



**The price of everything, and the value of nothing?
Stories of Contribution in Entrepreneurship Research**

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Stories of Contribution in Entrepreneurship Research

Introduction

This paper is concerned with academics who 'do' entrepreneurship research and not concerned with academic entrepreneurship, in the sense of university spin – outs for example. Landström and Persson (2010) note that the entrepreneurship discipline has developed significantly as a research field over the last three decades. Wiklund et al. (2011) similarly show that it has grown to rank among the larger groups of the Academy of Management. Audretsch (2012) comments that entrepreneurship research has gained considerable prominence in leading disciplinary and mainstream management journals. The increase in interest in academic entrepreneurship, centres upon the perceived economic benefits attained from the commercialisation of science and technological knowledge (Storey and Tether, 1998) and increased interest by policymakers, business practitioners and universities (McElwee and Atherton, 2005).

The extant literature considers the range and nature of entrepreneurial research outputs (Ireland and Webb, 2007) as opposed to the experience of the entrepreneurship researcher. Nevertheless, studies of entrepreneurship research, from a scholar's perspective, have begun to emerge. Frank and Landström's (2015) focus-group study of 'what makes entrepreneurship research interesting' highlights the importance of the relevance-rigour debate, and contrasts the emphasis of junior scholars on individual interestingness, with that of senior scholars on the interestingness of the field. Both groups agree that interesting entrepreneurship research is novel, relevant, and challenging. Smith et al (2013) draw upon insights from leading entrepreneurship scholars to identify and analyze the antecedents, processes, and consequences of qualitative entrepreneurship authorship. They find

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3 that the consequences of research include the generation of fine-grained richness that facilitates the
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5 understanding of multi-faceted complexities, that personal consequences such as intellectual
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7 enrichment, fun, confidence and frustration are also important, as well as the groundedness of
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9 qualitative work in engagement, relevance and stories of reality. Drakopoulou Dodd et al (2014)
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11 deploy the same dataset to examine, through a Bourdieuan lens, the processes, structures, and
12
13 relationships within qualitative entrepreneurship authorship. They demonstrate that these
14
15 qualitative researchers share an 'openness with regard to methodology and epistemology, an
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17 insistence upon grounded interaction with people and text, an explicit rejection of positivism, and a
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19 passion for the philosophy and practice of engagement' (2014:641). The capitals created through
20
21 qualitative authorship were identified as a range of personal benefits (such as interacting with new
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23 people, motivation, freedom, satisfaction, self-understanding), and benefits to the wider field's
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25 research project, through enhanced, richer understandings (2014:642). All three of these papers
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27 draw our attention to the researchers' perspective as to what contributions - what value, what
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29 *capitals* - entrepreneurship scholarship can achieve, highlighting the importance of grounding in
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31 practice (relevance), of personal development and intrinsic satisfaction, and of advancing shared
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33 knowledge in our field. The studies suggest that value is created for (and with) multiple stakeholders
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35 (oneself, the community, practitioners); that quality of intellectual contribution is assessed through
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37 depth, richness and novelty of understanding; and that extended and varied engagement with
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39 others is, in itself, both research process and contribution. However, Frank and Landström focus on
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41 one particular form of contribution – how *interesting* research is – and the Drakopoulou Dodd et al
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43 (2014) and Smith et al (2013) studies concentrate only on qualitative researchers, and include a wide
44
45 range of topics beyond research outcomes i.e. process, practice and antecedents. The studies
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47 provide an interesting foundation for directly considering in detail the research contribution of
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49 entrepreneurship scholarship, suggesting novel areas of investigation, whilst highlighting a clear
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51 research gap.
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3 This paper extends these recent studies, by exploring, challenging and deepening their initial
4 findings, and by focusing specifically on scholars' perceptions and experiences of the contributions of
5 entrepreneurship research. What value does entrepreneurship research create? What contribution
6 does our scholarship make, who for, and in what ways? How is the value of this contribution
7 recognized, assessed, measured, and rewarded (or not)? Given the blood, sweat and tears that our
8 community of practice expends on entrepreneurship research – the passion, commitment, time, and
9 intellectual heavy-lifting – it seems a little strange that these questions have not been raised more
10 clearly and frequently. This is particularly so in academic contexts increasingly shaped by external
11 and internal research metrics determining the award of tenure, promotion, and funding. Our study
12 aims to develop a grounded understanding of the value created by entrepreneurship research. It
13 does so by analyzing what entrepreneurship professors have told us about their perceptions and
14 experiences of research contribution. In so doing, we place the creators of entrepreneurship
15 research at the centre of this problematic, developing a scholar-driven framework of where our
16 research value lies, and the processes by which it is achieved.
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36 Ellson (2009) and Wilkins and Huisman (2015) describe the publication of academic papers in
37 learned journals as the ultimate outcome of scholarship and acclamation of application contribution,
38 knowledge and skill. Nevertheless, Erkut (2002) suggest that whilst some published research
39 produces no measureable impact on its respective discipline, other work has a profound effect. How
40 might such impact be identified? Ellson (2009) posits that the evaluation of academic research
41 remains debatable, subject to diverse, conflicting and contradictory patronage, and controversial in
42 application. Furthermore, Wilkins and Huisman (2015) argue that institutional managers and
43 governments have become obsessed with research quality even though there is minimal consensus
44 on what constitutes quality research and how it is recognised (Nedeva et al., 2012). For example,
45 Rao et al (2013) suggest that an important measure of research impact is number of citations that a
46 scholarly work achieves from its peers (Ranatunga and Romano, 1997; Leimu and Koricheva, 2005;
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3 Coleman et al., 2012), a stance which is far from uncontroversial. Geuens (2011) claims that an
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5 objective of many researchers is to achieve citations and increased prestige. Such an objective
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7 requires novel, and original research ideas and results. Whilst important to the field and
8
9 commendable, care should be taken that the results are also meaningful in a real world business
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11 context. Ellson (2009) suggests that research should focus on the needs of academic researchers,
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13 practitioners and students alike with the aim to provide solutions for contemporary business
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15 problems.
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21 Following Drakopoulou Dodd et al (2014)'s analysis of qualitative entrepreneurship authorship, a
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23 Bourdieuan theoretical lens is adopted. We focus on Bourdieu's Four Forms of Capital namely
24
25 economic, cultural, social and symbolic to examine the various types of value generated through
26
27 entrepreneurship research. Bourdieu's approach is particularly suitable, since his own work included
28
29 detailed studies of French academia, illustrating that 'just like any other field, academia is a struggle
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31 to establish and maintain the rules for legitimacy, membership, and hierarchy, and to determine the
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33 forms of capital which this game will value as its highest stakes' (Drakopoulou Dodd et al, 2014, ¹;
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35 Bourdieu, 1988:11). Pret et al (2015) review the deployment of this frame within the
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37 entrepreneurship literature, as well as carrying out a detailed analysis of capital creation and
38
39 conversion by a sample of rural craft entrepreneurs. They remind us that economic capital, (which
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41 they found *not* to play a dominant role) includes all financial and tangible assets; that cultural capital
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43 incorporates long-lasting dispositions, skills and education, and cultural goods; that symbolic capital
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45 is expressed in recognition, awards, status and legitimation; and that social capital is enacted in and
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47 through networked relationships with others. The potential relevance of this frame for exploring the
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49 contribution of entrepreneurship research is thus considerable, since it permits us to simultaneously
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51 consider the intellectual fruits of research (*objectified* cultural capital), the engaged and interactive
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56 ¹ For a detailed application of Bourdieu's wider theory, including forms of capital, to entrepreneurship theory,
57 and within the entrepreneurship literature, please Drakopoulou Dodd et al, 2014.
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3 nature of research contributions (social capital), the financial rewards of contribution (economic
4 capital), and the recognition which highly valued contributions achieve (symbolic capital).
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10 **Setting the Context**

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12 Before progressing to explore what entrepreneurship professors believe their research contribution
13 to be, a brief overview of current debates from the wider context is required. Three key areas where
14 discussion has been focused, within academia, but also in the wider public arena, are, the purpose of
15 the university; its relevance for practitioners; and the increase in national measurement
16 frameworks.
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27 The first debate relates to achieving the purpose and mission of universities, and the implications of
28 this for academia. The purpose of a university is seen to be the production and dissemination of
29 knowledge, and to achieve this end its employees undertake teaching, research and administration
30 (Harley et al., 2004). Blaxter et al., (1998) note that the archetypal academic role comprises all three
31 activities. However, Austin (2002) suggests that the role of the academic is changing with the need
32 to teach to specific learning outcomes, possess traditional subject matter expertise, use information
33 technology effectively, and integrate and apply knowledge and solve open-ended problems.
34 Consequently, academic careers are characterised by increased stress, pressure and uncertainty
35 (Rice et al., 2000). It is suggested that the academic must demonstrate a wider array of talents and
36 higher productivity (Fairweather, 1996; Massy and Wilger, 1995) than their predecessors. Moreover,
37 Weick (1970) suggests an academic must fulfil multiple roles including teaching, research and
38 university service to the profession which results in potential overload. The primacy of research is,
39 however, as Browning et al., (2014) suggest problematic; academic staff who do not research are
40 unlikely to develop fully as scholars, teachers and researchers (Orne, 1981; Weaver, 1982).
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3 Forster (2007) concludes that business people perceive that academics are publishing for each other
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5 and their research articles are becoming irrelevant to business, industry, and public sector
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7 practitioners. Armstrong et al., (2001) suggest that observers have criticized business research for its
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9 slow scientific progress, a particular challenge in the evolving business environment. Furthermore,
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11 increased student expectations of the relevance of their business education have been identified
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13 (Ellson, 2009). Frank and Landström's (2015) discussion of relevance and rigour, within
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15 entrepreneurship and management research arena, is a particularly thorough examination of this
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17 topic.
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23 Furthermore, as Browning et al. (2014) recognise, there has been an increasing focus on the
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25 assessment of research and linking government funding allocations to research quality and output,
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27 within the environment of tightening financial constraints within higher education globally. This is
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29 evidenced by national frameworks designed to assess quality, including "Performance Based
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31 Research Fund Quality Evaluation" (New Zealand), "Excellence in Research for Australia", the
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33 "Research Excellence Framework" (UK), "Research Assessment Exercise in Hong Kong",
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35 "Excellenzinitiative" (Germany), "Initiatives d'Excellence" (Idex, France), and "STAR METRICS" (USA).
36
37 Such frameworks systematically rank journals, scholars, and academic institutions (Adler and
38
39 Harzing, 2009). This increasing institutional pressure to publish in top ranked journals with high
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41 impact metrics, is a concern for UK scholars and elsewhere (Ortinou, 2011; Smith et al., 2013). Harley
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43 et al (2004) suggests considerable pressure is being put on individual academics to produce more
44
45 output for funding purposes. This has led to the privileging of research and the drive towards
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47 publication in high profile, international journals taking precedence over other aspects of the
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49 academic role and the rewarding of high achieving individuals for its accomplishment. It is evident
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51 that PhD students and academics will be 'unable to succeed in their jobs unless they are productive
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53 writers' (Gardiner and Kearns, 2012, p. 237).
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6 Harley et al., (2004) posit that such changes have positive and negative implications for academic
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8 careers. For high achievers there is the potential of encouragement, career progression, enhanced
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10 mobility and financial reward. From a negative perspective, the measurement of research activity
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12 performance gives the employing institution increased control over the academic career and its
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14 progression. At its most extreme, such measures have created insecurity of employment, loss of
15
16 autonomy, career inhibitors, enhanced peer competition and increased the potential of role failure.
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18 So, from one perspective it can still be claimed that an academic career provides several unique
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20 benefits in terms of freedom and autonomy and an opportunity to contribute to research in an area
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22 of personal interest (Bailyn, 2003). Contrastingly, Adler and Harzing (2009) note that scholars who
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24 seek the reputational and financial rewards that results from a successful research career face
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26 significant pressure to comply with stringent rules.
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32 Given this evolving context, and the dramatic increase in entrepreneurship scholarship, it is
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34 especially timely and significant to question “what value does entrepreneurship research create?”
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36 The study explicitly focuses on the experiences and perceptions of senior entrepreneurship
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38 researchers, to elicit understanding of research value held by those responsible for its creation. We
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40 recognize that the views of other relevant stakeholders, such as policy makers, and practitioners, are
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42 also important. However, our aim in this study has been to implement a detailed analysis of the
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44 value which entrepreneurship researchers believe they, and their community, achieve. To carry out
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46 a rounded exploration of this issue, it was necessary to consider also who value is created for, and
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48 how it is measured and recognized.
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52 53 54 55 **Methodology** 56 57 58 59 60

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3 This study employs a qualitative approach within which entrepreneurship researchers were asked to
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5 complete a research instrument to express their opinions on the value of their research and the
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7 extent to which their work contributes to knowledge and practice. Specifically, participants were
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9 asked to respond to six related questions, which were kept simple, broad and open, to encourage
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11 maximum flexibility in responses:
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- 13
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- 15
- 16 1. What is contribution?
- 17
- 18 2. Who measures contribution?
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- 20 3. What measures contribution?
- 21
- 22 4. Identify personal motivations for undertaking academic research.
- 23
- 24 5. Does your work make a difference?
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- 26 6. Do you make a contribution to knowledge? How do you know?
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32 The sample was drawn from full entrepreneurship professors from Australia, Europe, New Zealand ,
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34 the USA and UK. The authors decided to focus this study on established entrepreneurship research
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36 professors with an established track record of publication in the discipline as a benchmark study of
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38 expert respondents. The sample was identified through an internet search of Universities to identify
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40 established entrepreneurship professors. Each professor was emailed with a personalised message
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42 explaining the purpose of the research and a request to complete the questions enclosed within the
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44 communication. In total, 41 academic were contacted and 26 responding giving a response rate of
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46 63%.
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52 The data was initially analysed using NVivo software and organised by coding examples in which
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54 particular aspects of academic behaviour towards research contribution were explored. To analyse
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56 the data collected in a logical manner, a coding system was adopted to categorise the collected data
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(Jones and Jones, 2014). This involved a process of data reduction, display and conclusion drawing and verification based on the protocol proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). Within this process, the data was sorted into groups relating to the research themes identified in the literature (Smith, 1991). This axial coding narrative text approach was adopted to enable an accurate description of the data as related to the issue of academic contribution within the entrepreneurship discipline (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). This interpretation process involved multiple reviews by the researchers in order to explicate and refine understanding (Baskerville and Pries-Heje, 2001).

Insert Table One here

Following similar critical inspiration experience by other scholars, (including Terjesen and Elam, 2009:1100; Dodd et al 2014) 'during this process that it became apparent that our data could benefit from application of a conceptual framework', namely Bourdieu's theoretical frame (Pret et al, 2015). Our data was therefore re-categorised using this conceptual frame. In particular, Bourdieu's capital theory provided us with a helpful lens through which to view this dataset, as we hope the subsequent findings illustrate. Preliminary findings from the study were shared with colleagues at a major international conference, so as to provide reflexivity, by discussing and challenging the findings with a diverse group of entrepreneurship researchers. Analysis, findings, and theoretical framing were all re-visited and refined further following this helpful practitioner interaction, and further discussion amongst the authors.

Findings

Overview

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3 When we applied Bourdieu's Forms of Capital as an analytic frame to our dataset, patterns in the
4 nature of entrepreneurship researchers' cultural, social and symbolic capitals were revealed.
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6 Minimal reference was made to economic capital, which is a revealing finding, indicating that
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8 research contributions are not typically valued by measurements of their financial impact, whether
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10 upon the individual researcher, or other stakeholders. The processes by which these capitals are
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12 created, maintained, extended, combined and converted provide novel insights into how
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14 entrepreneurship scholars perceive their research and careers. In summary, entrepreneurship
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16 researchers engage in the creation of knowledge for a variety of personal and community-of-
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18 practice reasons (cultural capital), which they then share, in several ways, through interactions with
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20 four main groups of stakeholders (social capital). Recognition of the value of these interactions, and
21
22 the cultural capital shared through them, is manifested in a variety of forms by each stakeholder
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24 group (symbolic capital). The frame itself makes intuitive sense, and exhibits strong face validity. The
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26 benefit of the frame is as an analytic vehicle for exploring and reflecting on the nature of these
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28 capital forms, and the processes which link them; their relative significance to entrepreneurship
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30 researchers; their potential use as contribution measures, and the positive and negative attributions
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32 ascribed to them.
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40 At the centre of the frame are personal drivers for the creation of cultural capital, the set of
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42 knowledge, skills, experiences and dispositions adopted by entrepreneurship researchers, and the
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44 practices by which these are developed. We found four personal and intrinsic processes motivating
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46 respondents to engage in the generation of entrepreneurship cultural capital: intellectual curiosity,
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48 inherent enjoyment, a desire to influence thought, and, less positively, professional pressure.
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50 However, the majority of responses could be classified as processes which involved the transfer,
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52 sharing, evolution, or communication of this cultural capital with *others*. These others grouped into
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54 four clear "sets" of social capital relationships; the wider academic community; students;
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56 entrepreneurs/practitioners; and policy makers. In many cases, interactions were direct, and
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3 personal, through the enactment of social capital ties from all four sets, in written or verbal
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5 conversations. In other cases – most especially in the policy sphere – these were equally likely to be
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7 enacted through less direct means, including media coverage and debate. Some of these researcher
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9 interactions were enacted with relational ties from all four social capitals sets, such as receiving
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11 responses from those who had read specific research outputs, including conversations and debates.
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13 In other cases, the process of “making a contribution” was audience-specific. Sharing research
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15 through the practice of teaching was an interaction shared with students, specifically, for example.
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17 Researcher recognition and legitimation arising from these interactions also varied across the four
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19 different social capital groups, although for all, the over-arching theme of *using* cultural capital was
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21 key. Below, we present and explore each of these three forms of capital, and their significance in the
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23 life of entrepreneurship researchers, before drawing conclusions as to what novel cultural capital
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25 *this* research and writing process has developed, what our *own* contribution with *this* study might
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27 be.
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34 *Personal Drivers of Cultural Capital Creation*

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37 At the heart of the creation of academic cultural capital, and in line with the suggestions from earlier
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39 studies, we identified four main clusters of more personal, internal drivers; intellectual curiosity;
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41 inherent enjoyment; professional pressures; and the desire to influence thought (see Figure One).
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47 Firstly, participants depicted a cluster of rationales for writing around their inherent “curiosity about
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49 things”, their “personal intellectual development” and their desire to “make sense of the world
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51 around me”. Here, what is striking is the role that writing plays in working through their own sense-
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53 making: “I simply like to sit down and mull about what’s the most intriguing result to put into
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55 writing”. The discipline of writing “forces close examination of ideas and attention to logical
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57 inconsistencies and textual ambiguities”. As is discussed below, more often this sense-making,
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3 curiosity, and intellectual puzzling is experienced as a research community activity, as something
4 engaged in together, as an on-going, evolutionary enactment of co-creation. Yet there is also a
5 personal, private, rather solitary side to this aspect of writing, as researchers write-and-think for
6 themselves, by themselves: “to me writing is an extension of my thinking – if I do not write it down it
7 becomes fleeting and ephemeral” since “until I write things down, I can’t be sure what I think”.

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14 **Insert Figure One about here**
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20 Secondly, the intrinsic satisfaction of writing emerged as a significant driver of research, with
21 respondents describing the “joy in writing”, the “fun”, the “passion”, to the point that writing can
22 even be experienced as being “like an obsession”. Researchers told us that they write because they
23 “want to”, because they “enjoy ideas and ... enjoy the process of putting thoughts, research and data
24 together into a story”, and because writing leads to a “great deal of personal and professional
25 satisfaction”. Even within these powerful assertions of fulfilment and pleasure, however, there were
26 indications of the other tensions than can act as barriers to such delights: “the very act of writing is
27 itself therapeutic, but only when time permits and ideas deep back in my mind have opportunity to
28 surface”. This demarcation of joyful, essential writing from other professional obligations was also
29 indicated in relation to engagement with publishing: “I think there is a difference between writing
30 and publishing the writings. For me to write is to exist (as a researcher)”.

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46 The third intrinsic, personal driver to write continues this theme of professional pressures. Evident
47 within the dataset was the pressure to write because “in truth... it is expected of me”, because “it is
48 now a requirement of the job”; a “part of the job... (since) there is an expectation of output which
49 can only be achieved through writing”. Thus, “people are forced to write because of the industry
50 they are in”, and due to their “employment contract”. Several respondents linked enhanced writing
51 expectations to “the reduced status of teaching”. This sense of unwelcome compulsion contrasts
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3 with the exuberance of the personal joys associated with writing, with researchers noting both
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5 drivers as important stimuli for their writing. This multi-faceted, ambivalent, paradoxical and
6
7 conflicted nature of writing, of making a contribution, emerged at a several other points in our
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9 analysis, and appears to be one of the hallmarks of the research process.
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14 Linking cultural and social capital emerged as a motivator at the personal level, too, which is
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16 unsurprising given its importance in the remainder of our analysis, and, perhaps, the focus of our
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18 study. The desire to influence the thinking of others through research was distinct, with writing
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20 offering, for example, “just one opportunity or platform on which to promote my ideas/practice in
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22 order to gain access to places where I want to exert some form of influence”. Such influence was
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24 expressed as a will to “change ways of thinking”, so that “the ultimate motivator is that one’s
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26 research influences how others (scholars, educator, practitioners, public policy professionals) think
27
28 about entrepreneurship”. The fourth personal driver for engaging with the writing process, then,
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30 was outward looking, and encompasses the urge to shape others’ thinking and practice. Who these
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32 others are, and the nature of writers’ interactions with them, represent the major themes shared
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34 with us by the study’s participants.
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41 42 *Cultural, Social and Symbolic Capital Interactions*

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44 Beyond these personal drivers for writing, significant weight was placed on the cultural and social
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46 capital interface. Furthermore, it is through these interactions of researchers and their writing with
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48 significant others, that symbolic capital – legitimation and recognition – is achieved. Study
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50 participants depicted four main groups of stakeholders in their writing and research work (or, to use
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52 Bourdieusian terms, four main social capital sets); entrepreneurs/practitioners; students; policy
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54 makers; and other academics. The inherent complexity and diversity of the audience for
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56 entrepreneurship research, then, emerges strongly from the dataset. This is so pronounced that it
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3 has formed the main theming frame for our analysis of the remainder of these findings, as the
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5 subsequent sections illustrate. However, the nature of this audience diversity and complexity is a
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7 significant theme in its own right, as an over-arching element in the shaping and evaluation of
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9 research contribution. The multiple audiences for our writing are perceived, as we have seen, to
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11 include academics, and our leadership, as well as practitioners, policy-makers, and students.
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13 Moreover, multiple levels of audiences are identified including, “personal, team, department,
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15 faculty, university as well as local, regional, national and international”:

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21 “To me contribution is a multi-layered activity. It exists at personal, institutional and disciplinary
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23 levels. I want my work to make a contribution to topic and subject knowledge. It has to be useful to
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25 someone (other academics primarily) but also contribute at a theoretical, methodological,
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27 conceptual and/or practical level. Being of use to practitioners is very important to me.”

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33 Building on this audience complexity, many respondents note a multi-faceted imperative placed on
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35 entrepreneurship research writing, For many respondents, this demands that all writing make both a
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37 theoretical contribution, and impact upon practice in some meaningful way, since whilst “theory
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39 may or may not contribute to immediate practical knowledge that supports solving a specific
40
41 problem here and now ... it should contribute to a wider understanding of the activities studied and
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43 contextual influences impinging upon them”. Whilst commonalities, overlaps and movement
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45 between these four sets of social capital groups are evident, there remains adequate differentiation
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47 between them to merit separate analysis, as entrepreneurship scholars strive to create and share
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49 practitioner knowledge, to impact public discourse and debate within the policy sphere, to impact
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51 student knowledge through writing and teaching interactions, and to contribute to the academic
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53 environment through critical conversations, recognising the controversies around contribution
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55 metrics.
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Creating and Sharing Practitioner Useful Knowledge

Many of our respondents explicitly stated that they perceive contribution to be, in part, the creation and sharing of useful knowledge with practitioner entrepreneurs. Although this means research findings “are filtered through the prism of their particular agendas”, nonetheless as a community we value the practical relevance of our writing for entrepreneurs. The transmission of this cultural capital to the practice world takes several forms, including roundtables, writing for professional media, training programmes for entrepreneurs, and “contributing to stakeholder debates”. These interactions with entrepreneurs take the vehicle of novel cultural capital – new academic knowledge –, enacting the social capital that connects and bridges the worlds of theory and praxis. The rich social capital inherent in these interactions can be expressed in a series of research interactions, underpinned by trust: “entrepreneurs keep on trusting me by facilitating my gathering of data and by participating in roundtables or conferences that I organize with their collaboration; this trust allows me to think that my works contribute to a useful knowledge (the most important thing for me)”.

Although minimal attention was made of Symbolic Capital being developed through such research interactions with practitioners, it was noted for many other diverse social capital sets to be viewed as a legitimate entrepreneurship scholar, research contributions are required. One respondent noted that the micro-business community had also supported their work by recognising it explicitly during consultations with senior policy makers. Thus, in spite of the stated importance of research contributions being useful for entrepreneurs, it appears that few of us have experience of this being translated into formal, measured institutional approval.

Insert Table two here

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8 *Impacting Students: Writing and Teaching Interactions*
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11 Students also comprise an important social capital set for whom entrepreneurship researchers write,
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13 and with whom they interact both to share their writing, and to enhance its contribution. In terms of
14
15 the content of writing, theory, practical contributions, “case studies (derived from ... academic
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17 research”, and enterprise education research all offer opportunities for linking writing and teaching.
18
19 There are a variety of processes through which this takes place, according to our participants.
20
21 Writing, by maintaining and extending the researcher’s own expertise, leads to stronger classroom
22
23 performance, and to students who appear “to be happy to attend my lectures”: “I also learn when I
24
25 write in my subject area and this informs my teaching and hopefully inspires my students; at least
26
27 they tell me they’re inspired!” Equally, fellow academics may take our writing into their classroom:
28
29 “my best praise comes via emails from readers/followers who express that a particular paper almost
30
31 spoke to them and that they use it in their teaching”.
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37
38 Conceptual research deepens and extends students’ theoretical analysis of entrepreneurship, this
39
40 being especially relevant for teaching and training of graduate students. Similarly, research with
41
42 practical implications informs teaching by enhancing the ways in which students are prepared for
43
44 entrepreneurship, for example by making them “aware of the challenges they face”. The distinction
45
46 between these two types of students is relevant, as are the heuristics used for considering the
47
48 impact of contribution made: “in the long run I know I have contributed to my doctoral students
49
50 being able to think and my MBAs in starting and sustaining ventures”. Engaging with students
51
52 through our writing is an important vehicle through which entrepreneurship researchers can help
53
54 develop these relational others, so that they successfully evolve into members of the practitioner
55
56 social capital set, (by becoming strong entrepreneurs) or the academic stakeholder group. By
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3 deploying cultural capital (their writing) within student interactions, researchers facilitate the
4
5 movement of other “players” around the categories of social capital sets we have identified. Thus, to
6
7 some degree, entrance to membership of the practitioner/entrepreneur, and the academic, social
8
9 capital sets is itself shaped by interactions around and through the writing of entrepreneurship
10
11 researchers. Our own cultural capital forms the content of interactions with others, and these social
12
13 capital inter-relationships enhance outcomes, satisfaction, and impact for all parties to the
14
15 relationships. This process continues through writing with early career researchers, who can be
16
17 broadly understood as “students”, again linking writing and teaching: “I also write / co-author to
18
19 train my younger researchers in writing academically”.

20
21
22 When considering the recognition and legitimation of deploying writing successfully through student
23
24 interactions, the dataset provided us with stimulating, examples of the generation of symbolic
25
26 capital. Being invited to share enterprise education expertise with other institutions is identified as a
27
28 sign of recognised contribution in this area, as is the adoption of course models by other universities.
29
30 This institutionalisation of one’s writing into the wider field of enterprise education is seen in “the
31
32 extent to which your work is integrated in some derivative way into leading textbooks or
33
34 instructional materials that reflect how aspects of entrepreneurship are explained and taught”.
35
36 Additionally, symbolic capital and personal satisfaction, are achieved when “a student launches a
37
38 firm, or sells the firm they started in my classes and made money”.

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45 **Insert Table four here**

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48 **Insert Table five about here**

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53 *The Public and Policy Sphere: Impacting Public Discourse and Debate*

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56 A core theme to emerge from the dataset with relation to the policy and support sectors was the
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3 contribution to national discourse, through policy and media debates, and as “the knowledge gained
4
5 from the writing percolates into society”. This contribution was experienced through media
6
7 coverage, inclusion in policy reports, as well as via personal feedback, public acknowledgements,
8
9 and the opportunity to present work to policy makers, since “contribution to knowledge occurs
10
11 when the peer reviewed article gets picked up the public media and a wider discussion takes place”.
12
13 Whereas with teaching interactions, direct personal contact with known others was the main
14
15 medium through which the contribution of writing was enacted, here the emphasis is on more
16
17 public and indirect modes of communication. Thus, making a difference in the policy sphere may be
18
19 achieved through research writing which would not be highly valued using more formal academic
20
21 metrics:
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24
25 “My piece of work that has made the biggest difference was published as a research note in a
26
27 domestic journal. It spawned comment, criticism, debate, linkages, had policy impact and made a
28
29 difference to national debate”.
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34 However, a note of caution was sounded by the scholar who noted that “policy-makers...have their
35
36 own objectives which means research findings are filtered through the prism of their particular
37
38 agendas”. Furthermore, “being asked to contribute to policy making has as much to do with
39
40 communication skills as academic content”. Such points highlight the significance of on-going
41
42 interactions with others, as writers’ cultural capital – their new knowledge – is communicated to
43
44 others, debated, and re-shaped to meet their needs. Cultural capital, in the process of making an
45
46 impactful contribution, is always being evolved and co-created by other stakeholders within the
47
48 framework of their social capital set. Warnings were sounded about the dangers of writing too
49
50 closely to the agenda of powerful stakeholders, where “demonstrating ‘impact’ might involve
51
52 supporting organisations and practices constitutive of the status quo, rather than being critical of
53
54 them”. Here, we see that co-creation of knowledge can work reflexively also, with academic writing
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3 being shaped by the perceived demands of others, even when “whether such orientations
4
5 necessarily give rise to the ‘best explanation’ is a moot point”.
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10 An important vehicle for achieving such contributions was seen to be the introduction of novel,
11
12 poorly understood or under-recognised knowledge to the policy sector achieving impact through
13
14 “the recognition of a new principle or fact previously not considered or fully understood”. The
15
16 creation and sharing of novel knowledge is also a major theme when participants consider their
17
18 impact upon the academic community, as we shall illustrate.
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24 Turning to symbolic capital, the recognition of contribution in the public and policy arenas was
25
26 associated with the writer, and their writings, being employed to shape policy at the highest levels
27
28 possible, within government and socio-economic development agencies. Participants variously
29
30 reported, for example, an “award from business mentors in the House of Lords”; “having the UN’s
31
32 Chief of Entrepreneurship as a research student”, “being invited to lead new proposals from the
33
34 OECD”, and having presented their “research to four Prime Ministers in the UK”.
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41 In addition to highlighting potential significance of entrepreneurship writing to the policy and public
42
43 sphere, these findings raise issues relating to the co-creation of knowledge, and suggest a set of
44
45 contribution metrics specific to this arena. These are both topics considered in our discussion of the
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47 study’s findings.
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52 **Insert Table six here**
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55 **Insert Table seven here**
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3 *Contributing to the Academic Environment: Critical Conversations and Controversial Metrics*
4

5 Within the scholarly academic environment, impact and contributions are sought at “various levels:
6 personal, team, department, faculty, university as well as local, regional, national and international”.

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9
10 Much of this academic social capital set comprises those interested and engaged with the subject of
11 entrepreneurship, where contributions interactions tend towards a variety of conversations.

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13
14 However, other important social capital can be developed, through our research contributions, with
15 those whose interest in the content of entrepreneurship scholarship is of secondary interest to its
16 achieved impact. For example, institutional managers, , “read” impact and contribution signals as
17 indicating our standing as individual scholars, as entrepreneurship departments/centres, and as a
18 field of enquiry. Some of the contribution indicators discussed by our respondents – citations and
19 journal rankings, for example – are valued as forms of symbolic capital both within and beyond the
20 actual field of entrepreneurship scholarship. Other forms of cultural and social capital developed
21 within the academic community via entrepreneurship research are inherently content-focused, and
22 hence largely field-specific, such as generating and sharing novel knowledge, or engaging in research
23 debate.
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39 **Insert Table eight here**
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44 Being noticed, and read, is the first and most basic process of one’s cultural capital becoming the
45 currency of social capital development within academia. Engaging the attention of others is,
46 perceived to be a valuable contribution, and this interaction of others with one’s research writing is
47 converted into social capital through conversations where writers are told (via email, at conferences,
48 etc) that their work has been read and valued. However, this is increasingly complicated “as we sink
49 into ever deeper silos and lack the objectivity required by those with broader, perhaps
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3 interdisciplinary approaches”, so that “those who think narrow look for detailed analysis, whilst
4
5 those who think wider look for perceived relevance and connectivity”.

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10 Beyond this simple acknowledgement of readership, many of our respondents’ contribution to
11
12 knowledge was seen to emerge through debate around their writing, by influencing others, by
13
14 seeing their work utilised by others, and thus contributing to the “wider research community”. The
15
16 developmental nature of the shared research conversation was emphasized, so that writing makes a
17
18 contribution even though – or, indeed, because, it is “not something specifically correct as it were,
19
20 but more of a prototype that is part way through its evolution that is ‘beta tested’ by peers”. Our
21
22 ideas and research - our cultural capital – grows further and develops through challenges,
23
24 conversations, and critique from others. Indeed, it is clear that acceptance of their writing is not per
25
26 se what our participants seek, but being “able to put up knowledge to be challenged”. We can see,
27
28 through these processes, that it is not only researchers’ cultural capital which builds their social
29
30 capital relationships, through scholarly interaction, but also the converse: social capital relationships
31
32 build, develop and co-create researchers’ cultural capital too. Indeed, this is highlighted to such a
33
34 degree that it could be argued that cultural capital, in the process of making a contribution, becomes
35
36 a co-created and co-owned community resource, through the shared evolution of its use and
37
38 meaning.
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43 A cognate social-to-cultural capital conversion phenomenon can be observed in the dataset
44
45 responses, where participants state that their “practice involves creating a) *conceptual frameworks*
46
47 and/or b) acting as a *meta-data analyst* to support the development of others”, and setting
48
49 “boundaries for others who want to do research into similar topics”. Related supportive activities
50
51 include making resources (e.g. time, money and contacts) available to empower writing of
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53 colleagues, since “time and space to think is a gift to be able to give someone”, and, similarly, “acting
54
55 to make a (tacit) contribution to support colleagues in the entrepreneurship research community
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3 (e.g. coach or mentor)". Overall, there is a very sense "we tend to agree that contribution is a 'team
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5 level' activity".
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16 It was apparent from the dataset that writers, drawing on conceptual understandings of innovation,
17 recognise the substantive value and contribution made by *both* incrementally novel cultural capital,
18 *and* the radically novel. Adding to the entrepreneurship knowledge base, building our shared pool of
19 cultural capital, is valued in its own right; deepening, "refining", enriching, filling gaps through
20 "incremental" research are perceived to be valuable ways of making a difference. Participants told
21 us that "an intellectual contribution must ... enrich the theoretical knowledge", and that they write
22 "because of a belief that there are gaps in our understanding that are critical, and that I may be able
23 to make a contribution".
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33 As with the policy sphere, radical novelty is perceived to be an important form of contribution that
34 our writing can make within the academic community. Novelty is variously understood as the
35 creation of "something which adds a new perspective to old questions, something which suggests
36 new solutions, something which bridges different perspectives"; as "adding something new ...
37 looking at a question in a different way, applying a new theoretical lens to a question, using a
38 different method or gathering data from a different place". A special value ascribed to the sharing of
39 cultural capital that challenges the status quo, "which questions what we have taken for granted,
40 which pushes boundaries". Such a contribution, however, through "ideas that really turn the
41 discussions to new directions", cannot be seen "when they happen but they need years or even
42 decades to mature".
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8 Considering the creation of symbolic capital within the academic community, it is evident that
9 success in scholarly writing is a crucial process to enhance “personal reputation – recognition by
10 others that I am doing interesting, useful or high-quality work”, since “publication in a journal, and
11 its perceived value for the group, is also a measure of value”. There is an element of mutuality, and
12 community, evident in these forms of symbolic capital, which is interlinked with the social capital
13 network of scholars: “amongst a group of UK small business scholars it seems that I am well
14 regarded, in the same way that I hold others in this group in high regard”. It is not de facto necessary
15 to achieve star researcher status, based on conventional metrics, to be well regarded within the
16 field. An evocative metaphor compared this more rounded peer approval to “the sort of informal
17 accolade that attaches itself to certain types of sportsmen and women the players’ player, someone
18 that isn’t perhaps a star player, but that is nevertheless highly regarded because of their perceived
19 integrity, way of playing or some other attribute that singles them out”.
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34 Though the legitimization and recognition accruing to scholarly writing is not regarded as the award
35 of *individual* symbolic capital, but adds to the prestige of writers’ departments, research centres,
36 and universities, as well as to the entrepreneurship field collectively. For example, scholars explained
37 that they “write because I think it helps support the legitimacy of entrepreneurship as a unique
38 discipline deserving of scholarly attention”, and because “it helps build the image and reputation of
39 the institution with which I am affiliated at the time, and raises the legitimacy of entrepreneurship
40 within that institution”. Once more, we perceive the collective, communitarian nature of much
41 capital (whether cultural, social or symbolic) generated and converted through scholarly writing
42 about entrepreneurship.
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3 A considerable number of our participants debated the role of elite journals, their readers and
4
5 editors, in the measurement and validation of writing contribution. Here, we see the interweaving of
6
7 social, symbolic and cultural capital, as research writing (cultural capital) is awarded community
8
9 status (symbolic capital) through media which “belong” to a specific group of people, the
10
11 interactions of whom (enactment of social capital) shape the impact of scholarship substantially. The
12
13 positive aspects of this respected peer-based system were celebrated, and there is clear recognition
14
15 of the importance of “the quality of the journal in which the contribution is published”.

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21 Nevertheless, a level of ambivalence was evident as to the double-edged swords which all
22
23 established, institutionalised measures of success, including publishing in elite journals, represent.
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25 For example, the correlation between journal standing and article impact is neither automatic nor
26
27 obvious, since “overall I think the journal rankings correlate with the quality of the articles published,
28
29 I think it would be misleading to think that the articles in the ‘better’ journals automatically make a
30
31 more substantial contribution than the articles in the other journals”. Doubts were raised about the
32
33 effects of concentrating influence in the hands of “those that hold institutional power within groups
34
35 through journal editorships”. For example, comments were made as to the potential conformity this
36
37 desire to win recognition from the elite might engender, since “by potency I want my papers to
38
39 conform to whatever qualitative genre/area I am writing in. I care deeply about how my writing is
40
41 perceived”. Again, there is a both a positive and negative connotation to this conformity, which is
42
43 seen here to lead to more potent writing. Other participants expressed concerns as to the downside
44
45 of top journal-focused conformity, arguing that “authors may be tempted to follow suit, copying
46
47 approaches and analyses they perceive to be popular in high-ranked journals in order to get
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49 published. ... there is a lot of bandwagon jumping, where authors adopt concepts introduced by
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51 others, in order to obtain favourable responses from editors/reviewers”.

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3 Other anxieties included the size of this elite audience of elite journal readers may be a “small
4 constituency” so that “the chance to ‘make a difference’ may be limited”. This potential for limiting
5 impact through a focus on journal impact factor is linked to the fact that “of our 100 plus journals,
6 most have a low impact factor or only impact a small slice of the discipline”. Indeed, one author,
7 whilst acknowledging ranking and rating systems, noted that their most impactful piece of work
8 “was published as a research note in a domestic journal”. Here, again, we see the trade-off between
9 measurement, assessment, and legitimation of differing forms of contribution, and the conversion of
10 cultural capital into diverse, and perhaps mutually exclusive, forms of symbolic capital.
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23 “There is also a risk in letting contribution be defined by a narrow group of editors/reviewers who
24 advise on/accept submissions to elite-ranked journals. This might encourage conservatism in what
25 editors choose to publish and in what authors choose to submit. Journal editors facing commercial
26 as well as intellectual pressures might lean towards accepting papers that perpetuate, rather than
27 challenge, existing lines of thinking, to avoid dropping down the journal hierarchy.”
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34 In line with Bourdieu’s view of the agonistic nature of specific fields, and the dominance of elites,
35 contribution was seen to be “knowledge that is regarded by elites of particular groups as rigorous or
36 interesting or novel for some reason... it is a group and these compete against each other for
37 primacy for the rights to represent certain subject or topic domains”. Similarly, “if we are honest,
38 writing/publishing is a kind of competition”. These competitive understandings of the nature of
39 academic writing, and its contribution, whilst a minority theme, are nevertheless an indication of the
40 complex nature of the phenomenon, which is both competitive and collaborative, individual and
41 communitarian, creative and conformative.
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3 It is, however, when we consider the related themes of citations, and the UK's Research Excellence
4 Framework (REF) that the greatest ambivalence is demonstrated as to how our cultural capital is
5 converted into institutionalised symbolic capital. Citation indices, in particular, are highlighted by
6 participants as a key measures of recognition and legitimation, yet heir shortfalls are lamented, so
7 that "citations are one of the simplest forms of measuring contribution but they can also be
8 misleading". Participants tell us that they know they make a difference because they have
9 "respectable Citation Indexes, including Google Scholar", and that their work is "cited significantly by
10 academics, researchers, student, practitioner and policy makers in the UK and abroad". This support
11 may be due to the perception that while "citation statistics are over-blown, they are a proxy
12 measure for impact over time", as well as the transparency of this symbolic capital measure.
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28 Scepticism about over-reliance on citation indices is based on several factors, with participants
29 noting, inter alia, that such an approach does not allow for the recognition of the applied impact of
30 research, and researchers: "I think the use of citations as a guide is inherently flawed, not least
31 because those who adopt it may well be working in 'hands on' situations". Additionally, the pursuit
32 of citations, and similar formal success, may lead academics "in a resource-constrained, and
33 competitive, funding environment ... to devote increasing effort to publicising marginal differences
34 in imperfect indicators rather than taking action to improve the real quality of their research".
35 Similarly, an anxiety was expressed that "authors often write papers intended to attract citations but
36 which offer limited novel insight". There was a pronounced anxiety about "gaming" of the system
37 which may be facilitated, if not actively encouraged, by an over-reliance on citation indices, and
38 other ranking measures of contribution:
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55 "Obviously, important prior work should be referenced when presenting an argument but authors
56 commonly cite work in order to convince editors/reviewers that their study is of similar quality to
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works widely regarded as exemplary, even though such work may be tangential to the author's specific arguments. Editorial 'advice' to authors to cite supposedly related work from the same journal – but, more cynically, to increase journal impact factors – also encourages gaming. Authors keen to get published no doubt accept editors' advice."

The UK's REF, which allocates government research funding to universities and departments largely on the basis of perceived publication quality, comes in for related critiques, which argue that "by assessing academic work in a particular way" REF "is arguably having all kinds of unwanted side effects, which may undermine research quality".

Insert table twelve here

Conclusions

Our analysis illustrates that entrepreneurship scholars identify four personal drivers that stimulate them to write, produce cultural capital. These comprise intellectual curiosity, inherent enjoyment, a desire to influence thought, and, less positively, professional pressure. This study contributes new understanding towards a limited literature in the entrepreneurship discipline. Looking beyond the individual, to the embeddedness of entrepreneurship writers within a social capital nexus, the data presented evidence of four main groups of stakeholders with whom this cultural capital is shared, and with whom a variety of contributions are sought, measured and recognised: the wider academic community; students; entrepreneurs/practitioners; and policy makers. Research relevance is a much discussed topic, and our study demonstrates that within entrepreneurship these four specific groups

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2
3 are seen to form the social capital nexus wherein such relevance is co-created. The interactive
4
5 nature of the generation of relevant contributions was highlighted in our findings, such that cultural
6
7 capital (objectified in research output) appears to be converted into symbolic capital (highly valued
8
9 contributions) through the processes of social capital interactions. Although we found similarities in
10
11 some of the processes of cultural capital exchange, co-creation, and evaluation across groups (direct
12
13 interaction to converse and debate useful knowledge, for example), we identified some group-
14
15 specific practices, summarised and reflected upon below.
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21 Creating and communicating knowledge which is useful to entrepreneurs, which informs practice,
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23 was highlighted as being of crucial importance for our participants. However, there was minimal
24
25 evidence of such contributions being measured, legitimated and rewarded by the wider stakeholder
26
27 community, beyond feedback from specific entrepreneurs. We suggest that research policy in this
28
29 area - within and beyond universities - consider the need for metrics and celebrations of such
30
31 contributions. An emphasis upon Impact Case Studies within the Research Excellence Framework is
32
33 an indication of policy movement in this direction within the UK, although this was not remarked
34
35 upon by participants.
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41 Writing was also perceived to make an impact upon teaching interactions with students, both by
42
43 shaping and enhancing their entrepreneurial practices, and by providing conceptual developments
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45 to strengthen the understanding of students. Here, the impact of writing could be perceived in the
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47 movement of students from this status, to another stakeholder group, as they develop into
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49 entrepreneurs, or academics. Helping to move other individuals from one social capital set to
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51 another, enhancing these movements, and shaping the field's membership may thus be an
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53 additional valuable contribution made through entrepreneurial research writing. Again, it is through
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3 the social capital of on-going relationships with students and graduates that this form of high-value
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5 contribution should be experienced.
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10 Within the public and policy sphere, impactful contributions were associated with one's writing
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12 informing public debate, within the media, but also within the workings of government and its
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14 support services, through reports, committee work, and advising. Symbolic capital accrued from the
15
16 level and extensiveness of debate generated, and from the seniority of politicians drawing upon
17
18 scholarly writing. The dangers of an over-eagerness to please stakeholders within this sphere was
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20 regarded as a threat to the quality, innovation and independence of academic writing, however.
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26 Much of our dataset focused upon contributions to the academic environment, a complex and multi-
27
28 layered social capital nexus, comprising team, department, institution, and our discipline at local,
29
30 regional, national and global levels. Cultural capital is only converted into social and symbolic capital
31
32 within this environment if writing is first noticed and read. However, interacting in the critical
33
34 research conversation, through both novel and more incremental contributions, was especially
35
36 valued. Citation metrics, journal rankings and governmental research reviews were perceived as
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38 double edged swords. It may be the case that, these measures also have the potential to
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40 concentrate power in the hands of an elite, perhaps undermining novelty, and of encouraging
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42 gaming, so that scholars are motivated to pursue success in the measure, rather than quality in
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44 writing.
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51 Our analysis illustrates that much of the motivation, the contribution, and the perception of success
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53 which researchers ascribe to their writing and publishing is inherently embedded in, and manifested
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55 through, interrelations with others. More formally expressed, the evolution and legitimation of
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3 cultural capital, as it becomes converted into symbolic capital, is largely interwoven with the
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5 development and enactment of social capital.
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11 In terms of limitations the authors recognise that this study represents an initial snapshot of a
12
13 limited sample of entrepreneurship professors. The generalisability of the results must therefore be
14
15 treated with caution. We recognise that our sample is UK centric. The authors recognise the need
16
17 for further research in this area. In the present article we set out what we have learnt from this first
18
19 stage of our study. This represents the “what”, “with whom”, and “why” of entrepreneurship
20
21 research contribution. As such, it illustrates a useful, informative and timely picture of our field. The
22
23 second stage of the study will entail a large-scale, international, quantitative survey to assess
24
25 patterns of universalizability around the frame presented here, and to identify contextual and
26
27 personal drivers that shape the patterns found thus far. We anticipate that the study’s second
28
29 survey phase will add further evidence to our understanding of what contributions matter to
30
31 different types of entrepreneurship researchers (in terms of age, gender, experience, research
32
33 experience etc), in diverse contexts. The study has identified a range of informal metrics of
34
35 entrepreneurship research contribution, and we hope that these will form the basis of further
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37 research and debate around institutional research assessment, especially given the reservations
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39 expressed by our participants as to the dangers of over-reliance on citations indices and journal
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41 rankings.
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TABLES AND FIGURES

Table One: Sample Demographics			
<i>Country</i>	<i>Number of Respondents</i>	<i>Total Word Count per Country for all Respondents</i>	<i>Average Word Count per Country by Respondent</i>
Australia	1	187	187
Denmark	2	482	241
Finland	2	1901	951
France	2	861	431
Germany	1	779	779
UK	13	10115	778
USA	5	1925	385
Total	26	16250	536

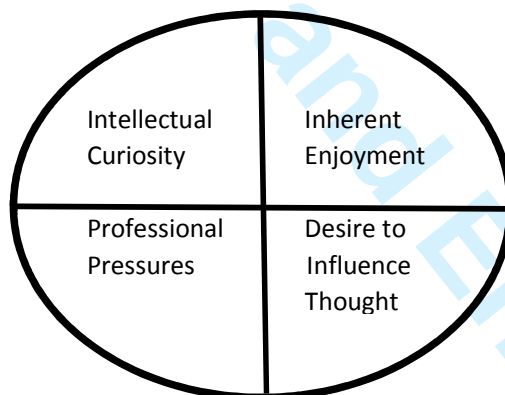
Figure One: Personal Drivers of Cultural Capital Creation

Table Two
Creating and Sharing Practitioner Useful Knowledge – Illustrative Data
I just want to bring some specific ... solutions / recommendations to managers
By its impact on the professional environment/business world (for example, the opportunity to present the results of a research during a roundtable with the participation of some entrepreneurs or the opportunity to publish a short article in a professional journal).
An intellectual contribution ... and more particularly in the domain of entrepreneurship, has to be directly useful to the entrepreneur/manager in a SME/intrapreneur.
Informal feedback from people who actually used the knowledge is far more enriching than other methods of measurements.

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Table Three		
Creating and Sharing Practitioner Useful Knowledge – in Summary		
<i>Cultural Capital in Process</i>	<i>Symbolic Capital “Measures”</i>	<i>Risks. Dangers& Challenges</i>
Roundtables, conferences, and training programmes for entrepreneurs	Contribution is measured and celebrated via feedback from specific entrepreneurs, and their organizations, through personal interaction, emails, and ongoing participation in research studies	There is little evidence of such contributions being otherwise measured, legitimated and rewarded by the wider stakeholder community
Writing for professional media		
Contributing to stakeholder debates		

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Table Four
Writing and Teaching Interactions – Illustrative Data
“Used much of the outcomes of my research in the content and teaching methods we use”
“I find that the research behind my writing, especially when it is conceptual work, informs my teaching.”
“I try to push at the boundaries of current research and then to present this to for example student cohorts as some new thinking”
“I value guest speaking slots and the like. For example at XXXXX tomorrow I will be proposing new ‘in curriculum’ developments”

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Table Five		
Writing and Teaching Interactions – in Summary		
<i>Cultural Capital in Process</i>	<i>Symbolic Capital “Measures”</i>	<i>Risks and Dangers</i>
Conceptual research deepens and extends students’ theoretical analysis of entrepreneurship - especially relevant for the teaching and training of graduate students	The successful movement of students to another stakeholder group, as they develop into entrepreneurs, or fellow academics.	None mentioned
Writing maintains and extends the researcher’s own expertise, leading to stronger classroom performance	Satisfied, engaged and motivated students	
Research with practical implications enhances the ways in which students are prepared for entrepreneurship	Use of research findings by other teachers, and in textbooks	

Table Six	
Impacting Public Discourse and Debate – Illustrative Data	
	“my work makes a difference. It has been used in national debates, ... it has encouraged people to debate.”
	“I think that contribution to knowledge occurs when the peer reviewed article gets picked up the public media and a wider discussion takes place.”
	“I am aware of my research being sited in reports to US presidents and Australian/New Zealand prime Ministers as well as Scottish First Ministers”
	“If impact depends on securing the commitment (or at least tolerance) of powerful social actors & funders to research-generated knowledge, then one might anticipate that academics will act in ways to ensure their findings are acceptable to such actors. ... Speaking truth to power might be inversely proportional to achieving impact.”

Table Seven		
Impacting Public Discourse and Debate – in Summary		
<i>Cultural Capital in Process</i>	<i>Symbolic Capital “Measures”</i>	<i>Risks and Dangers</i>
Informing public debate, within and through the media	The level and extensiveness of debate generated	The dangers of an over-eagerness to please stakeholders within this sphere was seen as a clear threat to the quality, innovation and independence of academic writing
Through the workings of government and its support services, via reports, committee work, and advising	The seniority of politicians drawing upon scholarly writing	

Table Eight	
Being noticed and read – Illustrative Data	
	I love it when folks tell me they have read everything I have written
	I often get praise from other academics at conferences who say my papers are readable and make a contribution.
	I am not sure individuals care that much about contribution to knowledge till the work actually gets looked at by others.

Table Nine	
Interacting in the critical research conversation – Illustrative Data	
	the extent to which my published work is incorporated with the work of others and is reproduced to inform critical arguments and insights
	For me, a contribution is more a qualitative measure – of being able (or not) to influence or inspire peers and their work.
	I appreciate review and informed friendly critique that makes you revisit and rethink

Table Ten**Creating and Sharing Novel Cultural Capital – Illustrative Data**

“Conceptual innovation & persuading readers that what I have to say offers new insight into important issues is perhaps the most challenging and satisfying aspect of academic writing for me”

“To me a contribution is simply adding to existing knowledge base or understanding. Similarly to innovations, there are probably different sub-types of contributions (e.g. radical, incremental contributions), and most of our work deals with incremental contributions. The radical contributions deal with asking totally new questions/probing “adding something new ... looking at a question in a different way, applying a new theoretical lens to a question, using a different method or gathering data from a different place”

Table Eleven**Symbolic Capital, Top Journal Publication, the REF and Citations – Illustrative Data**

“Journal publications tell us something about research quality & contribution as editors/reviewers wouldn’t publish (or recommend publication) if they felt submitted papers were not offering something of value to their readerships.”

“While overall I think the journal rankings correlate with the quality of the articles published, I think it would be misleading to think that the articles in the “better” journals automatically make a more substantial contribution than the articles in the other journals.”

“The so-called top four journals, especially in my area are probably read by a relatively few folk”

“The level of real scholarship in the field has been corrupted by the wonderful tool of Google Scholar”

“Contribution is mostly measured in terms of citations and informal feedback and rarely in specific value of the contribution in real life. Informal feedback from people who actually used the knowledge is far more enriching than other methods of measurements.”

“What I realise now (in hindsight) is the recent REF exercise has worked against my practice in terms of knowledge impact. “

Table Twelve

Contributing to the Academic Environment – in Summary

The academic “impact” environment is a complex and multi-layered social capital nexus, comprising team, department, institution, and entrepreneurship academia at local, regional, national and global levels

<i>Cultural Capital in Process</i>	<i>Symbolic Capital “Measures”</i>	<i>Risks and Dangers</i>
Writing must first be noticed and read	Citation metrics, journal rankings and governmental research reviews recognise and reward strong research contributions	These measures also have the potential to concentrate power in the hands of an elite, perhaps undermining novelty, and encouraging gaming
Interacting in the critical research conversation, and being challenged		
Enriching and extending the existing knowledge base through incremental novelty	Informal reputation amongst peers, and within the field	It can take years for real impact to be achieved and recognised
Creating radical novelty and challenging the status quo	Heightened respect for entrepreneurship scholarship, and departments, within wider academia	

The price of everything, and the value of nothing?

Stories of Contribution in Entrepreneurship Research

Introduction

This paper is concerned with entrepreneurship academics and how their writing contributes to the discipline. Landström and Persson (2010) note the entrepreneurship discipline has developed as a research field over the last three decades. Wiklund et al. (2011) suggest it has grown to one of the larger groups of the Academy of Management. Audretsch (2012) identified entrepreneurship research has gained prominence in leading management journals. The raised interest in academic entrepreneurship, centres upon economic benefits attained from commercialisation of science and technological knowledge (Storey and Tether, 1998) and increased attention by policymakers, businesses and universities (McElwee and Atherton, 2005).

The extant literature considers the range and nature of entrepreneurial research outputs (Ireland and Webb, 2007) as opposed to experience of the entrepreneurship researcher. Nevertheless, studies of entrepreneurship research, from a scholar's perspective, are emerging. Frank and Landström's (2015) focus-group study highlights the importance of the relevance-rigour debate, contrasting the emphasis of junior scholars on individual interestingness, with professors on the interestingness of the field. Both groups agree that interesting entrepreneurship research is novel, relevant, and challenging. Smith et al (2013) draw upon insights from entrepreneurship scholars to identify and analyse antecedents, processes, and consequences of qualitative entrepreneurship authorship. They identify the generation of fine-grained richness facilitating understanding of multi-faceted complexities, personal consequences such as intellectual enrichment, fun, confidence and frustration are important, as well as groundedness of qualitative work in engagement, relevance and stories of reality. Drakopoulou Dodd et al (2014) examine through a Bourdieuan lens, processes, structures, and relationships within qualitative entrepreneurship authorship demonstrating

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2
3 qualitative researchers have an affinity with methodology and epistemology through grounded
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5 interaction with people and text and a passion for philosophy and engagement. The capitals created
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7 through qualitative authorship are identified as personal benefits (including interacting with new
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9 people, motivation, freedom, satisfaction, self-understanding), and benefits to the wider field's
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11 research project, through enhanced, richer understandings (2014:642). These studies illustrate
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13 researchers' perspective as to what contributions - what value, what capitals - entrepreneurship
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15 scholarship achieve, highlighting the importance of grounding in practice (relevance), of personal
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17 development and intrinsic satisfaction, and of advancing shared knowledge. The studies suggest
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19 value is created for (and with) multiple stakeholders (oneself, community, practitioners); quality of
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21 intellectual contribution is assessed through depth, richness and novelty of understanding; and
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23 extended and varied engagement with others is, in itself, both research process and contribution.
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25 Frank and Landström focus on one form of contribution – how interesting research is whilst
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27 Drakopoulou Dodd et al (2014) and Smith et al (2013) concentrate on qualitative researchers,
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29 considering a range of topics beyond research outcomes i.e. process, practice and antecedents.
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34 These studies provide a foundation for directly considering the research contribution of
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36 entrepreneurship scholarship, suggesting novel areas of investigation, whilst highlighting a research
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38 gap. This paper extends these studies, by challenging and deepening their findings, and by focusing
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40 on professors' perceptions and experiences of contributions of entrepreneurship research. What
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42 value does entrepreneurship research create? What contribution does (our) scholarship make, who
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44 for, and in what ways? How is the value of this contribution recognised, assessed, measured, and
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46 rewarded (or not)? Given the effort that (our) community expends on entrepreneurship research it
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48 seems strange that such questions have not been raised more frequently. This is particularly so in
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50 academic contexts shaped by external and internal research metrics determining award of tenure,
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52 promotion, and funding. This study develops a grounded understanding of value created by
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54 entrepreneurship research by analyzing entrepreneurship professors' perceptions and experiences
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56 of research contribution. The unit of analysis are full-time tenured Professors holding the title of
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3 Professor of Entrepreneurship (or variants of) working in the Entrepreneurship discipline in terms of
4 teaching, research and external project activity within a European University. Entrepreneurship
5 professors were expected to work specifically within the Entrepreneurship discipline and not in the
6 more generic business/management disciplines. This study places entrepreneurship researchers at
7 the centre of this study, developing a scholar-driven framework focused on where our research
8 value lies, and processes by which it is achieved.
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19 Ellson (2009) describes publication of journals papers as the ultimate outcome of scholarship and
20 acclamation of application contribution, knowledge and skill. Nevertheless, Erkut (2002) suggests
21 whilst some research produces no measureable impact on its respective discipline, other work has a
22 profound effect. How might such impact be identified? Ellson (2009) notes evaluation of academic
23 research remains debatable, is subject to diverse, conflicting and contradictory patronage, and
24 controversial in application. Furthermore, Wilkins and Huisman (2015) argue institutional managers
25 and governments are obsessed with research quality even though minimal consensus exists
26 regarding what constitutes quality research and its recognition (Nedeva et al., 2012). For example,
27 Rao et al (2013) suggests an important measure of research impact is number of citations a scholarly
28 work achieves (Ranatunga and Romano, 1997; Coleman et al., 2012). Geuens (2011) claims an
29 objective of researchers is to achieve citations and increased prestige which requires novel, and
30 original ideas and results. Whilst important to the discipline, care should be taken that results are
31 meaningful in a business context. Ellson (2009) suggests research should focus on requirements of
32 researchers, practitioners and students and aim to provide solutions for business problems.
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52 Following Drakopoulou Dodd et al (2014)'s analysis of qualitative entrepreneurship authorship, a
53 Bourdieuan theoretical lens is adopted. This study focuses on Bourdieu's Forms of Capital namely
54 economic, cultural, social and symbolic to examine value generated through entrepreneurship
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3 research (Anheier et al., 1995). Bourdieu's approach is suitable, in that it illustrates academia is
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5 struggling to establish and maintain rules for legitimacy, membership, and hierarchy, and determine
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7 forms of capital (Drakopoulou Dodd et al, 2014; Bourdieu, 1988). Pret et al (2015) review the
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9 deployment of this frame within entrepreneurship literature reminding us that economic capital,
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11 (which they found *not* to play a dominant role) includes all financial and tangible assets; that cultural
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13 capital incorporates long-lasting dispositions, skills and education, and cultural goods; that symbolic
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15 capital is expressed in recognition, awards, status and legitimation; and that social capital is enacted
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17 in and through networked relationships with others. The relevance of this frame for exploring
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19 contribution of entrepreneurship research is considerable, as it allows consideration of intellectual
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21 fruits of research (objectified cultural capital), engaged and interactive nature of research
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23 contributions (social capital), financial rewards of contribution (economic capital), and recognition
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25 which highly valued contributions achieve (symbolic capital).
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32 **Literature: Setting the Context**

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35 Before progressing to explore what entrepreneurship professors believe their research contribution
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37 to be, a wider overview of current debates is required. Three key areas where discussion has been
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39 focused, within academia and the public arena, are: university purpose; its practitioners relevance;
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41 and increase in national measurement frameworks.
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46 **University Role**

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49 The first debate relates to achieving purpose and mission of universities, and implications for
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51 academia. Universities' role in society is one of enabling social change, innovation and economic
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53 development through highly skilled labour and research (Veugelers and Del Rey, 2014). More
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55 specifically, university purpose is regarded as production and dissemination of knowledge, and to
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57 achieve this, its employees undertake teaching, research and administration (Harley et al., 2004).
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4 Blaxter et al., (1998) notes the archetypal academic role comprises all three activities. However,
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6 Austin (2002) suggests the academic role is evolving with the requirement to teach learning
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8 outcomes, possess subject matter expertise, use information technology effectively, and integrate
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10 and apply knowledge and solve problems. Consequently, academic careers are characterised by
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12 increased stress, pressure and uncertainty (Rice et al., 2000). Academics must demonstrate an array
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14 of talents and higher productivity (Fairweather, 1996; Massy and Wilger, 1995) than their
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16 predecessors. Moreover, Weick (1970) notes an academic fulfils multiple roles including teaching,
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18 research and university service to the profession resulting in potential overload. Gurău et al., (2012)
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20 suggest entrepreneurship academics can undertake other entrepreneurship activity namely
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22 founding an entrepreneurial firm, project managing an existing firm or acting as a advisor/consultant
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24 to other businesses. The primacy of research is as Browning et al., (2014) suggest problematic;
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26 academics who do not research are unlikely to develop fully as scholars, teachers and researchers
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28 (Weaver, 1982). But how relevant is this research to stakeholders other than academics?
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33 Forster (2007) concludes that business people perceive academics as publishing for each other and
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35 their research is irrelevant to industry and the public sector. Armstrong et al., (2001) suggests
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37 observers criticize business research for slow progress, a particular challenge in evolving business
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39 environments. Furthermore, increased student expectations regarding relevance of their business
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41 education has been identified (Ellson, 2009). Frank and Landström's (2015) study of relevance and
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43 rigour, within entrepreneurship and management research, is a particularly thorough examination of
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45 this topic.
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51 **Assessing Research Quality**

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54 Browning et al. (2014) recognise the increasing focus on assessment of research and linking
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56 government funding allocations to research quality and output, within a university environment of
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3 tightening financial constraints. This is evidenced by various national frameworks designed to assess
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5 quality, and rank journals, scholars, and academic institutions (Adler and Harzing, 2009). This
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7 increasing institutional pressure to publish in highly ranked journals with high impact metrics, is a
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9 concern for all academics (Ortinou, 2011). Harley et al (2004) suggests additional pressure is
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11 impacting on academics to produce funded research. This has led to privileging of research and drive
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13 towards publication in high profile journals taking precedence over other aspects of the role and
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15 rewarding high achieving individuals for its accomplishment. Gardiner and Kearns (2012) suggests
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17 that doctoral students and academics will not succeed in their careers unless they are productive
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19 writers.
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26 Harley et al., (2004) posit that such changes have positive and negative implications for academic
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28 careers. For high achievers, this means career progression, enhanced mobility and financial reward.
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30 An academic career provides benefits in terms of freedom and autonomy and an opportunity to
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32 contribute to research in an area of personal interest (Bailyn, 2003). From a negative perspective,
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34 measurement of research activity performance gives employing institutions increased control over
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36 academic careers and their progression. Potentially, such measures create employment insecurity,
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38 loss of autonomy, career inhibitors, enhanced competition and increased potential of role failure.
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40 Adler and Harzing (2009) suggest scholars seeking reputational and financial rewards from a
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42 research career face pressures to comply with stringent rules. So this is the study context.
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49 Given this context, and increase in entrepreneurship scholarship, it is timely and significant to
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51 question "what value does entrepreneurship research create?" The study focuses on experiences
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53 and perceptions of entrepreneurship professors to elicit understanding of research value held by
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55 those responsible for its creation. The study recognises views of stakeholders, such as policy makers,
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57 and practitioners, are also relevant. Here the study undertakes a detailed analysis of the value which
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3 entrepreneurship professors believe they, and their community achieve, thus it was necessary to
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5 consider who value is created for, and how it is measured and recognised.
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10 **Methodology**

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12 This study employs a qualitative approach whereby entrepreneurship professors completed a
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14 research instrument expressing opinions on the value of their research and extent to which it
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16 contributes to knowledge and practice. Specifically, participants responded to six related open
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18 ended questions, to encourage flexibility in responses:
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- 24 1. What is contribution?
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- 26 2. Who measures contribution?
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- 28 3. What measures contribution?
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- 30 4. Identify personal motivations for undertaking academic research.
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- 32 5. Does your work make a difference?
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- 34 6. Do you make a contribution to knowledge? How do you know?
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40 The sample was drawn from tenured entrepreneurship professors from Europe with a track record
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42 of publication as a benchmark study of expert respondents. The sample was identified through an
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44 internet search of Universities to identify entrepreneurship professors. Each professor was emailed a
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46 personalised message explaining research purpose and a request to complete enclosed questions.
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48 Overall, 34 professors were contacted, 20 completed the questions (12 males, 8 females aged
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50 between 45-65) giving a response rate of 59%.
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3 The data was analysed using NVivo software and organised by coding examples in which aspects of
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5 research contribution were explored. To analyse the data collected logically, a coding system was
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7 adopted to categorise the collected data (Jones and Jones, 2014). This involved a process of data
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9 reduction, display and conclusion drawing and verification based on the protocol proposed by Miles
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11 and Huberman (1994). Within this process, data was sorted into groups relating to research themes
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13 identified in the literature (Smith, 1991). These categories were then coded using terms that
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15 emerged from the data (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). For example, amongst the drivers of knowledge
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17 creation, a category referring to “personal drivers” emerged. In this category, four codes were
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19 derived and identified as “curiosity”, “Enjoyment”, “Influence” and “Pressure”. This axial coding
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21 narrative text approach was adopted to enable an accurate description of data related to issue of
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23 academic contribution within the discipline (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). This interpretation process
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25 involved multiple reviews by the authors to explicate and refine understanding (Baskerville and
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27 Pries-Heje, 2001). Thereafter, illustrative quotes were selected from the collected evidence to
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29 highlight meaning across the research themes. These were selected on the basis of their perceived
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31 value and interest to the research themes by the authoring team (Jones et al., 2014)
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39 **Insert Table One here**
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44 Following critical experience by Terjesen and Elam (2009:1100) and Dodd et al (2014) ‘during this
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46 process that it became apparent that our data could benefit from application of a conceptual
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48 framework’, namely Bourdieu’s theoretical frame (Pret et al, 2015). Our data was re-categorised
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50 using this conceptual frame. In particular, Bourdieu’s capital theory provided an appropriate lens
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52 through which to view this dataset, as subsequent findings illustrate. Preliminary findings were
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54 shared with colleagues at an international conference, to provide reflexivity, by discussing and
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3 challenging the findings with a diverse group of entrepreneurship academics. Analysis, findings, and
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5 theoretical framing were re-visited and refined following this interaction.
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10 **Findings**

11 *Overview*

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13 Bourdieu's Forms of Capital was applied as an analytic frame and patterns in the nature of
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15 entrepreneurship professors' cultural, social and symbolic capitals emerged. Minimal reference was
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17 made to economic capital, indicating that research contributions are not typically valued by
18
19 measurements of their financial impact, whether upon individual researcher, or other stakeholders.
20
21 The processes by which these capitals are created, maintained, extended, combined and converted
22
23 provide novel insights into how entrepreneurship professors perceive their careers. In summary,
24
25 entrepreneurship professors engage in knowledge creation for personal and community-of-practice
26
27 reasons (cultural capital), which they share, through interactions with four main groups of
28
29 stakeholders (social capital). Recognition of value of these interactions, and cultural capital shared
30
31 through them, is manifested in several forms by each stakeholder group (symbolic capital). The
32
33 frame makes intuitive sense, exhibiting strong face validity. The benefit of the frame is as an analytic
34
35 vehicle for exploring and reflecting on nature of capital forms, and processes which link them; their
36
37 relative significance to entrepreneurship professors; their potential use as contribution measures,
38
39 and positive/negative attributions ascribed to them.
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49 At the centre of the frame are personal drivers for creation of cultural capital, the set of knowledge,
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51 skills, experiences and dispositions adopted by entrepreneurship professors, and practices by which
52
53 these are developed. Four personal and intrinsic processes motivating respondents to engage in
54
55 generation of entrepreneurship cultural capital emerged: intellectual curiosity, inherent enjoyment,
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57 a desire to influence thought, and, less positively, professional pressure. The majority of responses
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3 could be classified as processes involving transfer, sharing, evolution, or communication of this
4
5 cultural capital with others. These others grouped into four clear “sets” of social capital
6
7 relationships; the wider academic community; students; entrepreneurs/practitioners; and policy
8
9 makers. Typically, interactions were direct, and personal, through enactment of social capital ties
10
11 from all four sets, in written or verbal conversations. In other cases – especially in the policy sphere
12
13 – these were likely to be enacted through less direct means, including media coverage and debate.
14
15 These interactions were enacted with relational ties from all social capitals sets, such as receiving
16
17 responses from those who had read specific research outputs, including conversations and debates.
18
19 Otherwise, the process of “making a contribution” was audience-specific. Sharing research through
20
21 the practice of teaching was an interaction shared with students, specifically. Recognition and
22
23 legitimation arising from these interactions varied across the different social capital groups, although
24
25 for all, the over-arching theme of *using* cultural capital was key. Below, these three forms of capital,
26
27 and their significance for entrepreneurship professors, are presented before drawing conclusions as
28
29 to what novel cultural capital this study has developed, and contribution achieved.
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36 *Personal Drivers of Cultural Capital Creation*

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39 At the centre of creation of academic cultural capital, and in adherence with prior studies, four main
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41 clusters of personal internal drivers were identified; intellectual curiosity; inherent enjoyment;
42
43 professional pressures; and desire to influence thought (see Figure One).
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49 **Insert Figure One about here**
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54 First, participants depicted a cluster of rationales for writing about inherent “curiosity about things”
55
56 and desire to “make sense of the world”. Here, what is striking is the role that writing plays in
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3 working through their own sense-making: “I like to sit down and mull about what’s the most
4 intriguing result to put into writing”. The discipline of writing “forces close examination of ideas and
5
6 intriguing result to put into writing”. The discipline of writing “forces close examination of ideas and
7 attention to logical inconsistencies and textual ambiguities”. This sense-making, curiosity, and
8
9 intellectual puzzling is experienced as a research community activity, as something engaged in
10
11 together, as an on-going, enactment of co-creation. There is also a personal, solitary side to this
12
13 aspect of writing, as professors write-and-think for themselves, by themselves: “to me writing is an
14
15 extension of my thinking – if I do not write it down it becomes fleeting and ephemeral” since “until I
16
17 write things down, I can’t be sure what I think”.
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23 Secondly, intrinsic satisfaction of writing emerged as a research driver, with respondents describing
24
25 “joy in writing”, “fun”, to the point that writing be considered “an obsession”. Respondents wrote
26
27 because they “want to”, they “enjoy ideas and ... the process of putting thoughts, research and data
28
29 together into a story”, and because writing leads to a “personal and professional satisfaction”. Even
30
31 within these assertions of fulfilment and pleasure, there were indications of tensions acting as
32
33 barriers: “the act of writing is itself therapeutic, but only when time permits and ideas deep back in
34
35 my mind have opportunity to surface”. This demarcation of joyful, essential writing from other
36
37 professional obligations was indicated in relation to engagement with publishing: “I think there is a
38
39 difference between writing and publishing the writings. For me to write is to exist (as a researcher)”.
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46 The third intrinsic, personal driver continues this theme of professional pressures. Evident was
47
48 pressure to write because “it is expected of me”, a “part of the job... (since) there is an expectation
49
50 of output which can only be achieved through writing”. Thus, “people are forced to write because of
51
52 the industry they are in”, due to their employment contract. Several respondents linked enhanced
53
54 writing expectations to “reduced status of teaching”. This unwelcome compulsion contrasts with
55
56 enjoyment associated with writing, with professors noting both drivers as important stimuli for
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3 writing. This multi-faceted, ambivalent, paradoxical and conflicted nature of writing, of making a
4 contribution, emerged at several points, and is one of the hallmarks of the research process.
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10 Linking cultural and social capital emerged as a motivator at the personal level, which is unsurprising
11 given its importance in our analysis. The desire to influence others through research was distinct,
12 with writing offering “just one opportunity on which to promote my ideas/practice in order to gain
13 access to places where I want to exert influence”. Such influence was expressed as a will to “change
14 ways of thinking”, so that “the ultimate motivator is that one’s research influences how others think
15 about entrepreneurship”. The fourth personal driver for engaging with the writing process is
16 outward looking, and encompasses urge to shape others’ thinking and practice. Who these others
17 are, and nature of writers’ interactions with them, represent the major themes observed.
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31 *Cultural, Social and Symbolic Capital Interactions*

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33 Beyond personal drivers for writing, significant weight was placed on the cultural and social capital
34 interface. It is through these interactions of professors and their writing with others, that symbolic
35 capital – legitimation and recognition – is achieved. The participants depicted four groups of
36 stakeholders (in Bourdieusian terminology, four main social capital sets);
37 entrepreneurs/practitioners; students; policy makers; and other academics. The complexity and
38 diversity of audience for entrepreneurship research is apparent so that it informs the main theming
39 frame for the analysis. However, audience diversity and complexity is a significant theme, as an over-
40 arching element in shaping and evaluation of research contribution. The multiple audiences for our
41 writing are perceived to include academics, our managers/leaders, practitioners, policy-makers, and
42 students. Moreover, multiple levels of audiences are identified including, “personal, team,
43 department, faculty, university as well as local, regional, national and international”:
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3 “To me contribution is a multi-layered activity. It exists at personal, institutional and disciplinary
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5 levels. I want my work to make a contribution to topic and subject knowledge. It has to be useful to
6
7 someone (other academics primarily) but contributes at theoretical, methodological, conceptual
8
9 and/or practical levels. Being of use to practitioners is important to me.”
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14 Building on audience complexity, respondents noted a multi-faceted imperative placed on
15
16 entrepreneurship writing, This demands writing which makes both a theoretical contribution, and
17
18 impacts upon practice, since whilst “theory may or may not contribute to immediate practical
19
20 knowledge that supports solving a specific problem here and now ... it should contribute to a wider
21
22 understanding of activities studied and contextual influences impinging upon them”. Whilst
23
24 commonalities, overlaps and movement between these sets of social capital groups are evident,
25
26 there remains differentiation between them to merit separate analysis, as entrepreneurship
27
28 professors strive to create and share practitioner knowledge, impact public/policy discourse,
29
30 enhance student knowledge through writing and teaching interactions, and contribute to academia
31
32 through critical conversations, recognising the issues around contribution metrics.
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39 *Creating and Sharing Practitioner Useful Knowledge*

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42 Many respondents stated they perceived contribution to be, partly creation and sharing of
43
44 knowledge with practitioner entrepreneurs. Although this means research findings “are filtered
45
46 through the prism of their particular agendas”, nonetheless the community value the practical
47
48 relevance of our writing for entrepreneurs. The transmission of this cultural capital to practice takes
49
50 several forms, including roundtables, writing for media, business training programmes, and
51
52 “contributing to stakeholder debates”. These interactions with entrepreneurs take the vehicle of
53
54 novel cultural capital – new academic knowledge –, enacting social capital that connects and bridges
55
56 the worlds of theory and praxis. The rich social capital inherent in these interactions is expressed in a
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3 series of research interactions, underpinned by trust: “entrepreneurs trust me by facilitating my
4 gathering of data and by participating in roundtables or conferences that I organize with their
5 collaboration; this trust allows me to think that my works contribute to a useful knowledge”.
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12 Minimal attention was made of Symbolic Capital being developed through research interactions with
13 practitioners. For other diverse social capital sets to be viewed as a legitimate entrepreneurship
14 scholar, research contributions are required. One respondent noted small businesses supported
15 their work recognising it during consultations with senior policy makers. In spite of the stated
16 importance of research contributions being useful for entrepreneurs, it appears few Professors
17 experience this being translated into formal, measured institutional approval.
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28 **Insert Table two here**

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30 **Insert Table three here**
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37 *Impacting Students: Writing and Teaching Interactions*

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39 Students comprise an important social capital set for whom entrepreneurship professors write, and
40 with whom they interact both to share their writing, and to enhance its contribution. In terms of
41 content of writing, theory, practical contributions, “case studies (derived from ... academic
42 research”, and entrepreneurship education research offer opportunities for linking writing and
43 teaching. There are a variety of processes through which this takes place, according to participants.
44
45 Writing, by maintaining and extending professor’s own expertise, leads to improved classroom
46 performance, and students who appear “happy to attend my lectures”: “I learn when I write in my
47 subject area and this informs my teaching and inspires my students; at least they tell me they’re
48 inspired!” Equally, academics take research into their classroom: “my best praise comes via emails
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3 from readers/followers who express that a particular paper almost spoke to them and that they use
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5 it in their teaching”.

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10 Conceptual research develops students’ theoretical analysis of entrepreneurship, this being
11 particularly relevant for graduate students. Similarly, research with practical implications informs
12 teaching by enhancing ways in which students are prepared for entrepreneurship, e.g. making them
13
14 “aware of the challenges they face”. The distinction between types of students is relevant, as are the
15
16 heuristics used for considering impact of contribution achieved: “I have contributed to my doctoral
17
18 students being able to think and my MBAs in starting and sustaining ventures”. Engaging with
19
20 students through writing is an important vehicle via which entrepreneurship professors can develop
21
22 these relational others so they successfully evolve into members of the practitioner social capital set,
23
24 (by becoming strong entrepreneurs) or academic stakeholder group. By deploying cultural capital
25
26 (their writing) within student interactions, professors facilitate movement of other “players” around
27
28 categories of social capital sets. Thus, membership of the practitioner/entrepreneur, and academic,
29
30 social capital sets is shaped by interactions around writing of entrepreneurship professors. Our
31
32 cultural capital forms the content of interactions with others, and these social capital inter-
33
34 relationships enhance outcomes, satisfaction, and impact for all parties to relationships. This process
35
36 continues through writing with early career researchers, linking writing and teaching: “I write/co-
37
38 author to train younger researchers in writing academically”.

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45 When considering recognition and legitimation of deploying writing successfully through student
46
47 interactions, examples of symbolic capital were evident. Being invited to share entrepreneurship
48
49 expertise with other institutions is identified as a contribution, as is adoption of course models by
50
51 other universities. This institutionalisation of one’s writing into wider fields of entrepreneurship is
52
53 perceived as “extent to which your work is integrated into leading textbooks or instructional
54
55 materials that reflect how aspects of entrepreneurship are explained”. Additionally, symbolic capital
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3 and personal satisfaction, are achieved when “a student launches a firm, sells the firm they started
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5 and made money”.

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10 **Insert Table four here**

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13 **Insert Table five about here**

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18 *The Public and Policy Sphere: Impacting Public Discourse and Debate*

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21 A theme to emerge with relation to policy and support sectors was contribution to national
22
23 discourse, through policy and media debates, and as “knowledge gained from writing percolates into
24
25 society”. This contribution was experienced through media coverage, inclusion in policy reports,
26
27 personal feedback, public acknowledgements, and opportunity to present work to policy makers.
28
29 Whereas with teaching interactions, direct personal contact with known others was the medium
30
31 through which the contribution of writing was enacted, here emphasis is on public and indirect
32
33 modes of communication. Thus, making a difference in policy spheres may be achieved through
34
35 writing which would not be highly valued using more formal academic metrics:

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37
38 “My piece of work that has made the biggest difference was published as a research note in a
39
40 domestic journal. It spawned comment, criticism, debate, linkages, had policy impact and made a
41
42 difference to national debate”.

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44
45 However, a note of caution was sounded that “policy-makers...have their own objectives which
46
47 means research findings are filtered through the prism of their particular agendas”. Furthermore,
48
49 “being asked to contribute to policy making has as much to do with communication skills as
50
51 academic content”. This highlights the significance of on-going interactions with others, as writers’
52
53 cultural capital – their new knowledge – is communicated to others, debated, and re-shaped to meet
54
55 their needs. Cultural capital, in the process of making an impactful contribution, is evolved and co-
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3 created by other stakeholders within the framework of their social capital set. Warnings were
4
5 sounded about dangers of writing too closely to the agenda of stakeholders, where “demonstrating
6
7 ‘impact’ might involve supporting organisations and practices constitutive of the status quo, rather
8
9 than being critical of them”. Here, the co-creation of knowledge can work reflexively also, with
10
11 academic writing being shaped by perceived demands of others, even when “whether such
12
13 orientations necessarily give rise to the ‘best explanation’ is a moot point”.

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19 An important vehicle for achieving such contributions was regarded as the introduction of novel,
20
21 poorly understood or under-recognised knowledge to the policy sector achieving impact through
22
23 “the recognition of a new principle or fact previously not considered or fully understood”. The
24
25 creation and sharing of novel knowledge is a theme when participants consider their impact upon
26
27 academia, as the study illustrates.

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33 Regarding symbolic capital, recognition of contribution in public/policy arenas was associated with
34
35 the writer, and their writings, being employed to shape policy at the highest levels, within
36
37 government and socio-economic development agencies. Participants reported, an “award from
38
39 business mentors in the House of Lords”; “having the UN’s Chief of Entrepreneurship as a research
40
41 student”, “being invited to lead new proposals from the OECD”, and presenting their “research to
42
43 four Prime Ministers in the UK”.

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49 In addition to highlighting potential significance of entrepreneurship writing to the policy and public
50
51 sphere, these findings raise issues relating to co-creation of knowledge, and suggest a set of specific
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53 contribution metrics which are considered hereafter.
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3 **Insert Table six here**

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6 **Insert Table seven here**

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11 *Contributing to the Academic Environment: Critical Conversations and Controversial Metrics*

12
13 Within the academic environment, impact and contributions are sought at “various levels: personal,
14 team, department, faculty, university, local, regional, national and international”. Much of this
15 academic social capital set comprises those interested and engaged with entrepreneurship, where
16 contributions interactions tend towards a variety of conversations. However, other social capital can
17 be developed, through research contributions, with those whose interest in entrepreneurship
18 scholarship is of secondary interest to its achieved impact. For example, institutional managers,
19 “read” impact and contribution signals as indicating our standing as individual scholars, as
20 entrepreneurship departments/centres, and as a field of enquiry. Some of the contribution
21 indicators discussed by respondents – citations and journal rankings, for example – are valued as
22 forms of symbolic capital both within and beyond the actual field of entrepreneurship scholarship.
23 Other forms of cultural and social capital developed within the academic community through
24 entrepreneurship research are inherently content-focused, and hence largely field-specific, such as
25 generating and sharing novel knowledge, or engaging in research debate.
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45 **Insert Table eight here**

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50 Being noticed, and read, is the first and most basic process of one’s cultural capital becoming the
51 currency of social capital development within academia. Engaging attention of others is, perceived
52 as a contribution, and this interaction of others with one’s research writing is converted into social
53 capital through conversations where writers are told (through email, at conferences, etc) that their
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3 work is valued. However, this is increasingly complicated “as we sink into silos and lack the
4
5 objectivity required by those with broader, perhaps interdisciplinary approaches”, so that “those
6
7 who think narrow look for detailed analysis, whilst those who think wider look for perceived
8
9 relevance and connectivity”.

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14 Beyond this acknowledgement of readership, our respondents’ contribution to knowledge emerged
15
16 through debate regarding their writing, by influencing others, by seeing their work utilised, and thus
17
18 contributing to the “research community”. The developmental nature of the shared research
19
20 conversation was emphasized, so that writing makes a contribution even though – or, indeed,
21
22 because, it is “not something specifically correct as it were, but more of a prototype that is part way
23
24 through its evolution that is ‘beta tested’ by peers”. Our research - our cultural capital – grows
25
26 further and develops through challenges, conversations, and critique. Indeed, acceptance of writing
27
28 is not per se what participants seek, but being “able to put up knowledge to be challenged”. Through
29
30 these processes, it is not only professors’ cultural capital which builds social capital relationships,
31
32 through scholarly interaction, but also the converse: social capital relationships build, develop and
33
34 co-create professors’ cultural capital too. Indeed, it is highlighted that cultural capital, in the process
35
36 of making a contribution, becomes a co-created and co-owned community resource, through shared
37
38 evolution of its use and meaning.
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46 A cognate social-to-cultural capital conversion phenomenon is observed where participants state
47
48 “practice involves creating a) *conceptual frameworks* and/or b) acting as a *meta-data analyst* to
49
50 support others development”, and setting boundaries for others researching into similar topics.
51
52 Related supportive activities include making resources (e.g. time, money and contacts) available to
53
54 empower writing of colleagues, since “time and space to think is a gift to be able to give someone”,
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3 and, similarly, “acting to make a contribution to support colleagues in the research community
4
5 (e.g. coach or mentor)”. Overall, “we tend to agree that contribution is a ‘team level’ activity”.
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10 **Insert Table nine here**
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16 It was apparent that writers, drawing on conceptual understanding of innovation, recognise
17 substantive value and contribution made by *both* incrementally novel cultural capital, *and* radically
18 novel. Adding to the entrepreneurship knowledge base, building our shared pool of cultural capital,
19 is valued in its own right; deepening, refining, enriching, filling gaps through incremental research
20 are perceived to be valuable ways of making a difference. Participants suggest that “an intellectual
21 contribution must ... enrich the theoretical knowledge”, and they write “because of a belief that
22 there are gaps in our understanding that are critical, and that I may be able to make a contribution”.
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31 As with the policy sphere, radical novelty is perceived to be an important form of academic
32 contribution. Novelty is understood as creation of “something which adds a new perspective to old
33 questions, which suggests new solutions, something which bridges different perspectives”; as
34 “adding something new ... looking at a question in a different way, applying a new theoretical lens to
35 a question, using a different method or gathering data from a different place”. A special value
36 ascribed to sharing of cultural capital and challenges. Such a contribution, however, through “ideas
37 that really turn the discussions to new directions”, cannot be seen “when they happen but they
38 need years or even decades to mature”.
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51 **Insert Table ten about here**
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3 Considering creation of symbolic capital within academia, it is evident that success in scholarly
4 writing is a crucial process to enhance “personal reputation – recognition by others that I am doing
5 interesting, useful or high-quality work”, since “publication in a journal, and its perceived value for
6 the group, is also a measure of value”. There is an element of mutuality, and community, evident in
7 forms of symbolic capital, which is interlinked with the social capital network of scholars: “amongst a
8 group of UK Entrepreneurship scholars I am well regarded, in the same way that I hold others in high
9 regard”. It is not de facto necessary to achieve star professor status, based on conventional metrics,
10 to be well regarded within the discipline. An evocative metaphor compared this peer approval to
11 “the sort of informal accolade that attaches itself to types of sportsmen and women the players’
12 player, someone that isn’t perhaps a star player, but that is nevertheless highly regarded because of
13 their integrity, way of playing or some other attribute that singles them out”.

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30 Though legitimation and recognition accruing to scholarly writing is not regarded as the award of
31 individual symbolic capital, but adds to the prestige of writers’ departments, research centres, and
32 universities, and entrepreneurship discipline collectively. For example, scholars explained they
33 “write because I think it helps support the legitimacy of entrepreneurship as a unique discipline
34 deserving of scholarly attention”, and because “it helps build the image and reputation of the
35 institution with which I am affiliated at the time, and raises legitimacy of entrepreneurship within
36 that institution”. Furthermore, the collective, communitarian nature of such capital (whether
37 cultural, social or symbolic) generated and converted through scholarly writing about
38 entrepreneurship is perceived.

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52 Several participants debated the role of elite journals, their readers and editors, in measurement
53 and validation of writing contribution. Here, the interweaving of social, symbolic and cultural capital,
54 as research writing (cultural capital) is awarded community status (symbolic capital) through media
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3 which “belong” to a specific group, the interactions of whom (enactment of social capital) shape
4
5 impact of scholarship. The positive aspects of this respected peer-based system were celebrated,
6
7 and there is recognition of importance of “quality of the journal in which contribution is published”.
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12 Nevertheless, a level of ambivalence was evident. For example, correlation between journal standing
13
14 and article impact is neither automatic nor obvious, since “I think journal rankings correlate with the
15
16 quality of articles published, I think it would be misleading to think that the articles in the ‘better’
17
18 journals automatically make a more substantial contribution than articles in other journals”. Doubts
19
20 were raised regarding effects of concentrating influence in “those that hold institutional power
21
22 within groups through journal editorships”. For example, comments were made regarding potential
23
24 conformity this desire to win recognition from the elite might engender, since “by potency I want my
25
26 papers to conform to whatever qualitative genre/area I am writing in. I care deeply about how my
27
28 writing is perceived”. Again, there are positive and negative connotations to this conformity, which is
29
30 perceived to lead to more potent writing. Other participants expressed concerns as to the downside
31
32 of top journal-focused conformity, arguing “authors may be tempted to follow suit, copying
33
34 approaches and analyses they perceive to be popular in high-ranked journals to get published. ...
35
36 there is a lot of bandwagon jumping, where authors adopt concepts introduced by others, in order
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38 to obtain favourable responses from editors/reviewers”.
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46 Other anxieties included size of audience of elite journal readers may be a “small constituency” so
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48 that the opportunity to make a difference was limited. This potential for limiting impact through a
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50 focus on journal impact factor is linked to the fact that “of our 100 plus journals, most have a low
51
52 impact factor or only impact a small slice of the discipline”. One respondent, whilst acknowledging
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54 ranking/rating systems, noted that their most impactful piece of work “was published as a research
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56 note in a domestic journal”. Here, the trade-off between measurement, assessment, and
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3 legitimization of differing forms of contribution, and conversion of cultural capital into diverse, and
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5 mutually exclusive, forms of symbolic capital is apparent.
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10 “There is also a risk in letting contribution be defined by a narrow group of editors/reviewers who
11
12 advise on/accept submissions to elite-ranked journals. This might encourage conservatism in what
13
14 editors publish and in what authors submit. Journal editors facing commercial as well as intellectual
15
16 pressures might lean towards accepting papers that perpetuate, rather than challenge, existing
17
18 thinking, to avoid dropping down the journal hierarchy.”
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21 In line with Bourdieu’s view of the agonistic nature of specific fields, and dominance of elites,
22
23 contribution was regarded as “knowledge that is seen by elites of particular groups as rigorous or
24
25 interesting or novel for some reason... it is a group and these compete against each other for
26
27 primacy for rights to represent certain subject or topic domains”. Similarly, “if we are honest,
28
29 writing/publishing is a kind of competition”. These competitive understandings regarding nature of
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31 academic writing, and its contribution, whilst a minority theme, are indication of a complex
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33 phenomenon, which is competitive and collaborative, individual and communitarian, creative and
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35 conformative.
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42 **Insert table eleven about here**
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47 When the related themes of citations, and the UK’s Research Excellence Framework (REF) are
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49 considered the greatest ambivalence is demonstrated as to how our cultural capital is converted into
50
51 institutionalised symbolic capital. Citation indices are highlighted as key measures of recognition and
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53 legitimization, yet perceived shortfalls are lamented, so “citations are one of the simplest forms of
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55 measuring contribution but they can also be misleading”. Participants explain that they know they
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3 make a difference because they have “respectable Citation Indexes, including Google Scholar”, and
4
5 that their work is “cited significantly by academics, researchers, student, practitioners and policy
6
7 makers”. This support maybe due to perception that while “citation statistics are over-blown, they
8
9 are a proxy measure for impact over time”, as well as transparency of symbolic capital measure.
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14 Scepticism about over-reliance on citation indices is based on several factors, participants noting,
15
16 inter alia, that such an approach does not allow for recognition of applied impact of research, and
17
18 researchers: “I think the use of citations as a guide is inherently flawed, not least because those who
19
20 adopt it may well be working in ‘hands on’ situations”. Additionally, pursuit of citations, and similar
21
22 formal success, may lead academics “in a resource-constrained, and competitive, funding
23
24 environment ... to devote increasing effort to publicising marginal differences in imperfect indicators
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26 rather than taking action to improve the quality of their research”. Similarly, an anxiety was
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28 expressed that “authors write papers intended to attract citations but which offer limited insight”.
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30 There was a pronounced anxiety about “gaming” the system which may be facilitated, if not
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32 encouraged, by an over-reliance on citation indices, and other ranking measures of contribution:
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40 “Obviously, important prior work should be referenced when presenting an argument but authors
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42 commonly cite work in order to convince editors/reviewers that their study is of similar quality to
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44 works widely regarded as exemplary, even though such work may be tangential to the author’s
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46 specific arguments. Editorial ‘advice’ to authors to cite related work from the same journal to
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48 increase journal impact factors – also encourages gaming. Authors keen to get published no doubt
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50 accept editors’ advice.”
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54 The UK’s REF, which allocates government research funding to universities and departments largely
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56 on the basis of perceived publication quality, comes in for related critiques, arguing that “by
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58 assessing academic work in a particular way” REF “is arguably having all kinds of unwanted side
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3 effects, which may undermine research quality”.

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8 **Insert table twelve here**

9 10 11 12 13 **Conclusions**

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16 Our analysis illustrates that entrepreneurship scholars identify four personal drivers that stimulate
17 them to write, produce cultural capital. These comprise intellectual curiosity, inherent enjoyment, a
18 desire to influence thought, and, less positively, professional pressure. This study contributes new
19 understanding towards a limited literature in the entrepreneurship discipline. Looking beyond the
20 individual, to the embeddedness of entrepreneurship writers within a social capital nexus, the data
21 presented evidence of four main groups of stakeholders with whom this cultural capital is shared,
22 and with whom a variety of contributions are sought, measured and recognised: the academic
23 community; students; entrepreneurs/practitioners; and policy makers. Research relevance is a much
24 discussed topic, and our study demonstrates that within entrepreneurship these four specific groups
25 are seen to form the social capital nexus wherein relevance is co-created. The interactive nature of
26 the generation of relevant contributions was highlighted, such that cultural capital (objectified in
27 research output) appears to be converted into symbolic capital (highly valued contributions) through
28 processes of social capital interactions. Although similarities in some of the processes of cultural
29 capital exchange, co-creation, and evaluation across groups (direct interaction to converse and
30 debate useful knowledge, for example), were identified some group-specific practices, summarised
31 and reflected upon below.

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54 Creating and communicating knowledge which is useful to entrepreneurs, which informs practice,
55 was highlighted as being of crucial importance for our participants. However, there was minimal
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3 evidence of such contributions being measured, legitimated and rewarded by the stakeholder
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5 community, beyond feedback from specific entrepreneurs. Research policy in this area - within and
6
7 beyond universities –should consider metrics and celebrations of such contributions. An emphasis
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9 upon Impact Case Studies within the Research Excellence Framework is an indication of policy
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11 movement in this direction within the UK, although this was not remarked upon by participants.
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17 Writing was perceived to make an impact upon teaching interactions with students, both by shaping
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19 and enhancing entrepreneurial practices, and by providing conceptual developments to strengthen
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21 understanding of students. Here, impact of writing was perceived in the movement of students from
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23 this status, to another stakeholder group, as they develop into entrepreneurs, or academics. Helping
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25 to move other individuals from one social capital set to another, enhancing these movements, and
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27 shaping the field’s membership may thus be an additional contribution made through
28
29 entrepreneurial research writing. Again, it is through the social capital of on-going relationships with
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31 students and graduates that this form of high-value contribution should be experienced.
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37 Within the public/policy domain, impactful contributions were associated with writing informing
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39 public debate, within the media, but also within the workings of government and its support
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41 services, through reports, committee work, and advising. Symbolic capital accrued from the level
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43 and extensiveness of debate generated, and from the seniority of politicians drawing upon scholarly
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45 writing. The dangers of an over-eagerness to please stakeholders within this sphere was regarded as
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47 a threat to the quality, innovation and independence of academic writing, however.
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53 Much of our dataset focused upon contributions to the academic environment, a complex and multi-
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55 layered social capital nexus, comprising team, department, institution, and our discipline at local,
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57 regional, national and global levels. Cultural capital is only converted into social and symbolic capital
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3 within this environment if writing is first noticed and read. However, interacting in the critical
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5 research conversation, through both novel and more incremental contributions, was especially
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7 valued. Citation metrics, journal rankings and governmental research reviews were perceived as
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9 double edged swords. It may be the case that, these measures have potential to concentrate power
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11 in an elite, perhaps undermining novelty, and of encouraging gaming, so that scholars are motivated
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13 to pursue success in the measure, rather than quality in writing.
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16 Our analysis illustrates much of the motivation, contribution, and perception of success which
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18 professors ascribe to their writing and publishing is inherently embedded in, and manifested
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20 through, interrelations with others. More formally expressed, the evolution and legitimation of
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22 cultural capital, as it becomes converted into symbolic capital, is largely interwoven with the
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24 development and enactment of social capital.
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28 In terms of implications for policy and practice it is apparent that current practices within the
29
30 Entrepreneurship discipline are impacting on the sector and researchers therein. This study will be of
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32 interest to the entrepreneurship academic community and the Higher Education sector more
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34 generally, particularly University senior management. Increasing pressure (in the UK through the
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36 REF) to publish in perceived high ranking journals and for research to be impactful places greater
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38 emphasis on the contribution of the individual (e.g. the Entrepreneurship professor) rather than the
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40 collective departmental good (e.g. early career researchers). The study suggests evidence of
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42 academics adopting various coping strategies such as increased external collaboration and
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44 networking to manage this process. Individual failure to reach required research standards has
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46 caused stress, work pressures and even loss of job role. UK and European universities need to
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48 evaluate the value of an expanding sector whilst only valuing the research contribution of an elite
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50 minority. Across the sector such a policy potentially results in downgrading the value of research and
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52 even disengagement within certain institutions and a “talent gap” emerging with the next
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3 generation of researchers. These issues are particularly relevant within Entrepreneurship with its
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5 need to impact positively on business engagement and start-up, government policy and academia.
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11 In terms of limitations the authors recognise this study represents an initial snapshot of a limited
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13 sample of entrepreneurship professors. The generalisability of the results must therefore be treated
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15 with caution. For example the sample is UK centric. The authors confirm the need for further
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17 research in this area. This article sets out what has been learnt from the first stage of our study. This
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19 represents the “what”, “with whom”, and “why” of entrepreneurship research contribution. As such,
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21 it illustrates a useful, informative picture of our field. The second stage of the study will entail a
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23 large-scale, international, quantitative survey to assess patterns of universalizability around the
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25 frame presented here, and to identify contextual and personal drivers that shape the patterns found
26
27 thus far. We anticipate that the study’s second survey phase will add further evidence to our
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29 understanding of what contributions matter to different types of entrepreneurship researchers (in
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31 terms of age, gender, experience, research experience etc), in diverse contexts. The study has
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33 identified a range of informal metrics of entrepreneurship research contribution, and it is hoped that
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35 these will form the basis of further research and debate around institutional research assessment,
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37 especially given the reservations expressed by participants as to the dangers of over-reliance on
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39 citations indices and journal rankings.
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TABLES AND FIGURES

Table One: Sample Demographics			
<i>Country</i>	<i>Number of Respondents</i>	<i>Total Word Count per Country for all Respondents</i>	<i>Average Word Count per Country by Respondent</i>
Denmark	2	482	241
Finland	2	1901	951
France	2	861	431
Germany	1	779	779
UK	13	10115	778
Total	26	14138	778

Figure One: Personal Drivers of Cultural Capital Creation

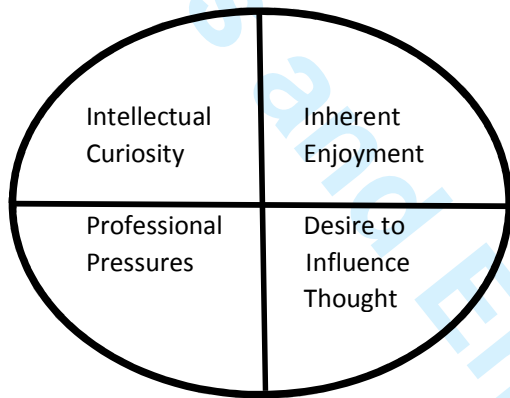


Table Two
Creating and Sharing Practitioner Useful Knowledge – Illustrative Data
I just want to bring some specific ... solutions / recommendations to managers
By its impact on the professional environment/business world (for example, the opportunity to present the results of a research during a roundtable with the participation of some entrepreneurs or the opportunity to publish a short article in a professional journal).
An intellectual contribution ... and more particularly in the domain of entrepreneurship, has to be directly useful to the entrepreneur/manager in a SME/intrapreneur.

Table Three		
Creating and Sharing Practitioner Useful Knowledge – in Summary		
<i>Cultural Capital in Process</i>	<i>Symbolic Capital “Measures”</i>	<i>Risks. Dangers& Challenges</i>
Roundtables, conferences, and training programmes for entrepreneurs	Contribution is measured and celebrated through feedback from entrepreneurs, and their organisations, via personal interaction, emails, and participation in research	There is little evidence of such contributions being otherwise measured, legitimated and rewarded by the wider stakeholder community
Writing for professional media		
Contributing to stakeholder debates		

Table Four
Writing and Teaching Interactions
“Used much of the outcomes of my research in the content and teaching methods we use”
“I find that the research behind my writing, especially when it is conceptual work, informs my teaching.”
“I try to push at the boundaries of current research and then to present this to for example student cohorts as some new thinking”

Table Five		
Writing and Teaching Interactions Summary		
<i>Cultural Capital in Process</i>	<i>Symbolic Capital “Measures”</i>	<i>Risks and Dangers</i>
Conceptual research deepens and extends students’ theoretical analysis of entrepreneurship - especially relevant for the teaching and training of students	The successful movement of students to another stakeholder group, as they develop into entrepreneurs, or fellow academics.	None mentioned
Writing maintains and extends the professors’s own expertise, leading to stronger classroom performance	Satisfied, engaged and motivated students	
Research with practical implications enhances the ways in which students are prepared for entrepreneurship	Use of research findings by other teachers, and in textbooks	

Table Six	
Impacting Public Discourse and Debate	
"my work makes a difference. It has been used in national debates, ... it has encouraged people to debate."	
"I think that contribution to knowledge occurs when peer reviewed article gets picked up in the media and a wider discussion takes place."	
"If impact depends on securing the commitment (or tolerance) of powerful social actors and funders to research-generated knowledge, then one might anticipate that academics will act in ways to ensure their findings are acceptable to such actors. ... truth to power might be inversely proportional to achieving impact."	

Table Seven		
Impacting Public Discourse and Debate Summary		
<i>Cultural Capital in Process</i>	<i>Symbolic Capital "Measures"</i>	<i>Risks and Dangers</i>
Informing public debate, within and through media	The level and extensiveness of debate generated	The dangers of an over-eagerness to please stakeholders within this sphere was seen as a clear threat to the quality, innovation and independence of academic writing
Through workings of government and its support services, via reports, committee work, and advising	The seniority of politicians drawing upon scholarly writing	

Table Eight	
Being noticed and read	
I love it when folks tell me they have read everything I have written	
I often get praise from other academics at conferences who say my papers are readable and make a contribution.	

Table Nine	
Interacting in the critical research conversation	
the extent to which my published work is incorporated with the work of others and is reproduced to inform critical arguments and insights	
a contribution is more a qualitative measure – of being able (or not) to influence or inspire peers and their work.	
I appreciate review and informed friendly critique that makes you revisit and rethink	
Table Ten	
Creating and Sharing Novel Cultural Capital	
"Conceptual innovation and persuading readers that what I have to say offers new insight into important issues is the most challenging and satisfying aspect of academic writing for me"	

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“To me a contribution is adding to the existing knowledge base. Similarly to innovations, there are probably different sub-types of contributions (e.g. radical, incremental contributions), and most of our work deals with incremental contributions. The radical contributions deal with asking totally new questions/probing “adding something new ... looking at a question in a different way, applying a new theoretical lens to a question, using a new method or gathering data from a different place”

Table Eleven

Symbolic Capital, Top Journal Publication, the REF and Citations

“Journal publications tell us something about research quality and contribution as editors/reviewers wouldn’t publish (or recommend publication) if they felt submitted papers were not offering something of value to their readerships.”

“While overall I think the journal rankings correlate with the quality of the articles published, I think it would be misleading to think that articles in the “better” journals automatically make a more substantial contribution than the articles in the other journals.”

“The level of real scholarship in the field has been corrupted by the wonderful tool of Google Scholar”

“Contribution is measured in terms of citations and informal feedback and rarely in specific value of the contribution in real life. Informal feedback from people who actually used the knowledge is more enriching than other methods of measurements.”

“What I realise now (in hindsight) is the recent REF exercise has worked against my practice in terms of knowledge impact. “

Table Twelve

Contributing to the Academic Environment Summary

The academic "impact" environment is a complex and multi-layered social capital nexus, comprising team, department, institution, and entrepreneurship academia at local, regional, national and global levels

<i>Cultural Capital in Process</i>	<i>Symbolic Capital "Measures"</i>	<i>Risks and Dangers</i>
Writing must first be noticed and read	Citation metrics, journal rankings and governmental research reviews recognise and reward strong research contributions	These measures also have potential to concentrate power in the hands of an elite, perhaps undermining novelty, and encouraging gaming
Interacting in the critical research conversation, and being challenged		
Enriching and extending existing knowledge base through incremental novelty	Informal reputation amongst peers, and within field	It can take years for real impact to be achieved and recognised
Creating radical novelty and challenging status quo	Heightened respect for entrepreneurship scholarship, and departments, within academia	