

## **Doctor's degree and then? The determinants of professional career intentions in the Life Science**

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Based on the model of Career Choice of Lent, Brown and Hackett (1994) this work examines the effects that play a role in a decision for or against an academic career after getting PhD. Of interest is how contextual factors (working as a research assistant or social support), socio-demographic variables, but also attitudes, interests and self- efficacy beliefs have an impact on the career intention. The examined sample includes 475 life scientists, who got their PhD between April 2013 and April 2015 at 13 German universities. Using a standardized online survey, participants were asked about various aspects of their doctoral studies, the socio - economic background and the professional transition after graduation. The analysis is done by means of structural equation modelling.

Number of publications during the doctoral studies and intentions toward an academic career show a strong relationship: both a direct effect was observed as well as an indirect effect over the self-efficacy. Number of publications depends on gender (men publish more articles than women) and on the fact of working as a research assistant during the promotion period (compared to a financing by a scholarship). Working as a research assistant also increases the scientific self-efficacy and has furthermore a direct effect on the intention to work in academia. No direct gender effect was observed on the career intentions.

Empirical test of the model of Career Choice by means of structural equation modelling illustrates the complexity of the development of the career intentions that are influenced by numerous direct and indirect effects.