

Conceptual paper

Measuring readiness for entrepreneurship: An information tool proposal



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ABSTRACT

A profound review of the literature on entrepreneurship reveals that it does not exist a specific information tool to measure the individuals' readiness for entrepreneurship. The purpose of this research has been building such kind of instrument to estimate the individuals' readiness for entrepreneurship. Its design takes in consideration the inclusion of the main variables identified by the literature as those most associated with entrepreneurial profiles. These variables have been grouped into three categories: sociological, psychological and managerial-entrepreneurial. Each group provides batteries of items which are evaluated thanks to a specific scoring system. The final objective is to provide a system to calculate individual scores of readiness for entrepreneurship and, at the same time, partial scores on concrete aspects of it. The information tool is presented at this paper and will be tested and refined in the near future.

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Midiendo la disposición para emprender: Propuesta de una herramienta de información

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La profunda revisión de la literatura asociada al análisis del fenómeno emprendedor pone de manifiesto la inexistencia de una herramienta de información específica para medir la disposición de las personas para emprender. El propósito de esta investigación ha sido el de diseñar un instrumento capaz de estimar la disposición de las personas hacia el emprendimiento. Su confección tiene en cuenta la inclusión de las principales variables identificadas por la literatura como aquellas más estrechamente relacionadas con los perfiles emprendedores. Estas variables han sido agrupadas en tres categorías: sociológicas, psicológicas y correspondientes al ámbito de la gestión empresarial. Cada grupo proporciona baterías de ítems evaluables gracias a un sistema específico de puntuación. El objetivo final es el de ofrecer un sistema capaz de calcular puntuaciones individuales de disposición para el emprendimiento y, simultáneamente, puntuaciones parciales sobre aspectos concretos de dicha disposición. La herramienta de información se presenta en este artículo y será probada, contrastada y refinada en un futuro próximo.

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Introduction

Entrepreneurship is crucial for having a healthy and rich economic structure characterized by high well-being levels (Saiz-Álvarez, Coduras, & Cuervo-Arango, 2014). The most dynamic countries in the world are characterized by the quality and quantity of their entrepreneurship, especially when expansive fiscal policies are limited, consumption is reduced, and investment (both foreign and domestic) is reluctant. As a result, the labor market is negatively affected in terms of higher unemployment and poverty generation, so it will be desirable to design a tool for measuring the readiness for entrepreneurship.

According to the existing literature concerning entrepreneurship, there is a range of psychological factors rooted on entrepreneurial education (Chen et al., 2015; Jiménez, Palmero-Cámara, González-Santos, González-Bernal, & Jiménez-Eguizábal, 2015; Oehler, Hofer, & Schalkowski, 2015; Piperopoulos & Dimov, 2015; Rauch & Hulsink, 2015; Saeed, Yousafzai, Yani-de-Soriano, & Moreno, 2015), need for achievement (Begley & Boyd, 1987) and working experience (Moog, Werner, Houweling, & Backes-Gellner, 2015); social factors based on gender (Bullough, de Luque, Abdelzaher, & Heim, 2015; Langevang, Gough, Yankson, Owusu, & Osei, 2015; Radhakrishnan, 2015), age (Harms, Luck, Kraus, & Walsh, 2014; Hatak, Harms, & Fink, 2015; Ouimet & Zarutskie, 2014), balanced entrepreneurial skills (Lazear, 2004), ability to interact with others (Baron, 2000) and family (Oezcan, 2011; Dunn & Holtz-Eakin, 2000); economic variables mainly grounded on corporate design, as decentralized structures are associated with opportunity realization of new business opportunities (Foss, Lyngsie, & Zahra, 2015), business strategy (Block, Kohn, Miller, & Ullrich, 2015), rurality (Ranjan, 2015), and immigration (Coduras, Saiz-Álvarez, & Cuervo-Arango,

2013). All these factors psychological, social, and economic variables interact in the desire to start a new business.

The objective of this paper is to propose a new instrument to measure the readiness for entrepreneurship. The importance for designing an information tool to measure the entrepreneur's availability to undertake is multiple: first, this instrument has interest to potential entrepreneurs so they know which is the ideal time to undertake; second, measuring the readiness for entrepreneurship facilitates the realization of job-generating economic policies, and, third, this instrument can improve the economic and social welfare in a country, regardless of their level of development. To cope with this goal, we begin defining the term "readiness for entrepreneurship" and we analyze its composition formed by sociological, psychological and entrepreneurial/economic variables. This will allow us to theoretically design and propose the instrument. Finally, we establish some conclusions and some future research lines will be drawn.

Readiness for entrepreneurship: definition and composition

A single definition is essential for measuring readiness for entrepreneurship as measuring a poorly defined concept would be impossible. To design and develop the information tool proposed in this paper, we adopt the following definition for readiness for entrepreneurship which constitutes one of the results achieved during the first stage of this research.

Definition (Ruiz, Ribeiro, & Coduras, 2016):

The readiness for entrepreneurship of individuals is defined as the confluence of a set of personal traits (or features) that distinguishes individuals with readiness for entrepreneurship as especially competent to observe and analyze their environment

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