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## Conceptual Development of Academic Entrepreneurial Intentions Scale

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### Abstract

Academic entrepreneurship is recognized as one of the values created by universities with their mission of being an entrepreneurial university in addition to teaching and research. The “entrepreneurial university” concept carries out this mission with technology transfer and firm formation activities. “Academic entrepreneur” can be narrowly defined as a faculty or advanced level research student at a university who creates a new organization and bring his or her innovation/invention/solution to market as a commercial opportunity. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991) and Armitage & Conner (2001), the best predictor of this behavioral outcome of being involved in setting up an academic spin-off can be referred to as “academic entrepreneurial intentions”. There are various scales in place attempting to measure entrepreneurial intentions of adults and students such as Chen et al.’s Entrepreneurial Decision Scale (1998), Krueger et al.’s Entrepreneurial Intentions Scale (2000), Thompson’s Individual Entrepreneurial Intent Scale (2009), and Liñán & Chen’s Entrepreneurship Intentions Questionnaire (2009). However a more comprehensive scale needs to be developed to measure the target construct of entrepreneurial intentions of academics concerning the individual and contextual circumstances specific to the university settings and the nature of business. In this regard, similar attempts have taken place to develop a scale for measuring academics’ entrepreneurial intentions such as the study of Prodan and Drnovsek (2010) however the scale did not provide the specific dimensions to target academics. The most promising scale is of a recent study by Huyghe & Knockaert (2014). This research aims to offer a conceptual discussion of measuring academic entrepreneurial intentions promising a novel contribution to construct reliability and validity measures in the future as addressed by Clark & Watson (1995).

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## 1. Introduction

Academic entrepreneurship is recognized as one of the values created by universities with their mission of being an entrepreneurial university in addition to teaching and research. The “entrepreneurial university” concept carries out this mission with technology transfer and firm formation activities. “Academic entrepreneur” can be narrowly defined as a faculty or advanced level research student at a university who creates a new organization and bring his or her innovation/invention/solution to market as a commercial opportunity. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991) and Armitage & Conner (2001), the best predictor of this behavioral outcome of being involved in setting up an academic spin-off can be referred to as “academic entrepreneurial intentions”. There are various scales in place attempting to measure entrepreneurial intentions of adults and students such as Chen et al.’s Entrepreneurial Decision Scale (1998), Krueger et al.’s Entrepreneurial Intentions Scale (2000), Thompson’s Individual Entrepreneurial Intent Scale (2009), and Liñán & Chen’s Entrepreneurship Intentions Questionnaire (2009). However a more comprehensive scale needs to be developed to measure the target construct of entrepreneurial intentions of academics concerning the individual and contextual circumstances specific to the university settings and the nature of business. In this regard, similar attempts have taken place to develop a scale for measuring academics’ entrepreneurial intentions such as the study of Prodan and Drnovsek (2010) however the scale did not provide the specific dimensions to target academics. The most promising scale is of a recent study by Huyghe & Knockaert (2014). This research aims to offer a conceptual discussion of measuring academic entrepreneurial intentions promising a novel contribution to construct reliability and validity measures in the future as addressed by Clark & Watson (1995).

## 2. Literature Review And Propositions

### 2.1. A Broad Definition of Academic Entrepreneurship

Universities are recognized as knowledge producers, conservers and disseminators in traditional sense. However use of knowledge for commercial purpose has been questioned in terms of university entrepreneurial mission together with teaching and research, and legitimacy of such a mission. The question is whether the mission of conducting basic research for solely pursuit of knowledge and science contradicts with the role of generating applied research and industry oriented activities for commercial exploitation both benefiting individuals, society and economy. Embedded in these arguments of entrepreneurial university coined by Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff (1997), academic entrepreneur can narrowly be defined as the faculty staff at a university who creates a new organization and bring his or her innovation/invention/solution to market as a commercial opportunity. Spin-off activity at universities in the form of business ventures based on academic research (Shane, 2004) is a concept which came out with the systematic analysis of MIT model by Roberts (1991). Dickson and others claimed in 1998 (Gurău, Dana, & Lasch, 2012; Lundqvist & Williams Middleton, 2013) that academic entrepreneurs possess three different profiles: academic entrepreneur with entrepreneurial endeavors in addition to academic work; the entrepreneurial scientist who is full time involved in a business venture dedicating to scientific interests, scientific entrepreneurs who is involved in a firm both dedicated to business and scientific interests.

Klofsten and Jones-Evans (2000) defined the academic entrepreneurship activities, in addition to teaching and research roles of faculty, as following: large scale science projects obtained through public grants or industry support; contracted research for external organizations, sales of consulting for scientific or technological expertise; patenting and licensing research results to industry; formation of new firms exploiting university research; teaching to non-university based individuals and organizations; commercial sales of products developed in the university; provision of testing and calibration facilities to non-university based individuals and organizations. This broad definition extends the role of academic entrepreneurship to a new level not limited to firm formation. (Louis, Blumenthal, Gluck, & Stoto, 1989) also defined academic entrepreneurship in a similar form: large-scale science obtained through funds, consulting for knowledge, soliciting funds from industry, patenting and firm formation. Philpott, Dooley, O'Reilly, and Lupton (2011) defined the forms of academic entrepreneurship as following adopting from Jones-Evans and Louis et al.: creation of a technology park, spin-off formation, patenting and licensing, contract research, industry trainin courses, consulting, grantsmanship, publishing academic results,

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