The Psychological Dimensions of Employability: Training Effectiveness with the Long -Term Unemployed

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

This research provides some empirical data in support of a psychological approach to evaluating a particular training intervention for a sample of long-term unemployed individuals. The labour market as a context for psychological research is explored, emphasising the complexity of the unemployment problem and the ideologies underpinning active labour market interventions. The following chapter is an overview of psychology's contribution to our understanding of unemployment. It discusses the central issues surrounding psychological well-being and the various theoretical models which have been proffered as explanatory frameworks. This chapter also critically reviews models of job-seeking behaviour and the few studies which have attempted to provide evaluations of unemployment interventions from a psychological perspective.

This review of the relevant empirical literature supports the value to the evaluation of three behavioural variables and analytical issues pertaining to each such as measurement and utility are then developed. It is hypothesised that these psychological variables will provide useful indicators of individual progress throughout the programme and may help to identify the needs and characteristics of different sub-groups of participants.

A longitudinal quantitative investigation was designed to study changes in **employment commitment**, **self-esteem** and **occupational work ethic** (which comprises three subscales; *initiative, interpersonal skills* and *being dependable*). Self-report psychometric questionnaires were administered to a sample of programme participants (n=291) upon joining the Wise Group and the same sample was followed up on three occasions throughout the intervention's 12 month duration. Individuals who left the organisation for various reasons between assessments were contacted at home to maintain as consistent a sample as

possible and to compare changes in scores over time amongst different training outcome groups. In addition, longitudinal qualitative work in the form of interviews with a sub-sample of participants was also carried out to provide some richer contextual information regarding their circumstances and perceptions of the intervention. The empirical work is presented in two main sections covering the methodology and results of the quantitative and qualitative work respectively.

Quantitative analyses show that the group as a whole increases significantly with respect to self-esteem and two of the three work-ethic sub dimensions over the course of training. In particular, measures of self-esteem and interpersonal skills are found to improve significantly over the first assessment interval, confirming that the early stages of training has a positive impact on the communication ability and perception of self-worth of the overall sample. Additional main results are the particular positive benefits demonstrated for those categorised as having either initial low employment commitment or self-esteem. Furthermore, the sample clusters into three identifiable categories. Of these, the most interesting is found to comprise individuals who score higher on self-esteem but lower on employment commitment. Several interaction effects are found in relation to assessment interval, training location and their influence upon employment commitment.

There are no significant differences over time between training outcome groups and no significant differences in the relative frequencies of training outcomes either by training location or cluster type. Overall, these findings suggest that participation makes a significant positive impact for the group overall, but that individual employability factors by themselves are not strongly predictive of actual training outcome.

The qualitative work consisted of short individual interviews which were held with a sub-sample of participants (N=40) to describe and track the perceived benefits of training and model the process of change. Initial baseline interviews describe a range of relevant issues pertaining to the situations and barriers long-term unemployed people face in looking for work and these areas are clustered and coded into themes such as effects of the unemployment experience and perceived barriers to re-employment. Time-two and time-three assessment points were used to collect descriptive information as to perceived benefits over time as compared to baseline and these data are coded for content themes.

Comparisons of the thematic data over time confirm a significant qualitative shift in terms of perceived change in the self. This progress can be characterised by a movement from a general increase in self-esteem as a function of being back in the work environment and structured use of time to more task specific benefits associated with skill acquisition as a function of self-efficacy and achievement motivation.

The results are discussed in terms of the utility of these measures in supporting a psychological dimension of individual employability. The results are considered in more detail and appropriate explanations advocated for the findings. In addition, several design and methodological limitations are highlighted and suggestions made to improve robustness and integrity. In particular, the discussion advocates the role of psychological variables within such an intervention but is keen to stress the need for them to be contextualised and relevant to participants' wider circumstances. The empirical findings are related back to theoretical approaches discussed earlier in the thesis and the recommendation made that individual–level employability in this context be structured around well-established models of motivated behaviour such as Expectancy-Value theory (Feather, 1992) or

Reasoned Action (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980) as doing so may prove useful in developing predictive models.

Suggestions are made for the continuing and developing role of psychology within labour market interventions. The conclusion reached is that with a suitable theoretical framework and appropriate methodology, individual employability is a viable concept within an unemployment intervention and that psychology as a social science is well–placed to make a significant contribution.

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Author's Declaration

I hereby affirm that the thesis entitled "The Psychological Dimensions of Employability: Training Effectiveness with the Long-Term Unemployed" is entirely my own work.

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"Make the important measurable, not the measurable important"

Robert S. McNamara
U.S. Defence Sectretary (1961- 68)

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This thesis attempts to demonstrate the validity, both conceptually and empirically of investigating the concept of employability from a psychological perspective. The context for doing so is with a sample of long-term unemployed individuals participating in an Intermediate Labour Market training programme. In particular, the thesis aims to show the viability of utilising psychological concepts such as self-esteem and attitudes to employment as measures of training programme effectiveness. By bringing a psychological perspective to the intervention's evaluation, the research provides a new viewpoint by which to demonstrate the difference and value the programme has for the participants. In addition to the aim of demonstrating actual change in these psychological variables over time, the thesis is also concerned with modelling the *process* of change and progress over time. To supplement actual counts of number of participants into jobs or number of vocational qualifications awarded, additional conceptualisations of success introduce a qualitative dimension as to the effectiveness of the programme for the individuals involved.

The structure of the thesis introduces the scope and diversity of unemployment as a research phenomenon and the various influences and key issues/challenges facing researchers in the field. In doing so it provides an overview of some contemporary thinking over active labour-market interventions and their practices, problems with assessing effectiveness and the ideological assumptions upon which such interventions are based.

Secondly, the contribution and roles of psychology to unemployment research are discussed such as the relationship between unemployment and psychological

well-being, re-employment and job-seeking. An analytical overview of the relevant literature is then provided within the context of the aims of the current project. Thirdly, the specific research variables of interest are discussed within a theoretical framework and specific research questions formulated. Fourthly, some empirical work is described along with methodological considerations and supporting statistical data. The results are then discussed in terms of the findings outlined earlier in the thesis. Interpretations are made in light of current thinking about employability in general and the wider implications for labour market interventions and the (un)employment context in general.

1.1 Background

In an increasingly target-driven society, active interventions to assist the unemployed in their search for work are increasingly required to show effectiveness and measures of their success. For national unemployment initiatives such as the New Deal, the major indicator is typically the monthly or annual change in the number of people out of paid work and claiming welfare benefit. Similarly, active interventions are often judged on the number of placements taken up with employers or the number of vocational qualifications awarded. Although actual numeric 'hard outcomes', i.e. numbers of people into jobs still take precedence as key indicators of performance, there has been a definite shift towards utilising 'softer indicators' of progress and effectiveness. In other words, there is considerable interest in demonstrating effectiveness at the individual level. This effectiveness often equates to individual change, i.e. the smaller, proximal outcomes or 'distance travelled' rather than a primary distinction between those getting jobs and those not.

'Employability' is now a much-used term in relation to these issues, particularly in how effectiveness is conceptualised and measured. For providers of active labour market interventions, they are keen to trace the impact their programmes have at

various levels. In addition, they are also interested in demonstrating the way these programmes conceptualise success and this will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. Where success involves an examination of the impact at the individual level, psychology as a social science can make a valuable contribution in several ways.

Firstly, a psychological perspective can provide a new conceptual framework for understanding and defining success at the individual level. In doing so, a wide and established background literature provides the basis for the formulation of specific research questions. Secondly, the discipline can provide appropriate design of methodology to investigate such questions, from validated quantitative psychometric measures to qualitative methods rich in contextual information to take into account a greater range of variables. Hence, psychology as a science of behaviour is well placed to investigate not just actual levels of change in these variables but also the processes and dynamics between factors i.e. model the *process* of change. This is supported by a range of appropriate statistical methodology to analyse the empirical findings. And lastly, the original research framework allows the results to be reinterpreted into the strategic direction of the organisation and its particular intervention. By approaching a topic in this structured manner, the process contributes not just specifically to the organisation but also supplements the advancement of unemployment as a research topic.

Hence, the objective of this thesis is to provide some empirical work in support of a psychological perspective of employability as applied to an active labour market intervention. Attempting to structure this very complex area firstly requires an examination of the concept of employability, followed by the integration of employability into the specific context of the long-term unemployed and measures to assist them in their search for work.

1.2 The Concept of Employability

The somewhat elusive term 'employability' has been appearing with ever-increasing frequency over the past few years to the extent that it is now used quite freely by many different agencies and in many different contexts. In some cases, the term employability is used to describe an individual's capacity for personal success in the labour market but employability also refers to an approach and philosophy of preparing people for (re)entry to the labour market. With a steadily increasing flow of substantial research reports specifically devoted to investigating the concept of employability (Atkinson et al.,1996; Comet and Venniker,1998; Hillage and Pollard,1998; Lange and McCormick,1998; Peck,1999; Wyllie,1999) the common objective is to specify the nature of this individual capacity for success in the labour market. Both conceptual and operational definitions of employability are abound at the present time yet there are certain identifiable themes common to them all which will be discussed shortly.

When the UK took over the Presidency of the European Union in January 1998, the discussion of employability was a central feature of this term of office, particularly as an issue fundamental to tackling the problems of unemployment, skill shortages and social exclusion. Employability focused on the primary objective of ensuring that people have the skills to get and keep jobs in the economies of the future. The Chancellor Gordon Brown commented that:

"Employability is the key to a cohesive society which offers opportunity to all its citizens. Better education and skills, combined with reduced burdens on business are the way to guarantee the high and stable levels of growth and employment which are the core goals of our economic policy." (Brown,1999)

Similarly, Scothern (1998) defines the fundamental aim of employability as:

"*creating a workforce in which all people capable of working are encouraged and helped to develop throughout their working lives, the skills, knowledge and adaptability which will enable them to enter employment and stay in highly productive work. It is thus an essential element of a flexible labour market. Increasingly, individuals may work for several employers and change jobs several times during their lives as the demands of the economy change*" (Scothern, 1998)

With reference to application at the individual-level, Comet and Venniker (1998) state that employability is commonly defined as:

"the capacity of an individual to obtain and retain productive and rewarding work over his or her working life." (Cornet and Venniker,1998)

To clarify this 'capacity', the authors indicate three primary factors which determine the employability of individuals.

- Knowledge and skill level (both vocational specific skills and soft skills)
- Awareness of the different flexible patterns of employment (e.g. working hours)
- Information about the future labour market situation (e.g. anticipate change)

Hillage and Pollard, in a report from the Institute of Employment Studies (1998) similarly state employability to be:

"...the capacity to move self-sufficiently within the labour market to realise potential through sustainable employment. For the individual, employability depends upon the knowledge, skills and attitude they possess, the way they use those assets and present them to employers and the context (e.g. personal circumstances and labour market environment) within which they seek work" (p.1)

Hillage et al. discuss how contemporary success is characterised by the ability to manage the processes of finding, acquiring, adapting to and maintaining suitable

employment. Taken together, these aspects represent a broader inclusive employability 'capacity', that of managing the range of employment transitions spanning entry to the labour market and subsequent maintenance and development within employment. The authors make the all-important point that the overarching characteristic of this capability is the m*anagement* of these relationships with the labour market. Although the main criterion or 'proof' of this capacity lies effectively in successful employment per se, it is important to conceive employability capacity not as a fixed and rigid entity but rather a flexible dimensional factor. It stands to reason that people can have the capacity but not be employed either as a matter of personal choice or due to other external variables over which they have no control such as lack of opportunity. Hence when employability moves from the conceptual to the practical, it has to be reinterpreted within the context at hand and take due cognisance of the scope of factors relating to it.

The above definitions clearly show the scope of application of employability from macro-level economics to the implications it has for individuals. What they appear to have in common is their indication that success equates to flexibility in approaching the labour market and in particular the ability to manage and anticipate change. Hillage and Pollard's definition raises three key issues central to employability which concur strongly with those of Cornet et al.;

- Individual Responsibility (Self-sufficiency)
- Skills and attributes
- Structural contextual factors of labour market change

a) self-sufficiency

With reference to self-sufficiency, Hillage et al.'s report draws upon the corporate origins of employability and the need to take personal responsibility for progress

within the labour market. Employability appears to have become the response to the realisation that lifetime employment (one job for life) probably no longer exists in modern flexible labour markets. There is suggestion of employability as a new 'social contract' Ellig (1998) where employers are expected to invest in continual training and development for their employees, but at the same time cannot ensure the same degree of job security enjoyed some 25 or more years ago. Employees therefore are expected to take this responsibility and ensure that they are equipped to deal with and anticipate change. Likewise, Gaspersz (1998) remarks that "in the new psychological contract of employability, the business relation is a temporary win-win situation for both parties." This ethos is further echoed by both Ghitleman (1996) and Waymon et al. (1996) who describe employability as the 'development of a new kind of inner security' and in essence 'psychological self-employment' respectively. They imply the severance of emotional bonds with the employer and the abandonment of passive reliance upon them for job security. Wyllie (1999) introduces a Scottish based report on employability as 'dynamic security' again calling for the need to retain flexibility within the labour force to meet changing demands and improve Scotland's economic inclusion.

b) skills and attributes

To ensure effective transitions into the labour market, there is now a growing body of research and evidence as to the specific nature of 'employability skills'. Obviously the competencies and skills required for a job will vary as a function of the job and employers requirements. However, there has been considerable interest in recent years in what have been termed generic, personal and transferable, basic and employability skills. Despite the range of terminology, these skills refer to the non-technical, non-specific aspects of jobs and are much more concerned with aspects of people's behaviour in their daily work and approach to their job. Whilst sound empirical evidence is severely limited in this

area, there is plenty of supporting evidence in terms of commissioned reports and analyses upon which conclusions can be drawn. Information relating to employability skills is diverse and sourced from areas such as academic education and vocational training literature which endeavours to discover the skills, competencies and attributes employers look for in the emerging workforce. A comprehensive report published by the Evaluation and Development Agency (Meager,1997) concentrates on the skills employers look for in school leavers and draws heavily upon research from both the UK and United States. The report's findings are that the main characteristics sought with the highest significance to employers are ability and willingness to learn, reliability and trustworthiness, self-motivation and punctuality. A lengthy research report focusing upon labour market skill trends (Owen, 1999) stipulates that there is generally no single agreed classification of skills and that there is a multiplicity of terminology used. However, the report indicates the classification used by the UK National Skills Task Force amongst others which employs the following descriptions:

- **Employability/Generic Skills**: transferable abilities used across jobs
  - *key or basic skills*:
    - communication
    - literacy
    - numeracy
    - problem solving
    - team working
    - IT skills
    - continual learning
  - *generic reasoning skills*:
    - prioritising work
    - diagnosing work problems
    - future planning
    - visualising output

- *personal values*:
  - work attitude/work ethic
  - motivation
  - judgement
  - discipline
  - leadership

- **Vocational Skills**: needed in a particular job or occupation
  - *specific technical job skill:*
    - e.g. computing, nursing, teaching, building

As noted, the relevant literature is diverse, but the conclusions are sufficiently clear; that the significance of generic employability skills is paramount. Therefore to match these requirements, providers of labour market measures are challenged with incorporating these skill issues into their programmes. It is important to acknowledge the role of contextual factors in relation to employability skills too. Employers' perceptions of specific groups of labour market entrants will inevitably shape requirements and perceptions of these skills between groups. To illustrate, employers state a general willingness to learn as a key skill for the transition from school and general education to working, but it is likely that for unemployed people seeking work or those looking for a job following a custodial sentence for example, employers are invariably going to place more emphasis upon evidence of self-motivation, reliability and trustworthiness.

c) structural contextual factors

A major difficulty with employability arises when the conceptual gives way to the practical as in the case of interventions for the unemployed. The basic conceptual issues or framework must be reinterpreted with the specific population or context in mind. For example, how is self-sufficiency in the labour market reconciled for someone who has been jobless for a significant number of years or an ex-

offender? In the case of many disadvantaged or socially excluded groups, a common factor is their perception of inequality in being able to participate and benefit from the same opportunities as everyone else. This is often accompanied by feelings of disempowerment and the restrictions imposed by social structures themselves, particularly in relation to welfare provision.

With this wider perspective in mind, Woods (1996) captures the inclusive nature of employability, stating that being employable means:

"being physically, emotionally, intellectually and psychologically able to work. It means having the skills and the tools to get and maintain employment, having a supportive social environment and being personally ready to take on the challenge; in other words it's about life skills, bridging skills and employment readiness." (Woods, 1996)

Although written with a particular context in mind; that of women who have suffered both physical and mental abuse, Wood's comment could apply to many other situations. The common factor is addressing the *transition* from a point of disadvantage, regardless of age, gender, disability, length of unemployment and so forth. It is helpful to compare different situations within Wood's framework; so to compare someone who has been unemployed for five years to a recent university graduate looking for their first job or the management professional suddenly made redundant after years of service. Similarly there will be different issues when this is applied to an offender due for release from prison, someone having served in the armed forces or an individual looking to return to the labour market after a traumatic brain injury or lengthy illness. Hence, if employability is interpreted with sufficient breadth to mean the *management of transitions*, then one can appreciate the complexity of inclusive factors.

1.3 Psychological dimensions of employability

Despite the evidence that employability encompasses so many dimensions, the psychological or behavioural dimension to employability is often overlooked. This is largely due to the complex nature of employability and the difficulty in defining and manipulating psychological variables, but to ignore the behavioural dimension results in the underlying structures being disregarded. Despite the lack of a singular employability theory, the various definitions and emergent frameworks suggest that the behavioural dimension comprises a strong motivational and attitudinal component regarding the recognition of the need for change, empowerment and personal control, coping ability and planning for the future. There is much supportive evidence from the medical literature, particularly with regard to vocational rehabilitation in which employability is a central facet. Acceptance of injury, coping ability and planning to deal with potentially difficult situations are all central themes of such research and are highly predictive factors in models of rehabilitation and employability. These issues have been shown to be central to employability in the contexts of traumatic brain injury (Ben-Yishay et al. 1990; Satz et al., 1998; Goran et al., 1997), spinal cord injury (Athansou et al., 1996), blindness (Hagemoser,1996), speech disorders (Williams et al.,1996) and learning difficulties (Neath et al., 1997, Samuels et al., 1993, Minskoff 1995).

Ben-Yishay et al. (1990) adopts a holistic approach to rehabilitation of which employability is a central aspect. Their model is again essentially one of managing the processes of change and is particularly relevant for exploring employability in disadvantaged groups, covering six steps;

- engagement
- acceptance
- control
- mastery
- awareness
- identity

This all-encompassing approach hence promotes the necessity to work through the various underlying psychological issues relevant to the rehabilitation process. Stern (1982) summarises the theme of such vocational rehabilitation work with dependent or disadvantaged populations, stating that in this field there are two dominant integrated work related components; actual work training and psychological elements which focus upon behavioural aspects such as coping, attitude and self esteem.

Likewise, a structured approach to vocational rehabilitation planning is based upon the assumption that considerations have to made regarding the following categories to assist in selecting effective treatment (Holland et al.,1998):

a) ***problems of occupational identity****: the possession of a clear and stable picture of one's goals, interests, personality and talents and as such is a pre-requisite for effective decision making.*

b) ***lack of information about jobs or training****: relates to specific factual information about the labour market and job search options.*

c) ***environmental or personal barriers****: perceived external obstacles to a chosen occupational goal.*

The above framework clearly shows the role of psychological perspectives of employability for any intervention to be inclusive and appreciative of the individual's holistic needs. Stern's dual conception of employability is repeated in Van Dam's (1998) notion of the psychological dimension of employability of which she similarly states there are two inter-related strands. Firstly and most straightforward are the required competencies and skills for the job, e.g. computer programming knowledge, commercial awareness, initiative and flexibility. The second aspect, Van Dam terms 'employability orientation' which refers to a broad psychological approach to the processes and management of change including the attitudes and behaviours of the individual towards developing these competencies and initiating any necessary change. In the case

of an unemployed person, primary factors would include an initial assessment of current position and life style, personal commitment to changing their situation, exploring possible help routes, assessing alternatives and initiating action of which desire or readiness for change would be a necessary precursor.

The same could be true of people wanting to give up smoking, lose weight or challenge alcohol, drug addiction and eating disorders (Franko, 1997; Levy, 1997; Isenhart,1997; Hewes, 1998; Stillman, 1996; Velicer, 1999). To illustrate this transitional process, the comprehensive transtheoretical model of change (Prochaska and DiClemete's 1982, 1984) has been successfully applied to numerous health change contexts involving addictions and the concept of its main stages, precontemplation, contemplation and action could potentially be applied to a vocational setting too despite the theory being typically used in the field of addictions. It could be argued that the goal directed element of this sequence of change is analogous to aspects of other psychological theories of attitude change and motivation such as expectancy-value theory (Feather, 1990) whereby actions are dependent upon perceived control, self belief and attitudes to the value (valence) of potential outcomes.

Van Dam also stresses that employability orientation is subject to an array of other determinants such as personal circumstances and experience, training provision and environmental forces, again evident that aspects of employability never operate in isolation but rather interact with each other to form this complex variable. Returning to our unemployed individual, environmental determinants of employability orientation will include the local labour market situation, such as sector growth and decline, employers' requirements and availability and quality of training provision. Also important are the perceptions of the unemployed by both recruiting employers and society at large, focusing upon stereotypes and attributions.

The role of personal experience and expectation is acknowledged by Ferrieux (1993, 1998) who maintains that mental representations of both work per se and of the self formed through past experiences are key determinants of individual employability. This research highlights quite a complex reciprocal relationship between employment status and a psychological dimension of employability composed of mental representations of both work per se and of the self. It is proposed that this psychological dimension is dependent upon past experience and expectations of work and such representations are considered key to the development of occupational identity.

Previous thinking on employability and hence interventions have been limited to the practicalities of specific job skills and activities such as job search techniques, but in recent years an important lateral shift has taken place. There is greater acceptance of the significance of the behavioural dimension to employability and more efforts to explore and incorporate it into active interventions. These need to match employers' requirements to reflect changes in the labour market. As such, means of assessing the effectiveness of interventions designed to assist the unemployed have widened too. As noted previously, there is now a considerable requirement to demonstrate impact at the individual level and psychology as a research discipline is well placed to carry out this task.

1.4 The viability of employability as a topic of psychological research

Whilst this thesis argues for the viability of employability at the individual psychological level, it would be ideologically flawed and naïve to assume that the behavioural level is the sole causal factor to which interventions should be directed. In maintaining that active labour market measures should recognise individual-level factors is in no way advocating that unemployment is an

individual-level problem. As Hillage et al's framework indicates, individual attributes and skills cannot be divorced either conceptually or practically from wider social issues such as personal circumstance and environmental structures.

The diversity of usage of the term employability both across and within contexts such as unemployment is often a symptom of its own popularity as Simmonds (1999) indicates:

"The fundamental stumbling block in employability is that different agencies tend to claim the term for themselves: as about either skills training or job search or motivation. This destroys the usefulness of the concept. Employability should be looking at the needs and circumstances of individuals and helping them to address the personal and external barriers to employment." (Simmonds, 1999 p.3)

This clearly echoes Wood's previous statement, that employability needs to be interpreted in a holistic way with the specific circumstance or context in mind. As a research concept, investigation needs to work from a framework to provide structure to a diverse and complex issue. However, it is only very recently that attempts have been made to formulate such a framework. Similarly, without a sound empirical research base, there is as yet no such thing as a comprehensive employability theory with well-defined parameters which poses difficulties for interpretations of findings. In so far as employability concerns all stages of the relationship with the labour market, its boundaries can appear limitless. It warrants interest from all the major social sciences such as politics, economics, social policy, sociology, psychology and also education, training and law. As such, it has been and remains the subject of considerable conceptual wrangling from both critical academics and educators to training providers, practitioners and public policy makers. However, such debate is advancing the pool of knowledge

towards a framework which will facilitate the development of a theory in time. As such, individual pieces of research make valued contributions as they investigate specific issues at deeper levels.

A concept so ill-defined and wide ranging is bound to attract criticism and that levelled at employability stems from its intangible nature both as a concept and viability as a practical approach. Employability is often dismissed as yet another irrelevant piece of business jargon. Hillage and Pollard (1998) cite criticisms from Robinson (1997) who condemns it as flavour of the month and Pascale (1996) as "wishful thinking masquerading as a concept". If taken naively at face-value, it may well seem that employability is indeed an overly optimistic and non-viable proposition. To restate, this thesis maintains that employability is in no way a panacea for unemployment and social exclusion and nor should it be considered a viable alternative to sustainable job creation. In particular, employability should not be used to detract from more structural problems inherent to the economy such as lack of sufficient permanent well paid jobs and the range of other factors the unemployed face.

Employability can only ever amount to maximising the match between the realities of the labour market and the capabilities of the workforce. In this sense, it aims to bridge the gap between individual abilities and the contours of the jobs market. The key elements, including those at the behavioural level provide specific indicators at which intervention effectiveness can be assessed. These provide additional means of conceptualising success over and above hard outcomes of numbers into jobs or numbers of qualifications gained. Lastly, active labour market measures have a clear commercial and political interest and if they can maximise means of evidencing their success, then being able to show impact at the individual level will no doubt be a welcome investment.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 The labour market as a research context

The aim of this chapter is to provide a general context for the empirical work presented later. The complexity of the labour market as a social phenomena is acknowledged and its myriad implications for academic research are discussed. Various research perspectives to studying the labour market are outlined and the specific approach of psychological or individual level analysis is discussed.

Discussion then proceeds to a specific area of the labour market, namely unemployment in providing particular focus for the thesis. The underlying problem and concept of unemployment is explored with particular reference to the labour market in Glasgow and some of its particular problems relating to unemployment. The unemployed as a group within society is reviewed, drawing upon several research perspectives, with specific reference to individual or behavioural level factors.

Having reviewed the structural problem of unemployment and investigated various means of conceptualising the characteristics of the unemployed, the implications for active interventions are outlined. The rationale and ideology of labour market intervention is discussed focusing upon the interplay of both structural and behavioural factors. The validity of including a psychological approach to such interventions is argued and the behavioural dimension to employability is advocated.

Green (1997) defines the labour market as the "main field of interplay between economic, social and demographic systems; it is where changes in the economic environment, social trends and demographic developments come together to

create 'new landscapes of employment and unemployment'." (p.506) It is therefore not surprising that something so complex has provided academic researchers with continual sources of study and debate for decades.

As such, Burchell (1992) states that "the labour market is one of the most complex socially constructed phenomena that psychologists have to deal with" (p.347). Despite writing with the domain of the psychologist in mind, Burchell succinctly outlines the manifest influences, research paradigms and perspectives which all contribute to this complexity inherent to understanding the workings of the labour market. He firstly points out the scope of institutional influences such as employers, government legislation, trade unions, pressure groups, the education system, the family system and so forth (p.347). On a larger scale these groups are manifestations of powerful social, cultural, political and historical determinants of the actuality of the labour market. As such, the labour market as a research arena is equally vast and diverse in terms of both academic disciplines and the perspectives they represent and pursue. For example, whereas economists are generally interested in macro-level processes and explanations such as unemployment flow (Daniel,1990), psychologists tend to turn their attentions to investigating phenomena at the individual and small group level such as the relationship between unemployment and psychological health. (Winefield, 1995)

But whatever the discipline, be it economics, politics, sociology, anthropology or psychology, social scientists are attempting to systematically understand and advance knowledge and in some cases suggest interventions. A particular example of this application is unemployment. Burchell (1992) goes on to call for an interdisciplinary theoretical perspective as a means of reconciling particularly the socio-economical and psychological approaches to the labour market. This he terms labour market segmentation theory (Burchell and Rubery, 1990) which

attempts to approach analysis of the segmentation of labour supply as a socially constructed entity. Here, social psychological variables such as the distribution of power, inequality, expectations and competitive ability between groups are viewed as key variables by which to explain both the workings of the labour market and the effect of the labour market upon different groups of individuals. Viewed this way, the segmentation framework would allow for an inclusive approach of disciplines but one which was not reductionist and exclusive of key structuring factors.

In arguing for a social psychological perspective, Burchell (1992) warns of the *decontextualisation* of understanding labour market experiences such as unemployment resulting from too narrow a sphere of study, in particular by failing to acknowledge the role of the individual in their social environment. He therefore advocates understanding the social psychology of the labour market i.e. inequality and factors contributing to exclusion before beginning to understand unemployment and possible means of addressing it's various psychological effects. The essence of this concern is echoed by many others in the field of unemployment research, notably Fryer (1999) who is particularly critical of the way unemployment is both conceptualised and the mainstream response approach taken in the form of active labour market interventions. The ideology of labour market interventions and in particular Fryer's critique will be discussed later in this chapter but attention now turns to examining the basic problem of unemployment and some conceptual issues over its definition.

2.1 Unemployment: the underlying problem

Recently published statistics reveal that unemployment in Britain has been falling steadily for more than 18 months. At 3.6% the jobless rate is at its lowest for a quarter of a century and the trend is set to continue meaning unemployment could soon fall below the one million mark. (BBC News, 18.10.00) However, just

a brief examination of the wider issues demonstrates that unemployment remains a huge and persistent problem and is far more complex than the latest jobless totals.

No one can dispute that the labour market works imperfectly and as such does not balance all those seeking work with the job opportunities on offer; i.e. there is a huge net jobs deficit. The large-scale mismatch between the numbers of the unskilled and the decline in these jobs simply means there are not enough opportunities for all those seeking work. Therefore the result is a wide gap between the types of skills and experience people have built up in previous jobs and the skills and working patterns characterising the modern day jobs market. The nature of this gap and approaches to dealing with it therefore provide researchers with manifest opportunities, be it through analysis of structures and economics or the effects and experiences of those individuals involved.

As Downes (2000) indicates, it is now cliché continually to restate that the world of work has undergone profound changes in recent decades. However, the reality is that whilst millions of semi and low-skilled manual and manufacturing jobs have disappeared, the often low-skilled, low-paid service industry jobs which have replaced them tend to lack the stability and security to make them long-term viable alternatives. As a direct result, many people see welfare benefits as a much more attractive option as opposed to demotivating, poorly paid jobs.

There have been major changes in the last 25 years across many industrialised countries; the decline in many areas of the manufacturing sector and the emergence of post-industrial service and knowledge-based economies in the wake of continuing technological advance. Global marketplaces increase the emphasis on knowledge and innovative developments by means of competitive advantage, escalated by huge developments in information and communicative

technology, thus necessitating major organisational restructuring. This in turn requires greater flexibility to meet customer needs and ensure survival in an uncertain economic environment. As a consequence, the nature of the working environment has changed considerably too, often with shifts from linear production- based structures to knowledge-based organisations. The shift in the nature of competitive advantage has moved from one of cost-reduction to product differentiation and faster quality improvements, new goods and services. (Cornet and Venniker,1998)

Many large UK post-industrial cities such as Glasgow, Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Newcastle and Birmingham have witnessed a huge decline in traditional industries such as steel manufacturing and particularly for Glasgow and Liverpool, shipbuilding. In their place has been the steady growth of service sector economies such as call centres and financial services. In Glasgow's case alone, over 80% of available jobs are within the service industry (Glasgow Economic Monitor, 1998).

This shift in job type has been matched by a fall in full-time permanent work and a rise in part-time, temporary contracts often accompanied by irregular working hours as opposed to the traditional Monday to Friday nine to five. Call centres are a prominent example of this where often availability is over the twenty-four hour and seven day a week period. Taken together, the implications of this massive and continuing shift for individuals are well apparent. Mergers, organisational restructuring and downsizing are a commonly accepted feature of many contemporary economies. The resulting fall out is often painfully clear and for those fortunate to survive these transitions, uncertainty and instability remain an ever present threat. But for those not so fortunate, they still need to deal with the same changes in the labour market but tend to be considerably more disadvantaged. As said, the problem is not simply rectified by slotting the

unemployed back into vacant slots and the next section of this chapter provides an example of a particular location where the complexity of dealing with change and unemployment is very apparent.

2.2 Glasgow's labour market

Gomez (1998) concisely charts Glasgow's attempts at urban regeneration following its decline as an industrial centre in the second half of this century. From being a dominant centre of the manufacturing and production of heavy industry such as iron and steel, particularly in relation to shipbuilding, Glasgow's huge process of deindustrialisation resulted in the well-documented massive losses of full-time male employment. Gomez acknowledges research by Robertson (1995) who explains the basic problem and inevitable change facing traditional Scottish economies from the early 1950's:

"The country's industrial base had always been narrow, focused almost exclusively upon textiles, coal, iron, steel and heavy engineering. Such specialisation could be sustained by the trading privileges accrued from the British Empire. Once the Empire collapsed, following the end of the Second World War, many Scottish industries found themselves unable to compete in world markets and went into terminal decline." (Robertson, 1995, p.4)

In line with most other large UK cities, the domination of the service sector has in the city's consistently been evidenced in Glasgow and is the main driver behind the continuing economic growth. The Glasgow Economic Monitor (Spring,1999) indicates that the push in Glasgow's GDP comes mainly from the service sector which now accounts for 84% of all jobs and therefore over four out of every five jobs in Glasgow are in services. The years 1993 to 1996 saw a net gain of 8,100 jobs in the service industry and as expected the main antecedents of this

increase were banking and finance services, distribution hotels and restaurants. Public services such as education and health have also contributed to economic growth in recent years.

The main implications of this service led economy are an increase in the number of part time jobs and of female employment within the workforce. Predictions estimate that part time employment will continue to account for over 30% of all jobs in the city reflecting the greater flexibility inherent in service economy jobs, for example in the case of call centres which attracts many female part-time workers.

An interesting feature of Glasgow's service economy picked up on by researchers at Glasgow and Strathclyde universities is the concept of *'aesthetic labour'* as a fundamental consideration and implication for recruitment and employee management processes of modern times. Nickson et al. (1998) indicate the nature of this idea within the context of the 'new Glasgow economy' as it reinvents itself as a post-industrial city. The basic assumption to this concept is that the foundation of competitive advantage rests upon investment in human capital and in particular aesthetic labour indicates employer reliance upon physical appearance and the embodiment of capabilities and attributes over and above actual technical skill and competence. In turn, such factors significantly impact upon organisational practices such as recruitment, training and management of employees in this service economy. However, the report warns against over conflation of this expansion as indicative of a booming knowledge industry. It is important to realise that within service provision is also a production process going on behind the scenes. As such, Nickson et al. emphasise the insensitivity to the heterogeneity of jobs within the service industry whereby much of service sector growth is due to the 'donkey- work' of serving, guarding, cleaning, waiting and helping in the private health care services and hospitality

industry. The report's authors state this as a problem of disaggregation of jobs, of those which are high in skill and knowledge-rich as opposed to the more mundane and consistently underpaid 'McJobs' using George Ritzer's conceptualisation of 'McDonaldisation' (Ritzer,1993). This popular observation of modern consumer culture indicates the tendency within the service sector to be overtaken by mass rationalisation of even the simplest everyday tasks at the expense of attention to quality and individuality. As Ritzer claims, such a direction only serves to propel the false illusion of efficiency and frugality.

2.3 Unemployment in Glasgow

Despite overall economic growth, agencies such as Glasgow City Council and Glasgow Development Agency warn that such positive achievements cannot afford complacency in light of the serious and prevailing problem of unemployment. Patrick (1999) states that:

"Poverty, poor health, low educational attainment and a degraded environment blight the lives of an uncomfortably high percentage of the city's population. At current rates, only one out of every two jobs is likely to go to a Glaswegian." (p.40)

A recent report states that approximately 500,000 jobs, mainly in the 'smokestack industries' of mining, shipbuilding and steel production have been lost in the last 18 years across the UK's largest cities. Focusing upon Glasgow alone, manufacturing as expected accounted for a great deal in the change of total employment. On Clydeside alone, the report documents a 47% drop in manufacturing jobs between 1981 and 1991 effectively a huge influence upon the total employment change. (Turok and Edge,1999) The Glasgow Economic Monitor (Spring,1999) reports Glasgow's total manufacturing loss as 3,000 jobs between 1993 to 1996 and the shedding of nearly 3,800 from the construction

industry across the same period. The destructive blow is that whilst these traditional male jobs have died, they have not been replaced, leaving a huge unemployed labour surplus with skills and experience in a declining area. Other demographic trends reported by Glasgow City Council are that the largest proportion in terms of the age distribution of Glasgow's unemployed are aged between 25-34. However, if all the age distributions are collapsed, then it effectively means that almost 17,500 people of prime working age between 20-44 are without employment and claiming welfare benefit.

Figures published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and reported in the Glasgow Economic Monitor (Autumn,1999) report that unemployment in Scotland is at its lowest for 23 years at 126,000 representing 5.2 % of the population. ONS figures for Glasgow alone reported in the same publication as of Autumn 1999 demonstrate that the unemployment claimant count was 24,256 representing 6.7% of the workforce. However, as the Glasgow Economic Monitor emphasises, as the Office of National Statistics (ONS) disregards those actively seeking work and *not* claiming benefit, this far underestimates the numbers of unemployed in places such as Glasgow where employment numbers are inclusive of a substantial proportion of inward commuters. As such, in April 1998 the Government sanctioned the International Labour Office (ILO) measure as a more accurate reflection of the real estimate of unemployment figures. As the Economic Monitor (Autumn, 1999) outlines, this effectively adds another 6,000 to the count whereby the number unemployed leaps to 31,000, hence boosting the rate to an expanded 12% for Glasgow, double the UK rate.

However, several reports have claimed that the real rate is closer to 30% taking into account all those in the city without jobs. (Turok and Edge, 1999; Beatty et al., 1997) Beatty claims that on these bases, the typically published figures for reduced unemployment are purely cosmetic and lie awkwardly alongside the big

increase in disengagement and inactivity. Beatty et al. produced estimates of 'real' unemployment for every district in the UK inclusive of a proportion of people on sickness benefit, government training schemes and early retirement. The conurbation cores were thought to have more realistic unemployment rates of between 20-30% compared with 14.2% for the UK as a whole. Calculated this way, Glasgow returns an estimate of 30.6% of the workforce compared with the official claimant count of 11.8%, a striking disparity of 18.8%. Beatty's research goes on to outline the various hidden features contributing to falls in the official unemployment figures such as:

- *increased out-migration of the population to surrounding areas*
- *decline in labour market participation(disengagement)*
- *changes in benefit eligibility rules meaning less registered unemployed*

Beatty's research concludes that the decline in demand for male labour has not been translated into an equivalent increase in recorded unemployment because of a labour supply which has seen to have fallen through out-migration, economic inactivity and outward commuting.

Such work demonstrates the need to examine the wider nature and causes of unemployment, in particular the necessity to investigate wider structural concerns over inequality and lack of prosperity. Likewise, Bailey,Turok and Docherty (1999) compare the relative structural positions and problems of Glasgow and Edinburgh and highlights the imbalance in prosperity between the two cities as being unfavourable for Glasgow. The report emphasises Glasgow's particular problems of which there are several key themes:

- *declining population within Glasgow at 3,360 people per annum over the last decade due to outward migration of population from city core*

- *10% of Glasgow consists of vacant or derelict land: deters investment and opportunity*
- *significantly higher unemployment than Edinburgh: Glasgow's loss of 75% of its heavy industry in the last 30 years*
- *'real' unemployment rate of 30.6% for Glasgow compared to 13% for Edinburgh*
- *extensive poverty, exclusion and ill-health whereas more localised across in the East.*

Glasgow has certainly suffered more long-term decline and the effects are more pronounced due to Glasgow being a larger and more fragmented city in terms of the social segregation and widening polarisation between affluent and disadvantaged. Decentralisation (shifts from city cores to suburban areas) prevents necessary investment in city housing and hence pockets of deprivation and poverty develop. Job losses specifically have severe cumulative effects by way of lower incomes, high crime, low educational attainment, ill health and sub-standard housing conditions.

Taking into account the various factors outlined in this section, the implications for those interested in intervention and resolution are both significant and complex. The way unemployment is conceptualised as a problem very much stimulates the approach taken to intervention. For example, Turok et al. (1999) advocates the urgent need to improve the infrastructure and skills level in Glasgow to enable it to sustain economic growth. This pertains to both individual level as well as structural level intervention but Turok like so many others is highly critical of measures which remain at the individual or supply side of the equation and effectively ignore variables such as investment in their infrastructure such as the availability of land to attract inward investment and the sustainability of local businesses. Turok states that:

"In the fields of urban policy and area regeneration, the goal of employment expansion seems to have slipped off the national policy agenda and been replaced by concerns over social exclusion, employability and workforce flexibility. Policy makers appear to have decided that they cannot influence where jobs get created or that the uneven demand for labour does not really matter because people will respond – or be helped to respond – through outward commuting, migration, wage moderation or retraining, that there will be sufficient labour market adjustment to alleviate the problem." (Turok and Edge,1999, p.8)

The interplay between individual and structural or supply and demand factors is a considerable bone of contention in relation to labour market intervention and activities to address unemployment. Glasgow is facing a huge and sustained need for large scale re-training and a major investment in learning and training to equip it's workforce with the essential skills and experience necessary to match the nature of opportunities and areas of growth. But at the same time interventions cannot ignore the critical role of demand and inequality in the labour market. With such an ingrained industrial and cultural heritage, the move to a knowledge based, service oriented labour market is likely to continue to pose significant challenges to those who work to help the unemployed access employment opportunities. Before looking at the response to unemployment and the rationale behind active labour market intervention, it is necessary to review how the unemployed are defined as a particular group within society. Having explored the context, the discussion now moves to the population; the characteristics of which also represent a significant field of interest for social researchers.

2.4 Defining the unemployed as a social group

If, as is argued, employability from a psychological perspective is a viable approach for labour market interventions, it follows that a necessary precursor is

to examine the defining characteristics of the unemployed at the behavioural level. It follows that the more information available regarding a specific group, the better informed the practical implications should be. The unemployed in the most literal sense are not in paid employment and would like to be so and as such are distinct from the non-participants or disengaged who have no *desire* or *need* for paid employment. But beyond this fundamental distinction, the way the unemployed are conceptualised as a group varies enormously depending upon the perspective taken.

The unemployed should not be perceived as one single homogenous group (e.g. the long term unemployed, women, ethnic minorities, youth unemployed, ex-offenders, the redundant, people with disabilities, lone parents) and definitions depend upon *who* is doing the defining and the *perspective* of the definer, be it the unemployed themselves, governmental institutions or social commentators. Not surprisingly, the way the unemployed are conceptualised has direct bearings upon the philosophies and realities of interventions which would claim to address the situations and needs of unemployed groups.

A substantial research report by Atkinson, Giles and Meager (1996) draws upon a huge body of empirical literature as to the nature and characteristics of the unemployed. On the basis of this research, they summarise the key findings purporting the chief likelihood characteristics of the unemployed to be as follows:

- traditionally concentrated within working class occupations
- generally in poorer health
- likely to be older males
- possess fewer educational qualifications
- consist of greater proportions of disadvantaged groups, e.g. ethnic minorities

Taken together, these factors would no doubt *marginalise* the unemployed from the full-time, well paid and motivating jobs available. Obviously, the above characteristics are based upon typicality and there are countless unemployed people who do not fit into either dimension and as the labour market continues to change, the unemployed will continue to become even more heterogenous. In other words, there is no typical unemployed person with a defined set of individual characteristics. Apart from the above demographic factors, Dawes (1993) categorises the variables into three broad categories: these being represented as inherent, behavioural and human capital characteristics:

- **Inherent (permanent, innate aspects)** e.g. health, disability, age, gender, ethnicity
- **Behavioural (directly resulting from the individuals' behaviour)** e.g. attitude, motivation, confidence and job-search activities
- **Human capital (valued in the labour market)** e.g. educational level, work history, technical skill etc.

Hence, if the purpose of intervention is to move the unemployed closer to the labour market, then there is a role for all the above categories, including the behavioural. If retraining enhances technical skill level and education but the individual is still vehemently opposed to employment, success in the guise of sustained employment is unlikely. What Dawes' categories provide are a framework for interventions to assess their impact. He doesn't provide any comparative data as to how the unemployed fare on these variables in relation to the employed. The following chapter reviews the main conclusions from the literature as to the impact of unemployment upon specifically behavioural factors such as psychological well-being.

Furthermore, Atkinson et al. (1996) propose that in conceptualising the unemployed, there are two different approaches to how the labour market works

and how this impacts upon employers' perceptions of the unemployed; namely the *state dependence* view and the *labour market heterogeneity* view. Essentially, the state dependence view rests on the assumption that the corrosive experience of unemployment upon personal attributes such as motivation, aspiration, skills and confidence is the causal factor of disadvantage. As such, the unemployed lack the attractive attributes employers require *because* they are unemployed and as such are less valued by employers. On the other hand, the heterogeneity approach advocates the natural sifting and selective process of the labour market leading to a clustering of people of low value to employers. Hence, these people are unemployed because they *inherently* lack the skills and attributes to be desirable.

Based upon a large representative sample of 800 UK employers, Atkinson's study found predominance of the state dependent approach in conceptualising employers' perceptions of the unemployed. In this case, their strong belief demonstrated that the *experience* of unemployment itself is demoralising and harmful placing the unemployed at a distinct disadvantage in terms of their weakened motivation and self-confidence.

Further means of analysing the characteristics of the unemployed is provided by Green (1997) who cites an extensive piece of research by Fieldhouse (1996) which models the risk of unemployment using data from the Great Britain 1991 Census of Population. The findings indicate several individual, household and socio-economic characteristics as being related to a greater risk of unemployment. They include occupation, qualifications, age, ethnicity, marital status, dependent children and tenure. However, such statistical association does not demonstrate a causal link between these factors and unemployment risk and as Green emphasises, there is a strong likelihood of interdependence between the two and as such causality cannot be claimed.

But for researchers such as Green (1997), attempting to isolate the behavioural or individual level factors from the demand or structural fields of disadvantage and inequality is wasteful. He feels that in characterising the unemployed, the criteria were and still are insufficient in their descriptions to capture the realistic changes in the representation of economic in(activity) and un(employment). To remedy this, Green advocates the need for alternative broader and hence more inclusive indicators (criteria) of labour market inclusion and hence exclusion mirroring the earlier thoughts of Burchell's labour market segmentation theory. Green proposes a wider appreciation of the effects of economic restructuring and how these are deemed to impact and result in the various socio-economic divisions within the contemporary labour market.

Green's account is effectively represented in terms of defining the issues which account for such divisions inherent to understanding exclusion and marginalisation, describing how both people and areas become excluded hence fuelling the growing inequalities throughout society. Firstly explaining who the 'losers' are, Green states that the approach taken in constructing such risk factors is largely conditioned by perceived causality of the unemployment situation. On the one hand and mirroring issues mentioned earlier, is an explanation which cites individual behavioural elements such as low motivation and negative work attitudes as underlying exclusionary risk factors, or as Green terms, a "psychology of poverty." (p.507).

On the other hand is the more accepted view attributed to structural processes, that changing labour market organisation places certain disadvantaged sub groups at the end of the employment queue, factors which effectively by-pass individual behaviour. Of the key characteristics of the labour market, Green includes the reduction in traditional skilled manual labour with a higher value

being placed upon knowledge, higher skills and qualifications, the growth of flexible work such as part time and temporary and the insecurities this brings, increased working hours, a continuing informal economy and finally the entrenchment of high level of unemployment and non participation amongst particular sub groups such as older men.

Responding to the fall out from these structural changes, Green refers to the subsequent resulting divisions termed by Hutton (1995) as the emergent '30-30-40 society'. This euphemism depicts the inequality of labour market effects across society as a whole in so far as 30% individuals are conceived as 'disadvantaged' including the economically inactive and unemployed, another 30% 'marginalised and insecure' due to the instabilities of part time, temporary, casual, short term self employment etc and finally the remaining 40% considered 'advantaged' i.e. full time employed and those whose part time and self employment is more stable and established.

The work described here supports the view that as Green states, the way the unemployed are conceptualised is largely conditioned by the perceived causality of their unemployment situation. However, by stating a case for employability intervention at the behavioural level, i.e. motivation, self-confidence and work attitudes is not placing the *reason* for the individuals' unemployment at the door of these psychological factors. In keeping with the state dependent view, the process of unemployment *itself* is harmful, but there is value in investigating behavioural factors as part of an intervention.

An additional perspective to conceptualising the unemployed is provided by Puuronen, 1999 who proposes an approach to employability as it relates to long term unemployed youth in Finland. The premise is that unemployment, particularly long-term unemployment results in *marginsalisation* of young people

which in turn often leads to membership of a subculture of unemployment. Understanding the key determinants of marginalisation and subculture is subsequently important in explaining the relative likelihood of gaining employment. The author states that:

"marginalisation is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. Marginalised young people may lack financial, social, cultural or political resources, abilities and skills. Marginalisation is often accumulative, marginalisation is one sphere of life results in marginalisation also in other spheres. In some cases, marginalisation can be a spin, coming out of which is very difficult." (Puuroneen, 1999)

Puuroneen's own research draws upon the earlier work of Hyypp (1992) whose interviews with long term unemployed young people between 16 and 25 years supports the significance of recognising the heterogeneity within such samples with respect to the degree of marginalisation. As such, she believes that long term unemployed youth can be divided into three groups, characterised by their degree of marginalisation and involvement in an unemployed subculture; namely the isolated, crisis and subculture groups.

The *isolated* often suffer the accumulated marginalisation described above which infiltrates all areas of their lives from lack of financial resources to lonely withdrawal from social circles, lack of interest in education and a belief they have nothing to offer in terms of education, skills or abilities enabling them to adapt to the workplace. The characterising feature of isolation and withdrawal means that subcultures of unemployment are largely unimportant to this group of people. This scenario is indeed a vicious circle whereby these individuals are marginalised in respect of almost all resources, including attitudes towards employment and education that are increasingly negative. As such, pre-

vocational needs and barriers are so significant that the chances of gaining employment are severely limited.

The second group characterised as the *crisis* group have many of the resources outlined above which are often lacking in the previous isolated group. Contrasted to the previous group, those in *crisis* are desperately searching for employment as it holds significant importance to them in terms of financial provision, social identity and esteem. As such, these individuals are strongly motivated holding positive attitudes to work and good standards of education and skills and generally work experience but for whatever reason have found themselves unemployed. Again, the subculture of unemployment is relatively unimportant as the crisis group do not exhibit the behavioural pattern of those thought to typify the subculture group.

The third group are defined by their belonging to the so-called *subculture* of long term unemployed young people. Belonging to such a subculture defines individuals' use of time, values, habits and more importantly expectations for the future. Contrasted to the isolation group, the subculture group benefit from well established social circles but this in turn reinforces the values and behaviours which impede their likelihood of employment. The prospect of employment is unattractive as it threatens this lifestyle which has become an ingrained way of being for this group. As such, their reticence to actively seek work often fits conceptual labels of a social underclass and a culture of dependency.

This last group, the sub-culture classification echoes concerns over the so-called growing culture of benefit dependency. In other words, the reason for being unemployed is purely behavioural and individual level and as such intervention should be geared to increasing favourable work attitude and strengthening work motivation and commitment. However, many are scathingly critical that the

rationale of national policy such as the New Deal is to directly address welfare dependency at the expense of structural and demand-side factors such as the lack of investment in job creation. Peck, (1999) asserts that this 'discourse of welfare dependency' represents ministerial justification for welfare policy, notably the New Deal. He explains that this stance effectively places the fundamental policy issue with the unemployed themselves rather than a lack of decently paid jobs or poverty.

"Dependency discourse is focused on the behavioural deficits of recipients themselves, in identifying their dependency as the issue to be tackled, thereby legitimating active supply-side policies, while deflecting attention away from structural causes of poverty and unemployment concerned with job generation and the demand side of the labour market." (Peck, 1999, p.348)

As such, Peck refers to the concealment of the government's Welfare to Work strategy as a supply-side behaviourist policy to ignore blatant demand-side causes and as such does not tackle the underlying reason for unemployment in the first place. Similarly, Robinson (1998) explores the policy implications of such conceptualisations of the unemployed and indicates how such beliefs advance related concerns such as the nature of social exclusion and the extent to which the unemployed embody an underclass. He reiterates Peck's observations of ministerial deployment of 'culture of dependency' terminology as defence of compulsive policy necessary to break the welfare dependency cycle of a sector of the population inherently lacking motivation, happy to remain jobless and be supported by tax–payer's money.

Dekker and Ester (1992) explain maintenance of such attitudes towards the unemployed as being symptomatic of authoritarianism. On the basis of Adorno et al.'s original (1950) concept of the Authoritarian Personality, Dekker et al. assert

that authoritarian negative image attribution stems from overt negative out-group trait attribution often towards minority social groups such as children, homosexuals, ethnic minorities and in the present case the unemployed. The researchers establish that authoritarian beliefs will regard the unemployed as 'lazy profiteers of generous welfare schemes' and will hence attribute unemployment to individual behavioural factors such as personal failure rather than demand side issues and structural causes in the wider labour market. The crux of the negative image is that the unemployed are viewed as the out group because they do not adhere to the traditional work ethic and live at the expense of society (p.14)

Leonard (1998) provides significant evidence to challenge the concept of the unemployed as an underclass. She cites that the long-term unemployed specifically are almost always included in this debate particularly in relation to why and how they are perceived as representing an underclass. The content of the argument is the same, namely whether disadvantage is due to the inherent personal attributes of the long-term unemployed such as lack of motivation or whether the wider structural forces of the jobs market act as the determinant of their unfortunate position.

Leonard cites similar distinctions in the work of Smith (1992) who refers to a debate between culture and structure, whilst Katz (1993) utilises the terms individual agency versus structural forces. Interestingly, the use of personal agency features heavily in explanations of the effects of unemployment (Fryer, 1986, 1988) to be discussed in the following chapter. Leonard's research carried out within a deprived housing scheme in West Belfast finds no grounds for the validity of the concept of an underclass within the traditional criteria of lack of a work ethic and passive resignation to the situation at hand via a culture of benefit dependency. Rather, she reports activities which counteract this stereotypical

image such as participation in informal economies which in itself demonstrated the ingenuity, responsibility and commitment to the work ethic. As such, Leonard states:

"those who engage in such activities may undermine rather than reinforce stereotypical images of the characteristics of an 'underclass' in that their motivations may demonstrate a commitment to rather than a rejection of, mainstream values and ambitions. (p.43)

The above discussion as to the various means of conceptualising the unemployed as a social group highlights some key issues which have direct implications for unemployment interventions. There appears a clear distinction between those who adhere to the heterogeneity view that the unemployed are jobless because they lack the necessary attributes, i.e. they have behavioural and personal deficits making them unattractive to employers; and the state dependent view placing the unemployed at a disadvantage *because* of their unemployment and the effect this has had upon their skills and motivations.

But as many have pointed out, the true conceptualisation of the unemployed has to go beyond this level to include a wider perspective of the antecedents and dynamics of disadvantage and material poverty to really appreciate the full issues of the factors characterising the unemployed. Whilst the scope of this thesis is within the behavioural/psychological approach, the author acknowledges that this is indeed just one level of analysis for intervention and that full understanding of unemployment cannot be limited by theoretical or ideological boundaries.

Based upon the above issues and their implications, the remainder of this chapter will briefly outline the rationale of active labour market intervention.

2.5 Bridging the gap: The rationale of active labour market intervention

At its simplest, active labour market approaches are designed to bring some mid-way between both the structural factors of the economy and the individual factors of the unemployed as a group. In other words, they tend to attempt to facilitate the match between what employers want and the skills that people can offer. Labour market proposals of how to reduce the numbers of jobless people are not a panacea for unemployment, but neither is there a single short-term magical solution to be found in either greater labour market flexibility or faster economic growth. (Grimes, 1996). If these two views are representative of extremes, the former would contend that the unemployed need to be increasingly flexible and take on whatever jobs they can. As Grimes indicates this is not a viable long-term solution both strategically and ideologically. Simply placing the unemployed into unsatisfactory short-term, underpaid jobs will no doubt lead to material disadvantage and poverty with the threat of psychological distress. Even if such an approach was successful in reducing the numbers of unemployed there would still remain the problem of the working poor who would have little incentive to give up welfare benefits. The unemployed would still be at a disadvantage as new jobs are likely to go to entrants to the labour market rather than those hoping to return to the jobs arena.

Hampden-Turner (1998) effectively describes the dilemma the unemployed face. He uses the analogy of Tebbit's father's 'on yer bike' approach telling the unemployed to try harder and become increasingly more flexible. Hampden-Turner points out the problem that as all the eager cyclists rush to a jobs market which cannot accommodate them all, the only pay off of trying hard is further diminished motivation. Even if the cyclists were all to pedal 20% faster, they may get there faster but the only outcome would be a huge traffic jam and the same proportion would still be unemployed but with greater frustration of effort and distress. Therefore, many would argue that focusing upon supply-side measures

which actively encourage greater flexibility, motivation and determination to try harder (i.e. faster pedalling) is not only wasteful but potentially damaging when a well paid secure job does not come to fruition.

Fryer (1999) amongst others is particularly sceptical of such interventions for the very reasons outlined above. He considers that the rationale and emphasis inherent to these interventions is ignorant of the multi-level socio-structural factors which provide a context for unemployment in contemporary society. He consistently condemns these interventions 'psychologistic' and 'implicitly individualistic', ignorant of factors such as inequality in the distribution of power and personal agency. Therefore, are labour market programmes which claim to improve employability simply putting off the inevitable and reordering the dole queue and in many cases adding to the distress and frustration already felt by the majority of the unemployed?

Typically, the most constructive answer lies somewhere in between. However, there tend to be two aims in typical interventions:

1) to help the unemployed compete more effectively for existing jobs
2) to create temporary forms of 'special employment'

The more established and informed models of labour market intervention such as the Intermediate Labour Market model as pioneered by the Glasgow-based Wise Group advocate a balance between structural and individual factors. In this sense, they are creating an intermediary jobs market specifically to help reintegrate the unemployed. Employability in this case incorporates practical paid work experience, training towards a relevant vocational qualification, job search assistance and personal/social development (akin to the behavioural component being advocated in this thesis.) The Wise Group ethos of an Intermediate Labour Market is defined as:

"The provision of waged or salaried full and part time jobs that are only available to the unemployed (or specific groups within the unemployed) for a limited period and where the product of their work has either a direct social purpose or is trading for a social purpose where that work or trading would not normally be undertaken." (Taken from 'Making Benefits Work',1996)

The basic assumptions of an Intermediate Labour Market are firstly that there are not enough jobs to go round for everyone that wants one, but more importantly it upholds the belief that the majority of the unemployed want to do and are capable of doing something rather than nothing. As such, the provision of useful work-experience allows the unemployed to demonstrate to employers that this is indeed the case, that with relevant training and a chance to access employment, they have the capabilities and commitment to be successful employees. Acutely aware of the many barriers long term unemployed people face such as lack of skills and training and particularly recent work experience, the Group clearly recognises the value and success of the combination of training, work-experience and a market wage to people seeking work.

Marshall (1997a) speaking at a Parliamentary Select Committee on Education and Employment stated the differentiation between the ILM approach and other unemployment 'schemes' is that offering a real wage for a real job immediately breaks the stigma of being unemployed; the person is now in a job and no longer unemployed. The perception the individual has of this transition and the employers' response is the key and as Marshall later indicates:

"This means no compulsion, no benefits sanctions and no mass environmental schemes which immediately stigmatise the unemployed." (Marshall, 1997b, p.16)

Participants are no longer claiming benefit, hence reducing the jobless totals and at the same time are given high quality training and support for a year and helped to find jobs which they are likely to maintain, rather than simply another short-term placement scheme to reorder the queue for a short time. For Glasgow in particular, many projects need to be undertaken to improve the local community especially with housing and inner-city urban regeneration and are not readily valued and taken up by the private sector. Hence, an ILM approach which achieves simultaneous goals; which on the one hand is greatly beneficial to the unemployed individual in providing work experience and at the same time addresses local community needs without placing a considerable drain upon public expenditure. In this way, a 'win-win-win' situation is achieved:

- Wise Group customers receive a professional standard of service
- the unemployed increase their overall employability
- the local economy receives a boost as more people have disposable incomes

In creating a realistic work environment, individuals receive a market wage and the terms of their employment are based upon a formal contract with rights and obligations. Participants also benefit from the expertise and supervision of highly-trained Wise Group staff who not only have a direct role in the acquisition of new skills and qualifications, but are also a continual source of support and motivation to aid longer term employability.

Hence, the intermediate labour market offers practical and creative ways of developing real jobs for the unemployed. The work done is vital, yet needs to be planned carefully to avoid clashing with local authority plans. The obvious focus is 'additionality' of value by means of careful targeting of projects, well-researched placements and effective partnerships to minimise displacement of existing employment. It is about affording and carving out creative opportunities

for those needing them most and the Wise Group has been achieving this successfully for over 15 years.

In terms of evaluation, recent annual reviews (Wise Group, 1996, 1998) have reported success rates of people into jobs of between 50% and 60%. An evaluation of effectiveness (McGregor et al., 1997) reported significantly higher success rate of people into jobs from the Wise Group than other training schemes. The research also found that two-thirds of participants found a job after leaving and nearly 50% were still employed up to 6 months later.

Like any other organisation, the Wise Group is always striving to develop new ideas and publicise its successes and in having charitable status, there are also added concerns over funding opportunities and competition. In recent years there has been an impetus to broaden the way success is conceptualised, measured and assessed over and above the explicit criteria of number of people into jobs. This has involved taking a wider perspective of the nature of individual employability, particularly from a psychological perspective. Experience and much anecdotal evidence from personal testimonies has reported that the Wise Group is successful in boosting people's self-esteem and that the factors comprising the Intermediate Labour Market succeed in lifting self-confidence through the acquisition of new skills and work experience.

To validate this accumulation of knowledge and to evidence the effectiveness of their approach, the Wise Group were thus interested in a project which focused upon systematically evaluating the impact their programme made upon people's self-concept including self-esteem, confidence and attitudes to work and employment. Aware that such factors are crucial to an unemployed individual's personal employability but nonetheless difficult to reliably quantify and assess, the organisation required a longitudinal investigation utilising reliable and valid

psychological methods to identify participants' progress and potential change over time.

The following chapter will outline the contribution psychology as a science has made generally to the field of unemployment research. It will clearly show the majority of this work relating to the psychological effects of unemployment with significantly less research having been done in the area of intervention and re-employment. More importantly, the following chapter reviews some established models of *why* the unemployment experience is thought to be psychologically damaging and the views these models take in relation to intervention and advancing the field of unemployment research from a psychological perspective. This will allow for the development of some analytical strands concerning several behavioural factors to be empirically investigated later in the thesis.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 Psychology's contribution to understanding unemployment

This chapter outlines the main contributions that psychology has made to our understanding of the unemployment experience of individuals and how this knowledge has been utilised in a practical sense to inform interventions. The purpose of this review is to provide a context in which to consider the present study from both an epistemological and empirical position. The chapter highlights the role that psychology has typically played and offers an appraisal of its contribution to tackling unemployment. In conclusion, the chapter will attempt to identify existing deficits in measures aimed at reducing unemployment and show where psychological studies such as this can make a necessary and valued contribution.

Firstly, the concept of unemployment can be contextually placed within the wider field of employment relations. The "processes of motivation and control over which the ways employment is carried out and rewarded in industrialised societies." (Hartley and Stephenson, 1995, p.1) can help us to understand how the individual perceives and structures their choices or expectations. Considering that employment and unemployment are both forms of social relations, their psychological component is unarguably extensive. This is because the scientific approach of psychology aims to shed light upon the individual, social and organisational behaviours and social processes underlying the creation of these relations (Hartley et al., p.1). As such, the beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, values, expectations and behaviours of individuals and groups is integral to any form of analysis at this level. Hartley et al. assert that despite psychology being able to make a distinctive contribution in terms of research, theory and practice, psychology's role is not to achieve disciplinary hegemony. Thus the challenge for social scientists is to ensure that psychological analysis is

placed within an environmental and institutional context. Thus, despite the focus of this thesis being analysis of employability at the individual level, it nevertheless recognises the need to interpret the findings in the wider environmental context.

In addition to the scope of individual level enquiry as highlighted above such as attitude and behaviour, psychology continues to contribute from several other perspectives. These include for example epistemological considerations, ideological perspectives, methodology in terms of theoretical analysis to define a research problem and lastly technical methods to actually carry out the research.

By far, the majority of this research pertains to understanding the *effects* of unemployment and also the re-employment experience upon mental well-being and causal relationships between unemployment and an impressive list of affective variables have been established to varying degrees. More importantly, psychology has provided several models and accounts as to *why* these effects occur and the rationales on which they are based have direct implications for policy development and measures to assist the unemployed. Similarly, several well-established psychological theories have been applied to the concept of job-seeking leading to the formulation of predictive models of re-employment (Abrahamson,1978; Ajzen and Fishbein, 1978; Weiner, 1985). Where interventions have sought to establish the process of change and impact on individuals, the application of psychological theory provides a well-grounded framework to assess effectiveness.

In summary, this chapter will attempt to draw out the main conclusions from the research literature that advocate a case for employability interventions to be considered at an individual level.

3.1 Conclusions in the research literature about unemployment and psychological well-being

Although this thesis is concerned with the use of psychology within an unemployment intervention, it is important to show awareness of the wider context as presented within the empirical literature. Specifically, this calls for an understanding of the issues concerning the relationship between unemployment upon psychological well-being. However, it is important to draw upon the major conclusions and show how they critically impact upon interventions to assist the unemployed. It is extremely difficult to succinctly summarise the research literature concerned with the unemployment-psychological health relationship. Within this particular research field there is huge diversity with respect to paradigms, theoretical perspectives, ideology and methodological sophistication resulting in a vast research domain which is complex and difficult to structure. There is no unifying theory of the effects of unemployment and no single agreed approach or theory to understanding why these effects occur or the best approach for dealing with psychological trauma associated with joblessness

Gaining critical perspective is problematic when one attempts to reconcile the significant variation inherent to unemployment research spanning nearly 70 years and the cultural, political and historical determinants impinging upon research outcomes. Thus, is it valid to compare findings from the mid 1930's with those in the mid 1990's for these very reasons considering the huge social, cultural and political changes throughout the twentieth century. Taken together, the findings span time, cultural changes, political developments and as such render simple summaries difficult. Does unemployment mean the same now as it did in previous decades and do we understand and measure it in the same way to warrant direct comparisons valid and reliable? The potential 'politicisation' of research means that pieces of work will often reflect the current climate and in

present times, employability, social inclusion and the pressure to evidence effectiveness may command particular attention and potentially ignore or disregard deeper-rooted issues such as the causes of unemployment, psychologically damaging employment and mental health concerns. As an example, there is currently a push to show intervention effectiveness and very often the 'hard outcome' of number of people into jobs is the terminal objective without adequate consideration of issues such as the quality of these jobs and their sustainability.

Returning to the research; having taken historical, cultural, socio-political determinants into account, the conclusion remains that generally there is a negative relationship between the experience of unemployment and psychological well-being for most individuals. Support for this assertion dates back to the 1930's, the time of the Great Depression and in particular the groundbreaking sociographic work of Marie Jahoda and others (Jahoda, Lazarsfeld and Zeisel, 1933/1972). In 'Marienthal' the effects of mass unemployment throughout the community were characterised by psychological resignation, passivity, apathy and despair. The conclusions reported by Jahoda are supported by several other frequently cited pieces of research from the 1930's. Research interviews carried out by the Pilgrim Trust (1938) across six British towns reported widespread feelings of restlessness, strain and nervousness amongst the unemployed, isolation, loneliness and demoralisation in an attempt to deal with declining living conditions and ensuing poverty. Fear of lost social roles, contacts, self-confidence and respect was reported by both Beales and Lambert (1934) and Bakke (1933/40) whilst Israeli (1939) documented negative future expectations and the fear of failure in the unemployed. Reviewing the literature and research evidence over this significant period, Eisenberg and Lazarsfeld's influential paper (1938) reported three main conclusions, namely that the unemployed appeared to suffer certain emotional

instability, a lowering of morale and lastly that such deleterious psychological effects progressed through a series of stages culminating in resignation. Although this valuable work charted the negative and destructive feelings associated with the wilderness of unemployment, it did not however offer much in the way of solutions.

If the research carried out during the 1930's is characterised by its rich descriptive portrayal of the psychological impact of unemployment, the second surge of interest in this field during the 1980's is perhaps distinguished by the introduction of more systematic research techniques and methods of psychological enquiry. Great emphasis has been placed upon the use of psychologically validated quantitative measures of affective well being, complex designs, larger pools of respondents and increasingly sophisticated statistical analysis in an attempt more accurately to quantify psychological costs and disentangle the intricate network of explanatory factors.

Using a series of quantitative psychometric measures, Warr (1987) has reported associations between unemployment and a variety of negative psychological effects including loss of self-esteem and confidence, anxiety, depression and psychological distress. Cross-sectional information comparing groups of unemployed and employed persons on one or more quantitatively measured psychological factors such as the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ, Goldberg, 1972) has generally revealed that the unemployed fare less well and exhibit lower psychological well being as opposed to those in jobs.

Substantial review papers and meta-analyses over the past 20 years (Fryer and Payne,1986; O'Brien, 1986; Warr, 1987; Fryer, 1988; Branthwaite and Trueman,1989; Winefield,1995; Fryer and Winefield,1998; Murphy and Athanasou,1999) have consistently indicated evidence of convergent findings

showing that compared to matched employed samples, the unemployed demonstrate higher levels of psychological distress. Such findings have been reported in relation to mental well-being such as depressive affect, anxiety and mood (Jackson, Stafford, Banks and Warr,1983; Tiggemann and Winefield,1984; Shamir,1986; Winefield, Tiggemann, Winefield, Goldney,1991; Shams and Jackson, 1994; Viinamaecki et al.,1996; Lai et al.,1997), lower self esteem (Feather,1982; Winefield et al,1991;) lower life satisfaction (Blanchflower,1996; Winkelmann and Winkelmann,1998) lower Protestant Ethic values, (Feather,1982) locus of control (Winefield et al.,1991; Goldsmith et al.,1996).

Research has also established relationships between unemployment and cognitive difficulties such as impaired memory, organisation and lack of concentration. (Fryer and Warr, 1984; Haworth, Chesworth and Smith, 1990). Cross-sectional research has demonstrated higher incidences of suicide amongst the unemployed than the employed in keeping with rising unemployment rates (Pritchard, 1995; Lester, 1997; McCrea,1996) Furthermore more sophisticated research designs attempting to place unemployment as a predictive risk factor have shown joblessness to be a high independent predictor of suicide (Lewis and Slogget, 1998; Johannsson and Sundquist,1997) and deliberate self-poisoning (Kelleher, Corocan and Daly,1996) when other related predictors were controlled for. Conflicting evidence of longitudinal suicidal ideation amongst continually unemployed groups has been reported by Clausen (1998) and Goldney, Winefield, Tiggeman and Winefield, 1995). Lastly, the frequently cited research by Platt and Kreitman (1990) revealed that parasuicide in Edinburgh was eight times more common among the unemployed than among people in employment. Their longitudinal data led the researchers to state that "these findings are entirely compatible with the hypothesis that unemployment is a major cause of parasuicide " (cited in Fryer, 1988 p. 252)

However, as Winkelmann and Winkelmann (1998) indicate, as do most other research reviewers including Branthwaite and Trueman (1989), Fryer (1992), Poikolainen 1995) and Winefield (1995) such single snap shot designs suffer from obvious explanatory limitations, notably their lack of power in explaining the direction of causality between unemployment and hypothesised factor(s) such as psychological distress. The authors also refer to another insufficiency commonly associated with cross sectional data; that of controlling for unobserved common determinants of *both* unemployment and the hypothesised factor such as life satisfaction or anxiety. Longitudinal designs which follow samples over time tend to fare better in detecting causality and hence are more powerful in their ability to track and account for the impact of specific fixed effects and co-determinants such as health or socio-economic status. As such, many researchers have adopted this approach. An extensive review paper (Murphy and Athanasou 1999) examined sixteen recent longitudinal studies from 1986-1996 and came to the conclusion that unemployment does have reliable negative effects upon mental health. For example, studies by Layton (1986); Bolton and Oatley (1987); Frese and Mohr (1987) and Dew, Bromet and Penkower, (1992) all reported significant increases in depressive symptoms in continually unemployed subjects over time. For the effects of employment status change, in the majority of cases, longitudinal analyses revealed a decline in distress symptoms for those moving from unemployment to employment (Shamir, 1986; Bolton and Oatley, 1987; Payne and Jones, 1987; Liem and Liem, 1988; Lahelma, 1992; Claussen, Bjorndal and Hjort, 1993; Wanberg, 1995), and an increase in distress for those moving from employment to unemployment, (Layton 1986; Iverson and Sabroe 1988; Graetz 1993; Hammer 1993; Morrell, Taylor, Quine, Kerr and Western 1994).

Despite the convergent evidence of the widespread negative effects of unemployment, it is imperative to note from the empirical literature that these

effects are not uniform and consistent across the unemployed. Hence an approach to unemployment as a 'heterogeneous experience' (Wanberg and Marchese,1994) along with several models and accounts explaining the dynamics of such variation Jahoda,1982; Fryer,1986; Warr,1987; Feather,1992; Wanberg et al.,1994; Garcia-Rodriguez,1997). Reviewing the surge of unemployment research during the 1980's and early 1990's, Warr (1999), states that:

"The thrust of empirical and conceptual work is that the unemployed should not be viewed as a homogeneous group, but that social and demographic features combine with specific psychological processes to generate responses which differ systematically between individuals." (Warr,1999 p.59)

It appears that the correlation between the unemployment experience and psychological response is determined by a complex array of moderating factors such as age (Hepworth, 1980; Warr and Jackson,1985; Rowley and Feather,1987;) unemployment duration (Hepworth, 1980; Warr and Jackson, 1984, 1985, 1987; Rowley and Feather ,1987) gender (Banks and Ullah,1987; Branthwaite and Trueman, 1989; Leana and Feldman 1991; Russell,1996). The research has suggested some likely determinants of the moderating effects upon well-being such as greater financial responsibility for individuals in the middle age range, possible adaptation to the unemployed role and the significance of social and domestic roles as buffers to psychological distress. However, the wide scale variation in variation in methodology , population samples and depth of analysis has shown the findings to be indeterminate.

Apart from these major demographic influences, variations in psychological well-being have also been reported as a function of social support (Bolton and Oatley 1987; Vinokur and Caplan 1987; LackovicGrgin et al. 1996), coping style (Smari

1997), time structure (Hepworth 1980; Feather and Bond 1983; Wanberg, Griffiths, Rich and Gavin 1997), level of activity (Evans 1986; Underlid 1996), ethnicity (Shams and Jackson 1994) and leisure (Liptak 1992). The moderating role of employment attitudes (Jackson, Stafford, Banks and Warr 1983; Warr and Jackson 1985; Pernice and Long 1996) will be critically discussed in a subsequent chapter.

In terms of critical implications, empirical findings provide convincing evidence that unemployment is causally implicated in determining the levels of psychological well-being. This raises the question, what is it about unemployment that is so harmful to psychological well-being and what is the best way to repair the damage? In conceptualising the destructive dynamic of unemployment, the dominant hypothesis is of social causation (unemployment leading to mental health problems) rather than individual drift or selection effects whereby poorer mental health leads to unemployment (Fryer,1998). Naturally there will be some people whose mental health status and circumstances will preclude their chances of unemployment, but on the basis of many longitudinal studies, social causation is the majority accepted view of the mental health-unemployment correlation.

Despite this over-arching conclusion, there is however radical divergence in the literature as to exactly how the unemployment experience is thought to be damaging and as such how the problem should be addressed in terms of assistance. The underlying issue is that on one hand, unemployment is identified as the lack of the psychological benefits of employment over and above having a job and by implication finance. Hence it follows that the unemployed should be strongly encouraged to find work in order to regain these benefits. The other is that the entire way unemployment is defined, conceptualised and dealt with within society is decontextualised, degrading, disempowering and hence psychologically destructive to those unfortunate enough to be in this position.

The problem is much more than a straightforward lack of employment. This approach advocates that unemployment as a socially caused problem necessitates a socially contextualised focus for intervention. The following section will review this debate in more detail making clear the respective ideological implications for interventions. Specifically, it will draw out their main assertions to support the case for an individual approach to interventions in preference to over-prescriptive methods.

3.3 Major research models explaining how unemployment is thought to affect psychological well-being

Jahoda's Latent Function account

Marie Jahoda's account of employment deprivation (Jahoda, 1980;1981) assumes that the psychological distress associated with unemployment is due to the absence of several vital yet unintended latent functions provided by the social institution of employment, over and above the manifest function of finance. This view inherent in much of the literature since the 1930's implies that unemployment essentially deprives the individual of the hidden psychological benefits of employment. A primary tenet is that employment as a contractual exchange relationship is an important social institution of which people typically make use to fulfil these habitual needs or find sources of psychological support. The five critical latent functions over and above the provision of money are the structuring of time, social contacts outside the immediate family, being part of a collective goal, personal status and identity and externally motivated activity. Hence it follows that as the dominant provider of these supports, exclusion from employment will therefore render these psychological needs unmet which may lead to feelings of psychological distress. Therefore, the impact of unemployment is the absence of the benefits of employment and the assumed positive psychological experience that it brings.

Jahoda's proposition of deprivation has found support from a number of subsequent researchers. Henwood et al. (1987) established deprivation of all categories of experience in unemployed persons. They also found that the model can account for differences in 'type' of joblessness. For example, comparisons made across female subjects categorised as unemployed, housewife and employed found that the unemployed were particularly distinguishable by their difficulty in structuring time, status, having a collective goal and feeling that people depended upon them. It is likely that despite their joblessness, housewives are able to fulfil the latent functions to a greater extent from other means within their domestic role. For unemployed man, they were particularly affected by loss of status and ability to fill their time, factors on which retired men were shown to be more like their employed counterparts. Therefore, it would seem that the ability to have some control over one's employment status is the decisive factor as to how severe the effect upon psychological functioning is.

Logically, it seems reasonable to suggest that re-employment is the necessary buffer against distress whereby the benefits of latent functions (i.e. the employment experience) are regained. Hence, this would equate with encouraging the unemployed to become more competitive and skilled in the flexible labour market. Fryer (1998) points out, whilst intuitively appealing and influential as the deprivation account may be, it is nonetheless difficult to operationalise and empirical evaluation (Fryer and McKenna, 1987; 1988) has proved unpersuasive. Jahoda claims that employment of whatever kind at whatever level results in experience of these latent functions; the deprivation of which leads to distress. However, this hypothesis is over simplistic and as Fryer (1986, 1995) indicates that although research shows improvements in well-being with re-employment, this is not always the case and developments in the empirical literature show that in some cases unsatisfactory (re)employment can be just as, if not more, psychologically distressing. Becoming re-employed may

mean taking a significant reduction in pay or the acceptance of work out of desperation with less security, interest, variety and meaning. This is what Fryer means by being de-contextualised, whereby no mention is made of the wider socio-structural factors likely to impinge upon alleviation of distress. So, is it right simply to encourage the unemployed to become re-employed as soon as possible in an attempt to regain the latent benefits? In relation to this point, Fryer is also critical that Jahoda's account assumes the passive dependency of the unemployed and as such their psychological benevolence towards the social institution of employment.

It would seem virtually impossible empirically to test Jahoda's account that unemployment is responsible for psychological deprivation. The simplest approach may be to compare employed and unemployed groups across all categories of experience, but how reliable are the results considering the vast array of variables which may affect the true effect of employment status? Similarly, in assigning individuals to experimental groups, one would have to take into account prior experience of employment or unemployment. Likewise, only a longitudinal study across employment-unemployment status change would allow any inference of causality. Lastly, one would have to show that only paid employment could fulfil these latent functions and that other relationships and activities could not provide the same support mechanisms.

In terms of policy implications, the deprivation model would suggest that interventions should provide surrogate latent functions such as collective goals and structured time to buffer against the harmful effects of deprivation and act as psychological supports for the unemployed. Interventions should thus aim to re-engage the unemployed into employment as soon as possible. However, as well meaning as these supports maybe, does this type of intervention fully provide

what the unemployed require in the long term and sufficiently deal with their joblessness?

Fryer's Agency restriction account

Critical of the assumed passive dependency of the unemployed, Fryer advocates an account of agency restriction which in contrast to deprivation theory describes individuals as active, motivated, goal and future oriented (Fryer and Payne,1986; Hartley and Fryer,1986; Fryer,1988). Fryer and Payne (1984) report a qualitative study of 11 unemployed men who demonstrated proactivity in their response to unemployment. However, the small study example is acknowledged as is the difficulty in establishing that this is representative of the unemployed. In a 1986 review, (Fryer and Payne,1986) describes people as being active rather than passive agents who strive to cope with threatening and inhibiting environments. Hence, rather than focusing upon the loss of benefits associated with employment, Fryer is highly critical of the restrictive nature of the social institution of unemployment which he describes as baffling, discouraging and impoverishing for the individual thus inhibiting the natural tendency for exercising personal control (Fryer,1995). He indicates how efforts are frustrated by inadequate resources and low social power and in effect it is the social construction context of the institution of unemployment rather than loss of the perceived benefits of employment which is so significant in frustrating and restricting both individual and collective agency. Fryer (1999) therefore states that the issue of social causation must be conceptualised in a way consistent with human agency. He is thus critical of Jahoda's perspective on the grounds that it over-relies upon the cognitive functioning of the individual and fails to take into account the unemployed person's social environment. Fryer (1998) and (Fryer and Winefield,1998) outline the three primary aspects of agency restriction, whereby the regulating social institution of unemployment effectively undermines personal control:

- agency is restricted by preventing future orientation and planning
- agency is restricted by relative poverty
- agency is restricted by the social institution of unemployment in terms of the bureaucratic regimes of benefits and entitlements

As such, the above aspects are taken to determine psychological distress in that they conflict with inherent human instincts to plan and take control. In addition, Fryer and Winefield (1998) are highly critical of the little exploration within the literature as to unemployment effects and the family, peer groups, organisational and community dimensions. In addition, they indicate that much research is outcome oriented with relatively attention given to the processes by which effects occur and appropriate ways in which distress maybe counteracted.

In terms of interventions, Fryer believes that there are a number of problems with the predominant approach of psychology to unemployment interventions. His main criticism focuses upon the 'psychologism' of intervention, whereby attention to individual level factors such as self-efficacy, job-seeking skills, motivation and employment commitment decontextualise the individual's situation without adherence to the frustration of personal agency. He believes that Jahoda's dominant approach whereby interventions provide surrogate functions essentially colludes with the oppressing forces of unemployment, ignores the root causes socio-structural causes and effectively apportions blame at the feet of the unemployed individual. For Fryer, unemployment and psychological distress is a social problem and thus warrants a social solution. Thus, he feels there is little value in the adoption of programmes to address individual supply-side issues as they are not the real underlying cause of distress and may inadvertently exacerbate the problem.

In response, Fryer advocates an alternative way of conceptualising and studying the psychological problems of unemployment. He suggests action, intervention

and evaluation from a community psychology perspective which acknowledges the social cause of unemployment distress and central role of human agency. He calls for an explication of the detailed multi-level processes through which social causation occurs such as disempowerment, and inequality.

Similarly, Burchell (1992) states that gaining a better understanding of the way labour market conditions affect psychological health necessitates investigation of the correlates of economic recession. He calls for the adaptation of such major explanatory frameworks as Jahoda and Fryer to other labour market phenomena such as job insecurity, promotions and demotions, stagnated careers and thwarted expectations; in other words the social psychology of the labour market.

In sub-conclusion, the issues in the empirical literature would suggest a necessary re-think of conceptual approaches towards understanding and measures to help the unemployed. The lack of a comprehensive unitary theory to account for such a non-homogenous group is clearly evident which leaves scope for the development of both existing and new models and approaches. In addition, studies aimed at evaluating labour market interventions indicate the need to address the relationship between labour supply and demand in a systematic and integrated way (Campbell et al. 1998; Fletcher et al. 1998).

To review further how psychology has contributed to unemployment interventions, this discussion will now consider the impact of individual/behavioural factors upon job-seeking and re-employment. Doing so aims to show the validity of approaching such phenomena from an individual level perspective and hence lends support to the utility of psychological dimensions of employability.

3.4 Psychology's contribution to job-seeking and re-employment

In addition to the implications from a conceptual explication of the relationship between unemployment and well-being, several well-established psychological theories have been successfully applied to understanding the phenomena of job-seeking behaviour and re-employment. Compared to the volume of literature pertaining to the *effects* of unemployment, there is significantly less pertaining to job-seeking behaviour and re-employment. Nevertheless, the application of theories such as Feather's Expectancy-Value theory (1990) and Ajzen and Fishbein's Theory of Reasoned Action (1980) and latterly Theory of Planned Behaviour (1988) have provided useful frameworks within which to understand the psychological processes of job-seeking behaviour and in some cases have suggested implications for interventions. The unifying perspective amongst this work is to exemplify the link between attitudes, motivation and their subsequent impact upon behaviour, in this case looking for a job.

Rather than simply describing these phenomena, many such studies aim to be predictive both of job-seeking behaviour and actual job outcome and have utilised a range of personal and situational variables as likely predictors. Succinctly summarising the conclusions is again difficult due to large-scale variation in measures used to define and predict job-seeking behaviour and re-employment, differing sample sizes, statistical analysis, sample ages, genders, different cultures with differing lengths of unemployment and circumstances of joblessness. However, this body of empirical research provides strong evidence for the role of individual level factors in predicting job search and re-employment.

Numerous studies utilising Expectancy-Value theory (Feather and O'Brien, 1987; Feather, 1990; Feather, 1992) have demonstrated the dominant role of job valence (need beliefs) over actual expectation of successful job search in predicting frequency of job-seeking behaviour in accordance with across a range of unemployed samples of varying ages and lengths of unemployment. The

results have been interpreted in several ways; most notably due to the dominant role of external pressures to search for work, parental and family pressures, social norms and the threat of benefit sanctions. A secondary explanation may also be the dominant role of valence as a means of self-expression and affirming self and social identity (Katz, 1967). However, in other similar studies including Taris, Heasink and Feij (1995), the predictive effect upon job search frequency was reported to be multiplicative involving both expectancy and valence in a large sample of middle aged unemployed Dutchmen.

Application of Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) attitude-behaviour Model of Reasoned Action has attempted to deconstruct the causal pathway between the determinants of behavioural intention and job seeking behaviour itself. Work by Vinokur and Caplan (1987), Wenzel (1993) and Wanberg, Watt and Rumsey (1996) have confirmed that although intention is the main direct predictor of actual job-seeking behaviour, the underlying influences of intention; namely attitudes and social norms are themselves strongly predicted by affirmation social support from a significant other to confirm the legitimacy and value of job search behaviour. Likewise, Rife and Belcher (1993) highlight the significance of both the perceived content of the supportive message being given and also the relationship between the unemployed individual and the source of support. Their research found that higher job search intensity was associated with the perceived credibility of the support-giver, i.e. other unemployed friends suggesting a key role for peer support and interventions within a supportive community setting. Affirmation social support in terms of reassurance of worth has also been shown to be highly predictive of the job-seeking self-efficacy of participants attending an employment training programme (Wenzel, 1993) whereby confidence and expectations in ability to perform specific behaviours are positively affected. Eden and Aviram (1993) reported significant positive treatment effects upon job search

activity and intensified effort through increased self-efficacy within a behavioural modelling training workshop.

On a larger scale Caplan, Vinokur, Price and Van Ryn (1989) report significant effects of an intervention to stem the flow of loss of motivation and the promotion of job seeking amongst the recently unemployed. The study found support for a combination of both specific job seeking skills and motivation in determining job search behaviour and subsequent re-employment. Motivational factors included problem appraisal, coping strategy, personal and situational constraints and perceptions of competence. In addition, inoculation against set-backs in terms of reinforcement from trainers and peers was found to be an important variable. As expected, the experimental intervention showed significantly higher rates of re-employment as compared to controls. Also noted was the reported higher quality of re-employment in term of earnings, motivation and job satisfaction.

Hence, the above research demonstrates the utility of adapting psychological models of motivation and behavioural change to the area of job-seeking. Not surprisingly, the majority of this has been limited to measuring and making predictions about job seeking behaviour rather than predicting actual job outcomes, but several pieces of work mentioned here have shown that psychological aspects of interventions have a direct bearing upon successful re-employment. The implications of these findings hence support the role of psychological factors in job-seeking behaviour, most notably the significance of job valence and affirmation social support as key determinants in predicting aspects of job search behaviour. However, the variance inherent to many this work is indicative of the determining role of wider structural factors on whether someone is successful in finding work or not.

Few studies however, have attempted to evaluate well-being outcomes of training-based interventions for unemployed people; a conclusion shared by both Muller, 1992 and Creed et al., 1996. Several pieces of research have demonstrated positive effects of training upon mental health, but considerably fewer have concentrated on well-being such as self-esteem and life satisfaction (Donovan et al., 1986; Oddy et al., 1984; Muller, 1992 and Creed et al.,1996). Muller indicates that behavioural aspects of well-being have been beneficial within a number of training interventions including Bruyere et al. (1984), Mattox, (1987), Coates, (1988) and Kieselbach and Svensson, (1988) and. As such, Muller suggests paying greater attention to the evaluation of training intervention at these levels. Her own research (1992) reports the success of personal development training in a sample of long term unemployed women in Australia. This intervention consisted of training aspects aimed at increasing self-esteem and encouraging participants to consider a wider range of employment and training options. Specifically, the programme focused upon identifying skills (vocational strengths and weaknesses), goal-setting, stress and assertion issues, shared experiences of long term unemployment, action planning, job search activities and importantly how all these issues relate to the current labour market. Longitudinal psychometric measures comparing pre and post course changes demonstrated significant increases in self-esteem and decreases in depression for the experimental participants compared to a control group not receiving the training intervention. At six months post-course, a main effect of treatment was still observed with the control group maintaining a higher level of depression and lower self-esteem than the experimental participants. At this same follow up period it was also reported that of the women having undergone training, a 70% success rate was shown whereby participants had either entered employment, education or further training whereas all the control group remained unemployed at this time. Similarly, Creed, Machin and Hicks (1996) reported significant increases in self-esteem for a group of long term young people attending an

occupational skills training programme. The treatment and a matched control group did not differ initially on self-esteem, although only those attending the course improved over the 16 weeks of programme duration supporting the effect of training intervention. However, (Winefield, 2000) found that although 'work for the dole' schemes for a sample of young people in Australia improved psychological well-being and reduced depression, the scheme failed to raise participants' self-esteem or reduce their feelings of social alienation. Interpreted within Fryer's agency restriction account, these findings may be because the young people were not empowered to exercise personal choice, having to work for their welfare benefit.

Although there is obvious benefit in developing models of job-seeking behaviour, one must remember that this does not occur in a contextual vacuum and one may return to the argument that interventions may be in vain and possibly counterproductive if good quality sustainable jobs are not available or that match the individuals' need and expectation. Such studies are can be criticised as being decontextualised in so far as they ignore of fail to acknowledge the wider issues of job type, sustainability, pay and satisfaction. This concern is a common feature of much contemporary debate regarding labour market interventions and in particular the need for and manner in which success is defined and measured.

"The increasing importance of social exclusion and employability for the agendas of local, regional, national and European agencies has brought with it a corresponding need to understand 'what works', both how and why. The concern is to develop an 'evidence-base' for policies aimed at addressing social exclusion."

(Fletcher et al. 1998)

Amongst others, Campbell et al. (1998) warns of the preoccupation with short-term 'hard' outputs from unemployment interventions such as numbers of participants into jobs, numbers of qualifications gained and so forth. Building upon the need for a reconceptualisation of the problem of unemployment, do these performance indicators actually represent the true needs of the unemployed being met? Campbell et al's evaluation of number of labour market interventions makes a number of recommendations including the need for a holistic view of success which focuses upon progressing the individual rather than these short term, sometimes arbitrary outputs. On this basis alone, psychology is therefore well placed to contribute to both understanding both the measurement and processes of change and progress; having at its disposal both the theoretical underpinnings and an objective approach to the appropriate measurement of individual level variables representative of progress.

Exemplifying the roles of psychology to unemployment interventions, Dalgleish (2001) asserts that psychological theory and application has increasingly been able to assist the unemployed to be competitive in the labour market. She describes the range of contribution from large scale assessment of aptitude and skill typical of the first fifty years of the twentieth century through to programme design to increase the flexibility of the unemployed in the late 1980's and 1990's underpinned by the dominance of Jahoda's deprivation account. Psychologists have also been used in the training of service staff and their skills and theoretical approaches have also been utilised in the development of job search computer software. In retort, Stansfield (2001) is quick to indicate that whilst these suggestions are not themselves unhelpful, he is unsure if psychology can claim to have made such a marked impact and questions whether the orthodox approach of occupational psychology pays due cognisance to the real issues. He points to a number of recent intervention approaches which amount to the forced taking of any job in an effort to make an impact on the jobless total resulting in an

unresolved conflict between government pressure to reduce unemployment statistics and the unemployed individuals' rights to a decent career and professional services. Stansfield states that government psychologists should focus upon interventions that do not view unemployed people as losers who have comparable rights to make choices and be able to achieve through sustainable and rewarding work.

Psychological practice with regard to interventions should aim to reflect these conceptual and structural shifts to assist the unemployed to (re)engage with current work practices, skills and structures. This means acknowledging key changes in work practices such as career breaks, the lack of jobs for life, the blurring of occupational gender roles, and home-working. Not surprisingly, the contribution psychologists and others make becomes potentially highly politicised in response to pressures to reduce jobless totals and produce evidence of success. No doubt, national employment initiatives such as the New Deal which profess to take a more client/needs led approach have and will continue to succumb to the pressures of evidencing impact. However, in beginning to establish some principles of 'what works' in the area of employability, the empirical psychological literature affords a very strong case for both the conceptualisation and measurement of intervention effectiveness at an individual/psychological level.

This chapter has reviewed the main contributions psychology has provided in aiding our understanding of the dynamics of unemployment. From this, some key critical issues have been highlighted and a case introduced for the viability of evaluation from a psychological perspective. The following chapter will identify three key assessment variables and develop some analytical strands focusing upon definition, measurement and relevance.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 Some analytical perspectives relating to three key employability variables

The purpose of this chapter is to develop some analytical strands in relation to three key employability variables to be empirically investigated in this thesis. These variables are:

a) *self-esteem*
b) *employment commitment*
c) *occupational work ethic*

Specifically, this chapter will focus upon issues surrounding the utility of these variables in evaluating labour market interventions. Doing so will direct specific research questions to be assessed via the empirical work in the remainder of the thesis and provide a framework by which the results can be both interpreted and discussed. Firstly, analytical issues regarding unemployment and self-esteem will be considered followed by unemployment and employment commitment and lastly issues regarding the concept and measurement of occupational work-ethic for the present purpose. The case will be made that these measures are appropriate in terms of the objectives of this thesis and that there are a number of particular theoretical issues relevant to each experimental variable.

Discussion will focus upon the relevance and utility of these three behavioural measures as a means of assessing intervention effectiveness. How appropriate these specific measures are is shaped by the way success of the intervention is perceived. Particularly with respect to self-esteem and employment commitment, the unemployment literature falls into two domains; using these concepts as indices of affective state and secondly as predictors of job-seeking behaviour and re-employment. For the purposes of this thesis, the primary aim is to measure progress

and change over the course of the intervention but there is also an opportunity to utilise the data to investigate the utility of these behavioural measures as predictors of job outcome.

4.1 Self-esteem

Self-esteem is a very popular construct within psychology and has been related to virtually every other psychological concept or domain, including personality, behavioural, cognitive and clinical concepts. It refers to an individual's sense of worth or value and the most broad and frequently cited definition of the concept is Rosenberg's (1965) who described it as a *"favourable or unfavourable attitude toward the self"*

(Rosenberg,1965, p.15)

In establishing the utility of a measure of self-esteem within an unemployment intervention, it seems logical to ask whether self-esteem is a significant issue for the unemployed and are the jobless at a real disadvantage compared to their employed counterparts. If self-esteem is a significant issue, the next logical question focuses upon whether self-esteem is an important variable in the re-employment process. There are a number of theoretical issues regarding the concept of self-esteem including definition and measurement and together these have direct implications for why and how self-esteem is used within unemployment interventions. There are also a number of critical points from the empirical literature surrounding unemployment and self-esteem and similarly they have a direct bearing upon the use of this variable within an intervention.

A particularly complex and unresolved issue within the unemployment literature focuses upon the assumed relationship between unemployment and its effects upon

the unemployed individual's self-esteem. Like many other important variables, there is no clear or unitary indication within the empirical literature as to the specific nature of and mechanism underlying this relationship despite compelling intuitive reasoning that such a causal association exists. It is conventionally accepted that job loss and continuing unemployment result in the lowering of self-esteem and other such related aspects of self-evaluation such as self-worth, self-respect and self-confidence. Several authors including Shamir (1986) and Pernice and Long (1996) indicate that this may be due to a change in perceived social standing and also feeling of personal inadequacy compounded by the repeated rejection, frustration, disappointment and failure often experienced during unemployment. Feather (1982) indicates that evaluative functions such as self-esteem in this case associated with unsuccessful job-search are determined by cognitive changes in the view of the self such as defining and redefining social identity.

Empirically, there is considerable evidence suggesting a detrimental relationship between unemployment and self-esteem. The richly descriptive work in the 1930's such as Bakke (1933) highlighted in the previous chapter indicated the widely reported detrimental blow to self-confidence and self-respect associated with the experience of unemployment. As with mental health variables, the second surge of research interest in the 1980's is characterised by more systematic and sophisticated scientific enquiry, notably in the use of psychometrically valid questionnaires. The impact and moderating effect of self-esteem features heavily in this body of research and similar to the mental health work, the results are equivocal and difficult to summarise succinctly. The research incorporates a wide range of concept definition (global/specific esteem), associations to varying types of joblessness, study designs (cross sectional/longitudinal), sampling procedures,

subject populations (cultures/socio-economic class/age/gender/ethnicity) measurements and theoretical frameworks.

Much cross-sectional study has demonstrated significant quantitative differences in global self-esteem, with unemployed groups faring less well than their employed counterparts (Donovan and Oddy, 1982; Feather, 1982; Shams and Jackson, 1994). This also held when the experimental group comprised various categories of economically underemployed and not specifically unemployed. (Prause and Dooley, 1997) Significant differences were found between the two main groups but self-esteem did not differentiate between actual unemployment and other indices of underemployment. This confirms the earlier call for a rethink as to the wider nature of economic distress within society and that additional aspects of labour market difficulty can be just as psychologically distressing as unemployment itself. However, divergent findings have also been reported by Hartley (1980), Gaskell and Smith (1981), and Shamir (1986) who all failed to find any significant cross sectional differences in global-self-esteem as a function of employment status.

However, other researchers have noted that cross-sectional differences may be dependent upon the mediating roles of other variables. For example, Peregoy and Schleibner (1990) advocate that moderating impact of the individuals' vocational identity. They report that from thematic analysis of interviews with unemployed individuals, self-esteem is particularly affected for those people who describe their self-identity as being highly defined by their job. This echoes the findings regarding employment commitment, whereby those individuals highly committed to work tend to show significantly worse psychological health in response to unemployment. Lastly, Garcia-Rodriguez (1997) proposes that self-esteem is differentially affected by whether the individual is seeking a first job or has undergone job loss. Her model

advocates that whereas a job seeker's motivation is governed by expectancy-value theory (Feather, 1992), the job losers are characterised by the model of Learned Helplessness (Abramson,1978). For the job-seekers, causal attributions tend to be external and hence esteem remains relatively high whereas for the losers, the internal attributions have a detrimental effect upon their self-esteem.

The disparity in cross-sectional findings may suggest that self-esteem is not sufficiently an issue for the unemployed. However, there are several issues concerning the measurement of self-esteem which may explain why significant differences are not so readily apparent and these points will be highlighted shortly. Despite the equivocal quantitative findings, one cannot deny that the self-esteem of the majority of unemployed is dealt a very harsh blow and as such it warrants consideration as part of an intervention if activities can help to raise peoples' feelings of control and self-worth.

To investigate the causal role of unemployment upon self-esteem, longitudinal studies have focused both upon potential changes in self-esteem with continuing unemployment and also as a function of change in employment status within samples. If a causal impact of unemployment can be established via the literature; then this provides further support for investigating the dynamics of self-esteem as part of an intervention to assist the unemployed in their search for work. Such longitudinal studies exemplify a key issue in relation to the self-esteem data; the degree to which the concept is assumed to be a stable trait over time or whether it is sensitive to specific situations.

Longitudinally, a number of studies concerning school to employment/unemployment transitions have reported changes in self-esteem being associated with a change in

employment status. For those individuals becoming employed after leaving school, positive changes are observed in their global esteem scores. (Gurney, 1980; Tiggemann and Winefield, 1984; Winefield, Winefield, Tiggemann and Goldney,1991). However, these longitudinal changes are for people moving into employment for the first time and no decreases were found in esteem for those failing to find work after leaving school. For adult subjects becoming unemployed, no evidence was found of a decline in self-esteem (Hartley, 1980) and similarly Shamir (1986) reported that global self-esteem is neither sensitive to employment status nor indeed longitudinal status change. Pernice and Long (1996) found no significant differences in the self-esteem scores of continuing unemployed subjects over one year but that attitudinal differences were found to account for some observed differences. With respect to increasing duration of unemployment, Rowley and Feather (1987) noted a tendency for lower levels of self-esteem associated with continuing duration of joblessness; a conclusion shared by Feather (1982). A frequently cited study by Goldsmith, Veum and Darity (1996) using data from the U.S. National Longitudinal Survey of Youth reports that continuing unemployment results in further detriments to self-esteem. However, LackovicGrgin, Dekovic, Milosavliijevic, CsevkSoric and Opacic (1996) found the length of unemployment to be unrelated to self-esteem.

The results of longitudinal studies such as Hartley (1980) and Shamir (1986) which fail to demonstrate a significant change in self-esteem with employment status change may suggest that this aspect of the self functions as a trait and as such is stable across time and situations within individuals (Adler,1997). This issue of the sensitivity of self-esteem to changes in personal circumstances has received considerable attention in the literature and a number of reasons have been offered as explanations. Fineman (1983) proposes a potential polarisation effect with the

self-esteem of unemployed individuals. He claims that people are polarised towards either very high or low esteem and hence a status change will not radically shift this base esteem level to an identifiably higher or lower level. Such an account is similar in assumption to that of Ziller's consistency theory (1973) as mentioned by both Shamir (1986) and Pernice and Long (1996), as possible explanations for their findings. Here, experiences such as unemployment will have differential effects depending upon the individual's acute or base level of self-esteem which is sufficiently stable and consistent a trait not to be significantly mediated by such change as job loss. Results such as those of Shamir (1986) where self-esteem is not shown to be sensitive to status change would hence support such a proposal. Whereas Shamir found that employment status had a significant effect upon psychological distress, low morale, anxiety and depression, self-esteem on the other hand remained unaltered.

The alternative socio-cognitive view to self-concept (Hartley,1980) however views self-esteem as a less stable, affective state more susceptible to the demands of social evaluations, norms and comparative pressures . In this sense, individuals translate a change in their objective environment into a subjective judgement of self-worth by way of social evaluations and comparisons with others. As such, a number of unemployment interventions have shown that self-esteem can indeed be positively affected suggesting that levels of self-esteem can change. To support this, significant treatment effects upon levels of self-esteem are reported in a number of works (Oddy et al., 1984; Donovan et al., 1986 Muller, 1992 and Creed et al. (1995,1996) in response to an unemployment training intervention. In all cases significant treatment effects were observed as compared to control groups who did not show a change.

Faced with this disparity in the literature, attention is drawn to the actual concept and measurement of self-esteem as this provides some additional insight as to variation in empirical work such and in particular self-esteem's sensitivity to intervention and re-employment. The stability of self-esteem is driven by the most important analytical issue in the literature; that of whether self-esteem is viewed as a fundamental, global facet of the person or a set of self-evaluations specific to different behavioural domains such as social or personal aspects of self-esteem. The traditional 'structural perspective' (Demo,1985) defines self-esteem as being a global positive or negative general manifestation of the self-concept with particular focus to self-evaluations of worthiness which remain relatively stable across time and situations. As such the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (RSE, Rosenberg,1965) is perhaps the best-known measure of global self-esteem as opposed to other measures based upon models of domain-specific conceptualisations of the self.

A number of factor analytic studies have confirmed a single factor solution for self-esteem using the Rosenberg scale (Demo, 1985; Shevlin, Bunting and Lewis,1995; Gray-Little, Williams and Hancock,1997) However, not all studies have supported a global concept and several authors report two factor solutions representing differentiating aspects of self-esteem (Kaplan and Pokorny,1969; Carmines and Zeller,1974,1979;Hensley and Roberts,1976; Kohn ,1977; Tafarodi and Swann,1995; Ranzijn, Keeves, Luszcz and Feather ,1998). Locke et al. (1996) ascertain that self-esteem as applied to the work domain comprises two main components, namely beliefs in specific abilities (self-efficacy) and a more general perception of self -worth. Sheeran and McCarthy (1992) make the distinction between public and private self-esteem whereby the differential locus is between a personal ideal and an actual comparison with others. Their research revealed cross sectional differences with respect to both public and private self-esteem and the findings find strong support

from Singh, Singh and Rani (1996). Warr and Jackson (1983) have argued that an inherent problem of global self-esteem is that measures such as the RSE include a mixture of both positive and negative items. The researchers argue that by deconstructing self-esteem and analysing its component parts more closely, differences may become apparent. They state that people tend to 'decouple' these two sets of aspects with the effect that negative self-esteem is often found to change with differing employment status, but not positive self-esteem. As such, unemployment is thought to lead to a response bias towards the negative items sensitising the unemployed individual to the negative aspect of themselves.

The job-search and re-employment literature also indicates the global/specific issue; whether singular or multidimensional aspects of self-esteem are more useful in this process. Empirical work reviewed in the previous chapter highlighted the role of specific aspects such as self-efficacy in the job search process (Eden and Aviram, 1993; Wenzel, 1993; Blau, 1994). However, Ellis and Taylor, (1983) in a study of college students found that both global and specific aspects in combination were necessary for successful job search. Whereas global self-esteem proved a better predictor in terms of actual search outcome dependent upon social skill, task specific self-esteem was particularly related to motivation and satisfaction. Another study with college students found a high degree of support for Ellis et al. reporting that academic self-esteem was highly predictive of motivation and actual college performance Rosenberg, Schooler, Schoenbach and Rosenberg (1995). In relation to job search methods, Ellis and Taylor's work (1983) also reported that the students with lower self-esteem were found to use more formal job-search methods such as employment agencies than those reporting higher esteem levels. The explanation follows that the lower esteem group possess less self confidence and ability in their performance requiring more personal approaches to job seeking such as direct

applications. Shamir, (1986) also reported a similar finding in relation to unemployed individuals looking to re-enter the jobs market. In this case too, lower self-esteem was found to be related to a preference for more formal job search methods amongst highly educated Israeli adults and attention is drawn to the mediating effects of culture and economic socialisation in this context.

Adler's review (1997) highlights that as with many such variables, most esteem measures are self-report and it is difficult to obtain non self-report indices of such a personal and subjective construct. Therefore, there is likely susceptibility to socially desirable responding and this may be a particularly pertinent issue when esteem data is collected as part of a research project and participants may feel obliged to respond in a socially desirable manner. In addition, definitions of esteem and self-worth are obviously highly subjective and open to interpretation and on what basis do people judge their worthiness as compared to others. Do they use some form of social heuristic driven internally by past experience or externally by social norms and pressures? Adler's final point is that scores tend to be skewed towards high self-esteem and therefore unable to adequately discriminate in this upper range and hence detect significant differences between experimental groups.

Despite the scope of analysis in the empirical literature and the various theoretical debates regarding concept and measurement, self-esteem is one of the most frequently cited affective variables in relation to the unemployment experience. Specific constructs of self-esteem such as self-efficacy and reassurance of worth have been shown to be positive and powerful predictors of re-employment. Lastly, there is albeit a small yet convincing body of research (Oddy et al., 1984; Donovan et al., 1986 Muller, 1992 and Creed et al. (1995,1996) demonstrating the positive effect of an unemployment training intervention upon self-esteem. Therefore it

seems plausible that self-esteem is a worthwhile and viable dimension underpinning employability to investigate at the individual behavioural level.

4.2 Employment commitment

Similar to self-esteem, the issues regarding employment commitment are primarily concerned with definition, measurement and establishing how stable a concept it is with regard to changes in employment status. Taking all these factors into account, this section aims to address how appropriate a measure of employment commitment is as a means of evaluating intervention effectiveness.

Employment commitment can be described as the importance of work to an individual or the salience of the role of employment in their life. O'Brien (1995) states that "*work commitment has been defined in many ways but generally refers to the degree to which individuals see work as a central life role and wish to expend effort in work activities*" (p.46). In order to investigate the extent of people's commitment, researchers have tended to use questionnaires varying upon the Lottery Question, originally introduced by Morse and Weiss (1955). This aims to measure the extent to which people would want to carry on working if they had sufficient finance such as a major inheritance or lottery win which would be enable them to give up work. Having accounted for the financial necessity of working, items aim to identify the other sources of commitment to the role of employment. O'Brien (1995) reviews 10 studies of the Lottery Question and taking into account varying sample sizes, cultures and gender of respondents, the meta-analysis reveals that most people would want to continue working even if finance was not a motivating issue. As such, researchers have been interested in the comparative values held by unemployed respondents to ascertain their degree of commitment to employment as a preference to remaining unemployed. (Shams and Jackson, 1994).

O'Brien's review (1995) suggests that psychologists are interested in concepts such as employment commitment, work meaning and values for several reasons. Some researchers may be interested in potential long-term shifts in motivation and work-ethic in their own right. Others may be interested in people's responses to changes in working practices to see if the resulting work attitudes fit with such changes and whether resulting attitudes and values accord with developments within working environments and can be used to predict responses to technological change. Lastly, work attitudes such as commitment have been utilised as both a mediating and outcome measure of adjustment to life without employment and also as predictors of likely re-employment and job-seeking behaviour and it is with these issues that the next section turns to.

The majority of empirical work regarding employment commitment has focused upon the hypothesised mediating effects upon the psychological well-being of the unemployed. As such, there is considerable convergent evidence that higher commitment to a job amongst the unemployed is detrimental to psychological health and that a lowering of commitment with continuing unemployment aids adaptation and an improvement in well-being (Warr and Jackson, 1985;1987). It is likely that with continuing unemployment and failure to find a job, the lowering of value placed upon employment serves to buffer against the distress and frustration of unsuccessful job searching. Several cross-sectional studies have confirmed that unlike their employed counterparts, the psychological well-being of unemployed samples is mediated by their level of commitment (Stafford, Jackson and Banks, 1980; Jackson, Stafford, Banks and Warr, 1983; Shams and Jackson, 1994). As Shams et al. highlight, the evidence of a lowering of commitment to buffer against distress thus poses a dilemma when considering the role of commitment in interventions. Hence, is it preferable to seek to maintain high levels of commitment to

increase the likelihood of finding a job or to facilitate a reduction in commitment so as to enhance psychological well-being? Ultimately, this focuses upon the appropriate understanding and usage of employment commitment in this context.

The issue of stability is also an important factor and earlier work by Warr and Jackson (1985) reported no change in commitment associated with re-employment. This suggests that this variable represents a stable trait rather than a transient entity sensitive to changes in employment status. Longitudinal research focusing upon continuing unemployment has found significant decreases in commitment (Warr and Jackson, 1985) but attributing change in commitment to employment status change has proved more difficult. For example, Jackson (1994) using data from the Transition from School to Work Project states that significant increases in commitment for a sample of youths eight months after leaving school are indicative of maturational developments and adult occupational identity and are independent of whether they moved into employment or not. However, a longitudinal study with two age cohorts of school leavers over a two year period (Banks and Henry, 1983) found significant decreases over the assessment period for the group as a whole, but that there were also significant main effects upon commitment level of career trajectory and locality indicating that commitment level was sensitive to chosen employment and training status. In the same review, Jackson (1994) notes his earlier work cited above (Warr and Jackson, 1985) in that employment commitment did not change significantly if and when adults moved into employment. Thus, it would appear that commitment is perceived as a relatively stable representation of intrinsic work values.

In relation to job seeking behaviour there is less empirical work to draw upon although a number of studies have found a positive relationship between levels of

employment commitment and job search activities as indexed by variables such as job search frequency, job-seeking confidence, intensity and intention (Warr, 1985; Rowley and Feather, 1987; Gowan and Gatewood,1992; Wanberg et al.,1992; Wanberg and Marchese, 1994). However, Wanberg et al's longitudinal study in 1992 reported that employment commitment was not a predictor of later re-employment. Incidentally, several pieces of work also report the association of financial worries being related to higher employment commitment in relation to job search behaviour (Payne and Hartley, 1984; Wanberg and Marchese, 1994). Indeed, higher commitment levels have been related to financial commitments and responsibilities for dependent children; an effect not demonstrated for both younger unemployed men without children and those aged 60 or over and nearing retirement (Warr and Jackson, 1984; Rowley and Feather, 1987).

As far as the author is aware, employment commitment has not been utilised as a dependent measure within an unemployment intervention to investigate the dynamics of commitment over time or also its relationship with other behavioural indices of employability. It is valid to argue that a longitudinal analysis of commitment is useful because it would seek to address not just levels of commitment over time but also whether different aspects or items within the scale became more or less salient over time. For example, do those with high initial commitment maintain this as training continues and what effect does an intervention have upon participants with low reported commitment to employment? Also, as with other quantitative measures, such a scale permits comparisons between large groups of participants.

Acknowledging the dilemma posed by Shams et al. there are a number of issues to consider regarding the use of employment commitment within an intervention. The

basic premise is one of validity; whether a measure of commitment is truly an index of an individual's true motivation to become and remain employed or rather a reflection of external pressures such as financial worries, social obligation and a wider representation of economic socialisation? It is also highlighted that measures of commitment and in particular the Lottery Question reflect only intention and not an actual chosen action and only work which followed people through in this specific situation could validly claim to document true commitment to employment if they actually chose to keep on working.

Others would argue that employment commitment amounts to no more than coercion into any type of paid job masquerading as a viable psychological concept. The point will undoubtedly be raised that there is the possibility of abusing its use as an index of potential change and using it as a diagnostic tool to encourage people to try and look harder. There may also be the likelihood of equating the success of an intervention with increased commitment to a job at all costs under the pressure to act upon the scores participants provide. Making the assumptions that commitment should rise with increasing time within an intervention. Should we expect it to rise or fall? This is where interventions have to use considerable caution in not over inflating people's expectations and then failing to deliver good quality sustainable jobs at the end. Using the basic premise of employment commitment as a target point for discussion may be more appropriate. This philosophy would strongly advocate the pressures of social norms and the role of socially desirable responding and the influence of agents such as family, mass media, peers and school for example. Criticisms of intervention may highlight the possibility of employment commitment becoming a disease-model whereby individuals with low employment commitment are sick and need a 'cure'. An inherent weakness in the literature is the interpretation and meaning of scores. Maybe researchers have actively avoided categorising

results into high and low commitment realising the potential dangers of using scores in a diagnostic means over and above monitoring group changes. Lessons from the mental health literature would suggest careful attention to employment commitment as it shows that those with higher commitment often suffer the most in terms of psychological distress. Therefore it can be potentially very damaging if interventions were to focus upon pushing commitment to a job as far as possible.

In sub-conclusion, the above discussion has pointed out several plausible uses of a measure of employment commitment within an intervention, particularly in reference to investigating the dynamics of the concept over time and its sensitivity to training outcome. Like self-esteem, such quantitative measures of employment commitment provide researchers with manageable indices of very complex behavioural variables to permit the investigation of a number of research questions. Not only does their use permit comparisons between groups and within groups over time but there is also the scope to utilise such a scale as a possible predictor of actual job outcome. A final issue which is common to all such self-report measures is that to acknowledge that despite them providing useful quantitative data, such methods do not permit the collection of sufficient contextual data to understand why people respond the way they do. Therefore, this requires additional qualitative work to provide the necessary balance of approach to psychological investigation.

4.3 Occupational Work Ethic

This final section of this chapter will discuss the use of a measure of occupational work-ethic within an unemployment intervention. Of the three experimental variables to be utilised in the empirical work to follow, occupational work-ethic is perhaps the most useful as a representation of employability. This is because it aims to operationalise both attitudes, motivation and self-perceptions of personal attributes in

the workplace which accord with the skills and behaviours required by most employers. As such, it is therefore less general and global in nature than the measures of self-esteem and employment commitment but in being so, provides an appropriate balance between the affective, attitudinal and perceptual elements of employability at a psychological level. The following section aims to clarify the particular focus of occupational work-ethic as a relevant and useful concept in today's workplace and the utility of a quantitative measure within an unemployment intervention.

A relatively neglected area within the unemployment field concerns the association between joblessness and work-ethic. Work-ethic is a cultural norm that advocates being personally responsible for the work that one does and is based on the belief that work has an intrinsic value (Hill and Petty, 1985). However, generally, occupational studies have utilised measures of the Protestant Work Ethic (PWE) derived from Weber's original conception in 1905 accounting for the origins of capitalism which specifies particularly strong cultural norms such as religion and morality. Furnham's review (1990) of the work-ethic compared and contrasted seven measures of the PWE and identified five discriminating factors:

- *Respect for, admiration of and willingness to take part in hard work*
- *A disdain for leisure*
- *Religion and morality*
- *Independence from others*
- *Asceticism and the damage from having too much time and money*

Numerous other factor analytical studies have reached similar conclusions, including those of McHoskey (1993); Tang (1993) and Blau (1997) hence supporting the Weber's theoretical discussion of the construct of work-ethic. Studies investigating Protestant Work Ethic and work behaviours have reported PWE to be a good

predictor of job satisfaction, competitiveness and the desire to work hard (Furnham, 1990) whilst Blau (1997) proposes that work-ethic is negatively correlated with absence and lateness and positively associated with work effort, extra role behaviours and job performance. In addition, Mudrack (1997) reports significant correlations between the hard work facet of PWE and internal locus of control and highly structured and purposeful use of time.

Despite this useful research linking work-ethic to a number of work behaviours, there is very little work specifically investigating aspects of work-ethic with the unemployed. A series of studies by Shamir (1985, 1986, 1987) reports mixed findings as to the relationship between PWE beliefs and coping with unemployment. The first study revealed that holding high PWE beliefs was significantly related to more non-work activities whilst unemployed and greater psychological benefits than those holding lower PWE beliefs. Shamir believes that these work-ethic beliefs hence serve as surrogate latent functions in the absence of actual paid employment in support of Jahoda's deprivation model discussed earlier in this thesis. The fact that adaptation and coping is related to high PWE beliefs suggests that work-ethic is not tapping into the same functions as employment commitment as previous sections in this chapter have demonstrated worse psychological health with higher commitment amongst the unemployed. However, later replication of this work by Shamir failed to support the hypothesis that PWE beliefs moderate individuals' psychological well-being. He also found that PWE belief was not sensitive to a change in employment status, suggesting that PWE is a relatively stable trait and not particularly susceptible to status change. In this respect, the global, intrinsic aspect of PWE assumes an overall similarity to employment commitment in that it taps into general, non-specific beliefs about work and employment per se. However, it does not really accord well with contemporary principles of employability and as such an

adaptation to PWE has been developed which represents a more specific and realistic representation of attitudes towards the self in the work-place.

Distinct from measures of Protestant Work Ethic, the concept of Occupational Work Ethic (Petty, 1991) represents a more relevant and realistic means of identifying attitudes and behaviours commonly sought by employers. Whilst adhering to the cultural norms of the desirable attributes of the contemporary workforce such as initiative, interpersonal skills and being dependable, occupational work ethic does not however rest upon the strong emotive religious and moral factors associated with traditional conception of work-ethic. It is questionable how useful these PWE factors such as anti-leisure and asceticism are to understanding the concept of work-ethic in today's society. The moral and religious bases of PWE are no longer appropriate for understanding motivation and work attitudes within contemporary society. Cultural norms of what constitutes a work-ethic have undergone quite radical shifts in the last 20 years and as such work-ethic should be reinterpreted in the light of modern social and economic conditions.

(Petty, 1991) defines the study of occupational work-ethic as the scientific exploration of behavioural factors and motivation of workers. He highlights a resurgence of interest in work-ethic, in particular means of identifying and measuring affective work competencies to match with employers' requirements. Petty's work states how much research concurs that an important part of job preparation is to facilitate understanding of job requirements and practices typically leading to success. (Hill and Petty (1995) state "*..the employability skills needed for the high performance work-place are a tangible expression of the underlying work-ethic, often mentioned in contemporary conversation but seldom clearly defined*" (p.60) Based upon earlier work with the Work Attitudes Inventory (Petty and Brauchle (19984) and

the Affective Work Competencies Inventory (Kazanas, 1979), Petty devised a psychometric instrument to measure an individual's occupational work-ethic. Specifically, this aims to measure the degree to which individuals perceive themselves as possessing characteristics and attributes representing work-ethic in the contemporary work-place. Developmental work encompassing both the concept and the measurement scale itself has revealed a three-dimensional factor solution comprising interpersonal skills, initiative and being dependable (Petty and Hill, 1994;Hill and Petty, 1995; Petty, 1995; Hill, 1997). In addition, these studies have also revealed that the measure of occupational work-ethic has revealed differences in attributes between male and female workers (Petty and Hill, 1994; Hill, 1997) and significant differences have also been reported as a function of occupational classification, level of education and length of employment (Petty, 1995; Hill, 1997). The existence of such differences suggests variation in employment socialisation and also has implications for training providers. The results also indicate to those preparing to enter the work-force the potential differences in work-attitudes one might expect to find on the job.

In terms of its applicability to the unemployed, the measure of occupational work-ethic has never been used with this population before as far as they author is aware. However, the factor structure and rationale upon which the concept is based is highly relevant to individual employability and hence it is argued that occupational work-ethic is potentially a very useful tool within an intervention. Use of this measure will enable further study of the dynamics of work-ethic over time both within and between groups of subjects and its utility in the development of employability skills. The introductory chapter of this thesis highlighted that a key aspect of employability is awareness of one's skills and progression and the work-ethic measure provides a tangible means of demonstrating this. For those attending a training intervention, this

may help to both review and reinforce progress and enable participants to understand their own work attributes and how they match with what employers require.

4.4 Conclusions

This chapter has developed some analytical strands pertinent to the use of three key employability variables. In particular, it has evaluated issues surrounding the utility of these concepts within an unemployment intervention taking into account empirical work indicating the role of these concepts to the context of unemployment. The discussion has not only emphasised the specific advantages of using these measures in this context but has also drawn attention to some wider considerations of this approach with the unemployed. These include awareness of the limitations of behavioural measures as indices of successful intervention and the role of factors such as socially desirable responding and the possibility of the measures being perceived as diagnostic instruments upon which interventions feel compelled to act. However, the approach being advocated is a viable means of quantitatively operationalising behavioural dimensions of employability and hence permitting comparisons of the needs and profiles of different sub-groups. The discussion has also emphasised the necessity for a balanced approach to individual measures of employability; in particularly, the need to consider quantitative alongside qualitative methods of enquiry to provide a deeper and more contextual understanding of why people respond the way they do. As such, the methodological approach will aim to bring together both quantitative questionnaires and interview data to provide information on both levels of potential change but also a contextual explanation of how people progress and change over time and the issues relevant to them. The following two chapters will introduce issues of methodology and design and proceed onto describing and interpreting the results.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 Quantitative Methodology and Results

The frequently cited studies which review the relationship between unemployment and psychological well-being typically indicate the vast range of methodological approaches which have been applied to this field (Burchell, 1992; Fryer, 1992; Jahoda, 1992; Winefield, 1995; Fryer, 1998b, Murphy and Athanasou, 1999). Notably, Fryer (1998b) indicates that "*these have included reliable and valid structured quantitative measures used within surveys and structures interviews; semi-structured, depth and investigative interviews; physiological analysis; psychiatric assessment; epidemiological investigation; document analysis; projective techniques; observation; and sociographic and action/intervention research. Research focused at the individual, family, community, organisation and population level has been carried out by post, over the telephone and in person within cross-sectional and longitudinal research designs.*" (p. 76).

There are several ways of categorising the range of research methods available from level of analysis to the degree of sophistication and replicability. The scope of options thus reflects the complexity of unemployment as a research topic and researchers are faced with numerous approaches dependent upon the questions they are wanting to answer and the means by which the data will be interpreted. Often, the methods adopted reflect preferred epistemological and ideological perspectives and the way unemployment is initially defined as a concept and a problem. As highlighted in chapter three, the two notable decades of intensive research activity i.e. 1930's and 1980's demonstrated radically different conceptual approaches and contemporary views appear to encourage a balanced approach to

psychological enquiry, particularly focusing upon broader, more inclusive means of understanding joblessness in modern society at various levels. In recognition of the complexity of unemployment research, a key message in the literature is for methods to encompass both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Pernice, 1996). In particular, researchers have called for a reintegration of more qualitative techniques within unemployment research which has tended to be dominated by quantitative methods since the 1970's (Fryer, 1992; Pernice, 1996). Each have their own epistemological assumptions, the advantages and relevance of which are equally useful to the work being presented in this thesis. Therefore, this present chapter will present some empirical quantitative work and will be followed by a chapter focusing upon a qualitative approach to assessing intervention effectiveness.

The small body of relevant empirical work concerning behavioural measures of intervention outcomes has tended to utilise validated psychometric instruments to make inferences about participant groups and track potential changes over time (Oddy et al., 1984; Donovan et al., 1986 Muller, 1992 and Creed et al. (1995,1996). However, such research tends to focus on actual levels of some psychological variable without particular reference to the process of change by attempting to explain how people progress and how participants describe the perceived benefits of the intervention. Nevertheless, the assumptions and benefits of such quantitative approaches are well documented in that they aim objectively to specify broad patterns or trends across the populations being studied. This way, specific questions can be systematically addressed as these measures permit the manipulation, measuring and specification of relationships between factors in order to test hypotheses about causal laws.

As far as the author is aware, this is the first attempted evaluation of an Intermediate Labour Market intervention focusing on employability at the psychological level of the individual participant. As the detection and investigation of trends within the participant group over time was a major objective, quantitative scale measures are particularly appropriate for this purpose and the previous chapter has demonstrated why the three psychological variables are particularly appropriate for assessing the effectiveness of the intervention from this perspective.

5.1 Design

The main objective of the research was to investigate potential changes in the three experimental variables over the duration of a training intervention; for the sample as a whole and within subgroups as categorised by a range of demographic factors such as age, length of unemployment and training location. In addition to assessing participants' progress over time, the psychometric measures would also be used as predictor variables in an attempt to distinguish those more likely to successfully find work after the programme finished. There was also an opportunity to see whether there was a distinct profile for those participants leaving early without a job.

At the planning stage of the design, the author conducted several semi-structured interviews with various groups of people with specific interests in the concept and measurement of employability as it applies to the long-term unemployed:

- *Wise Group management to explore the concept of employability and their understanding of employability skills as applied to the long- term unemployed.*

- *A representative sample of training staff to discuss the range of barriers Wise Group participants typically face and the role of Personal and Social Development within the organisation.*

- *A sample of 12 local employers who have employed previous Wise Group participants to discuss the employability skills required in potential employees.*

The information gained in these interviews strongly supported an approach to employability from a psychological perspective, in particular, the value of attempting to longitudinally measure progress and the possibility of identifying differences between sub groups. The interviews concurred with findings in the literature regarding the significance of generic employability skills and the need for participants to be able to recognise and articulate their progress and strengths to employers. Notably, the training staff highlighted issues such as the effect of unemployment upon participants' self-esteem and self-confidence and the role of the programme in helping to re-establish structured use of time and a sense of purpose.

Utilising a longitudinal design, pre-programme (baseline) questionnaire measures and other demographic data such as age, length of unemployment, work and educational history was collected from an on-going time 1 sample population of people commencing the Wise Group programme. Due to the number of intakes and the fact that the author was working alone, the sampling procedure was not exhaustive and thus inclusive of all new entrants to the programme over the data collection period. To maintain the integrity of the design, efforts were made to ensure that the overall project sample comprised a relatively representative sample of typical Wise Group Intermediate Labour Market participants with respect to gender proportions, age, unemployment duration data, training location and work experience unit, i.e. social care. The sampling procedure was also in part reliant on the recruitment timetable and activities of the organisation itself. For example, several weeks could go by between new intakes, with a greater push for recruitment in the first few months of the year. In general though, it was decided that the sampling

procedure retained sufficient integrity so that any results and interpretations made could be generalised to the wider Wise Group participant population.

To detect potential change over time, the same measures were re-administered 8-10 weeks (time 2) later upon the same sample and again at 26-28 weeks (time 3) into training. For a small sample of participants, repeated measures were taken a fourth time at 36-38 weeks into training. In addition to the aim of looking at the dynamics of the whole sample, other objectives were to assess the patterns of change of identifiable, naturally occurring sub groups such as early leavers from the programme and potential differences between the different training outcomes.

5.2 Participants

The total time 1 baseline sample comprised 291 subjects sampled from across three Wise Group training locations, namely Heatwise, Landwise and WiseStart. This total time 1 sample is representative of the Wise Group's total intake and included participants from all three locations and a wide range of work project intakes i.e. office administration, landscaping, social care and installers. Participants undergoing their induction week were briefed by the Personal Development trainer that a researcher would be coming to ask them to assist in her research the following day and that co-operation was wholly voluntary. A thirty-minute slot of the induction timetable was given over to the author to meet the respective groups in the induction classrooms, briefly describe her research interest and ask for co-operation in completing the various questionnaires. All participants approached in this manner agreed to fill out the questionnaires on a voluntary basis with the knowledge that the exercise was not a mandatory requirement of the programme's induction.

Table 5.1 below shows the composition of the sample, indicating the number of subjects at each location and the respective gender distributions.

Table 5.1: Distribution of participants and demographic information across locations

Location	N	Males	Females	Mean age
Heatwise	125	75 (60%)	50 (40%)	31
Landwise	110	98 (89.0%)	12 (10.9%)	32
WiseStart	56	52 (92.8)	4 (7.14%)	34
Total	291	225 (77.3%)	66 (22.6%)	

The gender breakdown information in the above table (Table 5.1) should be noted. The ratios are typical of expected and actual intake on all of the programmes due to the nature of the employment projects and work experience undertaken traditionally over the years with the Wise Group operations. All programmes have consistently attracted more males than females as a direct function of the types of employment experience available, namely manual work such as landscaping, general building and energy efficiency. However, in recent years the types and range of employment experience has diversified dramatically to reflect labour market changes which in turn has attracted a higher female uptake in keeping with growth of the service sector.

Indeed, the variability of the gender proportions across the three locations reflects this and at Heatwise in particular, the distributions are less skewed. At WiseStart, the gender proportions are again typical and a reflection of the focus upon general

building operations and male manual labour and it is important to note that WiseStart operates on a significantly smaller scale than both Heatwise and Landwise.

The sample size and its composition changed at each successive assessment period as individuals either remained on the programme or left to either enter employment education or otherwise left of their own accord. From an initial sample of 291 participants, the time 2 sample decreased in size to 269 as people left the organisation for various reasons. Again, at time 3, the sample diminished to 185 denoting a greater number of leavers from the programme. For a much smaller sample of individuals (n=38) who remained on the programme at time 4 (36-38) weeks, all were personally contacted by the researcher and 36 agreed to fill out the questionnaires a fourth time.

Incidentally, at both time 2 and 3 the greater proportion of the project sample were continuing programme participants whilst far smaller numbers had left within the first few weeks to either take up employment elsewhere or left for personal reasons. Table 5.2 below shows this information, representing the shifting composition of the original sample in terms of their distribution in training status at each successive assessment period.

Table 5.2: Changing composition of original sample over time

Assessment Status	Time 2 (8-10 weeks)	Time 3 (26-28 weeks)	Time 4 (36-38 weeks)
Participant	205	125	38
Positive leaver	41	92	175
Negative leaver	45	74	78
Total	291	291	291

Another characteristic of the sample is the distribution of educational attainment across the group and this information is shown in Table 5.3 below.

Table 5.3: Distribution of educational qualification level

Educational attainment level	N
None	**34 (11.68%)**
Basic **(vocational modules) e.g. Scotvec, City & Guilds)**	**117 (40.2%)**
Standard **(Standard/O grade)**	**97 (33.3%)**
Higher **(Highers/ A levels)**	**27 (9.2%)**
Further **(HNC/D, degrees)**	**16 (5.4%)**
Total	**291**

The above table shows that of the whole sample, just over 50% have no high school educational qualifications and furthermore, 12% of the sample report having no qualifications whatsoever.

In terms of marital status, 102 (35.05%) of the sample were married and 189 (64.9%) were either single, divorced or separated. Of the total sample, 63 (21.64%) reported having at least one dependent child to care for leaving 228 (78.3%) without dependent children.

5.3 Measures

5.3.1 Employment Commitment (Warr and Jackson, 1979)

The Employment Commitment Scale as developed by Warr et al. (1979) assesses the degree of salience to the individuals of the employment role. Warr et al.'s 6-item measure was originally adapted from a measure of the extent of specific job involvement by Lodahl and Kejner (1965). However, empirical research particularly

during the 1980's and 1990's has used adaptations of Warr et al.'s 1979 scale with 6, 8 and presently 10 items in an attempt to increase both the construct and content validity of the measure. Hence, the format used in the present study utilises the ten-item measure as reported by Shams and Jackson (1994). Respondents rate each of ten statements (see appendix A) on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The individual item scores are summed to produce an overall index of employment commitment of between 5 and 50.

Previous empirical work using the 10-item adaptation of the employment commitment scale (Shams and Jackson,1994) reported a coefficient alpha of (0.78). Both the 6 and 8-item revisions have consistently reported moderately high coefficients of between 0.77 and 0.85 (Jackson et al.,1983; Warr and Jackson,1985, 1987; Rowley and Feather,1987; Wanberg and Marchese,1994 and Wanberg, Watt and Rumsey, 1996). The alpha coefficient for the present sample was found to be (0.77).

5.3.2 Global Self-Esteem (Rosenberg, 1965)

Most studies of the impact of unemployment upon self-esteem have used the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE, Rosenberg,1965) or similar measures derived from it, (Bachman and O'Malley,1970,1977). The scale's popularity of use is due to both its length, having just ten items and hence convenience, but also an accumulation of respectable reliability and validity information. Rosenberg's scale was originally developed to measure adolescents' global feelings of self-worth or self-acceptance and is generally considered the standard against which other measures of self-esteem are compared.

The scale contains ten items or statements to which the individual is asked to respond (see appendix B) by indicating the extent to which they agree with each

item. The response format in the present study is a five-point Likert scale. Certain items are reverse scored in keeping with their negative wording. The ten item scores are summed to provide an overall single self-esteem index of between 5 and 50. The items are face valid and the scale is short and easy to administer.

Blascovich and Tomaka (1991) report extensive and acceptable reliability (internal consistency and test retest) and validity (convergent and discriminant). In their paper, Ellis and Taylor (1983) report evidence from previous research that the scale is reliable and valid. Item consistency reliability coefficients of 0.75 and 0.76 were reported by Weiss (1977) and Weiss and Knight (1980) whilst more recent studies using the RSE have reported coefficient alphas of 0.86 (Shamir,1986), 0.82 (Rowley and Feather,1987). The coefficient alpha for the present sample was found to be (0.81).

5.3.3 The Occupational Work Ethic Inventory (Hill and Petty, 1993)

The Occupational Work Ethic Inventory comprises 50 descriptor items or words relating to personal attributes in the work-place. Individuals respond to a stem sentence of *"At work, I can describe myself as:"* and indicate the extent to which they believe that descriptor item describes them in the work-place on a 7- point rating scale ranging from always to never. (See appendix C) The inventory is made up of three sub dimensions of work ethic, namely initiative, interpersonal skills and a final dimension termed being dependable. An average score for each dimension is calculated by summing dimension raw scores and dividing by the number of items in that dimension. Alternatively, the OWEI can be completed on–line via the Internet by which the researcher transposes the raw data onto the electronic questionnaire form and the three mean dimension scores are calculated.

Previous work on the construction and application of the OWEI has returned consistently high levels with regard to the scale's internal consistency. An early pilot study (Petty, 1993) reported a coefficient alpha of 0.94 and other similar work has returned coefficient alphas ranging from 0.90 (Hatcher, 1995) to 0.95 (Hill and Petty, 1995) emphasising an extreme degree of internal correlation within the measure. However, it is worth noting that alpha coefficients exceeding 0.90 usually indicate a high degree of internal redundancy in that there is a lack of discrimination between some items and that they are both measuring the identical aspect of the construct. The calculated coefficient alpha for the present sample was found to be (0.86).

Being a relatively recent measure in terms of development and construction, there is as yet no empirical evidence that the OWEI has been used with an unemployed sample as such normative information is unavailable at this time.

The table overleaf (Table 5.4) shows the sub dimensions of the OWEI, and the individual descriptor items loading onto each factor (Hill and Petty, 1995):

Table 5.4: Descriptor items loading onto each work ethic dimension

Factor 1 Interpersonal skills	Factor 2 Initiative	Factor 3 Being dependable
Appreciative	Independent	Dependable
Patient	Ambitious	Following regulations
Likeable	Effective	Following directions
Helpful	Initiating	Reliable
Pleasant	Perceptive	Honest
Co-operative	Adaptable	Careful
Hard-working	Accurate	Punctual
Cheerful	Conscientious	
Devoted	Persevering	
Courteous	Orderly	
Considerate	Enthusiastic	
Well-dressed	Persistent	
Friendly	Dedicated	
Loyal	Productive	
Modest	Resourceful	

A fourth factor comprising ten reversed items included in the original scale construction and stated in the negative is also included in the scale itself although typical use and interpretation of the OWEI only uses the three main factors, interpersonal, initiative and being dependable. Items loading heavily on this factor include hostile, rude, selfish, devious and irresponsible.

5.4 Procedures

The questionnaires were administered as part of the personal and social development days of the subjects' induction to the organisation. Group administration of the measures took place in training classrooms and the size of the

groups varied from 3 to 27 depending on the number of new intakes and attendees that particular day.

The author was briefly introduced to the group by the personal development trainer as an independent researcher helping to collect information and improve the design of the Wise Group programme. The personal development trainer then left the room until the researcher had completed the questionnaire administration and answered any questions the participants may have had. The author introduced herself as an independent researcher from the University of Glasgow interested in attitudes to work and re-employment and told participants that the findings would form part of her long term university research project.

In an attempt to preserve the integrity of the exercise, it was made clear that the author was not a member of Wise Group staff and that responses made to the questionnaire items and indeed participation alone would have no bearing upon the participants' time or performance at the Wise Group. The author stressed that all participation was voluntary and that if for any reason individuals felt they would rather not complete the questionnaires, that was in no way problematic.

Due to the personal nature of the questions regarding self-esteem and attitudes to work and employment, the author assured all participants that the data they provided would be treated with strict confidentiality and that the purpose of the exercise was not to identify or compare particular individuals. Participants were however asked to put their real names on the questionnaires and it was explained that this was necessary in order to identify clearly individuals over time and to match other demographic information such as that from the Wise Group database and from application forms. Participants were asked for their permission for the researcher to

obtain such information pertaining to their age, length of unemployment, marital status, qualification level and number of dependent children from the main Wise Group database. All subjects gave their consent for this data to be obtained.

After distributing the questionnaires to the group, the researcher drew attention to the instructions at the top of each questionnaire (see appendices A-C) and re-capped the applicable response format. For both the employment commitment and self-esteem scales, the participants were asked to respond to 10 statements and circle their appropriate answer indicative of their level of agreement with the respective statement ranging from 1-5. They were asked to give their general overall feeling and not 'agonise' over the question. Participants were reminded that there were no right and wrong answers to any of the questionnaires so subjects were asked to respond as honestly as possible to reflect their true feelings. It was also made clear that the prime objective was information collection, not testing as may have been thought.

For the occupational work ethic inventory the response format is slightly more complex and it was explained that the objective is to respond to the 50 descriptor items by way of the degree to which that item described the individual in the work-place. A copy of each questionnaire was shown on an overhead projector with fictitious responses to ensure participants fully understood the correct way to complete the various scales. After completion, the researcher collected all the questionnaires and thanked the group for their time and co-operation. Most groups showed a wider interest in the project and tended to ask several questions about the project in general and thus the author typically spent 5-10 minutes with the group afterwards answering such questions. This was considered an important aspect of the data collection process; to be seen as having time to establish a social rapport

with participants and show interest in their questions and comments as this would greatly assist in approaching individuals to participate in the one to one interviews.

5.4.1 Follow up 1 (Time 2)

At the first follow up (time 2) information was obtained from the Wise Group as to the present whereabouts of respective individuals, i.e. which training group they were in and where they were based and could be located. This required finding out which participants were still with the organisation and in the majority of cases, personal contact between the author and the individual at the Wise Group was possible to ask them to repeat the questionnaires a second time. Often this took place in job club sessions when many of the original group were together for a morning or afternoon. After a brief re-introduction of the purpose of the exercise, the three questionnaires were distributed to the group and the author recapped the correct method of completing the scales. With the help of training and administrative staff, all continuing participants were re-assessed at time 2.

For those people who had left the organisation, the reason for their leaving, either to enter employment or not was noted and permission to contact them at home by post was given by the Wise Group personnel department. Explanatory letters and copies of the questionnaires were sent out reminding subjects of the purpose of the project and they were asked to complete the items a second time and return them to the researcher at the Wise Group. The rate of return for the positive leavers was surprisingly high at 92.6% and even in the case of the negative early leavers who had left for other reasons, the rate of return was 57%, again surprisingly high. This meant that the composition of the time two sample was as follows:

- Continuing participants 205
- Negative early leavers 26
- Positive early leavers 38

Total 269

5.4.2 Follow up 2 (Time 3)

The same process was carried out again at the time 3 assessment period. Continuing participants were personally contacted at the Wise Group and a similar letter at their home address contacted all leavers up to that point.

Response rates were much lower this time and of the whole time 3 sample, the distribution was as follows:

- Continuing participants 125
- Positive leavers 46
- Negative leavers 14

Total 185

5.4.3 Follow up 3 (Time 4)

At time 4 (36-38 weeks) the aim was specifically to assess continuing participants at the Wise Group of whom there were 38 from the original sample as a huge shift had occurred between time 3 and time 4 of people into jobs. Of these 38, 36 completed the questionnaires a fourth time with two individuals who were working on an external site failing to return their questionnaires despite several follow up telephone calls to their project supervisors.

The following sections present the results from the quantitative empirical study.

5.5 QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Statistical analysis was performed using the statistical package Statistica with a view to determining whether self report ratings on the five measures changed with increasing time on the Wise Group programme. Differences in mean scores across the three Wise Group locations and their interactions with time are also compared, as are the effects of demographic factors such as age group, length of unemployment and marital status. Of particular interest is the effect of initial self-esteem and employment commitment level and its interaction with the repeated time measure. Where inferential statistics of differences in means reveal significant results, Cohen's d is also given to indicate the magnitude of the effect.

5.5.1 Baseline (Time 1) differences

The first analyses investigate possible baseline (pre-programme) differences upon the measures of employment commitment, self-esteem and the three occupational work ethic dimensions of initiative, interpersonal skills and being dependable as categorised by certain demographic variables such as age and length of unemployment.

Age effects

The mean age of the total sample is 32, ranging from 18 to 58 and the raw age data is grouped into three categories, namely younger 18-25, mid 26-40 and older 41+. These categories represented sensible cut-offs to ease interpretation between age groups, i.e. the younger 18-25's as in the case of the New Deal, the majority of the distribution of prime working age, 26-40 and a third category where age may become an important perceived barrier to employment. The means of each dependent

variable categorised by age group are shown below in Table 5.5 with the respective standard deviations shown in parentheses.

Table 5.5: Means and standard deviations for each measure between age groups

Age Group Measure	18-25 (n=94)	26-40 (n=146)	41+ (n=57)
Employment commitment	34.79 (5.05)	34.58 (6.56)	34.98 (5.74)
Self-esteem	37.68 (4.91)	38.15 (6.01)	40.21 (6.14)
Initiative	5.55 (.851)	5.57 (.893)	5.66 (.569)
Interpersonal	5.16 (.819)	5.27 (.914)	5.36 (.739)
Being dependable	5.92 (.825)	5.88 (.958)	6.06 (.627)

To detect any significant differences between the mean scores one–way Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) are computed for each dependent measure. The results show that there is a significant main effect of age group upon self-esteem at baseline, $F(2,288)=3.4104$, $p=<.05$ and the results of these analyses are summarised in Table 5.6 below.

Table 5.6: ANOVA for baseline data as a function of age group

Variable	df	F	p	Significance
Employment commitment	2,288	< 1	.85	N/S
Self-esteem	2,288	3.14	.034	S
Initiative	2,288	< 1	.753	N/S
Interpersonal	2,288	< 1	.401	N/S
Dependable	2,288	< 1	.441	N/S

To detect where the differences lie, post-hoc analysis using the Scheffé test reveal the difference to be between the younger and older age groups, whereby the younger group have a significantly lower baseline mean of 37.68 compared to the older group mean of 40.21, *p=<.05*, *d= 0.46*. It may be that the older members of the sample have better established ideas of their self-worth, established sources of support and the benefit of longer life experience compared to their younger counterparts.

Unemployment duration effects

The mean duration of unemployment for the whole sample is 101 weeks, ranging from 26 to 540 weeks and this raw duration data is grouped into three categories, namely short (26-52 weeks), mid (53-104 weeks) and long (105+ weeks). The categories represent meaningful groupings for interpretation. Long term unemployment is usually thought of as over one year and this longer duration is hence split into up to 2 years and over 2 years. The means of each dependent variable categorised by unemployment duration group are shown overleaf in Table 11.3. The respective standard deviations are shown in parentheses.

Table 5.7: Baseline means and standard deviations by unemployment duration group

Duration Group Measure	26-52 (n=134)	53-104 (n=91)	105+ (n=66)
Employment commitment	34.77 (5.99)	35.02 (6.10)	34.46 (5.95)
Self-esteem	38.23 (5.17)	38.16 (6.82)	38.90 (5.59)
Initiative	5.61 (.762)	5.59 (1.03)	5.51 (.619)
Interpersonal	5.26 (.812)	5.27 (1.03)	5.21 (.649)
Dependable	5.91 (.826)	5.92 (1.06)	5.95 (.609)

To detect any significant differences in the means between length of unemployment groups measures, one–way Analyses of Variance are computed for each dependent measure. The results demonstrate no effect of unemployment duration group upon the psychological measures at baseline whereby all F values are relatively small with respective p values all above .05 an the results are summarised below in Table 5.8

Table 5.8: ANOVA for baseline data as a function of unemployment duration group

Variable	df	F	p	Significance
Employment commitment	2,288	< 1	.851	N/S
Self-esteem	2,288	< 1	.684	N/S
Initiative	2,288	< 1	.715	N/S
Interpersonal	2,288	< 1	.919	N/S
Dependable	2,288	< 1	.950	N/S

It might have been expected that those with longer unemployment would have significantly lower self-esteem than those with a shorter duration of unemployment but as demonstrated in the analysis below, this is not the case for this sample. It may be the case that those with a longer duration of unemployment have become adapted to this role and as such self-esteem is unaffected by length of joblessness.

Effects of other demographic variables

One-way ANOVA's were also carried out for other categorical factors to see if they had an effect on the baseline data. Other demographic grouping variables considered are level of educational qualification, marital status and number of dependent children. None of these variables are shown to have an effect upon any

of the dependent measures at baseline. The Wise Group training location attended, namely either Heatwise, Landwise or WiseStart is also shown not to have an effect, whereby there were no initial pre-programme differences on the dependent measures. (See Appendix E for specific analyses, tables A4-A7).

5.5.2 Longitudinal analysis: effects across time

To investigate the effect of time upon the dependent measures, it was decided to firstly conduct univariate repeated measures ANOVA's for each of the five employability measures for the sample as a whole and then to subsequently see if and how other factors interacted with the time factor. In this case, time is a repeated measures factor, having three levels, time 1(baseline), time 2 (8-10 weeks) time 3 (24-36 weeks) and is analysed by univariate F.

Self-esteem

For the group as a whole, the analysis reveals a significant main effect of time for self-esteem $F(2,536)=14.11$, $p<.01$ confirming that this measure changes as an overall function of time on the programme. Post hoc analysis (Scheffé) was carried out to establish how the self-esteem scores differ over time. There is a significant difference in the means between initial baseline (time 1) self-esteem measure (38.33) and the first follow up (time2) assessment at 8-10 weeks (39.43), *($p<.01$, $d=0.20$).*

This suggests that the programme benefits are relatively quick in their effect upon enhancing a positive self-concept, self-confidence and a global feeling of worth. A further increment from time two (39.43) to time three (39.91) at the six months assessment is noted, although the difference is non-significant.

Interpersonal skills

For the total sample, a repeated measures ANOVA shows a significant effect of time for the interpersonal dimension of the occupational work ethic inventory $F(2,536)=19.26,\ p<.01$; again showing an overall effect of time upon reported social and communication ability within the workplace. Post-hoc analysis (Scheffé) reports a significant difference between the mean at baseline (5.26) and at the follow up assessment at 8-10 weeks (5.45), $p<.01, d= 0.25$. Similar to self-esteem, this result clarifies that the early stages of the programme are particularly effective for increasing individuals' reported ability to effectively communicate and get on with others in the workplace such as colleagues and supervisors. However, there is also a significant incremental increase from time 2 (5.45) to time 3 (5.61) showing further longitudinal gains with respect to interpersonal ability, $p<.05, d=0.11$.

Being dependable

For the 'being dependable' dimension of the occupational work ethic scale, statistical analysis (repeated measures ANOVA) again reveals a significant time effect for this quantitative measure $F(2,536)=3.83,\ p<.05$. Post hoc analysis using the Scheffé test shows the effect to be between the time 1 baseline mean (5.95) and time 2 follow up at 8-10 weeks (6.07), $p<.05, d= 0.16$. This result also provides clear evidence for an immediate and marked impact of the early stages of the Wise Group programme, in this case upon being dependable. This is indicative of the individual feeling trustworthy, reliable, and confident that others can rely upon them in the workplace. Again, a small non-significant incremental increase at time 3 (6.08) was highlighted in the post hoc- test.

Initiative

The time effect for the initiative sub-scale of the occupational work ethic dimension just fails to reach the required level of significance to show an effect of time, $F(2,536)=2.57$, $p=.07$. Examination of the mean differences shows the marked difference to be between time 1 and time 3 as opposed to the hypothesised time 2. The result is nevertheless strongly suggestive of overall programme effects upon the use and awareness of initiative such as being observant, taking the lead and being organised in the workplace.

Employment commitment

There is no overall effect of time upon the measure of employment commitment for the total sample, which decreases slightly from baseline (34.74) to follow up at time two (34.40) $F(2,536) <1$ suggesting that for the sample as a whole, the programme has no major effect upon the value individuals place upon having employment. This suggests that the antecedents of any potential change in employment commitment are likely to be external influences not captured by the measure such as local labour market conditions and other influential personal circumstances.

5.5.3 Interactive effects of time with age and unemployment duration

After finding a significant overall time effect for most of the dependent measures, it was decided to see if and how the time effect interacted with other independent factors upon the various employability measures. A series of ten factorial ANOVA's are computed to investigate the effects of age group and then unemployment duration group in combination with time for each of the five dependent measures, resulting in ten separate analyses. Each dependent variable in turn is analysed by a univariate F. Both the age group and unemployment duration group analyses are essentially 3x3 mixed designs whereby Factor 1 (time) has three levels and is the

repeated measures factor whilst Factor 2 (age group or unemployment duration group) also has three levels and represents the between groups factor.

For each of these analyses, the main effect of time where established in the previous analyses is reproduced meaning there is no modifying effect of other demographic variables such as age group or unemployment duration group effect upon the dependent measures. Essentially, the time factor represents the unitary effect of any change.

5.5.4 Changes from time 3 to time 4 for a restricted sample

Data is available for a restricted sample of some 36 individuals who remained on the training programme for a longer period of time and agreed to complete the dependent measures for a fourth time. This sample was followed up at time 4, i.e. 36-38 weeks of training. Dependent t-tests are carried out to assess any significant incremental increase in mean scores from the previous assessment period at time 3. The table below (Table 5.9) shows both means and t values for each respective dependent measures

Table 5.9: Incremental changes for a restricted sample time 3 to time 4

Measure	Means		t value (df= 35)	p value
Emp. Commitment	35.72	36.44	2.32	**.02*** (d=0.13)
Self-esteem	39.13	39.05	t<1	.73
Initiative	5.71	5.76	t<1	.35
Interpersonal	5.80	5.86	t<1	.31
Being dependable	6.11	6.09	t<1	.835

NB: N=36 (two-tailed)

As can be seen from Table 5.9, there is a small yet significant incremental increase in employment commitment for those participants in the restricted sample. It is thought that as these individuals are in the final section of their time at the Wise Group, they will be under more pressure to secure employment and hence their commitment will rise as they enter the last weeks of their training. As can be seen none of the other measures show an increase between the two assessment intervals. It can be argued that of all the measures taken, employment commitment is the most situation specific and as such more susceptible to external influence than self-esteem for example.

5.5.5 Interactive effects of initial employment commitment and time

Two-way factorial ANOVA's are carried out to investigate the effects firstly of initial employment commitment level and in the following section initial self-esteem level upon the subsequent pattern of the five dependent measures over time. For each set of analyses, the ANOVA's are mixed designs with initial commitment and esteem levels being the between factor (Factor1) and time being the repeated measures factor (Factor 2).

Employment commitment level (Factor 1) has 3 levels, namely high, mid and low representing the range of possible scores and time (Factor 2) has three repeated measures levels, assessment times1-3.

Initial Employment Commitment level upon self-esteem

The analyses reveal that initial employment commitment level has no moderating effect upon the pattern of self-esteem across time. This simply means that commitment level upon joining the Wise Group has no significant bearing upon measures of self-esteem taken across the three time periods. This suggests that

feelings of global self-worth are independent and unrelated to the value placed on having employment.

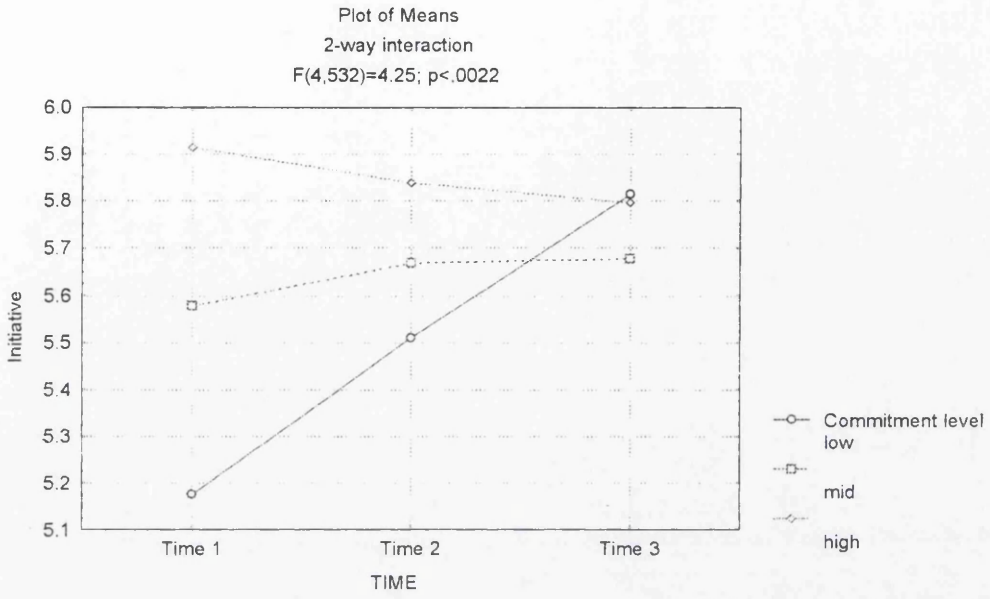
Initial Employment Commitment level x time upon initiative

However, initial commitment level does have an effect upon all three occupational work ethic variables over time, initiative, interpersonal and dependable and as such commitment level is shown to moderate the overall time effect in all 3 cases.

For initiative, the ANOVA result yields significant main effects for both commitment level $F(2,266)=7.48$, $p<.01$ and also for time $F(2,532)=4.94$, $p<.01$ There is also a significant interaction between the two factors $F(4,532)=4.25$, $p<.01$ meaning that the self-ratings of workplace initiative for different commitment levels change in different ways over the three time points.

Post hoc testing using Scheffé is carried out to determine the nature of this interaction. The results confirm that there is a significant difference at time 1 between the low commitment group (5.17) and the high commitment group (5.91), ($p=.004$, $d=0.91$). The source of the interaction is the overall time change for the low commitment group only, from time 1 (5.17) to time 3 (5.81), ($p=.033$, $d=0.72$). The changes over time for both other commitment groups are small and non-significant. This interaction of factors is shown overleaf in Figure 5.1 .

Figure 5.1 Changes in initiative as an interactive function of both time and initial commitment level.



Initial Employment Commitment x time upon interpersonal skills

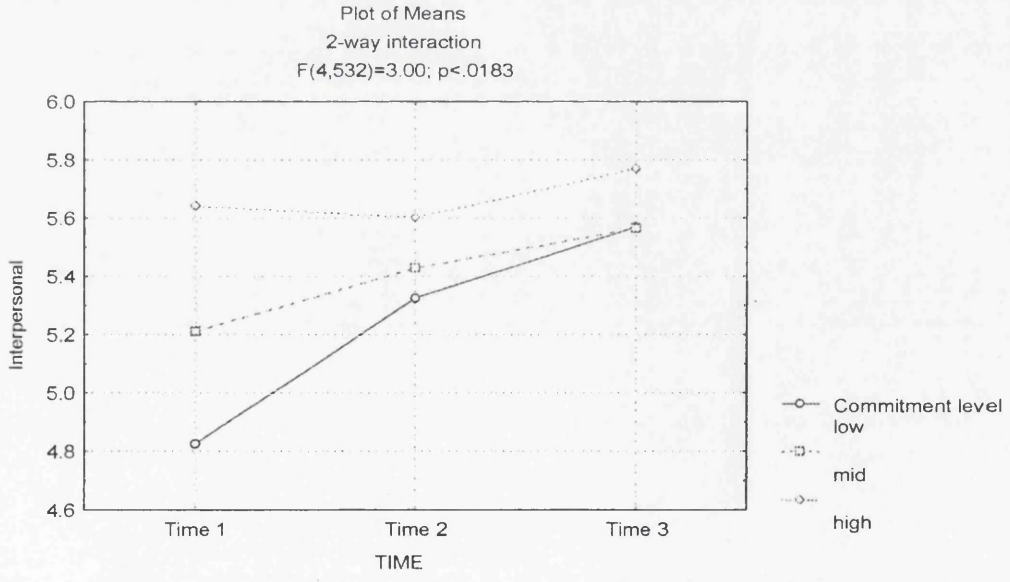
Likewise, the 3x3 ANOVA for the interpersonal work ethic dimension also reveals both main effects to be significant, namely for time *F(2,532)=17.20, p<.01* and also for commitment level, *F(2,266)=10.76, p<.01*. The significant interaction between employment commitment level and time effects *F(4,532)=3.00, p<.05* shows that differences over time of self-rated communication and interpersonal ability are moderated by initial commitment level to employment.

Scheffé post-hoc testing revealed that at time 1 there was a significant difference between the low commitment group (4.82) and the high commitment group (5.64), (*p=.01, d=0.96*) and also a significant difference between the mid (5.21) and high group (*p=.012, d= 0.64*).

The low commitment group showed a significant increase between time 1 (4.82) and time 2 (5.32), (p=.053, d=0.53) and both the low and mid commitment groups show a significant overall increase between time 1 and 3; the low group increasing overall from 4.82 to 5.57 (*p=.005, d=0.82*) and changes in the mid group being 5. 21 to 5.56 (*p=.01,d= 0.49*).

Hence, the Wise Group programme facilitated overall interpersonal skill changes for both the low and mid commitment groups, but was particularly effective for the low commitment group who improved significantly in a short space of time, i.e. within 8-10 weeks. The different patterns of mean score changes can be seen in Figure 5.2 below.

Figure 5.2. Changes in interpersonal skill as an interactive function of time and initial commitment level.



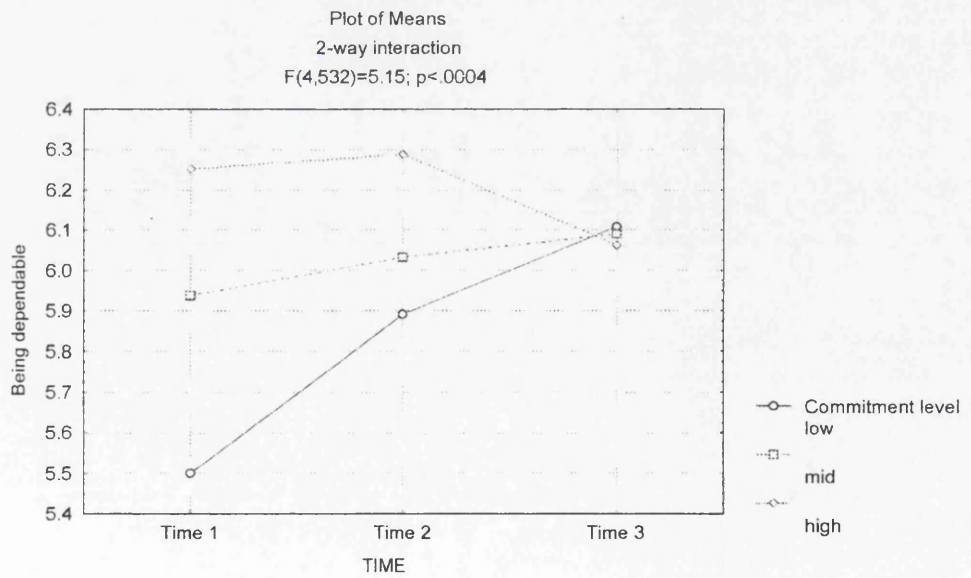
Commitment level x time upon being dependable

For being dependable there are also two main effects, one for time *F(4,532)=5.35, p<.001* and secondly for commitment level *F(2,266)=8.05, p<01.* There is also a

significant interaction effect between employment commitment level and time effects, *F(4,532)=5.15, p<.01* indicating differential levels of commitment behaving differently across time upon the dependent measure.

To establish where the source of the interaction effects lie, post-hoc analysis (Scheffé) shows that there is a significant difference in being dependable between the low commitment (5.50) group and the high commitment group (6.25) at time 1 (*p=.01, d=0.91*). The low commitment group improve overall, increasing from 5.50 to 6.10 at time 3 (*p=.05, d=0.68*) whilst there are no significant changes in the other two commitment groups. Therefore, in a similar way to the other work ethic variables, being dependable increases significantly for the low commitment group over time, but this increase is not as immediately effective as is the case for interpersonal skills. A visual representation of these changes can be seen below in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3 Changes in being dependable as an interactive function of time and initial commitment level.



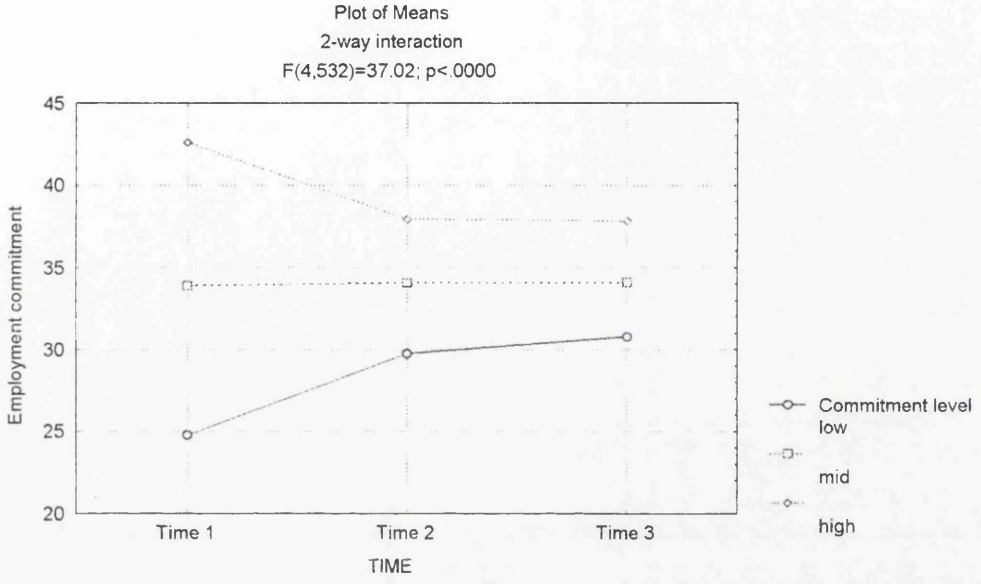
Commitment level x time upon subsequent commitment

There is also an interactive effect of initial employment commitment with time whereby different initial commitment groups change differentially over time, presenting an interaction term of $F(4,532)=37.02$, $p<.001$ As was found previously, there is no significant main effect of time upon commitment changes and neither is there a significant main effect of commitment group.

As before, post-hoc analysis (Scheffé) specifies the pattern of changes on the employment commitment measure between the commitment groups over time. At baseline, the commitment levels between groups are all significantly different from one another; (low, 24.76; mid, 33.93; high 42.60), (*p=.001).* Significant differences are shown between the initial low commitment group who make significant gains from time 1 to time 2 from 24.76 to 29.76 (*p=.000, d=1.18*) and overall to time 3 at 30.79 (*p=.001, d=1.45*). However, the high commitment group show a significant decrease between time 1 and time 2 from 42.60 to 37.91 (*p=.001, d=1.23*).

The plotted means overleaf (Figure 5.4) clearly show the significant increase for those initially low in commitment over the first assessment interval and also the decrease in employment commitment for the high commitment at time 1.

Figure 5.4 Changes in employment commitment as an interactive function of time and initial commitment level



In the case of the high commitment group, there is no evidence of a ceiling effect forcing the scores to decrease at time 2. The drop in mean scores over these time points may indicate that individuals were initially responding too high for their true feelings and it is also possible that with the prospect of a year in training a degree of complacency accounts for the decrease for the initial high scorers.

5.5.6 Interactive effects of initial self-esteem level and time

In the case of pre-programme self-esteem level, factorial ANOVA's are calculated to investigate the interplay of initial esteem level with the effect of time for each dependent measure. As the point of interest is hypothesised to be between the high and low esteem groups, the esteem level variable (Factor1) has 2 between-group levels, namely high and low and as with the commitment level variable, time (Factor 2) is taken across three levels and is a repeated measures factor thus providing a mixed 3x2 factorial design.

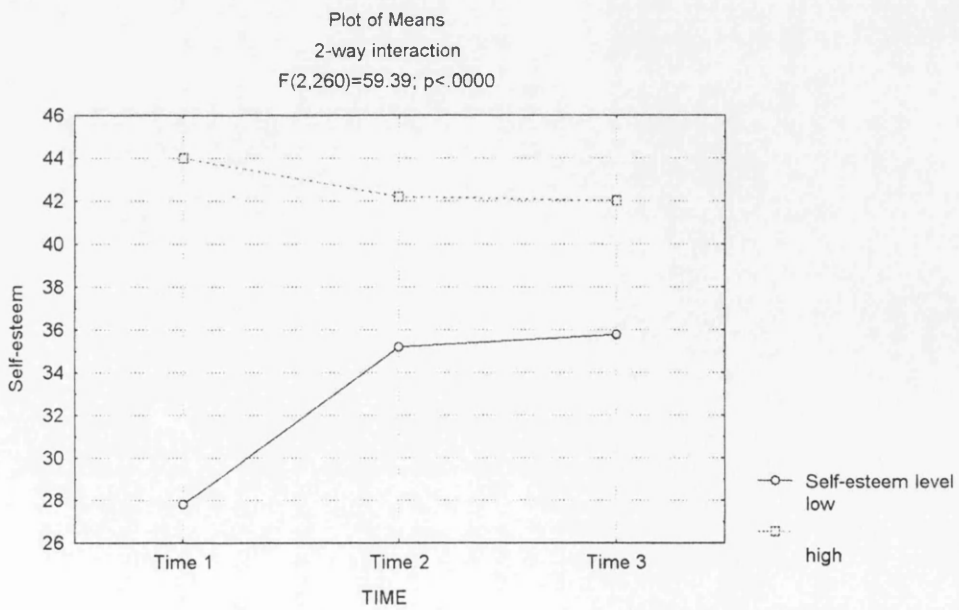
Self-esteem level x time upon employment commitment

Having already established that there is no overall effect of time upon employment commitment, the introduction of pre-programme self-esteem level was found to have no effect upon commitment measures either. This affirms the likelihood that employment commitment levels are being determined by other structural labour market variables or attitudes independent of those captured by the independent factors measured here.

Self-esteem level x time upon subsequent self-esteem

For actual self-esteem measures, both main effects are significant; that of self-esteem level; $F(1,130)=148.58$, $p<.01$ and for time, $F=(2,260)=21.95$, $p<.01$ A significant interaction is also found between initial self-esteem level and the effect of time on the programme, $F(2,260)= 59.39$, $p<.01$ and this is represented in Figure 5.5 below.

Figure 5.5. Changes in self-esteem measure as an interactive function of time and initial self- esteem level.



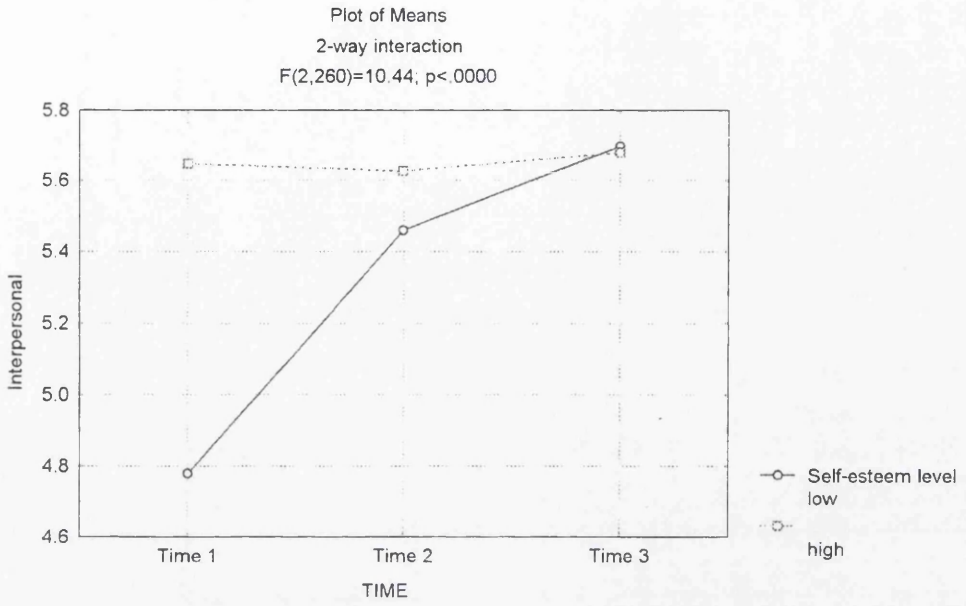
To establish the nature of the effect and specify the differences in means, post- hoc analysis (Scheffé) reveals a significant difference in self-esteem between the groups at time 1 with the low group mean being 27.80 and the high group 43.97, (*p=.001,d=5.31*) The low esteem group make significant gains by time 2 from 27.80 to 35.10 (*p=.001, d=1.73*) whilst the high group decrease significantly at this period from 43.97 to 42.19 (*p=.009*, *d=0.43*). Hence, for those with initial low self-esteem, the Wise Group programme has an immediate effect on boosting their confidence and feelings of self-worth but high initial levels of self-esteem are not being maintained.

Similarly for the sub scales of the occupational work ethic measure, self-esteem level at commencement of the programme was found to interact with the overall time effect for both interpersonal and being dependable. The two main effects of esteem level and time are also significant,(*p<.01*).

Self-esteem level x time upon interpersonal skills

Hence for the 3x2 ANOVA for interpersonal skills, the resulting interaction term is as follows, *F(2,260)=10.44, p<01* suggesting that changes in self-esteem occur differentially between the initial esteem level groups and this is plotted on the graph (Figure 5.6) overleaf.

Figure 5.6 Changes in interpersonal skill as an interactive function of time and pre-programme esteem level.

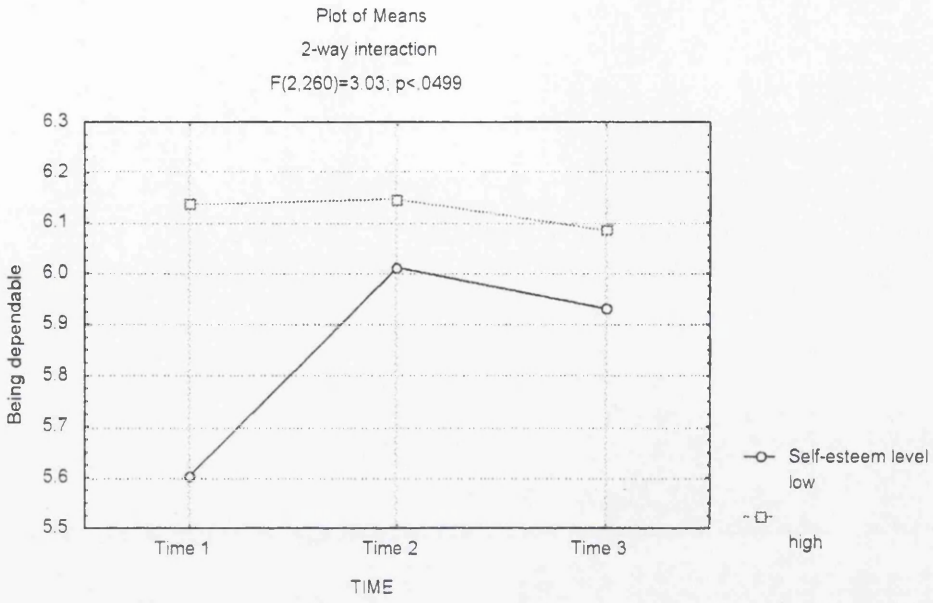


Post-hoc analysis (Scheffé) confirms that the interpersonal skill scores (4.77) and (5.64) are significantly different between the two groups at baseline (*p=.001,d=1.28*). The source of the interaction effect is shown to be the significant increase in interpersonal skill score for the low esteem group between time 1 (4.77) and time 2 (5.45), (*p=0.01, d=0.76*) but as can be seen from Figure 5.6, there is no change for the high esteem group over time. Hence, the Wise Group programme is effective in increasing the interpersonal skills of those with initial low self-esteem in a relatively short space of time.

Self-esteem level x time upon being dependable

The being dependable measure is also shown to behave differently as a function of time as moderated by pre-programme self-esteem level. There is a main effect of esteem level(p<.01) and also a significant interaction term, *F(2,260)= 3.03, p<.05* as can be seen overleaf in the graph, Figure 5.7.

Figure 5.7 Changes in being dependable as an interactive function of time and initial self-esteem level.



Scheffé post-hoc analysis, confirms the significant difference between the esteem levels in the baseline means, 5.60 and 6.13 (*p=.005, d=0.60*). Despite the graph showing a marked increase for the low esteem group over the first 8-10 weeks, the post hoc test reports that this is not significant (*p=.286*)

It is worth noting that the addition of the training location factor makes no moderating impact to any of the above findings regarding the interactions between commitment and self-esteem levels across time. This suggests that none of the training locations are any more or less successful than each other at bringing about change over time when the sample is broken down by initial self-esteem and commitment level.

5.5.7 Relationships between dependent measures

Apart from attempting to establish how certain groups differ from one another with respect to particular variables over time, it is also important to discover which variables share particular relationships and are to some degree predictive of one another. The following correlation matrix, (Table 5.10) provides indices of the relationships between the variables of interest to this quantitative strand of the study at baseline (time 1).

Table 5.10: Correlation matrix of relevant dependent measures at time 1.

Variable	Age	Time	Employ. Com.	Self-Esteem	Initiative	Interper	Depend.
Age		**0.20**	.04	.09	.06	.08	.08
Time	**0.20**		.00	-.00	-.05	-.04	.02
Employ. Com.	.04	.00		.10	**.30**	**.30**	**.31**
Self-Esteem	.09	-.00	.10		**.26**	**.41**	**.22**
Initiat	.06	-.05	**.30**	**.26**		**.82**	**.78**
Interper	.08	-.04	**.30**	**.41**	**.82**		**.79**
Depend.	.08	.02	**.31**	**.22**	**.78**	**.79**	

***Significant correlations (p<.05) are shown in bold**

As shown in Table 5.10, significant correlations are identified between employment commitment and all three work ethic variables suggesting that the more committed to employment an individual is, the greater is their reported work ethic in terms of initiative, interpersonal ability and of being dependable. Likewise, self-esteem correlates with work ethic indices, especially with the interpersonal dimension as expected as the two concepts are related by their interpersonal functions. However, self-esteem and employment only share a very weak relationship suggesting that that individually they act differentially upon the work ethic variables. As expected, the three work ethic variables themselves all correlate very highly. In this sample, age is

correlated with length of unemployment suggesting that the older individuals are more likely to have a longer duration of unemployment.

5.5.8 Cluster Analysis

K-means Cluster Analysis was performed to explore the possibility of the individuals in the sample forming meaningful sub-types that may help to identify different patterns of change over time. Essentially, K-means clustering moves the variables around to minimise within cluster variability and maximise between cluster variability, hence being analogous to the ANOVA in reverse.

The five dependent baseline measures were entered into the cluster analysis programme and a 3-cluster solution was reported, the results of which are shown below. The table below (Table 5.11) depicts the descriptive statistics for each identified cluster.

Table 5.11 Means and standard deviations (in parentheses) for each identified cluster

Variable	Cluster 1 *n=94*	Cluster 2 *n=100*	Cluster 3 *n=97*
Employment commitment	29.05 (3.88)	40.50 (3.28)	34.44 (4.11)
Self-esteem	41.14 (4.11)	41.41 (4.45)	32.52 (3.56)
Initiative	5.49 (.819)	5.84 (.538)	5.40 (1.01)
Interpersonal	5.26 (.861)	5.57 (.549)	4.90 (.974)
Dependable	5.87 (.855)	6.18 (.513)	5.71 (1.07)

As can be seen, the data clusters into three identifiable sub-types with Cluster 1 being the category of greatest interest due to the relationship between employment commitment and self-esteem.

- **Cluster 1**: Individuals who are relatively high on self-esteem yet differ significantly from the other two clusters in terms of employment commitment that is markedly lower. A one-way analysis of Variance (ANOVA) confirms that mean employment commitment scores are significantly different between the three clusters *F (2,288)= 223.92, p=.001.* Post-hoc analysis (Scheffé) finds that employment commitment for Cluster 1 (29.05) is significantly lower than both Cluster 2 (40.50), *p=.001 d=3.20* and also Cluster 3 (34.44), *p=.001, d=1.35.*

- **Cluster 2**: Individuals who score highly on both self-esteem and employment commitment and also score significantly higher on all three work ethic variables compared to the other two clusters. One-way ANOVA's confirmed that there were significant differences between the clusters with respect to all three occupational work ethic mean scores: initiative *F(2,288)=8.01, p=.001*; interpersonal *F (2,288) =16.85, p=.001*; being dependable *F(2,288)=7.97, p=.001.* Scheffé post-hoc testing revealed that Cluster 2 mean scores were significantly higher than Cluster 1 for initiative *(p<.05, d=0.52),* interpersonal skills *(p<0.05, d=0.44)* and being dependable *(p< 0.05, d=0.5).* Significant mean differences were also for Cluster 2 in comparison to Cluster 3 on all dependent variables. Scheffé post-hoc testing revealed these results for initiative *(p<0.05, d=0.58),* interpersonal skills *(p<0.05, d=0.88)* and being dependable *(p< 0.05, d=0.60).*

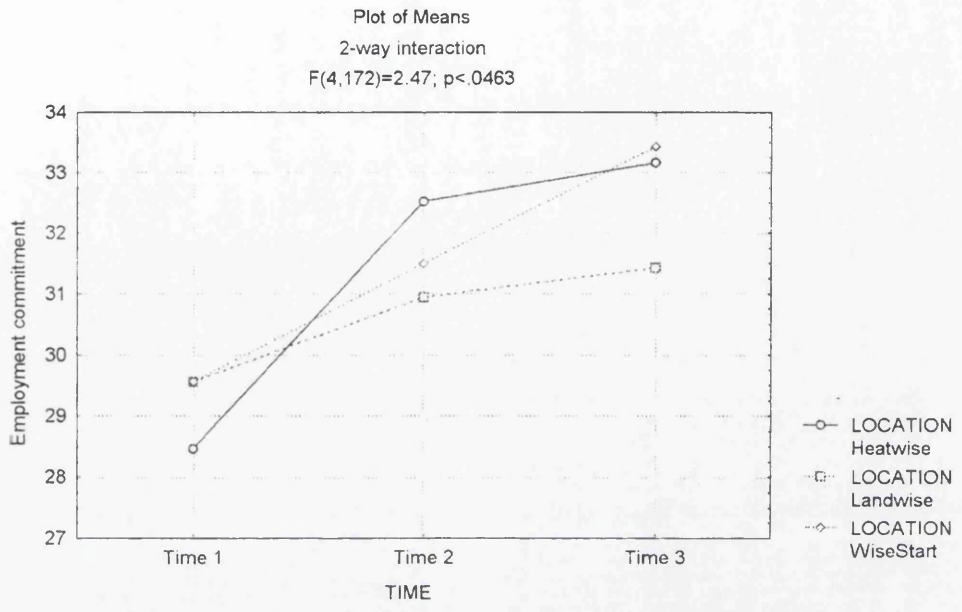
- **Cluster 3**: Individuals who score in the mid range on both self-esteem and employment commitment but who are also significantly lower than both other groups with respect to the interpersonal skills work-ethic dimension and also self-esteem. A one-way ANOVA and post-hoc Scheffé testing for mean self-esteem scores confirmed the significantly lower scores on this variable for Cluster 3 compared to both Cluster 1 *(p=.001, d=2.25)* and also Cluster 2 *(p=.001, d=2.22).* Similarly, analysis for the interpersonal skills dimension confirmed

Cluster 3 individuals score significantly lower than both Cluster 1 (*p=.001, d=0.37*) and Cluster 2 (*p=.001, d=0.89 .*

It can be assumed that Cluster 1 are a particular interest for the Wise Group. It is worth noting that there are almost as many people in this category as there are in Cluster 2 and Cluster 3 signifying that this specific combination of higher self-esteem and lower employment commitment is a feature of this sample. One-way ANOVA's revealed that there is no effect of cluster type upon duration of unemployment or age (*p>.05*) or the number of weeks spent in training at the Wise Group (*p>.05*)

The following analysis looks specifically at changes in employment commitment for Cluster 1 over time. A 2-way ANOVA specifying 3 levels of location (Heatwise, Landwise and WiseStart) and 3 levels of time (baseline, time 2 and time 3) reports both a significant main effect of time across the cluster as a whole, *F(2,172)=23.17,p<.01* but also a significant interaction between time and location for changes in employment commitment, *F=(4,172)=2.47, p<.05.* Post-hoc analysis using the Scheffé test confirms that the interaction effect identifies significant changes in commitment measure scores between time 1 and time 2 only for those people at Heatwise, whereby mean scores increase from 28.47 to 32.52, p<.05, *d=0.81*). This means that the early stages of the Heatwise programme are specifically effective for facilitating the commitment scores over an 8-10 week interval for those who initially have a low commitment level. Figure 5.8 below plots this interaction between time and location for the Cluster 1 sample.

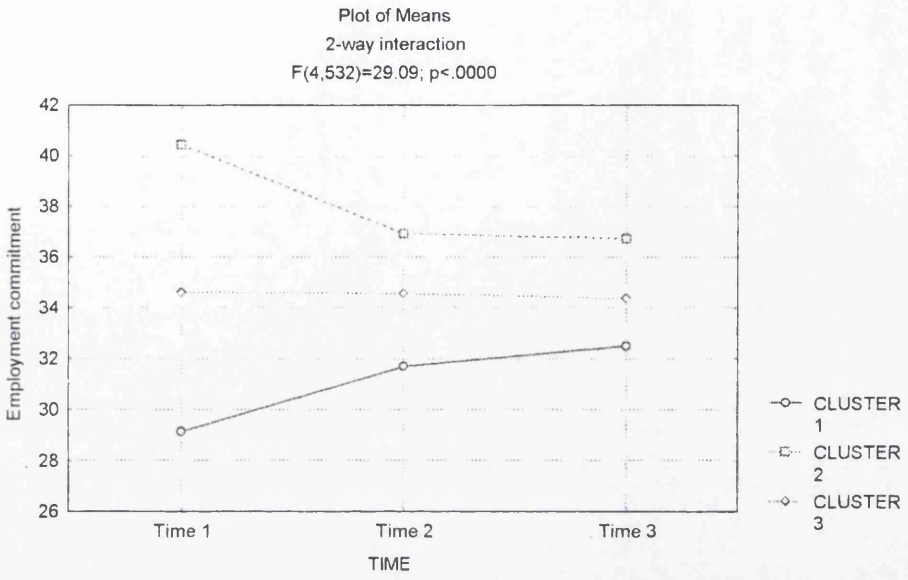
Figure 5.8 Cluster 1 changes in employment commitment as a function of time and training location



A 3x3 ANOVA assessing employment commitment score changes across all three clusters reveals a significant main effect of cluster type $F(2,226)=71.55$, $p<.01$ and also an interaction of time with cluster type, $F(4,532)=29.08, p<.01$ and the plot of means for this interaction is shown below in Figure 5.9. This plot clearly shows how the two variables interact in so far as over time, the mean scores change differently depending upon cluster type and not in a uniform pattern over the three assessment periods.

To determine which means differ in the interaction, post hoc analysis (Scheffé) shows that firstly the baseline means all differ from each other with respect to employment commitment. Having established that Cluster 1 are the lowest with a mean of 29.12, they differ significantly from Cluster 2 (40.44) and also from Cluster 3 (34.6) as previously noted.

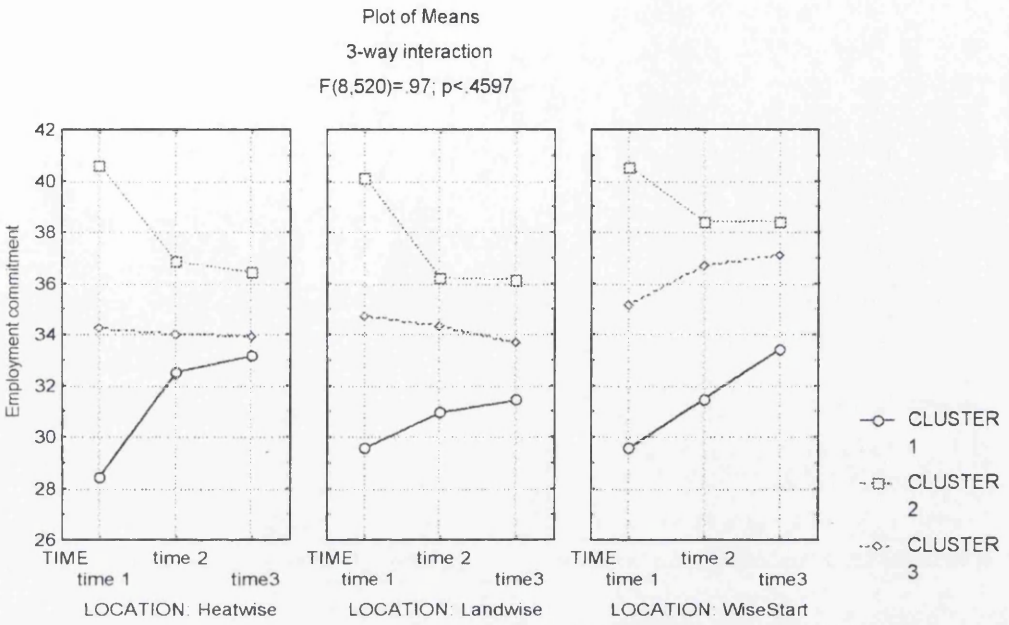
Figure 5.9. Changes in employment commitment means over time and for each cluster type



Knowing from the previous analyses that Cluster 1 improve significantly by time 2, it is also worth noting that Cluster 2 change significantly too, whereby their mean score decreases from 40.44 to 36.93 (*p<.01, d=0.66*) over the same period. Even so, the mean employment commitment of Cluster 1 (31.68) at time 2 remains significantly lower than both Cluster 2 36.93 (*p< .01, d=0.66*) and Cluster 3 34.56 (*p<.01, d=0.63*) At time 3, the employment commitment of Cluster 1 is also significantly lower than Cluster 2, the respective means being 32.49 and 36.74, (*p<.01,d=0.97*).

The addition of the location factor to the above analysis makes no significant moderation to the previous finding of an interaction between cluster type and time, although the main effect of location just missed the required level for statistical significance *F(1,193)=2.57, p=.07* . As can be seen from the interaction plot overleaf (Figure 5.10), the WiseStart programme appears to facilitate a more linear increase in commitment over time than either Heatwise or Landwise for Cluster 1.

Figure 5.10: Employment commitment changes as a function of both cluster type and training location



The decrease in mean score level for Cluster 2 across all location groups can be seen here too, although the decrease at WiseStart is not a significant one as in the case of both Heatwise and Landwise. This decrease in employment commitment cannot be explained by a ceiling effect as the scores could in effect have risen further to a maximum ceiling level of 50, but instead it appears that those in Cluster 2 who score initially relatively highly in both commitment and self-esteem fail to maintain this level in the first 8-10 weeks for reasons which will be discussed later in the thesis discussion section.

An important issue arising from the Cluster analysis is that of the robustness or reliability of the cluster structure. Since the clusters formed in the analysis were taken from the whole time 1 sample, the cluster analysis was repeated with two random samples of time 1 data for 180 subjects in each case to see if the cluster structure held and could be considered reliable. As can be seen from Table 5.12

below, the cluster analysis for each independent sample is comparable to the original cluster structure indicating an acceptable degree of robustness for each identified cluster.

Table 5.12: Cluster analyses for two independent samples, S1 and S2

	Cluster 1		Cluster 2		Cluster 3	
	S1	S2	S1	S2	S1	S2
Employment commitment	31.90	28.06	40.61	41.25	29.79	35.04
Self-esteem	43.84	40.20	37.62	42.88	33.70	33.31

5.5.9 Outcomes of Wise Group training

For the sample as a whole (N=291), 68% of participants (N=198) successfully moved into either employment or further training/education either directly from the Wise Group or within 2 months of completing their contract. This leaves 32% (N=93) who did not complete training and either left the organisation of their own accord, for medical reasons or were dismissed for unacceptable levels of attendance. In terms of time spent in training weeks, the mean number of training weeks for successful participants was 28 weeks whilst the mean for unsuccessful participants was 17 weeks in training.

Breakdowns of training outcome data in the form of 2x2 crosstabulation summary tables for each cluster are shown below indicating the frequencies of both positive and negative outcomes for each cluster at the three locations. Chi-square analysis is also computed to compare the observed and expected frequencies of outcomes across the locations for each cluster. As the Chi-Square test assesses the underlying

probabilities in each cell between observed frequencies matching those of expected, some probabilities cannot be estimated with sufficient precision when the expected frequencies fall below 5. This is the case for some of the WiseStart frequency data and as such the Chi-Square analysis takes into account data for Heatwise and Landwise.

Table 5.13: Summary table of training outcomes for Cluster 1

Location / Outcome	Landwise	Heatwise	WiseStart	Row total
Positive	23	25	14	**62**
Negative	15	15	2	**32**
Column total	38	40	16	**94**

Results of the Chi-Square analysis are non significant; ($X^2 = .032$, $df = 1$, $p = .857$) meaning that the relative frequencies of training outcomes are the same for Heatwise and Landwise for Cluster 1 individuals.

Table 5.14 : Summary table of training outcomes for Cluster 2

Location / Outcome	Landwise	Heatwise	WiseStart	Row total
Positive	24	29	16	**69**
Negative	8	17	6	**31**
Column total	32	46	22	**100**

For Cluster 2, Chi-Square analysis reports a non-significant result of ($X^2 = 1.23$, $df = 1$, $p = .265$) being interpreted that there is no significant difference in the relative proportions of training outcomes between Heatwise and Landwise for Cluster 2 individuals.

Table 5.15 : Summary table of training outcomes for Cluster 3

Location Outcome	Landwise	Heatwise	WiseStart	Row total
Positive	24	30	13	**67**
Negative	16	9	5	**30**
Column total	40	39	18	**97**

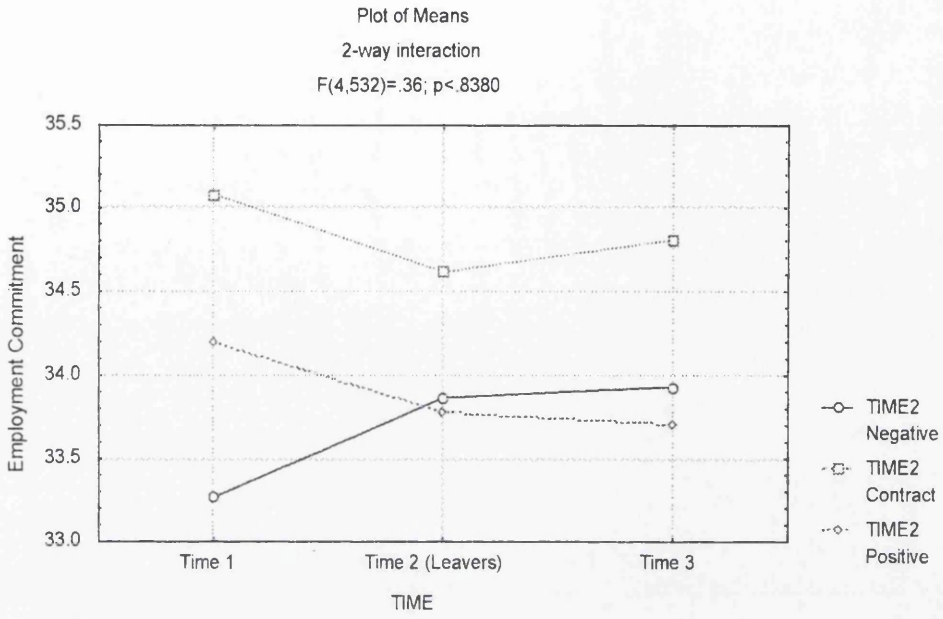
Similar to the data for Clusters 1 and 2, the non significant Chi-Square statistic shows equal relative frequencies of training outcomes for Heatwise and Landwise across Cluster 3: ($X^2 = 2.61$, $df=1$, $p=.105$)

5.5.9 Early leavers from the Wise Group programme

A specific practical strand of the analysis has the objective of specifying particular patterns of change for those who leave the programme early (within the first 8-10 weeks) without a successful outcome, termed the negative early leavers of whom there were 45 (15.4% of the original sample). Sometimes individuals leave for medical reasons but as is more often the case, they feel the programme is just not for them or they feel better off financially on welfare benefits. To this end, factorial ANOVA's were calculated to see the pattern of dependent measure change over time as a function of status at time two, by which time the early leavers would have left the organisation and could be identified as a separate category.

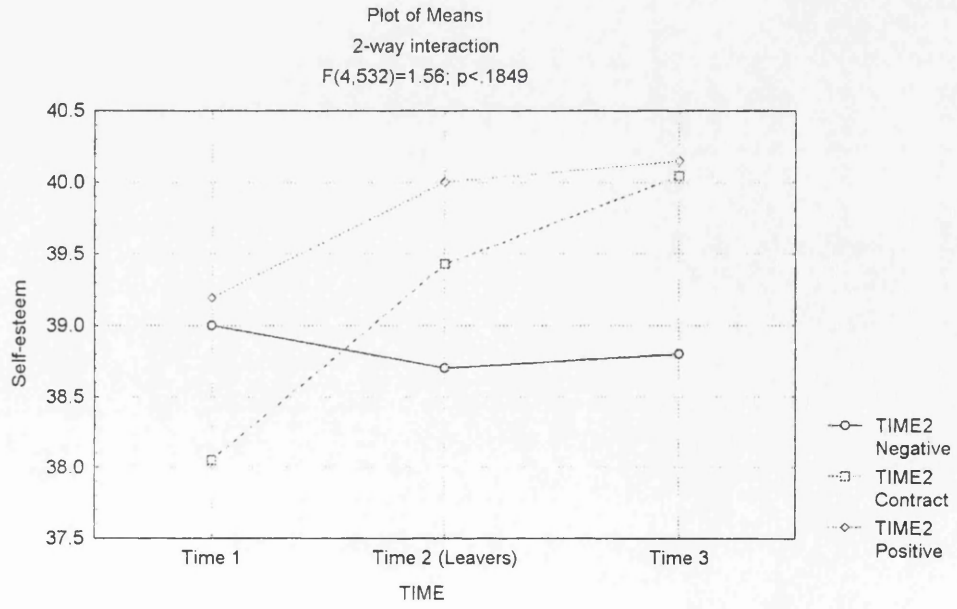
As can be seen overleaf in Figure 5.11, employment commitment does take a different course for the negative early leavers whereas the patterns of change for the positive leavers and continuing trainees follows the same pattern, although those continuing do so at a higher level. However, despite the observable trends, the results are non-significant between the three groups.

Figure 5.11 Employment commitment for both continuing trainees and leavers.



The results of the ANOVA for self-esteem changes over time between continuing trainees and positive and negative early leavers are shown below in Figure 5.12. Again, despite the observable trends, the results are not significant between the groups.

Figure 5.12 Self-esteem for both continuing trainees and positive and negative leavers



5.5.10 Discriminant Function Analysis

Discriminant function analyses were performed using 17 predictor variables of membership in two groups, namely positive and negative training outcome groups. The predictor variables are:

- age
- duration of unemployment
- 5 dependent measures at time 1 (baseline)
- 5 dependent measures at time 2 (8-10 weeks)
- 5 dependent measures at time 3 (24-26 weeks)

The discriminant function analysis yielded a non-significant result that failed to discriminate between training outcomes based on the predictive measures entered into the analysis:

Wilk's Multivariate Lamda for the model = *.946 F (17,251) = .828, p<.659.* The univariate correlations of the predictors with the discriminant function also show low partial lamda values suggesting their low unique contribution to the overall discriminatory model. Initiative at time 2, (F= 3.412, p=.065) comes the closest to statistical significance whereby the unsuccessful outcomes score higher on this variable, but as noted the overall model is low in power in discriminating between the two outcome groups.

The same 17 predictor variables are also used to carry out a discriminant function analysis between the early negative leavers and the early positive leavers to see if there are particular predictor variables discriminating between these two groups. As before, the discriminatory power of the model is low:

Wilk's Multivariate Lamda for the model = *.854 F (17,53) = .530, p<.925.* Similarly, the partial lamda values demonstrate low correlations of the predictor variables with

the discriminant function. Length of unemployment reports a unique contribution whereby the negative early leavers have been unemployed for longer, (*F= 3.83, p=.055*) but as before the overall discriminatory power of the model is low in defining the two groups of early leavers.

5.6 Overall observations of the quantitative data

There are a number of key results from the statistical analysis and as such several main conclusions can be drawn.

Firstly, there is clear evidence of an overall facilitation of employability for the group as a whole over time. In particular, the analyses demonstrate significant and positive effects for self-esteem and two of the three occupational work-ethic variables over time, particularly between baseline and at the 8-10 week mark (see section 5.5.2). In the case of self-esteem and interpersonal skills further increases are also noted suggesting the continuing impact of training over a longer duration. However, despite the significant differences in means over time, attention is drawn to the small effect sizes, the implications of which will be considered in the discussion chapter.

Secondly, where the data are categorised by initial levels of employment commitment and self-esteem, the evidence supports particular benefits for those with low starting levels on these two variables. Where initial commitment level is the independent variable, the programme significantly raises the employment commitment, initiative, interpersonal skills and being dependable skills of those with low commitment (see Figs. 5.1-5.4. Similarly, for self-esteem as an independent factor, evidence is found indicating positive effects for subsequent self-esteem, interpersonal skills, being dependable for the low esteem group (see Figs. 5.5-5.7).

Attention is also drawn to the larger effect sizes for the differences in means when the sample is categorised by initial commitment and self-esteem.

Whilst it can be argued that the programme works for those needing it most, there are also instances where scores decrease significantly for the high commitment and esteem groups, in the case of employment commitment for the high commitment group and self-esteem for the high esteem group. It appears that for the mid and high groups, there is no obvious positive effect as indicated by the measures used and in some cases, scores drop between time 1 and two suggesting that these people fail to maintain such high levels. If the positive effects are only occurring for a smaller specific group, then this raises questions as to the effectiveness for the overall programme sample. These and other potential reasons for decreases in initial high scores will also be considered in the discussion.

Analyses investigating the differences in factors between training outcomes has produced some identifiable trends but in general, the differences are not significant. This is the conclusion of the Chi-Square analyses for training outcomes between clusters across the three training locations and also the ANOVA results for employment commitment changes between training outcome groups. Lastly, there is some suggestion of discriminatory variables between training outcome groups including early leavers, but the overall discriminatory power of the model is very low.

Therefore, the general conclusion of the statistical analysis is that the Wise Group programme has enhanced the employability for the sample as a whole, particularly with respect to interpersonal skills and self-esteem. There are also specific beneficial effects for those initially low in commitment and esteem and also evidence of particular location effects for Cluster 1. However, predictive analysis of actual

training outcome is limited suggesting that although individual employability is generally enhanced, such psychological dimensions as measured in this way are limited in their predictive ability to forecast and discriminate between training groups. Despite this, a high proportion of participants successfully found employment or entered further education following their time at the Wise Group. However, without a control group for means of comparison, conclusions cannot be confident that success is totally attributable to participation in the programme and that those not receiving training may have been just as successful.

The following chapter will present the methodology and results of some empirical qualitative work.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 Qualitative Methodology and Results

As highlighted in the previous chapter researchers are faced with substantial methodological choice when studying unemployment and the relative merits of both quantitative and qualitative approaches is a particular focus. It is important to note the different epistemological assumptions underpinning them and specific to this thesis the implications for understanding the experiences of individuals participating in the Intermediate Labour Market programme. Whereas the previous chapter concentrated upon quantitative means of inquiry, this present chapter aims to introduce a rationale for using a qualitative approach to operationalising individual employability.

Fundamentally, qualitative approaches recognise the importance of understanding the meaning of experience, actions and events as interpreted via participants, researchers and cultures. This kind of methodology is hence sensitive to the complexities of behaviour and meaning in the contexts where they occur. Whilst one acknowledges the benefits of contextual and naturalistic inquiry, attention is also drawn to the fact that conclusions are subject to a high degree of interpretation and hence are less objective than quantitative methods. The rationale for this thesis is that these approaches permit exploration of participants' experiences from their point of view and enables construction of meaning in a specific context.

Significant review papers of unemployment research papers have emphasised the evolution of unemployment methodology and the current trends towards increasingly qualitative and descriptive means to study the meaning and effects of unemployment. This reiterates Pernice's call for inclusive methods in recognition of the complexity of unemployment as a social phenomenon (Pernice,

1996) and several other influential papers have advocated greater attention to descriptive and contextual accounts of individuals' experiences of aspects of joblessness. They question the continuing utility of orthodox quantitative measures that ignore the role of specific contextual factors and fail to take the individual into account. "In some reports on modern studies it is hard to realise that the unemployed are human beings; they are dissolved into variables suitable for entry into regression analyses and ANOVAS." (Jahoda, 1992, p.358) Likewise, Fryer states "the time has come to reassert the value of descriptive fieldwork and other qualitative and ethnographic methods, especially in triangulation with quantitative ones." (Fryer, 1992, p.266) In addition, Fryer's review highlights even more recent qualitative methodological advances such as ethnographic microanalysis and forms of post-structuralist discourse analysis (p.76) and the necessity of investigating the socio-structural determinants of unemployment alongside the individuals' subjective experience.

The implications for this thesis are to provide some qualitative analysis of participants' training experiences in order to balance the quantitative findings from the previous chapter. It is acknowledged that whilst such questionnaire measures have a number of advantages, they do not however give researchers much insight into why people respond as they do and used exclusively limit understanding of wider contextual issues.

6.1 Design

To provide qualitative descriptive data of the participants' own perception of progress and potential change over time, semi-structured interviews were carried out with a sample of individuals (N=40) over the course of their time at the Wise Group. It was then intended to analyse (quantitative content analysis) the contents of the data for salience of key issues relating to the interviews to produce some conclusions. There were two primary aims of the interviews:

- *to establish some contextual grounding of the experience of long-term unemployment in terms of psychological factors such as self-esteem, self-efficacy and attitudes to employment.*

- *to provide descriptive information of the perceived benefits of training and the processes of change over time.*

Individual interviews were held within the same time schedule as the quantitative data collection, approximately one week after the questionnaire data was obtained. This resulted in 3 sets of interview data gathering over the three assessment points. A larger sample (N=62) of individuals were interviewed initially at time 1 (baseline) but as expected there was a smaller number available to be followed up over two subsequent assessments as people left the organisation or in some cases were unable to be contacted for an interview. Hence, at time 2 (8-10 weeks), 51 participants were re-interviewed about their training and changes in themselves and at time 3 (26-28 weeks) the original sample decreased to 40. As the primary aim of this strand of the project was to obtain qualitative information regarding change over time, separate sets of information collected from successive interviews for each individual were added together to form a single report for each individual spanning the three interview sessions. Only data-sets comprising three successive interview sessions were used resulting in a total of 40 completed interview reports.

6.2 Interview Participants

As outlined in the previous chapter describing the selection of participants for the study, contact had already been made with individuals during the collection of the questionnaire information during the induction to the Wise Group. In the week following this first data collection exercise, the author approached individuals and asked if they would participate in a short individual interview about their experience of long-term unemployment and expectations for the future. This

process yielded on average two people from every induction group from which the questionnaire data had been collected the previous week. Using the demographic data obtained as part of the first quantitative data collection, checks were made to identify age, length of unemployment, marital status, previous work history, educational background and preferred training unit of members of each induction group. This meant that the author could control the diversity and representation of the interview sample. Simply approaching those who seemed most amenable to being interviewed or were most accessible in terms of training location may have led to a biased sample so efforts were made that the sample was inclusive and representative of those on the programme. For the first series of interviews, the sample distribution information can be seen in the Table 6.1 below:

Table 6.1 Sample distribution information for first wave of interviews at (Time 1)

Location	N	Males	Females	Mean age	Mean length of unemployment
Heatwise	35	20	15	31	94
Landwise	22	15	7	32	102
WiseStart	5	5	0	31	54
Total	69	40	22	31	83

6.3 Procedures

With the permission of the relevant member of Wise Group staff, individuals were approached often in the Job Club or in their training unit to arrange a convenient time for the interview to take place. In some cases, a small room was available for interview use but the majority of the interviews were carried out in the informal setting of the canteen area and on average lasted between 30 and 45 minutes each. As the author had met individuals the previous week, a brief recap was given as to the purpose of the research in general and the role of the interview.

Again, individual confidentiality was assured in that any information would form part of a university research project independent of Wise Group operations and that individuals would not be identified at any time.

To construct a meaningful picture of each individual's circumstances, the author chose to conduct a semi-structured interview to include several key areas with structure being provided by information pertaining to the past, present and future as follows:

- Motivations for joining the Wise Group
  - *experiences of previous training*
- Experience of unemployment
  - *circumstance, feelings, impacts*
- Problems encountered looking for a job
  - *stigma of being unemployed, employers perceptions*
- Thoughts about present skill strengths
  - *perceived strengths*
- Expectations for the future
  - *aspiration, future plans*

The choice of question areas was intended to explore the antecedents of concepts such as self-esteem and attitudes to work by investigating their meaning within the individual's own subjective experience. By building a picture of the participant's past, present and future, this would permit a richer descriptive account of the whole training experience and it's position within their wider context of unemployment.

6.3.1 Interview

The author began the interview by briefly summarising the five areas to be covered (see previous page) and that she expected the conversation to last no longer than 45 minutes and be relatively informal. It was made clear that the questions concentrated largely upon personal thoughts, feelings, perceptions and expectations and as such participants could refrain from answering if they chose not to. However, participants were asked to be as honest and open as they felt able. Interviewees were also made aware that the author would be taking fieldnotes during the interview but that their name would not appear in any written documentation avoiding the identification of a specific individual from the interview data gathered. Interview participants were also reminded that the author was hoping to re-interview them at later stages to ask about their perceived progress on the training programme. The author opened the interview by asking some relatively neutral questions such as duration on the programme to date and first impressions of the organisation. The interview then turned to circumstances surrounding application to the Wise Group with the majority of questions being open to invite further explanation from the interviewee. The author was aware of a number of general issues concerning the conducting of interviews such as avoiding the use of leading questions, restricting direction of the conversation to a minimum and refraining from interrupting. However, the author was keen to keep to the planned structure of the interview and at times appropriately intervened to move the interview on. Other methodological issues included checking understanding where there was a possibility of misinterpretation, paraphrasing at the end of a section to check understanding and asking whether the subject had anything to add. At the end of the interview, participants were asked whether they felt comfortable with the information they had given and the conduct of the interview. All were thanked for their time and openness and reminded that their accounts would form part of a larger group.

6.3.2 Content analysis

Content analysis is a very broad area of research and is defined as "...any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics of messages" (Nachmias, 1996, p.324). All forms of content analysis attempt to classify textual material by reducing it to a more manageable and relevant body of information and to identify themes or other commonalities. Variations include thematic analysis to identify themes, indexing of key words or phrases and quantitative descriptive analysis which describes features of the text quantitatively (Trochim, 2001). For the purposes of this thesis, the author utilised quantitative thematic analysis which proceeds through a series of methodological steps:

a) formulating categories with precise boundaries
b) determining frequencies for those categories
c) turning the frequencies into percentages and rates

Initial interview

It was the author's intention to audio-tape the interviews to allow verbatim transcription to increase the methodological validity and integrity of the process. However, several participants were unhappy with the conversations being taped so the author made comprehensive notes during each interview. Following each interview, the author wrote up the notes into continuous text as a soon as possible producing accounts written in the third person of the answers given to each of the five question areas. For each interviewee, the resulting documentation from the initial interview comprised on average 2-3 A4 sides of single typed text. As it was intended to note the relative frequency and hence salience of issues, the author was careful to note a number of naturally occurring patters in the dialogue indicative of salience. These included noting when items or phrases were repeated or the degree of emphasis given and when the

interviewee mentioned a number of items in ranked order of importance or preference or used a particular phrase.

The structure of the interview around the five major question areas meant that initial analysis of the data aimed to identify the main themes comprising each of these pre-defined areas, i.e. motivations for joining the Wise Group etc. Following the procedures for manifest content analysis as termed by Holloway (1997) each document was photocopied and the emergent themes for each question section were highlighted. For example, for the first section concerning motivations for joining the group, several sub-categories of motivation were apparent, e.g. the wage paid. These sub-category headings formed the initial index for each question section. Analysis of the 62 initial interview fieldnotes revealed a high degree of congruence in the sub-categories mentioned by the participants. As a result, six identifiable sub-categories for motivation emerged and these response themes for each of the five question sections are displayed below along with exemplars of each sub-categories and their frequencies in Tables 6.2-6.6 in the results section 6.4. As expected there was some information contained in the notes that the author felt was not indicative of a key sub-category, i.e. a specific motivation, so an additional 'miscellaneous' sub-category was created too. To provide an index of the relative salience of each sub-category, each of the 62 initial interview fieldnotes were analysed for instances of individual references to that particular sub-category, e.g. items pertaining to the wage paid by the training. Analysing the documents for the occurrence of the selected items therefore provided frequency data for each sub-category showing the distribution of importance given by the respondents and this is shown in Tables 6.2-6.6 in the results section 6.4

Time 2 follow up interview

Having established baseline data in the initial interview, particular interest now focused upon the participants' perception of changes to the self between time 1 and time 2 indicating the perceived benefits of the training over this first 8-10 week interval. At the time 2 assessment point, a shorter interview was conducted of around 15-20 minutes with available members of the original interview sample (N=51). They were asked if they felt any different about themselves in any way in comparison to when they first joined the Wise Group. Comprehensive fieldnotes again were taken by the author and these were written up as continuous text and added to the original text from the first session of interviews to provide longitudinal qualitative data. Methods of content analysis employed for the initial interview were utilised to provide both the existence and relative frequencies of four identified sub-categories of perceived individual change and this data is shown in Table 6.7 in the Results section 6.4.

Time 3 follow up interview

Hypothesising that there would be an apparent qualitative shift between time 2 and time 3, the same specific question of perceived change to the self was posed to the available members (n=40) of the original interview sample at the time 3 assessment period (26-28 weeks). The interview lasted on average 20-25 minutes and generated much useful data as the participants were now familiar with the interviewer and could talk retrospectively about their training at the Wise Group in general. As before, the methods of content analysis employed for the initial interview were utilised to provide both the existence and relative frequencies of four identified sub-categories of perceived individual change and this data is shown in Table 6.8 in the Results section 6.4.

The following evidence comes from 77 hours of interviews carried out in 153 separate encounters with clients over the programme's duration.

6. 4 Qualitative Results

The following tables 6.2-6.6 show data for each of the five question areas, the sub-categories (response themes), exemplar instances of phrases indicative of that sub-category and the frequency tally for each respective sub-category. Following each table of results, a section of a transcript relating to each section is provided to support the data given. Examples are taken from the transcripts of four individuals.

Table 6.2: Motivations for joining the Wise Group

Response theme	Exemplar instances	Frequency count
'Wage'	Better pay than other training Better incentive	89
'Years' work experience'	Longer contract Choice of projects	67
'Better deal'	Better overall package than most other training schemes	47
'New skills'	Opportunity to learn something new and useful for jobs market	36
'Qualifications'	Obtain some training qualifications	22
'Compulsion'	Felt compelled to attend training	10
Miscellaneous	Source of information about Wise Group	6

As can be seen from the frequency counts above, instances relating to both pay and a year long contract were high in relative salience for the sample group as was the belief that the Wise Group programme represented a good deal in terms of overall training provision.

Example from Transcript 12 (Time 1).

"X is 51 and has been unemployed for 156 weeks and after a long time thinking about it decided to give the Wise Group a try. He says that it seemed better than the usual TFW (Training for Work) schemes in that the whole training deal sounded better and he knew someone in the admin department so thought he would do the same. He has previously done CSV Scotland as an admin assistant and really liked it but the contract was too short and he couldn't get a longer placement. He's also been employed as a painter and decorator, joiner and handyman and says that he made a quite a bit of money from that he's getting too old for being up and down ladders every day and it doesn't pay like it used to. He also spent some time working on the railways when he was in his 20's and 30's doing maintenance things. He has got some Scotvec modules in IT from CSV and already has City and Guilds in Radio and Television Electronics Mechanics. However, he wants to get some more up to date qualifications because he thinks the things that employers want change so quickly."

Table 6.3: Experience of unemployment: feelings, impacts

Response theme	Exemplar instances	Frequency count
'Resignation'	Depressed, the way it is, apathy, demoralised, what's the point? Demotivated	137
'Self-confidence'	Lose faith in abilities to learn, and to achieve things,	95
'Personal agency'	Unemployment controlling life and not able to make plans to do what want	84
'Time'	Boredom, no time structure, nothing to do, inactive	84
'Relationships'	Under pressure, worthless, not contributing to family, stress	78
'Self-esteem'	Worthless, look at what others have got and can do	67
'Anxious'	Financial worries and pressures. Should be working	57
'Angry/Frustration'	Not given chance. 'Scrapheap' after working for years, cheated	38

Feelings of resignation, demotivation and apathy are particularly apparent from the above frequency counts mentioned by the respondents in relation to accumulated impact of successive failures to secure employment.

Example from Transcript 12 (Time 1).

"George says that three years is a long time not to be in proper work and trying to get by on benefit money and what you can make on the side doing decorating and wee jobs like that but that of course there are plenty of people who have been out of work for much longer. The first few months weren't too bad because he had always been quite active so he just went out all the time to keep busy but then it got much harder. His marriage ended but that wasn't really to do with not having a job, that was different. Says a lot of the time you just didn't want to get out of bed because you think what's the point, who wants to employ a guy whose nearly 50 and is a painter and decorator on the side. When asked about the effect his unemployment had, George says that of course it makes you depressed and your whole life slows down because you haven' the control over what you're doing –it controls you to a large extent and you just have to get up and get on with it one day which isn't easy at all and a lot of people just can't make that next bit to do something for themselves, they just resign themselves to that's the way it's going to be from now on. He supposes that for older guys like him it's worse because you look back and think you should have made more effort at school and at work to better yourself, get more promotion, but you don't think like that then do you? And then of course, when you're older, about 50, employers don't really want to know do they and you question yourself, what you can do and what you have to offer."

Table 6.4 overleaf shows the high frequency of job type as an over-riding theme within the area of problems looking for a job exemplifies the very problem of training designed to facilitate employability. The context of the interviews indicated the direct demotivating factor of poor job type and quality as a disincentive to continue searching for work.

Table 6.4: Problems looking for a job

Response theme	Exemplar instances	Frequency count
'Job type'	Poor wages, hours, boring jobs	102
'Little or no recent experience or relevant skills'	Looks bad on CV. Don't have right or enough skills. Need what employers want.	78
'Not enough jobs'	Competition too great Demotivation	62
'Age'	Employers don't employ over a certain age	14
'Stigma of unemployment	Biased employers, not given a chance	53
'Interviews/applications'	Difficult to know what to write/say/selling yourself	31

Example from Transcript 27 (Time 1).

"Carmel says she felt a bit above most people having a degree but that that kind of qualification doesn't make much difference. She says that if you can't get the job you want or any job it doesn't matter what level you are it's still demoralising and a long struggle back. Even getting back into work, all the temp jobs you need computing skills for and typing more than anything, which she didn't have. There's a huge stigma of being unemployed and it's worse when you have quite a good education and says it must be so much worse for those without a lot of qualifications because you have to take what's there even if you don't really want it or like it. She says she hated going to the job centres and telling them what she'd already done, especially having a degree and everything and then the jobs were rubbish and really bad pay. She found that the jobs were different and they all wanted different skills and you were competing against people just out of school who were a lot younger, knowing that her background was no longer relevant for admin jobs."

The information overleaf in Table 6.5 clearly shows the fact that there is an overall good level of identifying aspects of skill strength amongst the sample, particularly

in relation to the fundamental requirements employers stipulate such as reliability and a willingness to learn.

Table 6.5: Thoughts about present skill strengths

Response theme	Exemplar instances	Frequency count
'Willingness to learn'	Want to learn new skills e.g. computing, call centres	78
'Reliability'	Turn up to work on time everyday, trusted to do job	60
'Hard-working'	Organised, put in the time	57
'Working with others'	Get on with other people, teams	34
'New ideas'	Want to start own business	4

Example from Transcript 41 (Time 1).

Patricia picks out as important skills such as communication, reliability and adaptability and having to be ready to learn new things which at first you might not want to. She says the for a lot of people it's coming to terms with the fact that any previous work experience may be light years away from the skills that are being taught now and you have to be prepared to bit the bullet and get on with it. She says that at the moment she's quite optimistic because she's prepared to work hard and suspects that what they will want to see is that you can get on with others in your project and turn up for work on time. Patricia says the best attitude people can come with is to be open to what the staff will be telling you and not to knock the fact that you're going to have try new things that you might not necessarily think are important."

As is expected job security and stability is the major factor identified by the sample participants as a key aspect of aspirations and future work plans (Table 6.6). This is not surprising considering that the majority of the unemployed are at a disadvantage of short term casual and poor quality employment of which they often acquire limited personal benefits.

Table 6.6: Aspirations/Future plans

Response theme	Exemplar instances	Frequency count
'Job security/stability'	Longer term jobs more than a few months. Hold down a job	102
'Finance'	Enough money not to always be worrying how to manage	69
'Career'	Able to move on and use skills elsewhere in different jobs	31

Example from Transcript 5 (Time 1).

"Joseph says that he's not really thought that much about what he'll do in a year's time but that he hopes he'll have a good job to go to at the end or get taken on as staff at the Heatwise like some of the trainees do when they've finished. He says the biggest things for people coming here is to get some skills and experience that might get you a job that will last longer than a few months –but then that's the nature of the game these days isn't it; you're just getting into it and think you've made it and it gets taken away. He says you just feel like you're in this same game all the time and it's all short term and then you start again. He supposes it's the security thing that people worry about most and he's heard that a lot of people who come to Heatwise keep their job for a long time afterwards and that's the big thing for you. It's the money too so you've got some consistency and can see where it goes and plan for buying things. Joseph says he'd really like to get back into his social care and nursing jobs but they were always temporary and you're back into that game again."

The following data looks at the descriptions for participants' perceptions of training and the benefits of being at the Wise Group over time.

Table 6.7: Perceived changes to the self at time 2 follow up

Response theme	Exemplar instances	Frequency count
Increased self-confidence	Confident in self and ability to do well. Ability to learn skills	147
Time structure	Benefits of routine/structure. Purposeful activity, reason to get out of bed	115
Work environment	Being back in workplace amongst colleagues	104
Increased self-esteem	Feel worthwhile and useful again, self-value	58

The high frequency of instances in all the above categories indicates the salience of all the response themes at this time point. The structure of the information sets makes it apparent that that although increased self-esteem and increased self-confidence are evident, it is the source or qualification of this data frequency which is important to note. When the individuals describe their situations and whether they feel any different about themselves, they consistently make a point of connecting and attributing these changes to being back in the work environment amongst colleagues and the benefits to self-confidence resulting from an imposed time structure and daily routine. Hence, if a model or structural hierarchy of the discourse was to be constructed, it is important to focus on the underlying sources of variables such as self-esteem and self-confidence.

Examples from Transcripts 12, 27 and 44 at Time 2

Transcript 12

" At first he says it's a bit nerve racking and then you find out that a lot of the tutors if you want to call them that have been in the same position themselves a few years ago. He thinks it's really about giving people confidence just to be coming to work in the mornings and break them out of the bad habits you get and they start to learn good ways again. He says that his confidence has increased because you're busy and back in the thick of it again.

Transcript 27

"Carmel says she found it a bit hard sometime getting used to the people in her department if they weren't organised like her but they all get on well together and have their own way of doing things and helping each other out. She likes working in the admin centre because it's really busy all the time and it gives you lots of confidence that you're doing a really important job. She says that her important skills just now are staying calm when it's really busy and everyone's on at you and having to be very organised because there's so much going on and you have to be very good at planning your day and what you've to get through."

Transcript 44

" Patricia says that after a couple of months of being at the Wise Group they really instil a sense of self-value and really encourage people to go for it as far as a job is concerned. They don't promise you the moon and stars or anything but being back in an office and keeping busy boosts your confidence that you will be successful. She definitely feels more self-assured and confident about herself and her potential to do new things and be back as part of a team. She says that she sees it in other people who were really quiet when they started; they get some self-respect back and are happier in the workplace because it's more familiar to them after a while."

Table 6.8: Perceived changes to the self at time 3 follow up

Response theme	Exemplar instances	Frequency count
'Self-awareness'	Recognition of new skills acquired. Wider aspiration. Employer requirements	203
'Self-efficacy'	Motivation and confidence related to acquiring new skills, Faith in abilities, specific tasks mastered.	173
'Planning-orientation'	Awareness of how new skills may be used in interviews. Better able to sell self at interviews. Job prospects.	138
Self-confidence	General positive expectations, hope, happier with self, more relaxed	65

Whilst self-confidence remained an identifiable response theme in its own right, the sources contributing to self-confidence had shifted qualitatively so that self-confidence was now underpinned and attributed to the learning, development and awareness of valuable new skills. In particular, individuals felt significantly more aware of the new skills they were developing and this in itself boosted their esteem and confidence. Not only had existing skills been developed but also there was an apparent awareness of skill transferability between tasks and how this knowledge of personal achievement was central to selling oneself at an interview to an employer.

Example from Transcript 41 (Time 3).

"Yes of course the jobs are different and a lot of guys and women too don't realise that or they don't want to know it that it's all office work or call centres. That's another one they are big on here; telephone banking and that. The admin place has been great for learning all these new things. George says the training has given him the opportunity to put into practice the things that have been of great benefit. Not only has his confidence increased but his self-awareness too. He says he is much more aware of his capabilities than before, the things that are successful and also what needs to develop or improve such as more complex computing or different filing systems. He says he can look back now and see all the things he has learnt so far and that because of this he feels much more ready to go for an admin job somewhere."

Example from Transcript 5 (Time 3).

" He says he's learned so much about library skills and he believes that after a few more months he will be able to get a good full-time job in Glasgow. It was really hard thinking that you were done for because the major problem was that he wanted to stick to the same thing at first as that was all he was qualified for. He supposes it's about opening up more possibilities and your expectations of the other things you can do if you put your mind to it."

Example from Transcript 27 (Time 3)

"Learning computing and typing skills which she couldn't do before is really important to her self-esteem and confidence. The new skills that you get give you that extra push to keep thinking positively about the future and what you'll do next. At first when you come in, she says it's about being back in that routine and doing the same as everyone else and then as time goes on, you start to see the rewards in what you are learning and the possibilities it may open up for you and that keeps you going."

6.5 Inter-rater reliability of content analysis system

To check the reliability and integrity of the content analysis system adopted, a random sample of ten individual interview reports were given to a graduate clinical psychologist with experience of coding qualitative data of this manner. The inter-rater judge was provided with the main response themes (sub-category headings) and asked to analyse the data from these ten interviews and specify the frequency of information falling into each sub category. If the analysis rationale (response themes and relative frequencies) devised by the author is reliable then there should be a high degree of correspondence between the two sets of frequency counts.

The table below and overleaf (Table 6.9) shows the comparison of frequency counts for each response theme of each question area between the author and the second rater judge.

Table 6.9: Comparisons of frequencies for ten Time 1 interviews between author and rater

Response theme	Frequency (author)	Frequency (rater)
Motivation to join Wise Group		
Wage	26	24
Year's work experience	19	21
New skills	10	9
Qualifications	4	4
Better deal	13	11
Compulsion	2	2
Miscellaneous	1	1
Unemployment experience		
Time	24	28
Resignation	35	32
Anxious	18	17
Angry/Frustration	11	11
Relationships	23	23
Self-confidence	19	21
Personal agency	26	23
Self-esteem	13	14
Problems looking for job		
Age	2	2
No recent skills/experience	27	27
Interviews and applications	12	14
Stigma of unemployment	18	22
Not enough jobs	13	11
Job type	29	28
Present skill strengths		
Reliability	17	17
Willingness to learn	23	22
Working with others	8	8
Hard-working	19	20
New ideas	1	1
Aspirations/Future plans		
Finance	23	20
Job security/stability	35	30
Career	7	6

Simple observation of the coding frequencies indicates a high degree of congruence between the author and inter-rater judge. However, Chi-Square analysis was carried out for each set of response themes to provide a systematic index of inter-rater reliability.

Table 6.10: Summary table of Chi-Square analyses for time 1 frequency data

Time 1 question areas	Chi-Square (X^2)	df	Significance
Motivation to join Wise Group	0.90	6	N/S
Experience of unemployment	1.71	7	N/S
Problems looking for a job	0.79	5	N/S
Present skill strengths	0.09	4	N/S
Aspirations/Future plans	0.23	2	N/S

(p>.05)

As can be seen from Table 6.10 above, the non-significant Chi-Square analyses confirm the congruence in rating proportions between the two raters across the coding themes.

Table 6.11 Comparisons of frequencies for ten Time 2 interviews between author and rater.

Response theme	Frequency (author)	Frequency (rater)
Increased self-confidence	54	52
Increased self-esteem	13	11
Work environment	35	32
Time structure	34	32

Similarly, Chi-square analyses were carried out for the time 2 data and a summary is provided overleaf. Analysis of the relative proportions of ratings given by both raters indicates a high degree of correspondence by the two raters. Chi-Square results are again non-significant, demonstrating that the proportions of frequencies across both raters are not significantly different across the response themes for the time 2 data. *($X^2 = 0.11$, df= 3, p>.05)*

Table 6.12: Comparisons of frequencies for ten Time 3 interviews between author and rater.

Response theme	Frequency (author)	Frequency (rater)
Self-awareness	51	45
Self-efficacy	41	37
Self-confidence	15	14
Planning orientation	33	30

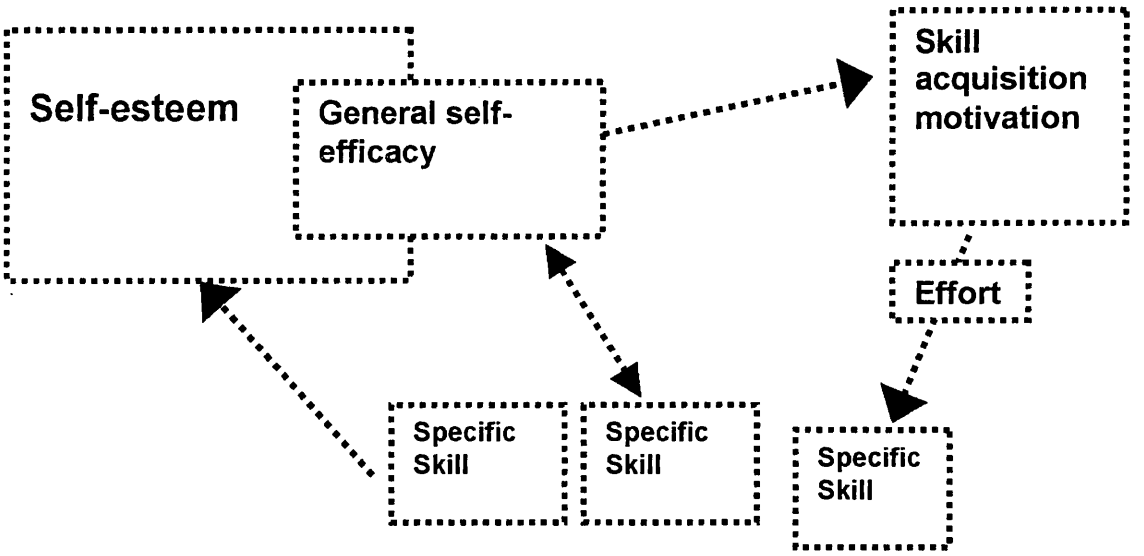
Chi-Square analysis based on the above contingency table shows that again, there is no significant difference in the frequencies between the two raters, suggesting the coding rationale utilised is a reliable one; *($X^2 = 0.11$, df=3, p>.05)*

A discussion between the two raters following the reliability exercise highlighted a significant point which undoubtedly accounts for some of the differences in coding frequency and is particularly relevant to the last set of data as shown above in Table 6.12. It was agreed that some subjects made a primary statement in response to a question and then later concluded or summarised their answer. In such cases, the author acknowledged these instances as separate frequencies, believing that such a summary was indicative of further salience to the individual. However, the independent rater tended to only count the primary statement and matching summary as one whole unit of frequency and as such this explained the slight discrepancies in the two sets of rater frequencies.

Explaining the change in thematic content

The particular point of interest is between the data at time 2 and time 3 where a direct comparison as a function of time is permitted. As can be seen, there is a marked qualitative shift taking place as indicated by the categories in the data as to the way individuals describe changes in themselves. The specific point of interest is the change in the underlying source of perceived change in the self from a general function of perceived time structure and being back in the work environment to later time 3 antecedents such as skill self-efficacy and self-awareness. The structure of the original data in the individual reports appears to operate at two levels. Firstly, concepts such as self-esteem and self-confidence are the readily identified *outcomes* but the subjects consistently constructed their responses to specify the underlying *source* of that esteem or confidence. This supports a hierarchical structure to the information and the time 3 change in thematic content of the data denotes a change in the source factors.

Figure 6.1: Model of the structural flow of information as described by the time 3 data



The above model (Figure 6.1) attempts to portray this structure and the flow of information as represented by the time 3 data. As established in the psychological literature, self-efficacy can be thought of as a particular component of global self-esteem in that it refers to the motivation acquired via achievement

and mastery of specific tasks. The pool of general self-efficacy feeds into the acquisition of new skills and goal-directed behaviour via effort. The development of new skills such as computing ability or driving a car leads to skill-specific self-efficacy that adds to the existing pool of general self-efficacy and also promotes enhanced self-esteem and evaluations of worthiness evidenced from these achievements and so the cycle continues. Obviously the model is extremely rudimentary and should be interpreted with additional contextual factors in mind influencing the cycle of the information.

The structure and flow of information in this model is certainly supported by what Wise Group participants say about their experiences and their ability to attribute the source of their self-esteem and confidence is most apparent. To provide some actual examples of participants' experiences to illustrate the point of the model, below are some actual comments collected by the author from a random sample of participants after approximately 6 months of training.

"Being at Heatwise has helped me to gain those things I hoped to get out of the programme: more confidence, a greater belief in my abilities, actual work experience rather than training experience and renewed experience of relating to colleagues. I am more confident than I was at the start of the programme. My self-esteem is higher and I have a stronger belief in my capabilities."

"Landwise has been helpful to me so far in respect of getting the chance of working again. I have been given some degree of responsibility and developed more understanding. I am now doing jobs I didn't think were within my capabilities. I certainly feel different from the start of the programme. I have much more confidence, respect myself more and feel much more motivated. I feel happier now and don't like the thought of being without a job for any length of time."

"Heatwise has been helpful by providing the opportunity to put into practice things that I have learned in an actual working environment and this has been of great personal benefit. My confidence has increased, as has my self-awareness. I am more aware of my capabilities than before and this is so important for your self-confidence."

"The training at WiseStart opened my eyes to the different types of jobs that are available. It gave me the help and options when applying for jobs."

"The training given at Heatwise is the best I have received in a long line of training. It gave me the push to get out of the rut of unemployment and realise the skills I had and a little more of the potential within myself to go on to other things which hold more of an appeal for my long term future."

"They instil a sense of self-value and really encourage you to 'go for it' as far as I'm concerned. I have also learned typing and computer skills that I did not have before. This alone is confidence-building. I definitely feel more self-assured and confident about myself and my abilities. The work routines and interaction with others of all ages is a great thing. I would encourage further projects like this."

To summarise, the qualitative data presented in this chapter has provided valuable insight into the perceptions and experiences of individuals participating in the intervention. There is clear evidence of a thematic shift occurring in the descriptions of the impact of training as duration increases from one of general re-integration into the work environment to one of more specific skill mastery and application of these skills to planning for the future. The following chapter will discuss both the quantitative and qualitative findings in more detail and interpret them along a number of evaluative dimensions.

7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

This purpose of this chapter is to interpret and discuss the findings presented in the previous two chapters and relate the empirical findings to the literature presented earlier in the thesis. In addition, this chapter will focus upon both the strengths and weaknesses of the research and make suggestions for future approaches to employability for the long-term unemployed. Wilkinson (1999) suggests structuring such the interpretation of experimental effects around the three considerations of credibility, generalisability and robustness:

1) ***Credibility***: are the effects credible given the results of previous studies and *theory?*

2) ***Generalisability***: *do features of the design and analysis, e.g. sample quality, similarity of design and effects as compared to previous studies suggest the results are generalisable?*

3) **Robustness**: are the design and analytic methods robust enough to support strong conclusions?

Therefore, this discussion will consider the findings in light of these 3 key issues. The chapter will begin by re-stating the main objectives of the research and the key findings from the empirical data before examining the findings in more detail.

7.1 Discussion of quantitative methods and findings

The purpose of the present study was to investigate potential changes in three experimental behavioural variables over the duration of an Intermediate Labour Market training programme. It was predicted that increases in such scores would be indicative of the intervention's facilitation of key psychological dimensions of employability. In addition, the data was to be used in an attempt to predict who may be more likely to successfully find work after the programme finished and

why. The study also aimed to understand the process of progression throughout the programme's duration by qualitatively assessing individuals' perception of the benefits of participation over time. The results support the claim that there is utility in approaching employability from an individual and psychological perspective and that participation in the programme positively enhances a number of psychological variables. Specifically, it was found that self-reported interpersonal skills, being dependable and self-esteem all increased significantly for the group as a whole.

Furthermore, the data revealed significant increases in the dependent measures for those individuals categorised as having low initial employment commitment or self-esteem. Cluster Analyses also reveal that the data is representative of three characteristically different clusters of participants and that the behavioural factors used to distinguish between them are significantly different. In addition, this analysis also found a significant positive effect of the Heatwise programme for those participants initially categorised as having low employment commitment. As an overall expression of training effectiveness, it is noted that 68% of the sample participants successfully moved into either employment or further training/education either directly from the Wise Group or within 2 months of completing their contract.

The following section will examine the findings for each dependent measure in more detail by providing interpretations and plausible explanations of the results and will also focus upon limitations and suggest appropriate solutions.

7.1.1 Self-esteem

Firstly, for self-esteem, there is evidence that the immediate effect of training significantly improved the self-esteem of participants. These results are consistent with earlier reports which identified improvements in self-esteem as a

function of a training intervention for the unemployed (Creed et al, 1996). However, the effect size of 0.20 must be noted indicating that the index of the 'meaningfulness' of the differences only meets the 'small' criterion for the behavioural and social sciences (Cohen, 1977). Creed et al. report an effect size in the 'medium' criterion range suggesting that the difference is more psychologically meaningful. However, there are a number of marked differences between the present study and the interventions assessed by both Creed et al. and Muller, 1992 and these must be noted when making comparisons between the present empirical work and similar studies in the literature. Attention is drawn to factors such as variation in the studies in regard to duration of training, the genders and ages of participants, the content of the respective interventions and the country where the research took place.

In the present empirical study, the fact that this initial difference in self-esteem is small and that no further significant difference is observed for the remainder of the programme suggests two things. Either participants' perception of self-worth is a largely stable construct and hence is not really affected by the intervention or as is more likely the case, the chosen measure of self-esteem is not sufficiently sensitive to detect such changes. The results of the qualitative data would strongly suggest the latter interpretation in that respondents particularly note their increased feeling of self-esteem and self-confidence. In addition, it is worth noting that the initial mean self-esteem score for the group of 38 is somewhat higher than a number of other studies utilising this measure. One explanation is that the very fact of being accepted onto the Wise Group programme raises self-esteem and as such the research is then not really picking up the true baseline measure of self-worth prior to the intervention. To remedy this, it would therefore be necessary to take measures before acceptance although how practical that may be is questionable if the design is limited to within the intervention itself. Future studies of this type may therefore consider collating information spanning the

change in status from unemployment through commencement of an intervention to attempt a causal explanation.

The fact that self-esteem does not continue to rise linearly with increasing programme duration may be explained in a number of ways. It is likely that people level out at a certain point as they become familiar with the programme and the initial boost to self-worth of the first few weeks is sufficient to take them to their homeostatic level. Secondly, there are more specific elements of the self-concept such as confidence in abilities, self-efficacy and development of expectations which are likely to continue but such global quantitative measures are unable to detect.

The effects of categorisation of initial commitment and self-esteem upon subsequent self-esteem over time produced some interesting findings (Fig.5.5). The fact that employment commitment and self-esteem are not significantly correlated is reflected in the finding that there is no interactive effect of initial perceptions of commitment to the employment role upon global feelings of self-worth. As indicated by the literature, one may have expected to find lower self-esteem for those who are more committed to employment (Warr and Jackson, 1985, 1987; Shams and Jackson, 1994). However, the lack of an effect of commitment level upon subsequent esteem means that feelings of self-worth are quite independent of commitment to the employment role.

The concept of 'Behavioural Plasticity' (Brockner, 1988) may be a plausible explanation for why the early weeks of the programme significantly facilitates the subsequent self-esteem of those demonstrating initial low self-esteem. The immediate question is whether these individuals have more to gain? The plasticity phenomenon would suggest that this sub-group are more susceptible to the external influences. This point is reminiscent of Eden and Aviram (1993) who

found that employment training was more effective for those with low pre-intervention self-efficacy.

The qualitative data shows that the first few weeks are characterised by increased time structure and getting back into the general work environment and routine. Maybe those with initial low self-worth benefit more from having their expectations shaped. The first few weeks may provide the realisation that there are many people in the same situation as them, some at greater disadvantage even and these factors together have a marked bearing upon this sub-group with the resultant effect size meeting the 'large' criterion for meaningfulness.

The significant decrease in subsequent esteem found for the initial high esteem group may be explained as previously by the effect of the acceptance being the real causal effect and time on the programme moderates expectations to a more realistic level. There may also be issues of social desirability to consider whereby participants feel compelled to augment their initial level of response but then as they become more familiar and secure in their environment and with the investigator, thus reporting more truly later on. It is interesting to note that the significant decrease noted above in subsequent esteem is not replicated for any of the dependent measures. This suggests that self-esteem is a particularly sensitive variable subject to a high degree of interpretation. Interpersonal and being dependable don't change at all. The issue of behavioural plasticity may also be a possible explanation for significant changes for the low esteem group only in interpersonal skills who increase between time 1 and time 2. (Fig.5.6)

Self-esteem is not identified as a characteristic of those leaving early suggesting that their justification is in no way related to their perceptions of self-worth and even if it is the case, the measures do not detect this. As mentioned in the previous chapter, in regard to profiling differences between those in Fig. 5.12

showing a lower and more stable pattern of esteem over time, the differences are non-significant. In addition, self-esteem within the discriminant function analysis fails to show that this variable contributes in any meaningful way to predicting likely outcomes of training. This is in line with the literature reported in chapter 3 whereby more specific measures of the relating to the self have had greater predictive success (Eden and Aviram, 1993; Wenzel, 1993; Blau, 1994) over global measures. Warr, (1987) suggests that improvements in global self-esteem may be underpinned by improved perceptions of competency, autonomy and aspirations for the future. However, global measures as utilised in the present work are limited in their usefulness as they are too general to identify the drivers of change in self-worth.

7.1.2 Employment commitment

As highlighted in the results section, the finding that the scores do not change significantly across the whole sample over time suggests that the commitment people have to the employment role is relatively fixed and stable and thus unlikely to be influenced by such an intervention. Although not based within a training context, this is the finding of several studies (Warr and Jackson, 1985, Jackson 1994). The repeated measure data presented in Table 5.9 does however demonstrate a small yet significant increase in commitment for those 36 subjects from the original sample still on the programme 36-38 weeks later. It can be argued that this is because these individuals will no doubt be feeling under some pressure to secure employment as they enter the last few weeks of the intervention and increased commitment may be a result of this.

In a similar way to self-esteem, there is some evidence to suggest behavioural plasticity when repeated measures over time interact with initial commitment level. For initiative (Fig.5.1), interpersonal skills (Fig. 5.2) and being dependable (Fig. 5.3), the low commitment group show the significant increases in work-ethic

scores, particularly between baseline and time 3 measures. Why should those with lower commitment show more progress on the work-ethic scores than those with high initial commitment? Looking at the interaction plots, it seems that for the high commitment group, they are practically hitting the ceiling for work-ethic and therefore the scale prevents an additional increase sufficiently representative of a significant difference. Therefore, those with high commitment may be making significant progress in work-ethic skills yet the skew of the data towards the top end means that there is less room to accommodate a significant change. Figure 5.4 shows the interaction between initial commitment level and subsequent commitment. Again, the intervention appears to be having an effect upon the low commitment group only whilst a significant decrease is observed in the first few weeks for the high group. Possible explanation may again be an element of social desirability and an initial effect upon commitment by being accepted onto the course. As with the previous decreases in self-esteem maybe this drop reflects more realistic expectations and the realisation that the programme effectively offers a years' security.

The outcomes of the cluster analysis raise some points worthy of note too. The different characteristics of each of the three clusters is interesting, especially cluster 1. The combination here i.e. lower commitment and high self-esteem echoes several findings in the literature whereby lower commitment appears to act as a buffer against unrealised expectation and hence serves to protect psychological well-being. Warr and Jackson, 1985, 1987; Shams and Jackson, 1994). However, cluster 2 have both high commitment and self-esteem and whilst this may go against the hypothesis above, the later chi square analysis (Tables 5.13-5.15) show hardly any difference in the proportions of successful outcomes as a result of cluster type. Also, in explaining the interaction in Figure 5.8, it appears that Heatwise has a specific effect upon raising the commitment of cluster 1 respondents within the first few weeks of training. This may be due to

Heatwise being the largest and most central operation and a more detailed analysis of differences in the locations in the first few weeks may provide further answers. People attending each operational base can all expect a year's programme and obtain approximate wages and conditions and thus there is no reason to believe that one location exerts more pressure to be committed to the employment role than another.

The significant decreases in employment commitment between baseline and time 2 again are suggestive of more realistic expectations after two months and this pattern is replicated in Figure 5.10 for cluster 2 (high commitment) individuals at all three training locations.

The attempt to characterise the early leavers (both positive and negative) from the continuing trainees is not successfully achieved via the quantitative measures. Whilst some of the observable trends are logical (Figs. 5.11 and 5.12) the inferential statistics are not significant. The plotted differences may seem meaningful but lack of statistical verification prohibits interpretation with any degree of confidence. The inability of employment commitment to predict employment status outcome hence supports the findings of Wanberg and Marchese, 1994.

However, as with self-esteem, in making cross references to similar studies to investigate credibility, the author notes the significant issues of variability between all these employment commitment studies. Again, they vary in respect of design, country, sample characteristics and the Likert scales used to rate employment commitment i.e. some use five, seven or even nine point scales. A major issue is the effect upon ratings of commitment given in previous studies and the economic climate at that particular time. The mid 1980's when many of the commitment studies were carried out was characterised by severe

unemployment and recession and as such this undoubtedly had a bearing of peoples' perceptions of the employment role. More importantly, longitudinal studies of employment commitment have not previously involved a training intervention so the current study is breaking new ground in establishing the utility of this variable in this context.

Used within an intervention, possible confounding variables to commitment may be the circumstances surrounding applying to the intervention in the first place. Are people generally more committed when they come onto a course like this and do their personal circumstances have a bearing upon their responses. Studies such as Warr and Jackson, 1984; Rowley and Feather, 1987 and Wanberg and Marchese, 1994) highlight the impact of external pressures such as finance and dependent children upon commitment level. Even thought the present study found no significant impact of these factors upon commitment, surely they have an important bearing and different methodology would need to be employed to detect any causal role. As such, future studies of this nature may consider a much broader and contextualised investigation of the influences upon employment commitment such as potential government compulsion to attend such interventions, and the way this and other influences shape expectations over time.

Psychometrically, the employment commitment scale has poor face validity for all the reasons mentioned above. The author questions whether these 10 items are truly representative of peoples' commitment to the employment role and whether responses reflect real perceptions of the employment role or social norms and external pressures? Changes in self-report ratings probably reflect issues outside of the intervention and without an appropriate comparison or control group it is difficult to interpret the effectiveness with a great degree of confidence. The role of employment commitment is still very important to individual employability but to

be of any use, the concept and hence items must be contextualised, relevant and hence face valid to those asked to respond to them. Items are often based upon hypothetical constructs and the concepts are too general in their present format to do justice to the complexity of commitment to the employment role. To make more sense and facilitate better understanding of employment commitment, future work of this kind should consider employment commitment within a larger theoretical framework such as Expectancy-Value theory (Feather, 1992) and Reasoned Action (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1967) and may also include a cross-reference to personal attribution and locus of control. Although there is some work linking work attitudes to job seeking, the application of established psychological models

7.1.3 Occupational Work Ethic

Similar caution should be exercised when interpreting the changes in work-ethic variables for the sample as a whole. For both interpersonal skills and being dependable, significant improvements are reported between baseline and time 2 with an additional significant increment being noted for being dependable from time 2 to time 3. However, attention is drawn to the effect sizes which fall into the 'small' criterion for the behavioural social sciences (Cohen, 1977) limiting the magnitude of psychological meaningfulness.

When categorised by initial commitment levels, all three work-ethic variables are found to increase significantly over the first two assessment intervals but for the low commitment group only. As discussed previously, the explanation for this interaction may represent behavioural plasticity and also the fact that the high commitment group have effectively hit the work-ethic ceiling whereby the scale does not permit additional increments sufficient to be significant.

The same interpretation can be applied to the effects of initial self-esteem upon the two work-ethic variables of interpersonal skills and being dependable as shown in Figs. 5.6 and 5.7. The graphs give a clear indication that those with lower initial self-esteem are typified by markedly lower perceptions of both interpersonal skills and being dependable. The logic follows that feelings of self-worth are made on the basis of comparison with others and the same mechanism will hold for self-perceptions of how dependable people feel they are and their interpersonal abilities. This finding is echoed in the results of the Cluster Analysis in Table 5.11 whereby the cluster two sample with high self-esteem are significantly higher on all three work-ethic variables than the other two clusters.

As regards predictive utility, the discriminant function analysis reveals that the work-ethic variables do not account significantly for any of the variance in helping to profile the different training outcomes. In a similar way to both employment commitment and self-esteem, these behavioural variables on their own are insufficient in their explanatory power of outcome.

Some general observations about the utility of this measure are focus upon the scale itself rather than the concept of work-ethic. The use of the Occupational Work Ethic Inventory is intended to be an expression of underlying work-ethic as classified by the three dimensions of initiative, interpersonal skills and being dependable. Whilst the author maintains that these variables remain central to any structured approach to personal development aspects of an intervention such as this, there is a question of the reliability of this scale when used longitudinally. Initial scores tend to skew to the positive end of the distribution and as such this limits the potential for incremental statistical differences over time.

In assessing the credibility of the findings in comparison to similar studies, there are several key issues worthy of note. Firstly, the OWEI has not been used in this

context before, i.e. with the long term unemployed or as far as the author is aware in an empirical investigation within in the UK. The scale is relatively new in its application and hence this poses a problem of appropriate normative data for comparative purposes. Of the few published empirical studies utilising the OWEI, non have done so longitudinally and the papers reported have used varying Likert scales and factor structures as the scale was under development.

However at a more practical level, out of the three quantitative measures, the OWEI generated both the most interest and was well received in term of face validity. A number of participants approached the author for blank copies for personal use to indicate their progress and also noted that the scales would be helpful prompts when it came to constructing CV's and writing application forms. The personal development training staff at both Heatwise and Landwise both commented that the scale was a useful self-indicator of progress in an area that was so behaviourally implicit and often difficult for participants to recognise and articulate. Ideas for future development would be to us the basic structure of the OWEI but broaden it to include examples of key work-ethic indicators so that the ratings are made in reference to a real event supported by documentary evidence by both the work supervisor and the individual participants themselves.

In sub conclusion, the quantitative results have reported some interesting findings in utilising these measures in the context of an Intermediate Labour Market intervention. The findings have shown that some key employability skills have been positively facilitated during the programme's duration. Of particular note are the improvements made by those categorised as initially low employment commitment or self-esteem. In addition, there are some useful findings in terms of identified clusters and the differential findings as a function of training location.

As such, the author is keen to indicate caution in using such psychological measures in a diagnostic fashion to direct participants to different aspects of training when their reliability is questioned. Caution is also drawn to the well-documented disadvantages of psychological self-report measures, specifically of experimenter effects, social desirability and face validity. Particularly in relation to the high initial commitment and self-esteem scores, attention is also drawn to the impact of self-selection into the Wise Group and as discussed the role of acceptance upon reliability of the baseline measures.

Lastly, the attempt at predictive analysis using these behavioural measures is disappointing in that none of the variables entered into the equation are able to discriminate between positive and negative training outcomes. Either behavioural aspects have no predictive power per se or as more likely the case, the way they are measured here is inadequate for their explanatory power to be detected. Taken at face value and in light of the arguments put forward in chapter 2, it would appear that successful outcome is independent of the behavioural and demographic factors reported here. Suggestions to improve predictive power would be to utilise alternative scales pertaining to more specific measures such as job-seeking self-efficacy or aspects representative of skill acquisition.

A more formal approach to evidencing progression is suggested such as core employability skill qualifications in areas such as the work-ethic dimensions and attitudes to work. However, the value and implementation of such qualifications is dependent upon appropriate explanations to and insight into the importance of employability skills by people participating in such interventions.

7.2 Discussion of qualitative methods and findings

The author was keen to collect data from the participants pertaining to their qualitative perceptions of progress throughout the programme and the perceived

benefits of participation. The interview data provided some invaluable insight into how participants' thoughts towards their situation and the training were structured. More importantly however, the data analysis revealed a number of qualitative thematic shifts over time as the duration of the intervention increased as shown in Tables 6.2-6.8 in Chapter 6.

In interpreting the results, comments fall into two major categories; the robustness of the methodology and the degree of fit between the findings and the major theories of unemployment and psychological well-being introduced in Chapter 3. The clear methodological limitation is the need for a more sophisticated and structured approach to the thematic content analysis. Firstly, the fact that the interviews were not audio-taped and transcribed verbatim introduces a significant degree of subjective interpretation on the part of the author. Whilst every attempt was made to make the fieldnotes as comprehensive and representative of the actual conversation as possible, this does not provide the same degree of integrity for making high-level psychological sense of the data. To increase methodological robustness, it may be appropriate to use a computerised package such as Nudist to give more refined account of the dialogue, the construction of people's arguments, the causal links between concepts and their relative significance. This is important as the distinctive features of evaluating the qualitative approach are the emphases upon authenticity and accuracy (Pernice, 1996).

Several of the theories that have been used to understand differences between unemployed and employed people in general can be used to explain improvements in well-being for unemployed people attending training interventions. For example, Table 6.3 demonstrates aspects of Jahoda's (1981/1982) deprivation account whereby the effects of the unemployment experience are explained in terms of boredom and the lack of time structure. The

high predominance of resignation would also suggest the assumption of Jahoda's account that individuals are passive and dependent upon the employment relationship to fulfil their well-being needs. Also, when re-interviewed some weeks later, the data clearly shows that a time structure, routine and purposeful activity amongst colleagues are the defining characteristics of change. Therefore, it can be argued that these first few weeks of the training are providing many of the latent that employment is assumed to provide which are important to well-being. However, there are also clear references to personal agency (Fryer, 1986, 1988) being frustrated (see Table 6.3) in that many respondents describe the controlling nature of unemployment and the detrimental impact it has upon the ability to look to the future and make plans. Agency is also echoed in the descriptions of worthlessness whereby people often report their frustration at not being able to provide and contribute to the family. In comparison to Table 6.7, the responses to perceived benefits later in the programme appear to be typified more by facilitated personal agency rather than substituted latent functions. Participants now appear to be motivated by the fact they have acquired new skills and feel much more confident that they are in a position to use their experience in the community. People describe the effect of these new skills and self-awareness in terms of the ability to plan for the future and having got back some control over their situation. As Creed et al. (1996) indicate, it may be that the agency model permits a better understanding of why aspects of well-being change throughout a training intervention insofar as this model views individuals as actively striving to do something and initiate change over their situation. In view of the fact that the majority of participants coming to the Wise Group make this conscious decision, this itself is perhaps indicative of personal agency. However, an interesting point for some future research may be to design a study to evaluate training effectiveness within these two predominant well-being frameworks.

7.3 Limitations of the design

There are a number of considerations about the design to take into account. It is first worth noting that this investigation was a commissioned piece of research. The key stakeholders in this (i.e. the Wise Group management) certainly influenced the aim to look for potential differences between sub-groups such as the early leavers and the issues of predicting training outcomes. These are valuable research hypotheses in their own right and to do justice to them would require greater concentration on the issues thought to distinguish these particular groups. Other expectations were that the investigation may be able to attribute a causal role of the personal and social development aspect of the programme which focuses upon many of the key issues of individual employability. However this would have necessitated a matched sample of participants who did not receive this aspect of training and this is not practical. It does though raise the related point of the lack of a comparison or control group. This would have been particularly useful in helping to identify distinguishing features of the Wise Group intervention compared to others. Without such, it becomes very difficult to attribute or manipulate exactly what the real defining feature of the Wise Group is and more importantly this greatly reduces any generalisability of the findings. Some indications are however, given in Table 6.2 whereby participants were making a number of comparisons between previous experiences of training interventions and their expectations of the Wise Group. These were shown to be the market wage for the job, the years' training duration and the better choice of projects. As such, future work of this kind should aim to evaluate effectiveness by assessing the number and degree of met, unmet or even exceeded expectations as compared to the beginning of the programme.

Additional design aspects to consider are the possible differences in study hypotheses if the actual participants had had a role in defining employability and identifying the factors they felt would be indicative of progress and success. This may have provided some greater contextualised methodological considerations.

The author suspects that perceptions of success would be the time taken to get a job, the quality and conditions of that job and maybe also the qualifications gained as a result of training. As ever, the real test of success is the sustainability factor of interventions and this is a feature of project design that perhaps causes most difficulty in terms of the practicalities of tracking people over time once they have left the organisation and are effectively left to apply their new skills and experiences on their own. This can be likened to the problem of contextually evaluating the effectiveness of prison-based offending behaviour programmes which aims to reduce recidivism. Without a strong community-based model or intermediary body, it vastly limits the conclusions that can be made about interventions designed around social phenomena if they cannot be 'tested' in the social environment where the phenomena naturally occurs.

Critics of conventional programmes claim they are limited in being wholly 'vocational' in scope, only dealing with needs related directly to skills training, work experience. In addition, this criticism would maintain that the intervention context only sees the unemployed as individuals in the labour market; relatively passive recipients of institutionally regulated aspects of society. Others would claim that locally-based community projects are preferable in that the context is the unemployed as part of the community where the impetus is upon activities to deal with vocational issues alongside education, health and welfare, social and recreational needs. This approach would advocate addressing more than the position of the unemployed in the labour market. It would seek to understand how mutual support, community leadership and the input of social and recreational facilities can also contribute to economic regeneration.

As such, the community psychology approach to understanding unemployment is worthy of greater investigation as advocated by Fryer (1998b).

There remains an issue for research such as this of falling in between the need to advance academic theory and shaping research to the requirements of the organisation. It is possible to accommodate both and if this research was to be repeated, it would be greatly beneficial to translate the main features of employability within an established psychological theory such as Expectancy-Value or Reasoned Action. Research into employability has to be clear about its identity: is it attempting to model motivated activity towards job-seeking via an intervention or is it attempting to model progress in psychological well-being in the context of unemployment using accounts such as Latent Function or Personal Agency?

7.4 Conclusions and final remarks

Integrating the findings of this investigation into the wider research context, the over-riding point is that the concept or aim of employability is in itself logical and worthy of promotion in such interventions. However, the difficulty is on the one hand acknowledging the role of wider structural and social factors but integrating these into a valid metric of employability within the confines of an organisation. Hopefully, interventions are realistic in that they can only provide a certain proportion of the necessary pieces but as shown they are becoming increasingly interested in demonstrating 'distance travelled' and more proximal outcomes added to the realisation that 'distance travelled' comprises largely of behavioural dimensions such as communication skills and reliability in the workplace.

As regards employability as a valid concept for psychological research, it is as highlighted necessary to be driven by an underlying psychological model. The data presented here has given some indications of possible theories which may be appropriate in explaining not just change itself but also the process of change over time. In general, psychology certainly has a role to play in assessing the effectiveness of such interventions, both within the organisation itself but also

relating to the individual in their social environment. More generally, psychology and the social sciences are well-placed to evaluate interventions along many new dimensions as they attempt to take into account wider structural factors such as job sustainability, areas and periods of entrenched unemployment and spatial variations.

This chapter has aimed to review and interpret the empirical findings of this thesis and provide some appropriate conclusions as to the viability of individual employability within a specific context. The results have been evaluated in terms of several theories of psychological well-being in the research literature and where limitations of design and methodology have been identified, suggestions for future improvement and integrity have been emphasised.

To re-state comments made in the first two chapters of this thesis, the study of the psychological dimensions of employability is only a single issue within very complex social phenomena. Any metric of training effectiveness within an unemployment intervention needs to recognise this and seek to integrate where possible psychological concepts, theory and practices within the larger structural contexts of participants' circumstances. Doing so will maintain the breadth of definition of employability as both a concept and measurable variable but also provide relevance and realism for both researchers and research participants alike. Suggestions are made for the continuing and developing role of psychology within labour market interventions. The conclusion reached is that with a suitable theoretical framework and appropriate methodology, individual employability is a viable concept within an unemployment intervention and that psychology as a social science is well–placed to make a significant contribution.

APPENDICES

The format and physical size of the questionnaires in the appendices (A-C) have been altered to take account of the restrictions imposed by the binding process and regulations for the submission of this thesis.

APPENDIX A

Work Attitudes/Values Questionnaire

Name: .....

Directions: The following phrases refer to how you feel in general about employment. Please read each statement below and circle the answer which best describes how you feel right now.
Remember, there are no right and wrong answers

1. **Even if I won a great deal of money on the lottery, I would want to continue working somewhere.**

   Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Not Sure* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

2. **Having a job is very important to me.**

   Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Not Sure* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

3. **I hate being unemployed.**

   Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Not Sure* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

4. **I get bored without a job.**

   Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Not Sure* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

5. **The most important things that have happened to me have involved a job.**

   Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Not Sure* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

6. **If unemployment benefit was much better, I would still prefer to work.**

   Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Not Sure* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

7. **I really must get a job or I'll lose my self respect.**

Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Not Sure* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

8. **Being unemployed is about the worst thing in my life.**

Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Not Sure* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

9. **A person must have a job to feel a full member of society.**

Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Not Sure* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

10. **Once you've got a job, it's important to hang onto it, even if you don't really like it.**

Strongly disagree *Disagree* *Not Sure* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

APPENDIX B

Self-Esteem Questionnaire

Name: .....

Directions: Below are some phrases asking you about how you feel about yourself in general. Please read each one and **circle** the answer which best describes your level of agreement.
Remember, there are no right and wrong answers and please respond to each item.
Example: Here is an example to help you.

Question: I feel that I have a number of good qualities

Strongly Agree (Agree) Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

This means you **agree** with the phrase

.....

1. **I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal level with others.**

   Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. **I feel that I have a number of good qualities.**

   Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. **All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.**

   Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. **I am able to do things as well as most other people.**

   Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. **I feel that I do not have much to be proud of.**

   Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. **I take a positive attitude toward myself.**

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. **On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.**

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. **I wish I could have more respect for myself.**

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. **I certainly feel useless at times.**

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. **At times I think I am no good at all.**

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

APPENDIX C Work Personality Questionnaire

Name:
.....

Directions: The words below describe *people at work*. Please say how well each word describes *you* when you are working using the choices provided. **Remember, there are no right or wrong answers**. Please respond to each item.

Example: Here is an example to help you. If you think you are usually dependable, you would place a number **'5'** beside the item **'dependable'**. If you are having any problems, please ask.

e.g. **Dependable: 5**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never	**Almost Never**	**Not Often**	**Sometimes**	**Usually**	**Almost Always**	**Always**

.....

At work I would describe myself as:

Dependable	Irresponsible
Stubborn	Efficient
Following Rules (written)	Flexible
Following Instructions (spoken)	Careful
Independent	Grateful
Ambitious	Accurate
Effective	Easygoing
Reliable	Thorough
Late	Depressed
Taking the lead	Patient
Observant	On Time
Honest	Devious

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never	Almost Never	Not Often	Sometimes	Usually	Almost Always	Always

At work I would describe myself as:

Selfish	Hostile
Thoughtless	Committed
Determined	Faithful
Likeable	Polite
Helpful	Considerate
Disinterested	Careless
Pleasant	Productive
Co-operative	Well-dressed
Hard-working	Friendly
Rude	Loyal
Organised	Clever
Enthusiastic	Modest
Cheerful	
Persistent	

APPENDIX D: Contact letter – Leavers Time 2 Follow-Ups

Department of Psychology
58 Hillhead Street
University of Glasgow
Glasgow
G12 8QB

Dear

When you joined the Wise Group a few weeks ago, you may remember being asked to fill out three short questionnaires as part of an independent research project at the University of Glasgow looking at people's attitudes to themselves and employment.

An important part of the project is following people up over time and as such I would be most grateful if you would fill out the same questionnaires again. This is just as important for people who have since decided to leave the Wise Group for whatever reason. This will take no more than 15 minutes of your time and your help will be greatly appreciated.

You will also see that there are 2 other questions. Could you please indicate why you decided to leave the Wise Group by choosing one of the options provided and ticking the box. Similarly, can you please indicate what you are doing now using the space provided. If you would rather not include this information, that's fine.

When you have finished, please put all the questionnaires together in the addressed envelope provided and post back to the Wise Group. The postage is already paid for so you do not need a stamp.

Many thanks and best wishes for the future,

Heather Byrne

APPENDIX E: ADDITIONAL TABLES

Table A1: Summary of Main Effect: All dependent measures at baseline as a function of age group

Variable	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Employment commitment	2	5.54	288	36.27	.152	.858
Self-esteem	2	112.47	288	32.98	3.41	.034*
Initiative	2	.1966	288	.692	.28	.753
Interpersonal	2	.6711	288	.732	.91	.401
Being dependable	2	.6158	288	.750	.82	.441

Table A2: Post-hoc (Scheffé) Main effect: Self-esteem by age group

Age group	{1} 37.68	{2} 38.15	{3} 40.21
younger {1}			
mid {2}			
older {3}	0.413		

Table A3: Summary of Main Effect: All dependent measures at baseline as a function of unemployment duration group

Variable	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Employment commitment	2	5.84	288	36.27	.161	.851
Self-esteem	2	12.78	288	33.67	.379	.654
Initiative	2	.232	288	.692	.335	.715
Interpersonal	2	.061	288	.737	.083	.919
Being dependable	2	.038	288	.754	.050	.950

Table A4: Summary of Main Effect: All dependent measures at baseline as a function of educational qualification level

Variable	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Employment commitment	4	39.34	286	36.02	.10	.360
Self-esteem	4	4.06	286	33.94	.11	.975
Initiative	4	.415	286	.692	.59	.663
Interpersonal	4	.347	286	.737	.47	.756
Being dependable	4	.574	286	.752	.76	.549

Table A5: Summary of Main Effect: All dependent measures at baseline as a function of marital status

Variable	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Employment commitment	1	7.36	289	36.16	.20	.65
Self-esteem	1	59.61	289	33.43	1.78	.18
Initiative	1	.14	289	.69	.20	.65
Interpersonal	1	.26	289	.73	.36	.54
Being dependable	1	.13	289	.75	.17	.67

Table A6: Summary of Main Effect: All dependent measures at baseline as a function of dependent children group

Variable	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Employment commitment	1	2.29	289	36.18	.06	.80
Self-esteem	1	1.62	289	33.63	.04	.82
Initiative	1	.46	289	.68	.67	.41
Interpersonal	1	.06	289	.73	.09	.76
Being dependable	1	.38	289	.75	.57	.47

Table A7: Summary of Main Effect: All dependent measures at baseline as a function of training location group

Variable	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Employment commitment	2	16.02	288	36.20	.44	.64
Self-esteem	2	14.28	288	33.66	.42	.65
Initiative	2	.30	288	.69	.44	.64
Interpersonal	2	.70	288	.73	.95	.38
Being dependable	2	.29	288	.75	.39	.67

Table A8: Summary of Main Effect: Self-esteem by time

Effect	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Self-esteem	2	178.09	536	12.62	14.11	.000*

Table A9: Post-hoc (Scheffé) Main effect: Self-esteem by time

Time	{1} 38.35	{2} 39.43	{3} 39.91
baseline{1}		0.001	0.000
8-10 weeks {2}	0.001		
26-28 weeks {3}	0.000		

Table A10: Summary of Main Effect: Employment commitment by time

Effect	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Employment commitment	2	7.785	536	13.72	.567	.567

Table A11: Summary of Main Effect: Initiative by time

Effect	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Initiative	2	.998	536	.388	2.57	.077

Table A12: Summary of Main Effect: Interpersonal by time

Effect	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Initiative	2	8.28	536	.429	19.26	.000*

Table A13: Post-hoc (Scheffé) Interpersonal by time

Time	{1} 5.26	{2} 5.45	{3} 5.61
baseline{1}		.003	.000
8-10 weeks {2}	.003		.021
26-28 weeks {3}	.000	.021	

Table A14: Summary of Main Effect: Being dependable by time

Effect	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Initiative	2	1.437	536	.374	3.83	.022*

Table A15: Post-hoc (Scheffé) Being dependable by time

Time	{1} 5.95	{2} 6.07	{3} 6.08
baseline{1}			.042
8-10 weeks {2}			
26-28 weeks {3}	.042		

Table A16: ANOVA Summary of All Effects: Employment commitment as a function of commitment level and time

Effect	*df Effect*	*MS Effect*	*df Error*	*MS Error*	*F*	*p*
Commitment level	2	4174.94	266	38.10	109.51	.000*
Time	2	10.72	532	10.81	.991	.371
Interaction	4	400.37	532	10.81	37.02	.000*

Table A17: Post-hoc (Scheffé) Interaction: Commitment level x time – commitment

Commit.	Time *(1,2,3)*	{1} 33.93	{2} 34.08	{3} 34.11	{4} 42.60	{5} 37.91	{6} 37.85	{7} 24.76	{8} 29.76	{9} 30.79
Mid	1 {1}		*.99*	*.99*	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**
Mid	2 {2}	*.99*		*1.00*	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**
Mid	3 {3}	*.99*	*1.0*		*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**
High	1 {4}	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**		*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**
High	2 {5}	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**		*1.0*	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**
High	3 {6}	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*1.0*		*.00**	*.00**	*.00**
Low	1 {7}	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**		*.00**	*.00**
Low	2 {8}	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**		*.989*
Low	3 {9}	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.00**	*.989*	

Table A18: ANOVA Summary of All Effects: Self-esteem as a function of commitment level and time

Effect	*df Effect*	*MS Effect*	*df Error*	*MS Error*	*F*	*p*
Commitment level	2	70.97	266	64.42	1.10	.333
Time	2	93.07	532	12.68	7.33	.000*
Interaction	4	3.73	532	12.68	.29	.881

Table A19: ANOVA Summary of All Effects: Initiative as a function of commitment level and time

Effect	*df Effect*	*MS Effect*	*df Error*	*MS Error*	*F*	*p*
Commitment level	2	4.37	266	.644	6.79	.001*
Time	2	4.38	532	.411	10.66	.000*
Interaction	4	1.61	532	.411	3.92	.003*

Table A20: Post-hoc (Scheffé): Commitment level x time -initiative

Commit.	Time *(1,2,3)*	{1} 5.57	{2} 5.42	{3} 5.68	{4} 5.91	{5} 5.60	{6} 5.79	{7} 5.17	{8} 5.32	{9} 5.81
Mid	1 {1}		*.78*	*.97*	*.13*	*1.0*	*.73*	*1.9*	*.81*	*.86*
Mid	2 {2}	*.78*		*.09*	*.00**	*.90*	*.06*	*.81*	*.99*	*.24*
Mid	3 {3}	*.97*	*.09*		*.64*	*.99*	*.99*	*.02**	*.36*	*.99*
High	1 {4}	*.13*	*.00**	*.64*		*.51*	*.99*	*.00**	*.01**	*.99*
High	2 {5}	*1.00*	*.90*	*.99*	*.51*		*.94*	*.28*	*.84*	*.96*
High	3 {6}	*.73*	*.06*	*.99*	*.99*	*.94*		*.00**	*.16*	*1.0*
Low	1 {7}	*19*	*.81*	*.02**	*.00**	*.28*	*.00**		*.99*	*.03**
Low	2 {8}	*.81*	*.99*	*.36*	*.01**	*.84**	*.16*	*.99**		*.27*
Low	3 {9}	*86*	*.24*	*.99*	*.99*	*.96*	*1.00*	*.03**	*.27*	

Table A21: ANOVA Summary of All Effects: Interpersonal skills as a function of commitment level and time

Effect	*df Effect*	*MS Effect*	*df Error*	*MS Error*	*F*	*p*
Commitment level	2	7.35	266	.682	10.76	.000*
Time	2	7.28	532	.423	17.20	.000*
Interaction	4	1.26	532	.423	2.99	.018*

Table A22: Post-hoc (Scheffé) Interaction: Commitment level x time -interpersonal

Commit.	Time (1,2,3)	{1} 5.21	{2} 5.42	{3} 5.56	{4} 5.64	{5} 5.60	{6} 5.77	{7} 4.82	{8} 5.32	{9} 5.57
Mid	1 {1}		.30	.00*	.01*	.04*	.00*	.26	.99	.38
Mid	2 {2}	.30		.87	.91	.91	.13	.00*	.99	.99
Mid	3 {3}	.00*	.87		.99	.99	.80	.00*	.87	1.0
High	1 {4}	.01*	.76	.99	1.0	1.0	.99	.00*	.73	.99
High	2 {5}	.04*	.91	.99			.97	.00*	.85	1.0
High	3 {6}	.00*	.13	.80	.97	.97		.00*	.25	.97
Low	1 {7}	.26	.00*	.00*	.00*	.00*	.00*		.26	.00*
Low	2 {8}	.99	.99	.87	.85	.85	.25	.26		.96
Low	3 {9}	.38	.99	1.0	1.0	1.0	.97	.00*	.96	

Table A23: ANOVA Summary of All Effects: Being dependable as a function of commitment level and time

Effect	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Commitment level	2	4.76	266	.620	7.67	.000*
Time	2	1.81	532	.410	4.42	.012*
Interaction	4	1.81	532	.410	4.42	.001*

Table A24: Post-hoc (Scheffé) Interaction: Commitment level x time –being dependable

Commit.	Time (1,2,3)	{1} 5.93	{2} 6.03	{3} 6.05	{4} 6.25	{5} 6.28	{6} 6.06	{7} 5.50	{8} 5.89	{9} 6.10
Mid	1 {1}		.98	.93	.20	.09	.98	.10	.99	.97
Mid	2 {2}	.98		.99	.72	.52	1.0	.01*	.99	.99
Mid	3 {3}	.93	.99		.83	.66	1.0	.00*	.98	.99
High	1 {4}	.20	.72	.83		1.0	.95	.00*	.54	.99
High	2 {5}	.09	.52	.66	1.0		.87	.00*	.39	.99
High	3 {6}	.98	1.0	1.0	.95	.87		.03*	.99	1.0
Low	1 {7}	.10	.01*	.00*	.00*	.00*	.03*		.61	.05
Low	2 {8}	.99	.99	.98	.54	.39	.99	.61		.98
Low	3 {9}	.97	.99	.99	.99	.98	1.0	.05	.98	

Table A25: ANOVA Summary of All Effects: Employment commitment as a function of self-esteem level and time

Effect	*df Effect*	*MS Effect*	*df Error*	*MS Error*	*F*	*p*
Self-esteem	1	38.47	130	66.89	.575	.449
Time	2	9.77	260	13.67	.714	.490
Interaction	2	8.94	260	13.67	.653	.520

Table A26: ANOVA Summary of All Effects: Self-esteem as a function of self-esteem level and time

Effect	*df Effect*	*MS Effect*	*df Error*	*MS Error*	*F*	*p*
Self-esteem	1	6019.69	130	40.57	148.58	.000*
Time	2	235.32	260	10.71	21.95	.000*
Interaction	2	636.59	260	10.71	59.39	.000*

Table A27: Post-hoc (Scheffé) Interaction: Self-esteem level x time - self-esteem

Esteem	Time *(1,2,3)*	{1} 27.80	{2} 35.19	{3} 35.76	{4} 43.97	{5} 42.19	{6} 42.00
Low	1 {1}		.00*	.00*	.00*	.00*	.00*
Low	2 {2}	.00*		.99	.00*	.00*	.00*
Low	3 {3}	.00*	.99		.00*	.00*	.00*
High	1 {4}	.00*	.00*	.00*		.00*	.00*
High	2 {5}	.00*	.00*	.00*	.00*		.99
High	3 {6}	.00*	.00*	.00*	.00*	.99	

Table A28: ANOVA Summary of All Effects: Initiative as a function of self-esteem level and time

Effect	*df Effect*	*MS Effect*	*df Error*	*MS Error*	*F*	*p*
Self-esteem	1	9.33	130	.629	14.83	.000*
Time	2	.71	260	.423	1.69	.186
Interaction	2	.70	260	.423	1.66	.191

Table A29: ANOVA Summary of All Effects: Interpersonal as a function of self-esteem level and time

Effect	*df Effect*	*MS Effect*	*df Error*	*MS Error*	*F*	*p*
Self-esteem	*1*	*7.19*	*130*	*.555*	*12.94*	*.000**
Time	*2*	*4.93*	*260*	*.437*	*11.28*	*.000**
Interaction	*2*	*4.56*	*260*	*.437*	*10.44*	*.000**

Table A30: Post-hoc (Scheffé) Interaction: Self-esteem level x time - interpersonal

Esteem	Time (1,2,3)	{1} 4.77	{2} 5.45	{3} 5.69	{4} 5.64	{5} 5.62	{6} 5.67
Low	1 {1}		.01*	.00*	.00*	.00*	.00*
Low	2 {2}	.01*		.89	.88	.93	.80
Low	3 {3}	.00*	.89		.99	.99	.99
High	1 {4}	.00*	.88	.99		.99	.99
High	2 {5}	.00*	.93	.99	.99		.99
High	3 {6}	.00*	.80	.99	.99	.99	

Table A31: ANOVA Summary of All Effects: Being dependable as a function of self-esteem level and time

Effect	*df Effect*	*MS Effect*	*df Error*	*MS Error*	*F*	*p*
Self-esteem	*1*	*4.69*	*130*	*.578*	*8.10*	*.005**
Time	*2*	*.943*	*260*	*.346*	*2.72*	*.06**
Interaction	*2*	*1.04*	*260*	*.346*	*3.03*	*.04**

Table A32: Post-hoc (Scheffé) Interaction: Self-esteem level x time – being dependable

Esteem	Time (1,2,3)	{1} 5.60	{2} 6.01	{3} 5.93	{4} 6.13	{5} 6.14	{6} 6.08
Low	1 {1}		.28	.54	.00*	.00*	.01*
Low	2 {2}	.28		.99	.96	.95	.99
Low	3 {3}	.54	.99		.77	.72	.92
High	1 {4}	.00*	.96	.77		.99	.99
High	2 {5}	.00*	.95	.72	.99		.98
High	3 {6}	.01*	.99	.92	.99	.98	

Table A33: Summary of Main Effect: All dependent measures at baseline as a function of Cluster type

Variable	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Employment commitment	2	3182.84	288	14.211	223.92	0.00*
Self-esteem	2	2481.54	288	16.52	150.13	0.00*
Initiative	2	5.26	288	.657	8.01	0.00*
Interpersonal	2	11.129	288	.660	16.85	0.00*
Being dependable	2	5.707	288	.715	7.97	0.00*

Table A34: Post-hoc (Scheffé): Employment commitment by Cluster type

Cluster	{1} 29.05	{2} 40.50	{3} 34.43
1 {1}		0.00*	0.00*
2 {2}	0.00*		0.00*
3 {3}	0.00*	0.00*	

Table A35: Post-hoc (Scheffé): Self-esteem by Cluster type

Cluster	{1} 41.14	{2} 41.41	{3} 32.52
1 {1}			0.00*
2 {2}	.904		0.00*
3 {3}	0.00*	0.00*	

Table A36: Post-hoc (Scheffé): Initiative by Cluster type

Cluster	{1} 5.49	{2} 5.84	{3} 5.40
1 {1}		0.132*	0.727
2 {2}	0.132*		0.00*
3 {3}	0.727	0.00*	

Table A37: Post-hoc (Scheffé): Interpersonal skills by Cluster type

Cluster	{1} 5.26	{2} 5.57	{3} 4.90
1 {1}		0.29*	0.00*
2 {2}	0.29*		0.00*
3 {3}	0.00*	0.00*	

Table A38: Post-hoc (Scheffé): Being dependable by Cluster type

Cluster	{1} 5.87	{2} 6.18	{3} 5.71
1 {1}		0.38*	0.42
2 {2}	0.03*		0.00*
3 {3}	0.42	0.00*	

Table A39: Summary of Main Effect: Demographic measures at baseline as a function of Cluster type

Variable	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Age	2	139.87	288	110.04	1.27	.282
Unemployment duration	2	11840.23	288	14064.92	.841	.431
Training weeks	2	235.47	288	222.71	1.05	.348

Table A40: Summary of Main Effect: Employment commitment changes as a function of training location for Cluster 1

Effect	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Location	2	19.65	86	47.08	.4174	.660
Time	2	245.22	172	10.60	23.12	.000*
Location x Time	4	26.22	172	10.60	2.47	.046*

Table A41: Post-hoc (Scheffé) Interaction: Location x time - Employment commitment

Location	Time (1,2,3)	{1} 29.60	{2} 30.63	{3} 31.13	{4} 28.47	{5} 32.52	{6} 33.16	{7} 29.56	{8} 31.50	{9} 33.43
Landwise	1 {1}		*.931*	*.712*	*.884*	*.046**	*.005**	*.887*	*.725*	*.000**
Landwise	2 {2}	*.931*		*.997*	*.282*	*.437*	*.130*	*.779*	*.845*	*.132*
Landwise	3 {3}	*.712*	*.997*		*.095*	*.755*	*.352*	*.727*	*.992*	*.367*
Heatwise	1 {4}	*.884*	*.282*	*.095*		*.000**	*.000**	*.884*	*.094*	*.000**
Heatwise	2 {5}	*.046**	*.437*	*0.75*	*.000**		*.987*	*.048**	*.621*	*.945*
Heatwise	3 {6}	*.005**	*.130*	*.352*	*.000**	*.987*		*.002**	*.357*	*.998*
WiseStart	1 {7}	*.887*	*.779*	*.727*	*.884*	*.048**	*.002**		*.734*	*.002**
WiseStart	2 {8}	*.725*	*.845*	*.992*	*.094*	*.621*	*.357*	*.734*		*.301*
WiseStart	3 {9}	*.000**	*.132*	*.367*	*.000**	*.945*	*.998*	*.002**	*.301*	

Table A42: Summary of Main Effect: Employment commitment changes as a function of cluster type

Effect	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Cluster	2	3233.08	266	45.18	71.55	.000*
Time	2	7.265	532	11.34	.64	.527
Cluster x Time	4	330.023	532	11.34	29.08	.000*

Table A43: Post-hoc (Scheffé) Interaction: Cluster x time - Employment commitment

Cluster	Time (1,2,3)	{1} 29.10	{2} 31.68	{3} 32.49	{4} 40.44	{5} 36.93	{6} 36.74	{7} 34.60	{8} 34.50	{9} 34.30
1	1 {1}		.001*	.000*	.000*	.000*	.000*	.000*	.000*	.000*
1	2 {2}	.001*		.958	.000*	.000*	.000*	.000*	.000*	.000*
1	3 {3}	.000*	.958		.000*	.000*	.000*	.027*	.032*	.089*
2	1 {4}	.000*	.000*	.000*		.000*	.000*	.000*	.000*	.000*
2	2 {5}	.000*	.000*	.000*	.000*		.999	.006*	.005*	.001*
2	3 {6}	.000*	.000*	.000*	.000*	.999		.020*	.017*	.004*
3	1 {7}	.000*	.000*	.027*	.000*	.006*	.020*		1.00	.999
3	2 {8}	.000*	.000*	.032*	.000*	.005*	.017*	1.00*		.999
3	3 {9}	.000*	.000*	.089*	.000*	.001*	.004*	.999*	.999*	

Table A44: Summary of Main Effect: Employment commitment changes as a function of both cluster type and training location

Effect	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Location	2	116.13	260	45.04	2.57	.077
Cluster	2	2909.27	260	45.04	64.59	.00*
Time	2	4.522	520	11.23	.402	.668
Location x cluster	4	20.12	260	45.04	.446	.774
Location x time	4	25.77	520	11.23	2.29	.058
Cluster x time	4	272.62	520	11.23	24.25	.00*
Location x cluster x time	8	10.88	520	11.23	.96	.459

Table A45: Summary of Main Effect: Employment commitment changes as a function of training groups

Effect	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Training group	2	83.85	266	68.86	1.21	.297
Time	2	.321	532	13.78	.023	.976
Training group x time	4	4.94	532	13.78	.358	.838

Table A46: Summary of Main Effect: Self-esteem changes as a function of training groups

Effect	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p
Training group	2	26.66	266	64.75	.411	.662
Time	2	31.32	532	12.56	2.49	.083
Training group x time	4	19.54	532	12.56	1.55	.184

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