



**Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences**

**Exploring Employment and  
Entrepreneurship Intentions among  
International Students in Hungary**

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**Doctoral (Ph.D.) dissertation**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Research Background and Problem Statement

Due to the global development of regional education mobility (HARRISON, 2012), Hungary has gradually become a priority country for international students to pursue higher education (WU & RUDNÁK, 2021). According to the GLOBAL INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY (2022), 57% of international students prefer to stay permanently or temporarily in the host country to seek job opportunities after graduation. Yet, retaining international students is not seen as the goal of immigration policy in Hungary (EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK, 2018). Thus, it is necessary for policymakers to understand the employment intentions of international students for both the host country and the third countries, especially in Hungary. However, there is little academic research on the employment intentions of international students after graduation and the specific influencing factors/reasons for choosing different intentions in Hungary. Therefore, the questions need to be explored as follows:

1. Have international students' employment intentions (EMI) changed after studying in Hungary?
2. What are the main reasons (influencing factors) for choosing different employment directions?

Notably, cross-cultural experience helps people enter a knowledge environment that is entirely different from their home countries, thus acquiring advanced knowledge, skills and new ideas and enhancing their ability to identify entrepreneurial opportunities (LIU et al., 2010; VANDOR & FRANKE, 2016). Even short-term foreign educational exchanges will likely improve people's ability to find profitable business opportunities (VANDOR & FRANKE, 2016). Entrepreneurship is a social activity with different needs according to the specific context, and the study of entrepreneurial intention urgently needs to warrant attention to the contextual and temporal aspects (DONALDSON et al., 2021). As such, after coming to Hungary, international students will be impacted by the new environment to a certain extent, leading to a change in their mindset. Thus, the following questions are worth digging into:

3. Have the entrepreneurial intentions (ENI) of international students changed since coming to Hungary?
4. What environmental factors would bring about changes in entrepreneurial intention before (ENI-before) and after (ENI-after) coming to Hungary? To what extent is it affected?

Through extensive research on the topic of entrepreneurial intention, scholars confirm that entrepreneurial intention comes from environment-oriented factors and people-oriented characteristics (GEORGE et al., 2016; MUSTAFA et al., 2016). MUSTAFA et al. (2016) disclose that the dynamic nature of entrepreneurial intention cannot be fully explained by individual or environmental variables separately. As known from the literature, prior studies mainly focused on the entrepreneurship of local Hungarian students or compared the entrepreneurial intention of Hungarian students with that of students in other countries (GUBIK, 2021; ILLÉS et al., 2015; NOWINSKI et al., 2019). Scant attention has been paid to international students in this domain, especially in Hungary (WU & RUDNÁK, 2021). To advance the external environment factors on the impact of entrepreneurial intentions. Such a study on the role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and personal characteristics on international students in the Hungarian context could provide a more comprehensive perspective of influencing factors on entrepreneurial intentions. Hence, the study will propose the following questions:

5. Does international students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy impact their entrepreneurial intention (ENI) in Hungary? What is the magnitude of these capabilities?
6. Are there significant differences in demographic characteristics among international students in Hungary related to their entrepreneurial intention (ENI)?

## **1.2 Research Objective**

The study takes into account two primary goals. The first is to understand the international education background of Hungary and overview the relevant literature on employment and entrepreneurial intentions, as well as influencing factors. The second is to put forward three conceptual models and corresponding research questions according to the literature theory, as well as test the hypotheses. To better understand the study, subsequent sub-objectives are proposed:

1. To review the literature on the international education background of Hungary, and the related models and theories affecting people's employment and entrepreneurial intentions. It includes the choice of migration or employment directions and their influencing push-pull factors, as well as entrepreneurial intentions with the influencing potential environmental factors, self-efficacy factors, and personal characteristics factors.
2. To test the changes in employment intentions of international students after coming to Hungary and the specific factors/reasons affecting their

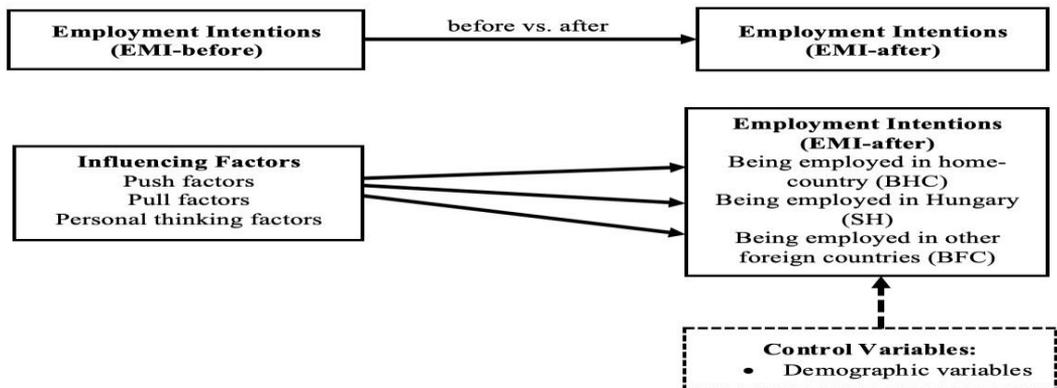
different employment directions, as well as rank the items with a considerable influence.

3. To test the changes in entrepreneurial intentions of international students after coming to Hungary and whether external environmental factors have an influence on them, as well as their extent.
4. To test whether entrepreneurial self-efficacy factors and demographic variables have any influence on the entrepreneurial intentions of the international student in Hungary and their influence extent.
5. To summarize the test results and put forward corresponding suggestions.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

### 2.1 Conceptual Model Construction and Hypotheses Development Employment Intention

This study explores the current employment intentions of international students in Hungary. They prefer to join the international labour market of Hungary or are more likely to return to their home country or go to other foreign countries. The present study is conducted to understand whether overseas experience has salient influences on the career development and employment choice of international students, testing whether their employment intentions have changed after studying in Hungary. Moreover, it is necessary to determine the main reasons for choosing different employment intentions. The main reasons include three major influencing factors: push factors, pull factors and personal thinking factors. To avoid the influence of the demographic variables on EMI-after, it is set as the control variables. The research model of employment intentions is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Conceptual Model of the Research for Employment Intentions**

Source: Author's own construction

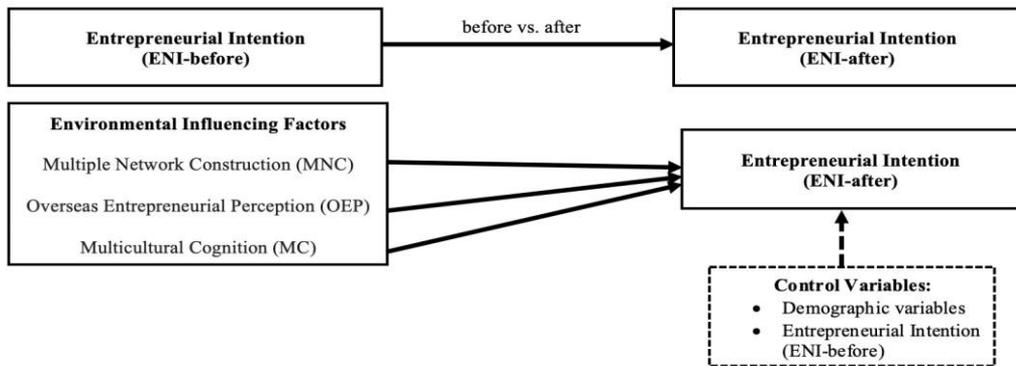
Accordingly, to achieve the purpose of this objective, the following hypotheses are put forward:

- **Hypothesis 1.** There is no difference in employment intentions (EMI) of international students to be employed in the home country (BHC) (H1a), stay employed in Hungary (SH) (H1b), and be employed in other foreign countries (BFC) (H1c) before and after studying in Hungary.
- **Hypothesis 2.** The pull of the home country (H2a), the push of Hungary (H2b), and personal thinking (H2c) have a statistically significant relationship with the choice of employment in the home country by international students after studying in Hungary.

- **Hypothesis 3.** The pull of Hungary (H3a), the push of the home country (H3b), and personal thinking (H3c) have a statistically significant relationship with the choice of employment in Hungary by international students after studying in Hungary.
- **Hypothesis 4.** The pull of other foreign countries (H4a), the push of the home country or Hungary (H4b), and personal thinking (H4c) have a statistically significant relationship with the choice of employment in other foreign countries by international students after studying in Hungary.

### Entrepreneurial Intentions and External Environmental Factors

This model aims to test whether the entrepreneurial intentions of international students have changed after studying in Hungary. Under the control of demographic variables and ENI-before, what environmental factors would bring about changes in entrepreneurial intentions (ENI-after)? The environmental factors tested in this study include multiple network construction (MNC), overseas entrepreneurial perception (OEP) and multicultural cognition (MC). The research model of entrepreneurial intentions (external environmental factors) is shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2. Conceptual Model of the Research for Entrepreneurial Intentions (External Environmental Factors)**

Source: Author's own construction

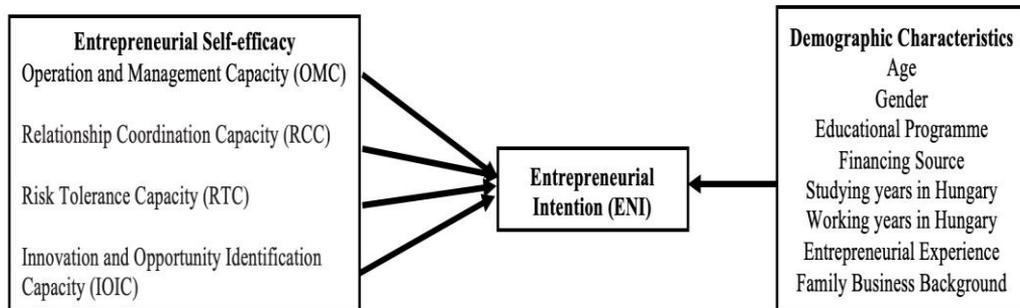
According to the conceptual framework of entrepreneurial intentions (external environmental factors), the relevant hypotheses are as follows:

- **Hypothesis 5.** There is a significant difference in entrepreneurial intentions (ENI) of international students before and after coming to study in Hungary.

- **Hypothesis 6.** Multiple network construction (MNC) (H6a), overseas entrepreneurial perception (OEP) (H6b), and multicultural cognition (MC) (H6c) of external environmental factors have a significant impact on the entrepreneurial intention (ENI) of international students in Hungary.

### Entrepreneurial Intention and Internal Self-Efficacy Factors

The self-efficacy of entrepreneurship in this study is tested by the following four capability dimensions: operation and management capacity (OMC), relationship coordination capacity (RCC), risk tolerance capacity (RTC), and innovative and opportunity identification capacity (IOIC). In addition, when examining the entrepreneurial intentions (ENI) of international students and considering their broad sense of self-efficacy, narrow personality traits should not be ignored. The research model of entrepreneurial intentions (internal self-efficacy factors) is shown in Figure 3.



**Figure 3. Conceptual Model of the Research for Entrepreneurial Intentions (Internal Self-efficacy Factors)**

Source: Author's own construction

In light of the above conceptual framework of entrepreneurial intentions (internal self-efficacy factors), this study proposes the following hypotheses:

- **Hypothesis 7.** Operation and management capacity (OMC) (H7a), relationship coordination capacity (RCC) (H7b), risk tolerance capacity (RTC) (H7c), and innovative and opportunity identification capacity (IOIC) (H7d) in entrepreneurial self-efficacy significantly influence the entrepreneurial intention (ENI) of international students in Hungary.
- **Hypothesis 8.** Demographic characteristics among international students in Hungary are significantly associated with their entrepreneurial intention (ENI).
- **Hypothesis 9.** There are significant differences in demographic characteristics among international students in Hungary related to their entrepreneurial intention (ENI).

## 2.2 Design and Measurement of Variables

### Employment Intentions

Employment intentions are divided into three directions: being employed in home-country (BHC), staying employed in Hungary (SH) and being employed in other foreign countries (BFC). The specific possible influencing factors (reasons) for choosing a different direction of employment are based on the current study experience in Hungary and the research literature of many scholars. The influencing factors of the three employment directions can be divided into three constructs, including push-pull factors and personal thinking factors as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. The Constructs/Factors for Employment Intentions**

	Constructs	Items
Being employed in home-country (BHC)	Pull of home-country	8
	Push of Hungary or other foreign countries	5
	Personal thinking	3
Staying employed in Hungary (SH)	Pull of Hungary	6
	Personal thinking	5
	Push of home or other foreign countries	3
Being employed in other foreign countries (BFC)	Personal thinking	4
	Push of Hungary or home-country	5
	Pull of other foreign countries	7

Source: Author's own construction based on literature

### Entrepreneurial Intentions

Table 2 shows specific indicators for measuring individual entrepreneurial intentions, including six items. The items from ENI2 to ENI5 refer to the entrepreneurial intention scale invented by THOMPSON (2009). Besides, ENI1 and ENI6 have been added to fit the research context. This scale is measured in two dimensions, including entrepreneurial intent and entrepreneurial preparation.

**Table 2. Entrepreneurial Intention Scales**

Codes	Items
ENI1	I have a sense of entrepreneurship.
ENI2	I plan to start a company in the future.
ENI3	I have been looking for entrepreneurial projects and opportunities.
ENI4	I spend time learning entrepreneurial knowledge and other people's entrepreneurial experience.
ENI5	I have saved money or considered the source of funds to start a company.
ENI6	I hope to get wealth and a sense of achievement through starting a business.

Source: Author's own construction based on literature

### External Environment Factors

The potential environmental factors explored in this study include multiple network construction (MNC), overseas entrepreneurial perception (OEP) and

multicultural cognition (MC). Multiple network construction (4 items) includes contacts between international students and Hungarian organizations or individuals. Then, overseas entrepreneurial perception (4 items) is the education, knowledge, resources, opportunities and so on perceived after coming to Hungary. Multicultural cognition (6 items) is the ability to discover and adapt to the cultural differences brought about by Hungarian and other international students. These three factors are considered independent variables based on the summary of studying experience in Hungary and related literature (Table 3).

**Table 3. External Environmental Scales**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Items (External environmental factors)</b>
Multiple Network Construction (MNC)	MNC1	I have established contact with Hungarian universities.
	MNC2	I have established contact with business partner in Hungary.
	MNC3	I have established contact with potential clients in Hungary.
	MNC4	I have established contact with relevant enterprises in Hungary.
	MNC5	I have established contact with investors in Hungary.
Overseas Entrepreneurial Perception (OEP)	OEP1	The experience of studying in Hungary has expanded my entrepreneurial horizons and possibilities.
	OEP2	Hungarian universities promote and encourage students to start a business, resulting in a strong entrepreneurial atmosphere.
	OEP3	The experience of studying in Hungary made me find the opportunity to start a business.
	OEP4	Hungarian universities provide students with education, resources and policy support for entrepreneurship.
	OEP5	The background of studying abroad helps me to get preferential policies or financial support for entrepreneurship when return home country.
	OEP6	Studying in Hungary has enhanced my foreign language skills needed for starting a business.
Multicultural Cognition (MC)	MC1	I am well aware of the differences between the culture of my own country and that of Hungary.
	MC2	I can quickly adapt to Hungarian culture and life.
	MC3	I can understand and adjust the conflicts brought about by multi-culture.
	MC4	I know how to communicate with Hungarians and students of different nationalities.
	MC5	I am very interested in the culture and customs of Hungarian and students with different cultural backgrounds, and often have cultural exchanges with them.
	MC6	I can change my behavior and cognition according to different cultural needs.

Source: Author’s own construction based on literature

### **Internal Self-Efficacy Factors**

Four capability dimensions in this study are used to reflect entrepreneurial self-efficacy as independent variables. Operation management capacity (OMC) includes five items and measures the cognition of the enterprise’s management knowledge and operational skills. Relationship coordination capacity (RCC) consisted of three items for the cognition of sustaining interpersonal relationship ability. Risk tolerance capacity (RTC) is constructed by four items to measure the ability to identify and face the risk of failure. Lastly, innovation and

opportunity identification capability (IOIC) is the perception of innovation and opportunity-seeking, including five items. These four dimensions are consistent with the ‘Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy Scale’ used by WEN et al. (2020). The specific measurement scale in this study is developed to combine with the research context for international students (Table 4).

**Table 4. Internal Self-efficacy Scales**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Items (Internal self-efficacy factors)</b>
Operation and Management Capacity (OMC)	OMC1	I am willing and able to make a clear plan for the future development of the enterprise.
	OMC2	I have the knowledge and skills of operation and management.
	OMC3	I can assign tasks well and lead my colleagues to complete the tasks successfully.
	OMC4	I can analyze the financial data and prepare the operating budget.
	OMC5	I have received entrepreneurship education and know how to start a business.
Relationship Coordination Capacity (RCC)	RCC1	I can communicate with others effectively.
	RCC2	I can maintain a long-term and good relationship with my colleagues and supervisors.
	RCC3	I can consider problems from the point of view of others and be good at solving conflicts.
Risk Tolerance Capacity (RTC)	RTC1	I tend to accept uncertainty and have less anxiety about it.
	RTC2	I have the ability to identify risks and make reasonable plans to reduce the possibility of risks.
	RTC3	I am not afraid of the risk of failure brought by starting a business.
	RTC4	I have the courage to face failure and I can try again.
Innovation and Opportunity Identification Capacity (IOIC)	IOIC1	I can always come up with some new and good ideas.
	IOIC2	I can easily accept and deal with the challenges of new things.
	IOIC3	I can identify the potential value of innovation.
	IOIC4	I pay more attention to the news of entrepreneurship and innovation to help me find the possibility of starting a business.
	IOIC5	My strong foreign language capacity can help me to identify more opportunities to start a business.

Source: Author’s own construction based on literature

### **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the research models in Part 2, this part will empirically analyze of the proposed research hypothesis by obtaining a large sample of data. The data collected by the employment intentions questionnaire and the entrepreneurship intentions questionnaire will be analyzed separately.

#### **3.1 Employment Intentions**

##### **Data Collection and Sample Characteristics**

The employment intentions survey was conducted from September 2020 to May 2023. After obtaining informed consent, the total number of participants in the survey is 702. After further eliminating the invalid questionnaires with incomplete answers and apparent errors, a total of 622 valid questionnaires were obtained, and the overall valid response rate of the questionnaire accounted for 94.3%. Among valid responses, 344 chose to work in their home countries, 151 chose to stay in Hungary, and 167 chose to work in other foreign countries.

The specific demographic characteristics of the respondents from the employment intentions questionnaire as follows. Female respondents were higher than male respondents, compared with 56.9% females and 43.1% males. Most respondents were younger than 23 years old (44.6%), followed by 24-28 years old (35.3%), but more than 29 years old (20.1%) were relatively fewer. Additionally, 88.7% of respondents were single, while fewer were married (11.3%). Most respondents are involved in the degree program, with 44.7% of respondents studying bachelor courses in Hungary, followed by master courses at 36.7% and doctoral respondents at 14.8%. However, respondents in non-degree courses were only 3.8%.

Besides, 66.6% of respondents were awarded scholarships for studying in Hungary, whose number was twice as large as 33.4% of respondents at their own expense. Respondents mainly have been studying in Hungary for 2-3 years (46.5%), and some respondents have been studying for less than one year (39.4%). There were fewer respondents with more than four years of study (14.1%) in Hungary. Moreover, only about 29.3% of respondents had worked in Hungary, including less than 1 year (20.7%), 2-3 years (7.7%) and more than 4 years (0.9%), while about 70.7% of respondents did not have any work experience during their studies in Hungary. Most respondents studying in Hungary do not speak Hungarian, accounting for 69.3%, while about 29.8% of respondents can speak Hungarian, but few speak Hungarian proficiently (0.9%).

## Hypothesis Test

### Paired Sample t-Test

The results of the paired-sample T-test show that the  $p$ -value of being employed in the home country is greater than 0.05, while the  $p$ -values of employment in Hungary and other foreign countries are less than 0.05 (Table 5). As Sig. (2-tailed) reaches 5% means the level of significance ( $p < 0.05$ ) (PALLANT, 2011), so there is no significant difference in international students' intention to be employed in their home country before and after studying in Hungary ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, there is a significant difference for being employed in Hungary and in other foreign countries ( $p < 0.05$ ) before and after coming to Hungary.

**Table 5. Paired Samples T-Test for Employment**

Comparison of employment intentions (EMI) before and after studying in Hungary		Mean	Paired Differences Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-sided)
Pair 1	Be employed in home-country--- <b>Before</b> Be employed in home-country--- <b>After</b>	3.66 3.58	0.08	1.157 1.161	.066
Pair 2	Stay employed in Hungary--- <b>Before</b> Stay employed in Hungary--- <b>After</b>	2.57 2.90	0.33	1.201 1.250	.000
Pair 3	Be employed in other foreign countries--- <b>Before</b> Be employed in other foreign countries--- <b>After</b>	2.89 3.18	0.29	1.296 1.330	.000

Source: Author's own construction

By comparing the mean values of the three employment intentions, the results show that international students have the strongest desire to return to their home country for employment, followed by employment in other foreign countries and employment in Hungary. Moreover, the largest gap between before and after coming to Hungary is the willingness to stay employed in Hungary (0.33), followed by employment in other foreign countries (0.29) and then employment in their own country (0.09). These mean that after studying in Hungary, the intention of international students to stay and work in Hungary has increased most obviously, and the willingness to work in other countries has also increased, but the willingness to return to their own country has not changed much.

## Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

### (1) Being Employed in Home Country

After testing the assumptions, including satisfying the sample size, no multicollinearity, normality, linearity and no outliers. The main models of hierarchical multiple regression analysis are evaluated. As can be observed in Table 6, Model 1 is a basic model that includes only control variables (demographic variables) and Model 2 contains all the variables (demographic variables, pull factors, push factors and personal thinking factors). The R square value in Model 1 shows that the demographic variables explain 14.7 per cent of

the variance. After the independent variables have been included, Model 2 as a whole explains 40.2 per cent. Furthermore, the R square change value is 0.255 ( $p < 0.05$ ), which means that the independent variables explain an additional 25.5 per cent of the variance in employment intention of being employed in the home country after the effects of the demographic variables are statistically controlled for. This is an acceptable result.

**Table 6. Regression Analysis (Being employed in home country)**

Variables	DV: Being employed in home country (BHC-After)		
	Control variables	Model 1	Model 2
Gender		0.300*	0.213*
Age		0.56	-0.069
Marital Status		0.092	0.035
Educational Programme		0.125	0.145*
Finance source		-0.184*	-0.084
Studying Years in Hungary		0.082	0.075
Working Years in Hungary		-0.048	-0.019
Hungarian Knowledge Level		-0.134*	-0.173*
<b>Independent variables</b>			
BHC-Pull			0.300*
BHC-Push			-0.134*
BHC-Personal			0.339*
R <sup>2</sup>		0.147	0.402
Overall F		7.198*	20.278*
R <sup>2</sup> change		0.147*	0.255*

\*  $p \leq 0.05$ . Note: DV: Dependent variables.

Source: Author's own construction

For specifically evaluating how well each of the variables relates, Model 2 in Table 6 exhibits that the pull factors, push factors and personal thinking factors all make a unique statistically significant impact on BHC-after ( $p < 0.05$ ). In detail, the personal thinking factors have a greater impact ( $\beta = 0.339$ ), followed by the pull factors ( $\beta = 0.186$ ). In comparison, the influence of push factors is relatively low ( $\beta = -0.134$ ).

## (2) Staying Employed in Hungary

In a similar vein, some assumptions are tested and satisfied. As can be observed in Table 7, Model 1 presents only control variables (demographic variables) and Model 2 contains all the variables (demographic variables, pull factors, personal thinking factors and push factors). The R square value in Model 1 shows that the demographic variables explain 11.7 per cent of the variance. Model 2 includes all variables as a whole and explains 35.7 per cent. The R square change value is 0.240 ( $p < 0.05$ ), which means that the independent variables explain an additional 24.0 per cent of the variance in employment intention of staying employed in Hungary after the effects of the demographic variables are

statistically controlled for. In detail, the pull factors and personal thinking factors make a unique statistically significant impact on SH-after ( $p < 0.05$ ). The personal thinking factors has a greater impact ( $\beta = 0.175$ ), followed by the pull factors ( $\beta = 0.167$ ) with a similar impact.

**Table 7. Regression Analysis (Staying employed in Hungary)**

Variables	DV: Staying employed in Hungary (SH-After)	
	Model 1	Model 2
<b>Control variables</b>		
Gender	0.242*	0.244*
Age	0.110	0.091
Marital Status	0.099	0.069
Educational Programme	0.371*	0.331*
Finance source	0.036	-0.016*
Studying Years in Hungary	-0.170	-0.163
Working Years in Hungary	0.121	0.123
Hungarian Knowledge Level	0.146	0.082*
<b>Independent variables</b>		
SH-Pull		0.164*
SH- Personal		0.175*
SH- Push		0.046
R <sup>2</sup>	0.117	0.357
Overall F	3.926*	4.381*
R <sup>2</sup> change	0.117*	0.240*

\*  $p \leq 0.05$ . Note: DV: Dependent variables.

Source: Author's own construction

### (3) Being Employed in other Foreign Countries

In the same manner, the assumptions are not violated. From Table 8, demographic variables as control variables shown in Model 1 explain 6.7 per cent of the variance in employment intention of being employed in other foreign countries (BFC-after). After adding the personal thinking factors, push factors and pull factors in Model 2, the total variance explained by the model as a whole is 26.7 per cent. The independent variables explain an additional 20% of the variance in BFC-after after controlling for demographic variables, in which the R squared change value is 0.20 ( $p < 0.05$ ). This is an acceptable result. More specifically, Model 2 exhibits that the personal thinking factor and the pull factor make a unique statistically significant impact on BFC-after ( $p < 0.05$ ). Among them, the personal thinking factor has a greater impact ( $\beta = 0.477$ ), followed by the pull factor ( $\beta = -0.211$ ).

**Table 1. Regression Analysis (Being employed in other foreign countries)**

Variables	DV: Being employed in other foreign countries (BFC-After)	
Control variables	Model 1	Model 2
Gender	-0.127	-0.126
Age	0.021	0.036
Marital Status	-0.136	-0.213*
Educational Programme	0.180	0.278*
Finance source	0.019	0.135
Studying Years in Hungary	0.012	-0.057
Working Years in Hungary	0.011	-0.013
Hungarian Knowledge Level	-0.001	0.031
<b>Independent variables</b>		
BFC- Personal		0.477*
BFC-Push		0.098
BFC- Pull		-0.211*
R <sup>2</sup>	0.067	0.267
Overall F	1.405	5.127*
R <sup>2</sup> change	0.067	0.200*

\*  $p \leq 0.05$ . Note: DV: Dependent variables.

Source: Author's own construction

### Descriptive Statistics

For international students who are **more willing to return to their home country** for employment, the personal thinking factor includes the desire of international students to live in the country of birth, with a mean value of 4.28. They can get more job opportunities (4.20), and the experience of studying abroad will improve their competitiveness to work back home (3.90). Pull factors include the familiar social environment in the home country, which makes them feel more comfortable (4.15) and give them a sense of belonging (4.12). Besides, they need to take care of their families, which is 4.04. The push factors include language and specialty constraints for them to find satisfactory jobs in Hungary (3.42). Moreover, Hungarian culture (3.26) and cost of living (2.78) are quite different from their own country.

For international students who are **willing to stay and work in Hungary**, personal thinking factors include that they like the working environment and atmosphere in Hungary (3.74) and the cultural and social environment (3.54) of Hungary. In addition, they are willing to carry out entrepreneurial activities through trade cooperation with Hungarians (3.14). The pull factors include the work experience gained in Hungary, which can help them find a good job when they return home (3.52). The living conditions and social security of Hungary are better (3.51), and its economic conditions could realize their ambitions (3.31).

The most important personal thinking factor for international students who **want to work in other countries** is that they prefer to go to foreign countries with

better economic levels and social security (4.27). Then, they are willing to broaden their horizons and experience different cultural environments (3.95). Moreover, a better business environment (3.90) is also important. The pulling factors include that the cultural and social environment of other foreign countries is more attractive for me to settle down (3.57), and their employment options are more diversified (3.34). Similar to the reasons for international students who want to stay and work in Hungary, they strive to improve their work experience abroad to help them find a good job when they return home in the future (3.23).

This study explores whether the employment intentions of international students change before and after studying in Hungary and whether push-pull factors and personal thinking factors impact their choice of employment intentions. It also reveals the specific items that affect the three employment intentions. The results show that among the main 4 hypotheses put forward by the employment intentions study, 9 sub-hypotheses are supported by data, and the specific hypothesis test results are shown in Table 9.

**Table 9. Hypothesis Test Results for Employment**

Hypotheses	Sig.	Result	The techniques used in the study
H1a	$p > 0.05$	Not Confirmed	T-test
H1b	$p < 0.05$	Confirmed	T-test
H1c	$p < 0.05$	Confirmed	T-test
H2a	$\beta = 0.300, p < 0.05$	Confirmed	Multiple regression
H2b	$\beta = -0.134, p < 0.05$	Confirmed	Multiple regression
H2c	$\beta = 0.339, p < 0.05$	Confirmed	Multiple regression
H3a	$\beta = 0.164, p < 0.05$	Confirmed	Multiple regression
H3b	$\beta = 0.046, p > 0.05$	Not Confirmed	Multiple regression
H3c	$\beta = 0.175, p < 0.05$	Confirmed	Multiple regression
H4a	$\beta = -0.211, p < 0.05$	Confirmed	Multiple regression
H4b	$\beta = 0.098, p > 0.05$	Not Confirmed	Multiple regression
H4c	$\beta = 0.477, p > 0.05$	Confirmed	Multiple regression

Source: Author's own construction

### 3.2 Entrepreneurial Intentions

The study on entrepreneurial intentions (ENI) is mainly analyzed from the perspective of external environmental factors and internal self-efficacy factors. The influencing factors of these two aspects will be analyzed separately.

#### Data Collection and Sample Characteristics

The main period for collecting data on entrepreneurial intentions was from March 2021 to May 2023. After obtaining informed consent, 588 students filled out the

questionnaire, of which 467 responses were valid without missing values and were retained for further analysis.

The following are the demographic profiles of respondents from the entrepreneurial intention questionnaire. The share of gender was similar, with 224 (48.0%) males and 243 (52.0%) females. Most of the respondents were between 25 and 29 years old (45.2%), followed by those under 24 years old (30.2%) and older than 30 years old (24.6%). Educational programs included exchange students (2.6%), bachelor's (22.5%), master's (49.7%) and PhD (25.2%) programs. More than half of the respondents were scholarship winners (65.7%). The proportion of respondents who studied in Hungary for 2-3 years was the highest (43.9%), followed by those who studied for less than 1 year (39.4%), while the proportion of respondents who studied in Hungary for more than 4 years accounted for relatively few (16.7%). Furthermore, 58.4% of the respondents had no work experience in Hungary; 31.5% had less than 1 year of work experience; and fewer respondents had more than 2 years of work experience, for a total of 10.1%. In addition, 73.7% of the respondents had no entrepreneurial experience, and 77.9% had no family business background.

### **Hypothesis Test for External Environmental Factors Paired Samples T-test**

The paired sample *t*-test is suitable for collecting data from one group of people on two different occasions or under two different conditions (PALLANT, 2011). Table 10 presents that all six items in the entrepreneurial intentions (ENI) are compared. The results show that except for the *p*-value of EI2 (I plan to start a company in the future) being more than 0.05, the *p*-values of the other five items are all less than 0.05. Therefore EI1, EI3, EI4, EI5 and EI6 are significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Subsequently, the author judges that there is a significant difference in the entrepreneurial intentions of international students before and after coming to study in Hungary due to most of the items reaching this standard.

Specifically, comparing the mean values of six items in entrepreneurial intentions, the results show that the mean values of ENI6, ENI2 and ENI1 are relatively high. It means most international students hope to gain wealth and a sense of achievement by starting a business. They plan to start a business in the future and have entrepreneurial spirits. Moreover, ENI4 and ENI3 changed the most after coming to Hungary, with paired mean differences of 0.18 and 0.17, respectively. That is, "I have been looking for entrepreneurial projects and opportunities" and "I spend time learning entrepreneurial knowledge and other people's entrepreneurial experience". Therefore, it could be concluded that after coming to study in Hungary, international students have taken more substantial actions for entrepreneurship. However, the intention of international students to start a

company in the future (ENI2) has not changed much after going abroad. That could mean that having the initial willingness to start a business is also an important and independent determinant for international students to engage in entrepreneurship activities in the future.

**Table 10. Paired Samples T-Test for Entrepreneurship**

Comparison of Entrepreneurial Intention before and after Coming to Hungary			Mean	Paired Mean Differences	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	ENI1	Before After	3.15 3.29	0.14	1.216 1.161	0.002
Pair 2	ENI2	Before After	3.39 3.44	0.05	1.242 1.211	0.351
Pair 3	ENI3	Before After	3.01 3.18	0.17	1.311 1.211	0.001
Pair 4	ENI4	Before After	2.94 3.12	0.18	1.228 1.237	0.001
Pair 5	ENI5	Before After	2.68 2.83	0.15	1.202 1.184	0.003
Pair 6	ENI6	Before After	3.44 3.55	0.11	1.216 1.144	0.027

Note: ENI: Entrepreneurial intention.

Source: Author's own construction

### Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

Before implementing the multiple regression analysis, the assumptions have tested and satisfied. The data meet the assumption of sample size, no multicollinearity, normality, linearity, and no outlier. Then, the main models of hierarchical multiple regression analysis are evaluated. As can be observed in Table 11, model 1 is a basic model that includes only control variables (demographic variables and ENI-before) and model 2 contains all the variables (demographic variables, ENI-before, MNC, OEP and MC). The R square value in model 1 shows that the demographic variables and ENI-before explaining 50.2 per cent of the variance. After the independent variables have been included, model 2 as a whole explains 59.5 per cent. Furthermore, the R square change value is 0.094 ( $p \leq 0.001$ ), which means that the independent variables explain an additional 9.4 per cent of the variance in entrepreneurial intention (ENI-after) after the effects of the demographic variables and ENI-before are statistically controlled for.

For specifically evaluating how well each of the variables relates, model 2 in Table 11 exhibits that finance source ( $\beta = 0.152, p \leq 0.001$ ), years of studying in Hungary ( $\beta = 0.197, p \leq 0.001$ ) and ENI-before ( $\beta = 0.469, p \leq 0.001$ ) belonging to control variables have a significant impact on the entrepreneurial intentions (ENI-after) of international students. The independent variables of OEP and MC

have a unique statistically significant impact on ENI-after ( $p \leq 0.001$ ), while MNC does not have an impact on it ( $\beta = 0.036, p > 0.05$ ). In detail, multicultural cognition (MC) has a greater impact ( $\beta = 0.229$ ), followed by overseas entrepreneurial perception (OEP) ( $\beta = 0.186$ ).

**Table 11. Regression Analysis (External environmental factors)**

Variables	DV: Entrepreneurial Intention (ENI-After)	
	Model 1	Model 2
<b>Control variables</b>		
Gender	0.055	0.007
Age	0.006	-0.007
Educational Programme	0.072	0.029
Finance source	0.206*	0.152*
Studying Years in Hungary	0.229*	0.197*
Working Years in Hungary	-0.021	-0.032
Entrepreneurial Experience	-0.019	-0.007
Family Business Background	-0.059	-0.075
Entrepreneurial Intention (ENI-Before)	0.599*	0.469*
<b>Independent variables</b>		
Multiple Network Construction (MNC)		0.036
Overseas Entrepreneurial Perception (OEP)		0.186*
Multicultural Cognition (MC)		0.229*
R <sup>2</sup>	0.502	0.595
Overall F	51.162*	55.693*
R <sup>2</sup> change	0.502*	0.094*

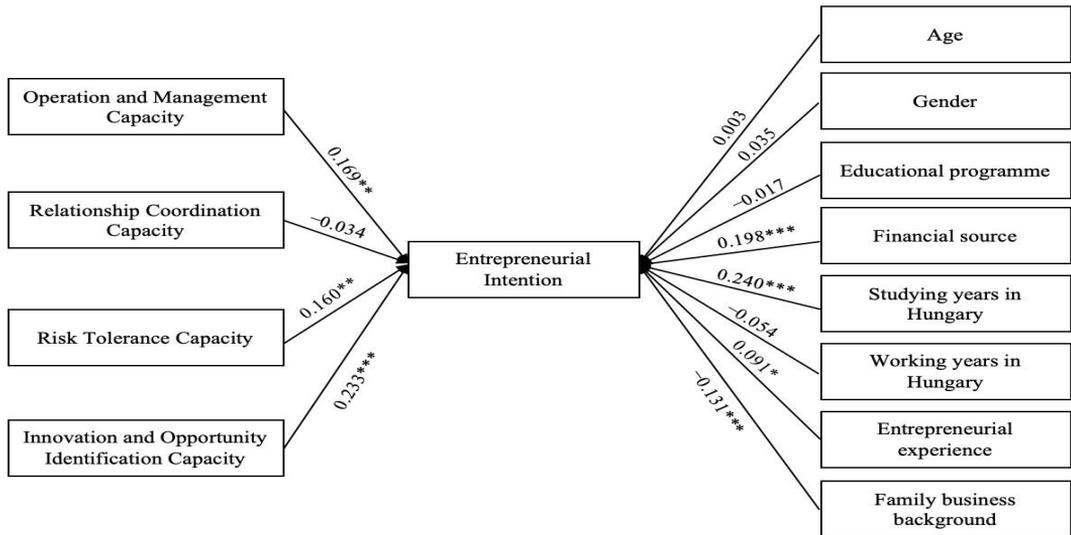
\*  $p \leq 0.001$ . Note: DV: Dependent variables.

Source: Author's own construction

### Hypothesis Test for Internal Self-efficacy Factors Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

Before conducting these analyses, the necessary assumptions are tested. The results shows that there is normality, linearity, no multicollinearity, no outlier and meet the sample size calculation. The variables are measured in the following sequence: entrepreneurial self-efficacy (OMC, RCC, RTC, and IOIC), age, gender, educational programme, financing source, studying years in Hungary, working years in Hungary, entrepreneurial experience and family business background. The four dimensions of self-efficacy (OMC, RCC, RTC, and IOIC) can disclose 28.4 per cent of the variance in entrepreneurial intentions. Then the demographic variables are measured one by one, and the results are presented in Figure 4. Specifically, IOIC has the greatest positive impact on ENI ( $\beta = 0.233, p < 0.001$ ), followed by OMC ( $\beta = 0.169, p < 0.01$ ). Then, RTC shows a marginally significant effect on ENI ( $\beta = 0.160, p < 0.01$ ). Whereas, RCC does not meet the significance level, thus indicating no statistically significant effect on ENI ( $\beta = -0.034, p > 0.05$ ). For demographic variables, studying years in Hungary ( $\beta = 0.240, p < 0.001$ ), finance source ( $\beta = 0.198, p < 0.001$ ),

entrepreneurial experience ( $\beta = 0.091, p < 0.05$ ) and family business background ( $\beta = -0.131, p < 0.001$ ) proved to have a statistically significant impact on ENI. Meanwhile, age, gender, educational programme and working years in Hungary have no impact on ENI ( $p > 0.05$ ).



**Figure 4. Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Research Model (Internal self-efficacy factors)**

(Note: \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ ).

Source: Author’s own construction

### Independent-Samples t-Test and One-way between-groups ANOVA

The outputs from independent-sample t-test display significant mean differences for finance source ( $p < 0.001$ ) and family business background ( $p < 0.05$ ). Specifically, international students who study in Hungary at their own expense ( $M = 3.45$ ) have significantly higher mean scores of ENI than those who depend on scholarships ( $M = 2.83$ ). The mean values of ENI for international students with a family business background ( $M = 3.56$ ) are higher than those without a family business background ( $M = 3.14$ ).

Additionally, there is a statistically significant difference at the  $p < 0.001$  level in ENI scores for the three groups’ years of students studying in Hungary and the four groups’ years of students with entrepreneurial experience. From the test of one-way between-groups ANOVA, the more years international students’ study in Hungary, the higher the mean score of their ENI. International students with less than 1 year of entrepreneurial experience have the highest mean score on the ENI, followed by those with more than 2 years of entrepreneurial experience.

However, international students with no entrepreneurial experience have the lowest mean score on ENI.

The research on the entrepreneurial intentions of international students in Hungary is mainly carried out based on external environmental factors and internal self-efficacy factors. To achieve these two research goals, the author puts forward main 5 related hypotheses. This study makes empirical tests and finds that the sample data support most hypotheses; only two sub-hypotheses are not supported, as shown in Table 12.

**Table 12. Hypothesis Test Results for Entrepreneurship**

Hypotheses	Sig.	Result	The techniques used in the study
H5	$p$ (ENI1, ENI3, ENI4, ENI5 and ENI6) < 0.05	Confirmed	T-test
H6a	$MNC_{\beta} = 0.036, p > 0.05$	Not confirmed	Multiple regression
H6b	$OEP_{\beta} = 0.186, p < 0.05$	Confirmed	Multiple regression
H6c	$MC_{\beta} = 0.229, p < 0.05$	Confirmed	Multiple regression
H7a	$OMC_{\beta} = 0.169, p < 0.05$	Confirmed	Multiple regression
H7b	$RCC_{\beta} = -0.034, p > 0.05$	Not Confirmed	Multiple regression
H7c	$RTC_{\beta} = 0.160, p < 0.05$	Confirmed	Multiple regression
H7d	$IOIC_{\beta} = 0.233, p < 0.05$	Confirmed	Multiple regression
H8	DV_four-eighth, $p < 0.05$	Confirmed	Multiple regression
H9	MD, $p < 0.05$	Confirmed	T-test and ANOVA

**Note.** DV= Demographic variables; MD= Mean difference.

Source: Author's own construction

## 4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 Conclusion

With the global development of regional mobility in education, Hungary has gradually become a priority country for overseas students to pursue tertiary education. More and more international students, including paid and scholarship-funded students, have come to study in Hungary in recent decades. Most of them are studying at higher education institutions. Based on this, exploring their employment and entrepreneurial intentions is vital for universities and relevant policymakers. On the one hand, the author finds out the influence of push-pull and personal thinking factors by choosing different employment directions and changing in their three employment intentions. On the other hand, this study explores the influence of external environmental factors and internal self-efficacy factors on their entrepreneurial intentions. This study uses a social media platform to send electronic questionnaires to international students and collects sample data from several universities in Hungary. Then, a T-test, multiple regression analysis and so on are conducted to test the hypotheses. The results find that a total of 5 sub-hypotheses of the 9 main hypotheses put forward in this study are supported by the sample data and the following conclusions are drawn:

**Firstly**, some international students choose to stay and work in Hungary, while others choose to return to their home countries or work in other foreign countries after graduation. The author finds that returning to work in their home country is the choice of most international graduates in Hungary, followed by other foreign countries, while the willingness to stay in Hungary is relatively low. However, the intentions of international students to stay and work in Hungary have increased the most among these three employment intentions. That may be because, during their study in Hungary, the increasingly familiar environment of the host country and job internship experience prompted them to stay and work in Hungary. In addition, the intention to work in other foreign countries has also greatly increased. That further proves that overseas experience greatly impacts their career development and employment choices. What's more, under the control of demographic variables, the significant factors influencing international students' choice to stay employed in their home country include the pull factors of their home country, the push factor of Hungary or other foreign countries and personal thinking factors. In addition, the significant factors affecting the employment of international students in Hungary and other foreign countries are personal thinking factors and the pull factor of Hungary and other foreign countries.

**Secondly**, the output reveals that after coming to study in Hungary, the entrepreneurial intentions of international students have indeed improved. The behavior that has changed most is the more substantive action taken by them in entrepreneurship. That includes taking the time to learn entrepreneurial knowledge and experience, and actively seeking entrepreneurial projects and opportunities. However, international students who have no initial desire for entrepreneurial activities will not engage in entrepreneurial activities in the future. Moreover, multicultural cognition (MC) and overseas entrepreneurial perception (OEP) belonging to environmental factors make a significant impact on entrepreneurial intentions to a similar degree under the control of demographic variables and ENI-before. Multicultural cognitive is considered the most urgent need for international students to face and strengthen when they enter the overseas environment. That can not only quickly alleviate the cultural conflict but also accelerate the integration of international students into the new environment and promote the emergence of entrepreneurial awareness. Meanwhile, the perception of overseas entrepreneurship means that the entrepreneurial policies, education, knowledge, opportunities and atmosphere perceived by international students after studying in Hungary could increase their entrepreneurial intentions. In addition, the impact of multiple network construction (MNC) on international students' entrepreneurial willingness is not significant. That indicates that the impact of the relationship established between international students and relevant organizations or individuals in Hungary on the formation of entrepreneurial intentions is not ideal and needs improvement.

**Lastly**, many researchers propose that entrepreneurial self-efficacy is one of the critical factors influencing individuals to make entrepreneurial decisions in the entrepreneurial domain. The findings indicate that innovation and opportunity identification capability (IOIC), operation and management capability (OMC) and risk tolerance capability (RTC) of entrepreneurial self-efficacy all have an impact on the entrepreneurial intentions (ENI) of international students in Hungary, which meets the basic capability requirements for entrepreneurship. Based on these results, international students with the ability to identify innovation and opportunities could help them identify cultural and economic differences between their own countries and Hungary, thus seeking business cooperation opportunities. What's more, the ability to operate and manage is regarded by international students as an essential and indispensable ability that affects the successful operation and development of start-ups. At the same time, international students also recognize the positive and significant impact of risk tolerance on entrepreneurship. Individuals with high-risk tolerance tend to be more willing to start entrepreneurial activities. However, the capability of relationship coordination (RCC) has not achieved the desired results. It reveals

that international students in Hungary are relatively lacking in interpersonal skills and cannot provide substantial and effective help with their willingness to start a venture. In addition, the demographic characteristics of international students are also an essential factor that cannot be ignored. Students with entrepreneurial experience, a family business background, studying abroad at their own expense, and longer years studying in Hungary are relatively more likely to have a higher entrepreneurial intention. Such groups need to be highly concerned and cultivated to promote entrepreneurial behavior.

## **4.2 Implications and Recommendations**

This dissertation excavates the research on the employment and entrepreneurship of international students in Hungary from a more comprehensive point of view. Employment includes the choice of employment direction for international students and its potential reasons. Entrepreneurship includes an in-depth study of entrepreneurial willingness, self-perceived capabilities, and environmental factors, especially the key driving factors behind the intention formation of international students, which has important theoretical and practical significance for relevant policymakers and educational institutions. As the research on the present topic of international students in Hungary is generally lacking in the literature, it is necessary to explore this domain. The finding could provide references for the employment choices and entrepreneurship willingness formation of international students in Hungary and provide a database for the Hungarian government, universities and enterprises to learn more about foreign graduate students in Hungary from the perspective of sustainable development.

Entrepreneurship is generally regarded as essential to national innovation and economic growth. Different social environments and personal factors may produce different entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors. This study takes international students in Hungary as the research object. They need to quickly adapt to the new environment and change their mindset due to various cultural differences. This kind of cultural gap would accelerate their cross-cultural communication and understanding abilities. Thus, studying abroad helps them to perceive the trade gap between their own country and Hungary, which enables them to identify entrepreneurial opportunities and generate entrepreneurial intentions. In addition, the study on entrepreneurial self-efficacy of international students is meant to grasp the conception of their internal entrepreneurial capability, coupled with the influencing factors of the external environment, which could serve as a more comprehensive, effective, and deeper reference for entrepreneurial intentions in the context of Hungary. Therefore, it is imperative to propose corresponding measures according to the current context of international students in Hungary. Some suggestions are as follows:

**Firstly**, international students in Hungary are more likely to return home for employment or to work in other countries after graduation. Hungarian enterprises that would like to improve the level of diversification need to provide more internship opportunities for international students to enhance their work experience. That will make them more willing to stay and work in Hungary.

**Secondly**, the reason for international students who expect to stay and work in Hungary or other foreign countries is that they are more likely to gain work experience in the short run and be conducive to returning home to find a better job. Therefore, universities must consider how to convey their support to future and current students, including student employment services and how to effectively support the transition of graduates from the student stage to the employment stage, especially post-study work visas.

**Thirdly**, the Hungarian government and tertiary education institutions need to attach importance to the entrepreneurial intentions of international students and promulgate policies to encourage them to cooperate with Hungarian organizations or individuals further to promote foreign trade cooperation between Hungary and third countries.

**Fourthly**, most international students in Hungary are taught in English and do not understand Hungarian, so it is critical to strengthen the training of international students in Hungarian and create a platform suitable for international students to obtain entrepreneurial information.

**Fifthly**, due to the different cultural backgrounds of international students, providing targeted entrepreneurship-related education and training can stimulate their entrepreneurial awareness. More attention should be paid to stimulating students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy. It provides targeted cultivation of the four entrepreneurial capability dimensions and adopts the combination of entrepreneurship course teaching and external training to improve the connotation and effectiveness of entrepreneurship education.

**Lastly**, international students lack the capability to coordinate relationships internally, while the external environment does not provide a good multi-network construction in the context of Hungary. Therefore, the biggest obstacle international students face in Hungary is constructing and maintaining relationship networks. In this sense, it is necessary to provide entrepreneurial practice opportunities for international students, organize the network construction of entrepreneurs and create a good entrepreneurial atmosphere.

## 5. NEW SCIENTIFIC RESULTS

My research shows several novel scientific achievements from the deeper understanding of the group of international students in Hungary. The following is a summary of the main novelty of this study:

- 1. This study first comprehensively explores the choice of employment directions, changes, and specific reasons for international students in Hungary to return to their home country, stay in Hungary or migrate to other foreign countries. Meanwhile, this is the first study in the literature on the impact of external environment and internal self-efficacy brought about by overseas study experience on entrepreneurship among international students in Hungary.**
- 2. Most international students in Hungary prefer to return to work in their home countries after graduation, followed by other foreign countries, while they are relatively less willing to stay and work in Hungary. The willingness to work in Hungary and other foreign countries has increased significantly among them. It further proves that overseas experience greatly impacts the career development and employment choices of international students in Hungary.**
- 3. The push factors did not significantly impact the choice of employment in Hungary and other foreign countries. It means that international students choose to work abroad to consider the advantages and attractiveness of the foreign job market.**
- 4. The entrepreneurial intentions of international students in Hungary have indeed improved. They take more substantive actions toward entrepreneurship after coming to Hungary.** These include spending time learning entrepreneurial knowledge and experience, as well as actively looking for entrepreneurial projects and opportunities.
- 5. The multiple network constructions of environmental factors do not significantly impact the entrepreneurial intentions of international students in Hungary. Meanwhile, the relationship coordination capability among the internal self-efficacy factors did not achieve the desired effect. It manifests that international students in Hungary lack the construction and maintenance of organizational and personal relationships, whether in terms of external environmental impact or internal self-efficacy capability and cannot provide substantial and effective help to their entrepreneurial intentions.**

6. The questionnaires developed by this study provide several new scientific results for the research. **They can be used as questionnaires for the future development of a multigroup analysis of different countries.**

## 6. LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

1. Yao, L., **Wu, J.**, Rudnák, I. (2023). A Study on Gender Differences in the Performance of Leadership Traits in Chinese Internet Promotion Service Industry. *Acta Carolus Robertus 13: 1 pp. 104-118.*, 15 p.
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3. **Wu, J.**, Alshaabani, A, Rudnák, I. (2022). Testing the Influence of Self-Efficacy and Demographic Characteristics among International Students on Entrepreneurial Intention in the Context of Hungary. *Sustainability 14: 3 Paper: 1069*, 21 p. (2022) (**Scopus Q1 & WoS**)
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5. Betáková, J., **Wu J.**, Rudnák, I., Magda, R. (2021). Employment of foreign students after graduation in Hungary in the context of entrepreneurship and sustainability. *Entrepreneurship and Sustainability Issues 8: 4 pp. 553-570.*, 18 p. (**WoS**)
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