family members. Since little is known about graduates' intentions, further research on factors that affect the intention process was recommended.

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1. Introduction

In the academic year 2011/2012, 67.7% of graduates were employed six months after graduation while 13% of students remained in higher education to acquire postgraduate degrees and 4.6% of students engaged in entrepreneurial activities (Redman, 2013).

The purpose of this study was to understand what factors affect a graduate's intention to apply for employment or postgraduate courses. In particular, the study investigated whether or not socio-demographic factors and personal attributes had an impact on this intention and if so what factors were more significant in this process than others. Numerous researchers in the higher education field tended to research this phenomenon from the perspective of entrepreneurship. Their work has contributed to a wider understanding of factors such as personal traits, motivation, demographics and education that have an effect on the process of students' entrepreneurial intentions and becoming an entrepreneur (Sánchez Cañisares and Fuentes García, 2010; Klapper, 2004; Raposo et al., 2008).

Although more recent studies considered the perspective investigating factors that have an impact on graduates' decision to enter the labour market rather than remaining in postgraduate study, only little is known about the factors that are good predictors of graduates' career intentions and whether their role changes between employment and progression to postgraduate study intentions (Wakeling, 2009a; O'Donnell, 2009; Wakeling and Hampden-Thompson, 2013).

This paper is one of the first studies that researches whether family's entrepreneurial activities, parent's level of education, access to money, employability awareness, student's nationality, age, programme of study, ethnicity and personal characteristics such as being confident or taking initiatives affect graduates' career intentions after graduation at a post 1992 established university in London. Research findings are based upon a questionnaire which had been distributed to second and third year undergraduate students at a Business School. By adding the results of a post 1992 university in London, this study was interested in addressing the existing gap in literature. New information would improve the understanding of factors that influence students' intentions in their transition process. This information will be valuable to universities by improving existing programmes in order to support

students effectively in their transition process toward employment or further study. Information could also be useful for students to make well-grounded decisions with regards to their future careers after understanding on which factors their intentions are based.

Summary
of findings
would be
useful

2. Literature Review

Many previous studies in the field of career intentions have been carried out from the perspective of student employability and enterprise creation in order to develop an understanding of the elements that shape students' decision-making process toward their desirable career choices (Moreau and Leathwood, 2006; Powell and Greenhaus, 2012; Wong and Liu, 2010; Raposo et al., 2010; Klapper, 2004; Peckman, et al., 2010). Yet, few research exists on access to postgraduate study and very little is known about factors that affect graduates' intentions to remain in further higher education (Wakeling, 2009a; O'Donnell, 2009; Wakeling and Hampden-Thompson, 2013).

This section presents a review of the existing literature on graduate employment, entrepreneurship and the progression to postgraduate study. The literature review begins with a theoretical perspective concentrating on the theory of planned behaviour before proceeding to a more practical perspective on various factors affecting employment, entrepreneurship and postgraduate level intentions.

This paper investigated what factors have a significant impact upon graduates' intentions to apply for employment or for postgraduate courses. Since there is little research on transition to postgraduate study in general and little academic information on different socio-demographic factors that distinguish a graduate who seeks employment from a graduate who intends to remain in higher education, the goal of this study was to address this gap by examining factors that have been identified to be significant in existing research on students' employability and postgraduate study among students in a post-1992 university in London.

2.1. Employment

Since the majority of graduates transfer to the labour market after obtaining their bachelor degrees, literature has concentrated on the understanding of factors that impact upon undergraduates' transition to employment (Kulkarni and Nithyanand, 2013). From one perspective, scholars have long debated to what extent graduates' decisions towards employment choices are based up on rational behaviours and social

influences (Krumboltz *et al.*, 1986; Turban, 2001). A growing number of researchers have concluded that employment decisions are largely based up on external factors such as personal skills, age, ethnicity, social class that influence a graduates' decision making behaviour (Finch *et al.*, 2013a; Moreau and Leathwood, 2006; Kulkarni and Nithyanand, 2013; Wong and Liu, 2010; Wilton, 2011; Greenbank, 2011).

A model that is generally accepted and widely used in literature in order to understand an individual's intention toward the choice of employment is the theory of planned behaviour. Ajzen's theory suggested that the possibility to engage in certain behaviour depends on intentions and availability of required resources and opportunities (1991:189, 2013:02). The framework adopts three components to map out the process of intention performance (Ajzen, 1991:182). Firstly, attitude towards the behaviour can be defined as a person's own capability to perform one's interested behaviour. Subjective norm refers to personal and society related expectations towards a certain behaviour (Krueger *et al.* 2000: Krueger and Brazeal, 1994). The third factor, perceived behavioural control, implies the difficulties associated with the performance of behaviour (Kulkarni and Nithyanand, 2013). The model predicts that the motivation to perform certain behaviour increases when individuals believe that the behaviour would have an impact on their personal situation or when they expect support from friends or family. Since opportunities mainly depend on self-efficacy and resources, an individual's intention to perform certain behaviour is also influenced by required skills and time, access to finance and a person's self-confidence (Krueger *et al.*, 2000).

In this context, it can be argued that not only graduates' employment choices are driven by externally influenced intentions but also their choices with regard to progression to postgraduate study. This argument illustrates the existing gap in literature to adopt a research approach that implements and compares factors that influence graduates' transition to employment and postgraduate education in a single study. In order to adopt this research approach, this study reviewed significant factors that have been identified in the existing body of literature on undergraduates' transition into graduate employment, entrepreneurship and postgraduate education. In this context, the following is a review of the breadth of factors in literature that influence undergraduate university student's intentions to enter the labour market.

Past research has analysed the relationship between graduates employability skills and employment. Finch *et al.* (2013b), who conducted research among

marketing specialists, suggested that the foundation of marketing education and traditional business education should be based upon meta skills such as self-management, problem solving and change adaptability (Finch *et al.*, 2013b:66). Similarly, Finch *et al.* (2013a) found evidence that hiring managers ranked soft-skills, such as communication and teamwork, and problem-solving skills, including creativity and adaptability to change, as the highest ranked categories when hiring new graduates. These findings are in correspondence with the studies of Finch *et al.* (2013a) and Lievens and Sackett (2012) who draw their attention to the importance of interpersonal skills assessment such as teamwork to predict academic and employment success among medical students. These findings raise the assumption whether students who possess meta skills are more likely to enter the labour market and if so whether graduates who intend to apply for employment after graduation have higher average scores in these skills than students who progress to postgraduate study.

Despite the fact that many scholars concluded that students' skills and their personal traits are the key drivers in the transition process into employment, Moreau and Leathwood (2006) argued that this assumption has to be seen critically. Their finding of a long term study at a post 1992 university in London suggested that social class, ethnicity and age may have a much stronger impact upon graduates' transition in the labour market than research in the field of skills development admits (Moreau and Leathwood, 2006).

In general, there is evidence in the broader research field of employability that age influences career outcomes (Van der Heijden *et al.*, 2009). From undergraduate university students' perspective, age plays a significant role in the transition process from university into the labour market (Little, 2011). According to Little (2001), whose work is based upon the evaluation of data from the graduates' experiences of higher education and employment survey, younger graduates were more likely to convince organisations that they were the best chosen candidate for an available position, while mature students faced difficulties finding employment after graduation. Although, the survey was conducted in 1995 and may be considered out of date, the 36,000 responses uniquely represented the situations in eleven European countries and confirmed the assumption that mature graduates are less likely to pursue employment because they prefer to progress to postgraduate study.

In contrary to Little (2001), Wilton's (2011) research concluded that mature

graduates have a higher variety of employment positions than younger graduates. Wilton (2011) also investigated whether ethnicity affects employment outcomes by analysing data from a survey conducted in 2003 based upon students who graduated in 1999. Even though the study stated that it is difficult to draw a strong conclusion on a white/non-white ethnicity comparison, it corresponded with Moreau and Leathwood's (2006) assumption that an inequality of graduates' employment outcomes based on ethnicity can be observed (Wilton, 2011:97).

Moreau and Leathwood (2006) concluded that because of differences in students' social class, there is an existing inequality in the graduate labour market which results in fewer employment opportunities for working class students. Greenbank (2011) came back to this assumption by determining that working class students lacked the ability to look into the future in comparison to students from middle class households.

Studies focusing on family behaviours have provided considerable evidence that family members influence employment decision-making (Powell and Greenhaus, 2012). A study conducted by Wong and Liu (2010) among Chinese hospitality and tourism management students showed that parents' socioeconomic status has an influence on students' career choice behaviour. Particularly, in this study parents' income and the fathers' educational level influenced students' decision to choose a career in hospitality or tourism after graduation.

2.2. Entrepreneurship

Alongside full-time employment, entrepreneurial activities are associated with employment. The last time HESA recorded self-employed students as a single category, 4.6% of graduates in the UK said that they were engaging in entrepreneurial activities six months after graduation (Redman, 2013). Although the percentage quota is slightly low compared to employed and postgraduate students, there has been a 46% increase in graduate entrepreneurial activities between 2004 and 2010 in the UK (HESA, 2013). In order to understand this development and to increase new venture creation among graduates, many previous studies in the field of enterprise creation have concentrated on the examination of factors that distinguish graduate entrepreneurs from other individuals. There is a wide range of literature on

entrepreneurial traits, situational influences and entrepreneurial intentions (Turker, D., & S. Sonmez Selcuk, 2009; Schwarz *et al.*, 2009; Matlay, 2008; Krueger *et al.*, 2000; Raposo *et al.*, 2010). The research discussion can be summarised in the statement whether entrepreneurs are born with certain traits or made to identify entrepreneurial opportunities (Kuratko, 2003).

Some scholars have concentrated on the influences of personal traits and individual motivations to draw conclusions on entrepreneurial success (Raposo *et al.*, 2010; Klapper, 2004; Sánchez Cañisares and Fuentes García, 2010). In this context, higher education has been identified as an important environment that influences potential entrepreneurs to consider an entrepreneurial career because universities shape students knowledge and characters. Sánchez Cañisares and Fuentes García (2010) investigated differences in personal traits towards entrepreneurial activities among 1,400 students. They observed that students who considered themselves as enthusiastic, creative, optimistic, self-confident, taking initiatives, and willing to undertake risks were more likely to start a business (Sánchez Cañisares and Fuentes García, 2010). These entrepreneurial traits correspond with findings of various other studies (Raposo *et al.*, 2010; Klapper, 2004; Peckman, *et al.*, 2010). Raposo *et al.* (2008) also examined personal characteristics of students to identify an entrepreneurial profile. In this process, students were classified into two groups. The first group that was more likely to enter the labour market focused on work autonomy, economic and personal independence, whereas the second group possessed self-confidence and leadership capability. Referring to the study, the second group was more likely to engage in entrepreneurial behaviour (Raposo *et al.*, 2008).

Krueger and Brazeal (1994: 102) who offered a social psychological perspective on entrepreneurship concluded that entrepreneurs are not born but made to identify entrepreneurial opportunities. In fact, they argue that starting a business can be seen as writing a business plan, which is nothing other than an action that results from planned behaviour (Krueger, *et al.*, 2000). From their perspective, starting an entrepreneurial venture after recognising an opportunity is dependent on the attitude and potential of a person (Krueger and Brazeal, 1994). Since an entrepreneurial career primarily depends on a person's intention, it can be said that behaviour is a relevant factor in the entrepreneurial process (Krueger and Brazeal, 1994, Krueger *et al.*, 2000). In reality, different situations affect the development of a

person's belief or attitude. Therefore, intention-based models take account of situational variables and emphasise their importance on the outcome to build an entrepreneurial intention (Krueger *et al.*, 2000).

Matlay's (2008) study provided evidence for this theory by highlighting that family members' opinions influences students' intention towards self-employment. In the study most interviewed students stated that family members had an impact on their intention to favour an entrepreneurial career in the future. In that context, graduates became interested in entrepreneurial venture creation when family members were entrepreneurs or showed interest in an entrepreneurial pathway (Matlay, 2008). This conclusion is in accordance with other studies, which argued that when family members are participating in entrepreneurial activities, students' intentions to explore a different career and educational opportunity decreases (Orhan and Scott, 2001 cited in Dawson and Henley, 2012). When associating entrepreneurship with employment, the question arises whether there is a significant connection between entrepreneurial family members and graduates' intentions to apply for employment.

2.3. Postgraduate study

During the last 10 years, the number of students in postgraduate education has risen by 18% to a total of 501,330 registered postgraduate students in England and Northern Ireland (HEFCE, 2013). Although there is a solid body of literature on access to undergraduate study and postgraduate study popularity has grown rapidly in general, little is known about the factors that explain students' transition process into postgraduate education and what kinds of individuals progress to postgraduate level (Donaldson and McNicholas, 2006; Wakeling, 2009a; Wakeling, 2009b; O'Donnell, 2009; Wakeling and Hampden-Thompson, 2013). A major reason for this may be that postgraduate study represents trends that already have been established in earlier stages of the educational system. As Wackeling referring to Fenton (2000) stated, the intention to pursue "postgraduate study is something one elects to do" (2009a:106). Therefore, it is a decision made on circumstances rather than necessity.

Because of the absence of literature on psychological and, to a certain extent, sociological factors that affect graduates' transition process, there is also a lack of

research on factors that affect graduates' intention to remain in education. However, since the process to form an intention is correlated with the actual decision-making process (Krueger *et al.*, 2000) this study reviewed identified factors that had an impact upon graduates' decision-making process and tested whether they were also true for graduates' intentions.

The majority of research findings are based up on surveys conducted by the Higher Education Careers Services Unit (HECSU) or Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). These surveys record demographic information such as ethnicity, social class, age, programme of study and nationality of graduates at UK based universities in order to determine who enters into postgraduate study (Purcell *et al.*, 2012; Redman, 2013). According to Purcell *et al.* (2012), the likelihood for students to progress to further higher education is affected by programme of study, ethnicity and parent's level of education. Students who had an Asian background were more likely to hold a degree in biology, veterinary studies or physical science. Students whose parents held degrees were more likely to apply for postgraduate courses. Similarly, a recent study using DLHE survey data from 2011-2012 came to the conclusion that the programme of study affects a students' decision to enter education at postgraduate level since the reported participation levels with degrees held in Biology, Physical and Mathematics toward further study were above the average national level. The survey also suggested that students holding an Accounting (8.5%) or Business (6.6%) degree were more likely to remain in further study in comparison to Hospitality (4.2%) and Marketing (3.6%) graduates (Redman, 2013).

A number of studies have identified relationships between education and ethnicity or social class (Van der Werfhorst and Andersen, 2005; Wakeling, 2009; Wakeling, 2005; Connor *et al.*, 2004; Shiner & Tariq Modood, 2002). Walking (2009) concluded that the proportion of students from ethnic minority backgrounds attending postgraduate courses is only slightly lower than among bachelor graduates. However, specifying ethnic minorities rather than referring to them as white and non-white showed that Chinese and Other Asian graduates were more likely to enter a postgraduate course than South Asian, White and Black graduates. These findings correlate with HESCU data that showed that there is a probability increase in a student's postgraduate participation when having an Asian background while students with a White background are less likely to remain in further study (Purcell *et*

al., 2012). Findings are also supported by studies cited in Shiner and Modhood's (2002) work and Wakeling and Hampden-Thomson (2013) who identified three groups with different rates of progression into postgraduate study affirming that Chinese and other Asian background students have a higher likelihood to progress to postgraduate courses than White background students.

In literature, nationality also is identified as an important factor with regards to postgraduate transition. According to Wakeling and Hampden-Thomson (2013), EU students studying in the UK are more likely to pursue a further degree after graduation in comparison to UK students. However, their reported research lacked the coverage of international students, may cause misleading results even though it can be interpreted that EU students similar to international students choose their career pathway more wisely when they decide to study abroad in the first place compared to UK students. Thus, Purcell *et al.* (2012) found evidence that the probability for EU and overseas students to progress to postgraduate study is higher.

Socio-economic backgrounds have also been identified as important predictors in relation to postgraduate transition. In reference to Leathwood (2004), there is a relationship between social class and transition to postgraduate level education since students from lower social classes are underrepresented in higher education in general. Similar evidence was found by previous research that has been conducted around this issue (Leslie *et al.*, 2006 cited in Wakeling, 2009; Wakeling, 2009; Purcell *et al.*, 2012). Wakeling's (2005) findings, which are based upon the same HESA datasets than prior studies, supported past research papers. However, he extended the discussion on social background concluding that social class has a higher impact upon students' progression to further study than parents' level of education (Wakeling, 2005). This has to be seen as a contradiction to later research (Purcell *et al.*, 2012; Wakeling and Hampden-Thomson, 2013). Both, Hampden-Thomson (2013) and Purcell *et al.* (2012) found evidence that parents' education significantly affects postgraduate level transitions since students had a higher progression rate when both parents held a degree.

In summary, the review of literature offers a firm explanation of several factors to expand the understanding of the factors that affect students' intention towards a transition into employment after graduation. In this process, researchers have concentrated on personal characteristics, demographical and social factors.

There is also an existing in-depth analysis of factors such as personal traits, individual's environments and entrepreneurship education influencing graduates intention to create their own ventures and engage in entrepreneurial activities.

Significant publications have identified the absence of research around factors that have an impact on a student's intention to enter into postgraduate study. This illustrates the gap that has developed between graduates' transition to the labour market and postgraduate study. This study sought to address this research gap. The research focused on socio-demographic factors that affect graduates' intention to apply for full-time employment and postgraduate courses because it had not been covered in this way in the existing research. Thus, reviewing the current body of literature on employability and postgraduate education identified families' entrepreneurial activities, parent's level of education, access to money, employability awareness, student's nationality, age, programme of study, ethnicity, fee status and personal characteristics as significant factors that may have an impact on students' intention to choose employment over further study and vice-versa.

On the basis of the above discussion, the following factors were maintained:

Personal skills and Employability awareness

Research has shown that hiring managers are looking for specific skills in the application process in the graduate labour market (Finch *et al.*, 2013a; Finch *et al.*, 2013b). Since applicants who could demonstrate the required skills were more likely to find employment (Finch *et al.*, 2012; Lievens and Sackett, 2012), an assumption can be made that graduates who demonstrate these skills are more likely to seek employment after graduation than students who progress to postgraduate level education. Moreover, graduates who are aware of these required skills through networking with companies or advice from universities' employability centres may choose to not pursue a postgraduate degree.

Entrepreneurial and social influences

According to Matlay (2008), the likelihood that students intend to explore a different career and educational opportunity decreases when family members are participating in entrepreneurial activities. Middle class graduates whose parents held degrees are more likely to pursue a postgraduate degree than graduates from working class families or graduates whose parents did not go to higher education (Purcell *et*

al., 2012; Wakeling and Hampden-Thomson, 2013). Therefore, this study used information on parents' level of education and income to determine whether social class and parents' level of education significantly affect the intention of graduates.

Demographic factors

These factors are seen to affect graduates' intentions toward their future career. In comparison to UK citizens, EU and international graduates are more likely to remain in postgraduate study after graduating from a UK university (Wakeling and Hampden-Thomson, 2013; Purcell, 2012). In both areas, there is an underrepresentation of certain groups of ethnicity. Age has been a contradictory factor in research. While some studies concluded that younger graduates have higher chances of finding employment, others negated this statement. Research on access to postgraduate courses seemed to neglect this factor stating that datasets showed equal numbers for younger and older graduates. Since this study focused on a Business School results on the programme of study were compared to the fact that a higher rate of Business students remain in education than Marketing students.

Thus, the following hypothesis was posited:

H₀: There is a relationship between graduates' intention to apply for employment or postgraduate study and the factors including family's entrepreneurial activities, parent's level of education, access to money, employability awareness, student's nationality, age, programme of study, ethnic majority, fee status and personal characteristics -

3. Methodology

3.1. Data collection

This section outlines the design of the research to answer the hypothesis. The study intended to use a random sample of Business students but this was unworkable because of regulatory and ethical difficulties. In order to carry out research, a closed, self-complementation questionnaire based on nine questions was distributed to the whole population of 419 second and third year Business undergraduate students at the Business School of a post 1992 university in London. The questionnaire's link was made available to students via the university's e-learning system two weeks before the Christmas break in December 2013. Due to unforeseeable administrative circumstances, responses to the survey were limited to a total of 44. Consequently, educational factors had to be excluded from the analysis due to lack of data. Basic demographic information of all registered second and third year Business students was collected from the internal Registry database. This section describes the statistical approach toward this study, and shows how variables will be measured and implemented in the model, and how the model will deal with sampling bias.

3.2. Measurements

Students' intention toward employment and further study was identified as the dependent variable. In the questionnaire students were asked "What is your future career plan after graduation?". While the answer further study will be classified with the score 0, statements in regard to employment take the value of 1. Since self-employment is characterised as a form of employment, answers towards entrepreneurial activities take the value 1.

Ten independent variables will be extracted from the survey and Registry data that may affect students' intention in regards to employment and postgraduate study. Demographical variables will include personal data such as programme of study (Business Management 1 and other 0), age measured in years, nationality (UK citizenship 1 and Non-UK citizenship 0), and fee status (UK and EU fees 1 and overseas 0). Due to proportionally many refused responses toward ethnicity, ethnic

majority will be measured by looking at students' nationality and home country. The dummy variable takes the value 1 for "Ethnic majority" and 0 for "Ethnic minority"

The additional five variables will be extracted from the questionnaire and included employability awareness, parents' level of education, income and family entrepreneurship activities ('yes' 1 and 'no' 0). Employability awareness will be measured by counting the positive answer towards knowing about "competitions, Employability centre and networking". When students knew about at least one service the variable takes the value 1 otherwise 0. Income (1 up to £19,999, 2 between £20,000 and £49,999, 3 till £50,000 and £79,999, 4 £80,000 and higher, 5 Prefer not to say, 6 Do not know) and education (1 Secondary school or less 2 Sixth form 3 Bachelor degree 4 Postgraduate degree or higher) will be measured as ordinal variables. In order to apply the income and educational variable in the logistic regression model, both variables will be transformed to dichotomous variables: Income up to £19,999 till £49,999 ('yes' 1 and 'no' 0), income £50,000 or higher ('yes' 1 and 'no' 0) and education (Sixth form or less 0 and Higher Education 1). Additionally, seven statements toward taking initiatives, self-confidence, communication skills, problem solving skills, change adaption, creativity and teamwork will be measured on a five-point Likert scale, whereby a score of 1 suggested "strongly disagree" and 5 suggested "strongly agree".

3.3. Statistical models

Pilot-study

Descriptive statistic tests such as Pearson's chi-square test and t-test will be performed in order to determine associations between each of the identified variables and the intention of students to seek employment or to remain in higher education after graduation. Factor analysis will be used to cluster the seven personal characteristics from the seven Likert scale statements into two categories. Finally, the most important factor and the prior tested variables will be included into a logistic regression model to predict what socio-demographic factors affect students' intention toward employment or further study.

Due to a limited and selective sample of 44 students, the sample underlies a self-selection process and therefore, observations may not represent the population. In order to avoid incorrect assumptions and depending on the final sample,

Heckman's two-step procedure or probability weights will be applied to correct the non-randomly selected sample.

4. Findings

In this section, the current study concentrates on the presentation and interpretation of the findings whether or not the identified factors affected graduates' intention to find a job or participate in postgraduate education. Relationships between undergraduate students' intention toward their future career and each of the factors were examined before adding them into a binary logistic regression model to predict graduates intentions. The category 'self-efficacy' was also added into the model after being identified in the factor analysis. In a final step, limitations are pointed out in regard to the undertaken work.

4.1. Sample characteristics

The primary data source of this study was an online survey on career plans. A total of 44 valid questionnaires that contained a variety of information including employability awareness, family entrepreneurship activity, parent's level of income and education were returned. There were 35 (79.6%) and 9 (20.4%) observations for students who intended to find employment after graduation and who had the intention to remain in education, respectively. These observations were merged with Universities registry data. The dataset included personal information on nationality, fee status, age, ethnicity, home country and programme and year of study.

The descriptive statistics, displayed in Table 4.1, summarise the standard deviations, means and frequencies for the dependent variable and the ten independent variables used in the study. The demographic characteristics revealed that students who responded to the survey were between 19 and 32 years old, non-UK citizens (59,1%) and enrolled into a Business Management course with a specific pathway such as Accounting or Marketing (72,7%).

Table 4.1: Summary statistics for independent and dependent variables					
Variable type	Description	Mean	Std. Dev.	Frequencies in %	
Dependent Variable				0	1
Intention	1=Employment, 0=Further Study	1.795	0.408	20.5	79.5
Independent Variables					
Fee Status	1=EU and UK, 0=Overseas	0.773	0.424	22.7	77.300
Ethnic Majority in Home Country	1=Majority, 0=Minority	0.864	0.347	13.6	86.4
Nationality	1=UK Citizenship, 0=Non-UK Citizenship	0.409	0.497	59.1	40.9
Programme of Study	1=Business Management 0=Pathways	0.273	0.451	72.7	27.300
Age	Continuous Variable	21.682	2.208	min: 19	max: 32
Employability Awareness	1=Awareness, 0=no Awareness	0.841	0.370	15.9	84.1
Income Level 1	1=yes, 0=no	0.386	0.493	61.4	38.6
Income Level 2	1=yes, 0=no	0.227	0.424	77.3	22.7
Parents' Level of Education	1=HE, 0=Sixth form or less,	0.432	0.501	56.8	43.2
Entrepreneurial activities among family members	1=yes, 0=no	0.591	0.497	40.1	59.9

4.2. Comparing the relationship between graduates' intentions and identified factors

In a first step, it was tested whether the acquired categorical variables were related to a student's intention to find employment or remain in higher education after graduation. In this process, each factor was grouped with students' intentions. The test showed that there was an association between student's intention toward employment or postgraduate study, along with each of the following variables: fee status $\{x^2(1)=6.9430, p=0.008\}$, nationality $\{x^2(1)=4.1559, p=0.041\}$ and level of parents' education $\{x^2(2)=7.9843, p=0.018\}$.

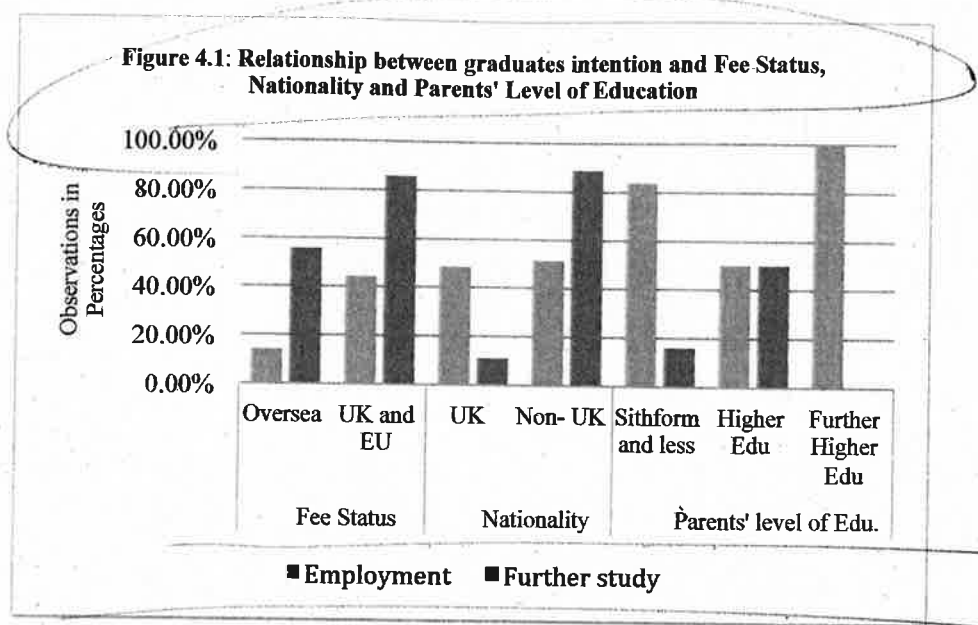


Figure 4.1 illustrates that the majority of students (88.9%) who planned to enrol in a Postgraduate study were Non-UK citizens while the number of UK and non-UK students who wanted to seek employment were almost identical (Non-UK: 51.4% and UK: 48.6). Similarly, the majority of students who paid overseas fees planned to acquire a masters' degree (55.6%). In comparison to 14.3% of students paying overseas fees, 85.7% of students who paid home and European fees preferred employment over remaining an additional year in higher education after finishing their bachelor degree. The majority of students who said that they were intending to apply for jobs after graduation had parents who did not participate in higher education (84%). There was no difference between the numbers of students who applied for jobs rather than further degree courses and vice versa when parents had been awarded with some sort of bachelor degree, while students with parents awarded more advanced degrees planned to find employment only.

The results on the importance of these three factors in the process of developing intentions and later on the decision to make a firm choice toward employment or further education are supported by past literature (Wakeling and Hampdon-Thomson, 2013, Purcell et al., 2012). Generally, fee status and nationality measure the same factor identifying whether or graduates study in their home country. The decision to acquire a bachelor degree abroad already affects a students' life significantly. Therefore, it could be argued that international students intend to finish off their further studies abroad before transferring into the labour market.

Undeniably, the background of parents' education influences graduates' intentions toward their future career pathway. (Purcell et al., 2012; Powell and Greenhaus, 2012; Wakeling and Hampdon-Thomson, 2013). When parents do not have a degree, they may encourage their children to find employment rather than spending money on an additional degree. Parents who acquired bachelor degrees themselves may have a better understanding for the progression into postgraduate study. On the other hand, students with parents awarded a postgraduate degree or PHD tended to choose employment over further study. One would expect that for those who have attained advanced degrees, are in support of their children pursuing further education as well. However, extremely high-educated parents could also see themselves in the advisory role not influencing their children. This assumption is supported by Wakeling (2005) who concluded that social class has a higher impact on graduates' choice than their parents' educational background in general.

Table 4.2 shows that there was no statistically significant relationship found for the other tested variables such as employability awareness, level of income, family anticipation in Entrepreneurship, programme of study and ethnic majorities.

Table 4.2: Relationship between Graduates' Intentions and other factors	
Intention and	
Employability awareness	$\chi^2(1)=2.5677, p=0.109$
Parents' level of income	$\chi^2(2)=3.2193, p=0.200$
Entrepreneurial activities among family members	$\chi^2(1)=1.0040, p=0.316$
Programme of Study	$\chi^2(1)=0.1455, p=0.703$
Ethnic majority in home country	$\chi^2(1)=0.0613, p=0.805$
Fee status	$\chi^2(1)=6.9430, p=0.008***$
Nationality	$\chi^2(1)=4.1559, p=0.041**$
Parents' level of Education	$\chi^2(2)=7.9843, p=0.018**$
Nationality and fee status	$\chi^2(1)=135.616, p=.000***$
* Sig<.01, **Sig<.05, ***Sig<.01	

However, for this sample it was important to detect that 88.57% of graduates' planning to find work and 66.67% of the remaining graduates, were aware of career service advice at the employability centre, network events that take place or are sponsored by their university, and business competitions that supports students in

acquiring necessary skills. This result also strengthened the assumption that employment services are not as important to students who are looking for further postgraduate courses (33.3%).

In relation to income, it was not possible to make a strong assumption because 38.6% of the total sample refused to answer the question or did not know the annual income range of their parents. The remaining answers showed that students whose parents earn more than £50,000 a year intended to pursue a master degree, while the majority of students who wanted to find employment were living in households earning less than £49,999 a year. Only, 17.1% of students with a family income below £49,000 considered further study.

Entrepreneurial activities by family members and close relatives seemed to have a positive outcome on students' intention to apply for employment. 62.9% of students who planned to begin working in the summer said that at least one family member was an entrepreneur whereas the majority of graduates intending to remain in postgraduate study specified that no one in their family had been self-employed.

Furthermore, even though the findings were not statistically significant, business management degrees with or without specialising pathways had an identical affect upon students' career intentions. It cannot be said that one of them is a route to either career option.

Finally, further study was intended by 88.9% of students who were considered as ethnic majorities in their home countries demonstrating that only 11.1% of students who lived as an ethnic minority in a country planned to progress into postgraduate education. A similar pattern was detected for employment intentions.

The findings could not support the conclusions of previous research on the significant effect on entrepreneurship, income and programme of study. Yet, it is possible to argue that the programme of study could have had an impact if it had been analysed in a different way. Due to limited observations, Accounting pathway degrees which had a higher postgraduate progression rate, were clustered with degree pathways having a higher employment rate such as Marketing, Human Resource Management and International Business. Furthermore, degrees that demonstrate postgraduate progression rates above the average national level such as Biology or

Physical Science could not be examined in the investigated Business School because these subjects were not offered in the course list (Redman, 2013).

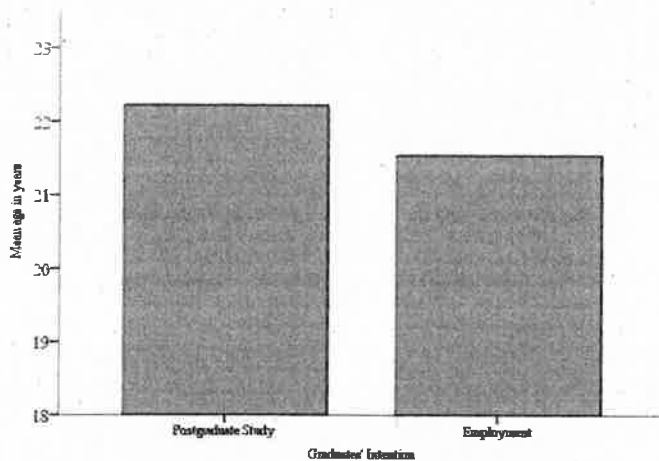
However, the study agreed with conclusions drawn by Moreau and Leathwood (2006) who concluded that skills and students' awareness have to be evaluated critically since they may not have a significant impact upon work placement opportunities in comparison to socio-demographic factors.

Finally, due to the general connection between fee status and nationality, an additional test was performed to determine whether both variables were associated with each other. In order to gain strong confidence for further analysis in this study, the total amount of 419 gained observations from registry data were used in this process. The result in table 4.2 shows that both variables were highly significant $\{\chi^2(1)=135.616, p=.000\}$. Therefore, in order to improve the informational value of the logistic regression model, nationality rather than both variables was included in the binary logistic regression model.

4.3. Comparing the relationship between graduates' intentions and age

The study also determined whether there was an association between students' career intentions and age. Figure 4.2 displays that on average, students who intended to find employment after graduation (mean=21.5 years) and students who intended to remain in higher education to pursue a master's degree (mean=22.2 years) were roughly at the same age group.

Figure 4.1: Comparison of age and graduates' intention toward employment or further study



The test highlighted some interesting details (Table 4.3). Firstly, the lower and upper confidence levels confirmed that students' in all age groups had similar intentions since age groups overlapped (95% CI 21 and 22). Secondly, in comparison to the group of students who would like to undertake further study (SD 0.971), age varied in the group of students intending to find employment (SD 2.417). This lead to the assumption that there was a smaller age gap between graduates that preferred to progress to postgraduate courses, while younger and older students alike intended to enter the labour market. There was no statistically significant difference between the means of these two group of students found $\{t(42)=0.820, p=0.417 > .05\}$. Therefore, the relationship between the intention of a student to seek employment or stay in education after graduation and age was not statistically significant.

This was a contradictory result to past research since scholars found statistical impact of age on students' transition into employment (Moreau and Leathwood, 2006) According to Wakeling (2009a), referring to HESA datasets postgraduate students are 34 years on average when they begin their postgraduate degree while Little (2001) concluded that younger graduates have better changes to succeed in job interviews. Generally, the current study could not confirm that graduates who are intending to study at postgraduate level are older than their peers or that graduates intending to find employment are younger. However, since age was not statistically significant the findings reflect the vague assumptions in the existing literature agreeing that graduates' career intentions cannot be distinguished by age (Wakeling, 2009b). In terms of research on postgraduate students, age has been neglected or was identified as a factor that should be examined in further studies

(Wakeling, 2005; Leathwood, 2004; Wakeling and Hampden-Thomson, 2013). Therefore, further research should be undertaken in a bigger sample with a wider age range.

Table 4.3: Comparison of age and future career intention

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Further Study	9	22.22222	.3239418	.9718253	21.47521	22.96923
Employment	35	21.54286	.4086108	2.417374	20.71246	22.37325
combined	44	21.68182	.3327964	2.207521	21.01067	22.35297
diff		.6793651	.828198		-.9920062	2.350736
diff = mean(1) - mean(2)					t = 0.8203	
Ho: diff = 0					degrees of freedom = 42	
Ha: diff != 0						
Pr(T > t) = 0.4167						
*Sig<.05						

4.4. Grouping personal characteristics into 'self-efficacy' and 'non-cognitive skills'

In order to predict whether or not personal characteristics were determinants for graduates' intentions, various attributes had to be clustered into fewer variables. The individual factors are summarised in table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Summary of individual characteristic's factors

Individual factor	Mean	SD
Taking the initiative	3.795	1.069
Change adaptability	3.636	0.967
Self-confidence	3.955	0.645
Problem-solving skills	3.955	0.714
Creativity	3.659	0.888
Teamwork	4.114	0.784
Communication skills	4.227	0.711

By using the principal factor method for factor extraction, the seven questionnaire statements asking about change adaption, taking initiatives,