

**The Effect of Participation within an Active Labour Market Programme  
(Tús) on an Individual's Perceived Employability.**

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April 2013

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## **Acknowledgments**

Firstly I wish to acknowledge and thank my supervisor Paul Halligan who was extremely helpful and supportive throughout the research project. I would also like to thank the participants and employees in the various Local Development Companies and Local Employment Service centres for partaking in and facilitating the research project. Finally I would like to thank my family, friends and partner for their encouragement and understanding.

### **Abstract**

The Tús programme was established by the Irish Government in 2011 to re-engage long term unemployed individuals with the labour market and improve work readiness. The aim of the present study was to empirically examine the effect, if any, of placement on this programme on the perceived employability of participants using the psycho-social construct as advanced by Fugate, Kinicki and Ashforth (2004). The research explored employability in relation to: (1) increased employability owing to placement on Tús; (2) increased job search activities owing to placement on Tús; and (3) increased self-esteem owing to placement on Tús. Overall the hypotheses were not supported by the study apart from a significant difference in relation to increased self-esteem evident in participants on Tús.

*Keywords:* Employability: Long Term Unemployed (LTU): Tús: Active Labour Market Programme (ALMP): Human and Social Capital: Adaptability: Career Identity: Self-Esteem

## 1. Introduction

During the late 1990's and early 2000's the Irish economy underwent a dramatic transformation. Posting average GDP growth rates of between 5% - 9% the effect of this growth on the labour market was immense. In 1998 the number of people in employment was approximately 1.4million, however by 2007 this figure had almost doubled to just over 2.114 million (Barrett and McGuinness, 2012). This figure marks the high point of employment in Ireland as in the years that have followed, owing to a range of factors<sup>1</sup>, the Irish economy has contracted and it is now only emerging from its fifth year of recession. The economic collapse of the past five years has had a profound effect on the labour market and these effects are borne out in the dramatic rise in unemployment figures. Since 2007 the unemployment rate in Ireland has risen from the annual average of 4.5% to 14.8% or 324,500 in August 2012 (CSO, 2012).

More striking than the unemployment rate is the fact that the CSO report found that the rate on those long termed unemployed (LTU) was now greater than that short term unemployed, 59.5% compared to 40.5%. As the numbers of people who are remaining unemployed for longer periods of time are increasing so too does the risk of the profound negative psychosocial phenomena associated with long term unemployment. One way in which the Irish Government has sought to combat these effects is through the implementation of active labour market programmes (ALMP) for the LTU. The Tús programme is a newly implemented ALMP whose central goal is to maintain the work readiness of the LTU through a community work placement initiative. In 2012 the money paid to participants in this scheme has totalled approx €60 million<sup>2</sup>. In a time of sweeping austerity and reduced budgets

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<sup>1</sup> The Global Credit Crisis, property market crash and bank bail-out, implementation of austerity measures etc.

<sup>2</sup> This does not include administration costs for this programme which would contribute to higher costs

how effective, if at all, is this new programme in its stated aim of maintaining the employability of its participants?

### **1.1 Long Term Unemployment**

Long term unemployment is defined as applying to anybody who has been continuously unemployed for a year or over. In August 2012 the LTU rate in Ireland stood at 8.8% or 193,077 individuals who have been unemployed for a duration of a year or more (CSO, 2012). The effects of unemployment and particularly long term unemployment can be both damaging and long lasting. There is ample empirical evidence detailing the impact of unemployment and how it can be witnessed on the both the individual and societal levels. Encompassing the social and psychological spheres of life the adverse effects of unemployment include ill health, higher risks of poverty, social exclusion, an increased likelihood of remaining unemployed even after improvements in the labour market and the deterioration of skills and employability (Kelly, McGuinness and O'Connell, 2011). These ramifications can also manifest themselves in loss of self confidence, status, authority and increased tensions within families (Sengenberger, 2011). As people remain unemployed for long periods of time, their attachment to the labour market weakens and their abilities to rejoin the labour market may also diminish (Hill and Halpin, 2008). To further elucidate the negative consequences of unemployment, this paper will discuss its potential effects on the health and employability of individuals in greater detail.

### **1.2 The Effects of Unemployment on Health**

The effects of unemployment on health are now well known and a causal relationship has long been established by numerous studies (Institute of Public Health, 2011). Not only does unemployment affect mental health but it also adversely impacts physical health. Depression was shown to be a severe problem for the unemployed population in Lithuania where a cross-

sectional study found that the longer a person was unemployed the higher the risk of depression became (Stankunas, Kalediene, Starkurience and Kaputinskiene, 2006). Other longitudinal studies in Australia mirrored these findings and revealed that unemployed people had poorer psychological health than those in employment (Morrell, Taylor, Quine, Keer and Western, 1994). In a recent study Browning and Heinesen (2011) found that job loss increased the rates of overall mortality and mortality caused by circulatory diseases, suicide, attempted suicide, mental illness and alcohol related diseases. Indeed The World Health Organisation (2011) outlined how the current economic crisis in Europe is expected to increase the incidents of mental health problems with a report describing how men are at an increased risk of mental health problems and death due to suicide or through alcohol use. Again these findings were replicated by Stuckler, Basu, Suhrcke, Coutts and McKee (2009) who found that for every 1% increase in employment there was an associated .79% increase in suicides for people under 65.

It is clear that unemployment is inextricably linked to the health outcomes of people. So why is employment so central to our health outcomes and identities? Work can be described as something that all humans are involved in either directly or indirectly (Drenth, 1991). It is a phenomenon that encompasses both the social and economic aspects of the individual. People's lives are significantly shaped by the circumstances in which they work and consequently the work people carry out becomes closely bound up with their conception of self and self esteem (WHO, 2007). A Health Research Board study (2008) illustrated how employment status was the greatest factor in influencing psychological distress. In an Irish context this is revealed in the startling fact that, as of June 2010, the annual rate of suicide had risen by 26% (Institute of Public Health, 2011). The scarring effects of long term unemployment can irrevocably change the health outcomes of individuals and subsequently affect the lives of the individual and those around them. The health costs of unemployment to



the individual are clearly demonstrated with wider repercussions for society such as additional pressures placed on the health services and stress caused to family. Ill health also affects the ability of people to gain and maintain employment thus further compounding the negative effects of unemployment and affecting the employability of the person.

### **1.3 Employability**

Employability is a concept that has emerged over the past two decades to become a core tenet of labour market policies of which the central aim is to reduce the likelihood of long term unemployment (McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005). Employability as a theoretical premise has been endorsed both nationally and internationally by actors such as governments, EU, OECD and academics alike yet despite this there is still much debate on its exact definition. Since the 1970's the developed nations of the world have experienced structural unemployment as jobs have been lost due to competitive and technological challenges and more recently through the recent and ongoing recession (OECD, 2006). This has forced actors within the labour market to reassess their understanding of work and also how and why we work. The once ubiquitous model of working for one or a limited numbers of employers, the bureaucratic model, is now no longer certain for the vast majority and as such this has led to consequences within our working lives with increased job insecurity and risk of unemployment.

With the demise of a "job for life" and increasing uncertainty surrounding job security it is increasingly left to individuals to maintain their employability (Berntson, 2008). Essentially employability can be defined as the ability to gain and maintain new employment while also having the ability to move between roles within the same organisation if required (Hillage and Pollard, 1998). As the move to a more protean career model has occurred and the ties to a single employer have decreased, the need to possess transferrable skills between employers

and employment types have grown. It is increasingly the responsibility of the individual to acquire, maintain and develop the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics that are important to current and future employers (Fugate, Kinicki and Ashforth, 2004). For some, employability simply refers to *“the possession by an individual of the qualities and competencies required to meet the changing needs of employers and customers and thereby help to realise his or her aspirations and potential in work” (CBI, 1999, p. 1)* (McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005). This approach would suggest that skills and competencies alone are all that is required for a successful career, however it ignores the wider social attributes that are also required. Employability, others argue, is central to our being and is a psycho-social construct that embodies much more than just our skills.

For Fugate, Kinicki and Ashforth (2004) employability is a construct encompassing the psycho-social spheres of an individual and a concept which indicates how we deal with the career challenges and changes such as that of unemployment that we face on a regular basis. For the authors, the concept of employability is a combination of several person-centred constructs which can be used to correlate how individuals may deal with and manage movement between jobs, both within and between organisations including job loss. As the demands placed on us by our different life roles increase and change, we engage multiple coping strategies and mechanisms. An individual's ability to adapt and change and how that individual accepts this change is argued by the authors to be an indication of one's employability. Fugate, Kinicki and Ashford (2004) outline that the greater a person's ability to adapt to the various challenging and demands of life corresponds with that person having greater employability. Through increased adaptability and possession of the skills and psychological factors which enable individuals to cope with change, the authors hypothesise that such individuals are better equipped to function within the new realities and difficulties of today's labour market.

For Fugate, Kinicki and Ashford (2004) nature of employability its sub-constructs are reciprocal with each of these elements influencing the other. As such the personal, behavioural and environmental factors which are unique to each one of us influences how we adapt and interact and by extension demonstrate our employability. While employability does not guarantee employment it is argued that it does increase the likelihood of it. The higher an individual's employability the greater the likelihood is that they are in possession of the required attributes for effective adaptation i.e. career identity, personal adaptability and social and human capital. It is through the combination of these dimensions that we can establish the construct of employability and how people identify, seek and adapt to the career opportunities both within and between organisations. Consequently it can be proposed that individuals who become long term unemployed lack the necessary attributes within the psycho-social construct thus possessing less employability.

In 2007 the concept outlined above was applied in a study by McArdle, Waters, Briscoe and Hall (2007). In this study a sample of 416 unemployed Australians participated in a longitudinal quantitative survey wherein the findings which were collected from the study broadly supported the theory advanced by Fugate, Kinicki and Ashforth (2004). It empirically examined three key aspects in relation to unemployment and its effects on employability e.g. self-esteem during unemployment, job search during unemployment and re-employment after a six month period. The study found that those individuals who rated higher within the three separate but inter-related psycho-social dimensions mentioned above i.e. career identity, personal adaptability and social and human capital had higher employability and this was borne out in how they reacted to unemployment. Those who had higher employability were found to have higher self-esteem, greater job search capabilities thus coping with the negative effects of unemployment in an enhanced manner compared to those with lower employability.

Employability can therefore be seen as key to navigating the insecurity and unpredictability that has become inherent in the labour market for many individuals. Rather than simply a set of skills or competencies it is core to how an individual interacts with the labour market and is a predictor to successful outcomes. Employability, or perceived employability, can also have a direct effect on the health and wellbeing of individuals during times of unemployment. A recent study by Berntson and Marklund (2007) revealed that even perceived employability was positively linked to improved global health and mental wellbeing with those with higher employability having an increased likelihood of reporting better health and well-being. These findings were again replicated in a study by Green (2011) which found that employability played a key role in negating the effects of unemployment and job insecurity which have become features of today's labour market thus further highlighting the importance of employability and its interrelated constructs in the process of alleviating the negative consequences of unemployment. Given the importance that employability has gained in the views of actors within the labour market and the significance now attached to ALMPs how does the Tús programme influence the perceived employability of its participants and by extension how effective is it in its stated aim of improving or maintaining work readiness?

#### **1.4 Active Labour Market Programmes**

Recognising the clear consequences of becoming and remaining unemployed, measures have been sought by governments in numerous countries to ensure that people remain in contact with the labour market. In Ireland and indeed across the OECD ALMPs are playing an increasing role in dealing with the effects of long term unemployment (Brown and Koettl, 2012). Income support during unemployment can be classed into two categories, passive and active (Kelly, McGuinness and O'Connell, 2011). Passive measures provide income support to people during the duration of their unemployment and can consist of unemployment benefit and redundancy payments amongst others however these measures have faced

increasing criticism as they provide a limited income for a defined time and can lead to dependency on welfare benefits (OECD, 2005). They can also lead to poverty traps and disincentives towards re-entering the labour market. As the inadequacies of passive labour measures have become evident an orientation towards active labour market policies has emerged.

Since 1994 the emphasis of the provision of welfare within OECD countries has shifted from passive measures to that of active measures. As mentioned above one such measure that is used in OECD countries is that of the active labour market programme. ALMPs are interventionist policies or programmes that are instigated by governments in an effort to actively assist unemployed people back to work (Johri, De Boar, Pusch, Ramasamy and Wong, 2004). Rather than passively supporting unemployed individuals through welfare measures, ALMPs seek to create a system of mutual obligation between the state and individual. Such programmes seek to improve the functioning of the labour market or support specific groups within the market i.e. the LTU. In return for financial support, people must engage with programmes which aim to improve skills, competences and also help job search processes (O'Connell, 2002).

The justifications for these programmes are three fold; on a macro level they help stimulate the economy thereby creating jobs, help reduce government spending on the unemployed and low paid and on the micro level can increase the employability and earning capacity of participants (Scott, 1995). The outcomes of ALMPS on labour markets can be categorised into three functions; enhancing the supply of labour (capacity building), the demand for labour (opportunity creation) or a combination of both through a process of matching (Johri et al, 2004). ALMPs are centred on participation in education/training programmes, job placement services and sanctions, direct job creation schemes and subsidies to employment in

the private sector with their primary aim centring on the risk of long term unemployment and its known negative consequences (Thomsen, 2009).

### **1.5 Effectiveness of ALMPS - Internationally**

Given the focus with which OECD countries now place on active labour market policies what is the evidence of their effectiveness. The effect of participation in an ALMP on the job application performance was found to be highly positive for those with a forecasted long term unemployment risk (Lalive, Morlock and Zweimuller, 2011). Strandh and Nordlund (2008) assessed that individuals who participated in AMLPs had an increased likelihood of regaining their pre-unemployment incomes and job security. Direct employment ALMPs had initial positive effects on income and security, however this quickly faded while the effect of training ALMPs had a much longer effect. A study by Kluve (2010) found that the effectiveness of a programme depends on the programme type. A meta-analysis on EU wide ALMPS highlighted how direct employment in the public sector did not increase participants' employment probability while wage subsidies and services and sanctions did. Card, Kluve and Weber (2010) conducted a meta-analysis of 97 studies of ALMPs from 1998-2007 and found differential outcomes between different types of ALMPS. Job search ALMPS produced favourable impacts while public sector employment schemes were less effective. Training programmes were associated with ineffective short term measures but produced positive medium term impacts.

An earlier study by Boone and van Ours (2004) analysed data from 20 OECD countries from 1985 to 1999 and found that labour market training provided the most effective way to address unemployment. These findings however were contradicted by a review of the Swedish experience of ALMPs (Calmfors, Forslund and Hemström, 2002). The finding of this study revealed amongst others things that there were hardly any positive effects for

placement services and training programmes had not increased employment probability for participants whereas some forms of employment subsidisation had. As is clearly shown above the empirical evidence arising from the analysis of ALMPs demonstrates widely differentiating outcomes. These conflicting results from the numerous international studies and programmes that have been initiated have brought about a confusing situation within which the tangible benefits and viability of ALMPs are no longer assumed. Given that the average spend on ALMPs in the OECD is 0.6% of GDP what returns are being gained for this expenditure and why is the picture so muddled (OECD, 2012)?

The most recent study of the effectiveness of ALMPs by the EU (2012) found that they can indeed be effective but the length of time in which the effects are measured, the programme design of the ALMP and the stage of the unemployment cycle that they are implemented are all variables which in turn effect the outcomes of policies and programmes. The most effective of ALMPs in the short term were found to be those centred on sanctions, private sector subsidies and entrepreneur sets. Training and job placement service programmes were found to be effective, however their impact needed to be examined over a period of 3-10 years. The least effective of all the labour market measures was that of direct job creation in the public sector which was not cost efficient in raising employment. So given these results and the empirically based criticism levelled at direct job creation in the public sector why has the Irish Government instigated the Tús Programme to address the unemployment problem currently facing the country and how can we measure its effectiveness? To answer this question we must examine the history of ALMPs in Ireland.

### **1.6 Ireland – A History of ALMPs**

In 2011 the ESRI published a systematic evaluation of the activation measures of the Irish State (McGuinness, O'Connell, Kelly and Walsh, 2011). Despite a commitment by

successive Irish Governments to alter the balance between public active and passive welfare expenditure in favour of active measures this has not happened. Since 1990 the spending split between active and passive measures has dropped from 1.06% and 2.55% respectively to 0.64% and 0.91% of GDP. Also outlined in the report was the National Employment Action Plan (NEAP) and how this formed the basis of the state's reaction to the known negative consequences of long term unemployment. Contained in the NEAP is the stated aim of ensuring that persons in receipt of Jobseekers benefit/allowance after a specific time period are referred by the Department of Social Protection to FÁS for activation interviews. The goal of the interview process is to reintegrate the individual into the labour market through assistance with job searches or by referral to a training scheme programme.

McGuinness, O'Connell, Kelly and Walsh (2011) reported serious gaps within the NEAP with up to 25% of jobseekers not being identified and referred for activation interviews. Individuals who had previously received intervention under the NEAP but became unemployed again were excluded from participating again in any activation measure which would seem to suggest that those most in need of participation in ALMPs were being excluded. For those who attended the activation interview, research revealed that those individuals were 17% less likely to become reemployed both in the short a medium term. A reason suggested for this lay in the inadequacy of the monitoring and sanctions regime of the system which actually contributed to a reduction in job search intensity and consequently reemployment probability.

The focus of ALMP expenditure in Ireland has been and remains on training and direct job creation (Grubb, Singh and Tergeist, 2009). This focus has not, however, been the most successful approach as is highlighted by the findings in relation to the Community Employment Scheme. Results found in relation to the CE Scheme, which can be defined as a public sector employment scheme, mirrored that of international studies in that it was found



to be ineffective. O'Connell, McGuinness, Kelly and Walsh (2009) reported that participants on the CE scheme had a higher probability of once again returning to long term unemployment. McGuinness, O'Connell, Kelly and Walsh (2011) again found that those participating on the CE Scheme were more likely to return to periods of extended unemployment, thus suggesting that the scheme was ineffective in increasing the employability of individuals. Given the empirical evidence detailing the ineffectiveness of public sector employment schemes both nationally and internationally it would seem that the aim of the Tús Programme to maintain and develop the work readiness of participants in the current employment crisis does not seem achievable? As such measures through which the viability and effectiveness of the Tús Programme in relation to participants employability is extremely important on both the macro and micro levels.

### **1.7 Tús**

In 2011 the Irish Government set about creating a new ALMP to address the unemployment crisis that has affected Ireland since 2007. The Tús programme can be classified as a job creation scheme in which, at its peak, hopes to place 5,000 LTU into community work initiatives. Managed at local level by local development companies, it aims to improve the work readiness of the placed individuals and also aims to maintain and impart new skills (DSP, 2011). Eligibility rules state that a person must be continuously unemployed for a period of a year and over and must be in receipt of a Job Seekers Allowance. Eligible individuals are identified by the Dept. Of Social Protection and are then referred for interview and placement with the local development companies.

Following a successful interview, acceptance of a placement and accessed suitability, the individual is placed on a panel to wait for a placement. Failure to comply with the process or rejection of a placement offer can result in sanctions being applied to the social welfare

benefits of an individual. Participation on the Tús programme is continuous for 52 weeks and an additional minimum top up payment of €20 is payable on top of the Job Seekers Allowance. Work placements are centred on community based activities which are covered by such things as environmental services, caring services, general community services, heritage and cultural services and para-educational services (DSP, 2011).

### **1.8 Application to this Study**

As discussed above the concept of employability as outlined by Fugate, Kinicki, Ashforth (2004) and investigated by McArdle, Waters, Briscoe and Hall (2007) has demonstrated that those individuals who have higher perceived employability have greater chances of re-entering the labour market and are also better at dealing with the negative effects of unemployment in contrast to those with lower employability. Given the stated aims of the Tús programme in maintaining and improving the work readiness of participants, does it also maintain or improve the perceived employability of individuals? To investigate this, this research paper will seek to replicate the study conducted by McArdle, Waters, Briscoe and Hall (2007) using a quantitative questionnaire methodology.

### **1.9 Conclusion**

Today in Ireland the unemployment rate stands at 14.8% and in the near term shows no sign of reducing. The percentage of those classified as LTU is now greater than those enduring short term unemployment and this will have profound effects both on society and the individual. As outlined previously, the effects of unemployment can have scarring and lasting effects on those who find themselves outside the labour market for extended periods of time. Ill health and a degradation of employability are among the insidious effects of unemployment and the longer the duration of unemployment, the more difficult it becomes to regain employment. In an effort to combat the known consequences of unemployment,

governments around the world have endorsed and implemented ALMPs in order to move away from passive income support. It has been shown however that not all ALMPs are successful in their aims and indeed some are counter-productive such as the Community Employment Programme. So how effective is Tús in combating the consequences of unemployment and reactivating participants?

While much debate surrounds the definition and application of employability its effects on individuals are evident. Based on three independent but interrelated dimensions of career identity, personal adaptability and social and human capital we can better understand how people interact with the labour market and also manage unemployment. Given the damaging effects that unemployment has on the individual and society it is imperative that understandings are reached through research. Recognising the emphasis and central role that ALMPs are now given in tackling the consequences of unemployment it is essential that their design is effective and worthwhile. Accepting the criticism that direct public job creation ALMPs have received insofar as that they are ineffective, is the Tús programme any different? Has the Irish Government implemented another programme such as the CE Scheme which, when empirically tested, results in no improvement for participants? It is the aim of this research to examine the effect of participation within the Tús programme on an individual's perceived employability in the hope of adding to the existing knowledge of the effectiveness of ALMPs.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Design**

The research design used for this study was that of a quasi-experimental non-random survey design. It was used to measure the quantitative results from both Tús participants and from a control group of LTU.

### **2.2 Measures**

All participants completed a short booklet of questionnaires containing demographic questions such as gender, age and education along with the scales detailed further on. Based on the study by McArdle, Waters, Briscoe and Hall (2007) the variables measured in this study were as follows adaptability, career identity, human capital, social capital, self-esteem and job search. Apart from age, gender, education and participation on the Tús programme all items were measured using a 5 point Likert scale from 1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree. An individual's perceived employability was determined through the results of these questions with a higher score in all the scales indicating a greater perceived employability. In turn by comparing the results between the two groups, the effect of participation in the Tús Programme on employability was ascertained.

As in line with the previous study by McArdle, Waters, Briscoe and Hall (2007) adaptability was measured by using proactive personality and boundaryless attitudes as proxy measures. Utilising Bateman and Crant's (1993) 10 item scale, Proactive Personality was measured using items such as "If I see something I don't like I change it". Briscoe, Hall and DeMuth's (2006) Boundaryless Mind-Set Scale evaluates a participant's attitude towards operating across organisational boundaries and includes items such as "I enjoy working with people

outside my organisation”. The range in score of the Proactive Personality Scale was 10 to 50 while the possible results for the Boundaryless Mind-Set Scale varied from 12 to 60.

Career Identity was assessed through a combination of scales from Stumpf, Colarelli and Hartmann’s (1983) Identity Awareness Scale and Kossek, Roberts and Demarr’s (1998) Career Self-Efficacy Scale. Scale items of the Identity Awareness scale include “How sure are you that you know the type of job that is best for you” while the Career Self-Efficacy scale includes items such as “When I make plans for my career I am confident I can make them work”. The possible range for these scales was 13 to 65 and 5 to 25 respectively with negative items reverse coded to ensure higher scores indicating higher prevalence of the scales. Participant’s self-esteem was measured by utilizing Rosenberg’s (1996) Self Esteem scale consisting of 10 items answered on a five-point Likert scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. Negative items were reverse coded so that a high score continued to indicate high self-esteem. The possible range for this scale was 10 to 50.

The final three components of Fugate, Kinicki and Ashforth (2004) construct, human capital, social capital and job search behaviour were measured using the following scales respectively. Human capital was determined by measuring the educational attainment of the individual, social capital was gauged through the use of two social network items and one social support item such as “Over the past six months I have been supported by my friends and family”. Job search intensity was meanwhile measured through the use of Kinicki and Latack’s (1990) job behaviour scale and included five items such as “since being unemployed I have focused my time and energy on job search activities”. Participants were also asked to provide their age (continuous), gender (0=man, 1=woman), length of unemployment/scheme participation (continuous) and citizenship (1=Irish, 2=EU excluding Irish, 3=Non-EU).

### **2.3 Participants**

The current research was conducted using a quasi-experimental control group design with two separate populations needed to complete the research. Tús participants and those who were long term unemployed were accessed through Local Community Development Partnerships within the Dublin region and were namely Northside Partnership, Tallaght Partnership, Southside Partnership, Ballyfermot Partnership, Blanchardstown Partnership and Local Employment Services. Sample 1 consisted of 89 Tús participants (44 male, 40 female and 5 missing values) with a mean age of 38.43. Sample 2 consisted of 84 long term unemployed individuals (39 male, 40 female and 5 missing values) with a mean age of 37.96. Educational levels varied both within and between the two groups with the respondents reporting the following:

### **2.4 Procedure**

The distribution and collection of questionnaires to Tús participants was designed in a two-step process. Questionnaires were provided to Tús Programme supervisors who in turn distributed them individually to Tús participants during the required weekly meeting set out in the Tús Programme guidelines. This allowed the participant a number of weeks to complete and return the questionnaire in a sealed envelope to the supervisor. Each supervisor collected and returned the questionnaires to their respective offices where all completed questionnaires from the Partnership were collated and returned in one batch to the researcher. Long term unemployed people were accessed through the Local Employment Service (LES) and their participation in Job Clubs. Again questionnaires were distributed to the relevant supervisors within each LES who in turn administered them to the sample. Completed questionnaires were again collated and returned in one batch to the researcher from each Partnership after a four week period.

## **2.4 Ethical Considerations**

From the outset of this study several ethical issues were seen to present themselves and as such strict adherence to ethical guidelines required. Due to the sensitive nature of this topic, in part due to collecting information from people in regards job search behaviours, informed consent and anonymity were required for each participant. Informed consent was insured by providing a brief outline of the aims of the study to the participant on the coversheet of the questionnaire along with contact details should they wish to receive a copy of the findings of the study. Again the voluntary aspect of participating in the study was underscored to the partaker and their right to withdraw at any time up until they submitted the questionnaire was stated clearly. Apart from age and sex no other identifying feature was requested in the questionnaire. Upon receipt by the researcher, the questionnaires were assigned random placing so that individuals could not be identified.

## **2.5 Analysis**

Following on from the return of the completed questionnaires, the data from each questionnaire was entered into SPSS in order to test and analysis for the hypothesis listed below and also the null hypothesis. Based on the study by Fugate, Kinicki and Ashford (2004) employability was defined as the total construct and as such represented 100%. The sub-constructs of Adaptability, Career Identity and Human and Social Capital, each independent but inter-related with each other, made up 33.333% of Employability. Each of these sub-constructs was measured by two scales which in turn meant that each scale comprised 16.665% of the global construct of Employability. In order to calculate the percentage of each scale's 16.665%, the participants' total result in each scale were divided by the maximum scale score and multiplied it by 16.665. If a participant returned a score of 25 out of 50 for Proactive Personality then  $25/50=.50$  which in turn was multiplied by 16.665

resulting in 8.3325. This in turn was added to the corresponding result for Boundaryless Mindset Scale resulting in the total for the Adaptability sub-construct. This process was repeated for each of the other two sub-constructs and then all are added together to calculate the person's employability.



### 3. Results

#### 3.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations for Employability, Human and Social Capital, Adaptability and Career identity.

Descriptive Statistics						
Unemployment_or_Tús		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Unemployed	Human & Social Capital	84	15.00	33.33	21.89	4.79
	Adaptability	76	14.33	30.11	22.55	3.03
	Career Identity	75	12.97	29.03	20.91	3.53
	Employability	69	45.09	85.09	65.21	8.57
	Valid N (listwise)	69				
Tús	Human & Social Capital	82	15.00	33.33	23.06	4.67
	Adaptability	73	12.06	33.00	22.68	3.55
	Career Identity	78	15.18	31.54	22.52	3.55
	Employability	65	49.83	93.54	67.89	9.04
	Valid N (listwise)	65				

As detailed above participants on the Tús Programme scored higher on employability, (mean score was 67.89 and the SD was 9.04) than the LTE, (mean score was 65.21, SD = 8.57). Tús participants scored higher in all the sub-constructs; Human and Social Capital (mean score was 23.06, SD = 4.67), Adaptability (mean score was 22.68, SD = 3.55) and Career Identity (mean score was 22.52, SD = 3.55). The results from LTE meanwhile returned the following values; Human and Social Capital (mean score was 21.89, SD = 4.79), Adaptability (mean score was 22.55, SD = 3.03) and Career Identity (mean score was 20.91, SD = 3.53).

Table 2: Educational Attainment

	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Other	Total
<b>Tús</b>	11.49%	59.77%	27.59%	1.15%	<b>100%</b>
<b>Unemployed</b>	16.67%	61.90%	21.43%	0.00%	<b>100%</b>

### 3.2 Inferential Statistics

#### **H1:** Participation on the Tús Programme increases Employability

An independent sample t-test was used to examine statistically significant differences between Tús participants and LTU in terms of their employability. The average employability of Tús participants in the sample was 67.89 (SD = 9.04) compared to 65.21 (SD = 8.57) for LTU. Levene's test for equality of variance suggested that equal variances could be assumed ( $F = 0.016, p > .05$ ) and no significant differences were found [ $t(132) = -1.77, p > .05$ ] suggesting that Tús participants and LTU in the sample did not differ significantly in employability however participation on Tús represented a small sized effect  $r = .15$ . The hypothesis was therefore rejected.

#### **H2:** Participation on the Tús Programme increases job search activities

An independent sample t-test was used to examine statistically significant differences between Tús participants and LTU in terms of their job search activities. The average job search activity of Tús participants in the sample was 17.09 (SD = 4.35) compared to 16.72 (SD = 5.11) for LTU. Levene's test for equality of variance suggested that equal variances could not be assumed ( $F = 6.89, p < .05$ ) and no significant differences were found [ $t(157.46) = -.512, p > .05$ ] suggesting that Tús participants and LTU in the sample did not differ significantly in job search activities however participation on Tús represented a small sized effect  $r = .04$ . The hypothesis was therefore rejected.

**H3: Participation on the Tús Programme increases self-esteem**

An independent sample t-test was used to examine statistically significant differences between Tús participants and LTU in terms of their self-esteem. The self-esteem of Tús participants in the sample was 38.05 (SD = 7.73) compared to 35.21 (SD = 6.93) for LTU. Levene's test for equality of variance suggested that equal variances could be assumed ( $F = 0.577, p < .05$ ) and significant differences were found [ $t(153.484) = -2.4111, p < .05$ ] suggesting that Tús participants and LTU in the sample differed significantly in self-esteem, with Tús participants having higher self-esteem. Participation on the Tús Programme represented a small sized effect  $r = .19$ . The hypothesis was therefore accepted.

Table 3 Subscale Interrelationships

Unemployment_or_Tús			Human & Social Capital	Adaptability	Career Identity
Unemployed	Human & Social Capital	Pearson Correlation	1	.316**	.283**
		Sig. (1-tailed)		.003	.007
		N	84	76	75
	Adaptability	Pearson Correlation	.316**	1	.437**
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.003		.000
		N	76	76	69
	Career Identity	Pearson Correlation	.283**	.437**	1
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.007	.000	
		N	75	69	75
Tús	Human & Social Capital	Pearson Correlation	1	.326**	.225*
		Sig. (1-tailed)		.003	.028
		N	82	70	73
	Adaptability	Pearson Correlation	.326**	1	.650**
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.003		.000
		N	70	73	67
	Career Identity	Pearson Correlation	.225*	.650**	1
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.028	.000	
		N	73	67	78

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

There was a small positive significant correlation between human and social capital and career identity,  $r=.225$ ,  $n=73$ ,  $p<.05$ , with higher levels of human and social capital associated with stronger career identity.

There was a moderate positive significant correlation between human and social capital and adaptability,  $r=.326$ ,  $n=70$ ,  $p<.05$ , with higher levels of human and social capital associated with higher adaptability.

There was a strong positive significant correlation between career identity and adaptability,  $r=.65$ ,  $n=67$ ,  $p<.01$ , with higher levels of career identity associated with higher adaptability.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1 Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects, if any, of the participation in the Tús programme on the participants as opposed to a control group of LTU. Acknowledging the high level of unemployment currently affecting the Irish labour market, standing at 14.8%<sup>3</sup>, and the more worrisome statistics in relation to the rate of long term unemployment, standing at 8.9%, what difference is the Tús programme making and by extension how effective is government policy in combating the malign effects of long term unemployment (CSO, 2012). Of primary concern was the effect of participation in the Tús programme on the participants' employability and whether there were any discernible improvements or indeed loss of employability. This was achieved by conducting a quantitative study of participants based on a previous study and theoretical approach advanced by Fugate, Kinici and Ashforth (2004) and subsequently tested by McArdle, Waters, Briscoe and Hall (2007). Measures implemented in this study included Identity Awareness Scale (Stumpf, Colarelli and Hartmann, 1983), Career Self-Efficacy Scale (Kossek, Roberts and Demarr, 1998), Proactive Personality (Bateman and Crant's, 1993), Boundaryless Mind-Set Scale (Briscoe, Hall and DeMuth, 2006) and measures for human and social capital.

In order to ascertain an answer in regard to whether participation on the Tús programme resulted in any increase in employability an independent t-test analysis was carried out. This revealed that while the mean score of Tús participants' employability, 67.89, was higher than that of the control group of LTU, 65.21, there was no significant differences between the two samples. Given the primary goal of the Tús programme to increase and maintain the work readiness of its participants, a clear disconnect between the aims Tús programme and the results for employability exist. This lack of effectiveness in improving the work readiness or

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<sup>3</sup> Figures are correct as of August 2012

employability of participants would seem to be in line with numerous international studies. As highlighted in the OECD Economic Survey Report (2011) the effectiveness of public job creation programmes in leading to employment is questionable and indeed the implementation of programmes such as Tús should be only as a measure of last resort.

Brown and Koetll (2012) discuss the role that public job creation schemes play in addressing long term unemployment through improving employability and preventing skill attrition. One major criticism of these types of ALMPs is that they do not produce any discernible medium to long term results and indeed can have unintended negative outcomes. Demonstrated by the fact that no significant difference was found to exist between Tús participants' employability and that of individuals undergoing no activation measures, questions previously raised in relation to ALMPs such as Tús are evidently warranted. While the results highlighted that a small positive effect was noticeable owing to participation on the Tús programme, this was not significant and the absence of any significant result is supported by repeated findings found throughout literature pertaining to ALMPs of this nature (EU, 2012).

Repeatedly the evidence in relation to the ineffectiveness of public job creation schemes such as Tús is readily found. Card, Kluve and Weber (2010) discuss how following a meta-analysis of over 97 ALMPS, programmes such as Tús produce no lasting benefits for the participants or for the state insofar as addressing the underlying causes of unemployment and acting as an agent in helping to alleviate them. Notwithstanding the points above the meta-analysis illustrated that the full effects of participation on ALMPs may not be fully ascertained until a substantial time period has lapsed after completion of the programme. The percentage of estimates relating to the significant positive impacts of participation on ALMPs rose from 39.1%, measured after one year, to 52.9% measured after three years. These statistics would seem to suggest that in order to measure the full benefit of participation on the Tús programme on an individual's employability, a longer timeframe of evaluation is

required and as such a longitudinal study is required. Worryingly however is the fact that despite the emphasis now placed on ALMPs after the first year of participation 36.4% of ALMPs had insignificant impacts, 24.5% had slightly negative impacts and after three years the insignificant impacts of ALMPs rose to 41.1%. The current evidence arising from this study would suggest that the Tús programme, in regards to maintaining and improving the employability of participants, is proving to have an insignificant impact however further longitudinal evaluation is required in order to definitively support this position.

While established as a new ALMP in 2011, Tús contains many similar features to the current Community Employment (CE) scheme insofar that both are public job creation programmes whose target group is the most disadvantaged in the labour market i.e. the long term unemployed (Kluve, 2010). The aims of these programmes are to keep the participants in contact with the labour market and to halt any loss of skills/human capital. A criticism faced by these ALMPs is that the placements generated by the schemes do not replicate the ordinary labour market circumstances, resulting in ambiguous outcomes for participants and indeed in the case of the CE scheme participants are more likely to experience long term unemployment again after leaving the scheme. Given that the results from this study reveal that while those on the Tús programme have a higher average employability score than the LTU sample no significant difference is evident is the programme failing in its intended outcomes? In accepting that employability is the ability to gain and maintain new employment and that the concept of employability, as advanced by Fugate, Kinicki and Ashforth (2004), is a construct dependant on a person's adaptability, career identity and human and social capital, is the focus of the Tús programme on the prevention of the degradation of human capital, without focus on developing adaptability and career identity, a contributory factor in the absence of significant differences in the employability of the two samples?

For Fugate, Kinicki and Ashforth (2004) active adaptability in the work domain is an essential component of employability alongside career identity and human and social capital. Examination of the results through correlations revealed that each of the separate sub-constructs of employability have a significant strong correlation with each other thus supporting the independent but inter-related hypothesis advanced by both Fugate, Kinicki and Ashforth (2004) and supported by McArdle, Waters, Briscoe and Hall (2007). Consequently the findings suggest that in order to increase participants' employability and thus improve their likelihood of successfully re-entering the labour market, a more holistic approach towards meeting the needs of participants is required. The significant positive relationships between each of the sub-constructs demonstrate the suitability of utilising the theoretical model as advanced by McArdle, Waters, Briscoe and Hall (2007) to examine the employability and thus the effectiveness of the Tús programme on its participants. Consequently measures which would lead to increases across the three sub constructs and movement away from the sole focus on human capital may in turn benefit the participants however further research would have to be conducted in order to verify this approach.

The medium to strong positive significant correlation between employability and job search activity indicates the ability of an individual to adjust and manage both themselves and their environment and highlights the role that employability plays in how people interact with the labour market (McArdle, Waters, Briscoe and Hall, 2007). Rather than passively waiting for situations to develop or reacting to such events, those who have higher employability actively engage with situations by increasing their search for employment. While the findings of the research does not allow for the increase in employability to be tied directly to participation on the Tús programme, those people participating did possess higher employability on average. This positive relationship with job search activities was repeated in all of the sub-constructs further underlining the linkage between higher employability and proactive behaviour in



searching for employment. As previously outlined by Fugate, Kinicki and Ashford (2004) the benefits reaped by such actions include realising career identities, increased job performance and career outcomes alongside reduced uncertainty and anxiety. By engaging in proactive adaptability a measure of perceived control is gained by individuals and enables them to formulate alternatives such as new opportunities.

A significant difference of note was observed between the two samples in regards to their respective career identities. Within the employability construct, career identity can be described as providing a compass by which people can identify and realise career opportunities and as such provide a pathway to re-employment (Fugate, Kinicki and Ashford, 2004). With a strong career identity and thus a strong belief in achieving that identity, individuals make choices, identify opportunities and pursue goals which enable them to assume that identity and also avoid careers choices they do not want. Conversely, it can be assumed, for those with weaker career identities it is harder to recognise and attain opportunities that present themselves. In this study the Tús participants exhibited a higher level of career identity when compared to the control group of LTU suggesting that they possessed a greater ability to recognise and grasp opportunities as they arose. Repeating the findings and framework of McArdle, Waters, Briscoe and Hall (2007) the study found that an individual with higher career identity may associate with a career path, encompassing a variety of roles, rather than a specific job which in turn enables greater flexibility and adaptability and openness to new opportunities as they present themselves. Flowing from this the likelihood of reemployment may be greater for Tús participants however further study is required as within this study no significant difference in employability was found.

Resulting from the research design it cannot be conclusively proved that higher career identity is as a result of participation on the programme and indeed the presence of individuals on the programme maybe as a direct result of their possession of higher career

identity. Owing to the selection process involved in assigning people to the Tús programme interviews are used to gauge the suitability of candidates referred through the NEAP (DSP, 2011). As such individuals with higher career identities may identify placement on the Tús programme as an opportunity to prevent skill degradation or a chance to reengage with the labour market and as a result may pursue placement more vigorously than those with lower career identity scoring. Indeed this ability to assess and identify opportunities through realisation of one's career identity is also found in the relationship between career identity and job search activities.

A medium to strong positive significant relationship was found to exist between job search activities and career identity. As discussed above while the exact cause in the elevated career identities of Tús participants cannot be directly attributed to participation on the programme presently, it does however signal a positive outcome and advantage for participants. As advanced by Stumpf, Colarelli and Hartmann (1983) stress during times of unemployment can be an indication of underlying mental and physical health issues. How people undertake job search activities can be an indication of how they are coping with long term unemployment. Denial and withdrawal invariably leads to reduced job search activities while increased career identity and the ability to evaluate and recognise opportunities is shown to have a positive effect. Through either gaining access or participation on the Tús programme guidance is provided to participants in an otherwise unstructured time of unemployment and through this allows participants time to formulate their beliefs and perceptions resulting in higher career identity. Following on from their 12 months placement on the programme, participants re-entering the labour market may engage in search behaviours, such as how and where to explore, with more precision owing to their increased career identity however further study is needed to verify this.

A unintended but common consequence of ALMPs is the creation of locking in effects wherein participants reduce their job search activities owing to their placement on a programme where there is no requirement to continue searching for employment (Thomsen, 2009). Although it was hypothesised that participation on the Tús programme would increase the job search activities of the participants this was not supported by the findings. While there is no prevention of Tús participants leaving to take up other employment throughout the duration of their placement the average job search activities of the participants, like their employability, while higher than the control group showed no notable differences. Indeed the absence of significant differences between the two sample groups would seem to verify that the criticisms levelled at public job creation ALMPs are valid and are clearly evident in this study (EU, 2012). As participants are placed on the programme for a 12 month duration without any need to engage in increased job search activities, the findings suggest that participation alone is not increasing interaction with the labour market and indeed the locking in affect is being realised. Unlike the CE Scheme however, Tús does have a shorter duration period and as such reducing the negative effects that locking in can create.

An alternative standpoint may be set forth that, as previously outlined by Stumpf, Colarelli and Hartmann (1983), while the level of job search activities show no significant difference between the two samples, how the two samples search for employment may differ owing to the difference in career identities of the groups. Participants on the Tús programme, owing to their higher career identities, may be engaged in more exact job search activities as they possess clearer career goals and pathways on how to achieve these goals. While the aims of Tús to impart new skills to participants cannot be supported in this study, the way in which people identify themselves and their career goals is shown to be of benefit. This process of identification points to an unintended but beneficial outcome of Tús however further research is needed to ascertain this.

Despite the criticism of public job creation programmes such as Tús in effectively delivering long term benefits to both the individuals placed on them and also to society, some tangible gains are to be gained from their implementations. One such benefit is that of social inclusion for both the participant, through reengagement with the labour market and also for the wider community given the placement of participants in community settings (OECD, 2011). As outlined in previous sections, the effects of long term unemployment go beyond skill degradation and loss of employability and affects individuals socially, economically and also in the sphere of health and well-being. Poorer mental health and well-being have been demonstrated to reduce the effectiveness of job searches and the ability to gain employment (Bernston, 2008). In their study McArdle, Waters, Briscoe and Hall (2007) discuss how employability can act as a buffer and prevent individuals experiencing low self-esteem. While no significant difference was detected in the employability levels between the Tús sample and LTU sample, a significant difference was seen in the self-esteem results between the two groups. The results from the study indicate that participation on the Tús programme can have a positive effect on the mental health and self-esteem thus helping to combat the negative health consequences of long term unemployment.

As detailed previously, employment and work have been shown to be closely associated with health and well-being. Many explanations have been advanced to explain why this correlation is evident, with Bernston (2008) arguing that through a combination of factors such as employment providing daily structure, regular contact and interaction with others and a sense of identity and status lead to beneficial rewards arising from employment. Indeed while no significant difference in employability was found, the difference found in self-esteem arising from participation on the Tús programme indicates beneficial mental health outcomes for participants. While no significant correlation was found between self-esteem and

employability, medium to strong positive relationships were found between adaptability, career identity and self-esteem.

In essence the framework discussed by Fugate, Kinici and Ashforth (2004) holds that career identity and adaptability enables an individual to formulate the questions of what they see as their career goals and how they are achieved. Through the combination of these sub-constructs it is evident that self-esteem is positively linked to the abilities of conceptualising career goals and how adaptable an individual is in achieving them. The findings of the present study would suggest that the Tús programme is providing a space within which this conceptualisation is occurring and as such facilitating a rise in self-esteem. It would seem that through participation on the Tús programme, the negative effects of long term unemployment on mental health and self-esteem are being negated and accordingly provides a tool for policy makers in addressing the known mental health consequences of long term unemployment.

Through enabling people to reengage with the labour market, despite criticisms as outlined above, structure is again provided in participants' lives and would suggest that while no significant improvement in employability was found in this study, the improvement in self-esteem and mental health in itself supports beneficial outcomes relating to the Tús programme. The tangible effects of increasing self-esteem among long term unemployed individuals cannot be underestimated given the stark statistics relating to suicide and long term unemployment (WHO, 2011). This demonstrates the fact that not all results of ALMPs can be measured in economic terms and employment figures but must be assessed in the wider context of health and societal well-being.

Surprisingly as mentioned above no significant relationship was found between employability and self-esteem. This was owing to a negative correlation between human and social capital and self-esteem which when combined with the other two constructs reduced the overall

correlation. This negative result contradicted previous studies by Fugate, Kinici and Ashforth (2004) and McArdle, Waters, Briscoe and Hall, (2007) which proposed that human and social capital were identified as the ability to influence others in regards to career opportunities and signify the ability meet performance expectations. A possible explanation for this result is owing to the way in which human capital was coded as a binary construct which did not examine in detail the effects of increased education on ones' employability. By implementing this simplistic measurement the influence that human capital exerts on self-esteem may not have fully captured. This in turn is a point which can be addressed in any future studies.

#### **4.2 Limitations**

Systematic access to a sample of unemployed people proved to be problematic. In order to gain access to a sample large enough, long term individuals already engaged with employment services were sought. Due to the current NEAP referral process all individuals after a period of three months are sent for labour activation measures. This has led to problems in isolating individuals who have not undergone any measure of activation. Due to the sensitive nature of the study, many people were reluctant to partake in the exercise due to fear of providing information which could affect their social welfare benefits. Feedback from all supervisors reported that in all centres many eligible people did not wish to complete the questionnaire and this was reflected in the completed return rate. Of 800 questionnaires distributed to the various locations throughout Dublin only 173 were received back, representing a return rate of 21.63%. This low level of return has in turn affected the confidence with which generalisations can be expanded to the wider population. Also a number of questionnaires contained missing cases which in turn prevented the generation of sub-scales which prohibited the computation of a score of employability for the individual. As a consequence of this the available population size on which analyses was possible was further reduced.

Another limitation affecting the study surrounded the inability of the researcher to conduct the study on a longitudinal basis. The fundamental test of the concept of employability is the actual ability of individuals to gain and maintain employment. As such a key limitation of this study is evident in the fact that no statistics are available which track the interaction of the participants with the labour market and monitor reemployment once they have either completed their time on the Tús programme or left the programme early due to other reasons. As such owing to limitations of time and resources a longitudinal study was not feasible and as such represents another limitation in this present study. While great care was taken to control different variables between the groups, unfortunately not all effects of this method can be nullified.

#### **4.3 Further Research**

Notwithstanding the limitations as outlined above, future research in the field of unemployment and how we address the pathological effects of it is essential. While quantitative research allows us to examine the effects of long term unemployment and counteractions of ALMPs on a wide scale it does however restrict the type of data and information researchers can collect. Qualitative research methods on the other hand allow for a more in-depth and detailed investigation of issues and given the unique, long lasting and damaging effects that unemployment can have on different individuals, it provides researchers with additional tools to further develop our knowledge. It is through answering questions of meaning, who is affected, why, what factors are involved and do individuals react differently that quantitative research methodology can add further substance and richer understandings on the problems faced owing to long term unemployment. By deploying a longitudinal mixed method approach wherein participants are interviewed prior to commencement and again after they have completed their placement, tracked throughout the year to measure for improvements in their employability and then their outcomes monitored

for up to three years later, as advocated by Card, Kluve and Weber (2010) can a fuller understanding about the effectiveness of participation on the Tús programme on employability be established.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

The unemployment crisis in Irish society today represents one of the greatest challenges in recent times. With long term unemployment constituting 59.5% of the overall unemployment figure the scale of the problem cannot be underestimated. The insidious effects of long term unemployment encompass the economic, social and psychological aspects of life and indeed the repercussions of it can be scarring and long lasting. As previously outlined, mental health, physical health, poverty and disengagement from the labour market are manifestations of the malignant nature of long term unemployment and underscore the need for concerted efforts by Government to combat these ill-effects. It would seem however that the findings in this study suggest that one approach taken by the Government, namely the creation and implementation of the Tús programme, is failing in its stated aims of improving the work readiness of its participants.

By assessing Tús through the theoretical employability construct as proposed by Fugate, Kinicki and Ashforth (2004) no significant differences in employability or job search activities were found between Tús participants and their LTU counterparts. These findings would substantiate the many criticisms faced by ALMPs of this type and draw into question the set up and effectiveness of the programme (Kluve, 2010). Not all impacts however can be viewed solely through the prism of economics and a more holistic approach to the effects of long term unemployment can be advocated. The increased self-esteem demonstrated by Tús participants outlines the beneficial impacts that can arise from the daily structures and routines provided by ALMPs of this type and highlights how central employment is, in whatever form, to our ideas of self, identity and worth (Bernston, 2008).



Further research is clearly needed in order to fully establish the effects of participation on the Tús programme and to gain a clearer picture of how, upon completion of the programme, individuals interact with the labour market. Debates are still being conducted and many discourses still exist as to how the impacts of ALMPs are measured and indeed the timeframe over which the effects can also be quantified. Above all, the findings from this research highlight the difficulties in predicting the outcomes, both intended and unintended, of ALMPs and underscores the importance of empirically testing and verifying the impacts of participation on individuals. It is only through rigorous development of theoretical frameworks alongside testing of their findings that knowledge can be increased about the effects of long term unemployment, allowing effective tools to be developed to combat the negative impacts on both the individual and societal levels.

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## 6. Appendix

### 6.1 Appendix 1

Hi,

My name is Declan Bowes and I am a final year undergraduate student in Dublin Business School. I am conducting a research study on Employability as part of a BA Honours Degree Programme in Social Science. My Research Supervisor is Paul Halligan.

The purpose of this Research Project is to measure the effect of participation within an active labour market programme (Tús) on an individual's perceived employability. There is a combination of eight questionnaires enclosed (in addition to the Demographic questions) which measure Adaptability, Career Identity, Human and Social Capital, Self Esteem and Job Search Behaviour.

This questionnaire will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete in total. Participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you may stop completing the questionnaires at any time, or withdraw your participation. You will not be identified in any of the questionnaires or demographic sheet and all answers given will be treated in the strictest confidence.

If you would like me to provide you with the results of my findings, please contact me on the email below. Thank you very much for your participation and time.

Declan Bowes Email: [2018762@mydbs.ie](mailto:2018762@mydbs.ie)

Supervisor's Details

Email: [Paul.Halligan@dbs.ie](mailto:Paul.Halligan@dbs.ie)

Phone: 00 353 1 417 8730

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:** M / F

**Level of Education:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Please Specify: _____
Primary	Junior Cert	Leaving Cert	Third Level	

**Are you an:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Irish Citizen	EU Citizen	Other

**How many months have you been either:**

Unemployed: _____	Participating on the Tús Programme: _____				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Over the past 6 months I have attended various networking meeting and workshops to learn about new career options	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Over the past 6 months I have initiated conversations with knowledgeable individuals in new career areas of interest to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Over the past 6 months I have been supported by my family and friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When I make plans for my career I am confident I can make them work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. If I can't do a job the first time, I keep trying until I can	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. When I set important career goals for myself, I rarely achieve them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I avoid career difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



8. When I decide to do something about my career, I go right to work on it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
10. Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas turn into reality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. <b>If I see something I don't like, I fix it</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. I love being a champion for my ideas, even against <b>other's opposition</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. I excel at identifying opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. I am always looking for better ways to do things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I can spot a good opportunity long before others can	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
18. I enjoy working with people outside of my organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. I enjoy jobs that require me to interact with people in many organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. I enjoy job assignments that require me to work outside the organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. I like tasks at work that require me to work beyond my department	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. I would enjoy working on projects with people from across many organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. I have sought opportunities in the past that allow me to work outside the organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. I am energised by new experiences and situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

25. I seek job assignments that allow me to learn something new	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. If my organisation provided lifetime employment, I would never desire to seek work in other organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. In my ideal career, I would work for only one organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
28. I like the predictability that comes with working continuously for the same organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. I prefer to stay in a company I am familiar with rather than look for employment elsewhere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<b>5 or less</b>	<b>6-10</b>	<b>11-15</b>	<b>16-20</b>	<b>21 or greater</b>
30. To what extent over the past three months have you obtained information on the labour market and general job opportunities in your career area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. To what extent over the past three months have you sought information on specific areas of career interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. On average, how many times per week have you specifically sought information on careers within the last few months	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<b>Not too Sure</b>	<b>Slightly Sure</b>	<b>Somewhat Sure</b>	<b>Moderately Sure</b>	<b>Extremely Sure</b>
33. How sure are you that you know the type of job that is best for you	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. How sure are you that you know the type of organisation you want to work for	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>
35. How satisfied are you with the amount of information you have on jobs that match with your interests and abilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. How satisfied are you with the amount of information you have on the occupations that are related to your interests and abilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

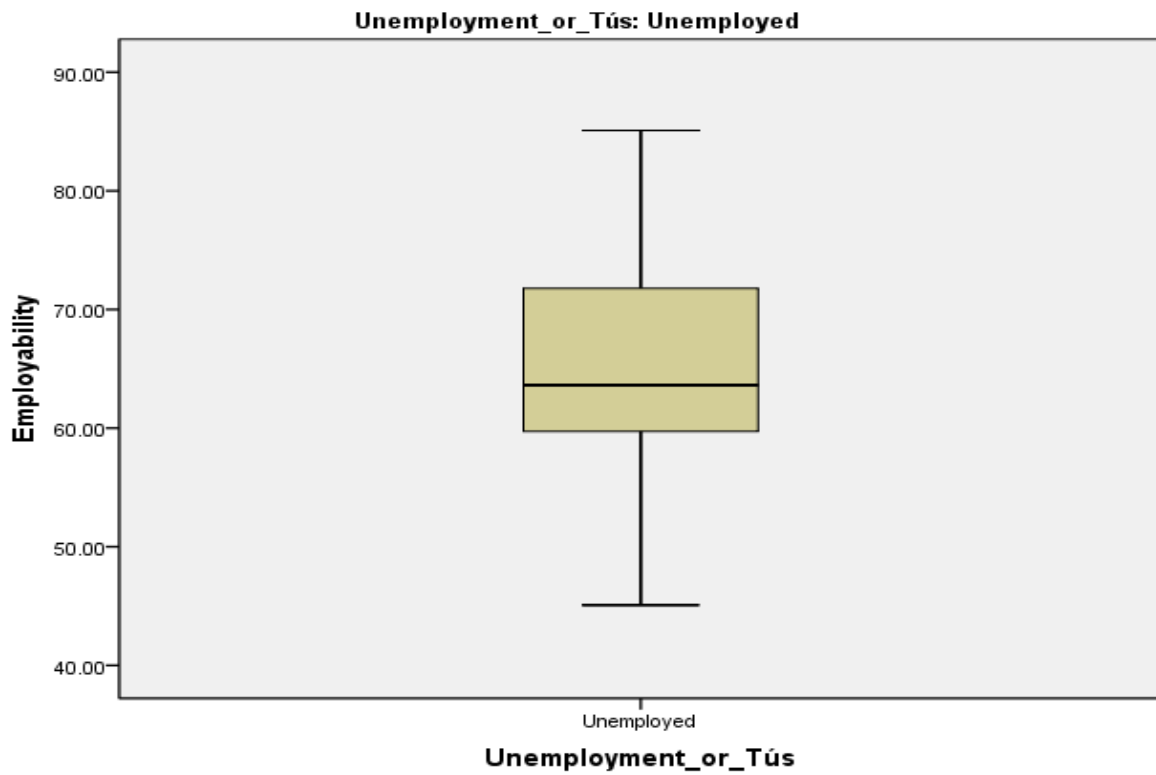
	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
37. How do the employment possibilities look for the job(s) you prefer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. How do the employment possibilities look for the career(s) you prefer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<b>Not Important</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Slightly Important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very Important</b>
39. How important is it to you at this time to work at the job you prefer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40. How important is it to you at this time to work in the occupation you prefer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41. How important is it to you at this time to become established in a specific position	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42. How important is it to you at this time to work in an organisation that you prefer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Hardly Ever	Rarely	Occasionally	Usually	Almost Always
43. Do you devote a lot of time searching for new jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. Do you focus your time and energy on job search activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. Do you give it your best effort to find a new job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46. Do you get together with job contacts, people who can help you find another job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
47. Do you talk to people who can help find you a job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
48. On the whole I am satisfied with myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
49. At times, I think that I am no good at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
50. I feel that I have a number of good qualities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
51. I am able to do things as well as most other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
52. I feel that I do not have much to be proud of	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
53. I certainly feel useless at times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
54. <b>I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least</b> on an equal plane with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
55. I wish I could have more respect for myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
56. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
57. I take a positive attitude toward myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 6.2 Appendix 2



**Correlation between Job Search and Identity Awareness**

Unemployment_or_Tús			Tot_Job_Search	Tot_Identity_Awareness
Unemployed	Tot_Job_Search	Pearson Correlation	1	.602**
		Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
		N	81	75
Tot_Identity_Awareness	Pearson Correlation		.602**	1
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
		N	75	76
Tús	Tot_Job_Search	Pearson Correlation	1	.372**
		Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
		N	86	81
Tot_Identity_Awareness	Pearson Correlation		.372**	1
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
		N	81	84

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

**Correlation between Job Search and Employability**

Unemployment_or_Tús			Tot_Job_Search	Employability
Unemployed	Tot_Job_Search	Pearson Correlation	1	.426**
		Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
		N	81	68
Employability	Pearson Correlation		.426**	1
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
		N	68	69
Tús	Tot_Job_Search	Pearson Correlation	1	.468**
		Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
		N	86	62
Employability	Pearson Correlation		.468**	1
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
		N	62	65

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

## T Test for Employability

## Group Statistics

Unemployment_or_Tús		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Employability	Unemployed	69	65.2061	8.56814	1.03148
	Tús	65	67.8920	9.03732	1.12094

## Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Employability	Equal variances assumed	.016	.900	-1.766	132	.080	-2.68586	1.52087	-5.69429	.32257
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.763	130.326	.080	-2.68586	1.52331	-5.69947	.32775